

NEW JESUIT PRIESTS

2010 ORDINATION

COMPANY INTRODUCES THE JESUITS ORDAINED TO THE PRIESTHOOD

This reflection is by Fr. Thomas Neitzke, SJ, who was ordained earlier this summer in Milwaukee. Fr. Neitzke's photo that he took during his immersion experience in China won the second place prize in the amateur category of *Company's* photo contest and appears on page 25.

In the summer of 2008 I went to China with a group of Jesuits to learn about and experience Chinese history and culture. After spending a few weeks in Beijing, three of us were sent to a remote village in southwestern China to live and work with a community of lepers. As I prepared for the trip I was both excited and frightened as I had no idea what to expect.

I had never seen anyone with leprosy, and I had only heard about it from stories in the Gospels or from the work of Mother Teresa. In the days before I left, I looked up Hansen's Disease, as it is officially called, and read that I would not contract leprosy if I washed my hands, as it is spread in a similar way as the common

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Fr. James Ackerman, 47, from Cincinnati, earned a BA in marketing from the University of Cincinnati. He did his regency at Cristo Rey Jesuit High in Chicago, where he taught religion and ethics and was director of campus ministry. He also served as a chaplain at INS detention centers in Los Angeles with the Jesuit Refugee Service. After ordination he will do parish work at the Church of the Gesu in University Heights, Ohio. (Chicago Province)



Fr. Anthony Borrow, 38, from Fort Pierce, Fla., has a bachelor's in liberal studies from Barry University in Miami. He has been a Catholic Charities counselor in San Antonio and a theology teacher at Jesuit College Prep in Dallas. His volunteer service has included pastoral work in San Francisco and gang ministry in Honduras. His first assignment as a priest will be as a campus minister at Cristo Rey Jesuit College Prep in Houston. (New Orleans Province)



Fr. Michael Christiana, 44, from Rochester, Minn., has a BA in Asian studies, religion, and history from St. Olaf College in Minnesota. At Brebeuf Jesuit Prep in Indianapolis he served as co-director of community service. He spent a summer in Thailand as an English tutor for novices and women religious and was a volunteer prison chaplain in Massachusetts. Next he will serve as Vice President for Mission and Identity at Brebeuf Jesuit Prep. (Chicago Province)



Fr. George Collins, 49, from Roxbury, Mass., has a bachelor's in accounting and a master's in pastoral ministry from Boston College. He taught theology at Cheverus High in Portland, Maine, and served at a parish in Connecticut. At his ordination, he will be vested by his brother and uncle, both who are Redemptorist priests. After ordination he will serve at St. Ignatius Church in Chestnut Hill, Mass., where he was a parishioner before entering the Society. (New England Province)



Fr. Kevin Dyer, 36, from St. Paul, Mo., received a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Saint Louis University. He taught theology and Latin at Regis High School, Girls Division, in Aurora, Colo. He spent summers in Guatemala and El Salvador as a volunteer and has experimented with giving the Spiritual Exercises in new formats. This fall he returns to Boston to complete work on a licentiate of sacred theology. (Missouri Province)



Fr. Charles Gallagher, 45, from Binghamton, N.Y., earned a BA in history from Marquette University, an MA in history from Binghamton University, and a PhD in the subject from Marquette. During his regency, he taught history at College of the Holy Cross. He was assistant chaplain at the largest prison in the United Kingdom and a writer and researcher on U.S.-Vatican diplomacy. His next assignment is teaching history at Boston College. (New England Province)



Fr. Mark Luedtke, 42, from Chicago, received a bachelor's in American government and Christian theology from Georgetown University and a master's in social philosophy from Loyola University Chicago. He taught ethics and Hebrew Scriptures at Cristo Rey Jesuit High in Chicago; volunteered as an athletic chaplain at Loyola University Chicago; and served as a catechist. He also spent a year as a volunteer in Nicaragua. He looks forward to working in high school administration after ordination. (Chicago Province)



Fr. Matthew Motyka, 51, from Kraków, Poland, holds a PhD in Romance languages and literatures from UC Berkeley. He taught Romance languages and humanities at UC Berkeley, San Francisco State, University of San Francisco, and Santa Clara University. He has done pastoral work at the Jesuit Refugee Service office in London and at San Quentin state prison. After ordination he will teach Romance languages and humanities at the University of San Francisco. (California Province)



Fr. John Mulreany, 41, from New York City, has a BA in history from Williams College in Massachusetts and an MA in educational psychology from New York University. He taught theology and coached the student congress team at Xavier High in New York City. He also did pastoral ministry at the Massachusetts Correctional Institute and ministered in China and Sudan. As a priest, he will earn a licentiate in sacred theology at Boston College. (New York Province)



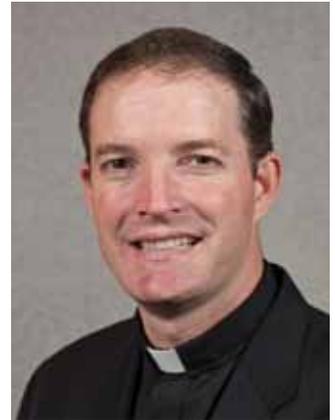
Fr. Thomas Neitzke, 36, from Port Washington, Wis., earned a BA in philosophy and theology from Loyola University Chicago and an MA in education administration from the University of San Francisco. He served as assistant principal, assistant dean of students, and theology teacher at Creighton Prep in Omaha. This fall he begins a year as principal for the Jesuit Middle School of Omaha; in fall 2011 he will become president of the school. (Wisconsin Province)



Fr. Paul O'Connor, 37, from Bay Village, Ohio, has a BA in religious studies from Canisius College. For regency, he taught English and theology at Loyola High in Detroit, and he taught theology and was an assistant hockey and soccer coach at St. Ignatius High in Cleveland, his alma mater. He did ministry with the homeless in San Francisco and Berkeley. After ordination he will serve as associate pastor at Old St. Pat's Church in Chicago. (Detroit Province)



Fr. Robert Pecoraro, 43, from Staten Island, N.Y., has a BA in food systems management from State University of New York College at Buffalo and an MA in Catholic education leadership from the University of San Francisco. At Cristo Rey New York High, he taught theology and was the campus minister responsible for faculty and staff faith formation. He will do a pastoral year at a parish after he is ordained. (New York Province)



Fr. Richard Ross, 58, from Cass City, Mich., earned a nursing degree from the University of Michigan Ann Arbor. He taught clinical nursing and bioethics at Georgetown University and worked as a hospital chaplain in Chicago and a prison chaplain in Concord, Mass. He returns to Boston College to complete a licentiate in sacred theology after ordination; after that he expect to return to teaching clinical nursing at a Jesuit university. (Detroit Province)

Fr. Paul Rourke, 37, from St. Louis, attended College of the Holy Cross and Georgetown University, earning a bachelor's degree in history. He then earned a law degree from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis. For his regency, he spent two years teaching history and religion at St. Joseph's Prep in Philadelphia. He recently began a license in Patristic theology at the Augustinianum in Rome, which he will continue after ordination. (Maryland Province)

Fr. Derrick Weingartner, 40, from Houston, graduated from Strake Jesuit College Prep and then earned a degree in economics from Texas A&M University. He taught theology for three years at Jesuit High in Tampa, and he worked at a parish on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. His first assignment as a priest will be to serve the African-American community at Southern University and Immaculate Conception parish in Baton Rouge, La. (New Orleans Province)

Fr. Anthony Wieck, 42, from Enterprise, Oregon, has a BA in philosophy from the University of San Francisco. He taught morality, social justice, and mathematics and coached freshman basketball at Strake Jesuit College Prep in Houston for three years. He volunteered at an orphanage in Guadalajara, Mexico and at an AIDS hospice in St. Louis. He currently teaches theology and works in residence life at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, where he will continue to work after ordination. (New Orleans)

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cold. With that news I immediately put myself in charge of bringing the hand sanitizer.

As the group left Beijing and we began our long journey through mountainous and muddy roads, I thought of all the ways to keep my hands in my pockets and avoid touching anyone at all costs, and I had sanitizer ready to go when needed. I was set! But if I have learned anything in my eleven years of formation it is that the best made plans usually fall apart and that God has a sense of humor!

As soon as we arrived at the leprosarium an elderly man, seeing me from a distance, walked out of the gate and grinning from ear to ear reached out his hand—a hand that was missing fingers and scarred and twisted from leprosy—with a joy in his eyes that I have rarely seen. Instinctively I reached out my hand and as we exchanged greetings in my limited Chinese I forgot about all the sprays, gels, and wipes, and experienced the touch of a man who would later tell us that he had been forced out of his village and shunned by his wife and children who he had not seen in thirty years. This man—a father, a brother, a son, and soon to be my new friend—left an incredible impression on me.

The people who lived at that leprosarium were not

allowed to touch other people; society had taught them to stay far away from others and to avoid human contact. They were reminded of this daily as they went to get supplies and the nearby village children would throw stones at them as they walked down the road. This group of people had been taught never to approach or touch another human being, but for some reason when they saw us the first thing they did was reach out and embrace us.

It was during my time in China that my vocation as a Jesuit priest deepened, and I understood the call to go to the frontiers to help reconcile the world to Christ and especially to those who struggle the most in our fragmented world. This call for me, as a Jesuit priest, is to imitate Christ as one who is both pilgrim and laborer, and also as one who is missioned to be with people in order to share the light of the Gospel with them. I am humbled by the love and care that I have received by so many along the way, and I was fortunate enough to have someone show me how to imitate Christ in the man I met in China. In that moment, without him even knowing it, he exemplified the true meaning of priesthood and of Christ's love by reaching out with affection and without fear in order to embrace my shaky and over-sanitized hand. 