

## **Precious Blood Spirituality is Lived**

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Over the past few years, I have shared my reflections on the spirituality of the Precious Blood a number of times, here in the US and in Vietnam. One thing all of my reflections contain are stories. I could write about the spirituality of the Precious Blood in some abstract, theoretical way, or I could just tell stories of how I've experienced the power of the Blood of Christ in my own life. That's where the spirituality lives – in our own lives.

Looking back, I would say that I first experienced Precious Blood spirituality in 1968, long before the idea of that spirituality was ever voiced. I experienced it when a missionary of the Precious Blood and a sister of the Precious Blood treated me with kindness. I had spent two school years and a summer in third grade. I was considered by most of the people in my life as a failure. Then my family moved to a new neighborhood, a new parish and a new school. And for the first time in a number of years, I was not treated as a failure, as someone who would never amount to anything. Their hospitality, generosity, kindness all added up and showed me what the power of the Blood of Christ could do. Of course, at the time, I would never have articulated it that way. But Sr. Anita and Fr. Pat showed me what it meant to be one of those “who had survived a period of great distress” and “had washed their robes in the blood of the lamb.”

Since then, I've seen Precious Blood spirituality at work when members of the community who chose to separate themselves from the community for one reason or another were welcomed back. When members of the community reached out to those who had become “far off” and “brought them back” through the blood of Christ.

I've seen the power of the Blood of Christ at work in people who were divorced, who had been hurt terribly by their former spouses, were able to forgive the one who had hurt them and were even able to love them again, though in a different way.

When I was a pastor of a parish formed by the closing and merger of four parishes in Cincinnati, I saw the power of the Blood at work building a new community, healing wounds that were deep and bring people together.

I could go on and on, but I'll let you reflect on some of your own experiences and how the power of the Blood of Christ has been at work in your life.