



MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

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Dear Friend,

Marriage Encounter is a ministry that encourages couples into a stronger, deeper relationship with each other and with God. The Church supports this ministry because it recognizes that the example set by loving, faithful spouses improves the lives of all around them.

Fr. Ken Schroeder, C.P.P.S., supports Marriage Encounter because he has seen what it can do. He's been active with the organization for nearly 40 years, and recently took part in a Marriage Encounter weekend as part of the presenting team.

"I appreciate working with the couples involved with Marriage Encounter. When I see couples living their sacrament, it impels me to live my sacrament," he said.

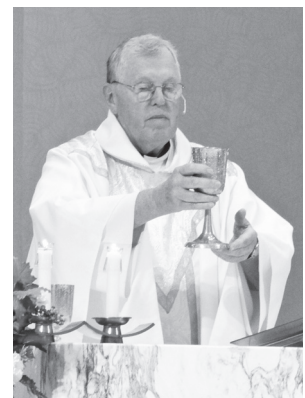
Marriage Encounter is just one of the ways that Fr. Ken continues to minister among God's people even though he is retired. Like many of the C.P.P.S. priests now living in retirement at St. Charles Center in Carthagena, Ohio, he frequently goes out to help at local parishes. "Once a priest, always a priest. Whenever there are opportunities where we can exercise our priesthood, we want to be of service," he said. "That's part of our calling as Missionaries of the Precious Blood."

An Ottawa, Ohio, native who was ordained in 1965, Fr. Ken has served the Church and our Community in many ways: as director of seminarians at Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind.; as a parish priest; and as a military chaplain, first with the U.S. Army Reserves then, beginning in 1978, in active duty with the U.S. Army. As a chaplain, Fr. Ken accompanied troops of the 1st Armored Division into Iraq during Desert Storm.

He retired from the military in 2000, and in 2001 became pastor first of St. John the Baptist Church in Maria Stein, Ohio, and later of the five parishes in that area. As with his other assignments, he loved it. "When I retired from the army, I said, 'I just want to be a pastor.' Maria Stein was a great fit for me. It was close enough to my family that I could easily go home to visit. It was just perfect," he said.

If you're around Fr. Ken long enough, you'll hear him talk this way about all the places he's served—all were the perfect fit for him, in their own way. But he had and has a special bond with the people in the Maria Stein area. It's just a few miles from St. Charles, so he continues to go to as many of the Marion Local Flyers sporting events as he can fit into his busy calendar.

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



**Fr. Ken Schroeder
presides at Mass at
St. Charles Center.**

Yes, I would like to help retired C.P.P.S. priests and brothers.

Enclosed is my gift of \$_____.

I would like to pledge \$_____ a month a quarter

We will send you pledge forms and envelopes.

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

ACCOUNT:

**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.

“At the ball games, you connect with people from the community. It helps me keep up my relationships with the people, and also I think the kids appreciate it,” he said.



Fr. Ken offers the sign of peace to fellow Missionaries at St. Charles Center.

He keeps up his relationships with his friends from Marriage Encounter, from the military (he and Fr. Louis Schmit, C.P.P.S., another retired army chaplain, attended a chaplains’ reunion in Washington D.C. early in November), and from parishes where he’s served. Fr. Ken also says it’s important for him to remain close to his fellow Missionaries at St. Charles. He was looking forward to retirement because he could draw up his own schedule—but he never intended to withdraw from life out in the community or in his religious Community.

“I was looking forward to retirement so that I could live at St. Charles. It’s perfect for me. Living with my brother priests and the religious brothers gives me a sense of security: I’m not alone in my quest to be a good priest. I can look to people like Fr. Jim Dugal and others for their example. We just enjoy being around each other,” he said.

Fr. Ken and his fellow priests and brothers living at St. Charles enjoy a life that’s as full as they want it to be. Many, like Fr. Ken, choose to help out at parishes as long as they are able. Those who can’t travel carry out an important ministry of prayer. They serve as an example to the rest of us of what it means to be faithful to our calling, to live out the promises that you have made to God and to each other.

One of our priorities as a religious Community is to care for our aging members. Our priests and brothers give so much of themselves through their years of active ministry. And they continue to give in many ways, spiritually and temporally, after retirement: Fr. Ken donates his military pension to the Missionaries. He and other Missionaries give the Mass stipends they receive to help support the Community.

We want to assure them that they will receive compassionate care in a comfortable home when they are retired. As Fr. Ken says, St. Charles offers them a place where they can live in Community and support each other as friends and brothers in every phase of life. They share a prayer life in Assumption Chapel, and meals and conversation around the table. When they face health issues, they receive excellent care in the St. Charles infirmary.

Your contribution will help support our retired priests and brothers, in the same way that they supported God’s people throughout their years of ministry. We hope that you will help our Community through your donation to aid our retired members. They have given so much—and continue to give. Would you consider giving something to help them in their later years?

Throughout his many years of ministry, Fr. Ken’s greatest gift has been the love he shares with everyone out of his own generous heart. His genuine affection for everyone he meets braces us up and helps us experience the expansive nature of God’s grace and compassion. Like Fr. Ken, may we say of every place that God sends us, “That was the perfect fit for me.”

Sincerely in the Blood of Christ,

V. Rev. Jeffrey S. Kirch, C.P.P.S.

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Provincial Director

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cpps-preciousblood.org

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