

On The Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood



The English School in Tampere

SUMMER 2017



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*We Remember . . .
We Celebrate . . .
We Believe . . .*



Sister Mary Judith Orf
September 7, 1925 - April 20, 2017

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For more information about the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood and their mission, please visit, www.cpps-ofallon.org.

Cover photo: Sr. Marie Klein teaching in Tampere, Finland, at The English School.

In this issue of *On the Journey* we celebrate jubilees. A jubilee is a time to look back with gratitude and to recall how God has been faithfully present. We gratefully acknowledge God's presence in our CPPS ministries and in the lives of our Sisters.

Over the coming months we will celebrate the jubilees of ten of our Sisters. One Sister will celebrate twenty-five years of profession, and three each will celebrate fifty, sixty and seventy years. These ten Sisters have devoted nearly 600 years of combined service to God's people. They have been teachers, homemakers, administrators, musicians and retreat directors. They have given and continue to give their lives for the sake of others. We celebrate and give thanks for God's fidelity to them and for their faithful, loving response.



In 1957, our community founded The English School in Tampere, Finland. In March 2017, we commemorated sixty years of service there to a diverse, international population of students. Over these years, thirteen Sisters ministered in Tampere. Some taught in the school, and others served in the Parish of Holy Cross. In October, the parish will celebrate its 60th jubilee. Shortly after that, the two Sisters who currently serve in Tampere will return to the States ending our CPPS presence there. Only God knows the full impact of these sixty years of service, but we trust that it has been far-reaching. We give thanks that God called our community to Tampere, and we pray that the seeds our Sisters sowed will continue to grow and flourish.

These are but a few of the reasons to celebrate. We also celebrate each of you! We are deeply grateful for your support of our community through your prayers, donations and volunteer service. May the coming summer months bring many opportunities to enjoy life and to be mindful of God's enduring love. Be assured of our prayers for you.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Janice". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Janice Bader

Congratulations to the

70th



Sr. Mary David Debrecht



Sr. Mary George Hellmann



Sr. Rose Rita Orf

60th



Sr. Philip Marie Burle



Sr. Katherine Ann Wildt



Sr. Luella Dames

Teaching at Bishop DuBourg High School followed by 25 years of CPPS Administration.
Sr. Mary David Debrecht

As they say, "My first one was my first love," so my first ministry assignment in the embroidery department.
Sr. Mary George Hellmann

My calling to be a Sister of the Most Precious Blood has been my favorite ministry by far.
Sr. Rose Rita Orf

Itruly enjoy the privilege and blessing of giving retreats in the U.S. and abroad.
Sr. Philip Marie Burle

The 2017 Jubilarians

50th



Sr. Rosemary Oellermann



Sr. Carolyn Pozarich



Sr. Marie Fennewald

We asked our 2017 Jubilarians what their favorite ministries were:

25th



Sr. Ginny Flowers

I have been teaching most of my life and I have enjoyed it greatly.

Sr. Katherine Ann Wildt

Helping others in liturgy and music for liturgical celebrations has been one of the lasting joys in my life.

Sr. Luella Dames

Teaching high school math at St. Elizabeth Academy because I taught such a diverse group of girls.

Sr. Rosemary Oellermann

Working in Bolivia was great because I could help very needy kids get a start on their education.

Sr. Carolyn Pozarich

Teaching, especially third grade math and finding ways to make it enjoyable for the students and myself.

Sr. Marie Fennewald

Teaching elementary and special education including working with individuals with severe to profound special needs.

Sr. Ginny Flowers



The English School in Tampere

The Sisters of the Most Precious Blood were only ministering in the United States until four Sisters, at the request of Finnish Bishop William Cobben, were asked to come to Finland in 1939 to be a Catholic presence, since less than 1% of the population was Catholic. The state religion of Finland is Lutheranism.

When the threat of war between Finland and the Soviet Union became evident, the Sisters who were working in Finland at the time had to decide whether to stay in the country or go back to America. All four Sisters had the exceptional courage of staying in Finland despite the war: "If you share the suffering of the people, you love them even more."

The English School in Helsinki opened in 1945 when the war operations had ceased in Finland. The English School in Tampere

opened in 1957 when the Catholic Church established its own chapel in Tampere. The English School in Tampere recently marked its 60th Anniversary with a celebration on March 11, 2017.

The establishment of The English School in Tampere was connected to the spiritual activities of the Catholic Church. At the time there were roughly 50 Catholic Finnish people living in the Tampere area, and it was for their spiritual needs that a Chapel and a Catholic activity centre was being built. According to the tradition of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, who were in charge of The English School in Helsinki, it was natural to establish a school in connection with the chapel. The school started its activities as a kindergarten and preschool and is still open today.





Sr. Annikki Rauhamaki



Sr. Ethel Marie Boffa



Sisters who taught at The English School in Tampere

Sr. Cecilia Bertelsmeyer
Sr. Ethel Marie Boffa
Sr. Nadine Flott
Sr. Theresa Jezl
Sr. Marie Kleine
Sr. Mary Vénard LeBeau
Sr. Aniceta Loeffler
Sr. Constantia Metzger
Sr. Carissima Pitz
Sr. Annikki Rauhamäki
Sr. Clementine Schneider
Sr. Monica Marie Toenjes



“The people of Tampere were kind, generous, polite and very helpful to the Sisters. I was so impressed with their interest in learning at such a young age. I am so grateful for my time in Finland because it gave me a wider world view and an appreciation of different faiths and cultures.” **Sr. Nadine Flott**



Sr. Monica Marie Toenjes



Sisters Theresa Jezl, Monica Marie Toenjes, Nadine Flott, and Mary Vénard LeBeau with the head of the School Board at The English School's 50th Anniversary Celebration.

The most important things have remained for 60 years: Enthusiastic, international atmosphere and sense of belonging combined with teaching good manners and top-quality language teaching.

(excerpt taken from The English School of Tampere website)

“The presence and work of the Sisters mean very much to the parish. Without them the parish would be spiritually much poorer. And I think that the presence and the work of the Sisters – as Christian educators and teachers – are of great importance also outside the parish...”

Reverend Gerard Schijlen, at the meeting of The Friends of The English School in Tampere, 1983

Reflecting on my time in Tampere by Sr. Theresa Jezl



As we celebrated the 60th year of the little school our Sisters established in Tampere in 1957, I could feel only gratitude. This was never a Catholic school. The vast majority of the

children were Lutheran, so we emphasized the Christian aspect and were, at best, PR people for Catholicism. But the school has nothing to do with our parish, so we Sisters, in effect, lead double lives. As one of our priests told me, “You Sisters have it the hardest of all. You neither sow nor reap. But you clear the field of stones so that others can sow and reap.”

There were challenges, but we Sisters were very enriched. We hoped we gave a good example to our pupils, but with no background in working under these conditions, we could only be ourselves, whatever that was. We were impelled to open ourselves to differences and to appreciate them. We learned that no church owns God and that we could learn about God from one another and that the process begins with mutual respect.

At the same time we learned to appreciate the members of our parish. Ours

is a church of foreigners. This is also true of the Finnish people who become Catholics. The unofficial definition of a Finn includes Lutheranism. A Finn, who becomes a Catholic, is no longer understood in the same way. They become foreigners in their own country. The other parishioners are immigrants or children of immigrants. We are black, brown, yellow and white and all combination in between, and we speak about 50 mother tongues—this in a parish of about 1,500 souls, scattered in an area of about 14,000 square miles.

We have grown with these challenges, fed by God and watered with the generosity and love of these people. They have helped us Sisters to live together, though we are isolated from our Precious Blood Community, our families, and from a more Catholic culture. We have been privileged to more clearly see the Church, as it is. I think often of the scripture passage: “We are now no longer strangers and foreigners, but members of the household of God...” In a homogenous parish, where all would be from the same kind of background, we might prefer to be “strangers and foreigners” to others. We might be more unable to respect differences.

The English School and Holy Cross Parish of Tampere have been channels of God’s gifts to us. Thanks be to God!



Sr. Theresa Jezl

PASSPORT to FUN



Thanks to all of our friends who joined us for our "Passport to Fun" Dinner Auction on Saturday, March 11, 2017, and to all who contributed to make it a successful evening. We are grateful for the continuous love and support of all of our donors.

Mark your calendar and plan to join us next year on Saturday, February 17, 2018.



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1. Alan Faust our auctioneer for the evening.
2. Jane Freise and Sr. Geraldine Vogel at the Wine Raffle.
3. Nancy Trautman and Nancy Molitor pose with Sr. Joann Fischer.
4. Erin Donovan, Peggy Cribbons, and Patty Nieters.
5. O'Fallon Mayor Bill Hennessy and his wife Debra.
6. Sr. Carmen Schnyder poses with one of our Oral Auction items.
7. Sisters Marie Orf and Viola Marie Spire sell a 50/50 raffle ticket to Fr. Mitch Doyen.
8. Passport to Fun decorations.

Night at Busch Stadium



Join us for the
St. Louis Cardinals
 vs.
Pittsburgh Pirates
 on June 23.



- ◆ Tickets are \$50.
- ◆ Transportation from O'Fallon for \$15.
- ◆ Lower Right Field Box Seating.
- ◆ Adult Cardinal Pullover Giveaway.

For more info visit:
www.cpps-ofallon.org



Sisters of the Most Precious Blood

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Have you considered giving a gift to the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood in your will? By doing so, your legacy will have a greater impact on our world. Call Leah Wand in the Mission Advancement Office for more information at 636-240-6010.