

# The NEW WINE PRESS

*Motivated by the Spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ*

April 2008

VOLUME 17 No. 9

## THE PROCLAMATION

*Lac Pham, C.P.P.S.*

The Easter Sunday Gospel noted that the beloved disciple arrived at the tomb ahead of Peter and “he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in” (Jn 20:5). But when he entered the tomb, “he saw and believed” (Jn 20:8b).

In July and August of 1996 I flew back to Vietnam for the first time since my 1975 departure, and took exploratory journeys throughout the country. Here and there I mixed in with the natives—the haves and have-nots, the healthy and the sick, the ruling and the ruled, the settled and the migrant, the owner and the possessed. I got to observe how their lives were structured and directed, and I thought that I had a very clear idea how to carry out our corporate endeavors and how to conquer the struggles of day-to-day living in this land.

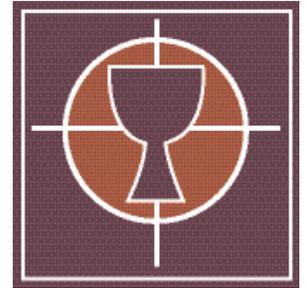
Having “entered the tomb” for over a decade now I am becoming more of a believer in the whole Passion-Death-Resurrection story. The celebrations on January 21, 2007 establishing the C.P.P.S. Vietnam Mission was a stone being removed from the entrance of the tomb. And the celebration of the Definitive Incorporation of the first native C.P.P.S. member on February 17, 2008 was a step further into the tomb to uncover the underlying resurrection. So, I pray that in every coming year I will celebrate a layer of the Passion-Death-Resurrection account with increasingly deeper meaning.

When St. Gaspar said that he “dreamt to have a thousand tongues to proclaim the merits of the Precious Blood,” did he have in mind a language of the Asian Far East? Since the revered missionary of the Far East, St. Francis Xavier, was Gaspar’s patron, it is reasonable to think that he had some Far East Asian tongues in mind. So, when a citizen of Vietnam was definitively incorporated as a C.P.P.S. member, Gaspar’s dream took one further step towards its fulfillment. Father Moderator General Francesco Bartoloni reaffirmed this when he declared in his homily at the incorporation Mass: “With Dominic becoming part of this Congregation and so of its charism, one more tongue is added to that of Gaspar to proclaim in this land of Vietnam the good news of the blood of Christ, blood of covenant, redemption and reconciliation.”

*Fr. Lac Pham is the Director of the Vietnam Mission.*



*Notre Dame Cathedral in Ho Chi Minh City.*



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The Society of the Precious Blood is a fraternal community of priests and brothers founded by St. Gaspar in 1815. Bonded through charity by a promise of fidelity, we are prayerfully motivated by the spirituality of the precious blood of Jesus Christ to serve the needs of the Church as discerned through the signs of the times and in the light of the Gospel.

The Kansas City Province—incorporated members, covenanted companions, and candidates—united in prayer, service and mutual support, characterized by the tradition of its American predecessors, are missionaries of these times with diverse gifts and ministries. In a spirit of joy, we strive to serve all people—especially the poor—with care and compassion, hope and hospitality.

*The New Wine Press* seeks to remain faithful to the charism of our founder, St. Gaspar, and the spirituality of the Blood of Christ with its emphasis on reconciliation, renewal and refounding. We accept and encourage unsolicited manuscripts and letters to the editor. *The New Wine Press* is published monthly. The submission deadline is the 20th of the month.

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## Leadership Notes

Jim Urbanic, C.P.P.S.

I think it best to say that our mission in Vietnam is growing, but not growing too rapidly. There are a combination of factors which have gone into our mission in Vietnam. First, The grace of God. This may seem obvious, but not always. We have tried to cooperate with God's grace and the Church in Vietnam in determining our mission there. Our mission could grow much faster, but Lac, Dien and others in leadership are being slow and deliberate about it.

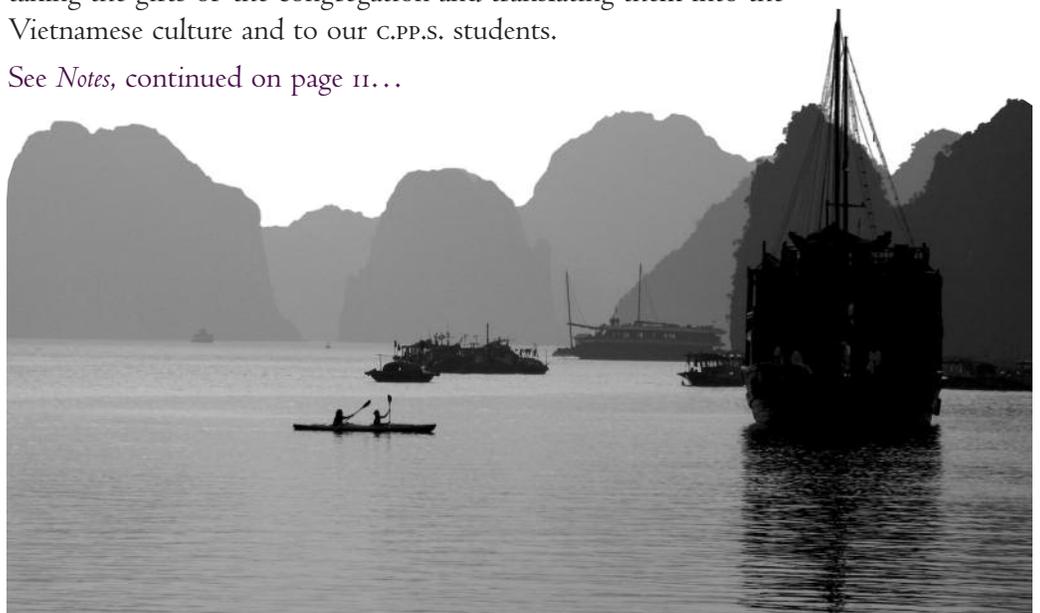
Second, our mission in Vietnam is a community apostolate, not a private one of Lac and Dien. The community receives an annual report at the assembly, we send two members over each year for a retreat, others in leadership have gone over to witness large events (like our first final incorporation this year), and we have kept in general touch with our central administration in Rome about our Vietnam mission. Dien and Lac are known by all of us and they feel the support of the entire province. Community support is strong. Even one of our companions, Mrs. An Nguyen, from California, was at the ceremony in Ho Chi Minh City.

Third, we do not accept each student who applies. The bar for admission is quite high. More students are sent home or just leave than remain. There are many more students who are interested than those who are accepted.

Fourth, we are inculturating into the Vietnamese Church. Lac and Dien have parish appointments, teach English and work in many other areas of Church life in Vietnam. The many other religious groups that attended our public incorporation ceremony attest to that. We are not hidden in Vietnam nor are we "too public." We are in touch with local bishops including the cardinal in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). We are ministering quietly and yet not so quietly. We are getting known, and other religious groups who also are not officially recognized by the government are looking to us to "see how it is done."

Fifth, we are working at translating Precious Blood spirituality and the charisms of our congregation and St. Gaspar for our students. Our students live together, not with Lac or Dien, in what I would call very simple conditions. I have said elsewhere that St. Gaspar would be proud of how we live and minister in Vietnam. We are working at taking the gifts of the congregation and translating them into the Vietnamese culture and to our C.P.P.S. students.

See *Notes*, continued on page 11...





## THANK YOU

*Lac Pham, C.P.P.S. and Dien Truong, C.P.P.S.*

Now that the hype and cheers of the incorporation festivities have tapered off and the solemnity of Holy Week and Easter has been experienced, on behalf of all members and candidates of the Vietnam Mission we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to so many:

Fathers Joseph Pham Ba Lam and Joseph Huynh Thanh Phuong, priests of the Hoa-Hung Parish, for hosting us and providing us with facilities for our celebrations.

Fathers Joe Bathke and Joe Miller for guiding us in our annual retreat and remaining with us from the beginning to the end of events.

*Fr. Lac Pham*

Fathers Francesco Bartoloni, Jim Urbanic, Bob Schreiter, Bill Hubmann, Amaladoss Mariasusai, and Sisters Mi Sook Kwak and Young Ja Lee (A.S.C.), and Mrs. An Nguyen (KC Companion) for celebrating the festivities with us and also for sharing with us the daily activities of local living.

All Community members, companions and friends who have been and still are sources of prayers, support and encouragement for us. 



*Fr. Dien Truong*

Nếu Đức Gioan Phaolô II tiên tri, “Thiên niên kỷ thứ ba của Kitô giáo là Á Châu,” và Đức Benedic XVI đang xúc tiến kế hoạch ấy thì sự kiện 21-01-2007 và 17-02-2008 của C.P.P.S. tại VN chính là cách C.P.P.S. đọc dấu chỉ của thời đại như lời: “Này con đây, con đến để thực thi ý Ngài.”—Dominic Nhan Bui, C.P.P.S.

*[If the words of Pope John Paul II, “The third millenium of Christianity is in Asia,” are a prophecy, and Pope Benedict XVI is realizing that prophecy, then the activities of C.P.P.S. on January 21, 2007 and on February 17, 2008, are the ways the C.P.P.S. are reading the signs of the times in line with Hebrews 10:9: “Behold, I come to do your will.”]*

Tôi không nghĩ rằng tại Việt Nam lại tổ chức được một thánh lễ tạ ơn lớn như vậy. Sự hiện diện của quý cha và quý khách đủ để nói lên sự quan tâm của các vị đối với chi dòng Việt Nam. Và đồng thời cũng cho thấy những nỗ lực của hai cha tại Việt Nam đã làm hết sức mình vì sự phát triển của dòng và cũng là điều khích lệ cho anh em khấn sinh. Điều đó nói lên sự quan phòng của Thiên Chúa và là một hồng ân Thiên Chúa dành cho dòng nói chung và cho chi dòng Việt Nam nói riêng.—Peter Tam Hoang, *pledged candidate*

*[I never thought that we could organize such festive celebrations of thanksgiving in Vietnam. The presence of the Moderator General, the Provincial Director, other C.P.P.S. members, and many guests of the community in Vietnam as well as from abroad is more than enough to reveal their care and concern for the Vietnam Mission. The liturgical ceremonies of pledged candidacy and definitive incorporation manifested the best of efforts from the two C.P.P.S. members in Vietnam to encourage the candidates and to further the cause of the Community. All these events were testimonies of God’s providential blessings to the Community, particularly to the C.P.P.S. Vietnam Mission.]*

*The members, pledged candidates and students of the Vietnam Mission.*



# THE PROMISE

Bill Hubmann, C.P.P.S.



From l to r: Fr. Bill Hubmann, pledged candidate John Vianney Loi Nguyen, and Fr. Joe Bathke.

When I announced to my family and friends around Christmastime that I was going to Vietnam in February I got a lot of raised eyebrows, strange looks, and the response “What? Are you crazy? Why in the world would anyone want to go to Vietnam?” When I told them that we had a mission there and that I was going to visit friends and that we were going

to celebrate the profession (definitive incorporation) of our first member there, they responded with, “But is it safe? What about the Communists?”

I consider myself truly blessed in having the opportunity of traveling to Vietnam and visiting our members, companions, students and friends there. The C.P.P.S. mission, while in its infancy, has touched the lives of many people across the country. It becomes clear as time goes on that we have a place and a purpose in being there. Fathers Lac and Dien have made friends with some truly admirable and helpful members of the local clergy. They have gathered in community some very bright, hopeful and inquisitive young men and women who in time could have a significant impact on the Church in Vietnam. Obviously we are starting small with high hopes.

The Catholic people of Vietnam have had their share of persecution through the centuries. They are poor and hard-working and all have stories told by their ancestors of the struggles and pains of the past. More than half of the Vietnamese population was born after the unification of the country—or the fall of Saigon depending on your perspective—in 1975. The greatest resource they have is a massive amount of cheap labor. Corporations from China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, the United States and Europe have all profited greatly as the people eke out a living on as little as three dollars a day. Ho Chi Minh City’s millions move about feverishly on their little motorcycles. Vietnam is a land ripe for development and ripe for a message of hope and healing.

During the years 1798-1801 many Christians took refuge in the jungle near Quang Tri, a

village in central Vietnam. They were hungry and sick and prepared for martyrdom. One day as they gathered in prayer a lady surrounded by lights appeared to them. She told them that she was the Mother of God come to encourage and console them. She advised the people to use the leaves of the ferns (*La Vang*) which surrounded them in the jungle to heal their ailments and she promised to hear and answer their prayer with maternal generosity.

When the persecution ended the people left their jungle hiding place and returned to their homes. But they never forgot her appearance or her kindness.

Over 100,000 Christians died in the persecution. In 1820 a shrine was built and to this day tens of thousands of pilgrims stream there every year. Next year the Catholic Church will celebrate 350 years of presence in Vietnam.

At the end of the Mass on February 17th welcoming Dominic as a member and Joseph and Peter as pledged candidates, Fr. Lac gave a gift of a handcarved wooden statue of Our Lady of LaVang to the C.P.P.S. members, the two A.S.C. sisters from Korea and our Companion An from California. He asked that we take her home with us as a constant reminder of our visit and that we should remember and pray daily for the growth and success of the Vietnam mission through her intercession and the intercession of Saint Gaspar.

Like Our Lady of La Vang, our mission in Vietnam is to hear the prayers of the people and to comfort, heal, help and console. Truly a worthy cause. 🙏

Fr. Bill Hubmann is a hospital chaplain at Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center in Chicago, IL.



“Ho Chi Minh City’s millions move about feverishly on their little motorcycles. Vietnam is a land ripe for development and ripe for a message of hope and healing.”



Mary Pelligrino, CSJ writes in a Fall 2000 *Horizon* article, “I believe that the great hope for religious life lies in our capacity to reclaim our prophetic identity along with the unique character and expression of religious life that each of our congregations represents.”

These words were fresh in my mind during my recent trip to Vietnam, when I was on retreat with the men and women discerning their vocational call, and again as I witnessed the definitive incorporation of Dominic Nhan, and the pledged candidacy of Peter Tam and Joseph Truc. I was privileged to be present for a truly memorable moment in the life of the Kansas City Province and the Precious Blood Mission in Vietnam.



*“These men and women genuinely drew strength from being together.”*

I believe that by our support and presence in Vietnam we have taken a step in doing what the above author believes is the “great hope of religious life.” It was and is important for me to say this because what I experienced in Vietnam demonstrated that the Precious Blood charism is having profound impact. It is not the same as what I have seen and been part of here in the United States—but, as I am learning, that is probably for the best.

The men and women on the retreat possessed a freshness of thought, anchored by solid faith and love of God that is demonstrated by their commitment to continuing in the discernment process and the sacrifices they make to live in the spirit of Gaspar. Their questions and concerns reveal a desire to learn and absorb everything they can about what it means to be Precious Blood. They take very little for granted and are filled with gratitude for the opportunity to journey with the Precious Blood community.

*“In their simple life style they give a strong witness to the people exemplifying a spirit of hospitality and an attitude that all are welcome.”*

I was especially struck by how much community means to them. These men and women genuinely drew strength from being together. I couldn’t help but notice that they were usually gathered in groups during breaks or when there was free time. For example, during the retreat the Benedictine sisters asked us to do the dishes and clean up after each meal and to do this in silence. It was inspirational to witness

the group pitching in together—and with twenty-three people this was far more than needed to stay but stay the majority did. And the smiles and energy present in the room was a wonderful community experience. In their simple life style they give a strong witness to the people exemplifying a spirit of hospitality and an attitude that all are welcome.

The retreat offered me a glimpse of the men and women interested in exploring the charism of St. Gaspar and the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. The definitive incorporation and pledged candidacy ceremony provided some insights into the broader community that has been touched by the Precious Blood presence in Vietnam. The number of priests, brothers and sisters both religious and diocesan who attended the ceremony was clearly a testimony to how the ministry that Lac, Dien and the candidates have provided for the church is valued.

Valued also is the example that has been provided for ministry to those who are pushed to the edge of society or church. These relationships speak of collaboration and thinking outside of the box in order to address the



needs that are before you which, I believe, are necessary in building the foundation for the community.

I am privileged to have had the opportunity to visit Vietnam, to have had the retreat experience with the men and women in

*See Hope, continued on page 11...*

Even today in the United States, we have necessarily become more aware of the need for inter-religious dialogue in an increasingly multicultural and diverse society. While Christianity and its Catholic tradition certainly comprise one of the largest world religious populations, everyone in the West immediately recognizes that it is by no means one cohesive or monolithic expression of our faith.

Frequently, however, when we view other cultures we fall into three traps. First, we make the mistake of believing their religious expressions to be monolithic. Second, we think that they should be organized as is our own religious culture. We do this because we think it will help our understanding when we place the unfamiliar in our own familiar categories. Our third trap is to find all the similarities in religions and then make that frequently heard statement, “Oh, it’s really all just the same one God whom we all worship in different manifestations.” None of these three ways of thinking about inter-religious dialogue is particularly helpful or respectful.

Just as our own community recognizes the same faith we share with our Latino Catholic brothers and sisters, we also know that there are major differences in the expression of our own faith in this very different culture. The Encuentros of the 1980s taught us to distinguish enculturation and assimilation as well as good principles of religious dialogue. So, too, as our community enters Vietnam, a culture every bit as old as our own—and hardly a monolithic society culturally and certainly not religiously—we will be engaged in a cultural and inter-religious dialogue. Vietnam is a very complex country.

The profile of the Precious Blood missionary calls us “to be evangelized by the revealed Word of God in Jesus

Christ and by the living Word of God present in the people and in the values of the culture to whom we are sent.” The latter part of this connects well to the statement of John Paul II in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, “The Holy Spirit works effectively even outside the visible structure of the Church, making use of the *semina verba* (seeds of the word) that constitute a kind of common soteriological root present in all religions” (81).

The presence of the Word in any culture is not to lead to mere reductionistic conclusions, but to invite us to truly respect that culture’s history and religious experience. So, in the same C.P.P.S. profile, our mission calls us “to respect and promote the inculturation of the Church in every society, to educate ourselves in other cultures and languages, to intercultural and international sensitivity, to an ecumenism disposed to dialogue and to collaboration with other religions.”



*Our mission calls us to respect and promote the inculturation of the Church in every society, to educate ourselves in other cultures and languages, to intercultural and international sensitivity, to an ecumenism disposed to dialogue and to collaboration with other religions.*

Under the caption of community in the profile, we are called to embrace “intercultural, international, and intergenerational community living.” Lastly under the title of spirituality we are invited to “inclusivity and multicultural diversity, openness, and renewal of person, culture, society and Church.” Living and manifesting these qualities here and in Vietnam presents challenges and opportunities to our province.

Vietnam is the 13th most populous country in the world, with more than 90 million people identifying themselves in more than 50 ethnic minorities. While there are many estimates and no absolute statistics, Vietnam is approximately 85% Buddhist, roughly 9% Christian, and about 6% other. More precisely, each of



*This makes inter-religious dialogue very slow, patient, and respectful work. But these are exactly the principles embedded in what we are coming to understand is the real work of reconciliation. Authentic dialogue is the central method of inter-religious work.*

these larger categories represent nuanced populations including Islam, Taoism, Confucianism, and animistic ancestor honoring. This religious landscape was shaped over millennia, most recently from the Christian perspective by the arrival of the French missionaries in the 1700s, the time between 1941-1954, years of war, and the communist regime since 1975.

While Mahayana Buddhism would seem to be the predominant religious cultural practice, Buddhism in Vietnam as everywhere else is really very diverse and representative of many historical schools, lineages, practices, and philosophies—just as Christianity has its many denominations. Unlike Christianity, Buddhism is not organized in any kind of hierarchical and centralized structure.

We also need to understand that the forms of Buddhism which came to the West through zen, Merton, and Tibet are already colored by a certain Western lens, often highly “romanticized” and “popularized.” Buddhists do not sit in solemn contemplation, legs crossed yoga style, head bowed and eyes shut on a cushion all day contemplating “nothingness/emptiness” (*sunyata*), but rather as David Steindl-Rast and Masao Abe have more aptly put it “unbounded openness.” Engaged Buddhism has every orientation toward social justice and action, just as certain strains of our own Catholicism.

It is in this religious landscape that our community has many rich opportunities, not only to build Church within the Catholic framework which already exists, but also to enter necessarily into inter-religious dialogue. Our central groundwork from our perspective is *Nostra Aetate* of Paul VI from Vatican II.

Buddhism comes with a very different set of principles and perspectives. For example while many comparisons can be drawn between Christ and the Buddha, ultimately both are completely unique, a reality which cannot be “smoothed over” or homogenized. This makes inter-religious dialogue very slow, patient, and respectful work. But these are exactly the principles embedded in what we are coming to understand is the real work of reconciliation. Authentic dialogue is the central method of inter-religious work.

From our end of things, we can certainly always hold in prayer Lac, Dien, the members and candidates, and our mission, and at the same time educate ourselves about the religious landscape in which we will be working. May I recommend three solid texts: Walpola

Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (Grove Press, 1974) as an introduction; *John Paul II and Inter-religious Dialogue*, Sherwin and Kasimow, editors (Orbis Books, 1999) as a response to *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*; and finally *Speaking of Silence*, edited by Susan Walker (Paulist Press, 1985). 🌸

*Fr. Alan Hartway teaches at Naropa University in Boulder, CO.*





I lived in a beautiful brownstone at the time. It was a nine-room flat with wooden floors, chandeliers, stained glass windows, a fireplace, beautiful wooden columns and a big courtyard with stone statues of angels and gargoyles, a perfect place for a Halloween party. At first I hesitated, being a single mom with adult children. This would be my first real party. My uneasiness came from having my oldest son, who was twenty four at the time, and my youngest brother, twenty six in this type of setting. I come from a family of nine; five boys, and four girls. I am the fifth oldest. My little brother Tony was like my son. He grew up with my children.

As it turned out we had a blast! One of my sisters videotaped the whole party. We laughed so much. I can't remember when we had so much fun. My brother Tony came as a clown; Erika his wife, who was seven months pregnant, was dressed as a witch. Little did I know this would be the last day I would see my brother alive.

As a 911 police tele-communicator since 1991, I thought I could handle almost any call that came my way. And I did—until October 26, 2002. That Saturday morning I received a call that would change my life forever.

I was awakened by the phone ringing, and as I answered there was a hysterical voice, a woman on the line. I could not yet concentrate on what she was saying for the background voice was overpowering. It also was the voice of a woman, and it sounded more like wailing. The voice sounded familiar. As I listened more carefully I was able to recognize the voice as that of my mother! My God! What was happening? Finally her voice was clear. She was screaming, "Tony! Tony! Tony!" That was my brother's name. It was a voice I would never forget.

What seemed simultaneously, I tuned in to the voice that was trying to talk to me—Maria, the wife of my brother Angel. She was telling me something happened to my brother Tony, and that I should go by mother's house right away. I felt confused, and now feeling my own heart pounding, feared the worst.

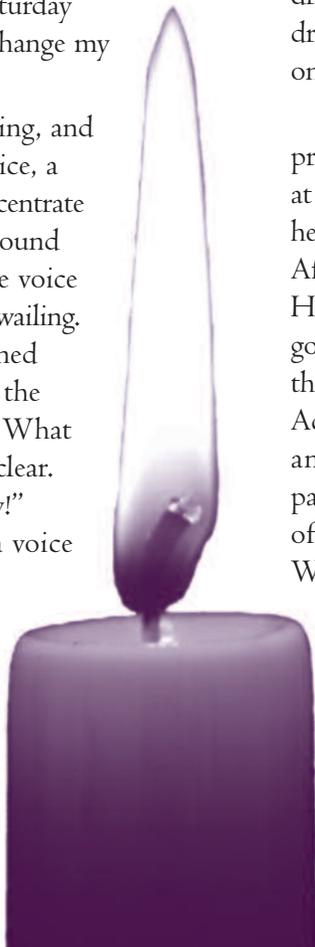
As I came back to my senses, I insisted on knowing what had happened. Maria responded, "It's Tony; he was in an accident! He didn't make it!" I couldn't believe it. It seemed like Tony had just left my house. We had all been here together, laughing, dancing. What time was it? She doesn't know what she was talking about. This could not be true!

As I began the drive down Lakeshore Drive to my mother, I detoured to Mount Sinai Hospital. Maria had told me that is where Tony was. I felt she was wrong, she didn't know what she was talking about. I began calling my sisters, my brothers and other family members, but nobody was answering their phones. My heart was pounding even harder, or maybe it was not pounding at all. I could not tell the difference anymore. Where was everybody? Was I dreaming? It felt like a dream, a nightmare—one that I still have not been able to wake up from.

*Her voice was clear.  
She was screaming,  
"Tony! Tony! Tony!"  
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Early morning, about 2:30 a.m., as Tony and his pregnant wife Erika drove home, they saw a person down at the curb at Western Avenue and 21st Street. Without hesitation Tony reversed his vehicle, a Black Trailblazer. After stopping Tony realized it was a homeless person. He asked Erika for two dollars to give this man. As Tony got out of his vehicle, a car pulled up next to him and the male passenger asked him, "What you be about?" According to Erika, my brother replied, "I am not about anything, I am with my family." At that point, the passenger pulled out a gun, and as Erika began to get out of the vehicle the man pointed the gun at my brother. While Tony stood by the door of his vehicle, with the two dollars in his hand, the man in the car pulled the trigger. One shot at close range hit him in the neck and Erick saw Tony fall to the ground defenseless. One shot took my brother's life. He lay there lifeless, with blood gushing from his neck. Tony never had a chance. We were told he died almost instantly.

See *New Creation*, continued on next page...



# PROPHET OR PATRIOT?

Mark Miller, C.P.P.S.

When Rev. Jeremiah Wright, the pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ (of which Barack Obama is a member), gave the sermon which has become the substance of daily news, was his message unpatriotic or prophetic? Did he speak as a prophet or was he simply expressing his anger and outrage against the policies of our nation?

When we lay aside our initial reaction and lay aside what news commentators want us to focus on, what did we really hear? Was it the message that seemed to offend so many? Was it something we have a difficult time hearing because it strikes us to the heart? How many of us have ever really listened to African-American preachers as they “break open the Word” and allow that “Word” to speak to the everyday experiences of people? How many of us have ever listened to them talk about the “Exodus story” as one which parallels their “slavery story”? How many of us have ever heard the comparison between Joseph and his brothers and the experience of many of our black brothers and sisters?

Too often, we read these ancient stories that speak of an enslaved people and we keep the “story” at a distance, as if it belongs to the past and our ancestors in faith. But for those who have experienced “enslavement,” for those who have experienced being betrayed and “sold down the river,” these stories can become personal testimonies of the power of God. They declare that deliverance comes from the hand of God.

We as a people, as a people of the United States, must examine our policies and our influence in the world.

There are decisions being made and actions taken today that would not hold up under the scrutiny of the gospel. There are policies being promulgated under the guise of “defending our country” that would not hold up under the scrutiny of moral principles. There are actions supported by our government leaders that violate international law. When these things are confronted, when these things are brought to light under the scrutiny of scripture, is one then judged to be unpatriotic—or a prophet?

*Am  
I an American  
who happens to be a  
Christian, or am I a  
Christian first who  
happens to live in the  
United States?*

When Peter and the other apostles were brought before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:21-32) and told to “keep silent,” and when they replied, “Obedience to God comes before obedience to [human authority]” were they being prophetic or were they incorrigible?

At some point, we must all ask ourselves, “On what principles do I stand?” Am I an American who happens to be a Christian, or am I a Christian first who happens to live in the United States? Which laws will have the final determination over my actions and speech, the laws of my country or the laws as outlined in the Book of Life? Choosing the laws of one’s country over the laws of God does not make one a patriot.

Denouncing the unjust laws and behaviors of one’s country does not make one unpatriotic. It may, however, get you in trouble or even in prison. There will not be a medal of honor awaiting this person, but rather the “imperishable crown” promised to those who remain faithful. 🕊️

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*New Creation, continued from previous page...*

Although this horrible crime has taken a part of my life that no one can ever replace, through the support of my family and our faith, we have accepted this as “Tony’s Destiny.” My nephew Erasmo Antonio Marquez was born Christmas Day.

After going through this ordeal, we realized how many other families have gone and are still going through this. In search of my brother’s assailants we have stumbled over a great need of services lacking in our city. We have come to realize our dream, our “destiny,” a nonprofit organization founded in Tony’s memory—SAVE Another LIFE (Sisterhood Against Violence Everyday in memory of Antonio E Marquez Love in Our Families and Educate). Our mission is to provide emergency assistance and emotional support to victims of violent crimes, to build safer communities through community awareness, block clubs and working with at-risk youth and their families, and to network with existing community resources and law enforcement agencies. These services are implemented with the philosophy of the Balance and Restorative Justices practices in mind. We respect all races, religions and cultures. 🕊️

*Sarita Villarreal is a board member of the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation and the Chicago organizer for the Illinois Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence. She is also a frequent participant in the PBMR hope and healing circles.*

# THE PLANTING

Joe Miller, C.P.P.S.

These days we see new life all around us and we may even get the urge to start planting seeds in a vegetable or flower garden. At home in Ohio where I grew up, this was a time to prepare the soil and plant a large vegetable garden for food for our supper table. After planting the seeds, we would have to wait and let the seeds grow. It was exciting to see the new life come out of the ground, truly the work of God.

As I reflect on my trip to Vietnam, on vocations and this time of the year, I cannot help but think of planting seeds. In Vietnam, Fr. Lac and Fr. Dien have been planting the seeds of Precious Blood spirituality for several years now. Having had the privilege of first hand experience, I can now better appreciate their efforts—efforts that are bearing fruit.

Fr. Joe Bathke and I had the privilege of walking with 20 Precious Blood Candidates (7 women and 13 men) during our time in Vietnam. We shared our faith with them as they shared their faith with us and each other. I witnessed how the candidates were concerned about one another, how male and female as well as different social groups respected one another.

I also saw the bond of charity working within the community. Everyone had their tasks or responsibilities and carried them out at the appropriate time without



Joe Bathke (l) and Joe Miller in a reflective moment from the balcony of their hotel.

complaining; there even seemed to be a sense of joy in doing these things.

I appreciated the inclusivity of the group and the openness to one another. I do not see any of this having occurred without the seeds planted by Frs. Lac and Dien. Joe and I tried to further nurture those seeds so that

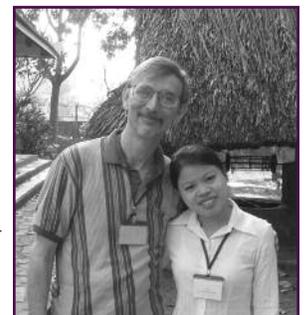
Precious Blood spirituality may continue to grow in Vietnam.

Reflecting on the missionary activity in Vietnam reminds me of our call to plant the seeds of Precious Blood Spirituality wherever we work and minister. We do that by our care, love and prayers for

one another. As we plant, we leave the growing in God's hands. We may or may not see the harvest, but may we all have the zeal needed to keep planting—so that some day there may be a thousand tongues proclaiming the Blood of Christ as St. Gaspar dreamed.

Thank you for your prayers and support while Fr. Joe Bathke and I were in Vietnam. It was a life-giving experience for both of us. May God reward you for your support for us and the Vietnam Mission. 🙏

Fr. Joe Miller is the Director of Vocations for the province.



Joe Bathke with one of the A.S.C. candidates.

Notes, continued from page 2...

Sixth, Lac and Dien themselves work hard not only for the Church in Vietnam but for our community as well. Formation of our candidates is only one part of their lives. They minister in parishes, bury the dead and are engaged in other ministries in the local diocese. They are good examples of priesthood to both the Church and our students, since they do not put themselves first. Our students notice the difference.

Let us continue to pray for our mission in Vietnam. 🙏

*Fr. Jim Urbanic serves the province as Provincial Director and a member of the Leadership Team.*

Hope, continued from page 5...

discernment, to be present for the first definitive incorporation of a member formed entirely in Vietnam, to have learned a little about the church, and to share in the hopes and dreams of the many people who extended their hospitality and care. I am excited about the future of the community, believing that by looking forward to what we need to do now we will be a strong and vibrant witness in the present, for the future. 🙏

*Fr. Joe Bathke is the Director of Formation for the province, and is currently enrolled in the Institute of Religious Formation at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, IL.*

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will they know it is the Lord who walks with them? The Emmaus story ends with the two disciples stopping for the night and Jesus staying with them at their insistence. And while they ate together, Jesus “took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them.” Their eyes were opened and they would later tell how Jesus “was made known to them in the breaking of bread.”

John Shea, in a commentary on this gospel, tells about his grandfather who used to play a game with him when he was a small child. With a cookie in one hand, he would put both behind his back, and then bring them to the front, fists closed: “If you can guess which hand holds the cookie, you can have it.”

Shea recounts that when he would finally make a choice, his grandfather would open both hands, and each would hold half a cookie. He had broken the cookie in half while holding it out of sight. Before Shea could finish complaining, “But you cheated,” his grandfather would eat one half and say, “You had better hurry.”

The point of this story is, of course, that we break bread and we break life in this way—half for us and half for others. The secret of sacrifice is that there is more love when it is given away than when it is kept.

The other secret to sacrifice is found in the words: “Jesus took bread and gave thanks”—at which moment they recognized him. Shea says Jesus did what we are all capable of doing. Those who sacrifice are people of gratitude, who give from fullness and from the recognition of what God has given and continues to give. That is how others will recognize the presence of Jesus as we walk with them. Their eyes will be opened—and so will ours. Half for me and half for you, and we both have all we need. 🙏

## PROVINCE CALENDAR

June 1, 2008

Fr. Vince Hoying 50th anniversary of ordination. Sacred Heart Church, Sedalia, MO, 11:30 a.m.

June 9-12, 2008

Province Assembly, Ramada Inn, St. Joseph, MO

July 28-August 1, 2008

Members' Retreat with Bishop Martin Amos of Davenport, with the Cincinnati Province. Shrine of our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, IL

November 8-9, 2008

Companion Retreat with Fr. Bob Schreiter, C.P.P.S. Marillac Conference Center, Leavenworth, KS.

In the March 2008 issue, the article *Gardening in Nicaragua* failed to identify the author, Lynda Quistorff. She and her husband Ed, who was also featured, are Precious Blood companions and members of Sacred Heart Parish in Warrensburg, Missouri. They are currently featured on the CFCA website at [www.cfcausa.org/SponsorProfiles.html#quistorff](http://www.cfcausa.org/SponsorProfiles.html#quistorff)

Thank you for the prayers, cards, Masses and kind words following the death of my dear Mother. Your thoughtfulness and kindness brought me great spiritual strength during a difficult time.

Lou Carey

*Piececitos*

Piececitos de niño,  
azulosos de frío,  
¡cómo os ven  
y no os cubren,  
Dios mío!

¡Piececitos heridos  
por los guijarros todos,  
ultrajados de nieves  
y lodos!

El hombre ciego ignora  
que por donde pasáis,  
una flor de luz viva  
dejáis;

que allí donde ponéis  
la plantita sangrante,  
el nardo nace más  
fragante.

Sed, puesto que marcháis  
por los caminos rectos,  
heroicos como sois  
perfectos.

Piececitos de niño,  
dos joyitas sufrientes,  
¡cómo pasan sin veros  
las gentes!

*Gabriela Mistral*

*Little feet of children blue with cold, how can they see you  
and not cover you—dear God!*

*Little wounded feet cut by every stone, hurt by snow and mire.*

*Man, blind, does not know that where you pass,  
you leave a flower of living light.*

*And where you set your bleeding foot,  
the spikenard blooms more fragrant.*

*Walking straight paths, be heroic, little feet, as you are perfect.*

*Little feet of children, two tiny suffering jewels,  
how can people pass and not see you!*

Translated from the Spanish by Doris Dana



*Two children stand together in the  
rain at a temporary shelter for people  
displaced by violence in Kenya,  
February 2008.*

I came across this photo recently in *America* magazine, and it has bothered me to look at it since. Nor can I set it aside or turn away; it continues to pull me in to the scene and to take me inside of myself.

As I have been putting this issue together I have also been preparing a homily for this coming Sunday, with its gospel story of the two disciples walking the road to Emmaus. In this photo's version of the story, the stranger (later to be revealed as the risen Lord) has not yet joined them. It is just the children, these two tiny disciples. They have no choice but to walk.

They are like so many people everywhere who must walk—to search for food and water; to find work; to make their way across borders looking for hope and a future; to escape in terror from the violence of war and the fury of nature. Many are children; all are children of God, disciples on the way, hearts and feet filled with hurt.

“And it happened that. . . Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.” How might I write Jesus into the story depicted in this photo—or any of the countless examples of those who walk without hope? And how

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