

Episcopalian Former Priests and Mission Hits Home for the Oblates.

Fr. Tom Stransky CSP, one of the founding fathers of Vatican II on ecumenism, has noted that we have a very faulty understanding of ecumenism. "It is the quest of Christians for full visible unity for mission through personal and church renewal and reform" (cited by Timothy McCarthy, *Christianity and Humanism* [Chicago, IL: Loyola University Press, 1996], p. 222). Note his emphasis on mission.

Former Episcopalian Pastor James Conyers was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood on June 28, 2014. His First Mass was at St. Catherine's Church, Ronceverte, WV on June 29. On August 15, the feast of Mary's Assumption into Heaven, Father Conyers presided at the annual Mass in the historic chapel of St. John, Sweet Springs, WV. I was able to join four other priests in concelebrating with him. For more on this event, see www.omi/usa.org, "Return to Appalachia," posted Aug. 27, 2014.

Mass More Often in Former Oblate Parish?

Monroe County Catholic Parish, WV, was founded and staffed by Oblates of Mary from 1977-91. The parish was suppressed by Bishop Michael Bransfield, Wheeling-Charleston Diocese, WV, in 2004, because of a shortage of priests. A recent convert from the Episcopal Church could offer Mass there more often.

James Conyers studied at the Episcopalian Virginia Theological Seminary, taking several courses at the Catholic Cluster of Independent Theological Schools (Oblate College, Washington, DC was one of the three seminaries within the Cluster). He and his wife Deborah were quoted extensively in the secular press when the Episcopalian community of nuns, of which Deborah is an associate, joined the Catholic Church on Sept. 3, 2009. "Our church left us," Deborah said. "It has diluted the message to suit everyone. Luckily the joy of Catholicism balanced the sadness of leaving where we had been."

James observed: "This decision is not based on political issues. It is an unfolding of understanding. In a sense, we have come home" (Baltimore Sun, Mary Gail Hare and Matthew Hay Brown, Sept. 3, 2009). James has been through the two day examination at Seton Hall University required by all Episcopalian priests seeking ordination. He'll be meeting soon with a spiritual director and a theological mentor as he continues the process required by the Pastoral Provision.

James and Deborah are part of the catechetical team which instructs the children of Monroe and Greenbrier Counties. For the past several years they have helped with the annual Aug. 15 Mass and social allowed at the oldest standing Catholic church in WV, St. John's Chapel, Sweet Springs, Monroe County. Please pray that the bishop will allow Fr. Conyers to offer Mass more often in Monroe County.

Two excellent articles on the current Anglican/Episcopalian Roman Catholic controversial document are available in *Ecumenical Trends* Oct. 2009, "Anglican/Episcopalians Looking to Rome: 1570-Present," by Msgr. Daniel S. Hamilton

(applies more to the USA situation) and America, Nov. 16, 2009, "Bridge Over The River Tiber," by Austen Ivereigh (applies more to the British situation).