MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

SPRING 2023

"Give the People What They Need"

In this issue of C.PP.S. Today



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

SPRING 2023

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We Are Not a Finished Product

One of the great things about our life in the Precious Blood Community is that we get to live with people who are at different stages in their ministry. I live at our house of advanced formation in Chicago, along with other Missionaries and our candidates who are preparing to become a priest or religious brother.

This makes for interesting conversations around the dinner table. Once you are ordained a priest or professed as a religious brother, you are most emphatically not considered a finished product. We anticipate that our Missionaries will continue to learn, evolve and grow. It is what we hope for all of God's people, a life of spiritual exploration where the Holy Spirit leads them forever into something new.

We hope you will enjoy our cover story, which is a conversation between one of our youngest members, Deacon Greg Evers, C.PP.S., who will be ordained a priest in July, and one of our senior Missionaries, Fr. Jim "Santiago" Gaynor, C.PP.S.

Fr. Santiago, a proud Hoosier by birth, served for more than 40 years in Peru before returning to the U.S. in 2019. Both are in ministry at St. James the Less Parish in Columbus, Ohio.

Fr. Santiago offers a description of the Missionaries that I really like. It was something he saw in a vocation pamphlet when he was a young man discerning his vocation to the priesthood: *the Missionaries of the Precious Blood are the troubleshooters of the Church*. That description helped lead him to our Congregation more than 60 years ago—and he has been faithful to that calling ever since. We pray that Deacon Greg also enjoys a long, happy and fulfilling life as a Missionary of the Precious Blood.

God leads us all along a path of discovery, if we only keep our eyes open. In another story in this issue, Fr. Keith Branson, C.PP.S., a preacher and musician, talks about the Gospel of Matthew, which we will be hearing through much of this liturgical year.

We hear the Gospels over and over again throughout our lives of faith. They are old stories, yet they offer us new insights every time they are proclaimed. Fr. Keith offers insights and context to the Gospel of Matthew that we hope you will find enlightening.

We help each other learn. In that way, we are all teachers and all students, throughout our lives of faith. May the Holy Spirit, whose coming during Pentecost continues to bring light to our lives, help us hear eternal truths in a new way. Between the Lines by Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S.



Deacon Greg Evers and Fr. Jim "Santiago" Gaynor in a chapel at their parish.

"Give the People What They Need"

The vocation of priesthood is a timeless thing, dealing with the eternal: "You are a priest forever, in the manner of Melchizedek" (Ps 110: 4). And yet, as with every human endeavor, it goes through stages and phases. A young priest might see his vocation and his ministry in one way, an older priest in another.

We asked two Missionaries, Deacon Greg Evers, C.PP.S., who will be ordained a priest on July 15, and Fr. James "Santiago" Gaynor, C.PP.S., who has been a priest for over 50 years, to talk together about their lives. What is Deacon Greg looking forward to? What has Fr. Santiago learned?

Both are in ministry at St. James the Less Parish in Columbus, Ohio, a congregation of 850 families of many different ethnic backgrounds. Some parishioners are descendants of Italian, French, German and Irish immigrants; others, who now make up the majority of the parish, are Spanish speakers whose families came to the U.S. from Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico and many other Latin American countries.

This interesting mix offers a lot of opportunities for ministries of all kinds, to all ages, in different languages, from many cultures. Deacon Greg and Fr. Santiago say they enjoy the variety of life at St. James the Less, and here's how they experience it.

At St. James the Less, you live in community with the pastor, Fr Antonio Baus, C.PP.S., and Brother Tom Bohman, C.PP.S., who is also in ministry at the parish. How's life at the rectory?

Deacon Greg: I saw what community life was like when I was in special formation at Immaculate Conception parish in Celina, Ohio. I see a lot of parallels here. We try to be intentional about gathering for meals and for prayer. But we try to stay flexible—if someone has a meeting or an emergency visit, we are attentive to that.

Parish life reminds me of growing up on a dairy farm. There are tasks that you have to do every day. Weekday morning Mass. On the weekend, Masses at 4:30 and 6 p.m. on Saturday, then four Sunday Masses. The everyday-ness of it.

The parish provides the chance to celebrate Mass and perform other liturgies in English and Spanish. How are you doing with that?

Deacon Greg: I write my homily out in English, then run it through Google Translate. If something doesn't seem right, I can usually catch it. I can read Spanish—but conversational Spanish is much more difficult for me.

Fr. Santiago (who spent over 40 years in ministry in Peru before returning to the U.S. in 2019): Greg has very good diction in English and Spanish. I envy that.

I participate with groups of Spanish-speakers. On Thursday there's a group that prays the prayers of the Precious Blood. I go and give a little reflection on Precious Blood spirituality. On Friday, there's a charismatic group. And then, when someone dies, the custom here is that there is the funeral followed by nine days of prayer for the one who died. We gather at the home of the deceased, pray the rosary, have a Bible reflection. It's really beautiful.

I miss Peru—to leave there was like leaving my family. But every place you go, there's always something you can do in ministry.

Fr. Santiago, do you have advice for Deacon Greg and others who are beginning their lives as religious?

Fr. Santiago: Be available. It's so important in a missionary's life. It's not necessarily that you decide what you want to do, but that you look and see what the Church needs and what the people need from you. Give the people what they need. That's the really important thing.

I think a lot about Pope Francis' exhortations on evangelization. He talks about not staying back in our offices or in the church, but going out like Jesus went out. It's so clear that in the missionary spirit of Jesus, that's what we should be doing.

It feels like all religious really all of us—are navigating a time of great change in the Church and in the world.

Deacon Greg: We're in a state of transition, not just in the life of our religious community, but in the Church as well. People are voicing a lot of fears and anxiety about what's being lost. I try to keep in mind that this is not the first time the Church has been called to change, and it won't be the last time—but we're still here. We've made mistakes in the past, but we're going to continue to learn.

We have to stay close to the people. That's a vital part of what we consider Church. The majority of people in the Church are lay people. We (clergy) have to keep in mind that we're not stuck in a feudal past where the clergy were more educated than the people of God. Often, lay people in our parishes are more educated than us! So there's a calling to build relationships among all the people of God, including those of us who are ordained.

I think about last time that when I'm attending meetings at the parish, whether the discussion is about finances, our school, or parish projects. The final word comes down to Fr. Tony, our pastor, who takes into account the recommendations of our parish council. Someday those decisions might



"I try to keep in mind that this is not the first time the Church has been called to change, and it won't be the last time—but we're still here."

- Deacon Greg Evers

come down to me. That's something I need to reflect on: the importance of surrounding myself with a team that will hold me accountable, a team that I can rely on. Not just me making decisions on a whim. Fr. Santiago: When I was ordained in 1967, when we left the seminary and were sent out to different places, it seemed like the pastor was the boss. Whatever he said, that was to be done...

I established a parish council when I was in La Oroya (a mining town high in the Andes in Peru). It was such a success. The lay people brought up a project they wanted to do—I told them, "I can't do that, there are no resources for that." And they said, "Don't worry about the money, we'll take care of it." And they did.

Somebody has to have the last word. But the involvement of lay people in these decisions over the past 50 years had been a very positive thing.

You are both Missionaries of the Precious Blood. How does that affect your ministry and your preaching? What message are you hoping to convey?

Deacon Greg: What I try to incorporate in my preaching is, when we think about communion, it's not just our vertical relationship between us and God. It's also about a horizontal relationship with our neighbors, with other members of the body of Christ.

We share bread together,

including with those we may not agree with, or may not even like. If you're just receiving for yourself, meditating on how you received the body of Christ, you may also want to think about, "What does Christ want me to do now?"

Fr. Santiago: I like to tell people that there's always a way back (to God). God does not abandon humanity. This has been happening for thousands of years. There's evidence in all of the Scriptures that even though humanity has gone through terrible times, God always brings us back along a better route.

How do you see your role as missionary disciples of Christ?

Deacon Greg: I see one of my roles as creating a space where people can come and be themselves. This idea of synodality (currently being explored in Pope Francis' Synod on Synodality) can be adapted to different things. You can always call people together to share their experiences in Church or in their lives-it's important to create those spaces, to allow people to share their experiences, leaving no topics off the table. If it's controversial, we can speak about that here.



Missionaries at St. James the Less, clockwise from top left: Brother Tom Bohman; Fr. Antonio Baus, pastor; Deacon Greg Evers; and Fr. Santiago Gaynor.

If we want to make faith something that is our own, we have to be first invited into it. If people don't feel invited into it, they're not going to make it their own. In previous models of church, we have sometimes been exclusive about who is allowed within our spaces. Going forward, we have to remove those barriers, and invite all people to come into this space.

Fr. Santiago: In 1957, I saw a booklet about various religious communities that said that the Missionaries of the Precious Blood are the troubleshooters of the Church. Troubleshooters, that impressed me. A troubleshooter is somebody who goes out and tries to solve problems.

That thought always motivated me to go wherever I was asked to go, to go where I was needed, to see the needs of the people and to try to attend to those needs. Wherever you go, you find people needing the services of the Church.

The Parish Can Encourage Vocations

Twrote my first column in *C.PP.S. Today* almost seven years ago. In L those seven years, I have used this space to encourage you to be an engaged collaborator with me in the ministry of vocations promotion. That is one of the most important lessons I learned as I began this ministry, and it continues to be true. We all have to participate in the ministry of promoting vocations.

Vocations do not magically appear on our doorstep. They require time and effort to flourish. And most of that happens long before I make contact with discerners. Vocations are encouraged at home, in the classroom, and around the parish. Young men think about becoming Missionaries of the Precious Blood because they've met us and desire to be like us. They want to live a life of service and they've seen the way we do that.

In the cover story, Deacon Greg Evers, C.PP.S., reminds us that "we have to stay close to the people." Sometimes we forget that "the people" includes everyone in our parish, from the little ones all the way up to the wisdom figures. In promoting vocations, it is particularly important to reach out to the youth and young adults of our community. The more engaged the whole parish is in their lives, and the more we invite and encourage them to take real responsibility in the parish, the greater the possibility of a priestly or religious vocation blossoming in a young man or women.

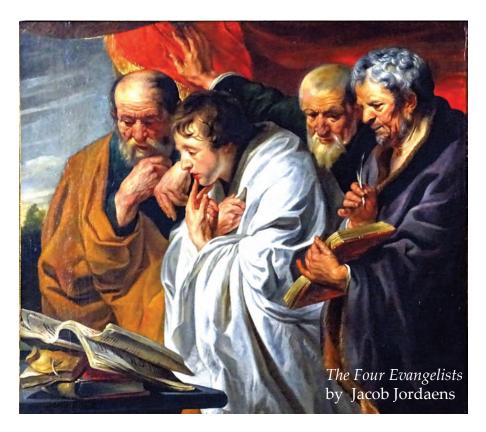
Fr. Santiago Gaynor, C.PP.S., reminds us of Pope Francis' exhortations around "not staying back in our offices or in the church, but going out like Jesus went out." That is good advice for the whole Church. We need to go out there, into the streets.

In the last seven years, I've been privileged to attend many youth and young adult events and conferences. Yes, I was there to promote our Community, but I was also there to share our spirituality, and to encounter young people. In the end, our goal is to help our young men and women grow into strong disciples of Jesus.

A few years ago, after several years of encouraging a young man I knew to consider life as a Missionary, he said to me "Fr. Steve, I guess I should tell you that I have a girlfriend now." I think I surprised him when I replied, "That's great news, congratulations! In the end, I don't care if it's an ordination or a wedding, I just hope I'm invited."

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





Matthew Provides A Firm Foundation

We'll be studying the first of the Gospels throughout this liturgical year.

Just as a parent won't choose a favorite child, Fr. Keith Branson, C.PP.S., can't possibly choose a favorite Gospel writer.

"Luke is who I relate to the most, I love John the mystic, and I really appreciate Matthew and Mark for what they have to offer," said Fr. Keith. "It's like having a well-balanced diet. The four Gospels come together as a consensus, to give us a complete view of Jesus."

Fr. Keith, a preacher and chaplain who lives at the Precious Blood Center in Liberty, Mo., is holding Matthew up to his preacher's prism this year.

"We have a three-year lectionary cycle, and every year the Gospel reading comes primarily from one author, particularly during Ordinary Time," he said. "This year, it's Matthew."

Written Around 80 AD

Fr. Keith offered a program, "Insights to Jesus: A Short Course on the Gospel According to Matthew," at the Precious Blood Renewal Center in Liberty, Mo., on April 25. (See page 13 for more information about the center.)

"Matthew's Gospel was written around 80 to 85 AD, about the time that the living memory of those who knew Jesus was fading," he said.

"Matthew probably came from Antioch, a city in Syria on the Mediterranean coast. It was the first place where Christians were called Christians. It was a seaport, and the end of the Silk Road. A lot of cultures came together there. There was an established Jewish community, but also more and more Gentiles who were becoming Christians."

Matthew was a Jewish Christian who was writing to a Gentile audience, Fr. Keith said. "Matthew is building his view of Jesus on Jewish foundations. That's why it starts off with the genealogy of Jesus, son of David, son of Abraham."

Primary Teachings In Matthew

Continuity was important in early Christianity, he said. "The Romans had a distinction: every religious established before the city of Rome was revered and its followers were given leeway. Jews were free to practice their religion. Religions that began after the establishment of Rome were categorized as superstitions. They didn't have quite the same status."

So to link Christianity as a natural extension of Judaism, as Matthew was attempting in his Gospel, would help it grow under Roman rule.

Also found in Matthew are some of the primary teachings of Jesus, Fr. Keith said.

"The Lord's Prayer that we use is in Matthew. The Sermon on the Mount is the most important teaching of Jesus, and it's in Matthew. The version of the Beatitudes that we hear most often is in Matthew — the Beatitudes are in Luke, too, but we don't often use that version.

"Matthew is the first book of the New Testament. It has the most influence of the four Gospels; Matthew is the Gospel that is most cited by



The Gospel of Matthew has the most influence of the four Gospels, says Fr. Keith Branson.

For more of Fr. Keith's insights on Scripture, visit homiliesandstraythoughts. wordpress.com

the Church Fathers."

Gospels Endlessly Interesting

Fr. Keith finds all four Gospels endlessly interesting. He grew up in the Presbyterian Church and attended Bible school every summer. "As I grew up, I got more and more interested in what the Scriptures had to say, and what was the context of the message."

A musician and composer who converted to Catholicism, Fr. Keith worked as a church musician before he answered the call to become a priest.

"As a church musician, I always looked ahead in the lectionary. I was always interested to see the scriptural themes for a certain Sunday, and to find the music that would support those themes," he said. "When I got interested in the priesthood and in preaching, I had 20 years of experience in sitting on an organ bench listening to homilies."

The Workers in the Vineyard

Now a preacher himself, he continues to study the connections that Matthew makes. Fr. Keith loves a parable that is hard for many to swallow: the workers in the vineyard, Mt 20: 1–16.

"It's about a man with a vineyard who hires laborers to bring in the harvest. He had to go back to the town square several times in one day to hire more, including a group he hires at 5 p.m., who worked only an hour.

"The owner of the vineyard paid a full day's wage to people who worked only one hour. Folks who were there all day complained about it. The owner said, 'Look, I'm not cheating you, this is what we agreed on. If I want to be generous, that's my business."" The parable "isn't a lesson on how to run your business," Fr. Keith said. "But it is a lesson on how we are valued by God. It's a good reminder to those of us who have been around for a while, and who tend to say, 'Kid, you haven't been around as long as I have.' It's a reminder that God loves all of us equally. As St. Augustine says, 'God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.""

Fr. Keith appreciates that open-handedness of God, that generous mercy. We can count on it for ourselves, and we ought to be sharing it with others. When he thinks about the real mission of the Church, of all of us, he thinks about Matthew 25, "the gathering of the sheep and the goats. Jesus says, 'When I was hungry you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me' (Mt 25: 35-26). The parable of the workers in the vineyard, found in Mt 20, "is a good reminder to those of us who have been around for a while, and who tend to say, 'Kid, you haven't been around as long as I have," Fr. Keith said. "It's a reminder that God loves all of us equally."

"That's really the challenge of how to live our lives. It's more important than trying to figure out what's going to happen when."

Renewal Center a Place of Peace, Prayer



The Precious Blood Renewal Center in Liberty, Mo., offers an array of programs and prayer opportunities. Learn more at pbrenewalcenter.org or on YouTube, @preciousblood renewalcenter9297.



IN MEMORIAM: Brother Paul Chase, C.PP.S., 77, died in the infirmary at St. Charles Center, Carthagena, Ohio, on March 30. He had been in failing health for several months.

He was born December 9, 1945, in Fairbank, Iowa, to Frank and Amber (Deaton) Chase. He entered the Congregation at Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind., in 1965 and was professed on August 15, 1966.

Brother Paul spent his life as a religious brother in ministry at St. Charles, where he worked as a farmer and dairy herdsman in his earlier years, and also raised chickens and other poultry, including several specialty breeds. Brother Paul also cared for the peacocks who preened near St. Charles' lakes.

Brother Paul was a familiar figure around St. Charles. His daily routine included caring for his chickens in the barn behind the main building. He sold eggs to St. Charles' neighbors and others who traveled for miles to get them. Brother Paul raised special varieties of chickens and turkeys for people

who exhibit them at poultry shows, for 4-H members to take poultry projects to the fair (he was a 4-H member himself, as a boy), and for backyard enthusiasts who want to populate their own chicken coops.

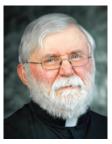
In the afternoons, Brother Paul would patrol the St. Charles grounds, picking up trash, sticks and other debris, his faithful cat named Dog running alongside his motorized cart.

He loved his life on the farm at St. Charles; he joined the Congregation in part because "they had cows," he once said. (St. Charles was famous for its Brown Swiss dairy herd in those years.) He saw livestock and his poultry flocks as part of God's creation, worthy of the best care he could give them. He never stopped learning about them, studying their ways.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held in Assumption Chapel at St. Charles Center on April 4, with Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S., provincial director, presiding. Fr. Matthew Keller, C.PP.S., was the homilist. Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

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

May he rest in peace.



Brother Paul Chase

IN MEMORIAM: Fr. Joseph Hinders, C.PP.S., 86, died on April 8 at St. Rita's Medical Center, Lima, Ohio. He had been in failing health.

He was born on November 18, 1936, in Celina, Ohio, to Homer and Emma (Pax) Hinders. He entered the Missionaries of the Precious Blood at Brunnerdale, their former high school seminary in Canton, Ohio, in 1951, and was ordained on June 8, 1963.

Fr. Hinders taught at Cardinal Newman High School, Santa Rosa, Calif., after his ordination. He ministered at St. Joseph Parish in Wapakoneta, Ohio, and Holy Rosary in St. Marys, Ohio, before volunteering for the Missionaries' mission in Peru in 1966.

He returned to the U.S. in 1970, when he was appointed an instructor at Brunnerdale. In 1981, he was transferred to Florida where he ministered to farm workers in the Diocese of Orlando. He also served at Resurrection Church in Winter Garden, Fla. He returned to Ohio in 1984 then ministered to the Hispanic community in Dayton.



Fr. Joseph Hinders

In 1988, he requested a leave from the Community and was laicized in 1994. In 1990, he married Mercy Escobar. Mercy died in 2007.

In 2009, he requested to be reincorporated with the Missionaries. He was definitively incorporated and reinstated as a Missionary of the Precious Blood on May 25, 2010. He served as parochial vicar at St. James the Less Parish in Columbus from 2010–13 then retired to St. Charles Center in Carthagena, Ohio. There, he helped tend the Community garden and ministered in area parishes as needed, particularly at St. Bernard Church in Burkettsville, Ohio.

Fr. Hinders had a searching mind and a wry wit. His gentle, introspective nature did not mean he wasn't paying attention; his observations were usually on-target yet never to be feared. He was extremely kind and appreciated anyone who walked into the room. He enjoyed his association with St. Bernard Parish; he wanted to be of service.

Fr. Hinders was a conscientious gardener who knew how to make things bloom. Even when his physical strength ebbed and he was no longer able to spend much time outdoors, he surrounded himself with pictures of flowers, a reminder of hope and grace.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated on April 17 with Fr. Andrew O'Reilly, C.PP.S., presiding. Fr. Jim Gaynor, C.PP.S., was the homilist. Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, United States Province.

May he rest in peace.

IN MEMORIAM: Fr. Edgar Jutte, C.PP.S., 88, died on April 10 at St. Rita's Medical Center, Lima, Ohio, where he had been a patient for several days.

He was born on March 21, 1935, in St. Peter, Ohio, to Theodore and Mary (Dorsten) Jutte. He entered the Congregation in 1949 at Brunnerdale, its former high school seminary near Canton, Ohio, and was ordained on June 9, 1962.

After his ordination, Fr. Jutte was an assistant pastor at Precious Blood Church in Fort Wayne. In 1965, he volunteered to serve in the Peruvian mission.

Fr. Jutte returned to the United States in 1973, then served as a chaplain at the Maria Stein convent of the CPPS Sisters. Later, he ministered at Precious Blood Church in Fort Wayne and Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Ottawa, Ohio.



Fr. Edgar Jutte

In 1978, Fr. Jutte returned to Latin America, this time to Chile. He returned to Peru in 1982.

An injury forced his return to the United States in 1993. He served in parishes in Mexico from 2000–2013, when he retired to St. Charles Center in Carthagena, Ohio, where he lived for 10 years.

Fr. Edgar had a strong constitution and strong faith to go with it. When he served in La Oroya, Peru, he took on ministry in small, remote villages, hiking out with only a few necessities. That was the way he lived out his vocation. But he also nourished it; he enjoyed reading theological texts and then discussing new ideas with his fellow Missionaries.

He was devoted to the people of God and to his religious congregation. Missionaries would play cards some evenings and trade stories about legendary C.PP.S. Missionaries of yore. Fr. Edgar would comment, "Well, the age of characters is gone." and his fellow members would respond, "Sure they are!" They would cast significant looks at Fr. Edgar, who never minded jokes and pranks at his expense. Quick witted, he would wait for an opportunity to pay them back in kind.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated on April 18, with Fr. Andrew O'Reilly, C.PP.S., presiding. Fr. Tom Brenberger, C.PP.S., was the homilist. Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, United States Province.

May he rest in peace.

A Full Menu of Emotions

At any human gathering, especially a celebration, people experience it at all different levels. A wedding, a birthday, a holiday dinner the host or hostess who pours so much into preparations would be appalled to know that despite all their best efforts, some guests are still sad or worried or bored.

I was thinking of the Last Supper during the Triduum. Was there a lot of tension in that upper room, or were the disciples, most of whom seemed slow on the uptake, blissfully unaware?

We had a large portrait of the Last Supper hanging in our living room when we were kids. Perhaps you did too. Ours was extra fancy; the disciples' robes were trimmed in glitter. Beyond the glitter, the artist had paid attention to the individuals, who wore various expressions of doubt, faith, ecstasy, concern, wonderment. One dinner table, a full menu of emotions.

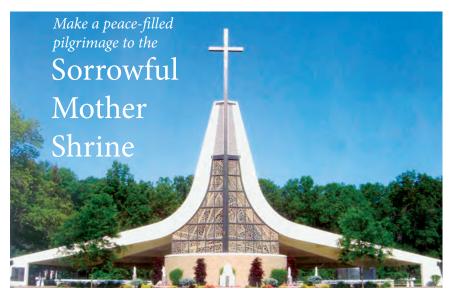
I was still thinking about it on Easter Monday. I had a moment of triumph when Easter dinner was served on time. Our kids, working young adults, largely view Sunday afternoon as a time of preparation for the coming week. They had been with us all weekend, and for them to hang around for Easter dinner was a kind concession to me.

In turn, I promised to serve an early dinner so they could hit the road. And I did! Dinner was served at 4 p.m., and we were done at 4:18. Mixed emotions in the room. Me, disappointment in both the ham and the roast. Chagrin when we ran out of dinner rolls. Gathering sadness over the coming goodbyes. An awareness that this Easter dinner would be the last of its kind, big changes coming ahead. They were probably thinking, do we need to get gas on our way out of town? Who knows what others are thinking, even those closest to us or maybe especially them.

Folks did leave after dinner, carload by carload. I walked them all to their cars in the April sunshine then collapsed on the couch. I was asleep by 8:30 p.m. I would not have been the one to stay up praying with Jesus on Holy Thursday, nor the first one at the tomb on Easter morning. At Our House by Jean Giesic

On Easter Monday, I washed the tablecloth. On the way out to the clothesline, I passed the basketball court and picked up one of the boys' sweatshirt, shed during a game. The more things change, the more they remain the same. That's one way to look at it, one way to get by. Perhaps Jesus, who went through more than most of us on his way to glory, might say instead, *Things change*, *but keep going, there are better and better days ahead*.

by Jean Giesige



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