

**THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



# **BULLETIN**



**THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



**PRAYER**  
**WE JOIN THE PRAYER WITH THE “RUAH”**  
**May**

Kananaskis, Alberta

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, www.workerbrothers.org

To access the contents of the Member pages, go to workersisters.org; click on More. Then click on Member Pages. The email address is: WSHS.WBHS@gmail.com ~ The password is: Angela45

**THE WORKER SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
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## CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS  
MAY 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**

May 23 • June 27 •

July 25 • August 22 • September 26 •

October 24 • November 21 • December 12

***Virtual Retreat Sessions on  
Celtic Christian Spirituality  
3:00 PM ET on May 2, 9, 16 and 23.  
Led by Carl McColman on ZOOM***

**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:*



### **NEW FRIEND APPLICANT – Ken Nolen**

Ken Nolen  
 4340 W Rae Circle  
 Tucson, Arizona 85741  
 Phone: 520-744-2123  
 Email: knolen@comcast.net  
 Birthday: May 10

Ken Nolen lives in Tucson, Arizona. He is a retired Tool and Die Design Engineer, a widower, and has two grown sons, Michael and Peter. Ken is active in his church and has a deep commitment to the Lord. He enjoys teaching high school and adult bible classes and has been a Stephen Ministries leader. Currently he serves on a chapel staff bringing the Word and Sacrament to people in assisted care homes. He learned about WSHS through Sr. Carol Matthew and looks forward to his walk with our Community.



### **NEW COMPANION APPLICANT – Sari Jn-Francois**

Sari Jn-Francois  
 2110 Lawrence Ave W  
 Toronto, Ontario M9N1J1  
 Phone: 416-614-0043  
 Email: sari\_jnfrancois@yahoo.com  
 Birthday: August 8

Sari Jn-Francois, born in Ottawa of immigrant parents from St. Lucia, grew up in Belleville, Ontario and has a Canadian-St. Lucian citizenship. Sari has worked for the City of Toronto for 10 years as a Social Services Caseworker and for the last year as a Planning and Policy Assistant with Children's Services. Sari has been married for 3 years and is very close to her siblings and their children. She "trusts that God will keep drawing her to Him and keep chipping away at the things in her heart that create barriers to loving and following Him." Welcome to Sari and the sharing of her journey with the Lord and the Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit.




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**HAITI**

We continue to pray for our loving Sisters, Brothers and children of Haiti. We give thanks for Br. Frantz Benedict as he and his team distributes the water tablets that are sent and keep their people safe with clean water.

We give thanks to our Community, whole-heartedly, for their continued support of our Haiti Mission. We also have individuals from our churches in the USA and in Canada who donate funds and appreciate their dedication to our cause. We know that our loving God is with us helping us on this Mission.

This season of 2019-2020 we have shipped 210,000 water tablets at 167mgs of 20 liters each. This equals 4,200,000 liters of clean water. Global Hydration has shipped 15 cases over this period at a total cost of \$6,688.20 CAD converted to \$5,028.54 US\$. No shipments went out in May and July. Global Hydration is now reporting the cost of tablets in CAD, Canadian funds, so I do a conversion for USA funds.

I am already receiving checks that I process. This season I have received checks in the amount of \$1,485 mailed directly to my address. The total history is approximately 1,905,730 water tablets shipped, which equals approximately 33,129,850 liters of clean water delivered to Haiti.

Blessings to All our Community; stay healthy,

*Sr. Alexandra Francis*




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**FROM YOUR DIRECTORS**

**RETREAT UPDATE** from Sr. Nancy Teresa, WSHS

Our **VIRTUAL RETREAT 2020** is in the final planning stages! Carl McColman will use ZOOM to lead four sessions on **Celtic Christian Spirituality** on 4 separate Saturdays: **May 2, May 9, May 16 and May 23, 2020.**

Each session will start at **3:00 PM ET**. More information about How to Zoom etc. will be sent to the Community prior to the session dates.

Anyone who has used ZOOM is asked to contact Sr. Nancy Teresa for the purpose of helping those of us who are not as “computer savvy” as others.

Looking forward to hearing and seeing you!!

**2020 GREEN SHEETS UPDATE:**

Since Retreat 2020 at the Mercy Center had to be cancelled (where we would have been able to hand out copies of the Green Sheets), we have decided to post the 2020 updated Green Sheets on our WSHS website. This will allow you to access the information as needed and save the Community the expense of mailing everyone a hardcopy. It will also allow us to update the online Green Sheets promptly when changes are communicated to the Co-Directors.

The Green Sheets will be posted under the Member Page. To access this page, click on this link, [worksisters.org](http://worksisters.org)

To proceed, type in the following email address: [WSHS.WBHS@gmail.com](mailto:WSHS.WBHS@gmail.com)

Then type in the PASSWORD: [Angela45](#)

Click on SIGN IN

If you or a Community member you know does not have access to the Internet and you want a hard-copy of the 2020 Green Sheets, please contact Sr. Christine or Sr. Wendy Samuel. Thank you!

**SPIRITUAL SHARING**

It was a surreal moment when they showed the video of the Bishop of Washington. A few weeks ago a college student named Patrick came to our church with his mom, who was visiting him here. Very nice people; we chatted a bit, and I encouraged them to come back. When the video came on last Sunday, I recognized the face: Patrick's mother is Bishop Mariann Budde. The Bible says by welcoming strangers we sometimes entertain angels unaware. Well, we entertained a bishop unaware!

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Both the Forward Day by Day and the Word for You Today speak of being "Salty." I would like to be a "salt of the earth" person. I just never thought of that being preserving, nourishing, enriching, seasoning — all ingredients each of us are blessed with.

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Apparently everyone is spending more time at their computers, and my inbox is deluged with messages from people I know all over the country, most of them needing (craving?) a response. Everyone is anxious. I'm trying to see answering them all as a form of ministry. I really love the way people are reaching out to each other in resourceful ways. My prayer is that when the pandemic is history, we will continue this heightened awareness, appreciation of, and participation in community.

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On the bright side, I think this emergency, like most disasters is inviting us to get our priorities straight, to stay in touch with those we love and all work together for our common good. It is also very helpful as an aid to practice simplicity.

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I did enjoy Sr. Mary Govan's article. It started me thinking about "thin" places in my own life and it took me to special places of my life. I'm not sure I'd call them all "thin" but, certainly they are scared places. Perhaps that is the same thing.

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I have been much less wasteful with food and other necessities, and am surprised at how far I can make things stretch. It has also been really good for the environment. That makes me very happy. Creation does have a way of taking care of itself. It is ironic that our destructive habits are being brought down by the most primitive of life forms.

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I think people are getting a chance, during this pandemic, to think about what's important. What they may want to do differently, or do more or less off, in the future. Hopefully it is bringing many closer and closer to our Lord also.

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The beauty of creation is in full bloom right now with the coming of spring. There are several red bud trees starting to bloom in our yard; front yard, side yard and down back in the woods. Spring is my favorite time of year when all the trees start turning green and the early flowers start blooming. I have several bird feeders on my deck and I love to watch the birds come to them in the morning when I sit at my kitchen table. I have several pairs of cardinals that come. The males are so red and pretty but the females are pretty too in their own way. We also have a couple of Pileated Woodpeckers that come to the suet feeder sometimes. They are pretty and look like Woody Woodpecker.

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It is strange to be so sequestered in such beautiful spring weather. It is lovely out these days for walking or riding bikes. People pass and usually nod or smile but keep their distance. Wish me well tomorrow as I venture out to Costco. It's amazing how I have slowed down and tried to just stay home and keep busy and not venture out except for the necessities.

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These days are slow and reflective. I have been journaling a lot more to pass the time. When this has all passed, it will be interesting to go back and reread what I wrote about during this time of uncertainty. I am missing in-person worship. My parish is live-streaming services every Sunday, but it just isn't the same. It is a poor substitute for real community.

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I hope that out of this chaotic mess will come more appreciation for our world, for nature, for one another by offering support, and humor. These for me are hopeful signs that God is alive and well, as we see human beings sharing what they have with others. Hopefully we are able to see beyond the usual confusion of hurry, rush, anxiety, fears, and prejudices; allowing us to enter those "thin places". What an opportunity at this time to just slow down willingly and to allow the creative juices to flow a bit! We may find an eternal truth in the midst of our ordinary lives.

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I really enjoy the virtual Sunday services that our church has had online. It is fun to see people in their home, with golden retrievers and other unusual things running around on the little Zoom screens. Isn't technology amazing?!

\*\*\*\*\*

I am trying to challenge myself to be open to new possibilities before me as my world narrows in the ordinary sense. I have not experienced such a blank calendar in years. It is a real spiritual challenge

to be open to new ways of being, as more time and space opens before me, to fill as I choose. So for me, the challenge of making better choices, more live-giving choices going forward is there, with new possibilities for good or not. I pray for grace to choose wisely.

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I loved all of Sr. Paula's source material. To know where we have come from is important when we begin a study of something. Just as last year we explored our roots in Judaism. I like the connections that we bring forward into our current life view and faith view to realize that what we believe comes from so many sources.

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All creation is connected like the quaking aspen in this part of the country. You will see a group of aspen and they are really one plant; it sends up many sprouts that we see as trees but they are all genetically one plant. We are all connected like these "trees". Molecules don't die they just reconfigure. We reconfigure in GOD'S creation. Dust to dust. The ancients didn't know molecular science but they recognized the truth.

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I see modern men and women as surrounded by so much activity or multi-tasking. There is no room for self-reflection unless we create that time – quiet enough to receive new insights from God. I suspect that is why our Taize service is so loved. A time to be in community in a deeper way – in silence mainly with just a bit of music and a few words to reflect on. I have experienced an intimate closeness when we are in silence together – letting us have a deeper connection than any conversation usually brings.

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I very much enjoyed the article Creation is Sacred by Sr. Mary Govan. I was looking forward to the Retreat and learning more about Celtic spirituality. Her appreciation of the Anglican church's sacramental nature, how we see things, and to see and think new ways all resonate with me.

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The desert Fathers and Mothers lived as hermits but some did gather with others outside their group to pray and worship. I think it is much easier to pray and worship in a group such as our Community but it is difficult to pray and worship on our own. I always long for the quiet times at Retreat, the Taize service and the other services in the Chapel as they always make me feel very close to God as I pray. I will miss Retreat tremendously this year but I trust in God to look after things for me.

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It has always been hard to remain faithful to God in isolation. How the hermits did it, I'm not sure. Sometimes I like to be alone, but there is such support and vitality in a group of like-minded folks. Now that we are all going to miss Retreat this year, I have a better idea of how we are all feeling. It's an annual "family reunion", a special boost to carry us through the year.

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During Lent, I learned that God will answer my requests when the time is the right time. But I don't just stop praying for it, but keep on praying so that I am in a partnership with God and he may use me in the solution!

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Love to all the Community as we grieve the cancellation of the 2020 Retreat. We know it was the right thing to do, but I will so miss seeing all of the beloved that come together once each year. Because a world-wide pandemic came to the United States in tandem with the Lenten season, I heard a remark from a friend I want to share, "I didn't think I would have to give up EVERYTHING for Lent". We must remember that Christ has trampled down death by death and given life in the tomb. We must not allow fear to crush the hope that is in us.



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

## Prayer — we join the prayer within the ‘ruah’

By

Marya Pohlmeier, Companion, WSHS



It’s a first real spring day here in St. Charles, MO. I’m looking out my sun window in my living room. One of the trees I see is a Bradford Pear just breaking out into bloom. The limbs and blossoms are swaying back and forth. There must be a breeze outside. That’s my supposition based on what I see.

But I’m going outside. Now, in addition to the tree branches, I see the blooming daffodils swaying in the same breeze. However, the breeze outside is more than seeing branches and flowers swaying. There’s a certain feeling of the breeze way beyond just seeing it I feel it on my face like a touch of feathers, I feel it searching through my hair, I smell a fresh spring-like scent. Yet the breeze itself can’t be seen. Only felt.

Most of my life, I have principally met God through nature and images. Hence, I began this article on Prayer with nature and images.

*Nature & Images* I grew up on a farm close to animals and crops, a farm that had a creek running through it. When I was trying to figure out what to do with my life, I used to sit in the summers high on a hill above that creek. It felt the closest to God I could get, other than the usual places of church, family, neighbors, all faith-filled people. I felt in high school sitting by myself above that creek with the sun warming me and the breeze cooling my face, that it was time for me to make my faith my own choice. Sitting atop the hill I finally saw that the creek kept on moving, farther and farther away from the present. Somehow I found myself say “Yes” to God, that I would move into a life of seeking to help others farther and farther down the stream. And so I have lived that initial call from God and spent my life in ministry. Most of you know I have done so in many ways I guess wandering from stream to the next stream to next creek to the next river, sometimes of course I wandered from the Stream, but the God of the Stream always called me back. I’ve taught children and teens, took leadership roles in elementary schools, engaged in faith formation for young adults, college students, adults in parishes, folks in prison and on.

At a point in mid-life I was far from the living water of the Stream. My dad was gone from me it seemed in his Alzheimer’s; mom was holding on, I had been in a car accident where my passenger was killed. I was transitioning out of education to who knows what. I took some lengthy time away to get back to my Stream. Eventually, I stood over a small bridge in upstate New York with a handful of leaves in my hands. I said one thing after another holding me back from God as I dropped each leaf

over into the river below, a lovely small river, with the freshest looking spring water, living water. As each leaf dropped to the water, it went WITH the fast-moving water. And I became willing again to pick up flowing with the Stream.

It was about this same time that I awoke to Scripture. It began with an initial Scripture course that was inspiring to say the least. It had, of course, been while I was running away from God, that I met God again in the Transfiguration episode. Praying over it for weeks, maybe months, I met up with Jesus when he came down from the mountain of transfiguration as Matthew says, “And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.” That line finally captured me and I let God be God again in my life. After a confusing experience the apostles saw no one except Jesus himself alone and so was I seeing “Jesus himself alone” with me.

The 17 years of my dad’s Alzheimer’s, 12 of them in a nursing home where he didn’t recognize anyone of us nor speak a word, was a challenge. At one of my retreats during that time I was given a Scripture to pray ... it was the passion and death of Jesus. I kept coming back to just one phrase in Matthew, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” I was pretty sure that God had not abandoned Jesus or me in this hour of darkness but why did this line keep haunting me as I prayed? After quite some time it came, God had not actually abandoned us, but maybe it FELT to Jesus like God had abandoned him at this terrible time and it FELT like God had abandoned me in these 12 years. I found it comforting that Jesus actually KNEW what I was experiencing. Our lives were intersecting. And there I was back in the living water of the Stream with Jesus floating beside me buoyed up by God.

Here is our present situation with Covid-19. We have all been turned upside down with it. The image that sustains me is the “Storm on the Lake” episode in Mark 5. Jesus is worn out with his ministry and suggests they all go across to the other side of the lake, presumably to take some rest. No wonder he quickly falls asleep in the boat. The storm rolls in furiously. The disciples wake Jesus up and say, “Don’t you care?” He rebukes the wind, and says, “Peace! Be still!” I’m wondering if we can take this time of forced isolation of sorts to seek out the rest we need from all our scurrying across our lakes of intense activity. Are we tempted to ask of God, “Don’t you care?” And let God rebuke our inner and outer tempests and tell us to be still. To hear God say so often, “Don’t be afraid!” And be filled with awe of this God?

*Breeze*  
*Ruah*  
*God*  
*Prayer*

I started this with my breeze experience and now for “ruah”, ways to meet God and ways God meets us. Ruah runs a gamut of descriptions from breeze to wind to breath to spirit. The Scriptures we all cherish begin with ruah, the breeze, the wind of God in the very beginning of Genesis 1. “In the beginning when God created a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.” I believe the Hebrew word used is “ruah”, the spirit of God or a mighty wind.

Later we have 1 Kings 19 where Elijah meets God not in a GREAT wind, not in an earthquake, not in a fire, but in a sound of sheer silence that gentle breeze that I began with that just touches my face like a feather.

And when we get to the New Testament, we can see that this ruah may culminate in the Spirit of God. Spirit is mentioned perhaps as many as 90 times. I have, through the years, experienced God not as

the “Hound of Heaven” as described by poet Francis Thompson; however, some of you may find in that metaphor more to your experience of God. I have experienced God more like the breeze, the wind that almost always seems present day, night, weekdays, weekends, months, and years.

Prayer has been quite a challenge for me. In my young years, I thought someone had to teach me to pray. I was disappointed when I couldn’t “do” or “perform” what they told me. As you probably can see I have finally committed to reaching God in a combination of images and in nature and in Scripture. And God reaches me in the same ways.

The “ruah” of God comes to each of us differently, whether wild wind, storm, breeze, sheer silence. Therefore, let us try to be open and willing to let the “ruah” of God come in personally. And then let’s hold one another up in the Ruah of God as a community of sisters and brothers.

### Questions for Reflection

1. Marya Pohlmeier, Comp. WSHS opens her article for this month with a wonderful, descriptive picture of growing up living on a farm surrounded by nature. For some this would feel like home but for those who grew up in other areas, take some time and draw an image of living that close to special place like that.

2. She would often enjoy sitting high on a hill above the creek close by and saw one day, the creek seemed to keep moving further and further away from the present – as she reflected upon that – she realized it was her initial call from God and to spend her life in ministry.

3. After reading that last paragraph, take time to reflect upon when you felt God’s call to you. As you ponder this, you may want to write down your feelings and responses. Was it excitement, joy, or fear – perhaps fear and feeling unsettled.

4. In mid-life, Marya realizes she was far from the living water of the Stream as she now refers to God and knew it was time to get back to the Stream. During your journey, have you felt it was time to “let things go” and get back to “flowing with the Stream”? Like, Marya, was there a special time or event that brought you back?

5. Marya speaks of being awakened to Scripture – she speaks of a moment after reading about the Transfiguration of “being alone with Jesus” herself after the Apostles had left him. That is a powerful image – how would you feel if you stood alone with Jesus? And then to realize, that she was back in the living water of the Stream with Jesus floating beside her buoyed up by God.

6. Through much of Marya’s struggle, she realizes that God had not abandoned us but rather that Jesus knew what she was feeling and felt the deep comfort. He knew what she was experiencing first hand.

7. We are all now so acutely aware of the Covid-19 which surrounds us and Marya refers to the “Storm on the Lake” in Mark 5. When the storm rolls in, the Disciples ask Jesus “don’t you care?” Jesus rebukes the wind and says “Peace, be still” and the storm ends. As today, we can ask God “don’t you care?” and let God rebuke our inner and outer tempests to be still. To hear God say so often, “Don’t be afraid!” And be filled with the awe of this God.

*Sr. LaVerne Peter, WSHS*