



MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

CINCINNATI PROVINCE
Office of Mission Advancement
431 E. Second St.
Dayton OH 45402-1764

mission@cpps-preciousblood.org
Phone: 937-228-9263
Fax: 937-228-6878

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Dear Friend,

Our founder, St. Gaspar del Bufalo, began our Congregation in the small town of Giano, Italy, in 1815. He always imagined that his Missionaries would go forth into the whole world to tell everyone they meet about the wonderful healing power of the Precious Blood of Jesus. An energetic visionary, he pictured them on the move from place to place.

As we have lived out his vision in the past two centuries, we have seen the wisdom of looking further than the eye can see, as St. Gaspar did. He imagined a world where everybody would be embraced by a loving Father, where everyone would understand and treasure the sacrifice of God's son. So, like St. Gaspar, we have tried to stay on the move, to seek out new places where people need the reconciliation and grace offered by the Precious Blood of Jesus. And we've also put down roots.

In our own province, we've established missions in Chile, Peru, Guatemala and Colombia. It hasn't always been easy. Our Missionaries had to place themselves into another culture, learn a second language, adapt to different food, and find a toehold in a new place where they would be accepted and their message would be heard.

Almost always, that's come in the form of parish life. Fr. Joe Deardorff, C.P.P.S., is a Dayton native who served in Peru for many years and is now the director of our *ad experimentum* mission in Colombia. He says, "A parish gives us an opportunity to be with the people. It gives us our own identity, a place where we can put down roots and share our spirituality. We can get closer to the people on a daily basis."

As I travel to our missions in support of our Missionaries, the visit sometimes includes joining in a liturgy at one of our parishes. I wish you could join me on these trips. It's wonderful to see how the same spirit of God flows through the people, there and here, and to hear the same gospel in Valdivia, Chile, that's being proclaimed in Whiting, Ind.



Parishioners gather outside our parish in Bogotá, Colombia.

(Please detach from letter and return with your gift in the envelope provided.)

Yes, I would like to be a part of the mission work in Chile, Peru, Guatemala and Colombia.

- Enclosed is my gift of \$_____.
- I would like to pledge _____ a month a quarter
- My first pledge is enclosed. Please send me pledge forms.

Please make your check payable to: **Society of the Precious Blood**

To make a donation by credit card, please use the reverse side of this form.

All gifts count toward the *Missionary Hearts* Mission and Ministry Society membership levels.

I ___ have or ___ wish to include the Missionaries in my estate planning.

There and here, no parish could survive without its dedicated volunteers. This is especially true in our parishes in Latin America, where one or two priests are often trying to serve thousands of people spread over many far-flung villages or crowded city blocks. When I see people pitching in to help at a parish in Peru or Chile, I can't help but think of my own mom, when we were growing up across the road from our country parish, and all the hours she volunteered teaching religion classes for grade-school children and helping in other ways.

Many parish activities, there and here, center on sharing a meal. At some of our Latin American parishes, as in our parish in Bogotá, Colombia, and at many of the chapels of Sangre de Cristo parish in the La Labor region of Guatemala, groups of parishioners get together to offer a light meal or snack after Mass, right outside the front door of the church. People walk out of the church into the most wonderful aromas.



Food served after Mass is always popular with younger parishioners.

As you can imagine, this is a big hit with the kids—and with everyone else, according to Fr. Bill Beuth, C.P.P.S., who serves in La Labor. “The food that’s offered is varied, but usually, it’s something that is easy to make and is not very expensive,” he said. At one community, volunteers top tostadas with a mixture of noodles and vegetables. Another favorite is an *antojito* (“little cravings,” a sort of an appetizer) that is an enchilada topped with beets, cabbage, carrots, onions, thyme, cheese, and slices of hard-boiled eggs.

The food is sold as a fundraiser for the parish. But more than the money, the parish benefits from the friendship. People stay after Mass for up to an hour, eating and visiting. It gives the priest a chance to mingle with the people, to ask how they’re recovering from a sickness or how their grandmother is doing.

While the food and the location might be different, you can get a sense of your own parish in this: in your Lenten soup-and-sandwich dinners, at the parish fish fry, in the lunch stand at the parish festival. There and here, the parish is often the place where a family’s faith is nurtured and sustained.

You know how important your parish is to you; will you help support our Missionaries’ ministry in parishes in Chile, Peru, Guatemala and Colombia? Please consider a donation that will aid our missions. A key to making any mission successful is collaboration and helping others help themselves. That’s what our Missionaries strive to do. Your gift can strengthen our efforts, ongoing for more than 200 years now, to encourage people to turn to the Precious Blood of Jesus for hope and strength. Your donation will help a faith family that begins with your family and extends all the way around the world.

We wish you all the joy of the Easter season, in your parish and in your home. We hope that you are refreshed and renewed by this holy time and that you feel welcomed and cherished at the great table of the Eucharist that we all share.

Sincerely in the Blood of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "V. Rev. Larry J. Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S."

V. Rev. Larry J. Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S.
Provincial Director

I would like to make a gift of \$ _____ by credit card.

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