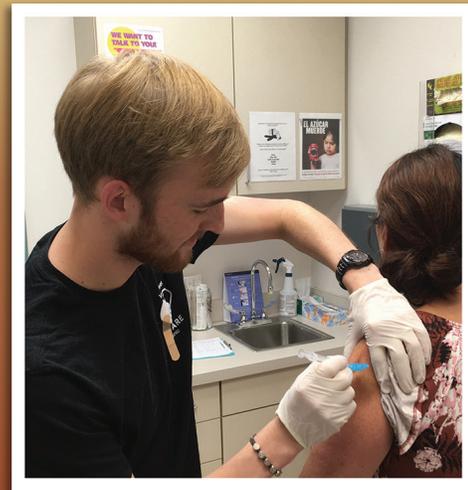


THE *New Wine* PRESS

Volume 29 No. 7 • March 2021



**Grow in your faith.
Build community.
Walk with those who suffer.
Seek reconciliation.**



Precious Blood Volunteers
preciousbloodvolunteers.org

THE New Wine PRESS

Volume 29 No. 7 • March 2021

Contents

Lenten Sacrifice: Making Holy.....	2
by Margaret Haik, Director of Communications	
New Creation: Ministry Discernment.....	3
by Br. Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S., Provincial Council	
A Lenten Journey Towards Reconciliation	4
by Fr. Bill Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S., Cincinnati Province	
Volunteer Retreats During the Pandemic.....	6
by Tim Deveney, Precious Blood Volunteers Director	
The Humility of Learning.....	8
by Teresa Graham, Staff of PBMR	

Front cover photo: Deer at Joseph and Mary Retreat House in Mundelein, Illinois during the Volunteer mid-year retreat. Photo by Tim Deveney

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

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

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

THE New Wine PRESS

Missionaries of the Precious Blood
Kansas City Province

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

Editor, Layout & Design
Margaret Haik
communications@preciousbloodkc.org

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

Printed on recycled paper by
McDonald Business Forms
Overland Park, Kansas



Lenten Sacrifice: Making Holy

by Margaret Haik, Director of Communications

I never studied Latin in school (I studied French and German, and a lack of occasion to use either means that I haven't retained much), but during the February 25th presentation of "Tapping the Wine Cellar" on Facebook Live, in reference to the first reading for the Second Sunday of Lent (Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18), Fr. Keith Branson taught me that the Latin word for "sacrifice" means "to make holy." Being a good student of the University of Google, I dug further and found that the root words are *sacra* (sacred things) and *facere* (to do or perform). Also during the presentation, Vicky Otto talked about the difference between transfiguration and transformation in relation to the Gospel reading (Mk 9:2-10). Jesus was transfigured—changed in appearance only. We are transformed—changed on the inside—through our experience of Jesus.

Okay, I already knew the difference between transfiguration and transformation...

Fr. Keith encouraged us to use Lent as a time where the focus of our sacrifice is more on "making holy" and less on "to give up something so that it hurts." We are called to experience God in a way that transforms us into a more holy version of ourselves.

It strikes me that all our articles focus on examples of people who are striving to be transformed through the "making holy" version of sacrifice. Br. Daryl Charron shares some of the process the two provincial councils have focused on as they discern what to retain and what new directions Precious Blood ministries should take. Fr. Bill Nordenbrock's article points us in the direction of reconciliation. Tim Deveney shares the experiences and challenges our Precious Blood Volunteers have had during their retreats this year. Finally, Teresa Graham, a new staff member at PBMR, shares how true learning requires humility.

Regardless of whether your Lenten journey involves any of those things—discernment, reconciliation, challenges, or humility—I hope it is a time of transformation. May we all seek to be "made holy." ✠

New Creation: Ministry Discernment

by Br. Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S., Provincial Council

Lately, it has been very constructive to have the help of Fr. Frank Donio, S.A.C. in our joint provincial council meetings as we refine ministerial priorities for the new province. Fr. Frank has been especially helpful because he also is in leadership for a Society of Apostolic Life. He knows where we are coming from in our style of governance and the charisms that motivate us. I am especially mindful of his challenge to us last meeting, namely, are we focusing on new ministries or maintenance of current ministries?

This is an important question for leadership to ponder as we look to the future. In the world of software development, “maintenance mode” refers to that point in a computer program’s life when it has reached all of its goals and is generally considered to be “complete.” At this point continued development is deemed unnecessary or ill-advised. Thank God, we Missionaries of the Precious Blood are not like computer software in maintenance mode. I believe we may have some maintenance going on, but we are also very capable of something new.

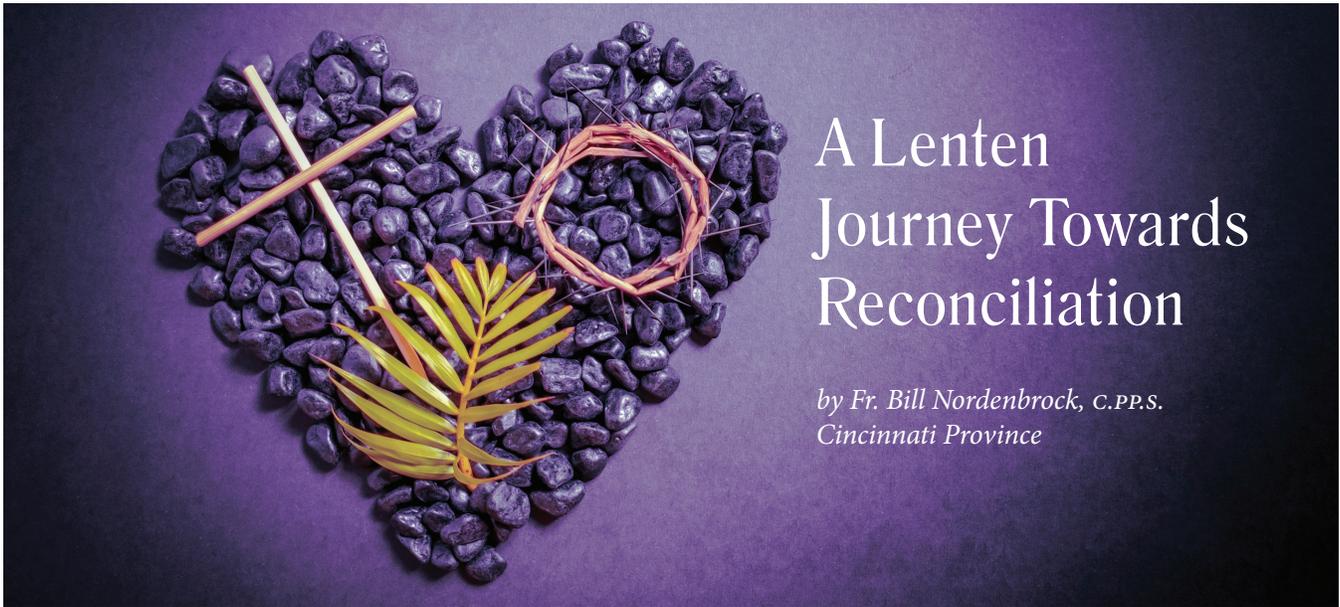
We can learn a lesson from St. Gaspar in this regard. We can seek his prayerful intercession knowing that he, too, may have experienced what we are currently experiencing. On several occasions, he wrote to Msgr. Bellisario Cristaldi with a similar sentiment. St. Gaspar wrote, “I see the urgency for me to cut down on the number of Missions that I take on and be more careful about the matters here in Rome, especially since problems are increasing both in the Penitentiary as well as elsewhere.” It sounds to me like St. Gaspar struggled with maintaining things in Rome while wanting to preach new Missions.

Furthermore, to confirm his struggle with this, he writes to Cristaldi again, “Why I am here in Rome and for what purposes is known to you. The urgency is that the Institute had to have someone here in Rome who would serve as the central figure for its affairs. I have come to realize more and more that this is my work. And, in fact, in addition to the directing of the Houses and the two centers of studies, now added is the burden of foreign correspondence.”

I sense here that St. Gaspar is venting to Msgr. Cristaldi about the struggle of doing maintenance type of work rather than preaching new Missions. He says, “I would be very scrupulous about abandoning

continued on page 5





A Lenten Journey Towards Reconciliation

by Fr. Bill Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S.
Cincinnati Province

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the February 2008 issue of the New Wine Press. It has remained relevant. Fr. Nordenbrock edited it for 2021.

“So, what are you going to do for Lent?”

That is not a question that I hear as often these days, but there was a time when that was not an unusual conversation starter for Catholics as Lent approached. Sort of like asking someone if they made any New Year's resolutions; it was an indicator that Catholics took seriously the possibility that Lent could be a time of renewal and personal transformation.

When I was younger, the answer that nearly everyone gave to that question was about making sacrifices and giving something up. Acts of penance are still part of the recommended observance, although often in current teaching the suggestion is that penance be combined with the giving of alms, transforming the foregoing of dessert from a mere diet into a religious observance.

Lent is also a liturgical season which has a particular invitation to reflect on reconciliation. Mostly, the concern is for sinners to be reconciled with God and not so much a concern for sinners to be reconciled with each other. In a ministry of reconciliation, it is important to maintain the connection between the two. One helpful image is found in the cross where both the horizontal and vertical dimensions are essential. When we link acts of penance with the giving

of alms, we are making that connection. When we are motivated by a realization that our over consumption is at the expense of others, then penance and alms giving is act of solidarity with the poor and can be personally transforming.

For many, “going to confession” is also a part of the plan for Lent. We celebrate the sacrament, and we ask for a “fresh start,” with the hope that the grace of the sacrament will help us to overcome those sinful tendencies that have brought us to the sacrament. That sacrament takes on amplified meaning when the desire for forgiveness flows out of a sincere desire to be and live differently going forward. Then the sacrament can be a transforming act of grace.

The essential connection between horizontal and vertical dimensions of reconciliation are most clearly articulated in St. Paul's words given to the community in Corinth.

This means that if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. The old order has passed away; now all is new! All this has been done by God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. I mean that God, in Christ, was reconciling the world to himself, not counting humankind's transgression against them, and that he has entrusted the message of reconciliation to us. This makes

us ambassadors for Christ, God as it were appealing through us. (2 Cor 5:17-20a)

Above all, we need to rejoice in the gift of reconciliation given to us, but like all gifts that God bestows on us, that gift becomes a commission. God makes “re-gifting” a command. St. Paul heard faithfully God’s command: I reconcile you and now you become my ambassador and spread this gift throughout the world. And St. Paul wanted his readers to know that they have been given the same gift and commission.

When I celebrate the sacrament of confession, as one confessing or as a confessor with others, I try to share the truth of reconciliation as both a gift and a commission. When we go to confession, we celebrate very well the first part, that God has forgiven us, but it takes a conscious effort to include the second part of the God’s work into the sacrament. As I leave the confession giving thanks to God for the sacrament, my thoughts should be: God has forgiven me - who do I need to forgive? God has reconciled me - where does God send me as an ambassador for Christ?

Precious Blood people should hear the invitation to reflect on reconciliation during Lent. Not just to come to a greater understanding of this aspect of our charism, but to allow our Lenten observances to help transform us into a reconciling presence. So as this season begins, the question to ask might be: How will Lent be a time when I journey deeper into our charism? How can Lent be a time to more fully embody our charism?

In the ministry of reconciliation, we have learned that an ambassador of Christ proclaiming the message of reconciliation must be radically hospitable and skillful in the practice of accompaniment.

Radical hospitality is about lovingly making room to receive people as they are, warts and all. Sometimes that is by offering a welcoming physical space, but in the ministry of reconciliation is it more often about creating the emotional space for people to be welcomed without judgement. Are we willing to welcome into our life and “space” those who are not like us? Can those of different ethnicity or nation of origin find in a us a place where they are safe and can

be expressive of their cultural identity? Real hospitality is dependent on our willingness to see what is positive in the “other” and to welcome those differences, recognizing that their giftedness is a gift to us.

During this Lenten season, one sign of the times that demands to be noticed is that polarization is a dominant characteristic in U.S. culture. Seemingly, across the board from politics to religion, dialogue has been replaced by dueling position statements. Perhaps this Lent, as Precious Blood people, we can make a practice of not writing off another’s opinion until we know why they care about their opinion; until we know the value that they are protecting in their opinion. This will require that we are radically hospitable, making space for another by presuming that they are of good intentions and that they are guided by values, values that we may share even if we don’t share their opinion on the matter that is brought to the dialogue.

Lent is a time for renewal and reconciliation, where religious practice can help us to remember and respond to a call for personal transformation. How can your religious practices during this Lent cultivate within you the attitudes and skill that will make you a reconciling presence in the Church and the world? †

[Fr. Bill Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S. welcomes your comments and questions. He can be contacted at bill.nordenbrock@gmail.com]

Leadership, continued from page 3

those things that have already been set in motion, and, remembering certain utterances of Monsignor Albertini, it appears to me that this is to be my way of life.”

I bring up these writings of St. Gaspar to pose a question. What cities in our new province are going to be the “Rome” that we need to maintain? Dayton, Columbus, St. Joseph, Liberty may be those cities whose ministries we need to maintain. They have already been “set in motion.” Some may feel we cannot “abandon such things.” We have to make some difficult decisions. †



Precious Blood Volunteers Mike Nguyen, Allison Spraul, and Thomas Weiss (seated), with Mike Price “Zooming” in from San Francisco.

Volunteer Retreats During the Pandemic

by Tim Deveney, Precious Blood Volunteers Director

The last year has had our world turned upside down, and, as with almost everything, Precious Blood Volunteers has had to cope with the changes wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our two previous volunteers, Caitlin Caminade and Keven Cheung, ended with them working remotely and largely remaining at Gaspar Mission House for their last few months in Kansas City. They were able to finish their year with the end of year retreat, but we had to cancel our normal farewell dinner with Companions and incorporated members.

In late July we welcomed four new volunteers and started it off with a scaled back orientation—scaled back in that we had most of our speakers talk with our new volunteers via Zoom. We also did not host our normal dinners with Companions and incorporated members to welcome the new volunteers. Instead, we held our commissioning service over Zoom. The commissioning

service ended up with a positive feel since several Companions, members, and Precious Blood Volunteers alumni were able to participate from across the U.S.

The COVID pandemic has also impacted the day to day of our current volunteers, and the experience of our volunteers this year looks much different than it has for previous volunteers. Most notably our volunteers in Kansas City and Chicago previously lived in community with Precious Blood priests, brothers, sisters, and members in formation. In those two cities we moved our volunteers into intentional, Catholic-based, communities where the residents of those communities were at lower risk of developing life-threatening cases of COVID-19. This has been a blessing in that our volunteers have been around people closer to their own age, and in the case of Thomas, he is living in the same neighborhood as his ministry site, Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR).

In early December, our Advisory Board, our volunteers, and I concluded that we needed to postpone our mid-year retreat. The retreat normally coincides with the beginning of Christmas break at Cristo Rey Kansas City High School, and at the same time provide enough time for our volunteers to travel home for Christmas. We made the decision to wait because of the growing number of COVID-19 cases across the United States, and the good possibility that at least one of our volunteers would soon be fully vaccinated—as well as predicted vaccines for the most vulnerable to severe cases of COVID-19. The bet paid off in that the cases have dropped dramatically since December, and one of our volunteers was vaccinated when we would have been in Chicago for the retreat! We still took the normal precautions of insisting that our volunteers and I had a negative COVID test in the days leading up to the retreat and wearing masks while in public areas. Additionally, Mike Price, our volunteer at Most Holy Redeemer Parish in San Francisco, joined us virtually from California.

The retreat was held at Joseph and Mary Retreat House in Mundelein, Illinois, which is a bit north of Chicago. Our two Kansas City based volunteers, Mike Nguyen and Allison Spraul, and I traveled up to Chicago on Thursday, February 11. On Friday we were treated to a COVID appropriate tour of PBMR led by our volunteer Thomas Weiss. We were able to meet with and talk to several staff members at PBMR to hear about their experiences working there. Sister Donna, Teresa, and Pamela welcomed us to the Mother Brunner House with their normal warm hospitality, treated us to donuts, and showed us the collection of teddy bears that were donated to PBMR from a donor in Dayton.

On Friday afternoon we started the retreat with prayer, sharing symbols of our volunteers' service, and reviewing the year. Friday evening, we spent time playing card games and enjoying each other's company. Saturday morning, we started off with a prayer activity creating prayer flags where the volunteers placed the names of people and concerns that they needed on pieces of paper. We continued with a reflection on the Precious Blood Volunteers Covenant and how they have lived up to it, where they would like to dedicate more effort to fulfilling

their covenant, and how they want to go forward with their covenant. The afternoon and evening were spent going through some exercises on Appreciative Discernment and how they can apply those principles to what they want to do going forward.

Sunday morning started off with a session entitled "What's in a Name?" During this session I asked the volunteers to spend some time reflecting on their experience, the charism of the Precious Blood community, and our pillars of walking with others, growing in their faith, building community, and seeking reconciliation. They then had the opportunity to choose a name and design a new logo for Precious Blood Volunteers. It's a fun exercise that brings out some amazing thoughts on what's important to them and how they see the charism of our community and the pillars of our program. We finished the retreat with a prayer service and recommissioning led by Father Keith Branson, C.P.P.S. over Zoom.

I thought the retreat went well. It was planned in conjunction with Precious Blood Volunteer alumna Brooke Buth. Many thanks to Father Bill Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S. who gave us lots of ideas on how to use Appreciative Discernment with our volunteers. ✠

Find Us on the Web!
preciousbloodkc.org



Go there for:
Province Events
At Home With the Word
The New Wine Press
and more!

Humility in Learning

by Teresa Graham, Staff of PBMR

As I quieted my mind to decide what to share, the first thought that came to me is my belief that service to others is one of the main reasons we are on Earth. And service requires humility. This humility helps us understand that we are always learning about ourselves and others, and whatever we learn, we can teach.

I believe that we are all students and teachers. I used to think that if I was able to teach something, it meant I had mastered it. I now understand that learning a lesson allows me to teach what I have learned thus far, while knowing I have a lot left to learn. Humility helps us know we are in a continual learning state. We may have some expertise but not mastery. If ever I think I have mastered one of life's lessons, something inevitably comes along to humble my ego and remind me I am also student. I believe every encounter, blessing, or trial is a new opportunity to learn, teach, or often times, both. Our mission here at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR) is radical hospitality, hope, and healing. It sounds simple and straightforward, but it has required me to humble my spirit, open my heart, and refocus my mind.

At a young age I was taught to help others. I was taught to listen without judgement. I was taught each of us does something better than another, but no human being is better than another human being. I was taught God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary works. All this made sense in my mind until I saw family members refuse to ask for or accept the help of others. I was even more confused when my grandfather dismissed someone's advice that seemed to be sharing good information. My observations taught me it was good to help others but not to ask for help; that it was good to give advice but not to accept it. This became a problem when I was the one who then needed help and advice. I tried to follow the wisdom of my upbringing, to figure out my challenges alone, but as time went on, I found myself alone and even more in need of support. I remember someone telling me that if a person is drowning, they do not wait until they are

completely under water to signal for help, they start signaling as soon as they believe they are in trouble. They signal while they can still come up for air and flail their arms. If they waited until they were completely submerged, it could be too late. This spoke volumes to me regarding that time. I have used this lesson for myself and to teach others: *it is okay* to ask for help.

When I got older, I talked with my grandfather about my confusion. He provided me some context. He shared about his experience of being African American in this country, and who he felt okay accepting help from. He explained that because of his experience with slavery, racial injustice, etc., he did not trust most white people to help him, and often didn't want their help. My grandfather was from Mississippi, but we lived in Alamogordo, New Mexico, where I was born and raised. As a child, I did not recall any negative racial experiences, so I didn't understand his trauma, or what receiving help signified for him. Listening to the experiences of my elder was a huge life lesson and helped me understand the value of context.

I have only been working at PBMR for two months now. I came ready to observe, advocate, and share my lessons to help women, men, and young people, and what I have found is an invitation to be a student and learn from those whom I accompany. The same week I started, there was a Zoom Women's Healing Circle. I listened as many women shared their stories; a son killed 10 years ago, 9 years ago, 2 years ago, to name a few. A son died in prison. A mom new to the circle, lost her daughter to domestic violence Christmas Eve of 2019. As you might imagine, her grief was still new and heart wrenching. I was a student in that moment. Listening to these women was enlightening. I learned how resilient people are after such challenging and gut-wrenching experience.

Then about 10 days later I met a young mother recently released from prison. She has six beautiful children (four boys, two girls). Her mother took

care of the children while she was away, soon after she returned home, her mother suddenly passed away. Now one of the most valuable members of this mom's support team was gone, and here she was navigating transition and caring for her children alone. When I met her, she was being evicted from her mom's apartment in the middle of the pandemic, with her children and all their belongings scattered on the lawn. With all the adversity in her life she still has this positive, hope-filled attitude. As I sat, listening to her, I learned—whenever I listen without judgement, I learn. Each time I hear another part of a person's story I learn more about the reality of their struggles, the strength with which they carry on, and what they need to move forward. I learned this mom had watched her children sleep on the floor, and so badly needed beds for her children to sleep on in their new living situation. We worked very hard to find bunk beds for her little ones. That week, we went out and purchased three bunk beds with mattresses and had them delivered. They were so grateful. The day they arrived, the mother called

me, and I could hear a few of her children exclaiming in the background—happy that they wouldn't have to sleep on the floor anymore. It's humbling to think that something as simple as a bed to sleep on, the gift of just a few hundred dollars, can make all the difference in the world of a child. I'm so happy we were able to meet this need. As the new victim advocate here at PBMR it is my responsibility to do all possible to meet the most immediate needs of our participants, but the first step in that is getting to know participant. Sitting, listening, and learning from each of our women and men will help me recognize the unnoticed and connect them to resources that might keep them from drowning. It is a role of great humility for me as people open up and share their needs. But it reminds me of all the ways I have been supported throughout my life, and that giving and receiving support brings the hope that everything will be ok. The incremental care, community, and hospitality move us closer and closer toward healing. ✨

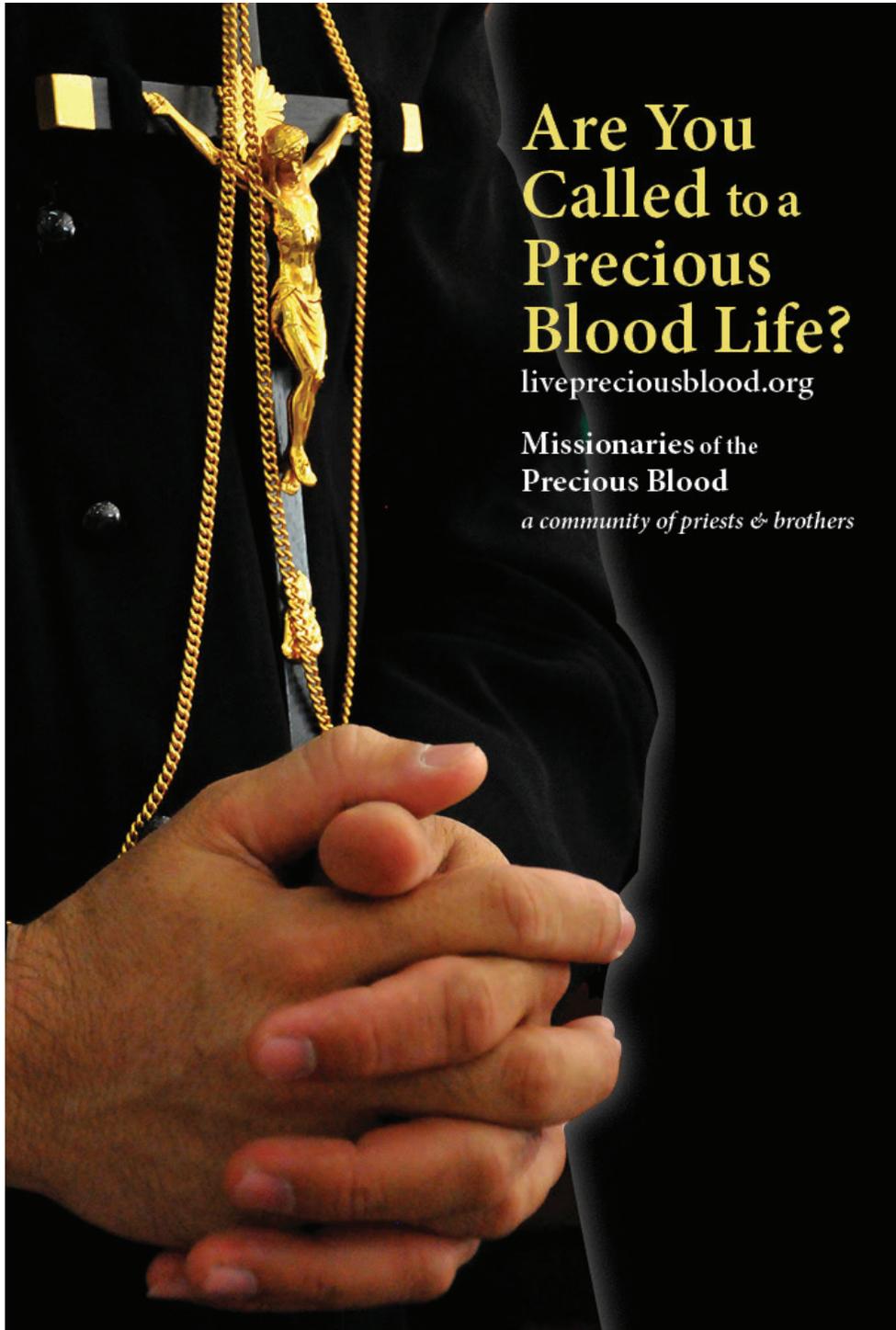
Mark Your Calendars

2022 Companion Retreat Dates

Orlando	January 15, 2022	San Pedro Retreat Center, Orlando
Kansas City	January 29 / 30, 2022	Precious Blood Renewal Center, Kansas City
California	February 12 / 13, 2022	Vallombrosa Retreat Center, Menlo Park
Wisconsin	March 12, 2022	To be determined
Ohio	March 19 / 20, 2022	St. Charles Center, Carthage
Iowa	March 26, 2022	To be determined

THE **New Wine** PRESS
Precious Blood Center
P.O. Box 339
Liberty MO 64069-0339

Change Service Requested



Are You Called to a Precious Blood Life?

livepreciousblood.org

Missionaries of the
Precious Blood

a community of priests & brothers



vocation@cpps-preciousblood.org
vocations@preciousbloodkc.org

