

# Sisters of the Precious Blood

DECEMBER 2018 Volume 3, Issue 12



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:

- Care of the Poor Prayer 1 & 2
- World day of the Poor 3
- Sister— PBS
- Healing Garden 4
- Practice Gratitude
- Advent Paths to Peace 5
- 3 Years of News 6
- Collaborative efforts 7
- Empty bowl project
- Undocumented 8
- Good Politics at the Service of Peace 9

## 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 non-violence, 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

### PRAYER FOR THE CARE OF THE POOR

This brief liturgy may be duplicated for free distribution. Prepared by Catholic Charities, USA.

#### OPENING PRAYER

Generous God, we lift up to your mercy that poverty which is a moral and social wound upon our country's soul. In your goodness, help us to heal this wound by working to alleviate the suffering and pain of the poor. Amen.

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 10: 12-14, 16-18

R. Rise up, LORD! Do not forget the poor.

Rise up, LORD! God, lift up your hand! Do not forget the poor! Why should the wicked scorn God, say in their hearts, "God does not care"? R.

But you do see; you take note of misery and sorrow; you take the matter in hand. R.

To you the helpless can entrust their cause; you are the defender of orphans. R.

The LORD is king forever; the nations have vanished from his land. R.

You listen, LORD, to the needs of the poor; you strengthen their heart and incline your ear. R.

You win justice for the orphaned and oppressed; no one on earth will cause terror again. R.

#### READING FROM SCRIPTURE

##### Luke 4: 16-21

(Jesus) came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has

sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.”

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, “Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”

**REFLECTION:** An individual or group reflection on the Scripture readings or the theme of poverty may be offered here.

**PETITIONS:**

- Confident that God always hears the cry of the poor, we lift up the following needs, saying: “Generous God, hear our prayer.”
- Give the church the grace to be a “poor church for the poor,” and so become an even greater sign to the world of Christ’s charity for the least and those in need, we pray:
- Give the people of our nation the collective will to make the economic, social, and political choices to reverse the human-made disaster of poverty, and so offer a new vision of life and society, we pray:
- Give those in elected office the conviction and courage to promote social policies and economic structures which reduce poverty and promote a just distribution of the world’s goods, we pray:
- Give those who struggle with poverty renewed hope, economic and educational opportunity, and dignified work in safe conditions for just wages, that they might live in economic security, we pray:
- Give us open hearts that we might willingly share our gifts with others, follow Jesus in his own poverty, and seek his face in the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters, we pray:
- Give to Catholic Charities and other organizations of good will the leadership and resources needed to reduce poverty in the communities they serve, we pray:
- Other intercessions may be offered here. Our Father...

**CLOSING PRAYER:** God of bounty, your son Jesus embraced poverty and taught that the poor are blessed, for “theirs is the kingdom of God.” Help us to step out of our certainties and comforts and keep our eyes fixed on him, so we can both see and serve him in the faces of the poor. Amen.

**SIGN OF PEACE**

All present may share an appropriate sign of peace.



*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*

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## **World Day of the Poor**

The World Day of the Poor was celebrated nationally Nov. 18, 2018. This day highlighted the faces and stories of those who are suffering with the burden of poverty. On this second anniversary, Pope Francis' World Day of the Poor message asks each of us to reflect on Psalm 34:6, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him," and consider whether we hear the cry of the poor and to examine what we do in response.

The mission of Catholic Charities USA is to provide service to people in need, to advocate for justice in social structures, and to call the entire church and other people of good will to do the same. We encourage you and your communities to learn more about poverty in the U.S. and to join with Catholic Charities in our mission to lift up the neediest among us.

Please visit this website, [here](#), to find helpful resources that you can use to raise your own awareness about poverty in our country as well as help your neighbors become more aware.

Ending poverty starts with each of us. Let's become a part of the movement to lift 45 million Americans out of poverty and help change the lives of millions of others in need. Research how poverty impacts the folks where you live.

<https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/world-day-of-the-poor/>

## **SISTER - COMING TO YOUR LOCAL PBS STATION**

Since 2014, director Joe Cardona and cinematographer José L. Vázquez have been traveling around the country filming for *SISTER*. It's a film about the life and work of Sr. Helen Prejean.

It's a film about her sisterhood, the Congregation of St Joseph.

It's a film about how nuns have changed in the past 50 or 60 years to meet the needs and challenges of the world. It's about the guilty and the innocent, about hurt and forgiveness. And it's excellent! Joe knows how to let people tell their own stories, and Jose knows how to shoot a documentary with the eye of an artist.

*SISTER* was premiered in New Orleans and Miami in September and had its first public broadcast on PBS South Florida. It will get wide distribution on PBS in 2019. We'll give you a heads up when that begins, but you'll need to keep an eye out for it on your local PBS schedule.

For additional information and insight, link to Sr. Helen's website: <https://www.sisterhelen.org/biography/>



## The Healing Garden at Mercer Health

Mercer Health Hospital in Coldwater, OH created a new, large addition to their present building and services. This West Wing Expansion added 68,000 square feet to the existing building to provide more surgery rooms, more private inpatient rooms and greater outpatient services, and many other worthwhile features. Open House was held Sunday, October 14, 2018.



The Healing Garden is a dedicated outdoor space designed to provide therapeutic benefits. It is organized by the MED Foundation (Medical, Educational & Development) of Mercer Health and will be located in front of the new Atrium. We, Sisters of the Precious Blood, made a monetary donation for an 8 x 8 inches Brick Paver with words engraved on it.

Reasons for doing this:

- We Sisters are known in Mercer County and our support will be greatly appreciated
- We received health care at this Hospital and this is an expression of gratitude
- At present and in past years some members of our Congregation serve at the hospital

- Our name in this Healing Garden is a way to recognize our Congregation's presence in this part of Ohio, where many of our Sisters lived and ministered
- It is a very clear and public statement that we believe **All Life Is Precious**.

**Submitted by:** Sister Martha Bertke

**Assembly Directive:** Network with others to be effective in our current reality.

## PRACTICE GRATITUDE

The GLENMARY Home Missioners on their Thanksgiving Card had these words:

**CONVERSATION STARTERS FOR AROUND THE TABLE at any time of year:**

1. Name two things you are thankful for this year.
2. Who are you thankful for, and why?
3. What part of nature is inspiring and beautiful to you?
4. What is something that makes you laugh out loud?
5. What is an unexpected blessing you've received this year?
6. Choose someone you are with and share three things you admire and appreciate about that person.
7. What is something you love about your family?
8. How are you going to practice gratitude this year?



# ADVENT PATHS TO PEACE

[PATHS TO PEACE – ecospiritualityresources.files.wordpress.com](http://ecospiritualityresources.files.wordpress.com)

Christians often refer to the Christ Child as the Prince of Peace. Many groups exchange a sign of peace during their services. When someone dies, we sometimes say: May s/he rest in peace. We pray for peace in our world, our families, our selves. Nobel awards a Peace Prize. We assume that the Cosmic Christ's reign will be one of Peace on Earth. Let's ponder the challenges of "peace."

How do you feel when applying Pope Francis's words to personal and national/international situations: "Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare. Only the tenacious say yes to encounter and no to conflict; yes to negotiations and no to hostilities; yes to respect for agreements and no to acts of provocation"?

In the Hebrew Bible, "shalom" is translated "peace." Each part of us (e.g., cells, organs, systems) is a whole entity, working for the good of the greater whole. Each person is part of larger wholes. Ultimately we are integral parts of our interconnected, expanding creation. No one and no thing can be excised from that whole. "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe" (John Muir). Justice demands that each be given its proper respect.

Note that shalom is not the absence of tension or even of conflict. Think how our Universe somehow began with an expansion of particles and light and the repeated transformation of these particles as they gave themselves to become the next generation of elements within evolution. Eventually supernovas exploded so that the remains could become our solar system — and everything in it, including ourselves.

Death and conflict pervade creation, yet from the beginning, creation has kept in balance and harmony. Earth repaired disequilibriums whenever that was necessary. (E.g., when too much oxygen threatened the health of the atmosphere, Earth "invented" respiration to assure the presence of the right amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) to foster life. This required eons.) We know from experience that we, too, can heal, though sufficient time must be allowed.

Others have shed light on the meaning of peace. Margaret Anna Cusack (foundress of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace in the 19th century), emphasized the biblical conception of peace not as the absence of hostility but as the establishment of right relationships based on justice. Pope Paul VI repeated this concept in his famous 1972 quote: "If you want peace, work for justice." The world awoke to yet another aspect of peace when Wangari Maathai won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 because of her efforts to save the environment and plant trees, thus contributing to social and ecological justice. How would you explain that to someone who didn't understand why she won the award?

What right relationships based on justice seem most needed in our personal lives, our groups, our nation, church, and Earth? How can justice bring peace to these issues? What difference happens when we use positive words rather than negative ones, e.g., "work for justice" instead of "war on poverty"?

As we ponder the gift of Jesus's example and teachings this Advent, let's remember that "justice and righteousness" are needed to keep ourselves and the entire web of life whole/at peace. Any single thing we do for peace will affect many people, many other issues. As with the mobile touching any one part affects the whole. Butterfly wings flapping somewhere influence weather patterns elsewhere; stones cast into water result in ripples that extend and intersect. We cannot do one thing in our interconnected universe!





## Thanks for 3 years of News!

Let's give thanks for having a **Grassroots Newsletter** published each month for three years. That is awesome! Thanks to each Sister who helps with this endeavor.

The first issue was published in December of 2015.

Sister Ceil Taphorn initiated the Peace, Justice and Care of Creation committee which held its first meeting October 20, 2015. The group met to identify a focus and purpose, to help motivate ourselves to action and to share information and ideas with each other. In this preliminary meeting conversation centered around peace, justice and

care of the environment in relation to part of our 2015 Assembly Directives. It was decided to start by developing a **Grassroots Newsletter** to be published each month. It will:

- be rooted in the 2015 Assembly Directives
- provide a venue for clusters to share what they are discussing
- give individuals an opportunity to be heard, question, to raise concerns

Sisters Mary Lou Schmersal and Martha Bertke along with consistent oversight by Sister Ceil, Mary Knapke, and Michelle Bodine have published a monthly newsletter for three years. They consistently invite and encourage Sisters to submit articles, but no one needs to wait to be invited to contribute an article. Many thanks to all who have shared so willingly.

In the beginning **Grassroots** was sent only to our C.P.P.S. Sisters. Since January 2016 we have begun publishing it on the web and since June 2018 there have been 348 pageviews on the website alone (according to Google Analytics).

The first issue sent out as an e-newsletter was March 2016. At that time the amount of recipients was 261. The latest Grassroots e-newsletter (November 2018) had 852 recipients.

Nov. 2018:	6 Twitter	7 Facebook
Oct. 2018:	6 Twitter	83 Facebook
Sept. 2018:	5 Twitter	116 Facebook
Aug. 2018:	5 Twitter	95 Facebook
July 2018:	10 Twitter	97 Facebook
June 2018:	14 Twitter	158 Facebook

### E-Newsletter shares on Facebook and Twitter (past 6 months):

As you can see the news of what our Sisters are doing is distributed to many.

It is a way of informing others of some things that we do. In the June issue of 2016, you were invited to contribute articles, to identify how your experience is rooted in the 2015 Assembly Directives, and this is continued.

Sisters, let us continue to collaborate in this awesome endeavor! **Thanks!**

**Submitted by:** P, J & E. Committee members; Data from Michelle Bodine

**Directives:** Increase our use of social media to promote Precious Blood Spirituality

## Grateful for Collaboration

Friday, May 6, 2016, the Peace, Justice and Care of Creation Committee (now known as the Peace, Justice and Ecology Committee) or PJ & E committee ) met at Salem Heights. Present were: Sisters Ceil Taphorn, Jeanette Buehler, Martha Bertke, Marita Beumer, Patty Kremer, Catherine Nader, Mary Lou Schmersal and Mary Wendeln.



Some decisions were made and ideas surfaced. One idea was “...to investigate the possibility of executing an energy audit at Salem Heights (at three of our buildings: i.e., Farmhouse, Orchard House and the Congregational Office Building) to determine how we can better conserve energy.”

Since that time, our Community Council has followed through on that idea and the committee is so grateful for what they have done. This is one example of how grassroots and leadership can collaborate and make good things happen.

**Submitted by:** Mary Lou Schmersal

**Directives:** Act responsibly in the use and care of our planet’s resources

## Empty Bowls Project

Sr. Paula Gero has been making pottery bowls for the Empty Bowls project. This event, which is for the benefit of *House of Bread*, will take place at the Marriott near the University of Dayton on March 14, 2019. For a \$25.00 donation, people receive soup, bread, and a dessert and can take home a handmade bowl. This project calls attention to the problem of hunger in the Dayton area.

Sr. Paula made the bowls at *Artistic Expressions* in Troy, Ohio. She says that the atmosphere there is relaxed and that the proprietors and other potters are friendly, cooperative, and non-judgmental. “I get completely covered with clay, including hair and glasses; they call my technique ‘combat pottery.’” She is glad to have a good reason to pursue this rather expensive hobby. Discerner Mi Kyoung Hwang, who is interested in arts and crafts, assisted her with some of the glazing.



**Submitted by:** Paula Gero

**Directives:** Stand with the marginalized

Send us your articles (approximately **125 to 150 words or less**) for our next issue. Next issue articles for *Grassroots* are due **DEC. 26** so that we can meet our goal of having it in your hands by **01\_05\_2019**.

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!**

Thank  
You

## Sisters Sponsor Event: “Belonging: Undocumented and American”

Jose Antonio Vargas, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, Emmy-nominated filmmaker, author and a champion for immigrants, spoke at Xavier University’s Cintas Center in Cincinnati on November 15. Sr. Mary Wendeln, C.P.P.S. and Colleen Kammer attended the gathering, which was the annual meeting of the Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center (IJPC). The Sisters of the Precious Blood were a major sponsor of the event.

Born in the Philippines, Jose Antonio Vargas’ mother sent him to live with his grandparents in the United States when he was twelve. He didn’t know he was undocumented until he applied for a driver’s license at the age of 16. Vargas made it through school and beyond, working and paying taxes, through the kindness of his teachers and friends.

In 2011, Vargas publicly disclosed his undocumented status in a New York Times magazine essay in order to promote dialogue on immigration. A year later, he appeared on the cover of TIME magazine with other undocumented immigrants, in a follow-up cover story.

At the IJPC event, the personable Vargas, told the audience that there are 258 million migrants in the world today – people on the move in search of a home. As of 2015, there were 43 million immigrants in the United States, about 12% of the country’s population. Eleven million of those immigrants are undocumented.

“Immigrants do not come to the U.S. because they want a better life”, Vargas claimed. “Many times, they come here because of the situations that the U.S. had a role in or caused, in other countries.”

Vargas founded Define American, a non-profit media organization that counters anti-immigrant hate through the power of storytelling. Its web site, [www.defineamerican.com](http://www.defineamerican.com), offers helpful information, including talking points for people to use in conversations about immigration.

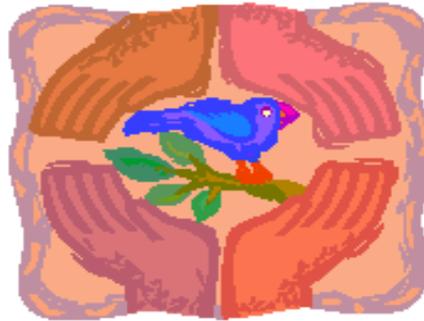


The library at Salem Heights contains Vargas’ memoir, *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen*, that was released in September. On the book’s inside flap, Vargas said, “After 25 years of living illegally in a country that does not consider me one of its own, this book is the closest thing I have to freedom.”

Vargas has not been able to see his mother in the Philippines for over two decades. Addressing the U.S. citizens in the 400-person audience at the Cintas Center, he said, “I hope you know the freedom you have (to go anywhere). I hope you remember that 11 million of us are fighting to have what you have.”

**Submitted by:** Colleen Kamer  
**Directives:** Stand with the marginalized

**Mass in Celebration of the 52<sup>nd</sup>  
World Day of Peace on the  
Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God  
January 1, 2019**



**Cincinnati: Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains  
(Corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Plum Streets, Downtown Cincinnati)  
11:00 a.m.  
Celebrated by Archbishop Dennis Schnurr**

**Dayton: St. Charles Borromeo  
(4500 Ackerman Blvd, Kettering, OH 45429)  
11:00 a.m.  
Celebrated by Bishop Joseph Binzer**

A reception with light refreshments will follow both Masses.

The Holy Father designates each New Year's Day as a special opportunity for the universal Church to pray for a year of greater peace, respect for life, and social justice. Join us as we pray for nonviolence and healing in our communities, nation and world.

Sponsored by the Archdiocesan Offices of Catholic Social Action, Worship and Mission.  
For more information, contact the Catholic Social Action Office at (513) 421-3131, ext. 2660 or [csa@catholiccincinnati.org](mailto:csa@catholiccincinnati.org) in Cincinnati; (937) 281-4124 or [csadayton@catholiccincinnati.org](mailto:csadayton@catholiccincinnati.org) in Dayton.



As we approach the new year, I invite you to share your hopes, your prayer intentions and your intended peace, justice and creation care actions for 2019, however specific or general. Please email them to Colleen at [ckammer@cppsadmin.org](mailto:ckammer@cppsadmin.org). We may use them at Mass or in upcoming Grassroots news. Thank you.

**Submitted by:** Colleen Kammer  
**Directives:** Increase our use of social media to promote Precious Blood Spirituality.