

FR. PAUL JANOWIAK, S.J.: *passing on the love of his Catholic faith*



Following his graduation from Loyola Marymount University and two years in the Northwest Jesuit Volunteer Corps, Fr. Paul Janowiak S.J. entered the Society of Jesus and was ordained in 1984. After some parish work and the completion of his doctorate, his first teaching assignment was at Seattle University's School of Theology and Ministry. In 2011, he was asked to transfer to the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California, to teach courses on the sacraments and liturgy.

During his first year in this new ministry, he had the pleasure of connecting with Sr. Sujita Kallapurakkathu, SND, who was there for the sabbatical program after serving the Congregation as Superior General from 1998 to 2010. He recognized in her a "kindred spirit," reminding him of the Notre Dame Sisters who taught him during his elementary school years. "It is interesting," he observes, "that as small children we used to save money in Lent to send to the new Indian mission the SND's were serving. How awesome that after all those years, this humble servant of God, Sr. Sujita, would be Superior General!" Although his current work at the Jesuit school is challenging, he says, "I feel I am passing on the love of liturgy and the faith that I learned from my early days."

Fr. Paul's "early days" were spent at St. Rose of Lima School in Maywood, where the Notre Dame spirit exemplified by the Sisters was profoundly

formative for his vocation to the priesthood. He reminisces, "I really think that the depth of my faith was communicated to me from the heart of these good women. They took an interest in our whole lives, our families, and the hopes we had for the future. I think that has made me a better teacher, Jesuit priest, and human being."

Fr. Paul's sojourn with the SNDs began when he entered first grade in 1957, taught by Sr. Florine Miller. He recalls that throughout the grade levels, the Sisters inspired the students to treasure their Catholic faith. Also central to their instruction were the basics of a good liberal arts education. He fondly remembers that Sr. Walburge Schmitt, with an infectious love of music, would play a pump organ to accompany her students in singing. For both seventh and eighth grades, Fr. Paul was privileged to have as his teacher Sr. Anita Hornack, "who prepared us for high school with such grace and skill."

Sr. Anita's influence on Fr. Paul's personal formation extended well beyond grade school. He acknowledges that she stands out as one who took his life seriously and encouraged him, even into her retirement where she had one of his books read to her in the infirmary. "In short," he says, "I was inspired by her care and the model of her own life and faith and active mind. What a gift!" Marveling at the fidelity and genuineness evident in the lives of Sr. Anita, Sr. Sujita and so many other SNDs, he affirms, "As I have told many of my colleagues, the Sisters of Notre Dame were the best teachers I ever had. I stand by that. I can only hope to cling to the folds of their faith to sustain my own."