

MARCH 2025

BLOODLINES

A MONTHLY OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARIES
OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD ATLANTIC PROVINCE



THE JUBILEE PRAYER

Father in heaven,
may the *faith* you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ,
our brother,
and the flame of *charity*
enkindled in our hearts
by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators
of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform
from within both humanity
and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of
evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,
a yearning for
the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace
of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.
To you our God,
eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever. Amen.



BLOODLINES is a monthly publication by the Congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province.

It is distributed to the Incorporated members of the Province and the Provincial Directors of the various Provinces.

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PROVINCIAL'S MESSAGE

THE passage from Mark's Gospel about new wine being poured into fresh wineskins has always resonated deeply with me. Growing up, I had the privilege of helping my father with the annual ritual of winemaking, a process that was both fun and formative. It was a time of learning, patience, and growth. As I reflect on this Gospel passage, I see a profound connection between that experience and the invitation Jesus gives us.

When we genuinely engage with the message of Jesus, particularly through His parables and stories, we allow ourselves to be transformed. We open ourselves to change. The image of "new wine being poured into fresh wineskins" speaks to this very process of transformation. What is Jesus really saying here?

Jesus is inviting His disciples—and by extension, all of us—to change, to grow, to stretch beyond our old patterns. If we remain like the old wineskins—rigid, dried up, and inflexible—then we remain stuck, unable to embrace the new. We cannot welcome what God is doing in our lives, and we close our hearts to His voice. However, if we remain flexible, open, and willing to embrace the new, then we invite the Holy Spirit to move in us. We are then able to make a profound difference in our own lives and the lives of those around us.

Ask yourself: What are you being challenged with right now? Where in your life have you become like the old wineskin, resistant to change? Is there an area where, as a community, we are struggling to accept a new situation or direction?

God is inviting us to be hopeful, patient, and open to new possibilities. He wants us to invite the Holy Spirit to help us recognize and face the challenges before us. God delights in enlightening our hearts and spirits, making us flexible enough to receive His new wine. The first step may not be easy, but once we take it, He will give us His heart and perspective, guiding us forward. As we trust Him, He will fill us afresh with His compassion, strength, and peace. God is faithful to His promises. But we must trust Him—and each other—to receive all that He has for us.

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, we hear a lot about being hopeful. But what is this hope? What is it rooted in? It is the same hope that sustained our forefathers in the Old Testament, the apostles and disciples in the New Testament, the early Christian community, and our own faith communities: the promises of a faithful and loving God. Hope is a gift from God that anchors us as we move toward our future home in heaven, where we will be fully united with the Lord.

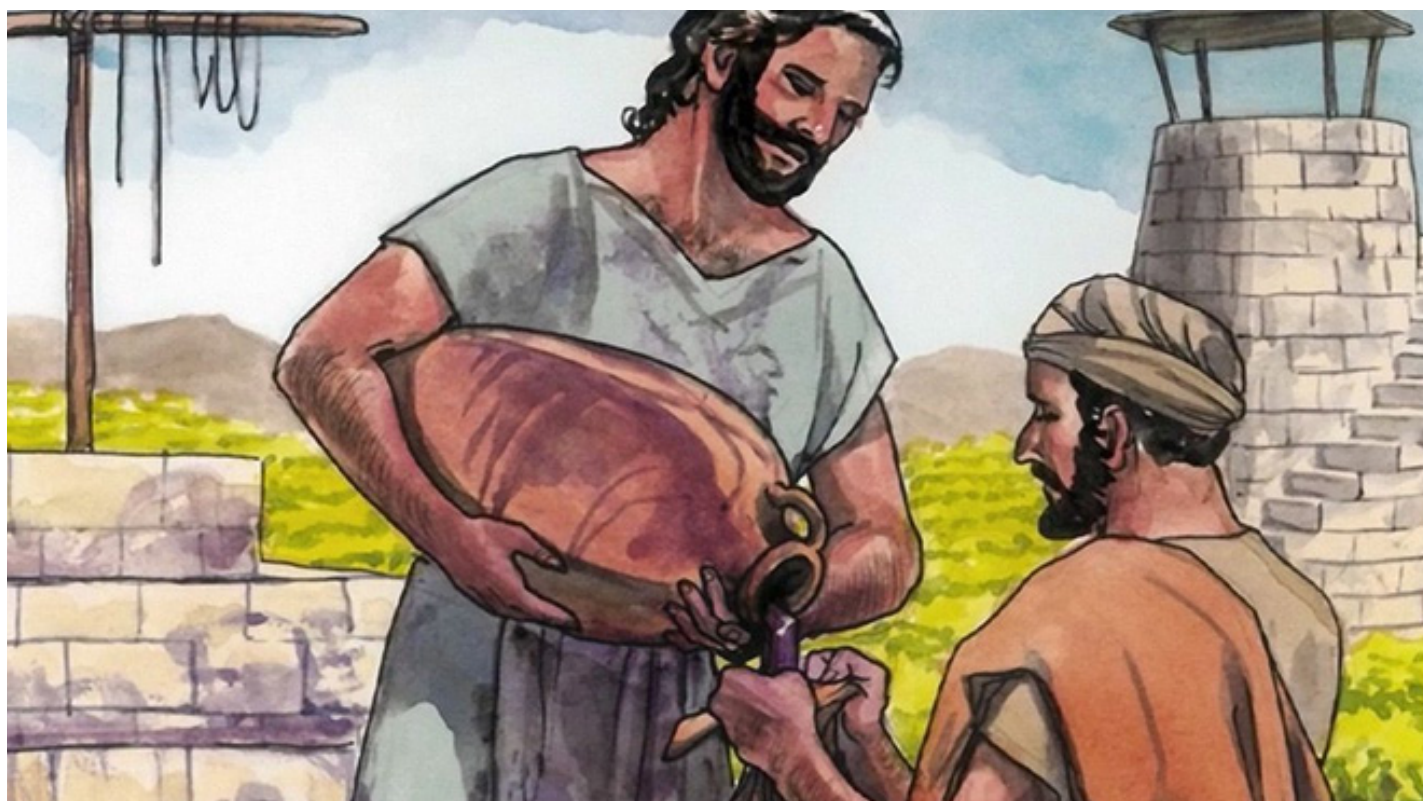
God's love is stable and unchanging. His love and abiding promises fill us with peace, keeping us calm even in the face of uncertainty. His hope anchors us in eternal, unchanging truths that renew us and draw us closer to Him—and to each other as brothers in community. When we share our hope with each other, then we are one in spirit and one in the Lord.

Storms may rage around us, and we may find ourselves stuck in places where we need a fresh outpouring of the Spirit to revive us. Whatever challenges we face, we must keep our hearts fixed on Jesus. Place your hope in His promises because His hope does not disappoint.

The new wineskin is ready to be filled, and the promises are true. Can we take the next step into the fullness of life that God has given us? Let us share this hope with one another. Let us be hope to each other. Our hope is rooted in Christ—the One who died, shed His Precious Blood, and rose again. This is the foundation of our faith. This is what we celebrate and proclaim. It is real, already accomplished in Christ.

May this hope take root in our hearts and spirits, transforming us and empowering us to live out the full life that God has intended for us. Let us keep the dream of St. Gaspar and Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini alive. Let us walk the path of hope and be new wineskins.

Fr. Luigino Santi CPPS



Hope in the Light of Faith

Dcn. Robert Sansone

Imagine a life without faith. Imagine living out your entire existence where all that matters is the visible world. Imagine a future where death is seen as the end. Now imagine enduring pain, suffering, and struggles without meaning. For those without faith, life can seem purposeless, and their struggles meaningless.

What values does secular society impress on us today? Society pushes autonomy as a legitimate virtue and indoctrinates dependence on self and worldly solutions. For those without faith the burden of life's challenges and the deeper existential questions of suffering and death may feel overwhelming because they must rely solely on their own limited understanding and the imperfect solutions offered by society, which can feel immensely insufficient. Without faith, there can be no hope in this world.

The book of Ecclesiastes, one of my favourite books in the Old Testament, is a treatise on the vanity of all things. Its main objective, while admitting the existence of a divine plan, is to explore the purpose and value of human life. Ecclesiastes offers the following worldly observations. Merit does not yield happiness, for it is often tried by suffering. Riches and pleasures do not avail. Existence is monotonous. Enjoyment is fleeting and vain. Life on this earth then is an enigma beyond human ability to solve. It is hopeless to even try. While Ecclesiastes concedes that there is an advantage for men to enjoy certain pleasures, lest they lapse into pessimism and despair, it also considers these indulgences vanity unless man returns due thanks to God,

who is the source of all things. It could be reasoned, therefore, that divine gratitude is the first of virtues that opens the door to hope.

Now imagine a life with faith. Imagine living your entire existence where all that matters is our ultimate heavenly home. Imagine faith in God who offers hope that suffering and struggles are not meaningless but rather part of a bigger story that includes redemption, healing, and an eternal reward. For those with faith, life has purpose, and their struggles have meaning. With faith, we have hope in this world.

For us, Jesus is the source of hope because he embodies all that God has promised through Scripture and salvation history. For Christians, Jesus' death and resurrection are the central events and the foundation of our hope. Jesus' victory over death assures us that death is not the end. This also gives us the hope that suffering will be overcome.

Another reason for hope lies in Jesus' promise at Pentecost. Jesus promises His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit who empowers, comforts, and guides all believers. We can rest assured that the presence of the Holy Spirit within the church gives us hope that we are not alone in our journey of faith. Strengthened by this, believers are offered hope in the face of a broken world and trust in something beyond our human limitations.

Therefore, remain in the light of faith and, by this faith, become a living testimony to the hope of the gospel.

Celebrating the Jubilee

WHILE many of us may not have the opportunity to travel to Rome and walk through the Holy Doors, we can still receive the abundant graces that the Lord wishes to shower upon us by walking through the ‘Holy Doors’ of our own diocesan cathedrals. The Pope has made the requirements easier to fulfill. After entering through these doors, we are asked to offer a prayer for the intention of the Pope, pray for the Pope weekly, make a good confession, and perform an act of charity. Here are some ways you can celebrate the Jubilee and become a sign of hope:

Pray for Our Provincial Council and Leadership Team Offer a prayer that they may be inspired by the Holy Spirit, filled with wisdom and courage to act justly.

Mass Intention for Peace Offer a Mass intention for world peace and peace in our own hearts. Let this prayer be a reminder that peace begins within us and radiates outward.

Seek Forgiveness Forgiveness is a powerful step in encountering God with complete trust and faith. Take this time to seek reconciliation with the Lord and forgive someone or a member of our Community who has hurt or

offended you. This act of mercy opens the door to God’s tender compassion and renewal.

Perform Works of Mercy Engage in either spiritual or corporal works of mercy, reaching out to others with love and care. Whether in small or big ways, these acts become tangible signs of hope to those around us.

All these simple actions are paths to growing in holiness. By offering our hope to others, we share the light of Christ. Reach out to someone who needs to witness this hope. The Lord will bless your efforts, rewarding you with graces and strengthening your hope.



The spirituality of the Precious Blood teaches us that true hope is born from the willingness to give of ourselves, even when it costs us dearly.

Signs of a Mature and Healthy Community

At a recent gathering of Provincials, a guest speaker shared some key “checkpoints” for identifying how individuals and communities can maintain healthy relationships with themselves and others.

Community A healthy community is one where members are comfortable engaging in both difficult and easy conversations. Can community members listen with empathy and understanding, whether to the challenges or joys experienced by those they live with?

Trust Trust within a community is built when members are open, honest, and feel safe with one another. It is about working and living together in mutual respect, as brothers who support one another.

Interdependence Living in close quarters, we need personal space, yet we also rely on each other for moral, spiritual, and fraternal support. Maintaining our individuality, pursuing personal interests, and nurturing friendships—both with one another and with laypeople—helps us maintain balance and gain perspective.

Interest A healthy community thrives on shared goals, visions, and ideas. Keeping the spirit of newness alive within the community helps foster engagement and motivation.

Prayer When the community makes time for daily prayer as a priority, it results in peace and understanding.

Cheerfulness A healthy individual and community can laugh at themselves without feeling undervalued. Humour and lightness of spirit contribute to a joyful and resilient community.

So, where are you and the local community in these "checkpoints"?

The Sacrifice of the Cross

The Power of Sacrifice embraces the Cross.
John 15:13 *No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

Reflection March is a time to meditate on the sacrificial love of Christ, who shed His blood for the redemption of humanity. As Pilgrims of Hope, we are called to participate in this sacrifice by offering our own lives in service to others. The spirituality of the Precious Blood teaches us that true hope is born from the willingness to give of ourselves, even when it costs us dearly.

Prayer Reflect on Christ's sacrifice and pray for the courage to offer your own life in love and service.



JOYOUS GATHERING AT ST. ROCH'S Most Rev. Santi, Rev. Laguartilla, Rev. Mnyagatwa, Rev. Doherty, Most Rev. Lupi (Moderator General of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood), Rev. Nobili, Rev. Hologa, and Rev. Abella at the appreciation dinner held at St. Roch's Parish Hall on February 8th.

Stream of Mercy

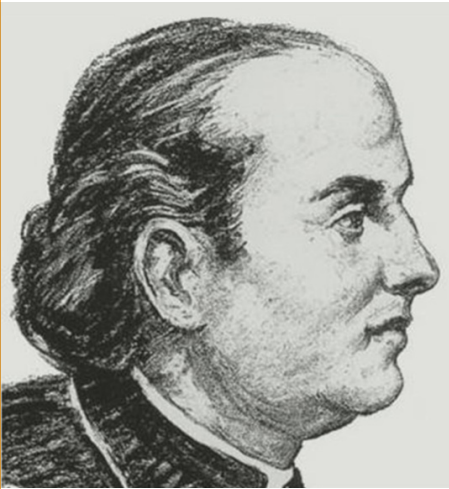
Fr. Gerardo Laguartilla, CPPS, is currently the parochial vicar at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Toronto. This large and active parish, with three elementary schools, numerous funerals, many baptisms, and weddings keeps him moving. As the parish's demographics have changed over the years and as the church is located on the corner of a major and busy intersection, Fr. Gerardo, along with Pastor Fr. Mario, remains attentive to the needs of the poor. 'Everyone is welcome', says Fr. Gerardo. Although tiring at times, his dedication and zeal to be present is life-giving. His spirit hope is renewed when he sees

people returning to the weekly Eucharist on Sundays and participating with excitement. Thank you, Fr. Gerardo!

Knights of Columbus St. Gaspar del Bufalo Council

An appreciation dinner was held to thank the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province, on February 8. The evening featured a delightful four-course meal, music, cultural dancing, and an opportunity for Fr. Alarey to share his talent. He was even encouraged to sing a third song as an encore.

Precious Blood Thoughts



St. Gaspar was deeply shaped and guided by the influence of Francesco Albertini, to the point where he felt compelled to establish a community of priests

dedicated to sharing and proclaiming the greatest treasure of Christianity: that we are saved through the shedding of Jesus's blood. With Jesus' blood, God renewed the covenant of love.

St. Gaspar understood this treasure as the profound love of God, which is most fully revealed in the Blood of Christ. This gift of love extends to every person, making everyone a precious, unique, and special creation—a gift from God that deserves to be respected and cherished.

St. Gaspar lived this out through his actions. He would often take food from his own table and share it with the poor. He devoted time, outside of his priestly duties, to visit the sick and dying at St. Galla—a place we would now call a hospice. He taught catechism to both children and adults and spoke out against the corruption and false societal values of his time.

He did all of this not out of obligation as a priest, but because he was deeply grateful and understood the value of Christ's blood. St. Gaspar also believed that we should see our lives in the world as treasures. Each of us is a “warehouse” of blessings from God—our individual talents, material possessions, and the gift of each new day, full of potential to love and serve. We also have the gift of forgiveness, the mercy of God, and the Eucharist—where Christ's Body and Blood nourish us to be faithful followers. These are the treasures God desires us to share generously.

Let us reflect on how God is calling us to be generous with our lives. How are we living the spirit of the Blood of Christ? Are we willing to spill our blood for others? Probably not in the literal sense, but we can still reach out to others in love and service. By sharing the treasures of our lives, we will reap abundantly—one hundredfold. Your life is a treasure. You are a gift meant to be given away. So, how can you share the precious gift that is your life?

Canonical Visitation



His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo warmly welcomed Most Rev. Emanuele Lupi and Most Rev. Luigino Santi.

The month of February was marked by constant movement for Moderator General, V. Rev. Emanuele Lupi, CPPS.

He visited every member, mission house, and residence within the Province. Having long wished to experience a true Canadian winter, he certainly did so! Enjoying the diverse Canadian cuisine brought him much joy—and a few extra pounds.

During his visit, he attended the Knights of Columbus Appreciation Dinner for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, as well as the commencement event for the Year of Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini. He also participated in a Mass celebrated by Bishop Robert Kasun. Throughout his time in Canada, the Moderator General met with His Eminence Cardinal Francis Leo, Bishop Gerard Bergie of St. Catharines, and Bishop Thomas Dowd of Sault Ste. Marie.

He also had the opportunity to visit USC members and celebrate Mass at each of our parishes. Additionally, he spent time with his cousin who resides in Toronto and had some leisure time to socialize and meet with the members of the Province.

DATES TO REMEMBER

DISTRICT MEETINGS

MARCH 25, 2025

Toronto District

MARCH 28

Niagara District
Provincial Assembly

JUNE 9 TO 13

Mt. Carmel Retreat Centre
Niagara Falls

WE CELEBRATE

MARCH 3

JOHN COLACINO
(Birthday)

MARCH 25

RONALD MAHON
(Ordination)

WE REMEMBER

MARCH 17

JOSEPH GENTILE
Requiescat in pace.

A Day of Faith and Fellowship

On February 23, the USC of the Atlantic Province hosted an Encounter and Pastoral Visitation by the Moderator General, V. Rev. Emanuele Lupi, CPPS, at St. Charles Borromeo Parish.

About 60 representatives from various parishes who share the spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus participated in the encounter, including St. Alphonsus, St. Rose of Lima, St. Charles, St. Eugene Chapel, the Precious Blood Prayer Group, and the USC core team headed by Fr. Gerardo Laguartilla, CPPS. Fr. Peter Nobili, CPPS, and Fr. Mario Cafarelli, CPPS, also participated in the event.



The encounter began with a warm welcome from Fr. Gerardo, followed by a simple lunch showcasing the cultural foods of the Union's members. Worship songs animated the members as they prayed the chaplet and litany of the Precious Blood.

Don Emanuele opened his talk by listening to the participants' reflections on what attracted them to the spirituality of the Precious Blood and how they experienced it in their own lives. It was an engaging and participative sharing session, deepening the USC's understanding of their identity as members of the Precious Blood family.

The gathering concluded with presentations from different groups to the Moderator General, final blessings, and birthday greetings to Don Emanuele.

Glorie Marasigan and Fr. Gerardo Laguartilla CPPS



Mass of Thanksgiving for the Newly Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini



Parishioners from various faith communities gathered on Saturday, February 15, at St. Charles Borromeo Church to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving in honor of the Beatification of Blessed

hall, with coffee, tea sandwiches, and cake stations set up by the dedicated members of the Precious Blood Prayer Group.

The Eucharistic celebration and reception offered a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and reflection on the legacy of Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini, serving as a beautiful reminder of the unity and devotion within the Precious Blood community.

Gino Marcuzzi

Don Giovanni Merlini.

The Solemn High Mass was concelebrated by Fr. Abella, Fr. Cafarelli, Fr. Doherty, Fr. Laguartilla, Fr. Nobili, Fr. Santiago, Most Rev. Santi, Most Rev. Lupi (Moderator General of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood), and His Excellency Bishop Robert Kasun, as the main celebrant.

The Holy Mass saw a strong turnout, with faithful and religious lay groups from St. Charles Borromeo, St. Alphonsus, and St. Roch Parishes coming together for this very special celebration.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Fr. Laguartilla for his efforts in coordinating the evening service to honor the newly Blessed.

Following the Mass, a well-attended social gathering unfolded in the parish



THE TRAVELING RELIC

Each parish has agreed to welcome a relic of Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini. During the stay at each parish, the relic will be venerated with a prayer service, culminating in a reflection at the Sunday weekend Masses.



APRIL 24 TO 27, 2025

St. Charles Borromeo Church, Toronto

JUNE 19 TO 22

St. Roch's Church, Toronto

AUGUST 16

Gaspar Mission House, Niagara Falls

SEPTEMBER 11 TO 14

St. Alphonsus Church, Toronto



The Precious Blood Family Magazine

is now available on the province's website:

preciousbloodatlantic.org. This special issue is dedicated to Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini. Spread the word and invite your family and friends to visit our website to read this unique edition.

To help grow our readership and expand our free subscription base, please provide the names and email addresses of individuals who you think would enjoy reading our magazine. This is a wonderful opportunity to share and spread the devotion and spirituality of the Precious Blood.

How To Live Hope

Fr. Jerome Hologa CPPS

Fr. Jerome Hologa shares a secret and practical way to live in HOPE.

Recognizing Signs of Hope

One of the greatest joys of priesthood is witnessing “God’s fingerprints” in everyday life—the small, often unnoticed signs of His love. A child’s laughter during baptism, an elderly parishioner’s quiet devotion at daily Mass, or a heartfelt confession of a returning soul—these moments remind me that God is always at work.

Too often, we fixate on the struggles of the Church or the noise of the world and overlook these signs of grace. But when we train our hearts to see them, we realize that hope is not absent; it simply requires attention.

Each day, I begin my day by looking at the art hanging on my bedroom wall that bears the words: “May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace as you trust in Him.” Words hold immense power, and as a priest, I have witnessed how words of hope can transform

hearts, lift burdens, and renew spirits. By beginning my day with such uplifting words, whether from Scripture, the Liturgy of the Hours, or the wisdom of saints, I set a

positive tone for the hours ahead. This morning ritual shapes my day as I prepare to celebrate Mass, visit the sick, or serve those in need.

This practice reminds me that hope is not merely a feeling, but a perspective—one that recognizes the grace and potential present in each new day. Hope flourishes when we take concrete steps



toward our goals and God’s mission, even if they seem small. In my ministry, I have seen hope in the simple yet profound acts of faith—when a parishioner takes the first step toward reconciliation, when a struggling family finds support through the generosity of the Church, or when young people commit to growing in their faith. The path of hope is not always grand; rather, it is made up of daily, purposeful movements toward God’s call. Whether it is deepening our spiritual life, serving the poor, or fostering peace in our communities, each step we take is a testament to hope.

At the end of each day, I reflect on one action I can take the following day to share the light of Christ with someone. This could be a phone call, a word of encouragement, or a simple act of service. This simple practice helps me stay focused on how I can bring hope to those I encounter.

Hope is not just optimism. Living a hopeful life does not mean ignoring challenges or pretending everything is perfect. It involves looking beyond current struggles to embrace the promise of God’s faithfulness. It is rooted in the unwavering truth of God’s love and providence. As a priest, I have walked alongside individuals in deep suffering—grieving families, the sick, and the lost—but what sustains us is the assurance that Christ is our anchor.

To remain steadfast in hope, we must continually return to the sacraments, to prayer, and to the living Word of God. When trials come, these spiritual anchors keep us grounded, reminding us that we are never alone.

I encourage you to develop a personal “hope anchor”—a spiritual habit that keeps you rooted in God’s promises. This could be a daily rosary, a nightly examen, or regular Eucharistic adoration.

WORDS OF THE FOUNDER

*Always carefully study
the great book of the Crucifix
and you will discover peace,
comfort, and encouragement
for every good work.*

*Let us take our response
in His divine wounds,
the source of every blessing.*

~ LETTER 3623 TO
LUIGIA DEL BUFALO

WORDS OF BLESSED DON GIOVANNI MERLINI

*Let us unite ourselves
more and more to God
with the most ardent desire
to be holy and wholly his.*

~ LETTER 26

Vocation Calendar

1

ALAREY ABELLA

2

MARIO CAFARELLI

3

BROTHER ANTHONY CANTERUCCI

4

RENÉ CERECEDO

5

JOHN COLACINO

6

SAMUEL D'ANGELO

7

BRENDAN DOHERTY

8

JOSEPH GRASSO

9

JEROME HOLOGA

10

DOMINIC JUNG

11

GERARDO LAGUARTILLA

12

GARY LUIZ

13

RON MAHON

14

MICHAEL MATEYK

15

WILLIAM MNYAGATWA

16

PETER NOBILI

17

LUI SANTI

18

GERMÁN SANTIAGO

19

PHILLIP SMITH

20

RON WIECEK

21

USC MEMBERS

22

DECEASED CPPS MEMBERS

23

OUR BENEFACTORS

24

OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

25

THE SICK

26

OUR BISHOPS

27

POPE FRANCIS

28

CANCER PATIENTS AND
THEIR CAREGIVERS

29

THE LONELY

30

THE FORGOTTEN

31

YOUR PERSONAL INTENTION

Prayer to Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini



*ETERNAL FATHER,
I thank you for redeeming me,
with the most Precious Blood
of Jesus Christ, your Son.*

*In communion with the Holy Spirit,
I ask You to glorify
Blessed Don Giovanni Merlini,
apostle of the Blood of the Lamb,
builder of peace, and messenger of mercy.*

*Through his intercession,
grant me the grace I desire
to be able to serve You every day of my life
and to give thanks to Your Holy Name.*

*I ask this through Christ,
your Son, our Teacher and Lord.
Amen.*