

Christmas
2025



the Voice

News from The Paulist Fathers Office of Mission Advancement

Merry Christmas
from the Paulists!



**"For today in the city of David
a savior has been born for you
who is Christ and Lord."
(Luke 2: 11)**

Discerning the Paulist Mission



Thank you to all those who kept our three "Pre-Assembly" gatherings in prayer earlier this year.

The gatherings brought together Paulist Fathers, Paulist Associates, Paulist Deacon Affiliates, and some of our lay collaborators to share ideas about the Paulist mission. They were held in October at retreat centers in Huntington, NY, and Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, and on Zoom.

The ideas raised are helping us to discern the movement of the Holy Spirit in anticipation of the upcoming election of our next Paulist Administration as well as our quadrennial General Assembly in June, 2026.

"The Pre-Assemblies were rooted in this Paulist belief that the Holy Spirit is active and alive in our culture today through the lived experience and prayerful discernment of the people of God," said Jonathan Lewis, the Paulist Fathers' Mission Strategy Officer, who coordinated the gatherings.

"Bringing together the voices of both Paulist and laity acting co-responsibly to vision the future of Paulist ministry in the next four years was really exciting," he added. "By reflecting on our history, as well as the mission lived today, we had a great opportunity to discern how we move forward tomorrow."

The next step in this process will be the work of study groups during the first part of 2026. 🏹



On the cover: The Paulist Fathers who serve in Grand Rapids, MI, in their Christmas sweaters.

Mission Impact Grants

The seasons of Advent and Christmas are an excellent time to take stock of our many blessings, including the immense generosity of the many donors to the **Annual Paulist Appeal**.

In 2025, the appeal has continued to grow both in revenue and the number of participating households.

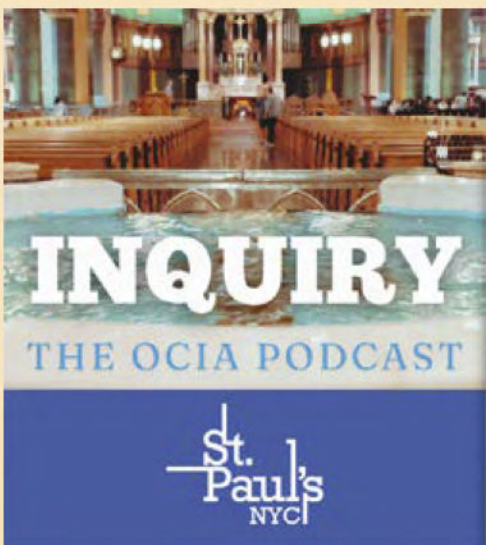
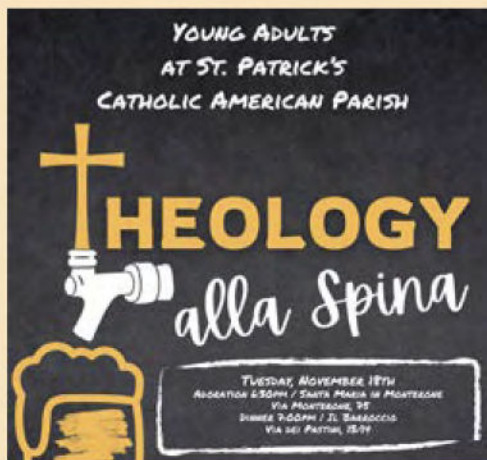
We are now in the second year of a new initiative related to the appeal: **Mission Impact Grants** from the Paulist Fathers to the parishes and centers we serve.

The grants, ranging from \$500 to \$2,500, provide funding for local activities related to the Paulist mission priorities. Out of the two dozen projects that were awarded grants, here are just a few examples:

- A Hispanic Couples Retreat at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew in Grand Rapids, MI
- "Theology alla Spina" (Theology on Tap) at St. Patrick's Catholic American Parish in Rome, Italy
- "Inquiry: The OCIA Podcast" at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle in New York City
- The "Women of Vision" speaker series at the Catholic Information Center in Grand Rapids, MI

Paulist Fr. Mike Cruickshank, an associate pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, helped to organize the Hispanic Couples Retreat supported by a Mission Impact Grant. He writes:

"Our speaker was a psychologist and a theologian who works with couples. He was very well received by the 32 couples who attended. He talked about the importance of communication across three sessions, and I gave the last presentation on spirituality and the sacrament of matrimony. We received positive feedback that the couples learned good tools for improving their relationships." 🍷





Come & See Weekend in February

Could God be calling someone you know to discern a vocation to the priesthood, religious life, and missionary life?

Discerners have told us how valuable it is to hear the question **"Have you ever thought of being a priest?"** from people they trust.

You could recommend that discerners attend our **"Come & See Weekend"** being held **February 13 to 15, 2026**, at Hecker House, our seminary in Washington, D.C.

Attending a "Come & See Weekend" is a great way to learn about discernment and to meet our current seminarians and formation team.

Discerners should contact our vocation director, **Paulist Fr. Ed Nowak**, at **(917) 763-7899** or **vocations@paulist.org**, or visit **beapaulist.org**, to learn more.

Thank you for being an advocate for our vocations program! 🌿



*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year 2026!*

THE PAULIST FATHERS OFFICE OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT

Father Dave Father René Fr. John

Brett William

Paul Kate Kami

Ariana

Ellie



FROM THE DESK OF FR. RENÉ



Dear Friends,

I pray that you and your loved ones are in the midst of a very blessed season of Advent!

Inside this issue of "The Voice," you will read about our three "Pre-Assembly" gatherings in October at which Paulist Fathers, Paulist Associates, Paulist Deacon Affiliates, and some of our lay collaborators gathered to exchange ideas about the Paulist mission as well as discern the signs of the times.

Esta carta se puede leer en español en:
paulist.org/espanol

At one of the Pre-Assemblies, a participant recalled this saying attributed to Paulist Father Gene Burke (1911 - 1984):

"You can listen people into existence."

Perhaps adopting this concept of deep listening and accompaniment could be helpful as we observe a season of Advent that comes at the end of a very fast-changing and disruptive year for our Church, our nation, and our world.

Could taking time to pause and really listen to people's stories and perspectives help our weary world, especially as we prepare for Christmas?

Such "thoughtful listening" or "active listening" is a guiding principle of "The Communion Project," the new name of our Paulist ministry that seeks to address the complexities of the divisions that are weakening our Church and society. You will be hearing more about **The Communion Project** in 2026!

All of our missionary endeavors are made possible by the movement of the Holy Spirit in cooperation with your never-ending prayers, encouragement, participation, and financial support.

Thank you for being so generous to us in so many ways. Please know how grateful to God we are for you at Christmas and all the year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. René meets Pope Leo at the Vatican in late November during a meeting of the Union of Superiors General.

Very Rev. René Constanza, C.S.P.
President, The Paulist Fathers

To make a contribution, please use the enclosed envelope or visit: paulist.org/apa

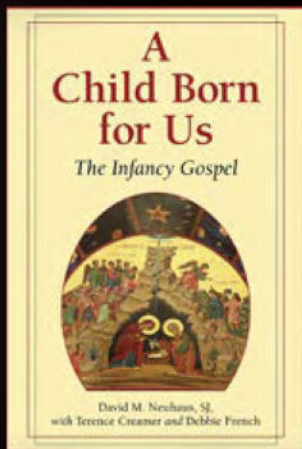




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**NEW FROM PAULIST PRESS:
"A Child Born for Us:
The Infancy Gospel"**

**By David Neuhaus, SJ,
with Terrence Creamer
and Debbie French**

Pictured: A glimpse from a Christmas Eve Mass in 2024 at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle in New York City. This photo was taken by Paulist Fr. Brad Schoeberle (1956 - 2025). Please see inside this issue of "The Voice" for news and updates.

This new offering examines the Gospel narratives of the infancy of Jesus. These complex texts tell us more than one may think about who Jesus is and our relationship with him.

To learn more about this and other Paulist Press titles, please visit: paulistpress.com.

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