

Fall 2008

# Companions of the Cross

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Diaconate  
Ordinations

Ignatian  
Discernment

Fr. Francis  
Frankovich's 40th



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Companions of the Cross



## TESTIMONY

by Deacon Simon Lobo

# The Day After



**I**t is true that I'm writing this piece barely 24 hours after my diaconate ordination. However, I must admit that I borrowed the title from a 25-year-old Hollywood film. The story depicts life after a nuclear holocaust. At a certain level, what happened to me yesterday, and the day before, is even more significant than the detonation of any number of explosives. Jesus and his Church have received me into the Order of Deacons – a profound and irreversible reality!

Perhaps I should begin by describing the months leading up to this day. It seemed like wherever I went, people all had the

same question: “Are you getting excited?” If you know me well, then you know that I have a fairly even-keeled, calm demeanor. In other words, I don't manifest oodles of excitement for much of anything. Speaking of which, posing for all those photos after the ordination was pure torture. I think that purgatory, for me, will be forcing a perpetual smile for a photographer. At any rate, I was certainly getting excited for the upcoming ordination, but I was also getting overwhelmed by the details, and even a little anxious, recognizing my own unworthiness. Thankfully I was surrounded by good people who were willing to help

with the details. Not the least of which was my brother, now, Deacon Jamie Utronkie. I am greatly indebted to him for all the legwork that he did in preparing for the big day.

As the summer progressed, and invitations were sent out, we started to notice more tension, chaos, and arguing within our family. At the risk of sounding “hyper-spiritual,” I think that the enemy was making one last concerted effort to stymie another priestly vocation. If anything, it gave me a much greater appreciation for what engaged couples have to endure during their wedding planning. I've been privy to more than a few pre-wedding tense moments between two people who truly love each other more than anything. As a hypothesis, I would argue that this same spiritual enemy is out to cause discord where there is potential for a beautiful and holy marriage.

By the grace of God and, no doubt, thanks to many of your prayers, I, too, was able to persevere. Incidentally, let me just take a moment to thank each of you who has been a prayerful and/or material support to me over the last 7 years. Without exaggeration, I would not have made it had you not been there to help me along the way.

The last few weeks of the summer seemed to cruise along in fast forward. Before I knew it, Sunday, Sept. 7th had arrived – the day I was to make Lifetime Promises to the Companions of the Cross. As I mentioned earlier, I figured that I would be cool as a cucumber. And I was...until I stepped into St. Mary's Church that morning. Suddenly I had butterflies and my legs went wobbly. Again, I was able to sympathize with those approaching the altar on their wedding day.

*Continued on page 2*

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Among the highlights for me was when my Mom sang the Ave Maria after Communion. I even got a little teary-eyed (but don't tell anyone). Once more, I will interject with a huge thank you to all those who helped to make the liturgies so beautiful, especially all the gifted musicians (As a worship leader, I think I'm allowed to show a little favouritism).

The Mass of Lifetime Commitments was really special. From the beginning, my call to the priesthood has been one and the same with my call to the Companions of the Cross. Here I must stop to express my deepest love for the vision of the Community and for each and every brother who has modelled this for me and helped me to live it. All of the priests and seminarians have impacted my life powerfully, but there is one who is deserving of honourable mention: Fr. Bob Bedard – Founder and Father to us all. Just a few days ago, I met with him for my last confession as a layman. Before departing I mentioned that none of us, none of this, would be here had it not been for him, and the power of God working through him. In a humble way he acknowledged that this was true. For some reason, God chose him. Praise God for his wise selection!

Finally, the Ordination day arrived. It was actually a great day. I had a good prayer time, attended to a few last minute items, and even got in a good last minute bike ride, out to Britannia Beach. I guess that cycling was a way of blowing off steam and dealing with the magnitude of what was about to take place. The first miracle of the night was that I showed up at



church on time. The whole Ordination Rite was so awesome. Laying prostrate during the Litany of the Saints, was a blessed time. In fact, I just felt so overwhelmed with grace throughout the entire Mass. I remember having a little trouble getting into the vestments. I had no idea that the deacon's dalmatic had sleeves. Truth be told, I had no idea what I looked like. It wasn't until, as a minister of the cup, I caught a glance of my reflection in the chalice. It was so surreal!

After Mass, there was a huge line-up of people who came to congratulate me. However, when the first few people asked to be prayed with, it started a ripple effect of requests for prayers from this "fresh

deacon." Though the stream of people seemed endless, it was still so satisfying to be used by God to bless his people. My simple words, my insignificant hands became instruments of grace. I was so jazzed from the experience that I couldn't sleep all night (if this article seems scattered, now you know why). It was sometime between 1-3 am that I lifted my head off the pillow and realized: I'm a deacon!

So, today is the day after. It's been full of firsts, and I'm sure that there will be many more to come in the next few weeks. I read the Gospel for the first time at Mass. I elevated the chalice for the first time during the doxology. Someone came up to me in the sacristy to introduce themselves. I responded: "Hi I'm Simon... er... Deacon Simon."

I guess, I can't end without throwing in a little "vocational guilt-trip." In all seriousness, though not all are called to priestly and religious vocations, some, perhaps many, **are** being called today. I can only encourage you to be fully abandoned to the will of God. Yesterday, I was standing on the point at Britannia Beach. The water, just in front of me, was so very much alive. We were also getting some weather at the time. It was in the midst of this that I heard the quiet voice of the Lord speak: "This life that I have called you to will set you free!"

I don't know exactly what the future holds for me as a deacon and, then soon after, as a priest. Nevertheless, I hope that you will be able to participate in God's exciting plan for your life. Together we can look forward to "the day after tomorrow." ☺

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- The Forbidden City
- The 'South Church' (Nan Tang)
- The Tomb of Fr. Matteo Ricci
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- Terra Cotta Warriors
- Yangshuo Scenic District
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“Our Lady of Sheshan, sustain all those in China, who, amid their daily trials, continue to believe, to hope, to love. May they never be afraid to speak of Jesus to the world, and of the world to Jesus. In the statue overlooking the Shrine you lift your Son on high, offering him to the world with open arms in a gesture of love. Help Catholics always to be credible witnesses to this love, ever clinging to the rock of Peter on which the Church is built. Mother of China and all Asia, pray for us, now and forever. Amen!”

– Pope Benedict XVI (May 24th, 2008)



Companions of the Cross

W e l c o m e N e w



**Jorge Alvarado**  
Monterrey, Mexico



**Antonio Aquino**  
Houston, TX  
Pre-Applicant



**Ruben Campbell**  
Saltillo, Mexico



H o u s t o n

# A p p l i c a n t s



**Steve Clark**  
Ottawa, ON



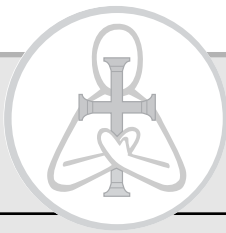
**Kenneth Lao**  
Mississauga, ON



**Stephen Marsh**  
Stratford, ON



C a n a d a



# Ordination to the Diaconate

## PHOTO ALBUM

On Monday September 8, 2008 seminarians Jamie Utronkie and Simon Lobo were ordained to the diaconate by the Most Rev. Terrence Prendergast, S.J. at St. Mary's church in Ottawa. They had made their lifetime commitments to the community the previous day at the 11 a.m. Mass at St. Mary's.

Archbishop Prendergast drew attention to the fact that the men were being ordained on the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. He spoke of the importance of Mary's yes to God's plan and he also spoke of Joseph's spiritual fatherhood of Jesus and how these new deacons are called to follow in those footsteps. "Do not shrink from the challenge of being spiritual fathers." The Archbishop said that these men have heard God's call on their life and have learned the message of the Last Supper, that apart from Jesus we can do nothing. He encouraged them to help their brothers and sisters grasp that all things work together for good for those who love God. He also pointed out that celibacy is both a sign by their life and character that they will give witness to their brothers and sisters that God has been loved above all else.

Special thanks to our photographer Anne Marie Gruden for these Ottawa photos.

On the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, Sunday September 14, 2008, seminarian Carlos Martins made his lifetime commitment to the community at St. Paul's church and was ordained that afternoon to the diaconate by the Most Rev. Claude Champagne, O.M.I. auxiliary bishop, at St. Michael's parish in Halifax. Special thanks to our photographer Terry Spearns in Halifax.



1. Deacons Jamie Utronkie and Simon Lobo prostrate themselves during the Litany of the Saints.
2. Deacon Simon Lobo at Communion time.
3. Archbishop of Ottawa the Most Rev. Terrence Prendergast laying hands on the Deacons.
4. Deacons Simon and Jamie prepare the altar.
5. Deacons Jamie Utronkie and Simon Lobo with their parents and Archbishop Prendergast.
6. Most Rev. Claude Champagne, Auxiliary Bishop of Halifax with Deacon Carlos.
7. Fr. Pierre Ingram receiving Carlos' lifetime commitment to the community.
8. Archbishop Prendergast and Deacon Jamie at the altar.
9. Carlos making his lifetime commitment to the community at Mass at St. Paul's in Halifax.
10. Deacon Carlos Martins prostrate during Ordination Mass.



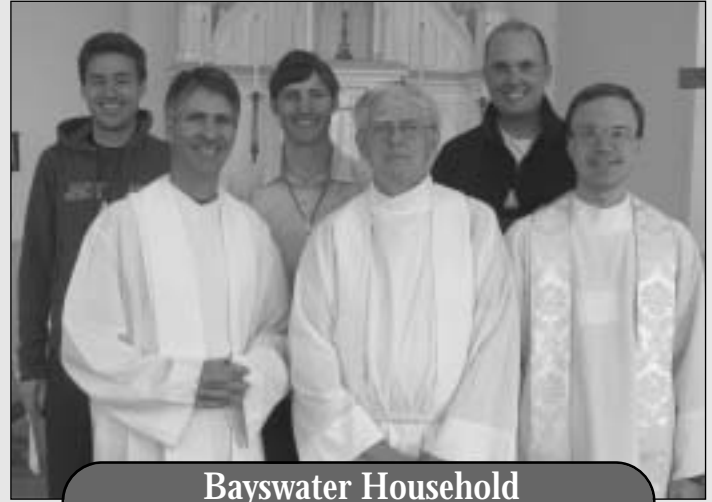


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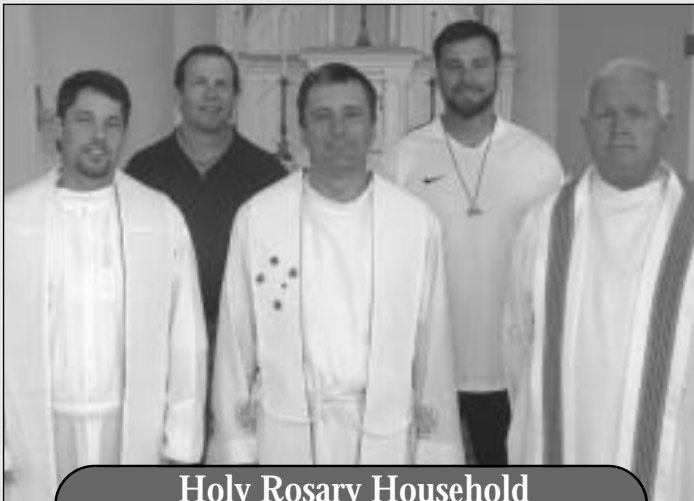
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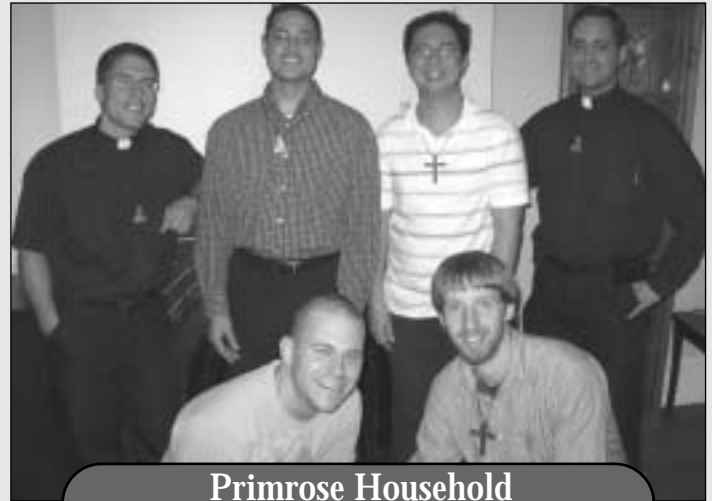
**Philippines Household**  
Batangas



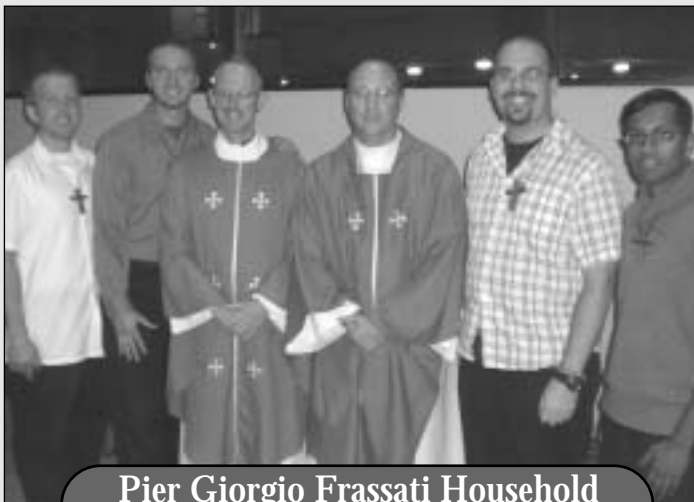
**Bayswater Household**  
Ottawa



**Holy Rosary Household**  
Ottawa



**Primrose Household**  
Ottawa



**Pier Giorgio Frassati Household**  
Toronto

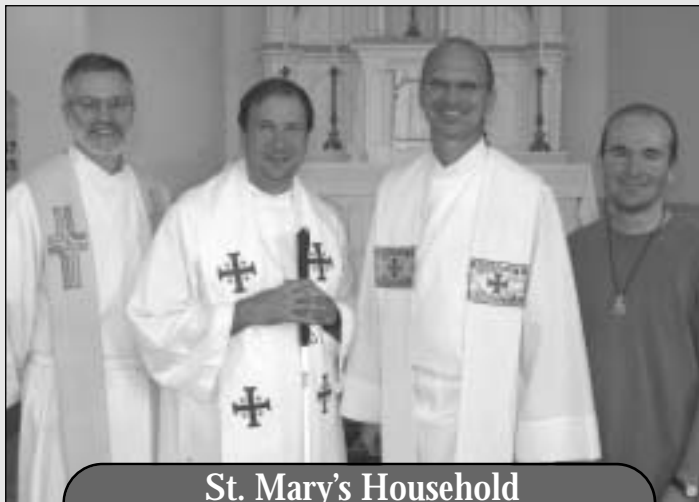


**Queen of Peace Household**  
Houston

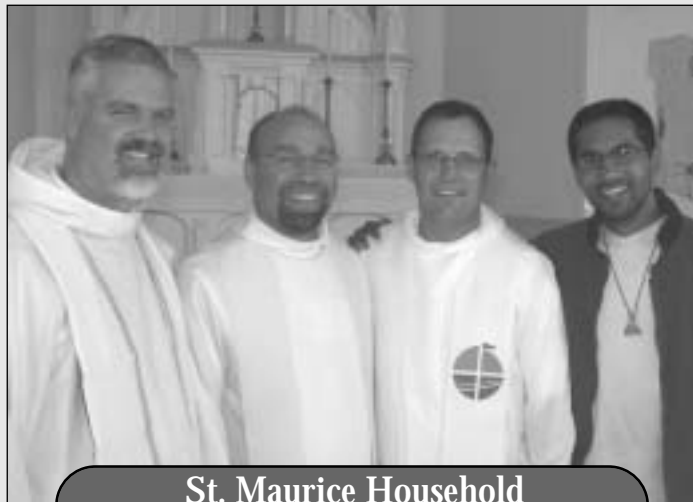


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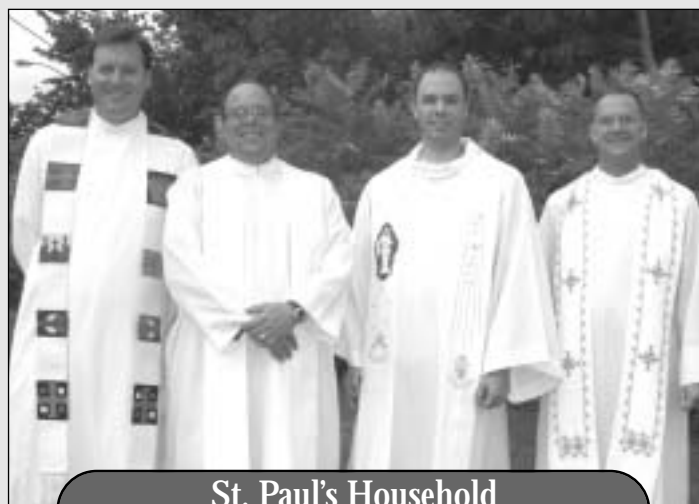
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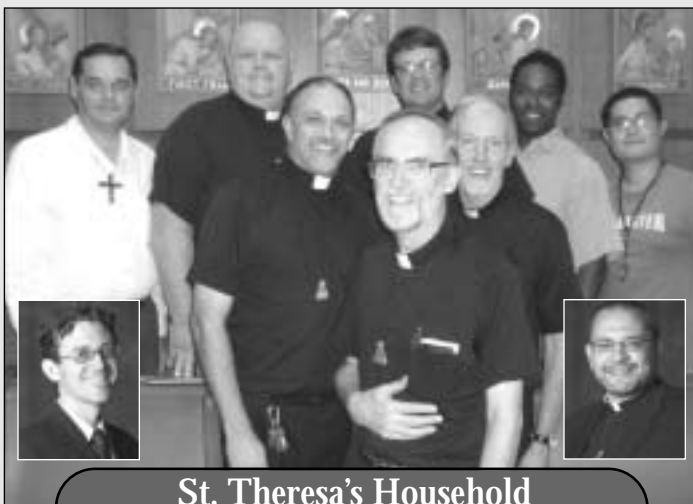
**St. Mary's Household**  
Ottawa



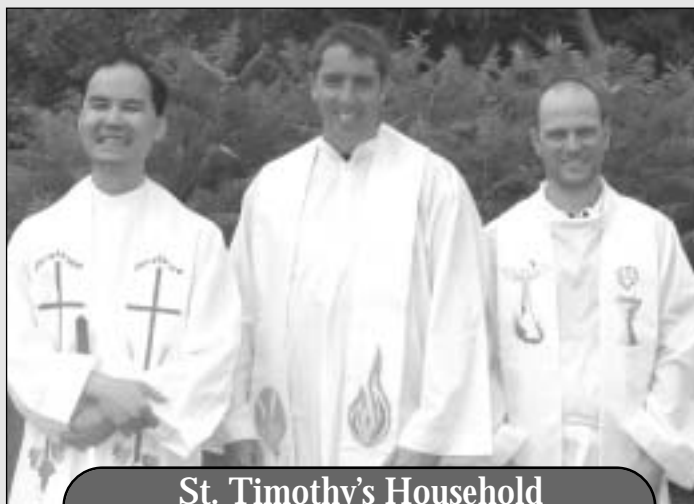
**St. Maurice Household**  
Ottawa



**St. Paul's Household**  
Halifax



**St. Theresa's Household**  
Houston



**St. Timothy's Household**  
Toronto



## FEATURE

by Christine Labrosse

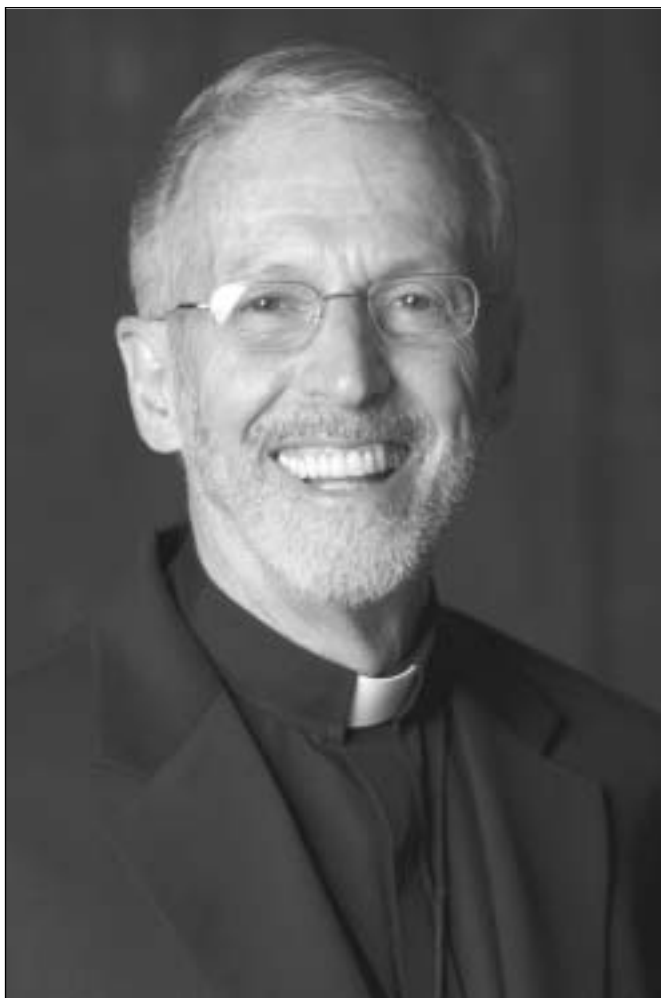
### “Remain in Me”

*“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:4-5).*

This is certainly a hallmark word from the Lord that represents Fr. Francis Frankovich’s 40 years as a priest. From San Diego, California where he was ordained on May 31, 1968 through Ottawa and now in Houston Texas, Fr. Francis has tried to live his priesthood “remaining” in Jesus, and as many in each of these places could attest, his ministry has borne fruit.

Fr. Francis grew up in a very faithful family with one brother. His mother and father belonged to the Legion of Mary and taught their boys how to pray the rosary before they even went to kindergarten. His father would go to confession weekly taking the boys with him. This faith-filled home environment nurtured a priestly vocation from a very young age.

“The strange thing is there was never a time I didn’t want to be a priest. I remember when I was a cub scout we made things out of balsa wood and one of the things I made was a chalice. My brother and I used to play Mass. I always wanted to be the priest. We had these little (candy) wafers, they were sweet. They had different coloured ones but one of the



colours was white. We used to say, ‘Taste and see how good the Lord is’. We always loved having communion with those wafers.”

When Fr. Francis was in grammar school they had to write a story about what they wanted to be when they grew up. He wrote that he wanted to be a priest. This desire continued into high school, so he entered the seminary afterwards.

Fr. Francis was ordained at the age of 25 at a time in the Church when there were a

great many changes taking place. It was just after the Second Vatican Council, the year that *Humanae Vitae* came out, as well as the beginning of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. These things made for a bit of a rocky beginning for his priesthood. He was baptized in the Spirit two years after being ordained and the Lord certainly had his hand on him in a powerful way.

The second parish Fr. Francis was assigned to was in San Bernardino in an area where there were a number of drug addicts. He was very concerned for them and wanted to help them in some way. “I had been baptized in the Spirit in my first parish so, nothing was impossible. I thought I could change the world.” He started a prayer meeting at this parish and with the people from the prayer meeting they began a house for drug addicts. The people that were involved took turns staying in the house around the clock to help.

“We all thought we could change the world, we knew nothing about drug addiction. We didn’t have any money so we sold beans, tacos and enchiladas to make money for the rent on the house.” While it was a very challenging time it was also very fruitful. This house is still running today. Fr. Francis said reflecting back on his 40 years this was one of the most memorable times for him.

“Just seeing a drug addict come clean and take on a whole new lifestyle and start liv-

ing a decent life after being on drugs for so long was fulfilling. Some of them had started taking heroine when they were 10, 12 years old and then they were in their 30s. Just to see them come out of that and into new life. It was a very high moment for me to see the excitement they had for Jesus and the desire they had to walk in his ways.”

Fr. Francis says that one thing that has happened to him over his years of priestly life is that he has fallen in love with the Spanish people. “The thing that draws me to the Spanish people is their openness to the Lord and their thirst for God and things of God. You can speak the Gospel to them and it means something.”

The blessing of working at the Catholic Charismatic Center in Houston is giving Fr. Francis a great deal of joy at this time in his life. “It is so exciting to see people come to the Lord and then grow in the Lord. At the Center we have so many young adults – many of them are young men. This is such a switch I can’t believe it. I started a group with some of the young men. It’s so neat to work with them because they just want to grow! Now, they want to invite other guys. I want them to start teaching and then we can get the young ladies involved. The potential is just phenomenal and very exciting!

“The most exciting part of my priesthood is seeing people come to the Lord and being a part of that – I don’t always do the whole thing – I am just a part of it. That is one thing I have learned over the 40 years, I am only one little part of the picture, and it takes a whole group of people working together for the work to be meaningful.”



Despite the busyness of his life at the Center, he continues to find the time to set aside for prayer and reflection. He said that the advice he would give to any young priest starting out would be to spend time in prayer. “One of the things that was a great strength for me despite everything was prayer. You really need to take time to pray. One of the things they had in the seminary for us was a day of recollection once a month. I would go to a Benedictine monastery and spend a day in prayer. That was my strength. I still try to take that one day a month of recollection, at least 6 to 7 hours to get away and be quiet.”

This practice has contributed to the overall importance, for Fr. Francis, of a balanced life. “Community life has helped me in keeping a balanced life. The importance of exercise and healthy eating are important because I think if your body is healthy you can serve and care for the people. The community has emphasized for me the importance of having an hour of personal prayer time daily and I can’t have a day without that – it’s like it’s built into my being.”

Fr. Francis said that in order for us to fulfill the call to holiness we need to spend this time with the Lord in prayer and quiet. “We really need to remember the

Vatican II call – all are called to holiness, priests most of all – we need to lead in this. We can’t take holiness as a second rate thing. We are in a materialistic world where the media is very accessible. It is easy to start taking on the values of the world. One of the things we lack is silence. We need to be quiet for a while allowing things to surface that we need to work on in our lives.”

This is good advice from a priest 40 years down the holiness road. While there have been times of difficulty and uncertainty for him he believes that as he has tried to keep his focus on the Lord, being faithful and trusting in him, the Lord has been trustworthy. Fr. Francis said it was difficult, especially in that first year, “I felt like leaving the priesthood in the first year but I sensed the Lord saying inside of me, ‘I called you and you’re going to stay here. I will be with you – you’re going to go through some tough things for me but it will be okay’.” Thankfully, for all of those who have been touched by Fr. Francis’ ministry, he remained rooted in Jesus and stayed the course. What a blessing he has been and continues to be to so many.

In a couple of short words Fr. Francis summed up his 40 years: “I have always enjoyed the priesthood and even in the hard moments the Lord always gave me what I needed.” ☪

*Christine Labrosse is the Managing Editor of the Companions’ Newsletter. She and her husband Charles are parishioners of St. Mary’s parish in Ottawa.*



# Companions of the Cross

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and financial support.





## FEATURE

by Claire Johnson and Fr. Terry Donahue

# Ignatian Discernment of Spirits and God's Will

**H**ow can we determine whether a particular thought or feeling comes from God? How can we know God's will with clarity in the major decisions of life? In the 15th century, St. Ignatius of Loyola pondered these questions and developed a set of practical tools to answer them: the Ignatian Rules for Discernment of Spirits and Discernment of God's Will.

### Discernment of Spirits

Ignatius was born to a noble Basque family and after travelling with the Spanish court in the region, became a soldier to the Spanish King. While recovering from a serious leg injury from a cannonball, Ignatius requested some of his favourite chivalrous romance stories. Fortunately for us, the only books available were *The Life of Christ* and a collection of lives of the saints. He noticed that after reading these, he was at peace and satisfied, whereas after having read the romance novels of the day, he had felt restless and unsatisfied. Ignatius wondered where these thoughts and feelings came from. This was the beginning of his discernment of spirits.

Ignatius called these thoughts and feelings **inner motions**, which have three possible origins: the Good Spirit (God and his angels), the Evil Spirit (Satan and the fallen angels), or our own humanity. Spirits can influence our thoughts and feelings directly, or indirectly through our environment. Discernment of Spirits is the process by which we distinguish between different kinds of inner motions and identify their origin, in order to accept the good and reject the bad.

Our lay formation course, *Ignatian Discernment: An Introduction*, covers the Discernment of Spirits Rules for Week I (see figure 1):

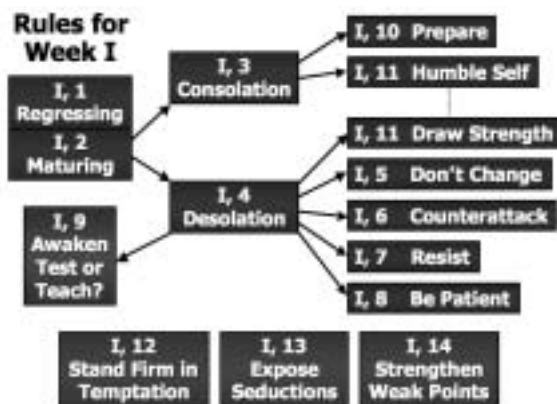


figure 1

- Rules I, 1-2 identify two types of people: **regressing** (moving away from God) and **maturing** (moving toward God) and how the Good and Evil Spirit act upon them.
- Rules I, 3-4 describe two major classes of inner motions: **spiritual consolation** and **spiritual desolation**. Spiritual consolation is a condition of uplifting feelings which instills joy and peace, directly strengthening our life of faith and pursuit of God. Spiritual desolation is a condition of heavy feelings that instills sadness and depletes energy for living, attacking our life of faith.
- Rules I, 5-8 explain what to do during spiritual desolation in order to fight back. **Don't change** or doubt in the darkness a decision that was made in the light. Counterattack in direct opposition to the desolation. **Resist** the temptations of the Enemy. **Be patient**, trusting that consolation will return.
- Rule I, 9 outlines three reasons why the Lord permits spiritual desolation: as a **wake-up call** for those sliding into mediocrity, as a **test** of our level of

commitment and source of motivation, or as a way of **teaching** us that spiritual consolation is a gift from God that we cannot manufacture.

• Rules I, 10-11 describe how to respond to spiritual consolation: **Prepare** for coming spiritual desolation. **Humble yourself** in consolation and **draw strength** from the Lord in desolation.

• Rules I, 12-14 describe how to defeat various tactics of the Enemy.

Following these Rules for Discernment of Spirits helps us to become aware of our interior life and how God is speaking to us. This forms the basis for discovering his particular will for our lives.

### Discernment of God's Will

The term "God's will" has several meanings (see figure 2): God's **permissive** will is everything he allows to happen. God's **positive** will is what God desires, what will be for our good. God's **universal** will is what God desires for everyone in every situation. God's **specific** will for me is the set of morally good alternatives in my situation. God's **preferential** will is the alternative God prefers, which brings about his greatest glory in us.

Ignatian Discernment of God's will is the process of choosing between two or more good options, seeking out the option that brings God the greatest glory in us, finding the alternative God prefers from among the morally good alternatives.

Discernment of God's will presumes a relationship of communion, dependence and collaboration with God. It requires an



figure 2

active prayer life, a willingness to seek after God's will, a holy indifference to all but his will, and a willingness to seek counsel from the wise.

Ignatius presents three methods (modes) to discern God's will. The best method to use depends upon the kind of raw material that God is providing at the time:

- **First Mode: God 'blows us away'** – One alternative is shown to us and our will is drawn so strongly and clearly toward it that there is no doubt that it is his will.
- **Second Mode: 'Tug of War' of inner motions** – We experience significant inner motions and evaluate them using Discernment of Spirits in order to make a decision.
- **Third Mode: 'Pros and Cons' for God's glory** – We do not experience significant inner motions, so we prayerfully make a list of advantages and disadvantages for each option under consideration, using the criteria of God's greater glory. We consider how conducive each option is to love of God, neighbour and self. These options are not weighted by the number of pros & cons, but by their importance.

## Benefits of Ignatian Discernment

There are other methods of discernment, but the wisdom of St. Ignatius, collected in his *Spiritual Exercises*, has stood the test of time and has a wide influence in the Church. Many people find that taking a course in Ignatian Discernment (complete with practical examples, case studies and class discussion) is more helpful than simply reading the text of Ignatius. One of our students offered the following testimony after completing the introductory course:

"I am now aware of some of the reasons for consolations and desolations that I had experienced in the past and I know now the steps that should be taken when they occur. As a young adult, I found the rules for discernment very helpful because, during this transitional stage, they provided me with a method for systematically seeking out God's will for my life. In addition to assisting my own discernment, I believe that the rules will better equip me to serve in various ministries and in my professional life as I work with teams of individuals."

Our next lay formation course, *Ignatian Discernment: Practical Applications*, covers the Discernment of Spirits Rules for Week II (see figure 3) and advanced discernment of God's will with specific application to married couples and group discernment. This course will cover the more subtle movements of the Spirits: the influence of the Good and Evil Spirits on progressions of thoughts, spiritual deception of the Enemy disguised as an angel of light, true and false consolations, and 'afterglow' experiences after spiritual consolation. This course will be offered in

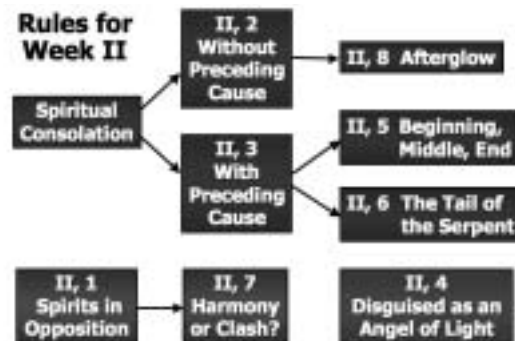


figure 3

Ottawa from October 20 to November 24, 2008. For those in other foundations, we plan to make these course materials available on CD and DVD. We also hope to offer these lay formation courses at our other Companions of the Cross foundations in the future. ☺

.....  
Fr. Terry Donahue is the Director of Lay Formation and Chaplain to the Lay Associates for the Companions of the Cross. He is also an English Secretary for the Papal Nuncio to Canada.

Claire Johnson teaches undergraduate theology at Saint Paul University while pursuing her Doctorate. She has extensive knowledge of Ignatian discernment and its practical applications.

# UNION WITH CHRIST

The following article is excerpted from the talks given by Fr. Pat MacNulty, of Madonna House, at the Community Retreat Days at the end of August at Red Pine Camp.

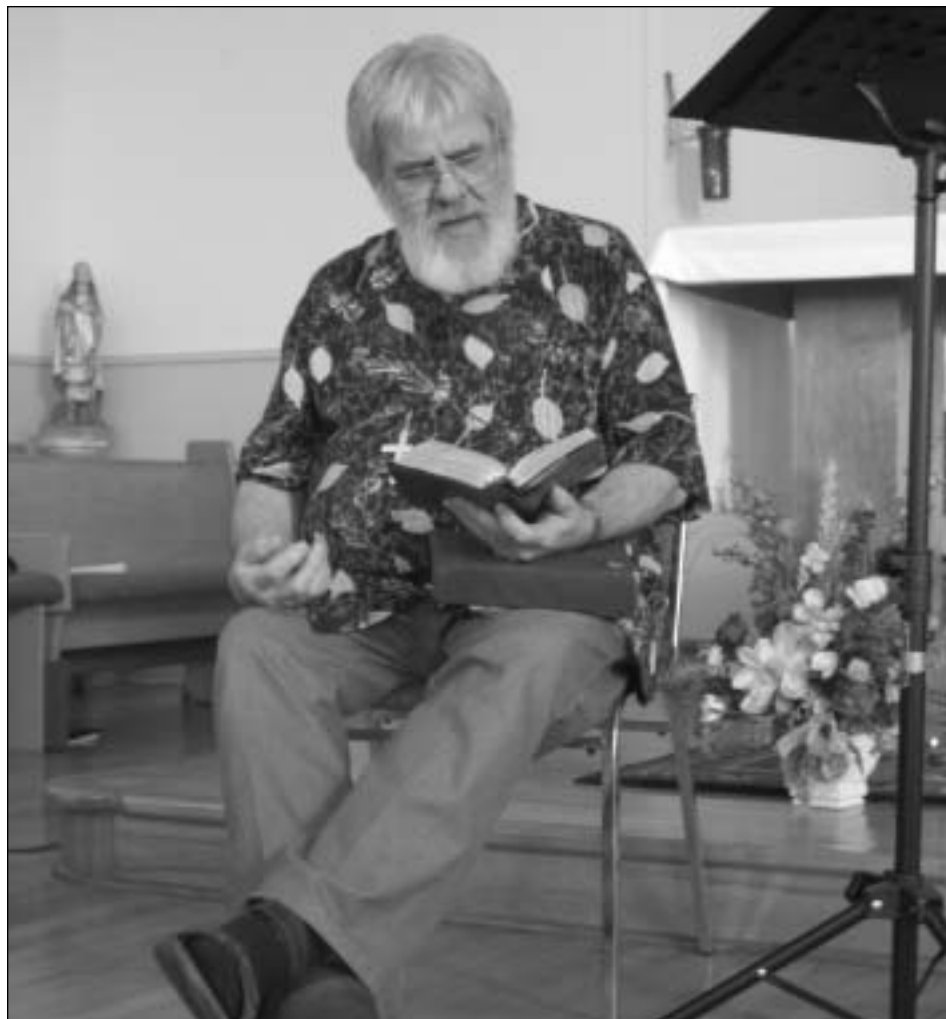
## Called by Name

When I think about my own relationship to Christ through baptism, there is this marvellous line from Isaiah: “*The Lord called me before I was born. From my mother’s womb He pronounced my name*” (Is 49:1). That applies to every one of us, particularly those of us who are baptized. That’s how clearly he knows you. He knows your ancestry, he knows the reason you were placed where you were, when you were, how you were – he knows all of that, and that should give us a sense of joy.

## Called into the Desert

We have a wonderful gift in our tradition of going out to the desert. Whether you go physically or mentally, you are ripped loose from something that is no longer giving you life, and God wants to refurbish your soul, your spirit. That’s what it means to go to the desert. “*So I will allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart... On that day, says the Lord, She shall call me ‘My husband’... I will espouse you to me forever: I will espouse you in right and in justice, in love and in mercy*” (Ho 2:16-21). When your world falls apart, it is God trying to love you.

Most of us spend our life trying to manipulate those tough edges where God is calling us. We say we don’t know how to go,



or we don’t want to go, or we can see it coming, and it’s too much. We withdraw. We don’t want to go to the desert. Whether it’s a physical desert or a mental desert, we don’t want to go there. But you have to go there, one way or the other, because that’s part of our history. It is in the desert that the Lord wants to heal our hearts. So when the Church goes into the desert, it’s a good sign.

Did the Apostles throw their life into something that was dying? It seemed to be dying when they threw their life into it. Did it look like it was going to survive? Not on your life! What did they throw their life into then? The power of Jesus Christ. If I throw my life into the vision of Jesus, I will survive. And I don’t mean

merely survive, I will live; I will have faith; I will be able to minister. The rest is God’s business.

## The Problem of Suffering

“What kind of a God are you?” People are asking that question all over the world today: “Why did my life turn out this way? Why is my son schizophrenic paranoid? I married and gave my life and he left me or she left me, and now I’m stuck. Where were you when my baby died? Where were you when I was conceived with AIDS? Where were you when the tsunami wiped out every living relative of mine? **What kind of a God are you?**” That question is in the heart of every human being.

People will not believe our answer unless they know it heart-to-heart. There's some dimension of those questions we have to live out every day. Now, it will be different for everyone, but for me the key answer was this incredible thing that happened to me. When I finally asked God that question, finally had enough guts to say, "Where were you when I was being abused as a child?" In my heart, I heard, "It was not you, who was being abused, Patrick, it was me. I am the One who bears the pain of the whole world, of everyone, saint and sinner, until the end of time." That's the meaning of the Incarnation. That's the meaning of love: "I am one with the abused, and one with the abuser." I couldn't believe that, I could not believe that I was thinking that way. I didn't hear voices, but it was there in my heart.

In *No Man Is an Island*, Thomas Merton said, "Suffering and the consecration it demands cannot be understood outside the context of Baptism. In Baptism we receive a divine vocation to find ourselves in Christ. It is the application to our souls of the passion of Jesus, and it gives us our personal, incommunicable vocation to reproduce in our own lives the lives and the sufferings and the charity of Jesus Christ in a way unknown to anyone else that has ever lived under the sun."

## The Priesthood of the Baptized

Caryll Houselander says, "Christ is formed in my life. We're not **beside** him – we're **in** him. And what he asks of us is to realize that it's in what we do that he wants to act. And it's in what we suffer that he wants to suffer." It's hard not to think of a kind of mystical Christ standing there beside us or in front of us. It's really difficult to realize that if he is formed in my life, we are not beside him we are **in him**. What he asks of us is to realize that it's actually in what we do that he wants to act, and to suffer. It needs to be prac-



ticed to be understood. We need to say to ourselves a thousand times a day – **Christ** wants to do this, **Christ** wants to suffer this **in** and **through my flesh**. That's at the heart of the spirituality of the priesthood.

St. John Eudes wrote, "You are one with Jesus. All that is his is yours, his breath in your breath, his heart in your heart. All the faculties in his soul in the faculties of your soul. You have one breath, and it's with him. You have one soul and one life and one will and one mind and one heart with him. And he desires that whatever is in him will live and rule in you."

I didn't believe that until I asked, "What kind of a God are you?" and Jesus said to me, "I was the one who was being abused, Patrick. I created **you** to be with **me**." I thought, "Do you want to run that one by me again?" Then I thought of what Catherine Doherty used to say, "Our life at Madonna House is meant to assuage the loneliness of Christ." I thought, "What does that mean? When I go before the

Blessed Sacrament dying of loneliness, I can't do anything for **him**! I'm going there for him to do something to **me**." I didn't get the connection! My loneliness **is** his loneliness. That's the point!

That's what happened when we were baptized: an ontological change in our humanity! We entered into the mystery of the priesthood of the baptized, where our relationship with Jesus is so **one** that he and **I are one**. What happens to **him** happens to **me**. What happens to **me** happens to **him**. That's literal. That's not symbolic, that's not hyperbole. "What you do to one another you do to me" (cf. Mt 25:40). What's happening to you happens to him. That's part of the tradition of the spirituality of our Church. **We just don't believe it yet.**

When Catherine Doherty was lonely, do you know how she satisfied her loneliness? She'd go into the dining room, just kind of wander across and sit down. She would go to the loneliest person in the dining room and spend an hour with him.

And when she got up, her loneliness was gone. Why? Because she believed that person's loneliness was the loneliness of Jesus. If Jesus lets me be lonely to get me to come to him in his loneliness, the going to him will heal mine. That's a key twist in spirituality. That's what makes it possible for us to love one another, and not end up with nothing. If what's going on in the other person can somehow be turned into some experience that we can see in the life of Jesus, then I can go to that person. Then we will find life there.

What is the priesthood of the baptized? Jesus and I are one. I don't have to act like we are one, I don't have to make it happen, **we are one!** The ultimate purpose of the human condition, of our own situation, and the reason why we are left wounded or unhealed, is to take us into the mystery of that union in Christ which is common to all of the baptized, and to somehow see all of that with the eyes of Christ. Christ said to me, "You and I are one. You must not look anywhere else for the meaning to your pain or your darkness, no matter what the sin, or the consequence of it. Come into my heart through yours and I will show you everything. All I need is a heart pierced by its own human condition, just like mine has been pierced. A heart that has no place else to go but to my heart. And I will do the rest."

Catherine Doherty says, "When I weep Christ weeps, because Christ is in me. When my tears mingle with those of Christ, his holiness washes me. Not me, not mine. I believe in faith that my tears are from God that I am crying with God because God cares for me and cries with me. Or, something happened in the world that made God cry, and God invited me to cry. Or perhaps I cried and invited God to cry."

### Becoming a Prayer

Catherine Doherty describes becoming a prayer: "Suddenly, out of nowhere, the suffering of all humanity will fill you, and you feel like one who is dead. You hear the news, and you are the man who has

been kidnapped by the terrorists. You are the woman dying of cancer. The pain of the whole world is upon you, from every corner of the earth. And then you hear the good news – you hear that a fiesta is being celebrated and suddenly you're dancing in the middle of the night. And you feel that perhaps God is dancing with you. When you're doubtful, you become a prayer for those who are in doubt. Sometimes you even go into the depths of hell – you descend there of your own free will, out of love. And your going there is prayer. As you pray about the living, the suffering, the doubting, all these things, God is there. And once you find God there, **you** become the prayer. You and God are joined in one, which is the prayer of Jesus Christ. And then you can truly say, 'I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me' (Ga 2:20)."

### The Mystery of the Eucharist

In *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, Nicholas Gihhr writes, "As in the life of the Church, the gloom of Good Friday and the joy of Easter, as in the life of every individual, sorrow and the hope of salvation, the daily need and the confidence of redemption, they follow upon and they blend with each other. So Christ is here – poor and humble as he was once in the manger. Because, he is once in the manger and again he is here in the throne of his majesty and glory. It is he who has overcome the world, and who has been elevated upon the Cross, and draws everyone to himself. Before whom all creatures then bow in adoration. Here is our Golgotha, where we grieve beneath the Cross. But here is our Tabor, where we build tabernacles to receive the peace of Heaven. There is the dread of Gethsemane, and there is the Easter morn. There is mystical death, and there is the secret fountain of life. Our Saviour is here – invisible, and yet visible – a hidden God, and yet evident to our eyes. For in this Sacrament there has appeared for us all the goodness and the kindness of our God. This earthly life is neither one or the other, grief or joy. But in him, the friend and the spouse of souls, who suffered all

that we endure and yet much more, who in grief silently and yet so audibly speaks words of encouragement to us as the glorified redeemer who cries out to us at every Mass, 'Have confidence, for I have overcome the world' (Jn 16:33). In him the soul learns and understands the real meaning of life, and from him she receives resolution and strength to immolate herself with the sacrifice that is offered on the altar. The altar becomes the sanctuary of the Church, the fountain of living water from which flows all that is grand and sublime, all that is glorious and divine, and he pours it over the whole world."

### Closing Prayer

Risen Lord Jesus, may we all come to know that from the moment of our Baptism the purpose and meaning of every event in our entire life is to be found in you and you alone, the Incarnate Son of God.

May we all come to know that nothing will ever happen to us or has ever happened to us that does not somehow mysteriously join us both together "in the flesh" now in a personal union beyond all telling. May we come to know that whatever we endure, be it sorrow or joy, life or death, it only takes us deeper into your own heart, so that in, with and through you, we too can enter into the suffering and joy of the whole world through our own, for we have become one with them in you!

In humble thanksgiving for this baptismal gift, let us promise, with the help of your grace, that from now until the end of our days, we will seek from you and you alone, in your life and your life alone, the personal, moment-by-moment explanation and meaning of every event in our life, past, present and future, even our own sin and weakness.

Let our prayer become that of your Mother so that we too will know, in our very flesh that I live now, not I, but you live in me. Fiat. Amen. ☩

# REASONS TO BELIEVE

## A Look at Tolle

by Fr. Terry Donahue

**E**ckhart Tolle is a spiritual teacher, motivational speaker, and writer from Germany now living in Vancouver, Canada. Since his appearance on Oprah in March 2008, his most recent book, *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*, has topped the New York Times bestseller list with millions sold, 10 million free downloads, 4 million copies given to youth, and 4500 copies given to all graduates of Stanford University by Oprah, who called it "one of the most important books of our time."

*A New Earth* is presented as a self-help book designed to help people experience personal transformation, live in the present moment, and tame the ego. But its core teachings are actually heavily influenced by Buddhism, packaged in different terminology:

1) When you identify with your ego, you experience dysfunction, sorrow and pain.

2) You are not your ego, your mind, or physical form. Your true self is timeless presence, formless being, eternal 'I Am'.

3) You must awaken to this true identity and be free of the ego in order to be your true self.

Oprah claims that "there's no conflict between this teaching, which is purely spiritual, and any religion." Some Catholics concur, maintaining that Tolle's teachings simply help them to be a better Catholic. In response, we can identify specific statements of Tolle that **directly contradict** the Catholic faith (see "Errors vs. Truths" sidebar). Tolle's work does contain some truths, but they are combined with many errors from a variety of eastern philosophies and New Age sources, creating a spiritually dangerous mix. An uncritical reading of Tolle can lead Catholics astray and confuse those sincerely seeking the truth.

"The success of **New Age** offers the Church a challenge. People feel the Christian religion no longer offers them –

or perhaps never gave them – something they really need. The search which often leads people to the **New Age** is a genuine yearning: for a deeper spirituality, for something which will touch their hearts, and for a way of making sense of a confusing and often alienating world... If the Church is not to be accused of being deaf to people's longings, her members need to do two things: to root themselves ever more firmly in the fundamentals of their faith, and to understand the often-silent cry in people's hearts, which leads them elsewhere if they are not satisfied by the Church. There is also a call in all of this to come closer to Jesus Christ and to be ready to follow him, since he is the real way to happiness, the truth about God and the fullness of life for every man and woman who is prepared to respond to his love" (*Jesus Christ: Bearer of the Water of Life: A Christian reflection on the "New Age"*, 1.5, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/interelg/documents/rc\\_pc\\_interelg\\_doc\\_20030203\\_new-age\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html))

Errors of Eckhart Tolle	Truths of the Catholic Faith
<p>"Never personalize Christ. Don't make Christ into a form identity. Avatars, divine mothers, enlightened masters, the very few that are real, are not special as persons." (<i>The Power of Now</i>, p. 105)</p>	<p>"At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father... who suffered and died for us and who now, after rising, is living with us forever." (<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>, 426)</p>
<p>"The word God is limiting... because it implies an entity other than you. God is Being itself, not a being. There can be no subject-object relationship here, no duality, no you and God." (<i>The Power of Now</i>, p. 224)</p>	<p>"Divisions which <b>New Age</b> proponents claim need to be overcome include the real difference between Creator and creation, the real distinction between man and nature, or spirit and matter, which are all considered wrongly as forms of dualism." (<i>Jesus Christ: Bearer of the Water of Life</i>, 2.2.4)</p>
<p>The Truth is inseparable from who you are. Yes, you <b>are</b> the Truth... The very being that you are is Truth. Jesus tried to convey that when he said, 'I am the way and the truth and the life.' If misinterpreted, however, they become a great obstacle. Jesus speaks of the innermost I Am, the essence identity of every man and woman..." (<i>A New Earth</i>, p. 71)</p>	<p>"Christ is 'the way, and the truth, and the life' (Jn 14:6). Consequently the decisive answer to every one of man's questions, his religious and moral questions in particular, is given by Jesus Christ, or rather is Jesus Christ himself, as the Second Vatican Council recalls: 'In fact, <u>it is only in the mystery of the Word incarnate that light is shed on the mystery of man...</u>'" (John Paul II, <i>Veritatis Splendor</i>, 2)</p>
<p>"The New Testament contains deep spiritual truth as well as distortions... Some are due to a misunderstanding of Jesus' teaching, others arose because people had an agenda (wanting to fit Jesus into their preconceived notions, wanting to make converts etc.)... When you are present, you access your inner knowing and you will sense what is true and what was added on or distorted." (eckhartolle.com/dear_eckhart_28)</p>	<p>"Holy Mother Church has firmly and with absolute constancy held, and continues to hold, that the four Gospels just named, whose historical character the Church unhesitatingly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation until the day he was taken up into heaven." (Vatican II, <i>Dei Verbum</i>, 19)</p>



# COMMUNITY NEWS & NOTES

by Fr. Rick Jaworski

## Eucharistic Congress

In the first week of June, five of our seminarians did some evangelization and evening missions promoting the International Eucharistic Congress in shopping malls, churches, and other venues. Fr. Pierre Ingram and Fr. Marc Syrenne celebrated Mass, heard confessions, and gave talks during the weeks of preparation.

Simon Lobo (now Rev. Mr. Simon Lobo) reported that at the Congress itself, there were many present for adoration during the Companions of the Cross-led time slots who told him afterwards that they were very touched. "They were particularly moved to see so many young priests present to help animate the time of Eucharistic Adoration", Simon said.



*Companions of the Cross leading Adoration at the Eucharistic Congress*

## Changes to the CC Roster

This year Steve Clark (Ottawa ON), Kenneth Lao (Mississauga ON), and Stephen Marsh (Stratford ON) join us in Canada; while Antonio Aquino (Houston TX), Jorge Alvarado (Monterrey Mexico), and Ruben Campbell (Saltillo Mexico) join us in Houston. Antonio is a pre-applicant but living in the priory with us; the other men are applicants.

Ruben Campbell. Doesn't sound Mexican. Ruben is North America all-in-one. His mother is Mexican; his father is from the United States; and he has roots in Canada. In fact, while in Ottawa in August, he found some relatives! Truly all of us on earth are one people, one family under God our Father.



*Deacons Simon Lobo and Jamie Utronkie*

It's always interesting to hear how the men found out about us. A nun in China told Kenneth that he should seek us out! God must be leading.

Some names are the same, but the men have been changed in their very being and have, as a result, new titles. Simon Lobo and Jamie Utronkie made their lifetime commitments to the community at the 11:00 am Mass at St. Mary's Parish

(Ottawa) on Sunday, September 7. Our Moderator, Fr. Scott McCaig, received their promises and our Founder, Fr. Bob Bedard, preached. The next day, as we liturgically celebrated Our Blessed Mother's birthday, Archbishop Terrence Prendergast ordained them deacons. "*For the Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*" (Mk 10:45)

The following weekend, out in Halifax where he had his parish internship, Carlos Martins made his lifetime commitment to the community to Fr. Scott's delegate, our Director of Formation, Fr. Pierre Ingram, at the 11:00 am Mass at St. Paul's on Sunday, September 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Then, at 3:00 pm at St. Michael's, the Most Rev. Claude Champagne, auxiliary bishop, ordained Carlos to the diaconate.

Thank you so much to all those who came out, helped in any way, and have prayed for these men. Yes, congratulations, but more so, thank you Carlos, Jamie, and Simon! You are gifts of God to us.

## Anniversaries

This year we celebrated Fr. Francis Frankovich's 40th anniversary as a priest. One of the honouring celebrations was on Monday, August 25 at St. Maurice Parish in Ottawa. In the homily with which he blessed us, Father Francis focussed on the Scripture quote "*Remain in me*" that, starting with a painting, has become dear to him. According to the story, the painter put all his love into making the picture of Jesus on the cross. Jesus, very pleased, offered to take the painter to himself. The painter accepted, and died—joining with his beloved Jesus forever.



Anniversary reception for Fr. Francis Frankovich at St. Maurice parish in Ottawa

Father Francis recounted a tale from one of his former parishes. It was a neighbourhood with gangs, violence, and drugs. There were bullet holes in the rectory from drive-by shootings. One evening Mass, some girls had brought boyfriends from another part of town. Boys from the area were waiting to harm them as they left the church. Father Francis knew they would be safe if they stayed with him, and urged them to do so. But they ran and were beaten. "*Remain with me.*"

The celebration in Houston was postponed due to Hurricane Ike.

## Community Days

The anniversary celebration comes right before our Annual Community Days, this year as in the past while, at Red Pine Camp. Fr. Thomas Dubay, the well-known, holy and scholarly, spiritual writer was going to be our presenter. Unfortunately, Father Dubay had to cancel due to serious health concerns. Please pray for him.

On the recommendation of a number of friends, we were able to get Father Pat McNulty of Madonna House on short notice. Thank you Father Pat and Madonna House! Father Pat's sessions were based on his book, *I live now, not I: Life as it is now becomes the mystery of Love in Christ* (Combermere: Madonna House Publications, 2008), while concentrating on the priesthood and the Eucharist.

*Continued on page 22*



“Our own personal human condition shapes our relationship with Christ through our baptism [ . . . ] through our everyday life. [ . . . ] Nothing in our life is wasted, because through our baptism, I no longer live but Christ in me”, Father Pat reminded us. “Everything that happens to you, happens to him; and that’s what he uses to get you to come to him.” Father Pat was profoundly moved by Catherine Doherty’s words: “When I weep, Christ weeps.” Preferring the term ‘sacrificial soul’ to ‘victim soul’, Father Pat spoke of union as the purpose of sacrifice, and union as the path to joy.

As regards the Eucharist, Father Pat highlighted its mystery and the need to live the Eucharist throughout the entire day. Finally, we prepare for our last moment by preparing for our present moment. The program is the same as ever; the center is Christ. “That’s where we’ll be at the moment we die, if that’s where we are at the moment where we live.”

### This picture brought to you by...

We hope to tell you what is going on and give you pictures from wherever the Companions of the Cross can be found. Although we will hire professional photographers for more solemn occasions, other events and candid shots in our various foundations come from the following cameramen and their helpers: Fr. Charles Orchard in Batangas, Philippines; Fr. Jerry Gauvreau in Halifax NS; Fr. John Vandenakker in Houston TX; Fr. Dennis Hayes in Ottawa ON; and Fr. Randy Hendriks in Toronto ON.

### News from Halifax

Fr. Rob Arsenault reports that they had a great summer. Tropical storm Hanna only ended up dropping lots of rain, as it mostly went by on the Bay of Fundy side. Brett Powell and Andre Regnier of Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO) will be giving workshops to the St. Paul’s household in Halifax (and the St. Maurice household in Ottawa) as they pioneer an attempt to integrate and adapt the various strategies presented to us by Brett in Houston in January 2008 more deeply into the fabric of our households and ministries.

There will be a leadership workshop put on along with CCO. The Catechetical program based on the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* that has been going on for the last two years will continue into its third year. St. Paul’s is presenting a Catholicism 201 program tied in to this Year of St. Paul. St. John the Baptist will be reaching out with their Catholics Coming Home initiative.

Fr. Marc Syrenne is settling in well and appreciated by everyone. Fr. Rob declares that Fr. Marc does the best bird imitation ever, but the worst dolphin. Apparently the dolphin sounds sick. Fr. Rob hopes the marine environment will improve it. Fr. Marc is replacing Fr. Brian Christie who is starting his experience-the contemplative-more-deeply year at the Little Portion Hermitage in Arizona (where John Michael Talbot is).

### Moving, Moving, Moving

Not only the priests and seminarians, but the office staff are moving too. Our residence at 126 Young Street in Ottawa has been transformed into a second office. Fr. Terry Donahue, Mary Lauzon, Ken Gorman, and Del Andison have moved their offices over there. They were very slightly preceded by Shannon Kalyniak.

As our Moderator, Fr. Scott McCaig, announced to the community in an internal letter, "Over the past few years there has been a growing need for the community to hire someone to take care of some



Shannon Kalyniak

of our growing technical needs. Specifically, we need someone to administer and develop our website and our online bookstore, and to take care of our growing video and audio editing needs. There are also many duties in the areas of development, advertising, and vocations that we currently contract out to others that could be done by such an employee.

"We have recently hired Shannon Kalyniak for this position. She has a degree in graphic design and recently completed a year of service with NET Ministries of Canada. We have no doubt that she will be a welcome and valuable addition to our staff."

### News from Houston

Shannon starts work; Fr. Ed Wade retires. As of August 31, Father Ed is 'officially' retired; however, this faithful and devoted priest, our dear brother, will continue to serve the people in various ways. He had knee surgery, wore a brace on his leg, and recovered nicely.

While on the physical topic, Fr. Michael Scherrey had a gastric bypass in early September.

Fr. Ben St. Croix arrived in time for what Fr. Francis Donnelly called in an email "the great sewage backup flood" in the Priory. This necessitated new covering in the residence first floor hall and rooms mostly.

This little event paled, of course, in comparison to Hurricane Ike. At Queen of Peace, Fr. John Vandenakker wrote, "We lost some shingles on our church roof (causing leaks inside the church). A tree fell on our parish hall (punching a big hole clear through it). Our parish sign blew down (along with the school sign, and many more tree branches). But all in all, we are thankful for all your thoughts and prayers. All our Masses went ahead as scheduled (some by candlelight due to the widespread power outages)." A tree fell on St. Teresa's priory chapel roof causing flooding in the chapel and inundating Fr. Michael Scherrey's room. Otherwise everyone was fine.

Thank you Jesus for being with us, giving us strength, guiding us, and giving us one another! ☺

See page 24 for photos from Hurricane Ike.

.....  
*Fr. Rick Jaworski has taken over for Fr. John Vandenakker in this regular column. He has a licentiate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome.*



*A tree fell on the parish hall at Queen of Peace punching a big hole clear through.*



*Fr. Michael Minifie working on the roof of Queen of Peace Church damaged by Hurricane Ike.*

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***“I am the vine;  
you are the branches; if a man  
remains in me and I in him,  
he will bear much fruit;  
apart from me you can do nothing”  
(John 15:5).***