

Winter 2016

## Evangelists of the Passion

Tony Lobo

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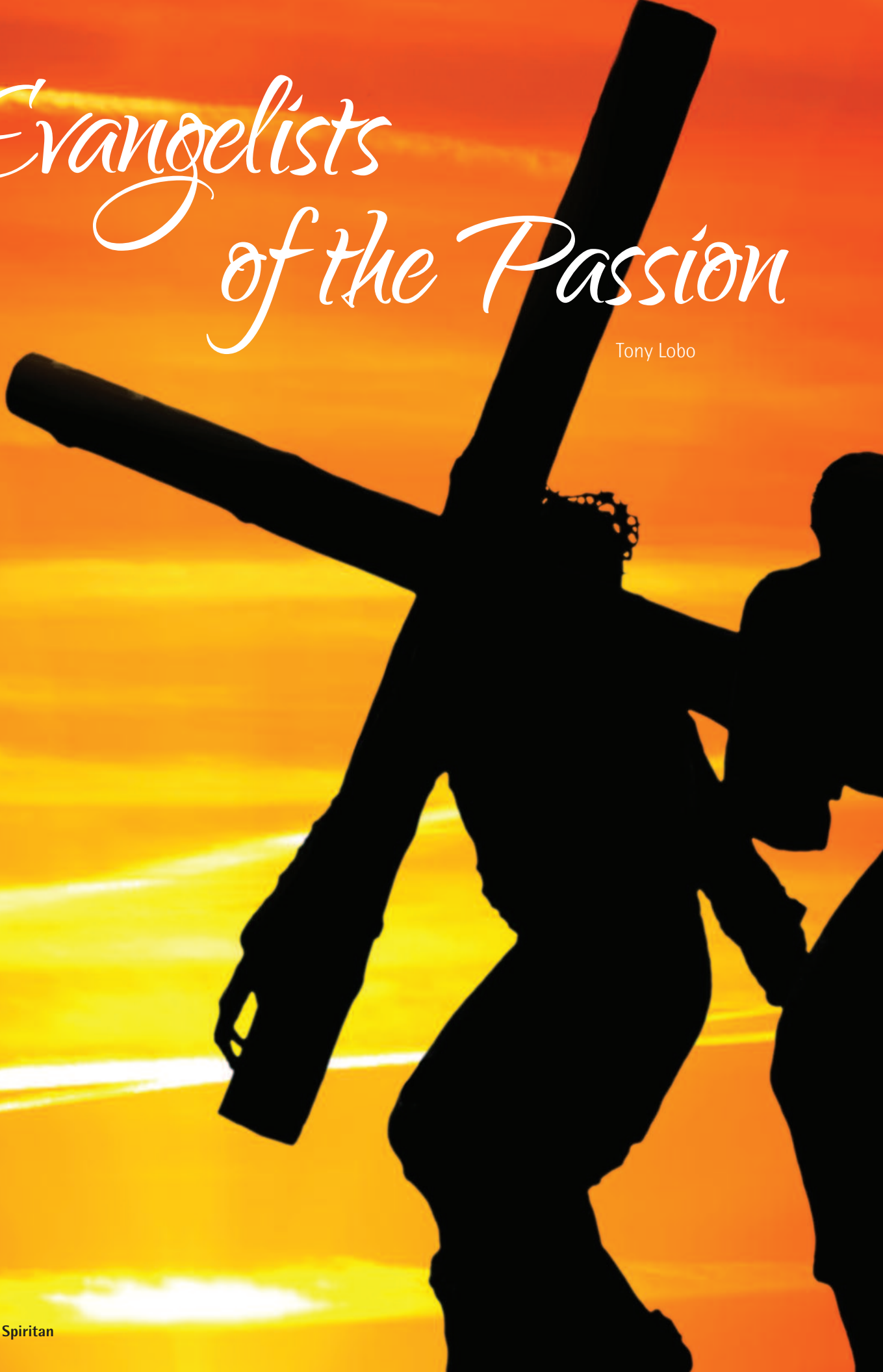
### Recommended Citation

Lobo, T. (2016). Evangelists of the Passion. *Spiritan Magazine*, 40 (1). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/spiritan-tc/vol40/iss1/9>

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# *Evangelists of the Passion*

Tony Lobo



Up the country paths  
I, Simon of North Africa, trudged.  
The wind whispered,  
“I knew you before I formed you  
in your mother’s womb.”  
Jerusalem ... A disturbance –  
The eyes of a soldier fastening on a stranger  
Ordered him to shoulder a criminal’s heavy cross.  
Beneath the load, a strange peace enveloped Simon.

Sorrow-filled Seraphia waited her moment, slipped in  
to hold her veil before the bloodied face of her Master,  
thus stepping into history:  
“Before you were born  
I set you apart.”

On Calvary hill, soldiers crushed the legs of two prisoners.  
Cassius, the centurion, glanced at the crucified One:  
Valour beheld valour.  
Sharply nudging his steed forward  
he lanced the chest above.  
A prophecy fulfilled.  
The wind sighed,  
“In my book every moment of your life was laid out.”  
Blood and water gushed into his upturned face.  
Drawing back, Cassius wiped his eyes.  
Startled at his perfect vision – his squint gone,  
Immortal words burst forth from him,  
“Truly, this was the Son of God.”

Thereafter, followers named Cassius *Longinus*  
... the one with the lance  
And Seraphia *Veronica*  
... the one with the true image.  
Simon and Longinus became disciples, journeyed afar  
Longinus to martyrdom ... to tell all.  
Veronica, in Rome with Nicodemus, treasured her holy veil –  
On beholding it, the sick Emperor Tiberius was cured.  
In the exulting wind the larks sang,  
“I appointed you as my prophet, my witness  
... to the nations.”

But the foremost evangelizer, the most silent one,  
In solitary retreat in the hills of distant Ephesus:  
No voice was heard, but  
her message, her example went out to all the earth:  
“Retrace my Son’s ... Stations of the Cross.”