

Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

WINTER 2023



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A Couple of Reminders:

If you know someone who is curious about Partners in Mission, please let me know. I am happy to contact them, answer their questions, and explain how to begin a *Pathways* journey to becoming a Partner.

Also, if you would like to see **your** words in print, take a look at Julie Schlichting's article on page two about contributing to this Newsletter. We would be delighted to showcase your work!

Thank you!
Audrey Jungermann

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

In Joyful Gratitude: A New Year's Message



Greetings, Partners and Sisters!

It is with a joyful heart that I wish one and all a Happy and Blessed New Year!

The Christmas season is a memory, and now we look to

the New Year with hopeful anticipation. Though we may be putting the Christmas decorations away for another year, this is a moment in which to find joy. You may ask how one can find joy in packing away Christmas decorations. For me, it's a chance to look at each decoration and ornament as I pack it away, recalling joyful moments from long ago. For me, it is also the act of letting go, piece by piece, and asking myself, "Does this piece still have meaning for me?" If it does not, then I know it's time to let it go. In 2022, I did a lot of letting go. Clearing out 34 years of accumulated possessions and downsizing to a smaller home has lightened my spirit and opened the door for more joy and gratitude in my heart.

Galatians 5:22-23 says: "*But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.*" Our Heavenly Father desires us to be joyful! Our Heavenly Father also smiles with glee when we express gratitude for the joy within our lives. Notice that "joy" is the second fruit described in the verse. Now, consider our Partners in Mission direction statement for the year: "**In joyful gratitude and ignited with the fire of the Holy Spirit we go forth to spread the love**

of Christ in service and to be a reconciling presence to our community and to our divided world." What is at the heart of the second word? You guessed it: "joy."

Many of us wish we had more joy and peace in our lives. What plans do you have to make room for more joy? Remember, the "clutter" that you clear away can be more than physical stuff. Consider the opposites of the fruits of the spirit--envy, jealousy, gossip, hatred and anger. Also, notice how the fruits of the spirit come up in your daily Examen. Do you find yourself using one or more of these consistently? Notice how Jesus used the fruits (including joy) in his ministry. Is there a special fruit you need? Thank the Lord for the gifts He has given you and ask Him for what you still need. Ask the Lord to show you the way to share more joy in this broken, wounded world.

May you be ignited with the fire of the Holy Spirit as you spread the Love of Jesus Christ in 2023!

In Joyful Gratitude,
Kris Jackson, Governing Board Chair



Combined SFC Gatherings

Recently, my Partners in Mission Small Faith Community, *Disciples in Action - St. Agatha*, had our combined gathering with the *New Beginnings* community. I had been looking forward to the joint meeting ever since the topic was proposed. I am very close to the members of my group and felt that an opportunity to get to know the members of another group would be a wonderful experience. The CPPS Partners in Mission tends to attract some truly outstanding people and I am always happy to fold more of them into my life.

Our combined gathering was held on November 15 in the chapel at the St. Louis Altenheim. The focus of the gathering was on getting to know each other.

We started with brief introductions of ourselves and then we played a fun game prepared by Sr. Clare Ann Litteken. Sr. Clare Ann had 26 cards, each labeled with a letter of the alphabet. We took turns pulling a card and then describing ourselves with wording that began with our letter (Thank goodness, I did not get the dreaded X or Z!). This turned out to be great fun and many of us were helped by our SFC members when our minds drew blanks trying to find appropriate words. We ended this fun by saying together a prayer that was previously featured in the CPPS Prayer Corner.

We then moved into the cafeteria for some more socializing and sampling of the deli-

cious bread pudding that is a staple on the menu at The Altenheim (It is truly not to be missed!). Even though it was already starting to get dark, we enjoyed a stunning view of the Mississippi River from the cafeteria windows. It was a lovely way to wind down our evening together.

A special "Thanks!" to Mary Jane Matejka who was instrumental in arranging for us to meet at the Altenheim!

-Julie Schlichting



Back row (left to right): Jill Berry, Linda Tonies, Sr. Loretto Maes, Sr. Helene Rueffer, Sr. Carolyn Pozarich, Kathi Broughton

Front row: Sr. Clare Ann Litteken, Mary Jane Matejka, Sr. Joyce Schramm, Kathleen Bolduan



Help make the ***Partners on the Journey*** newsletter the best it can be! Do you want to write an article? Do you have an idea for a feature or topic you would like to see covered in a future newsletter? ***Partners on the Journey*** is published quarterly and we are always looking for fresh ideas; any time is the right time to submit suggestions!

Please reach out to the Communications Committee chair, Julie Schlichting, with your ideas: julie@stlouisrc.com or 314.591.5213.

Thank you!!

Meet Sr. Mary Beth Kemper

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I recently sat down with Sr. Mary Beth Kemper (via Zoom, anyway) to profile her for this *Partners on the Journey* newsletter. I had a lovely time getting to know her better.

Sr. Mary Beth was born in Maryville, MO (about 90 miles north of Kansas City), the oldest child of a large farming family. Growing

up on a farm gave her a love of nature as she was surrounded by hogs, cattle, chickens and lots of cats. The farm is still in the Kemper family, under the guidance of Sr. Mary Beth's brother.

Sr. Mary Beth encountered the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood at any early age. Her aunt on her father's side was a CPPS sister (Sr. Clarissa) and Sr. Mary Beth was taught by CPPS sisters in grade school and as a boarding student at St. Elizabeth's Academy.

The early 1960s were an important time for Sr. Mary Beth. She entered the Precious Blood order in 1962 and made her first profession of vows in 1965. Sr. Mary Beth is currently the sister mentor with Sr. Barbara Payne for the *Taste & See* Partners in Mission Small



Faith Community and has been part of this group for the past five years.

Sr. Mary Beth has had exciting opportunities to travel abroad and she especially enjoyed her time in Machu Picchu, Peru with Sr. Mary Cecile Gunelson visiting Sr. Rosa Maria Ludena. Her own work has been enriched by seeing great works of art in European museums.

Sr. Mary Beth was blessed with an artistic talent that she developed as a Ceramics major (with an Art History minor) at Webster University and Missouri University. These skills were put to use teaching art at St. Mary's College and creating silk screened church banners. Sr. Mary Beth considers her opportunity to study art and create art for the community—like the example shown here—to be among her greatest gifts from God. She believes everyone has a capacity for art, you simply need the teaching and the time.

Sr. Mary Beth's dream for the world is that all nations come to **appreciate and cherish** each other's cultures and differences—certainly a wonderful hope for the new year!

Thank you, Sr. Mary Beth, for your time and the chance to get to know you!

--Julie Schlichting

Getting to Know Partner in Mission Kathy Flowers

I was born in St. Louis to a father who worked as a photoengraver and a stay-at-home mother. I have one older sister who was in the education profession as both a teacher and an elementary school principal. I was also a teacher—I taught art to all ages (kindergarten through college students). I was happily married for 40 years, and my husband and I were blessed with three sons and five grandchildren. My greatest gifts from God are my family, the children He has given me, and the various communities I have been privileged to be part of throughout my life.

I have traveled all over Europe and was in East Germany before The Wall came down. Art museums in France, Italy, and England were definitely the highlights of these trips for me. My goal was to make sure our three sons traveled to Europe at least once.

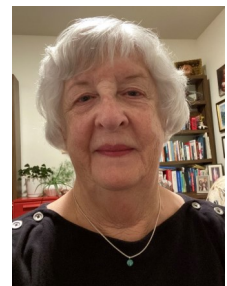
I first met the Precious Blood Sisters when my husband, Bob, and I moved into The Inn on the Villa Theresa property in late 2016. Sadly, Bob passed only four months later. The warmth and compassion of the sisters helped me through some hard times. My neighbors in The Inn at that time, Sister Ruth Kertz and Sister Esther Hogan, were a tremendous gift to me and invited me to become a Partner in Mission. At first, I declined, but then I realized it would be a good

pursuit. I became a Partner in Mission in 2019.

My involvement with my Small Faith Community, *Faith Seekers*, has brought many joys and graces by deepening my prayer life and making me more aware of the needs and suffering of others. The bond that has grown within our group helps each of us through prayer and discussions. We encourage each other every month to remember the goals that we set for the year. Most of us have been together since our Pathways experience, but last year we welcomed new members into our group.

Faith Seekers is a community of deep, prayerful, and strong women who give me courage and reinforce my commitment to live reconciliation in my life by listening, sharing life experiences, and praying. The dedicated lives of our three Sister Mentors—Sr. Cecile Gunelson, Sr. Mary Harper, and Sr. LaVerne Wester also make my heart sing!

-Kathy Flowers



Hospitality Month—Keeping a Good Thing Going!

Once again this year, in April, Partners will have the opportunity to invite guests to their Small Faith Community gatherings.

Of course, it's possible for people to find out about Partners in Mission in other ways, but a personal invitation seems to be the most appreciated—and the most effective.

As you think about ways to approach candidates, consider "invitation" as a better way to describe how we spread the word about Partners in Mission. "Recruiting" tends to imply work for us, and maybe more than a little "What am I getting myself into?" for prospective candidates. We would much rather have people feel *welcomed*. Hospitality, a core value of the CPPS sisters, happens to also be one of the things Partners excel at. I know this from personal experience, and I know my experience is not unique.

And so, if you have someone in mind who you think might benefit from belonging to Partners in Mission, or who would be good *for* Partners in Mission, consider reaching out to

them this year. Hospitality Month is the perfect time for this. Extend an invitation for the person to join your SFC gathering in April and see where the Spirit leads from there. If you don't ask, you'll never know!

I want to also offer that my "door" is always open, as is my phone line, to anyone with questions about Partners in Mission. I am also happy to reach out to anyone who would like to learn more.

And, if you have ideas of your own about how our invitation methods can be improved, please let either Mary Buchanan, this year's Recruitment (Invitation) Committee chair, or me, know. We are always looking for fresh, new avenues to try.

Finally, I want to sincerely thank you for all you do to keep Partners in Mission the mission-centered, *Christ-centered*, community that it is. What a great thing we have to share with others!

-Audrey Jungermann



From top to bottom, members of Mustard Seeds, In His Footsteps, and Wisdom Circle Small Faith Communities at gatherings.

2023 Winter Assembly

Partners and Small Faith Community Sister Mentors are long overdue for a true Winter Assembly. Luckily, one is just around the corner!

By now, you may have received your invitation to this year's Partners in Mission Winter Assembly Day. If you have not, you will have it very soon. **Please mark your calendar for Saturday morning, February 4, 2023. We will gather in the DuBourg High School cafeteria beginning at 8:30 a.m.,** for a morning of great company, outstanding food, and thoughtful reflection. Opening prayer at 9:00.

Partners and Sister Mentors, kindly RSVP by Friday, January 20, 2023, so we know how many to plan for.

When you respond, please also indicate what you will bring for the brunch buffet: Baked goods, fruit, or a breakfast casserole. We'll have juice and coffee there.

I think you will enjoy the morning we have planned. We look forward to seeing you there!

-Assembly Planning Committee
Audrey Jungermann
Julie Schlichting
Jeanne Palombo



Sr. Carol Orf addressing Partners at the 2019 Winter Assembly

CPPS Partners in Mission

We 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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