

THE **New Wine** PRESS

Volume 24 No 10 • June 2016

A Mindset of Mercy

The Miracle of The Healing Service

Reflections on a Precious Blood Life

Crossroads



Let us serve God with holy joy.

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

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Would You Believe?

Front cover photo: Pinwheels from the healing service at St. James Parish in Liberty, Missouri

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

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

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

THE New Wine PRESS

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Kansas City Province

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Jubilarians: 300 Years of Service

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

This issue is scheduled to be in your mailboxes at the same time as our province gathers for our annual Provincial Assembly from June 6-8. As is our custom, we will begin our time together in prayer, singing our “litany of saints,” remembering those members and Companions who have gone before us, that “great crowd of witnesses” who encourage us to faithfully continue our journey. Two days later, after the “work” of the Assembly, we will end our time together with Eucharist and a festive banquet honoring our jubilarians.

As you will know from reading the last issue, there are six jubilarians this year (Frs. James Schrader, James Sloan, James Urbanic, Alan Hartway, Joseph Miller, and Jack McClure). Together they represent almost 300 years of service in the community and the Church. I’m pleased that they were able to share some reflections in these pages (Fr. Jim Schrader was not able to do so.) A few quotes:

- Do you have any idea how important you are in helping other people to be who they are? I think of all the people who helped me become the person I am.
- My life is very rich because of the many people with whom I have shared faith and Eucharist in these past forty years.
- In looking back on the 40 years, I think of my Mom and one of her many one-liners: “You have something special to offer others that no one has.”
- Growth in faith was not taught me; I learned it from others, and as a gift from God.
- If I’ve learned anything, all these ministerial situations are humbling, which I arguably still need.

Celebrating our jubilarians can be an occasion to reflect on the mystery and the gift of call in all of our lives. A favorite quote of mine about call comes from Garrison Keillor, who said, “I believe that everybody has a calling in life, and only that person ever hears it. The world speaks to each person in a clear way that only he or she knows. And that is a dangerous time in your life, because to ignore it, or to go against it, or to follow it, are each of them dangerous. You take your choice, this calling to be something you may not be able to do. Everybody has to live life you know, whether you follow your calling or not. There’s no way to avoid doing terrible things and making awful mistakes. You still have to follow your calling somehow” (*Prairie Home Companion*, June 12, 1993).

As I focus on these six members, I would be remiss if I did not remember here Br. Steve Ohnmacht, who would have celebrated his 50th year anniversary of incorporation at this Assembly. During his battle with cancer, he often spoke of his desire to live to observe his jubilee. Br. Steve died just a year short of his goal, and will of course be included in our opening litany.

Congratulations to all our jubilarians and thank you for your unique gifts to the community and the Church. ♦

Mind the Gaps

by Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S., Leadership Team

“You may not remember the time you let me go first,” Brian Andreas writes in his book, *Traveling Light: Stories & Drawings for a Quiet Mind*. “Or the time you dropped back to tell me it wasn’t that far to go. Or the time you waited at the crossroads for me to catch up. You may not remember any of those, but I do and this is what I have to say to you: Today, no matter what it takes, we ride home together.”

As our community stands at a crossroads, Andreas seems to capture the mood of many of our members of the Kansas City Province who gathered in January for three days of prayer, dialogue, and fellowship—and have continued the conversation under the direction of the Futures Task Force. While there are some who arrived at the crossroads ahead of the rest and others have fallen back with fatigue or fear, the majority of our missionaries approach our future with more hope than despair; more excitement about creating something new than anxiety about extinction.

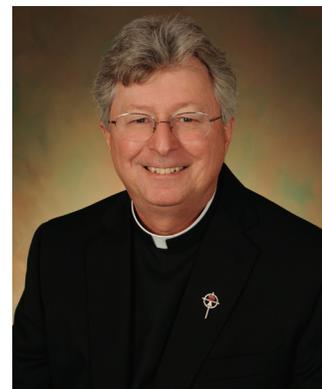
Still, that future might look very different from our present reality.

Recently at a gathering of religious, a speaker reminded us, “Our mission is to serve and not to survive.” If we focus only on our own survival, we will lose sight of the vision for which we were founded. But if we serve with enthusiasm and energy, motivated by our charism and formed by our spirituality, we will not only survive, we will thrive.

In his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (“The Joy of the Gospel”), Pope Francis underscored this belief when he wrote about his dream for the Church which he described as a “missionary option.” He defined this as a “missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today’s world rather than for her [own] self-preservation.”

Like St. Pope John XXIII, Pope Francis encourages us to read the “signs of the times” while inviting renewal in an institution that is reluctant to change. But he believes the “renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself.”

This is the dream that echoes in my soul as we look forward together as Missionaries of the Precious Blood. The image that surfaces for me of a principle that might guide us in making decisions about where our charism, spirituality, and mission calls us to be in the future comes from the voice that fills the platform area in subway stations in London that warns travelers and commuters





Members' Gathering, January 2016

to “mind the gap.” There is a small gap between the train and the platform. It is not large enough for a person to slip through but big enough to catch a foot, stumble, trip and fall.

“Mind the gap” is a way of reminding pilgrims of the Precious Blood of our mission. It offers us a succinct way of speaking about our future. Precious Blood people must mind the gaps in society, in the church, and yes, in the community life. St. Gaspar addressed the gaps in our relationships and how we love one another not in the traditional manner of vows but rather through the bond of charity. In community life, it is the bond of charity that minds the gaps.

In society, the gap between rich and poor seems wider than ever. Jesus was very clear on how to bridge this gap by standing in solidarity with those deemed the least. St. Gaspar echoed Jesus’ preferential option when he wrote, “Be especially concerned for the poor, particularly those most in need and deprived of every comfort (97).” When advising his missionaries about future ministries, Gaspar was unambiguous: “Please, I urge you not to abandon the poor, who are the image of Jesus Christ; so, if it were not possible to cultivate all of our different works, let not the most necessary be abandoned (9).”

In our church, we are painfully aware of the chasm that exists between those who promote the vision of the Second Vatican Council that embraced a spirit of collegiality and ministry that flows from the waters of baptism, and those who are more hierarchical in their

approach and clerical in their attitude. In an article for *Weavings* several years ago, Fr. James O’Leary called this “a tragic gap.” O’Leary was ordained a priest on the cusp of the Vatican Council in 1961. He welcomed the renewal of Vatican II with an open mind and heart. He was energized by the astounding changes taking place.

But by the 1980s, both in the church and in the country, O’Leary said “all my hopes for the future seemed to be unraveling.” He began to look for new options to live creatively in the gaps. Thinking especially about younger priests whose vision of priesthood and ministry was much different than his own he decided he could learn to love them. “They are not the villains,” he wrote, “but loving men with whom I have honest disagreements that do not need to separate our community. I do not need to argue with them or change them; I simply need to love them.” He now sees “the tragic gap” as “a gateway to greater trust in God and larger contributions to the life of the church.”

Minding the gaps means we gather up the stories, those unmistakable moments that remind us of the presence of God on our journey, remember the people, and retrieve the experiences that have shaped our lives and given us a sense of place in the world. Precious Blood people find their place at the gaps in society, the church, and the world.

As we look forward to our future minding the gaps, T.S. Eliot, captures the vision well in his poem, *East Coker, Four Quartets*:

Love is most nearly itself
 When here and now cease to matter.
 Old men ought to be explorers
 Here or there does not matter
 We must be still and still moving
 into another intensity.
 For a further union, a deeper communion,
 Through the dark cold
 And the empty desolation
 The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast water...
 In my end is my beginning. ♦

Families Are the Seedbed of Vocations

by Fr. Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S., Vocations Director

When I first shared with my mom that I was thinking about religious life and the community, her first question to me was, “Can you handle living alone?” As we talked more, she shared with me why she even asked that question. Growing up, she only saw the pastor at Sunday Mass and then living alone in the rectory. Over the years as I have lived out my vocation and shared stories of my ministry, my family has come to a better understanding of religious life and how important ministry and community is in my life. How do others perceive us in the ministry that we do and the way in which we live? How do those views and opinions encourage or discourage vocations?

In response to the Family Synod last fall, a major study on the role of families in nurturing vocations was commissioned by the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) and was conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. This study focused upon recent entrants to religious life and diocesan priesthood. The study found that they come from families that go to Mass weekly, give importance to private and public religious practices, pray together often, have active faith lives, and encourage family members to be open to vocation options. The study also discovered they come from families who regularly eat dinner together and gather as a family for games or discussions.

In reading these findings and talking with others, the results are not that surprising. In fact, they confirm what many of us already know. As Br. Paul Bednarczyk, C.S.C., NRVC Executive Director, stated, “The study confirmed what we’ve known instinctively: Families are the seedbed of vocations. Our goal is to help Catholic parents understand their crucial role in the future of religious life and ordained ministry and encourage them to create a culture of vocations within their families.”

How do we continue to encourage vocations? We do so by encouraging families to be active in their faith and to share with their children what their faith means to them. Things that are important to parents will be the things they share with their children and hopefully



Ordination of Fr. Mark Yates, his family in the first row of the pew

become important to them. Whether this is music, art, sports, hunting, theater, or anything else, it is what parents spend their time doing and sharing the love of it with the family that matters. Over the years, I have had many opportunities to spend time with various families and I’m always amazed at what families are involved with and how once I get to know the parents, I can see those same traits in their children.

As much as families might be open to a religious vocation within the family and parents might encourage their son or daughter to consider religious life, there is still a challenge of how to announce to the family and begin the conversation. The study found that once they did bring it up, they did find support. For others, families tried to discourage because of fear of “wasting” his or her talents, or rushing things, or forsaking a career or marriage. However, as parents and families witness the joy in their son or daughter, many of those concerns soon disappear. “She is so happy being a religious sister,” said one mother, echoing the comments of others, “There is no need to worry.”

Vocations are born within a family of faith and called forth by the community. We are called to encourage our families to grow in their faith, invite parents to encourage their children to consider religious life, and continue to serve one another as we build the kingdom of God. ♦



A Mindset of Mercy

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

This is the text of the homily Fr. Joe gave at the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph Healing Service on April 21, 2016 at St. James Church in Liberty, Missouri.

Julie Woodley is a survivor of sexual abuse. Her book, *A Wildflower Grows in Brooklyn*, details her journey of healing following the recognition that her father sexually abused her when she was a girl.

After the birth of her first child, Julie began to have nightmares about her father and what happened to her as a young child. “For a full year, I was afraid to sleep at night for fear my daughter would be harmed,” she writes. Together with her husband, Matt, and a counselor who told her it was time to confront her father, Julie’s journey of healing began. Her father denied the abuse took place, “but that confrontation,” she writes, “released a huge burden from me. I had given the problem back to my father—it was no longer mine—and the nightmares stopped immediately.”

From that time on, Julie said she “was able to confront reality, to revisit the pain and the abuse” but “my abuse no longer controlled my mind.” This also freed

her to be an instrument of grace and healing for others who suffer from abuse and other trauma. “I became very intentional in forgiving myself and also those who had deeply betrayed me,” she writes. “I began to realize we cannot cheaply throw grace at victims and tell them to forgive the atrocities that happened. We need to face the damage, the real damage—and bring our broken hearts to God.”

This is what we are seeking to do this evening—to confront the damage that has been caused by sexual abuse by clergy, religious, those in authority in our churches, schools, ministries, and parishes, and “bring our broken hearts to God.” For only God can heal us, can restore us, and can bring the scattered pieces of our broken lives back together. Like stained glass that has been shattered, we hold our fragile lives to the light of God’s love and mercy that has been given to us in the suffering, death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. Only in Christ whose

resurrected body bore the marks of his crucifixion, can we find healing and hope.

To experience this healing, though, we need to acknowledge the pain, the damage, the hurt and the harm. We need to acknowledge the pain of those of you who were abused and ask for your forgiveness. We also know, as Julie Woodley writes, “Forgiveness is a process. It’s the result of a conscious decision, usually many conscious decisions over time. It doesn’t happen all at once. More often, it’s like a journey with many steps.” We hope tonight is one small step in that journey of healing and hope.

For the past several months throughout the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, these healing services sponsored by the Office of Child and Youth Protection in the diocese and supported by our bishop, priests, deacons, religious, and lay leaders in every deanery, have sought to offer safe and sacred where victims of abuse and other forms of violence can find a measure of healing through ritual and prayer. As a church, we are deeply sorry for our failures in the past to confront the suffering caused by those who were in positions of trust. We are deeply sorry for the loss of innocence and the loss of faith these sins have caused.

We also realize that these scars will survive. Our prayer here tonight does not erase the scars but seeks to acknowledge them. In forgiveness, there is no such thing as “forgive and forget.” As Julie Woodley notes in her own experience of forgiving her father, “forgiving does not mean forgetting.” Our choice to forgive does not mean we “forget our devastation or let those who hurt us back into our lives.” Julie writes how she “would never trust her daughter with her dad.” Forgiveness, she said, “is a choice to trust God with our pain, our sadness, and our right for payback.” Only then can we begin, she said, to come to terms “with the imperfections of those who harmed us.”

We are an imperfect church. But as Pope Francis continues to remind us, as people of faith we humbly place ourselves before our loving God because we believe Jesus is the mercy of God: “In Jesus of Nazareth, mercy has become living and visible,” Pope Francis said. “Jesus’ entire life and his person is nothing but love, a love given gratuitously.”

Julie Woodley discovered this love in a very powerful way when she brought the wounds and scars of sexual abuse to Jesus. “Forgiveness is a choice to follow Jesus,” she said. Through this long and painful process of pardon to find peace, she said, “Jesus deconstructed my identity of victimization” and “offered me a better way—identity as the beloved of God. Would I dare to

believe,” she said, “what our reading from St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans underscored for us tonight ‘that nothing can separate me from God’s love—nothing I could do or fail to do, nor anything that could be done by anyone else to me.’”

This is the power of God’s love that has made us, each of us, a beloved daughter and son of God. And nothing ever can separate us from this love that comes to us in Christ Jesus—not “anguish, distress, or persecution, famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword.” As beloved daughters and sons, we are invited and encouraged tonight to lay whatever burden we carry—shame or guilt, worry or fear, anxiety or anger—whatever we hold in our hearts this night that prevents us from allowing ourselves to embrace our true identity as God’s beloved, to lay it here at the foot of the cross.

These stones are but small symbols of the immense burdens some of us carry tonight. In listening to the pain of those who have been abused, who are victims of violence or bullying, of prejudice or discrimination, the image is more like a boulder of betrayal. But as we sang at the beginning of our prayer this evening, God desires and delights in calling us home to our truth as God’s beloved so that we might all find a place at the table of God’s feast of love, as God yearns that “every one born, clean water and bread, a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing.” Indeed, tonight under the shelter of this cross, we lay out burdens down trusting that those rocks that have formed walls of resistance might come tumbling down under the weight of God’s mercy and compassion.

It is naïve and inappropriate to suggest that the barrier created by clergy sexual abuse and the lack of a compassionate and caring response on the part of those called to servant leadership in the church will crumble with a few healing services. We can say how sorry we are, fall on our knees before the cross and beg forgiveness for our sins. As a church, as a diocese, as a community of faith, we failed the children of God for too long. We seek pardon from those of you who have been abused by priests, religious, and those you trusted, betrayed by your church, and damaged by the silence that marked the church’s response for far too long.

No act of contrition will cure the wound or cover the scar. Forgiveness comes from the victim. But your presence here tonight is a courageous act of faith that says you will not allow the sins of the past on the part of your church to determine how you will respond today or deny your future. Your willingness to name and claim what happened to you, to honor the truth of

continued on page 9



The Miracle of The Healing Service

by Judy Keisling, Liberty, Missouri Companion

Although I was aware that our Diocese had been holding Healing Services during the past year, I wasn't really sure what they were all about. Then in March I learned that a healing service was being held in April right here in my parish of St. James in Liberty. The flyers in our bulletin said that the focus of the service was on healing for sexual abuse.

Well, I thought, this is nothing I am interested in attending. Thanks be to God I was never a victim of that type of abuse. However, as I thought about it, I realized that abuse has many faces, including emotional and verbal, and I had experienced those types of abuse in my life. So I decided to attend the service, hoping that it would help me lay to rest the memory demons from those times long ago. Additionally, Fr. Joe Nassal was giving the reflection, and I was also curious what Bishop James Johnston, our new ordinary, would have to say.

I thought of my daughter Suzanne, who had also suffered from emotional and verbal abuse in her life—especially during her incarceration—and I invited her to go with me. She said she'd try.

Entering the church on the evening of April 21, I was handed a stone—for what purpose I had no idea. Its revelation during the service, as you'll hear about later, played a large part in the peace and comfort I—and hopefully many others—felt when the service ended.

When the service began, my daughter had not arrived and I prayed that she would come walking in any minute. We sang the opening song, prayed the opening prayer, and still no daughter. As Fr. Joe walked to the ambo, she arrived and I thanked God for her presence.

He began his reflection by talking about the sexual abuse experienced by Julie Woodley, the author

of the book *A Wildflower Grows in Brooklyn*, and shared her story of healing. I looked over at Suzanne and saw tears flowing down her cheeks. I wondered why. Maybe she just became emotional hearing Julie Woodley's story, because to my knowledge she'd never been sexually abused. Turns out I wrong!

The rest of this article is Suzanne's story, which she has given me permission to share, in which she reveals the secret she had kept to herself for over 40 years and describes her emotions and reflections during the healing service.

When I was a little girl, I was touched inappropriately. I was exposed to things no little girl should ever be exposed to in her young, innocent life. I carried that wound with me into adulthood. That experience was part of the framework of how I saw the world, experienced the world, and what I allowed to come into my life—shame, depression, fear (lots of fear), trauma, crisis mentality, and much more. In time, our gracious Heavenly Father began to heal me through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. I thought I was pretty much healed from the traumas of my childhood and later the adult trauma that came (all somehow related and linked to my childhood).

On Thursday night, April 21, St. James held a healing service for victims of sexual abuse/assault and really any abuse. My mom had told me about it. I'd prayed but wasn't sure I was going to go since I knew God had already touched and healed me from so much of the past. It was my son's 16th birthday. I really wasn't sure that we would be able to get all the celebrating done before the service began. But by 7:15 we were done and I felt the Holy Spirit prompting me to go. I drove over

to St. James, knowing I was late and hoping it wasn't going to be a short service.

As I sat down, my mother went and got me a stone. I held that stone, unsure of its purpose. As I listened to Father Joe, I ran my fingers over that stone. It was smooth on almost all sides, but the bottom had several rough indentations and markings. As I sat listening to Fr. Joe talk about the healing of forgiveness, I thought to myself, "I have forgiven Lord." As I listened to him speak on healing, I thought, "I have been healed Lord." As he spoke on Romans 8 ("Nothing can separate me from the love of God"), I thought, "That is the memory verse that you had sustain me through one of the darkest periods of my adult life."

Then the stone was explained—that it was symbolic of our burden of abuse/assault/trauma. He broadened it to not only sexual abuse but also bullying, trauma, and those things that have wounded and scarred us. I began to think of my brothers and sisters and things that happened in their lives. I thought of my mother and traumas that she endured. I thought of my husband and the atrocities that he faced as a little boy in an abusive home, foster care, and the state system. I thought of my children and the time that they were raised by another. I thought about my friends and those I personally know who have suffered sexual, physical and mental abuse. They weighed so heavy upon my soul as I prayed and listed. I thought of each person in that church, and the struggles, trials, and situations that they and their loved ones had endured.

As I got in line to put my stone in the basket, I prayed. I prayed for those who abused, despitefully used and hurt me in my life. I prayed for those who were not there that evening and might never come to a healing service. I stood in the gap for them. But most importantly, I stood there for myself—the 5 year-old little girl, the 12 year-old, the 21, 26, 33 year-old me—for healing. I placed my stone carefully in the basket, reverently putting it at the foot of the Cross. I asked the Lord to cover it with His blood, to heal my wounds, my brothers and sisters, my mom, my friends and His body of Christ's wounds in that church as well our community. As I washed my hands in the water basin, I knew I was symbolically washing the hands of all those I stood there for, as well as myself and those that had harmed me.

Bishop Johnston stood before the group of us and publically stated that the church failed to protect those from sexual assault. He repented on behalf of the church. He acknowledged that sin had taken place. He stood in the gap between those who were hurt and

those who hurt others. He asked for forgiveness and he prayed for healing.

As I reflect back on the evening, I am emotional. But many things stand out to me. The stone was perfectly smooth on all sides but one. I was healed in so many ways, but some scars and wounds remained—they were just on the underside and not so apparent. Some who came on Thursday night came because they have seen loved ones touched by abuse. We prayed, we worshipped, we entered into His presence, and we walked in forgiveness and even repentance. The Lord met each person that was willing to lay down their hurt (as justified as it was) and offer forgiveness and begin a deeper journey into healing. For some, I am sure it was a start on this long road. For others, like me, it was the culmination of many years of the Lord healing me.

On Thursday many humbled themselves, prayed, received, turned, forgave, repented and some received forgiveness. Thursday, we came together as one body to allow the Holy Spirit to minister, change us, and heal us.

This is Judy again. The thoughts and emotions that Suzanne experienced that night so clearly show and reveal the profound impact the Miracle of the Healing Service had on one life; it did on mine and hopefully on many others who were there that night. ♦

Mercy, continued from page 7

your experience, to express your anger, outrage, frustration, or fear—whatever you carry in your heart this night—and place your experience here at the foot of the cross is symbolic and sacred. This is the only place where healing can happen because the only one who can heal our wounds is the one who bore the scars of crucifixion.

We must never forget that Jesus was abused, degraded, dehumanized, tortured, and crucified. He was a victim who experienced unspeakable suffering. But through his cross, the scars on his body, he is forever in solidarity with every victim of violence, of abuse, of torture and degradation. Whatever evil today inflicts suffering, Jesus stands with the victim tonight. He stands with us at the foot of the cross, for nothing can "separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." ♦

Reflections on a Precious Blood Life

Editor's Note: The following Jubilarians offered their thoughts upon celebrating their anniversaries of incorporation into the Missionaries of the Precious Blood or their ordination to the priesthood.



Fr. Alan Hartway, C.P.P.S., Mead, Colorado

*Fr. Alan Hartway, C.P.P.S.
40th Anniversary
of Ordination*

On April 24th I found myself ordained for forty years to the day. Months prior, I had intended not to do anything about it, until some of the parishioners

Googled me and discovered the facts of the matter. I then brought it up as an example of commitment and as an occasion to promote vocations to service.

Over these forty years, I've worked in nine different apostolates, and now I'm back in parish ministry again. If I've learned anything, all these ministerial situations are humbling, which I arguably still need. The humbling part operates on three levels. On one level, a presbyter will frequently be present at some of the intimate and sacred moments in the lives of others: preparing a couple for marriage, mentoring the developing student, hearing confessions, companion journeying on the spiritual path, death. The humility at these times has the tone of mercy, tenderness, and gentleness when overwhelmed or overcome by the sacred. On a second level, there's the humility of realizing I don't have all the answers and in the greater scheme of things am no more than a singular molecular facet on a single crystal of sand on a vast beach in the middle of nowhere. Then there's yet a third level, which is that when one leaves, they are forgotten after fifteen minutes. All that you've done is swept away by the next priest, who is surely tired of hearing, "But Fr. Alan did it this way." I know this humbling truth because I hear parishioners remembering pastors with lines like this, "Don't remember his name, but you know, the fat guy." And it was only a year ago. I know the truth of humility, because one of my favorite spiritual authors, St. Mary Margaret Funk, O.S.B., whose every other book I've read, has written one entitled, "Humility Matters for Practicing the Spiritual Life". It scares me. I've not read it.

Humility is a distinctly Precious Blood fruit of the Holy Spirit because it remembers the self-emptying of Christ in the stable, at the table, on the cross, and in

the tomb. Humility is necessary to minister any of the corporal works of mercy.

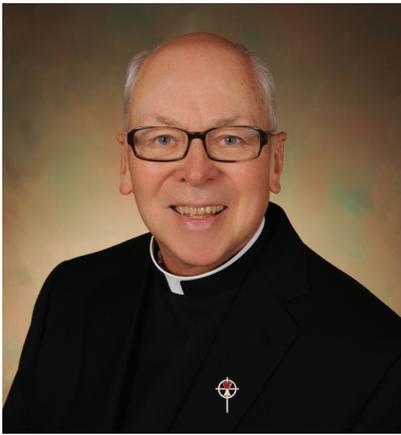
After teaching at Naropa University for 16 years, I officially retired as of last December, and I am again in parish work, again, for the fourth time. I think of it as retirement. However this parish is unique in a number of ways in relation to the charism of the Precious Blood and the corporate stances of the Kansas City Province.

I'm in the middle of gun and Trump country. The value of creating space where dialogue in the civic forum needs to be created and sustained cannot be overstated. Catechetical moments, classes, bible studies and the like are opportunities for conversions of the heart. While Catholics are generally terrorized by the word, the area is ripe for evangelization. With this must come good and solid homiletics. I find this a good challenge because an aspect of our charism is supposed to be preaching and a ministry of the word. An aspect of evangelization here is the need for engagement in mission. So the parish is gradually moving deeper to a commitment to partnering with the local Mead Rotary in the on-going development of a five-village water project near Esteli, Nicaragua with 1% of our monthly offertory.

On a daily basis I see opportunities for reconciliation ministry. Little of this has to do with the Sacrament of Confession. The parish has a very high incidence of divorce and remarriage, and therefore annulments. Annulments are primarily reconciliation work, especially the kind that never happened while the couple was going through the actual divorce part of their personal history. Then there's always the need for reconciliation with families, which often takes the better part of a lifetime. People hurt people, and the wounds can be raw and open for decades between siblings, or between parents and children.

A unique case of reconciliation here was an incident that brought me here in the first place. In 2007, the pastor at that time committed a boo-boo that led to a brouhaha, which left the parish without a priest, so the diocese contacted me and begged. I came. But that priest, who lost his faculties and went through other trials, lived in the area and wanted to know if he could attend Mass at Guardian Angels here. After conversations with parish leadership, we took a hand vote asking the congregation if they could be reconciled with him, and they all agreed. He attends Mass daily. This had

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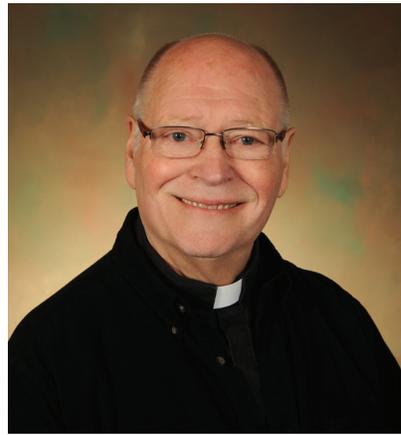
Fr Jim Sloan,
C.P.P.S., P.P.P.P.P.
60th Anniversary
of Incorporation

That PPPP after my name is not a typo. As I think back over the years, much of my life seems to be organized around the letter “P”: profession

[This was later replaced by Definitive Incorporation—ed.] as a member of the C.P.P.S. following a year of novitiate in 1956, ordination to the *priesthood* in 1962, named *principal* of Precious Blood Seminary in 1968. Then in 1984 I was appointed *pastor* of St. Barnabas Parish, Alameda, California, and elected *provincial* of the Province of the Pacific in 1998. Of course there were many other things along the way—graduate studies; three years as a hospital chaplain; years of teaching at Precious Blood Seminary and The Kansas City Art Institute; five years as an associate pastor; years of leadership in seminary formation, eight years on two provincial councils; leadership in the Companions movement; spiritual direction for The School of Applied Theology, Berkeley; Chairmanship of the building committee of the Diocese of Oakland.

Enough. No wonder I am now fully retired. Being retired, along with dealing with stroke effects, is hard work. Just dealing with diminishment (accepting it) is hard work. I am too young for this (I think), but of course I am 82 and getting around with a walker—which I call my blue horse.

Do you have any idea how important you are in helping other people to be who they are? I think of all the people who helped me become the person I am: the family that raised me and passed along the faith to me, Dominican sisters in grammar school, School Sisters of Notre Dame in high school, C.P.P.S. priest professors at St. Joseph College, St. Mary’s Novitiate, and St. Charles Seminary, lay professors in various graduate schools, classmates and fellow students all along the way, C.P.P.S. Companions, and many parishioners and friends (among them many C.P.P.S. members). “It takes a village to raise a child,” they say. Surely I am leaving some people out as I write down these words, but God bless them all. ♦



Fr. Jack
McClure, C.P.P.S.
40th Anniversary
of Ordination

Forty years ago this coming November 13, a sunny day, great music, and a happy blur of people rush into my head and heart.

Good times, lots of laughs and great memories. In every segment of my life, I’ve enjoyed my assignments, my jobs and life experiences, and wouldn’t change a thing.

My life is very rich because of the many people with whom I have shared faith and Eucharist in these past forty years. I’m especially grateful for the memories held in laughter or tears or both. I look back on both my formation experiences and almost always end up smiling to myself. Trips from St. John’s to Kansas City were brutal, but hilarious. Catholic Theological Union was an educational experience that continued to educate in every pastoral leadership role from West Des Moines to Harlan, Iowa to Gladstone, Missouri to “Newhall, Norway, Watkins, Blairstown, and Van Horne” to Ames and Osage and Stacyville, Iowa, to Kansas City North, to San Francisco, and now to Berkeley.

I’m resting and preparing for another surgery. I’d appreciate your having my back in prayer. Thanks to all those who have gone before us, for they have left us with much. Thanks to you of our province for your prayer. I pray the next forty be rich in peace. ♦

Fr. Alan Hartway, continued from page 10

been a major step for the people here to forgive and understand and practice mercy.

Finally, I think of contemporary environmentalism as an aspect of reconciling the human footprint and the natural world. In a parish with hundreds of oil, gas, and other mineral wells, educating and bringing diverse interest groups together is a daunting challenge in this parish.

So these are the ways and means I think I’m showing the charisma and spirituality of the Precious Blood, and engaging the corporate stances of the Kansas City Province. ♦



Fr. Jim Urbanic C.P.P.S., Berkeley, California

*Fr. Jim
Urbanic, C.P.P.S.,
50th Anniversary
of Incorporation*

Later this year I will turn seventy-two. A little counting tells me I have lived thirty-six years with a Democratic president and thirty-six years

with a Republican president. All even. And although things are even numerically, it is hard to see how they are even politically. The tones of the campaigns are sometimes vulgar and nasty, with personal attacks taking precedence over policy and solutions to national problems. If there was ever a time in recent American history for reconciliation and compromise, it is now. The art of conversation and dialogue is very much missing during this election cycle. The same is true for our Catholic Church.

At this stage in my life I have grown a bit closer to God, but a bit further away from Church. Even a loyal Catholic like myself experiences more negative feelings than positive ones in looking at church, society and American culture. The Precious Blood charism of reconciliation is more necessary now than previously. Pope Francis does offer a refreshing new narrative of mercy and looking after the poor, over the prevailing world-view of money, power and me first.

Earlier in my life I thought that reconciliation just referred to the sacrament. But I now see how fundamental it is to the health of a society, a country and a church.

And yet reconciliation begins not with us but with God. Finding common ground, having openness for dialogue and conversation, and beginning with good will toward “the other” flow from the great reconciliation that Jesus accomplished by his birth, death and resurrection. Reconciliation is difficult because it places us as a partner with others, keeps us from putting self first, and recognizes the goodness of another person, direction or way of life. It sees that people who differ, and even differ strongly, can see the face of God in “the other.”

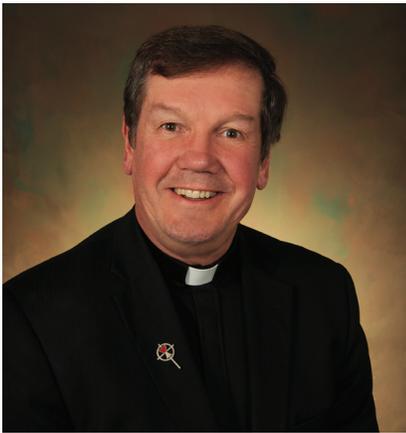
There is an inherent goodness in each person, and reconciliation begins with that goodness.

The two examples I enjoy speaking about are first the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, after apartheid was abolished in the years after Nelson Mandela. Both white soldiers who injured and killed blacks, and black families who were tortured or killed were invited to the same courtroom to ask forgiveness and receive forgiveness. Reading minutes of the Commission is a powerful witness to reconciliation. And secondly our own Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago, where perpetrators and victims pray together with a local bishop and Catholic leaders. Perpetrators ask victims for forgiveness for injuring or killing members of a family.

I have had some wonderful assignments in my fifty years in the province, in seminary, from associate pastor to pastor, formation director and college teacher, to ministering in evangelization and leadership. In my personal life I have experienced both highs and lows as a member of the congregation. My biggest learning experience was being the associate at St. Francis beginning in 1971. I had book knowledge of the faith and received a good education within the C.P.P.S. and at St. Louis University after our own seminary closed in 1969. But then I found that people without that education had a deep faith in God, far deeper than mine. It was striking for me to see so many believers looking for knowledge and theology, while I had both and thought it was everything. Growth in faith was not taught me; I learned it from others, and as a gift from God. Fr. Paul Sattler helped in giving me the practical details of parish life and early priesthood. As pastor I helped begin the first Companion group in the early 1990s.

My dad died last year; he lived past 100. I think about this fact. I know I am getting older since my desire to ride roller coasters has dimmed. And twenty years ago I hiked Half Dome in Yosemite—a hike I can no longer make. Some of my classmates have died. I have been blessed to be part of two classes. I was incorporated August 15, 1966 (with Br. Steve Ohnmacht, among others), but because I took extra philosophy classes at Rensselaer I was able to move ahead a year at Carthagen and join a class that included Mark Miller and Ralph Verdi. I have always enjoyed

continued on next page



Fr. Joe Miller C.P.P.S., Warrensburg, Missouri

*Fr. Joe
Miller, C.P.P.S.,
40th Anniversary
of Incorporation*

As I reflect on my 40 years of being a Missionary of the Precious Blood, I have to go back to my roots. Who I am

has much to do with my parents and family. I grew up in a great family where God, Church, prayer, family, and good values were important. Being the youngest of 13 children has its unique positive points as well as negative points. The positive outweigh the negative. I tell people that I was not spoiled, but I was loved a lot. I believe that is true. My family has been so very good to me. I truly do appreciate their support. If I need something or some prayers, I call them and the prayers come. I do thank God for them and my roots. My first 25 years have been a great help to my last 40 years.

Somewhere along the way of growing up, I had a desire to do God's will. I am not saying I always did God's will, but I tried and keep trying. I truly do believe God has a great sense of humor. People who know me know that I try to use my resources wisely and recycle. I even challenge others to do the same. Recycling has also been a part of my ministry, so it seems—it has been happening over and over again. I keep getting reassigned to places where I was earlier (is that so I get it right the second time?). I have been assigned to Centerville twice; I taught at Precious Blood Seminary twice; I was assigned to Sedalia two times; I did vocation ministry twice; I was at St. James in Liberty two times; and now I am assigned to St. Francis Xavier Parish in St. Joseph for a second time. Butternut, Wisconsin and Warrensburg (where I am at presently) are the only two places I have been at only once—so far.

My ministry with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood has been great. I have been challenged to

grow at each place I have been assigned and I pray I helped the people I served grow closer to God and the Church. I do feel God has used me—through the help of our provincials, Community, and prayer—to be where I needed to be. God is so good and I do continue to trust God is still working with me. I try to stay open to God's will each day.

In looking back on the 40 years, I think of my Mom and one of her many one-liners: "You have something special to offer others that no one has." God gave that uniqueness to me—and all of us—. God called me to be a Missionary of the Precious Blood. St. John puts it well: "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last..." (Jn 15:16). God does the calling and continues to call me and all of us each day to do God's will. All of us have something special to offer, and I pray that we will be open to whatever it may be in the future.

I am not sure if my next assignment will be back to Butternut or Warrensburg or maybe somewhere new.

Let us pray for each other, our Community, the Church and our nation that all may be open to the Holy Spirit and willing to follow that Holy Spirit in the world in which we live. ♦

Fr. Jim Urbanic, continued from p. 12

being part of two classes, one for incorporation and one for ordination.

I spent two summers (1968 and 1969) in Alaska, working with C.P.P.S. chaplains in religious education, with both children and adults. That experience helped me in the classroom later on and began a travel bug that has not abated. And speaking of Br. Steve, he was hoping to observe his fiftieth year of incorporation at this year's assembly. He died a little over a year short of that goal, a goal he mentioned to me over past years. God bless him. ♦



Joe Montgomery, Sr. Donna Liette, C.P.P.S., and Tommie Myers in West Virginia

Would You Believe?

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

A group of students from Wheeling Jesuit University (WJU) visited us (PBMR) last fall and sat in circle with some of our youth, visited our art gallery, listened to our stories of using circles and other practices in restoring relationships, the earth and our neighborhood. Afterwards they returned to their University and *would you believe* that they went directly to their administrators and campus ministry staff requesting that these practices be implemented at their university?

In a few months, I receive this e-mail: “Interest is growing among students and staff to implement restorative justice practices on campus, in response to students’ encounter with your work in Chicago using the ‘circle technique.’ On behalf of the students, I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to come to our University to speak about your ministry and about the value of restorative justice. It would mean a great deal to the whole community, and would help

the students on to their end of promoting a healthier culture of dialogue on campus.”

Would You Believe?

Wheeling Jesuit University arranged that three of us from PBMR come to their campus on April 25-27. This was to be a first in a series of events intended to integrate restorative justice and other community-building practices into campus life.

Would You Believe?

On April 25th, Tommie Myers and Joe Montgomery, two of our youth, and I boarded the United Express plane on our way to Wheeling, West Virginia. It was Tommie and Joe’s first flight ever! They were very scared as we became airborne; their eyes got bigger and bigger. Passengers enjoyed the boys and found them entertaining as they tried to manage their fears and the plane. However, we

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Crossroads

by Fr. Keith Branson, C.P.P.S., Avila University



Foyle Hall at Avila University houses the Campus Ministry offices and the chapel

An inn at a crossroads is always a special place. Where roads come together and people pause from their journeys—sharing stories, ideas, news, songs—creates a unique place in the world where knowledge and wisdom grow. Some travelers come from a distance, others are local people; some stop for a long stay and others pause for a short time. Some crossroads have always had an inn there, rebuilt every time it is destroyed by fire or other bad fortune. Many stories feature such a place, including the currently popular *Game of Thrones* series. *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* was another such place. As I reflect on my experience as a student and a teacher, this seems a good metaphor for institutions of higher learning. Every academic institution is a crossroad where generations interact to learn from each other, and all choose which road they will take next from what they learn, some continuing a different direction than they first intended.

Avila University was founded 100 years ago by the Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet in Kansas City, 50 years after they arrived in western Missouri. It was first an all-girls school, becoming co-ed in 1969 and offering graduate studies in 1978. In the past few years, it has grown considerably with a series of record breaking incoming classes, steadily improving and adding to its facilities. The Sisters of St. Joseph share a common heritage with us in one sense: they were founded in 1650 by a French Jesuit, Jean-Pierre Medaille, and their guiding principle is “serving the Dear Neighbor without distinction.” (Gaspar contemplated becoming a Jesuit, and used Jesuit authors extensively in the spiritual reading he assigned for

his Mission Houses.) Although the Sisters no longer reside on campus, they are present in force for Busy Student retreats and major functions, and Avila University draws on their inspiration for institutional values. Engraved on pillars in front of Blasco Hall (the Administration Building) are the words: Inspired, Insightful, Integrated, Inclusive, Innovative, and Influential.

Campus Ministry at Avila does an excellent job energizing students and faculty in large and small groups to reach out to their dear neighbors, as well as giving them a place to share faith. The total enrollment for Avila has been over 2,000 the past couple of years, of which around 350 live on campus. Perhaps unusually for a Catholic University, around 30 percent of our student body is Catholic. We involve both Catholic and non-Catholic students in our program, and assist our non-Catholic students as best we can in their faith journeys. I am part of a four-person staff: two of us are part time, and our Director and Associate Director are both full time. Over 60 students are involved with Campus Ministry every year; they are usually a delight to minister with.

As Avila Chaplain, I have the privilege of breaking open the Word and celebrating the Sacraments with them, and my goal is to be what they need me to be. We have a talented group of students who lead the music for Sunday Masses, and I help them as best I can. From time to time, I have been in the classroom to share in areas about which I have some knowledge, and Spring Semester I taught three students advanced Music Theory. Most of my ministry is a ministry of presence, to be visible and available. Perhaps the most important contacts aren't in the chapel or the classroom, but conversations that happen informally in times of casual intersection on campus or on the Internet.

How our charism intersects with theirs is a crossroad I never tire of: it particularly emerges at special celebrations when the area CSJs come to campus. Sr. Rosemary Flanigan is still a bundle of energy, challenge and insight, and her presence in particular is always an inspiration. Our charism calls us to respect all people as bearers of Christ's Blood, which calls us to a commitment similar to their charism of

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PBMR, continued from p. 14

did arrive safely in Pittsburg where Joe Lorenz, the Jesuit novice who arranged the visit, met us and drove us to Wheeling. The boys were so happy to be on the ground and did not want anything to eat; their stomachs were still churning. Joe talked of hitching home!

The next day we had a full day starting at 9:00 a.m. We met with group after group—students, administrators, people from the surrounding neighborhood, gardeners—visited the Dorothy Day Worker House, saw chickens and “mountains” (Nic, one of our wonderful tour guides (we had a 2 hour break), laughed a little and spoke of them as the “Hills of West Virginia.” Joe and Tommie still insisted that they were mountains.)

Would You Believe?

Joe, Tommie and I were invited to dinner at the Jesuit house. Joe took his place at the head of the table in one of the few empty chairs. You would have thought he was a Jesuit as he joined in the conversation with ease and pride. (I wish we had a picture or video of that!)

Now for the 7:30 p.m. final event in the theater: people starting gathering until there were probably over 200. We were amazed at the interest from the University and the community. I spoke of some of the key elements of restorative justice (community, capacity, connection, voice, and sacredness) and the need and value for the paradigm shift from punitive practices to restorative practices. However, best of all were the stories of Joe and Tommie. They stood tall at the podium in front of this crowd and spoke of their lives and the changes they had made from being a part of PBMR; how their lives had been restored; how being in circles of healing had helped them and their friends through their struggles. They shared how punishing and shaming is not a deterrent to harming others but rather sitting in circle and becoming friends is what changes lives and has changed their lives.

People applauded them and came to understand restorative practices verses punitive practices through their stories, their voices, their presence. People came up after our presentation with tears in their eyes, with questions, and with a desire to make changes in the University and the neighborhood. People wanted to be circle trained, wanted to

introduce the freshmen coming to the University next fall to the circle process.

Would you believe how two or our youth from the “hood” were like the 1000 (only 2) tongues that St. Gaspar desired for bringing people to an understanding of redemption, restoration, and healing.

Would you believe? ♦

Avila, continued from p. 15

unselfish service to the Dear Neighbor. The students respond enthusiastically to their example, and this generation seems to have compassion for others in great quantity, which gives me hope for the future. My experiences with Jerusalem Farm, which is sponsored by Avila, is a unique place of Christian community and service I feel we can learn from, and their staff are almost all in their 20s. Avila sends students there for volunteer service, which gives them an insight to living and working in the Pendleton Heights neighborhood.

We are redeemed in the Blood of Christ, and bound together by His Blood as family. My experience with Avila and Jerusalem Farm has helped me see how our charism is part of our Baptismal call, and challenged me to see everyone as a dear neighbor. It is a dialogue at the crossroads that helps us grow and deepens our understanding as we seek to be what God made us to be. May we always be willing to spend time at the crossroads and share stories with others we meet there. ♦

You're Invited!



Members, Companions & friends, celebrate the Month of the Precious Blood and St. Francis Xavier Parish's 125th Anniversary!

**Sunday, July 24, 2016
4:00 p.m.**

Prayer Service followed by ice cream social

St. Francis Xavier Church
2618 Seneca Street
St. Joseph, MO



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

- St. Gaspar del Bufalo



Missionaries of the Precious Blood



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

“Our community’s charism of reconciliation puts us in a great position to help people with the journey. Facilitating reconciliation means helping people to be together even in the midst of conflict and disagreement. Journeying with each other is an exercise of care, forgiveness, respect and compassion. That is what we are called to, that is the real prosed land. Peace and wisdom come from answering that call.”

*Fr. Garry Richmeier, C.P.P.S.
Kansas City, Missouri*