

Winter Issue 2002

Companions of the Cross



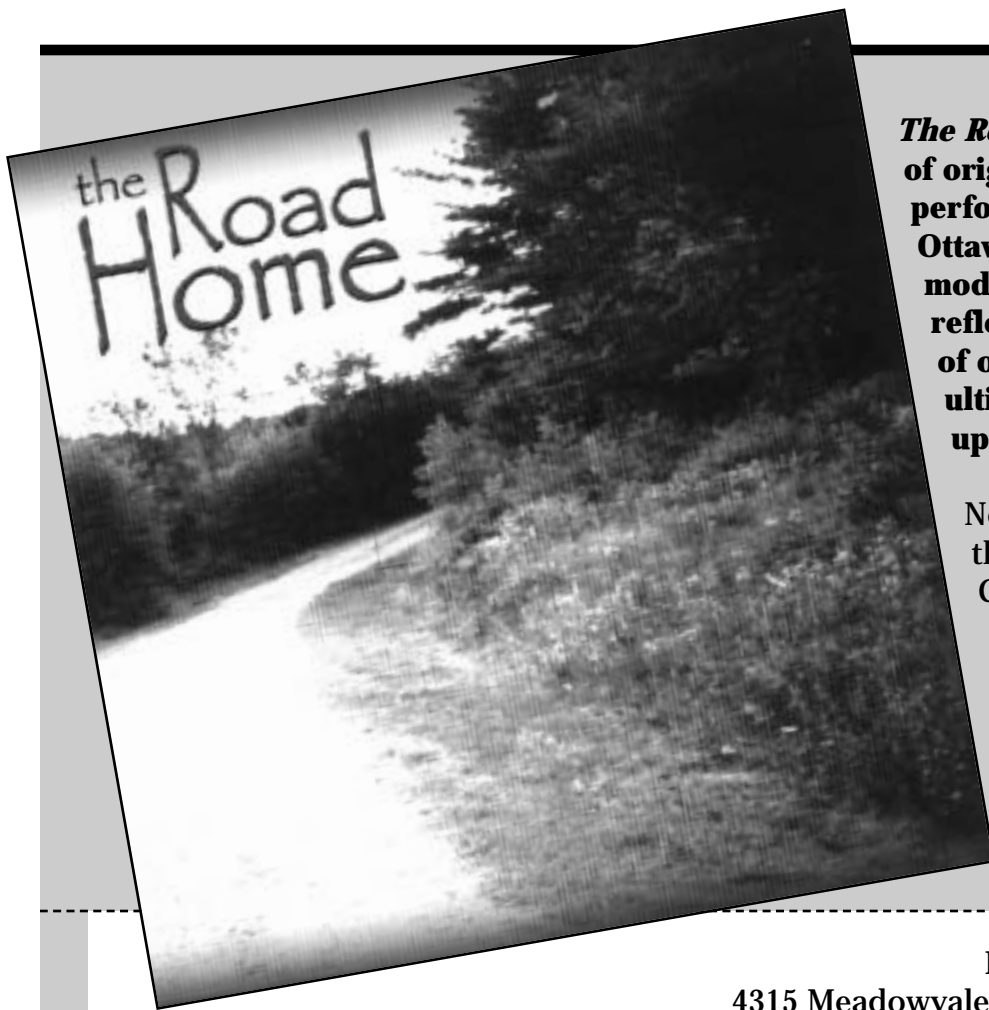
Inside

LAY ASSOCIATES

PARISH RENEWAL

NEW DEACONS





The Road Home is a collection of original music written and performed by young adults in the Ottawa Region. Recorded at a modest home studio, the CD reflects on the trials and hopes of our pursuit toward the ultimate goal, the prize of God's upward calling in Jesus Christ.

Net proceeds from the sales of this CD will be donated to the Companions of the Cross.

If you would like to receive the CD, **the Road Home**, please complete the following information, enclose a cheque for \$15.00 plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling and mail to:

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Companions of the Cross

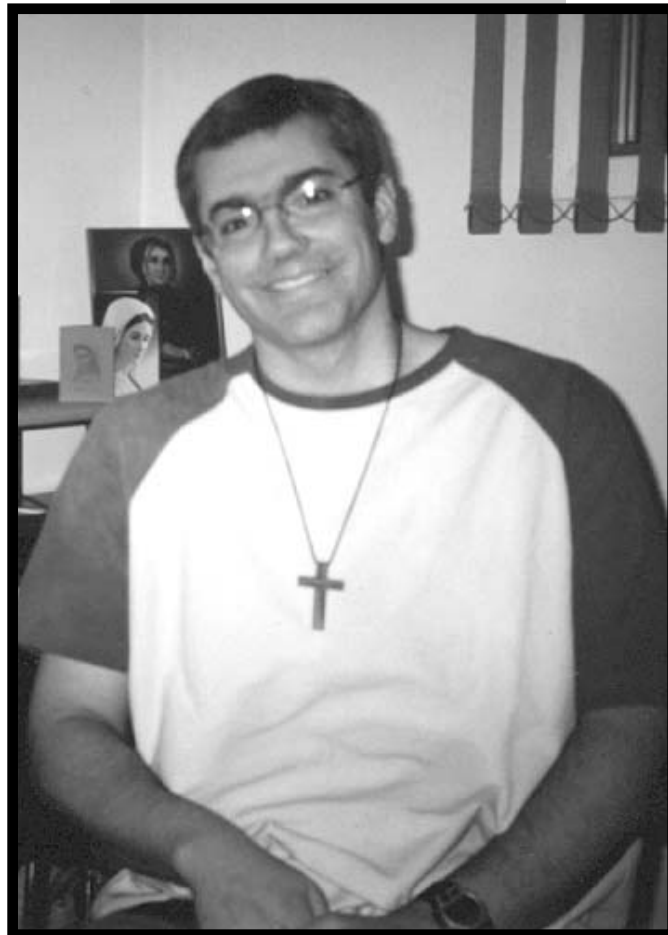


FEATURE

By Fr. Bob Bedard

My trip last fall to Radway, Alberta afforded me the opportunity to do something I'd been looking forward to for months. I was able to visit with Murray Chupka and his folks at their home in Sherwood Park, a suburb of Edmonton. Murray was involved in a dreadful highway accident this past summer when the small car he was driving home from Radway was broad-sided by a full-sized transport truck. It was nothing short of a miracle that he escaped with his life. But the injuries he sustained in the collision have put him in a wheelchair with medical prognosis dim. We, his CC brothers, received the news as though thunderstruck. It put a large dent in our spirits as we went to prayer for him, while dealing with the frustration of being so far away and unable to be on the scene to give support to Murray and his family at that time of incredible agony and confusion for all of them. But our spirits were shortly revived when we had opportunities to talk to Murray and his parents by phone in the days and weeks that followed. Some of our seminarians from the west were able to visit him during their summer trips home and reported his peaceful, even joyful, demeanor as he took every chance to witness to Christ to all he met at the two hospitals he was in before getting back home in October. They told us of how they all prayed together in his

Murray Chupka UPDATE



hospital room and how both staff and patients requested prayer from him each day. Truly the Lord has raised him up as a banner behind which the CCs will now continue to move forward. First, I met his sister, Crystal, at JP2 Bible School. What a gentle and charming young woman! She went in September to Radway to allow the Lord the opportunity to heal the hurts she herself had received as a result of her brother's accident. Then, I was able to make the journey one afternoon to his home to have some time with him and to meet and chat with his marvelous parents, Marvin and Harriet. I felt almost anointing in the house, the result, I guess, of all the prayers that continue to pour in there for Murray. Murray Chupka remains one of the most remarkable young men I've every met, one I consider to be a very close friend.

His determination remains to return to his community and CC brothers and to continue on the path the Lord led him to a couple of years ago. In my prayer I sense that Murray will be healed in due course and be back on his feet. I wouldn't advise anyone to bet against him. ☩

Fr. Bob Bedard's ministry has included teaching high school, full-time renewal work and pastoring St. Mary's parish. He is the founder of the Companions of the Cross.



FEATURE

By Fr. Jeff Shannon

Formation of the Will

This past summer, I was graced with the privilege of attending a four week course near Milan, Italy, at the “Center for Seminary Educators”. Eighty priests and two bishops from over 30 different countries entered the conference hall each day to participate in various talks, seminars, and group discussions. Being the only North American priest, I found I was able to absorb and integrate much of the Church’s wisdom as we probed into the finer details of what it takes to make a man into a priest... better known as “seminary formation”. One important teaching and personal reflection on a topic, which influenced me profoundly on the course, was the formation of the will.

Our will is what allows us to carry out or complete what our conscience is calling us to do. A person’s will is either strong or it is weak. Knowing what needs to get done, a strong will follows through and completes the job. A weak will fails in this regard.

Upon returning from our summer break in the community, I asked a number of the seminarians how they fared in fulfilling their responsibilities when the structure of community life was not present. Were you able to pray one hour of personal prayer each day? Did you pray the rosary every day? Did you exercise three times a week? Etc. It was clear that the answers were as I expected... all over the chart with few passing grades. Becoming a priest does not make things any easier. In fact, maintaining these disciplines becomes even more difficult upon ordination, and thus, a strongly formed will is an essential prerequisite. It seems that even though we have many good intentions to

do the things we know that we should do, our fallen human nature prevents us from fulfilling these goals. St. Paul was fully aware of this human reality when he agonized, “*For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want*” (Rm 7:19).

This is the battle we face and our will determines the direction that we take. Many of us, it appears, struggle because our senses and our appetites are not in proper order. We are blown around and negatively affected by our feelings and sentiments, like a balloon in the wind. There is no control and there is little discipline. Some temporary surface feeling blows us off course and keeps us from doing what we know we should and need to do. And so, our will remains weak, and we fail in our attempts at a proper disciplined life because we lack the sheer “will power”. How do we strengthen our will, we may ask? “*Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple*” (Lk 14:27). Each and every time we choose to make a sacrifice for a greater good, we strengthen our will. When we get up out of bed at the time we predetermined the night before so that we could spend some time with the Lord in prayer... when we offer up the pain and inconvenience of turning on the light in the early morning and swinging our feet out of bed... that sacrificial experience, offered to the Lord, strengthens our will. When it is done repeatedly, it not only becomes easier each time, but it becomes a holy habit... a virtue. A person living a virtuous life is a person with a strong will. A strong-willed person is someone who has embraced the cross and when he misses his prayer time on just one occasion, for example, he quickly corrects his ways

because his strong will has been developed and strengthened like a well-trained athlete.

To form your will always implies renunciation. This self-renunciation helps us to forge and educate our ability to will. It is not a negative means; rather it is to choose to opt for a greater good. This consciously chosen, sacrificial act of the will, can be applied to all areas of our life, completing our daily responsibilities and duties; finishing what we start; working with determination, organization, punctuality and dedication to work, study, and prayer and never procrastinating. In fact, every human activity is an occasion to strengthen our will. Likewise, when we are lazy and careless, our will grows weak. A strong will also gives us strength to overcome our feelings and emotions during times of desolation and discouragement. We choose to persevere in praising God in the midst of our suffering and pain and not let ourselves be swept away by the weight of the situation facing us – something a weak-willed person is more apt to do.

Living in a society and culture, which thrives on being led by our feelings, choosing the option, which strengthens our will, is all the more difficult. As well, as Canadians we are a very passive culture by nature. We accept and tolerate the most horrendous injustices in our society without the least bit of resistance and active involvement on our part. This passivity, which has ingrained itself into our nature, does not help in fostering a strong, disciplined will. We are just too “laid back” about too many things and this has serious ramifications in our spiritual life



New Applicants at Assumption Farm - From left to right: (standing) Mike Poulin, Chris Vonesh, Mike Lees, Fr. Scott McCaig, (kneeling) Barry Phillips, Rachad Khadij, Simon Lobo, (missing) Fr. Ron Myer & Fr. Jim MacGillivray

and our human formation. How can the Lord be confident in entrusting his plans and his divine will into our lives if he knows that we are incapable of carrying it out due to a weak and undeveloped will?

A further difficulty in forming a strong will in our lives can happen with some of us who have experienced the grace of the Lord through the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Although this new life with the Holy Spirit is an indispensable gift in our Catholic Christian life, many of us believe that the Lord will work his grace in our life each time in a similar manner - in a powerful way, and with very little action or cooperation on our part, (so it seemed on the first occasion when the Spirit caught our attention in a serious way). However, this initial powerful experience of the Lord that we received is meant to "entice our will" so that we will now make the choice to embrace the necessary sacrifices that come with following Christ, to pick up our cross and follow him. Some of us in the Renewal, who

have not developed and formed our will as we should, are tempted at times to avoid these crosses and return to places and environments to re-experience the initial graces we received over and over again. As beautiful as the first time was, and however necessary it is at regular times to be prayed with and to be "filled up" again with the Holy Spirit because "we leak", more often than not the Lord may also be calling us to make the hard, sacrificial decision facing us so that we can strengthen and form our will. That is the understanding of cooperation with grace. At times, we may also avoid the hard disciplined sacrifices because we say to ourselves, "Oh well, the Lord still loves me as I am". That is always true, however, it cannot become an excuse to avoid a little hard work and formation of our will.

The necessity of repeating the sacrificial action until it becomes a habit became real to me during my experience while praying at the Scala Santa in Rome (the blood stained steps that were brought to

Rome that Jesus climbed before being condemned by Pontius Pilate). While praying on my knees as I climbed the 30 steps to the top, I came to understand, in a deeper way, the necessity of the formation of the will and a vision of the spiritual life. I began with much vigour and enthusiasm to reach the top while praying my rosary. However, as I reached the middle portion, the tenth or eleventh step, I began to experience much physical pain on my knees. I wanted to give up. I was tempted to go back down; however, there was no real opportunity as people were behind me and in front of me praying. I decided, at that point, to simply push through and offer up the pain. After 10 or 12 more steps of sheer perseverance, I noticed that the pain had almost completely disappeared, (and I noticed it in the body language from the people around me as well) yet I was still climbing on my knees at the same pace. When I reached the top, I reflected on my experience. Isn't the spiritual life summed up in this one prayer experience? At the beginning of a new and deeper relationship with the Lord (the first 10 steps), things seem easy and consolations with God abound. However, when the initial graces wear off, (the middle steps) we are called to suffer with the Lord and embrace the cross and exercise and discipline our will to choose the greater good. After repeated perseverance, a new grace appears (the top section of the steps) and we rejoice in a deeper intimacy with God. Therefore, the necessity of responding positively and forming our will during the difficult moments in life is the ingredients for becoming holy.

"Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough" (Lk 13:24) Let us put on our jogging suits and build up our strength by forming our will so that we may be worthy to share in the promises of our Lord Jesus Christ. ☪

Fr. Jeff Shannon is the Chaplain for the Lay Associates. He also works with the seminarians in their formation program.

TESTIMONY

My Journey Home

By Michael Coughlan



I sit down to write this testimony at the end of a semester that has, without a doubt, been a very difficult time in my life. I began my journey with the Companions of the Cross in August of 2000, having arrived from England knowing that my father had just been diagnosed with cancer. In the couple of days leading up to my departure I was in some doubt as to whether I should come at all. My dad was very clear that I was not to let his difficult news get in the way of where God was leading me. Unsure of this I sat during Mass with a very heavy heart only to hear the words: “*Lord, let me go first and bury my father. But he answered him, Let the dead bury their dead. But you go and proclaim the kingdom of God*”’. This was from the Gospel of the day. So with my father’s blessing, I began my formation with the Companions.

Having completed my first year I returned to England knowing that dad’s treatment had been extended from chemotherapy to radiotherapy. On returning home I realised that all was not well and over the next six weeks I journeyed with my mum and dad, brother and two sisters, through the painful process of coming to terms with what had become a terminal illness. In fact, within four weeks of this diagnosis dad had died. I had the privilege of holding his hand after he got the news from the consultant and of knowing with absolute certainty that my heavenly Father had brought me home to walk alongside my dad as he prepared to “go home”. I found myself filled with a sense that dad was not to be afraid and that all would be well... but how do you convey this to a dying parent? As I was soon to

learn... through a gentle gaze, an affirming touch, and a promise that the journey would not be made alone. I am very grateful to the Lord for this quality time with my dad. Not that we spent hours talking about the mysteries of the universe, but rather he knew that he was not alone in his pain and whatever unresolved issues that many a father and son have were resolved in moments of Eucharist and being present to each other in our pain.

The days following the funeral unfolded the deepening drama in my own life. How is a son to be present to a mother lost in deep grief? My initial reaction was to try to take away the pain with words of comfort and encouragement and yet I began to realise that it was not mine to take away. As difficult as this has been I have had to begin to learn to place my mum into the hands of a heavenly Father who is ready and able to bring her into a place of blessing and peace. I sent mum a copy of *Hinds Feet on High Places*, a beautiful allegory of the spiritual life and our journey with “sorrow” and “suffering”, the companions that God often chooses to bring us to himself.

On returning to Canada I found myself physically and psychologically exhausted and dad’s death had once again triggered painful questions for me, “To whom do I belong?” and “Where is my home?” Gradually out of the confusion and insecurity the answer is emerging loud and clear, “Michael, you belong to me. You are my beloved son and you are on your way home”. There is a dawning realisation in my life that God wants me to have

an eternal perspective. So often our gaze is fixed on our present situation and happiness or lack of it. I believe that God is teaching me to seek him above all else and to trust him with the task of preparing me for life in heaven.

I am now 41 and this is my second time responding to the call to the priesthood. From the age of 18, I spent five years with the Marist Fathers and while with them God gave me a hunger for life in a Spirit-filled community, my novitiate was a little taste of heaven. After leaving the community at age 23, I spent a couple of years working and then the next four years studying theology and drama and training as a teacher. Following this I taught and worked as a lay chaplain for 10 years. During this time I experienced the Father’s love in a way that I had never experienced it before and I tasted something of the intimacy that God desires to share with us. I was experiencing a deep sense of my own sonship and hearing, for what seemed to be the first time, the message of the cross and all that Jesus had accomplished for me. My prayer life was transformed and a power and a passion entered my Christian walk. I spent some of these years living in lay community.

However, somehow in all of this my focus has remained very much on me, my journey and my call! The burning issue has often been “How am I going to get my needs met?” and “How am I going to become a whole integrated human being?” and “Where am I going to find the perfect community?” and “Where am I going to find the right people to minister to me?” In other words, my relationship with the Lord was all about me and not all about Jesus. I wanted to be whole for myself – I had become Michael-centred instead of Christ-centred.

Through dad’s death this has become clear to me. Yes, God’s desire is to make us whole, “*I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly*”, but I will not receive this by allowing it to

become my sole purpose in life. If personal happiness and wholeness is our goal then we have missed the point. It is taking me a long time to learn this lesson but I know that if I fix my eyes on Jesus and God's eternal plan, then I will truly become all that God intends me to be. Healing and restoration will happen on the way, this is God's work, not mine. So, I must let go of the process and allow him to melt me and mould me. So my prayer has now become, "Lord do whatever it takes to make me totally dependent on

you." I want to have that same desire that so many of the saints had to be with God. I want my life to be a preparation for my heavenly home... "What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9).

And so the way forward is clear... "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life

will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it. What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" (Mk 8:34-36).

I write this testimony with deep felt love for my earthly father... I love you dad. ☺

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This is Michael Coughlan's second year with the Companions of the Cross. He is from London, England.

A Prayer

By Sr. Andrea Wild

In repentance and humility Lord I beg your mercy and forgiveness for:

- all those for whom I had no time
- those whose struggles, temptations, darkness, sorrows I did not wish to share
- those whom I merely tolerated and whom I attended grudgingly
- those, Your children of flesh and blood, whom I scarred by my piercing thrusts
- those whom I shunned either through fear or dislike or incompatibility
- those upon whom I hung other labels when I deemed it impossible to relate
- those whom I avoided because they didn't resonate with me, weren't in tune, in touch with my spirit
- those whose theology or spirituality I disdained as too opposed to mine – or too challenging
- those whom I despised because they disagreed with my vision, my ideas
- those whom I accorded second place after my own needs and concerns of the moment
- those whom I saw as inferior, dull, witless, bland
- those whom I did not attempt to understand
- those whom I rebuffed because they did not understand me
- those whom I scorned as not spiritual enough, wise enough, mature enough
- those whom I blamed for wearing me to a frazzle because of their own frenziedness and confusion
- those whom I distanced as coming from another space and moving in a different direction
- those You entrusted to my special care and with whom I was too harsh, too unloving, too unbending
- those thirsting souls whom I didn't take seriously enough
- those broken souls with whom I chose not to empathize
- those frustrated souls to whom I did not extend Your peace and Your compassion
- those lonely souls to whom I denied Your presence, Your welcome as expressed uniquely through me

- those parched souls who yearned for that warm embrace, that incarnated Your love
- those simple souls whom I considered ignorant and incapable of dialogue
- those with whom I refused to share my gifts – Your gifts
- those whose gifts I ignored or belittled or did not call forth
- those upon whom I projected my own un-freedoms
- those whom I arrogantly believed were threatened by "my goodness"
- those whom I held in bondage by my "superiority"
- those whom I attempted to re-cast according to my design
- those upon whom I placed unreasonable, un-Spirit-filled demands and expectations
- those who kept knocking in vain at the door of my heart.
- those who yearned to know the treasure of my soul and whom I excluded from its wealth
- those whom I dismissed as "needing psychological help"
- those whom I looked down upon from a "higher realm"
- those whom I challenged to move in the Spirit according to my timetable, my tastes
- those from whom I withheld my friendship because they had not yet attained "my level"
- those whose truth I rejected as shallow or simplistic
- those whose callings judged "lesser" than mine
- those whom I pronounced either "too out of it" or "too far out"
- those whose visions I disregarded as too traditional, too narrow, or too permissive
- those whose contributions I left acknowledged, unsung
- those to whom I denied that small but creative sign of acceptance
- those whom I treated as unenlightened, unredeemed
- those whom I abandoned to the limbo of hopelessness, incorrigibility, impossibility
- those who were not "special enough", "chosen enough", or "far enough along"
- those who I thought had nothing to offer, nothing to share, nothing to gain
- those whom I confined in categories of my own convenience

- those whose slumbering strengths I kept in weakness
- those whose weakness I scorned
- those whose spiritual walks I didn't treasure like pearls of great price
- those whom I assigned to the wrenching isolation of "mistrust ability"
- those whom I relegated to the ranks of mediocrity
- those whose aspirations I thwarted and whose growth I did not support
- those bruised needs and dimly burning wicks that I did not tend
- those whom I forgave in such niggardly fashion or whom I have not yet forgiven
- all those, my Lord, who had a right to experience something of Your countenance in mine,
 Your voice in mine
 Your touch in mine
 and went away
 saddened, unfulfilled and seeking still.
 O Lord God of Healing Love,
 how could I bear this yoke of lovelessness if I could not visit with You
 each of these, Your cherished ones,
 mystically, in prayer, unknown to each,
 to bless and caress, to soothe and anoint with Your gentle unction of life-giving Love.
 How could I live with the gnawing knowledge of opportunities lost, forever past, unrepeatable, if I did not believe that
 You, Lord Jesus,
 the same yesterday, today and forever,
 could salve with Your precious blood
 those smouldering spirits in need of a master touch.
 How could I shoulder this weight, O Lord,
 or forgive myself,
 if I had to leave hanging, untended and unresolved,
 all these ugly, tattered, splintered loose ends of
 my life: signs of my un stewardship.
 O Lord God of Healing Love,
 do make up for what remains
 lacking, lurking, limited in me
 and be ever so merciful – ever so loving to me,
 a sinner. Amen.

(Printed with permission from Fr. Robert Wild of Madonna House Apostolate)



FEATURE

By Gary Mellor



The New Life Retreat

various means of growth including prayer, scripture, the sacraments, apostolic commitment, Christian community and carrying the cross.

My wife Margaret and I have overseen the retreats from their humble beginnings. We did our first retreat with only nine participants. The greatest blessing for us is to see so many lives changed and enlivened by the love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Why a New Life Retreat? That's the question asked in the pamphlet given at St. Mary's Parish in Ottawa prior to a retreat weekend. It briefly attempts to answer the question but mostly encourages the reader to find out for himself by signing up. St. Mary's parish has found this weekend encounter to be an effective means of evangelization and renewal for hundreds of people both in the parish and from all over the city.

The New Life Retreat is similar to a Life in the Spirit Seminar but in an expanded version. It places emphasis on a Catholic context by having the participants renew their Baptism and Confirmation. This format began at the parish in May of 1992, under the S.I.N.E plan (Systematic Integral New Evangelization). This pas-

toral plan developed by Fr. Alfonso Navarro of Mexico had been adopted at that time. Although the parish no longer follows that program, the basic retreat with various modifications continues.

The retreat is composed of three major blocks. The first block invites the retreatants to renew their Baptism, accept Jesus as Saviour, and convert from sin – social sin, unforgiveness and the works of Satan. During the second block, one is invited to renew his/her Confirmation and accept Jesus as Lord of every area of his/her life. This aspect involves being prayed with for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the last block, "Remain and Persevere" the candidate is provided with some of the means to continue and grow in his/her "new life". Talks are given on

We have worked on Life in the Spirit seminars for many years previously, and we appreciate many of the extra elements found in the New Life Retreat.

We find there is extra time in the first block given to examine the steps of conversion and forgiveness which help lead people to a deeper repentance and a fuller conversion. Our experience is that sometimes people find they are not ready and choose to leave the retreat. A few have returned and completed it on a later weekend. This retreat meets the need to deal with and address issues such as the causes of anger, resentments and unforgiveness and how to deal with them. It also explains what we are saying when we renew our Baptism and declare, "I renounce Satan and all his works."



Many find one of the benefits of the retreat is that it distinguishes clearly the roles of Jesus as Saviour and Jesus as Lord. It clarifies for them that one may have accepted Jesus as his/her personal Saviour but may still have not yet turned over certain areas over to His Lordship. Retreatants are then invited to do just that, knowing that it is the work of the Holy Spirit and a gradual process.

We were so convinced of the fullness found in this renewal format that we prayed and hoped for its return when in 1997 the parish went back to the Life in the Spirit seminars for a two-year period. When the pastor asked us to renew this retreat in January of 1999 we were thrilled! We were also very encouraged by the fact that over 80 people signed up when it returned.

Len, a convert to Catholicism explained what happened to him on his retreat in this way: "The Lord turned my life around through the New Life Retreat. My body was miraculously healed and I experienced an amazing peace. I was given the courage to make needed changes in my life and live my faith more boldly."

Pam described her experience in this way, "For me the retreat provided a foundation from which I could build on the principles of faith. It was a source of emotional healing and an experience of bonding and fellowship that keeps on growing."

Since the return of the retreat in 1999, the New Life Retreat team has grown to over 25 members. Many of these people are former participants who have chosen to return to help others receive what they were blessed with on their retreat. This group includes the music ministry called "The New Life Worship Team", a hospitality team to prepare and serve meals and breaks; a logistics team, and many others

who serve as evangelists (speakers) and shepherds (group discussion leaders). This does not include all those in the parish who are enlisted for prayer support and food donations. Prayer from different sources is requested on behalf of all those involved in each weekend.

St. Mary's has two retreats per year. This enables the team to be available to respond to invitations to bring renewal elsewhere. A parish in Hull, PQ has invited the team to do a retreat in the winter of 2002. In December we travelled to Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Sault Ste. Marie to conduct this retreat for a large gathering.

There seems to be a lot of good reasons why someone might consider taking the New Life Retreat. You can find out more of those reasons by checking out the website at www.christianministries.ca/newliferetreat/.¹

Gary and his wife Margaret Anne have nine children and first took the New Life Retreat in May of 1992. They are parishioners of St. Mary's in Ottawa.



FEATURE

By Gary Mellor

Then Jesus said to them all, “If anyone would become a follower of me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Lk 9:23).

Interesting – Jesus said it to all. He says it to you and me, his followers. When – daily? Oh no, does that mean I’m going to suffer everyday? Probably not, but you’re probably going to be called to deny yourself everyday. You deny yourself when you get up for work, when you’d probably prefer to stay in bed.

There’s a story of a mother who had difficulty getting her son up to go to school. She pleaded, “Son, you’ve got to get up and get ready for school!” He just stayed in bed and said that he didn’t want to go. She asked, “Why don’t you want to go to school?” He replied, “Nobody likes me there and it’s so boring.” But the mother kept insisting that he had to go anyway and she said, “Besides you’re 43 years of age and you’re the principal.”

You deny yourself when you keep a cheerful attitude and your boss is always giving you a hard time. You deny yourself when you keep a good attitude and the people you work with ignore you or act like jerks.



Carrying the Cross:

Instructions for living
your new life in the Lord

Carrying your cross is seeking God’s will in your life. Just as you pray in the words: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.” Sometimes that means we have to accept ourselves, as we are, “warts and all”. Do we like ourselves, because God is crazy about us.

Carrying the cross daily is trying to follow Jesus’ basic commandment: “*You must love the Lord your God with all your*

heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and you must love your neighbour as yourself” (Mt 22:37). That could be going to church when you don’t feel like it or taking time for daily prayer when it means we have to get up earlier. These are actions that show our love for God. And we are to love our neighbour – which starts at home loving those you live with who are often the hardest to love. We are called daily to deny ourselves when it comes to serving our spouse, serving our children, serving our parents or those with whom we live.

Here are some examples: there are many things we have to make choices about. We can choose what attitude we are to have. Some people say that attitude is everything. I love this story that illustrates the humble attitude of St. Jean Marie Vianney. When Jean-

Marie was in the seminary, he was a very poor student. He had difficulty particularly in learning his Latin. His tutor was so frustrated with him that one day he yelled out in exasperation, “Jean, you are a total ass!” Jean paused and quietly replied, “Well, if God could have Samson use the jawbone of an ass to kill a thousand Philistines, imagine what He could do with a total ass.”

What attitude do you take into your day? Here's a suggestion. Look at your day as an opportunity to bless others. In your prayer time ask, "Lord, who can I bless today?" Jesus said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and all that you need will be given to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Lk 9:23). Notice how Jesus is talking here about our attitude – don't worry! You don't need to look for problems or burdens to carry because each day has enough troubles of its own. We need to begin the day with the attitude that says, "Lord, there's nothing today that you and I can't handle."

Sometimes we accumulate troubles and burdens that we weren't meant to have as this story by Fr. Emile Briere from his book *For Uncomplicated Christians* illustrates. The story is called "Sometimes we Carry the Wrong Crosses" and is found on pages 39 to 40. It tells the story of a man burdened with a huge bag of heavy crosses. He meets the Lord who responds to his grumbling in this way: "But the Lord went to him, lifted the pack from the tired shoulders, and gave him his hand. 'Rise,' He said, 'let us examine these crosses you claim have come from my will.' The bag was opened, revealing its assortment of black and gray crosses, and a small one, light and shiny. 'This one is from me,' He said. All the others are of your own making. Throw them out and you will understand that my yoke is easy and my burden light.'"

My brothers and sisters embrace the cross that Jesus has chosen for you. It is a source of fulfilment and joy. ☺

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This article was reprinted with permission from the website for the New Life Retreat at St. Mary's parish in Ottawa. The website address is: www.christianministries.ca/newliferetreat/.

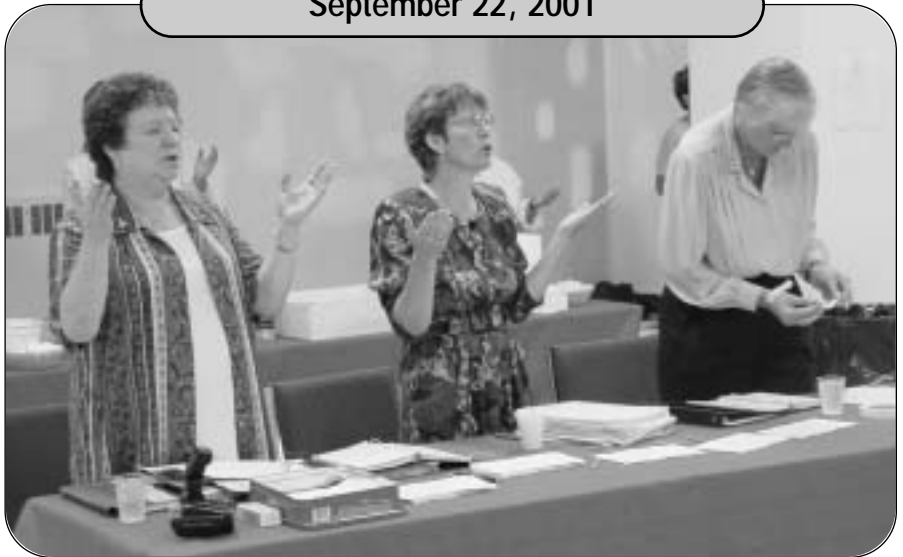


FEATURE

By Suzanne Friis

Lay Associates Annual General Meeting

September 22, 2001



Registration Team: From left to right - Joan Surette, Madeleine Thomson & Suzanne Friis

When the Companions of the Cross were founded in 1985, Father Bob Bedard and the first brothers believed that the Lord also wanted lay people to share in the "vision" and live out the spirituality of the community. The Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross were founded in the spring of 1989. Today, there are more than 250 Lay Associates in Canada and around the world.

The First Annual General Meeting of the Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross was held on September 22, 2001 in Ottawa. More than 100 Lay Associates and people interested in becoming Associates, gathered to take a look at the past, the present and the future of the group. The day began with "Praise and Worship" under the able musical direction of seminarians Tim Devine and Ben Spindler. Father Bob Bedard, founder of the Companions of the Cross, talked about the founding and vision of the community including the role of the Lay Associates. He emphasized the importance of worship, celebration and evangelization, and that the "vision" for the community and Associates is not over – the Lord continues to reveal His Plan to us as we open our hearts to His Word. In concluding his talk, Father Bob said the Companions of the Cross need more people like the Associates who are willing to be a source of support and encouragement to the priests/seminarians and who are committed to living and working out the spirituality of the community and its "vision".

Continued on page 10



Group discussion



Fr. Jeff addresses Lay Associates gathering.

After a short coffee break, Father Jeff Shannon, Chaplain of the Lay Associates spoke on the purpose of the First Annual General Meeting. Father Jeff began with the question, "What is our vision?" and then explained that we can strengthen our identity as Lay Associates through a better understanding of our commitment and greater participation in the community. Through prayer and a basic trust in the Lord we can give Him permission to reveal His "vision" His plan for us as a community of priests/seminarians and lay people. It is the mission of the Holy Spirit

to renew the Church, to enlighten us, and when we give our permission, to guide us to becoming the people of God that He wants us to be.

Father Jeff then asked us to break into small groups and discuss the following questions: 1) What is your vision of the Lay Associates? 2) What are your expectations for the Lay Associates? 3) What will you do to achieve these expectations? The discussion was heated, constructive, and inspiring. Space does not permit a full report here, but responses to the vision included developing a closer sense of community between Associates and the Companions of the Cross, a prayer chain, and training in evangelization. Some of the expectations that were expressed were growing in our personal spirituality, fellowship, supporting the Companions financially and through service. Ways of achieving these expectations could be realized through daily prayer and Mass, participating in ministry, volunteering and using our talents in service to other Associates and the greater community.

The day ended with Father Roger, Father Bob, Fr. Dennis and Father Jeff concelebrating Mass. During the Mass the Lay Associates present renewed their commitment promise to daily personal prayer and intercession, reading Scripture and continuing to give the Lord permission to work in our lives, and to surrender to His

will for the community and ourselves in working to achieve His plan for us.

As we gathered for the group picture, there were many hugs and promises to keep in touch. The Ottawans from St. Mary's, Annunciation of the Lord, St. John the Apostle, St. Maurice, St. Basil, St. Augustine and Holy Redeemer parishes made plans to meet at the Healing Masses and prayer meetings at St. Mary's Wednesday evenings at 7:15 p.m. The out-of-towners from St. Timothy's in North York, Holy Cross in Kemptville, St. John the Evangelist in Whitby, St. Jude's in Hawkesbury, Sacred Heart in Cardinal and St. John Bosco in Brockville all planned to come to Ottawa for the February 1 & 2, 2002 Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross Retreat. The First Annual Meeting was a great success, and we look forward to next year's meeting. Please join us if you can. ☺

Suzanne and her husband Torben live in Ottawa and are parents to six children. Suzanne has been a Lay Associate for nine years and a parishioner at Holy Redeemer for 18 years.

LAY ASSOCIATES

UPCOMING EVENTS

HEALING MASSES:

St. Mary's Church
at 7:30 p.m.
January 24
March 7
April 25

PRAYER MEETINGS:

St. Mary's Church Hall
at 7:15 p.m.
January 16
January 30
March 13
March 27
April 10
April 24
May 8
May 22

LAY ASSOCIATES CORNER

By Mary Lauzon

“Blessed be the Lord for He has heard the voice of my supplications. The Lord is my strength and my shield in Him my Heart trusts” (Ps 28).

Lord, I thank you for hearing the cry of my heart. For the past 15 years, I have been involved with the Companions of the Cross in various capacities. From the Friday night prayer meetings in St. Mary’s basement, weekly share groups, Ordinations, Special Masses and Anniversaries, it didn’t take long before I was involved and committed to the Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross.

Throughout the years the group grew and began to flourish as a community, supporting the Companions in prayer and ministry. As time passed, our vision for the Lay Associates grew to a formal commitment, which today includes:

- Daily Prayer & Intercession
- Reading Scripture
- Frequent participation in the sacraments
- Consecration to Jesus through Mary
- Service
- Keeping a Spiritual Journal
- Financial and Material Support
- Share Groups
- Fasting
- Attending Communal Celebrations

Over the past 10 years my husband Terry and I have helped with the organization of several retreats, fundraising events, and for two years we served on the Lay Associates Executive.

This past fall we became “empty nesters”. Our son Robert has his own place, and after 11 years of caring for my mom, she decided to leave home and go to a “swinging” retirement apartment! With all this free time on my hands, I began praying and asking the Lord for a new direction for me. While attending mass at St. Mary’s one Sunday I met Fr. Jeff

Shannon, the Chaplain for the Lay Associates. He nervously explained to me all the work that had to be done. With the Prayer Meetings being held twice a month, the monthly Healing Masses, and the summary sheets forthcoming from the Lay Associates day, held in September, it seemed overwhelming to both of us.

Reflecting on this over the next week, it seemed to me that Fr. Jeff was doing a lot of administration work when in reality, we wanted him in the role of “Chaplain”, a Spiritual Director, using his gifts to lead us into a deeper spirituality with the Companions. Though exceptional, Fr. Jeff’s talents in organizing and administration could be done by others, thus freeing him up to be a “Chaplain” to the Associates.

As the weeks went on I prayed and began to ask the Lord if this was His plan for me. With an excitement stirring within me about the possibility of working for the Lay Associates and helping Fr. Jeff, I asked the Lord to open all the doors if it was His will.

Terry and I agreed to be on the core team for the bi-weekly Prayer Meetings, believing that we were being called back to our “First Love”, the same word that was heard by the Companions on the Fall Retreat. Return back to your love, praise and worship, waiting on the Lord, hearing His Word. These meetings have been running every second Wednesday this past fall, in St. Mary’s basement, and are a constant blessing and confirmation from the Lord that this is the time for gathering in prayer and worship, especially when the world is in so much need of intercession, peace and love.

Several weeks after meeting Fr. Jeff and after numerous conversations, the Executive Council of the Companions of

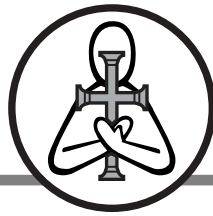


the Cross approved the first Lay Associate Office Administrator Position. The office is located in with the Companions on Breezehill Ave. Fr. Rick Jaworski, along with all the others, squeezed me in and welcomed me with open arms. We have set up a new phone line and I am now ready to answer your questions and concerns, or just to say Hi.

The priests of the Companions of the Cross have always represented the Father’s love to me. They are a group of men who know how to love well through graced times and suffering. Just being involved with this group of priests, shows me how blessed we are to be called the Lay Associates of the Companions of the Cross. They are a dedicated group serving the Lord daily with their whole hearts, minds, and spirits.

I thank the Lord for answering my heart’s desire in so many ways. I am very excited and honoured to serve you in my new role as Lay Associate Administrator. *“Be thou our Shepherd and carry us forward.”* ☪

Companions of the Cross
Lay Associates Office
237 Breezehill Ave. S.
Ottawa, ON K1Y 2J2
(613) 297-0899



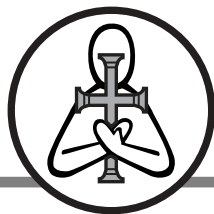
Diaconate C



Left to right: Deacon Randy Hendriks, Deacon Fernando



Ordinations



ando Suarez, Deacon Tim Devine, Deacon Mark Goring

1. Deacon Randy Hendriks & Bishop O'Mara of St. Catherines
2. Main Celebrants for November 30th Diaconate Ordination from left to right: Msgr Roger Morin, Fr. Roger Vandenakker, Archbishop Marcel Gervais, Fr. Ross Lambton & Fr. Rick Jaworski
3. Archbishop Marcel Gervais prepares to ordain Fernando, Tim and Mark in St. Maurice parish (Nepean, Ontario) on November 30th
4. Deacon Randy Hendriks proclaims the Gospel
5. Archbishop Gervais instructs the Ordinands
6. Deacon Randy Hendriks with his parents at his Ordination in St. Joseph's parish (Grimsby, Ontario) on November 17th
7. Smiling Deacons





Companions of the Cross

Deacons & Seminarists 2001 - 2002



Deacon Tim Devine
Kitchener, ON



Deacon Mark Goring
Pembroke, ON



Deacon Randy Hendriks
Vineland, ON



Deacon Fernando Suarez
Batangas, Phillipines



John P. Bolger
Cambridge, ON



Francis Ching
Toronto, ON



Brian Christie
Sarnia, ON



Michael Coughlan
London, England



Phil Cummings
Kitchener, ON



D'Arcy Dufresne
Kitchener, ON



Jean Francois Fortin
Blainville, QC



Ngugi Githinji
Kenya, Africa



Richmond Guillermo
Saint John, NB



Phil Halldron
Birmingham, England



Jeremy Heynen
Aylmer, ON



Andy Korvemaker
Regina, SK



Bernard Messier
Stoney Point, ON



Mike Minifie
South Mountain, ON



Mike Scherrey
Fort Smith, AR



Nick Simoni
Innisfail, AB



Ben Spindler
Edmonton, AB



Todd Thibeau
Yarmouth, NS



Mike Thompson
Ottawa, ON



Gerald Whittaker
Brockville, ON



Companions of the Cross

Priests 2001 - 2002

*denotes Candidate membership



Fr. Galen Bank
Glenavon, SK Ord. 2001



Fr. Bob Bedard
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1955



Fr. Daren Bryk
Edmonton, AB Ord. 2000



Fr. Daniel Cross
Fruitport, MI Ord. 1999



Fr. Terry Donahue
Oakland, NJ Ord. 2000



Fr. Francis Donnelly
Montreal, QC Ord. 1979



Fr. John Fletcher
Buffalo, NY Ord. 2001



Fr. Francis Frankovich
Riverside, CA Ord. 1968



Fr. Jerry Gauvreau
Lindsay, ON Ord. 2001



Fr. Dennis Hayes
Guelph, ON Ord. 1986



Fr. Pierre Ingram
Guelph, ON Ord. 1995



Fr. Ross Jaworski
Winnipeg, MB Ord. 1990



Fr. Ross Lambton
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1995



Fr. John Likozar
Toronto, ON Ord. 2000



Fr. Alan MacDonald*
St. Raphael's, ON Ord. 1994



Fr. Jim MacGillivray
Kingston, ON Ord. 1969



Fr. Yves Marchildon
Victoire, SK Ord. 1996



Fr. Scott McCaig
Kamloops, BC Ord. 1995



Fr. Charles Orchard
Cobourg, ON Ord. 1995



Fr. Christian Riesbeck
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1996



Fr. George Sammut
London, ON Ord. 1999



Fr. Jeff Shannon
Sudbury, ON Ord. 1997



Fr. Ben St. Croix
Kenora, ON Ord. 2001



Fr. Marc Syrenne
Saskatoon, SK Ord. 1997



Fr. John Vandenakker
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1985



Fr. Roger Vandenakker
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1989



Fr. Ed Wade
Philadelphia, PA Ord. 1972



Fr. Sean Wenger
Vernon, BC Ord. 1995

"In Communion With the Church, Mary & the Saints"

.....
A Pilgrimage to
Italy & Medjugorje
April 19th - May 2nd 2002
(14 days)

With Fr. John Vandenakker
of the Companions of the Cross

- Rome & the Vatican
- Sorrento
- San Giovanni Rotondo
(Padre Pio)
- Dubrovnik
- Medjugorje
- Assisi

Come embark on a journey
of faith that will take you to
some of the most important
Catholic places of pilgrimage
today. A wonderful
opportunity to enjoy great
fellowship and to deepen your
appreciation of the Church,
Our Blessed Lady, and the Saints.
Daily Mass & Rosary.

Cost: \$3399.00 per person (dbl. occ.)
Includes: Round trip airfare (Air Canada)
from Ottawa (via Toronto) to Rome;
First class hotels with two meals per day;
deluxe motorcoach with guide;
return ferry crossing of the Adriatic Sea;
all airport transfers and service charges.

For more Info and to obtain a
free brochure call Gail Goshko:
(613) 744-1418

Special Information Meeting:
2:30 p.m. on Sun. Feb. 3rd
in St. Mary's church hall
(corner of Bayswater and
Young St. in Ottawa)





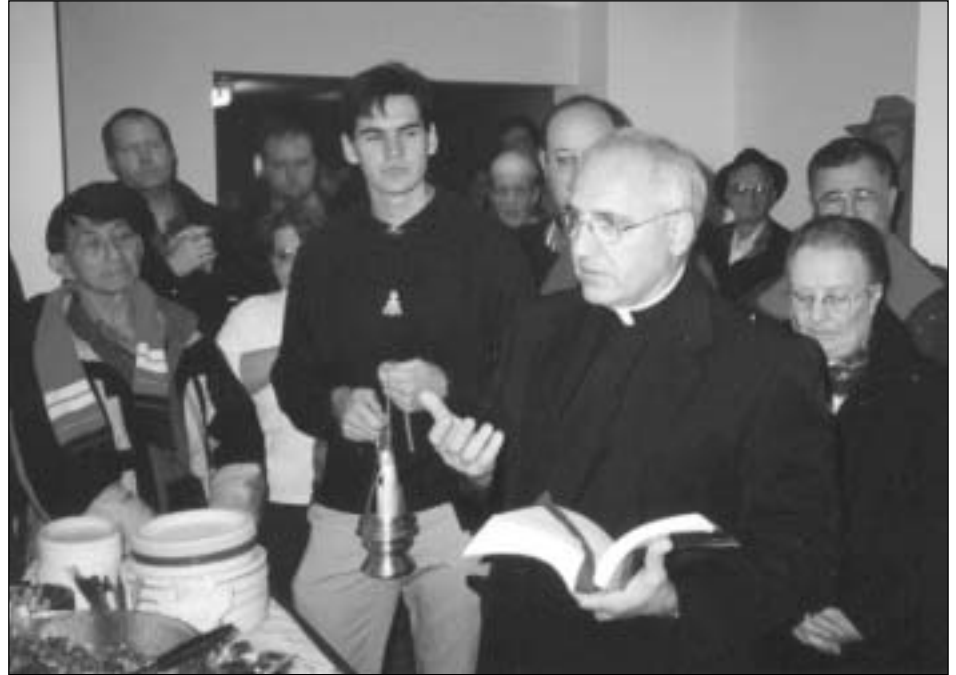
COMMUNITY NEWS & NOTES

By Fr. John Vandenakker

His Mercy Friendship Center has a Grand Re-opening

By Fred Schubert

Due to the great generosity of its many benefactors and the patronage of The Holy Family of Nazareth, His Mercy Friendship Center on Wellington St. in Ottawa has now completed its major renovations and was re-opened on Nov. 17th, 2001. It has taken half of a year to bring to completion, but the results are truly beautiful. All Praise and Thanks Be To God! At the grand re-opening on November 17th, Fr. George Sammut from Queen of The Holy Rosary Parish, Fr. Charles Orchard from St. Mary's and Rev. Anthony Bailey of Parkdale United Church, participated in blessing and consecrating the new Friendship Center. Ninety-six persons came out to celebrate this joyous occasion, which started with The Holy Mass offered by Fr. George at Holy Rosary Parish. D'Arcy Dalton and Randal Hall led the praise and worship for the Mass and then for the fellowship that followed later at the Center. It was a truly blessed evening. Just short of the house actually being shaken by a mighty wind, it was likened to the Pentecost experience of The Upper Room. Fr. George commented later that he "floated" back to the rectory. Though there was a large cross section of groups and individuals, all present felt at home and no one seemed to complain about the lack of space, which was another good sign that the Holy Spirit had His way that night. It was an experience of 'THE CHURCH IN THE MARKET PLACE' as the uninvited also wandered in off the street. All evening long the celebration continued to erupt into spontaneous praise and thanksgiving. The Lebanese community of St. Charbel



Fr. George Sammut blessing the new His Mercy Friendship Center.

Maronite Church had cooked and provided all the food. They produced an authentic and traditional Holy Land feast, truly fit for The Holy Family and their honoured guests. What a feast! What a joy! What a sign of good things to come. Thanks to all who contributed.

To continue your support for Our Lady of His Mercy Apostolate and the greatly needed work they do among the poor, please make your donation payable to: Holy Rosary Parish - c/o His Mercy. We are now located at:

Our Lady of His Mercy Apostolate/
Friendship Drop-In Center,
1071 Wellington St. West, Ottawa,
Ontario, K1Y2Y2.
Phone: 722-3685/ Fax: 722-8476
Website: <http://www.hismercy.ca/>
Email: hismercym@rogers.com

Mike Minifie Returns

Fr. Roger Vandenakker is pleased to announce that the CC Executive Council has approved the return of former CC seminarian Michael Minifie to the community, effective January 2002. Mike, who was living at Madonna House in Combermere, Ont., made the request in the fall. After a year and a half of living outside the community Mike has come to a deep peace and realization in his heart that the priesthood is his vocation and that he feels that the CCs are his "home." Mike will take up residence at St. Maurice household and will continue his theology studies where he left off. Let us all keep Mike in our thoughts and prayers. Welcome back brother!

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Visit of Visionary Alan Ames to St. Edith Stein Parish

On Thurs. Nov. 29th, 2001, Mr. Alan Ames from Australia gave a talk and led a healing service at Ste-Trinité Church in Rockland, Ont. (sponsored by St. Edith Stein Parish). The evening began with Mass, followed by Alan's witness, prayers for healing, and an opportunity for people to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Since 1995 Alan has been speaking almost continuously at conferences and churches around the world. He shares his conversion story, his experiences of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints, and the messages he has received, which centre on the Eucharist, Confession, and the Rosary. Alan has the permission of his local bishop to engage in this evangelistic ministry and he also receives permission to speak from local bishops in whose dioceses he ministers. The evening service in Rockland was blessed indeed. All who came were very much touched by the grace of the Holy Spirit. To find out more about Alan Ames and his ministry please visit: <http://members.iinet.net.au/~toheaven/>

Updated CC Web Site

The Companions of the Cross web site was recently updated with new photos. Also, past issues of this newsletter can also be found there, along with video clips of our community video "Introducing the Companions of the Cross," online order form for books & tapes, and a whole lot more. Please check us out at: www.companionscross.ca



Fr. Yves Marchildon and Alan Ames

A Nephew's Poem

Dear Fr. John, I have been a parishioner of St. Mary's Church for the past eight years. I am writing this letter to ask if it would be possible to have my nephew's poem placed in the next newsletter of the Companions of the Cross. He wrote the poem when he was 17 years old, three months before he died in a fishing accident in 1989. Enclosed is a copy of this poem. Thank you for your attention in this matter. Yours Truly, June Massicotte.

*God only wants us to listen
God only wants us to care,
Only through God I'm forgiven.
It's his cross he wants me to bear.
You can't hide anything from him
He created us all,
You must place your trust in him,
He'll never let you fall.
Often your heart may get broken
Your tears will fall like rain,
Know that in times of trouble,
He has shared your pain.
He gave up his life for us,
He died nailed to the tree,
And though I never asked him to,
He did this for me.
So many times I have wanted
To just give up and cry,
But that was always too easy,
He gave me courage to try.
- Daniel Massicotte (age 17 in 1989)*

Reflections on September 11th

Peggy Noonan: A few weeks ago I wrote a column called "God Is Back," about how, within a day of the events of Sept. 11, my city was awash in religious imagery – prayer cards, statues of saints. It all culminated, in a way, in the discovery of the steel-girder cross that emerged last week from the wreckage – unbent, unbroken, unmelted, perfectly proportioned and duly blessed by a Catholic friar on the request of the rescue workers, who seemed to see meaning in the cross's existence. So do I. My son, a teenager, finds this hilarious, as does one of my best friends. They have teased me, to my delight, but I have told them, "Boys, this whole story is about good and evil, about the clash of good and evil." If you are of a certain cast of mind, it is of course meaningful that the face of the Evil One seemed to emerge with a roar from the furnace that was Tower One. You have seen the Associated Press photo and the photos that followed: the evil face roared out of the building with an ugly howl – and then in a snap of the fingers it lost form and force and disappeared. If you are of a certain cast of mind it is of course meaningful that the cross, which to those of its faith is imperishable, did not disappear. It was not crushed by the millions of tons of concrete that crashed down upon



it, did not melt in the furnace. It rose from the rubble, still there, intact. So the face of the Evil One was revealed, and died; but the cross survived. This is how God speaks to us. He is saying, "I am." He is saying, "I am here." He is saying, "And the force of all the evil of all the world will not bury me." I believe this quite literally. But then I am experiencing Sept. 11 not as a political event but as a spiritual event.

Queen of Peace (Medjugorje) Message of Sept. 25th: *"Dear children! Also today I call you to prayer, especially today when Satan wants war and hatred. I call you anew, little children: pray and fast that God may give you peace. Witness peace to every heart and be carriers of peace in this world without peace. I am with you and intercede before God for each of you. And you do not be afraid because the one who prays is not afraid of evil and has no hatred in the heart. Thank you for having responded to my call."*

Sr. Maria Elisabetta: How does a cloistered nun see the world crisis that followed the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks? "It is as if everything was happening to our

own person; everything touches us profoundly," said Sister Maria Elisabetta, a Discalced Carmelite in Legnano, near Milan. Her statements appeared in the Italian newspaper *Avvenire*. "It commits us to live in a highly consistent way: in simplicity, silence and sacrifice, united to Christ," the superior of this community explained. "We learned about the Sept. 11 events, and what happened afterward, from the newspapers, but also from the many telephone calls we received from friends and acquaintances," Sister Maria said. "Some have asked us, in fact, for a word of light." Following "the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, there are different ways of reacting to the disconcert – all are important: social, political and cultural commitment, and our own, a life commitment so that, thanks to the fraternal existence we are able to live in our Carmel, the Good News will spread again to men's lives," the Carmelite said. "The current mentality gives us the illusion of being omnipotent," she said. "Thus, we lose the relation with our reality as creatures, and destroy our very selves while destroying the other." "To those who ask: 'Where is God in all this? Why doesn't God listen to us?' we suggest another question," Sister Maria said.

"Where are we? Are we in God's presence? We must not ignore God's judgement."

Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa: In a meditation to help prepare John Paul II and his aides for Christmas, a Capuchin friar said that eternity enables one to understand the meaning of Sept. 11. As happens every year, on Friday the Holy Father put aside his concerns and sat down to hear a meditation by Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Papal Household preacher, in preparation for the birth of Jesus. From the modern mosaics of the "Redemptoris Mater" chapel in the Vatican Rooms, where the Pontiff and his closest aides were gathered, attention was directed to the tragedy of New York's Twin Towers. "In last Sunday's Gospel, the first of Advent, Jesus said that at the hour that you least expect it, the Son of Man will come. This does not only refer to his last coming, but also to those comings that St. Bernard calls 'intermediate,' namely, while history lasts," Father Cantalamessa explained. "We are living today one of these intermediary comings that make history, given what happened on Sept. 11, which reminds us to a degree of what happened with the destruction of Jerusalem, which for Jesus was, so to speak, the end of the world, of a world: the Jewish world," the Capuchin added. "With his work *De Civitate Dei*, St. Augustine helps us to overcome this crisis, as in the year 410 Christians lived through something similar to what we are experiencing, when Alaric conquered Rome and devastated it," Father Cantalamessa said. "Given that Rome at the time was the guarantor of stability in the world, it was thought that perhaps it was the end of the world, as we believed, given certain recent events," he added. "However, Augustine showed that Christians' faith must endure, because God is not the guarantor of our good down here, but of the good that lasts eternally," the papal preacher continued. Hence, St. Augustine helps us to surmount this moment by reminding us of the right attitude of a Christian: "to see things from the angle of eternity, a word that we have quite forgotten," the

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19

Capuchin stressed. "This word can also help us to see the good that is evident in this situation," the priest said. We "must allow God to bring good from this evil." He continued: "No one would dare approve of terrorism, but neither does anyone approve of the previous situation as though it were ideal. There were situations that we should acknowledge were intolerable. "Perhaps the Lord wants to push us to change. He wishes to use these events, for example, to change our attitude toward poverty in the world, a situation that is certainly intolerable." The Capuchin priest concluded by suggesting to each person that they repeat the words of St. Teresa of Avila: "Let nothing disturb you, nothing frighten you, all things are passing, God is unchanging. Patience gains all; nothing is lacking to him who has God: God alone is sufficient."

Note: The above items were reprinted with permission from the ZENIT Catholic news service. For information on how to subscribe for free to this valuable news service visit their web site at: <http://www.zenit.org/>

Some Letters of Support from our Benefactors

"Dear Fr. Vandenakker, Enclosed is a cheque for \$50.00 to help support the Companions of the Cross. We have three Companions here in Halifax at St. Thomas Aquinas. I think they are wonderful and a breath of fresh air. Thank God!" – T.D. (Halifax, N.S.)

"Dear Fr. Vandenakker, Enclosed is a cheque for the Companions of the Cross Annual Fundraising Appeal. I belong to St. Timothy's parish in Toronto of which Fr. Marc Syrenne is the pastor together with Fr. John Likozar – both lovely priests, especially Fr. Marc who is very sympathetic, kind and full of fun. Phil Cummings the seminarian (intern) is doing well. We see Fr. Ben St. Croix now and again (he serves as RC chaplain of York University), but I do not recall seeing seminarian Todd Thibeau. I once saw a seminarian in St. Timothy's church – he

had a "ponytail," is he the same? I read about Murray Chupka in the fall issue and I do hope and pray he will recover enough to be ordained. I must let you know that I have a sister who is a nun. She belongs to the "Daughters of the Cross." Their Mother House is in Liege, Belgium. Since my sister has been a nun for more than 50 years, I don't suppose there is any affiliation with the Companions of the Cross. Your calendars for the year 2002 went on sale in our church and I bought a copy, so you don't have to send me a complimentary one. Wishing you all the best, your friend in Christ." – EW (Toronto, Ont.)

"Dear Fr. Vandenakker, Enclosed please find a cheque for \$500 in response to your annual fundraising appeal and a cheque for \$70 for the upcoming Lay Associate's retreat. We continue to pray daily for the Companions of the Cross and attempt to practice your spirituality. We miss your presence in Brockville very much. Your sister in Christ" – DD (Brockville, Ont.)

"Dear Companions, I am enclosing my gift of \$100 in appreciation for your faith-

106th Ottawa Women's Cursillo



Fr. Yves Marchildon and Fr. Roger Vandenakker (seated front row) served as Spiritual Directors for the 106th Ottawa Women's Cursillo held last November.

ful teaching and training of future priests. Our diocese is in dire need of priests. May God bless your faithful ministry” – JP (Powasson, Ont.)

“I am enclosing a money order for the calendar, which I think is lovely. As usual I enjoy reading about the Companions in the issues sent out. The pictures are great. It’s always nice to see familiar faces. Thanks again. God Bless all of you. You’re in my prayers” – AF (Regina, Sask.)

“Dear Companions, Yes, the Lord is blessing us abundantly, and herewith a share, small that it may be, to assist in the formation of those that are preparing to serve the Lord full time. A special greeting to Fr. James MacGillivray. God bless, and may you have a bountiful harvest of field workers for the Lord in 2002” – W&MF (Iroquois, Ont.)

Note to our Houston Texas Benefactors – we would love to hear more from you about how things are going at the Catholic Charismatic Center and Queen of Peace parish. For your information, the Companions of the Cross is a registered charity in the United States. If you (or any American) wishes to make a contribution to help support the training of our seminarians please make your cheques payable to “The Companions of the Cross” and mail them to Fr. Francis Frankovich, Catholic Charismatic Center, 1949 Cullen Blvd., P.O. Box 230287, Houston, TX 77223-0287, U.S.A.



Ministry in Japan

Here’s a brief report of my trip to Japan last fall: I left Canada on Wed. Oct. 31st and arrived in Japan on Nov. 1st. I stayed the first couple of days at Fr. Joe Broderick’s parish in Chiba, which is a suburb of Tokyo. Fr. Joe is a Columban priest. I celebrated Mass in his parish, got over my jet lag (it’s a 13 hour time difference), and even did a day of sightseeing in

Tokyo. Talk about a crowded city! Tokyo’s greater metropolitan population is 20 million. But everything about Japan is neat, clean, and efficient. The people are super friendly too. I then took a 3-hour “bullet” train ride to Osaka where I began leading the Priests’ Retreat on the evening of Sun. Nov. 4th. Each day included two main talks, a homily at Mass, Breviary, Rosary, “Ministry session”, and Holy Hour in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

There were about 25-30 priests who attended, many with experience in the Charismatic Renewal. Many were foreign-born missionary priests who had spent 40-50 years of their priesthood in this land. It was an honour to meet these men and minister to them. The Lord’s Spirit was truly in evidence. It was definitely a time of grace and renewal. Fr. Sean Ryle, a Columban priest from Ireland whom Fr. Bob knows, was the

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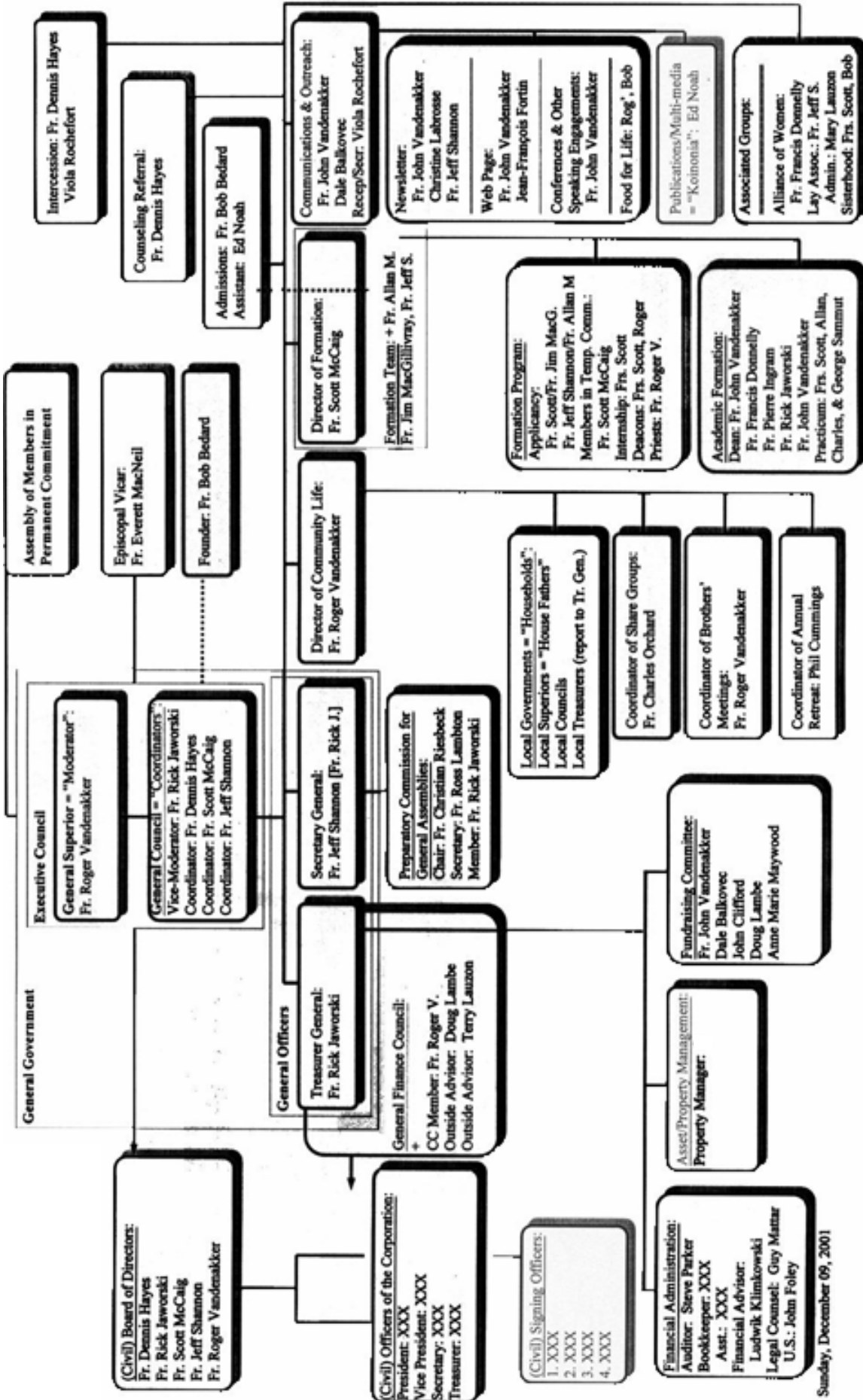
man who arranged things. He is celebrating his Golden Jubilee of ordination this year! The Priests' Retreat ended on Fri. Nov. 9th. Fr. Sean and I then took the train to Nagoya where we stayed at a SVD house on the campus of a Catholic University. The next day (Sat. Nov. 10th) I conducted a day of Renewal for the laity at the "Logos Center" at this university. About 60-70 lay people attended. It too was a blessed day. The person leading the music ministry was a Japanese student who had graduated from the Franciscan University of Steubenville. So the praise and worship was great. All of my talks at the Priests' retreat and at the day of Renewal were translated by a wonderful lady by the name of Hitomi. On my last day in Japan I celebrated Mass for a small group of English parishioners in Nagoya. Then it was off to the airport for my flight back home. The only problem was my flight had been cancelled! I only discovered this upon my arrival at the airport. Fortunately, I was able instead to get on a Varig flight (Brazil's national airline) to Los Angeles, and from there on some Air Canada flights back to Ottawa, arriving at 1:00 a.m. on Monday Nov. 12th. Here are a few pictures of my trip. I thank God for arriving home safely and for all your prayers. It was an amazing experience!



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.

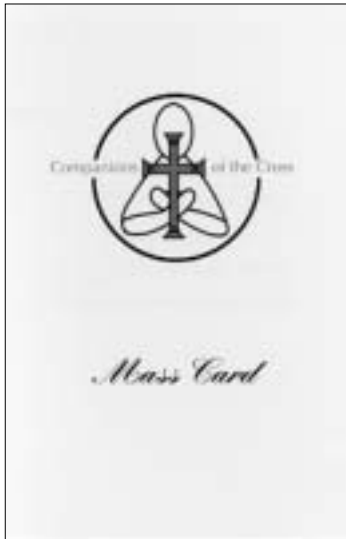


ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR THE COMPANIONS OF THE CROSS



Sunday, December 09, 2001

Companions of the Cross 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.)

COMPANIONS OF THE CROSS FINANCIAL SUMMARY

For the Fiscal Year Ended
August 31, 2001

INCOME :

General Donations	\$1,173,152
Other Income	40,387
Reimbursed Expenses	117,569
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,331,108

EXPENSES :

Administration (office salaries, rent, supplies, phones, professional fees)	\$ 121,202
Amortization	58,213
Communication (newsletter, brochures, fundraising)	109,363
Financing Charges	70,182
Intra-Community & Outreach (Community staff salaries, supplies, retreats)	256,176
Residential Operations (utilities, food, supplies, cook's salaries, maintenance)	259,622
Seminarian Formation (formation team salaries, tuition, medical, graduate studies)	335,459
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,210,217

OPERATING SURPLUS

120,891*

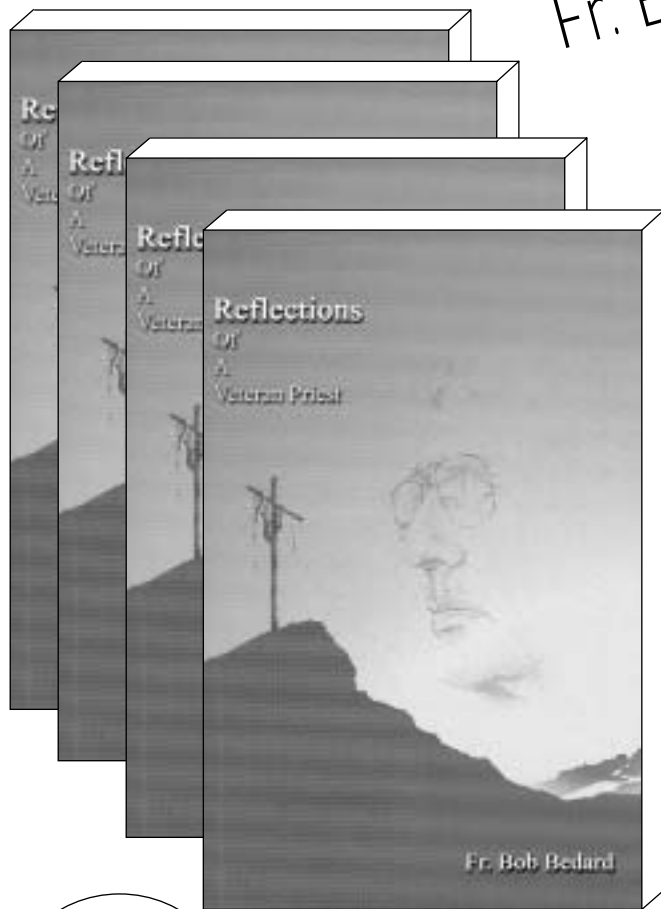
*Notes

Although we show an operating surplus for the fiscal year, it should be noted that we also carry liabilities of \$1,098,438 which are primarily mortgages owing on all our properties.

Our Chartered Accountants, Parker, Prins, Seel, have done a thorough audit of our financial operations and we have submitted their full report to our Executive Council and to the Archdiocese of Ottawa.

We are grateful to all our spiritual and temporal benefactors for their prayers and financial support over the past year. May the Lord bless you abundantly for your generosity.

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part works as it should the
whole body grows and builds
itself up through love"
(Ac 2:47)*