

## COME AND SEE about Becoming a Jesuit

by George Kearney

**F**rom June 21 to August 4, 2002, men contemplating entering the Jesuits can participate in the annual Six Weeks a Jesuit program in New York City. The program, sponsored by the Maryland, New England, and New York Provinces of the Society of Jesus, is designed to allow participants to essentially live like Jesuits for six weeks, in the hope it may be helpful for them as they discern whether or not to choose a religious vocation.

In 1998, Mark Luedtke, SJ, a 1986 graduate of St. Ignatius and 1990 graduate of Georgetown University, had just returned from a trip around the country and found himself wondering about joining the Jesuits. Fr. Brian Paulson, SJ, then vocations director for the Chicago Province, encouraged Mark, who'd just left his job in the retail industry, to consider Six Weeks a Jesuit. He did, and now says "the program helped me understand

more clearly what I was getting into as I approached my candidate's year in Cincinnati."

Participants in Six Weeks will be immersed in Jesuit spirituality, which affirms human potential and focuses on the constant give and take between good and evil in the world. They will live in Jesuit communities in and around New York City, where they'll be able to get a sense of the balance of common living, personal

prayer, and work that characterizes most Jesuit communities. Mark adds that Six Weeks "made me feel very comfortable jumping into community life and grappling with my understanding of what it meant for me to apply to the Society."

The main focus of Six Weeks a Jesuit is the apostolic work, which takes place at Jesuit apostolates in the New York City area. Past sites have included high achievement



"Six weeks a Jesuit" has traditionally been held in New York City (above). In 2003, the program will come to the Midwest when the Chicago and Wisconsin Provinces welcome participants.

(Above right) While the main focus of "Six Weeks a Jesuit" is apostolic work, there are also opportunities for reflection and recreation. This year a mid-program retreat at Linwood Spiritual Center in Rhinebeck, NY, will be offered.

"Six Weeks a Jesuit" provides opportunities for community living and Jesuit spirituality.



summer programs at St. Peter's Prep in Jersey City, Xavier High School in Manhattan, and Fordham Prep in the Bronx. Also included have been a grammar school at St. Aloysius in Harlem, a day camp at St. Ignatius in Brooklyn, and the Jesuit infirmary at Murray-Weigel Hall in the Bronx.

During each of the six weeks, participants gather for a conference designed to introduce them to different aspects of Jesuit life. Topics include Ignatian Prayer and Spirituality, Discernment, the Vows in Jesuit Life, Community Life, the Jesuit Formation programs, and the Jesuit commitment to the advancement of faith and justice in the world. Participants will also take part in a mid-program weekend of reflection at the Linwood Spiritual Center in Rhinebeck, NY.

The program begins with an orientation weekend at Cizek Hall, the Jesuit house of first studies at Fordham University. The concluding weekend, which serves as a so-

cial gathering and celebration, also takes place at Cizek Hall. Mark says that "Six Weeks was a first step in my coming to grips with how God is working in my life. In my initial attempts at surrendering to what God was asking me to be, I was able to easily grasp the ways God was shaping my life and calling me to be a Jesuit." Mark, who lived and worked at Xavier High School in Manhattan during his six weeks, adds that he "would recommend the program to anyone able to participate in it."

Since its inception, Six Weeks a Jesuit has been held on the east coast in New York and Philadelphia. But in 2003, Six Weeks will come to the Midwest for a summer when the Chicago and Wisconsin Provinces play host to the program. In even number years thereafter the program will remain in New York and Philadelphia, and in odd number years it will rotate among various sites around the country. ■

## Upcoming Chicago Province Vocation Events

**Come and See Weekend**  
Chicago: April 5-7, 2002

A weekend for men 18-35 years old who are interested in learning more about the life, spirituality and work of Jesuit priests and brothers, and exploring the possibility of a vocation. You will live in a Jesuit community, meet a diverse group of Jesuits and also get to meet others who are interested in exploring a Jesuit vocation.

**Candidates' Meetings**  
Chicago: Saturday, April 27

These meetings are for men who are seriously discerning a vocation to the Society of Jesus and provide an opportunity to meet Jesuits, hear about our ministries and apostolic works and meet others who are considering the Jesuits. The meetings begin at 10 A.M. and conclude around 1 P.M.

*If you're interested in attending any of these events, contact Fr. Dave Godleski, SJ, for more information.*

Fr. David A. Godleski, SJ,  
Vocation Director, 2050 N. Clark St.  
Chicago, IL 60614  
phone 773-975-6363  
godleski@jesuits-chi.org



Chicago Province Jesuits Mark Luedtke (left), presently in his first year of the Jesuit First Studies Program at Loyola University, Michael Shawver (middle), a first year novice at Loyola House, and Richard Mattox (right), in his first year of the Jesuit First Studies Program at Fordham University, all participated in "Six Weeks a Jesuit" before entering the Society.

Apostolic work sites, have included summer camps, grammar schools, the Jesuit infirmary, summer achievement programs at St Peter's Prep in Jersey City, Xavier High in Manhattan, and Fordham Prep in the Bronx. Joe Koshay, SJ, (far right) a Chicago Province Jesuit pictured here during his "Six Weeks a Jesuit" summer, is currently teaching religion at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis.

