



Bloodlines

Newsletter of the Atlantic Province

Winter 2016

From the Provincial and Council

The council met on February 26, 2016 at the Niagara Mission House. The Provincial Treasurer and the Mission Director gave reports on recent activities and developments. Fr. Peter reported that the loan to 1415 Bathurst was coming to maturity; for the past five years we have collected yearly interest close to \$20,000.00. The principal is now down to \$293,000.00. The Provincial and Council unanimously agreed to renew the loan.* Fr. Peter also gave a financial report for 2015 to the Council. The Province account ended \$110,000.00 in the red; to cover the shortfall \$50,000 was borrowed from the Precious Blood Trust Account and needs to be repaid, while \$60,000 was covered by an advance on the dividend from the Bathurst property received in November rather than the following February. The Provincial inquired of Fr. Peter about future plans for annual USC celebrations. A discussion followed about hopes and challenges for the future direction of the USC and its activities.

Fr. Patrick reported on an upcoming audit mandated by the government; on a number of personnel issues affecting the water project in Tanzania; on fundraising efforts by the mission office and the status of the schools. The latter's enrollment is down due to recent increases in tuition.

The Provincial reported on letters of appointment that went out on January 11, 2016 making the following personnel changes, effective July 1, 2016:

Fr. James Reposkey C.P.P.S. to pastor, St. Charles Borromeo Church; Toronto, ON
Fr. Philip Smith C.P.P.S. to pastor, St. Alphonsus Church; Toronto, ON
Fr. Lui Santi C.P.P.S. to pastor, St. Roch Church; Toronto, ON
Fr. William Mnyagatwa C.P.P.S. to associate pastor; St. Roch Church; Toronto, ON

An extended discussion took place in reaction to the Moderator General's article on reimagining religious life especially as this would affect the future of the three North American provinces. A variety of viewpoints was expressed, some of which will appear in the province newsletter and will again be taken up as part of the June retreat. A related discussion followed about developing a 5-year plan for the Province, which will be the main topic at the next council meeting. Actuarial data informed the discussion.

Fr. John reported on his recent communication with the Moderator General concerning the retreat. In addition to conferences on themes relating to our spirituality, time will be devoted to discussions about future directions for the C.P.P.S. in North America. Fr. John has also volunteered to organize the liturgical celebrations for the retreat.

A discussion then took place about formation policies and the need to update the provincial customary with respect to our formation program. The formation committee was charged with beginning this process.

Finally, an allocation of Masses to be said annually by various members to satisfy the Province's obligations for the Mass Association was developed and the Provincial will notify those affected of their allotment.

The meeting adjourned at shortly before 9:00pm with breaks for lunch and dinner. The council will meet next on June 6 prior to the provincial retreat and on June 10 following.

* This approval was given at the November council meeting and has been reported as an addendum to the minutes of this meeting.



Voice of the Founder

“Oh how we are comforted in our souls by the mysteries of the Resurrection! Yes, please pray that I too may be risen with Jesus, that is to say, to a new life and to an eager pursuit of holiness.”
(Letters, #2026)

Calendar

March 25 – Ronald Mahon – Anniversary of Ordination (1977)
April 17 James Reposkey – Anniversary of Incorporation (1974)
April 22 – Timothy Coday -- Anniversary of Incorporation (1978)
April 23 – Gary Luiz – Anniversary of Ordination (1977)
May 2 – Brendan Doherty – Anniversary of Ordination (1981)
May 4 – James Reposkey – Anniversary of Ordination (1974)
May 4 – Mario Cafarelli – Anniversary of Ordination (1985)
May 10 – Peter Nobili – Anniversary of Ordination (1969)
May 21 – Philip Smith – Anniversary of Ordination (1977)
May 21 – Timothy Coday – Anniversary of Ordination (1994)
May 25 – Rene Cerecedo – Anniversary of Ordination (1985)
June 3 – Dominic Jung – Anniversary of Ordination (1995)
June 25 – Michael Mateyk – Anniversary of Ordination (2011)
June 26 – Ronald Wiecek – Anniversary of Ordination (1971)
June 27 – Luciano Baiocchi – Anniversary of Ordination (1954)
June 29 – William Mnyagatwa – Anniversary of Ordination (1973)

Provincial Retreat

Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre; Niagara Falls, ON
June 6-10, 2016
Director: Very Rev. William Nordenbrock CPPS

Provincial Business Assembly

May 29-June 2, 2017
St. Francis Centre; Caledon, ON

The following article by Pete Sheehan appeared in the January 1, 2016 edition of *The Catholic Exponent* published in the Youngstown, OH diocese:

NILES – When Precious Blood Brother Anthony Canterucci was growing up at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish here, he found the idea of a vocation appealing and comfortable.

“I used to hang out at the church” with the priests and brothers from the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, who then served at Mt. Carmel, said Brother Anthony.

“They kept me around because they were afraid I wouldn’t come back” to the parish if he left, he added with a smile.

Little did he know that his calling to the order would take him far away from his town and parish – as far away as Tanzania, where, for decades he has spent time helping establish clean water supplies, medical facilities, and a school.

Brother Anthony, who has spent several months a year visiting there for about 40 years, in 2014 received Tanzania’s Presidential Award of Honor, the highest honor that the Tanzanian government gives to a non-citizen.

“I accepted it on behalf of the community and those who helped through their donations and support,” he noted.

Growing up in Niles, Brother Anthony went to public school until high school, when he attended St. Mary High School in Warren.

After graduating, he worked at St. Joseph’s Hospital as an orderly. “I was interested in a life of service.” In time, recalling the Precious Blood priests and brothers he knew, he felt drawn to pursue service through the Precious Blood community.

He began his studies at a Precious Blood novitiate in Burkettsville, Ohio. Eventually, he was sent to continue his studies in Rome.

“It was a real awakening,” Brother Anthony said, seeing the universal Church.

After his time in Rome, he returned to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel here in 1956 as an administrative assistant and also headed the youth program till 1966.

He spent the next several years with the Precious Blood community in Chicago and Rochester, N.Y., in youth programs or teaching or formation.

“Then I came back to Niles” for a time, working with youth again, Brother Anthony said. “In 1971 I was appointed mission director” for the order, striving to foster his community’s work overseas.

In 1972, he moved to the community’s Ontario Province headquarters in Toronto. Later that year he went to Tanzania for the first time.

“Seeing the poverty of the people” was overwhelming and compelled him to act. “You can’t do nothing after seeing that.”

He started with the water projects, addressing the most critical and obvious needs with the goal of drilling and establishing wells.

Though he began to learn Swahili, which is spoken there, he tended to stick with English in negotiating

with the government and the business he worked with on water projects.

“When I saw that they could speak some English I found that it worked better,” Brother Anthony said. Had he tried to negotiate in Swahili, he would have been at a disadvantage.

“Since we started we have dug 600 wells. We guesstimate that the wells provide water to about a million and a half people.”

When not in Tanzania, he was back in either Canada or the United States. “I began going to schools to talk about the project.”

“We got people interested,” Brother Anthony said, and he began taking groups of teens and others to Tanzania to see and experience the life of the people there.

“I had groups from as far west as British Columbia and the Northwest Territory” as well as from the United States.

“Because of these groups, we had a few hundred people over the years who came and put in time with us,” Brother Anthony said. “They would bring friends and sensitize people and that helped produce donations.”

Brother Anthony and the Precious Blood community also saw other ways to help.

“We built some medical facilities,” such as one large hospital with 500 beds and “a number of dispensaries throughout the region.”

In addition, they turned to the Tanzanian people’s educational needs. “We started with a primary school but in the past couple of years we opened up the high school. It was built mainly for the poor families.”

“We educate more than 1,000 students and it will grow,” Brother Anthony said. “The only way they are going to solve their problems is through education.”

Brother Anthony has stepped down as his order’s mission director. After taking some time off, he is preparing to return there more-or-less permanently to foster the work he helped begin.

“They have been great years and I’m grateful for the opportunity to be of service,” Brother Anthony said. “It has given me a chance to communicate the Gospel of Jesus – love – through my commitment to others.”



Br. Anthony with Laura Pilon returning from a mission trip to Tanzania in 1978

Reimagining Religious Life

by Fr. Bill Nordenbrock, c.pp.s., Moderator General

Within the Church there has been much reporting and discussion of the ongoing global demographic shifts. The vitality of the Church, represented by regular participation of baptized Catholics in Church activities and the number of vocations, is growing in the southern (especially Africa) and eastern parts of the world, accompanied by a striking decline in the vitality in the churches of Europe and North America. In the abstract, this trend can be interesting to consider, but in the concrete it is disturbing and requires response and action.

The General Curia has discussed the global trend as reflected in the life of the Congregation. Using our demographic information as a harsh light of truth, we have been reflecting on the vitality and viability of the Congregation around the world. These discussions identified three regions of concern and led us to initiate a discernment process asking: How can we reimagine a model of C.P.P.S. religious life that will have greater vitality and viability?

One region of concern for us is North America (along with Europe and Latin America). We studied the demographic of the three North American provinces and made a future projection if the trends continue. The projection for the future is somewhat speculative because of the uncertainties and the assumptions that need to be made, but in 10 years we see an Atlantic Province that has 21 members with 8 members under the age of 65; a Cincinnati Province of 51 members with 16 members under the age of 65; and a Kansas City Province of 30 members with 5 under the age of 65. These projections exclude the members in Mexico and the units of Latin America and Vietnam.

If the trends continue beyond 10 years the picture is one of virtual extinction. This is not a theoretical possibility but a statistical certainty. So what does this mean for us? How are we to respond and live faithfully?

For a vital and viable future it is essential to attract new members. While the Companions and lay associates have been an immeasurable benefit to the provinces, without men joining us as incorporated members, we have a very serious problem. This is not a new observation and we have all participated in countless discussions about vocations. While we have made efforts to engage in vocation ministry in new ways, we have not had the results we have desired. I suggest the problem has been that we have tried to fine-tune our vocation ministry without addressing the underlying problem that consecrated life, as we live it today, is not attractive to possible new members. Our vocation discussions have often focused externally, on what is wrong with society and cultural conditions today, the size of families and the reluctance of parents to encourage vocations or the “way young people are today.” What is needed is an honest appraisal of the internal condition of the Congregation. We need to create a model of consecrated life, in our current

external milieu, which is attractive to vocations. How do we maintain that which is timeless and sacred—the gift of consecrated life for the Church and the world with our particular charism and spirituality of the Precious Blood—but hold and present it in a wholly new way?

There is a need for us to reimagine religious life. This will require a new way of thinking and it will require personal conversion. It will require a new communal vision of our mission and way of life and most importantly, a willingness of individual members to sacrifice personal preference of ministry and life style to embody and live that new vision of consecrated life. This is no small task. It will be a difficult, but necessary, process. Along with the General Curia, I am asking for this process to begin.

I do not know what this process will look like or if we will be successful, but I believe to begin is a necessary act of faithfulness. Because our response will indeed be an act of faithfulness, I am not discouraged by the demographics or the future. With the grace of God and personal commitment to share in the discernment and work, this is something that we can do.

In November I met with the three North American Provincials to share the concern of the General Curia and to examine the demographic data. They shared our concern and supported our belief that for us to do nothing, to only continue as we are, is not a faithful option. To do nothing is to die from indifference or a lack of creativity and courage. They agreed to take this to the members of the Provinces and asked me to write this article introducing the start of that process. As a first step, individually each province will look at the demographic data and begin to discern how to respond. Each Province will be asked to honestly assess the vitality and viability of their province and to consider possible next steps. As part of that discernment, we ask that you consider if the task of reimagining a new model of C.P.P.S religious life in North America can best be done together.

Consecrated life is an essential need of the Church and the world. We live in times when the future of that gift in North America is very uncertain. We are part of a bigger cultural phenomenon that can seem overwhelming and impossible to counter. But it is shortsighted to not recognize that this has often been the situation of consecrated life. In fact, that is precisely the place and purpose of consecrated life. Some would say that we have lived in a time when consecrated life has been co-opted by the World and what we are tempted to view as a threat, can in fact be a call to reclaim a more radical and faithful identity as a religious congregation. That is my hope and prayer for us.

The following contributions were received in response to the Moderator's article and his question to the Province following the last Assembly:

Question #1 — What can be done to extend and deepen the spirit that was evident during the last Provincial Assembly?

In my previous role as Formation Director, I encouraged and spoke often to members and the candidates of the need to live faithfully to the Bond of Charity and the spirituality of the Precious Blood. I agree with the General, the list of reasons for the lack of new members are simply excuses. It is not external rather internal and the issues are not addressed. Even within community living we-(collectively) have embraced a spirit individualism. Young people see this very quickly and walk away. This was voiced by men looking at the community. We talk about community spirit, ministry other than parish but do not live it well. The six points which the General addresses are NOT NEW and which I have tried to put forth, but went unnoticed.

To extend and deepen the spirit that existed at the past Assembly I feel:

- leadership can have a positive influence if used well. Provincial and Council also is to listen to the membership -this create spirit of unity- a change of heart—welcomes commitment/trust. Since the past Assembly no visible action has taken place...a lot of talk during the assembly and nothing has come forth, which is discouraging,
- Provincial has made no visitations to listen to membership's concerns,
- the only outcome from the Assembly has been the return of the monthly newsletter and this is excellent,
- no long term - 'vision plan' for the Province has yet to be revealed...we keep addressing and providing 'band aid' solutions,
- style of assembly is too formal, need time for small group sharing, creative visioning, hear each other. A communal discernment and personal discernment is needed, where we 'see, reflect and act' process. This will invite us to be open to common/shared threads of truths and open to the Holy Spirit in the process too.
- attitude of complacency continues, an attitude/spirit that we are working together not against each other (even though we may have different opinions)... we all have something to contribute -see the goodness in each member,
- members of the leadership are quick to criticize rather than encourage a positive spirit,
- our personal life style is very important, are we willing to change so that the community and the Church will benefit *(Submitted by Fr. Lui Santi)*

I think the spirit that was fostered at the last provincial assembly was, in large part, due to the Moderator General's great facilitation skills and his in-depth knowledge of our spirituality. To foster that same spirit at the retreat, it would be helpful to obtain a facilitator who can ask us to reflect on the interior motivations we still have for remaining in the CPPS. Why do we choose to remain in the CPPS? We can just as easily join a diocese if all we want to be is parish priests. What about the community still attracts us? If a facilitator can get us to reflect on these questions, perhaps the spirit of the last meeting will be reborn and a greater collegial identity can be established among us. *(Submitted by Fr. Sam D'Angelo)*

Seeing the commitment that each member had to spread the message of the Precious Blood in his particular ministry, a few things came to my mind.

To continue to be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. I cannot get locked in to what I think the community should be doing. For me to be open to the spirit means not just looking at my own ministry but to see how the Spirit can also powerfully work in the ministries of my confreres.

From that I need to be supportive of what my brothers are doing. To listen to what they are doing, where they see God leading them and to be authentic in my support of them. Prejudgments are poison in community *(Submitted by Michael Mateyk)*.

Question #2 — Given the statistical information in the attached article, how can the three North American provinces respond so as to live our charism and spirituality faithfully in the future?

The Moderator's article reminds me of the much-discussed project of "refounding" some years back. In my opinion, very little came of it. While "reimagining" might be something different, I am still of the mind that either term, if realized in any meaningful way, would require a corporate –and not just individual – will to bring about radical change. I doubt this could be mustered in the time remaining before our membership is too old and tired to bring this about. The statistics tell us that in 10 years' time there will be about 100 of us between the three North American province, only 30% of whom will be under the age of 65. More important to me than deep structural and administrative changes that will probably never be accomplished, is the task of bequeathing to those committed laity who will be our heirs the resources necessary to carry on our mission enlivened by our charism and spirituality. In a way, this is a "back to the future" endeavor insofar as the Congregation has its roots in an association of the faithful before there were Missionaries of Adorers of the Precious Blood. In other words, like any good steward facing the prospect of one's mortality, I believe we need to take concrete steps to provide for our own end-of-life needs and then an inheritance for those whom we designate as our beneficiaries. This includes, by the way, arrangements for our temporal resources to be placed in the hands of competent trustees. *(Submitted by Fr. John Colacino)*

To become one North American province/unit, I do not see happening. Our history is different. The possibility of interprovincial-shared members for ministry for a period of time is inviting and positive.

- some shared offices *(Submitted Fr. Lui Santi)*

I believe the question of vocations is not internal, as the moderator suggests, but is one of external issues of church discipline, church theology, and the socio-cultural changes that have taken place over the past twenty years. We are, by and large, happy priests in this province. We take our ministries seriously; we enjoy one another's company. If we had to do it over again, many would join the congregation again, I suspect. I have no problem with opening a discussion about forming one north american province, but I don't think the process will be advanced by endless meetings. It needs to happen on a steady timetable and the leadership of the three provinces need to foster a vision of cpps regions in North America whereby all provinces feel their identity has not been obliterated by the new reality.

Another possibility to help live our charism and spirituality faithfully in the future is to include more interprovincial members in our ranks to assist us in ministry in north america. We should be welcoming, as many dioceses do, more african, indian, and asian members to join us in our work in north america and in so doing, also reciprocate by sending our members over to their native countries to learn about them and assist them. *(Submitted by Fr. Sam D'Angelo)*

We are to return to the basics with more community life, more prayer time together and to have House Congresses.

We are to return to what we are suppose to be and do what is expected of us as missionaries.

There is too much jealous among our members and let us see the good what each member contributes, we are to be less individualistic and I feel there is a lost in a 'common vision' as a community.

We lack good leadership- issues are put forward and never realized for fear of criticism, weakness.

We used to spend time together with and for each other...this has been forgotten, in the past we use to help each other i.e. in parish ministry or looking out for each other...this attitude is lacking.

Do we really care for each other as brothers?

More communication is need among ourselves...everything has become secretive, why?

We need a full-time Vocation Director.

To stay alive we are to encourage and promote and the need to share interprovincial members, since we have become an international community.....this will less the spirit and attitude of individualism.

(Submitted by Brother Anthony Canterucci)

En nuestra comunidad mexicana hemos dialogado estas preguntas y hemos respondido en comunidad lo siguiente:

- 1.- Es muy importante el apoyo económico y espiritual para realizar misiones en cada una de las unidades C.PP.S.
- 2.- Es urgente leer el patrimonio de la congregación para que nos enamoremos nuevamente si es que se ha enfriado nuestro entusiasmo por ser misioneros de la Preciosa Sangre. Empaparnos del carisma C.PP.S.
- 3.- Es necesario elaborar un programa vocacional que responda a las exigencias y perspectivas de cada unidad C.PP.S. y que se realice en cada comunidad.
- 4.- Es muy necesario cambiar nuestra actitud como misioneros C.PP.S. para que con un buen testimonio de vida C.PP.S. motivemos a las nuevas generaciones y sean parte de nosotros.
- 5.- Hacer un estudio de cada realidad donde hay presencia C.PP.S. pues solo así se podrá llegar a la realidad con mensajes y hechos acordes a esa realidad y donde encontremos puntos de concordancia en los trabajos misioneros.

In our Mexican community we have dialogued these questions and have responded in community the following:

1. It is very important economic and spiritual support for missions in each of the units C.PP.S.
2. It is urgent to read the heritage of the congregation to fall in love again if we has cooled our enthusiasm for being missionaries of the Precious Blood. Imbibe the charism C.PP.S.
3. It is necessary to develop a vocational program that meets the needs and perspectives of each unit C.PP.S. and performed in each community.
4. It is necessary to change our attitude as missionaries C.PP.S. for a good testimony of life C.PP.S. we motivate new generations and are part of us.
5. Make a study of each situation where there is presence C.PP.S. because only then you can come to reality with messages and events in line with that reality and where we find points of agreement in the missionary work.

Submitted by

Fr. René Silvio Cerecedo Alarcón, CPPS

Fr. Gregorio Hernández Cortés CPPS

Fr. Francisco Del Valle Millán CPPS
Fr. Germán Santiago Estévez CPPS

I would agree that more interprovincial cooperation is important. For the members to know more about each other and to see what ministry they are doing. From that we know about what we might do in our own assignments.

Perhaps some short term cross province assignments might help. Just again for the members to get to know one another better and bring their own or their province's particular flavour to a new place.

Making one mega province is not the answer, for then the problem of lack of vocations is not solved and shutting down completely is only delayed. What we may need is a new addition to the charism where the spirituality is passed on in a more refined and methodical way to the laity of the church (*Submitted by Michael Mateyk*).

From Around the Province....

100 Pelmo...

A powerhouse in the making! Several months have passed since the community took back possession of the residence and a lot has been done in upgrading and restoring various areas of the building. The residence, among other things, will be used for USC leadership formation and gatherings; it will also be the residence of the provincial and missionaries working in the Archdiocese of Toronto but not assigned to a parish. When all is said and done, there could be up to five of us --or even more residing there as a mission house with ministries inside and outside together with community living. All community members and friends are welcome to stop by for coffee and cookies, or dinner or an overnight stay (*servando servandis*). A cleaning lady has been hired on a regular basis and the cook is anxious to start. We are grateful to the many people who contributed with donations, time and physical work to clean and refurbish the house. More needs to be done especially outside and hopefully in time all will be done.

USC Activities...

The USC group from London, ON as well the group from St. Charles in Toronto held a day of recollection in preparation for Easter. Fr. Peter gave a mini-mission to the group at St. Alphonsus in Toronto from Palm Sunday to Wednesday of Holy Week. We ask our CPPS and USC members to foster the publication of the magazine *Precious Blood Family* and provide us with new addresses. The annual USC Retreat in Ancaster is planned for the weekend of May 27-29. Fr. Peter asks our members to help advertise these dates in their parish bulletin as a cheaper rates is available if we can reach 50 attendees. (*Submitted by Peter Nobili*).



From the Mission Office...

An abundance of joy and support from Kamloops, BC!

On March 5th, 2016 our supremely dedicated and seemingly tireless C.P.P.S. of the West supporters held yet another wonderful celebration in honour of C.P.P.S. Mission Projects.

In its 14th year, long time supporters came out to share stories, reconnect with old friends and welcome some new ones. The students who worked hard on the 2015 mission trip to Tanzania were there to show attendees just what they were able to do in the mission field thanks to their ardent support and then were presented with a lovely plaque to honour their experience with The Water Project.

It was a room decorated superbly with art created by the students—from the windmill and water vessel centre pieces to the massive silhouettes of Tanzanian landscapes and Masai warriors, on through to the massive water vessels that stood at the entrance of the ballroom, welcoming each guest with a touch of 'Asante'. Each of the 250+ attendees were incredibly gracious, welcoming, generous and staunchly supportive of C.P.P.S. Mission Projects. It was a truly delightful evening.

Many stories prompted laughter and there were more than a few beloved anecdotes shared about Brother Anthony aka Bro, whom they love and respect. Many had questions and a genuine interest in learning more about the work on the ground in Tanzania and still more were willing to share their experience in the mission field. We are truly blessed to have such a hard working group of supporters in our corner and I was blessed to have been able to attend along with Father Patrick.

-Hannah-Maria Ma, Mission Advancement Coordinator



Holy Week in the Province: Holy Thursday Altars of Repose



St. Gaspar Chapel, Toronto



St. Michael, Fort Erie



St. Charles Borromeo, Toronto



St. Roch, Toronto

In Case You Missed It....

Pope Francis' Prayer – Via Crucis 2016

O Cross of Christ, symbol of divine love and of human injustice, icon of the supreme sacrifice for love and of boundless selfishness even unto madness, instrument of death and the way of resurrection, sign of obedience and emblem of betrayal, the gallows of persecution and the banner of victory.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you raised up in our sisters and brothers killed, burned alive, throats slit and decapitated by barbarous blades amid cowardly silence.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the faces of children, of women and people, worn out and fearful, who flee from war and violence and who often only find death and many Pilates who wash their hands.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in those filled with knowledge and not with the spirit, scholars of death and not of life, who instead of teaching mercy and life, threaten with punishment and death, and who condemn the just.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in unfaithful ministers who, instead of stripping themselves of their own vain ambitions, divest even the innocent of their dignity.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the hardened hearts of those who easily judge others, with hearts ready to condemn even to the point of stoning, without ever recognizing their own sins and faults.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in expressions of fundamentalism and in terrorist acts committed by followers of some religions which profane the name of God and which use the holy name to justify their unprecedented violence.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in those who wish to remove you from public places and exclude you from public life, in the name of a pagan laicism ["secularism"] or that equality you yourself taught us.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the powerful and in arms dealers who feed the cauldron of war with the innocent blood of our brothers and sisters.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in traitors who, for thirty pieces of silver, would consign anyone to death.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in thieves and corrupt officials who, instead of safeguarding the common good and morals, sell themselves in the despicable market-place of immorality.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the foolish who build warehouses to store up treasures that perish, leaving Lazarus to die of hunger at their doorsteps.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the destroyers of our "common home", who by their selfishness ruin the future of coming generations.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the elderly who have been abandoned by their families, in the disabled and in children starving and cast-off by our egotistical and hypocritical society.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas which have become insatiable cemeteries, reflections of our indifferent and anesthetized conscience.

O Cross of Christ, image of love without end and way of the Resurrection, today too we see you in noble and upright persons who do good without seeking praise or admiration from others.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in ministers who are faithful and humble, who illuminate the darkness of our lives like candles that burn freely in order to brighten the lives of the least among us.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the faces of consecrated women and men – good Samaritans – who have left everything to bind up, in evangelical silence, the wounds of poverty and injustice.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the merciful who have found in mercy the greatest expression of justice and faith.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in simple men and women who live their faith joyfully day in and day out, in filial observance of your commandments.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the contrite, who in the depths of the misery of their sins, are able to cry out: Lord, remember me in your kingdom!

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in the blessed and the saints who know how to cross the dark night of faith without ever losing trust in you and without claiming to understand your mysterious silence.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in families that live their vocation of married life in fidelity and fruitfulness.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in volunteers who generously assist those in need and the downtrodden.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in those persecuted for their faith who, amid their suffering, continue to offer an authentic witness to Jesus and the Gospel.

O Cross of Christ, today too we see you in those who dream, those with the heart of a child, who work to make the world a better place, ever more human and just.

In you, Holy Cross, we see God who loves even to the end, and we see the hatred of those who want to dominate, that hatred which blinds the minds and hearts of those who prefer darkness to light.

O Cross of Christ, Ark of Noah that saved humanity from the flood of sin, save us from evil and from the Evil One. O Throne of David and seal of the divine and eternal Covenant, awaken us from the seduction of vanity! O cry of love, inspire in us a desire for God, for goodness and for light.

O Cross of Christ, teach us that the rising of the sun is more powerful than the darkness of night. O Cross of Christ, teach us that the apparent victory of evil vanishes before the empty tomb and before the certainty of the Resurrection and the love of God which nothing can defeat, obscure or weaken. Amen!