

SPRING 2022

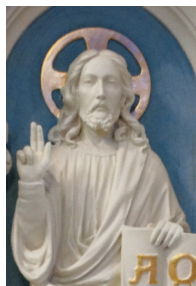
# CPPS TODAY

MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

LET  
EVERYONE  
COME IN

Speak, the Church is Listening

# In this issue of *C.P.P.S. Today*



## Page 2: **Taking Part in the Conversation**

Along with the rest of the Church, our Missionaries contributed their voices to the Synod on Synodality. *Between the Lines* by Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.P.P.S., provincial director of the Cincinnati Province.

## Page 3: **Let Everyone Come In**

A group of Precious Blood people reflects together on some of the questions from the Synod on Synodality.

## Page 11: **Feeding the Hungry in La Labor**

COVID caused the Missionaries in Guatemala to pivot with a nutrition project that feeds hungry children.



## Page 13: **Chapter and Verse**

News about Precious Blood people and places.

## Page 15: **Accompaniment and Synodality**

Pope Francis is calling us to be a Church that listens to people and walks with them. *Call and Answer* by Fr. Steve Dos Santos, C.P.P.S., vocations director.

## Page 17: **Pew Etiquette**

The pews and kneelers in our parishes connect us in some mysterious way. *At Our House* by Jean Giesige, editor of *C.P.P.S. Today*.

*C.P.P.S. is an abbreviation of the Latin name of the Congregation, Congregatio Pretiosissimi Sanguinis, Congregation of the Most Precious Blood.*

SPRING 2022

*C.P.P.S. Today* is published by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, (Society of the Precious Blood), Cincinnati Province, 431 E. Second St., Dayton, OH 45402 937-228-9263 mission@cpps-preciousblood.org cpps-preciousblood.org  
On Facebook, Missionaries of the Precious Blood Cincinnati Province  
On Twitter, @cppscincinnati

# Taking Part in the Conversation

“Synodality” probably is not a word that comes up in everyday conversation for most of us. Yet it should define how we live as Christians.

You may have read about the Synod on Synodality in messages from your parish or diocese. Pope Francis invites us all to think and talk about how we are journeying together as a Church. As defined by the Vatican, synodality is “the People of God journeying together and gathering in assembly, summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel. Synodality ought to be expressed in the Church’s ordinary way of living and working.”

For this issue of *C.P.P.S. Today*, we called together a small group of Precious Blood people to talk about the Church, how they experience it in this moment, and their hopes for its future. You can read their dialogue in our cover story.

The pope is calling all of us into this conversation. The Missionaries took part, answering discussion questions in their district meetings (monthly gatherings of C.P.P.S. priests and brothers who minister in a particular geographic area). These discussions were particularly pertinent to us, as we look forward to the formation of a new U.S. province in June. The future has been much on our minds.

Each of our districts reported back to the province on its discussion. I was heartened to read these reports. I then distilled their comments and sent our responses to the C.P.P.S. generalate in Rome. Here’s an excerpt:

*The common refrain was that Precious Blood Spirituality is synodal by its very nature and it is our responsibility to share our charism and spirituality with the wider Church and world.*

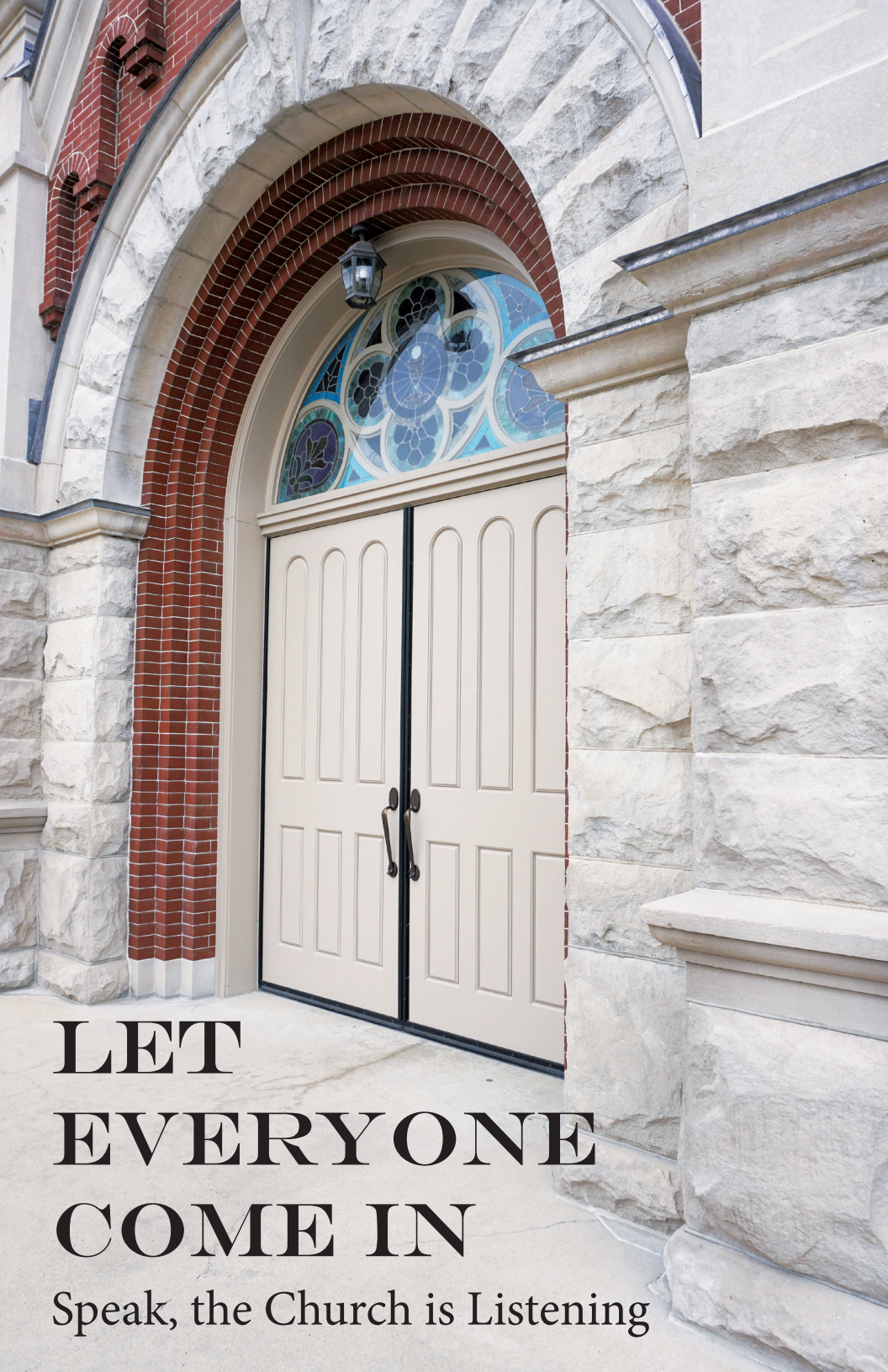
*Our spirituality calls us to go to the peripheries of society and the Church. We believe that the Blood of Christ has broken down the wall between “Jew and Greek” and therefore all have been brought near. It is our responsibility to share that Good News with those who have been marginalized and ignored. . . .*

*Our spirituality is one of reconciliation. Our Church and world are fractured and relationships have broken down. The gift of reconciliation is something we as Missionaries of the Precious Blood have to share.*

Our thoughts, our voices, will be part of the worldwide conversation of this synod. The hope is that as we walk together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will find new directions, new ways of spreading the Gospel message of reconciliation and renewal.

**Between  
the Lines  
by Fr. Jeffrey  
Kirch, C.P.P.S.**





**LET  
EVERYONE  
COME IN**

Speak, the Church is Listening

The goal of Pope Francis' ongoing Synod on Synodality is breathtaking: to collect the hopes and dreams of all the people of God, expressed through the power of the Holy Spirit, and use them to renew the Church.

The synod carries the themes of communion, participation and mission. We are all invited to take part. All of us. Pope Francis opened the synod last fall, calling it "an exercise of mutual listening, conducted at all levels of the Church and involving the entire people of God."

Statements from lay people; priests, religious brothers and sisters from religious congregations; and ordained diocesan clergy are being collected from these discussion sessions and their thoughts will be forwarded and synthesized this summer. Reports from listening sessions around the globe will be presented to the bishops in preparation for their face-to-face meeting (synod) in October 2023.

Pope Francis stresses that the synod is to involve everyone: "Everyone has a part to play; no one is a mere extra . . . Let everyone come in . . . the Holy Spirit needs us. Listen to him by listening to each other."

We held our own listening session, using questions from various dioceses and from the Missionaries, among four faithful folks:

- Deacon Leo Barron, a deacon in the Diocese of Gary, Ind., who ministers at St. John the Baptist Church and St. Adalbert Church in Whiting, Ind. Deacon Leo, who was ordained in 2017, is a husband, father of three and grandfather. He is retired from a management position with Boys and Girls Club. He is also a Precious Blood Companion (lay associate).
- Fr. Dennis Chriszt, C.P.P.S., the director of advanced formation with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, and the founder and director of Precious Blood Parish Missions.
- Fr. Tim McFarland, C.P.P.S., the director of ministry and mission and serves on the faculty at Calumet College of St. Joseph in Whiting, Ind. He was also in ministry for many years at Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind., and serves on the Missionaries' provincial council.
- Kathy Mescher, a lifelong parishioner at Immaculate Conception Church in Celina, Ohio. Kathy, a former Catholic school principal, also served as the director of a nonprofit serving women and families. She is a Precious Blood Companion.



## Question:

**A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, journeys together. How is this “journeying together” happening today in the Church? How is the Holy Spirit inviting you to “journey together” with the Church?**



**Fr. Tim McFarland:** I see this journeying together happening in the actual process leading up to the synod of bishops that will be happening next year. There have been many gatherings in dioceses, parishes, in a few universities and religious congregations. People have been speaking of their experiences and hopes for the future of the Church.

In his opening reflections announcing the synod, the Pope noted that we are on a journey with the Lord. We speak of our Church as a pilgrim church on a journey and the synodal process seems to represent the Church on the journey, building God’s Kingdom here on Earth.

So often in the history of the Church, things come from the top down. In the synodal process, bishops and the pope are engaging the

universal Church to hear from as many voices as possible.

I was really struck by some of the things Pope Francis said as he initiated the synod. He spoke of communion and participation and of listening. I think we have witnessed the working of the Spirit in many ways in modern times. I have been teaching in lay ministry formation for over 20 years and have seen the Spirit at work in many ways. Even the whole phenomenon of lay ministry has been the work of the Spirit as is this synodal process.



**Deacon Leo Barron:** For me, a phrase that really resonates in our lives as Catholics is that we are all to be missionary disciples. This is a description that did not always apply to our parish life. St. John the Baptist in Whiting is a very old community, in terms of the average age of parishioners. Many people over the years have had to rethink their role in the Church, especially in light of Vatican II.

Those who were raised in a time before Vatican II were used to going to their parish church, where they would sit there and thank God for their blessings and ask God for his help. Faith, for a lot of older Catholics, was a very personal thing. They weren't always used to the thought of their faith moving them out of the church building and sharing their faith with other people. Reaching out to everybody: that can still be scary to some Catholics.



**Kathy Mescher:** It is scary! It means stepping out of your comfort zone, reaching out to people we don't normally talk to, or maybe whom we don't normally include. That takes work. Why should we do that, when we can just be comfortable in our pew? What's the motivation for us to reach out? We know that there are reasons to be inclusive, but it's certainly not always comfortable.



**Fr. Dennis Chriszt:** We all have a role to play in the Church, and it's not, as was said in the old days, to pray, pay and obey.

**Deacon Leo:** It's about evangelization, which can be a difficult concept to grasp. We think of it as going out and ringing doorbells and asking people

if they believe in God. And we recoil from that: we may have the thought that we're just in church to appreciate God and what he does in our lives, but as individuals, we may think we don't have the knowledge to be out there spreading the Word.

**Kathy:** To go out and spread the Word, I don't think most individuals are comfortable doing that on their own. I might want to participate in evangelization, I might even be willing to lead these efforts, but I look to the organization (the Church) for the mechanism of how to do that. "Tell me what to do, and I'll do it."

**Fr. Dennis:** We don't evangelize just by talking about God at work in our lives. It's more about how we, every day, live the values that we say are our values. When we go to the grocery store, when we go to work. What would it be like in the 21st century if people could say about us, as they said in the first century, "See how these Christians love one another!"



## Question:

**Who are we that are journeying together, and who has been left out? How do we bring them home?**

**Deacon Leo:** In our cluster of parishes, we are starting to do a pretty good job of making people feel welcome. It takes time (when parishes come together); we've been working on it for four or five years.

Who is left out? Often, our younger members. Young adults especially. There are ways to get them involved—and I think it

starts with hospitality, greeting them at the door, helping them out with questions, inviting them to activities, welcoming them when the parish has coffee and donuts. At our parishes, one practical way we've done this is to host musical concerts for an hour on Sunday afternoons. We do a lot of publicity in the local paper, and the whole community is aware that it is invited—people feel comfortable coming in.

We are in some ways a changing parish. We hope to attract younger families with children. We have a school, so that helps. We appreciate them being here, we want them here. But it's always a work in progress.

**Fr. Dennis:** In my own family, there are young people who may feel left out. Some are very active in the Church and go to Mass regularly. Others go when they feel like it. One asked me recently, "How do I become a Catholic?" When I responded, "It's going to take a little bit of time," they lost interest. They didn't want to hear that. But my hope is always, when they bring up questions about their faith, I am encouraging them and helping them be as faithful as they can be. I can't do it for them.

There are many of us, including many grandparents, who say, "What is the Church doing to help my grown children and grandchildren be faithful Catholics?" And part of my answer is, "What are *you* going to do?"

The first step is to get all of us in the room together. So many of us have allowed at least two generations who started with some faith formation to drift away, and we have not found a way to reach out to them. The pope (in the Synod on Young People in 2018) asked young people all over the world to answer a series of questions—and we should listen to the young people. They want to be in relationship with one another and with God. But they don't necessarily want to do it the same way we've always done it. They don't want to just sit in the pew on Sunday mornings then say, "that's enough."

Read about the lives  
of two faithful  
Missionaries who  
had a real gift for  
connecting with  
young people,  
*Chapter and Verse*,  
page 14.

**Kathy:** Young people are faith-filled people, and we need to listen to them. I wonder, if we don't invite them in, and let them be with us on their terms, will they come? If they don't feel like they belong, why should they come back? What does it mean to be a part of this Church?

**Fr. Tim:** The one group I think are missing, whether consciously or unconsciously, are the young people, teenagers and young adults. Perhaps I am more attuned to this group as I have been in ministry with young adults my whole life.

How do we bring them home? That's a good question. If I knew the answer, I could be famous. Many young people see themselves as more spiritual than religious. I believe they are searching for the transcendent, but in their own way. Perhaps we as a Church need to invite ourselves and others to focus more on knowing God in our lives. So perhaps we can invite them to journey with us.

Young people seem to be attracted to service to others. How might we focus on and enhance these opportunities in our parishes and then reflect on this in the light of our faith and our journey to God?



## Question:

What enables or hinders you from speaking up courageously, candidly and responsibly in the Church and society? What space is there in our parishes for the voice of the people?

**Fr. Tim:** I think perhaps creating space in parishes to speak up is a concern. People are getting back into the parishes post-pandemic, but it seems that the numbers are smaller to some extent. There has been a decline in the number of people of regularly

attending Mass over the years (in addition to young adults). This phenomenon is not just among Catholics but is also the case in most Protestant traditions.

Also, in numerous dioceses there is a lot of “restructuring.” Parishes are clustering, as we have seen in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. People are wondering what their parishes will look like in the future. Pastors are being asked to do more and I’m sure they wonder how they can respond to all the needs of the people.

I have not been involved in full-time parish ministry very much but have offered sacramental assistance to many parishes. I think the tone set by the pastor and the openness he has to listening plays a vital role. I also think this might be a way in which the lay people might step up and invite people to join in community worship and the life of the parish.

**Fr. Dennis:** A key to this conversation is hospitality in our parishes and in our Church. There have been times when I’ve visited parishes and seen a sign that says, “This is a welcoming faith community,” and I’ve thought to myself, “I’m glad the sign told me that because otherwise, I never would have guessed! No one even said hello to me.”

I’ve seen this all over the country. We can be very hospitable to the people we already know, but we’re not always hospitable to the stranger. Sometimes when a stranger walks in, people think, “Who is this?” But nobody walks over and says, “Hello! Who are you?”

**Kathy:** Hospitality keeps coming up in this conversation. Maybe what the Church needs is as simple a concept as that: that we are welcoming, we care that you are here, we care about you. What is more important than that?

*(Continued on page 16)*

You can learn more about the synod at the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, [usccb.org/synod](https://usccb.org/synod).

# Feeding the Hungry In La Labor, Guatemala

Years ago, with support from their friends here in the United States, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood serving in Guatemala established a nutrition program that offered children in the villages of the La Labor region a hot midday meal. Children, often with little siblings in tow, walked for miles to enjoy those meals in a community dining room. Volunteer cooks ladled a fragrant and nutritious stew into bowls for the children to enjoy, along with tortillas to scoop up the last bite.

COVID put a stop to the noonday meals. And all who had been involved in the nutrition project wondered what was happening to the children.

Then the Missionaries and their volunteers in La Labor pivoted the program. They purchased food in bulk and identified the families in several small



“To see that my neighbors can receive a little help in this difficult time, it makes me happy.”

communities who were most at-risk for malnutrition.

Those families were often led by single mothers with several small children.

“This pandemic time has been difficult for the whole world, and here as well,” said Fr. Abel Cruz, C.P.P.S., pastor of Sangre de Cristo. “Many people lost their jobs, many people have died. In some families, when the

husbands died, their widows were not always able to get a job to make up for the lost income.”

To help, Fr. Abel and the volunteers prepared packages of food that would supplement the families’ diet—corn meal, beans, rice, cooking oil, sugar, eggs and mosh, an oatmeal beverage usually eaten at breakfast. Those allotments are distributed to the families each month.

The people who are pitching in with the nutrition project believe that God is directing their work. One of the volunteers said that she willingly lends a hand “to see that my neighbors can receive a little help in this difficult time, it makes me happy. In them we see the face of God—Scripture tells us ‘I was hungry, and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me to drink.’”

The parish dreams of expanding the program. The need is great—Guatemala has the sixth-highest level of chronic malnutrition in the world, and the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean.

There are 15 villages that are part of Sangre de Cristo Parish, each with its own small chapel. They are not far apart geographically, but the rough, rutted roads in the hills of rural Guatemala make it difficult to travel to the main church in La Labor.

Fr. Ben Berinti, C.P.P.S., a

Missionary of the Precious Blood who is the pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Melbourne Beach, Fla., made feeding the families of La Labor a Lenten project for his parish. He makes the connection between the Eucharistic table, where the parish family shares a meal during Mass, and the table of the world.

“The Eucharist is certainly a source of spiritual nourishment. Unfortunately, that can be too much of a focus, and we pretend it does not have anything to do with real hunger and real thirst,” he said. “When you receive the Eucharist, you are attempting to imitate the life of Jesus, and his life was about giving food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty.”



**IN MEMORIAM:** Brother Timothy Hemm, C.P.P.S., died at 10:20 p.m. on February 21, 2022, in the infirmary at St. Charles Center, Carthagen, Ohio, after a lengthy illness. He was 74.

Br. Tim was born on August 31, 1947, in Piqua, Ohio, to the late William G. and Cecilia (Recker) Hemm. He entered the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in 1961 and was professed a brother on August 15, 1968. He was active in education ministry for many years.



**Brother Timothy Hemm**

After his profession, Brother Tim was assigned to Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind., which is sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. He taught at St. Joseph School in Wapakoneta, Ohio, from 1971-72 then returned to Saint Joseph's College, where he was a part of campus life for decades.

Brother Tim performed many functions at the college and also ministered at St. Augustine Parish in Rensselaer. Later, he was the director of campus ministry at the college, organizing liturgies, Kairos retreats and innumerable other events to encourage students in their spiritual growth and help them find a home on campus.

Called "BT" by SJC students, Brother Tim was a constant presence on campus, remaining even after the college's operations were suspended in 2017.

Poor health led him to move to St. Charles Center in 2020.

During his long ministry in Rensselaer, Brother Tim lived at the crossroads of so many lives that he became a landmark. He was a cultural touchstone known to nearly everyone who passed through Rensselaer, St. Augustine Parish or Saint Joseph's College.

Brother Tim committed his life to supporting young people in their faith, especially as they transitioned from youth to young adult. It was his genuine nature that helped him accompany young people for so many years, staying young at heart himself through aging and infirmity. He approached his ministry with a humble heart, often serving behind the scenes. In doing so, he inspired young people to ask real questions of themselves and their faith and seek out the God moments in their lives.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 28 at St. Charles Center. Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.P.P.S., provincial director, presided and Fr. Denny Kinderman, C.P.P.S., was the homilist.

Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Cincinnati Province.

**IN MEMORIAM:** Fr. Eugene Schnipke, C.PP.S., 68, died of natural causes at Mercer County Community Hospital, Coldwater, Ohio, on March 17, 2022. He was transported there from St. Charles Center, Carthage, Ohio, where he was recovering from a recent surgery.

He was born on September 10, 1953, in Lima, Ohio, to Othmar and Dolores (Verhoff) Schnipke. Raised in Glandorf, Ohio, he entered the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in 1967 at Brunnerdale, the Congregation's former high school seminary near Canton, Ohio. He was ordained on June 21, 1980.

After his ordination, Fr. Schnipke was assigned to St. Anthony in Falls Church, Va., as associate pastor. He was commissioned as a U.S. Air Force chaplain in 1984 and served for nearly 22 years.

Fr. Schnipke served at Hessisch Oldendorf Air Station in Germany; Lowry Air Force Base in Colorado; George Air Force Base in California; and Osan Air Base in Korea. He attended Harvard Divinity School from 1994-95, then was appointed director of the spirituality/character division of the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Later assignments included chaplaincies at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho; Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base in Germany; Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio; and Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.



**Fr. Schnipke**

Fr. Schnipke attained the rank of lieutenant colonel and received several major awards and decorations during his years of service.

He retired from the Air Force in 2007. In 2008, he was appointed pastor of the Marion Catholic Community, a cluster of five parishes in or near Maria Stein, Ohio, where he served for 12 years and was a constant presence at community gatherings and local sporting events.

In 2020, he was appointed pastor of the Catholic Communities of Northwest Dayton (Precious Blood, St. Paul and St. Rita Parishes), where he served until his untimely death.

Fr. Schnipke had a heart for young people. He made them feel welcomed and valued. The same was true of his nephews and nieces, for whom he was an encouraging presence and an accepting listener.

A funeral Mass was celebrated on March 21 at St. John the Baptist Church in Maria Stein. Fr. Ken Schnipke presided and Fr. Ken Schroeder, C.PP.S., was the homilist. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on March 22 at St. Charles. Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S., provincial director, presided. Fr. Ken Schnipke was the homilist.

Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

A memorial Mass will be held at a later date in the Catholic Communities of Northwest Dayton.

Memorial donations may be made to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Cincinnati Province.



# Accompaniment and Synodality

There is a certain amount of buzz as we are in the midst of the diocesan phase of the Synod on Synodality. It seems that Pope Francis is hoping to move us further in the direction of being a listening Church. The three themes of the synod—communion, participation and mission—direct us toward relationship and action. Another word that Pope Francis uses a lot is accompaniment, *acompañamiento* in the original Spanish.

Accompaniment resonates with me in a couple of ways. We see the connection between accompaniment and the word companion, (one with whom you share bread). This means it speaks not just of coincidence, but of a true sharing of the journey, through the sharing of bread, and hopefully more. Accompaniment also points us in the direction of relationship.

Accompaniment is often used as a way to describe the ministry of formation directors and spiritual directors. It is also part of my ministry as a vocations director. We accompany people, rather than direct them. We listen to them and seek to hear the fullness of God's call in their lives. The emphasis on listening.

This is the direction Pope Francis is calling us to as a Church. He wants us to focus on relationship and listening rather than hierarchy and direction. He's been calling us to this his whole pontificate.

It's more than just his personal style. It's also an approach to Church that is needed today, especially if we want to draw young people back into relationship. Synodality, accompaniment and listening all take time. They are about being present to one another, taking in the other person's point of view, and trying to include and incorporate it into the new reality.

Just the other day, I was sitting with someone who told me he had a couple of names he needed to give me, as they might be potential prospects. I asked if he had had any conversation with them. He hadn't but now intends to. This life of synodality starts with real human conversations

A synodal church takes time and is slow moving because it is one that does a lot of listening. In many ways it is a movement back in the direction of the early Church, where human relationships were the foundation for the evangelization. Pope Francis is calling us to be a Church that listens, walks with, and shares our bread.



**Call and Answer**  
by Fr. Steve Dos Santos, C.P.P.S.



# Let Everyone Come In

*(Continued from page 10)*

**Question:** What are your dreams, hopes and vision for the future of this religious community, your parish, your diocese, your Church?

**Kathy:** I don't know that I have dared to dream. My hope for the future of any parish would be that it be the welcoming place that we've been talking about, that people feel like they are important, they are needed. That we have some shared idea of what it is we are doing as a Church. That we have a shared idea of what the parish is trying to accomplish, and for people to be involved in that. That's a big dream—it would be wonderful. If the parishes were that way, then the diocese would look that way, all the bishops and cardinals would have the same idea of what Christ founded this church for, and we'd all be going in the same direction.

**Deacon Leo:** Anything going into the future has to include everybody. It isn't just the pastor saying, "This is where we're going, this is what we're going to do." That doesn't work anymore. The more people can feel they have a voice, that makes a difference. It will ensure a better direction in what we're trying to do.

**Fr. Tim:** I hope that the many voices of the faithful are listened to. The universal, or international dimensions of the synod will be helpful as we continue our journey in this new millennium. For many Catholics, the Church is seen only in their geographic area. I think the voices from developing nations need to be heard and perhaps challenge the dominant ways of thinking that have been more parochial.

I think we are seeing the beginning of this in the C.P.P.S. as we are trying to see ourselves as more of an international congregation. It will also come into play as we enter into the new creation of the U.S. Province.

**Fr. Dennis:** One of my dreams for the new U.S. province is that it will show us once again to be a Community excited about its own future. My hope is that the new province will enable us to dream in ways we currently can't even imagine, and that when people outside of our Community see us dreaming like that, there may be more young men who are interested in joining us because we look like a Community that has a future rather than one that is remembering its past.



# Pew Etiquette

Pew etiquette is important in a Catholic church. I was thinking about this on the first Sunday of Lent as I sat in our historic church and grabbed the kneeler in an awkward way, too far down on one end. It let out a little bang as it hit the floor, not enough to startle the children, but more than a seasoned Catholic likes to hear.

Raising and lowering the kneelers should appear effortless even if they were crafted over a century ago from old-growth oak. One wants to be gentle, considerate of the hinges. There was a notice in the bulletin years ago about not resting one's feet on the kneelers when they are in the upright position. They weren't designed to be used that way.

They were designed for kneeling. This struck me as I grabbed the kneeler (again, too far down on one end, because it was too late in the Mass to scoot farther down the pew). On that day, the people in my faith family were kneeling and I was kneeling, pouring our hearts out to God. One of the beauties of the Eucharist is that we come there with our wants and needs, hopes and sorrows, and from these scant materials, God fashions a people.

What silent prayers have been poured out in these pews over the decades, onto the kneelers, through the church and up into the mind of God? The wood on which we sit and kneel brings us together at the same level, all of us clinging on for dear life.

Truffles popped into my head. I'd recently read a book about truffles, fungal growths with an ugly, knobby appearance and an other-worldly smell and earthy taste. People are crazy about eating them. I wouldn't know, I've never even seen one. The book taught me more than I ever wanted to know about truffles but mainly that they grow symbiotically on the roots of certain trees. Truffles spread a layer of their own lifeform onto the tree roots, doing no harm to the roots, and that layer provides the trees in the forest with a means of communicating with their own kind. In this way, truffles and tree roots serve each other. Through those interconnections, trees can send messages to each other. They can talk.

That connection, we yearn for it. The pandemic was hard because it cut through the roots and tore down the telegraph wires we didn't even know we had. Restoring those connections, maintaining them, should be our life's work.

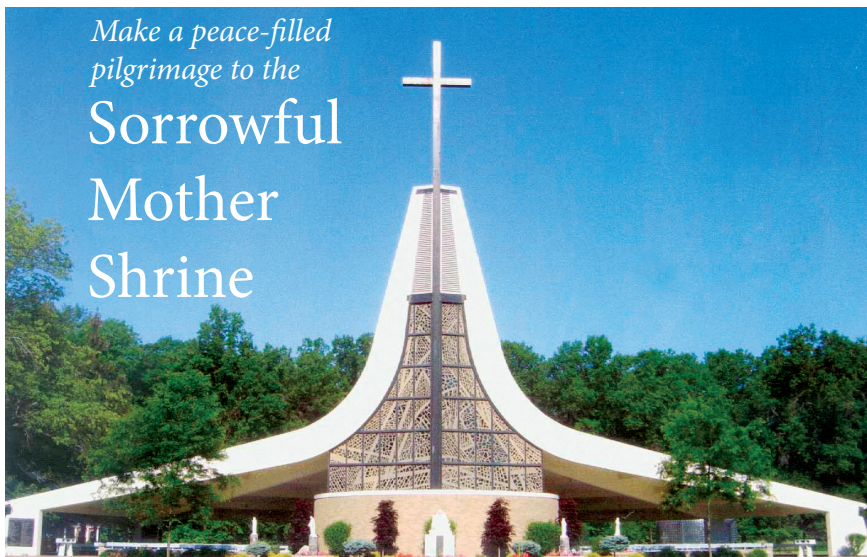
The psalm response that Sunday was so simple, so beautiful: "Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble." We make that plea to the Lord, and to each other.



**At Our House  
by Jean Giesige**



*Make a peace-filled  
pilgrimage to the*  
**Sorrowful  
Mother  
Shrine**



*Come to the shrine for a peaceful day of prayer.*

*Grounds open every day during daylight hours.*

*Daily Mass & confessions • 4106 SR 269, Bellevue, OH 44811*

*419-483-3435*

*[sorrowfulmothershrine.org](http://sorrowfulmothershrine.org)*



Sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood

*Let  
us  
hear  
from  
you*

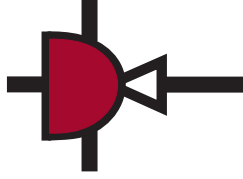
Send address changes,  
comments, suggestions  
or requests for  
more information to:

**Jean Giesige, editor,**  
**C.P.P.S. Today, 431 E. Second St.,**  
**Dayton, OH 45402-1764**  
**[mission@cpps-preciousblood.org](mailto:mission@cpps-preciousblood.org)**

*Please include your name and contact  
information so that we can respond to  
your correspondence.*

**MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD**  
**431 E. Second St.**  
**Dayton, OH 45402**

Return Service Requested



**Non-Profit Org.**  
**U.S. Postage**  
**PAID**  
**Celina, Ohio**  
**Permit No. 2**