

PRECIOUS BLOOD CHARISM AND ACTIVE MINISTRY:
HOW SISTERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS INFLUENCED RELIGIOUS LIFE

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PRECIOUS BLOOD CHARISM AND ACTIVE MINISTRY:
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ABSTRACT

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The primary ministry of a religious community has an impact on the way that that group understands its place in the Church. In this work, the Sisters of the Precious Blood's charism will be presented from the time of the community's foundation in the 1830s up through today, noting how active ministry has brought about a community which lives an apostolic life. These sisters, who in the beginning lived in large semi-cloistered convents, soon found themselves in active ministries, one of which was teaching in the area's public schools in northwestern Ohio. The narrative of renewing religious life in the middle of the twentieth century runs parallel to the standardization of religious education during release time in public schools. Finally, there is a discussion of how both the schools and the sister's charism lives on today through the involvement of lay people.

This work is dedicated to my parents,

John and Rita Hess

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an important part of both American history and Catholic history. Many of the earliest educators in what would eventually become the United States of America were the religious leaders in local communities. For American Catholics in later years, the religious leaders most associated with schools were “nuns,” women religious in long habits and veils, who knew that teaching was more than just a job; it was a vocation that shaped them at their core. The story that is about to unfold will uncover a different understanding of American education and Catholic educators than is often discussed. The phenomenon takes place in northwestern Ohio, where the Sisters of the Precious Blood (C.P.P.S.) were paid to teach in public elementary and high schools. In Mercer, Auglaize, Putnam, Seneca and other counties in this region, the sisters were supported in their ministry of public education by rural towns made up of almost entirely German Catholic immigrants. Although the extraordinary practice of sisters in public education occurred in other areas of the United States through the twentieth century, there has been scant documentation of the sisters who taught at state funded schools.

The narrative that unfolds will also look at how such a public ministry helped to develop the spirit and charism of the Sisters of the Precious Blood from their foundation in 1834 until today. This Swiss community was founded a mere ten years before three sisters arrived in Peru, Ohio to help Fr. Brunner and the Missionaries of the Precious

Blood minister to the German settlers. Their founder, Mother Maria Anna Brunner, had a strong devotion to the Precious Blood of Jesus, and was known for her long hours of prayer before the tabernacle in the presence of the Lord. She and the community that sprouted from her pious example were especially noted for the time spent in nocturnal adoration. It is this prayerful devotion and Swiss upbringing that instilled in her community a strong work ethic, each member doing whatever task needed to be done. It is because of this desire to do the work asked of them that teaching became an early ministry of the Sisters of the Precious Blood when they came to Ohio. In the beginning the need for teachers fluent in German was great in Northwest Ohio, and they had knowledge and skills to offer. Throughout their years in public schools sisters were regarded as well-educated and effective teachers, thanks in large part to the example of Mother Brunner.

The purpose of this project is to understand the sisters' roles in the public schools with regards to their ministry and religious community charism. This project also examines how these schools operated within the context of their unique Catholic and local community. Presented below is a chronicle of how the sisters' religious community charism and the public schools developed side by side. In the first chapter, I will present the life and teaching of Mother Brunner as well as the early ministry and spirituality of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. From there, a discussion of how these unique German Catholic settlements developed and how the schools were formed will be presented. In the second section, there will be an account of the sisters coming to America, their early settlements, and ministry in education. In addition, there will be a presentation of how the community of sisters sought to evolve their understanding of charism to fit to the ministry

of helping the needs of the local communities over that period. There will also be a discussion of how public education expanded in northwestern Ohio, and how the Sisters of the Precious Blood furthered that expansion. The third chapter illustrates how American legal practices and changing attitudes affected these rural public schools. This chapter begins with accounts of sisters who attended schools staffed by women religious of the same C.P.P.S. community they would later enter in the 1940s and 1950s. Near the end, Sisters who were teachers from the 1960s on show what changes area lawsuits brought, and how many communities still retained a subtle Catholic identity in their schools through maintaining the practice of release time. The fourth chapter will discuss the mid-twentieth century and how Vatican II affected the charism and practices of the sisters. During the period after the council, the Sisters of the Precious Blood sought to better articulate their spirituality to include the many public and active ministries the congregation's members filled. Finally, there will be an account of how the legacy of religious educators working in the public school system still lives on in various communities where the sisters once ministered. The fifth chapter will also look closely at a modern articulation of Precious Blood charism, and how the spirituality of these sisters can easily be adapted into the life of any faithful Christian.

CHAPTER 1: FOUNDATIONS

The first chapter of this study looks at foundations. Two different communities were beginning around the same time that would later influence and cooperate with each other for decades to come, up until today. However, for these early years neither community knew about the other's existence. The first narrative takes place in Switzerland and chronicles the life of Mother Maria Anna Brunner, foundress of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. The story of her life, which is recounted below, is the example of Precious Blood charism that sisters have strived to live for over one hundred and eighty years. The details that are recounted below note her emphasis on Eucharistic devotion from which flows her desire to fill whatever needs the local community might have. The chapter then turns to the plight of German Catholics who settled in the dense marshlands of northwestern Ohio. These farmers toiled at great lengths to establish farms, so as to keep their families alive. However, despite their poverty and the lack of amenities, these immigrants were never miserly when it came to furthering their Catholic faith and the wellbeing of their children. Despite their many unfulfilled needs, often a parish church and school were constructed before a priest or teacher could be found. Filling these positions became a great hope for the community. These two communities, one religious, one local; one in Switzerland, one in America, were about to meet and begin a relationship that would leave a lasting imprint on them both.

Mother Brunner, Father Brunner, and the early years of the Community:

Maria Anna Brunner was born on October 1, 1764 in the Swiss Alps between the villages of Muemliswil and Ramiswil.¹ She was the second child and the first daughter to Adam and Elizabeth Probst.² Little is known about her parents; however, it is clear that they were very devout Catholics who instilled many Christian values in Maria Anna and her five siblings. She is said to have written, “My parents, especially my father, were pious, and directed me in the path of goodness. Moreover, they did all in their power to have me well instructed.”³ By instructed Maria Anna probably did not mean the kind of formal schooling we think of today when that term is used. Any formal education in the village school would have been obtained before the age of twelve, for after that time, she had homemaking duties to attend to and she soon excelled in domestic arts. Most notably, after gaining a job with a local seamstress, Maria Anna became a skilled seamstress.⁴

These skills young Maria Anna Probst learned from her mother and the piety that she absorbed from the example of her father would take on new meaning when Nicholas Brunner approached her about becoming a maid in his household, as his wife had become ill. At first she was hesitant, stating that she would need to ask her parents and “then after Mass tomorrow morning, I will give you my answer.”⁵ At that time she was only fourteen years of age, and she was very unsure of her own abilities, but soon enough both she and Herr and Frau Brunner recognized the exceptional qualities of the young girl. It was not

¹ See Image 1 in Appendix of Images for the official C.P.P.S. Community Image of Mother Brunner.

² Eileen Thomlinson, C.P.P.S., *A Dream Come True: The Life of Maria Anna Brunner* (Dayton: The Sisters of the Precious Blood, 2007), 2.

³ M. Octavia Gutman, C.P.P.S., *Not with Silver or Gold* (Dayton: The Sisters of the Precious Blood, 1945), 7. Although this work is published anonymously, the community attributes the work to Sister M. Octavia Gutman, C.P.P.S.

⁴ Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 3. & *Called at the Eleventh Hour* (Dayton: The Sisters of the Precious Blood, 1952), 6&7.

⁵ Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 4.

long before Maria Anna became like family to the Brunner household and after the two daughters were married, she took over the running of the house.⁶ It was during this time that a Jesuit priest had come to the town of Muemliswil to preach on the mission work being done by his order. The words struck a chord in the heart of Maria Anna, which was already fertile ground because of the devotions her parents had instilled. Later she would call this “her guiding star in her ‘conversion’ resulting in her practice of genuine virtue.”⁷

Maria Anna’s piety and work ethic, as well her kindness and generosity did not go unnoticed by Nicholas Brunner’s son, John Baptist Brunner. In 1793, when she was twenty nine years old, John asked for her hand in marriage and they were married November of that year.⁸ It is important to note that during this time the French Revolution was taking place, and the Reign of Terror was in full swing. Although Switzerland was shaken during this period, the newly married Brunners were not perturbed. They clung to the Catholic faith that they both loved deeply and were able to acquire some land and a farmhouse to raise their family.⁹

Together the Brunner family made a happy home, and in 1795 they were blessed with their first child. Their son, whom Maria Anna loved very much, would play a major role in the community she would found later in life, was named Nicholas Joseph. She would have four other children who would live past infancy, with one daughter dying shortly after her second birthday. A daughter and a son would grow up to enter into

⁶ *Called the Eleventh Hour*, 10.

⁷ Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 5.

⁸ *Called at the Eleventh Hour*, 12 & Thomlinson, *The Dream Come True*, 5-6.

⁹ Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 6.

Christian marriages, modeling that of their parents. A daughter, Anna Maria, would become a Visitation Sister and her brother, Urs Joseph, a Jesuit.¹⁰

It was during this time that she acquired the title “Mother,” from more than just the people living under the roof of the Brunner farmhouse. The official community history, written in 1944, recounts the tale:

With good reason she was called “Mother,” not only by her own devoted six, but by the people of the neighborhood. She literally mothered all the children of the poor for miles around. Scarcely ever did she go on a journey without returning penniless, yet always rich in happiness and satisfaction that come from having gone about doing good... Moreover, she was sponsor in Baptism for as many as twenty babies, each of whom was thereafter the object of her special attention and solicitude. To these she was a “fairy godmother,” generously bestowing upon them gifts of money and of kind, together with more precious nuggets of gold – her wise admonitions and counsels.¹¹

Mother Brunner was a mother to all that were in need. She gave bread, clothes, and money to the poor without ever thinking about running out of it herself, relying on Divine Providence to provide if resources were scarce.¹² She also understood that it took a community to raise a child and showed this through her sponsorship of at least twenty children in Baptism. She would assist them through her words and actions, molding them into pious and hardworking Swiss Catholics. It was her care for the poor and her tender upbringing of young people that would leave an impression upon those who would come to follow her way of life in the not-too-distant future.

Soon, her son Nicholas grew into a young man of great piety, and decided to enter the Benedictine order. Delivering her son Nicholas to the Benedictine Abbey of Maria Stein in June of 1812 was a bittersweet moment for Mother Brunner.¹³ She knew the

¹⁰ *Called the Eleventh hour*, 13.

¹¹ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 13.

¹² See Image 2 in Appendix of Images for a depiction of Mother Brunner giving out bread.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 20. See Image 3 in Appendix of Images for a picture of Father Brunner.

abbey well, as well as the shrine of the Blessed Mother at Einseideln and of the Precious Blood at Weingarten. A large part of Mother Brunner's piety came from visiting these shrines and asking Mary or Jesus for help in a troubling situation.¹⁴ The shrines were also a place to find God's comfort, as well as seek a new venture. Just a few months after Nicholas's entrance into the Benedictine monastery, her beloved husband passed from this world into the next. This left a great a hole in the heart of Mother Brunner, and in remembrance of her encouraging and pious companion, she wore the traditional black bonnet of a Swiss widow. However, through the intercession of Mary, Help of Christians, whom Mother Brunner prayed to about the depression and sorrow that filled her heart from the passing of her husband, her grief passed and she was again ready for God to direct her life.¹⁵

Mother Brunner continued to run the family estate and care for her children for seventeen years after the death of her husband. During that time, Nicholas was ordained a priest and was given the name Francis de Sales and asked his superiors to honor his devotion to Mary by having that name added in front of his religious name.¹⁶ By the early 1830s both Fr. Brunner and his mother were becoming restless, and they felt the Lord must be calling them to something greater and that they could give of themselves in a way that would bring true joy. Mother Brunner was living alone, and her son, after exiting the Benedictine monastery, entering and leaving a community of Trappists, now acquired an old castle with the hope of setting up a boy's school. There Fr. Brunner, as he was still a priest, could find a place that needed missionaries, like Asia, Africa, and

¹⁴ *Called at the Eleventh Hour*, 16.

¹⁵ *Called at the Eleventh Hour*, 18 & Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 11.

¹⁶ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 21. However, in many of the published histories I will use, he is referred to as Fr. Francis de Sales Brunner or just simply Fr. Brunner. In order to keep things consistent, the Marian addition to the name will be dropped.

America, and he would train these boys to be knowledgeable and holy priests.¹⁷ It was not long after Mother Brunner arrived at the Castle Loewenberg upon the invitation of her son that Fr. Brunner began preparations for Rome, where he hoped to be assigned to mission work in the Congo.¹⁸ Of course, his dear mother would never miss an opportunity to go on a pilgrimage.¹⁹

While in Rome Mother Brunner was able to visit many of the principal shrines and basilicas in Christendom. There is one story worth recounting which shows in great detail the piety and generosity of this Swiss Mother:

One day, while kneeling deeply absorbed in prayer at the tomb of the Apostles, her mantle was stolen from her shoulders. When finally she arose from her devotion and wanted to fasten her cloak about her, much to her chagrin, she could not find it. When she returned to her lodgings, she remarked good naturedly to her hostess, Signora Sturni, "But tell me, are there really such people in holy Rome, who would steal a mantle from a person's shoulders? The poor fellow who took it from me may have needed it badly enough, but at least he could have asked me for it."²⁰

Mother Brunner was in such a deep meditation that she did not have time to focus on anything but the spiritual. Her charity also comes out in this story where, although stealing is no way to go about fulfilling one's needs, it is clear the culprit was poor, in one way or another.

However, the most important experience from Mother Brunner's time in Italy came at San Nicola in Carcere where she came into contact with the Archconfraternity of the Precious Blood.²¹ Founded in 1815 by Fr. Gaspar del Buffalo, this band of brothers preached redemption through the Precious Blood shed by Jesus. It is likely that Mother

¹⁷ Ibid., 21-33.

¹⁸ See Image 4 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of Loewenberg Castle.

¹⁹ Ibid., 49-50.

²⁰ *Called at the Eleventh Hour*, 24.

²¹ Later this would be known as the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, known as C.P.P.S. which stands for the Latin name of the community: *Congregatio Missionariorum Pretiosissimi Sanguinis Domini Nostris Jesu Christi*.

Brunner heard many of the early members expound on the graces that come through devotions to the Precious Blood. She also received leaflets with prayers that she asked her son to translate into German so that she could bring them back to Switzerland. Her desire became to fulfill the words of Gaspar, “I hope the day is not far off when the Archconfraternity of the Precious Blood will be established in other countries.”²² Remember, the missionary zeal of the Jesuit who visited the local parish as well her pilgrimages to the shrine of the Precious Blood near her Swiss home were already important influences on her life. This encounter buttressed these holy encounters and opened her eyes to her life’s mission, devotion to the Precious Blood of Jesus.

After returning to Loewenberg, Mother Brunner continued her work around the castle as well as her adoration in the castle chapel. It is said that she “began by putting first things first – prayer before action, example before words.”²³ She was especially drawn to prayer at night, when the world was still, and few people made visits to their Eucharistic Lord. Her prayers that more would join her would be quickly answered when two maids, Elizabeth Meisen and Salome Wasmer (later Sisters Clara and Nothburga respectively) started following Mother Brunner’s example. They were drawn in by Mother Brunner’s spirit of piety and saintly life, as were five or six more that came to join the fledging community in the spring of 1834. There were now enough sisters to keep night vigil. After morning prayers and Mass, sisters would rotate between prayer before the Blessed Sacrament and work around the castle. The day would end with the

²² Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 15.

²³ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 61.

community gathering in the evening for dinner and to make the Way of the Cross, a favorite prayer of Mother Brunner.²⁴

Membership continued to increase in the community of women gathered at Loewenberg, and it became necessary to get permission from the Bishop of Chur to allow a rule of life to be created. In 1835 a written rule, which was never officially printed, was put into force. It put in writing the simple and holy life exemplified by Mother Brunner. Some of the prescriptions include,

The Poor Sisters endeavor especially to help the sick and disconsolate, to visit them, to console them, and in case they are poor, provide for the necessities remembering that what they do for the poor, they do for Jesus Himself' [Rule, page 9].²⁵

Furthermore, in regards to their spirituality the Eucharist is central. The early *Rule* stated that, "Devotion of the Blessed Sacrament is the principle one [devotion] for the Poor Sisters, above all others..."²⁶ Now, at the age of seventy two, Mother Brunner had realized the purpose of her life's work. Her restless heart had founded a group of women whose love for the Eucharist flowed out of the walls of the chapel to those who were in need.

That same year brought both joy and disappointment to the community. Fr. Brunner, who was still navigating his situation in hopes that he would be sent on a mission abroad, thought it might be time that the fledging religious community expand itself into a shrine of the Blessed Mother in Gruenenwald, France. Sister Northburga and another sister were sent there to start adoration and work in the community. However,

²⁴ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 60-4, Called at the Eleventh Hour, 25-8, & The Dream Come True, 16-7. There is some ambiguity as to whether 5 or 6 members joined in spring of 1834, however, the official history states it as "5 or 6" so that is how I have left it in the account presented here.

²⁵ Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 17-8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

due to relations between church and state in that area, the bishop there was not supportive of the endeavor. This experiment lasted only two months, and Mother Brunner's thoughts on the situation were never recorded.²⁷ In November 1835 the community got a much needed boost when Maria Anna Albrecht and her daughter Rosalie entered the community. Maria Anna and her husband had separated by mutual consent, and later he would become a Precious Blood priest. These two played a role in educating the orphans who came to stay in Loewenberg.²⁸ Mother Brunner would have been even more overjoyed if she knew the roles that the two Albrechts would play in the future of the community in America.

However, Maria Anna and Rosalie Albrecht would only get a short time with their pious mother. Mother Brunner, called by God in the eleventh hour to found a community of women religious, died after only living with her community for two years. On January 15, 1836 Mother Brunner passed away surrounded by her Precious Blood sisters who were praying the Stations of the Cross. At one point she asked for some water and they stopped praying to which she said, "No, just continue, I never tire of it." These were to be her last words.²⁹ The next day, the death of the pious mother was announced at forty churches. Hundreds came from the surrounding towns to bid farewell to their holy and caring mother, and her body was laid to rest in crypt under the floor in St. Mary Church in Sagans.³⁰ Although their Mother had passed, the community of sisters continued her

²⁷ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 65 & Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 18.

²⁸ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 66 & Thomlinson, *A Dream Come True*, 19.

²⁹ Thomlinson, *A Dream Come true*, 22, *Called at the Eleventh Hour*, 33, & Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 68-70.

³⁰ *Ibid.* However, on November 6, 1933 Mother Agreda Sperber and two other sisters went to Sagans to retrieve the body. A bone specialist was present as well as the local ordinary. Her body was exhumed from the crypt and was identified by the reliquary of St. Aloysius she was interred with. A shrine was erected in Salem Heights, the M

work. In reflection on the life of the community's foundress, Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S., the current archivist for the Sisters of the Precious Blood, said that charism means "gift" in Greek. Here, charism refers to Holy Spirit bestowing a unique way to live out the Gospel message on to Mother Brunner. This charism is then handed on to Mother Brunner's followers by the gift of her exemplary life. Sr. Noreen continues saying that this gift includes prayer and care for those in need; a sort of love of God that leaves the chapel in actions.³¹ It is the gift of Mother Brunner's example that laid the foundations of the way of life for the sisters as they were about to embark on a journey to the United States of America, which would bring the love of God and caring actions of the community to the New World.

German Catholic Settlements in Ohio:

Before Father Brunner joined the Missionaries of the Precious Blood and even before Mother Brunner and the other women who came to join her in work and prayer formed their order, German Catholics were settling in northwestern Ohio. Father Brunner was not necessarily a founder of churches in these communities, but he arrived on the scene after they were founded to assume administration of the parish and to regularly administer sacraments. The second part of this chapter will look at how these extraordinary ethnic farming communities were founded. These unique German Catholic foundations play a role in how the rural community schools were formed as well as the role Catholic priests, brothers, and sisters would play in community life. Minster, Maria Stein, Glandorf, Ottoville and New Riegel are five communities that will be looked at

otherhouse, in Dayton until 1980 when her remains were buried in the community cemetery on the property of Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio (*A Dream Come True*, 23-6).

³¹ Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S., interview by author, Dayton, January 12, 2016.

closely, as they are quintessential German Catholic communities.³² Many of the other towns and villages whose public schools will be discussed later follow a similar pattern of these five such as Egypt, St. Rose, Cassella, Chickasaw, St. Peter, St. Henry, and others.

However, it is important to note that not all communities were initially German or Catholic. Furthermore, presented below are towns that had fewer Catholics who came much later. They would have Sisters of the Precious Blood arrive there long after they were founded, and end up teaching in the public school. Usually, the sisters became teachers in the public schools in these communities because the parish school was absorbed into the public school system to save money. There was no objection to this consolidation from the parish, and in very few cases were there objections about the sisters, who simply remained in the classrooms where they had always taught.

Fort Recovery is one of these communities whose founding cannot be attributed to Catholics from Germany. This history is important in understanding some of the later events that transpired in their schools. Moreover, it is important to note that there were places such as New Bremen, Ohio that were German but predominantly Lutheran.

According to the research accumulated here, there were never Sisters of the Precious Blood in New Bremen Public Schools, and thus the town will not be in this discussion henceforth.³³ Finally, it is also important to note that, although the religious community

³² See Image 5 in the Appendix of Images for a map of the area of northwest Ohio discussed in this study.

³³ David Hoying et al., *Pilgrims All: A History of St. Augustine's Parish, Minster, Ohio 1832-1982* (Minster OH: St. Augustine Parish, 1982), 56. This section notes that the relationship with the Lutherans of New Bremen in the early years was excellent and thus kept with the tradition of Catholics and Protestants being on good terms in the areas of Germany where these communities originated. A mission church was set up for Catholics in New Bremen in 1872, but was closed in 1885, when attendance dropped because roads had improved and many parishioners considered St. Augustine's in Minster to be their home parish, *Pilgrims All*, 122. A Catholic Church stands in New Bremen today, but was not built until the 1950s. (Hoying et al, *Pilgrims All*, 122).

came to help the poor German farmers in what was then the completely northern part of the Diocese of Cincinnati, they also worked in the French settlements that were not far off.³⁴ The public school in the early French settlement of Russia, Ohio would later have Sisters of the Precious Blood teaching there.³⁵

The first question one might ask is, why were all of these German immigrants were coming to America in the 1830s? Michael E. Leach, a notable local historian from Glandorf, Ohio, who is widely published, offers an idea of the situation in Germany at that time. He first points to the response of the German government to the French Revolution. Not wanting a similar fate to befall them, leaders tried “to stamp out the last sparks of liberalism and democracy” which included suppression of people’s freedoms.³⁶ In addition, the German economy was in shambles. There were too many people, too much production, and the farms could not compete with the larger industry that new factories brought.³⁷ People began to realize that opportunities to better themselves were not going to evolve. The situation was drastic, possibly drastic enough to force poor farmers to cross the Atlantic. The third reason the German people sought a new life in America was the enchanting descriptions of the United States that were finding their way over to Europe. James Fenimore Cooper and Gottfried Duden’s works presented America to Germany as a “place of plenty: a country in which land was cheap, harvest bountiful, forests primeval with lumber and building materials unlimited, streams of beauty stocked

³⁴Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 87-88. Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati asked the C.P.P.S. to come to his dioceses because he knew of these German settlements in need of priests. Later, the See of Cincinnati would be elevated to an Archdiocese and then the area we are discussing was cut in half with the northern portion under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Toledo

³⁵ Russia is pronounced “Rue-she.”

³⁶ Michael E. Leach, *Laborer’s in the Vineyard* (Glandorf: Michael E. Leach, 2000), 1.

³⁷ Ibid.

with fish, and a wilderness filled with game.”³⁸ What poor person of the nineteenth century would not be compelled by stories of such a prosperous place?

The reality was that pioneer life in America was not easy. Those German Catholics who settled in northwestern Ohio often had many hardships. Peru, Ohio, where Father Brunner would first settle in the 1840s, was founded in the 1820s when the Bauer family’s covered wagon broke an axel and they knew they could go no further. The family included Frances Bauer, an ex-nun of a French order that originally settled in Canada, who would take the lead in preserving the Catholic identity of the Swiss German families who settled there with them. These first citizens had to clear the thick virgin forests and build log cabins, barns, and a church.³⁹ It is important to note that clearing the land and tending to the fields was one of the greatest hardships for the Europeans who settled in northwest Ohio. An account of the area around St. John, now called Maria Stein, Ohio, states that the trees left up to eight inches of leaves, making trails and roads difficult to forge.⁴⁰ After clearing the dense trees, it was difficult to keep the fields and roads drained. Although today the swampy nature of the land is not noticeable, nor would anyone guess there was once a thick forest, drainage ditches were necessary then, and often the copious amounts of water could not be kept at bay by the rudimentary ditches.⁴¹ Many settlers of this area had to clear thick and swampy forests to plot fields and build communities that were far from the sometimes simple amenities that cities could provide.

³⁸ Ibid., 2.

³⁹ Helen Weber, C.P.P.S. ed., *The Legacy Continues...: Stories of Precious Blood Sisters Continuing the Legacy of Mother Maria Anna Brunner Vol.3* (Boulder: WovenWord Press, 2002), 3-5.

⁴⁰ Paul Mizer, *Saint John the Baptist Church 175th Anniversary 1836-2011* (2011), 33.

⁴¹ Hoying et al., *Pilgrims All*, 54-5. Here it is discussed in great detail the problems of drainage by the German Settlers in nearby Minster. The Maumee and Miami watersheds are the cause of the water troubles many settlers had at this time. The Minster community thought about putting in a windmill, like in the old country, to take care of the problem, but the dense foliage would block the wind, and a steam powered one would be too costly for these recent immigrants to afford.

It was common for a group of families to settle in the same place, like in Peru, Ohio, because it allowed for support in building one's new life in America. Often, as in the case of the founding families in Minster, Ohio, these families came from the same area of Germany. Many of the first settlers of Minster, then called Stallstown after its founder Franz Joseph Stallo, hailed from both Oldenburgisches Münsterland and Hannover.⁴² It is because of this German heritage that the town was renamed and Americanized, for now it is Minster. The German Catholics began arriving in the summer of 1832. Fr. Horstmann, of Glandorf, Ohio, established a Catholic church for this German Catholic settlement in 1836 dedicated to St. Augustine.⁴³ In establishing the church, a school for the young people in the community was also a provision of the church's constitution negotiated by Fr. Horstmann and Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati.⁴⁴ A male school master was paid \$40.00 for the first semester in 1836. A year later, the school had upwards of ninety boys and girls from the town and surrounding farms.⁴⁵

In the early years, village life in Minster was similar to that in the old country. They were farmers who relied on the land and those around them to prosper. The community came together regularly, knowing that success was only possible when they all worked together. When it came time to harvest, the community banded together to make sure every family was able to finish gathering their produce. Often, there was a large celebration after the harvest had been gathered. Finally, some farmers kept animals for meat, but few people had horses, which meant travel was usually on foot. At times oxen were used to plow the soil for the first time, as well as to pull sleighs during the

⁴² Ibid., 7-8.

⁴³ Ibid., 43-44.

⁴⁴ See Image 6 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of Bishop Purcell.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 66-67.

winter months. One account states, “It is not uncommon to read reports of couples walking twenty or thirty miles to Stallostown to be married or families walking a great distances to attend Holy Mass.”⁴⁶ Clearly travel was rough for those who settled in the Ohio wilderness.

From the 1830s to the middle part of the century, religious services were not always an easy thing. Fr. Horstmann may have established St. Augustine Parish in 1836, but that was one of many parishes he founded in the larger settlements of German Catholics who settled in Northwest Ohio. In smaller communities, such as Egypt, Ohio, which is not far from Minster, the idea of a parish church for such a small settlement of farmers was a long way off. This community consisted of settlers who came from the same area of those in Minster to farm the land. They gave their home the name Ägypten, or Egypt, as a means of connecting it back to the German farm of early settler Johann Alard. The farm that he lived on in the old country was named Egypt because after the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) the farm was a wasteland. Many early settlers agreed that this new area of swampy forest was also a wasteland.⁴⁷ Although German immigrants began settling in Egypt in 1833, there was no parish church until 1852.⁴⁸ Because of the lack of priests, the community in Egypt would have to attend the religious services in Minster.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 49-52.

⁴⁷ *A Place Called Egypt*, (2002), 1. The majority of the book chronicles the family farmsteads around St. Joseph’s Church in Egypt. Each family wrote about their own farm, and no editor is given. This history of name ‘Egypt’ is written by David Hoying.

⁴⁸ *A Place Called Egypt*, 5. This is taken from a simple timeline of events in Egypt, with no author attributed.

Another community of German Catholics settled to the west of Minster, in a community called St. John, later renamed Maria Stein.⁴⁹ They began arriving in 1834, with the head of the first three families named John Leistenschneider, John Stelzer, and John Thomas (the Thomas family was not Catholic).⁵⁰ A year later there were twenty-five Catholic families who were already thinking about founding a parish and schools by purchasing forty acres of land for these important parts of the community at the cost of \$120.00.⁵¹ It is important to note that during this time the population grew quickly in St. John, as well as the surrounding communities, because of the ongoing construction of the Miami-Erie Canal, which made travel to these rural areas from Cincinnati easier.⁵² The people who settled here were from Oldenburg, like those in Minster. The German settlers from that area of Germany spoke “Plattdeutsch” or Low German, which would be passed on to the descendants of these settlers until the Second World War.⁵³

The town got its name, St. John, after the church was placed under the patronage of St. John the Baptist when it was established by Bishop Purcell in 1836; given the names of the first settlers, the patronage also harkened back to the area’s foundation.⁵⁴ Before that, the settlers walked to Minster, and would still walk there for some Masses until a resident pastor was appointed.⁵⁵ The settlers of St. John were much like those of Minster, who had a deep sense of community and a strong Catholic faith, and for many it

⁴⁹ It is important to note that like Stallostown becoming Minster in later years, St. John’s will also have a name change and be called Maria Stein, after the motherhouse of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, which is established there. However, as C.P.P.S. priests, brothers, and sisters have yet to arrive, the name St. John will be used until the next chapter, when Maria Stein motherhouse is established.

⁵⁰ Joyce Alig ed., *Mercer County Ohio History 1978* (Celina: The Mercer County Historical Society, Inc., 1980), 736.

⁵¹ See Images 7 and 8 in the Appendix of Images for a drawing of the early log church and school.

⁵² Mizer, *Saint John the Baptist Church 175th Anniversary 1836-2011*, 31-4.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 34-5.

⁵⁴ Alig, *Mercer County Ohio History 1978*, 736.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 736.

was quite a walk to get to Mass. Much like Egypt, smaller communities would later organize their own churches, schools, stores, and industries. The successful growth of these smaller communities would only be possible after the Missionaries and Sisters of the Precious Blood arrived to assist and develop the local parish and school.

It would be quite a tragedy if these early pioneer years did not include some of the observations of Liwwät Böke.⁵⁶ Her journals, translated, edited and published by her descendant, Luke B. Knapke, give modern people a look into pioneer life at St. John, which is enhanced by her own illustrations.⁵⁷ Liwwät and her husband Bernard “Natz” Böke traveled to St. John in 1835, from the Oldenburg – Hannover area. Like in Minster, she recounts tales of the community banding together and using resources for the development of all. Here is one situation she describes where pelts are collected and sent to Cincinnati for goods:

...so the community after sowing time and harvest, together sends all the pelts collected here in St. John by pack-horses in a group south to Cincinnati. (The value is great!) Ten or a dozen men with guns and powder go, at times in snow. Three weeks later they bring back the things they were able to trade for, things which we cannot get or trade for here.”⁵⁸

The community realized that they all must trust each other in order to build the American dream. This was the idea behind the occasional “Trading Day” that was often hosted by the people at St. John. Hundreds would come with the goods that they were able to produce to trade with settlers who were skilled at other crafts or who farmed other crops. Liwwät also notes that this is a great time to catch up with neighbors and meet others

⁵⁶ Today her descendants go by ‘Boeke.’ (She is also the great, great, great grandmother of the author of this work.)

⁵⁷ See Images 6-9 in the Appendix of Images. Image 9 is of the early Boeke Homestead.

⁵⁸ Luke B. Knapke ed., *Liwwät Böke 1807-1882 Pioneer* (Minster: The Minster Historical Society, 1987), 69.

who have settled in the area.⁵⁹ It should also be noted that the Bökes took in an orphan boy in the community in 1849, at the request of a priest, indicating that these German Catholic settlers also demonstrated their faith by serving those in need.⁶⁰ Finally, she shows us an illustration of the early St. John Church, which, although simple, was lovingly built by the townspeople. She also was very proud to have a school in the community, built only a year after the Church.⁶¹

Fr. Wilhelm Horstmann, who was assigned to St. John's Church as well as St. Augustine's in Minster after the bishop established these parishes, had an important role in founding Glandorf, Ohio. Glandorf is well over fifty miles north of both St. John and Minster, and today is in a different diocese than the communities discussed above.⁶² Glandorf is exceptional because it was founded by a priest. Those in Glandorf had the luxury of Mass and religious education from a clergyman. Fr. Horstmann arrived in Putnam County, Ohio in 1834 and quickly founded a "Neu" Glandorf, after the town of Glandorf, Germany from where he and many of the town's early settlers hailed.⁶³ In 1837 the parish of St. John the Baptist in Glandorf boasted over eighty families from the town and rural farmland, and thus a new church was needed. It was also at this time that Fr.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 129.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 139. The section of her diary is labeled "A Rascal Lad Becomes Bishop" because Liwwät and Natz were responsible for the care of Joseph Dwenger, after the death of his parents in 1849. Fr. Andrew Kunkler, C.P.P.S. did not wish to enroll him in school until after he got over an illness (which may have been cholera, as that epidemic was raging in Minster in 1849). After a recovery, Dwenger entered school (he was one of a few who got to study in Cincinnati), was ordained a Precious Blood priest in 1859, was a councilor to Archbishop Purcell at the 1866 Council in Baltimore, and in 1872 Dwenger became bishop of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

⁶¹ Ibid., 97-8.

⁶² Ohio was one Diocese, Cincinnati, until 1847 when Ohio was split with the northern half under the direction of the new Diocese of Cleveland. Later, in 1910, the northern half was split again, with the Diocese of Toledo taking the western half of the 1847 Cleveland Diocese.

⁶³ Leach, *Laborers in the Vineyard*, 1 & 7.

Horstmann built the first grist mill in the area so that people would not have to walk many miles for grain.⁶⁴

By 1840, the community had swelled to 122 families and the bishop came to Glandorf, with a German translator, to administer confirmation to the young people. This was before there were any other churches in the area, as eventually Ottawa would have its own church and school, so many people traveled great distances for the services at Glandorf's parish during the early years. At that time the bishop noted that Fr. Horstmann was an effective leader in both religious and secular affairs who had constructed a pioneer church (with a pulpit constructed of a hollow sycamore log) and a school. The bishop stated that "a common school fund" helped to pay the pastor for teaching in the Glandorf school and that this was a "rare justice to the Catholic population in Ohio" that was also happening in Minster and Wapakoneta at the time.⁶⁵ Thus, even though the parish and priest had a direct hand in the education of the youth, the local population knew that this was the best use of resources for their children to receive an education. In the 1840s, a publicly funded school, with a priest at the helm, was functioning in Glandorf.

Furthermore, other communities whose histories fall in the same vein as Glandorf are the rural farm communities of Ottoville and New Riegel. Also located in Putnam County, Ottoville was similar to Glandorf, in that a priest bought the land of the settlement to develop. In the early 1840s Fr. John Otto Bredieck bought a plot of land next to the lock of the Miami Erie Canal in order to build a gristmill harnessing the power of the water in the canal. Originally named Dog Creek, in 1880 the town was renamed in

⁶⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 16.

honor of its founder. As they say, “if you build it, they will come” and many settlers from diverse areas of Germany began to settle there, the majority of whom were Catholic.⁶⁶ Schools were set up by 1850, not long after a small church was built for the community.⁶⁷ The community had many of the same characteristics of the pioneer communities described above. The community history notes that the general attitude during the hard years of settlement was positive. Despite the hard work of setting up farms in the swamp, “peace, harmony and brotherly love combined with a genuine love of faith” to construct the community of Ottoville.⁶⁸

The final predominately German Catholic settlement that is important to this project is New Riegel, Ohio. Located in the southwestern corner of Seneca County, this was the last area of the county to be settled because it had been set aside for Native American use. In the spring of 1833, land became available for sale and a mix of French and German immigrants flocked to Wolfscreek. Anthony Schindler was the first of many Germans to come from the town of Riegel, Germany. It is because of their overwhelming presence in the area that Wolfscreek was renamed New Riegel. Early public school districts were set up in 1838. *A Century of Growth in Pride, Prayer, and Progress*, the printed history book commemorating the centennial of New Riegel, has this to say about religious practice in the area: “throughout village history Catholicism has been the dominant religion of the residents. Their religion has also exercised a dominant force on the lives of many residents.”⁶⁹ This does not mean that Catholicism was a negative force

⁶⁶ *The Immaculate Conception Parish, Ottoville Ohio 1848-1923 Vol 1* (1987), 8-10. Volume 1 is a reprint of the Diamond Jubilee Souvenir, printed originally in 1923.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 108-09.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶⁹ *A Century of Growth in Pride, Prayer, and Progress: A Centennial History of New Riegel*, no other information is given on this source. Today, St. Boniface has changed its name to All Saints Parish in 2003.

in the town, as there are no recorded episodes of Catholics oppressing other residents. Moreover, the ‘dominate force’ is the church’s outreach to the community, helping to guide and support New Riegel through the years. St. Boniface Church, named after the beloved man who brought Christianity to the German people, was founded in 1836. Not long after, a school was erected. Redemptorist priests from Peru and other surrounding communities would occasionally come and minister to the German speaking settlers until the arrival of Fr. Brunner.⁷⁰

As stated above, there were some occasions when French settlers would reside in the area. However, as the 1830s rolled on, and more French settled in the area, a rivalry began between the French and German immigrants. Picture the tension:

Between the bordering counties of Darke, where the French lived, and Mercer, inhabited by the Germans, tensions were often high. Persons who grew up in the area recall hearing that young people were not allowed to date anyone from the other county. Farmers refused to sell grain or hay across county lines. However, many daughters of both German and French families later became Sisters of the Precious Blood, because the Congregation served both groups of immigrants.⁷¹

Russia, Ohio is much further south than New Riegel, Glandorf, or Minster, as many of the French built communities in the same way as the Germans in Darke and Shelby Counties in Ohio.⁷² The French town of Russia was named after Russia because some of those who settled there in the late 1830s fought for Napoleon, and thought that the Ohio wilderness resembled Russia.⁷³ Clearly, the fact that both communities were Catholic was not a uniting factor.⁷⁴ Following the spirit of Mother Brunner, the sisters did not ascribe

⁷⁰ Allen Huelskamp, *Wooden Chalice, Golden Priests, Golden Hearts: A History of St. Boniface Parish, New Riegel, Ohio* (1985), 1-4.

⁷¹ Weber, *The Legacy Continues... Vol. 3*, 73.

⁷² The villages that are still in existence today are: North Star, Frenchtown, Versailles (pronounced “Ver-sales”), and Russia (pronounced “Rue-she”)

⁷³ Sister M. Yvonne Voisard, C.P.P.S., “The Founding of St. Remy Parish in the Central Northwest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati” (bachelor’s thesis, The Athenaeum of Ohio, 1941), 6-7.

⁷⁴ Weber, *The Legacy Continues... Vol. 3*, 72-3.

themselves to these petty ethnic tensions and filled the needs of the people in the French communities. The Parish of St. Remy in Russia, Ohio, as well as the schools there, are where the Sisters of the Precious Blood would serve for many years. It is their presence in the Russia Public Schools that make the French-American story a unique and important part of the project.

Now that the characteristics of the dominantly Catholic and mostly German settlements whose schools will make up the bulk of the study have been laid out, it is time to take a look at the development of a traditionally non-Catholic settlement in the area, which had enough Catholics in later years to warrant sisters teaching in the public schools. The community differs here also because the church and town both founded two separate school systems in the beginning. The early development of Fort Recovery sets the stage for two very different stories concerning sisters in public education. Like the other communities above, this foundation is an important event that sets the tone of how the Catholic Church, the town, and the school will interact in the future, and how this interaction will affect the C.P.P.S. sisters and their charism.

The area that makes up Fort Recovery was once a bountiful hunting ground used by Native American tribes for centuries. However, by 1790 European settlers had begun to move into their territory. Naturally, this did not bode well for the tribes, and conflict was inevitable. General St. Clair was sent by President George Washington to subdue the situation, but he and his forces were overcome and had to retreat in 1791. In December 1793 General Anthony Wayne, a Revolutionary War hero, took back the area lost by St. Clair, naming it Fort Recovery, for he had recovered what was lost two years before. The Treaty of Greenville, signed in 1795, brought an end to the aggression in the area and the

Fort was no longer needed, though was probably vacated completely after the war of 1812. However, a trading post was established in the old stockade. By 1830, many families had begun to settle around the old fort, and the town of Fort Recovery began to take shape.⁷⁵ The public school in Fort Recovery was established in 1837.⁷⁶

Many of the hardships faced by the German Catholics, who were only a few miles away, were the same here. The closest settlement of Catholics was in Victoria, now called St. Joseph (colloquially St. Joe), and settlers there established a church in 1839. Priests from the diocese would come irregularly, a common practice in these communities, and they often went to Minster for Mass. As the rural Catholic community grew, there was need to establish new villages with the church in the center of it all. From St. Joseph the following hamlets evolved: St. Anthony (1852), St. Wendelin (1856), and St. Peter (1858-9).⁷⁷ These tiny communities were founded with a school, store and some houses surrounding.

Catholics also lived in Fort Recovery. According to the records there were no issues recorded between Catholics and Protestants in the town of Fort Recovery during these years. The pioneers had many hardships that may have occupied their interests during this time. The Catholics walked to St. Joseph Church at St. Joseph to hear Mass

⁷⁵ Alig, *Mercer County Ohio History 1978*, 285-6 & *Fort Recovery Bicentennial History 1791-1991* (Ft. Recovery: The Fort Recovery Bicentennial Committee, 1990), 1-3.

⁷⁶ *Fort Recovery Bicentennial History 1791-1991*, 67.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 72-3. Note: St. Wendelin was a daughter parish of both St. Joseph's and St. Henry. The Village of St. Henry, named for the pious German emperor from the 10th century, was founded in the 1830s by German Catholics. Their foundation and early years follow a similar pattern as St. John (Maria Stein) and Minster. St. Henry's history is not laid out in this chapter, but St. Henry's unique way of handling religion and public school system will be touched on in Chapter 3.

and receive any religious instruction.⁷⁸ The parish history of Mary Help of Christian Church tells of its founding:

There were few Catholics in Fort Recovery from the very early days, and only when the town began to expand was it deemed necessary to build a church here. On July 12, 1881, the Society of the Precious Blood purchased from the estate of Dr. Milligan fifty six acres and several buildings for the sum of \$7,500.⁷⁹

As noted above, smaller towns were given a church many years before the Village of Fort Recovery established theirs. There was a Catholic grade school established just a few years after the church, which was staffed by the Sisters of the Precious Blood.⁸⁰ Again, Fort Recovery shows us that the communities in Mercer, Auglaize, Shelby, Putnam, and Seneca Counties were not monolithic. But each has a unique past that helped to develop its future. A strong faith, deep sense of community, and drive to achieve a better future can be seen in all of those who banded together during the pioneer years in northwest Ohio.

Conclusion:

This first chapter brought to life the two foundations that were beginning in the early part of the nineteenth century. The first was the noble life of Maria Anna Brunner who would live on through the work and prayer of her sisters. The foundation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood illustrates a life of the Eucharist drawing holy women to aid those in need. The second American narrative of this chapter at first seems like it does not fit with the Swiss biography that precedes it, but the story of the poor German Catholics and other pioneers does. These men and women had strong faith, so much so

⁷⁸ Here the phrase ‘hears Mass’ is used. Many Catholics in the early 1830s would have understood this to be their role in the Liturgy at the time. Today, although this phrase still might be used, theologically speaking all Catholics ‘celebrate Mass.’ This re-articulation will be seen in the language used later in the paper, during and after the Second Vatican Council.

⁷⁹ *Mary Help of Christians Parish, Fort Recovery, Ohio: Centennial Year* (1981), 14.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

that they would travel miles to hear Mass, have the sacraments administered, and gain a religious education. Travel of this magnitude was often hampered by weather conditions, farm work, and family health. Although Mass may not have happened weekly for all of these settlers, the message of Christ, alive in the hearts of the people, was passed on to their children. It was this religious fervor that kept the Catholic faith alive in northwest Ohio until Father Brunner arrived with the Sisters and Missionaries of the Precious Blood. The settlers also show that they could not afford to be lazy or faint hearted in building their homesteads. Mother Brunner knew that busy hands created success. She had to run many a household and took care of many tasks at the Castle Loewenberg. The founding principles of the Sisters of the Precious Blood and those of the communities of Northwestern Ohio had many commonalities. It is these common values that allowed both the religious community (C.P.P.S.) and local community to prosper, especially in the area of education.

CHAPTER 2: EXPANSION

The Sisters of the Precious Blood who came to America were following many other religious orders' example of going to the United States and helping keep the faith alive among Catholics settling there. The first women religious to come to the territory that would later become the United States were Ursuline Sisters.⁸¹ In 1727, twelve nuns arrived from France in New Orleans with the mission to open a hospital. However, they soon realized that there was a great need in New Orleans for education. The Ursuline sisters then decided they should begin a school to educate and catechize young women as well as the black population, both slave and free.⁸² Although the sisters were only asked to staff a hospital, they observed the needs of the community and worked to fix them in creative ways. This same creativity was carried out by many communities of sisters that also came across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World. The Sisters of the Precious Blood were similar to these Ursuline Sisters in that they also came to America for a definite purpose, to minister to those in need and promote devotion to the Precious Blood. In the same way, the Precious Blood sisters would experience the educational needs of the German speaking people in northwest Ohio and venture out to teach them.

⁸¹ The Ursuline Community was founded by Angela Merici (1474-1540) who from early on ministered to people while not wearing distinctive garb, remaining celibate, and living in their own homes. However, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) forced them to adopt the cloistered aspects of religious life, having ministries connected to their convents. Later Vatican II would allow them to retrieve the legacy of their foundress, like many other communities of women religious. Margaret E. McGuinness, *Called to Serve* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 4 & 167.

⁸² Margaret E. McGuinness, *Called to Serve*, 7.

The Arrival of the C.P.P.S. in America and their Early Settlement:

After the death of Mother Brunner in the early weeks of 1836, her son, Fr. Francis de Sales Brunner, was unsure of what he was to do. His soul-searching lasted nearly two years, but finally he had a breakthrough during a trip to Rome in January 1838. In Cesena, Italy, Fr. Brunner happened on the Motherhouse of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, where God sent him a sign in the imposing figure of a missionary preparing for the sacraments in a sacristy.⁸³ He reflected on the experience at Cesena stating, "I look upon this site as my birthplace for, toward the end of January, 1838...I experienced a great yearning within me to honor the Precious Blood and to be received into the Congregation."⁸⁴ Much like his mother, Fr. Brunner's thirst for God was quenched in honoring the Precious Blood of Jesus. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood had fulfilled the yearning in Father Brunner's soul that God had put there. He knew that God had prepared him for this after his many years of searching. Naturally, in the quick and efficient Swiss style, Fr. Brunner wasted no time entering the religious community. In June of that year he was formally accepted into the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. On September 1838, Fr. Brunner became a "full-fledged Sanguinist."⁸⁵

What did this mean for the small community of women that Fr. Brunner's mother had founded at Loewenberg? During his long absence from the castle, he had not forgotten the important work that Mother Maria Anna Brunner had begun. He spoke with both Don Valintini, Moderator General of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, and Pope Gregory XVI about the sisters at Loewenberg. As a result of the talks, they were incorporated into the society. Pope Gregory XVI went so far as to orally and publicly

⁸³ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 77-78.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 79.

approve their way of life, thus raising the community status to an ecclesiastical institute, with the documents of approval following later.⁸⁶ This brought great joy to the growing community, as more women continued to join in the work of Mother Brunner. When they were not praying and adoring the presence of Christ in the chapel, the sisters continued their ministry by cooking and cleaning for the young men who were joining the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in Fr. Brunner's seminary at Loewenberg. In November of 1840, the first two seminarians from the castle were ordained. This year was also the first time that sisters left Loewenberg to keep house for the priests who were taking charge of churches in the area.

In 1843, Fr. Brunner had a meeting with an American priest who was originally from Switzerland. Fr. John M. Henni, who was on a trip with Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati, spoke to Fr. Brunner about the plight of his countrymen in the new world. This sad account pulled at the heartstrings of Fr. Brunner. He then realized that these were his brothers and sisters in most need, and quickly resolved to speak to his superiors in Rome about sending a delegation of missionaries and sisters over to the New World. At this point, Loewenberg had many students and there was a sizable community of priests in the area who were also Sanguinists. The band of priests and brothers set out for America on October 20, 1843. Fr. Francis de Sales Brunner and his missionaries arrived in Cincinnati on the last day of 1843 and began the trip to St. Alphonse Church in Peru, Ohio where a German-speaking Catholic community had been without a priest for many years. On the way, their steamer stopped in Wellsville, Ohio and the cassock and mission cross clad missionaries stepped off the boat to begin the journey in wagons to Peru. However, the Protestant town was quickly perturbed by a rumor that these were the

⁸⁶ Ibid., 80.

Pope's spies, and that a Catholic army would arrive soon forcing all in the area to convert. Despite this prejudice, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood were allowed to pass through, and arrived in Peru to the great joy of the community.⁸⁷

There Fr. Brunner met Frau Bauer, whose heroic suggestion to stay where the wagon axle broke and found the community that became Peru was recounted in the first chapter. Frau Bauer continued to be a leader in the expanding community, often teaching children and leading prayer services when there were no priests to do so.⁸⁸ She was insistent that Fr. Brunner bring over the women religious that he had told her about. She gave all she had so the priests could be successful in the Ohio wilderness and pledged to support the sisters when they first arrived. Bishop Purcell had also agreed to allow Sisters of the Precious Blood to minister in his diocese.⁸⁹ After getting the priests and brothers settled at St. Alphonse, and given the support of the bishop and others in the community, Fr. Brunner sent word for sisters to come from Loewenberg. Three sisters made haste to America in order to be united with Fr. Brunner again as well as to establish the work of Mother Brunner on a new continent. The three sisters who made the long journey were Mother Mary Ann Albrecht, Sister Rosalie (her daughter), and Sister Martina Disch, the latter two women being only novices.⁹⁰ On July 22, 1844 the sisters arrived at St. Alphonse just before Mass, making their first act as missionaries in Ohio in adoring the blood of their Savior offered on the altar.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Ibid., 87-101.

⁸⁸ Weber, *The Legacy Continues... Vol 3*, 7.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ "Mother" here was an honorary title that was given to Mother Mary Ann, for although she may have held some responsibility over the young community, Fr. Brunner was still the leader of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. This would be the case until he gave Mother M. Kunigunda the title in 1858, one year before his passing, so that she might oversee the community in tandem with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.

⁹¹ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 110.

At the urging of Bishop Purcell, the convent being built for the missionary men at New Riegel was to house the three sisters. It is important to note that until the end of the 1880s, the men and women of the Precious Blood Community were one community in America. Brothers and priests would reside in one building and sisters in another. From the mission house, priests would travel to the nearby parish missions. Sisters could carry out their ministry and prayer at the convent, or travel to the nearby school, church, or orphanage for ministry. Brothers would do the manual work needed to manage the farmland and dwellings of the priests and sisters. The log convent at New Riegel is known as the ‘Cradle of the Community,’ as it was their first house in the new world.⁹² Bishop Purcell visited the unfinished convent in early August and insisted on spending the night after he blessed it. It was Christmas Eve 1844 when the sisters, now ten in number with recruits from America, processed with Fr. Brunner into the chapel of their finished convent. This sacred space featured a double altar and double doored tabernacle so that mass could be celebrated for brothers and laity on one side, and sisters on the other, thus illustrating the cloistered nature of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in the early American years. Although the community was involved in apostolic works, such as the domestic arts and teaching, the Benedictine flavor of Fr. Brunner’s early years is visible in some of the practices of the community. The convent was called “Mary at the Crib” in honor of its Christmas dedication; it would be the first of ten convents built by Fr. Brunner and under the patronage of the Blessed Mother.⁹³

Now in their new home sisters could begin their ministry of work and prayer. There was always plenty of work to be done on the Ohio frontier, as the early community

⁹² See Image 10 in the Appendix of Images for a photograph of the log convent at New Riegel.

⁹³ Ibid., 111-15. See Image 11 in the Appendix of Images for a drawing of the convents Fr. Brunner built.

sought to establish farms. However, seventeen-year-old Sister Rosalie Albrecht set out for St. Boniface Church on a cold Sunday after Christmas in 1844 to fulfill the call in her heart to educate. She could see that instruction of children was something very important that the community needed. After holy Mass, Sister Rosalie gathered forty children to conduct the first class led by a sister of the Precious Blood in Ohio. The schools in the area were considered “Yankee” schools by many of the parishioners and they were suspicious of the education there.⁹⁴ They welcomed the education offered by Sister Rosalie because it included tenets of the Catholic faith, as well as being taught in the German language that settlers wished to retain. The settlers believed that if the younger generations retained the German language, then the faith and traditions brought over to this alien land would also be retained. Throughout the 1800s and in some areas into the early 1900s, the driving force for employing Sisters of the Precious Blood in communities’ schools was the fact that they spoke fluent German.⁹⁵

Public Education in the Community in the 1800s:

Not long after, a room was set aside in the New Riegel convent for classes, and Sister Rosalie continued her work teaching there. There are also accounts of the pastor of St. Boniface establishing a school near his church, which are discussed in the first chapter of this work. There is no existing evidence of any interaction between the two. Sister

⁹⁴ Weber, *The Legacy Continues... Vol.3*, 12. The idea of “Yankee” schools Americanizing immigrant children is shared by many immigrant communities. Jon Gjerde explains that many Scandinavian and German immigrant groups in the Midwest during this time avoided Yankee schools because they found many American practices to contradict those traditions of living brought over from their native countries. Jon Gjerde, *The Minds of the West* (Chapel Hill NC, The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 182 & 199.

⁹⁵ Although by World War I schools that still clung to German mostly dropped that language to teach subjects in English, it is notable that the local population still spoke ‘Plattdeutsch’ and some religious services may have contained a sermon in German. In Minster, Ohio there is note that German was spoken in the mid-1950s, when the pastor had to discourage the use of German in the confessional and other religious services “because it was alien to the American Culture” (Hoying et al., *Pilgrims All*, 194). See Image 12 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of an early German elementary textbook used by the sisters.

Rosalie was only able to teach for two years, during which she was battling tuberculosis as well as training her replacement. At the age of twenty, Sister Rosalie passed from life as a pioneer woman to that of saintly bliss, united with the Eucharistic Lord she adored on earth. Her handpicked replacement, Sister Salesia, an American of German descent, continued her work in New Riegel. In 1850, sisters took over the public school at St. Boniface, at which time two sisters educated 130 pupils from the town of New Riegel and the surrounding farms. Already in 1865 it was called a “free school” and in 1882, a public school district was established for the upper grades, though the sisters only taught in primary school.⁹⁶

The community gained many more schools in 1848 when the Minster and Glandorf schools were organized. The convent in St. John, named Maria Stein, was finished in 1846 and dedicated to Mary Help of Christians. From that convent, sisters traveled to Minster where they lived and taught in private homes until a convent and school could be furnished for them. However, the cholera epidemic of 1849 hit the area with such severity that the sisters in Minster were recalled to Maria Stein, and the venture was postponed until 1852. At which time the convent, dedicated to Mary of the Visitation, and a school for girls was built between the convent and St. Augustine Church. Later this girls’ school would become the district school.⁹⁷ Until 1895, the boys’ and girls schools were separated, and in that year a larger building was constructed so that they could be mixed together and high school classes could be held. A report in 1862 gives us some detail about how the public funds were used. A news report states,

⁹⁶ Sister M. Aquinas Stadtherr, C.P.P.S., “The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in the United States 1844-1944” (master’s thesis, Catholic University of America, 1944), 68. Later, Sister Aquinas would be referred to as “Mother,” as she was elected to the position of Mother General in 1954, and kept that title until her death.

⁹⁷ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 123, 130-31.

Between two and three hundred children attend the school, the girls being under the charge of the Sisters C.P.P.S., and the boys under that of an excellent [lay] teacher, who is also the church organist. Although Catholics, the people of Minster receive their share of the common school fund; and the Catholic school board very carefully gives their portion to the eight or nine Protestant families in Jackson township, who send their children to some district of German township, showing that where Catholics are in the majority, much abused division is very practicable.⁹⁸

This report shows that while Catholics had control of the town, naturally there was division with those who did not want to associate themselves with the Roman Church. But, this division was not on the Catholics' part, as they still gave public money to non-Catholics wishing to educate their children elsewhere.

Throughout this time, the sisters in Minster were able to educate girls at the girls' school on public funds. Fr. Voag, pastor of St. Augustine Church, tried to assert his authority over the public school in 1892, claiming to be superintendent. Unaware of the historical development of these schools, the school board of district No. 1 intervened, and told him he had no authority, even though the school rented space from the parish. His attempts to turn it into a parochial school were met with refusal from the local community, at which point Fr. Voag conceded his authority.⁹⁹ The public school remained as it was, untouched by the parish, to educate the youth of Minster for many years to come.

Furthermore, the school also played host to girls who boarded in the girls' orphanage, which was established after the cholera epidemic. This school, separate from the public schools in Minster, was called St. Mary's Institute. Those who were of high school age were permitted to attend classes at the public school also staffed by the sisters. Both the institute and the public school offered classes to pupils in the arts. A noted

⁹⁸ Hoying et al., *Pilgrims All*, 108-09. Brackets mine.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 140-41.

music and fine arts curriculum defined the school system while it was under the care of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. The arts became an important aspect of their teaching ministry, and many sisters with musical talent were stationed there.¹⁰⁰ Minster Schools, because of the talented Sisters of the Precious Blood soon became a center for the musical arts. Many students who passed through the school in the late 1800s had amateur music skills because of the good work of the sisters.¹⁰¹

Glandorf School came under the direction of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in the year 1848 as well. The convent, called Mary at the Holy Sepulcher, was finished a year later and seven sisters were stationed to teach and care for the priests and brothers in Glandorf.¹⁰² As early as 1854 the sisters at Glandorf were helping raise funds for the public school. Although originally the school was divided by gender, it was coeducational by the late 1800s. The community lent their support to the school, which gave not only the traditional ‘three Rs’ of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but also skills that boys could use on the farm, and domestic arts for girls, who would be expected to keep house. This was true for all of the early schools of the community, where practical skills were mixed in with subjects that still appear on report cards of today.¹⁰³ Although the school in Glandorf was a public school, Sister M. Aquinas Stadtherr asserts, in a 1944 study of the schools in which the Sisters of the Precious Blood have ministered, that “one may surmise that it [the curriculum] consisted of a fourth R, religion.”¹⁰⁴ As the area was densely German Catholic, and the state had little intervention in the early days, it is very likely that ‘four Rs’ were taught in public schools throughout the Mercer, Auglaize,

¹⁰⁰ See Image 13 in the Appendix of Images for a photograph of sister teaching music class.

¹⁰¹ Stadtherr, “The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,” 62-5, 123.

¹⁰² Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 126-7.

¹⁰³ Leach, *Laborers in the Vineyard*, 50.

¹⁰⁴ Stadtherr, “The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,” 66.

Putman, Seneca, and other counties of northwest Ohio and not just in Glandorf Public Schools.

Sister Aquinas, in her study of schools, does give some idea of how the curriculum at public schools where sisters taught compares to the Catholic schools where sisters were in ministry in the 1900s. Her tables are included in the appendix of images located after chapter five, but here is a brief sketch to argue that there was little difference, other than the formal catechism classes at the Catholic schools. Looking at what she has to offer, Russia Public High School can be compared to St. Joseph Catholic High School in Wapakoneta, Ohio and Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic High School in Ottawa, Ohio. Both have the same number of credits in English, Biology, Chemistry, Algebra, and Geometry. Both also offer what appears to be comparable music, home economic, and beginning business classes. Religion is offered at all three schools, only St. Joseph's lists a number of credits for it and there is no explanation why the Catholic school in Ottawa would not list a number of religion credits needed to graduate. This brief account notes that for Sisters of the Precious Blood there was little difference between the curriculum in Catholic schools and the public schools they taught in northwestern Ohio. For, even religion is noted on the curriculum of Russia Public Schools.¹⁰⁵

Serving in these schools was a sister of particular interest. Sister M. Adelaide Schmerge decided to enter the Sisters of the Precious Blood in 1846 at the age of twenty-seven. This was after she had already been teaching in public schools around Buffalo, New York. Like Mother Brunner, she had a desire to deepen her relationship with God and with those in need. She brought with her the skill of a trained educator, which was of

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 97, 106, & 109. See Images 14-16 in the Appendix of Images for her curriculum charts.

great use to the Precious Blood sisters. She helped to found the school in Minster and was also stationed in Glandorf.¹⁰⁶ Later Sister Adelaide helped to establish the Normal School of the Sisters of the Precious Blood at Maria Stein which sought to train novices for the classroom. Furthermore, she taught at the Normal School until 1874. Sister Adelaide passed at the age of sixty-two, in 1882, still fulfilling the needs of those in her classroom.¹⁰⁷ Her background in public education helped the C.P.P.S. community solidify its own institutions training sisters to minister in schools, especially public schools that had to conform to state standards, which will be discussed in the next section.

The practice of Sisters of the Precious Blood teaching in public schools was only beginning in the latter part of the 1800s. The local communities above were early ones that requested sisters and had a public school. Sisters were also teaching in Catholic schools at this time, whose support was solely dependent on the parish community for funding. Fort Recovery is an example of sisters in Catholic school which competed with the local public school system in late 1800s. In 1887, Mary Help of Christians Church in Fort Recovery built their first brick two-room school building. The Sisters of the Precious Blood taught there, and thus their reputation for high educational standards was already planted in the community before consolidation shifted their ministry into a public school district in 1952.¹⁰⁸ Consolidation is how many Catholic schools with women religious educators would become teachers in public schools. They simply remained in their classroom as the administration of the school changed hands. A detailed account of this process of consolidation will be given later in this chapter as well as in the next.

¹⁰⁶ See Images 17 and 18 in the Appendix of Images for photographs of Sisters in the classroom.

¹⁰⁷ Weber, *The Legacy Continues... Vol 3*, 15-6, 31-3.

¹⁰⁸ *Mary Help of Christians Parish, Fort Recovery, Ohio: Centennial Year*, 18 & 25.

Educating Teachers for Public Schools:

In the early years of their teaching ministry, and throughout the nineteenth century, it is important to understand what kind of education these sisters would have had prior to going into a classroom. This project looks directly at the development of the public schools in the Catholic areas of northwest Ohio and the evolving awareness of the Precious Blood charism by those sisters who ministered by teaching in them. However, this study offers a short discussion of the evolution of how the Sisters of the Precious Blood accepted the responsibility to train their educators. A brief account of this process will be given below. It is largely thanks to Sister Aquinas who, before assuming her role of community leader in the 1950s, collected and organized information of the communities first one hundred years of teaching.

First, it is important to note that standards for teachers, as well as students, were not as high, nor as well developed as they are today. The situation in Glandorf with two sisters taking on 130 students, seventy students to a sister, was not an abnormal phenomenon. The large class sizes in no way discount the success that these schools would have in the community within the context of the time. When looking at the Sisters of the Precious Blood's early work in schools it is true that they did not have backgrounds in education. Prior to coming to America the young community had not operated a school. Other religious orders that came from Europe already having ministered in educational institutions there and could easily use the same tactics in in founding and operating schools in America.¹⁰⁹ The educational tradition from Europe that may have guided teaching orders was simply not present in this religious community. Thus the pioneer sisters "had to acquire their professional training by the hard path of

¹⁰⁹ Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 141.

experience.”¹¹⁰ That being said, it is also very possible that seasoned teachers would have helped others out. Living in a religious community meant that a less experienced sister could have presented a classroom problem to an older sister, who may have had experience with the same issue. The religious community helped educators learn skills in the early days as well as in later years.¹¹¹ The younger sisters often learned from hard experience as well as the helpful guidance of older sisters who were veteran educators.

However, many of the members who came from Europe had received elementary educations from various schools in Switzerland and Germany. Their early education would serve them well in the classroom here in America. Sister Aquinas believes that the elementary education they received would have, at the very least, been comparable to the elementary education in the United States at the time and probably somewhat better. She also asserts that one must remember that Europe had established schools long before America, and therefore professional teachers were already employed with some organization and governmental involvement. Given that many sisters were still arriving through the 1800s from Europe to the American community of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, sisters were at the very least on par with secular teachers in the rural areas. Often they had mastered the elementary information they taught, but not much beyond that.¹¹² However, this situation would not last long. Sister Aquinas had this to say about the situation:

It seems almost a blessing in disguise that Divine Providence directed the sisters to establish their missions in rural districts of German immigrants, because this led them to conduct public schools in German localities – a privilege that the state

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 136.

¹¹¹ Private conversation with Sr. Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S., 2/8/2016.

¹¹² Stadtherr, “The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,” 140-1.

authorities, realized full well that “education received in Germany” was worthy of recognition in America.¹¹³

The sisters would teach in rural German-American schools, and the government in Ohio would be aware of the knowledge levels of immigrants who were educated in Europe. This relationship between the state run public schools and the sisters also made the Precious Blood community aware of the state standards of education that they would have complied with in order to be effective educators and legally allowed to teach in a public school.¹¹⁴ The relationship between the religious community and the state helped both institutions understand each other and bring about effective education.

The state of Ohio was very much aware of the importance of education for its people, and sisters came to Ohio after some standardization had already begun. In 1825, the state had already mandated each county to have three examiners to check up on “common schools” which served the public, and issue certificates to qualified individuals wishing to receive state money for teaching.¹¹⁵ These schools were staffed by teachers who had some knowledge of what they were doing, but not much beyond that. Thus various institutions around Ohio offered training, or “county institutes,” with laws passed in 1847 and 1849 sought to assist educators in attending these by making them more available.¹¹⁶ By the mid-1850s several teachers had access to these programs. It was in 1852 that the sisters opened their normal school, offering quite an advanced education to those sisters about to enter the classroom. In 1853 major laws were put in place that formally set up how taxes would be distributed to education, the need for many subjects to be recorded on the certificate, the establishment of libraries, as well as how the school

¹¹³ Ibid., 142.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 142.

¹¹⁵ James J. Burns, *Educational History of Ohio* (Columbus: Historical Publishing Co., 1905), 119.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 106-08.

boards were to function.¹¹⁷ Although teachers did not have a college degree, the state still made sure that they were prepared to teach the elementary level subjects to local children.

This brief account of Ohio state standards show that the first training school of teachers at New Riegel, permanently established in 1852, was on par if not a head of the educational standards of the day. Later, this two year teacher preparatory would be moved into the Maria Stein Convent opened in 1870, where novices were trained under the tutelage of Sister M. Adelaide Schmerge and others so that state certification could be granted to members of the community. This was one of the few normal schools established in America before 1860. The Precious Blood sisters took certification very seriously, and by the mid-1800s sisters in public schools were only placed there if they had passed a certification exam.¹¹⁸ Although today it might be assumed the exam was easy, that was not the case. Often very few could pass with the required percentage to receive their certificates. Sister Aquinas reports:

Older sisters of the Community who, over the period of years, had the fortune of experiencing the actual thrills of taking the examinations, agree that it was not an easy matter to secure a county certificate. One sister recalls an instance, when only five out of one hundred and twenty applicants were awarded certificates; that disjointed proportion was due chiefly to the fact that one hundred and fifteen had failed orthography – they could not spell.¹¹⁹

Becoming a certified teacher was not easy to achieve, but the sisters were determined to give those children under their care the best possible education they could. Mother Brunner worked tirelessly to serve those in need, and these sisters knew that they too had to work hard to meet the needs of rural Ohio.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 69-81, 120.

¹¹⁸ Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 140-43.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 144. Presumably the test referred to here is in English, as the next paragraph states tests were also given in German.

Certification to teach in Ohio could be quite a difficult process even in the early years and up until to 1918 sisters had to go to the county seat to take the exam. If the teacher was to conduct her class in German, then the sister would be allowed to take the exam in German and earn the certificate like everyone else.¹²⁰ The measures that sisters went through show that the state expected quality teachers. This was not so among many Catholic schools, where the demand for sisters in the classrooms was never ending. It is noted that although the C.P.P.S. sisters tried to qualify all of their teachers, even those in parochial schools which did not require teachers to be certified. The rapid growth of parochial schools at times made them “more interested in quantity than quality.”¹²¹ Public schools, because of the certificate, had an edge in rural Ohio during the 1800s.

The Religious Community Expands Spiritually:

The last two sections have looked at the expanding school system in northwestern Ohio as well as how the sisters responded to the qualifications needed to staff public schools in the 1800s. However, the spiritual environment of the community, as well as the way of life that was inherited from the example of Mother Brunner has a place in the conversation. The charism of the day was something that affected the sister deeply, because she was not teaching for the pay check but out of the joy of seeing the needs of her students fulfilled. Just as the Eucharist in the chapel at Castle Loewenberg urged Mother Brunner to engage the needs of the world, these sisters would return to their convents in the evening to receive strength from prayer and community life to enter the classroom the next morning ready to serve their students’ educational needs. The

¹²⁰ Ibid., 144, 147. Also mentioned in: Burns, *Educational History of Ohio*, 120.

¹²¹ Ibid., 148.

community had evolving practices at this time to meet the spiritual needs of this expanding religious community of women.

In instituting night devotions, Mother Brunner had no idea what fruit that would bring about for the community. As sisters gathered in the evenings, after classes, this time was spent praying from their community prayer manuals as well as devotions to the Precious Blood. Many of these, such as the Seven Offering of the Precious Blood and the Stations of the Cross, focused on the suffering of Christ through the shedding of the Precious Blood; through his suffering, the suffering of believers was given its redemptive meaning. Through the 1800s the community did not see any reason to change the way things were at Loewenberg, where Eucharistic devotion was central. It was during their early years in America that a simple black dress became a formal habit of black serge and black veil, the first habit of the congregation. At this time they kept the formal vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. These vows allowed them to focus on their baptismal call to serve God through devoting their lives to God and service to God's people.

The convents were very strict at this time. Rules were followed to aid in the carrying out of the vows. Religious life in these early convents resembled life in a cloistered religious community, but one could re-enter the world for ministry. Michael E. Leach gives us a view into the convent at that time. The sisters were to pray throughout their work and silence was observed for long periods of time in the convent. While a sister might not be able to pray while she was teaching, she could always have a prayerful spirit while in the classroom. Moreover, the practice at that time was, "Sisters who had the opportunity to speak to others outside the convent were to limit the conversation to

the reason for it.”¹²² In leaving the world and entering the convent, detachment from family was also practiced. The sisters were not permitted to visit home at this time. Finally, the food was very simple and portioned accordingly. A sister got what she got for a meal, which was usually less than the lay people at this time.¹²³ These practices seem harsh to us today, but in the 1800s, this was seen as the best way to commune with God because they separated the individual from the distractions of daily life. All of the distractions, even those that might have some good qualities attached to them, were removed by the Rule the sisters kept. The focus was totally on seeking the redemption of the world through the Precious Blood shed by Jesus, and actively exemplifying Jesus by aiding those in need.¹²⁴ The spirituality was framed by the rules which added structure to the lives of the sisters. If you kept the Rule, then the Rule would keep you.¹²⁵

The 1880s were a decade of great growth for the Sisters of the Precious Blood.¹²⁶ This is the decade that the sisters really came into their own, making major decisions as only a mature religious community could. As the 1870s were coming to a close, the Sister Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, headquartered in Rome, wrote Mother Kunigunda, who had charge of the community while it still operated in tandem with the missionaries, about the possibility of unity. The Adorers were founded by Maria de Mattias in 1834 under the inspiration of Gaspar del Buffalo and had their headquarters in Rome.¹²⁷ The

¹²² Leach, *Laborers in the Vineyard*, 27-8.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, Leach cites Fr. Brunner's *Explanation of the Rules*

¹²⁵ Phyllis M. Kittel, *Staying in the Fire: A Sisterhood Responds to Vatican II* (Boulder: Woven Word Press, 2009), 60. This is what was commonly said in the community.

¹²⁶ Although not a pivotal piece of information for this study, it is noteworthy that during this decade planning for the relic chapel was also happening. In 1876 a priest gifted the Sisters of the Precious a large collection of relics. In the spirit of Mother Brunner, who found God in her many pilgrimages, they too set up a shrine of holy relics at the Maria Stein Convent. Today, the chapel still stands and welcomes pilgrims in search of God (Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 215-24).

¹²⁷ Today, Maria de Mattias is a canonized saint in the Catholic Church.

American Sisters of the Precious Blood, at the advice of trusted priests and bishops, declined to attend their chapter or declare in writing “submission to the new Rule” of the Roman Community. But again, the Adorers, wishing unity of the Precious Blood orders of women religious, wrote in March and November of 1880 laying down how the provinces were to be split. Fr. Henry Drees, C.P.P.S., provincial director of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in America went to Rome in 1883 on business, but also went to advocate for Mother Brunner’s legacy in America. At that time the church official in charge of the case verbally agreed to keep the Roman and American sisters separate, and in 1887 it was made official.¹²⁸

This event shows that the Sisters of the Precious Blood understood their charism well. They were a community founded by a Swiss woman whose piety and work ethic laid the foundations to a life in service to God. It was Mother Brunner’s way of life that, with the aid of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, had made them very successful missionaries in the United States. They were not willing to compromise their charism or to change it on the request of a community they had just encountered located on a different continent. Their spiritual devotion to the Precious Blood, through vigils with the Blessed Sacrament was an important part of their charism. Furthermore, the traditions of the community were different, the habits were not the same, thus even in outwardly appearance there was discontinuity. The American Sisters of the Precious Blood safeguarded their gift from Mother Brunner, which was a constant source of fruitfulness in the past, and would be for years to come.

The second event which helped the sisters’ minister in public schools, parish parsonages, kitchens, seminaries, and retirement homes was their becoming independent

¹²⁸ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 226-29.

of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Archbishop Elder of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and the successor of Archbishop Purcell, contacted Fr. Henry Drees, provincial of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, concerning the Precious Blood's compliance to an 1878 decree from the Vatican.¹²⁹ In this decree, the pope called for the separation of men's and women's religious orders who shared properties. Two committees of Missionaries of the Precious Blood were formed, one representing the missionaries and the other the sisters, and they discussed the division of Precious Blood assets. On May 11, 1887 the "Female Society of the Precious Blood" was officially incorporated through the state of Ohio. The Sisters of the Precious Blood were then legally an independent community, free to act as they desired. This was an important moment in the spirituality of the Sisters of the Precious Blood because they had complete control of their community. Rooted in devotion to the Precious Blood, they revised their Rule and drew up Constitutions, so that the community could properly function in its new independent state. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the sisters elected a new Mother General in the same year, Mother M. Ludovica Scharf.¹³⁰ This would allow the community to enter new ministries and expand itself in the future decades.

The 1800s were a period of rapid growth in both the religious and secular communities in northwestern Ohio. By the end of the century, many sisters were in public schools or staffing Catholic schools with their credentials from the state. In hindsight, this was a very wise move on the part of the leadership of the Sisters of the Precious Blood because, as the twentieth century dawned, and buses became common, smaller rural schools became a thing of the past. Local communities would want consolidated schools,

¹²⁹ The Diocese of Cincinnati was raised to the status of an Archdiocese in 1850.

¹³⁰ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 233-34.

paid for by the state, that were well staffed. They also desired to have high schools, so that children could receive a higher level of knowledge to better equip them for a changing world. The sisters and the local parish, who owned school buildings and land, would graciously contribute to this endeavor. Also, the experiences that these sisters were having in the public and private schools, in the parsonages, aiding in retirement homes, and carrying out various domestic arts in seminaries and colleges, would contribute to the spirit of the community in later years. Going into a classroom, even in these German Catholic communities, allowed the needs of the world to collide with the spiritual life of the sister. It was in the early 1900s that the community began to make changes based on the effects of ministry.

The First Forty Years:

The first forty years of the twentieth century would bring about many changes to the communities and schools in northwest Ohio. By now, towns had formed where settlements were just beginning when Fr. Brunner first arrived in America. People desired education, and schools were becoming more formal, with the children staying in school longer. Technology had also advanced, and larger brick churches, schools, businesses, and homes replaced log buildings. These larger schools, with more rooms, required more teachers. During this period there was also the advent of the school bus, which transported kids from various locations to a centralized school. Rural Ohio was changing, and the sisters were in the classroom for many of these changes.

The town may have changed from St. John to Maria Stein because of the motherhouse and relic shrine located there, but the public school was still called St. John's Public School. Sisters actually began teaching there at the end of the nineteenth

century, and used their own curriculum, switching over to state standards in 1904.¹³¹ Sisters left the school for a time due to a heated argument between the priest and the school board over control of the school. This event happened at the same time the Minster community was dealing with a similar issue. The board had appointed a lay teacher at the objection of the pastor. A disagreement ensued in the parish, and the secular community as well, because Maria Stein was a nearly “completely Catholic community” at the time. The church was closed for five months because of the unrest in the community.¹³² The parishioners had to go to the convent for services and sacraments until the parish was reopened. Seven years of friction then ensued between the parishioners and various pastors appointed to St. John Parish. The matter was settled when a parcel of land was given back to the parish, and the pastor was allowed to appoint a teacher to the post.¹³³ Since then, there are no reports of issues between the pastors of St. John Church and the local school.

According to the parish history, sisters left the school during the period of unrest mentioned above and returned in 1891. One item of interest not yet discussed was the pay of teachers at this time. Records from St. John’s School can give us some insight. Sister M. Rosalia Alt was hired for \$35 a month in 1897. That same year, Joseph Oppenheim was hired to teach for \$50 a month.¹³⁴ Regrettably, it is clear that sisters were not paid the same as a male that would have similar duties. Later the boys’ school and girls’ school, which were separate much like in Minster, were combined with Sisters of the Precious

¹³¹ Stadtherr, “The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,” 69.

¹³² Stories that have survived this time do depict actual violence breaking out. Although these stories cannot be verified, oral history makes claims of shots being fired in the sanctuary, the priest being run out of his own parish, and the church being broken into. Although these might not have been true, it depicts that there were very strong feelings at the time, and reason to subdue the parish by closing the church. (Mizer, *Saint John the Baptist Church 175th Anniversary 1836-2011*, 68).

¹³³ Mizer, *Saint John the Baptist Church 175th Anniversary 1836-2011*, 67-9.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 80.

Blood at the helm teaching alongside lay educators. St. John's consolidated for the first time in 1930, and a new school was built, with eleven classrooms, a gym, and an auditorium. Many one room school houses would close in the years after, and those students would be bused to St. John's School. In 1937 the school graduated the first four year high school class, an exciting event for the whole community.¹³⁵ Finally, it is important to note that religious education in the school in the early 1900s was conducted by the parish priest who would come into the classrooms four times a week to supplement Sunday school instruction.¹³⁶ The school was lucky to be in such a densely populated Catholic area, because had that not been the case, no priest would have been able to teach religion in a public school.

North of Maria Stein, the village of Ottoville, Ohio had a public school that was taken up by the Sisters of the Precious Blood in 1902. Soon the school, where both sisters and lay people taught, became too small and the parish built an addition to the school. The school was then rented to the local school board but owned by Immaculate Conception Parish. By 1909 the community desired a high school be built for boys and girls, which later was producing graduates that could be accepted at colleges. Sisters taught some of the high school classes in Ottoville until 1929, at which point they only ministered in the elementary school. Around that same time, the consolidation movement became stronger and many of the rural school houses closed, swelling the number of

¹³⁵ Ibid., 83-7. Rural areas got high schools much later than urban areas. In Toledo, a city in northern Ohio, only 167 pupils were enrolled in high school in 1870. The population at that time was 31,584. As found in *A History of Education in the State of Ohio* (Columbus: The Gazette Printing House, 1876), 175. Over sixty years later, the first high school class in Maria Stein graduated. High school education was becoming more and more important to students and parents, as the state of Ohio reports that between 1950 and 1960 high school graduation rates raised 53% with Ohio sporting nearly 90,000 graduates state wide. As discussed in W.R. Flesher, ed., *Public Education in Ohio* (Columbus: School Survey Service, 1962), 63. This simple illustration shows the growing need for secondary education in Ohio throughout this period of just eighty years.

¹³⁶ Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 70-1.

students, and rooms in the Immaculate Conception Church basement that were set up for high school classes. The school board purchased five large school buses so that students might be collected from areas outside of the town and transported to school. From 8:00 to 8:30 Mass and religion classes were offered by the pastor, before the start of the school day.¹³⁷ The community of Ottoville was supportive of the exceptional education offered by the sisters, and so they allowed them to stay on as the school expanded over the years. The sisters saw that the community needed teachers to fill positions, and the C.P.P.S. community grew there. There are no records that public school buses transported children to the church early for Mass or religion class. The moral development of the community's children was of great importance to the community, and the sisters teaching religion in the school was important to families in Ottoville. This is evident by the community's acceptance of sisters in their schools and the use of school buses to transport children to early morning catechism and Mass.

The pattern shown in Ottoville and Maria Stein continues in Russia, Ohio. From early on, Sister Aquinas admits that the sisters' history at the schools there seems to be "a rather checkered one."¹³⁸ It is clear that the parish school had sisters since its founding, but they left the community of French Catholics in 1889. The public school in Russia, Ohio asked for sisters in 1909, which seems odd, because the parochial parish school at St. Remy had lay teachers. In 1912, the sisters left the public school and worked at St. Remy School. However, consolidation began in 1927, and the Sisters of the Precious Blood stayed at their posts, as the public school rented the elementary school from the parish, and two competing school districts became one. In 1938, more outlying schools

¹³⁷ Ibid., 78-80, & *The Immaculate Conception Parish, Ottoville Ohio 1848-1923 Vol I*, 110-11.

¹³⁸ Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 71.

joined the Russia Public Schools by popular vote, and four school buses were purchased. A high school for boys and girls was established in 1924, which had become the public high school in 1927, with sisters on the staff.¹³⁹ The consolidation of the schools happened with the consent of the community. These Catholics saw little difference in the schools, and realized state support could be available as well as the teaching expertise of the sisters both existing under the same roof. The sisters stayed at their posts as members of the Russia community despite the many changes in education in the early 1900s.

Egypt, not far from Russia, needed Sisters of the Precious Blood to staff the school there as well. This two room school had been staffed by lay teachers since its founding, despite the sisters' convent, dedicated to the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, being nearby. World War I had taken many community members not just from Egypt, but from local communities across America. The issue that Egypt was having in these post-war years was the lack of personnel to staff the school. Not wanting it to close, and have to become part of the Minster schools, the community asked the school board if they would be willing to employ sisters. The board agreed and the public school in Egypt remained open. Two sisters began staffing the grade school in the 1920.¹⁴⁰ Because Egypt remained such a rural community, the high school never materialized. The youth of Egypt, who were mostly from farms united by St. Joseph Church, would have to travel to Minster for a high school education.

To end this section, the life of Sister M. Simplicia McGreevy, C.P.P.S. makes a good summation of what was happening during the early 1900s in rural education in this area. Although of Irish decent, she was from a farm between the French settlements of

¹³⁹ Ibid., 71-3.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 69.

Russia and Versailles, where her father had settled after helping to build the Miami Erie Canal. She began teaching in public schools in 1895, and after forty years retired, breaking only to study for a time at Catholic University.¹⁴¹ Sister Simplicia was able to contribute a full public school pension to the community.¹⁴² This was another draw for the sisters to teach in public schools, the benefits for the community were a great help to fund ministries and build buildings. At the age of fifty-eight, there was still a lot of life left for her after education, so she became supervisor of schools for the Sisters of the Precious Blood in the mid-1930s, even though she was one of the few sisters in religious community leadership not of German descent. She was a valuable asset to Mother M. Magna Lehman during her years as Mother General (1936-48) because of her connections in the various public schools.¹⁴³ During Sister Simplicia's tenure as supervisor of schools, she sought to educate teachers in the community as well, because that would secure the sisters' future in public schools. By the end of Mother Magna's time as Mother General, 150 sisters had attained a bachelor's degree, fifty had master's degrees conferred on them, and three had doctoral degrees.¹⁴⁴ Sister Simplicia had experienced firsthand what top rate public schools in the early 1900s were like. She was able to serve the needs of children and then the needs of her religious congregation before her death in 1961.

A New Century, a New Mother General:

Decades before Sister Simplicia worked under the guidance of Mother Magna, Mother M. Emma Nunlist was the leader of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Elected in

¹⁴¹ See Image 19 in the Appendix of Images for a photograph of Sister M. Simplicia at Glandorf Public School.

¹⁴² Weber, *The Legacy Continues... Vol 3*, 75-6.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 77-9.

¹⁴⁴ Janet Davis Richardson, C.S.J.P. & Canice Werner, C.P.P.S., *More Than the Doing*, 45.

1899, Mother Emma served three terms of six years a piece, although between the first and second terms Mother M. Josephine had her time as Mother General. These years, especially Mother Emma's second and third terms, were a time of great progress for the sisters, both spiritually and temporally. In this last section dealing with the early 1900s, Mother Emma's influence on education and charism will be discussed. Much like Mother Brunner, she was a larger than life leader of the Sisters of the Precious Blood whose lasting impact is still felt today.

Although this study focuses on sisters in education, namely public education, it is important to note that education was not the only need that local communities had. Remember, the Sisters of the Precious Blood first kept house for the priest and seminarians at Loewenberg. This ministry continued one hundred years after their founding as sisters practiced the domestic arts in seminaries, bishop's residences, and in their own convents. Also, the community still cared for orphans, operating orphanages in Dayton, Marywood, Minster, and New Riegel.¹⁴⁵ During Mother Emma's first term, the community entered the health care field with the acquisition of Kneipp Sanatorium, later renamed Kneipp Springs, in Rome City, Indiana. After its purchase in 1901, Mother Emma encouraged sisters to enter into the healthcare field and took a personal interest in the affairs at Kneipp Springs, which included updating and expanding the facilities.¹⁴⁶ However, teaching remained the ministry that most sisters engaged in at this time. In 1944, the C.P.P.S. community had sisters at fifty-four schools, fourteen of which were public, and the majority of these were in northwest Ohio.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 413.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 285-87.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 414-15.

The community was expanding into new endeavors when Mother Emma was elected in 1911 for a second term. All of this expansion meant that something had to change in the life of the sisters. As explained above, the rules that governed the life of the sisters show that they were kept in what might be called a “semi-cloistral” state.¹⁴⁸ As sisters moved into smaller convents located next to the parish churches, near the seminaries or cathedrals, or in the health care facilities, the larger convents were beginning to empty, and younger sisters who were engaging the world in their ministries, could not be sequestered in them. Archbishop Moeller of Cincinnati supported and agreed with Mother Emma. At his suggestion, “most of the convents of perpetual adoration were given up in favor of a more active apostolate which time and circumstances were demanding of the sisters.”¹⁴⁹ Beginning in 1912, Mother Emma began selling off many of the larger convents and surrounding farm land where the Sisters of the Precious Blood had first settled.¹⁵⁰ The sisters found that the best way to serve the needs of an area was not in the large convents, located a distance from their ministry sites, but living in a small house in the local community near those they served. This is how education, including public education, affected the charism of the Sisters of the Precious Blood at this time. Their ministry and service to people drew them out from the cloister. Mother Brunner’s vision was not a cloistered community but of a group of women who showed their devotions in prayer and in assisting those in need. The world was not a distraction for sisters, but a place for sisters to encounter the same God that they attended to in the chapel tabernacle. By assisting many needs in many ministries Sisters of the Precious Blood encountered Christ in various forms though the diverse

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 336.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 336.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 337.

people encountered in the world. In the early 1910's this renewed sense of apostolic life was allowing the sisters to minister in schools more effectively.

Eucharistic devotion, the center of community life, was not forgotten about by Mother Emma. It had long been the desire of the community to be allowed to have perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Currently, the larger convents had sisters praying before the Blessed Sacrament as it was reposed in the tabernacle on the altar. But they also wished to have the Eucharist in the monstrance all the time at their motherhouse. Furthermore, with the closure of the larger convents, there was also a need for space in the summers, when the teaching sisters would come back, for during this time, many would return home for seminars, retreats, or summer courses for degrees.¹⁵¹ St. Joseph's College (Indiana), Xavier University, Catholic University, The Athenaeum of Ohio, Notre Dame, and the University of Dayton were some popular centers where sisters were studying for degrees. Now, in the 1900s, it was imperative for sisters to have attained a degree in teaching.¹⁵² The training of the sisters had come a long way since the first class in 1845, and there were still many sisters in need of training. How might Mother Emma manage to receive approval for perpetual exposition, house many sisters in the summer, and allow for more sisters to earn their bachelor's degree?

A plan to build had to be put into motion. This proposition was controversial, but it would allow the Sisters of the Precious Blood to transition into their more active Precious Blood charism that ministry was demanding of them. Moreover, it would not only retain, but encourage the honored community tradition of Eucharistic Adoration. Archbishop Moeller would not grant permission for perpetual exposition at Maria Stein,

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 338-39.

¹⁵² Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 153-54.

because of its remote location. Exposition should be shared by a large community of faithful, and therefore Mother Emma agreed to build in a city. In 1912 a parcel of land was purchased two miles north of Dayton, Ohio.

The building of the new convent in Dayton was easier said than done. Conservatives, led by Mother Ludovica, did not like the idea of leaving Maria Stein, and wanted to expand there. But Mother Emma was determined, and she saw expanding as a way of promoting Precious Blood devotions as well as strengthening the education ministry. On one occasion, Mother Ludovica got down on her knees and begged Mother Emma not to move the motherhouse to Dayton. But the land was purchased, and the plan approved by Mother Emma and her council. Had World War I not broken out, she would not have wasted any more time, but she had to wait for peace to come about before she could build. Nine years after the land in Dayton was purchased, ground was broken, and Salem Heights was completed in 1923. The sisters had shown their devotion to actively addressing the needs of the local community by expanding themselves from the world they knew. They had managed to find a way to live the charism of Mother Brunner, in times that had drastically changed from the days in Loewenberg.

Conclusion:

This chapter has covered nearly a century of developments for the Sisters of the Precious Blood, public education in rural Ohio, and the local Catholic communities that supported the schools and the sisters who taught in them. It illustrated change. Change from small rural elementary schools to large consolidated buildings offering high school courses occurred. The evolution of teacher education was in motion during these years as well. Sisters went from little training, other than their own experience as a child, to

attaining a college degree. The charism of the community was better realized, and large convents meant to be a retreat from the world were sold off, so that sisters could live in smaller communities near the people they served. One thing remained throughout this period; it did not change with times. The commitment of the Sisters of the Precious Blood to help those in need remained steadfast, and they continued bringing the example of Christ, who shed Precious Blood, into the world.

CHAPTER 3: CHANGING SCHOOLS

The world was a very different place in 1945. World War II had just ended, and Catholics in the United States had come out of the conflict changed, they were now different believers and citizens than they had been before the country entered the war. Although the war revealed the depth of evil humanity is capable of, the goodness of the human spirit prevailed. Furthermore, as this war involved countries across the globe, the conflict brought American Catholics into contact with new people and ideas. Increasing globalization was affecting the worldview of Catholics in America, just as it was the worldview of other Americans.¹⁵³ The world was changing. People knew that they could no longer live in the insular communities that had offered them protection for decades. The Sisters of the Precious Blood knew the needs of people were changing; they needed to respond with the generosity shown to them by the example of Mother Brunner. To do this the sisters would find innovative ways to respond to the needs of the people and remain true to their call to be Christ to those they encountered in the classroom and in the world.

This chapter will look at how the changes in society during this time affected the public schools in northwestern Ohio and the sisters who were ministering in those schools. Both in the Church and in the United States in general, the three decades after

¹⁵³ Patrick W. Carey, *Catholics in America* (Lanham MD: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2004), 92.

World War II were a time of openness to development, in a way that was unlike anything in the previous one hundred years presented in the last chapter. Many of the changes would involve tension and confusion as to what the future of sisters in the public schools would be. But, the sisters weathered through the legal battles and changes to become more professional and modern educators. In addition, to highlight these changes, this part of the project allows for those who lived during this period to speak in their own words of how women religious fit into the public education system and how the public schools began to become more accommodating to those who were non-Catholic.

Being a Student and Becoming a Sister:

In this section, firsthand accounts will be given by Sisters of the Precious Blood who attended public schools during their elementary years. The four students interviewed, who were not part of the C.P.P.S. community during their elementary years, decided to enter the community after high school. All four sisters had fond memories of their early public education in rural northwest Ohio. Although this section enters the realm of an oral history, the sisters present, through the lens of their childhood recollections, a view of how their sister educators and religion functioned in schools that were not sponsored by a parish. Many reported having lay teachers, some of whom were not Catholic, during their elementary years as well. Some sisters recalled that communities and their schools were changing, with just a few families who were non-Catholic moving to town. For others, the community remained very much Catholic throughout their grade school years. Moreover, no matter the demographics, the communities discussed in this section were supportive of the public school, and the educators who were hired there. Presented below are details that are pertinent to our

understanding of how these teaching sisters also inspired young Catholic girls in public grade schools to enter the religious community.

Sister Regina Albers, C.P.P.S. offers a vivid picture of the day-to-day student life at the public school across the street from St. Joseph Church in Egypt, Ohio. She attended grade school in her hometown from 1941 to 1948, first through eighth grade. The schoolhouse had two rooms, with a sister teaching first grade through fourth grade in one room and fifth grade through eighth grade in the other.¹⁵⁴ Sister Regina said this had its advantages, “I remember listening to what was being taught in the grade ahead of me and I would learn stuff before we’d get there.”¹⁵⁵ Having four grades in a room allowed students to get a jump on information to come, or review past material.

The Jackson Township #2 school building was owned by the school board, and the teachers were paid with state funds. Of the thirty children in the classroom, Sister Regina states that, “we were all Catholic in a public school,” allowing the practice of crucifixes in the classroom and Bibles in the desks of older students to read when work was completed. The day started with religious instruction or Mass using release time.¹⁵⁶ Sister Regina gives an account of how the Jackson Township school bus route accommodated Mass time:

We had one bus and we had two routes. One was the north side of Egypt and the other was the south side of Egypt and we alternated. One week you went on early bus and the next week you went on late bus. If you were on early bus, those kids went to Mass that week...so every other week we were at Mass, so yes, Mass was part of our day.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ See Image 20 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of the Egypt School.

¹⁵⁵ Sister Regina Albers, C.P.P.S., interview by the author, Dayton, January 15, 2016.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

The Catholic influence that began in the morning could be felt throughout the school day. Sister remembers that for good papers or as a prize for a good grade, sisters would give the children holy cards, some of which Sister Regina still has. She also has fond memories of Sister M. Yvonne Voisard, who coached baseball games on the playground and loved teaching the children in the farming community of Egypt, Ohio, as it reminded her of her youth spent in nearby Russia, Ohio. The sisters taught in English, but many of the children still spoke German at home. The student's knowledge of German meant that "many times on the playground it was German, but in the classroom it was English."¹⁵⁸ When asked if the sisters teaching at Egypt had an influence on her decision to enter the Precious Blood Community, Sister Regina answered with a confident and firm, "Definitely."¹⁵⁹ Despite being a public school, Jackson Township #2 was fertile ground for the hearts and minds of young boys and girls. They were able to learn in an encouraging environment, with teachers who also were an example of the joys of entering the religious life. Clearly, the ethnic and religious background of the community was welcome in its public school. This was punctuated by the example of the kind-hearted sisters who positively impacted Sr. Regina during her elementary school years.

Around the same time that Sister Regina was being taught by the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Egypt, in the larger community of Russia, Sister Rosemary Goubeaux, C.P.P.S. was also an elementary student in the public school. Grades one through six were in a building right behind St. Remy Church. The public elementary had four rooms at that time and often a teacher would have a full grade and half of another grade in a room. Sister Rosemary explains, "Like in first grade [room] you had all of the first grade and

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

half of second. Then the next would have the rest of the second and the third grade...seems to me we had a whole room for fourth grade, anyway it varied from year to year.”¹⁶⁰ Grades seven and eight were in the high school building and she reports having sisters for homeroom, religion, and home economics. One influential junior high school teacher for Sister Rosemary was Sister M. Audrey, who asked her if she had ever thought about becoming a sister, and if she wanted to enter the high school at Salem Heights. After prayer and reflection, Sister Rosemary decided to enter the Precious Blood Community high school. The sisters were still able to show a religious presence in the public school at Russia, from which came many new members at this time. In the Russia Public School, Precious Blood sisters had lay colleagues, some of whom were not Catholic. Sister Rosemary remembers that her uncle was her homeroom teacher in the sixth grade. Interestingly, the superintendent was not Catholic at this time, but still saw the value in release time and the presence of sisters in his schools.¹⁶¹

Sister Rosemary compares her experience at the Russia Public School to Catholic schools in which she would later work, stating: “Our day was pretty much like it would be in Catholic schools when I was teaching, we had religion each day.”¹⁶² In the 1940s Russia used release time for religious instruction, and the children would be bused into school for religious instruction before the formal school day began. A grade was recorded on the report card for religion. Sister Rosemary brought all eight of her report cards, marked ‘Shelby County Local Schools,’ to the interview.¹⁶³ Often religion was noted in the place of Ethics. She also stated that the parish pastor would distribute the report cards

¹⁶⁰ Sister Rosemary Goubeaux, C.P.P.S., interview by the author, Dayton, January 18, 2016.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ See Images 21 and 22 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of her report card and a note that sister included for her students regarding summer vacation.

to the students when it came time for grades to be reported. Furthermore, the Catholic atmosphere was punctuated with crucifixes in the classroom and the availability of Mass. Sister recalls, “We had crucifixes in the room, we had Mass on certain days, not every day, you just came to school earlier if you wanted to go to Mass.”¹⁶⁴ Non-Catholics were never pressured to attend religious instruction or Mass, and there were only maybe five families who were non-Catholic in the district. Sister said that these non-Catholic families did not mind “because they felt they got a good education there,” and some non-Catholics would attend religious instruction.¹⁶⁵ If the teacher was non-Catholic, the classes would just switch, so that they would not have to teach religion. In summation, Sister Rosemary felt that there always seemed to be a nice spirit among the staff and they worked together to shape students into well informed and caring citizens.¹⁶⁶

Another sister who paints a harmonious picture of her time in the public school in a Catholic community is Sister Martha Bertke, C.P.P.S. She attended St. John Elementary School, in Maria Stein, Ohio. From 1946 to 1954, she was in the elementary for grades one through eight, and then spent four years in the public high school located in Maria Stein. When asked about the non-Catholics in her classes, she recalls that there “was not a single one.”¹⁶⁷ This Catholic community of Maria Stein allowed influences in their school such as attending Mass often and being allowed to walk across the street to visit the Blessed Sacrament during lunch hour. Sister Martha even recalls: “We were prepared by the sisters who taught in the public school [for sacraments], because we were all

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Sister Martha Bertke, C.P.P.S., interview by the author, Dayton, January 9, 2016.

Catholic.”¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, during this time religious art was prevalent in the classroom, with crucifixes, statues of the Virgin Mary, and bulletin boards geared toward the liturgical seasons. Although Mass would have happened before the school day, Sister Martha gives an honest recollection from a child’s view point, stating: “It seemed to me that it was part of the school day, however, when you’re a child you don’t realize that you need a certain number of hours within the school day so, if we went to Mass, it seemed like it was just part of the school day.”¹⁶⁹ For the young students, often there was little distinction between religious instruction during release time and the formal school day.

Sister Martha also spent her high school years at Maria Stein. During her sophomore year, the area combined the smaller rural elementary schools of St. Rose, Cassella, Chickasaw, Sebastian, and Osgood to form Marion Local Schools.¹⁷⁰ At this time, St. John’s High School was renamed Marion Local High School, and two sisters still remained on the high school faculty. A new building was built, on land owned by the school board, on which Sister Martha’s father, Ivo Bertke, sat. This building was some distance from the Church. However, the building was not done in time for her class’s graduation, and commencement was held in the cramped auditorium which the students called “the cracker box.”¹⁷¹ It was around this same time, Sister Martha was thinking about entering a religious community. She spoke with Sister M. Friedburga Jaeger at the Shrine in Maria Stein, whom she had met during high school retreats. It was through the influence of this sister, that she found a home with the Sisters of the Precious Blood.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ This takes its name from Marion Township, where these communities are located.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. See Image 23 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of the Old St. John’s High School.

¹⁷² Ibid.

Finally, the memories of Sister Joyce Lehman, C.P.P.S. give a snapshot of the Ottoville Public Elementary School. Before entering the community high school at Salem Heights in 1959, Sister Joyce spent eight years in Ottoville under the tutelage of the Sisters of the Precious Blood as well as lay teachers who lived in the community. When asked about the demographics of her class, Sister Joyce recalls, “I think until eighth grade we were all Catholic and at that point a family moved in that was non-Catholic.”¹⁷³ Furthermore, when a non-Catholic did arrive, the student had no problem attending morning services and religious instruction, he or she fit right in, and there was no pressure to become or appear to be Catholic. School buildings were owned by Immaculate Conception Church and rented to the public school.¹⁷⁴ Many sisters taught in the elementary, and Sister Joyce only remembers two grades, fourth and seventh, when she had lay women as teachers, only one of whom was a non-Catholic. The lay teacher who was non-Catholic would still take the children to Mass, but did not receive communion; she still supported the work of the sisters and the religious atmosphere of the school, because she believed it maintained the high standards of the community. A typical school day in Ottoville in the 1950s started with release time for Mass and religion. Sister Joyce states,

We were brought in on the buses, we went to Mass from 8:00 to 8:30, from 8:30 to 9:00, we had religion class and then the school day started, the public school day started. It was just the way it was. As we got older we realized there was a distinction between the time we had religion classes and the time we had “regular” school.¹⁷⁵

Note, Sister Joyce observed, much like Sister Martha, that as a child she did not realize the distinction between Catholic and public schools.

¹⁷³ Sister Joyce Lehman, C.P.P.S., interview by the author, Dayton, January 11, 2016.

¹⁷⁴ See Image 24 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of the Ottoville School.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

The blurring of lines also occurred in the décor of the classrooms. There were crucifixes and religious art on the walls of the school, and many of the projects sisters completed, such as art projects, would have a religious theme. Sister Joyce remembers on one occasion,

...the principal of the grade school, Sister Othilda [Fullenkamp], coming in saying that we had to take the crosses down and that the religious related bulletin boards had to be changed because the state inspector was coming and there was some tension about having such a strong Catholic influence in a public school.¹⁷⁶

However, after the inspector left, things were business as usual at Ottoville Elementary.

Moreover, Ottoville in the 1950s was described as a peaceful community that was

“almost totally Catholic so everything revolved around the Church. There weren’t people to object to these things because it was such a Catholic community” by Sister Joyce.¹⁷⁷

Growing up in the town of Ottoville, she remembers the influence of the sisters, without which she may have never encountered the religious community she is now a member of.

It was also a very German Catholic community, in fact, the pastors of her childhood spoke English, but it was their second language after German.¹⁷⁸

In summation, there are many common themes from the childhood observations of those students who were later sisters. First and foremost, there was little distinction between a Catholic school and these public schools at this time, let alone the distinction between release time and the formal school day. The churches were nearby and open for Mass in the morning, religious instruction prefaced the first official class of the morning, and a crucified Christ looked down on the public school children throughout their lessons. If non-Catholics attended the school and lived in the community, there was no

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

observation of any hostility toward Catholics in the classroom. The students surveyed here do not remember any incidents of non-Catholics being obligated to learn the catechism or pray, nor did they recall being told of any problems from their school days when they matured into adulthood. Sisters came to serve the needs of these children and parents supported the excellent education their children received, knowing that these women instilled valuable morals and a great sense of joy. Truly the most important aspect of these accounts is the tranquility and pride found in the community who banded together to support their public school. Finally, it is clear that despite their presence in public schools, sisters still could be a strong example of a pious and Spirit filled woman. As educators, sisters inspired their students to pursue a religious vocation as a Sister of the Precious Blood. Despite trends of secularization and other changes to mainstream society in other, more densely populated parts of the State, these rural communities remained unchanged up until the end of the 1950s.

A Conflicting Church & State Outside of Northwest Ohio:

Although the accounts above show that there was little to no friction between the schools and non-Catholics in the area, this was not always the case. By the 1960s, things were changing in the way these public schools, which seemed to almost be state-supported Catholic schools, operated. The legal conflict between schools that employed sisters in religious garb and non-Catholics in the community helps to answer many questions about this church and state relationship. The first is how blurred the lines were between religious education happening during release time and the state-sponsored school day and how that was sorted out. As one can see by the testimony of those who grew up in these schools, often it seemed that religion was part of their school day.

Resolving this often meant that religion classes were no longer allowed to be taught in buildings used for public education. Connected to that quandary is the rise of parish religious education programs. In the 1960s many parishes established a CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) program, in its own building with their own catechists, be they lay or religious. Finally, the lawsuits involving religious women and those unhappy with the Catholic presence in state schools also gives some insight into where else the practice of women religious in public schools was occurring and how it compared to the situation in northwest Ohio. An important question then becomes, where did other orders teach in public schools and how did they compare?

By the late 1940s, non-Catholics in New Mexico were already reacting to ‘nuns’ teaching in schools that were supported by the state. One voice asserts, “The Roman Catholic church [sic] has undoubtedly more influence in New Mexico than any other state in the Union.”¹⁷⁹ This was not the case in the view of Catholics, who understood that they had helped bring about public education for all people in New Mexico, while not forcing the Catholic faith on them. After a chaotic period, in which Bishop Lamy of Santa Fe tried to open schools with the help of European religious orders and the Propagation of the Faith, the financial resources became available to open public schools.¹⁸⁰ This is very similar to how many of the schools began in northwest Ohio, with the local church using its resources to educate the community. A 1948 article in *America*, written by a sister who presumably worked in their schools, retells how sisters ended up in public schools in New Mexico,

¹⁷⁹ R. L. Chambers "Church and State in New Mexico," *Nation* 169, no. 9 (August 27, 1949): 201.

¹⁸⁰ Sister M. Philibert, "Nuns in New Mexico's public schools," *America* 80, no. 8 (November 27, 1948): 208.

When the public school finally became a reality, means were lacking to make it a physical one; the one recourse open to Territorial officials was to hire rooms in the buildings already opened by sisters and ask them to take examinations required to qualify as public school teachers. In most localities it would have been impossible to find other Anglo-American teachers. After almost a hundred years these conditions have changed in places, but in others they are much the same.¹⁸¹

In the places where there were demographic shifts, large populations of Protestants were not going to stand for Catholic instruction and religious pictures on the walls. On March 10, 1949 a judge barred 143 priests, sisters, and brothers previously teaching in public schools from teaching any further because of accusations asserting that the Catholic faith was intruding on public education. Furthermore, free text books and bussing could not be used by these seemingly parochial schools, and church owned buildings could not be used for public education. Ultimately these communities lost educators and buildings because of the decision, and were forced to build new schools as well as find new teachers. In the end, the state suffered from its harsh regulations, as in some areas people now had to pay a parochial school fee, or send their children away to be educated.¹⁸²

North Dakota also had sought to curtail women religious in its public schools. The protestant groups went about it differently and enacted anti-garb laws. These laws forbade the sisters from wearing their religious habit in the schools. Law makers believed they were making it no longer possible for sisters to teach in 1948, when the law was passed, because they believed religious community rules would have mandated sisters stay in the religious habit.¹⁸³ In an article from *America*, which was written by a sister teaching in the public schools, the agenda of the state legislature is explained,

In North Dakota, seventy-five Catholic nuns, receiving a fabulous salary of \$66.66 a month, were among 6,529 teachers employed by the State. Because

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Chambers, "Church and State in New Mexico," 207-08.

¹⁸³ "Ripples in North Dakota." *America*, July 24, 1948, 364.

ministers of various sects were also among the 6,529, the bill obviously could not be directed against “professional religious.” The solution, though probably unconstitutional, was clever: a bill aimed solely against the wearing of a religious garb while teaching in a public school. Ministers of course follow a secular pattern.¹⁸⁴

The plot was cunning, and the same article tells us that the law barely passed a popular vote. However, the bishops in North Dakota fired back and dispensed sisters who taught in public schools from wearing their habits.¹⁸⁵ The Catholic sisters were able to continue teaching despite the tension.

In 1948, there was an article in *The Christian Century* about Sisters of Mercy in two public schools in Connecticut. Sisters assumed teaching positions as well as that of the principal. It appears that, like some of the public schools in northwest Ohio with sisters, the schools began as Catholic elementary schools.¹⁸⁶ However, unlike Ohio, they did not become public because of consolidation. Rather, the pastor, upon his death, turned them over to the city with the desire that the teachers stay and the state support the school. The teachers, who were state certified, were then paid the same wage with the same benefits as other lay teachers in the existing district. This article remarks that those in the community saw this situation as something ‘not considered desirable.’¹⁸⁷ At the time the article was written, there were already some complaints by non-Catholic parents regarding informal religious education at these schools.¹⁸⁸

In 1953, non-Catholics challenged the policy allowing Catholic sisters to teach in public schools in Kentucky and West Virginia. Kentucky had ninety-seven sisters

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ E. Ralph Wiborg, "Nuns hold public school positions: in New Haven, 22 teach in buildings formerly Catholic-owned--third party active in Connecticut," *The Christian Century* 65, no. 8 (February 25, 1948): 248.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

teaching in the state and West Virginia had one hundred sisters in four counties on state salaries.¹⁸⁹ The Archbishop of Louisville, speaking for his Archdiocese in Kentucky “...declared that the nuns teaching in these schools are employed by the legally elected boards and that it is ‘undemocratic, even antidemocratic’ for an outsider to try and dictate what teachers are to be employed or to attempt to bar a teacher from the public schools because of her religion.”¹⁹⁰ Like the schools in rural Ohio that are being studied in this project, the sisters were not hired by the pastor at this time, but the school board was offering them contracts. Moreover, Kentucky and West Virginia were in the same situation as other places, where both sides would have to find a compromise so that sisters could continue to offer a quality education to people in need of it.

It was during this period that cases involving religious education during release time made it to the Supreme Court. The first of which, *McCullum v. Board of Education* came from Illinois in 1948. This case found the use of state funds to support religious education programs to be unconstitutional. Furthermore, public schools could not select teachers specifically for teaching religion.¹⁹¹ The second Supreme Court case dealing with release time builds on the decision made in this first case. In 1952, *Zorach v. Clauson* upheld the use of release time, which allowed students to leave school, even if during school hours, for religious education. The First Amendment was not violated when public schools tried to accommodate the religious needs of students.¹⁹² These decisions meant that schools throughout the United States could continue the practice of

¹⁸⁹ James Maurice Trimmer, "Ask ban on nuns in public schools: Kentucky suit requests court decision on legality of their teaching -- Gresham heads Bethany," *The Christian Century* 70, no. 48 (December 2, 1953): 1396.

¹⁹⁰ James Maurice Trimmer. "Query basis of nuns' teaching: Kentucky committee seeks court ruling on their employment in public schools of the state," *The Christian Century* 70, no. 32 (August 12, 1953): 922.

¹⁹¹ *McCullum v. Board of Education* 333 U.S. 203 (1948).

¹⁹² *Zorach v. Clauson*, 343 U.S. 306 (1952).

release time. However, they would have to conform to policies to ensure that all students' rights were respected.

Just like in Kentucky, West Virginia, Connecticut, North Dakota, and New Mexico, state policies were changing as public schools standardized. The sisters tried their very best to mold students into moral and knowledgeable graduates. However, it is possible that mistakes may have been made, or that anti-Catholic animus may have been used to skew the facts of what was really happening in the classroom. Either way, the women religious had to be very careful to follow the new guidelines that were being laid down by the state to protect both them and the students. Times were changing, and the people were taking a more active role in how their money was being spent. This is evidenced by the lawsuits and public complaints in this section as well as those which are going to be discussed in Kalida and Fort Recovery, Ohio. It was only a matter of time before a similar situation occurred in northwest Ohio involving the Sisters of Precious Blood.

Fort Recovery: An Important Church-State lawsuit for Ohio Schools:

Sisters located at Glandorf were the first community who would have to deal with the effects of Protestant objections to the Catholic influences on the public schools. Although no one challenged the policies of the Glandorf Public Schools, nervousness was felt in the community in 1959 when the Sisters of Divine Providence, who taught in the nearby Kalida Public Schools, were being accused of teaching the Catholic faith during class time. A letter from Sister M. Pacifica Weiner to Mother M. Aquinas Stadtherr details the situation that has "all of Putnam County in the spot light," for her fear was that more people would copy the accusations in other communities with sisters in the

schools.¹⁹³ Naturally, the school in Glandorf would need to prepare itself so that complaints could not be filed against it. The complaints in nearby Kalida, quoted from Sister Pacifica's letter, included:

1. The Children are forced to attend Catholic School.
2. Saying prayers and the sign of the cross.
3. Found a planter – statue of the madonna [sic] – this was exaggerated as a large statue.¹⁹⁴

These should be explained a bit further. Clearly, there was some major exaggeration in the accusations. From stating that children were “forced” into a Catholic school, when clearly an elected board had charge of the district was an exaggeration. Likewise, a planter of the Blessed Mother becoming a full-blown statue of the Madonna was false. These accusations started out as one woman's plan to expel the sisters and soon grew into twenty-three families backing the accusations at the time the letter was written. Sister Pacifica paints a picture of how six of the accusers roamed the halls of the Kalida Elementary School eavesdropping on the classes, “They found two words – God and angel. One of the sisters opened the door [on an eavesdropper] and said, ‘The door is open. Come in, you can hear better.’ Then they left.”¹⁹⁵ The superintendent of the Kalida Public Schools stated that these accusations were found to be false and that state inspectors were coming to verify that the school was still in good standing with the state.

The letter, with some irony, recounts to the Mother General the meeting that resulted in Glandorf Public Schools as a result of the Kalida accusations. On the morning of September 16, 1959 a faculty meeting was held about preventing anti-Catholic criticisms at Glandorf. Paradoxically, the pastor of St. John the Baptist Church and his

¹⁹³ Letter from Sister M. Pacifica Weiner to Mother M. Aquinas Stradtherr, September 16, 1959, C.P.P.S. Archives, Dayton OH.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., emphases not added.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

assistant were in attendance. It was agreed that all religious statues, texts and pictures were to be removed from the school premises. It saddened the sisters greatly to see the large crucifix, hung at the new high school's dedication, come down after this meeting. Secondly, there was to be no prayer except during release time in the morning, when "ethics" was taking place.¹⁹⁶ As one can see from Sister Rosemary's account of her religion grade being recorded as ethics, Glandorf was not the only public school district to call religion class ethics. Finally, "No confessions or communion practice except at noon until the war is over."¹⁹⁷ Clearly these precautions were so that the battle would not spread, and judging by the vocabulary of Sister Pacifica this was a serious and scary conflict. The staff was told not to panic, but to be careful.

Furthermore, for Glandorf, the school building itself could have added fuel to a fire of accusations, had there been any at that time. It is exceptional to note at this time that the part of the school not added on by the public school in Glandorf was owned by the parish and rented to the school board. The board of education also rented the land on which the school building was located from the parish. Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S., notes that the original building was too small, so the school board added on to it, building two wings that came out from the older, parish owned building. She taught in this building from 1970 to 1996. After she left, the parish exchanged some undeveloped land with this building for the school system to build a new elementary. The old school became the parish's religious education center where children still go during release time for their

¹⁹⁶ Jean Giesige, "His Godmother's Prayers were Answered," *Cincinnati C.P.P.S. Newsletter*, November 2015, 155. Calling catechism 'ethics' was a common practice of many schools in the area, as sisters noted in interviews and Fr. Emil Schuwey, C.P.P.S. recalls when he discussed his time as assistant pastor of St. Augustine Church, Minster where he taught about 200 children the Catholic faith, two students of other faiths did attend his class. In Minster, like Glandorf, "ethics" was a neutral name given to release time to help dissolve tension, even if the tension was just in the minds of the sisters and priests.

¹⁹⁷ Sister M. Pacifica. It is safe to assume 'noon' means during lunch break, as those were more lenient times and children could go home or to church.

religious education classes.¹⁹⁸ The diagram provided by the Diocese of Toledo (Ohio) gives us some insight as to how that awkward situation came about.¹⁹⁹ The parish rented many classrooms, the cafeteria, kitchen, teacher's lounge, and gymnasium to the public school board. The board added a first wing of restrooms and five classrooms in 1950, with an addition to that in 1959 with at least five more classrooms. In addition, two eighth grade classrooms were connected to the 1950 wing in 1987. A second wing of seven classrooms and restrooms was added in 1964, which appear to have housed lower grades.²⁰⁰ The building itself embodies the entanglement of the situation between the religious and state influences present in the school that are often very difficult to straighten out. It is truly amazing that state funds were used, with the consent of voters, to build an addition to a building owned by a church, on land rented from the same congregation. This is not the only place where this practice happened, often smaller buildings rented to public schools were simply enlarged by elected school boards as room was needed and budgets were too tight to construct new buildings.

Returning to the tensions, the precautions at Glandorf, recounted in Sister Pacifica's letter, may have helped them avoid accusations or a lawsuit at this time. However, the sisters at Southwest Local Schools in Fort Recovery, Ohio, were not so lucky. To preface the lawsuit in Fort Recovery, it is important to remember that the Catholics in Fort Recovery were a minority, with a formal parish church built in 1902 and school in 1921. In 1952 the Archdiocese and Southwest Local Schools reached an

¹⁹⁸ Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S., interview by the author, Dayton, January 12, 2016. Recently they completed the museum in the old school. Lockers were removed for display cases, with artifacts donated by the local historian, Michael E. Leach. The museum was dedicated in January of 2016. Furthermore, sister has verified much of the information about Glandorf's school in this chapter with Kevin Brinkman who grew up in the town and became the superintendent of the Ottawa-Glandorf School District after being principle of the Glandorf Elementary School for several years.

¹⁹⁹ See Image 25 in the Appendix of Images for the map.

²⁰⁰ Map from the Diocese of Toledo Ohio Archives, which can be viewed in the appendix.

agreement, and St. Mary's School became part of the public Southwest School District. The old Catholic school, originally called St. Mary's School, would be called the West Elementary, while the old public elementary, which was attached to the high school, was called the East Elementary. Until the time of the lawsuit, Protestants in Southwest Local Schools went to the East Elementary, and Catholics to the West Elementary. Both schools used release time for religious instruction, with the Protestants bringing in their own ministers for lessons.²⁰¹ The outlying communities of St. Joseph (formerly called Victoria, Ohio), Sharpsburg, and St. Peter also had schools that were managed by a school board though still attached to the parish.²⁰² Sister Marita Beumer, C.P.P.S. grew up in the parish of St. Peter and noted that sisters did not teach at this school until she and two other daughters of the parish entered the Sisters of the Precious Blood in the mid-1950s. They were the last of twenty-nine from the small rural parish to become sisters; the majority of those twenty-nine entered the Precious Blood Community. The pastor could not understand why they did not have sisters at St. Peter School, after so many of its young ladies had become religious women, so he went down to prove his case to the Mother General. The next school year, St. Peter had sisters in its classrooms.²⁰³ As for the school at St. Joseph, by the time of consolidation in 1958 there were no sisters there, if there ever had been Precious Blood sisters on the staff.

²⁰¹ *Fort Recovery Bicentennial History 1791-1991*, 64-5 & 69 & Rita Pleiman, personal conversation with author, February 27, 2016.

²⁰² *Fort Recovery Bicentennial History 1791-1991*, 64-5. Note that the town name is in both of these cases is St. Joseph and St. Peter. In this text, St. Joseph and St. Peter will be used to identify the larger community and not just the parish community, which largely unifies these rural farms, from which the area gets its name. If the specific church is referred to, it will be done so directly.

²⁰³ Sister Marita Beumer, C.P.P.S., interview by the author, Dayton, January 8, 2016. Sisters Noreen Jutte and Patricia Will were the other daughters of St. Peter Parish who entered the community the same year as Sister Marita.

New legislation for the 1959-60 school years closed the schools as their boards and supporting parishes could not conform to the new state requirements. A better education could be offered in the newly formed Southwest School District. The history of Fort Recovery written on the occasion of the communities bicentennial states: “that no more than two grades could be housed in the same classroom and that there must be at least three full time teachers...Each school was to have library facilities organized so as to contribute to the total educational program.”²⁰⁴ Furthermore, recreational classes were to be offered in art, music, and physical education.²⁰⁵ These three small schools, as well as many other small schools across the state, could not conform to these mandates and consolidation occurred.

There were four elementary schools in the Southwest district after consolidation. The St. Joseph’s schoolhouse was not one of the four schools, as it was vacated in 1958 and demolished in 1961. The school in Sharpsburg, which had connections to St. Paul Catholic Church before consolidation in 1958, became an elementary school of the district.²⁰⁶ The elementary, previously known as St. Mary’s School, next to Mary Help of Christians Church in the town of Fort Recovery, was already a public elementary school under the Southwest Local Schools.²⁰⁷ This school was still in operation when St. Peter and Sharpsburg schools became part of Southwest Local Schools, and was known as the West Elementary. A few years after consolidation, the school board built another building on parish owned land next to the West Elementary. This land was rented by the board

²⁰⁴ *Fort Recovery Bicentennial History 1791-1991*, 69.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ See Image 26 in the Appendix of Images for a photograph of the Sharpsburg School near St. Paul Church.

²⁰⁷ See Image 27 in the Appendix of Images for a rendering of the building owned by Mary Help of Christians Church at this time.

from the church until the parish sold the land to the school board in 1979. The third elementary in the district was at St. Peter. In 1962, the public school board added to the St. Peter School; classrooms for grades four through six, a library, and a gym/cafeteria. Much like the West Elementary, this new building was next to the older building which the board was renting from the Church.²⁰⁸ The circumstances around this addition were very much like the construction of wings on the Glandorf Elementary School happening around the same time, but Glandorf's wings were connected. In St. Peter the school board's addition was not connected to the original building rented from the parish. By 1983, the building was no longer needed due to declining enrollment, and the building was returned to St. Peter Church on whose land it was built.²⁰⁹ The final elementary was the East Elementary, which enrolled only non-Catholic students, and was the original public elementary that was attached to the high school. So, at the time of the lawsuit, Southwest Schools operated four elementary campuses, three with Catholic students and one with Protestant. Much like what was seen in the consolidation of community and parish schools in the last chapter, this progressed smoothly for Fort Recovery's children with no visible changes to the teaching staff and daily operations, with the exception of adding the students who formerly attended St. Joseph. Sisters remained at the helm because the local community needed qualified teachers. As a result, Fort Recovery, a settlement of predominantly non-Catholics, now had Sisters of the Precious Blood teaching in its public schools.

The situation progressed peacefully for only five years, after which time a few disgruntled citizens began to stir up trouble for the sisters and the school district. On

²⁰⁸ See Image 28 in the Appendix of Images for a picture of the existing school next to the addition.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 64-5, 69.

Tuesday, October 10th 1963, *The Journal*, Fort Recovery's local paper, reported that the "Southwest School System had been chosen as a guinea pig in a church-state school controversy that's been brewing throughout the state and different parts of the nation for a good many years."²¹⁰ The fact that 'it had been chosen' and that things had 'been brewing' has to do with the plaintiff having the backing of organizations that wished to make an example of the case, to extinguish the practice of sisters in public schools throughout the area. Sister M. Consuella Salmon, who was a teacher at the Southwest Elementary and a witness in the case, states these groups were: POAU (Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State), the Ohio Free Schools Association, and pastors of the local Protestant churches.²¹¹ It is quite probable that, given the low population of Catholics in Fort Recovery compared to the nearly totally Catholic settlements in the area, Fort Recovery would be an easy location for the POAU and others to attack. The local newspaper reports that Catholics made up "80 to 85 per cent of the people in district."²¹² Which would constitute a larger number than just the one or two non-Catholic families who resided in other communities remembered. The newspapers also agrees with Sister Consuella's assessment and states that the POAU hoped that this suit would clear up comparable situations occurring in at least twenty other schools in the state.²¹³ The apparent goal of the Fort Recovery lawsuit was to end the practice of women religious teaching in public schools in northwestern Ohio, and beyond.

²¹⁰ "SW Dist. Chosen for Test Case" *Journal* (Fort Recovery, Ohio) October 10, 1963.

²¹¹ Sister M. Consuella Salmon, C.P.P.S. "Fort Recovery Court Case" C.P.P.S. Archives, Dayton, Ohio.

²¹² "Defense Rests Its Case On Charge Of Church-State Ties In Mercer" *Dayton Journal* (Dayton, Ohio) April 30, 1965.

²¹³ "SW Dist. Chosen for Test Case" *Journal*, October 10, 1963.

Jesse Moore, a sixteen year resident of Fort Recovery, was the official plaintiff in the case against five members and the clerk of the Southwest School Board alleging they had “conducted religious sectarian schools for which public funds are being expended.”²¹⁴ Furthermore, the location of the elementary school was being called into question by the plaintiff. Mr. Moore alleged that the terms of the ninety-nine year lease between the school board and Mary Help of Christians Church had “given direct control and operation to agents of the church.”²¹⁵ The practice of many school boards in the area, to rent existing building from the Catholic parish, was now being called into question by this case. The fact that a building for the upper grades was built next to the existing four room schoolhouse complicated the situation further, for the school board now owned a building on rented land, as well as rented the previous four room Catholic school.²¹⁶ Finally, the article notes that busses that were owned by the board were being used to bus students to religious education.²¹⁷ This legal battle would last just over two years, involving the sisters who were on the faculty, and captivating the small town. A large portion of northwest Ohio and the Precious Blood Community also kept a close eye on the lawsuit, because the result of the lawsuit would have a significant impact on the schools and sisters teaching in them.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ The layout in Fort Recovery was such that the new school was built next to the existing school, which was just down from a house where the sisters lived until the late 1950s. The church sat between the old convent, used for CCD classes after the sisters vacated the building and the court ruled that religion was not to be taught in rooms where public school classes were held, and the priest’s residence. Later, a new cafeteria/parish hall was constructed between the two school buildings, but it was only attached to the old Catholic school. One had to walk outside of the new, board-owned school to get to the cafeteria and the lower grades in the old school. This information was provided in a private conversation between Wilfred and Ruth Etta Ranly on 2/23/2016. The Ranlys lived through the consolidation and lawsuit; Mrs. Ranly cleaned the church and school as well as worked in the kitchens. Mr. & Mrs. Ranly are grandparents of the author of this report.

²¹⁷ “SW Dist. Chosen for Test Case” *Journal* (Fort Recovery, Ohio) October 10, 1963.

The C.P.P.S. Archives have a statement from Sister M. Consuella about her perspective on the lawsuit for which she was called to testify. The document is undated, but a hand-written note at the bottom shows that it was to be submitted for annals of the community in Fort Recovery, thus it was probably written soon after the ruling on January 4, 1966. She adds some details to the accusations in the newspaper. Mr. Moore charged the school with segregation. He believed the East Elementary School in the town of Fort Recovery enrolled the Protestant children, while the other elementary schools, the West Elementary, Sharpsburg and St. Peter, enrolled only Catholic.²¹⁸ It would have been easier to teach religion on release time if there were only Catholics in the smaller schools outside of the community

Furthermore, Sister Consuella states that Mr. Moore objected to the religious garb of the six sisters who taught at the school. Notably, it was the crucifixes that they wore that he found most offensive.²¹⁹ Much like in North Dakota, the garb was attacked because the POAU thought that if habits were banished from the public school, the sisters themselves would effectively be banished. In addition, Sister Consuella sheds some light on Mr. Moore's strong reference to the school being 'sectarian' in the quote used by the papers. She asserts that Mr. Moore noted that release time was said to be used when classes attended an 11 a.m. Mass, but this time was not deducted from the teachers' pay.²²⁰ In other words, because the release time was happening in the middle of the day, and before school, it was harder to police whether things were actually happening on school time. These accusations in the fall of 1963 were just the beginning; the ordeal would last a very long time and would be a very taxing process for the sisters.

²¹⁸ Sister M. Consuella, C.P.P.S.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid.

Sister Consuella expands on how much stress was put on the school, the sisters, and the town. She states that not all Protestants in the town were on Mr. Moore's side, making any distinction of "'friend' or 'foe'" very hard to discern. She recalls "Espionage began to take place in areas of the three schools, St. Peter's, Sharpsburg, and St. Mary's [the West Elementary], Fort Recovery." She states that, at one point, a lay teacher was stopped on her way to the school by two men who appeared to need her help, but were really trying to collect evidence against the school and the sisters. However, "their ruse was quickly identified by the teacher, Mrs. Gettinger, who shouted at them, 'Step aside or there will be two dead men on the road!'"²²¹ In another episode, Mr. Rose, the superintendent, hired a new teacher who seemed very friendly and cooperative. But later he was seen exiting Mr. Moore's house and his true character was revealed, as he was an "undercover agent" for the plaintiff. Clearly these teachers were passionate about keeping the standards of their schools from being dragged through the mud. Moreover, the language that Sister Consuella uses in her account and the actions of the staff show the passion and war-like nature of what must have seemed like a battle against a school which had done nothing but try to employ the practice of release time for religious instruction.

From the notes of Sister Consuella, the arguments took place in late April 1965, with sisters being called to the stand on April 27th and April 28th. The reason why this dragged out for so long was because there were many filings of briefs and counter-briefs by the defendant and the plaintiff. The cross examinations of Sisters M. Renata, M. Consuella, and M. Josina were recorded for the annals. Sister M. Lucietta did not offer

²²¹ Ibid.

the questions asked of her for documentation in Sr. Consuella's record for the annals.²²²

Many of the questions asked were what one would expect to be asked in a case such as this. Some examples, with their answers, are:

How did you get your appointment here at Southwest Schools? (I was recommended by the board, had the qualifications, and was accepted.)

What is the difference between teaching in a parochial school and a public school? (The branches of study are the same, but we have more freedom in teaching religion and talking about God.)

When did you hear about release time officially? (At the first teacher's meeting.)

Will you describe the dress you are wearing? (He questioned me [Sister Consuella] until he got the word habit out of me.) Do you wear it in the classroom? [Yes]

What is that you have around your neck? (Ans: "A Christian Symbol!" [both Sister Renata and Sister Consuella answered this question this way])

Will you tell me the name of the Christian Symbol that you wear?²²³

Although these questions were taken from the list given under Sister Renata and Sister Consuella, these same questions were found in all three that were recorded. It is extremely likely that Sister Lucietta was asked these same questions, as after these four sisters testified the plaintiff agreed that the other two sisters teaching at the school, because they would answer the same way these sisters had, would not need to give testimony.²²⁴

What seems like a simple cross-examination was not without controversy. Both Sister Renata and Sister Lucietta were cross-examined by the plaintiff's lawyer Mr. Mark McChesney, who appears to have tried to add information to the official record of their

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid. Format retained from Sister Consuella, except the bracketed information, which was added by author.

²²⁴ Ibid.

testimony. Naturally, by April 1965, the sisters had given depositions previously. In the fall of 1964, Sister Renata gave a statement privately. Mr. McChesney tried to insert information from this statement in the official transcripts when his question had been dismissed. Sister Renata had noticed something was going on between Mr. McChesney and the recorder so she quickly alerted the judge by asking, “How does he know I will answer that way?” Sister Consuella notes that tension was also high when Sister Lucietta took the stand and again Mr. McChesney was talking with the recorder, making additions to the record. At which point sister said, “I heard what you told the recorder to insert!” He was caught before the thought was fully inserted into the records, but it’s possible it was not deleted.²²⁵ Either way, both sisters spoke up so that the records show they were not going to let Mr. McChesney insert false information into their testimony. All four sisters fought valiantly for a working relationship between religious education and state education in Fort Recovery. They should also be commended for having to live through the tension and confusion brought about by the case.

This case was very hard on the larger Fort Recovery Community. Although she was already a sister at the time, Sister Marita Beumer recalls some events leading up to and during the lawsuit. As a young girl, she could remember the tension building between Catholics and Protestants in Fort Recovery. At times in the 1950s, Catholic families would boycott some of the stores in Fort Recovery that were owned by Protestants who publically supported the removal of sisters and release time from the school as well as voiced anti-Catholics sentiments. She remembers, “We wanted to show them that we were not in support of what they were saying.”²²⁶ At the same time, before the lawsuit,

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Sister Marita Beumer, C.P.P.S.

when children at St. Joseph and St. Peter finished the eighth grade they would usually go to the public high school in Fort Recovery. However, Sister Marita remembers some families who felt the public high school was anti-Catholic sent their children to Coldwater or St. Henry Public High Schools. Sister Marita notes that some of her siblings went to Coldwater Public Schools while others attended Fort Recovery Public Schools. Although Sister Marita did not know what was happening in the Fort Recovery Public Schools in the 1950s, the fact that families were pulling their children out and sending them to other schools left an impression that she did not forget.²²⁷

The practices of boycotting and attending other schools continued throughout the lawsuit. Sister Marita recalled that the whole town changed, saying “the ones that were not Catholic would not live there...and they moved out of town.”²²⁸ Boycotting was a prevalent practice from both groups who felt strongly on either side. Sister Consuella states that,

Estranged relations snowballed between the Catholics and the Protestants – that is, those Protestants who were on the plaintiff’s side. Not all Protestants were of the same opinion; among these was the School Board President, Mr. Monroe. Likewise, business places suffered; some people even withdrew money from the local Bank [sic]. It was this time that Seifert’s (Sister Florence’s parents) abandoned their clothing store and went out of business.”²²⁹

The bottom line here is that boycotting was a two way street. It caused pain and suffering on both sides, as the Catholic Seifert family lost their business, and many Protestants left the community. What was once the minority (Catholics) later became the majority. Today, the largest faith community in Fort Recovery is the Catholic Church, with a diverse group of active Protestant churches as well, thus steeples of all denominations

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Sister M. Consuella, C.P.P.S.

still scrape the skyline. The tension felt by the community in the 1950s and early 1960s eventually evaporated and the community realized that the only way forward was to work together.

What caused this change back to a peaceful community in the late 1960s that has continued to today? Mr. John Hinders, nephew of Sister M. Leontine Pax, C.P.P.S. said when the trial was over, “The unusual thing about this trial is that both sides are satisfied with the outcome!” The costs were divided evenly between both the plaintiff and the defendant.²³⁰ The resolution was reported in *The Journal*, that the school had until June 18, 1966 “to abide by his [Judge Cramer’s] order terminating the release time program” thus also ending religious instruction on the same premises as daily classes.²³¹ Sister Consuella is quick to point out that this was just for Southwest Schools, as the ruling did not make a statement on the use of release time state wide.²³² In response to Mr. Moore’s accusation of religious segregation, *The Journal* reports “the court finds that the evidence in this case does not support a finding of segregation of public pupils based on religious creed...in that no adverse effects on the segregated children was shown.”²³³ Thus, although division was happening to help facilitate release time, now that release time was ending, so too would the segregation.²³⁴ The elementary was to be located in West Elementary only, and East Elementary would be used for kindergarten classes and to expand the high school until the late-1970s when the complex, except for the gym, was torn down and a new high school built.²³⁵ Furthermore, Judge Cramer stated the wearing

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ “Judge Writes Finis to School Case,” *Journal* (Fort Recovery, Ohio), January 6, 1966.

²³² Sister M. Consuella, C.P.P.S.

²³³ “Judge Writes Finis to School Case,” *Journal*, January 6, 1966.

²³⁴ Sister M. Consuella, C.P.P.S.

²³⁵ Rita Pleiman.

of religious garb in a public school was not “in and of itself sectarian in character and is not constitutionally prohibited” and therefore sisters could remain teachers there.²³⁶ The Protestants were happy because now their school would be free of division brought about by the release time used by the Catholics to teach religion. The Catholics were fine with having to develop their own CCD program, if the sisters were allowed to stay in the schools.

This episode illustrates that times were changing in Northwestern Ohio. The sisters had to be careful not to allow their faith to encroach on the public school system, even if release time was used. This also shows that the state realized the value of sisters who had the credentials to teach in the schools, as well as the sovereignty of the school boards who found them worthy to educate. If a sister was qualified, she could teach in a public school. As one can see from the accounts of what was happening in some of the other states, this resolution seems mild. No one had to be released from wearing the habit, and no religious sister was barred from teaching. In the end, Fort Recovery had to lose its release time, but as this case was meant to set a precedent, the lawsuit ultimately failed. Other schools could keep their release time and their sisters. The perseverance of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Fort Recovery paid off, and sisters were allowed to remain in public schools.

Teaching in a Public School in the Late 1960s and Beyond:

What were the effects of the lawsuits on public schools in northwestern Ohio? The lawsuit in Fort Recovery was a major factor in the changes that would occur in these public schools. Chapter three ends as it began, with the memories of those who were in the classroom observing how these schools operated. But there is an interesting twist;

²³⁶ “Judge Writes Finis to School Case,” *Journal*, January 6, 1966.

there were no sisters before the late 1950s who were teachers alive to interview, just as after the later 1950s there were no students in public classrooms with sisters who became sisters to speak with. Below is the account of sisters whose memories of teaching were mostly after state regulations tightened up the schools. Gone were the crucifixes, Bibles, and holy cards. There were no longer statues of Mary, or religion grades, or bulletin boards geared toward liturgical seasons. The schools had changed. These sisters report being a public school teacher in the way we would view a lay person in the position. They were respected by the local school board and community as educators and were eventually paid the wage of lay educators. These stories contrast with those above in some details, but the joy of being involved in a public school remains unchanged by these sisters who taught in rural northwestern Ohio.

There are three sisters who were interviewed about their work in the Ottoville Public Elementary School. The first of these is Sister Rosalie Kastner, C.P.P.S., who was employed by Coldwater Local Schools from 1952 to 1958 and then in Ottoville Public Schools from 1960 to 1986. During her twenty-six years at Ottoville she taught two generations of first graders. Sister Rosalie remembers hearing about the conflict in Kalida and was told that was when release time was strictly enforced and crucifixes came off the classroom walls in Ottoville. Interestingly enough, Sister Rosalie remembers that after the crucifix came down, the room was not painted for years “and the shadow of the cross was still there.”²³⁷ Despite the changes brought about by the POAU in Kalida, Sister Rosalie believed that in Ottoville, “Teaching was permeated with a religious attitude because we teach what we are. I felt that [release time] was a good arrangement, because

²³⁷ Sister Rosalie Kastner, C.P.P.S., interview with the author, Dayton, January 7, 2016.

that way we could teach the children without problems.”²³⁸ The parents were very cooperative with the sisters who taught there, knowing that Christian morality was being imparted to them. Sister Rosalie remembered that at one time a non-Catholic teacher taught the other first grade class, she was supportive of release time, and switched classes with Sister Rosalie so the Catholic sister could teach catechism.²³⁹

Sister Rosalie does recall the changes in the way Sisters of the Precious Blood were compensated at Ottoville Elementary School. She remembers, “...my salary at the beginning was very low. The Sisters didn’t get the same as the lay people did in those days, the beginning. But, at the end I was equal to the lay people because of my longevity and also because of getting a master’s [degree]...So I was really at the top of the scale.”²⁴⁰ The schools, in the end, realized what a valuable asset the sisters were and paid them fairly, at a rate comparable to their lay counter parts. Sister Rosalie, now at the age of ninety-three, also helps support the Community today by her public school pension.²⁴¹ Sister Barbara Jean Backs, C.P.P.S., also a teacher at Ottoville, said that by the time she started in 1970 she was on the same contract as the lay teachers.²⁴² Through this time and even into the 1990s, the checks were sent directly to the motherhouse. Sister Catherine Nader, C.P.P.S. remembers an occasion when she and Sister Barbara Jean were in the office and the superintendent was telling them how surprised he was they did not handle the money they made. How could these women religious still pay for things like gas and food if the money they made did not go to them? He did not understand that each sister

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid

²⁴² Sister Barbara Jean Backs, C.P.P.S., interview with the author, Dayton, January 8, 2016.

was allotted an amount of money from the motherhouse, which they budgeted yearly.²⁴³ The excess money not budgeted to the sisters in public schools went to sisters in other ministries who were not making enough money to live on.²⁴⁴ Even though the sisters knew that the public schools were an exceptional way to support the community monetarily because they paid better than Catholic schools, they realized being a life-giving presence, like the example of Mother Brunner, was the most important part of ministering to the children in rural northwestern Ohio.

Sister Barbara Jean adds many details to the account given by Sister Rosalie. She can remember that sometimes Protestant ministers would ask if they could teach a lesson on release time. Being a public school, they said yes, the non-Catholic students would have their own session. Parents had to agree to their students attending release time, and those who did not attend would just have time in the library supervised by an adult. As the busses brought everyone to the schools at the same time, those not in religion class just went to the library and worked on homework. High schoolers could choose to go to the parish hall during study hall for religious classes which a lay person taught. By the time that Sister Barbara Jean got there, the crucifixes were long gone, but she remembers that in the first grade classroom there was a print of Salvador Dali's depicting the crucifixion. Sister Barbara Jean explains: "they were allowed to have that because it was an art work!"²⁴⁵ There was a fine line, and the exception to that was fine art. Over the years, she taught many grades in Ottoville and also spent seven years teaching children

²⁴³ Sister Catherine Nader C.P.P.S., interview with the author, Dayton, January 8, 2016. This way of each community member deciding how much she will need and receiving it from the community treasurer came about after the community's renewal in 1960s and 1970s. This is still how that community manages money today. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

²⁴⁴ Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S., in a private conversation.

²⁴⁵ Sister Barbara Jean Backs, C.P.P.S.

with learning disabilities. In addition, one of her lasting legacies at Ottoville was beginning the college prep program for high schoolers there as well as a homework club to help children with their homework when their parents were unable to assist them.²⁴⁶

Sister Catherine Nader, C.P.P.S. was the third and final sister interviewed who taught in Ottoville Public Schools. She ended her time there in 1997, after seventeen years. Before entering the convent, she had the credentials to teach in Ohio public schools, because she spent four years in an inner-city public school. She paints a picture of what the school in Ottoville looked like as the years went on: “When I first taught there, there might have been three or four non-Catholics in the class. But by the time I left, pretty many were non-Catholic.”²⁴⁷ By the mid-1990s, she estimates ten or fifteen students out of thirty were non-Catholic, but religion was still taught first thing in the morning using release time. Even on the doorstep of the twenty-first century, Sister Catherine remembers that the community supported her presence in Ottoville’s public schools.²⁴⁸

The development of the community and schools in Ottoville in the latter part of the 1900s was similar to the nearby community of Glandorf, Ohio. Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S. taught in the Ottawa-Glandorf Local Schools for twenty-six years, from 1970-1996.²⁴⁹ She would be the last sister teaching in the Glandorf community after a 148 year C.P.P.S. presence at the school. When she started in 1970, of the nearly 500 students, there was only a handful that went to the cafeteria during release time, being supervised

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Sister Catherine Nader, C.P.P.S.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ In the early 1960s the town of Ottawa and the town of Glandorf consolidated schools, creating this public district. A Catholic School at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Ottawa still functioned independently, as it does today.

by the cooks, while the students worked on their homework. The grades alternated when they went to Mass during the release time instead of religion classes.²⁵⁰ Sister Noreen remembers that she had a student that was non-Catholic in her class in five or six of the twenty-six years she was there. Sister Noreen notes,

The parents were told that this teacher is a Sister. The parents wanted their child in my classroom. I remember saying to them, “wonderful!” If you would like to have your child in my classroom release time in the morning, I have no problem with that. I do want you to know that there are some aspects we stress that are different from your religion, and that didn’t make them any difference. They wanted their child in my room. I never had a non-Catholic that I had to send to the cafeteria.²⁵¹

Sister Noreen’s experience through the early 1990s was that the community understood her role as a teacher as well as a model for Christian morality. The non-Catholics obviously did not mind that a religious sister would be teaching, because of the quality education offered by Ottawa-Glandorf Schools and Sister Noreen during release time. Sister Noreen recalls, “Those that were non-Catholic were no problem at all, they were part of the community.”²⁵² She remembers the schools and community to have been very positive, with everyone having worked together for the improvement of the youth and community.

As noted, the Catholic parish owned part of the elementary school, and the land that the entire building was constructed on. In the cafeteria, which was owned by the parish, there remained a picture of the Last Supper. That was the only religious artifact in the school. Sister Noreen recalls however, “On my desk, because I could not have a crucifix or any statues or anything like that, I had a big rock. This big rock to me was a

²⁵⁰ Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

symbol of God. In Isaiah, you read, ‘God is an eternal rock.’”²⁵³ The rock, which came from her father’s farm, was her own personal symbol of God in her classroom, as she did not make its symbolism known. This allowed her to keep in mind her spirituality as well as follow the directives of the board of education.

When it comes to how she was paid, she started out as having zero experience and on a different level than lay people. This is because they did not recognize the thirteen years of teaching in Catholic schools, even though she had been certified by the state during those years. She states her pay rate changed when, “A significant number of years later, I got a letter from our superintendent, and he said in there, the school board is going to recognize five years of teaching in a parochial school if you can produce the names of the schools and they are found in the National Educational Index.”²⁵⁴ This allowed some of Sister Noreen’s experience to be recognized and she was moved up the pay scale. She also remembers that at one time the board was discussing the two level pay scale, with the sisters being paid less than the laity, which was in force. A board member stated that this was illegal, and the practice was immediately ended. Sister Noreen was finally on par with other educators. Sister Noreen says that sisters never made issue of how they were paid because, “we were there to serve the people.”²⁵⁵

Another sister who taught in a community near Fort Recovery around and after the time of the turmoil was Sister Rita Yahl, C.P.P.S. She was in the Marion Local Elementary School in Maria Stein, Ohio, for twenty-five years from 1961 to 1986. She remembers that crucifixes were removed at the beginning of the Fort Recovery lawsuit, but classes and the daily schedule remained largely unchanged. When she first came to

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

Marion Local, the priest would come over once a week for a time to teach religion in the classes. Later, by the mid-1970s, a CCD program was taking place on Monday nights that took the place of release time.²⁵⁶ The community remained largely Catholic and supported the sisters' presence in the schools. By the time Sister Rita left, three or four non-Catholic families had moved into the district. She never expected to be teaching in a public school, but enjoyed her time at Marion Local, where things seemed more carefree than in the stricter Catholic elementary schools the Precious Blood Communities staffed. Overall, Sister Rita remembers, "I never had any problems" and the students and community respected her.²⁵⁷

Finally, Sister Ann Lehmkuhl, C.P.P.S., gave an account of her time in the public school at New Riegel. She taught there from 1968 to 1975, after coming from McCartyville's public elementary, a community located six miles east of Minster. Like Sister Rita, she saw a difference between the public school and the Catholic schools but Sister Ann saw that in the public school she did not have to preach, her "actions were meant to tell more than words."²⁵⁸ Like many other school systems in the area, the public school board rented the parish school because they needed classrooms. Furthermore, Sister Ann recalls, "The people supported us 100 percent and we never had a problem with the non-Catholics."²⁵⁹ Sometimes non-Catholics in her class would ask questions, such as why Catholics did certain things, and she would just answer these students honestly. There was no hostility, just curiosity. When at McCartyville in 1960, she began with a salary of \$300 a month, but by the time she left, she had full salary and benefits

²⁵⁶ Sister Judy Kreoger, C.P.P.S. in a private conversation. She did not know when it started, but when she was living in the community in the mid-1970s, there was a CCD program for the Catholic children.

²⁵⁷ Sister Rita Yahl, C.P.P.S., interview with the author, Dayton, January 8, 2016.

²⁵⁸ Sister Ann Lehmkuhl, C.P.P.S., interview with the author, Dayton, January 8, 2016.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

like the lay teachers. When Sister Ann started at New Riegel, she was given the same contract all teachers received from the board of education.

She can remember the day that she no longer had to wear the habit while teaching in the classroom. Sister recalls, “They celebrated all day with me when I changed from the habit to the street clothes... We had a real party for it.”²⁶⁰ However, even without the habit, they knew that she stood for something greater. When she was around she can remember people saying, ““Oh, now that sister is here, you know you can’t do that!””²⁶¹ Her presence seemed to hold them to a higher standard of action that would hopefully become a pattern in adult life. Being in the public eye did not bother her. It was part of ministry. Sister Ann realized that people “kept a close eye on where you went, what you said, and what you did.” This did not bother her because she had a deep understanding of the Precious Blood Charism. Sister Ann simply lived the example of Mother Brunner truthfully in her teaching ministry and daily life.²⁶²

These recollections paint a picture, one that had shifted from the memories of the sisters who attended schools similarly situated but in the 1940s and 1950s. The crucifixes were long gone and the communities were no longer uniformly Catholic. The sisters realized the state was aware of what was happening in these schools and how state money was being used. These changes were not a problem for these women who truly enjoyed teaching. There was still immense joy found in going into the classroom every day and being an example of living a Christ-centered life. The Sisters were not teaching this example in words but with actions. When asked if the non-Catholics, state, or school board had any special requests of the sisters, they all answered, “No.” They were

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

respected like the professional teachers that they were. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and into the 1990s, release time before school was still used by many of the communities, for religious education and Mass. Protestants did not mind this, as in the communities researched here, the sisters reported never having incidents. At times, non-Catholic parents even allowed their children in the classroom. These communities transitioned nicely into a period where Catholicism was not shunned completely, but it was put in a place that respected the right of all to a true, public education.

Conclusion:

The post-war period depicted in this chapter is one that recalls hard times as well as good times. The Sisters of the Precious Blood, as their students recalled who later entered the religious community, offered an excellent education and learning environment for their students engaging with them in the classroom, church, and playground. These were truly happy times that had a spiritual element which led those former students who were interviewed to enter the congregation after discernment. But the Sisters of the Precious Blood weathered the bad times too. The C.P.P.S. community at Fort Recovery knew that their actions in the lawsuit would have lasting effects for sisters who felt called to minister in public schools. These sisters found a way to compromise, so that they could remain doing what they loved in a way that would not alienate some Protestants in the town. Finally, sisters teaching after the lawsuit noted some differences, which respected the up and coming diversity of the school's community, while allowing them to become professional and respected educators. Furthermore, the contracts they were offered in later years showed that communities realized they could no longer sell the sisters short. The school boards realized sisters were very effective teachers who were

assets to not only the school, but the community, whose future was being formed in their classrooms. Overall, the communities remained loyal to their schools and the quality education happening in them. Non-Catholics became comfortable with the role model that could be found in the Sisters of the Precious Blood. The Sisters were also becoming comfortable with being active members in the larger community, because of their public ministries, one of which was teaching in the public school systems. They were truly beginning to understand what it meant to serve the needs of the world, an understanding that will be explained further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RENEWING CHARISM

The 1950s and 1960s brought about many changes to the public schools in which some of the Sisters of the Precious Blood worked. The sisters in these schools were getting a taste of the world around them. The experiences of teaching students who lived fully in the modern world, and for teachers to be modern men and women, caused the community to pause. How was their current way of life allowing them to maximize their assistance to those in need? Teaching in the public schools was not the only ministry that allowed sisters to enter the modern world, which led their hearts to wonder if more conducive practices were possible. With that, the ministries performed by the congregation began to become diverse.

The Sisters of the Precious Blood, growing in number and in ways to live out their charism of helping those in need, discovered many new ministries in the mid-twentieth century. The congregation opened their own parochial girls' high school in Norwood, Ohio and later, in the 1950s, a large high school named Fatima Hall was opened at the motherhouse. They reached out to minorities in need of an education remaining at parish schools changing to African American neighborhoods in Ohio and Missouri. Sisters also ministered to Hispanic populations with parochial schools in Arizona and California.²⁶³ The community also purchased more convalescent homes in Ohio and Michigan, and

²⁶³ Richardson & Werner, *More Than the doing*, 42-3, 105.

many sisters were becoming nurses. Additionally, they were taking on more bishop residences, seminaries and chanceries throughout the mid-west for sisters skilled in the domestic arts. Another change in ministry was at Maria Stein, where, under the direction of Mother Nathalia Smith, a program for lay retreats was set up, with the first beginning in 1953. By 1962, ground was broken for a formal retreat house, with private bedrooms, a dining room, conference rooms and chapel. This same Mother General sent Sisters of the Precious Blood to Chile in 1957, where the need for educators and catechists was great and where sisters still minister today.²⁶⁴ There was also the establishment of a C.P.P.S. cloister in 1957, for sisters who desired a more contemplative religious life, in the convent at New Riegel.²⁶⁵ The sisters, who for many years were known as teachers and domestic arts practitioners, were blossoming into the religious community that followed in the footsteps of Mother Brunner. Reaching out to the needs of the local community, which the sisters had done for years in public schools, was a growing trend in the community that expanded as the twentieth century continued on.

By the mid-1960s it was becoming clear that sisters were responding generously to the call of renewal brought about by the Second Vatican Council, which built on the directives of Pope Pius XII in the 1950s. Living and working in the modern world would become the norm for many orders that understood their charism as a society of apostolic life. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines this style of religious community as one where members “lead a life as a brother or sister in common to a particular manner of life, strive for the perfection of charity through the observance of the constitutions. Among these there are societies in which the members embrace the evangelical

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 80, 92.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 105.

councils.”²⁶⁶ This explanation may at first seem in conflict with the earlier community, but the Sisters of the Precious Blood operated in this context, while also trying to fit into the contemplative or cloistered mold that the Church expected of communities of women religious. The changes that allowed the community to better function as an apostolic life and exemplify the life of Mother Brunner, will be the focus of this chapter. There are two parts to this chapter, the 1950s and 1960s. Each part will begin with the general trends of the period, as presented by the recent study of American women religious by Margaret McGuinness. This will be followed by a discussion of how the Sisters of the Precious Blood began to better understand and articulate their charism.

Part 1: Community Charism in the 1950s:

In the 1950s, cracks were beginning to show in the way that the Church was functioning. The Catholic religious thought of the day could not keep up with the modern expansion of the institutions.²⁶⁷ Although Carey is referring to what is happening in America, it was true for the Church in the western world at the time. There appeared to be a growing number of Catholic parishes, schools, priests, and religious. Moreover, the Church seemed to be thriving. But, just under the surface, there was a theological struggle over whether to adapt the teachings of the Church and the Church’s spirituality to forms that would be compatible with modern progress or keep the traditional way of teaching and living the faith. In basic terms, those who wished to conform the Church to the modern world would have been regarded as suspicious and subject to censure by the

²⁶⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 930. Evangelical councils refer to the promises of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

²⁶⁷ Patrick Carey, *Catholics in America*, 98.

Church authorities.²⁶⁸ Although this was a more serious situation for theologians, sisters in convents also began to ask questions about why things such as the habit, the rules, and the separation from the world were still so important. Why had the Church not changed with the times?

American convents were booming places in the 1950s. Many young girls had sisters teaching in the classroom, as well as supportive parents at home that made the decision to enter the convent just as normal as getting a business degree today.²⁶⁹ The post-war baby boom meant that there were many young women who were considering a vocation to religious life. On the surface, there seemed to be no problem in the growing Church. However, McGuinness points out the issue, “Women entering a religious community in the 1950s were introduced to a lifestyle that had changed very little over the past several centuries.”²⁷⁰ They were still wearing cumbersome habits, living a life closed off from the modern conveniences of the world, and being placed in ministries deemed appropriate by the community superiors. But the world around them had changed. Lay Catholics were on the move and were settling in the suburbs, where they were mixed in with non-Catholics. New technology was also becoming available for more and more people. Televisions and phones were changing how information was being circulated. The automobile was now an item that almost every family owned, allowing people to travel more freely. At this time, women religious were being challenged to find ways to minister to modern people while still following rules that were centuries old. The 1950s were a time of questioning and creativity, as the valuable and

²⁶⁸ John O’Malley et al., *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), 15.

²⁶⁹ McGuinness, *Called to Serve*, 156.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

useful parts of modernity were making contact with historical and time honored practices that also had value in religious communities.

Trying to balance old and new brought different communities of women religious together to discuss ministries and religious life. These meetings of women religious allowed them to discuss the common issues that they were facing women religious across America. One of the groups that are especially important to this study was the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). McGuinness says the NCEA was formed because it was “‘open to American women religious and their needs,’ sisters realized that they had to cooperate with this organization if they wanted to receive the education endorsed by both Pius XI and Pius XII, who were concerned that sisters were not well prepared for classrooms.”²⁷¹ This group’s first goal was to further the education of women religious who were ministering in the classroom. But the group grew rapidly, and many subcommittees were formed which discussed other aspects of religious life. They listened to what other communities were doing to get the education needed for the classroom. Because many orders were not in the public schools, like the Sisters of the Precious Blood, these orders were not in the same position as the Precious Blood Community. Remember that Sister M. Aquinas tells us, the community could boast “by January 1, 1943, the Community had reached its goal – all sisters actually engaged in teaching held certificates...”²⁷² These groups are notable during this time of renewal because they allowed sisters to work together to find new ways to live out the ancient tradition of religious life.

²⁷¹ McGuinness, *Called to Serve*, 157.

²⁷² Stadtherr, “The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in the United States,” 145.

In 1951 Pope Pius XII gathered leaders of religious communities to Rome to begin “a revolutionary undertaking of renewal of religious life.”²⁷³ The next year the gathering met again, and reported that it had found custom books “oppressive” and that religious garb had become “archaic.”²⁷⁴ How could modern women be drawn into religious life if the practices were no longer pertinent to the modern world? The Pontiff agreed with this committee’s findings, that religious life needed to be updated if it was to survive into a new millennium, now less than fifty years away. Pope Pius XII believed that the outward garb should reflect the simple and natural spirit of the community that allowed for good hygiene as well as to attract young women to the community.²⁷⁵ Although these new ideas may have seemed like a tall order, the Mother General at the time, Mother M. Nathalia Smith, C.P.P.S., was a very capable leader in executing the mandates brought to the community from Rome. Although she was not present at the meeting, she stayed updated with reports that were coming out of the deliberations. It was from these that Mother Nathalia began the work of renewing the Sisters of the Precious Blood to better live out the charism they were called to.

Mother Nathalia could not do all of this work herself. In 1953 a group of twenty-five Sisters of the Precious Blood were sent by Mother Nathalia to the University of Notre Dame for a five day workshop. This same workshop was attended by Mother Nathalia the year before.²⁷⁶ This was the National Institute of Spirituality, and was sanctioned by Pope Pius XII after his call for renewal. This group of sisters was to discuss how to enact the reforms that were coming about in religious communities across

²⁷³ Richardson and Werner, *More Than the Doing*, 68.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 70-1.

the country. Many others had active ministries, such as education, that were changing the way sisters lived. This workshop was also meant to “expose them to new aspects of ascetical and mystical theology, liturgy, the vows, and canon law.”²⁷⁷ Mother Nathalia was in favor of the renewal and knew that this would be a great opportunity for the Precious Blood Community to better understand and articulate its spirituality. She also spearheaded various retreats centering on her renewal program. When sisters returned to the motherhouse in Dayton for holidays and summer break, she had seminars that were led by a panel of sisters and C.P.P.S. priests. These began in 1952 and continued through her term, which ended in 1954. These panels were meant “to promote the adaptations among the entire Congregation and to open the Sisters more deeply to the profound changes underway in the understanding of the vows, the common life and the role of religious life in the Church.”²⁷⁸ The call of Pius XII, and the discussion among other religious orders was having an effect on the Sisters of the Precious Blood. These were not just intangible changes, such as in thought or belief, but also in the daily lives and ministry of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

What were some of these changes to daily life that were brought about by the reform spearheaded by Mother Nathalia? Many sisters in public schools were overjoyed when the community allowed televisions in convents, so that those educating could now see and hear what was happening in the modern world. This allowed them to better understand the modern situation and communicate about current events with their pupils. Mother also allowed for more recreation time.²⁷⁹ Finally, Mother Nathalia realized that liturgy and prayer were at the center of one’s spirituality and this too needed updating.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 71.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 71.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 86.

She knew that simple prayers from the heart were better than formulated lengthy prayers, therefore she shortened prayer before meals, and simpler music in the liturgy was introduced.²⁸⁰ These changes allowed sisters to connect more deeply with the world around them as well as develop a more personal relationship with God. By becoming more aware of the world around them and God's presence in that world, sisters could help students better understand the modern situation as well as where God was acting in their lives.

The book *Staying in the Fire: A Sisterhood Responds to Vatican II*, compiled by former member Phyllis Kittel, gives insight into the daily life of sisters and novices at this time. This book was written in 2009 with the support of the C.P.P.S. community, nearly forty years after she left the community. In it she interviews many sisters and gives her own personal reflection on how the Sisters of the Precious Blood responded to Vatican II and how they live out that response today. She notes that although there were changes brought about by the progressive regime of Mother Nathalia in the 1950s, this was still a time when community rules were followed to the letter. For many of the young women entering at this time, it was a break from everything they were used to. From the stories collected by Kittel, the transition during the first days after entering looked something like this:

Newcomers found the sisters they met in Dayton to be as prayerful, joyful, and warmly generous as the women they had known from home. They also found themselves faced with an abrupt transition from family life to structured, disciplined rule-based institutional life.²⁸¹

Those young ladies found joy and the spirit in the sisters they met, as well as the friends they made in their class. However, for the young women who were entering Fatima Hall,

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 69.

²⁸¹ Phyllis M. Kittel, *Staying in the Fire: A Sisterhood Responds to Vatican II*, 60.

the sisters' high school at Salem Heights, the world had changed, and the strict life at Fatima was a challenge to face.²⁸² As hard as it was, they realized there was more to religious life than just the rules. The Spirit that moved among these young women called them to remain at Fatima throughout their high school years, and to enter the novitiate.²⁸³

Together these young women were formed in the charism of Mother Brunner, for at the beginning of their novitiate they were given a copy of the *Rule*, which helped to structure their daily lives, leading them to others and to God. It was during this time that many had edifying moments before the Blessed Sacrament exposed perpetually in the motherhouse chapel. Many of the sisters who speak about their experiences note that this practice of Mother Brunner was often a challenge. These young women had never spent time daily before the Blessed Sacrament. For them, the expanse of quiet time meant for the recitation of prayer was an adjustment. This is where they first learned to pray, often with the prescribed prayers of the community. These included many traditional prayers such as the Stations of the Cross and the Seven Offerings of the Precious Blood. Many found that this time was best spent meditating and praying using their own creativity. One sister remarked to Kittel, "We prayed, but we weren't really taught to pray. I guess we were supposed to learn how to do it just by doing it."²⁸⁴ Other sisters believed that it would take time to learn and that it would be something they would grow into. Although trial and error may not have been the desired outcome, many used the formal prayers as well as their own forms of prayer, finding a balance that fit them. In the end, the novitiate was a contemplative and prayer-focused time that prepared the sisters for when they left Salem Heights and entered ministry.

²⁸² Ibid., 65.

²⁸³ Ibid., 66.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 82.

The second pillar of Mother Brunner's charism is to go out, find the needs of the world, and fill those needs. This, along with Eucharistic prayer, is the founding charism of the Sisters of the Precious Blood and has remained the charism of the community to this day. At this time, new assignments were given to newly professed sisters after their profession ceremony. One sister recalls that after profession, the new sisters found their "obedience" under their dinner plates. Newly professed sisters were also given their assignments directly from the Mother General or her representatives, after consultation of sisters who knew the novice. It was called "obedience" because it was the most outward sign of the sister accepting and following her vow of obedience. That ministry assignments could change from year to year would also come from the community's administration.²⁸⁵ For the public schools in northwest Ohio, this meant that sometimes you got a teacher that was acquainted with release time and the unique situation of having a non-Catholic in class. Through the interviews done for this study, some sisters, like Sister Marita Beumer who grew up around Fort Recovery, were not surprised by the public school situation when they taught. Others were not as aware that public schools were a ministry of the Precious Blood and were not expecting to be placed in a public school.²⁸⁶ By serving the community's needs through ministry assignments and prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, Sisters of the Precious Blood were living the charism of Mother Brunner in the 1950s.

Keeping these two pillars (prayer and service) of Mother Brunner in mind, in 1954 the Sisters of the Precious Blood held a Chapter meeting, where they sought new ways to live out her charism. A Chapter was a formal meeting of the community in which

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 97.

²⁸⁶ Some of the sisters interviewed did state that they had expected to teach in Catholic schools for their ministry and not necessarily a public school.

delegates made decisions on the direction of the congregation and also elected new leadership. Mother Nathalia's six years of reform were up. Although they agreed with her renewal, they wished to continue it under Mother M. Aquinas Stadtherr. She was seen as a less controversial candidate, where Mother Nathalia was said to be a "woman ahead of her times" by many in the community in the 1950s. The voting delegates in the Chapter knew that Mother Aquinas would bring about renewal at a pace that was more comfortable for many of the members who did not vote for Mother Nathalia.²⁸⁷ Mother Aquinas was able to navigate the community through a twelve year period of unique challenges in both the history of the Sisters of the Precious Blood and the United States.

One of the first changes made during her term was the change in the habit that the sisters wore. Less than a month after entering office she petitioned the Holy See for a change in the religious habit of the community.²⁸⁸ This was to fulfill the words of Pius XII, who wanted healthy, simple, and attractive attire for women religious. This black wool habit, which had its origins in the community prior to the 1850s, was adopted after the community came under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Cincinnati in 1888. It was described as being severely black, as it was totally constructed of black serge. In 1911 Archbishop Moeller suggested adding a white collar, for "A little white added to the somber dark color of the habit would give it an air of cheerfulness, especially necessary in the schoolroom."²⁸⁹ The habit remained that way for many years when in the 1920s, Archbishop McNicholas suggested some red be added to represent the Precious Blood, the heart of their charism. At that time a red cincture replaced the black belt, and the

²⁸⁷ Richardson and Werner, *More Than the Doing*, 91.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 100.

²⁸⁹ Helen Weber, C.P.P.S. ed., *The Legacy Continues...: Stories of Precious Blood Sisters Continuing the Legacy of Mother Maria Anna Brunner Vol.2* (Boulder: WovenWord Press, 2001), 14.

crucifix was strung with red string.²⁹⁰ The habit then remained untouched for decades until 1955.

August 22, 1955 was the day that the community, as a whole, made the switch. All members, simultaneously, no matter their location, now wore a gray habit, made of light material that was easily washable.²⁹¹ This meant that, after approval was received on March 22, 1955, 700 members needed gray habits in six months. The speed at which this occurred was monumental. The habit also included a white collar and black veil. The new habit was hotly debated during the 1954 Chapter meeting, but in the end the community realized that this light weight and easy to wash habit would serve the sisters' active ministry better.²⁹² Sisters in education, especially public education, now had a habit that appeared less severe, more inviting and allowed for them to easily move around. The new gray habit was cooler than the black serge when teaching in rooms that had no air conditioning. The active ministries of the C.P.P.S. sisters, as well as the papal call for updating brought about this functional change to community life.

Mother Aquinas brought about other changes in community life in the 1950s. The 1954 Chapter started allowing sisters to visit their families. Sisters who were originally from Germany, Switzerland, and Canada traveled back home to see family during the term of Mother Aquinas. The 1954 Chapter also called for a cloister to be opened at the New Riegel convent. This was built for those who wished to have a more contemplative lifestyle and did not alter the rules that governed the rest of the religious community in any way. When Mother Aquinas was not attending to matters in New Riegel, she was also trying to organize the community's expansion into Chile, which was also decided

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ See Image 29 in the Appendix of Images for a photograph comparing the black and gray habits.

²⁹² Ibid., 18.

upon at the 1954 Chapter. The first three sisters arrived in Chile in January 1957, and there are still sisters ministering in communities there today. She also increased vocational programs, asking sisters to go to high schools and engage with young women who might have questions about the community and share the joy the sisters have found in religious life.²⁹³ Although many of these changes in her first term were directives from the Chapter that elected her, Mother Aquinas was by no means unable or unwilling to make changes. This became much more apparent in her second term, after her reelection in 1960.

On a final note, Mother Brunner's devotion to the Precious Blood in prayer and service was not always stated in writing as well as it was written on the hearts of the sisters over the years. On the surface, the 1917 Code of Canon Law made changes that appear to alter this charism focused on the needs of others and devotion to the Precious Blood. Sister Joyce Lehman gives this change some context

Maria Anna Brunner and those who gathered around her lived a charism of veneration of the Precious Blood of Jesus in prayer, life and service. This purpose of the Congregation continued to take precedence in our early Constitutions until it was derailed by the Canon Law of 1917 which required that the purpose or object of religious congregations was sanctification of its members. However, since the *aggiornamento* of the Second Vatican Council we have worked to reclaim our original purpose and to realize that Precious Blood spirituality is our Charism.²⁹⁴

This situation requires serious explanation. The change brought about by the Canon Law on ink and paper did not change the charism of the community. As it can be seen by the ministries discussed in the introduction to this chapter, Sisters of the Precious Blood were

²⁹³ Richardson and Werner, *More Than the Doing*, 103-10.

²⁹⁴ Sister Joyce Lehman, C.P.P.S., "Charism and Ministry" C.P.P.S. Archives, Dayton, OH. The transcript does not state where or when sister wrote this. However, judging by context clues in the transcript, located in the C.P.P.S. Archives, this was probably for at a Spirit Days Assembly (comparable to Chapter meetings) around the year 2000.

still filling the diverse needs of the world. Moreover, there was still perpetual adoration in Maria Stein, New Riegel, and Rome City (Indiana) and perpetual exposition at Salem Heights after the mandate in 1926.²⁹⁵ These gifts from Mother Brunner did not take a backseat in the hearts of the members. The charism of the community in the 1950s and prior was more than mere practices written in ink on yellowing paper. Although they could not articulate it at the time, since its birth in the Swiss countryside up to today, the community understands that devotion to the blood shed by Christ and offered on the altar in prayer and service to those in need leads to the sanctification of the congregation as well as the entire people of God. This understanding is reviewed when a sister recites the prayer of the seven offerings of the Precious Blood, which has been used by the community since its early days.

In conclusion, the 1950s were a dynamic time for the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Much like the national trend in convents, the Precious Blood Community remained faithful to its traditions while engaging in the modern world. Modern practices that were not harmful to the religious nature of the community, such as home visits, lighter weight habits, and modern technology became useful to a prayerful life and successful execution of ministry. Simpler prayer was adopted and liturgical prayer was enhanced. There was also a growing re-articulation of community spirituality in the hearts of the sisters that was planted by the forward thinking conferences of Mother Nathalia. These new modes of understanding charism required sisters to pause and think about what Mother Brunner meant to them, and how they were living out her gift of prayer and service. The active ministry that influenced these changes mirrored the active leaders of this time. Much like the sisters in public school classrooms at this time, the

²⁹⁵ Gutman, *Not with Silver or Gold*, 413.

leadership of the C.P.P.S. community was also going through a period of change to better the standards of the institution. These leaders recognized the importance of the call of Pope Pius XII for renewal of heart, and knew it would also cause a renewal of ministry and the rules structuring religious life. These changes asked the sisters to update their lives to better serve those around them and build a personal relationship with God. The renewal of religious life in America was just the beginning in the 1950s. The call of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s allowed the Sisters of the Precious Blood to respond more graciously than ever to the example of their pious founder, Mother Brunner.

Part 2: Community Charism in the 1960s and Beyond:

The way that the Precious Blood Congregation lived, ministered, prayed and even looked in 1960 would not be the same ten years later. The 1960s were a time of change. Yet despite all that may have been changing in the Church and in society, they remained true to the gift of Mother Brunner, a rock that the sisters clung to. On October 11, 1962 Pope John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council where bishops from across the globe gathered in Rome to discuss the current state of the Catholic Church and the direction in which to steer it through the contemporary situation. This four year event, which was closed in 1965 by Pope Paul VI, would renew the faith, reenergize the faithful, and bring about a Church that was not in conflict with the world around it. Naturally, the Sisters of the Precious Blood would take what the council said to heart and find ways to bring about the renewal called for in their convents and in their ministry.

It is important to note that, despite the dramatic effect Vatican II had on religious life, sisters did not take an active role in the Council's proceedings. McGuinness states,

Women were neither asked for their opinions nor invited to attend the Council sessions until Cardinal Suenens noted that ‘half of humanity’ was unrepresented at Vatican II. As a result, twenty-three women were invited to attend the third and fourth sessions as auditors; they could observe, but not speak. Ten of the invitees were women religious, and one, Sister Mary Luke Tobin, SL, a Sister of Loretto, was an American.²⁹⁶

Sadly, sisters were not able to let their perspective of the Church officially be known at the Council. Vatican II did address religious life in the decree *Perfectae Caritatis*. That document, along with the Church’s constitutions *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, gave women religious a road map to what the Church expected of their work and prayer. The general belief was that these documents “called sisters to work with the poor in cooperation with the clergy and laity.”²⁹⁷ These documents urged all people of God to bring the light of Christ to those in need. Furthermore, sisters felt that these three documents challenged religious communities to “return to the original inspiration behind the founding of their communities and infuse that spirit into their contemporary lives and ministries.”²⁹⁸ The sisters had gotten this idea from the document *Perfectae Caritatis*. This document on religious life asks that the “spirit and aims of the founder be maintained,” that “before all else religious life is ordered to the following of Christ,” and for “their apostolic activity...[to] have its source in unity with him.”²⁹⁹ Religious congregations across the globe began to look into their past to find the best way to navigate their future in light of the renewals requested of them in *Perfectae Caritatis* and other documents promulgated by Vatican II. The women religious of the Catholic

²⁹⁶ McGuinness, *Called to Serve*, 161.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 162.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ Vatican Council II, “*Perfectae Caritatis* [Decree on the Up-to-date Renewal of Religious Life],” in *The Basic Sixteen Documents: Vatican Council II*, ed. Austin Flannery, (Northport, NY: Costello, 1996), paras 2 & 8. Brackets added by author.

Church, who in many cases had not changed in centuries, were ready to open the windows of the convent and let in fresh air.

One document from Vatican II that was also important for the Sisters of the Precious Blood was *Sacrosantum Concilium*. Unlike some other religious communities the Sisters of the Precious Blood have a Eucharist centered charism. The directives from Vatican II's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* helped further liturgical developments which began in the 1950s. Sisters went to lectures on the liturgy hosted at the motherhouse, some even attended institutes at St. John's Abby in Collegeville.³⁰⁰ Furthermore, the liturgical developments during the time of Pope Pius XII were enthusiastically embraced by community leadership. These include the "dialogue Masses," where the people recited parts of the mass, and the revised rites for holy week in 1956.³⁰¹ The document *Sacrosantum Concilium* furthered these advances, allowing for greater participation of the people of God in the Mass through simplified, vernacular prayers. It also wanted the faithful to realize that the Liturgy is the source and summit of the Christian life.³⁰² This spoke clearly and directly to the sisters whose life and ministry flowed from the Eucharist and celebration of the holy rites of the Church, reinforcing an important aspect of their charism. The 1966 document "One in Love" notes the importance of *Sacrosantum Concilium* and mentions that it is "the charity that exists among the sisters" that will show how effective liturgical prayer was in the community.³⁰³ They were able to internalize the liturgy document of Vatican II and, like

³⁰⁰ *Salem Heights Annals*, 110-11, 274-76, & 304. Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S., private conversation.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*

³⁰² Vatican Council II, "*Sacrosantum Concilium* [Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy]," in *The Basic Sixteen Documents: Vatican Council II*, ed. Austin Flannery, (Northport, NY: Costello, 1996), para 10.

³⁰³ Sisters of the Precious Blood "One in Love" (Dayton, 1966), 23.

Mother Brunner, take the presence of Christ out into the world, being an example of the Christian life to those students in the classroom.

Many of these and other changes happening in religious life because of Vatican II's documents are discussed by Margaret McGuinness. Her work on the ministry of American nuns, gives an account of many of the patterns of change that were found in convents across the United States. Many of these same reforms in the 1960s were happening in the C.P.P.S. congregation as well. The first noticeable change was a change of habit. This often took many years, experimenting with modified versions of the community habit and then experimenting with wearing the clothes of modern people.³⁰⁴ Secondly, the traditional hierarchy of the convent was also in for a shakeup. During this time it was often the case that religious communities formed committees to discuss various issues in the convent. They would then report their finding to the Mother General and to the Chapters. This gave way to a more democratic style of convent governance which in time allowed all members to have a say in community life.³⁰⁵ In addition, other communities adopted a pattern that was already occurring in the Precious Blood Congregation, and opted for smaller residences for their sisters, instead of large houses. This practice was supported by another trend: women religious entering non-traditional forms of ministry. The traditional ministries were teaching, hospital work, and the domestic arts. Some of these new ministries women religious were entering included teaching at secular colleges, working for the ecumenical peace movement, managing soup kitchens in the inner-city, working with immigrants at the border to learn English, spreading the joy of the Gospel in prisons, and taking on the role of pastoral associate in

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 167-68.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 166.

parishes.³⁰⁶ Finally, prayer changed so as to better fit the active lifestyle of many sisters. The Divine Office was not always conducive to spiritual edification for some sisters, so many adopted styles that fit community character. Often both traditional and new forms were mixed with spiritual and scripture readings.³⁰⁷ These changes in dress, administration, community life, ministry, and prayer helped many women become closer to God and better live out their call to religious life.

Stepping back to a few years before the council and the general trends in convents discussed above, in the Precious Blood Community reforms happening during the 1960 Chapter pointed to many of the changes that were to come after Vatican II. This Chapter reelected Mother Aquinas to another six year term and also made some changes to the customs of the community, allowing for more collegiality, which would later be in line with many of the Council's reforms. Each convent house was now permitted to submit its own prayer and work schedule, thus reversing the common horarium that had been in effect for all houses of the congregation. Professed sisters were also permitted to choose their own material for meditation after the 1960 Chapter. Furthermore, Mother Aquinas was concerned about a questionnaire regarding the new habit that collected "vague and contradictory responses."³⁰⁸ So she appointed a committee to continue studying the habit of the community, though no changes were made until the 1966 Chapter. Finally, many workshops had suggested the creation of a "vocations recruiter." So, it was at this Chapter that a vocation director was appointed, and a new six-pronged plan for vocations recruitment was put into effect.³⁰⁹ The Chapter had continued the work of Mother

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 170.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Richardson and Werner, *More Than the Doing*, 113.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 115.

Aquinas and the 1954 Chapter, while setting the community on a trajectory on par with the unexpected Second Vatican Council that was only two years away with the Chapter of 1960's innovative ideas and changes.

Mother Aquinas took her cues from the Chapter of 1960 and also spearheaded many reforms in the C.P.P.S. community. Moreover, Mother Aquinas was also helping renewal of religious life on the national scale. In 1961 she was elected as a committee member of the East Coast Division of the Conference of Major Superiors of Women Religious. The Chilean missions had “sparked her interest and involvement in the national missionary association [sic] where she was appointed co-chair of its Major Superiors Division.”³¹⁰ This allowed the community to participate on a national level with discussion on religious life and spirituality. The C.P.P.S. community participated in the directives of this conference, opening up opportunities for the Sisters of the Precious Blood to attend other conferences and institutes on the renewal of religious life and charism happening throughout the country.³¹¹

An unlikely source for Precious Blood Charism would be from Pope John XXIII, as he was a pope with an ecumenical council on his hands. It is noted that he had a direct hand in revitalizing devotion to the Precious Blood in the twentieth century. He wrote an apostolic letter, *Inde a Primis*, “On Promoting Devotion to the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ” in 1960. Before the opening of the council, Pope John XXIII prayed before the tomb of the founder of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, St. Gaspar del Bufalo, for the success of the Second Vatican Council.³¹² The Pope had a strong devotion to the Precious Blood and felt that it should inspire action in the hearts of

³¹⁰ Ibid., 116.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Ibid., 117.

the faithful. He told a Missionary of the Precious Blood, “Now it is up to you to diffuse devotion to the Precious Blood.”³¹³ The Precious Blood Community of priests, brothers, and sisters wasted no time in responding to this papal request.

A whirlwind of gatherings followed. The Precious Blood family met to discuss and showcase the aspects of Precious Blood charism. There were Precious Blood study weeks at St. Joseph’s College (Indiana) where unity between the various Precious Blood Communities permeated the conversations and presentations like never before. In 1961, the sisters also helped to spearhead a program at the Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Cleveland, where missionaries and sisters both ministered. This seminar turned out to be a great success, and the conference was given at many other locations. This seminar was adapted into a Precious Blood Christian Formation Program that was praised by the personal representative of Cardinal Suenens two years later at a Local Superiors Institute at the University of Notre Dame. This program continued holding workshops at Precious Blood houses and churches through the mid-1960s.

Another event that was important to the entire life of the congregation was the Fort Recovery lawsuit. The Fort Recovery lawsuit weighed heavily on the minds of the Sisters of the Precious Blood during Mother Aquinas’s second term, because many Sisters of the Precious Blood teaching in public schools could be impacted if the outcome was negative. Mother Aquinas was kept informed of the developing situation. When the ruling found that the sisters could still teach in the school, but that release time could not be used, the community knew that a religious education program would need to be established. Fort Recovery was not the only location where sisters were setting up what would later be known as CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) programs for

³¹³ Ibid.

Catholic children who attended public schools where release time was not an option. Often these sisters would have another ministry and teach religious education on the weekend or on weeknights.³¹⁴ Thus, the Sisters of the Precious Blood had acquired a new ministry to teach and evangelize in a world where attending a Catholic school was not always the norm for Catholic children.

As the Second Vatican Council was coming to a close, the Sisters of the Precious Blood were beginning preparations for the 1966 Chapter. Various committees were set up to discuss the issues that the community would sort out in this Chapter. Mother Aquinas wanted the input of all the sisters, and not just the voting delegates that the sisters elected, so she sent out a survey to see what the community beliefs were on certain topics. The responses she got back did not disappoint. “Significant among the issues were some which dealt with more mature living practices, limiting or expanding the concepts and practice of apostolic works and further changes in wearing apparel.”³¹⁵ With high hopes, the Sisters of the Precious Blood entered the 1966 Chapter.

Their first act was to elect Sister Rosella (M. Anthonita) Hess as Superior General.³¹⁶ Mother Aquinas was the last to hold the title “Mother” in the community. Sister Rosella would retain the title sister, while also being the administrator of the Precious Blood sisters. After the 1972 Chapter, the Superior General would be called the president.³¹⁷ This was a show of collegiality, that she was a sister just like those sisters on her committee, in schools, in homes for the aged, and practicing the domestic arts. Sister Rosella’s ministry of managing the congregation was equal to their ministries. Another

³¹⁴ Ibid., 134.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 143.

³¹⁶ There is no direct connection between Sister Rosella Hess and the author of this work.

³¹⁷ Richardson and Werner, *More Than the Doing*, 145 & Kittel, *Staying in the Fire*, 160-61.

major change was that the Chapter of 1966, as it would have been referred to during the sessions, did not end in 1966. Unlike the other Chapters, discussion of major issues continued into 1967. Then, in 1969, Pope Paul VI asked the community to hold another Chapter meeting. He stated in preparation for this Chapter “the general [executive] council must arrange, by some suitable means, for an *ample and free consultation* of all the subjects.”³¹⁸ All sisters would have input in the 1969 Chapter, it would be more than the few delegates who had been briefed on the imminent issues facing the C.P.P.S. sisters voting on the direction of the entire community. From 1966 to 1969 many trial practices, such as with modern dress and new governing styles, would lead to the adoption of new practices in the community. The Chapters of both 1966 and 1969 would solidify practices that are still visible in Precious Blood Community life, prayer, and ministry today.

The discussions from the 1966 Chapter were found to be both exciting and challenging for the community. Phyllis Kittel, in her study on how the Sisters of the Precious Blood responded to the call of Vatican II, states that documents coming out of this Chapter took their cues from the Council Documents. The crowning achievement of the Chapter was “One in Love,” which did not change or add to the community rules but rather recalled basic principles of the community.³¹⁹ They drew on a positive approach that looked at the “essential interior meaning of the vows” and drew from the scriptures and inspiration of community charism.³²⁰ They also incorporated the council’s concern for the dignity of all people. This led to a deepening relationship with God, stating, “the I-Thou relationship of true encounter with God” and other people to form community.³²¹

³¹⁸ Kittel, *Staying in the Fire*, 125.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 129.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 127.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 128.

John O'Malley comments that the documents of Vatican II did shift in style from Church decrees before the sixteen documents passed by the bishops. The genre had changed from a legalistic formula to a pastoral tone, which was persuading and inviting.³²² The document composed by the sisters "One in Love" picked up on these changes and made use of them. The pastoral tone emphasized the dignity that each sister had to live as an adult woman, called by Christ to contemplation of God, and service to humanity, following the example of Mother Brunner.

"One in Love" is important because it would be used to guide the renewal of the Precious Blood Community until a new constitution could be drafted and approved by Rome. There are many formal changes worth noting that came about when this document was in force, before 1990 when "Our Way of Life" became the constitution of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. In order to get a better look at the principles that helped structure the community before the 1966 Chapter and the changes that came after, examples will be given to illustrate the new emphasis on the personal responsibilities of the sister to live out her vocation. It is important to also remember that these structured rules were sometimes softened, in the spirit of charity and common sense, given the circumstances and the local superiors' governing style. These changes were gradual, and were undertaken after serious thought and discussion of the community when they believed that they contributed to the renewal of religious life. The *Rule* held, to protect the vow of poverty, sisters should ask permission "annually from the Mother General" to acquire a variety of everyday goods such as "paper, pencils, art material, ink, flow pens, etc., supplied for general use."³²³ After "One in Love, when it came to poverty, the community believed, a

³²² O'Malley et al., *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?*, 72, 77.

³²³ Sisters of the Precious Blood, "Book of Customs" (Dayton, 1960), 12.

sister's personal conviction – virtue – shall be regarded as more basic than the simple act of obtaining the superior's permission for the use of goods."³²⁴ The emphasis was now on the sister to exercise her own conscience and follow the desires that she had in her heart. This same principle would guide other changes to community practice to better live the charism of Mother Brunner.

The document "One in Love" helped to further the plan of renewal initiated by Pope Paul VI. In his document "Norms for Implementing the Decree on the Up-to-Date Renewal of Religious Life" he allowed the sisters to respond to the modern age with creativity that had not been permitted in religious communities in centuries. The 1966 document asserted, "This general chapter [the special one, 1969 for the C.P.P.S.] has the right to alter, temporarily, certain prescriptions of the constitutions...by way of experiment, provided that the purpose, nature and character of the institute are safe guarded."³²⁵ The words of Pope Paul VI did not fall on deaf ears at the Chapter of 1969, where the sisters decided to experiment with governance, dress, living, prayer and ministry.

Many of these changes happened slowly at first, with those who were testing the practice reporting back to the motherhouse on the positive and negative effects of the new procedure. The reforms of Pope Paul VI did not happen overnight. The first of these changes was dividing the area where sisters were ministering into regions. This would allow for more participation of sisters in the government of the order, while also allowing for more independence, as local matters were handled locally.³²⁶ This change mirrored the notion of collegiality expressed by Vatican II. A second experiment was in the dress

³²⁴ Sisters of the Precious Blood "One in Love," 29.

³²⁵ Paul VI, "Norms for Implementing the Decree" (Rome, 1966), 624.

³²⁶ Kittel, *Staying in the Fire*, 133.

of the sisters. Beginning in the mid-1960s, community leadership allowed sisters to dress in modified habits and allowed for certain styles and colors to be adopted by sisters who made the personal choice to modify their dress. After a time, a sister could then choose to wear the clothes of everyday people, and a special C.P.P.S. cross was designed for them to wear to show their distinct vocation. Sisters at this time were challenged and became more accountable because they had to choose what to wear.³²⁷ For sisters who taught in public schools, being able to wear the professional clothes similar to their colleagues aided their ministry. They could be seen as the professional educators that they were, while the cross was a subtle sign of their higher purpose. The distracting habit, which not only had children asking questions, but also had the POAU investigating, would no longer detract from the education process. Furthermore, the change of habit was helpful in ministry and also was a true testament to their charism, as Mother Brunner wore the clothes of a simple Swiss widow, and did not ask her sisters to dress in a way different from those they were serving.

Local communities began changing the style of governance. Some opted for no local superior, but just a treasurer and a contact person; others had a communal style where a committee signed off on decisions after input from all in the house.³²⁸ These changes on a local level allowed sisters a freedom to think for themselves and make decisions on their own about how they would live out their charism. One sister states it was during this time that personal budgeting came about, and budgeting one's own money led to the sister coming to a greater understanding of their vow of poverty.³²⁹ The sisters in the congregation had to scrutinize their choices and discern if what they were

³²⁷ Ibid., 136-37.

³²⁸ Ibid., 139-40.

³²⁹ Ibid.

asking for was truly in the spirit of poverty. Prayer was also something that they experimented with. Often communities with sisters who worked in different ministries could not find a common time to pray. Sisters also found that different styles of prayer suited different personalities. Thus local communities began experimenting with prayer schedules and modes of prayer.

Finally, this period of reform in the late 1960s also brought about a change in ‘obediencies.’ Phyllis Kittel gives us some insight into how the term obedience could be understood. She states, “The word *obedience* derives from the Latin *ob-audiere*, which means to listen attentively. Listen attentively to whom?”³³⁰ This is exactly what the community was trying to figure out, to whom they needed to listen attentively in order to live out their call to be a Sister of the Precious Blood. As stated above, usually the Mother General would weigh the obligations the community had to various schools, parishes and other institutions with the number of sisters she had on hand and their disposition. So traditionally, to be obedient meant listening to the superiors who had discerned the needs of the church and world. This vow was flipped on its head after the late 1960s Chapter meetings. Sisters now had to discern, in dialogue with the religious community, where they thought the needs were and how they could minister to that group. The vow now did not mean doing things together, as a community, but discerning God’s will together.³³¹ Sisters talked with others about how the Spirit was leading them to answer “the cry of the Blood” in the world today.³³² This change caused sisters to live the vow of obedience more personally because each sister, in conversation with their community, was responsible for finding the needs of the Church and responding to those

³³⁰ Ibid., 169.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Sister Joyce Lehman, C.P.P.S., “Charism and Ministry.”

needs as she saw fit. This change meant that a community that had always sought to fill the needs of others could also allow sisters to choose a ministry based on the needs and desires of their hearts in conversation with the congregation. Being able to discern ministry also brought the Sisters of the Precious Blood in contact with new, non-traditional ministries, which was a common event for many other communities of women religious, as noted in McGuinness's study of women religious noted above.

With these changes, the community also allowed sisters to return to their baptismal name rather than the name given to them when they entered the novitiate. Religious life is one of a number of vocations one can choose to live out his or her baptismal call. The sister understood she was fulfilling her baptismal call by following the charism of Mother Brunner and her many sisters over the years. Returning to a baptismal name also showed the sisters solidarity with all people of God ministering to those in need as well.³³³ Mother Brunner never changed her name, and much like the habit and other practices noted above, the long and sometimes hard to pronounce names were not always practical in active ministry. For non-Catholics in the public schools, the names may not have made sense and could possibly have been difficult for young children to pronounce. The baptismal names would make sisters more approachable to those whose needs they served.

In regards to ministry, it is again appropriate to note that from its foundation the community was not tied down to one specific ministry. Today, it is apparent that the Sisters of the Precious Blood have always sought to minister to the needs of the world. Thus, where Sisters of Charity and Mercy might be able to connect their charisms with

³³³ Kittel, *Staying in the Fire*, 75.

works of mercy or charity, this is not the case with the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

Sister Joyce Lehman states,

We [the C.P.P.S. sisters] recognize instead that our charism calls us to a how, not a what. It is through hearing the cry of the blood in the world and recognizing the power of the Precious Blood of Jesus shed on the cross at work each day through us, redeeming, reconciling, healing, uniting.³³⁴

Sister Madonna Winkeljohn, C.P.P.S. re-articulates the historical ministries of the Sisters

of the Precious Blood to show how the Precious Blood charism has formed ministries.

For this study, the unique ministry in public schools has been highlighted. Precious Blood

sisters in education ministry were a life-giving presence to their students, uniting them,

teaching them, and making them whole. While in public schools, they responded to the

cry of the blood, to fill a needed local community position that, in the very early days,

only sisters were qualified for. In Sister Madonna's time the idea of education had shifted

because the needs of the day had changed, the cry of blood was heard in more places.

Sister writes, "Today, we must see that education as a life process involving adult

education, education of minorities, the poor, education via the media, pastoral ministry,

[and] ecumenical ministry."³³⁵ The Sisters, who long ago were accepting of the few non-

Catholic children in their public school classes, realized there was not a great feat in

Council's message to engage the people of God. For at the time she was writing this,

probably in the late 1970s or early 1980s, sisters were teaching all those groups that she

called for.³³⁶ The sisters could easily adapt to modern ministries because their charism

them 'how' to serve, and not 'what' to serve the people of God.

³³⁴ Lehman, "Charism and Ministry."

³³⁵ Sister Madonna Winkeljohn C.P.P.S., "Historical Perspectives of Social Justice in the Congregation" (Dayton, year unknown), 3. Given context clues, this could have been written in the late 1970s or early 1980s.

³³⁶ Ibid.

How did these changing practices help sisters better understand and articulate their charism as the community moved into the 1970s and 1980s? Prior to the Council, spirituality was drawn from the devotional prayers of the community at that time which “emphasized the reparation and atonement aspects of Christ’s suffering and death – atonement to God for our sins.”³³⁷ This might seem odd, given the account of the community given in this paper. Sisters of the Precious Blood were very joyful and fun-loving teachers in the classroom, according to the students who later joined the C.P.P.S. congregation. They were approachable to their students and to women hoping to enter the community. Kittel notes that for many, long before the Second Vatican Council, members of the community were having trouble reconciling the somberness expected with the joy of new life that comes with the redemption offered to humanity in the Precious Blood.³³⁸ The experiences of the sisters, many of whom were in active ministries, were brought to discussions on how best to reflect the charism lived by Mother Brunner and placed in the hearts of the Sisters.

Sister Joyce Lehman, in a presentation to her community around the time of the millennium, gives some insight into what later discussions at community assemblies were about. The name was changed to Assemblies from Chapters in the 1970s, and these now happen every four years. Also, presidents of the congregation are elected for just four years, and not six. She states that redemptive theology played a role in the early years of renewal.³³⁹ This shifted the focus:

Precious Blood spirituality means participating in God’s love for human beings in a world where suffering is the result of imperfect human nature and frailty, violence and greed. Precious Blood spirituality is bound up with the mysteries of

³³⁷ Kittel, *Staying in the Fire*, 289.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Lehman “Charism and Ministry.”

suffering, death, and redemption; but its contemporary focus is on redemption, not sin, guilt, or blame.³⁴⁰

This important view of redemption is essential to understanding how the shedding of Christ's blood urges the Sisters of the Precious Blood to serve those suffering, just as Christ suffered when he shed Precious Blood. It is through Christ's gift of himself that Mother Brunner gave her gift of prayer and service.

Mother Brunner realized this charism, not only by showing the redemption of Precious Blood in her actions, but also by spending time with Christ in prayer. Sister Joyce Lehman states that through the 1970s, discussions on Eucharistic theology and its role in community charism were taking place in the community.³⁴¹ The Eucharist had been a central part of the Precious Blood Congregation and the sisters sought to continue making the Eucharist a part of the sister's active lives. Today the emphasis is not on adoration of the Eucharist but in celebrating the Eucharist. The Eucharist is seen as a way of gathering the community together so that it can be centered and sustained by receiving the Eucharist. Kittel notes that even though scheduled adoration had diminished, there was still adoration happening when sisters responded to the needs of the people.³⁴² In being of service to the poor, they are being of service to Christ; adoration of the presence of God in humanity. The theological understanding of the Eucharist and redemption are then tied together in the lives, prayer, and ministry of Sisters of the Precious Blood. The Eucharist calls Catholics into the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, something they see through their ministries in the world today. It is in this way that the Eucharist is the sharing of the redeeming love of Jesus.

³⁴⁰ Kittel, *Staying in the Fire*, 291.

³⁴¹ Lehman "Charism and Ministry."

³⁴² Kittel, *Staying in the Fire*, 294.

Sister Joyce Lehman states that in the 1980s enough discussing and learning had occurred in the community's renewal that it was time to start writing.³⁴³ They decided to begin with a mission statement that would concisely articulate what their mission, or charism, meant to them. This statement was a synthesis of the theological understanding that had developed in the past decades as changes to outward practices inspired new inward thoughts. The statement they finally agreed on still inspires the sisters today. It reads, "Urged by the redeeming love of Jesus the Christ and rooted in Eucharistic prayer, we Sisters of the Precious Blood proclaim God's love by being a life-giving, reconciling presence in our fractured world."³⁴⁴ One can see the re-articulation of belief, while also holding true to the life Mother Brunner lived in these words. There is a presence of the Eucharistic and redemptive theology that mixes so eloquently with life-giving presence that both blood and the ministries of the sisters have in common. Christ's blood, received at Mass, was shed for the reconciliation of the world. Sisters working with the needy in the world today also hope to reconcile those people to God and others who might seem distant given their situation.

This mission statement of the Sisters of the Precious Blood was a taste of "Our Way of Life" that was approved as the new document which provided structure for the practices of the community. Just from the title, one can tell "Our Way of Life" would be in the spirit of the documents promulgated by Vatican II, speaking in a language that was inviting, unlike the legal prescriptions of the community's *Rule*. This document, approved in 1990, gives a fuller expression of the life and ministries of the community than the mission statement. It states that the redeeming love of Jesus remains at the

³⁴³ Lehman, "Charism and Ministry."

³⁴⁴ C.P.P.S. Mission Statement.

congregation's core and that the Eucharist and scripture aid in forming a response to this love.³⁴⁵ Evident in this articulation is the redemptive theology that was discussed recently in the community as well as the Eucharistic presence that was so central to the example of Mother Brunner. Moreover, living in community is a Spirit-led response to the baptismal call to proclaim the Gospel message.³⁴⁶ Precious Blood Community life is a vocation that any young woman among the people of God might be called to, if the Spirit desires. Here one can see the influence of the Council's language and call in the sisters' guiding document.

Furthermore, "Our Way of Life" gives some insight to activities that embody redemptive love. The Sisters of the Precious Blood believe, "We [the sisters] continue Christ's work of redemption through a variety of ministries in accordance with our tradition of education, healing and Christian service."³⁴⁷ This assertion again shows the influence of renewal in community in accordance with the documents of Vatican II as well as the foundations of the C.P.P.S. sisters. Vatican II had asked sisters to meet the needs of the world, and Mother Brunner demonstrated that service to the needy is an important part of living Precious Blood spirituality. This understanding blends both old and new in a way that reveres the traditional ministries of the congregation, while also realizing that new ministries had become important to responding to the cry of the blood. In addition, this also allows for new ministries to be embraced by sisters as the needs of the Church and world change.

As new ministries are being discerned, "Our Way of Life" offers guidelines to assist sisters in the discernment process, as well as evaluation of existing ministries. The

³⁴⁵ Sisters of the Precious Blood, "Our Way of Life" (Dayton, 1990), 2.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

first considers the tradition and goals of the congregation. These are qualities such as commitment to Eucharistic prayer, response to “needs of our time” and action based on justice.³⁴⁸ These are also supported by practical concerns such as financial resources, personal ability and acceptance by the local community where the ministry is taking place.³⁴⁹ In these concerns, one can see the modern articulation of charism followed by sisters for over 175 years. The sisters, who worked in public elementary schools, did these very things. They responded to the needs of the time and the requests of the community over the years by being well trained educators in remote areas. They strove for justice because the sisters served children in need of a good education, teaching publicly, and not just in private institutions. The Sisters of the Precious Blood’s commitment to education and truth despite the hardships in Fort Recovery is a strong witness to this justice. The C.P.P.S. community also benefited from the income, which they could use to support themselves and other sisters who ministered without salaries.³⁵⁰ Their ministry in public schools is an example of an active ministry, which by the 1950s was showing signs of needing a renewal of language and thought, as active ministry needed active sisters. This example also eloquently illustrates how the core beliefs of the Sisters of the Precious Blood have remained firm over the years. The Second Vatican Council allowed the sisters to better express what they were doing and how they were praying in a fullness not possible before and in a way that all could understand.

Conclusion:

This chapter was a brief account of the changes that occurred in the community from the 1950s until the doorstep of the twenty-first century. At the call of Pope Pius XII,

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 36.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Private conversation with Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S.

many religious orders began to seek answers to the questions in their hearts regarding being held back by the out of date structures communities had employed for as long as anyone could remember. The words from Rome brought about a flurry of discussions among and within religious orders. These discussions allowed communities to see how the central spirit of their founder could be retained, while allowing for practices that fit with modern life. The documents of Vatican II would greatly encourage and bless continued efforts of religious men and women to study, discuss, and re-articulate their ways of life. Many changes were made to the dress, names, governing style, way of life, and mode of praying of sisters that allowed for an easier life in an active ministry. The Sisters of the Precious Blood were very much in tune to the call of Vatican II and their founding charism in composing the document “Our Way of Life” which currently aids the community in its proclamation of Christ’s redeeming love rooted in the gift of the Eucharist.

It is important to note that these changes connect directly to the ministry of the Sisters of the Precious Blood teaching in the public elementary and high schools of northwest Ohio. The active lifestyle of a teacher, who was engaging the entire community and not just the Catholic portion of it, is a perfect example of an active ministry that did not fit with the archaic practices in force at the time. Through the discussions, workshops, and Chapters, sisters began to see a different structure emerging that allowed them to best express the gift Mother Brunner had imparted to her sisters in community. They could adore Christ who shed Precious Blood by entering the classroom to be an example of his love to young minds. The language of the Council helped sisters to realize that they were the people of God, sent to help all those in need. This fit nicely

with the charism of Mother Brunner, who also wanted sisters to respond to the needs of the people around them. This way of life allows for the Sisters of the Precious Blood to minister into the future, knowing that as needs change, they can adapt. Mother Brunner is certainly smiling down on a community faithful to Precious Blood spirituality and the desires of the Church.

Finally, it is important to look at this historical period. The trends and events in this chapter should be compared closely with the information in the last. Both chronicle very trying times for the religious and local communities discussed. The changes in the world made it necessary to update the way that public schools functioned as well as how religious life was lived. The schools made changes so that non-Catholics moving in would feel comfortable in the public schools while also realizing the full value of the sisters who taught in them. Sisters of the Precious Blood realized that they too were professional teachers, worthy of the respect given to them by the children and families in the local communities. Changes during this time helped to promote the professionalism of the sisters who were involved in the ministry of public education. Sisters could now dress like professional teachers, and possibly return to a more fitting name for modern children to pronounce and understand that also showed solidarity with the people of God she ministered to. Sisters now did not have to worry about breaking a rule by fulfilling an obligation of an educator, such as speaking to a sister to ask for teaching advice during grand silence, or not attending to a meeting in the evening because they were expected to stay in the convent at that time.³⁵¹ Change in both the schools and the convent was taking place at the same time in history, and often the changes benefited both the religious community and the school. These changes would continue the work of Mother Brunner

³⁵¹ Examples given by Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S. in a private conversation.

as well as the legacy brought about by a Christian presence among the youth in the community that continues to this day. The final chapter of this study will present a review of how the Catholic nature of the local communities and the Spirit's movement within the C.P.P.S. community is still visible today.

CHAPTER 5: LEGACY

In this final chapter, the legacy of the Sisters of the Precious Blood teaching in public schools and forming their charism will be discussed. The first part will look at the lasting impact of the Catholic faith on the people and school children in the communities where sisters ministered in the public schools. Today, there are no sisters from the Precious Blood Community that minister in public schools. The shift to different ministries will be presented as well as the way in which the communities continue to foster a religious culture among the young in northwestern Ohio. The other legacy of the sisters is their Precious Blood charism, which has an ever-evolving understanding as the needs of the world continue to change. The sisters believe that their spirituality is not something that only members incorporated into the religious community can live out, but that all people can live by following the Christian example of Mother Brunner. A very recent study of the Sisters of the Precious Blood charism, written by Sister Joyce Zimmerman, C.P.P.S., is a text with great theological depth that is also accessible to Catholics interested in the sisters' charism. Highlighted in the following discussion will be how this articulation of charism uses new imagery, namely qualities people attach to the colors red and gold. The shedding of Christ's blood has red qualities such as sacrifice, self-offering, and suffering. But it also has gold qualities, because the blood of Jesus brought about new life, glory, and joy. Although this is a new presentation, qualities of

C.P.P.S. charism that were studied in the past, such as redemptive theology and the importance of the Eucharist, are reframed as they also have red and gold qualities.

Legacy in Northwest Ohio's Communities:

Today there are no Sisters of the Precious Blood ministering in public schools in northwestern Ohio. By the year 2000, the practice had ceased. Women religious were spread thin, with fewer younger candidates joining the order and a greater attraction to new ministry opportunities in urban areas. As for these rural schools, the need for sisters to be educators was no longer present. There were now a sufficient number of people in the area who could teach in the public schools. The fact that there are no sisters in public schools today does not mean that there has not been a legacy, or rather a noticeably strong Catholic identity, imprinted on the various communities discussed here because of the sisters' presence in the classroom in the past. Although current students might think that a religious sister teaching in their public school is foreign, many parents and grandparents cherished their school days with the sisters. The generations of the past, imprinted with the morals, lessons, examples, and religious attitude of their C.P.P.S. educators, passed on these values to children living today who are beginning their own families. The legacy of the sisters is passed down by these children's parents as well as the parish in which they attended, which remember and retain the C.P.P.S. charism within them. The legacy of living with a religious temperament is still woven into the fabric of many young people's upbringing in the historically German Catholic communities, even today when it is clearly separate from a public education.

Release time is still being tactfully used and remains as a way of passing on the faith in some of the communities of northwestern Ohio. Glandorf Elementary School,

now in its own building, still employs release time. Children go over to the old school building, now operated by St. John's Church, for their religion classes. It is still the case that attendance is voluntary, and with parental consent children are able to go over to the building.³⁵² The practice of release time in Glandorf has been maintained because of the Catholic presence in the town. Parents realized that the Catholic faith has formed them to be productive, moral, and holy people, and they want this same success for their children. The fact that the religious education is not occurring in the same building as the public school classes is another reason that release time in Glandorf did not meet the same end as it did in Fort Recovery. The Church has retained the old school for the progress of the faith in the community, just as the sisters championed the faith decades before.

A school system that still acknowledges a form of release time is the St. Henry Consolidated Local Schools of St. Henry, Ohio. This community, made up like many others discussed in this work of German Catholic settlers, follows many of the patterns of other communities discussed in this study. Founded by German Catholics and named for the saintly Holy Roman Emperor Henry II, this community found a way to educate their young people in the faith early on with the help of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. During the time of the Church-State conflict in nearby Fort Recovery, the parish stepped in and built a religious education center on its own property, so that release time might continue in the St. Henry community. In the spring of 1965 the parish of St. Henry opened a state-of-the-art catechetical center. At that time, the 440 families of the town of St. Henry, most of those families being Catholic, sent nearly 1,000 children to the center which was near enough to the public school that children were allowed to walk to the center during the permitted religious education time. Although the priests at the parish

³⁵² Sister Noreen Jutte, C.P.P.S.

were Precious Blood, the sisters who initially staffed the facility were Franciscan Sisters of the Poor.³⁵³ Within a few years, Sisters of the Precious Blood joined them.³⁵⁴ Today, lay men and women from the parish are charged with the religious education ministry at the catechetical center, which enrolls children from the St. Henry Schools who attend one of the five parishes in the St. Henry cluster parishes.³⁵⁵ The curriculum ranges from kindergarten through high school.³⁵⁶ The times of these classes are set by the high school, and the center is near the school for the students' convenience. Again, the religious nature of the community, instilled in minds and hearts early on by C.P.P.S. priests, brothers, and sisters, continues today through the parish and school working together.

The communities of Minster and Egypt have a similar arrangement. Today, the parishes of St. Augustine in Minster and St. Joseph in Egypt are clustered together, under the direction of one pastor. The school reflects this situation, as students who are from the farms around Egypt are now transported to the Minster Local Schools for classes.

However, the Catholic faith is still present with the school and church working together.

The parish website outlines the agreement between the pastor of St. Augustine and St. Joseph with the school board and states that students in kindergarten through eighth grade will attend Mass at 8:00 am on Wednesdays. Students are expected to report directly to St. Augustine Church for Mass that day. Those students, whose parents have agreed to

³⁵³ "St. Henry Catechetical Center One of Largest, Newest in Area," *The Catholic Telegraph*, March 5, 1965. (Courtesy of the Archives of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati).

³⁵⁴ Private conversation with Sr. Judy Kroeger, C.P.P.S. 4/5/2016

³⁵⁵ Beginning in the 1990s the Archdiocese of Cincinnati began to cluster parishes together under fewer clergy. Mercer County Ohio is a rural county, with abundant farmland, yet it has twenty Catholic Churches. Thus, in the St. Henry area, five parishes are placed under the direction of one pastor. These parishes are St. Aloysius (Carthagen), St. Bernard (Burkettsville), St. Francis (Cranberry Prairie), St. Henry (St. Henry), and St. Wendelin (Wendelin).

³⁵⁶ "St. Henry High School Handbook 2014-2015," St. Henry Local Schools, accessed March 28, 2016, http://59895075-104418163188194671.preview.editmysite.com/uploads/5/9/8/9/59895075/student_handbook_2014-15.pdf & "Catechetical Center (St. Henry)," Saint Henry Cluster Parishes, accessed March 28, 2016, <http://www.sthenrycluster.com/catechetical-center/>

enroll them in the program, are bused into town and dropped off near the church. Attendance is taken at the Mass, but does not count for school, as the school will also account for the children when they arrive for class. Furthermore, students in kindergarten through sixth grade will have an hour long catechism class each week and junior high students have a half hour religion class each week. The school system sets the time schedule for these classes. High school students in parishes have the opportunity for religious education classes on Sunday mornings.³⁵⁷ Today, this community still passes on the Catholic faith to its children in a way that is closely related to their education in other subjects. The community works together with the same community spirit of those early settlers, to raise these children to be well-rounded Christians and citizens, who are active in the local and parish communities. Although sisters are no longer in the classroom, the cooperation between the public school and the parish remains.

The communities of farms and parishes around Maria Stein also have a vibrant way of passing on the faith to their children, even though the subtle religious presence brought about by the Sisters of the Precious Blood is no longer visible in the public school.³⁵⁸ Naturally, a community living next to a shrine of relics located at the former motherhouse would be led by the spirit to a creative way for students to engage in their faith. Sister Martha Bertke, C.P.P.S., who still resides in Mercer County, highlights the relationship of the Catholic faith with the students at Marion Local Schools. She explains, “At St. John Church in Maria Stein, particularly during the football season, the athletes are welcome to attend mass on Friday mornings. After Mass, the parish provides

³⁵⁷ “Religious Education,” Minster Cluster Parishes, accessed on March 28, 2016, <http://www.staugie.com/religious-education>

³⁵⁸ Today the parishes of St. John (Maria Stein), St. Rose (St. Rose), Holy Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Cassella), Precious Blood (Chickasaw), and St. Sebastian (Sebastian) are clustered together under one administration. The Marion Local School System covers the same geographical space as these parishes.

doughnuts and juice...Sports are important but so is the faith. Many of the pastors in the area attend sports games.” As many of the students at Marion Local are Catholic, the support of their faith community in their sporting events is welcome and encourages their spiritual development as well. This is yet another example of how the area has not separated the Christian faith from the everyday life of the community.

Furthermore, there are times when parish and local communities come together to support athletic teams as well as the common faith shared by many of the students in the area. In three communities, sports teams are invited to come together for a day of prayer and reflection at the spiritual center on the grounds of the Maria Stein retreat house and relic chapel. This is meant for reflection on how good sportsmanship can carry over into one’s personal and religious life. Sister Martha, who has attended this event, explains:

For the last several years, the last Wednesday of July, they have what is called the MAC Mass (Midwest Atlantic Conference). Three of the Precious Blood [staffed] parishes in the area combine St. Augustine (Minster), St. John (Maria Stein), and St. Henry (St. Henry). The pastors invite the high school youth athletes to a special Mass at the spiritual center at Maria Stein.³⁵⁹

This voluntary event brings together many high school students from across Mercer County, to pray and grow together in a common Catholic faith. After Mass, there is usually a presentation from a speaker from the area that has been successful in athletics as well as in his or her faith and civic life. Furthermore, as these parishes share a common C.P.P.S. charism, the sisters and missionaries in the area also attend. The C.P.P.S. priests, brothers, and sisters discuss with the young people the importance of listening and responding to their vocation and to help them to better understand the charism of the

³⁵⁹ Sister Martha Bertke, C.P.P.S.

C.P.P.S. communities.³⁶⁰ In this way, the extracurricular activities offered by individual public schools allow the students to pray together, learn about their faith and its Precious Blood roots, as well as reflect on what God is calling them to do with their skills in the future.

Not all communities have a strong partnership between parish and school. Those discussed above were highlighted because of their unique way of connecting education or school sponsored groups and religious education. Many of the communities discussed in the earlier chapters have continued passing on the faith through CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) or PSR (Parish School of Religion) programs, which are common throughout the United States. These programs usually are carried out by lay people on the grounds of the parish. The programs discussed above are happening in large part because of the commitment of lay people in the community. As a religious community that serves the needs of the times, the educational needs in northwest Ohio changed, and therefore sisters could move to ministries with a greater need. Lay educators filled the local community needs, and sisters could move to different ministries, following new needs. Lay people continue the legacy of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in northwestern Ohio, by connecting young people with the skills to live a peace-filled life, incorporating their Catholic faith with the practical knowledge they learn in their public schools.

Charism Today:

From a castle in the Swiss countryside to the peaceful fields of Mercer Country, Ohio, to the bustling city of Dayton, the Precious Blood charism has had many backdrops over the decades. What began as a widow's desire to honor the Precious Blood and assist those in need has turned into a way of life that has connected many women and aided

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

many people in becoming better Christians and leading more fulfilling lives. The charism imparted by Mother Brunner continues today. Sister Joyce Ann Zimmerman, C.P.P.S. recently published a book for lay people so they might come to understand the spirituality of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. The project was inspired by those pilgrims who came to pray in the relic chapel located in the former motherhouse in Maria Stein, Ohio.³⁶¹ By analyzing her work on Precious Blood spirituality, one can see another shift, thus allowing everyone to see life through the prism of Mother Brunner's example of devotion and service.

In her work, *Red + Gold: A Spirituality of the Sisters of the Precious Blood for Everyone*, Sister Joyce notes that red and gold are rich colors for the congregation.³⁶² The color red can bring about mixed emotions, as can the belief that Jesus died on a cross, shedding his Precious Blood. Sister Joyce states,

This spilled blood brings sadness as we meditate on the suffering and ridicule, misunderstanding and abandonment of Jesus. This same spilled blood brings us joy as it flows from the pierced side (from the Sacred Heart), blood that foretells the Blood of the Eucharist (the life pulse of the Church), the overflowing love of a heart that even death could not contain.³⁶³

The Precious Blood for the sisters is not only about suffering; there are also elements of joy in it. The traditional sorrowful response is contained in this understanding while also mixing the joy found in Christ's redemptive blood-shed that is a renewed focus of the community after Vatican II. One might liken this to the Christian practice of calling the day that Christ died "Good" Friday. Though God suffered and was put to death on a cross, his death brought about redemption for the world. Here, one notes the impact of the

³⁶¹ Sister Joyce Ann Zimmerman, C.P.P.S., *Red + Gold: A Spirituality of the Sisters of the Precious Blood for Everyone* (Maria Stein OH: Maria Stein Shrine of the Holy Relics, 2012), ix.

³⁶² Emphasis added by Sister Joyce Zimmerman, C.P.P.S.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11.

community's discussions of redemptive theology in their charism that is still present in today's renderings of community spirituality. Moreover, sisters, in meditating on the suffering of Christ and humanity, know that the goal of suffering does not lie in humanity putting up with suffering because of sin, but rather in realizing that it is part of being human and is why people must rely on a personal God who himself experienced this aspect of humanity.³⁶⁴ It is a reminder of humanity's dependence on God, and that it is only in following God's will that sufferings will ultimately be relieved.

On the other side of suffering and death is salvation. Salvation is God's gift to his creation, freeing humanity from sin and the bondage of indifference and brokenness to enter into right relationship with God.³⁶⁵ This salvation is the work of God, through the shedding of blood on the cross. The cross itself then becomes much like the color red. It is both a joyful and a terrible symbol. Sister Joyce says that in the western Church we often see a suffering Christ on the cross, where in the Eastern Church, crosses are often adorned with jewels. Furthermore, she says, "The Eastern Church can teach us well that cross and death are not the point; risen Life, Resurrection, light are what it's about."³⁶⁶ The suffering of Good Friday is only part of the story. The other half, the Easter event, is what makes the story more meaningful for humanity's fuller understanding of Christ's blood. The same can be said for the color red as it concerns the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Understanding suffering is important, but it loses its meaning without the context of joy.

Sister Joyce turns from the color red to the color gold: the gold of the resurrection, the morning when the sun rose in golden glory, for Christ had conquered death. Later it

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 12-13.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 14-15.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 17.

was a day that would be a memorialization of Jesus; “Sunday,” a day where people would gather to celebrate the Eucharist, a celebration of the Resurrection.³⁶⁷ With resurrection comes new life and the reminder that all humans were created in the image and likeness of God. Baptism enriches this and allows humanity to enter into the Body of Christ with a mission to share life with others.³⁶⁸ It is through this baptismal mission in life that we are called to show God’s glory and holiness. Glory can come in shining the light of Christ on others who have gotten lost or given up on their path to new life in Christ. Glory allows one to be holy by living the law of Jesus in our families and communities.³⁶⁹ The gold reminds humanity that there is a gift of new life and nourishment in the Eucharist that draws individuals into the community by being Christ to each other.

The red and gold reframes and connects many aspects of Precious Blood charism that have been a central part of the community for decades, as well as some details brought to a new prominence as the community continues to grow in its understanding of its charism. Red and gold come together to better understand Eucharist and how Eucharist fits into the charism of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. As a community centered on the Eucharist, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus take on a special meaning, as they enter the world for ministry. They become like the bread that Mother Brunner handed to those in need, becoming a bread of life nourishing the local communities in which they work. The Eucharist, much like their way of life, then takes on the qualities of red and gold.

In Sister Joyce’s book on charism, she expounds on some of the theology behind the Eucharist as red and gold in the context of Precious Blood charism. The first theme is

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 21.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 23.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 24-7.

sacrifice. At every Mass “during the Liturgy of the Word we hear a snippet of the story of Salvation in the readings – we hear of God’s mighty deeds on our behalf” and are then challenged to live out this gospel message, sacrificing to carry out the will of God. Furthermore, Jesus’s sacrifice becomes present again on the altar for the community to consume. It is in partaking in the holy sacrifice of the altar that humanity becomes holy; humans become the Body of Christ that they consume.³⁷⁰ By receiving the body of the risen Lord, humanity is able to be like the bread and wine, offered up to God. Just like the grapes and wheat, which are offered to God, the community assembled is called to die to themselves and offer up their lives to become holy.³⁷¹ It is in following the example of Christ, who prayed “not my will but yours be done” (Lk 24:42) the night before he died, that his followers might surrender themselves. Sister Joyce states that this is an overarching theme of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, in which the daily surroundings are recollected and united with those of Jesus.³⁷² In this way, the Eucharist strengthens the faithful to carry on living out the Gospel, while also transforming themselves.

Transformation is the end result of sacrifice of desires and offering up of one’s life to God. Sister Joyce notes, “By praying for unity, we are praying that we all share the same identity, that we unite ourselves more closely with both Christ through his Eucharistic Gift and with each other in the Body of Christ.”³⁷³ Thus unity in the person of Jesus brings humanity out of itself, to become more Christ-like in loving God and others. It is a love that contains qualities of the red and gold. The sacrifice and surrender of self might appear to have qualities of red. Red has painful attributes of offering up the life one

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 32-3.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid., 36-7.

³⁷³ Ibid., 39.

wished to live, suffering and even unexpected sacrifices. However, red also has passionate traits, such as closer unity with the Divine and with the community of believers, which have a golden allure. Golden qualities also abound, as it is only through sacrifice that there can be the joy of resurrection, the holiness that comes with the unity of God, and the gift of new life one is called to lead.

The qualities of the red and gold as understood through this explanation of Eucharist form the building blocks of understanding the Precious Blood charism today. Sister Joyce eloquently sums up the red of the cross, the gold of the resurrection, their meanings in light of the Eucharist, and how this all fits into Precious Blood charism. She states:

We Sisters of the Precious Blood believe that the Holy Spirit has bestowed on our Congregation the unique gift of an appreciation for the value and fruitfulness of perpetual adoration of the Eucharistic, risen Christ. This adoration is a source of grace that enables us to express in our prayer, in our ministry, and in the love with which we serve all members of the body of Christ the rhythm of dying and rising, *kenosis* [self-emptying] and Life-gift, Cross and Resurrection, Tables of the Word and the Eucharist that describe for us Precious Blood Spirituality.³⁷⁴

It is the red and gold, or “the joys and hopes, the grief and the anguish” found in the Eucharist that are also found in the life that Christians are called to live.³⁷⁵ These elements of joy, new life, glory, holiness, sacrifice, suffering, death, and salvation, which are contained in the Eucharist, are called to be brought to life by the ministries of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Interestingly, as noted above, these words are similar to the opening lines of *Gaudium et Spes*, Vatican II’s *Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World*. Sister Joyce has illustrated through the colors of red and gold the pains

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 41.

³⁷⁵ Vatican Council II, “*Gaudium et Spes* [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World],” in *The Basic Sixteen Documents: Vatican Council II*, ed. Austin Flannery, (Northport, NY: Costello, 1996), para. 1.

and pleasures found in the life of Christ, and his body present here on earth. Moreover, *Gaudium et Spes* indicates that the followers of Christ should embrace a life that is red and gold, and that the Church, motivated to do the work of Christ in service to humanity, should help believers down this joyful and sorrowful path leading to redemption.³⁷⁶ In this articulation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood charism one can see a renewed commitment to the renewal called for by Vatican II while also finding a contemporary way of explaining what the Church asks of women religious and all Christian believers. This understanding of the sisters' charism, shown in their ministerial works, must have red and gold qualities as well, because they have received God to sustain their life of Gospel work in ministering to those in need of a Divine presence.

What might these red and gold qualities of Precious Blood charism be? The first is hospitality. Sister Joyce recalled the Old Testament story of Elisha who stopped to stay at the home of a woman who, realizing he was a holy man, built him a dwelling in which to stay.³⁷⁷ Red and gold hospitality are shown by the woman because she acted in a way that recalled God's over-the-top self-giving acts of hospitality throughout salvation history. Sisters of the Precious Blood are to be like this woman of the Old Testament and live hospitality in the same over-the-top way that God does.

The second attribute is generosity. The generosity in Jesus's giving of himself as the Eucharist is emulated by the giving of one's goods and self as well as being generous in thoughts, by not passing quick judgment.³⁷⁸ Again, it is in following the example shown in the gospel, of Jesus's self-giving love present in his crucifixion.

³⁷⁶ Ibid, para 3.

³⁷⁷ Zimmerman, *Red +Gold*, 42.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 45.

Finally, one can live out red and gold by exercising justice. Sister Joyce states “Not everyone is an Oscar Romero or Mother Teresa” and social justice is not always at the center of everyone’s life; however each is called to live justly.³⁷⁹ In the practice of justice, the red of the cross is brought to the gold of the resurrection. Living justly means that people who are in need can see a bit of the resurrection in our actions; our choice must be ones that are life giving. People who were suffering and broken can be brought to life again by of the generosity and hospitality of those who have become Christ-like in their partaking of the Eucharist. Sisters practice these three qualities of Precious Blood charism today through ministry by responding generously and hospitably to those who are in need. The sisters offer them the justice that rebuilds their dignity as the Body of Christ. It is in sacrificing and surrendering for those in need that allows them to see the gift of fullness of life.

Finally, it is important to note that this presentation of Precious Blood charism, a way of life that, so like the blood of Christ has both red and gold qualities, has a legacy of its own. In the last section, the legacy of responding to the needs of community through public school, by not only teaching but also offering a religious presence today was discussed. Sisters are no longer present in the public schools and often times the religious education they would have offered during release time has also been assumed by lay people. One must realize that Mother Brunner was not a woman religious when she first started living out the charism of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Much like how schools have a lay presence, so too could the charism of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. This contemporary understanding that has been laid out is sub-titled “A Spirituality of the Sisters of the Precious Blood for **Everyone**.”

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 46.

The reasons why this contemporary explanation of Precious Blood charism is for everyone is primarily in the format that it is presented to the reader. As stated above, Sister Joyce wrote this to enlighten pilgrims who visit at the Shrine and are interested in the community of women religious who sponsor it. She has laid out her work just for that purpose. It is written in a way that the common person can comprehend and apply to his or her life. Readings on aspects of the cross, resurrection, Eucharist, and spirituality are divided into two-page meditations on a theme, that end in reflection questions which allow the reader to contemplate how they see each aspect of Precious Blood charism in their lives. Sister Joyce states that she deliberately wanted this to be an understanding for everyone. The cross and Eucharist are both central themes of the liturgy, where the paschal mystery is made present to all believers.³⁸⁰ It is not just the Sisters of the Precious Blood who partake in the Mass, but all believers. Likewise, all believers are baptized into this paschal mystery, making all believers part of the Body of Christ. Thus, Sister Joyce explains,

The Church's spirituality is a paschal mystery spirituality, is liturgical spirituality. This is the way of life into which our baptism ushers us. Since the two prongs of our Precious Blood Spirituality [cross and Eucharist] coincide so perfectly with the Church's spirituality, with liturgical spirituality, we sisters cannot claim it as our own.³⁸¹

The charism of the Sisters of the Precious Blood is something so similar to the way of holiness that baptism calls Christians. Details from the Precious Blood can easily enrich and promote the baptismal call of the faithful. Praying the liturgy not only draws sisters and laity into the paschal mystery, but also onto the simple path to holiness on which Mother Brunner walked. Sister Joyce has taken the time-honored traditions of the

³⁸⁰ Ibid, viii. Here Sister Joyce notes *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, paras. 6 & 106.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

community, harmonized them with the restated and clarified mission of the Church presented at Vatican II, and made the C.P.P.S. charism something that everyone can understand and live out in their daily lives.

CONCLUSION

This work has set out to connect the active ministry of Sisters of the Precious Blood in public schools across northwest Ohio with the ever evolving understanding of their charism to honor the Precious Blood by service to those in need. At times, changes due to active ministries caused the sisters to reflect on how better to live, pray, and serve. At other times, the schools and local communities needed and wanted the sisters' expertise, especially in the 1800s. The communities created an environment that would allow for sisters to minister to the youth who desired knowledge of the world and of God. Each of the five chapters of this study chronicles different periods of this development, with every period facing its own joys, sorrows, goals and struggles. Generations of German Catholics and Sisters of the Precious Blood, through the providence of God, were able to celebrate and weather together these triumphs and tribulations of local and religious community life.

In the first chapter, the life of Mother Maria Anna Brunner was recounted. She was a Swiss woman of great faith, who responded to the call of the blood around her. She served the needs of those men under the direction of her son, Fr. Brunner, at Loewenberg, as well as the needs of those in town, by providing food, clothing and resources. She also was rooted by the Eucharist, for it was Christ who set her heart on fire to respond to the needs of the people, and be Christ to them. By the time of her death in 1836, this saintly

mother had established a community of women, each with their own gifts, who were willing to bring the love of God from the chapel to the world. The chapter then turns to the German Catholics settling in northwest Ohio around the time of Mother Brunner's death. These rural communities, often separated by dense farmland, were not separated by their desire to make a better life in the area. This took much determination and hard work on their part to turn a wilderness into functioning farms. The common background and faith brought these communities together, for they realized that it was only in working together that they could prosper. Furthermore, God would be their strength and often a church was quickly constructed even before a priest was assigned. These settlers also built a school near their church, so that their children might have access to a basic education. Thus, chapter one sets up what appears at face value to be two seemingly unrelated stories. But on closer inspection, the Swiss community of Mother Brunner, who was looking to fill the needs of those less fortunate, while also proclaiming a deep love of the Catholic faith, would pair quite well with the poor German Catholics of northwestern Ohio who were trying to build lives and communities that would be sustainable for generations to come.

The second chapter of this work allows the reader to see this relationship between the Sisters of the Precious Blood and the local communities they came in contact with through the lens of their ministry in public schools. Early on, communities knew these sisters had a European education, as well as a good command of the German language and the Catholic faith that was important to the settlers. They set out to first found schools, and then expand schools so that all children in the area might have access to a public education, as well as time set aside for religious education. These schools grew

and the program of release time became more formalized in the twentieth century. The C.P.P.S. sisters realized that in order to retain a ministry in public schools, they would need to conform to the state standards for educating and certifying their teachers. Thus the Precious Blood Community could boast a high number of state certified educators from early on and by the 1940s almost every teacher was state certified.

In addition, the sisters also came into their own between 1844 and 1944. A reform called by the Holy See asked that men and women religious become separate institutions. The Sisters of the Precious Blood split from the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, allowing them to pursue ministries and a spirituality that was unique to their founder. Furthermore, the unique charism of Mother Brunner would be defended when the sisters chose not to be dissolved into the Sister Adorers of the Precious Blood, who were another order in the Precious Blood family, but had different roots. Mother Emma continued this self-awareness when she realized that a community wishing to serve the needs of people should go to a place where there is great need: the city. She moved the community's motherhouse to the city of Dayton after World War I, allowing the active community to engage in new ministries, as well as securing the practice of perpetual exposition in the motherhouse chapel. The first century of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in America, from 1844-1944 was one that saw great formalization of public education and the sisters' role in that system. This period also saw the sisters' understanding their active ministries to those in need, in light of the Eucharist. It was a dynamic time in local communities, their schools, and for the sisters' charism.

However, by the mid-twentieth century, people were ready for change in many aspects of American society and the Catholic Church. Some non-Catholics who had

begun to relocate into the German Catholic communities in northwestern Ohio began to question if the practice of sisters teaching in public schools was legal and if the Church was reaping too many benefits from the release time programs that had been developed over the years. Chapter three includes interviews with sisters who studied before the Fort Recovery case, and sisters who taught after, to illustrate how these communities operated from the viewpoint of someone in their schools. These former students gave an honest account of how the public schools that they attended were operated in the 1940s and 1950s. These sisters never state that there were any issues brought to their attention in the communities of their childhood regarding sisters teaching in the public schools. However, some areas were affected by non-Catholic negativity. Glandorf was the first school where C.P.P.S. sisters became cautious due to complaints from non-Catholics at a public school in a neighboring town. It was only a few years later, in 1963, that Southwest Local Schools in Fort Recovery had a suit filed against it. The sisters had to testify, and the accusations hit them at their core, as these sisters had done no wrong. In the end, the school, which had separated Catholic and Protestant pupils, had to integrate and release time ended in Fort Recovery. However, the sisters could remain at the school and wear their habits in the classroom. The chapter closes with sisters who taught after the law suit illustrating that many areas just saw a deliberate separation of release time from the public school day. This allowed release time to continue, for sisters' status as professional educators to grow, and for continued dialogue with towns that were no longer Catholic monoliths.

The fourth chapter illustrates the same period of time, but from the angle of changing manifestations of religious charism within the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

The social changes of the age could not be ignored, nor could the call of Pope Pius XII to update religious life in the early 1950s. For the Sisters of the Precious Blood, active in a variety of ministries, a new habit that was lighter weight, machine washable, and less severe looking was a welcome change. But in the 1950s, the community was also changing its members' hearts to better understand what Mother Brunner had envisioned for her community. Rules, such as not visiting family, were opened up so that they made more sense with modern life and spirituality. There was also renewed emphasis on the way that sisters prayed and celebrated liturgy. Discussions of charism and founding principles began at this time and helped facilitate larger discussions of Precious Blood charism after the Second Vatican Council. Vatican II allowed sisters to become more self-aware of community life. The sisters re-evaluated and better articulated their purpose and then changed community structures so that they could better serve those in need. In the late-1960s they adapted modern dress, just as Mother Brunner had worn the clothes of Swiss women, to relate better to those they served. The sisters realized that their gifts would be better spent if they chose how to use them, and open placement into chosen ministry became the practice of the community. Sisters also wanted to be governed in a more democratic style so chapter meetings, with delegates, gave way to assemblies with the whole congregation present. The Sisters of the Precious Blood, founded to actively serve those in need, while adoring Christ, found new ways to do this, while revisiting the life of Mother Brunner and the community origins at Loewenberg.

The final chapter of this thesis covers the contemporary situation of the schools in which sisters worked as well as an example of a current presentation of community charism. The sisters have left a legacy of quality education and a religious temperament

that permeates life throughout the area where the religious community once taught. Some of the schools in northwest Ohio have retained the practice of release time. The school and parish work together to find time, space, and personnel to continue religious education in the context of a quality public education. The parish takes the lead in finding lay catechists and space, while the school works out scheduling for Mass or classes. Other communities have opted for a CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) or PSR (Parish School of Religion) program that has been successful at countless parishes across the country. The other half of chapter five examines the theological work of Sister Joyce Zimmerman. In her book, the traditional ideas such as the suffering of Christ because of sins and Eucharistic adoration are reframed. Furthermore, the study of the sisters after Vatican II to see themselves in the context of redemptive theology and Eucharistic theology are presented in a fresh light. Furthermore, Sister Joyce shows that, in living out the baptismal call, everyone can follow the example of Mother Brunner by extending life-giving justice to those who are suffering in the local community. Both in the sisters' charism and in the educational system one can see a turn to the laity, that they too can live holy lives that influence others to do the same. Both also illustrate that by respecting the past and responding to the present needs, the religious and local communities have found ways to be successful today in a new contemporary situation.

The Sisters of the Precious Blood ministered tirelessly in public education as well as other ministries throughout northwest Ohio, the United States, and other parts of the world. Through their ministries they learned practical lessons about how best to serve God and those in need. For over one hundred and seventy-five years the Sisters of the Precious Blood have been a life-giving presence. They came first to serve the needs of

German Catholics in northwest Ohio and success there propelled them into new ministries in different areas. Mother Brunner would be proud of all of the good the sisters have done and all the lives they have changed for the better. May God continue to bless the good work of the Sisters of the Precious Blood as they continue to respond to the needs of today's world.

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Zimmerman, Joyce Ann. *Red + Gold: A Spirituality of the Sisters of the Precious Blood
for **Everyone***. Maria Stein OH: Maria Stein Shrine of the Holy Relics, 2012.

APPENDIX OF IMAGES



Image 1: The official portrait of Mother Maria Anna Brunner painted shortly after her death in 1836 by an unknown artist. Note that she is in traditional Swiss garb, and not a religious habit. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)



Image 2: Painted by Sister Eileen Tomlinson, C.P.P.S. in 1990s, this picture depicts Mother Brunner giving bread to those in need when she was walking to Mass. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)



Image 3: Fr. Francis de Sales Brunner, C.P.P.S. dressed as a missionary of the Precious Blood with distinctive mission cross affixed to his cassock. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)



Image 4: Loewenberg Castle, located in the Swiss countryside, this was where the Sisters of the Precious Blood began in 1834. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)

Image 5:
 This is a map illustrating the location of the villages, towns, and settlements where the Sisters of the Precious Blood ministered in public schools

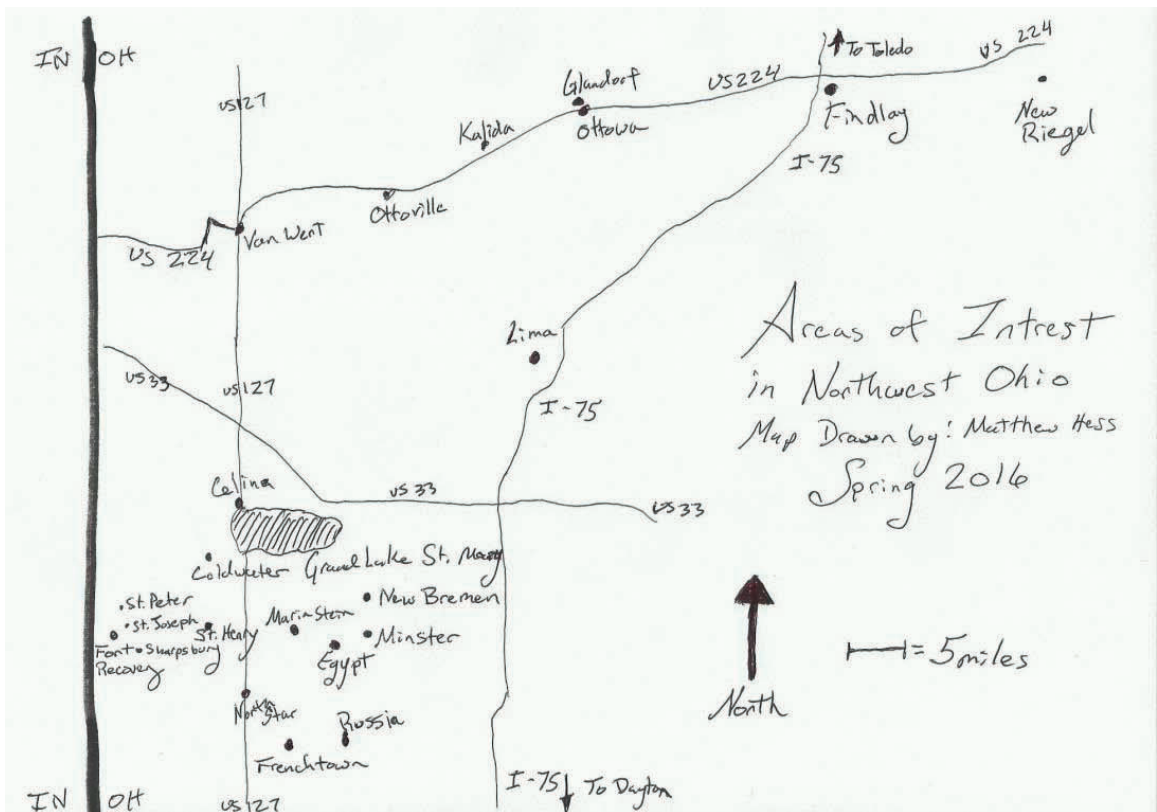




Image 6: Bishop Purcell; the caption reads “Our bishop sat for my drawing twice. I finished the picture at St. John.”
1859. Drawn by Liwwät Böke. From Luke Knapke ed., *Liwwät Böke: 1807-1882 Pioneer*, 142.

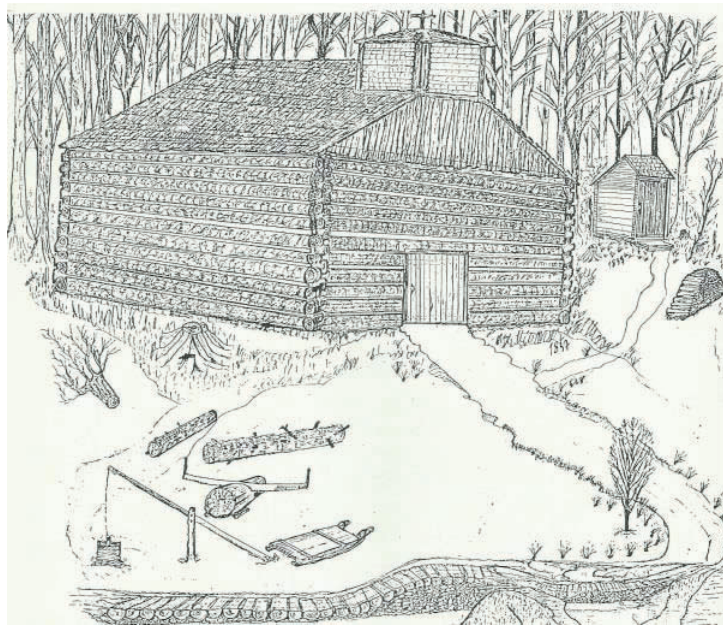


Image 7: Liwwät Böke’s drawing of the early log church in Maria Stein, 1839. Knapke, Luke ed., *Liwwät Böke: 1807-1882 Pioneer*, 98.



Image 8: The log school house in Maria Stein sketched by Liwwät Böke, 1836. Luke Knapke ed., *Liwwät Böke: 1807-1882 Pioneer*, 100.



Image 9: The Böke Homestead near Maria Stein, Ohio. Many early settlers to northwest Ohio would have built log cabins similar to this one. Picture by Liwwät Böke, year unknown. Luke Knapke ed., *Liwwät Böke: 1807-1882 Pioneer*, 76.



Image 10: A photograph of the cradle of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in America in New Riegel, Ohio. Date unknown. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)



Image 11: The Sisters of the Precious Blood's ten convents that were founded under the direction of Fr. Brunner. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)

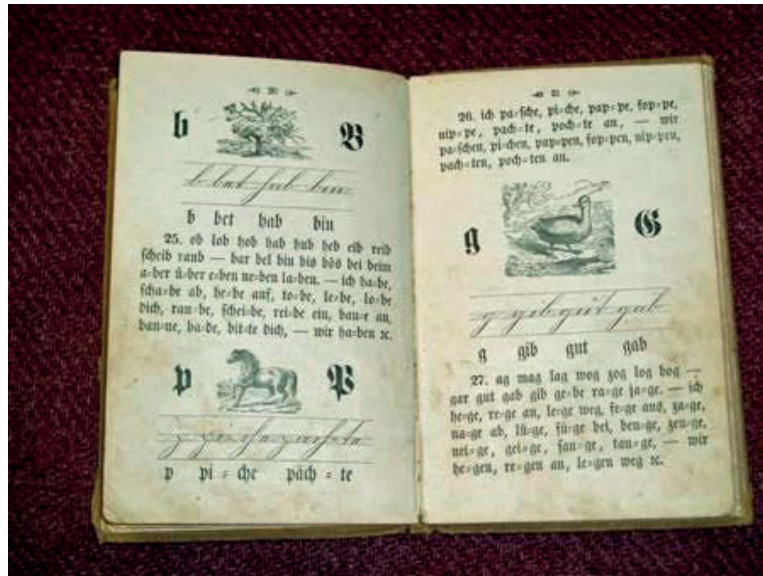


Image 12: An example from the C.P.P.S. Archives of a nineteenth century elementary school text book in the German language used by a sister here in America. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)



Image 13: Sisters teaching children music. The C.P.P.S. community had many talented members who shared their gifts with schools children. Date unknown. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)

TABLE IV
 CURRICULUM OF RUSSIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL*
 RUSSIA, OHIO

Subject	Periods per week	Number of years	Units earned
Required			
Religion	5	4	4
English	5	4	4
General Science	5	1	1
Biology	5	1	1
American History	5	1	1
Civil government	5	1	1
Senior survey	5	1	1
Economics	5	1	1
Business law	5	1	1
Physical education	2	4	1
Electives			
Algebra	5	1	1
Geometry	5	1	1
Chemistry	7	1	1
Physics	7	1	1
Latin	5	4	4
Home economics	10	2	2
Industrial arts	10	4	4
General business	5	1	1
Bookkeeping	5	1	1
Shorthand	5	2	2
Typing	5	1	1
Office practice	5	1	1
Music - vocal	2	4	1
Music - instrumental	2	4	1

* Data obtained from the principal, Sister M. Leontine.

Image 14: The curriculum of the Russia Public High School in the early 1940s. Source: Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 97.

TABLE VI

CURRICULUM FOR STS. PETER AND PAUL HIGH SCHOOL
OTTAWA, OHIO, 1943-1944*

Subject	Periods per week	Number of years	Units earned
Religion	5	4	--
English	5	4	4
Algebra	5	2	1
Geometry	5	1	1
Biology	5	1	1
Physics	7	1	1
Chemistry	7	1	1
Latin	5	3	3
Social science	5	4	4
Home economics	7	2	2
Music	3	4	1
Physical education	3	4	1
Business training	5	2	2
Stenography	5	2	2
Typing	5	2	1
Bookkeeping	5	2	2

*Data obtained from the principal, Sister M. Barbara.

Image 15: The curriculum of Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic High School in the early 1940s. Source: Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 106.

TABLE VII

CURRICULUM OF ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL
WAPAKONETA, OHIO, 1943-1944^{*}

Subject	Periods per week	No. of years	Units of credit
Religion	4	4	2
Sociology	3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
English	5	4	4
Latin	5	4	4
Spanish	5	2	2
Social science	5	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Algebra	5	1	1
Plane geometry	5	1	1
H. S. arithmetic	5	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
General science	5	1	1
Biology	5	1	1
Chemistry	7	1	1
Physics	7	1	1
Home economics	10	2	2
Drawing	5	2	2
General business	5	1	1
Salesmanship	5	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Shorthand	5	2	2
Typewriting	5	2	1
Bookkeeping	5	1	1
Office training	5	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Instrumental music	2	4	1
Choral music	3	4	1

* Data obtained from the principal, Sister M. Grace.

Image 16: The curriculum of St. Joseph Catholic High School in the early 1940s. Source: Stadtherr, "The Educational Activities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood," 109.



Image 17: A sister and her class. Date unknown, but judging by the religious habit and schools desks, in the 1930s or 40s. (Image courtesy of C.PP.S. Archives.)



Image 18: Often it was the sisters who prepared second grade boys and girls to receive their first communions during release time. Date unknown, but judging by the religious habit and schools desks, in the 1930s or 40s. (Image courtesy of C.PP.S. Archives.)



Image 19: Sisters on the faculty of the Glandorf Public School in 1902. The sister who is standing on the left is Sister M. Simplicia McGreevy, C.P.P.S. (Image courtesy of C.P.P.S. Archives.)

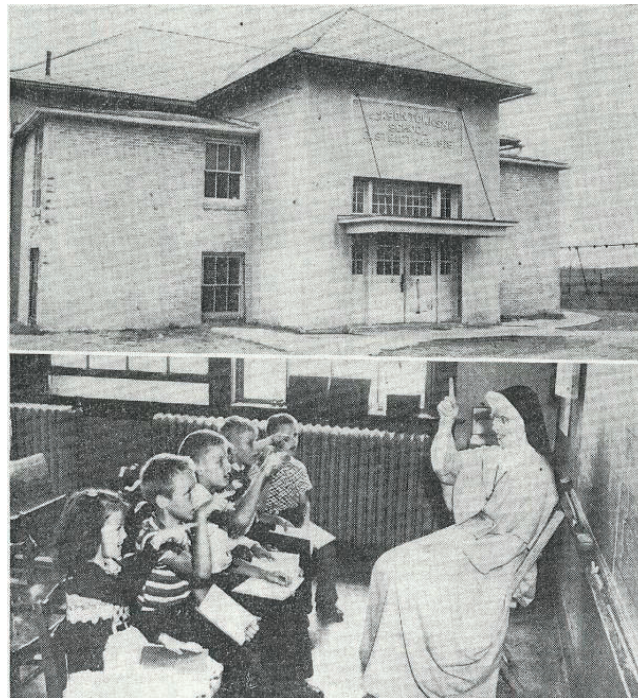


Image 20: Top: the school house in Egypt that Sister Regina Albers, C.P.P.S. attended as a child. Bottom: a Sister teaches her students ca.1958. (From: “Little School Ponders Use Of \$7,113 Gift” *News of the Area*, ca. 1958. Courtesy of the Archives of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.)

Image 21: A report card of Sister Rosemary Goubeaux, C.P.P.S. Note “Shelby County Schools” marked on the front of the envelope. Also, find that under “Art” the grades for “Ethics” are recorded. (Source: Sister Rosemary Goubeaux, C.P.P.S.)

NO. 8


SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS
GRADE CARD POCKET

Name of Pupil Rosemary Goubeaux
Russia Local School

Grade 7 Year 1947-1948

STUDENT SAFETY CODE

1. Be alert at all times. Obey traffic signals, stop signs, officers and safety patrols directing traffic.
2. Cross streets only at intersections and stay within the cross-walks.
3. Do not play in the streets or dart out between parked cars.
4. Ride bicycles safely and sanely and obey strictly the rules and regulations pertaining to bicycle riding.
5. When alighting from a school bus look both ways before crossing the road.
6. Courtesy makes for better safety. Be courteous.



THOMAS
Jewelers
SINCE 1838
112 SOUTH MAIN AVE.
SIDNEY, OHIO

ELEMENTARY

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS
C. E. MCCORKLE, SUPERINTENDENT

School Russia Local

Pupil Rosemary Goubeaux

Grade 7 Year - 19 47 19 48

Teacher Sister Mary Audrey C. P.P.S.

SUBJECTS	FIRST SEMESTER						SECOND SEMESTER						Y E A R
	1st	2nd	3rd	General Average	Exam. Sem. Average		1st	2nd	3rd	General Average	Exam. Sem. Average		
Reading	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Writing	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Spelling	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Arithmetic	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
English	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Geography	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
History or Civics	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Physiology	a	a	a	a	a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health and Physical Education													
Music													
Art <u>Ethics</u>	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Nature Study													
Manual Training													
Household Art													
Rhetoricals													
Conduct	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Gen. Average													
Days Present													
Days Absent													
Times Tardy													
Study Habits													
Department													

Superintendent Charles H. Sharp

Image 22: There was a note sent home with Sister Rosemary Goubeaux's report card when school let out for the summer giving students some practical advice for their faith lives. (Source: Sister Rosemary Goubeaux, C.P.P.S.)

Dear ...

Our school year has drawn to an end and with its closing we count the successes and failures it has meant for us. Though all of us have had some failures, we can count them as stepping stones if we've used them correctly. And that is what they should be incentives to strive higher.

Don't fret too much about the closing year, but resolve to try harder next year.

And during the summer when you're forgetting books, reports, and lessons, at least please don't forget the religion you've been taught. May I give you a few pointers which I hope will lead you to become good boys and girls and much better Catholics.

Be faithful to frequent Mass, Holy Communion, and Confession.

Be obedient.

Be careful in choosing companions.

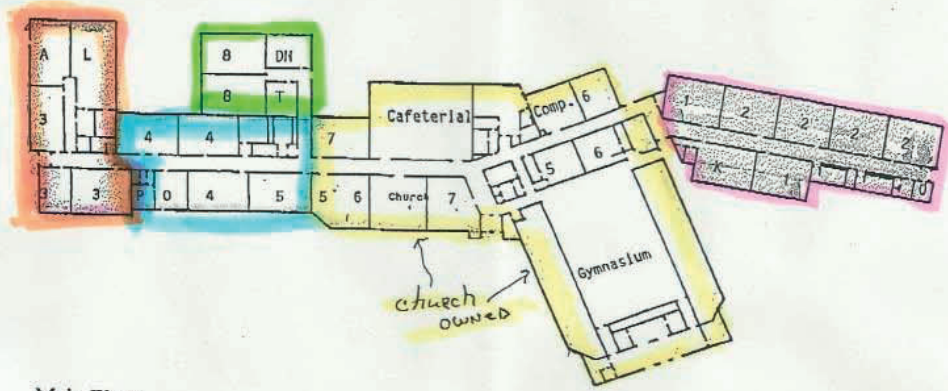
Be particularly faithful to your heavenly Mother. She'll always be faithful to you.



*Image 23: St. John's High School, Maria Stein, Ohio. It was in this school's "Cracker Box" that Sr. Martha Bertke, C.P.P.S. attended her graduation ceremony. Photo taken from the steps of St. John Church. (Source: Mizer, *St. John the Baptist Church 175th Anniversary 1836-2011*, 317.)*



*Image 24: The Ottoville School that Sister Joyce Lehman, C.P.P.S. would have attended during the 1950s. [Source: Archdeacon, Ages, et al. *Immaculate Conception Parish 1923-1987 Vol.II* (1987), 19. No publishing information given.]*



Main Floor

church owned areas include
 GYM
 CAFETERIA
 COMPUTER LAB
 MUSIC ROOM
 KITCHEN
 TEACHER'S LOUNGE
 6 CLASSROOMS

Glandorf Elementary

Number of Students 540

Building Size 48,900 square feet → church owned → 22,879

State Standard: 71,300 sf (540 student population)

Square Feet / Student 91 sf / student

State Standard: 132 sf / student

Building Site 0 acre

State Standard: 10 acres + 1 acre per 100 students = 16 acre

DWELLINGS BUILT BY GLANDORF SCHOOL DISTRICT

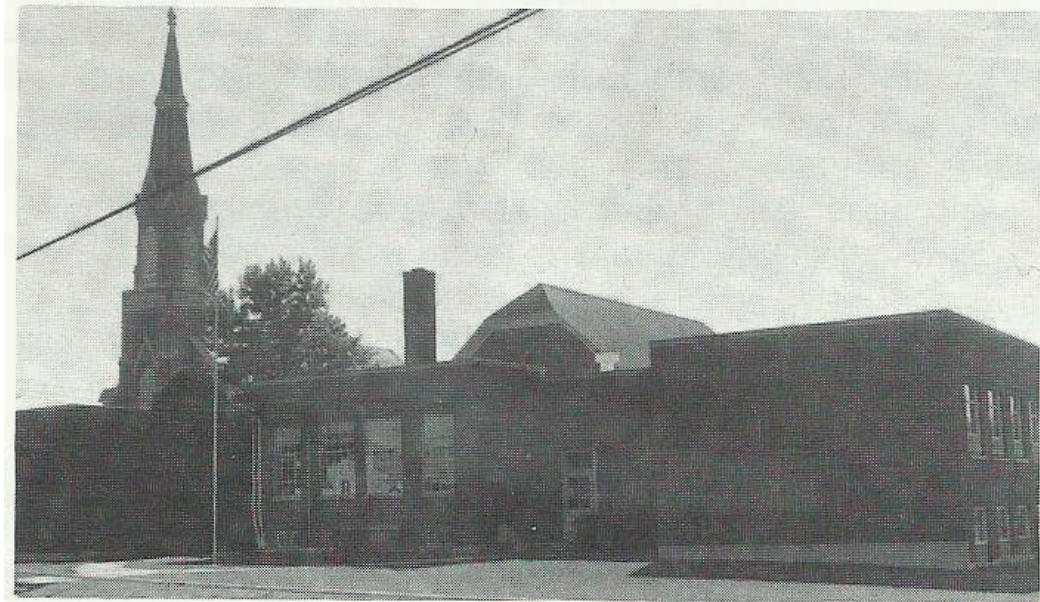
1964

1959

1950

1987

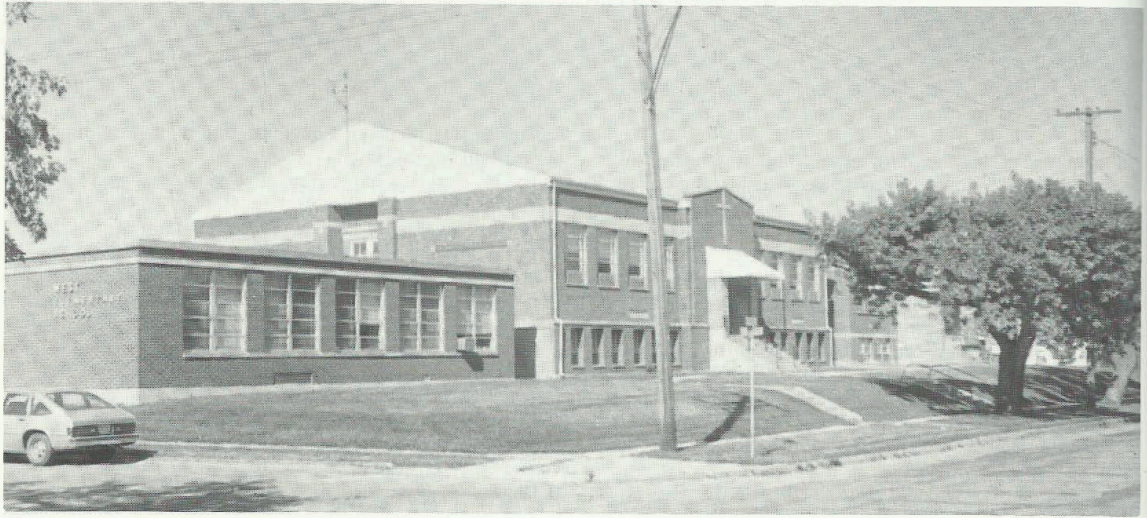
Image 25: This is a map of the former Glandorf Elementary School, now owned by the parish. This shows the parts of the school owned by the church, as well as the order wings were added to it by the school board. (Courtesy of the Archive of the Diocese of Toledo.)



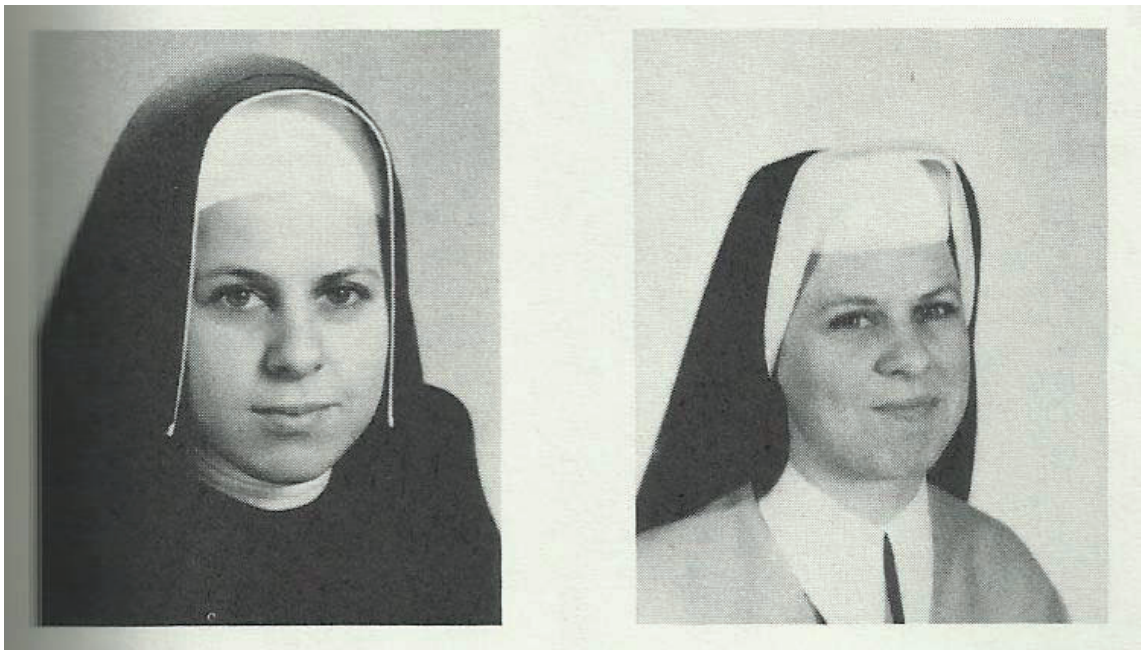
*Image 26: A quintessential picture for the situation discussed in this study, as the church steeple looms over the communities school. This is the Sharpsburg Public Elementary with the steeple of St. Paul's Catholic Church in the background, ca. 1990. (Source: *Fort Recovery Bicentennial History 1791-1991*, 70.)*



Image 27: This painting, by Phil Wood in the 1990s, is located in the present Mary Help of Christians Church, Fort Recovery, Ohio. The parish school (built in 1921) is on the far left and the cafeteria, which doubled as the parish hall, is next to it. The light colored building in the center was the sisters' residence until 1958 and next to that is the 1902 church, which was torn down in 1977. On the extreme right is the priest house, and it is the only structure depicted in this painting still standing today. (Source: Matthew Hess)



*Image 28: The West Elementary School ca. 1990. Note the addition by the school board next to - though not connected to - the existing building built by the parish (hence the cross). At this time, the board would have owned both buildings. Also, the Church steeple is out of the picture, as a new church was built on a different location in 1977. (Source: Source: *Fort Recovery Bicentennial History 1791-1991*, 70.)*



*Image 29: Sister Barbra Jean Backs, C.P.P.S. in the black habit and later in the gray habit. [Source: : Archdeacon, Ages, et al. *Immaculate Conception Parish 1923-1987 Vol.II* (1987), 67. No publishing information given.]*