

THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



BULLETIN



THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



**COMPASSION DURING
A DISAGREEMENT
August 2023**

Bulletin Cover - Retreat Spread Love

Photo by Marcos Paulos Prado - unsplash.com

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Community Communication Contacts:

Prayer Requests and News Notes for the monthly Bulletin - email Br. Ephrem, etcocles148@gmail.com or see green sheets for his mailing address.

Changes of address, phone numbers, email addresses - email Sr. Shirley Evangeline at sr.shirleyevangelinpace@gmail.com or Sr. Christine at casturges@gmail.com or see green sheets for mailing addresses.

Urgent Community Prayer Requests for email distribution – email or call Sr. Kathleen Rachel (srkathleenrachel@gmail.com) or Sr. Wendy Samuel (srwendysamuel@gmail.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 – This project has been discontinued until the situation in Haiti is resolved.

Problems Receiving your Bulletin - If you are not receiving the monthly Bulletin (by regular mail or by email), please email or call **Sr. Shirley Evangeline, 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	
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Community Marketing Group, LLC, Publisher Port Huron, MI Copyright 2023	
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CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS
REGIONAL GATHERINGS
August 2023**

Below is a list of the monthly Regional Gatherings and Corporate Communions. 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**August 26, 2023**

Eastern Regional USA Br. David, WBHS, brdavidwbhs1@gmail.com
& Southern Regional USA

12:30 PM ET

Central Regional USA Sr. Catherine Marie, WSHS, sr.catherine.marie@gmail.com

2:00 PM CT

Western Regional USA Sr. Wendy Martha, WSHS, wgyuton17@gmail.com

10:00 AM AZ Time

(Which is 10AM PT, 11AM MT, Noon CT, 1PM ET)

In-person Corporate Communions

Pleasant Hill, Tennessee Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS

TBD

REGIONAL GATHERING/CORPORATE COMMUNION DATES**August 26 • September 23 • October 28 • November 18 • December 16**

***Chapter Online Meeting
August 9, 2023 @ 1:00pm ET***

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:

Updates for your Green Sheets

To view the online Green Sheets, go to www.workersisters.org; click on MORE, then on MEMBER PAGES. To sign in use: WSHS.WBHS@gmail.com – if you don't remember the password, contact Sr. Christine or Sr. Shirley Evangeline.

Sr. Jacquie Elizabeth

has a new apartment number. Her new mailing address is:

Bickford at Mission Springs, Apt. 509B
5350 West 61st Place
Mission, KS 66205

Sr. LaVerne Peter

has moved. Her new mailing address is:

Cobblestone at Park Springs
600 Springhouse Circle, Apt. #205
Stone Mountain, GA 30087
Ph: 678-820-2505

The Rev. Kathy Bauer, Companion, WSHS

has moved. Her new address is:

Town Village of Leawood
4400 West 115th St. Apt. 223
Leawood, Kansas 66211

Sr. Carol Matthew

has moved. Her new mailing address is:

4340 W Rae Circle
Tucson, AZ 85841



COMPANIONS AND FRIENDS CORNER

Hello! I'm Marya Pohlmeier, Companion. I'm assisting Sr. Betty-Lou Shirley, coordinator of Companions & Friends, in a ministry we share with other Companions and Friends. Here are more snippets from our Pentecost Letters as they keep arriving! It's never too late to send your letter to Sr. Betty-Lou Shirley.

- I met my prayer partner at retreat. She remains in my prayers.
- I was exposed to Judaism at the retreat in 2019 on "Judaism and the Jewish Jesus." Judaism speaks to me because all good people have a place in heaven, regardless of their faith and the focus is on repairing the world, charity, and acts of loving kindness.
- As I pondered my commitment to WSHS/WBHS as a Companion, I decided I need to do something different to remember DAILY "to pray for The Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit" as my commitment says. I was finding I might remember to do so some days, but not every day. So, recently God helped me. I was on a bus pilgrimage with our parish and we went to a shrine where the tour guide gave us each a "decade of the rosary as a remembrance." I've never been dedicated to praying a daily rosary as my best friend is. But I decided, I could pray a decade once a day. And so I placed the physical beads in the place where my books of prayer and spiritual reading are located. That physical visual reminder has helped me to pray daily according to my commitment. I begin with the latest of the emails requesting prayer, look up who's birthday is this month or day, and then pray a decade of the rosary for all the WSHS/WBHS. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for guiding me to improve my commitment.

Dear Friends and Companions: If you have suggestions for this section that would be helpful to you, please let me know. My info is below. Love to you all and prayers daily for all.

Marya Pohlmeier, Companion, WSHS
1677 Mount Vernon Drive, St. Charles, MO 63303
Email: maryalovestravel@gmail.com



SPIRITUAL SHARING

As Sr. Lucia shared in the *Bulletin* about Benedict's human touch, I found myself saying AMEN, as that is one quality I love about the Benedictine Rule: the Compassion and concern for the individuals within the community making exceptions for those who are ill, are old, who have been working all day in the fields etc. Instead of being jealous of them being given a "pass" or being given an accommodation, we are to be grateful that we don't need that same accommodation for ourself.

It helps me to just take the time to look back on the month, our theme and to respond to what comes up to write about this month. Focusing for a few minutes makes me more alert and I open my eyes and ears to life around me the rest of the month.

What do I think of when I hear the expression Mother Earth? Hippies. Yes, that is what I think of when I hear that phrase. The Mother Earth News was a publication born from the era. Ideas of self-sufficiency and simplicity were the themes.

I continue to enjoy volunteer teaching English as a Second Language to seniors from Burma and China at our town's senior center. It's the highlight of my week.

My relationship with God grows from my Simplicity due to my clearing out the clutter in my mind, and in my soul. My relationship with others grows by slowing down, listening to them and God without all the clutter of my own voice.

A newsletter I receive included an article titled "A Healing Touch" with the following:

"There is truth and wisdom in a quote I once read: "Our sorrow and wounds are healed only when we touch them with compassion."

I experienced the truth of these words most significantly when I reached out and visited with a friend who is housebound. She thanked me at the end of the visit for my compassion for her. Driving home I realized while I was carrying God's compassion to someone else, I too was touched and received healing and a lightening of my own wounds and sorrows.

Recently I remembered just after Jesus learns that John the Baptist has been beheaded (Matt14:13...) He withdrew to a solitary place, but crowds followed him. And "he had compassion on them and healed their sick" (vs 14). Then he feeds the crowd. Despite his own sorrow, Jesus had compassion and healed and fed the people. In a new way I realized I too can follow this example of Jesus. I can let God's compassion work through me, even when tired or sad. Amazing grace!

Another life-changing thing I am learning to implement is learning the middle way. Attention to detail is not always the best or efficient way to do some things.

For several years my church has been hosting what we call Spin Cafe. It has a large hall that is kept warm during the winter months and a place that the homeless can come and get a meal and a warm place to shelter when the weather is nasty outside. They have access to computers to look for jobs etc. My sister and I make about 25 - 30 sandwiches for their lunch once a month. All of the churches in our town participate in making lunches.



FORMATION AND TRAINING

Compassion During a Disagreement

By

Erin Diericx, Worker Applicant, WSHS



God created human beings to be in community and in relationship with God and one another. We are relational beings who are dependent upon God and each other. Because God grants us free will, we are able to decide between several alternative “goods,” which can bring us closer to God or lead us astray. The choice is ours.

The Bible is filled with stories of individuals who disagree with God. When God asks Moses to go to Pharaoh, he says, “I cannot speak elegantly. Who will listen to me? Send someone else.” God gives Moses the words for Aaron to say to Pharaoh and the Israelites. God is compassionate by listening and providing an alternative way of getting the tasks done. God is with the Israelites during the seven plagues. God leads the Israelites out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and into the Promised Land. Was the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land easy and pretty? Nope. Did the Israelites always do what God asked? Nope. Did God have compassion and let the Israelites turn back to him? Yes.

Jesus eats with sinners, prostitutes, tax collectors, and the other sinners who the Jewish authorities would not even acknowledge. Jesus has a difficult but loving conversation with the Samaritan woman. I am pretty sure Jesus did not necessarily agree with their choice of occupation or how they went about their lives. However, Jesus still shares meals with these sinners, listening to them, and sharing God’s love with them. And when that was not enough, Jesus paid the ultimate price on the cross for our sins, for every time we disagree with God. Compassion.

Let’s examine Jesus’s conversation with the Samaritan woman. Outside of town, Jesus is resting at the well around noon when a Samaritan woman comes to draw water. Jesus asks her for a drink, and the Samaritan woman takes a step back [I imagine] and says, “You know that’s just not done. You are a male and a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. We should not even be talking” (*John 4:7-9*). Between

the gender roles and the cultural divides, Jesus, a good Jew, should not be seen with a Samaritan woman, let alone her. Jesus answers, "If you knew who I was, you would ask me for living water. Please give me a drink." (*John 4:10*). The Samaritan woman is taken back and says, "You have no bucket to draw water from this deep well. Our ancestor Jacob dug this well. Are you greater than him?" (*John 4:11-12*). Jesus goes on to explain the water he is offering her is living water; she would never be thirsty again, and it would give her eternal life (*John 4:13-14*). The Samaritan woman is overwhelmed by the promise of never being thirsty again, never having to draw water in the middle of the day, so she says, "Please give me this living water." (*John 4:15*).

Jesus replies, "First, go get your husband and come back," and the Samaritan woman answers sheepishly, "I have no husband." (*John 4:15-16*). Jesus commends her for her honesty, "You are right to say, 'I have no husband.' In fact, you have had five husbands, and the man you live with now is not your husband. You have stated the truth." (*John 4:17-18*). Jesus's compassion does not ignore the ugly truth, but by acknowledging her ugly truth Jesus is saying, "Yes, I know who you are, but I am still offering you this living water and eternal life in the Kingdom of God."

In an instant, the Samaritan woman recognizes the man who she has been talking with as a prophet and asks, "Where must an individual worship God: on this mountain or in Jerusalem?" (*John 4:19*). Jesus explains, "The Samaritans worship what they do not know on the mountain, while the Jews worship what they do know in Jerusalem. However, the time is now coming when it will no longer matter where people worship God the Father as long as they worship God the Father in Spirit and truth" (*John 4:20-24*). Jesus gives the Samaritan woman hope. Jesus promises the cultural divides will be things of past, and God will be accessible to everyone everywhere.

The Samaritan woman acknowledges the promise of the coming Messiah, and Jesus reveals he is the Messiah (*John 4:25-26*). Could you imagine being the Samaritan woman, an outcast who is forced to go to the well in the middle of the day to avoid the other women, finding she has been conversing with the Messiah, God in the flesh? And he has offered her living water and eternal life in the Kingdom of God, despite her past!

In the face of cultural differences, Jesus has compassion for the Samaritan woman.

- Jesus bridges the divide by meeting her where she is, at the well in the middle of the day.
- Jesus does not ignore the ugly truth, but he moves beyond it to what the future holds.
- Jesus shares God's love.

Unfortunately none of us are Jesus. None of us know what the future holds. None of us handle each situation perfectly. None of us say the right things all the time. In the face of disagreements, we have to fight the temptation to put up our defenses. To fight the temptation to be defensive, try these suggestions:

- Take a breathe to force yourself to PAUSE for a few seconds to think through your next response. It really does help.
- Acknowledge the other person may not be ready to hear what we have to say with the best intentions, or MAYBE we are not hearing what they are saying or know what they are feeling.

Taking a step back and time can help you see the situation more clearly and from the other side.

- Stick to the facts as best as you can.
- Express God's love and forgiveness as best as you can in the moment.
- Stepping aside and letting the other individual make their own decisions is sometimes all we can ultimately do.
- Practice humility: Apologize when you realize you could have handled the situation differently.

Relationships are messy given that human beings are involved and are vulnerable to other alternative goods. Not everyone we meet on the street is Christian. It is our job to express God's love to others and to direct them to the Triune God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

O Lord, lead us to face diversity with compassion and empathy. Give us your wisdom to understand each situation and to know what to say to the individual(s). Guide us with the Holy Spirit. † Amen.

Questions for Reflection

*Choose one or two that speak to you and perhaps
you would like to reflect on them in your next yellow letter.*

1. Reflect on how Jesus forms a relationship with this Samaritan woman by having compassion in the face of cultural differences. How can we learn from Him how to bridge a divide, to not ignore the truth but move beyond it and to share God's love with the "other" in our lives?
2. Knowing ourselves to often be "defensive", to feel "vulnerable, thus fearful", to be "right" or "in control", how can we begin to see and listen to "the other" without being ruled by these often-unconscious tendencies in ourselves? How does learning humility lead to compassion for ourselves which then leads to compassion for others?
3. Share with the Community a story of an encounter with someone very different from yourselves. Were you able to incorporate any of the suggestions given by Erin such as pausing before you spoke? Taking a few breaths while listening deeply to the "other?" Acknowledging that the other person might not be ready to hear what you say even with your best intentions? How did your encounter go? Would you have done anything differently should you have such an encounter in the future?
4. Prayerfully consider how much this hurting and divided world needs us to treat others who differ from us, with respect and compassion. Take this concern into your prayers this month.



FORMATION AND TRAINING

Exploring Our Community Rule

Our most recent Annual Retreat focused on “*getting back to our roots*” and “*reconnecting with one another*”. Consequently we spent this recent Retreat digging a bit deeper into our Rule of Life and allowing those present to reflect on how the Rule has formed them. Because we had such positive feedback, we decided to re-present the Rule over the next year in our monthly Bulletins. We will include salient parts of our Community Rule as seen through the eyes of each of our presenters, enabling all WSHS members to experience our gem of a Rule, gifted to us by our beloved founder, Sr. Angela.

Note: Those of you who have the big white Rule may read it in its full length; those of you who do not have the printed Rule can find it on our Web site if you wish to dig deeper.

(Sr. Nancy Clare, WSHS, Director of Formation and Training)

This Introduction to our Community Rule was written by our Founder, Sister Angela, WSHS April, 2000.

Out of God’s infinite glory, may we be given the power through the Holy Spirit for our hidden selves to grow strong, so that Christ may live in our hearts through faith, and then planted in love and built on love, we will, with all the saints, have strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth, until knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond all knowledge, we are filled with the utter fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:16-19)

We echo these words with Paul and pray that our Community will be given the power to grow strong, that Christ will be fully alive, that love will be the very fiber of our being, and that we will be “filled with the utter fullness of God.” With this undergirding, we can go forth bringing light and hope to the world. The RULE of the Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit is the underlying foundation of our Community, with the cornerstone being Jesus Christ....

I commend this RULE to you for your prayer and faithfulness. May the wisdom and knowledge of God’s Holy Spirit lead us into new adventures on this incredible journey through The Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit.

Our Fourfold Commitment (From the Prologue)

We, the Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit, hold as essential to our RULE, Mission, and Life together a fourfold commitment:

to Jesus Christ: *Abide in me and I in you. (John 15:4)*

to the Fruit of the Spirit: *As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. (John 15:4)*

to mission : *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit. (John 15:16)*

to ministry : *You who believe in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will you do... (John 14:12)*

This commitment is enacted through obedience to the RULE OF LIFE as prescribed by the Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit.

Mission Statement

The Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit is an International Covenant Community which seeks to respond to God's call through the power of the Holy Spirit, participate in Jesus Christ's vision of unity, become his holy people, show forth Fruit, and in obedience to his command, go forth into the world. It offers women and men — married, single, divorced, widowed or partnered — a path for individual spiritual growth through a life commitment to a RULE which provides an opportunity to experience prayer, worship, becoming, discovery, belonging, relating, commitment, and mission.

Vision

You cleared a space where it could grow; it took root and filled the whole land. (Ps 80:9)

The Community was founded to fulfill an evidenced yearning to experience some of the opportunities enjoyed in monastic life and to bridge the gap between the past and the future. In the face of the pressuring demands and changes in society and technology, a new means for attaining balance and Christian community was created.

The Life Commitment to the RULE included Prayer, Holy Scripture, Holy Eucharist, The Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Mission and Ministry. It required accountability and continuous conversion of heart. Its name, "Sisters and Brothers," expressed desire for oneness and at the same time celebrated diversity.

The concept of "Worker" was based on "Worker Priests" who lived and worked side by side with others. The charism was to carry Christ's redeeming love in the power of the "Holy Spirit" to all the world.

Our Vision Lived Out

I shall help you speak and instruct you what to do. Be strong, stand firm. Today is not beyond your strength or beyond your reach. (Ex 4:15, Deut 31:7, 30:11)

“Our Community is constantly being created by those who are becoming.”

The importance of training, formation, and education evolved into yearly and monthly themes and Annual Retreats.

Re-Visioning for the 21st Century

I will bless you and make your descendants many in number. Be therefore sure that Yahweh your God will go in front of you. (Gen 26:24, Deut 9:3)

Look down from heaven, look at this vine, visit it, protect what your own right hand has planted. (Ps 80:15)

What is our future vision? The shape and direction will be dependent upon the Community's faithfulness to the original vision, the RULE OF LIFE, the Mission Statement, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We must strive for solid leadership, sound training, and good communication. Our spirituality for the 21st century must be deep, real, inclusive, vital, alive, viable, intimate, relevant, and **compassionate**.

We must continue our charism to be Christ in the world and share God's love as we dialog with other denominations and religions. Above all, we must be women and men of constant prayer, continually seeking God's will and direction.

A few comments from Sr. Nancy Clare, Formation and Training Director, to close this first sharing of our Rule.

When I joined this Community, I knew that I needed a support system that would ensure my spiritual growth into the future. I needed accountability which I found in this Community. Although I read the Rule early on, it wasn't until later that I fully appreciated the vision laid out by Sr. Angela.

When I was made Novice Coordinator some years ago, I re-read our Rule and was truly in awe of the spiritual wisdom, scope and depth revealed by our founder's vision. Scriptures are woven into every part of this Rule to put a firm foundation under us. Her faith, passion, skill and love for our Community was revealed on every page. Although I was a bit nervous at assuming my new duties as Novice Coordinator, I was inspired more than nervous, after a reflective reading of this beautiful Rule of Life gifted to us by Sr. Angela. It was evident to me that she listened well to the Holy Spirit as she began to envision our Community and to write the Rule that would support this wonderful vision.

When Chapter discerned that group study of our Rule at Retreat was what was needed at this time for us to re-connect with one another and to return to our roots, the Holy Spirit affirmed to us over and over again that we were “in the flow” so to speak, as the important plans fell into place because everyone affirmed and supported one another. We were living out parts of this precious Rule.

Spend a few minutes reflecting on how you personally have benefited from our Community Rule. What part of these introductory sections speaks to you now, and how will you ensure that the vision is passed on meaningfully to those who come after us?