



The New Wine Press

Motivated by the spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Blessed To Be In Their Company

Sean Fitzgerald

My time as a volunteer for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood has led me to cross paths with wonderful people and challenging circumstances. I came by these enlightening events because of an irregular and unfortunate event at college. The summer of 2010 brought a life-changing decision for me. By no means was I dangerously at a loss for guidance, but I was stuck between a rock and a hard place. Not knowing what to do with the time I had between that summer and going back to school in the fall of 2011, I had the good fortune to meet Chris Hoyt, the director or the Precious Blood Volunteers program, while volunteering as a chaperone on a mission trip with my home parish, Church of the Annunciation in Kearney, MO.

Chris gave a very insightful presentation of his experiences as a volunteer and the new Precious Blood Volunteers program. Through the next few months I met with Chris in regards to volunteering, and with great patience from him and some helpful support from my Youth Minister at Annunciation, Elizabeth Madeo, I decided to take the opportunity that was before me. In that decision there were several things that led me to my conclusion, but one of the reasons at the forefront of my mind was that through the rest of my life, after going back to college and setting out on that path, how many opportunities would I have to volunteer for six straight months or more. After that conversation I was sold, and plans were made to proceed.



Of all my volunteer experiences, Tuesdays and Wednesdays are the best of memory. I spend my Tuesdays at the Sacred Heart-Guadalupe food pantry. The pantry was at first rather daunting and discouraging, because there were so many people that needed food. Previously, the vast majority of my experiences with the poor had been limited to “projects” and “doing” things for the poor—and had little to do with interaction with the poor.



The more I interacted with the people who came, the more encouraging they became to me, because it finally hit me that those people were working as hard as they could to support themselves and their families. I quit treating them like the needy and started treating them as people and brothers and sisters in Christ. It’s easy to get caught up in the idea and stereotype of the “needy,” but they are just people like you and me who

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Leadership Notes

[The leadership team of the Kansas City Province consists of Frs. Joe Nassal, Richard Bayuk, Ron Will, Jim Betzen and Tom Welk. They will take turns writing this column for each issue. This column is the reflection given by Joe Nassal during the liturgy of installation of new leadership on June 6, 2011 at Savior Pastoral Center.]

“This is the first, wildest, and wisest thing I know,” the poet Mary Oliver writes, “the soul exists and that it is built entirely out of attentiveness.” Many spiritual writers have observed that the essence of the spiritual life is “paying attention” or “awareness,” being aware of the presence of God in our life. This is the basis of our prayer: we believe in our very bones that we are loved by God and that God’s image is etched on our hearts and the hearts of every human being.

But there has been a shift in the thinking of many people of faith that has occurred over several years and it might be summed up in the difference between two similar sounding words: “attentiveness” and “attendance.” Too often our focus is on numbers: “How many were at the funeral, the wedding, the Midnight Mass at 11:00, the workshop, the Assembly, the mission, the retreat, the fill-in the blank.” We live in a numbers crunching culture and this penchant for polls, ratings, rankings, and attendance has invaded every nook and cranny of our institutional life and taken up residence. This is not surprising, of course, since we live in a culture of consumerism. But the desire to play the numbers game and rank everything and everyone from movies to missions is endemic to hierarchical thinking.

Playing the numbers game is the popular pastime for politicians and prelates. In politics, it leads to re-districting; in clerical culture it leads to closing of parishes, schools, retreat centers, and ministries of every kind. “How many” and “how much” are often the first questions we ask when playing the numbers crunching game and it inevitably leads to winners and losers. But there is the danger when we only play the numbers game: numbers are not the only things that are crunched; hearts are too.

While bottom lines are a fact of life and all in ministry would encourage as many in attendance as possible, a shift in focus from attendance to attending to the needs of those who are on the outside looking in seems more reflective of a spirituality that seeks to draw all people near in the circle of God’s love. The world is our emergency room and like attending physicians, Precious Blood people attend to those who have been damaged and bruised and battered by the powerbrokers and warmongers of the world.

Precious Blood people are not meant to be powerbrokers, but rather men and women who have traced the scars on their hearts and learn compassion from their own experiences of brokenness. Which is why tonight, the five of us who have said yes to leadership in the province face a daunting challenge. Can we drink this cup where so many tears and fears of so many people are mingled?

Can we drink this cup where our hopes and our hurts, our loves and our losses, our triumphs and our tragedies, our dreams and disappointments, our joys and our sorrows come together to create a mystical brew known as the blood of Christ?

How Do We Get There Together

Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S.



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 refounding. We accept and encourage unsolicited manuscripts and letters to the editor.

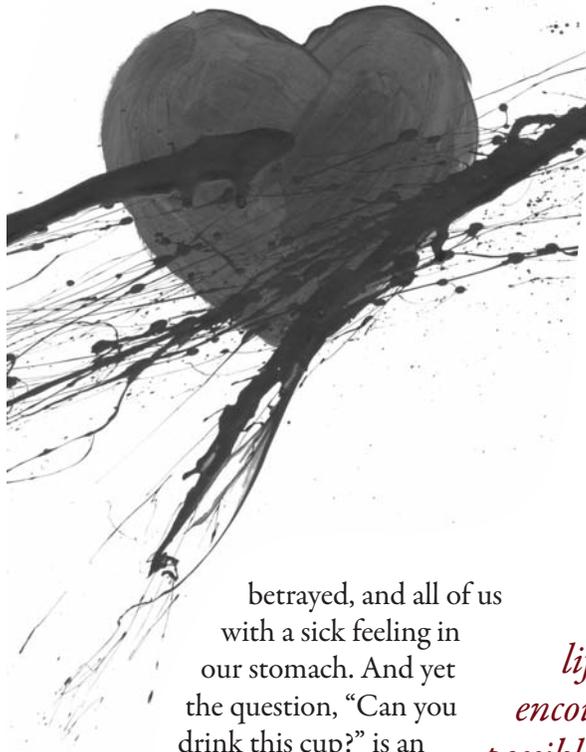
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Can we drink this cup when we know how bitter it tastes at times from the betrayal and broken dreams we have all swallowed and find hard to stomach? The events that have unfolded in the local church the past couple of weeks have stirred anger and resentment, leaving so many feeling



betrayed, and all of us with a sick feeling in our stomach. And yet the question, “Can you drink this cup?” is an invitation to drink in the anger and pain of the victims and the betrayed, and keep swallowing hope for the reconciliation and peace that can only come through the blood of the cross, the blood of the cup, and the blood of the covenant.

The crisis in the local diocese invites reflection and action on the role that we as Precious Blood people play for the local church. Can our parishes, our homes, our centers, be safe places where those who are wounded deeply might come to tell their stories? Can we drink this cup?

Can we drink this cup when we know for so many in our world revenge tastes sweet and reconciliation seems like an acquired taste?

We can if we pay attention and seek to listen to each other. We can drink this cup if we are

more focused on attending to the wounds and wonders of one another, rather than who wins the numbers game. We can drink this cup if we remember that we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us; those whose spirits surround us in this chapel tonight, whispering in our hearts that so great a crowd of witnesses accompany us every step of the way on this journey of faith. We certainly felt this the first night of our Assembly when the names of the members and companions who have traveled before us were sung in the litany of saints.

We can drink this cup when we remember those who have served in leadership before us. And I want to thank especially Jim, Al, and Garry for your service to the province, the church, and the congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood. But I also want to thank all who serve in leadership, not only by election or appointment, but by vocation. For indeed, all of us were elected through baptism in the blood of Christ to bear witness to the truth the cup of blessing and brokenness holds. Thank you all for being servant leaders of the blood of Christ.

I began by quoting one of my favorite poets, Mary Oliver. I conclude with a story from another of my favorite writers, Mark Nepo, who was sitting on a park bench near his home in New York City. He had an apartment on the edge of this

“While bottom lines are a fact of life and all in ministry would encourage as many in attendance as possible, a shift in focus from attendance to attending to the needs of those who are on the outside looking in seems more reflective of a spirituality that seeks to draw all people near in the circle of God’s love.”

“beautiful path-centered park seemingly designed to have people drift alone only to bump into other drifters.” Spring was just arriving and Mark joined others who were “coming out from under our rocks to warm and lengthen.”

He noticed “a gentle older man” sitting a couple of benches down and “staring off into the place between things, beyond any simple part, staring into the beginning or the end, it was hard to say.” As the older man got up and walked by Mark, their eyes met. “There was no point in looking away,” Mark said, “no point in pretending we didn’t know each other. And so he shuffled over and sat beside me. The sun moved behind the one cloud and he finally said in half a quiver, ‘How can we go there together?’”

Mark was silent. He was awkward and unsure. The old man stared “as if to search my will, and after several minutes, he just patted my hand and left.”

Continued on the next page...

The old man's question lingers in my mind as we accept the mantle of servant leadership in the community: How can we go there together? This becomes the work of our lives, of living the answer to that question in our sometimes stumbling, bumbling, and fumbling ways.

"For me," Mark writes, "this old man brimming with eternity, patting my hand and walking on, helped me to understand that this is the work of integration: to have our inner soul work meet our outer relational work. Indeed, how can we be who we are when no one is around and bring that holy presence everywhere?"

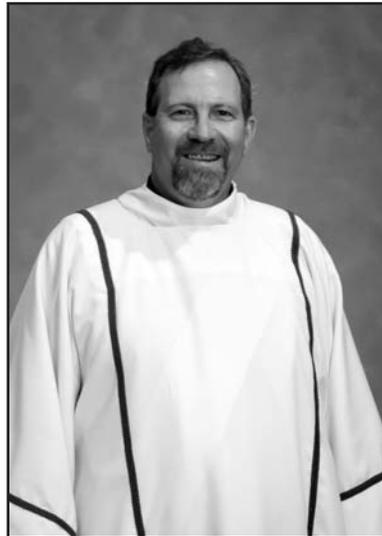
As Mark Nepo reminds, "No one can live your life for you and yet we need each other to be whole and complete." So how do we go there together? "Perhaps by risking the sharing of our solitude," Mark writes. "Perhaps by taking turns in leaning on one another and bearing each other up. Perhaps by valuing community over achievement."



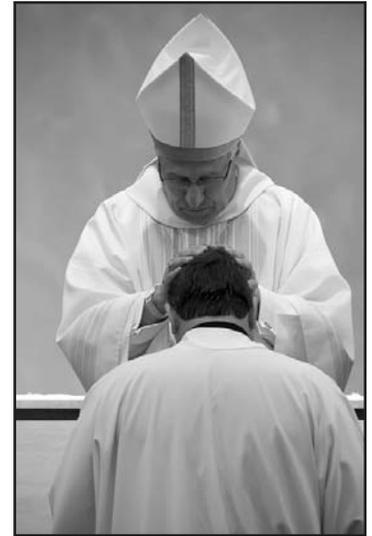
So how do we go there together? Perhaps by paying attention to the cracks in the chalice of each other's hearts that contain the stories of each one's lives and knowing that Leonard Cohen was correct:

Forget your perfect offering.
 There is a crack, a crack in everything.
 That's how the light gets in.
 That's how the light gets in.
 That's how the light gets in.

Joe Nassal is Provincial of the Kansas City Province.



*Deacon Mark Yates, C.P.P.S.
 Ordained June 25, 2011*



*Bishop Joseph Charron laying
 on hands during the
 ordination liturgy*

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Reach Out



Company, continued from page 1...

have fallen on less fortunate times. I felt blessed to be in their company, because they showed me a whole other side to a great conversation on life. There were many new angles that I found through conversation with them. Life wasn't as simple as black and white with them; it was a much more colorful and understood one.

My experiences and time spent with the Precious Blood members and the food pantry have helped build a strong compassion for the poor and unfortunate. The Sacred Heart-Guadalupe staff's care and attitude in the food pantry reminded me that the poor are people too, and that Jesus was on to something when he entrusted their care and well being to those of us to have the power and obligation to do something about it.

Wednesdays are spent in school I loved my time there, because through the last couple of years I have developed a bad habit of making my faith more complicated than it should be. The children at Our Lady of Guadalupe School, and those in the summer Bible school, brought about a more carefree attitude that I hadn't been able to get back to since I was their age. Their faith was admirable too, because they had just that, faith. They believed without seeing and knew Jesus for what he was and what he had promised them: forgiveness, love, and friendship. Their behavior took me back to a time in my childhood—which was actually not too long ago!—when I thought of things so much more simply. I was amazed to hear the students' responses when speaking with them about questions that I personally try to answer in too many words. They brought about an amazing growth in my understanding to not be after the answer all the time, to take a breath and relax, to slow down and let the mystery of the Holy Spirit be exactly that.

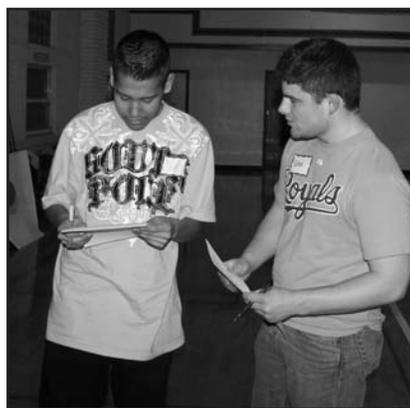
To say that I have had many experiences with religious communities would be an exaggeration, but what I know about the Precious Blood community is that they most certainly practice what they preach. I have observed, experienced and learned what it truly is to be accepting of all of God's children. They have shown and taught me a compassion for the poor that I cannot begin to explain. Fr. Al Ebach, Fr. Mike Goode, and the staff at Sacred Heart-Guadalupe have helped me grow to see people as they are—to understand that the poor are no different from the rich; they have lives, concerns and families. No matter what our social classification, we all thank God for what we have and the Lord still works through all of us.

My experience with the Precious Blood Volunteers has been a positive one. I feel that I have grown and it has shown me that you never know enough to stop growing. Christ's love is present in this program and all its experiences.

Sean Fitzgerald, a Precious Blood Volunteer, is completing his service at the end of July.



Our Lady of Guadalupe School



Assisting with a youth retreat



At the food pantry



Preaching the Precious Blood

Timothy Guthridge, C.P.P.S.

This spring, 25 members and companions of the Precious Blood Community from 11 different countries attended an international workshop on preaching the message of the Precious Blood at the International Center of Precious Blood Spirituality in Salzburg, Austria.

The conference took place during the week of May 22-28. Fr. Barry Fisher opened the conference and gave the first major presentation on how Jesus preached. Father Willi Klein from the Teutonic Province gave the presentation on how St. Gaspar preached, and Sr. Johanna Rubin, an A.S.C. from the Schaan Region in Switzerland, gave the conference on how St. Maria de Mattias preached. Fr. Dennis Chriszt spoke on how Precious Blood Missions are done in the United States and Sr. Donna Liette gave a presentation on the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago. Frs. Dawid Siwicki and Klement Horvat from the Polish Province gave wonderful presentations on how the message of the Precious Blood is communicated to young people through drama, art, music and festival; Fr. Joe Deardorff and Sr. Elsie Vinhote gave presentations on how Precious Blood spirituality is spread through base communities and women's and youth action groups in Peru; and Fr. Thomas Temba gave a presentation on working with youth in Tanzania.

The good news is that Precious Blood spirituality is being spread around the world. Of course the bad news, as Fr. Barry Fischer pointed out in one of his presentations, is that Precious Blood spirituality is still one of the best kept secrets in the church. Although the various Precious Blood communities of men and women have come to a much greater understanding of the message of the Precious Blood among themselves during recent years, we have come to a point where we really have to start doing a better job of sharing what we know with others through our ministries.

During the conference a fair amount of time was spent in discussion of this topic, with ideas that will be submitted to the various general councils. One of the ideas was to create a series of small booklets and pamphlets for lay and young people on various aspects of Precious Blood spirituality. These would be translated into various languages. CDs and even some DVDs could be made for distribution in parishes and missions around the world. The Polish Province, in their presentation, showed us how St. Gaspar Festivals can be celebrated, where young people are asked to create art, music, and short plays about the lives of Gaspar and Maria well as various aspects of the message of the Precious Blood. They have contests, for example, to see who can create the best Precious Blood song. Young people can be very creative, especially when it comes to art, music and drama.

“All members of the Precious Blood communities serve the church by proclaiming the word of God. This is key to understanding our charism, which includes proclaiming the Good News of the Blood of Christ. Everything else must be viewed from this perspective.”

One of the more exciting aspects for me was to discover that a lot of us are already doing what Jesus did, what Maria de Mattias did, and what Gaspar did regarding preaching. All members of the Precious Blood communities serve the church by proclaiming the word of God. This is key to understanding our charism, which includes proclaiming the Good News of the Blood of Christ. Everything else must be viewed from this perspective.

Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God is at hand and not at some distant time in the future. Jesus is (not just was) the Word made flesh and dwells among us. Jesus proclaims the Good News through us, at least to the degree we choose to be in union with Christ through personal prayer, sacrament, scripture, community and service of others. This is why Precious Blood members, companions and associates must strive to live in constant union with God. This is why St. Gaspar once wrote that members of the community must live like missionaries while on the road and live like contemplatives when at home. The latter strive to live in communion with God at all times regardless of what they are doing. If our mission is to be fruitful, we must strive to be in communion with God at all times.

Barry Fischer pointed out the things that Jesus did not do when he preached. He did not condemn or moralize, did not

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Preaching in the Flatlands

Keith Branson, C.P.P.S.

Every 4th Friday, all the Churches in Salzburg are open from 6:00 A.M. to midnight. Each one has something different going on—one will have prayer services, another will have lectures, another will have concerts, and most will have a combination. The Dom (Cathedral) has something special: a labyrinth of votive lights on the floor. One travels the labyrinth in twilight, moving carefully, so as not to knock over a candle or bump into someone walking the path. In the center is a well with a mirror in the bottom; looking into the mirror gives one their own face and the portrait of the dove high at the top of the Dome. It is an amazing experience.



*Frs. Timothy Guthridge
and Keith Branson
“on the mountain”*

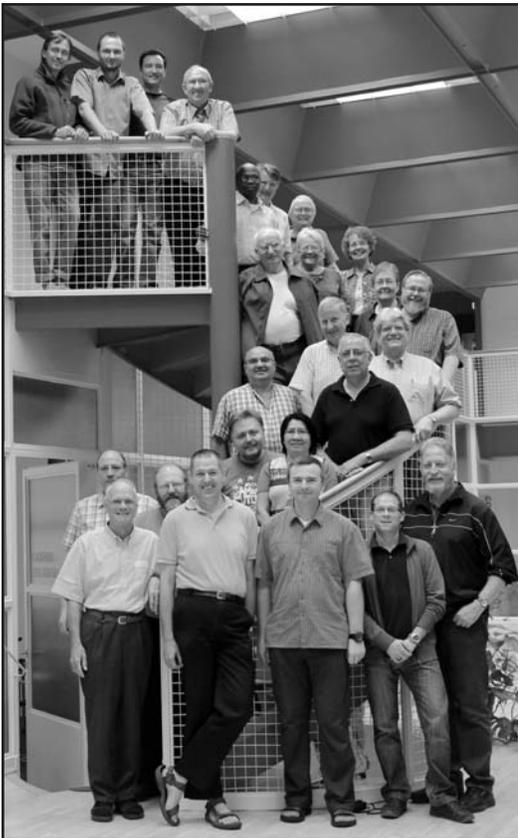
We came to Salzburg, to the International Center for Precious Blood Spirituality, from 11 different countries on 4 continents: Austria, Germany, Poland, Croatia, Spain, Tanzania, Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the United States; we were priests, sisters and lay people. The Teutonic Province gave us a warm welcome at the Kolleg St. Josef, and provided excellent hospitality and use of their facility. Salzburg itself provided wonders and revelations as we stayed there: a beautiful old city full of music, flowers, mountains and stunning architecture. The setting of past stories provided an interesting backdrop for the workshop titled, “Preaching/Communicating the Message of the Blood of Christ.”

We shared stories of how Jesus preached, how Gaspar preached, and our stories of our contexts of preaching. Poland told of their amazing work with youth, the South Americans told of the social contexts of our spirituality, and we of North America shared our mission preaching strategy. There were other stories that came out as well: Croatia spoke of its commitment to hospitality, Tanzania spoke of the dehumanizing effects of Black Magic on the marginalized, Spain spoke of ministry to the imprisoned, and the Precious Blood Reconciliation Center shared stories of their ministry in Chicago. We dreamed as well, particularly about the future of the International Center for Precious Blood Spirituality and what it might be able to offer to Precious Blood communities around the world.

We also built a community of 25 people and several languages. We prayed, sang, talked, explored Salzburg, ate and drank. One evening we had a North American cookout, complete with bonfire, and had a wonderful time in spite of the challenges of thick tree branches, thin sausages and no graham crackers for S'mores. The night before we concluded, we experienced the Long Night of the Churches, a dynamic event than many turned out for in spite of rain.

The last day there we rode the cable car up the Untersberg, and had the grand view of the Salzach valley and the Alps. Like Peter, James and John at the Transfiguration, the challenge for us is to integrate the mountaintop experience and use the visions we saw in Salzburg as inspiration for ministry and preaching in the flatlands.

Fr. Keith Branson is pastor of St. Ann Catholic Church in Warsaw, MO.



*Participants of the workshop
held in Salzburg in May*

2011 Human Development Grants

The Kansas City Province awarded grants from the Human Development Fund to 12 organizations in 2011. The following are the recipients, along with a brief description of each.

Brother André Fund of St. Agnes Parish

Los Angeles, California

The Brother André Fund is the outreach ministry of St. Agnes Parish. People from within the parish boundaries can come for food once a month. The fund also provides emergency assistance with rent, utilities and medical conditions. St. Agnes, perhaps the most culturally diverse parish in the entire community, has been served by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood since 1967, including currently, Fr. Bill Delaney of the Kansas City Province.

Center of Hope

Wichita, Kansas

The Center of Hope, founded in 1984, is well known for its reputable homeless prevention services. As part of the center's services, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ Foundation developed a program to work with the chronically underserved. About 20 new clients are admitted each year.

These families are given assistance to develop a plan with concrete goals to improve their quality of life and identify and address the barriers that have prevented them from breaking out of the cycle of poverty.



Centro Salud Integral

La Paz, Bolivia

This center is a ministry of the A.S.C. community, providing assistance to many women in La Paz who are subject to economic exploitation, especially those who are single heads of households. The project improves their quality of life by giving economic support so they can hold down a steady job with dignity, and receive training and formation. The long term goals are to help families become more stable, improve the quality of life, help the women get better jobs with higher pay—all leading to systemic change.

Ecumenical Community Empowerment Committee

St. Joseph, Missouri

This recently formed committee has representatives from various churches (including Precious Blood parish, St. Francis Xavier) and social agencies, and is seeking to address poverty in the city. They have adopted a model used in other parts of the country called "Circles of Support," which helps change people's lives and situations instead of providing charity alone. The circles include allies (people living above the poverty level), participants

(those living below the poverty level), and volunteers and staff. The goal is to engage the local community to meet with families that need help to determine what they need. This will include helping them to budget, getting them involved with the community, and leading them to vocational schools, possible employers, and other referrals. The grant will make it possible for this Circle of Support to get started, with a goal of self-sufficiency within several years. The committee is currently chaired by Fr. Ron Will, C.P.P.S. and Companion Gary Kincaid serves as secretary.

Hope and Healing Ministries

Ankeny, Iowa

This ministry is committed to offering hope, healing, reconciliation and the love of God by means of group retreats and one-on-one care to women and men wounded by abortion and abuse in its many different forms. The recipients of HHM services are empowered to face their present challenges in the context of understanding the wounds of the past. St. Mary Parish in Albia, IA, a Precious Blood parish, has worked closely with this ministry.

Kateri Center of Chicago

Chicago, Illinois

This center addresses the major problem of poverty and related needs among the Native American community, according their holistic view that treats the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional self. In their proposal, they state that with this grant "we will be able to support the children, women and homeless persons who make up the poor population we serve. For those struggling to continue their education we have been able to help in promoting their spiritual, mental, physical and emotional needs through meals, networking and providing a place to gather with other Natives. Additionally, we remain the only Catholic outreach in the state of Illinois for Native Americans, and with this we have witnessed successful stories with wonder. In short, Kateri Center of Chicago is about changed lives." Mark Yates worked at the center as a volunteer during his time at CTU.

Love INC of Clay County

Liberty, Missouri

Love INC (Love in the name of Christ) has been serving low income families and individuals since 1990. Recent economic conditions have resulted in increased numbers of those seeking assistance. The primary goals of the “Emergency Assistance and Basic Needs” program at Love INC are to provide the tools and resources for families and individuals to become self-sufficient.

Proyecto de Salud Sangre de Cristo

Guatemala, Central America

This health care project is part of the social outreach program of Sangre de Cristo Parish, staffed by the C.P.P.S. priests of the Guatemalan mission. The executive director is Sr. Dani Brought, A.S.C. The grant provides funding assistance for their medical day campaign program which provides the opportunity for medical checkups in communities that have limited access to health care services. Additionally, an important part of the program is the provision of health education by women community leaders who have been trained and empowered to serve within their own communities and thus provide sustainable improvement in the quality of life in the communities served.

Redemptorist Social Services Center

Kansas City, Missouri

The center has been a recognized establishment in metropolitan Kansas City for over 25 years, providing a lifeline to the poor and elderly—widows left behind in a changing city, the working poor, the sick, the homebound and the homeless, the emotionally and mentally challenged. The grant is being applied to the “Emergency Client Assistance: Matching Payments and Transportation Assistance” program to assist low income families who sincerely want to work hard to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.

St. James Catholic Church

Kansas City, Missouri

Fr. Garry Richmeier serves as sacramental minister here, and Deacon Ross Beaudoin, the pastoral administrator, is on the Precious Blood Volunteer Board. This grant will provide some

of the salary for a Social Services Ministries Coordinator, someone who will facilitate the growth and development and coordinate the many ministries within the parish, and also coordinate with the many established social services in the Troost Avenue corridor, including “Pay Day Loan Alternative,” “Hope for Borrowers,” “Bus Stop Ministry,” “Community Garden” and more.

Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School

East St. Louis, Illinois

This school, under the current leadership of principle Sr. Janet McCann, A.S.C., provides a holistic education for urban children. (Other ASCs are on staff as well.) Some parts of their Holistic Learning Program are “Education Through Music and the Arts,” “Peacemaker Program” (a discipline approach based on respect and responsibility), “Extended Day Program” (healthy and wholesome after school activities), and “Family University” (offering support in parenting, learning new skills and modeling life-long learning to their children).

Wichita Women’s Initiative Network Inc. (WIN)

Wichita, Kansas

This is a sponsored ministry of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ which works with women survivors of domestic abuse. Participants earn a paycheck (20 hours of work) in a flexible and supportive environment in a safe and secure facility. There is intensive mentoring to form appropriate workplace behavior, and the women have full access to the network of available social support services in the Wichita area. WIN also assists the women as they complete additional schooling, usually finishing their G.E.D. or high school diploma. WIN also continues outreach services for past participants as needed. This unique combination of work and education is the basis for a woman’s entrance in the public work force at a better than minimum wage, thus helping to end the cycle of poverty.



Feast of the Precious Blood

Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S.

[The following is the text of the homily preached by Fr. Joe Nassal at St. Charles Center during the Mass celebrating the Feast of the Precious Blood. That same liturgy on July 1st also honored the jubilarians from both provinces.]

After an especially bloody terrorist attack in Tel Aviv a few years ago, three hundred college students waited patiently for six hours on a Friday in the library building at the Max Elias College in the Palestinian town of Ibillin to donate blood. On the surface, this is powerful witness that these students would be willing to share the gift of life with others. But scratch beneath the surface, and this donation of blood was a profound and powerful statement against the evil of war and terrorism.

These 300 students were Palestinians who were donating their blood for use in Jewish hospitals for victims of the terrorist attack. Fr. Elias Chacour, a Melkite priest, organized the effort of the students. “We wanted to do something,” he said, “to sweep away some tears from the eyes of broken hearts...with our blood we decided to deny terror.”

On this feast of the Precious Blood, we gather to remember how blood is life and how through the Precious Blood of Jesus we are renewed and refreshed, reconciled and redeemed. Most especially, we gather to celebrate these jubilarians who in their blood, sweat, and tears poured out through these many years have given the congregation, the church, and the world a witness to remember.

My brothers in the blood of Christ, with your blood you have celebrated the sacraments that give life and nourishment to the people of faith; you have stood as brothers with the poor and abandoned; you have shared your life of service with more people than we can count.



“With Gaspar as our inspiration, and all those who have gone before us serving as a foundation, we continue to build out of the crosses and losses of our lives the kingdom of God.”

With your blood, you have tilled the soil, planting seeds of hope that have grown to produce an abundant harvest of justice and love.

With your blood, you have studied and preached, taught and rendered God’s tender mercy. With your blood, you have shouted against injustice and oppression and been instruments of peace in a war-scarred world. With your blood, you have held the hands of the dying, creased the foreheads of infants with the oil of chrism, witnessed the commitments of countless couples as your pronounced them husband and wife.

With your blood, you have walked with the wounded, healed the brokenhearted, reconciled the estranged, and comforted the sick. With your blood, you have been a transfusion of life, of energy, of love.

We are most grateful.

With your blood, you have celebrated at so many altars, in so many places, where the sacrifice we heard about in today’s first reading from the book of Exodus is prayed out every day. While not as messy as the ritual Moses performed—taking “half the blood and putting it in large bowls” and with the other half “he splashed on the altar”—you have prayed at the table of Eucharist and shared the blood of Christ with all who are thirsty for redemption.

As Moses sprinkled the blood on the people to seal the covenant God made with them, so you have sprinkled the people you served and continue to serve with the refreshing waters of baptism that beckon us to believe how we belong to one another and to God. You sprinkle us with stories of the characters you have met, the consolation you have found, and the compassion you experienced. Your lives are indeed a sign of the covenant of God’s love, for your commitment to your call and your service to the congregation inspires us all.

Precious Blood spirituality is about living this covenant in the blood of Christ, and your fidelity to the covenant reflects the quality of

relationship the covenant symbolizes—the depth and width and height of God’s gracious love for the people.

As Paul reminds us in today’s second reading, Precious Blood spirituality speaks not only of covenant but of the cross. The relationship we share with one another is not only with those who are close to us, those we love, those who admire us and affirm us. This blood of the cross draws all people near, those “who were far off,” those we find difficult to love, those who ridicule and reject us, those who are on the fringes of life.

As ministers of reconciliation, the spirituality of the Blood calls us to claim Christ as our peace “who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity.” Because of the blood stained cross, because of the blood pouring from the body of Christ as a result of his torture, because of this blood that seeps into the ground of our being making us holy, we are “no longer strangers and sojourners,” wandering aimlessly and listlessly. No, now we have a purpose, a passion. We are now “fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God.”

With Gaspar as our inspiration, and all those who have gone before us serving as a foundation, we continue to build out of the crosses and losses of our lives the kingdom of God.

With your blood, brothers, you have preached and lived the reconciliation that is won for us in the blood of the cross. You have sought to live an inclusive vision of God’s gracious love where the cross is the bridge and the Christ’s blood pays the toll.

And so now we gather around this table of Eucharist to remember and relive what Jesus did on that night he was betrayed when he “took his place at table with the apostles” and taking a cup,

“gave thanks, and said, ‘Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you that from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.’”

Look into this cup today, my friends, and see all that we are as Precious Blood people. Here in this cup are the stories of our lives, for this cup “is the new covenant in the blood of Christ.” See in this cup our loves and our losses, our joys and our sorrows, our hopes and dreams along with our fears and tears.

“With your blood, you have walked with the wounded, healed the brokenhearted, reconciled the estranged, and comforted the sick. With your blood, you have been a transfusion of life, of energy, of love.”

Mingled in this cup are all the memories of those with whom we have shared this wondrous life. As we drink from this cup today, we do so with gratitude for these men who have given so much to the congregation, the church, and the world.

But, as we drink from this cup today, we will also find the courage we need to live in such a way that the world—and our church—so badly in need of a transfusion of tender mercy and compassion, of peace and reconciliation, will be given new life through our witness. As those Palestinian students did for their Jewish brothers and sisters following the terrorist attack in Tel Aviv, so we will do for one another. Whether it is stranger or friend, enemy or kin, with our blood we will be willing to pour out of lives in loving service. With our blood, we will proclaim all are brought near through the blood of Christ. With our blood, we shall resist evil and reveal God’s redeeming love.

With our blood, we will live lives worthy of our calling—priest, brother, sister, companion, mother, father—missionaries all, who will live in relationship, deepen our commitment, and continue our struggle to give voice to peace we have found in the blood of Christ.

Preaching, continued from page 6...

throw sins in people's faces, did not please. He spoke the truth always, proclaimed the reign of God and condemned anything that impeded that reign. Jesus used the common language of the people and was in tune with his culture. Barry reminded us that the truth always invites, but never imposes. I think most of our members strive for this when they preach, whether it be at or away from the pulpit.

Willi Klein emphasized that when Gaspar preached, the word was always new and fresh. He was definitely inspired by the Holy Spirit while preaching, using bible quotes as starting points and including examples from daily life. He was a bit of a showman and liked to use objects, gestures and symbols while preaching. He spent significant time in personal prayer and at least a half hour each day in quiet meditation before the crucifix. In general, he spoke briefly but often, avoided using fear, talked at the level of the congregation and always spoke respectfully.

In preparation for his sermons, Gaspar studied scripture, spiritual writers and famous preachers. He demanded that members of the community must be willing to study preaching. We are called to be a community of preachers and we are to be trained as preachers.

Gaspar spent a lot of time preaching the passion, which he saw as the greatest sign of hope and God's grace for the world. Never was there to be a mission given in which the passion was not preached.

My favorite presentation was Sr. Johanna Rubin's talk on St. Maria de Mattias. She described her as a woman of prayer and a model of what true faith, hope and charity are all about—someone who exuded the presence of Jesus. Her sisters were called to recollection simply by looking at her. Sr. Johanna described her as a chalice open to God's presence at all times.

Maria de Mattias grew up in violent times. She was an eyewitness to heinous crimes of violence committed by bandits and military deserters who lived in hiding in the area. And yet, according to her biographers, when she first heard Gaspar speak, she fell in love with the crucified and risen Christ.

This I have always believed to be the heart of Precious Blood spirituality—to be stained by the Blood of Christ is to fall in love with the crucified and risen Christ. It is said that when Maria spoke about Jesus, her face would turn red, she would break out in a sweat, and her eyes would sparkle.

She was a woman of the word. She preached to groups of primarily Italian women as well as her school children. Quite a number of men and clergy would listen to her as well. She always prayed over the various points of her talks.

As busy as she was starting schools for Italian girls and new community foundations, Maria always had time for prayer; most of her free time was spent in chapel. One of the things I learned about the

Adorers of the Precious Blood is that all members are expected to spend at least an hour and a half a day in private prayer and adoration. I can't imagine doing that, and yet I can't help but wonder what life would be like if the rest of us gave it is shot. We seem to have enough time for our entertaining distractions. What would happen if we let Jesus be our primary source of rest and refreshment?

Maria and Gaspar were people transformed by the Blood of Christ. Through the Blood of Christ they became living vehicles of Christ's word and presence in the world. They called thousands to Christ. Through them, thousands saw Christ.

We who are called to follow in Maria's and Gaspar's footsteps need to permit ourselves to be stained by the Blood of Christ so that we may be transformed by God's grace in such a way that we become living vehicles of God's grace and love as well.

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The New Creation

Reflections from the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation

Last December, Fr. Kelly wrote an article called “Can You Imagine That?” in which he said that the work of reconciliation is about creating conditions where peace and reconciliation are possible. He wrote about the willingness to walk into a muddled mess and the willingness to imagine a world in which peace is possible. I was not consciously aware of those thoughts last March when I was approached by my friend, Pat Greger, a third grade teacher in Kettering, Ohio. Still, they must have played a role in my willingness to say “yes” to Pat’s intriguing request to do circles with her third grade students.

Pat is a master teacher. For the past 30 years, she has specialized in teaching students who have difficulty learning in a classroom as well as those who excel at learning. She has won a coveted national award for her teaching and is revered by her former students and their families. So I was more than a little surprised when Pat said that she was having great difficulty with her class this year. She said that it was one of only two classes in all of her years of teaching in which she had been unable to create a sense of unity in the classroom.

Pat has heard me talk about circles and she knows about Sr. Donna Liette’s work. So she wondered if circles might help bring some unity to her classroom. We happened to meet at a funeral Mass, so there wasn’t much time for Pat to describe her situation. But with trust in what

I had learned about circles from Frs. Kelly and Nordenbrock and from Sr. Donna, and with a deep belief in the circle process, I gladly said yes to her proposal to do circles in her classroom. Little did Pat or I know that day about the muddled mess we would come to experience with the students. Nor did we know how, by slogging through the muddled mess, she would find community in her classroom through circles.

Things began well. We had wonderful participation in our first “getting to know you” circle, with the students bringing objects from home to help them share something they wanted the circle to know about them. The students very quickly caught on to the guidelines and took pride in observing them.

Things went so well that on the Monday after our first Friday circle, Pat convened her own circle spontaneously. An incident on

the playground had left her students too upset to begin their math lesson. The verbal misunderstanding from the playground was quickly resolved in circle, with those who misheard taking responsibility and giving a full-hearted apology to the child who had been misheard. With the recess upset resolved through circle, the students became completely available for their math lesson. Pat said that the circle was the most powerful 15 minutes they had spent together all year.

We began our circles focusing on respect. Empowered by this early success, the students were able to name and own times they had been respected, respectful, and not. They began to stand in their truth outside the circle as well, and quickly the focal point of the disunity in the classroom emerged.

There was one child whose behaviors were challenging to his fellow students and to Pat. The behaviors were so challenging that the students had begun to isolate the student, refusing to play with him on the playground, to stand near him in line, or to associate with him in the classroom or at lunch. The child reacted naturally by whining and complaining, and melting down to the point the student had to be removed from the classroom, which only further alienated his fellow students. The stage was set for bullying to begin. Circles during this middle phase could well be described as a muddled mess. The child brought his whining, complaining, and exasperating behaviors to the circle, and the children expressed their exasperation back. There was no sugar coating what was happening in the circle and in the classroom.

Fortunately, Pat had been working with the child’s mother all year, and as the circle brought matters to a head, communication between school and home increased. The mother disclosed

See Imagine, continued on page 14...



Yes, We Can Imagine That!

Mary Hallinan

Imagine, continued from page 13...

that the child had learning disabilities and health problems that she had not previously shared with the school. These problems were directly responsible for some of the behaviors that the students found so challenging.

With this newly disclosed information, we were able to hold a circle in which students were invited to share ways in which they might not have been made perfect. The students were eager to share, and in that circle they learned from their fellow student about the physical conditions that were causing the behaviors they found so exasperating. The sharing was simple and poignant. In that moment the muddled mess began to resolve as the students listened with their hearts and were naturally moved to empathy. With a bit more coaching from Pat outside of the circle, most of the students reversed their behaviors. The child began to be included at school and he was invited to a birthday party along with all the other boys in the class. The class began to take big steps toward the unity that Pat had desired all year. The school administration was also mobilized to better serve the student and his mother.

Our final circle was a celebration. Each child was honored for qualities that they had contributed to the circle. And in turn, each child described what they had learned from the circle, including that they were loved for who they are. With Pat and the third graders, I learned the very important lesson of holding on to the vision that peace is possible while in the middle of a mess that is so muddled that peace appears to be unattainable. So now, from the third grade, we can say, "Yes, Fr. Kelly, we can imagine that!"

Mary Hallinan is a trained circle keeper in Dayton, Ohio. She is part of a group of individuals in Dayton who are striving to develop a Center for Reconciliation in that area.

She has been trained in the Restorative Practice of Peacemaking Circles. This is a reflection she wrote about some of the work in Dayton.



This is a photo of the gift which Mary Hallinan received from Pat Greger's third grade class. Below are the words printed in the circle, surrounded by the names of the students and the teacher.

God bless you for your honesty.
God bless you for helping us.
God bless you for spending time with us.
God bless you for teaching us respect.
God bless you for helping us learn respect.
God bless you for teaching young kids respect.
God bless you for helping us learn honesty.
God bless you for teaching us honesty and courage.
God bless you for teaching us forgiveness.
God bless you for helping us learn forgiveness.
God bless you for teaching us to work together.
God bless you for teaching us to be nice to one another.
God bless you for teaching us responsibility, fairness and caring for each other.
God bless you for loving us the way we are and teaching us kindness.

Precious Blood Scholarships 2011

The following 2011 Precious Blood Scholarships were presented at the Provincial Assembly in May.

Alicia Bettis, Albia, IA, nominated by Sharon Crall, is in her 2nd year at Creighton University, Omaha, NB.

Meredith Brunkow, Kearney, MO, nominated by Ann Tucker, is in her 2nd year at Loras College, Dubuque, IA.

Clarissa Cheda, Kansas City, MO, nominated by Chris Hoyt, is in her 3rd year at Bishop Ward High School, Kansas City, KS.

Leslie Flores, Los Angeles, CA, nominated by Bill Delaney, C.PP.S., is in her 2nd year at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA.

Patricia Garcia, Los Angeles, CA, nominated by Bill Delaney, C.PP.S., is in her 2nd year at Holy Family High School, Los Angeles, CA.

Pamela Gonzales, Los Angeles, CA, nominated by Bill Delaney, C.PP.S., is in her 2nd year at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA.

Andrea Gossen, St. Joseph, MO, nominated by Ron Will, C.PP.S., is in her 1st year at Bishop LeBlond High School, St. Joseph, MO.

Gerardo Henriquez, Los Angeles, CA, nominated by Bill Delaney, C.PP.S., is in his 2nd year at Cathedral High School, Los Angeles, CA.

Jazmin Leon, Los Angeles, CA, nominated by Bill Delaney, C.PP.S., is in her 2nd year at Holy Family High School, Los Angeles, CA.

Abby McCoy, Liberty, MO, nominated by Phil Smith, C.PP.S., is in her 1st year at St. Pius X High School, Kansas City, MO.

Paul Nurse, Kearney, MO, nominated by John Wolf, C.PP.S., is in his 1st year at Ave Maria University, Naples, FL.

Patricia Orellana, Los Angeles, CA, nominated by Bill Delaney, C.PP.S., is in her 1st year at Bishop Conaty-Our Lady of Loretto High School, Los Angeles, CA.

Jessica Reyes, Los Angeles, CA, nominated by Bill Delaney, C.PP.S., is in her 2nd year at Holy Family High School, Los Angeles, CA.

Jessica Rice, St. Joseph, MO, nominated by Phyllis Still, is in her 1st year at Bishop LeBlond High School, St. Joseph, MO.

Official Appointments

As Missionaries of the Blood of Christ, sent in the Spirit of the Blood and motivated by the charism of our founder, the Leadership Team of the Kansas City Province is pleased to announce the following recent appointments:

Thomas Albers, C.PP.S.

Pastor, St. Mary Church, Nevada, MO, effective July 1, 2011

Timothy Armbruster, C.PP.S.

Interim Administrator, St. James Church, Liberty, MO, July 1, 2011-January 5, 2012

James Betzen, C.PP.S.

Senior Associate, Sedalia Catholic Community, and Director of Hispanic Ministry, Sedalia, MO, effective August 12, 2011

Alan Hartway, C.PP.S.

Parochial Vicar, Guardian Angels Parish, Mead, CO, effective June 12, 2011. Fr. Alan will continue to teach at Naropa University in Boulder, CO, where he serves as chair of the interdisciplinary Studies Program.

Matthew Link, C.PP.S.

Parochial Vicar, Saint Hilary Parish, Tiburon, CA, effective September 1, 2011

Jack McClure, C.PP.S.

Pastor, Sacred Heart Church, Osage, IA and Visitation church, Stacyville, IA, effective July 12, 2011

Joseph Miller, C.PP.S.

Pastor, Sacred Heart Church, Warrensburg, MO, effective September 8, 2011

Mark Miller, C.PP.S.

Pastor, Sedalia Catholic Community, effective August 12, 2011, with continued service on the General Council

Michael Mulhearn, C.M.

assisting at St. James Church, Liberty, MO, July 1, 2011-January 5, 2012

Stephen Ohnmacht, C.PP.S.

Retirement, Precious Blood Center, effective June 1, 2011

Joseph Uecker, C.PP.S.

Semi-retirement, Odessa, TX, effective July 1, 2011

Mark Yates, C.PP.S.

Diaconate Internship, Sedalia Catholic Community, effective July 7, 2011

The New Wine Press

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My Back Pages *Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.*

Love is not a seasonal crop
The weather we can't control
Tend it well and well it'll grow
The weather will and unknown how
or why itself impose
Weather it with all your will,
those it always wins
For of itself in time weather must be spent
Sometimes its only slight damage done
That we must amend
If it's a total ravish, bend down and plant again
For earth and hearts are glad to give
An equal yield of what's putted in
Love is Not a Seasonal Crop
David E. Patton

Don't knock the weather; nine-tenths of
the people couldn't start a conversation if it
didn't change once in a while.
Kin Hubbard

Weather is a great metaphor for life—
sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad, and
there's nothing much you can do about it
but carry an umbrella.
Terri Guillemets

Weather forecast for tonight: dark.
George Carlin

Looking back at this column since 2007, I am aware that I have not written about the weather, other than a passing mention. But I'm going to give it a try—while remembering the words of Oscar Wilde: “Conversation about the weather is the last refuge of the unimaginative.”

As this issue goes to press, here in Missouri and much of the midwest, we are in the midst of a heat wave that is brutal and lengthy and record-setting. The adjective most often used in weather reports recently is “dangerous,” along with the adverb “extremely.” Combined with very high humidity, the high 90s are resulting in heat indices of 110+ up to as high as 131. The only place in the world where the latter figure is common is along the shores of the Red Sea (insert your own comparisons, making sure to use the phrase, “of biblical proportions”).

Just six months ago (how easy to forget) it was bone-chilling cold here. Then came this year's violent spring of destruction and death from tornados, arguably the worst of them all right next door in Joplin. Meanwhile, flooding along the Missouri River continues even now to disrupt lives and cause destruction.

Heat, cold, wind, water. What's missing? Oh yes, fire. But they had that in Texas and Arizona. And severe drought. The common denominator here is our complete powerlessness to control or change or avoid these extremes of nature (short of going somewhere else every time it happens—not very realistic). We can only try to stay safe, look out for one another, water the flowers, and know from experience that the weather will eventually change—and change and change and change. Like us, maybe.

Somewhere I read that there is no bad weather, only different kinds of good weather. It's a part of life; it affects our lives all the time in so many ways. And in the end, remember that “you can have money piled to the ceiling, but the size of your funeral is still going to depend on the weather” (Chuck Tanner).
