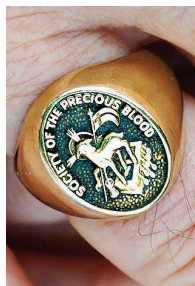


SUMMER 2019

CPPS TODAY OUTREACH

In the wake of brutal
storms, North Dayton
parishes lend a hand.

In this issue of *C.PP.S. Today*



**C.PP.S. ring of
Fr. Jim Seibert**

Page 2: We Journey Together

Some journeys are expected, others aren't. But wherever we travel, God is with us. *Between the Lines* by Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S., provincial director of the Cincinnati Province.

Page 3: Outreach

Several tornadoes struck Dayton on Memorial Day, destroying many homes and businesses. C.PP.S. parishes jumped right in with the recovery effort in their neighborhoods.

Page 10: "I Think God May Be Calling Me"

Summer mission trips may bring about an awareness of God's call. Here's how to help. *Call and Answer* by Fr. Steve Dos Santos, C.PP.S., vocation director.

Page 11: A New Creation

C.PP.S. priests and brothers in the Cincinnati and Kansas City Provinces advance a proposal to become one U.S. province.

Page 15: Chapter and Verse

News about C.PP.S. people and places.

Page 17: Higher Time, God's Time

There may be a way to escape the calendar after all. *At Our House* by Jean Giesige, editor of *C.PP.S. Today*.



**2019 Provincial
Assembly**

C.PP.S. is an abbreviation of the Latin name of the Congregation, Congregatio Pretiosissimi Sanguinis, Congregation of the Most Precious Blood.

SUMMER 2019

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We Journey Together

One of my favorite movie genres is the Western. Movies with the likes of John Wayne and Gary Cooper have always caught my attention. There are many reasons why I like Westerns. Part of it is the whole good-guys-versus-bad-guys dynamic. Part of it is the gunfights and horse chases. And part of it is the beautiful scenery. As a little boy I'd imagine myself on a horse, pushing the cattle herd forward down the trail. It's a long journey with twists and turns, unexpected pitfalls, and serendipitous delights along the way. Much like our lives.

In this issue of *C.P.P.S. Today*, there are stories highlighting two very different journeys. One journey was totally unexpected and the other was years in the making. Though the journeys are unique, they share an end goal. The Memorial Day tornadoes that devastated whole sections of the Dayton area sprung up with a vengeance in the night. So many people's lives were affected. Looking at homes missing roofs and walls, seeing the belongings that were scattered over a ten-mile area, one could not help but come close to despair. In the midst of all that suffering, the local community came together. Everyone recognizes that rebuilding homes and lives will be a difficult journey. And like those cattle drives in the Westerns, there will be pitfalls along the way. But as we journey together, new life will come.

The tornadoes precipitated an unexpected journey for many people. The journey in the second article has been years in the making. In some respects, this journey began in the early 1970s when the three provinces of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in the United States began to collaborate in the formation of their candidates. Those first steps on the road together have led to increased and deeper collaboration in ministry and Community life.

A few years ago the moderator general and general council asked the worldwide Congregation to begin to consider how we can ensure our vitality and viability. The shared journey through decades of collaboration in formation, the Companions movement, vocation ministry, the Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, and in numerous other ministries, led the two provinces to undertake a new creation as one province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in the United States. Though the journey has been long in the making, we have not yet reached our destination. Much work lies ahead of us. The Missionaries voted overwhelmingly that we can better serve God and the Church together. The journey continues.

*Between
the Lines*
by Fr. Jeffrey
Kirch, C.P.P.S.





OUTREACH

Reaching out to the poor, suffering, sick and lonely is part of everyday life at the Catholic Community of Northwest Dayton. But a series of storms on Memorial Day led parishioners to immediate action.

On Sunday, May 26, the people of the Catholic Community of Northwest Dayton—and maybe even all of Dayton—were breathing a sigh of relief. The Ku Klux Klan had come to town for a rally on May 25, and the city had braced itself for violence. Instead, the people of Dayton had come together in a show of unity against the Klan's message of hate. Their shared values crossed neighborhood lines and knit the city together.

Then a storm came and blew it all apart.

On the night of Memorial Day, May 27, Dayton was hit by 15 tornadoes that tore through the city, uprooting a forest's worth of trees, obliterating homes and businesses, destroying power lines and infrastructure. Among the neighborhoods that were worst hit were Trotwood, Brookville and Shiloh on Dayton's Northwest side, exactly where the three parishes of the Catholic Community of Northwest Dayton are located.

Two of the three parishes—Precious Blood and St. Rita—were hard hit. High winds damaged the roofs of three buildings at Precious Blood, on Salem Avenue. At St. Rita, on N. Main Street, part of the church's roof was blown off and many trees fell, including one that crushed the church sign, with its message celebrating that the

parish was debt-free. A third parish in the group, St. Paul, just a 10-minute drive from St. Rita, escaped without damage.

On the morning of May 28, the pastor, Fr. Jim Seibert, C.P.P.S., woke up in his house across the street from St. Paul. He stretched and got ready for the day. He'd gone to bed before the storms hit around 10:40 p.m. on Monday and didn't listen to the news when he woke up on Tuesday, so like a lot of people who lived in neighborhoods that were spared, he was unaware of the storms' severity. Fr. Seibert backed his car out of the drive and started for St. Rita, where he was to preside at morning Mass. He traveled just a few blocks before he realized that much of that part of town had been turned upside down.

Looked Like A War Zone

Fr. Seibert, who grew up on the north side of Dayton, tried every shortcut he knew to get to St. Rita but was turned back time and again by closed streets. Finally, he said, "I realized I'd get there quicker by walking," so he parked the car and went on foot. What he saw was awesome, as in astounding, awful, staggering.

"It looked like a war zone," he said. Houses were flattened; others were exposed to the elements with their roofs or walls blown away.

“When you see those big trees uprooted like somebody picked them up and threw them down, you could see the power of the storm,” he said.

He finally did reach St. Rita and saw the devastation there—plus the one person who’d shown up for morning Mass despite the storm.

Throughout the affected neighborhoods, people were waking up to the reality of the storm. Matt Ruttle, the pastoral associate at St. Rita, saw it on his block. Though his home was spared, many others sustained heavy damage.

“Looking up and down our road, you could see the devastation,” he said. “People were wandering around with that deer-in-the-headlights look, ‘what do we do now?’ That’s when the neighbors came out and started helping, bringing out chainsaws to clear a path, bringing food to share with others. No one was waiting on local officials. People were going door to door, asking their neighbors, ‘Are you all right?’”

Among the people of the Catholic Community of Northwest Dayton, relief efforts started almost immediately, as if springing up from the well-watered ground. “It was not on an institutional level for us. It was individuals who stepped up,” said Curtis Kneblick,

the social justice director for the three parishes. “On an institutional level, none of us knew what to do. We didn’t have a plan for something like this. Individuals just started doing things.”

Anyone Who Could Help

At Precious Blood, a plea went out for volunteers, and the response was immediate. “People with chainsaws, people with trucks, anyone who could help. It was incredible to see so many people deciding they were going to do something, and just helping,” Curtis said. “There were so many.”

The parish set up an emergency distribution center at Precious Blood Church in the parish activity center. Volunteers collected donations of food, water, clothes, toiletries, diapers and cleaning supplies for storm victims. “It was like we had a revolving door—stuff would come in, and stuff would go out,” Curtis said. “It was like that for four days, and all that time, we were meeting people who had lived through the storm, hearing their stories. That was really powerful too.”

As volunteers sorted the donated goods, no one attempted to sort the people, said Debi Hamby, an administrative assistant at St. Rita. “Nobody paid any attention to race, politics



Fr. Jim Seibert, left, pastor, and Fr. Tim Knepper, parochial vicar, at St. Paul Church.

or religion. Nobody asked about any of that," she said. "It was just people coming forward to say, 'You need help, what do you want me to do?'"

As initial needs were met, the ad hoc storm relief centers that had sprung up became less critical. Needs didn't go away, but could be met by established providers, like the parishes' very active St. Vincent de Paul Society. In the days after the storm, St. Vincent de Paul went to the local Meijer to ask if it might match the donations that were pouring in. Meijer said yes, and as a result, St. Vincent de Paul had 400 gift cards worth \$25 each to hand out.

"People were crying with gratitude when we handed them

the gift cards," said Beth Crouse, an administrative assistant at St. Paul who is also an active volunteer with St. Vincent de Paul. "I never experienced anything like it."

Other cash donations were set aside to help with another critical need: housing. People displaced by the storm needed help with deposits and rent so they could move to a new place along with whatever they had been able to salvage from the storm. "We've also been doing some financial counseling, trying to help people not to go in the hole when they're moving to a new place," Crouse said.

Getting people to talk and maybe to laugh a little has been an important part of recovery

from the storm. One Sunday after the tornadoes, the parochial vicar, Fr. Tim Knepper, C.P.P.S., told the congregation in his homily that disasters seem to follow him around. "I was at Sts. Peter and Paul (in Ottawa, Ohio), when the big flood hit in 2007, and now I'm here and there was a tornado. People asked me later, 'When are you leaving?'"

Unbelievable Generosity

Long before the storms hit, the parishes placed a priority on social justice and outreach. Supporting those in need is nothing new. "The generosity here is unbelievable," said Fr. Seibert. "All three parishes have a real concern for serving the poor, and had that long before I came here."

When Fr. Seibert was appointed pastor in 2012, the parishes were united into one region. He helped them combine some of the outreach efforts, strong but separate at each parish, into one united front. They now enthusiastically fund one chapter of St. Vincent de Paul, which operates a foodbank and a thrift store.

In the seven years they have been one Catholic community, many such outreach efforts have been strengthened. Mother Brunner School at Precious Blood Parish offers a Catholic education to children in grades preschool

through eight. Eighty percent of the students are from families at or below the poverty level, Fr. Seibert said. Nearly all go on to attend one of Dayton's Catholic high schools.

"They come here to get a Catholic Christian education. They're taught values, respect and discipline as well as all the usual school subjects," Fr. Seibert said. "I believe in Catholic education. It's a struggle—but we're doing it and I think that it's adding a lot to the local community."

The parishes also offer outreach to senior citizens in North Dayton, with a free community meal and speakers twice a month; bereavement ministry to grieving families; and recently trained a new generation of volunteers through its Stephen Ministry, in which volunteers accompany people through a period of crisis, sickness or loss. Parish volunteers help out at the Brunner Literacy Center, which is administered by the Sisters of the Precious Blood, their neighbors in Trotwood.

Coming together as three parishes to form one faith community wasn't always easy. There were economic and social challenges in some of the neighborhoods but not others; plus some people at the parishes wanted their parish life to continue in the same way it



After the Memorial Day tornadoes, the already-vital St. Vincent de Paul Chapter in Northwest Dayton increased its outreach. (Volunteer Beth Crouse is at left.)

always had. But little by little, day by day, they were united. “People have to learn to trust you. They have to know that you are not putting on any kind of show, that this is who you are and what you believe. And I think people respond to that,” said Fr. Seibert.

A Year of Growth

Despite the turmoil, this has been a year of growth for the parishes, Fr. Seibert said. Their response to the looming Klan rally back in early May was to schedule a public presentation by a University of Dayton professor who spoke about the history of the Klan and white supremacists in the city and the state. It was

a public meeting and a public stance, with all the risks that entails, Fr. Seibert said.

“But we wanted people to get the message that all people deserve our respect,” he said. “It would have been a lot easier to say, ‘We’re not going to touch this.’ We were opening our doors to people who might not think like we do, and there’s a risk involved with that. But I just think you can’t always play it safe.”

The presentation was attended by nearly 200 people, and all went well. The Klan came to town that weekend, and left without the violence that had been sparked in 2017 in Charlottesville, NC. The people had united against them, and

that was seen as a real blessing.

Then the tornadoes came. And through the storm, the blessings rose up again. “In the midst of this disaster, people were just human. People treated each other with dignity. Why does it take a disaster to do that?” asked Debi Hamby of St. Rita. “There was no judgment—everybody wanted to help. And they didn’t care who they helped. That’s something that impressed me a lot—I wish we could be like that all the time.”

To be like that all the time: that’s the goal of the Catholic Communities of Northwest Dayton. Curtis Knebllick said that the tornado brought a sense of urgency to communities where people already help people; it was the story of the Good Samaritan lived out in real time.

And that taught him something. “I learned that it’s important to show up,” he said.



“I learned that it’s important to show up. You may not know what to do, you might feel you have very little to offer, but showing up, showing you care, is a revelation of God’s presence.”

— Curtis Knebllick, shown distributing food with other volunteers in the Mother Brunner School gym after the disaster.

“You may not know what to do, you might feel you have very little to offer, but showing up, showing you care, is a revelation of God’s presence. In all your weakness and inadequacy, you let people know they aren’t alone,” he said.

In other words, you can’t always play it safe.



“I Think God May Be Calling Me”

Summer is a time when many of our youth go away and have Mountaintop experiences. Maybe they took part in a mission trip, or attended a youth conference or summer camp with a focus on the faith. It is fairly common for a young man or woman to come home from something like that with a new openness to the possibility of a priestly or religious vocation, perhaps even feeling for the first time a call. The question for us who encounter them in the days and weeks afterward is how to nurture it without overwhelming them. It's important to nurture the experience without letting it become the only thing you talk about.

Ask them to tell you the story. What happened? Where were they? How did the Lord touch their heart? What is it that they feel the Lord might be calling them to? All these questions are geared toward simply getting them to share their story, or perhaps even helping them to understand better their own experience. There is nothing final here. There is no judgment to be made about the authenticity of their call; that's a task for later. Right now we simply want to help them connect with the experience, and get comfortable sharing it.

It's also important to ask them how they feel about this new sense of a possible call. They might be excited, but they might also be terrified. Heck, they might be both! Acknowledge their feeling(s), and let them know that whatever they are feeling is normal. Encourage them to go deeper than just the feeling itself. What excites them about the idea? Why are they scared?

The next step is a little more difficult. Ask them how you can help them going forward. Let them lead you in helping them. Obviously, offer to pray for them, but beyond that, what would they find helpful? Maybe they need help finding a place to volunteer (to keep the experience of the mission trip alive). Maybe they want to sit down with Father to talk about it, but are too nervous to reach out. If you are not their parent, be sure to encourage them to share this story with their parents.

Some of these young men and women are actually being called to the priesthood and/or religious life. Many are simply being called into a deeper relationship with Jesus. At this moment, it isn't our job to decide which it is. Our job is to simply listen, help and encourage. The Holy Spirit will do the rest. Because either way, it is a good thing.

Call and Answer
by Fr. Steve Dos
Santos, C.P.P.S.



Missionaries in the Kansas City and Cincinnati Provinces vote to become **A New Creation**

At their provincial Assembly on May 21, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood of the Cincinnati Province voted to affirm the new creation process, which could lead to a single C.P.P.S. province in the U.S.

The vote in favor of moving forward with the new creation was 82–6 in favor, with one abstention.

The proposal had already been approved by the Kansas City Province at its assembly in April.

“It’s the beginning. Hard work lies ahead,” said Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.P.P.S., provincial director of the Cincinnati Province. “We have a bright future ahead.”

Major Superiors to Decide

Though much work and discussion has already gone into the planning process, the approval at the assemblies moves the proposal forward and into the realm of the C.P.P.S.



Frs. Richmeier, Kirch and Nassal at the Cincinnati Province Assembly. The decision to form one U.S. province now rests in the hands of the C.P.P.S. Major Superiors.

major superiors, who have the authority to approve the plan. Fr. Kirch and Fr. Garry Richmeier, C.P.P.S., the newly-installed provincial director of the Kansas City Province, will make a presentation to the meeting of major superiors (MMS) in Poland in September.

“What we wanted to do with this vote is be clear in this province that we desire to become a new creation in the United States as one single unit,” Fr. Kirch said. “The votes at the assemblies do not create one unit. We are expressing our

will as a province to the major superiors. They will take a vote in September after Fr. Garry and I make a presentation about our process, where we've been, and the results of the vote.

"At that meeting, the provincial directors will offer a preliminary timeline of when we think we might be ready to become one province," he said, though the timeline itself will be set by the MMS.

The two provinces plan to hold a joint assembly in June 2020 at a location to be determined.

"Before we would become one unit, we would need to have our statutes approved by the general council," Fr. Kirch continued. "Once the statutes are approved, then comes the election of the first provincial director and council of the new province. All of those dates are to be determined. The MMS will start to firm up some of those dates."

The two provinces have worked on many initiatives together over the years. They collaborate in the formation of candidates, and have a common ministry with lay associates, called Companions. They also share a common history, as once there was one American Province in the United States. Discussions and dreams to bring the provinces back together have been going on for many years.

"We're in this Together"

Fr. Kirch said he felt very heartened by the vote at the Cincinnati Province assembly. It may have been an easier decision for the younger members, who had gone through formation with members from the Kansas City Province. "But if you look around the room (at the assembly), you would see that it's not just the young guys who voted to do this," he said. "So what I'm heartened by is that people who never studied together, maybe don't even know each other, other than by a name, have said, 'Yes, I want to journey with you into this new creation.' We're in this together."

Fr. Joe Nassal, C.P.P.S., the former provincial director of the Kansas City Province, said that as with other leaps of faith, the Congregation will have to live into "a new way of being. As with Companions, when that first started. At first, we weren't sure where we were going. And often these things turn out to be much different than how we envision them. They branch out, and maybe what we envision now may not be what we experience five years down the road."

Bonds Will Strengthen

As members and Companions from the two



The two provinces already collaborate on a number of ministries, including with their Companions (lay associates), seen above during a liturgy at St. Charles Center. At right, Fr. Barry Fischer preaches during a liturgy at the assembly.



provinces spend more time together, the new creation will take root, added Fr. Richmeier.

“Once we start doing more things together, those bonds will naturally strengthen,” he said. “It’s a trust thing. And how do you grow in trust? You hang out with each other, you tell stories.”

In his homily during a liturgy at the Cincinnati Province Assembly, Fr. Barry Fischer, C.P.P.S., issued a clarion call for the Congregation as it takes this

step forward in faith. “When we celebrate the Eucharist, when we say amen, will we promise to be Christ’s body broken, Christ’s Blood shed? We are stained by the Blood of Christ. As I look to the future, I can see an army of Missionaries going out to the whole world, sharing the saving balm of the Blood of Christ. We become those thousand tongues that Gaspar dreamed of.”





Definitive Incorporation:

Lucas Tiul Coc, C.P.P.S., was definitively incorporated into the Congregation during a liturgy on June 6 in Guatemala City. Lucas is a candidate with the Missionaries' Central American Mission.

Fr. Antonio José Hernández, C.P.P.S., the director of the mission, presided at the liturgy. Please pray for Lucas as he continues his formation for the priesthood.



Cause Continues: A Church tribunal in Naples, Italy, has concluded its review of the testimony of witnesses about a possible miracle worked through the intercession of the Venerable John Merlini, C.P.P.S. (Fr. Merlini's cause for beatification was featured in the spring issue of *C.P.P.S. Today*.) At this point in the process, the tribunal does not reveal its findings to anyone, including the Missionaries and the Adorers of the Blood of Christ (ASC), who are working together on Fr. Merlini's cause.

During a ceremony on July 15 in Naples, the documents were be presented in a sealed box then transported them to the Vatican. Next, the Congregation of Saints will review the documents then pass them along to commissions of doctors then theologians for more study. If approved, Fr. Merlini's case goes on to the bishops, cardinals and ultimately Pope Francis, who will decide if and when Fr. Merlini will be beatified.

The process has no set timeline, and the Missionaries and the ASC sisters will receive no further information until a final decision is made, said Fr. Emanuele Lupi, C.P.P.S., the vice



Ven. John Merlini

moderator general and the vice postulator of Fr. Merlini's cause. "This is a time for prayer and waiting," he said. "It is the universal Church that will be doing the discernment, and we want to accompany that process with our prayer."

The life of Fr. Merlini (1795–1873) is a great example of everyday holiness, Fr. Lupi said. "The secret of the holiness of Merlini is that he was a regular person. What he can teach us is that it is possible to be holy in our regular ordinary lives. We can make extraordinary all the ordinary things that we do every day."

In Memoriam: Brother Gregory Frantz, C.P.P.S., 91, died peacefully at St. Charles Center, Carthage, Ohio, on May 27, 2019. He'd lived and ministered at St. Charles for nearly all of his life as a religious brother.



**Br. Gregory
Frantz**

He was born in Cleveland on February 3, 1928 to John and Rose (Gedeon) Frantz. He entered the Society in 1948 and was professed on December 3, 1950.

After a year at Brunnerdale, the society's high school seminary near Canton, Ohio, Brother Gregory was appointed to St. Charles Seminary (now St. Charles Center). He was a member of the house at St. Charles from then on, and performed many services for his religious community, including serving as a driver for his fellow Missionaries at St. Charles. For many years, he was one of the Community's photographers, and could be seen clicking away with his camera at any C.P.P.S. gathering.

Brother Greg had entered the Congregation with his twin brother, Henry, who became a priest. Fr. Henry Frantz died in 2015, and Brother Greg was the last of his immediate family.

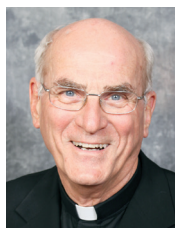
Brother Greg was unfailingly kind and compassionate to everyone he met. He was cheerful in his ministry, driving thousands of miles to take his C.P.P.S. brothers to doctor's appointments. He willingly served at Mass, Benediction and funerals at St. Charles. He loved to play golf, and was planning to spend many happy hours on the links this spring.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on May 31 at St. Charles Center, with Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.P.P.S., provincial director, presiding. Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Cincinnati Province.

May he rest in peace.

In Memoriam: Fr. John Kalicky, C.PP.S., 84, died on June 18, 2019, at St. Charles Center, Carthage, Ohio. He had been in failing health.



He was born on October 13, 1934 in Whiting, Ind., to John and Lillian (Spychalski) Kalicky. He entered the Society in 1948 at Brunnerdale, the Missionaries' former high school seminary, and was ordained on June 10, 1961 in Carthage, Ohio.

Fr. Kalicky's first assignment was to his home parish, St. John the Baptist in Whiting, from 1962–73. He then began his ministry with the congregation's formation program at Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind. He was named special formation director in 1974, and at the same time was elected to the executive committee of the province. Fr. Kalicky was elected vice provincial director in 1978. Also that year he became the administrator of St. Adalbert Church in Dayton.

In 1981, Fr. Kalicky was named pastor of St. Anthony Church in Falls Church, Va. He was elected provincial director of the Cincinnati Province in 1982, and served two terms. After his time in leadership, he was appointed pastor of his home church, St. John the Baptist, in 1991, where he served until his retirement in 2014. Fr. Kalicky was named a Sagamore of the Wabash by then-Gov. Mike Pence in 2014. He remained in Northwest Indiana during his retirement years, living in Highland, Ind.

Dedicated and faithful, Fr. Kalicky served the Church and his Congregation well in all of his assignments, but his greatest joy was in parish ministry. Fr. Kevin Scalf, C.PP.S., who served with him at St. John the Baptist, said that Fr. Kalicky had "a special way of bringing people back to the love, peace and joy that is authentically Jesus Christ."

On his retirement, Fr. Kalicky said he was happy to lay aside the administrative chores of the large parish but missed the ministry. "I am a priest forever, and I surely love working with the people," he said. "If you really want to be a pastor, you have to walk with the people and share their lives. That's a special privilege. You feel their joys and their sadness. They know when you are sincere about it."

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on June 22 at St. Charles Center, with Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S., provincial director, presiding. Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Cincinnati Province.

May he rest in peace.



Higher Time, God's Time

I always get a little panicky — maybe you do, too — when the Fourth of July has come and gone. For those of us living in northern climates, it means that summer is half over. Not according to the calendar, of course; but what is left is an implacable round of festivals and fairs that run right up to the first day of school. The best part of summer, the part that seemed uncommitted and endless, is over.

In fact, the passage of time in general is starting to drive me a little crazy. People always told me it would only go faster as I got older, and people are right. Remember just yesterday, when 2019 was a brand-new year and we were all wishing each other the best? Now it is more than half over and looking a little shopworn, and for some people it has not been a very good year at all. There's been death and destruction and surgeries and radiation and chemo. In our town and maybe yours too, a tornado went through and left a path of mayhem that is still a scar in our community. There have been a couple of weddings and graduations thrown in during 2019, but still, can we get a do-over?

No. The calendar marches on with military precision. There is no stopping it, but there may be something of a cure in what is called "Higher Time," a term coined by sociologist Charles Taylor. I found it in *Poor Will's Almanack for 2019*, and thinking about Higher Time as opposed to secular time calms me down and gives me hope. Almanack author Bill Felker explains it this way: there's secular time, which is what we find on the calendar, and once it is past, it is past. "Higher Time, on the other hand, dramatizes cycles like those represented in the Christian liturgical calendar or in the repeating nature of the year. And even though the modern world seems to do business completely in secular time, the alternate viewpoint persists and may even be dominant inside memory."

Higher Time allows us to organize our memories in a deeper way and see connections that move beyond time and maybe space. We're part of a river that flows to the sea, into the clouds, down through the rain and back into the river. Whether it's June or January is not so important.

When I was a little girl, I always wondered how Jesus could be born in December and reach the age of 33 by April. On the calendar, it makes no sense. But if we can escape the calendar and sink into Higher Time, into God's time, we see that we are part of a rhythm that is much more meaningful than the ticking of a clock.



At Our House
by Jean Giesige



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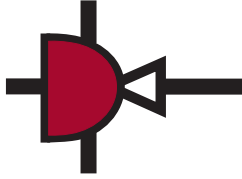
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