

# THE **New Wine** PRESS

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**Volume 25 No 7 • March 2017**

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**BE NOT AFRAID**

**IN FAITH, A NEW MINISTRY IS BORN**

**PIECING TOGETHER DIVINE WISDOM**





# Let us serve God with holy joy.

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

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# THE New Wine PRESS

Volume 25 No. 7 • March 2017

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*Cover photo: Agitated wine in glass, iStockphoto.com. As Precious Blood people, we are called to agitate and disrupt injustices we see in this world.*

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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## Disrupt and Rebuild

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

“Fear is the path to the dark side. Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering.” - Yoda, Jedi Master

There’s a lot of disagreement and division in our country today, and thus a lot of anger—even rage. Our country is painfully divided, as are many families. I’m old enough to remember the last time it felt this way (albeit for different reasons): 1968—two assassinations, an increasingly unpopular war, an extremely close and divisive presidential election; significant division in the Catholic Church with the publication of *Humanae Vitae*—in addition to the continuing struggle to implement the changes brought about by Vatican II. I remember the anger well, because it was part of me also, in the realm of both politics and the Church. Opposition to the war impacted churches, and religious leaders—including Catholic bishops—who struggled with the ability to navigate during that turbulence. The president at the time, Lyndon Johnson, was known for using the biblical quote, “Come, let us reason together.” But that was not to be, as in the end he failed to do so and so did the country. There was to be no significant reasoning together in the country, or in the Church. And so both, in my opinion, paid a huge price for anger. And it can happen again.

The current occupant of the White House has never been known to invite “reasoning together.” After a long and often ugly campaign, he lost the popular vote but won the Electoral College. Many people experienced a lot of his rhetoric as fostering division and appealing to some of the darker impulses of human nature, such as fear or bigotry or selfishness. But now he is the president and is choosing to lead in his own way. A way that many take exception to and find hard to respond to positively, especially if they feel overwhelmed by what is about to be dismantled in this country, and what is about to be taken away from people already struggling to get by.

Since his election in 2013, Pope Francis has captured the imagination of many people, in and outside of the Church. But there are those who see him as too liberal, too willing to soften some hard doctrinal positions, even politically too “Marxist.” There is division in the Church on many levels, and bishops, pastors, and lay leaders struggle with how to lead in the midst of it—and how to respond to the implications of what our political leaders are saying and doing and proposing. So I would like to focus on the welcome leadership that one particular Catholic bishop has exhibited.

The U.S. Regional World Meeting of Popular Movements was held in Modesto, California on February 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>. The conference was organized with the support of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, and the PICO (People Improving Communities through Organizing) National Network.

Pope Francis sent a message to the gathering of about 700 community organizers and social justice advocates in which he called on all people to become Samaritans and resist the “grave danger” in this moment to disown our neighbors amid a culture of indifference. “Do not classify others in order to see who is a neighbor and who is not. You can become neighbor to whomever you meet in need, and you will do so if you have compassion in your heart.”

Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles, one of the speakers, called for comprehensive immigration reform and condemned the deportation policies of the last two presidents, but in particular, President Trump. “I do not like the harsh tone, the sense of indifference and cruelty that seems to be coming out of this new administration in Washington. They are playing with our emotions, with people’s emotions, toying with their lives and futures, and that’s not right.... A person is still a person even though he is without papers.”

It was San Diego Bishop Robert McElroy most of all who energized the crowd in his remarks, calling on the gathering to become disrupters and rebuilders amid current American politics. Some examples:

*“President Trump was the candidate of disruption. He was the disrupter, he said. Well now, we must all become disrupters. We must disrupt those who would seek to send troops into our streets to deport the undocumented, to rip mothers and fathers from their families. We must disrupt those who portray refugees as enemies, rather than our brothers and sisters in terrible need. We must disrupt those who train us to see Muslim men and women and children as sources of fear rather than as children of God. We must disrupt those who seek to rob our medical care, especially from the poor. We must disrupt those who would take even food stamps and nutrition assistance from the mouths of children.”*

*“We must make the issues of jobs, housing, immigration, economic disparities, and the environment foundations for common efforts, rather than of division. We must seek prophetic words and prophetic actions which produce unity and cohesion, and we*

*must do so in a spirit of hope, which is realistic.”*

*“This is an especially important anchor for us in an age in which truth itself is under attack. We’ve come to a time when alternate facts compete with real facts, and whole industries have arisen to shape public opinion in destructively isolated and dishonest patterns.”*

*“The tradition of Catholic social teaching is unequivocally on the side of strong governmental and societal protections for the powerless, the worker, the homeless, the hungry, those without decent medical care, the unemployed. This stance of the church’s teaching flows from teaching of the Book of Genesis, that creation is the gift of God to all of humanity. Thus in the most fundamental way, there is a universal destination for all of the material goods that exist in this world. Wealth is a common heritage, not a ... right of lineage or of acquisition.”*

*“For Catholic social teaching, the surest pathway to economic justice is the provision of meaningful and sustainable work for all men and women capable of work. ... Work is thus a profoundly sacred reality. It protects human dignity even as it spiritually enriches that dignity. If we truly are in our work co-creators with God, don’t we think that deserves at least \$15 an hour?”*

*“We have to rebuild this nation so that we place at its heart the service to the dignity of the human person, and asserts what that flag behind us asserts and is our heritage: Every man and woman and child is equal in this nation and called to be equal.”*

*“So let us see and judge and act. Let us disrupt and rebuild. And let us do God’s work.”*

Needless to say, there are those who are now castigating this bishop for his words. Not asking to reason together, just criticizing—in often angry ways. This is the air we breathe right now in this country and this Church. We each get to choose how we will lead and how we will respond to leadership, good and not so good. Channel the anger; disrupt and rebuild. †



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## Musing from the Inner Room

### Honoring the Mystic Within



**A Day of Reflection presented by Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S.**  
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**9:30 AM—3:30 PM**

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The invitation of Lent is to retreat to this inner room, the sanctuary of one's soul where one's core truth is held. As we explore this sacred space within, we begin to understand what many of the great teachers of the spiritual life remind us: we are called to be modern day mystics through the practice of awareness. The Divine One is present in our everyday life. We will explore how we can honor the mystic within by becoming more aware of the love that God has kindled in our hearts.

**"When you pray, go to your inner room..." Mt 6:5**



*Precious Blood Family at the SEEK 2017 conference in San Antonio, Texas*

## Conversations

by Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S., Vocation Director

Looking out the window as we landed, I saw green grass along the runway. I knew then we were no longer in Kansas. Just after the first of the year, I traveled to San Antonio, Texas to attend SEEK 2017. I was joined by Fr. Steve dos Santos, Sr. Patty Kramer, Sr. Karen Elliot, and Lori Bengé. We came together as Precious Blood family.

SEEK 2017 was a conference with tons of college students from hundreds of colleges. Over 13,000 college students came together for five days of talks, workshops, art, and worship. It is sponsored by FOCUS, an

apostolate that focuses on launching college students into lifelong Catholic mission. FOCUS missionaries work with college students to invite them to grow in their Catholic faith and relationship with Jesus Christ. Even beyond graduation, students are encouraged to continue to be leaders in ministry and reach out to others.

We were invited to interact with students in various ways throughout the week. We had our traditional vocation booth and materials to hand out. We had

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*Refugees entering Macedonia, 2015*

## Be Not Afraid

*by Tim Deveney, Precious Blood Volunteers Director*

“While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.’ When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, ‘Rise, and do not be afraid.’ And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone” (Matthew 17:5-8).

I remember vividly the big deal my school and church made of our first reconciliation in second grade. I remember my fear of messing up the Act of Contrition we were forced to memorize and having to come up with a list of serious enough sins that would show my confessor I was taking this confessing stuff with enough gravitas, but not bad enough that the priest would think I was a horrible person. That’s a fine line on which to balance for a seven year-old.

The part of that service that still sticks with me, besides the tightrope of sin that my seven year-old

self was navigating, was the song “Be Not Afraid.” This is a common enough hymn and the main theme of the song is a phrase used with great regularity in Scripture, including many references in the Old Testament, Gospels, and Epistles. It’s almost as if God knows what holds us back!

The disciples in this reading are terrified of the bright cloud and a voice. The disciples have a great deal of fear. I do not blame them. I would be petrified with fear with a voice coming out of a cloud! The disciples are us. They are always us. In good and bad, they are always us. They cower. They fall to the ground. They lock themselves in a room after Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection.

We, like them, prostrate ourselves—not in humility, but in fear. Fear that the call of God will open us up to the sacrifice of everything we are attached to. Fear of being hurt. Fear of changing who we are. Fear of our ideologies being wrong. Fear of being open to a new world beyond us. Fear of losing our livelihoods and the possessions that so often own us. Fear of

our culture changing. Fear of being called to give up everything we have and follow Christ.

We are constantly bombarded with fears. Commercials on TV, radio and the internet tell us that we will not be happy without the newest piece of technology preying upon our deep worry about not keeping up with the times. Our politicians and news people work on our fear of the other by telling us we might be killed or maimed by a terrorist or criminal, and many times we are only told about the ones who look different than we do. There is a constant bombardment of fear regarding immigrants, especially those from the other side of the United States' southern border. We are told to be afraid of our neighbors.

These fears often prevent us from seeing Christ in everyone. They hold us back from Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves along with His further instruction that we broaden our conception of who our neighbor is. Our neighbors include the people who live next door, but it also includes people who do not look, think, dress, love, vote, speak, pray or act exactly like we do. The Christian conception of neighbor includes everyone and our command to love calls us beyond all of our fears, beyond all of our preconceived notions and beyond our attachments.

In an increasingly globalized world, "my neighbor" is much bigger than we probably want to admit. Our neighbors are a family in Yemen with bombs made in the United States falling on them. Our neighbors are refugees fleeing torture, oppression, poverty, and war. Our neighbors are people in Bangladesh and island nations seeing their land disappear amidst a rising ocean. Our neighbors are people who go bankrupt because of a health care system that favors the wealthy and healthy over basic human decency.

This Lent I challenge all of us to listen to two of the main calls we hear from Jesus: "Be not afraid" and "Love one another," and then look deeply at our lives to see how we live these out. Loving one another is hard, especially when we are called by Jesus to "love your neighbor as yourself" and then answer the question "who is my neighbor?" The answers to these questions can lead us to be more loving and less fearful people and better at the discipline of following Christ in faith, hope, and love. ✠

*SEEK 2017, continued from page 5*

opportunities to have conversations, celebrate Mass, attend workshops and celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation with the students. I had several good conversations in speaking about our community and spirituality as well as just talking about life and discernment.

In sharing our charism and spirituality, we talked about reconciliation as more than just sacrament. Many students I talked with were faithful in a daily examination of conscience and going to confession, but one thing I kept hearing in these conversations was the wrong and negativity in their lives. Very few of them were finding anything positive or good or life giving about themselves. It was a challenge getting them to see something different about themselves.

Another student shared about the disappointment in not hearing God's voice in her life. She shared that other classmates had been talking about God moments and hearing God's voice and knowing that it was truly God speaking. She was feeling left out, that she was not worthy or not doing something right because she was not having life-shattering experiences. I shared with her from my own experiences and commented that I have never heard that big, booming voice; rather I have heard God speaking in the quiet of life. It is that peace that one knows deep within after debating about an issue and finally making a decision that one can live with.

Another conversation focused on how to relate to others, including family members, who have not had these same spiritual experiences. One student spoke about having just returned from spending time with family over Christmas break and was uncertain about her parent's faith because they couldn't see eye to eye. It was obvious she was alive with the Spirit but didn't know how to share her experience with others who hadn't had the same experience.

At times, I felt like an outsider or someone on the margin, since I hadn't shared some of those same experiences. It is obvious the students are having great experiences and growing in their faith, but sometimes I wonder if they are making connections with other areas of their lives or with people off campus. Although these were only a few conversations with a few students, it seems many conversations I have revolve around reflecting and making connections in one's life. In many ways, it is one conversation worth having. ✠



## In Faith, a New Ministry is Born

by Denise Murrow, Liberty, Missouri Companion

*“I say to you if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you” (Mathew 17:20).*

How often have you had an idea in the back of your mind that began as a seed and grew into a vision? Recently I had that experience. My small seemingly insignificant idea grew into a vision, which if it became a reality, could bring the Kansas City Province members and Companions together, and at the same time serve the poor and needy. It reminds me of a quote by Moderator General, Fr. William Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S., “We are called to be ardent witnesses of love for God and neighbor as well. We must be courageous and be willing to reach out to those on the margins. We must be courageous in prayer, ministry, and our community life. We must be courageous in imagining our future as the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.” I wondered if I would have the courage to share my idea with the community so we could all have the opportunity to serve the marginalized together.

In October of 2016 I attended the Companions retreat given by Father Ben Berinti, C.P.P.S. I was in awe of the passion and spiritual content of his presentations. In an article written by Rena Tulipana in the

December 2016 edition of the *New Wine Press*, she mentions the “Four Irritatingly Beautiful Questions” presented by Fr. Berinti. When he asked the question, “Whom shall I send?” a spark lit up my spirit and gave me the strength to follow my faith and focus on my vision. I asked myself, “How can I help the Precious Blood community to unite in helping the needy?” I felt like a school kid and wanted to raise my hand and say “Please send me God!” I wanted to offer my 20 years of experience in social service working for several government agencies to organize our own ministry. We already had a successful Peace and Justice Ministry with Social Justice as an emphasis, advocating for the rights of those oppressed. I thought we could also have a social service component to spread the charity our community could offer to the needy. I shared my idea with my friend, Companion Kathy Keary, who was very supportive. She gave me the inspiration to share the idea with some of the other Companions at the retreat. Kathy’s encouragement helped me realize that

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# Accompanying the Poor

by Keith Branson, C.P.P.S., *Precious Blood Resource Service Planning Committee*

A cholera epidemic ravaged Italy in the mid-1830s, causing widespread death and disruption: in the fall of 1837, it reached Rome. Gaspar del Bufalo was staying at Sonnino, in poor health, but busy guiding his community both in organizing missions and social assistance to epidemic victims as best he could. A call came for him to return to Rome, and in October he was there, visiting hospitals and the sick; others made a line at his apartment for confession and other aid. Gaspar had been a tireless worker for the poor in Rome since his early 20s: as a seminarian he had been appointed president of Santa Galla Hospice, and he was an excellent fundraiser as well as chaplain. One of his biographers said that on this journey to Rome he saw none of the Curia, avoided the hierarchy of the Church, and devoted all his time to making himself available to the poor.

There are many programs available to help the poor in our time. However, as Denise Murrow shared with some of us, there is little cross communication between services, and at times it seems the system makes the process difficult in hopes people will abandon their quest and funds set aside to help them go unused. Very few people walk with aid applicants through the process, and the need is much greater than the help available. At her urging, some Companions, province staff, and incorporated members have been meeting over the past couple of months to develop a Precious Blood Resource Services, where people can come to find out which public and private programs exist that can help them, and get ongoing support as they travel through the system. No other group or agency is especially dedicated to this one service, although a few offer this as part of a larger group of services.

It will be an excellent opportunity for Companions and incorporated members to work side by side, accompanying the poor as Gaspar did and Pope Francis calls us to do today. It is hoped we can set up a pilot program this fall, and eventually operate centers in other places where the Precious Blood community exists. It is a ministry that won't require physical strength or agility—someone in a wheelchair could do it. The work would take average intelligence, patience, and an openness to learn. There will be some training involved as well as ongoing education. However, it may be a chance for us to help people get the assistance they are entitled to and only ask us to commit a few hours every week. It will also be a chance to expand on our Corporate Statements of solidarity and the work of the Peace and Justice Committee by putting words into action, and ourselves in direct contact with those who need our help. We would have a chance to walk with the poor one to one.

Pope Francis started calling us to walk with the poor almost from the beginning of his pontificate. The need today is great and it may become greater. Companions have explored ways to work together in the past, and incorporated members have been talking about which directions our future ministry will go. As we read the signs of the times, it is time to find more ways we can be faithful to Christ's call for us to love one another and reach out to those in need. Perhaps this will be a way we can work together to bring forth the Kingdom of God.



*From left to right: Joey Rodriguez, Larod Styles, and Marshan Allan, who were recently released after the Supreme Court decision that mandatory life without the possibility of parole for juveniles was unconstitutional*

## Homecoming

by Julie Anderson, PBMR

When Joey Rodriguez walked into our meeting alongside his sister Cathy, I could not help but smile as tears sprang to my eyes. For the last 35 years Joey has been incarcerated, and for 10 of those years I have been meeting with his sister Cathy monthly at our CRIIC (Community and Relatives of Illinois Incarcerated Children, a group of family and friends dedicated to seeing juvenile life without parole ended in the United States) meetings. We have cried together, laughed together, hugged each other, and offered each other encouragement and hope where there was none.

Joey is one of three men recently released from prison who attended our meeting this month. Larod Styles and Marshan Allan were also in attendance; both of

these men were incarcerated for over 24 years. Each of the three was under 18 years old when sentenced to life without parole; they were told they would die in prison. Yet here they were at our family meeting—enduring kisses, hugs, and well wishes from the entire CRIIC Family.

For years the CRIIC Family Group has met monthly. In our meetings we talked about our sons, nephews, brothers, and friends who were locked up. Our hopes were that one day they might be released. We shared stories of when they were young, how they were surviving in prison, and tales of their accomplishments and struggles. These were dark years, where there was no hope, only years and years of visiting

someone you love in prison, watching as they die a little more each time you visit. I remember Cathy telling us about her brother, how hard it was for him when their mom passed. Cathy promised her mother she would always be there for Joey and she has been faithful to this day! Larod had Michelle, a truly special friend, who attended the meetings on his behalf. When I first met Marshan his attorneys shared with me how special Marshan was and how wrong it was for him to be in prison—a young man with so much he could offer the world.

I'm not sure if any of us every really believed we would see our guys released. We all hoped that one day it would happen, but to see the miracle of their release, to have these guys come to the meeting and actually talk to us, gave us the courage to never give up hope. Larod stood during the meeting and told all of us that he was there to give us hope, just as our group had given him and others hope during their long years in prison.

On June 25, 2012, the United States Supreme Court ruled it was unconstitutional to sentence anyone under 18 to mandatory life in prison. On that day, we began to have hope, to think that maybe a few of our loved ones would be returned to us. The last 4 years have been a long difficult journey for many of us; re-entering the court system, revisiting the worst time in your life, for many of us seeing the victims' families and the pain that is still with them. Not all of the stories have been as happy as Joey, Larod, and Marshan. Some have been told again that they will die in prison, that they are not more than their worst decision in life. Still others have been given extremely long sentences. For many of us, we are still waiting for our loved ones to be resentenced; it is a limbo that eats away at you, the fear and worry is always there.

We had cake for Joey, Larod, and Marshan because we knew we needed and wanted to support and celebrate them. We all needed to celebrate! It's was a small gesture, but the guys loved it—smiles abounded and for a little while all of us forgot our own worries and basked in the happiness and delight of these three men. I just shake my head, smile, wipe away a tear, and realize that I have witnessed a miracle.

*Julie Anderson's son Eric was sentenced to life in prison when he was 15 years old, he is now 37 years old and is awaiting his resentencing. Julie directs PBM's advocacy efforts through the national Catholic Campaign for Human Development and Dayton Sisters of the Precious Blood. ✠*

### *A New Ministry, continued from page 8*

the idea was worth pursuing and that my faith in God's calling would remain strong.

I then made a proposal for the creation of a resource service that would connect those in need with social service organizations in the community. Companions and incorporated members could work together to establish the resource center, promoting Precious Blood spirituality in a faith-based project designed to build relationship within the community through service and charity. This project would link the elderly, disabled, low-income families, children, and others in need to supportive services. All members of the Precious Blood community could participate in providing the contents of the resource center. Resources could be gathered and placed in a database establishing an online service as well as an outreach service.

The vision has grown bigger than a mustard seed and the mountain has been nudged. An advisory committee was formed which includes Fr. Garry Richmeier, Fr. Keith Branson, Margaret Haik, Gabino Zavala, and Kathy Keary. After several meetings and hard work, plans for Precious Blood Resource Services were created. These services will consist of needs assessment, referral, and accompanying. We will refer those in need to resources and help them through the process so they can effectively receive those services. An organizational structure has been established and locations for a central office have been explored in mid-town Kansas City. Inquiry has been made into funding opportunities. Training sessions will be implemented for those in the community who are interested in being part of the process. We have reached out to other social service organizations that have shown interest in collaborating with us. All Companions, volunteers, and incorporated members have their own unique gifts and talents to offer to those in need and can help this project to succeed. The committee will be reaching out to the community to share our progress and ask for input and ideas.

The unity of all works to achieve the spiritual goals God has intended for us and enables us to reach out to the marginalized and spread the Precious Blood spirituality.

“For in one body we have many members and the members do not all have the same function, so we, through many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another” (Romans 12:4-5). ✠

# Piecing Together Divine Wisdom

by Fr. Garry Richmeier, C.P.P.S.

People often come to me asking for help in making difficult decisions. Usually they have already weighed all the pros and cons, but are hesitant to do anything because they don't want to make the wrong choice. When I ask who judges whether a choice is right or wrong, they often tell me that it is God. So the question shifts from "How do I figure out the best thing to do?" to "What does God want me to do?"

We human beings are pretty insecure sometimes, especially when dealing with uncertainty as to what to do. It is difficult work sorting through all possible courses of action, having to settle on one, and still not being certain what will come of it. Many of us would much rather have someone (e.g. God) tell us the "right" choice so we can forgo all that work (and let someone else take the responsibility for the outcome).

Many religions are adept at "helping" people attain certainty. Religions tend to claim they speak for God, the definitive judge of right and wrong. So if people do what the religion says, they don't have to worry about making a wrong decision. Terms like "intrinsic evil" are used to label wrong choices, while rules, laws, and doctrine are used to label (mandatory) right choices. Of course the price people pay for this certainty is the forfeiture of their right and responsibility to make their own moral decisions. But we can never ethically shirk our responsibility to make our own moral decisions.

The same thing can happen in politics. It is hard work sorting through all the issues facing us as a country, and coming to some level of understanding that will guide us in urging law makers toward the best course of action. So it is tempting to see our job as simply electing our favorite person and letting them take responsibility for everything that happens after that. This can easily devolve into

blindly following and defending that person regardless of what he/she says or does. This idea probably motivated some people to criticize protestors after this last election, calling them whiny sore losers that should just shut up. The implication is that their job was only to vote, and since their person didn't win, they have no more rights or responsibilities for voicing which direction the country should go.

God has given us human beings divine wisdom as a guide to all good. But the catch is that each of us has a part of that wisdom, often called collective wisdom. If you or I choose not to offer our piece of that divine wisdom because of apathy, fear, or self doubt, the direction we need to go as a people becomes less clear. If you or I let some religion, elected official, or party platform speak for us, we again deprive others of our unique piece of the divine wisdom, and we end up with only a few people (or one person) making decisions for all. If you or I don't listen to what others have to offer because they are different than us, or because we see them as enemies somehow, we miss their piece of divine wisdom, and may lose our way, ending up in division, mistrust, and violence.

We have a moral and Spiritual responsibility that we cannot delegate to anyone else. This moral responsibility is to make sure that every person's piece of wisdom (including my own) gets included in the public discernment of where we need to go. Only by trusting this divine wisdom with which God has gifted us (which means trusting each other) can we ever hope to find our way through all the complicated issues facing us. Only this divine wisdom can draw us together in the common task, which in our faith tradition is called building the reign of God. ✠



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

**- St. Gaspar del Bufalo**



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

“One of the challenges we face as precious blood people seeking to be a reconciling presence in an increasingly polarized environment is to create sacred space for dialogue. By listening to the other’s story, we seek to go deeper into the well of each other’s experiences. We do this not to prove a point, advance an ideology, or win an argument, but to find our common ground of humanity.”

*Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S.  
Provincial Director, Kansas City Province*

