



# The New Wine Press

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

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Volume 24 No. 8  
April 2015



Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring  
*page 4*

Thinking About Homelessness  
*page 5*

2015 Jubilarians  
*page 6*

My Testimony: Undocumented  
*page 7*

Embracing a Spirit of Renewal  
*page 8*

Laurene O'Connor, January 1,  
1917-February 11, 2015  
*page 9*

Through, With and In  
*page 10*

A Light No One Can Extinguish  
*page 11*

Accompaniment  
*page 12*



*Provincial Director Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S. blesses newly pledged candidates of the Vietnam Mission.*

## *A Cloud of Witnesses: Memory, Joy, and Hope in Vietnam*

*by Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S., Provincial Director*

Three images from our recent visitation of our members and candidates in Vietnam are etched in my memory: the joy on the faces of Joseph Phung Van Ky, Vincent Vu Thai Hoa, and Paul Pham Xuan Anh Hao as they became Pledged Candidates; the celebration at the Pastoral Center in Saigon where thousands of religious women and men serving in Vietnam gathered to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life on February 2; and the hospitality we received throughout our visit, not only from our members and candidates but from the families who opened their homes to us.

One of the first things you see entering a Vietnamese home is an altar honoring the family's ancestors. These altars are often elaborate and ornate, decorated with vigil lights, flowers, incense, and pictures. This communion of saints, which the Letter to the Hebrews calls "a cloud of witnesses," offers

*continued on next page*



*Vincent Hoa Vu Thai, Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S., Paul Hao Pham Xuan, Fr. Lac Pham, C.P.P.S., and Joseph Ky Phung Vu.*

a sacred connection and occupies a holy place in every home. As the incense rises on these domestic shrines, it is easy to envision how this cloud of witnesses is caused by people on fire with love, on fire with a passion for peace and prayer, truth and justice. These are the ones the great mystic, Catherine of Siena, must have been referring to when she advised, “Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.” As Members, Companions, and Volunteers of the Precious Blood, our common challenge is to set the world on fire by being faithful to the call of God that we have heard in our hearts.

We saw this fire in the gathering of religious at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center in Saigon on February 2 as thousands gathered to commemorate the Year of Consecrated Life. Scanning the large crowd, the most notable feature was youthfulness. The old adage, “youth will be served,” is turned on its ear in Vietnam as young religious serve the country. Under a blistering sun and 95 degree temperatures, the young religious, seminarians, and candidates, many of whom were clad in cassocks, veils, and habits, broke into song and dance at various intervals. Many of the songs were accompanied by gestures, and though I did not understand the language or the lyrics, the energy and enthusiasm were genuine. The oppressive heat was not a detriment to the dream of religious life expressed by these young religious. Indeed, the fire in the sky mirrored the fire on the grounds of the Saigon Pastoral Center.

My favorite memory from our time in Vietnam is the joy on the faces of Joseph Ky, Paul Hao, and Vincent Hoa

when they became Pledged Candidates on February 7. In meeting with each of them individually during the week prior to the ceremony and listening to their stories of responding to God’s call, I was deeply impressed with their depth of knowledge and understanding of Precious Blood spirituality and the charism of St. Gaspar. Brother Daryl Charron and I stayed with these candidates, Peter Tam Hoang, and Fr. Dien Truong at Xavier House, our new formation home. Our Members and Candidates were most hospitable, and showed they are steadfast in prayer and presence.

Ky, Hao, and Hoa bring a wealth of gifts to the Precious Blood community and the Church in Vietnam. They each bring a passion for art, law, and music, and are very gifted in living their passion. But even more important than their passion is their compassion for those who are poor or weak, those who are imprisoned in body, mind, or soul, and those who are on the margins and edges of society, which is where our founder would want us to be.

The clouds that form from our brothers and sisters in Vietnam, these witnesses who are on fire with God’s love, compassion, and peace, hovers over the landscape and signals to all that where there is smoke, there is fire. Not the fire that destroys but the fire that dares to draw others near to the love of God.

In cloud terminology, there is something called a halo effect which appears as a thin circle surrounding the sun or moon formed by ice crystals in cirrus clouds. Since we often associate a halo with saints, as Missionaries of the Precious Blood the challenge for each of us as we

seek to take our place in this cloud of witnesses is to remember we are raised to a high altitude only when we take the lowest place. When the fire of God's mercy and compassion has removed the weight of our sin, the cloud formation reflects God's redeeming grace. The cloud of witnesses captures a belief in the expansive love of God for all peoples.

We experienced this expansive love on the Sunday following the Pledged Candidacy ceremony as Fr. Lac Pham led us on a pilgrimage to the northern part of the Mekong Delta region where we celebrated Mass at a small mission church bursting at the seams with new converts, and met many families in the surrounding villages as we experienced their remarkable hospitality. As the Vietnam Mission continues to discern its future vision and mission, this region of the Mekong Delta offers one possibility for expanding our ministry with those on the margins.

Reflecting on the commitment of our young brothers in Vietnam, I recall a song we sang at Morning Prayer during the CMSM meeting in Nashville a couple years ago. "Here Am I" by Brian Wren reflects God's call to gather at the table of God's Word and Sacrament:

*Here am I, where two or three are gathered,  
Ready to be altered, sharing wine and bread,  
Here am I, where those who hear the preaching.*

## ***Important Dates to Save***

### **Provincial Electoral Assembly**

April 13-16, 2015  
Church of the Annunciation  
701 North Jefferson Street, Kearney, MO 64060

### **Provincial Banquet**

Celebrating the Installation of the Provincial Council (to be elected April 2015)  
June 1, 2015  
Savior of the World Pastoral Center  
12601 Parallel Parkway, Kansas City, KS 66109  
All Members and Companions Welcome

### **Members Retreat**

June 1-5, 2015  
Savior of the World Pastoral Center  
Kansas City, KS

## **The New Wine Press**

*Missionaries of the Precious Blood*  
Kansas City Province  
[www.kcprovince.org](http://www.kcprovince.org)

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.

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# *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*

by Kathy Keary and Vicky Otto, Precious Blood Companions Co-directors

One of the best known works of Baroque music is “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” from a cantata written by Johann Sebastian Bach in 1723. It is a popular piece that may not be known by name, but many have heard it played at weddings by an organist or pianist. Recently it has had a resurgence of popularity through new vocal adaptations by several artists. In the lyrics, the beauty of Easter springs forth: “Jesu, joy of man’s desiring/holy wisdom, love most bright/drawn by thee our souls aspiring/soar to uncreated light.”

Throughout the season of Easter, we frequently hear of the everlasting love of God that Bach alludes to and the disciples’ reaction to it. Whether it is was the disciples’ first reactions to the risen Lord at table in Emmaus or behind the locked doors of the Upper Room, they came to understand the depth of love he had for them. Saint Gaspar understood the depth of this love, writing: “May the love of God inflame our souls with holy zeal, and lead us to the perfection that is proper to us” (Letter #300).

Like the disciples after the Resurrection, our souls are also called to soar from our experience of the Risen Lord. Gaspar writes: “Oh how we are comforted in our souls by the mysteries of the Resurrection! Yes, please pray that I too may truly be risen with Jesus, that is to say, to a new life and to an eager pursuit of holiness” (Letter #2026). What does that soaring Bach wrote about mean to us as a Precious Blood community? It is easy to get discouraged and stay in a place of fear and sadness similar to what the disciples initially felt, hearing about what is happening in the world, our communities, our Church and even our families. Yet we are united on a journey Fr. Joe Nassal describes as, “an uncommon journey of truth and tenderness, compassion and care.”

The Vision Statement adopted by the xx General Assembly of our Community says: “As a courageous community of missionary disciples, the Cry of the Blood calls us to the edges of society to be ambassadors of Christ for reconciliation and hope as we minister with the people of God.” The Companion Vision statement *Gather, Send* calls Companions to: “share the gifts we have been given with the rest of the world.” Like the disciples in the Upper Room on Easter morning, we

must also step past fear and sadness, becoming an Easter people who soar with the gift of love God has given us. It may be a word of peace shared with family members, or caring for the poor and marginalized in our society. It may be a call to be prophetic witnesses to the need for mercy and compassion in our broken world. No matter what our gifts are, when they are shared we give witness to the liberating love we experience at Easter.

We follow in the footsteps of the disciples who formed the early Christian communities, we follow those who have traveled this road before us and have shown us the way. We learn from their struggles and their joys, and through their intercession, they continue to lead us. As we celebrate Easter, may we become Easter people with souls inflamed with holy zeal as we soar to uncreated light.

Call for Manuscripts

## **THE WINE CELLAR**

Topic: **Mercy.**

Deadline for submissions: April 15, 2015.

Article length: 2500 words in Word format.

Poems, prayers and artwork are also welcome.

Please include a brief bio and four reflection questions with article submissions. Any member or lay associate of a Precious Blood community is invited to contribute.

Contact:

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# Thinking About Homelessness

by Sr. Rosemary Flanagan, C.S.J.

And let my prayer be: Lord, mighty God, bless all who think about the homeless and strengthen their resolve to be even more sensitive to their plight.

I have only a few words to say as an old philosopher who has spent her life saying many words. As I used to tell my ethics classes, there are no answers in the back of an ethics text. When we are trying to figure out the right and good thing to do, in big decisions and small ones, we must dig into our deepest within—conscience, some have called it, or character—to lay out the arguments for and against a plan of action:

- *Why* am I doing this?
- What will be the *results* if I do it?
- What *values* am I bringing into existence by doing what I am doing?
- What *effect* on *who I am* will this decision have?
- What *effect* on *who other are* will this decision have?

In my years of teaching philosophy, before students could sign up for an ethics class, they had to spend a semester thinking about philosophizing: What is this activity called philosophy? Then we would make them take a semester of the philosophy of the human person because actions are right/wrong, good/bad, depending on what those actions do for people. How are others, how am I affected by my actions? Are they ennobled? Lifted up? Or debased, melted down into unthinking robots?

But especially it was important that all of us looked beyond ourselves. The ideal of higher education is to produce men- and women-for others. We are not ice cubes in an ice cube tray existing next to another's fence or boundary, affecting nothing. Rather, we are inextricably linked with others. You and I are who we are because of the parents and grandparents we have, the neighbors who lived next door to us when we were five, because the countless interrelationships we have had with others over the years help to form who we are.

That is an amazing fact. You and I wouldn't be who we are if we had been born in another country, another home, at another time, reared in another family. Let's say that when you were born your mother thought, "I

can't do this!" So she put you down in the cellar, sent a pipe down with milk and things like Ensure. Then sixteen years later, after she had read lots of books on child rearing, she decided that she knew how to rear you, so she opened the cellar door. I used to say to my students, "Would you crawl up those stairs?" And, of course, the answer is "No." We depend by nature on others. We are formed to be who we are by others.

The 1500-year old Dyerville Giant, the world's 3rd tallest redwood in California's Humboldt Redwoods State Park, measured 17 feet in diameter and was 360 feet tall; it was the pride of the park. But in May 1991 torrential rains felled it. How could that have happened? Hadn't there been thousands of rains in its past? But the park superintendent explained that redwoods depend on each other for support. He said: "It's like a domino effect, with the roots intertwined. Redwoods have relatively shallow roots and they don't have a taproot. Their roots are like a mat and they all help each other to stand up." The trees around this glorious giant had fallen—and it was only a matter of time.

And isn't that the way with us? Can any of us say, "We don't need one another"? "What happens to anyone of us doesn't affect me"? Oh! How wrong we are when we think that way.

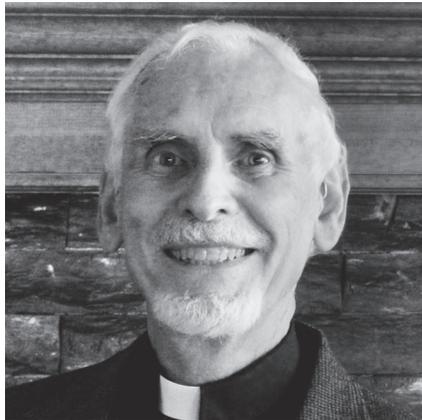
The blight of homelessness is like a cancer in all our bodies, and we who are fortunate to be able to go home tonight cannot let ourselves forget those who have no home to go to. What are we doing? And how is our response affecting who we are?

*Sr. Rosemary Flanagan C.S.J. has taught at St. Theresa's Academy and Avila University, and notably taught philosophy for 17 years at Rockhurst University. She also served on the board of St. Joseph Hospital (now Carondelet Health) and as a board member and consultant for the Center for Practical Bioethics. Today, she volunteers as an archivist at the St. Teresa's Academy library.*

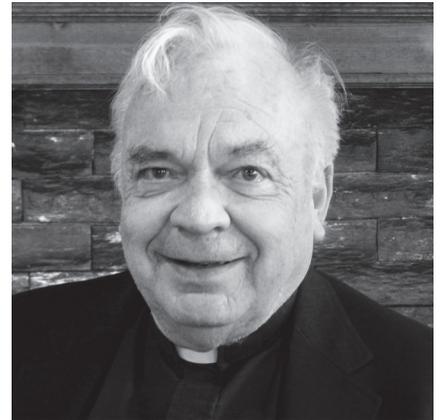
## *Jubilarians: Provincial Assembly 2015*



Fr. Alvin Herber, c.p.p.s.  
70 years of Incorporation  
65 years of Ordination



Fr. Bill Walter, c.p.p.s.  
60 years of Incorporation



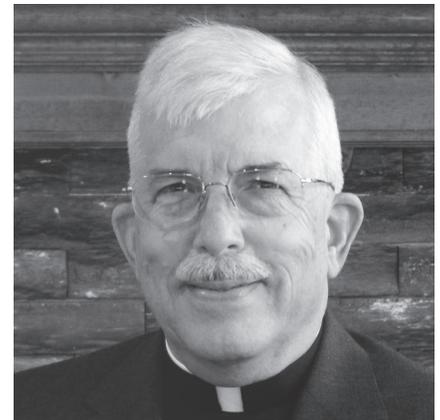
Fr. Paul Sanders, c.p.p.s.  
60 years of Incorporation



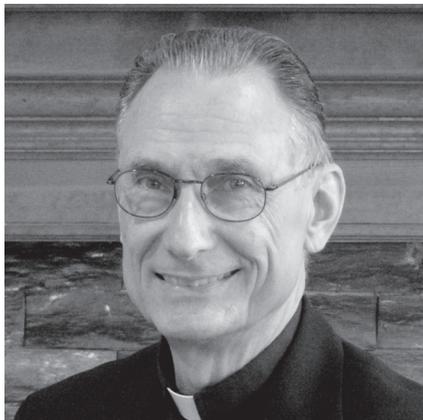
Fr. Linus Evers, c.p.p.s.  
50 years of Incorporation



Fr. Mark Miller, c.p.p.s.  
50 years of Incorporation



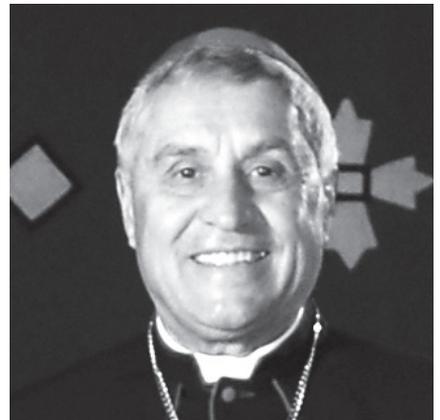
Fr. Richard Bayuk, c.p.p.s.  
40 years of Ordination



Fr. Ron Will c.p.p.s.  
40 years of Ordination



Fr. Daniel Torson, c.p.p.s.  
25 years of Ordination



Bishop Joseph Charron, c.p.p.s.  
25 years of Episcopal Ordination

# My Testimony: Undocumented

shared by Fr. Mark Miller, C.P.P.S., Pastor, Sedalia Catholic Community



Hi, I'm Undocumented and I've been in the United States for about 9 years. I am 14 years old. I have an amazing family that I love. I am a member of a Catholic parish. I would like to tell you my experience here in the U.S. living as an undocumented teenager.

When your kids go to school, they will usually say that they want to be in some kind of sport: soccer, football, basketball, wrestling, etc. Then you sign them up and the next day they're on the team. Well, for us undocumented people, we don't get those types of privileges. You may ask yourself, "Why?" Well for us there is always a problem: no insurance. As you know, your child's school will always ask for his or her insurance before they enter any sport. We don't have insurance, which means we cannot join any sport or any other extra-curricular activities.

Have you ever thought about undocumented children, teenagers and parents while you're at your summer vacation? They don't have a summer vacation. They're usually at home watching movies, making a cake, outside mowing the lawn or helping their mom by washing dishes. They can't take the risk of getting caught on the road to a vacation without a driver's license. Our parents are afraid they're going to get deported or get sent to court for not having a driver's license. We prefer not to do anything too risky for something not too important. Don't you think they'd like to adventure to new places and discover mysteries of the world? Or maybe just take a break from all of the work?

I also want to talk about the school side of this. There is a good and bad part to this. I'll start with the good side. The good thing is that it doesn't matter if we're undocumented

or not; we still have a right to have an education. But the bad thing is that once we have an education, we have limited access to it. We can't have every class we would wish to have, or be in any sport we want to be in. Are we going to be like this all the time in school? Are we ever going to have an opportunity for anything? How are we going to be someone better in life?

There is always a positive side to this from my point of view. For example, all of my family is together. There are children that don't have their mothers or fathers with them because they have been separated. There are also teenagers that live all their lives depressed because they have never had the chance to meet their mothers or fathers. There are also millions of children that are dying of hunger or suffering from the weather while crossing the Rio Grande with their mothers, trying to find a better future here in the U.S. Are we going to keep separating families? God once said that the family was holy. Are we following God's example or are we doing what we think is right for us?

Always remember to help those in need. You never know if they're having trouble because they don't have a home or food to stop their hunger. Always thank God that you have a roof that covers your head from the freezing snow and the lightning from the storms. But most importantly, thank God every night that you have your families together.

The question is: Are we going to be like this forever? Are our lives always going to be hiding in the shadows? Is our destiny for our lives going to be overpowered with fear? Is there ever going to be someone that's going to solve this and speak up for us? How can we follow God's steps? Is this what God wants?

## *Embracing a Spirit of Renewal*

by Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S., Provincial Director

As the renewal of Vatican II called for the revitalization of religious life, much of the dialogue at District and Community meetings during the late 1960s focused on revising the C.P.P.S. Constitutions in preparation for a special General Chapter called in the Fall of 1969. Following the principle of subsidiarity envisioned by Vatican II, a committee composed of members from the Cincinnati, Kansas City, and Pacific Provinces recommended that community law “previously handled on the level of the Constitutions and General Statutes will now be a matter of provincial legislation to be called the Provincial Statutes.” One of the major changes in community government supported by the majority of the Kansas City Province was reducing the term of Provincial from six years to four years.

With the approval of the three American Provincials, a Junior Clergy Caucus was held in Chicago in October 1968. Those attending the meeting from the Kansas City Province were Fathers Joseph Uecker, Thomas Albers, Ronald Hoenninger, William Dineen, Ronald Moorman, and Edward Oen. One of the main concerns of the caucus was “the increasing number of priests who have left both community and priesthood. We must explore the why of their departures and... what are the possibilities for effective remedies.” The young priests of the community were “deeply convinced of the absolute necessity to experiment with new forms of ministry and service.” Among the other issues discussed by the junior clergy were community, the apostolate, seminary life, vocations, and racism, “the most urgent issue facing Americans today.”

Shortly before leaving for the special General Chapter in Rome in September 1969 to revise the C.P.P.S. Constitutions, Provincial Director Daniel Schaefer announced that Father Lawrence Growney, a member of the provincial council and Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Sedalia, MO, was leaving the Priesthood and the Community. The council elected Father Ralph Bushell to fill out Father Growney’s term.

A Business Chapter was called in early 1970 to review the Normative Texts and eleven decrees which the special General Chapter in Rome approved. Acknowledging the geographical distances within the province, the Business Chapter was held in four separate locations for the convenience of the members. The Provincial Statutes

were reviewed and approved by the General Council on March 16, 1971.

The Province held its Second Electoral Assembly April 13-14, 1971 at Precious Blood Seminary in Liberty, Missouri. As recorded by the provincial secretary, Father Lawrence Cyr, “Father Daniel Schaefer received a great majority of the votes (93), unequaled in the history of the community, on the first ballot, and thus was re-elected as provincial director.” Father Cyr was elected vice-provincial and the rest of the council included Fathers James Schrader, Joseph Charron, and George Fey. At the first meeting of the Provincial Council, Father Cyr was appointed Provincial Secretary and Father Robert Stukenborg, Provincial Treasurer.

Father Schaefer’s second term as Provincial was brief: on August 12, 1971, he was elected Moderator General of the Society. Father Lawrence Cyr succeeded him as Provincial Director and each member of the Council advanced leaving the Fourth Councilor position vacant. Father Robert Stukenborg received the next greatest number of votes at the Provincial Electoral Assembly in April, and was elected Fourth Councilor by the unanimous vote of the council, with Father Ralph Bushell appointed as Provincial Secretary.

The renewal of the church initiated by the Second Vatican Council that included the re-invigoration of religious life coincided with significant social upheavals taking place around the world—and especially in the United States—in the 1960s and 1970s that deeply affected the way religious life in the Society of the Precious Blood was lived. The Junior Clergy Caucus in 1968 highlighted issues such as racism in society; however the war in Vietnam and the scandal of Watergate that brought down a United States President were two major events that caused many to question their trust in government and in institutional structures in general. Issues of equality both in society and in the Church influenced the way seminarians were trained as formation directors sought to respond to the “signs of the times” and offer candidates more opportunities to enter into dialogue with the modern world.

In April 1969, after much deliberation and dialogue the previous year, the Business Chapter of the Cincinnati Province voted to close St. Charles Seminary.

*continued on next page*

## Laurene O'Connor, January 1, 1917–February 11, 2015

from the funeral homily given by Fr. Ron Will, C.P.P.S., February 14, 2015 at St. Francis Xavier Church, St. Joseph, Missouri

Today is a sad day, a hard day. But we are also so grateful that we had Laurene for as long as we did—98 years. She was a gift to us: to her children and grandchildren, and to our parish.

Laurene loved going to daily Mass in her earlier years. Her children describe her as a *practicing* Catholic. She didn't just go through the motions and say the prayers. She put her faith into action by practicing the corporal works of mercy. She was a member of our parish ACT Committee (Active Christians Today) who visit our homebound, bring them holy communion, and write cards to them. She put her faith into action in so many other ways in our parish and beyond.

Her children remember their Mom and Dad kneeling across the bed and praying the rosary every night. They remember coming back from a trip to Omaha or Kansas City, how after being on the road a short while their parents pulled out their rosaries and began praying. If the kids weren't praying along, mom would say, "We can't hear you back there." Laurene loved the Rosary.

Her children believe that their parents had an amazing marriage; they had a true partnership for 43 years. Her Funeral Mass happens to be on Valentine's Day, a day when we honor our beloved. On this Valentine's Day, Laurene is able to rejoice once again being in the presence of her beloved husband Tom. They had been separated for 29 years. On this Valentine's Day, Laurene is also able to rejoice in the presence of her beloved Lord, Jesus Christ. It is an appropriate day to send her to her true love(s).

She was a longtime member of the Precious Blood Companions. She hardly ever missed a meeting, or a Companion Retreat, or a Provincial Assembly. It was very important to her. She is wearing a well-worn Precious Blood Companion pendant. The red is worn off. I think that is symbolic; she lived sacrificial love.

Some people referred to her as the energizer bunny. One example was on Christmas Eve. Their home was small, but they fed a large number of people. The kitchen became her command center for giving directions to everyone. She put on quite a spread. She was an organizer in many ways. She lit up when she was with her grandchildren; she played games with them, took them places, enjoyed having lunch with them and just talking.

And so we let go of our physical, daily ties to Laurene and let her go to God. As we do so we celebrate the bright promise of eternal life for her and also for ourselves. We discover in the time of death that we are not alone, that God is walking with us. When Rose Kennedy was asked during an interview many years ago how she could survive all the tragedies in her life, she responded without hesitation: "My faith." What a difference faith makes in our lives. It does not magically take away sorrow, but it helps us to walk through it in union with the One who became flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Like Laurene did, may we always hold fast to that faith, and forever, in good times and bad, may we ever gratefully sing the goodness of the Lord.

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### *Province History, continued from page 8*

Theologians studying at St. Charles for the Kansas City Province completed their theological training at various divinity schools, including Notre Dame University and St. Louis University. By 1972, the Kansas City Province sent their students in theology to two seminaries: St. John's Seminary in Collegetown, Minnesota, and Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

In the first few years after the birth of the province, those attending the high school seminary in Liberty went to St. Joseph College in Rensselaer, Indiana for college level formation. But on August 17, 1971, the province rented a duplex near Rockhurst University, a Jesuit institution in Kansas City, Missouri. Five candidates under the direction of Fathers James Sloan and Dennis Schaab lived together in community while attending academic courses at Rockhurst.

1971 also marked the beginning of the Special Formation Program. Once again, sparked by the renewal of religious life called for by Vatican II, Special Formation signaled an important departure from a previous monastic model of a novitiate. Instead, seminarians would live in community at one of the Province's parishes or apostolates. This approach sought to stress the communal and apostolic dimensions of what it means to be a Society of Apostolic Life. Father Joseph Jakubiak of the Kansas City Province was named the first director of the program.

*Next Month: Apostolic Expansion*

## Through, With and In

by Gretchen Bailey, Alameda, California Companion

Prepositions are the last and most difficult words that incorporate themselves into our grammar as we acquire language. They are words of movement through space and time, yet we use these very words to describe our relationship with God. The Word lives within us, through us and throughout creation, yet we creatures of time and space frequently feel separate and alone. Perhaps that is our sin: denying our oneness with the Divine. This doubt enables us to feel separate, better than or worse than another. In frustration we hit, stomp, throw things, say the unspeakable, insult parents and children. We commit institutional murder, genocide, adultery and all manner of destruction. We flip perfectly good people off. Would we do any of these things if we truly grasped that God is inseparable from Us, in Everyone and in All Things?

Perhaps some of us tend toward feelings of isolation more than others. Eventually we need to take the heaviness and deposit it somewhere before it becomes part of a carefully constructed wall that we will put together, brick-by-brick, until we are totally convinced of our own aloneness. Bill Wilson knew this when he and a Jesuit friend developed the Twelve Steps. Based on the *Examens* of St. Ignatius, the steps include the of telling your story, revealing and sharing your hurt and shame, first to yourself, then to others so that the community might help you heal as you seek to restore balance. Who is to say that there is not some form of the sacrament of Confession taking place at such meetings in church basements, storefronts, back rooms and upper rooms? What a gift this process is for those who do not know the sacrament of Reconciliation. Reconciliation is the process of discovering and admitting that the Divine Blood runs through you, through all people, all things, always. You have to sweat through your story, your shame until you realize that your shame has a small “s” and that your Self has a capital “S” because the Divine is delineated with an initial capital letter.

Most parents have experienced the Prodigal story at some level. Some people tire of its telling, but if you are among those who have experienced the addiction or alcoholism of a loved one, and that loved one embraced recovery, well, there is nothing on this earth like that.

To see the eyes change from windows of darkness to mirrors of hope and light; to see an emaciated body become whole; to see sallow skin become healthy, rosy; to hear clear words of hope rather than words of shame, hate and despair. That is the stuff of the Divine at work. Reconciliation is a journey that starts when you are sorry for what you have done and continues as you tell your story, perhaps with hot tears, a cold sweat or goose bumps. Your flesh is remembering that it is One with Those who listen.

If you are a spouse who has broken your beloved’s heart, surely you know shame. If you are a spouse who has been forgiven, there is nothing like that. That is the stuff of the Divine at work. I know love like that from another human being, and God’s love is infinitely more. Imagine Christ drawing lines in the dust, and no one casts a stone. Imagine your beloved drawing lines in the dust. Never forget how good it feels to be forgiven.

We reconcile to remember the Divine within us. We confess in order that we embrace all that is good and all that is imperfect within, because that is how we are made, and God saw It was good. When you tell your story, you are confessing the covenant, embracing yourself as God’s Child, with God’s blood running in your fast-beating heart. God hears your story and your fast-beating heart. God is your fast-beating heart. Your warm tears are the same temperature and salinity as the water that flowed from His side.



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# A Light No One Can Extinguish

by Fr. Dave Kelly, C.P.P.S., Director, PBMR

“It is believed,” the Archbishop of Chicago said to five youth of Cook County Juvenile Detention Center, “that wherever the bishop is, there is the Church. 2.2 million Catholics are with you at this moment; tonight we are the Catholic Church of Chicago.”

On Saturday evening, March 7th, Archbishop Blase Cupich came to Cook County Juvenile Detention Center to celebrate the Confirmation of five young men who are 16 and 17 year olds. Jovany, Joshua, Marvin, Pedro, and Joseph are being tried as adults. Amidst the strain and stress of the possibility of spending many years in prison, they wanted and worked hard to better understand their Catholic faith. Through the guidance and teaching of Mike Donovan, one of the volunteers with Kolbe House and Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, the Archbishop of Chicago confirmed them. As one of the kids said, “pretty cool, huh?”

Archbishop Cupich’s presence and his pastoral and open attitude won the hearts of everyone. He greeted the sheriffs as he came into the facility, stopping to speak with each one. As he went upstairs to the visitation area, he stopped to speak to the families who were waiting to visit their children. Making his way through the facility and into the chapel area, even before he took off his coat, he immediately went over and introduced himself to the youth and their families who were grateful and overwhelmed that the Church had not forgotten them. His presence and attitude demonstrated that this was not about the Archbishop; this was about youth who, though locked up, were part of the Catholic family.

In his homily, he said he was going to mark their foreheads with the sign of the cross using the Holy Chrism, which means Christ. The Cross he placed on their forehead wasn’t the Cross of Christ, but it was their Cross: it was the pain and hurt that they carried. He said the Holy Chrism is used because Christ meets us precisely in those moments of pain and disappointment.

He spoke of the Samaritan Woman at the Well, the Gospel of the day. She came out in the heat of the day, whereas most came early in the morning when it was cool, because others did not accept her. She couldn’t join

the other women as they came to the well because of how she was looked upon. “She believed what they said about her”, he said. “She believed deep in her heart that she was not worthy, that her sin had made her a bad person—worthless.” He told these five young men, dressed in their jail garb, that neither should they believe the hurtful or harmful things that people might say of them, nor should they believe that they are bad people. “God the Father and Son comes to you in the Holy Spirit because of his love for you. Believe it,” he said. “This sacrament is a gift because it relieves you of the burdens you carry and calls you a son of God. You receive, in this sacrament, a love that no one can take from you.”

It is said that the worse form of torture is isolation: the feeling no matter how loud you cry out, no one hears you, you are invisible to the world. The visit by the Archbishop of Chicago broke through isolation and darkness and, if what the Archbishop said is true, for that brief time the whole Catholic Church of Chicago was celebrating as the Holy Spirit dispelled the overwhelming darkness and ignited the light within these five young men and their families. And, as we know, that fire will never be extinguished.

On March 7th, in the once dark detention center, a light broke through the darkness and as the Archbishop said, “I needed this, we, as Church needed this, and none of us will be the same.”

He spoke of how this is where the Church needs to be: with the forgotten, the thirsty, the hurting, our children.

After the celebration, Archbishop Cupich took pictures with the youth and their families, and the many staff who wanted to have their picture taken with him as well. He shared a meal with the kids, their families, staff and volunteers. He remarked to one of the youth that he was really looking forward to being here with them and how he wanted to do a good job, and quipped, “you know jobs are hard to come by these days; I don’t want to lose mine!”

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### Editor's Notes

## Accompaniment

by Fr. Keith Branson, C.P.P.S., Publications Editor

I ran into this quote the other day and put it on my Facebook wall; I pass it along now because of its particular insight. Wish I knew who said it first, but so far Google searches haven't revealed it:

"Become friends with people who aren't your age. Hang out with people whose first language isn't the same as yours. Get to know someone who doesn't come from your social class. This is how you see the world. This is how you grow."

After listening to Sr. Helen Prejean's story of how she woke up to a broader world and eventually found a death row ministry through her life among the poor, these words above struck me as being a way to wake up, a primer in Missionary 101. We do tend to associate with folks our own age and background whether in small groups or in larger groups such as religious communities and parishes. We want to include those far off, but they stay far off when we call them. About 20 years ago, someone asked at one of our Assemblies: "Where are the people of color? Where are the young people? Why aren't they here with us?" One of my best friends, an amazing youth leader, gave me a profound answer when I passed the question to her: "Because you're not where they are."

Pope Francis talks about the Art of Accompaniment in *The Joy of the Gospel*, the call to walk with the poor and marginalized as equals. We tend to put out welcome mats and wait for people to see them; we talk with people, but keep them at arm's length and don't truly share ourselves with them. There are times we wonder if our hospitality is enough since people aren't generally coming to us, yet I think the quote above, Sr. Helen's story and Pope Francis' art have a challenge for us. We need to go out if we're to bring people in. We need to work on our technique of walking with, bend our missionary hearts to mastering this technique, perfecting this art.

I think this is important because it's probably the reason for falling short of our hopes of being inclusive. It's easy to walk with someone as their rescuer, their patron, their benefactor, but that's not an equal relationship, a mutuality that binds at deeper levels. If the marginalized are to feel welcome around our campfire or our table, they should feel comfortable walking with us in the first place because we have been a good companion as their equal, because we have accompanied them well. It'll be a frightening experience if we're doing it right, but we'll know we're making progress when they accept our invitation.