

Summer Visit Bears Fruit

Society of the Divine Word Priests Help out at Risen Lord Food Pantry;
One is Working with the Pastor to Create Video about the Ministry

By Colleen Rowan

The faithful of St. Thomas Parish in Gassaway and Risen Lord Mission in Maysel welcomed Society of the Divine Word priests Father Minh Anh Dinh, SVD, and Father Khánh Minh Hà, SVD, for a visit to their churches and area last week. They were also there to visit Father Thien Duc Nguyen, SVD, pastor of the churches, who is a Society of the Divine Word priest as well. The trio had attended seminary together.

In addition to spending time at the churches and celebrating Masses, Father Minh and Father Khánh rolled up their sleeves and got to work at Risen Lord's food pantry. A ministry of Risen Lord Mission, the food pantry is one of the only places area residents who have fallen on hard times can find food and assistance.

"We helped 238 families last week," Father Thien said.

The food pantry serves about 230 to 250 families at Risen Lord and another 60 to 80 families at St. Thomas each month.

"We also help 330 kids weekly with the backpack program," Father Thien said. "Every month we spend about \$6,000-9,000 to purchase food for the poor in Clay and Braxton" counties.

During their visit, Father Khánh and Father Minh helped unload food deliveries and other provisions for the pantry, packed boxes of food and loaded them into cars in the pantry's drive-thru distribution.

Father Khánh was so moved by the ministry and outreach that he and Father Thien are working on a video about the efforts of the ministry.

In addition to the pantry, the ministry helps people in emergency situations and in need of assistance for utility cut off notice, medical bills and gasoline.

According to the Society of the Divine Word, Father Khánh professed perpetual vows in 2019 and was ordained to the



Courtesy Photo

Following Mass at St. Thomas Parish in Gassaway are, from left, Father Khánh Minh Hà, SVD; Father Minh Anh Dinh, SVD; and Father Thien Duc Nguyen, SVD, pastor.



Courtesy Photo

Father Khánh Minh Hà, SVD, helps unload provisions for Risen Lord Mission's Food Pantry in Maysel.



Courtesy Photo

Father Minh Anh Dinh, SVD, right, helps unload provisions for the food pantry.

priesthood in 2020. He has been serving as a missionary in Ecuador.

Father Minh professed perpetual vows in 2020 and was ordained in 2021. He has been serving in a parish in Missis-

sauga, Ontario, Canada, and is now going back to Chicago to work for the SVD province.

Currently, there are eight Society of the Divine Word priests serving in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, ap-

pointed to 14 churches as pastors and administrators and to the chaplaincy for West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon and WVU Medicine St. Joseph's Hospital in Buckhannon.