

# Sisters of the Precious Blood

MARCH 2019 Volume 4, Issue 3

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:

- Ohioans to Stop Executions 1
- Book Reviews 2
- Joyce Rupp: **Constant Hope**
- Helen Prejean: **River of Fire**
- **The Sympathizer** 3
- **The Refugees**
- Pope's Prayer Intention
- Global Catholic Climate Movement; Project Creation 4
- Pre-Lenten Treats; Addiction crisis 5
- Have Dinner with Us; Isabella County Park System 6
- Earth Day 2019; Global Catholic Climate Movement 7

## 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

### OTSE - Ohioans To Stop Executions

In case you missed it, Governor DeWine issued a reprieve to Warren K. "Keith" Henness on Friday, January 25. The governor cited concerns raised by a federal magistrate who ruled Ohio's execution drug protocol is "painful, both physically and emotionally, including a sense of drowning and the attendant panic and terror, much as would occur with the torture tactic known as water boarding."

The reprieve granted to Henness reschedules his execution from February 13 to September 12, 2019. The reprieve order also directs the Ohio prison agency to assess the state's options for execution drugs and investigate possible alternative drugs that could be used.

What does all this mean? For sure, Ohioans can expect to hear about additional experimental, theoretical drug combinations. We can expect more litigation and arguments why this drug or that drug *might* work. We may also hear some legislators calling for a return to other methods like the electric chair. We cannot forget that in 2016, the director of the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association advocated for nitrogen hypoxia--literally a gas chamber.

We know better. We know that the death penalty is a failed policy that does not keep communities safe or help victims' families heal. We know the death penalty costs taxpayers untold tens of millions of dollars more than alternatives. We know that innocent people have been and will continue to be sentenced to death for crimes they did not commit. That's why OTSE will renew efforts to work with legislators and state leaders to do one thing: end the death penalty.

Submitted by Sister Martha Bertke

- **Directive:** Stand with the marginalized, make a collective commitment to promote and witness nonviolence, and strive to effect reconciliation among God's people.

## Grassroots welcomes Book Reviews



Reading books improves your brain, imagination, and memory. You can gain knowledge, reduce stress, and improve your vocabulary. Books can take you to another different world, where you can relax, be enriched and challenged.

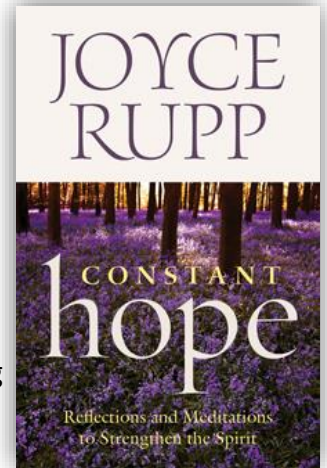
Through book reviews you can become familiar with books, authors, publishers and your thinking skills become sharper. We welcome **book reviews** that relate to the "Emergent Future Directives". Good books you have read should be shared with others. Please consider submitting a Book Review any time; don't wait to be asked.

### New Book on Hope from Joyce Rupp

#### Reflections and Meditations to Strengthen the Spirit (from the publisher)

"We are meant to be hope-filled people," says noted spiritual writer and Living Faith contributor Joyce Rupp, but how do we keep an enduring sense of hope "in a society where divisiveness and hostility doggedly work against" it? In this beautiful and profound book, Rupp helps us follow the only path that leads to real hope: the path of building our "relationship with the Holy One who dwells within us."

Based on the seasons of the liturgical year, and suffused with real-life wisdom, Joyce Rupp's Constant Hope will be an invaluable companion on your journey of faith, leading you to the One who has been encouraging and wooing you to enter more fully into relationship, and helping you respond in hope and joy to the love that God constantly offers.

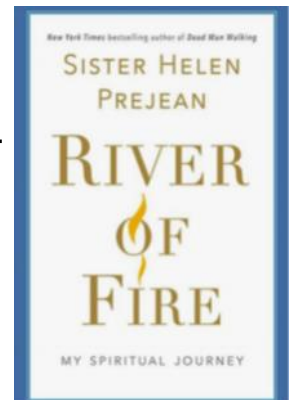


Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ

Author of "Dead Man Walking" and tireless activist to end use of the death penalty shares the story behind her new book, "River of Fire: My Spiritual Journey."

**Tuesday, March 19, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Mount Saint Joseph, University Theatre**  
**5701 Delhi Pike, Cincinnati, OH**

You may want to attend ... this is not specifically about the death penalty, but it's hard to believe the topic will not come up ..

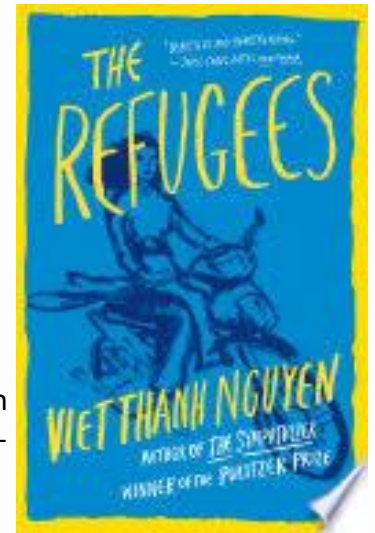
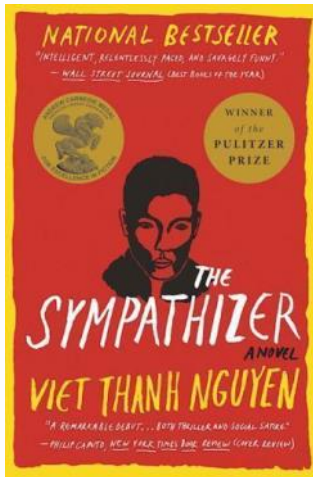


At the Precious Blood Congress years ago, Sister Joan Chittister recommended reading “ethnic literature” as a way of encountering people different from ourselves. I’ve tried to do that somewhat consistently, and so recently

I read Viet Thanh Nguyen’s collection of short stories, *The Refugees*, and also his 2016 Pulitzer Prize novel, *The Sympathizer*. *The Refugees* is much more accessible. In it you meet a cross section of people from the Vietnam diaspora who deal with all the usual problems of displaced persons. *The Sympathizer* is complex, layered, challenging to read, and at times upsetting.

An unnamed narrator is writing a “confession” about his conflicted life. Born in Vietnam of a Vietnamese mother and a French Catholic priest father, the sympathizer was sent to study in the US. He absorbs our culture and learns to speak unaccented English. He returns to Vietnam as the war starts, and becomes the assistant to “the general,” head of the South Vietnamese secret police, translating for him and negotiating for him with his American allies. But he is actually a mole, a sympathizer of the communist cause.

When Saigon falls, he evacuates to the US with the general, but he continues to send reports about the general’s activities to the victorious communists. When the general rounds up other expatriate military and surreptitiously returns to Vietnam to try a counter-revolution, with the sympathizer in his party, things go badly. They are all killed or captured. Broken by torture, the sympathizer has an epiphany about the nature of war—perhaps best summed up by an article in *Time* (Dec 3, 2018: 30) where Nguyen says: “Every country believes in its own best self and from these visions has built beautiful cultures...And yet every country is soiled in the blood of conquest and violence, Vietnam included.” This is not an anti-American novel. The narrator sympathizer is equally critical of the French colonialists, the Vietnamese communists, and the US and yet also sympathetic to each culture. This novel made me remember the Vietnamese war, the refugees who arrived in Denver when I was living there, the high school students I taught who died there. It made me grateful that today some wounds have healed, as wounds do. Perhaps you will want to read more about this author on Wikipedia and explore these books or his other works.



Submitted by Sister Mary Garascia

- **Directive:** Stand with the marginalized, make a collective commitment to promote and witness nonviolence, and strive to effect reconciliation among God’s people.

The Pope’s prayer intention for MARCH is: **Evangelization – Christian Communities**

That Christian communities, especially those who are persecuted, feel that they are close to Christ and have their rights respected.

O Lord Jesus Christ, we confess you as the Way, the Truth, and the Life! We rejoice in this profession of our saving faith and ask you to keep us always aware of what a great gift it is. We know, O Lord, that in imitation of you, many of our brothers and sisters, ancestors in the faith, died for their profession of this faith in you. Teach us, like them, to value our union with you, our trust in you, our love for you more than any earthly treasure.

Lord, we know too that Christians still suffer today merely for their profession of faith in you. Like in ages past, they endure hardship, loss, and even death because they cling to you. O Good Savior, we ask you to turn your merciful gaze upon these suffering Christians. Allow them to feel your presence and the assurance of hope in you.



Grant, O Lord, that our human communities many recognize the rights of all to seek, find, and serve you in peace. Amen.

# News from Global Catholic Climate Movement

<https://catholicclimatemovement.global/>

**Global Catholic Climate Movement** works within the Catholic Church to better care for our common home.

**Sr. Dorothy Stang**, "Martyr of the Amazon", died February 12, 2005. Sr. Dorothy was born in the United States, but moved to live with the poor in rural Brazil. **There, she witnessed first-hand ranchers and loggers exploiting farmers and indigenous people**, stealing land, cutting down forests, and murdering those who spoke up.



Sr. Dorothy courageously spoke up. Over several decades, she pushed for protection of Brazil's rural poor, especially those in the Amazon. **Because of her work for justice, she was named to a death list, and eventually murdered.** Here is how her sisters tell the story: "on a dirt road at the Boa Esperanca settlement in a rural area in Para, two hired gunmen fired six shots and killed Sr. Dorothy...**As the gunmen approached her, she took her Bible from her bag and began to read the Beatitudes: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice.**"

**In October, bishops from around the world will gather in the Vatican for a month-long conversation on protecting the Amazon and its people.** We at Global Catholic Climate Movement will bring care for the Amazon into our programs throughout the year. Please mark your calendars for important moments in the coming weeks:

**For Lent**, we invite you to add plant-based meals to your diet. It's a surprising truth that cattle farming is the single largest reason for deforestation in Brazil, and that the average serving of meat has 60 times the greenhouse gas emissions of a serving of fruits, vegetables, and grains. Eating plant-based meals is a way to honor our Lenten tradition of simplicity and stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters. Sr. Dorothy said that "only a profound change in our way of living—our values and attitudes—can bring new life to our world."

**This Lent, protect creation.** Add a day of plant-based meals to your diet this Lent, or strive to eat only plant-based meals throughout the Lenten season. Fasting from meat on Fridays is part of our Catholic tradition. It's a way to live in the simplicity and humility that Jesus offers us.

**Growing in simplicity for Lent is a gift of the spirit. We now know that it's also a way to sustainably inhabit our place in God's creation.**

Many of us enjoy meat, and we're grateful for the farming families who make our meals possible. Focusing our diets on plant-based meals and enjoying meat as an occasional treat is a sustainable way of living in our common home. It's a surprising fact that cattle ranching is the leading cause of deforestation in Brazil's Amazon, and across Latin America—in Brazil, cattle ranching is responsible for approximately 80% of all deforestation. **This land is often taken illegally from indigenous people.**

It also surprises many people to learn that meat production is a major contributor to climate change. **Weaving foods that protect creation into our diets is a way to love our neighbors, love that's needed now more than ever.** Adding plant-based meals to our diets is an invitation to honor our Lenten tradition *and* stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world.



## PRE-LENTEN Treats

March 5, 2019 is **Shrove Tuesday**, the last day before Lent in many Christian traditions. This day is also called Mardi Gras, Carnival, Pancake Tuesday, and many other names in various languages. What these days have in common is a tradition of a Pre-Lenten feast of foods. Many cultures have developed traditional recipes and certain foods for this day.

**Paczki (Punch-key)** In Poland and in communities with Polish roots, the most common traditional treat is paczki, a deep-fried jelly doughnut dusted with powdered sugar. They are different from your everyday doughnut in that they contain more eggs, and some recipes call for a little bit of alcohol in the dough, which keeps the oil from penetrating too deeply.

**Malasada** Malasada is traditional in both Portugal and Hawaii. The Shrove Tuesday treat consists of deep-fried balls of yeast dough that are sprinkled with sugar and resemble fluffy doughnuts without the hole. Some recipes call for passion fruit filling.

**King Cake** In Alabama, Louisiana, and other places that celebrate Mardi Gras, the King Cake is the traditional sweet. The King Cake started in Europe as a Catholic celebration of Epiphany, on January 6th. Many Americans are familiar with Louisiana-style king cakes that consist of cake-y bread dough twisted into a ring and decorated with colored icing & sprinkles.

**Pancakes** Even communities that do not observe Lent will enjoy a traditional Pancake Day, for fundraisers or just for the fun of it.



## **Workshop: “The Addiction Crisis: A Catholic and Lutheran Response”**

On February 19, I attended this event at the Community of the Good Shepherd in Cincinnati, along with 350 people from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and the Southern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. We learned about the brain-based disease “substance use disorder” (addiction) and were able to network and meet with our county agencies to

understand the resources that are available for those in crisis.

Fr. Mark Hushen, a recovering alcoholic working for Ashley Addiction Treatment Center, illustrated by a group exercise that it may take 20 or more people with varying skill sets/professions to support just one person in active recovery. Thus, our church communities and congregations can be sources of support for recovering addicts, providing love, hope and friendship. “The goal”, Fr. Mark stated, “is to help the addicted regain their ‘spiritual swagger’, their joy of living”.

**Submitted by:** Colleen Kammer

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



## Have Dinner with Us

It was my first day back to UD after the winter break. We were divided into groups of two and given the task to gather information so that we could introduce one another to the class. I found myself in a group of three. The young woman who was asking me questions thought I was a Marianist Sister. When I told her I was a Precious Blood Sister then both young ladies commented that they had received post cards in their mailboxes inviting them to dinner. Thanks to Jenna I had received one too and knew what they were talking about. I told them I hoped they would RSVP. The last question I was asked was 'what interesting thing did I want the class to know about me'. I mentioned that I had discerned religious life before I was Catho-

lic. By then I had **piqued** their interest.

When it came to class introductions and it was our group's turn, I had found out that every young woman in the class had received an invitation to dinner, (wonderful!). When the young woman ended her introduction of me with her interesting fact and several of the young women in the class started to ask me questions, I said in reply, "That is something that we talk about over dinner. I do hope you RSVP!"

I do thank Jenna for getting the postcards out. I hope that the written and personal invitation gives my classmates a future connection with my CPPS community.

• **Submitted by:** Sister Lakesha Church

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

Sister Marie Kopin works with Isabella County Park Supervisor Sue Ann Kopmeyer and her staff member Nicole in preparing a seasonal list of mycology events in the Isabella County Park system, <http://www.isabellacounty.org/dept-2/parks>. We have strong support for education here as a key to lifelong skills and improving our planet. This park system tries very hard to entice children and youth to get outdoors and enjoy God's creation and thus respect and improve it.

When I read the Mission Statement of the parks I was very impressed as it deals directly with the responsible management of many things whilst conserving the land, resources and the environment! Certainly the study of Fungi "fills the bill" as without the mycelium (root-like system) fungi produce we would have almost no plant life on earth.

**Mission Statement** "To promote healthy and active lifestyles for all residents and visitors of Isabella County, to provide quality facilities and diverse recreation opportunities, and to practice responsible management of human, financial, and environmental resources while promoting conservation of land, resources, and the environ-



ment." *The Mission Statement is on the first part of the Master Plan. I find much information and dedication in this plan.*

To see even more of what a county park can do go to their **MASTER PLAN**: <http://www.isabellacounty.org/images/stories/pdf/parks/MasterPlan05022012.pdf>



**Submitted by** Sister Marie Kopin

- **Directives:** 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.

## Earth Day 2019 —PROTECT OUR SPECIES

<https://www.earthday.org/2019/01/24/earth-day-network-designates-2019-as-crucial-year-to-protect-species-from-extinction/>

Click here to view our library of resources <https://www.earthday.org/earthdayinbox/>

### Here are some EARTH DAY TIPS

1. Join Earth Day Network's campaign to [Protect Our Species](#).
2. Join Earth Day Network's campaign to [End Plastic Pollution](#).
3. Join a local park, river or beach clean-up.
4. Use environmentally-friendly, non-toxic cleaning products.
5. Replace inefficient incandescent light bulbs with efficient CFLs or LEDs. Reduce your carbon footprint by 450 pounds a year.
6. Carpool, ride your bike, use public transportation or drive an electric or hybrid car. Reduce your carbon footprint by one pound for every mile you do not drive.
7. Keep your tires properly inflated and get better gas mileage. Reduce your carbon footprint 20 pounds for each gallon of gas saved.
8. Change your car's air filter regularly.
9. Teleconference instead of traveling. If you fly five times per year, those trips are likely to account for 75% of your personal carbon footprint.
10. Stop using disposable plastics, especially single-use plastics like bottles, bags and straws.
11. [Recycle paper, plastic and glass](#). Reduce your garbage by 10% and your carbon footprint by 1,200 pounds a year.
12. Donate your old clothes and home goods instead of throwing them out. When you need something, consider buying used items.
13. Use cloth towels instead of paper ones.
14. Change your paper bills to online billing. You'll be saving trees and the fuel it takes to deliver your bills by truck.
15. Read documents online instead of printing them.
16. When you need to use paper, make sure it's 100% post-consumer recycled paper.
17. Set your office printer to print two-sided.
18. Collect used printer, fax, and copier cartridges to recycle.
19. Convince your school district or office building to choose reusable utensils, trays, and dishes in the cafeteria.
20. Use reusable bottles for water, and reusable mugs for coffee.
21. Bring reusable bags when you shop.
22. Pack your lunch in a reusable bag.
23. Organize to have healthy, locally-sourced food served in your school district.
24. Buy local food to reduce the distance from farm to fork. Buy straight from the farm, frequent your local farmers' market, or join a local food co-op.
25. Buy organic food to keep your body and the environment free of toxic pesticides. Support farmers and companies who use organic ingredients. Grow your own organic garden, or join a farm-share group.
26. Reduce your meat consumption to curb carbon emissions from the livestock industry.

Send us your articles (approximately **125 to 150 words or less**) for our next issue. Next issue articles for *Grassroots* are due **March 25** so that we can meet our goal of having it in your hands by **04\_01\_2019**.

Please submit to Marty Bertke [m.bertke@hometowncable.net](mailto:m.bertke@hometowncable.net)  
— or to Mary Lou Schmearsal [cppsnews@bright.net](mailto:cppsnews@bright.net)

**Your contributions make all the difference!**



Thank  
You