

Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

WINTER 2021



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Pathways to PIM

"Hospitality Month" is a great way to introduce a friend to Partners in Mission. I am also always available to talk with anyone who may be interested in learning more. Feel free to share my e-mail address, or, forward the individual's contact information to me and I will reach out to them.

Thank you!

Audrey Jungermann

Reconciliation—Deepening our Relationships with God, each other, and our suffering World.

Happy New Year!

There were times during the past several months when I wondered if we would ever get 2020 behind us. And so, I am especially happy to not only turn a calendar page this January 1, but to put that entire calendar away.

No one could have predicted what last year was to bring. Although maybe not to the extent that we just experienced, some years seem to go that way. One thing after another happens and we find a way to deal with whatever comes. Unfortunately (or maybe it's fortunate, after all), we cannot see around corners.

While my best-laid plans are often the first casualties when things go off the

rails, I know that there is always a larger, better plan in place. There is peace in knowing that all is in God's hands.

While I mourn the losses of 2020, I look to the year ahead with anticipation of the many unknown *good* things that I know will come our way. Each new day holds the potential for answers to questions, solutions to problems, and blessings we cannot now imagine.

I am grateful for all that has been, and for all the wonderful things I know this new year will bring. May God bless you well. Happy New Year!

-Audrey Jungermann

April is "Hospitality Month"

Has your Small Faith Community ever considered adding new members? Or maybe you have a friend who is curious about Partners in Mission but is not exactly sure of what to expect?

This Spring, the Governing Board is designating April as "Hospitality Month". All month, Small Faith Communities will have the opportunity to invite guests to attend their monthly gathering.

The premise is simple: Invite a friend to a meeting and share with them what it's like to be part of a Small Faith Community. This is a no-pressure way of introducing someone to your group, and of introducing Partners in Mission to the individual.

Attending an actual gathering—even by Zoom—will illustrate what we are all about much more effectively than any brochure can. If Hospitality Month is successful this year, it may become an annual tradition.

More information from the Board will be coming soon. In the meantime, please consider opening your heart and sharing the PIM experience with someone new!

-Audrey Jungermann



“Thank You!” to our Retiring Board Members

When we can safely assemble again, Partners in Mission will hold elections for two new Governing Board members. As these new members come aboard, two founding members, Dawn Boschert and Patti Belmont, will move into well-earned retirement.

Dawn and Patti were instrumental in charting the course of Partners in Mission from the very beginning, helping to form policies and practices that are still in place today.

I am so grateful for the hard work, dedication, humor, and love these women have brought to Partners in Mission Leadership. Although they will be missed at formal Board meetings, I know they will still be very much with us in spirit, and still very involved in PIM ministries. Additionally, both Dawn and Patti have graciously agreed to remain on the Board until new members are elected.



Dawn Boschert



Patti Belmont

THANK YOU, Dawn and Patti, for your vital contributions to the Governing Board and for your *presence* as Partners in Mission!

A word of thanks is also owed to the Partners who have agreed to run for the two open Board seats—Julie Schlichting, Karen Cella, and Mary Jo Williams—and for their patience with the postponed elections.

I look forward to what is ahead for Partners in Mission and our Governing Board as we advance into the future.

-Audrey Jungermann

Sr. Julie Wolf—Our South American Connection



Sr. Julie Marie Wolf

Sr. Julie Marie (Julie) Wolf is the newest Sister Advisor on the Partners in Mission Governing Board. As she describes it, “When asked to be on the Governing Board, I was excited because I knew I’d be involved with Partners! I am so impressed with the vitality, initiatives, and profound spirituality of our Partners. They are truly GIFT to us!”

Sr. Julie is also Sister Mentor for the South American Small Faith Community of Partners in Mission. Unfortunately, contact with this group whom Sr. Julie has come to know well is not as frequent nor as reliable as she would like. Since Sr. Julie is in the United States, communication is mainly by *WhatsApp* messaging or phone calls.

Even with the distance and the limitations of technology, however, Sr. Julie remains in touch with the South American Partners:

“My lifeline with Pocha Mercado Celiz is her daughter’s *WhatsApp* account. Pocha and her husband Don Orestes are my compadres; we’re family. Their children and grandchildren are my godchildren. Contact with Pastora Jurado de Gutierrez is by phone. Pastora always asks how everyone here is. In September, she celebrated her 88th birthday!

“Dora Lara is now back on *WhatsApp*. (She had lost her phone—when I did not hear from her, I worried something awful had happened!) Daniela Aranibar Paco, now 19, recently told me she is pregnant! She is very grateful for prayers for herself and her baby. Rosario Salcedo has no phone, so I am unable to be in touch with her.

“These Partners always assure me that they pray daily for CPPS Sisters and Partners. They are living the hard times of the pandemic and elections in October which left the Socialist MAS party in power.”

Sr. Julie appreciates prayers for this faithful group of Partners in South America. And we appreciate Sr. Julie’s efforts to stay connected with them. Thank you, Sr. Julie!

-Sr. Julie Wolf & Audrey Jungermann



Dora, Sr. Julie, and Pastora, with former Partners Rosemary Espejo and Melfy Escobar Velasquez

Getting to Know: *Sr. Viola Marie Spire*



Sr. Viola Marie with her embroidery work

chickens, gathering eggs, milking cows--a busy life! After graduating from grade school, I attended the Catholic high school in Conception, MO where I made my first acquaintance with the Precious Blood Sisters. After high school, I joined the convent with seven other Postulants. We were given a tour of the Ecclesiastical Art Department and I became fascinated with the beautiful work of the Sisters.

In 1959 I was privileged to be sent to St. John the Baptist parish in St. Louis where I taught 120 Kindergarteners: 60 in the morning and 60 in the afternoon. I thought I'd never learn their names, but I did! I taught at St. John's for four years and worked at the Motherhouse in the Ecclesiastical Art Department during the summer.

After my fourth year, I was given the opportunity to work full time in the EAD, which I took. After Vatican II, we started receiving more orders from other denominations. I had enjoyed teaching the little ones, but it was a great joy to return to my first love in the EAD. On July 1, 2018, after 160 years, the Department closed; and I, after having worked there for 64 years, am now in retirement!

In 2015 I joined the *Latecomers* Small Faith Community. What a blessing this group has been for me! Because of the pandemic we only just resumed our monthly meetings in October, but what a welcome gift! We are open for "new *Newcomers*" to join us!

-Sr. Viola Marie Spire

I was born on Ascension Day, May 7, 1933 in a small farmhouse five miles Northwest of Maryville, MO. My parents Viola and Raymond Spire named me Charlene Louise. I have an older brother and two younger sisters. While at home on the farm I helped with the chores--housework, gardening, feeding

Ministry in the Spotlight: *Christmas at St. Agatha's*

Throughout the gospels we are told that nothing remains the same; that there will always be change. We have certainly experienced that this year!

In the past, we celebrated community and friendship with St. Agatha's Center patrons with a Christmas party the first Friday in December. Donations of clothing, toys, hygiene products, household goods, gift cards, new and slightly used items were received from all over the St. Louis area. It was always amazing to see "God's Hands" working! Volunteers would come together the afternoon before the party and transform the Community Center gym to host a magical Christmas event and gift giveaway.

This year, in an effort to keep everyone safe and healthy, St. Agatha's planning team decided to have a "walk-through giveaway"

instead of the annual Christmas party. Patrons of St. Agatha's Center Food Pantry were sent a letter explaining the changes and were given the option of receiving a gift card or participating in the giveaway. Donations were collected and moved to St. Agatha's school building. Items were separated into individual classrooms labeled women, men, children/toys and large gift.

On the day of the giveaway, volunteers helped patrons chose gifts for their family according to gender and age. Approximately 40 families registered for the giveaway with the understanding that only one family member (masked and wearing gloves) would be allowed to walk through and select gifts while keeping socially distant. Every family received a large bag of hygiene products, a bible, and a toaster oven.

Thirty-seven families registered for gift cards. Each member in the family received a gift card, and each of those families also received a toaster oven.

We always say that, "this is God's Party." We never know what donations will be received or how many volunteers will attend but God ALWAYS provides over and above our expectations! This year, donations were given not only to St. Agatha's patrons, but to communities serving immigrants/refugees, people living with HIV/AIDS, Wellston Food Pantry, young adults recently out of foster care, pregnant mothers, nursing home residents, and a warming center in north St. Louis.

God has truly blessed us this holy season. Merry Christmas !!!!

-Jill Berry

Into the Chocolate Factory

This August, my grandchildren spent several days a week in my home, sitting at their computers with their headphones on, trying to disseminate the information being given to them by their teacher on the other side of their screen.

Expectations on both sides were high—some days too high! We had meltdowns of children, grandmothers, and teachers. I felt very inadequate trying to keep them in the correct place at the correct time. They were on Zoom every day from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.! The anxiety and frustration of moving from subject to subject, from “dream box” to “independent hour” was overwhelming to all of

us. Every day we survived, only to begin again the next day.

As the weeks passed, each of us learned to accept the challenges before us. COVID-19 has brought so much stress and hardship to so many families. On the other hand, it has brought out so many successes and blessings in relationships that we otherwise would never have known. For my grandchildren, it has made them resilient! They have learned to cope with malfunctions in equipment, a Nana who is somewhat rusty at locating education apps, and a new structure of independent study. I admit I felt a little like

Lucy Ricardo in *The Chocolate Factory* episode where she starts eating, hiding, and throwing candy everywhere, just so she does not get fired. I was kept running back and forth from one child to the other, trying to keep them both on task as the information moved by faster and faster!

Good news: School is back in session and no one has gotten sick! Nana and her grandchildren love sharing time and games and laughter together just as we did before we stepped into the Chocolate Factory!

-Patti Belmont

The Journey Begins

As we step into this new year,
Restore our spirits.
Renew our passion for sharing your wisdom
And nurture our compassion
for those in need of greater support.

Transform us as we seek to transform:
Guide us as we seek to guide;
Open our minds and hearts
As we seek to open minds and hearts
To the Good News of justice and peace.

Help us listen more deeply
To the world and to your Word,
So we can walk with those in our care,
Attentive to the Wisdom that
Calls us all to the Kingdom of God.

From a prayer by Jane Deren, <http://www.educationforjustice.org>

CPPS 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 suffering world.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

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Dawn Boschert, Vice Chair
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Jean Douglas
Sr. Ginny Jaskiewicz, Council Liaison
Sr. Julia Marie Wolf, Sr. Advisor
Audrey Jungermann, PIM Director

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