



Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

WINTER 2018

IMPORTANT DATES:

February 2
CPPS Feast Day

February 3
CPPS Partners and Sisters Winter Gathering

February 17
CPPS Dinner Auction

March 10
CPPS Partners in Mission Trivia Night

March 17
CPPS Spring Community Day

September 9
CPPS Partners in Mission Assembly Day

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Response to Human Needs—In Giving We Receive

St. Agatha's Christmas Party

For over 25 years, the first Friday in December has brought much joy and love to many in the south St. Louis area near St. Agatha's Center. Responding to material needs and hoping to help build community in the area, now Partner Jill Berry along with Srs. Clare Ann Littekin, Joan Klaas, and many others began St. Agatha's Christmas Party.

This year many Sisters, Partners and others from all over St. Louis responded with great generosity. Sisters and Partners donated several car trunks full of shampoo, body



wash, and other personal hygiene items used to fill a bag for each man and woman who attended the party. Another new Partner Karen Cella and her friend Patty Hunter, and new Partner Margie Johnson made many, many fleece hats and scarfs. Several Partners

and Sisters helped transform the Cherokee Recreational Center into a Christmas Wonderland on Thursday evening. On party day, Partners and Sisters became Christmas Elves for the day helping to distribute gifts of toys, books,
—continued on back

Small Faith Communities--the  of Partners in Mission

In His Footsteps



Mary Jo Orlando, Margie Johnson, Karen Cella, Sr. Eileen Schieber, Jean Douglas, Cleo Hubert, JoAnn Cheli

In His Footsteps is one of the newest CPPS Partners in Mission small faith communities. Although Karen Cella, JoAnn Cheli, Jean Douglas, Cleo Hubert, Margie Johnson, and Mary Jo Orlando just made their initial commitment in September, they,

along with their sister prayer partner, Sr. Eileen Schieber, have already been very busy supporting the Sisters and residents at Villa Theresa. In addition to gathering monthly at Villa Theresa for faith sharing on the fourth Monday afternoon of the month, they also gather on the second Monday of each month to assist the Villa Theresa activity staff with craft projects. So far, they have made turkeys and snowmen.

For their faith sharing, the ladies have been using "Joy to

the World," from the Loyola Press Six Weeks with the Bible series, which fit nicely with the Advent and Christmas Seasons.

Not a texting or email group for the most part, they communicate with each other through the tried and true method of a phone chain when necessary to get in touch with everyone.

Karen, the leader of the community, stated "As we continue to be together with our faith sharing and Sr. Eileen's scripture interpretations for us, I feel we will be a strength for CPPS in the future."

—Debbie Whited

“Our Precious Blood...”

Karen Grant



Karen Grant

Shortly after joining Sts. Joachim and Ann Care Service, I was introduced to two volunteers, Sister LaVerne Wester and Sister Robert Ann Harper. Their prayerful and gentle spirits had a big impact on me from the moment we met.

My husband, Brian, and I credit them with having found each other. We joke about it being divine intervention, but seriously, without their encouragement and prayer, we may have never even been looking in the first place. We met in 2012 and were married in 2013.

A couple of years later, my

co-worker, Mary Reynolds, asked me to explore CPPS Partners in Mission and I felt a strong calling to respond to the invitation. I’m so glad I did as it has been such a blessing to be part of this community, especially during a time of many life-changing events.

Although we are a little mature to be starting a family, Brian and I had each always dreamed of having a family so in 2014, we decided to go through the process of becoming licensed foster parents so we could adopt through the foster care system. We now have three

beautiful children – Alexis (15), Peyton (11) and Breydan (6).

I am still learning about reconciliation and what it really means and am so grateful for the teachers that surround us who can guide us in passing down the lessons. I believe it is a life-long journey of faith, one that causes us to examine our own humanness and understand the joy God wants for us, even though we are not perfect. Brian and I learn more every day through the eyes of three children who need us as much as we need them.

—Karen Grant

Sr. Ruth Kertz

Sr. Ruth Kertz first came to the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood in 1952. She grew up in a small town between Festus and Ste. Genevieve where the sisters taught in her grade school. After grade school, she went to O’Fallon for a 3-year Aspirancy and then continued on as a Postulant. Her first mission after her vows was to work as a household sister at the Motherhouse. She was not sure what the best way was for her to practice the

charism of reconciliation.

One day an older sister stopped her in the hallway at the Motherhouse and asked her if she had ever thought of being a teacher. That idea struck a chord in her so she went to the Mother Superior who told her to come back to her in the Spring. Sr. Ruth did just that. When she returned, Mother Superior said, “I didn’t forget you!” She began training as a teacher. The places she has been assigned have always

been ripe with opportunity for reconciling. As a school principal, she was especially moved when she saw injustice. This motivated her greatly to find solutions that brought people together. She believes these opportunities are around us everyday. Sr. Ruth has been part of the Partners in Mission for the last 4-5 years. She participates in the Outside the Gates small faith community.

—Peggy Hoefel



Sr. Ruth Kertz

Save the Dates

CPPS Dinner Auction

Saturday, February 17, 2018, 5:30 to 11:00 p.m. at Old Hickory Golf Club, St. Peters. This year’s theme is *Cheers to 25 Years*. To donate, volunteer to help, purchase tickets, or for more information, please contact Leah Wand, Mission Advancement Director, 636-240-6010.

CPPS Partners in Mission Trivia Night

Saturday, March 10, 2018. Doors open at 6 p.m., play begins at 7 in St. Joseph School cafeteria, Cottleville. Please plan a table with your small faith community, family or friends. To help plan trivia night, please contact Dawn Boschert.

CPPS Spring Community Day

Saturday, March 17, 2018, 9:00 a.m., Mercy Center, Please look for more information in the mail in February.



2017 Dinner Auction
Denis & Debbie Wilhelm with
Sr. Robert Ann Harper



Sr. Luella Dames

Sr. Luella Dames offers the following reflection.

Howard Thurman, an influential African American author, puts the work of ministry beyond the time of Christmas into perspective in his poem *When the Song of the Angels is Stilled*:

“When the Song of the Angels is Stilled, When the star in the sky is gone, When the

kings and the princes are home, When the shepherds are back with their flocks, The work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, To heal the broken, To feed the hungry, To release the prisoner, To rebuild the nations, To bring peace among people, To make music in the heart.”

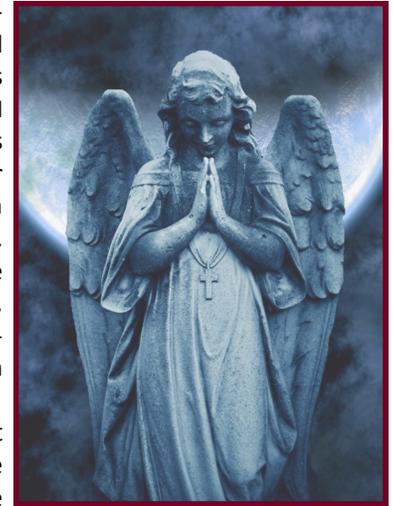
This hymn calls me not only to live this during the time after Christmas but to carry it into my daily life. What better time to continue this practice into the season of Lent? As a child, I thought of giving up candy, collecting some money for the missions, obeying my

Lent —

A Season of Growing

parents and while attending Catholic grade school to be on time for Mass each day. Today, you and I know that our neighbors and the immigrants in our midst all call us to reach out to those in need. When we see them, we know their depravations, feel some of their heartaches and needs. How can I; how can we respond?

Besides knowing about these situations, we are called by the Bible to take care of the poor in our midst; to love others as ourselves, etc. How could this season of Lent become a deeper challenge by a daily reading of the Bible? Try a Gospel in the New Testament and listen to Jesus call you to a closer friendship with Him. If you are brave, choose a



book from the Old Testament and get better acquainted with the Psalms or the books of the Prophets. Let Jesus be our Guide. He gave up everything to share His Life and Love with us. “Happy Growing!”

—Sr. Luella Dames

Thank You for Holding Up Partners in Mission in Prayer

In her memorial letter for Sr. Mary Ann Averbeck, Sr. Janice so eloquently wrote, “As Sister Viola Marie Spire sang the *Bridegroom Song*, Sr. Mary Ann joined the heavenly choir on Saturday, November 25. The words



Sr. Mary Ann Averbeck

she chose for her memorial card, ‘In the presence of angels I will sing your praise,’ (Psalm 138:1) came to fulfillment.”

For many years, Sr. Mary Ann, a former teacher, principal, accountant, eldercare provider, driver and seamstress just to name a few, faithfully served as Moses for CPPS Partners in Mission.

A Moses is a Sister appointed by the leadership team who prays for a CPPS ministry or community house. This tradition is based on Exodus 17:8-13 when Israel was attacked by the Amalekites. As long as “Moses kept his arms raised, Israel had the advantage;

when he let his arms fall, the advantage went to the Amalekites.”

In December, we welcomed Sr. Carol Orf as our new Moses. The blood sister of Sr. Marie Orf, Sr. Carol grew up in Josephville, Missouri the oldest of four children. Sr. Carol has been a teacher, spiritual director, 50 year Jubilarian, campus minister, and former director of CPPS Partners in Mission from 2001 to 2013, which she considers a gift.

With her flare for drama, Sr. Carol and two other sisters wrote a theatrical history of the CPPS community and performed it for the public in 1995.



Sr. Carol Orf

Sr. Carol is currently the director of Sanguis Christi Spirituality Center near St. Pius V Parish in South St. Louis. Thank you, Sr. Carol for saying “Yes” to holding up Partners in Mission with your prayers.

—Debbie Whited

A MOMENT FOR GRACE

A PRAYER FOR REFUGEES

God of our Wandering Ancestors,
Long have we known
That your heart is with the refugee:
That you were born into time
In a family of refugees
Fleeing violence in their homeland,
Who then gathered up their hungry child
And fled into alien country.
Their cry, your cry, resounds through the ages:
"Will you let me in?"
Give us hearts that break open
When our brothers and sisters turn to us with that same cry.
Then surely all these things will follow:
Ears will no longer turn deaf to their voices.
Eyes will see a moment for grace instead of a threat.
Tongues will not be silenced but will instead advocate.
And hands will reach out—
working for peace in their homeland,
working for justice in the lands where they seek safe haven.
Lord, protect all refugees in their travels.
May they find a friend in me
And so make me worthy
Of the refuge I have found in you.
Amen.

Catholic Relief Services

GPPS Partners in Mission

Partners in Mission strive to bring Christ's reconciling presence to those we encounter in our daily lives. We seek to carry on the legacy of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood by deepening our relationship with God, each other, and the Community to heal our broken world.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Lori Larkin, Board Chair

Susan Buerkle, Secretary

Patti Belmont

Dawn Boschert

Mary Reynolds

Sr. Ginny Jaskiewicz, Sr. Advisor

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Partners on the Journey

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St. Agatha's Christmas Party

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clothing, shopping cards, and more.

Jill says, "We never know who will attend or who is collecting or donating. This is 'God's Party' and He provides through us what is needed."



Partners Colleen Curran-Schulte, Jill Berry, and Kathi Broughton

This year donations were also made to people living with HIV/AIDS, Doorways Interfaith Residence, Cooper House, Our Ladies Inn, Lydia House, St. Pius V, Wellston Food Pantry, Cherokee Recreational Center and the International Institute.

It was truly a December day that the Partners and Sisters present experi-



Partners Mary Mann and Sr. Loretta Sigler

enced the blessing of receiving in their giving. Love, laughter and community overflowed in abundance.

Please mark your calendar and plan to join the celebration of St. Agatha's Community and Christmas on the first Friday in December in 2018.

—Debbie Whited



Sr. Anna Marie Himmelberg with a party guest.

Successful Fundraising Evening

On Thursday, November 29, many Partners, Sisters, family members, and friends gathered at the St. Louis Bread Co. in O'Fallon to share an evening meal to raise awareness and support the United Nations Orange Campaign UNITE to End Violence Against Women and Girls around the world. The fundraising event raised a total of \$170 that will be sent to the UN in New York.



The 16-day Orange Campaign begins on November 25 and runs until December 10 (Human Rights Day). We are also asked to remember the campaign on the 25th of each month throughout the year. We are invited to wear orange—a shirt, bracelet, or even just an orange ribbon. Sr. Carol Boschert frequently makes orange ribbons available at Villa Theresa.

—Debbie Whited