

THE New Wine PRESS

Volume 27 No. 10 • June 2019





Let us serve God with holy joy.

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

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Front cover image: Fr. Timothy Coday, C.PP.S. during Mass celebrating jubilarians, 2019 Kansas City Province Assembly; picture by Sedalia, Missouri Companion Ruth Mather

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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Missionaries of the Precious Blood
Kansas City Province

Precious Blood Center
P.O. Box 339
Liberty, MO 64069-0339
816.781.4344
www.preciousbloodkc.org

Editor
Richard Bayuk, C.PP.S.
rbayukcps@mac.com

Layout & Design
Margaret Haik
communications@preciousbloodkc.org

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The Consistent Ethic of Life

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

Desperate people in desperate situations do desperate things. A homeless person shoplifting food from the local convenience store instead of combing through the dumpster in back; a young man converted to terrorism because of no hope for his future in a war-torn part of the globe; refugees risking their lives and that of their families to cross Mediterranean in a flimsy boat or walking to the southern U.S. border to escape violence, poverty, and war. And yes, the woman or teenage girl who can see no alternative to having an abortion.

In the February 2018 issue of the *New Wine Press*, reflecting on the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., I wrote: “Pro-life is just that. Pro-life. It means trying to reduce and ideally eliminate abortions and the situations that compel people to have them. It means a lot of other things as well. Preventing hunger and poverty; supporting the terminally ill and the mentally ill; religious freedom for everyone, even non-Christians; LGBT people being able to live and work and worship as they desire; fighting racism, bigotry, and homophobia; fewer guns in the hands of people who shouldn’t have them; compassion for immigrants and refugees; working to combat climate change; elimination of nuclear weapons; working for peace; living justly.”

I believe that all life has value and human life in particular has great value—and the lives of the most helpless deserve special consideration. I would welcome a world where the number of abortions is zero. That is also the number of deaths I would like to see caused by bombs; school shootings; racial, ethnic, and religious hatred; poverty; denigration and unwarranted fear of immigrants and refugees; climate change; addiction; lack of health care.

In the 1980s, Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago proposed what he termed “the consistent ethic of life,” attempting to emphasize that all life issues are intertwined and that we have to see them as a “seamless garment.” This was crafted at a time when abortion, the death penalty and nuclear war were forefront on the minds of many Catholics. Today, a strong case can be made for inclusion of many other life issues like immigration, health care, the environment, and gun violence.

Unfortunately, the so-called “seamless garment” looks at times to be in tatters in our country. Currently, there is a spate of anti-abortion laws being passed at the state level, with the intention of getting the issue into the Supreme Court, where the hope is that *Roe v. Wade* will be overturned

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Who Do You Play For?

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

We are beginning a new chapter in the life of our province with the installation of a new Leadership Team on June 10, 2019. Some of us may be surprised by some of the individuals who have been chosen. Our God is a God of surprises. We can never put limits on what he is capable of or how his love can transform something or someone seemingly ordinary into something or someone truly extraordinary. I totally trust the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit surely knows what is best for us at this time in our history.

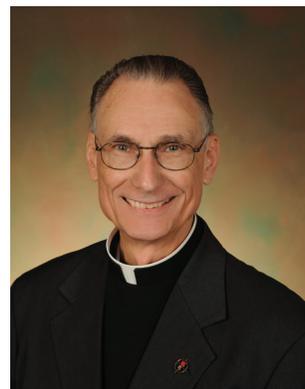
We will begin this chapter with many of our Members making a retreat with Fr. Bob Schreiter, C.P.P.S., focused on the theme of “Living into the New Creation.” I anticipate that it will give us a clearer focus as we move into this new adventure.

I recently read the book *Autopsy of a Deceased Church* by Thom Rainer. An autopsy helps us learn the cause of death in order to avoid the same causes in the future. The author goes through the results of fourteen church autopsies. They are all similar in one significant way: they followed paths that caused them to die. They were more concerned with self-preservation, or with a certain way of doing church, or with self-comfort, rather than with allowing new members to lead and to teach. God calls each church to look outwardly. Each autopsy revealed that the ailing or dying church had become self-centered and self-gratifying. Thriving churches (and religious communities, I believe) have the Great Commission as the centerpiece of their vision, while dying churches have forgotten the clear command of Christ. A church without a Gospel-centered purpose is no longer a church at all.

The United States hockey team was not supposed to have a chance in the 1980 Olympics. The Soviet Union seemed invincible and unbeatable. Their team included elite professionals who had played together for years. The Americans, on the other hand, had teammates who had never played together. None of them were professionals; they had come from colleges and universities across America.

The turning point for the Americans came in a practice led by Coach Herb Brooks. Brooks was not happy with the play of the team, so he had the players skating sprints to the point of exhaustion. Some of the assistant coaches were worried that the players would either pass out or quit. They urged Brooks to stop. But Brooks pressed forward.

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Editor, continued from page 2

(which, by the way, would not make abortion illegal in this country, only leave it up to the states). In many of those same states (and at the federal level), there is a lack of funding for nutrition and housing, affordable and accessible healthcare, encouragement and support for responsible family planning, promotion and support of adoption and fostering, and substantial sex (and marriage) education, all of which would promote a culture of care and an ethic of life, while greatly reducing the number of abortions.

Meanwhile, at the federal level we are witnessing continued separation of refugee families; fear-mongering about those seeking asylum; rolling back of protections and rights for LGBT citizens; inaction regarding gun violence; disparaging of immigrants, including those legally here; ignoring and denying climate change; and a seeming unwillingness to address health care and immigration reform.

Despite all of this, I take great hope in the fact the vast majority of people do not agree with these anti-life positions. The writer John Pavlovitz says that most of us choose to be defined not by the pain we manufacture for one another, or by the people we exclude, or the burdens we place on others. Rather we choose to be defined by “the compassion we show, the help we give, the table we expand, the walls we destroy, the outsiders we welcome, the beauty we exchange, the peace we make, the huddled masses we embrace.” I agree. The garment might be torn, but there are a lot of people who will try and patch it and wear it. Desperation does not have to define anyone. ✦

Los Angeles Companions



Congratulations to all Companions that made their first covenant or renewed covenant during the 2019 Provincial Assembly!

Liberty, Missouri Companions



Sedalia, Missouri Companions



Warrensburg, Missouri Companions



Leadership, continued from page 3

During the practices, Brooks would ask a player who he played for. The player would respond proudly with the name of his college. Brooks was asking the same question during this practice of total exhaustion. One of the hockey players looked up from his prostrate position after his last sprint. Gasping for breath, he declared, "I play for the United States of America."

It was the defining moment. They got it. They did not play for the different colleges from which they came. They played for the United States of America. And the team responded accordingly. They would beat the mighty Soviets in the first game of the medal round, and they would ultimately beat Finland for the gold medal. Purpose gives energy and passion.

Chapter 11 of the Letter to the Hebrews celebrates "heroes of faith" who obeyed God even though they did not know the consequences of that obedience. They saw themselves as foreigners in this land and life, temporary residents of the earth. The "good old days" did not exist in their minds. The future held the best days. They understood that this life is not a time to get comfortable. The future holds the best days. Yes, we respect the past. We can even revere the past. But we can't live in the past and we can't re-create the past.

During the discernment process leading up to our Provincial Assembly, I drew a picture of a walking bridge which symbolized where I was in terms of leaving the old and moving toward the New Creation. I pictured myself mid-way on the bridge with many people from different nationalities and skin tones on it. Jesus was walking in the middle of us. If we walk with each other with respect, care, and love, we don't have to worry about the destination. We are already there.

In one of the Easter Gospels, Jesus asks Peter three times, "Do you love me?" and each time gives him deeper responsibilities with his *Yes*. Jesus does the same to each of us. But it starts with recognizing Jesus. It was John, the beloved disciple in the boat, who recognized Jesus from a distance on the shore. Love helps us see what others do not see.

Some years ago, I was at an all-day conference with Fr. Chuck Gallagher, S.J. At the end of the day

we celebrated Mass together. After the opening song and the introduction to Mass, Fr. Chuck said, "After this experience together, aren't your hearts just filled with joy?" We all nodded our heads "yes." And he said, "Then you better inform your faces."

In a recent Easter Mass reading, St. Stephen was being stoned to death and his face looked like the face of an angel. There is something attractive about a smiling face, a face filled with joy, as opposed to a somber face. Pope Francis said, "Don't look like you just came back from a funeral. Let the joy of your relationship with God shine out."

Jesus says: Come to me for all that you need. Come to me with confident expectation. There is nothing you need that I cannot provide. ✠

Centerville, Iowa Companions



Kansas City, Missouri Companions



Birthmarks for a New Creation

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

Opening Address 42nd Kansas City Provincial Assembly
April 29, 2019

*We have been called to heal wounds,
To bring together what has fallen apart
And to bring home those who have lost their way.*
St. Francis of Assisi

Seventy years ago, on the publication of *Seeds of Contemplation*, Thomas Merton wrote in his journal on March 6, 1949: “The Passion and Precious Blood of Christ are too little in this new book—only hinted at here and there. Therefore, the book is cold and cerebral. What is the good of trying to teach people to love God without preaching through Christ’s wounds?” This may explain why a few years later he published an updated version of the book called *New Seeds of Contemplation*.

As Precious Blood people, we are called to preach and live through the wounds on the resurrected body of Christ. When Jesus arrived in that upper room, he said to his fearful disciples, “Peace be with you.” And when he said this, “he showed them his hands and his side” as proof that it was him. The wounds on the resurrected body of Christ become the birthmarks for a new creation. With the greeting “Peace be with you,” Jesus invites us to see and believe in the reality of becoming a new creation.

As we gather in Assembly this week, we are on the precipice of new possibilities for our province and our community as a Society of Apostolic Life. We will elect new leadership for the province. We will vote on the New Creation of a single province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in the United States. And we will elect a delegate who, along with the new provincial, will represent us at the General Assembly in September in Poland.

These are decisions that will and must be made. But as we enter into this important week, we remember who we are as children of God and how in the Risen Christ we have become daughters and sons of a new creation. As John reflects in the gospel tonight, the



Fr. Joe Nassal speaks during the opening prayer service at the 2019 Kansas City Provincial Assembly

new creation happens much like the first—out of darkness, light; out of chaos, a new order that takes time to clarify. Like the first creation in the book of Genesis that began with a proclamation, “Let there be light,” so the birth of the new creation proclaims, “Peace be with you.” And both begin with God exhaling—God breathed into the man and woman the breath of life in the garden; and in the upper room that became the maternity ward for the new creation, Jesus breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

So, my friends, unlike the president from the 90s who when questioned about a certain substance said, “I did not inhale,” I pray this week we inhale the breath of the Holy Spirit, fill our lungs with the fresh air of love that bonds us in charity. Fill our souls with stories of hope and courage in the face of an earth so ravaged by violence and fear. Fill our hearts with compassion as we touch the scars but see them not as indications of our demise but rather as merit badges of God’s mercy that will give us the courage to become a new creation in the Risen Lord!

What keeps us from becoming a new creation? Fear, mostly. Remember the doors were locked where they were hiding because of fear. Doubt that we can actually become a new creation also plays in the shadows because we carry so much old stuff.

My Mom has a hummingbird feeder outside the family room window. She fills it with sweet nectar, and one of her favorite pastimes is to watch from her recliner as the hummingbirds hover in midair to feed. She is always delighted by the visits—especially if the other birds she roots for, the St. Louis Cardinals, are losing.

In the *Newsletter for Guest House* recently, there was a brief reflection by Fr. George Hazler, who contrasted the hummingbird with the vulture. It seems these two birds which appear on opposite ends of the ornithology scale have something in common. They both “thrive in the desert. Vultures fly over the landscape looking for dead carcasses as a source of food. Hummingbirds fly over the same landscape looking for flowers to feed on. The vultures fill themselves with what is dead and gone, but the hummingbirds live on what is. They fill themselves with new life.”

Reflecting on those disciples huddled in fear in that upper room, they could have been like vultures, looking “back on their mistakes and missed opportunities.” As Fr. George writes, “Vultures live in a ‘would-of, should-of, could of’ mentality.” Vultures look for death, feeding on what once had been alive. But hummingbirds drink in the nectar of new life. They are always looking for a new opportunity, the bright new flower to bring them life.

Fr. Joe Nassal presents mission cross to Fr. Jim Betzen



Thomas, the patron saint of the “Show Me” state, was more of a hummingbird than a vulture. The one we have come to know as Doubting Thomas was not in the upper room when Jesus showed up the first time. We don’t know where he was. Perhaps he had just stepped out for a breath of fresh air since that upper room had to be stuffy with the stagnate air of fear, grief, and guilt. But in missing Jesus the first time, Thomas missed out on the fresh air Jesus brought to the room when he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Yet, when Thomas came back and the others told him, “We have seen the Lord,” he would not believe it. Why? Well, perhaps nothing had really changed. There was still fear in the air; the doors were still locked. Isn’t this one of our fears with becoming a New Creation? We fear that nothing will really change.

The other disciples may have been more excited now than when Thomas left the room, but the evidence that they had actually seen the Risen Jesus in the flesh was rather thin. So, all Thomas really asks is to see what they had seen. Jesus had showed them his hands when he appeared to them the first time as proof it was him. All Thomas is asking is to see the same evidence: “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

What will it take for us to believe we can become a New Creation? Will it take irrefutable evidence that it will succeed if we take the leap of faith it demands? Will it take the healing of old wounds? Or will it take seeing the wounds on the resurrected body of Christ and, rather than turning away, touching them and saying, “My Lord and my God.”

Each day we see and touch the wounds and the scars on the body of Christ. Whether it is the man I spent three hours with on Friday who was abused as a boy by one of our priests, or the wounds of the world inflicted by hate and anger at a synagogue in California or Pennsylvania, or a church in North Carolina or Texas, each day the wounds surface and the scars survive.

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There is no doubt the wounds exist. There is no doubt the scars are there. The only doubt is if we touch the wounds and fail to believe that out of this vicious scar, there is hope for victory.

Doubt is healthy—it invites questions and searching more deeply into what happened rather than being content to stay on the surface. It invites dialogue and questioning which may lead to answers and possibilities we have never thought of before. Doubts about becoming a New Creation of Precious Blood missionaries in the United States are normal and healthy.

Doubt is dangerous only when we fail to see these scars as birthmarks for something new. Doubt is deadly only when we fail to see and touch each other's scars as invitations to a story that will lead us ever more deeply into relationship and reconciliation. Doubt is an obstacle only when we stay on the surface and fail to recognize the presence of the Risen One in each other's stories and scars.

May these days take us deeper into the reality of our belonging to one another and our becoming a new creation. May they remind us of our common mission, summed up so eloquently in the words of St. Francis of Assisi (which could have been penned by St. Gaspar of Giano): "We have been called to heal wounds, to bring together what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way." This is our mission of reconciliation and renewal in a wounded world and a broken institutional church.

New Provincial Council; back: Timothy Armbruster, Daryl Charron, Keith Branson, front: Garry Richmeier, David Matz



So, my friends, breathe deeply of the Holy Spirit who dwells within each of us, who breathes peace in each of us, who breathes through each of us. Breathe deeply of the memories of those we will now remember who have gone before us, the members and companions whose spirits and stories we carry close to our hearts. Breathe deeply of their courage and compassion. Breathe deeply of their wisdom and their wonder. Breathe deeply of the knowledge and the truth that one day we will all share the stories once again around the table in the new creation that never ends.

For as the poet, Mark Nepo, writes:

*If you have one hour of air
And many hours to go
You must breathe slowly.
If you have one arm's length
And many things to care for,
You must give freely.
If you have one chance to know God
And many doubts, you
Must set your heart on fire.
We are blessed.
Each day is a chance.
We have two arms.
Fear wastes air. ✠*



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2019 Jubilairans; Back: Richard Colbert, Jim Betzen, Timothy Coday, John Wolf, Front: David Matz, Tom Welk, Mike Goode, William Hubmann

“God So Loved the World....”

by Fr. John Wolf, C.P.P.S., Liberty, Missouri

The following is Fr. John Wolf’s homily from the Jubilarian Mass during the Provincial Assembly.

Several months ago, I heard from someone who was recovering from surgery. The surgery had gone well, he was resting comfortably, and was also super grateful for pain meds. Or as he put it, “God so loved the world, he gave us Percocet.”

I’m sure there a number of you here who can relate to that. I surely can. But in truth, that’s not what John had in mind when he penned this iconic verse—that the gift of God’s wondrous love for the world would be God’s only Son, and to believe in Him would open for us the way to eternal life.

Yes, John 3:16 is arguably the most familiar, most memorized, most quoted, most beloved, most likely-to-be-held-up-at-a-sporting-event passage in all

of Scripture. When I see billboards or banners and posters at sporting events and concerts and full page ads proclaiming John 3:16, I always hope that the message goes beyond, goes deeper than simply, “Just believe that Jesus is the Son of God and heaven is your reward”—as if nothing else matters.

I’d feel better if occasionally they’d hold up something else, maybe: “What you did for one of these least ones, you did for me” (Mt 25:40), or “What does the Lord require, but that you do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God?” (Micah 6:8), or “But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off, have been brought near through the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:13), a verse so dear to our missionary hearts. Or anyone of Jesus’s parable stories of mercy. This would acknowledge the presence of the Risen Christ among us—a living, active presence—and that our faith and

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Fr. John Wolf, continued from page 9

belief in Christ involves living a life with our “feet on the ground.” (As one writer once said: “It’s not about pie in the sky when you die; but about making sound on the ground while you’re around!”)

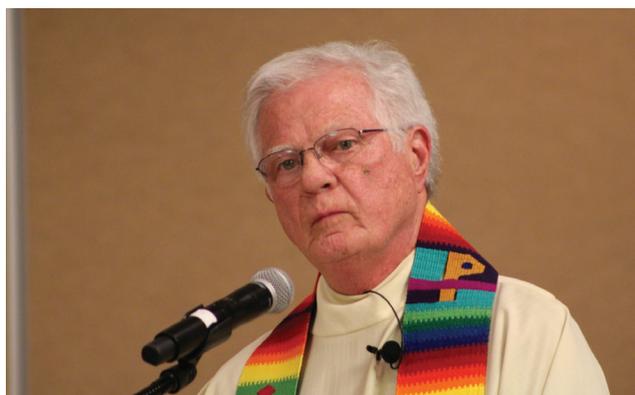
It’s not only the death that Jesus died that reveals his unselfish, sacrificial, redemptive love, it’s how he lived: to teach and heal and tell stories, protest and turn over tables, touch the untouchable, sit around the table with sinners, break bread and wash feet, face temptation, forgive, and to announce a new kingdom. Not only announce it, but show us what that kingdom is like—to love his enemies to the point of death at their hands, to defeat death by rising from the grave, and to be with us in the promised gift of the Spirit.

It’s all of that and more. God so loved the world. God gave us all of that in His Son. And as we heard in today’s passage from the Acts of the Apostles, “with courage they went out to tell about this life.” There was power in that sacrificial, redeeming love.

Some of you may recall the eloquent words of Bishop Michael Curry in his homily at Prince Harry and Megan’s wedding last year: “There’s power in love to help and heal when nothing else can. There’s power in love to lift up and liberate when nothing else will. There’s power in love to show us the way to live. And when love is the way, there’s plenty good room for all of God’s children.”

Things are often better understood when we know the context—certainly true when we hear this central gospel reading, given to us on this Eastertime weekday

Fr. Timothy Coday and Fr. John Wolf, c.p.p.s.



Fr. John Wolf, c.p.p.s.

in the midst of our Assembly, given to sustain the joy of Easter resurrection and remind us of our identity as “Easter people,” proclaimers of resurrection hope in our time.

“God so loved the world.” This is part of the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, about being “born again,” being a new creation in the Spirit, about looking upon the one who would stretch out his arms on the cross. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, leading member of the Sanhedrin—his mind was not closed to Jesus, he felt the attraction of his words, was curious, wanted to know more. This was not a “daytime-dialogue.” John’s narrative says Nicodemus came “at night,” perhaps wanting to avoid being seen, afraid of his fellow Pharisees. Or is it John’s way of saying that without faith in the One whom God sent to save us, we walk in darkness? The transformation for Nicodemus and for all of us is when we choose to come out of the “shadows” of doubt and fear and move toward the light.

I think we have all had experiences or times when our “eyes were opened.” We were humbled to discover what really matters, where true joy and hope exists; our courage was renewed, our mission restored. In my years of ministry, I’ve been fortunate to have had some of those moments, times when I came away thinking, “Oh, this is what it means to love and to be loved, to serve—with the crucified, risen Christ in our midst.

In two of my parishes, St. Charles and Annunciation, I ministered with some amazing people, who every year packed up suitcases with medical supplies and education materials and went on mission to our neighbors in Central Latin America. We went bearing gifts for them, but always returned home more

aware that we were the ones who received the greater gift. The mission from St. Charles was to Guatemala, our relationship was with Fr. Salvador Rojas—supporting him in his programs of hope, aimed at furthering education for children and youth. At Annunciation in Kearney, our relationship was with a girls’ orphanage in Honduras and a home for the elderly poor, a mission of solidarity with Joe Self, a lay missionary from Annunciation parish.

Whether it was climbing into a Jeep, traveling to the outlying villages, and stepping into their humble dwellings (where sometimes the only thing hanging on their wall was a picture of Jesus or a cross), or settling in with the children at the orphanage, joining in their singing and games, walking them to school in the morning, or joining them for meals, it was evident that their faith and joy is born, not out of good fortune or having a well-stocked refrigerator or all the conveniences we enjoy. It came rather from knowing they are loved, and that what matters is that they have each other, and that the one who suffered and died for them is now their hope. They know the cross of Jesus, it’s like they know his outstretched arms were meant for them.

This is the kind of faith we are being asked to embrace as missionary disciples, the wondrous love that led Jesus to lay aside all that was rightfully his as God’s Son and take upon himself the role of a servant. Reconciling us by the blood of his Cross so that we could be brought near—near to God, near to each other, missionaries of mercy and reconciliation—as we do our part in building up the Kingdom of God.

During one of his visits to the United States, Pope John Paul II met with a group of priests. Fr. Frank McNulty spoke on behalf of the priests and he began with this story.

After a large dinner at one of England’s stately mansions, a famous actor entertained the guests with stunning Shakespearean readings. Then, as an encore, he offered to accept a request. A shy, gray-haired priest asked if he knew the 23rd Psalm. The actor said, “Yes, I do and I will give it on one condition: that when I am finished you recite the very same psalm.” The priest was a bit embarrassed, but consented. The actor did

a beautiful rendition, “My Shepherd is the Lord, there is nothing I shall want; in verdant, green pastures he gives me repose” and on and on. The guests applauded loudly when the actor was done, and then it was the priest’s turn. The man got up, shuffled to the front, and spoke the same words, but this time there was no applause, just a hushed silence and the beginning of tears in some eyes. The actor savored the silence for a few moments, and then stood up. He said, “Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you realize what just happened here. I knew the Psalm, but this man knows the Shepherd!”

I have been blessed and graced over these many years to have walked with people who have humbled me, inspired me, challenged me, and supported me, and in many ways, have helped me come to know the Shepherd—to know that pastoral ministry is first of all “pastoral” and that people really don’t “care how much you know” until they “know that you care.”

The call of the Shepherd is a call to serve, to seek out and rescue the poor, the lost, the broken—with no exceptions. I’m grateful that my Community, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood—in particular the Kansas City Province, members, companions, volunteers, and our many friends—has kept that call alive for me. It’s in our blood, and this vision is etched on our hearts, expressed so well in that familiar refrain: “We are redeemed in the blood of Christ, we are washed in love; Sent by the blood, stained by the blood, we are servants of the Blood of Christ.” ✠

Fr. Timothy Coday, C.P.P.S.



What's it All About?

by Sr. Donna Liette, C.P.P.S., PBMR

Meetings and more meetings, strategic planning, measuring outcomes and reviewing budgets. For those who were into the music of the 60s, you may remember Dionne Warwick singing, “What’s It All About, Alfie?” Last night as I was driving home, I asked myself that question: Donna, what is this PBMR ministry all about—offering radical hospitality and healing from trauma, and living with hope in the midst of suffering and hopelessness?

Then I remembered the mother who called me needing diapers for her grandson. His daddy (her son) was murdered last year and she is now the caretaker. The doorbell rings as I am talking with her and here comes Bill Bright from St. John’s Parish in Western Springs with boxes of diapers. Then I also remembered several weeks ago when a young mother of twin girls came to the door and asked if there were any extra diapers. There was Bill. She gave him a big hug. That’s what it is all about.

On May 1st when we gathered at the Floating World Gallery for our Annual Fundraiser Gala, people came from all areas of Chicago and even as far as Greenville, Ohio. The air was filled with laughter and amazement. It was like a family reunion, old and young, from diverse backgrounds and yet united in a mission that is growing and vital in the Back of the



Yards community and beyond. One of our youth, who helped prepare and serve the hors d'oeuvre, said, “This feels so good!” That’s what it is all about.

PBMR is known as a welcoming place, but



several weeks ago we were reminded of how important it is to be a place of warmth and safety. A youth was encouraged to come to PBMR for services and mentoring. However, Fr. Kelly (known now as the HOPE dealer) started checking for support places closer to the young boy’s home, and very quickly the youth said, “Oh no. I want to come back here. I get such a warm feeling here.” That’s what it is all about.

Women come in and out of the Mother Brunner House. For diapers, yes, but also for a cup of coffee, a big hug, and some laughter; for support, for sharing tears, and for healing; for community and for love. At the end of the day, you know—That’s what it is all about.

Several Sundays ago, a call came to our Precious Blood Center, a woman crying because a youth that she had worked with had been killed and she was at a loss. She knew that we offer many services to youth at our center, and also felt that she lacked the spirituality that we offer—and so at moments like that had to reach out to us at PBMR. I talked with her and assured her that her presence would be all that would be needed and God would show up. “When you walk, let your heart lead the way” is another line from “What’s it all about, Alfie?”

Why do we do what we do? Why do we rehab the boarded-up houses in our neighborhood, mow the grass, plant vegetables, or create a Peace Garden? Why do we delight when we see our youth and families moving forward? Why do we see as precious the

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The Art of KonMari and the New Creation

by Br. Juan Acuna, C.P.P.S., New Creation Commission

I recently stumbled upon a Netflix series titled “Tiding Up with Marie Kondo.” Marie Kondo is a Japanese organizing consultant. She has developed a method called the KonMari method to simplify and organize a home by getting rid of physical items that do not bring joy into your life. In each episode, Marie helps different people struggling with messy homes to declutter and organize them through her method.

It caught my attention in the first episode that her approach to declutter a home was very practical and at the same time very spiritual. I was very moved seeing the change in people’s lives before and after decluttering their homes. The struggle people go through when letting go articles of clothes, books, or other items charged with sentimental value is very real. Since at that time I was thinking about my Lenten practice for this year, I decided trying to apply her method to my own life during Lent.

I began with my clothes. I was shocked to see how many clothes I was holding on to. Stuff that didn’t fit me anymore, or some that had some sentimental, value but really did not bring me real joy today. Some clothes had not been worn in a long time and they were just sitting in my closet. I even found stuff I brought from Chile twelve years ago that had not since seen the light of day.

Letting go of stuff that was once important—because it served me well or was given to me by people in my life I care for—was probably the hardest part of the process. The KonMari method encourages the person to be grateful for the time and joy that a particular item brought them and then let it go. It took me several days to go through all my clothes, and at the end of the process I filled eight big trash bags with clothes that went directly to the donation bin. This process brought me new energy, peace, and much joy.

I think we can also see the New Creation process we are going through as tiding up our home. I am not suggesting the KonMari method can be applied directly to the New Creation, but I think it is valid to

not take things for granted. For example, when revising our statutes and policies, to consider things we are carrying from the past that served us well before but are not “bringing us joy” today, or when thinking about our future ministries to ask “Am I holding on to a particular apostolate just because I have a personal attachment to it or am I really being faithful to our charism in that particular place?” I know it is sometimes hard to look into our own mess, sort out our own feelings about things, and make decisions that could be painful in the moment. The natural temptation to avoid the pain, the fear of letting go keeps the status quo and we look away.

As the New Creation commission has stressed, the driving force of this process is being faithful to our charism and the mission entrusted to us by our founder. So anything that does not serve the purpose of our mission today is cluttering our home. In our ideal, tidied up home, everything we find serves to support and nurture one another, to embrace a life of prayer, to call forth the gifts of the laity and work in collaboration with them, to preach and witness the word of God, to promote conversion and reconciliation, and to pursue justice while mindful of the poor and marginalized.

I envision and pray the end result of this New Creation process will be a home where some things will be old, some things will be new, and everything will fit perfectly, represent exactly who we are, and will bring much joy for everyone. ✠

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blood stains on the pavement upon which we walk? Because we are rooted in the spirituality of the Blood of Christ; we are washed in love, sent by the blood, stained by the blood, we are servants of the blood of Christ.

The many daily interruptions and human encounters remind us to stay focused on the real meaning of our mission—hospitality, hope and healing. Love. That’s what it is all about. ✠

Father Benedict Florian Hahn, C.P.P.S.

by Fr. Gary Luiz, C.P.P.S., Atlantic Province

Fr. Florian Hahn was born in Germany in 1850, and not long after his birth his family emigrated to the newly developing region of western Ohio. Hahn entered the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in Carthagena, Ohio and was ordained a priest for the Congregation in 1882.

Six years after ordination, he was sent to the newly built Indian School at Rensselaer, Indiana. The school was established by St. Mother Katherine Drexel in 1888, and Hahn was sent by the province director, Fr. Henry Drees, to supervise the school. Drees must have realized that he was very committed to the Indian cause even then.

Drexel opened another school in Banning, California, and Hahn was sent there in 1890. The solemn dedication of the school took place on January 1, 1891.

Hahn wasted no time preparing his students for the sacraments, and in May 1891, thirty-eight youngsters received their First Communion. Hahn was tireless in his work for the school and very devoted to his Indian charges, who came to love him very much. Within ten years, he had a separate chapel building erected on the school property, working on the project along with the Indian men. In 1895 he began the publication of a school newspaper, *The Indian Mission*. As a young man he had been a printer, a trade which certainly prepared him for this venture.

In 1901, Hahn's superiors requested that he return to Ohio. This was a time of soul searching for the priest, now 51. He had come to love the students of the Indian school and his pastoral ministry in the surrounding area parishes. He knew that his presence was important to the continuing growth of the school, and his return to Ohio would leave the school and surrounding area bereft of ministry. After prayer and consultation with other priests, the sisters, and the bishop, Hahn chose to leave the Missionaries of the Precious Blood to continue to serve his new family in Banning.

In February 1901 until February 1902, Hahn took a sabbatical leave to work exclusively among the Indians

of the larger surrounding region. He established over a dozen mission churches extending over a distance of 125 miles. Precious Blood Church in Banning was dedicated in 1910, and the choice of its title was surely influenced by Hahn. It is now merged into St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish along with two chapels on nearby reservations.

In September 1913, Hahn resigned from the school and was assigned as pastor of St. Francis De Sales parish in Riverside. He died on August 3, 1916 in Oxnard. He was buried in the school cemetery, fulfilling a wish to be buried near his children "so that they could remember me in their prayers." Hahn's love for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood can be seen in the inscription on his grave, which contain the initials "C.P.P.S." after his name. His epitaph also bears the abbreviation "M.A.," since he received the title of Missionary Apostolic from the Apostolic Delegate in 1903. (St. Gaspar also was given that title by Pope Pius VII when the pope commissioned him for the ministry of missions.)

Today, of course, the efforts of the "Indian Schools" of that era have come under criticism, much of it valid. The intention of many schools at the time was to assimilate Native Americans into a homogeneous white culture. Native customs, culture, and languages were often not valued—and even discouraged. At the same time, it seems clear Fr. Benedict Florian Hahn worked selflessly for the good of his charges, who loved him in life and mourned him in death.

What more could any laborer in the Lord's vineyard ask? ✠

*(For more information, the late Fr. Dominic Gerlach, C.P.P.S., has published a history of the Rensselaer Indian School that contains a number of references to Hahn. The article may be accessed at: <http://bit.ly/2VoegHz> along with his *An Interpretative Essay on the History of the American Province, C.P.P.S.*)*

Hero of Small Deeds

by Koby Buth, Precious Blood Volunteer at KC CARE Health Center



Koby Buth

Growing up, I regularly attended youth ministry events titled something along the lines of, “Be a Hero for Jesus!” The message I heard at those events usually went something like this: “Jesus calls us to be moral exemplars in society. We need to stand

out from our peers in a way that points to Christ and brings others to Him. By performing extraordinary acts with extraordinary courage, we will gather attention from society that we will then be able to redirect to Jesus.”

Part of the use of the word “Hero” was, of course, a means of appealing to our ten-year-old imagination: we could be Superman or Wonder Woman. I did not consider, however, how this appeals to our modern obsession with individualism, until I first heard the song *Helplessness Blues* by the band Fleet Foxes. As I contemplated the lyrics over time, the first verse has always been the most striking to me:

*I was raised up believing I was somehow unique
Like a snowflake distinct among snowflakes,
unique in each way you can see
And now after some thinking, I'd say I'd rather be
A functioning cog in some great machinery
serving something beyond me*

While that verse could be interpreted as critiquing the Participation Trophy Phenomenon, I think it more clearly speaks to the desire to contribute in small, cooperative ways to a larger, more meaningful society. Those youth ministry events encourage great individual acts, not small, perhaps menial, acts that add up to something greater than we could do individually. I think that our youth ministers did not want to encourage those particular acts, primarily because they can feel menial. An accountant for a homeless shelter may not feel like she’s contributing much to the world, but that shelter would not exist for very long without her, leading to fewer people getting the services they need.

This volunteer year, I have often felt like a “cog in some great machinery,” which has in some ways left

me a little unsatisfied. I have felt the need to begin some great project which will overhaul the way the clinic works and drastically improve the care for our patients. I would love to say that desire comes solely from the care I feel for our patients, but I think some of it comes from a desire to stand out from the crowd—to be a Hero for Jesus. In college, we often had speakers from small organizations come and speak about what caused them to start a nonprofit that helps with human trafficking or world hunger. I often wondered if, instead of having many small organizations dedicated to eradicating a huge social issue like human trafficking, having a few large ones would be able to mobilize more people and more resources. I wondered if people’s desire to be a Hero for Jesus by starting their own organization was a less efficient way of decreasing hunger and slavery in our world than joining a pre-existing one and adding their skills and talents to an already established nonprofit.

People will often say that the desire to be a cog in a machine is fueled by complacency. But I am learning to see the benefits to it. It allows good, helpful organizations to function smoothly. It helps you make significant changes in the world without burning yourself out hunting for the next great idea.

A few months ago, some street evangelists stopped Brooke (my wife, also a Precious Blood Volunteer) and I on our walk home and asked when we were saved. I thought, I don’t think salvation is a one-time thing, I think it’s a process, which is why Paul tells us “work out your salvation.” But, because I knew I would make my wife uncomfortable confronting street evangelists, I said, “When I was around six.” He then asked, “Does your salvation make you want to go out and evangelize?” My answer was something along the lines of, “Actually, I feel like I usually want to show people what Christ is like rather than telling them.” We then told each other to have a good day and parted ways. These people were looking for big ways to serve Christ, which is good, but I’m trying to find consolation in doing small things, routine things to serve Christ, other people, and the broader creation. †

Sent by the Blood

The Leadership Team of the Kansas City Province of the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood is pleased to announce the following assignments for service in our mission:

Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S., Pastor, St. Mary Parish, Centerville, Iowa and St. Patrick Parish, Melrose, Iowa, effective July 1, 2019.

Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S., Director, Initial Formation for Cincinnati and Kansas City Provinces, House of Formation, Chicago, Illinois, effective August 1, 2019.

Timothy Guthridge, C.P.P.S., Staff, Sorrowful Mother Shrine, Bellevue, Ohio, effective July 1, 2019.

Tam Minh Hoang, C.P.P.S., Interim Director, Vietnam Mission. Fr. Tam will remain Director of Formation, Vietnam Mission, with residence at Xavier Formation House, Ho Chi Minh City, effective August 1, 2019.

William Hubmann, C.P.P.S., Supply and Sacramental Ministry. Fr. Bill will move to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to help care for his mother, effective July 1, 2019.

Mark Miller, C.P.P.S., Sabbatical, effective August 5, 2019.

Joseph Nassal, C.P.P.S., Sabbatical, effective July 1, 2019.

Lac Pham, C.P.P.S., Associate Pastor, St. Francis Xavier Parish, St. Joseph, Missouri. Fr. Lac will remain Director of Formation for the Kansas City Province, effective July 1, 2019.

Dien Truong, C.P.P.S., Assistant Director, Vietnam Mission, Ho Chi Minh City, effective August 1, 2019.

Michael Volkmer, C.P.P.S., Senior Priest in Residence, St. James Parish, Liberty, Missouri, effective July 1, 2019.

Mark Yates, C.P.P.S., Pastor, St. Mary Church, Albia, Iowa, St. Patrick Church, Georgetown, Iowa, and St. Peter Church, Lovilia, Iowa, effective July 1, 2019.

We are grateful to these missionaries for accepting the call to be sent by the Blood of Christ in the spirit of St. Gaspar to be a reconciling and renewing presence in the Church and our world.

With peace in the blood of Christ,

Joseph Nassal, C.P.P.S., Provincial Director

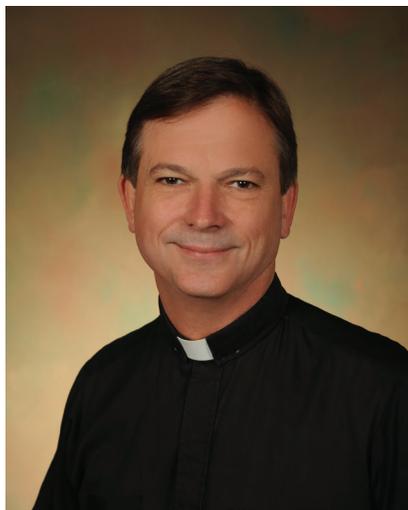
Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.

Thomas Welk, C.P.P.S.

Ronald Will, C.P.P.S.

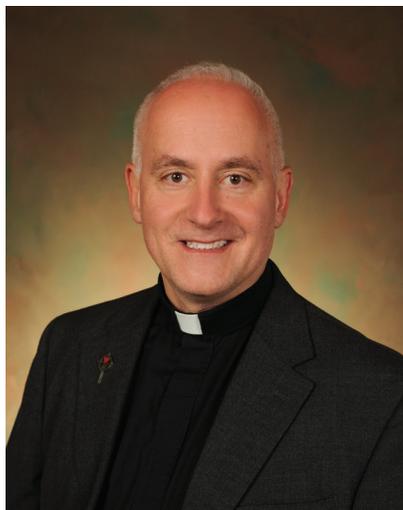
Mark Miller, C.P.P.S.

Congratulations to the Members of the New Provincial Council!



Provincial Director

Fr. Garry Richmeier, C.P.P.S.
Incorporated April 16, 1982
Ordained June 18, 1983
Sacramental Minister at
St. James Parish
Kansas City, Missouri



Vice-provincial Director/First Councilor

Fr. David Matz, C.P.P.S.
Incorporated June 21, 1994
Ordained November 18, 1995
Pastor at
St. Agnes Parish
Los Angeles, California



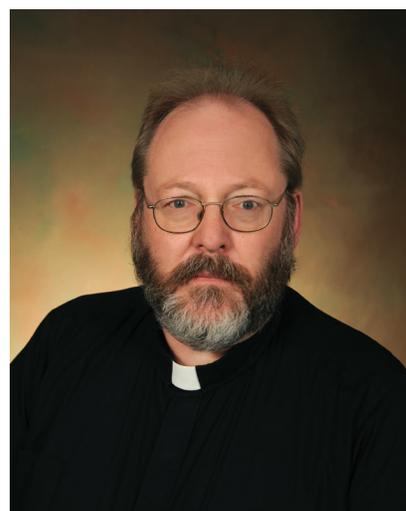
Second Councilor

Br. Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S.
Incorporated April 18, 1995
Director of
Vietnam Mission
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Third Councilor

Fr. Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S.
Incorporated October 27, 2000
Ordained August 18, 2001
Associate Pastor at
St. James Parish
Liberty, Missouri



Fourth Councilor

Fr. Keith Brason, C.P.P.S.
Incorporated April 14, 1999
Ordained June 9, 2000
Chaplain at
Avila University
Kansas City, Missouri

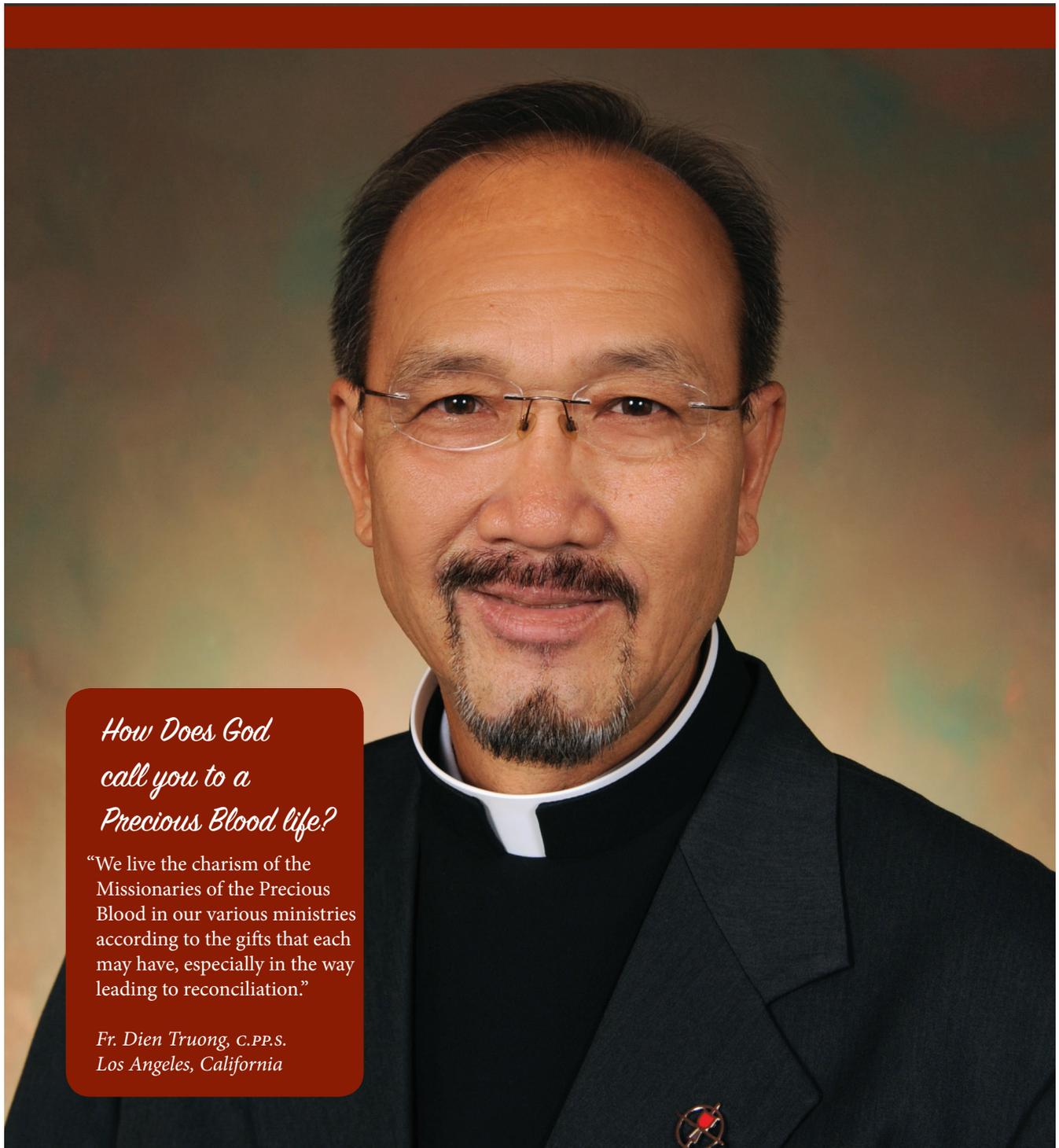
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*How Does God
call you to a
Precious Blood life?*

“We live the charism of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in our various ministries according to the gifts that each may have, especially in the way leading to reconciliation.”

*Fr. Dien Truong, C.P.P.S.
Los Angeles, California*