

THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



BULLETIN



THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



LIVING IN AN ICON
February 2026

Bulletin Cover - photo by Jeremy Bishop Unsplash.com

Entering creation as an Icon leads us to see the Creator behind all of creation.

Community Communication Contacts:

Prayer Requests and Thankgivings for the monthly Bulletin - email Erin Diericx, WSHS, emdeerx@gmail.com, or see green sheets for her mailing address.

Changes of address, phone numbers, email addresses - email Sr. Shirley Evangeline at sr.shirleyevangelinpace@gmail.com or Marilyn Propp at proppjones@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. Christine, 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

Web Addresses: workersisters.org workerbrothers.org

THE WORKER SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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CALENDAR

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS
REGIONAL GATHERINGS
February 2026**

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

February 28, 2026

Eastern/Southern WSHS Province, U.S. & Canada	Br. David, WBHS, brdavidwbhs1@gmail.com	1:00 PM ET
Central WSHS Province U.S. & Canada	Sr. Catherine Marie, WSHS, sr.catherine.marie@gmail.com	2:00 PM CT
Western WSHS Province U.S. & Canada	Sr. Wendy Martha, WSHS, wguyton17@gmail.com	10:00 AM Arizona Time
<u>In-person Corporate Communion</u>		
Pleasant Hill, Tennessee	Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS	TBD

REGIONAL GATHERING/CORPORATE COMMUNION DATES

***** NOTE DATE CHANGE from 4th Saturday to 3rd Saturday in November and Deceember 2026**
February 28 • March 28 • April 25 • May 23 • June 27 • July 25 • August 22
September 26 • October 24 • *November 21 • ***December 19**

Chapter Online Meeting – February 11, 2026
Retreat 2026 at Mercy Center – April 30 - May 3, 2026

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:

Reminder to Sisters, Brothers and Workers

1. Please email your entire "Yellow" letter to your Cluster Leader including Prayer Requests, Recommendations and News Notes.
2. Email a copy of only your Prayer Requests, Thanksgivings and News Notes to:

Erin Diericx, WSHS emdeerx@gmail.com

Her mailing address is:

1204 North Prospect Avenue, Lecanto, Florida 34461

Reminder to Companions and Friends

Send your responses to the Friends and Companions Corner to:

Marya Pohlmeier, Companion, maryalovestravel@gmail.com

1677 Mount Vernon Drive, St. Charles, MO 63303

You are encouraged to explore our **WSHS/WBHS website**.

Check it out! 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



FROM YOUR DIRECTORS

At Retreat 2026, Mary Mack will be admitted as a Lay Worker. We asked her to write a few lines about her journey with WSHS. Please pray for Mary as she prepares for Retreat.



“Having experienced significant trauma in my life, and as a mother whose surviving child is now an adult, I found I was at a point in life where I needed to discover a new identity for myself. Opening my heart and soul to exploration through the WSHS/WBHS learning process has helped me to discover who I am at my core.

I very much look forward to continuing my growth and development as I mature spiritually with the support and love of this wonderful community. Praise be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! Amen.”

RETREAT REMINDERS

By now you should have received the 2026 Retreat Brochure and forms. If you have not received it, please email or call Sr. Christine and she will send you the material.

There are scholarships available to help with the cost of travel. Send your request to: Sr. Nancy Teresa, E-mail: nancybrooks40@gmail.com

Remember that this year, there is one registration fee of \$100 per person for everyone attending in person at Mercy Center. All accommodations and meals will be paid for by the WSHS/WBHS Community.

We invite all members of the Community to attend; Workers, Sisters, Brothers, Companions and Friends. Plan now to attend! Retreat dates are April 30-May 3, 2026. (Thursday to Sunday).

FROM THE TREASURER

Sr. Nancy Teresa would like to begin training someone to eventually take on the duties of the WSHS American Treasurer. She says "It is the only professional job I have ever had where people send me money with loving notes!" A knowledge of a bookkeeping program would be helpful. Please consider this with prayer to discern if it is something you feel called to do! It is very rewarding, and very important!

If you are interested in learning more about the WSHS Treasurer role, please contact Sr. Nancy Teresa so that she can follow up with you. Her email address is: nancybrooks40@gmail.com. Her cell number is: 913-638-3208.



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.**

"Caring for All of God's Creation"

I love the theme for 2026.

I've been wondering how I can go farther in the caring part. I am looking at what I already do and then consider what's next.

• I have been re-cycling for quite some years thanks to my friend. She lives in a city that re-cycles and my city doesn't do it. So I gather my clean recycles each week and deposit them in her bins. I've learned the importance of cleaning and drying the recyclables. I also get to sort and separate items at the office where I work. Having provided separate containers for trash and recycle, the offices are pretty good about separating, but I still have to check and re-sort every once in awhile! I've figured out which offices need more "supervision." I take aluminum cans collected from several friends and offices to a center and get around 50 cents a pound which I use to subsidize the cost of the Retreat weekends at the state prisons that I attend. That helps me stretch the concept of "caring" to move from things to people. What's next? Reduce the amount of recycling by reusable shopping bags and talking to others for tips on what I'm missing.

• Water. That was a big thing I observed in my parents. Mom never let the water in the kitchen just run indefinitely. She always turned it off in between uses. When washing dishes, she never let the water run and if any of us did, she would come over and turn the faucet off for you. We learned quickly and continue the practice to this day. Mom and Dad grew up getting married in 1934 in the height of the depression and it left its deep imprint on both of them. Our farm in Nebraska was a grain farm plus commercial raising of turkeys. (Thousands of them several times a year). Summers were hot and dry and water had to be filled in mobile tanks from our well. Guess who got the first water? Yes, the turkeys. So the tanks were filled first and everything else came second: washing anything in the house, watering the garden, even flushing toilets only after several uses! What's next? Continue the sparing use of water in my house and becoming more grateful in prayer for water and creation.

• Walking. I've been told several times by my doctor to walk! So while I make efforts to do that more, I'll try to walk outside when possible and while walking to let God speak to me and speak back to God with grat-

itude, awe, and questions that arise as I walk and observe nature and people and pray!

Marya Pohlmeier, Companion. St. Charles, MO. I became a **Friend** in the 1980's when I spent a summer at St. Luke's Hospital in the CPE program where Sr. Angela worked part time as a chaplain. I became a Companion at Sr. Angela's invitation maybe 15-20 years later so that I could attend the annual Retreat. In the early days of WSHS, Companions could come to Retreat only every five years until she changed it to every year. I've pretty much attended every Retreat since then. I'm partially retired, but work part time as evening receptionist for my parish office in St. Peters, MO. Plus lots of volunteering: planning day pilgrimages by bus, actively participate in Retreat teams 3-4 times each Spring and each Fall in state prisons, provide two Bible studies for our parish, plus helping a friend who is in early stages of dementia. I just turned 81 in December!



SPIRITUAL SHARING

I was feeling out of sorts the other day and finally realized that what I wanted was to go back and be a child again. Go to church Christmas Eve, sleep fitfully all night and then wake up in the morning excited to see what Santa left under the tree. While I know that isn't happening, I think acknowledging it made me feel better. The holidays are beautiful and wonderful and difficult. I know deep down in my soul that Jesus came and is coming and is here with me. I sense His presence. I know the quiet joy of the season.

Christmas was rather quiet this year, our daughter, son-in-law, granddaughter and great grandson joined us the week before Christmas for our celebration. We enjoyed the time with them, but times have

changed as the family ages, they have jobs and university and things are so much different than when they were young.

I realize that I could take some time to remember those childlike times of excitement and wonder, and look around to see what moments now spark joy and wonder for me. There are some when I am awake and watching. Like the young daughter of our priest greeting me at the front door with "You came!!" Also, gentle tears of thanks for friendship that I shared with my dear friend, J, as we stood in the quiet church after the service was over.

Regrettably, young people eventually grow up and are dependent on their elders less and less in our Western societies. I have heard elder folk complaining that they are not being consulted regularly as reliable and ready resources for the younger generations. It's probably the way of the world. We likely treated our parents in the same way.

I am always encouraged by the God stories that others have to share. And lately, at Corporate Communion, I find joy in the stories of those who are reconnecting more with God and our Community. It encourages me to see answers to the prayers I have sent up and or posted on the prayer wall over the years.

I'm reading a book called Separation of Church and Hate. It is a call for Christians to follow the teaching and example of Jesus (sometimes ignoring the contradictory doctrines of Paul), such as welcoming the stranger and taking care of the poor. A significant quote from John Kenneth Galbraith (a famous economist) really struck me. "Americans have spent a lot of energy trying to achieve the impossible, figuring out a moral justification for being selfish."

Our journeys with God, told in the Bulletin articles, have been delightful. So many ways to go and we all seem to be headed to the same place.

God of all creation, help us to protect all that you have set upon our earth and universe. Fill us with love and give us wisdom and strength for us to care for your creation and not abuse it. Protecting with gratitude and wisdom and sharing our love for our brothers, sisters and all your children with love and devotion.

This season has offered a meaningful lesson in “welcoming the stranger” and what that truly looks like in daily life.

Welcome to this New Year. It is still Epiphany here. I have been grateful today for the revelation of God’s unlimited love that is given to everyone. As the saying goes, “We’re all in this together.” And I give most heartfelt thanks for our wonderful Community. It is a very special part of my daily life. Belonging has been my salvation, over and over again.

It is a challenge for us to trust God with these situations, because we really want to “fix it,” especially for those in our WSHS/WBHS family, and other loved ones. In our Women’s Bible Study, we keep finding that theme of trusting God coming up. Recently a card I had been sent (and I saved) fell off the top of my desk. The card has the words below printed on it - I have found this wisdom very helpful as I pray.

Trust:

Trust the past to the mercy of God;

Trust the present to His Love;

Trust the future to His Providence.

- St. Augustine of Hippo



FORMATION AND TRAINING

Living in an Icon

By
Sr. Nancy Clare, WSHS



Many of us have learned the importance that Icons play in the Orthodox church and are familiar with the most famous Russian Icon entitled “The Trinity,” which depicts three Angels around a table, commonly thought to represent the Trinity. How to define an Icon in this Orthodox world? An Icon is a portal or a doorway through which a believer might encounter God.

Many spiritual guides through the ages describe all of natural creation as an Icon or portal through which we are invited into a closer relationship with the Divine Creator. We actually live in an Icon.

If we go outside and allow ourselves to settle into mother nature’s naturally slower rhythm, opening all our senses, then we may experience at various times: curiosity, respect, surprise, gratitude, humility, wonder and awe. We may also have new insights about a gracious God who loves all of us as we begin to sense that this world is deeper and richer and more vast than what we had known. We learn we are not the center of the universe.

This natural world is about relationships, connections, self-offerings. We may begin to sense our relationship with that old gnarled tree or

that busy ant. Entering creation as an Icon leads us to see the Creator behind all of creation. We gain a new sense of the interconnectedness of all living beings.

Barbara Brown Taylor writes in *An Altar in the World*, that *“Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it is a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars.”*

John O’Donohue, a Celtic poet, philosopher and priest writes *“Reverence bestows dignity and it is only in the light of dignity that the beauty and mystery of a person will become visible. The same applies to seeing the dignity of a tree or a place or even yourself.....”*

Then we have the example of St. Francis’s life, in which he became almost one with the natural world around him. He saw God in all living things exemplified by his *Canticle of the Sun*, loved by so many.

From the book *Living in an Icon*, I found a quote by St. Augustine who declared:

“Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you! Note it. Read it. God whom you want to discover, never wrote that book with ink. Instead He set before our eyes the things that He had made. Can you ask for a louder voice than that? Why, heaven and earth shout to you. “God made me!”

There is this quote from Meister Eckhard, a German mystic:

“Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things. Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God. Every creature is a word of God.”

Here are two quotes from another German mystic, Hildegard of Bingen

“Everything that is in the heavens, on earth and under the earth is penetrated with connectedness, penetrated with relatedness.”

"We shall awaken from our dullness and rise vigorously toward justice. If we fall in love with creation deeper and deeper, we will respond to its endangerment with passion."

As I look back on my life, it has been those times when I am experiencing the joy and awe of being in a natural setting that remind me how nourishing it is to be in a place of natural beauty or in the presence of majestic storm clouds or be delighted by a wildflower by the side of the path. Even holding an ancient smooth stone from a favorite Cornish beach puts me in touch with something essential beyond myself.

I'm not as able now to tramp as easily through a forest or walk on the top of a cliff overlooking the sea but, even so, there are living things around me. My favorite Icon is an old fir tree that I see from my porch. I will truly mourn if it is ever taken down, as this tree has become such a familiar being to me. When I use the word "being," I am reminded of reading a chapter in Braiding Sweet Grass, in which I learned the indigenous practice of giving all living things human pronouns. As someone said, it is a lot easier to cut down a tree if it is an "it" rather than a "he" or "she." I loved that concept and wish we did have more relationship pronouns for living beings.

I have known my tree in all seasons; I see how it provides a cover for birds who come to my feeders, not to mention for squirrels who jump from its branches onto my roof. I love this tree which is familiar and dear and would so miss it should it not be there for me. It is a place where I continue to see the divine presence. And sense the interconnectedness in this natural world.

I invite you, who are reading this article, to explore the natural world near you with an intent to discover more of God in creation. Give yourself time to slow down, say a prayer of intent before you go out, and be prepared to open your senses to that piece of creation which is inviting you into a relationship at that time.

Questions for Reflection

Please remember it is not necessary to answer all of the questions. Choose one or two that speak to you and perhaps you would like to share.

1. Think about the slower pace at which nature unfolds and about what you will miss if you keep to your usual hurrying pace.

What might help you to slow down accordingly, so that you might enter into that slower pace of the magical world before you?

2. Think back on a time when the natural world spoke to you of a Creator who is so mysteriously and wonderfully above what you could ever imagine.

Share this insight or experience that transformed that moment in time for you.

3. No less than St. Augustine spoke of the natural world as a Book written by our Creator.

What has the Book of the Natural World taught you about our Creator?

4. Ponder this quote of Hildegard of Bingen, "If we fall in love with creation deeper and deeper, we will respond to its endangerment with passion."

How do you feel today about your connection to the natural world and your commitment to do your part to protect our Common Home? How are you attempting to carry out this commitment?