



# THE NEW WINE PRESS

*Motivated by the Spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ*

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## HEALING THE PLANET

*Timothy Guthridge, C.P.P.S.*

Jesuit theologian Jon Sobrino once wrote that one is either willing to hang with Jesus on the cross or one is pounding in the nails. He wrote this regarding the relationship between the Church and the poor, but I also think his statement can apply to our environment. We either try to live and work in healthy relationship with the natural ecology of our planet or we hurt it. Given the present damage done to the planet, especially to its water and air, the industrialized nations of the world have done far much more of the latter than the former.

In January, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in Peru hosted an International Symposium in Lima regarding Christian stewardship of the planet. It was titled “The Spirituality of the Blood and the Mission in Defense of our Common Home.” The purpose of the symposium was to reflect upon how a religious community with the God-given charisms of healing and reconciliation can bring healing and reconciliation to a wounded planet which has been plundered, polluted, and pillaged by hedonistic and overtly materialistic industrialized nations.

In the first keynote address, Fr. Dionicio Alberca reminded us that “The Spirituality of the Blood of Christ calls us and sends us forth to care for creation.” He told us that we are to use the gifts of the earth responsibly and deepen our respect for all the diverse forms of life that God has created. He stated further, “Our troubled earth is a sign of the times, a call of the blood to which we must respond. It demands from us a new sensibility, a new way to deepen our relationship with God, with others, ourselves and with creation.”

After giving us a description of how wounded the planet is, he talked about Precious Blood spirituality as a way to healing. He spoke of the blood of life, the blood of the covenant, the blood of the cross, the blood of reconciliation, and the blood present in the Eucharist as graces from God that could help heal our world.

Bishop Erwin Krautler gave us a rather blunt reminder that the people who suffer the most due to the pollution of the earth are always the poor. The Church, as the



*“Our troubled earth is a sign of the times, a call of the blood to which we must respond. It demands from us a new sensibility, a new way to deepen our relationship with God, with others, ourselves and with creation.”*

*See Healing, continued on page 4...*

## LEADERSHIP NOTES

### *Recapturing the Spirit of Collegiality*

Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S.

The long flights to and from Vietnam afforded me the opportunity to read Archbishop Rembert Weakland's memoir, *A Pilgrim in a Pilgrim Church*. His insights into religious leadership in the post-Vatican II church are instructive. For example, his election as archabbot of St. Vincent's in Latrobe, PA at such a young age (36) was predicated to a large degree on his predecessor's heavy-handed and controlling authority that alienated some of the younger monks. "I learned first-hand," Weakland writes, "that exercising leadership was not the same as having power, and that leadership cannot be given to one; it must be earned."

Weakland's term as archabbot paralleled the Second Vatican Council where the inspiration of Pope John XXIII left an indelible mark on his own vision of church. "John XXIII...took a new approach toward what later came to be called dissent," Weakland writes. "He stated that the Church 'now prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than severity' and should meet the needs of the present day by demonstrating the validity of its teaching rather than by condemnation." Reflecting on the direction of the Church since Vatican II, Weakland laments the shift back to a hierarchical, condemnatory approach rather than a collegial, circle model of leadership. "One of my sorrows four decades later was to see the concept of 'People of God' minimized or reduced in importance," he writes, "with a deliberate return to an emphasis on the prerogatives of the clerical state."

It is this spirit of collegiality that has guided the vision of the leadership team the past three years. One of the important values of our meeting with the Cincinnati Provincial Council in Chicago was to explain our attempts at a



*Provincial Council members from the Kansas City and Cincinnati provinces at their recent meeting in Chicago.*

team model for leadership. We articulated the areas of responsibilities

of each member of our team serving as liaisons to provincial staff, province ministries and committees, and individual members.

We have struggled at times to implement this team approach to leadership. We are aware of how miscommunication at times or missed responsibilities have contributed to misunderstandings, undue stress, and frustration. A hierarchical approach is much cleaner since the person at the top controls the show and each one knows his or her place. A team model is messy at times; there are sometimes gaps in communication and in implementation of ideas and vision. But collegiality is more satisfying because all voices have the chance to speak and be heard. It also demands personal accountability of each member of the team to exercise leadership in his given area of responsibility.

In his memoir, Weakland laments that the church has moved away from a

## THE NEW WINE PRESS

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

The Kansas City Province—incorporated members, covenanted companions, and candidates—united in prayer, service and mutual support, characterized by the tradition of its American predecessors, are missionaries of these times with diverse gifts and ministries.

In a spirit of joy, we strive to serve all people—especially the poor—with care and compassion, hope and hospitality.

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

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collegial model where the ladder of leadership is refashioned into a circle; where the pope is truly the “servant of the servants of God”; where the voices of bishops’ conferences carry some weight; and where bishops dialogue with their priests before decisions are made, and pastors depend on the input and expertise of the laity. Instead, the circle of collegiality has been broken in recent years and not only has the image of a ladder returned, but a few rungs have been left off the ladder.

The image Pope John XXIII used when he convened the Second Vatican Council was that of opening the windows of the Church and allowing the fresh breezes of the Holy Spirit to sweep inside and refresh, rejuvenate, and revive a musty and stale institution. In the first twenty or so years after the council, the windows remained opened, but those in leadership put screens on the windows. Maybe there were too many mosquitoes biting bishops and annoying those in cushy, curia positions. Maybe a few birds flew through the open windows carrying messages from far distant lands with words of equality and inclusion and ecumenism, the latter being one of good Pope John’s most fervent prayers for the council. But in the past twenty years or so, the screens have been replaced by bars and the windows seemingly slammed shut.

This is precisely where the religious congregations serve a prophetic function for the institutional Church. Our charism is like a crowbar to pry open windows that are stuck. Our spirituality is like a doorstop that keeps the doors of the Church open to all. Our witness becomes

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an invitation to others to see how collegiality can still be practiced in a post-Vatican II Church.

This is why we convened a visioning group at the beginning of our term and continue to invite the dreams of individual members and companions to give voice to their vision for our future. It is the spirit of collegiality that brought together most of our pastors for the Pastors’ Summit in 2008 to reflect on which parishes we will keep and which ones we will have to return to the care of the diocesan priesthood. It is the spirit of collegiality that is guiding our district and companion discussions in preparation for our Assembly in April that will launch our discernment for leadership in 2011.

It was the spirit of collegiality that brought the leadership teams of the two provinces in the United States to Chicago in early February to place our concerns on the table. A summary of our time together was published in *The Weekly Wine Press* and is also available on our website and in the Cincinnati Province Newsletter. Though the decisions we reached are important and the areas of collaboration we agreed upon significant, what I honor most about our time together was the honest dialogue in the bond of charity that reflected a true spirit of collegiality.

Near the end of his memoir, Archbishop Weakland reflects on the shift to a more centralized Vatican bureaucracy under Pope John Paul II that stifled collegiality and neutered the conference of bishops. He writes that it became “difficult to discuss the question of the priest shortage and the whole celibacy issue on the floor of the bishops’ conference without the session turning into a pledge of loyalty to the pope, or without the accusation that our very discussion on the shortage was bringing on a self-fulfilling prophecy. As a result, the bishops gave the impression that maintaining a celibate clergy was a higher value than providing sacraments to our people.”

I pray we are not afraid to dialogue about the important issues of our day that are affecting our congregation, our province, and our ministries. With the bond of charity as elastic as ever, may we keep stretching our minds and our hearts to insure that each one’s voice is heard and each one’s dream counts.





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*Healing, continued from page 1...*

Sacrament of Christ in the world, is called—and has always been called—to stand with the poor. Bishop Krautler made it clear that the institutional Church and our community have greatly failed in this area, and he challenged us to rethink this.

Sister Sonia Matos, A.S.C. spoke of spirituality being necessary to keep our common house healthy. She reminded us that “God is in everything and that everything is in God.” She told us that people can only move and exist in God. In a world that is very much detached from God, I found this a very important reminder and something we take too much for granted.

Sr. Matos also said that we must get away from our desire to dominate the earth and instead create a healthy relationship with it. Human beings are the only ones who can put creation in relation with God, given the way God works through us—assuming we have a healthy relationship with God. Men and women must come to understand that we are a part of nature, not masters of it. God is the only master.

Fr. Barry Fischer talked to us about our commitment and missionary responsibilities regarding the planet. Similar to Bishop Erwin, Barry reminded us that the Church is to be a voice for those that do not have a voice. He also reiterated that the Church is to stand with the poor and that Christ will put things right. We are called to be guardians of the earth.

He described how eco-minded the Vatican has become. For example, the Pope Paul VI Assembly Hall, which can hold some 6000 people, has 2400 solar panels to generate power. He mentioned the windmills and the water treatment center that exists on the Vatican grounds.

He also told us about the millions of children who can't go to school because they spend too much of their days seeking water for their families. Sadly, they are the very ones who wind up drinking the filthiest of the water and whose lives are greatly shortened because of it.

Dr. Megan McKenna gave the last keynote address. She stated that modern society entertains a real sense of denial about killing God's creations. Human beings have done more damage to the earth during the last fifty years, than in the previous time since the appearance of humanity. Whether or not that is statistically correct, it is safe to assert that we have done a great deal of damage to the earth in the last few generations.

Dr. McKenna said additionally that people use their spirituality as their grounding in reality, and that Precious Blood Spirituality can be a great source of reconciliation between humanity, earth and God. One of the things said that really struck me is her mentioning how scientists and even theologians are

coming to understand more and more that the earth is a sentient being. It perceives and it cries out—Haiti being an example. Our earth is wounded and humanity is greatly responsible for this. The consequences are that millions of poor people suffer every day because of the way people pollute and neglect the earth.

I have given just a few snippets of what was shared at the symposium. In the not too distant future, there will be a book published containing all the keynote addresses. I hope you can take the time to read and reflect on them.

Our spirituality is a spirituality of healing and reconciliation. There is great need of healing and reconciliation between humanity and the planet on which we live. I hope the mission of defending our common home—the earth—can be an important part of the Precious Blood mission to the world.

*Fr. Timothy Guthridge assists at St. Francis Xavier Parish in St. Joseph MO and does spiritual direction ministry.*



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# SPRING THAW

Chris Hoyt

Recent earthquakes that shattered the fabric of life in Haiti and Chile serve as a constant reminder that tragedy strikes our most vulnerable communities the hardest. Shocking media images of homes destroyed, schools in utter ruin, and anguished victims strike a chord of empathy deep within us. However, even in the midst of an already severe global recession, the worldwide outpouring of volunteer and financial support to our devastated neighbors renews our confidence in human goodness and our collective faith. As a community dedicated to serving the marginalized communities of our nation and world, we also continue to recognize the pressing need to act on behalf of vulnerable individuals, ensuring they be treated with human dignity.

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To that end, the Precious Blood Volunteer Program proudly formed its Advisory Board this winter. Our qualified board members boast vast administrative, volunteer, development, and legal experience that will shape this initiative for the coming years. As we gathered for the first time, we realized that Precious Blood spirituality united our visions for a better world, despite hailing from geographically and experientially diverse backgrounds. Our valuable time together included practical discussions of volunteer program administration, a process of board training, and reflective prayer. These coming months signal new opportunities for our community's ministry, as the Advisory Board meets in April to discuss additional volunteer sites, fundraising opportunities, and important details of policy and procedure. We are extremely grateful for our board member's service, and welcome them to the Precious Blood community!

As cold winter thaws and spring approaches, we look toward future avenues of growth for our program. While the fall of 2009 represented recruiting trips to major Catholic universities and laid the groundwork for lasting, collaborative relationships, this spring promises new areas of opportunity. The Volunteer Office will begin publishing articles in parish bulletins, both locally and outside the Kansas City area. In addition, recruitment efforts will

follow at Precious Blood parishes, where our spirituality is prevalent and Companions may seek ways to become involved. Similarly, diocesan parishes will serve as sources for volunteer candidates, while cultivating long-term interest and relationships with staff and parishioners. Local area colleges and universities provide immediate access to potential graduates exploring challenging volunteer opportunities with our community.

The arrival of spring brightens our hearts and the future of our ministry. As always, we are thankful for your efforts in raising awareness of our program to potential candidates, and for your prayerful support. We encourage you to please contact our office to request program information or literature, and we hope that Precious Blood spirituality continually inspires your ministry in addressing the challenges of tomorrow.

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*Members of the Volunteer Program Advisory Board:  
Fr. Al Ebach, Christopher Hoyt, Ross Beaudoin, Jim Noble,  
Sr. Barb Smith, A.S.C., Marie Trout, Charlotte Noble*

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# THE MANY FACES OF VIETNAM REFLECT THE LANGUAGE OF HOSPITALITY AND HOPE

Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S.

When Lac Pham journeyed back to his homeland in the 1990s to explore the possibility of starting a mission for the Kansas City Province, I still associated Vietnam with war. My social conscience and my awareness of the war began forming during my freshman year in high school when Precious Blood Seminary participated in the national *Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam* in the fall of 1969. I don't remember the films we saw or the speeches we heard or whether or not we had to write a report for social studies class. But the gravity of the day, the seriousness of the subject, and the passion of the young priests and brothers for peace left an indelible imprint.

In those formative years, certain images from Vietnam became iconic reminders that war is hell and that when the warmongers have their way, peace doesn't have a chance. Remember the monk who set himself on fire at a busy corner in Saigon to protest the war—Lac showed us the site where the self-immolation occurred. There is a shrine to mark the memory. Recall the image of the young girl running naked down the road to escape the napalm attack on her village. Today she has become a powerful ambassador for reconciliation. And who can forget the picture of the helicopter taking off from the U.S. Embassy with people trying to hang on for dear life to escape the country after the fall of Saigon. Lac told us of his escape on a boat as a 14 year-old the day before the fall of Saigon—a journey that would eventually lead him to the Kansas City area and become a student at Precious Blood Seminary.

In high school, when I heard the word TET, I did not associate it with the Vietnamese New Year but rather with the offensive that began on January 31, 1968 and escalated the war in Vietnam. My Lai became synonymous with massacre, butchery, and the betrayal of human decency and the American principles of justice. The Mekong Delta was a remote place where the war raged on, while closer to home the seniors at Precious Blood Seminary gathered in the library reading room the day the draft numbers were published in the newspaper. Those with low draft numbers suddenly found that vocation or not, continuing in

the seminary was not a bad idea.

Some of these thoughts were on my mind on the morning of February 11th as Dick Bayuk and I boarded the United Airlines 15-hour flight from Chicago to Hong Kong, and then on to Ho Chi Minh City, formerly known as Saigon. We arrived on the weekend of the TET holiday. On the first night, Lac invited us to a New Year's Eve Mass at the parish where he often helps out. As the faithful came forward to receive the Body of Christ, I tried to look at each face. Some kept their heads down, their eyes in the custody of higher authorities. But several looked at me, bowed and smiled, as they said, "Amen." There were many young people at the Mass and those that were not of age to receive communion were presented by their parents for a

blessing. Every now and then there was an older face that made me wonder, "What stories are etched in the lines of this man's face, worn by weather, war, and repression? Was he a farmer, a father who lost family members in the war? Was he a merchant whose shop was destroyed by a bomb?"

One gentleman especially moved me. He was old enough to have survived the war. His body was thin, fragile, as if he carried the weight of so many memories. His face, stoic not severe, noble and serene, held a thousand

stories. Our language and our lifestyles were so different, so foreign to one another. And yet, here we met across a piece of bread that bonded us together as brothers. "The Body of Christ," I said



*"The Body of Christ,' I said as he held out his hand, bowed slightly, and smiled. He raised his hands to his lips and consumed the host. Our eyes did not meet again. He turned and shuffled away. I saw so many faces like this man's, the face of longevity, of wisdom; the lines like sentences in a book reflecting an untold story of a life, of a people, of a war fought and lost, and an uneasy peace."*



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The faces of the children with their eyes wide open and shining brightly shouted welcome. The young people, teenagers and younger, smiled easily and often said, "Hello," as we walked from the hotel to the parish. Since the neighborhood where Lac lives with our inquiry and pledged candidates is not a tourist destination, the people don't see many westerners. But they were friendly and not the least bit suspicious. We waved back and smiled, but we were also nervously looking around to avoid being hit by the buzzing motorbikes that made the streets impassable at times. Lac told us to walk with a sense of purpose and they will avoid you. But if you pause, you will throw off their timing and a collision could occur. Dan Kelly, the American vet who has tutored some of our candidates in English and who joined us for the retreat, was hit by one of the motorbikes shortly before we left for retreat. He was only slightly injured as the motorbike was slowing down at the time of impact. Dan told us he was partly to blame since as an experienced pedestrian in Saigon, he knew he should have continued walking rather than stop to let the motorbike pass.

### **The Language of Life—and Death**

"What a priceless possession is the gift of speech," Howard Thurman wrote. "To be able to make sounds, convey specific meanings and deliberate notions, to be able to put at the disposal of another the feelings that nestle within the inner life, to be able to reveal one's self in symbols which make clear and do not betray—this is the miracle and the gift of the spoken word."

During our days in Vietnam the priceless gift of speech became apparent since we did not speak the same language as our inquirers and candidates and most of the people. While not speaking the same language can be a barrier to communication, how much more than words does a smile, a bow, a kind expression convey?



*"During the Mass, loved ones encircled the graves of their honored dead. As the sun beat down on the crowd, the heat could not evaporate the spirit of prayer, the smell of incense, or the sounds of chant and song that enveloped that holy ground."*

On the second day of TET, the day when the Vietnamese honor their ancestors, we travelled about an hour north of Saigon to visit the home and family of Dominic, our first definitively incorporated candidate. We stopped first at the home of his sister and brother-in-law who operate a small hardware store. They live in the back of the shop as many families in Vietnam do. They either rent out the space facing the street to a merchant or they run their own business. Dominic's sister made some lemonade that tasted sweet on a sweltering day. We learned his brother-in-law worked for a time in Nebraska. He returned to Vietnam to open the store.

From there we journeyed to the cemetery for a Mass for the ancestors.

The parish, near the cemetery, is Dominic's home parish and is building a cathedral-like church. Under construction for three years, the church is still far from finished. It has a definite eastern architecture with the bell tower in the shape of a pagoda and the church itself has the look of a temple. The shell of the church, the marble floor, the hardwood railings, and some of the stained glass windows are complete. But the entire structure was laden with such dust that as the parish council president was giving us a tour, we found it difficult to breathe. The heat of the day and the dust were oppressive and even in the open church, the air was stifling.

The Mass in the cemetery was moving not because we understood a word of the homily or the prayers, but because of the number of people who gathered to pray at the graves of their loved ones. Lac told us that to gather at the cemetery and pray for their deceased ancestors is a special ceremony for the diocese where Dominic's home parish is located, since the second day of TET is meant to honor all of one's ancestors, living or dead.

Continued on next page...

In this particular cemetery, the people honor the memory of their dead with large, above ground, marble monuments, the headstones with the picture of the deceased in the center. When we arrived at the cemetery, Dominic's mother and family were at his father's grave in prayer. This was a common sight. During the Mass, loved ones encircled the graves of their honored dead. As the sun beat down on the crowd, the heat could not evaporate the spirit of prayer, the smell of incense, or the sounds of chant and song that enveloped that holy ground. Dick Bayuk remarked how it reminded him of the "Day of the Dead" celebrations in the Latino community.

After Mass, we went to Dominic's mother's house for a festive meal. Lac told us that Dominic's mother, though she is the matriarch of the family, was uncomfortable sitting at the table with the priests. She offered us a very warm welcome and seemed honored that we came to her home. She offered a toast for a healthy and happy new year.

The following day, Father Dien Truong invited us to his mother's home for lunch. Dien's Mom is a slight woman in her 80s with a gracious smile. Both Dien and Dominic's mothers reflect an elegant nobility and sacred simplicity. They are models of what Jesus must have had in mind when he blessed the "poor in spirit," for these two women have certainly viewed the face of God. They are both very generous with their hospitality and genuine humility.

**Ambassadors for the Blood of Christ**

We began the retreat with our inquiry and pledged candidates on Ash Wednesday. We were joined by two young women who are inquirers of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, and Dan Kelly, the American veteran of the war who met our community through Fr. Dien when they both lived in Chicago, and who travels to Vietnam often to teach English. The retreat center, sponsored by the Oblate community, is near the coast, about sixty miles from Saigon. The chapel was the upper room of the house and it offered a wonderful view of the sea.



How appropriate that we started the retreat as we began the season of Lent with Paul's clarion call to be "ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us." The theme of our retreat was how we are ambassadors of the blood of Christ as we reviewed some of the key principles of precious blood spirituality,



*"When translating the conference on hospitality, Fr. Lac told us that there is no one word for 'hospitality.' In Vietnamese, words like welcome, generosity, kindness, and reverence convey the meaning of hospitality. It is significant that for a people who do not have a word for hospitality, they practice it so well.... Perhaps our brothers and sisters in Vietnam don't need the word 'hospitality,' because they embody the value. After all, as people of faith who believe in the incarnation, 'the Word made flesh,' they have so incarnated hospitality in their daily practice they do not need to say the word."*







*“During the retreat, we employed the circle model that we use in reconciliation ministry for our dialogue and conversation. The candidates were open to the circle as a safe place and the depth of their reflections was moving. Using the chalice as our truth piece, the circle brought us closer to each other through the power of story.”*



especially reconciliation and hospitality, along with the charism of St. Gaspar and how we live the charism today.

When translating the conference on hospitality, Fr. Lac told us that there is no one word for “hospitality.” In Vietnamese, words like welcome, generosity, kindness, and reverence convey the meaning of hospitality. It is significant that for a people who do not have a word for hospitality, they practice it so well. In the English language, hospitality can be trivialized. We have a “hospitality industry” and it refers to hotels and resorts. But that is far from the meaning of hospitality in the ministry of reconciliation and the spirituality of the precious blood. It is more focused on welcoming the stranger, the enemy, even the one who may take from you.

Perhaps our brothers and sisters in Vietnam don’t need the word “hospitality,” because they embody the value. After all, as people of faith who believe in the incarnation, “the Word made flesh,” they have so incarnated hospitality in their daily practice they do not need to say the word. Throughout our visit, we experienced extraordinary hospitality. Our incorporated members—Lac, Dien, and Dominic—certainly went above and beyond the call of duty to make us feel at home. But each of our candidates was also exemplary in their ability to give flesh to the word “hospitality.”

Reflecting on the power of the words, Howard Thurman wrote, “It is with the word that humans become human and then make possible the circles of relationships which make fast one’s sense of self.” Yes, words matter. But when they are made flesh, brought to life in the actions they represent, the need for words becomes mute. We see the word in the person who lives the meaning of the word. Our experience in Vietnam suggests that we were in the company of those who defined hospitality in the actions of their lives.

### **Wandering Americans: The Circle Grows Wider**

During the retreat, we employed the circle model that we use in reconciliation ministry for our dialogue and conversation. The candidates were open to the circle as a safe place and the depth of their reflections was moving. Using the chalice as our truth piece, the circle brought us closer to each other through the power of story.

We were impressed with the depth of spirituality we experienced from our candidates in Vietnam. Even though some are very young and just beginning the process of formation, their exuberance and joy are obvious and contagious. They also have an ability to articulate the language of the soul at such a young age. I can only attribute this to the study and formation they are receiving from our missionaries in Vietnam. If the proof of the formation is in the quality of candidates the formation process produces, we should be very proud.

The retreat concluded with Mass for the First Sunday of Lent. As the gospel for the Mass told the story of Jesus being led into the desert

*See Vietnam, continued on page 14...*

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## MEET THE CANDIDATES



I am John Marie Vianney Loi Huu Nguyen, born on July 7, 1961 in Hue, Old Citadel of Vietnam. My home town is Nha Trang City. I have three brothers and two sisters. I am the youngest. My elder brother is a diocesan priest of the Hue Archdiocese. My father is a teacher of French. In 1973–1975 I was a minor seminarian of Nha Trang Diocese. In 1985–1995 I joined the Saint Joseph

Congregation of Nha Trang Diocese. I graduated from the university in 1995 and worked as a private teacher of English; at the same time I also learned traditional medicine.

I joined to the Vietnam Mission in 2001, became a pledged candidate in 2004, and am in Advanced Formation until now. I have been learning the first year of Theology at the Centrum Dominicanum Studiorum. In 2007–2008 I served Van Coi parish and from 2008 until now I have been serving the Cong Ly parish as a minister of religion education for the youth. Now I live with Dominic Nhan, Peter Tam and Joseph Truc in the Vietnam Mission House in Saigon.

I participated the annual retreat of the Vietnam mission on the occasion of the TET holidays in Vung Tau Beach Town. I feel supported and encouraged thanks to the vivid, cheerful, meaningful and real sharing of both Fathers Nassal and Bayuk. I hope to realize the spirit of renewal, reconciliation and hospitality to live the C.PP.S. spirituality in daily life in Vietnamese surroundings. I consider this occasion like a new Pentecost to help me to quit the fearfulness and to open my heart to others and find the safe place in Christ.



My name is John Dung (pronounced as Zoohng) Tien Nguyen. My home town is in Ninh-binh Province, North Vietnam. I am 21 years old.

My family is composed of seven persons. My father is 50 years old and my mother is 41; both are rice farmers. I am the oldest of five children, three boys and two girls.

I have lived with the C.PP.S. community in Vietnam since September 16, 2008, and I am in the inquiry process while participating in the first of the three years of a post-secondary education program at a technical school which has just turned into a college in Saigon.

I like the green color of tree leaves and listening to folk songs with rural themed tunes, and walking.

I dream of some day becoming an educator, bringing education to many people, or an engineer of agriculture to contribute to Vietnam's agriculture. Along with that dream, I also wish to be able to communicate in English so that I would have more opportunities to learn and to become a member of the C.PP.S.



I am Martin Kiet Tuan Nguyen, born on September 28, 1990. My family is made up of five people, of whom I am the oldest and the only son; my two sisters are younger than I. We live in Gia-kiem, Thong-nhat District of Dong-nai Province.

I am in the first year of pursuing a post-secondary education degree at the Cao-thang Technical College, majoring in mechanical manufacturing. I like to listen to music. I dream of becoming a good engineer, able to contribute my efforts, partially to the society at large, partially to my family and myself.

I have been participating in the discernment-inquiry process of the C.PP.S. for five months. I also have participated in the volunteer medical mission helping the poor in rural areas.



I am Peter Tam Minh Hoang, 40 years old, the oldest of nine children, two boys and seven girls. My family lives in a central province of Vietnam—known for its quality coffee beans—where we grow coffee.

Presently I am in second philosophy at the Dominican Center for Philosophical and Theological Studies. My favorites hobbies are watching sports events and musical programs from abroad. My desire is to complete the theology program at the Dominican Center. I am making efforts to learn English so that I can read and communicate in English. My dream is to become a deeply spiritual person, to come to others with heart, a learned person to understand others more.

I have participated in the C.P.P.S. religious vocation discernment and formation for over six years, and have been a pledged candidate for over two years. For over a year now I have participated in pastoral visits to the sick at the Mai-khoi Clinic on Tu-xuong Street, Saigon. Occasionally I join the volunteer groups providing free medical care to the poor in rural areas of the surrounding provinces. Also, I help distribute communion at the two Sunday evening Masses at St. Paul Parish in Binh-tan District, where Fr. Lac presides.



I am Joseph Vu Minh Truc. I was born on July 6, 1969 in Saigon in a family including ten people,; four sisters, three brothers, and my mother (my father died in 1980). My oldest sister is a religious sister of the Order of Maid-Servant of the Priest Christ.

I was officially admitted into Inquiry Formation in 2004, entered Initial Formation in 2007 on the occasion of the establishment of

Vietnam Mission, and from 2008 to now have been a pledged candidate of the Vietnam Mission of the Kansas City Province of the Society of the Precious Blood.

I graduated from the Theological Institute of Archbishop Paul Nguyen Van Binh in June 2007, and finished a month and a half mission at Bui Hiep parish of Xuan Loc Diocese of Dong Nai Province on September 30, 2007, and a year and a half mission at Go Dau parish of Phu Cuong Diocese in Tay Ninh province, near the frontier of Vietnam and Cambodia. Sometimes, I also did charity works with other volunteers in the Muoi Dat Group for the poor and sick at the rural parishes.

Now I am participating in the religious education program for high school students as a catechist at Hoa Hung and Saint Paul Parishes in Ho Chi Minh City as well as learning English at the Formation House.

After a retreat week in Vung Tau City, Frs. Joe and Dick helped me understading the spirituality of the Precious Blood more deeply. I hope that I will be definitively incorporated in 2011 as well as a priest of the Society to share the Society's mission and meet the needs of the Church through the spirituality of the Precious Blood in the future.



My name is Martin An Duy Nguyen, born on October 1, 1978, in a family of nine children and twelve grandchildren. All of my siblings are married. My parents live with my youngest sister.

I am in the second year of pursuing a post secondary education degree in finance and accounting (evening classes 6:00–9:00 P.M.). Mondays to Fridays I work 8 hours a day as a logistic commercial specialist for a computer information security company.

Through studies, information gathering and work, I have a desire to become a member of the C.P.P.S. contributing to the mission of the community. I having been participating in the discernment-inquiry process of the C.P.P.S. for two years, and now I am directed by Dominic Nhan Bui, C.P.P.S. During these years I have also participated in the volunteer medical missions bringing medical help to the poor. In the past I collaborated with a reform school teaching troubled teens sent to the school by their families.





My name is Joseph Ky Van Phung, 38 years old (born on December 12, 1972). I was born in a non-Catholic family of five boys, of whom I am the fourth child. My family first lived in Vinh-phuc Province of North Vietnam. In 1983 we moved to Can-tho Province in southwestern Vietnam. I was baptized on December 26, 1991, and confirmed in July 1997 in Can-tho. Presently I am in the fourth year of a five-year per-

forming arts bachelor program (painting) of the University of Saigon, College of Fine Arts.

Having come into contact with the community since April 2004, I am now still in the discernment-inquiry process. I desire to become a member of the C.PP.S.

Previously, while being a member of the Heart Home Community (October 1997–September 2003) I ministered to the street children, the poor, the sick, and victims of HIV/AIDS. Now I continue doing ministry with the Medical-Social Services Volunteers in Saigon.



My name is Joseph Liem Hoai Nguyen Vu, born September 19, 1991. My family is composed of my parents, one older sister, myself, and three younger sisters. My parents run a family-owned business. All of us

children are still in school. We are a happy family living in Bach-lam, Ward Gia-tan, Thong-nhat County, Dong-nai Province.

I am in the first year of a three-year accounting program at Cao-thang Technical College. I dream of becoming a skillful person to help my family. I have been in the discernment and inquiry process with the C.PP.S. for five months while facing the challenges of life.

I have not yet participated in any apostolic work, but often did charity works and contributed to help the poor when called for by my schools.



I am Joseph Diep Ho Vu, 36 years old. My parents have twelve children, of whom I am the fifth child. My father is weakened with age. Healthier than dad, mom runs a small family-owned convenience store. We belong to the Bac-hai Parish, Ho-nai District of Bien-hoa City, Dong-nai Province.

Presently I am in the second year of the four-year teaching arts bachelor program at the University of Ho Chi

Minh City. My favorite activity is to teach. I dream of some day becoming a person with the ability to preach in religious as well as secular worlds.

I have participated in the discernment-inquiry program of the C.PP.S. for over five years, and still am in that process.

In apostolic works, I sing in one of the choirs of the Hoa-hung Parish, serving at weekly Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses. In the afternoons of the first Sunday of each month I go visit the elderly at the Camillo Home for the Aged in the 8th District of Saigon. Furthermore, once every two or three months, I participate in the Muoi Dat Volunteers Group providing free medical care to the poor in rural areas.



I am Joseph Khang Quoc Nguyen, born on July 31, 1963. My family migrated south from Ninh-binh Province of North Vietnam in 1954. I am a cardiologist at a local private hospital.

I have participated in teaching marriage preparation programs, youth groups in parishes, and organized volunteers to bring free medical care to the poor in rural areas.

I have known the C.PP.S. for over 10 years through Frs. Lac and Dien, but have seriously inquired about the C.PP.S. for about one year.

My dreams are to become a chaplain at a healthcare facility where I can also practice medicine, and to create a facility to care for the abandoned elderly and a medical clinic for the poor.



I am Francis Xavier Niem Tien Nguyen, 40 years old. My mother is a 73 year-old widow living with my siblings in a small parish in Don-duong, Lam-dong Province. I am a technician of anesthesia.

My hobby is to write. During free time, I write and have contributed to a few publications. My wish is to become a member of C.PP.S. Hopefully some day I will have an opportunity to visit the community and its members in Kansas City, and to study in the U.S.

Since October 2009 I began discerning a religious vocation with the C.PP.S. Since 1994 I have been teaching religious education to children at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Saigon. From 1999 I joined the Physicians and Businessmen Association, which monthly or quarterly reaches out to the poor in rural areas of the eastern, western, and central provinces of Vietnam, providing them with free medical care.

Thank you for the days at the last retreat; I've learned a lot, and very much enjoyed such experiences.



Greetings to all C.PP.S. Members and Companions. As this issue of *The New Wine Press* presents the faces of students in the young C.PP.S. Mission in Vietnam I would like to share a few things about myself.

I am Dominic Nhan Anh Bui, born in 1967 in Bien-hoa City, Dong-nai Province, South Vietnam. My parents bore nine children, five boys and four girls. The oldest son died when he was nine months old; the rest of us are still living in good health up to now. I am eighth among the siblings and the only one pursuing a vocation to the religious life. My father passed away in 1996, but my mother, at 82 years of age, is in good health.

During the 18 years working as an artisan in carving woodcrafts I studied business administration (1993-1997) and business law (1995-2000). In 2000 my younger sister and I opened up a family owned household electrical hardware store. The first time I knew about the C.PP.S. was at the end of 2000. At the end of 2002 I moved into a job training establishment sponsored by the C.PP.S. in Binh-duong Province, though still worked part-time with my family business. One year prior to definitive incorporation I parted myself completely from this business. I have just celebrated my second anniversary of Definitive Incorporation on February 17, 2010.

Presently I am taking theology courses at the Dominican Center for Philosophical and Theological Studies, hoping to complete the required courses by the end of 2011. I continue to apply myself to the studies and formation toward the priesthood, which I deeply appreciate, but it is not all for me. I always desire to do God's will (Heb 10:9). What I am most concerned about is to have more "tongues" which know how to and dare to proclaim the spirituality of the Precious Blood in Vietnam, my home country, where the values of renewal and reconciliation are becoming more necessary and urgent than ever.



*Vietnam, continued from page 9...*

to be tempted by the devil, the journey to Vietnam had its share of temptations—the temptation to hurry time, to curse the heat, to be frustrated by the problems with communication at times. Even the incessant buzz of motorbikes and wondering if one or the other would stop in time or avoid me before a collision caused me at times to sigh and maybe even scream, “I want to go home!”

But as the final day of the retreat unfolded, before the bus ride from the retreat center back to Saigon—a sixty-mile trip that took us almost six hours because of the end of the extended TET holiday and traffic that made the Eisenhower in Chicago on a Friday night almost seem like an expressway—I found myself deeply grateful for the opportunity to begin the season of Lent in the company of Lac, Dien, Dominic, and the candidates of our community in Vietnam. They are a strong, resourceful, and hospitable group of faithful folks who are growing in their identity as missionaries of the blood of Christ.

*“They are a strong, resourceful, and hospitable group of faithful folks who are growing in their identity as missionaries of the blood of Christ.”*

Perhaps there is some insight from the first reading from that First Sunday of Lent liturgy that puts our trip into context. In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses outlines a ritual that reflects trust in a good and gracious God. “My father was a wandering Aramean who went down to Egypt with a small household and lived there as an alien.” For those twelve days in February, Dick Bayuk and I were “wandering Americans” who were welcomed by a small household of C.P.P.S., not as aliens—although some of the looks on the street that we received certainly made us feel like aliens now and then—but as a family.

This trip reminded me again of the times I’ve been to Giano in Italy where Gaspar founded the congregation and I heard the echoes of his famous, fervent prayer for “a thousand tongues” to proclaim the Precious Blood. Whether this small household

of C.P.P.S. missionaries, candidates, and inquirers will become “great, strong, and numerous” isn’t in question. From where I stand, they may not be numerous but they are certainly great and strong. They are identifying themselves with the Precious Blood imagination that makes the cross, covenant, and cup central themes in understanding who we are.

Like the ancient ancestors that Moses described who were “maltreated and oppressed,” our missionaries in Vietnam know what it is like to be a repressed minority. They work hard in their ministry and their studies. Many of our students juggle very busy schedules but hold prayer and meals together as sacred times for community.

Moses’ ritual prayer in the book of Deuteronomy reflects gratitude for God’s deliverance of the people from the hands of their oppressors. I am grateful for the twelve days of exploring a land where I had never been before but one that is certainly etched in the memories of my formative years. No longer will I associate Vietnam with war. Though the scars of that war will always be there, now I will see Vietnam through a new lens—the lens of Precious Blood spirituality, reconciliation, and hospitality embodied in our missionaries and candidates.

*Fr. Joe Nassal, who resides at Sonnino Mission House in Berkeley, serves in retreat, mission, and writing ministries. He also serves on the Province Leadership Team.*





## PRAYER FOR THE 2010 CONVOCATION

Eternal God,  
we offer you the Precious Blood of Jesus,  
for our sisters and brothers  
who gather for our Precious Blood Convocation.

Accept us as disciples of your son, Jesus.  
Deepen our understanding  
of the theology of the cross and resurrection,  
which shapes us as your children and brings us life.

Move us to witness to our faith  
in the Precious Blood of Jesus,  
by actions which lift up reconciliation,  
center on the poor and displaced of our world,  
provide for the immigrant,  
counsel the sorrowful  
and bring your Church the unity and courage it needs  
to live in our world today.

Help us to embrace  
the anguish of our world and our Church  
with the redeeming love of Christ,  
which conquers all things, even despair and death.

Let us join with our ancestors,  
with Maria De Mattias,  
Gaspar del Bufalo,  
Maria Anna Brunner,  
Theresa Weber  
and Francis Pfanner,  
in proclaiming the Precious Blood of Jesus  
to a world in need of redemption.  
Our communities are places of friendship and support,  
of prayer and study, of action and witness.

Send your grace to all our Precious Blood congregations.  
May the Holy Spirit rouse us to be your witnesses,  
set our direction, lighten our burdens,  
refresh us with your presence,  
and empower us to proclaim your Kingdom.

Bless our Convocation with joy and energy,  
with purpose and wisdom,  
and with hope and promise.

May it be a moment of grace for our Church  
and our congregations.

We can be your disciples today.  
We must proclaim the Precious Blood to our neighbors.  
We will sacrifice our lives for the sake of your Kingdom.

Amen.

The 2010 Precious Blood Convocation, to be held July 26-29, 2010, at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri, is only a few short months away. The preparations and all the 'behind the scenes' work, however, have been going on for well over two years.

The theme of the Convocation, "Who Will Speak the Word to Rouse Them? I can, I must, I will. Will you?" promises us the opportunity to listen to, reflect on, and act out our commitment to living the gospel.

Our keynote speakers are Sr. Barbara Reid, O.P., Vice-President and Academic Dean of Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P., moral theologian and former President of Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis.

Pre-convocation materials have been sent out. Even though you may not be able to fully participate in our event, we would encourage you to use them and to hold us in prayer as we gather to renew friendships, strengthen bonds with each other, and are challenged to speak the word that will rouse them.

If you were not able to pre-register we assure you there is plenty of room. The registration will be coming in this spring. We hope you will take the time to come meet, pray and play with us in St. Louis!

### Convocation 2010 Committee

Jim Urbanic, C.P.P.S. (K.C. Province)  
Mary Whited, C.P.P.S., (O'Fallon)  
Marie Orf, C.P.P.S., (O'Fallon)  
Janet Winandy, C.P.P.S., (Dayton)  
Karen Elliott, C.P.P.S., (Dayton)  
Magdalena Vogt, C.P.S. (N.A. Province)  
Trish McConnell, A.S.C.  
Barbara Jean Franklin, A.S.C.  
Phillip Smith, C.P.P.S. (Atlantic Province)  
Rob Reuter, C.P.P.S. (Cincinnati Province)  
Ralph Verdi, C.P.P.S., (Cincinnati Province)  
Companion Frank Niemas  
Companion Lou Carey  
Joni Belford, C.P.P.S., (Liaison to the PBLC)  
Denise Simeone, Facilitator,

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# PRECIOUS BLOOD MINISTRY OF JUSTICE



## *The Face of Diversity*

Steve & Marie Trout

On April 6, 1981 our third daughter Megan was born. She was an easygoing, well-tempered little girl. Her two older sisters loved her and she was delighted by their attempts at entertaining her. She grew into a curly haired toddler who was nearly always happy and smiling. She was one of those little children who knew no strangers, and people would often stop to talk to her because she was inviting and welcoming. She became an energetic schoolgirl who would play My Little Pony with the girls as well as Ninja turtles with the boys. Teachers often shared with us at conferences how great her personality was.

As a teenager Megan was in demand as a babysitter. She loved to entertain the children she was watching and we would often hear from other parents how much their children enjoyed having Megan “come to play”; they didn’t see her as a babysitter. She was drawn to adults as well and could sit and carry on conversations with them. In high school she had her own “Tuesdays with Morrie” experience. A man who had worked at the same company as Steve years earlier, and who had recently gone through our parish’s RCIA program, was dying from cancer. After school at least one day every week without fail she would go visit Richard and sit and spend time with him. She shared her day with him as well as invited him to share his story with her.

Megan then went to college, worked as a Faith Formation Director in a parish and is now in graduate school working on her Masters of Divinity at Notre Dame. She is drawn to service and justice and hopes to work with the marginalized when she graduates.

We share this story with you about Megan not to brag about our daughter. As parents we all take great pride in our children, their accomplishments and who they have become. Many of you could share similar stories. We share this story because we want to share another part of who Megan is with



Megan Trout

you as well. Megan is gay. She has worked hard to live into who God made her to be and to use the unique gifts she has been blessed with to serve God and others.

We suspected Megan might be gay even before she had grown into who she was created to be and could verbalize that to us. We are proud of her and it changes nothing for us as parents. It does give us new fears as we deal with society and the Church’s view of homosexuals. We have taken this gift to our family as an opportunity to grow in our understanding and knowledge about homosexuality. We have learned much and have much more to learn and experience as Megan shares herself and her relationship with us.

*“We share this story with you about Megan not to brag about our daughter. As parents we all take great pride in our children, their accomplishments and who they have become. Many of you could share similar stories. We share this story because we want to share another part of who Megan is with you as well. Megan is gay. She has worked hard to live into who God made her to be and to use the unique gifts she has been blessed with to serve God and others.”*

We do have new fears that we must learn to handle and other feelings as well, as we were unable to share fully who Megan is. When working in a parish she was unable to be open as to her orientation and she found out quickly that she could not be open at Notre Dame either, a Catholic institution that proclaims to have a “Spirit of

Inclusion.” As parents we felt the hurt and struggle on a small level when we felt we could not share what Megan’s life is about and that she has fallen in love and has the same dreams to live in an openly committed rela-

tionship as her two older sisters enjoy. To share this could have jeopardized her job in the parish, it could have affected her being part of the Master of Divinity program at Notre Dame. We feel this on a certain level, but certainly not on the level she experiences daily as she has to be careful, cautious and fearful.

We would like to share with you an experience that happened in January for Megan. Some of you may have seen or heard about this incident in the news. The student paper at Notre Dame published a cartoon that had a saw (indicating that whoever said that was a 'tool') asking a student 'How do you turn a fruit into a vegetable?' The student says "I don't know" and the saw then answered "A Baseball Bat." This was much improved from the original cartoon they turned down where the response was 'AIDS.' This started a firestorm of meetings, talks, protests, panels and letters to the editor. We won't address here how we feel about a newspaper from a Catholic institution even considering publishing such a cartoon.

The gay community and supporters of the gay community at Norte Dame wear an orange shirt one day each semester. On the front of the shirt are the words "Gay? Fine by Me." Some students have chosen to now wear a shirt with the words "Gay? Go to Hell." Megan chose to be one of the many people who wrote a letter to the editor [*reprinted on the next page*] and more or less outed herself. In some ways that may feel freeing and possibly healing. Upon reading her letter to the editor we were even more proud of Megan as we saw how brave she was to write the letter and speak out against this cartoon and resulting actions.

We began this article letting you get to know Megan. Our purpose behind that is for you to put a face on homosexuality, a face that many of you may know or know the parents of. You see, we believe that it is easy to submit a cartoon threatening to beat a person into a vegetable, but it is much more difficult if you actually get to know the person and their story. The cartoon is just one more example of homophobia and fear-based hate.

We have experienced many people—not knowing we have a daughter who is a lesbian—share that they are fine with homosexuals, yet they tell and or laugh at jokes about homosexuality. Or make remarks like saying someone "is light in the loafers," or telling how they cannot support a certain candidate because he or she supports gay marriage and "that is just sick." Or sharing about someone they "think" is a [obscenity] lesbian or gay. We have listened to many innuendos and crude remarks, some of which have taken place at Precious Blood gatherings.

We believe that Megan as well as our family are called to be agents of

change, so we are not sharing this to judge anyone, but rather to invite people to take the time to be educated and to remember this face and this story. If you tell an offensive joke about homosexuals you are telling a joke about our daughter. If you use offensive language about persons who are LGBT you are making those remarks about our spirit-filled child. When you deny persons who are LGBT the same rights and privileges you enjoy, you deny our gifted daughter those same rights. Please remember with a spirit of openness our Megan, her story, who she strives to be, as well as the many other Megans in our world.

*Marie Trout is Province Director of Companions as also serves on the Precious Blood Ministry of Justice Committee. She and her husband Steve live in Kansas City KS.*

*"If you tell an offensive joke about homosexuals you are telling a joke about our daughter. If you use offensive language about persons who are lgbt you are making those remarks about our spirit-filled child. When you deny persons who are lgbt the same rights and privileges you enjoy, you deny our gifted daughter those same rights."*





From *Wikipedia* website

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fine\\_By\\_Me](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fine_By_Me)

*Fine By Me* is an organization in the United States with the mission to give voice to friends and supporters of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. The organization developed a project to print T-shirts bearing the phrase “gay? fine by me” and then worked with communities to distribute and wear the T-shirts to show acceptance and support for LGBT people and publicly demonstrate against homophobia.

The organization began at Duke University in spring 2003. The idea behind fine by me, sprung from a dinner conversation between ten friends; both gay and straight. The group came up with the idea to distribute—free-of-charge—T-shirts with an anti-homophobic message. In less than two weeks, the group distributed nearly 2,000 T-shirts to students, faculty, and staff. Even then university president, Nannerl 'Nan'Overholser Keohane, wore a T-shirt.

The idea continues to spread to schools all over the country, including traditionally conservative and religious institutions such as the University of Notre Dame and Boston College.

*Fine By Me* has distributed over 35,000 T-shirts to date, according to Michael Wessel, of Duke University. Since its founding in 2003, the organization has expanded its focus to include churches and synagogues, local civic groups, PFLAG chapters, businesses, and other community groups and organizations.

Fine-By-Me website  
[www.atticuscircle.org/gay-fine-by-me](http://www.atticuscircle.org/gay-fine-by-me)

The following letter, referenced in the previous article, appeared in *The Observer: The Independent Newspaper Serving Notre Dame and St. Mary's*, January 28, 2010

It is just a shirt, just an orange shirt. But I have to admit it is hard for me to wear, and not just because orange is not my color. Suddenly when I wear that shirt on campus it is as though I am wearing a target, and people can say whatever they want to me or about me for wearing the shirt. But I make it a point to wear the shirt to show support—for a group that is usually discriminated against and sometimes ignored (I will not go into which is worse). I want to support people on campus who have had the unfortunate experience of coming out at a place like Notre Dame, a place that is not known for welcoming those in the GLBTQ community, even if it does have a “Spirit of Inclusion.” It is only once a semester, but it is still important to me that I join with those brave enough to face the comments that the orange shirt can bring.

People have a variety of reactions. “Couldn’t they have found a better phrase?” “I would never wear that shirt,” “It’s NOT fine by me” and even “Go to hell.” Yes. “Go to hell!”

Really? I was amused by the “Obama? Fine by me.” shirts. I really enjoyed the “Dumbeldore? Fine by me.” shirts. But “Gay? Go to hell?”

Thank you. Thank you Notre Dame students for demonstrating how ridiculously hard it is for GLBTQ people everyday, all of the time. Thank you for reminding me that this campus does not have the “Spirit of Inclusion” that it claims.

This is the obvious time to go off on a rant about how hateful and disrespectful it is to wear a shirt that tells someone to go to hell, and how absurd it would be if I wore a shirt that said “Catholic? (or male?) Go to hell.” I am simply here to say that I wore that shirt and I am glad that I did. And I am sorry that I had to be in class Wednesday at noon instead of standing next to those who protested. But I am the most sorry that we scare you so much that you feel like you have to tell us to go to hell.

We are trying to express love and support—not hate—so I will not return hate with hate. But I will say that I am sorry that we scare you and I hope that you can find some sort of comfort in that “Spirit of Inclusion” here at Notre Dame.

Megan Trout  
Graduate student  
Off campus

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## VOCATIONS OFFICE: *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*

Sharon Crall & Joe Miller, C.P.P.S.

On April 25, 2010—Good Shepherd Sunday—we celebrate the 47th *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. The theme for this observance is “Witness Awakens Vocations.” In the Holy Father’s message already prepared for publication, Pope Benedict XVI says, “The fruitfulness of our efforts to promote vocations depends primarily on God’s free action, yet, as pastoral experience confirms, it is also helped by the quality and depth of the personal and communal witness of those who have already answered the Lord’s call to the ministerial priesthood and to the consecrated life, for their witness is then able to awaken in others a desire to respond generously to Christ’s call.”

This should be a special day for everyone in our parishes. We are reminded that as baptized Catholics and all Christians, our central vocation is a call to both holiness and service. All vocations flow from baptism. In baptism each person receives a “call.” Those who are baptized are called to a life of holiness and service. This call is lived out in a vocation as single, married, ordained or consecrated.

The following story tells of a little boy who realized his first and second calls at a young age.

During Mass some years ago, a priest was using the rite for the blessing of people with holy water. As he began the rite, the priest realized that the sacramentary (the book used for prayers in the liturgy) had been left in the sacristy. Without a word, the priest immediately left to retrieve the book in the sacristy. In the meantime, the little server, not knowing what had happened to Father, picked up the holy water container and went up and down the aisle blessing the people! The people were smiling and making the sign of the cross. When the priest returned, he laughed and said: “I couldn’t have done a better job myself,” and continued with the Mass.”

In this true story, the little server saw a need and fulfilled the call to do something about it. Having witnessed the holy action previously, he

was ready to get involved. Persons of all ages should be witnessing to the call received at their Baptism. But, the call brings further commitment.

A single person responds to their vocation by being a witness of what it means to be a single, loving, committed Christian in today’s world. Married persons respond by being shared witnesses to a covenantal commitment of love in our present day society. Those ordained or consecrated respond by journeying with God’s people as priests, brothers, sisters, and others who have promised or vowed to grow in faith and holiness while helping others to do the same by witness and action.

It is our hope that you will observe *World Day of Prayer for Vocations* in your parish or ministry. An excellent source of materials is found by ordering World Day of Prayer Kit 2010 from the National Coalition



*“All vocations flow from baptism. In baptism each person receives a “call.” Those who are baptized are called to a life of holiness and service. This call is lived out in a vocation as single, married, ordained or consecrated.”*

for Church Vocations. The phone number for NCCV is

773-955-5453 and their website is [www.nccv.vocations.org](http://www.nccv.vocations.org).

The story of the little boy was found among these resources.

You will find a couple of bulletin announcements, prayers of intercession, homily notes, liturgical suggestions, a prayer service, family take home page, clip art and prayer for vocations. It would be a good time to remind all Catholics of their commitment to a life of holiness and openness to their vocation in life, whatever it may be.

If the Vocation Ministry Office can assist you with anything in regard to *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*, please do not hesitate to contact us.

*Fr. Joe Miller and Companion Sharon Crall  
are Province Directors of Vocation Ministry.*



## *Blindsided by Real Life*

Michael Donovan

I'm a sap for movies like "The Blindside." It tells the story of a homeless African-American teen, thrown on the scrap heap of life, transformed when given a second chance. Michael Oher is adopted by a rich, white family, graduates from a private high school, gets a football scholarship to Ole Miss, and eventually is selected as the first round choice of the Baltimore Ravens in the 2009 NFL Draft. It is that one in a million story that grabs at your heart strings. Don't forget the tissues.

I work with Robert, whose life mirrors the story of Michael Oher, but with no fairytale ending. In the film, Michael's birth father is unknown, and he is separated from his mother at an early age, apart from his siblings. He was enrolled in seven schools during his formative years, because he "fopped" from place to place, with no stable place to live. Schools passed him along. He was labeled a "runner", and even his birth mother warned his adoptive mother, "Don't be surprised if you wake up one day and he's gone."

Similar to Michael, Robert was abandoned at birth by his mother, and his father is unknown. He grew up apart from his brothers. Now 16, he has been enrolled in at least six schools in the last three years, and there is no record of his graduation from the 8th grade. Unlike Michael, Robert has not found an adoptive, loving, and supportive family, so he runs, and runs, and runs, but has nowhere to go since the death of his

great-grandmother, who provided the only nurturing in his life. He has grown up without boundaries, leading to poor choices, always ending in incarceration. Robert is a traumatized young man, who longs for a family who will love him.



I met Robert while he was locked up at the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center, and he joined our Making Choices Program upon his release. A year and several lockups later, I became his mentor. Twice recently, I've been named his *guardian ad litem*, in the absence of any family to accompany him in court proceedings.

*"Robert has not found an adoptive, loving, and supportive family, so he runs, and runs, and runs, but has nowhere to go since the death of his great-grandmother, who provided the only nurturing in his life. He has grown up without boundaries, leading to poor choices, always ending in incarceration. Robert is a traumatized young man, who longs for a family who will love him."*

As someone who successfully led several organizations of more than 1000 employees, Robert has caused me to re-consider everything I thought I knew about human behavior. I have tried everything, but Robert continues to run, his life broken, and running out of chances.

However, our ministry has not given up, and we are presently collaborating with the courts, probation, a cluster parish, and the

Department of Children and Family Services to place Robert in

Boystown, Nebraska, where he will receive the help he needs, and the loving and supportive family he so wants. But that doesn't mean that he still won't run.

This tale probably won't have a storybook ending. Don't forget the tissues.



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## REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRECIOUS BLOOD MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

### *Contraband*

Dave Kelly, C.P.P.S.

Rosaries are considered contraband in Cook County Jail and Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center. As Catholic chaplains, we are forbidden to bring them in—but they come in nonetheless. I have been told, memos have been circulated that rosaries are forbidden, contraband, against policy. There is a level of frustration and suspicion on the part of the administration of the jail because rosaries continue to get in. I know that they suspect that I am violating policy, so much so that the administration at Juvenile Detention Center entered the chaplain's office (my office) in search of rosaries and they found one—mine. To give credit where credit is due, they did find, along with that sole rosary, some small crosses that we had given out years ago to mark the beginning of Lent. Of course, that was when crosses weren't considered against policy.

After my anger subsided a little—or at least was under control—a smile came across my face. Here's the thing, I don't bring in rosaries. While I do not agree with the policy, I don't think that I should jeopardize the entire ministry because of rosaries. The smile on my face appears because they continue to come in and I know where they are coming from. I hope they continue to come in. Mothers and grandmothers are carrying in rosaries, not to violate policy, but because rosaries are symbols of hope and faith for their children. Mothers and grandmothers will do just about anything to be symbols of hope for their children. My guess is that, policy or no policy, they will continue to try to bring in rosaries for their children and grandchildren.

There is a story about Uruguayan political prisoners that comes to mind. The story says that political prisoners in Uruguay may not talk without permission or whistle, smile, sing, walk fast, or greet other prisoners; nor may they make or receive drawings of pregnant women, couples, butterflies, stars or birds. One Sunday, Didako Perez, school teacher, tortured and jailed "for having ideological ideas" is visited by his daughter Milay, age five. She

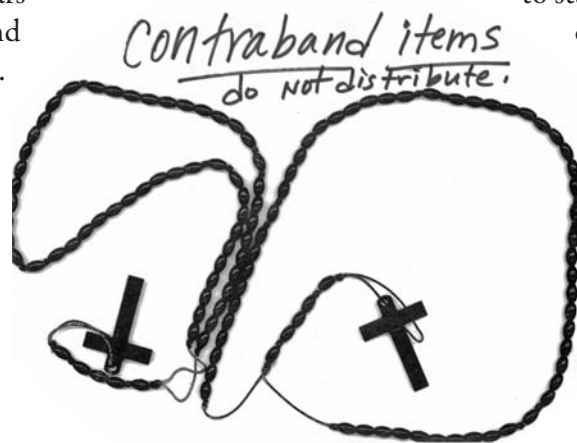
brings him a drawing of birds. The guards destroy it at the entrance of the jail. On the following Sunday, Milay brings him a drawing of trees. Trees are not forbidden, and the drawings get through. Didako praises her work and asks about the colored circles scattered in the treetops, many small circles half-hidden among the branches: "Are they oranges? What fruit is it?" The child puts her finger to her mouth: "Shh." And she whispers in his ear, "Silly, don't you see they're eyes? They're the eyes of the birds that I've smuggled in for you" (Eduardo Galeano).

Whether they are rosaries or smuggled pictures of birds, I believe we are called to continue to be hope for those who are suffering. Churches, parish schools, faith-based organizations—all have to become places of hope. We have to support mothers and grandmothers as they strive to stand against the tide that says some children do not warrant our love.

I believe we have the responsibility to be mothers and grandmothers for those who are abandoned, marginalized—and those considered not worth the effort.

I blame my father some. He taught me respect. "David," he would say, "you need to respect authority." And so, too often I find myself giving in too much to authority figures. I need to continue to respect them, but I realize that I don't have to give them authority. I am learning more and more that true authority comes from knowing who I am and what I believe—my father also taught me that.

Martin Luther King Jr. said: "There is nothing wrong with a traffic law which says you



Continued on next page...

have to stop for a red light. But when a fire is raging, the fire truck goes right through that red light. Or, when a person is bleeding to death, the ambulance goes through those red lights at top speed. Disinherited people all over the world are bleeding to death from social and economic wounds. They need brigades of ambulance drivers who will have to ignore the red lights of the present system until the emergency is solved....”

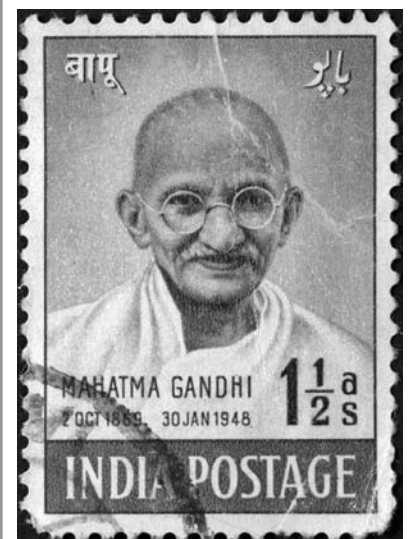
Even if they managed to create the security sufficient to keep rosaries out altogether, I can tell you they will still appear. They will appear made from thread woven into crosses, thread taken from their socks or from the sheets of their beds; they will appear drawn on scraps of paper; they will appear because they continue to be symbols of God among us, Emmanuel.

For those who are incarcerated, hope is the only real thing they have left. The young and the old cling to hope as their lifeline. As men and women dedicated to the life-giving hope of the Precious Blood, let us live that hope in the world today, a world that so desperately needs men and women of hope.

There is a story that I read about Gandhi and how a protestant minister named Charlie Andrews came to join Gandhi in South Africa. The two men are walking down a city street when three teenagers emerge from the alley, carrying rocks, calling names, and threatening violence. Charlie pauses and suggests that he and Gandhi take a different route. Instead, Gandhi moves forward and beckons Charlie to come along. As they walk, Gandhi notes that Jesus taught that if an enemy strikes a blow on one cheek, you are to turn the other. The danger grows with each forward step until the unnerved minister blurts out: “Surely that teaching was metaphorical.” Gandhi replies: “I am not so sure. I have thought about it a great deal, and I suspect he meant you must show courage. Be willing to take a blow, several blows, to show that you will not strike back, nor will you be turned aside. And when you do that, it calls on something in human nature, something that makes his hatred for you decrease and his respect increase. I think Christ grasped that, and I have seen it work” (taken from *Change the World*, by Robert Quinn).

The determination of the mothers bringing in rosaries, of Milay smuggling in birds, and of Gandhi living out the gospel of Jesus takes great courage. As people who have been called to live out the spirituality of the Precious Blood, we, too, must have the courage to step out into the unknown and rely on the inner strength of knowing that we are doing God’s work. It is a spirituality that seeks not to conquer those who stand against us, but to embrace them as our brothers and sisters, even though they may not initially recognize us in the same way.

*“Even if they managed to create the security sufficient to keep rosaries out altogether, I can tell you they will still appear. They will appear made from thread woven into crosses, thread taken from their socks or from the sheets of their beds; they will appear drawn on scraps of paper; they will appear because they continue to be symbols of God among us, Emmanuel.”*



## Power Failure

Darkness caught me halfway back up the steps,  
freezing me in place like one of those Pompeii people.

Then the banister came off in my hand,  
and the steps began to buck and twist  
as I climbed up toward  
Dad's new solid core  
basement door.

The lights came on  
when you opened it.  
to check what was happening.

My daily adventures complete,  
I began telling you about my latest near death experience.  
You said that that was very nice,  
and to be sure and wear something other  
than the dirty sweatshirt I had on when the neighbors came,  
and they would be here any moment.

As I changed,  
I prayed, really prayed  
thanking God for bringing me  
out of darkness and into the light—  
one more time.

*Bob McCray*

## LOOKING AHEAD

April 12–14, 2010  
*2010 Provincial Assembly*  
Church of the Annunciation  
Kearney MO

July 26–29, 2010  
*Precious Blood Convocation*  
St. Louis University  
St. Louis MO

## WWW.KCPROVINCE.ORG

We invite you to visit our website  
where you will find back issues of  
*The New Wine Press*  
as well as our weekly newsletter,  
*The Weekly Wine Press*,  
and the January 2010 issue of  
*The Wine Cellar*.



*Post-retreat celebration*



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## MY BACK PAGES

*Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.*

### **Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle**

Everything the Power of the World does  
is done in a circle. The sky is round,  
and I have heard that the earth is round  
like a ball, and so are all the stars.  
The wind in its greatest power, whirls.

Birds make their nests in circles,  
for theirs is the same religion as ours.

The sun comes forth and goes down again  
in a circle. The moon does the same,  
and both are round. Even the seasons  
form a great circle in their changing,  
and always come back again to where they were.

The life of man is a circle from childhood to childhood,  
and so it is in everything where power moves.

*Black Elk*

As I ready this issue for press, I have also been preparing my homily for this coming Sunday. The first reading from Exodus takes me back to my recent encounter with the culture and people of Vietnam, and our time spent with the members and candidates of the Vietnam Mission. In this passage, as Moses approaches the burning bush, God calls out to him from the bush, “Come no nearer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”

I observed that it is a common custom in Vietnam to remove one’s sandals (which seems to be the universal footwear) when entering a home—including one’s own. I don’t know the origin or meaning of the practice there,

but it was a symbol to me of reverencing what is holy ground, the primary place of presence, the home. It is a good metaphor as well for visiting another country, another culture. Mark Yates, in a recent article about his time in Vietnam, referred to this similarly as “entering someone else’s garden.”

“Holy ground” was for me the enduring image of my time in Vietnam. Surely the formation houses and the homes we visited. But also the liturgies, with most of the Mass parts sung by presider and assembly, reverent bowing to each other as a sign of peace, even the outside grounds filled with people standing prayerfully as they participated in the midst of hundreds of parked motor cycles. The most memorable Mass was the one in the cemetery, with throngs of people gathered not only in front of the outdoor sanctuary, but throughout the gravesites, burning incense, remembering, honoring, walking carefully on the holy ground of their ancestors.

I found myself extending the image of holy ground to the entire land, however, especially as I recalled and tried to imagine (unsuccessfully, of course—I wasn’t there) this beautiful country and its good people bloodied by a war that is only 35 years in the past. The charisma of our community surely has a place there, and is slowly taking root.

Once I was able to get beyond the brutal jet lag, the incessant and ubiquitous (and at first annoying) swarms of motorcycles, and the acclimation to a different diet, I was able to enter the experience with ease and enjoy “going barefoot.”

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