

Promising News

40th Anniversary Edition

People of the Promise

People of the Promise, commonly referred to as POP, was founded as an offshoot of People of Hope which itself evolved from the Paulist Center community. Initially there were three Paulist priests associated with People of Hope: Patrick Hughes, Robert Baer, and Robert Quinn. The original group split when Pat Hughes decided to get married but wanted to continue as a People of Hope's priest. POP, made up of people who couldn't accept this, was founded in June 1972 with Baer and Quinn as its priests.

Rainer Kohler, a lawyer, who drew up the incorporation papers, recalls that at the meeting on June 14 1972 at which the constitution was adopted there were 37 members present. But, by October of that year there were 63 members. That was probably close to peak membership but many, perhaps most, members had children then, so attendance at services was far more than that – and got a little noisy sometimes!

Over the years POP has held services in many venues including St. Dominic's in Brookline, Cambridge Friends School, various properties belonging to the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge and for the last 15 years or so Odd Fellows Hall in Belmont

About a year after incorporation Bob Quinn left to pursue other interests. Fortunately, Brian McDermott, a Jesuit, who was studying at Nijmegen at the same time as Bob Baer, returned to the US and took up residence at the Weston School of Theology. Bob invited Brian to celebrate with us. Several years later Bob Baer moved to Switzerland to train to be a Jungian analyst. By then Brian was fully a member of POP, and took Bob's place as our principal minister – beginning an association with the Society of Jesus that continues to this day. When Brian left to become Rector of the Jesuit community at Georgetown University, other Jesuit priests filled in to serve the community, among them Tom Massaro, Ed Vacek, Mark Jones, Roger Haight, Jim Keegan, Philo Nguruwe, and Paul Roy.

When Paul Roy left for Santa Clara on sabbatical in 1987, Randy Sachs came on board supposedly just to fill in as chaplain until Paul came back. However, Paul decided to stay in California and Randy has been POP's principal minister – and a beloved member of the community – ever since.

Since its founding 40 years ago, POP has undergone many changes as original members have moved away or passed on while other people have joined. Both organization and form of worship have been simplified. In the beginning, reflecting its Paulist Center origins, there were a lot of slide projections and special effects. Promising News, POP's long time newsletter, has been replaced by a website: www.peopleofthepromise.org. As numbers and energy levels have ebbed, so have the our range of social shared events—which included First Night Parades (we marched behind our banner), volunteering at the Pine Street Inn, annual pool parties, ski trips and meetings at Thompson's Island.

The community is still above all Eucharist centered but the dialogue homily, in which everyone is free to comment on and discuss the readings, is a significant part of every service as it has been from the beginning. Beyond special events such as ski trips, cookouts, house parties and spiritual retreats have contributed to a strong sense of fellowship and mutual responsibility. This is a family of believers.

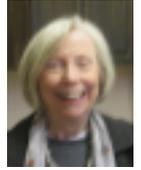
The community was founded in the wake of Vatican II, an exciting time when the church seemed to be entering a new era in which the laity would play a far greater role. While much of that promise has yet to be fulfilled, true to its name People of the Promise remains inspired by it – and keeps the faith.

We respectfully submit our brief POP history and the reflections you have shared with us.

Bill Davis, Chris Tree and Hank Teuwen

Mary Alcott

I have been a member of People of the Promise since the early 1970s along with my recently deceased husband Steve and our three children, Roger, Jenny and Rory. Our eight grandchildren have also enjoyed the fellowship of POP. This is a true community and people attend to each other in very meaningful ways. During Steve's illness with ALS we were sustained physically, emotionally and spiritually through the goodness of the community. Happy Birthday POP!!!!



Jenny Alcott and Eric Crowell with Ruby



Ruby

Richard and Betty Appleyard

We are Betty Ann and Richard Appleyard. We are too old to remember when we first came to POP but it has been a while. We were introduced to POP, as so many others have been, by the Moynihans. We were Paulist Center refugees who had been looking for a place where we could be comfortable with a liturgy that values every one.



Len and Margaret Bateman



Judy Boyle

After 10 years search for an intentional Eucharistic community in Massachusetts, I had the good fortune in 2002 to meet POP member Mary Troy on a sidewalk in Lincoln. Mary introduced me to a welcoming, loving group of sincere searchers. My spiritual friends, they have been a blessing to me and my family. Peace.



Fran Carlton



I joined POP in 1977, with my husband, John, when the community was just 5 years old. Local parishes had become stale and too dogmatic for me. I was fortunate to have a contact in Bob Baer, who I knew from college days as a Newman Club chaplain. My daughter, Ellen, received her First Communion at POP's 5th Anniversary celebration. She and her 3 brothers, Pete, Tom, and Dan, were not thrilled with travelling from Randolph to Cambridge on Sundays to attend church. But, they adapted and preferred POP to the local parish. They joined the "peanut gallery" in the back row at liturgies and made friends, especially with the Murphy girls, with whom they have remained friendly. They're like sisters, as Tom once put it. POP is like "the family I have chosen," as I usually put it. I had come seeking opportunities for spiritual development, not knowing that personal growth and development would be inspired, and lasting friendships included. Could it be that a religion should do all that for its members?

Dave and Karen Coale

First, congratulations for continuing on for 40 years! And thank you for thinking of the Coales. Karen and I were among the founding members. We are now both retired and living in St. Petersburg, Florida. Our daughter, Stefanie, and her husband and two children (boy 9 and girl 5) live only two blocks away from us.

After leaving Boston, we moved around — Washington, New Jersey and West Virginia. In the Washington area, we were active in the Nova Community, a progressive community which attracted very good theologians. In New Jersey, we attended a Trinitarian church where liberal views were encouraged. We eventually became too discouraged (angry? embarrassed?) with Catholic leadership here and in Rome and have joined a Unitarian Universalist Congregation very active on social justice issues in Florida. We continue to work with our Catholic friends on these issues.

Bill Davis and Christina Tree

We were introduced to POP, like so many others, by John Moynihan and joined in the first year of its existence. It has been a central part of our life, both spiritually and socially, ever since. Two of our sons were baptized and all three received first communion in POP ceremonies. When our first son, Liam, was born a groggy Bill — on orders from an exhausted but articulate Chris — went straight from the birthing room at the old Boston Lying in to St. Domenic's to deliver the great news. Every time we hear or read the Acts of the Apostles with its description of first century Christian communities we think of them as an ideal that intentional communities like ours are trying to emulate. POP doesn't share property or wealth but we do share our friendship, our insights, our spiritual yearnings and in time of need love and helping hands.



Carmela D'Elia

As a lifetime pilgrim on the journey I have discovered the folks from POP to offer a promise of hope and a community that shares with honesty profound messages from the Gospels. This community has allowed me to see how the church is like a big tent and we can make a difference. I am able to share my pastoral experiences in a hospital setting and to recognize the gifts of the spirit that make us unique. Even a strange experience from another country is cherished and I feel that we humanize each other in the process. As I age I look for quality of expression for all the senses. We have theologians, poets and story tellers in our midst who continue to enrich our lives.



Inez Folsom and Leo Harrington



Janet Halloran



Janet's cousin was a close friend of Steve Alcott at Tufts. He moved to Israel but continued to visit Steve over the years. Janet found POP through Mary. Janet has a son and daughter and three grandchildren. She lives in Arlington Heights.

Bob and Alice Hart



As relative newcomers to the POP community, thanks to recruitment by John Moynihan, Alice and I have enjoyed the liturgies and the Members who have made us feel welcome.

Dotty Keveny

A retired elementary school teacher I am grateful for the 33 wonderful years I had as an educator in the Milton public schools. I have also traveled extensively through the years including much of the United States and five of the earth's continents. Besides family and friends, some loves of my life include travel, music, photography, reading and, of course my community, People of the Promise. For the past 40 years, this faith based Eucharistic community has been the focus of my life as a Catholic. My sincere gratitude goes to all the priests, men, women and children who have been part of People of the Promise all these many years and who have taught, loved inspired and supported me. Happy Birthday to all the People of the Promise!



Rainer and Paula Kohler



Ever since we met in 1948, Paula and I have been searching for a meaningful spiritual experience. In 1971 we both made Cursillos where Paula met Mary Sullivan, who kept saying to her: "You have to come to the Paulist Center, you will find meaningful liturgy there." We finally got there the day the community and its three priests moved out and became the People of Hope. Our next visit was not until the People of Hope had moved to St. Dominic's in Brookline. On the day we visited in 1972 the People of Hope split into two groups, one of which became the People of Promise, which we joined. I was practicing law then and helped draw up the charter and got POP. incorporated. In 1975 a new job took us to western Massachusetts and boy oh boy did we miss POP. In 1982 we moved back and returned to a somewhat changed but still vibrant POP. We celebrated the 20th and 30th anniversaries in 1992 and 2002. Lately our health and life has not permitted us to participate in the community's activities but we rejoice in the fact that POP is 40 years old and we hope that it will go on forever.

Nancy Libby**Brian McDermott, S.J.**

I am a former member of POP (1973—ca. 1997) and celebrant at the liturgies. How did my connection with POP begin? I was a fellow student with Fr. Bob Baer, C.S.P. in Nijmegen, Holland and when I came to Cambridge after my doctoral studies Bob invited me to be copresider with him in the POP community. When Bob moved on, I was the presider. That started the Jesuit association with POP. There then there were folks like Roger Haight, S.J. and now Randy Sachs, S.J. who continued that tradition.

POP was a crucial element in my life as a Catholic Christian, Jesuit priest, and theologian. I formed wonderful friendships and got to know terrific individuals and families. I was nourished in so many ways as a member of the community. We need to draw hope where we can in the Church, and POP represented for me the Church at its best, grounded in reality, full of deep spiritual desire, and wanting to celebrate their shared faith and have royally good times together (in the footsteps of party-loving Jesus).

I am currently the rector of the Jesuit Community at Loyola University Maryland, where I teach in the Theology and Pastoral Counseling Departments. I am also tertian director for the Maryland and New York Provinces of the Jesuits. (Tertians are Jesuits preparing for final vows in the Order, usually after a number of years as serving as priests or brothers.) In August of this year, I will be returning to Georgetown University to become a special assistant to the University President, engaging in spiritual ministry with adults, training people to give the full Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, and teaching in the Theology Department in the College and in the Business School. Before I came to Baltimore I had been rector of the community at Georgetown for six years and taught in the Theology Department. I was a faculty member, rector, and academic dean at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge between 1973 to 2000.

I wish I could be present for the anniversary celebration, but I will indeed be present in spirit, with a heart full of gratitude for all the blessings I received from POP.

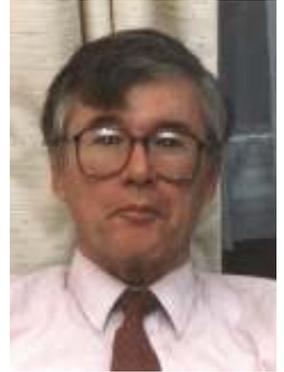
John and Judy Moynihan

For most of my business career I owned and operated an industrial publishing company. I sold it in 2002 and not wanting to use the “R” word began searching for other things to do. I worked on the gubernatorial campaign of Robert Reich and worked for an NGO called Chrispaz (Christians for Peace in El Salvador) and Voice of the Faithful. I now have a part time gig as an administrator for Only a Child. I am active in Democratic politics serving for many years as vice chair of of the Swampscott Democratic Town Committee. I also served on the communication committee for the campaign of now auditor Suzanne Bump (my cousin.) And on Tuesday nights I sing in the country’s second oldest men’s chorus, the Apollo Club of Boston. Judy and I have been part of People of the Promise from the beginning. For Judy, a non-Catholic who didn’t want to listen to Catholic priests preach about the evils of birth control and abortion and for me who didn’t want to sing old hymns at a Methodist church, the creation of POP was a god-send, It has remained an extremely important part of our religious life as well as our married life. I have become a bit of an apostle about this sort of a community. Academics call us Intentional Eucharistic Communities (IEC) and I have attended two national conventions of IECs and have been chief networker with IECs in the Greater Boston area,

John

I’m working as a speech pathologist two days a week at Winthrop High School. Still doing ballet and trying to do fund raising for the North Shore Civic Ballet. My favorite role is as a grandma to three little boys and one little girl! For me, the experience of People of the Promise began when I visited the Paulist Center with my friend John, who lived upstairs from me in Cambridge. Although a Protestant, I immediately resonated with their Vatican II inspired form of worship. Religion was and is important in both our lives and I decided if we could agree on that, perhaps we could share our lives together. Almost 42 years later we are still being nourished by the People of the Promise.

Judy



Kay Murphy

Obviously, life on the Cape is good! A lot has happened since the early seventies and my active days with POP. Those three girls who graced the early PoP liturgies have all gone on to successful lives. My grandson, Pam's son, Eric, is turning into a fine young man. I'm still pursuing my love of travel though not as much as before. I'm very active in several organizations on Cape Cod and, as the picture shows, taking full advantage of what nature offers here. It's hard to believe it's been 40 years until I think of the friends who are no longer with us—Betty, Tom and Steve among others. But all in all, it's been a good life.



Tim and Myna Murphy



Jane Audrey-Neuhauser

In September 2007 I remarried. Jim McGowan and I met on a golf course and we had a great wedding celebration in the Berkshires. As snowbirds we spend the winter months in Orlando where Jim's daughter and her family live. I really appreciated the years I shared with the People of Promise. It opened me to experience an intimate and meaningful type of liturgy. I now worship with the Spirit of Life Community which gathers in Weston and is also an inclusive Catholic community. Congratulations to your wonderful community on its 40 years of promise.



Philo Nguruwe

The Peace of the Risen Lord be with you! Every time I celebrate mass I remember you, the POP. I feel so united when the face of each member comes so vivid in different occasion: Others singing, others sweeping the basement, other(s) play the piano, the other tries the CD and it refuses to play, others taking me back to Foster St, others bring tea and food for the group. What a unique solidarity! I know today you are meeting in the evening. God's blessing in your gathering.

Rosemary Oliva



In 1985 Diana Dumoulin invited me to attend a POP. liturgy conducted by Louise LeBlanc on the theme of of children with aging parents. I remember of excited I was to finally find a community of like minded Catholics who celebrated the Mass with such joy and passion. POP was what I had long been searching for. I believed then, and do now that the People of the Promise comes closer to my vision of what early Christian communities must have been like. Now, 26 years later, our community sustains me in my faith and provides the opportunity to hear and b heard by sharing our spiritual insights within a supportive, loving environment. I have often said that but for the People of the Promise, I would not be a practicing Catholic. For me, POP. is a wonderful spiritual and human family that provides a foretaste of what God wills for all of us—unending joy in the community of saints. Happy birthday POP, and thank you for the founding members , past and present, whose vision created this community and all our current members who sustain it.

Ken and Jude Pogran

Ken and Jude Pogran are still “alive and well” and living in Lexington. Since we left POP about 15 years ago Ken survived the first internet boom and bust and is now director of business development at EGH a small company in Lexington Center that builds software for telecommunications companies . He is also an occasional lector at Sacred Heart's 10 a.m. Mass. Jude is still working at the law firm of Wilmer-Hale in Boston. Remember that energetic little boy who used to run around Friends School and Odd Fellows Hall? He's not so little now having surpassed his Dad's 6'4 height by a good inch or more. Next month Mike will graduate from Washington University in St. Louis with a bachelor's degree in architecture, after which he plans to pursue a master's degree in software engineering.



Steve and Elizabeth Power



We regret that we cannot attend the reunion because it would be such fun catching up with old friends we have not seen for years. Our daughter Sarah lives in Richmond VA with her husband, Don Berlund and two children, Ian 6 and Lila ,5. Jessie (who was christened at POP in 1974) and Alejandro Nieto were married in 2011. They now live in Austin but are moving to New York City in May. We are enjoying retirement splitting our time between a Boston condo and a home on Martha's Vineyard. We are 40 years older than when we worshipped at POP with young children in tow. We wish you all a joyous reunion!

Randy Sachs

I'm a Jesuit who teaches at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. If I remember correctly it was in September of 1987 that I joined the community thinking that I would be filling in as chaplain for my then colleague Paul Roy, who had a sabbatical from Weston School of Theology, where we were both on the faculty. Paul spent the year out in California at Santa Clara University. Life agreed with him there on many levels. He stayed out there and I have been blessed to be a community member ever since. It sure doesn't seem like 25 years!



Bob and Peggy Schleicher



I am a retired computer programmer but still spend time on the computer putting together a newsletter for the condominium where we live. And, I help assist resident with any computer problems they may have. I enjoy photo adventures with my wonderful wife Peggy. Our photo taking is more about the "doing" than the results. Other enjoyments include spending time with our two grandchildren. And, lest we forget, I've been known to play a few rounds of golf with the guys. We love the community that we found at the People of the Promise. It's a community that makes Christianity real. It's about the people. Bob

Here are some of the important things to know about me. I am enthusiastic and like to enjoy everyday. Philosophically speaking, love, kindness, cooperation and inclusion are my goals. Family, friends, and community are at the center of my life. I value education and learning. Spiritually speaking I am at home in People of the Promise because I find soul energy there. Bob, my totally wonderful husband and best friend is my greatest gift, my secure harbor. He helps me see the magic and beauty that is everywhere. Peggy



Linda and Hank Teuwen



It was a long time ago. On a Sunday in February, Bob Baer baptized Elizabeth with my mother, my sister Ann and my Aunt Em present. All went well until Pat Hughes made his fateful announcement. My mother and aunt, I'm sure, never understood what exactly happened. The following week, POP struggled into existence and forty years later, it is still a going concern. It is difficult to say what our spiritual life might have been had POP not been so much a part of our lives. But the 'cult', as Sarah once jokingly described POP, surely served us well. We were just 3 then, Linda, Elizabeth and me; now we are 9. Sarah and Leah came along. Sarah found Kirk and they have given us Allison, Lucy and Jackson. We are more than thankful for our family and for POP.

Top: Kirk, Linda, Sarah, Lucy, Elizabeth, Hank.
Below: Allison, Leah. Inset: Jackson.

Mary Troy

I came to People of the Promise on the suggestion of Carmella D'Elia whom I met at our local church in Lincoln. I think it was about 17 years ago. For quite a long time I was a regular at the Paulist Center. There were several offshoots called Koineaus; I belonged to one in Newton and another one in Melrose. Then, Carmella introduced me to a group called the St. John's community, where we often met for services. After a few years I heard about POP and again attended with Carmella. I enjoy the community and the loyalty of our chaplain., Randy Sachs, S.J.



Gisela and John Trump



I am thinking far back of my forlornness in a to me foreign country and Bill Davis offer of a spiritual home while leaning against the frame of a kitchen door at a pot luck supper in the home of one of Thomas’ classmates at Cambridge Friends School. We talked about POP’s history, spiritual roots and my unsuccessful search for spiritual belonging. That was 29 years ago. Since then John and I , and as a family , have had many experiences to spiritually go forward and even have fun at the same time. The sharing of experience and the reflections of Randy, other priests and the group have been most inspiring pushing me – and us – to reflect and respond. With a sigh of of great relief and gratitude for Bill’s help to get me unstuck so long ago, I continue to ward off inertia and to participate in the life of POP, where tolerance of differences, support and service to others is the leading principal with the Eucharist as the core. Our needs, individual, community related and worldwide and POP’s beliefs and actions fit like “a hand in a glove. “

Gisela

I remember the first two years Gisela and I were sharing liturgies, retreats and potlucks. Part of the symptoms of our human “stuckness” that POP helped us to reduce and finally eliminate involved our vision of ourselves as “newcomers” not fully accepted as equal participants by existing members. It was wonderful to experience how our perception could be changed to one of inclusiveness, caring and respect for each other. We are also grateful for the spirit of the Second Vatican Council that inspired so many of us.

John

Toni Whitmore

I had the good fortune of having Betty and Richard Appleyard for my neighbors when my family moved to Melrose about 15 years ago. That family included my mother, grown daughter Elise and myself. The Appleyards introduced me to the People of the Promise in its Belmont life and I became an active part of he POP family about seven years ago. It has been a great gift to my spiritual life and to meet so many wonderful people within POP. I moved to the Boston area about 45 years ago from western Pennsylvania and have worked, gone to graduate school , and lived here most of my adult life. POP is one of the treasures to cherish and nourish in carrying on the hope and spirit of the Second Vatican Council.



Bob and Shirley Winslow



We were delighted to learn that POP is celebrating its 40th anniversary and were pleased to be included in the mailing. We have been fortunate to find a wonderful parish community in Las Vegas served by Viatorian fathers. It’s a huge parish but we are part of a small community within the larger parish that has helped us to find a place where we fit in. Our older daughter has gone back to school and earned a degree in veterinary medicine and our younger daughter , married here, has two girls, one four and the other 11 months-old. We do miss the community at POP. Our time with you was very meaningful and came at a time when we were searching for a way to participate in a sacramental life in a smaller, more open environment. We had become so alienated from parish life that it felt like a rebirth to be in a place where we could share our deepest concerns and find acceptance and nourishment. The members were from varied backgrounds but broad minded enough to be able to listen to and love those whose opinions and experiences might be different. It’s an attitude in short supply today . We will always be grateful to the Schleichers for introducing us to POP. We are truly grateful to Randy and Roger as well for their spiritual leadership.



POP Kids at Cambridge Friends School



First Communion with Paul Roy — c. 1985



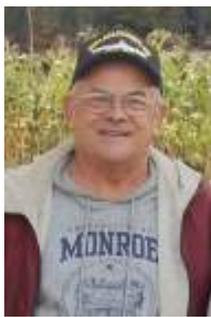
More POP Kids

And many, many more ...

There are many more POP People who should be included but have passed away. People like Steve Alcott, long time treasurer who often spoke eloquently on the day's scripture. Mary Dawson who early on reminded us we are not immortal. Tom Guganig, our passionate archivist who would have made this newsletter infinitely better and surely have made a highly polished video of our party. Betty Nelson, belly dancer and POP grandma for the ages. Bob Sullivan, the ebullient life of many parties. Joe and Bernice Weider, the social conscience of the community. The unique personalities that were Clair Oyler and Sister Judith. We remember all of them fondly; may they rest in peace.



Steve Alcott



Tom Guganig



Betty Nelson



Bob Sullivan

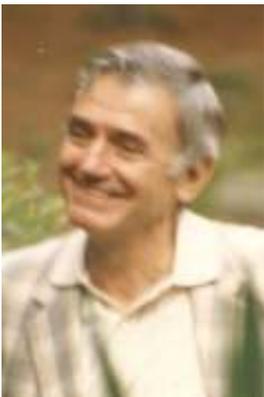


The Weiders



Clair & Sr. Judith

There are others who for a variety of reasons are not represented here. Bob Baer and Bob Quinn whose vision for what church could be were instrumental in POP's founding. Roger Haight, the eminent Jesuit theologian who despite his learning was easily among the best and down to earth homilists we have ever had. Louise LeBlanc who may be small but certainly gave all 4' 9" of herself to the community. Joan Nuth who for years worked tirelessly and perhaps vainly to upgrade and transform POP's music.



Fr. Bob Baer, C.S.P



Fr. Bob Quinn, C.S.P



Fr. Roger Haight, S.J.



Louise LeBlanc



Joan Nuth

Surely there are others. Each of you have friends who have contributed to the community. Help us remember and celebrate those who have ever passed our way and left their individual mark.

Happy 40th POP!

