

# Companions of the Cross



Inside  
**GIFTS OF  
THE MAGI**





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## Feature

# GETTING NOWHERE



By Fr. Bob Bedard

I had a discussion recently with two middle-aged women relating to their concerns about the Church.

They go to Mass themselves, but they're not too impressed with the state of things in the Roman fold. "A patriarchy run by male chauvinists," they would say. They see it as a very human "institution" with "power" currently in the hands of conservatives. "Conservative" of course, means out-of-touch, living in the past - very bad situation.

As far as I can read it, they have two main beefs - the Church's ban on contraception and women's ordination.

They are, it goes without saying, no admirers of the pope or his recent predecessors. Surely a liberal will be elected next time. "Liberal" is synonymous with good. Liberals are up-to-date with what's going on in the world. They are "with it", more open to power sharing.

Contraception? "That rhythm stuff never worked anyway," I was told. When I pointed out that it was they who were out of date that I wasn't referring to the rhythm system at all. I was, I told them, talking about N.F.P. (Natural Family Planning). "Never heard of it," they said. As I sat mouth open in astonishment, they said something like - "if the Church hasn't pushed it enough so that the likes of us are familiar with it, it can't be worth much." When I offered one of my very favourite statistics - that, while marriages that survive today are somewhere on the shady side of 50%, with those who use

NFP it is 99.8%, they gave me a very skeptical look.

Women's ordination? But Jesus didn't ordain any, I pointed out. "Understandable," was their rejoinder. The customs of his day were so heavily stacked against women, he would never have got away with it, they countered. When I mentioned that Jesus broke all the taboos concerning men's association with women, they remained unmoved. When I further invoked the history of the day to illustrate that priestesses were quite well accepted, that outside Jewish society, they were commonplace, they seemed to hesitate, but quickly enough came back with - "not among the Jews, they weren't."

I went from there to talking about fatherhood. The priest is intended by God to do what Jesus did. Among other things, he was a father to his disciples. Women are not intended to fill out a father's role. It sounded reasonable to me. They would have none of it. They knew many women, they said, who were single mothers and have done an excellent job of both mothering and fathering. I felt they were missing the point, but they were not swayed.

I re-grouped and decided to take another route on the matter. I talked about the very nature of the Church. Jesus himself founded it, and he left it with a very clearly defined authority structure, a system that is still in force today. Surely, we have to agree that the said authority has been guided all along by the Holy Spirit. Taking all that in stride, they responded

that certainly they could accept that, but could it not be also that the Holy Spirit is active in the feminist movements in our day and wants appropriate changes in Church law?

I was aghast. The Church conform itself to the ways of the world? Why ...the world is in such an incredibly confused mess today, how can we take it seriously? The Church is to evangelize the world, not vice-versa.

The discussion, at that point, collapsed into a five minute free-for-all with everybody talking at once.

It ended with nothing resolved - as usual. I went away wondering - how they could be so dense? Or maybe they are just stubborn? I'm sure they were saying the same things about me.

But I've been thinking about it. And praying. The Holy Spirit driving the feminist movement? I don't think so. What I see in the ranks of the latter are anger, bitterness, resentment and a critical spirit. These are not of the Spirit of God.

No - women will not be ordained and contraception will never be accepted by the Church. These are not Church laws. They are part of the divine order of God. ☩

.....  
*Fr. Bob's ministry has included teaching high school, full-time renewal work and pastoring St. Mary's parish in Ottawa. He has spent the past number of years founding and working with the Companions of the Cross.*



## Feature

By Fred Schubert



*Fr. Charles Orchard, 3 Magi and young person carrying the Christ Child in procession*

### Gather 'Round the Crèche with the "Gifts of the Magi"

When the number two bus comes to a halt at its regular stop in front of Somerset Park, heads turn in unison to the window facing the park. The general traffic also slows down to take notice. Drivers and passengers alike briefly glance over to the park to see what has become a new tradition in our neighbourhood.

What are they looking at exactly? What captures their attention so? They are admiring a little, grey grotto, just off the sidewalk. A humble and unimposing structure with a flashy star on top.

Painted like a stone cave, it features an old, fragile, plaster Christ Child comfortably swaddled in a manger crib of straw and hay and set behind a thin sheet of plexiglas. Flanked on either side of the babe are Mary and Joseph, a shepherd, ox, ass, camel and three gift-bearing Magi. Of course it's a nativity scene. A timeless, frozen tableau of the most profound event that ever took place on planet earth. The Incarnation, God's first coming, born as a babe on the outskirts of Bethlehem of Judea ushering in the beginning of salvation history and the Christian faith.

The Catholic lay apostolate called Our Lady of "His Mercy" Ministries in Ottawa, has been erecting this public nativity scene for the past four years. For the last two years, it has been set up in Somerset Park, in the Hintonburg neighbourhood. For the two weeks before Christmas this crèche becomes Ottawa's Bethlehem. A multitude of modern day Magi make their annual pilgrimage to this spot. Young and old, they come from every walk of life, bearing gifts and paying homage to the poor Christ and Christ in the poor.

Increasingly, with every passing year, public nativity scenes are disappearing from the landscape of our cities. This is most evident in the United States, where reports proliferate of yet another legal ruling banning the public crèche and other religious Christmas displays. Three years ago, in the case of the city of St. Ann, Missouri, historically a Catholic city, the American Civil Liberties Union ordered the city to remove its crèche from in front of City Hall. It was declared unconstitutional and forbade any nativity scenes on city property in the future. Two years ago, in November of 1998, at precisely the same time that “His Mercy” asked for and was granted permission by the city to move its crèche into Somerset Park, a crèche in another city was being shut down. Quite by coincidence, it was in the town of Somerset, Massachusetts. An U.S. District Court Judge there ruled in favour of removing the nativity scene, saying it “conveys to a reasonable viewer the constitutionally forbidden message that the town of Somerset officially sup-

ports Christianity.” In the end though, the crèche was allowed to remain but only if a Santa Claus were placed in front. This way it would be seen as secular and not religious. The plaintiff who won the case was still disappointed. He was the Regional Director of the association called “American Atheists”. And just last year, a Cincinnati attorney actually attempted a legal battle to declare the federal holiday of Christmas itself unconstitutional because it is blatantly religious and promotes Christianity. He lost because it was decided that the Christmas holiday by and large is already considered a very secular event. I suppose “The Grinch” will always try to steal Christmas and the crèche. Twenty centuries after the first Christmas and Jesus still waits for some real hospitality from our busy, overcrowded Bethlehems.

But not so in Hintonburg! We have made Him room. Here, Christmas is vibrant and alive. Much activity revolves around the crèche of the “Gifts of the Magi” program. At almost any hour of the night, solitary figures can be seen paused in silent prayer and adoration, just standing there or even kneeling. Sometimes people leave slips of paper with prayers written on them, just like at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. People are drawn to the crèche to touch the invisible but so tangi-

and hearts open to share, they will enter into all the lavishness of the Father’s love offering, the gift of His Son. Especially at Christmas, Christ’s divine heart is like a blazing hearth. It remains humanity’s enduring campfire to warm its hands and heart by, amidst the brutal winter of our world. At Christmas His holy heart blazes the brightest and is seen in the heavens, in that star over Bethlehem. Christ’s star that heats up the whole earth below.

The good news of Christmas is being proclaimed in our neighbourhood, through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The gospel is being seen and heard. Indeed, “the spirit of the Lord is upon us and has anointed us to bring good news to the poor” (Lk 4:18-19). Hearts are being healed and set free to give and receive love. God is being found by a new generation of Magi. Captive and homeless hearts are being converted and transformed by the only power that can - the Holy Spirit of love. There are many stories of the miracles our program has witnessed over these four years of the “Gifts of the Magi”.

“His Mercy” launched the “Gifts of the Magi” primarily as an outreach program with a particular mission. There are many among us who do not participate in Christmas and the sustaining warmth of Christmas does not reach them.

They are sadly left out and forgotten. So many people at that time suffer quietly, fighting depression in their lonely grottos of emotional darkness. They are scattered all over the city, on the fringes of life. Without a family, they spend Christmas alone. Who are they? We identified them as “the homeless of the heart”. It is they and the lonely Christ in them, that the

*Continued on page 4*



*Left to right: Sign advertising Gifts of the Magi program; Supporters dropping off gifts in front of the crèche*

ble mystery of God’s love revealed there. The mystery of the Nativity is pure wordless wonder at perfect beauty. The crèche icon helps us to contemplate. It will never lose its magnificence or the power to enchant us and generate in us its warm, peaceful joy. Christmas is a foretaste of heaven. For those who prepare with hands



Music ministry

“Gifts of the Magi” locates, reaches out to and serves.

About 500 gifts are brought every year, carefully wrapped and distributed throughout the city. Many include a personal message from the patron Magi. Gifts are brought to the Centre on Wellington St. where they are sorted and distributed to those who are always so grateful to receive them. “His Mercy” reaches chronic care hospitals, retirement homes, post-psychiatric facilities, and various temporary shelters for the homeless, new immigrants and refugees. Our patron Magis decide who they want to give their gift to and tag it for either a man, woman, girl or boy, with the approximate age and size if it is clothing.

Every year on the Sunday before Christmas, this year it will be December 17th, friends and patron Magi assemble at St. Francis of Assisi church which is also on Wellington St., just a few blocks from the crèche in the park. There, hosted by our three costumed Magi and a City Councillor, “Gifts of the Magi” sponsors a very special evening of Christmas choral music and family carolling. With a distinctive Canadian flavour, it is a free bilingual concert featuring a variety of multicultural and ecumenical choirs. The “homeless of the heart” are bussed from all parts of the city. They are the guests of honour and a new gift is presented to each of them. Directly after the concert ends, the outdoor “Procession of the Gifts”

begins. As the bells of St. Francis ring out through the neighbourhood all the Magi in attendance move behind a police escort for a short procession with candlelight carolling down Wellington St. to the park. At the feet of Christ the gifts are presented to Christ in the poor. Then gathered ‘round the crèche with the gifts of the

prayers on our behalf. Several invited pastors who are Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic offer their prayers for unity and peace and all God’s children in the world. It is an evening remembered forever. Many have experienced their first true Christmas somewhere along the journey of that blessed evening.

How appropriate to celebrate our concert and begin the procession at St. Francis of Assisi church. It was St. Francis who produced the first outdoor nativity scene and began the tradition. He wanted everyone to find his beloved Jesus. He knew from his own experience and journey of faith that anyone who seeks Him, finds Him. St. Francis discovered that the nativity scene is a powerful tool of evangelization.

Our Lady of “His Mercy” Ministries invites all Christians to a special challenge of faith this year. In this Great Jubilee of the Incarnation of our Lord in Bethlehem, we need to do “something truly beautiful for God”. Consider it a birthday present to the Lord. “His Mercy” Ministries challenges you to erect your own crèche. Could you imagine what would happen if every Christian family, religious community, parish, Christian business and organization celebrated this Great Jubilee of His birth by creating and erecting their own unique outdoor nativity scene? Think about it. It’s a simple thing to do. It’s a peaceful witness to the world around us, to our neighbours and fellow citizens, that we Christians believe that God came to earth in Jesus Christ

2,000 years ago. This is evangelization that anyone can do. Pray about it. It wouldn’t cost much if you made it yourself. We would certainly gain back some ground lost to rampant secular humanist atheism. Think of the joy and laughter we could give our heavenly Father as He looks down upon thousands of little manger cribs that sing a chorus of praises and thanksgiving to Him for the gift we have received in His Son, “Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today and forever.”

Meet you at the crib! ☺

*Fred Schubert is the founding Director of Our Lady of “His Mercy” Ministries. This year the apostolate is eight years old. They have a sister Centre in Vanier, Ontario and one in Beirut, Lebanon.*

The founder of the international Catholic organization called Aid to the Church in Need, puts things clearly in perspective with the Gospel when he says “Charity does not consist of fine words. It demands gifts, deeds and sacrifices. It demands a piece of ourselves. It excludes any indifference to the hungry, the persecuted, the sick and the prisoners with whom Jesus identifies himself in his description of the last judgement.”

*“His Mercy” needs your continued monetary and volunteer support. Their rent has increased more than 50% this year and with their many other monthly expenses they can no longer just make do. In order for them to continue to serve and witness on the street they need your help. To ensure their work continues, they are asking their benefactors and friends if they might generously make a regular monthly commitment. In their eight-year history of service to the Church and to the poor of our city, they have never formally begged monetary assistance. They are forced to now. They are thankful for all your support these past eight years.*

**Tax receiptable donations can be made out to Holy Rosary - His Mercy Ministries, 1073 Wellington St. Ottawa, ON K1Y 2Y2 (613)722-3685; Fax: (613)722-8476; email:mercy@glob-alserve.net.**

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# Welcome New Applicants



**John P. Bolger**  
Cambridge, ON



**Doug Brooks**  
Kitchener, ON



**Murray Chupka**  
Sherwood, AB



**Michael Coughlan**  
London, England



**Nathan Dempsey**  
Halifax, NS



**Jaime Garcia**  
Providence, RI



**Ngugi Githinji**  
Kenya, Africa



**Jean Francois Fortin**  
Blainville, QC



**Bernard Messier**  
Stoney Point, ON



**Kevin Philip**  
Kimberly, BC



**Ty Smith**  
Houston, TX



**Mike Scherrey**  
Fort Smith, AR



**Ben Spindler**  
Edmonton, AB



## Feature



# Fr. Bob's Birthday Celebration

By Dale Balkovec

I love the story of St. Lawrence the Deacon. When asked to gather together all of the treasures of the Church for the emperor, Lawrence gathered her people. July 16th and 17th this past summer were a little like that for Fr. Bob and his Companions. These were days of gathering with some real treasures in their lives: loving friends and benefactors. The decree to gather was an open invitation to celebrate with Fr. Bob his 71st birthday.

The first round of festivities flowed out of Sunday Mass at St. Mary's and onto the



Fr. Bob sitting next to Howard Riopelle

neighbouring grounds for a picnic and BBQ. It was reportedly one of the coldest July days on record, but the spirit of celebration kept things warm (or was that the radiant heat from Fr. Bob's birthday candles?!) Special thanks go out to Mary Anderson and her crew of volunteers, who hosted an estimated 300 friends of Fr. Bob and the CCs. Highlights of the day included a tribute to Fr. Bob by the choir and the balloon toss game.

Monday evening's formalities looked rather different on the outside. But that familiar spirit of warmth and goodwill



Fr. Bob Bedard

filled the St. Elias Banquet Centre, for the Companions of the Cross' Fundraising Dinner in honour of Fr. Bob's birthday. The thanks and credit for this smoothly orchestrated evening go to Mary Lauzon (of the Lay Associates) and her team of volunteers.

The large banquet room was sold out. More than 300 guests had been brought together by our connection to and affection for Fr. Bob: colleagues past and present, friends old and new, former high school students and basketball players, former parishioners, Brother CCs, spiritual sons and daughters... We represented the many lives touched by the life and ministry of Fr. Bob and his community.

After a wonderful dinner served elegantly to our table, Fr. Roger Vandenakker launched us into the entertainment portion of the evening. His welcoming remarks and "bridging" jokes set and maintained a congenial tone throughout the evening.



Janis Clarke singing with Suzie Auclair on guitar

What unfolded was a unique mixture of toast and roast.

Fr. Bob described Maria Lobo's original musical medley of his life and times as "epic". Indeed, hours of creative energy must have gone into her clever rewrite of the lyrics of popular songs. Each told a story or captured a reflection of Fr. Bob that someone was sure to recognize. Her finale brought everything into proper focus as she led us all in singing to God, *Worship His Majesty*.

Soprano Janis Clarke from Montreal honoured Fr. Bob's devotion to Our Blessed Mother and drew us all into devotion with *Our Lady of Guadalupe*. Accompanied by the classical guitar of Suzie Auclair, Janis also debuted an original song dedicated to Fr. Bob and based on the Prayer of St. Ignatius: "Lord, teach me to be generous, to do your will". Her dedications and her music were each heartfelt, prayerful and moving.

Furthering the theme of devotion to Mary, Gisele (GiGi) LeMay and Fr. Pierre Ingram collaborated vocally on *Our Lady of Knock*. Vince Johnson then joined Gisele for a duet called *My Treasure*. NET Ministries rounded out the musical portion of the evening with their drama-



Fr. Bob next to his caricature by Dede Lambe

tized rendition of *Thank You for Giving to the Lord*.

The momentum shifted with an energetic skit featuring several of the CC priests. Together they depicted a brothers' meeting in which Fr. John Vandenaeker (as the Moderator) considered suggestions for attracting seminarian recruits. Despite intriguing ideas from Fr. Roger Vandenaeker (movie fanatic), Fr. Charles Orchard (music fanatic), Fr. Scott McCaig (motorcycle fanatic), and Fr. Dennis Hayes (fishing fanatic), the wisdom of Chris Keyes as (you guessed it) Fr. Bob, prevailed: it would be tempting to offer Senator's tickets, but waiting on and trusting the Lord is best! (Apparently Chris is getting to be so good at playing the part that Fr. Bob publicly told him to keep the clothes this time.)

Next, Dr. Carlos Muira pondered the fine line between toast and roast, and decided



NET Ministries skit



Maria Lobo with her gift of "song"

to offer something completely different. Complete with visual aids, he presented two humorous new marketing schemes for consideration by the CCs. (We'll invite him to the next fundraising committee meeting to explore their potential in greater detail!)

The last presenting guest of the evening was Howard Riopelle. With obvious affection, he shared a collage of reminiscences from his longtime friendship with Fr. Bob, from coaching days to the present. Fr. Bob (perhaps wondering why he couldn't place all of these memories?) dubbed this contribution "The Apocrypha of Fr. Bob"!

The grand finale of the evening was the unveiling of an official portrait of Fr. Bob...NOT. The curtain was drawn back to reveal instead an amusing and clever caricature by Dede Lambe. But even a greater gift awaited Fr. Bob – he was invited to have the last words! He used them well to express to all of us his heartfelt thanks and appreciation for two wonderful days of celebration.

This is where the story takes a little spin on the St. Lawrence story. St. Lawrence is reputed to have given all of the Church's material treasures to the people,

whom he considered the real treasures. On this occasion, the people were invited to give of their material treasures to support the CCs. Fr. Bob honoured all of us as the real treasures by absolving us of any obligation to make the free will offering. But those present opened their hands



Gisele LeMay and Vince Johnson

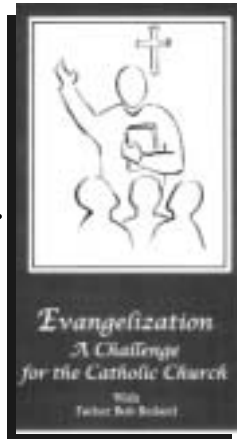
as they had opened their hearts. Our loving Father, through the friends of The Companions of the Cross, came through once again in a time of need. Through the dinner, \$15,000.00 was donated to the CCs. What a birthday gift! Thanks to our God, for everyone He used to accomplish this.

*"These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things" (Ps 104:27-28). ☺*

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*Dale Balkovec works for the Companions of the Cross on a part-time basis, assisting their efforts in fundraising and public relations. She, her husband George, and sons, Adam and Joel, are parishioners at St. Maurice, a parish served by the Companions in Nepean, ON.*

# V I D E O S

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By John Fletcher

**M**y internship experience at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Grand Rapids, Michigan was a very positive one. I was made to feel quite welcomed by the parishioners as they embraced the fourth Companion of the Cross seminarian intern at St. Thomas.

The pastor, Father Jim Chelich, was a good mentor for me and demonstrated once again his willingness to help train yet another intern. He helped me get oriented to the parish and the parishioners and gradually initiated me in various parish activities including preaching, wake and committal services and their planning, assisting at funerals and baptisms, hospital and shut-in visitations, leading vesper services, communion services, working with the school and CCD

# My Internship Experience

children, and helping out with youth activities. Almost all of this was new to me and I have become much more comfortable in all of these areas because of my time at St. Thomas.

During my time at St. Thomas I came to have a greater appreciation for the kind of life that a diocesan priest leads and it has reinforced my belief that I need to be part of a religious community.

The biggest reason for this is that in a good community there will be both the support I need to get through difficult times as well as the accountability I need to stay vigilant.

Prior to my internship year, I had a lot of apprehension about the idea of being the pastor of a parish. It was not something that I wanted to do at all – any other ministry besides that one! After I had been at St. Thomas for several months, I slowly began to lose some of my fear of being a pastor; now the idea of my being a pastor seems a bit more possible. This came about because of my exposure to a parish model that works incredibly well. I've seen first hand how a very healthy and happy parish is run. I've learned that it is not just up to the pastor to run the parish but also the parish staff and lay ministers, working closely together with the pastor as a team.

I've also been exposed to a Catholic school unlike any I've ever heard of. My experience of Catholic schools has been largely negative but what I've seen at St. Thomas has given me hope that there are still some good Catholic schools out there.

My internship also allowed me the time and space I needed to further discern my calling to the priesthood as well as to the Companions of the Cross. My confidence in becoming a priest has continued to grow and it seems that this is truly God's invitation to me and I am only too happy to respond in the words of Our Lady, "*Let it be done unto me according to your word.*"

My confidence in becoming a member of the Companions of the Cross has also been growing. This is where I believe Our Lady has led me and I have peace about the prospect of making my lifetime commitment to the Companions in September on the feast of the Triumph of the Cross.

I know that I've learned a lot at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, in fact much more than I am conscious of at this time. Only time will reveal how much I've really learned. I am truly grateful to both Fr. Jim and the parishioners of St. Thomas.



*John Fletcher made his lifetime commitment to the Companions of the Cross at the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross in September. He resides at St. Maurice parish.*



## Feature

By Fr. Pierre Ingram

# Retreat Report

Once again, Red Pine Camp near Golden Lake, ON provided the setting for our annual gathering. The chosen theme for the talks, brotherhood and fraternal relationships, had emerged in the discernment of a prophecy received at the May 2000 Evaluation Days [see the previous issue of this newsletter, p.7]: *"I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first"* (Rev 2:4).

### Prophetic Words

During communal prayer times throughout the retreat, a number of prophetic senses addressed our need to repent for our lack of brotherly love; pertinent scriptural passages exhorted us in a similar vein. Another strand of inspiration emerged alongside this word on brotherhood: the need for the "fire" of the Holy Spirit in order to carry out our mission of evangelization. Fr. Roger's discernment was that these two themes were complementary: there must always be a balance

between brotherhood and zeal for evangelization. A third prophetic message that seemed interwoven with the first two was a call to welcome Mary in our midst, like the apostles in the Upper Room before Pentecost.

### Fr. Roger Vandenaeker's Teaching

Our new Moderator explained the discernment of the theme for the retreat. Sharing some of his own vocation story, he remarked that ever since high school (where he participated in a small "share group") he had always perceived brotherhood as a necessity. It is highly significant that the Companions of the Cross grew out of a support group for seminarians. That embryo of the future community had five essential characteristics: a profound sense of the Lord's presence; a sense of brotherhood; freedom to share personal struggles; support for the members' vocation; and a common theological and ecclesiological vision. That share group experience constitutes the founding charism of our community, our "first love". Evangelization and brotherhood are the two "prongs" of the CC charism, and they are interconnected in such a way that the effectiveness of the former depends on the quality of the latter.

There are four requisites to authentic brotherhood: knowledge (theoretical and practical); the capacity to give and receive fraternal love; a will or fostered desire for brotherhood; and faith. Obstacles to brotherhood include fear of rejection, pride, and lack of modelling within our families of origin. In a sweeping theological vision, Fr. Roger presented unity as a



Brothers in harmony

gift originating in the heart of the Trinity. Unity within the Body of Christ is the primary work of the Spirit.

There are two extremes to be avoided in living out the call to brotherhood: the first type of brother is lots of fun to be with but is uncommitted and undisciplined; the second type



Praising the Lord

is super-responsible but remains aloof and judgmental. We can fail in being good brothers because: we don't realize the importance of brotherhood; other things become higher priorities because we derive greater satisfaction from them; or we lack the requisite capacity. Fr. Roger read a series of excerpts from a book by Keith Clark, *Being Sexual and Celibate*, explaining the nature and levels of intimacy. The talk concluded with a list of eighteen practical suggestions on loving one another as brothers in community.

### Fr. Bob Bedard's Teaching

Our founder confirmed the discernment of the theme for the retreat. While we seem to have a good grasp of the other aspects of our identity as a community,

we are lacking in the area of brotherly love, which was our first mandate from the Lord. Although excuses have been made for this problem, such as the community's rapid growth, financial concerns, need for administrative structures, etc., the only appropriate response is repentance.

Fr. Bob then went through a series of practical points on which to examine our consciences. We need to learn to: decide to love our brothers; affirm one another; embrace our brothers warmly; be vulnerable; tease one another in non-hurtful ways; call one another by name; balance our relationships; support and edify one another; receive affirmation; forgive one another; admit our "bad days"; anticipate one another's needs; say "I love you"; surrender privacy; share conversation; pray together in such a way that we encourage one another; and play together.

### Angelina Steenstra's Teaching

In preparation for her talk, Mrs. Steenstra had received two words, "Return to your first love" and Consecration to Our Lady.

The fundamental insight which needs to govern our approach to community is that priests and laity are meant to be as bonded as spouses. Hence what we priests live in community is meant to bear fruit in our "marriage" with the Church. Mrs. Steenstra shared some of her own experience of inner healing. Although her relationship with her earthly father had been virtually nonexistent, she received a revelation of God as Father through the power of the priesthood. On the basis of that experience, she asserted that the Roman collar is a "bridge" between our earthly father and our heavenly Father. Thus part of our calling is the restoration of fatherhood.

It is no accident that our community was born in the pontificate of John Paul II, whose motto is *Totus tuus* — we need to receive all that is feminine so that we can

give all that is masculine. Quoting Fr. Francis Martin, Mrs. Steenstra stated that males must reject the lie of the exiled state which is that their loneliness cannot be overcome; but to overcome it, males will first need to acquire trust, by listening to the Woman.

### Fr. Bob Sharkey's Teaching

Fr. Sharkey began his talk on "intimacy with the Lord" with a humorous story about an experienced monk who, after half-drowning a novice, tells him that when he desires God as much as he wanted that one breath of air, he will know how to pray. There is only one place to look for God: in the desert of our own hearts. But when we go looking for him

there, we encounter our own disordered passions instead. These passions can become barriers between ourselves and God, inasmuch as we are afraid that he will reject us because of them. To get over this obstacle, we must choose to believe that the only love God has for us is a merciful love. Once we make that choice, we can meet the real God, who does not look down in disgust at our failures. Any other God would only be a projection of our own shame. Shame presupposes a preoccupation with self, so God must draw us out of our selves, and assume the central position in our inner world. When God is the centre, his welcoming love can begin to heal us.

### Small and Large Group Sharing

Small group sharing, a summary of which was presented in general session, enabled all members to express their views and concerns related to intimacy, relationships, and other aspects of community life. ☺



Mrs. Angelina Steenstra and Fr. Robert Sharkey

.....  
Fr. Pierre Ingram is doing doctoral studies in Sacramental Theology at the Institut Catholique in Paris, France.



Companions Priests



# Companions of the Cross Annual Fundraising Appeal

**Dear Friends in Christ,**

Greetings in the Lord! As you can see elsewhere in this issue of our Newsletter, we welcomed 13 new applicants to the community this past September. This is a sure sign of growth and a real Jubilee Year blessing from the Lord. Further evidence of this fact is Fr. Bob's report that in the past 12 months ending Aug. 31st there has been a record number of new inquiries from men expressing interest in joining us (over 181). We seem to be doing something right!

We haven't yet turned away, because of lack of space or other material resources, anyone whom we have discerned should be an applicant-seminarian in our formation program. Nevertheless, the financial situation of the community remains tight. It costs approximately \$10,000 per year to house and educate one seminarian. We have over 40! Our regular operating expenses are well over \$1,000,000 per year. This does not include the monies we will definitely need in 2001 for capital expenditures (such as a new residence building), other formation team salaries for priests and other staff, etc. If we do not have such additional funding in place, we will not be in a position next year to take any new applicants whatsoever, let alone another 15 or so. (Maybe we will have to hold a round of "Survivor" and vote a few guys out to make room - heaven forbid!)

Most Catholics instinctively know that priests are vital to the future of the Church. In a time in which we are experiencing a distinct shortage of priests, here we are with a surplus. We project that next year, the Lord willing, we will be in a position to set up our third new foundation in a diocese yet to be determined. (This past Spring I visited with Bishops and/or their Episcopal Vicars in three Western Canadian dioceses after they had expressed interest in having us come and minister there. Invitations from Bishops across North America and beyond continue to come in). So does it strike you as odd that in a situation of great need, with Catholics clearly willing to support vocations and in a time of widespread economic prosperity, we find ourselves having to beg for financial assistance? That's probably the Lord's way of keeping us humble and dependent on His goodness!

That is why we are turning to you our readers and benefactors in this annual Fall "Fundraising Appeal." You have been our greatest supporters. You have stood by us these past 15 years as we have grown from a small sapling into a mini oak (we're not quite a mighty oak yet, but give us a few more years, oak trees take quite a while to mature!). You have interceded for us before the Lord, held us close to your hearts, and aided us emotionally, spiritually, and financially, in ways too numerous to mention.



**Annual Fundraising Appeal Annual Fundraising Appeal Annual Fundraising Appeal**



# Fundraising Appeal - *Our Plea for Help!*

You are our dear friends, fellow companions on the journey, toiling with us in the same vineyard. Together, we will bring in a mighty harvest of souls.

One challenge we face is to make ourselves better known. If Catholics from all over, not just the Ottawa area, could hear about our need I am positive that many would be glad to help us out, for the sake of supporting the Church Universal. Many Catholics are growing increasingly fearful about the tenuous pastoral situation that exists in many parishes that are understaffed or being merged with others, with fewer and older priests being called upon to shepherd them. We are a dynamic young community that is anxious to help build the Kingdom of God. Please support our efforts to become better known by telling a friend or relative about our great need. If they desire more information about who we are, they can check us out on the Web at [www.companionscross.ca](http://www.companionscross.ca). We are in the process of setting up a new Fundraising Committee that will aid us in this task (more about this in the next issue).

As you can see, we are trying to do our part to cooperate with God's grace in continuing the work of the Companions of the Cross. We are not fearful about the future (only slightly anxious!). Our trust is in the Lord. We give Him "permission" to do with us as He pleases. Won't you please prayerfully consider our

request for financial assistance? We trust He will place on your heart some idea of how you can continue to support us. If you are able to support us financially, you can use the envelope provided in this newsletter. If you lack the means to give financially, we know you can and do pray for us. We are blessed with many such "prayer warriors" out there who are interceding for us daily. We love you all!

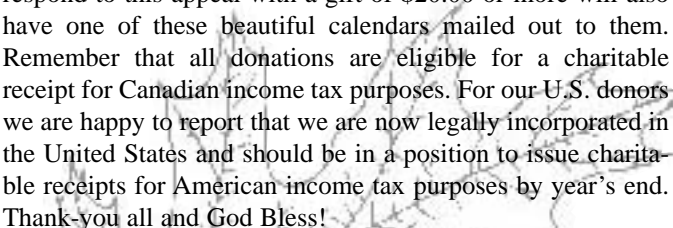
Wishing You the Peace of Christ,



Rev. John Vandenaeker,

*CC Academic Director and Coordinator of  
Fundraising and Public Relations*

P.S. Most of you who donated \$20.00 or more to us in the past year will receive a special fundraising letter directly from Fr. Bob Bedard, along with a complimentary copy of our new 2001 Companions of the Cross calendar as a thank-you gift. This calendar is new and improved - with Sunday back in its proper place as the first day of the week! New donors who respond to this appeal with a gift of \$20.00 or more will also have one of these beautiful calendars mailed out to them. Remember that all donations are eligible for a charitable receipt for Canadian income tax purposes. For our U.S. donors we are happy to report that we are now legally incorporated in the United States and should be in a position to issue charitable receipts for American income tax purposes by year's end. Thank-you all and God Bless!



*"The birds of the air nest by the water;  
they sing among the branches... the earth  
is satisfied by the fruit of His work"  
(Ps 104:12, 13b).*



**ing Appeal Annual Fundraising Appeal**



# Lay associates corner

By Fr. Jeff Shannon

Another exciting year has begun for our community and for the Lay Associates and I am pleased to serve you for my second year as Chaplain to the Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross.

This past summer I was appointed to serve full time with the formation team of our community. Even though I will be away from Ottawa at our formation house in Combermere for the months of January to May with our second year applicants, I am still planning regular visits back to the city and phone contact with my trustworthy team of Lay Associates in Ottawa. Pray with me that this year we have no snow and above freezing temperatures for the months of January and February (miracles have happened)!

There is plenty of exciting information I want to pass your way, so I better get started.

This past year we began some Lay Associates' prayer meetings that turned out very well. Anywhere from 40 to 80 people, on each evening, joined together to praise the Lord, hear His Word and listen to various teachings. Due to the success of these meetings the Executive Council of the Lay Associates and I are planning to continue meeting with just a slight change in the format. We will be holding monthly Healing Masses. The first Mass took place at St. Mary's parish on Wednesday, October 11th at 7:30 p.m. The next one will be on Thursday, November 2nd at St. Maurice parish in Nepean beginning at 7:30 p.m. All are invited and please bring a friend! Our loving Lord desires to bring the fullness of healing to all His beloved children. Through these Healing Masses, the Lay

Associates want to participate in a small way, in this plan of our God. Please watch for future Healing Masses sponsored by the Lay Associates and keep these nights in your prayers.

In the month of December, we will not be holding a Healing Mass, however, you are invited to our Advent Brothers Meeting on Wednesday, December 13th beginning at 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary's parish hall. This event will bring together the Lay Associates and their friends, as well as all the priests and seminarians of the community. Come and join with us in a time of prayer, praise and fellowship and meet our first year applicants as they share a bit about themselves and their time at Assumption farm since September. Hope to see you there!

Have you ever thought of becoming a Lay Associate? If so, please come to a special Information Night we will be holding at St. Mary's parish hall on Wednesday, November 8th at 7:30 p.m. At this meeting we will be outlining the spirituality and components of becoming a Lay Associate and answer any questions you may have. After a discernment period of three months, one can make their commitment to the Lay Associates. Please make plans to attend if you are interested. Our next public commitments will be held at our Annual Retreat in February 2001.

Speaking of the retreat, the annual Lay Associates Retreat is just around the corner, so we are advertising already! This retreat, held at Tudor Hall the past few years, has been a real blessing for all those in attendance (see the back of the registration form for a letter from a participant from last year). Last year was the first time I attended the entire retreat and given that experience, I am anxious for the next one. If you plan to attend please

pencil in the dates and fill out the application on the next page. This year's retreat will be held on Friday, February 2nd and Saturday, February 3rd, 2001.

Please keep praying for our community and for all our Lay Associates and don't forget to pray for me! May we always continue to lift Jesus higher. ☺

*Fr. Jeff Shannon is the Chaplain for the Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross. He also works on the formation team for the community.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Healing Mass  
St. Mary's parish  
Wed., October 11th, 7:30 p.m.

Healing Mass  
St. Maurice parish  
Thurs., November 2nd, 7:30 p.m.

Advent Brothers Meeting  
St. Mary's parish hall  
Wed., December 13th, 7:30 p.m.

Information Night  
St. Mary's parish hall  
Wed., November 8th, 7:30 p.m.

Lay Associates Retreat  
Tudor Hall  
February 2nd & 3rd, 2001  
(See opposite page for info.)

LAY ASSOCIATES OF THE COMPANIONS OF THE CROSS

**A N N U A L R E T R E A T**

**FEBRUARY 2ND & 3RD, 2001**

**Friday 7:00 - 10:00 p.m.**

Mass, Praise and Worship, Coffee and Oven-Luck Dessert Social  
(Families Welcome To Join Us!)

**Saturday 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.**

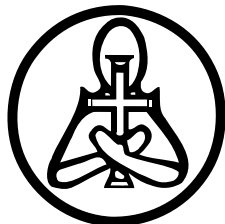
Rosary, Praise and Worship, Teachings  
Lunch (Bagged lunch or local restaurant)  
Mass (Saturday readings)  
Dinner, Praise and Worship, Intercession

**Location: Tudor Inn**

3750 Bowesville Road  
Ottawa, ON  
(Near the intersection of Hunt Club Road and Riverside Drive)

**Cost: \$30.00**

includes: sit down dinner Saturday evening, hall rental, coffee breaks  
and a stipend for the Music Ministry



Mail Registration and cheque to:  
"The Companions of the Cross"  
c/o The Companions of the Cross  
199 Bayswater Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1Y 2G5

ALL REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 19, 2001.  
TICKETS WILL NOT BE SOLD AT THE DOOR!!!

**Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross**

**Annual Retreat**

**February 2nd & 3rd, 2001**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City & Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Tickets Required: \_\_\_\_\_ (x \$30.00)

Donation to assist those who wish to attend but are unable to afford the cost at this time \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount of your cheque: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SEE OVER

Dear Companions of the Cross and Lay Associates;

This is to thank you for the most Spirit-filled retreat I have ever attended in my life and I have attended quite a number of them.

Besides being so uplifting, this weekend gave me the spiritual nourishment I really needed. I learned a lot about the Eucharist and devotion to Mary, which was explained in such a touching way. The humour running through the weekend was quite enjoyable. You are really very SPECIAL people – chosen by God himself.

I also want to thank all the Lay Associates who worked so hard to make this a wonderful and carefree weekend for all of us who were there. Everything was so well organized and you all really put yourselves out to make everyone feel welcome and you pleasantly catered to all who attended the retreat.

Thanks again and may God pour his most precious blessings on all of you.

Your sister in Christ,  
Raymonde Jackson

---

Please check (✓) the following:

- Currently, I am a Lay Associate.
- I am not a Lay Associate.
- I am not a Lay Associate, however, I would like to receive information on becoming a Lay Associate.
- I would like to be included on the Companions of the Cross mailing list and receive the quarterly newsletter.
- I will pray for the success of the retreat and keep the priests, seminarians, and the Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross in my daily prayers.



# He's Alive

**Testimonies  
of Catholics from  
across Canada**

**Compiled by  
Fr. Peter Coughlin  
including testimony from  
Fr. Bob Bedard  
and  
Richard and Natalie Jaworski  
(parents of Fr. Rick Jaworski)**

**\$15.00  
plus \$3.50  
shipping & handling**

**Order from  
Koinonia Enterprises  
199 Bayswater Ave.,  
Ottawa, ON K1Y 2G5**

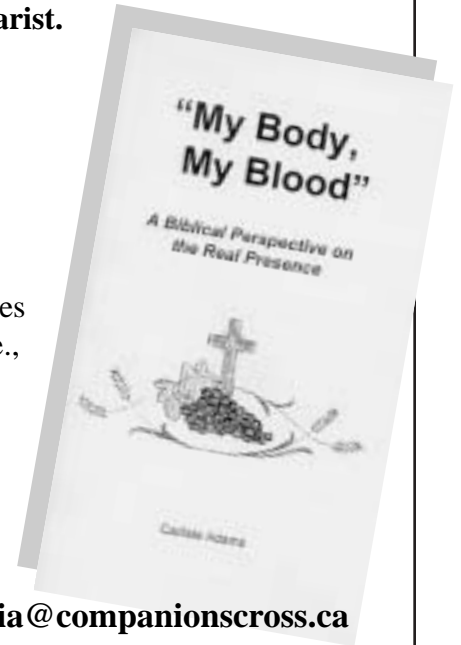
**(613) 728-3175  
e-mail: [koinonia@companionscross.ca](mailto:koinonia@companionscross.ca)**

## My Body, My Blood

**A book by Carlisle Adams, a St. Mary's parishoner. An in-depth bible study on the Catholic teaching on the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.**

**\$4.00 plus  
\$3.50 shipping  
& handling**

**Order from:  
Koinonia Enterprises  
199 Bayswater Ave.,  
Ottawa, ON  
K1Y 2G5  
(613) 728-3175**



**e-mail: [koinonia@companionscross.ca](mailto:koinonia@companionscross.ca)**

## D I S T I N C T I V E

**Companions of the Cross  
Christmas Cards**

**Package of 12 cards  
with 4 different designs  
\$6.00/package  
plus \$2.00 shipping & handling**



**Order from:  
Koinonia Enterprises  
199 Bayswater Ave.,  
Ottawa, ON K1Y 2G5  
(613) 728-3175  
e-mail: [koinonia@companionscross.ca](mailto:koinonia@companionscross.ca)**

# A Pilgrimage to Greece & Turkey

## With Fr. John Vandenakker of the Companions of the Cross

### Day 01 : Tuesday, May 8 – Depart Canada

Depart Ottawa by bus for Montreal. Depart Canada (via Montreal or Toronto) for an overnight Olympic Airways flight to Athens, Greece. Dinner and breakfast will be served on board.

### Day 02 : Wednesday, May 9 - Athens / Vouliagmeni

Arrive in Athens. Board our deluxe motor coach for transfer to our hotel in nearby Vouliagmeni, a resort area on the idyllic Aegean coast nicknamed the “Greek Riviera.” Dinner and evening Mass at our hotel (Armonia) in Vouliagmeni. (See our Hotel at [www.greekhotel.com/athens/armonia](http://www.greekhotel.com/athens/armonia)).

### Day 03 : Thursday, May 10 - Athens / Corinth

Morning tour of the famous Acropolis of Athens, including the majestic Parthenon, enduring symbol of the Golden Age of



Greece. It was on a slope of the Acropolis known as “Mars Hill” (Aeropagus) that St. Paul preached to the Athenians (cf. Act 17:16-34). In the afternoon we proceed to Corinth, crossing the spectacular Corinthian Canal, which connects the Aegean and Ionian Seas. St. Paul spent two years living in Corinth, building up the local church there (cf. Acts 18:1-18). It was to the Corinthians that St. Paul addressed two of his best-known Epistles. We will read from these Epistles during the Mass we will celebrate there and then return to Vouliagmeni. Dinner and overnight in Vouliagmeni.



### Day 04 : Friday, May 11 - Cruise / Mykonos

Transfer to Piraeus, the port of Athens, to embark upon a 3-day Royal Olympic cruise of the scenic

Greek Islands (standard outside cabin, 3 meals daily while on board). En route to our first stop at the small island of Mykonos we will celebrate Mass aboard our ship. We arrive in Mykonos late in the afternoon and have four hours in which to stroll the waterfront area of town with its many shops and

cafes, explore the hundreds of tiny chapels dotting the island, where sheep graze in the shadow of white-washed windmills, or else to just bask in the serenity of sunset over the picturesque harbour. Dinner and overnight aboard the ship. (Learn more about our Royal Olympic Cruise at [www.royalolympic-cruises.com](http://www.royalolympic-cruises.com)).



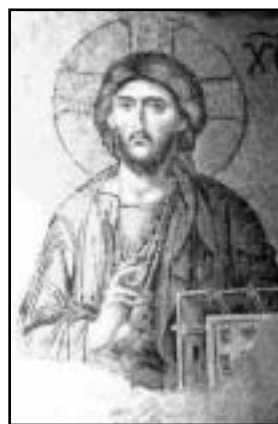
### Day 05 : Saturday, May 12 - Cruise / Rhodes

Morning arrival at the island of Rhodes, once home to the famous Colossos, a huge statue that was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. During the Crusades the island was also the headquarters of the Knights of St.

John. St. Paul set foot briefly on Rhodes during one of his missionary journeys (cf. Acts 21:1). The day is free to explore the fascinating old city on your own, take a swim at one of its fine beaches, or else opt for an excursion to the nearby resort town of Lindos (excursion extra). Mass, dinner, and overnight aboard the ship.

### Day 06 : Sunday, May 13 - Cruise / Patmos / Ephesus / Kusadasi

Morning arrival at the holy island of Patmos, where St. John was exiled. We will visit the famous monastery of St. John the Evangelist and celebrate Mass in the Grotto of the Apocalypse, where tradition has it he composed the Book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 1:9). A panoramic view of the whole island can be glimpsed from atop this location. Return to our ship for a short journey to Kusadasi, which is on the Turkish mainland. Here we disembark our cruise.



Afternoon tour of the ancient ruins of Ephesus, among the most impressive and best preserved in all of Asia Minor. Here was located the Temple of Artemis, which was another of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Here St. Paul's preaching to the Ephesians inspired a riot led by some silversmiths of Artemis (cf. Acts 19:1-14). The church that was established here was also the recipient of St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Ephesus is also the first

of the seven churches addressed in the book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 2:1-7). Dinner and overnight in a resort hotel (Onura) on the coast in Kusadasi. (See our hotel at [www.ozkasap.com.tr/hotel/kusadasi/onur.html](http://www.ozkasap.com.tr/hotel/kusadasi/onur.html)).

**In the Footsteps of St. Paul and St. John  
Highlights of St. Paul's Missionary Journeys  
and the Seven Churches of the Book of Revelation**

**May 8-19, 2001  
(12 days)**



**Day 07 : Monday, May 14 -  
Smyrna / Pergamum / Ayvalik**

Depart Kusadasi aboard our deluxe motor coach for the drive to Izmir (ancient Smyrna), the second of the seven churches of the Book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 2:8-11). After a brief stop it's on to the hauntingly beautiful acropolis of Pergamum, which rises high on a hill as one nears the city of Bergama. It was once the capital of

one of the richest and most powerful kingdoms of the ancient world, and it still retains its past grandeur even in its present state. Highlights will include a visit to the monumental Altar of Zeus, the sanctuary of Demeter, the Temples of Trajan and Dionysus, Theater, Gymnasium, Agora, and other sites. Pergamum was the third church addressed in the Book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 2:12-17). After having celebrated Mass here, the message of our Lord to the church at Pergamum will become much better understood and more vivid in all our hearts. Dinner and overnight in our hotel (Grand Hotel Temizel) located in the nearby beautiful coastal town of Ayvalik. (See our Hotel at <http://hotels.wecnet.com.tr/web/hotelina.html> - click "a" and look for Ayvalik - then click on Grand Hotel Temizel).

**Day 08 : Tuesday, May 15 - Thyatira / Sardis /  
Philadelphia / Pammukale**

Depart Ayvalik for our journey to Thyatira, the fourth church of the Book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 2:18-29). Thyatira was well

known for its cloth trade on account of its purple dyes (cf. Acts 16:14). Then it's on to Sardis, the fifth church of the Book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 3:1-6). Sardis is the most picturesque of the seven churches. The city was the capital of the ancient Lydian kingdom in the 6th century B.C. Here we will view the Temple of Artemis,

walk along the Royal Persian Road that began in Susa and ended here (built by Cyrus the Great), and celebrate Mass in a small Byzantine Church. Our last stop of the day will be a brief visit to Philadelphia, the sixth church (cf. Rev. 3:7-13). Dinner and overnight in our hotel (Thermal Colossae) at nearby Pammukale (ancient Hieropolis). Pammukale is famous for its hot springs and therapeutic mineral baths. (See our Hotel at <http://www.colossae.com.tr/>).

**Day 09 : Wednesday, May 16 - Laodicea / Pammukale**

This morning we journey to nearby Laodicea, the seventh church of the Book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 3:14-22). Laodicea



is also mentioned in St. Paul's letter to the Colossians (cf. Col. 2:1 & 4:13-16). Here we will tour the ancient ruins and celebrate Mass. Then we return to our hotel in Pammukale for a free afternoon of leisure. This area has been declared

a "World Cultural Heritage Site" by UNESCO. Pammukale owes its reputation to its spectacular setting - a fairyland of white travertine outcrops and thermal springs. The hot springs have been used since Roman times for therapeutic purposes. Today, the pools on the travertine are closed to swimming to preserve the site, but you can still swim in the mineral waters at our hotel. Dinner and overnight in Pammukale.

**Day 10 : Thursday, May 17 - Meryemana / Kusadasi**

Depart Pammukale for our return journey to Kusadasi. Along the way we will visit Meryemana, where the "House of Mary" is found. While most apocryphal texts agree that the Virgin Mary died in Jerusalem, some versions say she left the Holy City and went to Ephesus, in the company of St. John. She is said to have spent her last days here in a small isolated hermitage on the heights of Mount Coressus. Nothing about this is mentioned in the Scriptures, but a German Mystic, Sr. Anne Katharine Emmerich (d. 1824) is said to have confirmed this location in a vision she once had. Whatever the case may be, since 1951 the site at Meryemana has been officially recognized by the Vatican and the Eastern Orthodox Church. Pope John Paul II came to pray here at the beginning of his pontificate and the house has become a major pilgrimage site. Here we will celebrate Mass. Dinner and overnight in Kusadasi.

**Day 11 : Friday, May 18 - Samos / Athens / Vouliagmeni**

We will depart Turkey by ferryboat and journey to the nearby Greek island of Samos, one of the most green and beautiful islands of the eastern Aegean. Here we will catch a flight back to Athens. Upon arrival we transfer to our hotel in Vouliagmeni where we will have time to relax and enjoy the rest of our day. Special farewell dinner and Mass of Thanksgiving at our hotel. Overnight in Vouliagmeni.

**Day 12 : Saturday, May 19 - Athens / Canada**

Transfer to the airport for our return flight back to Canada (Montreal and Toronto). Upon arrival in Montreal a bus will transport us back to Ottawa.

**Cost = \$2749.00 per person based on dbl. occupancy.  
Includes two meals per day (three while on the cruise).  
Insurance and \$42 Departure Tax extra.**

**Contact person (and to request a free brochure):  
Gail Goshko (613) 744-1418**

**Information Session: Sunday March 4th, 2001, at 2:30 p.m.  
in St. Mary's church hall, Ottawa**



# Community News & notes

By Fr. John Vandenakker



## Triumph of the Cross & Lifetime Commitments

Every Sept. 14th, which is the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, the Companions of the Cross gather with our Lay Associates and friends at St. Mary's church in Ottawa to celebrate the community's feast day. At this special Mass various men who have been in "temporary commitment" to the community for a number of years finally make their "lifetime commitment" to the Companions. This year the following men became "lifers" and received the "red" CC cross to wear as a sign of this momentous step in their lives. They are Ben St. Croix; Galen Bank; Gerry Gauvreau and John Fletcher. Welcome aboard brothers!

All of them will be proceeding with ordination to the diaconate sometime in the next few months. Please keep these men very much in your thoughts and prayers.

## Welcome New Applicants

The Companions of the Cross are pleased to welcome 13 new Applicants to the community this fall. They are from near and far (mainly from "afar"). They will spend the first semester with Fr. Scott McCaig up at our "Novitiate" at Assumption Farm in Combermere, Ont. After Christmas most of them will begin their philosophy studies at the Dominican

College in Ottawa. Let us pray that these men, who have begun this journey of discernment with us, will be led by the Holy Spirit to recognize and embrace the call of God that is on their lives. We warmly welcome:

John P. Bolger - Cambridge, ON  
Doug Brooks - Kitchener, ON  
Murray Chupka - Sherwood, AB  
Michael Coughlan, - London, England  
Nathan Dempsey - Halifax, NS  
Jaime Garcia - Providence, RI  
Ngugi Githinji - Kenya, Africa  
Jean-Francois Fortin - Blainville, QC  
Bernard Messier - Stoney Point, ON  
Kevin Philip - Kimberly, BC  
Ty Smith - Houston, TX  
Mike Scherrey, - Fort Smith, AR  
Ben Spindler - Edmonton, AB

**Fr. John Likozar's  
First Mass**

Here are some photos of Fr. John Likozar's "First Mass" celebration at Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church in Toronto this past July 2nd. The parish is predominantly composed of Slovenian Catholics. They were proud to celebrate the first-ever vocation to the priesthood from their parish of one of their "own" (Fr. John was born in Canada to

Slovenian immigrants). The celebration of Fr. John's First Eucharist, at the regular Sunday Mass, was packed. The music ministry was outstanding. Many ladies of the parish wore native Slovenian folk dress for the occasion. A tall archway of two trimmed pine trees was erected outside of the church for Fr. John to walk under. At the threshold of the church, under this arch, Fr. John was blessed by his father Alex, and greeted by his cousin Tina Primozic and sisters Maria and Anna Likozar, in accord with Slovenian tradition, before proceeding inside. Afterwards a huge reception was held in the parish hall. To cap off the day, again in accord with Slovenian tradition, the Litany of Mary was sung back inside the Church to accompany Exposition and Benediction. Many thanks to their pastor, Fr. Ivan Plazar, and to all those parishioners who worked so hard to make it a very special day in Fr. John's life.



*Continued on page 22*

Continued from page 21

## Ben St. Croix Ordained to the Diaconate

CC seminarian Ben St. Croix was ordained to the diaconate on the Saturday of the Canadian Thanksgiving Weekend (October 7th) in his home parish of St. Louis in Keewatin, Ont. (near Kenora). Bishop Fred Colli was delegated by Archbishop Marcel Gervais of Ottawa to perform the ordination. Many thanks to Bishop Fred for his kind assistance. Also on hand helping out with the ceremony was John's dad, who is a "permanent" deacon in service to the diocese of Thunder Bay. Now there's a great team – a father and son set of St. Croix deacons! But not for long, for Ben will be ordained to the priesthood next spring. Then he will be the "father," and his dad will be? Deacon Ben is currently assigned as chaplain to York University in Toronto, and lives in our St. Timothy's parish household.



From left to right: Deacon Ben St. Croix, Fr. Marc Syrenne, Fr. John Likozar

## CC Newsletter Now On Line

Thanks to CC seminarian Andy Korvmaker, who is a web master whiz, we have finally uploaded many previous issues of this Newsletter onto the "On Line Newsletter" section of our web site at [www.companionscross.ca](http://www.companionscross.ca). This is a great way to access interesting articles from past issues, or to just keep track of various developments within our community. You will need Acrobat Reader to view the pages, but a link on our site will direct people in how to download this free software program very easily. Enjoy!



# Companions of the Cross ON-LINE NEWSLETTER

## New Household Rosters

Every year many of the priests and seminarians of the community get moved around into different households. This past summer, though, I think we set a record of some kind! To help you sort out who is now where, please consult the listing of our households below. Please be aware that this list can change at almost any time!

### Assumption Farm (Fall):

1. Fr. Scott McCaig
- + 13 New Applicants (see page 20)

### 58 Primrose (Fall):

1. Fr. Jeff Shannon
2. Fr. Fr. Jim MacGillivray
3. Fr. Scott McCaig's Room
4. Francis Ching
5. Marty Cutting
6. Phil Halldron
7. Bartosz Maslanky
8. Mike Thompson
9. Peter VanKampen
10. Gerald Whittaker

### 126 Young:

1. Fr. Roger Vandenakker
2. Fr. Yves Marchildon
3. Mark Goring
4. Jerry Gauvreau
5. Todd Thibeau
6. Erik May

### 199 Bayswater:

1. Fr. Bob Bedard
2. Fr. Francis Donnelly
3. Richmond Guillermo
4. D'Arcy Dufresne
5. Patrick Dursi
6. Nick Simoni

### Holy Rosary:

1. Fr. George Sammut
2. Fr. John Vandenakker
3. Phil Cummings
4. Brian Christie
5. Andy Korvemaker
6. Jim McKay
7. Jeremy Heynen



*Queen of Peace (Houston): Fr. Francis Frankovich, Fr. Ed Wade, Fr. Daren Bryk, Randy Hendriks, Fr. Christian Riesbeck, Fr. Sean Wenger*



*St. Timothy's (Toronto): Ben St. Croix, Fr. John Likozar, Fr. Marc Syrenne, Tim Devine*

### St. Mary's:

1. Fr. Charles Orchard
2. Fr. Terry Donahue
3. Fr. Dennis Hayes
4. Fr. Rick Jaworski
5. Fr. Bob Poole

### St. Maurice:

1. Fr. Ross Lambton
2. Fr. Dan Cross
3. Galen Bank
4. John Fletcher
5. Dan Jeffrey
6. Fernando Suarez

### Queen of Peace (Houston):

1. Fr. Christian Riesbeck
2. Fr. Francis Frankovich
3. Fr. Ed Wade
4. Fr. Sean Wenger
5. Fr. Daren Bryk
6. Randy Hendriks

### St. Timothy's (Toronto):

1. Fr. Marc Syrenne
2. Fr. John Likozar
3. Ben St. Croix
4. Tim Devine

### CCs in Other Residences:

1. Fr. Rob Arsenault (Spencerville)
2. Fr. Pierre Ingram (Paris)

### Pictures of the Month



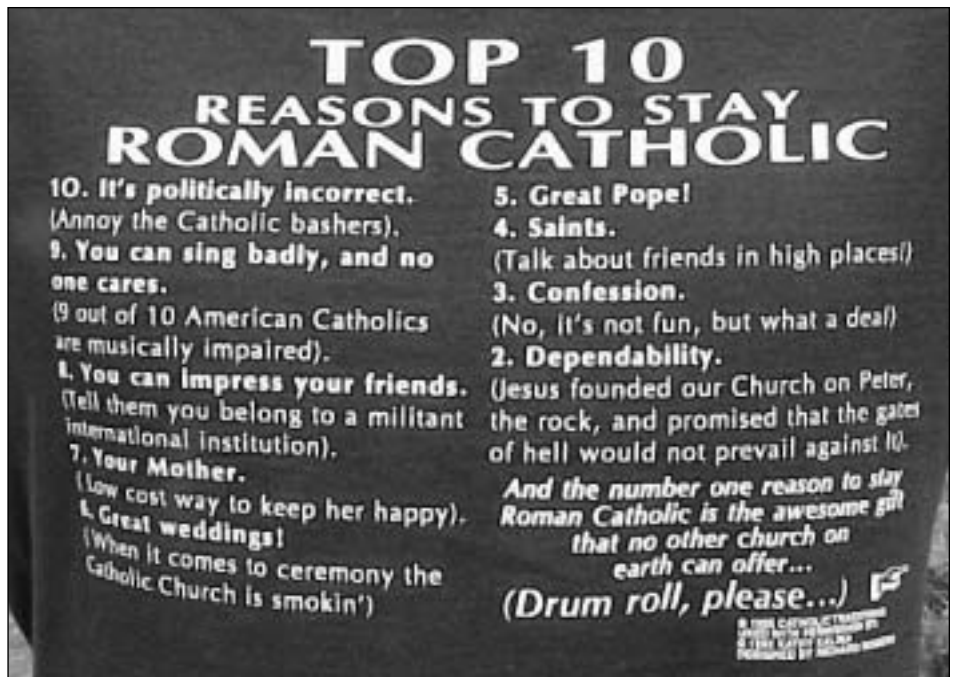
Sketch of Fr. Bob by local artist Gisele (Gigi) LeMay



Fr. Bob Poole relaxing with two of his new friends



Fr. Scott "Harley" McCaig: "Biker for Christ"



"... and the #1 reason to be a Catholic - The Eucharist!"

### Ready for the Banquet

Mary Donnelly, the mother of Fr. Francis Donnelly, passed away in late August in Ottawa. The funeral Mass was held at St. Veronica's parish in Dorval (Montreal) Quebec on September 1st. Fr. Francis was joined by his brother Fr. Patrick

Donnelly, other brothers and sisters, friends and relatives and priests from all over for what turned out to be a wonderful celebration of faith. Mrs. Donnelly was an immigrant to Canada from Ireland. She was buried with a fork in her hand, a symbol, we were told, of her being prepared to partake in the "heavenly banquet" with our Lord. Now that's

faith! Our condolences and prayers go out to Fr. Francis and all the Donnelly family. ☺

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*Fr. John Vandenakker teaches theology and serves as Academic Director for the Companions of the Cross. He also oversees the community's fundraising and public relations efforts.*



# Companions of the Cross

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 D-4 God Reveals Himself

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 D-5 The Holy Spirit's Role  
 D-7 The Peculiar Charisms  
 D-8 Baptism and Confirmation

- Learning to Pray**  
 D-9 Elements of Prayer  
 D-10 The Power of Prayer  
 D-11 Praise

- Discerning and Responding to God's Will**  
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 D-13 Wisdom: What is it?  
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- B-6 Signs of Hope
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- B-10 Young Adult's Relationships
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*"On coming to the house, they  
saw the child with his mother  
Mary, and they bowed down  
and worshipped him"  
(Matthew 2:11a).*