

CAVocation Voices A



Name - Dennis Chriszt, C.P.P.S.

Congregation - Missionaries of the Precious Blood

How long in Vocation Ministry - I served as director of vocation ministry from 1998-2002. I am currently serving as director of advanced formation for the second time (2016-present)

Birthplace: Cleveland, Ohio

Favorite Pastime / Hobby: I love to cook, and one of my favorite things to make is an old family tradition - chicken paprikash. I also love to travel and visit my community around the world. I love when those I visit share some of their favorite places in their home countries.

I also love live theatre and going to classical music concerts.

What book is currently on your bedside table? Building a Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community Can Enter into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion, and Sensitivity, James Martin, SJ (*Members of my family, as well as people I've ministered with are part of the LGBT community.*) I also love to read mysteries. I like to figure things out before I get to the end of the book, but continue to read on to see if I'm right. (*Sometimes I actually am right.*)

Favorite Movie: Star Wars - the whole series

Favorite flavor of ice cream: Butter Pecan

Favorite Vacation Spot: The bottom of the Grand Canyon

I've always wanted to visit: The ruins under St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, Italy

My favorite thing about being a religious Sister/Brother/Priest: No matter where I've been or what ministry I've been involved in, I've been blessed. I've been blessed to visit my community in Guatemala, Peru, Tanzania, Vietnam, Austria, Canada, Italy, Spain, and numerous places around the US - sharing the spirituality of the Precious Blood with thousands of people.

I receive the most joy from: I've worked with men joining the Missionaries of the Precious Blood for almost 20 years - though not all at once or at one stage of the formation program. I get great joy for seeing them complete the process and seeing what they're doing years later. As I write this, I'm preparing to visit one of the first young men I worked with when he was in formation. Today, he is the director of our mission in Vietnam, where I will be sharing some of my reflections on the spirituality of the Precious Blood.

Why be a religious today: It's a great way to experience God's blessings. There are so many experiences I never imagined having when I entered my community. The same will happen to anyone who does so. It is far more rewarding than anyone could imagine.

Previous ministries: Associate Pastor in two parishes in Whiting, IN and Orlando, FL, Formation Director, Vocation Director, Director of Special Formation (our version of noviate), Preacher of Parish Missions and Retreats, Theology teacher at what is now Jordan University in Morogoro, Tanzania, Pastor of a African American parish in Cincinnati, OH. I've also trained people in the ministry of Christian Initiation of Adults.

What are you passionate about? I'm passionate about sharing my faith in God's great mercy - especially as embodied in the spirituality of the Precious Blood. I want others to know the joy I've experienced in knowing that mercy in my own life.

How do you relax? The best way for me to relax is to spend time with friends and family, just being together with members of my community and listening to their stories and sharing some of mine relaxes me, too.

List one BEST PRACTICE you'd like to share with your colleagues.

Many young people today seem to believe that they are not good enough to serve God. To tell the truth, I'm not worthy either. The story of Jesus Christ reminds us that we have all been made "good enough for God" by his life, death, and resurrection. We have all been washed in the blood of the Lamb, saved by God's grace, and if we believe this and proclaim it clearly, those who can't imagine being called by God or being good enough to serve God, might just become able to hear God's call in their lives no matter what their vocation.