



# Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

SPRING 2016

## IMPORTANT DATES:

March 30-April 9  
General Chapter

April 10  
Mass of Celebration and  
Greeting of New Leadership  
Team

April 10 & 14  
CPPS Partners in Mission  
Information Gatherings  
Villa Theresa

April 16  
Partners in Mission  
Trivia Night

April 23  
Fourth Saturday Mass  
St. Gerard Majella

April 24 & 28  
CPPS Partners in Mission  
Information Gatherings  
Sanguis Christi

May 15  
75th & 60th Jubilee  
Celebration

June 12  
50th Jubilee Celebration

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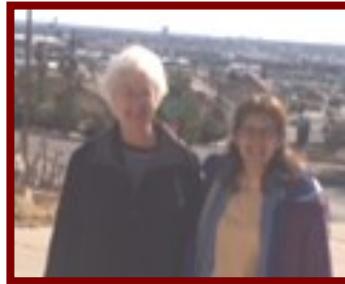
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Partner Susan Buerkle and Sr. Joyce Schramm

## Journey to El Paso to Help Immigrants

Bienvenido!

So read the simply scripted sign above the office door of Nazareth Immigrant Hospitality Center of the border city of El Paso, Texas, where Sr. Joyce Schramm and I (PIM) volunteered in January. Each day, the bus from ICE (Immigration Customs Enforcement) dropped off weary asylum seeking men, women, and children whose eyes lit up at that sign of "Welcome", the first message of kindness for some in weeks. The stories mirrored those we read about in the paper, only they



were REAL. Juan was a frightened teenager whose siblings were murdered in Guatemala, and knowing he, too, was targeted, had fled in desperation. Maria, a professional social worker, also feared for her life. She paid thousands of dollars

Sr. Joyce Schramm and Susan Buerkle in El Paso, Texas, serving immigrants to a Coyote to help her negotiate the desert, and she was grateful she had not been raped, as most women who attempt the journey are. She related she spent four

days in detention in Mexico, where she was not given food or water. Gali was a distraught young father of three whose family was divided by U.S. Immigration Enforcement, and he did not know where his wife and *continued on p. 4*

Small Faith Communities--the  of Partners in Mission

## Faithful Remnant



Back row: Rosemary Chrisite, Sr. Dorothy Ann Katke, Sr. Barbara Payne Front row: Judy Shirley, Sr. Rose Marie Mersinger (Not pictured: Rose Meyer, Sr. Joanne Reuter, Susan Bruker)

One of the first small faith communities, the Faithful Remnants have been gathering for prayer, faith sharing, and discussion since 2002. Members of the community include Susan Bruker, an architect with the

Lawrence Group who designed the development of Villa Theresa; Judy Shirley, an active member of St. Gabriel's Parish; Rosemary Christie, a regular volunteer at St. Anthony's Food Pantry; Rose Meyer, a woman of great spirit and praise; Sr. Dorothy Ann Katke, a recent retiree from St. Pius Parish after 35 years as a pastoral associate; Sr. Joann Reuter, a generous caregiver at Regina Cleri; Sr. Barbara Payne, the community's dedicated archivist and caretaker of Madison, a 33 year old blue crowned conure; and Sr. Rose Marie Mersinger, a strong reconciling presence at Villa Theresa, Cardinal fan, and avid

card player. Through their daily lives, these faith-filled women joyfully live the Precious Blood charism.

Although they sometimes gather in St. Louis and other times O'Fallon, the community's favorite gathering this year was a Christmas Season visit to Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville. After eating dinner and watching a puppet show inside the national shrine's gathering space, the Faithful Remnants enjoyed the beautifully lit grounds, great conversation and laughs while piled in a CPPS van driven by Sr. Rose Marie.

Thank you, Faithful Remnants, for your many years of prayer, presence, and living witness.

## “Our Precious Blood...” *Sharon Stockmann*



*Sharon Stockmann*

An artist and avid golfer, Sharon Stockman is a life-long St. Louis resident. She and her husband, Dick, have been married for 40 years, all those years as residents of Lafayette Square in a house they first purchased 1974 when all the other homes on the entire block were vacant. They have two children, Christopher, in Olympia, Washington, and Ellen, in Indianapolis, and three grandchildren.

Sharon retired from St. Elizabeth Academy in 2008 after teaching art for 10 years and serving as the academy’s development director for 7 years. Inspired by the work of the Sisters, Sharon, desiring to continue her relationship with the Precious Blood Sisters, became a Partner in 2009. After her retirement, Sharon’s hobby of rehabbing homes has become a business. She and Dick, an engineer for the City of St.

Louis, have rehabbed 15 homes since 2009.

For several years, Sharon illustrated Christmas cards for local non-profit organizations. One year, six of Sharon’s different card sets were featured in a St. Louis Post-Dispatch article.

A bubbly, extroverted woman of strong faith, Sharon is a member of the Wisdom Circle. Her former teaching colleague, Sister Rosemary Oellermann, is her prayer partner.

## *Sister Barbara Schlatter*

Sr. Barbara Schlatter, with a flair for drama, has a mischievous grin when relating how Jesus works in her life. She will be celebrating her 50th Jubilee this year, but when she was 18, she was not sure the convent was the right place for her. She saw her ideas about what God expected of her change in miraculous ways. Improbably, she found that God did not require her to do what she did not want to do, but He welcomed growth in her that allowed her to enjoy

using the gifts He gave. She found that in her calling to CPPS and in her ministry of teaching her view of the convent and teaching became joys instead of obligations.

The Gurtweilers PIM community has such a wonderful mentor in Sr. Barbara! She sees the Partners as a calling from God to continue to spread His love. Just as Vatican II expanded the way she felt called to share her gifts as a new Sister, the ongoing transformation of the CPPS Sisters now expands to include the laity in the calling

to share the love of God. In her current ministry as a prison tutor, Sr. Barbara finds ways to see Christ in the men she teaches and recognize the humanity shared by all.

Words to describe Sr. Barbara include performer, vivacious, thoughtful, Christ-centered, creative, poetic, courageous, compassionate and grace-filled! You are truly a gift to the Partners! *We will ALL be celebrating your Jubilee!*

—Peggy Hoefel



*Sr. Barbara Schlatter*

*View of Meadowlark grounds, dock and lake in the spring.*



## Opportunities to Relax and Enjoy God’s Abundance

**Friday, April 29-Sunday, May 1**— CPPS Partners in Mission Directed Silent Retreat with directors Sr. Carol Orf and Sr. Ginny Jaskiewicz at Meadowlark in Warrenton. This is a wonderful



opportunity to relax, enjoy the beautiful setting, and connect more deeply with God through scripture. There is no cost to Partners but a free will offering will be accepted. For more information or to reserve a space, please contact Sr. Ginny (gjaskiewicz@cpps-ofallon.org) or Sr. Carol (corf@cpps-ofallon.org).

**Friday, June 17** – Enjoy CPPS Night at Busch Stadium when the St.



Louis Cardinals play the Texas Rangers. The seats this year are awesome. Look for more information in the mail soon.

## For Your Spiritual Journey...

**Sr. Rose Marie Dobelman** recommends the book *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World* by Joanna Weaver. If you've ever dreamed of being more loving, more forgiving but have felt as though you're always striving but never arriving, then this book may be for you.



*Sr. Rose Marie Dobelman*

It explores how our lives today aren't really different from that of Mary and Martha.

Like Mary, we long to sit at the Lord's feet, but the demands of a busy world just won't leave us alone. Like Martha, we love Jesus and want to serve him, yet we struggle with weariness, resentment, and feelings of inadequacy.

Jesus extends the same invitation he issued long ago to the two sisters of Bethany. He invites us to walk alongside him and share an intimacy that will flow naturally into the service of others.

—*Denis Wilhelm*

"Se on tavallisen ihmisen kirja ja antaa tietoa miten suuri Jumala on," so articulates our Helsinki Partner **Inger Honkaranta** in her native Finnish language in recommending the book *The God of Surprises* by Gerard W. Hughes. "It's a book for the average person, which shows how great God



*Inger Honkaranta*

is." In 2000, Inger attended a retreat by this English author given in Finland, and she was also blessed to attend another retreat given by Hughes in Spain in 2004. In this progressive work, Hughes emphasizes that God is in all things.

A Jesuit, Hughes is also the author of many other books including *Walk to Jerusalem: In Search of Peace*, which tells the story of his contemplative

pilgrimage from Birmingham, England, to Jerusalem.

In *The Four Agreements*, author Don Miguel Ruiz feeds your heart and soul differently each time you read his book. The overarching message, of this best-seller recommended by **Partner Maureen McGarth**, is one of hearing the spirit in all things. Know that anything other than the spirit is just wasted noise.



*Maureen McGarth*

## She Shared Our Joy and Sorrow

## JUDY POWERS

1944-2016



Partner in Mission, Judy Powers was fortified with the Sacraments of Holy Mother Church on Wednesday, January 20, 2016. Judy, who was very matter-of-fact, would have probably found humor in that statement. She would have

**A Member of the Faithful Remnant Small Faith Community, Judy became a Partner in 1998.**

simply said, "She died."

That was Judy. She was always to-the-point, with no fuss, and absolutely no pretense about who she was or what she did. She was loved by many for her open, honest, easy manner.

She was genuine in everything she said and everything she did. I am a better person for having known her.

Judy was the Pastoral Minister at St. Joseph Parish in Cottleville. I believe that her ministry is her legacy. She gave

countless hours to families in need. Whether it involved helping with tuition assistance, grief counseling, financial aid, or simply just listening to our stories, holding our hands and praying with us, Judy was a constant reminder of God's unconditional love. She was a doer and a giver. She was love in action. And her laughter was pure gold.

Judy battled serious health issues in the last year of her life and I remember struggling with why God would allow such suffering to afflict one who had given so much to others. It finally occurred to me that because Judy depended on the

help of friends and family so desperately in that last year, she would never have to wonder how much she was loved.

At her funeral Mass her brothers played and sang "The Servant Song". It was a moving tribute to a life well spent. The lyrics are quintessential Judy:

***"I will weep when you are weeping  
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you  
I will share your joy and sorrow  
Till we've seen this journey through."***

—*Denis Wilhelm*

## Journey to El Paso

*continued*

children were taken. The family was later located in a Detention Center in Karnes, Texas, 12 hours away. Many women were nursing tiny babies, and complaining they were unable to produce enough milk because of their own food deprivation.

Each person was treated with utmost dignity. In a few short days at the Center, the immigrants were connected with family somewhere in the U.S. who purchased bus or plane tickets for them. At the Center, they were able to take showers, receive clean clothing and shoes, a few hot meals, and a simple “quarters” with a cot and blanket. As volunteers, we filled in with whatever was needed... assisting families through the “process”, sorting stacks of clothes, cooking and serving endless frijoles, mopping floors, cleaning bathrooms....the mundane, but necessary, and often working and eating side by side with those whom we came to serve. This powerful opportunity in partnership with Sr. Joyce (who, by the way, speaks fluent



Spanish) embodied our core values of hospitality, presence, reconciliation, and response to human needs. We were welcomed to live in the home of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas, who provided a warm and loving community for volunteers, and enabled us to be rooted in prayer throughout our experience. The eyes of these beautiful people resonate in my memory and have enkindled my fervor to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform.

Nazareth Center seeks volunteers year round for a minimum of 10 days. If you have an interest, please contact Sue Buerkle for more information (314-707-3227).

### 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

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**Patti Belmont**

**Dawn Boschert**

**Susan Buerkle**

**Sr. Ginny Jaskiewicz, Sr Advisor**

**Sr. Barbara Schlatter, Sr Advisor**

**Debbie Whited, Director**

**debbie.whited.cppspim@gmail.com**

**204 North Main St.  
O'Fallon, MO 63366  
636-542-9479**

**Partners on the Journey**

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Sr. Mary Joan Dyer

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## 2016 General Chapter



The Sisters of the Most Precious Blood General Chapter 2016 began March 30 with the Mass of the Holy Spirit in St. Joseph Chapel. Later in the day, the Sisters journeyed to Pallottine Retreat Center where they are gathering for 10 days to set future direction and elect a new leadership team for the next six years.

One of the highlights of the opening days was a DVD presentation of Stephen Bevans', SVD, address to the LCWR Assembly in August 2015 and the Sisters' response. Using a *Spirit of Gentleness* and acknowledging the thirsts of the world—for the water of integrity, for the wine of hope, for the nectar of justice, and for the elixir of beauty as articulated by Bevans, the PowerPoint of pictures and words showed how Sisters and Partners have responded to those thirsts.

## Spirit of Gentleness

*Spirit, spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling and free,  
Spirit, spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.*

*You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;  
and over the eons you called to each thing;  
“Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.”*

*You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
and when they were blinded with idols and lies,  
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.*

*You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;  
and down in the city you called once again,  
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.*

*You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.  
From the bondage of sorrow all the captives dream dreams;  
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions your people arise.*

*(James K. Manley (20th century), hymn-writer. Published in Everflowing Streams (1981).  
“Spirit,” 1. 1-4 (1978).)*

[http://southwood.typepad.com/southwoodlutheran/2007/05/spirit\\_of\\_gentl.html](http://southwood.typepad.com/southwoodlutheran/2007/05/spirit_of_gentl.html)

