



mission

magazine

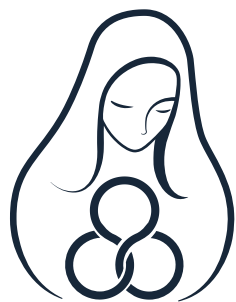
WINTER 2019



GETTING TO KNOW JOEL:
Fr. Jeremy Davis, SOLT

SMILE: Fr. Zachary of the
Mother of God, SOLT

GROWING AS A DISCIPLE:
Sr. Mary Joy of Our Father, SOLT



SOCIETY *of* OUR LADY
of the Most Holy Trinity

A message from the
**GENERAL
PRIEST
SERVANT**



Love-Desire-Joy

As I read through the articles of this issue of the Mission Magazine, I was struck by a pattern of movement within the life of the missionaries that sees them move from love to desire to joy in their relationship with others. Upon reflection, I think it is a pattern of life that not only describes the life of a missionary, but which can describe the Christian life in general.

It all begins of course with love. It is the love of God which impels a missionary in the first place to go among those who would be strangers otherwise and begin to love them for the sake of God. When we love someone, we wish them well, or will for them good.

Usually this decision is also accompanied by an interior affection which can be described as a kind of surge or impulse to reach out toward those we love – to be united with them in some way. I suppose one just has to imagine a loved one in their life to confirm this notion. In the case of the missionary, this impulse of love assists them in heading off to the mission and striving to work for the good of the people there.

Our love for others leads us toward desire and hope, namely, we desire that they would find happiness in life. For the missionary, this desire for happiness for the other includes some of the typical notions of success associated with friendships, education, and athletic achievement,

CONTACT INFO

Director of Mission Advancement

Sr. Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, SOLT
P.O. Box 4116, Corpus Christi, TX 78469
(361) 654-0054 ext 101
srmariymediatrix@solt.net

Discover more at solt.net
Instagram: @soltlife33
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VOLUNTEER

soltvolunteer@gmail.com
www.solt.net/volunteer-programs/

VOCATIONS

Priests & Brothers Vocations

Fr. Mark Wendling, SOLT
Fr. Zachary of the Mother of God, SOLT
vocations@gmail.com

Sisters Vocations

Sr. Mary Elizabeth Albers, SOLT
soltsistersvocations@gmail.com



***Disciples of Jesus through Mary living in Marian-Trinitarian communion,
serving on Ecclesial Family Teams in areas of deepest apostolic need***

but it primarily revolves around the hope that a relationship with Jesus Christ would be found and become the bedrock of the person's life, the place where they find their ultimate happiness. This desire also becomes the impetus to continually pray for the other and beg divine assistance on their behalf.

It doesn't always happen, but when the hopes and desires become a reality, there is no question that the resulting sentiment is a profound joy. The joy is caused by witnessing one who has become a friend flourish, by revelling in the divine wisdom which makes all things possible, and by the privilege of being able to play an instrumental part in leading another closer to God. In fact, the joy is so profound and great, that even one instance of success is enough to encourage one to continually press forward, even when it seems that in some

cases we can get stuck interminably at the stage of hoping and desiring. I am sure there are many parents who know this last feeling all too well!

For those who walk in the light of faith, the path of love-desire-joy is the pattern of life in our relationships with others. As you will see in reading the articles of this edition of the Mission Magazine, it is a great privilege and joy to be able to share with others the love of God and to play an instrumental role, however small or large, in bringing them closer to the font of all love and joy – God.

FR. PETER MARSALEK, SOLT

Fr. Peter is currently serving as the General Priest Servant of SOLT. He resides in Corpus Christi, TX.



Left: While serving in the SOLT mission in Belize City, Fr. Scott Guiliani, SOLT takes time to visit the primary school in Maskall, Belize.

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After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.” (Luke 5:4)

Where SOLT Serves...

AMERICAN REGION

BELIZE

BELIZE CITY-
BELMOPAN

GUATEMALA

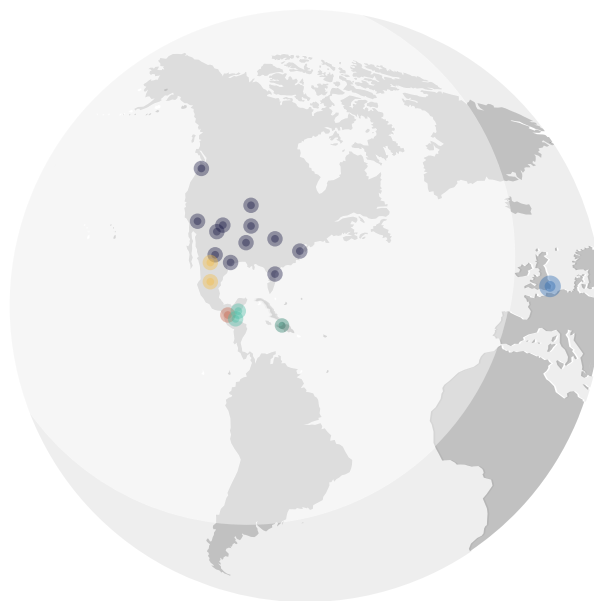
APOSTOLIC VICARIATE
OF EL PETEN

MEXICO

NUEVO LAREDO
QUERETARO

ENGLAND

SOUTHWARK



UNITED STATES

PHOENIX, AZ
PUEBLO, CO
ATLANTA, GA
SIOUX CITY, IA
DETROIT, MI
KANSAS CITY—
ST. JOSEPH, MO
PATERSON, NJ
SANTA FE, NM
FARGO, ND
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX
GALVESTON—
HOUSTON, TX
SEATTLE, WA

ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

CHINA

MACAU

AUSTRALIA

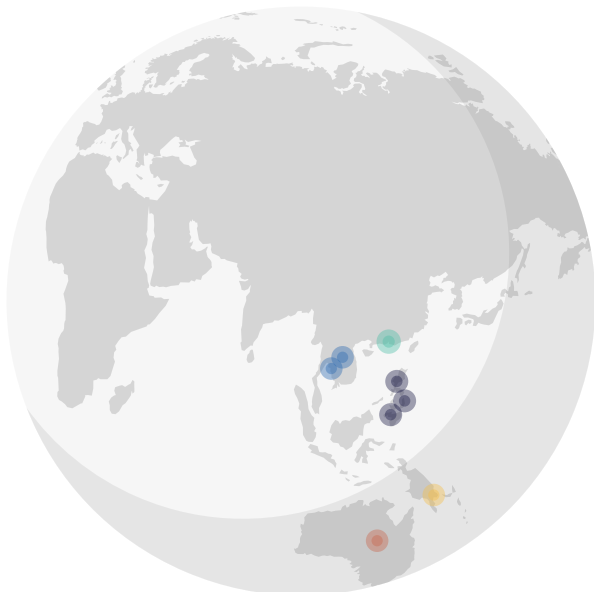
BROKEN BAY

PAPUA, NEW GUINEA

MT. HAGEN

THAILAND

RATCHABURI
CHANTABURI



PHILIPPINES

CACERES
LEGAZPI
SORSOOGON
DAET
NOVALICHES
LIBMANAN
SAN JOSE IN
NUEVA ECIJA



Getting to know Joel

I arrived at Santa Maria del

Mexicano in August of 2015, two months after my ordination. Santa Maria is a boarding school for troubled, poor, and abandoned youth in Mexico founded over forty years ago, where we serve two hundred children and twenty elderly.

I serve as the assistant director of the institution and as the director of the house for middle and high school aged boys.

Two and a half years ago, I met Joel Antonio Trejo. A young man, 14 years old, from the mountains in the state of Veracruz. Otomi, a

dialect that sounds like Japanese, is spoken in the pueblos there. Legitimate centers of education and police are few. Poverty, abandoned children, substance abuse and corruption are starkly contrasted with the physical beauty of the green mountains and steep cliffs.

In my second year at Santa Maria, I had returned from a short trip home to the United States. The very next morning, Joel came knocking on my door.

He greeted me with an innocent and anxious smile and simply said, "You came back." I told him I was very pleased to see him. He smiled widely and responded, "I'll see you later, Father." He went running back to school.

I'll never forget that moment. Joel's father left him and his family to go to the United States when Joel was very young. His family is very poor and

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***He greeted me
with an innocent
and anxious smile
and simply said,
"You came back."***





Above: Fr. Jeremy Davis, SOLT, Joel Trejo and another student outside of Santa Maria del Mexicano, in Colón, Mexico.

he rarely corresponds with his father or receives any financial support from him. Many single mothers from his pueblo are left to find a way to feed and educate children abandoned by their fathers.

Joel and I began to build a deeper friendship in his first year at Santa Maria. I prepared him twice a week to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Excluding myself, I recommended some possible sponsors.

Upon asking Joel the name of his sponsor, he responded, "You." I thought to recommend someone else, but there was no way my heart would allow me to turn down such a simple, sure request.

A young man of integrity and joy, he shares with me about his family and struggles. I pray with him and the other boys. I teach them in school and I hear their confessions. I celebrate Mass with them and for them.

I go for runs with Joel and he asks for tips about certain soccer skills. He accompanies me and helps me with tasks. I cut his hair. A quick learner, he earns straight As and excels in his carpentry workshop.

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To be a spiritual father to children such as Joel gives me a joy I cannot explain.

On his birthday, I always get him a little something, to make him feel special while far away from Veracruz. In July of 2017, I had the privilege to visit Joel in his home in the mountains and I could not have been happier. Showing me around his pueblo and inviting me into his humble home deepened our friendship.

To be a spiritual father to children such as Joel gives me a joy I cannot explain. I pray for all of our children that they may know that they are beloved by God, our Heavenly Father. He is a Father that gives special attention, knows our needs, and "always comes back." Thank you for your prayers and generous support of our children and elderly.



FR. JEREMY DAVIS, SOLT

Fr. Jeremy is from Kansas City, Kansas, and played soccer while studying at Benedictine College.



Above: Youth group members express their joy; Sr. Agnes Abordo, SOLT travels by boat between islands, to serve the people.

Upon reflection, this is the fundamental

lesson that I learned in the Philippines. A smile is a reflection of a living faith, a culture, a community, a soul, a heart, and a harmony. A smile is a disposition that has a positive impact on everyone. A smile says that "I am open to a relationship and it is good that you exist." A smile is a blessing.

It is my hope to help you embrace and develop all these aspects of a smile. I hope to do this by speaking heart to heart ("puso sa puso" in Tagalo, the native Philippine language) rather than speaking head to head ("intellect to intellect" in the Western World way). In fact, finding Jesus in your heart, and sharing Jesus in the hearts of others is one of the keys to entering the depths of a smile.

Let us enter the depths of a smile originating in the depths of a heart that is filled with the love of God. Please open your hearts and prayerfully enter the light from the Asia-Pacific Region where the sun rises. Please be open to a way of life that is as different as the East is from the West.

Have you ever known a Filipino? Yes, in the native language some words are spelled differently and this is part of "opening your heart" beyond what you "know." What was your experience of being in the presence of a Filipino? Did you notice the big smile? Did you notice the joy and laughter and love?

How can there be such a big smile with such joy when the Philippines is a country made up of 7,100 islands in the typhoon belt in the Pacific Ocean, and experiences about twenty typhoons a year, five of which are destructive? How can there be such a big smile with such joy when in the Bicol Region, where we serve in large part, the poverty line amounts to less than \$400 US Dollars per year and the

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A smile is a disposition that has a positive impact on everyone.



minimum wage for hard labor is about \$4 to \$5 US Dollars per day? How can there be such a big smile with such joy when many people have little food to eat, experience “brown outs” (no electricity for periods of time), and may not have the funds for necessary medicine or medical and dental care?

The answer is what I call the Filipino Formula for Happiness. The Formula is composed of four words, and these four words start with the same letter as Filipino and Formula. Can you guess? Do you have enough experience of happiness? Are you able to smile from the heart even in the midst of trials and suffering?

The Filipino Formula for Happiness is Faith, Family, Food, and Foto (yes, photo can be spelled Foto! Smile!).

When you reflect upon these four words and the deep realities that they signify you will find that happiness is found in relationships. Faith is a living relationship with a loving God, and the true God is Love. The true God is the Most Holy Trinity. The true God is the One God that is a Perfect Communion of Three Divine Persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are an Eternal Bond of Perfect Goodness, Truth, Unity, and Beauty. In this Unity is Love and Happiness.

Smile! You are created in the image and likeness of God. You are created for relationships and love. No matter what happens in your life, this truth should make you smile.

Family is about loving relationships. Family is the school where we are supposed to learn to love and live a life of virtue. Family is a school of





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Open up to the depths of a smile and your life will be blessed forever. Share these depths through many smiles and the lives of others will be blessed forever.



sharing and sacrifices. Family helps us understand the inner life of God. Family is the treasure of a Filipino.

Food can actually become a way for one to show love to others. Obviously, sharing food with others, especially the poor and needy, is an act of love. More importantly, spending time together at a meal is a way to grow in relationships and love. This is why Filipinos may spend an hour or more together during and after a meal (much time is spent together after a meal, very much time!).

Foto is a way to remember and cherish the relationships that are valued and treasured. After many events you will hear, “Foto, Foto!” Many pictures will be taken and many smiles will be shared.

Well, I hope this sharing from the heart helps you enter more deeply into the Catholic faith that is the source of a smile. The people of the Philippines are mostly Roman Catholic (in 2015 about 83% of 100 million Filipinos) and there is great devotion to the Santo Nino (Divine Child) and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This should help you further understand why the fundamental lesson that I learned in the Philippines is: SMILE!

Open up to the depths of a smile and your life will be blessed forever. Share these depths through many smiles and the lives of others will be blessed forever. Develop a Catholic culture of smiles and the world will be blessed forever.

Clockwise (from the left): Mass is celebrated on the island; youth group members get ready to share their musical talent; youth group share their joy with one another; SOLT members visit the islands to administer the sacraments, smiles abound in the Philippines



FR. ZACHARY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD, SOLT

Fr. Zachary is originally from Michigan and has been a priest of SOLT since 2005. He served in the Philippines as rector of the House of Formation from 2014-2018. He is currently serving as Vocation/Formation Director.

Growing as a Disciple



Many times in mission, you are “planting seeds” and you may or may not see the fruit. Sometimes, though, when the soil is rich, you have the privilege of seeing another person’s life changed because of the action of God and that person’s openness to grace. Fred and Janet Miller are two such people, who have truly become our friends and co-workers in the mission of serving Most Holy Trinity Parish in Phoenix, Ariz., where SOLT has served for ten years.

1. Can you share a little bit about your own background, as well as your history with Most Holy Trinity Parish (MHT)?

Our names are Fred and Janet Miller. We have 4 children and 4 grandchildren. I [Fred] am a licensed home inspector and Janet works for a college. We were married at MHT in February 1998 and our two youngest children attended school here. We have been parishioners for over 20 years.

2. Do any particular memories stand out of your first encounters with SOLT?

When Sister Mary Claire arrived in Phoenix, her first assignment was as our daughter’s sixth grade teacher. They developed a special bond and we are thankful for their relationship. Over time, we have grown in relationship with many members of the SOLT community. We have shared holiday meals, attended symphony and ballet performances, a Cardinals football game, and participated in many other fun celebrations with our SOLT family.

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The fact that we have decided to journey together in deepening our faith has blessed our family and our marriage.



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Sometimes... when the soil is rich, you have the privilege of seeing another person's life changed because of the action of God and that person's openness to grace.

3. What gifts did you see that SOLT brought to the parish?

A major gift we received was when Fr. Brady brought the Disciples of Jesus and Mary formation to our Parish. That formation was the first time we really explored our relationships with the Holy Trinity and Mary and laid a foundation for us. We then discerned to join the SOLT Lay Formation. We look forward to sharing our gifts with the SOLT and local community and apostolate we serve. The priests, brothers, and sisters who have served here have truly made this a community focused on becoming true disciples of Jesus.

4. Do you understand any particular aspects of your faith or your personal vocation differently than before?

We thought we were “good Catholics” because we went to church regularly. As we progressed in our formation we found there was room for growth. The more we have learned about the Catholic faith, the deeper our confidence and trust have grown for love of the Church and as a



follower of Christ. The fact that we have decided to journey together in deepening our faith has blessed our family and our marriage. We are able to see all of our life experiences as opportunities to respond in a way that gives glory to God.

5. What are your hopes for the future?

We are open to God's plan for our lives. Our hope is that we continue to focus on being disciples of Jesus, deepen our faith, expand our knowledge of Scripture, and give our lives to Mary so that we will be able to fulfill God's will for us.

Clockwise (from the left): The matachines dancers honor Our Lady of Guadalupe during a procession; Fred and Janet Miller are longtime parishioners of Most Holy Trinity Parish and are currently in SOLT lay formation; The sisters enjoy the hospitality and friendship of the Castellanos family.



Submitted by

SR. MARY JOY OF OUR FATHER, SOLT

Sr. Joy is originally from Oregon and has been serving at Most Holy Trinity since 2015.



Above: A Confirmation student at the SOLT parish in Phoenix prays for the gifts of the Holy Spirit during a Confirmation retreat.

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On the front cover: At the SOLT Mission in Colon, Mexico, Fr. Jeremy Davis, SOLT, Santa Maria del Mexicano students and their teacher exhibit the new pews they are creating for their chapel.

Right: Youth group in the Phillipines



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