

On The Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood



Seeds Planted

SPRING 2023



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Editor: Leah Huff
Designer: Debbie Groesch, Groesch Graphics,
314-304-1876
dgroesch27@gmail.com

Contact Information:
Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon
Leah Huff, Communications Director
204 North Main Street
O'Fallon, MO 63366-2299
636-240-6010
lhuff@collaborativegovernance.org
For more information about the Sisters of the Most
Precious Blood and their mission, please visit
www.cpps-ofallon.org.

Cover photo: Lissa Kaskinen embraces Sr. Mary Vénard LeBeau at her 100th Birthday party in Finland.

Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago, we celebrated the great feast of Easter, the central Mystery of our faith. In the northern hemisphere, this celebration takes place near the beginning of Spring, and the earth itself serves as a teacher of the Paschal Mystery of life, death, and resurrection. Signs of resurrection after the dark and seemingly dead, days of winter are visible everywhere. As we see plants sprout from the earth, we are mindful of the seeds that fell to the ground and died to bring forth this new life.



In the last issue of this magazine, we told you of some of the seeds we are sowing for our community's future, and we shared stories of seeds sown in the past. We invited you to share with us about the seeds that may have fallen upon the fertile ground of your heart. We are deeply grateful to those of you who took the time to send a reply. Your generous recounting of the ways that our sisters touched your life gave us more reasons to be grateful that God chose to use our small, simple community as an instrument of God's love.

In this issue of *On the Journey*, we continue the theme of "Seeds Sown," as we share once again how the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood and our Partners in Mission aim to spread the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. You will read of seeds sown by our jubilarians and by our sisters who have gone home to God. We also share stories of the seeds sown by our community in Finland and in Africa. And our Partners in Mission tell of the ways they share in our mission by planting seeds through their own vocations.

Our prayer is one of gratitude for the harvests of the past and one of petition that the seeds of the present and the future will grow to a fruitful harvest. "That all may be one," was Jesus' prayer for us on the night before he died. Please join us in praying that the seeds that are sown by our Sisters, by our Partners in Mission, and by each of you may be gathered into one harvest that will lead to unity for our world which currently is so fractured and polarized. May we all be one!

Sincerely,

Sr. Janice

Sr. Janice Bader
Superior General

SEEDS PLANTED IN AFRICA

Narrated by Sr. Antoinette Temporiti. Written by Sr. Lucy Meissen. Edited by Sr. Barbara Schlatter



During my sabbatical to Africa in 2003-04, a seed was planted in my soul when I listened to women who visited our safari campsite asking, "How do you decide which child to feed each day?" Twenty years later I see how that seed has grown. To find a way to help, I began to study microfinancing. With the help of generous friends, a dream was nurtured, and Microfinancing Partners in Africa (MPA) took root.

Of course, what is a seed without water? Children, especially girls, are walking 3 to 5 hours a day to fetch water – water that often carries diseases. In 2016, MPA introduced

water filters and now helps communities dig wells in or near their villages.

MPA recognizes that seeds must develop to produce more seeds. What better way to promote growth than through education? Already over 400 students from primary school to college have received scholarships.

In our recent travels to Africa, I experienced great joy to meet some of our past students who are now teachers and social workers. They are paying it forward by returning home and teaching skills that will help new generations raise themselves out of poverty.



Some of our growing seeds:

- ☀ 2006 - Jamii Bora Trust, Nairobi, Kenya: Mothers use small loans of \$10.00 to start street vending businesses.
- ☀ 2009 - Diocese of Masaka, Uganda: Farmers receive pregnant cows that give birth to calves, providing milk for the family and manure to nurture depleted soil.
- ☀ 2014 - A partnership with the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood: Over 65 small groups learn to save and begin income-generating projects. Groups continue to form in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania, [including the island of Zanzibar.]
- ☀ 2017 - Village Health Centers and Kitova Hospital in southern Uganda: Women injured in childbirth receive a healing surgery and a piglet to raise for income or to keep. Ultrasound machines detect at-risk deliveries. New mothers living in poverty are given a loan to put them on their feet.
- ☀ 2019 - Northern Uganda: With the help of two native religious communities - the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary and the Marianist Brothers - Sudanese refugees form small microfinancing groups that learn how to start and maintain small businesses.

Sr. Mary Vénard LeBeau ~ Sower of Many Seeds

In 1939, at the request of the Bishop of Finland, our community opened its first mission outside the United States. Four Sisters went to be a visible Catholic presence in Finland where Lutheranism is the state religion.

Plans to open a school were postponed because of World War II. The English School in Helsinki opened in 1945, and The English School in Tampere opened in 1957.

After returning from settling the first Sisters in Finland, Mother Wilhelmine visited St. Elizabeth Academy, telling the students of this new mission. Student Georgine LeBeau heard God's call through Mother Wilhelmine, deciding she wanted to be a Sister and she wanted to serve in Finland. Georgine professed vows as Sr. Mary Vénard in 1944; in 1949 she departed for Finland. She served in Finland for nearly 74 years ministering as a preschool & elementary teacher, principal, curriculum developer, and minister to refugees. She returned to the United States in February, days before her 100th birthday.

Sr. Mary Vénard was the last Precious Blood Sister ministering in Finland. She, with thirty-three other Sisters, contributed over 500 years of service to the Church in Finland. They planted and nurtured countless seeds, evidenced by the many friends, faculty, and former students who celebrated Sr. Mary Vénard at her farewell birthday party. May the seeds sown in Finland continue to grow and flourish.



Congratulations to Our Jubilarians

70TH



Sr. Lois Hellebusch

60TH



Sr. Mary Therese DeMoor



Sr. John Antonio Miller



Sr. Julia Marie Wolf



Sr. Carmen Schnyder

50TH



Sr. Ginny Jaskiewicz

25TH



Sr. Joni Belford

We Remember... We Celebrate... We Believe...



Sr. Ginny Flowers

October 7, 1962-August 9, 2022
Entered CPPS: 1991
Professed vows: 1992

Sr. Ginny taught at the Missouri School for the Blind and Immacolata School. She served as a caregiver assistant at Martha's Hands and as a paraprofessional at Roger's School and Trautwein Elementary School. She served her own Sisters as the Community Life Coordinator for St. Joseph Retirement Center.

Growing up in a large family, Sr. Ginny learned to be a helper. She helped her mother with cooking, cleaning, and caring for her younger sisters and brothers. Perhaps it was that early caregiving that led her to minister as a teacher and caregiver to our Sisters.



Sr. Clara Therese Ziegler

May 28, 1932 - August 31, 2022
Entered CPPS: 1950
Professed vows: 1952

Sr. Clara Therese was a homemaker, and she took well-deserved pride in providing healthy, tasty meals and exquisite baked goods. She served at convents and parishes in St. Louis including the Archbishop's Residence. Later, she served as a driver, delivering mail and packages.

Sr. Clara Therese made a great effort to learn what foods the Sisters liked and she cooked meals accordingly. She would say, "I know the food won't last long, but I have living monuments walking around".



Sr. Isabelle Walsh

April 12, 1927 - October 15, 2022
Entered CPPS: 1950
Professed vows: 1952

Sr. Isabelle taught elementary grades in Illinois and Missouri. She also served in special education in St. Louis. Upon retiring from teaching, Sr. Isabelle became a hand stitcher in our community's Ecclesiastical Art Department where she served for 25 years.

Sr. Isabelle spent many hours prayerfully stitching the faces of Christ and the saints. We rejoice that she is now beholding those faces, looking lovingly upon her as she so lovingly looked upon them.



Sr. Betty Jean Korte

July 1, 1928-October 23, 2022
Entered CPPS: 1946
Professed vows: 1948

Sr. Betty Jean taught at many elementary schools in Missouri and Illinois. After retiring from teaching, Sr. Betty Jean served in hospice ministry, as a caregiver for the elderly, and in the Alternative to Prison ministry in Jefferson City.

Sr. Betty Jean was an artist who created beauty in watercolor, poetry, and prose, and in culinary delights. Her attentiveness to the splendors of creation and her careful observation of details enhanced all her creative endeavors.



Sr. Luella Dames

January 24, 1933 - December 11, 2022
Entered CPPS: 1955
Professed vows: 1957

Sr. Luella taught elementary grades in St. Louis and Florissant, MO, and she was a teaching principal in Bloomsdale, MO. She also served as a counselor at St. Elizabeth Academy in St. Louis and as campus minister and instructor at St. Mary's College in O'Fallon. She gave ten years of service as our community's vocation directress.

Love of the liturgy was a cornerstone of Sr. Luella's life. She served as organist and director of liturgy at several parishes and at our motherhouse in O'Fallon.



Sr. JoAnn Faust

August 10, 1944 - December 18, 2022
Entered CPPS: 1963
Professed vows: 1965

Sr. JoAnn taught elementary grades in Rhineland, St. Peters, and Bridgeton. She used her excellent organizational skills in her service as the congregation's Secretary General and as the secretary for St. Mary's Academy. For twenty-seven years, she served at St. Elizabeth Adult Day Care Centers.

Sr. JoAnn was a quiet, behind-the-scenes person. She had many interests from sports, to playing the piano. And, perhaps most of all, she treasured being with her family.



Sr. Claire Slama

September 13, 1930 - December 23, 2022
Entered CPPS: 1949
Professed vows: August 10, 1951

Sr. Claire was a teacher at many schools in Missouri beginning her teaching career with 63 third-grade students. After 25 years of teaching, she worked in our Ecclesiastical Art Department. She also served as a pastoral minister and director of religious education in California and Missouri. Upon returning to O'Fallon, she served as a driver, and she taught Spanish to home-schooled students.

Sr. Claire was a grateful and kind-hearted soul who was always appreciative of any kindness.



Sr. Renée Brinker

October 11, 1931 - April 6, 2023
Entered CPPS: July 25, 1950
Professed vows: August 10, 1952

Sr. Renée shared her love of learning in North and South America, Europe, and Asia. In 1966, she joined our mission in Finland, serving as both a teacher and a principal. Except for brief periods spent in China & Peru, she remained in Helsinki until 2019.

As a teacher and principal, Sr. Renée was creative and exacting, demanding the best of students and teachers. Her students remember her as a wonderful teacher, friend, and guide.

Partners in Mission

February is often the time of year when Winter seems to drag on. The black and gray landscape seen out the window is dismal and it neither snows nor warms up enough for us to enjoy being outside. This February fourth, however, Partners in Mission were reminded of the promise of Spring and warmth and budding flowers when they met for a Winter Assembly at Bishop Dubourg High School. The theme of the assembly was, "Bloom Where You're Planted." The program focused on overcoming our environment when that environment feels less than life-giving and finding ways to thrive no matter where we are--something the Precious Blood Sisters have done since their founding.

The day began with an opening prayer given against a backdrop of beautiful images of flowers and plants. The pictures were taken by Partner Jeanne Palombo's aunt, Sr. Mary Hope, SSND, who spent years in Japan and who was present at the assembly.

Next, three individuals gave inspiring talks, expanding on the day's theme from their unique perspectives: Carlos Ruiz Martinez, Director of Client Support services at the

Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project (MICA), described his organization's work to provide legal services, education, and advocacy to immigrants trying to put down roots in a new country. Sr. Theresa Jezl, CPPS, shared her experiences of having to change course, move, or otherwise be "re-potted" throughout the course of her life and in her ministries. Partner Sandy Hosack spoke about the practical ways she has found to flourish as a reconciling presence to family, co-workers, and people she encounters in everyday life.

Finally, Sr. Carol Orf, CPPS, introduced the assembly to the practice of "centering prayer" and then gave a practical demonstration of it by leading the group in an actual session. It was a calming, yet somehow energizing experience that Partners look forward to practicing on their own, and it was a great way to wrap up the day.

After a morning in the company of good friends and fortified by the day's guest speakers—not to mention the delicious pot-luck brunch—we all went our separate ways, inspired to nurture our own little plots.

Audrey Jungermann,
Partners in Mission Director

Seeds Planted

In the Fall 2022 issue of On the Journey, we asked if you would share a reflection about the seeds the Sisters have planted in your life and how you have nurtured that seed. We received some wonderful responses. Thank you to everyone who replied. It means the world to us to know that our legacy lives on in all of you. Here are a few of the responses:

Truly developing the woman inside of the girl, I was when I arrived at SEA in 1968. The education I received was superb ... and it went beyond academics. I learned more about my faith, which is a bedrock of my life. I learned about accepting others and celebrating the gifts they have. I am truly grateful for everything that the Sisters have done for me!

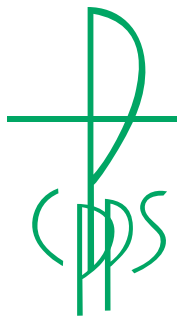
At St. Mary's Academy, we were taught to be compassionate, inclusive & strong women! Many thanks for your leadership & role modeling. As a social worker, mother & now grandmother, I hope I have shared & planted these same seeds of love.

I went to St. Stephen's School, where as a child they planted a seed in my heart. They taught love your God with all your heart & soul. I try to pass on what I learned from the Sisters to my grandkids.

My wife and I are both graduates of Bishop DuBourg High School. We are both very, very grateful to the Sisters for the education and example they gave us during our time there. I think the thing that we remember the most is an extraordinary patience, and unfailing kindness that the Sisters showed us. It was obvious that they were guided by a deep faith and a love of young people to whom they ministered.

From the time that I was a young girl, I was impressed with the community service that was performed by the Sisters. My aunt would get regular visits, as a shut-in, from the Sisters and I was so impressed. I try to do community service by taking meals to people who are in need. I will never be able to do as much good as the Sisters, but they are an example for me that I have not forgotten.





Sisters of the Most Precious Blood
204 North Main St.
O'Fallon, MO 63366-2299

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Recently, our Sisters, were asked to reflect on the following question, "What is the blessing you would like to offer for our *Precious Blood* community going forward?" We wanted to share one of those blessings with you, our friends, because you have blessed our lives in so many ways.

May God give us the vision to see the blessings others bring.

May the Love we give be reflected back to us.

May gratitude be the light for all we do, think, and pray.

May we recognize God in every person and situation we meet.