

Fr. Joe Rodrigues, Singing Priest, Shares Songs from His CD

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SPECIAL TO THE CATHOLIC HERALD

Since he was a boy in Hudson, Massachusetts, Fr. Joe Rodrigues, SDS, often sang in choirs, bands and musicals, while attending Catholic school. At one point, he thought he might pursue it professionally, but instead, God called him to the priesthood.

Today, many know him as “the singing priest.”

“When I entered religious life, I assumed any aspirations of singing would simply be used in a liturgical context,” he said. “But in 1999, six years after ordination, a neighbor, who was a musical director for a Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa, asked me, if it was OK for a Catholic priest to sing in a Lutheran Church? I said sure, and sang a couple of songs during their service. While the pastor was giving his sermon, he interrupted himself and said, ‘I am so distracted right now. I have to say, never in my life did I ever imagine a Catholic priest would be singing at one of my services, let alone get applause from my congregation.’”

Later that year, the same pastor hosted an ecumenical service in Wauwatosa and invited Fr. Rodrigues as a soloist with mixed choirs from the area. Following the service, a woman asked to buy his CD. When he said he didn’t have one, the music director offered to record one for him. He agreed only if the proceeds would benefit mission outreach.

“Soon after, we recorded in the church and I was thinking it would be my first and last time, since only my mom and aunt were going to buy it,” he said, laughing. “And now I have just recorded my fifth CD. Ours is a God of surprises.”

As part of the 125-year anniversary of Salvatorian Presence in the United States, Fr. Rodrigues will lead a multimedia program at Divine Savior Holy Angels High School, to highlight the Order’s history and share their enthusiasm for today and speak to the future. This message is woven through a variety of songs from Fr. Rodrigues’ latest CD, *Mission of Mercy*.

“On this CD, there are cover songs with fresh arrangements and styles with some lyric adjustments. The opening song is, *Bring Me Back to Life* and one of the key phrases is ‘Wake me up inside,’ something Pope Francis was asking of all religious orders to do for our world. I see it as a Lazarus kind of story that is a universal cry. The remainder of the songs are in response to that cry for life, forgiveness, healing and unconditional love. Essentially, it is the story of a soul.”

IF YOU WANT TO GO:

Years on Fire

Passion for Mercy Commemorative
Mass, Dinner and Concert

Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017

Divine Savior Holy Angels High School
4257 N. 100th St., Milwaukee

4 p.m. Mass

Social and Dinner to follow

7 p.m. Mission of Mercy Multi-Media
Concert

<http://bit.ly/MissionofMercyMKE>

Special guests include Patti Munsen, who is featured on the CD, as well as students from Divine Savior Holy Angels High School.

Ticket Prices: \$15

Email: sds125@salvatorians.com - with a subject line of “MKE 125” or 414-258-1735