

Partners on the Journey

Sisters of the Most Precious Blood Partners in Mission Newsletter

FALL 2023



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My Thanks to You

As you may know by now, I will be retiring in mid-November. I would like to take this opportunity to say what a privilege it has been to know and work with you as Partner in Mission director these past five years. You have blessed my life in more ways than I ever expected, and I am forever grateful to you for your kindness, encouragement, and support.

These words, which I borrowed from poet Doe Zantamata, say it best:

"Thank you.
Eight little letters,
One little space,
Tell you the reason
For the smile on my face.
I want you to know
That for all that you do
I sincerely appreciate,
Love, and thank you."

I certainly do. God bless.

-Audrey Jungermann

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

Commitment Sunday 2023

On Sunday, September 10, Partners in Mission and sister mentors gathered to celebrate an on-going relationship that has nourished spirits and brought members of both groups closer to God. Commitments by Partners to participate fully in that relationship were made. For five new Partners (see pg. 2), this commitment was made for the very first time.

The theme of the day was, "Welcome!" Welcome to all who want to follow in Christ's footsteps. Welcome to all who embrace the Precious Blood charism of Reconciliation. And welcome to all who love and desire to serve God's people.

Guest speaker, Jeanne Connolly, Director of Charism and Ministry for the Wheaton Franciscans and long-time associate herself, addressed the assembly. Ms. Connolly spoke of associate life as a vocation and of the global impact we make when we "open our tents wide." She also acknowledged the challenges associate groups face as they make their way into an unknown future.

Partner Patti Belmont gave a personal

reflection via Zoom on what being an associate of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood has meant to her.

The year's direction statement (see below) was introduced, and two new Board members were elected as two retiring members were acknowledged (see pg. 2).

Partners and sisters participated in a beautiful Mass, and the weather could not have been more cooperative for lunch outdoors under the tent. It was a wonderful day!

-Audrey Jungermann



2023-2024 PIM Direction Statement

When the Governing Board met in June to compose this year's Direction Statement, we first took time to reflect on the past year and on where we felt led going forward. We read Small Faith Communities' assessments of the year. We reflected on the CPPS vision and mission statements that have been our guiding principles.

We also reminded ourselves of why many of us became Partners in Mission in the first place. We considered the importance of service to others and where we fit into the bigger picture of God's plan for Creation.

The result of our deliberations and discussions was the following statement:

"With open hearts we accept God's mission, with open hands we do God's work, with open arms we welcome God's people."

We invite you to take this statement into the new year and find ways to bring the words to life.

As you gather each month, light the candle, and read the statement, let it be a reminder of our mission, our work, and God's people, whom we serve.

-Audrey Jungermann

New PIM Governing Board Members

*Welcome,
new Partners in
Mission!*



*Darlene
Scaglione*

*Paula
Lee*



*Jackie
Lovett*



*Nadine
Mues*



*Lois
Coleman*



*New Partners, with mentors
Sr. Anna Marie Himmelberg
and Sr. Ellen Orf (back row),
making initial commitments.*



*Mary Beth Hunt &
Maureen McGrath*

At the Partners in Mission Commitment Sunday & Assembly on September 10, Partners elected two new members to begin three-year terms on the Governing Board.

The first of the two elected members, Maureen McGrath, has been a Partner in Mission since 2009, and she was a member of the ad hoc committee that formed the structure for what would become our present-day Governing Board. Maureen finds inspiration in the Small Faith Communities, as well as in activities that unite Partners in their shared ministry of reconciliation.

The second elected member is Mary Beth Hunt. Mary Beth learned about Partners in Mission from her friend, Partner Susan Bruker, and she completed *Pathways* in 2022-2023. At her initial commitment ceremony, Sr. Marie Fennewald suggested to Mary Beth that she consider work-

ing here, as Spiritual Care & Community Life director. Mary Beth spent six months in that position, for which her background as Executive Director at the Sarah Community prepared her well. Mary Beth enjoyed working with the sisters in Villa Theresa and Abbey Senior Health, spending quality time with them and hearing their life stories.

Congratulations, Maureen and Mary Beth! We look forward to having you on the Governing Board!

The rest of the members for 2023-2024 are: Julie Schlichting (Communications), Jeanne Palombo (On-going Board Formation), Dawn Boschert (Development), and Mary Buchanan (Invitation). Sr. Julie Wolf serves as Sister Advisor to the Board.

Finally, a sincere "thank you" is owed to all three individuals who agreed to run for a seat on the Board this year: **Maureen McGrath, Mary Beth Hunt, and Deborah Meyer.** Your willingness to "say yes" is a big part of the reason Partners in Mission is able to continue into the future. *Thank you!*

-Audrey Jungermann

Thank You, Retiring Board Members!

With the election of two new members to the Partners in Mission Governing Board, two members whose terms are coming to an end will retire.

At the September 10th assembly, Kris Jackson and Carol Oldendorf were recognized and thanked for their years of dedicated service.

Kris is the Governing Board's current chairperson. Prior to her present position as Board Chair, Kris chaired the Recruitment Committee, now known as the Invitation Committee.

Carol has been serving as chairperson of the Spirituality Committee. Before that, she was long-time chair of the Communications Committee that produces this newsletter.

Both women have been a credit to their positions on the Board. Their presence, contributions of creative ideas, and commitment to Partners in Mission are deeply appreciated.



*Kris Jackson &
Carol Oldendorf*

Thank you, Kris and Carol, for all you have brought to the Governing Board over the years, and for all you continue to do for Partners in Mission!

Enjoy a well-earned retirement!

-Audrey Jungermann

Meet Sr. Joan Oberle

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Sr. Joan (on right) with good friend Sr. Loretta Luecke

Recently, I sat down with Sr. Joan Oberle and I really enjoyed the chance to get to know her.

Sr. Joan was born and grew up in St. Louis with her parents John and Magdalena and younger brother Larry. She attended grade school at St. Stephen Protomartyr in South City and later attended St. Elizabeth Academy for high school. Sr. Joan had CPPS sisters as teachers beginning in grade school and she knew in first grade that she herself wanted life in a religious order. As a freshman at SEA, Sr. Joan met future CPPS sister, Sr. Loretta Luecke, with whom she enjoyed a wonderful friendship.

In second grade, Sr. Joan met a Maryknoll priest who had been imprisoned in China—she was greatly moved by his story and initially wanted to be a Maryknoll sister in China. Ultimately, it was the years of guidance and example of the CPPS sisters (and the Precious Blood Divine Office, Gregorian Chant and Liturgical life) that led her to enter the convent in 1952, making final vows in 1955 with the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood.

Sr. Joan worked as both a teacher and a teaching principal in Missouri, Illinois and Colorado from 1955 until 1990. In 1990, Sr. Joan began a new mission in Anchorage, Alaska (Sr. Loretta was assigned to an Alaskan mission at the same time) and she was there until 2022; a mission of 32 years. Sr. Joan has

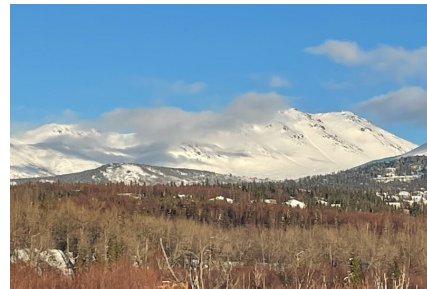
many happy memories of her time in Alaska at Holy Cross Church and the Archdiocesan Tribunal. She shared with me the details of a major road trip she and Sr. Loretta took (55 days total), round trip from Anchorage to St. Louis. Sr. Joan and Sr. Loretta enjoyed a friendship that spanned more than 50 years until Sr. Loretta's passing in 2017.

Sr. Joan left Alaska in late 2022 to return to O'Fallon, where she lives today. Sr. Joan spoke repeatedly of the abundant blessings she has received in her life; she strives daily, in prayer and action, to live out the CPPS call to be Christ's continuing presence in the world. Her dream for the world is peace and acceptance of all by all.

Sr. Joan is an accomplished photographer—during our email correspondence to schedule our time to meet, she would always include some beautiful image (see a sample below) and I was quite impressed to learn that they had all been captured by her camera. She certainly has a skilled eye.

Thank you Sr. Joan for sharing your story!

-Julie Schlichting



Getting to Know Partner in Mission *Margie Johnson*

It was a real treat for me to profile Margie Johnson as featured Partner in Mission for this issue, and I hope you will enjoy getting to know Margie better.

Margie is originally from Little Rock, Arkansas. She first came to St. Louis to complete her training as an X-ray technologist. Her first employment in the field of X-ray technology was in Memphis, Tennessee. There, Margie lived with her sister until she was able to move into a women's rooming house.

It was in Memphis where Margie met her husband, Jim, while he was studying Engineering at Christian Brothers University. They married in June of 1962, the day before Jim graduated.

After Jim's graduation, the newlyweds moved to St. Louis where Jim had a position at McDonnell-Douglas, Corporation. Jim and Margie raised seven children—six girls and one boy. (A fun fact: One of Margie's daughters, Diana, was a close grade-school friend of mine and I remember spending many happy times at the Johnson house.) Today, a total of 13 Johnson grandchildren fill Margie's life with happiness.

In May of this year, Jim passed away, just a few days shy of their 61st wedding anniversary. Margie found

comfort in the Padre Pio prayer during Jim's illness. When praying it, she knew that Jim was going to be alright.

Margie has had some wonderful opportunities for travel in her life. Some of the highlights were an Alaskan cruise with Jim, a visit to England and Germany with one of her daughters, and a Hawaiian vacation that included a kayaking experience (in her 70's!).

Margie became a Partner in Mission in 2017 after going through the *Pathways* program with some fellow members of the 50+ Club at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (SEAS) parish in St. Charles. Sr. Laverne Wester and Sr. Mary Harper were quite the recruiters—five members from SEAS joined Partners in Mission and established "In His Footsteps" Small Faith Community. Margie especially enjoys being able to speak with the sisters about what they have done in their lives; she will often attend the Jubilee ceremonies and finds it a joy to spend time with the sisters.

Thank you, Margie, for taking the time to be this quarter's featured Partner!

-Julie Schlichting



Partners at Meadowlark



Did you know that the CPPS Sisters own a retreat property in Warrenton, MO? Have you ever wondered about the story of how this peaceful place came to be?

The Meadowlark facility sits on a beautiful private lake which provides a serene setting for quiet contemplation. The CPPS Sisters first purchased

the lot where Meadowlark would eventually be built, and later purchased and cleared the adjacent lot. Together, they create a wonderful haven, perfect for tranquil getaways. Meadowlark is an excellent location for Small Faith Communities to have extended time together to pray, share, and plan.

My SFC has taken advantage of Meadowlark for day retreats. Our gatherings there have been made truly impactful by being able to concentrate on the day's mission without outside distractions. We are able to enjoy breakfast and lunch together while focusing solely on our time as a group and on meeting our objectives for the day.

Looking for more time to spend with

your SFC? Meadowlark may also be used for overnight events, having two full kitchens and room to accommodate large groups. Meadowlark was cleverly designed so that two groups can stay at the same time, completely independent of each other. The basement area is equipped with its own full kitchen, bedrooms, and bathrooms. Both the main floor and the basement offer stunning views of the lake.

As Partners in Mission, we are fortunate to have access to this facility that the CPPS Sisters graciously make available to us. Intrigued? Your SFC Sister Mentor is your liaison for booking time for your SFC at Meadowlark.

-Julie Schlichting

Sustainability Committee News

Service Days

What, When, & Where

This year, we will once again help sort Scouting for Food donations at **Saints Joachim & Ann Care Service**. Volunteers are asked to come to the Celebration Room (the large center room) at **11:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 18**.

We will also be supporting **Saint Francis Community Services** with a drive to collect kitchen items for the immigrant families they serve. SFC Leaders received a list of needed items and other details at the Leaders' Workshop on Saturday, September 23. The drive will run from **November 13 - November 25**.

Partners' Retreat

Give Yourself a Gift

Advent Meditations: Before the busy Christmas Season arrives, treat yourself to a quiet afternoon inside St. Joseph Chapel and outdoors on the beautiful grounds in O'Fallon. We will meditate on the themes of the four Advent candles: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, and spend time in Chapel and outdoors on the walking path, weather permitting. Participants may choose to spend some or all of the day in quiet solitude or attend led reflections. Meditation materials will be provided. A fellowship gathering will follow the retreat.

Date and time will be announced soon.

If you have questions, or to volunteer for the Service Day, please contact me.

2023 Summer Picnic:

Co-hosted by the Committee & TLC SFC

This past Summer, on July 15, Partners and Sister Mentors gathered at Veteran's Tribute Park in St. Charles County for a second "Partners in the Park" picnic.

It was a great chance to enjoy a wonderful meal in the relaxed company of Sisters and Partners who might not otherwise get to visit with one another.

Both last year's picnic and this one were very well-received, and we hope to make this an annual event.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support the efforts of the Committee and TLC SFC.



-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

Newly elected members:

Maureen McGrath
Mary Beth Hunt

Sr. Julia Marie Wolf, Sr. Advisor
Audrey Jungermann, PIM Director

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