

# THE **New Wine** PRESS

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**Volume 25 No 3 • November 2016**

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**Deepening Our Dialogue**

**Honing the Skills of  
Community Life**

**Mixing It Up**



# Let us serve God with holy joy.

*-St. Gaspar del Bufalo, founder of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood*

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Volume 25 No. 3 • November 2016

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*Front cover photo: Fr. Timothy Armbruster preaching during Marillac II gathering of members*

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

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

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

## THE New Wine PRESS

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Kansas City Province

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## Who's Expecting?

by Fr. Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S., Publications Editor

In the 1950s, “I Love Lucy” was a popular television comedy, starring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. During the second season, Lucy and Ricky have a son, whose birth was timed to coincide with Ball’s real-life delivery of their son Desi Arnaz, Jr. At no time on the show were they allowed to show her pregnant. As late as 1962, when Johnny Carson’s show debuted, the word “pregnant” itself could not be used; “so and so is expecting” was allowed and preferred.

I like both words, “pregnant” and “expecting.” Both are intimately connected to the season of Advent—which is rapidly approaching. Both are also embedded in the themes running through the articles in this issue: creating something new, deepening the dialogue, paradigm shifts, new normal, reimagining, widening circle, preparing, being open.

The quaint phrase, “so and so is expecting,” seems to capture the melody of this lovely season. Mary is expecting new life in a mysterious, wondrous way. The people of Advent—like the prophets, for example—are acting like expectant parents; they feel new life kicking in their weary nation’s womb. Paul with all his ups and downs is convinced that Lord is coming back, and he’s expecting it to happen soon. John the Baptist of course was very challenging in his preaching, because something in his prophet’s gut told him that old times were coming to an end.

All the characters of Advent are people who are expecting. The word comes from Latin, *expectare*, “to look out for” or “to look out of.” So we can say people who are expecting are those who are looking out of their present situation to something new that is going to occur—and that they can help bring about. And it’s because they are pregnant, i.e., full of possibilities, teeming with life, looking forward.

I’d like to suggest that we are all preparing to give birth this Advent (and all year round into the future). There is new life that needs to be born in us as individuals, as families, as a country—and certainly as a religious community. In each case, the birth for which we are preparing is our own. Of course, rebirth means even more changes; as any couple can attest, it’s never the same after a birth.

As surely as we celebrate the pregnancy of Mary and rejoice in her son, as surely as families around the world celebrate their pregnancies and rejoice in the hope of new life, we celebrate a church that is ever pregnant with the hope of Christ’s coming and celebrate our own hope and expectation for the new life which stirs within us. I invite you to reflect on the articles presented here with this lens of expectation and pregnancy. And consider what this—my favorite Advent poem—might offer as well.

*After Annunciation*  
Madeleine L’Engle

This is the irrational season  
when love blooms bright and wild.  
Had Mary been filled with reason  
there’d have been no room for the child. ♣

# Intentional Living and Ministry

by Fr. Ron Will, C.P.P.S., Leadership Team

Several months ago I was feeling unusual sensations in my chest. These led to a heart catheterization and an angioplasty of a blocked artery. Three months later I was feeling strange sensations again when I walked at an accelerated level. That led to another heart catheterization and the placement of a stent in a different artery that was 95% blocked. I still have a partial blockage at a place that cannot be stented. So I live with the reality of limited blood flow. That reality certainly puts me in touch with my mortality. It makes me think a little differently as I engage in activities and ponder what my long-term future is. But I certainly am not going to stop ministry because of this.

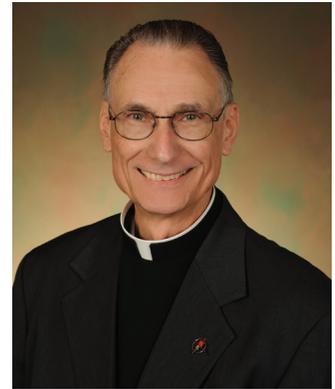
In a parallel way our Precious Blood Community has limited resources—considering the age and number of our members. That certainly is not going to stop us from engaging in dynamic ministry in the present and in the future, or stop planning for the future. Just as I keep dreaming and planning about the future of St. Francis Xavier Parish, we are doing the same thing for the Kansas City Province.

My health condition makes me live a little more intentionally. I want to make a positive impact. God also wants me to make a positive impact on people's lives. In a similar way, our Community wants to make a positive impact on people's lives. There is no use in hoarding our personnel or our financial personal resources. Why not invest them in people's lives now?

We are about to begin a new Liturgical Year with the First Sunday of Advent. We will begin preparing for the coming of the Kingdom of God in a new way. Jesus is coming. What can we do to cooperate, to welcome, to make his activity most effective in people's lives? How can we prepare people to receive Jesus in a new way, on a new level, during this new Liturgical Year? How can the Kansas City Province prepare people to receive and encounter Jesus Christ on a new level now and during our next fifty years?

During our Marillac II Gathering in August 2016, we named the desire of our members to create something new. This is now a real possibility. In September, the Provincial Councils of the three North American Provinces met in Chicago. We also named a desire for a new creation—a new model—for our Precious Blood Community that will speak more effectively to the Church and the world today. This is more than writing a new chapter in our Community history. It will be more like changing from hand-written letters to computer technology. We keep creating new wine, but we also need new wineskins into which to put it. We can't keep fine-tuning the engine of a car that has no wheels. We are not thriving as a Community. I believe that we need a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit on ourselves for that to happen. During Marillac II we named the specific desire for more faith sharing among our Members. If we do that honestly and intentionally,

*continued on page 5*





## Deepening Our Dialogue

by Fr. Alan Hartway, C.P.P.S., Pastor of Guardian Angels Church, Mead, Colorado

Over the last nine months, the members of the Kansas City Province have entered into an ever-deepening dialogue to renew our understanding of community, mission, and spirituality. The Futures Task Force, appointed by the provincial leadership after our first gathering at the Leavenworth Marillac Center in January, has invited the province members to come together to talk about renewal of religious life and mission and our future.

Our second gathering at Marillac, from August 22-24, was the fifth time during these past nine months that a province wide conversation took place. At both gatherings, Dr. Kevin McClone, a Chicago based therapist and facilitator, enabled the members to ask questions that challenged them to go deeper and be more present to one another.

The Futures Task Force used intentional interviews conducted by its members with the provincial leadership. The questions asked of each respondent were: What does faithfulness mean to you when thinking about community life and your apostolate? What qualities of your life in community and your apostolate invite others? This fourth round of the broader conversation prepared the members for the August meeting.

With prayer and Eucharist, the source and summit of our lives, the members spent three days together sharing and reflecting on the input from the two

questions. Dr. McClone stimulated our conversations Monday evening by asking us to share our hopes and our fears for the present and for the future. Many of the hopes expressed concerned keeping the conversation going and getting to know one another in respect and trust. On the flip side of this same coin, we shared our trust issues and fears of the unknown in the future.

Tuesday, we asked ourselves two more questions at our tables: What connects me to community and binds us together? What barriers are there to a deeper sense of relating? The members expressed a real desire to renew our bond of charity, but realized that would take more trust and overcoming our fears. Real distance and virtual distance created by the internet and other media are among our obstacles, but also the independence we've created to secure ourselves in the world of ministry. A more important obstacle is the need for reconciliation among us over our wounds. Many expressed a desire to do this work, realizing how much time it would take.

We then looked at yet another question of our future: How do we continue the spirit of Gaspar going forward together? We realize that it is sometimes difficult to translate Gaspar's concept of mission house and work into the modern world; this requires our imagination and creativity. An article by Sr. Sandra

Schneiders helped us to wrestle with the “new normal” of apostolic life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These phrases arose at the table conversations: Preaching the Word/Reconciliation/Renewal/Mercy/Blood of Christ/Meeting people where they are at/Going to the Edge/Missionary consciousness. We also shared the issues in our current mission sites.

Tuesday’s work led us to the evening session. Four members of the province volunteered to form a panel and share answers to this question: What has been the grace and the wound for you as a member of the Kansas City Province? This evening session was a powerful and intimate experience of healing and trust for the members.

On Wednesday morning in our concluding sessions, McClone invited us to address two more questions: What are my hopes and dreams for community going forward together in this liminal space and reality of “new normal”? What am I personally willing to commit to making that future a reality? Each member then wrote a personal and private covenant, stating what each one is committed to doing to actualize community and mission in the year ahead. We ended with Eucharist and lunch.

All the above questions are given here for further reflection among the members, and the Companions are invited also to take these questions up personally or in groups. The gathering made us more aware than ever of our continued need to do this work together.

After national and international Precious Blood leadership meetings in September, the province will have more direction for taking our process into the future. ✠

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*Leadership, continued from page 3*

I believe we will open ourselves to a deeper awareness and influence of the Holy Spirit.

The Leadership meeting in Chicago set a goal for the whole North American unit of working on a common vision. Each Province will go forward with relevant discussions by its members during the coming months. The Provincials will meet again in January to share the results of those discussions. Then a meeting of all

members of the three Provinces is hoped to take place in September of 2017.

A question that the Leadership meeting in Chicago asks all members to discuss is: Do we want to imagine a new future together with other provinces or imagine a new future alone? Personally I want to imagine together, honoring the spiritual talents of all of us, and flourishing under the strong influence of the Holy Spirit. I have found a prayer to the Holy Spirit that I plan to use daily for our Community during the months ahead. I want to ask the Holy Spirit to infuse us so that what we dream and plan is not just of us humans, but also of God.

When God called Abraham and Sarah to leave a familiar and comfortable homeland, they left without even knowing where they were going. They just trusted God. We can do the same.

When Jesus appeared after the resurrection, his wounds were still visible. We all have wounds or memories of wounds from one another. These wounds can keep us from creating something new. But they don’t have to limit us or drag us down. We can use the wounds as a means of understanding and ministering to each other and to God’s people more effectively.

One of our Precious Blood charisms is reconciliation in the world. The world certainly needs reconciliation in a lot of places close at hand. I can imagine the Precious Blood Renewal Center in Liberty, Missouri, offering intentional opportunities for reconciliation. Its setting offers an oasis in the midst of a busy, urban setting. The oasis extends across the road for peaceful walks through Immaculata Manor and Our Lady of Mercy Country Home. I could see myself as part of a team offering such opportunities for individuals, for couples, and/or for groups. Does anybody else see what I see? Obviously some people believe in what we are doing at the Precious Blood Center. After we started construction on the Reconciliation Labyrinth, the Province received an unexpected gift of \$50,000, which could be used for the labyrinth.

For us, limited blood flow should not be a problem. We have all that we need—and more—in the Precious Blood of Jesus that imbues our lives and our mission. In this we are life giving, energizing, healthy and active. Let us not allow our limited resources to stop us from dreaming!

What do you see? Tell us about it. ✠



*Frs. Tom Welk, Joe Uecker, Bill Walter enjoy some down time during Marillac II.*

## Honing the Skills of Community Life

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

American novelist, poet, environmentalist and farmer, Wendell Berry, once mused, “Community, I am beginning to understand, is made through a skill I have never learned or valued: the ability to pass time with people you do not and will not know well, talking about nothing in particular, with no end in mind, just to build trust, just to be sure of each other, just to be neighborly.”

For the past year or so, members of the Kansas City Province have been gathering in dyads, intentional interviews, and as a larger group to focus on our future as a religious community. We are engaged in a process of “Contemplative Conversation,” of going deeper into the mystery of our relationship and the bond of charity. In many ways, we are practicing a skill that many of us never learned, though unlike Berry, many of us did value: community. Though we spent many years in formation for ministry and community life, the focus was on ministry. Community life was a means to support the apostolate. We are, after all, not a monastic community; we are a Society of Apostolic Life. In the words of our founding provincial, “We exist for the apostolate.”

So many of us grew up with the idea that to be in community meant being “good neighbors” to one

another. Try not to annoy or bother one another. I recall one of the members being told when he moved into a community house many years ago, “The number one rule here is don’t bother anyone else.” That sets a low bar for the bond of charity. Instead of being “brother” to another, the suggestion was “don’t bother.”

Expectations of community life are higher than this though we often confuse living in community with living in common. The latter isn’t necessarily community and is often captured in the well-worn phrase, “living alone together.” The desire for a deeper communion, a deeper conversation, beyond the talk about the weather or the game last night or how many weddings or funerals you had the last year is what members of the Kansas City Province have been addressing this past year.

This is hard work. As Berry points out, “A community is not something that you have, like a camcorder or a breakfast nook. No, it is something you do. And you have to do it all the time.” So, how are we “doing” community? We often don’t think of “doing” community as we talk about “being” in community. But community is about doing those things that respect and reverence the dignity of the brothers and sisters

with whom we enter communion. We do community together but we have to work at it.

The model of community that has guided my journey as a Missionary of the Precious Blood is what Jesus did in the company of his friends on that night before he died. On the night when he knew the fabric of the community he wove was unraveling because of betrayal, denial, greed, ambition and fear, Jesus took the bread and the cup, identified himself with these elements of the earth—wheat, bread, grapes, wine—and said, “Do this in memory of me.” Do this—do this thing called community, communion, until he comes again in glory.

But what exactly do we do? In the sharing of our stories, our truth spills out in our circles of trust. We tell of our wonders and our wounds—as four of our members did when we gathered in Leavenworth in late August to continue this process of honing our skills of living community. There the members shared stories of how they have been wounded in community. If we are to move forward into the future, we must address these wounds. We must tell the truth. But most importantly, we must listen for the truth of the other’s words and story. In listening to our brother, we might be bothered—I hope we are bothered—as we touch that tender spot within where we missed a sacred connection with our brother or sister.

In listening to the four members share their wounds at that gathering in Leavenworth, I was reminded of something Killian Noe wrote in her book,

*Frs. Jim Uecker and Dave Matz at Marillac II*



*Celebrating Mass at Marillac II*

*Descent into Love.* “Sometimes we are astonished when we learn that although we did not actually ‘do’ anything for a certain individual, our simply being present or showing up allowed something to shift in his or her inner landscape that made space for deeper healing,” she writes. “Sometimes we discover that in simply being present to another’s pain we experience the Divine in them that awakens the Divine in ourselves.”

I have experienced this shift in our community life the past few months although we still have a long way to go. But when this shift occurs, when we trust each other enough to go deeper into the mystery of our relationship, we strengthen the bonds of love that are at the core of our life together.

During this coming year, the worldwide Congregation of Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood will focus our attention on what it means to live an authentic community life as people immersed in the spirituality of the blood of Christ. The dialogue, conversation, storytelling and truth-telling among all those connected to our congregation—incorporated members, Companions, candidates in formation, volunteers—will culminate with the Community Life Symposium July 23-28, 2017 in Rome with representatives from every geographical region where Precious Blood missionaries serve.

Community is like the old shoe slogan, “Just do it.” It’s hard work but when we do it, even if we don’t do it as well as we would like, we build trust, gather strength, deepen relationship, and stir the spirit of communion that brings the reign of God a little closer. ✠



# Mixing It Up

by Vicky Otto, Co-director of *Precious Blood Companions*

I have a confession of sorts to make; I am not a great cook. But I do like to watch cooking shows on television. One of my favorites is a show called “Chopped.” For each dish the contestants have to make they are given a basket of some rather strange ingredients that have nothing to do with the dish they are tasked to prepare. Imagine if you were given ingredients like rutabaga, chicken livers, graham crackers and cherry soda and told you had to create an entree with them. The chefs have to reimagine them (with other ingredients) into the dish they are assigned. After watching the show for a while, one gains a whole new appreciation for the creativity of those who love to cook.

As I have been reflecting upon *Gather, Send* and the vision of the Companions to invite people from different cultural traditions and from younger generations, I can’t help but reflect that, like the ingredients in “Chopped,” Companions may be reimaged into something they have never anticipated through the vision they share.

There is one sentence of *Gather, Send* that Companions and members have been drawn to over the last several months: “We bring the cup of spirituality to ever-widening circles, to people of all generations, races and cultures. We seek out those who are yearning for this message, and invite them, the way that we were invited.” While one can be drawn to the invitation action of this statement, one would hope there is a willingness also to allow the group to change once the new Companions are included. For our Companion Movement to truly live into *Gather, Send* we must not only embrace the new Companions but also the change that will occur.

Fr. Anthony Gittins, C.S.Sp. discussed this topic in his book *Living Mission Interculturally*. Fr. Gittins was writing to religious communities who were struggling with welcoming new priests into their communities, but many of his ideas are applicable to our Companion Movement. He discussed the challenges of intercultural mission, writing, “A community that is polarized into ‘us’ and ‘them’ will never achieve intercultural living; only in a community striving to become ‘we’ can it possibly succeed.” He encouraged the community as well: “Intercultural living demands graciousness, diplomacy, compromise, mutual respect, serious dialogue, and the development of a common and sustaining vision. A vision is something that inspires the common effort of a lifetime and also provides appropriate means to achieve a desired end.”

He also shared three guidelines that the Companion Movement should also embrace as we welcome Companions of different cultural traditions. The first guideline he suggested was “We are called to build a home together.” The image that he encourages communities to strive for is the same feeling that one has regarding a family home. He writes that the home is “an evolving, organic entity and its shape is forever changing.” Think of your own family home. Harmony

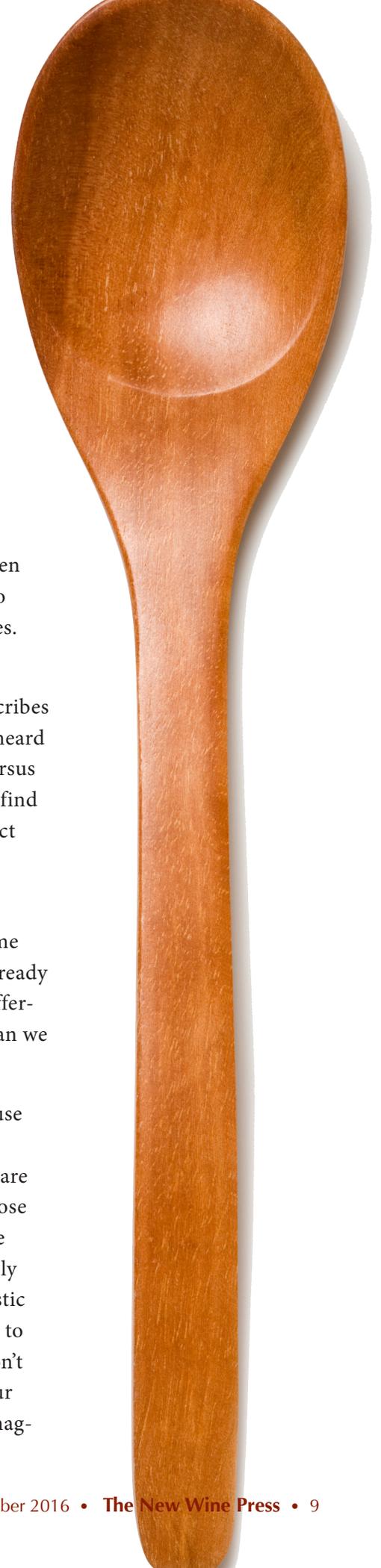
exists only because its members are willing to change plans, adapt to unforeseen circumstances, and change as members change.

The second guideline he offered was “We are called to discover the dignity of difference.” In the book he shares a story that brings this guideline to life: A teacher asks the disciples: “When do you know it is dawn?” One said, “When you can distinguish a white thread from a black one.” Another responded, “When you can see the outline of a tree against the horizon,” and many of the other students responded, but after all of the responses the teacher said “No.” Finally, he gave the students the correct answer, “When you can look into the eye of a stranger, an ‘other’, and see a brother, or a sister, then it is dawn; until then, it is still night.” Sometimes it is challenging to see the “other” because as a church and as a world we slip into the routine of negatively labeling a person. He has a wonderful description of this challenge: “The great human paradox is that we are all the same and yet all different; the great human folly is that humanity is often alienated from itself by using differences not only to distinguish but also to disagree, dissent, and discriminate, sometimes with appalling consequences. We are members of a single race, and its name is human.”

The last guideline is “We are called to rethink the way we think.” He describes two ways of thinking. The first is a dialectical mode of thought. You have heard millions of examples of this, “right versus wrong,” “either versus or,” “us versus them.” The other way of thought is called complementary, which works to find the compromise between the two extremes. He concludes, “To think and act differently often requires nothing less than a radical conversion.”

Each of the guidelines that Fr. Gittens offers challenges our Companion Movement. As we welcome new Companions, are we ready to offer the same flexibility and adaptability that hopefully one finds at home? Are we truly ready to embrace the other as our brother or sister? Can we see past what our differences are and truly welcome a new Companion as our brother or sister? Can we develop our complementary perspective?

The guidelines that Fr. Gittens speaks about should sound familiar because these are all pillars of Precious Blood spirituality. We are called again and again to stand in the middle as a source of reconciliation and renewal. We are called to continually widen our circles—and with a special invitation to those who stand outside the circle. Over the last year we have revisited and made a renewed commitment to these sentiments. As we continue to authentically live our Precious Blood spirituality, bringing *Gather, Send* becomes a realistic possibility, especially as we open ourselves and the Companion Movement to welcoming people from other cultures and other generations. While we don’t become the wonderful dishes that are prepared in “Chopped,” the life of our Precious Blood community looks stronger as we allow ourselves to be reimagined as our circles are ever widening. †





*PBMR participant Asa Lee*

## Paradigm Shift

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

Richard Rohr, in his new book on the Trinity, *The Divine Dance*, says that a paradigm shift becomes necessary when the old structure, the previous paradigm, has become so full of holes and “patchwork fixes” that it no longer holds together. It is then that a new way becomes possible.

One of those paradigms which has been patched and puttied so many times that it is barely holding together is our criminal justice system—the way we treat those that live outside societal norms and standards.

Limited resources and programs have left the criminal justice system, in many cases, as the only response to the many social issues: trauma, economic disparities, unemployment, race, inequities, etc. As the old adage goes, when all you have is a hammer, then everything looks like a nail. Even after all the money spent on prisons and jails, social ills still plague our communities. It has become obvious that the criminal justice system is not equipped to respond to the needs

of those who have been isolated and marginalized for decades.

We need only to consider the growing tension between the police and communities of color. The fear and mistrust between the police and community is only one example of a system that is ill equipped and unable to respond. For far too long, the police and the courts are called upon not only to keep us safe, but also to cure the social ills that we face as a nation. That it is failing says more about our resistance to change and our unwillingness to confront the real issues than about the system itself.

Police and courts were never supposed to deal with trauma. How did it come to be that our police and our courts are now expected to deal with all the trauma in the lives of people and communities?

Terrance is a young man who has been removed from his home and placed in a secure institution—a detention center of sorts. He is there because he violated his probation order of house arrest. While the courts have been clear, he regularly violates that

*continued on page 12*



*Ryan Cornelissen on the job for Habitat for Humanity*

## Prepared for Impact

*by Ryan Cornelissen, Precious Blood Volunteers Alumnus*

One of the most identifiable themes of Advent is preparation. But preparation for what? The birth of Jesus? The Catholic tradition of Christmas includes the season of Advent, because we are to understand how the radical truth of Jesus' message provokes conversion and change of behavior. In the readings for the First Week of Advent-Year A, both Romans 13: 11-14 and Matthew 24: 37-44 point to the urgency and necessity to prepare ourselves to best interact with the body of Christ in the world as Jesus did. Of course, it is important to be mindful of the actions and behaviors we should avoid—as Paul mentions in the second reading—as an effort to condone proper conduct. But, in my opinion, the gospel reading from Matthew better points us to a lifestyle of being awake! Instead of merely avoiding attitudes and practices, the conscious choice to be awake promotes a proactive searching and preparation for the truth that we are to live out.

As a Construction Site Supervisor for Habitat for Humanity in Boston, I lead volunteer groups through

the process of building homes for those in need in the greater Boston area. In addition to working with volunteers, I have the pleasure of working alongside the families who are selected for each home to complete their 300 hours of “sweat-equity” on their future home (the equivalent of a down-payment on their house). Working alongside the mothers and fathers, I have the privilege of hearing stories of the reality of life before Habitat for these families.

This month, two new families were selected for the final duplex of a three duplex development in Roslindale, a Boston suburb. Felipe, one of the selected fathers, continues to share with me different pieces of the complex puzzle that is his life. Living in a 700 square foot apartment with his wife and two daughters (ages 3 and 8) was not exactly his dream. Felipe's family is originally from the Dominican Republic, but he grew up in the United States. He works as a maintenance supervisor for a homeless shelter and

*continued on next page*

*Volunteers, continued from page 11*

rehabilitation support center in the Boston area, and when describing his job speaks of the importance of allowing people to share their stories and be listened to. Sitting there with my jaw wide open, I wished Felipe knew that his story is also worth listening to.

Earlier this week, up on the scaffold with Felipe installing siding on the gable wall of his future home, I decided to ask some simple questions to get to know him a bit better.

I asked him jokingly, “So, do you have any hobbies that you used to enjoy before having kids?” Felipe responded, “Can I be completely honest with you?” “Sure!” I said. “Well, my hobby has been preparing my family for where we are today,” Felipe stated.

Every minute that he has, Felipe is working at his job, and on-site with Habitat, to obtain a better life for his family. Before Habitat, every waking moment Felipe had outside of work he spent trying to learn about the daunting world of home ownership and financial responsibility. Felipe uses his time, effort and gifts for the benefit of his family; most days he doesn't even eat lunch, so that his children can. Being connected to Habitat for Humanity is like a dream come true for Felipe and his wife. When they complete their hours, they will be the first members of their families to own a home.

The sense of urgency and attentiveness Felipe embodies as he puts the futures of his wife and daughters above his own is the type of preparation God has in mind for Advent. Christ is coming into the world as a human being, prepare! Each day God is coming to you in human form, will you be prepared? Will you give your best self no matter who is sent and what the circumstance? Felipe's desire to give and serve his family is lived out each day as he works towards the goal of home ownership and a better future for his two daughters. The same goes for us that each day we are called to endlessly pursue a deeper relationship with God to better adjust our vision to Jesus' vision and humbly expose our wounds and flaws in hopes of being held and healed by our loving God.

Just as Felipe gives of his life daily for his wife and daughters, we come to find that this journey is not about us, but instead the bringing about of God's glory in the world. As you reflect this Advent, know that now is the time to prepare yourself and respond to God's call for you to humbly carry the message out into the world. ✠

*PBMR, continued from page 10*

order—often to come to the Precious Blood Center. At his last court date, after a month or more in the detention center, he was placed in a secure group home.

However, the underlying issues that cause his violation are not criminal, but family. His family is overwhelmed and stressed beyond their means. The family home is not a suitable place; it does not provide for the needs of this young man. It would be easy to merely blame the family for not living up to their responsibilities—and there is some truth to that—or a system that does not care—also some truth—but the real issue is the lack of societal support and services. As a community and society, we are not providing the necessary support or structure for many of our youth. When the family structure fails, for whatever reason, there should be a supportive community that steps up.

The singular response to Terrance's struggles has been to place him on house arrest. While the courts agree that this repeated sentencing does not get to the real issues, they cannot shift their mindset. So they get the same results!

As a society we have to admit that we have failed to provide a safe and nurturing environment for Terrance. A criminal justice system cannot respond to issues of trauma and joblessness.

Restorative Justice sees beyond the broken law and seeks to understand and respond to the underlying issues. It is said that if you go back far enough in any of our cultures, our elders sat in a circle and pondered how to respond to the needs of the community or village. A restorative justice practice understands that the real issue with Terrance violating his house arrest is not a disregard of the law, but of a home that is neither nurturing nor safe.

We can point fingers and blame a community for its failure; we can point fingers and blame the police for its disregard for youth of color—or we can seek to come together and work to build a more restorative community.

The public discourse in our country reflects a nation that seeks change. We can double-down on a failed punitive response or embrace a more restorative response that at its core seeks to build bridges and repair broken and strained relationships.

I hope the paradigm shift that Richard Rohr speaks of allows for a new approach to the many issues that plague our country. I hope, too, that we as the church are not on the sidelines merely watching as things unfold, but are agents of change. ✠



**Let us serve God  
with holy joy.**

**- St. Gaspar del Bufalo**



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*How Does God call you  
to a Precious Blood life?*

“God calls me to a Precious Blood life in the Vietnam Mission through solidarity with the poor and trying to meet their basic needs. Right now I try to meet their need for education. I enjoy teaching English.”

*Br. Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S.  
Saigon, Vietnam*