



Passion is the Strength of Ministry

by Denise Murrow, Precious Blood Resource Services Director

In the March 2017 edition of the *New Wine Press* I wrote an article titled “In Faith a New Ministry is Born.” In it I spoke of the spiritual inspiration I received during a retreat given by Father Ben Berinti in October of 2016. The retreat was about apostolic life and the “Four Irritatingly Beautiful Questions for Companions of the Precious Blood.” They were questions about where we were in our apostolic life, how we could improve our relationship with God, and how we could help our brothers and sisters in need. The last question included Isaiah 6:8, “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send and who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I. Send me.’” I felt a strong calling to ask God to “send me” to bring life to a new social service ministry and embrace St. Gaspar’s vision to help the poor.

Over a year ago a very dedicated committee was formed whose members believed that providing charity to the poor and marginalized is an integral part of Precious Blood spirituality. They had enough faith in the ministry to devote their time and energy into its structure and organization. As a result of their passionate efforts, Precious Blood Resource Services (PBRS) emerged.

Precious Blood Resource Services is a ministry of accompaniment. We offer those in need assessments of their individual situations, provide them with referrals and resources and then accompany and walk them through a very tedious process. As a former city, county and state social service worker, I can attest to

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the fact that it is not easy for the public to understand the process they must go through in order to get the services they need and are entitled to.

I recently retired from the State of Missouri and am now the Director of Precious Blood Resource Services. An office has been provided to us in the rectory of St. James Parish at 3909 Harrison, Kansas City, Missouri. Bishop Sullivan Center, next door at 3936 Troost Avenue, has also provided us with space. We now have access to MAAKLink (Mid America Assistance Coalition) database, providing us with information from approximately 200 providers in the Kansas City area. We will be able to track services that have already been provided and then locate services that have not been provided. At this time, we have six volunteers. We are actively collaborating with other resource services in the community and we have already started to assess several clients in need.

The story of Jason is one example of the service we provide that can help those in need. Jason is a 71-year-old gentleman who came to us for assistance. He had been in prison for 20 years. When he was released in 2010, he started receiving Social Security benefits and had his own apartment. Unfortunately, a year ago he met a woman who began to financially exploit him and was spending his Social Security check. He was eventually evicted from his apartment and faced homelessness. He was living in a house with many other homeless and without electricity. Since Jason had a felony and an eviction on his record, finding housing seemed impossible. Most low-income apartments subsidized by the federal government do not accept as tenants those who have a felony. We collaborated with another social service agency that had found Jason a payee so that the woman could no longer take his money. We completed an assessment on Jason and found a local agency that had access to grants that could help people who had been incarcerated to find housing. They agreed to complete an emergency assessment on Jason. In the meantime, a homeless shelter nearby accepted Jason into their program and provided him with a bed and case management services until permanent housing could be found. If the shelter cannot attend to all his needs, the other local agency will be a secondary option for Jason. Jason told us that he had finally found some peace. We will continue to monitor Jason's progress in case he should need other services in the future.



On February 14th, a general email was sent out to members and Companions with an attached survey for anyone who would be interested in volunteering their gifts and talents to Precious Blood Resource Services. The volunteer categories range from assessing individuals, case management, data entry, making phone calls to providers, office work, gathering and collating resources. Although we are currently located in downtown Kansas City, volunteers can work from a convenient location for them or from home by making phone calls to providers or collecting resources. Training is being developed for those who want to be part of the ministry.

My passion continues for Precious Blood Resource Services and my vision is that it will branch out to other areas where Companion groups are located, enabling those communities to benefit from our services. Although the mustard seed has grown, it takes time, patience, strength and unity to bring the seed to blossom and give it life. I am confident that God will give me the strength to continue my journey with this ministry and spread Precious Blood spirituality. I turn to two scripture passages: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13) and "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Our new e-mail is pbrs@preciousbloodkc.org and the phone numbers are 816-548-6008 (office) and 816-499-2798 (cell). ☩