



MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

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Dear Friend,

This year has not turned out the way any of us expected. It helps to keep in mind all the stories of Scripture, where people who encountered God were always in for a big surprise. We believe that God can work through all things, even storms, strife and global pandemics. My prayer is that through every trial, you never feel alone. "I will not leave you orphans," Jesus told the disciples at the Last Supper, and I hope we all feel that assurance every day of our lives.

My calendar, normally crowded with meetings and trips to visit our Missionaries across the U.S. and in other countries, was cleared off by COVID-19. Maybe yours was, too. And God's faithful people found themselves outside their church buildings, yet still a vital part of the Church.

I have watched our Missionaries who minister in parishes, schools and hospitals rethink the way they go about their days. The pastors in particular had to adapt to continually changing recommendations, requirements and restrictions, first to close their church and parish buildings to the public, and then later in the spring to reopen them with extreme caution. It is a toss-up as to which is more difficult: closing a parish to the public or opening it back up!

As I checked in with our Missionaries, I heard their stories of how they had to manage in this new landscape. Some are comfortable in the digital world. For them, switching to livestream Masses exclusively was something they could accomplish relatively easily. For others who are not so tech savvy or perhaps serve in places where internet connections are more difficult, going online with Mass and other worship opportunities was a real challenge. Many mentioned how strange it was to preach not to a congregation but to a computer screen or an iPhone. Our Fr. Barry Fischer, C.P.P.S., a chaplain at Marian University in Indianapolis, joked that "it's not very motivating to look at your ugly mug on a screen and pretend you're preaching to the people."



Fr. Rick Friebel, C.P.P.S., holds a drive-by eucharistic devotion at Sts. Peter and Paul, Ottawa, Ohio.

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

Yes, I would like to support the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

- I would like to make a gift of \$_____
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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.

But mostly, our Missionaries told me that during the lockdown, they missed the people of God. Pastors missed their parishioners. Our members who are teachers missed their students. Hospital chaplains, whose movements were restricted due to COVID-19, missed the opportunity to minister closely with patients and hospital staff. Our Missionaries are used to being on the move, being among the people they serve. And yet they found new ways to bring the Precious Blood of Jesus to a shuttered world. The Precious Blood saves us and sets us free. We all need to hear that in these troubling times.

Many people in the Church have found new and innovative ways to reach the people of God during this pandemic. One archbishop even climbed into a bright yellow two-seater airplane and flew over the archdiocese, blessing his people! No doubt that was a very visible sign of his presence. Our Missionaries are generally known to be down-to-earth. You may not see them flying overhead in a yellow plane. But please know that they give their lives in service to the Church. They have the same doubts and struggles as all people do, but they give their best to their ministry, offering up their trials for the sake of the people they serve.

I am asking you to support our Missionaries, who walk alongside the people of God throughout the days of their lives. How many families have been accompanied by a Missionary of the Precious Blood as a loved one passed from this world, as a young couple starts a new life as husband and wife, or a baby is welcomed into the Church? Our mission is to be a helping hand always, to all people who are looking for the light of Christ.



Fr. Angelo Anthony, C.P.P.S., during an online parish mission in Dayton.

Please be a part of our mission. If you can share some of your resources with us, we will be profoundly grateful. I know in these times many families are struggling to meet their basic needs, so if your support comes to us in the form of prayer, we are certainly grateful for that as well.

As we continue the ministry we have taken on for more than 200 years, we are blessed and privileged to walk alongside God's people. Together, we will keep looking for new ways to build God's kingdom, in good times and in bad.

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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