



The Cup of the New Covenant

MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
No. 41 - October 2016

Gratitude and the Works of Mercy

Jeffrey Kirch, C.PPS.

Something for everyone. This phrase comes to mind when looking back through the archives of *The Cup of the New Covenant*. In October of 1996 the very first issue of *The Cup of the New Covenant* was published with articles exploring the theme of our “Precious Blood Spirituality as it Calls Us to Solidarity.” Twenty years later, through dozens of different themes, *The Cup of the New Covenant* is still exploring our Precious Blood Spirituality.

Included in this first issue is also an article from Rev. Barry Fischer,

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Many elderly residents are served by the medical mission near Vietnam's border with Cambodia.

Oasis of Mercy

Daryl Charron, C.PPS.

On August 20th members of the Vietnam Mission joined a team of doctors, nurses, pharmacists and volunteers on a medical mission to the Tuy Duc District of the Dak Nong Province on Vietnam. We conducted the medical mission at Giao Xu Thien An. This is a Catholic parish with three mission churches right on the border of Vietnam and Cambodia. We embarked on this journey to carry out, in whatever way we could, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

In preparation for going on this medical mission the members and students of the Vietnam Mission prayed special prayers, especially at the cele-

bration of Eucharist for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. These prayers were written by Pope Francis and are very inspirational to those wanting to carry out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Pope Francis said that the practice of pilgrimage has a special place in the Jubilee Year of Mercy, because it represents the journey each of us makes in this life. When Pope Francis wrote his letter, *Misericordiae Vultus*, he reminded us that life itself is a pilgrimage and this will be a sign that mercy is also a goal to reach and requires dedication and sacrifice.

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Those of us in the Vietnam Mission who prepared for this opportunity to serve in a medical mission saw it as a pilgrimage of mercy. It did require dedication and sacrifice.

It was a two-day commitment involving staying overnight and sleeping on the floor. You do not get much sleep and it is a lot of physical work. It requires loading and unloading medical supplies, food, and clothing from the bus. Depending on which group you are assigned to, it also meant being busy with the distribution of these necessities to those in need.

Being engaged in such ministry made us aware of the importance of small daily acts of solidarity in meeting the real needs that we were encountering throughout the medical mission. We realized that there is a bond between our faith and the poor, as well as an obligation not to abandon them. You could not help but show mercy, because that is what living community in Vietnam means. We opened our hearts to those living on the fringes of society in Vietnam. Feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, counseling the doubtful, and instructing the ignorant were the main works of mercy that we were doing.

Khuong Nguyen and I had the responsibility of providing boxes of food for the patients coming to receive medical attention. We provided each patient with 5 kilos of rice and 10 packages of instant noodles as well as a package of clothes. Performing this work of mercy caused me to reflect on the theology of Br. Ton Sison, C.P.P.S. who came to Vietnam earlier this Summer to teach a course at the Jesuit School of Theology in Ho Chi Minh City. I talked with him about his book, "The Sacred Foodways of Film." In his book, Ton grapples with critical questions of how belief in God's provision of daily bread squares with contemporary realities on the ground where socio-economic forces that are often too large, too complex to

"You could not help but show mercy, because that is what living community in Vietnam means."

comprehend, bedevil what was intended to be a meaningful and straightforward faith equation. His book challenges the reader to think about the process of acquisition, distribution, and use of food. It caused me to reflect on the gift of food and that gift being sufficient and proportionate to each person's needs. I wondered if we were going to have enough to serve the needs of all the patients coming forth to receive assistance.

Khuong took his responsibility very seriously and was being especially careful to prepare the food boxes equally and fairly. He said, "I enjoyed making acquaintances with people I had never seen before. Welcoming the stranger helped me

discover that I am not shy around strangers. I found out it is rather easy for me to be friends with strangers. I learned the value of being open-minded and showing love to everyone." Khuong's response to the mission confirmed my belief in mercy being the foundation of the Church's life. Our pastoral work is at its best when we show such merciful and compassionate love as Khuong did. I especially enjoyed how the children's faces lit up with joy when Khuong gave them candy.

Blir Ntor, another one of our students, also enjoyed creating relationships with others and serving them. His responsibility was to help the pharmacist dispense the medicines. He struggled with his lack of experi-



Bro. Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S. and Precious Blood candidate Blir Ntor during a medical mission trip.



In addition to medical treatment, medical supplies are distributed to those in need.

ence and not being familiar with such work. However, his desire to expand his understanding far outweighed his limitations in helping. I was especially touched by Blir saying, “I feel the deprivation of those I am serving.” Blir recognized early on that we were serving many indigenous Vietnamese who were also of his heritage. Many of whom we were serving spoke a variation of the M’Nong language. Blir also speaks this language and felt a special connection with the people. One of Blir’s shortcomings according to him was being timid when in contact with the people he was serving.

Blir and I took a picture under a banner on the outside of the church which read, “Duc tin phai hanh dong nho duc men.” It is a quote from scripture referring to putting our faith in to action. Pope Francis talks about this in the letter I mentioned earlier. He encourages us to contemplate the mystery of mercy as the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Blir was blessed with the ability to look into the eyes of his brothers and sisters and feel their deprivation. Pope Francis says that at times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father’s action in our lives. Our activities in

the medical mission made us feel that our faith in action helped us come into contact with God’s action in our lives.

Ky Phung, one of our pledged candidates in formation, worked with the pharmacist in giving out medicines along with Blir. Ky had been at this particular site before in a previous medical mission. He was able to help Blir understand his role and responsibilities. There is an image of Jesus and his divine mercy flowing from his body that was on the wall at the parish in which the medical mission took place. Pope Francis talks about this image in his letter and asks all of us to fix our eyes on Jesus and his merciful gaze. He says, “The signs he works, especially in favor of sinners, the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering, are all meant to teach mercy. Everything in him speaks mercy. Nothing in him is devoid of compassion. What moved Jesus in all these situations was nothing other than mercy, with which he read the hearts of those he encountered and responded to their deepest need.” I believe Christ was working through us in this way during the medical mission.

This opportunity to go on the medical mission which others taught me something of what the Pope meant when asking us to get back to the

basics and bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters. I take serious the message of Pope Francis who says, “Wherever the Church is present, the mercy of the Father must be evident. Wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy.” I felt that our entire team did well to create an oasis of mercy for those we were serving. The doctors and nurses were so kind and compassionate with the patients that I could witness their carrying out the works of mercy of instructing the ignorant and counseling the doubtful as they advised our patients in receiving further healthcare. Ky Phung helped me appreciate this aspect of the ministry when he said, “I have been on these medical missions several times and I have developed the ability to see through the actions a deeper meaning of identifying with the poor and sick much like Mary at the foot of the cross with Jesus.” I believe Ky truly knows the meaning of “option for the poor.” He lives it among those in Ho Chi Minh City suffering from HIV and AIDS who he cares for during his regular ministry.

Participating in this medical mission helped me to appreciate even more the Precious Blood Spirituality that sustains me. It meant a lot to me when the head doctor of the mission sat next to me at Eucharist after he had told me that it was customary for the team to go to Mass together on the Sunday of the mission. This confirmed in me the belief that Precious Blood Spirituality truly is a spirituality of hospitality and renewed life. It is a spirituality that calls for solidarity with the poor and a concern with concrete tasks of daily living. It has to do with redemption and an overcoming of obstacles.

Our Catholic tradition holds that the celebration of the eucharist is a sacrifice. Precious Blood Spirituality came alive for me as our medical mission team brought our own personal sacrifices to the altar and united them with the renewing sacrifice of Jesus. ♦

A DAY OF MERCY, A DAY TO COME HOME

Stephen Dos Santos, C.P.P.S.

In the opening of the Jubilee of Mercy Pope Francis wrote, “The initiative of *24 Hours for the Lord*, to be celebrated on the Friday and Saturday preceding the Fourth Week of Lent, should be implemented in every diocese. So many people, including young people, are returning to the Sacrament of Reconciliation; through this experience they are rediscovering a path back to the Lord, living a moment of intense prayer and finding meaning in their lives. Let us place the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the center once more in such a way that it will enable people to touch the grandeur of God’s mercy with their own hands. For every penitent, it will be a source of true interior peace.” (*Misericordiae Vultus* 17)

The Year of Mercy has truly been a gift to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. *Misericordiae Vultus*,

like so much of Pope Francis’ pontificate, was full of Precious Blood themes. God’s mercy and a culture of encounter are two themes that influenced the Dayton District of the Cincinnati Province as we developed the Day of Mercy event as part of the Year of Mercy.

In our November 2015 District meetings we were asked to reflect on the then upcoming Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy and on how we as Missionaries of the Precious Blood might engage this year, which speaks so loudly in the language of our charism and Spirituality. One of the things we were asked to do was to brainstorm about how we might, individually and collectively, engage the upcoming Jubilee Year of Mercy. It was in this context that the Days of Mercy were developed.

We knew that the *24 Hours for the Lord* idea would not work in our

context. Dayton is not a city with a 24 hour culture, and our parishes are in parts of town where people would be apprehensive coming out in the middle of the night. And so, the Day of Mercy was born. The idea was simple. We would open one of the parish churches where we minister for 12 hours. When Mass wasn’t being celebrated the Blessed Sacrament would be exposed, and priests would be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Our Precious Blood Spirituality teaches us that mercy and reconciliation are broader than the forgiveness of sins alone. While it would be important that we celebrate God’s Mercy with people in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we would also need to tend to the need of others who might come looking for mercy in other ways. Some people would need to sit and talk and so we would



The Day of Mercy included time for adoration, mass, and the sacrament of reconciliation.

have brothers, sisters, and priests available to offer spiritual counsel to those who came looking for it. Some would need time to stop and be quiet with the Lord, and so we made a number of prayer resources available on a table as they walked in.

The first Day of Mercy was held on March 15, 2016, Tuesday of the fifth week of Lent, from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Church in downtown Dayton, and it was a great success. St. Joseph's is known for having a confessor available every day before the noon mass, but this day was different. We had no idea if people would come, or if we'd be sitting in the confessional reading our books. Those of us who heard confessions were kept busy the whole day through. The first hour was a little quiet, but from 7:00 a.m. on there were penitents waiting to celebrate the sacrament throughout the whole day, we even had to add confessors a couple of times. At one point, a diocesan priest who had come to receive the sacrament, pitched in and helped hear confessions when he saw that the line was getting long.

A second Day of Mercy is scheduled for October 21, 2016 the Feast of St. Gaspar, our founder. The elements of the day will be the same, but the schedule will be different. The day will begin with Mass with the students of Mother Brunner School. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed and Confessors will be available throughout the day until Benediction followed by a celebratory meal.

Lisa Johnson, a regular daily mass attendee at St. Joseph's said "Ever since I saw this advertised, I was so moved, and I knew I would be here. I felt such anticipation for what this day would mean for so many people." Johnson said she especially appreciates the sacrament when offered through the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. "Precious Blood priests are amazing confessors," she said. "They take their time with each person. You can feel Christ's presence through them."

"Mercy is more than just forgiveness. At its most basic level, mercy is nothing more and nothing less than a form of love."

The Day of Mercy was focused primarily on the Spiritual Works of Mercy. Those of us in the confessionals were there to "forgive offenses willingly." But in the conversa-

warmly embraced by the God, the Father.

Sr. Judy Niday, C.P.P.S. (Dayton) made herself available for conversation and counsel. As a trained spiri-



Several priests, including Rev. Angelo Anthony, C.P.P.S., were present to hear confessions throughout the day.

tions that took place with the religious who were available, we were also able to "counsel the doubtful" and "comfort the afflicted." The Companions who came to help with hospitality also sat in the back and prayed for all those who came into church that day.

There is something special that happens on a day like this one. Men and women who have been away from the church see this as an opportunity to come home. The open availability of a wide open span allows them to come. For some of the participants the time since their last confession was measured in decades rather than weeks or months. Though they may feel like they are sneaking in under the tent flap, in fact they are walking in through the front door and being

tual director, Sr. Judy was ready for whatever people brought with them to St. Joseph's that day. It was her hope that in sitting and listening that she could offer people the Father's merciful embrace. "My prayer before I came to church this morning was that the Spirit would be with me, to give me an open heart to allow people to speak their own truth, and to help them with any questions," she said.

Mercy is more than just forgiveness. At its most basic level, mercy is nothing more and nothing less than a form of love. In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we are all called to be more loving with everyone we encounter. Days like this one help to remind us that a lot of people need a lot of love. ♦

Following in the Footsteps of Saint Galla and Saint Gaspar

Stanisław Rawski, MD - Ignacy Jakubiak, C.P.P.S.

Labuńki, a small village in Eastern Poland, is home to the Hospice of Santa Galla, a ministry of the Polish Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. I work there along side Fr. Ignacy Jakubiak, C.P.P.S. The work and ministry give us joy and a real sense of vitality, despite the challenges of hospice ministry. The name of the hospice is Santa Galla and frankly speaking, I did not know much about this saint before writing this article. Fr. Dawid Wróblewski, C.P.P.S. gave me a biography of Saint Gaspar by Mario Spinelli so that I could learn more about the Precious Blood connection to Santa Galla. I read that Saint Gaspar visited the hospitals and hospices in Rome “giving solace and comfort, devoting himself to the poor, elderly, and sick.” One of those hospices was Santa Galla.

During Saint Gaspar’s life one of his primary apostolic works was the reopening of the hospice of Santa Galla in Rome. The hospice had a long, rich history almost stretching back to the time of Constantine. Saint Galla, the daughter of a wealthy Roman patrician, founded the hospice. We know very little about her life except that her father was executed by Theodoric, the ruler of the Ostrogoths, and that her husband died after only one year of marriage. Due to her beauty and wealth,

she had many suitors, but she decided to dedicate her life to taking care of the sick and poor. She died in 550 from breast cancer which had caused her great suffering and pain. It was reported that as a result of the disease she had become so thin that she looked like a skeleton.

standing qualities of the early Christians was their commitment to take care of the sick and elderly, and the hospice of Santa Galla became a prime example of this commitment. Caring for the ill, taking them in from the streets, tending to their infected wounds, these were novel



The Santa Galla Hospice not only cares for the residents’ physical needs, but also their spiritual needs, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist in the chapel.

The hospice she founded in the 6th century eventually became the hospice where Saint Gaspar ministered in the 19th century. One of the out-

ideas for the ancient Romans. Pagan Rome did not see care for the sick or elderly as a duty. In fact, it was common for crowds to yell loudly, “Let the elderly be thrown into the Tiber river!” As Christianity grew and became the official religion of the Empire a new ethos of caring for the sick and elderly developed. These centers of care and healing were often supported by important Roman citizens and church leaders. The earliest and most important of these was Santa Galla. In the 17th century

“Our ministry in hospice care is to give the suffering and the sick the best quality of life we can...to ensure suffering and dying persons human dignity, and ultimately to allow them to die in dignity.”



Santa Galla Hospice in Łabuńki, Poland.

Livio Odescalchi sponsored the hospice and built the church. A few decades before Saint Gaspar, Saint Giovanni Battista de Rossi also ministered to the poor, sick, homeless, and dying at Santa Galla.

When Napoleon invaded Rome the hospice was almost ruined, but thanks to Saint Gaspar's efforts and devotion it once again was able to minister to those most in need. He organized the hospital and the dormitories, he implemented the teaching of the catechism, and began the regular celebration of the liturgy. Santa Galla was of utmost importance for Gaspar throughout his life. The hospice, with roots back to the 6th century, withstood the test of time, until 1930, when Benito Mussolini had it demolished for the creation of a new road.

The physical building of Santa Galla Hospice does not exist today in Rome, but its name and mission is carried on in Łabuńki, Poland at our Santa Galla Hospice. Like Saint Gaspar before us, we are devoted to sick and suffering people in our world. We care for them, treat their wounds and bedsores, and offer them the love of Christ just as Saint Galla and Saint Gaspar did in their times.

Every day those of us who minister at Santa Galla in Łabuńki meet and care for people suffering from cancer. Today our patients have some of the best medical resources to help alleviate their pain and suffering, but the sick and dying in the time of Saint Galla and even Saint Gaspar had none of these resources.

Saint Galla, as she struggled against her breast cancer, would have suffered from cachexia, which still causes drastic weight loss in our patients today. And if Saint Galla suffered from bone metastases, she certainly would have experienced severe, horrible pain that could not be alleviated.

Even now contemporary medicine is not omnipotent and one hundred percent effective. The struggle with death can not always be won, and in the end everyone passes away. Our ministry in hospice care is to give the suffering and sick the best quality of life that we can medically and spiritually, to ensure suffering and dying persons human dignity, and ultimately to allow them to die in dignity. It is not an easy task.



St. Gaspar's spirit of care for the sick is carried on today at the Santa Galla Hospice.



Friends of the Hospice gather to plant flowers to raise awareness of the importance of the hospice ministry.

In 2001, during the General Assembly of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Saint John Paul II called on the Missionaries to work for the protection of human life from conception until natural death. This care for all persons, no matter what stage of life they are in, is the mission of Santa Galla Hospice.

The spirituality of the Precious Blood calls for us to see even the sick, dying, and most vulnerable as deserving of God's love.

Paraphrasing Pius VII, Saint John Paul said, "Two centuries later, another Pope summons the sons of Saint Gaspar to be no less bold in their decisions and actions - to go where others cannot or will not go and to undertake missions which seem to hold little hope of success. I ask you to continue your efforts to build a civilization of life, seeking the protection of all human life, from the life of the unborn to the life of the aged and infirm, and promoting the dignity of every human person, especially of the weak and those deprived of their rightful share of the earth's abundance. I urge you to pursue a mission of reconciliation, as

you work to rebuild societies torn by civil strife, even bringing together victims and perpetrators in a spirit of forgiveness."

This mission, the mission of protection the human life from the beginning to the end, is a daring one in our contemporary world, especially in times of financial crisis. Unfortunately, its success is not sure. When there is not enough money, when the public debts grow rapidly, calling for the care and treatment of the terminally ill means wasting funds to some people. It is simple to say that no matter what we do for a sick person she will die soon, so we should not waste the money.

Such statements terrify all of us who minister at Santa Galla, doctors, nurses, volunteers, and the Missionaries. Our mission is to ensure the

dignity of the dying. In time of Saint Galla this was called *ars morendi*, the art of dying. Saint Galla sacrificed herself to this art, she offered all her fortune and life to ensure the dignity of the dying. Saint Gaspar did the same, dying during a cholera epidemic in 1837. We are their successors. After 1500 years we are wealthier, we have a greater medical knowledge, yet we continue spend millions on military equipment, and we deny financial support to the terminally ill.

The early Christians insisted that the sick and dying needed their help, despite the prevailing sentiments in Roman culture.

Today this corporal work of mercy, so important to Saint Gaspar, continues to prompt us for action on behalf of those most vulnerable, the dying. ♦

"The spirituality of the Precious Blood calls for us to see even the sick, dying, and most vulnerable as deserving of God's love."

Sheltering the Aged and Orphaned in India

M. Rajendra Mariadass, C.P.P.S. - S. Amal Nathan, C.P.P.S. - A. John Baptist, C.P.P.S.

The Jubilee Year of Mercy is an invitation—an invitation to love, kindness, and unbounded generosity. Pope Francis is offering us the opportunity to encounter the incredible mercy of God.

Encountering mercy means encountering God. It can transform our lives, our relationships, our work, and our ability to embrace and experience all of life. We are also invited to become like our Father who is heaven. We are called to show the merciful face of the Father to our brothers and sisters who are greatly in need of love, kindness, and hope in their lives.

This is something that the Missionaries of the Precious Blood strive to do throughout all of our apostolates in India.

As the Jubilee Year of Mercy draws to a close, it is helpful to remind ourselves of the importance of the works of mercy in the life of St. Gaspar and in the life of the Indian Vicariate.

Article 2447 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that the works of mercy are, “charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities.

Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead.”

We see these works of mercy clearly in the life of St. Gaspar. Even as a young boy St. Gaspar learned from his mother to show concern for the poor and sick. He was motivated by her to be charitable to the children of the servants, the poor, and the needy.

He committed himself to acts of charity by giving away his own food to the poor through the windows of the Palazzo Altieri because as he said, “They are hungrier than me.” As a young man, both before and after he was ordained a priest, he was part of different charitable groups that reached out to the poor, sick, and abandoned of Rome.

Later in life, St. Gaspar would become a “victim of charity” through his ministry to those suffering through a cholera epidemic. He



The residents and staff of the St. Gaspar's Home for the Aged in the Kolar Gold Fields, India.



Orphaned boys are cared for by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood at the St. Paul's Boys Home.

died while performing the works of mercy.

St. Gaspar laid a strong foundation for the works of mercy in the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and he became a source and inspiration to guide his followers in the footsteps of mercy that he left behind. The vision of St. Gaspar is brought to reality in the various apostolates that are undertaken here in India such as the St. Gaspar Home for the Aged and St. Paul's Home for Boys.

The St. Gaspar Home for the Aged was started in the early years of Missionaries' presence in India. First, it was located at St. Paul's Church in Marikuppam, Kolar Gold Fields. Later on it was relocated to our Merlini Farm, also located in the Kolar Gold Fields. This center provides shelter for elderly people who have no way to meet their own basic needs. The St. Gaspar Home welcomes everyone, men and women of various religions, without discrimination. Our Missionaries working here are committed to taking care of the residents without any hesitation

or limitation.

We believe that service to men and women is in fact service to God. We take care of the residents with love and concern which is often deprived of them. Relying on the providence of God, and with the support of Italian Province and the local government, we shelter and care our residents throughout their lives. Each resident is given personal care both in terms of their health, through medical assistance, and as well as in their psychological needs.

The St. Gaspar Home for the Aged also strives to make the residents feel truly at home by showing love and concern, and especially by spending time with them through various social activities, games, cultural events, and spiritual activities. Every year an outing to a different part of India is organized for the residents, and in order to create a family atmosphere, local festivals and the residents' birthdays are celebrated. The Missionaries who minister here are kept busy by caring for the needs of our elderly brothers and sisters. Joseph Kantharaj is 67 years old, and

comes from Aadugudi, Bangalore. Due to various illnesses and skin problems, his family would no longer care for him. He ended up begging on the street in order to feed himself. He came to know about the St. Gaspar Home for the Aged and was admitted to it. He says that, "Now, my life is very comfortable and happy here, because the fathers are taking care of me very well and I get everything here. Due to my sickness my own family refused to accept me but here I was accepted and the society is providing food, medicine, clothes and all the necessary items. Hence I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart for the great service rendered."

Like Joseph, Alphonsa came from Bangalore and is 85 years old. She is a widow without any children. Her extended family could no longer care for her and she was abandoned. She has been living at the home for 18 years and says that the St. Gaspar Home for the Aged is, "a heaven for me. Here I feel the real love, care, and concern of the Fathers who are here now and those who have helped in the past. My sincere thanks to Precious Blood Missionaries."

In addition to St. Gaspar's Home for the Aged, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood also minister with young people who have no place to go. St. Paul's Boys Home is an orphanage where young boys who

"Our Missionaries working here are committed to taking care of the residents without any hesitation or limitation."

“Our ministry here is simply to try to better the life of some of God’s children and we continue to commit ourselves to the betterment of those we serve.”

have lost their own family home can find another home. The loss of parents at such a young age is like losing everything. Not only have they lost a physical home and their belongings, but they have lost the love, care, and support of their parents. The Missionaries in India believe that it only takes determination and the love, care, and support from others to make a difference in the lives of these young ones as they grow to face their future. The Missionaries help these poor children by providing them education and by helping them to cope with life as an orphan.

Before working with the boys my thought was that I would go and teach them the basics of computers and that they would simply learn things just like it happens in school. Well, it did not happen that way. These boys carry a great deal of emotional baggage because of their past histories and memories. Teaching them is not easy.

They not only need their basic needs met, but struggle with a whole host of problems related to their situations as well.

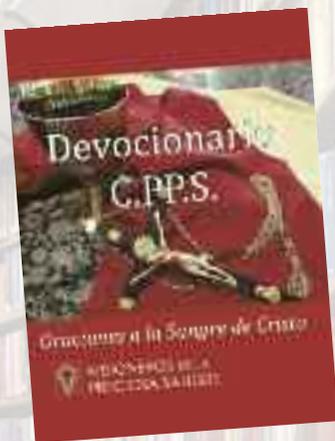
Clearly an orphanage is not a place where happiness is seen all of time. The children are emotionally inse-

cure and seek out solace through someone or something. Our responsibility at St. Paul’s is to help the boys learn how to mature in a healthy way. Our children are from different cultures, regions, and castes. They have many differences between them, but there are many similarities as well. We try to concentrate on those qualities that the boys share so that there can be a sense of community.

It is a challenge to connect with them. There is a place for the Missionaries at St. Paul’s in the lives of the orphans. We reach out to them, share our own hearts, and try to build bridges with them.

This is important because this will in turn help them become better students and successful young men.

Our ministry here is simply to try to better the life of some of God’s children and we continue to commit ourselves to the betterment of those we serve. ♦



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O sonho continua***

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***Sul mio viaggio in America
per la Visita alle nostre Case
della Provincia e della Delegazione***

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The Mercy of God, a Door to Reconciliation

Joseph F. Deardorff, C.P.P.S.

To receive the mercy of God or to be caught up within it, we need to open up our lives to God. Even though, at times, we are not active in this relationship, God's mercy is constant and is given to us freely.

In Bogota, Colombia, at our Center of Reconciliation, "Our Lady of the Precious Blood, Woman of Reconciliation", we see as our primary task to present opportunities for people to experience the mercy of God by asking them to open their hearts to a God who loves them. We give them counsel and help them to discover that part of God's mercy invites them to see within their hearts and to see what has been stored there for so many years. Some discover hate and the desire for vengeance after years of violence and abuse; others come with feelings of being unworthy to be forgiven and unable to forgive themselves for what they have done in the past.

We teach them the message of the Cross. Twice a month, the Center facilitates a "Celebration of the Cross", in which the people come to reflect upon how the Cross is the

source of liberation. We offer them an understanding of how the Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross, is the ultimate expression of God's mercy. Instead of sending his Son to condemn us for our sins, he sent his Son to forgive us for what we have done and for what we will commit in the future. His forgiveness shows a clear message of God's mercy; he does not wish the death of a sinner but rather that he or she is converted and can then freely take advantage of the life that he offers them through his love and guidance.

The Center teaches that God's mercy helps to hold together one's personal dignity. All are precious in his sight and worthy of his love. There are those who come with hearts of stone and find a false security in that. They feel that by keeping others out of reach they can avoid all types of tensions or the need to take risks.

They discover keeping others away also brings with it a sense of loneliness and at times even desperation. We help them to understand that the Blood of Christ is like a drop of water, as it makes contact with their

heart of stone, it gradually erodes away the hardness of its surface and converts it into a heart of flesh. This allows them to be merciful as well, to be merciful as God is merciful. They then begin to realize that the tensions of being different is not a threat but rather an opportunity for growth and that by taking risks in their relationship with others will allow them to find their own strengths and giftedness.

The mercy of God opens the door for reconciliation. The mercy of God, manifested in the pouring out of Christ's Blood, tears down all barriers that separate us, allows us to recuperate the relationship that has been lost and to live again in harmony with one another. The Center invites people to come together to recognize the need for dialogue and ultimately reconciliation. There are those who facilitate "Circles of Reconciliation". The circles are established upon values, presented by each participant and shared as the way to advance the dialog. The participants create a secure and sacred place where everyone openly listens to one another, where one is able to find support and a willingness to be reconciled and to offer reconciliation.

There was a woman who came to one of our circles who had always been shunned by her mother. Her mother was a prostitute and was promised by one of her clients, after becoming pregnant by him, that he would marry her and take care of her child. After the child was born, both of them were abandoned and left to their own resources. Since that time, the mother felt that she could not love her child and always made that known to her. The child, now an adult, wanted to forgive her mother and through the circle process was able to find the way and the support



The Center of Reconciliation helps young people experience the mercy of God through the Circle Method.



Rev. Joseph Deardorff, C.P.P.S. and other Missionaries work for reconciliation in Colombia.

to do so. She decided to take her mother into her home and care for her. In this case, the woman needed to reconcile her relationship with her mother, which then allowed her to accompany her mother as a true work of mercy.

In the southern part of Bogota, our seminarians and two lay associates have facilitated circles in a school where resources are scarce and where the children are confronted each day by many social ills. Some feel abandonment, others have experienced abuse, and many have

looked at their reality and feel unable to escape it without drugs or sexual encounters. The circles have become moments in which the youth feel that they can share their story and that someone is listening to them. The most powerful moments are when they feel loved and supported.

Through all of this, they come to feel the mercy of God because there are those who are present that have shown God's mercy to them. It is when they hear words of counsel, are corrected with respect and rediscov-

er their own personal dignity. It is when their tears are wiped from their faces and they are able to smile again.

Another work of mercy is prayer. Each Thursday, early in the morning, a Mass is celebrated at the Center. During the day, there is Adoration of the Eucharist, in which both species are present. For personal reflection, the Center developed a booklet to contemplate on the symbol of the cup. You must hold, lift and drink the cup, a reflection on how we are to live out our spirituality in our everyday lives, how we must come together as one and be willing to serve one another.

Another prayer that the Center has developed is the "Prayer to Our Lady of the Precious Blood, Woman of Reconciliation". The Center has published thousands of copies of this prayer, which asks the intercession of the Virgin Mary, for peace in Colombia.

It is a prayer that leads one through the process of reconciliation. It reminds us that we do not forget the past in order to embrace the future. We approach Jesus as he pours out his Blood on the Cross, as Mary did, and then share its message with the whole world. It is one of love which demands of us, that the peace we strive for, be achieved through acts of compassion and mercy.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also a way to experience God's mercy. Our work at the Center is to offer a space where people can come to experience God's pardon and to be reconciled. One day a week, there are priests available during the day to hear confessions. The majority of people who come are overjoyed that they are listened to and time is dedicated to each one as they pour out their life stories in search for inner peace.

Through God's mercy, hope begins to manifest itself and little by little, it grows within our hearts. Here in Colombia, we are surrounded by this hope, a hope that reconciliation and

"May the mercy that is shown through the Blood of Christ be a source of healing and peace for everyone."

Newly Incorporated Missionaries since April 2016...

James Smith	<i>Cincinnati Province</i>
Matthew Keller	<i>Cincinnati Province</i>
Francesco Caizzone	<i>Italian Province</i>
Ernesto DiFiore	<i>Italian Province</i>
Giampiero Lunetto	<i>Italian Province</i>
Giacomo Manzo	<i>Italian Province</i>
Giuseppe Vitelli	<i>Italian Province</i>

In Memoriam

Rev. Norbert Adelman	<i>Cincinnati Province</i>	<i>April 5, 2016</i>
Rev. Fabian Ruganyiza	<i>Province of Tanzania</i>	<i>May 21, 2016</i>
Brother Jude Brown	<i>Cincinnati Province</i>	<i>August 2, 2016</i>
Rev. Ernesto Gizzi	<i>Italian Province</i>	<i>August 14, 2016</i>
Rev. Francisco Del Valle Milan	<i>Atlantic Province</i>	<i>August 24, 2016</i>
Rev. Richard Riedel	<i>Cincinnati Province</i>	<i>September 29, 2016</i>
Rev. Helmut Giesers	<i>Teutonic Province</i>	<i>October 13, 2016</i>
Rev. Fritz Tschol	<i>Brazilian Vicariate</i>	<i>October 17, 2016</i>

The Corporal Works of Mercy

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Clothe the naked.
4. Shelter the homeless.
5. Visit the sick.
6. Visit the imprisoned.
7. Bury the dead.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Counsel the doubtful.
2. Instruct the ignorant.
3. Admonish sinners.
4. Comfort the afflicted.
5. Forgive offenses.
6. Bear wrongs patiently.
7. Pray for the living and the dead.

peace can be achieved. After fifty-two years of armed violence, a peace agreement has been negotiated and signed. It was then left to the people for a vote, to accept the agreement or not. On the 2nd of October, of this year, the agreement was voted down. The regions that had suffered the most over the years voted to approve it, those who had been less involved in experiencing the violence voted against it, but the most shocking was that sixty-eight percent of the population did not vote at all.

I mentioned that we are surrounded by hope. It is true. The people will not allow this opportunity to fade away. The government and the FARC are back at the negotiating table.

The Church finally came out with a statement asking that everyone continue to work for peace. After the referendum, one priest, in a personal statement, manifested that, the main work of mercy that awaits us today, is the need to instill in the hearts of the people the urgency for reconciliation.

After making that statement, he shared his own experience of violence. When he was a boy, he was at Mass when a bomb exploded inside the church. Seventy-eight people were killed that day. Years later, he became a priest. He was able to forgive those had executed such a deplorable act and since then has worked for dialog and the need for reconciliation.

Through our work at the Center of Reconciliation God's mercy is being felt, and through that, we have seen reconciliation taking place.

The challenge now is that everyone become personally responsible for the mercy that God has initiated in him or her and that each one becomes a clear expression of that mercy to others.

May the mercy that is shown through the Blood of Christ be a source of healing and peace for everyone. ♦

C.P.P.S. which outlines the mission of the publication from the perspective of the then newly elected Moderator General and General Council. Fischer writes on page two, “We have decided to emphasize in each issue of *The Cup of the New Covenant* some aspect which is relevant to our spirituality, to our missionary charism, or to our community life. Thus we hope to contribute to the ongoing renewal of our Congregation.” Each issue has been dedicated to a specific theme that calls the reader to reflect on topics connected to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and in turn the articles help form us as a Precious Blood family.

It is important to note that this publication was not intended to simply convey information or to be a newsletter from the Moderator General and General Council. Instead *The Cup of the New Covenant* is a way to create a common language around our charism. It is a way to engage with our internationality and the multicultural aspects of our mission, spirituality, and community life. Looking back through past issues of *The Cup*, it is clear that this goal has been met. *The Cup of the New Covenant* has served the Congregation well in bringing various parts of the community together to reflect, discern, and discuss fundamental elements of our charism and of our very life as a Congregation.

A significant amount of work goes into each issue. Though the Moderator General and General Council choose the themes for the issues, it has been Fr. Barry that followed through on all of the details

“We have decided to emphasize some aspect which is relevant to our spirituality, to our missionary charism, or to our community life. Thus we hope to contribute to the ongoing renewal of our Congregation.”

from editing articles and getting photographs to tirelessly checking for misplaced commas. He has had much help over the past twenty years from various members of the General Curia through four administrations and all of their combined efforts have gifted the Congregation with rich rewards. The fruit of their hard work is evident in the very life of the community and the deep appreciation for the Spirituality of the Precious Blood that our members and lay associates have. Gratitude is owed to Fr. Barry and all of the various General Curia members who have made this publication such a success.

The April 2016 issue, number 40 if you are keeping track, was the last issue that Fr. Barry shepherded from beginning to end. V. Rev. William Nordenbrock, C.P.P.S. has appointed me to oversee the publication of *The Cup of the New Covenant*. Clearly I do not do this work alone. Like Fr. Barry, I will need to rely on the help of many people and the other members of the General Curia will continue to have an integral role in the process. I am also counting on your support, especially when you are asked to submit an article for an issue. It is your commitment and love of the Precious Blood that has made *The Cup of the New Covenant* a powerful source of renewal in the past and that will help sustain the

Missionaries of the Precious Blood well into our second century of responding to the cry of the Blood.

We are also grateful for the opportunity during this past year to reflect upon the great love and mercy which has been given to us by God.

The Jubilee Year of Mercy has been an exciting time in the Church’s life. Here in Rome there have been numerous special celebrations, liturgies, and pilgrimages to mark this important event, and to be sure there have been many celebrations in your local dioceses and parishes as well.

We have not only celebrated this Jubilee Year of Mercy through prayer and liturgies, we have also reflected on the meaning of mercy within the context of our very own spirituality of the Precious Blood. The April 2016 issue of *The Cup of the New Covenant* offered us rich reflections from the symposium on Mercy and Precious Blood Spirituality which was sponsored by the Teutonic Province.

For this current issue we wanted to move from the theological foundations offered in the previous issue to some practical examples of how the spiritual and corporal works of mercy are lived out in the Congregation.

We invited Missionaries from around the world to share with us how their province, vicariate, or mission is living out the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

Each author was asked to reflect on how their works of mercy are particularly influenced by Precious Blood Spirituality. The examples offered here are rich in diversity, reflecting our own diversity as a community. Bro. Daryl Charron, C.P.P.S., from the Mission in Vietnam, relates the

“The blood of the paschal lamb, then, beckons us into a future with the promise of God’s outpouring of mercy on a world that is so much in need of it.”



Rev. Barry Fischer, C.P.P.S.

experiences he and C.P.P.S. candidates had during a medical mission trip in rural Vietnam. Rev. Steve Dos Santos, C.P.P.S. tells us how a parish in the Cincinnati Province spent an entire day welcoming people to the mercy of God.

From the Polish Province we see up close how their ministry of accompaniment at a hospice is truly a work of mercy. Rev. Joseph Deardorff describes how mercy is at the center of the ministry of reconciliation in Colombia. And finally, from the Vicariate of India we learn how Missionaries there are striving to ensure a better future for children and providing comfort to the elderly.

In his article from the April issue, Rev. Robert Schreiter, C.P.P.S. identifies the image of the paschal lamb, the very image on the Congregation's official seal, as a source and expression of God's mercy.

On page five he writes, "The blood of the paschal lamb, then, beckons us into a future with the promise of God's outpouring of mercy on a world that is so much in need of it."

The articles in this issue are wonderful examples of how the mission and ministry of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood is part of that outpouring of mercy. ♦

Printed by Stilgraf Cesena - Italy

The Cup of the New Covenant

A Publication of the C.P.P.S. General Curia
Viale di Porta Ardeatina, 66 - 00154 Roma
ITALY

web site: <http://www.cppsmissionaries.org>