

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Winter 2025 - December

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## DISCOVER YOUR NEXT STEP WITH US

### DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear *Next Steppers*,



Chris Stafford coined that phrase on our trip to Acapulco last summer, which was a blast. The location was fabulous and everyone there really needed it. We saw the famous cliff divers, water skied, watched amazing sunsets and had lots of time to share life, learn from each other, and get motivated to continue living the best

lives we can. To be honest, there are some days I'm not sure why I spend so much time working on this project, but then I talk to guys who are walking across that bridge back to lay life and I remember how alone I felt walking that path 12 years ago, or I get an email thanking me for doing this and so I continue.

We're really just at the beginning. No one else is doing this in the Church, and yet we still have no regular funding. So, I'd encourage you to read the End of Year Report, *coming out soon*, to see all that we are able to accomplish already, and then please consider becoming a paying member so we can move toward sustainability and then accelerate to grow and offer this to many other people who need it across the Church.

More about membership will be coming out soon, including events, professional development, networking, small groups, and more. We want this to be a low-cost, high-value proposition that really helps accelerate your growth in whatever your next step is. Please reach out to let us know how we can make this of value to you.

Sincerely,  
Kristian Jalloway

## IN-PERSON CONNECTIONS: MICHAEL GROSS



Since leaving the Legion at the end of 2009, Michael Gross served for over 10 years in chaplaincy services at the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis, primarily serving Catholic veterans and assisting the chief chaplain. During this time, he completed a Master's in Pastoral Ministry at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

Michael found his work with veterans from across major U.S. conflicts—including WWII veterans—both challenging and rewarding, especially during the COVID lockdowns. His day-to-day responsibilities were intense and non-stop: leading chapel services, setting up and serving daily Masses, patient visits, and charting patient visit notes. He also assisted with hospital training for seminarians from St. Paul Seminary preparing for future priestly ministry. Due to national-level changes for board-certified chaplains, Michael knew he would need to transition, as even with board certification, ordination would be required to continue serving as a Catholic chaplain in the VA system.

After leaving the VA, Michael spent about four months networking and job searching. Then, one day, an email arrived with the opportunity he had been hoping and praying for. The message read: "If you were to start working for Rejoice Counseling Apostolate, what would your job description look like?" Michael responded with four pages outlining how he could assist this Texas-based company that offers in-parish counseling. By spring 2026, he will have worked with Rejoice Counseling for five years.

Currently, Rejoice serves close to thirty parishes across Texas. Michael serves as Service Coordinator, helping to onboard and maintain parish partnerships while handling administrative and communications support for Parish Counseling Services. Initially, Michael thought administration was "nerdy," but after attending a Gifts Inventory workshop with the Siena Institute, he recognized and embraced administration as a gift that enables others to do

what they do best—counseling—while strengthening parish communities through individual, couples, and family counseling.

One of the joys of returning to the Twin Cities, where Michael grew up, has been reconnecting with family and assisting his elderly parents. He is also involved with his local senate district and the conservative movement, in addition to being active in the pro-life movement. For over 10 years, he has led monthly prayer on First Saturdays in front of the Planned Parenthood clinic in St. Paul. While open to the vocation of marriage, it has not yet come together in God's good providence. Michael has enjoyed reconnecting with former Legionaries and hearing their stories of where life and God's grace have led them. Since leaving the Legion, he has found the retreats and trainings offered by the JP II Healing Center to be helpful and healing. As a self-described "administrative geek and guru," Michael has assisted the Next Step Network board in connecting and reconnecting former LCs, inspired by the belief that this worldwide network and brotherhood can continue to do great things for the Church and our communities.

## **BAND OF BROTHERS EVENTS**

### **Summer Gathering in Acapulco, Mexico (August 2025)**

*"In Acapulco the crew jumped on skis some to tighten the slalom others to stand up for the first time with help from our ski instructor. Other adventures included walks on the beach, watching cliff divers and snorkeling the local shipwreck. Our favorite beach is still hard to say but Acapulco made quite the impression!"*

– John Antonio





## WHAT'S COMING NEXT



### Ski Trip January 17-20, 2026

Join us in Wolf Creek, in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, which has the most snow in all of Colorado! Find out more and RSVP [here](#).

### Region Update

Detroit, MI coming up in spring 2026

## MEXICO NEWS

### An Opportunity to Build a Future

Altos Bosques Community Learning Center – Chilil, Chiapas\*\*  
 We're excited to share a meaningful initiative underway in Chilil, Chiapas: the development of the **Altos Bosques Community Learning Center**, offering quality education to children and youth in a rural area with limited access to academic opportunities. A group of former Legionaries, together with **Raíces con Causa**, are collaborating to strengthen the project by helping build the leadership team, secure funding, and support its long-term growth. Our friend and fellow former Legionary, **Samuel Sanabria**, is serving as school director with great dedication. We believe education changes futures—and supporting this community is a way to build real and lasting hope.



If you'd like to help through donations, sharing the project, or visiting the community, you are warmly invited to be part of this effort. 🙏 Thank you for your prayers and support.



📍 Learn More or Stay Connected

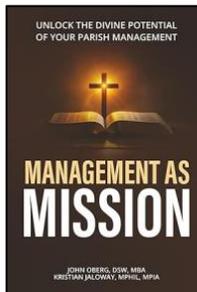
\* Website: <https://causacomun.com.mx>

\* Facebook: Centro de Aprendizaje Comunitario Bosques Altos

\* Instagram: Altos Bosques Chilil

## PUBLICATIONS & ACTIVITIES FROM OUR ALUMNI

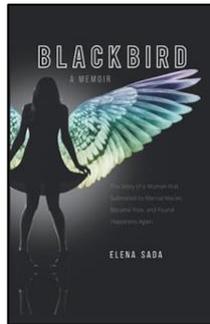
### JOHN OBERG AND KRISTIAN JALOWAY SHARE HOW TO UNLOCK THE DIVINE POTENTIAL OF YOUR PARISH MANAGEMENT



Unlock the divine potential of your parish management with "Management as Mission" - where heavenly wisdom meets earthly efficiency.

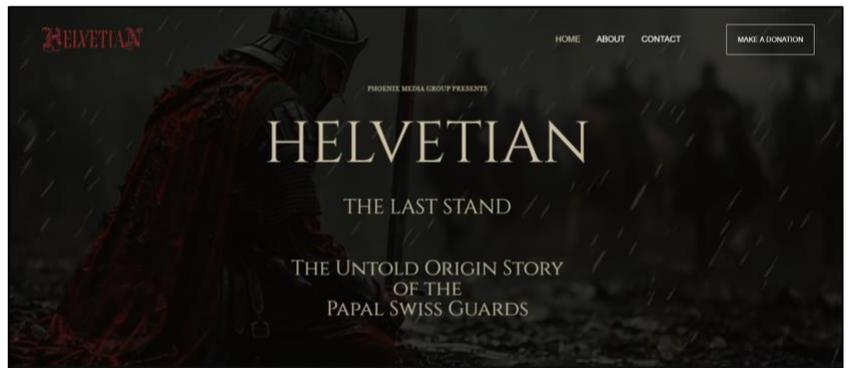
Transform your parish office from a bureaucratic burden to a beacon of discipleship with "[Management as Mission](#)."

## ELENA SADA SHARES A MEMOIR OF FINDING FREEDOM AND TRUST AGAIN



Elena's story [Blackbird—a Memoir](#): The Story of a Woman Who Submitted to Marcial Maciel, Became Free, and Found Happiness Again is the uplifting interpretation of a dark tale that begins the day she decides to leave Regnum Christi.

## ERIK BELLO MOVES FORWARD WITH THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE SWISS GUARDS



Learn more about Helvetian The Last Stand [here](#).

## OTTI A. OKELLO IS A PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANT IN THE UGANDAN 2031 ELECTIONS



Join us in [Shaping Uganda's Future](#) to [Support an Aspiring Leader](#).

If you have any news of a publication, project; a life update, need or achievement; a prayer request, please forward a title, description, link, and photo or graphic design piece as is appropriate to:

[info@thenextstepnetwork.com](mailto:info@thenextstepnetwork.com).

## TRANSITION TIP

### Transferable Skills

These are skills that many LC graduates have reported gaining in their time in the Legion. On a resume they are usually listed under “transferable skills” and are in high need in today’s job market.

Legionary language	Business language
Following schedule	Punctual, on time performance
Meditation and prayer	Self-awareness, spiritual acumen
Limited access to technology	Attention management
Program, guide, calendar	Planning and execution, OKR’s and
Leading and influencing others	Leadership qualities
Homiletics, public speaking	Public speaking, rhetoric
Examination and writing conclusions	Always improving
Change and growth are good	Growth mindset
Teamwork	Teamwork
Etiquette classes	Manners and etiquette
You have a life calling, mission	Purpose driven
Understanding of maturity	Authenticity
Emotions are neutral	Emotional intelligence
\$ is only a tool	Abundance mentality
Organizing Retreats, Camps	Event Management
Initiative	Self-starter
Completion of Projects	Project Management

## PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES

If you have a prayer intention, please forward a title, description, link, and graphic design piece as is appropriate to: [info@thenextstepnetwork.com](mailto:info@thenextstepnetwork.com).

### Daniel Welter

Click [here](#) to learn more about Daniel’s journey with bone cancer, and [here](#) to extend additional support as you are able.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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- Web:  
[www.thenextstepnetwork.com](http://www.thenextstepnetwork.com)
  - Email:  
[info@thenextstepnetwork.com](mailto:info@thenextstepnetwork.com)
  - Meeting with Kristian:  
[Sign up here](#)
  - [BECOME A MEMBER APPLICATION](#)
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## OPEN POSITIONS

If you have are aware of a job or work opportunity, please forward a title, description, link, and graphic design piece as is appropriate to: [info@thenextstepnetwork.com](mailto:info@thenextstepnetwork.com).

## CALL TO ACTION

- **Share the Newsletter** - Forward this to someone who could be a future member or potential donor.
- **Let's Connect** – Whichever stage you are in, we are here to assist you on the journey. Connect with us [here](#).
- **Support Our Cause** - We operate without membership dues (you've already given years of your life to the Church). However, recurring donations are vital for covering technology costs and, eventually, supporting scholarships for smaller events. Donate through [Zeffy](#).
- **Get Involved** - We need volunteers for mentoring in specific life or career areas, fundraising and networking, organizing international groups, planning local or regional events, and supporting RC women's groups. If you're interested, let's schedule a time to discuss your involvement. Please email us at [info@thenextstepnetwork.com](mailto:info@thenextstepnetwork.com).