



# THE NEW WINE PRESS

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

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Hope for a Family  
page 1

Leadership Notes  
page 2

Translation or  
Transliteration  
page 6

+Companion Paul Beadle  
page 8

In Memory of Me  
page 10

It's Not Pretty  
page 14

Double Vision  
page 16

Hope and Healing  
page 20

There for the Journey  
page 21

My Back Pages  
page 24

## HOPE FOR A FAMILY

*Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.*

I watched and listened as a group of grade school children in San Lucas Toliman sang a song titled “Himno de la infancia misionera” (*Hymn of the Infant Missionary*). “I am a missionary, and although little, I serve with joy,” they began. Among other things, the song addressed St. Francis Xavier, asking that he help them give witness to God’s love. Serendipitously, this was December 2nd, the evening before the feast of our patron. “Lord, may we help to build your kingdom,” they concluded. Coming as it did at the beginning of my time in Guatemala and El Salvador, this earnestly and beautifully performed song provided a connection to the C.P.P.S. community (additionally, one of the first people I met was named Gaspar!) as well as a meaningful context for the week-long experience.

Myself and six other priests (including Fr. Matt Link) who work for Christian Foundation for Children and Aging and two employees from the U.S. office in Kansas City, KS spent the first week of December traveling to numerous communities in Guatemala and El Salvador where CFCA has a large presence. We were accompanied all week by Bob Hentzen (the president of CFCA, who lives in San Lucas) and Henry Flores (the CFCA director of the Communications Center for Central America, who lives in El Salvador), and at various times by numerous local CFCA staff people.

Having visited Guatemala first in 1991 and again in 2004, it was good to be back and immersed again in the reality that I try to speak about most weekends as I invite people of faith to respond to the call of the gospel of compassion and justice and become sponsors. I believe deeply in the mission of CFCA, and this trip reinforced my passion for this ministry. As the children reminded us, we are all missionaries—a sentiment that St. Gaspar would undoubtedly applaud. “Unlike statues, missionaries are not motionless,” he wrote. “They serve wherever God will send them.”



God sent many good people to meet us during our time in Guatemala and El Salvador. The welcome and the hospitality was genuine, deeply felt, and almost overwhelming. In one of my conversations with Bob Hentzen, I asked him what

*Continued on page 4...*

## LEADERSHIP NOTES: *Evaluation*

*Al Ebach, C.P.P.S.*

Over the years, at various gatherings of people in vocation and formation work, I have often heard raised the topic of evaluations for people in ministries within the structure of a religious community—including parish ministry. It was a valid question, since many of us in vocation and formation work had been involved in those ministries for a number of years, and no one had ever suggested any kind of evaluation process. I remember the days when novice director, for example, was simply an honorary position. However, it did not mean that priests, brothers or sisters were prepared for these positions—or, to my knowledge, ever evaluated.

For the last few years the leadership team of the Kansas City Province has wrestled with some possibilities of evaluations within our province structure, beginning with self-evaluations of lay staff members and those involved in vocation and formation ministries. We have reviewed some samples of self-evaluations, a good start for a possible structure for such a process. It is one thing to come up with a good process, but it is another to choose the people to be evaluated. Should every member, companion or lay person who is involved in a ministry within the provincial offices be part of a self-evaluation process? Or should every active member and those involved in any community ministry or apostolate be included in this process?

It may not have seemed as relevant when it was only members of religious communities who were responsible for community infrastructure; however, with the diminishment of membership in many religious communities and dioceses, more lay people are involved in a variety of apostolates and offices. Evaluations should not be introduced just because lay people are hired for these positions, but rather because it benefits the programs and those in the particular ministries.

While it may have been beneficial in the past to have evaluations among priests and religious, perhaps for some reason diocesan and community leadership thought it would infringe on trust. I remember a provincial approaching me years ago regarding a decision I had made in formation. Rather than looking at it as assisting me in the process, I experienced it as interfering in the ministry he trusted me to do. My exact words were: “You appointed me to this position, so why would you not trust me with it?” His question had nothing to do with trust, of course, but it felt threatening to me. People, especially peers, might perceive an evaluation process to be a threat to pride or self-worth. Could it instead be an opportunity to further discern one’s gifts and abilities?

I continue to believe that evaluations could encourage province members and companions to be open to new possibilities for the future. I have been personally challenged in my ministry by my involvement as a board member at Alta Vista, a



*“I continue to believe that evaluations could encourage province members and companions to be open to new possibilities for the future.”*

## 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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charter high school on the West Side of Kansas City. The board has had many hours of training, and at our last gathering we tackled a self-evaluation process as a board. It was very enlightening and challenging—and productive. During the workshop I not only saw the merit of evaluation for us as a board, I also translated much of it into what I think would be valuable to our community. I will try to share some of the ideas gleaned from the workshop.

The most important question is: what is the measure for the evaluation? As a community, what would we consider to be the measure—our mission statement, one's job description (if there is one), or just the judgment of the person doing the evaluating? And who would be the evaluator? In other words—as the facilitator at the school board workshop asked—what is the standard and who sets it?

It was suggested that the goals of the board and that of the school would become the standard for evaluation. I then asked myself, does the community have goals, or do certain offices or ministries have goals? And if members, companions or lay staff members have personal goals, does the community at large know what these goals are?

I believe that goals for our province should definitely become a measurement for evaluation. Maybe we need to set some goals. Maybe there are

goals set by the province, programs, movements or individuals and these goals have yet to be shared.

We also spent much time in looking at the vision of the school, from which the board goals would be established. VISION! What is vision of the province? I know we have broached this subject a number of times and in a number of ways in many of our assemblies. Is it written down, and do people know what it is, and are members and companions—personally or in ministries—encouraged to establish their goals from this vision?

If a community vision and subsequent goals are unknown or nonexistent, how can those in ministries, on jobs, or in various committees or boards possibly know what the measure of evaluation is and how they are to plan for the future? This is a challenge for our province, and we probably need to put some more energy into this topic.

The facilitator kept challenging us as a school board to be on the same page as the school personnel. His challenge was for us to get into the school to meet people, to observe what is going on so that we can own their vision and goals. That statement opened a challenge for me in community life. First of all, do I have personal goals, following the vision of the province, and do I visit others or talk to them about their goals so that we can journey together with common province goals?

The last challenge of the workshop from the facilitator was: REWARD, RECOGNIZE, CHALLENGE! He encouraged the board to invite a teacher or administrator to our board meetings and recognize them for living up to the vision of the school. About the only time we recognize people in the community is when we celebrate jubilees. Maybe there are additional ways that members, companions and others associated with the community could be rewarded or recognized for their living out the vision of the province.

The facilitator shared that some people think that rewarding is divisive. He asked the board members whether we give bonuses to those who excel or do we reward everyone the same to keep peace? How rewarding is it to those who live the



*“The last challenge...from the facilitator was: REWARD, RECOGNIZE, CHALLENGE!...About the only time we recognize people in the community is when we celebrate jubilees. Maybe other approaches could be established that members, companions and others associated with the community be rewarded or recognized because they live the vision of the province.”*

*See “Evaluation”, continued on page 22...*

*Continued from page 1...*

gives him the most energy in this work that he has been a part of for over 50 years now. "It's the relationships," he responded. "I come from a large family. Relationships have always been important to me, and what I see in the invitation of the marginalized people of these countries is that they are saying to me, to us, all these projects and all these families are saying, 'Welcome to my world, welcome to my family, and welcome to my daily struggle.' That really energizes me and inspires me, because deep down I need them, not in any patronizing kind of way, but just humanly. St. Paul said, 'Be prepared to give a reason for your hope.' They are the reason for my hope, because they are showing such deep faith and such deep hope in God. That's what keeps me going."

Relationship is at the heart of the CFCA mission and its community of compassion that extends around the globe—from the Philippines and India, to the continent of Africa, to South and Central America, Mexico, the Caribbean, the United States and Canada. The bonds of family and community, the friendships between sponsors and sponsored, the profound unity of all in the body of Christ. Our time in Guatemala and El Salvador was ultimately an experience of our common ground and common goals and common faith. As Fr. Matt described it, "I see that I am them, and they are me."

One of the things that I found especially gratifying on this trip was seeing the significant development that is taking place in the CFCA world. Today there is a growing emphasis on creating sustainability or livelihood programs which make it possible for people in poverty to move beyond mere survival to a place where they have attainable goals and hope for the future.

We witnessed many examples. In each case, the starting point is mothers and/or fathers deciding to work together—and it is made possible initially by a loan from CFCA. The first day we were there we visited a community where a group of mothers run a successful egg producing business. In another village, twenty-five different families are raising chickens to sell (they buy them at one day old, and this breed is fully grown in six weeks). In another town, a group of 8 mothers produces chocolate for use in desserts and hot drinks. They roast the cacao beans, grind them, mix them with sugar and cinnamon, and form them into patties, which are then sold. One of the mothers choked with emotion as she expressed her gratitude for the loan that helped



#### HIMNO DE LA INFANCIA MISIONERA

Fuego he venido a traer a la tierra  
quiero que arda sin descansar,  
soy misionero y aunque pequeño  
sirvo con gozo al Rey Celestial.

Con oraciones y con limosnas,  
con sacrificios, vida y amor,  
colaboremos con eficiencia  
a construir tu Reino Señor.

*I have come to bring fire to the earth,  
I want it to burn without rest.  
I am a missionary and although small  
I serve the heavenly king with joy.*

*With prayers and with alms,  
with sacrifices, life and love,  
may we help with efficiency  
to build your kingdom, Lord.*



them get started. Now that they have paid that off, they have taken out another loan in order to buy their own grinder, saving them the two-hour trip into Guatemala City to have it done.

In a rural community, we met another group of mothers who have started a sewing business—again with a startup loan from CFCA. Their first project was making bed linens—which CFCA then buys from them to use as part of the benefits made available to sponsored children in many parts of the country. They are using some of their proceeds now to attend a sewing school in the nearby town, where they are learning to make clothing of various kinds.

Iliana, the president of this group of mothers (whose husband manages the vending side of the business) told us that she previously worked at a restaurant in town from 8:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. “I don’t make any more now than I did before,” she said, almost overcome by emotion, “but I am with my children now.” Others in the group told similar stories. One used to make and sell tortillas, another sold candy in the street, another washed clothes. They explained that previously they were mostly very shy and afraid to talk with people, but that this experience had increased their dignity and their confidence—something that was quite evident as they stood in front of the group and described how their lives have changed.

Perhaps the most impressive livelihood program we visited was a small industry known as K’tocalza, in Santa Catarina Mita, Guatemala. This is a group



who are fathers of sponsored children. K’tocalza started a year ago, when a CFCA staff member persuaded these men to consolidate their individual operations. The 28-member group began with a start-up loan from CFCA, and today they make more than 3,000 pairs of shoes each month, almost all of which are purchased by CFCA and distributed to the nearly 100,000 sponsored members and their families in Guatemala.

A side story to the success of K’tocalza is that they are pro-



viding the hand-crafted hiking boots that Bob Hentzen is using on his 8,000 mile, 16-month walk (he ordered 12 pair!) which began on December 29th. In 1996, Bob walked from CFCA headquarters in Kansas City to Guatemala as a way of saying thank you for all that sponsored members have taught him. This is a continuation of that walk, and will go through the 12 countries in Central and South America where CFCA serves more than half of the 310,000 children, youth and aging who are sponsored world-wide. Bob explained that this walk will help to counterbalance the isolation of people living in poverty, and show them that someone cares. “By walking with them, we are saying you are not alone,” he said. “We are listening to you and learning from you.” Along the way during the various segments of the walk, Bob will be joined by hundreds and thousands of locals and also sponsors from the United States. The walk has its own web site at [www.walk2gether.org](http://www.walk2gether.org). Included there is a video of the K’tocalza shoe workshop.



While in Guatemala, I had the opportunity to meet Alex, a 20 year-old student whom I have been sponsoring for several years. He and his mother joined our group for two days as we visited various communities. Alex is studying to be an accountant, so of course I shared with him that I am a treasurer. I also told him that he probably

*Continued on page 13...*

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# TRANSLATION OR TRANSLITERATION?

Thomas Welk, C.P.P.S.

During their meeting last November in Baltimore the U.S. Catholic bishops approved the lingering “ordeal” of the Vatican translated texts for the Roman Missal to be used in the United States and other parts of the English speaking world. This was done despite the opposition of Bishop Donald W. Trautman of Erie, PA and former chair of the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy.

Bishop Trautman is a biblical scholar, and his opposition to the proposed revisions to the Lectionary and the Missal was based both on scriptural and linguistic reasons. In his assessment, these revisions reflect the heavy hand of the Vatican, wielding control over a process that should be the prerogative of the national bishops’ conference(s). More on this point later.

The Vatican committee’s revision of the texts reflects a very literal translation of the Latin texts. Any linguist will tell you that doing a literal translation, or transliteration, is not always an accurate way to move from one language to another.

Authentic translating is difficult. This is acknowledged clearly in the book of Sirach. You may recall from your scripture studies that this book is not acknowledged as inspired by most of the non-Catholic community. The dispute as to which books to accept as part of the Hebrew scriptural canon covered many decades, culminating with the dispute between Martin Luther and the Council of Trent in the 16th century.

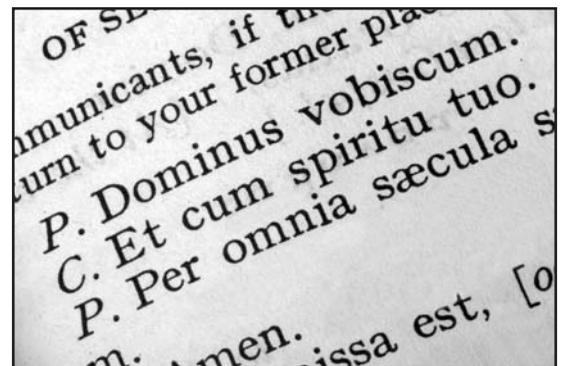
Why was the book of Sirach in dispute? Because the original Hebrew version (written between 200-175 BCE) had been lost and was extant only in the translation into Greek (some time after 132 BCE) by the author’s grandson. The Masorettes (*a group of Bible scholars who compiled a system of critical notes on the external form of the Biblical text, and who effectively determined the precise text of the Bible in the Jewish community-ed.*) would only accept Hebrew texts.

In the Foreword, the grandson acknowledges he is translating his grandfather’s writings. He states, “You therefore are now invited to read it in a spirit of attentive good will, with indulgence for any apparent failure on our part, despite efforts in the interpretation of particular passages. For words spoken originally in the Hebrew are not as effective when they are translated into another language.”

I agree with Sirach’s grandson and Bishop Trautman: translation is hard work and often ends up being a matter of interpretation. Simply engaging in transliteration makes for a poor translation. This is as true in moving from Latin into English as it is moving from Hebrew into Greek, or whatever languages are involved.

Those of us who are considered “older Fathers” know how difficult and stilted Latin can be. In my seminary generation (1950s and 1960s) we were required to take seven years of Latin study. In addition, I also ended up teaching Latin briefly. Latin

was never difficult for me, either as a student or as a teacher. Maybe the Vatican “experts” should have called on a few American Latin scholars to



help them in their work. Or even better, as Bishop Trautman contends, they should have left it completely to the scholars in the United States. I always considered “ecclesiastical” Latin to be especially easy, especially after having contended with the Latin of Caesar and Cicero.

As it is, many of the transliterated texts are very stilted and will come across as awkward to Americans. Bishop Trautman, in his opposition voiced over the course of several years, points out many examples of the poor work resulting from the efforts of the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship. I suspect for many of them, English is not their first language.

In reflecting on the process of moving from one language to another, I can draw on my own experience of being familiar with several languages other than English (Latin, Spanish, French, Greek, Hebrew). I was brought up in North Dakota speaking German, and not just your run-of-the-mill formal High German, but Alsatian, a dialect form of High German. Throughout my

years of education in high school and college I took enough courses in German to become fluent also in High German, earning a minor in German from St. Joseph College.

Let me use that experience to illustrate how ridiculous it can be to engage in literally translating words from one language to another, thereby totally losing the meaning of the words being transliterated.

We all know what we get when we order a hotdog in a restaurant. If you went to Germany and literally transliterated the combination of two words in English (hot and dog) you would come up with this: *heisser Hund*. I'm afraid you would get a strange look directed your way, because in North Dakota and in Germany you would be using the slang German expression for a dog in heat!

The proper way to “translate” hotdog—and therefore get something comparable to a hotdog—in Germany would be to ask for either a Bratwurst (literally, fried sausage), a Wiener Schnitzel (literally, a little cut of meat from Vienna), or more likely a Wiener Wurst. (Generally, these latter two German words are combined to make single words.) Indeed, there is a huge difference between transliterating and translating.

Let me return to a point I raised at the beginning of this article, namely, who should have the authority to approve texts for the different national groups in the Catholic Church? Bishop Trautman insists that the Second Vatican Council's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* made the bishops' conference responsible for translations.

Chicago Cardinal Francis George, president of the U.S. bishops' conference, acknowledged that he had abdicated to the Vatican in this important matter. As Bishop Trautman

pointed out, this question of conceding control so easily has wide ramifications for the Catholic Church throughout the various corners of the world—and not just in the translations of texts to be used in the Lectionary and the Missal.



Rev. Michael G. Ryan reflects on this question in an article in the December 14, 2009 issue of *America* titled “What If We Said, ‘Wait’?” [See pages 15 and 18 for several brief quotes from Ryan's article-ed.] Ryan too laments the poor work resulting from the Vatican's committee and then comments that this is “...one more assault on the council and, sadly, one more blow to episcopal collegiality.”

*“The Vatican committee's revision of the texts reflects a very literal translation of the Latin texts. Any linguist will tell you that doing a literal translation, or transliteration, is not always an accurate way to move from one language to another.”*

Ryan poses this question for us: “Are we priests going to give up, too? Are we, too, going to acquiesce?” He then outlines some “modest” proposals that are summed up with the title used for the article: “Why not wait and do some market testing before simply acquiescing? Originally, he had used as his working title “What If We Just Said No?” However, “waiting” and engaging in dialogue might be better, and could help to bring about changes among those who considered “Latinity more important than lucidity and they might end up listening to people and further evaluating their position.”

I agree with Ryan. I believe it is another way of giving witness to our Precious Blood spirituality and to the charism of Gaspar. Gaspar did not hesitate to challenge the powers of his day, especially when the needs of the People of God were not being met. This would be a good prophetic stance for us to take. Ryan invites us to join him in his efforts by logging on to the web site [www.whatifwejustsaidwait.org](http://www.whatifwejustsaidwait.org) and make our voices heard. 🙏

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## REMEMBERING COMPANION PAUL BEADLE

Vince Sullivan

Paul Beadle was a very close friend. Beginning in kindergarten we attended all grades together through Albia Community High School. Paul always seemed to be quietly supportive to everybody and to accept them as they were. He had a special gift of understanding others feelings and anxieties. He seemed able to empathize and he communicated this with a calm presence—and usually few words. He possessed a very quick wit—which was his common vehicle for correcting another’s deviations from common sense or even common decency. In this manner, his quick and to-the-point “one liners” were both hilarious and effective, without being offensive.

We attended public school through the 4th grade and then St Mary’s through 8th grade. We spent many hours together engaged in school activities, hunting, some fishing, some boy scouts, much baseball, and lots of roaming between pool halls, (with the occasional euchre game at the Melrose tavern). We spent even more time under the direction of the St Mary’s parish priest, who loomed large especially in those early years. Fr. Heinen would monitor the local movie theater and pool hall from the rectory and had many informants throughout Albia to keep track of “his boys.” Later in life Paul became an expert on post traumatic stress syndrome and once commented that he had “more PTS from church than from Vietnam.”

In high school Paul definitely favored the social sciences. His mother was totally Irish Catholic—and worried incessantly I thought—and his father was a protestant English-born coal miner. Paul and I always said we would make a trip to Ireland after high school, but that was delayed for both of us. He was athletic in many ways and especially above average in track and football, as he was a good sprinter. Once I asked him if he could repeat a record breaking performance, to which he replied, “only if I get wrapped up in another hurricane.” This was typical of his humorous way of deflecting attention from his own accomplishments. He was an outstanding student and his outstanding gift of friendship was always a strong positive influence with all of us.

After high school, Paul attended Northeast Missouri State, and then entered the military in 1967. Just before going to Vietnam, he was godfather to our new baby girl. Paul’s experience in Vietnam undoubtedly had a huge impact on him. Equally certain is that he continued his natural and God-given ways of friendship, evidenced by the Bronze Star which he was awarded surrounding activities related to the Tet Offensive of 1968. He especially would have stood by his comrades in any such situation. After returning from the military, he needed a period of time to readjust before he made

perhaps his most important contributions, and this is where Marlene enters the picture.

Marlene and Paul were married on Sept 13, 1981, and her assistance was hugely important to his well being and the contributions he made in his work. His counseling activities received many awards and were well deserved. His occupational counseling, especially of returning veterans, is well-known. His huge success in helping so many was because of his many talents embedded in a thoroughly Christian person with a thoroughly Christian outlook on life and relationships. He always manifested a strong faith and was always oriented to strong Christian principles toward all people. I think this was inherent in his being ever since Baptism. He was a very gifted person, endowed with a Christian spirit which allowed him to make huge contributions to his neighbors. It would be very rare to find a better companion. 🙏

*Vince Sullivan is a physician and a member of St. Mary Parish in Centerville, IA.*



*“It would be very rare to find a better companion.”*

*Paul Beadle  
June 3, 1944–December 12, 2009*

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# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Brian Chambers

One man—one life—does make a difference.

In the Christmas classic, *It's a Wonderful Life*, George Bailey believed his life hadn't made a difference. He was mistaken, of course, as the absent-minded angel-in-waiting Clarence was to prove to him by making a world without George in it. It was not a pretty sight and George, with Clarence's help, soon realized that he had made a positive impact on those around him.

This movie came to mind this week when I read of the death of Paul Beadle. Paul—like George—made a difference in lives. Or at least in mine.

I came to know Paul not long after I retired from the military. My wife was in Afghanistan and I had been thinking of going to college. With time on my hands I applied for the GI Bill, but due to administrative problems that are of no concern here I was denied benefits.

I had been working with a VA rep at Indian Hills Community College and once my ineligibility was determined he told me to go see this guy named Paul Beadle. I walked to another building, found his office, peeked in and introduced myself. Paul told me to take a seat and, after moving a stack of files, a chair was soon uncovered and we began to talk.

I told Paul about my predicament, that I wanted to go to college but it didn't appear it was in the cards. Paul, in turn, asked me a few questions and once he realized that I had retired with a disability pension he told me about a vocational rehabilitation program that I would be eligible for. We immediately had an argument.

I told him just because the Army made the decision to give me a small disability, that in no way meant that I was disabled. I could still work and I believed any programs targeted at disabled veterans should go to those that really needed it. That wasn't the case with me, I just wanted to go to school and was looking for some options. But in no way was I going to take any that could better be spent on veterans that were in need.

Paul appreciated my position but told me I was wrong on a number of levels. He explained that the vocational rehab program was for all veterans who qualified, regardless of disability level. And he made it quite clear that I wouldn't be taking money from other vets. In other words, the program didn't have a spending cap.

Another argument I had was that I wasn't exactly looking for a skill or a trade, which I assumed a voc rehab program was designed for. I didn't have a skill, hadn't had one for a number of years and wasn't in the market for one, thus I still didn't qualify. He persisted and explained that an education would open up many doors and said that—at first—I didn't need an end game. Just get in college and take it from there.

In the end Paul convinced me and I began life as a full-time student. I also began my relationship with Paul.

Part of the deal was to have regular conferences with Paul so he could chart my progress. These would all begin much like our first meeting, as a stack of files would have to be moved before a chair became available.

I often wondered how he kept everything straight. Many times I would have to dig through a stack of folders to help him find mine. He would have computer problems and once I found myself on my hands and knees helping him to connect some cables.

His office was always in disarray and at times when he couldn't find something after a fervent search he would finally say, "Oh the hell with this, let's go out and have a smoke."

We talked about much while in his office and outside by the butt can. I found out he was a Vietnam veteran who wasn't especially fond of the service as a whole but held veterans in high regard, didn't care for the policies of President Bush and didn't believe the invasion of Iraq was justified. I agreed with him on all points. I also found out he was a dedicated public servant with a long history of helping veterans while employed with the VA. (This he didn't tell me other than his number of years with the Veterans Administration.)

After awhile it became obvious that Paul wasn't in the business for personal glory—

*See "Difference," continued on page 19...*

*"The education Paul helped me receive changed my life forever. If physical doors didn't open for me immediately the doors of my mind opened up in ways I had never before realized were possible."*

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## IN MEMORY OF ME

Al O'Dell

I want to reflect on the injunction of Jesus at the Last Supper, "Do this in memory of me." Prior to doing so, however, I would like to talk briefly about memory, its purpose, its power and its limits. Some of this will then be carried over into the discussion of Jesus' words to us at the Last Supper.



The purpose of memory is to make present and available for our response a reality from the past. When remembering a loved one, for example, memory takes on an added note of thanksgiving. We are grateful for the loved one's life and for our gifted relationship with them. What we remember is not simply an individual person, but a web of relationships, relationships that constitute the life of the loved one and our own place in it. We experience again a kind of union with the loved one. Memory can prompt in us a heartfelt reaffirmation of our relationship with the loved one. It can spur us to action that is in harmony with the inherent demands and espoused values of the loved one and our relationship with them.

The power of memory can be greatly enhanced by the presence of some physical object (card, photo, letter, handicraft) connected with the loved one. We may hold these memorabilia, caress them, even kiss them, all in an effort to experience once again a sense of union with the loved one. The greater the experience of union, the more powerful is the memory in urging to action that is in harmony with the remembered relationship.

It is at times like this, however, that the very real limits of memory are most keenly felt. While there is a kind of sacramentalism in memory, like all sacramentalism it is limited. In embracing the "sacraments" of the loved one, we are keenly aware that the loved one is not present. It is at these times especially that we feel their absence more than ever. Yet, because of memory, and especially because of the memorabilia, the loved one is not totally absent.

Something of them, their energy and values, their love, is present and available to us in and through memory now enhanced by these "sacraments" of the loved one. We experience once again a sense of union with the beloved. And we have every reason to hope that whatever is good and noble in the remembered relationship will not be lost but will survive and flourish in God's time and space.

The Church, too, has memory. And when we say "Church" here, we are not talking about some third entity. We are talking about ourselves. We are Church. Church defines what we are in the depths of our being. There is no aspect of our lives that stands outside this covenant relationship. It is what we are, and therefore what we are called to be. As Church, we remember the mighty deeds of God, culminating in the person and life of Jesus, deeds that give us life and continue to nourish and sustain us. The entire liturgical year is a celebration in word and ritual of the church's memory. As Church, we celebrate these memories so that we never forget whence we come, why we exist and where we are headed.

The Church also has memorabilia in the form of the Scriptures and the Sacraments.

*"What we remember is not simply an individual person, but a web of relationships, relationships that constitute the life of the loved one and our own place in it. We experience again a kind of union with the loved one."*

The Scriptures are like letters from a loved one; they constitute the communal memory of God's gradual fashioning of a people for himself. The Sacraments, in word and symbol, continue God's mighty deeds in the Church's behalf, deeds that continue to nourish and sustain her. The Church cherishes these memorabilia.

They inspire in her a hope for an even greater union yet to come. This is most especially true of the Eucharist in which the Church commemorates and nourishes her personal union with God in Christ, and has a pledge of future union with him.

It is here in the celebration of the Eucharist that we also feel keenly the limits of the Church's memory. While we are deeply and personally united with God in Christ, it is still a union in sign and symbol. With St. Paul, perhaps, we "...want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much better..." But we sense that, at least for now, "...to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need..."

When this article was first written several months ago, the death of my wife was the farthest thing from my mind. My wife died, however, on September 25, 2009. In the wake of my beloved wife's death, many of the ideas in this article expressed thus far ring even more true to me than they did at the time they were originally written. My wife has become the loved one who is remembered, whose "sacraments" are deeply cherished and whose physical presence is sorely missed. She has become an additional reason to "...want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much better..." She is also, however, an inspiration and a constant aid as I continue to "...stay alive in this body..."

And as we continue to stay alive, it is precisely in this context that we need to ask what it is Christ is asking of us when he says "...do this in memory of me." What is the "this" that Christ is doing and wants us to do?

There are several approaches to an answer to this question. Perhaps the most obvious meaning of the "this" Jesus is asking us to do is the celebration of the Last Supper, the celebration of God's irrevocable covenant with his people, but now soon to be sealed in the Blood of Christ. What is celebrated is not simply a sacrificial meal, but the relationship that meal represents. God is with us. He is our God. We are his people. In union with Jesus, we are to be the incarnation in our world of his kingdom, his values; he is with us, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, to empower us to do that.

One might also see the Last Supper in continuation with Jesus' other meals. Jesus not only

seems to enjoy table fellowship, it was for him a teaching moment. He criticized formalism and rigidity in religion. He showed a special concern for the marginalized and for society's outcasts. These were underlying themes of God's covenant with his people as reflected often in the prophets. At the Last Supper in particular Jesus gave his apostles a lesson that today's world desperately needs: power is not for domination, for lording it over others, but for service, for the building up of the human.

*"My wife has become the loved one who is remembered, whose 'sacraments' are deeply cherished and whose physical presence is sorely missed."*

One might regard the celebration of the Eucharist, in the words of Pope John Paul II, as an "epiphany of Communion." He who celebrates the Eucharist "...learns to become a promoter of communion, peace and solidarity in every situation." A true Eucharistic community must by its own inner dynamic be open

to all of humanity. Anything less is not, to that extent, a true Eucharistic community. It is this community that is the clearest sign of God's presence in the world: "May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me."

While all of these ways of understanding what Jesus is requesting us to do are valid and worthy of reflection, there is another approach that I feel includes all of them, at least implicitly, but perhaps goes somewhat beyond them. That is to understand the "this" that Jesus has invited us to do as his own definitive "yes" to the Father. At the very time when things seem to be falling apart—Judas is about to betray Jesus, Peter, the leader of the apostles, will soon deny that he even knows Jesus, the apostles are arguing among themselves about who is the greatest—Jesus with complete trust in the Father embraces without reservation God's will in his regard. And we need not, indeed should not, assume that God wanted Jesus to die on the Cross. Jesus' death was simply the result of his unwavering yes to being, in his person and life, the inauguration of



*Continued on the next page...*

God's kingdom, the definitive establishment of God's covenant with his people. St. Paul tells us: "...Jesus...was never yes and no: with him it was always Yes, and however many the promises God made, the Yes to them all is in him."

In shedding his Precious Blood on the cross, Jesus uttered his final and definitive yes to the Father. This act makes clearly visible for the first time the depth and intensity of Jesus' yes. In this context, the Precious Blood of Jesus thus becomes a real symbol revealing both the depth and intensity of Jesus' yes to the Father and the possible cost for anyone who would follow him. In the celebration of the Eucharist, it is also the inspiration and source from which springs any subsequent yes to God.

Jesus' yes was something he learned on the lap of his mother. It was she who said: "I am the handmaid of the Lord...let what you have said be done to me." In so doing she gave God a fully human presence in our world. Since the dawn of creation, God's redeeming and reconciling entry into our world has always depended on a Spirit-inspired and Spirit-enabled yes to God's advance. This was true of Abraham and Moses, all the prophets. It was true of Mary and in a most unique way, it was true of Jesus. His yes was but the human echo of the eternal, love inspired yes of the Word to the Father in a mutual exchange of love that is the Holy Spirit. For Jesus, yes to God was not simply something he said. It is what he was in the depths of his being.



This then is what Jesus is asking us to do. To say yes to God. To be yes to God. It is here that we begin to share in the Trinitarian communion when, moved by the Spirit, we join our yes to that of the person of Jesus in his being-towards-the-father-in-love. In trying to be yes to God in the context of the Eucharistic celebration, we commit ourselves to being "...the sign to the contemporary world that Jesus was to his by his preaching and healing, his liberating association with sinners, prostitutes, and tax collectors, his prophetic reversals of commonly accepted human values" (Roger Haight, *The Future of Christology*).

It must, however, be our own yes, not anyone else's, no matter how glorious it might appear. It is a yes the demands of which are

revealed to us day to day, moment to moment, in the changing, unpredictable, sometimes joyous, sometimes tragic and heart-wrenching, more often very ordinary circumstances of our daily life. The Eucharist is the reminder that God is God-with-us for the task of the moment. It is also the foundation of our hope that God will be with us for each successive moment.

Perhaps the synoptics, in putting the description of the Last Supper in the context of human weakness, greed and pending violence are telling us something important about the cost of saying yes to God in union with Jesus. Anyone who wishes to do so must accept the fact that betrayal, misunderstanding and even crucifixion, figuratively or literally, is always on the horizon of possibilities.

The weakness and betrayal, the lack of understanding on the part of Jesus' closest friends also serve as a constant reminder that of ourselves we can do nothing. We can only allow Jesus through his life giving Spirit to continue his yes to the Father in and through us. The Eucharist is not only the celebration of what we are and therefore of what we are called to be. It is also a source of nourishment and a pledge of hope that the task is possible.

This side of resurrection life, we are never a pure yes to God. We carry with us our negativities, longing to be free of them. We stumble on in the knowledge that God is with us, and in the hope that he can create in us an ever deeper yes to him. As the prophet Ezekiel says: "I will give them a single heart and I will put a new spirit in them; I will remove the heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh instead, so that they will keep my laws and respect my observances and put them into practice. Then they shall be my people and I will be their God."

And as our death approaches perhaps we can make our own the ardent wish of the late Bernard Haring: "I contemplate and long for my death as the last, irrevocable, and unsurpassable yes and amen to God's salvific will." 🙏

*Al O'Dell is a Precious Blood Companion and Amicus from Columbus Grove, OH.*

*Continued from page 5...*

knows more about math than I do. Others in our group also were able to meet their sponsored children. If I remember correctly, Fr. Matt got a good workout (in the high altitude) playing soccer with a group of young people, including his sponsored child.

On our last day, we visited the chapel in San Salvador where Monsignor Oscar Romero was assassinated in March of 1980 as he celebrated Mass. It was a moving experience to stand behind that same altar, and I couldn't help but look down the aisle and out the open door to the spot outside where the hired gunman stood many years ago. We were joined by a large group of mothers of sponsored children from the city and a choir of about 30 who led the music.



*This painting is displayed in Oscar Romero's apartment.*

After Mass, we were given an impassioned presentation about Monsignor Romero, and were left in no doubt about his significance for these people yet today. The speaker called the chapel our "Holy Land" and reminded us of the words spoken by a bishop after the murder: "In Oscar Romero, God walked among the Salvadoran people." His small apartment next to the chapel is now a museum which includes—in addition to

his simple possessions at the time—many photos of his life and ministry, his death, his funeral. In one display case hang the bloodied vestments he was wearing when he died. Quotes from his homilies are painted on the walls, including one from just two months before his death: "Si me matan resucitaré en el pueblo salvadoreño" (*If they kill me I will rise in the Salvadoran people*).

From the simple beauty of the children who sang of being little missionaries, to the profound realities of a life like Romero's, and so many stories in between, this walk with the poor was a reminder of the mission that we all share. In the words of the final song in Romero's chapel: "Todos nos comprometimos en la mesa del señor a construir en este mundo el amor, y a luchar por los hermanos, y hacer la comunidad. Cristo vive en solidaridad." (*We all commit ourselves at the Lord's table to build love in this world, to struggle for our brothers and sisters, to make community. Christ lives in solidarity.*)

We are all missionaries, sent to one another. The people who make up CFCA are real people making a real difference, bringing hope to families. The people who belong to the world-wide community of CFCA believe that families can create real change in our world, and they are doing just that. 🙏

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## IT'S NOT PRETTY

Alan Hartway, C.P.P.S.

Sometime during my first year at St. Mary Parish in Garden City, KS, we were having a pastoral and finance council meeting together to discuss the budget. Every one was brainstorming items to decrease or eliminate from the proposed budget for the next year. Among the ideas, someone said, "Let's buy smaller hosts because they are cheaper than the large whole wheat ones, and let's stop offering communion wine." They felt that it was hundreds of dollars a year. I was deeply impressed with Sr. Gemma Doll, O.P. who responded at that moment that one should never diminish the sacramental signs as they are foundational to the communion in the community of the parish. That made a great deal of sense to me, and over the years has really stuck with me.

So just the week before Christmas I was having Mass in a parish on the front range near Boulder where I frequently help out. I noticed that the communion hosts put out were the smallest white hosts I think I've ever seen in my life. It looked like they were smaller than dimes; I can't imagine who makes them. I asked the sacristan what was with the small hosts; they actually turned out to be much harder to pick up from the ciboria and distribute. Then this was the response, "I ordered them just for Christmas because they were white, and I thought they would be pretty for Christmas." Yes, that's what was said, "pretty for Christmas." I had to bite my tongue, after all I was only the visiting clergy. But it surfaced a number of thoughts for me.

The sentiment of "pretty for Christmas" reflects an increasing suburbanization and domestication of the liturgy. There's a strange blurring of lines between what we are doing in the malls where things are indeed made to be pretty, and what we are doing in Church, where merely "pretty" is the last thing we are doing. No doubt we will decorate our churches for Lent and then again for Easter, just as we have done recently for Christmas. But the last goal that should motivate us is the concept of "pretty."

Signs are things we use to stand for and to

point toward other realities that challenge our humanity. The poets, for example, will say, "Love is a red, red rose." While we all know that love is not indeed a rose, somehow the statement makes a kind of sense to us—beyond speech—that points to a deeper, richer reality than other descriptive words. We all know what they mean really, and we accept the statement as holding a kind of truth. So roses are given to one's beloved as a token of love. Yes, they are pretty, but they also have thorns. Love, too, has its thorns.



*"I ordered them just for Christmas because they were white, and I thought they would be pretty for Christmas.' Yes, that's what was said, 'pretty for Christmas.' I had to bite my tongue...."*

When it comes to the liturgy, we Catholics are very good about the use of symbols, especially those involving the physical senses. These symbols shape a great deal of our Catholic imagination. Sometimes we get a little carried away, and the symbols then get piled on top of one another, which results in confusion and mere decoration. Symbols are there to point to realities richer and deeper than themselves. Most of the time simplicity is best because the symbol then is more clear and more adeptly focuses and draws our attention to the bigger picture. Symbols express things for us that a heap of words may otherwise fall short in communicating. Too many symbols, and it seems like we get stuck on the "pretty" part and nothing happens on the spiritual level.

The *Catechism* teaches this in #1145: "A sacramental celebration is woven from signs and symbols. In keeping with the divine pedagogy of salvation, their meaning is rooted in the work of creation and in human culture...." And again in the next

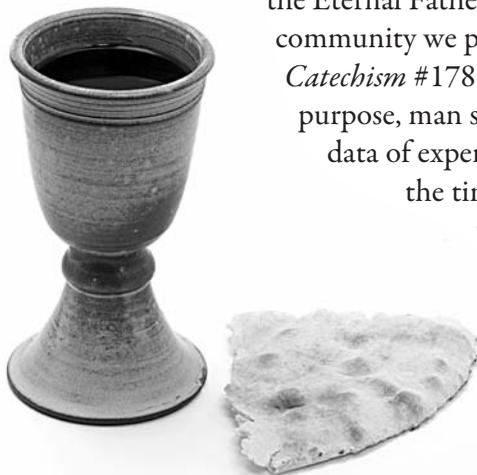
paragraph, "In human life, signs and symbols occupy an important place. As a being at once body and spirit, man expresses and perceives spiritual realities through physical signs and symbols. As a social being, man needs signs and symbols to communicate with others.... The same hold true for (our) relationship with God."

So that the communication achieves its goal, simplicity and clarity work to our advantage, and "pretty" has nothing to do with it. After all we are not in the business of decoration. That is, as I said earlier, for the malls.

I was led to explore a bit further what the *Catechism* has to say about signs. Two things stand out. First, blood. In #2260 we read, "The Old Testament always considered blood a sacred sign of life. This teaching remains necessary for all time." Our Eucharistic signs are vitally important in the liturgy and need to be the most direct, clear, and simple physical realities that in fact they are. Hence the value of real red wine and a whole wheat host of a size commensurate with the imagination they invoke.

Communion isn't at all about being pretty; communion is messy. In the gospel of Luke in this Year C we will see this time and again as Jesus immerses himself in the messiness of our humanity, and at the same time raise us up to the dignity of our full stature as a people of God. Communion gives meaning to suffering, being broken, distributed, and poured out. Jesus speaks to us and gives our whole lives, even the ugly parts, meaning.

Under the rubric of conscience, the Church also speaks to us about signs. It has been a particular charism of our Precious Blood community to read the signs of the times. In the Eternal Father prayers for the community we pray for this skill. In the *Catechism* #1788, we read, "To this purpose, man strives to interpret the data of experience and the signs of the times assisted by the virtue of prudence, by the advice of competent people, and by the help of the Holy Spirit." Clear signs are easier to read, and those more complex require the



*"Communion isn't at all about being pretty; communion is messy.... Jesus immerses himself in the messiness of our humanity, and at the same time raise us up to the dignity of our full stature as a people of God. Communion gives meaning to suffering, being broken, distributed, and poured out. Jesus speaks to us and gives our whole lives, even the ugly parts, meaning."*

engagement of community and an openness to the Holy Spirit in prayer.

Communion is the living presence of the Lord Jesus among us. Communion isn't something we do to be pretty or to be nice. Communion is someone we receive who makes and keeps us real. Communion, as Bonhoeffer wrote from prison, is a revelation of existence communication and not a mere conceptual communication. To communicate this effectively we preach good news, the whole news about God and about us. The Gospel of Luke will confront us with our spiritual poverty, while at the same time share with us the abundance and miracle of grace given in the presence of the sign of Jesus among us. This sign as presence is most pre-eminent in communion. 🙏

"What is at stake, it seems to me, is nothing less than the church's credibility. It is true that the church could gain some credibility by giving us more beautiful translations, but clumsy is not beautiful, and precious is not prayerful. During a recent dinner conversation with friends, the issue of the new translations came up. Two at the table were keenly—and quite angrily—aware of the impending changes; two were not. When the uninformed heard a few examples ('and with your spirit'; 'consubstantial with the Father'; 'incarnate of the Virgin Mary'; 'oblation of our service'; 'send down your Spirit like the dewfall'; 'He took the precious chalice'; 'serene and kindly countenance,' for starters), the reaction was somewhere between disbelief and indignation."

Michael Ryan, *What if We Said "Wait"?*

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## VOCATIONS OFFICE: *Double Vision*

Sharon Crall

I recently experienced a case of “double vision” for three days during the NCYC (National Catholic Youth Conference), held in downtown Kansas City, MO in November and attended by over 23,000 high school students, youth leaders and chaperones from around the United States. Taking place on the weekend of the Feast of Christ the King, the theme was fittingly “Christ Reigns.” My position with the Vocation Ministry Office meant staffing a Vocations Booth for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood throughout the three day event, and my position at St. Mary Parish in Albia, IA meant I was the on site support person for a group of seventeen youth and three chaperones who attended NCYC. It was a truly amazing faith-filled gathering, and my “double vision” allowed me to experience it from two different perspectives.

Planning for NCYC began almost a year and a half ago. It was a wonderful opportunity for the Precious Blood community having the conference held in our own backyard, and the proximity of Kansas City to Iowa made it easier for youth from our parish to attend.

I quickly found out that rules and procedures abound with such a large gathering, and the details of paperwork could leave one almost dazed. For the Vocations Office it was all about timing and locking in the position for our booth. Once that was accomplished, we were forwarded an outline of over 13 pages, which we were expected to read, comprehend and then follow in detail. My colleague Fr. Joe Miller simply told me that he was sure such details would be my department, so I spent one exhilarating evening highlighting what would pertain to us.

The next step was connecting with the proper channels who sent more paperwork to be completed. One example of this process was our need of electricity to run the laptop computer. For a fee of \$50 and the written request for the paperwork, a three page comprehensive application arrived, including the need to sketch out the placement of the plug-in (in the middle of

the booth). I will never again take a drop cord for granted! Then there was the need to obtain credentials for all people who would help staff the booth. Frank and Phyllis Still from our Vocations Team are in the business of promotional items, and so thousands of C.P.P.S. key tags were designed and produced. And then there was the candy—sacks and sacks of it—which we heard was an expectation of all the booths.

The same “busyness” was going on in the Albia parish. Even though we were fairly close to the event, the cost figure per student was regulated and enforced by our Diocese of Davenport Youth Ministry Office and was non-negotiable (just over \$400). In the past we were lucky to get four to six students interested in attending NCYC, so I was fairly shocked when the pitch was made and over twenty youth expressed interest on the spot! So this was going to be expensive, and we quickly drew up plans and carried out lots of fund-raising events. Thanks to generous parishioners who supported us, we met our challenge.



*Sharon Crall, second from left, with some of the youth from Albia at the NCYC.*

There was much paperwork to be done here as well, including insurance certification, medical forms, and waivers. We met with parents and obtained needed signatures, made copies and sent duplicates to the Diocesan Office, and made a folder to have on site in Kansas City. On Wednesday evening, November 18th, the twenty pilgrims were blessed at a youth Mass in the parish. I left that evening and the rest left for Kansas City the next morning.

Fr. Joe Miller, Fr. Timothy Armbruster and I spent the first morning finding our way around the Conference Center and created our vocations booth, but my thoughts would occasionally drift to the pilgrims I knew were heading in from Albia. Would they travel safely? Would the hotel accommodations be correct? Would they get turned around and back downtown in time for opening events? Would I even see them that day amidst the crowds? I was somewhat of a Mother Hen wondering about her little ones and their whereabouts.

From noon to 4:00 P.M. Thursday, the immenseness of the gathering began to sink in as we staffed the vocations booth. Youth from all across the United States stopped by, and I was completely overwhelmed with their excitement about their faith. All of the students were respectful, courteous, and filled with the Spirit. I could see that I was going to gain a lot from this experience. But where was the group from Albia? And no phone call yet from the youth leader traveling with them.

When Fr. Joe and I closed down the booth and arrived at the Sprint Center for the opening session, it was not long before I spotted two girls from the Albia group on the big screen high above the stage. Albia had arrived! Steve Agrisano and Jesse Manibusan, two wonderfully faith-filled youth presenters, exceeded the opening event. I found myself clapping and dancing to the Christian rock music. The entire Sprint Center took on energy of its own as thousands of Catholic youth celebrated their Catholic faith and pledged their openness to deepening their faith by participation in all of the upcoming sessions. They wore identifying T-shirts and crazy hats to trade, and all were quickly getting into the spirit of celebrating Catholicism.

After I returned to Precious Blood Center late that night on a “Catholic high,” I called Tanya, our youth leader from Albia, to see how the bus trip went and what our parish youth thought of the conference opener. My “high” quickly turned to concern as Tanya answered that the group was still walking downtown block after block trying to find their bus which was not parked in the designated place. I could hear the kids in the background moaning that they were tired and very hungry. Three phone calls later found the group back at their hotel and ordering pizza, while still trying to make curfew rules. It could be a long next few days!

Friday morning ushered in a long and exhausting day of staffing the vocations booth and serving as a check-in spot for the Albia youth. The day was a blur of activity. One minute I would

be talking to a youth group from Connecticut and explaining the charisms of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. The next minute a group from Albia would excitedly rush up to the booth to fill me in on their latest escapades and experiences. Trading hats was a big draw, and the Albia group was meeting people from all over the



*From left, Phyllis Still, Fr. Joe Miller, Sharon Crall, Br. Steve Ohnmacht, and Frank Still*

*“The entire Sprint Center took on energy of its own as thousands of Catholic youth celebrated their openness to deepening their faith by participation in all of the upcoming sessions. They wore identifying T-shirts and crazy hats to trade, and all were quickly getting into the spirit of celebrating Catholicism.”*

United States. It was so much fun to help them decide what workshop to attend, and then getting a short synopsis upon their return. Since I was also the “relief station,” I kept a supply of snacks and water behind the curtain of our booth.

Meanwhile, I was getting a geography lesson as hundreds of students stopped and shared about their home area—sometimes making a connection with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Some were from parishes staffed by the community, some had heard of priests from our order in their area, and some knew members. Students also very respectfully looked over our material and computer presentation, and asked questions about religious life. I was pleased to see the openness that many showed to this way of life. So the day went, always on my feet, as I talked to hundreds of bubbly teenagers about their faith and about looking at religious life. Then it would be back to sharing the excitement of our Albia youth experiencing such a huge faith gathering. As one of them said to me, “This makes me so proud to be Catholic!”

*Continued on the next page...*

My double vision position of trying to excite and then sharing excitement was a fantastic experience. Here was faith in action.

That evening Fr. Joe and I had the opportunity to attend the General Session keynoted by Jason and Cystallina Evert, the best presentation I have ever heard on chastity and respect. This time we were sitting with the Albia Youth Group so I could hear and see the reactions of the students to the honesty and truth conveyed in the message. Our group left tired and hungry, but completely charged up by the message, the music and the sharing of being Catholic with thousands of other pilgrims.

I went back to the Center with dreams of double vision again—how to harness that enthusiasm into future religious vocations, and wishing I could have processed the evening with our Youth Group. A phone call to Tanya later related that first aid was on the way in the form of food, so processing had given way to hunger anyway.



Saturday was another full day. We welcomed scores of youth to our booth area all day long. Once again, the little groups from our Albia entourage would find their way to my station and visit about their latest “great experience.” By this time, we had notations in our vocations notebook of some follow-up contacts and phone numbers of several youth leaders who had invited us to visit their ministry. The Albia pilgrims meanwhile were excitedly outlining to me their plans to attend NCYC in Indianapolis in 2011. Fr. Joe returned from hearing confessions for two hours and told me of the length of the lines still waiting. My time at the vocation booth did not allow me to attend the many workshops and sessions during the day, but I got my briefing from the students anyway.

The closing Mass on Saturday evening brought an awesome experience of the Eucharist. With the Sprint Center full to capacity and with hundreds of bishops, priests and seminarians vested and participating, both I and the Albia Youth Group were in total wonderment. The music and student animators performing on stage were great. To witness such sacredness toward the Eucharist in a huge arena with thousands of people in attendance was edifying. Even as we processed in long lines to receive the Body of Christ, it was quiet and holy.

My double vision returned as I participated in the Mass. In my vocational role, I could see that there is a future and hope for religious vocations that can be fostered and nurtured with opportu-

nities such as I was witnessing. My parish leader role took pride and encouragement as I witnessed the Albia group totally engaged in a celebration of Catholic joy. As the evening drew to a close, people began to file out of Sprint Center into the night. However, one of the Albia girls stood in place and exclaimed, “I don’t want it to end!”

Sunday brought the return home of a tired but hopeful vocation director/parish leader. As I drove back to Iowa, my double vision would return from time to time as I mused about the happenings of the past few days. My vision became very clear as I thought of the hope contained in thousands of young Catholic people. I pray that the participants of NCYC become strong leaders in our Church and usher us into a new era of excitement and energy. 🙏

“In short, what if we were to trust our best instincts and defend our people from this ill-conceived disruption of their prayer life? What if collegiality, dialogue and a realistic awareness of the pastoral needs of our people were to be introduced at this late stage of the game? Is it not possible that we might help the church we love avert a debacle or even disaster? And is it not possible that the voices in the church that have decided that Latinity is more important than lucidity might end up listening to the people and re-evaluating their position, and that lengthy, ungainly, awkward sentences could be trimmed, giving way to noble, even poetic translations of beautiful old texts that would be truly worthy of our greatest prayer, worthy of our language and worthy of the holy people of God whose prayer this is? (If you think the above sentence is unwieldy, wait till you see some of the new Missal translations. They might be readable, but border on the unspeakable!)”

Michael Ryan, *What if We Said “Wait”?*

## PRAYER FOR THE 2010 CONVOCATION

Eternal God,  
we offer you the Precious Blood of Jesus,  
for our sisters and brothers  
who gather for our Precious Blood Convocation.  
Accept us as disciples of your son, Jesus.  
Deepen our understanding  
of the theology of the cross and resurrection,  
which shapes us as your children and brings us life.  
Move us to witness to our faith  
in the Precious Blood of Jesus,  
by actions which lift up reconciliation,  
center on the poor and displaced of our world,  
provide for the immigrant,  
counsel the sorrowful  
and bring your Church the unity and courage it needs  
to live in our world today.  
Help us to embrace  
the anguish of our world and our Church  
with the redeeming love of Christ,  
which conquers all things, even despair and death.  
Let us join with our ancestors,  
with Maria De Mattias,  
Gaspar del Bufalo,  
Maria Anna Brunner,  
Theresa Weber  
and Francis Pfanner,  
in proclaiming the Precious Blood of Jesus  
to a world in need of redemption.  
Our communities are places of friendship and support,  
of prayer and study, of action and witness.  
Send your grace to all our Precious Blood congregations.  
May the Holy Spirit rouse us to be your witnesses,  
set our direction, lighten our burdens,  
refresh us with your presence,  
and empower us to proclaim your Kingdom.  
Bless our Convocation with joy and energy,  
with purpose and wisdom,  
and with hope and promise.  
May it be a moment of grace for our Church  
and our congregations.  
We can be your disciples today.  
We must proclaim the Precious Blood to our neighbors.  
We will sacrifice our lives for the sake of your Kingdom.  
Amen.

*“Difference,” continued from page 9...*

although his obituary mentioned several honors he had received. He just wanted to help vets, for two reasons: first, it was his job and second, because he wanted to. The model public servant.

Anyway, the education Paul helped me receive changed my life forever. If physical doors didn't open for me immediately the doors of my mind opened up in ways I had never before realized were possible. With Paul's urging I pursued English and History with a passion—a passion I found out was shared by him. After I completed my two-year degree he helped me enroll at Simpson College. Once again I questioned him.

Since the vocational rehab paid all college costs, as well as providing some cash each month, I asked him if Simpson—at the tune of around \$23,000 a year—was a bit too steep. He said not to give it another thought, as it was his decision as to my best interests and he had decided that Simpson was the place for me. As it turned out he was right. By then I should have known.

It's a long story, but I never completed my bachelor's degree. I came to work here instead. By that time Paul had retired, and although he was pleased I was writing for the paper, he made it clear that I should have finished what I started out to do. It was the only time I regretted my decision. But I never regretted the decision—at Paul's urging—to take advantage of the program he offered me.

Now it could be said that Paul wasn't responsible for my education, but rather the VA, as it was their program. But I wouldn't have ever found out about it if it wasn't for Paul and I would never have enrolled if it wasn't for Paul. The experience made my life richer—because of Paul.

He made a difference. Just like George. But unlike George, Paul was real. 🙏

*Brian Chambers is a columnist with the Albia Union-Republican in Albia, IA where this column first appeared. It is reprinted here with the permission of the author.*



## *A Ritual of Hope and Healing*

Dave Kelly, C.P.P.S.

The church filled quickly. People gathered with pictures of their loved ones held close to their chests. This was a community that knew violence; this was a community suffering. The Back of the Yards community had just experienced another young man killed. The Mass of Hope and Healing, an annual celebration, brings together people who have been victims of violence and families who have lost a loved one because of violence and offers them a time and place where our tears and pain are not ignored or hidden. It is a celebration of our faith that allows us to place our stories and the pain that we carry alongside the story of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. At the very core of our faith is the belief that life is triumphant over death—but sometimes we struggle to embrace that hope. Even with the faith that is planted deep within our souls, the tears well up and the pain becomes overwhelming.

Only a week or so before, we buried a young man, seventeen years old, who was gunned down as he walked home from school. With the Fenger high school beating so recent in our memory—an especially violent act that captured the attention of the news media—violence among teens has been a steady subject of discussion. Calls for more police and harsher penalties, calls for schools to be more attentive to the gang lines that separate communities and conflicts that arise because of it, has placed violence among our youth front and center.

We didn't gather in that church because we had answers or ideas, but rather with the simple need to come together as a community, a community of people who have been scarred by violence.

Bishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, an auxiliary bishop of Chicago, spoke about the pain of losing someone, not through sickness or old age,

but ripped from us by violence. He spoke of his own personal experience of losing his good friend, only three weeks prior, to violence. His normally passionate speech was halted at times, but then he went on to speak emphatically of the Christian story, the story of the death and resurrection of Christ, and how it offers us a place where we can begin the journey toward hope and healing, a journey toward reconciliation.

Perhaps the most moving part of the ceremony was the mothers carrying a large cross to the front of the church. After the homily, mothers who had lost a child to violence surrounded the cross and carried it forward. As the cross was placed in front, people were invited to place their smaller crosses—each inscribed with the name of their loved one taken violently from them—around the larger cross of Christ. Our stories of losing a child to violence were thus symbolically placed around the cross of Jesus. It was a powerful ritual which carried a host of messages, not the least of which was that we are not alone in our pain and that God is present with us today.



*“People were invited to place their smaller crosses—each inscribed with the name of their loved one taken violently from them—around the larger cross of Christ. Our stories of losing a child to violence were thus symbolically placed around the cross of Jesus.”*

Isolation is the cruelest form of torture. Not knowing if anyone knows or cares or understands is devastating. Trauma and

*See “Hope and Healing,” continued on page 23...*

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## REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRECIOUS BLOOD MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

### *There for the Journey*

Michael Donovan

I met Arturo at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center when he was 16 years old. He was attending a weekend retreat led by the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation team, and I was immediately impressed by his thoughtfulness. During our follow-up one-on-one visits, he always expressed great remorse and regret, and accepted full responsibility for the actions which led to his incarceration. He soon turned 17, and was transferred to the Cook County Jail awaiting adjudication of his case.

Because I don't have chaplaincy privileges at the County Jail, my meetings with Arturo continued, but were restricted to shouting through a plate glass shield in the noisy visitor's area at the facility. It was hard to carry on meaningful conversations, so we began to correspond by letter. As time passed, I came to appreciate Arturo's strength and courage as he persevered through this very difficult time in his life. His mother had moved to Texas, so he no longer had her in-person support. He also confirmed my initial impressions of his intelligence when he wrote me that he had received his GED, without attending formal classes.

In the Spring of 2009, Arturo, now 18, made the difficult decision to plead guilty, and he was sentenced to 27 years in prison, with no chance for parole until he served 24 years. He was sent to a maximum security correctional facility in Southern Illinois, about a 7-hour drive from Chicago, further separating him from his father, who visited him on a regular basis while in jail.

I continued my letters to him, never knowing what to say. I cannot begin to imagine how one faces such a desperate situation, but Arturo's letters are always filled with wisdom beyond his



chronological years. In his first letter from prison he wrote the following: "I've taken full responsibility for my actions. What I did was wrong, and it's eating me up slowly, even with God's forgiveness. I also told the victim's family that I was sorry, but I think I will write them a letter. The only way I can recuperate is by paying my debt to society as well as living a productive life while incarcerated and continuing when I am released. I know it's going to be hard, but I will try."

*"I've taken full responsibility for my actions. What I did was wrong, and it's eating me up slowly, even with God's forgiveness. I also told the victim's family that I was sorry.... The only way I can recuperate is by paying my debt to society as well as living a productive life while incarcerated and continuing when I am released."*

His letters speak of his plans to educate himself, since there is no schooling at his facility. He wrote that "believe it or not, I'm taking this as a learning experience. I know I can get through this as long as I keep my mind busy/occupied." However, he laments that "the thing that really hurts me is the fact that I can't have a real relationship with my brothers, sister, Mom, Dad, and Stepdad because I'm behind bars.... When I finally make it home, they're going to be older." It occurred to me that

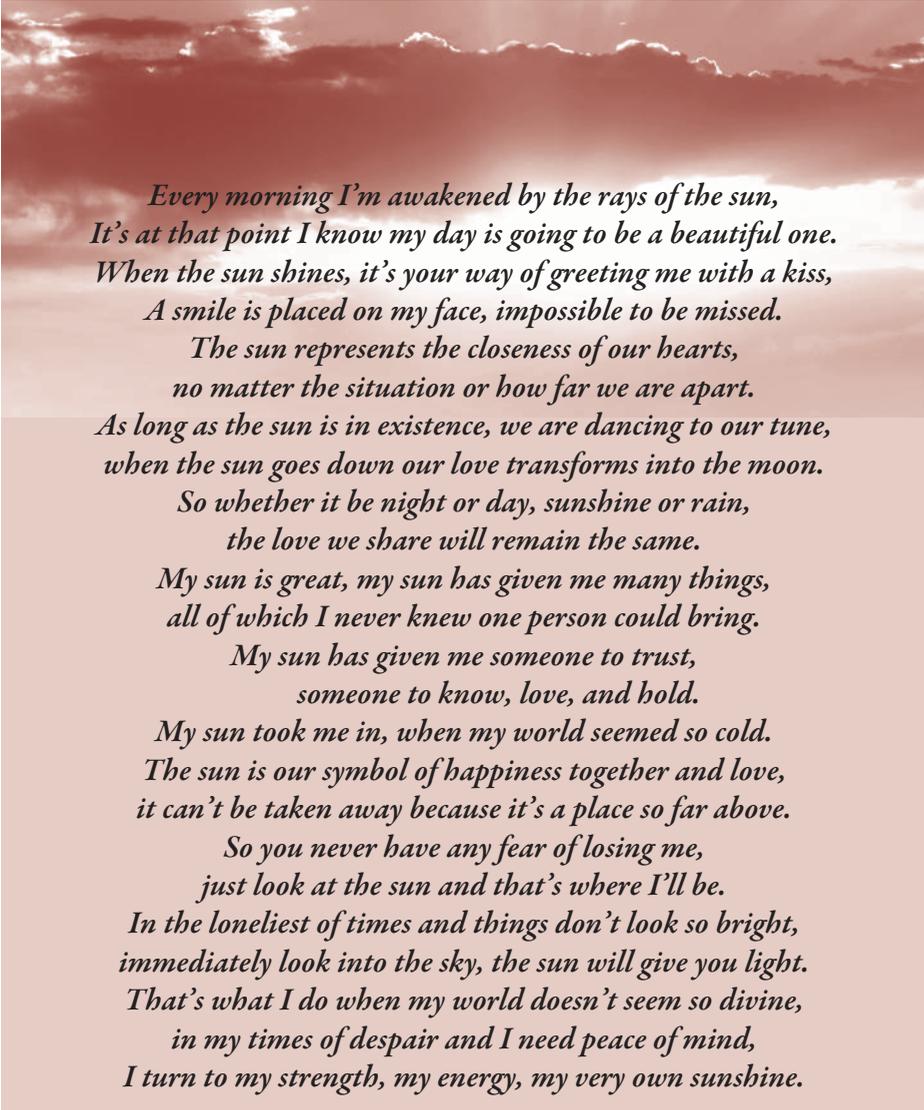
*Continued on the next page...*

I would be 80 years old, if I lived until his first opportunity for parole!

He has tried to get me on his visitor's list, but to no avail. Confirmation of his many requests get "lost" in the in-house mail system. His patience to get me on his approved phone list finally paid off after seven months, and I received my first call from him on December 1st. It was so good to hear his voice. He began to tell me his story of the day-to-day life of incarceration at a prison where the inmates are locked down 23 hours a day. The isolation and loneliness are suffocating, and being the new guy—and one of the youngest—doesn't make it any easier. We talked a lot about forgiveness, reconciliation, guilt, loss and redemption. We prayed.

One of the hopes of our jail ministry is to follow the youth out of detention and back into their neighborhood, supporting their efforts to stay out of trouble and to make changes in their lives. We won't get that chance with Arturo. We can't follow him out, but we can be there for the journey. I'm onboard.

Arturo recently submitted a poem for publication in our *Making Choices* newsletter titled "My Sunshine," which best exemplifies his positive spirit and strength. I include it here. 🧡



*Every morning I'm awakened by the rays of the sun,  
It's at that point I know my day is going to be a beautiful one.  
When the sun shines, it's your way of greeting me with a kiss,  
A smile is placed on my face, impossible to be missed.  
The sun represents the closeness of our hearts,  
no matter the situation or how far we are apart.  
As long as the sun is in existence, we are dancing to our tune,  
when the sun goes down our love transforms into the moon.  
So whether it be night or day, sunshine or rain,  
the love we share will remain the same.  
My sun is great, my sun has given me many things,  
all of which I never knew one person could bring.  
My sun has given me someone to trust,  
someone to know, love, and hold.  
My sun took me in, when my world seemed so cold.  
The sun is our symbol of happiness together and love,  
it can't be taken away because it's a place so far above.  
So you never have any fear of losing me,  
just look at the sun and that's where I'll be.  
In the loneliest of times and things don't look so bright,  
immediately look into the sky, the sun will give you light.  
That's what I do when my world doesn't seem so divine,  
in my times of despair and I need peace of mind,  
I turn to my strength, my energy, my very own sunshine.*

*"Evaluation," continued from page 3...*

vision and mission and how challenging is it to those who could apply themselves a little more if there is no distinction in rewarding people? After hearing him speak about recognition, I wondered how well our province recognizes or rewards people. Yes, we may not do it because we are called to a life of humility, or we do not want to hurt peoples' feelings, but in the meantime it seems we may miss opportunities to challenge each other.

This reflection hopefully invites some discussion about possibilities for the future of the province. All that I have learned as a school board member has been a challenge to me. I have come to realize the importance of evaluations and rewards, while recognizing that I have not always done my best in ministry at the parish and in the province. I realize there are mission and vision statements in many aspects of our province structure. In my opinion there are so many more possibilities of growth for us as a province. I am discovering that growth comes from challenges to one another, acknowledgement of accomplishments, and through periodic evaluations. 🧡

*"Hope and Healing," continued from page 20...*

violence cause one to feel alone with their pain. This ritual, and in fact the entire Mass, offered us a place to acknowledge our pain—to ourselves and others. It became that place where our stories were welcomed, heard and honored.

Along with Bishop Gustavo, ten priests from the southwest side gathered to celebrate the Mass. Their presence was a powerful statement to the families that they do not grieve alone. This community of the faithful who gathered that night in Immaculate Heart of Mary Church was not linked by geography or ethnicity, but by the common experience of losing someone dear to them by violence. The liturgy was a celebration of hope and a strong statement that we will not forget those who have been taken from us.

We will continue our journey of hope and healing. On December 8th we, along with many other restorative justice groups throughout the city, will hold circles of healing and understanding. People of all walks of life will be invited to gather together in circle and share their stories of violence and to work together toward halting the violence and beginning the healing. From the grassroots we seek to confront the violence around us and work for peace and reconciliation. 🙏

### *Waiting for the Storm*

Smoke spilled from each chimney  
while we children ate early suppers  
so as to be out of dad's way  
when he got home from the mill.

The radio said it was snowing upstate,  
but not here—not yet—but it was coming—  
Mom could feel it in her bones.

We still kept our sleds in the garage,  
at least 'til the storm hit.  
Could have been later that day,  
could have been the next.

Whenever it came,  
we'd stay gone 'til it was over.  
Dad will probably be late again,  
anyway.

It was decades later before we understood  
going to the mill every day was the only way  
he knew how to say, "I love you."

*Bob McCray*

## LOOKING AHEAD

**January 10–15 2010**

*International Symposium*  
"The Spirituality of the Blood:  
Our Mission in Defense  
of the Earth Community"  
Center of Spirituality  
Lima, Peru

**February 8–10, 2010**

*Cincinnati and Kansas City*  
*Provincial Councils Meeting*  
Chicago, IL

**February 17–21, 2010**

*Vietnam Candidates' Retreat*  
with Frs. Richard Bayuk  
and Joe Nassal  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

**April 12–14, 2010**

*2010 Provincial Assembly*  
Church of the Annunciation  
Kearney MO

**July 26–29, 2010**

*Precious Blood Convocation*  
St. Louis University  
St. Louis MO



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## MY BACK PAGES

*Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.*

Early in November I was celebrating Mass in a parish in California. This particular diocese was a bit late to the party, so to speak, and were only then implementing a set of guidelines to help combat the latest flu virus. Before each Mass, the announcement was made that there would be no communion from the cup, no communion on the tongue (I still don't get that one), no holding hands during the *Lord's Prayer*, and above all, no touching during the *Sign of Peace* (ok, they didn't say "above all"). An aside: I observed with a certain amount of glee that the prohibitions against touching were pretty much ignored at the Spanish-speaking Masses.

At the first Mass of the weekend, following the Lamb of God, I sensed motion off to my right, and turning slightly I observed the deacon walking very solemnly towards me, reverently holding in his hands a family-size pump container of GERM-X hand sanitizer. He said, "Father, would you like to scrub?" (his exact words, honest!) Feeling like I was on the set of ER preparing to enter the operating room, I politely declined.

In my recent travels, I have seen every possible variation of liturgical strategies designed to prevent the spread of illness, running the gamut from common sense (don't come to Mass if you are ill) to just plain silly (wear gloves when shaking hands). Setting aside the good intentions of those who promulgated guidelines in many dioceses (with no uniformity, and at times with questionable medical rationale), and the inconsistencies in content and implementation,

I am somewhat intrigued by the power of symbol in all of this.

Several articles in this issue address the celebration of the Eucharist, the place of symbol, the words we use, the memory we hold. Recent experience has shown me that the ubiquitous container of hand sanitizer is the new symbol for Eucharist (in the United States, anyway). No more mess, no more risk, no more human contact, not even in church. I shudder to think what kind of guidelines might be developed if our places of worship were ever determined to be in danger of terror attacks, given how we have tended to overreact in terms of security at airports.

I don't mean to be irreverent or insensitive to legitimate concerns about health—or security. But I have been deeply troubled by such easy acquiescence (usually in the face of perceived danger or risk) which renders the liturgy stripped of a primary component (communion from the cup), human touch, and just plain common sense. So not only do we have prettiness (in the words of one author), but it is all very sanitary as well—an attribute that unfortunately can get into our consciousness and affect how we pray.

I didn't encounter these kinds of concerns as we celebrated Eucharist in the humblest of venues in various communities in Guatemala and El Salvador. It was all about our unity with one another in the body of Christ, bringing our varied and diverse lives and experiences to the table and offering it all to God. There was no GERM-X to be seen. Only each other. 🙏

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