



The New Wine Press

Motivated by the spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

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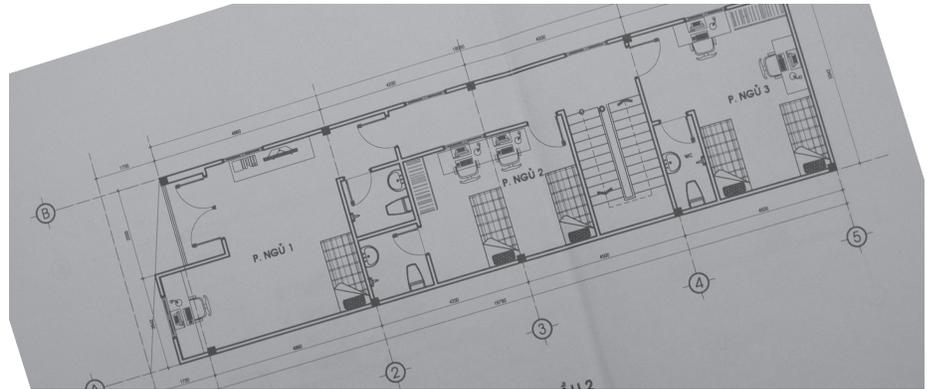
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Blueprints for the Future

Margaret Haik, Director of Communications



In April 1975, fourteen year-old Lac Pham left his parents and siblings in Vietnam and travelled to the United States with his uncle, cousin and countless other refugees fleeing the communist takeover of South Vietnam. Lac wound up in Fort Chaffee, a refugee center in Arkansas, and then came to the Kansas City area through the sponsorship of St. Therese Parish in Parkville. Because they had attended a seminary school in Vietnam, Lac and his cousin were accepted as students into Precious Blood Seminary High School in Liberty, MO.

Fast forward to 1989. Now a priest, Fr. Lac had served a long stint at St. Francis Xavier Church in St. Joseph and was due for a new assignment. Then Provincial Director Fr. Mark Miller suggested that Lac make a trip to Vietnam to explore the possibilities for a Precious Blood ministry there. In 1986 the Vietnamese government had begun a new policy of openness to the rest of the world to improve its economic situation. Lac travelled back to Vietnam for the first time in July 1996, and after reporting that there was a great need for the spirit of reconciliation that the Precious Blood community lives by, the community commissioned Lac to return to Vietnam in July 1997 to start ministering there.

Lac has been working there ever since. Fr. Dien Truong joined Fr. Lac in Vietnam in 2006. Dien had been a helicopter pilot in the South Vietnamese Air Force. He escaped during the fall of Saigon by landing his helicopter on the deck of a U.S. aircraft carrier (and then pushing it over the side of the ship). Together, the two have served in Vietnam, celebrating Mass, teaching English, ministering to migrant workers, and inviting those who might be called into inquiry with the Precious Blood community. Former Moderator General, Fr. Barry Fischer, officially elevated the project in Vietnam to the status of a Mission of the Kansas City Province in 2007.



Joseph Truc Vu, Peter Tam Hoang, John Vianney Loi Nguyen (center), stand with Fr. Lac Pham and Fr. Joe Nasal following their Definitive Incorporation, June 5, 2012.

On June 6, 2012, at the Kansas City Province annual assembly the membership approved the proposal to build a house of formation on the edge of Saigon. The right to use the land had already been donated to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood by a benefactor in Vietnam (because no one owns land in Vietnam, one can only have the ownership of the right to use the land). Currently, the members and Precious Blood inquirers and candidates live in limited rental space at two different locations. Small by American standards, only 3,875 square feet, the proposed building will stand four stories tall. It will have seven bedrooms, eight bathrooms, a community room, a chapel, common space, and a kitchen, and will house up to ten people.

Currently, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood operate in Vietnam unrecognized by the government. Even though religious tolerance by the government has improved since 1986, all religious organizations must be recognized by the local, provincial and national government in order to operate legally in the country. Also, the governments must approve ordination of ministers of any faith tradition. In order to be recognized by the government entities, the religious community must own property (a building) to gain recognition by the government. In order to own property, religious communities must have members who have Vietnamese citizenship. Fathers Lac and Dien, though born and raised as Vietnamese citizens—but having United States citizenship now—are not recognized as Vietnamese citizens by the current government of Vietnam. Until the Precious Blood candidates

from Vietnam complete their community formation and pastoral training, the mission will rely on the generosity of the benefactor.

One such candidate for ordination is Truc Minh Vu. He was incorporated into the Precious Blood community during the 2012 Assembly last June, and has been living at the Woodlawn Formation House in Chicago. Truc is anxious to be ordained; he hopes to someday work in a parish as an associate pastor. When I visited him in Chicago, he expressed his concern over the Vietnamese government's need to control so much of the country's religious life and the possible dangers associated with remaining an unapproved religious community operating in Vietnam. The US State Department reports that members of religious communities, both approved and unapproved, have been harassed or attacked as late as 2011 (U.S. Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom 2011, Vietnam, www.state.gov).

Tam Minh Hoang and Loi Huu Nguyen, also living at Woodlawn House, added that the unapproved status of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood discourages some young men from becoming possible inquirers in the community. Tam and Loi were also incorporated as members of the Precious Blood Community last June. Loi is very talkative and engaging; he has a background in youth ministry, which he hopes to continue with when he returns to Vietnam. Tam is quiet and thoughtful; he hopes to minister to HIV patients in Vietnam when he returns.

Tam and Loi talked about the difficulties of becoming a member of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. First, it is a long process. Inquirers must pursue a college degree, followed by seminary studies in Vietnam. After that they travel to the United States to pursue further studies at Catholic Theological Union and to live in community with more members of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood; this is a time of further formation in the spirituality of the community. Still, with inquirers being exposed to only two Precious Blood priests living in Vietnam, it is very important to continue this formation in the United States, according to Fr. Lac. Some men who might be interested in joining the community are discouraged when they realize the long process, especially if they are older. Tam, who is in his 40s, told Fr. Lac, "I am too old to become a priest," knowing that the study period was so long. Tam said that Fr. Lac assured him, "don't worry about age, but focus on the spirituality."

Tam and Fr. Lac both talked about a second issue, namely, the lack of a Precious Blood-owned house of

formation in Vietnam. As renters, Fr. Lac and Fr. Dien and the inquirers can be turned out of their residences if there is a greater perceived need by the landlord. They said many young men (and their families) are skeptical of the permanence of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood when there is not a house that is owned by the community.

So why should the Missionaries of the Precious Blood become a permanent fixture in Vietnam? According to Fr. Lac, Vietnam is a country that will greatly benefit from the kind of reconciliation that Precious Blood spirituality offers. Neighbors and families that were divided by the war still harbor resentments toward one another. I asked Fr. Lac how he and Fr. Dien spread the message of the Precious Blood. Fr. Lac said, "God is already there. Just going there and living there will bring God forth by doing with the people, not for the people. We don't tell people, 'this is what you need,' but invite them by how we live and interact with them."

He said that he finds people resistant to the message of reconciliation; the people most open to this message are the migrant workers



Nhan Bui

of Vietnam. But he has found that if people are able to become more relaxed about the rules of religion, and focus on faith and liturgy celebrated as community—when enemies come together and pray—then miracles happen.

Nhan Bui was the first Vietnamese citizen to be incorporated into the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in 2008. He just arrived in the United States last June. His English is difficult to understand at first, and like Tam he is quiet and thoughtful, but his passion for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood is easily communicated. Nhan was a businessman prior to becoming a member of the community. He laughed, saying, "I'm middle aged and starting all over!" Nhan explained that some young men join the priesthood in Vietnam because it offers social and some financial security through parish work—although that's not what he or the Missionaries of the Precious Blood are about. He—like Truc, Loi, and Tam—is anxious to begin his ministry in Vietnam, but knows that living with Precious Blood members in the United States is crucial to his formation. He would like to work with one of the minority populations in the mountains of Vietnam.

I asked Fr. Lac how he hoped the building of a house of formation would affect the future of the Precious Blood community in Vietnam over the next 20 years. He said, "Right now, we (he and Fr. Dien) are training Vietnamese men to serve in Vietnam." He would like to see the current Vietnamese members training more candidates for the next 10-20 years of ministry needs and also responding to the needs of the church in Vietnam. Among the needs he sees are:

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The New Wine Press

Missionaries of the Precious Blood
Kansas City Province
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 re-founding. We accept and encourage unsolicited manuscripts and letters to the editor.

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Reflections from the CMSM Annual Assembly

People of the Spirit: Keeping the Dream Alive

Joseph Nassal, CPPS, Provincial Director

“Our Society will progress the more happily in proportion to becoming people of the Spirit.”
St. Gaspar del Bufalo

During his keynote address at the Conference of Major Superiors’ meeting in Houston in early August, Benedictine Father Bernard Eckerstorfer said something that has stayed with me the past few weeks. In reflecting on what he called the “hermeneutics of diminishment,” Fr. Bernard said, “We are losing ground in numbers but what is even more troubling is that we are losing ground in significance.” Father Bernard is a young monk from Germany who was ordained in 2005 and presently serves his monastery as director of vocations and novice master. “Our focus on numbers is a trap,” he said.

So how do we avoid the trap of playing the numbers game and instead keep our focus on continuing to make a significant contribution to the life of the church and the advancement of God’s realm in our world today? Another youthful speaker, Kim Smolik, executive director of Franciscan Mission Service, quoted Sister Pat Farrell, OSF, past president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) who told her, “We used to have a vocation director and now we have a charism director.” The charism director keeps before the congregation the question, “How are we living our charism today?”

We keep the dream of St. Gaspar alive today by being faithful to the charism he has passed on to us. Perhaps we should refer to the members of our new National Vocation Ministry Team—Fr. Vince Wirtner of the Cincinnati Province and Frs.

Timothy Ambruster and Matt Link of the Kansas City Province—as our “directors of charism” who challenge and inspire us to live the spirit of reconciliation and renewal in our ministries today. As we have seen this past summer with our volunteers serving in Berkeley, CA and Crowne Point, NM, these young



“If I send my prayer as a text message, will I get a faster reply?”

people were attracted to our volunteer program because of the Precious Blood ministries with those on the margins.

One of the questions provincials and major superiors raised consistently from the floor at the CMSM meeting was given the desire and energy exhibited by many young people today to be of service, why do so few join our religious communities? While slipping into that

numbers trap, the question bears reflection. A possible answer surfaced many years ago when sociologist and novelist, Father Andrew Greeley, proposed that priests and religious make short term or temporary commitments rather than take lifetime or perpetual vows. As one of the major superiors said in the open forum, “The guys who joined us and then left really did have a temporary commitment.” He was not judging why they left; he was simply suggesting that while they were most sincere at the time they pledged a perpetual commitment, life happened and they came to realize the call they heard was more temporary.

Almost twenty years ago at the 1994 Provincial Assembly, the Commission on Membership presented the document, *People of the Spirit*, a 104-page report that addressed these questions of temporary and perpetual membership. As some of you may recall, *People of the Spirit* was a workbook that reflected the stories, comments, questions, and insights of members and companions about what it means to belong to a Society of Apostolic Life, and specifically, a community claimed by the blood of Christ. After many years of pondering and discussing the questions of revitalization and renewal raised by *People of the Spirit*—to the point when these questions were brought up at district or companion gatherings or at Provincial Assemblies the eyes of many would have that glazed

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Precious Blood Volunteers: *Riding the Edge*

Jason G'Sell, Precious Blood Volunteer



Volunteers Jason G'Sell and Michael D'Netto, Fr. Al Ebach, Companion Judy Keisling, Volunteers Stella Yoon and Maggie Nickels, and Companion Mary George at Precious Blood Center, June 2012.

I've always loved margins. As a kid, the margin was where I would scribble all of my random thoughts, ideas, and daydreams. It was a place where I could doodle to my heart's content. All of the work of the day was focused on the middle of the page, but the margin—the margin was mine. It was totally empty, a space I could call my own. I could fill it however it liked. As I progressed through high school and college, my margins became smaller and smaller. My algebra and geometry calculations began encroaching on my free space. My notes on literary passages that I needed to remember were scribbled on either side of the text. My margins were being pushed out. However, no matter how much I wrote, the margin never quite disappeared. There was always a little bit of that free space, visible between letters, between words. Tiny pockets of white just barely visible between lines and inside "O"s and "A"s.

I always found margins attractive because they represented a freedom from work—an escape. Yet as I began to struggle to understand my sexuality and my sexual orientation in high school, I realized that the margin was no longer the safe haven I could once explore. Instead, I was being pushed into the margins and locked away. It suddenly became a place of confinement. I was different, and as such I began to believe that I belonged in the margins. I was simply too loud or too effeminate or too gay for polite, mainstream society. It felt like obstacles were being raised all around me to keep me in my place. Yet this place—this margin of confinement and isolation—is exactly the space Precious Blood spirituality compels us to occupy.

At the Pacific Center for Human Growth in Berkeley, CA, we provide mental health services to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender clients living in the margins. We embrace

those people who have found the margin to be a cold, disconnected place, and help them transform it into that magical space I inhabited as a child. My favorite thing about San Francisco is that it shows that living in the margins doesn't have to mean living in despair. The margin can be a fabulous place where communities come together out of love and support for one another. But it takes tireless work to achieve that dream.

It is time to stop thinking of the margins as what we are told they are, and to start envisioning what magnificent places they could be. By living and working in the margins, we create communities there—vibrant, beautiful communities where people can celebrate their differences as gifts from a wonderfully creative God. I have found in my life that the margin is no longer a place of shame, but one of pride. My empty white space has become brilliantly rainbow, and for that I couldn't be happier.

Precious Blood Volunteers

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Precious Blood Spirituality

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Tending the Garden

Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S.

Sometimes we just need to be in the right place at the right time to say the right thing.

I love to be outdoors working and playing in the dirt. I was standing on the porch of the rectory one afternoon when one of our parishioners walked by. He hollered when he saw me and asked if I had some time to visit. "Sure," I said. So we sat on the front porch and chatted. As he began to share his story with me he started by saying, "Father, I'm almost embarrassed to admit this, but I have all these questions about my faith that I should be able to answer myself but I can't. I grew up Catholic. I attended Catholic school all my life, even into college, but I just have all these questions." As I listened to his story, I began to realize how old he was and so I asked him, "You grew up with the Baltimore Catechism didn't you?" To which he replied, "Yes." I shared with him my thoughts and understanding of the Baltimore Catechism. "It was a good tool, but in some ways it did a lot of head stuff, but not a lot of heart stuff. It did a lot of theory, but not a lot of 'how-to.'" He nodded a bit and followed what I was saying. Then I went on to ask him, "By the way, when you were in high school, what was first and foremost on your mind?" "My job, my car and my girlfriend." "And now?" "My church, my faith, my family." "Ok, so what has changed in your life?" He didn't really have a quick answer for that one. We sat in silence for a moment or two. Finally I said, "What has changed is what's important in your life and where you are. You are now ready to hear the answers to the questions. You are in one sense ready to put your faith into action, to live it. You may have always had the questions, but were not ready to hear the answers. Now you are." And with that, we talked the rest of the afternoon about faith, and making that most difficult and sometimes longest journey from the head to the heart.

As we finished our visit, he thanked me for taking the time to sit and talk. He then told me as he was walking to the church, he was saying a prayer and asking God for a sign. He had asked God that if he was meant to stop and talk he would see me outside somewhere because he was too embarrassed to ring the doorbell and come in. I just happened to be outside tending to some plants on the front porch that had been knocked over during the night by a heavy windstorm. Coincidence? Act of God? Just lucky? Hmmm...not sure, but my guess is all of the above. For once, I just happened to be in the right place at the right time, to be where and what God needed me to be.

Where is God calling us to be today? Where is God putting me today so I can be in the right place at the right time to be open to the opportunity to experience the Spirit of God alive in each of us? We just never know when one of the "fluke of a chance" encounters might just be the beginning of a call to a vocation. May God continue to work through each one of us to bring about some good in the world around us.

Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S. is the midwest regional director of vocations for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. He can be reached at vocations@kcprovince.org.

In Formation

Joe Bathke, C.P.P.S.

As the day approaches for the beginning of our new year at Gaspar House, Nhan Bui and I are preparing for the arrival of Fr. Timothy Guthridge, CPPS; Don Williams; and Corey Knapke. With Nhan and myself we will have five residents at Gaspar House this year.

Fr. Timothy is a member of the Kansas City Province. He recently completed Creighton University's Master of Arts in Christian Spirituality and will be engaged in spiritual direction and retreat ministry.

Nhan Bui Anh, C.P.P.S., is the first definitively incorporated member of the Vietnam Mission. He arrived on May 23 and has begun his English studies at DePaul University. Nhan's plan is to become proficient in English so that he can study theology at Catholic Theological Union with the goal of being ordained to the priesthood for ministry in Vietnam.

Don Williams, from Poplar Bluff, MO, will be entering his second year of initial formation. This summer Don worked at his parish, assisting his pastor and the staff, as well as providing music for Sunday Masses. Judging from Don's enthusiastic comments about his experiences, I sense his exposure to parish life was most positive and educational. Don will continue to focus on completing his philosophy requirements and exploring new pastoral ministry experiences.

Peace & Justice: Honor and Respect Within Circles

Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S., Peace and Justice Director

Corey Knapke, from St. Henry, OH, will join Gaspar House as a discernment candidate. Corey is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati with a BS in engineering and an MBA. He was also involved in the university's marching band. Together with Don, he will bless the house with some much-needed musical talent.

Corey will also be taking philosophy and theology courses at Saint Xavier University to meet the necessary requirements established by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. (The bishops have established a minimum number of hours a candidate for ordination to the priesthood must have before he can begin the theological studies that are the academic preparation for ordination.)

It promises to be a special year with some very special people. I hope you will always feel welcome to visit or keep in touch with any member of the house. We really appreciate hearing from you. As we welcome your prayers for a successful year here at Gaspar House, we also promise you our prayers.

Joe Bathke, C.P.P.S., is the director of initial formation for the Kansas City and Cincinnati Provinces.

On the Sioux Indian Reservation near Mobridge, SD stands a huge stone monument of Chief Sitting Bull. I recall seeing it often as a child—and studying about him in grade school. During the difficult times of losing the Black Hills to the U.S. government in the late 1800s, he had this to say, “There are things they tell us that sound good to hear, but when they have accomplished their purpose they will go home and will not try to fulfill our agreements with them.” It proved to be a sad truth soon to be realized. Negotiations, in the eyes of many Native American tribes, happen instead in sacred circles where each member of the circle is honored and respected equally.



Earlier this summer, along with four members of our Justice and Peace Committee, I attended Circle Training at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation Center in Chicago. I quickly developed an appreciation for the power of the Circle and use of the talking piece.

Our Justice and Peace Committee has already put the Circle Training to good use in the Election 2012 Study Sessions at St. James Church in Liberty. Talking politics as it relates to Catholic social teaching is a difficult conversation. Using the methods of the Circle has helped immensely, especially when the discussion gets heated. We refer to the rules of conduct, which help us be respectful of each other no matter what our political party affiliation. Everyone gets a chance to talk without interruption and no one is allowed to dominate the discussion. It is useful because there is definitely disagreement and people want to share their opinions about the political process. More importantly, we want to learn from each other and make decisions together based on Catholic social teaching. Circles help us to do this.

Prayer within the circle is heartfelt and crucial to the bonding that happens. I felt this strongly in Chicago at PBMR, and I could feel it again in our Circle in Liberty. The opening and closing ceremonies play an important part in uniting the group. This election year promises to be a difficult one, due to the polarization between the political parties and the negative campaigning. As study participants, we are struggling to discover the underlying truths that help us form our consciences regarding our vote. Practicing Circle objectives allows us to have a safe place to find common ground. Prayerful dialogue helps us find our moral and spiritual similarities.

“Behold, my friends, the spring is come; the earth has gladly received the embraces of the sun, and we shall soon see the results of their love!” Once again, Sitting Bull speaks of the powerful forces of circles in nature referring to the earth and sun. I have felt the love brought forth from Circles experienced and fully engulfed in their promises. I believe in this ancient Native American

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Merlap

Mary George, Liberty, MO Companion



Mary George

In summer 2011, I had the opportunity to go on a whirlwind pilgrimage to Ohio to visit the places where the work of the C.P.P.S. began in the United States. I never dreamed that this summer I would be blessed with an invitation to represent companions of the Kansas City Province at MERLAP III (Meeting of Representatives of Lay Associate Programs) in Rome from July 23 to 27. This trip took me to the place it all began—the places where St. Gaspar lived, worked and founded the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

I headed off to Rome with Marie Trout and Bob & Angie Schienebeck and we met up with Debbie O'Malley, Phillis Fuller-Clippis and Mark Giesege from the Cincinnati Province. My Precious Blood family was growing, but that was just the beginning. By the time our meeting began on Monday morning, this family had grown to over 50. Men and women, priests and lay persons

from 13 different countries speaking Spanish, Italian, Polish, Croatian, and English connecting with smiles, hugs, laughs, tears and a translator.

We shared our stories during prayer, meetings and meals, and realized no matter what part of the world we came from we could sense the spirituality of St. Gaspar in each other and the works going on in our homelands.

We heard reports from our own companions directors about companion formation, both initial and ongoing, and our covenant relationship with the community. In addition, we heard about the work of lay persons associated with C.P.P.S. in a less formal way. In Lima, Peru where they will soon celebrate 50 years of the presence of Missionaries of the Precious Blood in their area, the lay associates are active in social justice ministries, helping those affected by lead contamination from a North American mining company. In Poland, their work is more about spreading devotion to the Precious Blood.

We were all touched by the presentation about the youth minis-

try work of Fr. Domenico D'alia, C.P.P.S. of the Italian Province. The concept of helping young adults give birth to God in themselves and to realize the gifts that they have to share with us rather than what we have to teach them gave us much to think about.

As a covenanted companion from the privileged United States, a comment from one of our group still resonates with me. "This makes us realize that our covenant is with our worldwide Precious Blood family and not just our local community." The days I spent at MERLAP have opened my eyes and heart to the bond I have with my C.P.P.S. family throughout the world. Because of this bond I want to stay connected to them with prayer and continued awareness of the situations in their countries.

I had several invitations to visit my new family members to witness first hand the C.P.P.S. spirituality at work in their homelands. I wonder where I might be off to next summer?



Some participants take a quick trip to the Vatican before the start of MERLAP.

The Power of Our Words

David Matz, C.P.P.S., Director of LGBT Ministry

“Without knowing the force of words, it is impossible to know more.”

-Confucius

There’s an old saying we are all familiar with. I remember using it many times as a young child and adolescent. Funny thing is, it never did work. “Sticks and stone will break my bones, but words will never hurt me!” The words actually did do their damage to me, whether intentional or not. With sticks and stones, if something on my body was broken, it healed in six weeks. Words, however, can cause damage that can take a lifetime to heal.

“It’s okay, I love you anyway.” This phrase is one example of words that garner the attention of a person who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. From that clandestine place inside—even though they are just words—they bother you, let you know that deep inside yourself, at the most inner core of your sacred being, something is wrong with you. These words really do hurt! The problem is that we don’t pay attention to the language we use, the words that flow out of our mouths without even thinking about them. In a society and church, in our communities and families, and especially in our Precious Blood Family, the challenge is particularly acute if we want to be an inclusive community, one that shows respect and love for each other regardless of our differences—and because we encounter the person of Christ most especially in the outcast, stranger, and marginalized persons in our world.

“It’s okay. I love you anyway” is a common response to someone who “comes out” as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. At first glance, it doesn’t seem like a bad response. But the phrase can imply a standard of heterosexuality as being normative. Sometimes people equate a sexual orientation that is fundamental to a person (meaning we do not choose our orientation) with a choice that someone makes. “You’re a drug addict. That’s okay, I’ll love you anyway!” “You murdered someone. It’s okay, I’ll love you anyway!” “You’re gay. It’s okay, I’ll love you anyway.” Unlike abusing drugs or choosing to murder someone, sexual orientation is not a choice. It is something we are born with and become aware of as we grow and mature. When a person “comes out” they are showing you “who they are” not “what they do.” Why not just say, “I love you!”

As Precious Blood people we can walk with each other, striving to love each other as Jesus did, without conditions. God’s love knows no boundaries and no conditions. Nor do people who espouse a spirituality of the blood of Christ. When we choose to love someone, we love his or her whole being and self, no conditions. Can you love who I am and hate what I do? When a person “comes out” they are showing you “who they are” not “what they do.”

“Sticks and stones” and the body can eventually heal. “Words” do hurt, but they too can be healed in time with God’s unlimited love. Perhaps if we can move beyond the words we use, be more attentive to the words that come out of our mouths and be willing to listen more from the heart of love, our words will change and our lives as well. In our willingness to hear another person, we may open our horizons, move beyond our prejudices, and speak the words of Christ, the word of love for all.

Vietnam, continued from page 3
to act as counselors and facilitators to help young people out of prostitution (often controlled by the local police force), and working with shut-ins and the elderly. He also would like to see members working as chaplains in hospitals—a virtually non-existent position right now. Quoting Fr. Barry Fischer, Fr. Lac would like to see members active in ministries as a response to the “cry of the blood.”

CMSM, continued from page 4
look to impair our vision—we have moved forward in our relationship with one another while falling from time to time in that numbers trap.

As we begin preparations to celebrate the 200th anniversary of our congregation and the 50th anniversary of the birth of our province in 2015, perhaps a question gleaned from the CMSM gathering in Houston might serve as a starting point for our ongoing reflection. Rather than resurfacing those questions revolving around “who we are” that caused many to fall into a trance, why not embrace who we are as a people of the Spirit, brothers and sisters bonded in the blood of Christ, and ask instead, “Are we living our charism in the most relevant way possible?”

Justice, continued from page 7
tradition of using a talking piece, an object passed from person to person in a group which grants the holder sole permission to speak. Such a tradition can be combined with contemporary concepts of democracy and inclusivity in a complex, multicultural society. We can learn a lesson from Sitting Bull in the skill of careful listening.

The New Creation: Reflections from PBMR

Journey Toward Healing

Mary Hallinan

Thirty years ago, my sister Anne was killed by a drunk driver. Although I had much exposure to the criminal justice system as a law clerk while I was in law school, and through my mentor, a criminal lawyer; I experienced the system with fresh eyes as the family member of a victim of a lethal crime. By grace and through instinct, I knew immediately after my sister died that no amount of time served, fines paid or insurance proceeds recovered would place a balm upon the wound caused by my sister's prolonged suffering and eventual death. Initially, what brought healing to me was the grace that flowed from God through my home parish and the larger communities of which I was a part.

Our current criminal justice system is based on a paradigm or model of justice that is essentially retributive. Under this system, certain behaviors that harm another are classified as crimes. Though most criminal behavior is directed at an individual, under our retributive system the crime is regarded as an injury to the state. Once criminal charges are brought, the state's criminal justice process determines guilt and levies punishment. The central focus of the retributive paradigm is inflicting punishment on the offender for breaking the law. It is a modern enactment of the Old Testament "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth."

Under the retributive system, the person who killed Anne was sentenced to six months in jail. He served about half that time—and was the first person ever to serve time for such a crime in that jurisdiction. As a lawyer with good connections to the local legal community and as the member of the victim's family, I felt as though our family got the best treatment possible under the system. At the same time, I have never heard anyone in

my family express feelings of relief, satisfaction or healing on account of the time served by my sister's offender. The time served and the insurance proceeds didn't even begin to approach the magnitude of our loss. No amount of time served or money recovered ever could.

In the past 20+ years, a new/old model of justice has emerged. This model, called restorative justice (RJ), focuses on making right the harm that is caused when a crime is committed. RJ is people-centered, rather than state-centered. It views a crime as a violation of the person and of relationships. Under RJ, violations create obligations in the offender to repair the harm created when the crime was committed.

Likewise, when a crime has been committed, victims develop needs. The central focus of RJ is on the victim's needs and the offender's responsibility for repairing the harm he/she created while committing the crime.

The justice process in the RJ paradigm is a collaborative effort involving everyone who has a stake in the outcome.

Victims play a very active role in the RJ process. Because the offender is held directly responsible for the harm he/she created, the victim must think about the needs that have arisen because of the crime. This generally does not happen in the retributive system where punishment of the offender is the central focus. The very act of considering and articulating needs begins a healing process for a victim. In naming what they need, victims begin the process of taking back the power they lost on account of the crime. In my sister's case, what would have been healing to me was to know that the offender appreciated the magnitude of the harm caused by the crime he committed, to the point where the offender took responsibility for it by addressing the root cause of

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Reflections from PBMR

Helpless

Mike Donovan, PBMR Staff Member

“Some of us have a new habit each weekend morning—and increasingly during the week—we turn to the Internet or our daily newspapers to check the violence quotient of the night before, a typical weekend now running about four dead, another 35 to 50 shot.” (“The Impact of Violence,” Marilyn Katz, *Chicago Tribune*, June 27, 2012)

It’s been a very violent spring and summer in Chicago. We’ve become numb to the reports of violence in our Southside neighborhood. The youth at our Center are frightened. All know someone who has been murdered or injured this summer—friends, neighbors, or relatives. Many of the shootings have been within close proximity of our Center. Most of the gun violence has been gang related, so many of the victims have been young.

Last week, Charlie arrived at my Center office cubicle, frantic and drenched in sweat. He told me his story of helplessness, being shot at many times in the last week, sure in the knowledge that he was targeted by a rival gang. I took him into a private office where Charlie cried, not knowing where to go or what to do. I felt helpless too, because I had no good answers that would ensure Charlie’s safety.

Charlie has never had a chance in life. He never knew his father, and has gone through life with an alcoholic mother, always living in deplorable conditions. Presently, they live in a garage apartment, where there’s no room for Charlie. He never graduated from the 8th grade, and has been on the streets for as long as I can remember. Now he’s following his mother’s example by drinking away his pain. Moreover, Charlie and his little brother may be the only white boys in the Back-of-the-Yards neighborhood, and he has tried to fit in by being part of a gang.

I’ve known him since he was eleven years old, a client of Catholic Charities Street Intervention Program. When Catholic Charities left the neighborhood, Charlie gravitated to the Precious Blood Center. Through the years, I’ve visited Charlie when he was locked up at the Detention Center. At least he was safe there—three hots and a cot, as they say. I’ve had no success finding him a job. He works sporadically at a tire repair shop, where he gets paid at far below minimum wage. I help him out by having him wash my car, or by doing odd jobs for me every Wednesday. But I’m helpless in keeping him safe,

especially this summer.

Since I’d never seen Charlie so fearful, I gave him bus fare to his sister’s apartment—but she won’t let him stay there more than one night since he is a magnet for danger. While he was still a juvenile, he had opportunities for residential placement, but he didn’t want to be away from his family, or accept the structure of a group home after answering to no one for most of his life. He is one of society’s throw aways, at age 19.

I went home that night and packed for a four-day trip to prisons located in Southern Illinois, knowing I had not solved Charlie’s problems. Two days into my trip, I received a call from Diana Rubio of our staff with the news that Charlie had been arrested. No details, just that he was locked up. My initial thought was a sad commentary on the state of affairs in our neighborhood: “At least he’s safe,” I thought—at least for now.

Please pray for the youth we serve at Precious Blood Center.

From Retribution to Restoration, continued from page 10
his intoxication. What is heartbreaking to me is that the offender in my sister’s case did reach out to my family, but with no structure in place to facilitate the meeting, it never happened. Twenty years later, the note of forgiveness I sent to the offender went unanswered. To me, this entire course of events was a lost opportunity for greater healing through reconciliation.

In *The Emergent Christ*, Ilia Delio, O.S.F. describes the good news that emerged from the life of Jesus as “the news of God’s healing love; the binding of wounds; the reconciling of relationships torn apart...; and that forgiveness is an act of love that creates a new future.” What is hopeful to me about RJ is that it creates the structures through which the good news that Jesus brought into the world can be realized. This is the time and we are the ones who can make real His vision of the coming of the Kingdom on earth.

Mary Hallinan lives in Dayton, OH and has been trained the practice of Peacemaking Circle. She is involved in many restorative justice efforts in the Dayton area.

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Precious Blood Volunteers: *Meet Our New Director, Tim Deveney*



I am excited to begin this journey with the Precious Blood Community. I look forward to this new adventure of helping to form young people in Precious Blood spirituality, having the opportunity to walk with people living on the margins of our country, and working in the Precious Blood Community.

For the last eight years I have worked at the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging (CFCA). I managed CFCA's team of priests who invite people to sponsor one of the children, youth or aging people who live in poverty in the countries where CFCA serves. During that time I had the pleasure of working with a number of Precious Blood priests including Frs. Bayuk, Hartway, Link, Chriszt and Kirch.

As part of my work with CFCA, I had the blessing of visiting parishes across the United States and seeing the diversity of the Roman Catholic Church. I was also graced by having the opportunity to travel to visit with families who are sponsored through CFCA in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

Before coming to CFCA, I worked in Nepal for two years as a Jesuit Volunteer. I taught at St.

Xavier School—a Jesuit school in Kathmandu—living in community with other Jesuit Volunteers. In addition to teaching, I worked as an after-school tutor with the Salesian sisters of Don Bosco and coached basketball. During my free time I had the opportunity to hike in the Himalayas and visit the jungle in the southern part of the country. As you might imagine I developed a deep love of South Asian cuisine.

I received my Bachelor of Arts in History and Master of Arts in Education from Truman State University, in Kirksville, MO. I am originally from St. Peters, MO, but I now live in Independence, MO with my wife Sarah and our two children, Adeline Anne and John Joseph. We are expecting our third child, a daughter, in December!