MARIANS IN THE NEWS

From Overseas

• In the Polish Province, the Providence of God, 40 Novices were accepted into the Novitiate at St. Hyacinth Monastery, Skorzec, Poland. These novices are a cross section of Polish citizens; lawyers, painters, musicians, students and one widower. They will study the Constitutions of the Congregation, work on the publication — *I Hear the Voice and Follow* — and tend to the monastery gardens.

Of the 40, 35 are candidates for the Priesthood while the others are studying for the Brotherhood.

The Novice Master is Father Henry Kulesza, who is assisted by Fr. Edmund Szaniawski who was previously the director of vocations.

• On the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4, 1982 in Portugal at the Marian Monastery in Balsamao, three young men pronounced their First Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience to the Congregation of Marians of the Immaculate Conception. These vows were received in the name of the church and according to the constitutions of the community by the Provincial Superior, Rev. Richard J. Drabik, M.I.C. of the St. Stanislaus Kostka Province.

Fr. Provincial, V. Rev. Richard Drabik, M.I.C. with the Master of Novices, Fr. Stanley Szymanski and the three newly professed clerics.

Jose Carlos Sousa is a candidate for the priesthood. He completed three years of military service after which he made application to the Marians for college studies.

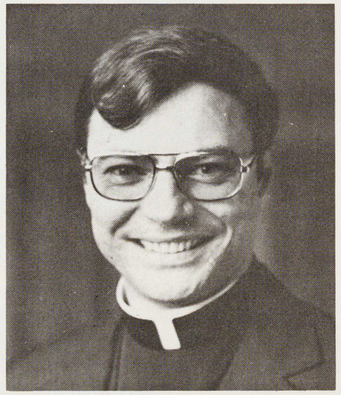
Francisco Herculano Sousa is Jose's younger brother and the youngest member of their family and has completed his studies for entrance into Philosophy.

Joao Rodrigues completed studies at the Technical School of Braganca. He then joined the Marians for his college studies and is now ready to proceed with Philosophy in preparation for the priesthood. This year one of his sisters, Estare, pronounced her first vows in the Franciscan Sisters of the Reparation to the Eucharistic Christ.

The newly professed will complete a year of humanities at Fatima, Portugal as part of the Educational Center of Fatima which is the union of studies for several religious communities. During the year they will also be engaged in a program for young Scouts and the furthering of the Devotion of Divine Mercy among the young in Portugal.

We congratulate these men of Portugal and assure them of our prayers — may more men follow in their footsteps!

Fr. Roger L. Wojcik, appointed Director of Vocations



Fr. Roger L. Wojcik, M.I.C.

The Congregation of Marians, St. Stanislaus Kostka Province, whose Provincial House is located in Stockbridge, Mass., has appointed Fr. Roger L. Wojcik, as the new Director of Vocations.

Fr. Roger will represent the Marians in ministering to those who seek counseling in discerning their vocational call. The Marians today, though small in number, minister in difficult circumstances to God's people behind the Iron Curtain; serving Russian and Lithuanian exiles in Australia; publishing and printing at two centers — teaching school, counseling married couples, alcoholics, young men and women, working with immigrant groups; administering parishes; serving Eastern-rite Catholics; doing missionary work in Brazil and Argentina — in a word, *serving Christ and the Church,* wherever there is a need, wherever the Good News has yet to be preached.

When Lincoln Prayed for Victory

By FRANCIS HOWARD

From a small pamphlet, published for a reunion of old Civil War veterans in the year 1910, there comes an amazing revelation about Abraham Lincoln.

Far from confirming the opinion of a small band of biographers, led by his early law partner, William H. Herndon, who insisted that the great War President was a skeptic and an agnostic, this forgotten bit of historical literature would seem to prove that Lincoln was a person of strong religious faith.

The pamphlet is entitled *Lincoln and Sickles*. It describes the friendship between Mr. Lincoln and one of the famous Union generals, and it was written by Lieutenant Colonel James F. Rusling who was General Sickles' chief quartermaster.

After the battle of Gettysburg, General Sickles, who had lost a leg in the fierce fighting, lay in pain, brooding anxiously at his Washington home. Because of the handicap, it was not easy for him to contemplate the future.

It was then that Lincoln came to call on him. The President inquired about General Sickles' wound, but when the famous commander told him the doctors were very grave about his chances of recovery, Mr. Lincoln set aside such despairing talk.

"I am in a prophetic mood today, General," he declared, "and I prophesy that you will soon be up and about, and that you will live to do many an important service for your country."

General Sickles felt a sense of relief. His worries about his wound seemed to vanish, and a burden rolled from his mind.

The discussion then turned to the recent battle. They re-examined the strategy and the various movements of the different corps of the Union Army to meet General Lee's assault.

General Sickles broke in upon the President.

"I suppose Washington was pretty close to panic, Mr. President?" he asked. "You had reason enough — it was nip and tuck with us."

Lincoln looked solemn.

"Yes, we were a little rattled," he admitted. "There was talk of the city being captured, and the Cabinet ordered a gunboat. But when they wanted me to go along, I said no. I told them we were going to win at Gettysburg. I had no fears about that!"

General Sickles was so astonished by the last remarks that he almost sat up in bed.

"How was that, Mr. President?" he inquired.

The fall of a pin might have been heard as Lincoln answered.

"I will try to tell you, but I don't want you to speak of it. Some people might laugh, you know. The fact of the matter is, in the pinch of the battle up there, when we had sent General Meade all the soldiers we could scrape up, and yet everything seemed to go wrong, I went into my room one morning and locked the door, and got down on my knees and prayed God Almighty for victory at Gettysburg. I told Him this was His country, and our war, His war, and that we could not stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville. And then and there I made a solemn vow that if He would stand by you boys at Gettysburg, I would stand by Him. I prayed, 'O God, have mercy upon me and my afflicted people! Our burden and sorrows are greater than we can bear! Come now and help us, or we must all perish! And Thou canst not afford to have us perish! We are Thy chosen people, the last best hope of the human race!'. . . I don't know how it was and I can't explain it, but somehow or other a sweet comfort crept into my soul there into His own hands, and that things would come out all right at Gettysburg. And He did stand by you boys there, and now I will stand by Him."

There was not a sound as Abraham Lincoln finished, "No, General Sickles, I had no fears for Gettysburg and now you know the reason why." □