

# Voluntas Dei Institute



January 2015

## “BE IT DONE UNTO ME ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD” (Luke 1: 38)

Dear Voluntas Sisters and Brothers,

Happy New Year!

We dedicate this issue of “Togetherness” to our married couples and their families. The commitment of our couples to Voluntas is a unique and privileged gift to our Institute. The joining of their marriage vows with their commitment to Voluntas is at the heart of the spirituality of the Institute.

Fr. Dunstan, our Director General, shared with me that in his theological formation for the priesthood in Sri Lanka, he lived with a Voluntas couple and their family. He attributes the depth of his formation to the love he experienced within the family context. He joked that there was no escape from being serious and diligent in his studies, prayer life and ministry.

I joked with him that I was not as fortunate since I had to live in a seminary system with all men. One of the great joys of coming into Voluntas has been the ways in which I am now formed through my relationship with our married couples. I feel that I am a better person and priest because of the love, care, and witness of our couples.

I would make the important observation that the presence of a married couple on our District Council is one of the things that makes Voluntas special and different. Having been on councils in religious life and diocesan settings, there is a big difference in my experience of Voluntas because of the presence of one of the couples on our Council. It is with deep gratitude and affection that I thank God for the gift of Carol and Joel on our Council (and couples who have served on past councils). They bring the strength of their relationship and the vision of family life to all of our deliberations.

Pope Francis has affirmed the importance of the family by calling a synod that involves the entire Church in a two-year process of reflection on the family. He models for us what a Christian family should be like. He is the loving father who accepts all of his children as they are giving all the freedom to speak what is deep within their hearts.

Thank you to all of our married couples and your families. You model marital love for us and help us to become a family. One of the primary reasons that Voluntas is a wonderful community to be a part of is because of your presence, faithfulness and commitment to God and to us.

Thank you and we love you!

Love,  
*Tony*

## Save the Dates!

### **2015 Plenary Gathering**

March 6-7, 2015 at Newark Airport Crown Plaza, 902 Spring Street, Elizabeth, NJ. All members and observers are very strongly urged to attend.

### **2015 Alternate Plenary Gathering**

April 10-12, 2015 at Heart of God Hermitage, Green Mountain Falls, Colorado. Please register by emailing Tim Corbley at [fritimothyolw@yahoo.com](mailto:fritimothyolw@yahoo.com)

### **2015 August Retreat**

August 4-6, 2015 at Daylesford Abbey, Paoli, PA. Details TBA.

### **2015 August Congress**

August 6-8, 2015 at Daylesford Abbey, Paoli, PA. Details TBS

## POPE FRANCIS ANNOUNCES NEW CARDINAL FROM ADDIS ABABA



Archbishop Berhaneyesus Demerew Souraphiel was named a cardinal by Pope Francis. Twenty new cardinals from eighteen countries will receive the red hat on February 14.

Archbishop Souraphiel is very close to our members in Ethiopia. He is a great supporter of Voluntas Dei and the ministry that our members have for the homeless and HIV infected.

Joel, Andrew and myself had a wonderful meeting with him when we visited Ethiopia in January, 2014. In fact, it was his suggestion that we send our first two seminarians to Tangaza University in Nairobi.

I wrote to him on behalf of the USA District and our Ethiopian Sector to congratulate him and assure him of our prayers. I invited him to visit with us when he comes to the United States.

We also send our congratulations to our members in Ethiopia in this wonderful affirmation that our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has given to them in naming their good friend to the college of cardinals.

*Tony*

# Council Notes

**October 15, 2014**

1. The following members have accepted the invitation to serve the District in the ways indicated:

Sector A Facilitator: Jamie Bono  
Sector B Facilitator: Tom Wilhelm  
Global Team Leader: Jose Pimental

The following members have accepted the invitation to be committee chairs:

Liturgy: John Anderson  
Hospitality: Bill and Betty Reuter  
Communications: Eileen and Marty Theys  
Finance: Paul Lang  
Missions: Jan Dugan and John O'Neill  
Vocations: Rory Murphy

The following member has accepted to chair the Safe Environment Program/Response Team:

Anthony DiPalma

The following members to serve the District in special ministries:

Book Ministry: Art Candreva  
District Photographer: Jim Musumeci  
Website Coordinator: Greg Kremer

2. Committee chairs are appointed by the District Council. An invitation will be extended to the entire District inviting members to join committees.  
Committees will meet by telephone conference (unless they choose another venue). Each chair will prepare a one-page report that will be sent to the entire membership prior to the August Congress. There will be no break out meetings of the committees (in an effort to streamline the schedule). There will be opportunity during the business meeting for input from the membership.
3. Ethiopia: Terfa indicates that the two seminarians will be ready for ordination in 2016. The cost per seminarian each year is \$7,000-\$10,000 (Tuition, Room and Board, Personal Expenses). Funding comes exclusively through donations and grant requests. Six members will be going to St. Athanasius Parish, Brooklyn, NY to preach for Ethiopia and to promote the Institute.
4. Dates for the General Assembly of the Entire Institute: July 11-25, 2016.  
Tony and Andrew will go as delegates ex officio. In addition, the USA District is expected to send three vowed members and one committed member to the Assembly. Details to follow.
5. The March Plenary Gathering (March 6-7, 2015). The planning committee consists of the following: Sector Facilitators: Jamie Bono and Tom Wilhelm; Global Team Facilitator: Jose Pimental; Liturgy chair: John Anderson; Hospitality Chairs: Bill and Betty Reuter.

Tim Corbley has agreed to plan a Gathering in another part of the country.

6. The August Retreat: August 4 at 1:00 PM- August 6 at 12 noon.  
The formation team will plan and lead the retreat.

7. The August Congress: August 6 (12 noon)-August 8 (12 noon): The council is responsible for planning the congress and selecting a speaker.
8. The District Council will have a day of recollection prior to the retreat: Monday, August 3, 2015.
9. Response to the Structure Committee Proposals (from the Assembly). These questions were raised by the Structures Committee at the Assembly. The council provides the answers below and will present these at the business meeting for general discussion and response.
  - A. Annual meeting and Sector Structures: “Clarify expectations for attendance; explore contemporary means of communication; state policy.”

Response from Council:

- It is expected that all members participate in their team meetings
- It is expected that all members will attend the annual Congress in August
- It is expected that all members taking next steps will attend the annual retreat
- It is strongly recommended that all members attend the March Plenary Gathering and all are encouraged to attend the annual retreat
- If a member is not able to attend a required event, he/she should contact the Director
- Should a member taking steps not be able to attend the retreat, other arrangements can be made with the consent of the director and his council.

B. “Clarify how we communicate”

Response from the Council

- Our normal channels of communication are via: email, “Togetherness”, Team Leaders and business meetings at the annual gatherings.
- In regards to particular issues (.g., liturgy, finance, vocations etc.), these should be directed to appropriate committee chair or the person who has the area of responsibility

C. “Proposals for Next Steps”

Response from the Council:

- Ordinarily steps are taken at the annual Congress. If for good reason that is not possible, other arrangements can be made with the approval of the director and council.

10. Formation Issues: George Hazler is the District Formation Director. The team consists of Paul Tolve (Vocation Director), Julian Gonzalez, Jamie Bono, and Tom Wilhelm. The next formation meeting will be November 11, 2014. The council asked Tony to consult with our canon lawyer on two issues: the transfer of religious order priests and ordination to the priesthood.

11. Togetherness: Eileen Theys coordinates the publication of the newsletter. The new format selects a theme for each issue.

12. Stability for members transferring from a religious community: A discussion was held about a proposed change in policy from Canada. Final results are pending.

13. The Next council meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2014

## December 10, 2015

1. Plans for the March Gathering were discussed. Fr. Dan Horan, OFM will be the speaker. The planning group is working on the schedule. There will be a ½ hour business meeting at the end of the day Friday. Tony will contact Tim Corbley to check on the status of a Gathering in another part of the country.
2. The committee structure was reviewed once again. The committees will be published in “Togetherness”, placed on the Website and discussed at the business meeting in March. Committee chairs will be invited to place items on the council meeting agenda. Tony will communicate council meeting dates.
3. Formation: The formation team discussed formation processes, team meetings and reflections, formation at national meetings. They reviewed the process for applications, update the website, and communication about the year of consecrated life. The council reviewed the deliberations of the formation team. They also discussed a workshop on discernment for the council and formation team. Details need to be discussed and logistics worked out. The Director of Formation will also be invited to place items on the council meeting agenda. Tony will notify him of dates of upcoming meetings.
4. Sectors: The sector structure was reviewed. Sector facilitators should bring teams together; invite teams for joint meetings; serve as the formation contact person. They will also visit teams, create a gathering of the teams within the sector (e.g., a recollection day) once within a two-year cycle. Sector facilitators and the global team facilitator will be invited to place items on the council meeting agenda.
5. The August Retreat: The Formation Team is working on the Retreat.
6. The August Congress: The council is working on the Congress. The speaker for the Congress has been selected: Mark Kutlowski, a Benedictine Oblate. His topic will be the “Present Moment.” He is currently reading Fr. Parent’s books in preparation for the Congress.
7. Ethiopia: The six members who went to St. Athanasius Parish in Brooklyn raised \$5,200.00. Our first grant was received for the amount of \$4,000.00
8. Next Meeting: February 3, 2015



## The Reuter Family

“Lt./Capt./Major/Col Reuter’s Quarters” was the greeting our family most often used to answer the phone when we were living in government quarters, sometimes overseas, sometimes here at home. We were a military family--dad and mom and three sons and a daughter. Of course, we had all the dynamics of a “regular” family--but we sure moved a lot and our children changed friends and changed schools pretty often. We all learned about being flexible and resourceful and perhaps open to new things and ideas because we found ourselves in situations we had never encountered before. But for sure what we had that made it all work for us was the confidence that we were a family. There was no doubt that we were together in whatever happened and there were some things that never really changed, knowing that God loved us and was part of our journey, confidence in Mom and Dad, being able to count on each other to help whenever it was needed, to celebrate each others’

achievements and more. Our home and our family was a place of security and most of the time happiness.

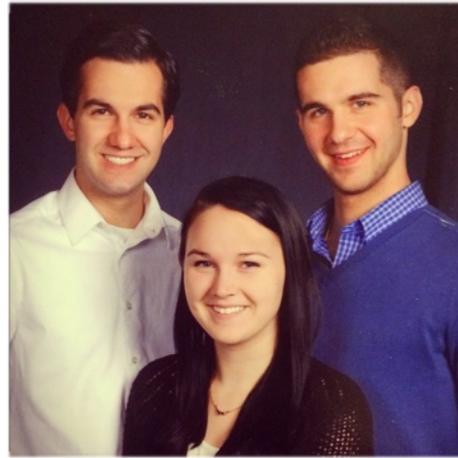
God gave us many opportunities all through those years to increase our faith in Him, mostly by “planting” us within communities of like-believers who reinforced the love of God we had at home. Now our children are all grown and have families of their own. We are delighted and grateful to see that they still care about each other and seem to genuinely enjoy each other’s company. Our Voluntas journey constantly reminds us not to complain or criticize and to live each moment looking for God’s presence. We believe knowing and trying to live out this challenge makes us less complicated and less demanding and maybe more interesting parents at this stage of our lives! We often shake our heads in wonder at the joy we have known with our family and now with our Voluntas community and are most humbly grateful to our Loving Father.

*Bill & Betty*



## The Chaplin Family

Ernie and I have been married for nearly 30 years and are the proud parents of 3 children, Stephen (27), Greg (24) and Carolyn (20). Ernie has made his career in sales and marketing and has recently embarked on a new adventure starting up a new division for German company. I continue to work in parish ministry at Sacred Heart Parish in Hopedale, MA as the ministry coordinator. Stephen, an attorney specializing in civil litigation, is also a professional jazz pianist. Gregory, a personal trainer and professional jazz bassist/guitarist is beginning his doctoral program in physical therapy this June. Carolyn, a second-year student at Assumption College is also a talented vocalist who has successfully released several original songs getting the attention of music folks in Nashville!



We have been members of Sacred Heart Church in Hopedale for 25 years and have participated in ministry over the years in many different capacities. When our children were young, Ernie and I began working in Youth Ministry, pretty much “growing” with our kids. Ernie presently leads our Confirmation Team, Mission and Outreach and is a Reader of the Word. Although my job touches almost every ministry in the parish, my beloved ministry is the Ministry of Hope; working with those who are grieving.

All of our children participated in music ministry from a young age. Stephen began as a cantor and became the coordinator of music while he was an undergraduate student at Berklee College of Music. He continues to accompany the seasonal choir during Christmas and Holy Week. Gregory shared his music with various ensembles and also was an usher for many years. Carolyn began as an altar server in the 3rd grade and continues to be involved in the parish even as a college student. She is a cantor, has taught faith formation, served

on many committees and is the MC at our parish Christmas Fair. Ellen DeGeneres has serious competition!

Our Voluntas journey began with an invitation from Bill Konicki. Ernie & I attended a national meeting in Newark where we found everyone so welcoming. We were impressed that everyone seemed to view all vocations as equal. This was intriguing and caused us to want to learn more. We cautiously proceeded from observers into aspirancy, through probation and making our promises in August, learning more about the Institute, its members and ourselves.



Our family and our Voluntas family have become very close, very much like an extended family. It is so interesting to see schedules being adjusted so that everyone is home on “Voluntas Nights.” I believe that speaks for itself. The spirit of the 3 5’s is catchy!

*Pam & Ernie*

## The Lang Family

We always tell those asking the question, “How did you find Voluntas?”, that we didn’t find Voluntas; Voluntas called on us through a wonderful thoughtful couple and we responded. The Lang’s are a career military family and we were quite busy managing a family of four and a military career. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, Paul was deployed to the Persian Gulf for almost a year and during this time a couple, Roy and Frances Brown, whom we did not know, would talk with Eileen after Saturday or Sunday Mass and ensure that she and the kids were ok and if they needed anything. Eileen used to write how kind and thoughtful they were in asking about the family and how Paul was doing. To say the least, we were impressed with Roy and Frances and after almost a year, we finally were all introduced to each other at Mass.

A few years after that initial meeting, Roy and Frances invited us to a Voluntas team meeting (The Jersey Shore Team). We were instantly drawn to this group of people and their early explanation of Voluntas’ charism and spirituality. Driving home that night, we spoke about how we have found something special that we didn’t even know we were looking for. Since that time we have been uniting Voluntas’ spirituality into our daily life experiences. We are on this continuous journey to be Voluntas – leaven for the world. We have found joy in Voluntas, we’ve struggled in Voluntas, gotten upset in Voluntas, and have been rejoicing in Voluntas. We wake up each day with this question on our minds, “How can we be Voluntas today!”

As for family life, we were married in 1984 and have four amazing children, each in their own way; Brian 29, Kevin 26, Melissa 23, and Nicole 18. Brian is currently serving in the US Navy, Kevin was discharged from the US Navy in 2014 and is living in Utah. He has two children Kamden and Kristian. Melissa and her Husband Joshua are transferring from military life (US Navy) back into civilian life in January 2015. They have one child, Wyatt, and Nicole is half way through her freshman year of college.



We have to be honest, our children joke about us belonging to a cult and as we are in the midst of our commitment stage with Voluntas, they believe we should be committed. But we look at our children with their different life experiences, some struggling and some not, that our Voluntas spirituality is starting to

permeate their lives. It is living within this family experience sharing with each other that we see the infancy of our Voluntas spirituality growing in their lives. We witness it in their conversations and

actions with others they meet. Our children may not have realized it yet, busy with things of the day, but we look upon them with great joy in what they are becoming and the seeds of the Voluntas spirituality growing in their lives. All of this taking place within the life of the family.

*Paul & Eileen*

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT  
VOLUNTAS DEI INSTITUTE  
DISTRICT MINISTRIES**

**SECTOR FACILITATORS AND GLOBAL  
TEAM FACILITATOR**

**Sector A Facilitator:** Jamie Bono (Jersey Lakes, Jersey Shore, Highland Reach, Saddle River, Morgan Run)

**Sector B Facilitator:** Tom Wilhelm (Central Park, New York Harbor, Latino Team, Reservoir of Grace, Bay State)

**Ethiopia Sector Facilitator:** Terfa Dinka

**Global Team Facilitator:** Jose Pimentel (St. Isidore, Gold Coast, Long Beach, Mountain Springs, City of Lakes, Great Lakes, Moorings by the Sea, Germany, Japan)

**Role of Sector And B Facilitators:**

- Invite teams to occasionally gather for joint meetings
- Serve as the formation contact person
- Try to visit each team at least once in the two year cycle
- Create a plenary gathering of all of the teams in the sector once in the two year cycle (e.g., recollection day or another form of gathering)
- Plan the March Plenary Gathering (with liturgy and hospitality chairs)

**Role of the Global Team Facilitator:**

- Coordinate. with the technical assistance of John Szamreta, Greg Kremer and Julian Gonzalez some combined team internet gatherings
- Serve as the formation contact person
- Plan the March Plenary Gathering with the Sector A and B facilitators

**TEAM FACILITATORS**

**Sector A:**

Jersey Lakes: Eileen Theys and Jamie Bono  
Jersey Shore: John Campoli  
Highland Reach: Paul and Eileen Lang  
Saddle River: Damian Collichio  
Morgan Run: Gerard Steffener

**Sector B:**

Central Park: Anthony Ciorra  
N.Y. Harbor: James Musumeci  
Latino Team: Andrew Sioletti  
Reservoir of Grace: Paul Tolve  
Bay State: Bill Konicki

**St. Isidore Team Facilitator:** John Szamreta

**Role of Team Facilitators:**

- Facilitate and animate local teams
- Welcome new members and oversee the formation process on the team level
- Invite joint team meetings, formation gatherings, or social events with nearby teams in your sector

**FORMATION TEAM**

George Hazler, Director of Formation  
Paul Tolve, Vocation Director  
Julian Gonzalez, Jamie Bono, and Tom Wilhelm

The role of the formation team is to lead and take responsibility for the formation of new members and the ongoing formation of the entire USA District. These responsibilities include the following:

- Coordinating the team lessons and setting the annual theme
- Coordinating the application process for new members and those moving to next steps. This includes collating the files for our database and forwarding necessary materials to Canada
- Coordinating and planning the annual retreat in August
- Coordinating and planning the break out sessions for the levels of formation at the August Congress
- Discerning the readiness of new applicants and those who are applying for next steps. The Director of Formation presents the discernment of the formation team on the Friday morning of the March Gathering (9:00AM-12:00PM). The District Director writes during the month of April to those who have made application as to the results of the Formation Team and District Council discernment.

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM/  
RESPONSE TEAM**

Anthony Di Palma, Chair  
Members: James Burns, Paul & Eileen Lang, and  
Anthony & Claudia Bruno

Coordinate the Safe Environment Program for the District. This includes the annual training session at the Congress, background checks, and chair of the Response Team.

**WEB COORDINATORS**

Greg Kremer  
Julian Gonzalez

Coordinate and update website on a regular basis

**BOOKS AND RESOURCE MATERIALS**

Arthur Candreva

Provide Institute literature, books and promotional materials at the annual Congress and during the year as needed

**DISTRICT PHOTOGRAPHER**

James Musumeci

Take pictures at national gatherings and provide them for the website and for membership photos for the directory

**COMMITTEES**

**LITURGY**

John Anderson, Chair  
Emmanuel Bologna, Claudia Bruno, Anne Fleischl,

- Coordinate the liturgies for the March Plenary Gathering, the annual retreat, and Congress
- The chair is on the planning committee for the March Gathering with the Sector Facilitators, Global Team Facilitator and the chair of the Hospitality committee

**FINANCE**

Paul Lang, Chair  
Francis Berna

- Oversee the finances for the District
- Disburse funds and keep financial records
- Provide reports for the Council as needed

**HOSPITALITY**

Bill & Betty Reuter, Chairs  
Elaine & Domenic Basile, and Timothy Sullivan

- Logistics for the March Plenary Gathering and August Congress
- Coordinate refreshments and socials at national gatherings

**VOCATIONS**

Rory Murphy, Chair  
Leo Patalinghug and Mark Dilone

- Create technology venues for vocation promotion (e.g., website, face book, blogs)
- Create a vocation brochure in several languages (English, Spanish, Korean—members can help with this)
- Host one or two annual gatherings (e.g., recollection day, holy hour, etc.) focusing on recruitment for a particular parish, ethnic group, or age groups
- Partner with our Mission preachers for Propagation of the Faith assignments (We have applied to several dioceses. We hope to get several of these). A vocation committee member would accompany to preacher (if possible) to speak about vocations to consecrated life

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Eileen and Marty Theys, Chairs  
Steve & Marianne Rossi, Lenny Delgado and John Szamreta

- Coordinate and publish “Togetherness”
- Communicate to the District through email as needed
- Communicate details and help coordinate logistics for national gatherings
- Acknowledge birthdays/anniversaries

**MISSIONS**

Jan Dugan and John O’Neill, Chairs  
Nell and Christopher Lauber

- Coordinate and report on the mission and outreach of the District
- Coordinate and animate the Ethiopian projects through the Propagation of the Faith, Grants, and other venues
- Keep the membership informed as to needs and projects