

Winter 2006

# Companions of the Cross

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## Inside

World Youth Day  
Report

Spiritual Poverty

Inspired by  
the Saints



# REACHING FOR TRUTH AMID STORMS OF DECEIT



- **Pope Benedict XVI vs. The Dictatorship of Relativism**
- **The Truth about The Da Vinci Code**
- **Surviving the Culture War: Family, Work, School & Politics**

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Companions of the Cross



## FEATURE

by Fr. Bob Bedard

# The Holy Women

Well... the Lord is at it again. I find myself in the unexpected role of founding another community – the CC sisterhood. Having spent the last 20 years almost exclusively with the question of young men and the priesthood, I will now add to that young women and the consecrated life. I am thus in obvious need of encouragement and prayers in this new (for me) and daunting responsibility.

I have found myself the last few days drawing from my memory pictures of nuns that I have known.

Basically, the ones I recall from days gone by were a jolly lot. They were prayerful, dedicated, hard-working and most of them had a good sense of humour and loved to laugh.

The ones I had teaching me in school were properly stern. Many of the sisters were school principals and carried the extra load of school-wide discipline. I learned to respect them deeply when I myself had to take up the role of high school teacher and principal after I was ordained. Those were not simple tasks. Youngsters, I found, were not naturally well behaved and obedient, but they would fall into line if bullied a bit. After they found out where they stood and what was expected of them (or else) they were wonderful. A great many of them I could actually count as my friends.

What long habits the nuns wore! How did they ever manage through the hot weather? And the pockets they had in those skirts! I remember seeing some of them

pull out amazing things – scissors, rulers, protractors, first aid kits, cod liver oil for the kids, and, of course, the strap which they used to coax recalcitrant scholars back into line.

What kind of women will these new sisters be? Right away, memories of the nuns of my past come rushing into my mind. There were gentle and charming ones. There were amusing and lively ones, frustrated and unhappy ones, prayerful and wonderful ones, nuns of all kinds, temperaments and preferences. But, by and large, my experiences with the consecrated women are among my most treasured reminiscences.

*We are committed to seeking the Lord's will in all things, all decisions. I see the sisterhood, once established, moving ahead step by step as God indicates. May His glory be celebrated and the Church be served.*

It pains me to hear so many people, mostly women, speak with actual venom about “those awful nuns” who treated them so unfairly, even cruelly. It can't be true, I say to myself. It must be that they never got to understand one another, that the sis-

ters never perhaps let their hair down and allowed the young ladies to see who they really were. But the nuns didn't fool me. I knew they were real flesh and blood women with their natural likes and dislikes, their triumphs and their struggles. And they have had my highest admiration.

More recently there has emerged another breed of consecrated women. These are the ones who have doffed their formerly long and heavy habits in favour of a more personally expressive garb. They have asserted their independence, as is their right, in their determination to blaze a new trail for Catholic sisterhood. Unfortunately, many of them have left most of what's Catholic behind them. As a result, their ranks are thinning and their demise is not so very far off. What a shame. The great pioneer women who went before them deserved much better.

But the future lies before us. What are the new sisters to be like?

We are committed to seeking the Lord's will in all things, all decisions. I see the sisterhood, once established, moving ahead step by step as God indicates. May His glory be celebrated and the Church be served. But I can't predict what it will look like.

Things look promising. Two young women, Anna Chan and Monique Bisson, have been persevering together, working part time and living the common life, with common prayer and good works. They have recently moved from their very

small flat to a considerably larger place on Irving Avenue with room to receive a few guests at a time. They are now fielding quite a few inquiries and have had a few week-long visitors as well.

We are, to this point, without a name. The vision we have had was for a community of sisters which would be quite independent of the CCs but would be available to work with the priests in everything except sacramental ministry.

What, then, will the sisters actually do? They could do any ministry the superior

of the sisterhood appoints them to do, hopefully with due regard to their interests, desires and gifts.

The sisterhood will relate to the Companions of the Cross in the same way the CCs relate to a bishop. A bishop may ask the CCs to take on a responsibility in his diocese. The community will discern it in prayer and make a response to the bishop. Likewise, the community of priests or any other body, which asks the sisters to take on some ministry, will have to wait until the latter's leadership discerns it in prayer and makes a response.

So... the nameless community will take root soon. I'm praying that the Lord will line up droves of young ladies, fired up for the Kingdom of God, consecrated to Him, ready to take their places in the Lord's army to regain territory the enemy has stolen.

May we count on your words of encouragement and your regular prayers? ☺

.....  
*Fr. Bob Bedard is the founder of the Companions of the Cross.*

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# FEATURE



## EXPERIENCING WORLD YOUTH DAY 2005

By Fr. John Likozar

BE-NE-DE-TO, BE-NE-DE-TO!

This was the chant that was heard throughout Germany this summer as pilgrim youth from all over the world came to Cologne to celebrate XX World Youth Day, and to greet our new Pope. I was privileged to be there with the pilgrims from St. Timothy's Church in Toronto. During the week of celebrations, over 1 million pilgrims converged upon the city of Cologne, often bringing traffic and the transit system to a standstill, yet, despite such difficulties, the enthusiasm of the youth could not be quashed.



Preparations for our pilgrimage began early in February 2004, when the Archdiocese of Toronto began to plan a WYD pilgrimage through its Office of Catholic Youth (OCY). The youth of St. Timothy's Parish quickly got on board and began to prepare for Germany. Preparations initially included registra-

tion, and planning of different fundraising events. The parish itself was supportive of its young pilgrims, offering advice, and help to organize different fundraising and spiritual events. After over a year of

prayer and preparation, the pilgrims made ready to leave for Germany. We were part of a group of about 350 pilgrims from the OCY. This group was split up into two pilgrimage tours, with one going directly to Cologne, and the other tour journeying first to Rome Italy, for four days, and then meeting up with the first group

in Cologne Germany. St. Timothy's was part of the Rome-Germany pilgrimage.

We left for Rome on August 10, and arrived 7:00 a.m. the following morning (Rome time). Although the overnight flight was a sleepless one, we were ready to begin our pilgrimage. During our stay in Rome, we had two days of planned tours: a historic tour of Rome and a religious tour of Rome. On our historic tour, we visited many sites including the Coliseum, the Roman Forum, and the

Trevi Fountain. On our religious tour we visited the Vatican Museum, the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, and the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Wall. On our free days, many of us would take to the streets to discover other sites such as the Bridge of the Angels, the Pantheon, the Piazza del Popolo, the Spanish Steps, and the endless flavours of gelato.

After four days we were off next to Cologne and WYD. Cologne is the fourth largest city in Germany with a population of about 1 million. The centerpiece of the city is its towering gothic Cathedral beside the Rhine River. The Cathedral is home to the relics of the three Magi and was the focus of many WYD events. Huge crowds of pilgrims were always gathered around the Cathedral waiting patiently for their chance to visit and see the shrine of the Magi.

The opening ceremonies of WYD began on Tuesday August 16 with the Opening Mass that was held at the *Rhine Energy Football Stadium*, and was presided over by Cologne's Archbishop Joachim Cardinal Meisner. Cardinal Meisner warmly welcomed us and reminded us that our search for a "fulfilled life has led



us to Cologne, where we will be following in the footsteps of the first God-seekers, the Three Kings” who came in search of God, following his star. And as a result, the theme chosen for this WYD would be the words of the Magi from Matthew’s Gospel: “*We have come to worship him*” (Mt 2:2).

The following two days were days of catechesis, where pilgrims went to different catechetical sites to be instructed by the shepherds of the Church. Our catechesis site was the *Bay Arena Football Stadium* in Leverhussen, and our catechists were Theodore Cardinal McCarrick (Archbishop of Washington D.C.) and Archbishop Terrence Prendergast (from Halifax diocese).

It wasn’t until Thursday that we got our first glimpses of Pope Benedict XVI. Many saw, on television, his plane land just before noon hour, and many more pilgrims crowded along the banks of the Rhine River (some even wading into the water) to see Pope Benedict as he sailed by on the papal boat.

On Friday, the OCY pilgrims gathered outside of the youth hostel, which was our residence, to celebrate the Stations of the Cross. Opportunity was also given to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As a priest, I was edified to see so many young people come and receive God’s mercy and forgiveness.

Saturday was the day of the papal vigil at Marianfeld. Marianfeld (Marian Field) is a grassy field located some 20 km southeast of Cologne. The field is the site of a former open-pit lignite mine, and a former Cistercian monastery. Its name comes from a 15th century stone Pieta statue of the Virgin Mary, which countless pilgrims came to venerate and before which many were reportedly healed.

For the vigil, about 800,000 pilgrims had gathered to meet and pray with the pope. The evening was divided into two, with Vespers and Eucharistic Adoration.



During the Vespers, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on why the Magi had set off on their journey in search of the Lord.

The Magi were troubled with the state of their world. They knew of the Israelite prophecies of a saviour king who would bring about a true justice that comes only from God. They wanted to find and serve that king, to fall prostrate at his feet and so play their part in renewing the world. When they found him they recognized him as the Saviour and fell down in adoration. But things were not as they had expected – how could this Child have the power to change things? The Magi had to change their ideas about power, about God and about man, and learn that God’s ways are not as we would imagine them or might wish them to be. It meant that they themselves would have to change and become different, “they must learn God’s ways”.



Benedict encouraged the youth do the same, to kneel before the same Lord and King and to surrender themselves in service, that as they search for meaning and a solution to our own disordered world, to realize that true revolution comes only from God. "It is not ideologies that save the world, but only a return to the living God, our Creator, the guarantor of our freedom, the guarantor of what is really good and true. True revolution simply consists in turning to God."

Many of the youth heard Pope Benedict's words and as the evening continued, many of them stood or knelt (and even prostrated themselves) in silence before the Eucharist in the monstrance.

The following morning, after a night under the cool air, we made ready to celebrate the closing Mass with the Pope. As the time for the Mass approached, many more pilgrims made their way to Marianfeld. The attendance for the final Mass was estimated at 1.1 million, with about 9,800 priests and bishops ready to concelebrate with the Pope.

In his concluding homily, Pope Benedict again encouraged us to adore Christ in the Eucharist, and realize that adoration and union with him in the Eucharist brings about transformation in our own lives. He also spoke about not neglecting Sunday Mass just because it may seem inconvenient. Sunday is the Day of the Lord, the Day of Resurrection, the day of entering into the new creation of God's salvation. Coming to Mass is "what gives focus to our free time," and it is in the Eucharist that we find the true joy that we need so much in our lives.

In the Angelus that followed the Mass, Pope Benedict officially announced that the next WYD would be celebrated in Sydney, Australia in 2008. As he left Marianfeld, the crowd was still abuzz with pilgrims praying, dancing, seeking confession, or trying to find out how they would get back home. Because of the higher than expected numbers, the shuttle buses and trains could not handle the crowds and so many pilgrims decided to just walk towards Cologne. St. Timothy's pilgrims were amongst them. Although

some complained and wondered if we were going in the right direction, I heard one pilgrim remark: "It's a pilgrimage, it's not meant to be easy!"

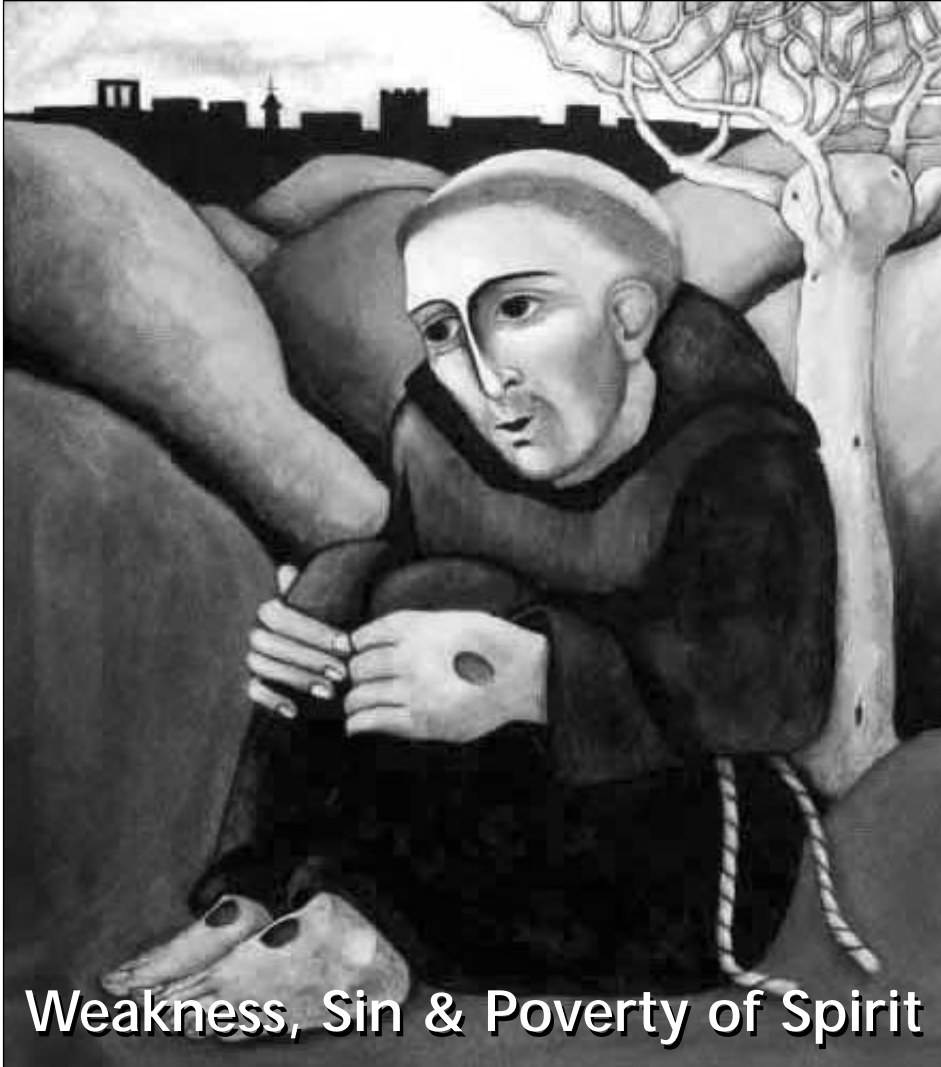
WYD 2005 was a tremendous experience of a Church that is alive and growing in our young people. Being around so much young joy cannot help but be contagious! Pope John Paul II has truly left us with a gift and an antidote to a consumerism that leaves many of our youth high and dry. Pope Benedict XVI is a wise and inspiring teacher that understands the issues and challenges that face the Church of today, and he is not shy in challenging us to move outside of our comfort zones and to **open wide the doors to Christ**. I look forward to the challenges that await the Church, and I know that there are many young people out there, who are also ready to witness to the world that Jesus Christ is alive in their lives. **See you in Sydney mate!** ☺

.....  
*Fr. John Likozar is the Pastor of Holy Rosary parish in Ottawa.*



## FEATURE

by Chris Vonesch



### Weakness, Sin & Poverty of Spirit

Art by Michael O'Brien <http://studiobrien.com/>

**A**s seminarians and priests, and as lay men and women desiring to grow close to our Lord, there is an interesting phenomenon that seems to take place in our lives.

Just after our conversions, while the glow of the initial encounter with God's love had not yet even faded, we were fed with a new confidence. We knew of God's love, we believed in his favour, and everything seemed to be coming into order very quickly. And it was assumed

that the little sin we thought we had would just disappear if we pretended it wasn't there. After all Christians weren't supposed to be sinners, they were supposed to be saints.

Now, I have come to notice three major camps in the way that sin is perceived and dealt with by Christians who are "mature in the spiritual life." We can become **idealists**, we can become **cynics**, or we can become **realists**.

In the beginning we seem to become idealists, when our eyes are opened to the way things **ought** to be. But very soon this idealism can quickly become its opposite, where cynicism begins to take over as we notice more and more that things are **not** what they ought to be. And they don't seem to be becoming what they ought to be very quickly either. This stage is a dangerous place to be, and I have met many, from the teenage years to the "golden years," who are **caught** here. There seems to be this underlying belief that causes them to mistrust the love that is given them, so that every action and reaction is coloured with the assumption that life has somehow cheated them.

I have found that realists are rare. There are both idealists and cynics who **pose** as realists, but it seems that the authentic ones are few and far between. They are usually older men and women who have managed to live through the suffering that life has given them, and they have come out surprisingly peaceful.

But I want to talk about the **cynics** today, because they are widespread in today's generation, and lo-and-behold, there are traces of it in me.

One major factor that has caused me to hesitate on my road to the priesthood is the fact that I have seen many priests who appear to be unhappy, cynical men—and unhappy, cynical men are not inspiring! Now, we are blessed to be part of an exceptional community, and I have been blessed with exceptional parish priests while growing up, but the **fear** has stood out nonetheless, looming in the background. It slowly eats away at the call to childlikeness and purity of heart, and the joy that is found in the freedom of Christ.

But I have also come to realize in myself that cynicism and unhappiness begin to eat away at **hope** and **faith** the more we lose sight of what is most essential: **the merciful love of the Father**.

We can begin to see our sin all too clearly as we walk towards the Lord. And as we get closer and closer to him, for some reason rather than focusing on the love and mercy that is being poured out, we can begin to look at ourselves with more and more disgust. The brighter the light, the more tendency there can be to self-hatred.

Perhaps this is because we have not understood mercy yet.

When we see our sin we tend to get all frustrated, and beat ourselves up over it. Why? Because sin is evil? The more likely answer is that we still live somewhat in condemnation. We live believing that if we do anything wrong at all, then we are condemned. We live believing that condemnation is more powerful than love. We live believing that if we can only do things right, **then** we will be loved by the Father.

But St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus gives us these words: “Do not let your weakness make you unhappy. When, in the morning, we feel no courage or strength for the practice of virtue, it is really a grace; it is time to lay the axe to the root of the tree, relying upon Jesus alone. If we fall, an act of love will set all right, and Jesus smiles... You know well that our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, or even at their difficulty, as at the love with which we do them. What, then, have we to fear?”

We as men have a tendency to scorn any sign of weakness in ourselves, but the recognition of this weakness is a path that leads to poverty of spirit.

Thérèse goes on: “If you bear in peace the trial of being displeasing to yourself, you offer a sweet shelter to Jesus. It is true that it hurts you to find yourself thrust outside the door of your own self, so to speak, but fear not; **the poorer you become, the more Jesus will love you.**”

When we see our weakness and experience the loneliness of what it means to be poor, it is really a doorway. It is the way into the desert of the heart: the interior **poustinia**. And then we begin to hear the voice of one crying out in the desert: “*Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.*”

It is no coincidence that the Baptist was to be found in the desert, and that the healing waters of baptism poured freely there. So may we recognize, in our desert, the voice that Christ heard at his baptism: “*You are my beloved son, with you I am well pleased.*” ☩

.....  
*Chris Vonesch is in his fourth year with the Companions of the Cross. He comes from Olds, Alberta.*



## TESTIMONY

by Jim Lowe

# “This is My Body... This is My Blood...”

**M**y name is Jim Lowe, and I am a second year seminarian with the Companions of the Cross. I wish to share with you how the Eucharist has had a transforming effect on me at several points in my life. At a very early age, I learned the importance of prayer. My family prayed before meals, and every night I said my prayers. We went to Mass every Sunday, there were no exceptions. Even in high school, when 10 a.m. seemed so early in the morning, my mom or dad knocked on my door several times, “Jim, time to get ready for church.” After graduating from High School, I continued to attend Mass every Sunday, taught Sunday school, was a lector, and sang in the choir.

However, after I graduated, I began to attend Mass more out of routine or habit than genuine desire. I had many distractions in my life. I worked three jobs and I had a girlfriend with whom I spent quite a bit of time. God

*Continued on page 8*



became less important, and the lifestyle I chose to live became more important.

One Sunday morning I decided to attend Mass at the National Shrine of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, Michigan. I walked in, sat down, and went through the routine that I had unfortunately become accustomed to. It was time to go to communion. I went through the line just like any other week. The priest said to me, "The Body of Christ." I responded, "Amen." Then the cup minister said, "The Blood of Christ." I responded, "Amen." As I was returning to the pew, I began to physically feel the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I felt an intimacy with God like I had never felt before. As I knelt before the altar, I cried. Everything I had learned about God started to make sense. The Mass came to life. I understood it all. The

prayers, the Liturgy of the Word, The Eucharist, Mary, the role of the saints in the Church, at that one moment, it all began to make sense.

The next week, I returned for a Life Teen Mass. I was still on fire from the week before. The entire liturgy was so powerful. Every word penetrated my heart. Again, it was time to go to communion. This time, I was not just routinely walking through the line; I was actually looking forward to receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. When the priest said, "The Body of Christ," I genuinely replied, "Amen," which in English literally means, "So it is!" As I was returning to the pew, I again felt the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I knelt before the altar and again began to cry. At this moment, I prayed, "Lord, I'm not sure why you are

doing this, but whatever it is you want from me, I'll do it." Be careful what you say to the Lord, because he will hold you to it. One minute later, the youth minister made an announcement that they needed adult volunteers for the Life Teen core team. I said O.K. Lord, I'll do it. That night, I joined the core team.

Five months later, I was on a Cursillo weekend. It was Saturday night. I was in the chapel praying before the Blessed Sacrament. Again, I began to overwhelmingly feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. I knew God wanted something from me, but I did not know what. I asked Him to give me a clear sense of what He wanted me to do in life. As I was praying, it became clear to me that I was supposed to become a youth minister. Four months later, I was hired as the Coordinator of Youth Ministry at St. John Vianney in Houston Texas. St. John Vianney has had 24 hour perpetual adoration for over 20 years and has two daily Masses. Today, they have over 7,000 families and over 100 ministries. There is power in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

While at St. John Vianney, I continued to spend time in prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament. I continued to ask the Lord to reveal what he wanted from me. I attended daily Mass as often as possible. Through careful prayer and discernment, I sensed the Lord wanted me to join the Companions of the Cross. I joined the Companions in the Fall of 2004. I continue to remain faithful to attending Mass every day. I spend time in the chapel with the Blessed Sacrament whenever possible. I will always appreciate the blessings and graces received through the power of the Eucharist. The Body and Blood of Christ are a gift to us from the same God who created the entire universe. Next time you go to Mass, when the priest says, "The Body of Christ," answer, "Amen," with conviction. At that moment, you and Christ become one, and the Holy Spirit penetrates your heart! God bless you. ☩

# Our Lady of the Garden

Photos of Marian statues (and an angel) gracing the gardens of our CC Lay Associates and friends.



Centre image: Suzanne Friis; Clockwise from top left: 1 - Helen Wolff; 2 - Peggy McGrath; 3 - Gabriel Parrodi; 4 - Shirley Radey; 5 - Heidi & Hilda; 6 - Jean Osbourne; 7 - Barbara Nolan; 8 - Cathy Pereira; 9 - Joan Surette; 10 - Clarice Dalton; 11 - Lee Watson

# Inspired by the Saints



by Tom Prugo

**D**o you have a favourite saint? The Catholic Church has literally thousands of saints, representing two millennia of history and offering us role models from every culture, race & ethnicity in the world! Yet how many of us take the time to reflect upon their accomplishments or to integrate their examples into our own hectic lives? Truthfully, I gave little thought to the saints during my years as a young adult. Now, I can look back and recognize that there were a few who either directly or indirectly, helped shape my decisions, career path and other key turning points in life.

In Secondary School, the saint I most readily identified with was St. Jean de Brébeuf (one of the Canadian martyrs). At first the association was superficial. My school bore his name. Later, it assumed greater meaning as I began to marvel at how heroic he must have been, willing to abandon the comforts and luxuries of “modern” France to respond to God’s call to evangelize a new and unknown world. Unfortunately, owing to a series of misfortunes (successive poor harvests, the outbreak of measles which the Europeans had inadvertently brought to them, along with key military defeats to the Mohawks) Brébeuf along with several other “Men of the Black Robes” would end up being martyred.

Even now, I cannot fully grasp the strength of Brébeuf’s faith & conviction to be able to offer his own life in service to God’s will. Thankfully, few if any of us will ever be called to such a sacrifice but my teachers did warn us that we too would be challenged and tested, albeit in a different manner. I didn’t fully envision what they meant until I attended university. There, God and faith in general were not only directly challenged but dismissed by professors extolling the virtues of liberalism, modernity and science. Freedom, equality, and justice were taught as principles created and perfected by humans alone. The world didn’t need God.

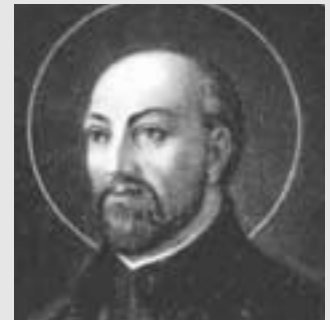
On some conscious level, I sadly bought into that illusion of immediate gratification, consumerism and the belief that we could bring about our own happiness. During my years at university, I strove to obtain one degree after another in the quest to become a renowned professor of history. I read all the great works of the past: Aristotle, Socrates, Freud, Hobbes, Rousseau, Marx etc. But did they really offer a true solution to our world’s problems or to the questions: why are we here? and what is life all about?

My faith walk was in its infancy. I believed God existed but that he was too busy to answer my own prayers or to take an active role in my day-to-day affairs. In retrospect, I couldn’t have been any more wrong. The media or society at large is quick to blame God for wars, the plight of the poor and other such sufferings. But is that a fair assessment? Study in depth what happened in Bosnia or Rwanda or why there are many poor in a certain country and all the answers will lead to us and not God as the culprit. These events were not the product of religious intolerance but rather of unchecked nationalism coupled with gross economic and political disparity amongst the haves and have-nots. This is the result of people who believe in the supremacy of man and where has that led us?

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I chose to become a teacher as I always viewed it as a noble profession and calling. I enjoy learning and I am the kind of person who wants to make a difference in the world. In reflecting on the two schools I have taught in, I’ve noticed several interesting coincidences.

My first school was St. Luke. Here was a school dedicated to the patron saint of artists, a passion I’ve had since I was a



child! My next and current school is St. Jerome. Here too an interesting connection. St. Jerome is the patron of scholars and students, a title he received from translating the Bible into the modern Latin Vulgate. Secondly, St. Jerome was born in the province of Dalmatia (in modern day Croatia), the same region where my family comes from!

Over the past three years, my faith walk has matured to a degree I never could have imagined. I've been blessed to have visited places like Medugorje and the Philippines as well as meeting various Bishops and well-known Catholic lay people like Aunt Babsie Bleasdel and Sister Clare Fitzgerald, a leading Catholic educator from the U.S.

I now have a loving and personal relationship with our Lord. Thanks to St. Thérèse, I see God all around me, be it in a sunset or the wind as it rustles through the trees. She has taught me to teach my students the importance of recycling and protecting our environment as we are stewards to God's creation.

On another level, I am indebted to Mother Teresa who protected and loved those in society deemed as disposable owing to their lack of financial means or frailty of health. She has encouraged me to reach out and offer ever greater love and attention to those students suffering from depression or low self-esteem. Perhaps she is the reason why I chose to give up

half of my summer vacation to go to build classrooms and interact with the poor in the Philippines. (P.S. It was the most meaningful and satisfying experience I ever had!) I now teach my students to embrace our differences and to see one another as true brothers and sisters.

Perhaps of all the saints I most readily admire or wish to emulate is St. Pio of Pietrelcina. His reverence and sanctity for the Holy Eucharist reminds me that this is the TRUE body and blood of Jesus Christ, and not some symbolic representation or mere remembrance of an historic event. I learned that in receiving communion, we are not only able to receive Christ but Christ can also receive us!

Padre Pio's example has helped renew my desire for Confession. Like many Catholics I never fully understood this sacrament. Since I could pray to God directly, then surely I could tell him of my sins and say that I am sorry! This line of thinking, however, is misguided. Think about it. Is it not more difficult to publicly say to someone, "these are my sins and I am truly sorry" than simply to voice it to yourself? The reason why we need an intermediary (priest) is to enable us to be in the right state of repentance. This extra step or effort shows our willingness to make amends and that we are really seeking forgiveness.

We live in a world that seems to emulate the wrong kinds of heroes. Many of

today's students, and dare I say some of us, wish to be a famous actor, musician, athlete, or someone with extreme wealth or power. Yet how many in reality will ever obtain such material fortunes or public notoriety? This is a set-up for failure and disillusionment. I challenge every Catholic to revisit and contemplate the lives of the saints for they offer a guaranteed path to truth, inner peace, happiness and solutions to the stresses and challenges we collectively face in the 21st century! Moreover, they lead us to God, the Creator of all things.

Admittedly it is at times difficult to be a practicing Catholic much less a charismatic one in today's world. But I encourage you to try a Marriage Encounter or a Life in the Spirit Seminar or try to adopt a saint as a role model and see what happens! Your life will become less burdened, more manageable and meaningful once you do this. Our God is a loving one who has always been at our side. All you need to do is to open up your heart and mind. So try to emulate a favourite saint, try saying the rosary or begin praying once again and see your life, friends and relationships be FULLY TRANSFORMED – imagine how the world would then look! ☩

.....  
*Tom Prugo is a lay associate of the Companions of the Cross*



# Companions of the Cross

## D O N O R   R E S P O N S E   F O R M

**I would like to participate as a partner with the Companions of the Cross in the formation of candidates for the priesthood. I have indicated below the method of support that I prefer. To view our Privacy Policy please visit our web site.**

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

Street Address/P.O. Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov./State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE SECTION(S) BELOW WHICH APPLY TO YOU:**

Enclosed is my cheque payable to the Companions of the Cross in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed are \_\_\_\_\_ post-dated cheques, payable to the *Companions of the Cross*.

I prefer to charge my donation to my credit card (*check one*):  Mastercard  VISA

Number: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Make this a (*check one*):

one-time donation  monthly donation (can be cancelled at any time with one month's advance notice)

**Automatic Monthly Direct Payment:**

I hereby authorize the Companions of the Cross to deduct (*check one*):

\$25  \$50  \$100  \$200  Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of each month

from my account indicated below. I understand that I may cancel this transfer at any time by notifying the Companions of the Cross at least one month in advance.

Name of Financial Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Number      Transit Number      Account Number

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we have enclosed the required personal cheque marked "void".

I would like a free subscription to the Companions' quarterly newsletter.

Please pray for the following special intention: \_\_\_\_\_



Please tear out this entire page, place it in the postage paid envelope provided, and then drop it in the mail.  
Your support of our community is very much appreciated!

*Introducing*  
**Companions of the Cross  
In Memoriam Cards**

**A fine way to express sympathy for a recently deceased individual  
and also support the life and ministry of our community.**



When a dear friend or relative dies, what can a donor do to honour his or her memory? Flowers bring some consolation, but their beauty fades. There is another way – by using our specially designed card to make an “In Memoriam” contribution to the Companions of the Cross.

These “In Memoriam” cards let family members know that our community’s work is being furthered in the name of their loved one through the thoughtfulness and concern of others. Like a Mass card, it also assures them of our community’s prayers for the repose of the soul of their loved one.

“In Memoriam” cards will be made available at most funeral homes in most locales where our Community ministers, or by phoning our office. A receipt for income tax purposes will be sent to the donor.

Please continue to remember the needs of the community by keeping us in your prayers. There are many ways (spiritual & temporal) that our benefactors support us – and for this we are profoundly grateful to you and to the Lord!

If you would like more information about our “In Memoriam” cards, or about other matters pertaining to Planned Giving (i.e. wills, annuities, life insurance policies, etc.), please call:

**Ken Gorman, Director of Resource Development**  
At our Companions’ Office (613) 728-3175  
Or e-mail him at: [kgorman@companionscross.ca](mailto:kgorman@companionscross.ca)



# Companions of the Cross

P r i e s t s 2 0 0 5 - 2 0 0 6



**Fr. Rob Arsenault**  
(Temporary Commitment)  
Kingston, ON Ord. 1994



**Fr. Galen Bank**  
Glenavon, SK Ord. 2001



**Fr. Bob Bedard**  
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1955



**Fr. Daren Bryk**  
Edmonton, AB Ord. 2000



**Fr. Francis Ching**  
Toronto, ON Ord. 2005



**Fr. Brian Christie**  
Sarnia, ON Ord. 2005



**Fr. Tim Devine**  
Kitchener, ON Ord. 2002



**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. Mark Goring**  
Pembroke, ON Ord. 2002



**Fr. Dennis Hayes**  
Guelph, ON Ord. 1986



**Fr. Randy Hendriks**  
Vineland, ON Ord. 2002



**Fr. Pierre Ingram**  
Guelph, ON Ord. 1995



**Fr. Rick Jaworski**  
Winnipeg, MB Ord. 1990



**Fr. John Likozar**  
Toronto, ON Ord. 2000



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



**Fr. Jim McGillivray**  
Kingston, ON Ord. 1969



**Fr. Yves Marchildon**  
Victoire, SK Ord. 1996



**Fr. Scott McCaig**  
Kamloops, BC Ord. 1995



**Fr. Michael Minifie**  
South Mountain, ON Ord. 2005



**Fr. Charles Orchard**  
Cobourg, ON Ord. 1995



**Fr. Christian Riesbeck**  
Ottawa, ON Ord. 1996



**Fr. Mike Scherrey**  
Fort Smith, AR Ord. 2005



**Fr. Jeff Shannon**  
Sudbury, ON Ord. 1997



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



# Companions of the Cross

P r i e s t s 2 0 0 5 - 2 0 0 6



**Fr. Fernando Suarez**  
Batangas, Phillipines Ord. 2002



**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



# Companions of the Cross

S e m i n a r i a n s 2 0 0 5 - 2 0 0 6



**David Bergeron**  
Granby, QC



**John Paul Bolger**  
Cambridge, ON



**Michael Clarke**  
Coaldale, AB



**Miki Dopp**  
Maryhill, ON



**Luc Filion**  
Ottawa, ON



**Lawrence Hyginus**  
Toronto, ON



**Luke Jalsevac**  
Toronto, ON



**Rachad Khadij**  
Montreal, QC



**Simon Lobo**  
Ottawa, ON



**Jim Lowe**  
Troy, MI



**Carlos Martins**  
Kitchener, ON



**Bernard Messier**  
Stoney Point, ON



**Chris Murphy**  
Bawlf, AB



**Brian O'Neill**  
Montreal, QC



**Barry Phillips**  
Toronto, ON



**Richard Pilon**  
Vinton, QC



**Jamie Utronkie**  
Killaloe, ON



**Chris Vonesch**  
Olds, AB

*This photo display does not include first year applicants as they were featured in our Fall issue.*



## FEATURE

by Gerry Kupferschmidt

It is hard to believe that Maryvale Academy is well on the way to completing its first year of operation. Many of the families involved in this ambitious project have been in the pews of Companions of the Cross parishes listening to the exhortation of people like Fr. Bob Bedard telling us to “find out what God is doing and support it” and then “get on board and run with it.” In a nutshell, this is exactly how Maryvale Academy came into being. A small group of faithful Catholics came together under the leadership of Cyril Dowling to put plans in place and build the team necessary to launch an independent Catholic school in Ottawa (which opened in the fall of 2005).

Providence has played a large role in getting Maryvale Academy to where it is today. The lion’s share of capital and equipment (including desks, computers, curriculum and books) has been donated by generous people and businesses, who we remember daily in our morning Rosary. It seemed for most of the summer leading up to our opening day, that the Lord was simply giving us everything we needed along our way for this project. As long as we kept walking with Him, we would find little caches of grace along the road. It was an exciting and joyful time.

Learning from the experience of more established independent schools such as Wayside Academy in Peterborough, and bringing to bear the considerable professional experience of the Board of Directors, Maryvale Academy began to catch the attention of prominent members of the Catholic community.

The Diocese has taken notice and graced us with a few official visits. Msgr. Len Lunney, Episcopal Vicar, has visited us and has been impressed with our vision, especially the curriculum and the Catholic



## MARYVALE ACADEMY

spirit of the school. Fr. Doris Laplante, Chancellor for the Archdiocese of Ottawa, also visited us upon our request for permission to repose the Blessed Sacrament in our Chapel. Fr. Laplante recommended to the Archbishop that Maryvale Academy be permitted to reserve the Blessed Sacrament. The Archbishop was gracious enough to accept our request. It was very edifying to see the excitement in the students at the prospect of our Eucharistic Lord being present to them. They prayed for several days before the announcement, and they literally shouted for joy when the Archbishop allowed us this great privilege.

We are blessed with the support of eight different priests from various parishes around the diocese who make the sacra-

ments available to our students. Weekly Mass and monthly Confession, as well as some religious instruction and Latin, are all being offered by our beloved priests. The staff and students of Maryvale Academy are extremely grateful for this service.

Our enrollment for this year is currently at 41 students with inquiries coming in at a steady pace. This enrollment is at least four times the normal first year enrollment experienced by other independent schools in Ontario. In fact, future years look even more promising with committed registrations reaching out to 2011. Children born this year are already registered in our school. Inquiries have come from as far away as Toronto and Montreal. These people are interested in

bringing our model of Catholic education to their own cities.

What is attracting all these families to Maryvale Academy? What is happening here? It has been 17 years since I rediscovered my faith and I have never seen a stronger outpouring of grace than this. I believe the answer is that the Shepherd wants this. It is that simple.

The need for Catholic education has never been stronger in this province. Families know the dangers in our secular society, and they are looking for a school that fosters the faith while providing an excellent academic program.

The classical approach to education focuses on the goal of providing children with the educational tools to both learn and think for themselves. Classical education goes beyond academics to provide students with a moral framework for their lives by teaching them to search for truth, beauty and goodness. When a student learns mathematics, science and literature, he should be formed in the faith at the same time. Our faith has something to offer concerning the proper subject and method of scientific inquiry. It has something to offer about beauty and truth. Maryvale Academy is co-operating with God's grace to enrich our children's education so that they may learn not only the subject matter at hand, but the wisdom to live well and make good choices.

Efforts are aimed at developing the student's virtuous character, a sense of social responsibility and a profound knowledge and personal love of God through sound spiritual formation. Maryvale Academy is an environment that teaches that Truth is something to be discovered. Our focus is on much more than the technical and practical. Education should not be fragmented because we are talking about a

**This really is a school for the family by the family.**

human person not a means of production. We are talking about a soul, and the mystery of that soul only becomes clear in the mystery of the Word made Flesh. Faith, culture and life are brought together in harmony so that our children will discover Jesus Christ in the world around them while understanding their identity as creatures made for the glory of God.

Christian unity through interaction involving the family, the parish and the larger community in the educational process, is a critical component of Catholic education. Only through the effective collaboration of the home, school and parish can a Catholic school aid a child in discovering his or her gifts and reaching their potential as a child of God. Maryvale Academy recognizes that the parents are the primary educators of their children. The faculty understands that parents have delegated to them the authority to teach their children. Parents remain intimately involved in the education of their children through regular contact with the school and their presence in various capacities such as classroom volunteers. **This really is a school for the family by the family.**

Maryvale Academy is a registered charity; it is not a business. Our aim is to support Catholic families in the education and formation of their children. Our tuition structure reflects this and is built around confidence in God's providence and a willingness to risk trusting him for our daily manna. As such, our tuition is much less than a typical independent

school would charge. This forces our reliance on donations that will be made by the people who believe in what we are doing. Without this trust, we believe that we would begin to rely on our own abilities and gifts and fail the litmus test of faith. It would also push our rates beyond the reach of many Catholic families to our own detriment and we would miss our target to support the very families who need a school like Maryvale. This puts us in a position of utter dependence on God. Utter dependence on Him allows more grace to flow into our world. We need this grace. Maryvale Academy is Catholic education. It is families helping families, working with the whole community to evangelize our young; to prepare leaders for the next generation, allowing an awareness of vocation to develop in the hearts of the young.

How can you help us in our mission?

Maryvale Academy can only exist on the generosity of the Catholic community. Our ability to continue depends largely on the generosity of our brothers and sisters in Christ. The way of the Church is the way of the family. There can only be a "new springtime" in the Church if we make the necessary sacrifices and support what God is doing. Do you see yourself working or investing in this particular field or vineyard? We need your help. Catholic education will be built on the good will and sacrifice of the Catholic community. I invite you to help us financially so we can continue to offer independent Catholic education in the city of Ottawa. Please visit our website at [www.maryvaleacademy.ca](http://www.maryvaleacademy.ca) or call us at (613) 321-2186 for more information. ☺

*Gerry Kupferschmidt is the Director of Maryvale Academy.*

# LAY ASSOCIATES CORNER

by Mary Lauzon

On the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross (Sept. 14th) Masses were celebrated in our CC parishes in Halifax, Ottawa, Houston and Toronto.

**Halifax** had two new Companions of the Cross Lay Associates enrolled during their Feast of the Triumph of the Cross liturgy (Jeff Roy and Mary Ann Briand). Festivities were held at St Michael's Parish with a reception held after Mass. The CCLA group in Halifax hold monthly Praise and Worship services on Saturday nights at St. Paul's in Herring Cove (last year they were held at St John the Baptist). Fr. Tim Devine heads up the group as worship leader and then gives a talk and ends the evening with Adoration and Benediction. People come from all over the Halifax area to participate.

Other news reported from our Halifax parish is a Scripture Study being lead by Fr. Tim Divine – Scott Hahn's *Understanding the Scriptures*, a 30 week program in total. There are 47 officially registered. So eager and excited are these parishioners they are continuing on through the Christmas Season... Good job Halifax!



Fr. Tim preaching in Halifax



Fr. Terry Donahue and Ottawa apologetics course participants

**Ottawa** celebrated our Feast Day with a gathering at St. Mary's Parish. Fr Rick Jaworski celebrated the Mass and a reception was held afterwards. In October we began the Lay Formation Courses. The first one was entitled *Catholic Apologetics from Scripture & Church Fathers*. This course had over 95 registered attendees and was presented by Fr. Terry Donahue.

On October 29th, we held a Eucharistic Mini-Conference at the closing of the Year of Eucharist, with a Youth Fest in the evening. The day was very well attended and appreciated by everyone as one participant wrote:

*Dear Father,  
I want to wholeheartedly thank everyone for the wonderful "Eucharistic Mini Conference." It was very enriching. I am sorry I do not remember all the priests' names but each one did a splendid job. The holy Mass at the beginning was beautiful. Father's homily was so moving I couldn't stop the tears through the whole Mass. Fr Pierre Ingram's talk on Pope John Paul II's letter on the Eucharist was very informative and very reverently done. The music was heavenly and the testimonies were very moving. Thank you to everyone that helped to put on an amazing Conference. My life has been changed because of it. I even went to the Eucharistic conference in Mexico and I*

*got just as much from your conference. I was happy to close the Eucharistic Year off with this beautiful day. Praise God for a glorious day!*

**Houston** reports that this past October the Lay Associates were part of the New Life Evangelization Retreat team. Adela Tischina was the coordinator of the retreat this year, and gives us the following account:

*For the past 3 years, the Lay Associates at Queen of Peace Catholic Church have brought the teachings of the Companions of the Cross to the community by way of a retreat. The retreat covers the basic Gospel message of God's love, Sin, Salvation, Faith & Conversion, The Holy Spirit, and Community in the Church. Each topic begins with a talk given by the laity, followed by a powerful activity that drives the topic home, having been taught about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and giving him permission to bring about the success of the retreat. Among the Lay Associates we have found leaders and administrators that oversee the retreat; teachers and evangelists that give the talks; helps and service people that coordinate the activities, music, and other tasks; and intercessors that help with the laying on of hands in prayer. The most principal agent in the evangelization is the Holy Spirit. Thanks to the teachings of the Companions of the Cross we*



*Preparing to celebrate Mass at the CCC in Houston*

*emphasize the importance and action of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all the members of the Church. We invite the participants to draw close to the Lord by surrendering their lives to him so as to enter more deeply into the life of the Most Holy Trinity. Through the renewal of our hearts, we are able to better worship and serve God the way he deserves to be.*

And here is a testimony from someone who attended the retreat:

*After attending one of these retreats myself, I was set on fire with the Holy Spirit. I had a hunger to learn and know more about my faith and the Lord. I looked for every opportunity to attend classes or other retreats. Never imagining my ability to speak in front of 75-100 people, I now found myself drawn in and desiring to do so. The love that I found and the peace that he gave me, made me want others to know and feel this as well. I now look forward to stepping out in faith and proclaiming the Word of God to those around me, in my workplace, with my family, and with my children.*

Other activities being held in Houston are the monthly Healing Masses. The Feast of the Triumph of the Cross was held and the Lay Associates sponsored a cake and coffee reception in the hall.

### Companions of the Cross Lay Formation Course

#### *The Gospel of Life by John Paul II*

Dates: April 19 – May 24 (6 weeks)

Promote a culture of life through an in-depth study of John Paul's Encyclical Evangelium Vitae. Learn recent Catholic teaching on the issues of Abortion, the Death Penalty, Euthanasia, Stem Cell Research, and Cloning, along with the reasons for the teachings. Understand how to make End-of-Life Medical Decisions and design your Living Will in accordance with the plan of God.

Cost: \$60.00

(Includes teaching outlines and a copy of the text of the Encyclical)

Classes are taught by Fr. Terry Donahue CC, from 7:15 - 9:15 pm on Wednesdays in the hall of St. Mary's Church on Bayswater & Young. Pick up a registration brochure at your local church or call Mary Lauzon at 613-728-3175.

## COMPANIONS OF THE CROSS STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS For the Year Ended August 31, 2005

### INCOME :

General Donations	\$ 1,414,539
Legacies and Bequests	541,969
Non-cash Gifts	313,095
Other Income	103,552
Reimbursed Expenses	166,288

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**TOTAL INCOME** **\$2,539,443**

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### EXPENSES :

Administration	\$ 181,646
Amortization	64,405
Communications	126,740
Financing Charges	49,882
Fundraising	190,720
Intra-Community	530,819
Residential Operations	226,301
Seminarian Formation	538,194

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**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$1,908,707**

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Operating Surplus	630,736
Loss on Disposal of Assets	(82,546)
Gain on Disposal of Investments	15,544
Excess Revenue over Expenditures for the year	563,734

#### Notes:

We carry liabilities of \$875,176 which are primarily mortgages owing on all our properties.

Parker, Prins, Seel, Chartered Accountants, have done a thorough audit of our financial operations.

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.



# COMMUNITY NEWS & NOTES

by Fr. John Vandenakker

## Annual Ministries Mass

Ottawa-area Companions gathered this past Nov. 4th in Holy Rosary parish to celebrate our annual "Ministries Mass". Receiving ministries (of acolyte or lector) at this Mass were CC seminarians: Barry Phillips; Rachad Khadij; Jamie Utronkie; Simon Lobo; Chris Vonesch; Richard Pilon; Luc Filion; David Bergeron; and Brian O'Neill. Please keep all our seminarians in your prayers as they continue their journey of discernment and preparation for the priesthood.



## Vision 2005 Update

CC Moderator Fr. Roger Vandenakker reports: "In assessing our temporal goals and needs, the CCs have long desired a facility that would provide increased residence, office, and ministry space for our growing community. An expansion of our CC residence at 199 Bayswater (next to St. Mary's Church in Ottawa) was thought to be the optimum solution. Initial plans for such an expanded facility were drawn up already in 1998, but the project was indefinitely postponed due to financial constraints. A few years later, in 2002, when "Vision 2005" was first formulated, this type of facility was again on the table. In 2005 the CC Executive Committee recently tried to pursue this goal once more. We looked at three options: (i) a 3-storey "L"-shaped building; (ii) 3-storey "U"; and (iii) 4-storey "U" - as well as options regarding sinks & bathrooms, elevator, air conditioning, and the like. In the end, it was decided that option (ii) - a 3-storey "U"-shaped facility was the most cost efficient and practical plan to go with. As our architects progressed on the plans for constructing such an addition, accurate cost estimates came more into focus. Initial cost estimates

were based solely on square footage projections. Thus the planned addition, originally estimated to be in the range of \$2 million, quickly escalated to close to \$4 million (including tax). Given our present financial situation, the Executive Council has decided to once again postpone the building of such a facility at this time. Please keep this project in your prayers though, we are still very much in need of it. And if you know anyone with a spare million laying around the house, tell them where they can send it!"

## Personnel Update

Fr. Marc Syrenne thanks everyone for their best-wishes and prayers. He had to undergo an angioplasty at the Ottawa Heart Institute back in the fall. He reports: "My heart is doing fine. I never suffered a heart attack, which causes damage to the heart. I had angina, which does not damage the heart. So my heart is still as stony as ever. JOY!JOY!JOY!" Fr. Marc is back at Assumption Farm over-



seeing the formation program for our first year Applicants. Good to have you back in the saddle Fr. Marc.

Due to Fr. Scott McCaig's sabbatical, Fr. Jim MacGillivray has been appointed the "acting" Director of Formation until the Companions gather for their General Assembly in May 2006. Fr. Roger reports that Fr. Scott is enjoying his rest and spiritual refreshment and is taking advantage of the opportunity to be near his family in Kamloops, British Columbia. He has also been getting in some great Rocky Mountain snow-boarding, though his bones seem to ache more than they used to. Pray that he returns to us in one piece!

Due to a sincere misunderstanding and lack of communication between Fr. Roger Vandenakker, Moderator of the Companions of the Cross, and the Archdiocese of Toronto, Fr. Fernando Suarez had his faculties for pastoral ministry in the Archdiocese of Toronto revoked by Cardinal Ambrozic this past October. Fr. Fernando has been assigned a new residence by Fr. Roger in

Ottawa and has been granted faculties for ministry by the Most Rev. Marcel Gervais, Archbishop of Ottawa. He remains a priest in good standing and is continuing his pastoral and healing ministry now from his home base in Ottawa.

In addition to his ministry as Associate Pastor of Queen of Peace parish in Houston, Texas, Fr. Daren Bryk has been appointed by Archbishop Fiorenza as Spiritual Director to the Legion of Mary's governing Senatus Council (which oversees the Legion's activities in all of Texas and two other neighbouring states as well). That's a lot of territory! We pray that Our Blessed Mother will give Fr. Daren all the grace he needs to carry out his duties in this important Marian apostolate.

In mid-January 2006 CC seminarian Luke Jalsevac began a community "apostolic" assignment with our Halifax foundation and household. He will divide his time working alongside Fr. Brian Christie at the Newman Centre at Dalhousie University and with Fr. Rob Arsenault at St. Michael's Parish.

Our prayers go out to Fr. Michael Scherrey, pastor of the Catholic Charismatic Center in Houston, Texas. His father John Scherrey died in early January after a long battle with cancer. He was 91. The funeral was held in St. Boniface Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas, on Friday Jan. 6th. May the Lord welcome John into eternal glory, and continue to impart his consoling grace to Fr. John and the rest of the Scherrey family.

Effective January 1st, Fr. Randy Hendriks will be assuming the office of Pastor at St. Timothy's Parish in Toronto. This change was initiated by request, and in consultation with Fr. Dennis Hayes, who felt that due to his recent health issues over the past couple of years he was not able to continue effectively in this office. Fr. Dennis, however, will be remaining at St. Timothy's as Associate Pastor.



### Out of Africa Report

CC seminarians Brian O'Neal & Miki Dopp went on a mission trip to Africa last summer (July 7- Aug. 20, 2005). They spent the first month in Kenya, living in the parish of Irish missionary priest Fr. Kevin McGarry. After that they hooked up with Lloyd and Nancy Greenhaw of Renewal Ministries for ministry in Uganda and Rwanda. Here is a selection of their thoughts and reflections taken from the online blog they kept of their journey:

Karibu! Havari Yako? (Welcome! How are you?). Well, we made it without any hitches. While here in Kenya we are staying at Mary Mother of God parish in Embul-bul (beside the Ngong mountains. Miki and I will be giving week-long seminars in apologetics. In the afternoons we will be doing prison ministry or visiting the mission parishes or small Christian communities that Father Kevin has established.

Today I attended the parish prayer meeting and gave a short intro and teaching about apologetics and the program we will be giving (our focus will be on the Eucharist, Scripture, and Our Lady). These people could really teach us a thing or two about praising the Lord and about proclaiming the word! We were sent here to minister, but truly, we are being minis-

tered to. Njoo Roho Mtakatifu! (Come Holy Spirit!).

We also had a tour of some of the local seminaries. There are tons of religious communities here – the Salesians, Society of Missionaries to Africa, Apostles of Jesus, Dominicans, Franciscans, Passionists, Marists, etc. It is a real sign of hope for the church in Africa to see about 10 large seminaries all within the span of a few miles.

So, today we rest up and await the arrival of the Renewal Ministries Team. Off to Rwanda, and then Uganda for the week following. How the Lord is good! Last year, at our small parish outreaches, well over half of the people experienced either physical healings or emotional healings, not to mention the conversions which took place Njoo Roho Mtakatifu! (Come Holy Spirit!).

Want to read about the rest of Brian and Miki's ministry experience in Africa? Simply go online and visit their blog at: <http://www.mikidopp.blogspot.com/>

### Ministry in the Philippines

This past July, Fr. Fernando Suarez, Fr. Jeff Shannon, CC seminarians Barry Phillips, Chris Vonesch, and laymen Michael Amaral, Tom Prugo & Melvin Rivera, travelled to the Philippines to conduct some missionary work for the Mary, Mother of the Poor Foundation. Here is Chris Vonesch's report of what they accomplished:

We as Companions have done some remarkable work in the Philippines with Fr. Fernando these past few years. It is incredible to see the help that these people are getting, especially through the education of the children we sponsor. There is so much happening, but the basics include: a free pre-school for the poor; 2 to 3 free hearty meals for all the students every week at the elementary school in Butong, Batangas; building houses and



schoolrooms for the poor; starting livelihood programs for the poor to teach them how to better nourish and provide for themselves and their families; conducting healing Masses throughout the country; putting on a medical mission for 2 days in Infanta where over 1000 were killed by massive mud slides caused by illegal logging followed by massive rains. We brought doctors over from Canada, and we recruited doctors from the Philippines; they all donated their time, money, drugs, and services. Keep praying for all God's poor, and let us keep reaching out to them with the blessings we have in Christ Jesus!

### CC Priests Introduce Floor Hockey to Houston Students

*Queen of Peace priests offer beginner's puck to students of game' (Sept. 23, 2005), by Jonah Dycus -Texas Catholic Herald Staff Writer (used with permission).*

The puck whips across the gym floor and bounces off a wall before four players converge on it. Sticks steadily clack until finally, Father Christian Riesbeck slices a



pass through a huddle of eighth graders near the goal. Every Thursday during P.E. (pastoral schedule permitting), Father Christian jumps into the hockey fray with students at Queen of Peace School to offer pointers and take a few slapshots. Due to the severe lack of iced-over lakes in the Houston area, the Companions of the Cross priest supplies the children with a very agreeable athletic option in floor hockey, a sport he honed his abilities in while at the seminary.

"In Canada, ice hockey is our national sport. We are very avid hockey fans. I played street hockey growing up and field hockey in school, so I thought this would be a novel idea to introduce to the kids here," the Queen of Peace pastor and unofficial hockey ambassador said. "Being from Texas, these kids never really experienced hockey. We took them to an Aeros game not long ago, and that was one of their first exposures to ice hockey. We said let's bring them some field hockey so they can have a little bit of an experience of what ice hockey is all about." In the past two years, the game has taken off in popularity with students at Queen of Peace, especially with the sixth, seventh and eighth graders, who participate regularly.

"It is good exercise for the kids. It is also a team sport, so they get to learn about teamwork," Father Christian said. "You can see that they have a lot of enthusiasm.

Last week, I showed the younger kids how to play; how to hold a stick, how to shoot. And they are pretty excited about it." Eighth grade student Sabrina Cerda says her floor hockey skills have improved with each contest; she considers "scoring goals" to be her favorite part of the game. "I like playing a lot," she exclaimed. "It is nice to get to play with the priests because it feels like they enjoy doing this with us. They take time out to play because they know that it is what we like to do." Mark Soto's eyes widen when asked about the priests' game. "Yeah, they are very good," the sixth grader said. "I am grateful that they take time out of church to play with us."

The other priest consistently in the floor hockey mix is Father Michael Minifie, CC, a parochial vicar at Queen of Peace. Just a few months removed from the seminary, he has adopted Father Christian's pet project wholeheartedly, adding schedules, tournament brackets and designing the school's equivalent of the NHL's Stanley Cup (appropriately titled Our Lady's Cup).

Steady interaction with the young people at Queen of Peace has been a mission that both Father Christian and Father Michael take very seriously. "I just think kids need to see the whole picture of the priesthood, not just of the priesthood at Mass," Father Michael said. "They can realize that priests are fun. I call it the good life." "I

think it is good for the kids to see a different face of the priests as well,” Father Christian explained. “We are not just praying and working; we can also have a little bit of fun. Some of the boys have expressed a desire to be priests, so I think it is a good witness to them as well.” He continued, “It is great to be able to teach them something new. Just to be with the kids, it is a privilege, spending some time with them and getting to know them.”

### Mission to Tanzania

I (Fr. John Vandenakker) went to Tanzania, Africa last July to be part of a Renewal Ministries’ Mission Team headed up by Tom Edwards. For the first few days we ministered in a parish near Nairobi, Kenya (conducting a parish renewal conference). Then we travelled to the town of Moshi, Tanzania, which is near the base of majestic Mount Kilimanjaro. There we participated in a Catholic Mission Rally for 10 days, as well as ministered at special charismatic retreats for priests and sisters of the diocese of Moshi. The crowds that came out to the Rally were awesome! (20,000+ each night). The Spirit of the Lord was really moving in many wondrous ways (i.e. healings, conversions, deliverances). The Bishop was really glad we came. The hope is that this Rally will contribute to the growth and acceptance of the Renewal in this part of Africa. That is why the retreats for the priests and sisters were so crucial in this regard. They were eager to learn more about the grace of Renewal and how to pastor it and support it. There is an exceptional team of local Tanzanian Renewal leaders who assisted us throughout our journey. Pray for them! Africa faces many challenges (poverty, AIDS, etc.). But the Lord is moving! Praise God! If you would like to view some more photos of Fr. John’s journey visit our online PictureTrail album at: <http://www.PictureTrail.com/gid7972337>.

### St. Maurice Parish Construction Update

St. Maurice parish in Ottawa broke ground in the fall on their “architectural renewal project”. This undertaking involves significantly enlarging the parish hall and kitchen, constructing a beautiful new “atrium” entrance to the church, relocating the baptistry, constructing new restrooms, and renovating various offices. We will have a full report with photos in a future newsletter. For now, the photo below gives you an idea of the extent of the construction taking place there. Fr. Galen sighs “I’ll be glad when this is finally over!”



### Pilgrimage to Poland & the Czech Republic

**May 6th-18th, 2006** – with Fr. John Vandenakker of the Companions of the Cross.

Highlights Include: The Infant Jesus of Prague; St. Faustina & Shrine of Divine Mercy; Shrine of the Black Madonna at Czestochowa; Boyhood Home of Pope John Paul II; Auschwitz & Shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe; Tatra Mountain Excursion at Zakopane & Much More! To view the complete itinerary please visit our web site at [www.companionscross.ca](http://www.companionscross.ca) and click the “Upcoming Events” section, or call Gail Goshko at (613) 744-1418.

### Correction to CC Calendar 2006

Due to an oversight, the Anniversary of Ordination of Fr. Michael Scherrey does not appear in the CCs 2006 Calendar. With our apologies to Fr. Michael, his anniversary should appear as a notation on April 30. He was ordained in 2005. Please pray for him!

### Invitation to May CC Foundation Mass

Everyone is Welcome!  
Come and Celebrate  
with the Companions!  
**CC Annual Foundation Day Mass**  
**7:30 p.m., Friday May 5th**  
**St. Mary’s Church, Ottawa**  
Reception to Follow in the Hall

### Humanae Vitae Conference

*A New Beginning*  
(May 12-14, 2006)  
Lansdowne Park - Ottawa, Ontario

**DR. JANET SMITH**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

Dr. Janet Smith is the Fr. Michael J. McGivney Chair of Life Issues at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. She is the author of *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later* and editor of *Why Humanae Vitae Was Right: A Reader* and many articles on ethical and bioethics issues. Over 700,000 copies of her tape, “Contraception: Why Not?” have been distributed. She taught for nine years at the University of Notre Dame and twelve years at the University of Dallas. She speaks nationally and internationally on several issues, especially the Catholic Church’s teaching on sexuality. She is serving a second term as a consultant to the Pontifical Council on the Family.

For complete conference details see:  
<http://therosarium.ca/>

*Fr. John Vandenakker teaches theology and serves as Academic Director for the Companions of the Cross.*

# CALENDAR EVALUATION

We hope you, our supporters, have come to look forward to the annual fall appearance of the **Companions of the Cross Calendar**. In an ongoing effort to create an attractive, useful and inspiring calendar, we would like to solicit your feedback.

If you have something you would like to tell us about the calendar, please complete the following survey and return it to our main office. You can also complete the survey on-line at [www.companionscross.ca/survey](http://www.companionscross.ca/survey). Or simply e-mail your general responses/comments/suggestions to [PR@companionscross.ca](mailto:PR@companionscross.ca) with the header "Calendar Survey". Thank you for taking the time let us know what you think!



## AVAILABILITY & COST:

Supporters who have donated a total of \$50 or more over the course of the previous year receive a complimentary calendar through the mail as a thank you gift. Calendars are also offered for sale through the newsletter and through some parishes at a cost of \$10.00 each (+ \$5.00 S&H if mailed.)

How did you acquire your calendar?

- received it by mail
- purchased it through the office
- purchased by mail in response to the newsletter ad
- purchased from a CCs seminarian at a parish sale
- as a gift
- other \_\_\_\_\_

If you received one as a thank you gift, did you purchase any additional copies?

- NO
- YES: How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your parish have a sale of CCs calendars?

- YES
- NO

If not, would you appreciate being able to buy one this way?

- NO
- YES: Name of parish \_\_\_\_\_

Do you find the cost reasonable?

- YES
- NO: What would be a reasonable cost? \_\_\_\_\_

## PICTURES:

The calendars typically feature pictures of the CCs and/or their ministries. Can you suggest ideas for CCs pictures?

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Are there other types of pictures you would prefer to see?

- NO
- YES: Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

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Which picture layout do you prefer?

- Full page pictures (like in Calendar 2006)
- One picture on a background, with caption on the page
- Several smaller pictures per page

Are the picture captions...

- adequate?
- too detailed?
- not detailed enough?:

Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

## BOTTOM LINE:

Do you think the CCs should maintain the annual calendar project?

- YES: Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- NO: Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

## CALENDAR NOTATIONS:

Please comment on each of the following as they appear in CCs Calendar 2006. Indicate specifics if you feel something is not required or is missing.

Liturgical notations:

- too many
- too few
- just right
- don't include

Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you find the Legend (found on back cover) easy to follow?

- YES
- NO:

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Civil notations:

- too many
- too few
- just right
- don't include

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

CCs specific notations (priests anniversaries, events):

- too many
- too few
- just right
- don't include

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## INFO PAGES:

Contact information:

- too much
- not enough: What is missing?

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Products and services information:

- too much
- not enough: What is missing?

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Generally we have one page open for new ideas each year (inside back cover). In 2006, we included a picture of the community with a thank you message.

Do you have any ideas of what you would like to see included on this page in future calendars?

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Please share any further ideas you may have for future calendars:

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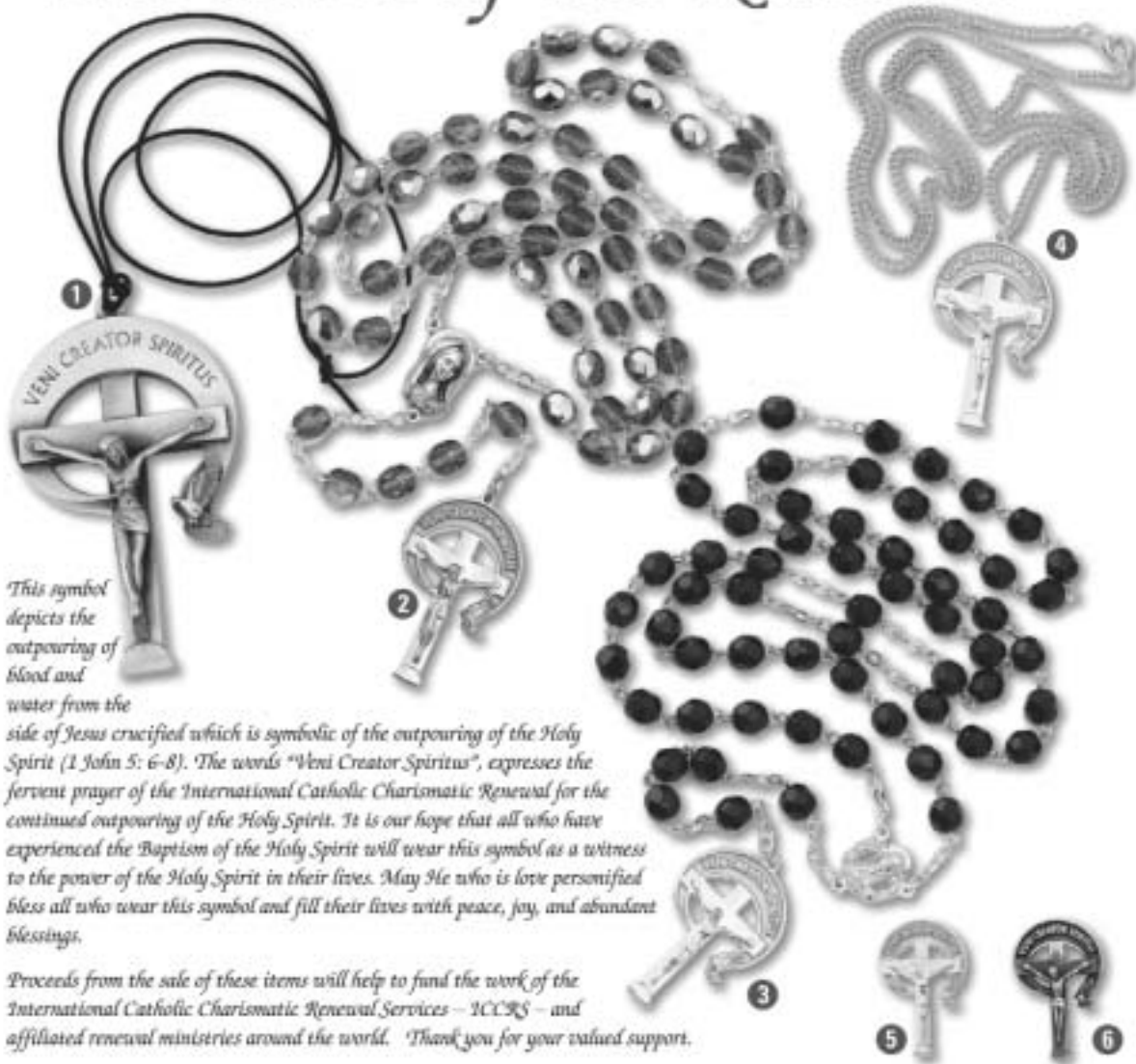
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*Thank you for your input. We appreciate it!*



# The Cross of the Renewal<sup>®</sup>



*This symbol depicts the outpouring of blood and water from the side of Jesus crucified which is symbolic of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (1 John 5: 6-8). The words "Veni Creator Spiritus", expresses the fervent prayer of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal for the continued outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is our hope that all who have experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit will wear this symbol as a witness to the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. May He who is love personified bless all who wear this symbol and fill their lives with peace, joy, and abundant blessings.*

*Proceeds from the sale of these items will help to fund the work of the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services - ICCRS - and affiliated renewal ministries around the world. Thank you for your valued support.*

## ORDER FORM

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COTR - 2	Rosary with Silver Plated Cross	\$ 12.50	\$ 12.50	€ 9.00	A \$16.00	C \$15.00		
COTR - 3	Rosary with Gold Plated Cross	\$ 12.50	\$ 12.50	€ 9.00	A \$16.00	C \$15.00		
COTR - 4	1.5" Gold Plated Pendant & Chain	\$ 7.50	\$ 7.50	€ 5.60	A \$ 9.50	C \$ 9.00		
COTR - 5	1" Gold Plated Lapel Pin	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.00	€ 2.50	A \$ 4.00	C \$ 4.00		
COTR - 6	1" Antique Lapel Pin	\$ 2.30	\$ 2.30	€ 1.80	A \$ 3.00	C \$ 3.00		
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*"We have come  
to worship him"  
(Matthew 2:2).*