

THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



BULLETIN



THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



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

PRAYING TOGETHER
November 2021

Bulletin Cover - Prayer Reminder Card from a past Retreat

We are geographically separated, yet joined daily in prayer and love for one another.

Community Communication Contacts:

Prayer Requests and News Notes for the monthly Bulletin - email Br. Ephrem, apergydesign@gmail.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

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

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Community Marketing Group, LLC, Publisher
Port Huron, MI Copyright 2021

Illustrations by M. Lourdes Vinas, O.S.B. from Our Father St. Benedict
Sr. M. Regina Goberna, O.S.B. (New City Press, NY, 1983)
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CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS
REGIONAL GATHERINGS
NOVEMBER 2021**

Below is a list of the monthly Regional Gatherings and Corporate Communion. Meetings are open to all members (Sisters, Brothers, Workers, Companions, Friends and Applicants). If you are interested in attending an online Regional Gathering, please contact the Zoom Host and she/he will add you to the group's email list.

Regional Zoom Gatherings

		<u>November 20</u>
Eastern Regional USA	Br. David, WBHS, brdavidwbhs1@gmail.com	11:30 AM ET
Central Regional USA	Sr. Nancy Teresa, WSHS, nancybrooks40@gmail.com	2:00 PM CT
Southern Regional USA	Sr. Kathleen Rachel, WSHS, srkathleenrachel@gmail.com	3:30 PM ET
Western Regional USA	Sr. Wendy Martha, WSHS, wguyton17@gmail.com	10:00 AM PT

In-person Corporate Communion

Carthage, Missouri	Sr. Barbara Veronica, WSHS	10:00 AM CT
Pleasant Hill, Tennessee	Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS	TBD

REGIONAL GATHERING/CORPORATE COMMUNION DATES

November 20 • December 11

50th ANNIVERSARY RETREAT
April 28-May 1, 2022
Our Journey: Looking Back, At the Present and to the Future. Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit
Mercy Center, St. Louis, MO

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:

Here is an update for your Green Sheets. Remember that an online copy of the Community Green Sheets is available on our website. It is updated monthly. To view the online Green Sheets, go to www.workersisters.org; click on MORE, then on MEMBER PAGES. To sign in, the email to use is: WSHS.WBHS@gmail.com – the password is Angela45

Sr. Barbara Veronica has a new email: bmountjoy38@outlook.com

Sr. Susan Gabriel has moved to Pleasant Hill, Tennessee. Her address is:

Sr. Susan Gabriel (Varner), WSHS
55 Upper Meadows Road in Pleasant Hill
Sparta, TN 38583

Her phone and email address have not changed.



SPIRITUAL SHARING

Loved Marya's thought that it's not so important that you read through all of the scriptures as it is that all of the scripture goes through all of you. It is that daily persistent practice that does put one in a place of transformation over time.

COVID is affecting us all in so many ways. One of our sisters reports that there are many Sundays when she doesn't even want to attend church, but when she does, she feels better. She often just has to push a bit more now, to stay connected.

The article by Br. Ephrem talks about "Letting go and letting God". I have always looked to let God lead and to trust him at all times, as hard as it seems sometimes.

Marilyn's reflection on finding God through colors, shapes, and handiwork really resonated with me. Her depiction of God revealing Godself to her through the light in a stained-glass window reminded me of my own ecstatic experiences of God. I haven't always been able to experience the Divine like that though.

I used to think that wisdom and goodness could only be found in self-deprivation and solemnity. I built walls up around myself to numb my senses. I kept myself in line with strict fasting, head coverings, restrictive wardrobe choices and the constant sacrifice of my own dreams. The more I gave,

the more my soul withered away. I was completely numbed to life's joys. My spiritual and personal growth was stunted. Precious years were stolen from my life. I was judgmental of myself and others. I lived in a state of constant fear of damnation. After deconstructing my faith and rebuilding it again, I now realize that wisdom and goodness is marked by freedom and delight. We don't have to deprive ourselves of the joy of this life in order to find God in the next. We can experience God here and now if we are willing to open our eyes and mind.

The article by Marya Pohlmeier brought to mind memories from my Catholic upbringing through to my present membership in the Episcopal Church. The Mass was such an important part of my formative years through the end of high school. After many years away from the church I was introduced to the Episcopal church and found the familiarity of the liturgical experience spoke to me in a strong way. Here I found the grace I knew I missed.

The prayer experience is alive to me when I participate in the Eucharist in my small home church. Here many of us feel a family relationship and responsibility to each other. When I participate in other Episcopal churches I am comforted by the common rituals, prayers, and traditions. Knowing that all around the world many churches are reading the same Bible text and celebrating the Eucharist in the same way makes it especially meaningful. The Eucharist wherever I attend, has familiar customs, rhythm and movement.



FORMATION AND TRAINING

Praying Together By Sr. Nancy Clare, WSHS



A book could be written about this topic but I will reflect on what it means to me based on Scripture, our Episcopal Prayer book, Our WSHS/WBHS Community Prayers, and what I have experienced personally.

For Christian prayer, it begins for me with either of the two scriptures from Mark 12:30-31 or Matthew 22:36-40 . Both contain almost exactly this same statement which takes us to the heart of our Christian journey as explained by Jesus Christ to those who ask him what is essential to our faith:

From Mark - "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these."

These succinct summaries tell me that my love of God is never separate from my love of others. The “others”, of course, is another whole topic. It could be fellow WSHS community members, my parish members, fellow activists, strangers and everyone else I meet daily. Easily understood, but less easily lived out.

It stands to reason that if I am to love others, I would of course also be praying with some of those others. From Matthew 18:20 *“For when two or three gather together in My name, there am I with them.”* How often have I or someone else used this scripture to begin prayer together, just two of us or a small group of us? I’ve used this for phone prayers when I’ve called those preparing for surgery or in recovery. To be physically present is good; to be present on the phone is also good; and to be praying alone but to know that I am still praying with others, this too is good. All of these praying together times give me a sense of an enormous power that I don’t generate on my own. We pray our prayers in the company of the saints and as a member of the Body of Christ all over the world. I believe that the Holy Spirit calls us individually and as a group into a powerful and vast energy field, what we call prayer, and whether we are physically present or not, we are connected when we pray together.

Something happens in my church on a Sunday morning as I take in the mystical space, listen to beautiful music and see others in their various aspects as everyone is so different from me, but in some mystical way, connected to me as we pray ancient words together and sing magnificent hymns. I truly love and feel compassion for these people, some of whom I really don’t know well. The communion table is the common focal point but that sense of oneness is throughout the whole church and service. We find God in our neighbor. There is great power when we are gathered.

Remember how deeply moved we are as we begin Retreat with our service of remembering our Community of Saints? This is followed by a deep sense of peace and love as we follow with our moving Taize service. Then there are powerful experiences of oneness when we pray one on one for one another informally and especially when we pray intentionally for healing with one another at our Saturday night service. These are moments of heaven on earth, eternity experienced in the midst of our daily time.

Sr. Nancy Teresa and I have been meeting weekly to have some prayer time together, a time for sharing and intercessory prayer but most precious, the prayer of silence which we enter together with the whole host of heaven as we bring those for whom we pray into that silence that is always calling us to come and rest awhile. Praying with one other, or more than one person, is a way to be accountable and to enrich our own prayer life. We all need encouragement and support, because each of us is only one part of the Body which needs all of us if we truly want to transform our world, our culture, our neighborhood, our communities and families.

Prayer itself has expanded in meaning for me over the years. It can be just being with another to celebrate or to mourn; it may be a service of Eucharist where we pray old and well known verses together and sense that connection that we all share, no matter our differences. It can be working in my church’s food pantry as I prep boxed lunches and then interreact with those who come for coffee and sandwiches, making themselves at home sitting outside around a stone table and benches; I call it their local Starbucks! These guests know they are welcome as we often ask their names, make eye contact and just spend some time joking and making small talk. This is praying with others. There is connection as we serve them as guests. We are often thanked with a blessing for our day.

I am currently enjoying the richness and honesty of Barbara Brown Taylor, author and Episcopal priest and want to offer a quote from one of her books, Holy Envy, Finding God in the Faith of Others.

“I asked God for religious certainty, and God gave me relationships instead. I asked for solid ground, and God gave me human beings instead – strange, funny, compelling, complicated human beings – who keep puncturing my stereotypes, challenging my ideas, and upsetting my ideas about God, so that they are always under construction.....I hope God is going to keep coming to me in authentically human beings who shake my foundations, freeing me to go deeper into the mystery of why we are all here.”

Questions for Reflection

*Please remember it is not necessary to answer all of the questions
Choose one or two that speak to you and perhaps you would like to share.*

1. Sr. Nancy Clare begins her article on Praying Together with the words that “my love of God is never separate from the love of others.” As she cites the words of Scripture she opens with, she says “Easy to understand but less easily lived out”. Do those thoughts come to you also?
2. How do you feel when you pray alone and how do you feel when you are praying with others?
3. Sr. Nancy Clare draws an excellent example of how we begin Retreat with the Communion of Saints service. We draw those who have come before us into this service, and as we progress into the moving Taize Service, the whole room comes into a oneness, filled with everyone’s prayers, “as heaven on earth, eternity experienced in the midst of our daily time”. Perhaps you would like to share the feelings you have experience during this service.
4. Sr. Nancy Clare speaks of having a special Prayer Partner – Sr. Nancy Teresa. They meet weekly for prayer. The prayer of silence into which they enter together with the whole host of heaven as they bring those whom “we pray for in silence that is always calling us to rest a while and enrich our own prayer life through being accountable in reaching out to others”. If you do not have one you might look for a weekly Prayer Partner, to join you.
5. In her article Sr. Nancy Clare also mentioned prayers for those who come to her Church for their food pantry where the opportunity to share with others no matter what their differences are and reach out to them. This is indeed what I often call are “arrow prayer” where we quietly pray in my hearts and minds for the other.
6. The opportunity of Prayer is unlimited. We, of course, can pray in Church and at a Service but we can also pray as we walk, drive, and move in life each and every hour of each and every day as the Spirit calls us to “never separate from the love of others”.

Sr. LaVerne Peter, WSHS