

Recently you were invited to make a presentation to the provincial chapter of the Assumptionists of North America as they prepared for the general chapter scheduled to take place in Rome in May 2011. Could you share with us the main points of your remarks?

I was honored by the invitation to join lay and religious Assumptionists to discuss Bayard and its efforts to cooperate with the mission of the congregation. I presented an overview of the company and our operations in the United States and discussed four key principles that direct our efforts and are firmly rooted in the words and charism of Emmanuel d'Alzon. In particular I observed that Bayard publishes with a definite *purpose*, with a pronounced *boldness*, in *service to the people of God* and in a spirit of *collaboration*.

The Assumptionists are the sole shareholders of Bayard Press throughout the world. Could you give our readers some idea of the mission and reach of Bayard internationally?

With a unique history that goes back nearly 140 years, Bayard stands out as a positive exception in today's world of global media conglomerates, increasingly dominated by the demands of quick profit. Its single shareholder is indeed the Augustinians of the Assumption which guarantees the group's stability, gives witness to our corporate mission and offers editorial independence to each of our publications which include nearly 125 magazines including ***Catholic Digest***, ***Living Faith***, ***Living with Christ*** and ***Faith & Family*** as well as books, booklets, digital products and one of France's leading daily newspapers, ***La Croix***.

Present in 15 countries, Bayard's trademark stands for editorial excellence and innovation at the service of demanding readers of all ages – from toddlers to teens, and young adults to seniors. Inspired by the Assumptionists every one of our publishing initiatives seeks to reflect and promote positive values rooted in the intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions of life. Bayard's expertise and success is sustained by 2,100 full time employees and 3,300 freelancers of many nationalities serving over 30 million readers.

How long have you been CEO of Bayard USA and what are some of the areas of growth that have taken place over the past few years? And what do you see as some of the major challenges?

I joined Bayard as President and CEO in February 2007 after serving in Catholic publishing for nearly ten years. The past four years have seen tremendous changes including our assuming the publishing responsibilities of **Tobias** and **Faith and Family** magazines; the launch of **Living the Gospel Life**

; the transition

of Religion Teacher's Journal

to

RTJ's Creative Catechist

; redesigned websites; refreshed editorial policies and platforms; contemporary redesigns; and the acquisition of new and key authors of books such as Joan Chittister, OSB and Joyce Rupp.

We are particularly proud of our recent launch of **Faith Matters** – a publishing initiative cooperating with Bayard's global effort of developing les

fiches Croire

– which are convenient, contemporary booklets aimed at communicating the faith in a simple, but elegant and practical manner.

Our major challenges include the diminishing resources of Catholic schools and parishes and maximizing the opportunity of developing print products in tandem with digital products.

Last year (2010) in May you and some of your senior staff participated in a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Venerable Emmanuel d'Alzon, the founder of the Assumptionists, on the occasion of the bicentennial of his birth. How has this pilgrimage influenced the way you carry out your responsibilities as CEO and how has it affected your staff?

The pilgrimage first was a tremendous team-building exercise. We learned much about each other and had to practice patience as we proceeded through cities and countrysides at a rapid pace, shared sleeping cars on European trains and as we prayed together daily. But most importantly, the pilgrimage gave us an opportunity to know Emmanuel d'Alzon as a decisive and simple leader. He was surely committed to greatness and encouraged others to share that commitment. He managed a diocese, founded a press, corresponded extensively, and led a school. He was capable of persuading others to participate in his mission and vision - fostering

the unity of the church and impacting society. That's the kind of leadership we hope to inspire at Bayard and that's the type of leadership I seek everyday to evidence.

From the beginning, Fr. d'Alzon was quick to solicit lay partners in his goal of extending the Kingdom. In your experience, is this partnership still alive? If so, how have you experienced it?

I think the partnership is very much alive and quite clearly emanates from the Assumptionist's simple motto – Thy Kingdom Come. Jesus preached about a kingdom that is clearly meant to come on earth, starting right now, and so it necessarily must involve itself in efforts to build the world into something better, something more like the way the God that Jesus reveals to us would have things. That means that the kingdom of God is meant for everyone – men and women and lay and ordained.

This is the good news: we followers of Christ are sent forth “to love and serve the Lord.” And the Lord wants each of us to be salt to the earth and light to the world in the everyday activities of life. My experience of the Assumptionists is that they realize that this call is not an option for Christians but the universal vocation to which we are called and that we all cooperate together to fulfill this call and to build the best world possible, in short, the kingdom of God.

I experience this every day of my professional life when the vowed members of the congregation support me in my work and rely on me as a publishing professional to make the best decisions possible to grow our company, expand our initiatives and serve our customers while tending to our common and shared mission.

Having worked at other Catholic publication organizations, how would you distinguish your experience at Bayard?

What most significantly distinguishes Bayard are elements that I've already mentioned – its international scope and its ownership by the Assumptionists. Many publishers operating in the religious sector have only a national scope and are entrepreneurial or venture capitalist initiatives, meaning that their corporate mission originates with one, founding person or group placing a greater emphasis on money over mission. Now I don't mean to say that being profitable isn't important. It most certainly is. But only to the degree that it is profit that allows us to come back tomorrow, and the day after, and the day after that to focus on the mission of

contributing to the unity of the Church, impacting society, and witnessing to God's love.

As you reflect on your experience at Bayard, what are your dreams for the future of the organization?

We are fully committed to the goal of being the largest and most influential publisher serving the American Catholic community. To this end, we work every day at being a company where people's contributions are recognized, valued and affirmed; where people view their work as ministry; and where communication is transparent and creativity is fostered.