

Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

SUMMER 2023



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

July 1, 2023

Commitment Sunday	2
Upcoming Events	2
Meet Sr. Mary Venard LeBeau	3
Getting to Know Deborah Meyer	3
Summer Plans	4
Board Nominations	4

Your Governing Board Members and the Committees they Chair—Who does what on the PIM Board:

Kris Jackson, Board Chair. Facilitates meetings and co-plans the June planning retreat with the director.

Julie Schlichting, Vice-Chair and Communication. Works with the director to produce this quarterly Newsletter.

Jeanne Palombo, Secretary and On-Going Board Formation. Records minutes and provides prayers at meetings; helps enlist and on-board new members.

Carol Oldendorf, Spirituality. Supports the spiritual development of Small Faith Communities and co-plans the April spiritual retreat with the director.

Mary Buchanan, Invitation (FKA Recruitment). Spreads the word about Partners in Mission and the *Pathways* program.

Dawn Boschert, Development. Distributes grants for the continuation of ministries from funds raised.



July 1st marks a very special day in the life of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood. It is their feast day and a time to recall the past with gratitude and look forward to the days

ahead with hope and joy.

It would be interesting to know what the original sisters of 178 years ago would think of the community today!

How could they possibly imagine the number of people whose lives would be touched by the sisters—the minds that would be educated, the hungry, of both body and spirit, who would be fed, and the lives that would be turned around? Would they ever believe how the sisters would grow in numbers and spread across the globe to serve, boldly, wherever they saw a need? Could they dream of

the important contributions to art and liturgical celebrations the sisters would make?

I think the founding sisters would be amazed!

From my perspective as a Partner in Mission, I can say what an honor it is to be associated with this amazing Precious Blood order of women religious!

Thank you, Sisters, not only for inviting us Partners to share your charism, but for welcoming and encouraging us with your friendship and support every step of the way. We are most grateful!

Blessings to you on this special day, Sisters! May the light of God's love continue to shine on you!

-Audrey Jungermann



Congratulations, 2023 CPPS Jubilarians!

70th

Sr. Lois Hellebusch

60th

Sr. Mary Therese DeMoor
Sr. Julia Marie Wolf
Sr. Carmen Schnyder

The late Sr. John Antonio Miller would also have celebrated her 60th jubilee this year

50th

Sr. Ginny Jaskiewicz

27th

Sr. Guillermina Loma Aliaga

25th

Sr. Joni Belford



Guest Speaker for Commitment Sunday



On Sunday, September 10, 2023, Partners in Mission will gather with their sister mentors to welcome new partners, elect new Governing Board members, and re-

new their commitment to Partners in Mission.

In addition to the day's regular events, we are honored this year to welcome a very special guest speaker: Jeanne Connolly, former Board President for the North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR).

Although NACAR dissolved as an organization last year, Ms. Connolly continues to support the associate movement as Director of Charism and Mission for

Wheaton Franciscans, and she has been a Covenant Companion, or associate, herself for more than 27 years.

Ms. Connolly has had over 35 years of leadership, management, training, and consulting experience. She believes that, in her words, "We are all called to be instruments of peace, transformation, and hope. Each of us has a role in life, ministry, and mission to serve the Creator and one another for the greater good."

To say the least, we are very excited to have Ms. Connolly address our assembly!

Please plan to attend this important annual gathering. It is a great occasion for coming together in shared mission to be reignited in the Spirit and inspired for the year ahead.

See you there!

-Audrey Jungermann

Mark Your Calendars!

The Governing Board and Sustainability Committee have great things in store for Partners in Mission this year! We hope you can join us for...

Partners in the Park Summer Picnic Saturday, July 15, 2023, in Veteran's Tribute Park at 1031 Kisker Road in Weldon Spring, 63304. Come any time



between Noon and 3:00 p.m. for delicious food and great company! Carpooling is being coordinated for those who want to share a ride.

RSVP to: ajungermann@cppsadmin-offallon.org by Monday, July 3, 2023.

Commitment Sunday September 10, 2023, on the West side of St. Joseph Chapel from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mass will be at 11:00 a.m. in Chapel, with lunch for partners and sister mentors to follow in the Abbey tent outside. We return to the West side of Chapel after lunch for Board member elections and our afternoon sessions.



SFC Leaders' Workshop Saturday, September 23, 2023, under the Abbey tent outdoors from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Leaders or representatives of Small Faith Communities are invited to come hear news for the upcoming year. Breakfast will be served.

Partners in Mission Service Days Projects, dates, and locations to be announced soon.



Combined SFC Gatherings

Last year's trial of having SFCs come together for one or more monthly gatherings was very well received. We look forward to combined gatherings again this year. Someone will be on hand to assist with scheduling at the Leaders' Workshop in September.

Partners in Mission Retreat Thanks to your great input, plans are underway to offer a contemplative retreat for partners on the O'Fallon campus, making use of the beautiful spaces in St. Joseph Chapel and outdoors. More details will follow.



Meet Sr. Mary Venard LeBeau

PAGE 3

I recently had a lovely visit with Sr. Mary Vénard LeBeau to interview her for this article. We had a thoroughly enjoyable visit and I hope you enjoy this tiny glimpse into her fascinating life.

Sr. Mary Vénard was born Georgine LeBeau, one of eight children. She grew up in Kansas before her father made the decision to move the family out of the Dust Bowl region to Missouri; she was 11 at the time. When Georgine joined the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, she took the name Mary Vénard, after St. Théophile Vénard a French saint who was martyred in Vietnam in 1861. (On a side note, I was not familiar with St. Théophile Vénard and I did a little research to learn more about him. His biography is one worth exploring.)

Sr. Mary Vénard has had a fruitful career as an educator, especially for the youngest children (ages five through ten) and she taught with the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood before becoming a sister herself. In 1945, Sr. Mary Vénard left the United States to teach at The English School in Finland, returning to O'Fallon just a few months ago—the last CPPS sister to leave Finland permanently. In Europe, Sr. Mary Vénard was especially gifted with teaching the youngest students. She saw it as her responsibility to give them a good start, both in the classroom and in life, leading by example and gentle discipline, when needed. It was not unusual for Sr. Mary Vénard to join the students at recess by running and playing tag with them.

Under Sr. Mary Vénard's direction, students learned how to be considerate and respectful of a large group and individual members. To say, "large group" is no exaggeration. Sr. Mary Vénard's class size was 100 pupils—50 attending in the morning and 50 in the afternoon.



Lissa Kaskinen & Sr. Mary Venard, from the cover of "On the Journey" Spring 2023 issue

Sr. Mary Vénard was clear about setting expectations so that students knew what was expected of them and she provided abundant examples for them to follow. As a parent myself, I can appreciate Sr. Mary Vénard's tactic for parent/teacher conferences: Start with the positive and then follow with the areas to improve.

When Sr. Mary Vénard knew the time was coming to depart from Finland, she prepared herself for this big life change. She was sent off in style with a large celebration in Finland shortly before her 100th birthday. Welcome back to the USA!

To read more about Sr. Mary Vénard—complete with some great photos--see the Spring 2023 issue of "On The Journey" magazine.

-Julie Schlichting

Getting to Know Partner in Mission Deborah Meyer



I really enjoyed the opportunity to interview Deborah for this piece. It is always a pleasure to get to speak with other Partners in Mission and my time with Deborah was no exception.

Deborah is a St. Louis native and has known the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood since her days at St. Mary's Academy. During our conversation, Deborah and I realized that we had overlapping time at SMA (she was a confident senior the year that I was a lowly freshman). We had a nice walk down memory lane, bonding over common experiences at SMA.

After graduating from the Academy, Deborah attended college and spent a couple of years in sunny San Diego, California before returning home to the Midwest. Deborah worked in the hospitality industry for 10 years before making the move to a new career as a Special Education Math teacher; she is currently employed with the Orchard Farm school district

Deborah now lives in St. Charles where she is raising her foster daughter, Maggie, a student at Fort Zumwalt South. Deborah has been Maggie's foster mom for two years and is currently moving towards adoption. Maggie is Deborah's greatest gift from God!

Deborah has been a member of the *Stepping Stones* Small Faith Community for five years. She responded to an announcement in the Assumption parish bulletin. It was the start of her pathway to becoming a Partner. Her experience with Partners in Mission has greatly enriched her life, but there have also been challenges; namely, the passing of two sister mentors (Sr. Mary Catherine Feldewert and Sr. Rosemary Russell). The members of *Stepping Stones* take comfort in supporting one another during trying times.

On a parting note, Deborah shared with me her favorite prayer which is from St. Theresa of Calcutta, "Do It Anyway." These are definitely words to live by.

*People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.
Forgive them anyway.*

*If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.
Be kind anyway.*

*If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.
Succeed anyway.*

*If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.
Be honest and sincere anyway.*

*What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.
Create anyway.*

*If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.*

*The good you do today, will often be forgotten.
Do good anyway.*

*Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.
Give your best anyway.*

*In the final analysis, it is between you and God.
It was never between you and them anyway.*

Thank you for letting us get to know you better, Deborah!

-Julie Schlichting

“What I Did on My Summer Vacation”



Ugh!! How I used to dread that unavoidable essay assignment every September! I struggled to come up with anything noteworthy I had done during the previous three months and would try to make whatever I *had* done sound interesting. In hindsight, I can (now) see the value of looking back on what has been accomplished—or not accomplished.

I recently gave sort of a reverse assignment to Small Faith Community Leaders: “What do you *plan to do* this Summer?”

I knew that many Small Faith Communities do not hold regular gatherings in the Summer, but I suspected that activities do not stop. I thought it might be good to hear about the different ways Partners and Sisters remain connected in the off-season.

Here are a couple of responses I received from SFC Leaders:

Colleen Curran-Schulte of *Disciples in Action*—one of the groups that DOES



meet year-round—told me that this year their Small Faith Community attended a retreat together in June. They will also be helping clients of St. Agatha’s at the annual “Christmas in July” event (to which volunteers are always welcome, by the way!).

In His Footsteps Small Faith Community usually delivers “goodie bags” to residents in Abbey Senior Health at Halloween, Christmas, and Easter. This year, deciding not to wait until the Fall, they will also deliver bags on the 4th of July. Margie Johnson shares that, “We have gotten good

response from the residents in the past, but they want to know who the bags are from. And so, for the first time, we will label the bags with our group’s name.”

In my own Small Faith Community, *Faith Seekers*, we first started getting together for a luncheon in July a few years back and it has become an an-

nual tradition. It is a nice way to break up the span of time between the end of one Partner year and the beginning of the next and to catch up with one another. We have come to look forward to these luncheons almost as much as our regular gatherings.

Hearing about what others do can be inspiring for groups wanting to try something a little different. Thank you, Leaders, for sharing your plans with the rest of us.

I hope everyone has a wonderful, safe, and happy Summer!

-Audrey Jungermann



Tick, Tick, Tick...



Yes, the clock is ticking. There are just a few weeks left to submit nominations for one of two seats on the Partners in Mission Governing Board.

By now, you probably know the basics of Board service by heart—attend three annual meetings, in February, August, and October, and two Saturday retreats at Meadowlark, chair one of five committees, and participate in assemblies and events.

Those are the technical aspects of serving on the Board, and they are pretty straight-forward. What’s a little harder to describe are the benefits of working on a team that has everyone’s best interests at heart and that cares deeply for each individual as well as for Partners in Mission as a whole.

Board members value each other’s opinions, support one another in

prayer, and sincerely want every person to succeed.

Perhaps the best ‘perk’ for Board members is belonging to something larger than themselves that lasts beyond the term of service. Every member leaves something of themselves behind when their term ends: a legacy of their unique contributions to Partners in Mission. *Everyone* has something of value to offer.

And so, in these weeks leading up to July 31, I encourage you to consider a name—possibly your own—to suggest for this year’s ballot.

And, to those who have already agreed to run for a seat on the Board, “*Thank you!*” This should be an exciting race!

-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, Sister 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