



MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

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Dear Friends,

You can probably remember the first time you left home for a significant amount of time. Maybe you went off to college or the military, got married or got your own place. It is a big step and it usually signifies a whole new chapter in your life.

For Brother Dan Eisenman, C.P.P.S., it happened when he was 13 years old. He set off by train, alone, from his hometown of Center Line, Mich., just north of Detroit, to Canton, Ohio. It was 1945 and he was going to Brunnerdale, the high school seminary of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

There were other boys on that train bound for Brunnerdale, but they didn't know each other. "We all got off the train in Canton and were standing there on the platform, looking at each other," Brother Dan said. The car arrived from Brunnerdale and they climbed into it, and that was the start of a whole new life for young Dan Eisenman.



**Brother Dan in Assumption Chapel,
his favorite place at St. Charles.**

Brother Dan is now 88, the oldest brother in the Cincinnati Province. He looks back on his life and can see the Lord's hand at work, through his own hands, which he used willingly always to help his religious Congregation.

When Brother Dan arrived at Brunnerdale in 1945, he had hoped to become a priest. When he went on to further studies at Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind., he met the religious brothers who did all the behind-the-scenes work at the college. They were carpenters, electricians and mechanics. They took care of the grounds. "I admired the brothers and their way of life, and I started thinking about that. I'm not one for pomp and ceremony. The brothers lived a much simpler life," he said.

He spoke with his novice master about becoming a brother. "He told me, 'That's the Holy Spirit talking to you. Listen to the Holy Spirit!' So I said, 'Okay, that's it.' I was professed as a brother on September 8, the birthday of the Blessed Mother, in 1952."

Religious life takes many forms. Most Catholics know what a priest does: a priest presides at Mass, hears confessions, perhaps is the pastor of a parish. But religious brothers take on many

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roles in a religious congregation and in the Church. In earlier times, as with Brother Dan, they provided much of the manual labor that was so vital to the Congregation.

Brother Dan worked to support his Congregation in whatever way it needed him. At first, even though he was a city boy, he worked on the Missionaries' farm. Then came the call that he was needed at Messenger Press, the Congregation's print shop located on the grounds of St. Charles Seminary (now St. Charles Center) in Carthagena, Ohio. Brother Dan didn't know anything about printing, but he was willing to learn.

"Running the presses, there's a skill to that," he said. "All the different settings on the machines, all the different inks and papers." And those machines could bite. One day, Brother Dan got his hand caught in a press and it broke his wrist.

"I survived it," he said.

For 21 years, he ran the presses at Messenger. But he dreamed of working outside. At that time, Brother Alfred cut the grass at St. Charles. When he retired, Brother Dan asked if he could take his place. Working outside, Brother Dan could revel in God's creation every day. "I worked outside for 35 years. I really loved it," he said.

He also served Mass in St. Charles' Assumption Chapel for decades. For many years, he brought the daily meals from the kitchen to the infirmary and helped the priests and who could no longer feed themselves.

In the winter, while the St. Charles lawn and flowerbeds slept, Brother Dan picked up a paintbrush. "I painted about every room in the building, plus the hallways," he said. "I enjoyed that."

At 75, he said, "I started falling apart." He suffered through a ruptured disc, had heart bypass surgery, got two new knees. "After that, I couldn't kneel down and plant flowers," he said. "That's when I had to think about getting out of this business."

Throughout his long life as a brother, he did whatever was asked of him. "That's what a brother does," he said. "Help out wherever you can."

The simple, profoundly prayerful life that Brother Dan sought out as a young man was given to him, and he gave back everything in return. Brother Dan still lives at St. Charles, now in retirement with the other priests and religious brothers there. They poured out their lives to answer God's call. And now we're asking you to help.

Can you help support Brother Dan and other Missionaries who gave their lives in service? They followed their vocational call without counting the cost. Will you now help them live out a meaningful life of prayer? We ask that you consider helping our retired priests and brothers as they always helped others.

Our elders are a great gift to all of us. By their faithful example, we set our course. That's true for us as a religious congregation just as it is for you as a family. We pray that they feel valued and respected. We pray that young people hear God calling them to a good and productive life, whatever their vocation may be, and, like Brother Dan, answer with an enthusiastic yes. And we pray in thanksgiving to our God who brings us together, young and old and everyone in between, into one loving family.

Sincerely in the Blood of Christ,

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

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