



Bloodlines

Newsletter of the Atlantic Province

Spring 2015

From the Provincial and Council

The Provincial Council met at the Niagara Falls Mission House on June 18. The Mission Director and Treasurer were present for the first part of the meeting as mandated by the last provincial assembly. The Mission Director reported that he has secured an auditor for the mission project. The high school project in Tanzania should be completed by July 31, including furnishings. The elementary school is also functioning well. Fr. Patrick was also delegated to represent the Province when the Tanzanian vicariate is elevated to provincial status on August 8. The Atlantic Province will present a gift to the newly-erected province of \$10,000 along with a work of native Canadian art. The new office staff is busy building the website for the mission project which will in turn be linked to the province's website. Other initiatives were also discussed which could facilitate our moving from a charity to a solidarity model with respect to the mission project.

The Treasurer updated the Council on the revised amounts for personal and car/travel allowances and will send this information to the membership in a separate memo. He also indicated that since the assembly has in effect forgiven the debt associated with the line of credit approved at the 2014 assembly, the sale of property in Africa intended to secure the loan will be remanded until a fair market value can be realized. Fr. Peter also updated the Council on the plans for the August 15 bicentennial celebration in Toronto. The Council proceeded to reconfirm the following provincial offices: Provincial Secretary (Fr. Wiecek); Provincial Treasurer (Fr. Nobili); Director of Vocations (Fr. D'Angelo); Mission Director (Fr. Gilmurray); Archivist (Fr. Luiz); Liaison to the Union of the Blood of Christ (Fr. Nobili). The Provincial will send out official notifications. The officers for local houses will be appointed at the next council meeting to be held at St. Charles in Toronto on August 17.

Fr. John reported that the revitalized provincial newsletter should be ready for electronic distribution on July 1 and will appear quarterly. The provincial asked that directors of the other units of the congregation be included in the distribution list. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel issues and planning in view of the Moderator General's hopes that the province might model a "multi-cultural communion."



Voice of the Founder

“Whereas the devil would like all to be victims of justice, we ministers of the sanctuary must make known the depths of God's mercy. In this devotion [to the Precious Blood], we have the treasures of wisdom and holiness; in it we find comfort, peace and salvation.”

(Letters, #1214)

Calendar

July 1 Solemnity of the Most Precious Blood

July 1 Fr. Alarey Abella – Anniversary of Ordination (2007)

July 1 Fr. Francisco DelValle Milán – Anniversary of Ordination (2009)

July 3 Fr. Sam D'Angelo – Anniversary of Ordination (1999)

August 3 Br. Anthony Canterucci – Anniversary of Incorporation (1949)

July 31 Fr. Joseph Grasso – Anniversary of Ordination (1992)

August 14 Fr. Carlo Della Vecchia – Anniversary of Ordination (1948)

August 15 Bicentennial of the Founding of the Congregation

August 15 Fr. Ron Wiecek – Anniversary of Incorporation (1965)

August 29 – Fr. Joseph Grasso – Anniversary of Incorporation (1991)

International C.P.P.S. Prayer Schedule:

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| July | Peruvian Mission & Colombian Mission <i>ad experimentum</i> |
| August | Vicariate of Chile & Central American Mission |



Provincial Retreat

June 6-10, 2016

**Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre
7020 Stanley Ave.
Niagara Falls, ON**

Retreat Director:

Very Rev. William Nordenbrock C.P.P.S

From Around the Province

Visit of Muslim Women to St. Roch's

About a week before the assembly a group of Muslim women approached me stating, "We walk by your church every day but we have never been inside; May we have a tour?" We made an appointment for the next morning.

I met 10-12 women, belonging to a Muslim group that is neither Sunni nor Shiite, but a relatively large group here in Toronto. Their mosque is north of Toronto near the town of Maple, ON. We begin our tour in the entranceway where I explained the symbols that are important to us: water, candles, and the place itself as a place of welcome. When we entered the church proper, they were impressed with its simplicity and beauty and after explaining the various devotional elements such as the stations of the cross, the statues, the importance of Mary (whom they also honour), the altar, the baptismal font, the tabernacle, the stained glass, they were filled with questions. I tried as best I could to respond to each request and they were more than pleased.

I asked about their veils, and though no faces were covered, all the women's heads were. It is part of their tradition and they do not demand a total face covering. They believe in peace and in light of recent events throughout the Mideast and Africa, they believe and pray for peace and are against violence.

During my time with the ladies, I could not help but reflect that St. Gaspar wanted to work with Muslims but was never able to do so. In a small way, we are opening doors here in north Toronto and now walking along Islington Avenue and the streets of the parish, we have begun to make inroads with some of our Muslim neighbours who greet us and have promised to pray for us.

Phil Smith C.P.P.S



“The Church regards with esteem also the Muslims. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honor Mary, His virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom.”

*Second Vatican Council
Nostra aetate, no. 3*

Member Profile

Fr. Ron Wiecek C.P.P.S.



Father Ronald P. Wiecek, C.P.P.S., (Missionary of the Precious Blood), has been working in Canada for the past five years primarily with the Spanish-speaking community in the Niagara Region.

Fr. Ron, as he prefers to be called, has spent the first 20 years of his priesthood in the educational ministry of the church. He has been engaged in everything from high school education to university Newman work and formation in houses of study to teaching at the seminary in Mexico City.

It was while he was doing special ministry in a Diocese in California that Fr. Ron was asked to do some parish work as an administrator. Fr. Ron at first was doing parish ministry along with other tasks that have been asked of him during the last 22 years of his priesthood.

Fr. Ron has been involved in retreat ministry and working with those discerning their vocation or where God is leading them. He holds a certificate in Spiritual Direction awarded in a program sponsored by the San Francisco and Oakland Dioceses and also has been trained in formation work and doing psychological assessments.

When Fr. Ron turned 65, he asked to return from the mission fields of Mexico after having been there for three years. After a short time of rest, he was asked to come to Canada and work with the Spanish speaking community in the Niagara Region.

Fr. Ron's love is working with the immigrant community and enable and empower them to take an active role in today's church and to develop a personal relationship with Jesus whom they are called to serve.

Reflection

John Colacino C.P.P.S

In Michele Colagiovanni's biography of Francesco Albertini, *The Hidden Father*, some interesting facts are presented about the day the Missionaries of the Precious Blood were founded. I read the book while on retreat and I was reminded of them when the discussion arose at the provincial assembly about our corporate identity.

As he recounts it, "The first community in Giano was born without clarification of the title. The members were called Missionary Priests or Secular Missionaries.

Even if he was reluctant to leave Rome, Don Gaspar had to leave for a few days to get everything ready. The house was formally opened on August 15, 1815, with [Don Gaetano] Bonanni as superior with Don Vincenzo Tani and Don Adriano Giampedi. The role of *economista* fell to Gaspar, but he was the true factotum of any enterprise."

Colagiovanni goes on to ask, "Can one say that on that day at San Felice di Giano that the Missionaries of the Precious Blood were born? Cristaldi, Albertini and Gaspar would say 'yes.' For Bonanni and the others, things looked a bit different. Don Gaetano had accepted the devotion to the Most Precious Blood but held that the organization should continue to be called the Gospel Workers, even if he preferred

the more generic title of 'Secular Priests,' precisely to avoid the idea of a true and proper religious institute."

Along with these ambiguities, the nascent community did not have the stability its main protagonists thought essential lest the property revert to the bishop of Spoleto. Even Don Gaspar was not always on board.

Hence, "With the arrival of Don Vincenzo Tani in September, 1815, Gaspar left San Felice and returned to Rome. The arrangement was now in order. But shortly thereafter, Don Adriano Giampedi also left. Only Bonanni, Tani and two lay brothers remained in Giano."

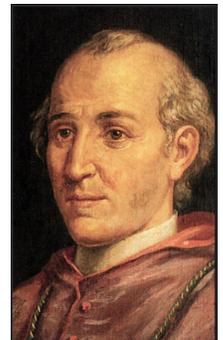
It was Cristaldi who insisted that Gaspar return to Giano without delay but even he met with resistance.

Indeed, "Gaspar went to great lengths to find someone to go, looking for someone to volunteer, but without recognizing the obvious: that he himself should return. He was unable to hear his own arguments that he had used to convince others and overcome their resistance. "

Colagiovanni even goes so far as to say that, "The characteristic self-promotion and incurable optimism of Gaspar became the object of ridicule."

As for Albertini, this was an issue of a need for greater maturity on the part of the founder. Even if Gaspar's presence in Rome was in many ways an advantage, the "hidden father" knew Cristaldi was right about his need to be on scene. Colagiovanni notes now, "The disagreement reached a delicate moment and threatened to dash the hopes of many. Don Gaspar would have to feel more personally involved, detaching himself from his own views and perhaps from his own family as well."

As we celebrate our bicentennial, and continue to reflect on our identity as a province, it seems we might take courage from the vagaries surrounding the Congregation's inception some two hundred years ago. There was a lack of unanimity, or at least a common understanding, about the precise nature of the new undertaking, its responsible parties, and even its title. St. Gaspar himself needed some fatherly persuasion from Albertini to ensure that his spiritual son would assume the role he envisioned for him.



As the province seeks to move forward we might find ourselves at times hesitant and faltering, although I believe we were given a persuasive impetus by the Moderator General in line with the last General Assembly's own vision for the Congregation's future, namely to embrace and to model a "multi-cultural communion."

I believe we saw a glimpse of this when at our closing Mass members were invited to offer an intercession in their native language. Hearing these prayers of the faithful in Kiswahili, Korean, Italian and Spanish left me with a powerful impression of what the General had in mind for us as a province.

For some reason, that phrase "multi-cultural communion" has continued to capture my attention and my imagination and strikes me as worthy of much further conversation. That is one reason the General has been invited to give our provincial retreat next June.

In a letter addressed to the provincial and council since the assembly, Fr. Nordenbrock let us know how he "was very pleased to be able to tell the General Council about the way the Province was willing to engage the question of renewal and expressed the desire to continue to dialogue with each other, expressing a shared commitment to a renewed future."

He also noted that the General Council asked him if there is "any way to build on the good start of the assembly and to continue the ongoing process, between now and the 2016 retreat?"

And while the question was forwarded to provincial leadership, it seems to me it should be posed to the entire membership.

I hope this newsletter will provide one forum for expressing our collective "judgement and plans for what is desirable and potentially beneficial for the Province" (Letter of June 20, 2015).

With this in mind, I hope to hear from members of the province about how you see a renewed future unfolding. I would like to include your thoughts in this space to keep a dialogue going and to help the General and the council best prepare for next year's retreat.



Abbey of San Felice, Giano

Book Review

Sam D'Angelo C.P.P.S.

Greening Your Church by Norman Lévesque is a concise, practical presentation of creation care theology and ministry in 100 pages. It is written from a Roman Catholic perspective, in an easy-to-read language for all persons, not just those with theological or pastoral degrees. I would recommend it for all those involved in pastoral care at any level. Its stated purpose is to “equip dioceses, parishes and religious communities not only to praise our Creator, but to really take care of Creation.” The book hopes to achieve this goal by laying a theological and practical groundwork for Creation Care Ministry. It contains three appendices: *The Canticle of the Creatures* by St. Francis of Assisi, A Calendar of Christian Feasts and Environmental Days, and a Sample Environmental Policy which can be created for a faith based community. Each chapter is subsequently divided into topics or questions, highlighted in bold and then answered. Small leaves are used throughout the book as bullets to help the reader to identify and to return to the main points explored in each chapter. This system of bulleting could prove to be a very useful means for a green team to access the information it desires as it develops its own local response to environmental challenges in its particular ministerial setting. Suggested activities for faith-based communities are interspersed throughout the book and often, as a conclusion to a particular topic. As a pastor myself, I found the suggestions, for the most part, very practical and manageable for parishes of all shapes, sizes, and with varying economic resources available.

The first part of the book treats the philosophical, scriptural, historical, liturgical, and theological underpinnings which, the author believes, provide the main motivations to advocate for a Creation Care ministry in Christian faith traditions today. This is a difficult task to accomplish, given the brevity of the book and the complexity of developments over time in all these areas. I do not think the author was entirely successful in this regard, though I appreciate the attempt. I also felt that some of the scriptural supports for the various questions the author was attempting to answer were used in the manner of proof-texting, with little attention given to informing the reader as to the context, the historical situation of the text, the persons to whom it was originally written, etc. This section also treats apocryphal and historical stories attributed to the life of St. Francis of Assisi (Patron Saint of Environmentalists) as well as the life of St. Kateri Tekakwitha (Patron Saint of Ecology). The author additionally provides a helpful chart of what are termed, “ecological saints,” i.e., canonized persons who, in some way, interacted with nature or supported the flourishing of creation by their actions and encourages the reader to find ways to advocate for creation on those days. The theological section of the book concludes with the author challenging the reader to identify environmental values stemming from the four cardinal virtues (temperance, prudence, courage, justice) and the three theological virtues (faith, hope, love) as a means of furthering the development of a theology of creation from a Christian perspective. I believe this approach could be a powerful springboard in identifying environmental values today.

The second half of the book addresses the three pillars of Creation Care Ministry--- ecospirituality, environmental awareness, and environmental action--- and then concludes with a chapter on how to evaluate the greening of one's church. The treatment of each pillar includes examples of workshops and retreats from various churches in Canada that have already begun the process of developing a creation care ministry. The author describes, in detail, what each faith community did, and encourages the reader to attempt a similar activity in one's own context. I found these descriptions to be both helpful and insightful. The book concludes with a description of how to assess the extent to which the three pillars have been integrated into one's church. Additionally, the author supports the website: greenchurch.ca where participating churches can be certified 'green' after having completed a green audit. Having met the author at a green workshop myself, I am convinced of the book's value and its message and therefore, recommend it to you.



In light of Sam's book review and our water project in Tanzania, the following words from the pope's encyclical, Laudato si', on the environment are especially meaningful:

“Water poverty especially affects Africa where large sectors of the population have no access to safe drinking water or experience droughts which impede agricultural production.”

“Access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.”

New Face in the Mission Office

My name is Amy Wilson. I am the new Mission Advancement Assistant for C.P.P.S. Mission Projects, and a mother to a sassy 10 year-old 'ginger-baby'. My first (unofficial) 'job' was as a domestic engineer, which I began at the age of 13, providing care for my much younger sisters and running the household as my parents' work took them out of town for extended periods.

I was raised an 'unaffiliated' Christian. My grandma was a Sunday school teacher and she would give us Bible passages to read during 'time-outs'. I never really considered going to church myself until about two years ago. After I took my daughter out of the local public school and placed her in the Catholic system, Rhiannon took to the religious education provided by the Catholic school. Suddenly she realized what Christmas was about, and she wanted to be baptized so she could join her classmates, who were already receiving communion. Excited that she was excited, I eagerly supported her.

Fr. Jeff invited my daughter and me to attend St. Michael's in Fort Erie. I was quite intimidated when I first walked in. The very first Gospel reading was one I knew – the fish and the loaves - but this time I was in awe of the interpretation of it, being so very different

and enlightening than the explanation I had been given. I was hooked.

Going with my daughter as she attended Baptismal prep classes with Fr. Patrick, I began to consider being baptized myself. When asked if I would be interested in RCIA, I jumped at the chance to join the Catholic faith. But I have to say I was unprepared for how the three Scrutinies would affect me. They made me realize how many people of the world are without – education, water, food, health services, and human rights for girls.

Since my baptism, I have been seeking out a way to help those who need. When I learned more about the mission projects, I felt that this is where I could be of help. I have immersed myself in a daily search for information and have taken to engaging with others on Facebook, Twitter and other social media. With occasional help from Fr. William, I am trying to learn a little Swahili so I might be able to read some Tanzanian newspaper articles and maybe even speak the language a little. I hope to be an advocate for people who struggle with these issues, increase awareness about them and invite others to help.



“As we now approach the feast and month devoted to honouring Christ's Blood ---- the price of our redemption, the pledge of salvation and life eternal -- may Christians meditate on it more fervently, may they savour its fruits more frequently in sacramental communion. Let their meditations on the boundless power of the Blood be bathed in the light of sound biblical teaching and the doctrine of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church.”-- *Pope St. John XXIII; Apostolic Letter, Inde a primis; June 30, 1960*