

# Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

WINTER 2022



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### Reminders:

*If you know someone who is curious about Partners in Mission, please let me know. I will be happy to contact them, answer their questions, and explain what we are all about.*

*Also, if you have an interesting item for the newsletter, the Communications Committee would love to hear from you. Please contact either Carol Oldendorf or me with your ideas.*

*Thank you!*

*Audrey Jungermann*

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

## A Message for the New Year



Greetings Partners and Sisters!

We have waited in joyful hope for our Lord throughout the Advent season, and now have received the most important gift: New life—the Christ child born in a manger.

The Christmas season also includes the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God, celebrated on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Across the Christian World it is also known as World Day of Peace. What a grace to consider PEACE! With so much division that currently exists within our country, PEACE is a fitting resolution for us to ponder as we begin 2022.

Consider the word “ponder”, which is described as mental activity. One definition of the word is to give attention to matters of the heart. In the Hebrew language, the heart is the center of the person, the place where reason, emotion, imagination, conscience, and prayer abide. To ponder is to reflect on something while trying to make sense of it, to allow the heart to interact with it. This is the kind of pondering Mary did when she encountered the Angel Gabriel.

Only after doing this could she summon the courage to listen more, to ask how God’s work would happen, and joyfully respond, “YES!” (from Catherine Upchurch, *Daily Reflections for Advent & Christmas*: Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 2021.)

Mary, the mother of the Prince of Peace, teaches us to ponder in our hearts before words pass our lips or appear on the computer screen; to be reflective before reacting to a situation. Mary’s “YES” leads the way in teaching us to conform our desires to those of God.

As you prepare your spiritual resolutions, consider:

Do my desires reflect the desires of God for PEACE?

Do I slow down sufficiently to listen for God’s voice and quietly ponder HIS words?

Do my words and actions add to God’s PEACE?

“May the PEACE of God, which surpasses all human understanding, guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.” (Adapted from Philippians 4:7)

Happy New Year!

-Kristina D. Jackson, PIM Governing Board Chair

## Committees & Community

A brand new year brings brand new opportunities! If you have been looking for a way to meet new Partners in Mission, consider joining one of the Governing Board’s committees, such as Spirituality, Recruitment, or Communication; or, maybe you feel more drawn to the work of the Bold Action Committee.

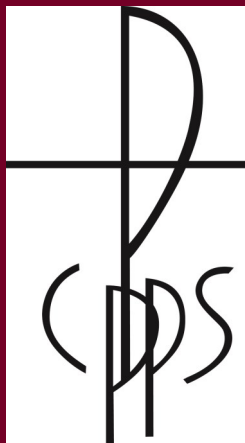
Committee membership is a great way to meet people outside of your Small Faith Community and feel connected with the larger CPPS Community.

To learn more about one of these committees, start by contacting the group’s leader. They would love to hear from you!

Spirituality—Jean Douglas;  
Recruitment—Jeanne Palombo;  
Communications—Carol Oldendorf;  
Bold Action—Sue Buerkle.



## A Gift of Love



Each year, Small Faith Communities are asked to submit goals for the upcoming year. A simple, standardized form is used to name the community's leader, sister mentor, and when and where gatherings will be held. There is also space on the form to note two or three ways in which the SFC intends to live out the vision and mission of Partners in Mission. It's a very serviceable form.

This year, however, one SFC chose to state their goals in a completely different way. I would like to share it with you here:

***"Sustaining Sisters:*** *We as a Partner in Mission (Saints in The Making) group have been gifted with a friend, Sr. Rose Marie Dobelman, of the Precious Blood Sisterhood. She brought us together to share her love of God and her faith with us. She was evidence of the goodness in mankind.*

*As our gift to her and the other Precious Blood Sisters, we continue our journey together sharing our faith, our love, and the spiritual awakening that Sister Rose stirred in us. Our gift to her is to spread her love and friendship to all that we meet. Sister Rose gave so much of herself to us by being our friend, our mentor, and sometimes our conscience. She let us see her inner peace and beauty. Now it is our turn to continue to work to spread her love and values.*

*All of the Sisters work so hard to be a wonderful role model of love to the*

*world with their many endeavors. They seek justice for every person. It is our job to continue to sustain this idealism to make the world a place of peace with the love of God.... We need far-seeing eyes to see the good in every person. Who we are and what we do affects everyone in our lives.*

*As our treasured memory of her and gift to the Sisterhood we love, we continue our journey together sharing our faith, our love and the spiritual awakening. Our gift of love and commitment for the Sisters will live on as we continue our life journey.*

*(Members of Saints in the Making)*

*Pat Scharr  
B. J. Ellison  
Robbi Norcia  
Cathy Cordonier  
Alberta Iffrig  
Sharon Bollinger  
Blandine Stanowski"*

What a beautiful declaration of commitment, and wonderful way to carry forward the gift of God's Love personified by this Community's beloved late mentor, Sr. Rose Marie.

How Partners in Mission will carry the legacy of the CPPS Sisters into the future has been and will remain the topic of much discussion and even debate. When we have those conversations, perhaps it will help to think of that legacy as simply, "God's Love, shared."

-Audrey Jungermann



*Saints in the Making: Sharon, Cathy, Robbi, Sr. Rose Marie, Pat, Alberta, BJ, and Blandine*

# Sr. Josepha Bauer and Ellen Gardiner: A Beautiful Partnership

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***Strolling around the O'Fallon grounds at any given time of the year, you may very well come across two gloved women riding a Gator four-wheeler or pulling weeds in one of the sisters' many flower gardens. They are Sr. Josepha Bauer and Partner in Mission Ellen Gardiner. You rarely see one without the other as they calmly go about their work of keeping the O'Fallon campus beautiful.***

## ***These are their stories:***

My journey began on a farm between Silex and Millwood, Missouri, the last of ten children. My father died before I was born and the last of my siblings died in 2019.

Our 'schooling', to the 10th grade, was in a three-room schoolhouse, taught by CPPS Sisters. After a year at Assumption High School, I entered the Postulancy in 1946 wanting to be a "household sister" like our dear Sr. Medarda who was always kind and cheerful with us 'kids'. But after profession in 1949, I spent 10 years teaching.

In 1959 I was assigned to our mission in Lima, Peru. Besides teaching, our responsibilities included working with the muchachas, home-bound mothers, and the very poor. In 1970, three of us went to Santa to work in an area devastated by a major earthquake. Santa Parish included 16 out-lying villages. "Regular" parish work included being a liaison between government and foreign-aid organizations and the many pueblos in the reconstruction of roads, schools, irrigation canals, and homes. In 1980, Sr. Carol Boschert and I

moved to Macate to be more accessible to the out-lying villages there.

Since returning to the States in January of 1985, I have worked in a Kansas City parish, St. Agatha's Parish, St Elizabeth Academy, the Ecclesiastical Art Department, and now, maintaining and cleaning medical equipment and performing gardening / landscaping work with Ellen Gardiner, whose help is irreplaceable in those tasks. She has been a true Partner in Mission, long before making a formal commitment to any organization other than to live according to The Way of Jesus.

-Sr. Josepha Bauer

\* \* \*

In 1954, I was adopted by Meyer and Jean Zavadnick. Four months later, they adopted another baby, Ann, giving me a sister. I attended school in Normandy, graduating in 1973. After studying mathematics and education, I began teaching junior high school math and science in the St. Louis Archdiocese.

I have been married for 44 years. Ron, my husband, worked for Boeing before retiring in 2020. We have one daughter, Kathleen, who is an Infection Prevention Manager for BJC. We have 2 grandchildren, Mallory, a high school junior and softball center fielder and Evan, a freshman and soccer defenseman. We lost our son-in-law to cancer in 2019. I left teaching to provide hospice care for four family members, eventually moving to O'Fallon in 2000.

Twelve years ago, I started attending 6:30 a.m. Mass at St Joseph Chapel. I found a pew half way back. A week later, I met my first CPPS sister, Sr Rose Marie Mersinger, when she told me to move because I was sitting in another sister's pew. That other sister was Sr. Josepha Bauer, who had been out of chapel due to surgery.

Sr. Josepha and I gradually became friendly and I began working in a garden with her. Over the next eight years, our work in that one garden grew into landscaping nine areas around the campus and cleaning and repairing durable medical equipment. Sr. Josepha and I spend several days every week working together and have become close friends. I have also come to know all but four CPPS sisters. Becoming a Partner in Mission was the natural next step for me.

-Ellen Gardiner

## Traditions of Finland

I recently sat down with Sr. Clare Ann Litteken (we are members of the same Small Faith Community) to learn about her time in Finland and explore Finnish Christmas and winter traditions with her.

Sr. Clare Ann lived in Finland from 1977 to 1996 and experienced several long winters during her time there. When Sr. Clare Ann moved to Finland it was a volunteer mission for American sisters; there was one Finnish CPPS sister in 1977. Finland, predominantly Lutheran and Orthodox Christian, had only 0.1% of the population identifying as Catholic and there were only two Catholic churches in all of Helsinki—St. Mary's Assumption and St. Henry's. The Catholic community was a close-knit group.

Sr. Clare Ann's job in Helsinki was to teach the youngest students at The English School, which is still in existence today. The English School is a co-educational school for students in pre-school through junior high. Classes were taught in both Finnish and English, with an emphasis on developing a proficiency in English. While not a Catholic school, every student at The English School took religion classes. The sisters lived in the upper floor of the school building—an easy commute to work!

In Finland, the Christmas season would

officially begin with the feast of St. Lucy (December 13) and in Finnish households, the youngest daughter would bring coffee to Mom in bed on Christmas morning. Typically, households held Christmas parties only after the feast of St. Lucy. These were welcome events, as during Helsinki winters, sunlight is only seen from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm; darkness sets in very early.

For the sisters, celebrating Christmas involved attending Mass at 2:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve (designated as the Children's Mass), Midnight Mass, and Christmas morning Mass. CPPS sisters contributed their talents to the choir at the Masses. Finnish families typically celebrated Christmas with Mass, followed by a sauna, and then the family meal. After the meal, Father Christmas would make an appearance with gifts.

Christmas in Helsinki was intentionally slower-paced—there was no public transportation open on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, which encouraged people to spend the day within the warm embrace of family and friends. If you did not have a car of your own, you would work to find a ride on those days! This approach is one the hectic-paced Christmas season in the U.S. could benefit from.

To Sr. Mary Venard LeBeau, who now divides her time between Finland and Estonia, and to the Partners in Mission there: "You are wished a very blessed 2022 from the other side of the ocean!"

-Julie Schlichting



Daughter of the church organist in traditional St. Lucy attire.

Sr. Mary Venard, Sr. Aniceta Loeffler, Inger Honkaranta, Sr. Clare Ann, Sr. Renee Brinker

## February Assembly Day

Partners and SFC Sister Mentors are invited to gather at Bishop DuBourg High School on Saturday, February 5, for the Partners in Mission Winter Assembly 2022!

Doors will open at 8:30 a.m. and Assembly will begin with opening prayer at 9:00. Brunch\* will be served mid-morning.

We plan to meet as we did for Assembly in September, with those vaccinated against COVID-19 welcome to attend in person and those unable to attend in person viewing the Assembly on Zoom. Masks are required.

We hope you can join us for a morning of prayer, inspirational sharing, and the blessing of one another's good company.

\*Please let Audrey Jungermann know if you would like to bring a buffet item. Dishes should be brought to the school cafeteria the day of Assembly. The address for Bishop DuBourg High School is:

**5850 Eichelberger Street  
St. Louis, MO 63109**

**Enter the campus off Eichelberger and drive around to the back.**

RSVPs are due to Audrey Jungermann by Friday, January 14. We look forward to seeing you on Assembly Day!

-The Governing Board Assembly Planning Committee:  
Audrey Jungermann, Jean Douglas, Julie Schlichting, Jeanne Palombo

### 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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