



Society of the Divine Savior (Salvatorians)
Provincial House on 1735 N. Hi Mount Blvd.

That Face!

In 1958, the Trecker Mansion at 1735 Hi Mount Blvd. was passed from the Trecker Family to the Society of the Divine Savior (Salvatorians). The connection with us came from the wife's side of the family through one of our member priests, Fr. Bill Nern, SDS, a noted WWII army chaplain. The house was purchased for the princely sum of \$18,500! With no children, no pets and no one particularly interested in interior decorating living there since then, the house has remained largely intact.

Ever since its purchase the Salvatorians have debated posting a sign of some kind somewhere on the property to call attention to the fact that this is the residence of our Provincial (the chief administrator) and the location of our national office. But sensitive to the residential nature of our neighborhood nothing was ever done. Until now.

In mid-September 2015, a cast of the face of Jesus, the Divine Savior and titular patron of our religious order, was installed on the middle gable above the front porch. The impressive limestone-colored face is surrounded on three sides with the Latin words *Societas Divini Salvatoris*, and is flanked by two horizontal panels inscribed with the Greek letters Alpha (Α) and omega (Ω). For believers this indicates our belief that Christ is the beginning and the end, the meaning all things.

Where did this striking image come from, and how did it get to where it is today? In 1924 (a date that appears at the base of the sculptured face) the Salvatorians built a Provincial Office facing Burleigh St., just west of 68th and immediately across from Holy Cross Cemetery. (In those early days when the street car stopped at 35th St. this was mostly farm land and the Salvatorians quickly gained the reputation of being "the German cemetery priests.") If you visit that building today you will see this sculpture reigning above the unused front entrance. It is not neglected, but is seldom seen or admired. Sadly we do not yet know the name of the artist or its original cost.

In 2014, 90 years after its installation, a mason looked into the possibility of removing the sculpture from Burleigh St. and moving it to Hi Mount. His estimate for the job was about \$5,000, and he could not guarantee that the limestone might not break. So we looked for another solution. Techno-Industrial Inc. of Hartland supplies polymer materials to create molds and casts of sculptures such as ours. Additional advantages to making a cast are its lighter weight, and the fact that multiple copies can always be produced.

An artist friend of the Salvatorians, Mike Yankowski, professor of Design at Northwest Louisiana State University in Natchitoches, offered to fly up and make the cast in return for good Milwaukee food, beer, and company. It proved to be a marriage made in heaven. Mike returned home refreshed and left us with a perfect mold.

Finding someone qualified to make the final cast was more difficult. The mold, though perfect, is complicated with many quirks and back cuts. No job for an amateur! Luckily, John Van de Costecle owner of Techno-

Industrial was able to find just the right man. Brian Vallery of Brian Vallery Productions just happened into John's shop one day and was intrigued with the mold he saw there. He couldn't wait to take on the challenge.

Finally, in mid-September the cast was delivered to Hi Mount and was almost immediately installed with the help of a good friend of the Salvatorians and long-time member of Mother of Good Counsel Parish. Mr. Tony Cuda. All necessary equipment was made available for free by our other good friends at Langer Roofing. A second cast will soon be installed at eyelevel within the front portico of Mother of Good Counsel Parish on Lisbon Ave. for anyone who might like a closer look at this wonderful work of art and devotion.

So far comments from the Salvatorians who have seen the installation have all been very positive. My favorites being: "It looks like it was always there;" and "It really fits the style of the house and does justice to the neighborhood." I hope our neighbors will feel the same way. And knowing that Mr. and Mrs. Trecker were themselves very staunch Catholics, I feel they too would be pleased with this tasteful addition to their house which announces to all who pass by the goodness and kindness of Christ the Savior that we hope emanates from within.

Fr. Dan Pekarske SDS