



Bloodlines

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

FEBRUARY 2024

PROVINCIAL'S MESSAGE

As we embark on a new year...

Last summer, I had the pleasure of stopping by a parishioner's home for a quick coffee. During our conversation, the couple shared their involvement with *Catholic Engaged Encounter*, a pre-marriage program. To my surprise, they were not just coordinators, but also weekend facilitators for the program. As they recounted the themes discussed, I couldn't help but notice the relevance to us as Missionaries. Let's reflect on a few key considerations:

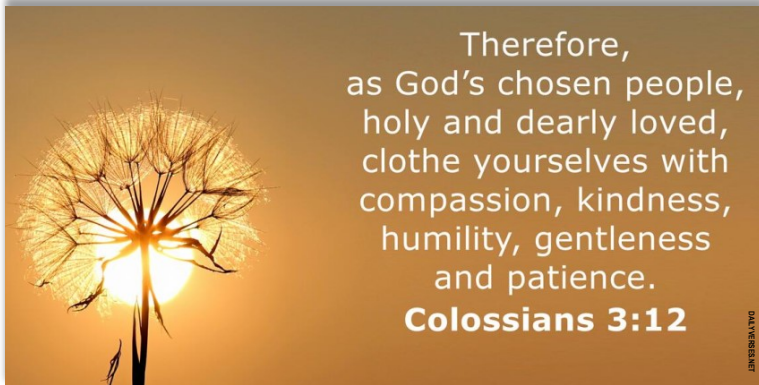
How can we strengthen our fraternity or community spirit? Regardless whether we've been members for two or fifty years, there's always room to grow in fraternal love and unity. St. Paul provides simple, practical wisdom: **Put on heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; bear with one another and forgive one another.** This kind of fraternal love, reflected in our attitudes and caring spirit, urges us to be loving individuals.

As we embark on a new year, let's consider better aspirations and possibilities.

CAN WE BE COMPASSIONATE? Just as Jesus showed and lived this kind of love, we may be asked to put the needs of our brothers ahead of our own. This could mean putting ourselves in their shoes, listening to their struggles, offering prayers, and giving them the time to deal with their issues.

CAN WE BE KIND? The Hebrew word for kindness, *hesed*, is often translated as *steadfast love or mercy*. When we fulfill a need that someone is struggling with, we are expressing our love.

CAN WE BE HUMBLE? Often, our pride precedes us. Admitting mistakes or the desire to always be right requires courage. Living in community offers



Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Colossians 3:12

DAVIDE

numerous opportunities to die to self, and may we find the courage to be humble.

CAN WE BE GENTLE? Gentleness is not a weakness; even Jesus referred to himself as gentle and lowly in heart. In our speech or dealings, displaying gentleness is a true sign of inner strength. Fraternal correction expressed with gentleness is better received.

CAN WE BE PATIENT? It's easy to lose patience with those close to us and expect them to see things our way. Remembering how patient God is with us can serve as a guide. When you're tempted to give up, seek the Lord's help to supply what you lack.

In our prayers, when we call upon the Lord, he will grant the graces and strength to live in unity and love. One final quality to cultivate is forgiveness.

CAN WE FORGIVE? Repeatedly forgiving our brother for the same errors can be challenging. Refusing daily forgiveness can sour our relationships and harden our hearts. A simple phrase, "I am sorry, please forgive me.", can restore and improve our relationships. Human nature makes us prone to hurt one another; let's foster a forgiving heart, an attitude to forgive and forget.

Gaspar often encouraged his members to sit at the foot of the cross, burdening Jesus with our hurts and asking for understanding, wisdom, and renewed hope. The more we practice forgiveness, the easier it becomes to forgive when offended.

Living in community means bearing with one another, letting go of habits and foibles that may annoy us. This is when practicing patience and kindness

is crucial. Peace comes when we accept the things we cannot change in others.

In this new year, let's seek the graces and strength to reflect the glory of God as we treat each other as brothers and love as brothers in Christ. Acknowledge that our past may not always

have been a stellar success, but we can strive to do better.

~ FR. LUIGINO SANTI CPPS



Reflection

By the time you read this, ashes may already have been placed on your forehead. If not, they soon will be. And they will just as soon be gone. But the effects of that little ritual of smudging the forehead with some burnt palm from last Passion Sunday is supposed to last for 40 days.

Sprinkled ashes with their companion garment — sackcloth — are the Bible's way of expressing sorrow, whether for mourning a departed loved one or, in this case, to show contrition for one's sins.

The church adopted the symbol — thankfully, without the sackcloth — for those who, after committing some serious sin, sought to be restored to Communion. Such people were enrolled in the *Order of Penitents* and underwent a lengthy period of rigorous penance under the supervision of the bishop. The Lent prior to their reconciliation was an even more intense preparation when, on Holy Thursday, they would be absolved and readmitted to the Eucharist in time for Easter.

During the same period, the catechumens who were preparing for baptism — often for many years — were entering the final stages prior to their initiation at the Easter Vigil. Now known as *the Elect*, they would soon undergo a final examination known as *the Scrutinies*. That lengthy process began when their own foreheads were

marked with the Sign of the Cross at the door of a church when they first entered the *Order of Catechumens*.

Today we know these rites as the Sacrament of Penance (or Reconciliation) and the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults — though admittedly they survive in a rather vestigial form compared to the practices of the ancient church. Even children, however, are still met at the door of the church on the day of their baptism when presented by their parents and godparents to be signed with the cross, their *catechumenate* lasting only a few minutes. Yet however much truncated and far less demanding, these rites still characterize Lent.

For in receiving ashes as an outward sign of penitence, absolution awaits us too at some point in this Lenten season, prior to the Sacred Triduum. Opportunities for confessions heard and received should abound *throughout these forty days*. But we also receive these ashes as erstwhile catechumens, hence the renewal of our baptismal vows awaits us also during the Easter liturgy, after which we are sprinkled with the water that will have bathed the Elect during the Vigil.

So take your pick or, better yet, imagine yourself as both a Penitent and a Catechumen in the coming weeks — the signing with ashes marking your enrollment in both Orders.

Therefore we may apply to ourselves the words of the sixth-century *Gelasian Sacramentary*, spoken by the bishop on Holy Thursday to both penitents and the Elect:

In the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts it is time to plant new shoots and root out all that is withered up. The waters of baptism wash clean; so too do the tears of the penitent... Encouraged on our way by the example of those around us, and in the presence of the whole Church praying with us, we cry out: We acknowledge all our faults, our sins are ever before us. Turn away your

face from our sins, O Lord, and wipe away all our iniquity. Give us again the joy of salvation and build up your strength within us.
~ FR. JOHN COLACINO CPPS



ST. MARIA DE MATTIAS

Let us remember and celebrate the feast of **St. Maria de Mattias** on February 4th. Maria was a woman of the Word, served God and neighbour; she inspired hope and was a dedicated Adorer-Apostle.

Maria wrote to her sisters:

Be courageous and place great trust in the Providence of God. Jesus will never abandon you. Place yourself in God's hands and go forward with great fortitude and generosity.

Maria consistently demonstrated a keen attentiveness to her spiritual father, **Venerable Giovanni Merlini**. After engaging in prayer and exercising careful discernment, she shared reassuring words with her community: *Do not fear. The work we do is God's. In the face of tribulation, anxieties, and misfortunes, place all in the hands of the Lord, and you will see miracles.*

This guidance holds particular significance for missionaries like us, who find it difficult to be at peace.



PRAYER TO ST. MARIA DE MATTIAS

St. Maria de Mattias, faith enabled you to discover in the cross of Jesus and in the gift of his precious blood, the incentive and strength for your apostolic commitment.

Obtain for us from God an increase of living faith, and help in our present need.

Yours was a radical and joyous response to God, who so loved the world that God gave the only begotten Son for our salvation.

We ask for an increase of love for God and our neighbour, together with the grace which we ask for with confidence.

Amen.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, STREAM OF MERCY

The Precious Blood is a powerful reminder of God's infinite mercy and forgiveness. **St. Gaspar** encouraged a deep trust in God's mercy and the ability to seek forgiveness through the Precious Blood.

In February we often celebrate love. Contemplate on the healing and reconciling power of Jesus' Precious Blood, which restores broken relationships and brings peace to troubled hearts.

FAREWELL TO REV. DOMINIC JUNG, CPPS

Fr. Dominic is contending with a rare blood disorder that significantly affects his energy levels, hindering his ability to minister effectively on physical, mental, and emotional fronts. Given these challenges, he has made the heartfelt decision to return to Korea to spend his remaining months with his family.



On Sunday, January 14, a poignant departure Mass was held in honor of Fr. Dominic at his parish, St. Antoine Daveluy at Corpus Christi, in Boston, Massachusetts. The parishioners came together to mark this significant moment, and the farewell celebration extended to a reception dinner hosted by the caring members of the community.

Fr. Dominic stands as a profound reflection of God's love, embodying rare qualities that have left a lasting impact on the parishes where he has served. His unwavering commitment to keeping the joy and faith of Christ alive is a testament to his exceptional character. Despite the challenges posed by his health, Fr. Dominic's missionary spirit has shone brightly, imparting a sense of peace, joy, and hope, wherever he ministered. His presence will undoubtedly be missed, and his legacy of love and faith will endure in the hearts of those he has touched.

We thank you, Fr. Dominic, for your dedication and compassion in shepherding the People of God. We are truly blessed to have you as our confrere and we will hold you in our prayers as you now find time to rest and recover, in the company of your family in Korea. May God, through the intercession of St. Gaspar, continue to guide and bless you.

Let us seek out the greater glory of God alone,
let us inspire each other in the doing of good,
let us always live closely bound to the cross of Jesus and each other,
and let us not doubt his loving assistance in every moment of our lives.

*St. Gaspar del Bufalo
Letter 39*

We celebrate!

YOUR BIRTHDAY

RON WIECEK
February 6

THE ANNIVERSARY OF YOUR INCORPORATION

PHILLIP SMITH
February 1

ARCHBISHOP LEO VISITS THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

On January 5th, vigil of the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, **Archbishop Francis Leo**, Archbishop of Toronto, visited the community at St. Charles Borromeo. He came for dinner, where he was treated to an Italian home-cooked meal. He was delighted to spend time with members of the community. His simplicity and unpretentious manner made the visit a joyous occasion, and he vowed to return. His Excellency became familiar with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood years ago when he studied in Dayton, Ohio, and resided with our Missionaries in that city. He also remarked how he is fond of our habit, especially the large crucifix.



SPECIAL VISIT: Fr. Luigino Santi, Fr. Gerardo Laguartilla, and Fr. Mario Cafarelli, together with Archbishop Francis Leo

GTA PASTORS GATHER

An afternoon devoted to sharing, brainstorming, resource inventory, networking, and fellowship became the focal point of a gathering involving three pastors in the Toronto area. This informal meeting transpired on January 9th, and was attended by **Fr. Mario Cafarelli** of St. Charles Borromeo, **Fr. Alarey Abella** of St. Alphonsus, and **Fr. Michael Mateyk** of St. Roch. The atmosphere of candidness and openness during the exchange of ideas sparked thoughtful reflection and planted seeds for future gatherings. The

dedication and commitment demonstrated by these pastors in their parish ministry are truly commendable. A shared interest emerged in the desire to sustain these discussions and meetings every two months, with plans to extend invitations to associate pastors for upcoming gatherings. It was heartening to witness the expressed hopes and insights, deepening the spirit of community among them.

The next meeting is scheduled for late February and will be hosted by **Fr. Mateyk**. Due to distance, **Fr. Samuel D'Angelo**, from Sudbury, was not able to attend; however, he wishes to be kept in the loop. Great work!

DEVOTING 2024 TO A GREAT "SYMPHONY" OF PRAYER

In his Angelus address of January 21, Pope Francis announced that 2024 will be a Year of Prayer: *a year dedicated to rediscovering the great value and absolute need for prayer in one's personal life, in the life of the Church, and in the world.*

A series of reflections dedicated to prayer will be featured in upcoming editions of *Bloodlines*.

Prayer involves listening to the voice of God during moments of quiet reflection, providing a powerful means to strengthen and affirm our friendship with Him. The essence of prayer lies in seeking divine assurance. Through attentive listening, we gain insight into God's will, fostering a deeper understanding of ourselves. Beyond merely communing with our Creator, prayer allows us to discover and connect with our inner selves. It is an opportunity to be in His presence, where listening and trusting in His guidance fortify our actions. Taking a leap of faith in trust empowers us with the courage and confidence needed to navigate life's journey. Gaspar's words echo this sentiment, as he writes, *...and particularly through prayer may you find true spiritual peace.* (Letter 184)

Prayer instills in us the confidence to perceive the world through the eyes of God. While it may not eliminate obstacles or difficulties, dedicated prayer time equips us with the resilience to confront these challenges.

In moments of prayer, we attune ourselves to the voice of Jesus the Christ, especially when faced with the need for patience, kindness, mercy, and love towards those who may cause us distress. The art of listening in prayer involves genuine attentiveness — no interruptions, daydreaming, or pre-

We remember and pray for...

ALBERT DePASCALE
February 6

We pray for our deceased
CPPS members, family, friends,
and benefactors.

REQUIESCANT IN PACE.

planning responses. This intentional effort and patience bring forth numerous benefits. Prayer enlightens our minds, renews our spirits, empowers us to shoulder our daily burdens, and reveals the truth. As Mother Teresa aptly expressed, *Prayer begets faith, faith begets love, and love begets service on behalf of the poor.* Thus, prayer is not just a promise made; it becomes a commitment fulfilled in our actions. Gaspar's encouragement to his confreres resonates: *The more one prays, the more good can be done.*

(Letter 424)

Ponder: How do you see your prayer play out in your life? You know what is in your heart; what can you do better in your prayer life?

~ PETRUS BEN MIRE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

OUR ANNUAL RETREAT
JUNE 10 TO 14, 2024
Mt. Carmel Monastery
Niagara Falls, Ontario



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BLOODLINES is a monthly published by the Atlantic Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. It is sent to the Incorporated members of the Province and Provincial Directors of the various Provinces. Your input and contributions are welcome. Email submissions to luicpps@yahoo.ca or mail to 100 Pelmo Crescent, Toronto, Ontario M9N 2Y1, by the **25th OF THE MONTH.**

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Vocation Calendar • February 2024



VOCATION PRAYER

Loving God,

you showed,
in your Son Jesus,
how Christian love
and faith
are to be lived
with compassion
and concern
for our neighbour.

As you have blessed
our community
over the years,
we pray and ask
that you will continue
to send
new missionary
vocations
who are willing
to serve
in humility and kindness.

Your love is always
the light to the truth,
the way and life of service.

We ask this
through our Lord,
Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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The sick |
| 14
Gary Luiz | 29
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Our Bishops |
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Ron Mahon | |

Let us remain united in prayer