

Faith obvious in sculpture

A duo in sculpture for more than twenty years, Jordan Wanner's warm smile bears a striking resemblance to that of his father's, the late David Wanner. David, God rest his soul, was an alumnus of our Salvatorian school, St. Nazianz in Wisconsin and held his Salvatorian roots close to his heart. "I remember hearing about the Salvatorians at a young age and got the distinct impression that Salvatorians were good men, dedicated to their mission. Fr. Leo Herbst especially made a huge impression on dad and really encouraged him with his interests," said Jordan. In just the last year, while visiting his dad at St. Anne's Salvatorian Campus in Milwaukee, Jordan asked if he was named after the Salvatorian founder, referring to a photo hanging on the wall, Jordan said, "My dad gave an empathetic, 'Oh yeah, absolutely!' response."



Jordan's studio time with his Dad started early!



Wanner Sculpting Studio was moved from the Wanner garage to a nearby industrial park in 1999.

For more than 20 years, Jordan and his dad worked side-by-side in the family business, Wanner Sculpture Studio, which creates hand crafted bronze baptismal fonts and other sculptures for parishes and businesses across the U.S. "When my father was asked how he began his career in sculpture, he would say it started with a bar of soap. He would whittle a block of soap into small figures. He was even working on a sculpture up until about 6 months before he died," said Jordan. "The religious connection is his background and his faith. There is a niche in the art community for religious sculpture, he was very prolific. He didn't do it for the recognition; he did it to fulfil his passion."

So much so, that a number of years ago Jordan had been commissioned to create a bronze baptismal font for a new parish being built in Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, St. John Fischer. He arrived early for the morning meeting and wandered into the old church on site. When looking around he vaguely recognized a sculpture at the back wall. Looking closer, he realized it was a piece his father had done decades earlier; he had seen photos of it over the years. Jordan looked for his dad's name and didn't see it; he had

forgotten to sign it. The parish asked if the sculpture could be refurbished, so when it returned to its home in Milwaukee for some TLC, Jordan was sure to carve 'David Wanner' on the base before refinishing it.

David Wanner loved art. "His connection to liturgical pieces is relatable to his Salvatorian education and is his strong faith shining through," said Jordan. "His philosophy was that truth comes from beauty which comes from God. When people experience beauty they come to know God."



Strong ties to his Salvatorian friends continued long after graduation.