

ministry associates

PRAYERS • DONORS • VOLUNTEERS



March 2018

Letter to Our Ministry Associates

Upcoming Events

March 16-18: Eucharist Retreat

March 23-25: Silent Sacred Listening & Speaking Women's Retreat

April 14: Caregivers Workshop

April 21: Earth Day Celebration

April 27-29: Medieval Women Mystics Retreat

May 18-19: Exploring Nature's Ways Retreat

June 1-3: Serenity Retreat for Recovering Alcoholics

June 7-10: Silent Solanus Casey Retreat w/Fr. Dan Crosby

June 15-17: Retreat for Those Left Behind by Suicide

June 29-30: Writing Workshop

July 27-29: Twelve Step Retreat

August 4: Continuing the Journey of Widowhood

August 11: St. Clare Day

August 18: Healthy Spirituality with Cancer or Chronic Pain

August 24-26: Creative Retreat

Volunteer Appreciation Party

Sunday, March 11 from noon to 4 p.m. in the Hesse Lounge.

We'll have food and fun as we share fellowship with each other. If you wish to participate, please bring some type of wrapped gift that symbolizes spring to you! RSVP to Marie.



COMPASSIONATE LIVING

A Core Franciscan Value at St. Anthony Spirituality Center is compassion. Compassion is more than simply feeling sorry for another. Compassion literally means "to suffer together" or "to suffer with." Compassion is the feeling you get when confronted with another's suffering, and you feel motivated to relieve that suffering. It is what Jesus felt in Mark (6:34) and Matthew (9:36) when He saw the crowds; "He was moved with compassion [moved with pity] for them." And Jesus took care of them. In modeling his life after Christ, St. Francis of Assisi is remembered for his great compassion.

Everyone likely knows the story of St. Francis' encounter with a leper. One day Francis saw a leper in the forest outside of Assisi. At first, he drew back in fear. Victims of leprosy were objects of great dread in that society. They were required to carry a wooden bell or clacker, calling out "Unclean...Unclean." Francis decided he must embrace the thing that he feared most; only then would he be freed from his fear. So, Francis hugged the mangled limbs and withered body of the leper. Only at that moment did he realize that he was embracing Jesus Christ.

As I journey through Lent this year, who in my life is need of compassion? What can I do to embrace

compassion as a way of life? What fears do I need to let go of to love more deeply? Perhaps we can learn a lesson about compassion from St. Francis. St. Francis felt compassion for every living creature, from lepers to birds. He simply recognized that God loves all of creation. It makes sense, then, that I should, too. It is easy for me to give money to the poor and to pray for those in need in far off places. However, can I forgive the family member who hurt me? Can I embrace the neighbor I find offensive? If I cannot show compassion to those who are hardest to love, do I truly possess the love of Christ? Like St. Francis, let's vow to show compassion to everyone we encounter, treating them as if they were Christ himself. Let's look beyond ourselves to comfort those who are suffering, whether physically, spiritually, or emotionally. Let's choose to find the courage to let our egos die by letting go of what is material and fleeting. Let's fill our hearts with the same passion for compassion that Saint Francis embodied. Let's pray for others with the blessing of St. Francis: "The Lord bless you and keep you; May He show His face to you and have mercy. May He turn His countenance to you and give you peace."

~Marie Fleisner

Who Was Here

- 16 Private Retreatants
- Diocese of La Crosse Lay Formation & Deacon Formation
- Knights of Columbus
- Priest Support Group Retreat
- Retrouvaille
- Confirmation Retreat
- Franciscan Formation
- Deacons & Wives Retreat
- Evening for Lovers
- Bethany Baptist Church
- First Call Family Systems
- Regnum Christi Men
- Ignatian Exercises for Men
- Mothers of Seminarians

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ST. ANTHONY
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Look what Sandra created!

For our Evening for Lovers, our head chef made a gorgeous, decadent dessert that looks straight out of a foodie magazine. Yum!



Hospitality Meeting & Orientation

Anyone currently part of the hospitality ministry or interested in the hospitality ministry is invited to come to “get to know you” meeting on **Thursday, March 22**. Two sessions will be offered: one from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. and one from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Front Lounge. I’ll provide snacks and beverages. We’ll talk about what this important volunteer ministry involves as well as identify upcoming opportunities for hospitality. RSVP to Marie.



Enhance Your Lenten Experience

Are you looking for a way to make Lent more meaningful this year? Consider one of our Lenten retreats. Gather with Fr. Bob Strevler in a Eucharist Retreat to study the words of Scripture that speak to us of the special presence of Jesus with us and within us. The retreat begins Friday, March 16 with supper at 6:30 p.m. and ends with the noon meal on Sunday, March 18.

Ladies, we all want to be heard, but do we know how to respectfully listen? We all have something to say, but are the words affirming the dignity of yourself and others? Come to Sacred Listening & Speaking, a silent retreat for women beginning Friday, March 23 with supper at 6:30 p.m. and ending with the noon meal on Sunday, March 25. Call us or register on our website.

Did you know... Hundreds of volunteer hours are donated to the Center to keep it running and reduce our costs.



In January, 38 volunteers gave more than 875 hours. (That's more than five full-time employees!)

May God return their blessings!

Volunteer Opportunities

Eucharistic Adoration: Our Lord Jesus blesses us with many graces and strengthens us when we spend time with Him. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is available in our chapel Monday through Friday at 1:00 p.m., with benediction most days at 2:00 p.m. We invite you to become one of our regular adorers. Bishop Fulton Sheen said, “A Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration is a sharing in the work of Redemption.” Can you spare one hour per week, or even one hour per month, for Jesus?

Prayer Partners: We believe in the power of prayer, and we know you do, also! We invite you to join us in this important part of our mission and ministry. Even secular studies have shown the awesome power of prayer! Contact Marie to become one of our Prayer Partners and receive a weekly email of prayer requests.

Kitchen Ministry: Did you know that St. Bonaventure is the patron saint of dishwashers? Legend has it that when Vatican officials came to appoint him cardinal, he asked them to leave the red hat (which was the symbol of cardinal at that time) on a tree outside until he could finish washing the dishes. Volunteers are needed for occasional help in the kitchen, particularly with dishwashing, where you’ll be in the company of saints!

Housekeeping Ministry: In the line of patron saints, St. Zita is the patron saint of housekeepers. Dusting and cleaning might not seem like a path to holiness, but Zita saw it differently. At the age of 12, she went to work for a rich family where she was given the most menial of tasks. When Zita felt the drudgery of cleaning getting to her, she would say a short prayer and remind herself that she wasn't doing this unpleasant job to win praise from her employers but for love of God. We need volunteers on Monday mornings to vacuum, dust, and straighten bedrooms and conference rooms. Grow in holiness by joining this ministry!

Hospitality Ministry: Couples and/or individuals who would enjoy spending an occasional weekend at the Center to host retreat groups. Stairs and the ability to lift up to 15 lbs. are involved. Lodging and meals are provided. Weekday and evening opportunities are also available. Those interested in hosting can choose a weekend to “shadow” an experienced host to see if it would be the right fit for you. Contact us if you would be interested in hearing more about this or other opportunities at the Center.

Music Ministry: Are you blessed by God with the gift of music, vocal or instrumental? If so, please consider volunteering for our music ministry. Occasionally we have retreats where we need someone to lead the music for services or liturgies. This is a great opportunity to share your gifts.

To volunteer for any of these, or to learn other ways you can volunteer your time and talents, please contact Marie.