

SUMMER 2017

COPPS TODAY

MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD



UPKEEP

It takes skilled
hands to maintain
sacred spaces

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



Mike Hemmelgarn with the tools of the trade at St. Charles Center.

Page 2: To Fix What is Broken

It's always fulfilling to create something new or to mend that which is broken. *Between the Lines* by Fr. Larry Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S., provincial director of the Cincinnati Province.

Page 3: Upkeep

Maintenance workers labor behind the scenes at our churches and ministry sites to keep beloved old buildings at their best.

Page 11: The Healing Place

At our Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue, Ohio, a sacred place has been dedicated for the survivors of abuse.

Page 13: It Takes a Parish

It takes all faithful Catholics working together to foster religious vocations for the Church. *Call and Answer* by Fr. Steve Dos Santos, C.P.P.S., director of vocation ministry.

Page 14: Chapter and Verse

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

Page 17: It's Our Job to Plant

We're not promised a future, but we plan for one anyway. *At Our House* by Jean Giesige, editor of *C.P.P.S. Today*.

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

SUMMER 2017

C.P.P.S. Today is published by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, (Society of the Precious Blood), Cincinnati Province, 431 E. Second St., Dayton, OH 45402 937-228-9263 mission@cpps-preciousblood.org cpps-preciousblood.org On Facebook, Missionaries of the Precious Blood Cincinnati Province On Twitter, @cppsincincinnati

To Fix What is Broken

I admire all of the main subjects of our cover story in this issue of *C.P.P.S. Today*. They are the maintenance workers at our Precious Blood parishes or ministry sites who work hard behind the scenes to keep churches, schools and other buildings in good shape. They have to know how to tear down objects and build them back up, how to manage their time and have to anticipate problems before they become problems. We're grateful for all that our maintenance people and volunteers do, year after year, indoors and out—it's a real ministry, even if they may not think of it in that way.

I'm never happier than when I'm tinkering in my workshop, repairing something that has broken down or building something new to fill a need around the house. There's a real satisfaction that comes from working with tools, keeping at a task until it's done right, and then putting everything back where it belongs. Well, that's the ideal, anyway, even if it doesn't always happen!

We all have a spiritual side but we're also physical beings, and putting our physical skills and talents to good use can bring a lot of satisfaction. I would imagine that Jesus knew all about this, growing up as he did with Joseph, a carpenter. I like to think of them spending their days together in a workshop, with Jesus learning about tools and techniques as he watched Joseph work. Joseph must have taught the little boy how satisfying it was to finish a job, to fix something that was broken, or to create something new.

Someone else who finished what he set out to do is Fr. Leon Flaherty, C.P.P.S. In this issue is a story about Fr. Flaherty's project, the Healing Place, which was dedicated in June.

Along with Companion Margaret Saliga of Whiting, Ind., Fr. Flaherty planned and campaigned for the addition of the Healing Place, a space at our Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue, Ohio, where victims of abuse, their families and friends can come to pray, mediate and just spend some time in the shadow of the crucifix. While the original concept was to offer the space for victims of clergy abuse, it quickly grew to include those who have suffered from any form of abuse, including domestic violence and bullying. We hope that in the Healing Place survivors of abuse will be able to feel their true value as cherished children of God.

God bless all people who try to fix what is broken in our world. As always, we look to the Precious Blood of Jesus and believe in its power to heal us all!

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



UPKEEP

**It takes skilled hands to
maintain sacred spaces**



*Mike Hemmelgarn
on the job at
St. Charles Center.*

We talked with three mensches of maintenance—Mike Hemmelgarn of St. Charles Center in Carthage, Ohio, Bill Baron of St. Joseph Church in Dayton, and Don Kaminsky of St. John the Baptist Church in Whiting, Ind.—about their work.

The campus of St. Joseph Parish in downtown Dayton is huge, including the historic church, a large rectory, a former convent that is now the provincial office of the Cincinnati Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, and a former parish school across the street. There's always a lot to do to keep the place buttoned up and looking good.

But often, it's one little blinking light that catches Bill Baron's eye. Baron is the head of maintenance for St. Joseph. He's an electrician by training but, like most parish maintenance personnel, is a jack of all trades, by necessity if not inclination. There is a red light that comes on above each confessional when a penitent kneels down. There's a pressure-activated switch on the kneeler; one might say the weight of a person's sins turns on the merciful light of Christ, but a maintenance man can't give in to faith-based metaphors. He has to figure out how things work.

One kneeler switch doesn't always work. "That kneeler switch drove me nuts," Baron said. It had a mind of its own, not coming on when it was supposed to. So he looked up pressure-sensitive switches, found that they are popular among folks who design haunted houses during Halloween, and came up with a better system, one that

now works properly. Possibly, no one in the parish appreciated Baron's initiative in solving the problem. But every time the light blinks on then off when it should, Baron feels a sense of satisfaction. He's done his job.

"My job description? Fix everything. Ensure the functionality and cleanliness of the church and other buildings," he said.

Taking Care of the God-House

It's a short description for a big job. Especially with cherished, aging buildings that hold the prayers and praise of generations of worshippers, maintenance becomes more than a job. "Bill is taking care of people's home away from home, their God-house," said Fr. Angelo Anthony, C.P.P.S., the pastor of St. Joseph and two other parishes in Dayton's Region Seven, Emmanuel and Holy Trinity. "It's important work. It's good for me to know that I have eyes and ears around the parish to catch the things that I may not see. It gives me a sense of reassurance to know that somebody's paying attention to the buildings."

Paying attention, for Baron, means walking around the parish plant every morning. Sometimes homeless people take shelter in the church's outdoor alcoves, or

baseball fans park in St. Joseph's lot to attend a Dayton Dragons' game at the nearby Fifth Third Field. Baron cleans up any mess that is left behind. He inspects the buildings to make sure what's supposed to be inside is inside (heat, power, running water), and what's supposed to be outside is outside (bugs and other pests, rain). "Observation is what maintenance is all about," he said.

One of the constant battles is making sure that water is behaving itself, staying in the pipes as intended, or sheeting off the roof as planned.

"When water shows up where it doesn't belong, there's something wrong," Baron said.

An Inquisitive Mind

It helps that he has an inquisitive mind, he said. He was raised that way. One of six children, Baron and his siblings cleaned the house "from corner to corner" every Saturday morning under the watchful eye of his dad. He and his twin brother, the youngest, were assigned to areas that were mostly on the periphery: the basement, the driveway, the garage floor, all cement surfaces. As a result, he said, he's an expert at cleaning concrete, a skill that comes in handy at a large parish.

"I learned a lot from my

dad, who was a toolmaker and engineer. He had a workshop in his basement, and he built us little workbenches of our own. Back then, you didn't take your bike to a shop for repairs—you fixed it yourself," he said.

Baron has a well-equipped workshop in the basement of St. Joseph where he keeps tools, supplies and an inventory of spare parts. "I spend a tremendous amount of money buying parts. Often, you want to buy a backup," he said. For instance, he knows that the threshold on the door of the rectory is going to wear out every year—it always has. There's an extra threshold in his workshop.

While he works, his inquisitive mind weaves stories about the things he finds. Baron realizes that nothing is ever thrown out in a parish, he said. A use might come up for it later, or it might just get stored away for years.

Baron loves to hear stories about the church. He collects them and retells them to first-time visitors. One is about a pair of horseshoes, one for summer use, the heavier one for winter, which hang from a board right over Baron's head when he goes down the steps, a board that shows the signs of river silt in its grain. He's been speculating about them for years and in his mind, they are directly connected

“Bill is taking care of people’s home away from home, their God-house.”



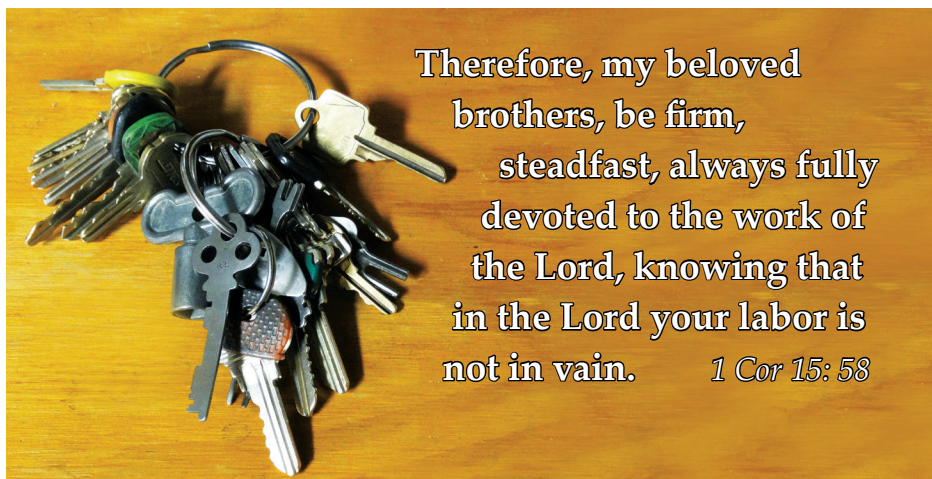
Bill Baron, right, with Fr. Angelo Anthony in the sacristy of St. Joseph Church in Dayton.

with Dayton’s great flood of 1913, which killed 360 people and 1,700 horses. During the flood, St. Joseph was under 20 feet of water.

“This is what I think happened: they had the flood, and the parish horses were drowned. The maintenance man turned to the pastor and said, ‘Father, let’s get a car,’” Baron said. The horseshoes were never needed again—but never thrown away.

Learning on the Job

Possibly the world headquarters of never throwing anything away is St. Charles Center, the Missionaries’ motherhouse in Carthage, Ohio, where industrious and thrifty C.P.P.S. brothers were once in charge of the buildings and grounds. That responsibility now falls to Mike Hemmelgarn, who, with the help of over a century’s worth of tools and parts, can



Therefore, my beloved
brothers, be firm,
steadfast, always fully
devoted to the work of
the Lord, knowing that
in the Lord your labor is
not in vain. *1 Cor 15: 58*

fix almost anything.

Hemmelgarn grew up in Burkettsville, Ohio, not far from St. Charles; three of his brothers attended Brunnerdale, the Congregation's former high school seminary near Canton, Ohio. The Missionaries "knew our family pretty well," he said.

Hemmelgarn, who has worked at St. Charles for 20 years, is skilled in carpentry, painting, electrical and plumbing work. He can hang drywall and work on engines. "I learned most of it growing up on the farm," he said.

Other skills he had to teach himself. He's learned all about St. Charles' sound system—"When they installed it, I asked a lot of questions," he said—and the internet service provided to its residents. Since it's now a retirement home for both C.P.P.S. members and the laity, he helps

everybody get online and stay there, if they so desire. He's also become an expert on getting the residents' mobility scooters up and running—usually, the problem involves the battery, he said.

Those concerns and most of the other problems that residents report daily might be considered the micro-challenges of Hemmelgarn's workday. He's also in charge of macro-challenges: he tests the water purity, he maintains the huge building's heating systems, he sets up for all of St. Charles' many events, and he takes down all of the main building's windows in the spring, washes them and puts them back up. Hemmelgarn and his wife, Ann, live across the highway from St. Charles, so he can almost always see the place even when he's not technically on the job.

As problems arise, he works on answers. Hemmelgarn said he doesn't sketch them out on paper; generally, the plans exist in his head. "If it doesn't work out the first time, I try something different. I figure, if it's broken already, you can't hurt it, right?" he said.

Sometimes, he said, he amazes himself when he comes up with an answer for a thorny problem. Frequently, he amazes others. "Mike's a real go-getter," said Br. Nick Renner, C.P.P.S., who formerly was in charge of maintenance at St. Charles, but now splits his time between St. Charles and the St. Henry Cluster of parishes in St. Henry, Ohio, where he is part of the ministry team. "He has a great work ethic and a lot of common sense. He has been a godsend for us. He'd be very hard to replace because he's willing to help out, day or night, whatever comes up. It's in his blood."

Hemmelgarn, who is 61, takes between 15,000 and 20,000 steps every day, according to his phone, as he makes his way around St. Charles' buildings and grounds. He doesn't need to join a gym.

Working around a historic building like St. Charles, with its chapel, infirmary and powerhouse, Hemmelgarn said he can't help but feel a sense of ownership as he keeps the place

humming along: warm in the winter, cool in the summer, dry all year. Usually, he's busy all day, but "there are some slow days," he said. "That's when we do some odds-and-ends. There's always something that can be done."

Running the Team

Working in maintenance often means working alone—but not really. Maintenance workers at a parish or ministry site are often supported by an army of volunteers who help clean and maintain the property, which often feels like their home away from home. People pitch in with everything from pruning the landscaping to replacing the worship aids in the pews when a new issue comes out. Taking care of a parish is best done by a team.

Don Kaminsky, who for years served as head of maintenance at St. John the Baptist parish in Whiting, Ind., was always aware of this. People, he said, were the most important tools.

Kaminsky, a Whiting native and St. John parishioner, may have been the most overqualified maintenance man of any parish in the Diocese of Gary. He came to work at the parish in 2000 after retiring as the head of maintenance for Michael Reese Hospital, a 1,000-bed teaching

hospital with a research arm on 13.5 acres in Chicago.

Before working at Michael Reese, he was the supervisor of the electrical department at American Maize, a factory that produced products from corn, in Hammond, Ind., which borders Whiting.

"We lived close to the factory, so when they had a breakdown, guess who they called? It didn't matter if it was Christmas, or New Year's Eve, you had to go," he said. "I spent many a night there, many a weekend and holiday."

When Kaminsky retired from Michael Reese, he received a call from Fr. John Kalicky, C.P.P.S., then pastor at St. John, and another Whiting native. "I knew Fr. John, I knew his family. We're all entrenched in St. John," Kaminsky said.

Kaminsky had watched the school being built and had worked on maintenance crews there when he was a kid. "I knew it from the ground up," he said. "For me, it was fun coming to



Don Kaminsky with the cooling system he designed and installed at St. John the Baptist's rectory in Whiting, Ind.

work here.

It was fun, but also work. "If a maintenance man doesn't run it like a business, he's in trouble," Kaminsky said. "I set up a preventative maintenance system. Every summer, there were certain things that you did: maintain the fan coil units (in the heating and air conditioning system), change the filters, oil the motors, and if you run across one that's bad, get it repaired. Inspect your roofs; you repair leaks in the summer, not in the winter. Make sure the custodians are cleaning the classrooms, washing the desks, washing windows."

Kaminsky inventoried everything. Labeled and/or numbered everything. Had a spare part for everything. "Here's a simple thing: the front doors

of the school have an electric lock. Electric locks can break. If it breaks, you can't get into the school. You've got to have spare parts. A guy comes here to work on the lock and says the striker is bad—if you have a spare, he can just flop it in," he said.

In Whiting, so close to Lake Michigan, winter is an annual battle. Kaminsky established a snow crew at St. John because "if you have a 6 a.m. Mass, there are people here at 5:30 wanting to get into the church, and they aren't the young people. The first priority was to clean the steps and the church and the sidewalks leading up to the church," he said.

Whether it was snow or a leaky roof or a broken lock, there was one rule that Kaminsky followed: "You can't ignore problems. You have to look them straight in the eye and tackle them."

He was renowned for that at the parish, said Fr. Mark Peres, C.P.P.S., St. John's pastor. "It's an aging infrastructure, and there's always something you have to stay on top of," he said, adding that a maintenance worker at a parish is dealing with the temporal and spiritual: one annual chore is to empty, clean out and refill St. John's baptismal font before the Easter Vigil Mass.

Kaminsky is now retired from his retirement job, replaced by Rudy Salazar. "When we hired

Don's replacement, one of the most important things was, did Don like him? Did Don think he could do the job?" Fr. Peres said. "Rudy is very competent, which is so important because each of our buildings has different needs. It's not a one-size-fits-all job."

Built to Last

Back at St. Joseph, the noon bells signal when it's time for Bill Baron to take his lunch break. In his workshop, over the old wooden desk, there's a chalk board with a list of items and events he needs to keep in mind. On the chalkboard, his grown daughter has left him a message: "Be a Billy." What does it mean? Be inquisitive. Be observant. Be aware. Use the gifts God gave you. Baron said that he carries with him an awareness that his work is for the greater glory of God, and that he's another in a long line of people like him who have cared for this sacred space.

"When you're working at a place like this, you appreciate the workmanship that went into this church, the sturdiness of the building and its foundation. It survived the flood. It was built to last," he said. "As I'm working, I can't help but think of those original craftsmen, and all the things they went through to give these things to us."



Survivors of abuse are invited to pray, reflect at **the HEALING PLACE**

At the Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue, Ohio, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood have dedicated the Healing Place, an area in the shrine where victims of abuse and their friends and family members can come to pray, meditate and heal. The project was led by Fr. Leon Flaherty, C.P.P.S., who with Companion Margaret Saliga, of Whiting, Ind., and other volunteers worked to make the Healing Place a reality.

It's in keeping with the Missionaries' "spirituality of healing and reconciliation," said Fr. Flaherty, who traveled from his home in Superior, Wisc., to Ohio for the June 2 dedication. Originally conceived as a place for victims of clergy sexual abuse, the idea quickly expanded to include all abuse survivors.

The planners worked with victims' groups and with the Diocese of Toledo, in which the shrine is located. The labyrinth that resulted, in the midst of a peaceful corner of the shrine, is



Fr. Leon Flaherty, third from left, with C.P.P.S. members at the dedication of the Healing Place.

outlined in red, signifying the Blood of Christ poured out for his people. Those who pray at the Healing Place will be "walk-ing through a river of Christ's Blood, which we hope will bring them to healing," Fr. Flaherty said. The Healing Place is situated at the foot of the crucifix, so that Christ remains the focal point.

Fr. Larry Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S., provincial director, presided at the liturgy in the shrine's chapel that preceded the dedication. "Just like the relationship between God and Jesus, there is a relationship between the broken and the Church. All of us as brothers and sisters want to love the way Jesus and the Father love. All of us in the community of believers want

that for children of every age, ourselves and every person who hurts. It is only by reaching out to one another that we begin to heal the brokenness of the past. That is why the Healing Place was created, so that as hurting people we can walk the walk of Jesus, realizing and knowing that there is resurrection.

“Let’s all of us pray this day that as we dedicate the Healing Place, it may become a place for people to do whatever kind of walk necessary to bring them to healing. Whether they walk the labyrinth alone or with a trusted friend, a spouse or some other loved one. We pray that victims—no, not victims, but survivors—may once again discover the love and trust that Jesus offers and be healed. That survivors might marvel in the strength that God placed within them, that they are able to live and breathe and take a step forward toward healing. That they could choose to despair, but instead come out of the darkness into God’s light, choosing to ask God to heal them—saying yes to life in abundance.”

Also present for the dedication was Frank DiLallo, victim assistance coordinator of



Above, the Healing Place is at the foot of the crucifix. Below, Companion Margaret Saliga, who helped lead the project.

Diocese of Toledo. “I am honored and blessed to be here,” he said. “For over 20 years, it has been my honor and privilege to offer pastoral care to many individuals and families who have been affected by abuse of many kinds. There’s never a quick fix. Healing takes time and tremendous courage.”



It Takes a Parish

In our cover story on parish maintenance men, Don Kaminsky talks about how taking care of a parish is best done by a team. The same can be said of nurturing a vocation. It is the rare individual whose vocation is the result of a singular moment or interaction. For most, it is the culmination of lots of little God-voices speaking to their heart.

Thanks to research done on religious vocations, we know that on average, the men being ordained in the U.S. this year were encouraged in their vocation by four people. And number three on the list after priest and a friend is a parishioner. Parents were also high on the list.

Consideration of religious life and the decision to enter is so contrary to the currents of contemporary culture that it can be hard for a young man or woman to consider it as a viable option. That's where you come in. It takes the whole parish to nurture the vocation that God has placed on the hearts of his people. Whether you are a parent or a catechist, a parish volunteer or someone who sits behind them at Mass, you have a role to play in nourishing their vocation. It takes all of us to build up God's Church.

"Have you ever thought about being a priest or a brother?" is a great way to plant the seed. Heck, you don't even have to wait for an answer; just ask the question and walk away. The more a young person hears this sort of invitation, the more likely he or she is to consider the possibility.

We have to do more than just invite young people to consider a priestly or religious vocation. It helps if we also encourage them. It can be as simple as thanking them for their service, or noticing the way they pray and paying them a compliment. If you know them a little better, it could be engaging them in a conversation about their vocation. While I'm talking about priestly and religious vocations here, I would say you should also encourage young people when you see things in them that would make them a great spouse and parent.

It's impossible for the maintenance worker at the parish to clear the walks in time for the morning mass by himself; he needs a crew to come out and help make it happen. The same is true of a vocation. It takes the whole parish, each person doing his or her part to invite and encourage young people to be open to God's call.



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





First Commitment: During their annual assembly in June, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood accepted the first commitment of candidate Greg Evers of Maria Stein, Ohio.

Greg, who now enters special formation, promised to continue to learn about and live among the Missionaries. The Congregation in turn



Greg Evers with Missionaries after his first commitment to the Congregation.

pledged to support him in prayer and share their lives and spirituality with him.

Greg, who in December completed his undergraduate degree from St. Xavier University in Chicago, spent the spring in the Missionaries' Central American mission in Guatemala. There, he practiced his Spanish and got to know the Missionaries and

candidates of the mission.

During his special formation, Greg will live and minister in a C.P.P.S. house in the Kansas City Province.

We hope that you'll continue to pray for Greg as well as for two other candidates, Deacon James Smith, C.P.P.S., and Matthew Keller, C.P.P.S. This summer, James will be ordained a priest and Matthew will be ordained a deacon. May God bless and watch over these young men and all who are discerning a religious vocation.

Rector of SJC: Fr. Barry Fischer, C.P.P.S., has been named rector of Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind. In that position, Fr. Fischer is overseeing the re-engineering of the college into its new stage of life. Operations were suspended at the college after commencement this spring.

Many proposals are being studied that will bring new life to the Saint Joseph's campus. Fr. Fischer is meeting with alumni and other supporters, including officials from the community of Rensselaer. He has formed a team of administrators, faculty and others who have a "passion and love for Saint Joseph's and administrative and



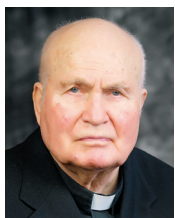
Fr. Barry Fischer on the SJC campus.

educational expertise. They needed to be persons with experience in the academic as well as in the financial aspects. I looked for people who would have the mission in the center of their concern and ones who were not afraid to think outside the box.”

The Missionaries of the Precious Blood will continue to have a presence on campus. “We believe that we (the college) will have a future,” Fr. Fischer said. “That’s what drives us and fills us with passion as we pursue our mission. Of course, it is not an easy task and at times we may hit bumps in the road, but we are not discouraged, and we count on your prayers and the intercession of St. Joseph. We are inspired by these words of Pope Francis: ‘Look to the past with gratitude. Live the present with passion. Embrace the future with hope.’”

In Memoriam: Fr. James Bender, C.P.P.S., 90, died on March 21, 2017 at St. Charles Center in Carthagena, Ohio.

Fr. Bender was born in 1927 in Grass Creek, Ind., to Robert and Ethel (Layman) Bousman. He was later adopted by Marion and Mary Jo Bender and raised in Monterey, Ind.



Fr. Bender

In 1940, he entered the Missionaries of the Precious Blood at Brunnerdale, the Missionaries’ minor seminary near Canton, Ohio. He was ordained on May 18, 1952.

After ordination, he served in parish ministry then volunteered for the Missionaries’ mission in Chile, where he served in C.P.P.S. parishes in Santiago and in southern Chile. He was also spiritual director of the Missionaries’ minor seminary in the early 1960s, and later was the first elected director of the Chilean

Vicariate. Later, he ministered in Peru, in La Oroya, high in the Andes, and also at Our Lady of the Light Parish in Lima. Fr. Bender remained in Peru until his declining health forced his return to the U.S. in 2010. He spent the last seven years in retirement at St. Charles.

Fr. Bender “lives on in the memory of many, many people,” said Fr. James Gaynor, C.P.P.S., who served with him in Peru. In La Oroya, Fr. Bender founded a center for senior citizens, where they could come together for a meal and companionship each day. The elderly and the

lonely had a special place in his heart. May he rest in peace and enjoy new life among kind people and saints like himself.”

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated at St. Charles Center on March 24. Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

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

In Memoriam: Fr. Gene Wilson, C.P.P.S., 88, died on March 30, 2017 at Firelands Regional Medical Center in Sandusky, Ohio.

He was born in 1928, in Charleston, W.Va., to Luther Lee and Hilda (Lawson) Wilson. The family later moved to Cleveland, where he was raised.

He entered the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in 1950. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Saint Joseph’s College in Rensselaer, Ind., and was ordained on May 28, 1960.

After two years of parish ministry at St. Adalbert Church in Cleveland, Fr. Wilson attended Catholic University in Washington, D.C., where he studied library science. A lifelong learner, Fr. Wilson later completed coursework at other institutions as well.

In 1964, he was named librarian of Brunnerdale, the congregation’s high school seminary near Canton, Ohio. He later returned to parish ministry, once again at St. Adalbert where he served for many years, and at parishes in Detroit and California. Since 2009, he had been in ministry at the Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue, Ohio, which is sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

Fr. Wilson was always cheerful, always joyful in his service to the Lord and to the Church, said Fr. Clarence Williams, C.P.P.S. “I first met him when I was in the fifth grade at St. Adalbert School. He would come into our classroom—he was the first African-American priest most of us kids had ever laid our eyes on,” Fr. Williams said. “All the kids were crazy about him. He had a big impact on all of us.”

Fr. Wilson had a strong devotion to the Holy Spirit and was active in the charismatic movement of the Church, often presiding at healing Masses where many people came to worship with him.

A funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Charles Center, Carthagen, Ohio, on April 3. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 11 a.m. at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Garfield Heights, Ohio. Burial followed in Calvary Cemetery, Cleveland.

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



Fr. Wilson



It's Our Job to Plant

This spring, as I planted my vegetable garden, I wasn't the only one in the vicinity who was in the future business. Not far away, in a flower bed at the edge of our pond, a mother duck had fashioned a perfectly round nest and filled it with 11 ivory eggs. I found out about this seconds after the dog did; she made a hullabaloo and the mother duck flew off. I chastised the dog and, after we'd gone away, the mother returned.

I liked to think about our parallel projects: the seeds I'd planted gaining strength from the soil, swelling with water then bursting up with the force of a volcano (proportionally speaking); the duck eggs with their own potential, their development triggered by the heat of the mother. We all believed in the future.

Alas, then came the morning when I saw eggshells scattered on the ground near the nest. Some other living thing had needed the sustenance the eggs could provide. I didn't see the duck again.

Near our front porch, a robin who'd built her nest in the crook of the downspout was faring better. By and by, we could see little beaks pointing up at the sky when the mother was off foraging.

But then the nest went silent, and we saw no more of the mother or babies. We'll take the nest down now. It's the empty home of another failed family.

Each day when I go out to check the garden I am braced for a similar calamity. Rabbits, deer, bugs, blight, wilt, wild grasses: none of them respect my boundaries, and things that are growing one day can be tossed down, disrespected then discarded, returned to the earth.

We make plans for an earthly future that is not promised to us. We have to; it's our nature. The lilies of the field do not toil or spin, but they do bloom and set seed, their roots pushing deeper into the soil around them. God decides who will grow and who will fall to the ground; it's our job to plant and water, to be watchful and nurturing in our own way, to care about the future but not live there. "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life," Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6: 25a). Perhaps he is promising us a future beyond the future we think we can see. Perhaps that is the promise.

It's a mystery, and I did not know how to end this story, so I went to the kitchen to get another cup of coffee and outside the window I saw a teenage robin, his breast speckled, his head cocked. The little robins of our downspout did not make it, but other robins did, and they carry the same promise. We all carry that promise.

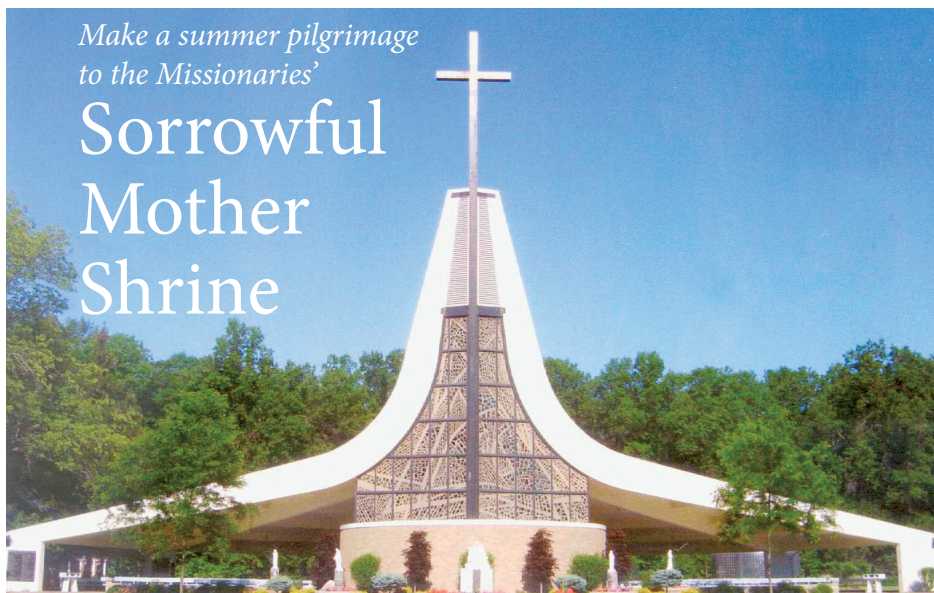


At Our House
by Jean Giesige



*Make a summer pilgrimage
to the Missionaries'*

Sorrowful Mother Shrine



Come to the shrine for a peaceful day of prayer.

Grounds open every day during daylight hours.

Daily Mass and confessions.

4106 State Route 269, Bellevue, Ohio, 44811 • 419-483-3435

sorrowfulmothershrine.org

*Let
us
hear
from
you*

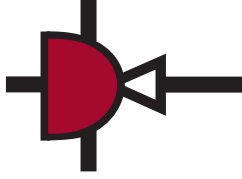
Send address changes,
comments, suggestions
or requests for
more information to:

Jean Giesige, editor,
C.P.P.S. Today, 431 E. Second St.,
Dayton, OH 45402-1764
mission@cpps-preciousblood.org

*Please include your name and contact
information so that we can respond to
your correspondence.*

MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
431 E. Second St.
Dayton, OH 45402

Return Service Requested



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Celina, Ohio
Permit No. 2