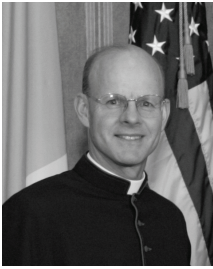


### A Time of Grace and Growth: Saint Luke Institute 1993—2009



I recently stepped down as President and CEO of Saint Luke Institute after seventeen years of service, including four as its Vice-President. I have been honored to walk with our priests and women and men religious on their journey to wholeness and holiness. It has also been exciting to be part of the growth of the Institute's healing ministry.

#### Moving to a New Site

When I began in January of 1993, we were located in a smaller building in Suitland, Maryland, which we rapidly outgrew. The program was still primarily for priests and men religious with alcohol and other behavioral difficulties. We needed to find a larger site and to expand our programs to assist a wider variety of residents. Providentially, I was informed by a Missionary Servant that their former seminary would soon be available in Silver Spring. The 140,000 square foot building sounded ideal, and a visit to the site confirmed it. The Missionary Servants themselves had been involved years ago in ministering to priests in need of care and thus were especially supportive of our work. We arranged a long-term lease and the Institute moved in the summer of 1996.

#### Talitha-Life Program

In addition to our men's impatient and half-way house programs, we had long wanted to add a healing program for women religious and the larger site made this possible. The women therapists on staff gathered and designed a program for women and run by women. What emerged was our Talitha-Life program which is particularly sensitive to the needs and charisms of women religious.

Additionally, we realized that most communities of women had limited financial resources and often had difficulty affording residential care. Thus, we charged a modest fee, heavily subsidizing their treatment through the generous donations of benefactors. This subsidy program continues to this day. It has been a pleasure for me to watch the growth and maturation of this vital and highly successful program.

#### Education and Prevention

The Institute also needed a dedicated education program that would help in the prevention of problems *before* they occurred. Since its founding, our Education Department has grown yearly, offering more than 80 workshops this past year at the Institute and around the world. Thousands of priests and women and men religious have been assisted in healthy psychological and spiritual living. (continued, p.2.)

### A Call To Help Those in Need

"And who is my neighbor?" In St. Luke's account of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus, a scholar of the law asks this question of Jesus, leading Him to tell the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) – a parable unique to the Gospel of Saint Luke. As we all know, Jesus turns the scholar's question "who is my neighbor" back on him in the telling of the parable – challenging him to be the true neighbor – the one who shows others mercy. The scholar's question is a good one to ask oneself:



How willing are any of us to pour oil and wine over the wounds and bandage the least among us?

When I was invited to become the President and CEO of Saint Luke Institute, I was set back a bit. I am not a psychologist or a spiritual director. Until now, my priestly life has been spent in parish and diocesan ministry, with some work in the governance of Catholic institutions, including a vibrant Catholic acute-care hospital in New Hampshire. I was comforted, though, by the counsel of a good priest friend who reminded me that this was an invitation from the Church to help those most in need among those called to serve others.

I have worked closely with my brother priests and consecrated religious for many years, including those whose lives had taken a turn for the worse – those who found themselves on the side of the road. Following the advice of the late Bishop Leo O'Neil (Manchester, NH), I have always sought to be less occupied with how someone becomes "down and out," and more focused on what I can do to help lift him/her up.

Saint Luke Institute saves people's lives every day. In helping priests and religious in need of spiritual, psychological and physical restoration, I believe we not only serve them well, but in doing so, we serve the Lord and the Church. Each vocation to priesthood or consecrated life is a precious gift not only to the one called but also for all of God's people.

I am pleased to be at SLI, surrounded by some of the most gifted clinical professionals and pastoral ministers I know. Those of us engaged directly in this great work of charity are supported by a visionary board of directors and are lifted up in prayer and supported financially by so many.

There is a great spirit of prayer at Saint Luke Institute, all built around the presence of Christ in the gift of the Eucharist. Please know of our prayers for you and those whom you love and serve, and that we count on a remembrance in yours too. (continued, p.2)



# LUKENOTES

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## **A Time of Grace and Growth** *Continued...*

In particular, the education department conducts several workshops each year to assist seminary and religious formators to foster healthy psychosexual living for celibate men and women.

Our bimonthly newsletter, LUKENOTES, currently distributed to 10,000 readers internationally, informs church leaders on current psychological and spiritual issues and helps Church leaders in handling challenging situations and personnel.

SLI has also supported prevention through its work on the Vicars for Clergy network, dedicated to helping those who assist bishops in promoting the health of diocesan priests. Partnering with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), SLI maintains the Vicars for Clergy on-line list serve, publishes its newsletter and supports its annual conference in Chicago.

We especially wanted to be supportive of wellness efforts in other countries. Workshops and collaborations have been accomplished in the Philippines, South and Central America, Africa, England, Ireland and many other nations. SLI has made international "wellness evangelization" a priority, and we have made many warm friendships around the world.

### **Building a Development Program**

SLI could not provide its broad range of services without a strong development program. Because SLI made the commitment that no priest or religious would ever be turned away because of a lack of financial resources, we needed to build an effective fund-raising program.

Fund raising began very modestly and has grown over these past thirteen years. We now raise more than \$400,000 annually, hosting a delightful benefit at the Apostolic Nunciature. We have a direct mail campaign to Catholic priests in the U.S., a number of generous foundations and bishops that assist us, plus a dedicated group of "Friends of SLI" who understand the importance of our ministry and help directly with their "time, talent, and treasure."

Since its inception, the development program has raised about \$13 million, including \$5 million in our recent capital campaign. This has been a critical part of supporting the healing ministry of SLI.

### **Our Catholic Identity**

It is important that SLI provides both the highest quality professional psychological care and an authentic Catholic spirituality program. Strengthening our Catholic identity has been a priority during my tenure. Building on the fine work of the past, we continued to expand our spirituality program. Currently there is daily Mass, regular opportunity for confession and retreats, anointing services, welcoming and departing liturgies, regular spiritual direction, twice weekly holy hours, and spirituality groups. Spiritual evaluations are part of every evaluation week, and our spiritual staff continues to be an integral part of the treatment program from beginning to end.

Every five years, the Archbishop of Washington sends a team of three to evaluate the quality and faithfulness of our programs. Happily, the final written report of each of these visits has been a ringing endorsement of the fidelity and

excellence of the Catholic program at SLI.

### **Crisis in the Church**

No discussion of this time in SLI's history could overlook the Church's sexual abuse crisis of 2002. The Church came under intense public scrutiny for its handling of the sexual abuse of minors. As the media accounts rose to a negative crescendo, I was asked by the USCCB to assist in responding to the media as well as being a consultant to the USCCB's Committee on Child Sexual Abuse which drafted the "Dallas Charter." During these difficult times, SLI's entire staff continued to provide high-quality critical services to the Church, both to its priests and religious in need, and to the wider Church. I believe that the Institute has emerged even stronger because of our staff's integrity, hard work, and dedicated efforts during this exceptionally difficult time.

### **St. Luke's Centre**

In 2005, SLI was contacted by representatives of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) and asked to begin a wellness program in the U.K. After a unanimous resolution by the bishops in the CBCEW and a warm welcome from the bishops in Scotland and Ireland, St. Luke's Centre (SLC) began its ministry in Manchester, England.

SLC in England works closely with SLI in the States, providing a wide range of evaluation, treatment and educational services. If residential treatment is indicated for an individual, he/she will normally enter SLI's residential program. SLC is growing rapidly and the feedback from clients and superiors has been overwhelmingly positive.

### **Concluding Comments**

These past 17 years have been an exciting time of growth for SLI. The Institute has emerged as a broad based program that serves both men and women in ministry with a wide range of psychological and spiritual difficulties. Thanks to the dedicated work of our board, staff and our many friends, we have garnered a strong reputation for quality therapeutic, educational and Catholic service. Under the fine leadership of our new president, Fr. Edward Arsenault, I am confident that the Institute will continue to serve the Church and its ministers with fidelity, excellence and compassion.

*Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti*

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### **A Call to Help Those in Need** *Continued...*

I ask you to join me in being a good and merciful neighbor to our priests and religious in need. Only the Lord Himself can reward your generosity in doing so, but I can assure you that your sacrifice makes all the difference.

*Rev. Edward J. Arsenault*

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### **A Reminder...**

**Critical Personnel Issues Conference  
for Bishops and Major Superiors  
March 21-23, 2010—Washington, DC  
April 11-13, 2010—Toronto, Canada**

**For more information, contact us at [education@sli.org](mailto:education@sli.org)  
or 301 422 5499.**