

## The Poor are Calling Us

We are called to be faithful to our charism and to the spirit of our founders, while responding to the signs and needs of the times in which we live. Put another way, we are called to BE where GOD wants us to be. Our challenge is to follow Jesus and to be obedient to his call in changing historical and cultural contexts. As people who bear the name of the Precious Blood we are being called by the Blood of Jesus. Can we let ourselves be led by the poor, by the hungry and the outcasts of society? We are called to make visible God's presence among them. Fear, shame and blame can immobilize us. We take refuge in the unknown, in our establish world.

Yet, as missionary communities we are called to live as a pilgrim people, to travel light, to always have the mental disposition of "letting go" and to travel on whenever God calls us or whenever the signs of the times beckon a response from us. The Blood of Jesus calls us to witness to his presence, to be living arks, reminding the outcasts and the downtrodden that God's love is unfailing and that they are never alone. God journeys with them. Our Pilgrim God wishes to be with the suffering, with those pushed out to the fringes of society and with those whose lives are threatened showing his love and concern to them, through our missionary presence. We walk with the people to show them that their pilgrimage isn't just a wandering without a destiny, but a road which others have already walked. We will be a Sign for them. We are members of the new alliance, sealed in the Blood of the Lamb!

We are called to be Good Samaritans in our world today, becoming brothers and sisters to those in need, leaving when called our established and known worlds, our routines, our plans, sometimes our own cultures of origin, in order to be led to where the Blood is calling us to be.

St. Gaspar is a model for us in this important aspect of missionary spirituality. He let go of his long-time desire to become a Jesuit and a foreign missionary like his patron, St. Francis Xavier. He overcame his poor health, his love for cleanliness, in order to make long and tiring journeys. He left his beloved Rome and all his apostolic activities there in order to crisscross up and down the Papal States, searching out the despised and the needy of his times. He lived the mystique of "exodus." A mystique which never let him become installed in his dear and cherished Giano. He was a true missionary and our model.

To be a missionary today demands of us to be ever ready to hear the voice of the Blood, calling us to a journey of solidarity and of compassion, thus recovering our missionary charism.

*(Fr. Barry Fischer, C.P.P.S., Along the Road Marked by Blood, C.P.P.S. Resource Book # 9, The Messenger Press, Carthagena, Ohio, 1992, pp. 11-17)*