



Pillars

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Our Philanthropic
Mission: Uniting
those who are
called to be
witnesses of
Christ's love,
and stewards
of His gifts, with
our mission to
proclaim the
Kingdom of
God to all.



The Adoration of the Infant Jesus;
Fra Filippo Lippi; 1450.

The Most Important Gift

by Rev. David T. Tyson, C.S.C.

May the peace of Christ be with you this Christmas Season! As we enjoy the blessings bestowed on us at Christmas, may we truly experience the wonder of the most important gift we receive in Jesus Christ, God made man.

This time of year we give a lot of attention to “gifts.” In most regards, we don’t have much choice as no sooner do we commemorate *All Saints* then retailers and local and national news outlets begin promulgating a message of economics and shopping for Christmas. The countdown of shopping days begins, predictions are made for a retail boon or bust season, and the resounding message of “special deals” and “great gift ideas” fill our eyes and ears. Temptation can quickly lead us from what we know to be the true gifts of Christmas. Let us be on guard and determined in keeping Christ and His blessings as our true gifts.

This issue of *Pillars* has a singular, dedicated focus, to reflect on the meaning of “gift” at Christmas in the gift of Christ to the world, and to the many tributaries that flow from this gift.

In the spirit of great Christmas stories, Fr. Pat Hannon, C.S.C., shares of a time from his youth when his desire for a particular Christmas gift was so strong he did everything within his youthful influence to make the gift a reality. Yet, for all his efforts, Christmas morning brought great disappointment. But that’s not the end of his story. The gift, as Fr. Pat would realize later,

was far more significant and altering than the gift for which he originally had hoped.

In his recurring column, *Plain Speaking*, Fr. Herb Yost, C.S.C., offers hope and comfort for anyone who finds the Christmas season spiritually, emotionally or mentally challenging. Fr. Herb explains how from the depths of our suffering, gifts do emerge.

If you’ve ever sought the perfect gift, Fr. Hugh Cleary, C.S.C., knows what it is, or more precisely, who it is. Fr. Hugh writes beautifully of the gift of God’s love for us through Jesus Christ. It is this perfect love that embraces us, protects us and through our faith, which is also a gift, leads our efforts to model this perfection.

The remaining feature reinforcing the theme of “gift” is by Fr. Bud Colgan, C.S.C., titled *Solidarity and Communion*. At first glance that title may raise a question about the relevance to “gifts”, but as Fr. Bud shares his experiences in creating bridges between the work of Holy Cross and those interested and invested in what we do, the con-



nection makes complete sense. Fr. Bud looks at gifts from donors as transcending dollars and cents, much as St. Paul did as he called the faithful to support the Christian community in Jerusalem.

The very existence of the Congregation of Holy Cross emanates from the gift of God’s love, a gift each and every member accepts, and with a daily and renewed commitment, strives to share with others through the sacraments, through active ministry, through a caring presence, through prayer.

The ability of the Congregation to extend this gift, to make God known, loved and served, is furthered by the gifts we receive from you. To affirm Fr. Bud’s comments, I’m not just referring to financial gifts and their surface value. I’m convinced that behind every dollar offered to Holy Cross lies hope. Every gift represents an affiliation, an affirmation, a desire to hasten the Kingdom of God with Holy Cross. As such, the gifts we receive from you become a gift we pass onto others. In ways large and small, we support one another through what we receive and give, acknowledging through our actions the words from the Letter of James, “*all good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no alteration or shadow caused by change.*” James 1:17

A most holy Christmas to you and yours, and our best wishes for a New Year filled with God’s blessings.

Ask for everything and hope for half..

I Had Already Named Him Buddy

by Rev. W. Patrick Hannon, C.S.C.

In my house as a child you survived mostly on your wits. It was as simple as that. I was the seventh of nine children and the youngest boy. I came into the world a month early, weighing in at just under four pounds. Father Stack poured water on my tiny head in the middle of the night, satisfied that my tiny soul was now fit for heaven.

My parents named me William Patrick. William was my dad's name and Patrick was his paternal grandfather's. My Aunt Barbara brought me home from the hospital - she likes to remind me even to this day - in a shoebox because I was so puny. (I began to lower a doubtful brow upon that apocryphal yarn when I was eleven or twelve, about the time I doubted just about anything any adult told me.)

Being the runt of the Hannon litter, I surmised quickly that if I had any chance of seeing my sixteenth birthday I had to be cunning. I would never carry the bulk or brawn of my older brothers upon my thin frame, and I would certainly never enjoy the clemency afforded my sisters by virtue of their feminine aspect. No, if I wanted seconds at the dinner table or a new pair of sneakers or an extra hour of playtime well after the sun had set or a day free of fraternal torment, I needed to be smarter than my siblings.

And so, when I was eight years old, in a bold and calculated move, I began to cultivate a relationship with my father that would - I was convinced - be mutually beneficial: He would have a relationship with a son worthy of his name and I would enjoy the kind of status within the clan that would keep me content and unbruised.

As it turned out, this rather devious and selfish plan only served to illustrate the profound truth articulated once long ago by Thomas Aquinas that grace builds on nature (that is, that God breaks through in our lives in ways we could never imagine or anticipate). My simple human desire

to survive in the Darwinian jungle of the Hannon household (and - well, all right - my hope that somehow I would become my dad's favorite) brought me closer to a man I was even a little afraid of, but a man, nonetheless, whom I wanted to become when I grew up.

This convoluted strategy culminated on my eighth Christmas in a gift clumsily wrapped in the Sunday funnies, a gift - as I was to discover only years later - that changed the entire direction of my life.

I suppose my family was not unlike most families when it came to Christmas presents. The rule was a simple one: Ask for everything and hope for half! I still have this scene in my head - scripted in my teen years - of my parents late at night in bed going over the list of all the things we crass materialists masquerading as their nine children had pleaded for that day: "Well," Mom would chime in first, "Brian wants a motor scooter, Jack will be catatonic if he doesn't get that damned BB gun, and where in the hell are we going to get three E-Z Bake Ovens?" (My mother, a saint, could nonetheless cuss like a sailor!) "Sally wants a pony, Greg is dead set on that portable Magnavox television set he saw in the window at Andy's TV and Appliance, and Pat is still begging for a puppy."

Dad would reply: "Hmmm?"

"Bill, are you listening? I've done the math, sweetheart, and I just don't see how we're going to manage this year unless you get a second job. Maybe you can deliver the morning paper with the boys."

Dad: "Hmmm?"

(This is where my fantasy morphs into a ridiculous tableau of my father on a rickety bike careening down darkened streets at six in the morning, chucking papers onto roofs and into rose bushes, hating every minute of it but doing it anyway because, well, darn it, he loves his kids.)

I was serious about the puppy though.

Johnny Bigelow down the street got a Black Lab the previous Christmas and named him Sarge, and his dad was only a heart surgeon. Here was my dad - the Atticus Finch of Castro Valley, a guy with three suits, a GTO Pontiac convertible, his own office and a secretary. He could certainly afford to buy me a dog. After all, I *was* his namesake and I *was* working on becoming his favorite.

My parents were assaulted daily with Christmas pleadings from my brothers and sisters, and I knew it was getting them nowhere. I can still remember actually seeing my mom's eyes glaze over as she stirred a pot on the stove one night, her brood begging for attention as Christmas Day drew perilously close. God only knows the serene and silent place to which she retreated that evening, but I'm pretty sure it wasn't some spiritual shopping mall.

Me? I kept to my game plan. I hung out with Dad. I sneaked into his bathroom while he was shaving in the morning and stole a few splashes of his after-shave. I stopped by his office after school just to say hi, and sometimes I waited an hour in his law library until he finished for the day just to catch a ride home with him. I sat with Dad in the living room at six and watched the evening news and cursed the liberal Democrats in Congress with contempt equal to his own. And almost every night before I went to bed, I lay next to him in his bed and read my book as he read his.

Quite possibly the earliest memory I have of my father is seeing him in bed - under the covers, stripped to his underwear, his black framed prescription glasses pushed up above his forehead. And he is always reading. Apparently, Dad lived by the adage - coined years later by my brother Brian and me at a tavern in San Jose after spending an hour talking about all the books we were reading - "so many books, so little time."

My father didn't so much read books

as consume them voraciously. On his bedstand always rested a stack of six or seven books, and these were replenished regularly. The breadth of books he read fascinated me to no end: a biography of Hitler, a Hemingway novel, a book on modern farming techniques, the private journal of Dag Hammarskjöld, Shakespeare's *Othello*. Thumbing through their pages, I got a glimpse of hidden, remote words begging to be explored, jungles destined to be tamed.

This seemingly magically self-replenishing tower of books by my father's bed helped me partially understand, even at the tender age of eight - how he was able to graduate at the top of his class in law school having never earned his bachelor's degree.

So most nights I scaled my parents' bed, careful not to drop the book I was carrying with me and thereby disturb my father. I'd like to think that if anyone saw my dad

and me reclined there in similar reading postures, our bellies exposed, our lips surreptitiously moving to the lines of words, they would have had a hard time discerning where I ended and my father began.

Years later I came upon this description of the two main characters in one of Flannery O'Connor's stories, "They were grandfather and grandson but they looked enough alike to be brothers and brothers not too far apart in age, for Mr. Head had a youthful expression by daylight, while the boy's look was ancient." When I read those words, I thought of the nights I spent with my father, reading together in silence.

But at the time, it was all about the puppy. I was convinced that I had outsmarted my siblings and would on Christmas morning be bathed with the sloppy tongue of the floppy-eared dog I first saw at the pet store two months before. I had already secretly named him "Buddy" and

made him my own. I bet I had read at least twenty books with my father during that secret autumn/winter campaign to win his admiration and favor. All that remained for me to do was feign a believable look of surprise and give heartfelt hugs of gratitude when Buddy came bouncing out of the box on Christmas.

When I got out of bed that morning, my first, frantic thought was that Buddy was dead. Not one package or present wrapped tightly in colored paper under or around the blue spruce that morning had holes punched into it through which my puppy might breathe fresh air. There was no sound of whimpering or barking. 'My God,' I thought, 'they killed Buddy!' I allowed myself a few moments of stunned desperation before I acknowledged the cold and mocking truth while peals of laughter and delight echoed in our living room as my brothers and sisters became increasingly overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of their Christmas booty. My campaign had failed; I wasn't getting Buddy.

Dad must have noticed the clouds of disappointment gathering upon my horizon, for he reached down for a package that had been tucked away in the back and said in his faux Santa voice, "Well, well, well. This one must be for Pat!"

Suddenly, I experienced a flicker of hope. A primordial force that seemed to draw its breath from God Himself illuminated my darkened heart. For at least a few seconds, the thought that a puppy might yet still be delivered into my trembling hands was resurrected.

But what I had in my hands was a small package wrapped in Sunday comics, fastened with generous swatches of scotch tape. It had been passed from brother to sister to brother with disinterested hands and dropped on my lap. If it was a puppy, it was a dead puppy; that was for sure. I sadly tore through the wrapping paper, lifted the lid on the box, and dug through



The Hannon Family at Christmas, mid-1970s. Fr. Pat is standing third from the right.

the crinkled tissue paper.

It was a book. *The Illustrated History of the World War* by Thomas Herbert, to be exact. It was a first edition copy published by Pictoral Publishing Company of Chicago, in 1919. It was beaten up and grungy and the print was too small. It did have pictures and it was about a war - two redeeming qualities no doubt - but I was supremely disappointed. It served me right I thought. My secret little plan had backfired completely. Of course I would get a book! What else could my father have concluded that I really wanted, seeing me next to him nearly every night with my face buried in a book? He knew that I was a boy after his own heart, destined to be a lover of books and literature, just like my old man. But I was an eight-year-old boy, and all I wanted was a puppy for Christmas.

"Look inside," my father nudged. I detected a tone of secret pride in his voice, as if he were talking not so much to his son as he was a soulmate of sorts. Maybe there was a sales slip to the pet store. Maybe Buddy would be mine after all.

There, tucked away in my book's pages, was a small yellow card. Upon further inspection I discovered that it was my father's second grade report card. His teacher, Miss Joanna Sullivan, and his principal, Mr. Jerome Keefer, had seen fit to promote my father to the third grade at Tulelake Grade School on May 26, 1936. My dad had received straight A's in reading and literature, I noticed, and straight B minuses in morals and manners (a discrepancy I was able to enjoy only much later in life).

That Christmas morning, however, this revelation of my father's humanity was cold comfort. Unjustly denied the puppy I thought I had so richly deserved, I shoved my new old book (with its priceless memento of my dad that was absolutely worthless to me at the time) onto the shelf in my closet. Like Coleridge's ancient mariner, I drew consolation from my humiliating

defeat only by admitting that though I was a sadder boy that day I was also much wiser.

My father died years later of a sudden heart attack a month before my twenty-sixth birthday. I remember lying awake all night after receiving the phone call. As darkness finally surrendered to the early morning light, I was desperately coaxing from my memory those significant moments in my life that I had shared with him.

The most recent (and unsuspected last) had been after I had taken my first vows in the Congregation of Holy Cross at our novitiate in Colorado that previous July. My mom and dad were driving me back to Notre Dame in Indiana, and just outside of Marysville, Kansas, my dad got pulled over for speeding. We had been coasting at around ninety and enjoying every minute of it.

'I don't think he actually paid the ticket before he died,' I remember thinking as I finished my memory tour and reached to turn off the light on my bedstand. Then I saw them.

There on my bedstand stood a stack of six or seven books in various stages of consumption. I chuckled aloud as I recalled that dusty memory of my eighth Christmas, when my father gave me a book instead of a puppy. I went to my closet that very moment and retrieved that book from a storage box. I looked at it again, as if for the first time. I saw now that originally the book had belonged to my namesake, my great-grandfather Patrick Hannon, who died in 1930. My hunch, given my father's second grade report card stashed within its pages, was that *Dad's father* must have given *his father's* book to Dad right around the time of Dad's eighth Christmas.

I have to admit that I had spent the years thinking that my father and I - despite our shared name, rare blood type and southpaw orientation - were irreconcilably different. I had become - annoyingly liberal in my politics, passionate about things

to which my father gave scant attention, and irritated by his introverted, home-body predilections. I had always loved him and respected him deeply, but there always seemed to be an emotional gully that kept us too often at arm's length from each other.

That early morning of his death, I was blessed to have in my closet a clear and incontrovertible reminder of Dad's love for me - going all the way back to when I was eight and thought that a puppy would make me happy for life. His book and report card were now two of my most precious possessions.

That much was clear. But an even deeper truth dawned on me that morning. I had, in a very real sense, become the man I always wanted to be - not a man who was my father exactly but someone who shares his love for books, for reading, for the literary adventure. This is a gift even better than a puppy with floppy ears.

I read books because I love stories. I read books because someone else has seen something or felt something or thought something or imagined something that maybe I haven't...and I want to know what that something is. I read books because they help me to see the world with more truthful eyes. I read books because it is another way to engage in thoughtful and passionate conversation, whether it is with a fictional character, a historical person long gone to God, or a writer who has something desperate to say. I read because deep and abiding questions always surface in whatever book I attempt to conquer, and those questions always bring me to God in prayer. My father gave me all that with that one gift on that one Christmas so long ago.

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Your questions answered...

Plain!Speaking

by Rev. Herbert C. Yost, C.S.C.

Given that this issue of *Pillars* is devoted to gifts, I thought I'd share a simple reflection on this special theme.

The first thing that comes to mind are Christmases past. There were the many gifts from Mom and Dad Claus, Uncle Iggy and Aunt Dorothy, and more in going next door to my grandparents and in sharing some of Nanny's cinnamon toast. Then would come the Christmas meal with Aunt Sis and Uncle Pat and cousins.

But as precious as family gifts were and are, my heart and mind keep gravitating to the many gifts from God. While too many to list, the top four would be linked to the four major turning points of my life thus far. Each of those turning points involved some degree of suffering...I had to let go of the familiar and comfortable, journey for awhile through a desert of emptiness and reconstruction, and then finally came the recognition and welcoming of the gift(s) and the new life which resulted.

Bear in mind that while going through these life-changing events, the idea of gift never entered my mind. In no way is suffering itself a gift. It is an evil. Maybe in the later stages, as the healing starts, you might see a glimmering of the gold that is hidden in the manure. But until then, one goes through all the stages of a person who is dying: fear, anger, grief, loneliness, denial, bargaining. The giftedness of each event becomes apparent only after a long process of letting go and of discovery.

Suffering is something we all want to avoid, but it inevitably touches every human life. We cannot escape it. God does **not** give suffering to us...what loving parent would do that to a child? But God does permit suffering to touch our lives. It comes through

our own bad choices (e.g., smoking), through the sinfulness of others (e.g. drunk driving), through natural events and disasters, through all the ills and ailments that touch our bodies, minds, and spirits.

While we cannot escape suffering, we do have a choice in how we react to it. Our reaction will cause one of two things to happen: either we will grow more fully into our God-given humanity and appreciate its strength and beauty, giving life to all we encounter; or we will become bitter and disillusioned.

What are some of the gifts that might come from suffering, or the suffering that a community of faith goes through? St. Paul gave a good summary in his letter to the Romans (5:3-5): *"We even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."*

But let's get more specific.

You find an increase in the fruits of the Spirit: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The Beatitudes make sense now.

You begin to see God as God really is, not as you want him to be, or as others tell you he is. Prayer becomes a vital and necessary part of life, not an afterthought.

You find your worldview changing from "me, my, mine" to "ours, we, us." You come to the aid of others who are being bullied, oppressed, battered. Slowly your heartbeat comes into tune with the world's heartbeat.

Your relationship with the Church might change. You begin

to see "the Church" as all of us together, instead of just the hierarchy. "Because I said so" is no longer a sufficient reason for obedience because you've learned that your values are very significant and important.

You discover the giftedness of all life, including your own. Gratitude becomes a dominant disposition of your mind and heart.

You find that pain is the great equalizer among all human beings. When you experience your own pain and work through its meaning, you become very much more grounded, less egotistical, and extraordinarily aware of your humanness. You see how we are all the same underneath the surface of our skin color.

You discover that your life is graced with extraordinary support from a variety of sources.

You will find an inner strength that was not there before, a freedom to be yourself, to say and do things that heretofore were always inhibited by others' expectations, roles you thought you had to play, fear of others' reactions, etc.

If one passes through enough suffering, there eventually comes a point where suffering and faith become partners. That is, in the midst of your suffering, you have this deep intuition that if you do the necessary work, "all will be well", to use Julian of Norwich's words. Jesus was right when he said that one must lose life to gain it. And once new life is there, what a treasure it is!!!

Questions for Fr. Herb?
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Christmas Around the



BANGLADESH The Christmas liturgy is the focus of the faithful with colorful decorations adorning the church.



BANGLADESH The hand carved image of Mary with the infant Jesus, accented by the presence of a poinsettia, is a traditional Christmas scene in homes and in churches.



EAST AFRICA Decorating homes for Christmas is becoming more popular, with the Nativity being the most common accent.



EAST AFRICA The visit by the three wise men done in a traditional African technique of paint on fabric.



EAST AFRICA While dance is a traditional part of the celebration of the Mass in East Africa, it takes on a greater role at Christmas.



BANGLADESH Christmas stars are commonly placed over the homes of Christians.

World with Holy Cross



MÉXICO Las Posadas is a dramatic novena of prayers re-enacting Joseph and Mary's search for a place to stay in Bethlehem. Holy Cross seminarians sing "there's no room at the inn," as part of the devotion.



MÉXICO The Nacimiento, (birth), is a devotional that incorporates an elaborate display of the nativity along with a novena of prayers offered by friends and family.



MÉXICO Las Posadas concludes with the arrival of Joseph and Mary at church for the celebration of the Midnight Christmas Mass.



PERÚ After the celebration of Midnight Mass, which is followed by fireworks, families gather for a meal and a simple exchange of gifts such as this child holds.



PERÚ An example of a handcrafted Peruvian Nativity, found in many households. Typically, the figure of the Baby Jesus is taken to Midnight Mass to be blessed before being placed in the crib.



PERÚ Each year, Yancana Huasy school has a Christmas party orchestrated by many in the parish. A live nativity helps to make the Christmas message more tangible.

Solidarity and Communion

by Rev. Arthur J. Colgan, C.S.C.

I am returning home from a delightful evening meal in Lima with a group of visitors to Perú, all people associated with the pastoral mission of Holy Cross. They are returning to the States tomorrow and the meal was our final encounter: an opportunity to share their company and to assess and evaluate the time they spent with us. While the visit was brief - just over a week - they managed to spend a full three days visiting the neighborhood and our ministries in Canto Grande. The last four days were spent delving into the rich past and cultural heritage of Perú on a trip to the colonial Andean city of Cusco and the ruins of Machu Picchu. They are just beginning to process and understand all that they have seen and heard over these days. Hopefully, it will be an ongoing source of insight and challenge as they return to their everyday lives and activities.

As I drive back home from our meeting, I reflect on the wonderful grace of knowing these people who share in different ways in the pastoral ministry of the Congregation of Holy Cross in Perú. Two are board members at Holy Cross institutions in the States. One is a close friend of a Holy Cross priest and a member of a Rotary Club that has sponsored a project at our Fe y Alegria School. All have shown an interest in the work of Holy Cross in Perú and have been generous in supporting it. Their willingness to take the time out from their busy lives to visit Perú and see the work of Holy Cross first hand is a great source of encouragement for us.

As on so many occasions in the past, I am reminded of the promise Jesus made us of the hundredfold blessing on those who leave behind their families and friends to follow the Lord. So many times over the years I have come to meet and to bond with people whom I never would have met had my life circumstances been different. Religious life and priesthood in Holy Cross have been a wonderful source of ongoing friendship with people with

whom I share values, concerns, interests and our faith - people who have become a part of our ministry through their solidarity, their sharing of resources, and their ongoing interest in the people that we serve.

Of course, this is not the first group to visit us. Over the years of our presence in Perú, bonds have been established with different individuals, parish communities, schools, Holy Cross institutions in the U.S. - and many of them have had the opportunity to come to Perú and see first-hand the work they are supporting.

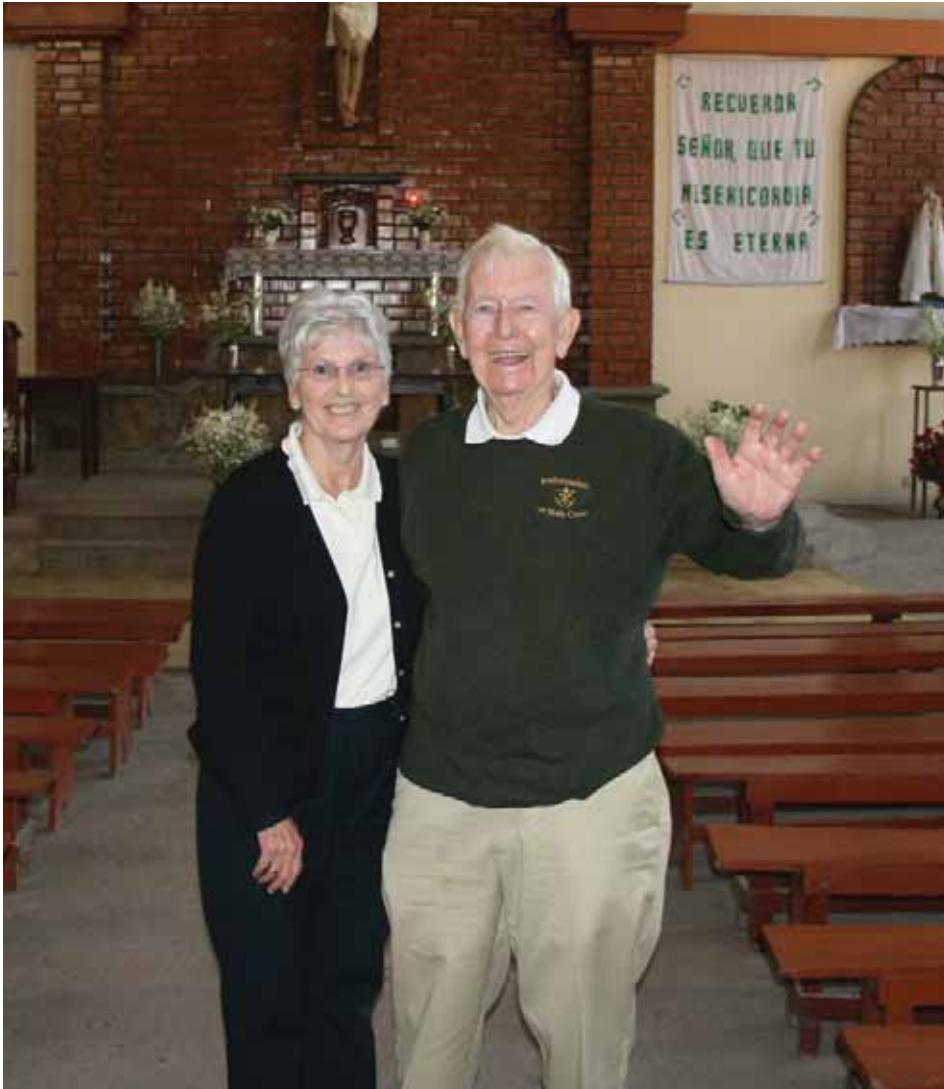
There are the "sister parishes" in the U.S. that have a bond with Our Lord of Hope Parish and a commitment to support us - Holy Cross Parish in Easton, Mass.; Most Holy Trinity in Saco, Maine and St. Ann's Parish in Cincinnati. There are two parishes in Germany that are part of the "Partnerschaft" movement and have an ongoing relationship of support and solidarity with Our Lord of Hope (Partnerschaft is a program of the Diocese of Freiburg that links all of the parishes in the diocese to sister parishes in Perú.). There are the now numerous students and former students of Stonehill College (Easton, Mass.), King's College (Wilkes-

Barre, Pa.), St. Edward's University (Austin, Texas) and Holy Cross College (Notre Dame, Ind.) who have come here for an alternative "Spring Break" program and have remained in contact. Each year St. Gerard's Parish in Canton, Mass., sends a group of college students from the parish for an immersion experience. A good friend of Yancana Huasy, (the parish program for the mentally and physically handicapped), Dr. Joseph Dutkowsky from Cooperstown, N.Y., a specialist in rehabilitative medicine, has now come on several occasions along with other colleagues. He has linked us up with "Eleanore's Project", a nonprofit organization that sends a team to Canto Grande each year to assemble and fit wheel chairs for children and young people in the Yancana Huasy program.

I have come to realize that it is one thing to tell someone the story of the Canto Grande neighborhood, the slum area on the outskirts of Lima where Holy Cross has lived and worked since 1976. It is another thing entirely to be here on the ground, to walk the streets, to experience the smells and sounds of this teeming neighborhood, to see the dry, stony hills that



Fr. Bud Colgan celebrates Mass at the original Maria de Nazareth church.



The new Maria de Nazareth, funded in large measure by the efforts of Jack and Patti Conway of Scituate, Mass.

dominate the sides of the Canto Grande valley filled with small shacks where people live, to meet the people who live here, to hear their stories and see their struggles, to share the faith life of the people of Canto Grande participating in the Eucharist in the chapels and churches of the neighborhood and to visit the institutions and the programs that Holy Cross sponsors - to meet our lay collaborators.

This experience is far more than just “fundraising” to support the work of the Congregation. While seeking the resources to support the life and the work of the

Congregation in Perú is crucial, there are other dimensions to the experience that are equally as important and significant for us and for our friends.

As I reflect on this experience, I call to mind the great paradigm in the New Testament of “fundraising”: St. Paul’s campaign to raise funds for the support of the Christian Community at Jerusalem. As Sam Marsh writes in his blog article “Paul’s Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem: An Essay”:

“The collection has been described as occupying a ‘central place in Paul’s

work among Gentile churches...becoming a defining emblem of his apostolate.”¹ It was certainly ‘one of Paul’s most ambitious hands-on projects,’ looming large within the Corinthian and Roman letters, ‘both theologically and practically.’²

The collection was so important for St. Paul that he refers to it in all of his major letters (Galatians 2:10; I Corinthians 16:1-4; II Corinthians 8: 1-24; 9: 1-15; Romans 15: 25-29). He began this campaign to encourage the Christians of other cities to show their charity and solidarity by sharing their resources with the Christians of Jerusalem who were facing severe poverty and need:

“Now as you excel in every respect, in faith, discourse, knowledge, all earnestness, and in the love we have for you, may you excel in this gracious act also. I say this not by way of command, but to test the genuineness of your love by your concern for others. For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake He became poor although He was rich, so that by His poverty you might become rich.” (II Corinthians 8: 7-9)

However, for Paul it was more than the sharing of resources. He saw it also as a means of drawing the Gentile Christians and the Jewish Christians into closer communion with one another:

“For Macedonia and Achaia have decided to make some contribution for the poor among the holy ones in Jerusalem; they decided to do it, and in fact they are indebted to them, for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to serve them in material blessings.” (Romans 15: 26-27)

For that reason, Paul insists on the need for a delegation from Corinth to travel with him to Jerusalem to personally

deliver the collection to the 'holy ones' of Jerusalem. (I Corinthians 16, 3). The collection is about building up personal bonds, communion, 'koinonia' in the Early Christian Church, composed of Jewish and Gentile members with their different backgrounds, histories and animosities. It is about personal contact, bridging barriers and physical distance that separate members of the one Church of Jesus Christ.

As Sam Marsh reflects in his essay, "In Romans Paul imbues the collection with theological meaning...Paul's vision of the collection, in Romans, is that it is a massive symbol and prophetic sign 'blazoned across half a continent, trumpeting the fact that the people of God redefined around Jesus the Messiah is a single family.'³ Now that they are a single family in Christ, they must live as such and live by the principle of practical *ἀγάπη* (agape)."

In our experience of hosting visits to Canto Grande over the years, this dimension of personal contact that bridges barriers

and distances has been very much present. Christian people who are separated not only by physical distance, but also by barriers of language, culture, geography and life experience come to know their brothers and sisters in a uniquely personal way. They get a totally new perspective on what life is like for the great majority of the people of Perú. As members of the Church, they come to experience how faith is lived and shared in a very different context. They discover the vibrancy and spirituality of the Church in Perú.

In an age that is marked by globalization and instant communication across the globe, establishing these bonds and connections is so important. The experience can be transformative and life-changing for those who participate. This has been especially true for many of the college students who have come to Canto Grande for the alternate Spring Break. People come to rethink their priorities and to reassess the direction their lives are taking. New bonds and new friendships are established.

The "visitors" as well as the "visited" are enriched and blessed. Both come to discover that "the people of God, redefined around Jesus the Messiah, is a single family."

As an international religious congregation that "crosses borders of every sort," the Congregation of Holy Cross is in a unique position to facilitate experiences of solidarity and communion. It is an emerging and very contemporary ministry in the service of the Gospel and of the building up of a truly global (Catholic) Church. ■

1. Sze-Kar Wan, (2000) 'Collection for the saints as anticolonial act', in Horsley, R., A., (Ed.), Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation, (Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, p. 194)

2. Wright, N., T., (2005) Paul: Fresh Perspectives, (London: SPCK), p. 167. Paul makes reference to the collection in every one of his major letters (see Rom 15:25-28, 1 Cor 16:1-4, 2 Cor 8-9, Gal 2:10)

3. Wright (2005), p. 167

4. (sammarsh.net/?p=638)



Students from Stonehill College leave behind the comforts of home to serve God's people.

Around *the* Province

Notre Dame/South Bend

"Seasons of the Spirit – Scriptural Reflections for Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter," written by Rev. LeRoy Clementich, C.S.C., has recently been published by Corby Books. Fr. Clem, renowned as one of the best Scripture columnists in the country, shares spiritual insights that both inform and inspire.

The second volume of the autobiography of Rev. Edward A. "Monk" Malloy, C.S.C., has been published by the University of Notre Dame Press. *"Monk's Tale: Way Stations on the Journey,"* is part two of a three-part autobiography covering the 13-year period in which Fr. Malloy worked on the Moreau Seminary staff and as a Notre Dame rector, professor, administrator, vice president and associate provost.

The Wernle Youth & Treatment Center in Richmond, Ind., recognized Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., President of the University of Notre Dame, with its 2011 national *Catalyst for Change* award. Wernle is a family-focused, child-centered agency providing programs to assist troubled children and their families.

St. Joseph Grade School, founded by Holy Cross in 1854, has been named a 2011 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. The National Blue Ribbon School award honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students achieve at high levels or where the achievement gap is narrowing. The school combines solid faith-based formation with a strong academic curriculum that encourages students to excel in high school and beyond while sharing in the mission of the Church and contributing to the communities of which they are a part.

Stonehill

For the fifth straight year, Stonehill College has been named a top tier

"Best National Liberal Arts College" by *U.S. News & World Report* in its 2012 edition of Best Colleges. Additionally, the College was named an "A+ School for B Students."

King's College

Rev. John Ryan, C.S.C., has been inaugurated as the ninth president of King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Fr. Ryan has been working at the college since 1994, as the president since July 1, but the ceremony on October 7, was a chance to publicly honor him and welcome him to his new role. He is the first Wilkes-Barre native to hold the position.

For the second consecutive year, King's College has been placed in the top 5% of all master's degree granting colleges and universities in America. The rankings appeared in the September/October issue of *Washington Monthly* magazine. The rankings were based on three evenly weighed selection criteria; social mobility, service, and research.

Portland

Rev. Mark Ghyselincx, C.S.C., art teacher at the University of Portland, was recently featured in an exhibit called "Places" in the Buckley Center Gallery on campus. The exhibition featured paintings of landscapes, using acrylic paints and watercolors as well as pastel drawings from photographs.

The University of Portland has been named the top producer of Fulbright scholars in the nation among "master's universities" for the second consecutive year, by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. The University had 10 alumni win the prestigious grants to work and study abroad for 2011-12.

The University has also received a "number one" ranking from *Washington Monthly*, for its commitment to community service.

Rev. Ronald Raab, C.S.C., has published his second Advent at-home retreat for Cycle B of the Church's liturgical calendar. The retreat resource, entitled, *The Unsheltered Heart*, an At-Home Advent Retreat, provides a simple four-step process for each day of Advent that includes the gospel reading, personal reflection, commentaries and prayers. The book is available from Ave Maria Press, avemariapress.com.

Santiago, Chile

Saint George's College, a Holy Cross primary and secondary school celebrated its 75th anniversary on November 11, 2011. The school was founded in 1936 by the Archdiocese of Santiago and has been administered by the Congregation of Holy Cross since 1943. Saint George's is recognized for its academic excellence and currently serves 2,600 students, representing approximately 1,400 families.

México

On September 16, 2011, Carlos Augusto Jacobo de los Santos, C.S.C., was ordained a deacon by Auxiliary Bishop of Monterrey, S.E.R. Jorge Alberto Cavazos Arizpe. Participating in the celebration were Carlos' parents and two of his brothers, along with four Holy Cross seminarians for Monterrey and the formation staff.

East Africa

Phase II of a multi-year construction of a Boys Dormitory at Holy Cross Lake View Secondary School in Jinja, Uganda, is underway. The completed dormitory will eventually be a three story structure, but because of funding limitations, only one floor can be completed at a time. Holy Cross Lake View Secondary School is among the top 5 schools in the entire country of Uganda.

Love is never finished...

The Gift

by Rev. Hugh Cleary, C.S.C.

Jesus is God's most cherished Gift to the world. He is perfect Love palpable in our image and likeness. He is God's Love, the visible Gift of the invisible God.

Fittingly, the word "gift" has its roots in the agreements of a wedding exchange preparing two to become one. The origin of Gift correlates to the "*bride price*," the value amount paid by a groom to the family of the bride - the opposite of a dowry, the amount payable by the bride's family to the groom.

In the ancient Jewish tradition, the rabbis insisted that before marriage the new couple enter into a *ketubah* contract, a financial agreement providing for the bride's future security in the wake of any possible calamity which could conceivably rend the marriage apart. The word Gift springs from this promise of security.

In God's intimate Love for us He sent us His Word as the guarantee of His ageless, timeless, eternal Love. Jesus Himself was the price God paid for us, His Church, His people, His spouse. God's Beloved, our Beloved, would agree to no greater price of personal commitment than to lay down His Life for us, His prized friends. In the *ketubah* covenant, Jesus is the paid price of Love's guarantee, Jesus vowed that nothing, absolutely nothing, could or would come between us, not even death itself. There is no other gift like this, nothing comes even close.

The Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross recognize and value all the wonderful gifts of the earth as the handiwork of God's care for us. They have such beauty and worth we cannot help but marvel at their appeal - so much so that we are often forgetful, dazzled and blinded to the Love that is of their origin. "*The world is well provisioned with gifts from God's hand*," the Constitutions say, "*but the gifts are often worshipped and the Giver is ignored*."

As the perfect Gift Jesus calls upon us to give our trust and homage to the

Giver of all gifts. In the Gift of Christ we are joined to God as one joined in marriage. In Him we live and move and have our very being in God's Love. Jesus is our guarantee of this perfect Love; He is our salvation from all that is not of perfect Love. Jesus, the Word of Love made flesh, is the irrevocable Gift that neither sin nor death can dissolve.

Perfect Love is the perfect Gift; love not yet perfected has much to learn of this many faceted, mysterious, seemingly unfathomable Gift. But the learning is also a magnificent gift, for love is in the learning! Jesus reveals the height and depth and power of this relentless Love that gives and seeks its own return not in need, but in perfection. And so Jesus the Gift teaches us perfect Love, Love in all its power and glory, in all its forgiveness and healing, in all its wisdom and courage, in all its all.

In time the Lover and the Beloved become one; in that perfect union of their desire, each lost in the other, while, paradoxically, neither one really lost to themselves but truly discovered to themselves - in all their astounding uniqueness - while to and for and in the other. Love is like that.

Love is never finished for it is dynamic; Love is never finished for by its nature it is

always inclusive never exclusive. It is the Gift that keeps on giving within oneself and without - in its tender mercy and responsibility for all. There is no one not to be loved; no one not to know and receive the Gift. Love is infinite; its passion knows no bounds, in heaven or on earth.

Jesus, the Gift, awakens within us the promise of perfect Love; perfect Love is just that, it is love achieved. We have far to go in nurturing our poor love on its way to perfection. But Jesus is our teacher; He is our Way, our Life, our Truth. He is the guarantee that no calamity will ever rend apart this holy discovery, this holy marriage of perfect Love. The way to perfect Love is fraught with obstacles sometimes beyond imagining. But finally, all works toward the good.

Our Holy Cross Constitutions inspire us in the great hope of perfect Love's realization: "*There is no failure the Lord's love cannot reverse, no humiliation he cannot exchange for blessing, no anger he cannot dissolve, no routine he cannot transfigure. All is swallowed up in victory. He has nothing but gifts to offer. It remains only for us to find how even the cross can be borne as a gift*." It is simply part of the *ketubah*.



The Last Supper; Juan de James; 1560.

Our Five Pillars

- Appropriate stewardship of the gifts we receive
- Formation and education of our priests and brothers
- Ministry to the poor and oppressed in the United States and abroad
- Care for our elder and infirmed confreres
- Ongoing facility requirements to serve our mission

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Statue of Saint Bernadette from the Notre Dame Grotto.