



THE NEW WINE PRESS

Motivated by the Spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

HOW DEEP IS OUR WELL?

Alan Hartway, C.P.P.S.

*Volume 20 No. 1
September 2010*



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Upon arrival in St. Louis, MO for the Precious Blood Convocation, the hospitality began immediately from the sisters. Airport connections and transport to St. Louis University were precise and gracious; my van included a brief scenic pass by the Arch. Campus and dorms were ready for us; accommodations were spacious, although I was bigger than the bed. Now I will appreciate my own college students just a bit more for their endurance when classes begin at Naropa University on August 23rd. Events were in four different closely located buildings on campus. In addition to the North American provincials and leadership, it was good to see Fr. Barry Fischer, C.P.P.S., former moderator general, and Fr. Francesco Bartoloni, C.P.P.S., current moderator general, in our company.

I am beginning my 12th year working and teaching with a richly interreligious, but Buddhist inspired school. I was one of the break out session facilitators for Wednesday afternoon, so naturally I chose to work on the topic "Eastern and Western Spiritualities in Dialogue." There were fifteen of these break out sessions, and because I was leading one of them I could not attend any of the others. I was amazed by the richness of the topics offered by members of the Precious Blood family, and we all should hope that these talks get published somehow among us or placed on one of our websites. A session on education, one on eco-spirituality, and non-violent communication particularly interested me, but there was plenty to choose from for everyone.

A group of mimes presented the encounter of the Samaritan woman and Jesus, acted out on stage and then throughout the days of the convocation among us. This enabled the whole gathering to respond to the call, "I can, I must, I will go to speak a word to rouse them." Their mimed gestures invited the whole gathering to sing along and answer back with our own hands and hearts.

Dialogue became the main theme for me as I listened to Sr. Barbara Reid, O.P. and Fr Charles Bouchard, O.P. Dialogue seemed to be the thread that connected a palette of Precious Blood themes and practices. Dialogue was modeled for us by the way Barbara Reid invited us into the encounter of the Samaritan woman and Jesus at the well. This meeting of two strangers at the deeply ancestral site of Jacob's Well placed them both on an equal plane which enabled them to enter one of the rare and truly dialogue narratives in the gospels.



See Well, continued on page 10...

LEADERSHIP NOTES: *Council or Team?*

James Urbanic, C.P.P.S.

I suppose I am not the best person to address this question, but I do have some thoughts that only I could have. I have been involved in both models, the provincial council model from 2003-2007 and the leadership team model from 2007 to the present.

When elected in 2003, I followed the tradition of my predecessors and our province by working in the provincial council model. I thought this was what was expected. I think I am the kind of person that works well in the present but does not see the future as well as others. The tasks given leadership are not always easy: appointments, coordinating our province ministries and committees, addressing concerns about members, collaborating with other provinces and planning for the future. There are different ways in which these issues can be addressed, and the Kansas City province is trying to address them using a different model.

Also, I am probably not the best person to be involved in this change of models. I worked in the previous model for four years but wanted to be faithful to the 2007 Provincial Assembly, which asked those elected to look at a different model. The challenge of this model was not only for me but for the members and companions as well. Some members perhaps see no difference in the way the models operate in their life, while others notice a change and may not like the change. Others see what is happening and embrace it. Other members elected in 2007 were far quicker than I to go with a leadership team model.

In the leadership team model, decisions about the above named tasks are made more slowly, made more fully, and made by five elected members rather than one. The process can be cumbersome as well as being new. The number of emails among the five members has grown. Decisions are not made by emails, but often a direction is taken that will be discussed in person when we meet. The agenda, the facilitator, those leading prayer and those taking minutes all rotate among the team. We have put in place a list of liaisons in which not everything is funneled through the provincial office but to a specific person. Each of us is a liaison to different offices and ministries, for example, Joe Nassal with companions, Garry Richmeier with vocations, Al Ebach with formation, Dick Bayuk with finance, myself with international C.P.P.S. Every area is then reviewed by the entire team. This takes time, energy and—sometimes for me—waiting to see wisdom in this new model.

The downside of this model is slowness, but the upside is more completeness and a greater care for both the members and the province. Perhaps saying that “five heads are better than one” is a trite way of expressing it. As a personal aside, this model has allowed me the leisure to become the part time pastor of our parish in Warrensburg. I could not have done this in the provincial council model.



Jim Urbanic, C.P.P.S. & Mary Whited, C.P.P.S. served as co-chairs of the Precious Blood Convocation. They also both serve on leadership teams in their communities.

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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 charisma 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.

Precious Blood Center
P.O. Box 339
Liberty, MO 64069-0339
816.781.4344

Editor
Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.
rbayukcpps@mac.com

Assistant Editor
Lou Carey
sec@kcprov.org

Printed on recycled paper by
Trojan Press of North Kansas City

I have found the model to be challenging for me personally, but a better one for the province. I think the province is stronger using the leadership team model. But challenges remain: none of the five of us are full time in the office, while some in the province wish to deal only with me. I am also aware that in some areas of province life our statutes give the provincial the final say, with others in leadership only required to be consulted. In some tasks, especially those involving Praesidium and delicate legal issues, I have acted on my own, partly for reasons of speed or confidentiality but also because this is the way I was doing it using the provincial council model. This is one issue that does not lend itself to the team approach as nicely as other issues.

What happens during our coming electoral assembly I could not predict. I am not planning to be available for a third term. I like the province tradition of two terms and do not wish to alter it. How much of the leadership model will be operative among

those elected I do not know. I do know that the model has not been given a full hearing, being operative for only one term or less. This is an issue for our province discernment, both prior to and during our assembly. It does require more communication among the team, and a bit slower decision process, but it does allow appointments and province business to receive a larger hearing and greater discernment.

There are issues and challenges to be faced by the new leadership team, the makeup of which we don't yet know. Interesting things always happen at elections. I will of course be available to assist the new team with the transition as needed. I thank the province for the opportunity to have served these past seven and a half years.

Each speaks their truth, knowing that neither has the whole truth. Truth is something that cannot be possessed by a single individual or a single group; in fact truth is something that cannot be possessed at all. I may speak what I call "my truth," but I do so knowing the limitations of my ability to perceive and convey truth. Truth emerges in the dialogue as the object of mutual seeking. For Christians, Jesus himself is Truth incarnate. For us, it is in listening to and emulating him, that we learn and embody Truth.

Both Jesus and the woman are letting the Spirit lead them in this dialogical dance. In talking with Nicodemus, Jesus had told him that the "Spirit blows where it wills...and you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit" (3:5). Letting the Spirit lead, they may end up in a different place entirely—neither worshiping in Jerusalem, nor Gerizim, as in a true dialogue, neither one will convert the other to their way, but something new will be born, where their understanding of God, themselves, and "the other" will have changed, which then means their manner of worship will also change.

This part of the dialogue between Jesus and the woman ends with them sharing their hopes for the messianic times. It is in speaking together their hopes for their people, for their children and grandchildren, that they can experience God's revelation in their midst. There's a famous story that Jimmy Carter tells how on the final day of his attempts to try to get Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat to reach a peace accord at camp David in 1978. The talks were breaking down and each was retreating to his own space. Carter was shuttling back and forth, trying to bring them together. When he finally got them to sit down again in the same room, he asked them to show him photos of their children and grandchildren. Each man did so and spoke with pride and longing of his hopes and dreams for a future of peace for the little ones of the next generations. This was the moment of breakthrough for the talks to proceed to an accord.

As Jesus and the woman spoke of their hopes and dreams, together they wove a vision by which God could be perceived as fully manifest in their midst. Transcending the names each of them used for God and God's Anointed, they could both experience the presence of the divine as "I AM," the way Moses, their common ancestor, expressed what he had experienced of God on Sinai.

Sr. Barbara Reid, O.P., from her convocation address



*Sr. Barbara Reid (r) with
Sr. Mary Louise Degenhart, A.S.C.*

+FR. ALPHONSE JUNGWIRTH, C.PP.S.

Alphonse J. Jungwirth, C.PP.S., a member of the Kansas City Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, died on July 28, 2010 at St. Charles Center in Carthagena, OH. He was born on August 7, 1918 in Milwaukee, WI to Karl Jungwirth and Theresa Stoiber. He entered Brunnerdale Seminary, Canton, OH in October, 1931; was definitively incorporated on December 3, 1938; and was ordained on May 9, 1943 at St. Charles Seminary, Carthagena, OH.



*Fr. Al Jungwirth, C.PP.S.
1918-2010*

Fr. Jungwirth is preceded in death by his parents, and a sister, Ann (Henry) Homa. He is survived by one sister, Sister M. Frances Therese, S.S.N.D., of Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, WI; three nephews, Charles (Kathryn) Homa, Joseph (Marge) Homa, John (Rose) Homa; and all the priests, brothers and companions of the Precious Blood Community.

After his ordination, Fr. Jungwirth began his pastoral ministry at St. Thomas

Aquinas Parish, Milwaukee, WI. In 1947 he went to St. John's Parish in Whiting, IN to study Spanish in preparation for the missions in Chile, S.A.—where he then ministered in a variety of capacities until 1953. After he returned to the United States, he served as an associate pastor in Garden City, KS and in Lebanon, PA. He became pastor for the first time in Rockford, OH. Following this first pastorate, he served in many parishes as pastor: Hillview, SD; Beulah, ND; Holly, CO; Wakeeney, KS; and Mystic, IA. In 1996 he retired to St. Charles Center, Carthagena, OH, where resided until his death.

The Mass of Christian Burial took place on August 3, 2010 at St. Charles Center, with Fr. Richard Bayuk, C.PP.S. presiding. Burial following in the Community Cemetery.

Fr. Al was an unassuming servant to the people in his care. He loved being a Missionary of the Precious Blood, and was always welcoming to members who came to visit. He enjoyed “tinkering” around the rectories and churches where he lived and served; he could fix and repair many things. His greatest gift to all who knew him was his quiet, simple approach to life, which he lived with a spirit of humility.

There is an interesting anecdote from Fr. Jungwirth's correspondence with province leadership. After a couple of years in Holly, CO, he wrote a letter to Fr. Daniel Schaefer, the provincial at the time, informing him that he had to get out of Holly for a

few days. In the letter he assured Fr. Schaefer that there were no personal issues involved with this request. He wrote—with his wonderful sense of humor—“No, nothing drastic is on my mind. I'm just trying to be obedient. It's necessary to keep things in shape if one is to live to 92.” Fr. Al Jungwirth died two weeks before is 92nd birthday.

“How are you Fr. Jungwirth?” Those who knew him, could easily predict his response. He would always say: “Terrible!” He didn't always mean that literally, but he did suffer much in his life with a variety of physical ailments. Again, as a true servant, he bore his pain and suffering quietly, rarely ever complaining. Those who knew him best were aware that despite his seemingly tough demeanor, he was a very endearing man when you got to know him. And, by the way, a great Green Bay Packers fan. May he be with God.

Al Ebach, C.PP.S.

The following is the homily from the Mass of Christian Burial. The scriptures were Isaiah 25:6a,7-9 “God will destroy death forever.”, Revelation 21:1-5a,6b-7 (The old order has passed away.), Matthew 25:31-46 (Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me.)

Early this morning, I spent some time in Fr. Al's room. He lived simply, so there are very few material possessions left behind. But what I saw tells a story, and what he chose to hang on to might tell us what was important to him.

First of all, there are two cases filled with many and various tools. Fr. Al loved to “tinker around,” as they say. But he was good at it by all reports. His skills included electrical, plumbing and woodworking, to name a few. Not everyone knew this about him—in part because he didn't make a big deal of it, unassuming as he was.

The second item is a copy of *The Packer Report*, a monthly periodical that he subscribed to at one time. He loved the Green Bay Packers. Fr. Vince Hoying, who is here today, was Fr. Al's neighbor in Iowa in the late 1980s and early

1990s. He tells how on Sunday afternoons following the Masses, he would go to Fr. Al's neighboring parish where he would be welcomed with a manhattan and an invitation to watch the Packer game.

The third thing I found is a German-English Catechism from his St. Charles Seminary days. It has a copyright of 1892. German on one side, English on the other. Fr. Al was born into a German immigrant family in Milwaukee in 1918. I am told that for a time his parents ran a tavern there. Maybe that's where he learned to mix the manhattans.

The fourth and fifth items really go together. His passport—maybe the only one he ever had—is dated 1952. It has two stamps in it, one for entry into Peru (evidently he visited there) and another from when he left Chile in 1953. It was next to a copy of the publication titled *The Diary of Fr. George Fey, 1947-1952: The Beginnings of the Mission in Chile*. Fr. Al was a part of that beginning, serving there with Fr. George (and others) from 1947 to 1953. At the beginning of his ministry he was with Fr. George, and again at the end of his life he was his neighbor as their rooms were across the hall from each other in the infirmary.

Our founder St. Gaspar dreamed of being a foreign missionary, but never got to do it. Fr. Alphonse Jungwirth did. He sailed to Chile as a missionary in 1947 and helped to start what continues today. And he was a missionary of the Precious Blood all his life—in Chile; in all those parishes where he served after his return from South America; in Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, and lastly Mystic, Iowa. Both Fr. Vince Hoying and Fr. Leonard Goettemoeller, who are here today, served in neighboring parishes during his last pastorate, as did his good friend, the late Fr. George Heinzen. Fr. Al not only lived the Precious Blood, he offered it faithfully—in the sacrament, in his life, in his very body as he struggled with his final illnesses.

Fr. Al's life—as it is for all of us—was a gift from a loving God. His life was also a gift shared—with family, with thousands of parishioners, with us in the Precious Blood community. Of course the significant history of our lives is not to be found in the office of the County Clerk, nor in the record of our daily comings and goings, nor our years of school, our jobs, property acquired, money made, nor recognition gained. What matters more are those important events which formed us as disciples of Jesus and children of God. Our baptism, confirmation, marriage, incorporation, or ordination. The times we craved and received forgiveness, or sat at the Lord's table and heard the promise, "Whoever eats this food will live forever."



Passport photo

The gospel we just heard is very sobering and challenging. The criteria for judgment will be the range and sincerity of our compassion. Our fidelity to Christ is tested and measured by compassion, especially to those in need. "I was hungry and you gave me food." "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." "I was sick and you cared for me."

"Come, you who are blessed by my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning." God loved Fr. Al. God called him by name, sustained him with love and grace, and now has gathered him into the divine embrace. So we are here to give thanks—for the love of God which was shown to others in Fr. Al's life; for his perseverance in faith, hope and love; for the happy end of his journey and his final homecoming.

There's one final item from Fr. Al's room that I want to mention. It is a very old, black-and-white photograph that shows him standing



"Fr. Terrible"

on a sidewalk in front of what is perhaps a rectory. On the back someone had written the following: "Hosmer, South Dakota. Summer 1959. Father Terrible, I mean Father Al."

Yes, it's true. When asked how he was doing, he would almost always say "terrible." Sometimes he meant it; he did suffer physically at times. Usually, I think it was just his way of connecting. Beneath a sometimes "tough" exterior was a quiet, kind and gentle man. So allow me to fantasize for a moment about his arrival last Wednesday evening. "Well, how are you, Fr. Al?" "Terrible." But this time it didn't sound as convincing. "No more terrible, Fr. Al. Just as I promised, the veil of death has been destroyed, the tears are wiped away. The old order has passed away. I make all things new. I am your God and you are my son. Welcome home, come on in. Sit down. Here's a manhattan. The game is just starting."

Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.

HEALING: *Integration of Body, Mind and Spirit*

Tom Welk, C.P.P.S.

[The following is a summary of the breakout session given at the Precious Blood Leadership Convocation on July 28 in St. Louis, MO. My presentation was illustrated by graphics that are not included in this article, but are described in a general way.]

Facing imminent death brings with it a host of challenges. We know that death eventually will come for all of us. It is one thing to acknowledge this abstractly; it becomes a totally different reality when our “ticket is punched” and we come face to face with death because of a terminal illness. The cliché that throughout our life-journey we only live one day at a time is on target. Yet, how does one accomplish this “daily” living when confronted with a life-threatening illness?

In the early years of my involvement in providing end of life care through Harry Hynes Memorial Hospice I was accustomed to describe the services of a hospice program by stating that the mission of hospice is to enable terminally ill patients to die well. This premise was rudely challenged by a teenager during a talk I presented to a group of emotionally disturbed youngsters at a Wichita hospital. His loudly-voiced comment/question, “Why in the hell is it so important to die well,” startled me. I was ready to defend/explain my statement when suddenly the light went on. Indeed, none of us begins our day by telling ourselves we want to “die well.” We begin each day with the intention of living well, even though a particular day may have some difficult issues confronting us.

A terminal illness can bring about some very severe challenges compromising the ability to live well. As the body is inexorably deteriorating there also will be accompanying challenges to one’s psychosocial/spiritual functioning.

Over the course of several years, I have used various words to sum up these challenges. Words such as suffering, annihilation and disintegration come to mind. The word I have settled on to describe the varied ways a terminal illness prevents life from being lived fully is brokenness. Nothing seems to work anymore; everything appears to be falling apart. In illustrating this I use a full circle, with four surrounding circles intersecting this circle to depict the physical, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of human functioning.

In the physical arena there is a literal brokenness due to pain and troublesome symptoms (nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, to name only a few) that are part and parcel of a life-threatening illness. Physical pain can either be a small or large intersecting slice of the brokenness circle due to the terminal

disease process. It must be addressed if there is to be a continuation of the deeper living encompassed in the psychosocial/spiritual arena.

My involvement in hospice care has also clearly shown me that only addressing physical discomfort is merely touching the tip of the iceberg when it comes to resolving the often much deeper sources of brokenness. Some



Fr. Tom Welk giving a presentation at the Convocation

patients who objectively should be having little pain indicate they are near the top of a 1-10 point scale. Further probing many times uncovers deeper issues that end up being identified as physical pain. Even the strongest opioid medication will not resolve this “pain.”

Often the patient may be suffering emotionally because of fear. Death is the great unknown; unknowns can be a source of great anxiety. One patient could not even acknowledge he had cancer, telling me that his illness began with a “c.” Admitting he had cancer would require acknowledging also the “d” word: death. It was very emotionally difficult for this patient to do so. Fear, indeed, can be a profound source of brokenness.

Relationships are an integral part of every person’s life-journey. We are social creatures. Relationships, however, are not always what they should be; conflicts inevitably arise. Part of completing one’s life-journey is to take care of unfinished business. Terminally ill patients indicate

they want conflicts resolved. Not having reconciliation can be a significant ingredient of the brokenness circle.

What I find to be the greatest source of brokenness is in the spiritual arena. Defining spirituality can be a daunting task. Often it is conflated with religion. Religion is the means whereby spiritual needs are met. At the risk of being simplistic, let me define spirituality as the longing of the human spirit to find purpose and meaning in life. Not to have a “why” for living can make it extremely difficult to find a “how” to overcome the challenges that inevitably come our way, especially during a terminal illness. Not having a “why” and a consequent “how” leaves one in despair. There is no greater brokenness or source of suffering than despair. It comprises in many instances the biggest portion of the brokenness circle.

In the midst of all this brokenness, how can wholeness be found? In my graphic I depict another circle that is opposite the “brokenness” circle. These two full circles are intersected by the physical, emotional, social and spiritual circles. Wholeness can be reached: 1) by eliminating pain so there is comfort; 2) by dealing with the unknown, thereby replacing fear with trust; 3) by reconciliation, bringing peace in the midst of conflict; and, 4) most importantly, by giving spiritual support, despair is replaced by hope that suffering and brokenness will lead to even greater life.

Comfort, trust (faith), reconciliation (love), and hope are the basic ingredients of wholeness.

Moving from brokenness to wholeness is a process of moving from disintegration to integration. It can also be described as a healing process. The medical world often uses the words cure and heal synonymously. The two words do not identify the same realities. Cure is more properly related to the physical dimension of human functioning; curative interventions are

directed to fixing a body that is broken through injury or disease. Modern medicine has an almost endless array of interventions to hold death at bay. Nonetheless, there comes a time when the prefix “in” must be added to cure: we will all become incurable.

When this happens, then it is time to turn toward healing. Unfortunately, when the word “heal” is extended to form the word “healthy” we end up identifying healing also with the physical part of our existence. The word heal comes from the Anglo Saxon “*hāl*, whole.” Engaging in the process of healing is to move from brokenness to wholeness. Eventually, even the most sophisticated curative medical intervention will be futile; we will all become incurable, but we will never exhaust the possibility of healing. Even in the midst of physical challenges, a healthy person can function well emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Our culture strives mightily to avoid any and all suffering and brokenness. It is an irony of ironies that there can be no wholeness without there first being brokenness. There must be death before there can be a birthing to new life.

The core of Christianity is belief in the resurrection of Jesus. Easter is the celebration of the Christian community. Yet, Easter is not possible without Good Friday. Our culture wants the Easter event, but it desperately tries to avoid Good Friday.

There can be no Easter without a Good Friday; but a Good Friday without an Easter makes no sense either.

This is what is encompassed in Precious Blood spirituality. Jesus gave life so that we can have life. “One of the soldiers thrust a lance into Jesus’ side, and immediately blood and water flowed out”

(Jn 19:14). It is the broken body of Jesus, the wound to his heart that gave birth to new life; gave birth to the Church, the People of God. Saving, life-giving Blood can only flow from a body that has been broken open.

It is through the healing, sacrificial (*sacer*, whole; *facere*, to make) ministry of Jesus that a broken, sinful (*Sünde*, apart, divided, sin) people becomes whole; becomes HOLY.

When our bodies are broken open in death may we, too, find fullness of life, because we have allowed the healing ministry of Jesus to integrate us in body, mind and spirit. May death be the final stage of our growth: birthed to a new life of wholeness, of holiness.

“At the risk of being simplistic, let me define spirituality as the longing of the human spirit to find purpose and meaning in life. Not to have a “why” for living can make it extremely difficult to find a “how” to overcome the challenges that inevitably come our way, especially during a terminal illness.”

INVITED AND INVITING

Joe Miller, C.P.P.S.

Our Precious Blood Family in North America took time to celebrate, pray, learn and relax together at the end of July at a convocation held at St. Louis University. There were two speakers, Sr. Barbara Reid, O.P. and Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P., who reflected on the passage from John's gospel about the Samaritan Woman at the well. There was much food for thought and ways to grow in their presentations. After Jesus explained to the Samaritan women about the living waters and invited her to receive it, she asked about this gift and Jesus promised it to her. It brought new life and excitement into her life. She then went out to share that living water by allowing it to flow out of her to the people in her hometown and others.

As Precious Blood communities, we were invited to allow the living water to flow out of us to all we meet. If we do so, we will allow the living water of our Precious Blood spirituality to spill out into the world to those we encounter along the way.



Companion Sharon Crall and Fr. Joe Miller of the Vocation Ministry Office at the Convocation.

The people who receive the living water may want to follow in our way of life. The apostles followed Jesus because they saw the living waters flow out from him and they were invited to share in the living waters. They wanted to be refreshed and nourished by that same water and they followed Jesus. May there be many people attracted to our communities in a similar way as we try to allow the living waters to flow out of us. We may need to invite others to follow us by word and witness as Jesus invited people to follow him.

The last morning we were asked to reflect on the life-giving waters of the well springing up in us. I did reflect on this vision and realized I need to be willing to receive as well as give. It is part of living a fulfilling life. It took me a long time to realize the value of receiving. I see this as a definite need for me in my vocation ministry if I am going to really live and grow in Precious Blood spirituality. It also was interesting to me that earlier that morning I read part of Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical, *God is Love*. He comments that we cannot always give. We must also receive.

He says anyone who wishes to give love must also receive love as a gift. To be a source from which rivers of living water flow (Jn 7:37-38), we must constantly drink from the original source, Jesus Christ.

I like this idea, and I believe that if I am going to really live out Precious Blood spirituality, I need to allow the life-giving waters of the Eucharist to nourish me. The Eucharist is central to me and our Precious Blood spirituality. I may be able to go for a while without the Eucharist, but I and my ministry will eventually suffer spiritually if I do not regularly receive nourishment from the Eucharist. The waters that flow from me would lack the life we hear about in John's Gospel. I believe also that the Eucharist needs to be central to our communities. If I am going to attract people to follow me and our Community and allow the living waters to flow out of me, I have to be willing to receive the living water from the Eucharist.

Let us continue to pray for vocations for our Communities and the Church.

Sometimes our objection to the work of prophetic dialogue is that we'd rather keep our grievance. I'm reminded of a time when I was a doctoral student at Catholic University and was living with other Dominican sisters in the men's Dominican House of Studies. One day one of the sisters—I'll call her Mary—overheard one of the priests say something about her that hurt her very deeply. Mary kept coming back to it over and over and over with us in conversation. Every mealtime we'd hear again how hurtful this was and how upset she was. Finally, when the rest of us couldn't stand to hear about it one more time, we finally urged her to speak directly with the priest who had hurt her, and try to reconcile. She thought about it for a minute, and then declared, "I think I'd rather have my grievance!"

Sr. Barbara Reid

ALL ARE WELCOME

Mark Miller, C.P.P.S.

During our most recent Precious Blood Convocation, the plea to welcome all to the table was expressed in a variety of ways. The table referred to was our Eucharistic Table. While we recognize that our institutional Church has restrictions on who can and who cannot receive the Lord at our Eucharistic Table, only we can put restrictions on all the other tables (altars) around which we participate on a daily basis.

I am talking about our family table where we share food and stories of family and faith; around the board room table where we decide policies which affect peoples' lives; around our workbench where we make materials for commerce; around our academic desks and offices where we help people deepen their knowledge of creation and gain a sense of self-assurance; around our counseling tables where we hear and respond to the stories of people struggling to make sense of life. These are the tables (altars) where we exercise control and are able to make decisions about who is invited or not invited to participate in our lives and ministries. Are these tables (altars) welcoming to everyone?

Many of us minister in places where people come seeking counseling or some other assistance; are all welcomed as possessing the presence of Christ or are some less tolerated and dismissed as quickly as possible? Many work in offices of health care, insurance, child care or social services. Are these places of welcome, and are the rules and policies applied equally for everyone—or are there areas of discrimination? Some work in our educational institutions. Is everyone treated with an equal dignity worthy of a human person?

My suspicion is that if people experienced welcome at all of these tables (altars), they would feel no need to ask if they are welcomed at our Eucharistic Table. They would simply assume that if those responsible for these daily tables of ministry and life are welcoming, then they would experience the Body of Christ welcoming them to the table of Body and Blood on Sunday morning.

So, where do we start? We start at the table (altar) over which we are responsible and begin our welcoming there.

As the dialogue between Jesus and the woman concludes, Jesus' disciples return and they are astonished that he is talking with a woman. It is notable that the evangelist does not say they were astonished that he was talking with a Samaritan. The issue is that she is a woman. But they don't have the courage to ask him why he was talking with her or what he wanted from her. If this vignette does not elaborate for the disciples what Jesus got from the woman, the rest of the Gospel does make it abundantly clear that Jesus' female followers told the story of Jesus quite differently in their circles, and that has, or could have, a profound influence on our understanding of God, Christ, the Spirit, ourselves and our cosmos.

If we widen our lenses beyond the story of the Samaritan woman and Jesus, we see that this is one part of a much bigger theme that ties together the whole of the Fourth Gospel. It is the theme of new life that is born out of death, and it is cast in female terminology and imagery. Throughout the gospel birthing language and the symbols of water and blood, the two liquids that accompany the birthing process, weave a theology of the life and death of Jesus quite different from that of other New Testament books. In this gospel, Jesus' death is not an atonement for human sin, but rather a birth to new life. When a soldier pierces the side of Jesus, from which blood and water flow, we are given a powerful image of Jesus' death as a portal to new life.

Sr. Barbara Reid



Well, continued from page 1...

This discovery of a shared humanity and equity in a new location is a good way for all of us to think about and to practice a reconciliation that leads to a birthing of faith. More than that even, the dialogue enables the birth of new relationships between strangers. I really appreciated what she explained regarding the phrase “rivers of living water will flow out of one’s womb” (John 7,38 quoting Isaiah 12,2 and Ezekiel 47,1). Our NAB translation has translated “heart” for the Greek word for “womb” that is in the text. After all, life comes from the womb, not the heart. Here where life begins, a complete breakdown of the body/spirit dualism occurs. I found myself taking it a step further and understanding how blood as life begins in the womb and is shared from mother to child.

This leads us to reconsider the practice of dialogue, especially three things for me: the dialogue of women and men that must deepen, the ways in which women articulate the gospel and faith, and the ways in which each of us “gives birth” to faith because we can spiritually identify our “womb.”

Fr. Bouchard approached “dialogue” as encounters. He outlined four different kinds: risky encounters that we should never be afraid of, encounters with the risen Lord, obstacles to encounters, and authentic encounters. Our preaching fosters an encounter with Jesus in each of these ways. Our preaching facilitates a joining of our narrative imagination (the stories we tell both biblical and personal) and our sacramental imagination which effects grace.

Our preaching needs to close the gap between what the Bible means and what the people need. Preaching is not merely to sustain and comfort, but facilitates the presence of Christ crucified and resurrected. While we instruct the intellect, we are hearkening to the

heart of Christ and to the heart of the other who is in the dialogue of the preaching.

The most thought provoking part of his presentation, however, concerned the North American Catholic Church. He identified four prophetic issues for us. First comes our imaginative work of vision; more than ever we need to be responsible for the vision of the Church, not just the routine of daily pastoral or catechetical care.

But his second issue was the most provocative and caused the biggest stir. He invited us to “renew our reverence for the institutional Church,” which he clarified to mean that we preserve values and goods which we have in the Church. Sometimes it is easy to look at the institutional church as an obstacle to faith and dialogue, to say nothing of one’s daily work in ministry. Obstacles to this reverence are the scandals,

the temptations of personal power, and an anti-intellectualism that prevents the kind of dialogue to think things through together.

A third prophetic issue arises out of our sense of self-sufficiency as Americans; we should be more interested in the common good as Church and as Catholics.

Fourth, Fr. Bouchard drew our attention to role of “radical awe” in contemplation. Contemplation, which I’ve heard many times from the

Buddhists, is not merely silence, but a dialogue on a very different plane which sees all reality as the divine presence. Contemplation is the most profound sort of dialogue which we can enter.

A Wednesday morning panel summarized the previous day’s talks and moved the conversation further in their responses and suggestions for where we go from here. It was interesting to consider the dialogue at the foot of the cross as a location for the Church today. Here we are vulnerable and more open to dialogue. There was a suggestion that there be a statement about dialogue that does not mean disloyalty or lack of faith. Questions arose about being “awake” and “waking up,” in other words “speaking a word that will rouse them”—and us.

Thursday closed with a missioning event. For me, more than the fine talks and panel’s dialogue-provoking obser-

See Well, continued on page 18...

“Our preaching needs to close the gap between what the Bible means and what the people need. Preaching is not merely to sustain and comfort, but facilitates the presence of Christ crucified and resurrected. While we instruct the intellect, we are hearkening to the heart of Christ and to the heart of the other who is in the dialogue of the preaching.”

A SPIRITUALITY OF GENEROSITY

James Schrader, C.P.P.S.

What does the Precious Blood of Christ say to me? It is a question that anyone living Precious Blood spirituality must answer, and then allow to impact his or her entire life.

Blood is life in ancient Jewish and biblical understanding. Is it the Precious Blood as an object that forges our spirituality, or is it the shedding of the Precious Blood that motivates our lives and ministries?

The shedding of the Precious Blood speaks to me of GENEROSITY, a super-abundant love, a prodigal mercy. Jesus pours out his blood (his life), shedding his last drops of blood and water as he dies on the cross. Recently at evening prayer at Precious Blood Center, the message struck me: It is in Christ and through his blood that we have been redeemed; so immeasurably GENEROUS is God's favor to us (Eph 1:9).



Mark Yates at the Convocation looks at the paintings by Fr. Jim Schrader (seated)

In our chapel at Liberty hangs a graphic reminder of the generosity of the Lord Jesus in shedding his blood for us. A large banner—painted by Sr. Mary Beth Kemper, C.P.P.S.—shows the Lamb standing on the altar of sacrifice. The pierced side of the Lamb pours forth blood, filling the chalice, which in turn overflows onto the globe of the earth. The action that banner emphatically proclaims is GENEROSITY.

Could our Precious Blood spirituality be termed *generosity*? Would this clarify our spirituality? In no way does this diminish the “cry of the Blood” that Barry Fischer expounds so well. We are called to respond to the cry of the Blood as it manifests itself in our time and culture. Our response must be with generosity, the generosity of the shedding of the Precious Blood.

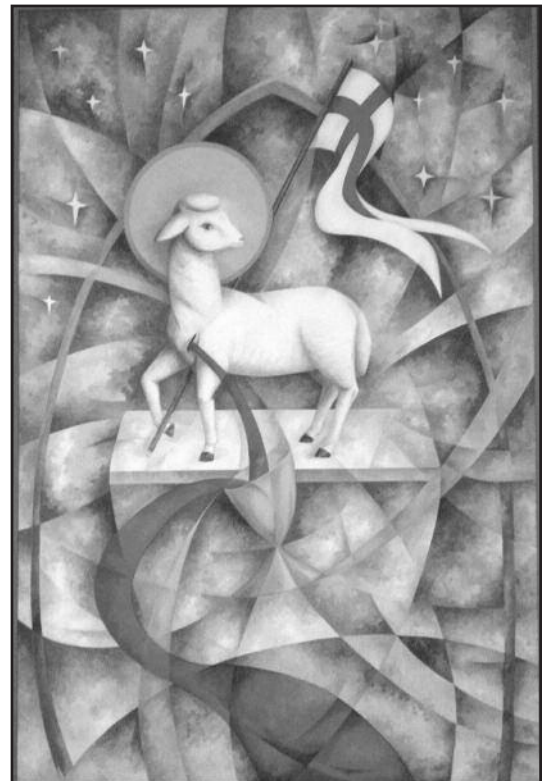
Gratefully, our Precious Blood spirituality now goes beyond the devotion of the past. At the Precious Blood convocation in St. Louis we pondered how the generosity of the Precious Blood is to motivate us in our ministry of relationships and reconciliation, in our prophetic witness, in our conversion journeys, and in our making and renewing of covenants.

In 1999, missionaries of the Precious Blood convened in Rome and produced a “Profile of a Missionary of the Precious Blood.” This profile seeks to define us through the three pillars of our congregation—MISSION, COMMUNITY, SPIRITUALITY.

The profile states: “The spirituality of the Precious Blood motivates us and focuses our mission. The missionary finds at the center of his vocation the Blood of Christ. The spirituality of the Precious Blood includes: individual and communal prayer and study; gathering at the Eucharistic table; reconciliation; inclusivity and multicultural diversity; openness; interior freedom and poverty of spirit; celibate loving; a radical response to the call of the Blood; renewal of person, culture, society and Church; humility which recognizes our interdependence, our Gasparian charism, deepening of our spirituality with others who share it.”

Verbosity sometimes leads to clarification. And clarification leads to better practice. As the profile states, “The spirituality of the Precious Blood motivates us.” After imbibing the wisdom of years of pondering our spirituality, I would define it as responding with GENEROSITY in our lives and ministries, responding with the generosity of Christ.

Fr. Jim Schrader is in retirement at Precious Blood Center.



Let me conclude by offering a few suggestions about what should characterize our ministry in this present time. Together, they constitute what I believe would involve a prophetic dimension to Precious Blood spirituality.

First of all, we must help renew our reverence for institutions. All of our founders were institutional people—they believed in the Gospel, but they also believed that it was necessary to institutionalize our tradition and our values so that they would survive history and human ambivalence.

I believe the trend to privacy, tribalism and self-interest threatens our institutions and renders the common good impossible. Hugh Heclo wrote a book entitled “On Thinking Institutionally,” and in it, he says that “thinking institutionally is a counter-cultural act.” As religious, we are hugely invested in institutions—not just brick and mortar, but communities and structures and perpetuating charisms and missions.



Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P.

Institutions are durable—but not like a weather-worn rock. They are alive and organic—they are constantly reborn, shaped by their times and culture. Our institutions can be an important counter-balance to corporate institutions which do not always act for the common good.

Second, we need to deepen our awareness of and commitment to the common good, to the belief that we have a common life together that is greater than the sum of its parts.

We do not have an operative notion of the common good in the U.S. We live under the illusion that adding up individual choices and freedom will create a culture that will enable us to flourish—but free economic exchange is not enough. Justice is

not just a matter of rights, especially forbearance rights, but a web of relationships

A real commitment to the common good requires the virtue of solidarity: Jesus and the woman at the well, the kind of relationship that Jesus established with the woman at the well. He created a bond that said, “We are all in this together.”

Finally the most important aspect of our prophetic task may be to foster contemplation as an antidote to the noise and narrowness that plagues us as a culture.

True silence, which leads to contemplation is not just staring into the abyss; it is taking time and creating a place where we can see reality as it truly is and God’s presence in it. This can be frightening, but it can also help us see God’s hand and the presence of grace in the world around us.

My brothers and sisters, you gather here these days to celebrate the great gift of your Precious Blood charism, given both for your own perfection and for the world you serve. May this be a time for you to renew your prophetic ministry, one that deepens our reverence for institutions, which have been with us as Christ’s sacramental presence to the world; to deepen our love of the common good; and above all, to cultivate contemplation and as another founder, St. Dominic said, “to share the fruits of that contemplation with others.”

Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P.



A SUCCESS STORY

Al Ebach, C.PP.S.

Following the distribution of the 2010 Human Development Grants, we have received many cards and letters of appreciation from the recipients. I want to share with our readers a response from Sr. Joan Klaas, C.PP.S. which puts a human face on one of the organizations we assisted.

She is part of St. Agatha Center in St. Louis, which provides spiritual, material, educational, physical and emotional assistance to residents who live in a very poor area of that city. The Center provides food for people who have to make choices between buying food or paying utility bills. They sponsor educational opportunities for adults and children to improve quality of life. The Center becomes a resource to direct people to proper social service agencies. Her letter is printed on the right.

The other organizations receiving grants:

- ◊ *Fr. Joe Deardorff, C.PP.S.* La Oroya, Peru
- ◊ *Anawim Center* Chicago IL
- ◊ *Love Inc* of Clay County MO
- ◊ *English Tutoring Project* St. Louis MO
- ◊ *Precious Blood Ministry of Justice.*
- ◊ *Wichita's Women's Initiative Network*
- ◊ *Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation*
Chicago IL
- ◊ *Brother Andre Center*
St. Agnes Parish, Los Angeles CA
- ◊ *Maria De Mattias Library and Resource Center*
Guatemala
- ◊ *Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School*
East St. Louis IL
- ◊ *Our Lady of Guadalupe School* Kansas City MO
- ◊ *Sangre de Cristo Health Care Project*
Guatemala City
- ◊ *Center for Survivors of*
Torture and War Trauma St. Louis MO
- ◊ *Redemptorist Social Services Center*
Kansas City MO

EVER-LOVING EULA

What a wonderful sight for my old eyes when I saw Eula at the St. Louis University Griesedieck Dining Hall at breakfast on the first full day of the Precious Blood Convocation! Why so?

Some years ago, perhaps two or three, Eula was a client at our St. Agatha Center and Food Pantry. Loving and lovable, that Eula! She was always eager to give and to receive hugs. Her smile lit up her face—but there was a sadness and fear in her eyes. After some months of coming to our Center, she felt safe enough to tell us why she was fearful. She lived in an apartment complex in our area that was often the scene of shootings and other violence.

Around Christmas time that year she stopped coming to St. Agatha Center for food and other assistance. We missed her and her beautiful smile, ready hugs and gracious gratitude. We worried that she may have been a victim of a shooting or other form of violence.

We spent some time and energy trying to locate the apartment manager so that we might learn if Eula was OK. All we learned was that she had left in the dead of night. We worried about her, and turned our worry into prayers for her and her safety.

A couple of years passed, and now we see her working at St. Louis University. Yes, she tells us, she left the apartment because she feared for her life. She had discovered that someone in the adjoining apartment had drilled a hole through the wall and was watching her as she dressed and undressed. She was afraid and left during the night.

She was afraid to come to us to tell us about it, lest she cause trouble for us too. About that time she had also lost her job—but she knew God was looking out for her, because now she has a full-time job in food service at SLU, and she has an apartment in an area that is much safer.

Sr. Clare Ann saw her first, and it was a wonderful reunion! She asked Sr. Clare Ann who else of “her Sisters” was at the meeting. So she had her eyes out for me, and when our eyes met, there were two very happy women who hugged for a long time!

We are very happy for Eula and the blessings that have come her way. She asks us to please thank everyone who helped her along the way. You are some who have helped Eula, because you have given grants to our St. Agatha Center. We are glad to share this good news with you, and we also thank you.

DEACON BOB SCHIENEBECK

[Companion Bob Schienebeck was ordained to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Superior, WI on August 8th. The following is excerpted from an article in The Catholic Herald, the newspaper of the Diocese of Superior. It appeared the week before the ordination.]

Service to the church brings [Bob] Schienebeck to the diaconate. Schienebeck, a parishioner of Immaculate Conception, Butternut, takes service to heart. When he is not serving the parish as lector, Communion service leader and RCIA coordinator, he is serving his community as town clerk of Chippewa, vice-president of the board of directors at Flambeau Hospital and formerly a member of the school board. "I'm an involved type of person," Schienebeck said. "That's what a deacon is. It's a service ministry."

Once Schienebeck, who is retired, has been ordained, he will serve the clustered parishes of Immaculate Conception, Butternut; St. Anthony of Padua, Park Falls; and St. Francis of Assisi, Fifield.

Schienebeck's service with the church has its origins in tragedy. In 1979, he and his wife, Angie Schienebeck, were expecting their fourth child. When their son Curtis was born, he appeared to be healthy. Within a week, a problem with the left ventricle of his heart became evident. Things went downhill so suddenly that the couple was not able to be with their son at the hospital when he died at 10-days-old.

According to Angie, this brought the couple closer together and caused them to surrender control of their lives to God. "When [Curtis] passed away, I realized I was not in charge of my life; it was God who was in charge of my life," Angie said. "As much as I miss him, I believe that was God's plan. Maybe Curtis was a part of my life, where I stepped out of just living, and I stepped in to another part of my life where I needed to serve people."

Schienebeck said dealing with the death of their son brought the two closer to their parish priest. Not long after, the priest approached him to become a lector at Mass. "Maybe he asked me that because he thought, 'You've got to do something. You've got to get your mind off of that,'" Schienebeck said.



Bob and Angie Schienebeck

Lectoring was not only a benefit to Schienebeck, but also the whole family. They took up residence in the first pew in the church each week Schienebeck lectored. "Your children are much more likely to behave in the first pew than the last pew," Angie said. The priest asked if the family would move back a few rows to allow elderly parishioners to sit in the front pew. Weeks went by, and no one occupied that front pew. Finally, one of their daughters insisted, "Mom, we're sitting in our pew."

Once Schienebeck began lectoring, it opened the doors to service in the church. Angie took on teaching religious education, serving at funeral luncheons, lectoring and Eucharistic ministry. Schienebeck started bringing communion to the homebound, coordinating RCIA for the parish cluster and facilitating preparation for baptism and marriage.

Eventually, the husband and wife were asked if they would like to be trained in leading daily communion and Liturgy of the Word services in the absence of a priest. Over time, the two became known for their service in the parish, and that service prompted Schienebeck to consider the diaconate.

"We belonged to so many ministries already," Schienebeck said. "When you're involved in different faith formations, people ask, 'Have you ever looked at the diaconate? Have you ever thought of being a deacon?'"

Schienebeck worked as a mechanical engineer for Flambeau River Paper until his retirement in 2008. At his job, he was known for his involvement in the church. One of his co-workers kept two phone numbers on file for Schienebeck - his home phone number and the parish phone number. The co-worker said he always knew Schienebeck would be at one of the two.

"When you take that holy water [at church], you're renewing your baptismal promises and you hopefully carry that into the workplace and wherever you go," Schienebeck said.

A JOURNEY OF FAITH

My Faith Journey started a long time ago, actually back in the mid-1950s with a Precious Blood priest, Fr. Joseph Graf. I was his weekday altar boy, and of course at that time I had no idea this was a beginning of a journey. I just wanted to reach sixteen so I could drive a car, and eighteen so I could have a beer. I finally reached eighteen and saw my hometown in my rearview mirror.

After Angie and I were married and having children we decided to leave the big city (Minneapolis) and move back to our roots to raise our family. Upon arriving back home we found that although the name and face had changed we still had a Precious Blood priest. Raising the family was going along rather smoothly until our fourth child was diagnosed with a serious heart problem. One thing lead to another and the decision of our young life was before us. No cure, and nothing could be done to save our child and we had to make a decision regarding ending life support. Fr. Tom Conway was there and helped us through these difficult times. As my wife Angie stated: “We found out that we are not in control, God is in control.”

This is when I started getting serious about saying yes to God. We both became very involved in our church and community. Later on we were asked to become Precious Blood companions. We learned about Precious Blood spirituality and what it means in our everyday life. I believe I took that Precious Blood spirituality that influenced me at a young age and as a young parent to begin my faith journey.

When your faith journey is truly guided by the Holy Spirit and you take those gifts of the Holy Spirit, you can feel that Precious Blood spirituality calling you. As companions, we have something special to offer each other and our communities. As Paul says, “ As a body is one though it has many parts.” We all have special gifts from God to offer. But sometimes we have to go places that feel a bit uncomfortable—especially doing so alone. Gaspar, like Paul, took the first step, and now Precious Blood spirituality is completing the journey. We as companions were very gifted to have the followers of St. Gaspar start us on our journey.

I use this analogy to describe my ministry and Precious Blood Spirituality: As kids you would argue which family had the best car, was it our Chevy or their Ford? You could live with your friends driving to church or a movie or the grocery store in their Ford as they could with you in your Chevy. But what about those kids on the far side of town that had that old Plymouth? Precious Blood spirituality helps you discover that even in today’s world you can get to church, to the movies, or to the grocery store in an old Plymouth, but if for some reason you cannot, I can always pick you up in my Chevy.

These roots obtained from Precious Blood priests and Precious Blood spirituality helped me in my decision to become a deacon. My ministry has been and will continue to be with those less fortunate, the elderly and anyone whom I hear calling. Sometimes we have to find out who we are not, to find out who we are. Hopefully my service as a deacon will further define my Precious Blood spirituality.

Deacon Bob Schienebeck





THE NEW CREATION

REFLECTIONS FROM
THE PRECIOUS BLOOD MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

A group of young adults, *Catholics on Call*, came to visit. They came to hear and see the work we do at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation. Catholics on Call is a group of young people, sponsored by the Bernardin Center of Catholic Theological Union, who are discerning a vocation or calling to ministry within the Church.

Each year we are the host to one or two groups from *Catholics on Call*—individuals that come from around the country, including Dayton, Kansas City, St. Louis, California and beyond. This year we even had someone who was from Maria Stein, OH. When asked why they would come to the inner city to inquire about ministry, they spoke of an inner “noise” within that urged them to look deeper into their life as they tried to discern what God’s call was. It is an interesting and an awakening message for some of the youth from PBMR (Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation) to hear—someone actively seeking to understand and live out the call of God.

As we gathered in Circle, some of the youth from the PBMR joined us to share their stories and what it was like to grow up in a neighborhood where violence is commonplace. Ronald spoke about how he was outside only a couple weeks before with friends and someone came up and just started shooting, a mistaken identity. He was shot in the stomach and in the hand. Another spoke of the schools they attend where metal detectors, police, and security are the most visible part of the school day. As the Circle continued and they felt the safety of the Circle, they were able to speak about their family. One of the youth commented about how he felt alone in the world, about how no one really cared what he did. “My mama don’t care if I come home or not. I asked her to help me get a paper signed at school, but she said no—that she was tired. You know how that make me feel?”

As they spoke, even I was amazed at how honest and open they were. You could see in the eyes of our guests that while they didn’t understand how it was to live in such a way, they were amazed that the youth were able to share so openly. One of *Catholics on Call* young men

spoke about how he lived in a Chicago suburb, only a few miles from the Center, and yet he had no idea of the struggles of the youth and how it affected them on a daily basis. Toward the end of the circle time one of the kids from PBMR asked, “How do you think you’d be if you grew up here?”

Some days later I was talking to a couple of the facilitators of *Catholics on Call* who had not been with us and they said that the visit at the Precious Blood Center really had an impact. They went on to say that one of the questions from the youth, “How would you be if you grew up here?” really caused them to think about what they were called to in the Church. They said it dominated the conversation that evening.

Called by God

Dave Kelly, C.P.P.S.

We don’t host groups at the Center just to open the lives of the youth to others. It is true that we hope that the stories have an impact and that people begin to realize the destructive powers of poverty and violence. But we, too, hope that the stories of others who are on their own journey, who have their



A group of youth and their teaching artists who participated with Kolbe House at Assumption (jail ministry of the Archdiocese of Chicago) in a summer program of art. All are regular participants at the PBMR center.

own struggles, have an impact on the youth who gather each day at the Center. We hope that the uncomfortable feeling of trying to discern the call of God disturbs the lives of our youth, too. We hope that they feel a “noise” within themselves calling them to go deeper and seek out what it is that God calls them to.

See Called, continued on page 18...



SAINT GASPAR, PEACEMAKER

Jerome Stack, C.P.P.S.

One of the more prominent and memorable chapters in the life of St. Gaspar is his ministry with the brigands in the Papal States south of Rome. Gaspar and his Missionaries took a bold and courageous step in order to bring peace to a very troubled area. It remains a powerful example of Gaspar's ministry of reconciliation motivated by the power of the Blood of Jesus.

Gaspar's concern for reconciliation and peacemaking was not confined to this dramatic period of his life, however. The missions he and other Missionaries conducted also emphasized reconciliation, as recorded by Biagio Valentini, Gaspar's spiritual director for more than fifteen years and Gaspar's successor as superior of the Congregation, and the Venerable John Merlini his friend and the third moderator general of the C.P.P.S. Not long after Gaspar's death, both of them were invited to give testimony in the canonical process for the beatification and canonization of Gaspar. Their testimony is an invaluable source for much of what we know of our founder's life and work.

Merlini notes that a feature of the mission was reconciliation and establishing peace. He describes a ritual for peacemaking:

It consisted in having the priests come onto the platform two by two where they kissed the wounds of the Crucified Lord, while he and his companions kissed the feet of the priests. Sometimes, he would have two of his companions kiss the feet of the priests while he held the Crucifix. The priests then stepped off the platform, wearing their choir garb and the solemn stole or with surplice and stole. Where there were few priests, he would substitute with the men of the various confraternities that had assumed the task of assisting at the Mission. While all that was going on, he urged the people to exclaim: "Peace with God, peace with everyone, long live peace." Furthermore, he himself or others

would announce the selection of peacemakers, both men and women, whose responsibility it was to bring about reconciliation wherever there was need.

What is noteworthy here is that Gaspar, always concerned that the fruits of the mission would endure, would choose peacemakers from among those making the mission to continue the work of reconciliation that had begun during that spiritual exercise. I have not found a description of the process for selecting the peacemakers, but Gaspar may well have consulted the clergy and lay people of the place in making his choice. Gaspar was also known to be perceptive of the gifts of others and rather forceful in inviting them to use these gifts in ministry.

I have regrettably not found any more details about how these peacemakers were to carry out the ministry of reconciliation. Gaspar and the other Missionaries did, of course, establish associations or sodalities of the laity and clergy in order that the good work begun in the missions might continue to be fruitful. Perhaps Gaspar encouraged the peacemakers to form a similar

"...the people were asked to bring 'all evil books that were to be burned, also playing cards and other dangerous articles, including forbidden weapons' and to surrender them to the missionaries.

It seems that Gaspar anticipated contemporary gun turn-in programs nearly two hundred years ago! (It appears that at some point in our history playing cards were judged to be less evil, given the prominence of pinochle and other card games in C.P.P.S. history here in North America.)"

organization. Ever a man to look to detail, Gaspar would, I suspect, give the peacemakers some rather specific instructions to carry out their ministry.

Another significant feature of the mission that took place on the final day was the "sermon of reminders." Prior to the sermon, the people were asked to bring "all evil books that were to be burned, also playing cards and other dangerous articles, including forbidden weapons" and to surrender them to the missionaries. The books and cards would be burned and the weapons smashed

See *Gaspar*, continued on page 18...

Called, continued from page 16...

I'll admit that sometimes it's frustrating to have to encourage, even push, church communities to create safe places for youth who are on the fringe of society. I think there are times when an outside group can see more clearly the goodness in youth who find themselves outside the walls. What the *Catholics on Call* group discovered, what most discover when you take the time to listen and hear the stories, is that we carry with us many similar values.

Youth who are surrounded by violence, who suffer trauma, experience a disconnect with themselves and with those around them. They lose themselves in the midst of the pain and the trauma. They begin to behave and act in ways that brings harm to themselves and to others. The telling and hearing of stories can help us re-connect to ourselves and to those around us.

The Sacred Scriptures are full of stories and situations how Jesus created these moments and places where stories were told and new understandings happened. For those who lived outside the gates, these were the times of grace, where they felt the dignity of being called by name. Whether that be the upper room, on the road to Emmaus, or by the seashore, Jesus reached out to those who felt unwanted and unworthy and created places where they felt welcomed and loved. Now we need to go and do the same.

Well, continued from page 10...

versations, there was all the real dialogue and sharing that happened when over 300 Precious Blood family members gather around the tables, during meals, walks, in the hall ways and late into the night. I returned home grateful to the Precious Blood Leadership that worked long and hard to bring this convocation together. The whole Precious Blood family of communities should be grateful for them and the good work continued.



Gaspar, continued from page 17...

to bits, with the metal then sold and "the money used to buy wax for candles or something else in honor of the most holy Mary." It seems that Gaspar anticipated contemporary gun turn-in programs nearly two hundred years ago! (It appears that at some point in our history playing cards were judged to be less evil, given the prominence of pinochle and other card games in C.P.P.S. history here in North America.)

Merlini and Valentini describe a number of occasions in which public and dramatic reconciliations took place during missions conducted by our founder. One striking example (told to Valentini by Innocenzo Betti, one of the first companions of Gaspar) involved a very sick man whom Gaspar was trying to convince of the need for repentance and reconciliation. The man was not convinced of the urgency of his situation, so Gaspar resorted to more dramatic means:

Realizing that his words were being ignored and wanting nevertheless at any cost to save that soul, the Servant of God again took out his discipline and while holding the Crucifix aloft in his other hand, he proceeded with the thrashing on his back. The dying man was so moved that with great compunction he began making his confession. Since he had borne a long-seated interior hatred for one of his neighbors, he then shouted out his pardon and sought immediate reconciliation with him. Shortly after that, the man died tranquilly, fortified with the other sacraments.

From these few examples it is clear that reconciliation was a very important element in Gaspar's ministry, especially in the missions. Not only did he encourage and invite people to be reconciled during the mission, but he also provided a means of continuing the ministry of reconciliation by the peacemakers he appointed.

We Missionaries of the Precious Blood have been sharpening our focus on reconciliation as a core element of our congregational charism. Certainly Gaspar must be pleased that we are, in a sense, rediscovering a dimension of ministry that was of such great importance to him.

Fr. Jerry Stack, a member of the Cincinnati Province, teaches at Calumet College in Hammond, IN.

LOOKING AHEAD

October 16-17, 2010

Companion Retreat

Marillac Center
Leavenworth KS

October 24, 2010

Feast of St. Gaspar Celebration

Sedalia MO

October 29-30, 2010

Discernment Weekend Retreat

Gaspar House
Chicago IL

May 2-5, 2011

Provincial Assembly

Annunciation Parish
Kearney MO

June 6-10, 2011

Installation of Leadership and Community Retreat

Savior of the World Center
Kansas City KS



Religious communities have always had a special role to play in the Church, and much of what we do is based on facilitating the kind of encounter the woman had with Jesus. In health care, education, pastoral care, preaching, and service to the poor we are all about making room for this holy encounter. Our communities prepare us for these encounters, and we in turn provide a place for others to have these encounters.

Fr. Charles Bouchard



DISCERNMENT WEEKEND RETREAT

Gaspar House
Chicago, Illinois

October 29-31, 2010

(Friday evening to Sunday Noon)

Contact Fr. Joe Miller in the Vocation Office
for more information or to register:

voc.office@yahoo.com ♦ 816.781.4344

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MY BACK PAGES

Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.

You will most likely be receiving this issue in the days just prior to the 9th anniversary of 9-11. The gospel for the Sunday following—as it was in 2001—consists of the three parables of *The Lost Sheep*, *The Lost Coin*, and *The Lost Son*. In each one, what was lost is found in the end. I recall vividly in the days immediately following the attacks, the ubiquitous images on TV of people in New York City walking or standing outside holding photos of their loved ones. Often their sign would say something like, “Have you seen my brother” or “I’m trying to find my daughter.”

A lot of people were lost that day. The dead and the missing obviously, but also the traumatized survivors, so many citizens who grappled with grief and confusion and anger, and yes, even the perpetrators who were so very lost in their terribly misguided religious fervor. I remember reflecting in my homily that weekend that the gospel calls us to believe that God will search and wait and find and welcome home—with great joy—all those who were lost, even those we probably didn’t think deserved it at the time. Even those *we* might not bother with because they’re not worth the effort—one wayward sheep, a small penny, an ungrateful child, a criminal. We cannot afford to become the evil we deplore.

As I write this, there is an ugly attitude among many in this country, ginned up by right wing talk radio and hate speech merchants and opportunistic politicians. It is in response to the proposed Muslim community center which is being built a few blocks away from Ground Zero. Many

are trying to frame it in terms of “they have the right to do this, but they should be more sensitive.” Others are very blatant in their contempt and make no effort to phrase it so nicely. Mosques in various parts of the country have been vandalized. A cab driver in New York, who happens to be Muslim, was stabbed.

There are people who should be walking around today carrying signs that say, “Have you seen my country?” “Have you seen my principles?” “Have you seen the Constitution?” They all seem to be lost right now.

All this is happening in the context of much ugly political and cultural discourse today, not a small portion of which has its roots in racism and fear and intolerance. I think it is mostly fear that is being manipulated. People feel lost in many ways today as well, given economic insecurity and loss of employment, for example. Unfortunately, there are those unscrupulous folks who are happy to manufacture a target for them toward which they can direct their feelings.

Our Precious Blood spirituality, which is reflected upon in many ways in this issue, has something to offer in this instance. Nine years ago we saw the very worst and the very best exhibited in the wake of 9-11—an outpouring of community, compassion and generosity in the face of death and darkness. God is still looking for the lost among us today. Being found and welcomed is better. So is reaching out instead of turning inward. That’s where the joy is.
