

**THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



# **BULLETIN**



**THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



**THE INVISIBLE WORLD**  
**April 2020**

**Bulletin Cover**    *The Bronze Cross on the cover has several illustrations of the Celtic Knot. Photo from the Internet*

There are different opinions on what the Celtic Knot is all about but the basic understanding is that the unending knot symbolizes the unending cycle of life. The interweaving illustrates the interdependence and interconnections of the physical and spiritual aspect of our being

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**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. Wendy Samuel virtue54@outlook.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. Wendy Samuel: virtue54@outlook.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)**

<b>THE WORKER SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>	
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Community Marketing Group, LLC, Publisher Port Huron, MI    Copyright 2020	
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## CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS  
APRIL 2020**

**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  
Illinois USA

Br. David, WBHS  
Sr. Julie Margaret, WSHS  
Sr. Dorothy Cecilia, WSHS  
Sr. Barbara Veronica, WBHS  
Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS  
Ginny Berkey, WSHS  
Sr. Diane Richard, WSHS

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS FOR 2020**

April 25 • May 23 • June 27 •

July 25 • August 22 • September 26 •

October 24 • November 21 • December 12

**RETREAT 2020**

**Canceled Due To Corona-Virus Pandemic**

**A Virtual Retreat Is In The Works**

**Details To Follow**

**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




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**COMMUNITY CHANGES**

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

**Sr. Barbara Veronica has moved.**

Her new address is:  
533 Scott Street  
Carthage, Missouri 64836  
Her cell number and email stays the same.

**Karen Charbonnet, WSHS (formerly Karen Carter, WSHS)**

has a new email. It is:  
Kcharbonnet3@outlook.com

**Correction: Ginny Berkey's** cell phone number is: 520-237-2041

**Stan Hampton, WBHS has moved.**

New address:  
668 Lundy Lane  
Peterborough Ontario  
Canada K9J4J8

**Fleur Clark, Friend, WSHS has moved.**

New address:  
1100 E. Hullum Street, Apt. 8  
Breckenridge, Texas 76424  
Phone: 254-559-2712




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**SPECIAL NEWS NOTES**

**Sr. Nancy Teresa:** Grandson Joshua had his feeding tube removed from his tummy. It has been there for twelve and a half years. I know you have been praying for Joshua and we are all so grateful!

Joshua has decided to commit himself to eating food and handling the discomfort that accompanies it. He has not had a feeding with his tube for months and has managed to gain weight. This morning he went to the hospital and tube was removed. Thank you all for your prayers. This is truly an answer we never expected. Hallelujah!

**Special Prayer Request from our Companion Community,  
Monastery of the Holy Spirit – Gweru, Zimbabwe Africa**

Lenten Greetings,

Thank you for the update on the corona pandemic. Definitely, it's a global issue now. Our neighboring country South Africa is highly affected. It is our worry now in Zimbabwe that we are likely prone to the virus.

The Holy Spirit Monastery is kindly requesting for your prayers that there be divine intervention. It is very sad that our hospitals in Zimbabwe have no resources even to treat the most minor diseases. We really ask for the grace of God to prevail on our nation. Despite fears of Covid -19, all the nuns and friars still remain hopeful for full protection from the virus.

Our love and greetings to all Worker Sisters, Worker Brothers, Companions and friends,

Yours in Christ  
Sr Teresah HSM



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**HAITI**

In the months of February and March, Global Hydration was able to ship two cases of water tablets each month for a total of four cases to Sr. Betty-Lou Shirley to forward on to Haiti. It's wonderful that we are able to keep up the monthly shipments so that the orphanages, small villages and the people of Haiti are able to have clean water.

Our thanks to Sr. Betty-Lou Shirley and Br. Frantz Benedict and his team for keeping up the good work in processing the water tablets, kudos to all of you for your diligent work.

With the Coronavirus outbreak throughout the world, let us pray for one another for protection and prayers from our loving God.

Blessings and Peace to All,

Sr. Alexandra Francis



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**FROM YOUR DIRECTORS**

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From Sr. LaVerne Peter, WSHS

Dear beloved Community,

Please know I am holding each and every one of you in prayer each and every day and pray that you are well. This is a tragic time for our entire world and we are all together in dealing with this dreadful virus. Please take care of yourselves and honor the regulations and instructions we have been given to follow. It can be the difference between life and death.

At the end of this letter you will find the Prayer for a Pandemic. I suggest that you read this each day and night as the words speak to our hearts.

We are all being asked to stay home as much as possible and limit interaction to help reduce the spread of the virus. All of our churches are closed and services in some cases are offered via the Internet.

While, we, at present, cannot receive Holy Communion, I suggest that you make a Spiritual Communion. That can be found on page 79 of our Personal Rule for Sisters and Brothers. If you do not have a copy of this service, it can be found on the Internet by typing in Spiritual Communion.

We all may seem to have extra time now being at home and I suggest we offer that to God. Try reading scripture, using Lectio Divina as you read, practice writing your thoughts and reflections in a journal. If you are not one who typically keeps a journal, this may be a good opportunity to start writing in one.

While many might feel this is a span of time where we are bored, looking at too much television and feeling there is little to do, it is also a time for us to make new beginnings. When was the last time you read your Community Rule or your Personal Rule for Sisters and Brothers? It is always a good time to refresh our minds and renew ourselves.

Reach out to other Community members, and while we can't physically touch, we can phone, send a note, or write an e-mail. Let others know we are thinking and praying for them.

You may want to expand your world a bit and learn something new, how to play Chess, knit and most of all keep laughter alive.

While canceling Retreat was a very hard thing to do, it was the right thing to do. While we will miss being together, we have some exciting news for us to look at the road ahead.

1. Carl Colman is currently putting together a video of his Retreat Presentation which will cover all the talks he was planning for us and it is hopeful we will be able to have some sections where we can all be part of it. I know, technology, is a wonderful thing.

We are also delighted that Carl will be presenting our Chapter Quiet Day in October and lead our Retreat in 2021.

2. Sr. Brenda Faith, WSHS is now our WSHS/WBHS Chaplain – we will have a special service at Fall Chapter.
3. Stan Hampton will be invested as a Brother at the next Canadian gathering. He will become Br. George.
4. Erin Diericx will be admitted as a Companion early Fall in her home Parish in Florida.
5. Ken Nolen will be admitted as a Friend when the next Arizona gathering is able to take place.

Dear ones, while these are dark days, it is time always to look ahead and see the Light of Christ which is calling us as one – as I said we may be separated by miles and even a Virus, but the Holy Spirit is holding all together.

My love and prayers are with each one of you always, *Sr. LaVerne Peter, WSHS*

### **Prayer for a Pandemic**

*by Cameron Bellm*

May we who are merely inconvenienced  
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors  
Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home  
Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close  
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips  
Remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market  
Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home  
Remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country,  
let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,  
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.



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**PRIRESS**

*For those in the Community who do not use email, we are including a copy of the letter from Sr. LaVerne announcing the cancellation of Retreat 2020*

Dear WSHS/WBHS Community,

It is with deep sadness that I am writing to each of you regarding our Retreat for 2020. We are aware that, not only are we in a state of unbelief, but also deep concern as we look at the impact of the Corona-virus around the world, as well as here in the United States and Canada.

I have been monitoring the situation very closely - Diocese after Diocese is sending updated notes as to Religious Services and I just learned that one Diocese has closed all of its churches completely. Gatherings, meetings on every level are being canceled and the numbers of those affected seems to continue to grow.

As I look at all this, and with the possibility of a State of Emergency being declared for the United States, I have looked seriously at our Retreat. We have had several cancellations - those unable to travel due to health issues, etc. In my own area here in Georgia, two more cases of the Virus have just been reported and public schools in counties surrounding me are now closed on an indefinite basis. I know that some of you were planning to drive to Retreat but now understand the Virus is air born and even that mode of transportation is not good. The germs from it can last quite a bit.

I have been in lengthy discussion with Sr. Christine our American Director, Sr. Wendy Samuel our Canadian Director and Sr. Nancy Teresa the President of our American Board of Directors and we felt it was indeed time to make a decision. We took a full poll of our WSHS/WBHS Chapter and they were in agreement that we should cancel this year's Annual Retreat. In our 50 years as a Community, we never have had to do this but we felt that if one of our members became sick, it was not worth the risk.

We are very pleased that the Mercy Retreat Center has accepted our cancellation without any extra charges and are very understanding. We are deeply grateful! Those of you have already purchased tickets and sent in funds, please send Sr. Nancy Teresa your receipts and she will reimburse you.

While, this is dark news for us, we are delighted that our Retreat Leader, Carl McColman, is putting together a video of his presentations which I believe will run the days of Retreat. He is currently working on this for us so that we will continue our study in what we are now calling a Virtual Retreat which we are looking forward to greatly! Carl and his wife Fran have become an integral part of our Community and we are pleased that he will be presenting our Retreat for the next year. Again, another blessing and sunshine! While we may not be together, much of Retreat can still go on in new ways. More information will be forthcoming on this. Other various plans can happen locally, so while we are not physically together, we will be together in a different way.

While I know, this brings great sadness, let me share a bit of my history. I made application to WSHS in 1974 while living in Washington, DC. Sr. Jane Barnabas and I were the only members outside the Kansas City area so we were both “alone”. After I made my application and was accepted, it was two years before I met Sr. Angela who came to North Carolina to install me as a Worker. This was two years without knowing any of you in Kansas City area and I must say, the Holy Spirit filled the void and I always felt part of the Community and I know Sr. Jane did also.

We may be separated by miles and even, a Virus, but the Spirit is keeping and holding us all together as one. Our love and prayers surround you and, may God the Holy Spirit, keep each of you ever so safe. *Sr. LaVerne Peter, WSHS*



## SPIRITUAL SHARING

My resolution for this year is to think about and see if I develop joy. My Spiritual Director gave me a print that says “The body heals with play, the mind heals with laughter and the spirit heals with joy.” I think it will be a good development

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Life is a loving gift from God and we need to live it to the fullest, as God has been so compassionate in giving us this gift. Our gift to God’s generosity is to love one another and help those in need.

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Discipline is both a learned habit and a gift from God. Now I could not see me leaving the people I love. I feel called to love others and love God. The community is what nourishes me. I personally feel that God calls us to seek him in the solitude but the embrace of his love and teachings is in the community of humankind.

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To me the most important thing is that Christianity is not solitary. It is meant to be shared. Jesus is known to us in the breaking of the bread, not a solitary thing. When two or more are gathered, all of this points to community. Our Father, not my Father, over and over community is the basis.

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I have noticed that in terms of artistic talent, I am more in the bottom half of my class than in the top half. I say to myself, “What the heck! I am having a ball with this venture and that’s all that counts.” Sounds like a very WSHS/WBHS thing to be feeling, namely, to enjoy your being rather than to sweat about your doing.

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When in Holy Places you feel that “thin place” that is talked about. I am very excited to learn more this year and embrace the quiet place (where I have often had problems).

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I am struggling with my work as a Lay Worker Applicant. I feel inadequate in my observation of the Rule. It seems as if I fight the process and yet when I fully engage, I feel good.

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Last year having to see Jesus in his Jewish culture, was brand new to me. So many Jewish traditions and stories were woven into my brother’s and my childhood, it felt familiar. Then at Retreat my skin

had to stretch as I grew into the broader view of the Jewish Jesus. Celtic Christianity is opening another new area to me. I picture myself as a tree with new limbs pushing beyond the bark.

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I used a Celtic Prayer Book for about 6 months quite some years ago. I loved it. Certainly it was a way of disciplined prayer and worship but makes me think of the “littleness of God”, his precious humility, sort of like small children. There is a poverty in the way people turn easily to God. They don’t rely on their own understanding.

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The Irish wilderness appeals to me a lot more than the Egyptian desert. There is something about the woods and nature that calls my mind to God. I have always had a connection with Creation. Growing up, there was a little forest behind our house. I used to have splendid adventures in it. I swam in the river, ate lunch on fallen logs, and pretended that the giant boulders were my castle. There was something magical and mysterious about that world under the trees. I remember walking on trails singing Sunday school songs, and re-dedicating my life to Christ while lying in the meadow. I’m at a season in my life where I have had enough of a focus on escaping the world and harping on sin. My soul craves wonder, wholeness, and a deep connection with God. I need a faith that enlivens my senses. The Celtic monks seem to have craved that exact same thing.

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We were discussing hymns and I mentioned that a couple of weeks ago some of the words in our Gospel hymn were: “And through all eternity, I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on.” It really hit me as profound and I thought about it quite often in the week after I mentioned this at the class and one of the other members said, “you know after singing that hymn I thought I need to put that as one of my funeral hymns because of singing on through eternity.” We talked about how hymns can have some deep spiritual truths in them.

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I recently read that when you pronounce the name, “Yahweh,” correctly, you cannot use your tongue or close your lips. The sacred name is simply the sound of breath. To attempt to vocalize the name is an attempt to imitate breathing. It is practically impossible. So, what does this mean? It means that the very first word that every human being utters as they emerge from the womb is the name of God. This also means that the very last word we speak, as we die, will be the name of God. We are constantly uttering the name of God throughout each day. We can’t help it!

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It is helpful to use the daily readings and prayer for the Community and the members. I am also looking at some special spiritual books to help me in my journey.

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My latest breakthrough has to do with the Fruit of Gentleness – treating others with gentleness should be a focus. It’s a major shift in my approach to people.

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I am finally back to reading my Bible and meditating; working on myself. Carving time out has been hard. I pray the way is being opened for me now and I can be whole.

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I was delighted with Sr. Paula’s article as I thought she did a fine job of connecting the desert fathers and mothers with the early Celtic Saints. I think this connection is not commonly known unless someone has made a pilgrimage or studied the beginnings of early Celtic Christianity. I don’t think many of us experience the desert, in the same way as did Jesus, then the desert fathers and mothers

and then the Celtic saints. In our day we have monasteries devoted to enclosure and at least times of silence. A retreat time is the closest we come. I see modern men and women as surrounded by so much activity – multi-tasking or attempts to do so with some noise always there in the background. I suspect that is why our Taize service is so loved.

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A quiet time like Taize though, is not quite a desert experience - it is a letting go and becoming more receptive – it is often restful and peaceful. But if one was truly alone and that aloneness continued for some time, I suspect we would then encounter some of the inner voices and challenges that the ancient saints met within them. We can learn much from these ancient saints.

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My personal struggle is probably overexposing myself to the news. This is my “dragon in the desert” that I am not vanquishing very effectively. I admire the strong faith these hardy ancient peoples had to pray always and in every way.



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

### The Invisible World

By

*Sr. Kathleen Columb, WSHS*



I grew up in Northern Ireland and in Londonderry locally known as Derry where St. Columb (also known as St. Columba) left for his exile to Iona. There are many references to this saint all around Derry. I attended St. Columb’s cathedral as a child and young adult. I was baptized there as was my oldest son. I was confirmed there and my first marriage took place there. My father’s family was a member for several generations. St. Columb was a man who, in his youth, was vain and proud and because of this he was responsible for many deaths. In his remorse he made a promise to God to bring as many souls to God as was lost in the battle and to exile himself from his beloved Derry. He was born in Garton County Donegal not too far from Derry.

When I was young, the church would have a special pilgrimage to Garton on June 9th Columb’s Saint’s Day. Two years ago when I was in Ireland we went to Garton. It is a beautiful place with the Donegal hills and the quiet. Columb loved animals and especially wild geese. There is the story of when he was in Iona, a crane came there from Ireland and St. Columb told the brothers to care for it until it had rested and could fly back to Ireland. There is a special peace in Garton where Columb came from, almost like a thin place where heaven and earth are so close.

People sometimes struggle with the concept of the Trinity but I have not because it was always a central part of Christianity in Ireland. The Celtic knot became a symbol of the Trinity. It illustrates a more circular and never ending concept of life with no beginning or ending. The Celts sensed no distinction between the spiritual and the material. To them, everything in nature was an image of the divine. They spoke to their saints in a natural way as if they were nearby. God was found everywhere and at all times in all tasks. The Celts' lives were lived out in the heart knowledge that Christ loved them and was calling them. There was a vivid sense that God who knows, loves and supports them, is close at hand and actually present in the lives.

While in Ireland one day we were out for a drive and came upon a little cemetery. Next to the cemetery is St. Aiden's well. It was a spring and there were several stones around it and a sign telling what it was - a holy place. On Good Friday the cathedral has prayers from Noon until three o'clock and folks are encouraged to come and pray. My grandmother, even when she was elderly, spent those three hours in prayer at the cathedral every year. St. Columb's is a very holy place and I always feel especially close to God and my family there. My mother used to always say there is no place like St. Columb's. It was built in 1633 and I believe that all the prayers and worship going on there for all these years has penetrated into the walls. I can feel the peace of God there that passes understanding. Carl McColman, in An Invitation to Celtic Wisdom, writes:

“Prayer is not magic, and traditional practices associated with prayer — like visiting a sacred water source — do not imbue the prayer with any more power than any other type of prayer might contain. So why go to all the fuss of visiting a well...with reverence? ...We visit certain places because they seem to bring us face-to-face with the mystery of eternity. That mystery is always present in our lives — but we do not always pay attention....” p. 39-40

The Celts were very aware of that mystery in their lives. They felt they were at one with the natural and spiritual world. It just happened that one was visible and the other invisible.

We have another special day coming up, St. Patrick's Day. People ask me “what do Irish people do on that day?” When I was growing up, it was a holy day and you went to church. It usually fell during Lent but folk could break their Lenten fast on that day and people could get married on that day. I have been to the mountain where tradition has it that Patrick spent many years as a boy tending sheep for his master when Patrick was a slave. That is where he found his relationship with God. Many years later when he escaped from Ireland he had dreams of the Irish people calling him back. Where other missionaries failed, Patrick did not.

One of my favorite hymns is St. Patrick's Breastplate which I had sung at my deacon ordination. This verse really sums up the Celtic idea of God all around us in everything situation.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,  
Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,  
Christ to comfort and restore me.  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,

Christ in hearts of all that love me,  
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

Esther de Waal, in The Celtic Way of Prayer, writes:

“... it is the sheer glory of this great hymn that so excites me! I know of nothing else which, so superbly, serenely, and yet energetically, can throw the whole universe onto one canvas! In it I am given a tremendous creedal affirmation of the unity of the universe and of men and women within it. ... It feels as though it is woven in the same way as the Celtic strap-work on the carvings of the high crosses or the intricate pages of decoration of illuminated manuscripts, so that all the elements flow into one strong gently unified harmony. Here is a powerful sense of the unity of the whole created order, a celebration of creation and redemption, that healing wholeness, the oneness in plurality that has always been so important a gift of the Celtic world to the fullness of my Christian understanding.” p. 22-23

What I take from her is that although we may not see with our eyes the great unity that connects us, (invisible in that sense) it is nevertheless present and acknowledged in faith and imagination - all is alive and glowing with God's infinite love, not the least of which is our being filled and upheld and surrounded by God's love.

### Questions for Reflection

1. St. Kathleen Columb tells us the story of St. Columba – interesting to learn his story. His remorse turned his life around. How do you imagine the internal struggle he must have gone through to do this?
2. We learn that the Celts sensed no distinction between the spiritual and material. To them everything in nature was an image of the divine. God was found everywhere and in all tasks. What would it be like to live life like that?
3. Sr. Kathleen Columb speaks of the Celtic knot being a symbol of the Trinity. I was to give a talk on St. Patrick on St. Patrick's Day. As I researched the topic, I learned that when he spoke to the pagans in Ireland, he used the Shamrock to explain the Trinity. Next time you look at a Shamrock think of that.
4. The article quotes Carl McColman's book "An Invitation to Celtic Wisdom". Take time to read again that quote especially the line "we visit certain places because they bring us face to face with the mystery of eternity. That mystery is always present in our lives, but we do not always pay attention..." Do you have a special place that brings this to you?
5. The Celts were very aware of the mystery of their lives. They felt they were at one with the natural and spiritual world. It just happened that one was visible and the other invisible. Take to think about that a bit.
6. Take time to open your Hymnal to 370 and read the words of St. Patrick's Breastplate slowly – Sr. Kathleen Columb writes that "The words sum up to the Celt idea that God is all around us in every situation." What touches your heart as you read the words of this hymn?