

# Reunited at Colombiere

by Lisa Files

**A**fter decades of ministry and service around the world, several Jesuits recently were missioned to Colombiere Jesuit Community to pray for the Church and Society. Four of these Jesuits featured here first met in the 1940's in the early stages of their Jesuit formation. Now they, along with 38 fellow Jesuits, are crossing paths again at Colombiere Center in Clarkston, Michigan, where conversations are rich with stories from across the region and around the globe.

From the time they enter the Society of Jesus, Jesuits dedicate their lives to

serving God's people in a great variety of educational, pastoral, and spiritual ministries. When physical limitations arise or mobility is impaired, Jesuits complete their ministry at Colombiere Center.

**Their mission** at Colombiere is to "pray for the Church and Society, serve at the side of Christ, and build the kingdom of God." Here they have the opportunity to reflect on their lives and cross paths with those whom they first met at the former Jesuit novitiate in Milford, Ohio.

Since 1992, over 135 Jesuits have prayerfully served this important ministry at Colombiere. Today, 42 Jesuits are in residence.

Assignments for today's Jesuit novices (being formed in nearby Berkley, Michigan) include pastoral and care visits to the Senior Jesuits at Colombiere. Novice Edgar Sanchez, nSJ, for example, gains inspiration from the experience of meeting these Senior Jesuits:

*"When I visit our Jesuit priests and brothers at Colombiere Center I see that they continue to be active missionaries in the apostleship of prayer—men for others who share their wisdom with us. The men at Colombiere remind me that great things are possible; they inspire me to toil and not count the cost."*



Colombiere Center. Clarkston, MI



**Earl Weis, SJ**

Entered novitiate at Milford in 1941. Served 37 years as theology expert at Loyola University as well as other locations.

*“After a lifetime dedicated to teaching, having the possibility opened up to me now of living a life of recollection and contemplation and prayer is a very attractive thing. It happens through the Daily Mass, Divine Office, Spiritual Exercises, Examen, Rosary, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and living more and more consciously in the presence of God. In God’s providence, it’s a great gift to be given this opportunity to live a recollective life at the end of a very crowded life.”*

—Fr. Earl Weis, SJ



**John Reilly, SJ**

Entered novitiate at Milford in 1946. Served 13 years at St. Ignatius College Prep as teacher, principal, and president. Served Loyola University development for 29 years.

*“After 13 years of training, we spin out into the world like boomerangs. Now we are back together again at Colombiere.”*

—Fr. John Reilly, SJ



**Cornelius Curtin, SJ**

Entered novitiate at Milford in 1943. Served 13 years in Nepal and 36 years in India pioneering parishes and teaching.

*“It was difficult to leave Peru. I was so involved with the people, the retreats, the counseling. But it is a joy to be here in the midst of the people I haven’t seen in 47 years. I feel blessed. It’s like going around in a circle and coming back again.”*

—Fr. Bob Beckman, SJ



**Bob Beckman, SJ**

Entered novitiate at Milford in 1943. Served in Peru for 47 years as teacher, counselor, retreat and spiritual director.

*“The men of Colombiere*

*represent an incredible number of years of service in a variety of vital Jesuit ministries. If moving to Colombiere signifies ‘retirement,’ it’s a very busy retirement of prayer and ministry that, for some, includes celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, writing, offering spiritual direction. I’m especially grateful for our friends and benefactors, like Jim and Marie Gallagher (right), whose prayerful support has made our ministries and Colombiere Center possible. Be assured that the men of Colombiere, and indeed of the Society, pray for you daily.”*

—Fr. Edward Schmidt, SJ, Provincial

