

# Walking in the footsteps of Padre José

A Diocesan Pilgrimage   
August 8-16, 2015



## Who is the pilgrimage for?

This trip is open to all adults of the Diocese of La Crosse.

## What is the focus of the trip?

This pilgrimage is designed to follow the path that led Father Joe Walijewski to found Casa Hogar. Tracing his steps, pilgrims will visit the parish at Villa el Salvador and the soup kitchens founded by Father Joe. There will be plenty of time to get to know the children of Casa Hogar. In addition to visiting the tomb of Father Joe at the orphanage, a day trip is planned to Lima for a visit to the tombs of St. Rose of Lima and St. Martin de Porres. Returning home you will be inspired to see more clearly how to serve those in need around you.

**Cost: Approx. \$2,200 per person**

Accommodations and all meals at Casa Hogar included. Housing will be bunk-style in the guest house section.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2015**, which requires a \$300 non-refundable deposit by check or money order. **FULL PAYMENT IS DUE JUNE 15, 2015.**

\* Please know that until our flights are actually ticketed, the anticipated cost of \$2,200 could increase due to fluctuations in fuel surcharges, taxes, etc. There may also be flight changes, and/or airline changes to the itinerary that may impact the final cost.



For more information please contact:  
**Jen Mickschl at 608-791-0161**  
**or jmickschl@diolc.org**

**REGISTRATION IS LIMITED.  
DON'T WAIT. REGISTER NOW!**

Learn more about Casa Hogar by visiting  
[www.homeajpm.org](http://www.homeajpm.org)

## Fr. Joe's Prayer Box



You are encouraged to ask for Father Joe Walijewski's intercession. Father Joe Walijewski's Prayer Box has been established as a way for you to have your prayer intention remembered in a special way. Either by using the website or by sending it in the mail, you are able to submit your request. Once received, these petitions will be

collected and kept in the chapel of Casa Hogar in Peru. Every day the children of Casa Hogar will pray for the intentions kept in the box. Once a week, the box of intentions is carried in procession up to the tomb of Father Joe where a group of the children will offer prayers for your special intentions.

If you would like to have your petitions included in Father Joe's Prayer Box please visit  
[www.frjoesguild.org/prayer\\_request.php](http://www.frjoesguild.org/prayer_request.php) or send your intentions to:

The Diocese of La Crosse | Attn: Father Joe Walijewski's Prayer Box | P.O. Box 4004 | La Crosse, WI 54602-4004

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

The Father Joseph Walijewski Legacy

# Guild

Servant of God  
Father Joseph Walijewski  
1924 - 2006

SPRING 2015

## Sustaining his Legacy

The Father Joseph Walijewski Legacy Guild was established to sustain the legacy and promote the cause of the Servant of God, Father Joseph Walijewski. Since its inception in 2013, over 1,800 people have become members. These members have taken the time to learn more about Father Joe's life, prayed for his beatification and canonization, and helped sustain the legacy he left behind through their financial contributions.

### Guild Leadership

**Episcopal Moderator**  
The Most Rev.  
William Patrick Callahan  
Bishop of La Crosse

**Spiritual Director**  
Msgr. Roger J. Scheckel

**Development Director**  
Brian Logue

**Communications Director**  
Jack Felsheim

**"The chief task is to provide leadership and financial sustainability for the missions started by Father Joe."**

While the canonization process is important to the mission of the Father Joseph Walijewski Legacy Guild, the task of preparing the documents and testimony for delivery to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints at the Vatican typically

takes about five years. The ongoing and chief task of the Father Joseph Walijewski Legacy Guild is to provide financial sustainability and leadership for the missions and organizations started by Father Joe that are still serving countless people today.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support. Please continue to pray for the advancement of his cause and help spread the word about his life and legacy.

Take a few moments to learn more about his life and let his

model of humble service guide you in your own pursuit of Christ-like service. If you are able, consider making a financial contribution to the Father Joseph Walijewski Legacy Guild. Your gift will mean so much.

## Father Joe – An Orphan No More

As we ponder the life and works of the Servant of God, Father Joseph Walijewski, we may ask ourselves what would inspire someone to work so hard and for so long in a place so far from one's homeland? What was it that fuelled his energy and gave him consolation for so many years?

Clues to answer those questions are found in some of his early writings.

When Father Joe was finishing his first year of seminary in Michigan, it was determined that he didn't fit their profile so he was told to pursue another calling. Perhaps his simple upbringing or his difficulty with some college level classes raised doubt in the minds of the Michigan seminary. For whatever reason, young Joseph

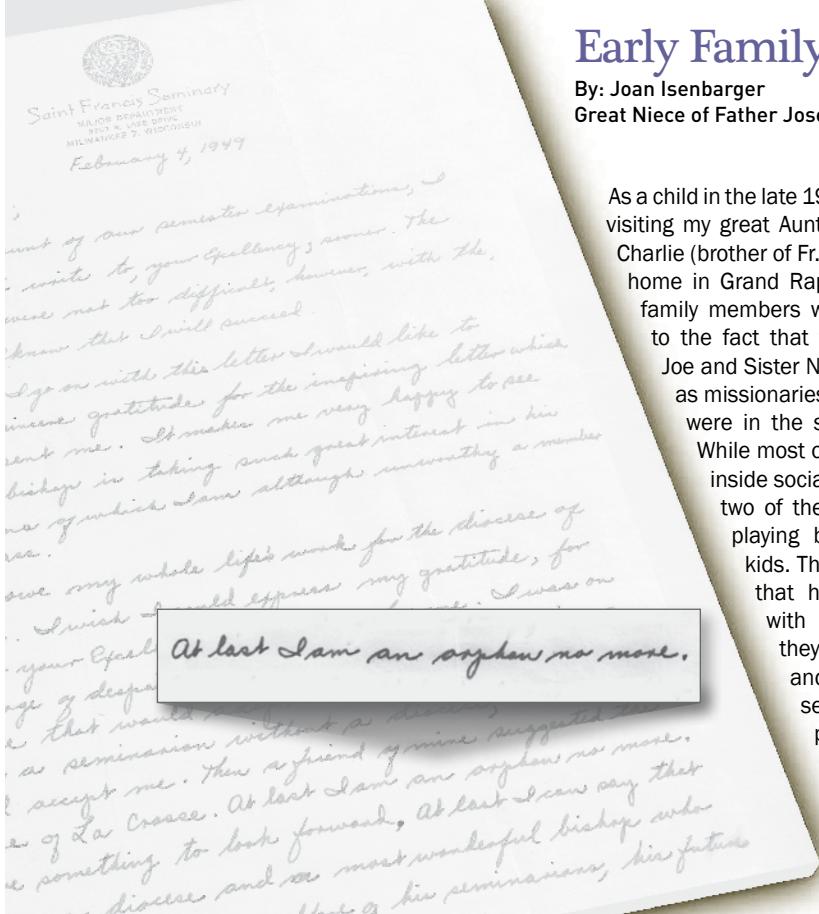
Walijewski needed to find out if God's plan for his life was the priesthood, and if it was, it would have to be for another diocese.

Displaying early on his character of seeing a problem and determining to do something about it, he decided to send letters of application to the neighboring dioceses asking if they would take him as a seminarian. After several letters went unanswered, someone suggested he contact Bishop Alexander Joseph McGavick of the Diocese of La Crosse. Within two weeks, Bishop McGavick responded to young Joe with a letter asking him to come for an interview. It was that letter that opened the door for him to continue as a seminarian for the Diocese of La Crosse.

See ORPHAN on next page



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



## Early Family Memories

By: Joan Isenbarger  
Great Niece of Father Joseph Walijewski

As a child in the late 1960s, I remember visiting my great Aunt Alice and Uncle Charlie (brother of Fr. Joe) Walijewski's home in Grand Rapids, Mich. Many family members would gather due to the fact that their siblings, Fr. Joe and Sister Noel, both working as missionaries in foreign lands, were in the states for a visit. While most of the adults were inside socializing, I recall the two of them being outside playing baseball with us kids. This is one memory that has always stuck with me. I thought they were pretty cool and thinking they seemed like real people! Fr. Joe always made us feel comfortable and loved by his good-humored personality whenever

we were fortunate enough to be around him. He always had a special gift with children.

As I grew into my early high school years, Fr. Joe's journey continued to touch my heart. I believe he made an impression on me by his real life stories that he shared. It was always so apparent that he loved his mission in life. I would



Father Joe, Mary Walijewski (Fr. Joe's mother) and his sister, Sister Noel. Taken in Grand Rapids Michigan in the early 1960s.

### ORPHAN continued...

A few years later as Joseph was starting his third year at St. Joseph Seminary in Milwaukee, Bishop John Patrick Treacy was named the fifth Bishop of La Crosse. Here is what he wrote to his new bishop in February of 1949, "I owe my whole life's work for the diocese of La Crosse. I wish I could express my gratitude, for all that your Excellency has done for me. I was on the verge of despair in my attempts in seeking a diocese that would adopt me as one of their sons. I was a seminarian without a diocese, no one would accept me. Then a friend of mine suggested the diocese of La Crosse. At last I am an orphan no more."

Father Joe knew how it felt to be orphaned as he was looking for a diocese that would adopt him as one of their sons. In response to the kindness shown to him by the Diocese of La Crosse, he pledged his whole life's work. Little did he know where that would take him or to what extent his service done in gratitude would enable the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be told. Many thanks for your years spent in service to the countless people who received the gift you passed on to them.



Father Joe and his great niece Joan, dancing on her wedding day, October 22, 1977.

On October 22, 1977, Father Joe generously traveled from Peru to Michigan to perform my wedding ceremony in a Catholic church to a non-Catholic man who rarely attended church. Over the years Fr. Joe's presence resonated with my husband and me as we raised our two daughters. Additionally, I believe Fr. Joe had an impact on my husband becoming Catholic after attending Mass with us for many years. Last but not least, on April 11, 2013, the seventh anniversary of Father Joe's death, my first grandchild Isabella was born!

So as Father Joe continued to be a Servant of God in other parts of the country, his works were also bearing fruit in the United States, and in particular in our family.

I applaud everyone who is involved with the mission of the Father Joseph Walijewski Legacy Guild. You are doing wondrous deeds to preserve Fr. Joe's legacy. However, I already know that in God's eyes "Father Joseph Walijewski" has already been blessed into sainthood.

### A few anecdotes from the family:

A memory from Rosemary, a niece: During a visit to my home, I asked Fr. Joe what he preferred for breakfast; naming pancakes, sausage, eggs, toast and hash browns. He replied "YES" with his childlike grin followed by an explanation that his cook didn't prepare these foods for him in Peru. Needless to say he enjoyed his wholesome breakfast!

Another memory shared by his deceased sister (relayed to Rosemary): When back in the U.S., Fr. Joe would sometimes forget that the rules of the road here were different than driving in the jungle. While traveling back to Wisconsin from Michigan, his car would be loaded to the brim with donated clothes to be shipped to Peru and his foot would be heavy. With these traveling traits, Fr. Joe was becoming quite a favorite subject of the State Police.



Scene at one of the several soup kitchens established by Father Joseph Walijewski. People from the neighborhood are waiting for lunch. This kitchen is directly behind St. Joseph's Chapel in Villa El Salvador, the church wished for as one of Father Joseph Walijewski's mother's three wishes.

## EWTN to feature the life of Father Joseph Walijewski

Expected to air in spring 2015, this 60 minute tribute to Father Joseph Walijewski's life and ministry, produced and hosted by Bob Dolan of Bob Dolan Productions, is filled with many testaments to his charism. Tracing his life of devotion and dedication, this feature explores how God's providence guided, and Father Joe's humble service provided the necessary means to minister to those most vulnerable.

Father Joe spent most of his life in South America, but brought with him the cleverness of a Midwestern farm boy. His simple upbringing and can-do attitude allowed him to respond to those in need with extraordinary success. Despite the setbacks he experienced throughout his life, his faith remained strong and his devotion unwavering.

His story of faith and service gives us courage to confront situations placed in our lives, and the resolution to do something about it. Using the model of his life, we will be inspired to see Christ crucified in everyone we meet.



Inscription at the site of Cristo Salvador Parish, the Bob Dolan, and Monsignor Hirsch are interviewing first church established by Father Joseph Walijewski in a Peruvian resident who knew Father Joseph Villa El Salvador, Peru, which reads 'Place where Mass Walijewski while he was living in Villa El Salvador. was celebrated on December 24, 1971 by Cardinal Juan Landazuri recognizing Padre Jose Walijewski as the first pastor. In attendance were: nine children, five women, two men, and 15 dogs.'

## 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.

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)

## Second Anniversary Mass - March 15, 2015

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, March 15, 2015 at 10:30 a.m., when the second 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.

## Fun facts about Father Joe

### A little something for everyone

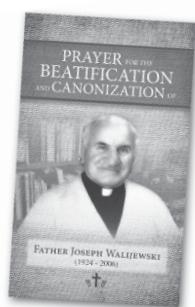
One way that Father Joe endeared himself, especially to the children of Peru, was his habit of giving out candy. He would have several small hard candies in his pocket and as he would meet and greet the children he would reach into his pocket and give out candy. Many people commented how such a simple gesture would have a lasting impression on those he encountered.

### Looking on the brighter side

Later in life, Father Joe was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and given a strict diet to follow. Barb Swieciak remembers that he would follow his dietary directives as an obedient soul. "When I brought out his portions," Barb Swieciak reminisces, "counting out the potato chips, he took one look and with a tone of disappointment said 'Every rose has its thorns.'

## Prayer Cards

Prayer cards can be ordered through the Mission Office by contacting:



The Diocese of La Crosse  
Attn: Father Joe Walijewski's Prayer Card  
P.O. Box 4004 • La Crosse, WI 54602-4004  
Ph: 608-791-2676



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