



Destination C.Ss.R.

Redemptorist Vocation Newsletter

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Dialogue 2006: Plug into Christ!



The summers are long for a post secondary student. In high school I found it easy to cherish every day of the two month summer dreading the oncoming school year. As the university approached, I recently completed a Honors Degree in Religious Studies at St. Jerome's University, I became excited by the prospect of a four month summer but unfortunately the reality is they have proven to be more challenge than pleasure. At University I have a good community around me and I am involved in a plethora of activities; both of a religious nature and not. I find it easy to focus in an environment that I



Fr Jon Hansen C.Ss.R. (Fr.Techie-Priest) explains to team member Michelle Thiessen how the batteries represent our hearts that receive grace from God and store it in our heart, to be used as light for the world

have molded for myself which nurtures my strengths and weaknesses. At home I find that my production is stifled, mixed up with my summer job, my high school friends and my mother, who lovingly does too much for me. That is why the prospect of sneaking out of Oshawa, Ontario for a week in August after a particularly frustrating summer excited me so much.



Preparing Lunch Bags for distribution among the poor in Toronto

What I found at Dialogue 2006 was much more than an escape from my ordinary life. It was instead a time and a place where I was able to recharge, refocus and link up with others. Surely as humans we have a tendency to wear down. My summer had worn me down due to the long hours I had worked mixed in with other commitments and the general loll of life in an Oshawa suburb. Arriving at Dialogue I was tired and hungry for some spiritual food. The combination of ample prayer opportunities

and the captivating preaching skill that one encounters in communion with the Redemptorists was just the food for which I was searching. During my week at Dialogue I renewed my connection with Christ through prayer and was inspired to rethink parts of my spiritual life as a reaction to the messages conveyed to me through the talks.

One specific experience which caused me to refocus my way of thought was in relation to Fr. Mike Brehl's major address. Within this talk was an explanation of the Hebrew term "go'el", which is paralleled roughly to our word redeemer. I felt called to reevaluate my relations with others, especially those who are close to me, realizing the role I played in making their lives more fruitful. This in turn emphasized the importance of Dialogue as a place to link up with others who share a similar vocation. At Dialogue I met people from around North America. Not only did I make new and cherished friends but I learned from these new friends what they were doing to evangelize within the Redemptorist community where they lived. This provided me not only with new ideas, but with inspiration and devotion to try to dedicate more time in making my association with the Redemptorist community stronger.

I would like to thank the Core team for Dialogue 2006 for providing a place for young adults across North America to rediscover the value of what it means to work with the Redemptorists for the benefit of others.

David Byrne, Oshawa, Ontario



Fr. Santo and the other Team Members at the Final Mass



Young Adult Team Members: (L-R) David Byrne, Myron Rogal, Jake Busch, Carla Ambros

Christ Calls All!

Vocation Discernment Group Begins in Toronto!



In 1987, at a parish in Toronto, 5 young adults individually approached the pastor, all within the span of a month, to share their questions and concerns about discerning a vocation to priesthood or religious life. The pastor felt it would be beneficial that these young adults should gather together to grow together, to learn from one another about the joys and struggles of discerning their vocation, and to deepen their sense of God's presence in their journey as they discern God's call in their life. Over the next few years, the group grew to 10 members. In the following years, some of the group's members married, some became diocesan priests, some professed religious sisters and priests, and some are still discerning.

It is a group of adult males and females (preferably 18 years and older) who gather once a month to share faith, fellowship, and the journey of discerning God's call in their life. The group

gathers for Eucharist or a prayer service, followed by discussion on various topics and themes such as love, the vows, discernment questions, priesthood, religious life, relationships, doubt and fear, 'How do you know?', among others. After the discussion, the group could share in some type of social either at the rectory or meeting place, or at an agreed upon location like a restaurant. The leadership for planning the gatherings rotates among its members.

We have begun plans for such a gathering in Toronto at Perpetual Help Residence 426 St. Germain Avenue. Our first gathering was in September.

For more information about the group, please contact Fr. Santo Arrigo C.Ss.R., Coordinator of Redemptorist Vocation Ministry.

If you're not in Toronto, but would like to begin such a group in your local Redemptorist Parish, contact Fr. Santo as well to see how this might come together!

Letting the Poor Speak to your Vocation - Being open to SERVICE!

I was only 15 years old when I had to travel near downtown Toronto by streetcar to do some relief work at a grocery store for two weeks. Each morning, I would see first hand the poor of our city who were sleeping on park benches, under over-passes, and who began their day panhandling while I began my day working. I would be afraid that the Meat Department manager wasn't there to open the door when I got there, and I would have to wait outside in the parking lot, staring and being stared at. I found myself praying, "Lord, help me not to be afraid of these people!" That was my prayer for a very long time.

Thankfully, the Lord did hear that prayer, and has blessed me through the years with several opportunities to encounter and meet the poor through volunteer work, in some of my different ministries, and even just walking on the street.

How do the 'Poor' speak to one's vocation? Simple. They teach us about the vulnerability of our own hearts. We are often challenged to recognize the face of Jesus in the poor; seeing Jesus on the street, in the soup line, in the hungry, naked, and thirsty. It is not an easy thing to do. Perhaps that is because we often want to replace the face of the poor with the less frightening face of Jesus, and thus dishonouring both the poor person whom we encounter, and the person of Christ who is at one with them in their poverty.

I remember washing feet at St. Patrick's Church, 'Out of the Cold' Program when I was a Theology Student and again as a visiting priest to Toronto. The First Aid Station / Foot area was the best place for me to interact with our homeless guests one on one. Be-

sides the fact that the Station was the place where they would come with their smelly, gangrenous feet, and with life's problems and I gave the solution or whatever remedy we could offer, it was also a place to take some time to talk, as well as to listen, and to recognize the call of Jesus to "wash feet" as a mission of service, a mission of compassion, a mission of love.

I have found that there is one important test to the Christian Vocation, whether it is to priesthood, religious life, marriage, or single life. It is the test of opening ourselves to the poor among us, and allowing them to be Christ for us. It isn't about just recognizing the face of Jesus in them. It is praying that they find the face of Christ in us. They will know when we are fake, and if our heart isn't into it.

A group of the nurses at 'Out of the Cold' tended to a gentleman who was brought in, soaking wet and cold. The nurses went right to work, warming him up, getting him new clothes, bathing him, getting food. All he said to them was, "They didn't treat Jesus this good..... Jesus was homeless too, you know.....". For some of these nurses, it was a new confirmation of their vocation as nurses, and a new sense of how to live the Gospel in their life.

Maybe we need to remember sometimes that Jesus was homeless to as we seek to understand how this poor king invites us to serve our brothers and sisters through the gift of our vocation.



RYVM OFFICE UPDATE!!!!

We welcome Kathy Perry to the Office!

Things have been quite busy in the RYVM (Redemptorist Youth and Vocation Ministry) Office over the past several months. SERVE, Dialogue 2006, preparing for a new year with Vocation Promotion, Vocation Come and See Retreats, High School Retreat Team, Liguori Circle..... The list goes on and on!

Pat and I are happy to welcome into the craziness, Kathy Perry who is currently studying Theology at Regis College in Toronto. Kathy will be working with RYVM as her Practicum in Pastoral Ministry. She will be working with Pat in the preparation and running of the High School Retreat Ministry Team,

as well as being involved with the Toronto Liguori Circle with Fr. Jon Hansen C.Ss.R. at St. Patrick's Church. Kathy will also be contributing to the RYVM Newsletter, and other elements of our ministry at the Office.

You may one day be hearing from her as well!

Welcome Kathy to the Office! We look forward to working with you over the next year!



What do the poor reveal to us?

There are people, especially those who themselves are open but who skillfully attempt to juggle the claim the poor place on us, asking, "Who are the poor?" As a reflex, there comes to mind the question put to Jesus by the master of the law: "And who is my neighbor?" Today, just as then, it must be admitted that the question is poorly asked, that the masters of the law occasionally were mistaken in their questions and, consequently, in their answers as well. In the same sense, one must begin by making what could be termed a "Samaritan investment" and ask oneself who in fact acts as a neighbor. It is not by deciphering the economic, political, historical, cultural, etc., factors that one in fact commits oneself to the poor. To the contrary, it is done by shouldering the evangelical charge of service to the poor that enkindles the dynamism of love, even as one begins to understand the urgency and complexity of the issue.

Taken from "The Poor also Evangelize" written by: Francisco Moreno Jejon C.Ss.R. from the Vice Province of Peru-Sur, written in *To Be A Redemptorist Today*

Constitution Corner

65. Missionary charity requires of the members that they live a life that is really poor, and adapted to the condition of the poor they are evangelizing. By doing so, they show solidarity with the poor and become a sign of hope for them.

66. In the same way, they will endeavour in all sincerity to understand those values that are held in esteem by other peoples though they may not perhaps appeal to themselves for their own culture. From this will be born that fruitful dialogue which brings to light the rich endowments God has entrusted to different nations.

Christ: Relationship and Redemption



At Dialogue 2006 in Hamilton, Ontario, Fr. Michael Brehl C.Ss.R., Provincial Superior of the Edmonton-Toronto Province, presented to a wonderful talk on "Christ: Relationship and Redemption."

The following are thoughts and insights from Fr. Mike's talk that are worth sharing and reflecting on:

'For Alphonsus, the whole of Christian life is centered in Jesus and his work of redemption. If we want to understand the spiritual insight of our Founder, then I believe the critical focus is not upon redemption as an abstract category, but rather upon the person of the Redeemer.'

'The People of Israel developed an understanding that if any of their members were in trouble, then the nearest blood relative, the next-of-kin of that person was bound to come to their rescue. They called this person the

'go'el', a word which translates into 'Redeemer'. So, the Redeemer means the nearest blood relative or next of kin of a person in trouble – and this Redeemer was bound by law to act on behalf of the person in trouble.'

'God used this tribal legal concept to reveal something very important about himself. God said to them, 'your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel'. God calls himself their Redeemer. God assumes those three responsibilities – blood relationship, liberation, restoration.'

'St. Alphonsus says that, for Christians, the first mystery of redemption is the Incarnation of Jesus. Why? Because, although God has chosen to be the nearest blood relative or next of kin, we do not believe it. We think that God is not like us – God is not flesh and blood as we are.'

'Jesus makes himself the nearest-blood-relative to all these people, even when their own next-of-kin fail to do so. The lepers were renounced by their families. The

woman caught in adultery was alone in her sin. Zacchaeus was despised by his townspeople. Jesus' whole life proclaims restoration, liberation, and transformed relationships and communion. It is enough for someone to be in trouble for Jesus to act as a blood-relative.'

'Jesus is my redeemer. He is my nearest blood relative, my closest friend. I have done nothing to merit this friendship. I can never earn this relationship. He is my redeemer simply because I need him – because I so often get myself into trouble. And because he is my redeemer, it means that you really are my sisters and brothers. This is very powerful and gives me great hope and strength.'





Young Adult Ministries

What Does Redemption Mean to YOU?

We invite you to answer this question and the following questions in our **ONLINE SURVEY!**

What do you believe about the saving work of God?

How is Jesus YOUR Redeemer?

In what ways do you think the world is in need of hearing about "Redemption"?

How does the Good News of Plentiful Redemption need to be heard among the youth of the world today?

How does the Good News of Plentiful Redemption need to be heard among the youth where you live?

How might you see the work of the Redemptorists responding to the needs of young people?

How might you be able to participate in bringing the Good News of Plentiful Redemption to our broken world?

www.redemptorists.ca

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!

Looking for a Good Book?!

Here are a few to consider looking at:

Religious Life: A Prophetic Vision: Poverty, Celibacy and Obedience, by Diarmuid O'Murchu MSC

Holy Longing, Ronald Rolheiser OMI

Weeds among the Wheat, Thomas Green SJ

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.

See the Website for Details!

Come and See Retreat Weekends!

Check out the website for information about the Come and See Retreat Weekends.

www.redemptorists.ca

You can even register ONLINE!

Toronto: October 27-29, 2006

Edmonton: November 3-5, 2006

Retreat dates are advertised on the website as well for Winnipeg, Vancouver, St. John's, Sudbury, Toronto, Saskatoon and Quebec City.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Fr. Santo Arrigo C.Ss.R.

Coordinator of Redemptorist Vocation Ministry

Pat Csinos

Coordinator of Redemptorist Young Adult Ministry

426 St. Germain Avenue

Toronto, Ontario M5M 1W7

Phone: 416-789-3217

vocations@redemptorists.ca ryvm@redemptorists.ca

www.redemptorists.ca

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

Check these websites out!



Busted Halo
Canadian Vocation Network
Canadian Catholic Campus Ministry
Catholic Information Center
Centre for Ministry Development
Newspaper on Religious Life
Redemptorist DIALOGUE 2006
Redemptorists in North America
Redemptorists in Rome (General Gvnm't)
VISION Magazine Online

www.bustedhalo.com
www.vocations.ca
www.cccm.ca
www.catholic.net
www.cmdnet.org
www.vidimusdominum.org
www.dialogue2006.org
www.redemptorists.com
www.cssr.com
www.visionguide.org