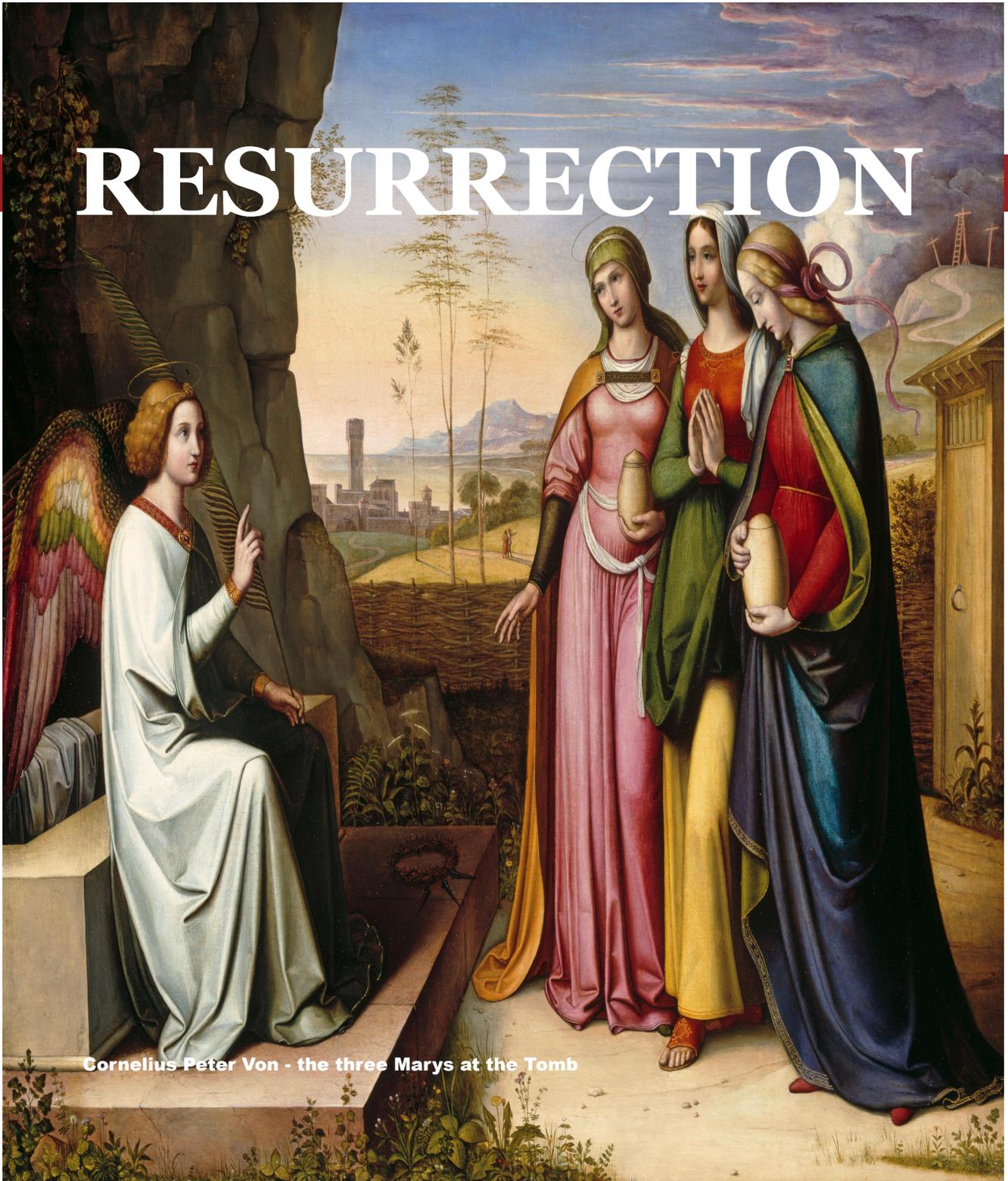


# RESURRECTION



Cornelius Peter Von - the three Marys at the Tomb

**Volume 29**  
**Issue 1**

**THE PRECIOUS**  
**BLOOD FAMILY**

**Easter Edition**

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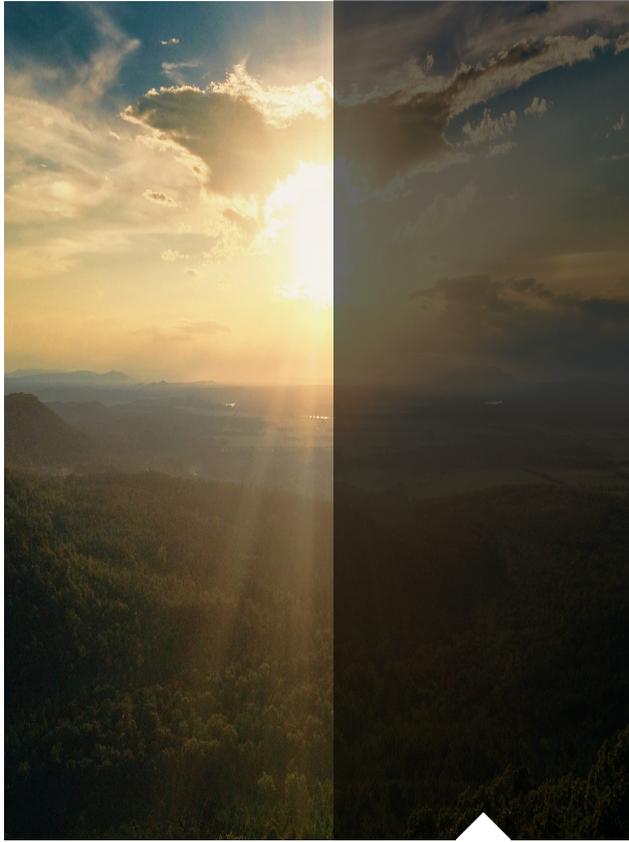
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# A NEW DIRECTOR OF UNIO SANGUIS CHRISTI (USC)



## THE PRECIOUS BLOOD FAMILY

The Precious Blood Family is published three times a year by Congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province.

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**FR. GERARDO V. LAGUARTILLA, C.PP.S.**

We are filled with joy to have Fr. Gerardo V. Laguartilla, C.PP.S. as the new Director of *Unio Sanguis Christi* (USC). Our new Director, Fr. Gerardo, was born and raised in the Philippines. He is a missionary of the Congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province. Currently, he is ministering as an Associate Pastor at St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Parish with special responsibilities to St. Eugene's Chapel of the Archdiocese of Toronto.

We thank the outgoing Director, Fr. Peter Nobili, C.PP.S. for serving the USC with integrity and dedication. Thank you for making us laugh by your heartwarming stories. You will be truly missed.

While your leadership and zeal will be missed, we believe you are leaving the USC in capable hands and the future is bright. We give thanks to God for the gift of Fr. Gerardo to the USC and the Congregation. "Blessed are you to whom it is granted to drink some little drop of the bitter chalice, which Jesus drank in love for us to the very last drop." Following in the footsteps of our founder, St. Gaspar del Bufalo, "Do not fail to ground yourself evermore firmly through prayer and humility, the sources of every good work." We wish you many victories and know we will always be united in prayer, mutual encouragement, and helping each other as we preach with our tongues and lives the blood of Jesus.

The quotes are attributed to our founder, St. Gaspar del Bufalo.

# EDITORIAL

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THE RESURRECTION

IS ABOUT

HERE AND NOW

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FR. JEROME A. HOLOGA,  
C.P.P.S.

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**T**he Sequence of Easter Sunday begins with a powerful proclamation: *Victimae paschali laudes immolent Christiani* (“To the Paschal Victim, Christians, offer a sacrifice of praise”). Christ, the victim, the innocent lamb, immolated himself on the Cross to reconcile sinners with the Father. The Latin verb *immolare* means “to shed blood or to slay,” connoting the Passover’s bloody sacrifice of a lamb in the Old Testament. This is the price Christ paid for our sins.

Yet for some of us the sight or subject of suffering, or even more so of blood, makes us uncomfortable. The mere thought of it awakens in us dreadful imagery that we would want to avoid. Thus, we might observe the events of the Passion from afar, in both time and space—at the altar of the “predictable.” Yes, we tell ourselves, Jesus’ body was covered in blood and sweat, his garments were stripped from him in a very rough manner, his skin was scourged, and a crown of thorns was placed on his head. And of course cruel clefts of nails lacerated his hands and then his feet; the soldiers made the Cross fall into place producing a horrible effect on the body hanging from it. On the Cross hung someone who was despised, mocked and held with no account; a just man died in a most tormenting torture, condemned by a most unjust sentence, by the most corrupt people, and — Oh wait! Hallelujah! He is Risen! Pass me the lamb chops! Salute! Some more wine?

Why doesn’t the crucifixion of Jesus move us to live differently? How can we read or chant the Passion narrative, look closely, not only with our thoughts, but also with our very eyes at the blood shed out of love and somehow not hear his cry screaming in our streets? Sin must be horrible indeed that nothing could merit our forgiveness except his precious blood. And yet in some mysterious sense, this blood which still trickles and reddens in long streams doesn’t seem to make us more acutely aware of our own sinfulness and the need to repent. In his essays *Language and Silence* George Steiner confessed, “We know now that a man can read Goethe or Rilke in the evening, that he can play Bach and Schubert, and go to his day’s work at Auschwitz in the morning.”

When Easter Monday comes who will show up to my day job and daily routine? The event of resurrection is about here and now. It is a resurrection of conversion, a new person in the present life, for the better. When, in fact, a persecutor like Paul becomes a disciple of Jesus, or a formerly possessed woman like Mary Magdalene becomes free and sees “the sepulcher of the living Christ; the glory of the Risen One” or when an unjust person becomes just, or a mean person becomes gentle. Now that is resurrection!

# 01

## STUDY THE GREAT BOOK OF THE CRUCIFIX

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**TO DISCOVER  
PEACE, COMFORT,  
FORGIVENESS AND  
ENCOURAGEMENT**

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**FR. LUI SANTI, C.PP.S.**

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Jesus' act of dying and rising is a deep, profound and powerful witness of forgiveness. Everyone who believes in the death and resurrection of Jesus shares in his victory and partakes in the newness of life. This newness is a change of heart, mind and spirit. On the Cross Jesus forgave those who condemned him; he forgave those who spoke ill of him. He forgave those who judged him; he forgave those who deserted him in the last hours of life.

Forgiveness is the pivotal hinge to love. Forgiveness is difficult yet it requires that we cease holding onto feelings of resentment against our neighbour, and to pardon their wrong-doing. Forgiveness is more than just words; it involves a sincere effort to change our mind and heart and begin to see and hold the good in our neighbour.

Everyone who believes in the death and resurrection of Jesus shares in his victory and partakes in the newness of life. This newness is a change of heart, mind and spirit.

The prophets, psalms and the gospels often reflect on the words and message of forgiveness. So we might ask, "Why should I forgive others?" The Old Testament presents several reasons for extending pardon and mercy to others. The main reason is that it is the nature of God to forgive and we are asked to be Godlike in all ways possible. Now imagine begging for God's forgiveness for our sins and hearing God reply, "NO I WILL NOT FORGIVE YOU!" How despairing a situation that would be. Yet that is what we do by our refusal to seek forgiveness whether from our neighbour or from God. Sirach says, "Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight." (Sirach 27:30) We tightly grasp our selfishness, our sins, poor attitudes, and behaviours like a child clinging to a doll or blanket.

It is wonderful when we beg for some limited mercy from God and he responds with total pardon, giving us a new heart and granting us peace of heart and spirit. God is the great forgiver. He offers unlimited mercy. As we ask for mercy-



**Rembrandt's "The Return of the Prodigal Son" captures the merciful embrace of God. He awaits patiently for our homecoming.**

forgiveness, he awaits our plea though at times we betray him by not being open to forgiving others.

Can we become a great forgiver? Change of heart means being less demanding on others, and being grateful. May we not forget the many gestures of kindness which have been extended to us by the Lord by dying on the Cross and shedding his precious blood. As we drink of the same blood at the table of the Eucharist, we are fed, nourished,

renewed, and given grace to forgive others. As we consume the Blood at Eucharist we say yes to forgiveness.

The parable in the gospels advises us to forgive 70 times those with whom we live in close contact -family members, co-workers, or parishioners. If we are to take those words literally then we are to pardon at least 490 times in order to keep peace and remain on good terms! Forgiveness, like love, has no restrictions. Since we

do not keep count of the times we may tell others we love them, neither are we to count or keep a list of the times we offer pardon.

May we reflect on the life of Jesus and let go, pardon and seek forgiveness and become Christ-like. The Cross is an act of love, to love leads to forgiveness and forgiveness creates harmony and unity, the Body of Christ.

# “ 02

## POEM

### TO THE MOST

### PRECIOUS BLOOD

”

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**CHRIS DOIG**

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Blessed be His Most Precious  
Blood! a free and flowing holy flood,

the sacrifice of just mercy, is for  
sure healing remedy.

On the door post was blood of  
lamb, now fulfilled, our saving balm.

The dark angel passed them  
o'er, now sin and satan are no more.

No need for ram or goat or

bull, Christ's blood for us, a chalice  
full,

'tis more powerful than the old,  
our salvation, now, behold!

That Precious Blood for many  
out-poured, covenant renewed, the  
Ark restored,

Everlasting and always new falls  
from heaven like holy dew.

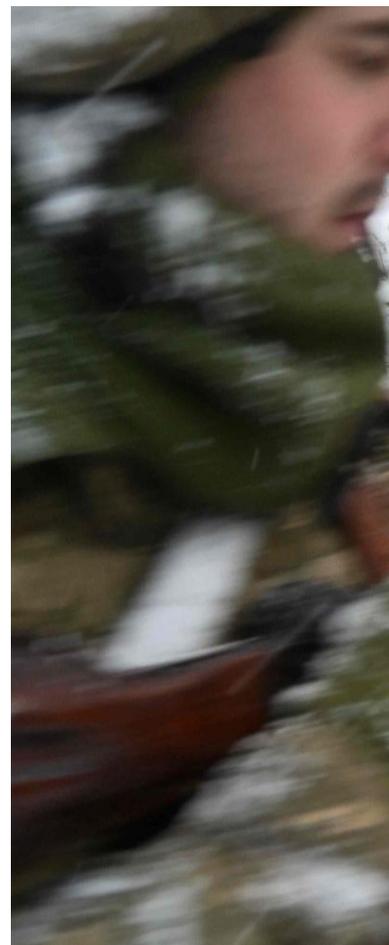
This is the hour of the Son, that  
our sin must be undone,

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My wounds are painful healing, call you to adore in  
kneeling, the pain of scourge and crown of thorn,  
gives you hope to see the morn.

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Source: <https://www.stthomasneilston.co.uk/?p=3108>





**A rescuer pushes a trolley carrying an elderly woman during the evacuation of civilians from the city of Irpin, northwest of Kyiv. (Vatican Media)**

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**Candlelight flickers in the darkness in a sign of peace. (ANSA)**

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by each drop of Life Most Precious, reviving faith, how infectious!

Look on me with eyes of faith, heaven opens wide the gates,

each drop of blood I shed for you, takes your sin, and soul makes new.

My wounds are painful healing, call you to adore in kneeling,

the pain of scourge and crown of thorn, gives you hope to see the morn.

Tremble, see, in adoration, it's the time of your salvation,

go dear soul and sin no more, the Lord saved you by blood out-poured.

Standing by the Cross we must, remember that we are but dust,

with Mother of Sorrow let us weep. And, cast ourselves into the deep.

Praise to the Father and the Son, who in the Spirit, love as one

Theirs the honour and the glory, as it was, is now, and will be.

# PRECIOUS BLOOD SPIRITUALITY AND A SYNODAL CHURCH

**FR. JOSEPHAT MSUYA,  
C.P.P.S.**

Every founder or foundress of a religious congregation is inspired by either a particular spirituality or a spiritual crisis of their time. Ours, the spirituality of the precious blood, is not an exception. History tells us that the spirituality of the Precious Blood was lived by Catholic faithful years before the foundation of our congregation in the year 1815. The Archconfraternity of the Most Precious Blood, for example, was born from a union of different pious associations of the laity whose objective was to venerate the Blood of Christ and apply its merits through works of charity. It was Mgr. Francesco Albertini who brought together the fragmented groups devoted to the Precious Blood under the banner of the newly-formed Archconfraternity of the Most Precious Blood. The search for spiritual answers as



Since October 17, 2021 the Church has been in the  
global synodal process called “Toward a Synodal Church:  
Communion, Participation, Mission.”

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Over the last few years religious congregations have been urged to go back to their roots, revisit their founders' visions and come up with relevant ways for particular spiritualities to respond to the signs of times while remaining true to their origins.



a result of the miseries inflicted by the French Revolution paved the way for Christians to look at their own sufferings in relation to the passion of Christ. It was Mgr. Francesco who composed the “Chaplet of the Precious Blood” to guide members of the Archconfraternity to meditate on Christ’s passion in expiation for their sins and the conversion of sinners.

It was a blessed coincidence for St. Gaspar to join Mgr. Francesco Albertini in exile because of their refusal to take the oath of allegiance to Napoleon. Their life in exile confirmed without doubt Gaspar’s dream of forming a band of men devoted to the spirituality of the Precious Blood. Like during the time of St. Gaspar, for a spirituality to be alive and vibrant it must be given to the Universal Church as a gift often from a particular group. Over the last few years religious congregations have been urged to go back to their roots, revisit their founders’ visions and come up with relevant ways for particular spiritualities to

respond to the signs of times while remaining true to their origins.

This call for renewal coincides with Pope Francis’ invitation for the whole Church to walk a united journey he calls Synod on “Synodality” (2021-2023). The Pope invites all members of the Church to walk together on a process that will guide the Church to arrive at a more decentralized model of decision making. Since October 17, 2021 the Church has been in the global synodal process called “Toward a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission.” The Synod of Synodality also desires to make the institutional church a more inclusive entity. It seeks to realize the need for collaboration among all members of the Church, clergy as well as the laity, by listening to each other’s voices in all matters of the church and identifying various charismatic gifts in the Church.

The call to Synod on Synodality fits well with the vision of sharing the spiritualities of religious communities with members of the wider Church.

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**Pope Francis gives the homily as he celebrates Mass to open the process that will lead up to the assembly of the world Synod of Bishops in 2023, in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican Oct. 10, 2021. (CNS photo/Remo Casilli, Reuters)**

It is in the wider church community that the spirituality of the Precious Blood finds its real and fitting application in the life of people: moving from devotion to the blood of Jesus in prayers like the chaplet of the precious blood to applying its merits in daily life. Pope John Paul II spoke of this on October 19, 1989 in an address to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood when he recalled the exhortation he had previously made on the occasion of the second centenary of the birth of St. Gaspar del Bufalo. He said that the blood of Christ "is the school of sanctity, of justice, of love. Never cease ... to delve deeply into this mystery of justice and love: diffuse it into the whole world." One might add that in fact every spirituality of the church draws its foundation from the blood of Christ and for this reason deserves to be held in the highest regard in the life of the Church.

In dedicating themselves faithfully to the vision of St. Gaspar, the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood, wherever they are, continue to share their spirituality alongside various groups including communities of consecrated women devoted to the precious blood as well as groups of laity who dedicate themselves to spreading the spirituality of the blood of Christ in their lives. Together they continue what was begun by the confraternities of the Precious Blood many years ago. All this is proof of the relevance of this spirituality for the life of the Church. The blood of Christ calls us to draw strength at the foot of the Cross and share the graces we receive from him with the world around us. As we approach the Lord to share the same bread broken for our salvation and drink his blood from the same Cup, each one of us in our own unique ministries, is united in making our contribution to building up the one Body of Christ, the Church.



## THE PRECIOUS BLOOD FAMILY

You can support the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and their apostolate. We appreciate any donation to help defray postage and printing costs; the suggested annual is \$30.00. We are most grateful for additional contributions to advance our apostolate. Please make cheques payable to Unio Sanguis Christi. Tax receipts are issued in January of each year.



## C.PP.S. MISSION PROJECTS

Since 1976, C.PP.S. Mission Projects has focused working toward the uplifting of human dignity, and toward better living conditions of Tanzanians. Our missions in Africa support 2.5 million people a year. We devote ourselves to the education of children and young people by means of different kinds of schools. We also work tirelessly to give access to clean water to the people and communities in desperate need. May we always be ready to help the poor and the vulnerable. Find us at [cppsmissionprojects.ngo](http://cppsmissionprojects.ngo)

# BECOME A CHOSEN WINE BY SUPPORTING OUR APOSTOLATE

## MASS ASSOCIATION



Since the Church enjoys on all the faithful the charitable obligation to pray for the living and the dead, the 4000 Perpetual Masses is an ideal way to be in association of solidarity in prayer carried out by the Unio Sanguis Christi with the approval of Pope Leo XIII in 1883. The Masses are offered by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and the names of those enrolled are kept in the Archives of the USC. Enrollment can be done in person at St. Alphonsus Church in Toronto, by mail sending a request at Shrine of St Gaspar 540 St Clair Ave W, Toronto ON M6C 1A4, or by phone 416-653-4486. The donation is \$25.00 plus \$4.00 for mailing the certificate of registration which will be issued.

You may also access the website - [preciousbloodatlantic.org](http://preciousbloodatlantic.org) - click on Donations for more choices, like requesting a single Mass, a Mass Association or make a donation for spreading the spirituality of the Precious Blood or the work of the Missionaries by completing all the required fields.



## BECOME A USC MEMBER

The Spirituality of the Precious Blood is meant to be shared; as such we are forever grateful for your interest and passion in continuing our Spirituality. The Unio Sanguis Christi (USC) embraces individuals and groups who commit themselves to live and promote Precious Blood Spirituality. You are welcome to join us through our Spirituality. For information on formation and USC activities, contact Fr. Gerardo V. Laguartilla, C.P.P.S. at [uscatlanticprovince@gmail.com](mailto:uscatlanticprovince@gmail.com)

He is Risen!



**Pope's special Urbi et Orbi blessing: 'God turns everything to our good' delivered in the middle of an empty St. Peter's Square on Good Friday 2021. (Vatican Media)**

# RISE!

Pope Francis in his traditional Easter Sunday 2021 address denounced as “scandalous” how

armed conflicts continue to rage even as the coronavirus pandemic has triggered severe social and economic

suffering and swollen the ranks of the poor.



Emerging from a time where the world has been isolated for almost three years,

I can't help thinking about the power of the Resurrection of Christ.

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**DENISE ARAICHE**

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04

**E**merging from a time where the world has been isolated for almost three years, I can't help thinking about the power of the Resurrection of Christ. Covid has brought us to a different reality – we were fearful of those around us and fearful of what the future held. We were in isolation, finding this state far better and safer than one in community with others and we were often losing hope. Will this state of uncertainty ever end?

Will we ever feel alive again? Yet we can draw a parallel between this time and another time....

Rise!

For I think of our time in isolation much like the time after the crucifixion of Jesus. The apostles were hidden in a room, afraid of being arrested and crucified, afraid of going out to do what Jesus commanded them to do and unsure of their



**“This is the day that the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24)**

---

purpose. They felt small and weak and paralyzed with fear. Because of this they cut themselves off from the community Jesus had just built – the community that needed their leadership and love.

During the pandemic we too felt isolation while we were weak and helpless. We felt fearful of the future and locked ourselves away from the world. We neglected to connect in safe ways, preferring to immerse ourselves in television or sleep. We distanced ourselves from community, preferring to watch events instead of participate in them with others. We cut ourselves off from what we needed – love and hope, community and fellowship, and a purpose for our lives. The poet John Donne said “No man is an island, entire of itself, every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.” He was echoing the sentiments of Jesus Christ – we are meant to be in community and when we isolate or try to



**“Let us allow ourselves to encounter the Risen Jesus! He, alive and true, is ever present in our midst; he walks with us to guide our life, to open our eyes.”**

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**So in these 50 days of the Easter season, Rise up! Reclaim your life of love and community. Enter back into church - no longer in a tomb but in the place of resurrection. Bask in God’s love for you. Feel His love and share it with others.**



**“With Jesus’ arrival the disciples’ situation of anguish changes radically. He enters through closed doors, he stands in their midst and gives them the peace that reassures: “Peace to you” (John 20:19b). It is a common greeting but it now acquires new significance because it brings about an inner change; it is the Easter greeting that enables the disciples to overcome all fear. The Peace that Jesus brings is the gift of salvation that he had promised in his farewell discourses: “peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” (John 14:27)**

**Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI**

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disassociate ourselves from others, we do harm to ourselves and them.

Rise!

But today is a new day. Most of us are able to emerge from our homes safely. We are longing to connect with those whom we haven't seen in a while. We want to be in community; we want to feel joy and hope and love. Easter is upon us. We have much to rejoice over. Most of our parishes have catechumens participating in the rites of the Catholic Church. We need to

welcome these new members and through our hospitality bring others to God. This is the time for us to refocus on our mission as Catholics just as the apostles did. They reveled in the resurrection of Christ and drew strength and joy from Jesus. They were not abandoned but strengthened. They didn't have to live in fear because Jesus conquered death. They had a mission imparted to them and they needed to live out that mission. We are in the same place. With the celebration of Jesus' resurrection we draw strength and joy in knowing our God

loves us so much He was willing to give His life for us. We know we are not abandoned because Jesus came back to us through the resurrection and is with us every time the Eucharist is celebrated. We don't have to live in fear because we know that our life doesn't end, but continues with God in heaven.

Rise!

Like the apostles before us, we are waking to a new reality – a life of faith in Jesus, a life of hope in Jesus, a life of love in Jesus. Like waking from a deep sleep, we smell the new spring air, we feel the sunlight on our faces and we can rise out of our stupor to live the life Jesus meant us to live – in communion with Him and communion with others.

Rise!

So in these 50 days of the Easter season, Rise up! Reclaim your life of love and community. Enter back into Church - no longer in a tomb but in the place of resurrection. Bask in God's love for you. Feel His love and share it with others.



**The Incredulity of Saint Thomas, 1603 by Caravaggio. In this painting, Caravaggio shows Christ inviting Thomas to place his finger in the wound made by the lance of the Cross.**

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“Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

John 20:25



“When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.” (Luke 24:30-31)

05

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FR. MARTIN DICUANGCO

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CHRIST IS WAITING TO SURPRISE US WITH HIS PRESENCE

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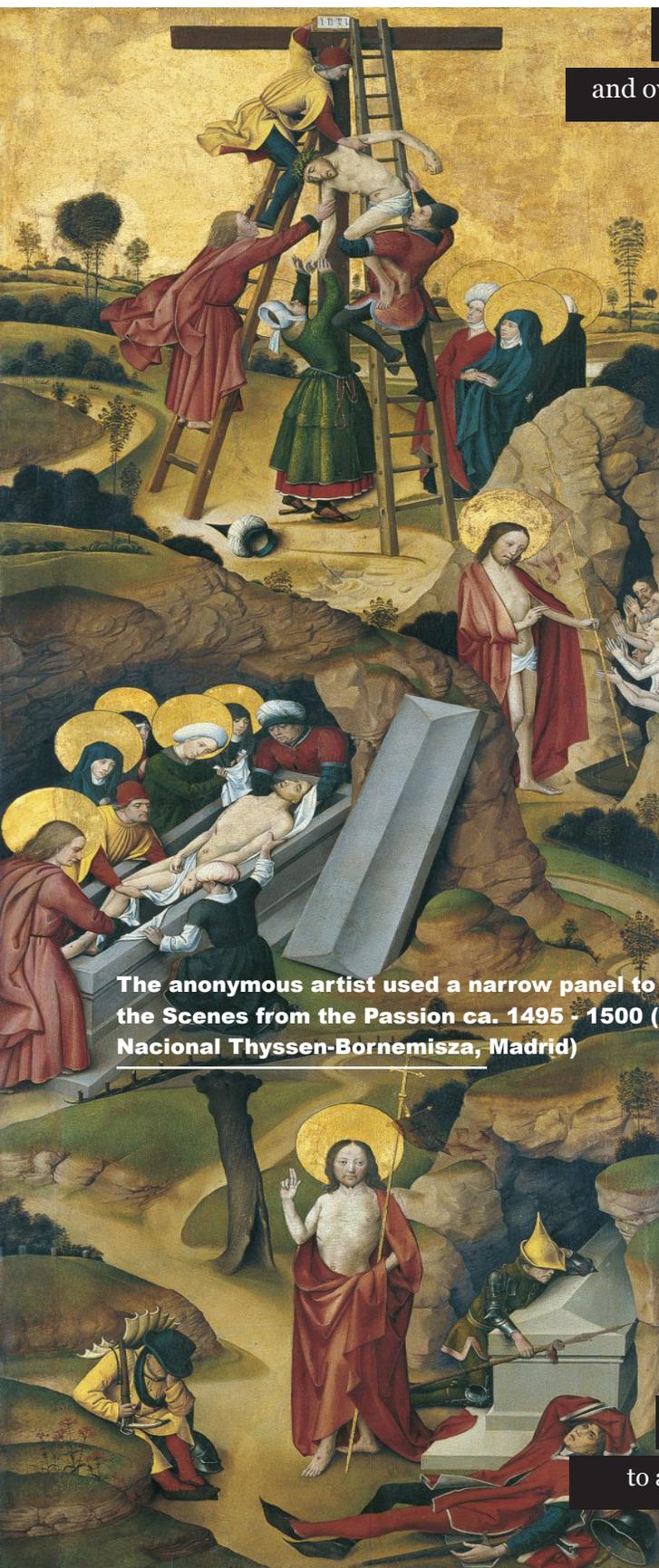
## - ON BEING SURPRISED - BY THE RISEN LORD

**U**pon seeing the empty tomb, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary encountered an Angel who said to them that Christ would “go before them into Galilee.” (Matthew 28:7) So the two women ran quickly toward Galilee expecting to meet the disciples to tell them the Good News. On the way, they meet the Risen Lord who has already anticipated this encounter. In fact, before they begin to run, the Lord was already prepared to meet them. This little detail in the Gospel teaches us that the Resurrection is not confined to the past, but an

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This ability to be struck requires something of us. We must be willing to surrender ourselves to the reality before us, for in our midst God is already anticipating an encounter with us.

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The anonymous artist used a narrow panel to depict the Scenes from the Passion ca. 1495 - 1500 (Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid)

“If it is true that death no longer has power over man and over the world, there still remain very many, in fact too many signs of its former dominion.”

event that is prolonged in time and space, and that He, “the Resurrection and the Life,” continues to surprise us in the here and now. Wherever we go, Christ is waiting to surprise us with His presence.

The question, however, is whether we are willing to be caught off guard, ready to adore the Lord when he appears. The temptation for our time is that we desire to control every facet of our lives since we have the means, more than ever, to achieve our goals. In other words, we are steeped in a culture of make-ability. We are able to construct our lives as if we were little gods. This is what the world tells us: we can be and do whatever we want; we can achieve our dreams if we work hard enough. For the Christian, however, it is not our dreams that have the final word; it is God’s dream for us. It is not our will to be done, but God’s will -- and His will can surprise us.

“Christ calls men and women in every time and place to affirm his victory using his own weapons: the weapons of justice and truth, mercy and love.”



**“At daybreak on the first day of the week the women who had come from Galilee with Jesus took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb; but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus ... Then they returned from the tomb and announced all these things to the eleven and to all the others. The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James.”**

**Luke 24:1-3; 9-10.**

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As followers of Christ, we do not move ahead of Him. He must always go before us. We are called to make space in our hearts for a surprise encounter with Christ. We are called not to be constructors of our reality, but to develop our sense of wonder so that we are struck by reality in all its grandeur.

The great Jesuit priest-poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, captures this experience in his poem, God's Grandeur:

“The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And though the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.”

This ability to be struck requires something of us. We must be willing to surrender ourselves to the reality before us, for in our midst God is already anticipating an encounter with us. Let us cultivate an attitude of wonder. Let us be willing to be “grasped” by Someone who precedes us rather than taking control without Christ and distorting reality so that it fits into our own world view thus blocking this encounter from taking place. Like the two Marys, let us be ready to reciprocate the Risen Lord's desire to surprise us with our willingness to be surprised.

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**HE IS ALIVE!**

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**ANNE HANLEY**

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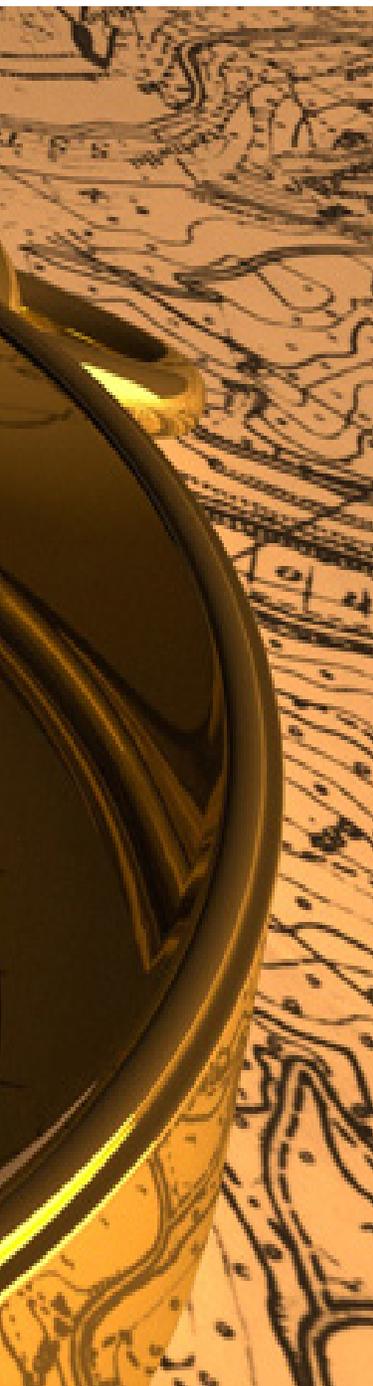
# CHANGING TIMES



You say our times are troublesome, the times are burdensome,  
the times are miserable. Live rightly and you will change the times.

May we give thanks for those who  
change the time by shining the light of  
God's mercy and love in our troubled  
world.

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**O**ur dog passed away earlier this year. Callie was a 13-year-old border collie/Lab; her personality combined the intelligence and awareness of a border collie with the sweet gentleness of a Labrador retriever. My sister and I brought her home when she was a year old. She loved her brother, made us laugh and danced on Saturday mornings as we read the newspaper beside her.

Callie took ill on Dec. 30. Our regular veterinarian was away and a number of vet offices were closed due to COVID outbreaks; others were at capacity and couldn't see her. We finally reached a vet emergency hospital who could; their response was immediate. "Bring her in."

The days that followed were marked by kindness. The receptionist brought out a dog bed so Callie could comfortably wait for the vet; the hospital vet who examined her explained the diagnosis and treatment, and then returned my call at 11:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve. (Can you imagine!) The vets contacted us at home to check on Callie and, finally, the team who helped us with her passing. All treated us with care and sensitivity under trying conditions and while obeying COVID restrictions.

In thinking of their kindness, I've remembered St. Augustine's reflections

on community in times of difficulty. "You say our times are troublesome, the times are burdensome, the times are miserable. Live rightly and you will change the times," he wrote (Sermon 311,8).

The veterinary staff who treated Callie changed that time for us. In their compassion, they reminded us of God's mercy. Whether they knew it or not, their efforts manifested the light of God's love to us in a difficult and sad time.

For while God is most dramatically present to us in the sacraments, God is always present in our daily moments: in prayer, in nature, in our routines, in times of uncertainty, pain and trouble, and in each other.

God is not only present to us; God knows each of us intimately. As we read in Jeremiah, God says, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you." (Jeremiah 1:5) And in answer to the Bee Gees' musical question, here's how deep God's love is: "Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you." (Isaiah 49:15)

In the Easter Sunday gospel, we see that personal relationship in how Jesus makes himself known to Mary Magdalene. He calls

## - EASTER RESOLUTIONS FROM THE EDITOR -



We pray for true conversion from greed, which causes us to ignore those in need, allowing others to go hungry and die while we turn money and worldly possessions into false gods.



We pray for peace. May this Easter be “the beginning of the new world, set free from the slavery of sin and death: the world open at last to the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of love, peace and fraternity.”



Spread the joy of Easter. “If Jesus has become your hope, communicate this to others with your joy. Let Christ dwell within you, and having placed all your faith and trust in him, spread this hope around you.”



We pray for true conversion from sin. Just as we were buried with him by baptism into death, we rise with him in newness of life. Let us make holiness our goal for our Father in heaven is Holy.



We pray for true communion amid tribal wars and clash of freedoms. May we find communion in the Eucharist, the bond of unity which makes those who are near and those who are far off one body.



Help someone. “What good is it if the Eucharistic table is overloaded with golden chalices when your brother is dying of hunger? Start by satisfying his hunger and then with what is left you may adorn the altar well.”

Through Jesus’ death and resurrection, God has opened up a life-saving way for us to know and be united with Him.



Through our actions, may we too as  
members of Christ's Church serve to shine  
God's precious Light to others.

her by name. "Mary!" And in hearing Jesus call her by name, Mary's distress vanishes and she recognizes Jesus for who he is: "Rabbouni!" One can imagine the joy with which she obeyed Jesus and ran to tell the disciples the Good News of His resurrection. "I have seen the Lord." (John 20:16-18) He is alive! He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Not long ago, a visiting priest delivered a homily that spoke of the power of God's words. He recounted how he had once chatted with two celebrities, and how he afterwards described the meeting to his friends. Wow, his friends said, stunned, they took the time to talk with you; that's amazing! But, as the priest reminded his friends – and us in his homily – God is so much more

important than any earthly celebrity ... and God talks with us all the time! "When God speaks, God heals," the priest said. "When God speaks, God creates."

God wants to be in relationship with us, to experience new creation and new life in harmony with God, our world and each other. Through the sacrificial gift of love made by God's beloved Son, God has reached out to us to make these transformations possible. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God has opened up a life-saving way for us to know and be united with Him.

In the first letter of Peter, the writer describes the magnitude of Jesus' sacrifice for our salvation. He writes

that we have been "ransomed" from our "futile ways... not with perishable things like gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish." (1 Peter 1:18-19)

May we rejoice and give thanks for the life-giving and sacrificial offering of God's Son for our redemption. May we give thanks for those who "change the time" by shining the light of God's mercy and love in our troubled world. Through our actions, may we too as members of Christ's Church serve to shine God's precious Light to others.

# AN EASTER PEOPLE?

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FR. JOHN COLACINO, C.P.P.S.

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Strive to find common ground with others who hold differing theological, political or social views contributing to polarization in Church and society.



“Do not abandon yourselves to  
despair. We are the Easter people and  
alleluia is our song.”

**W**e Are An Easter People and “Alleluia” is our Song! So says St. Augustine of Hippo in words attributed to him and later quoted by Pope St. John Paul II. But are we? I know that for many clergy and pastoral ministers, after the intensity of Lent and Holy Week, there often follows an Easter collapse. Even the Octave is difficult to celebrate with the solemnity it deserves, although Divine Mercy Sunday does arouse a lot of enthusiasm on the Eighth Day. But the joy that ought to mark the whole 50 Days of Easter is difficult for many of us to maintain once the lilies have faded. Paschaltide just seems to ask too much of us and perhaps this year more than ever.

Yet, as Russian Orthodox theologian, Fr. Sergei Bulgakov reminds us,

*The feasts of the Lord and of the Mother of God, as well as the entire Church year, with its quotidian commemorations, Holy Week, and daily gospel readings - all this has such an eternal and temporal significance of remembrance and also the significance of accomplishments that have taken place just once in the temporal chain but that have acquired power for all times in eternity. Every feast is, on the one hand, a repetition of the event in our memory and, on the other hand, a certain identification with the event. We immerse ourselves here in the event itself and co-experience it.*

So how might we “co-experience” the Resurrection we celebrate this Easter season? Here are a few suggestions:

-- in the midst of any trial or suffering you might be experiencing, seek renewed strength and hope in the triumph of Christ knowing that we all share in the paschal mystery of his death and resurrection in many different ways;

-- rejoice in the ways human ingenuity, medical knowledge, and skilled practitioners have helped us deal with



And finally pray that the Easter gift of peace might descend anew on our world, especially in Ukraine.

**Polish nuns opened their doors to Ukrainian refugees.**

“Why we should wage war on each other over conflicts that we should resolve by talking to each other? Why not, instead, join forces and resources to fight the real battles of civilisation together: the fight against hunger and thirst; the fight against disease and epidemics; the fight against poverty and modern-day slavery.”  
Pope Francis





**“The rage and hatreds that swirl around the world are worrying: the outbursts of violence, the words of contempt, the explosions of ferocity.”**

St. Paul writes to the Galatians:

“If you bite and devour one another take heed that you are not consumed by one another!”  
(Galatians 5:15).



the pandemic;

-- resolve to act more decisively in the face of threats to human life and well-being including environmental degradation;

-- seek out reconciliation where relationships are broken or strained while cherishing loved ones with gratitude;

-- strive to find common ground with others who hold differing theological, political or social views contributing to polarization in church and society;

-- and finally pray that the Easter gift of peace might descend anew on our world, especially in Ukraine.

And don't forget, as Bulgakov also reminds us,

*Christ co-participates in the proper life of humanity... the Church is the body of Christ and that He lives in this body not only in an accomplishment to come but here and now, in the militant Church, that He lives in it mysteriously, in virtue of His redemptive feat. Thus, Christ's abiding in heaven is compatible with His life in the Church; to be sure, this life must be understood not as a passive and indifferent abiding, but as an unceasing activity, full of power, love, and compassion.... Therefore, not only those who know Him in this life but also those who do not know Him, and - strange to say - even those who deny Him, commune with Him and are subject to Him. The history of humankind after Christ is not only the history of Christian humankind but also the history of Christ's humankind.... Resurrection extends to all human beings, irrespective of the personal relation to Christ of each of them: it extends to those who knew Him in earthly life and to those who did not know Him, to those who believed in Him and to those who did not believe in Him.*

That's enough to make anyone shout, Alleluia!, isn't it?

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THAN WORDS

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FR. JEROME A. HOLOGA,  
C.P.P.S.

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# WITNESS SPEAKS LOUDER

“Our advancement in perfection does not consist in doing great things, but rather in fulfilling the will of the Lord and becoming sanctified along the path through which he is pleased with us.” (St. Gaspar del Bufalo)

**A** spirituality accumulating dust on bookshelves is dead. It has to be lived for it to be alive. So true. Here is a story of a people who proclaim with their lives the spirituality of the precious blood. You will find them on Sunday afternoon in the basement of St. Charles Borromeo parish singing, praying, sharing in the Word of God and having fellowship in breaking

**USC members from St. Charles Borromeo parish joining in celebration at St. Roch's parish.**

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**Members of USC stuffing 2022 calendars at the USC central office, Pelmo Crescent in North York.**

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bread. They are active members of *Unio Sanguis Christi* (USC). The first time I heard them singing, I thought heaven was treating us to an angelic choir. They were that good! I am sure heaven was delighted as we were.

While I enjoy to hear them sing, I admire even more their selfless service. They are always ready to be of service and they do it with a smile. I jokingly call them “a people of all seasons.” For indeed they are. I see them as a people who have allowed themselves to be led by the Lord and thus render him in return unconditional service. This is the embodiment of the spirituality of the precious blood.

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**Photos by Fr. Jerome and Glory**



**USC members from St. Charles Borromeo parish at the Mission House in Niagara Parkway.**

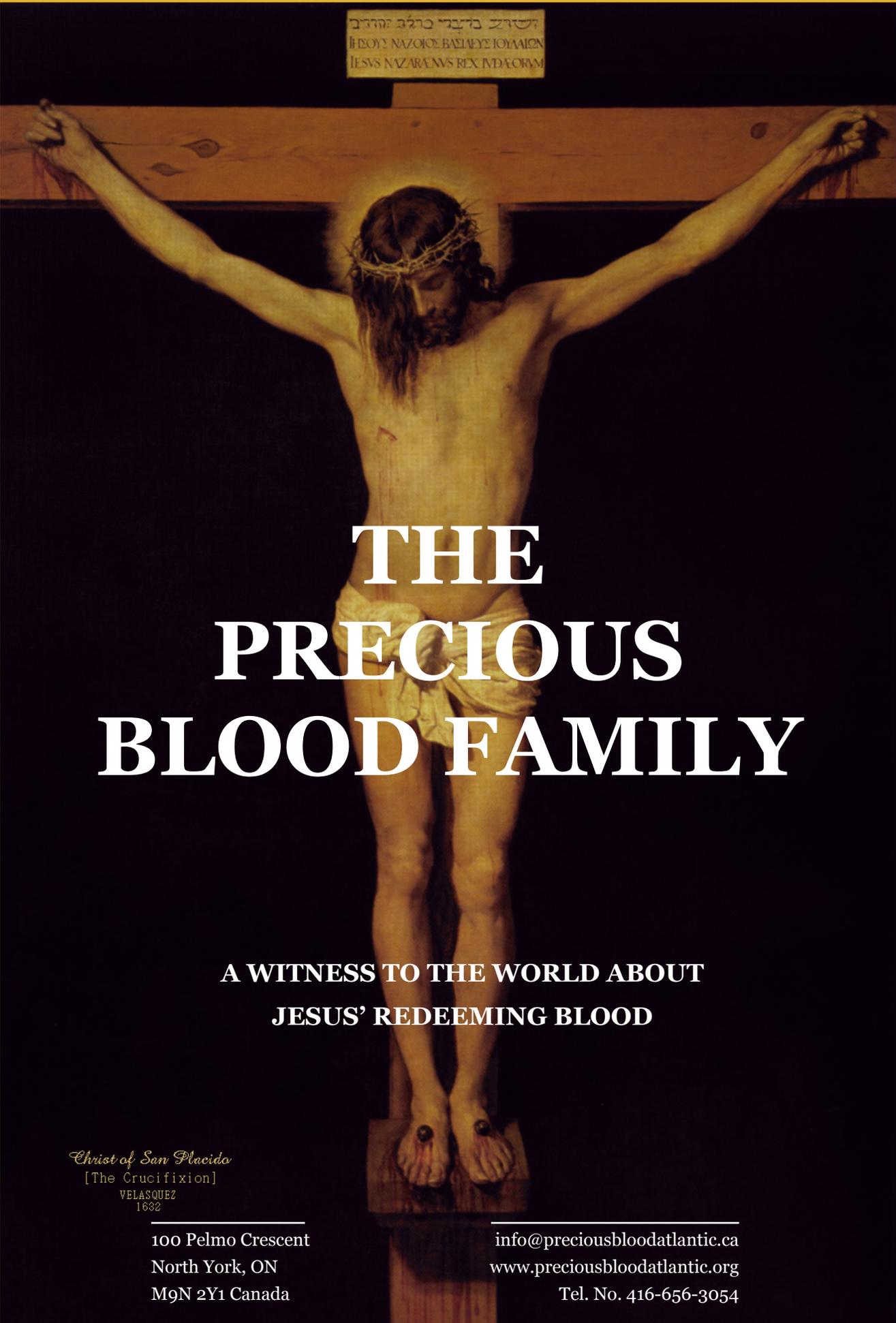
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It is not what they do that makes the difference, but how they do it. And it is the love they pour that makes the difference. Truly remarkable people!

Members, the world might not see your love for and witness to the blood of Christ, do not despair for he who shed the blood knows. It matters to him that you are faithful.

Through the words of our beloved founder, St. Gaspar, “May the Lord grant you the most ardent desire to love him and serve him faithfully; may he root you deeply in the holy virtues of humility and patience; may he make you in the words of de Sales, irrevocably his own.”

ישוע בן נצרתי מלך המלכים  
ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΝΑΖΩΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΩΝ  
IESVS NAZARANVS REX IVDÆORVM



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**A WITNESS TO THE WORLD ABOUT  
JESUS' REDEEMING BLOOD**

*Christ of San Placido*  
[The Crucifixion]  
VELASQUEZ  
1632

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