



EDITOR'S DESK

We have finally finished the last of the Thanksgiving turkey soup and the Advent season is very much upon us (as are all the pre-Christmas "sales" and "preparations"). For the Assumptionist family, the priestly ordination of the first two Filipino Assumptionists leads us to reflect on vocation (the very personal and individual call that God extends to each one of us to follow Him as we proclaim the coming of the Kingship of God in us and around us).

Father Richard Lamoureux, AA helps us to reflect on how we hear that call and might answer it. Inside this edition we share with you some "snapshots" of ways in which different folks are living their response today. And we are happy to share with you a close-up look at the ordination of Father Alex Castro, AA and of Father Ricky Montanez, AA. While this is a special event for the Assumptionists in the Philippines and throughout the Assumptionist world, we - in the United States - are grateful to have been given the opportunity to share their journey with Ricky and Alex. And so many of you, our readers, have actually accompanied them with your prayers, your encouragement and friendship and even with your financial contributions. It's great to know that our support has made a difference. Our gifts do, in fact, have real daily impact.

We encourage you to find more about the ordination of Alex and Ricky by going to <http://www.assumption.us/news/filipino-news>.

Please support the Assumptionist mission with a financial contribution to the Partners of God's Kingdom fund. Visit our website www.assumption.us



What are you looking for?

Richard E. Lamoureux, AA.

A bolt out of the blue... A voice from God... There's no doubt, we tend to think of a vocation as a spectacular intervention by God, a clear message that tells us what to do or what choice to make. But I don't know too many people who get the call that way.

There's one scene in the Gospels that helps me more than any other to understand what a vocation is. It's at the beginning of John's Gospel (chapter 1, verse 38). Jesus noticed two guys following him; he turned around and asked them: "What are you looking for?" It sounded like an innocent question, but it made the two think. "What are we looking for?" That was the beginning; they were hooked. They asked Jesus where he was staying, and Jesus told them to follow him home. I can imagine they were up all night talking, trying to explain to Jesus (and to themselves) what they were looking for, what they really desired in life. I would guess that the following morning they had a better idea of what their "vocation" was and had some confidence that keeping in contact with Jesus would allow them to see things even more clearly.

This scene must also have made an impression on Saint Augustine. He spent so much time in his own life being attentive to his desires and often explained in his sermons how desires could help us discover God's will in our lives. Augustine's fundamental insight is that what God wills is not something foreign to us, something that we have to submit to or force ourselves to obey. On the contrary, God plants deep down inside of us an attraction (or desire, to use another word) to live according to that will.

The complicating factor, of course, is that we have all too many desires. Augustine urges us to do what he did, to follow a process that he relates in his autobiography, called the Confessions: to look at all those desires (and thoughts and attractions) thoroughly, with courage and serenity, and gradually try to see which ones will make us truly happy. It's not an easy process. It took Augustine ten years before he could finally leave aside his youthful adventures and misguided doctrines and accept to become a Christian and later a monk. Even after these major changes in his life, Augustine realized that the search for God would last a whole lifetime.



Richard E. Lamoureux, AA, Tom Ryan, Joseph Pagano, Robert Gray

Along with Augustine, the kind of lucidity we achieve through this kind of process helps to make us free; otherwise, we run the risk of unknowingly allowing ourselves to be ruled or at least disoriented by a host of conflicting desires. With the kind of freedom that clear-sightedness makes possible, we are able to see (and eventually embrace) the deepest desires that God has rooted in our heart. Those deepest desires, Augustine would say, are the best way we have to discover our call.



For one month last summer, I lived off the love, warmth and affection of the people in the mountain communities of Veracruz, Mexico as a missionary. Although they were very poor, I was richly blessed through the relationships I experienced with these simple and beautiful people.

Matthew Chua, Resident Student, Assumptionist Center, Brighton, MA

The theme of this fall's Day of Recollection at St. Anne & St. Patrick's Parish in Sturbridge, MA was the person and vision of Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon, founder of the Assumptionists. Fr. Richard Lamoureux, A.A. led thirty-five spiritually curious lay and religious participants through the life of Fr. d'Alzon and his determination to work for the reign of God.

Small groups gave witness to various aspects of Assumptionist spirituality: living the faith today, fostering unity in our world and how to work for justice and care for the poor.

Daniel J. O'Connor, Parishioner of St. Anne & St. Patrick Sturbridge, MA



Floro del Pilar II with the members of the Community

Transition time is always interesting. As an example, I reflect on my postulancy which has taken place here in the Philippines. It has been a time of growth, of ups and downs, pains and separations, and successes and failures. I see this growth as an inevitable phenomenon of life, for life is characterized by growth. But most importantly, it has been a time to grow in the person of Jesus.

Floro del Pilar III, Postulant, Philippines



Carlos Alberto Castillo, Mexico

As a postulant to the religious life I find myself at a decisive moment in my life: that is, to reaffirm my call to the consecrated life and my vocation to Christ. I have decided to commit myself to the service of the

Assumption ... to encounter the love of Christ in my life through the intermediary of my brothers in community, my family and in the places where I have been on Mission. Even if I have made my decision, the road is not easy. I have encountered many obstacles that made me think of abandoning this calling. Prayer, however, and the support of my brothers have helped me to continue in the same path.

Carlos Alberto Castillo, Mexico



Bernard Holzer, A.A.

To accompany young religious up to the priestly ordination is a grace and a great joy. It is also a responsibility towards the Congregation, the Church and the society. It is a moment of grace for the North American - Philippines Province where these two, Ricky and Alex, grew in their faith and the service of others. They are the first Filipino Assumptionist brothers to be ordained to the priesthood. With their fellow brothers, they will bear the responsibility to translate the charisma of the Congregation into the Asian context. With them and all the members of our communities, I thank the Lord for this gift to the Church and I am grateful also for the many benefactors who made their journey possible over the years of their formation. We invite you to rejoice with us and to accompany them with your prayers.

Bernard Holzer, A.A., Superior, Philippines

"My journey in becoming a son of Emmanuel d'Alzon and eventually a priest, became clear through my work as a high school teacher in the school of the Religious of the Assumption and the spirit of Mother Marie Eugenie, in addition, my immersion in the educational apostolate deepened at Assumption College in Worcester, MA, and now continues in the Philippines through the language school and Bayard Press. It is God's work for me to minister among and with His people."

Fr. Ricky Montanez, A.A.



"My formation in Assumption began long before I entered the congregation, through the daughters of Mother Marie Eugenie. As I grew, rooted in the person of Jesus, my life and ministry as an Assumptionist and now as a priest is about relationships, grounded in Him. In that way I strive to be a herald of the kingdom, inspired by our founder Emmanuel d'Alzon."

Fr. Alex Castro, A.A.

The Archbishop of Manila, Louis Antonio Tagle, emphasized the symbol of the boats representing the priestly ministry and the lives of these two new priests. To fish, like Peter, one must go deep. One must be open to venture to uncharted areas in the priestly ministry. The grace of God will always embolden them to do this.

Fr. Jose Miguel Diaz Ayllon A.A., Provincial of North America and the Philippines stated with much joy and gratitude that, "it is the presence of God's love for the Church and for the Assumption, that Ricky and Alex must therefore continuously open themselves to God's invitation to serve His people."

"Ricky will always be my inspiration and strength. He is a silent person possessing an intense desire to become a priest. I assure him of my love and that of the rest of our family."

Lornalie Montanez Martir, youngest sister of Fr. Ricky



"Alex is such a blessing to our family. We wish him good health as he continues to serve God and His people."

Riezel C. Palses, cousin of Fr. Alex



the assumptionist...
 a quarterly newsletter of the US Region of the Augustinians of the Assumption

Director of Development: Tomasz Kierul, CFRE
 Editors: Donald Espinosa, A.A., Sr. Clare Bertero, OSF, Patricia Haggerty, Mary Ann McCue, Patricia May
 Design: Natalia Kierul

330 Market Street Brighton, MA 02135
 Tel 617-783-0400 Fax 617-783-8030
 newsletter@assumptio.org
 www.assumption.us

THE ASSUMPTIONISTS
AUGUSTINIANS OF THE ASSUMPTION
330 Market Street
Brighton, MA 02135



"Go to the Savior in Bethlehem, encounter the humility of His crib,
and contemplate the self-emptying of a God who became a little child to save you."

"We love the God-Man,
who brings peace to heaven and earth.
Yes, we love Him
because He leads us to true light and true goodness."

Emmanuel d'Alzon, AA

