

# Sisters of the Precious Blood

MAY 2018 Volume 3, Issue 6

Please consider saving paper, ink and the environment — print only if necessary. We have eliminated much of the heavy color areas to minimize the use of colored ink. Thanks!



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

• Sisters of Earth Conference	1
• Recycling endeavors	
• Guatemala	2
• Play Hospital	3
• Gaudete et Exultate	
• Laudato Si'	4
• Anti-trafficking efforts	
• Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence	
• Immigration Story	5

## Enacted in our ASSEMBLY DIRECTIVES 2015 we will remember to...

- Continue to articulate and integrate our Spirituality in our sharing among ourselves and with others.
- Increase our use of social media to promote Precious Blood Spirituality.
- Stand with the marginalized, make a collective commitment to promote and witness nonviolence, and strive to effect reconciliation among God's people.
- Act responsibly in the use and care of our planet's resources.
- Network with other individuals, agencies and groups to be effective in our current reality.

## Stories from around our CPPS world



### Sisters of Earth 2018 Conference:

*“Sharing the Wisdom, Shaping the Dream: Creating the Future We Want”* July 12-15 at Mount St. Joseph University, Cincinnati, OH. For more information, contact Colleen Kammer, 937-275-0303 x 116  
<https://www.facebook.com/srs.ofearth>

Sisters of Earth is an informal network of women who share a deep concern for the ecological and spiritual crises of our times, and who wish to support one another in work toward healing the human spirit and restoring Earth's life support systems. Founded in 1994 by several Catholic Sisters from the U.S. and Canada.

- **Assembly Directive:** Network with other individuals, agencies and groups to be effective in our current reality.
- **Submitted by:** Colleen Kammer

“Please check out this interactive map about electronic recycling to find a location near you.”

<https://allgreenrecycling.com/drop-off-locations/>



## Guatemala

Our hats are off to Sister Marifé Hellman, who has served in Guatemala for 38 years. When Sister Rosie Goubeaux and I visited her, she quickly informed us that she was the first woman in Guatemala who taught theology in a seminary. That's a great accomplishment!

Recognizing the importance of education, Marifé began a school for young Mayan girls because in the small villages in Guatemala, education for children goes up to grade six and further education is not available. Providing high school education in this hilly countryside of San Raymundo, with assistance from our Congregation, Marifé works with other people and now teaches in a third school building, which is named Holy Mary of the Most Precious



Blood School (*Escuela Santa Maria de la Preciosísima Sangre*). The present building was newly built a few years ago and is a boarding school capable of housing 32 girls. It includes classrooms, study areas, kitchen, dining room, chapel, etc. Some girls and boys from the local neighborhood also attend classes but do not live there. Over the years, students who come from various areas and from different language groups have attended this school, get along so well, learn so much

and are enriched with the spirit of the Precious Blood.

Presently a gentleman from the United States, with skills in marketing, is assisting Marifé by developing a fundraising campaign. He, his wife and their daughter, who is in college, were visiting while we were there. They were busy preparing promotional materials by taking many pictures, creating a video, interviewing people and gathering valuable information. The funds they plan to raise will be used to establish similar schools in other locations within Guatemala. They too see the importance of providing education for children from impoverished homes and are committed to assisting with this endeavor.

In addition to education, Sister Marifé also reaches out to many families in the neighborhood and local area, sharing love and kindness and assisting them in various ways. While we were there, a pickup truck drove onto the property. The bed of the truck was filled to capacity with a great variety of fresh fruits. Marifé quickly helped to distribute some of this delicious fruit to a number of families who live nearby.

What a thrill it was to walk the grounds of where she lives and ministers with others, praying and sharing faith, life, goodness and our Precious Blood Spirituality.

- **Assembly Directive:** *Stand with the marginalized. . .*
- **Submitted by:** *Sr. Martha Bertke*

## Play Hospital

Mercer Health Hospital in Coldwater sponsors an annual event called "Play Hospital" for kindergarten-age children from the local schools.

This year it was held each day of the week of April 16-20. These children come on buses to the hospital to tour seven areas in the hospital. Volunteers lead a group of about 10 children on a tour through the hospital to the seven designated areas. At each area, a hospital employee talks to the children and shows them different objects and explains their use.

This year, Sister Martha volunteered to help with this fun and rewarding event on April 18. The kids had a blast!

**Assembly Directive:** *Network with agencies and groups to be effective in our current reality.*

**Submitted by:** *Sister Martha Bertke*



## Gaudete et Exultate

### (Rejoice and Be Glad) by Pope Francis

REJOICE AND BE GLAD  
GAUDETE ET EXULTATE



On April 9, 2018, the Apostolic Exhortation "**Gaudete Et Exultate,**" or **Rejoice and Be Glad,** was promulgated by Pope Francis. The Holy Father looks at the call to holiness in today's world with wit, insight and encouraging counsel. Francis says: "**Don't be afraid of being holy.**"

From how to avoid false forms of holiness, to finding inspiration in the lives of the saints, Pope Francis explores the heights and depths of practical Christian holiness. He invites all Christians to accept Jesus' invitation to live out the fullness of the Beatitudes and to discern and generously respond to one's personal mission. See how Pope Francis is guiding the Catholic Church's call to holiness in the modern world and how you can be a part of it!

**Source:** <https://store.usccb.org/rejoice-and-be-glad-p/7-599.htm>

- **Assembly Directive:** *Network with . . . groups to be effective in our current reality.*
- **Submitted by:** *Sr. Martha Bertke*



**Michigan Nature Association**  
People. Land. Legacy.

Sister Marie Kopin was invited for the second time to the Michigan Nature Association's (MNA) "President's Council" dinner and special guest speaker event. It was held at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing, Michigan, with the board of trustees present to honor a number of life members, stewards and those making significant contributions to MNA. Sister Marie has been a co-steward of the Alta Warren Parsons Memorial Nature Sanctuary in Clare County, Michigan, for a number of years and has begun a series of specialized mycology educational events there for the public. Visit <https://michigannature.iescentral.com/menus/home.html> to take a look at Michigan's first nature preserve association and what we do. The photo shows Marie with MNA board president Aubrey Golden and Jon Breithaupt, executive director of the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy in Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

Marie notes that this information may give us insight into our own possible contribution to an Ohio nature preserve association of some kind.

- **Assembly Directive:** *Act responsibly in the use and care of our planet's resources.*
- **Submitted by:** *Sr. Marie Kopin*



## *Laudato Si'* (On Care for Our Common Home) by Pope Francis

As we move into spring and summer, we like to enjoy the outside and perhaps need to ask ourselves, “What am I doing to care for our common home?” Some quotes from this extraordinary 2015 encyclical come to my mind. First of all, Pope Francis states, “Faced as we are with global environmental deterioration, I wish to address every person living on this planet.” This is a plea for all of humanity (not only Catholics) to wake up and care for creation and end environmental destruction.

Another strong quote: “*Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue. It is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.*” If we are to survive, each one of us must do whatever we can to protect all of creation or, in other words, take action to care for our “common home.”

**Assembly Directive:** Act responsibly in the use and care of our planet’s resources.

**Submitted by:** Sr. Martha Bertke



The Sisters at Salem Heights labeled 2,000 bars of soap with the national human trafficking hotline number on April 11. This was for the S.O.A.P. (Save our Adolescents from Prostitution) organization. S.O.A.P. distributes bars to hotels for use in their bathrooms where trafficked individuals are likely to use the soap. Fourteen sisters worked together to label the soap in one hour’s time! Their nimble fingers made quick work of the sheets of labels and cases of soap. Thank you, Sisters!

**Assembly Directive:** Stand with the marginalized, make a collective commitment to promote and witness nonviolence.

**Submitted by:** Colleen Kammer

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### **“An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-Commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence”**

In 2016, April 11-13, 80 Catholic peacemakers from over 25 nations were invited to the Vatican for a conference to discuss formally abandoning the so-called “just war theory” and to return the Church to the nonviolence of Jesus. This was the first-ever gathering of its kind in Church history. This is the first time the Vatican has ever co-sponsored with Pax Christi a conversation on nonviolence.

Three days of deliberation took place and the statement, called “An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-Commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence” was affirmed by the participants of the Nonviolence and Just Peace gathering.

The message of Pope Francis for the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> World Day of Peace, January 1, 2017, was named “**Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace.**” It encourages us to acknowledge one another as sacred gifts endowed with great dignity, and calls us to make “active nonviolence our way of life.” What am I doing???

• **Assembly Directive:** Increase our use of social media to promote Precious Blood Spirituality.

• **Submitted by:** Sr. Martha Bertke



## Immigration Story

Permit me to introduce you to Mireya Gonzalez. She is a member of the *Social Concerns (Social Justice) Committee* that I chair for The Holy Name of Jesus parish in Redlands. Mireya is a parent of several children, and she and her husband are very active workers in the area of immigration. Mireya is a local representative to CHIRLA, *Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (in LA)*. Recently Mireya arranged for speakers from CHIRLA to speak to our committee. By the time you read this, CHIRLA will have opened a San Bernardino office. You can read about this organization on its website.

CHIRLA offers legal services, like Catholic Charities does, to immigrants trying to obtain Green Cards or other legal documents. But CHIRLA is also a “feet on the ground” organization that follows immigrants who are arrested by ICE. CHIRLA visits them in the detention centers, connects them with legal services and communicates with their families. For example, here is a message about one detainee, sent to me by Mireya a few days ago: *“On February 14, Fernando ... was detained by ICE. He is 19 years old and became homeless at the age of 16 after having family conflict. His sister, Dalia, and her younger brother were taken in by a family friend. Fernando was not as fortunate. He would sleep in a car, shower in his high school locker room and go hungry several days at a time. In February, he had an encounter with ICE while on the streets and was taken to the Adelanto Detention Center. ... On Friday, he was given a \$2,000 bond. Help us get Fernando out of Adelanto by donating! It is crucial that he is released as soon as possible as his mental health is deteriorating.”*

Of course Fernando is only one of the vulnerable immigrants in our area. In our parish, the Hispanic members of our *Social Concerns Committee* estimate there are about 400 Dreamers. One of them is the son of a woman named Araceli, whom I tutor at the literacy center in Redlands. She is a parish member and a cook in a Mexican restaurant, and her husband drives a street sweeper on the night shift. They both pay taxes. She has lived in the U.S. for 24 years but does not even have a Green Card. One of their sons is a citizen, but the other is a Dreamer. She is trying to learn to speak and write English so that she can begin paperwork toward getting a Green Card, which you must have for five years before applying for citizenship; a Green Card would help her get a better job. Like all people in this situation, Araceli and her family live daily with fears of being arrested like Fernando was. I feel privileged to know her, to know about her life. But I also feel helpless as I learn more and more about our broken immigration system from people like Mireya, and about the harm it does to families and people like Fernando and Araceli.



- **Assembly Directive:** *Stand with the marginalized . . .*
- **Submitted by:** *Sr. Mary Garascia*

**Send us your articles (approximately 125 to 150 words or less) for our next issue. Next issue articles for *Grassroots* are due **May 25th** so that we can meet our goal of having it in your hands by **06\_04\_2018**.**

Please submit to Marty Bertke [m.bertke@hometowncable.net](mailto:m.bertke@hometowncable.net)

....or to Mary Lou Schmersal [cppsnews@bright.net](mailto:cppsnews@bright.net)

**Your contributions make all the difference!**



We're on the Web!

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