



The Cup of the New Covenant

MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
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The General Curia: Ministry of animation

by Francesco Bartoloni, C.P.P.S.

This issue of *The Cup* deals with the service of animation which the General Curia of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood would like to carry out as a help to all the units of the Congregation. The articles are written by members of the General Curia and are intended to explain the work they will be doing as “animators” of the Congregation. Here I would like to present these articles, giving a bit of the history of their origin and the reason for these articles.

The charism of our Congregation was founded upon three pillars which the members of all the units recognize as our basic pillars: mission, community, and spirituality. In the course of our history, these pillars were understood in increasingly diverse ways and this will happen in the future as well. A charism is not a static thing that can-

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The General Assembly is the highest authority in the Congregation (2007)

Leadership: from the community to the world

by Francesco Bartoloni, C.P.P.S.

The fourth chapter of our Normative Texts is entitled “Government” and the articles in that chapter express the meaning of authority and its relationship to the members who make up the Congregation and its various units.

In our Congregation, which has as one of its fundamental pillars community and the congressus, the meaning and exercise of authority is always found in relationship. Article C46 says: “Authority is a necessary support of the community. In our Congregation, as in the Church, some men are called to the office of leadership in which

they are to put themselves in a special way at the service of the community.”

Thus, authority sustains and supports the community; authority is not its essence. There is authority because there is community, not the other way around. Authority in our Congregation is exercised as an authority of relationship. Community and authority are an organic unity, each influencing the other. In order for authority to be really effective, community must be really effective.

A responsible community must be capable of creating a vision and an

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atmosphere that encourages a personal and communal commitment to that vision. For its part, authority must develop in such a way that this vision is realized in practice. Authority must see to it that each member of the community commits himself to realizing that vision.

Sometimes, in our discernment for electing leadership, we place great emphasis on the qualities that a person in authority should have. But that same emphasis needs to be placed on the qualities required of the community.

In our Congregation, in which leaders are ordinarily elected by the community, concern from the state of the community, I would say, is an essential project. If the community lacks quality and if commitment to quality is not constant, how can the authority, the leader, become a person of quality? Our leaders are not

these fundamental qualities in its leader, is an uncritical community that does not live the relationship and does not know how to recognize charisms and allow itself to be carried by them toward a shared and more open future.

In a Congregation like ours, in which community is constitutive, it must be precisely the community that gives “authority” to the leader. This takes place not only on the formal level, by which the community chooses its leader (either directly or by means of its delegates), but also on the practical and lived level, through which the leader is enabled to exercise his role. As it is established in article C61, that leadership role, is primarily “to vivify and renew the spirit of the Congregation” and to be “the visible sign of unity.” Strictly speaking, this is the task that our Constitution assigns to the Moderator General, but starting with him and sharing with him, I think

to one another, however, they must use their freedom to advance the welfare of the community.”

The most common and the most lethal danger to the life of the community can be the habitual incapacity to form a vision, to address itself to projects, and to construct an identity. This, I think, is the primary role and commitment of the leader: **to reawaken in the community the sense and meaning of its vision and of its identity.** The personal vision of the leader is not enough. If it is only the leader who has a vision, then his authority can become that of a salesman and the vision, as it were, a product in the marketplace.

The famous phrase of Martin Luther King, Jr., “I have a dream,” is immediately completed by the phrase: “It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.” His was not a personal and individualistic dream. That is, he believed that his dream was a shared dream which was already in the hearts of the American people. He had to draw the dream out.

What makes authority truly “authoritative” is the capacity to identify those values that underlie the essence of the community and which can mobilize it completely and entirely. The leader does not invent or create a vision. He identifies the vision that is constitutive for the community and his role becomes one of orienting and of guiding the community toward rediscovering this vision. In our Congregation, and especially in our youngest units, this capacity for identifying the vision is a very important role. Identifying the vision requires the commitment of the entire community and all members of the unit must be aware of and responsible for this task. The role of the leader is that of animating and promoting, that is, of creating strategies and programs that assist the entire community to commit itself to this important task. Truly, I think that the first job of the leader must be getting the community and the members to rediscover their vision and proper identity; it must be the creating of those strategies and programs by which all members can

«Sometimes, in our discernment for electing leadership, we place great emphasis on the qualities that a person in authority should have. But that same emphasis needs to be placed on the qualities required of the community.»

given to us, but they are “our” leaders; the persons whom we have chosen for ourselves and who are part of our community.

A person exercising relational authority is a person who forms, molds, and enriches the community and who allows himself to be formed by the community. In the same way, a relational community is one which forms, molds, and enriches the leader and allows itself to be formed by him. A leader may possess charismatic and visionary qualities, but not necessarily be a good leader in our Congregation, if he does not place these qualities in a relationship to the community and if he does not share those qualities with the community in a way that the assists the community to become charismatic and visionary. For its part, a community that does not know how to recognize

that this is also the task of every leader in his unit or community.

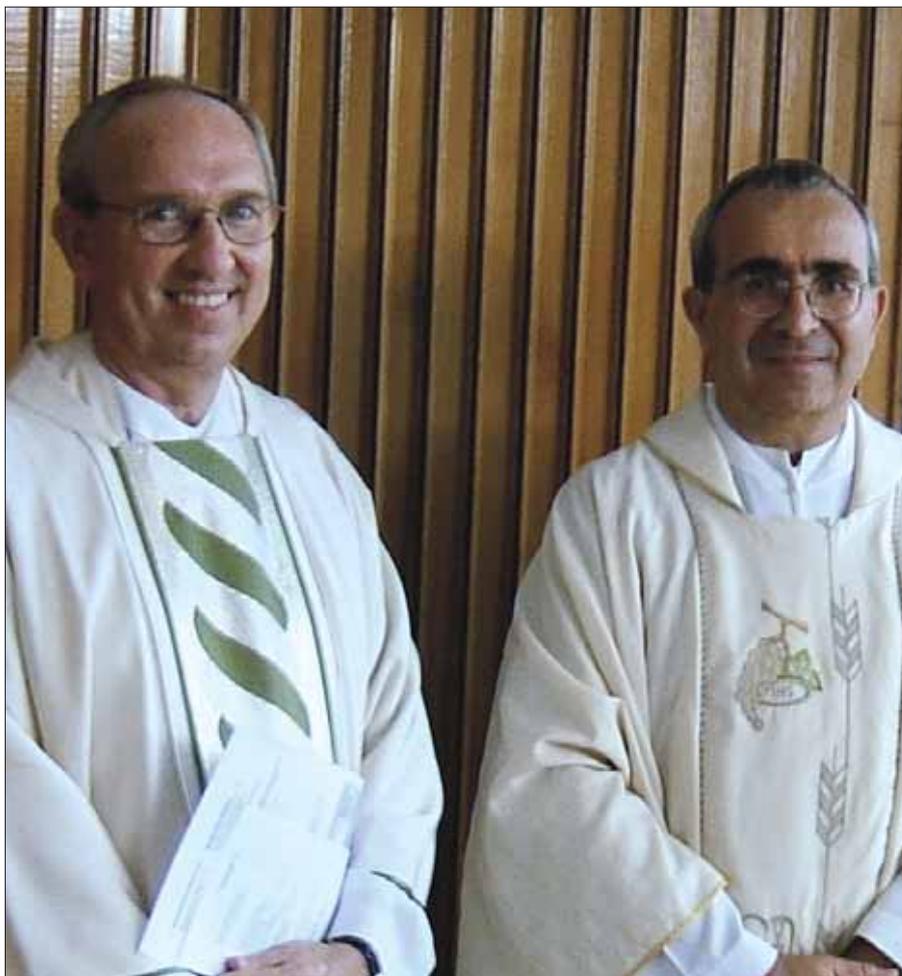
This relational exchange between leader and community is essential. I am not sure if a good leader can function if there is not a good community. He would be a crippled leader, who could indeed have the qualities of a leader but who lacked the means of carrying them out in practice. Thus, the state of the community is of fundamental importance and our formation and our way of life ought to create an ever better community. Article C45 of our Constitution insists on this: “Our Congregation is a fellowship of men freed through the Blood of Christ and united in the bond of love. As brothers, the members work together to create a community in which each of them can respond in full freedom to the call of Christ. By commitment

together commit themselves in this search and analysis.

How is this done? The effective means is through listening. Our Normative Texts (C47) tell us: “The function of authority is to unite the individual members into a single community. The Directors of the Congregation are to reconcile conflicting spirits and to keep the members faithful to the ideals of the community by exhortation and counsel and, if necessary, by direct command.” In our Congregation, the leader must be fully rooted in the community. This is his field of activity and ministry and the first action of this ministry is not the “direct command,” but being attentive to the situation and condition of the community. “Listening” to the community does not mean only doing what the community wants, but placing himself in service of the community. Service of the community is that which moves the community to realizing its vision and understanding its identity.

Through listening, a leader comes to know and recognize the sense of the community and is able to see where the community is going. To listen is an interior rather than exterior movement, which implies not only the capacity for being open to what others are saying, but also and above all, means discerning that which others are living. Living is greater than talking, because living points to the reality, while many times spoken words only point to desire or aspiration. It is difficult to listen to life, to judge living, without discernment. Listening and discerning go hand in hand. Each needs the other and together they assure that the leader is not one who only tells the community what it wants to hear or only says what he wants them to live out and to accomplish. These great values of listening and of discernment are qualities or charisms that the leader must have or must acquire.

We cannot forget the example of Jesus, who before beginning his public ministry, lived for thirty years in the “silence” of Nazareth. These were not only years of his human



The former and current Moderator Generals, Barry Fischer and Francesco Bartoloni

development. I like to think that they were also years of listening and discernment; listening to the Father and listening to the “cry of humanity.” Perhaps this example is important if we consider the “littleness” of our role as leaders. It can give the right impetus in the exercise of authority: as proper and suitable for the community; for discovering or rediscovering and actualizing its identity; an authority committed to arriving at a shared vision and project with the participation of all.

Action flows from the leader who has listened, discerned, and shared the vision with the entire community. Authority must know how to act: the rediscovery of identity and of vision by means of listening and discerning must be transformed into action, into mission. Community exists for mission and not for itself. Article C21 of our Normative Texts described the mission thus: “The Congregation takes part in the apostolic mission of the Church, proclaiming the mystery of Christ who

has redeemed all human beings in his Blood to make them sharers in the Kingdom of God.” Again in article C24: “The Congregation dedicates itself to the ministry of the word according to the spirit of the Founder. Every member shares in the apostolate of the Congregation, whether he exercises an administrative function or other related services, or whether he bears the suffering of sickness or age.”

The leader acts in a way to affirm and realize the Normative Text, which says: “every member shares in the apostolate of the Congregation.” This means that all members are participants and all are responsible for the mission. It is the aim of the leader to see that this responsibility is truly felt by all and to give all the possibility of realizing this mission. This mission situates the Congregation, not as a society which is an end in itself, but one which realizes its end in giving all of its members the possibility and capacity of putting its mission into action. ♦

Vision, Mission and Communion

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." [Proverbs 29:18]

Many years ago, when I was a seminarian in a homiletics class dreaming about the possibility of becoming one of St. Gaspar's thousand tongues, the professor startled the class with the observation that Jesus only had one sermon: "The reign of God is at hand." He went on to say, that this simple message was the core proclamation of the preaching ministry of Jesus, and all else that Jesus said and did, was mere commentary on that simple vision.

The reign of God is at hand - see it in the healing of the blind man. The reign of God is at hand - see it in the multiplication of the loaves. The

by William Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S.

preached the love of God and was given to us as a vision to save us from perishing.

Jesus had the power to see that which was not yet the physical reality. Jesus had the vision to see that the meek would inherit the earth; that those in sorrow would find comfort; and that peacemakers are the children of God. Because of his unity, his communion with his heavenly Father, Jesus had the vision to see the plan of God and his commitment to that vision allowed him to live his life and to offer his life as a means to bring that plan of God to fulfillment.

inspires us to follow his example and as he returned to heaven he gave his disciples our mission: To continue his mission through the proclamation of the gospel. Proclaim the vision of the Reign of God! Proclaim, in word and deed, how that vision is reveal in Christ. It is that evangelical mission which has become our Church.

As a religious congregation we share in that grand mission and in the ministry of evangelization that flows forth as an expression of that mission. All apostolic religious congregations are rooted in that common soil. In founding us for a ministry of the word, Gaspar rooted us firmly and faithfully in that mission. We proclaim the word of God with a



The journey of the Congregation begins on the road leading from San Felice in Giano, Italy

reign of God is at hand - see it in the mercy that I extend to a sinful woman. The reign of God is at hand - see it here on the cross. The reign of God is at hand - see it in the empty tomb. The words and deeds of this man Jesus, revealed the vision of God's presence in the world. Jesus was the declaration of God's love made visible for us to see. The life of Jesus

The vision that allowed Jesus to see that the reign of God was at hand, inspired him to live to completeness his mission from God to reconcile all people with God.

Jesus is the revelation of God for his disciples. His life and his teaching present to us a vision of what is possible in this world. His life shows us how to live with love. His teaching

particular emphasis: The world receives the gift of salvation through the shedding of Christ's blood. We preach that message with words, and more importantly, by living a common life that embodies the spirituality that finds its inspiration in the shedding of Christ's saving blood. That is our congregational mission. But while it is our congregational

mission, it is a mission that has had many expressions over our nearly two hundred years of history.

In every time and place it is necessary for the congregation to discern the call of God to participate in the great missionary work of the Church. Faithfulness to that mission in Tanzania in the twenty first century

tionally, we need to open ourselves to the revelation of a God that desires and promises to lead us through an ever abiding presence in our midst. This discernment is never a “once and forever” decision, but must be our way of being together in the world; always seeking and open to the breathe of the Spirit within

There is a famous (at least in English) children’s story called, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. It was written by the Englishman Lewis Carroll in 1872. In the story the main character falls through the looking glass (mirror) into a magical wonderland. In one scene, Alice is making a journey and she comes to a fork in the road and she asks a Cheshire cat which way she should go. The cat responds by asking Alice: Where do you want to go? When Alice replies that she doesn’t know where she wants to go, the cat tells her: If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.

«We need to believe that God will pour out the Spirit upon us and that young men shall see visions and old men shall dream dreams.»

must look differently than faithfulness in the papal states in the nineteenth century. Faithfulness to that mission in Europe today must look differently than it did in Europe a hundred years ago. That mission finds expression in many ways, according to the needs of a particular time and place. A mission must be anchored in reality. And because reality is continually shifting and changing, as a congregation we pray that we can read the signs of the times.

In that way, a mission is an alive and dynamic thing. It is an identity that is ever changing as we are guided by the Spirit. We hold the hope that our mission will have a life that is long and Spirit led. But there can be dangers that threatened that vitality. A community, a unit of the congregation, can be like an old man who looks with contentment and satisfaction on work well done and who is reluctant and resistant to accept the risk of being drawn into a new life. A community, a unit of the congregation, can be like a young man, uncertain of his gifts and vocation and timid in trusting the whispered urgings of the Spirit and reluctant to make the life-giving commitment that a mission demands.

A vision is a revelation of God. To discern that vision, to see the revelation of God in the concrete reality in which we live, requires an intimacy with God. We need to believe that God will pour out the Spirit upon us and that young men shall see visions and old men shall dream dreams (Act 2:17). Prayerfully and inten-

and to the way the wind of Spirit continues to blow in our world.

A community must discern the vision which can inspire and call it into the future. A community must discern its mission, the way that the community will live its way into that vision, so that the vision which begins as a hopeful dream, can become the lived reality of the community. All who are part of the community must share in that responsibility and must prayerful participate in the discernment activity. Those members in positions of community leadership do not define the vision and the mission, but they must lead by facilitating the discernment and by their own lives, by their words and their deeds, they must lead the community in it faithful commitment to the vision and mission which is discerned.

A religious congregation needs to know where it is going. We are a pilgrim people, but we can not be pilgrims wandering aimlessly. Simply, we need to be people of vision. We need to hold a hopeful vision that acts like a beacon which call us forward in continuing faithfulness. We need to be a people that share a commitment to a common mission; a mission which faithfully expresses our identity as a Precious Blood community. Just as Jesus and the Father are one with the Spirit, a holy communion that proclaims a vision of the Reign of God and fulfills a mission of reconciliation, we are in communion with one another when we allow that same Spirit to guide us as we share a commitment to fulfill our mission in the world today. ♦



Young missionaries sharing their visions under the trees at Giano

INITIAL, SPECIAL, AND ONGOING FORMATION

by Lucas Rodríguez, C.PPS.

It is already a cliché that we find ourselves not in an “epoch of change” but in a “change of epoch.” By this we affirm that the changes that confront us today are not superficial or transient, but that they go to the deepest roots of the issues of life itself. It is a matter of “paradigmatic changes” which question the foundations and models of society, of religion, of church, of ethics, of theology, of religious life – in short, of everything.

This change of epoch is manifested in the compression of space and time. How are time and space compressed? Yesterday is already today and today is already tomorrow. The world has become a global village where everyone knows one another and is interconnected. Religious life, as well, is seen as marked by a new dimension of depth and by that which today is usually called “axial time” (Karl Jaspers), according to which humanity has made a qualitative leap in the awareness that human beings are persons; are sub-

jects with rights and obligations.

For this reason, religious life today is confronted with the challenge of making a qualitative leap in understanding and living its identity. We note that the cosmetic retouching of the postconciliar period and the efforts of refounding have not had the desired results. Despite all of these efforts, the crisis continues all the stronger. Vocations are diminishing in many parts of the globe. It appears that we are experiencing that which is beginning to be called a “period of sterility.”

But there are also signs of hope: new experiences of religious life; new congregations are emerging; new theologies; and new commitments. There are people today who are “making new garments... and putting new wine into new wineskins” (cf. Lk 5, 36-37).

It appears that we urgently need a new theology of religious life. Like-

wise we need a new theology of mission, a new Christology, and a new ecclesiology. What do poverty, obedience, and chastity mean for the young people of today? What does it mean in concrete terms to follow Jesus Christ today? What is the radical nature of following him? What does it mean to hear the cries of the blood in today’s world? What does it mean to live in community? Do these questions have the same meaning in Europe, in Brazil, or in India? How can one live the same identity in cultures so different? What is necessary in formation so that we are faithful to our charism and faithful to God’s people?

The present General Council, elected in July of 2007, met in October to plan the activities for the next six years. The various tasks of the Moderator and of the Councilors were assigned. Responsibility for assisting in the area of formation was assigned to me. Formation embraces initial, special, advanced, and ongoing formation of candidates and of definitively incorporated members, whether brothers or priests.

Of course, we are not starting from zero. There has been important and solid work in the field of formation during recent years, at the local, regional, and international levels. One need only to recall the workshops for formators, for recently incorporated members, and the brother’s symposium. There have also been international retreats and gatherings of the students of Europe and North America. There are integral programs of formation in North American and in Latin America.

The Council recognized that the animation of formation in the various units must embrace three areas:

1. Animation in formation;
2. Formation and support of formators;
3. Care that the patrimony of the CPPS is understood.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

In Water and Blood:

A Spirituality of Solidarity and Hope,

by Robert Schreiter, C.PPS.,

(New York, Orbis Books, Revised, 2007)

Sette Giorni con Te Stesso:

Eserci Spirituali per un’Anima Semplice,

by Mario Proietti, C.PPS.,

(Foggia: Edizioni Il Castello, 2007)

If you are interested in these publications, please contact the Generalate.



The candidates and house members of the Advanced Formation program in Chicago

The Council considers animation in formation to be a matter of special importance. We are concerned that formators are prepared well and that programs of formation are excellent and effective in forming good Missionaries. We are convinced that formation must be accomplished in conformity with our missionary identity and must include both theoretical and practical aspects. Another conviction of the General Council, and mine in particular, is that animation in formation must be much more than holding formation workshops every six years. We need to assist and support formators, especially with regard to our CPPS patrimony. The General Council likewise believes, and hopes that the superiors of the units share this belief, that

formators must be chosen carefully and that that formation should take into account the context in which the candidates will carry out their apostolate.

In relation to the formation of formators, the Council believes that

- It is necessary to develop quality programs for the formation of formators;
- The Directors of the units must recognize the importance of preparing suitable persons for formation ministry;
- Preparation of formators is the responsibility of the entire community;
- Community life is an integral part of formation;
- Some of the newer units may

require help for establishing clear criteria for admission of candidates, while other, older units can be aided in vocation animation and thus, possibly, increase the number of their candidates.

How can we give this help to formators? As the Councilor responsible for animation in formation:

- I hope to know all of the formators of the CPPS.
- I will regularly visit the units in which formation is taking place. I hope these visits will be seen as an offer of help and never as an inspection to give criticism.
- I want to be well informed regarding the programs of formation in each unit.
- In relation to the understanding of the patrimony of the congregation, we believe that it is necessary to continue the workshops for formators every six years, but possibly it would be advisable to have meetings on an interregional level more frequently. The Council could be

«What is necessary in formation so that we are faithful to our charism and faithful to God's people?»

«In relation to the understanding of the patrimony of the congregation, we believe that it is necessary to continue the workshops for formators every six years, but possibly it would be advisable to have meetings on an inter-regional level more frequently.»

present and assist in the development of these workshops and in the interregional gatherings of candidates.

I offer this profession of faith, in which I express some of the things I understand regarding formation.

- I believe that God, Father-Mother, loves all without distinction (S. Peter).
- I believe in Jesus Christ, formator of disciples/missionaries.
- I believe that the Spirit is hovering over formation (the waters) (Genesis).
- I believe in Mary, disciple and teacher-formator of Jesus.
- I believe that there will be no formation without a formative community.
- I believe that no one gives what he does not have; one can not form others without being formed himself.
- I believe that God speaks to us in the cries of the Blood.
- I believe that there is no unity except in diversity (the Holy Trinity).
- I believe that if we are different we enrich each other (Helder Camara).
- I believe that “the dream that is dreamed together” comes to fulfillment (M. L. King).
- I believe that structure can give life but can also kill.
- I believe that in union there is strength (interregionality-internationality).
- I believe that there is no fidelity without creativity and no creativity without fidelity (JP II).
- I believe that cultures are not better or worse: they are different!
- I believe that without an option for the poor there is no Good News.

- I believe that faith moves mountains (Jesus Christ).

In closing, I wish to share with you an experience I had as Vice Rector of the Interdiocesan Seminary San Gaspar and as professor of pastoral care and companion to the seminarians in pastoral practice. The candidates for the priesthood, mainly diocesan along with some religious, were studying philosophy and theology in the Regional Pastoral Institute (IPAR). In the program, pastoral education had the same weight as the academic (fifty-fifty).

Each year, for two months, I would visit the candidates in their places of origin; evaluating, suggesting, and

accompanying them in their pastoral tasks. When I began this work I felt a shiver in my spine. For a moment, I thought that the local bishops, the priests of the parishes who received the candidates and the seminarians themselves would consider me to be a “Vatican spy” or a policeman. Happily, my experience was completely otherwise. For example, bishops came to meet me at the airport or bus station; priests saw me as an older brother helping them with formation; and the seminarians, in general, considered my presence very valuable for their formation. That was twenty-one years ago and even now, when I meet the seminarians of that time, now mature priests, we recall those times with joy and gratitude.

With this feeling of confidence in God, in the Congregation, in the superiors and in the candidates, I wish to begin this task. In this work, undoubtedly challenging but at the same time exciting, I want to be considered a companion (*cum panis* — one who eats the same bread), older brother, helper, councilor, and never spy or vigilante. ♦



A candidate in Mexico receives the ministry of lector

C.P.P.S. MISSION FOR JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

by Felix Mushobozi, C.P.P.S.

As Missionaries of the Precious Blood and as a community of apostolic life, we are living in a special moment in our history. We are in a process of renewal as we are rediscovering the missionary dimension of our charism. Over the last few decades, we have explored our understanding of our identity (particularly in regard to our spirituality) and it is time for us to translate that identity into practice with concrete actions at personal, communal and ministerial levels. The challenge before us is to embody and be a living sign of that spirituality in our world. Our involvement and concern for issues of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) can be a prophetic announcement that the Blood of Christ continues to redeem our world.

Fr. Barry Fischer and his administration have left us a legacy which needs to be developed; our missionary identity is clearer now than it was two decades ago. Using the framework of the three pillars of mission, community and spirituality, they have helped us to understand what being a missionary of the Precious Blood means today.

In this article, I would like to share my understanding of the task assigned to me as animator for JPIC. I am convinced that at this point in our history, our next step of development is to incarnated and inculturated our spirituality in the contexts where we live and work. The XVIII General Assembly identified, as a step on our road of re-founding, the need to reconsider and broaden our



Orphans under the care of the missionaries in India

understanding of mission. Thus, one of its values says: *“We recognize working for justice, peace, human life and the integrity of creation is an integral part of the ministry of the Word in a spirituality of the Blood of Christ as an expression of Catholic social teaching.”* (ACTA, 2004, Value 11). I would pose these questions: What is the link between our charism and our involvement in issues of JPIC? How can the rich heritage contained in the social teaching of the Church help us to accomplish our mission of listening and responding to the *cry of the blood*?

THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH FOR MISSION

Let me start my reflection by focusing on the role of the social teaching of Church for our mission today. “The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church” (CSDC) underlines this truth very clearly: *“With her social teaching, the Church seeks to proclaim the gospel and make it present in the complex network of social relations”* (n. 62). This means that the Church does not reach out to humanity to bring the Good News, disconnected from the realities that touch humanity’s daily life, but she does so by being attentive to the moral quality; that is, the authentically human and humanizing aspects of social life. Believers actively take part in the divine redeeming project through concrete measures taken in a social arena and not through theoretical abstractions. For this reason, right from the begin-

«We recognize working for justice, peace, human life and the integrity of creation is an integral part of the ministry of the Word in a spirituality of the Blood of Christ as an expression of Catholic social teaching.»



Our missionaries work to protect the environment in La Oroya, Peru

ning of its life, the Church was convinced that it's social teaching is part and parcel of Christian living because it is the social consequence of Christian commitment (John XXIII, *MM* 263). We testify to the gospel message when we put it into practice in concrete living situations and this is the way that we realize the universal vocation to holiness (See *GS* 36). And importantly, we will be judged to the extent to which we concretely live the gospel, expressed in lives that embody a commitment to our neighbor (*Mt.25:31-46*).

Church tries to do is to promote human dignity and humanity's vocation to be in communion with one another. This includes the task of teaching men and women the demands of justice, peace and integrity of creation, in conformity with divine wisdom. (*CSDC*, n. 62.)

THE CAUSE OF JPIC IN LIGHT OF CPPS CHARISM

While Missionaries of the Precious Blood around the world are already involved in JPIC activities, we need to give this work emphasis as a spe-

John Paul II, have clearly stated, not only that the social teaching of the Church is "*a valid instrument of evangelization*" (John Paul II, *CA* 54), but also that "this social doctrine is a distinctive way for the Church to carry out her **ministry of the word** and her prophetic role (Paul VI, *OA* 4; John Paul II, *SRS* 41). In effect, to teach and to spread her social doctrine pertains to the Church's evangelizing mission because it is an essential part of the Christian message, since this doctrine points out the direct consequences of the message in the life of society and situates daily work and struggles for justice in the context of bearing witness to Christ the Saviour" (*CSDC* 67).

Evangelization, therefore, means that we give living testimony in our ministry by taking on ourselves the concerns of the community of men and women with whom we live and work; their problems regarding justice, freedom, development, relations between peoples, peace and environmental issues. These issues should be sign posts in our plan of preaching, ministry and apostolic action. Nothing that concerns society should be foreign to our mission; otherwise our evangelization remains incomplete. Our task extends

«Evangelization, therefore, means that we give living testimony in our ministry by taking on ourselves the concerns of the community of men and women with whom we live and work.»

Thus, the Church is interested in what happens to society in all aspects, such as, politics, economy, labor, law, culture, etc. She believes that through her individual members and as a community, she can contribute greatly toward making the family of humanity and its history more human. Practically, what the

cific mission that flows from living our charism. Our constitution state clearly that the Missionaries of the Precious Blood dedicate themselves "*to the service of the Church through the apostolic and missionary activity of the **ministry of the word***" (*C3*). The social teaching of the most recent popes, especially Paul VI and

beyond a simple awareness of the challenges that face the peoples of our times. Those challenges are extensive: hunger, diseases like HIV – AIDS, unemployment, human trafficking, child labor, prostitution, deprivation of freedom, false democracy, ignorance, global warming, abortion, euthanasia, terrorism, the building of walls of division on basis of religion, race and social structures, and the list can go on. But beyond awareness, we are called to weigh the issues carefully and to provide an evangelical response to them as a renewal of our mission.

The tragic nature of these realities can effect our feelings and lead to a sense of helplessness and our silence in regard to these issues. But regardless of our feelings, what is important is that we try to respond. Do we try to analyze and discover the causes of these problems? Are we just a part of the apathetic masses that are willing to let things continue as they are, or are we willing to try to create a better world? We may not be able to perform wonders, but we can create a small room for discussion on these issues and discern possible ways of responding in faith.

RENEWAL OF OUR MISSION A MATTER OF APPROACH

In our General Council meeting in October 2007, there was a strong conviction that our credibility for mission will depend on our approach on issues of JPIC. We wanted to emphasize that the role of the General Council in this is not to set a direction different from the one envisaged by our constitution, but to continue exploring ways of building on that common vision. It was suggested that we could begin with the pastoral methodology found in the social teaching of the Church: **Observe-judge-act**. Pope John XXIII gives the dynamics of this approach in simple and concrete terms: “*First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and*

should be done to implement these principles” (John XXIII, MM 236).

The use this methodology has the advantage in that it creates a focus on pastoral concerns which can assist a missionary to be sensitive to the concrete needs of the people with whom he or she lives and works. It calls us to offer a theological perspective of mission and to prioritize dialogue with contemporary environments. It also brings to the forefront the role of the lay faithful in the universal mission of the Church.

OBSERVE - JUDGE - ACT

Doing mission in this way requires dedication to a mutual search for new horizons of life as we endeavor to build in our world a civilization of love and life.

NEW HORIZONS AND SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

It is not within the scope of this article to be too specific about the place of JPIC in our mission. I know that many of our missionaries around the globe are already very active in issues of JPIC. Some of the many examples include: our involvement in helping the victim of HIV-AIDS in Tanzania; the defense of the land rights of the poor in Brazil; the ministry of reconciliation in North America; Fr. Rosario Pacillo’s ministry with drug addicts in southern Italy; etc. I recognize that in some units of the congregation there is already a deep, lived commitment to this work. In these units, the General Council hopes to support that work. In other units there is less concrete activities and our starting point may need to be the building of awareness that concern for peace and justice is an **essential** part of our spirituality and charism. In these areas we might want to develop a program which will, in effect, foster a con-

cern for peace and justice ministry in the hearts of the members. What I think is appropriate at this point of our CPPS history, with creative fidelity to our founder, but without limiting ourselves to traditional models, we must incarnate our charism in response to the new situations of the world in which we live.

The overview of our mission today urges us to work for a common understanding and response to the issues of JPIC. We might need to create awareness both during initial

and ongoing formation. We may evaluate the possibility of integrating issues of JPIC in formation programs and raise consciousness of our members through visiting and sharing in their ministries. I understand that we can’t do everything at once, however through dialogue among our members, we hope that a commitment to respond to the issues of JPIC will be incorporated in our planning for our ministries. I believe this is a specific contribution which the Church expects from us and this is what John Paul II meant when he exhorted the XVII General Assembly where others are not willing to go and to do missions that have less prospect for success.” It is in this challenge that the social doctrine of the Church can offer us a focus and open new horizons for our mission today. ♦

List of Abbreviations used for papal document; available on the Holy See website.

CA	Centesimus Annus
CSDC	Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church
GS	Guadium et Spes
MM	Mater et Magistra
OA	Octogesisma Adveniensi
SRS	Sollicitudo Rei Socialis

Animation of the Lay Associates

SLEEPING GIANT

My journey towards missionary vocation in the CPPS began when I was in the high school. One day my friend invited me to go with him for a youth retreat in Czestochowa. It was organized and guided by a CPPS Missionary for members of the *Unio Sanguis Christi* and those interested in Precious Blood spirituality. After the first day, I already had a strong impression of being among people who were really searching for God – something I was looking for too! So, at the end of the retreat I decided to enter the youth group of the USC in my town.

After one year of regular participation in the youth group, I made a decision to enter the CPPS community. In the Mission Houses of the

by Grzegorz Ruchniewicz, C.PPS.

Polish Province we have always lived together with the lay people. They are

It was there that, for the first time, I realized that the Catholic Church is about 1% clergy and about 99% lay persons! And it was there, where I

«The Catholic Church is about 1% clergy and about 99% lay persons!»

a clear example of the Christian life for all of us: priests, brothers and students. Many times I was strongly supported by them on the way of my personal vocation. So, when in our work as a General Council I had to choose the specialization to focus my work, it was very easy for me – I decided to study the theology of apostolate, where a special emphasis on the mission of the laity was laid.

heard the laity in the Church referred to by one of our professors as a “sleeping giant.” Since that moment it became one of the most important dreams of my missionary service to awaken this giant.

“WE ARE THE CHURCH!”

It is clear looking on the history of the Church, that the first Christian



Companions and Associates also walk the road that leads from San Felice (MERLAP II)

community was one organism with some members serving the others as *presbiteroi*¹ – leaders of the community. It is clear that the rapid development of the Church in the first centuries was caused by the activity of lay Christians. Only after the Constantinian edict in A.D. 313 did the Church become more institutionalized and also the tasks of the *presbiteroi* became more official. Consequently, the difference between two groups became more visible and sensible. The gulf was enlarged in medieval times, especially between the higher clergy and the rest of the faithful.

On the other hand, it is very important to notice the continuous activity of lay persons in the history of the Church: first monks and eremites were usually lay people, who discovered the Gospel in a new way and wanted to follow Jesus more radically; in the medieval Church there were plenty of brotherhoods and other devotional groups – some of them really active, not only on the level of prayer, but in what today we would call evangelization and social service. But a real self-consciousness of the laity began only about 150 years ago. It is important to notice that the history of the present day Catholic Action began in the time of Pope Pius IX (1792-1878). Since that moment, the joint responsibility of the lay people for the mission of the Church has been emphasized more.

Of course, the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) is for us an important point of reference, as it showed the vision of the Church as the People of God², where hierarchy and clergy are to serve the entire community³ and the main protagonists are those who were a “sleeping giant.” Who are the lay Christians? Being baptized “they are in their own way **sharers in the priestly,**

prophetical, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world” (LG 31).

In the same article of *Lumen Gentium* there is a sentence, which seems to me one of the most important: “What specifically characterizes the laity is their secular nature.” And the Council explains this secular character and mission of the laity: “the laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven. They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. In this way they may make Christ known to others, especially by the testimony of a life resplendent in faith, hope and charity.”⁴ This is certainly the *Magna Carta* of the lay Christians vocation in the Church and in the world!

Of course, there are other important documents of the Church about the role and mission of the laity, e.g. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II *Cristifideles Laici* (1998), the newest Catechism of the Church⁵ or messages of John Paul II and Benedict XVI on the occasion of meetings with catholic movements or families,⁶ etc.

Do you remember a song by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie, “We are the world”? It seems to me a good song for the Church after the second Vatican Council, which we should sing every day with our heart and our mind, lay and clerics, collaborat-

ing with each other: we are one family, we are one community, “We are the Church!”

“ST. GASPAR & SONS”

What does this look like in our CPPS family? Since the very beginning of our Congregation, St. Gaspar wanted his missionaries not only to preach the Word, but to also begin lay groups (*ristretti*) to keep the spiritual fruits of their work; one can find also a suggestion to found *oratories* for men to gather them for common prayer and Christian formation, etc. He wrote in one of his letters: “We are living in times when it is necessary to form apostolic workers among people of all ranks” (# 3792).

In our past there were different approaches to our association with lay people. Whether we like it or not, there are lay people who are attracted by the Precious Blood spirituality and the CPPS mission, going forward with us and searching for their own way on this journey “marked by the Blood.” Fortunately in recent years our members became more conscious that the collaboration and sharing the Precious Blood spirituality with the laity is an important part of our life.⁷ In the Jubilee Year of 2000, we came to Rome to celebrate this great feast of Christianity and in 2001 and 2007 we organized two international Meetings of Representatives of the Lay Associates Programs (MERLAP). I would risk saying that, while on the one hand, these were very nice meetings; but on the other hand, they also revealed the need to learn much more about the specific place of the lay people in the Church and in our CPPS family and their distinct way of living the Christian spirituality.

It would be good to realize more and more that “St. Gaspar & Sons” is not a small business for an elite group, but a sign-board under which many people can find their own place and feel at home!

OUR JOURNEY

We have to continue the journey started by former general adminis-

«The laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God.»

«The collaboration of the laity and clergy is not the mission of the Church. It is just the usual way to fulfill the mission, which is to “make disciples of all nations” and to build the Reign of God.»

trations and go farther. What is the direction of this journey into the future? I would like to suggest some ‘places to be visited’ on this journey.

TO GET KNOW EACH OTHER

There are many different groups collaborating or associated with the CPPS. I recognize as the most important in my task of animation to get know people and their situations. But I would suggest the same for all our members and lay people: let’s get know each other on our local level and international level. This is necessary in order to collaborate and to go further.

TO CREATE A SPACE FOR SHARING AND SEARCHING

To facilitate getting to know each other, we need a space for sharing and searching. This was expressed during both MERLAP meetings. This process should be done mainly by the laity themselves to avoid a possibility of creating a clerical way of life for non-clerical people. Of course, the theology of laity should be known and studied more thoroughly. One of the possibilities for sharing is to use the CPPS website as a mean of communication.

TO ENCOURAGE

We have to give each other a courage and hope for this work! Personally, I consider this to be especially the CPPS members’ job; without our willingness it will be not possible to collaborate with the lay persons. In some places we are already much further in this topic, but there are areas where some changes are still necessary. The

presence of lay associates in our houses and in our mission, with their own way of understanding the Church and their own way of “sanctification of the world,” should be a continuous challenge for us.

TO COORDINATE

As we live in different realities, there is a need for coordination of the Lay Associates groups. That was the reason of giving one of the General Curia members a special task of Lay Associates animation. Of course, it needs the previous steps to be done. In my opinion, the coordination is possible in two areas: mission and spirituality. It seems, that these are two common points for all our

groups. But ways of coordination still need to be studied and determined.

TO ACT AS ONE CHURCH

The collaboration of the laity and clergy is not the mission of the Church. It is just the usual way to fulfill the mission, which is to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19) and to build the Reign of God. And “usual” here means not less important; this is how the things should be done! There is only one mission for all members of the Church, with different ways to fulfill it.

MERLAP III AS A POINT OF REFERENCE

It is not possible for me to say much more in the beginning of my service. But I would suggest that we look on MERLAP III, planned for 2013, as a point of reference for our work in next years. We can plan and study, work and meet to make the next

OUR AUTHORS

Fr. Francesco Bartoloni, C.P.P.S. Moderator General. The Constitutions give him the responsibility to be sign of unity in the Congregation, to vivify and renew its spirit and to promote its expansion.

Fr. Grzegorz Ruchniewicz, C.P.P.S. Vice Moderator General and Procurator of the Congregation. He has the responsibility of the animation of the Lay Associates.

Fr. William Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S. General Councilor. He will focus on the animation on Mission and Vision in the Congregation.

Fr. Felix Mushobozi, C.P.P.S. General Councilor. He has the responsibility of animation in the topic of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

Fr. Lucas Rodríguez Fuertes, C.P.P.S. General Councilor. His responsibility is the animation on the issue of Formation, from initial to ongoing.



A gathering of the Union of the Blood of Christ in Croatia

MERLAP a moment of meeting, sharing and maybe of creating something new as well.

I realize that much of what I have written above is not really new. All we need to do is to put into practice what has already been said.

So let us finish with the words of St. Gaspar: “A Society that is in the process of developing requires a very strict exchange of ideas, not indeed so much for setting up basic procedures, but to improve its practices in doubtful instances” (# 2033). ♦

¹ 1 Peter 5:1.

² Lumen Gentium (LG), especially Chapters 2 and 4.

³ LG 13.

⁴ For more background on the vocation of the laity in the world, see the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*).

⁵ Especially paragraphs 897-913.

⁶ An example of this is the homily of Pope Benedict XVI during the meeting of the Catholic Movements and New Communities in Rome, June 3rd 2006 (<http://www.laici.org/>).

⁷ See “The Cup of the New Covenant” no. 8, April 2000.

«We are living in times when it is necessary to form apostolic workers among people of all ranks.»

UP COMING EVENTS

Meeting of the General Council

*June 16-26, 2008
Salzburg, Austria*

Dedication of the International Center of Precious Blood Spirituality

*July 1, 2008
Salzburg, Austria*

Meeting of the CPPS Major Superiors and Mission Directors with the Moderator General and General Council

*November 3-7, 2008
Bangalore, India*

International Workshop on Mission

*July 20-24, 2009
Salzburg, Austria*

☛ *Continued from front page*

not be changed. It is born in history and develops in practice, in the unfolding of history. Among the three pillars, mission is surely the one which, in some sense, characterizes us since we are not a congregation of consecrated life but a society of apostolic life. In our understanding of the service of leadership we have especially wanted to emphasize this fundamental aspect: community service for the whole community.

It is true that our *Normative Texts* speak of the Moderator General as “the visible sign of unity in the Congregation ... endowed with the authority over all Provinces, Vicariates, Missions, houses and members invested in him by Common Law, the Constitution and the General Statutes, and decrees (C61).” The same *Normative Texts* do not tell us much about the General Councilors, except that they assist the Moderator General (C67), that they help the Moderator General “in governing the Congregation” (S30), and that the Moderator General must in certain instances seek their counsel or their consent.

From the first meeting of the General Council we have chosen to carry out our ministry of governance

in a collegial manner. We have sought to discern the situations in our Congregation which are most in need of animation, for a homogeneous growth, which is at the same time also rooted in history and place. This discernment was not easy. It required a great deal of discussion, much prayer, and great sensitivity on the part of all, especially in light of all that has taken place in the various general assemblies, workshops, and international meetings. In the end, we made a list of five areas of animation which seemed useful and necessary for all the units of the Congregation: formation, mission and vision, social awareness, collaboration with lay associates, and, naturally, government. There are probably other areas of animation, perhaps even more important, but these seemed to us to be the most urgent.

We have divided these areas among ourselves. Fr. Gregory Ruchniewicz will be the animator in the area of lay associates. Fr. Felix Mushobozi will be the animator in the field of social awareness, and justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. Fr. Lucas Rodríguez Fuertes will be dealing with both initial and ongoing formation. Fr. William Nordenbrock will have responsibility for creating

a vision for mission and I, as moderator general, will have task of the animation of leadership.

The articles which follow seek to show what each of us intends to do so that our service and ministry will bear fruit and be shared by all the members of the Congregation. In addition, they also are aimed at showing what each of us means when he speaks of his area of animation, highlighting those salient qualities which he wishes to emphasize.

As I said, this work of animation, despite the division into areas of animation, will not be a task undertaken individually by the various members of the General Curia, but seeks to be as much as possible shared, especially within the General Council and also by all of the members of the Congregation. Our exercise of authority, exercised collegially, will lead us to open ourselves to one another and to all who wish to collaborate so that this animation will be effective and will reach all the members of the Congregation.

For this reason I do not offer only my best wishes for a pleasant reading of the articles that follow, but above all, my desire for a good response to them as well. ♦

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