



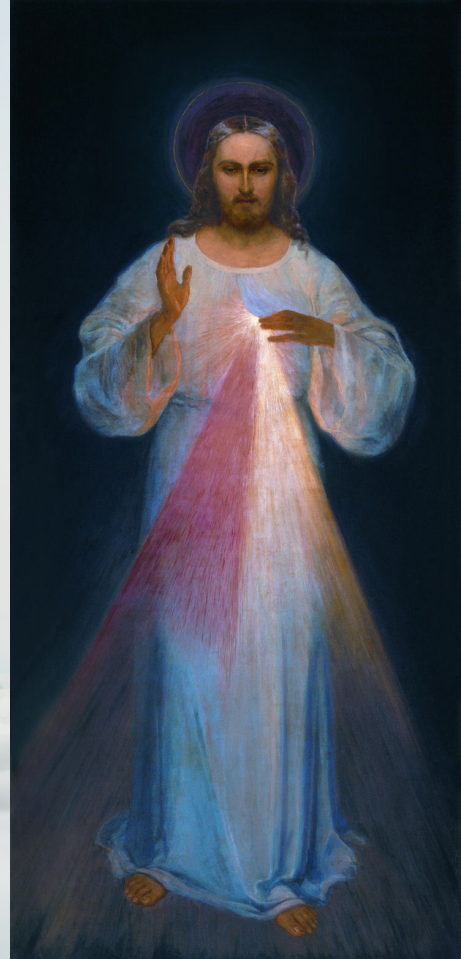
Holy Apostles
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INTO THE DEEP

Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies Newsletter

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SUMMER
SEMESTER 2021

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

BY DR. J. MARIANNE SIEGMUND

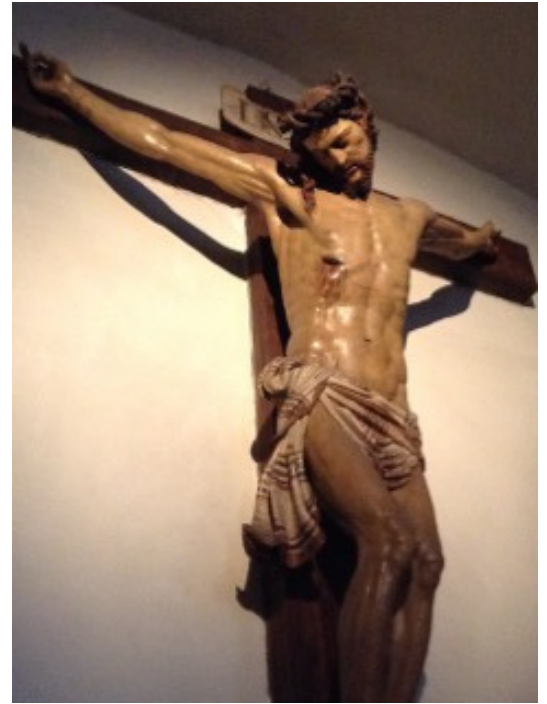
What does the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ have to do with the New Evangelization? At first, it might seem as if the two concepts are unrelated. In truth, however, the Blood of Christ is the central means by which we proclaim Him and show to others the Face of our loving Father in Heaven. He gives us the grace. Consequentially, Christ's Blood has everything to do with the New Evangelization.

The Precious Blood of Jesus Christ is central to the New Evangelization because It sanctifies us and makes us holy (cf. 1 John 1:7). Refreshed each week (and daily, if possible) by the Sacred Body and Blood of Jesus Christ at Mass, we are "brought near" to the Father's Heart "by the Blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13). The Holy Eucharist gives us the grace and strength to follow the Commandments and to live in His love. Since love is the "fulfillment of the law," our practice of charity invites others to see Christ in us (Romans 13:8). Allowing Jesus to make Himself visible in us exemplifies both holiness and the New Evangelization. As Saint John Paul II explains, holiness is "a message that convinces without the need for words; [it] is the living reflection of the face of Christ," whom we are to proclaim (John Paul II, Novo Millennio Ineunte #7).

There is another reason why the Precious Blood of Jesus is the means by which we proclaim Him and show the Father's love to others. That reason concerns the fact that we marvel at the love of God shown forth in Christ's salvific death on the Cross. Both aspects of that last sentence must be foremost in our hearts and minds: the love of God shown to us on Calvary and our redemption won through His Blood.

Since the Blood of Christ is the lynchpin of the New Evangelization, let us ponder the love of God and the redemptive death of Christ. As Saint Thomas teaches, God's first motive for the Passion is to show us how much He loves us (Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae III, 46, a. 3). When we "know and believe" in God's love for us, we respond to that love (1 John 4:8, 16). Imbued with the love of God, we are made holy in His Blood (cf. 1 John 1:7). Because the Blood of Jesus sanctifies us and makes us holy, we are able to show Christ to others and to "make His Face shine ... before the generations of the new millennium" (John Paul II, Novo Millennio Ineunte #16).

The month of July is traditionally dedicated to the Most Precious Blood of Jesus. Relying upon Christ's Blood and contemplating It, let us proclaim Him by believing in His love for us and by rejoicing in that love (1 John 4:8, 16).



Crucifix, Basilica of Santa Prassede; Rome, Italy; Photo by J. M. Siegmund; All rights reserved.

"To Him who loves us and freed us from our sins by His Blood" be all praise, honor and thanksgiving, now and forever (Revelation 1:5)!



Thank you, Fr. Edward Przygocki, MSA, for serving as Provincial! Your many years of service to Christ and His Church are an inspiration to all of us!

AM I A MESSENGER OF MERCY OR OF JUDGMENT?

**By Abune Menghestiab Tesfamariam,
Archbishop of Asmara, Eritrea**

When the Lenten Season was about to begin this year I wondered what message I was going to prepare for the pastoral agents in my Archeparchy of Asmara, Eritrea. While doing my spiritual reading and reflection I bumped into the amazing story of the prophet Jonah (in Eritrean language it is Yonas), one of the Minor Prophets in the Old Testament.

I thought his story would be an inspiring one that would encourage our bishops, priests, nuns, catechists and lay leaders, to reflect upon the meaning of Lent vis-à-vis their multi-faceted ministries in the Eparchies, parishes, religious houses and chapels.

The Book of Jonah has only four chapters. First of all, it is God who takes the initiative and calls Jonah to be His messenger to the big and sinful city of Nineveh. But Jonah is scared and wants to run away to the furthest end of the world, which, at that time, was Tarshish in Spain. Imagine that God wanted him to go to the East, to Nineveh in Mesopotamia, but he chose to go West—in the exact opposite direction. As he reached Joppa on the Mediterranean coast, he finds a ship directed to Spain and immediately embarks on it. As they sail, a very strong storm threatens to sink the ship into the sea. The crew is very scared and starts to wonder who may be the culprit who brought on this misfortune.

Each person who does not want to obey the Lord finds his/her own Tarshish, in which to escape. We should ask ourselves what are our excuses. How do we dodge God's will in our daily life? At the same time, we have to be convinced that we cannot run away from God's presence. In this case, Psalm 139 is the best prayer to pick in order to start a deeper personal reflection. "O Lord, You have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down, and You are acquainted with all my ways" (Ps. 139:1-3). No one can hide or run away from the Lord!

Jonah, however, is honest enough to admit his disobedience to the Lord. He also told the sailors that he was a Hebrew, and that he was fleeing from the presence of "the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land" (Jon. 1:9). The sailors asked him: "what shall we do with you that the sea may quiet down for us"? His reply was: "Take me up and throw me into the sea, then the sea will quiet down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you" (Jon. 1:12).

Here we see both Jonah and the other sailors to be good and honest people.



A 78-year old farmer in Hebo (Southern region of Eritrea), who spent seven years constructing the terraces by himself without machinery; Photo by Yonas Asfaha; All rights reserved.

The sailors did their best not to throw Jonah into the sea but they were unable because the storm was too great. Jonah also did not want to hurt the other sailors because of his guilt. In fact Jonah's honesty and transparency brought the sailors to know and fear the Lord, the God of Israel. Before throwing Jonah to the sea "they cried to the Lord 'we beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not on us innocent blood; for thou, O Lord, has done as it pleased thee'" (Jon. 1:14). Their humane attitude towards Jonah and their practical fear of God saved them from perishing in the storm.

God, of course, had His own plans for the prophet. "And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" (Jon. 1:17). Then, in chapter two vv.2-9, we find the wonderful prayer of Jonah from the belly of the fish. Hence, the God who always hears the cry of the true penitent "spoke to the fish, and it

vomited out Jonah upon the dry land” (Jon. 2:10). At times the Lord uses drastic means to call us to conversion, like he did with Jonah and St. Paul on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9:1-19). However, we should not push the Lord to such extremes because we may not always be “vomited out to the dry land”!

“Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time saying: ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you” (Jon. 3:1-2). After such a shocking experience the prophet is ready to go and do what the Lord asked him to do. However, the message he transmitted is more a message of judgment rather than a call to penitence and reconciliation. “Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he cried. ‘Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown”” (Jon 3:4). Yes he transmitted the stern message literally, but without compassionate love.

The people of Nineveh, to Jonah’s great disbelief, “believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.” Even their king “arose from the throne, removed his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes” (Jon. 3:6). Even the animals were made to participate in the fast! Seeing their wholehearted repentance, God “repented of the evil He had said He would do to them and He did not do it” (Jon. 3:10). God cannot resist “repenting” in front of an authentic contrition. In fact, “The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God you will not despise” (Ps.51:17) says the psalmist. If he is true to his mission, the messenger cannot and should not try in any way to sway God’s deed. It is very important to become constantly aware of the fact that any effort to manipulate God’s response to human prayer or activity is futile. God is all knowing, all seeing, all powerful, all embracing and, He does what He wills, how He wills, when He wills and to whom He wills. This is why St. Paul affirms so resolutely, “Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:11).



A farmer women with a cow in front of a traditional Agudo house; Lamza, Central Region of Eritrea; Photo by Yonas Asfaha; All rights reserved.



Baboons in the Eastern Escarpments (Dirfo), Central Region of the Northern Red Sea area in Eritrea; Photo by Yonas Asfaha; All rights reserved.

In any case, the total repentance of the people of Nineveh and of the Lord “displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry. And he prayed to the Lord and said: ‘I pray Thee, Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish, for I knew that Thou are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repentest of evil” (Jon. 4:1).

On the one hand, it is wonderful to see the prophet speak so highly of God. On the other hand, it seems Jonah did not believe that the Ninevites were going to repent and return wholeheartedly to the Lord. Does that sound familiar in our pastoral ministry?

So often we preach the word of the Lord, but we ourselves are not really convinced that the people will take it seriously.

We forget that God's Word has its own independent power. "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I intend and prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Is. 55:10-11).

It seems Jonah did not grasp the meaning of "it shall accomplish that which I intend and prosper in the thing for which I sent it." God asks his messengers to do just that; namely, to transmit faithfully the message they have received. The outcome of the transmission belongs to the Lord and not to the messenger! This is why Jesus admonished us, "So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say 'We are unworthy servants, we have only done what was our duty'" (Lk. 17:10). "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). (The second part of this article will be continued in the Fall 2021 issue of *Into the Deep*).



Male ostrich in the wild; Red Sea (Engel), Northern Red Sea region; Photo by Yonas Asfaha; All rights reserved.

MR. AND MRS. KATHY AND MIKE BRINDA

celebrated their 46th Wedding Anniversary on April 19, 2021. They are pictured with four of their five grandchildren. (From left to right: Luke, Mia, Sheaden, and Dakota. Little baby Ashton is on the way, and will be born soon!) Congratulations, Brindas! What beautiful grandchildren!



Congratulations to 2016 Holy Apostles College and Seminary MAPS graduate, Mr. Michael Brinda, who is teaching with Tepeyac Leadership Initiative! Bishop Thomas Olmsted of the Diocese of Phoenix wrote an Apostolic Exhortation, "Into the Breach", and Professor Brinda presented one aspect of this document to the students enrolled at Tepeyac: men becoming what they are called to be for their families and men leading other men to Christ. Congratulations, Professor Brinda, and keep teaching!



Professor Mike Brinda is teaching second year seminarians Parish Management and Operations at Mundelein Seminary in Illinois.

He published a book entitled *Parish Management and Operations: The Buck Stops Here*. Congratulations, Prof. Brinda!

CONGRATULATIONS!



Interior of the Basilica of Santa Prassede, Rome, Italy; Photo By Livioandronico2013 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=41182546>



Saint Praxedes (d. 165; feast July 21) reverently depositing the relics of the martyrs;; Johannes Vermeer - Mystudios.com; Public Domain

MEET MR. JOSEPH RAMOS

At long last, I have earned my MA in Theology. I had been plugging away at my studies one on-line course at a time, while the rest of my life was busy with family and work.

I came to my degree program late in my career, and much of what I learned, I wish I had known earlier in life. One such learning is this: get your operating principles right in order to get your practices right. Our studies are ultimately about getting our principles right to live rightly and for the right practice of our MAPS apostolates. As will be evident, given my background, I wanted to acquire such principles to inform my existing career and apostolate.

I was, for many years, a psychotherapist/counselor, life coach, dispute mediator, and trainer. My vocation was to help people grapple with difficult, often painful, personal and relationship issues to enable them to move forward in life with healing and meaning. I later crossed over into organizational life by adapting my knowledge of human behavior and related skills to issues of organizational leadership, behavior, conflict, and change. Until my recent retirement, I provided executive coaching, among other services, and directed leadership and organization development for two medical centers.

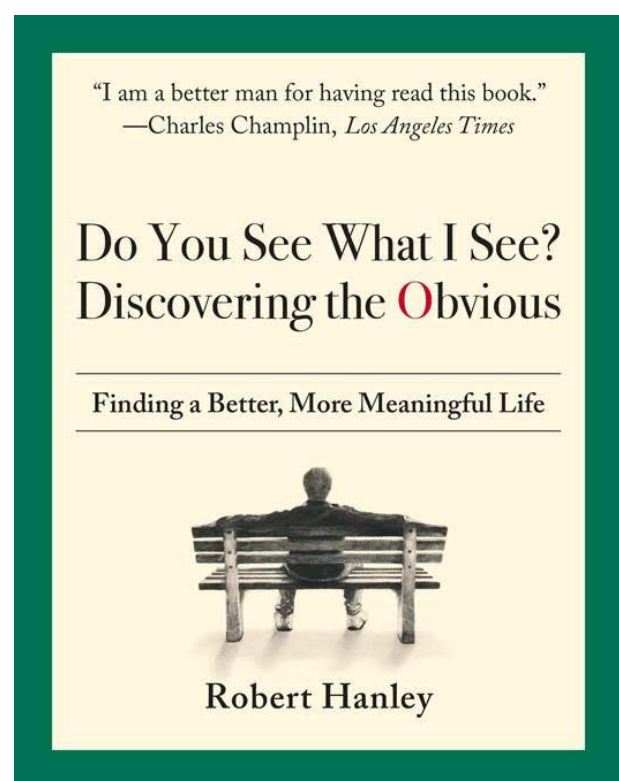
In each domain, when working with the inner life of a patient/client, whether in counseling or coaching, I discovered the Natural Law to be a valuable model for understanding the integrity of the human person and assessing one's means and goals. I had earlier found the secular psychological theories, which informed my profession, to be, in themselves, very limited for their purposes. I came to understand why this was so, when my studies contrasted the natural law with the subjective relativism of Enlightenment thought; most contemporary theories are grounded in the latter, and without an objective understanding of the human person. Through the lens of the Natural Law, however, patients/clients and their circumstances can be conceptualized with meaning to inform one's interventions.

If the Natural Law has implications for counseling and coaching, so does it have spiritual implications for the practice of spiritual direction. I am also a professed member of the Order of Discalced Carmelites Secular, a religious order of lay people in union with the orders of

Discalced Carmelite priests and nuns. I was previously Formator of our community's novices, and will likely be called to this apostolate again. In addition to teaching, this role naturally entails offering spiritual direction, as needed. Although I can adapt my secular listening and coaching skills for this purpose, my understanding and interventions need to be guided by principles of spiritual theology. I turn naturally to the great Carmelite mystic, St. John of the Cross, who coaches spiritual directors in how to proceed in this practice, and the pitfalls to avoid. Nonetheless, the spiritual principles that inform his praxis can be elusive, without knowing their underlying presumptions.

My coursework was, thankfully, permeated with the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas. Through him, it dawned on me that St. John of the Cross' mystical theology presupposes the teachings of Aquinas. This realization opened my eyes to many nuances in John of the Cross' teachings that I had not fully grasped previously, but which I can now apply in spiritual direction. I am grateful for my Master of Arts degree in theology, and with this realization, I am now thinking about pursuing the MAPS degree in Spiritual Direction.

Pope St. John Paul II calls us, as Catholics, to be influencers in the world. In *Lumen Gentium*, he teaches that, by virtue of our baptism into Christ, we are called to the praxis of spreading the Gospel, and, thus, to order the world to Christ's kingship. With this intention in mind, we, in our respective MAPS studies and apostolates, are in a good position to integrate our informed faith into our own lives, and to aid others in doing so, one moral decision at a time, and one conversation at a time. -Joseph Ramos



THE FIRESIDE FELLOWSHIP

Holy Apostles College and Seminary has partnered with Catholic actor and author, Robert Hanley, who has created a ministry called The Fireside Fellowship, a spiritually-based supplement to his book [Do You See What I See? Discovering the Obvious](#), which has been praised by His Eminence, Timothy Cardinal Dolan, His Eminence, Wilton Cardinal Gregory and other bishops as well as major media outlets.

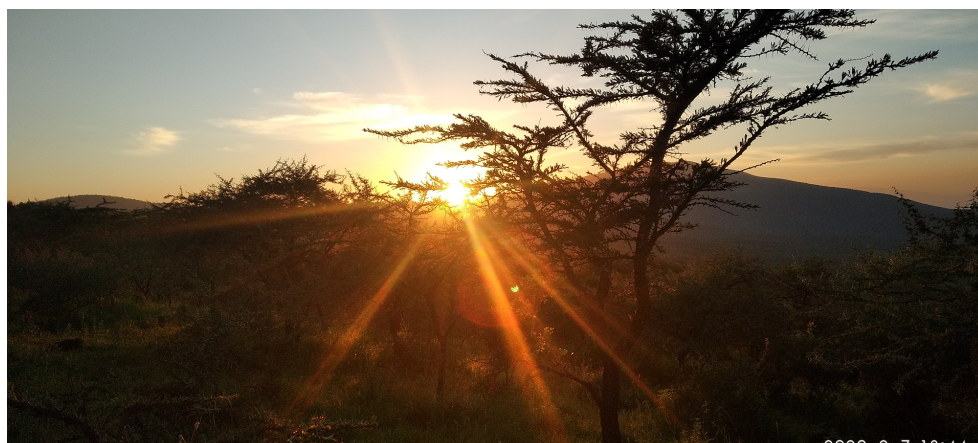
To find out more information about [The Fireside Fellowship](#) and how you can participate, visit us online!

WCAT Radio, founded by Dr. Sebastian Mahfood, OP, Dr. Ronda Chervin, and Mr. Bob Olson in the fall of 2016, is entering its second full-year as a 501(c)(3), federally tax exempt, not-for-profit organization. Available online at <https://www.wcatradio.com>, the station has raised over the past two years over \$65,000 in support of pro-life missionary work in Tanzania, COVID-19 relief efforts in Italy for migrants and refugees, disaster relief for the elderly and infirm in Lebanon following the August 2020 explosion in Beirut, and women's studies workshops in Nigeria and Pakistan.

It has spearheaded the establishment of LIFE Runners (<https://www.liferunners.org>) in Africa, which now has over 500 members across 9 countries, including Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda. Additionally, the station website hosts dozens of Catholic voices explaining the Catholic faith to various audiences. Anyone interested in being interviewed about life and ministry within the Church, please contact Dr. Sebastian Mahfood, OP, at mahfood@wcatradio.com



The Great Rift Valley, Tanzania where creatures such as giraffes, wildebeest and lions make their home. Tourists view the migration of thousands wildebeest from a helicopter. Photo by Yonas Asfaha; All rights reserved.



Sunset in Massai lands, Arusha, Tanzania; Photo by Yonas Asfaha; All rights reserved. The Massai people herd hundreds of livestock and so lions attack the herd without getting noticed. To defend against lions and other predators, they use indigenous leaves from the trees, which have a special odor. The Massai put the leaves under their arm pits, wait for about thirty minutes, and then drop the leaves behind them on the road. If lions are following them, they come to sniff the leaves. The smell of the leaves makes them cry and so they make noise. When the people hear that noise, they know that lions are behind them and so they scare them away.

Holy Apostles College and Seminary celebrates in the July 31

commencement the graduation of its first four Tanzanian students from its graduate programs.

The graduates are Fr. Desderius Katabaro (MAPS), Fr. Isdory

Mhagallah (MAPS), Fr.

Thomas Mambo (MA/Theology), and Fr.

Andrew Mlele Mtaki (MA/Philosophy). These

four Tanzanian priests are members of the curia

of the Archdiocese of Tabora in Western

Tanzania, East Africa, who entered their

programs on full tuition scholarship from Holy

Apostles with a generous book allowance provided

by the Burke Foundation in the 2018-2019

academic year. Their successful completion of

their programs is a gift to the Church in Tanzania,

in Africa, and in all of the world.

Congratulations, Fathers!



"ITE AD IOSEPH"

"GO TO JOSEPH!"

(GENESIS 41.55)

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YEAR OF SAINT JOSEPH



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR [MAPS](#) STUDENTS AND ALUMNI!

Please send comments or submissions to Dr. Siegmund at
msiegmund@holyapostles.edu



Dr. Sebastian Mahfood, OP, Vice President of
External Affairs, with MAPS graduate,
Professor Michael Brinda