

MISSION EXCELLENCE

Recognizing Those Who Promote the Passionist Charism



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I made my first trip up the hill to Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center (MDPRC) with my fiancé and her parents in June 1975 to attend Mater Dolorosa's Annual Fiesta. This was my first introduction to the Passionists and, looking back, it was a critical spark in my spiritual journey as a lay Passionist.

Jane and I married in 1978. It was a given that I would join my wife's father and brothers and attend my first Men's Retreat as soon as the United States Navy would cooperate with my schedule.

Fast forward a few years. I'm no longer an active duty Naval Officer. I had started a financial services business in Burbank, CA and my father-in-law had already introduced me to Fr. Steven Mudd, C.P., who was the Retreat Director at MDPRC at the time. After a couple

of conversations with Fr. Steve, I agreed to become a volunteer at the retreat center, giving of my time, talent and treasure to help grow the mission of the Passionists in Southern California.

It was during these early years that I started to study and apply the charism of the Passionists in my daily life. I was fascinated by the Passionist mission...of their preaching and collaborative ministry. As I read and interacted with a growing number of Passionist Priests and Brothers who were becoming my friends, their shared goal of keeping alive the love of Jesus Crucified as seen in His Sacred Passion became a part of me.

My love for the mission of the Passionists has grown over the past four decades, as has my lay activities with MDRC and the other retreat centers in the Holy Cross Province. I have been blessed to serve on the Board, and I have helped the Province when my skills and background were the right fit for what was needed.

My biggest gift learned at the foot of the cross is the gift of gratitude. Gratitude swells each time I think of God choosing Mary to be the Mother of His son and for Mary saying yes!

As so often happens in life, the unexpected occurs. In late 2015 I underwent prostate cancer surgery. Learning to be grateful for every single thing that occurs second by second, minute by minute, hour by hour was the gift that helped me survive 16 days in ICU and 20 days in the hospital after a "text book" prostate cancer surgery went awry in December 2015. Having gratitude for the immense blessings in my life became the focal point of my prayers as my body began to shut down while fighting off an incredible infection and organ shut-down caused by post-op complications.

With grace received through the sacraments, my prayers focused on a loving God who I was truly able to talk to and who spoke to me through His Spirit as I focused my thoughts on the memory of the Passion and the goodness of Jesus and His love for me. In addition, my mental vision was of the Blessed Mother looking to her Son nailed to His cross as I prayed and asked for Mary's intercession to her Son and His help in healing me.

It is with the deepest gratitude that I thank the Lord for my family and Passionist friends I have journeyed with in my life. I'm very blessed to have the friends He has given me in faith.

In closing, "May the Passion of Jesus Christ be always in our hearts!" God bless you.

Holy Cross Province - Office of Mission Effectiveness

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