



# Sisters of the Precious Blood

FEBRUARY 2019 Volume 4, Issue 2



Please consider saving paper, ink and the environment — print only if necessary.  
We have eliminated much of the heavy color areas to minimize the use of colored ink. Thanks!

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Fun with Fungi 1
- SH book discussion 2
- Racism - Workshop offering 3
- Helping Immigrants 3
- Human Trafficking 4
- Consecrated Life 4
- St. Josephine Bakhita 5
- Serving in El Paso 6
- Earth Day 2019 7

## Enacted in our ASSEMBLY DIRECTIVES 2015 we will remember to...

- Continue to articulate and integrate our Spirituality in our sharing among ourselves and with others.
- Increase our use of social media to promote Precious Blood Spirituality.
- Stand with the marginalized, make a collective commitment to promote and witness non-violence, and strive to effect reconciliation among God's people.
- Act responsibly in the use and care of our planet's resources.
- Network with other individuals, agencies and groups to be effective in our current reality.

## Stories from around our CPPS world

### FUN WITH FUNGI

Sister Marie & MNA donated her services as part of the Silent Auction at the yearly banquet of the Michigan Nature Association, the very first organization in MI to preserve natural areas.

The winner of Sister Marie's silent auction offering enjoyed a privately tutored field experience learning about fungi of the forests.

Sister Marie Kopin has donated her services for a privately tutored field experience learning about fungi of the forests. Donations received from the silent auction will be used to fund the purchase of a rare original stand of native pines in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, enlarging an existing MNA preserve.



Sister Marie, the winner of the 2018 Knighton Service Award and much in demand for her mycology expertise, may lead you to visit a MNA sanctuary depending on conditions. The best time to search is between September and the first week of October.

Submitted by: Sister Marie Kopin

Directive: Act responsibly in the use and care of our planet's resources.



# Justice Conference of Women Religious

JPIC Ministry in the Coming Age of Religious Life

## News from JCWR – Justice Conference of Women Religious

### Human Trafficking

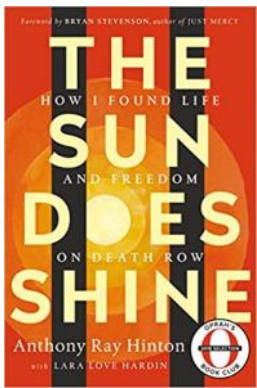
Jan. 21, 2019, the Vatican released pastoral guidelines for Catholics dedicated to the eradication of human trafficking.

This is a new resource for the Catholic community worldwide approved by Pope Francis!

Download the Vatican's "[Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking](#)".

It is a source of inspiration and support.

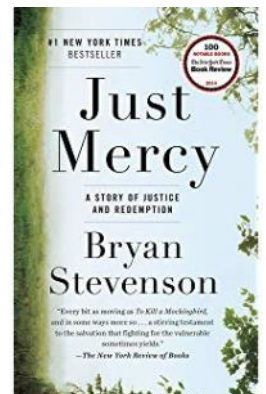
### SALEM HEIGHTS BOOK DISCUSSION



Salem Heights was the gathering place for a discussion of the book THE SUN DOES SHINE: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row by Anthony Ray Hinton with Lara Love Hardin. The twelve women who came together were Sisters, lay women, Black and White, members of various religious denominations. This powerful book recounts the real life experience of the author who spent 30 years on death row for a murder he did not commit. It is a story that moves from despair to hope, from hate to forgiveness, from mere endurance to choosing life and, ultimately, results in his exoneration. The inside look at a failed justice system and life on death row is a must read, a book you will want to share in light of current efforts to

reform our justice system. Be prepared to experience a gauntlet of emotions as you enter into Mr. Hinton's struggle for life and freedom.

(The next book chosen for discussion is Bryan Stevenson's Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption.) Just Mercy shadows world-renowned civil rights defense attorney Bryan Stevenson as he recounts his experiences and details the case of a condemned death row prisoner whom he fought to free. A powerful true story about the potential for mercy to deem us, and a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice—from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time



re-

**Submitted by:** Sister Jeanette Buehler

**Directive:** Network with other individuals, agencies and groups to be effective in our current reality

## 2019 Racism Through The Prism of Social Justice

### JCWR Third National Convocation

March 25-27, 2019    Marriott St. Louis Airport  
March 25 at 7:00 pm to March 27 at noon



Participants are invited to examine the roots of systemic racism and explore the difficult work of purging ourselves, our communities, and our country of the sin of racism and its destructive effects.

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur **Patricia Chappell and Anne-Louise Nadeau** will keynote the convocation. Both are experienced presenters and workshop leaders specializing in anti-racism work. Sister Patricia serves as Executive Director, and Sister Anne-Louise as Program Director, of Pax Christi USA.

Registration is open to all those who serve as promoters of justice, peace, and integrity of creation for women's congregations in the United States.

The convocation registration fee is **\$225.00**. The deadline for submitting [your registration form](#) is **February 23, 2019**. The JCWR rate at the Marriott St. Louis Airport is **\$130.00 plus tax** per room, per night. To receive the special Justice Conference for Women Religious (JCWR) rate at the Marriott, book your room [HERE](#) or call 1-866-661-8953 and use the code JCW. Rooms must be booked by **February 23, 2019** to receive the JCWR rate.

If you have questions, please e-mail [jcwrtteam@gmail.com](mailto:jcwrtteam@gmail.com).

### CPPS is helping Immigrants

LCWR – Leadership Conference of Women Religious requested that the U.S. Sisters assist the migrants and caregivers at the U.S. Southern Borders in any way possible. Sisters from various religious congregations are responding to this endeavor in a variety of ways.



Our faith calls us to **respect the dignity of life** in all its forms. Here are some ways Sisters of the Precious Blood of Dayton are caring for immigrants:

- Two of our Sisters spent several weeks in El Paso, TX from January 12-26<sup>th</sup> assisting those who are caring for asylum seekers released from the immigration detention centers. They worked at Annunciation House. For more information: <https://annunciationhouse.org/>
- A monetary donation was given for refugee relief efforts at a detention center in San Bernardino, California
- Some furniture and household items were given to a house of immigrants in Dayton, OH
- Contacts are being made with Catholic Social Services or Catholic Charities of SW Ohio and the city of Dayton for resources to assist immigrants.

*Submitted by: our Community Council*

*Directive: Standing with the marginalized*

## World Day for Consecrated Life

February 2, 2019

In 1997, Pope Saint John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life. This celebration is attached to the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on February 2nd. This Feast is also known as Candlemas Day-the day on which candles are blessed symbolizing Christ who is the light of the world. So too, those in consecrated life are called to reflect the light of Jesus Christ to all peoples. The celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life is transferred to the following Sunday in order to highlight the gift of consecrated persons for the whole Church.



Watch this video to appreciate “why we love our vocation”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXfLtClftU&feature=youtu.be>

*From USCCB – United States Catholic Conference of Bishops*



### Salem Heights Sisters

#### Gain Awareness About Human Trafficking

Since 2010, by presidential proclamation, January has been designated as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month in the United States. The sisters at Salem Heights attended a presentation on human trafficking on January 9, to better understand the \$150 billion/year global trafficking industry (labor and sex), learn national and state facts and understand how young people get caught up in the web of trafficking.

The chairwoman of Abolition Ohio’s speaker’s bureau, Sheila Crane, delivered the informative presentation. She told the 18 sisters in attendance that the average age of young people entering the trafficking industry is 12-14 years. They are courted by “groomers” who can be older children themselves who gain the trust of the victim until they secure them through drug addiction, coercion, or other methods. Over 1,000 Ohio teens are estimated to be trafficked for sex.

Some good news in the fight against human trafficking came at the end of 2018. Congress and President Trump re-authorized the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, which provides resources to combat and prosecute trafficking crimes and respond to victimization. And in Ohio, child marriage, a vehicle for some young people to enter into trafficking, was banned after the passage of House Bill 511. Ohio joins 32 other states that have set a minimum marriage age.

**Submitted by:** Colleen Kammer

**Directive:** Stand with the marginalized, make a collective commitment to promote and witness nonviolence



**February 8** is the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita, the patron saint of victims of modern slavery and human trafficking, a good day to join with others to pray for those affected by the crimes of modern slavery and the people that volunteer and work to eradicate this crime.

Saint Josephine Margaret Bakhita was born around 1869 in the village of Olgossa in the Darfur region of Sudan. She was a member of the Daju people and her uncle was a tribal chief. Due to her family lineage, she grew up happy and relatively prosperous, saying that as a child, she did not know suffering.

Historians believe that sometime in February 1877, Josephine was kidnapped by Arab slave traders. Although she was just a child, she was forced to walk barefoot over 600 miles to a slave market in El

Obeid. She was bought and sold at least twice during the grueling journey.

For the next 12 years she would be bought, sold and given away over a dozen times. She spent so much time in captivity that she forgot her original name. As a slave, her experiences varied from fair treatment to cruel. Her first owner, a wealthy Arab, gave her to his daughters as a maid. The assignment was easy until she offended her owner's son, possibly for the crime of breaking a vase. As punishment, she was beaten so severely she was incapacitated for a month. After that, she was sold.

One of her owners was a Turkish general who gave her to his wife and mother-in-law who both beat her daily. Josephine wrote that as soon as one wound would heal, they would inflict another. She told about how the general's wife ordered her to be scarred. As her mistress watched, ready with a whip, another woman drew patterns on her skin with flour, then cut into her flesh with a blade. She rubbed the wounds with salt to make the scars permanent. She would suffer a total of 114 scars from this abuse.

In 1883, the Turkish general sold her to the Italian Vice Consul, Callisto Legani. He was a much kinder master and he did not beat her. When it was time for him to return to Italy, she begged to be taken with him, and he agreed.

After a long and dangerous journey across Sudan, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean, they arrived in Italy. She was given away to another family as a gift and she served them as a nanny. Her new family also had dealings in Sudan and when her mistress decided to travel to Sudan without Josephine, she placed her in the custody of the Canossian Sisters in Venice.

While she was in the custody of the sisters, she came to learn about God. According to Josephine, she had always known about God, who created all things, but she did not know who He was. The sisters answered her questions. She was deeply moved by her time with the sisters and discerned a call to follow Christ.

When her mistress returned from Sudan, Josephine refused to leave. Her mistress spent three days trying to persuade her to leave the sisters, but Josephine remained steadfast. This caused the superior of the institute for baptismal candidates among the sisters to complain to Italian authorities on Josephine's behalf.

The case went to court, and the court found that slavery had been outlawed in Sudan before Josephine was born, so she could not be lawfully made slave. She was declared free. For the first time in her life, Josephine was free and could choose what to do with her life. She chose to remain with the Canossian Sisters.

She was baptized on January 9, 1890 and took the name Josephine Margaret and Fortunata. (Fortunata is the Latin translation for her Arabic name, Bakhita). She also received the sacraments of her first holy communion and confirmation on the same day. These three sacraments are the sacraments of initiation into the Church and were always given together in the early Church. The Archbishop who gave her the sacraments was none other than Giuseppe Sarto, the Cardinal Patriarch of Venice, who would later become Pope Pius X.

Josephine became a novice with the Canossian Daughters of Charity religious order on December 7, 1893, and took her final vows on December 8, 1896. She was eventually assigned to a convent in Schio, Vicenza.

For the next 42 years of her life, she worked as a cook and a doorkeeper at the convent. She also traveled and visited other convents telling her story to other sisters and preparing them for work in Africa.

She was known for her gentle voice and smile. She was gentle and charismatic, and was often referred to lovingly as the "little brown sister" or honorably as the "black mother." When speaking of her enslavement, she often professed she would thank her kidnappers. For had she not been kidnapped, she might never have come to know Jesus Christ and entered His Church.

During World War II, the people of the village of Schio regarded her as their protector. And although bombs fell on their village, not one citizen died. In her later years, she began to suffer physical pain and was forced to use a wheelchair. But she always remained cheerful. If anyone asked her how she was, she would reply, "As the master desires."

On the evening of February 8, 1947, Josephine spoke her last words, "Our Lady, Our Lady!" She then died. Her body lay on display for three days afterwards.

In 1958, the process of canonization began for Josephine under Pope John XXIII. On December 1st, 1978, Pope John Paul II declared her venerable. Sadly, the news of her beatification in 1992 was censored in Sudan. But just nine months later, Pope John Paul II visited Sudan and honored her publicly. He canonized her on October 1, 2000. Saint Josephine Bakhita is the patron saint of Sudan and her feast day is celebrated on February 8.

## GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION IN EL PASO

For the past two weeks, Sister Ann Clark and I volunteered in El Paso, Texas. El Paso is located at the southwestern corner of Texas with New Mexico to the west and Mexico to the south. At various ports of entry into the United States, each day Homeland Security is admitting hundreds of people to the United States on a temporary basis. These immigrants and/or refugees have a sponsor person in the United States. Around El Paso there are at least five shelters, most of them affiliated with Annunciation House. These shelters are organized to move the people from the immigration detention centers to their US sponsor.

Sister Ann and I were privileged to be part of this well-organized volunteer program, volunteering at the shelter located in the Diocesan Center. For me, being engaged in a very real “grassroots” movement was so significant. Everyday our Center received between 40 to 60 new guests and, therefore, everyday about the same number of guests moved on. At the shelter, the guests were received with pleasant welcomes, good meals, clean clothes, warm showers, arrangement of their travel ticket through their sponsor and a ride to their mode of transportation. Both of us were assigned to the “in take” detail, making sure that all was in order with their papers and that their needs, such as medical, were taken care of.



Besides that, Sister Ann and I made numerous trips to the airport and the bus stations. At the airport, most of the time we were permitted to escort the guests to their gates since this was a first-time air travel experience with change of gates and with the language barrier. Can you imagine how many volunteers there were each day for all the above activities! It was amazing and inspiring to see young adult long term volunteers, volunteers in charge of each of the areas, parishioners from different parishes bringing in meals two times a day. Their generosity was heartwarming and the expressions of gratitude of the guests was overwhelming!! For us, this was real “grassroots” in action, responding to the need at hand.

**Submitted by:** Sister Marita Beumer, CPPS

**Directive:** Network with other individuals, agencies and groups to be effective in our current reality.

The Pope's prayer intention for February is:

“That we may take good care of creation –a gift freely given– cultivating and protecting it for future generations.”



The [Pope Video](#) is an initiative by the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#) to disseminate the monthly intentions of the Holy Father concerning the challenges facing humanity. The [Global Catholic Climate Movement](#) is a proud partner of this initiative.

**Please remember to pray for creation throughout February and share the video!**

## Earth Day 2019 —PROTECT OUR SPECIES

*“In nature, nothing exists alone.” Rachel Carson, 1962*

Nature's gifts to our planet are the millions of species that we know and love, and many more that remain to be discovered. Unfortunately, human beings have irrevocably upset the balance of nature and, as a result, the world is facing the greatest rate of extinction since we lost the dinosaurs more than 60 million years ago. But unlike the fate of the dinosaurs, the rapid extinction of species in our world today is the result of human activity.

The unprecedented global destruction and rapid reduction of plant and wildlife populations are directly linked to causes driven by human activity: climate change, deforestation, habitat loss, trafficking and poaching, unsustainable agriculture, pollution and pesticides to name a few. The impacts are far reaching.

If we do not act now, extinction may be humanity's “most enduring legacy.” [Here](#) are some quick facts on the current wave of extinction and additional information about this problem [here](#).

All living things have an intrinsic value, and each plays a unique role in the complex web of life .

The good news is that the rate of extinctions can still be slowed, and many of our declining, threatened and endangered species can still recover if we work together now to build a united global movement of consumers, voters, educators, faith leaders, and scientists to demand immediate action.

Earth Day Network is asking people to join our *Protect our Species* campaign. Our goals are to:

- Educate and raise awareness about the accelerating rate of extinction of millions of species and the causes and consequences of this phenomenon.
- Achieve major policy victories that protect broad groups of species as well as individual species and their habitats.
- Build and activate a global movement that embraces nature and its values.
- Encourage individual actions such as adopting plant based diet and stopping pesticide and herbicide use.

[Click here to view our library of resources](#)

**Send us your articles (approximately 125 to 150 words or less) for our next issue. Next issue articles for *Grassroots* are due **February 25** so that we can meet our goal of having it in your hands by **03\_04\_2019**.**

Please submit to Marty Bertke [m.bertke@hometowncable.net](mailto:m.bertke@hometowncable.net)  
— or to Mary Lou Schmersal [cppsnews@bright.net](mailto:cppsnews@bright.net)

**Your contributions make all the difference!**

A graphic featuring the words "Thank You" written in a large, elegant, black cursive script. The text is set against a white background that is tilted slightly to the right, and the entire graphic is placed on a light green rectangular background.