



One Body

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD COMMUNITY

“God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer.”

—Mother Teresa



Fall 2008

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A Letter from the Editor



COMMUNITY, defined by Webster’s as a group of people who have common interests. An alternate definition comes from the Latin word *communitas*, meaning fellowship.

When Fr. Pat asked me to create a parish newsletter promoting community, I had difficulty defining what the word meant to me as an MPB parishioner. As I typed and deleted and deleted, I decided to stare at the actual word community until I was struck with an idea. Perhaps it was the Lord’s hand gently nudging instead of actually striking me, but nonetheless I was hit with something to write rather than delete.

I simply started breaking down the word community. First, “to commune,” or come together to share like interests and, second, “communion,” or to come partake in the body and blood of Jesus Christ and, third, “to unite,” or join in fellowship to celebrate one shared belief. Lastly, “unity,” in terms of the Catholic faith, denotes the concept of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To me, this is the actual cornerstone of the Catholic faith. According to 1 Corinthians 12:12, “*The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.*”

Again, I was struck and this time not so gently. As if God himself were shouting in my ear, came the words to a favorite hymn of mine, not so subtly titled, “We Are Many Parts,” by Marty Haugen, (Psalm 36, 5-10.) For those not familiar with the hymn, the refrain and verses are as follows:

Refrain: *We are many parts, we are all one body and the gifts we have are given to share. May the Spirit of love make us one indeed; one, the love that we share, one, our hope in despair, one, the cross that we bear.*

Verses:

- 1.) *God of all, we look to you, we will be your servants true, let us be your love to all the world.*
- 2.) *So my pain is pain to you, in your joy is my joy too; all is brought together in the Lord.*
- 3.) *All you seekers great and small, seek the greatest gift of all, if you love, then you will know the Lord.*

Okay, Lord stop the shouting and the not so subtle reminders! I hear you saying a community is made up of many people who ultimately make the Church one whole body. If it were not for the many people working toward a common goal, Most Precious Blood Parish would probably cease to exist, and yes, the newsletter for this same reason will be titled, **One Body**.

For the record, God didn’t think I had the point. Thus, Fr. Pat gave a wonderfully humorous homily a few months back. In his homily, Fr. Pat mainly spoke about how a community must unite in order for it to function properly. Jokingly, he pointed out that though we want to say we did it all by ourselves and perfectly at that, there is no one (but himself and God), who can accomplish this great feat.

Although it would be nice to accomplish what only God and Fr. Pat can do, it is impossible. I proved this point not only to myself but to all of you when God “struck” me with the words for this article.

I hope you enjoy reading the first issue of our MPB faith community newsletter. If interested, in writing an article or if you have a story idea, please contact me at faulknerpb@aol.com.

Beth Faulkner



The Delores Project

Reaching out to Homeless Women

By Eleanor Pasternak and Cathy Reano

The Delores Project is a place where women are treated with kindness and respect, where they can rest from the dangerous and traumatic experience of being without a place to live. The women of Delores come from all walks of life. Most live in poverty, sleeping under bridges, in parks and other places that put them at grave risk. The Delores Project reaches out to women who are chronically homeless, have mental disabilities or who are facing serious barriers to stability.

The Delores Project was derived from the name Delores Big Boy, a Lakota Sioux woman, who was homeless and died on the streets of Denver shortly before the Center opened in 2000. Delores had received services from several different agencies and yet fell through the cracks. Her name was chosen so that no one would forget that there are women like Delores who are homeless every night. Delores' family recently visited the shelter and was touched by the peace of the yard, the cleanliness of the center, and the cozy beds. This tour was different from the many others tours as this time a family could see that through

their loss a new life was born for many other women.

In 2007, 722 homeless women were guests in the shelter, and The Delores Project experienced 300+% growth in the use of its services due in part to the expanded capacity of their new facility, and the eight month shut down of Denver's only other shelter, specifically designated for single women. Also, this increase was possible because after years of having temporary shelter available only during the winter months, The Delores Project acquired a permanent home that is now open year round. The new shelter provides beds for 50 women with overflow space for an additional 25 in times of severe weather.

One woman's story . . . *Hope, a woman in her late 60's had been living in a condo that had been left to her when her parents passed away. She was able to live there for a long time on her disability money. Eventually with inflation and rising cost of insurance she was no longer able to stay in her home and she came to The Delores Project. As they got to know her over time it became clear that Hope had an undiagnosed mental illness and she was referred to*

the Mental Health Corporation of Denver. By connecting her to expert resources, The Delores Project was the stepping-stone for Hope to find safe, permanent housing at The Goebel House, a residential group home for women with mental illness.

Are you looking for a way to make a difference in someone's life? MPB's Social Outreach Committee invites you to reach out and help in this worthwhile project. Presently, every Monday, rotating teams of MPB women share in preparing a home-cooked meal for the 55 residents of the shelter. Once a month, one might cook a main dish, another a side dish, dessert or salad, or another may deliver the food. Other MPB parishioners help with the Open Sunday Program, teaching arts and crafts, Weekend Work Days, and serve on the Board of Directors, etc.

On the Delores Project website: TheDeloresProject.org, you can learn more about the various opportunities in which you could be involved. Contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Lorie Beth Brey for more information at loriebeth@thedeloresproject.org.

Bridges to Community

Dr. Vie Thorgren and The Center for Spirituality at Work

By Dennis Boyd

"Spiritual direction is the discipline of helping individuals get in touch with their calling and to live out of that calling. And the calling is how God wants to work through you for the community which is all of us, truly the Body of Christ."

The generally accepted understanding of community is of a group of individuals sharing some connection: a geographical space, a passion, a church. That's an easy concept to grasp, isn't it? But what happens when one's sense of community expands and includes dispersed groups—from prisoners to bankers—from all over the world? How does one function in that greater community?

If you're Vie Thorgren, MPB parishioner, you work on building bridges connecting all these various groups in the hopes of widening that sense of community. In 1996, Vie started the Center for Spirituality at Work (CFSAW), a non-profit organization. Their idea was to bring different lay people together under the direction of a facilitator to examine the spiritual life.

The Center initially created broad-based workshops on spirituality that were deliberately nondenominational. They occur over lunch and all-day sessions where business people are asked to "try on" different lenses, and sit down with people from different worlds to explore meaningful topics together.



The History of MPB

How Our Parish Began

By Bill Miller

“To have the services of the Church available as soon as the need arises,” Archbishop Vehr told the Denver Catholic Register of January 2, 1947, he had purchased forty-six lots at South Colorado Boulevard and Iliff Avenue, from the University of Denver, for \$24,000.

The need for a new parish arose sooner than most expected, as Southeast Denver exploded with residential and commercial developments after World War II. The sparsely settled 1880s neighborhood of University Park, next to the University of Denver, boomed, with development spilling over into the newer neighborhoods of University Hills and Wellshire. The block between Colorado Boulevard and Harrison Street, East Iliff and Warren Avenues, which had been Joseph Weid’s bee, wheat, and chicken “ranch,” was soon to become a new parish plant.

On July 10, 1952, Archbishop Vehr authorized creation of Most Precious Blood parish and appointed a Vincentian priest, John Donohoe, CM, the founding pastor. Father Donohoe held the initial mass and organizational meeting August 10, 1942, in the large outdoor grotto at Our Lady of Lourdes Church. Several hundred people attended and were given census and donation forms. Subsequent masses of the baby parish were held in the eighth-grade classroom at Our Lady of Lourdes School. By December, the young parish had outgrown that room and began meeting in the basement chapel at St. Vincent de Paul School. Meanwhile, Most Precious Blood parishioners began raising money for a church of their own, using socials at Observatory Park, bazaars, Levi Blue Jeans dances, swimming parties, hay rides, bake sales, spaghetti dinners, “Country Cousins” square dances, and festivities featuring filmed highlights of Notre Dame football games.

John K. Monroe designed a rectory, meeting hall, and temporary church completed in March 1953, on South Colorado Boulevard. Father Donohoe, who had been living with his fellow Vincentians at nearby St. Thomas Seminary, moved into the one-story beige brick complex which

was dedicated by Archbishop Vehr on May 13, 1954.

As many parish families were looking for loans to build in the area, one of the first services offered by Most Precious Blood was a parish credit union, established in the fall of 1956. After persuading many members to donate or pledge 2 per cent of their income to build a school, the parish hired the Ro-



land Johnson architectural firm to design six classrooms. This modern one-story brick structure, which included a library, audiovisual room, health room, business office, and kitchen, was built for \$241,011. The school opened in the fall of 1960, and was staffed by four Daughters of Charity. At first, the nuns wore their order’s quaint starched white coronet with a blue habit; pupils had no uniform. However, in 1961, students were asked to wear uniforms, and in 1964 the nuns shed their 300-year-old headgear - the coronets also called “windmills” and “sunbonnets.”

To house the Daughters of Charity, a home across the street from the school was purchased for \$33,200 and remodeled in 1959. Four years later, this home was replaced by a large two-story convent, built for \$127,384. Over the main entrance, was a life-sized mosaic of a Daughter of Charity in the old habit. Rumor had it that many shuffleboard tournaments enlivened the basement after the convent was completed and blessed on November 19, 1963.

By 1962, the parish had grown to 1,000 families, and Bernard P. Degan, CM, became the second pastor. During Father Degan’s time, the school was expanded to eight grades, and the church was enlarged. Even with the enlarge-

ment, parish historian Pamela Jill Thomas recalled that “if you were late for mass, you sat way back in the church or even out the door!”

Maurice P. Kane, CM, who became the third pastor in 1968, began working on a new church. Architect Roland Johnson designed the spectacular modern structure - a low, circular, red brick church rising to a glistening white concrete central tower. This edifice, which included a library and shrine, cry and meeting rooms, was dedicated by Archbishop Casey on May 21, 1971.

Parishioners were shocked on the night of January 19, 1978, when Father Kane died in his sleep. His plans for the parish were pursued by the next pastor, Oscar Lukefahr, CM, who, with parishioners, completed a parish center on September 17, 1979, as a memorial to Father Kane. Father

Lukefahr was an avid runner who began using marathons as fund-raisers. He believed in spiritual as well as physical exercise and made Most Precious Blood the first parish in the western states to inaugurate a Renew program.

David A. Darling, CM, followed Father Lukefahr in 1982. Although the Daughters of Charity withdrew from the school, preschool through eighth-grade education was still offered. Despite creation of new parishes from its territory, Most Precious Blood maintained a family membership of over 1,560 in 1988.

John F. Clark, CM, the pastor since 1988, focused on building up a Counseling Center and a fully accredited Day Care Center. “MPB certainly is a very active, concerned and caring parish,” Father Clark reported in 1988. “The promotion of Gospel values is at the center of our activities and programs, indeed at the center of our life as a parish.”

The history of MPB is included in the book “Colorado Catholicism in the Archdiocese of Denver, 1857-1989” by Thomas J. Noel, noted Denver historian. That history, taken from page 329-330, follows. It is the hope of the editors that parishioners, particularly those who were involved in the development of the parish, will share their memories with the editors for future publication in our parish newsletter.

Staff Spotlight

Suzi Savich, Receptionist

By Annette Shope



If you've dialed the church office lately, chances are that you've heard the pleasant voice of Suzi Savich, our gracious gatekeeper on the other end of the phone. Her top priority is to help every caller by answering their questions, providing information, or finding them contacts within the parish. Over a year in the part-time position, Suzi stated she couldn't have asked for a better job working with such wonderful people within a faith community which allows her to use her creativity, computer and administrative skills. One noteworthy assignment included producing the various ministry brochures, which are located on the rack against the east wall outside the sacristy.

To say Suzi is a devoted parishioner is an understatement. She grew up in the parish and recalls the progressions of the elders. Suzi received all her sacraments at MPB, including her own baptism and marriage to her husband, Richard. Their son, Dillon, was also baptized 13 years ago in the parish.

One special childhood memory happened during a mass at Christmas time. A then four-year-old Suzi took her new black dog radio from Santa and during Fr. Kane's sermon turned up the volume!

Suzi and her family share the love of the outdoors and she defines herself as a "Colorado mountain girl" who enjoys camping, hiking, cycling kayaking, snowshoeing and photography. She is concerned about the environment and actively supports the efforts of the Creation Care ministry.

Keeping the Faith

By Megan Woods



One thing I have heard from many of my friends over the years is that they were raised Catholic, yet, when they got older, they didn't feel a connection to the Church and have, therefore, stopped attending mass. I have always wondered what prompted their decision to stop going to church. However, more importantly, I asked myself why I have kept attending Mass?

As a young child, I went to mass because my family took me, and, as a student going to Most Precious Blood, it was a part of school life. I didn't feel a strong connection to my faith at that time since I was so young, but I went. It was expected of me. Either way, mass was enjoyable to me (or at least talking to my friends afterwards was). When choosing what high school to attend, Catholic school was the only option I would look into. I was more than happy to continue my Catholic education. I took the regular religion classes and I attended Mass with my family as usual. Missing Mass was never a choice for me for several reasons: My family went, and, therefore, I would go. I felt my faith should be stronger and I hoped that attending church would help that happen, and I felt a certain guilt at the thought of missing.

When deciding what college to attend, I picked a college that fit my personality and style. I ended up choosing Regis University, another Catholic school. This time it was a Jesuit school. My brothers had attended Jesuit schools since high school and, after hearing what they said about their education, I felt it was the best decision for me. It was during this time, that I finally found a passion for my faith. In the Jesuit tradition, they teach religion, however, they encourage you to actually live your faith as well. It was the first time that I experienced what it was like to have a community of people who were dedicated to their faith and helping others. I was fortunate enough to attend

High School Youth Program

By Catherine Cole



The high school youth program at Most Precious Blood is open to all high school students. We meet weekly on Sunday nights from 6:00 to 7:30pm in our new youth rooms (meeting room and game room) in the Parish Center.

The goal of youth formation is to help ground high school aged students in their faith. We want to offer a solid foundation so youth can engage in the world knowing they are grounded in their faith. High school is a tumultuous time. Many youth don't think they have time for their faith. They are highly involved in activities, sports and social gatherings. Here, at MPB, we want them to have a place to come where they don't have to pretend to be anything but who they are at that moment. We want to offer an environment that recognizes young people where they are and encourages them to grow with the help of others.

We meet on a weekly basis and focus on four different rotating themes: Topic Nights, Prayer Nights, Scripture Nights, and Social Nights.

On the Topic Nights we discuss issues that are relevant to the Church and the world today. Topics include anything from Catholic social teaching, justice issues, to dating and relationships, peer pressure and "Why we go to Mass."

Prayer nights involve engaging in different types of prayer traditions. Meditations, Ignatian examen, Adoration, Lectio Divina and the Rosary are some of the forms of prayer we'll explore.

Since it is the Year of Paul, we will be doing some Scripture study with the epistles looking at how scripture calls us to come and follow Christ.

And finally our monthly social engagement can be anything from Bowling at Monaco Lanes, watching a movie, having an ice cream social or pizza party, to hosting a game night.

This program offers a variety of ways

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Reflection

By Sam Beirne, *Sohpomore*
Regis Jesuit High School, Girls' Division

The Church is a place of worship where we all gather together for the same purpose, and everyone is invited. We all pray, give thanks, and sing songs of praise, but it is our



community that keeps people coming back each week. Together we share so much. One of the most touching things we experience together are the sacraments. To watch a small baby laugh during Baptism, and to sit around the altar together sharing in Christ's gifts make each of us realize that we are not alone. We will always have Christ, but

"We will always have Christ, but in the community, the support and confidence we give each other really makes a difference."

in the community, the support and confidence we give each other really makes a difference. I personally, have taken the time to become involved with a few activities that the parish offers and

have found that they brought me closer to the church through the community. There are so many ways to help people through the parish. This really encourages me to go to mass every week knowing that I can help and pray for these people. I think going to mass really encourages me to get involved with youth group. For me, youth group is a positive place to get closer to God, share experiences with other teens, and know that we all understand each other. Just knowing that I can share my church experience with others around me encourages me to go to mass each week, and has the same effect on others.

Young Adult Faith Formation

Drinks & Dios

By Catherine Cole

The Young Adult Faith Formation program at MPB is open to all "young adults." What is a young adult? Good question! We don't know, perhaps post college until about age 35 or so. However, if you're interested in coming, you're always welcome! The purpose of the Young Adult group, also called Drinks and Dios, is to offer a way for young adults to continue their faith journey. So often after graduating from college, graduates lose that sense of community and can feel lost in the "real world." The young adult group provides an opportunity for young adults to meet other young people with similar beliefs and values in order to continue that walk on the faith journey.

Drinks and Dios meets on a monthly basis, usually the second Monday of every month from 7:00 to 9:00pm. They meet in the RCIA room to listen to a speaker and share food, drink and fellowship. Speakers cover topics about various justice issues in the Church and world to how the lectionary works and what the Eucharist means. They aim to offer a comprehensive program.

One thing that they are hoping to add this fall is the creation of small Christian communities or small faith sharing groups. This would give young adults the opportunity to explore their faith in a more intimate setting.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Young Adult program, please contact Catherine Cole at cole.catherine@gmail.com.

MPB Teens Offer to Help Moms

Go in Pairs

By Peggy Gorsuch

Hey, Mom! Do you need someone to babysit while you go shopping or entertain the children when you work at your computer?

Sarah Haas and Annie Grubah, two entrepreneurial MPB eighth graders, are at your service. Their new business, **Go In Pairs**, gives moms time of their own.

Sarah and Annie will change the diapers, bathe and dress babies, play games with the children and supervise craft projects. They even baked a cake for one busy mother.



As the name **Go In Pairs** suggests, Sarah and Annie work as a team. They are available for both daytime and evening segments, as well as nine-to-five responsibilities. Now that school has resumed, they will limit their workload to Friday nights and weekends.

Both girls are trained and certified by the American Red Cross to handle babysitting and mother's helper responsibilities. They charge \$8 an hour and divide the money.

For information and scheduling, contact them: goinpairs@gmail.com.

Bridges to Community (continued from p. 2)

One popular workshop, the “Balancing Act to a Balanced Life” addresses the challenges of today’s hectic world. The hope in all these events, according to Vie, is that the interaction and the “heart of these events is the interaction” and allows us to benefit from looking at issues from someone else’s perspective, so that we become a community of seekers and not solo searchers.

Community and bridge building exist in other places of CFSAW, which is evidenced in two major programs the Center operates, one that is called the Formation Program for Spiritual Directors. This program pre-dates the Center but was started by Vie at the behest of the Dean of the old St. Thomas Seminary in 1986 and it came under the Center’s wing in 1998. Spiritual Direction, Vie explains, is the discipline of “helping individuals get in touch with their calling and to live out of that calling. And the calling is how God

wants to work through you for the community, which is all of us, truly the Body of Christ.” To that end, individuals throughout the world – Ireland, the Philippines, Canada, and Guyana - have come to Denver since 1986 for the Center’s 13-month Spiritual Directors program. The last and most notable program offered by the Center for Spirituality at Work, is Making Choices, a prison based transformation program for female prisoners started in 1999. Making Choices attempts to heal the community by working with women in the Denver Women’s Correctional Facility on, as the title implies, making better choices than the ones that resulted in prison time. In this program, prisoners are paired with volunteer mentors from outside the prison and participate in a 8-week training program while incarcerated. Then, upon release from prison, they receive a full year of mentorship.

Making Choices instructs them in the process of making decisions and

constructive choices that will build their lives and families, rather than destroy them. Making Choices has been phenomenally successful, not only personally for its individual students and mentors, but collectively for the state as well. It costs Colorado approximately \$30,000 per year to incarcerate a woman; it costs Making Choices about \$1,100 per graduate. One out of every two women released from prison in Colorado returns there as a result of a subsequent crime; Making Choices graduates have an 8% recidivism rate. This is what we need to do with our communities: maintain them and maintain the relationships in them. The challenge faced by this member of our own MPB community is to advocate her organization’s mission, and offer us, by her example, the challenge to live out our faith.

Parishioners interested in finding out more about the Center For Spirituality at Work can reach Vie at 303-383-1610.

Keeping the Faith (continued from p. 4)

a Kairos retreat while I was at Regis. This retreat was a life-changing experience where I was forced to examine God’s place in my life. What I found was that my faith provided the foundation of hope that I needed to help me through difficult times. At this time, I looked at going to church as an opportunity to deepen my faith and my knowledge about my religion.

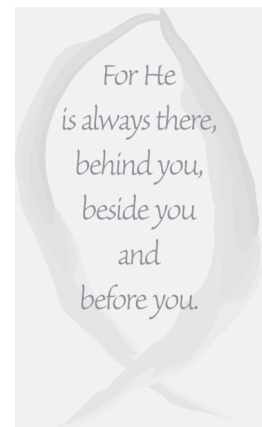
Still, after college, I struggled to find a church where I felt comfortable. It took several years before reconnecting with MPB. By that time, things had changed and reminded me of my college experience. I looked forward to attending church and what I could learn and incorporate into my life. I didn’t quite feel the sense of community that I had at Regis. It wasn’t until a friend told me about the Drinks and Dios group that I found the piece of my faith that had been missing. The young adult group has been a great experience for me. It gives me the chance to meet people in my age group that I can discuss my faith with, and it gives me the opportunity to be more involved in church so that I am again living my faith instead of just going to mass. I love the fact that I can walk into any mass and know someone. It has brought a new sense of hope and faith into my life.

I think that part of having faith and being religious is being patient while you are trying to figure out your beliefs. For me, I was motivated enough to stick through the years when I didn’t know the purpose behind going to church. In the end, my faith has become stronger and I am proud to say I attend mass each week. It has become more than something I do; it has become a part of who I am.

High School Youth Program (continued from p. 4)

for our youth to encounter the risen Christ through prayer, scripture, as well as other methods.

If you’re interested in being involved in our high school youth program in any capacity, email Catherine at cole.catherine@gmail.com.



The mission of One Body is to provide a forum for members of the MPB Community to share their lives and personally connect.

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2250 S. Harrison Street, Denver, CO 80210.*

If you wish to submit an article, please contact Beth Faulkner at faulknerpb@aol.com.