

SPRING 2017

CPPS TODAY

MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

Out & About

Missionaries of
the Precious
Blood Forge
Bonds in Parish



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

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Staying Faithful

Sometimes as I write about what we're offering to you in every issue, a theme emerges from the issue itself that makes my job easier. This time, though, no clear theme was immediately obvious to me.

But as I focused in on the stories—our mission in Colombia, the status of Saint Joseph's College, our C.PP.S. brothers—I see now that the theme is faithfulness.

Our mission in Colombia has been through many trials, losses and heartaches. Take the two founders of the mission, for instance. Fr. Ernie Ranly, C.PP.S., had to return to the U.S. shortly after moving to Colombia, due to health reasons. Fr. Abelardo Ibaceta, C.PP.S., a Chilean priest, gave himself completely to his ministry in Colombia but died of a heart attack while serving as director of the mission. There have been other setbacks as well. Yet our Missionaries there continue to serve faithfully, sure that they are where they are meant to be. I hope that when you read the story of how they go about parish life, you'll agree.

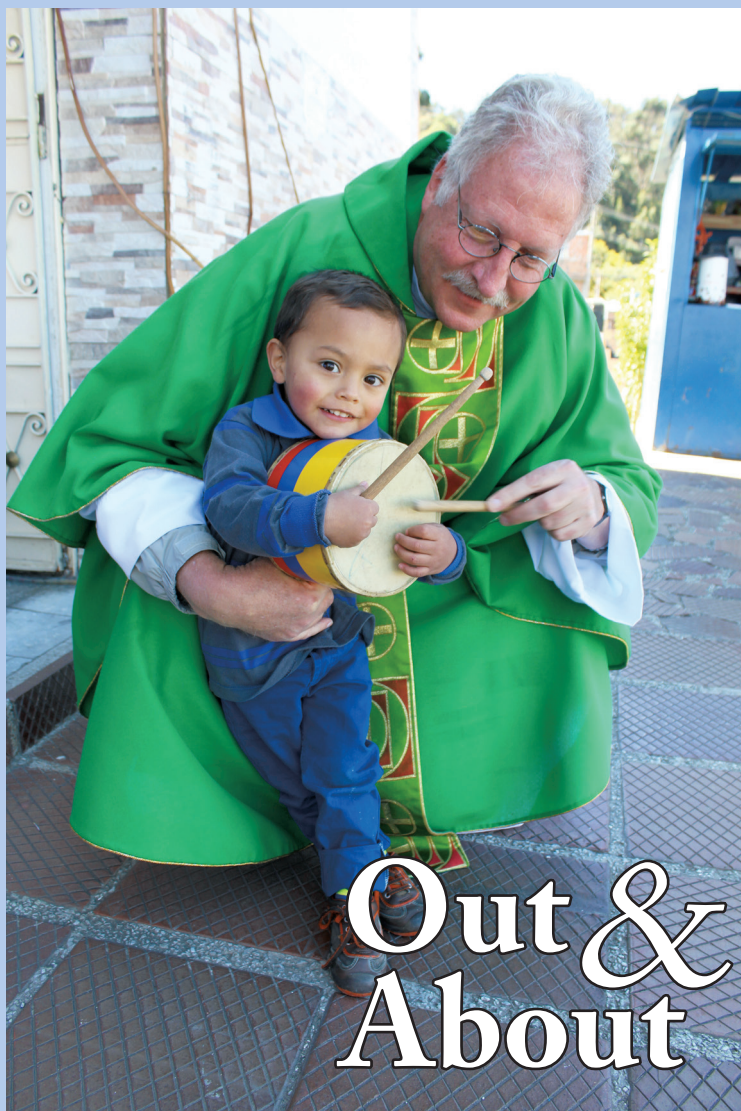
Our C.PP.S. brothers, whom we will honor on May 1, the first-ever Religious Brothers Day, are a study in faithfulness. Their role in our Community and in the Church has evolved greatly over the years. First and foremost, the brothers say yes to their call. Brother Tom Bohman, C.PP.S., says that he decides to be a brother every day. Their continual openness to God's call to service, no matter where it takes them, makes our brothers an example of steadfast faith for all of us.

Also faithful to their mission are our priests and brothers currently serving at Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind. Due to serious financial issues, the college's board of trustees made the decision in February to suspend operations at the college after commencement in May. This was an extremely difficult decision for the board to make and for everyone on campus to hear. Also deeply affected are the alumni and the town of Rensselaer. Many are grieving and are experiencing the anger, sadness and bewilderment that comes with it. In the midst of all that, our C.PP.S. priests and brothers at the college are walking with the people in their pain, and I am proud of them. I hope you'll join me in praying for strength and courage for them and for all of the college family.

God doesn't ask us to work miracles. We're not expected to always be brilliant. But God does ask that we stay faithful, that we kindle hope and inspire trust where we can. God asks us to take another step, and then another, even if we're not quite sure where we're going. And he assures us that he is right there with us.

**Between
the Lines
by Fr. Larry
Hemmeln,
C.PP.S.**





Out & About

Fr. Joe Deardorff, C.P.P.S., with a young parishioner at Nuestra Señora de los Alpes in Bogotá.

Missionaries of the Precious Blood in Bogotá, Colombia, find that parish life gives them a platform to talk about and live out Precious Blood spirituality.

For Fr. Robin Urrutia, C.P.P.S., a good metaphor for parish life is fried eggs.

Not the eggs themselves, of course, but the way that they are served.

Fr. Urrutia is the pastor at Nuestra Señora de los Alpes (Our Lady of the Alps), on the southern outskirts of Bogotá, Colombia. It's not a wealthy parish, and there certainly isn't a large staff. As with parishes everywhere, it's a challenge to keep up with the care and maintenance of the church building.

At Nuestra Señora de los Alpes, the cleaning of the church takes place every Friday morning by a group of six faithful volunteers. When they are finished, they join Fr. Urrutia at a breakfast he prepares for them, of eggs, *arepas* (a corn pancake that is popular in Colombia) and coffee.

"We can't afford a salary for someone to clean the church. Sharing a breakfast is my way of saying thanks to them," Fr. Urrutia said. "We sit around the table, we share breakfast and conversation about what's going on in their lives. Things like this create and build community in a parish."

The Missionaries first came to Colombia in 2005, led by the late Fr. Ernest Ranly, C.P.P.S., and Fr. Abelardo Ibaceta, C.P.P.S. They were convinced

that the country was in need of the reconciling power of the Precious Blood of Jesus. They've found plenty to do there, including founding a Center of Reconciliation that offers spiritual retreats, classes and counseling. They've served or are serving as chaplains in schools and hospitals. They have identified, brought forth and educated candidates for the priesthood.

They also helped out at parishes in Bogotá, serving as what Fr. Joe Deardorff, C.P.P.S., a Dayton native who is the director of the mission, calls "taxi priests." But what the Missionaries learned, Fr. Deardorff said, was that just as lay people need a parish to give them a sense of belonging and community, so did the Missionaries. "A parish where we're in daily ministry gives us an identity, a place where we can put down roots, share our spirituality, and get closer to the people on a daily basis," he said.

And so, when they were asked to take on such a parish, they said yes.

Out and About

Nuestra Señora de los Alpes began as a chapel 45 years ago, in the mountainous southern fringe of Bogotá. The congregation grew as the neighborhood grew, and finally became a parish of its own.

"Ours is the last parish of

the city, as you're going up the mountain. Half a block from the parish, the forest preserve begins," Fr. Deardorff said.

"When you walk out of the church, you can see all of Bogotá from above. That's how they got the idea of calling it Our Lady of the Alps—obviously, we're not anywhere near the Alps. We're in the Andes."

Bogotá, founded in 1538 in the center of Colombia on a high plateau in the Andes, is the capital and largest city. It has an official population of more than six million, but it is estimated that as many as four million people are part of the floating population of migrant workers and displaced people.

Most of the people in the working-class neighborhood of the parish are up early in the morning to report to their jobs on the north side of the city, Fr. Urrutia said. They're maids or construction workers or cab drivers. Surrounding the parish are crowded blocks of homes and mom-and-pop businesses. He knows the territory because he's out in it, most days.

"As I study the history of St. Gaspar del Bufalo (founder of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood), I believe more and more that it's important to get closer to the people, to establish a relationship with the people you serve," he said. "One way

to build community in the parish is to walk around the neighborhood. People see me, they invite me in for a coffee or a beer. Sometimes I do a little shopping. It's just important to be out and about, trying to be as close to them as I can."

Building that family feeling within the parish is more than just Fr. Urrutia's mission; it's the mission of the Church in Bogotá, he said. "Lately, we've been meeting with the cardinal (Cardinal Rubén Salazar Gómez) to figure out what parish life should be like, and likewise, we've been meeting with the people of the parish," he said. "Pope Francis tells us that the parish has to be the house of the people of God. Throughout our archdiocese, we're proposing that the parish be reconciled, and that it be a place of reconciliation. And we as Missionaries are adding that the reconciliation should be done through the Precious Blood of Jesus."

"You Have to Live It"

Fr. Urrutia brings to the task a long history of parish ministry. A Peruvian, he has also served in the city of La Oroya, high in the Peruvian Andes, and in a parish in Mexico. Each assignment helps him with the next assignment, as he understands better the nature of the work. "How you deal with

**Pope Francis
tells us that the
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people of God.”**

**— Fr. Robin Urrutia,
pastor of
Nuestra Señora
de los Alpes**



Fr. Urrutia talks with a parishioner.

people is essential,” he said. “You can try to explain it with words, but you really have to live it.”

He works with the people to stretch their limited resources as far as possible. There are times when the parish ends the month with \$50 or \$60 in its bank account, after paying all the bills. Among the people to whom the parish cannot afford to pay a salary is Fr. Urrutia himself; he

hasn’t received a paycheck from the parish for three years.

Even with the economic struggles, or perhaps especially because of them, he tries to encourage the people to make their voices heard in local and national elections. He continually urges them to vote. People don’t necessarily trust their government, he said, and so they
(Continued on page nine)

A Message about Saint Joseph's College



*St. Joseph,
pray for us.*

Maybe you've read the news that Saint Joseph's College, in Rensselaer, Ind., which is sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, will suspend operations after spring commencement on May 6, 2017.

The decision was made by the college's board of trustees after a two-day meeting in February. The trustees determined that the college's longstanding financial challenges were, at last, insurmountable,

especially in light of increasingly burdensome debt and a decreasing pool of potential students who were looking for a liberal arts education in a rural setting.

The board of trustees is committed to reengineering the college, which in its past lives has served as a high school and a seminary. What it can be in the future will depend on the work of a vital, engaged group of practical visionaries coming up with a workable plan to continue the college's mission. Details on that planning process will

emerge after this academic year.

Graduating seniors will receive their SJC diplomas; other students can continue their studies at one of the many other schools with which the college has established a teach-out arrangement. Many colleges and universities have sent representatives to SJC in recent weeks to help students through the transfer process.

There are currently six Missionaries in ministry at the college: Fr. Philip Gilbert, Br. Tim Hemm, Fr. Tim McFarland, Br. Rob Reuter, Fr. William Stang and Fr. Vince Wirtner. They are ministering to those around them who are grappling with all the stages of grief, while at the same time wondering what their own next steps in ministry will be. Most have served at the college for many years in many capacities.

The Missionaries founded the college, which was chartered in 1889, and have seen it through many incarnations. People who believe in the Easter promise must believe that

new life will come. In the meantime, there is sorrow on campus and in the Congregation, many of whose priests and brothers studied at the college themselves and believe fervently in its mission.

We ask all in the Precious Blood family to pray for the college family, including students and their families, faculty and staff, alumni, and the community of Rensselaer.

St. Joseph, patron saint of workers, protect and guide those who work at Saint Joseph's College.

St. Joseph, patron saint of immigrants, be with the students who must find a new college to call home.

St. Joseph, patron saint of families, heal and comfort the Saint Joseph's College family, including its alumni, whose hearts are broken.

St. Joseph, patron saint of the universal Church, pray for us all that we can help each other through loss and pain to hope and love.

(For more information about the college and the board's decision to suspend operations, visit saintjoe.edu.)



Out and About

(Continued from page six)

don't bother to vote. "I write a parochial newsletter, and in it I invite people to realize that voting is their right, and they have to exercise their right," he said. "In homilies too, I try to bring forth the message that people need to live up to their responsibilities and vote. It's hard because they don't think it makes any difference."

"The Cry of the Blood"

Fr. Urrutia gets help from Fr. Deardorff, who is at the parish on weekends and is in charge of its confirmation program, which is preparing 40 14- to 16-year-olds for the sacrament. Also in ministry at the parish is Fr. Angelmiro Granados, C.P.P.S., who presides at a healing Mass every month and who offers counseling and spiritual direction to parishioners.

It is in the nature of missionaries to be mobile; the Congregation's founder, St. Gaspar del Bufalo, said, "Missionaries are not statues." But there's a paradox there, because without roots, they can miss out on meaningful contact with the people.

It's a balancing act that they are living out at Nuestra Señora de los Alpes, as at every other



Parishioners descend the steps that lead to Our Lady of the Alps.

parish where they minister.

"People say that our prime ministry as a Congregation is not necessarily parish ministry, but it's in our parish ministry where we really find out what's going on in society, where we hear more of what Fr. Barry Fischer (a former moderator general) calls 'the cry of the blood,'" Fr. Deardorff said. "A parish gives us the opportunity to be with the people. It helps us confront the issues in society that we need to attend to."



What is a Brother?

From time to time at vocations events, I'm asked to explain the vocation of religious brother. The difficulty of understanding the brother's vocation arises for a variety of reasons. Some communities, like the Alexian Brothers or the Christian Brothers, are communities of only brothers. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood, on the other hand, is a mixed community of both brothers and priests. Add to that the fact that the title brother gets used in a variety of ways by different congregations, and you have lots of room for confusion. In some communities, any professed member who isn't ordained is called a brother; in other communities, like the Marianists, everyone is a brother, even those who end up getting ordained. In our case, we reserve the title brother for those men whom God has called to be a brother.

A brother is a layman who commits his entire self to the service of God and the Church as a member of a particular religious community. First and foremost, brothers are called by God to serve the Church, but they are called to serve in a particular way, as laymen. Being a brother is not a step on the path to something else, it is a vocation in itself. Brothers are called to minister in accord with their lay state, and so they minister differently than our priest members.

For instance, both Br. Brian Boyle, C.P.P.S., and Fr. Jeff Finley, C.P.P.S., currently minister as hospital chaplains. Clearly they minister differently, but it would be wrong to say that Br. Brian's ministry is lacking in anything. Br. Brian's status as a layman is at times an advantage. His being a brother affords him the opportunity to minister to folks who might not be ready for someone in a Roman collar. The 2015 Vatican document *The Identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church* reminds us that the brother's vocation is rooted in mystery, communion and mission. Put more simply, this means that the brother is a man of grace, community and action.

A brother encounters the mystery of God, opts both to live in and build community, and turns his experience of God's grace into action through his ministry.

You may encounter a young man who shows signs of a vocation, but whose heart is drawn to work other

than administering the sacraments. Perhaps God made this young man to be a brother. What a wonderful thing you could do to simply suggest becoming a religious brother.



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



**RELIGIOUS
BROTHERS
DAY is May 1.
See next page.**

The first ever
**RELIGIOUS
BROTHERS
DAY** *is May 1, 2017*

Here, four of our
Precious Blood
brothers talk
about their
vocation and
ministries.



Brother Ben Basile, C.P.P.S. • Hometown: Mount Holly, N.J.
Professed in 1969 • Associate professor of mathematics at
Calumet College of St. Joseph in Whiting, Ind.

Brother Ben, at right in this photo with C.P.P.S. Brothers (from left) Jerry Schwieterman, Jim Ballmann and Brian Boyle, knew from ninth grade on that he wanted to be a math teacher. But he was a sophomore in college before he discerned his call to be a religious brother.

Right where he belongs: Now in ministry at Calumet College of St. Joseph in Whiting, Ind., Brother Ben says that's "definitely where I should be." The college, with its urban setting, ministers to students who are often the first in their family to attend college. That appeals to Brother Ben's sense of social justice.

The gift of music: Life in an urban center (near Chicago and Gary, Ind.) has also put him in touch with other musicians; Brother Ben is a gifted organist and organ repairman who enthusiastically offers his talents to parishes and schools. "I'm never happier than when I'm working on pipe organs," he said. "It's just the right combination of art and technology."

**Brother Tom Bohman, C.P.P.S. • Hometown: Osgood, Ohio
Professed in 1975 • In parish ministry at St. James the Less Church
in Columbus.**

Brother Tom, puts in a full day's work at St. James the Less Church (*and congratulations to St. James the Less, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year!*), where he administers both RCIA and the parish school of religious education, among many other tasks. He learned all about work growing up on his family's farm outside of Osgood, Ohio, population 300.

The family business: In becoming a C.P.P.S. brother, in a way, he entered the family business; Brother Tom can claim nearly 20 C.P.P.S. priests, brothers and sisters in the extended clan. (Among his relatives are C.P.P.S. Frs. Jim Franck, Ken Pleiman, David Hoying and Mark Hoying, and the late Brother Norbert Hoying, C.P.P.S., and Fr. John Franck, C.P.P.S.)

A brother is a bridge: The vocation of religious brother is "a bridge," Brother Tom said. "People want to see someone who is prayerful, who is genuine. I don't know if I'm either one, but I try. People want someone to walk with them. They don't want a priest or brother lording it over them. I don't think people expect us to be perfect. To me, that's what parish ministry is all about: walking with the people in joy and sorrow, and there's always plenty of both."



Brother Tom with St. James the Less Assistant Principal Jennifer Wallace (left) and Principal Samary Cecchetti.

**Brother Joe Fisher, C.P.P.S. • Hometown: Wapakoneta, Ohio
Professed in 1977 • Provincial treasurer, Cincinnati Province
of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.**

Not a free ride: Brother Joe was a freshmen in formation with the C.P.P.S. at Saint Joseph's College when Br. Gerard Von Hagel, C.P.P.S., the director of brother postulancy, called him and every other brother candidate into his office, one by one. "The very first question he asked was, 'What kind of work do you see yourself doing as a brother of the Society of the Precious Blood?' In other words, this isn't a free ride; you have to do something."

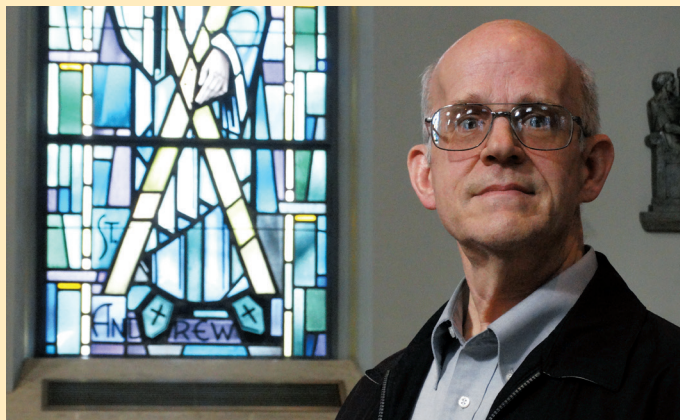
Brother Joe, who grew up on a farm, told Brother Gerard that maybe he could earn a degree in agronomy from nearby Purdue University, then manage the Society's farmlands.

Brother Gerard had another idea: "You're going to be an accountant." He picked up the phone, called the chairman of the college's accounting department, and Brother Joe soon had four years of coursework set. And his future work.

Good stewards: He has served as the provincial treasurer for 30 years. "It's a unique job, and it requires a certain amount of training and commitment and sacrifice. We live more on the edge than people realize. We're lucky that we have what we have, but in the bigger scheme of things, we don't have all that much, so we have to be good planners and good stewards." By watching over the Community's resources, he believes, he's taking care of his brothers, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

**Brother Joe outside of
the provincial office
in downtown Dayton,
where he also tends
the garden.**





Brother Terry Nufer, C.P.P.S. • Hometown: Winamac, Ind. Professed in 1977 • Director of music ministry, Sorrowful Mother Shrine, Bellevue, Ohio.

Four corners: In one block of his hometown of Winamac, Ind., St. Peter Catholic Church was on one corner, the rectory on another, the convent on another, and the Nufer house on another. That was fortuitous for young Terrence Andrew Nufer, who took piano lessons from the sisters beginning in third grade. By fifth grade, he was playing the organ at weekday Masses.

A path opened: After he graduated from college with a degree in French, he spent two years teaching French and music at Brunnerdale, the Society's former high school seminary near Canton, Ohio. There, he learned a hard truth: "I am not a classroom teacher."

But when he was assigned to parish ministry at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Cleveland, he found himself in the right fit. "A path opened before me, and I walked right through" into life as a church musician.

How it fits: At the shrine as in a parish, a music minister helps the music fit the moment. A lifelong learner, Brother Terry earned a master's degree from the University of Notre Dame to help him in his ministry. "That gave me tools I still use. It helped me understand how the music fits into the liturgy and what it's supposed to do. As a minister, I can make sure the music fulfills its purpose."

It's a fulfilling life, he said. "As far as I am able to tell, this is what God wants of me, and it's always been that way."





Teaching in Kenya: Br. Antonio Sison, C.PP.S., has resumed teaching duties at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago after spending a month as a visiting scholar in Kenya.

Teaching as the first visiting international scholar of the Jesuit-run Hekima University College in Nairobi, Kenya, was “a meaningful and exhilarating experience,” Brother Antonio said.



Brother Antonio Sison (third from left) with students in Nairobi.

(Among Brother Antonio’s academic specialties is the study of theology and film. He writes movie reviews for the *National Catholic Register*.)

“The energetic and insightful students in my ‘Hope and Solidarity in Global Cinema’ class came from Kenya, Zambia, Nigeria, Benin, Zimbabwe, and other countries in East and West Africa, plus India and Mexico. Nicole, the only woman in the class, is from Cameroon,” he said.

“As I was preparing to leave, they told me, ‘We hope we have made a good impression. We hope you don’t forget us.’ How could I? It has been such an enriching and humbling experience to teach this inspired community of sojourners. Each day in Nairobi was a gift.”

Learning in Guatemala: Greg Evers, a C.PP.S. candidate from Maria Stein, Ohio, who was featured in the fall 2016 issue of *C.PP.S. Today*, is now spending six months at the C.PP.S. mission in Guatemala as part of his religious formation.

Greg is living with the C.PP.S. seminarians in Guatemala City. “My experience of Guatemala has been very fruitful and eye-opening

all at the same time,” he said. “Everything from the weather, the food and the people have all been enriching to my experience. This adventure has also allowed me to see the impact that the Missionaries of the Precious Blood are having in other ministry settings outside of the United States.”

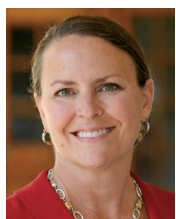
Greg is coping with the language barrier and is adapting to a different culture. He writes, “The C.P.P.S. members and the seminarians have all gone out of their way to make sure that I was feeling comfortable. The patience and compassion that has been shown to me is a great testament to Precious Blood hospitality. . . . This experience calls to mind what St. Paul wrote in his

letter to the Ephesians, ‘But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have become near by the blood of Christ’ (Eph. 2: 13). This is a great description of the mission that not only Precious Blood members are called to do, but also Christians and humanity as a whole.”



Greg Evers (third from left) with Missionaries in Guatemala.

New President: Congratulations to Dr. Amy McCormack, who has been named the new president of Calumet College of St. Joseph, effective July 1. She will replace Dr. Daniel Lowery, who will step down and, after a sabbatical, return to the college as a full-time faculty member.



Dr. Amy McCormack

McCormack is currently the senior vice president for finance and administration at Dominican University in River Forest, Ill. She was the unanimous choice of the search committee of the college’s board of trustees.

McCormack has spent the majority of her career in a senior leadership position at a Catholic institution. She has served Dominican University since 1991 as controller, vice president for business affairs, and in her current position since 2006.

McCormack earned her Ed.D. in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania. She holds a master’s degree in business from Dominican University and a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Indiana University and is a certified public accountant.



What's Going On that We Can't See

Ever since I was a child, I've felt most at home when wandering around in a woods. To be one of the unknowable layers of life in a woods, to see and appreciate God's intricate designs in moss and fern, to watch the woods fall asleep in November and wake up in April: it's a privilege to be a guest there.

I feel that way even more after reading Peter Wohlleben's best seller, *The Hidden Life of Trees*. Wohlleben writes that trees in a forest rely on each other for help and support, that they can send messages to each other through the chemicals they release, and that they nurture their young and make plans for the future.

They do not pluck their own apples to pelt hapless travelers like Dorothy and the Scarecrow. That's fiction. Wohlleben, a forester, is writing about science.

He points out that the massive trees we see in the forest have an even more extensive network under the ground. With their entwined roots, they relay nutrition to brother and sister trees that are sick or injured. Working with an equally vast network of fungi, trees' root systems cover acres of territory underground to support the part of the tree that we can see: the trunk, branches and leaves.

This is a good metaphor for human life. People are complex creatures who form complex societies. The part that we can see is only a fraction of what's really going on. How many times have we been walking with an old friend, or even a brother or sister, when he or she has revealed something that startles us into realizing that perhaps we don't know this person as well as we thought we did? In each of us are layers upon layers, memories piled on memories, opinions and feelings and experiences that are unique.

As a forester, Wohlleben uses all his senses when he walks among the trees in the old-growth forests in his native Germany. He strains to see beyond the bark and leaves. As a member of a human community, we do too, and our greatest rewards come when we can enter into a deeper level of understanding with someone we thought we knew.

There's another thing Wohlleben tells us about trees: that lone oak in your yard is probably sad and lonely. It was meant to live close by other trees, to enjoy their company and support. See the metaphor there?

We can go out into the yard and hug the solitary oak, though that might make it nervous. We can also look for other beings who are solitary in our neighborhood, town or even our family. They may be sending signals that they desperately hope we can hear.



At Our House
by Jean Giesige



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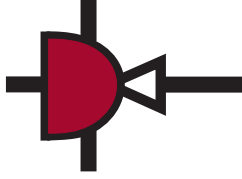
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