

# a Pencil in Our Lord's Hands

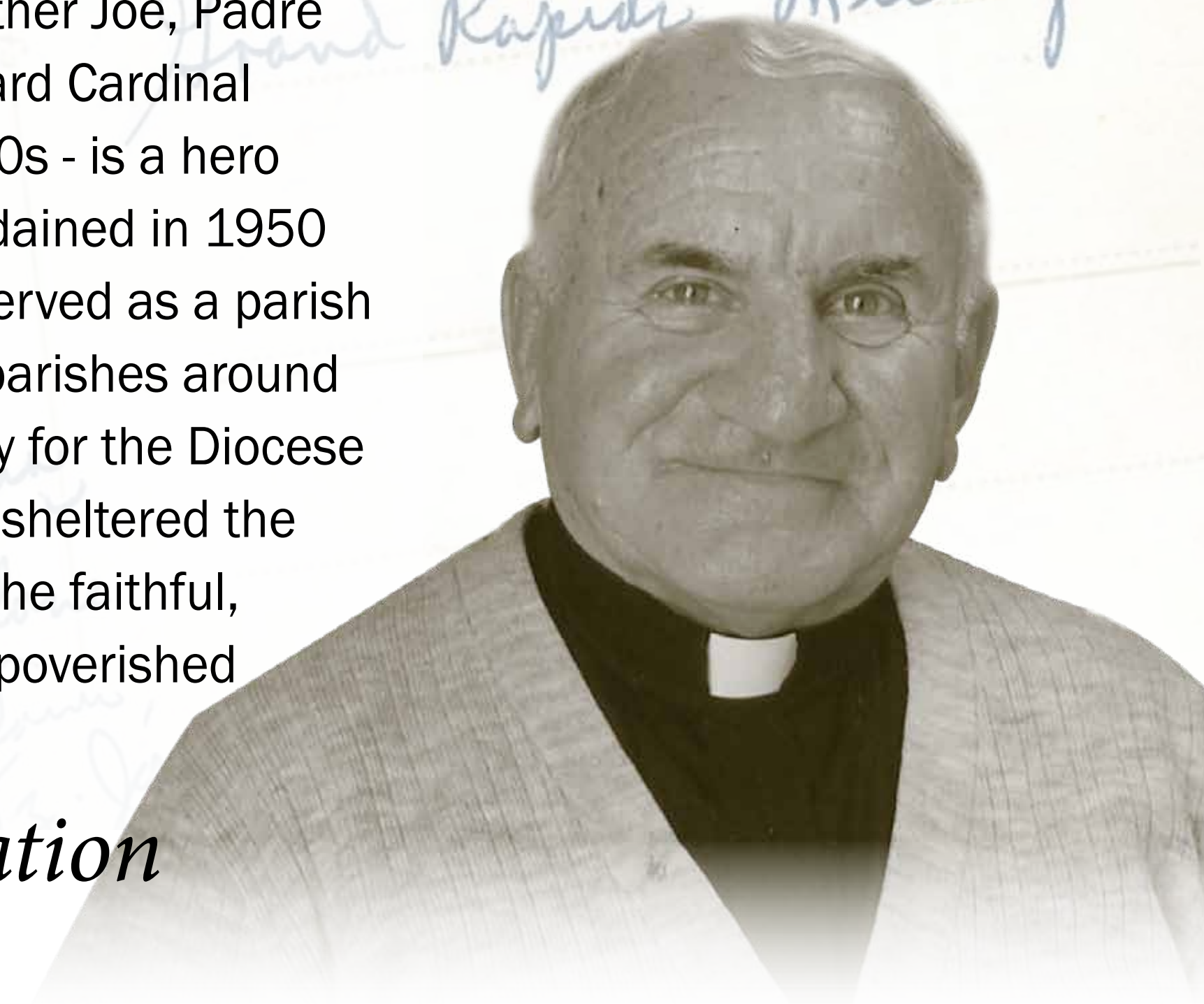
## THE LIFE OF FATHER JOSEPH WALIJEWSKI

### Servant of God,

Father Joseph Walijewski - Father Joe, Padre Jose, or Joe the Pole, as Richard Cardinal Cushing dubbed him in the '60s - is a hero of faith for our generation. Ordained in 1950 in La Crosse, WI, Father Joe served as a parish priest in the Polish-speaking parishes around Stevens Point. As a missionary for the Diocese of La Crosse, he fed the poor, sheltered the homeless, and ministered to the faithful, who were among the most impoverished people of South America.

For more information please visit

[www.FrJoesGuild.org](http://www.FrJoesGuild.org)



1924

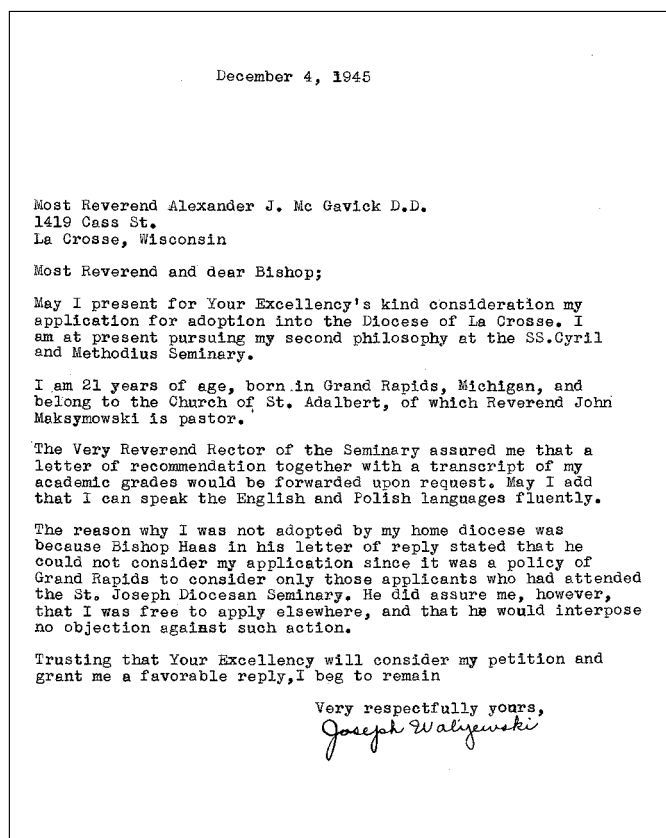
**March 15** - Joseph Walijewski, born to Polish immigrant parents Frank and Mary, in Grand Rapids Michigan.



Baptized on **March 22, 1924**



His First Communion picture



1945

**December 4** - Joseph Walijewski writes to Bishop McGavick requesting his excellency to adopt him as a seminarian. Bishop McGavick responds and requests to meet him at his residence in La Crosse on April 23, 1946.

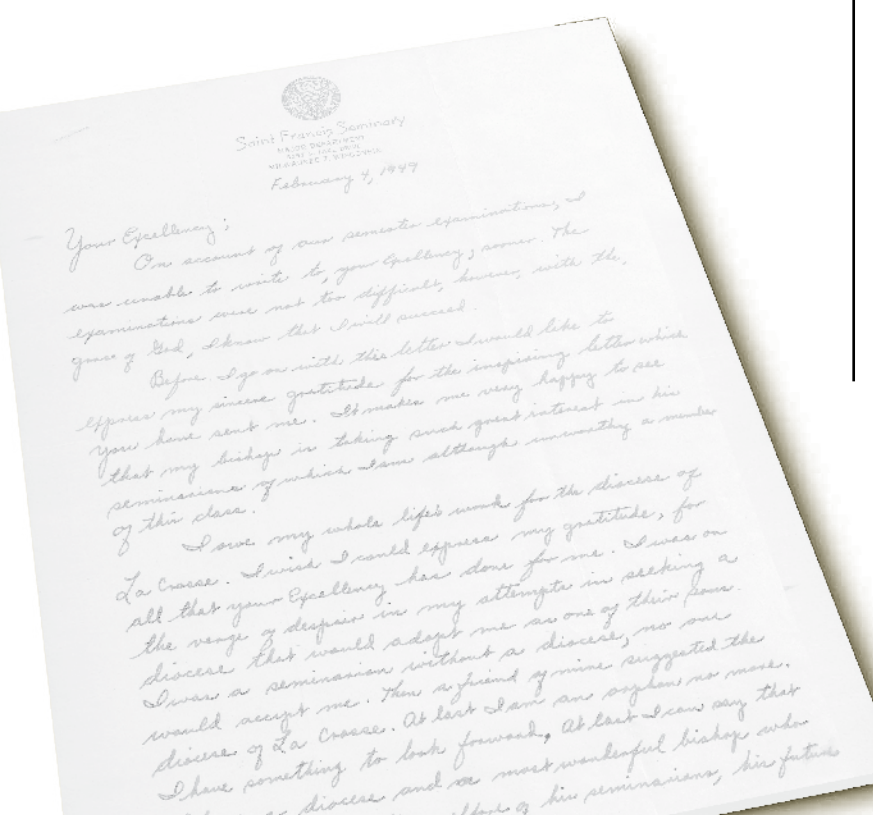
1949

**February 4** - Joseph Walijewski writes to Bishop Treacy thanking his excellency, and the Diocese of La Crosse, for adopting him as a seminarian.



1950

Graduation picture from Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee, WI.



1950

**April 16** - Father Joe ordained in La Crosse, Wisconsin, soon to serve parishes of Mosinee, Thorp and Stevens Point.



1950



His parents, sister, brother & niece in the front yard of family home in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Walijewski Family portrait.



Ervin Klick and Leona Stroinski's wedding took place at St. Hedwig's Chapel at 9 am on **Sept. 9, 1950**. Father Joseph Walijewski, assistant pastor, officiated the ceremony.



1956

Bishop John Treacy presents Father Joe with the Mission Cross, granting his request to serve the poor of Latin America. Referring to Pope Pius XII's Apostolic Letter, he goes to Bolivia and founds Holy Cross Parish in Santa Cruz.



1958

Father Joe Walijewski moves to Bolivia and founded the Holy Cross Parish in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. **July 2015**, Pope Francis visited Santa Cruz Parish during his apostolic journey to Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay. His Holiness was the second pope to visit the sites of missionary work begun by our beloved Father Joe Walijewski.



**"We in the missions have a saying: You either go native, go crazy or go home." - Father Joe**



1966

Father Joe returns to Wisconsin, serving several parishes, including as pastor of St. Hedwig's Parish in Thorp.

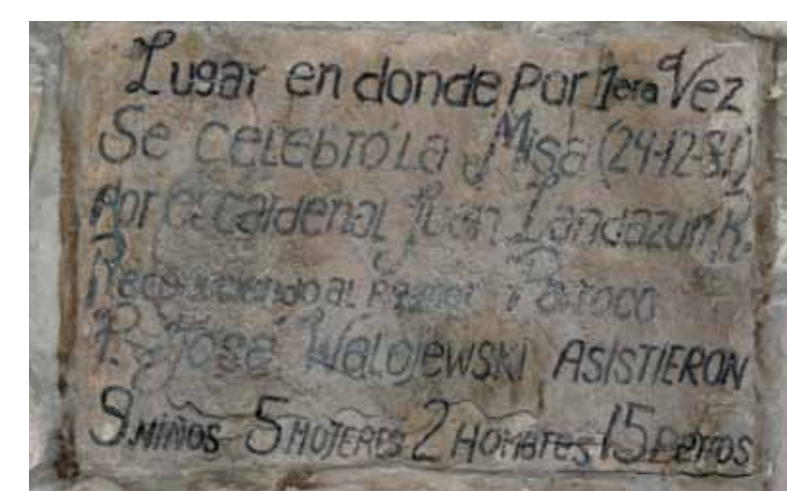
The 5 Musketeers: Frank, Steve, Fr. Joe, Bernie, and Charles, Fr. Joe's brothers.

1971

Father Joe asked to leave for Peru, requesting to work among the poor. Cardinal Juan Landázuri Ricketts assigned him to a group of 8,000 earthquake refugees who eventually settled around Lima on land mapped out for a military industrial complex. It was just rock, sand and dirt — "Like the moon," Fr. Joe says — but they named it Villa El Salvador, City of the Savior, and it instantly became a town. It also became Father Joe's parish.



Cristo Salvador Parish

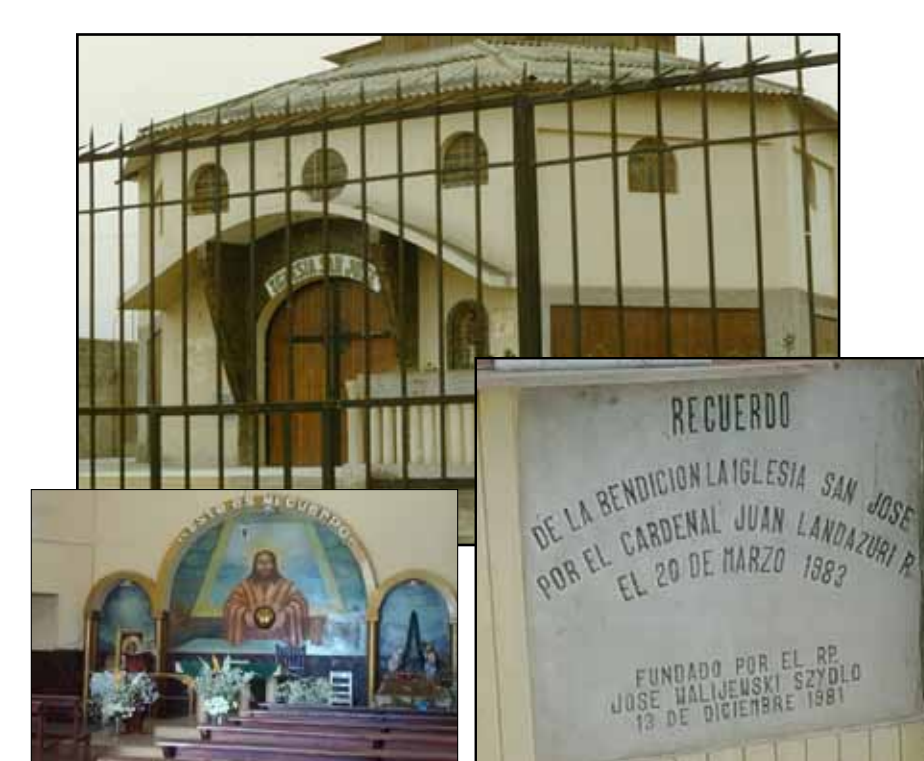


► Inscription at the site of Cristo Salvador Parish, the first church established by Father Joseph Walijewski in Villa El Salvador, Peru, which reads "Place where Mass was celebrated on **December 24, 1971** by Cardinal Juan Landázuri Ricketts recognizing Padre Jose Walijewski as the first pastor. In attendance were: nine children, five women, two men, and fifteen dogs.



1972

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



1981

Father Joe founds St. Joseph's Chapel in Villa El Salvador, Peru.

► A memory of the blessings of Saint Joseph Church by Cardinal Juan Landázuri Ricketts on **March 20, 1983**. Founded by Father Joseph Walijewski Szylko 13th of **December 1981**.



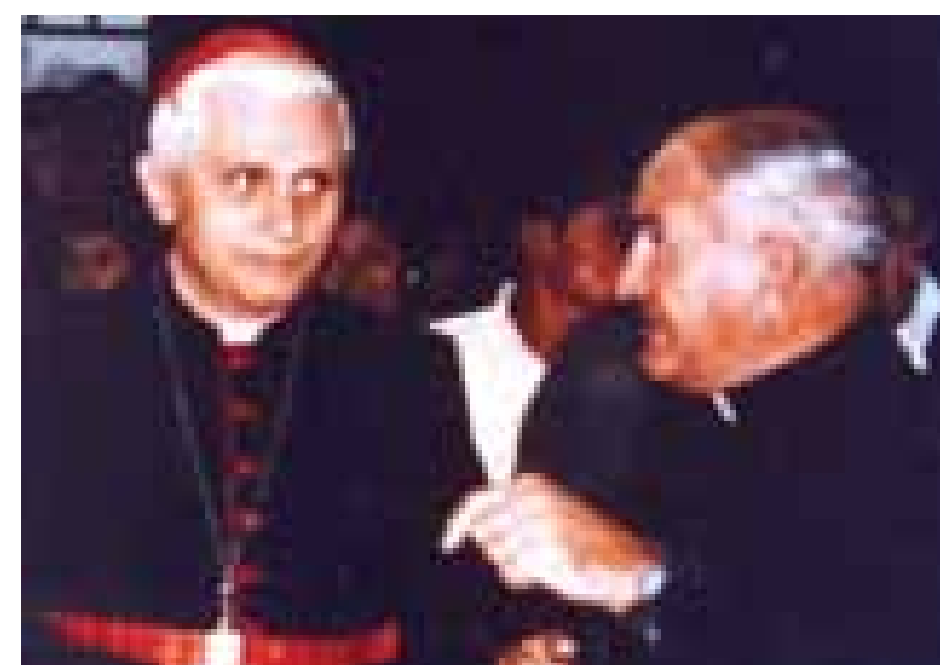
1985

Pope Saint John Paul II visits Peru, leaving \$50,000. That money was used to help Father Joe begin building an orphanage modeled after Father Flanagan's Boys Town.



1986

Father Joe founds Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II in Lurin, Peru, which is now home to 64 children.



1987

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) visits Father Joe in Peru.

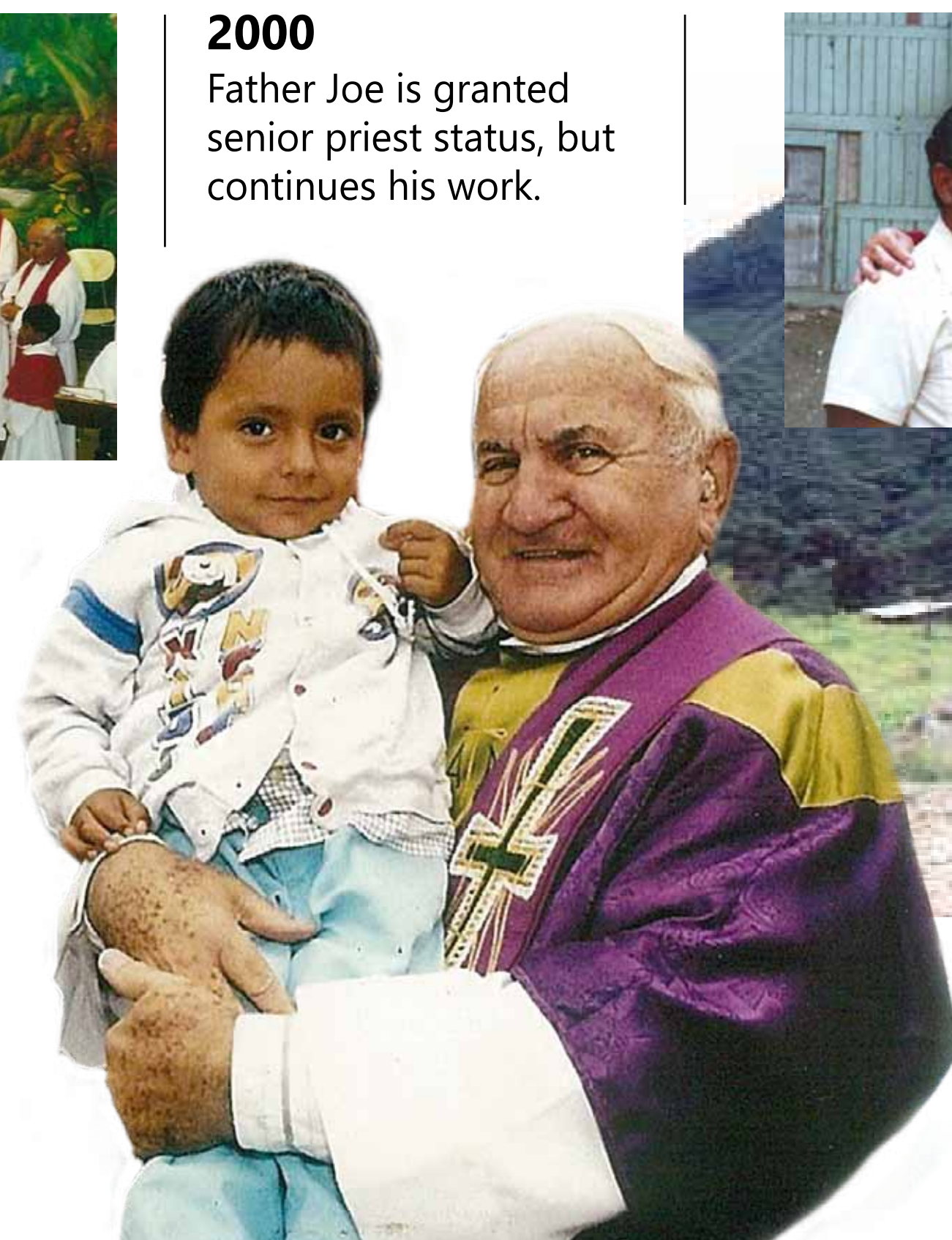


1987 Thorp Catholic School's Mission Club



1997

Bishop Burke visits Casa Hogar and made it an official mission of the Diocese of La Crosse.



2000

Father Joe is granted senior priest status, but continues his work.



2005

**April 11** - Father Joe founds St. Joseph's Retirement Home in Chontabamaba, Peru.

2005

Bishop ListECKI visits to Casa Hogar.



2006

**April 9** - Father Joe's last Mass, Palm Sunday, with children at Casa Hogar Juan Pablo II.

2006



**April 11** - Father Joe passes away from this life, returning to the Lord.



At 64, Father Joe is still strong enough to show off to 5-year old Luis and his friends.

**"I do not know how long I will live, but while I live, Lord, let me give some comfort to someone in need by smile or nod, kind word, or deed."**  
- Father Walijewski