



Bloodlines

A MONTHLY OF THE CONGREGATION OF MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD ATLANTIC PROVINCE

FEBRUARY 2025

PROVINCIAL'S MESSAGE

Walking in the Footsteps of Faith: Prophets and Pilgrims of the Precious Blood Community

Our Precious Blood forefathers— Francesco Albertini, St. Gaspar del Bufalo, Biagio Valentini, Blessed Giovanni Merlini—along with the holy men from each province, have left us examples of how to live as both prophets and pilgrims.

Gaspar's brave step of faith in trusting in Albertini's vision of founding a community dedicated to preaching the saving gift of life through the Precious Blood of Christ is deeply inspiring. Valentini and Merlini, among others, joined this mission, governing and continuing the work of our founding fathers. These men shared virtues that we can still imitate today.

God looks at our hearts, not our accomplishments. Merlini modeled the teachings of Jesus and faithfully followed the Rule established by St. Gaspar. What did Gaspar see in Merlini, and what did Merlini see in Gaspar—or in the community living in Giano—that led him to return and join this community of preachers?

Merlini's **humility** is a key aspect of his life. He welcomed the invitation to be a missionary of the Word, embracing God's plan as he lived His will throughout his many commitments. He dedicated each day to fulfilling God's will and bore witness to the love of the Father, in the spirit of the Blood of the Son, who came to redeem the world.

Merlini's **simplicity** is another defining trait. He found contentment and peace, trusting that God would lead the community where it needed to go. His focus was on seeking the true path of holiness, living with love, and offering witness to the work of each day. He accepted his limitations and frailties, walking alongside others and



THE RELOCATED RELIC OF BLESSED DON GIOVANNI MERLINI, originally from Via Narni, now enshrined at S. Maria in Trivio, Rome as of January 20, across from St. Gaspar's resting place.

reflecting God's presence. He allowed himself to be absorbed by Him.

Merlini's **righteousness** came through his simplicity. He lived a rational, practical life, always aligning himself with Christ's spirit and nurturing his relationship with God. His dedication to the "inner room" of his heart, celebrating the Eucharist, and dear devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary show us that holiness is born from humility and accepting God's plan for us.

Our forefathers teach us much about faith and living together as brothers. God speaks to us each day. Speaking to God through prayer is beautiful, but it is equally important to listen in silence and accept what we hear. Silence is a way to understand and surrender our desires to God's purpose, for His ways far surpass our own. In letting go, we show trust in our Father, even when life seems chaotic.

Finally, there are men in our community (our province) who continue to teach us

how to trust and believe. Trusting that God is with us so we need not fear, and believing that God loves us enough to give His Son to die and shed His Precious Blood so we may have new life. We are called to believe with trust and joy, responding with charity through our works, serving those around us, and respecting one another as brothers.

God's will is lived through humility, simplicity, and righteousness. As pilgrims, we are invited to trust and believe, nourishing our hope. In doing so, we give prophetic witness to His



will. In this Jubilee Year of Hope, let us strive to be both prophets and pilgrims, keeping hope alive.

~ FR. LUIGINO SANTI CPPS

REFLECTION ON THE JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE

Every 25 years, the Pope declares a Year of Jubilee, encompassing a year-long celebration in the Church that focuses on the remissions of sins, reconciliation, conversion, evangelization, and spiritual renewal. Each Jubilee Year also adopts a specific theme. However, Popes can also declare Extraordinary Jubilees for special occasions. For example, in 2015, Pope Francis declared a Jubilee for the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second Vatican Council. In 1983, Pope John Paul II proclaimed a Jubilee to celebrate the 1950th anniversary of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The fundamental idea of the Church's declaration of a Jubilee Year is rooted in Jewish tradition and is based on Leviticus 25:10, which states that the 50th year shall be proclaimed as a remission of sin to all the inhabitants of the land...for this is the Year of Jubilee.

After the year 1450, the Church decreed that the Jubilee should be every 25 years. In his Jubilee Bull of Indiction, Pope Francis declared 2025 as the Year of Hope. The Bull of Indiction is simply a Papal document that announce a Jubilee and offers a reflection on the theme for that year.

In his Bull, Pope Francis writes: "Everyone knows what it is to hope.



Hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come despite our not knowing what the future may bring.” I don’t know what my future may bring, but I have been privileged to live through five Jubilee Years, and I hope that I can live long enough to perhaps experience one or two more. This is just one example of how hope can offer someone something to hold onto, to give one a sense of optimism, to ground hope in our belief that the love of Christ promises us eternal life.

This hope is a virtue that I see and experience each day in various aspects of my life. Every morning, I can choose to scrutinize this world—a world which is marked by suffering, injustice, and brokenness—and feel hopeless. Or, I can rest on the assurance that God is actively working to redeem and restore His creation; a work revealed through salvation history and culminated through the redemptive work of Jesus. Instead of feeling dejected by death, mourning, pain, and earthly challenges, I can choose to nurture my relationship with Jesus and cultivate hope in the face of tribulation.

When I bear witness to my family drawing closer to God and to the Church, that gives me hope. When I hear non-Christians at work reaching out to God in their own daily struggles, that gives me hope. When people approach me in Church and ask me to bless them because they need to be strengthened amid a crisis, that gives me hope. When I see persecution, war, homelessness, and poverty, I see an opportunity to help those in need, feed the hungry, and give to the poor... and that gives me hope.

During this Jubilee Year, if you find yourself faced with a world of troubles, ask yourself: What gives me hope?

~ DEACON ROB SANSONE

ANCHORED IN HOPE

Becoming a missionary of Love: *Romans 5:8*

Reflection: In this month, often celebrated as a month of love, we are invited to reflect on the depth of God’s love as recalled through the Precious Blood of Christ. In this Year of Jubilee, as pilgrims of Hope, we are called to journey in love, carrying within us the hope that stems from Christ’s ultimate sacrifice. Just as the Israelites were sustained by the hope of the Promised Land during the journey in the wilderness, we too are sustained by the

hope found in the Precious Blood, which assures us God’s unwavering love and mercy.

Prayer: Commit to living out this love in your daily life, offering hope to a world in need of love and mercy. Pray for God to grant you the grace to be a vessel of His love, reflecting the light of Christ’s sacrifice to all you encounter.

TRAVELING RELIC OF BLESSED DON GIOVANNI MERLINI

After many years of prayers and intercessions, we are thrilled to announce that Venerable Giovanni Merlini was beatified in Rome on January 12.

The Province has planned several events throughout 2025 to celebrate this significant event in the life of the Church and the Congregation, with the hope that one day he will be canonized by the Church. We hope you can share in as many events as possible and encourage your friends and parishioners to attend.

On February 15, at St. Charles Borromeo during the 4:30pm Mass, **Bishop Robert Kasun** will preside to commence a year of celebrations.

The Traveling Relic: Each parish has agreed to welcome a relic of Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini. During the stay at each parish, the relic will be venerated with a prayer service, culminating in a reflection at the Sunday weekend Masses.

April 24 to 27: St. Charles Borromeo Church, Toronto

June 19 to 22: St. Roch’s Church, Toronto

August 15: Gaspar Mission House, Niagara Falls

September 11 to 14: St. Alphonsus Church, Toronto

HOW DO YOU LIVE HOPE?

Rev. Gerardo Laguartilla, CPPS, shares his secret of living with hope. **HOPE BRINGS LIFE**

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. —JEREMIAH 29:11

My favorite French philosopher, Gabriel Marcel, wrote: “I almost think that hope is for the soul what breathing is for the living organism. Where hope is lacking,

INSPIRING WORDS OF BLESSED

DON GIOVANNI MERLINI

When God gives us crosses, he gives us the inheritance of Jesus Christ, therefore let us accept them cheerfully.

Letter 47

the soul dries up and withers.” Hope is a virtue that is necessary for survival in life. We don’t last long or live without it. Without hope, we die physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Living involves hope.

According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Christian hope is “the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ’s promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1817).

Throughout my life, hope doesn’t disappoint me. To give an example, when I was a kid, I was very sickly, and my parents were so scared that I would not survive. They went on a pilgrimage to the International Shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in Antipolo Rizal, east of Manila, to pray to the Lord through Mary for my healing and survival. Thanks be to God, I survived and was cured.

Another example was when I was assigned in Lima, Peru. The beautiful and joyful pastoral and missionary experience became challenging during the pandemic with so many deaths and suffering people around me in Lima. It became more difficult when I could not travel back to Toronto because of the restrictions My ordination was delayed, and on top of that, I could not even bury my own mother, who passed away in the Philippines in 2020. The hopeless situations became a moment of trust in the Lord’s will for me. I learned to entrust my life, my family, my vocation, and so many other people into the hands of Jesus. But God doesn’t let me go into despair. Everything turned out very well in God’s time. As Romans 5:5 says: “And hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us”.

To find hope is to make a life-changing discovery. It is to connect deeply and personally with the very reason you are here in this world.

We
celebrate!

YOUR BIRTHDAY

FEBRUARY 6
RONALD WIECEK

YOUR ANNIVERSARY

FEBRUARY 1
PHILLIP SMITH (INCORPORATION)

In his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Viktor Frankl observed other prisoners in a Nazi concentration camp. He noted that those who had hope of being rescued lived on. Those who gave up died. Be alive! Let us help others persevere for eternity. Let us see and experience the presence and providential plan of God in



our day-to-day life and ministries. Be a Pilgrim of Hope and sharer of hope.
~ FR. GERARDO
LAGUARTILLA CPPS

In the January issue of 'Bloodlines', Fr. Lui Santi's reflection on 'Learning a New Path', captured Fr. Mario Cafarelli's attention. Fr. Mario writes:

'CULTURE': In a world that is increasingly divided and hostile, it is no small wonder that people long for the "good old days" when life seemed simpler and more meaningful. One element of that sense of comfort and fulfillment was the communal culture shared within a particular society. Culture defines and shapes our being. As a result, it is necessary to put into perspective the reason for such a phenomenon. One's understanding of culture encompasses a wide array of meanings, purposes, identities, expectations, and conformities.

One definition of *culture* refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes,

VOICE OF OUR FOUNDER

To be even minded in every circumstance, with every person, in every place, and at all times, is a sign of mature sanctity.

St. Gaspar del Bufalo
Letter 3614

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 8, 2025
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
MISSIO PROVINCIAL'S DINNER
ST. ROCH'S PARISH HALL

MARCH 25
TORONTO DISTRICT MEETING
Merlini Mission House 2pm

MARCH 28
NIAGARA DISTRICT MEETING
Gaspar Mission House 1:30pm

JUNE 9 TO 13
RETREAT
Mt. Carmel Retreat House
Niagara Falls, Ontario

meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, and roles, as spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people over generations through individual and group striving.

We live in a world that is witnessing great technological innovations and medical wonders. It also experiences a greater rift between the haves and have-nots, devastating climate change, human atrocities, and large-scale extinction. We are experiencing unprecedented migration of people throughout the world. Inevitably, cultures are bound to mingle in ways that can enhance or disrupt the national and social fabric of the receiving country. Culture, therefore, can either define us or set us against one another.

In such a scenario, there is a definite need for enculturation. Wikipedia describes *Enculturation* as the "process by which people learn the dynamics of their surrounding culture and acquire values and norms appropriate or necessary to that culture and its worldview." As much as other cultures can enhance and contribute to a society, it is imperative that it does so in relation to the common or dominant culture of that society.

Mass migration, as in the case of large populations being displaced by economic, political or environmental changes, or individually motivated immigration, can precipitate suspicion and, in severe cases, hostility from the receiving nation or culture. When a culture feels threatened or compromised, it will react in response to those new and incoming cultures. This is not to say that other cultures are insignificant, but that it is important for them to recognize and respect the existing and dominant culture.

We remember
and pray for...

FEBRUARY 6
ALBERT DE PASCALE

FEBRUARY 25
CARDINAL BELISARIO CRISTALDI

Our deceased CPPS members,
family, friends, and benefactors.
REQUIESCANT IN PACE.

For example, the Western world reacts to cultures that disrespect individual rights, women's rights, freedom of speech, religious freedom, judicial institutions, and national goals.

One question that is often asked is, "Would those cultures accept Western values and ideals?" Here lies the issue that every culture will inevitably encounter. Another question is "How do we deal with it.?"

One way is to simply educate people to respect the dominant culture while still retaining their individual cultures in respect to the dominant culture. Another approach is to incorporate those cultures into a "melting pot" and/or choose those elements that best reflect and envision the ideals of the dominant culture. A third way is to resist any change that can affect the dominant culture.

Today, we are faced with the need to incorporate the migration of people into the ideals and expectations of society. Without this incorporation, society will face division and confusion leading to disenfranchisement and hostility.

Ponder: As missionaries, how do I respect the local culture where I am living and ministering? Am I

incorporating or learning the process of enculturation so that I am able to evangelize well?

~ FR. MARIO CAFARELLI CPPS



PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION FOR February 2025

FOR VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life.



STREAM OF MERCY:

This month we feature **Fr. Samuel D'Angelo**, CPPS, who is the Vice Provincial for the Atlantic Province. He believes that as missionaries, we are called to witness to the hope that comes from Jesus Christ. This hope is given at our baptism. As pastor of a vibrant parish in the Nickel City of Sudbury, northern Ontario, he is thrilled to be a missionary. He feels there is an urgent need to bear clear witness to the Gospel faithfully and well. *To be a sign of hope as the world has forgotten how to love one another.* Thank you, Fr. Samuel.

UPDATE: Indult of Departure: In accordance with C42 of the NT, the Moderator General of the Congregation of the Missionaries, declares **Don Augusto Menichelli**, CPPS, released from the bond of definitive incorporation on January 5, 2025.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY FAMILY

JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH,
in you we contemplate
the splendour of true love;
to you we turn with trust.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH,
grant that our families too
may be places of communion
and prayer,
authentic schools of the Gospel
and small domestic churches.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH,
may families never again
experience violence, rejection
and division;
may all who have been hurt
or scandalized
find ready comfort and healing.

HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH,
make us once more mindful
of the sacredness and inviolability
of the family,
and its beauty in God's plan.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
graciously hear our prayer.

Amen.

**POPE FRANCIS
AMORIS LAETITIA, 325**

**IN PREPARATION FOR THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN
SEPTEMBER 2025,**
we are encouraged to offer daily
and recite this prayer so the Holy
Spirit may inspire and guide the
Congregation's leadership
and the delegates.

**PRAYER FOR THE
2025 GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE MISSIONARIES
OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
HOPE FOR THE WORD**

COMPASSIONATE GOD,
We give you thanks and praise
for Your wonderful
yet suffering creation,
as we share the healing
and reconciling presence
of the
Precious Blood of Jesus,
your Son.

OPEN OUR EYES
and enlighten
our hearts so that we may know
what is the hope
to which You have called us,
the hope that does not disappoint.

**REAWAKEN OUR DESIRE
AND COMMITMENT**
to serve Your holy people
as we journey together,
follow pilgrims on the Way
to Your Kingdom.

MAY THE WISDOM
and anointing
of your Holy Spirit
rain down upon us
as we discover visionary
commitments and leaders,
who in the spirit of St. Gaspar
and Blessed Giovanni Merlini,
will empower our Congregation
to be a dynamic force
for renewal in the Church.

**AS WE RAISE THE CUP OF
SALVATION,**
and call upon Your name,
may we then pour out our lives
each day
to advance that 'new order
of things
that Christ brought about
in the shedding of
his Precious Blood.

Amen.

THE JUBILEE PRAYER

Father in heaven,
may the *faith* you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ,
our brother,
and the flame of *charity*
enkindled in our hearts
by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators
of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform
from within both humanity
and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil
vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,
a yearning for
the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace
of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.
To you our God,
eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.
Amen

Franciscus



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Your input and contributions are
welcome. Please email your submission
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M9N 2Y1, by the **25TH OF THE MONTH.**

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DESIGN
GINO MARCUZZI

VOCATION CALENDAR • FEBRUARY 2025



VOCATION PRAYER

Come,

HOLY SPIRIT,
embrace
and enflame my heart
with your love.
Grant us the courage and
grace to accept His will.
May our lives
be chalices of compassion
so that
we may proclaim your word
in truth.

Strengthen our leaders,
our members and
USC members
to be
faithful followers
of St. Gaspar and
Blessed don Giovanni Merlini.

We humbly ask to send
men to serve the community
who will courageously
proclaim and live
in the spirit
of the Bond of Charity.
Amen.

- | | |
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their caregivers |

Let us remain united in prayer