



# THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF

NEWS of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God  
*Province of the Good Shepherd in North America*

Spring/Summer 2025

Issue 8



## Brothers in Faith and Hospitality

### *Holy Habits*

When you hear the word “brother,” you might think of a sibling or a close friend. But in the Catholic Church, a “religious brother” is something unique—a man who has dedicated his life to God, community, and service. These men may not always be in the spotlight, but their daily lives are filled with meaning, purpose, and, yes, some truly holy habits!

A Catholic religious brother is a man who commits himself to a religious community by taking vows – usually poverty, chastity, and obedience. Hospitaller Brothers take a fourth vow of hospitality. Unlike priests, brothers are not ordained and do not perform sacraments, but their role is just as vital. Brothers live, pray, and work alongside others, often serving in the social service field, special needs facilities, hospitals, homeless shelters, or wherever needed.

A brother's life is shaped by a rhythm of prayer, work, and community living. Early mornings start with communal prayer and Mass, followed by breakfast and a service-filled day. Every brother brings his own talents to the table, making the community rich and vibrant.

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In a world that often seems hurried and divided, the quiet, steadfast service of the Brothers of the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God shines as a beacon of hope and compassion. The Province of the Good Shepherd is synonymous with the Mission of Hospitality and care that uplifts the most vulnerable among us.

Many face uncertainty, fear, and hardship. They struggle under the burden of poverty, homelessness, hunger, and isolation. We are blessed that our Brothers are the center of compassion and hope for those in need.

Our Brothers have dedicated their lives to serving others, following the example of our founder, St. John of God. Our mission is simple yet profound: to provide comfort, healing, and dignity for those in need, regardless of background or circumstance. Whether through the provision of healthcare, pastoral care, or providing food and shelter to the homeless, the poor and marginalized, our Brothers embody the values of compassion, kindness, humility, and respect.

What sets us apart is not just the breadth of our work, but the depth of compassion we witness to. We see Christ in every person we serve, offering not only physical healing but emotional and spiritual support and comfort. Our presence brings reassurance to clients, families, and communities alike.

Brothers, thank you for your unwavering commitment, your gentle strength, and your boundless generosity. You remind me daily of the power of compassion and the enduring impact of selfless service.

We are blessed to serve, but even more blessed by your support. Thank you for your care, support and generosity to those we serve.

May you continue to be a blessing, and blessed, in the Mission of Hospitality.

In Hospitality,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Br. David Lynch OH".

Br. David Lynch, OH  
Provincial Superior

*"What sets us apart is not just the breadth of our work, but the depth of compassion we witness to. We see Christ in every person we serve..."*

*Br. David, Provincial Superior*

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One of the most beautiful aspects of a brother's life is the sense of brotherhood—living, laughing, and sometimes disagreeing together while striving for holiness. Meals are shared, chores are divided, and stories are swapped at the dinner table. Through it all, brothers support one another in their faith journeys.

Many brothers say they were drawn by a desire to serve God and others in a tangible way. It's a life that values simplicity, humility, and deep relationships. Brothers often describe a profound sense of joy and peace from living for something greater than themselves.

The "habit" that brothers wear isn't just a robe—it's a symbol of their commitment. But the real "holy habits" are the daily practices that shape their lives: prayer, service, community, and a constant striving to grow closer to God. These habits transform ordinary days into extraordinary journeys of faith.

## *Walking in the Footsteps of St. John of God*

In October 2024, we had the amazing opportunity to bring together co-workers and board members from across the Province of the Good Shepherd in North America to walk in the footsteps of St. John of God. They were graciously hosted by the Prior and Brothers at the Hospital San Rafael in Granada, Spain.

Walking in St. John's footsteps isn't just about visiting places; it's about embracing his spirit of compassion and service. It's about imagining his daily rounds of offering comfort, food, and medical care to those in need. Experiencing the places where St. John of God cared for the sick and poor, and reflecting on his radical hospitality, can deeply move participants to return home changed.



*Br. Gary shows participants the St. John of God Path.*



*Br. Gary and Co-Workers discuss St. John of God's work.*

Looking ahead to October 2025, we are excited to announce the continuation of our journey. Two new groups of co-workers and board members will once again team up with Brother Gary Hill, continuing this meaningful and educational journey to walk where St. John of God walked, pray where he prayed, and learn of his selfless service to others.





*Br. Alphonsus and Br. Charles join the Albuquerque Community.*

It is with both joy and a touch of sadness that we announce the retirement of Brother Alphonsus and Brother Charles from Good Shepherd Manor, Momence, Illinois, as they begin a new chapter at Villa Matthias.

For many years, Brother Alphonsus and Brother Charles have been the heart and soul of Good Shepherd Manor. Their dedication, warmth, and unwavering commitment to the residents, families, and co-workers have left an indelible mark. Through their daily acts of kindness, gentle guidance, and steadfast faith, they have embodied the spirit of the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God.

Brother Alphonsus, with his ever-present smile and words of encouragement, has been a source of comfort and inspiration to all who have crossed his path. His devotion to the well-being of the residents and his willingness to lend a helping hand in any circumstance have made him a beloved figure throughout the Manor.

Brother Charles, known for his quiet strength and deep compassion, has touched countless lives through his attentive care and thoughtful presence. Whether offering a listening ear or a reassuring word, Brother Charles has always been there to support and uplift those in need. Their impact on Good Shepherd Manor will always be cherished.

Brother Alphonsus enjoys this new chapter of daily walks and movies with the brothers. Brother Charles delights in preparing desserts for everyone and working on stained glass projects.

Villa Mathias was delighted to welcome Brother Yvon, who journeyed from Toronto to spend six weeks in Albuquerque. Seeking a respite from the cold Toronto weather, Brother Yvon found warmth in the milder climate but also in the company of the Albuquerque Brothers.

Brother Yvon's annual winter retreat has become a much-anticipated tradition, bringing Villa Mathias a renewed sense of camaraderie with the Toronto Community. During his stay, he joined Brother Alphonsus and Brother Michael for an outing to Christ in the Desert Monastery and shared Masses, meals, stories, and laughter with the Brothers.

Brother Yvon's humor and thoughtful presence were a welcome addition. His Toronto stories always sparked lively conversations.

Brother Yvon has returned to Toronto. We are grateful for the warmth and fellowship he brought to Villa Mathias. His visit serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of community and the comfort of being together—especially during the colder months.



*Br. Yvon visits New Mexico.*



# Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God

Province of the Good Shepherd in North America

# 2024

## Annual Report

### OUR MISSION

We witness to Jesus' healing love, as expressed by our charism of Hospitality and provide compassionate care in the manner of St. John of God.

Our **20** Religious Members have a combined **841** years of service to the poor, the needy, and the disadvantaged.



**49,558**  
Clients served



**1,339,546**  
Meals served



**5,579,546**  
Units of Service



**3,266**  
Volunteers



**1,232**  
Co-Workers

### Religious Members & Their Ministries

Province Administration



Developmental Disability Services



Retired/Prayer Ministry



Acts of Mercy (Homeless, Meals, etc.)

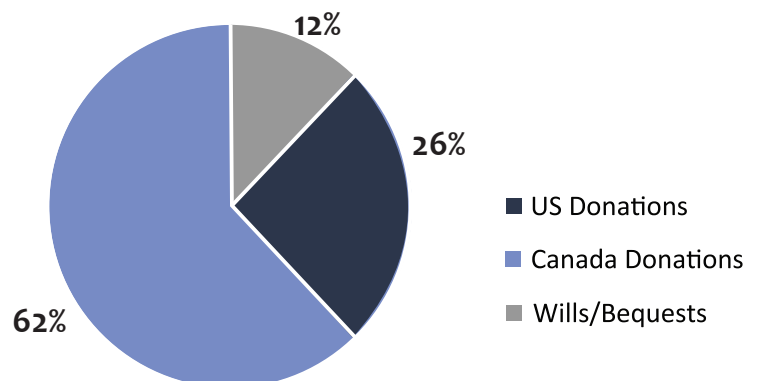


**“Do good for yourself by doing good for others.” -St. John of God**

The Hospitaller Order consists of **949** Religious Members serving in **18** Provinces located across **55** countries on **5** continents.



### Mission & Development Revenue





## Remembering Pope Francis



Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on December 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, became the 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church in March 2013. As the first pope from the Americas and the Southern Hemisphere, his papacy marked a significant shift in the Church's history. Known for his humility, compassion, and dedication to social justice, Pope Francis endeared himself to millions worldwide.

His commitment to the poor, advocacy for environmental stewardship, and efforts to bridge gaps between different faiths and communities

were hallmarks of his leadership. He emphasized mercy, forgiveness, and love, urging the Church to be a place of welcome and healing for all.

Pope Francis's legacy will be remembered for his groundbreaking encyclicals, such as "Laudato Si," which called for urgent action on climate change, and "Fratelli Tutti," promoting fraternity and social friendship. His focus on inclusivity, dialogue, and understanding laid a foundation for a more compassionate and united world.

As we remember Pope Francis, we celebrate a life dedicated to service, empathy, and the pursuit of peace. His teachings and actions will continue to inspire generations to come, reminding us of the power of faith, kindness, and the enduring spirit of humanity.

### *Mission Moment*

A gentleman experiencing homelessness was recently admitted to Kendall Regional Hospital, Miami, Florida, for psychiatric care. Upon discharge, he was provided with transportation to Camillus Health Concern (CHC), Miami, Florida, for assistance with housing services. When he arrived, he shared with the CHC team that he had been directed there for overnight shelter and housing support.

He was welcomed into the walk-in clinic, where an initial assessment revealed a need for both medical and behavioral health care. It was immediately clear to all teams involved that he could not be safely discharged to the streets and required emergency shelter.

Thanks to the compassionate collaboration of CHC's case managers, Brother Sean, and the Lazarus Project Team, he was successfully connected to housing support.

He continues to return to CHC for the care and support he needs.



*Br. Sean cares for a client.*



Brother Gerard Sullivan, OH  
*July 20, 1945 – December 2, 2024*

Brother Gerard entered religious life September 15, 1969, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He professed first vows February 23, 1971, in Waterford, Ireland and final vows February 1, 1976, in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Over the years, he served at Good Shepherd Centre, Wolverhampton, England; Good Shepherd

Manor, Kansas City, Missouri; Good Shepherd Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Good Shepherd Center, Alameda, New Mexico; Barrett House, Toronto, Ontario; Cardinal Manning House of Prayer, Los Angeles, California; Camillus House, Miami, Florida and Good Shepherd Manor, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Brother Gerard was the Director of Novices for many years at the House of Formation in Toronto, Ontario; and served on the General Council for more than 25 years.

His Funeral Mass and interment of ashes were at Villa Mathias, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

May he rest in peace.

## Hospitaller Leadership

On November 1, 2024, in Czestochowa, Poland, Brother Pascal Ahodegnon was elected Superior General of the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God during the 70th General Chapter.

Brother Pascal was born in Savè, Benin on April 10, 1971. He entered the Order in 1994, took his temporary vows on August 15, 1997, and made final vows on May 25, 2003. He graduated in medicine and surgery in Milan, Italy. He was elected General Councilor in 2012, and re-elected in 2019, particularly in charge of the Africa region.

Brother Pascal's General Council consists of Brother Joaquim Erra Mas, Vicar and First General Councilor; Brother Jaki Mullankuzhy, Second General Councilor; Brother Etienne Mbad Sene, Third General Councilor; Brother David Lynch, Fourth General Councilor; and Brother John Jung, Fifth General Councilor.

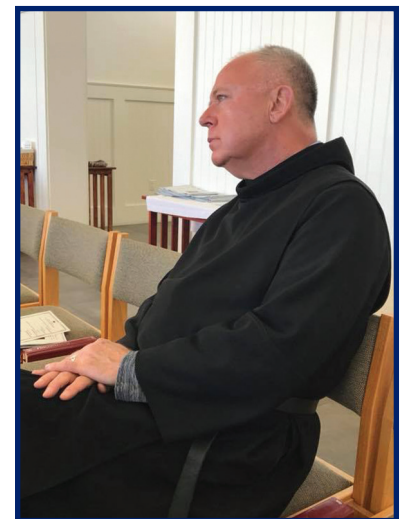
## Silver Jubilee

Brother Charles is marking a significant milestone this year: his Silver Jubilee, commemorating 25 years of religious life and service with the Hospitaller Order of St. John on August 15, 2025.

Brother Charles began his journey with the Hospitaller Order in 1998. After completing his initial formation, he made his religious profession and joined a community of brothers dedicated to serving those in need. Over the past 25 years, he has served in various roles across the Province of the Good Shepherd, Camillus House, Miami, Florida; St. John of God Community Services, Westville Grove, New Jersey; and Good Shepherd Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

As Brother Charles celebrates 25 years of profession of vows, he remains committed to the Order's mission and looks forward to continuing his work alongside his fellow brothers. His Jubilee serves as a reminder of the transformative power of faith in action and the importance of hospitality in a world that still hungers for compassion and care.

Through the dedication of brothers like Charles, the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God continues to be a beacon of hope and healing—true to the spirit of its founder and the enduring call to serve.



*Br. Charles celebrates 25 years of service to the poor and marginalized.*



## *Celebrating Religious Brothers Day*

*The heart of the identity of the Religious Brother, namely fraternity, is a gift that is received (mystery), a gift that is shared (communion), and a gift that is given away (mission). Source: Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church- Vatican Document approved by Pope Francis, October 4, 2015.*



*Br. Sean receives donations for the food drive.*



*Br. John helps in the clothing room.*

Religious Brothers Day recognizes the life and vocation of Religious Brothers. It was first celebrated on May 1, 2017, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. It was created by the U.S. Brothers Think Tank, which is composed of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Religious Brothers Conference, Religious Formation Conference, NRVC, and Brothers representing various religious institutes.

Annually, Catholic communities worldwide celebrate Religious Brothers Day, honoring the invaluable contributions of Religious Brothers and acknowledging their unique vocation within the Church.

We invite you to pray for Religious Brothers everywhere, learn more about their vocation, and consider ways to support their mission through donations, volunteering, or simply offering words of appreciation.

Thank you for your support.