



Sharing & Caring

THE SISTERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD ■ DAYTON, OHIO

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Sister Ruth Ann's behind-the-scenes ministry

Below, Michigan math teachers explore new technology for the classroom, thanks to the efforts of CPPS Sister Ruth Ann Meyer.



Read about it on pages 6-7

Memories...

Beginning in the late 1920s, numerous teenage girls (like these pictured in 1938) attended the high school aspirancy of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. For 15 years, from 1950 to 1965, aspirants lived in Fatima Hall on the CPPS Dayton motherhouse campus. Some went on to become sisters, others to different walks of life.

Earlier this year, the last class of "Fatima Girls" gathered for a reunion, sharing their memories, stories and gratitude for the gift of that experience.

Read about it on page 14...



Photo courtesy CPPS Archives



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Newman's gift

The recently beatified English convert, theologian, writer and cardinal, John Henry Newman is not a household name for many American Catholics. In fact he is sometimes confused with the first U.S. bishop to be canonized a saint, the Bohemian-born John Henry Neumann ("Noi-man," from its German origin, but often pronounced "Newman" in English).

Some of us may have made a passing acquaintance with Newman in high school or college. I remember studying his poem, "The Dream of Gerontius," in high school. Newman's "The Idea of a University" was required reading in college. Other readers may recognize the familiar opening lines of another poem of

his, written after a brush with death during a sea voyage, but not know that Newman was its author:

Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom / Lead Thou me on!

The night is dark, and I am far from home... ("The Pillar of the Cloud," 1833)

Many of Newman's ideas and theological insights were not only brilliantly articulated but years ahead of their time — for example, his emphasis on the role of the laity. For all his scholarly depth, Cardinal Newman advocated (and lived) a spirituality of "ordinary" holiness, coupled with a radical belief in God's work and purpose in every human life.

This belief is expressed powerfully

in one of his meditations, ("Hope in God-Creator," 1848) excerpted below, as timely today as it was when he penned it:

God has created me to do Him some definite service.

He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.

I have my mission.

I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

Somehow I am necessary for His purposes... I have a part in this great work;

I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

I shall do good; I shall do His work...

He has not created me for naught.

Therefore, I will trust Him.

He does nothing in vain.

He knows what He is about....

There is much in this issue of *Sharing & Caring* about ordinary holiness, about mission, about finding and sharing God through simple connections, about hope. May we, too, rejoice that God has made us "a link in a chain," confident that "He knows what He is about."

—Pat Morrison

In Loving Memory



Sister Rose Margaret

As *Sharing & Caring* was in the final stage of production, the Sisters of the Precious Blood were saddened at the deaths of two sisters, on the same day, in different parts of the country. Both were 92 years of age.

■ **Sister Rose Margaret (M. Cyril) Langdon** died on Tuesday, October 19, in Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

■ **Sister M. Leonides Piekenbrock** also died on October 19, in Dayton.

The funeral liturgy was celebrated for Sister Leonides on Oct. 22 at Salem Heights, with interment in Salem Heights Cemetery. The funeral Mass for Sister Rose Margaret was celebrated at Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Wheat Ridge, Colorado on Oct. 25, with interment in Colorado. A Memorial Mass was offered on Oct. 26 at Salem Heights.

The complete texts of the eulogies are available online at www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org in **Memoriam**. Memorial tributes for both sisters will be published in the Winter issue of *Sharing & Caring*.



Sister M. Leonides



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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Our challenge: Daring to live hope



As I sit here on this crisp autumn day seeking clarification for what is in my thoughts at this time, the word “hope” keeps surfacing. This is not surprising since the theme of hope has been prevalent in many readings and experiences over the past few months. *Hope in the Midst of Darkness* was the theme of a booklet of articles and a booklet of reflections written by women religious and published by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). “Hope in the Midst of Darkness” was the theme of the national LCWR assembly in August.

It is not hard to identify darkness — in our church, world, country, local communities, families and yes, even within ourselves. People throughout the world are experiencing the ravages of earthquakes, hurricanes and floods. Countries are torn apart by wars from within and outside. Violence and unjust treatment of persons are taking place in terrifying ways. Unthinkable poverty exists in the midst of astonishing wealth and extravagance. People of the church are experiencing doubt and disillusionment. Instant communication and technology are used to fuel and fan the fires of hatred and division. These are realities in which we live, with which we deal, sometimes on a daily basis.

Religious congregations, too, are facing darkness as we acknowledge our increasing average age and diminishing membership due to death and lack of new members. For us the question becomes how we are called by God to carry on our mission in the context of today's realities.

Where is the hope in all this? Hope is very hard to define, to

name, to wrap one's arms around. Hope is used frequently in everyday expressions: “I hope you are feeling better,” “let's hope it rains today,” or the cliché “hope springs eternal.” Hope is often thought of in terms of future — confidence and anticipation that something positive will come to pass.

Scriptures speak often of hope. The psalmist prayed in hope, “May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, as we put our hope in you.” St. Paul reminded his communities that “everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope.” He prayed for them “that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which God has called you” and “may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

This is the message that ran through all the readings and reflections and discussions of the past few months. Followers of Jesus are called to be full of hope, to live lives overflowing with hope so that we are a hope-filled presence in our world wherever we find ourselves. Women religious have found new depth of meaning in the truth that we have been and must continue to be a hope-filled presence to our world. What we wear, where we live are not the things that define our call or our ministries. Who we are and how we live flows from our rootedness in God and God's love made manifest to us in the redeeming love of Jesus. The challenge for each of us, women and men, lay and religious, is to identify how we are called to live hope

wherever we are and whatever we are doing.

This is the challenge we Sisters of the Precious Blood have identified for ourselves as we prepare for our next Assembly in June 2011. “Dare to Live Hope” is the theme set for the Assembly. Our task in the months ahead is to delve more deeply into what “living hope” really means for us now and into the future. “Dare” may be a hard admonition. It will not always be easy to face the truth of our age and numbers, to repurpose spaces we have called home, to hand over ministries — to not lose hope. But Jesus didn't promise *easy*; he promised *joy* and *peace* because he is with us always.

I recently read a quotation from Barbara Kingsolver which seems to me to speak to our theme: “The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof.”

Dare to live hope — dare to be a hope-filled presence. Each of you, readers of *Sharing & Caring*, has been part of our past, are family members or have shared in ministry. We humbly and confidently ask you to join us in our prayerful preparation and discernment for Assembly 2011. We promise to continue to gather you all in our prayers.

Sister Florence

Sister Florence Seifert, CPPS



Family is driving force behind vocations

BY SISTER CAROLYN HOYING

As the family goes, so goes society, and so goes the world in which we live.

— Pope John Paul II

Recently I attended the Northern Area Congress for religious educators, held in Piqua, Ohio. The keynote speaker was Dr. Joseph P. White, who holds a doctorate in child psychology. The topic of his presentation was the family as the “missing link” in catechesis today.

He began the morning session by asking participants two questions:

1) “How did your family influence the development of your faith?” and

2) “What did you learn about God from your family?”

The room was abuzz as those present discussed these questions with those around them. In the group I was with, many said their parents taught them to pray very early in life. The Mass was presented as something very important because it brought the People of God together as a community in the body of Christ. Participants shared that it was in the family that we learned who God is and who we are and how God relates to us. We learned that through example and listening to family stories and faith stories. We learned it while eating family meals together and being taught the connection between the family meal and the Eucharist.

It was in the family that we experienced the meaning of life. Our faith grew and deepened in our relationships in the family, our church and school community as we grew up. Our Catholic faith was the center of our life.

Today, in the modern day family, where hectic schedules mean divided attention and less “family time” — sometimes even no family meals or shared time at all — the family structure breaks down. Demands, whether real or self-created, are greater and life becomes compartmentalized.

When this happens, Dr. White pointed out, faith suddenly goes on the back burner. It becomes just one more extra-curricular activity. Secularization takes priority and faith becomes counter-cultural in today’s society.



Family stories, faith stories and family meals: These are times for building relationships — and relationships are a key element to nurturing vocations.



One reason people in today’s culture fear commitment is because of their divided attention. Our lives are cluttered with things that distract our attention and keep us from focusing on our whole reason for being. Families move frenetically from one event to the next; there’s no time in the busyness of the day to reflect or be silent so as to hear what God is saying or how God is relating to us.

As Dr. White noted, our faith holds the meaning of life. God reveals himself in family life through family stories, faith stories and family meals. These are times for building relationships — and relationships are a key element to nurturing vocations.

Society’s not always positive influence

This is just one reason why so few women and men are entering religious life today. The influence of society in general has a negative effect on today’s young people.

At the same time, many young people also know there’s something missing in their lives and in what the culture holds out to them, and they’re searching to discover what that is. They’re searching for deeper meaning in their lives and for a way to live out their Catholic identity. They’re searching for a sense of community.

Several factors make a vocational choice today more difficult.

So many options!

One, there are just so many options! Young people today have more options than their parents and grandparents had before them, from education to career choices and much more. If they make a commitment to one thing, that may rule out many of the other options. And, some will worry, what if their choice is the wrong one?

Fear of lifetime commitment

Another factor is the fear of making a lifetime commitment. For some women and men, the idea of choosing one lifestyle, vocation or life partner is very challenging and frightening. In some ways, “lifetime” has also taken on new meaning. In past centuries when people married or entered into a church vocation as young teens and died in their 40s, a “lifetime” was much shorter. Today, people are living longer; we no longer have second careers, but third and fourth as well. How is it possible to commit to this one way of life or this one person for a *lifetime* when that

may mean half a century or more?

Some solutions

As Dr. White told the religious educators, we are called first to strengthen family life and then healthy relationships in our faith and religious communities. When that happens it's possible we will see an increase in church vocations.

I believe that religious life is a viable and important way of life today for our church and for our world, just as it has been throughout history. It may look different than it has in the past, but nevertheless, I believe this way of life will continue to meet the needs of the church and of the world — and of the generous, searching human heart.

As a congregation, we Sisters of the Precious Blood recently expanded our Vocation Ministry Committee beyond our own sisters to include four lay women and men (see Summer issue of *Sharing & Caring* and photo below.) We knew that we need-

ed to look beyond ourselves to see new possibilities, and we're grateful to these new members for their willingness to devote time and energy to this important task of cultivating vocations.

We know that their life experience, "fresh eyes," and insight will generate active enthusiasm for "a culture of religious vocation" within our CPPS congregation. This committee will study and look at internal and external components of who we are and how the various publics see us. They'll also explore what we can do to enhance how we present ourselves to potential new members.

Beginning with the Winter issue, we'll be introducing our new lay members of the Vocations Ministry Committee to *Sharing & Caring* readers.

I believe that religious life is a viable and important way of life today for our church and for our world, just as it has been throughout history. It may look different than it has in the

past, but nevertheless, I believe this way of life will continue to meet the needs of the church and of the world — and of the generous, searching human heart.

So I ask you, how does your family go? If you know of a woman who is searching for deeper meaning in her life, she may just be called to a religious vocation. If you're that person or know someone who might be, please contact Sister Carolyn. It all begins in building a relationship!

**Vocations@
PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org**



To learn more about ongoing and upcoming vocation-related programs, visit the website! Go to **www.**

PreciousBloodSistersDayton.

org; click on News & Events and then scroll to the drop-down Vocations Programs.

Vocations committee now 'new and improved'

Four lay members join CPPS sisters to promote vocations

Four lay men and women have joined CPPS sisters to serve on the Vocations ministry team. They are Mary Lynn Delfino, Nathan Hess, Alex Loehrer and Cynthia Schmersal. (See Summer *Sharing & Caring*, page 4.)

At right, the entire committee gathered for a souvenir shot at their first meeting this past Summer. They are (front row, from left): Cynthia Schmersal, Sister Joyce Kahle, Nathan Hess, Sister Mary Yarger; (back row) Sister Carolyn Hoying, Sister Amy Junk, Alex Loehrer, Mary Lynn Delfino, Sister Terry Walter, Sister Marita Beumer, Sister Mary Lou Schmersal.



***They teasingly call her
'the money nun.'***

***But it's her passion for education that
has brought this Ph.D. from
the math classroom
to hunting for funds that benefit
Michigan's underserved.***



Sister Ruth Ann's behind-the-scenes ministry

BY PAT MORRISON

KALAMAZOO, Michigan — Sister Ruth Ann Meyer's compact, tidy office on the campus of Western Michigan University gives a visitor a few visual clues as to what this lifelong math teacher is about these days. One wall contains shelves of large loose-leaf binders. A print of one of M.C. Escher's fascinating, mathematically inspired lithographs adorns another. And a large map of Michigan, marked with dozens of color-coded dots, takes up much of a third.

The binders document dozens of projects and related grant funding that Sister Ruth Ann has been active in developing and launching through WMU. The Escher print is eloquent testimony to her own passion for mathematics and its stretch toward infinity. The map indicates wide-ranging areas of the state where the university's research and funded projects have been implemented, from central city communities to the most rural (and low-income and academically underserved) parts of Michigan.

In a casual encounter with Sister Ruth Ann, one might never suspect the wealth of experience, education and expertise this quiet, soft-spoken Precious Blood Sister has brought to classrooms in elementary and high schools from Arizona to Ohio and universities from Notre Dame to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

One also wouldn't suspect that she has been the behind-the-scenes force in helping to obtain more than \$20 million dollars to conduct programs for Michigan's mathematics teachers.

Her brothers tease that she's "the money nun," she said.

But "I really don't like that," she says with a chuckle, shaking her head. "It sounds like I'm getting money for myself, or that I'm independently wealthy. And of course as a sister, with a vow of poverty, that's never the case." But her hard work and persistence have indeed brought in millions of dollars to WMU for the state's teachers — and she's proud that most of these monies are ultimately going to the service of the poor.

"People think 'poverty' in Michigan, and they immediately think of [the automotive centers] Detroit and Flint," she said. "What they don't know is that portions of the Lower Peninsula (LP) and other rural parts of the state are even harder hit economically and in terms of employment."

Schools in the northeastern LP, she said, often have difficulty attracting and keeping skilled teachers, especially for subjects like math. Because the area is rural, teachers must travel long distances, ongoing education opportunities are limited, salaries are low (even for teachers, who are poorly paid in general), and technol-

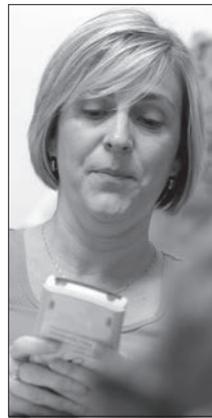
ogy is no match for the bigger cities. It's a cycle, she says. If the teachers are poorly trained in math, the students will be also, and their job opportunities will suffer.

Part of Sister Ruth Ann's goal is to remedy that, and she has helped put programs in place that have enabled Michigan's math teachers to rise to new levels of learning and teaching expertise. Another part of her job — the most challenging — is to find the funding to make the programs reality.

The former chair of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Western Michigan University, Dr. Meyer (as the students and her colleagues address her) is since 1999 an emerita researcher and professor of mathematics at WMU. Through 2011 she is the principal investigator/project director of the Kalamazoo Area Algebra Project, a state math/science partnership project. She is currently completing a five-year term as principal investigator and project director of the Michigan Mathematics Rural Initiative Project. (Abbreviated and cleverly baptized with math-lovers' symbolism, it's popularly known as M²RI.)

Thanks to funding for the M²RI Project that Sister Ruth Ann was able to secure from the state and from a private foundation, the university's math department has partnered with 20 rural area school districts in Michigan's central and northeastern LP and regional science and math

One of Sister Ruth Ann's favorite projects is this year's Kalamazoo Area Algebra Project (KA²P, of course!); <http://wmich.edu/math/kaap/> The project provided four-day technology workshops for mathematics teachers of grades 6-12. Here (and on the cover) teachers huddle to explore the "bells and whistles" of new high-tech calculators.



Another result of her funding efforts, this hands-on learning experience energized and taught enhanced skills to the 111 teachers who participated.

*Photos top, left and inset cover © Michael Lanka
Photography; courtesy of Western Michigan University.*

centers to boost students' opportunities for learning.

The already successful rural area program recently changed its delivery format to an even more effective model in 2009-2010: Offering online learning opportunities for teachers by means of DVDs containing instructional modules, M²RI can better serve rural area teachers. Providing at least 21 hours of professional development for the math teachers, M²RI "has been a win-win for everyone," Sister Ruth Ann says. "It offers state-of-the-art continuing education to a wider base of teachers in low-income and underserved areas. It reduces travel time and cost for teachers. And they are then in a position to share their enhanced skills and the latest technology with their students." The project staff trained teacher leaders to facilitate the sessions, which included a DVD dinner/dialogue at local school districts.

That the educators enjoyed and benefited from the program is clear from a number of thank-you notes and letters Sister Ruth Ann received from the teachers and her colleagues alike.

A special education teacher in lower Michigan wrote: "Wow! I am having so much fun learning math with my colleagues. I love the hands-on activities, even the challenging ones... I want to express how much I appreciate this opportunity. There have been so many benefits. M²RI has definitely made me a better teacher... Our math department has become much closer. Thank you!... I really can't thank you enough."

On her curriculum vitae, Sister Ruth Ann's academic credentials, areas of graduate study, published articles in journals, books and monographs, and honors run to more than 20 pages. But for this veteran educator, what energizes her is helping people learn and giving them the tools to do that.

Attending grade school with her eight siblings in New Cleveland, Ohio, or Sts. Peter and Paul High School in Ottawa, Ohio, she never thought she'd have a Ph.D. in mathematics education or that it would be her life's work. But she admits math came easily to her.

Sister Ruth Ann shrugs off any suggestion that this is a difficult and specialized field. "Some people like English or art," she said, "I love math. I always have, ever since I was a child."

She knew she liked math, and she also knew she liked the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Her pastor tried to steer her toward another religious community, but she insisted on joining CPPS. "I told him they were 'more spiritual,'" she said.

One way she lives and shares that spiritual focus today is as chair of the



Photos page 1 left, page 6 and above by Pat Morrison

Sue Simons and Sister Ruth Ann take a break from work to catch up on news. Sue is the administrative assistant to the chair of WMU's mathematics department.

congregation's Maria Anna Brunner Fund. This fund provides short-term grants to worthwhile programs that benefit the poor, and women especially. "There are so many people doing great things," she said. "We can't help them all, but it's very satisfying to be able to empower them in a small, limited way."

Today, spirituality is more central to her life than ever. Before she heads to the busy WMU campus, Sister Ruth Ann begins her day with contemplative prayer. She attends Mass at a nearby parish after work, and closes her day with another period of prayer.

"Education is a strong part of our history as Sisters of the Precious Blood," she says as we cross a breezeway over the WMU campus. "I love what I do. I'm very grateful to the congregation for allowing me to get the education that has enabled me to do what I've been doing now for many years."



CPPS presence marks new Mother Brunner School celebration

DAYTON— Sept. 22 marked a special Eucharistic celebration for the beginning of the school year for students at the new Mother Maria Anna Brunner

Catholic School. Parishioners and students had voted to name the school, a consolidation of St. Rita and Precious Blood schools, in honor of the foundress of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

At left, Mother Brunner herself (AKA Sister Nadine Kaschalk) made an appearance at the Mass and afterward, with her basket of bread, posed with students for an all-school photo. (Precious Blood Parish's pastor, Father William O'Donnell, is at far left.) CPPS symbolism was in evidence at the Mass, with Mother Brunner's bread basket at the foot of the altar, along with statues of St. Gaspar del Bufalo, founder of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, and Mother Brunner. Above, third-grader Adam Boyd receives Holy Communion from the cup from Deacon Michael Prier. Archbishop Dennis Schnurr presided at the Mass.



Celebrating a century

DAYTON — The Sisters of the Precious Blood paid tribute to their oldest living member at a special birthday celebration on Aug. 22. Sister Consuella Salmon marked her 100th birthday on Aug. 25.

Dozens of friends, relatives and former students joined the Sisters of the Precious Blood at the Salem Heights motherhouse for a birthday party that included cards, wishes, gifts and song — and of course birthday



For Michigan CPPS Sister, mushrooms make for ... ministry

HOUGHTON LAKE, Mich. — Experienced mushroom hunters Sister Marie Kopin and Phil Tedeschi (photo at left) point out mushrooms growing on the trunk of a birch tree at a Michigan state park. For Sister Marie, a longtime member of the Michigan Mushroom Hunters Club, this is much more than a “fun” hobby; it’s a form of ministry connected to CPPS commitment to respect the environment.

Sister Marie explained to *Sharing & Caring* that underneath the forest’s an underground web of threadlike structures called “mycelia” is constantly breaking down decaying matter and transforming it into soil, recycling nutrients and preparing the ground for other forms of life. Many mushrooms (the fruit of mycelia), are not only a nutritious food but also have antibacterial, antiviral and anticancer properties. En-

zymes secreted by mycelia can destroy pathogens, and fungi can be used to treat contaminated water, clean up oil spills and break down toxins in contaminated soil. “The lowly, marvelous mushroom holds the key to Earth’s health and sustainability,” she said — “as long as humans stop destroying the forests where they live.”

Part of Sister Marie’s “mushroom ministry” is teaching courses on mycology for adults and children. A member of the North American Mycology Association, she leads “forays” to help them learn to identify mushrooms and the fungus’s important contribution to our Earth. She has been actively involved in the Michigan State Parks’ two-month Explorer summer educational program, offered at 45 state parks. Below, she explains a particular type of mushroom to a young participant on a foray.



Photos on page 9 by Thomas Reznich, Houghton Lake (Mich.) Resorter. www.houghtonlakeresorter.com. Reprinted with permission. Other photos by Pat Morrison

cake (actually three of them!). At left, Sister Consuella blows out the candles on one of her birthday cakes. Giving an assist are Sisters Jean René Hoying and Joyce Lehman.

During the celebration, Sister Consuella was presented with a framed letter of recognition and appreciation from Cincinnati Archbishop Dennis Schnurr and a plaque featuring a proclamation of August 22 as “Sister Consuella Salmon Day” from Trotwood Mayor Joyce Cameron.

For more news and photos about the Mother Brunner Catholic School dedication and Sister Consuella’s 100th birthday celebration, visit the website and click on News & Events > News.

www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.Org.

Passing of baton for CPPS Director of Initial Formation

Sister Pat Will continues in liturgy, music ministry; Sister Joyce Lehman is new director

DAYTON—The Sisters of the Precious Blood recently said a grateful farewell to Sister Pat Will for her ministry as Director of Initial Formation for the congregation and also welcomed Sister Joyce Lehman to this position.

After six years in initial formation work, Sister Pat is turning her attention full time to coordinating liturgy for the sisters at Salem Heights. “It was a real discernment,” Sister Pat said. “I had been appointed initially for three years, and then served another three, so it seemed like the time was right for a ministry change. I’m grateful to Sister Florence and the Council for supporting me in my discernment.”

During her time as Director of Initial Formation, Sister Pat accompanied women who sought to enter more deeply into the journey of discerning religious life as a Sister of the Precious Blood. When there were no women to companion, she supported and assisted Sister Carolyn Hoying with her vocation efforts.

“I received so much during these years,” Sister Pat said. “I especially was energized attending the meetings with various

Precious Blood congregations’ formation and vocation personnel, exchanging ideas and insights into how we can help people today hear God’s call and then walk with them on their vocational journey. I also enjoyed and learned a lot from the national and regional gatherings I attended. These really helped me feel the pulse of what’s happening in our church and among young people today. It was a great experience, and it has enriched my own life.”

With Sister Pat’s departure from the office, CPPS welcomes Sister Joyce Lehman as the new Director of Initial Formation. Sister Joyce most recently comes from 10 years of service in the Diocese of Toledo, Ohio. She first served as Director of Pastoral Planning in the Secretariat for Pastoral Leadership; in the last three years she was the head of that secretariat and a member of the Bishop’s Cabinet. (More about Sister Joyce and her new assignment will be presented at a later date.)

The Sisters of the Precious Blood thank Sister Pat for her years of dedicated service and wish her joy and satisfaction in her liturgical and musical endeavors. And a warm welcome to Sister Joyce.

As Director of Initial Formation, Sister Pat Will (right) worked closely with Vocations Director Sister Carolyn Hoying in a wide range of vocations-related projects as well as working with women interested in CPPS religious life.

Photo by Sister Noreen Jutte



Do you

■ **Sister Mary Ann Mozser**, vice-president of Mission & Ministry at St. Vincent Charity Hospital in Cleveland, was named the 2010 recipient of the “Homeless Stand Down InterActer of the Year” Award. The award is given by InterAct Cleveland “to an individual who has given outstanding service to the Homeless Stand Down, thus contributing significantly to building relationships across diverse religious traditions.” In her letter announcing the award Sister Donna Wilhelm, SSJ-TOSF, executive director of InterAct Cleveland, wrote to Sister Mary Ann: “You have been a model of generous volunteer commitment, consistency, and an example of innovating and impactful leadership.” The award was presented May 13.



This is the eighth year Sister Mary Ann has been involved in helping to coordinate this major three-day outreach to Cleveland’s homeless population. She serves as the liaison between the hospital and the Standdown. Her major role is to organize the podiatry services for the Standdown, recruiting the podiatry residents, collecting socks, foot powders and anti-fungal creams to give those who come for the services, and much more. (See the Summer issue of *Sharing & Caring* for more about this year’s program and the role of this CPPS Sister in it.)

■ **The Sisters of the Precious Blood** were recognized for their collaboration with and service to United Theological Seminary in Trotwood during a celebration Sept. 8. The volunteer and donor recognition ceremony was held in conjunction with the naming of the seminary’s O’Brien Library.

CPPS was presented with the Partnership Award by Rev. Timothy Forbess. Rev. Dr. Wendy Deichmann Edwards, UTS president, thanked the Sisters of the Precious Blood for “the channel of grace” the sisters have been to the seminary and its students. CPPS has shared its facilities at Salem Heights with UTS for sev-

Know that...

eral years. The seminary has hosted prayer events and retreats in the chapel, and enjoyed meals in the dining room. Several UTS students are residents at Salem Heights during the academic year and seminary students and instructors attending overnight programs have also been welcome to Salem Heights guest rooms and other hospitality.

In her note of thanks to the congregation, Dr. Edwards wrote: "Thank you so much for your offerings of time, talent and treasure given to United Theological Seminary... It is amazing how the work of a few people can greatly impact our mission and vision as we seek to meet the needs of God's church in the 21st century. Your commitment and loyalty to the work of United is truly outstanding."

Representing CPPS at the event were Sister Florence Seifert, CPPS president; Sister Madonna Ratermann, a member of the community council; Sister Beverly Bodnar, director of resident life at Salem Heights, and Sister Eva Roehrich, Salem Heights guest services coordinator.

■ When the United States Postal Service unveiled its 44-cent commemorative stamp honoring Bl. Mother Teresa of Calcutta this Fall, a Catholic school named in her honor was the site of the southwest Ohio honors. **Mother Teresa Catholic Elementary School in Liberty Township, Ohio**, was host to the unveiling of the stamp. **Precious Blood Sister Anne Shulz** (above, right), founding and current principal of the independent school (K-8), and the full student body welcomed dignitaries to the Sept. 7 event that included Cincinnati Archbishop emeritus Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Hamilton Postmaster Todd O'Reilly and Middletown Postmaster Greg Engel (above, left) civic officials, archdiocesan school officials, and others.

Mother Teresa died in 1997 and the new planned school was named in her honor shortly after. The Nobel Peace Prize-winning nun worked with the poorest of the poor in India and established homes for orphans, the disabled and dying around the world, served by the sisters of the order she founded, the Missionaries of Charity. Her cause for canonization was put on the fast track to sainthood by Pope John Paul II, who knew her personally and beatified her in 2003.

Sister Anne told the students that their school was named in Mother Teresa's honor because school planners hoped she would be a life-long role model for them. "I had the privilege of meeting Mother Teresa and felt the love she had. It was an encounter I will never forget... As you students mature my prayer is that you always remember" her words and kindness to all people "and become true, solid disciples of Christ."

In preparation for the stamp unveiling, several grades chose Mother Teresa quotes, created posters and talked about her in their classes. Each student also received a commemorative envelope featuring the stamp and its special cancellation. The first-day cancellation envelope will also be available to collectors through the school.



Photo by Kathleen Kennedy, courtesy MTCES

For news coverage of the event, visit our website at www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org; click on News and scroll to In the News. Active links will bring you to the media coverage.

■ **Sister Karen Elliott** is the author of a new book published in September by Anselm Academic in Winona, Minn. *Women in Ministry and the Writings of Paul* is Sister Karen's scholarly and insightful reflection on "the witness of women of faith throughout the ages" and the encounter with and impact of women disciples with Paul, the passionate disciple of Jesus Christ.

Sister Karen is an associate professor and chair of the religious studies department at Mercy College of Northwest Ohio in Toledo, Ohio. This is her first published book.



The book has received high praise from other theologians and Scripture scholars, including Grand Rapids Dominican Sister Barbara Reid, vice president and academic dean at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and Sylvania Franciscan Sister Shannon Schrein, who chairs the Department of Theological Studies at Lourdes College in Sylvania, Ohio. Dr. Schrein called *Women in Ministry* "a finely written and engaging book that... goes right to the heart of the issues..." Dr. Reid says that "Elliott spurs the reader to want to go deeper into the thinking of this complex apostle" and "encourages our continuation of the legacy...of these influential women ministers in Christian history."

Congratulations, Sister Karen!

Your Comments

The publication is very professionally done. I enjoy the colorful layout and informative pictures... I read it cover to cover!... • I like the stories connecting the past and the present. These give you a feel for the sisters' lives... • As a former member, I'm especially interested in news about my former classmates and friends... • I enjoy learning. It is interesting to see how your community keeps on keeping on!... • I enjoy the whole issue and find it helpful in my daily living. Many inspiring stories and thoughts...

And the survey says!.... What your readership surveys told us

BY PAT MORRISON

Thank you to *Sharing & Caring* readers who participated in our Spring readership survey. We received 134 completed surveys — at 14% of our readers, that's an above average response rate for similar surveys. Your responses and your comments indicate your high level of interest in this congregational newsletter, and especially in the Sisters of the Precious Blood. That's good news for us! And your comments and suggestions will be helpful to us in planning future issues.

How you read us — and rate us

Your responses indicate a high level of readership, reader loyalty and in general give high marks to *Sharing & Caring*. Some responses:

- 100% said you've read or looked at the most recent issue; 94.6%, or 123 readers, said you've read or looked at all of the past four issues.

- A high percentage — 68.7% — read the entire issue; 31.3% said they skim the issue and read/look at some articles.

- More than half of *Sharing & Caring* readers said they "Always Read" the regular features. (See the chart below for percentage by topic.)

- 65.6% of readers rate *Sharing & Caring* "very interesting" within the past year; another 34.4% rate it "interesting." And almost half of our readers (48.8%) say it has "improved a great deal," with another 27.2% finding it has improved somewhat.

- Survey respondents in general gave high marks to *Sharing & Caring's* content, layout, variety, length of articles, quality, use of color and readability of type. These categories received a rating of "Excellent" from 75% of readers; 25% gave a "Good" rating.

- The survey asked readers to

rate **why** you read *Sharing & Caring*. Almost half (44.6%) gave as their number one reason that the newsletter "provides me with news of individual sisters and their ministry" and another 38.5% said their number one reason was that it "keeps me updated on general news" about the congregation. More than half (50.5%) listed as third in importance that it provides a deepening awareness/appreciation of Precious Blood spirituality.

Who you are

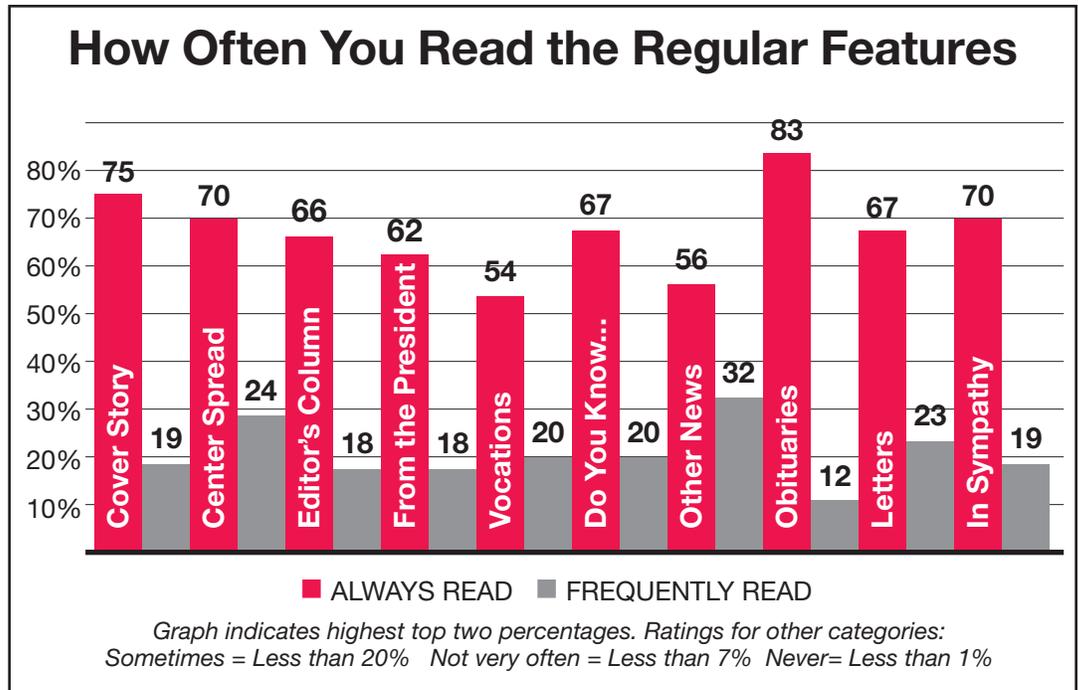
Sharing & Caring readers are predominately female (85.3%). The largest groups of readers are middle-aged and older.

- Married readers comprise the largest group, 41.9%; another 36.3% are single.

- Readers are overwhelmingly members of the laity (86.3%) Another 14.5% include women religious,

Continued on page 13

- I see several other religious community publications and yours ranks among the best of them. Excellent layout, beautifully written articles... • Adding color really draws one's attention and helps bring the stories to life.
- I am inspired reading the accounts of the sisters' ministries in the In Memoriam section, their selflessness, service, joy, fidelity to the very end...
- I like to read about your courageous witness in justice and helping people help themselves... • Good updated news!... • You have an exceptional publication. Keep up the good work!...





Sister Louise Margaret “Peg” (M. Helena) Williams

February 6, 1919 — August 26, 2010

Sister Peg (Louise Margaret) was born on February 6, 1919, to Peter and Louise Margaret Williams in Dayton, Ohio. She was the youngest of six siblings.

Taught by Precious Blood Sisters in grade and high schools, Peg entered the Precious Blood community in Dayton in 1934. She received

the religious name Sister Mary Helena.

For 30 years she taught and occasionally was principal in schools in Ohio, Arizona, and California.

Sister Peg served in regional Precious Blood leadership and in parish ministry in Colorado before beginning nearly 25 years of ministry at Desert House of Prayer, which she considered the crowning point of her life of ministry.

In 1974, Sister Peg joined Father John Kane, a Redemptorist priest, and St. Joseph Sister Dorothy Ann Leshner in co-founding Desert House of Prayer at Picture Rocks Retreat outside Tucson, Ariz. She

brought her many talents and dedication to this ministry. Besides spending hours each day in contemplative prayer, she was available for spiritual direction, oversaw the kitchen, did the weekly shopping, and kept the community books. Sister Peg is remembered for her joyful humming, radiant smile and gentle words of wisdom.

In 2000, Sister Peg came to Salem Heights. In November 2009 she moved to the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center because of failing health.

Wherever she lived or worked she brought joy, laughter, enthusiasm, peace, love and compassion. Her joy, gratitude and pleasant manner won the hearts of all who served her. She faced her last weeks excited and waiting for the God she loved to come get her.

— Sister Edna Hess

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

Survey

Continued from page 12

diocesan priests/deacons and male religious. About 8% also identified themselves as members of another Precious Blood congregation or related group.

■ Asked about your connection with the Sisters of the Precious Blood, the highest response indicated former members (41.2%); another 27.5% is comprised of friends and co-workers of the sisters, and almost 20% have a relative in the congregation.

Your reading preferences

More than half of our readers (61.2%) prefer the print edition of

Sharing & Caring (61.2%) to reading it online, and 27% of readers share their copy with two to three other people. Visits to the CPPS website? “Sometimes” (36.6%) and “frequently” (9.2%). (Close to 20% listed not having/using a computer as their reason for not visiting the website.)

Readers appreciate and/or would like more of

Stories on individual sisters and their ministry, both active and retired; stories on CPPS ministry/ history and stories exploring various aspects of religious life; sisters' personal reflections (e.g., “What CPPS means to me”); the in-depth coverage; include sisters' names in religion; more color.

Corrections

In the Spring issue of *Sharing & Caring*, the sidebar on the new lay members of the Vocation Ministry Committee (page 4) incorrectly identified Mary Lynn Delfino's ministry. She is a campus minister at Kent State University.

The page 15 story on the new Mother Maria Anna Brunner Catholic School incorrectly listed the original teaching congregation at St. Rita School. The Sisters of Notre Dame were the first congregation to staff St. Rita's; the Sisters of the Precious Blood succeeded them.

We regret the errors.

'Fatima Girls' reunite, share memories

In September 1964, Fatima Hall, the high school aspirancy of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Dayton, opened its doors to its last freshman class. Although that class would stay at Fatima only two years before the aspirancy was closed in June 1966, a bond would be formed that would last for life.

One member of that class, Eileen O'Connor Vaughan, shares memories from an April reunion of the last class of "Fatima Girls," and their reflections on this "CPPS Connection."

On April 23, 2010 — 44 years later, 17 members of that last class gathered in an old rented house in Gatlinburg, Tenn., for a joyous and memorable weekend reunion. We have had a few reunions in the past, but this was the first time that we had located every member of our original freshman class. Some of these classmates were unable to attend, due to distance or other family commitments, but 17 of us made it! Judging by the success of this gathering, more reunions will surely be planned in the future.

We sat in a huge circle in the living room, sharing our life stories and reminiscing about events that happened at Fatima. There were tears, some very poignant moments, and hilarious shrieks of laughter as we shared with one another. Friendships begun in 1964 are alive and well in 2010.

On Saturday, after a day that included shopping (of course!), lunch at a wonderful tea room, Mass



'FATIMA GIRLS' REUNION — *Front row, from left: Sheila Warnecke Jeffery, Cathy Boehmer Yauch, Pam Meyer Lane, Lois Biesiada Wehrle; Middle row: Jana Merris Young, Ann Thobe Beyke, Mary Beth Bloom, Joyce Schwieterman Gerlach, Donna Weldon Boensch; Back row: Jackie Guess Sponaugle, Rita Miller Beining, Linda Hovest Bloomfield, Ginny Monnin Henderson, Barb Kahlig Huelsman, Rosaire Sonderman Bollmer, Margie Wenning Heitbrink, Eileen O'Connor Vaughan.*

at Holy Cross Church in Pigeon Forge, and dinner, we headed back to our reunion's "home base." We gathered in the large dining room for an evening of laughter, food, and song. Some played guitar and we sang the songs that we had sung at the "hootenannies" back in the gym at Fatima. Someone even provided copies of the original song sheets complete with guitar chords! With

clapping, laughter, more tears, and total joy, we sang together just as we had in the old days. Two classmates handed out a "Fatima Word Scramble" they had put together. This activity brought forth even more memories, as we deciphered such words as Rainbow Room, Lincoln Logs, five can method, Junk Room, General, goats, grotto, Grand Silence, tapioca soup, and more. We

Just a few comments from our reunion weekend on the role of CPPS in our lives:

"I was taught by the Sisters of the Precious Blood from the first to the 12th grade with the exception of the 8th.... I named my dolls after them, for gosh sakes! How do I summarize in a few words what these women mean to me? Let's try this: These Sisters are to a very large extent the reason that I know what I know, believe what I believe, and am who I am." —**Rosaire Sonderman Bollmer**

"My experience of being at Fatima Hall for my freshman and sophomore years taught me about team work, living independently, and being part of a community. I learned about giving and receiving, acceptance and for-

giveness, and spiritual discipline. I learned... the beginning of the importance of God and prayer in my everyday life." —**Lois Biesiada Wehrle**

"My two years at Fatima Hall were some of the best times in my life, both socially and spiritually. I loved the sense of community nourished by the sisters, and I learned to live a more personal and deeper relationship with God." —**Jana Merris Young**

"The Precious Blood Sisters, both at Fatima and in our own respective parish schools, lovingly touched each one of us Fatima girls by their devoted service and their willingness to express God's goodness, [and we] truly cared for and trusted them in return." —**Jackie Guess Sponaugle**

sang "Happy Birthday" to ourselves since this is the big year when we all turn 60. The birthday party even included a cake with a picture of Fatima Hall on top!

As I sat in the midst of these faith-filled, generous, loving women, I asked God to help me soak in every single second of this experience. Being together again wasn't just about the fun, which I knew was inevitable. This weekend in Gatlinburg was a life event that had great impact and meaning. As we talked during our time together, we knew that we wanted to let the sisters know what they had given us. (*See comments on previous page.*)

Even before we met at Fatima, we were inspired and influenced by the Sisters of the Precious Blood in our home parishes. That love and respect led us to Fatima, where we deepened our faith, received an excellent education, learned important lessons about work, time management and cleaning skills, and formed bonds of friendship that would always be with us.

To you Sisters of the Precious Blood who nurtured us in our early education, we thank you most sin-

cerely. The home parishes from which we hailed were Queen of Angels, Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. Anthony, Falls Church, Va.; St. Leo, Fairfax, Va., and the following Ohio parishes: St. Barbara, Cloverdale; St. Mary's, Dayton; St. Margaret Mary, North College Hill (Cincinnati); Resurrection, Dayton; Sts. Peter and Paul, Alvada; Our Lady of Good Hope, Miamisburg; St. Patrick, Troy; and Sts. Peter and Paul, Ottawa.

To you Sisters who worked with us at Fatima Hall, who taught us, fed us, ate with us, played games with us, guided us, disciplined us, and in any way gave of your time and your talents, we thank you with a deep and heartfelt gratitude. We are better people for having been at Fatima, and even though we never entered the ranks of the Precious Blood Sisterhood, we have served our families, our parishes and our communities in the way that you modeled for us. Thank you for all you did for us, for the church, and for the world. God bless you all, you special women of God!

For more reflections from this class of "Fatima Girls," visit the website at www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org; click on News & Events>News

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 Cecilia Taphorn on the death of her brother-in-law, Thomas Dahle, on July 11.

Sister Mary Ann Schroeder on the death of her brother, Louis Schroeder, on July 20.

Sister Verlina Mescher on the death of her sister, Lucille Nielsen, on July 28.

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood on the death of Father Al Jungwirth (Kansas City Province) on July 28.

Sister Nancy McMullen on the death of her sister, Jane Wittke, on Aug. 19.

Sister Virginia Hebbeler on the death of her sister, Jane De Carlo, on Sept. 15.

Sister Mary Louise Hoelscher on the death of her sister, Mary Hoelscher, on Sept. 24.

Sister Barbara Jean Backs on the death of her sister, Irene Klosterman, on Sept. 28.

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood on the death of Father Thomas Conway (Kansas City Province) on Oct. 6.

REMEMBERING...

Mary Jane Thobe, formerly Sister Mary Elsina, CPPS, on Sept. 8.

Kate Thomas, mother of the late Sister JoAnn Thomas, CPPS, on Sept. 14.

Mary Rodak Kissimer, formerly Sister Agnesita, CPPS, on Oct. 11.

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE.

What they're doing now

The former "Fatima Girls" are still continuing the values of spirituality and service they learned in CPPS: They are currently serving God's people in close to 70 types of both church and civic community involvement. Here's just a sampling:

Church involvement: Bereavement Ministry; Catholic school teachers/substitute teachers and religious education instructors; cantors, lectors, greeters, musicians at liturgy, choir members; Eucharistic ministers at Masses, to homebound and in hospital; Mass coordinator; sacristan; critical care nurse in a Catholic hospital; RCIA team members and instructors for First Communion and Confirmation; Parish council chairs and members; team members for Cursillo and other retreat programs; founder and director of parish Early Childhood Center; patient and family care advocate; school nurse at a Catholic school; SCRIP program helper to raise funds for tuition and special needs projects for the parish.

Community service: 4-H advisor; attendant to persons with severe and profound mental and physical disabilities; Catholic Ladies of Columbia officer and member; clown minister; Cub and girl scout leader, staff member; licensed professional clinical counselor in hospital; First Aid/CPR instructor; fundraising/booster clubs for schools, high school programs, high school theater; Make a Wish foundation; Head Start; high school tutor; home health care worker; hospice, and hospital and school volunteers; hurricane cleanup volunteer; member of hospital ethics committee; music therapist for Hospice; nurse; nursing home and orphanage volunteers; political precinct captain; public school teacher; Rotary Club; "Share the Blessings" volunteer (builds wells and supports education in Uganda); Working with victims of child abuse... and more.

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What CPPS means to me...

BY SISTER LOU ANN ROOF

The first born (about eighty days early) to a young married couple, I weighed in at below two pounds. I'm here today, I believe, thanks to both the determined efforts and the strong faith in prayer of my mother and grandmother.

My mother was raised in a Precious Blood parish, so our family was nurtured with Precious Blood spirituality and deep devotion to the Blessed Mother.

As a child when we played school, I was always the teacher. I was delighted when, now a sister, I was assigned to education ministry, serving as a teacher and later as principal. It was heartening when a principal who followed me told me there was a true Precious Blood spirit in the school and parish.

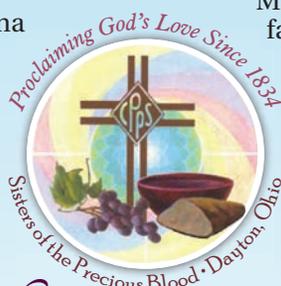
I spent my temporary vow years in Arizona among poor Mexican and Native American families. Like the people we served, we sisters had only the bare necessities, and we were thousands of miles from home. But we worked, played and prayed together. This early experience of religious life, of community prayer, Precious Blood spirituality and nurtur-

ing community life has been a constant source of strength for me, especially in difficult times.

I love the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. What a gift to walk the faith journey with those who hunger! And what better way than from the perspective of the Precious Blood. It also is a blessing to bring the Eucharist to those who are hospitalized, some near the end of life and longing for the sacraments. One patient was hesitant when I offered her Communion. I prayed that I might be the face and voice of Jesus to her. She began to sob when I asked if she wanted to see a priest. When she said yes, I arranged for the priest's visit; a few days later her obituary was in the paper. The Precious Blood is powerful!

My Precious Blood spirituality touches my family as well. Today I can be part of my siblings' families, taking an active part in their practice of the faith and that of their children and grandchildren.

Now a Sister of the Precious Blood for 60 years, I ask daily that I may have the mind and heart of Jesus, may give of self as Jesus did — even to the shedding of blood.



Learn more about the Sisters of the Precious Blood

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