



A weekly reflection by members of the Precious Blood Community

April 3, 2024

Sr. Paul Gero, C.P.P.S.

A Eucharist Story

It was to be a weekend hike in the Jordan River area in Michigan: me, a close friend, and some of her colleagues from the college. I was uneasy about missing Mass (there was nothing “necessary” about the trip), so before I zipped up the backpack, I stopped by the church and picked up a pyx, two consecrated hosts, and a missalette. Maybe that wasn’t exactly legal, but to my mind, neither was casually missing Mass.

So, on a misty Sunday morning, after crossing a stream in a woodland valley and, panting up the hill, and marveling at a jack-in-the-pulpit (a rare wildflower), we found that we had dropped behind the group. We were alone—in a silent forest, a long way from a church and everything else. We sat down on a log, read the Sunday scriptures, and gave Eucharist to each other. Then, we caught up with the group. That was all.

Except, a couple of years later, on a devastating Sunday morning, she died.

Mourning is a strange condition. The way it took me was this: I couldn’t remember anything—anything good, that is--about her, about our friendship, at all. Forty-four years of shared experiences—the novitiate, college classes, mission work, phone calls, birthday cards, family visits, swimming, hiking, getting mad and making up, talking half the night—for a long time, it was all gone.

And then, one very ordinary morning, memory took me back to the log by the jack-in-the-pulpit. Again, I gave her Eucharist. She gave Eucharist to me. And I knew we were both okay.

Sr. Paula Gero, C.P.P.S., has been a vowed member of the community for over sixty years. She has served the community in many ministries, including tutoring children recently.

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This weekly reflection is made available to all who are part of our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org