

DE TRINITATE

Newsletter of the Society of the Holy Trinity
Societas Trinitatis Sanctae

From The Senior

As I have travelled around the country visiting our chapters over the past few years, one of the things I hear most often is the phrase, “see you in Mundelein!” It is a familiar theme to those of us who have come to love that place over the years, this wonderful St. Mary of the Lake Seminary and retreat center. In the early days of our Society, we alternated our General Chapter meetings between Chicago one year and the East Coast the next. Many of us remember fondly the beautiful chapel at Divine Word-Techny and the not so friendly acoustics at Bon Secours in Maryland. In between we have tried other sites, some good and others not quite so. But over the past few years it is St. Mary which has become our “mother house,” our home, the place to which we return each year to gather together as sisters and brothers to share in prayer, reflection, mutual conversation and consolation, and to live out our commitment to the Rule to engage in just such a retreat.

Our first gathering was at the Jesuit Center in Morristown NJ, in 1997 so this will be our 22nd General Chapter Retreat. The Society has grown and changed a great deal over these years, and some things about the General Chapter have also changed. We are a little more “formal” now than when we started. Our cassocks have become more standard dress, although not required. Our Offices are now more structured and we have settled into a format of having generally outstanding theologians to teach us. But this does not mean that we should become complacent about the General Chapter or neglect its importance in our common life. Chapter retreats feed us on a regular basis and many of us could not get through our ministries without the close support we get from fellow members of our chapter. But it is General Chapter which is the beating heart of the Society, this annual gathering that is unlike anything else we experience, this wonderful time when, having come from all corners of the US and Canada, we raise our voices together in prayer and praise, in fellowship and friendship, in mutual conversation and consolation. Yes, the format may now have become more familiar, but it never grows old because each year is a time of anticipation and expectation as we hear new things, share with old friends, and live out our common life in this unique way called General Chapter.

**“See you in
Mundelein!”**

So once again, the time is drawing near for the Society to gather in General Chapter Retreat. The dates this year are September 24-26. As always a goodly number of folks will be arriving on Monday and the Divine Offices on Monday evening and Tuesday morning will be prayed under the guidance of our chaplain for this year – The Reverend Erwin Roux, STS of the Susquehanna chapter.

Our teaching theologian this year will be The Reverend Dr. Maxwell Johnson from the University of Notre Dame. Dr. Johnson, who last addressed our Society at its 10th anniversary General Chapter, is a well-known Lutheran teacher and author who will address the theme we started last year, “*ecclesia semper reformanda*” with two lectures. The first is entitled “*Ecclesia Semper Reformanda – A Baptismal Principle Par Excellence.*” The second is entitled “*Ecclesia Semper Reformanda and the Eucharist: Are we Lutherans Falsely or Rightly Accused of Abolishing the Mass?*” Clearly those should be both insightful and challenging. Our Wednesday evening response panel will be comprised of The Reverend Dr. Amy Shifrin, STS, President of the North American Lutheran Seminary and The Reverend Dr. Thomas Drobeno, STS who recently

completed his doctoral work at Cambridge, England. Dr. Johnson will join them for a question-and-answer time.

It has been our practice to celebrate Mass at the closing of the retreat. However, the last two times we held an election for Senior we began the retreat with Mass. With the Leadership Council's concurrence, starting with Mass will now become our standard practice and during Mass the Senior will offer an address of pastoral guidance. Confession will be available as always and preaching by other members

From The Secretary

Registration for the General Chapter Retreat is now open! The deadline to register is September 11. Members must register through their chapter deans. Non-members affiliated with a chapter also register through that dean. Visitors and guests are warmly welcomed and encouraged. If you wish to attend, but are not associated with any chapter, you may register directly with me at revsbailey@redred.com. The cost for non-members is \$245 (shared room) or \$265 (single room). If you wish to arrive early, the cost for an additional night is \$70. You may choose to eat additional meals on campus (supper \$15, breakfast \$10). All payments must be sent to me prior to the

Chapter Updates

The **Carolinas Chapter** plans an Advent Retreat December 2-3, 2019, at the Catholic Conference Center in Hickory, NC. Study will be devoted to a presentation on historic iconography by Archpriest Fr. Marcus Burch of the OCA. Those interested in attending should contact the chapter dean, Steve Saxe, at lcgsl601@aol.com. The **Columbia River Chapter's** next retreat will be October 9-10, 2019, at Mt. Angel Abbey. The Rev. Dr. Richard O. Johnson, STS, editor of *Forum Letter*, and author of the recently published book *Changing World, Changeless Christ: The American Lutheran Publicity Bureau 1914-2014*, will serve as teaching theologian. Contact Pastor Joe Hughes, dean, for more information by September 30 by email at j_w_hughes@hotmail.com. The **Guadalupe River Chapter** most recently met May 20-22 at the Cedarbrake Retreat Center near Belton, TX, and discussed various aspects of our ordination vows. The next chapter retreat will be January 27-28, 2020. For more information, please contact the chapter dean, Ralph Reitmeyer, at rweit@aol.com. The **Metro New York Chapter** recently held a spring retreat where they discussed the topics of Eucharistic Adoration and church

of the Society will take place at Vespers Tuesday and Wednesday, and at the closing Service of the Word on Thursday. All in all, we expect a fruitful time at this upcoming General Chapter, so "see you in Mundelein!"

In our common service and life,

Paddy Rooney, STS
Senior

beginning of the retreat — do not bring payment with you. You can send a check payable to the Society to PO Box 116, Belview, MN 56214, or fees may be paid with a credit card via PayPal to societyholytrinity@gmail.com. Keep in mind, there are additional charges associated with PayPal, so it will cost you a bit extra. Please contact me for further information on electronic payments.

In our common service and life,

Pari Bailey, STS
Secretary

safety. Please contact Dean Terence Weber at TWeber1978@aol.com for information about future retreats. The **Minnesota Chapter's** Advent retreat will be December 2-3, 2019 at Christ the King Retreat Center, Buffalo, MN. Join us for the daily offices, our traditional Advent Hymn Sing, and time with colleagues. See our Facebook page, "Society of the Holy Trinity – Minnesota Chapter" or email Dean Trevor Bailey at tbaile65@gmail.com for more information. The **New England Chapter** held its annual summer picnic August 23 in Stafford, CT. Our fall retreat will take place November 4-5, 2019 at St Joseph Retreat House in Milton, Mass. Contact Chapter Dean Ryan Mills (tlnhpastor@yahoo.com) if you are interested in attending. The **Susquehanna Chapter** will next retreat December 9-10, 2019, at SS Cyril & Methodius, Danville, PA. Please contact Chapter Dean Kenneth Elkin at kennethelkin@gmail.com for more information. The **Wisconsin Chapter** plans their next retreat for November 4-5 at St. Norbert's Abbey in De Pere, Wisconsin. For more information contact the Rev'd Tim Duesenberg, STS at stmaximos@aol.com.

Reflections on the Rule

THE ROLE OF THE RULE

Regardless of the form it takes or the charism which defines it, every Order in the life of the Church has a Rule. From the ancient Monastic orders to the more recent Societies, Confraternities or Congregations, each one was governed and ordered by some form of a Rule. Some Rules date back to much earlier days such as the Rule of St. Augustine or the Rule of St. Benedict, while others are more recent such as the "Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus." Clearly most of these Rules were written by the founders of such Orders and are generally considered to be fixed and immutable once drafted and accepted.

As we gather for the upcoming General Chapter retreat and as we prepare to receive new signers to the Rule, it is perhaps good for those of us in the Society of the Holy Trinity to reflect upon just what role that Rule plays in our common life and mission and why we, like those who have gone before us chose to draft such a Rule to help govern our life together.

First though, let's be clear what the Rule is not! It is not a mission statement – heaven knows we have enough of them in the judicatories and organizations to which we belong. And, despite the word "Rule" in its name, it is not a legalistic or pharisaical document. Rather it is, as one author puts it, more like a written version of wedding vows than these other concepts. True, there is an element of a mission statement or a legal code bound inside the idea of the Rule that various monastic communities, including ours, have adopted, but these are not the be all and end all. Like those wedding vows, the Rule is embraced as something to grow into over the years, a way of living and loving that is formed and shaped by the very vows themselves. But, as the wedding service so clearly reminds us, such vows are not entered into "lightly or unadvisedly" but rather with full knowledge and understanding of that which we are about to do. So it is with the Rule which is to be embraced fully and completely but with a full understanding of that which we are about to do.

For this Rule is not just an addendum to our understanding of who we are or the Office we hold. We are priests in Christ's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, ordained into this Holy Office of Ministry. So when we subscribed, we spoke clearly that it was for "the sake of the vows that we spoke at ordination" that we chose to embrace this Rule – not "lightly and unadvisedly," but rather, with full understanding of what it means to subscribe to this Rule and the demands it will lay upon us. This does not mean that the Rule is prescriptive – that we must do everything perfectly each and every day. But it is the means by which we embrace these directions for our lives, which will in turn form and shape us into a life which is yet more Christ like. And just as the Rule forms and shapes us as individuals, so it also forms and shapes us as a community. The Rule is read at all retreats – local chapter and General Chapter – not because we do not know it, but because reading it regularly creates a bond between us, spread out as we are in our various chapters across four time zones and numerous distinct cultures. The Rule binds us together and makes it clear that this Society is not about any one of us, but rather, about the community as a whole.

So in summary, what is the role of the Rule? Very simply, it is the means we have adopted, faithful to those Orders and Societies that have gone before us, which is designed to form and shape us both as individuals called to serve the Church in and through the Office of Holy Ministry, and as a community called the Society of the Holy Trinity, so that together we may better serve Christ's Church both now and until He shall come again. May Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit give us grace and strength to live this Rule all the days of our lives.

In our common service and life,

Paddy Rooney, STS
Senior

In Memoriam

De Trinitate prints notice of members who have recently entered the Church Triumphant. If you are aware of a Society member's death, please contact our Secretary, Pari Bailey, at revsbailey@redred.com with name, date of death, and chapter affiliation.



DE TRINITATE
News and Reflection from the Society of the Holy Trinity
Volume 22, Number 2, Pentecost 2019
Editor: The Rev'd Mrs. Katie Johnson
Editorial office: 2471 Pine Grove St, Muskegon, MI 49441/ 515-360-2381/ iowakatie1981@gmail.com
To be placed on the De Trinitate mailing list or to report a change of address, please contact the Secretary, below.
Senior: The Rev'd Patrick Rooney, 450 Ridge Road, Dillsburg, PA 17019 / 717-870-1154 / pastorrooney@gmail.com
Vicar: The Rev'd Brian Evans, 1455 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15221 / 412-915-3196 / bae@flcpittsburgh.org
Secretary: The Rev'd Pari Bailey, P.O. Box 116, Belview, MN 56214 / 507-938-3285 / revsbailey@redred.com
Bursar: The Rev'd Jay Denne, 4612 Grant St., Sioux City, IA 51108 / 712-898-1678 / revjaydenne@gmail.com
Society Website: www.societyholyltrinity.org