**SUMMER 2023** 

## PP PS A Y

MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

Parish Life Is Always a Team Effort

### In this issue of

### C.PP.S. TODAY



Mike Leach leads a tour at St. John/ Glandorf.

### Page 2: None of Us Walks Alone

With faith, we can step beyond our own fears and uncertainty, because God is with us. *Between the Lines* by Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S., provincial director of the United States Province.

### Page 3: Always a Team Effort

Past, present and future are intertwined at St. John the Baptist Parish in Glandorf, Ohio—and probably at your parish too.

### Page 8: It's All About Building Bridges

Fr. Angelo Anthony, C.PP.S., assumes a new role as vocations minister for the US Province. It's a ministry he's done before, but a lot has changed.

### Page 9: "I Had Nothing Better to Do"

A junior at the Missionaries' Calumet College of St. Joseph shows an open mind and a giving heart.

### Page 13: Chapter and Verse

News about Precious Blood people and places.

### Page 17: Gracie is With You

We can't keep our eye on every sparrow, or even every dog. *At Our House* by Jean Giesige, editor of *C.PP.S. Today*.

On the cover: In Glandorf, Ohio, all roads lead to St. John the Baptist Church.

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

### SUMMER 2023

*C.PP.S. Today* is published by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, (Society of the Precious Blood), United States 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 United States Province

### None of Us Walks Alone

A line in the cover story of this issue of *C.PP.S. Today* caught my eye: *Parish life is always a team effort.* In fact, I would expand that: A life of faith is a team effort.

Who among us really walks alone? First of all, God is always with us. That relationship is central in our lives. God provides the very spirit that lives within us, and we accept that spirit with a grateful yes.

But if it stops there, just us and God, we never reach our potential. We remember that Jesus shed his Precious Blood for all, and we see that there are no boundaries, no limits, nothing that holds us back. We are a part of all creation, through all time and in every place, and we take our place in the generations that we see to our right and to our left. God leads us to share our faith with others.

That is the story that is illustrated in this issue of *C.PP.S. Today*: faith being passed from one generation to the next. We see that lived out at St. John the Baptist Parish in Glandorf, Ohio, where our Missionaries have served since 1848.

We hope that the missionary spirit of hearing the Word of God and sharing in the Eucharist then going forth to serve is alive in every parish where our Missionaries are in ministry. We are grateful to the people of St. John the Baptist in Glandorf who have welcomed our Missionaries into their midst for so many years.

A life of faith is a team effort. That's certainly true at Calumet College of St. Joseph, the college we sponsor in Whiting, Ind., just east of Chicago. The ministry team at CCSJ invites students to live out their faith through volunteer efforts, prayer and fellowship.

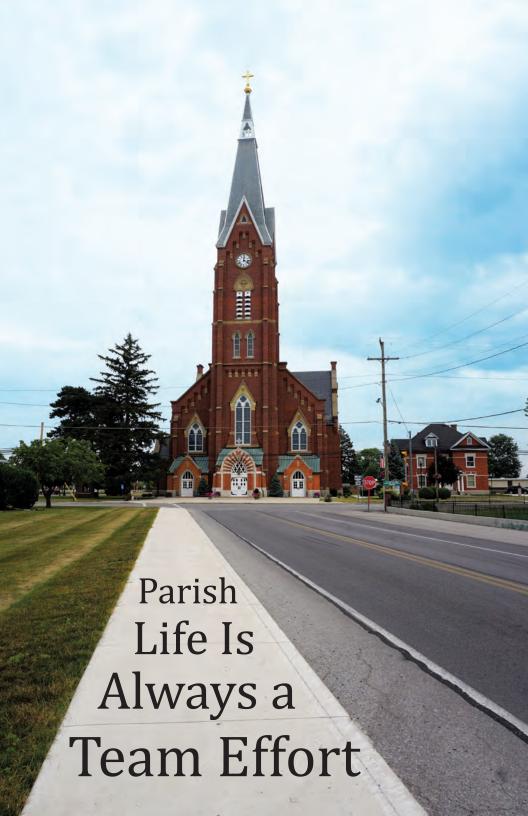
Earlier this year, the campus ministry team honored a CCSJ student, Katie Clements, with the first-ever Brother Jerome Schwieterman, C.PP.S, Award, to be given each year to a student who exemplifies

Brother Jerry's gentle, consistent, persistent care. Katie never met Brother Jerry, who died in 2022. Brother Jerry was a constant presence on campus during his 18 years of ministry at the college. He was a conscientious worker and an enthusiastic member of the college family. Not boisterous or showy, he would have seen himself as part of the team, a helper and a guide.

A life of faith leads us outside of ourselves. With faith, we can step beyond our own fears and uncertainty. We join forces with others to build the kingdom of God, which is bigger and brighter than anything we can imagine on our own.

Between the Lines by Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S.





The building site of St. John the Baptist Church in Glandorf, Ohio, under construction in the 1870s, is on a rise, and because of that, teams of horses, going downhill, had an easier time lifting loads to the highest point as the church was being built.

At least that's the story as Fr. Matt Keller, C.PP.S., the pastor, has heard it. Fr. Matt is completing his first year as pastor at St. John the Baptist, which has been served by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood since 1848, 175 years. He does not pretend to know all the stories.

But St. John's parish historian, Mike Leach does. He has been collecting—one might say curating—stories about the church for most of his life.

Mike has a deep appreciation for the history of St. John, both of its structures and its people. "I've been the parish historian here since Moses," he told a recent tour group, from St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Findlay, Ohio.

A faith family, created by God, has a past, present and future—even when its story takes twists and turns. St. John the Baptist parish and the town of Glandorf (current population 970), were both named after the mother parish and community in Glandorf, Germany, and founded in 1834. Soon after the arrival of the first settlers, the

first parish church was built. The current church was constructed between 1874–1878.

At the time, it was the largest Roman Catholic church in all of Northern Ohio, even larger than the cathedral in Cleveland (Putnam County parishes were in the Cleveland diocese at the time—the Toledo diocese wasn't established until 1910) "It is a neo-Gothic design, with arches that are meant to look like praying hands," Mike said.

### **Working Hands**

It was working hands that made the church come to life. According to a visitor's guide published by the parish, "German, Austrian, Swiss and American craftsmen and artists were employed in the construction and decoration of the church. Swiss Mennonites from the Putnam/Allen County area laid the foundation stones in 1874."

Artisans did their best work for the church, Mike said. "We were lucky—Cincinnati was a hotbed of ecclesial artists at that time," and the parish pulled them north to adorn the church.

That included a handcarved pulpit so ornate that it was exhibited at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia before it was purchased by the parish in 1876. The church was completed in 1878 and has been in use nearly every day since. Nearly every day—for there was a time when the people nearly lost their church. On August 14, 1992, kids playing in the church started a fire in the priest sacristy that could have destroyed the historic building.

### That Dreadful Day

"I came in with the fire-fighters" on that dreadful day, Mike said. "It was so hot in here, it was like your mom just took a roast out of the oven." The church was the oven and the people were the roast; Mike remembers crawling on his hands and knees to a storage area under a side altar where he had stored items from the original church design, items that he hoped someday would be restored to what he always considered their rightful place.

Later, he said, the state fire marshal could not believe that it was volunteers who successfully extinguished the fire (three volunteer fire departments, from Glandorf, nearby Ottawa and Kalida, working alongside local parishioners) had successfully extinguished that blaze.

But the people were used to taking care of their church, cherishing it, sacrificing for it. Under the leadership of then-pastor Fr. Louis Osterhage, C.PP.S., the church was restored and back in full use four months later, in time for Midnight Mass that Christmas.

Mike was asked to lead the restoration, a task that in some ways he had been training for his whole adult life. He has an appreciation for the church that goes beyond brick and mortar. He wasn't born in Glandorf; he moved there with his family in 1950, when his mother returned to her hometown to take care of her mother. Mike had a long career teaching English and German at nearby Pandora-Gilboa High School, but always, he was keeping an eye on St. John the Baptist, protecting its heritage and its priceless craftsmanship.

"When I first started doing this, people didn't always appreciate my efforts," he said. It took a while for people to see the value of having a parish historian on site, always vigilant.

"I live in the 19th century," Mike said.

Further: "It's been my joy to instruct the people of God here on what their heritage really is. So many young people grow up not knowing their own history. We put that to route."

### A Team Effort

Passing history along to the next generation requires effort





"So many young people grow up not knowing their own history. We put that to route."

— Mike Leach, center left, leading a tour at St. John the Baptist. Top photo, the church's choir loft.

in both giving and receiving the message. Parish life is always a team effort. Fr. Matt, the current pastor, knows that. He walks down the hall of the former parish school, now the parish life center, where years ago parish volunteers removed banks of

lockers and replaced them with display cases that parishioners built by hand. Those cases are now the parish museum, a tribute to the parish itself, and to the Missionaries and Sisters of the Precious Blood who served there. That's the history of the place, and it's bookended by colorful bulletin boards put up by catechists as they prepare for the coming year. Religion classes are held in the parish life center. The children of the parish, the future of the parish, learn about their faith as they walk past artifacts of their faith family's past.

Fr. Matt appreciates all that, the past, present and future. "Here in Glandorf, what's special is that the church is the center of our community. You can be driving from miles away, coming into town, and the church is the first thing you see. The church draws people to faith," he said.

"We're a family church. St. John's is the heart of Glandorf, and the heart is where the life is; blood flows into the heart, gets its oxygen and then goes out to the peripheries, carrying that life with it. People come here to bolster their faith and receive the sacraments. Then they go out into the local community. Faith flows out, and it flows back in."

It's inspiring to him that the parish appreciates the contributions of the Missionaries, who have served there for so many years. He appreciates that the people maintain the museum, which is a reminder of a long and strong relationship. But it's never all about the past, he said. Right now, the parish is planning a new event, SONday Funday, to be held in October. SONday Funday will be family-friendly event with games for the kids, an open house for the religious education program, and representation of other parish organizations. It will also raise funds for maintenance of the parish center. It's going to be great, he said.

He'll be there. You can count on it. "For a pastor,

ministry of presence is important," he said. "I can do the office stuff; there are always administrative tasks that need to be done. But I



Fr. Matt Keller

like getting out of the office, being among the people. I like to go out and walk around town, and people know me. Being out where people can see me, that's a sign of the ministry. It's an informal way of ministering to the people."

The people minister to him, too. "They stop and talk to me, they ask, 'Father, how are you doing?" The question is sincere; their concern for him is obvious. It's a family church, and he's part of the family.

### It's All About Building Bridges

Summertime is often a time of transition for those involved in ministry because many new assignments begin on July 1. After 12 years serving as pastor of three parishes in downtown Dayton, I began a new assignment as director of vocation ministry for the U.S. Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Many thanks to Fr. Steve Dos Santos, C.PP.S., our former director of vocations, who is now pastor of St. James the Less Parish in Columbus, Ohio.

In this time of transition, I am returning to a ministry that I was engaged in during the mid-1990's. One of the greatest changes is using social media as a tool for vocation ministry. Recently, Pope Francis became the first pope to use Facebook Live. It reminded me of 2012, when Pope Benedict was the first pope to send a tweet, using the handle @ Pontifex, a Latin term meaning "bridge builder." The papal Twitter account now has 18.7 million followers.

How do we build bridges to communicate with one another the importance of faith and mission? I received a rosary on my First Communion from Sr. Loyola Pulskamp, my great aunt. Along with the rosary she typed a message that the rosary was blessed by the pope. That special gift planted a seed, built a bridge to a pope who seemed so far away and yet now was connected to me through the rosary. Little did I know that I would one day meet Pope John Paul II and receive another rosary directly from his hands.

We never know when a little word of support will plant a seed. Recently we celebrated the ordination of Fr. Greg Evers, C.PP.S., in Maria Stein, Ohio. Years ago, presiding at the funeral of Greg's grandfather, Fr. Ken Schroeder, C.PP.S., commented during the homily that maybe Greg would hear the call to priesthood to honor the tremendous faith life of his grandfather. As God's providence would have it, Greg was ordained on his grandfather's birthday.

Call and Ans

Whether it be a small gift, a word of encouragement, a tweet from the pope or an interview on Facebook Live, we can all keep the idea of a vocation to ministry within the Church alive and present in the hearts of our youth and young adults. As St. Gaspar said, "Give attention to those inspirations which God imprints upon you as you meditate, so that you will be able to recognize whatever is in keeping with and correspondent to his divine will by which the soul is led to the holy mountain of God."

Call and Answer by Fr. Angelo Anthony, C.PP.S.





CCSJ junior Katie Clements, center, recipient of the first Brother Jerome Schwieterman Award for campus involvement, with campus ministers Sr. Mary Jo Sobieck, OP, and Larry Cubalchini. (Not pictured is Fr. Tim McFarland, C.PP.S., also part of the campus ministry team.)

## "I Had Nothing Better to Do"

Calumet College of St. Joseph student feigns indifference while becoming an invaluable part of the college's campus ministry team.

Aatie Clements contributes to campus ministry efforts at Calumet College of St. Joseph in a number of essential ways.

For instance, she spotted a fatal flaw in campus ministry's planned Mardi Gras celebration.

Campus minister Larry Cubalchini, a former director of religious education at a parish in Chicago, said he wanted to use the event as "a teachable moment." For him, it was going to be an opportunity to teach students about Ash Wednesday and Lent.

Nope, said Katie, who will be a junior at CCSJ this year. "I had to axe that stuff," she said. "People aren't going to be interested in an event like Mardi Gras if it isn't going to be a fun thing."

It turned out that Katie was correct, as Larry is the first to admit.

"It was a really good time, a time to unwind," Katie said. And for students at the small college in northwest Indiana, many of whom are juggling work, school and family concerns, time to unwind is very welcome, especially in the middle of a long semester.

Katie's instincts with events, her commitment to the college, her sense of what might draw students to CCSJ's campus ministry office, made her a natural choice for the first-ever Brother Jerome Schwieterman Award, which will now be given annually to a student who makes a difference on campus.

"We (the campus ministers) have wanted to do a student award for a while now, for someone who makes an outstanding contribution to campus life. Then came the idea to name an award after Brother Jerry, who spent 18 years in campus ministry. And we thought, 'Hello, this is it!" Larry said. And they knew right away who would receive it.

"It is a way to honor Brother Jerry's memory, keep the Precious Blood connection, and move forward," he said.

### **Radical Hospitality**

Campus ministry at CCSJ practices radical hospitality, meaning that everyone is welcome in the campus ministry office and at its events.

Katie leads the way for many campus ministry activities, but it was not always the case. And CCSJ was not always her school. Raised in nearby Hammond, Ind., she first went to college to become a massage therapist. When that did not turn out, she switched schools and enrolled in a pharmacy tech program—until that school shut down.

She thought she might just forget about college, until a friend, Kelly Burns, who happens to work in CCSJ's admissions office, suggested that Katie visit CCSJ.

"I told her I was just coming for a visit, and we were talking, then Kelly told me that CCSJ has a great writing program," said Katie, who loves to write. "I said, 'Oh really? Tell me more,' and BAM, she slapped down a pamphlet. I tell her she bamboozled me."

"I felt drawn to it, learning more about God, Jesus, hearing the stories. I started thinking, 'Maybe this is something I can get into.'"

That initial bamboozlement led to Katie enrolling in classes at CCSJ, including a Theology 110 class taught by Larry, on social justice. "She had taken the class once before, but she had not seen eye to eye with the instructor," he said. "But that's not the person I encountered. She was the person in the front row, willing to speak. Half of the freshmen were sitting there scared to say anything, but Katie was willing to open up."

"I had nothing better to do," she said, with a wry smile. But really, as Katie helped foster meaningful class discussions, she was also helping herself.

"I've made a lot of mistakes in my life," she said. "If you had asked me two years ago, I would have told you I don't believe in God. I was in a dark place, and I needed something to get my mind cleared. So I took his class. I had no choice—it's required. I wanted to be one of those kids who just sat there and did nothing. But I'm also not one who does what everyone else does. So I started asking questions, challenging opinions. I made some people mad. But I got the discussion started."

Then she went to the campus ministry office to ask Larry a question, "and I never left," she said. "I felt drawn to it, learning more about God, Jesus, hearing the stories. I started thinking, 'Maybe this is something I can get into.""

### "It's Got to be Perfect"

That Katie found the right people, the right place at the right time, is something that happens sometimes in ministry, said Sr. Mary Jo Sobieck, OP, also a part of the CCSJ campus ministry team. "A lot of it is the work of the Holy Spirit," she said. "There's something in that human connection. There was

a moment of readiness in Katie, something struck a chord in her mind and heart. We can't as ministers ever know what that is going to be in the people we serve. But it doesn't always require doing as much as it requires just being together. That's what we do in this room, we're just together. It's just a hangout spot. People come by and see us laughing, being together, and it sparks their interest: 'What's going on in there?'"

Katie carries that spark from thoughts, feelings and beliefs into action. She helps with the college's annual St. Joseph's Table celebration, held in March on the Feast of St. Joseph, patron of the college. She planned a going-away party for Dr. Valerie Pennanen, a longtime faculty member at CCSI whom Katie called "the sweetest Hufflepuff." She's a constant volunteer at the school's weekly sandwich-making session—last year CCSJ students and staff made enough sandwiches to provide 9,000 meals to Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood. Katie helped with the school's first-ever Halloween costume contest, part of a three-day commemoration that included All Saints Day and All Souls Day.

"When there's an event, I take charge of it, even though I try not to," she said. "It's got to be perfect."

Katie's efforts pay off when students are drawn near through campus ministry events and informal gatherings, said Fr. Tim McFarland, C.PP.S., who is the director of mission and ministry at the college.

"Katie helps foster the vision of CCSJ in the way she helps bring people together so all feel that they belong here. Her regular assistance serves those in need, even beyond our campus. This continues the ministry of Brother Jerry, who had a passion for those in need, particularly those in Guatemala. We are grateful to her for continuing the mission of the college and our Precious Blood charism."

Brother Jerry Schwieterman, C.PP.S. (1961–2022), ministered at Calumet



College of St.
Joseph from 2001–19.
He was a welcoming presence

on campus and had a missionary spirit for helping those on the margins.
Brother Jerry died in 2022 after a lengthy illness.



### $C \cdot \mathcal{H} \cdot \mathcal{A} \cdot \mathcal{P} \cdot \mathcal{T} \cdot \mathcal{E} \cdot \mathcal{R}$ and $\mathcal{V} \cdot \mathcal{E} \cdot \mathcal{R} \cdot \mathcal{S} \cdot \mathcal{E}$



**ORDAINED:** Fr. Gregory John Evers, C.PP.S., was ordained to the priesthood on Saturday, July 15, at St. John the Baptist Church in Maria Stein, Ohio.

Archbishop Dennis Schnurr of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati presided. He told Fr. Greg during the homily that "God has led you here. He has created you for this moment."

He directed Fr. Greg to "model Jesus' example of selfless love and service. What an incredible responsibility to place on human shoulders! But the followers of Jesus are humble enough and wise enough to know that, if called, the Lord will provide them with all they need to carry out the mission."

Fr. Greg, the son of Roger and Mary Evers, entered formation with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in 2014. He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy in 2016 from St. Xavier University, Chicago, and a Master of Divinity degree from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago in 2022.

He is now in ministry at St. James the Less Church in Columbus, Ohio, serving with its pastor, Fr. Steve Dos Santos, C.PP.S., and Brother Tom Bohman, C.PP.S.

Fr. Greg celebrated his first Mass on Sunday, July 16, at his home parish of St. Rose. The church was full to hear the son of a farmer preach on the parable of the sower.

"I think I can speak for my Precious Blood confreres with us today that it certainly takes time and many hands, to get to this point" of ordination, Fr. Greg said in his homily. "For me, the seed was planted about 13 years ago when I first started discerning to religious life. But God was already at work before that.

"As the seed begins to grow, it needs a little help. And it starts with family. I remember mom and dad praying with us kids at night before bed. They taught us to pray before meals, to pray the rosary together. These small practices helped plant the seed and allow it to grow, to pass it along to the next generation."

Fr. Greg said he is grateful to his family, faith community and religious community, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

"I stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before me," he said. "I hope that my ministry can produce fruit that will help to feed and benefit the people of God. I look forward to working with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in serving the people of God and in sharing the reconciling power found in the Blood of Jesus."





Above, Fr. Greg with the whole congregation at his first Mass; center, Fr. Greg with the archbishop and his parents; below, Archbishop Schnurr ordains Fr. Greg.



**IN MEMORIAM:** Fr. Clarence E. Williams, Jr., C.PP.S., 73, died on Saturday, July 8, 2023, at Jennings Nursing Home, Garfield Heights, Ohio. He had been in failing health in recent years.

He was born on May 10, 1950, in Tuscaloosa, Ala., to Clarence E. Williams Sr. and Lula Belle (Woods) Williams. Raised in Cleveland, he entered the Congregation in 1965 at Brunnerdale, the Missionaries' former high school seminary near Canton, Ohio. He was ordained in Cleveland on October 28, 1978.

Fr. Williams was a writer, preacher and pastor who throughout his more than 40 years as a priest was an advocate for Black Catholics and for racial justice and understanding.

After his ordination, Fr. Williams entered parish ministry at St. Anthony Church, first as an assistant then as pastor.



Fr. Clarence Williams

In 1995, he was assigned to the Archbishop Lyke
International Center in Detroit. He also served as director of African American ministries for the Archdiocese.

In all, he ministered in the Archdiocese for more than 25 years.

In 1998, he received a doctoral degree in global education and cultural communication. He authored three books, many articles and gave presentations throughout the country on the theme of Racial Sobriety, a term with which he described his process for dealing with racism as a social illness. In 2007, Fr. Williams was named the director of racial equality and diversity for Catholic Charities USA, Washington, DC.

He served from 2010–12 at Holy Innocents-St. Barnabas in Roseville, Mich. From 2012–18, he was pastor of St. James the Less Church in Columbus, Ohio.

He could speak compellingly to a crowd, yet make a solitary person feel completely heard and understood. A cheerful extrovert, he was happy to reach out to people from all walks of life. His educational achievements helped him excel as a communicator, but he never talked down to people and always appreciated the gifts they brought to the table of faith and fellowship.

A funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Charles Center, Carthagena, Ohio, on July 17, with Fr. Jeffrey Kirch, C.PP.S., provincial director, presiding. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Adalbert Church, Cleveland, on July 18. Fr. Richard Friebel, C.PP.S., presided. Burial followed at Calvary Cemetery, Cleveland.

For a full obituary, visit cpps-preciousblood.org.

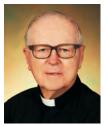
**IN MEMORIAM:** Fr. William Delaney, C.PP.S., 87, died on May 28 at Mercy Retirement and Care Center, Oakland, Calif. He was 87.

Fr. Delaney was born in Oakland on May 28, 1936, to William and Mary Margaret (Murphy) Delaney. Having met Precious Blood priests at his home parish, St. Barnabas, in Alameda, Calif., he joined the Congregation in 1956 at St. Charles Seminary in Carthagena, Ohio, and was ordained on June 8, 1963.

Fr. Delaney was active in parish and education ministries and in leadership during his 60 years as a priest.

After his ordination he served briefly at parishes in Oklahoma then at St. Anthony Church in Detroit; and St. Barnabas in Alameda.

In 1964, he was appointed an instructor at Del Bufalo Seminary in Liberty, Mo. He was appointed head of the religious education department at Cardinal Newman High School in Santa Rosa, Calif., and later served as principal.



Fr. William Delaney

For many summers, Fr. Delaney studied at the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University in Chicago. In 1970, he received a master of religious education degree.

From 1977–90, Fr. Delaney was the associate pastor then pastor of St. Anthony Church in Manteca, Calif. He also served two terms on the provincial council of the Province of the Pacific.

Fr. Delaney also ministered at St. Agnes Parish, Los Angeles, as pastor (1990-2001), and St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Los Angeles, beginning in 2001. He returned to St. Agnes as senior pastor in 2005, accepting the position of pastor pro tem in 2014.

In 2015, Fr. Delaney retired to Sonnino Mission House in Berkeley, Calif. He moved to Mercy Retirement and Care Center in 2017.

Fr. Delaney inspired others in the parishes where he served and in his religious community. Fr. Delaney understood that a good shepherd not only cares for those who are in his parish but also leads them out into the world to make a difference in the neighborhood where they live. The spirit of the Gospel of justice and peace guided his ministry and leaves a legacy of hope in the people he served.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on August 11 at 10 a.m. at the Holy Spirit Chapel of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary Center, Campbell, Calif. Fr. Joseph Nassal, C.PP.S., presided.

Burial followed at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Hayward, Calif.

For a full obituary, visit cpps-preciousblood.org.

### Gracie is with You

T hree of our kids got married within the past 11 months, and two of the couples took their honeymoons at the same time. Both asked us to watch their dogs (three total) at our cabin in the woods. Plus our old decrepit dog means we were in charge of four dogs during the last two weeks of June. The dogs had to be fed separately. The cat had to be kept safe, as two of the dogs chase the cat.

The dogs enjoyed their time in the woods, I think. Three of the dogs were given much dog latitude to sniff and roam about. One dog was my runner. She had to be tied up, or tied to me, or kept indoors.

This dog, Gracie, is the darling of one of my darling daughters-inlaw. Rescued from a puppy mill, Gracie is distrustful or disdainful of most humans. She's a sturdy 40 pounds, built low to the ground and surprisingly fast, like a buffalo.

My daughter-in-law had attached an Apple tag to her collar. It sent a reassuring message to my phone, "Gracie is with you."

I tethered Gracie out in the lawn for meals. One night, having been fed, she was out there while I was making human dinner. When I checked on her, I found only her long lead with its empty collar, near a narrow pathway into the woods. "Gracie is with you," the tag lied.

"Gracie, Gracie!" I called as I crashed through the woods, wearing inadequate shoes, carrying no leash. "Gracie, Gracie!" She never comes to anyone except her one human even in the best of times. "Gracie, Gracie!" Thinking of how my new daughter-in-law would feel when I told her the news. Hearing my husband call, "Gracie, Gracie" from the other end of the woods.

Who knows how far she would go, in what direction? I went back to the cabin to put on my boots and long pants. Went back into the woods on the faint trail. "Gracie, Gracie!"

God watches over every living thing. His eye is on the sparrow: I always took that as a message of infinite benevolence. But it is also about responsibility. For all the living things whom God places in our care. We

laugh with them, hug them, but there is a much deeper contract that we have made when we say we will watch over them. If we think about it too much, we freeze up. We're not God.

"Gracie, Gracie!" Then I heard lumbering in the underbrush, and she was coming toward me. I didn't catch her, she caught me. I slipped her collar back on. "Gracie is with you." I called my husband, "I've got her, thank you." I told God, "I've got her, thank you." Thank you for everything.

At Our House by Jean Giesige



### A beautiful, peaceful, prayerful HOME



### SAINT CHARLES SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY

- Airy, spacious one- and two-bedroom apartments for seniors.
- Exercise room, library and walkways on St. Charles' beautiful grounds.
- Residents are invited to participate in St. Charles' rich and devout prayer life, through daily Mass and benediction in the Assumption Chapel.

For more information, call 419-925-4516, ext. 112

2860 US ROUTE 127, CELINA OH 45822

Let
us
hear
from
you

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

Jean Giesige, editor, C.PP.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 United States Province | St. Charles Center 2860 US Route 127 Celina, OH 45822-9

Celina, OH 45822-9533

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