



Sharing Caring

THE SISTERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD ■ DAYTON, OHIO

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Announcing the **GOOD** **NEWS**

*W*hen he walked the earth, Jesus announced the Good News and confirmed its message by teaching and healing the people he encountered. He also entrusted that same mission to those who are his disciples.

Since their founding, Sisters of the Precious Blood have taken to heart that invitation and challenge of Jesus. Teaching and healing — expressed in traditional and contemporary models — have been and continue to be an important part of CPPS' ministries.

In Toledo, Ohio, Sister Rita Rogier heads the catechetical ministry for two parishes. In this 21st century, she is announcing the Good News to children and adults in religious education. As Jesus the Teacher before her, Sister Rita also “teaches the teachers,” working with catechists and parents who together are a vital part of passing on the faith to our children and new members of the church.

Read about it on page 7

CLUSTER

For Sisters of the Precious Blood, the cluster concept offers a way of living community in the 21st century. Bonding, shared prayer, and a support network are just a few of its benefits.

Read more on page 5



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

CPPS women: teaching, as Jesus did

If we were to sum up the public ministry of Jesus in a sound bite, it could well be: teaching and healing. And in many ways, those expressions of Jesus' love are interchangeable: As a teacher, he healed; and in healing, he taught.

In his powerful play and later award-winning film "A Man for All Seasons," Robert Bolt presents an unforgettable portrait of Sir (later Saint) Thomas More, the brilliant and popular chancellor of England who was imprisoned and beheaded under Henry VIII rather than compromise his conscience.

The play's dialogue offers a treasure trove of wisdom and wit. One of my favorites comes from a conversation More has with Richard Rich, a bright but flawed young man who desperately wants a position at Henry's court and begs Sir Thomas to use his influence to get it for him. (Not much later, it will be Rich's perjury that will be the needed "evidence" for More's death sentence.)

More responds to Rich's importuning by suggesting a very different life

path. "Why not be a teacher?" More encourages him. "You'd be a fine teacher, perhaps a great one."

"If I was, who would know it?"

"You, your pupils, your friends, God. Not a bad public, that."

Since their founding 176 years ago, hundreds of Sisters of the Precious Blood have been, and continue to be, teachers. In grade school, high school, college and university classrooms, in parish religious education and adult learning and faith formation programs, CPPS women have continued Jesus' teaching ministry.

Our cover story for this issue features Sister Rita Rogier, the catechetical leader at St. Thomas Aquinas and Good Shepherd parishes in Toledo, Ohio. Her dedicated ministry, which includes both children and adults, also enables her to "teach the teachers": the catechists and parents who are so important in passing on the faith to our children and new Catholics.

But other ministries, too, have an important teaching component. Sis-

ter Margo Young, a medical doctor, is featured on page 9. She's bringing her expertise and caring as a physician to the area poor and underserved at the H Street Clinic in San Bernardino, Calif. Much of her work involves teaching the patients she meets to be pro-active in dealing with the kinds of health issues that disproportionately affect the poor and minority populations. Sister Margo's classroom is a medical clinic. Here her healing ministry takes place in large part through education, her teaching through her healthcare profession.

In 1972, the American bishops wrote a pastoral letter on education. They called it *To Teach as Jesus Did*. Sister Rita and Sister Margo are among the numerous Sisters of the Precious Blood in many different settings, among many different people, dedicated to doing just that: teaching as Jesus, in reconciling, healing love.

— 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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Reader Survey inside this issue

This issue of *Sharing & Caring* contains a Reader Survey. It's short (21 questions), shouldn't take more than a few minutes of your time to fill out, and easy to return (just fold, tape closed and add a postage stamp).

We encourage you to complete the survey because it's helpful in several ways. One, it's your opportunity to share your opinions and suggestions with us, and two, it helps us know more about you, our readers, and how we can better meet your needs and interests with *Sharing & Caring*.

The survey should be included in all mailed copies of *Sharing & Caring*. If you are a regular subscriber and this issue does **not** have a survey, please write or e-mail the Office of Communications (see address in box at right), provide your mailing address, and we will mail one to you.

Deadline to return the survey is June 1. Why not take a few minutes now to fill it out and send it back? Thank you in advance!

Hearing and telling the stories



“Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?”

Easter time is such a glorious time of the year. Flowers bloom, trees bud and Alleluias ring out proclaiming the mystery of our faith — Christ is risen, we are a people redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Easter is also a time of grand storytelling. I was often heard to say to the neophytes in the mystagogy period of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults that the Scriptures during the Easter season were my favorites. To which they would inevitably reply that I say that with every season!

That may have been true, but the Easter stories are special. Instead of “once upon a time” they begin with “on the first day of the week at dawn...” Women are the first at the tomb, the first to hear that he is not here, he has been raised. They tell the story, and its retelling brings refusal to believe, verification, then amazement and belief.

Overflowing joy was Mary’s gift as she heard Jesus speak her name. She ran to tell the others, “I have seen the Lord,” and reported what he had told her. The disciples on the way to Emmaus were talking about their experiences of the past few days. They shared their story with a stranger as they walked along, and he in turn retold the ancient story. And, as they reflected on that experience, they proclaimed that their hearts were burning within them as they listened.

The Easter stories go on and on re-

vealing to the apostles and disciples much about the Lord, but perhaps even more about themselves. Whether they are afraid and huddled together behind locked doors or in the boat fishing, they find the truth of the risen Jesus. Gradually they began

The Sisters of the Precious Blood experienced much storytelling during our 175th anniversary year...

Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, our hearts burned within us as we told and listened and talked about what we had seen and heard.

to remember all that Jesus had said and done when he was with them.

Storytelling is a very important part of life. Don’t we delight in hearing old family stories or telling them to our children and grandchildren? As they listen, sometimes wide-eyed, sometimes perplexed and wondering, we might wonder what they are thinking as they listen and how they will retell the story in the context of their hearing. Faith sharing is storytelling and is an important part of our spiritual life. Talking with another about an experience of God in our lives invites more reflection and unfolds new aspects of the mystery of God’s action in our life and theirs.

The Sisters of the Precious Blood experienced much storytelling during our 175th anniversary year. We reflected on our history, the good news of God’s faithful presence with us over the years. We reflected on the great women who have gone before

us and led us to who we are today. We reflected on the many ways we were called to respond to the needs of God’s people and all the women and men who were part of our lives in community and in ministry. We listened as others told us stories of their experiences with us. Our hearts burned within us as we told and listened and talked about what we had seen and heard.

We Sisters of the Precious Blood continue to be challenged by what these many stories tell us about ourselves and our future. Hopefully, they have made us a very, very grateful community challenged to live as a grateful people. We are humbled and challenged

to live humbly, trusting more deeply in God’s abiding presence and the truth that it is God’s work that we are about. We are filled with new hope, challenged to be ever more deeply rooted in prayer and faithful in discerning and following God’s will today.

On Pentecost Sunday, the Easter season stories end much as they began, “on the evening of that first day of the week.” Jesus said to his disciples “peace be with you” and showed them his hands and feet. And the disciples rejoiced!

Peace and joy are Jesus’ gifts to us as we continue to experience his unconditional love and presence and to share the good news through our words and our lives.

Sister Florence

Sister Florence Seifert, CPPS

CPPS Connections

Editor's Note: In the Winter 2009 issue of Sharing & Caring, we invited readers to share with us and other readers their "CPPS Connection" — how they came to know the Sisters of the Precious Blood, an anecdote, memories of a particular sister who was a teacher, friend or colleague.

The following is a selection of the "Connections" we've received. More will be published in the Summer issue of Sharing & Caring.

Thanks to all of you who shared your thoughts, memories and gratitude!

In a previous letter of thanks for sending *Sharing & Caring* (Summer/Fall 2008) to me for about the past 15 years, I mentioned that I was at Fatima Hall from 1954-1958, then over to the motherhouse. I was a postulant from Jan. 6 to May 31, 1958, when I left to enter the Trappistines in Wrentham, Mass.

My first connection with the Sisters of the Precious Blood was through a brochure, among many others I picked up at Regina High School in Cincinnati. Our sixth-grade class, at St. Boniface School, taught by the Sisters of Charity, went to Regina for a Vocation Day. On the way home in the bus I leafed through a brochure — yours. On the spot I turned to a classmate and said, "I'm going there after eighth grade." Even though I had been taught by sisters thus far, I had never thought of being a sister before.

It was, I believe, the smiling sister on the back page of the brochure who won me over — or rather, God won me over! When I was back at Salem Heights last November, I asked around if anyone knew who that sister might have been, but no success.

Now, when I received the last *Sharing & Caring*, I almost lost my breath. Was Sister Margaret Mary



(Innocent) Imes that smiling sister? [“Among the Southwest’s Native Peoples,” page 6.]

It was 1952 when I first saw that CPPS brochure. I’m forever grateful to whoever it was the Lord used to bring me to Fatima Hall and receive my contemplative vocation there.

Sister Marjoe Backhus, OCSO
Tautra Mariakloster
Frosta, Norway

My connection with the Sisters of the Precious Blood began in 1992 when I heard that you were looking for a person to fill the position of administrator at Salem Heights. I made an appointment with your leadership and went to Dayton for an interview.

Your Council was very gracious, but when it was over, I couldn’t tell whether I had a chance of getting the position or not. My hopes were fulfilled a few days later when I received a call from Sister Joyce Langhals saying that the job was mine and asking when I could start. The rest is history!

I was at Salem Heights from 1992 to 1999, when my Dominican community called me home to help with the building of our new motherhouse in Columbus.

The seven years with you were some of the happiest and most fulfilling of my religious life. Your sisters welcomed me with open arms, and I wasn’t there very long when we began a complete renovation of the building ...while 110 of you remained in it! (Many were the times I had to put up a sign saying: Don’t Even THINK About Entering This Area!)

We survived though, stitching hangings for the chapel, baking Christmas cookies, planting flowers, giving away old furnishings and picking out new ones. It was an exciting time for all of us. I truly felt part of your community.

My love and appreciation for you remains, and I am always interested in how you are and what you are doing.

God bless all of you!

Sister Corinne Staub, OP
Columbus, Ohio

Greetings from sunny Florida! We are spending time with my mother and just received the latest *Sharing & Caring* magazine. We just want to say “Thank you” for sending this to my mom, Agnes Voisard, and to let you know we really enjoyed reading about all the special events celebrating the 175th anniversary.

The articles made us stop and think of all the special

women/nuns who have been in our lives. Mom remembers a nun who came from Minister to teach at her school, Sacred Heart in McCartyville, Ohio, but her name escapes Mom today.

I am remembering Sister Josina [Kuhn] from my days at St. Denis in Versailles, Ohio, and Sister DeChantal [Beaver], who was a classmate of my father in Russia, Ohio, as well as a teacher of my children at St. Patrick’s in Troy, Ohio. Sister Mildred Lefeld was also a favorite of my family and was the religion teacher at St. Pat’s. My husband, John, remembers a Sister Lucietta [Osterloh] from St. Peter School in St. Peter, Ohio.

We can’t forget our family members of your order! Sister Victorine Gross, John’s aunt, and Sister Rose Behr, my aunt, as well as cousins Sisters Adeline Mertz, Evelyn Monnin and the Voisard sisters.

My most recent memories are of all those at the Maria-Joseph Center who showed so much love and support for each other, and in particular for Sister Rose and her sister, Wilma Brandelik, during their last days in this world. What a blessing that experience was for me — I met so many beautiful women! I am remembering Sister Katie and Sister Margaret Daniels, who were so loving and concerned, and there are so many others...

God bless you for all the years of service you have given to those in need. “May you be blessed by the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth!”

John and Carol Gross
Troy, Ohio
Agnes Voisard
South Daytona, Florida



Photo by Pat Morrison

CPPS Sisters find cluster concept strengthens community

By PAT MORRISON

OREGON, Ohio—When the doorbell rang, Sister Rita Rogier looked outside, then pressed the buzzer to open the entryway door at her Oregon apartment building. She knew who'd be coming to visit this Saturday morning in mid-November: four other members of her CPPS community.

As her guests arrived, Sister Rita's cozy apartment soon echoed with lively conversations. Inviting scents blended from the meal cooking on the stove and from candles for prayer (and for a birthday cake). It was evident that these five women were glad to see one another and to be spending time together.

Sister Rita is catechetical leader at Good Shepherd and St. Thomas Aquinas parishes in East Toledo. She was the hostess for this month's meeting of her cluster, as small organizational groups of Precious Blood Sisters are called.

Today's cluster gathering—beginning with lunch and lasting until late afternoon—included a belated birthday celebration, prayer service, discussion of some articles which the sisters are reading on religious life, a few business matters, and just the chance to be together and relax. (This particular Saturday also happened to be an Ohio State-Michigan game, so the TV was on intermittently, with devoted fans of both teams checking the score throughout the day. And despite their teams' strong

Sister Linda Pleiman (second from left) shares her thoughts during a meeting of the Sojourners Cluster. Other members are Sisters Rita Rogier, left, hostess; Pat Gist, Mary Lou Schmersal and Joanne Belloli. Not pictured is Sister Amy Junk.

rivalries, the sisters remain friends!)

The cluster to which Sister Rita belongs, called Sojourners, includes Sister Pat Gist, pastoral associate at St. Joseph Parish in Sylvania; Sister Linda Pleiman, a teacher at Central Catholic High School in Toledo; Sister Mary Lou Schmersal, marketing and development director at the congregation's Maria Stein Center; Sister Amy Junk, choir director and pianist at All Saints Episcopal Church in Toledo; and Sister Joanne Belloli. Sister Joanne, a mental health therapist and clinical social worker, lives in Brighton, Mich., but connects with this Toledo cluster of CPPS sisters and is the cluster's contact person/convener.

Three other Precious Blood Sisters who live and work in the Toledo Diocese are members of other clusters: Sister Karen Elliott, department chair and religious studies professor at Mercy College of Northwest Ohio, and Sister Joyce Lehman, leader of the Secretariat for Pastoral Leadership for the Toledo Diocese, both live in Toledo. Sister Lou Ann Roof lives in Ottawa and volunteers at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Columbus Grove.

The Precious Blood Sisters' cluster concept is shared by other religious communities under different names and with some structural differences. It grew out of both a

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CPPS cluster

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practical need as the face of ministry evolved for women religious and out of members' own desire to strengthen community even as their living situations changed.

For most apostolic sisters (orders dedicated to active types of service), their ministry determines where they live. Today's women religious live in a variety of settings. Some live in traditional convents, either with members of their own congregation or with sisters from other orders. But with fewer large traditional convents available, more sisters today are living among the people they serve and in similar housing. Some live in small groups in regular houses or apartments; others live singly. While this gives



Laughter ripples through the group.

Here's proof that cluster is a place where sisters can be themselves and know they're loved and accepted.

Cluster is 'a safe place.'

sisters proximity to their ministry, it also calls for a creative response to how to live community, one of the important hallmarks of religious life.

For a Precious Blood Sister, her cluster functions as her local community. Getting together regularly, usually monthly, with other members of the congregation provides sisters with opportunity for shared prayer, discussion and socializing. It also calls members to accountability, a lived expression of sisters' vow of obedience.

Precious Blood Sisters are free to join a cluster of their choice, and while there's some geography involved, that's not necessarily the determining factor. The North Coast Cluster, for example, includes six sisters — from Toledo to Cleveland, Mansfield to Columbus.

Sister Karen, a member of the North Coast Cluster, is one CPPS sister living in an inter-community setting. And although she shares daily living with another sister, her CPPS cluster brings an additional value: "the depth of prayer and sharing from the heart which is foundational" for her cluster. "Cluster gatherings grace my life," she says. "I'm inspired and encouraged by the wisdom and witness of my sisters in community."

For Sister Mary Lou, getting together with members of her cluster "provides a forum, an opportunity to float new ideas, get feedback." Sister Pat, with whom she lives, laughs. "Yeah, she's tired of me going 'mhhh hmmm. Thank God there's a wider audience once in a while!"

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Counterclockwise from top: This cluster meeting included a birthday party for Sister Rita Rogier. • Sister Linda Pleiman. • Sisters Pat Gist and Mary Lou Schmersal. • Sisters Joanne Belloli and Rita Rogier during the cluster's prayer service. • Sister Joanne Belloli.

Photos by Pat Morrison





Photos by Pat Morrison

Announcing the **GOOD NEWS**

BY PAT MORRISON

According to the old adage, education traditionally centered around the “Three Rs”: reading, ’riting and ’rithmetic” — to which Christian educators added an important fourth R: religion. But announcing, celebrating and passing on the Good News of Jesus through religious education today might be said to include not four Rs but... six Ps: preparation, programs, prayer, parents, pastoral team... and of course, patience.

Precious Blood Sister Rita Rogier knows a lot about those four Rs and 6 Ps: She’s a veteran Catholic educator — 11 years as a teacher, 19 as a principal. And for the past decade-plus she has been bringing those skills and gifts to her ministry as catechetical leader at two parishes in East Toledo, Ohio, and the 2,563 parishioners they serve.

She’s a familiar presence in the Toledo Diocese. A native of New Riegel, an important early CPPS site, Sister Rita has served in other dioceses as well, but her ministry has criss-

crossed the Toledo Diocese. She was principal at St. Anthony in Columbus Grove, St. Patrick in Bryan and St. Mary’s in Clyde.

Today she heads the catechetical programs for East Toledo’s Emmaus Community — two parishes, St. Thomas Aquinas and Good Shepherd, which under the diocese’s twinning plan retain their identity while sharing a pastor, pastoral team and religious education program. She is also a member of the parishes’ team for Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA).

A DAY IN THE LIFE...

■ (above left) Sister Rita distributes materials during a Sunday afternoon confirmation planning meeting for candidates and their parents. From left, Jay Nagy and his mother, Rosie; Candelaria and Roberto Cordova.

■ Enjoying a light moment in a religion classroom with students Noah Smith and Cain Doran.

The Emmaus Community’s three-person pastoral team includes the new pastor, Father Jeffrey McBeth; pastoral associate Mary VanderLinde, and Sister Rita.

Located on the east side of the Maumee River, East Toledo has its own characteristic flavor, ethnic heritage, and contemporary challenges. Home for more than a hundred years to large ethnic parishes built by Poles, Hungarians, Germans and others, the area today has a growing Hispanic population. Forty percent of the students in the regional Catholic school are Hispanic, “and this population is growing, too, in the religious education program,” Sister Rita noted.

The economic downturn has hit the Toledo area hard, largely because of its role as a manufacturing provider for Detroit’s struggling automotive industry. While unemployment in the nation as a whole hovers at 10 percent, in Toledo it’s spiked to 13.4 percent.

That economic reality, of course, impacts the parishes and their pro-

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ON OUR COVER — Sister Rita goes over homework assignments with religious education students Marina Mendieta and Samantha Serrato.

Christ icon, 6th or 7th century, from the Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai, Egypt. In this image Christ is both Lord and Teacher, shown holding the book of Scripture and raising his right hand in the traditional gesture of teaching authority.

Announcing the GOOD NEWS

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grams. Many families are struggling with unemployment or underemployment, Sister Rita said. But this also provides an opportunity for the church to reach out. The Emmaus Community aims to respond as much as it can with tuition assistance and other financial helps for parishioners and their children.

“Sometimes a parent will call me and say, ‘Sister, I just don’t have the money right now [for tuition or supplies], but I’ll be able to pay it’ next week, next month. Whenever we can, we give them a grace period, and also try to direct them to social services like Catholic Charities and St. Vincent de Paul, that might be able to help them if they’re at risk for eviction or losing a home.” Another valued local organization, Helping Hands of St. Louis, which the Emmaus Community sponsors, also provides meals, groceries and hygiene products.

Traditionally a largely Catholic area, there’s a shift there today also, as some older Catholics have moved to the suburbs and new families have joined the neighborhood. At least 40 percent of the students in the area’s Catholic school are non-Catholic, Sister Rita said.

“This is a challenge but also a great opportunity” when it comes to evangelizing, she said. Since the parishes’ religion and sacramental pro-



grams always involve parents, it means that non-Catholic parents are exposed to Catholic life and teaching at the same time as their children. Sometimes it means welcoming new members, as these parents and children, who often had no former religious affiliation or faith family of their own, now choose to enter the Catholic Church through the RCIA — another of Sister Rita’s great energizers.

“I love RCIA,” she says, noting that it’s “both a challenge and a blessing” for evangelization.

The challenge, she said, is that many families include one or both parents who are not baptized in any faith. Some parents are nominal Catholics who have never been catechized, who know almost nothing about the faith — “but who are proud to tell you ‘I’m Catholic.’” With both groups it means starting at the very beginning.

“The blessing is to see them follow through, become more knowledgeable and deeply committed to God and the faith,” she said. “Seeing people deepen and grow,” Sister Rita said, “that’s a

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Photo by Laurie Stevens Bertke; courtesy of Catholic Chronicle

A DAY IN THE LIFE: (top right) Sister Rita and CCD office assistant Bert Lewczynski take a break from preparing materials for students to smile for the camera. • Mary VanderLinde, pastoral associate (left) makes a point during the Emmaus Community pastoral team’s staff meeting. Father Jeffrey McBeth, pastor, is in the center. * Sister Rita and student Ryan Johnson look over his religion materials.



CPPS doctor reaches poor, underserved

Continuing Jesus' healing ministry among the poor is 'perfect fit' for Sister Margo Young

By PAT MORRISON

SAN BERNARDINO, California — Since opening its doors in April 2007, the H Street Clinic has helped turn the dream of convenient access to affordable, quality health care into reality for many San Bernardino residents.

The clinic, a collaborative community outreach program which receives both financial and resource support from St. Bernardine Medical Center (SBMC), not only treats patients, but provides education and preventive services responsive to the health care needs of the underserved in the community. One of these newest "resources" is Precious Blood Sister Margo Young, a physician (and California native) who was recently appointed the Community Outreach MD by the medical center.

Sister Margo's ministry is especially valuable in helping area residents identify and seek proactive treatment for medical issues that often impact low-income people more than the general population — often because financial concerns lead them to neglect treatment.

One component of the medical center's partici-



Photo courtesy of St. Bernardine Medical Center

Sister Margo Young, a community outreach physician with St. Bernardine Medical Center, offers both medical care and health education to the poor and underserved at San Bernardino's H Street Clinic. She's also on staff at the medical center, which co-sponsors the central city clinic.

pation in clinic operations is educational programming that addresses those health issues that affect local populations at an alarming rate, especially obesity, diabetes and heart disease. In just the past year, SBMC has offered five sessions of Spanish-language diabetes education programs in multiple classes.

In May 2009, Sister Margo began offering her support at the H Street Clinic, helping with education and preventive efforts for

the approximately 375 patients who visit the clinic each month.

Another plus to Sister Margo's presence is her fluency in Spanish, which she fine-tuned during her 13 years of previous ministry in Guatemala.

A majority of the clinic's patients are Spanish-speaking, she told *Sharing & Caring*, and even those who speak English prefer to discuss medical issues in their native Spanish. At the clinic, she said,

"I'm speaking Spanish 95 percent of the time." The other clinic staff — three healthcare professionals and two nurse practitioners — are also all bilingual.

"It's more than just speaking the language," she noted. "We need cultural sensitivity and good communications skills so that the people are comfortable with us and trust us."

In addition to cultural

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CPPS physician reaches underserved

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sensitivity, respect is also a key component in the H Street Clinic's philosophy. "We're not a free clinic," Sister Margo explains, adding that there are free clinics in the area. "We're a low-cost clinic. Patients are asked to pay \$10, but if they can't afford it, they don't pay."

She explained that patients are more inclined to value the care if they know there is a dollar-value associated with it. They're also more likely to continue their programs if they've made a personal financial commitment to them.

Central San Bernardino has never been an affluent community, but with the economic downturn and more unemployment, the clinic is seeing more new patients. "We're getting people who had insurance, but lost their job and insurance with it," Sister Margo said of the changing and increased clientele. "We're seeing patients who haven't had their medication for six months and more, because they can't afford it."

She told *Sharing & Caring* that when she began her ministry at SBMC, she indicated that she didn't want a desk job, she wanted to be hands-on medical care, preferably in community outreach. The H Street Clinic position answered her prayer: She works part time at the medical center and volunteers 12 hours a week at the clinic.

"I think my presence at the clinic also gives [the medical center] a better feel of what they're supporting," Sister Margo said.

There's good partnership modeled in the San Bernardino community regarding services, she said. For example, SBMC collaborates with the Central City Lutheran Mission; the medical center co-sponsors the clinic, and the Lutheran mission coordinates homeless projects and meals for all ages. "We each have our niche, so there's no duplication of efforts, but we really work together to cover all the bases — or as many as possible."

When she arrived at the clinic and was able to track patients' health care patterns — diabetes, poor nutrition, and so on — she knew that's where

she'd begin.

"I started with an assessment of the diabetes program," she said. That assessment included gathering data to provide a more clinical evaluation of the program's benefits, "especially how it influences visits to the Emergency Department or hospital admissions or readmissions," she explained.

Last June, Dr. Young began teaching a class herself, educating participants about healthy eating and how proper nutrition can aid in the prevention of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

"Our ultimate goal is to avoid the onset of these serious issues, contribute to the health and well-being of those we serve and promote an improved quality of life for our community," she said.

The veteran physician admitted that sometimes the work can be discouraging because "it seems like we're always back at the beginning, the issues are the same. The problems are huge, and it seems like we're not making a dent."

"Often it feels like it's just a Band-Aid... I feel so bad," Sister Margo said. "But there are small successes, and I remind myself of those. We're trying to get a little exercise program together, for example, getting patients to commit to that regularly." Some come and go, she said, but seeing the few who stick with it is encouraging.

"I do think there's movement, that we're making a difference... We're trying to look at how we can be more holistic," she said — not just see patients and dispense prescriptions, but really find a way to involve the patients in their own health care choices.

Sister Margo is especially energized by the "fit" between her ministry at the clinic and the mission of her CPPS community. "As Sisters of the Precious Blood, our call is to the most marginalized. We aim to welcome everyone, treat everyone with respect," she said. "So this is the perfect place to do that. It's perfect, it fits, it's great to have this opportunity!"

This story incorporates information from the SBMC newsletter, In Focus. Used with permission.

CLUSTER

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Laughter ripples through the group. Here's proof that cluster is a place where sisters can be themselves and know they're loved and accepted. Cluster is "a safe place. We trust each other," comments Sister Linda.

Sister Joyce told *Sharing & Caring* that while cluster "was originally seen as the local base of our governance," it has grown into a setting where sisters who do not live with another CPPS member build community. "It includes the whole spectrum of living together: support, encouragement, challenge, tensions, disagreements, reconciliations." At the same time, she said, "it allows sisters to meet the demands of our ministries," which often involve evening and weekend work.

Because more sisters are living by themselves, as she currently does, Sister Joyce said that the cluster is "a very important vehicle for these necessary connections that create a community of caring." A sister going through an illness, or sickness or death among family members or friends, will find her cluster members offer support and presence.

"Even though cluster is a formal 'government structure,' it's very much a personal support group," Sister Rita says. Cluster members are there to bring a sister home from a hospital stay, attend a parent's funeral, be a sounding board in difficult times, adds Sister Joanne.

From sharing insights from their prayer or a book they're reading, to telling jokes or working through problem situations in their lives, Precious Blood Sisters all said cluster is an important part of their lives, providing a healthy outlet, valued support and privileged place of welcome and acceptance.

History-making Bible's art coming to central Ohio

Precious Blood Sister was instrumental in arranging exhibit's arrival

CARTHAGENA, Ohio — A monumental achievement and historic undertaking, *The Saint John's Bible*

is a major artistic, cultural and spiritual endeavor. It is the first handwritten illuminated Bible in over 500 years. And for a limited time this summer, twenty-five prints from this unique work of art will be on exhibit at St. Charles Center in Carthagena, Ohio — the only site in the state of Ohio this year to have a showing of the Bible's prints.

The exhibit will run from Aug. 22 through Sept. 10. Exhibit hours are Monday through Saturday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m.; Wednesdays 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., and Sundays 1 to 4 p.m. There is no admission fee; a free-will offering is appreciated. St. Charles Center is located at 2860 U.S. Route 127 in Carthagena.

In 1998 the Benedictine monks of Saint John's Abbey and Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minn., commissioned Donald Jackson to create this historic "Bible for our time." A world-renowned calligrapher and illuminator, he has collaborated with



Creation
Donald Jackson with contribution
by Chris Tomlin.

© 2003, *The Saint John's Bible* and the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Order of Saint Benedict, Collegeville, Minnesota, USA.

numerous other artists, calligraphers and theologians to weave word and image in this once-in-a-millennium project. *The Saint John's Bible* is a unique blend of ancient methods, materials and tools with modern themes, images, technology and text. It includes 160 illuminations on 11,000 pages bound in seven volumes.

Precious Blood Sister Martha Bertke, manager of the St. Charles Senior Living Community in St. Charles Center, was instrumental in arranging to have the biblical art exhibit come to west central Ohio. She's enthusiastic about it from both a cultural and faith perspective. "The final version of the Bible is a wonder," she said. "The illuminations are defined as 'spiritual meditations on a text' as opposed to mere illustrations. It's that spiritual element that elevates this artwork — as well as those who experience it."

Whether you have a deep reverence for Scripture, are drawn to beautiful art, or just curious about this fascinating manuscript, you won't want to miss this exhibit.



To learn more about *The Saint John's Bible* and see a selection of its illuminations in color, visit the website: www.SaintJohn'sBible.org.

For more information about the exhibit in Carthagena, visit our website: www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org>News; or contact Sister Martha Bertke at (419) 925-4516; ext. 112; e-mail: smbertke@bright.net.

Announcing the Good News

Continued from page 8
source of great joy."

She's also enthusiastic about a family-centered program called Generations of Faith. It's unique among many religious education/adult ed programs because it involves parishioners, parents, grandparents and children. More than 160 people attended the first season.

"It has a strong doctrinal component," Sister Rita said, "but it's also down to earth and practical... It's a successful and popular way to pass on aspects of Catholic life to multiple age groups at one time."

Although both parishes might be

considered on the small side, the amount of work involved in developing and running programs for people of all ages means the "base" at St. Thomas Aquinas is a very busy place. The two parishes share a religious education program that serves 61 families, with 103 children in kindergarten through eighth grade.

In addition to the parish staff meetings and meetings with catechists to organize and run the programs, the list of ongoing activities is impressive: annual Confirmation retreats for seventh- and eighth-graders; sacramental preparation for penance, first Eucharist and confirmation; sacrament celebrations; religious education classes for grades

K-8 on Sunday mornings, RCIA on Tuesday evenings — and for Sister Rita, being present to the parishioners after the Masses at St. Thomas Aquinas at 4 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. Sunday. "In between" the programs and classes, she said, is her time for administrative tasks: organizing and planning ahead for the next event.

Like Jesus the Teacher before her, this Precious Blood Sister says his example leads her to want to "pour out my life in service." Like Jesus, Sister Rita announces the Good News among his people in the 21st century. From Galilee to northwest Ohio, the message is the same, and always proclaimed with joy.

Guadalupe comes to Maria Stein

Our Lady of Guadalupe visited the Maria Stein Center on Feb. 12. From 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. the shrine chapel welcomed an exact digital replica of the 4 x 6-ft. image of Mary that was miraculously imprinted almost 500 years ago on the rough cactus-fiber cloak, or *tilma*, of the Aztec Indian, St. Juan Diego. The actual image is venerated in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The image's replica, known as the missionary image because of its travels, is hosted at various churches and shrines around the United States, where the faithful are invited to venerate it and to ask Mary's intercession.



Visitors prayerfully venerate the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Sister Regina Albers, curator of the Maria Stein museum, said that about 45 people were present each hour. "It was very moving to see people approach and touch the image, and pray quietly for a few moments," she said. The Guadalupe image was welcomed with a Marian hymn, recitation of the rosary and Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was held from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Mary is patroness of the Americas under her Guadalupe title, and Our Lady of Guadalupe is also especially venerated by the Mexican people.

Do you know

■ **Sister Mary Louise Hoelscher**, who served for many years among the Native Americans of the Southwest, was interviewed by *The Catholic Sun*, newspaper of the Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona, on the occasion of the death of Gallup Bishop-emeritus Donald E. Pelotte. Bishop Pelotte, the first U.S. bishop who was a Native American, died in January at age 64. Sister Mary Louise, who currently lives in Phoenix, served as vicar for religious for nine years under Bishop Pelotte. She described him as "very collaborative." She remembered him as "an outgoing friend, someone who cared about his flock and would visit them all across the diocese via a small airplane. He had a special love for the Native Americans," she said, "which was reciprocated."



■ **It's almost Jubilee time!** Fourteen Sisters of the Precious Blood are celebrating their 75th, 60th and 50th jubilees in 2010. Together these CPPS women represent 785 years of consecrated life and service to God and God's people.

This year's jubilarians are: 75 Years: **Sister M. Armella Schoenlein**; 60 years: **Sisters Rose Margaret Broerman, Rita Herman, Catherine Lett, M. Carmelita Monnin, M. Claire Louise Sharpshair and Lou Ann Roof**; 50 years: **Sisters Patricia Dieringer, M. Jean Rene Hoying, Mary Ellen Lampe, Nancy Recker, Margaret Mary Rigdon, Benita Volk and Thelma Wurzelbacher**.

The 2010 Jubilarians will be featured in the Summer issue of *Sharing & Caring*.

CPPS employees represent more than



Photos by Michelle Bodine

Sister Florence Seifert, CPPS president (right), presents a certificate of recognition to Linda Koenig at the Service Awards Ceremony. Linda has been housekeeper at the Maria Stein Center for 20 years.

The Sisters of the Precious Blood honored 46 employees in a Service Awards Ceremony and luncheon at Salem Heights on Feb. 22. Together these employees — who work at Salem Heights and the Generalate, Maria Stein Center, and Emma Hall at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center — represent more than 300 years of service.

Specially recognized were staff members with five to 20 years of service:

Linda Koenig, housekeeper at Maria Stein Center, 20 years; **Kimberly Jaynes**, activity coordinator at Salem Heights, 15 years. Honored for 10 years of service each were **Elton Benson**, lead cook at Salem Heights; **Brenda Gabbard**, director of food service, Salem Heights; and **Kimberly Lewis**, laundry worker at Emma Hall. Five-year honorees, both at Salem Heights, were **Tamiko Morrison**, housekeeper; and **Sister Pat Will**, liturgy coordinator.

These seven employees received certificates and either a pin or keychain presented by Sister Florence Seifert, CPPS president. Sister Florence also thanked all the employees for their professionalism and dedication to the Sisters of the Precious

ow that...



■ **The Mustard Seed Foundation** was the final recipient of the 175th Anniversary's Legacy Donations. The foundation provides a home to pregnant teenage girls who have no other home for themselves and their baby after they give birth. These first-time mothers, between the ages of 14 and 18 will have a welcoming home in the former Gaspar House (CPPS Sisters' convent before that) at Precious Blood Parish in Dayton (Trotwood). In addition to creating a home and community environment for these young women and their babies, the organization provides an extensive program which enables the mothers to finish their education and also learn parenting and life skills. Sister Florence Seifert, CPPS president, presented the donation for \$17,500 to representatives of the Mustard Seed Foundation on Jan. 15. Daria Dillard Stone, board secretary of the Mustard Seed Foundation (second from right), accepted the donation. With her, from left, are: (front row) Shondale Atkinson, CEO and founder; Wendy Wiggins, interim board chair; and Precious Blood Father William O'Donnell, pastor of Precious Blood Church; (back row) Denise Horton, volunteer supporter; Brittny McGraw, board member; and Bea Shafeek, former director.

Do you watch the news?

No, not the evening news on TV. The "In the News" feature on the CPPS website!

"In the News" is the place to go to read and view news coverage of Sisters of the Precious Blood that's been reported in other media — newspapers or TV news. We provide a direct link to the publication or news outlet mentioned. You can read the full story or watch the video there direct from our website.

For example, did you know that...

- The *Dayton Daily News* recently featured Sisters of the Precious Blood in its March 28 Life section?
- And the day before, WHIO TV posted a video of its newscast which included CPPS Sisters speaking out against violence and in support of life.
- Two CPPS Sisters who are cancer survivors were also featured in a series for Breast Cancer Awareness month (*Dayton Daily News*),
- Another two were showcased for leading college students on an alternative spring break to Guatemala where they helped at an orphanage (*Toledo Blade*).
- A young California woman exploring religious life, a CPPS discernment retreat and two CPPS sisters was the cover story in the *San Bernadino Press Enterprise* newspaper.



"In the News" is updated regularly. Be sure to check it out!

www.PreciousBloodSistersDayton.org

Click on News & Events; scroll to In the News

300 years of service

Blood and the congregation's facilities and ministries.

The 39 other employees were also honored with a certificate for years of service. These are: 21 years of service: **Nancy Wilson**; 13 years: **Omer Bertke, Diane Dues**; 12 years: **Sr. Barbara Ann Hoying, Sheree Neumann, William Wolters**; 9 years: **Belinda White**; 8 years: **Sr. Regina Albers, Sr. Beverly Bodnar, Linda Hageman, Sr. Jeannine Kloeker, Sr. Janet Winandy**;

7 years: **Tammie Bane, Ruby Felton, Sr. Jean René Hoying, Sr. Gerri McGeorge, Patsy Nelson**; 6 years: **Barbara De Los Santos**; 4 years: **Sr. Mary Ellen Andrisin, Donna DeCamp, Filomena Johnson, Sr. Mary Ellen Lampe, Michael Quilling, Sr. Mary Lou Schmersal, Denise Shepard**;

3 years: **William Caripides, Jean Henderson, Patricia Morrison, Sr. Nancy Recker**; 2 years: **Rebecca Bruggeman, Christopher Dillon, Susan Gehret, Dennis Mescher**; 1 year: **Michelle Bodine, Lori Boyd, John Buehler, Brian Donchez, John Gilley, Wanda Plassenthal**.

Together these dedicated people bring their skills and commitment to excellence in untold ways for the benefit of the sisters, other staff and the world of CPPS.



Kimberly Jaynes



Elton Benson



Brenda Gabbard



Kimberly Lewis



Tamiko Morrison



Sister Pat Will



Sister Mary Lea (Mary Ruth) Glaser

1936 — 2010

Sister Mary Lea Glaser, a Sister of the Precious Blood for 55 years, entered her eternal home on Jan. 22, 2010, at Vitas Innovative Hospice Facility in St. Elizabeth Center, Dayton. Sister Mary Lea was the youngest of three children born to Walter and Marguerite Antoinette (Rathweg) Glaser. She is survived by her sister, Barbara

Bachey, and her brother, Tom. The family belonged to Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Dayton. On the parish grounds there was a statue of the Blessed Mother which Sister Mary Lea frequented to pray her favorite prayer, the *Memorare*.

Sister Mary Lea became acquainted with the Sisters of the Precious Blood while working at the Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue, Ohio, and continued her relationship through correspondence. After entering the community, she carried out their mis-

sion through the ministry of education in Indiana, Missouri and Ohio.

A vital part of this and later ministries was her love for music. She freely shared this gift with everyone. Grade school choral groups amazed all who heard them. In later years her music ministry with the senior adults as activity director at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center in Dayton brought delight to the hearts of the elderly.

Each of us remembers Sister Mary Lea from a different color of the prism of light that she reflected: singing, being friend, consoling, or understanding her love for birds. She was a beacon of hope for many. During the last several years of her life, Sister Mary Lea had to cope with Alzheimer’s disease so as the Resurrection liturgy was celebrated on Jan. 25, 2010 at Salem Heights it was somewhat of a consolation to know that her suffering was gone and she could live in the loving embrace of God for all eternity.

—Sister Madonna Ratermann



Sister Alma Catherine (M. Theophila) Huelskamp

1925 — 2010

Sister Alma Catherine, a Sister of the Precious Blood for 67 years, died March 17, 2010, at the Maria-Joseph Living Care Center in Dayton. Sister Alma was one of nine children born to Aloysius and Rose (Harlett) Huelskamp in St. Joseph, Ohio, on Feb. 28, 1925. She is survived by her sisters Mildred Will and Sister Luella, also a Sister of the

Precious Blood, as well as by her brother Alfred.

Alma entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood on Aug. 14, 1942, and for a time was known as Sister Mary Theophila. Throughout her 57 years of active ministry she served primarily as a cook. Her mission list included bishops’ residences, seminaries and homes for the elderly. Especially dear to her heart were her 28 years at St. Thomas Seminary in Denver, and her 18 years at St. Charles Seminary in Carthage-na, Ohio. She was held in high regard by the seminarians, priests and brothers wherever she served, a true daughter of Mother Maria Anna Brunner.

In reflecting on Sister Alma’s years at St. Charles Seminary, one of her companions wrote: “She is a pleasant person who is lots of fun to be with. She is prayerful. She loves to read, take walks, crochet, and do needlework and crossword puzzles. Since she is near her home, she spends her day off with her sister [Millie] making comforters and quilts for the poor.”

In 2002, Sister Alma retired to Salem Heights, where she continued to be the same pleasant person she was throughout her years of active ministry. In November 2009, various health issues led her to make the decision to go to Emma Hall in the Maria-Joseph Center. Her health deteriorated to the point where she freely admitted to being tired, and visitors often found her asleep. The psalm verse, “God gives to his beloved even in sleep,” came true for her on March 17 as God took her to himself and gave her the reward of a life lived so generously for him and for others.

—Sister Jeanette Buehler

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

LETTERS...

Thank you so much, Sisters, for continuing to send *Sharing & Caring* magazine. I enjoy reading about all of you and how active all of you are.

The "Nifty 90s Club" [Fall 2009] caught my eye, as Sister Consuella Salmon was my fourth-grade teacher! The Immaculate Conception class of 1960 will be celebrating 50 years since graduation, and I know my classmates will enjoy knowing Sister Consuella is still doing well.

Sister Mary Louise Ante always kept my name on the prayer line. I hope it is still so! Please know I pray for all of you, too!

Paula McIlroy
Celina, Ohio

Thank you for sending us *Sharing & Caring*! A thank you also for verifying that my grade-school teachers (1946, St. John the Evangelist in Deer Park, Cincinnati) were indeed Sisters of the Precious Blood. It's amazing how easily important bits of one's history can fade away after 50 or so years!

The history of the Sisters of the Precious Blood was of great interest to me because not only were the sisters my teachers, but my second cousin, Sister Marie Speaks (then Sister Mary DeSales), was a member of the order. Sister Marie was my mother's cousin, and everyone in the family loved her.

Sister Marie was an exceptionally gifted organist and student of classical music. I vividly remember visiting your convent in Dayton where we always begged Sister Marie to play the organ for us. As I recall, she held an advanced degree in Gregorian Music.

You may rest assured that my prayer intentions always include all of the priests, brothers and sisters who have graced my life — and the Sisters of the Precious Blood will always rank right at the top of that list!

I know without a shadow of a doubt that Sister Marie plays a celestial organ even now for Our Lord's enjoyment in heaven, and smiles down on us as her nimble feet fly over those foot pedals again!

Bill Laudeman
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Thanks to all of you who remembered to pray for my cousin Hubert (Butch) Hoehn as he entered into his eternal rest.

Thank you, too, for your continued prayers for my nephew, Terry Lindeman, and his wife, Doris and the infant girl they are caring for. Baby Samirato, from Burkina Faso in Africa, is with them as she awaits two serious surgeries.

Sister M. Renee Hoehn
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:

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood on the death of Father Raymond Schultheis (Cincinnati Province) on Dec. 5, 2009.

Sister Casilda Obringer on the death of her brother-in-law, Winson Denny, on Dec. 7, 2009.

Sister Rose Margaret Broerman on the death of her sister-in-law, Ruth Broerman, on Dec. 29, 2009.

Sister Canice Werner on the death of her brother-in-law, Herman Ruef, on Jan. 13.

Sister Edna Hess on the death of her father, Leo Hess, on Jan. 14.

Sister Elizabeth Jane Westgerdes on the death of her brother, Ray Westgerdes, on Feb. 13.

Sister Rose Ann Winkeljohn on the death of her cousin, Victor Moeder, on Feb. 22. Mr. Moeder was also the brother of the late Sister Julian Moeder.

Sister Nadine Kaschalk on the death of her brother-in-law, Bob D'Agnese, on March 3.

Sister Luella Huelskamp on the death of her sister, Sister Alma Catherine Huelskamp, CPPS, on March 17.

Sister Rose Ann Winkeljohn on the death of her sister, Jane Widmair, on March 20.

Remembering...

Linda Hageman King, formerly Sister Richardine, CPPS, on Jan. 2.

Marian Miller, formerly Sister Mary Gordian, CPPS, on Feb. 14.

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE.

Moving? Please tell us!

Are you planning to move? Do you have a new address? If so, please tell us. The U.S. Postal Service does not forward *Sharing & Caring*, nor notify us of address changes. **You can help us save postage costs by notifying us as soon as you know your new address.**

Please attach your old/current information from the label portion on the back page and send to us (see address on page 2) with your new information below. Thank you!

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BY SISTER PAT DIERINGER

What CPPS means to me...

Just a week after high school graduation, I entered the “work world,” joining the accounting department of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. I worked there for seven years before I felt a pull to enter religious life.

I entered the convent, another religious congregation, for the first time on Sept. 8, 1954. After some months, with much prayer and the help of spiritual direction, I determined I wasn’t being called to be a sister — at least not then. So I returned home and helped my mother care for my father, who was very ill. I returned to the work force, first with an insurance company and then later again with Goodyear. I also tutored at the parish school and in homes, and volunteered in the rectory doing office work. My life was busy, and full.

But all the while God was still nudging my heart to re-explore religious life. I entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood on Aug. 23, 1959. I was all of 30 — in those days considered “an older vocation”! After professing my vows, I began years of ministry, all of which enabled me to use my business and accounting background in various places and institutions.



Although I’m formally retired, my plate is as full as ever. I work in several congregational ministries and help as needed with the older sisters. I’m actively involved at Precious Blood Parish in Dayton where I serve as Eucharistic minister and coordinator for Eucharistic ministers. I enjoy helping to serve the area poor through the parish’s St. Vincent DePaul Society. I’m also an avid sports fan and would love to see my Cincinnati Reds win another World Series.

But added to all the above, the first and foremost priority of my ministry is daily Eucharist and striving to deepen my prayer life. This is what energizes me and supports all my activities. It makes every day a new challenge.

I’m happy that the second time around God allowed me to dedicate myself to him and his church through the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Our Precious Blood charism and the inspiration of Mother Maria Anna Brunner urge me to be a reconciling presence: to give hope to the hopeless through the acceptance of everyone, of every race, culture, creed and nationality.

I’ve been blessed to be a Sister of the Precious Blood. And I’m immensely grateful.

Learn more about the Sisters of the Precious Blood

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