



# Merry Christmas from InHim Ministries!



## Auld Lang Syne

The very first InHim Ministries team Christmas Dinner, 2002!

Left to right: John Havey, Susan Spiegelberg, Samuel Carlo, Mark Brackins, Denise Blas, Danielle Villegas (not pictured: Sharon Gouveia, Aaron Foege, Malia Livingston)

### Special events so far this year:

Respect life weekend at On-Fire! October, 2009

Celebration of Fr. Damien's canonization at Blessed Sacrament Church

Catechist Retreat at St. Stephen's Parish November, 2009

### Upcoming Events:

February 6<sup>th</sup> - 6:00pm  
On-Fire! Theme: "Nothing is impossible with God!"

February 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>  
Prince of Peace Parish  
Confirmation Retreat

## Happy Birthday, Jesus!

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." -Luke 2:10

"Joy, which was the small publicity of the pagan, is the gigantic secret of the Christian." - G.K. Chesterton

"He comes down; down from the heights of absolute being into time and space, down into humanity...but He goes down to come up again and bring the whole ruined world up with Him." -C.S. Lewis

"Nothing is impossible with God." -Luke 1:37

## St. Damien, Leprosy and the Gift of Pain

A personal reflection by Mark (Marcos) Brackins, Founder of InHim Ministries

God gave me a gift this Christmas that I didn't ask for and wasn't expecting.

The past year has been very painful for me - physically, spiritually and emotionally. Even as I write this, I am recovering from two torn muscles in my upper back and a pinched nerve in my neck, which causes pain when I use my right arm.

This Advent, God reminded me about a book I read many years ago called "Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants." It was written by a doctor who made an astounding discovery about Hansen's disease, or Leprosy.

The medical community at the time thought that physical deformities were a direct result of Leprosy eating away at the body. Dr. Brand discovered that Leprosy doesn't directly destroy skin and tissue, it affects the nervous system.

The reason that people with Hansen's disease suffer deformities is that they can't feel pain! When you or I twist an ankle, we limp. If we hurt a finger, we subconsciously guard it. If we feel a burn, we pull away quickly. People with Hansen's disease don't.

They keep walking on the ankle, don't guard the hand and don't pull away from the fire, because they can't feel pain. The injuries get worse instead of healing, and the physical effects are catastrophic.

I've had a devotion to Fr. Damien for some time, but something has changed since he was canonized. I find myself relating and praying with him more and more, and meditating on that famous picture of him later in life, his face and body swollen from the effects of Hansen's disease under his priestly hat and robe. He could no longer feel physical pain, but certainly still felt emotional and spiritual pain.

God also reminded me pain is something I can offer up to God, who uses everything for good. The last time I experienced so much pain for so long it led to a tremendous conversion in my life. I spent most of the next 20 years in service to the Church.

St. Damien's resurrected body doesn't "need" pain. As with him, one day God will wipe every tear from our eyes, and there will be no more death, mourning, wailing or pain. (Rev 21:4)



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*Memorare*

*Remember, O most gracious  
Virgin Mary, that never was it  
known that anyone who fled  
to your protection, implored  
your help or sought your  
intercession, was left unaided.*

*Inspired with this confidence,  
I fly to you, O Virgin of  
virgins, my Mother; to you do  
I come, before you I stand,  
sinful and sorrowful.*

*O Mother of the Word  
Incarnate, despise not my  
petitions, but in your mercy  
hear and answer me. Amen.*

**We're on the Web!**

**Visit us at:**  
<http://www.inhimhawaii.org>

*Aloha to Gary Boisclair*

InHim Ministries Hawaii wishes a fond farewell and God's blessings to Gary Boisclair. Gary will be joining InHim alumnus Joseph Landry in Washington, D.C. as a pro-life activist and lobbyist.

Gary has been a faithful friend and member of InHim Ministries since 2003.

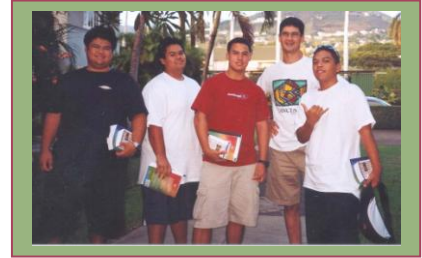
We pray for Gary, Joseph and their co-workers that they will truly be led by the Holy Spirit and that God will put an end to the disgrace of abortion in our country and in the world.

*A special appeal*

Like many organizations, InHim Ministries was very affected by the last economic downturn. We've purposely avoided fundraising efforts which would compete with the Diocese or parishes we've served, and we are very much in need of your continued prayers and financial donations. We also welcome vehicle donations that are in good, working condition.

InHim Ministries is a 501(c) (3) lay association under the authority of the Diocese of Honolulu. Donations are tax deductible.

Mahalo to those of you who have prayed for us and supported us through the years!



Gary Boisclair led the first ever small group of young men boarding at Kamehameha Schools who prepared for the sacrament of Confirmation with InHim Ministries. (2003)

**Joke for the season:**

Q: What do you call a reindeer with earmuffs?

A: You can call it anything you want; it can't hear you!

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