

THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



# BULLETIN



THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**  
**January 2024**

**Bulletin Cover - Photo by Mary Dean: [Marydeandraws.com](http://Marydeandraws.com)**

This photo was shared with us by Sr. Brenda Faith at Chapter 2023. Her sharing of the Fruit of the Spirit inspired us and we look forward to the coming year.

**Community Communication Contacts:**

**Prayer Requests and News Notes for the monthly Bulletin** - email Br. Ephrem, [etcocles148@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:sr.shirleyevangelinpace@gmail.com) or Sr. Christine at [casturges@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:srkathleenrachel@gmail.com)) or Sr. Wendy Samuel ([srwendysamuel@gmail.com](mailto: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
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**CALENDAR**

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS  
REGIONAL GATHERINGS  
January 2024**

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**

**January 27, 2024**

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 AZ Time  
(Which is 10AM MST, 11AM CST, Noon EST)

**In-person Corporate Communion**

Pleasant Hill, Tennessee      Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS      TBD

**REGIONAL GATHERING/CORPORATE COMMUNION DATES**

**January 27 • February 24 • March 23 • April 27 • May 18\* • June 22 • July 27  
August 24 • September 28 • October 26 • November 16\* • December 14\***

*\* Date changed to 3rd Saturday due to the holiday*

***Chapter meets Online  
January 10, 2024 @ 1pm EST***

**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**




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

**Updates for your Green Sheets:**

**Sr. Janeen Julian** – Please replace her janeen195 email with the following: [srjjwshs@gmail.com](mailto:srjjwshs@gmail.com)

**Sr. Jane Bartimaeus** has a new home phone number. It is: 905-713-9959.

**Sr. Deborah** – Please replace her [strdeborah@hotmail.com](mailto:strdeborah@hotmail.com) email with the following: [strdeb555@gmail.com](mailto:strdeb555@gmail.com)

**Melanie Toboyek** – Her current mailing address is: 207400 County Road X, Mosinee, WI 54455

**The Rev Clifford Waller, Comp** – He no longer has a land line. His cell number is: 210-601-0001 and his email address is: [cliffwaller1935@gmail.com](mailto:cliffwaller1935@gmail.com)

**Trina Avedisian** – Please remove the work number by her name. She only has the cell number which is: 810-300-8381

**Joan Gittings** asked to become a Friend of the Community. Her name and address information is now listed in the Friend section of the Green Sheets.

Chapter accepted, with regret, **Gail Moore's** decision to withdraw from the Community



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FROM YOUR DIRECTORS

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### RETREAT 2024 – You are Invited!

Retreat 2024 Brochures will be mailed or emailed to you shortly. Please read the Brochure carefully and begin to make your plans to join other Sisters, Brothers, Workers, Companions and Friends for our annual retreat.

## The Fruit of the Spirit



MERCY CENTER - ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

APRIL 25-28, 2024

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL RETREAT

Please plan on participating in *Retreat* this year as members of our Community discuss Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance. The Fruit of the Spirit are gifts given to us to use in our daily lives. May we find excitement in being able to share in person or via Zoom. *Retreat* specifics including, the Registration and Accommodation forms, will be sent to you separately in the Retreat Brochure. Please note the Registration deadlines!

With love,  
Sr. Shirley Evangeline  
Retreat Coordinator





## COMPANIONS AND FRIENDS CORNER

Let us Companions and Friends 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.**

It's exciting to introduce a Companion and an Applicant this month.

**Barbara Everett, Companion ... Phone conversation with Marya**

### **What drew you to the WSHS?**

Sr. Angela became a neighbor to Barbara when she moved to Tennessee. They became friends, need we say more? Sr. Angela had the passion to invite others into deeper conversations and Barbara grew in friendship followed by respect. It led her to become a Friend and then to become a Companion. Others from the same area (a retirement community) soon formed their own mini-community and continue to do so. There are now one Sister, one Lay Worker, two Companions and one Friend who continue to grow together in their spiritual journeys. They also keep in touch with Br. Andrew. Barbara found the Retreats that she was able to attend to be rewarding to her spiritual journey. After Sr. Angela died, the Tennessee community jumped in to help lead the very next Retreat.

### **What keeps you?**

Barbara remains because of the relationships developed and the community's belief and practice of prayer. Her local community in Tennessee is vital to sustaining those relationships and prayer.

**Patricia Cashman, Companion/Worker Applicant ... Written email by Pat**

### **What drew you to the WSHS?**

I traveled to Assisi in January 2023 and came back wanting a religious community. The leader of our pilgrimage was from a Franciscan community where people live in their homes and he seemed so very happy with it. I am not a Franciscan, I'm Benedictine! From my first formation through our Book of Common Prayer, I've felt a deep match with the Benedictine lifestyle. From 2003 – 2009 I lived as a member of two different Episcopal Communities (Community of the Holy Spirit and The Order of St Helena). I treasure that experience and the trip to Assisi rekindled the flame.

Also, at that time, I was feeling discouraged and stuck in negative energy toward my ministry in the church as a priest. I took a few months off from clergy supply work to be still and listen. And then I immediately found WSHS & WBHS. I just googled "Episcopal Religious Communities." I believed I knew them all, and was shocked when this one popped up out of nowhere. I couldn't understand how I could have missed it! It was completely new to me. I turned to the website and found The Rule.

It impressed me deeply. I know how hard it is to write theologically cogent ideas and I just fell into the lovely Benedictine world through it. I got in touch with the Community and came to the April Retreat. Everything was loving and loveable. I felt drawn to want to be a Sister and began the process.

### What keeps you?

I keep remembering my thoughts, feelings and desires that I began with in 2023; in my mind's eye I see the flame of community burning. I keep my WSHS Community "mementos" on my desk – my name pin, my Dove pin, the Prayers for the Community. Sometimes I wonder why I don't just put them away because I am behind in writing my reflection pieces and doing my packets. Maybe it is because of stubborn pride. I don't like to give up after I say I'm going to do something, but I think it is the Holy Spirit inviting me to a community to experience deeper giving and receiving. I'm not about to turn away. I've experienced so many blessings and renewed positive energy toward life and ministry since the retreat, and I'm deeply grateful. It is not that I pray regularly for the Community. The Holy Spirit will send me sudden, intense thoughts of our Community out of the blue. They have come often enough now that I feel I must make mention of them. They always result in what I call buttery prayers, warm and delicious. I find these keep me going. Oh, that, and looking forward to the next Retreat!

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Thanks to Barbara and Patricia for their contributions this month! Love to hear from you! If you still need to send your Pentecost letter for 2023, Sr. Betty-Lou is always glad to receive it. Keep it short and simple regarding how life and God are going for you.

*"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." --Albert Einstein*  
*"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." --C.S. Lewis*

Blessed New Year of 2024 to everyone.

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



### SPIRITUAL SHARING

Never enough hours in a day! But I take solace in the New Zealand Night Prayer, especially the part that says, "It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done; what has not been done has not been done; let it be."

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Sr. Janeen shared a quote from Søren Kierkegaard: "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards."

\*\*\*\*\*

My favorite hymn is one I sing (to myself): “This is my Fathers World.” The last verse goes like this. “And though the wrong seems of’t so strong, God is the Maker yet.” I hold on to this when I feel overwhelmed by what I see and hear.

\*\*\*\*\*

Keep praying for ways you can help. Our church has opened its doors for a once-a-month pot luck for all the “newcomers” in our town from Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria and any other country. It is a small gesture but more than 40 come to comfort and learn from each other as they navigate living in a new country.

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I’m looking forward to Advent. I try to focus on the little blessings rather than the larger stressors. I’m going to try to shift my focus so that I see the little wins rather than the giant hurdles and to look at the simplicity of life, the little ways we see God and don’t always “see.” So, I’m going to try to be more aware of these moments.

\*\*\*\*\*

I have conferred with a church member who is very computer savvy about how to find song lyrics that use certain grammatical concepts. For example, from Fiddler on the Roof, the main character, a poor milkman named Tevye sings a song called “If I were a rich man, here are all the things that I WOULD do.” That “if I were a rich man” is called the present unreal conditional. Tevye is not a rich man and probably never will be rich, but here is what he WOULD do if he were rich. I am trying to find other song lyrics like that so that my ESL students can hear and see various grammatical structures in popular song lyrics.

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When I approach the altar for Holy Eucharist, it is a renewing of our (mine and the Lord’s) covenant. Not just a contract, not just a promise, but a covenant, a blood covenant at that.

\*\*\*\*\*

Something Br. Ephrem said towards the end of his article, that we are called to pre-emptively regard the “other” as “self.” We hear the opposite. “If you respect me, I’ll respect you” or “if you are nice to me, I’ll be nice to you.” This is another way we can show the world we are different because of the sacrifice of our Lord for us.

\*\*\*\*\*

I believe forgiveness only happens with the gift from God. And when the process is complete there is peace, perfect peace, as from the Father that surpasses all understanding.

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When reading over the Bulletin for the 3rd time, something jumped out at me, “if you are able to do many things but don’t have compassion for yourself, how can you have compassion for others?” St. Paul said, if you have all those gifts from God and yet do not use them with love in your heart, you have nothing. We must stay humble. We must stay awake with ears to hear and eyes to see. We must not begin to feel pious. We must remember that we are sinners too.

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In my prayer life I say part of the rosary every day and I read a selection from the Bible. I use a Methodist publication called The Upper Room for my Bible selection.

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One day, a long time ago, I was in a parking lot getting ready to leave when a homeless woman came up to me crying so desperately. She asked me for help. I felt so bad for her because anyone of us could be in her shoes. I stayed with her for a while and visited with her and asked how she was doing. She

was so touched by my concern for her. I gave her money and she said “you are a gift from God.” I, in turn, was touched by her.

\*\*\*\*\*

I have joined a Bible Study at my church, studying the Abrahamic narratives. I also joined a Book Study which has begun Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s “The Cost of Discipleship.” I read this book years ago and it had a big influence on me back then. We are watching a video about his life. Many things I did not know, so it has been very interesting.

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Life issues of our children affect us emotionally and mentally as well. It is such a feeling of helplessness knowing we can’t fix it for them and seeing them so unhappy in their lives.

\*\*\*\*\*

God has shown me over the past few months that I am involved too much in my daughter’s day to day life. Every celebration for birthdays, holidays etc has been at my home for the past 6 years. She and her husband have not had the opportunity to form their own traditions and ways of celebration. This opened my eyes to see how my son-in-law must have some resentment. I have backed off and they are starting to live their own lives. It is healthier. It is a pleasure to see.

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I’m not sure I can truly ask someone for forgiveness unless I have been forgiven and loved by God first.

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... it (forgiveness) wasn’t so much an exchange of words as it was a change in my attitude and actions toward these persons.

\*\*\*\*\*

Often it is very difficult to forgive when we perceive a wrong has been committed against us. Ninety per cent of the time the person who we think has wronged us doesn’t realize that we are upset and had no intention of hurting us. But being human, we tend to take the wrong meaning of words, always feeling that we have been hurt. I think this comes from a feeling of insecurity and we need to trust in God to put things right in our lives.

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I loved the poem from Mother Teresa. (*see October Bulletin*) It’s a call to serve, regardless of the consequences.

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When I met with my Spiritual Director, I was struck by these words in a Harvest Prayer that she used: “We thank you for walking with us through the seasons of our lives. And for autumn days as leaves fall to seed new growth.” That “seeding new growth” image has stayed with me.

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I had an opportunity to view a TV program where a suggestion was given, “remind yourself of 26 things to be grateful for each day.” This idea/suggestion perked my ears! What a great idea for Advent!

\*\*\*\*\*

I find myself preoccupied with my work duties, home duties and my caregiving. I have a strong desire to be part of something again, but I lack the follow through.

\*\*\*\*\*

I graduated from EFM this last spring (May of 2023). I said something like “I’m going to take a year off and just BE.” Well, it’s been 6 months, and I am asking myself, what next? What’s your mission? What do you seek?

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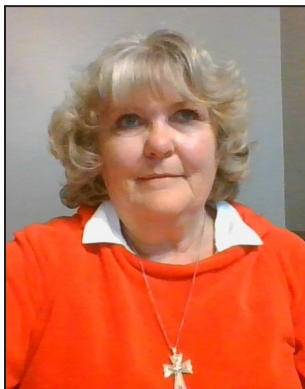
Every morning I start my prayers by thanking God for all God is doing in our world: Everlasting Unconditional Love; Forgiveness; Mercy and Grace; Healing; Wholeness; Peace and Presence. And I ask God to be present with all those who are hurting even though I know God is already there. I believe we can ask God for anything. And I also believe that God's will is best even though we may not understand it.



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

### Introduction to The Fruit of the Holy Spirit By Sr. Wendy Samuel January 2024

*"<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)*



This year we will be studying the Fruit of the Spirit: **Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance**. Each month our Bulletin will highlight one of the nine fruits in an article written by one of our Community members. When we come together in our Regional meeting held each month, we will discuss the article and the particular fruit that is highlighted in the Bulletin.

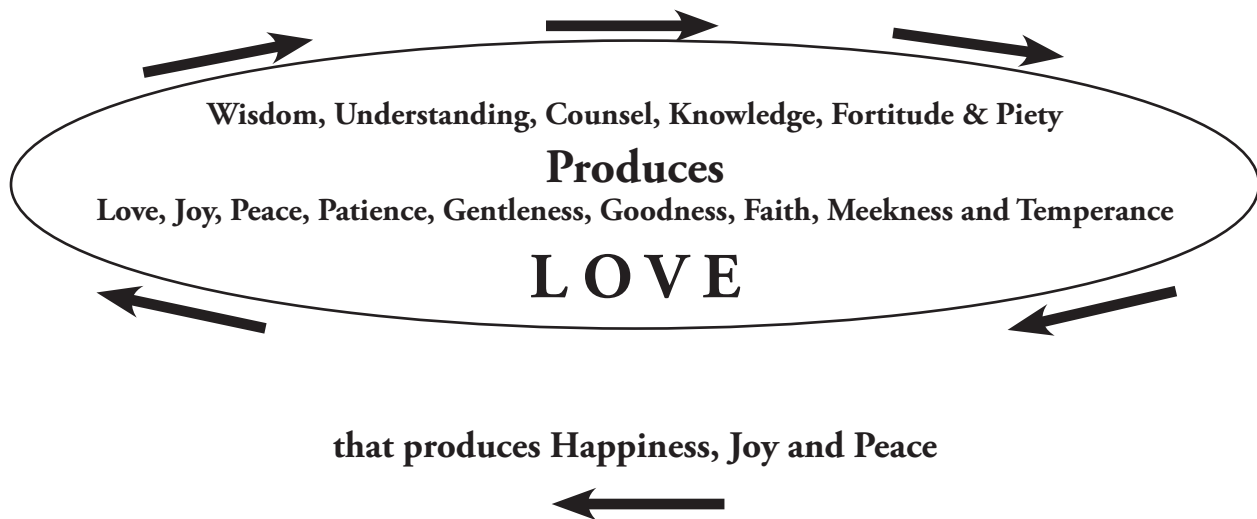
Let's start at the beginning. To produce the Fruit of the Spirit, we must first receive the **gifts** of the Holy Spirit [*Wisdom helps us recognize the importance of others and the importance of keeping God central in our lives; Understanding is the ability to comprehend the meaning of God's message; Knowledge is the ability to think about and explore God's revelation and also to recognize there are mysteries of faith beyond us; Counsel is the ability to see the best way to follow God's plan when we have choices that relate to him; Fortitude is the courage to do what one knows is right; Piety helps us pray to God in true devotion; and finally Fear of the Lord is the feeling of amazement before God, who is all-present, and whose friendship we do not want to lose.*] Acting in conjunction with these gifts, the Fruit of the Spirit will surely follow. It is important to note that the gifts, followed by the fruit, are freely given to us by God. There are no special tasks or assignments or trials and tribulations. This is simply another way God shows His love for us.

We can ask the Holy Spirit to help us grow in the fruit that these gifts may produce. The amount or portion we receive of the fruit depends on ourselves, our willingness to change or grow with our gifts as guides. We must pray that by the Holy Spirit, and by receiving these gifts, God would help us become

more like our Saviour and Redeemer and thereby growing closer to our loving Father. We do this daily, when we say our Community prayer: “May your fruit become evident in our lives ...”

Equally important is the fact that we are not meant to withhold these gifts from others. To truly be Christlike, we need to share the fruit of these gifts to all that we meet with our own personal reaching out to others in *their* need, as well as our own. Truly, to change the way of the world begins with each one of us. What greater Mentor do we have than Jesus to demonstrate how to “show forth our fruit?”

By sharing our gifts and the fruit we have received, an unexpected bonus occurs. By reaching out and sharing our fruit, giving freely and selflessly, we receive the reward of feelings of happiness, joy and peace within our own souls. I see this as a never-ending cycle of Love, the greatest gift of all.



A parable: I would like people to think of the **Word of God** as the root of a tree, our hearts and minds (**our body**) as the tree, and the **seeds (the gifts)** that are planted within our body as producers of the fruit of the tree.

Like all good fruit, it takes time, devotion and care for the fruit to ripen and grow. Our nourishment is freely provided by a loving God who is the Farmer. A Farmer who patiently waits for His own **fruit** to grow with the planting of His seeds - **our faith!**

*Go in Peace, to Love and Serve the Lord.  
 Thanks be to God!*

### Questions/Reflections

1. What fruits do you think you have and share really well?
2. What fruit(s) do you struggle to grow?
3. What fruit do you wish you had more abundantly?



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

### From our Rule - An Experience of Discovery

Personal sharing from Sr. Nancy Clare:

In the early years of WSHS, Sr. Angela introduced us to the Fruit of the Spirit and we were to focus each month on a particular fruit and practice manifesting that fruit, say “peace” that month. Later we shifted to just becoming more aware of those times when a fruit, such as “joy”, was experienced in our lives. We were always assured that we did not produce the fruit, that the fruit was produced in us by the Holy Spirit, but that we could become more aware and co-operative in this process.

Years later, I am amazed at the fruit-filled lives of our members, whose renewed lives transformed our Community. It is a beautiful thing to see: the result of years of formation in community, the discovery of members who have grown into spiritually mature persons whose lives are marked with Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance. It is exciting to know that the journey continues as we daily discover the power of the Holy Spirit to transform us and use us to bring light and love to a hurting world.

### The Holy Spirit

Cultivating awareness of the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Ongoing learning and teaching about the spiritual life is a lifelong process of formation.

*I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. (Ez. 36:26)*

To quote Sr. Angela from our Rule: “The dedication of our community to the Holy Spirit recognizes the creative power and presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst bringing us together, recreating, shaping, and forming us into the life-giving body of the Risen Christ.”

### The Fruit of the Spirit

*You will know them by their fruits. (Mt. 7:16)*

*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)*

We commit to the Fruit of the Spirit, one of our fourfold commitments: a charism of our community.

Our former Community Chaplain, Father Bill Beachy, once shared that the Fruit of the Spirit is a description of Christ's character. So with this in mind we have a way to measure our spiritual growth, by the fruit we produce in order to become more Christ-like.

### **Spiritual Formation and Training**

*"Each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift – to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ." (Eph. 4:7,12, 23)*

In committing to ongoing formation and training, our Community has a formal program of formation for our Applicants, Workers, Sisters & Brothers consisting of material on topics with reflection questions. In addition we are formed by monthly Bulletins focusing on an annual theme, monthly letters to promote accountability, yearly retreats, corporate as well as private prayer and attendance at regular Holy Communion services where possible. There is an expectation that each of us will supplement these offerings with our own learning and formation. On-going transformation only comes with on-going formation.

### **For Reflection**

#### **The Holy Spirit**

- Who is the Holy Spirit for you?
- How would you describe the working of the Holy Spirit in your life?
- Reflect on any growing edge you may be experiencing which may be the Holy Spirit nudging you forward.

#### **The Fruit of the Spiritual**

- What is the importance of the Fruit of the Spirit in your life? (Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance)
- How do you show forth the Fruit in your life?
- Reflect on using the Fruit of the Spirit to recognize the Christ in the other. How do others see the Fruit of the Spirit in your life?

#### **Formation and Training:**

- How open are you in accepting responsibility in your own formation process? Are you willing to go deeper?
- How will you remain open to ongoing conversion of life?
- What resources have been most helpful to you on your journey and what resources do you envision will be needed for future community members?
- What are some of your gifts that bring you joy? (talents, skills, activities)
- Which gifts are you willing to share with your community, a community in transition? What gifts are you willing to share with the wider world around you?