

THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



BULLETIN



THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



RUNG SIX
CONTENTMENT
July 2018

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.

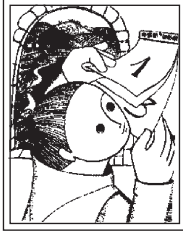
If a friend expresses interest in WSHS/WBHS, remember to direct them to our website, www.workersisters.org, www.workerbrothers.org

THE WORKER SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
Web Addresses: workersisters.org workerbrothers.org

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CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS
JULY 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

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**



HAITI

As always, we pray for our Sisters and Brothers in Haiti that they are held in God's hands and protected from diseases such as Cholera. We pray that Br. Frantz Benedict and his team are able to distribute water tablets to all their people.

Global Hydration shipped out four cases of water tablets to Haiti in the month of June. It is so wonderful that we are able to continue our Haiti Mission and having Sr. Betty-Lou to help out and make sure that the tablets are shipped in a timely manner.

I continue to thank our loving Community for all the help in making this Mission continue and also those individual churches and people who contribute.

Sr. Alexandra Francis

Here is an update from Sr. Alison Constance on the quilts for Haiti....

I am pleased to announce that 25 beautiful quilts were sent off to Haiti after Retreat. I am sure they will be as loved as the batch we sent last year. I want to thank everyone who took the time to make this special gift for the children of Haiti.

Br. Benedict showed some wonderful pictures at Retreat of the children with the quilts. Hopefully we will have copies soon to share in the Bulletin. A picture is worth a 1,000 words. Thank you Br. Benedict, for taking your precious time to see that the quilts are given to those in need. We appreciate all you do to hand off the gifts we are able to send down to you in both the water pills and the quilts.

For those of you who picked up material to make quilts at the 2017 Retreat I would appreciate if you would be able to finish them and send them to me by or before Retreat 2019. If for any reason you took material home from either the 2017 or 2018 Retreat and found yourself unable to complete the quilt, please return the material to me so it can be passed on to someone else. Material can be expensive and it is very important that each piece is used for our Haiti quilts. If anyone would like to donate cotton quilting material, please let me know. Thanks again for all your hard work. God bless you all.

Sr. Alison Constance



SPIRITUAL SHARING

I held everyone in prayer during the time of Retreat, and I could imagine you in the various places: dining room, meeting rooms, the beautiful chapel, during the music time, and in prayer. I hope everyone was touched with love and healing.

I loved Retreat. It was at time of being filled and renewed. Chaplain Jaci's presentation was great. I enjoyed being part of the process of really studying the *Benedictine Rule* this year. I have a much better understanding of it. I got about 9 books from the list sent earlier and from my priest, and they were so enlightening. Patience — something I am often not good at. When given a job, I want to get it done now, before I forget or get distracted. I can wait in line quietly and look around, UNLESS I have somewhere I need to be — THEN ALL BETS ARE OFF. I want to blame our instant gratification culture, but it is me and how I respond; no one else's fault but my own.

How do you see obedience fitting-in to those commitments made to WSHS/WBHS? I could not be committed, if I did not try to be obedient. I have re-read Sr. Angela's words, and I feel that with more obedience in my personal life, I would be more of what God wants me to be.

It was part of my job with a home care company to help a client's wife get him into a Hoyer Lift. It was tiring work. I had to follow directions from his wife, because I really did not know how to get him into the lift. I mention this, because it makes me realize that if I think I have challenges in life, these challenges may, in fact, be small when compared to what other people must go through. I cannot imagine how this man's wife does it. She is rather frail herself.

Sr. Nancy Theresa writes about her medical mission trip to Haiti and the patient endurance she saw in the Haitian people — walking all night, waiting all day for medical help. The joy and love they saw in people was "abounding everywhere". Think about how amazing it must have been to be part of the group — helping and participating in this life changing experience for the patients, and volunteers as well. Helping people in need brings the most satisfaction. I can only imagine the magnitude of being part of something so profound. I have experienced patient endurance when I worked full time with the homeless in the US, and when I delivered food in trucks to very impoverished areas where children gleefully took the bread and fruit.

When we reflect more deeply on Sr. Nancy Teresa's story, what can we say about our own patience? Today all of life seems to be racing past us—Gandhi once said, "There is more to life than racing through it." Do these words speak to me? Yes, because I have recently stopped working two jobs.

Patience is part of our community prayer. Do I pray for that gift for the day and then get angry in traffic, because it is not moving fast enough? Am I impatient about having to wait in line at the store or a doctor's office? Am I impatient with the hostess who serves someone else before serving our table — even though we were there first? I seem to lose my patience when I am under unsurmountable stress. I am beginning to pray for this to improve, along with the other fruits. I have also just read Man's Search for Meaning and am considering my suffering and how I help others who are suffering.

My patience was recently tested when I experienced hardship. I began to think things couldn't get worse. But then, I was reminded of how much worse it could get. I believe this was God. I responded to him that I would look at each difficulty as a test of my faith, endurance, strength and patience. However, I gain the most by helping others—the homeless, sick, elderly, children, and animals. Then it becomes a gift to me. The retreat was amazing and very spiritual. However, I came home to an immense amount of stressful difficulties. I have come to realize that I have more to learn spiritually in dealing with stressful situations. I seek reconciliation on a regular basis. I always thank God for my spiritual directors — especially this month. I cannot express how much I appreciate them. I believe I am growing spiritually, and I am blessed for the guidance I receive.

I can hardly believe has been almost a month since Retreat. The weather has been wonderful, so we have spent lots of time in the yard. This year we have two vegetable gardens. We planted peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and squash well before Memorial Day. Every plant is doing well, and I love watching them grow. I find working in the yard — weeding, watering, or whatever to be very relaxing. It's a good time to just be and let my mind be quiet.

I stay active in my church and also take someone to the Saturday night Eucharist at another church. I have some longtime friends there and enjoy making some new friends at a weekly bible study there. I am often asked to be chalice bearer at the evening service — a ministry I really enjoy. At my church, I am getting more involved again with the lay eucharist ministry. I took communion to someone who was ill last week. This allows me to get to know people and pray with them. I am fortunate to be able to do that, because I think these activities help me to stay grounded in the Lord.

I think it must have been amazing for Sr. Nancy Teresa and Frank to see the humble acceptance of the Haitians. Most of us in the western world have never had that experience. I think that most of us are moved more by hearing an illustration like this than hearing a sermon preached. It is also good to have the words of Julian and Benedict illustrate what we have experienced with our own eyes. One does not need a lot of words to express their observation of perfect Christian humility. We don't want to be humble, but Julian reminds us that God is close to the humble. Perhaps that makes what seems impossible, possible. It is hard work to obtain this kind of humility. Masks must be uncovered, and it's very challenging to learn to be fully honest about our motives. All of this is to be done "for the Love of Christ." As Sr. Nancy and St. Benedict remind us, we cannot strive to be humble. When we pat ourselves on the back for being humble, we are going down the ladder. Up is down and down is up — the first shall be last; and the last, first. It is a mystery and we will be unraveling it for a long time.

I do find that as I journey along this road there are many times when God's grace just seems to flow through me easier and I find myself more patient, thankful, and grateful. I don't get as easily thrown when my plans don't work out. I think this is just a case of all the practice, contemplation, and habit beginning to take over my spirit. But of course, there are many times I resist. This is when I experience the difference between living in the kingdom and not living in the kingdom. It is a choice I make, but sometimes with God's grace, it seems to happen more effortlessly. At other times, it does require a real conscious awareness and choice.

Spiritually, I am continuing with my small ministry at church and leading the service and preaching. I am also trying to attend a larger church once a month to play my guitar, although the service really does not connect for me. There is no time for prayer and everyone talks a lot. Whether I will continue at this service, I don't know. I am leaving it up to God. I pray that I go wherever he wants me.

At our bi-monthly Centering Prayer gathering tonight (5 of us), it occurred to me that I simply need more trust that the Lord will take me where I should go. It seems to be a pretty good goal for me to trust in God's guidance.

It's tough to come down from the mountain of a weekend of intense prayer, praise, and fellowship and go home to the "same old, same old". Coming down from the "retreat mountain" is not easy.

Thoughts on Obedience and Patient Endurance: I think of the medical mission trip to Haiti and realize how much the people there suffer. In the past, we have visited similar countries in Central America. I would love to be part of such a mission again. However, I now have my own mission — helping and loving my own husband who is failing in health.

I sometimes think that life is passing me by, because I can do very little to help others now. Yet yesterday afternoon, I was able to go with the "Grace Ladies" to a retirement home to provide afternoon tea to the residents. I ended up spending some time with an old friend who is a resident at the home while she recovers from cancer treatment. That time with her was a wonderful time for me. She shows such love and care for others even with her own troubles. It's just a blessing to be with her.

I occasionally become impatient with my husband who needs a lot of help. I sometimes sound as if I do not love him which is, of course, not true. I need to have more understanding and patience with his needs and show him more often how much I care for him. I am very fortunate to be able to work with children. I pray constantly about what God wants me to do. I love working with the MOPS' toddlers, teaching Sunday school, and assisting with the Children's Ministry. We have both vacation bible school and day camp coming up, and I will be working at both. I have also applied for a preschool teachers position during the next school year. I feel it would be an amazing job for me, so please keep me in your prayers.



FORMATION AND TRAINING

Rung Six: Contentment

By

Sr. Lucia, WSHS

1 Cor 10:31 WHAT EVER YOU DO,
DO FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

*The 6th Rung of Humility: We are content with the lowest and most menial treatment and regard ourselves as a poor and worthless worker in what ever task we are given. **The Rule of Benedict, Christian Monastic Wisdom for Daily Living**, annotation by The Rev. Dr. Jane Tomaine.*

This rule goes against our culture where we think that we do the best job, move up and get rewarded. Do not be content with mediocracy. Jesus shows us the way, at the last supper he washed the feet of the disciples.

This job was given to the lowliest servant, not the Master. The feet of 1st Century people who wore sandals were filthy. Dirt and dust was mixed with the excrement of animals. So, when you entered a home you were given towels and water to wash your feet or if the home was prosperous, the least of all servants did this job.

Today each person can think of the most menial, disgusting job that one wouldn't want to do. Now think of doing that job and being at peace with it. Then add that you are not worthy of doing that job. For me it would be weeding. I despise weeding and would love someone else to do it and yet I do it because I hate weeds more than the knee pain or uselessness of weeding. The weeds always come back up and I have a tough time walking the next day. Last year on Wednesdays before church, I had a Weeding and Prayer ministry. The thing is, I felt pride when I finished each week. A Benedictine sister or brother would not see pride in the job, but see oneself as still a poor and worthless worker. As the Psalmist cries in Psalm 73:22-23, I was stupid and ignorant, I was like a brute beast toward You. Nevertheless, I am continually with You; You hold my right hand.

In another book I came across a statement that grabbed me. I just kept coming back to *Humility Rules* by J. Augustine Wetta, O.S.B and this provocative statement:

Be someone's doormat. This statement was like a slap in the face. Me Too! is ringing in our ears and I am to be a doormat. But I take it this way. What does a doormat really do? Similar to a 1st century foot washer, a doormat cleans off the dirt from the street. The doormat absorbs water and dirt. It prepares you to enter a place clean. Another thought about being a doormat from Wetta's view was that

it meant Serenity in deed. Wetta goes on to say you need serenity in thought. Become content, not just resigned with the lowliest and worse of everything then there is never a wasted moment. He sees that there is no such thing as a dull or useless experience. Sorrow loses its sting because all experience is opportunity to glorify God. 2nd Corinthians 12:10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities, for when I am weak, I am strong. Once you have learned to find contentment in adversity, all life becomes charged with light and hope and joy. He writes that you should also show Serenity in word. One can't be serene and resentful at the same time. To do this St Benedict insisted on saying Our Father at beginning and end of the day.

15 days of Prayer with St Benedict by Andre Gozier, O.S.B. writes that Humility does not debase humans for it allows them to unite with God. In John 15:5 it states because apart from me you can do nothing. Humility does not debase a human but allows us to unite with Christ. Gozier states, in the 6th step the soul sees itself from God's perception in order to judge itself. It is the Love of one's nothingness before God. In His Incarnation, Jesus shows the ultimate humility in becoming man. Though he was God he became man, lived, worked, and died as man. Therefore, he was content with the ultimate worst menial task of dying on a cross.

Oblation Meditations on St. Benedict's Rule by Rachel M Srubas has this rung seen as Acceptance. Accept without complaint; wretched and inadequate conditions so that when faced with a task of any kind they would think of themselves as poor workers.

I read a sermon given by Br. Curtis Almquist, SSJE on July 28, 2009. He talked about contentment in actively engaging life now, today. Not being a victim or staying put, but being satisfied with the limitations of our present life about that we can not change. So, if you are given a "disgusting task" to do, do it without complaint. Do not look to do another more pleasing task, for at this moment this task needs to be done. If in the body of the community you are to be the fourth toe, be the fourth toe and don't desire to be the eye. Each member of the body, i.e. the Community has a job to do. That job is important. Whether you are the weeder or the baker, both are important. It is important to see the sacred in the ordinary.

The 6th rung of Humility is seen as serenity in word, thought, and deed and in acceptance without complaint of tasks we are given. It is also contentment and living life in the now. Seeing the sacred in the menial and most disgusting tasks we are given. Sit at the low table at the party and let Him bring us to the table of honor. We will never receive humility by seeking it, but by emptying ourselves through obedience.

Questions for Reflection

1. Sr. Lucia talks about Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. It is a lowly job done by the servant in the home. Jesus, however, picks up a towel and undertakes this task. Have you ever had your feet washed on a Maundy Thursday Service? If, so, how did you feel?

2. She also states that pulling weeds which she despises – and yet, she undertook that task and did an excellent job – feeling pride it looked so good and yet, she felt uncomfortable that "pride" had come to the surface. Have you experienced that? Perhaps we can help by remembering Jesus' words "well

done, good and faithful servant” and he felt pride also in one doing a menial task without complaining. What are your thoughts?

3. We have all heard the expression “Don’t be a doormat”. Sr. Lucia compares the doormat as something that also cleans feet along with the foot washing. How do you see “serenity” in those two examples?

4. She quotes Br. Curtis Almquist, SSJE in which he says “each member of the Community has a job to do. That job is important. Whether you are the weeder or the baker, both are important. It is important to see the sacred in the ordinary.” What is the ordinary?

5. Sr. Lucia writes “The 6th rung of Humility is seen as serenity in word, thought and deed and in acceptance without complaint of tasks we are given. We will never receive humility by seeking it – but by emptying ourselves through obedience. Please take time to reflect on those words – How do you see yourself fulfilling the 6th rung of St. Benedict’s ladder?