

Dear Celina Cluster Parishioner,

It is with sadness and yet a profound sense of gratitude that we come to the end of my time as Pastor of the Celina Cluster and more significant, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood returning the pastoral care of the Celina Cluster back to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Our Precious Blood community has been blest serving each of our Celina Cluster parishes since the very beginning; IC since 1864, OLG since 1904 and St. Teresa since 1937.

It has been a long and fruitful journey in Celina beginning in 1864 with those four Catholic families in the village who came together every two weeks in the home of Daniel Mahoney to attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered by Fr. Bernard Dickman, C.P.P.S. The first IC School was built in 1878. Since then our IC parish has had 29 pastors, 36 associate pastors, three religious brothers, two deacons and that is not counting seminarians who taught for many years. There have been 225 nuns who have given over 877 years of service and there have been an estimated 10,000 parishioners. We have had two churches, 6 schools, 1 rectory and 3 large bells. We have grown to 66 ministry opportunities and our IC Church continues to be an icon of faith that not only defines our parish family but also the landscape and heart of the Celina community.

Our Lady of Guadalupe began as a part of St. Sebastian but then built it's own church celebrating their dedication Ash Wednesday, 1904 with Fr. Seraphim Kunkler, C.P.P.S. and Fr. Cosmas Seeberger, C.P.P.S. presiding. The First Mass was celebrated the next day, February 27, 1904. Since then, OLG has had 30 pastors, in the early days living at St. Charles, one religious brother, numerous seminarians, two deacons and several Precious Blood sisters. There have been three churches, one teacher house, one rectory and two bells named St. Michael and St. Agatha still housed in the current bell tower. OLG offers 45 ministry opportunities and serves families who have been parishioners for generations and vacationers who enjoy respite along Grand Lake St. Marys.

It was Fr. Roman Schwieterman, C.P.P.S., a son of OLG parish, who first conceived the idea of a mission church in Rockford when he was pastor of St. Mary Church in an Irish Settlement near Geneva, IN. The first church was dedicated May 4, 1937 and the first Mass celebrated by Fr. Roman Schwieterman, C.P.P.S., May 9, 1937. With a growing congregation and many young families, the former Otterbein Church of the Brethren on SR 707 was purchased and a first Mass celebrated June 21, 2009 by Most Rev. Dennis Schnurr and Fr. Tom Brenberger, C.P.P.S.. St. Teresa has had 26 pastors, in the early days living at St. Charles, one religious brother, one seminarian, two deacons and 12 Precious Blood sisters. St. Teresa offers 40 ministry opportunities and continues to be a growing community of faith with many children.

While the number of Precious Blood pastors and religious over the years can be counted, what is incalculable are the number of Masses and sacraments that have been celebrated, the faith and ministry that has been shared and the lives that have been transformed by God's goodness, generosity and gift of ever faithful love.

On behalf of our Provincial leadership and all the Missionaries and Sisters of the Precious Blood who have served each of our Celina Cluster parishes, I offer praise and thanksgiving to God for all the blessings that have been received and shared. While there have been struggles, challenges and hardships along the way, I would dare to say the blessings, joy and gratitude far outweigh any hardship or struggles.

As our Precious Blood community takes leave of IC, OLG and St. Teresa, be assured that each of you will always be in our hearts and in our prayers. We ask that you remember and pray for us as well. Our lives, ministry and service have been enriched by our time with you, we pray that we may have enriched yours as well. Blessings and prayers, Fr. Ken