



April 2018

Letter to Our Ministry Associates

Upcoming Events

- 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

Who Was Here

- 16 Private Retreatants
- Diocese of La Crosse Lay Formation & Deacon Formation
- Knights of Columbus
- Priest Support Group Retreat
- Lenten Day of Prayer
- Franciscan Formation
- UMC Clergy Mentoring
- Wausau Deanery Marriage Prep
- Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
- UW-Stout Catholic Center
- Diocese of La Crosse Regency Retreat
- Eucharist Retreat
- Portview Church Retreat
- Sacred Listening Retreat for Women
- St. Mary's Religious Education Group

JOYFUL SERVICE

I'd like to continue the theme of Franciscan values by focusing on **joyful** service. Notice that I've placed the emphasis on **joyful**. We are all called to serve, but what makes Franciscan service stand out is the emphasis on joy. As a director of religious education and confirmation leader, I've always stressed the importance of service and have required that my students perform works of service. As their leader, I can make them serve. But, can I force them to serve with joy? Of course not! Their joy must come from Jesus. My students can only serve joyfully if they understand that by serving others (the poor, suffering, sick, and broken), they are serving Jesus.

A principal theme of the pontificate of Pope Francis is joy. His first apostolic letter was "The Joy of the Gospel." In his first papal homily on Palm Sunday 2013, he said; "Here is the first word I wish to say to you: joy!" Pope Francis, in the spirit of St. Francis, calls us to make joy the hallmark of our lives – like Mary who proclaimed, "My spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Joy comes from the Holy Spirit. Joy is the second fruit of the Holy Spirit, right after love. Joy is a gift from God. It fills our hearts and our whole beings. Joy is grace. It isn't just a fleeting feeling of sunshine or happiness. It is deeper. We all experience suffering, sorrow and grief in our lives; however, joy endures—even through our darkest times—when we hold in our hearts the faith that we are infinitely loved by God. When we focus only on ourselves, we reject the gift of joy. Joy comes from the Lord, not from circumstances, places or

possessions. This is the joy St. Francis discovered.



Joy was a primary trait of St. Francis' life. He often scolded brothers who walked around with sad or downcast expressions. He encouraged them to be cheerful, even in trials. This was who St. Francis was. When robbers and thieves beat him up and threw him in a ditch, he jumped out and joyfully sang praise to God. St. Francis demonstrates the joy that comes from following and obeying Jesus, the joy that enables us to endure suffering. St. Francis knew this deeply in his heart, because of his total devotion to and passionate love for Jesus. St. Francis desired to imitate Jesus who endured rejection and suffering because of His love for us. St. Francis considered suffering with Jesus "perfect joy." He knew that perfect joy is a gift of the Holy Spirit. It makes us rejoice in sharing the suffering of Jesus, knowing we will also share in His resurrection.

So I invite you to reflect on this spirit of joyful service; joy that comes from your own devotion to Jesus. Joyful service is our Franciscan mission. The world is so often depressing and sad—we need to show others the joy we find in serving Jesus, just like people saw that St. Francis' joy came from the joy of knowing, following, and loving Jesus.

~Marie Fleisner



We Love Our Volunteers

Our Volunteer Appreciation Day was held on Sunday, March 11, and a great time was had by all in attendance. The day began with Mass offered by our own Fr. Bob Streveler. We were then treated to a feast prepared by Sandra that featured barbecued ribs and root beer floats. The 45 volunteers in attendance then engaged in a friendly "battle" of dice to see who got to keep the best gift. Despite some fierce competition, everyone left with a prize and lots of good memories. Stay tuned for future fun events.

The Board of Directors is pleased to welcome Lori Randall as our new Center Director. Lori may be familiar to some as she was a resident at St. Anthony's 20 years ago. In recent years she has returned to volunteer as a host and musician. She will be starting in June, and will share her story with you in our June newsletter.



The Board would also like to thank Deacon Bryan Hilts for his service to St. Anthony's over the past three years. We wish him all the best in his retirement.

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

In February, 38 volunteers gave more than 800 hours. (That's more than five full-time employees!)

May God return their blessings!



Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities

Helping Hands for our Centennial Celebration:

Sunday, June 10, 2018

Honoring the laying of the Corner Stone

Volunteers are needed in the following areas: Training will be prior to the event.

- 15 volunteers as tour guides for the Inside tour, leading groups of 15-20 throughout the building (scripts will be provided) Tour from 2:00-5:00
- Eight volunteers as tour aides, assigned to designated area to help with moving folks along, and assisting the tour guides when needed from 2:00-5:00
- Four volunteers to help organize the Procession 12:30-2:00, meeting at Veterans Park on 4th street and walk four blocks to the Center.

We are so excited about this event and the folks who will be present. If you have questions please contact Barb Ceranski 715-574-4896 or barbceranski@gmail.com.

If you can volunteer, please call Marie Fleisner by May 1.

Kitchen Ministry: We frequently get many compliments from our guests about our home-cooked, comforting meals. Providing these meals and cleaning up after the meals, takes lots of work and many hands. We need volunteers in the kitchen, particularly for washing dishes. If you have a few hours to spare on the weekends, consider volunteering. This is a great service opportunity for confirmation students.

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.

Naturally Franciscan!

Gentle, peaceful, unassuming, joyful, treating each other with respect. Does this sound like a huge hope for 2018? What if these words became more familiar for us each day and actually kind of became a "Rule of Life"? Those qualities are what St. Francis promotes in his way of living, his Rule of Life.

Whenever you, our generous volunteers, are here, it is obvious that these qualities are true of your lives. Whatever project, task, activities each of you has when you are here, we see joy, peace, gentleness, and great respect. We claim and proclaim that our volunteers are naturally Franciscan!

~Sr. Jolynn