

Fall Issue 1998

# Companions of the Cross



Inside

**TIM DEVINE  
MEETS THE POPE**





## Feature

# I met the Pope!

By Tim Devine

On the third week of June of this year, my good friend D'Arcy Dufresne (now a first year seminarian with the Companions) and I went on a "Roman holiday". We stayed at the Canadian Pontifical College where Fr. Mark Slatter is studying. I certainly reaped the benefits of having connections in the community. He was a great host. Needless to say, the accommodations were fantastic. D'Arcy and I each had our own room with a bathroom. My room had a balcony where I practiced pronouncing several amateur dogmas to the people of Rome.

D'Arcy went sightseeing and I, due to my low vision, went sound hearing and texture touching. The echoes in the churches were marvellous; the water in the fountains sang pretty melodies and the traffic buzzed in my ears as though I were inside a honeycomb. The ancient ruins felt crumbly, as could be expected; the foot of the statue of St. Peter felt extremely smooth from the millions of lips that kissed it and the bust of Pope John Paul II inside the Vatican enabled me to feel what

he looks like. It must have been a strange sight to see a Canadian tourist excitedly caressing the bronze bust of His Holiness. He's got big ears. I suppose they help him hear the Lord with greater accuracy in these times of ours. However, despite all these great sounds and textures, the best, without a doubt, was the sound of the Holy Father's voice as he blessed me in my native language of English and when I held his hand and kissed his ring.

I like to tell people that with my cane, I'm able. During the Pope's general audiences on Wednesday mornings he invites all newlywed couples and anyone suffering from illness or a disability to sit at the front during his catechesis. To top it off, he also invites them to have a photo audience with him immediately afterwards. All I had to do was flash my cane as though it were a badge and before I knew it, D'Arcy and I were being escorted by the Swiss Guard up the steps of St. Peter's Basilica to the front row. It was a beautiful sunny morning and while D'Arcy and I prayed the rosary in anticipation of the

audience, I was overwhelmed by the graciousness of my Heavenly family.

I will always be thankful to our Lord and our Lady for my trip to Rome. Even though the encounter was brief, I will forever find it to be a source of strength and encouragement as I continue this pilgrimage towards eternity. I pray that as you look upon the picture of our meeting, you will see a loving father who identifies himself with the sick, suffering and disabled; a man who took the time to see one of his spiritual sons personally and bless him; a man who loves both you and me as his own children. Let us always follow the Good Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ, as our Holy Father Pope John Paul II shows us in these times of ours.

"You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it" (Mt 16:18). ☺

*Tim Devine is a third year seminarian with the Companions. He is a 23-year-old from Kitchener, Ontario.*

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The Companions of the Cross is a quarterly publication designed to encourage spiritual growth and to share about God's movement within a new community of Catholic priests, and candidates for the priesthood. The Companions' ministries are made possible by the prayerful generosity of its supporters, to whom we are most grateful.

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## Feature

# INCLUSIVE

# Language

By Fr. Bob Bedard

The lobby on behalf of inclusive language in the Church's liturgy and documents is surely not the most pivotal issue in our midst these days. There are several other points of contention of greater importance. But this one nettles me. I don't see the point. In fact, I'm trying to see through it, beyond it.

The purpose of the project is to make sure that no expression we use has a strictly masculine connotation. Words such as "he", "him", "his", "man", "men", "mankind", etc. must be replaced, we're told, if their context makes clear they refer to both men and women. The language we use, it is urged must be 'inclusive'.

Thus, when Jesus asks: "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world . . ." we must change it to: 'what does it profit anyone . . .' or some such. "If a man wishes to follow me, he must pick up his cross . . ." must yield to the likes of: 'All who wish to follow me, must pick up their crosses' . . . ('cross' here would be very bad grammar).

This is called inclusive language. I don't think it is.

Actually, I'm in favour of inclusive language. I think all of us should be. But the inclusivity we should be committed to is the one the English language already provides. The words "he", "him", "his", "man", "men", and "mankind" etc. if the context in which they're used indicates reference to both male and female are just that. They are inclusive! "He" includes "she", "him" includes "her", and so on.

That's a convention of English. It's understood. If there are some people who are not aware of the convention, they can easily be taught. It isn't difficult. Anybody can pick it up.

Whence comes the current lobby? It comes from a rather small group of people, who call themselves feminists. They are mainly academics, both men and women who tell us present usage is offensive to the female population. I think they're wrong. With virtually all the women I know it's just the opposite. They're perfectly content with the English they've grown up with and deeply resent any attempt to change it in this needless way. Would we be willing to take a survey of Catholic women? The lobbyists might be surprised.

Another thing. The inclusive language lobby is after more than just the use of words that seem to imply that equal status is being given to women. The guns are also pointed directly at God.

I have recently heard at Mass such as the following: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's (not his) people on earth"; "It is right and just to give God (not him) thanks and praise"; "May God accept these gifts at

your hands for God's (not his) glory, for our good, and for the good of all God's (not his) people". There are many other examples. I don't think it's inclusive. It's just plain dull English.

But these examples have nothing at all to do with inclusive language. This is an attempt to emasculate God. We know, of course, that God is neither male nor female, but simply God. But Jesus had made it abundantly clear that we are to relate to God as our "Father". God does-

n't want to be called 'Mother'. Nor does he want to give way to any supposedly pre-biblical deity called 'Sophia' or 'Lilith' or whomever.

Did I read a couple of years ago that the bishops of Quebec, at an annual plenary session, did not concelebrate Mass because women present (theological and pastoral advisors), might find it "offensive"? Instead, the women took up positions near the altar and when the time came, gave Communion to the bishops?

Please pray for our bishops that they will knuckle under no further to nor be faint-hearted no longer when confronted by a small lobby of people within the Church who rest their cases on very

*Continued on page 2...*

"The inclusive language lobby is after more than just the use of words that seem to imply that equal status is being given to women. The guns are also pointed directly at God."

Continued from page 1...

shaky theological foundations and who represent a very small minority of believers.

A few years ago, I was invited to the wedding of a fine young man, a very close friend of mine. I assumed it meant celebration. But when I got to the church, he spotted me with my alb and stole and told me there would be only one celebrant because it was too hard to pre-estimate how many priests would attend (I think there were four of us in all that day). He seemed embarrassed. I assured him it didn't matter to me and not to worry. I understood. Actually, I was happy to get a chance to sit at the back in church for a change. That doesn't happen too often. I prefer it back there. I guess too many men in the sanctuary actually do "oppress" dedicated feminists.

Have we ever heard or read the last few years the expression "women and men"? It's all part of the same 'movement'.

What's the matter with the customary "men and women"? Nothing! Why change it then? If we do change it, should we also say "gentlemen and ladies" rather than "ladies and gentlemen"?

I'm fed up with the whole thing. It appears to me as no more than much ado about nothing.

I believe that this newly arrived little band of so-called feminists is giving authentic feminism a bad name. In fact, I'm really a feminist myself – authentic, I hope.

I'll stand up for equality any time. Equal pay for equal work. I'm not for quotas. Qualifications should determine hiring policy and wage scales not gender. But there should also be a pay scale for mothers who choose to stay home to take care of their children.

And we do need more protection for women. If I hear one more story of brutality or even rudeness and lack of con-

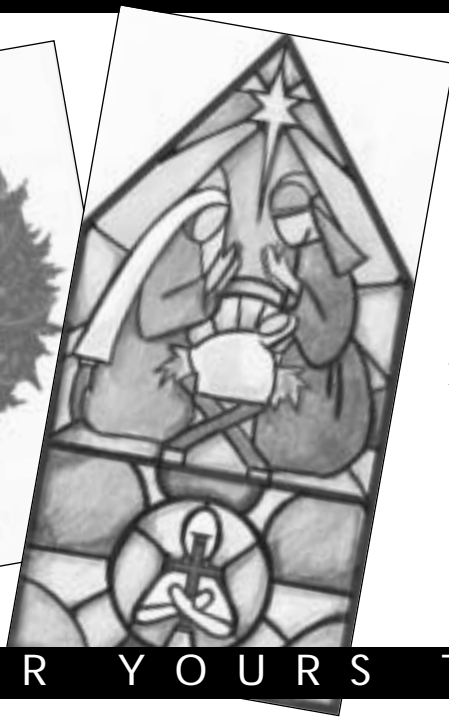
sideration by men toward their wives, I think I'll explode.

If it seeks simply protection and equal rights for women, I see nothing wrong with feminism. But, when it descends to serve the agenda of a relatively small group of very angry women, it must be opposed. When their agenda includes redefining the Father-Creator himself with the so-called inclusive language issue as a starting point, this essentially subversive 'movement', which does not deserve to be even associated with the name "feminism", must not only be opposed but exposed. ☺

.....  
*Fr. Bob Bedard is the founder of the Companions of the Cross in Ottawa; currently Canada's fastest growing community of priests. A native of Canada's capital, Fr. Bob was ordained to the priesthood in 1955. His ministries include high school teaching and administration, full-time renewal work and pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Ottawa.*

# Christmas Cards

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# The Journey Continues

By George Sammut

As we journey in or towards our individual vocations, we sometimes make diversions or change our course in response to both legitimate and false movements of our heart. This is called discernment. When we honestly open our heart and our mind to God's Will, we will often, if not always, hear a word or get a sense, or feel a movement in our spirit. In hindsight, when things do not turn out as we expect, we often blame it as bad discernment, or a mistake. Well that is not always the case. Early last year I felt the call to the diocesan priesthood outside the scope of the Companions of the Cross and by August of that year I was continuing my studies as a seminarian for the Pembroke Diocese.

But something was not right within me. Things started to happen. First of all, I got bitten by the simplicity bug, which I had inherited from my three years with the Companions. I began to feel so badly about having bought a new and somewhat expensive vehicle that I soon took it back to the dealer and traded it in for a car 10 years older. Where did that come from I wondered. Then I started to miss the things I had liked the least while I was in community, the share groups, the intimate relationships with other priests and seminarians, the common meals, etc. etc. All the things that I could not reconcile about community life with the Companions of the Cross now became obvious necessities for me. For me! That's important. I do not want to be accused of saying that community life is a necessity for every priest or religious, but for me, and coincidentally for many others, it is an essential way of life.

**“He at times allows us to experience and encounter opportunities which may appear to be setbacks or mistakes. But, in fact, these are indeed opportunities to grow in wisdom, experience, knowledge, love, faith, hope, prudence, accountability, confidence and on and on and on.”**

I spent the first six months at the Cathedral rectory in Pembroke where I had the honour and pleasure of serving for Bishop O'Brien whenever he celebrated Mass there. For an aspiring seminarian, serving at a Mass for a shepherd of the Church who is both kind and caring, is quite an honour. However my greatest joy was in the parishioners with whom I became acquainted and who were so very supportive and kind to me. By mid-February I was at the Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, also in Pembroke, where I continued my formal internship and where I was exposed to a wide variety of parish activities. Here was a parish where the youth really stood out, at least for me, and they became a new and great source of joy and spiritual growth.

So I shared the stirring going on within me with Bishop O'Brien and shortly thereafter, I was back in Ottawa with the Companions. Was it a mistake to venture out of the community life into the life of the typical diocesan priest? No, of course not. Was it just bad discernment? Again, no, of course not. First of all, I can say that anything we may do in response to what we believe to be God's Will cannot be a mistake, otherwise, where is faith? Then why is it that some things just do not seem to work out? If my original discernment was genuine, as I believe it was, then why did I end up back where I started?

*Continued on page 4...*

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ed? Well to begin with, we know that God's ways are not necessarily our ways. God in His omniscience knew perfectly well that remaining in an environment consistent with community life would not resolve my doubts about community life. Have you ever heard that absence makes the heart grow fonder? That certainly works for me! Furthermore, I was subject to situations and activities in the diocese of Pembroke, which were unique that I would probably never have experienced elsewhere, all of which will probably make me a better priest than I might otherwise have become. Having said that, how then could my initial discernment and subsequent decision have been a mistake? In God's ever-loving and gentle mercy, He at times allows us to experience and encounter opportunities which may appear to be setbacks or mistakes. But, in fact, these are indeed opportunities to grow in wisdom, experience, knowledge, love, faith, hope, prudence, accountability, confidence and on and on and on.

Fr. Bob knew I belonged in the Community and when I spoke to him about returning, he said so much, adding that he had to let me go and did not try to stop me; otherwise I might always have had doubts. So, like an understanding father with a bemused and disquieted son, he let me go so that I could come to my own conclusions and discoveries. He let me go perhaps, so that God could take over and do for me what I would not let Him do previously. And so my journey continues. It is a journey with a lot of ups and downs and curves and stumbles. But it is a journey with a new sense of belonging and commitment, one, which I share with 65 other priests, and seminarians. It is a journey which will see me make a lot of *mistakes* and a lot of *wrong* decisions, all I pray, that are cradled in faith, hope, and love. ☺

George joined the Companions four years ago and has recently completed his theology studies and formation requirements. He is currently assisting in the Companions' administration office while he awaits ordination to the diaconate.

## Companions of the Cross CALENDAR



### 1999 Calendar

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## Feature

# The Papal Preacher

By Andy Korvemaker

On Friday, August 21, Fr. Bob Bedard, John Labreche, Ben St. Croix and I crammed into "The Bobmobile" and motored down to Hamilton (Ontario) for the 1998 Catholic Crusade. We arrived with plenty of time to get settled before the talks started. Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa was the featured speaker for the weekend. He was appointed Preacher to the Papal Household in 1980. He gave five talks, including the homily at Mass on Sunday morning.

Fr. Cantalamessa opened the conference with an excellent talk. The words he spoke were not terribly profound, and he wasn't a dynamic speaker. He did not present himself as a scholar. Still, he spoke with humility and conviction. This was a man who really knew in his heart, what he was talking about.

Referring to the request of the Pope that we focus this year on the Holy Spirit, he asked what the most important achievement for this year could be. Could it be to come to know the Holy Spirit better? Or to write books about the Holy Spirit? These are very good things, but they are not the greatest. Instead, he stated that it would be a greater achievement this year to receive the Holy Spirit in a new and greater way. While "head knowledge" of the Holy Spirit is good, it is much better



Andy Korvemaker and John Labreche at the Companions table at the conference.

to have an experience of the Holy Spirit - to experience a New Pentecost.

He continued by stating the truth that there is power in the name of Jesus. By simply saying this divine Name, the Holy Spirit will come. He may come quietly and gently, like a sweet spring breeze, or He may come suddenly, filling those who have called on the Holy Name with power. We need only to believe and to trust in the promises God has given us. He is faithful. We can and should depend on Him for all our needs.

After this he moved on to a little commentary on Romans 3, focusing on the end of the chapter where St. Paul speaks of our justification through our faith in Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, the Law ruled the people. The people of Israel believed that God's justice was the punishment He would bring to bear on them if they did not follow His statutes. To have a conversion meant to cease doing evil acts and to start doing good acts. A decision was made and acted on.

Now we live in a fuller understanding of God's justice. We are no longer justified by the deeds we do, but by our faith in



Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa with Fr. Bob Bedard in Hamilton.



Christ Jesus, who was appointed by God to be the means of expiation for our sins. His justice is not His anger, but His act of love by which He makes us, His children, holy. Our good works have become the effect of our salvation, not the cause of it. Now the door to salvation is not the purity by which we live our lives, but the faith we hold in Jesus.

This is, as he put it, the "Compact Gospel", the Good News by which we need to live our lives. It is so simple, but it is easy to forget. We are saved, not by anything we have done, but by the mercy of God. Even though we turn away from Him, He welcomes us back.

Fr. Cantalamessa did not say anything really new or profound at the opening of this weekend. He simply stated the basic Gospel message. He laid it out plainly, leaving the message uncluttered by the distractions that often seem to come from philosophical or theological discussions. Sometimes, that's just what we need. ☪

.....  
Andy is in his second year of formation with the Companions of the Cross and is currently studying philosophy in Ottawa. He's from Regina and feels that Ottawa has far too many hills.

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# Welcome New Applicants



**Brian Christie**  
Sarnia, ON



**Wade DeCoste**  
Mattie Settlement, NS



**D'Arcy Dufresne**  
Kitchener, ON



**Patrick Dursi**  
Halifax, NS



**Jason Gould**  
Stratford, ON



**Raymond Guillermo**  
Saint John, NB



**Richmond Guillermo**  
Saint John, NB



**Jeremy Heynen**  
Aylmer, ON



**Marcel Mann**  
Lemberg, SK



**Doug McColeman**  
Nepean, ON



**Jim McKay**  
North Bay, ON



**Chad Parsons**  
Columbia, Missouri



**Greg Pestell**  
Orillia, ON



**Nick Simoni**  
Innisfail, AB



# Community News & notes

## CC Annual Retreat

Was held from Aug. 30th-Sept. 2nd at Waupoos Island. Over 65 priests and seminarians from the community, along with a few associate members, joined in our annual days of reflection and recreation. Speakers and Talks for these days included the following: Fr. Bob Bedard - "Authentic Catholic Spirituality...How are we Doing?"; Fr. Ed Wade - "The Agony & the Ecstasy...Between Pentecost and Suffering"; Fr. Pierre Ingram - "Using the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Ministry"; Fr. Mark Slatter - "Freedom in Christ vs. Licentiousness"; John Fletcher - "Devotion to Our Blessed Mother"; and Fr. John Vandenaeker - "Our Community & the Year Ahead". In addition, there was a ministry evening to pray for healing, daily Eucharist, Prayer & Praise, Liturgy of the Hours, our Annual General Meeting, and a campfire & fireworks display (other fireworks occurred when one of our new guys told Fr. Bob he looked sleepy!). Many priests and seminarians who are not yet lifetime members of the community either renewed or made their temporary commitments to the community at this time. Most of the seminarians stayed on at Waupoos with priests from our Formation Team to do a three day silent retreat as well

(Sept. 2nd-5th), as called for in our Formation Guidelines. Many thanks to all who helped out in organizing these blessed events, especially Todd Thibeau (God's Right Hand Man!).

## #58 Primrose Property

We are pleased to announce the purchase of a new residence for the Companions of the Cross at 58 Primrose St. in Ottawa. This large 13 bedroom house served as a residence for the sisters of St. Joseph of Peterborough for many years. It was also known as the "Upper Room House of Prayer". This new building will primarily house our new applicants, with Fr. Roger Vandenaeker moving in to be the new "House Father". The house is conveniently located right around the corner from the Dominican College, where many of our new seminarians study philosophy. In addition it has a good-sized chapel and classroom (where some CC courses will be taught this year). We want to thank the Sisters



Fr. Pierre Ingram



Celebrating Mass on Retreat



Praise and Worship time



Recreation time



58 Primrose



Primrose property

of St. Joseph for the generous terms of sale they worked out with us. They haven't exactly "given" the building away (it costs \$425,000), but they accepted a very reasonable base price, a low down payment, and helped us arrange mortgage financing through themselves instead of a bank. Thanks also to Glenn Floyd for kindly assisting us for free with the negotiations and paperwork surrounding this transaction, and to Phil Bottriell of Bottriell Engineering for his excellent and heavily "discounted" building inspection. The building feels blessed and very much "prayed in". We love it. Now if we could only afford to keep it! (Subtle appeal for more funds from you our generous benefactors!).

## Welcome New Seminarians!

14 new seminarians (called Applicants) joined us in September for the new academic year. They are: Brian Christie (Sarnia, Ont.); Wade DeCoste (Mattie Settlement, Nova Scotia); D'Arcy  
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Dufresne (Kitchener, Ont.); Patrick Dursi (Halifax, Nova Scotia); Jason Gould (Stratford, Ont.); Raymond & Richmond Guillermo (Saint John, New Brunswick); Jeremy Heynen (Aylmer, Ont.); Marcel Mann (Lemberg, Saskatchewan); Doug McColeman (Nepean, Ont.); Jim McKay (North Bay, Ont.); Chad Parsons (Columbia, Missouri); Greg Pestell (Orillia, Ont.) and Nick Simoni (Innisfail, Alberta). Pray that the Lord may bless their first year of formation and discernment with us.

### Assumption Farm Update

Our new seminarians are scheduled to split their time the first year between our Primrose St. property and Assumption farm (just as our second year applicants do - but in alternating fashion). Speaking of Assumption farm, construction is virtu-



*Renovations at Assumption Farm*



*Work in progress at the farm*

ally completed on the \$350,000 expansion project. Many thanks again to Tony Harrison and his crew from Harrison Construction for all their hard work. It looks wonderful! It has 12 bedrooms, a large chapel, kitchen, bathrooms, lounge, and other rooms. Tony has also donated part of the cost of the windows we

installed in the new building. As well, thanks go out to Pastway Planing Limited of Combermere and Murray Brothers of Barry's Bay for the great discount on the lumber we used in the building. Many thanks also to all the people who donated furniture of all kinds to help equip this new facility (and our new Primrose residence). A virtual mountain of furniture was amassed this past summer. Todd



*Donated furniture waiting for its new home*

Thibeau and his assistants had to store it in three separate locations! Thanks to Malcolm MacGregor of Brown's Cleaners for donating some vacant space in a local shopping mall store he owns. Thanks also for garage space provided by Henk & Diny Vandenakker and Henk & Paula DeKemp. A special "chapel design" committee, headed up by Fr. Ross Lambton, has been hard at work putting the finishing touches on the furnishings for this beautiful place of worship. A series of four original oil paintings by Michael O'Brien have been "lent" to us for use in the chapel for an indefinite length of time by the Ferrant family of Smith Falls - thanks guys! Also, Nazareth Family Ministries has donated a Tabernacle for the chapel along with the stained glass window they donated earlier. Their thoughtfulness and generosity has profoundly moved us. Other items of a special nature that we have needed to purchase for the chapel include:

- Altar (masonry field stone) = \$3,000
- Ambo (masonry field stone) = \$1,500
- Presidential Chair = \$400
- Credence Tables = \$300 for both
- Benches & Chairs = \$1,000
- 8 "Princess Glass" Windows = \$1000 each (or \$8,000 total)

- Processional Cross = \$300
- Chandelier (wrought iron) = \$800
- 2 Candle Stands for beside altar (wrought iron) = \$200 for both
- 8 Wall Sconces (wrought iron) = \$900 total

If you would like to donate some funds to pay for the purchase of any of these items listed above we would be glad to include your name and intention (e.g. "In Memory of...") on a special plaque that will hang outside the entrance to our chapel. Just give our main office a call. We hope to have some photos of our new chapel and the rest of the farm facility in our next newsletter. Stay tuned!

### Triumph of the Cross

Our annual Sept. 14th feast day celebration at St. Mary's church was an extra joyful event this year because it featured two men from our community making their definitive "lifetime commitments" to the Companions of the Cross. These men are Fr. Ed



*Dan Cross making his lifetime commitment*



*Relic of the true cross*



*Fr. Ed Wade (left) and Dan Cross*

Wade & seminarian (soon to be deacon) Dan Cross. Welcome aboard guys! We're glad to have you with us for the long haul. You're both great brothers in the Lord!

## Coming and Going

A hearty “welcome back” has been extended to George Sammut who had been a seminarian with our community for three years before taking his leave of us to pursue discernment as a candidate for the priesthood in Pembroke diocese last year. As George has related to the brothers, as much as he liked the prospect of diocesan priesthood, he just couldn’t shake the sense he had that the Lord wanted him back with the Companions! George will be helping out the community this year in a number of different capacities, including coordinating the fundraising activities of all our seminarians.



*George Sammut*

Fr. John O’Brien from Yarmouth diocese, Nova Scotia, spent almost two months visiting with the community here in Ottawa from mid-August until mid-October, furthering his discernment with us. It was good to see Fr. John around! Maybe we’ll see more of him sometime in the future?

Fr. Tom Lynch of St. Augustine’s Seminary in Toronto will be spending some time this fall semester here in Ottawa teaching our seminarians a course in “Sexual Ethics”. Fr. Tom is a very dynamic and faith-filled professor of Moral Theology who kindly accepted our invitation to help us out with teaching this course. Thanks Fr. Tom!

Next year we hope to have Fr. Mark Slatter back from Rome and available to teach many of the Moral Theology courses. Fr. Mark spent August and September back home with us here in Ottawa before returning to Rome in October. Fr. Mark has grown very fond of life in Rome, just ask him about it sometime!



*Fr. Mark Slatter*

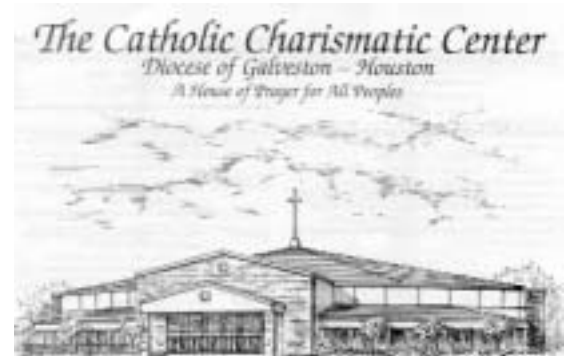
Speaking of courses, we are pleased to have Michelle Oaks teaching many of our seminarians a course in “public speaking” this fall. Michelle is a very gifted teacher (she better be - because she’s got her work cut out for her! - only kidding guys!).

We are pleased to announce that Sheila George has been hired by the community on a part-time basis to assist us in the area of Communications, Public Relations, and Fundraising. Sheila previously worked for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and is currently working part time as well for the Canadian Conference of Religious. Sheila has known Fr. Bob for many years, she even attended the prayer meetings Fr. Bob helped start back at St. Pius X high school in Ottawa in the mid 1970s (hope that’s not giving away your age too much Sheila!).

Speaking of jobs and ministry openings, we are glad to hear that Michel MacDonald, a former CC seminarian who recently married Jeanette Donahue (Sept. 17th), has been hired on at St. Maurice parish in Nepean to be their new Youth Minister and 10:30 a.m. Sunday Morning Mass Choir leader. Fr. Ross Lambton has assured us that no favoritism was shown Michel in the hiring process. Those of you who know Fr. Ross can vouch for the fact that this is absolutely true! (If St. Paul himself applied for the job, Fr. Ross would carefully check him out first, then engage in a lengthy time of discernment, before answering “maybe.”)

Speaking of new places to minister, this past summer Fr. Bob Bedard, Fr. Ed Wade, Fr. Sean Wenger, and Fr. John Vandenakker paid a visit to the Catholic

Renewal Center of Houston, Texas. Fr. Richard Paulissen and his community had invited us down to investigate the possibility of having the Companions take on ministry there next year. It is certainly a beautiful new facility that is absolutely “huge”! (seats 3000 people and cost about 5 million US\$ to build). And the people down there are fantastic, very hospitable and very open to “charismatic renewal” and ministry. We have told Fr. Richard that his offer (along with the welcome we received from the local Bishop - Most Rev. Joseph Fiorenza) is an amazing one and that it warrants serious discernment on the part of our whole community. We are hoping to establish our first household of CC priests outside of Ottawa next summer. Could Houston be the door the Lord is opening for us? We have had many other requests as well from bishops across



*Catholic Renewal Centre, Houston, TX*

North America. It will not be an easy choice to make, so please keep this matter in your prayers. And finally, a fond farewell to Dave Podnar and Paul Mullin, who had been applicants with our community, but during the summer Dave and Paul told us that they would not be returning to us in the fall, but will keep us all in their prayers. We will keep you, Dave and Paul, in our prayers! May the good Lord lead where he wants you both to be! ☺

*Fr. John Vandenakker is currently serving as Moderator of the Companions of the Cross. He also teaches courses in Theology to Companion seminarians via Dominican College.*

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!.....

## Companions of the Cross ANNUAL FUNDRAISING A · P · P · E · A · L



Dear Friends in Christ,

As you can see elsewhere in this issue of our newsletter, we have been blessed with many new seminarians who have joined us this fall. Fourteen in all! How are we to respond to such an influx of new recruits? We are reminded of Isaiah's prophecy: "Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left" (Is 54:2-3a). We're stretching Lord!

We know that our continued growth is a great blessing from God, a sign, we hope, that we are continuing to do the Lord's will in moving ahead with this new community of priests and seminarians to serve the church in the power of the Holy Spirit. We know that the Lord will not let us down (although He sometimes likes to make us sweat a little as we wait upon his help!).

We acknowledge that the Lord is the "builder" of this community, mindful of the Psalmist's injunction to Israel: "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain" (Ps 127:1).

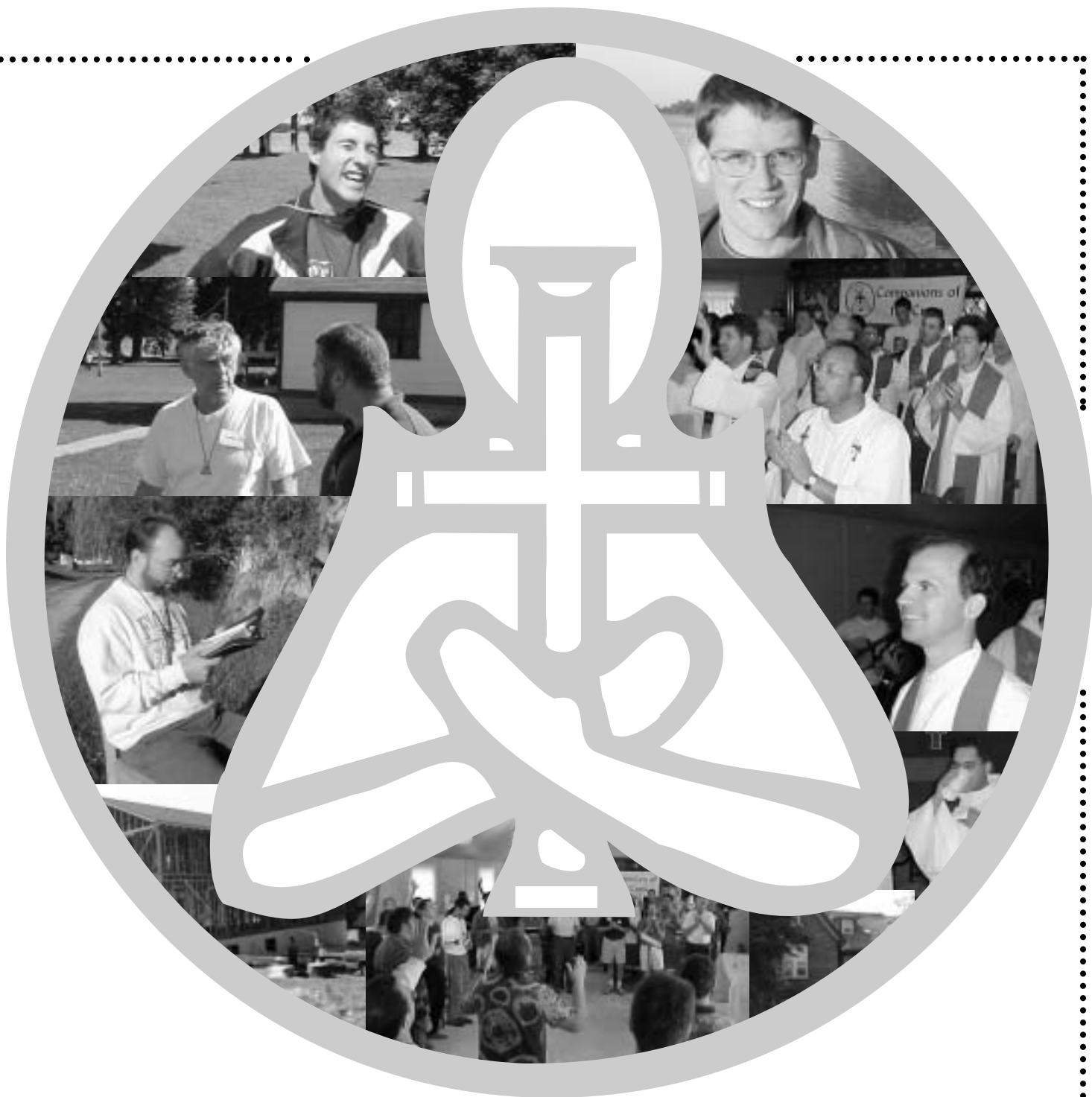
We have been busy this past summer "increasing our tent space". We have completed a \$350,000 expansion of our "novitiate" facilities in Combermere, Ont., and have purchased a \$425,000 new residence for our seminarians in Ottawa (both with big mortgages!). In addition, we have the tuition costs of our new men to provide for and a host of other Formation, Housing, and Administration expenses (making for a \$900,000 operating budget). But we sense the Lord has instructed us not to "worry" about it. Why? Because he's told us that he wants YOU to worry about it for us! Isn't God wonderful?

In all seriousness though, we do indeed depend on your assistance. Your prayers and financial support are crucial to the ongoing success of the Companions of the Cross. You are our "partners" in this exciting work of the Lord. Without your aid we would perish. That is why this annual fundraising campaign is so important to us. Won't you please prayerfully consider this urgent request? May the good Lord bless your generosity in this special "year of the Holy Spirit".

Yours in Christ Jesus,  
**Rev. John Vandenakker (Moderator)**

P.S. Most of you who have donated to us in the past year will be receiving a special fundraising letter directly from Fr. Bob Bedard, along with a complimentary copy of our new 1999 Companions of the Cross calendar as a thank-you gift. New donors who respond to this appeal with a gift of \$20.00 or more will also have one of these calendars mailed out to them. Hang on to this calendar - it's sure to become a collector's item one day!

# ANNUAL



Companions of the Cross  
*Community Life*

**FUNDRAISING APPEAL**



# Feature

## An Interview with Fr. Ed



*Fr. Ed Wade making his lifetime commitment*

On September 14, 1998 Fr. Ed Wade made his lifetime commitment to the Companions of the Cross along with seminarian Dan Cross. We spoke with Fr. Ed before this celebration and asked him to share some of his thoughts on how he made this decision and what it means for him in his life and his priesthood.

**?** Why have you decided to make a lifetime commitment to the Companions?

**Fr. Ed:** I think it's the right decision but it didn't come easily. I believe in the vision of the community as Fr. Bob has articulated it. I believe that I am supposed to be in Canada; I really like this country and so this is my home. I believe in the essential grace of the community – the area of evangelization and I believe in the vision and that is the key thing. It was time for me to make a decision. I had to look at myself and decide what I really wanted to do.

**?** Was there any one factor that helped with your decision?

**Fr. Ed:** I went on a Poustinia. My spiritual director asked me to list 10 pros and cons for joining the community. He said there was fear – not just fear of making a decision but going into something where there is no fast answer. The only way to get answers to this is to experience it.

The Lord let me know that I needed to make a choice without knowing the far-reaching answers. In other words, I had to cut bait. I had to make the choice – I

have always kept a trump card just in case this doesn't work and the Lord had me make this decision. When I look back at what I came from I could go back to something safe and secure. But safety and security have nothing to do with it – the Lord was asking me if I was willing to walk into the unknown, where you don't know what is going to happen. But, I've thrown the trump card in and it's the best thing that has ever happened to me.

**?** How have you seen yourself change since you have been here?

**Fr. Ed:** My walk of faith, trusting in the Holy Spirit and living the duty of the moment. Just living day by day, watching God unfold his plan in simple things. Sensing what God is doing right in front of your eyes. Getting into poustinia has been a great thing for me. Seeing what God is doing in my own heart and then everyday actions in his people and in the church, he is the architect. I can do all I want, make all kinds of things happen but it's God that really is doing it. It's freeing to see that. I'm not trying to

make it happen; I'm watching it happen and unfold. The Lord is way ahead of us; he's touching hearts. I don't have to have all the answers. The Lord is the answer. That's quieted me down. The Holy Spirit writes the gospel in our hearts in everyday life, in everyday circumstances. We see the Holy Spirit acting in our hearts, my heart and the people around us – we see Acts 29 happening all around us. It settles



*Fr. Ed being welcomed*

you down into letting the Holy Spirit do the work – it's a continuation of the Acts of the Apostles in our age.

**?** What is the most valuable characteristic of the community?

**Fr. Ed:** Evangelization and freedom. They are young enough to try possibilities. To be free to walk around and do the things that God wants you to do and not being caught up in where you fit in the structure is a key thing. There is a freedom to do the kind of work that Fr. Bob and I are doing in Vanier – they don't look and say well this is the way we've always done it – so there is a tremendous freedom to do some of these things.

**?** What is the point you would make to a person considering this community?

**Fr. Ed:** I think you have to come and see what's happening here and see if you fit in. If a young man is called to the charismatic spirituality, brotherhood – it's a new and refreshing thing. A lot of opportunities are going to come around in the future that you wouldn't normally have in a parish situation. It seems that there is an openness to what the Holy Spirit is saying. It's not just about the parish with this group – there are other things as well. For me, this is a selling point – that when you come here there's more opportunities than just parishes.

# Wade

? How would you say community life has enhanced your priestly vocation?

**Fr. Ed:** I think having the support is important. It gives me the ability to do the kinds of things that I want to do. It's the brotherhood, fraternity and support – it's the family that we are growing into. It empowers me to do what I am able to do in situations that you wouldn't normally be able to get involved in. It's encouraging to see these young men coming in – it's renewal, it's new wineskins. It gives us new models of community, new models of parish – not the traditional model.

? What are your thoughts as you enter into this lifetime commitment?

**Fr. Ed:** It comes down to committing myself to the community – throwing in my trump card. I've always been able to do whatever I felt I wanted to do but now I had to face the fact that suppose the community wanted me to do something else – the obedience to the will of the community. I think that is where the Lord is asking me to go. I can see the hand of the Lord in the duty of the moment. This has been a big change in my life. I feel this is right. You commit yourself to the needs of the family. This was the Lord's plan – this is what the Lord wants and I am not looking back. ☺

.....  
*Fr. Ed Wade is a now a lifetime member of the Companions of the Cross and pastoral leader of Jesus Gathers His People (English Sector) Catholic Evangelization Center in Vanier (Ottawa) Ontario.*



## Feature

# Assumption of Mary

# CAMP/98

By George Sammut



*Fr. Francis Frankovich says Mass at the camp this past August*

**E**ach year during the month of August, the Companions of the Cross host a summer camp for Catholic boys, mainly from the Ottawa Valley and area. However, we have had boys attend from as far away as California, and this year, from Idaho. The Assumption of Mary Camp is named in honour of the Blessed Virgin whose motherly protection we pray for and invoke daily, and because the camp is run through the middle of August, it usually runs through the Feast of the Assumption (August 15).

The camp is organized and operated by some of the seminarians of the Companions of the Cross, and it is an endeavor to provide a time and opportunity of Catholic fellowship, prayer, recreation, and enjoyment for young men aged 11 to 16. The camp provides a time of structured prayer, that is the Morning Prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours - the prayer of the Church - daily Eucharist, rosary, and daily talks by the seminarians to help the participants develop their own personal prayer. Finally, the camp tries to provide a safe environment for these young men to develop friendships and to enjoy healthy recreation within the context of the Gospel message.

*Continued on page 14...*

Continued from page 13...

This year's camp was directed by Galen Bank, a 5th year seminarian, who was assisted by Mike Minifie, Gerry Sembrano, George Sammut, a former camp participant Josh Brickman and a former Youth Blaze participant Richard Whittaker. Fr. Francis Frankovich was chaplain this year providing a full range of spiritual assistance and ministry.

The camp has historically been run in the Combermere area, but due to a shortage of facilities this year, the camp was taken north of Hull in the beautiful Gatineaus near Alcove PQ. The camp facility was much larger than we have had in the past and that allowed for a greater variety of activities for the young men. The facility included an archery range, several hiking trails, lots of climbing, great swimming



*Enjoying a good lunch*

Another major challenge of this undertaking is trying to feed this little army of active young men, so this year we hired a professional cook to look after the kitchen. Chris Hull did a wonderful job of keeping us well fed and afterwards, he provided great leadership and direction for the boys in the gracious art of dish washing. For you mothers whose sons attended the camp, you may want to consider letting them practice these newly formed skills at home, I'm sure they would love the opportunity.

This year's craft projects included turning a slice of rough oak into a beautifully finished clock. That meant a lot of sanding, staining, varnishing, and precision drilling. But the end result was truly impressive and the

boys each took home with them a time-piece guaranteed to last for years. Many boys also took the time to make wooden crosses upon which they mounted a corpus of Christ, which they made out of mold and plaster.

The most important aspect of the camp is the spiritual life in which each boy participates. After a couple of warm-up songs at 9:30 each morning, we sang the psalms of the Liturgy of the Hours in the same way the early Monks and religious of the Church did hundreds of years ago; the way it is still done by religious and laity

throughout the world today. Perhaps because many of the boys had attended this camp in past years and were now familiar with the tones and structure of the prayer, the sounds of these young men singing their praises to God each morning was enough to make the angels stop and listen.

With each day's Eucharist, Fr. Francis taught the boys the

various garments worn during a liturgy, explained the many symbols and gestures of the Mass, and taught them how to pick out key words and phrases from the readings of the day. Anyone reading this article would be truly impressed by the insights and understanding that many of these fine young men conveyed as Fr. Francis drilled them with questions and challenged their thoughts.

As always, our Blessed Mother was honoured each evening by our common rosary. This was a prayer experience of deep mystical reflection set in the quiet presence of a chapel full of holy young men, each of whom had been called by our Blessed Savior to share in the gracious outpouring of His endless graces.

And that is Assumption Camp. We do not always meet our goals or accomplish all we set out to do, but God does! Despite our failures and mistakes, God accomplishes in each young man all He sets out to do for them at this camp. When all is said and done, that is really why we run this camp, to give boys an opportunity to encounter God, and to give God the opportunity to transform us. ☺

*George joined the Companions four years ago and has recently completed his theology studies and formation requirements. He is currently assisting in the Companions' administration office while he awaits ordination to the diaconate.*



*Having fun kayaking*

facilities on Lac Notre Dame, canoeing and the very popular kayaking, and did I mention the climbing? The lake is located down a fairly steep escarpment from the main center and the cabins are up another long hill in the opposite direction. Several campers and nearly all the leaders swore they lost weight having to do so much climbing. We had thought the long trek up to the cabins would tire the boys out prior to bedtime so that they would enjoy a long, quiet evening of sleep. Were we wrong! It seems that the still of the night brings out the energy of the boys, right cabin 5!?



# Lay associates corner

By Fr. Marc Syrenne

The summer has passed and the fall is now here. I hope that your summer was filled with blessings from the Lord. My summer was certainly fruitful. I was able to meet with the Lay Associate Executive for a day-long session. Our goal was to compile information for a much needed brochure regarding the Lay Associates. It was a very productive meeting. The information that was compiled is to be given to Fr. Bob Bedard to glance over so that he can give us some feedback as to what we may have missed.

On September 26th, we will meet once again with Fr. Bob to get his input. Once this has been done we will then begin to work on a final draft, which we hope will go to print and be available in November or December.

Last fall, when I became the chaplain for the Lay Associates, I asked the Lay Associates present at the September 14th celebration of the Triumph of the Cross, if

I could elect an executive for a one year period, with elections to be held in the fall of 1998. With their permission I elected the executive. After speaking with the executive I feel that a more appropriate time to have these elections would be at the Lay Associates retreat in February. This would allow a much easier transition, in particular, for the new executive members. I also feel that it would be in the best interest of the Lay Associates and the executive if three of the six members were to remain. Each member would, from then on, be elected for a two-year term. This would allow a comfortable and healthy changeover.

I have been very pleased with the executive. They have worked hard and have been a real support. Please pray for us, as we are working for you the Lay Associates. Have a blessed fall! Here is the upcoming schedule for the Lay Associates:

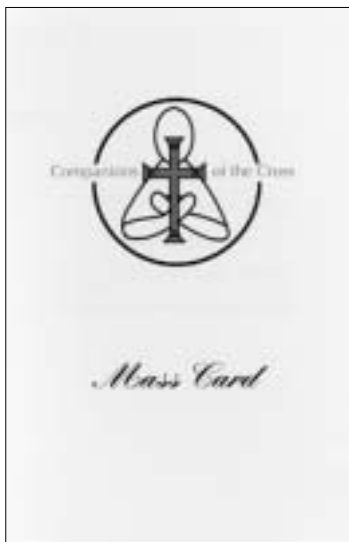
- December 11, 1998 Christmas Social
- February 5-6, 1999 Lay Associates Retreat
- May 7, 1999 Companions Anniversary Mass

If you are interested in becoming a Lay Associate or if you just want more information, then please write to me at: The Lay Associates c/o Fr. Marc Syrenne 199 Bayswater Ave. Ottawa, ON K1Y 2G5

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Fr. Marc Syrenne, Chaplain  
Lay Associates of the  
Companions of the Cross

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*Fr. Marc Syrenne is the Chaplain for the Lay Associates. Fr. Marc was ordained June 14, 1997 and is Associate Pastor at Annunciation of the Lord in Ottawa.*



## Companions of the Cross Mass Cards

The Companions of the Cross are pleased to present our new Mass Cards. If you would like to have a Companions of the Cross priest celebrate the Eucharist for your special intention, simply contact our offices and request a specially designed Companions of the Cross "Mass Card".

For an offering of five dollars, a Mass Card will be sent directly to you, or to someone else (upon your written direction), while a record of your special intention is maintained by our Community.

To obtain the Mass Card(s), simply fill out the form below and mail it in to our CC Offices at 199 Bayswater Ave., Ottawa, Ont. K1Y 2G5 (please make cheques payable to "The Companions of the Cross").

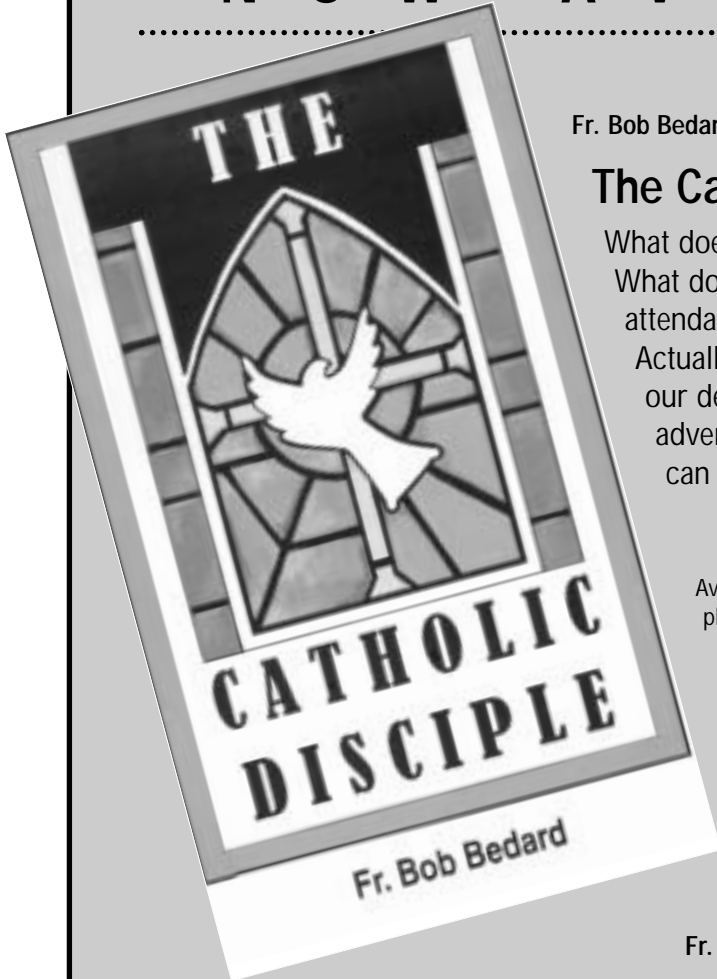
Intention: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested By: \_\_\_\_\_

*(for additional Mass Cards, please record your other intentions on a separate sheet of paper when mailing in this form.)*

N O W   A V A I L A B L E

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Fr. Bob Bedard's book,

## The Catholic Disciple

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus today? What does it mean for the average Catholic? Or is attendance at church enough? Or leading a good life? Actually, there's much more involved. When we make our decision to be Jesus' disciple, that is when the adventure really begins. It is the best decision we can possibly make. Are we ready for it?

Available now through **KOINONIA ENTERPRISES** for \$9.00 plus shipping and handling.

Fr. Bob Bedard's book,

## Mary, Mother of Jesus: Why the Controversy?

Many things divide the Christian Churches from one another, but one of the main bones of contention is the current role of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A mother is intended by God to hold the family together, not to be a cause of their separation. There is no really good reason for that. This small text is intended, not as a proof of anything, but to show that Catholics and others who ascribe a special role for Mary today find more reasons for it in Scripture than may be thought.

Available through **KOINONIA ENTERPRISES** for \$5.00 plus shipping and handling.

(See our convenient Order Form on page 21 and order your books today)





## Youth feature

# YOUTH BLAZE 1998

By Heidi Reisbeck

*“I have come to set a fire upon the earth and how I wish it were already blazing!” (Lk 12:49).*

This bible verse represents the work that Jesus desired to accomplish in us and through us for six weeks this summer on Youth Blaze. Ten of us set out on a mission to be His instruments in keeping the fire blazing by our evangelistic efforts.

The first three weeks were spent in Combermere at the Companions of the Cross farm living in and experiencing community life. As we soon found out, community life is not always easy, and we learned the importance of communication, as well as forgiving and loving each other even when it was difficult. This strengthened us and brought us closer together. Every day we had the privilege of praying the Liturgy of the Hours together, had a time of praise and worship, prayed the rosary, celebrated Mass, had personal prayer and had the opportunity to adore Jesus exposed in the Blessed Sacrament on several occasions. We also did a 33 day consecration to Mary, our consecration day being on the day of the Assumption. This helped me to understand Mary’s role and brought me closer to her and to Jesus. It completely changed my prayer life, because I learned that because Mary is perfect when we pray to her she shows us how to love Jesus as perfectly as she does and therefore she strengthens our relationship with Jesus. By consecrating my heart to Mary, I have experienced Jesus’ love for me in a more personal way, and this has led to a desire in me to entrust myself more fully to Him and love Him more wholeheartedly.

The first three weeks of Youth Blaze also consisted of a time of formation and cate-

chesis on the teachings of the Catholic Church. We studied the importance of praise and worship, personal prayer, confession, forgiveness, the role of Mary, Apologetics, moods, the Passion, spiritual warfare, holiness, Christian ecumenism, discernment, the parts of the Mass and many other topics. This not only strengthened our faith and understanding of the teachings of the Church, but also enabled us to answer questions about the Church while we were out evangelizing. We had many excellent guest speakers who came to give talks and provided us with much wisdom and food for thought. What I have learned through Youth Blaze has helped me to understand my faith and its origins, giving me a deeper admiration of the Church and strengthening my beliefs.

After the three weeks in Combermere came to an end we began our mission to evangelize. We travelled to Barry’s Bay, Kitchener, Buffalo, Toronto, Cornwall, North Bay, Kingston, Ottawa and to the “Lasting Treasures” Youth Conference in Midland. We led retreats, youth groups, performed skits, evangelized on the streets and at festivals, ministered to ex-psychiatric patients in Toronto and to inmates in an Ottawa prison. I was especially touched by the night in Ottawa (7 p.m.-7 a.m.) when we went out evangelizing in the streets of the Byward Market. We were in groups of two or three and evangelized for three hours and prayed at St. Brigid’s Church for one hour before the Blessed Sacrament. That night, I met many people living on the streets for whom God seemed very distant. Their main goal is simply to survive. Some seem to blame God for their predicament. So many people fail to realize that even in



*Youth Blaze '98 Back row from left to right: Tim Devine, Dede Lambe, John Fletcher, Heidi Reisbeck, Pam Guitard; Front row left to right: Randa Malaty, Katie Whittaker, Mark Goring, Jennifer O'Brien, Jeanette Donohue.*

our darkest times Jesus is there and feels our pain and wants us to share it with Him to ease our burdens. During our night in the Market, we prayed with various people and shared Jesus’ love with them. Often just spending some time with them, offering them a smile or a simple “hello” was enough to remind them that they are still loved. If every Christian approached one person a day and reminded them of God’s love, the world would definitely change.

When I first started to evangelize, I was nervous and did not know what to say. However, before approaching someone we prayed for the right words, thereby giving us the peace and the courage to minister to them.

I believe that as Christians we should not be afraid of sharing our faith with others, because Jesus is “the way, the truth and the life”. I know that Jesus loves us, that He died for us, and that He would have died just for me if I had been the only sinner on this earth. During Youth Blaze, I really grew in my love for Jesus. I pray that those who are searching for Jesus and who are especially in need of experiencing His love would open their hearts to Him and let Him fill the emptiness in their lives and blow them away, as only Jesus can! ☺

*Heidi is 17 years old and is a member of St. Maurice’s Parish.*

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# Feature

By Albert Dilanni

To all appearances, third world countries are teeming with vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Africa has been booming, but also Indonesia, India, the Philippines and parts of Latin America. Practically all religious congregations, irrespective of their theological leanings, have been able to attract candidates in the developing nations. But this is not true in the industrialized first world. Here differences in theological and religious style play a significant role. During the first 25 years after the Second Vatican Council, two distinct trends were apparent. First, the more “progressive” or change-oriented a congregation was, the less it seemed able to attract first world vocations. Some well-known groups of sisters that have introduced marked changes since Vatican II now have an average age of 73. Second, some congregations attracted abundant first world vocations only if they were newly founded and were of an arch-conservative strain. The Legionaries of Christ with 400 seminarians in one Roman seminary, are the prime example.

But in the 1990's, something new has been occurring. The ability to attract vocations is no longer restricted to new conservative foundations. At the present time, long-standing, mainline congregations are also gaining solid number of recruits, as long as these congregations exhibit a willingness to return in some measure to a more classical form of religious life. The most striking example is that of the French Dominicans. Until very recently France had three Dominican provinces - Paris, Toulouse and Lyons. Around 1990 a group of young men interested in a more traditional religious life entered the Toulouse and Paris provinces. Soon others were attracted, and in 1992 each of these provinces had 10 novices. On a 1997 visit to the Dominican Provincial House in Paris, I was told that the trend was continuing. The new candi-



## View of Religious Vocations

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dates were interested in a discipline of prayer, in loyalty to the magisterium and love of the full richness of Catholic theology, in contemplation and the classical mission of caring for souls. In contrast to all this, the Lyons province of Dominicans, whose members were still skeptical of classical religious life and locked into more progressive ideas, had attracted not one novice for years; and in July 1997 the Lyons province was merged with the province of Paris.

Probing more deeply, I discovered that most of the new Dominican recruits were somewhat older than seminarians of an earlier time and that often they had entered religious life upon retrieval of an abandoned faith. The novices were all in full habit and daily sang the Liturgy of the Hours in choir. One of them was quoted as saying, “We want a consecration that is visible!” This seemed to me to be the exact opposite of the ideal of the priest-workers, who wanted simply to disappear among the laity and work alongside them without any active attempt at proselytizing. Something new was stirring.

Playing the devil's advocate, I asked one of the Dominicans, “Are these new candidates not all arch-conservatives? Don't they have a need for security and for simple answers? Are they not merely nostalgic restorationists?” The answer came

back like an arrow: “They are conservative and intelligent. For them the wearing of the habit is a way to profess their faith and to witness quietly to the transcendent. They have discovered faith at an adult age and feel that they have found a treasure and they want to share it with others”. The Dominican explained further, “The old Catholic Action movement used to preach that we should be an invisible leaven in the dough. But this has been tried and found wanting. These younger men want to be part of a visible and confessing church - *une Église visible et professante*”. As vocation director of the Marist Fathers' Boston province, I have discovered that many other congregations have a similar story to tell.

Something new seems to be burgeoning in the psyche of younger Catholics, the children of Catholic baby-boomers. They do not want a religion that is merely a baptized psychology or sociology. They want a religion that purports, as it traditionally has, to place them in touch with the supernatural. They want to belong to a church filled with the mystery of Christ, a church of sacraments and grace that has a message of a salvation beyond the obtaining of rights and peace in this world.

They are impressed by the passionate faith of people like Pope John Paul II and Mother Teresa, which frees them from fear and enables them to proclaim what they believe even before agnostic princes and presidents. They are moved by the great number of new Protestant converts to Catholicism, like Scott Hahn and his wife Kimberly, who seem willing to wrestle with angels in order to discover the truth. The more idealistic among them are seeking a religious life that stresses a special consecration, a betrothal that demands sacrifice and is not afraid to present itself as a visible sign for others.

I have communicated about these matters with Jim Tucker, an intelligent seminarian at the North American College in Rome. I recounted my vocational findings to him and asked him if these facts were in accord with his own experience of seminarians coming to Rome from different parts of the first world. His answer was overwhelmingly in the affirmative. He feels that “the present generation of seminarians and new priests (as well as the laity) are able to take a dispassionate account of the successes and failures of the 30-some years since Vatican II”.

He and his fellow seminarians have a great interest “in delving into the Vatican II documents themselves so that [they] may be able to distinguish the desires of the council from the whims of individuals”. They desire strongly to restore lost dignity and reverence to the sacred liturgy” and hope for a “fruitful collaboration with the laity in the apostolate, in a way that truly respects the distinct characters and special gifts of both the clergy and the laity”. They desire, too, to commit themselves *firmly* to “preaching the Gospel of Christ in its entirety, under the guidance of the magisterium and the church's living tradition”. They seek, moreover, a renewed “devotion to the holy Eucharist and the Blessed Mother, as well as a restored appreciation of the Divine Office”. And they believe that all this has nothing to do with nostalgia for the past and everything to do with a proper interpretation of the documents of the Second Vatican Council.

All of these new phenomena run counter to the conventional wisdom of progressive religious writers, some of whom pass off the current concern about vocations as a “numbers game”. Interested in change, they do not seem to realize that something has already changed. In recent years, the “liberal” model of renewal has been hotly criticized in books and articles by Mary Jo Leddy, O.P., Elizabeth McDonough, O.P., Ann Carey and others. Some, like Benedict Groeschel, have called for a reform of the renewal. Now it seems that

the “liberal” model of religious life is really on its way out. Through the critique of our youngest members we are learning that perhaps religious life cannot be transmuted as completely as we may have thought after Vatican II. Perhaps the changes were too radical, and perhaps there are perennial elements of religious life that have been abandoned and must be reclaimed.

Paul Philibert, O.P., labels the Progressives “culture Christians”, whose desire it is to discover the good of the world and accommodate to it, in opposition to an earlier type of religious who could be called “radical Christians” and who felt that they must be a countersign to the world. He says that, while the progressive “culturists” have achieved much

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in creating new apostolates, they appear to have lost sight of their need to “witness to a privileged experience of intimacy with a God who calls us into anointed silence” (*Living in the Meantime*, 1994). He calls for a *via media* that in a new and transforming way respects community, contemplation and charism as much as it does the apostolic mission.

It is understandable that some older religious who have welcomed the liberation after Vatican II might be alarmed. We might feel that the new generation of priests and religious are betraying or rejecting Vatican II. But just the opposite is true. They want to read and re-read the actual texts of Vatican II, to return to the sources and take a new look. In recent articles (e.g., “‘Real’ Religious

Communities”, in *Religion and the Social Order*, 1996), Patricia Wittberg, S.C., the principal observer of the emerging new communities, has shown that in restoring the classical, the new religious foundations are not on some nostalgia trip, but are actually developing a hybrid form of religious life that mixes some of the old with some of the new. While stressing obedience to the church and to superiors, for instance, they insist also that each person has an individual journey before God and that each person must be given freedom to develop his or her individual talents for the benefit of the mission. Also, while they desire to make a clear distinction between themselves and the laity, for them this does not constitute the superiority of one state over the other, but only a difference in role, vocation or calling. In their minds, the wearing of a religious habit has nothing to do with a desire to stand out. One purpose of the habit is to help maintain a sense of unity and purpose among the members. But more than this, the habit serves as a sign of one's dedication to the transcendent, a way of preaching the word of God without needing to utter even one word.

Most of all, we must not project our own needs on the young. Many of us born before 1950 were perhaps repressed and starved for freedom. But today's young people are not repressed. They may in fact be “hyper-expressed”. They have tried everything and have found it wanting. Brought up in a deconstructionist world without meaning or purpose, a world insistent on freedom and tolerance as the highest values, they experience vertigo. They are looking for lines, for a place to stand. If they have a need for security, it is not a neurotic need but a legitimate one, like the need of the elderly for social security. Is it neurotic to seek for answers in a world in which choice is king? Is it neurotic to seek meaning in a cultural climate in which intellectuals speak of human life as a sport of nature without meaning or purpose?

*Continued on page 20...*

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The new candidates now entering religious life are not entering to become part of yet another peace and justice program aimed at systemic social change. Nor are they entering to help save the planet earth. They are entering primarily to join a praying and faith-filled community, a community that exclaims with St. Peter, "Where shall we go, Lord? You have words of eternal life". Behind the revival of religious vocations of a classical type is a rediscovery of the sense of the transcendent, mystical and eschatological aspects of Christianity. The new recruits regard Catholicism as a rich treasure and they want to share it with others. For this reason they desire a form of Catholicism that is confident without being triumphal, and a religious life that is visible without being elitist.

There is a hunger among the new candidates for a renewed sense of consecration - *a vita consecrata* - and for a mission that is in great part defined by that consecration. They want union with God and for this reason the notion of the "spouse of Christ" is regaining a new vigor. They want to return to the pristine visions and charisms of the great founders and know that they need a rule and a discipline of prayer to sustain them in their quest. They are shifting away from what they view as an excessive emphasis on the secular mission - the need to transform the world and its social structures - toward a more explicitly religious mission. They want to balance the Christian message of love with the Christian message of hope. We are called not only to a love that strives to transform society on earth, but also to a faith and a hope in a salvation that begins on earth and endures unto eternity. ☩

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**This abridged article is used with permission from the author and is taken from AMERICA February 28, 1998 vol. 178 No. 6.**

## Prayer by Pope John Paul II

for 2nd year of Jubilee Preparation

Holy Spirit, most welcome guest of our hearts,  
reveal to us the profound meaning of the Great Jubilee,  
and prepare our hearts to celebrate it with faith,  
in the hope which does not disappoint,  
in the love which seeks nothing in return.

Spirit of truth, you who search the depths of God,  
memory and prophecy in the Church,  
lead mankind to recognize in Jesus of Nazareth  
the Lord of glory, the Saviour of the world,  
the supreme fulfillment of history.

*Come, Spirit of love and peace!*

Creator Spirit, hidden builder of the Kingdom,  
by the power of your saints guide the Church  
to cross with courage the threshold of the new millennium  
and to carry to the coming generations  
the light of the Word who brings salvation.

Spirit of holiness, divine breath which moves the universe,  
come and renew the face of the earth.  
Awaken in Christians a desire for full unity,  
that they may be for the world an effective sign and instrument  
of intimate union with God and of the unity of the whole human race.

*Come, Spirit of love and peace!*

Spirit of communion, soul and strength of the Church,  
grant that the wealth of charisms and ministries  
may contribute to the unity of the Body of Christ;  
grant that laity, consecrated persons and ordained ministers  
may work together in harmony to build the one Kingdom of God.

Spirit of consolation, unfailing source of joy and peace,  
inspire solidarity with the poor, grant the sick the strength they need,  
pour out trust and hope upon those experiencing trials,  
awaken in all hearts a commitment to a better future.

*Come, Spirit of love and peace!*

Spirit of wisdom, inspiration of minds and hearts,  
direct science and technology to the service of life, justice and peace.  
Render fruitful our dialogue with the followers of other religions,  
lead the different cultures to appreciate the values of the Gospel.

Spirit of life, by whose power the Word was made flesh  
in the womb of the Virgin Mary, the woman of attentive silence,  
make us docile to the promptings of your love and ever ready to accept  
the signs of the times which you place along the paths of history.

*Come, Spirit of love and peace!*

To you, Spirit of love, with the Almighty Father and the Only-Begotten Son,  
be praise, honour and glory for ever and ever.

AMEN.





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*“Enlarge the place of your tent,  
stretch your tent curtains wide,  
do not hold back; lengthen your cords,  
strengthen your stakes.*

*For you will spread out  
to the right and to the left”  
(Js 54:2-3a).*