

THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



BULLETIN



THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



COMPASSION LEADING TO ACTION
November 2023

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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CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS
REGIONAL GATHERINGS
November 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

November 18, 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

November 18 • December 16

Chapter meets at Conception Abby
November 16 - 19, 2023

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;
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.*)

When it says to sign into your account, *REMEMBER* to Sign in as: wshs.wbhs@gmail.com
If you don't remember the password, please contact Sr. Christine.

Updates for your Green Sheets

Sr. Paula Adelaide has a new email address
Sr.Paula.Adelaide@paulamorrow.com



FROM YOUR DIRECTORS

UPDATE ON PERE FANFAN (BR. FRANTZ BENEDICT)

Below is a copy of an email received by Sr. Nancy Teresa. It brings us hope of answered prayers for the release of Br. Frantz from his incarceration. Thanks be to God for His never-ending mercy!
Please read below.

From: STAN SHAFFER

Date: October 3, 2023 at 2:16:34 PM CDT

To: Nancy Brooks

Subject: Hopeful release of FanFan and others in the near future

I just received this regarding Pere Fanfan.

Please let me know if anyone has confirmation or has heard from him.

Blessings,

Stan

From: Jim Grant

Date: October 3, 2023 at 9:37:43 AM PDT

To: STAN SHAFFER...

Subject: Hopeful release of FanFan and others in the near future

I have spoken with Pere Ajax and Pere Casseus about recent developments in the EEH, primarily the recognition of the new ad hoc committee by Haiti's government, and a recent judge who ruled that none of Diocesan staff currently in jail are guilty of any crimes.

The wheels of justice are of course still turning slowly, but FanFan and the others should be released now that they have been cleared. The church will also be able to restore its customs franchise and start dealing with all of the EEH shipments languishing there, hopefully to include the GBHF Landcruiser.

There is further good news that an indictment has finally been brought against Vundla Sikhumbuzo and others for the charges originally filed against FanFan and the others currently in jail.

Cheers,

Jim

PLEDGES

If you have not let Sr. Nancy Teresa know your plans for this year, please email her at (nancybrooks40@gmail.com), call or text her at 913-638-3208. If you text, please add your name just in case you are not in my contact list. THANK YOU!

BIRTHDAYS and COMMUNION of SAINTS

We sent you an updated Birthdays and Communion of Saints list with the *October Bulletin*. The format provides a year's list, by month, of active members' birthdays as well as the dates when our deceased members entered the Communion of Saints. Please take time to read through the list, praying for our Community by name. Remember it is ok to send a birthday card from time to time, remembering those you know, and introducing yourself to those you have yet to meet.

If you misplaced or didn't receive a copy, please contact Sr. Christine and request a new copy. Her email is casturges@gmail.com; her phone number is: 970-219-5855.



WORDS FROM YOUR CHAPLAIN

WORDS FROM YOUR CHAPLAIN

By

Sr. Brenda Faith, WSHS



This month we are delighted to introduce Words From Your Chaplain. Sr. Brenda Faith, our Community Chaplain, was admitted as a Lay Worker in 1981. In January 2020, she was ordained priest and serves as Vicar at St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, a mission church in Collins, Mississippi.

My Dearest Sisters and Brothers, Workers, Applicants, Companions, and Friends,

We have had a meaningful year of study. I have enjoyed our wonderful submissions from the community on COMPASSION. We have learned so much and benefitted greatly from this study. Thank you one and all for your thorough discussion and thought-provoking material that led to many useful questions for us to ask of ourselves. As disciples of our Lord, we certainly want to have compassion for others, just as Jesus had for each of us and others.

As I reviewed the articles from each month several of your thoughts jumped out at me. The following are reflections worth contemplating and reviewing.

“The word itself feels like what it is” **Compassion** — the prefix *com* means with, together, and in association. We think of passion as an emotional encompassing feeling. It is a very strong feeling. Thinking of Jesus, we relate it to his suffering as recorded in the Gospels. God’s compassionate love is so strong that God gave all for us to demonstrate that love. *(Peter Brook, Companion)*

“There are always reasons for **someone holding back compassion** from us because we fail to put ourselves in the other person’s shoes.” This statement points out the importance of imagining why one would act the way one does. A familiar adage is: “never judge a man until you have walked a mile in his moccasins.” We must all stop and consider this and try to understand “the why” before we judge. If we try to understand, our understanding can help us feel compassion for our fellow travelers. *(Sr. Wendy Samuel, WSHS)*

The Book of Ruth epitomizes compassion — Naomi’s compassion for her daughters-in-law, Ruth’s compassion for Naomi by sticking with her, Boaz’s compassion for Ruth and God’s compassion in providing for the poor by commanding the farmers to leave the edge of the fields unharvested for them to glean for food. *(Ted Wilson, WBHS)*

Compassion is not only a feeling, “but a **personal demonstration of concern** for the other’s welfare.” A vocational example given was when working with troubled youth, a ministry was successful by “showin’ ‘em they care. They’re right there with ‘em.” Jesus showed compassion not only in words but through personal contact — touch and presence. (*Canon Harry Firth, Companion*)

“**The Earth** is a loving mother, nurturing and protecting all people and species without discrimination.” We should nurture and protect her in return by “living with compassion, balance, and harmony with Mother Earth.” (*Sr. Wendy Martha, WSHS*)

“Truly asking people how they are with open hearts is a **way to show compassion**. A smile can brighten someone’s day, or a kind word can change someone’s path. Truly ‘seeing’ someone can make all the difference and is compassion.” (*Sr. Lucia, WSHS*)

“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 (those with whom we find ourselves in disagreement). Guide us with the Holy Spirit. Amen.” (*Erin Diericx, Worker Applicant, WSHS*)

We also need to continually learn how to be **compassionate to ourselves**, as well as to others. Jesus modeled self-compassion in his practices of solitary prayer, close friendships, meal-sharing, sleeping under stress, and weeping when grieved, (*The Desert of Compassion* by Rachel M. Srubas). (*Sr. Carol Matthew, WSHS*)

Forgiveness is an act of compassion for the forgiver as well as the one who is forgiven. “We know that in forgiveness we ourselves are freed, regardless of the other parties.” “Jesus came to break the cycle, the chains, of reactive violence that we might be free and thereby help to free others.” We must yield to the Spirit of our compassionate God asking that Spirit to rule our hearts. “I know that it starts within our own hearts.” (*Br. Ephrem, WBHS*)

And I add the following:

God’s love for us is a compassionate love that flows from God’s being to God’s people. All through the Bible, over and over this is evidenced to us. God’s own self-revelation proclaimed in Exodus the character of mercy, lovingkindness, and compassion. (*Exodus 34:6*) The Hebrew prophets reminded us of God’s compassion. The psalms proclaimed it, “The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in merciful love.” (*Psalms 103: 145:8*)

Sister of St. Joseph, Catherine Nerney, writes of God’s love and compassion for the world. She writes that God’s compassion is handed down to us: “That God’s very life **imprints** in us that same dynamic rhythm from prayer to action, from contemplation to lives of compassion, reveals the God in whose image we are made.”

Catholic author Judy Cannato believed this Great Compassion was Jesus’ primary objective. She writes: “Jesus demonstrated God’s compassion for us to see it in action through his healing, kindness, generosity, and inclusion. **No one** was excluded from fellowship. Jesus went beyond superficial divisions and called for a culture of compassion.”

Judy adds, “Compassion changes everything. Compassion heals. Compassion mends the broken and restores what has been lost. Compassion draws together those who have been estranged or never even dreamed they were connected. Compassion pulls us out of ourselves and into the heart of another, placing us on holy ground where we instinctively take off our shoes and walk in reverence. Compassion springs out of vulnerability and triumphs in unity.”

Compassion flows from the heart of God to and through our own hearts. But we must let it happen. It is available to us and to the world. Our hearts must be open to “see”.

I recently read a devotion by Xochiti Dixon. She tells about a premature baby who surprised doctors by surviving. He entered the foster care system until his aunt adopted him. A teacher realized four-year-old Christopher Duffley, though blind and diagnosed with autism, had perfect pitch. Six years later at church, Christopher stood onstage and sang, “Open the Eyes of My Heart.” The video reached millions. It can easily be pulled up on YouTube where the viewer can be amazed at the beauty of the boy and the song. It’s a wonderful tool for contemplation and prayer. In prayer we can open the eyes of our hearts to see our God and the compassion that is available **to us** and available **for us** to share with others.

God Bless each of you, my Sisters, Brothers, Workers, Applicants, Companions, and Friends of our Community. I pray you are continually clothed in the abundant compassion of our God.

As Paul writes to the church at Colossae, “As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.” (*Colossians 3:12, NRSV*)



COMPANIONS AND FRIENDS CORNER

Companions and Friends, let us pray daily for our Community:

**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.**

If you still need to send your Pentecost letter for 2023, Sr. Betty-Lou is always glad to receive it.

What’s a Pentecost Letter? Great question asked by a Friend. Simply put, it is a letter composed by each of us once a year and sent to our Coordinator, Sr. Betty-Lou Shirley. Originally, it was designed to be our reminder for a financial contribution to our Community. That part is now taken care of by the annual reminder letter we receive to send our financial contribution.

Thus, the Pentecost letter has morphed into a spiritual statement about our “state of soul,” so to speak. That leaves it wide open to assess our living as a Companion or Friend and write as little or as much

as it takes. The Sisters, Brothers and Workers write a letter once a month to their Cluster leader responding to the article in the *Bulletin* or whatever else the Holy Spirit is awakening in them. We can do the same once a **year**.

Dear Friends and Companions:

I had a lovely conversation by phone with a Companion and his wife. They are both retired and getting “up in years.” He told me he became a Companion because he was invited! (Do you invite others???) He stays a Companion because the order is a remarkable witness to the world. He prays for the Community and especially enjoys sharing the Ignatian way of praying with his daughter, and he loves when the *Bulletin* arrives.

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.

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



SPIRITUAL SHARING

Thank you for your openness and honesty about your awareness of being judgemental. As we grow, God reveals things to us about ourselves that need to be weeded out. We are products of our upbringing and it takes some work to see what God wants us to see in order for us to become the person we are really meant to be in this world. God’s love for us is so great to show us these things and sometimes it is difficult for us to realize what is embedded deep within us. Your affirmation that Our Rule is calling you to be less judgemental and to be more open in Mind and Spirit is a real blessing.

I am a student of Richard Rohr. I also love John Dominic Crossan’s teaching on Jesus. Well, I love Jesus. What more can I say.

I used to hear that aging isn’t for the faint of heart! And it is so true.

It is Mental Health Sunday (October 8th) and our church is unveiling a new group called Mental Health Allies. It’s composed of mental health professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers) and mental health consumers and family members of mental health consumers. The purpose of the group is to educate the congregation about mental health matters and to reduce the stigma associated with mental health illnesses.

It's been a busy summer with gardens producing, activities like the local Fair in August and guild activities starting up again. I sure didn't get much done, what with looking at fibre, talking, eating, more talking. Wasn't it fun!!!! Much needed Compassion for self.

Compassion and self-compassion I think is like the airline's spiel "put the mask on yourself so you can help others". If you are able to do many things but you don't have compassion for yourself, how can you have compassion for others?

Our Community is always inspiring and reaching out. As I page through my calendar each morning, I seem to find a hint of someone or something that I need to look into. Can I help in any way? Could I give her a ride, make a meal, or? Just a phone call can sometimes make a difference. As I pray, and reflect, I often find a way to encourage or help. Yes, sometimes I'm not successful, but just being there can help strengthen the person needing the help.

Thank you for being concerned regarding my concern for my brother. He has always broadened my understanding of Jesus and the Bible. He loves all the hymns and sings beautifully. I'm not good at articulating the situation with him. But it felt so good to sit with everyone on Zoom today.

The *Bulletin* was wonderful as always and I especially appreciated the reminder to 'care for ourselves'. It is easy to 'overdue.'

I appreciated this topic of dealing compassionately and being able to communicate in that same manner with those with whom we disagree. This topic has been preoccupying me for some time because of the deep divisions in this world we live in today. It is different than the divisions I remember from the past.

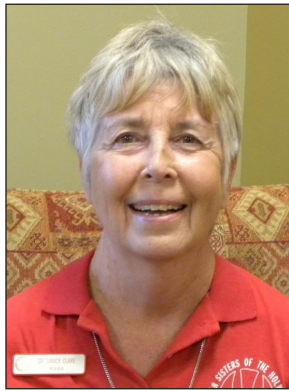
As always when I start writing, something seems to let go inside of me and I find I have more to say. These letters benefit me as they help me to get a better idea of what's going on inside of me each month. It is not that I don't know what to do. The clue is to remember the wisdom of "compassion for self" and then practice it. Our Women's Bible Study is looking at the Parables of Jesus and this past week was the Wise and Foolish Builders. The passage in Matthew points out that the foolish builder is like someone who hears the Words of Jesus but does not act on them. Ah, it sure makes a difference when I listen for what Word is being spoken to me and then act on it. The actions are usually quite small. Such as changing my attitude to focus on what is good and builds up. Or, making my bed first thing in the morning to outwardly see more order and calm.



FORMATION AND TRAINING

Compassion Leading to Action

By

Sr. Nancy Clare, WSHS

Imagine a time when you needed loving compassion from someone; when you were at your lowest, when you were most vulnerable and in need. Was there someone who came into your life at that moment and showed you loving compassion? There may have been some who prayed and that's a form of action certainly. There many have been some who called or wrote notes and that was action driven by caring compassion. However, was there a time when someone ministered to you in such a compassionate way that to this day you remember their loving act which gave you new hope or strength or courage to go on during a difficult time? There have been such times and persons in my life. Truly, it was as if that person were sent directly by God to meet an immediate and deep need which revived me and gave me strength for the short or long struggle ahead of me.

In the Spring of 2020 when Covid brought fear to so many, I fell and shattered my upper femur. By the grace of God I was able to reach my cell phone which lay on my kitchen counter. I could not have stood up to use my other phone but was able to get help fairly soon on my cell phone.

When emergency help reached me, I was in shock and great pain but I was stabilized and met my surgeon who would put a titanium rod in my leg the next morning. Surgery went well and I was drugged enough that I was okay until the night when the pain began. I desperately wanted to sleep but sometime around midnight they discovered I needed a pint of blood and the nurse didn't get it started correctly. Several hours later I was miserable with my bruised arm swollen twice its size. They then tried the other arm and woke me up all during the night to check on me. In the morning I found myself wrapped in damp sheets with blood stains everywhere. I was about as low as I could be with both arms black and blue and an aching leg. I was ready to throw in the towel and give up. I was close to tears maybe more from weariness than pain although there was that also.

A young nurse came in and gave me an upbeat good morning. I believe she saw that I was not coping well and close to tears. I sensed her empathy. She helped me to the bathroom and as I sat there I shared with her that all I wanted was to get under a shower and just feel cool clean water showering down on me. She responded "Well, you can't have a shower but we can bathe all of you right here." To my surprise, she brought a big bowl of warm sudsy water and two wash cloths and said "You do the top and I'll do the bottom." Because her manner was encouraging, warm and kind, I almost cried from relief. I had the feeling that she didn't have to go the extra mile with me but she did. After a thorough

and gentle cleansing, she massaged soothing lotion everywhere and then helped me to brush my teeth, still sitting in the bathroom. This compassionate and kind nurse then helped me change into a clean hospital gown and sat me comfortably in a chair while she changed my bed completely with all fresh sheets and pillow cases.

I have been shown other acts of compassion, but I share this one because it was so recent and my need was so great. This angel just came into my room and ministered to me. I felt as if God met my needs through this young woman on that dismal morning in the hospital. Through her gracious loving action I regained a sense of hope and strength from that very moment, enough to continue through my healing journey. I went from darkness into the light because of this young nurse whose compassion led to action on my behalf. I share this time in my life because I want you to remember a time or times in your own life when you received such an act of compassion.

The Incarnation, for me, is the ultimate compassionate act. The loving Son of the Father, out of compassionate love, emptied himself completely of all heavenly power; came to us, accepting the limits and challenges of our humanity. As fully human, he showed us how much we are loved and are to return that love by loving ourselves and our neighbors.

We have the old Testament and the prophets' message to show us this more loving path but with Jesus coming in human form, we now see this path walked by a fully human man. He showed us how to cultivate our relationship with our loving Father, how to respond to others out of the love received from above. Our compassionate acts come, not out of obligation, but out of being loved ourselves and responding to this love as it overflows in us to God, to ourselves and to the others we meet. Often we revere Christ without taking that next step to follow in the path he has shown us.

Erin, Brother Ephrem, and Sr. Lucia, in past *Bulletins*, movingly shared some particulars of how Jesus modeled compassion for us. We are able to do this because we are first loved and called to respond to that loving relationship.

I know I am on that path when I am able to reach out to a homeless person, smile, make eye contact, and maybe even speak a few words simply as one human being to another. I need this interaction as much or more than that person to whom I extend this compassionate act. These quotes below from Fr. Richard Rohr resonate with me:

“The outer poverty, injustice, and absurdity we see when we look around us mirrors our own inner poverty, injustice, and absurdity. The person who is poor outside is an invitation to the person who is poor inside. As we nurture compassion for the brokenness of things, and learn to move between action and contemplation, then we find compassion and sympathy for brokenness within ourselves. We, too, are full of pain and negativity, and sometimes there is little we can do about it. As compassion and sympathy flow from us to any person marginalized for whatever reason, wounds are bandaged — both theirs and ours. We’ll never bandage them all, nor do we need to, but we do need to get close to the wounds.”

A meaningful image for me to explain these daily acts of compassion is one of joining the constant dance of love between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It’s all about giving and receiving love. That

love may be revealed in acts of kindness and mercy; sometimes it leads us to march with a sign for justice; sometimes it may mean a ministry of presence with someone in need. It is good to remember that these acts of compassion, large and small, are as varied as the needs of those we meet.

I'll close with some wise words attributed to Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

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. Spend a few minutes remembering a time when you received an Act of Compassion and reflect on the blessings you experienced. Reflect on any change within as a result of this compassionate act.
2. Reflect and describe the process experienced as you go from feeling empathy to an act of compassion for another.
3. Share your insights and feelings when you reflect on the Incarnation of Jesus.
4. Expand this view of Incarnation and reflect on how you see God incarnate in your daily life if you have eyes to see and ears to hear.