

# Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

FALL 2020



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

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### Pathways to PIM

*If you know someone who would like to learn more about Partners in Mission, please have them contact me or a member of the Board. We will be happy to explain our mission and answer questions.*

*A new Pathways class is forming now for the Fall.*

*Thank you!*

*Audrey Jungermann  
636-542-9479*

## Renewing Our Spirits

I recently learned of a place, not far from here, that offers retreats for rest and rejuvenation of the spirit: King's House Retreat & Renewal Center in Belleville, IL. The Pandemic had them shut down for a while, but they have met all of the requirements to reopen and are holding retreats once again.

Two of your fellow Partners, Mary Jane Matejka and Carol Oldendorf, have each made several retreats to King's House. Mary Jane recently completed her 17<sup>th</sup> retreat, and Carol will begin her 14<sup>th</sup> retreat in a couple of weeks.

King's House hosts only small groups—just 20 to 25 women at a time—so the experience is very personal. In Mary Jane's testimonial, she says, "...from Friday night until Sunday noon, you can have the best rest for your body and soul. The grounds and accommodations are beautiful—and there is no cooking or dishes! It's a vacation for the soul."

Carol has made annual retreats to King's House a personal tradition, and finds that, "By this time each year I am craving it. I always say I'll go more than once a year, like maybe in the spring and the fall, but things come up and I never do. I will settle for once a year for now."

We all need to care for our spirit and find new ways to be inspired. This might be just the thing to do, either for yourself individually or with a group of close friends. More information about King's House may be found on their website, [kingsretreatcenter.org](http://kingsretreatcenter.org).

Even Christ, when he became weary from the many demands made of him, knew the value of withdrawing from the crowds and finding a quiet place for himself. He could then come back refreshed, better able to continue his work. The same is certainly true for us, who may be feeling a little weary in spirit ourselves.

As Mary Jane adds, "Belleville is not that far away, but to get away is what we all need; God only speaks in whispers."

-Audrey Jungermann



## Featured Board Member: *Jean Douglas*



*Jean Douglas*

I moved to St. Charles, Missouri, in November of 1979, so I feel like this is definitely “home”. Unless you have moved a long distance (500 miles) you might not appreciate the importance of that statement. It takes a long time to make friends and find your way in a new community.

I live with my husband of 57 years. We have been blessed with four children, six grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. We get together when we can—and will hopefully do so more often after this pandemic is over. Right now, we keep in touch via Zoom and the phone. My two girls live in this area, one son lives in Macomb, Illinois, and another lives in Dayton, Ohio.

I converted to the Catholic faith before I got married. In my teens I often attended Mass with friends in my hometown of South Euclid, Ohio and I was moved by the Sunday services. When I met my husband, I had no problem joining the church. I love being Catholic and am proud of my faith.

I was approached by Sisters LaVerne West-er and Robert Ann Harper about joining a Partners’ Small Faith Community at Villa Theresa, which I did in September 2016. I will soon start my fourth year with *In His Footsteps*; I am currently the leader of this Small Faith Community. We meet once a month at Villa Theresa for prayer and reflection, and often one of the Sisters joins us for a short talk. And, of course, there are refreshments! We also meet one day a month at Abbey Senior Living to help the Sisters with an activity.

I was elected to serve on the Governing Board last year, and I chair the Spirituality Committee. We are currently reaching out to our fellow Partners to check on them, pray with them, and sometimes to just talk.

I enjoy hand quilting and belong to a very active quilt guild. I love to travel with my husband, visit relatives in Ohio, and keep up with our grandkids’ activities.

-Jean Douglas

## Meet Partner in Mission: *Kim Lawry*



*Kim Lawry*

I was born on May 13, 1972 to Harry and Wanda Roeger in Indianapolis, Indiana. In college I met my husband, Jack, and was introduced to the Catholic Church. Being a Protestant, I chose to be baptized on my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, but at college I had not been able to find a church home. I knew from the moment I entered the Catholic Church that something awe-inspiring and powerful was present in the sanctuary.

Jack and I were married after graduation, and this July we celebrated our 26th anniversary. Shortly after being married, we moved to Missouri so I could attend graduate school at Washington University. We later settled in O’Fallon and I officially joined Assumption Parish through RCIA in 2001. I always joke that with my rudimentary understanding of the Eucharist and the Catholic faith, they should never have let me in.

In May 2003 our son, Brett, was born. Less than two years later, he was diagnosed with PDD-NOS, an autism spectrum disorder. When Brett was six, I began to homeschool him. This is where I learned my faith, and

how I became a Partner in Mission. On a homeschool fieldtrip to tour St. Joseph’s Chapel, Sr. Marie Orf took a liking to Brett, and after giving him a personalized tour she invited me to consider joining Partners. In 2017, I became a Partner and am part of the *Sacred Journey* Small Faith Community. I would say the talent God has entrusted to me to share with Partners, is an open heart and His love to share in little, quiet ways.

Since joining Partners, I have been so blessed by everyone’s prayers and support. Words can’t express how grateful I am to all the Sisters and Partners. Many have become like family to me, and for someone who has no in-state family, this has been such a comfort. Some of you may know that last year I was very sick with Addison’s disease and was unable to do many of the things I love doing. For those of you who hadn’t heard, I was miraculously healed last September while on retreat. I love telling the story so don’t hesitate to ask if you’d like to hear it.

-Kim Lawry

## Getting to Know: *Sr. Lucy Meissen*



My life story began on a small farm in north central Missouri. I have four brothers and two sisters. I was taught for 12 years by the Benedictine Sisters of Atchison, KS. I had an aunt who was a Sister of the Most

Precious Blood and who strongly influenced my entering with the sisters in O'Fallon.

Most of my assignments on mission have been out of state: Tennessee, Colorado, and 25 years in Las Cruces, New Mexico. I also spent some years in Mexico and Cottleville, Missouri. I treasure the six years I served on the Leadership Team for the Community as it gave me opportunities to know and love our sisters dearly. It was during those six years with Sr. Fran Raia that Partners in Mission developed its present structure with its own director.

I am in the *Listening Hearts* Small Faith Community, and I look forward to our

monthly meetings. During the pandemic we meet by Zoom or BYOS (bring your own supper) in my backyard which provides space for social distancing. I appreciate this group of five women and one gentleman as our conversations take us to places we never plan as we share our life stories and grapple with the news of the world. Our outreach has been to St. Anthony Food Pantry, making donations of toiletries and gift cards. Recently, I had open heart surgery and am healing well thanks to the prayers and support of both the Sisters and the Partners. Life is good. All is gift.

-Sr. Lucy Meissen

## *Wisdom Circle* Enjoys 10+ Years Together!

*Wisdom Circle* Small Faith Community, formed in 2009, includes good friends Sr. Fran Raia, Sr. Rosemary Oellermann, Carol Jung, Sherry Smith, Maureen McGrath, Sharon Stockmann and the late Sr. Janet Dohr. These friendships began years ago in the days at CPPS convent and Saint Elizabeth Academy.

We have been grieving the loss of Sr. Janet. We are sad that because of the pandemic we have been unable to gather as a group to support each other. It will be quite an adjustment when we gather again without Sr. Janet, but she will always be with us.

Our group meets once a month at one of our homes for faith sharing, prayer, scripture, discussion of current articles, and activities. We always share a meal. We also have invented "Pearls of Wisdom!" At each meeting, one member presents her pearls of wisdom--and at our age there are many! The "pearl" is artisti-

cally written on a card with a pearl attached and collected in a fancy pouch for the next meeting. In doing this we've learned a lot about our God, each other, our families, and ourselves.

One of the highlights of every year is our weekend retreat to Meadowlark. We plan religious activities and "girl time." We spend time praying, hiking, or looking at the stars. We enjoy great food, inspirational movies, and each other. We also make a special day out for each sister on her Jubilee.

Our reconciliation efforts involve a variety of outreach activities. Every year we provide Christmas gifts for an immigrant family through St. Anthony's Food Pantry. We also send items to the pantry throughout the year. All of us were active in The Bridge homeless shelter in downtown St Louis. The International Institute is close to our hearts and we support immigrants in a variety of ways. We also

delight in creating an unusual basket for PIM Trivia Night!

We salute the members of our *Wisdom Circle* who have been instrumental in creating the structure of Partners in Mission and in planning the celebration of the 175th anniversary. These are important to all of us. See you at the next 175th event!

-Sharon Stockmann



Front row L to R: Sr. Fran, Sharon, Maureen;  
Back row: Sr. Rosemary, Carol, Sherry, and Sr. Janet

# Sanguis Christi Spirituality Center



"A sanctuary in the heart of the city" is how Sanguis Christi Spirituality Center was once described.

On January 10, 2010, Sr. Carol Orf and Sr. Ginny Jaskiewicz opened the Center on the second floor of St. Elizabeth Academy Convent. Offerings included spiritual direction, overnight retreat opportunities, personal growth workshops, Taizé Prayer, and prayer days for people living in the south city area. Our goal was to offer spiritual and personal growth opportunities to those who could not otherwise participate due to financial or transportation issues. For four years guests were welcomed there.

In 2014, the St. Elizabeth Academy campus was sold to International Institute. The Spirituality Center moved to St. Pius V Convent and reopened on September 14, 2014. Overnight retreats and Taizé Prayer were no longer options, though the other offerings remained. Visio Divina replaced Taizé Prayer. *Heart to Heart*, a ministry of listening to clients and offering spiritual direction and moral support, was initiated at St. Anthony's Food Pantry.

In 2018, when the sisters relocated from St. Pius V, the Spirituality Center moved again! (3<sup>rd</sup> time is the charm!) Sanguis Christi found a home at Precious Blood Center in O'Fallon, Missouri, its present location. Sr. Theresa Jezl and Sr. Carol

Orf provide Desert Days, days of reflection, spiritual direction, and retreats. We are now, "A sanctuary in the heart of St. Charles County"!

*Because of Covid-19, events are not currently being scheduled but will resume when it is safe.*

-Sr. Carol Orf



Sr. Ginny and Sr. Carol at a Spirituality Center event

## Unstoppable Partners

Shut-down—Schmutt-down!! Even a world-wide pandemic cannot hold back Partners when they are on a mission!

During these last challenging months, Partners and their Small Faith Communities have found ways to be present to each other, even when they could not physically be there.

Partners regularly sent cards and e-mails, called, and prayed with people who were isolated, letting them know they were cared about and loved. For some, the focus was turned inward, and Partners found opportunities to be present for family and extended

family in ways that might not ordinarily have been possible. Others gave of their financial gifts so that ministries could continue. Still others took advantage of opportunities for self-growth, and developed patience when situations seemed out of their control.

Whatever lasting changes this year's experiences might bring about, I know one thing that will not change: Partners' dedication to being God's presence in the world.

*THANK YOU* for being that bright light!

-Audrey Jungermann

### 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.*

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#### Partners on the Journey Newsletter

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