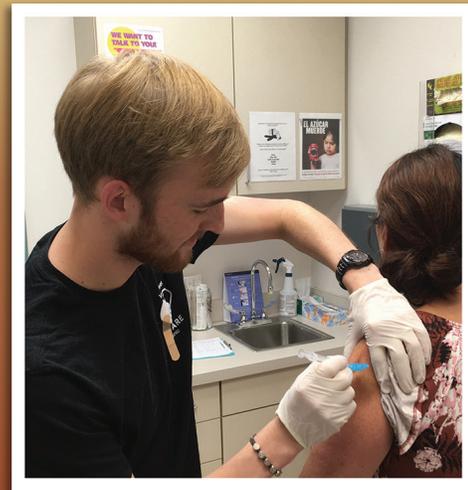


THE New Wine PRESS

Volume 28 No. 4 • December 2019



**Grow in your faith.
Build community.
Walk with those who suffer.
Seek reconciliation.**



Precious Blood Volunteers
preciousbloodvolunteers.org

THE New Wine PRESS

Volume 28 No. 43 • December 2019

Contents

Close Bound Enough	2
by Fr. Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S., Editor	
Cold Pasta	3
by Fr. Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S., Provincial Council	
Do Something	4
by Fr. Joe Uecker, C.P.P.S., Odessa, Texas	
How Dare We?	5
by Gabino Zavala, Justice and Peace Director	
Nothing Can Separate Us From the Love of God (Rm 8:35)	7
by Sr. Diana Rawlings, A.S.C., LGBT Ministry	
What Does Inclusion Look Like?.....	8
by Ruth Mather, Central Missouri Companion	
Is There Any Hope?.....	9
by Sr. Donna Liette, C.P.P.S., PBMR	
Sixteen Months Later	10
by Leah Landry, Precious Blood Volunteers Alumna	
A Way Forward.....	11
by Fr. James G. Betzen, C.P.P.S., Ottumwa, Iowa	
Companion Frances M. Flanagan.....	12
by Maureen Lahiff, Alameda, California Companion	
Teapots and Chalices.....	13
by Vicky Otto, Precious Blood Companions Director	

Front cover image: Precious Blood Volunteer Alumna Leah Landry and Sr. Donna Liette, C.P.P.S. at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation

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 refunding. We accept and encourage unsolicited manuscripts and letters to the editor.

THE New Wine PRESS

Missionaries of the Precious Blood
Kansas City Province

Precious Blood Center
P.O. Box 339
Liberty, MO 64069-0339
816.781.4344
www.preciousbloodkc.org

Editor
Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S.
rbayukcpps@mac.com

Layout & Design
Margaret Haik
communications@preciousbloodkc.org

Printed on recycled paper by
McDonald Business Forms
Overland Park, Kansas



Close Bound Enough

by Fr. Richard Bayuk, C.P.P.S., Editor

*“Well, we’ve been lucky devils both,
And there’s no need of pledge or oath
To bind our lovely friendship fast,
By firmer stuff
Close bound enough.”—Robert Graves, Two Fusiliers*

As I write this, I am preparing to leave in the morning for Washington, D.C. to attend the funeral of a former classmate. In 1961, I began high school at Holy Cross Seminary in La Crosse, Wisconsin, part of a class of 101—the largest in the school’s history (just ten years later in 1971, the seminary closed, as vocations declined rapidly in the years after Vatican II ended). Joe and I did not meet until we began seminary, but we grew up not far from one another. Consequently, his dad and mine would take turns driving us to school and back for school year beginnings and endings and vacations. In 1965, only 27 of us remained to graduate; all the others had discontinued seminary studies and entered upon other life journeys. I was the only one to eventually be ordained.

While some of us maintained occasional contact through the years, most did not. But in 1990, we came together for our 25th anniversary reunion (at the seminary, which was then being used as a parish school and the diocesan chancery). I had been ordained for 15 years by this time, and the others had gone on to a variety of vocations like physicians, teachers, attorneys, government jobs. Joe had gone on to serve in the U.S. Army, marry, and begin raising a family.

The most remarkable thing about the reunion (and we all “remarked” about it) was the experience of coming together as if 25 years had never happened. The bonds we developed during those four years made it possible to just “pick up where we had left off,” enjoying one another’s company and telling “remember when” stories—along with filling in the blanks of those intervening years, of course. I recall being struck by the fact that a large majority of my classmates had chosen vocations of service of some kind or another—the result, I maintain, of the kind of seminary education and formation we received, as strict and structured as it was in those pre-Vatican II days.

Those friendships and bonds have endured with a number of us to this day. In 2015 we came together for our 50th anniversary. The connections were still there, even stronger—no doubt helped by our starting an annual

continued on page 6

Cold Pasta

by Fr. Timothy Armbruster, C.P.P.S., Provincial Council

How much wood is needed to make a good campfire? Or is charcoal better? What is the best way to restore a rusty cast iron skillet? If only I was preparing to go camping and not updating a kitchen.

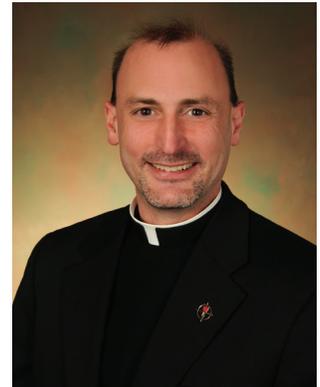
In July, I began my new assignment at St. Mary Parish in Centerville, Iowa, and St. Patrick in Melrose. It has been a wonderful move as I have been warmly welcomed. However, living again in small town USA is a bit different story. Let's just say I'm good with the Amazon app and friends with the UPS drivers. I have at least found a good local grocery store for fresh food.

When I left St. James, I was gifted with funds to purchase new kitchen appliances, for which I am very grateful. However, I never expected it would be so difficult updating the kitchen in order to install the new appliances. The parishioners were a great help unloading the truck and getting rid of the old appliances. But when it came time for the tear out and construction, they weren't so helpful. I can't blame them, as many who have the time are retired and didn't want to tackle such a job. They have been helpful to suggest who to contact. Although we have funds in the budget to make this all happen, trying to get the contractors is difficult. I've reached out but getting a return call is near impossible and very frustrating. I'm very close to digging out my sledgehammer, ordering a construction dumpster, and going to town.

One blessing during all this is that it has forced me to get to know the community, listen to the stories of who is related to whom, and learn who to call. As I shared my wish list with a parishioner, her comment was that the previous pastors all cooked in the kitchen with no problem. And yes, they probably did, and I could also cook on a campfire—but it doesn't mean I'm going to like it. It was an okay kitchen, but it needed to be updated. In addition to the kitchen, I was also given a wish list of things that need to be addressed around the church and in the faith formation building. There are some doors and other things that need attention. So, I have the list, but now where do I begin? Oh, and yes, at the same time, to continue to minister and serve the needs of the parishioners.

This is nothing new. We all juggle many things in our lives. We live during the dust, chaos, and scaffolding. I know the things that I can accomplish, the painting and getting rid of the junk that clutters the storage

continued on page 4



Do Something

by Fr. Joe Uecker, C.P.P.S., Odessa, Texas

These words, “Do Something,” were quoted several times during the recent funeral services for Rep. Elijah Cummings. Realizing that no one can do it all, Rep. Cummings also realized that everyone can do something. Or as a famous charismatic preacher, Fr. John Bertolucci, said: “No one has it all together, but together we have it all.”

This past summer and early fall, I had been reading two books in particular: *Waking Up White* by Debbie Irving and *Racism: America’s Original Sin* by Jim Wallis. Those two books, together with all the news coming out of Washington, got me riled up in a big way. I’m not proud to admit, but I must (because it’s true), that I almost got to the point of hating some of our government leaders. And I knew that I had to do something.

I’m not sure why, but I looked up the website of our GOP state representative and found that he had several issues and he laid out his stance on each of those issues. I copied them and then wrote out my opinions regarding each of those issues and, since he lives in Odessa, sent them to him with an invitation to join me for supper at a mutually convenient time. I figured that was one possible place to start.

Then came the shootings in Odessa on August 31st. The following week there was a special Mass at St. Joseph Parish with the bishop presiding. Our representative was there—he is a member of one of the Odessa parishes—and I spoke with him afterwards. He had not yet received my note, but when I invited him person-to-person for supper, he agreed. We had that meal together at his home rather than mine, and it is a start. I don’t think any minds were changed that evening, but maybe a couple minds were stretched a bit.

I’m a firm believer in dialog over food. Sometimes when I read Luke’s gospel, I think Jesus must have weighed 300 pounds. He always seems to be eating. My experience has been that good things happen when food is involved. I left a copy of Jim Wallis’ latest book, *Christ in Crisis: Why We Need to Reclaim*

Jesus, with our representative and suggested that we get together periodically to discuss it chapter by chapter. Next time at my place. This isn’t going to change the world, but at least we’re doing something. It’s an attempt at reconciliation; it’s Precious Blood living. ✠

Leadership, continued from page 3

room. I started throwing out some old stuff and was told that it is an antique and I shouldn’t get rid of it. Well, it’s junk to me; if you want, you can have it.

During all this mess has been the opportunity to get to know the parishioners. I’m not one to sit around and just talk over a cup of coffee, but I do enjoy working alongside others and sharing stories.

We talk within the community of how we are moving into the New Creation. We know those who are working on the various structures. And we talk about sharing stories and getting to know one another better. Listening to one another’s story takes time. How much time are we willing to put into this endeavor?

I do have access to the kitchen in Marian Hall in the basement of the church. It’s no big deal to walk over there and cook something to eat. One night, I made pasta and walked back to the rectory to eat. By time I got there, my food was cold. Going into this assignment, I knew it would have its challenges. I’ve lived through remodels in the past, so I know it takes time and planning, but I’m so ready for it be finished. But for now, I’m content to be during the chaos as I imagine what the new kitchen will one day look like. As frustrating as it is to live through the process, I know that one day it will all be worth it. The more time I take now in the planning stage, I know how much better the final project will be. For now, I’m having fun sketching out different possibilities and wondering how it will look when finished. ✠

How Dare We?

by Gabino Zavala, Justice and Peace Director

Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg addressed leaders at the United Nations on September 23, 2019, excoriating them for their failure to act on climate change. She told them, “This is all wrong. I shouldn’t be up here; I should be back in school.... Yet you come to young people for hope. How dare you!” She continued, “You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I’m one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!”

“For more than 30 years, the science has been crystal clear. How dare you continue to look away and come here saying that you’re doing enough, when the politics and solutions needed are still nowhere in sight.”

The 16-year-old concluded by saying, “You are killing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say, We will never forgive you.”

Greta Thunberg has eloquently and prophetically expressed a deep concern that many of us have about the crisis of climate change in our world today. And yet on November 4, 2019 the Trump administration formally told the United Nations that the United States is pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement. This makes the United States the only country to bow out of this landmark deal on solving the problem of climate change.

While the United States has pulled out of this deal, more than 11,000 climate scientists from around the world have labeled the climate crisis an emergency. They state that our focus must be on reducing global inequality and protecting ecosystems rather than on the GDP and wealth.

Pope Francis raised the concerns of Greta Thunberg and the climate scientists more than

4 years ago when he promulgated his encyclical *Laudato Si’*. This encyclical has been key to Pope Francis’ call to evangelization. Pope Francis sees the role of the church in the contemporary world not to dominate, but to serve, to reveal a loving Creator who cares deeply about His creation.

As such, *Laudato Si’* was not addressed to the bishops and the faithful in the church as most encyclicals are, or even to all people of goodwill. It is rather addressed to everyone on the planet, to all who share our “common home.” Pope Francis’ efforts have created a partnership between science and religion that has made it possible for a new vision in which the people of the world try to stop the juggernaut of consumption and destruction. This new way of seeing begins with the understanding that something vital has been lost and leads to a conviction that something different must be done to get it back. We are talking about “conversion.”

The hope that Pope Francis expresses in *Laudato Si’* is that all humanity arrives at a greater ecological awareness. Humanity needs to understand that consumerism has failed us. We are all connected to one another, to all of God’s creation. Francis wrote, “What we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society that lives in it.”

We cannot regard nature as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature and we are constantly interacting with it. We are responsible for our actions that destroy or negatively affect this world in which we live. Therefore, if we recognize pollution or the degradation of God’s creation in our world and environment, we need to study the workings of society, its behavior patterns. We need to consider comprehensive solutions and try to understand what both governments and individuals must change to address these questions.

In chapter five of *Laudato Si’* Pope Francis asks: If increased production and consumption lead to

continued on page 6

Laudato Si', continued from page 5

a deterioration in the quality of life of the poor and the degradation of the environment, why call it progress? If a company swells its profits at the expense of future resources or the health of the environment, should we consider this growth a success? “We know how unsustainable is the behavior of those who constantly consume and destroy,” he argues, “while other are not yet able to live in a way worthy of their human dignity.”

The pope contends that a great debt is owed to developing countries, because often their resources are fueling the development of richer countries. As he has said, we are a single “homeland” that calls for “one world with a common plan.”

In the last chapter Pope Francis challenges all of us “that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world.” This statement reminds us that we share one common home and are interconnected with each other and all of creation. We do not stand in isolation.

We need to read and reflect on the words of *Laudato Si'*. Am I doing everything I can to protect God's creation? Am I encouraging my lawmakers to pass laws that protect our environment? As Missionaries of the Precious Blood, our spirituality of the Blood of Christ calls us to recognize that blood is precious. All life is precious. All creation is precious. Our spirituality reminds us that we are connected to one another. Let us do all we can to protect our common home. Let us act.

Greta Thunberg said, “I don't want your hope. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear that I feel every day and then I want you to act as if the house is on fire. Because it is.”

On April 19, 2019 Pope Francis met 16-year-old Greta, the conscience of a new generation demanding from us adults that we act. The pope had one message for her. “Go on. Go on. Continue.” Greta told him. “Thank you for standing up for the climate, for speaking the truth. It means a lot.” ✦

Editor, continued from page 2

Christmas newsletter in 1990, which continues to this day. By the time of this reunion, I was the only attendee who had not retired! Joe had served in Vietnam and was stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon when the city fell to the North Vietnamese in April 1975. He later would serve in Bosnia, among other locations, eventually transitioning to the U.S. Army Reserves, and then until his retirement had a career with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Another classmate who chose a life of service.

I developed other enduring bonds of friendship through seminary following those high school years, but there will always be something special about that four-year crucible of learning, growing, questioning, and formation. It wasn't always easy. The seminary structure was strict and often felt constricting to our teenage sensibilities—and we reacted at times and got in trouble; some didn't leave by their own choice. But we were a part of something important, even though we didn't realize it. And I would like to believe that each of us entered vocations that have made a difference and made a contribution. During this time of leave taking, I recall these words of the poet Mary Oliver from *Song of the Builders*.

On a summer morning
I sat down
on a hillside
to think about God—

a worthy pastime.
Near me, I saw
a single cricket;
it was moving the grains of the hillside

this way and that way.
How great was its energy,
how humble its effort.
Let us hope

it will always be like this,
each of us going on
in our inexplicable ways
building the universe. ✦

Nothing Can Separate Us From the Love of God (Rm 8:35)

by Sr. Diana Rawlings, A.S.C., LGBT Ministry

Approximately 25 Precious Blood people listened to a challenging message from JR Zerkowski, Executive Director of Fortunate Families, on November 9th at Precious Blood Renewal Center in Liberty, Missouri.

The top three take away points from the day include:

1. LGBTQ+ is a pro-life issue. There is already a Knights of Columbus group in Kentucky that is an ally with Fortunate Families.
2. How do we go forward with intention and prudence for outreach to LGBTQ+ in parishes, schools, and universities?
3. Our work is with those on the periphery. Our mission as Christian/Catholic is to accompany those suffering.

Precious Blood Spirituality is pro-life, and it is about accompanying those on the periphery. Our spirituality is about building bridges that lead to reconciliation. The mission statements of Fortunate Families and the Precious Blood LGBT ministry are closely aligned.

Fortunate Families says they support LGBTQ+ “by facilitating respectful conversation and sharing personal stories within dioceses, parishes and communities, especially with bishops, pastors and Church leadership. By accompaniment and bridge building we seek to uphold and safeguard the dignity of LGBTQ+ daughters and sons of God.”

Precious Blood LGBT Ministry focuses on “ensuring a place at the table...creating safe spaces that invite and encourage dialogue...standing in the breach with those most in need to offer hospitality, hope, reconciliation and renewal...”

Br. Daryl Charon, C.P.P.S. opened the day, giving some observations about the United States, after having been in Vietnam for the past three years. For example, it is good to have the freedom to speak without fear of reprisal, but at the same time surprised that LGBT issues are more restricted, narrower now than three years ago, especially since June, which

marked the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. He offered his personal experience with Fr. Brian Massingale who spoke recently at the Religious Formation Conference. Fr. Brian’s message: “I come to this conversation as a Black, gay priest and theologian.

I encourage my LGBT Catholics to remember that you are equally redeemed by Christ and radically loved by God.” Br. Daryl went on to challenge participants to proclaim this same message, because it is the message of our Precious Blood spirituality.

Sr. Diana Rawlings, A.S.C. spoke about the need to be mentors to all LGBT Catholics, and she shared with those in attendance these words from the poet Jan Richardson. “You are part of the path (Spirit) is preparing, this blessing means to be a voice in the wilderness and a welcome for the way.”

JR Zerkowski challenged participants to build a culture of encounter, an encounter with God. He said this echoes the challenge from Pope Francis in his June 2019 message on the World Day of Migrants and Refugees. The pope is trying to inspire all people to build a “culture of encounter” instead of “personal walls.” “The progress of our peoples,” he said, “depends above all on our openness to being touched and moved by those who knock at our door. Again, Precious Blood spirituality demonstrates an openness to being touched and moved by people, especially those on the margin.

Zerkowski noted that our Blessed Lady has become the patroness for Fortunate Families, as illustrated by



continued on page 11

What Does Inclusion Look Like?

by Ruth Mather, *Central Missouri Companion*

I recently attended a day of dialog and reflection at Precious Blood Renewal Center (PBRC), titled “Nothing Can Separate Us From the Love of God.” This program was coordinated and presented by the LGBT Committee of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and facilitated by the Executive Director of Fortunate Families. While the focus of the day was on inclusion of LGBTQ+ in their Catholic faith and the church, inclusion of all the marginalized was incorporated effectively in the discussion.

One take-away of many for me, was the use of a safe symbol in some Catholic schools. It is a button with a rainbow-colored heart that faculty and staff wear (after agreeing to and receiving training). This button signifies to students that the individual is a safe person to discuss sexual orientation issues with, without being chastised, ridiculed, or threatened with damnation of mortal sin. The presenter pointed out that in some communities the rainbow-colored symbol may not be accepted; however, a symbol that includes all types of discrimination might be.

The term “safe spaces” is not new to us. The Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR) in Chicago and the PBRC in Liberty are known “safe spaces” within our community. PBMR and PBMR provides safe environments for all people and are wonderful assets to their respective localities. There are designated “safe spaces” on college and university campuses, mainly as platforms for the LGBTQ+ movement.

The “safe space” concept has been met with both positive and negative responses, particularly within a group format. Many of the marginalized fear sharing their stories in a group environment, especially the young (preteens, teens, young adults) who are dealing with complicated life situations. Hopefully we can all remember and relate to how dramatic everyday life was in school. Add to that issues of discrimination; bullying; physical/verbal/psychological abuse; and fear and confusion based on race, religious belief, culture, immigration status, or sexual orientation; and just being perceived and/or treated as different. No

wonder suicide and the abandoning of their faith is at such high levels among young people.

Let’s not forget that “inclusion” means *all*, including the elderly, the poor, those who lack the food, medicine, shelter, dignity, and sense of purpose as fellow human beings in this world we share. It is that inclusion that drew me to the Precious Blood community. Inclusion is a strong part of the spirituality that we share. The concept of all individuals who feel they are outcast for any reason, knowing there is someone who will listen to their story and let them know they are not broken or evil, that they are still very much loved by God, has grabbed me. The circle within our Precious Blood symbol is meant to be inclusive and never-ending. It represents the covenant that holds us together. While it includes our “bond of charity,” it can also include our intention to be inclusive in our ministries and in our speech with one another.

Several groups have specific symbols that signify “safe space” and/or support: the rainbow heart, CASA’s safe place for the battered/abused, pink ribbon for breast cancer, MeToo logo for sexual abuse, Black Lives Matter for racial discrimination, and the list goes on. What about those on the margins that have no movement, no symbol? Or those that are affected by more than one area of discrimination?

What would a safe symbol look like that tells any and everyone we are here for you? That there is someone you can talk to and share your stories with, without fear of judgement or any form of retaliation? In an environment they are comfortable with discussing a very personal, complicated, and/or scary subject; either with one person or in a support group? In considering a safe symbol that represents true inclusion, we should first ask, do we fully understand what inclusion means? It’s not just the current subjects in the news or in our neighborhood, it’s the forgotten and unpopular as well. Victims of discrimination and abuse, LGBTQ+, immigrants, homeless, mentally ill, handicapped, poor, sick, addicts, and those that are just labeled “different.”

continued on page 13

Is There Any Hope?

by Sr. Donna Liette, C.P.P.S., PBMR

The other day, after the murder of two of our youth, the realization that a dedicated PBMR donor is critically ill with brain cancer, several center break-ins, and violent outbursts among participants, I asked Fr. Dave Kelly, “Is there any hope?” In his gentle way, he reminded me of our mission of being agents of hospitality, hope, and healing and allowing the chaos of our ministry to transform us.

A few hours later we had our weekly staff meeting and we read the passage about the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. The people had gathered to hear and see Jesus, but also to be healed. Many were healed, but the even greater miracle was within the crowd. As the food was shared and hospitality offered, there was abundance and the people began to see each other differently. A community of trust, of love and *hope* began to emerge.

Then Fr. Kelly asked us, “Where have you seen hope in this PBMR community?” The stories we told brought tears to our eyes and bursts of laughter—had we only thought to record those stories.

Angelica told the joy of helping one of our participants move into his own place with his mother. He had worked hard in the Woodshop to earn the money, and there they stood, proud in their new home with furniture and all. HOPES were fulfilled.

Fred told of talking to the mother of one of his participants, one of our youngest. The mother is so happy about the change in her son; she sees the hopes she had for her son coming alive at home.

Dave told of one of our youth, Joe, presently incarcerated, calling because he was feeling down. After talking to a few staff as the phone was passed around, he said, “I feel so much better.” Connection made—*hope*.

Fr. Denny shared the joy and HOPE he experiences when guys from years past come back and tell how their lives have changed—jobs and housing found, the positive lifestyles—and they are so deeply grateful for their time at PBMR.



Artrice, Sr. Janet, and I work with the mothers and see their joy as they grow in their healing, in their desire to further their education and to grow spiritually.

Many stories were told of the HOPE that our “Hospitality House” for men returning from prison after 20+ years has brought, not only to the three men now living there but to all of us.

Hector had a great hope story. He described the evening a pottery class joined the PBMR screen printing business in the Mother Brunner basement, a tight space already shared with laundry facilities. Then one of Hector’s PBMR youth got a little agitated with the intrusion of these “younger” boys. The story ends with this agitated youth showing a younger potter the skill he has learned. Well now, agitation turns to pride and he was all in and happy to be sharing space, talent, and “big brother” stuff! *Hope*.

There were many more stories. Some you can read in our monthly e-newsletter along with wonderful photos of HOPE and healing.

Today, as I prayed with the Jesuit and companion Martyrs of El Salvador, there was a reading from Jon Sobrino. (*Companions of Jesus: The Jesuit Martyrs of El Salvador*). He writes, “It is not easy to keep on hoping... it seems that everything is against HOPE...but together with the great love Jesus showed and these martyrs had, there are the faces of the poor, in which God is hidden but nevertheless present, asking us to keep going, a request we cannot ignore.”

So, during this coming season of Advent—this season of HOPE and waiting—let us look for hope, for love, and create in our own homes, workplaces, and churches a spirit of hope and love. Where there is great love, there is *hope*. It is the call of the blood of Christ. ✠

Sixteen Months Later

by Leah Landry, *Precious Blood Volunteers Alumna*

My life is dramatically different now than when I was a Precious Blood volunteer. I moved from my hometown of Chicago to Washington, D.C. I have two roommates who are in their 20s, instead of three Precious Blood sisters who were...not. I am saving money instead of trying (and failing) to live on a stipend. And I work at Catholic Charities as a Volunteer Coordinator, a role that requires many hours behind a computer, instead of the days at PBMR running from one person (and crisis) to the next.

Despite these dramatic differences, I think about my year as a Precious Blood Volunteer at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation every day. Maybe it's because I have only been gone for 16 months, but I have a feeling that my volunteer year will continue to influence the life I create for myself. I can already see its effect on my life in D.C.

Potentially the most annoying impact of my volunteer year is that I overthink everything. I can't do simple things without analyzing the social justice implications of the decision. For example, when I walk down the streets of the Georgetown neighborhood, I don't just enjoy the adorable row houses and beautiful gardens. No, instead the beauty of the neighborhood makes me think about the racist and classist tactics that have gentrified and insulated the neighborhood and made it unaffordable for middle- and low-income folks. Precious Blood Volunteers and PBMR woke me up to the injustices that I had been complicit in for 23 years. Now, I see these everywhere I go.

My experiences as a Precious Blood Volunteer have also made me more intentional about being a part of a community. Knowing so many folks in the Back of the Yards neighborhood during my volunteer year and seeing them when I went to the grocery store or drove down the block was a wonderful feeling. I've been working to create that here, but with mixed results. I started by aggressively saying hi to people in the elevator in my building, even when they awkwardly smiled and looked down at their phones—East Coast people are weird—and trying to make friends with the cashiers at the grocery store. When those tactics didn't



Leah Landry at pbmr

work, my roommates and I started a book club to get to know more of our neighbors, and now we have seven members! My friend and I are determined to keep open the new local bookstore by giving everyone we know books for Christmas. I've also joined the Silver Spring Candid Conversations group to talk about race and racism with other community members. My experiences as a volunteer have made it impossible to see myself as just an individual; I am constantly trying to build more community around me because I realize that's where I am happiest.

Another impactful change from my volunteer year that I have brought with me to my life in D.C. is my new understanding of racism and white supremacy and the role I play in that system. I learned about this and wrote about as a Precious Blood Volunteer, and I knew I needed to try to continue to learn about it, even as I moved away. I joined Showing Up for Racial Justice DC (SURJ), a group of predominately white people who are organizing for anti-racist communities by educating other white people and supporting people of color-led movements like Black Lives Matter. SURJ continues to push me to be more anti-racist and to more fully live out my values. I've also been a part of a group at work that is pushing for an equity and inclusion initiative to make sure all people's voices are heard, respected, and valued in our workplace, particularly those that have been historically marginalized. This new lens spurred me to go to the Texas-Mexico border in June and support the migrant families that were being released from immigration prisons to the Catholic Charities of Laredo Shelter. Racism is not something I can witness or hear about and just feel bad

continued on page 11

A Way Forward

by Fr. James G. Betzen, C.P.P.S., Ottumwa, Iowa

As the immigration debate continues, life goes on for parishioners at St. Mary of the Visitation Parish in Ottumwa, Iowa. Many immigrants came from Mexico and Central America around the turn of the century to better the lives for themselves and their children. Many came to work in meat packing plants in the United States because these low skill jobs were available to them. Many immigrants came to the United States with children and have had more children since they have come. Most immigrants seek a life with more possibilities for advancement and a life without violence and corruption. These immigrants seek an earned path to citizenship, but such a path is difficult and lengthy. And our parishioners who continue to work in the meat packing plants waiting for legislation to grant them an earned path to citizenship.

Instead, these immigrants must live with false names and false identification to protect themselves from being deported. ICE raids send terror into communities where immigrants live. In May of 2018, there was an ICE raid about an hour east of Ottumwa. The next few days, many immigrants were afraid to go to work or take their children to school. These immigrants did nothing wrong, but do not have the proper documents. When one of the two working adults is deported, the family struggles financially to survive. I see many at our parish office door asking for assistance.

Youth brought here as children from Mexico and Central America also wait, so that they can attend state universities and later be able to work. A year ago last spring, the high school teachers in Ottumwa organized a rally for their DACA students. Several of the high school students shared their frustration and fears about not having citizenship. Many fear that they will be deported to a country of origin that simply is foreign to them. These youth have younger siblings born here that are citizens.

With the frustration and fear that continues in this immigration debate, and lacking any progress to reform the immigration process, immigrant families in our parish continue to work long hours at the meat packing plants or other low paying jobs. Children

continue to attend school and religious education classes. Spanish Mass, sacraments, Quinceaneras, weddings, Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrations, and posadas are celebrated in our parish. They continue to attend classes to learn English, attend classes for ministry formation, and hold charismatic prayer meetings and healing retreats.

There are millions of immigrants in the United States Catholic Church and in our communities across the nation contributing to our economy. How long will it be until we allow them to become citizens of our country? If you would like to help the effort to reform the immigration process in our country, please join the immigration discussion group of the New Creation commission. ✚

Sixteen Months Later, continued from page 10
about anymore. I saw the effects of this widespread, insidious system on the young women I worked with and befriended in Chicago and I feel compelled to work with others to dismantle that system.

My life looks different than it did 16 months ago. I have a new home, a new city, a new community, and a new job. But every part of my life has been and will continue to be shaped by the people, experiences, and lessons I had as a Precious Blood Volunteer. And while it might be less annoying to live in ignorant bliss, I am grateful that my experiences in Chicago are sticking with me and helping me live a life that is more authentically in line with who I want to be. ✚

LGBT, continued from page 8
the two prayer cards designed for them. Our Lady of Guadalupe claimed she is the mother of all people, thus being the mother of fortunate families. She also has no face, because every child is reflected in the face of their mother. The other card shows Mary holding her child wrapped in a cloak representing Pride colors. And the prayer: "Wrap us in the mantle of your love and maternal pride, and lead us to Jesus." May this be true in our continued outreach to people on the margins. ✚

Companion Frances M. Flanagan

by Maureen Lahiff, Alameda, California Companion

"May you live to be 100!" is a common toast. Companion Frances Flanagan did live to be 100 and lived her long life fully.

Born near St. Joseph, Missouri in 1915, her life was dedicated to education. After teaching elementary school in St. Joseph, she earned an M.A. and a Ph.D. in English, later serving as chair of the English department at Missouri Western State University.

Francis was a life-long member of St. Francis Xavier parish in St. Joseph. The parish, named for the patron of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, has been served by Missionaries since its founding in 1890. Frances was already retired from university teaching, but active in the parish and her community when she was invited to become a Companion in 1991.

Frances writes movingly about her long journey to Precious Blood spirituality in a 2003 article in the *Wine Cellar*. From childhood on, she had a negative attitude about blood and did not want to know anything about its role in human life. She found devotion to the Sacred Heart appealing and delightful. Frances worried that becoming a Companion would be "casting the Sacred Heart aside." At the same time, she was "sure that becoming a Companion would lead to my spiritual growth."

She writes in her 2003 *Wine Cellar* piece that "our first missionary call comes in baptism," and that being a Companion requires participating in the missionary endeavors of the community. A later *Wine Cellar* piece in 2014, reflects Frances's growth. She writes, "I join the community in concern for the poor, in ecumenical outreach, and in responding to the cry of the blood...I must honor the blood of life and humankind. I deplore euthanasia, I deplore capital punishment. I also deplore what amounts to capital punishment in a land in which it is sanctioned by the government: the willful taking of the life of an unborn child."

Frances's cover piece for the March 2011 issue of the *New Wine Press*, the Kansas City Province's monthly magazine, is entitled "The Heart of Community."

Frances calls us to give equal attention to this third pillar of our Precious Blood life, drawing on her study of St. Gaspar's writings. She says that "The love Gaspar desires for his followers was



Frances Flanagan

not the sentimental variety that fires St. Valentine's Day; rather, it was an everyday love, blessed with such gifts as forbearance, self-sacrifice, humility, hospitality, and a sense of humor. Gaspar saw this love as a necessity, not only in the lifelong formation of Precious Blood members, but also as an empowerment in their missionary endeavors. If the missionaries made their great love visible, as the new Christians did in the early days of the Church, the men and women who saw them would know that God is good."

Frances credits Father James Urbanic, C.P.P.S., who served as pastor at St. Francis Xavier, with her understanding that Precious Blood incorporated members and Companions are a family. She addresses Companions with several suggestions of ways "to grow in our sense of and participation in community."

Through her work with Father Dien Truong, C.P.P.S., who served at St. Francis Xavier in the summer of 1996 as a deacon, Frances came to a deeper experience of Precious Blood family. Deacon Dien sought to improve his conversational and written English and to become a more effective preacher. Frances says that she found herself referring to our provincial rather than your provincial.

Although Frances lived and worked close to her birthplace throughout her life, she was a world traveler. On her journeys she photographed both landscapes

continued on page 13

Teapots and Chalices

by Vicky Otto, *Precious Blood Companions* Director

My mother had the firm belief throughout her life that if you had a problem to solve or needed advice about something, the best way to do this was to have a cup of tea. She believed that taking a breath while the tea was brewing allowed a person the chance to consider new ideas or possibilities. This memory came back to me recently when I saw a documentary about the rituals that the Chinese have for tea. I was especially drawn to the story of the Yixing teapots. Because of the unique clay that is used to make these pots, a natural oil retains the flavor of the tea as it is brewed. Consequently, over time the teapot gives back to the owner in that it enhances the taste of the tea.

As I reflected upon the story of these teapots, it echoed similar messages that I heard at the General Assembly and the recent Companion retreats. During the General Assembly, Fr. Ben Berinti led the group in a retreat using the image of the living chalice. What struck me was that to be a living chalice means that one must be used, not be a ceremonial piece that is set on a shelf for admiration. Like the teapot that gets better every time it is used, as living chalices we are called again and again to be filled with God's love and mercy and to pour it forth through service to others.

During our Companion retreat in Ohio, Fr. Tim McFarland reminded us that Vatican II affirmed and recognized the roles and responsibilities of the laity in the Church. In essence, the laity has a distinctive role in the Church—to be honored and understood not as an appendage of the clergy, but in its unique fashion. He reminded the group that St. Paul wrote to the Colossians, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." By the end of the retreat, Companions had a renewed sense of the role of the laity in the Church and their part in it. They were ready to recommit themselves to be the living chalices that Fr. Ben spoke about during the General Assembly in Poland.

It is always wonderful to be with the Companions during the retreats, especially as the community continues its journey into the New Creation. Like

most retreats, when the experience is positive there is a heightened sense of energy and enthusiasm for the future. Unfortunately, these high points often lessen when one must come back to the realities of life. One of the challenges of being a living chalice is that we are not in control of the entire situation. We can't control the future, we can't control what we are given to pour out, and we can't control the moments when we are called to stand in service to others.

The challenge that both Companions and members face as we continue our journey into the New Creation is to be open to losing control. As *Gather Send* states, Companions are called to step out. Each of us is called to step out again and again in service as we fulfill our destiny to be living chalices. In responding to the unique ministerial call that we each were given; we have accepted our responsibility of service. We have said yes to standing with our those in need, those standing on the margins, those in search of reconciliation. This action is not a one-time activity; we are called to step out again and again in service to the other. Like the teapot that offers the user a better tasting tea through continuous use, allowing ourselves to be living chalices through services creates a better world, a glimpse of the kingdom of God. ✠

Inclusion, continued from page 8

What symbol could we wear/display that lets everyone know we support them and they are still children of God? That we were all created by the same God? That we all have a right to live in this world and share in the safety and respect of human dignity? I believe this is a question not only worth asking but seeking to answer. ✠

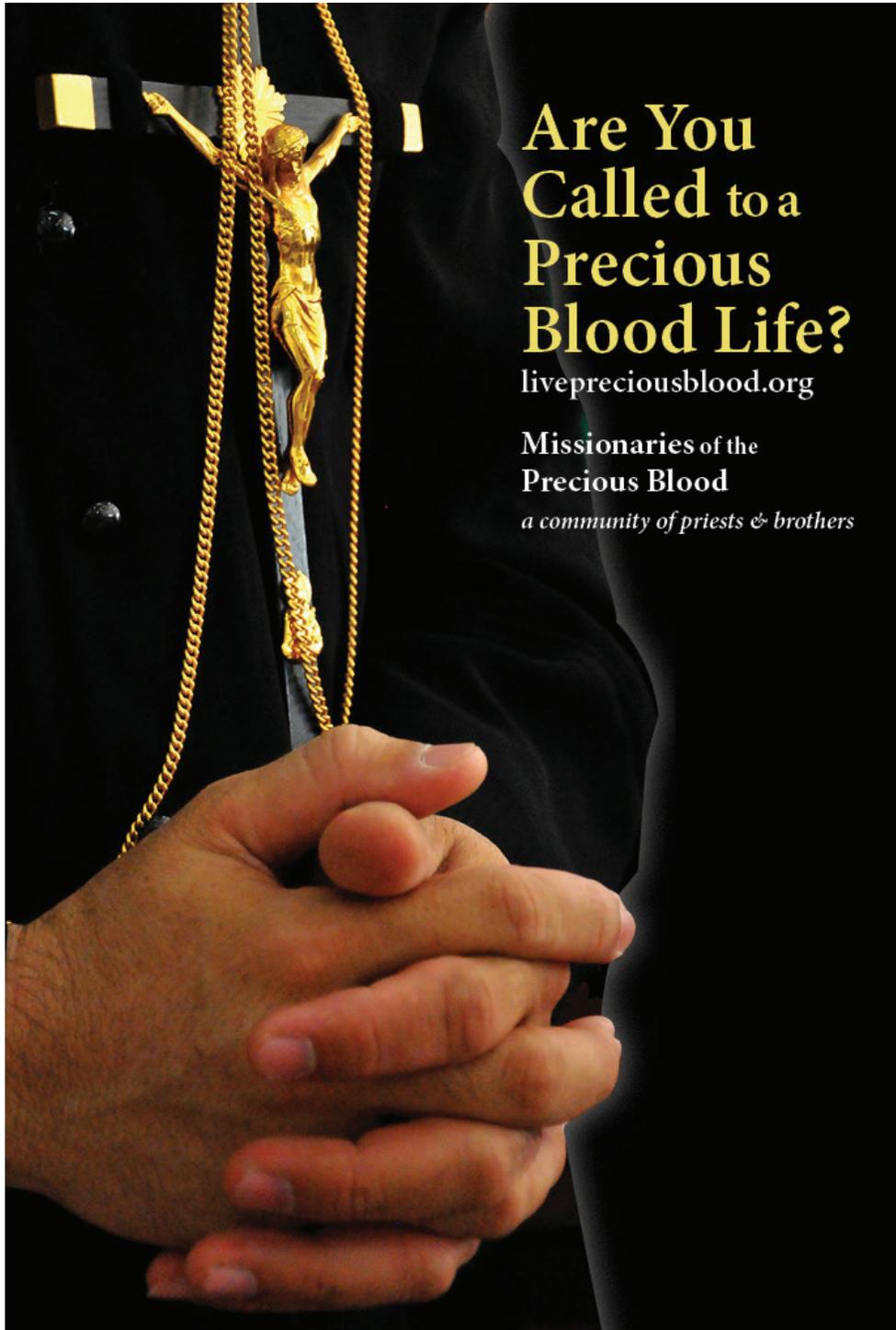
Frances Flanagan, continued from page 12

and people. Her book *Art Along the Way* captures the world as Frances saw it, with photos and commentary.

Frances says in her 2011 piece that "I have become a 'new creation,' made somewhat according to the specifications of St. Gaspar." With her prayers and example, so may we all. ✠

THE **New Wine** PRESS
Precious Blood Center
P.O. Box 339
Liberty MO 64069-0339

Change Service Requested



Are You Called to a Precious Blood Life?

livepreciousblood.org

Missionaries of the
Precious Blood

a community of priests & brothers



vocation@cpps-preciousblood.org
vocations@preciousbloodkc.org

