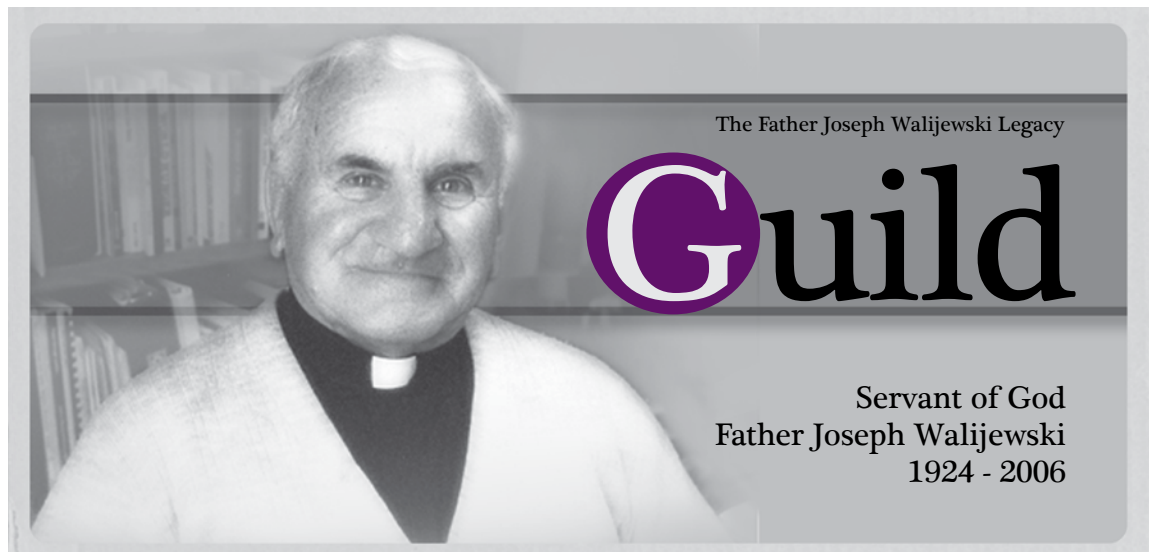




## DIOCESE of LA CROSSE

3710 East Avenue South  
P.O. Box 4004 • La Crosse, WI 54602-4004  
[www.FrJoesGuild.org](http://www.FrJoesGuild.org)

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ROCHESTER MN  
PERMIT NO. 289



"I am just a pencil in  
Our Lord's Hand"  
- Father Walijewski

Servant of God  
Father Joseph Walijewski  
1924 - 2006

SPRING 2017

### Father Joe's Vision of Christmas

By Bishop William Patrick Callahan

1971 could quite seriously be hailed as the start of the digital age with the invention of the microprocessor. The year also hailed the admission of China to the United Nations and the grand opening of Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, along with other natural, political and social events of significance. For our particular consideration it is important that we remember 1971 for one particular event that made history in Lima, Peru: the arrival of Father Joseph Walijewski. Christmas in Peru, of course, has its own special kinds of cultural and religious expressions; but it shares a similar point of reference to all people of every race and



Father Joe and Bishop Freking gather with the families and children in Villa El Salvador, Peru, in 1972.

See VISION on next page

### Pope Francis' visit to Bolivia includes a stop at Santa Cruz

By Father Keith José Kitzhaber

A very eventful time, indeed. I never would have expected Pope Francis to come to MY parish, but that is just what happened. Bishop Callahan gave me permission to work at our Mission Parish in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. It was founded 60 years ago by Father Joe Walijewski, and I spent the last two years working and ministering there. When we found out the pope was going to be coming, it was decided by the government and the diocese to have the Mass with the pope two blocks from the parish. We became

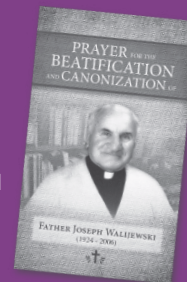
the staging area for all the concelebrating priests, and visiting seminarians. We also were the distribution center for all the Consecrated Hosts that were to be offered during the Mass. If not for the work begun by Father Walijewski and the priest-missionaries that came after him, we wouldn't have had the opportunity to host Pope Francis.

Our parish in Santa Cruz was the best place to have the Mass. The parish was on the outskirts of town, where it was started in 1956, but now lies very close to the busi-

See Reflection on next page

### Prayer Cards

We have a number of prayer cards that have been touched to the tomb of Padre Jose that are available upon request. Prayer cards can be ordered through the Mission Office by calling 608-791-2676 or  
**The Diocese of La Crosse | Attn: Father Joe Walijewski's Prayer Card**  
**P.O. Box 4004 | La Crosse, WI 54602-4004**



### Prayer for Beatification and Canonization

Holy and Good God, your servant and priest, Father Joseph Walijewski, through priestly zeal and heroic holiness, defended innocence against the sadness of evil, especially to broken families and helpless children.

Imaging the Compassionate Christ, he led others to the font of sacramental life and the knowledge of Jesus Christ as their True and Only Savior.

Heavenly Father, we humbly pray You to raise up Your servant, Father Joseph Walijewski, whose joyful priestly heart was resolute in the Heart of Christ Jesus, to the courts of heaven; and, through Your Holy Spirit, who guides and leads the Church, give him to us as a saint and hero of this generation.

Through his example may there be a new urgency of souls for Christ. Through his intercession, I humbly ask (make your intention here) through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Bishop William Patrick Callahan, OFM Conv.  
Diocese of La Crosse, Wis.*

Please report any favors received through the intercession of Father Joe to The Father Joseph Walijewski Legacy Guild at [www.FrJoesGuild.org](http://www.FrJoesGuild.org)



#### Guild Leadership

##### Episcopal Moderator

The Most Rev.  
William Patrick Callahan  
Bishop of La Crosse

##### Spiritual Director

Father Woodrow Pace

##### Stewardship and Development Director

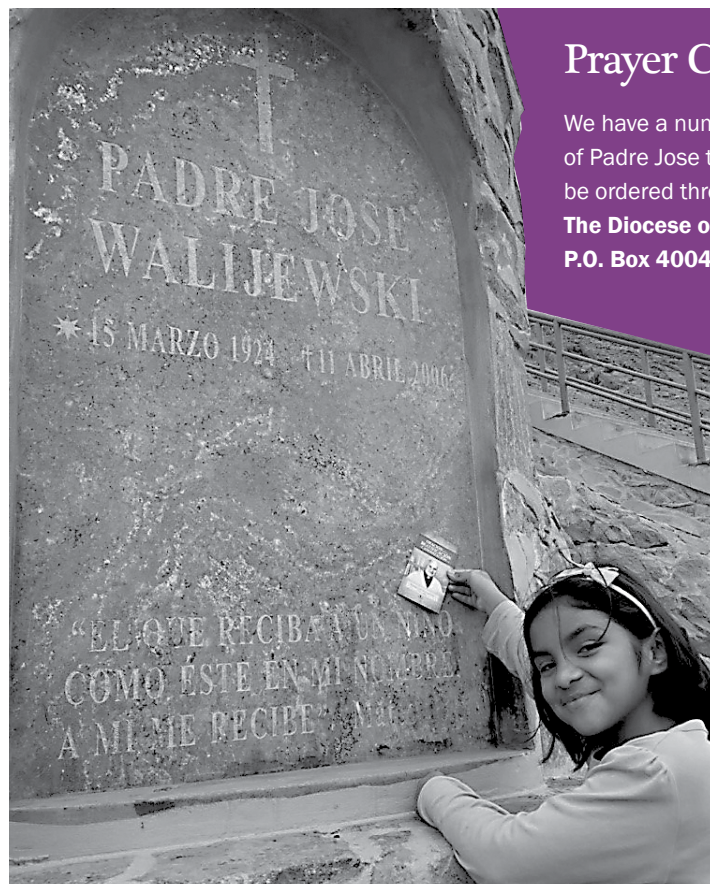
Jeff Reiter

##### Communications Director

Jack Felsheim



DIOCESE of LA CROSSE  
[www.frjoesguild.org](http://www.frjoesguild.org)



A child from Casa Hogar touches one of Father Joe's prayer cards to his tomb.

# Casa Hogar Celebrates 30th Anniversary

By Jordan Zoroufy

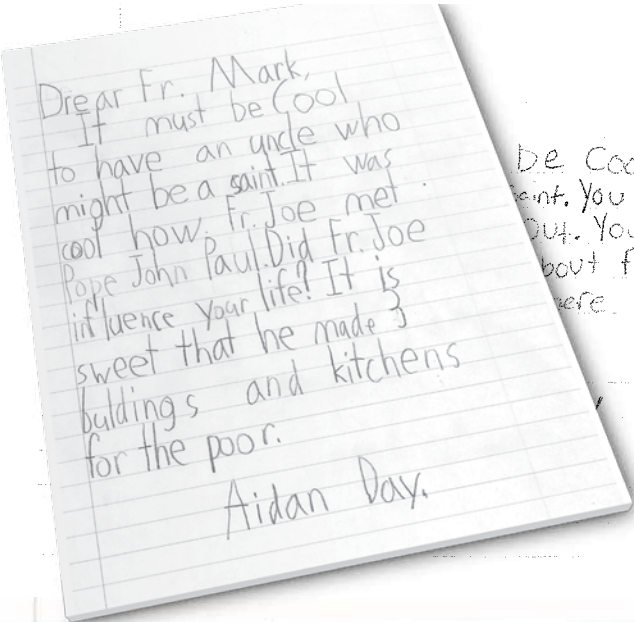
Father Joseph Walijewski found his inspiration after seeing how so many of Lima’s children lived, and still live, in desperate poverty. One day, while walking through the slums of Lima, he noticed what appeared to be a pile of old newspapers begin to move. Then, the heads of a little girl and boy popped out. These children, like so many street kids of Lima, had spent the night with only the newspapers to protect them from the cold. He thought to himself, “How can I go home to a warm bed, when so many children are living in these conditions?” It was Pope John Paul II’s donation that started the orphanage, which now bears his name.

In the beginning, the orphanage was two children, a foreign volunteer, and one tutor. One year later the orphanage was home to 32 children and six tutors. Now, thirty years later, the mission of Father Joe continues to provide a place to call home for 64 children between the ages of 4 to 17 and 24 family teachers.

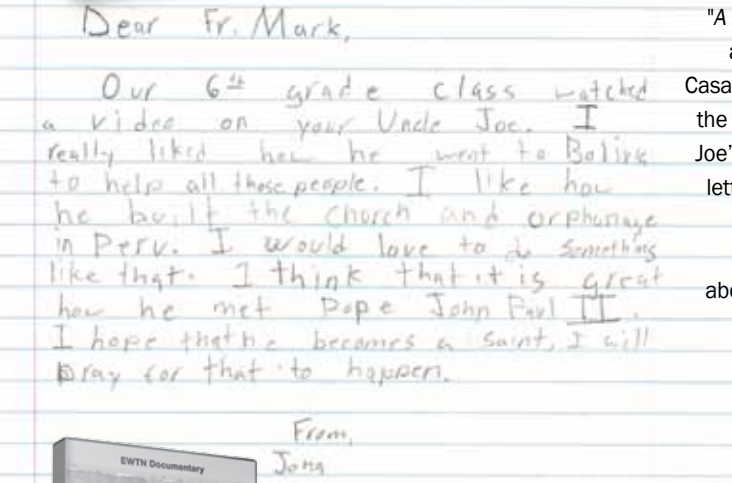
This anniversary year was very special and brought together so many who knew Father Joe. Casa Hogar held its 30th Anniversary celebration in April of this year. Hundreds of kids who lived at Casa, many friends of Father Joe, and members of the community came to celebrate the mission of Padre José.

This anniversary year also saw many changes to Casa Hogar. These changes included improvements such as repainting the house, as well as many structural upgrades. All of these changes are an effort to continuously advance the house and provide a safe living environment for the children for the next 30 years and beyond. However, there is still work to be done and always room to grow to better serve the children.

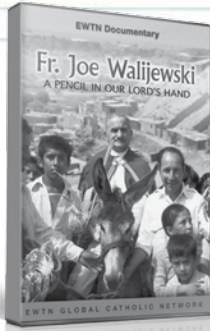
As you can imagine, after 30 years, infrastructure upgrades such as electrical rewiring, new water lines, and a new septic system are needing to be addressed soon. Security needs for the children of Casa Hogar include repairing the perimeter walls, updating cameras,





Dear Fr. Mark,  
It must be cool to have an uncle who might be a saint. It was cool how Fr. Joe met Pope John Paul II. Did Fr. Joe influence your life? It is sweet that he made 3 buildings and kitchens for the poor.  
Aidan Day.




Dear Fr. Mark,  
Our 6<sup>th</sup> grade class watched a video on your Uncle Joe. I really liked how he went to Bolivia to help all these people. I like how he built the church and orphanage in Peru. I would love to do something like that. I think that it is great how he met Pope John Paul II. I hope that he becomes a saint, I will pray for that to happen.  
From,  
John



**Father Joe Walijewski A Pencil In Our Lord's Hand**  
**Broadcast Schedule**  
In celebration of the 4th anniversary of the opening of Father Joe's Cause of Beatification and Canonization, EWTN and Catholic TV will show the documentary.





[www.facebook.com/FrJoesGuild](http://www.facebook.com/FrJoesGuild)

and adding security lights.

As Casa Hogar takes the next steps forward and in the spirit of Father Walijewski, we are expanding the work outside of our institution and taking our mission and the generous support of benefactors and visitors and turning it outward. Three years ago, we formed an association of orphanages along with other institutions such as rehab centers, nursing homes, and soup kitchens in our local Diocese of Lurin. Dozens of

institutions are reaching thousands of people in need, with Casa Hogar as the driving force. The association is designed to share ideas and resources while providing support in tougher times. This is just one of the many examples of how, after 30 years, the mission spirit inspired by Father Walijewski continues to grow and bear fruit for the people of Peru.

Thank you for your help over the years. We will continue to dedicate ourselves to bringing hope to the children placed in our care.

REFLECTION continued...

est intersection in the city. The church, completed under Bishop Robert Flock, is among the largest in Santa Cruz. The parish center was well equipped. That is where the pope met with all the bishops of the country. The parish school provided a place to house seminarians and other visitors.

At the end of the meeting with Pope Francis and the bishops I was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to shake hands with the pope. Initially, it seemed unlikely to happen as I was not given proper credentials to be in my own parish. The Swiss Guard, dressed like the Secret Service, forced me to leave the parish, out the north gate, twice. Each time, I went around through the east entrance, through the rectory, and back to the corner of the building. The second time, I kept back, closer to the exit, and they left me alone. As I was talking to the volunteers who hosted the bishops, the chief of police shouted and waved for the volunteers to come forward to shake the pope's



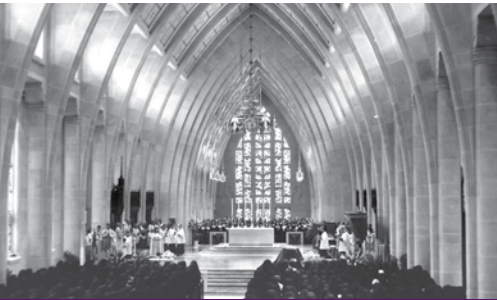
Pope Francis visited Holy Cross Parish in Santa Cruz, Bolivia during the summer of 2016 and walked in the footsteps of Father Joe as he processed by Holy Cross Parish, a church built by Father Joe.

hand. Then, he waved me over with them, since he knew me. So, I quickly walked passed the Swiss Guard, whom had kicked me out twice, to meet the pope.

During this time, I was marveling at the experience of the volunteers. Some were crying, some were speechless, others more composed. I said something like, "Welcome, Holy Father, I'm a priest at this parish." He just nodded his head and continued.

He looked pretty tired. He went from our parish to the airport, and continued on his journey.

We're all just standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. We started with Father Joe Walijewski, and concluded our time with Father Ed Penchi and me. Father Penchi served the parish for over 52 years, and passed away last January. "Padre Eduardo" was the only "lifer" there. All other missionaries came and went, but he stayed. His life is another testimony of Christ in the world. His funeral was very well attended and most people at the parish had never known the parish without



## Fourth Anniversary Mass

Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, March 12, 2017** at 10:30 a.m., when the fourth anniversary Mass to honor the opening of the cause of Beatification and Canonization of Father Joseph Walijewski will be celebrated at St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral in La Crosse.

Padre Eduardo. The thousands of people that he baptized or married, are too many to count. The parish does 300 to 400 weddings each year. It's hard for us in Wisconsin to imagine that many weddings.

I'm very grateful for these opportunities to develop relationships in Santa Cruz, to meet Pope Francis, and to serve the people as they have changed me. I look forward to going back there in July to witness the marriage of a couple friends, and to visit the rest of the folks at the parish. Perhaps I can take a group with me and continue the relationship with the community, and help others learn more about Father Walijewski and his legacy.

VISION continued...

every nation throughout all of creation: the birth of The Baby. Jesus is, of course, as much “the reason for the season” in Peru as He is in Western and North Central Wisconsin. Father Joe certainly knew how important the celebration of Christmas was for his friends in the Diocese of La Crosse and his family back in his home state of Michigan. He knew how important Christmas is for children; and, his love for Christmas and his love for children made his arrival in Peru in 1971 a match literally made in heaven!

While Christmas in Peru certainly has its own particular cultural style and expressions, it would be correct to note that Father Joe found a similarity in recognizing the presence of Jesus in each

of the children he encountered in the cold and destitute streets of Lima. There was then, and there certainly is now, very little difference between the Child found in a manger in Bethlehem and the children Father Joe found covered with sheets of old newspaper trying to keep themselves warm.

These visions of Christmas help us to comprehend more deeply the kind of man Father Joe must have been in his sense of urgency for fulfilling the Mission of Jesus Christ; all the more reason for us to seek his heavenly guidance in our celebration of Christmas for years to come. Father Joe lived the Christmas reality with passion and energy born from a pure faith in the presence of Jesus among us right now! Father Joe continues to inspire us, by his life and ministry, with an awakening

of the child of God within each of us. Father Joe rescued street children and Casa Hogar continues that essential and beautiful ministry. The Legacy of Father Joe still raises up a sense of innocence and childlike confidence in all of us—to care for children, yes, but to further allow God’s amazing grace to transform the child of God within each of us to be like Jesus and act like brothers and sisters in His sight. As we pray for Father Joe’s beatification and canonization, be aware that his energy allows us to support the children of Casa Hogar in Peru, but by his heavenly support to recognize the child within us and the children around us who struggle to see God’s love in their lives each day. Let’s keep the spirit of Christmas alive throughout the year!