

Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

SPRING 2023



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

"It's YOUR Turn for Content"	2
Governing Board Nominations	2
Meet Sr. Joan Klaas	3
Getting to Know Julie Bartch	3
How we Connect	4
2023 Winter Assembly Recap	4

Reminder:

April is Hospitality Month for Small Faith Communities. Share what you love most about Partners in Mission by inviting friends to a monthly gathering.

All are welcome!!

If you know someone who might be interested in joining this Fall's *Pathways* class, let's talk! I'll be happy to answer questions and explain the path to becoming a Partner in Mission. And, I am very grateful to everyone who has already referred *Pathways* candidates.

Thank you!

-Audrey Jungermann



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

Easter Hope

We are on the threshold of another Holy Week, with Palm Sunday just around the corner and Easter Sunday close behind. Lent is winding down. Outside, the first signs of Spring have already begun to appear. The sun shows itself more frequently these days and for longer periods. In all aspects of life, I can feel darkness retreating.

During the colder, darker days of Winter and Lent, I sometimes felt hope slipping into the background. But now, as the natural world begins to awaken, making everything lighter and brighter, I sense hope nudging its way back up to the front.

I am keenly aware of the fact that I live in extraordinary comfort and safety. I am also very aware that not everyone does. It is difficult to comprehend what hope could possibly look like for someone who has just lost everything. I don't know how people manage to find hope in the face of war or natural disasters or violence; but I also don't know how anyone survives without it. To despair would be a worse tragedy.

I pray that I'll always be able to tell when someone needs something from me—even if it's only an acknowledgement of their presence or a smile that might help



them get through the day. I need to be still long enough to notice those around me, especially those who are easy for me to overlook. I need to be mindful of the power that a kind word, or at the very least, a listening ear, can have.

May hope never fail you, no matter how dark the day might seem. When dawn breaks on Easter Sunday morning, let it be a reminder of the sure and eternal presence of the resurrected Christ. I pray that this presence will be especially felt by anyone who is struggling to find light in their life right now.

Blessings, for God's love and light and hope to be yours, this Easter and always.

Happy Easter!

-Audrey Jungermann

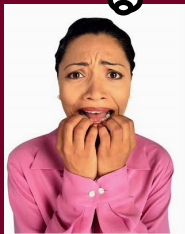
Upcoming Events in 2023

The Governing Board and Sustainability Committee have several events in the works for the coming year. Look for details to be announced in the next few months!



“It’s *YOUR* Turn for Content”

YIKES!!



Did the title of this article make your heart race? If you have ever felt panic at being responsible for the content of an upcoming gathering, then you know what I mean. I recently asked Small Faith Community leaders and members about content they have found especially meaningful. Below is a list to help get your creative juices flowing when it is *your* turn to provide content.

- Book Club—select a book to read and discuss at your SFC gathering. The following titles come highly recommended:
- *Universal Christ*; Richard Rohr
- *Julian of Norwich: Wisdom in a Time of Pandemic – and Beyond*; Matthew Fox
- *Ten Prayers God Always Says “YES” To*; Anthony De Stefano

Even if you haven’t read *Ten Prayers God Always Says “YES” To*, you can do the following: print off the ten prayers (they are found at [A Catholic Life: Ten Prayers God Always Says Yes To](#)), place them in a bowl, and have each participant pick one and then speak to whether they have prayed the prayer and what the response has been.

- Book Exchange—this needs a little advance planning. Each member brings a book that is meaningful to them and exchanges it with another member’s book. Plan to discuss the books at a future meeting (how far in the future will depend on your group’s particular situation).
- Stations of the Cross—this works best in

Lent, of course. Print off the Stations of the Cross and slide each one into a page protector with an appropriate image on the other side. As each station is read (we alternated among participants) the others view and contemplate the image.

- Seder Supper—this also works best in Lent. My group did this a few years ago and for me it brought back memories of grade school experiences where we did group Seder Suppers in the cafeteria.
- Move your meeting outside—my group did this out of necessity during the pandemic (we had a meeting at Sugar Creek Park), but spending time in nature with your SFC group can also put a new perspective on your gathering, regardless of the agenda.
- Plan a retreat together—it will take the input of multiple members and some advance planning, but consider taking advantage of the Meadowlark facility for this; the peaceful setting will take your time together to a new level.
- Catch a movie together—since I am due to take a turn at content for my SFC, I am going to suggest that we go see *Jesus Revolution* and then grab a bite to eat afterwards to discuss the movie.

If your group does something particularly outstanding, don’t keep it to yourself—sharing with your fellow Partners may provide others with the same experience.

-Julie Schlichting

Elected Members of the Governing Board:



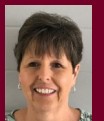
Kris Jackson
Board Chair

Julie Schlichting
Board Vice Chair,
Communications



Jeanne Palombo
Secretary,
Board Formation

Carol Oldendorf
Spirituality



Mary Buchanan
Invitation

Dawn Boschert
Development



Sr. Julia Marie Wolf
Sister Advisor

Governing Board Nominations

This is the time of year when we begin thinking about whom to nominate to run for a seat on the Partners in Mission Governing Board.

This year’s Board Formation Chair is Jeanne Palombo. I encourage you to reach out to Jeanne—or me, or any member of the Board—if you have questions about Board service. We will be happy to answer your questions and explain more about what’s involved and why this is a worthwhile and rewarding use of your time.

The other Board members are: Kris Jackson, Julie Schlichting, Carol Oldendorf, Mary Buchanan, and Dawn Boschert. Sr. Julia Marie Wolf serves as the Board’s Sister Advisor.

Here are some of the basics: The Board is comprised of six elected Partner mem-

bers and a Sister Advisor. Each member serves a three-year term; terms are staggered so that each year two members rotate off and two new members join.

The Board meets for three evening meetings (February, August, and October) in O’Fallon, and two Saturday retreats (a spiritual retreat and a planning retreat) at Meadowlark.

Each member also leads a committee – Communication, Board Formation, Recruitment, Development, or Spirituality.

Nominations for next year’s Board will be accepted through July 31st and should be submitted to: palomfam@aol.com. Elections will be held in September when we gather for our Commitment Sunday assembly.

Thank you!

-Audrey Jungermann

Meet *Sr. Joan Klaas*

PAGE 3

Although I have known Sr. Joan Klaas for some time (we are in the same Small Faith Community), I had a delightful experience interviewing her for this profile so that you can know her a little better too.

Sr. Joan was born to parents Clara and Joe and the family initially lived in North St. Louis County before relocating to Wentzville when she was eight years old. Sr. Joan grew up with two older sisters: Lucy (who passed in 2020) and Madonna, and two younger brothers: Leo (who passed in 2009) and Frank.

The family's move to Wentzville would have big an impact on Sr. Joan's life. She attended St. Patrick's grade school, which is where she first encountered the joy of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood. One sister of particular influence for Sr. Joan was Sr. Luanna Brucks (who also happened to be my music/chorus instructor at St. Mary's Academy). Sr. Luanna's warmth and loving personality was one that Sr. Joan remembers vividly from her first days as a student at "St. Pat's".

Sr. Joan came to the convent in 1957 and took first vows in 1960. Her first years as a CPPS sister were spent teaching: 7th and 8th grade science and math at Holy Family; science at Bishop DuBourg High School; science and math at St. Mary's College; and finally, microbiology and physics classes for nursing students. In 1980, Sr. Joan became a member of the CPPS Leadership Team and served in this capacity for the next 12 years. In 1992, Sr. Joan began two



new adventures—a move to St. Agatha's convent in South City to support the food pantry, and involvement with the Partners in Mission.

The Partners bring Sr. Joan great joy and she feels blessed by their willingness to help the sisters. (Sr. Joan—I can assure you that those feelings go both ways—the Sisters bring us Partners great joy and blessings too!)

Sr. Joan has had the opportunity to travel extensively. While on the Leadership Team she traveled to Bolivia, Peru, and Finland to spend time with the sisters living there. She also made several trips to Lithuania—at one point, bringing an infant boy, Lucas, to the US for medical treatments and then accompanying him on the flight back home when he was two and ready to return.

Sr. Joan is a woman of great faith. She has never doubted God's love or mercy (as she says, she would much rather take it for granted than doubt it), and her greatest prayer is for peace and healing in our world.

Thank you, Sr. Joan, for taking the time to let us get to know you better!

-Julie Schlichting

Getting to Know Partner in Mission *Julie Bartch*



I recently had the pleasure of getting to know Partner in Mission Julie Bartch while profiling her for this article. Thank you, Julie, for giving me the opportunity to meet with you!

Julie was born in Danville, IL but spent a good portion of her childhood in the Dallas, TX area (her father was a huge *Cowboys* fan!). When Julie was 16, the family returned to the Mid-west, settling in Hazelwood. Julie graduated from Hazelwood High School and then attended Lindenwood University where she earned a BA in Accounting.

Julie was married to her husband Hal for 36 years until he passed away in 2014. Together, Julie and Hal settled in St. Charles and raised two sons. Michael, 41, now lives in Montana where he and his wife are university professors. Matthew, 36, is living in Atlanta and has the distinct privilege of being the father of the love of Julie's life: her 19-month-old granddaughter, Sloane. Both Michael and Matthew attended the Academy of the Sacred Heart for grade school and

then continued their education at St. Louis University High School.

Julie worked as an accountant in her professional life, holding financial administration positions with several city governments. Recently retired, Julie's latest job was that of president and CEO of Pickett, Ray & Silver Inc., a company that she and Hal owned.

Julie has been a member of the *Taste & See* Small Faith Community since 2017. Partner Mary Martin was instrumental in encouraging Julie to join Partners in Mission. Being a Partner has allowed Julie to reach a comfort level with her Catholic faith in general (Julie converted to Catholicism as an adult) and with the sisters in particular. Julie said that the sisters just 'drew her in.'

With the free time that retirement brings, Julie is taking the opportunity to travel—frequent trips to Atlanta to spend time with Sloane are a favorite. Julie tapped into her independent spirit by kicking off her retirement with a 15-day solo road trip of the southeastern United States, taking in the sites in Louisville, Charleston, Savannah, and Atlanta—definitely a real adventure!

-Julie Schlichting

How We Connect

There is a definite rhythm to the Partners in Mission year. Annual events are held, with some new ones occasionally being added. Something is going on in nearly every month to help partners and sisters connect and stay connected. For the benefit of our newer partners, here are some of the things you can look forward to:

Communications:

Leah Huff's *Precious Blood Updates* are emailed to sisters and partners each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Everyone is invited to submit prayer requests for a weekly *Prayer Moment Intentions* e-mail and to pray for the needs of fellow partners and sisters.

A *Monthly Update to Partners* is sent the first of each month. This Update typically contains a reflection, a list of partners' birthdays, upcoming events, and other features.

Partners On the Journey newsletter—**This is what you are currently reading and it's all yours!! Your articles and ideas for interesting features are always welcome—we would love to feature your writing in this quarterly newsletter!**

Gathering Opportunities:

Commitment Sunday is held in September on the Sunday closest to September 8, the anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood. On this day, new partners are welcomed and existing partners renew their commitments. Also, new Governing Board members are

elected and milestone anniversaries are celebrated.

In late September, Small Faith Community Leaders gather for a Saturday morning workshop to receive news, ideas, and material for the upcoming year. This workshop is recommended for all Leaders, especially those in that role for the first time.

Winter Assembly in February is the second major gathering of the year for partners and sister mentors. Guest speakers from among the CPPS community and elsewhere are invited to give presentations.

Trivia Night, hosted by TLC Small Faith Community, had been an annual event prior to 2020, and is planned to resume this year. Everyone is welcome to attend this night of food, fun, and friendly competition. Themed baskets and other prizes are donated by SFCs and raffled off the night of the event.

Summer get-together, a collaborative effort by TLC, the Sustainability Committee, and the Governing Board keeps the tradition of a Summer party alive.

And, of course, attending monthly SFC gatherings, and occasionally joining other SFC gatherings to share ideas and faith experiences, remains central to Partners in Mission.

Outreach & Ministries:

PIM Service Days in the Fall give partners from all SFCs a chance to

spend time together while supporting great causes. Dates, locations, and projects are chosen to give as many people as possible a chance to participate.

Membership on the Governing Board or one of its committees is open to all partners and offers an opportunity to guide the direction of Partners in Mission. This is also a great way to meet other partners.

Some Small Faith Communities visit sisters and residents in Abbey Senior Health or send greeting cards as part of their outreach efforts.

Partners have individual ministries, as well. Denis Wilhelm's *Journeying & Journaling* blog, which is shared with partners and sister mentors, is a great example. Denis' unique perspectives on life and faith are often humorous and always thought-provoking.

What else?

Do you have ideas of other ways partners can connect? We'd love to hear them! Share your ideas with your SFC Leader, a member of the Board, or me! Thank you!

-Audrey Jungermann

2023 Winter Assembly-Partners in Bloom

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2023 Winter Assembly at Bishop DuBourg High School on Saturday, February 4. What a great time!

The day began with a welcome and explanation of the day's theme, "*Bloom Where You're Planted.*" Next, came a reflection and opening prayer against a backdrop of beautiful images from Sr. Mary Hope Billing, SSND, Jeanne Palombo's cousin.

Carlos Ruiz Martinez, from the Migrant & Immigration Community Action project, spoke about his organization's work, which is to provide legal representation to immigrants ar-

riving in St. Louis.

After an amazing brunch, Sr. Theresa Jezl and partner Sandy Hosack each gave inspiring talks on our theme from their perspectives.

Sr. Carol Orf wrapped up the day by explaining and then leading the assembly in a "centering prayer." It was a lovely way to end a great gathering.

My thanks to Jeanne Palombo, Julie Schlichting, Sue Buerkle, Mary Mann, our presenters, and EVERYONE who pitched in to make the day special!

-Audrey Jungermann

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.

GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Kris Jackson, Board Chair
Julie Schlichting, Vice Chair
Jeanne Palombo, Secretary
Carol Oldendorf
Dawn Boschert
Mary Buchanan
Sr. Julia Marie Wolf, Sr. Advisor
Audrey Jungermann, PIM Director

204 North Main St.

O'Fallon, MO 63366

636-542-9479

Partners On the Journey Newsletter

Editor: Julie Schlichting

Publisher: Audrey Jungermann