



Destination C.Ss.R.

Redemptorist Vocation Newsletter

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'Tis the Season! Once A gain..... Reflections on A dvent



When I was first getting to know the Redemptorists, they often summarized the spirituality of St. Alphonsus with three words: Crib (Incarnation), Cross (Redemption), and Altar (Eucharist).

Since Advent is the time of preparation for the celebration of the Incarnation and the Birth of Jesus, we can focus on the first of those three themes. Among the writings of St. Alphonsus we find a *Novena of Christmas* and *Meditations for Advent* in which he helps us to reflect on the mystery of the Incarnation B especially as an aspect of the mystery of our Redemption. Even before the death and resurrection of Jesus, God's saving love for us is already revealed in the Word becoming flesh.

Alphonsus writes: "Oh, let us pray the Lord to enlighten our minds and to make

us understand what an excess and what a miracle of love this is, that the eternal Word, the Son of God, should have become human for love of us!" And later, "Jesus Christ is a gift which contains all the gifts that we can seek or desire." Let those words inspire your Advent reflections this year.

Fr. David Louch C.Ss.R.



Fr. David Louch C.Ss.R. is the Director of Formation, and is living in the Redemptorist Community in Sudbury, Ontario. The Redemptorist Community in Sudbury serves in Holy Redeemer Parish, and is the home of our Pre-novitiate Formation Program for the Edmonton-Toronto Province.

Fr. Tom O'Rourke C.Ss.R., the Pastor of Holy Redeemer Parish, serves as the Associate Formation Director for the Province.



Alfred Pampalon C.Ss.R. A Saint in the making.....

Alfred Pampalon follows in the tradition of Redemptorist holiness begun in North America by John Neumann and Francis Seelos and countless other confreres who walked Alphonsus' way of holiness but whose names are forgotten to us. Pampalon, born in 1867 and died in 1896, lived a brief nine years in the Congregation. After a few years of ministry in Belgium and in Canada,



Alfred contracted tuberculosis. After terrible sufferings, he died at Sainte Anne de Beaupré on September 30, 1896. His life was unremarkable - a typical Redemptorist life of action and contemplation. The memory of Pampalon has lived on through the people. Pilgrims to his tomb in the crypt of Sainte Anne de Beaupré have claimed Pampalon as an intercessor for those struggling with addictions. They see their own struggles with addictions mirrored in his own struggle to suffer through tuberculosis. We pray through his intercession for those suffering from addiction in their life, and the courage to live in freedom.

To Apply? or Not to Apply?..... That is the Question!



Have you ever heard someone complain about their boyfriend or girlfriend with regards to their inability to commit? It almost seems as if we live in a world of endless questions.....

What if she's not the one for me? I love him now, but what about after we get married? Am I ready to give up some of my freedom for her? Will he always remain faithful to me?

These are all very good questions that I'm sure we've heard many times from friends, or perhaps we have asked similar questions ourselves.

Discerning a Vocation to Religious Life and Priesthood is not much different. There are many questions that each one of us have. Often the questions bring about doubt and uncertainty. The questions could even scare us into not making a commitment, or scare us from even trying to learn more.

However, there comes a time when we have to take a risk, and trust God with what we are experiencing in our heart. If we believe that God is calling us in a certain direction, then we need to take God by the hand and see where we might be led. Finding out more about a religious vocation, or even entering into the formal Formation Program is not signing your life away. It just means that you are taking the steps to find out for sure if you feel at home with our way of life and ministry.

The only thing worse than finding out you *don't* have a vocation to a certain call like Redemptorist Life and Ministry, is not even *trying* to see if that call is at all there.

So, how do you know you are ready to apply to the Formation Program? This is a very good question. It is a question that we often shy away from, even often avoid. But the question needs to be asked and responded too.

When we ask the question, "To Apply? or Not to Apply?", it is really a question of readiness. Often we confuse readiness with worthiness. If worthiness means perfection, being free from sin and temptation, then none of us is worthy to begin this

intimate process of discernment, and living out the call that we sense in our hearts.

However, readiness is the question and key to knowing when to apply to a formation program. Let's look at what "readiness" might look like:

1. **Developing a Prayer Life** - this is not only key to discernment, but for being a follower of Christ throughout your life.
2. **Ongoing Spiritual Direction** - the process by which you and a qualified spiritual director look at how God is working in your life.
3. **Understanding the Community** - Do you know us? Are you beginning to feel at home with the our mission, sense of community life, and the Redemptorists that you know? Have I been meeting with Fr. Santo and the Redemptorists for about a year?
4. **Have a sense of your call** - What is your dream for your life of service? What are the gifts that God has given you to use in the service of the Gospel and to the mission and charism of the community?
5. **Academic Preparation** - Have you completed your Bachelor's Degree? Have you taken courses in Philosophy?
6. **Are you free to come and see** - Do you have family obligations? Financial Debt? Other commitments?
7. **An Open heart** - A willingness to come and explore where the hand of Christ the Redeemer is leading you.

Are you ready to apply? Perhaps? Together let's discern if you're ready to begin the process! Someone who might apply to the formation program might do so in the winter and spring time prior to entrance to give enough time to complete the required elements of the application, like interviews, application forms, references and the like.

I invite you to refer to the brochure, "So, How Long Does It Take To Become One Of You Guys" for a detailed outline of our Initial Discernment and Formation Program, or review it online at our website: www.redemptorists.ca

May God continue to bless you, especially during the holy season of Advent, as we await the birth of Christ once again in our world and hearts.

Discerning Voices: Adam's Story



Adam is a Vocation Inquirer in St. John's, NF, and continues to study at MUN.

The Salvation Army does not believe in Baptism, the Eucharist, or the Priesthood; yet, you rarely hear anybody criticizing them. If you are wondering why, it is because what they do speaks so loudly that their beliefs take a back-seat to their work. They provide soup kitchens for the starving, clothe the naked on our streets, and rehabilitate those addicted to drugs and alcohol. They are there wherever disaster strikes and as far as people are concerned, that is what matters.

I have been privileged enough to work for two summers at the Basilica Shrine of Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré. It is there that I had the opportunity to reach out to the most abandoned, those who came from all walks of life in search of hope and redemption. It was at the Shrine of Ste-Anne that I realized that this is the work that I find to be the most important.

Sometimes in our own church it is difficult to see the will of God truly at work. We have a church with a not so nice history—lets face it we aren't the most popular bunch around. But when God calls, he truly calls, there is no possibility for honestly ignoring his call. When I knew I was being called by God, I began to search for the possibilities of what He may be calling me to do. I immediately thought that I was intended to be a Priest, even if that was not what I wanted for myself. I searched for a long time, constantly having ups and downs. Because of my inspiration from working at the Basilica of Ste-Anne, I decided this past summer to meet with the Redemptorists in Toronto and it was the first time that I felt 'at home'.

I looked for where I thought God was truly at work. I found Him at work in helping the most abandoned of His children. We too can make our actions speak loudly. We too can make such a difference in a world filled with so many forms of poverty. I have found a way to accomplish this through the Redemptorists.



The Global Perspective of Redemptorist Youth and Vocation Ministry

From November 16-21, 2005, Toronto was the home of the General Secretariat for RYVM. Six representatives from every Redemptorist Region across the globe gathered for five days of meetings to share, discuss, dream, and plan the future of RYVM (Redemptorist Youth and Vocation Ministry).

As you probably know, we here in Canada offer programs and activities for Youth and Vocation Ministry like: SERVE, Liguori Circle, the High School Retreat Ministry Team, Vocation Promotion and Retreats. But the RYVM Program is a global initiative of the Redemptorists, because we see as a world-wide Congregation that the needs of our Youth today are one of the greatest challenges in the Church and in our world. All across the Globe, Redemptorists seek to find ways to reach out to youth and young adults from all walks of life; whether it is working with orphaned children and young people with HIV/AIDs, hosting retreat programs, offering volunteer mission experiences, or inviting young people to share in mission with the Redemptorists.

In different parts of the world, the needs of young people in the Church are different, so the challenge becomes for us an invitation, as we find in our mission the call to preach the Good News of Plentiful Redemption to all of creation, and to "Evangelize the Poor and be Evangelized by the Poor"

Some of the decisions being worked on as a result of our meetings include: The contest among youth/young adults across the globe for a new RYVM Logo, inviting Y/YA to give input about the needs of Y/YAs in today's world and Church, the planning of regional meetings: like this year's DIALOGUE 2006 in Hamilton, Ontario, strategies for support and promotion of the RYVM Programs across the globe via internet, and many more! Needless to say, you will be seeing more information about our plans in the coming months on our website, and through the newsletter.



General Secretariat for RYVM

L to R: Fr. Ariel (Argentina), **Fr. Jens** (Germany), **Fr. Raymond** (Zimbabwe), **Fr. Willy** (Indonesia), **Fr. Joe Tobin** (Superior General of the Redemptorists), **Fr. Serafino Fiore** (Rome: Vicar General and Chair of the Secretariat for RYVM), **Fr. Alfonso** (Rome), and **Fr. Santo** (Canada).

A Lay Person's Reflection on the Redemptorist Charism

A distinctive mark of the Redemptorist is that he is willing to go to the outer edges of humanity to reach those who are rejected and forgotten in our world. Just as Christ did not sit in synagogues waiting for the people to come to him, so the Redemptorist does not confine himself to traditional places and forms of ministry. Rather, he goes out to distant villages and dark street corners seeking direct and personal contact with the abandoned poor. He thereby becomes a living reminder of the Son of Man who came to search out and save what was lost (cf. Luke 19:10). His presence alone is a prophetic word among the poor, announcing "God-with-us" to people who have lost hope.

Taken from "Lay Discover the Redemptorist Charism" written by: Alicia von Stamwitz, a Lay Person from the Denver Province in [To Be A Redemptorist Today](#)



Am I Called?

Discernment is NOT easy. Now that we got that out of the way, let's move on with our task!

Often when we try to reflect on our call from God, we get all caught up with questions, fears, expectations, and wondering what we'll have to give up to follow God with any vocation we are invited into, be it religious life, priesthood, marriage, or single life. Perhaps we have to think about what we have in us as internal assets that will contribute and lead to our discernment, instead of focusing on the fears of letting go of what we need to give up. The following are a series of questions to help you focus on your journey of discernment. Every couple of months, another set of questions will be listed in this newsletter to assist

you in your reflection. These questions are adapted from the work of another Vocation Director, Sister Gloria Urrabazo, MCDP, and reprinted in Horizon Magazine. Used with permission.

This Issue: "Are you involved?", and "Charity begins at home."

Next Issue: "Where are you now?", and "Living and Loving"

IV. Are you involved?

1. What kind of groups are you involved in? What kind of activities are of interest to you in these groups?
2. How does close identification with a group of people help you to grow in faith and concern?

3. What more do you think has to be done within the groups to which you belong?
4. If you are not involved in any particular group, are you involved in any other form of apostolic activity, i.e. visits to nursing homes, jails, assist with religious education programs, other parish activities, etc.

V. Charity begins at home.

1. Have you spoken of your desire for religious life to your family?
2. How did each member of the family react to the news?
3. Have you met with difficulties? How have you handled these difficulties?
4. Has your family been an influence in your desire to consider religious life? Is there anyone in your family who serves the community in some way or other?

Constitution Corner

Chapter IV: Formation of the Apostolic Community

78. The aim of formation for both candidates and members is to lead them to such a degree of human and Christian maturity that, with the help of God's grace, they will be able to dedicate themselves intelligently, willingly and wholeheartedly to the service of the missionary Church in Redemptorist community life, in order to preach the Gospel to the poor. They should learn progressively what the following of Christ demands of them, required as it is by baptismal consecration and confirmed by religious profession, and thus becoming true missionaries.

Give your 2 cents worth!

"Dear Alphie....." & **"Room with a View"** are opportunities to ask questions, engage discussion, grow in faith, and learn a bit from sharing, and expert Redemptorist advice.

Go online at www.redemptorists.ca and hit Quick Links: **"Dear Alphie....."** or **"Room with a View"** to have your say!

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Our Young Adult Ministries



Liguori Circle

If you're looking to connect with young adults to share faith, fellowship and fun, get involved in Liguori Circle! Cities hosting Liguori Circle include: Grande Prairie, Saskatoon, St. John's, and Toronto (January). See the Website for Details!

S.E.R.V.E.

S.E.R.V.E. is a 5 week opportunity for Young Adults (age 18-30) to live in Redemptorist Community, work in apostolic opportunities, and together grow in faith through prayer, reflection, and Eucharist. This year, S.E.R.V.E. will be taking place in Saskatoon and Sudbury from **May 13-June 17, 2006**

SEE the WEBSITE for Information and Registration!!

Weekend Vocation Retreat Opportunities

See our Website for upcoming dates for Weekend Vocation Retreats in 9 locations across Canada!

www.redemptorists.ca

You can even register ONLINE!

Upcoming Location and Dates:

Grande Prairie	January 20-22, 2006
Edmonton	February 3-5, 2006
Toronto	February 17-19, 2006
Saskatoon	March 3-5, 2006

Look online for a complete listing of upcoming retreats.

Check out the Web!!

There are several websites that pertain to the Church, Redemptorists, discernment, and different other "Catholic" things!

Check these ones out!

Canadian Vocation Network
 Canadian Catholic Campus Ministry
 Centre for Ministry Development
 Daily Reflection on Scripture
 Redemptorist DIALOGUE 2006
 Redemptorists in North America
 Redemptorists in Edmonton-Toronto Prov
 Redemptorists in Rome (General Gvnm't)
 Vatican
 Vidimus Dominum (Newspaper about Religious Life)

www.vocations.ca
www.cccm.com
www.cmdnet.org
www.marklink.org
www.dialogue2006.org
www.redemptorists.com
www.redemptorists.ca
www.cssr.com
www.vatican.va
www.vidimusdominum.org

