



The New Wine Press

Motivated by the spirituality of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ

Volume 22 No. 2
October 2012



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Maggie Nickels near Crownpoint, NM.

Being There: A Summer in Navajo Nation

Maggie Nickels, Precious Blood Volunteer

Several months ago, when friends or family asked what I would be doing in New Mexico for the summer, I did not have a definitive response. "I'll be working on a Navajo reservation," never seemed to suffice, as they usually wanted know what exactly my job was and where I would be living. I knew that I would be helping at the hospital and I knew that I would be staying with nuns, but that was about the extent of the information I had even up to the moment I boarded the airplane. Although the uncertainty with which I began my volunteer experience was a bit unsettling at the time, it was this same sense of continual mystery that made my six-week trip so fulfilling.

Driving into the town of Crownpoint, New Mexico, my eyes met the brown and red terrain before me. While the land there is dry and barren, it holds an unmistakable beauty. Canyons and mesas outline the town, and once monsoon season begins the landscape transforms into a gorgeous lush and green sight. But the most unforgettable natural aspect of the area is the setting sun each evening. As it descends beyond the mountains in the west, an explosion of red and orange brilliance lights the horizon. If the clouds are sitting just right—which they often are—the entire sky becomes dotted with pink and purple hues you would swear had been painted with a brush.



Precious Blood Volunteers Stella Yoon and Maggie Nickels at Crownpoint, NM.

My job in Crownpoint, however, was not to sit and contemplate the beauty of nature, although I could have accomplished that quite well. My duties there consisted of helping with the public health division of the Crownpoint Indian Health Services Hospital, working at the used clothing shop owned by the parish, taking blood pressure after masses, assisting with Vacation Bible School, and most importantly, simply being there. Before Stella Yoon and I arrived in Crownpoint, we spent a week at Precious Blood Center in Kansas City receiving an orientation to prepare us for our journey. It was during this time that Fr. Al Ebach spoke about the importance of being present. He explained that too many times, individuals go into service opportunities with the expectation of changing the people or making grand systemic differences. Often, the most profound thing one can do is to simply be there for the community. It was not until I spent my summer in Crownpoint that I came to understand what this meant.

Crownpoint is located in Navajo Nation, which is Native American-governed territory extending through northeastern Arizona, southeastern Utah, and northwestern New Mexico. Like many other reservation towns, it is a very low-income area. There are no restaurants or recreational facilities, many people live in homes with tattered roofs and no running water, and the school

system is extremely poor. However, behind the poverty lies a wealth of traditional wisdom. I was humbled by many pieces of Navajo culture: the profound reverence to the Earth, the closely-knit families, the stories and skills passed down with each generation, the fry bread, the weaving, and the love of laughter, to name a few.

That day I first drove into Crownpoint, Sr. Maureen told us that the lifestyle of she and Sr. Michelle was such that most days they were “flying by the seat of their pants.” It took me probably all of three hours to witness this. The Sisters were the safe-haven of the town, a place where people could come for food, for advice, or simply to vent their troubles. Some days it seemed that the phone never stopped ringing. And each time it did, Sisters Michelle and Maureen never wasted a minute in answering and in doing all that they could to help. Stella and I learned to emulate their flexibility so that we too could go where needed. Whether it was simply across the parking lot to paint doors, to the clothing shop to organize boxes, or over to a little girl’s birthday party to bring cookies, we tried hard to “be there” just as the sisters were.

Let me tell you about these Sisters in Crownpoint. They certainly were not what I had been expecting. I believe I had imagined serious-faced women wearing habits, perhaps singing a tune in perfect harmony or walking single file to prayer. Now these Sisters do have lovely voices, and they do pray, but they also are fun-loving, witty, and on some days you may even say “wild.” I’ll never forget my surprise when I awoke to gunshots and rushed to the window to see Sr. Barb casually pointing a rifle at squirrels. And never before did I think I would sit in a circle and smoke a native pipe with four nuns. But it happened, and I’m thankful it did.

I will also never forget the Sunday that Sr. Barb was back in Crownpoint. She had been in Rome for the past several years following her election to the Leadership Team, but prior to this she had spent nearly three decades in Crownpoint with Sr. Maureen. She returned to Crownpoint this particular week to visit, bringing along Sr. Zeta from Rome to see the town. The community could not have been happier to see her. It seemed we couldn’t go anywhere without hearing a “Sister Barb?!” and then watching joyous hugs ensue. On the Sunday during their visit, the parish gave a spontaneous blessing of the two sisters for their thirty years of service. They also blessed Sisters Michelle and Zeta, Father Kevin, and Stella and I. Standing in front of the altar and receiving that blessing, I felt a wave of simultaneous pride and

humility. I closed my eyes and my heart filled with the appreciation of being part of such a wonderful community.

And then, just as I was beginning to remember the correct pronunciation of the Navajo word for “thank you,” just as I finally learned how to remove paint from my hair, just as I started getting the hang of driving a pickup truck, it was time to go. Six weeks passed and we were saying goodbye to the most kind and strong (and quite honestly, the only) nuns I had ever known, a priest who had taught us much about UFOs and about life, and a community of people so unique and loving that they have left a permanent impression on my heart. Some people say “Don’t worry, I’ll be back!” half-heartedly, in a way that really means “Well, I’ll be back if I find the time.” But from me, it meant “I will return, because I can feel that is what God wants.” The Navajo people of Crownpoint taught me a lesson that will help me grow both as an aspiring physician and as a human being. They have taught me how to overcome stereotypes and personal inhibitions in order to stand with a community in hardship and in joy. They taught me to listen even when it hurts, to honor the words of the elderly, to cherish the innocence of children, to pick up and go where needed on a moment’s notice, and to sit and listen and therefore heal. They have taught me to simply be there, and for that I am grateful.

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The Society of the Precious Blood is a fraternal community of priests and brothers founded by St. Gaspar in 1815. Bonded through charity by a promise of fidelity, we are prayerfully motivated by the spirituality of the precious blood of Jesus Christ to serve the needs of the Church as discerned through the signs of the times and in the light of the Gospel.

The Kansas City Province—incorporated members, covenanted companions, and candidates—united in prayer, service and mutual support, characterized by the tradition of its American predecessors, are missionaries of these times with diverse gifts and ministries.

In a spirit of joy, we strive to serve all people—especially the poor—with care and compassion, hope and hospitality.

The New Wine Press seeks to remain faithful to the charism of our founder, St. Gaspar, and the spirituality of the Blood of Christ with its emphasis on reconciliation, renewal and refounding. We accept and encourage unsolicited manuscripts and letters to the editor.

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Printed on recycled paper by
Trojan Press
North Kansas City

Leadership Notes: *MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO (A Sound Mind in a Sound Body)*

Tom Welk, C.P.P.S., Provincial Councillor

As I prepared to write this article I heard a report on NPR that McDonalds had decided to post in its restaurants calorie counts for all its servings. This was followed by another report about New York City's efforts to limit the sizes of soft drinks served in eating

establishments.

These efforts, among others, are the result of the rapidly expanding obesity epidemic in our country. This epidemic not only has disastrous health consequences on an individual basis, but also is causing a precipitous increase in national health care costs.

At the conclusion of our 2012 Assembly in June, the keynote speaker remarked to us joining him at lunch that maybe as a Community we should consider

the topic of health and wellness at our next Assembly. At our August meeting, the leadership team voted to create a Health and Wellness Committee for the province in response to a felt need. I agreed to serve as the chairperson and help get the committee organized.

That is the brief history behind the genesis of this committee. Now what? A rather delicate issue, this business about taking care

of one's health, isn't it?

None of us relishes the thought of having someone else messing with our lifestyle habits, particularly when it comes to what

we eat or drink or how we may or may not exercise.

This challenge of maintaining good physical health is not just a recent topic of discussion. The phrase used for the title of this article has been around for a

long time. It shows up in the works of

Thales, a Greek philosopher, and the Latin expression comes from a poem by the Roman poet Juvenal. "A sound mind in a sound body" is something to be striven for. Sounds rather similar, doesn't it, to what we learned in our first catechism classes, namely, that our bodies are to be temples of the Holy Spirit?

"Mens sana in corpore sano" speaks to the point of balance. Keeping things in balance is important, particularly in the American culture that places undue emphasis on physical attractiveness. If you are the personification of "body beautiful," then you have all that you need to be happy. That is the prevailing attitude surrounding us. With this exaggerated focus on the physical dimension of our existence, it is easy to ignore the importance of the psychosocial/spiritual aspects to human functioning, i.e, the "mens sana" part.

The hospice patients I visit as I provide end-of-life care are obviously very compromised in their physical functioning. Yet, despite no longer having a "sound body," if there is "right order" in the psychosocial/spiritual aspects of their lives, these individuals are life-filled even as their bodies are increasingly compromised by a terminal disease.

The question of what it means to be healthy is also filled with ambiguity. To be healthy is often culturally misunderstood as optimal physical functioning in a beautiful body; nothing else is more important. The word "healthy" is an



extension of “heal,” which comes from the Anglo Saxon word *hāl*, meaning “whole.” Properly understood, a healthy person is one who is functioning well, not only in the physical dimension, but in all aspects of what it means to be human, including above all one’s psychosocial/spiritual functioning.

Nonetheless, even though acknowledging that a sound body is not a *sine qua non* for happiness, this does not excuse us from taking care of our bodies. To put it in common parlance, don’t we all just “feel better” when we are in “good shape,” both literally and physically? Indeed, how true it is: a sound body is a tremendous asset in our striving for a sound mind.

The Health and Wellness Committee membership has not yet been fully determined. It is my hope that once it is up and running, the committee will be able to provide some helpful suggestions for doing things to take care of ourselves in our physical dimension.

As a committee, we definitely do not want to be intrusive. Your helpful suggestions, ideas, practices, habits, or whatever you can come up with will all be highly appreciated. You can either contact me with your input or one of the other soon-to-be-named committee members.

InFormation: *It’s No Secret*

Matt Keller, Cincinnati Province candidate

It is said that it is not a good idea to tell a secret in a cornfield because there are so many ears to hear the secret. This is certainly true where I grew up in Maria Stein, Ohio; a secret in the cornfield falls on many ears and spreads very quickly to the point where the secret is no longer a secret anymore. It is no secret in Maria Stein that I am in formation with the Community. When word spreads around town, it could be good or it could be bad. The good that I find in a word like this spreading is that I feel much prayerful support in my journey.



Matt Keller

A second cornfield where it is advised to not share a secret is at St. Charles Center. On my first day of working in the front office at St. Charles, a number of Community members came into the office to see the stranger who was “invading” their territory.

Working among our guys at St. Charles, I have made many relationships with our Community members. Humans are creatures of relationships. In our relationships with one another we become of support to one another.

As I write this article for the Newsletter, I have been at the parish for about two weeks, and I am adjusting to the new environment. I am now living the adventure and figuring out what I am going to be doing while I am here.

Br. Hugh Henderson, C.P.P.S., and Fr. Dennis Chriszt, C.P.P.S., are showing me around the city and the parish. Fr. Clarence Williams, C.P.P.S., is also in residence here and I am making some connections with him as well. For the time being we are still living in the old Saint Mark’s rectory.

After going to school for many consecutive years from preschool all the way through college, it feels great but also a little weird to have some time away from school. While I was taking classes, my time was occupied with my schoolwork. This year, along with doing some ministry, I want to be doing some reading of Precious Blood materials about our history and spirituality.

No matter where I go in life it is about relationships and sharing the journey with people. No matter where this journey of life takes me—to the corn fields of Mercer County or in the cities of Chicago or Cincinnati—it is the people around us who bring us closer to God.



Major Superiors Meet at St. Charles

The provincial and mission directors for the world wide Missionaries of the Precious Blood met with the General Council at Carthagen, OH, September 10th to 19th. Kansas City Province members Mark Miller, Lac Pham, and Joe Nassal participated. In addition to the meetings, the major superiors visited St. Joseph's College and the formation houses and Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago.

Top: In Chicago

Middle: Touring St. Joseph's College

Bottom right: Francesco Bartoloni (Moderator General, Italy)

Bottom left: Mark Miller (Kansas City)



Committed for Life?

Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S., Regional Vocation Director

“Win Free Pizza For a Year!” is what the headline of the postcard read that arrived in the mail. The fine print read, “1 in 5,000 will win. Grand Prize winner receives 1 Free Pizza a week for a year.” Wow! That sounded pretty good until I asked Mom how good is this restaurant’s pizza. “Well,” she said, “it’s just so-so.” So I’m not sure how good that deal would be, even if it were free. At least I would know it would be only for a year. Sometimes in our lives we can endure something if we know how long it will last. I can get through this class because it’s only for 6 weeks. I can endure this cast because it will be off in 4 weeks. I can get through these next few days of work because I will be off for 10 days. At times, we can wrap our minds around a certain length of time and endure knowing that at some point things will change and we can move on.

Working with couples preparing for marriage, we ask the question, “Do you intend a lifelong commitment totally faithful to your spouse?” Usually, the couples have no trouble answering that question when we fill out the paperwork. One couple I worked with enthusiastically answered that question “YES!” I was excited working with them and I got the strong impression they totally understood their commitment to each other and were preparing for that lifelong commitment. However, I recently learned that a couple years after being married they have decided to separate. What!?! I couldn’t believe it! When asked, the couple simply said, “We tried.”

One thing I’m discovering as I talk with different people is the understanding of commitment. Across the board, whether it’s talking about marriage, a career, or even religious life, different people have different understandings of what it means. Some people truly understand it, while others take the approach, “I’ll try it, and if I don’t like it I can always leave.” I know in my own life, I’ve had the opportunity to try out various roles. Growing up on the family farm, I learned farming and the year after year commitment it takes to survive. I would love to be back on the farm—the farm that was there 25 years ago with all the family. It was easy to make that commitment because I had people who loved and supported me. As I started my studies for the priesthood, at times I wasn’t sure, but little by little I completed the next step of school and formation. Each time I found myself saying, “I can do this,” I was able to take that next step in my journey because I still had people around me who loved and supported me.

Commitment is a scary thing at times. A lifelong commitment is not easy to wrap our minds around. How do we come to better understand what a lifelong commitment means? How do we help others get past the thought, “If I don’t like it, I can always leave”? Hopefully as a person discerns his or her calling in life, he or she will better be able to understand where God is calling and where that is leading the person. Experience life, experience community, experience ministry, and hopefully come to better know one’s self and one’s direction in life.

As we discern our calling in life and experience it, we come to a better understanding of what it is about. But once we make that commitment, do we have others around us to love us and support us? What does it take in each of our lives to remain faithful to our commitments? Who has loved us and supported us in our commitments? If we have ever felt like leaving, who encouraged us to stay? It is one thing to hear God’s voice in our life and respond. It is something else to live it out each and every day. It is a commitment we have made. It is a commitment we invite others to make as well. How better can we invite and support others to make this same commitment?

Fall 2012 Vocation Discernment Retreat Friday, October 26-Sunday, October 28 Gaspar House of Initial Formation Chicago, Illinois

The vocation discernment weekend is for men completing high school, or college age and older, who are discerning a vocation to religious life as a priest or brother. Retreatants will spend the weekend in prayer and conversation with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

For more information, contact:
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Dream Seekers of St. Joseph

Gail Kincaid, Companion

By listening to God's nudges, several of us in St. Joseph, MO have formed an ecumenical program called Dream Seekers of St. Joseph. This is a once a month open door experience, through which adults and children alike may share an evening of food and fun together—and make friends intentionally! The program is faith-based and ecumenical, gathering with dinner at 5:30 p.m. at the First Christian Church on the last Monday of each month.

Dream Seekers of St. Joseph is a group of individuals and families who form mutually respectful and reciprocal relationships. They make friends on purpose.

Dream Seekers is intended to be different in many ways from a social-service provider. One major difference is that we leave our labels at the door and acknowledge that we all have poverty of money, meaning, or friends. We are all often in isolation from most of the other people in our community. Our approach is one of building effective relationships across race, economic, and cultural differences.

Another difference between Dream Seekers and a social service is an emphasis on recognizing that all have gifts and talents to share. We invite reciprocity in all relationships. We are mining for each individual's best contributions to the overall task of reducing poverty, racism, and other problems that divide our community.

This approach is one that employs both the head and the heart. It is driven by good intentions. It gives permission for people to make mistakes. It celebrates what is new and good as we work together to bridge the gaps between ourselves and build communities of caring where all can contribute their best.

When there is no communication, myths and misinformation often fill that void. Because we do not know each other, we buy into stereotypes. We do not acknowledge or understand the struggles of those we do not meet on a regular basis. We hope that every person involved will grow and learn and contribute and receive.

Dream Seekers gatherings start with a simple meal—keeping in mind food for children, as we have many in attendance, and free babysitters to watch them after dinner if the children care to leave the room. A nice program is offered and the activities are all uplifting. We have guides to follow for this part of the evening. We also offer the opportunity to help people with their dream

path at a separate time, if they care to make one. (This program has an outline to help those wanting to make a dream path for their focus and betterment). “Wants, Needs and Offers” is very meaningful for everyone. We ask this at each table and someone shares this information then with the total group. If the individual wants his/her items placed on the “blog,” that can happen too, so people not in attendance may be aware of the request or offer. Many things exchange hands in this fashion. Our blog can be found at



<http://dreamseekersofstjoseph.wordpress.com/>.

Before parting, we always try to “appreciate” verbally the person sitting on our right or left (the person starting this gets to choose which direction it will go). We also

like to share with one another what is “New and Good” in our lives. If there is extra food at the end of the meal, it is packaged and placed on a



community table, along with items brought by some to share with whomever would enjoy taking them.

July 30th was our 6th Dream Seekers meeting. At present we have many young mothers with small children who join us, plus a good mix of people from many denominations and nationalities. We send out an e-mail before the meeting and at that time ask for their RSVP the week before the meeting.

We’ve had a small group gather to plan meals for the year, so now we have a list at each meeting of items needed for the next month’s meal. That way, the people have an opportunity or can reciprocate by bringing an affordable item if it fits their budget. If not, we purchase it. We’re in the process of getting a 501(c)3, but Inter-Serv at present is offering us that opportunity through them. Some people have also slipped us money, so we know our God is watching over us!

At present, we have not yet completed our Board. We’ve used and modified the by-laws taken from the program called Circle of Support out of Canada. Our by-laws state that 1/3 of our Board will be from marginalized groups. I believe we will be able to manage that well.

When visualizing our program focus, our “Wants, Needs, and Offers” were realized when deciding on the name Dream Seekers of St. Joseph. Since our program does have guidance instructions to help people plan their dream path, the idea of “Dream Seekers” was easy to arrive at. Knowing that many of our friends have difficulty reaching their goals, our hope is to model for the marginalized, and to help make their dreams come true by our caring and concern. Being a faith-based organization, knowing that both the Old and New Testaments have a Joseph who understood dreams, and living in St. Joseph, it seemed a perfect title for the group.

Working in the Lord’s vineyard with one another is what it’s all about! We believe the Harvest Master has sent the workers, as so many people are listening to Him! (Lk.10:2).

Our process and learning with one another, in working as an ecumenical group, has been terrific and heart-warming. It’s been truly amazing to observe and be part of this very caring and most generous community. One can KNOW that God is alive and well!

Shared Anniversaries: *Do Not Fear the World*

David Matz, C.P.P.S., LGBT Ministry Director



While recently attending a retreat with people who are gay and lesbian, I became aware that Pope Benedict XVI, in order to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of Vatican II on October 11, 1962, called for a “Year of Faith” to begin on October 11, 2012. Perhaps it was the immediate context in which I found myself, but I found it appropriate that this particular day is also important for those I had gathered with that weekend. Since 1987, the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities have celebrated October 11 as National Coming Out Day. Although, the Vatican Council predates National Coming Out Day by 25 years, both the Church and the LGBT communities of the United States share October 11th as the day of “coming out” into the world. 50 years ago and 25 years ago, both communities chose not to live in fear and mistrust of the world, but to dialogue with it in order to live in truth and authenticity, working with the greater human community to find peace and integrity of life. And both challenge us to keep coming out, so that together we may advance in love as a worldwide human community—not in fear but in faith, hope and love.

On Oct. 11, 1987, half a million people participated in a March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. It was the second such demonstration in our nation’s capital, and it resulted in the founding of a number of LGBT organizations. The momentum continued four months after this extraordinary march as more than 100 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender activists from around the country gathered in Manassas, Virginia, about 25 miles outside Washington, D.C. Recognizing that the LGBT community often reacted defensively to anti-gay actions, they came up with the idea of a national day to celebrate coming out, and chose the anniversary of that second

march on Washington to mark it. Thus, National Coming Out Day was born—and it continues to promote a safe world for LGBT individuals to live truthfully and openly.

Vatican II was also a call for us as Church not to be fearful of the world, but instead bring the message of the love of God in Jesus Christ into the world. In the great constitution, *Gaudeum et Spes* (The Church in the Modern World), the council fathers stated that the joys and the hopes, the grief and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anxieties of the followers of Christ. We as church are connected to each other, yet also connected to the larger human community. And this is what calls us to stand within the world, respecting its history and all the diversity of the human community. The church does not retract in fear or isolate itself from the world, but it situates itself in the world to be messengers of the Gospel of love and compassion through honest dialogue with all people from other Christian traditions, all nations, race and cultures, even those who oppose the church.

The Vatican Council voice is even more so prophetic for us today, especially for its call to honest dialogue. Currently, though, it seems the opposite is in play, as the church often seems reluctant to discuss women’s roles in the church, married clergy, birth control, marriage and the dignity of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. The recently deceased Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini spoke in his last interview: “The church is 200 years behind the times. Why doesn’t it stir? Are we afraid? Is it fear rather than courage? In any event, the faith is the foundation of the church. Faith, trust, courage.... Good people around me make me feel their love. This love is stronger than the sentiment of distrust that I feel every now and then with regard to the church in Europe. Only love defeats exhaustion. God is love. Now I have a question for you: What can you do for the church?” He attended and participated in Vatican Council II.

Fifty years have passed since the Council and 25 years since the first celebration of National Coming Out Day. May we continue to come out to each other in regards to speaking the truth of our lives with authenticity and integrity and create those places where we can love each other and trust each other, so that together we can work together to build a world love and peace.

The New Creation: *A True Community Effort*

Dave Kelly, C.P.P.S., *Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation*



Early on a Saturday in June, community residents gathered to construct a community garden on the property that surrounds Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR) in the area where the church and convent once stood. Neighbors and friends of the Precious Blood Center gathered with shovels and wheel barrows to construct twelve raised growing beds that would inaugurate our garden. While we are still in the beginning stages, we have already enjoyed an abundant crop of such foods as tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, cucumbers. The weeds and broken asphalt have given way to the sight and taste of fresh tomatoes.

On that early June morning, the neighborhood came alive with a common goal: transform an abandoned lot into a community garden. Each with a specific task, we cleaned, constructed, planted, mulched, and watered. Over sixty people participated in the effort, which culminated with a neighborhood barbecue. Little children joined their mothers, teens came with friends, fathers and uncles arrived to clean, build and plant. It was an opportunity for the neighbors to meet each other and to unite for a common cause.

It was quite the sight to see people coming from neighboring houses armed with shovels, wheelbarrows, rakes and brooms—a parade of determined neighbors. I couldn't help but reflect back on how it must have been in the past, people joining forces for the annual planting. In June we prepared and planted; today we reap the rewards of that hard work.

For much of the summer, in another part of the property, a small flower garden has been adding some life—"Sr. Donna's Flower Garden" as it is affectionately called. In addition, about a week or so ago, twenty-five DePaul

University students arrived as part of their urban plunge experience and joined some of the youth from the neighborhood to begin to construct the healing garden. This is an area of the property that we are dedicating to healing and peace. A "circle" with a sitting area and a fire pit in the middle is being constructed with the help of some volunteers and supporters. A Catholic Campaign for Human Development grant enabled us to purchase some flowers and shrubs, all in an effort to create a space that will be welcoming—a place where people can rest and build and renew relationships. There's area for basketball still being planned. We want to create a space where young people can come and play in safety.

As with our murals and restorative art, we seek to create spaces that reflect the values that we carry. The abandoned buildings, neglected and trash-filled lots, and graffiti-laced walls do not reflect our hope for the community. We are working as neighbors and friends to transform our community, in order to reflect who we are becoming. A community garden, with an emphasis on life and growth, beauty and welcome, seems a perfect way to engage people toward this end.

This has been truly a community effort, and so on October 10th we are planning a community barbecue to celebrate. There is still a great deal of work to be done, but for now we need to stop, celebrate, and give thanks.



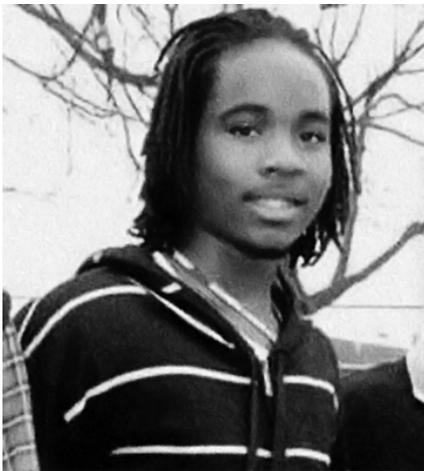
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He's College Material: *Dennis Kinderman, C.P.P.S. Scholarship Awarded*

Dave Kelly, C.P.P.S., Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation



Sometimes you just gotta smile. Sometimes something happens and you have no choice but to say, "Man, that's good." John Jones is a young man who fought many odds: grew up without a father, went to a failing school, fought off the gang influence and the violence that seems to be everywhere. Yet, despite the odds, he's in Northern Illinois University (NIU) in their Chance program. Chance is a program for students who don't quite make it academically, but show every other sign of being successful.

John, better known as BJ, has been a part of most every program we have at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR). He has worked on the murals, participated in the theater project and "starred" in one of the short films that we did. He has received tutoring and even took "drivers training" with Mike Donovan, our resident instructor. Through it all, he kept his desire to go to college. I am sure for many, that might not seem all that newsworthy, but for our community, it's breaking news! A kid going off to college causes a buzz; it causes others to think, "maybe I could go" or "maybe I should set my sights higher." It takes the power out of the thinking, "man, I'll never be able to go to college."

Thanks to the Kansas City Province, Fr. Denny Kinderman is able to award a scholarship (\$1,000.00) to a youth in college. It didn't take us long to determine BJ was the candidate. If we are honest, there weren't that many contenders. I wish that weren't the case, but it is the sad truth.

When the time came for BJ to head for NIU, we did the traditional Wal-Mart run, got his dorm necessities and moved him in. Truthfully, it gave me joy to see a young man do what so many others consider ordinary. He's on the top bunk, but it is college! He met his roommate and all seems to be going smoothly. I know it's early, and grades have yet to come out, but we are proud of him.

There's more money that needs to be found, but the scholarship from the Kansas City Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood is deeply and honestly appreciated. I hope you know how much you have done for kids like BJ. Maybe they don't all go to college, but they are doing things that without your support and generosity, they wouldn't be able to do.

Keep BJ in your prayers. We have two others who went off to college as well, so we're all smiles.