



# Sharing & Caring

THE SISTERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD ■ DAYTON, OHIO

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## Seasons of Celebration

**F**ROM its official opening on January 15, 2009, this 175th Anniversary year marking the founding of the Sisters of the Precious Blood has been filled to overflowing with gratitude to God first of all, and also with celebrations of various kinds and sizes, and in various places.

Liturgies, lectures, commemorative pilgrimages both domestic and international, and gatherings formal and informal have been pivotal events for both Sisters of the Precious Blood as well as friends and family, co-workers and former members, and the wider church community of laity, religious and clergy.

These months have truly been “Seasons of Celebration.” Now, as the breathtaking colors of autumn in the

Midwest proclaim the beauty and diversity of God’s creation, so too the various events marking this anniversary reflect the beauty of God’s people — of the CPPS women whose lives and heritage are celebrated, of those with whom they minister and of the world to whom CPPS sisters aim to be a reconciling, healing presence.

This issue presents some of these recent events from summer through early October. Read about the Oct. 3-4 reunion with former members, the lecture on Precious Blood spirituality by Father Barry Fischer, and Mass with Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk in Dayton, the August Mass and picnic at Maria Stein Center and a twin event celebration in Glandorf, honoring both the founding of the village and CPPS Sisters.

**See pages 8 – 12**



## A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

# Knowing where you've come from ... and *Staying in the Fire*

We were relaxing after dinner at the Carmelite spirituality course, exchanging thoughts about the morning's lecture on St. Teresa of Avila and her Spanish and Jewish ancestry. Soon the conversation moved from *La Madre's* ethnic heritage to those of us around the table: Italian, Polish, Irish, German.... African. Dinner guests were describing the thrill of "connection" they experienced visiting their ancestors' villages in Poland and Italy or tracing the lineage of their grandparents from counties in Ireland. Jon, the African-American in our group, was quiet. Finally he spoke.

"I can't tell you how hard it is for a black American like me to be part of these conversations," he said sadly, but not judgmentally. "You see, you all know where you're from. But I don't. I have no idea where I come from – oh sure, Africa somewhere. But I don't know what tribe or village, what my people did or even their real names...."

"Sometimes when I'm walking down the street I see another black guy who looks like me, and I think, hey, maybe we're related. Maybe we're from the same tribe or old African village. But the hard part is not knowing."

I started thinking of the millions of people today who live through a similar fate: refugees and displaced peoples who often have been in camps for generations, so long they have no memory of another place or way of living...

Jon's final statement brought me out of my reverie: **"It's hard to know who you are when you don't know where you come from."**

As the Sisters of the Precious Blood celebrate this 175th anniversary of

their founding, the conversation often, and fittingly, turns to roots and history, exploring facets of their spirituality and ministry within historical and cultural contexts, and the lives of their foundress and other significant congregational leaders.

A big part of the many 175th celebrations has been revisiting the places, the history of CPPS life and service, from the ruins of Mother Maria Anna Brunner's Swiss castle to the congregation's pioneer Southwestern missions. CPPS women know that where they come from — the tracing of their lived history as well as the place — is essential to knowing who they are today. And how that graced history and contemporary reality will impact the future.

With perfect timing, an important resource to explore and unpack the meaning of this rich history and hopeful future has emerged.

*Staying in the Fire: A Sisterhood Responds to Vatican II* is a seminal book soon to be released by WovenWord Press. Through interviews with more than 40 CPPS sisters, the book explores the sisters' search for meaning and purpose through the tumultuous changes of the Second Vatican Council to a rediscovered and deepened sense of their charism and mission today.

*Staying in the Fire's* author is Phyllis Kittel. The book, years in the making, is the fruit of her own passionate quest to understand the contemporary religious life of the congregation she belonged to as a young woman.

The book has received glowing reviews from experts on U.S. religious life. Those who have read it praise Kittel's unflinching exploration of the wide swath of issues that impact-

ed the congregation — including the difficult challenges that shape the life in 21st century America.

Future issues of *Sharing & Caring* and the website will give more news about this insightful book that details where CPPS women "come from" at the deepest level, who they are today, and who they are called to be. For more information, contact WovenWord Press by phone (303) 449-4501, e-mail (books@wovenword.com) or their website: www.wovenword.com.

—Pat Morrison



## Sharing & Caring

### CPPS Mission Statement

*Urged by the redeeming love of Jesus the Christ and rooted in Eucharistic prayer, we Sisters of the Precious Blood proclaim God's love by being a life-giving, reconciling presence in our fractured world.*

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## The CARA Report and CPPS

*Individuals and programs aim to respond to the expressed interests of young people discerning their call*

BY SISTER CAROLYN HOYING

Have you heard of the CARA Report (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate) that was done for the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC)? The study, which used a variety of surveys to gather its findings, was just completed in August. The findings from the surveys, especially those from focus groups and from interviews with new members, report good news. They confirm that there are still significant numbers of men and women responding to a call to religious life and hopeful about its future.

New members within the last 15 years are drawn to religious life primarily by a sense of call and a desire for prayer and spiritual growth, the study reports. Many new members identify common prayer as one of the aspects that most attracted them and sustains them. They name the communal prayer types as the daily Eucharist, Liturgy of the Hours and Eucharistic adoration.

Community life is cited as the most influential factor in their decision. Most new members prefer to live in a large community (eight or more), or one that is medium sized (four to seven), and to live only with other members of their community. They also have a strong pref-

erence for ministry with other members of their community.

New members are attracted to religious communities that are clear and confident about their identity. They are looking for communities that foster a "culture of vocations" and involve membership and leadership in vocation promotion efforts. Survey participants said that discernment programs, ministry weeks and other opportunities for potential candidates to meet and spend time with members to learn about the community are very important. According to the report, it is the example of the members and the characteristics of the community life, prayer life and spirituality that have the most influence on the decision to enter a particular community.

In March and August we Sisters of the Precious Blood offered "Come and See" discernment retreats for single women ages 18-45. The March retreat was at Maria Stein, Ohio; the August retreat was held at Salem Heights in Dayton. There are many things about the August retreat that connect with the CARA report.

Ten women ages 19-45 attended the August retreat, titled "Who Is This Jesus?" I asked sisters living at Salem Heights if



Frequent discernment retreats are a regular part of CPPS outreach for vocations. Pictured here during the August "Come and See" retreat at Salem Heights, Sister Mary Lou Voisard and retreatant Emily Krehnovi prepare their Liturgy of the Hours books before the celebration of evening prayer (Vespers). Ample time was provided for communal and private prayer during the retreat, as well as time for socializing and conversation with the sisters and other retreatants.

they would help to welcome the women and to be their prayer companions. Six sisters were involved in giving the retreat, and, thanks to the sisters' enthusiastic response, another 20 served as prayer companions for the weekend.

In order to help make the women feel at home for the Liturgy of the Hours (Vespers), each of these sisters was a prayer companion to the woman she had welcomed earlier, and was her partner when the group came to chapel for prayer.

As sometimes happens when you've made plans, our schedule was rearranged by... life! There

had been a murder in the city, and a homicide vigil, a longtime commitment of the CPPS community, was scheduled at noon on Saturday at the site of a murder. A group of CPPS sisters always takes part in the vigil, praying at the place where a human life was lost. Salem Heights sisters, who are unable to go to the actual vigil site, have a prayer service for the victim before Vespers that same day.

Despite the tragic circumstances, the prayer service introduced the retreatants to things that CPPS stands for, especially healing and reconciliation. Supper followed

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# The CARA Report and CPPS

*Continued from page 3*

evening prayer, and again the retreatants and their respective prayer companions dined together. A relationship was beginning to form...

Another 10 sisters from the local community houses around the area were invited to spend one-on-one time (an "Emmaus walk") with the women in the evening and to stay for the holy hour and social later on — other opportunities for relationship building.

The next morning, retreatants and prayer companions met for morning prayer and Mass with the Salem Heights community. During our final session Sunday morning, I explained that each Precious Blood Sister has another community member who prays specifically for her and her ministry. I asked the retreatants if after the retreat they would like to have a prayer sister on a regular basis. The women eagerly signed up!

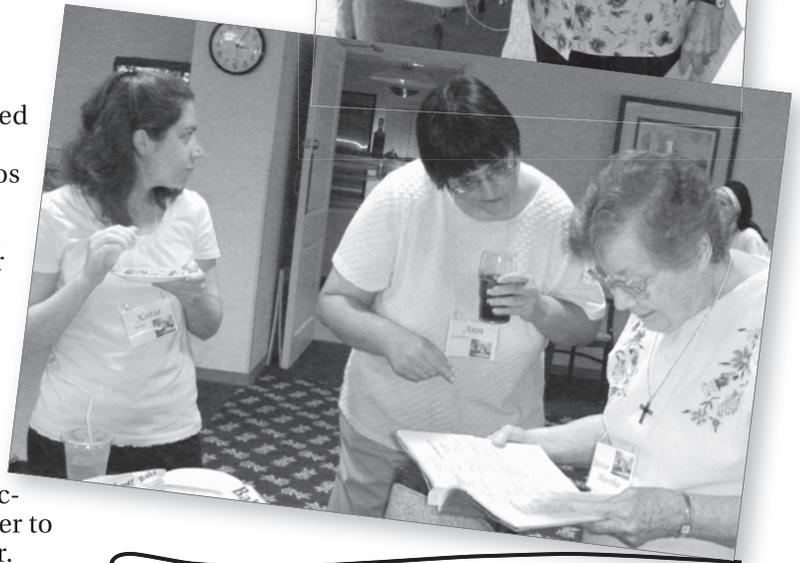
The evaluations from the

retreat were very positive. (See letters on page 15 for a sample from one participant.) The women said praying with community, hearing the sisters' stories, the one-on-one walk with a sister, and having the holy hour were the high points of the retreat.

More than 30 sisters were directly involved with this discernment retreat. The rest of the community was involved through prayer. There were tangible mementos of the weekend as well: We took photos of each woman with her prayer companion and "Emmaus walk" sister and sent copies to them. And the sisters who were prayer and "Emmaus walk" companions received photos of the woman each is accompanying, a reminder to continue to pray for her.

Religious women may be fewer in numbers in today's church, but we Sisters of the Precious Blood have hope, and are enthusiastic about prayer, community

and mission. If you know of someone who is looking for these in their life, call me at (937)-231-1244 or e-mail: [Vocations@Precious-BloodSistersDayton.org](mailto:Vocations@Precious-BloodSistersDayton.org)



Check the website (News & Events>News) for regularly scheduled vocations programs and coming retreats.

To read the full text of the CARA report "Recent Vocations to Religious Life," go to: <http://cara.georgetown.edu>, item 5: NRVC & CARA report. (You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader, a free download, to view the document.)



**PHOTOS:** Top, Sister Bernice Krieg, a Salem Heights resident, welcomed Debra Ormsbee to the retreat and served as her prayer partner. • Snack time and one-on-one sharing were an important time during the retreat. Here Sister Martha DeBrosse (right) and Ann Freisthler find something interesting in a publication they're

viewing, while Katie Riddle enjoys a snack. • Above, the retreatants pose with some CPPS sisters for a souvenir photo. Among the sisters on the retreat team were (far left) Sisters Carolyn Hoying, coordinator of vocation ministry, and (far right) Amy Junk (front) and Marla Gipson.

# Into Navajo Land

BY SISTER ELEANOR MCNALLY

**O**LD ROUTE 66, the same one taken by the Joads in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, runs through the picturesque land of northern New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona. This is home to the largest tribe of North American native peoples, the Navajo Nation.

In addition to the Navajos' rich culture and tradition, their language itself is unique. This rich and highly complex Na-Dene language, which the Navajo believe was given to them by the Holy Ones, played a significant role in securing the world's freedom. It was used in World War II by the Navajo Marine "Code Talkers," and the code was never broken by the Japanese. (The important contribution and patriotism of the Code Talkers has been recounted in numerous ways, including several U.S. government honors and also John Woo's 2002 movie, "Windtalkers.")

The call to serve the people of the Navajo Nation came in 1972 to Sister Mary Louise Hoelscher. Like Sisters Vera Heile and Georgiana Pahl (Spring 2009), Sister Mary Louise had been missioned at Gerard High School in Phoenix. Ready for a change from the challenges of high school administration in the turbulent '60s, Sister Mary Louise accepted the invitation of the Navajos.

In addition to entering into the lives of the Navajo people, it also meant entering the incredible natural beauty of their land: a land of beautiful canyons and mountains, an elevation of 7,000-plus feet, where sunrises and sunsets take your breath away, where skies are pure blue broken only by white cumulus clouds, where rabbits and coyotes dart amid acres of wild flowers and fourwing salt brush.

But amid the natural beauty, this Sister of the Precious Blood was com-

mitted to adopting the lifestyle of the people she had come to serve: Sister Mary Louise began in a trailer, living the simple life of the Navajos. She hauled her own water. She traveled the rough, bumpy roads in her Bronco — and got stuck many times delivering food to the homebound and going with the nurse to pray with the sick in homes without electricity or running water.

"Living a life in contradiction to life in the materialistic world has been a challenge and a reward in my life," says Sister Mary Louise.

Well-educated and with teaching experience since 1947, she was hired as coordinator of the work-study program in the Window Rock School District in Fort Defiance, Ariz., five miles west of Window Rock, the capital of the Navajo Nation. Here she supervised three other teachers who worked in the program. In this position, which she held for nine years,

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Above, the majestic Window Rock, capital of the Navajo Nation, epitomizes the natural beauty of the region. But the breathtaking scenery is in stark contrast with the grinding poverty of most of the Navajo people. At right, Sister Mary Louise visits with Navajo Mary Yazzie, outside her modified hogan (the round house boasts



an added-on porch). The home has no water or heat and only limited electricity, powered by a generator. Sister Mary Louise was delivering Christmas baskets to Navajo families and seniors in the outskirts of Manuelito.

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she taught Navajo juniors and seniors the skills necessary for job success. In the evenings, she also taught the men at the Navajo Tribal Utility Company as well as other adults in the parish.

caress for religious for the Diocese of Gallup, N.M. She enjoyed this position for 18 years, serving women religious of 43 different congregations in this young diocese of 50,000 square miles.

perience for her as well as a time of personal growth and learning for the young people.

By 1993 this Precious Blood Sister had earned the distinction of being

# Into Navajo

Besides her educational work on the reservation, Sister Mary Louise also reached out in church ministry. She became an instructor for permanent deacons and lay ministers, as well as a catechetical instructor.

In 1991, Sister Mary Louise's alma mater, St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind., presented her with its Distinguished Alumni Award on the college's 100th anniversary — an honor which she described as a "surprise and totally unexpected."

It was also an honor, and a witness to her committed religious life, when she was appointed vi-

In 1989, Sister Mary Louise packed her things in a horse trailer and moved to Sanders, Ariz., where she taught math and biology and served as administrator of the summer school. Students from the Hopi Relocation Area as well as Navajos from the reservation were bused in daily, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. These students had little familiarity with life beyond the reservation. This posed no little challenge for them or their teacher! But she earned their respect and trust and it became a rewarding ex-

named an "Honorary Member of the Navajo Nation." She officially retired from teaching that year, but had no intention of ending her ministry to the people of the Southwest. She headed to Manuelito, N.M. Here from her simple trailer home she volunteered her service to the community in many ways, primarily as chaplain at the Indian Health Hospital and McKinley Manor Nursing Home.

In 2002, Sister Mary Louise received the "Presidential Award for Volunteering," an award given for "serving your community and country with distinction through everyday acts of kindness and decency." At the awards banquet, the popu-



Outside their mobile home, a young Navajo mother proudly holds her baby. At right, Sister Mary Louise visits Buck Jones in his hogan. Mr. Jones, who was an actor in several Westerns, was a leader among

the people and wanted to ensure that Indian values and culture are preserved for future generations. Center, a young Navajo performs the graceful eagle dance at a festival.

lar governor of New Mexico (and in 2008, presidential candidate) Bill Richardson presented this award to Mary Louise on behalf of President George Bush and posed with her for a photo. The award was a fitting

# Land

culmination — but not the end — of Sister Mary Louise's many years of service among our Native peoples, especially the Navajos.

Today Sister Mary Louise lives in Phoenix, where she continues to volunteer in a variety of services to the poor and underserved people of the area, especially the elderly, Hispanics and Native Americans. Not one to "retire or be too tired," she recently began working in a program with young women who want to leave a life of prostitution but need to develop marketable work skills. She tutors them for their General Equivalency Diploma and also serves as a mentor for the girls, many of whom had no adult models in their lives.

Whether on the reservation surrounded by hogans, in her simple trailer or in a city apartment working among the poor, Sister Mary Louise has truly found her heart's home among the native peoples she has served for so long.

During Mary Louise's long years in Navajo Land, a number of Sisters of the Precious Blood served with her for longer or shorter periods of time. They included Sister Luella Huelskamp, now retired and living



*"Navajo Christ Breaking Bread" © 1999 Fr. John Giuliani; Reproductions at [www.BridgeBuilding.com](http://www.BridgeBuilding.com)*

at Emma Hall in Dayton, and the late Sisters Mary Margaret Le Glise, Katie Webster, Jessie Marie Poole and Julie Link. Together they all brought their loving service to a people whose inspiration of a "simple, spiritual and contented life immersed in the Great Spirit's revelation in the fruitfulness

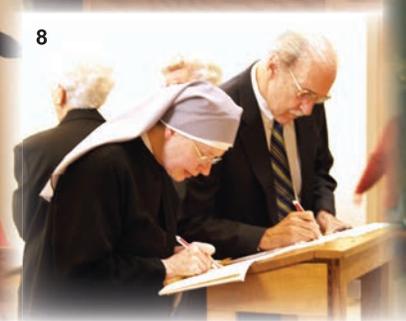
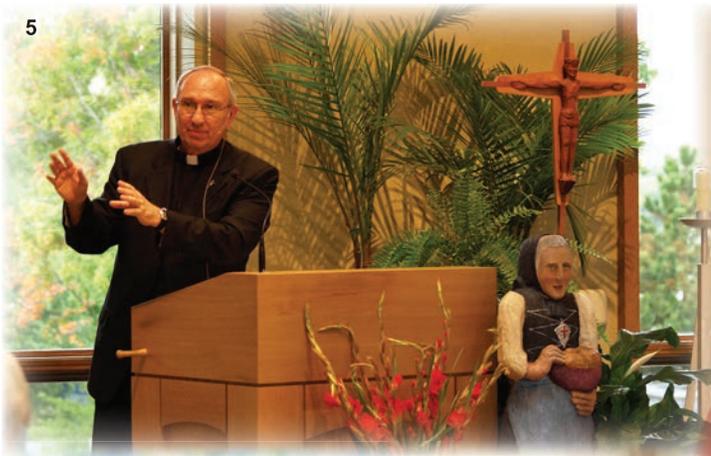
and beauty of nature," was for the sisters their greatest reward.

Sister Mary Louise sums up the richness of their experience: "Living among these people has given us far more than what we could ever give them."



***'Living among the Navajo people has given us far more than we could ever give them.'***

**—Sister Mary Louise Hoelscher**



# Seasons of

BY PAT MORRISON

These pages present some of the 175th Anniversary events from summer through mid-October. These include the Dayton Oct. 3-4 reunion with former CPPS members, the lecture on Precious Blood Spirituality by Precious Blood Father Barry Fischer, and the Eucharistic celebration at Precious Blood Church with Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk.

Other anniversary events featured in this issue are the August Mass and picnic at Maria Stein Center and a twin event celebration in Glandorf, Ohio, honoring both the 175th anniversary of the founding of the village and the foundation of CPPS Sisters.

Summer and fall also included pilgrimages to CPPS roots — a “homespun” local pilgrimage of some current members to areas of Northwest Ohio where early Sisters of the Precious Blood lived and served, and an international pilgrimage to Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Italy to visit historic CPPS European roots. (Both will be featured in the Winter issue of *Sharing & Caring*, with highlights and photos also posted to the website in the near future.)

But, like the Midwest’s brilliant fall foliage, the weekend of Oct. 3-4 in Dayton was overflowing with the vibrant colors of programs, liturgies, reunions, all celebrated by Precious Blood Sisters and hundreds of friends, family, co-workers and former members...

**PHOTOS, Pages 8-9:** 1. Former members and spouses join CPPS at prayer service. • 2. Socializing. • 3. Sr. Patricia Kremer leads the lecture’s opening prayer service. • 4. Sr. Dorothy Schmitmeyer from Chile offers a comment during lecture. • 5. Fr. Barry Fischer at lecture. • 6. Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk offers homily at Mass. • 7. Sr. Florence Seifert welcomes assembly at the Mass. • 8. Friends signing the guest book before Mass. • 9., 12. Celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy. • 10, 13. CPPS Sisters and former members at prayer. • 11. Kathryn Stanziano of Precious Blood Parish interprets the liturgy for the hearing impaired. • 14. Sisters and friends at the reception. Page 11: 15. Fr. William O’Donnell, pastor of Precious Blood Parish. • 16. Skip Ekhart directs the combined choir. • 17-19. Moments of the liturgy. • 20. Miami County Commissioner Dan Foley presents a proclamation honoring the sisters.

Photo 14 © by E.L. Hubbard, published with permission; all other photos by Pat Morrison



# Celebration

## Third Anniversary Year Lecture

On Saturday, Oct. 3, the third of the anniversary year's four lectures on Precious Blood spirituality was presented at Salem Heights. More than 230 participants — sisters, Missionaries of the Precious Blood, former members and other guests — filled the chapel for Precious Blood Father Barry Fischer's powerful lecture on "Precious Blood Spirituality: Wellspring of Our Call to Mission."

Father Barry is well-known in the Precious Blood family. He is the former moderator general (major superior) of the priests and brothers who form the international Missionaries of the Precious Blood, serving in that post for two terms. In addition to the Missionaries, he has also served the global church as a member of several leadership groups, including the 2005 Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist.

The Pennsylvania native served in Chile during his formation years and was ordained there in 1973. He has long experience in Chile and Guatemala, both in formation work and leadership. In Chile he worked closely with the Sisters of the Precious Blood and other congregations in the Precious Blood family. Today Father Barry has traded his Spanish and Italian language skills for German: He is the founding director of the International Center of Precious Blood Spirituality in Salzburg, Austria.



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# Seasons of Celebration

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In his daylong lecture program, with two main presentations interspersed with group sharing and time for questions and comments, Father Barry traced his own personal exploration of Precious Blood spirituality and then offered challenging reflections on how “the cry and the call of the blood” are heard in our world today and how ministry, the outgrowth of the spirituality, leads us to respond.

He began with a working definition of the term “spirituality”: *Spirituality is like a reservoir from which a person or community can draw to motivate action, to keep on track, to bolster commitment, to avoid discouragement when times get rough.*

He then took participants through a tour of scriptural and ecclesial texts that are pivotal to interpreting the richness of Precious Blood spirituality, principally Pope John Paul II’s 1995 encyclical, *The Gospel of Life (Evangelium vitae)*. “I was captivated,” Father Barry said, by the pope’s use of the term “cry of the blood,” and other scriptural references both to the shedding of Christ’s blood and that of others, from the first pages of Genesis to today. Drawing on the papal text, Father Barry said, “the blood of so many innocent ones today is a continuation of Christ’s passion being lived out in today’s world. Their blood continues to cry out, awaiting a response.”

Like Jesus, women and men inspired by Precious Blood spirituality, hear “the cry and the call of the blood” today and find in it a way to bring theological reflection down to earth, to connect with life’s experiences. “A missionary spirituality is by nature an incarnational one,” he said. “It is a way of discovering mission and our specific [CPPS] contribution to the universal church as peoples marked by the blood of Christ.”

Powerfully alluding to “the red threads” that are woven over the earth, Father Barry cited numerous examples in individual lives and in society that call for the blood of reconciliation, from murders and violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of persons, to personal and corporate greed and lack of concern for the environment.

Authentic Precious Blood spirituality, he said in his afternoon session, is rooted in mission; it necessarily leads persons and communities to be welcoming, inclusive, unwilling to promote the divisions created by “-isms.” Precious Blood people, he said, believe in redemptive suffering. Above all, they are committed to sharing the message with all people and all creation that they are loved by God and infinitely precious in God’s eyes.

## Reunion with Former Members

Following the rich input and exchange from the day’s

lecture, the celebration moved to an expression of... homecoming! More than 40 former members of the Sisters of the Precious Blood returned to Salem Heights for an historic reunion. After a warm welcoming by CPPS president Sister Florence Seifert and an evening prayer service, the former and current CPPS women moved to the dining room for a relaxed evening of refreshments and socializing.

At the congregation’s invitation, they came from all parts of the United States and beyond, drawn to reconnect during this anniversary year with the people and places that had been a formative part of their life, for a few months as postulants or years as professed sisters.

Hugs and exclamations of welcome were in abundance throughout the weekend, as current and former CPPS women shared memories, told stories and caught up on news.

Even though their life’s path has taken a different direction over the years, it was evident the bonds with the congregation and its women are still strong. Former members expressed warm appreciation for the values and spirituality which their time in CPPS, long or short, brought to their lives — and still brings to their life today, wherever they are. And the enrichment is reciprocal.

## Anniversary Mass

In a high point of the anniversary year, the Precious Blood Sisters’ community and the wider community gathered around the Lord’s table with Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 4, at Precious Blood Church.

The lives of the sisters and the parish have long, warm connections: CPPS sisters taught in and administered the school for many years; the congregation donated the land on which the current church is built.

The Mass in Dayton with the archbishop was a focal point of the anniversary year and its significance was not lost on those who came from near and far to attend: The church was filled almost to capacity with CPPS sisters, friends and co-workers, parishioners, and representatives of other religious communities. Six priests, members of the archdiocesan clergy and Missionaries of the Precious Blood, concelebrated the liturgy.

Sister Florence offered a welcome before the Mass, and words of thanksgiving in conclusion.

It was truly a joint Precious Blood celebration, with sisters and parishioners forming the choir for the liturgy, and sharing in the distribution of Holy Communion. CPPS Sisters proclaimed the Scripture readings and presented the gifts of bread and wine.

In his homily, Archbishop Pilarczyk offered a brief theological reflection on what devotion to the Precious Blood means for Catholics: "...We are paying honor to the dedication of Jesus to his saving mission, ...remembering that Jesus loved us to the very end, that he gave everything he had" to bring the human family into eternal union with the Blessed Trinity.

The archbishop then briefly traced the history of CPPS, beginning with Mother Maria Anna Brunner's founding inspiration and spiritual focus, to the presence of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Ohio and expansion to other places to continue their mission, expressing their devotion in many contexts. Gesturing to the statue of Mother Brunner displayed in front of the ambo, he quipped, "For being 175 years old, she's looking pretty good!"

Thanking the sisters for their dedication for almost 200 years, he noted that CPPS women have made a difference in countless lives: "The tonality of our Catholic life in the counties you have served would be much different if you had not been here to witness to the saving generosity of the Lord Jesus and to the persistence of his love for us... As we celebrate this anniversary today, I once again want to offer thanks: Thanks be to God for all [CPPS sisters] who have gone to their reward. Thanks be to God for all of you."

At the Mass's conclusion, Precious Blood Father Bill O'Donnell, pastor of Precious Blood Church, offered his own congratulations and words of thanks to the sisters. He especially noted their courageous witness in undertaking ministries and outreach that few others would accept, their strong stance in the local community in defense of life and against the death penalty and violence, and the congregation's long support of the parish. Women religious, he said, are too often unsung and unheralded, but are the true prophetic voices in our church and in our world.

After Mass, the celebration continued in the parish center with a reception where guests and sisters enjoyed refreshments and socialized.

The day's celebration was capped with recognition and appreciation from members of the civic community. Montgomery County Commissioner Dan Foley, Ohio State Rep. Roland Winburn (D-Dayton) and Trotwood councilman Rap Hankins all presented proclamations to the sisters in recognition of the anniversary year. (In a happy coincidence, all three of these community leaders were taught by Sisters of the Precious Blood in Dayton Catholic schools.) A proclamation honoring the sisters was also read on behalf of the City of Dayton.

And with joy and gratitude, the celebration continues! Watch for more coverage on the website and in the Winter *Sharing & Caring*.



**Visit the website for:**

- Excerpts from Fr. Fischer's lecture
- Sr. Florence Seifert's remarks
- The full text of Archbishop Pilarczyk's homily

Check the website often for information about other 175th anniversary events — announcements of coming events and more news and photos of recent events!

[www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org](http://www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org)

# More Anniversary Year Highlights

## *Twin anniversaries for CPPS and Glandorf, Ohio*

GLANDORF, Ohio — The Labor Day weekend marked a gala twin celebration in the village of Glandorf, Ohio: the 175th anniversary of the foundation of the village (by emigrants from the city of the same name in Germany) and its St. John the Baptist Church, and the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, with historic ties to the area since their arrival in America.

Located in the northwest corner of the Toledo Diocese, in rural Putnam County, Glandorf has enriched the lives of the Precious Blood family of Sisters and Missionaries (priests and brothers) who have ministered there in parishes and schools almost since the village's beginning.

This year, the village's annual weekend festival took on an historic, international and religious flavor for the celebration, which included firefighters from Glandorf, Germany, a Mass celebrated by Toledo Bishop Leonard Blair, and a parade with a tractor-drawn float of CPPS women and men — native sons and daughters of the area and/or with long service to St. John the Baptist Parish.

In addition to Glandorf's usual festival venues of dancing, beer garden and home-made chicken dinners, the almost two-hour parade included floats, bands, fire trucks, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, antique tractors and other celebrations of rural life. Back at the firehouse, an added touch for the anniversary year was the historical display of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

Nineteen Precious Blood Sisters and four Missionaries of the Precious Blood were on hand for the celebration, taking part in various liturgical roles and/or riding on the float that honored both the communities and the parish.



*Contributed photo*

As the German flag flutters in the background, a bright red Farmall tractor pulls the float commemorating St. John the Baptist Parish and the Sisters of the Precious Blood. CPPS Sisters (from left) Nancy Recker, Lou Ann Roof and Noreen Jutte rode on the float, along with Missionaries, represented by Father Harold Brown (in biretta), pastor of St. John the Baptist, Fathers Raymond Seifert and Tony Fortman, and Brother Jerry Schulte.



*Photo by Pat Morrison*

CPPS Sisters were Eucharistic ministers at the outdoor Mass. Here Sisters Pat Gist (center background) and Anna Maria Sanders present the cup to some of the 500 worshippers.

## *Maria Stein welcomes 500 for August Mass and picnic*

MARIA STEIN, Ohio — With a bright sun overhead, more than 500 people filled the grounds of the Maria Stein Center on Sunday, Aug. 16, for a Mass and picnic to help the Sisters of the Precious Blood celebrate their 175th anniversary at this historic and memory-filled site.

Families, friends, volunteers and Sisters and Missionaries of the Precious Blood sat on folding chairs, camping seats and the green grass for the 4 p.m. Mass, which was followed by a picnic supper in the center's courtyard. Precious Blood Father Kenneth Schroeder presided at the Mass.

Helping to make the celebration more festive were several fraternal and patriotic groups, including men and women of the American Legion, Knights of St. John and Knights of Columbus. Dozens of volunteers helped with shuttling participants from the parking area to the Mass site in golf carts, baking, contributing and serving food items and soft drinks, and grilling burgers and hotdogs.

More than two dozen priests and brothers of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood joined the more than 50 Precious Blood Sisters on hand for the celebration. Many of the sisters in attendance were either from the area or ministered there over the years.

Representatives of the two groups of religious communities offered remarks. Sister Florence Seifert, president of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, welcomed the participants and thanked them for their years of support and friendship. At the close of the Mass Sister Barbara Ann Hoying, director of the Maria Stein Center/Relics Shrine, also thanked all who participated and continue to support the sisters' ministry.

*For full news coverage and more photos, visit the website:  
[www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org](http://www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org)*

# Do you know that...

■ **The Sisters of the Precious Blood** continue the legacy of their foundress, Mother Maria Anna Brunner, especially through advocacy for the poor and oppressed.

In June, on behalf of the congregation, **Sister Pat Dieringer** presented a check for \$15,000 to Gene Porter, president of the **Saint Vincent de Paul Conference of Precious Blood Church in Dayton**. The donation, a gift of the sisters' Maria Anna Brunner Fund, is designed especially to help the parish help the many poor it serves in the Trotwood area with food, utility assistance, emergency rent and housing help, and other crisis needs. Sister Pat is executive secretary of the Maria Anna Brunner Fund.



■ It's not everyday that a CPPS Sister attends... a prom, and even less likely that she'll be named prom queen! But **Sister Regina Albers**, curator at the Heritage Museum at Maria Stein Center, received both honors this summer, selected by a general drawing of all who were present. The event was the annual Senior Citizens' Prom hosted by St. Denis (Versailles)/Holy Family (Frenchtown)



Parish Youth Ministry in the Cincinnati archdiocese's Sidney Deanery. Although organizers claim no nepotism was involved in the vote, the prom king was Urban Gehret.... who also happens to be Sister Regina's brother-in-law.

## 'Nifty 90s Club' make its debut at Salem Heights

On her 99th birthday on Aug. 25, **Sister Consuella Salmon** became the charter member of the Salem Heights "**Nifty 90s Club**," a prestigious group of CPPS sisters residing at the motherhouse who have entered their ninth decade of life.

The celebration included refreshments, balloons, and gifts for all as well as the opportunity for each "Nifty 90" sister to light and blow out a special candle, share her own memories of her rich life, and hear affirming reflections from Sister Beverly Bodnar, director of resident life.

Each sister who turns 90 automatically becomes a member — and there are no dues!

In addition to **Sister Consuella**, the nifty nonagenarians at Salem Heights are: **Sisters Melitta Barga, Mary Linus Bax, Margaret Daniels,**



**Dorothy Kammerer, Bernice Krieg, Gladys Marie Lowe, Dolorosa Oen, Eileen Tomlinson, Joanela Whaley, Canice Werner and Peg Williams.**

Another dozen sisters in their 90s reside at Emma Hall, the CPPS healthcare unit at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center. They are: **Sisters Madonna Kempf, Cecilia Ann Goldschmidt, Mary Kathryn Gurren, Leonides Piekenbrock, Madonna Schneider, Rita Sonderman, Iona Taylor, Clara Van de Beuken, Bernadine Viet, Yvonne Voisard, and Madonna Winkeljohn.** (Sister Clara Tumbush will be 90 in December.)

Thanks to each of you "Nifty 90s" for showing us how to be young at heart and live life to the fullest!



Gathered for the first celebration of the "Nifty 90s Club" at Salem Heights were: (seated from left) Sisters Consuella Salmon, Margaret Daniels, Canice Werner, Delphine Kolker, Peg Williams,

Mary Linus Bax; (back row) Eileen Tomlinson, Bernice Krieg, Joanela Whaley, Gladys Marie Lowe, Dorothy Kammerer and Melitta Barga. Inset photo (left): Sister Dolorosa Oen.

## Sister Frances Kleman

(Sister Mary Caritas)

SISTER FRANCES KLEMAN died Sept. 6, 2009, at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center in Dayton, Ohio. She had been a Sister of the Precious Blood for 69 years.

Frances was born in Glandorf, Ohio, on Sept. 28, 1922. She was one of eleven children, four boys and seven girls, born to Louis and Elizabeth (Kreinbrink) Kleman. She entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood on August 4, 1940 and received the name Sister Mary Caritas.

Sister Frances began her 26-year educational ministry teaching elementary school at Precious Blood School in Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. Mary in Dayton, Ohio; and St. Mark in Cincinnati. She then taught high school math and science at Immaculate Conception in Celina, Ohio; Sacred Heart in Sedalia, Mo.; Central Catholic in Lafayette, Ind.; Fatima Hall in Dayton; St. Joseph in Wapakoneta, Ohio; and Carroll High School in Dayton.

Sister Frances was then asked to be secretary/treasurer and later was elected regional director for the Northern Region of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. She later served as executive director of the congregation's Maria Anna Brunner Fund.

She served as administrator of Maria Stein Convent for three years, followed by ministry in the field of housing for the elderly and low-income families in Columbus and Toledo, Ohio and Detroit, Mich.

Sister Frances retired to Salem Heights in 1998. Here she continued with a variety of volunteer ministries, reflective of her great commitment to social justice. Among these were coordinating a cancelled-stamp project that raised money for the missions, and crocheting winter hats for distribution to the needy. She shared this hat-making "ministry" with Sister Rose Ann Winkeljohn, who did knitting, while Sister Frances crocheted. Together they provided thousands of warm caps for children and adults alike.

Declining health required her to move to Emma Hall at the healthcare center earlier this year. Sister Frances later suffered a debilitating stroke.

Sister Frances was preceded in death by four sisters and two brothers. She is served by two sisters and two brothers: Eleanor Kleman of Marlboro, Md.; Alice Ciotta of North Olmstead, Ohio; Harry (Agnes) Kleman of Ottawa, Ohio, and Arthur (Rose) Kleman of Delphos, Ohio.



## Sister M. Susanna Laux

SISTER MARY SUSANNA LAUX died Aug. 11, 2009 —two days after her 93rd birthday — at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center in Dayton, Ohio. She had celebrated her 75th anniversary as a Sister of the Precious Blood in 2007.

She was born Margaret Mary Laux in Bryant, Ind., on Aug. 9, 1916, to Albert and Rose (Welsch) Laux. She was the fifth-oldest of four brothers and two sisters. She is survived by one brother, Joseph, and two sisters, Helen Fisher and Alfreda Muhlenkamp. She is also survived by a second

cousin in the congregation, Sister Rosemary Laux, who lives at Salem Heights in Dayton. Sister Susanna was preceded in death by her sister, Sister Mary Albertina Laux, also a Sister of the Precious Blood, and second cousins in the congregation, Sister Mary Agnella Laux and Sisters DePaul and Magdalene Miller.

Throughout her 77 years of religious life, Sister Susanna was engaged in domestic arts as a cook, housekeeper and seamstress. She served in various Ohio convents, including Dayton, Glandorf, North College Hill, Troy and Vandalia, and at the residence of Bishop George Rehring in Cincinnati.

A gifted seamstress, Sister Susanna worked for 18 years in the Ecclesiastical Arts Department at the mother-house making vestments; she also made the uniforms for the girls entering the congregation as aspirants. Her last assignment, which lasted over 20 years, was as the cook at Our Lady of Good Hope Convent in Miamisburg, Ohio. She enjoyed singing in the parish choir and taking part in various parish activities. Parishioners as well as her own CPPS sisters loved Sister Susanna and recognized her spirit of joy and thoughtfulness.

Due to failing health, Sister Susanna retired to Salem Heights in 1987 and eventually to Emma Hall at the healthcare center in 2006.

In retirement, and even with health limitations, she wanted to be mentally active: She loved to read, work crossword puzzles and do word searches. Above all she loved playing cards, especially pinochle, with a group of sisters on Sunday afternoon.

Simplicity, kindness, prayerfulness and loyalty describe Sister Susanna. She was also known for her wit and sense of humor. Susanna respected every person and went out of her way for others. In the words of a friend, "she always made a good happening seem better than it was, and a misfortune not as bad as it seemed."

### IN MEMORIAM

*For the full texts of the eulogies given at the sisters' funerals, go to [www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org](http://www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org); click on In Memoriam.*

## LETTERS...

The members of the CPPS Magnificat Cluster, who prepared the 175th anniversary celebration at Maria Stein Center on Aug. 16, give special thanks to the many Sisters of the Precious Blood and numerous other volunteers who assisted us at this event.

To the sisters: Your joyful presence as choir members, hostesses, greeters, tour guides and more, was much appreciated.

The father of a young family told us he remembers the sisters as always being of service to others. And here again, when he saw the sisters as Eucharistic ministers, he was touched by our willingness to serve.

To our dedicated volunteers: Your energy and spirit of service — as site preparers and chair set-up workers for the Mass, shuttle drivers, grillmasters and chefs of all kinds, food servers, clean-up crew, gift shop helpers (and so much more behind the scenes) — make us even more grateful for the support we sisters have felt for years from you, our friends and supporters.

We received notes and words of compliment from family, friends, former students and parish members from far and wide. We also had kind remarks from the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. We will long remember this distinctive anniversary celebration!

Thank you, sisters and volunteers! You make us proud!

**Magnificat Cluster Members — Sisters Regina Albers, Mary Ellen Andrisin, Martha Bertke, Barbara Ann Hoying, Maureen Mangan, Lou Ann Roof, Elizabeth Westgerdes and Nancy Wolf**

I just wanted you to know how much I enjoyed the “Who Is This Jesus?” weekend [retreat at Salem Heights Aug. 1-2]. I got the answers of how Sisters of the Precious Blood put their mission into action, insights into prayer life, what CPPS values are, community, life, etc.

And additionally it was a very nice time for reflection on my faith and reconnecting with Jesus in my life. I just took two online classes in the Spring and one of them was images of Jesus.

It was very similar, reflecting who Jesus is and who he is in our lives, etc.

Thank you again, and blessings!

**Bea Tiboldi  
Dayton**

Thank you, sisters and friends, for all your cards, visits and prayers for my brother, Marvin Oen, who died July 30.

I deeply appreciate all your love and care.

**Sister M. Dolorosa Oen  
Dayton**

Thank you for getting me subscribed to *Sharing & Caring*. The issues you recently sent were waiting for me when I picked up the mail, and I enjoyed reading them.

I was especially interested to read about Sister Consuella's 80th class reunion and 99th birthday (Summer 2009). I was in Sister's third- and fourth-grade class at New Riegel in 1949 and 1950. Now that I know her birthday, I hope to send her a card next August for her 100th birthday! I have especially fond memories of her as my teacher.

Thank you again for *Sharing & Caring*. I have a great interest and love for the Sisters and [Missionaries] of the Precious Blood.

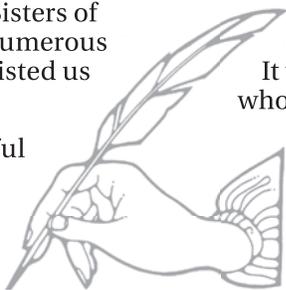
**Don Rogier  
Risingsun, Ohio**

A warm thank you to all who sent cards and words of kindness, and offered prayers and Masses on the death of my sister, Freda Gram.

Your kindness will always be appreciated by me and our family.

May God bless you all.

**Sister Gladys Marie Lowe  
Dayton**



## IN SYMPATHY

*Our sympathy and prayer to the following sisters and to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood who have recently lost loved ones in death:*

**Sister Gladys Marie Lowe** on the death of her sister, Freda Gram, on July 15.

**The Missionaries of the Precious Blood** on the death of Father Milton Ballor (Cincinnati Province) on July 21.

**Sister M. Dolorosa Oen** on the death of her brother, Marvin Oen, on July 29.

**Sister Mary Ann Westerheide** on the death of her brother, John Westerheide, on Aug. 6.

**The Missionaries of the Precious Blood** on the death of Father Werner Verhoff (Cincinnati Province) on Sept. 10.

**Sister Leonides Piekenbrock** on the death of her sister-in-law, Stella Piekenbrock, on Sept. 12.

**The Missionaries of the Precious Blood** on the death of Father Raymond Seifert (Cincinnati Province) on Sept. 14.

## REMEMBERING...

**Mary Elizabeth Uhlenhake**, formerly Sister Othelia, CPPS, on Sept. 8.

**Theresa Bagert**, sister of the late Sister Florentine Gregory, on Sept. 25.

**Brigid McCormick Brower**, a former novice, on Sept. 29.

**MAY THEY REST IN PEACE.**

## Check the web!

Remember that between issues of *Sharing & Caring* you can find updated news about the Sisters of the Precious Blood and events on the website. It's normally updated every two weeks on Friday afternoon.

[www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org](http://www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org)

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## CPPS in... Navajo Land

**P**RECIOUS Blood Sister Mary Louise Hoelscher accepted the invitation to live among and serve the people of the Navajo Nation in 1972, continuing a long CPPS tradition of serving the Native American and Hispanic peoples of the U.S. Southwest.

The powerful image at right, "Navajo Christ breaking bread," depicts Christ with Navajo features and the blanket of a tribal leader, in the act of breaking bread. The painting illustrates the hospitality that marks the Navajo way: Sharing — food, time and companionship, one's material goods — is a hallmark of the people. Below, Sister Mary Louise and Jimmy Yazzie deliver a food package, pray and visit with Lenita Adakai, 81, in her simple home on the Navajo reservation.

Read more about Sister Mary Louise's life among the Navajo on pages 5-7.



"Navajo Christ Breaking Bread" © 1999 Fr. John Giuliani;  
Reproductions at [www.BridgeBuilding.com](http://www.BridgeBuilding.com)

