

October 2010

Usually our monthly newsletter is very short, only a short list of the most important activities of our Institute. This time is different. The fall has brought us not only the normal activity at the beginning of the academic year, but also, new projects and initiatives. Here's a quick look at everything that keeps us super busy and happy in this October 2010.

fr. Luis R. Aguilar

SHARING A PASSION

We are deeply committed to helping lay leaders in the most under-resourced and isolated areas of the country. The Catholic Extension Society was created to serve those same areas. This makes us natural partners in bringing new resources to these areas. Luis Roberto and I were very pleased recently to meet with Fr. Jack Wall, President, and his coworkers. They are very interested in assisting us to develop our fundraising efforts, especially in the area of grant writing.

fr. Wayne Cavalier

TEAMING UP TO SHARE GOOD NEWS

Good news wants to be spread. We've teamed up twice now with the Salt Lake City Diocese and a host of collaborators (Univ. of Notre Dame STEP, Extension, CTU) to tell the good news of how we worked together to make it possible for four Lay Ecclesial Ministers from Salt Lake to pursue graduate degrees in pastoral ministry. First, we did it in April at a workshop at the annual NALM conference, and this time at a faculty symposium at CTU.

fr. Wayne Cavalier

THE FIRE WITHIN

"We are very encouraged." When two missions converge to create new resources for Lay Ecclesial Ministry formation, those committed to those missions feel the fire burning within. That would be the Program Directors of the Congar Institute meeting with the Univ. of Notre Dame STEP staff to overcome obstacles and develop means for enhancing the online offerings of both STEP and the Congar Institute, including Spanish-language programs. I have a bet with Luis that he won't make his self-imposed deadline of April 1 to start piloting the first Spanish-language pastoral skills online course. Something tells me I'm gonna lose!

fr. Wayne Cavalier

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON THE GROUND

The leaders of home mission institutes are eminently practical people. Their bottom line has always been that our collaboration with them in the project "Developing Lay Ecclesial Ministry for the U.S. Missions" is predicated on the difference it makes to people on the ground. When we presented an overview of the lives we've touched over the last five years, there was a strong sense that our collaboration is worthy of support. We are all grateful for the way in which we have been brought together in this common effort. Still, we are challenged to

respond creatively to the needs of the African American community even as we grow our capacity to assist the Hispanic community.

fr. Wayne Cavalier

MOVING FORWARD ON EMMAUS JOURNEY

On 18 September, in a festive atmosphere, we held the introductory session of Emmaus Training Plan for Hispanic Ministry. We met at the Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Salt Lake City with the intention of providing participants with a General Introduction to Holy Scripture. It was attended by more than 80 people, which at all times, showed their willingness and determination to move forward on this journey of formation. At the end of the journey what we hope to achieve is a group of better prepared lay ministers who have the skills necessary to proclaim the Gospel without fear or timidity to Hispanic Catholics and others in the diocese.

fr. Luis R. Aguilar

REAFFIRMING OUR COMMITMENT

The National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM) held its annual meeting on Wednesday September 22nd in Chicago, IL. fr. Luis R. Aguilar, O.P. represented the Congar Institute. Although brief, this meeting allowed us to reaffirm our commitment to all those who strive to serve the Hispanic Catholics in the United States. The president of NCCHM, Ms. Carmen Aguinaco, presented her report, then openly discussed the conflict between workers at the hotel where we were meeting (most of them Hispanic) and the hotel management. It was impossible to ignore this reality that somehow reflects the reality of many Latin American immigrants in the USA.

fr. Luis R. Aguilar

RAÍCES Y ALA/ROOTS AND WINGS

The National Council for Catholic Hispanic Ministry held its national congress on Hispanic ministry called "Roots and Wings: Rooted in Discipleship, Sent in Mission" in Chicago, IL, September 23 to 26. The aim of this conference was to produce lines of action that will guide the pastoral efforts in the U.S. Hispanic community. Using the methodology of see, judge and act, we reflected on seven areas identified as priorities in our work of evangelization: Family and Marriage, Ministerial Formation, Education, Academic and Religious Vocations, Youth Ministry, Life and Dignity of Persons and Unity in Cultural Diversity in the Church. Frs Wayne and Luis attended this important event and staffed the Congar Institute exhibit. We networked with the representatives of the diocese we serve and made new contacts with those who shepherd the Hispanic community in this country.

fr. Luis R. Aguilar

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER

The Parish of St. Joseph in Nashville, TN very kindly let us use their facilities for the Board Meeting of the Congar Institute on October 1st -2nd. Attending were: Fr. Mark Widdig, OP,

Fr. Paul Phillibert, OP, Fr. Wilmo Candanedo, OP, Sr. Liz Wendeln, SCN, Fr. Wayne Cavalier, OP and Fr. Luis R. Aguilar, OP Besides the director's report, we discussed issues of vital importance for the development of our mission, such as future projects, and tried to take a step forward in our efforts to secure the funds necessary for the functioning of the Institute. In this friendly atmosphere, we welcomed the newest member of the Board: Fr Mark Wedig. OP who succeeded Fr. Wayne as the Regent of Studies of the Southern Dominican Province and serves ex officio on the Board.

fr. Luis R. Aguilar

IMPRESSIVE RESPONSE IN BEAUMONT

Once again, the response of the laity in the Diocese of Beaumont, TX, to the Pastoral Skills Development Program, has been impressive. Seventy-five people attended the first meeting which was devoted to the issue of self-knowledge as the key to being a good pastoral animator. The session was held at Santa Ana Parish in Beaumont on Saturday, October 9. The day before, Fr. Luis met with Mr. Jesus Abrego (Director of Hispanic Ministry) and Dr. Lorraine DeLuca (Diocesan Director of Lifelong Formation) to begin the process of developing a formation plan for lay pastoral leaders in Spanish, which will last two years, and aims to provide the diocese with pastoral agents prepared to address the urgent pastoral challenges of the local church.

fr. Luis R. Aguilar