



THE NEW WINE PRESS

Motivated by the Spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

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Leadership Notes
page 2

+Fr. Thomas Conway
page 4

The Pastor
as Good Shepherd
page 5

+Br. Robert Herman
page 6

Shunning the Spotlight
page 7

+Companion
Richard Seluga
page 9

Invited and Inviting
page 11

Education at the
Heart of Ministry
page 12

A Father's Defense
page 13

My Back Pages
page 16

A CHURCH IN NEED

Garry Richmeier, C.P.P.S.

The revelation of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy has resulted in much finger-pointing and scrambling to identify who and what is responsible for such evil. The cry for “heads to roll” has been clearly heard in many parts of the world. Various bishops have been blamed—as has the pope—for ignoring sexual abuse allegations and sweeping them under the hierarchical carpet. Another alleged culprit is the culture of secrecy within the church, fueled by an intense fear of scandal and the need to maintain a kind of infallible appearance. Some have even suggested that the traditional blind, unquestioning obedience of the laity is partly at fault in the whole mess.

In general, the institutional church has responded by admitting that there have been priests that have sexually molested children, and numbers of priests have been defrocked or removed from ministry. Different dioceses and religious orders have compensated victims financially, whether as a result of lawsuits, out of court settlements or voluntarily admission of moral responsibility. New structures have been set up in Catholic institutions to protect children from abuse.

Despite all these actions, the institutional church has resisted the notion that something inherent in the church’s hierarchical structure, organizational culture or modus operandi could share some blame for the crisis. The hierarchy has adopted a Copernican, reductionistic view that the problem is a result of defective “cogs” in the church machine, and



when these cogs are fixed or replaced the machine will run smoothly. This allows church leaders to remove guilty priests and proclaim that the problem is fixed, while few bishops have felt personal repercussions because of their roles in the scandal.

This rather mechanistic view also places a high priority on identifying “defective” cogs (people) before they are allowed into the clerical ranks to gum up the works. A so-called “defect” that church officials have identified as one of the main causes of the sex abuse by clergy is homosexuality. They cite statistics that show most of the victims across the country have been male. Therefore there has been a recent push in seminaries to identify and dismiss people who are homosexual. In effect, the institutional church has named homosexuality as the

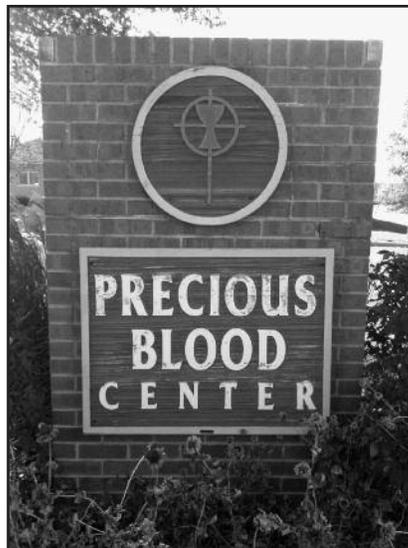
See Need, continued on page 10...

LEADERSHIP NOTES:

Al Ebach, C.P.P.S.

During the community assembly of 1986, there was a proposal to use a million dollars from the sale of Precious Blood Seminary to construct a central house for the Kansas City Province. The final tally: yes-73, no-16. Two years later an addendum was made to the 1986 proposal to raise the amount of money by two hundred thousand dollars to finish the project. By this time the priests and brothers who lived at Precious Blood Seminary had moved to three different locations in the Liberty area. In 1988, at an annual assembly, it was announced that eighty acres of property had been purchased for the construction of a community center. Fifty of the eighty acres were purchased for investment. After much discussion at district gatherings it was decided to construct three residential houses for twelve community members, and one building was to accommodate space for offices and community life.

This is how Precious Blood Center in Liberty, MO began. There were numerous discussions at district meetings and assemblies regarding the purchase of property and the building of a center to replace Precious Blood Seminary. During all those discussions there did not seem to be a clear purpose for the center complex other than to provide housing for community members. Some of the membership envisioned the use of the new space to provide opportunities for members to live in community and support each other in ministries in which they were involved. Other members thought the center could provide a home for those who were planning to retire from active ministry.



Over the years a number of members have lived at the center for a variety of reasons. In most recent years, the houses at the community center mostly provided accommodations for members who were retired, even though it was agreed that the complex was not to be used solely as a place of retirement. Nevertheless, it has been a home for many priests and brothers and continues to serve the needs of many ministries for members and companions.

On June 8, 2010, through an invitation from the province leadership, the staff members who minister at Precious Blood Center and the members who reside at the center met to share dreams, ideas and possibilities for the center, focusing mainly on Altmann Manor (the guest house). However, as the discussion developed, some people voiced various options as possible ministries utilizing the entire campus. There seemed to be some excitement as people shared their ideas for the center. One individual suggested it should become a place for ministry to the marginalized, as shared in the province mission statement. Another person became excited about the possibility of the center presenting opportunities for training, education, language courses and retreats.

THE NEW WINE PRESS

Missionaries of the Precious Blood
Kansas City Province
www.kcprovince.org

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

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

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

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

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It was suggested that the center be made available as a place for members and companions to find spiritual and physical solace, or a space that could be created for exercise and recreation. There was even a suggestion to have a wildlife sanctuary (with the exception of geese!). Additionally, someone mentioned adding some hermitages to offer additional approaches to retreats and prayer. Above all, people agreed that it should be a place where Precious Blood spirituality and hospitality is alive.

A number of possibilities were presented around a circle in the chapel. Many of the participants expressed concerns about environment, both inside and outside the buildings. People shared about the lack of handicap accessibility. Ideas also surfaced regarding landscaping and environment that would be inviting—such as walking paths, benches, plants, art work, etc. Some people shared that the interior of the guest house could use features that would be more accommodating to all who visit or participate in activities and programs.

Everyone in the circle contributed with all kinds of possibilities. There were also some practical questions and concerns addressed. What would this do to the people who are presently residing at the center? Would there be someone assigned to be a coordinator of programs and activities, along with being a minister of hospitality? How could this be advertised within the community, parishes and the diocese? What would be the expense of such a venture? Is Precious Blood Center the best site for these dreams and possibilities, or should the community invest in another place that would be more accommodating? All these questions and concerns are areas yet to be addressed.

The staff members and residents were very responsive regarding possibilities and dreams. The next step, which is already in motion, is for members and companions to be invited to form committees to develop plans and suggestions to be presented to the assembly in May. One committee will be asked to present possible programs and activities for the center. Another committee is being formed to discuss environment, landscaping and physical needs of the campus and buildings. The committee members have been selected and approved and will begin the task of discerning various possibilities. The assembly may not yet be open to follow recommendations from the committees; however, the input from the committee members can hopefully present ideas for members and companions to further review alternative uses for Precious Blood Center.

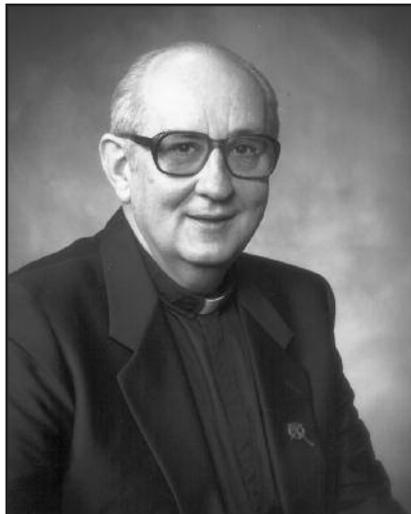


Fr. Al Ebach is pastor of Sacred Heart-Guadalupe Parish in Kansas City and serves on the Province Leadership Team.

+FR. THOMAS CONWAY, C.P.P.S.

Fr. Thomas Conway, C.P.P.S. of the Kansas City Province died at St. Charles Center, Carthagen, OH on Wednesday, October 6, 2010. He was born in Detroit, MI on April 15, 1930 (and would therefore often make the connection between his birthday and income tax day!). He was the fifth of seven children of Harold and Marie (Oberle) Conway. He entered Brunnerdale Seminary in Canton, OH on August 14, 1944. Fr. Tom was professed on December 3, 1951 and ordained June 2, 1957 at St. Charles Seminary and spent most of his priestly life in parish ministry.

He first served as assistant pastor at St. Mary Parish in Centerville, IA. In 1958 he was assigned as assistant pastor at St. Anthony Parish in Park Falls, WI and then in 1961 as assistant pastor at St. Anthony Parish in Linton, ND. In 1966 he returned to Centerville for a year, after which he went to Marymount College in Salina, KS to serve as chaplain. In 1968 Fr. Tom began his first pastorate in Westboro, WI with missions in Whittlesey and Chelsea. In 1976 he became pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Butternut, WI. In 1979 he was assigned as pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in St. Joseph, MO, where he served until 1983, when he was assigned to Precious Blood Center in Liberty, MO as Provincial Archivist.



Fr. Thomas Conway, C.P.P.S.
1930-2010

From 1985 to 1989 Fr. Tom served as a member of the General Curia in Rome. During this time, he worked in the Generalate Archives and was responsible for much of the cataloging and filing which remains to this day. In 1990 he returned to Precious Blood Center as Local Director, during which time he also had a variety of other responsibilities. In 1995 Fr. Tom returned to

parish ministry as pastor of The Church of the Annunciation in Kearney, MO, where he served until his retirement to Precious Blood Center in 2002.

Fr. Tom was Irish, a great storyteller. One of his best memories was the sabbatical he took at the University of Notre Dame in 1990. He was a great fan of the Irish and often sported clothing with the Notre Dame logo. He knew the history of the community well and could be called upon to share stories about many of the members. He was well versed with dates, locations and the personnel assignments of many members. He enjoyed conversations of all kinds—with members, companions, parishioners and friends.

Fr. Tom was also an artist. While he was in Linton, ND he wrote a screenplay for the television show “Combat,” which was used. In addition he wrote a complete Mass which was used by the choir in Linton. He also wrote some music which was featured on the Lawrence Welk Show. Perhaps his biggest passion was heraldry, and he produced numerous coats of armor—which were the result of extensive knowledge and research. Fr. Tom had an inquisitive mind and enjoyed both hearing and telling a good story. His humor and laughter will be missed. His jokes (especially the puns) brought laughter, ridicule, snickers and enjoyment—and he was always ready for any response to them.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Charles Center on October 8, 2010. Fr. Tom’s brother, Fr. Robert Conway, C.P.P.S., presided and his nephew, Msgr. Robert McClory, preached the homily. Burial followed in the community cemetery at St. Charles.

THE PASTOR AS GOOD SHEPHERD

Fr. Robert Conway, C.P.P.S.

Upon hearing of the death of President Kennedy, Washington columnist Mary McGrory remarked to a colleague, "We'll never laugh again." Of course they did laugh again but future TV press conferences never again caught the vigor and spark that JFK inspired. Perhaps with the passing of Father Tom, gatherings pastoral and social will lack the enthusiasm that he could be counted upon to stimulate.

The *Velasquez Spanish and English Dictionary* gives the first definition of the Spanish word "pastor" as "shepherd or one who tends sheep." The Spanish "cura" is defined as "parish priest, rector, curate." In Chile and elsewhere "cura parroco" is rector or incumbent of a parish.

Among Spanish-speaking evangelicals the head of a congregation is known as "el pastor, la pastora." Wouldn't you agree that such is a truly wonderful name for the leader of God's flock: the shepherd. The whole connotation of "pastor" would be changed. For instance, "Who is the shepherd of your church?" Or, "Is the shepherd holding a meeting tonight?"

Father Tom was a true shepherd. Yes, he was gifted with an imagination that wrote a TV war drama, that invented several board games that gave Lawrence Welk a usable song, and entertained us as the welcome teller of tales—true and otherwise.

In some ways these accomplishments, standing alone, could distract us from knowing Father Tom as the good shepherd. The portrayal of real-life persons in films can often be misleading. Thus, Fr. Flanagan of *Boys Town* fame; Fr. Duffy, the Fighting 69th; Msgr. O'Flaherty, *The Scarlet and the Black*; and Fr. Clark, the

Hoodlum Saint. In all these films the cinematic priests were depicted as social worker rather than that of a celebrant of the sacraments and dispenser of spiritual realities.

Such was not the Fr. Tom that his congregations knew and loved in Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, North Dakota, and Missouri. Many testify to this. One such was the bishop of the Superior diocese who wrote to Father Tom; "It is always a joy for me to meet you at meetings. The priests of the diocese like you and that is a great compliment in itself.... Sometimes I get tired of being a Bishop, but it is priests like you who give me the courage to continue.... With warmest personal regards and best wishes, I remain very sincerely in Christ, George A. Hammes, Bishop of Superior."

As death drew near Fr. Tom, the good shepherd, received notes with a shared theme. Thus, "Just a note to know how much we love you! What a fine pastor for us and greatly beloved! It was always a joy to see your smiling face." And another, "We've shared a lot of meals, laughed a lot, discussed our precious faith a lot. A lot of Masses and a lot of confessions. My family and I love you so much, Father!"

In Fr. Tom's room I found this plaque: "Visionary Award In gratitude for envisioning and laying the foundation for small faith communities at The Church of the Annunciation in Kearney, Missouri; this certificate is presented to Thomas A. Conway, C.P.P.S." It is signed and sealed by eight members of the parish. The good shepherd was at work.

Pope John Paul II wrote: "How great and noble is the vocation of the priest! Ordained first of all to proclaim Christ, to celebrate his mystery, and to transmit to the faithful Christ's invisible and efficacious signs, such as the sacraments, the priest is God's gift of love to the Church."

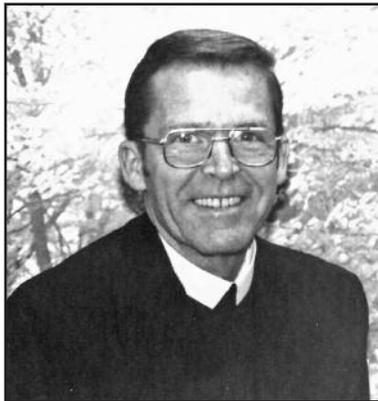
We thank Christ, the Good Shepherd, for Father Tom, alter Christus and good shepherd.

Fr. Robert Conway is a member of the Cincinnati Province and a brother to Fr. Tom Conway.

+BR. ROBERT HERMAN, C.PP.S.

Br. Robert Herman, C.PP.S. of the Kansas City Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood died on October 11, 2010 at Our Lady of Mercy Country Home in Liberty, MO. He was born on July 8, 1931 in Cincinnati, OH to Edward and Emma (Grimminger) Herman. A resident of Springfield, OH from 1932 to 1954, Br. Robert graduated from Catholic Central High School in 1950. He entered the community in June, 1954 at St. Mary's Novitiate in Burkettsville, OH. On August 15, 1956 he made Temporary Profession at the novitiate, followed by Final Profession on August 15, 1959 at St. Charles Seminary in Carthage, OH.

From 1956 to 1965, Br. Robert served on the staff at St. Charles Seminary in Carthage, working in the kitchen as a baker, in the front office, and in various other capacities. In 1965 he transferred to Brunnerdale Seminary in Canton, OH. The provincial at the time, Fr. John Byrne, C.PP.S., wrote in his letter of assignment: "It is said when you want a job done, look for a busy man. You have been one of my anchor men among the brothers at St. Charles. It is because of your grand personality, your exemplary spirit and your many talents that I spontaneously gravitate to you when I need assistance."



*Br. Robert Herman, C.PP.S.
1931–2010*

Br. Robert served on the Disciplinary Staff at Brunnerdale until August of 1966, at which time he transferred to the newly-formed Kansas City Province and began his ministry at Precious Blood Seminary in Liberty, MO. During his time there he worked in the kitchen as a cook and a baker; outdoors mowing the lawns, landscaping and planting trees; and in the treasurer's office. In 1977, he began a year-long Clinical Pastoral Education Program at Little Company of Mary Hospital in Evergreen Park, IL. He often spoke of this being a turning point in his life, one that expanded his horizons beyond his previous institutional ministries and helped him to recognize that he was capable of doing ministry that he once thought not possible for him.

In 1977, Br. Robert joined the pastoral team at Sacred Heart Parish in Sedalia, MO. In 1987, *The Catholic Missourian* ran a story featuring his ministry at Sacred Heart. He was referred to as the "nerve center" of the parish because of his numerous and varied work. Quoting the story, "He knows the people, he is on the job seven days a week as bookkeeper, cook, handling phone calls, serving as liaison between the parish and social concerns

agencies in Sedalia. If anyone in the parish needs help of any kind, Br. Robert is likely to know it and will see to it that help is given." In addition to these activities, he also brought communion to the sick and homebound of the parish, using his bicycle for transportation.

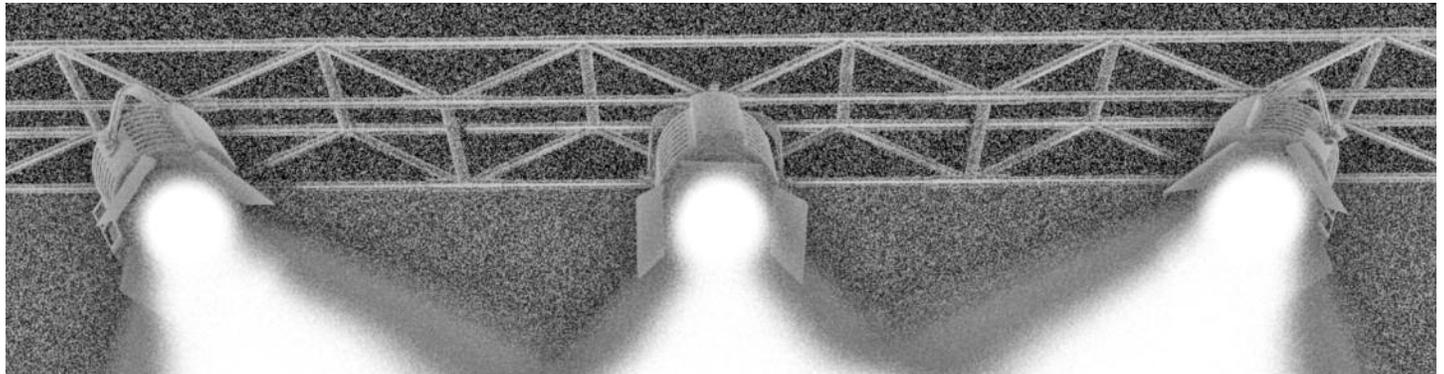
After his time in Sedalia, Br. Robert joined the formation staff in the college formation program, helping to manage the three houses next to Rockhurst University where the candidates lived with him and the other two directors. He served there until 1994, when he joined the pastoral staff at St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Gladstone, MO. Here he had a two-fold ministry: outreach to the elderly and homebound and emergency assistance to the needy, a ministry of care and compassion to people who are too often forgotten. Pastor Fr. John Wolf, C.PP.S. explained at the time: "Robert is not a leader, as many would describe leadership. He does not seek the limelight; in fact, he stays quite clear of it. But he plays a key role in the mission and ministry of the parish. On the home front, Robert can often be found in the kitchen on Saturday morning baking bread, making a casserole and gathering up recycled items to take to the recycling center." In 2007, Br. Robert retired to Precious Blood Center in Liberty where his ministry with the elderly and homebound continued.

Br. Robert is survived by his brother Don and MaryAnne (Franzen) Herman, 8 nephews and nieces, and 14 great nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother Edward Jr. and wife Elaine (Conroy) Herman.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Wednesday, October 13, 2010 at St. James Parish in Liberty, MO, with Fr. James Urbanic, C.PP.S. presiding and Fr. Michael Goode, C.PP.S. preaching. Burial followed at Resurrection Cemetery.

SHUNNING THE SPOTLIGHT

Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S.



In the early 1970s, there was a Disney film called “Now You See Him, Now You Don’t,” starring a youthful Kurt Russell and a supporting cast of sitcom veterans long-forgotten (unless you are a true trivia buff who remembers Joe Flynn from McHale’s Navy). The movie was a typical Disney flight of fantasy that focused on a chemistry student who accidentally invents a spray that makes its wearer disappear. One would hope Calvin Klein could invent cologne with that feature. Of course, a “bad” guy finds out about the invention and plans to steal it so he can become invisible and pilfer to his cruel heart’s content.

I thought of this not-so-memorable movie, not because of the plot, but because of the title. I lived with Brother Robert Herman for several years, first at Sacred Heart Parish in Sedalia and later at the college formation house, commonly known as the Rock House, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Brother Robert had an uncanny ability to disappear from a party or social gathering without anyone noticing he was gone. Now you see him; now you don’t. He wasn’t being impolite or rude; he was simply being Robert. When it was time for his solitude, when it was time for sleep, he never drew attention to himself or made a grand exit. He simply slipped away quietly. And when you turned around, he was gone. “Where did Robert go?” someone would ask. Now you see him; now you don’t.

But this description captures more than Robert’s presence and then sudden absence at parties or community gatherings. It also describes how he refrained from wanting any attention drawn to himself for his work, for his ministry or for his accomplishments. Robert shunned the spotlight. He was always more comfortable in a supporting role. No one was more supportive, encouraging and generous in his affirmation of others than Brother Robert Herman. He would prefer to point the spotlight on someone else rather than himself. Robert was so extravagant in his praise and affirmation that one would think it was the greatest feat since homemade bread (who cares if it is sliced or not?)—and the bread Robert made at the seminary and at the parishes he served caused one’s senses to awaken to thoughts of home.

Ok, Robert was prone to embellishment, but if you were the recipient of his encouraging words, you didn’t mind so much. Sometimes when we were living together and experienced the same event—whether it was meteorological, ecclesiological, eschatological, or just plain social like coffee and conversation at the Bothwell Hotel in Sedalia with the early morning daily Mass group—I would hear him tell the tale later I would wonder if I had been at the same event.

But that was Robert: generous with his friendship, his faith and his forgiveness. For when we did not see eye to eye—which was rare but part of the human condition of living in community—he never held on to the hurt for long. Perhaps that is why he didn’t understand those in community who had difficulty with his decision to leave Precious Blood Seminary where he was a baker, cook, and assistant to the treasurer to embark on a new ministry, first doing a Clinical Pastoral Education program in Chicago and then landing in Sedalia for more than a decade as pastoral associate. In the early days of the Kansas City Province, brothers were often confined in their ministry to support staff to keep Precious Blood Seminary running.

Continued on page 8...

Robert was one of the first brothers to break the mold and embark on a new ministry and I always admired his willingness to take the risk.

Of course, once he arrived at a new place, he planted his feet and his roots went deep. We were together two different times at Sacred Heart in Sedalia. The first time was his first year at the parish and my year of Special Formation when I taught at the high school. Vince Hoying was pastor, Bill Higgins took care of Bahner and Spring Fork, and Richard Colbert was associate pastor.

My first experience of living in community without seminarians my own age was facilitated by Robert, Vince, Bill, and Richard and their generous acceptance.

I went back to Sedalia in 1985 as a priest to work with Robert and Bill Walter, with Tony Kraff and later Paul Sattler at St. Patrick's. Tony and Paul would always come to Sacred Heart for the evening meal that Robert faithfully prepared, and those two years remain one of the strongest memories of what community can be that I have experienced in the Precious Blood. We would make it a point to spend some time together at the Lake of the Ozarks, either at my brother Ed's place (about an hour and fifteen minutes from Sedalia) or at the other end of the lake with Tren Meyers who was pastor at Warsaw and Cole Camp at the time. When my brother Ed died three weeks before I was scheduled to leave Sedalia, Robert came to the funeral and was a prayerful companion in grief.

Robert was the nerve center of Sacred Heart Parish, answering the phone in the front office, welcoming the visitors (those who had appointments and those who were just passing through town and down on their luck), visiting the hospital and bringing communion to the sick and homebound. Robert ministered with those on the margins of the parish and was a good friend to those who hungered for the body and blood of Christ but were not able to come to the table because of illness or age. Robert brought the table to them and kept them connected to the parish.

When he left Sedalia to join the formation staff at Rockhurst in Kansas City, Robert found it very difficult. He did not want a

going-away party. He did not want any kind of reception. Now you see him; now you don't. I encouraged him to give in and let the people celebrate what he had meant to them for more than a decade—to do it for them not for himself. But I remember him telling me he was afraid he would be too emotional for him. As I understand it, this was his pattern at the other places where he served for a long time as well. Even at our Assembly a few years ago when he was celebrating a significant anniversary of incorporation, he chose a quiet dinner with friends over the banquet honoring the Jubilarians.

“...I prayed with him and spent a few minutes thanking him for the years we spent together in community and his faithful friendship. While I never learned his secret about how he was able to slip away from the spotlight and disappear without anyone noticing, anyone who came in contact with Robert learned a little more about humility, hospitality, and compassion.”

Even in death, Robert shunned the spotlight. He did not want a wake service with storytelling or a sharing of memories. He did not want a public viewing as his body was cremated. He simply wanted his life to speak for itself, and it most certainly did.

The last time I spoke with Robert was this summer when I flew into Kansas City for some retreats and workshops in the Midwest and picked up a car at Precious Blood Center. We talked for more than a half-hour in the garage as he was coming in from a communion call and I was heading out for a retreat. He told me about his aches and pain, especially his back, but not in a complaining way. He asked about life in California and the community at Sonnino Mission House. We shared a few memories and I told him I would pray that he would feel better. Robert always kept himself in great shape—from swimming and exercising to watching what he ate—so when his age began to catch up to him, Robert no doubt found it very difficult to keep a regular routine.

The last time I saw Robert was a two weeks before his death when I was back in the Midwest and he was at Our Lady of Mercy Home. He was under heavy medication and his breathing was labored. He was nonresponsive when I prayed

See Spotlight, continued on page 14...

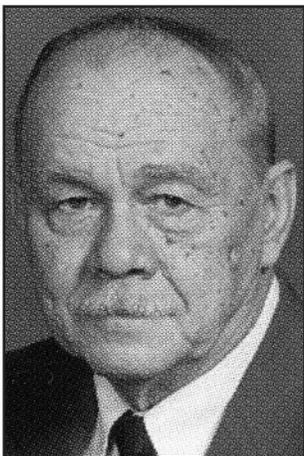
+COMPANION RICHARD SELUGA

Richard George Seluga, 71 of Bonifay, FL died on Monday, September 27, 2010, at Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan, Alabama, after battling brain cancer. Born May 11, 1939 in Waukegan, IL, he was the son of the late Felix Seluga and the late Rose (Moll) Seluga. He was a member of Blessed Trinity Catholic Church. Mr. Seluga was a member of the Highland Park, IL police department for 17 years prior to moving to Park Falls, WI where they operated the Eager Beaver Inn for 34 years, after which they moved to Bonifay in 2007.

He is survived by his wife Alvera; one son, Richard Seluga and wife Carol, of Staughton, WI; one daughter, Rose Hoffman of Apache Junction, AZ; brother, Harry Seluga of Naples; five grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

A funeral service was held at Blessed Trinity Catholic Church with the Fr. Richard Dawson officiating. Memorialization by cremation followed with Sims Funeral Home of Bonifay directing.

[From *Washington County News*, Bonifay, FL., October 6, 2010]



Companion Richard Seluga
1939-2010

Rosann Thate remembers the many stories that Dick told her about being a police officer in Chicago. Rosann joined the Precious Blood Companions at the same time as Dick and his wife, Alvera. I did not know Dick and Alvera until I moved back to Park Falls in 2001. They attended daily Mass and so did I. In a short time, we became best friends.

Dick did many, many things at St. Anthony's. He started a Friday morning hospitality time serving coffee and his homemade rolls after Mass. He would only accept a thank you in payment, but did accept donations for the church/school. (We still have this every Friday, but without his homemade rolls.)



Whenever there was a large gathering at St. Anthony's for which a meal would be served, Dick would do all the cooking. (And again would only accept a thank you.)

I was already a Lay Leader of Prayer, and encouraged Dick and Alvera to take the classes. They did, and both became Lay Leaders of Prayer. About this same time, they were talking to me about the Precious Blood Companions which they had joined. They invited me to a gathering. Later I also became a companion. (We have a great group here at our church.)

Dick and Alvera owned a tavern where they served food. Dick did all of that cooking too. He had many large fish tanks in the tavern, and sold tropical fish. He traveled often to keep up his supply.

During the many things he was doing, he had a couple of strokes. He never gave up, and when he got back on his feet he was right back doing all the things he had been doing.

About four or five years ago they decided to move to Bonifay, FL where they already owned property. They were missed by all here in the Park Falls and Butternut area, but we kept in touch. But when they left—guess who Dick passed all his church jobs on to? (He was a very persistent man.) So I said ok, but no cooking!

After moving to Florida, they became very close to their new pastor and again Dick was right back doing all the same things at his new church that he had been doing at St. Anthony's. And now he cooks with angels.

Companion Nancy Miller

Need, continued from page 1...

culprit and the scapegoat, relieving the church of the need for any further discernment or soul searching regarding the cause of the sex abuse. And since “heads must roll,” it appears that it will be the heads of homosexuals that will be rolling.

Almost all mental health professionals agree that there is no correlation between homosexuality and child sex abuse. In fact, most perpetrators are heterosexual. Child sex abuse is primarily a crime of domination, manipulation and control—and only secondarily a sexual crime. Abusers find pleasure in controlling the child physically, psychologically and emotionally. Even when the child is out of the abusers reach, the abuser often continues to assert control by having threatened the child or the child’s family if the child tells anyone.

Child sex abuse is a crime of opportunity. Perpetrators often have a preference about what kind of child they choose to abuse, e.g., gender, age, hair color, etc. But the biggest reason abusers choose one child over another is because the opportunity presents itself.

Historically mass servers have been male, which means that there have been many more opportunities for priests to abuse boys rather than girls. In the past people would have gotten concerned if a priest appeared too friendly with a girl, and probably would have done something to stop it. But priests were encouraged to be engaged with boys in all kinds of ways, including things like camping trips, sports and “man to man” talks. Greater opportunity was the reason most sex abuse victims were male, not because priests were homosexual.

The hierarchical church uses homosexuality as a scapegoat because it can’t admit that it is an abuser’s need to control, dominate and have power over another that is the real issue behind the problem of sex abuse. To do so might call into question the church’s own use of power to control its own mem-

bers. The hierarchy tends to have a psychological blind spot regarding the negative effects of using power and control. The church has long used shame, guilt and threats of excommunication and hell to control the behavior of its members, often rationalizing that “it’s for their own good.” Like forcefully dragging someone down a gravel road, the institutional church has inflicted many wounds with its efforts to control the flock. One example has been the advice priests in the past (and probably still in the present) have given to women in abusive marriages. Women have often been advised to uphold the sacrament of marriage by staying in their relationships and enduring the punishment.

Precious Blood Spirituality calls us to speak against all forms of domination, manipulation and control of people. The image of pouring out one’s life-blood for others is an image of self-giving rather than self-asserting. We speak out first of all by our actions. In our dealings with each other and the people with whom we minister we work collaboratively,

“Precious Blood Spirituality calls us to speak against all forms of domination, manipulation and control of people. The image of pouring out one’s life-blood for others is an image of self-giving rather than self-asserting.”

knowing that we as individuals don’t have the whole truth. This requires that we give extra energy and time to listening rather than moving too quickly to accomplishing specific tasks. We also place a high value on reconciling opposite views and opinions, enabling all to have a place at the table, in the parish, the office or wherever we minister.

Our spirituality also calls us to name and challenge instances of people controlling and dominating others—especially in our church. The scapegoating of homosexuals is just one instance of domination and control in the church against which we need to speak out. Others include the increasing lack of listening to the laity, the attempts to trivialize or demonize female voices in the church (e.g. the recent “investigation” of women’s religious orders), and the appointment of bishops and priests with little or no input from the people to whom these clerics will be ministering, to name a few.

See Need, continued on page 14...

INVITED AND INVITING

Joe Miller, C.P.P.S.

The Vocation and Formation Personnel from the North America Precious Blood Congregations (men and women) met for their Annual Precious Blood Vocation and Formation Conference (PBVFC) at Ruma, Illinois September 30 to October 2, 2010. Guest speaker for the event was Sr. Charlene Diorka, S.S.J., Associate Director of the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC). Sr. Charlene shared an overview of the *Study on Recent Vocations to Religious Life* published by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) in August of 2009. The study was designed to identify and understand the characteristics, attitudes and experiences of the men and women who are coming to religious life today, as well as the characteristics and practices of religious institutes that are successfully attracting new candidates and retaining new members.

We want to share with you a few of the interesting and thought-provoking excerpts from that study.

RELIGIOUS LIFE TODAY

Most religious institutes in the United States are experiencing diminishing numbers, but some continue to attract new members and a few are experiencing significant growth.

Nearly 4,000 men and women are either in initial formation or professed final vows within the previous 15 years, which confirms that there are still significant numbers of men and women who are responding to a call to religious life and are hopeful about its future.

78 percent of men's communities and 66 percent of women's communities have at least one person currently in initial formation (candidate or postulant, novice, or temporary professed).

ATTRACTION TO RELIGIOUS LIFE AND TO A PARTICULAR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE

85 percent say the example of members attracted them "very much," especially their sense of joy, down-to-earth nature, commitment and zeal. Sense of call and a desire for prayer and spiritual growth are other primary draws.

Most new members were attracted to their particular religious institute by its spirituality, community life, and prayer life.

VOCATION PROMOTION AND DISCERNMENT PROGRAMS

The most common discernment programs are: "Come and See" experiences (offered by three-fourths of the responding institutes), live-in experiences and discernment retreats, and

mission or ministry experiences. New members who participated in such programs generally found them to very helpful in their discernment practice.

Many new members did not experience a great deal of encouragement from family members, diocesan priests, parishioners, or friends when they were first considering a vocation to religious life. Younger respondents were more likely to report receiving encouragement from diocesan priests.

BEST PRACTICES FOR VOCATION PROMOTION

Instill a "culture of vocations" and involve membership and leadership in concerted vocation promotion efforts.

Have a full-time vocation director supported by a team and resources.

Use new media, especially websites and other online options.

Offer discernment programs and other opportunities for potential candidates to meet members and learn about the institute.

Target specific groups—college students, young adults, elementary and high school students—to increase awareness and provide information about religious life and a particular institute.

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Most new members acknowledge that the numbers in religious life may continue to decline. Nonetheless, they believe religious life will persevere and that the Spirit can and will move in that diminishment.

New members are especially attracted to religious institutes that themselves are clear and confident about their identity and hopeful about their future.

Fr. Joe Miller, along with Companion Sharon Crall, is Director of Vocation Ministry for the province.

EDUCATION AT THE HEART OF MINISTRY

Chris Hoyt

“This is seriously going to cut into Monday Night Football,” I thought last fall as I drove north along I-35 at 9:30 P.M.. Just two months before I had decided to enroll in the Masters of Public Administration program at the University of Kansas. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, the program ranks high among all programs in public and non-profit administration. As a young adult reentering the U.S. from a non-profit experience in Mexico, it seemed to be a logical step to best prepare myself professionally for the challenges of this new and emerging volunteer ministry. “Doesn’t change the fact that I just missed the Cardinals/49ers game.”

Truth be told, I am loving the entire experience. Sure, I spend most evenings at the university’s satellite campus in Overland Park discussing the increasing pressures that non-profits face during economic recessions. But I find myself alongside all walks of public and non-profit managers, from city engineers to curators to firefighters, all of whom try to answer the question, “How can I best serve my community?”

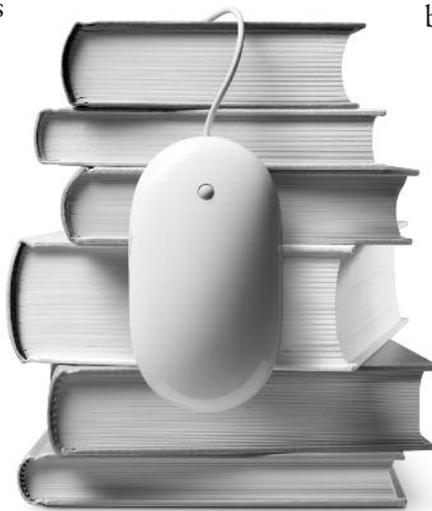
A professional faculty of county administrators, social scientists, and Chief Information Officers make up a small portion of the wealth of knowledge and experience I have the opportunity to learn from each day. Each semester, I catch myself thinking, “Wow—this person really could be pulling down big bucks by working in the private sector.” But I could say the same thing

about my peers in class, who spend countless nights away from loved ones (or any resemblance of a personal life), grappling with statistics to best understand how we can use data for strategic planning, or studying how organizations effectively use performance evaluations to improve the daily culture of the workplace.

As a liberal arts major, I feel blessed to spend this time brushing up on my budget planning skills, improving the way I listen and communicate to build team unity, and manage information technology systems to reach the next generation of volunteers and the people they serve. But more than that, I am continually amazed at the daily opportunity to challenge myself intellectually, participate in stimulating conversations, and think critically to create serious solutions for the serious prob-

lems we face as a society. Some call it (gasp) being a nerd! I like to think of it as part and parcel of my ministry. Why not? And as it turns out, I can just DVR the game!

Chris Hoyt is the Director of Precious Blood Volunteers



A FATHER'S DEFENSE

Dave Kelly, C.P.P.S.

“He wasn’t a bad kid. I mean, he wasn’t perfect, but he was a good kid. He didn’t deserve to die like that.” It was if he had to defend his son even in death. Too many people had questioned why his son was killed. “Was he into something? Was he in a gang? What was he doing that he got killed?” Too often families tell of how they feel as though they have to defend their loved ones even when they are the victims of a horrific crime.

Late Sunday afternoon, as I was saying goodbye to our Hope and Healing group—a support group for families who have lost a loved one violence—I received a call. “Father, can you come to the hospital? Andy was shot; they say he won’t make it.” I arrived at the hospital, celebrated the sacrament of the sick and anointed Andy, but his wound was too grave and his heart gave out.

Only a week before his death, after Mass on the steps of the church, Andy spoke to me about enrolling in college. He had graduated some months before and was working at McDonalds. He wanted more out of his life. He wanted something that would give him a future. As he left, he turned and embraced me and said he’d call. Andy had just turned eighteen years old.

One of the things that families who have lost a child to violence always say is that many people presume that their son somehow brought the violence on himself. As we were planning the funeral, Andy’s father spoke—in the midst of his grief—of a kid who struggled, and was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. He was killed in the middle of the afternoon on a Sunday. He was with his friends, riding in a car—nothing more. He was a victim of violence.

Andy’s older brother only recently returned from Iraq after his tour of duty. He returned back home to Chicago after his four years with the U.S. Army were completed. It is ironic, if not tragic, that he comes back from war to the death of his little brother on the streets of Chicago.

One might be tempted to see this as an urban issue, as something that is confined to the streets of places like Chicago. But school bullying, drug dependency and family and institutional dysfunction is not limited to urban America. One only needs to pick up the newspaper or turn on the television to hear stories of how violence has interrupted and changed forever the lives of yet another family, another community.



I cannot tell you how many community gatherings, town hall meetings and strategy sessions I have been a part of in an attempt to address the violence among our youth. The question as to why there is so much violence, drug abuse and polarization within our communities seems to be the topic of many agenda. Why do so many youth seemingly have so little direction in their lives? Why is there so much violence in families and communities? Why are kids killing kids? What can we do?

While so many are focusing on stricter laws and harsher punishment, the church is called upon to do what she does best—to reach out and heal. Programs addressed to healing—not punishing—those who are caught up in violence seems to be more in line with who we are as a community of believers.

The first step toward learning how to prevent any health problem—and violence is a health problem—is to discover what causes it. Once we know what causes it, we know a bit more about how we are to overcome it, neutralize it or remove it. Violence, as opposed to some of the other health issues, is caused by humanity.

“Hurt people hurt people”, says noted psychologist Carl Bell. If we are to overcome the violence that plagues our communities

See Defense, continued on next page...

Need, continued from page 10...

The presence of blood is not something that can easily be ignored. Whether it is blood being shed or blood being donated, most often it is definitely noticed. As Missionaries of the Precious Blood we need to be just as clear, definite and noticed as we proclaim the gospel message. Speaking clearly for collaboration, dialogue and working together is often uncomfortable in a church that is increasingly hierarchical, directive and intolerant of diversity. But like the missionaries of the past who went into foreign lands to proclaim the Good News, maybe the “foreign land” that needs our missionary activity today is the hierarchical church.

Gaspar preached the Word for the renewal of the church. Maybe the signs of the times are challenging us as a community to be an instrument of renewal for the institutional church today, calling it back to life-giving servant leadership rather than death-dealing hierarchical control.

Fr. Garry Richmeier works in counseling ministry, serves the parish community of St. James in Kansas City, and is a member of the Province Leadership Team.

Spotlight, continued from page 8...

with him and spent a few minutes thanking him for the years we spent together in community and his faithful friendship. While I never learned his secret about how he was able to slip away from the spotlight and disappear without anyone noticing, anyone who came in contact with Robert learned a little more about humility, hospitality, and compassion.

We no longer have to ask, “Where did Robert go?” We know he now enjoys the company of Matty, Iggie, Carl, and Fritz and so many more, who were not just supportive and encouraging friends but brothers in the blood of Christ who knew the bond of charity is a bond that can never be broken. For even when we no longer see them, their spirit is strong, their legacy is sure and their love endures.

Fr. Joe Nassal works in the ministries of retreats, missions and writing and serves on the Province Leadership Team.

Defense, continued from page 13...

and families, we must work to attend to those who carry so much pain and hurt. As a church, we can begin by reaching out and working toward healing and reconciliation. Providing the space and time to allow someone to voice their pain and connect with themselves and others is one way in which we can reduce the violence that is too often the result of feeling isolated and alienated. Violence both causes and is a result of the alienation and the loss of connectedness with those around us.

It is not that our work ends with building relationship; rather it has to begin there. All the programs and intervention strategies cannot take the place of building and sustaining relationships with those who feel isolated from the world around them. Victims of violence or trauma feel as though they are alone. Whether it be the young person who is a victim of bullying, our men and women coming back from war, or the young person on the streets of Chicago—the stories are of feeling numb, or of feeling they don’t belong, of trying anything to bring feeling back into their lives.

The Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation is a ministry of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood charged to work toward healing and reconciliation in and among the communities in which we live and in our Church communities. We have embraced many means to gather people together and create spaces—sacred spaces—where stories are told and relationships can be built or repaired. Some of those methods, such as the peacemaking circle, are teachable and usable in a host of situations. As we strive to be relevant and aware of the “ever changing times” let us reach out to those within our communities who are estranged or in pain and make a place for them—a place of hospitality and care.

The parish church/school continues to be a safe haven in our communities. For many, it is a place of trust and acceptance. We must embrace the unique gift given us through the blood of Jesus; we must embrace the ministry of reconciliation, not as an afterthought, but as the very core of who we are. We have the special gift and honor to tread in places where other cannot tread. We are called to allow the stories to be told and to honor those stories in how we live.

Fr. Dave Kelly, a member of the Cincinnati Province, serves on the staff of the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago.

Pages, continued from back page...

little Matty that there is continuity of some kind. We all want to believe that; we want it to be true.

I remember visiting an elderly woman in a nursing home who asked me in the course of speaking about her death which she was awaiting, “Do you believe in the resurrection?” I answered, almost too quickly, “Of course, don’t you?” She responded, “Yes, I do, but sometimes I wonder.” Absolute certainty about something we haven’t experienced would exceed the bounds of reason.

The gospel this coming Sunday (32nd in Ordinary Time) can help us to believe and give us permission to wonder. Jesus has been locked in intellectual combat; the goal is to trap him in game of wits. Jesus moves the argument, however, from a question grounded in death to one grounded in life. There may not be marriage in heaven, but there will be people—and that which makes us people: knowledge, the gift of meaning, and love.

Jesus says, “Is not God the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?” In other words, “Do you really think those people of God died? Do you really think that God, who loved them so much, who influenced their lives so intensely, would have forgotten those even you remember? Are you trying to tell me that God would overlook them, or forget them? Can you think of yourself as being overlooked in the end.”

Our family picture albums are full of photos of aunts, uncles, grandparents, great grandparents, parents, children, friends, community members—people who have come before us, journeyed with us, and gone on to God. They shared baptisms, ordinations, weddings, family reunions, Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas gift giving. They disagreed with us, annoyed us, committed to us, married us, loved us. These are the very people who are, in the words of Jesus, alive for God; for our God is God not of the dead but of the living; our dead rise again and God is still their God. They are different now in ways we can’t imagine; as sons and daughters of resurrection they are totally for God.

Yes, Matty, we will get to see them again; yes, they still love us, yes, the hurt will stop.

Life continues; and what do now leads directly to life on the other side. In death we leave both those we love and the world; it’s the only world and life we know, and we are so made that we cling to it. We are meant to use God’s gift, to enjoy life and cling to it, trusting in the promise that it continues.



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MY BACK PAGES

Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.

November in the Church liturgical year focuses on endings and beginnings as we remember those who have died and look to the future with hope—despite the many transitions, endings (and beginnings) which we live.

One of my favorite movies, *Men Don't Leave*, tells the story of a woman unexpectedly and tragically thrust into widowhood and single parenthood. Her husband and her suburban home are gone, and she is forced to relocate with her two sons from a small town in Maryland to a Baltimore high rise. The film is all about staying together when everything around seems to be falling apart, and the story centers around each family member's way of coping in response to the father's death.

The younger ten-year-old son Matty is especially lost and seeks an outlet in his isolation from his feelings and in friendships and activities which bring him more pain. His mother, meanwhile, has isolated herself emotionally from the children as she slides into depression.

In a poignant scene near the end of the movie, Matty has run away from the family in order to find his way back to their former house. He is sitting in the play house in the back yard which he and his father built while they were living there. His mother finally finds him. Matty begins and this exchange follows.

"I miss you."

"Are you mad at me? Are you? Matty, listen, I want you to talk to me. I love you so much. I care about you

more than anything else in the whole world. You must know that and you must know that you can always talk to me."

"I can't."

"Why, Matty, why not?"

"I just can't. I wanna say bad things."

"Oh Matty, you don't always have to be such a good boy." *"I do."* "Why?" *"Cause you like me that way."*

"Oh Matty, I love you anyway. I need you. You have to tell me what you need.

"I want...I wanna see him again—just one more time. Does he know? Does he know I'm in the fourth grade."

"Yes, I think he does."

"Does he know I do bad things?" "What bad things?" *"Stealing."* "Well, he knows we will make things right."

"Do you think he still loves me." "Yes, Matty, yes."

"Will the hurt stop?"

"You know what I read once: heartbreak is life educating us. You know what that means?"

"That we're learning something from this?"

"That's right, Matty, that's right."

We all think and feel and speculate and wonder and ache at the reality of death and what waits on the other side of our passage from life in the kingdom here to life in the eternal kingdom. We want to believe like

See Pages, continued on page 15...
