

**THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



---

# **BULLETIN**

---



**THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



**FORGIVENESS:  
COMPASSION FOR THOSE WHO HURT US  
October 2023**

**Bulletin Cover - Photo by Aaron Burden on Unsplash**

**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.shirleyevangelinepace@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](http://www.workersisters.org), [www.workerbrothers.org](http://www.workerbrothers.org)**

<b>THE WORKER SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>	
Web Addresses: <a href="http://workersisters.org">workersisters.org</a> <a href="http://workerbrothers.org">workerbrothers.org</a>	
Trina Avedisian, Friend, WSHS	Layout & Design WSHS/WBHS Bulletin
Sr. Shirley Evangeline, WSHS	Proof Reader
Contributing Staff	
Br. Ephrem, WBHS	News Notes and Prayer List
Sr. Kathleen Rachel, WSHS	Co-Director
Sr. Wendy Samuel, WSHS	Co-Director
Community Marketing Group, LLC, Publisher Port Huron, MI   Copyright 2023	
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) Reprinted with permission	

No part of this publication may be produced, transmitted, stored in a retrieval system, or translated into any language or computer language, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, magnetic, optical, chemical, manual or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the The Worker Sisters of the Holy Spirit, 9221 Creekside Trail, Stone Mountain, GA 30087.




---

**CALENDAR**

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS  
REGIONAL GATHERINGS  
October 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****October 28, 2023**

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

***NOTE DATE CHANGE from 4th Saturday to 3rd Saturday IN NOV AND DEC***

October 28 • November 18 • December 16

***Chapter Online Meeting  
October 11, 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:*

To view the online Green Sheets, Go to [www.workersisters.org](http://www.workersisters.org):

- Centered above the group photo are the words:  
**HOME: WHO WE ARE      COMMUNITY LIFE      MORE**
- Click on the word **MORE**. That will show another list of options. Click on **MEMBER PAGES** (the last option.)
- Sign in as: [wshs.wbhs@gmail.com](mailto:wshs.wbhs@gmail.com)
- If you don't remember the password, contact Sr. Christine.

### Updates for your Green Sheets

**Cliff Waller, Companion**

New email address and phone number.

Email: [cliffwaller1935@gmail.com](mailto:cliffwaller1935@gmail.com)

Ph: 210-601-0001

Cliff's mailing address has not changed.



## COMPANIONS AND FRIENDS CORNER

If you still need to send your Pentecost letter for 2023, Sr. Betty-Lou is always glad to receive it. May I suggest you put it on your "to do" list if needed. *- Marya*

From Pentecost letters:

As a Companion, I am praying for the Holy Spirit's breath be breathed into every member of The Worker Sisters of the Holy Spirit and The Worker Brothers of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpts from a sermon preached on the Spirit and ministry by a Companion:

This Sunday, I preached on the subject of Christian ministry. The texts were those of Nehemiah 8: 2-10 in which Ezra, the priest, is pictured flanked on the right and the left by a large group of laity as he stands to read the law to all the people. Beside the priest and his "flankers" we are told of another group called "Levites" who assist the people to understand the scriptures, encouraging them not to weep and prostrate themselves before the Lord, but to rejoice in the Word for the "joy of the Lord will be their strength."

This image called to mind the several Retreats I have shared with the WSHS/WBHS Community, the many Bulletins and “spiritual packets” I have received from you. These have all had the “Levitical” character of the joy in the Lord and in His Word. But just as importantly, WSHS/WBHS seems to understand and demonstrate that the Word and all the gifts of God come most powerfully when all are encouraged to become an active participant. We are to rejoice actively in the gifts that God gives us, not to sink into the hole of depressive passivity that grows and takes power when we believe that we have no gifts, or that those which we have are insufficient.

James 1:22-25 puts it this way “Only be sure that you act on the message and do not merely listen: for that would be to mislead yourselves. Persons who listen to the message but never act on it are like those who look in a mirror at the face nature gave them. They glance at themselves and go away and at once forget what they looked like. But those who look closely into the perfect law, the law that makes us free, and who live in its company do not forget what they hear and act upon it; they are those who by acting will find happiness.”

Read Luke: 4: 14-21 Jesus is “armed with the power of the Holy Spirit.”

...More personally, I have discovered in my life that the anointing of the Spirit becomes real when I consciously attempt acts of love in God’s name and to his Glory. The first time that I can remember actually doing this was when I was completely frustrated with trying to reason things out with my wife. I stopped and silently prayed to God to give me the strength and wisdom to be an agent of His love rather than being right personally. I found when I opened my mouth the next time my words were different and they were received differently. I found that the same person, with no other additions to the situation except my willingness to be an agent of God’s love, could function in a new way.

Through this simple experience, which has been replicated many hundreds of times since, I found that God’s anointing Spirit empowers me whenever I am willing to act as an agent of His Love and to subject myself to His guidance. If I try in my way, it always seems to backfire and to destroy the very relationship that I want most and need. If, on the other hand, I put my weakness and frustration before God, his Spirit arms me and empowers me to use my gifts to build up and create.

Isn’t it wonderful how we are affirmed when we affirm in God’s name? We are healed when we heal, forgiven when we forgive, loved when we love, given sight when we accept another’s vision and set free when we release others in the power of the Spirit.

Dear Friends and Companions:

If you have suggestions for this section that would be helpful to you, please let me know. I'd love to hear a short description of how you came to be a Friend or Companion, and what helps you remain a Friend or Companion. My info is below. Let us, Companions and Friends, pray as suggested above:

*Holy Spirit, may your breath be breathed into every member of The Worker Sisters of the Holy Spirit and The Worker Brothers of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

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



## COMMUNION OF SAINTS



Juliet Adele Crowell, age 83, of Croswell, passed away Sunday, September 3, 2023 in her home surrounded by family. She was born October 25, 1939 in Chicago, daughter of the late Raymond and Margaret (Girard) Carsky. Julie married Richard Crowell on June 16, 1962 in Croswell. They shared a rewarding marriage until his passing on January 15, 1999.

After graduating from Croswell-Lexington in the class of 1957, she earned a bachelor's degree from Eastern Michigan University and later a Master's degree. She was a dedicated elementary teacher at Carsonville/Port Sanilac for 37 years.

Julie was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Lexington, Michigan for more than 50 years and further served her Lord through Worker Sisters of the Holy Spirit. She served her community as a board member of the United Way of Sanilac County, and a member of the Order of the Eastern Star in Croswell. She considered herself fortunate to be able to travel in her retirement and will be remembered for her intelligence, kindness and generosity as well as her grit.

Sr. Julie Margaret, Sr. Kathleen Rachel, Sr. Barbara Rebecca and her mother, Catherine Westbrook were introduced to the WSHS/WBHS Community by Sr. Catherine, Sr. Bettie Patrick and Sr. Angela during a get-together at Sr. Catherine's Lexington home. The group was admitted as Workers in 1984 at Trinity Episcopal Church in Lexington. Following the admission service Sr. Bettie Patrick and Sherman hosted a celebration at their Lake Huron home. Sr. Julie served as Cluster Leader to the St. Theresa Cluster for a number of years. She will certainly be missed.



Theresa Cluster - 1984



## SPIRITUAL SHARING

Compassion for the earth is a topic on which we can learn a great deal from our indigenous brothers and sisters. They have a great reverence for the earth, including air and water. Our Rotary Club has a special environmental clean-up day every year and the garbage that is picked up is just appalling. Some people have no thought for others or for the earth. Now we seem to be seeing the results of global warming. So, at the moment we will continue to do our part to keep the world clean.

\*\*\*\*\*

I love Erin's description of Sin as "disagreeing with God." Her article was very insightful and compassionately written.

\*\*\*\*\*

I recently re-read *The Last Battle*, the final book in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia series. The following quote from Aslan (Lewis' Christ figure) should be disseminated to all of us when we seek to divide "us" from "them": "...if any man do a cruelty in my name, though he says the name Aslan [Jesus], it is Tash [Satan] that he serves and by Tash [Satan] his deed is accepted."

\*\*\*\*\*

The pointers Erin shared about how to deal with conflict with someone were really good reminders for me. However, truth be told, the people I am most often in conflict with are those in my immediate family! This summer found me "blowing up" rather often. Yikes! Well today, as I read the Bulletin sharing on our Rule, a verse from John 15 jumped out at me: "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) The light bulb went

on. I had not been “abiding in the vine.” All the busy hubbub and trying to organize a daily routine had pulled me off course. I had been trying to run things all on my own. The antidote to this human condition is to reconnect with the nurturing of Jesus as the Vine, and immediately we are available to receive God’s love and to pass it on. It is so simple, and I forgot just return to Him. I can even make a physical motion and place my hand back into the hand of the Lord of the Dance.

\*\*\*\*\*

As Sr. Lucia shared about Benedict’s human touch, I found myself saying AMEN! That is one quality I love about the Benedictine Rule. There is 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. The Rule was not to break one but to encourage and support growth as was shared so beautifully at Retreat. Encouragement and support only come when each individual is considered precious in himself or herself. When someone needs and is given what they need, we all are to be glad that the need has been met, not jealous that we didn’t get the same consideration. Be glad that we don’t need it!

\*\*\*\*\*

As Sr. Wendy shared in the Bulletin, we have this wonderful Creation that is being destroyed before our eyes. Seeing through the eyes of compassion we would be led to join our efforts with others. A big agenda but the first need is to begin with ourselves and slowly with God’s help work outwards. We can only do so much, but we can do something.

\*\*\*\*\*

I am going to be encouraging the members of our church to be in the corner for their friends and relatives with mental health challenges and to do this by being there for them with a listening ear and a listening heart.

\*\*\*\*\*

I also know, first hand, that ‘being with’ people is much more important than ‘doing for’ people.

\*\*\*\*\*

We have to see beyond what our disagreement is and see the person and show understanding and concern. Compassion!

\*\*\*\*\*

I have more space and time in my life to truly be present to others. I remember Sr. Angela sharing with us about praying to have the heart of Christ and how my heart has become so open and tender toward others in need. This is compassion.

\*\*\*\*\*

In the past 10 years I’ve been working and listening to others and employing non-judgmental responses which has been especially difficult with my “holy roller” family. I learned that when we die, we will have ridges on our tongue from keeping our mouth shut!

\*\*\*\*\*

I am so moved at the Bulletin sharing that we use at our Regional meetings. Today we shared Erin’s Compassion During Disagreement, which brought me to seeing this in my own life. I have a problem listening because my mind is already on overload trying to respond.

\*\*\*\*\*

I show compassion for myself by being kind to me and making sure that I get plenty of rest and exercise to keep myself healthy. And by spending time with my family and friends enjoying our conversations.



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

## Forgiveness

By  
Br. Ephrem, WBHS



*Br. Ephrem, WBHS lives in Batesville, Arkansas and became a Lay Worker in 2011.*

Forgiveness is a big subject; one we can read books about and devote ourselves to living out. I know that those of us in this Community do just that. We are also human and we suffer all the fragilities of being human. We fall and, like Jesus, we get up again. (That should be a song). I thought about regurgitating everything we know from Scripture and our traditions. But you know all of that already. You also know it experientially because that is a large part of our *Calling*.

All I *know* at the moment is that those lines about forgiveness from Scripture *mean* something. They are not just nice aspirations to be discarded when they become inconvenient, when the trials of life occur. They are recorded and handed down to us for just those moments. I know from them that we are meant to cleanse our own hearts, our own temples, before we may enter the Temple of God.

As for myself, I have studied forgiveness and I have tried to live it out as best I can for quite a while now. Imperfectly, to be sure. My own reconciliations (or return to balance or equilibrium as I see it) with the Divine were a long and fruitful process with a lot of pain and a lot of joy. That was about fifteen or so years ago. More. Perhaps you would be surprised at the truth of my life now, after a great deal of very hard work over a very long period of time. You might laugh, I hope, at the absurdity. It seems a long, long time ago. It was.

When I find it difficult to forgive, I commit to the process and trust in the Divine. I honor truth. I don't believe our light should be kept under a basket but, rather, placed atop that it might illumine us all. When I have wronged, I say so, even if the wrong was decades old. There are many things from the deep past that I deeply regret. When I am wrongly accused, I say so too. These are the precepts as I understand them.

So, just what is it that we are forgiving? The answer is pretty much always the same. Almost invariably it is the imposition of *violence* in one form or another. Coercion, intimidation, the threat of violence. Verbal violence. The *invalidating* of others. The "othering" of others. The *means* always equals the *end*. If violence is the means by which we choose to act in the world, regardless of the justification or expediency, it will not turn out well. If one perpetrates violence in the name of compassion, of healing,

one is still complicit and now worse. This is an obvious(ism). If there is no truth, can there ever be justice? What lies must we tell ourselves to justify our lies to others? How deep do we choose to bury ourselves, all the while spouting “good intentions.” Violence is violence. Jesus provides the model by which we are meant to respond to it, in ourselves and in others: acknowledgment of our own errors and the forgiveness of those committed by others.

Following Scripture, let us first be honest with ourselves. Here, forgiveness begins. We are emotional beings but we must not let our feelings (which may or may not be rooted in objective truth) dictate our responses. *Hume* wrote that, “The intellect is at the service of the emotions.” Let us hope, all evidence to the contrary, that this is not the case. Nor, it must be said, is the intellect to rule. Dispassionate compassion is a dangerous thing. Paul indicated, I believe, that the intellectual and emotional mind were both of a complimentary stature but were unified in the Spirit or Soul. This is something like the Greek Orthodox meditative practice of lowering that totality of mind, the nous, to one’s center or heart. If compassion is a state of being, this is perhaps the place of discernment at which forgiveness (in any direction) occurs. Giving and/or receiving forgiveness is a difficult experience to which one must be fully present and connected to Spirit.

Secondly, as Jesus models for us, let us be kind to others and ourselves in the process of forgiveness. Let us be compassionate, even as we are honest. What does that look like? The method of reconciliation, known to us all, as outlined by Jesus and practiced as rite in the Church is about a good example of how the process should work as I’m aware of it. That is a reconciliation, mediated through the Church, between oneself and God. In the political world, we have seen something like this method used as a model successfully in the *Truth and Reconciliation Committees* in the aftermath of the nightmare that was colonial South Africa. It’s about accountability *and* compassion. Sincerity is the key. Honesty. It is the asking for forgiveness and the grace to give it, just as the Lord forgives, the One who ultimately reconciles all things.

We also know that in forgiveness we ourselves are freed, regardless of the other parties involved. It’s about truth and owning up to one’s responsibilities in any dispute. There is always enough “blame” to go ‘round. Jesus came to break the cycle, the chains, of reactive violence that we might be free and thereby help to free others. He was, I think we would all agree, absolutely right. He called upon us to “love one another as I have loved you,” to preemptively regard the “other” as “self,” each a reflection of the *Divine*. Herein is forgiveness, real healing and reconciliation. How do we make that work? I don’t know. I know that it starts within our own hearts.

### **Mother Teresa’s Anyway Poem**

*People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered;*

*Forgive them anyway.*

*If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;*

*Be kind anyway.*

*If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;*

*Succeed anyway.*

*If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;*

*Be honest and frank anyway.*

*What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;*

*Build anyway.*

*If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;*

*Be happy anyway.*

*The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;*

*Do good anyway.*

*Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;*

*Give the world the best you've got anyway.*

*You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and your God;*

*It was never between you and them anyway.*

### **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.***

- Brother Ephrem connects the process of “reconciliation” with “returning to balance or equilibrium.” In another part of his article he speaks of forgiveness bringing us to a “place of freedom” regardless of the other person involved. If this resonates with you, share about a specific time when you felt this “return to balance” or sense of “freedom” after giving or receiving forgiveness.
- Br. Ephrem stresses that for reconciliation to be possible, we need to “commit to the process”, “trust in the Divine”, “honor truth” and “be sincere”. Remembering your past experiences forgiving or being forgiven, were these qualities present? What challenged you in this process the most? What did you learn from your process?
- Br. Ephrem included the “Anyway Poem” written by Mother Teresa. Share your response or insights to this beautiful poem.




---

**FORMATION AND TRAINING**


---

### **From our Rule - An Experience of Worship**

*Gathering together to give praise and glory to God.  
Drawing strength, renewal and sustenance  
Through the Holy Eucharist and the liturgies of the church*

As a new widow, worshipping with others is so comforting to me. I have returned to the small Episcopal Church, where we began when we moved to Tucson. To be able to share with others The Holy Eucharist is a sacred experience. ~ Sr. Patsy Anne, WSHS

#### **The Liturgy of the Hours**

*Seven times a day do I praise thee (Ps 119:164)*

*I shall bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall ever be in my mouth. (Psalm 34:1)*

Praise and adoration are a vital part of worship. Many times our prayers filled with petition. Many times we offer prayers of thanksgiving. Sometimes praise falls at the end of our list.

For centuries women and men have designated special times each day for prayer. Our Community is asked to join with the Church in reading the appointed lessons for the Daily office. Resources include the Book of Common Prayer with Morning, Noonday and Evening prayer as well as Compline. The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada has an excellent introduction to the Divine Office and Daily Prayer.

#### **The Eucharist**

*While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and after blessing it, he broke it, gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them saying: "Drink from it, all of you for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:1)*

The Holy Eucharist is our central act of Corporate Worship in the Rule and life of the Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit. This Sacrament is both a medication for the soul and healing sacrament of the church. It provides nourishment and health for both body and soul. The Eucharist, celebrated in our gatherings of Worker Sisters and Brothers all over the world, brings us closer together as we become more fully known to one another in the breaking of the bread.

In addition to regularly receiving the Holy Eucharist, members are encouraged to spend time in silence and solitude before the Blessed Sacrament. When receiving the Eucharist is not possible, a "Spiritual Communion" is encouraged.

*This excerpt of The Experience of Worship was taken from our Community Rule. Those of you who have the big white Rule may read it in its entirety; those of you who do not have the hardcopy Rule may find it on our Web site if you wish to dig deeper.*

### **For Reflection**

- Most of us cannot worship seven times a day but there is something about regular prayer that promotes stability and growth on our spiritual journey.
- How are you structuring your day to allow for regular prayer? Include times of less formal prayer when you turn to God during your day.
- Reflect on the importance of the Holy Eucharist in your journey of faith. Journal a bit about what this central experience of meeting Christ at the altar means to you.