

Winter 2007

Companions of the Cross



Inside

Hunger for
Healing

Fraternal Life

St. Michael's
Halifax Report





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

The editorial team welcomes your comments and inquiries.

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Publications Mail Agreement #: 40016244



Companions of the Cross



FEATURE

by Fr. Scott McCaig

A Powerful River

In his Pentecost homily in 1998 Pope John Paul II said an amazing thing. He taught: “[t]he institutional and charismatic aspects are co-essential as it were to the Church’s constitution. They contribute although differently, to the life, renewal, and sanctification of the people of God”. It would be hard to overestimate how important these words are and how poorly they are understood.

There are many people in the Church today who sincerely believe that all that is needed for the renewal of the Church is a return to sound doctrinal orthodoxy. If the faith was taught correctly and convincingly, it is argued, the renewal of the Church would be all but accomplished. I must respectfully disagree.

Without question there is a need for the faith to be taught correctly and convincingly. The very beauty and power of the truth would undoubtedly draw many to the Church. There is also, without question, a critical need for obedience to the Church’s teaching office (the Magisterium). I couldn’t agree more. The Magisterium is part of the institution of the Church. It was instituted by Jesus himself and is essential. The Pope and the college of bishops enjoy the special assistance of the Holy Spirit to teach in Jesus’ name and by his power (see *Catechism* #873). The Church could not be the Church without it. But as impor-

tant as the Magisterium is, and as important as clear and faithful teaching is, it is not enough. There is another dimension to the Church that is also essential: the charismatic dimension. Unfortunately, it is often overlooked or forgotten.

The charismatic dimension of the Church could be defined, very simply, as the dynamic action of the Holy Spirit in the life of individual Christians and of the whole Church. The most eminent way the Holy Spirit sanctifies the Church is through the Sacraments, but his action is not limited to them. The charismatic dimension is seen in many ways. It is seen when the Holy Spirit awakens people to the full reality of who Jesus is (this is largely what the “baptism” or “renewal” in the Holy Spirit is all about). It is seen in the charisms of religious orders. It is seen in the charisms of the Saints who act as heralds and prophets to the Church. It is seen when the Holy Spirit “distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank... [making] them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church” (Vatican II, *Constitution on the Church*, #12). In other words, the Holy Spirit empowers all Christians to undertake their own roles within the Church. It is seen when “[c]harisms given by the Spirit burst in like an impetuous wind which seizes people

and carries them to new ways of visionary commitment to the radical service of the Gospel” (Pope John Paul II, homily for Pentecost, 1998). It is also seen when the Spirit pours out his power dramatically to bring souls to Jesus and his Church – as on the day of Pentecost. The charismatic dimension involves the Holy Spirit calling, equipping, and empowering the whole Church to fulfill the mission Jesus gave us.

The institutional and charismatic dimensions of the Church are meant to work together a bit like a river within its banks. The banks direct the power of the river in the right direction. A river without proper banks becomes a flood, and can do more damage than good. The institutional aspect of the Church is called to direct and pastor the charismatic dimension. But a river bank without a river is only a ditch. There’s not much movement. The Gospel advances by the exciting power of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of ordinary Christians. We need the institution, certainly, but we also need the charisms.

The charismatic dimension has never been entirely absent from the Church, but it has been more evident in times of great renewal. When renewal is needed, it seems, this dimension of the Church shines forth more clearly. Our own time in Church history is one of those times.

At the beginning of the Second Vatican Council Blessed Pope John XXIII prayed, "Send upon the Church again, O Lord, as at the beginning, the fullness of your Holy Spirit – a new Pentecost for our day". In the words of Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, "The period following the Council scarcely seemed to live up to the hopes of John XXIII, who looked for a 'new Pentecost'. But his prayer did not go unheard. In the heart of a world desiccated by rationalistic skepticism a new experience of the Holy Spirit has come about, amounting to a worldwide renewal movement. What the New Testament describes, with reference to the charisms, as visible signs of the coming of the Spirit, is no longer merely ancient his-

tory: this history is becoming a burning reality today (*The Ratzinger Report*, p.43-44, 151). As Pope Benedict makes clear, it is the Lord Himself who is behind this "renewal in the Holy Spirit" and is stirring up the charisms. It is the Lord himself who is leading us to rediscover the charismatic dimension of the Church. He is giving us a new Pentecost because we need it. It is a gift from the Lord for the renewal and building up of the Church. Notice that the Magisterium itself is saying so. In the last year of his pontificate the great Pope John Paul II said, "Thanks to the Charismatic Movement, many Christians... have rediscovered Pentecost as a living and present reality in their daily life. I desire that the spirituality of

Pentecost be spread in the Church, as a renewed thrust of prayer, holiness, communion, and proclamation" (Audience with Renewal in the Spirit, May 30, 2004).

The renewal of the Church we all so desperately seek will come about only when both the institutional and charismatic dimensions of the Church are accepted and lived as the Lord intends. We need them both. We don't need a flood or a ditch, but a powerful river! ☩

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Fr. Scott McCaig is the Moderator of the Companions of the Cross. He was ordained in 1995.



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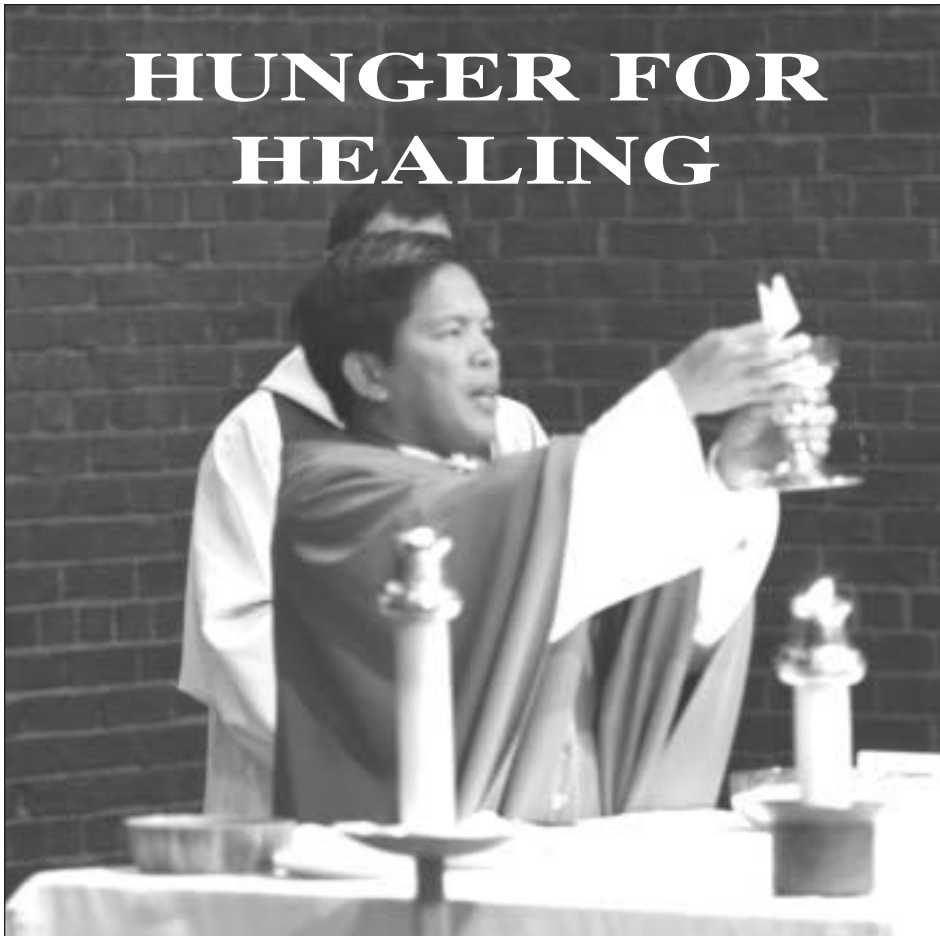
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HUNGER FOR HEALING



The following is from an article that appeared in the Ottawa Sun (Sunday, June 18, 2006). Both the article by Donna Casey and the photo by Sean Kilpatrick (front cover) are reprinted with the permission of the Sun Media Corporation.

The soft shimmer of a summer sunset streams through the back doors of St. Anthony's Church. Three ceiling fans whirr above the heads of hundreds of bowed heads. A short, broad-faced Filipino man dressed in red vestments walks across the altar to the pulpit. "I wonder why all of you are here," the priest says to the packed church, the space silent except for the muffled cry of a fussy baby.

A white-haired Italian man fidgets with his cane. A blond teenage girl sitting with her parents looks straight ahead, her ear straining to catch every word. A young mother paces the floor near the front of the church, holding her baby boy to her chest, his feeding tube taped to his tiny nose. "I don't know why you are here, but God knows why you are here," the young priest tells the congregation. "I know almost all of you hunger for healing."

A strange mix of faith and despair has brought hundreds of strangers together tonight, all with the same wish in their hearts and the same plea on their lips. They hope the soft touch of the priest's hand, offered with a whispered prayer, will make them well again. "God is using

my hands to be an instrument of his hands," the priest tells the sick, the lame, the blind, the inconsolable assembled before him. He offers a prayer to the group gathered on a muggy June night.

"To those suffering loneliness and depression, release them right now. For those who have so much pain in their bodies, those who cannot breathe, who cannot hear, who cannot see, please Lord bless them right now and heal them."

Word of mouth has brought the men and women to this Ottawa church to see the man the Catholic Church believes God has used to heal hundreds of people since he was a teenager. Since his ordination in 2002, Father Fernando Suarez has traveled the world, leaving a trail of testimonies from people who say his prayers and presence have restored their sight, cured their cancer and soothed deep spiritual wounds. Every month, Suarez's superiors at his Ottawa-based religious community (the Companions of the Cross) receive a half-dozen letters from people who say they've been healed after the priest prayed with them.

A few years ago, the 39-year-old Suarez was leading an ordinary life as a chemical engineer in his native Philippines. When he was 16, his life took a fateful turn that would lead thousands of sick and wounded souls to his door.

Suarez was walking near his home when he saw a crippled woman on the street. The teen asked the woman if she wanted him to pray with her. Suarez wasn't a churchgoer and had never prayed with anyone before. "I did it out of pity. She nodded her head and I made the sign of the cross and said the Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be to God. They were the only prayers I knew," he recalls. "All of a sudden she got up and walked. I ran - I got scared."

Continued on page 4...

The teen started going to church. Sometimes he would pray with people who were sick and later, some of those people would approach him, saying they had been healed of their ailments. The easygoing kid, who loved tennis, ping-pong and basketball, would tell them to keep it to themselves. "For the longest period of time, I didn't even want to talk about this. I was scared that he would tell me something bigger than what I could do."

After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, 'Be opened!' At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly. Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. People were overwhelmed with amazement. 'He has done everything well,' they said. 'He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.'
(Mk 7: 33-37)

A young couple climbs the steps to the altar at St. Anthony's, the first to ask Suarez for his prayers. Fabrizio Mascioli cradles his son, Vieri, on his chest, the seven-week-old boy facing outward like an offering. Suarez draws the couple close, touching the arm of the boy's mother, Maria. He embraces her and she quickly collapses into sobs. The baby suffered brain damage at birth and can't see or swallow, the dad tells Suarez. Doctors say the boy won't walk and will likely have serious cognitive problems. Suarez tells Maria to have faith and not lose hope. Don't be discouraged, God has a plan for all of us. "Right now, he doesn't see, so that would be a good sign," says Fabrizio, standing at the back of the church after seeing Suarez. "We realize that it's small, little steps, that he's going to come through. I feel good, very good being here," he says as his son gives a soft bleat in the arms of a relative. "He wasn't sup-



posed to cry, but he cries now. They said it couldn't happen, but it did," says Maria.

Suarez entered a seminary in the Philippines and in 1995, he met a man from Winnipeg who encouraged him to continue his studies in Canada. In 1997, he joined the Companions of the Cross, an Ottawa-based religious community. Suarez tried to keep his healing gift hidden, but his fellow seminarians noticed "unique things and events taking place in his presence," recalls Father Galen Bank, the pastor at St. Maurice's Church in Nepean. "He'd give it to me in bits and pieces," says Bank, who has known Suarez since 1995. After Suarez's ordination in 2002, Father Bob Bedard, the Companions' founder, told the new priest he couldn't keep his gift a secret any longer. "He told me: 'The gift is not for you, it's for the people,'" says Suarez. He began performing monthly healing masses at St. Timothy's Church in North York, his first posting as a priest. Within a few months, the community started getting requests for Suarez to visit churches in the U.S., Eastern Europe and the Philippines.

Sitting at the dining table at his community's headquarters on Bayswater Ave., Suarez shrugs off comparisons to a miracle worker. "I cannot understand why people get healed. I don't feel supernatural using this gift. I'm not in ecstasy, I don't see angels. I just have love in my heart and the joy of the Lord that I want to give to people who are already in pain," he says. "It's not me. I'm probably the most stupid person on the planet if I take ownership of this gift. "I try to avoid making false assurances. What I am giving is what Jesus said - do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, don't let your hearts be troubled."

Suarez's ministry fits into a Catholic tradition that started with Jesus and the apostles, says Martin Rovers, professor of human sciences at Saint Paul University in Ottawa. The Catholic Church believes certain people are blessed with a special gift to heal people. Article #1508 of the Church's *Catechism* states that "the Holy Spirit gives to some a special charism of healing so as to make manifest the power of the grace of the risen Lord." The article

goes on to caution that “even the most intense prayers do not always obtain the healing of all illnesses,” citing 2 Corinthians 12:9, in which St. Paul says Christians must learn from God that “*My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.*”

Suarez’s gift throws light on an ancient mystery: Why do people suffer and why does God heal some and not others? The Catholic Church teaches that God heals out of love and as a sign of mercy, but often the most faithful believers must endure trials and hardships, says Father Scott McCaig, Moderator of the Companions of the Cross. “He doesn’t heal everybody and I don’t understand why necessarily,” says McCaig, adding the Church teaches that those who suffer can offer their burdens as “an incredible powerful prayer” that will bring them closer to God. Rovers, of Saint Paul University, points out that Catholics believe that being healed doesn’t depend on a believer’s faith. “It’s a gift and it happens at a time that we’ll never know. It happens to the saint and to the sinner and it happens to the strong and the lowly. The word that people use for that – that’s just mystery.”

The Mass has ended and clusters of the most needy make their way to the altar. Suarez asks the crowd to be patient, he will pray with everyone who wants to see him. He explains how others he has prayed with sometimes fall backwards and “rest in the spirit”. “Don’t deprive yourself of this experience. Most people feel tremendous joy and peace and love, but you don’t need to fall down to be healed,” he says.

An usher brings Suarez to the front pew to see a dark-haired woman in a wheelchair. Suarez prays with the woman, who’s in her 40s. He helps her stand up and the woman falls limp. Two men help lay the woman on the floor. After a few minutes, the woman gets up and makes her way to the pulpit. “I have for years had pain in my legs, cancer has torn them apart,” the

woman tells the crowd. “Now I don’t feel pain right now, so I praise the Lord.”

Suarez circulates quietly around the chaotic choreography invading the altar. He brings the anguished close, offering a gentle touch and whispering a quiet prayer. A long-limbed girl dressed in capri pants and flip-flops walks up the altar steps, her father guiding her way. Suarez approaches the girl. Weronika Janeczek tells him she’s 14 and that she’s been blind since a brain tumour took her sight when she was four. He tells her to trust in God and believe in him.

He touches her eyes with his fingers and says a prayer. The girl’s father, Chris, falls backwards on the floor, while an usher directs Weronika to a pew on the altar. She sits quietly for a few minutes, a serene smile on her face. The girl’s mother, Anna, brushes away tears as she watches from the front of the church, her eyes weary, her hands clasped in prayer. Last year, her daughter started noticing shadows after Suarez prayed with her at a healing Mass. “For me, it was a sign, it was something. Some people get something right away. Maybe it will be step by step. I don’t know,” says Anna, her voice trailing off. “Some miracle may happen, but also miracles don’t happen very often,” she adds as her husband and daughter walk back from the altar. “I was hoping for some healing,” says Weronika, the footsteps of others taking her place on the altar. “I feel like I’m at peace. The Lord is really present,” she says.

If Suarez has been used to cure the sick, the Catholic Church takes a cautious and exacting view of the gift, treating it like a stick of dynamite. “One of the things the church always warns this sort of ministry about is sensationalism,” says McCaig, the Companions’ moderator. “You have to be very careful not to be sensationalistic and give people false hope.” There’s a danger healings can become “all about a show or about money,” McCaig adds. At every healing Mass Suarez performs, a collection is taken for Mary Mother of the

Poor, the foundation Suarez started to fund medical missions and other projects in the Philippines.

Rovers says the Church will keep Suarez in check with a good support network. “If anything, the Church is too skeptical and will test him and question him,” says Rovers, adding Suarez’s superiors will be quick to root out any hints of a God complex. It’s to Suarez’s credit that he kept his healing gift under wraps for 20 years, says Father Jeff Shannon, who acted as Suarez’s spiritual director when he was a seminarian. “If he wanted to abuse this power or use it any way, he would never had hid it for so long. “He’s such a humble man and he’s very simple. He preaches very simply that it’s God that heals. There’s really nothing in it for him – it’s pure giving,” says Shannon, who will soon join Suarez full-time on the road.

In a culture where irony rules and Jesus is a conspiracy theorist’s dream, people who attest to spiritual healings often come across as “a little flaky,” says Rovers.

“Probably most of the secular world think ‘Hey, what’s this little kookiness going on here?’ “ While hundreds claim to be healed from Suarez’s prayers, Rovers says the people who fill churches wherever he travels are the true testament of his work. “Are they walking out of there a little crazy or duped, or are they are walking out of there more happy, more content, more peaceful and more hopeful? If they didn’t, there’d be questions around that,” says Rovers. “The finger needs to point to God,” he adds. “If the finger points to the faith healer, there’s trouble.” Suarez will ultimately be judged on what Rovers calls “the fruits of his work.” “If what’s left behind when he’s gone is faith, love, hope, peace and generosity, the Church says ‘Thank you, God.’” ☩

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For further information about Fr. Fernando’s ministry visit his web site at www.fatherfernando.com. He can be contacted at the office of Mary, Mother of the Poor (613) 225-6212.



Companions of the Cross

P r i e s t s 2 0 0 6 - 2 0 0 7



Fr. Rob Arsenaux
(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



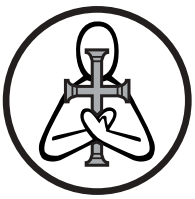
Fr. Mike Scherrey
Fort Smith, AR Ord. 2005



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 6 - 2 0 0 7



Fr. Fernando Suarez
Batangas, Philippines 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

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Cambridge, ON



Anthony Cafik
Victoria, BC



J.P. DeFleuriot
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Carlos Martins
Kitchener, ON



Bernard Messier
Stoney Point, ON



Brian O'Neill
Montreal, QC



Bryan Sabourin
Ottawa, ON



Jamie Utronkie
Killaloe, ON

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



FEATURE

by David Bergeron

I often reflect on Simon of Cyrene who helped Jesus carry his Cross. As Christians, we are all invited to carry our cross, following the example of Jesus. This invitation might be addressed to me more specifically because of my membership with the Companions of the Cross. That is why I decided to pray and reflect on this invitation. I would like to share with you my prayerful reflections.

It is hard to know with certainty what was in the depth of Simon's heart. The three Gospels where we find the account of the Passion, including the involvement of Simon, reveal that he was ordered to carry the Cross of Jesus against his will. "As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross" (Mt 27:32). "A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross" (Mk 15:21). "As they lead him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus" (Lk 23:36). The verbs used show that it was not Simon's intention to carry Jesus' Cross but that he was forced to do so.

However, it is hard for me to imagine that Simon did not have a conversion while carrying the Cross of Jesus. Being that close to Jesus as he was living his Passion, I tend to believe that Simon was probably touched in a deep way by Jesus. Simon was touched physically by Jesus who was suffering out of love for all of humanity, including Simon himself. I



Be Simon of Cyrene for One Another

believe that he was also touched in his heart. He was so close to Jesus that I believe he probably understood the motivation behind the carrying of the Cross up to the ultimate sacrifice. "There is no greater love than to lay down your life for your friends" (Jn 15:13). The motivation of Jesus to suffer his Passion was possible only through his infinite love for us and for his Father in heaven.

I believe that we are invited today to follow the example of Simon of Cyrene and to act for others as he did. What does it mean to be a Simon of Cyrene in our everyday life? I do not believe it means seeking the Cross. Jesus himself asked when he prayed in the garden if it was possible to avoid his Passion. "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will" (Mt

26:39). In the midst of difficulties we can make this prayer like Jesus and with Jesus. After he prayed, Jesus accepted his Passion and his Cross because it was the will of God. Following his example, we also have to accept our Cross because of our love for him and for our neighbour. There is a difference between looking for the Cross and accepting or embracing it according to the example of Jesus. It is useless to worry, the Cross will find us. It can seem strange to say that we do not have to worry about the Cross but it is appropriate because we have the certitude that Jesus will always be on our side. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28). The Cross will find us, either in our own life or in the lives of the ones who are close to us. It is exactly what happened to Simon. The Cross found him through the sufferings of another. He was asked to carry the Cross with Jesus.

**"Come to me,
all you who are
weary and burdened,
and I will give
you rest"
(Mt 11:28)**

We can find many meanings for the same action of Simon of Cyrene. First, we can say that he was a bearer of Christ. This is what we are called to do in proclaiming the Good News around us. What does it mean to proclaim the Good News? We are

to bring the mystery of the Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ to those around us. We are invited to bear Christ, more precisely to bear Christ Crucified and Resurrected to those we meet.

We are invited to bring Christ into our actions not just our words. We have to train ourselves to recognize Jesus in the one who is suffering, the one who is rejected, persecuted, lonely, weak, etc. Jesus himself asks us to do so in Matthew 25:31-46. After having recognized Jesus in the one in need, we must help that one to carry his Cross, especially when they cannot carry it by themselves anymore. It is precisely what Simon did with Jesus. To imitate Simon of Cyrene means to be ready to help people and to be close to

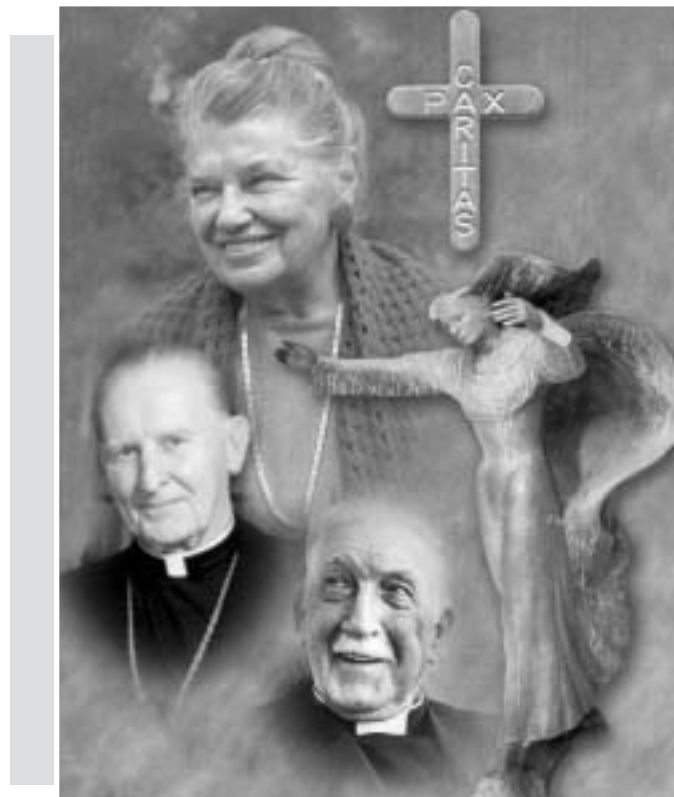
them. The soldiers probably chose Simon because of his good physical capacity. Simon was physically ready to carry the Cross. He made himself close to Jesus. He was so close to Jesus that he probably came in contact with the blood of Jesus. *“This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many”* (Mk 14:24). Simon was a great support for Jesus when he was in need, so Simon’s reward was probably great.

Simon showed compassion. The word **compassion** has really deep significance related to the context in which Simon acted to help Jesus. The word compassion embraces the word **“passion”**. In our turn, we are invited to unite our sufferings with the sufferings of Christ in order to be

able to share his glory. We are called to live with him the way of the Cross. By uniting our suffering with Jesus’ suffering, we are assured that we will also be rewarded and that he will share with us the glory of eternal life.

In a sense, we are all called to be companions of the Cross. We are all called to accompany each other in carrying our crosses together, always united to the Cross of Christ which is the victory over sin and death. ☩

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David Bergeron is a seminarian with the Companions of the Cross. You can visit his bilingual online blog at: <http://davidbergeroncc.blog.ca/>.



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FEATURE

by Fr. Rob Arsenault

It was early in the fall of 2005 and I didn't know if I was coming or going. I had just returned from World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany. I was feeling pleased, but tired. In addition, I had recently attended the Steubenville East youth conference and our Companions' community days near Ottawa. Before I knew it, I had been away from my Halifax parish for five of the first eight weeks since my appointment there as pastor! Did I mention that St. Michael's was a new parish that the Archbishop of Halifax had just placed in the pastoral care of the Companions of the Cross? One more thing, despite having been around the community almost since its inception, I was brand new to the practical reality of living out the vision in an actual Companion's household. (I had spent the previous year in formation at our CC novitiate as a priest applicant.) To top it all off, it rained a lot too. If someone were to make a movie of this chapter of my life, the soundtrack would surely feature Fr. Brian Christie playing his violin!

Happily, that was then and this is now. As I go into my second year as pastor here in Halifax, there is much that is still new, and there is plenty of work still to be done. But we truly seem to have laid a solid foundation for what I hope will become an effective and life-giving ministry here at St. Michael's parish and the rest of our "CC cluster" of parishes (St. Paul's, St. Peter's, and St. John the Baptist). It still rains a lot (in fact it is pouring down at the moment), but there has also been a good deal of sun. August through September and even into October has more than made up for the wet spring we had in 2006. Our CC household managed to finish the summer rested and relaxed by taking some well-earned vacation time.



What a Difference a Year Makes

This was a good thing because fall 2006 has been full of activity. With the lack of Catholic schools here in the province of Nova Scotia, we are required to run parish-based catechism courses for our young people (which total over 400 students between all four CC parishes here). As we try to work together in what is officially known as the North West Arm Pastoral Unit, or as we have come to call it "Ne-wah-pu" (ask Father John Fletcher), not only are we trying to form our young people, but also the catechists themselves. To help bring this about we invited Sr. Johanna Paruch from the theology faculty of the Franciscan University of Steubenville to lead a workshop for our catechism teachers. She spoke on the topic of transmitting the faith. This was offered to our own parish catechists as well as to any other interested catechists from parishes throughout the diocese.

Our local CC pastors (including Fr. Tim Devine & Fr. John Fletcher) had started the tradition of working together for certain pastoral projects. Most notable was hosting a parish mission for the whole "pastoral unit" (Fr. Fernando Suarez led one last spring at St. Michael's) and common days of Reconciliation services with Confession. We have built on that tradition by also recently joining together for a common celebration of the feast of the Triumph of the Cross (September 14th) and the feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8th). It is good to be able to mobilize all four parishes in this manner (almost like a mini-diocese) as it gives us greater resources to draw upon as well as helps foster a greater sense of being the Church. These events have been well received by our local parishioners.

We have also been hosting a "Transmission of the Faith Through the Family" catechism program each Tuesday night. This is a follow-up to the Holy Father's meeting in Spain of over a million people last summer (it was a type of "World Youth Day" for the family). Fr. John, Fr. Tim, and I hope to follow this up with a continuing series based on the new *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Archbishop Prendergast has asked the parishes of our diocese to work their way through the *Catechism* during the next five years. Ambitious, but we believe do-able, with we three CC pastors providing the bulk of the talks in our "pastoral unit".

Individually, our parishes have also been doing many of the traditional things parishes do to help build a sense of community, including holding fall fairs and having dinners. Another less traditional event (at least for Nova Scotia) was the



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

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Please complete this form, place in postage-paid envelope provided and mail to: Companions of the Cross, 199 Bayswater Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Y 2G5. Your support of our community is very much appreciated!

A Truly Texas Blessing

This past fall, Texas supporters of the Companions of the Cross hosted their **3rd Annual Fundraiser** (Sept 30th). This year's event honoured Fr. Christian Riesbeck, on the **10th Anniversary** of his Ordination to the priesthood with the Companions of the Cross. The tribute dinner was held at the Catholic Charismatic Center in Houston. The MC for the evening was a very kind and benevolent Jim McIngvale, president of Gallery Furniture in downtown Houston.

The whole evening was a touching tribute to the pastor of Houston's Queen of Peace parish. The outpouring of affection and gratitude, in recognition of the gifts, talents and dedication Fr. Christian has displayed in his ministry, was truly inspiring. The evening saw tributes sent in via video from CC Founder Fr. Bob Bedard, letters read from the former and current Archbishops of Galveston-Houston, and speeches delivered by some of his fellow CC brother priests in Houston and from CC Moderator Fr. Scott McCaig.

Also making the journey to Houston from Ottawa for this festive event was Fr. Christian's mother, father and sister. Mr. Herbert Riesbeck eloquently described his thoughts and feelings about his son's decision to become a priest, and what that meant to his family. Young Andrea Wolf, a student at Queen of Peace School, was part of a group of students who voiced their gratitude for Fr. Christian's valiant efforts in their school. After a stirring rendition of "Take me out to the Hockey game", Andrea read a poem, the conclusion of which is as follows:



*Through your teachings
We know that Jesus is our friend.
He is always with us from beginning to end
And by your example in the life that you lead,
We know that if you have faith
He will fill ALL our needs!!
So Happy Anniversary from all of us
here at the school,
You'll always be our NUMBER ONE
because we think you are WAY cool!!
We love you Fr. Christian!*



During dinner a silent auction was held. Items donated for this auction stretched from one end of the hall to the other. This was followed by another live auction after dinner (Texans love their auctions!). We need to offer a Texas-size thank you for all the work and dedication exhibited by our CC Lay Associates, parishioners of Queen of Peace and the Catholic Charismatic Center, and especially those on the organizing committee who hosted this magnificent event (over \$25,000 was raised for the Companions!).

During Fr. Christian's speech at the end of the night, he recalled Our Lord's words in Matthew 9:37-38: "Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'"

FEATURE

FRATERNAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY

*Excerpts from the Feb. 2, 1994
document issued by the Vatican's
CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES
OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND
SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE*

- Before being a human construction, religious community is a gift of the Spirit. It is the love of God, poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, from which religious community takes its origin and is built as a true family gathered together in the Lord's name.
- The coming of the Holy Spirit, first gift to believers, brought about the unity willed by Christ. Poured out on the disciples gathered in the Upper Room with Mary, the Spirit gave visibility to the Church, which, from the very first moment, is characterized as fraternity and communion in the unity of one heart and one soul (cf. Ac 4:32).
- It is impossible to speak of religious community univocally. The history of consecrated life witnesses to a variety of ways of living out the one communion according to the nature of the various institutes. Thus, today we can admire the wondrous variety of religious families which enrich the Church and equip her for every good work and, deriving from this, the variety of forms of religious communities.
- Nevertheless, in the various forms it takes, fraternal life in common has always appeared as a radical expression of the common fraternal spirit which unites all Christians. Religious community is a visible manifestation of the communion which is the foundation of the Church and, at the same time, a



prophecy of that unity towards which she tends as her final goal. As "experts" in communion, religious are, therefore, called to be an ecclesial community in the Church and in the world, witnesses and architects of the plan for unity which is the crowning point of human history in God's design.

- As a response to the admonition of the Lord, "*watch at all times, and pray*" (cf. Lk 21:36), a religious community needs to be watchful and take the time necessary for attending to the quality of its life. Sometimes men and women religious "don't have time" and their day runs the risk of being too busy and anxious, and the religious can end up being tired and exhausted. Prayer needs to be seen also as time for being with the Lord so that he might act in us and, notwithstanding distractions and weariness, might enter our lives, console them and guide them. So that, in the end, our entire existence can belong to him.
- Communal prayer reaches its full effectiveness when it is intimately linked to personal prayer. Common prayer and personal prayer are closely related and

are complementary to each other. Everywhere greater emphasis must be placed on the inner aspect, on the filial relationship to the Father, on the intimate and spousal relationship with Christ, on the personal deepening of what is celebrated and lived in community prayer, on the interior and exterior silence that leaves space for the Word and the Spirit to regenerate the more hidden depths. The consecrated person who lives in community nourishes his or her consecration both through constant personal dialogue with God and through community praise and intercession.

- Our life is a sharing in the charity of Christ, in his love for the Father and for his brothers and sisters, a love forgetful of self. All of this, however, is not in the nature of the "old man", who wants communion and unity but does not want or intend to pay the price in terms of personal commitment and dedication. The path that leads from the "old man", who tends to close in on himself, to the "new man" who gives himself to others is a long and difficult one.

- A fraternal and shared common life has a natural attraction for young people but, later, perseverance in the real conditions of life can become a heavy burden. Initial formation needs, then, to bring one to awareness of the sacrifices required for living in community, to accepting them in view of a joyful and truly fraternal relationship and of all the other attitudes characteristic of one who is interiorly free. When we lose ourselves for our brothers and sisters, then we find ourselves.
- The communitarian ideal must not blind us to the fact that every Christian reality is built on human frailty. The perfect “ideal community” does not exist yet: the perfect communion of the saints is our goal in the heavenly Jerusalem. Ours is the time for edification and constant building. It is always possible to improve and to walk together towards a community that is able to live in forgiveness and love. Communities cannot avoid all conflicts. The unity which they must build is a unity established at the price of reconciliation. Imperfection in communities ought not discourage us.
- It may be useful to recall that in order to foster communion of minds and hearts among those called to live together in a

community, it is necessary to cultivate those qualities which are required in all human relationships: respect, kindness, sincerity, self-control, tactfulness, a sense of humour, and a spirit of sharing.

- Joy is a splendid testimony to the evangelical quality of a religious community; it is the end point of a journey which is not lacking in difficulties, but which is possible because it is sustained by prayer: *“rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer”* (Rm 12:12).
- In many places there is a felt need for more intense communication among religious living together in the same community. The lack of or weakness in communication usually leads to weakening of fraternity: if we know little or nothing about the lives of our brothers or sisters, they will be strangers to us, and the relationship will become anonymous, as well as create true and very real problems of isolation and solitude. Some communities complain about the poor quality of the fundamental sharing of spiritual goods. Communication takes place, they say, around problems and issues of marginal importance but rarely is there any sharing of what is vital and central to

the journey of consecration. This can have painful consequences, because then spiritual experience imperceptibly takes on individualistic overtones. A mentality of self-sufficiency becomes more important; a lack of sensitivity to others develops; and, gradually, significant relationships are sought outside the community.

- The relationship between fraternal life and apostolic activity, in particular within institutes dedicated to works of the apostolate, has not always been clear and has all too often led to tension, both for the individual and for the community. For some, “building community” is felt as an obstacle to mission, almost a waste of time in matters of secondary importance. All must be reminded that fraternal communion, as such, is already an apostolate; in other words, it contributes directly to the work of evangelization. The sign par excellence left us by Our Lord is that of lived fraternity: *“By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another”* (cf. Jn 13:35).
- We stay together in community not because we have chosen one another, but because we have been chosen by the Lord. ☪



Pilgrimage to Italy

with Fr. Daren Bryk CC

Sept. 13-25, 2007

\$3,099.00 Cdn (dbl occ) from Montreal or Toronto

From the beautiful Bay of Naples and breathtaking Sorrento, to the peaceful towns of Assisi and San Giovanni Rotondo, from the miraculous Churches of Pompeii, Lanciano, Genazzano and Orvieto, to the majestic and historical Rome, join us on this spiritual 13-day journey to Italy.

**For information
call Martha Dorotik at 1-866-451-5946**



Catch the Fire Conference at St. Timothy's Parish in Toronto

November 10-11, 2006

**Fr. Dennis Hayes CC Lay Associate
Chaplain Toronto Area:**

The Catch the Fire Conference held this past November at St. Timothy's Parish marked the definitive launching of our CC Lay Association within the Greater Metropolitan Toronto area and surrounding regions. With just over 250 participants, the day brought together people from many areas of the GTA with some dedicated souls driving in from as far as the Niagara Peninsula. Featured speakers were Fr. Bob Bedard our founder, Fr. Scott McCaig our Moderator, Fr. Terry Donahue principle director of the CC Lay Association. On Saturday evening, Catch the Fire hosted a Youth Fest at St. Timothy's with Fr. Marc Goring and his young adult ministry team featuring some of our talented seminarians and their friends. The event included video, drama and testimony, culminating with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and inspiring praise and worship. Participants mostly in their early teens, numbered well over the 250 mark.

A follow up retreat day for those who wish to discern membership within the CC Lay Associates will be held at St. Timothy's Parish on Saturday March 10th. For more information on becoming a Lay Associate as well as for the upcoming Retreat Day at St. Timothy's please contact Mary Lauzon in our Ottawa office 613-728-3175.

**Companions
of the Cross
Lay Formation Course
2006-2007**

Marian Spirituality

Presenter: Fr. Terry Donahue,
CC Director of Lay Formation
Dates: April 16 – May 21
(6 weeks)

Receive spiritual formation in true devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and her role in leading us to Jesus. Learn the meaning of Consecration to Jesus through Mary according to St. Louis de Montfort, Maximillian Kolbe, and John Paul II. Understand the essential aspects of Mary's ongoing ministry in the Church (including the meaning of her titles of Advocate and Mediatrix) and her role in the New Evangelization.

Cost: \$60.00
(includes teaching outlines)

Classes are taught from 7:15 – 9:15pm on Mondays 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.



Here are a few impressions from those who attended Catch the Fire Toronto:

Mrs. Fiona Xavier parishioner at St. Timothy's Parish:

I felt there was an awakening – a rekindling, seemed that the flame that was already there was being fanned. Fr. Bob Bedard's talk was an eye opener on how I need to be empty and totally surrendered from the heart (not just heady – with words), which I often do. Also mentioned was how we need to wait on the Lord for clear direction and to be obedient in carrying it out when he directs. Humility – and how important it is in a Christian's life if we want to be like Christ. How we need to be (in all humility) submissive to our priests just like Fr. Bob was, when he approached the Archbishop to speak about his order. He reminded us how we need to pick up our cross daily and follow Christ – even if we are weak/ tired. Fr. Roger's message on Praise and Worship and how the enemy flees when we begin to praise was AMAZING. It helped many of us to really get out of our fears or comfort zones and lift our hands in praise to our God.

I realize that the success of the event was only because we gave God his due or priority over the rest of the rally. Like the hymn goes, give God his due and he will give back to you – he can turn your water into wine. This was a very important thing and a good head start for the rally to begin with Mass and Adoration and thus experience success through the entire rally.

Fr Terry's talk on Christ crucified – the power and wisdom of God and his own experience made it very practical. Evangelization was another key important factor which all ministries stand in need of without which there will be no effect. I wish to thank the COMPANIONS for all their efforts for our community and for reaching out to us in LOVE.

Stephanie Ng from Chinese Martyrs Parish Markham Ontario:

A couple of weeks ago, my friends and I attended the Youth Fest at St. Timothy's parish. The Youth Fest started off with a very interesting skit that grabbed my attention immediately. We were then taught how to praise and worship through a humorous video. The night was also filled with testimonies given by seminarians, praise and worship, talks, and last but not least, Eucharistic Adoration. I think my favourite part of the Youth Fest was the Adoration. During the Adoration, the music team led us in song and in no time, I was singing my heart out. Another thing that happened during Adoration was that confessions were made available. After the Youth Fest, there were refreshments in the church basement. It was a good chance for different youths to meet one another. I really enjoyed that night because it gave me a chance to grow spiritually.

Wondering What to Do with Your Life?



**We Can Give
You a Few
Suggestions!**



For more information, call Fr. Mark Goring,
CC Director of Admissions @ 613-231-4806

***If the Lord is calling,
it's time to answer!***

Do you feel the Lord might be calling you to the priesthood? The Companions of the Cross invite you to make a discernment retreat at Our Lady of the Holy Spirit CC Household in Ottawa (#58 Primrose). Come and live our community life, meet our priests and seminarians, and see if the Lord might indeed be calling you to the priesthood and our community.

***Upcoming
'Come & See'***

***Vocation
Discernment***

Retreats:

Feb. 17-21, 2007 (Winter College Break)
Bring your snowboards!

Mar. 10-13, 2007 (March Break)
Especially for High School students!

Apr. 4-9, 2007 (Holy Week)
Celebrate Easter with the Companions!



COMMUNITY NEWS & NOTES

by Fr. John Vandenakker

Ministries Mass Report

Ottawa-area Companions gathered this past Oct. 13th in Queen of the Most Holy Rosary parish to celebrate our annual “Ministries Mass”. Receiving the ministry of acolyte at this Mass were CC seminarians Bob Lowry and Jim Lowe. Receiving the ministry of lector were David Bergeron and Carlos Martins. Please keep all our seminarians in your prayers as they continue their journey of discernment and preparation for the priesthood.

Marian Day Report

On Sat. Oct. 28th the Companions hosted a special “Marian Day” out at Bearbrook Farm east of Ottawa. Over 150 people attended this “family-friendly” event, which was ably coordinated by Mary Lauzon of our CC Office. Fr. John Vandenakker celebrated Mass in the morning and gave two talks on the key themes to be found in the reported messages of Our Lady of Medjugorje (on the 25th anniversary of her appearances). CC seminarian Simon Lobo shared a brief testimony of his experiences on a recent pilgrimage there. Fr. Terry Donahue clarified the Church’s teaching about private revelation and the status of the Medjugorje investigation. The day ended with the Rosary and a Consecration to Jesus through Mary prayer. Many thanks to all who came out on a very rainy day! Thanks as well to the Lobo family for their anointed music ministry, to Dale Balkovec for managing our book table, to Sheila Trainor who assisted with Registrations, and to all who had a hand in making this day a “graced” event for all.





Frassati House Update

From Fr. Roger Vandenakker – addressed to all our CC brothers: “Just a little fall update concerning our new Companions household here in Toronto. Life here is going well, although Bernard Messier and J.P. Bolger miss the contact and fraternity with the other seminarians in our community back in Ottawa. Bernard will be receiving his ‘Admission to Candidacy’ in a few weeks at St. Augustine’s seminary with J.P. and myself attending the Mass and supper. Unfortunately, Fr. Allan will be away that week on his annual canonical retreat at the Carmelite Monastery in Kitchener. We have been getting together for a monthly social with Fr. Dennis Hayes, Fr. Randy Hendriks, and Fr. Francis Ching at St. Timothy’s. In a few weeks we are planning a trip on our day off to visit the McMichael Art Gallery in Kleinberg, ON. This is the gallery that houses the famous Canadian collection from the ‘Group of Seven’.

“Tomorrow, I will be taping our first group of ‘Food For Life’ television shows here in Toronto. Michael Hanley, our Director, Producer, and Cameraman, will be travelling here from his home in Buckhorn, in the Kawartha Lakes Region, northeast of Peterborough. Please continue to keep this ministry in your prayers. I am continually bumping into and hearing from people who watch and are genuinely blessed by the program. The fact is that there is very little Canadian-produced Catholic programming on the air.

“Recently Fr. Allan and I were on a retreat with approximately 60 Catholic students from York University. The weekend was truly anointed by the Lord. Fr. Scott McCaig was the main speaker giving four excellent presentations on the four pillars of our CC spirituality (Magisterial, Charismatic, Marian, and Eucharistic) which happen to be, as he duly noted, four constitutive elements of simply being Catholic. The students were all ears and

Travelling Chalice for Vocations

Jean Kirton from St. Timothy’s parish in Toronto reports: “Our parish is proud to be the ‘home’ of Fr. Marc Syrenne’s ‘Travelling Chalice for Vocations.’ During Fr. Marc’s tenure as pastor here, preparations were initiated by the Liturgy Committee for what has come to be known as the ‘Travelling Chalice for Vocations’ project. The Chalice was a gift to him from his Mom on the 5th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood in the Companions of the Cross. On March 5th, 2006, the Chalice, protected by a beautiful hand-crafted wooden case, was presented to Fr. Marc. He, in turn, gave it to Melinda Dizon who was chosen to be the first recipient to host the chalice while praying for vocations. Eighty-five families have since signed up to have the Chalice in their home for prayer and devotion for a one-week period.

“This is a wonderful tribute to Fr. Marc and also a great way to pray for vocations. Feedback from families who have already hosted the chalice has been very positive. Some say their faith and the closeness of their families have been restored. Prayers have been answered and some families have returned to Church on a regular basis. The Companions of the Cross are so fortunate to have priests like Fr. Marc who dedicate their lives to Jesus and to proclaiming the Good News. Many thanks to Fr. Marc for all his hard work, we always look forward to his visits to Toronto. May God continue to guide him in his formation work at Assumption Farm in Combermere. We wish him the best of health always.”

eager to hear and embrace the fullness of their Catholic identity and heritage. The highlight of the weekend was the Eucharistic Adoration with praise and worship that took place Saturday evening, beginning at 8:00 p.m. and continued all night until benediction the next morning at 7:30 a.m. Of course not all the students stayed up the whole night but many did stay for at least three hours or more and over 20 were there at 3:00 a.m. to sing the Divine Mercy Chaplet (EWTN sung version). When I woke up and went to the chapel at 6:45 a.m. there were, again, over 20 students praying before the Blessed Sacrament and being led in praise and worship by some of the music ministry. I was deeply moved and edified by the faith, enthusiasm, and devotion which I witnessed on this weekend. It is the kind of ministry which really encourages our vocations as priests. There is nothing quite like seeing the Lord touch the heart of a young adult because you know the fruit has the potential to last a lifetime and significantly influence the life choices they will make, including vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Wishing you all the Lord's blessings in your vocations, studies, and ministries."

Letter of Thanks

The following letter was written by Rosemary Ballard, Youth Ministry Coordinator at St. Mary's parish in Ottawa (dated Nov. 1, 2006): "Dear Companions of the Cross, I wanted to write to you to express what a wonderful gift you are to the Church and, in particular, to the youth ministry at St. Mary's Parish. Both as a group and as individuals you are an amazing blessing to me and to the youth of this generation. What an absolute joy and relief it was for us to have Companions priests and seminarians assist us in helping youth of this city receive and step up to the call of God's love in their lives at our recent Life in the Spirit Seminar.



"During Confessions on the Saturday I was trying to encourage one of the young girls to not be nervous to go to the sacrament (because she hadn't been since her First Confession many years ago). At one point I said to her 'Really, you can go to any of the priests... they'd all be kind and gentle with you.' Being able to say that really struck me... your sincere love and care for God's people is shown in many ways but I think it is illustrated in a very special way in this example.

"The experience and knowledge of prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit that you have was very evident on Saturday night when many of you prayed over our young people for Baptism in the Holy Spirit. How generous you all were with your time, your energy and your gifts! And how powerfully the Lord worked through you! Who else could we have called on and in such numbers to pray over 76 teens and preteens?

"After our time of prayer and Adoration were over I came to a greater appreciation of who you are and the role you are playing in the renewal of God's Church. Your commitment to that renewal and to building up the faith of God's people as well as your commitment to your own lives of

personal prayer and holiness is such a HUGE gift. One that you offer daily for the sake of many souls. I know it can't always be easy but on behalf of myself, my leaders and all my young people... thank you so, so much for being who you are. May God continue to draw each of you near, fill you with His love and grow you into His will and purpose. I keep you all in my prayers!" Sincerely – Rosemary Ballard.

In Memoriam Clarification

A Companions of the Cross In Memoriam card is not the same thing as a Companions of the Cross Mass card. In Memoriam cards are a way for people to give a gift to the Companions in memory of someone who has recently died (in a manner similar to the way people can make a donation to a cause such as "The Heart & Stroke Foundation"). Sometimes the family of the deceased requests that such donations be made in lieu of sending flowers. Our In Memoriam cards can be made available to any funeral home or by contacting our CC office. A thank you letter with a receipt for income tax purposes will be sent to the donor. We in turn

will also notify the deceased next of kin that an In Memoriam donation has been received from this donor.

Companions Thank Knights of Columbus

Knights of Columbus Council # 12296 (St. Maurice Parish, Ottawa) undertook their annual Keep Christ in Christmas campaign in collaboration with the Companions of the Cross. With permission, the Companions produced a



Christmas card featuring a reproduction of some beautiful nativity artwork from the Holy Family Chapel at the Knights Supreme Headquarters. Hundreds of the cards were distributed by local Knights to parishioners at St. Maurice after all the Masses on the second Sunday of Advent, 2006. The only request was that the cards be used to send Christ-centred Christmas greetings to family and friends. However, donations of over \$900.00 were received by the Knights, and were generously passed on to support the Companions in our ministry. Our heartfelt thanks go out to Grand Knight Robert Boire and his Council, and to the parishioners of St. Maurice. The remaining Christmas cards carried our thoughts, prayers and Christmas greetings from the CCs to our friends and supporters. Plans are to do the same thing next year, with a new card design. If any other K of C Council would like to use our Companions' Christmas cards in their parish campaigns, please let us know. We would be happy to help you help us!

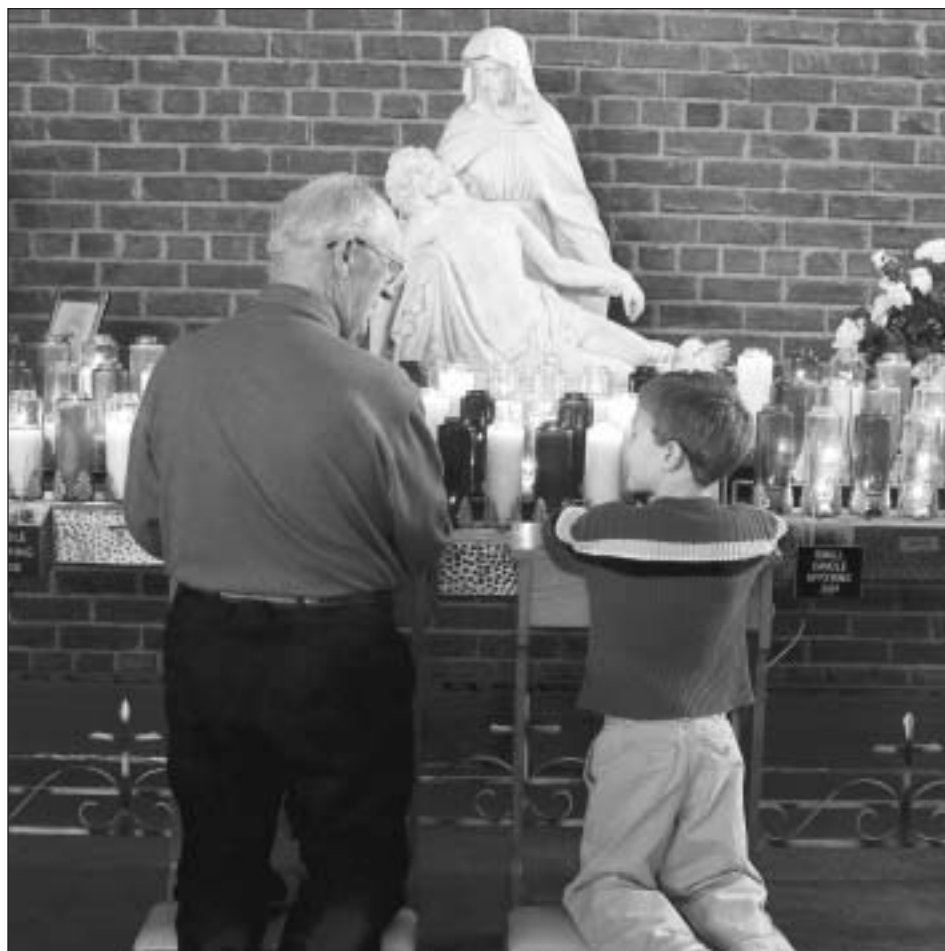
Leave a Legacy of Faith

You will notice a special insert in this edition of our CC newsletter. It is a brochure entitled "Leave a Legacy of Faith." It explains how you can remember the Companions of the Cross in your Will. The cover photo depicts an "older" man (my father Henk) with a younger boy (my nephew Daniel), kneeling down in front of a bank of vigil lights at St. Maurice parish in Ottawa. The back cover photo is the paschal candle from St. Maurice church. Thanks go out to our volunteer "models", our photographer (Richard Donnelly), our text editors (Dale Balkovec & Ken Gorman), our graphic designer (Dyann Bernard), and to Fr. Galen Bank for giving us permission to photograph in his church.

Massive Worship

NET Ministries is hosting a national music training conference, entitled "Massive Worship - Equipping Musicians for Ministry", on the weekend of March 2nd-4th, 2007 at the Holiday Inn in Toronto. Their goal is to provide training in contemporary styles of music and liturgy for parishes, especially those that work with youth. Many new musical resources for churches will also be available.

One of these resources is a recently released CD - "Holy is Our God" - featuring all original Catholic music written by NET team members (including CC seminarian JP de Fleuriot). For information about the conference and CD visit www.massiveworship.com.



New Companions of the Cross Email Addresses

The Companions have recently switched internet service providers. On our website we have also changed the final designation of our domain name from “.ca” to “.org” (i.e. www.companionscross.org). This change reflects the fact that we are more than simply a Canadian entity (we have a foundation in Texas after all). Many of our office and staff email addresses have also changed accordingly. Any and all emails that used to end in @companionscross.ca are now @companionscross.org. Our main CC office email is no longer compcros@cyberus.ca but is now info@companionscross.org.

Guide Dog Update



From October 2005 to April 2006, the CC household at 126 Young St. in Ottawa had an additional member... of the canine variety! Taylor is a female black Labrador Retriever from the Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind. Frs. Pierre Ingram, Rick Jaworski, and John Vandenakker helped care for her and introduced her to a number of different environments and social situations. After leaving the household last spring, Taylor underwent intensive training at the CGDB Training Centre in Manotick (south of Ottawa). She successfully completed the program, and has just recently been paired with a visually impaired client, who (what a coincidence!) happens to live a few blocks away from St. Mary's church, and who belongs to the parish! ☺

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

COMPANIONS OF THE CROSS STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS For the Year Ended August 31, 2006

INCOME :

General Donations	\$ 1,414,515
Legacies & Bequests	509,493
Gifts-in-Kind	23,938
Other Income	97,164
Reimbursed Expenses	216,070

TOTAL INCOME	\$2,261,180
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EXPENSES :

Administration	\$ 146,771
Amortization	59,245
Communications	125,412
Financing Charges	26,898
Fundraising	146,196
Intra-Community	609,406
Residential Operations	276,253
Seminarian Formation	299,617

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,689,798
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Operating Surplus	571,382
Loss on Disposal of Assets	(1,630)
Gain on Disposal of Investments	5,450
Excess Revenue over Expenditures for the year	575,202

Notes:

We carry liabilities of \$147,939 which are primarily mortgages owing on all our properties.

The Statements of the Companions of the Cross have been audited by our auditors Parker, Prins, Seel, Chartered Accountants.

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.

Food For LIFE

A Weekly Catholic Television Program

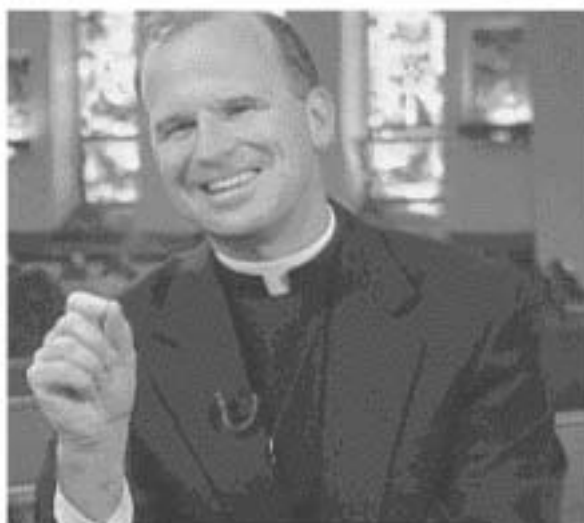
**Proclaiming and
Teaching the Good
News of Jesus Christ**

Featuring

**Personal Testimonies &
Teachings from God's Word**

Hosts of the *Food for Life
Program* **Fr. Bob Bedard
and Fr. Roger Vandenakker**

**Join us each week
& tell a friend too!**



Join us Sunday:

CTS - 12:30 p.m.

VISION TV - 2:30 p.m. ET

CHTV (Global) - 7:30 a.m.

CTV (Mid-Canada Television) - 8:30 a.m.

The Miracle Channel (CJIL) - see local listings

