

SPRING 2025



SOCIETY of OUR LADY
of the Most Holy Trinity

GRAY

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GRAY ROBES FORMATION PROGRAM

SACRED HEART MAJOR SEMINARY — DETROIT, MI

Configuration II

Br. Gregory Rice (PA)

Configuration I

Br. Andrew Collart (GA)

Discipleship II

Br. Nicholas Judge (MD)

CONSECRATED BROTHERHOOD IN MISSION — DETROIT, MI

Year I

Br. Rocky Garcia (TX)

NOVITIATE — CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

Cole Hamilton (FL)

ASPIRANCY — BENQUE VIEJO, BZ & CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

Blake Ducharme (MN)

Ethan Deters (KY)

Ethan Wersland (WA)

Jack Harber (IN)

John Tabuntschikow (GA)

Nikita Glebov (WY)

Stephen Kurt (MI)

Patrick Walsh (VA)

Emmanuel Orozco Alfaro (MX)

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Rector's Letter

The same Lord is Lord of
all, enriching all who call
upon him

ROMANS 10: 12

I am writing from a mini-retreat with the brothers. They have gone out to spend the afternoon together. Their contagious joy and desire for the good are always striking to me; they are “*filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 13:52).

Lent and the second semester are in full swing and there are many things to be done. The brothers attended the SEEK Conference in January and heroically worked to share the charism of the community. They now prepare for Easter and for final exams. There is an excitement in the air as they begin to guess at what their summer assignments might be. And one of them, Br. Greg, with your support and God's grace, hopes to definitively and freely give his life to God through the evangelical counsels (poverty, celibate chastity, obedience) in our community this summer. In July we plan to celebrate his perpetual promises in the Clerical Branch of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity.

As usual, the Lenten season carries an accelerated rhythm of life but a religious community “*should live constantly in the sight of its Lord and ought to be continually aware of his presence*” (Fraternal life in Community, 17). The penitential practices and the purifications should always put us in the presence of God; He is the singular desire of our hearts, freeing us when we cling to him and glorifying us when we call on him (cf. Ps. 91). These men are aware of the Lord's presence in their lives and continue to be formed by Him.

Their goodness renews me. They take their studies seriously and want to share what they learn. They ask me about my life and teach me to be a better priest. They anticipate each other's needs and are so generous in helping in the seminary, in the SOLT Community, and in being a stabilizing faith presence in Southwest Detroit. They are still in temporary promises, but the gift of their hearts and their lives to God and his people inspire me. Though they are poor materially, they have been enriched by God (cf. Romans 10:12).

Thank you for helping me to accompany the SOLT Brothers. We are so grateful for your prayers and generosity. May God bless you abundantly!



In Christ,
Fr. Jeremy

P. Andrew Davis S.O.L.T.

"Teach me, LORD, your way . . ."



Br. Nick sits with his students for the students vs teachers volleyball game.

By Br. Nicholas Judge, SOLT

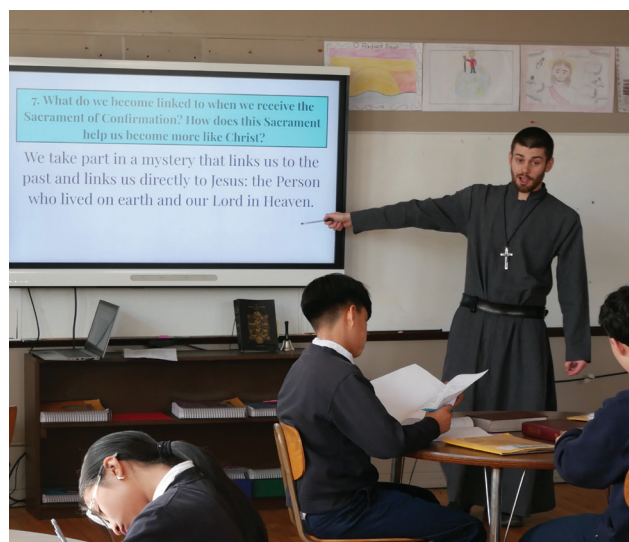
In my time with SOLT, first as a volunteer and later as a brother, one consistent theme has been teaching. In Belize I taught at our High School as well as a First Communion Class. Then in my first year in Detroit, I taught a Confirmation Class. Now this year I teach religion to the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades at Most Holy Redeemer School. Interestingly I first met SOLT on a mission trip which was billed as a "teaching mission".

It is interesting to think that teaching has a special role in the Lord's plan for my life. However it is fitting preparation for the priesthood. The role of the priest is traditionally presented in the three *munera*, which correspond to the actions of Jesus. *Munera* is a Latin word that means "duty" or "office", but also has a sense of "gift." The first of the *munera* is the *munus docendi*, or the office of teaching. Thus, the Church tells us that teaching is one of the most important duties of the priest but also that his teaching is a gift to himself and to the Church.

In reflecting on teaching as a gift in my life, I am struck by how strange that idea would have seemed to me before that mission trip, or even after much of my time in Belize. But what I was far from enthused by some five years ago is undoubtedly a blessing today.

For the Church, teaching means the handing-on of the faith. One particularly life-giving experience of this teaching was the day that I took the boys of the seventh grade class to the church to train them as Altar Servers. We went through the order of the Mass, stopping at each point that was relevant to them and their duties. I was impressed by their knowledge—many of them were already doing the task as I was beginning to explain it—and impressed by their enthusiasm to be involved in the Liturgy. And I was edified by their desire to be the priest.

Through teaching I am constantly re-immersed in the Faith and required to render an explanation for it. Through it I am being prepared to participate in the priesthood of Jesus. Through it I am nourished in my desire for that priesthood.



Meet Br. Rocky!

Where are you from Br. Rocky?

– I was raised on the King Ranch. My father Guadalupe Garcia Jr. (the lead mechanic for the ranch) taught me the value of taking initiative and the value of being a skilled tradesman. My mother Criselda (the secretary for the school district of the ranch) instilled a desire for administration and the importance of working on teams. Three older brothers before me, served the Mass and I was anxious for it to be my turn! One younger sister brings the gentle approach, much needed to my family dynamic.

How did you first hear about SOLT and get involved?

– I literally was driving along the highway and noticed the "Blue Dome" of the adoration chapel at Our Lady of Corpus Christi and was inspired to see what this church was all about... Upon driving into the property I walked into the gift shop and asked: "What is this place?"

How did the Lord's call to be a consecrated brother first come to you?

– First He first called me to Adoration, and in Adoration He called me to Himself... More specifically, I was called to share the brotherhood of Christ. I reached this decision in the light of Easter after my Lent experience during my novice year at Our Lady of Corpus Christi.

What did you do to answer the call?

– Well, I gave up a twenty-year business because I was inspired to evangelize and pay my debts

through the rosary. I started a rosary business, and after promoting devotion to Mary at conferences, hosting rosary workshops, making and selling 6,000 rosaries I was able to pursue religious life.

What has been one of your joys since receiving the habit?

– The motivation and encouragement I receive from my religious brothers in formation is without a doubt what I appreciate the most! Another joy is the conversations started with strangers curious about the habit, It's an outward expression of my radical commitment to my baptismal promises and I truly enjoy sharing this with all of God's family.

Are there any apostolates and ministries you have taken on at the Detroit SOLT mission?

– I have the privilege of serving at the SOLT —operated Holy Redeemer Catholic School, providing assistance during lunch and recess as well as implementing my web development and marking skills to help introduce the school to the world via *holyredeemer.net*. I also have the privilege of teaching classes to the upcoming confirmation candidates.

What has been your favorite class at the seminary and what is a topic you learned that impacted you?

– Intro to Catholic Spirituality has been the highlight thus far... It gave me introspection on how I currently approach my spiritual relationships and how to improve them.

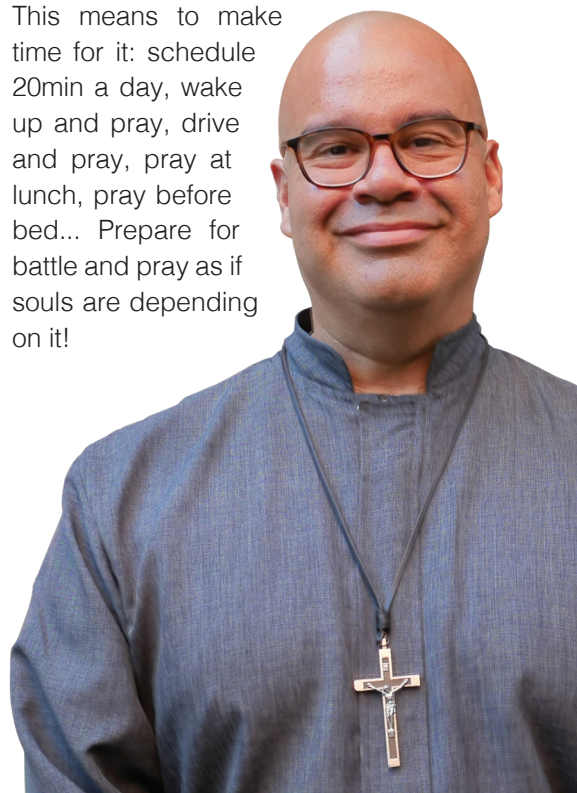


Are there any saints who have helped you along the way?

– Yes, St. Damien. Living in Hawaii led me to St. Damien of Molokai who inspired me to become a missionary disciple of Christ. St. Damien, known for his compassion, provided spiritual, physical, and emotional comfort to those suffering from the debilitating and incurable disease of leprosy.

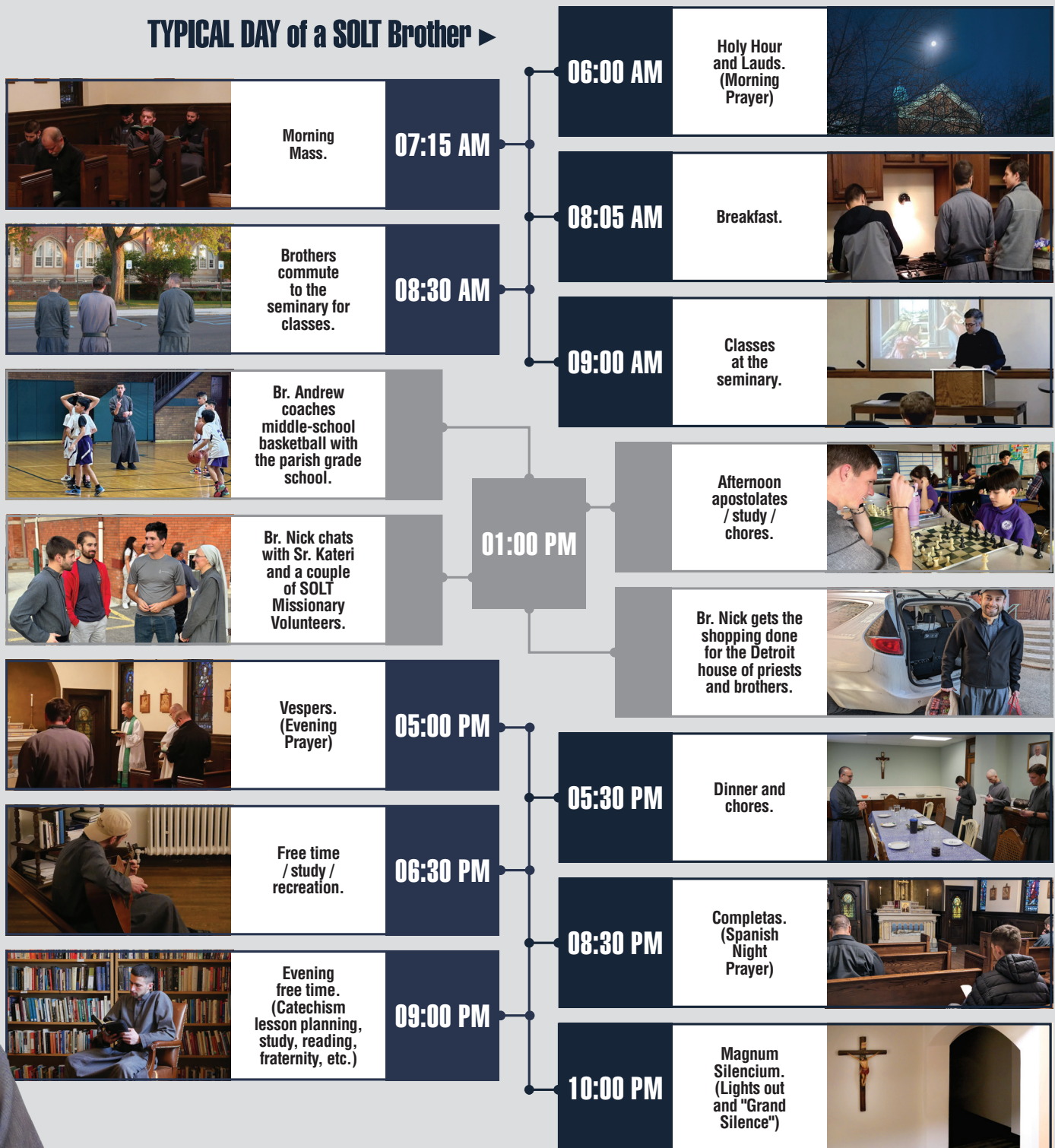
Do you have any advice for how to pray the rosary with more devotion?

– The slogan of the rosary company I started was "*Always carry your weapon!*" This is to imply that we are in a spiritual battle. With this, it is important to practice or "train". This means to make time for it: schedule 20min a day, wake up and pray, drive and pray, pray at lunch, pray before bed... Prepare for battle and pray as if souls are depending on it!



Day in the Life of a SOLT Brother

TYPICAL DAY of a SOLT Brother ►





Br. Andrew prays with Liz and Angela, pro-life sidewalk counselors.

It is Good That You Exist

By Br. Andrew Collart, SOLT

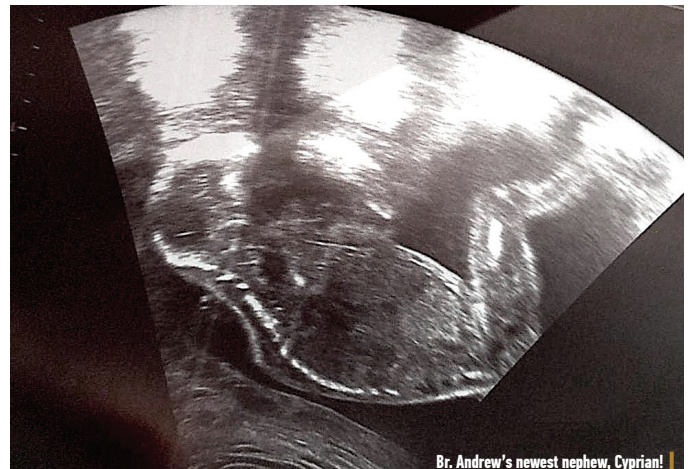
Acherished, early memory is, as a small child, my mother singing me to sleep. She would sing the blessing from Numbers 6:24-26: “*May the Lord bless you and keep you...*” I love this passage from scripture. God gave these words to the Israelite priests, promising: “*So shall they invoke my name upon the Israelites, and I will bless them.*” (vs. 27)

Last February, I and a fellow seminarian went to pray at an abortion center here in Detroit. It was cold, with snow and ice about. In a matter of minutes we witnessed several mothers woodenly trail into the sad, concrete building where their maternity would be lost. We prayed with two pro-life women who were already there on the sidewalk advocating for the unborn and offering alternatives and help. (Their group strives to be present like Mary at Calvary, so that no child be alone or unloved through their last moments.) Though only staying long enough to say a single rosary, when Charles and I left, turning to wave good-bye to the two sidewalk counselors, one of them clapped her hands together in joy and exclaimed, “*Man, you’ve blessed us!*” They are there week after week... and we blessed them!? It humbled me. I realized what an undeserved but great joy it is for me, through my presence, to cause others to concretely know of God’s love!

Another time that I went, I parked down the street at Pregnancy Aid Detroit which is the pro-life clinic offering life-affirming options and free ultrasounds. A woman named Nancy was outside spreading salt on the icy sidewalk. Exchanging greetings, she asked me if I would come inside and bless the clinic. I explained that I couldn’t yet bless (not being a priest) but that I would love to pray with them! She invited me in enthusiastically and I and the

staff of five women gathered in the ultrasound room and bowed our heads. As I prayed, I remembered the words of the Nicene Creed and we invoked the Holy Spirit to be with us, the “*Lord and giver of Life.*” Deuteronomy 30:19 reads: “*I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life...*”

There is a saying: “*hurt people, hurt people.*” Abortion oft-results from pressure or manipulation, the deep hurt of having been “objectified” or “used,” from fear and anxiety about the future... (Without discounting the evil of abortion, a mother seeking it may herself have already been “spiritually aborted” by others.) However, it would conversely be a corollary that “*blessed people, bless people.*” Central to my vocational call is a priest’s power to bless. Through a blessing God draws near—accompanying, healing, illuminating, bringing order and peace, strengthening. To bless is to say to another, “*It is good that you exist.*” Years ago now, I was blessed through a priest who made the love and affirmation of God the Father real to me through the sacrament of confession. So, here I am today.



Br. Andrew’s newest nephew, Cyprian!



Realizing I'm Home

The Detroit SOLT community gathers for Holy Hour and Morning Prayer every Saturday. |

By Br. Gregory Rice, SOLT

The second morning after Christmas, I walked towards the church with a feeling of relief tinged with melancholy. The day before was supposed to be my home visit, but I had woken up with a virus and spent the day in bed, too sick even to read and, by the end of the day, suffering a boredom verging on oblivion. I'm being dramatic, admittedly, but it was a sorrowful day.

The priests and brothers checked on me frequently, but the hours crawled by and my disappointment mounted at not being able to visit my parents, family and friends. Falling asleep that night felt like pure erasure—a lost day and a missed opportunity for a change of scenery, a break from the familiar. It seems the “familiar,” however, is exactly what God desired to teach me about. “Familiar” shares a

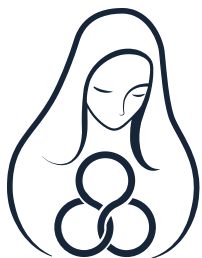
root with the word “family,” connoting the filial closeness of living-with. My days are wrapped with repeated routines that fold me in and create a home for me, though I do not always realize they are doing so. “Habit!” Marcel Proust says, “That skillful but very slow housekeeper...” Life depends, as does music, on repetition for order and therefore beauty. Søren Kierkegaard says that repetition is, in fact, the seriousness of life. It is the misfortune of fallen nature that familiarity with the ordinary tends to breed contempt. God, on the other hand, is childlike and sees everything as ever-new. Through a

day of convalescent seclusion, He drew me away to allow the ordinary blessings to stand out again in bold relief.

As I walked into the church that morning, a row of SOLT sisters were praying in their usual pew, and I slid into a pew a few rows ahead of them. After a few minutes, a pair of SOLT priests began the Mass, with a permanent consecrated brother serving at the altar. As Mass progressed, it gradually dawned on me that, if God calls me to final promises, this will be the filial content of my life, and it was as though I was awakening to reality again for the first time. Consolation grew as I realized I will never be without a community to pray with, nor will I ever be without a rule of life which, while it binds me, holds me secure. Though I would still miss my family, I was realizing that I was already home.



Br. Greg has breakfast with the SOLT team at sisters' convent on Saturday. |



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