

**THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



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# **BULLETIN**

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**THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



**RUNG FIVE**  
**CONFESSION**  
**June 2018**

Bulletin Cover: Cardinal

Photo by Sr. Deborah at Retreat 2018 St. Louis, MO

Please email Sr. Deborah (strdeborah@hotmail.com) your photographs of the beauty of our world for use in Our Bulletins this year. Kindly include the State or Province the photo was taken.

**Community Communication Contacts:**

**Prayer Requests and News Notes for the monthly Bulletin** - email Br. Ephrem, andrews8484@hotmail.com or see green sheets for his mailing address.

**Changes of address, phone numbers, email addresses** - email Sr. Christine casturges@gmail.com or Sr. Deborah strdeborah@hotmail.com or see green sheets for mailing addresses.

**Urgent Community Prayer Requests for email distribution** – email or call Sr. LaVerne Peter Callaghan@aol.com, Sr. Christine casturges@gmail.com or Sr. Deborah strdeborah@hotmail.com

**Financial Contributions –**

Members residing in the U.S., make checks payable to WSHS/WBHS and mail to:  
Sr. Nancy Teresa, WSHS, Treasurer, United States, 12900 Glenwood Street, Apt. 108, Overland Park, KS 66209

If you pay any bills through your bank, you can easily send your contributions to WSHS the same way. Use the address above to send your check. You can make a one-time payment or a recurring payment. If you have questions, your bank will be happy to help you. And - you don't need any postage!

Members residing in Canada, make cheques payable to WSHS/WBHS and mail to Br. David, WBHS, Treasurer, Canada, 2170 Preston Road, Cavan Monaghan, Ontario, K9J 0G5 Canada

**Contributions to Haiti Clean Water Project –**

Check contributions to the Haiti Clean Water Project may be mailed to Sr. Alexandra Francis, WSHS, 7711 E Waverly Street, Tucson, AZ 85715. Please make your check payable to Alexandra Zarris. Put "WSHS Haiti Clean Water" in the memo line.

**Problems Receiving your Bulletin** - If you are not receiving the monthly Bulletin (by regular mail or by email), please email or call Sr. Christine, *not Trina*. Thank you.

**If a friend expresses interest in WSHS/WBHS, remember to direct them to our website, [www.workersisters.org](http://www.workersisters.org), [www.workerbrothers.org](http://www.workerbrothers.org)**

**THE WORKER SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
**Web Addresses: [workersisters.org](http://workersisters.org) [workerbrothers.org](http://workerbrothers.org)**

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## CORPORATE COMMUNIONS JUNE 2018

### CORPORATE COMMUNIONS

Corporate Communion and meetings are held monthly where members are within physical proximity of each other. Currently these gatherings are taking place in the following locations. For more information, please contact the Community member listed below.

Ontario, Canada  
Michigan USA  
Kansas City, MO USA  
Southern MO USA  
Pleasant Hill, TN USA  
Arizona USA

Br. David, WBHS  
Sr. Julie Margaret, WSHS  
Sr. Dorothy Cecilia, WSHS  
Sr. Barbara Veronica, WBHS  
Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS  
Sr. Alexandra Francis, WSHS

### CORPORATE COMMUNIONS FOR 2018

June 23 • July 28 • August 25

September 22 • October 27 • November 17 • December 8

***CHAPTER 2018 – October 25 - 28, 2018***  
***Conception Abbey, Conception, Missouri***

**Call to Prayer.** Please remember our Community in prayer twice a day 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM in your time zone and pray for World Peace at Noon.



**8:00 AM - Prayer for our Community**  
**12:00 Noon - Prayer for World Peace**  
**5:00 PM - Prayer for our Community**

**COMMUNITY CHANGES**

*Please make the following alterations to your Green Sheets:*

**Sr. Alice Stephen, WSHS**

*Current address is:*

Westbrook Care Center  
401 Platte Clay Way, Apt 604  
Kearney, MO 64060

**Sr. Helen Joseph, WSHS:** Please cross out the fax number

**Sr. Kathleen Columb, WSHS:** Home phone number is 417-332-0415

**Sr. Patsy Anne, WSHS:** Cell phone number is 520-343-1799

**Br. David, WBHS:** Please cross out the USA cell number

**The Rt. Rev. Barry Howe, Friend, WSHS:**

Please correct the spelling of his email address. It is: [barryrhowe@gmail.com](mailto:barryrhowe@gmail.com)

**The Rt. Rev. Philip Poole, Friend, WSHS**

*Please update his address to:*

28 Emms Drive  
Barrie, Ontario L4N 8H3

**The Rt. Rev. Peter Fenty, Friend, WSHS**

Please add Bishop Fenty to your list. His address is:

Ecclesiastical Visitor, Canada  
Area Bishop of York-Simcoe  
2163 King Road, Unit 3  
King City, Ontario L7B 1A5

**Sr. Alexandra Francis is the Corporate Communion Coordinator for the Arizona group.**

**Sr. Barbara Veronica is the Corporate Communion Coordinator for the Southern Missouri group.**

**Sr. Betty Hope is the cluster leader of the St. Brigid Cluster.**

**Shirley Pace, WSHS is currently a Novice.**



## HAITI

## HAITI MISSION REPORT

We had a wonderful 45th anniversary celebration as we gathered together at Retreat and prayed for our entire Community. The joy of connecting with one another brings such happiness to all of us.

It was a blessing to have Br. Frantz Benedict with us this year. We pray for his people of Haiti in the hope that we are able to continue helping them with our Mission and sending water tablets to their country.

We have collected \$580 this year and it's wonderful that we were able to send tablets to help with clean water in the month of May. We are thankful that our Community continues to support this Mission and received additional funds during Retreat. I want to thank all of our Community members as well as all the individuals and church groups for their dedication to this cause.

*In His Name,  
Sr. Alexandra Francis*



## NEWS NOTES

**Sr. Alexandra Francis:** I'm taking a six week course at Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church called Episcopal 101. In this introduction to the Episcopal Church, we'll discuss basic Episcopal liturgical practice, the idea of liturgy and the Book of Common Prayer. It offers a history of the Episcopal Church, its roots and sense of tradition. I am very excited to take this class! My daughter-in-law, Minta Zarris, is in Thailand and had in vitro fertilization, which was successful. She is pregnant with twins. She has stayed for her first trimester. So far all looks very good and we have a positive attitude. Thanks for your prayers.

**Sr. Janet Rose:** My granddaughter, Brianna, will be travelling to New Zealand and Australia as a part of her curriculum for three months. Her major is psychology. My grandson, Michael, is out of the army and is safe and sound. Thank God.

**Shirley Pace:** Grace Episcopal Church, Carthage, Missouri, had a very special women's retreat in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, highlighting changes in church life and changes in our lives. There were nineteen in attendance as well as Fr. Steve Wilson and Fr. Ted Estes leading us. We had a beautiful confirmation service with Bishop Martin Field. Our church was packed to the brim! In addition to Grace Episcopal Church, Carthage, St. Philips, Joplin, All Saints, Nevada, St. Nicholas, Noel, and Christ Episcopal, Springfield participated. All in all there were thirty-six candidates presented.

**RETREAT THANK YOU!**

Thanks to everyone who participated and helped with Retreat 2018! We plan to share some photos and reflections on Retreat in an upcoming issue of the Bulletin.

**SPIRITUAL SHARING**

I have been strengthened to imitate Christ in my daily life. This happened through prayer and involvement in various activities like Bible Study, prayer shawls and charity quilts. I am more comfortable doing and experiencing faces of joy watching for Christ to appear. The Community has helped me more than it knows. After Retreat one year (in Canada - I think) I was meeting with my cluster and, of course, I was wanting to know about each one of them and they asked about me. That was huge. I had never had that experience of such caring.

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God willed life. It is still a struggle, but I am trying to open up each day and be thankful for creation, and the ability to pray for all of its many gifts. Bible study helps me to understand more clearly why Jesus was sent to be on earth. The practice that stands out to me is praying three times a day. We are not all in the same time zone but, that's OK. Prayers are always on our minds.

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I am excited about St. Benedict and the fruits. I framed the picture of him from the *Bulletin* and put it on my prayer wall.

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I think the Holy Spirit keeps me positive about the future. Ultimately a new heaven and new earth will triumph, but in God's time, not ours. Meanwhile our job is to lay the foundation for its arrival by our efforts and example. Age prevents me from some helpful activities, but I must strive to be a positive example by the smallest courtesies and by caring for others.

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I look at obedience as discipline and the Community Rules have helped me stabilize and keep on a path of direction, especially during all the stress I encountered after mom's death and the legal issues I was confronted with.

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The Community has supported me in prayer and my cluster leaders have supported me when issues have impacted my life. When I emotionally withdrew they were there loving and supporting me until I could be present again. That was the biggest gift I have ever had.

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I have always, after I accepted Christ into my life, been strengthened to imitate Christ in my daily life and the Community has helped me stay on track, even when I get ticked off.

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Since the January *Bulletin*, I have struggled with the two lists concerning humility and pride. So if there were to be a book written about my spiritual path towards growth and maturity, it would be called, Rebel, Resist, Reflect and Resign myself to His will. I know when I am not obedient to the will of my Father for a long time, the period of rebellion lasts longer. Finally, worn out from my mental sparing with the truth, I relax into the comfort of turning from my stubbornness. It is very much like a Monopoly Board, feeling false progress only to find myself back at square one.

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Lent was rather chopped up this year, but I got a very good booklet called “Living Well” by Living Compass. It was about loving as a practice rather than emotion and had some good insights and exercises. I also read books by Desmond Tutu and The Dalai Lama that had good thoughts about forgiveness. A friend and I watched the film “Invictus” about Nelson Mandela. We found it very inspiring and a wonderful example of forgiving against tremendous odds.

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Obedience and loving accountability are qualities, important to me from the beginning. I was drawn to the Community because I sensed that I needed to have more accountability if my spiritual journey, which at that time was rather intense, was to be sustainable and bear fruit over the long haul. I was following a sort of inspired, spirit-filled rule of my own at the time and it was easy because I was new in the journey and I was high on the excitement around and in me. But, I think I knew at a deeper level, that I would not be able to sustain the growth without drawing on some sort of formation process in a permanent community. I believe I was being drawn by the Holy Spirit to WSHS, to a place where I would gradually learn to listen and to obey day in and day out. I received so many blessings but I really needed to draw on the wisdom of others and learn of God’s will for me gradually, by listening to my brothers and sisters in Christ – in this particular community at this particular time.

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As Sr. Angela says in the Tenets, obedience isn’t to be forced on someone. After a time of “trying out” our Rule we are admitted formerly into the Community and at that time we promise obedience to those we have learned to trust and to those whom we believe by faith have our best interest in mind. How many times did some of us squirm and try to get out of some instruction from Sr. Angela, only to learn a few years later, how much we had needed to learn from this practice or that.

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Trust is built day by day and trust enables us to listen with an open heart. A belief to listen with our heart and then obey our spiritual guides, our brothers and sisters, is to find a deeper and more meaningful spiritual life. We certainly see the chaos and destruction in the world around us, caused by those who believe they should be able to do and say whatever they wish, whenever they like. This is not freedom; this is freedom gone crazy which can also become destructive to ourselves and others.

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It is a sign of humility when we listen to each other in Community because when we listen in this open and obedient way, we are actually affirming that we don’t “know it all”, that “we don’t have all the answers”. We are further saying that we want to learn from one another because together we have so much more knowledge and wisdom than we have alone.

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My journey with the Community has been one of gradual growth in Christ. I became part of the Community in 1984 when I was admitted as a Lay Worker. However, although I was active in my Church, I never really felt part of the Community and I really did nothing for the first 13 years. After my awakening experience, God guided me to become more involved with the Community and I have attended every Retreat since that day in December. As I continue with the Community I am aware that I need to submit to God and allow the Spirit to direct my paths. In doing this I am slowly being strengthened to imitate Christ more and more in my daily life.

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The Community practices that nurture my ability to open myself to God are the monthly *Bulletin* and News Notes, as well as the annual Retreat. Retreat for me is a special time of renewal and reconnecting

with God and the Community. I am always recharged and strengthened in Christ. My spiritual life is sort of in limbo at the moment. With the closing of our Church and all the bad feelings that came from the final meeting I find it very difficult to move forward, things have changed so much. We now attend a small country Church which has Communion twice a month and once a month I have been attending the Church in Peterborough where I have the opportunity to play guitar along with the musicians at the “Open Circle” service. I am so thankful for the wonderful Community which helps me to go forward and to grow spiritually.

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What I would like all my Brothers and Sisters of the Holy Spirit to know is they have given me strength through our *Bulletins* and reflections, calls, emails and their inspiration. The Holy Spirit brought me to you for He knew I would need you and you will always be there for me.



## FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

### Fruit of the Spirit By Sr. Alison Constance



*The Fruit of the Spirit is one part of our fourfold commitment as Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit. This month Sr. Alison Constance reflects on the next Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness. At a Retreat several years ago, the Community decided on a fruit symbol to go with each Fruit of the Spirit. The banana was chosen for Gentleness. It is a fruit that is held within a bright yellow, firm skin. The fruit itself is soft and yielding to the bite. It can be bruised if handled incorrectly...reminding us to be gentle with our lives and those of others.*

After reading this article, reflect on what fruit best symbolizes for you this Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness.

The fruit of gentleness has been lost in our society in so many ways. Hurtful words are passed back and forth without thought. Jesus used gentleness to help guide us instead of angry words meant to pierce us. Because of this we were more willing to listen to his words and be transformed by them.

How many people have we changed their point of view through our “righteousness”? When talking of different views people are much more willing to talk meaningfully if we show respect and kindness to them. They may or may not change their view but they will hear what we have said and somewhere in their heart those words will take route.

We must watch for those who are hurting and use gentleness and kindness to help heal. Jesus showed us the way yet how often do we really follow his example.

The next time someone comes at you with angry words, show them kindness and see how fast the anger dissipates. You will see a look of confusion on their faces as they do not understand why you are not giving them anger back. Through love this world will slowly change and we need gentleness in order to change our world.



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

### The Promise of Reconciliation Offered Through our Community Rule of Life by The Rev. Canon Harry Firth, Companion



As Sisters, Brothers, Workers, Companions and Friends of the Holy Spirit, we yearn to go out into the world exemplifying the Fruit of the Spirit, true ambassadors of God's Love, sowing the good seeds of the Kingdom of God.

That is exactly what God *desires* for us, and so God is constantly leading us in paths of spiritual growth, through wholesome community intimacies, in deepening commitments, character strengths, and capacities for giving and receiving love, so that we may become just such agents for healing in the lives of other people.

But we do not start out in life as perfect examples of humility, obedience and genuine godliness, faithfully mirroring the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. And so God has given us a Rule of Life to assist us, and our Community, as we strive to grow in grace.

Each of us is vulnerable to the destructive effects of Sin (translate: misdeeds, wrong attitudes, alienations). Sin is the enemy of everything that breeds love, peace, harmony. Sin promotes divisiveness between persons, discord within communities, and even guilty disunity within our very soul.

This month's theme encourages us to examine Confession as one of the remedies God has provided, that can cleanse away burdens of guilt which may be frustrating our progress, hindering our endeavors to bless others.

For many people the idea of confession may seem daunting until they have experienced for themselves the grace and peace that inevitably lead to greater spiritual growth. So let us take a moment to review some of the varied ways our spiritual forbears have engaged in it.

Long ago the LORD commanded the Israelites that when a man or woman wrongs another, breaking faith with the LORD, that person should confess the guilt and make full restitution to the injured party, adding 20% for good measure (Numbers 5:5-7) – a rather straightforward transaction of one person owing up to what had been done, and an opportunity for the injured party to forgive – thus promoting reconciliation.

The *healing* aspect of reconciliation in the early Church is seen in James 5:16: “Therefore confess your sins to one another, so that you may be healed.” Others may have been witnesses, but here we have another example of individuals directly relating to one another through confession leading to reconciliation.

In Acts 19:18 we observe new believers openly acknowledging their sins, and in Matthew (7:6) we find people coming to baptism in the Jordan River, openly admitting former practices which will be forgiven and left behind in their new life! The first Letter of John (1:9) proclaims, “If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Such examples reveal early Christians “coming clean,” owning up, truthfully confronting parts of their lives that needed healing through God’s Grace in the context of a supportive community. Sacred buildings, priests and prayer books were not required for these moments of spiritual healing, growth, and reconciliation.

However, in many cases separation, misery, alienation, and guilt can gain such a pernicious grip on our spirits that sacramental confession and absolution may become essential to our quest.

It is very dangerous to hold onto festering, guilty memories – perhaps for years – revisiting and reviving unhappy memories, rehearsing who said this and who did that, and not quite managing to “*convince*” ourselves that we should *not feel guilty!* With the passage of time the other party may no longer be living or cannot be found, so that person-to-person reconciliation is no longer even possible. Sin maintains its stranglehold.

An insightful friend once asked a person who had long resisted dealing with haunting memories of a terrible event in which he had been involved: “If you really are *sure* that you are not guilty, then *why are you having trouble sleeping?*”

It is not God’s intention that our lives should be debilitated by unhealed sin, and our Rule of Life stands ready at all times to offer the health-restoring remedy, when needed, of sacramental confession – wherein a caring priest will listen, offer counsel, and suggest the penitential road to pardon and absolution in the Name of God!

We find the sacrament which Benedict refers to as “Confession” appropriately entitled “The Reconciliation of a Penitent” in the Book of Common Prayer, beginning with a helpful introduction on page 446.

Normally the sacramental rite involves a priest, although in special circumstances a deacon or lay person can offer the declaration of forgiveness. Those who are offering a confession for the first time may

relax in the knowledge that the priest will spend any time necessary answering questions in advance, so that nervousness need not blemish the process of expressing matters which need to be put into words.

The priest will offer counsel, direction, and comfort according to his or her best insights, and then pronounce absolution in the authority of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with full assurance that “The Lord has put away all your sins.” And then, the sacrament culminates with the priest asking the penitent to “*Go in peace, and pray for me, a sinner.*”

One aim of confession is to regain spiritual wholeness by renouncing the foolishness of trying to *hide truths about oneself from God*. “Reveal your ways to the Lord and trust in Him,” pleads scripture, “for He is Good: *His mercy endures forever.*”

Trying to hide evil thoughts and unworthy actions committed in secret is dangerous because *we bring suffering upon ourselves* – spiritually, mentally, even physically – by carrying burdens of remorse, shame, and guilt in our hearts.

We seek to be fully *present* with the Lord in our private prayer life, and sometimes when our troubled hearts have admitted some disturbing fault, the Lord grants us a *feeling of certainty* that we have been heard and forgiven.

At other times it can be helpful to make our confession to another human being. By listening and sharing some of our burdens that person may become a sort of *spiritual ally* – someone who is *with* us in the striving for a purer life – supporting and rejoicing with us as we realize the *joy* of renewal in God’s forgiveness.

These are some of the reasons our Rule suggests a program of self-disclosure and interaction with trusted fellow pilgrims if we truly want to grow. The healing discipline promotes not just feelings of *healing*, but the inner security that the Lord has indeed put away those things that shamed us, *and* is giving us renewed stamina for *further growth*.

And so God rewards our humility and readies us to be sent forth: bringers of forgiveness, renewal, and hope for others in their pilgrimage.

### Questions for Reflection

1. How have you experienced the power of confession over the years in community – either as one confessing, or as one hearing a confession?
2. How has it changed you over the years?
3. What practices in this community encourage us to bear each other’s burdens and rejoice with each other when we discover the joy of being renewed by God’s forgiveness?