

THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



BULLETIN



THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



THE COMPASSION OF JESUS
May 2023

Bulletin Cover - Photo by Mike Labrum - Unsplash.com

As Father Harry reminds, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine..."

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. LaVerne Peter (callaghgan@aol.com), 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
Web Addresses: workersisters.org workerbrothers.org

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CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS
REGIONAL GATHERINGS
May 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

May 20, 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, wguyton17@gmail.com | 10:00 AM MT |

In-person Corporate Communions

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| Pleasant Hill, Tennessee | Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS | TBD |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----|

REGIONAL GATHERING/CORPORATE COMMUNION DATES

**May 20 • June 24 • July 22 • August 26
September 23 • October 28
November 18 • December 16**

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**



FROM YOUR DIRECTORS

RETREAT THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who participated and helped with Retreat 2023! We plan to share some photos and reflections on Retreat in an upcoming issue of the Bulletin.

BIRTHDAYS and COMMUNION of SAINTS

Along with the May 2023 Bulletin, you will find an updated Birthday and Communion of Saints list. 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.



SPIRITUAL SHARING

I know of some times when I have not acted with compassion and, as you mention, fear has often been behind my actions.

I feel that God implants in our souls what is in our best interest because He knows us best. He encourages us to take steps we might not take otherwise, as we are unsure so often of even the smallest steps we take. He listens to our joys, our sorrows and our complaints equally. He supports us in our everyday existence and rejoices in our successes.

Compassion is also the focus of the Living Compass "Living Well through Lent 2023" that our Women's Bible study is using. I am reminded of the importance of being aware of God's Love and care for me. Living Compass reflections put it this way: "simply praying for awareness of God's loving gaze that is cast upon the hurting and vulnerable, even and especially ourselves." The image of "God's loving gaze" is new for me. It helps me see God's presence as an image of God's gaze surrounding and watching over me.

Today I read: "Our capacity to offer compassion to others is directly related to our ability to open ourselves to receiving God's compassion for ourselves." Ah, here again was the reminder that we cannot pass on to others what we have not already openly and unreservedly received from God.

I am so grateful for the guys in my Men's Study Group at church. We really enjoy each other's company. But more importantly, in preparing to guide each weekly session, I am forced to seriously confront the scripture readings and supplemental material. How to allow the Spirit to make an impact and

touch our hearts? How to grow in the knowledge of Our Lord and apply that knowledge in our daily walk? It is a very special time.



FORMATION AND TRAINING

JESUS' COMPASSION AND OUR VOCATION by Canon Harry Firth, Companion



Jesus often encountered religious and even political mistrust and rebuff, but that did not stop him from showing compassion for others. His compassion becomes a model for people like you and me living in today's challenging world. These thoughts are offered as an affectionate personal sharing with you.

Apparently today there's some latitude as to what compassion can mean. Let me explain my view by sharing a personal experience.

One fine spring afternoon my college friend, Jim, invited me and several classmates to go swimming with him in a small lake at someone's family farm. We found the banks not too muddy and there was a small island that appeared a reasonable swim from where we all jumped in. Everyone else swiftly reached the island, but I was still recovering from *polio myelitis* a couple of years before, and about midway muscle fatigue took over and I began sinking. Several of the guys noticed and were yelling encouragement, but Jim actually saved my life by diving in and helping me to safety. The rest of the day with the others was great, but I will always be especially thankful for Jim.

To me his action demonstrated what Christlike compassion means. Although the dictionary only calls it "a deep feeling of pity for the suffering of another, and an inclination to give aid or support, or to show mercy", it cites the Latin *pati* for feeling *pity* or *sympathy*. My understanding of the Latin is stronger: *to get through* something. *Com-*passion suggests the responder being *with*, and *sticking with*, the person facing the challenge. So to me, Christlike compassion at its best is more than a *feeling* or an *inclination*, but a *personal demonstration of concern for the other's welfare*.

In a recent Kansas City newscast featuring a successful rehabilitative youth ministry, the interviewer asked the counselors why their work with troubled youth has been so effective. The response was, "Our leaders are *showin'* 'em they *care*. They're right there *with* 'em."

Again and again in the New Testament we find instances where our Lord didn't just reveal sympathetic *feelings* for sufferers. He showed compassion not only in words but through personal contact. For in-

stance, touching the dumb person's tongue; making mud with his own saliva to restore a blind person's sight; saying, "little girl arise" and then helping her sit up.

Many opportunities were offered for persons to experience *personal closeness* with Jesus. To Levi he said, "follow me" (*be with me*). He told a man with a withered hand to stretch it out to him for healing. It was deeply significant when he told the disciples, "You did not choose me, but I have chosen you." "There shall be one flock, one shepherd!" I relate to Jesus as my beloved shepherd when I pray Psalm 23: "Yea, though I walk through the shadow of death I fear no evil, *for thou art with me*; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

In Matthew's Gospel we recall a moment when Jesus, sorrowful and troubled by the murder of John Baptist by Herod's jailers, withdrew to a hopefully deserted place for prayer but was soon thronged by hoards following from all over. Seeing the great crowd he had compassion for them and cured their sick. Evening approached and again in compassion Jesus divided five loaves and two fish so that all ate and were filled, with baskets full of left overs.

He sent the disciples off by boat so he could dismiss the crowd and begin praying in solitude. Stiff wind and waves threatened the disciples and when Jesus approached walking on the sea, they were terrified. Jesus said, "Take heart, it is I, do not be afraid." Peter asked, "Lord, command me to come to you on the water." So Jesus said, "Come." (You know what happened next!) "Lord, save me!" Then Jesus went *with* Peter and joined the others.

Now in all these connected events our Lord, who had desired prayerful solitude, instead showed *personal, physical compassion* for the gathered mob by healing their sick; by a feeding miracle; by walking across the water to help his fearful disciples; by encouraging and then saving Peter; and then joining the others in their now safe vessel.

There was a certain centurion whose total faith commitment was rewarded by a promise that he, on returning home, would find the object of his concern alive and healthy. In another instance, the initiative was taken by a woman daring to touch the Lord's garment. But, in many cases it was Jesus who showed his compassion through wonderful, close personal contact and relationship with others.

Taken all together, can you and I discern our Savior's compassion as a primary model for our own vocation as Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit? If so, we must realize that perhaps, *especially* in today's divisive political and religious climate, compassion could be one of our most meaningful gifts to others. The way we *look at people* both similar to and different from us, after all, is directly related to how we *treat* them.

How comfortable are you and I with concepts like inclusion and diversity? How should we respond when others with different viewpoints become angry with us? What does compassion suggest to us with reference to transgender, gay, lesbian or bisexual persons? How should we feel and pray concerning war times, war crimes, compassion among troops, compassion toward enemy troops?

How would Jesus guide our racial attitudes and actions? How about awareness of redlining, segregation, suspicion and fear of the "other", education, employment, equal opportunity, immigration? How do we feel toward persons who seem to yearn for a more discriminatory, exclusionary past?

Sometimes as I grow older, I wonder if the frailty of my living situation allows reasonable hope that my attitudes and ideals will make much impact on society for better or worse. In one parish I served we had a group of eighty-plus year olds who called themselves Saint Barnabas' Guild. We realized that we could still use the telephone, write letters, encourage and speak out in support of others and each month we met and shared our experiences with one another. Thus we managed to feel connected with our sense of vocation to compassion in response to Jesus Christ.

Compassion may not always be easy, but John's Gospel 10:11 reminds us that the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, and Matthew 5:14-16 signals the importance of *making good actions visible for the right reasons*: "YOU are the light of the world," Jesus tells us. "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

And remember that old Sunday School song, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!"

Questions for Reflection

Fr. Harry reminds us that the way we look at people both similar to and different from us, is directly related to how we treat them.

1. How do you see Jesus guiding your attitudes and actions towards others?
2. Father Harry states: "The way we look at people both similar to and different from us, after all, is directly related to how we treat them." Do you agree with this statement and if so, why? If you disagree, why not?
3. "Matthew 5:14-16 signals the importance of making good actions visible for the right reasons:" What would be a good reason and can you give an example when you have performed a good action for the right reason regardless of the negative opinion of others?