



July 2018

Letter to Our Ministry Associates

Upcoming Events

July 26: Theology of the Body w/Fr. Bob Streveler (Know Your Faith)

July 27-29: Twelve Step Retreat

July 29-August 2: Volunteer Week

August 4: Continuing the Journey of Widowhood

August 11: St. Clare: Mirror of Christ

August 18: Healthy Spirituality with Chronic Pain or Illness

August 23: Partners of Grace: Mary and Joseph w/Fr. Al Burkhardt (Know Your Faith)

August 24-26: Creative Retreat (Journal Making and/or Drum Making)

August 25: Caregivers' Workshop

September 14-16: Scripture Retreat w/Sr. Dianne Bergant

September 28-30: Silent Franciscan Living Retreat

October 5-7: Serenity Retreat for Recovering Alcoholics

October 7: St. Francis Day

Who Was Here

- 14 Private Retreatants
- Knights of Columbus
- Ascension Senior Level Training
- Serenity Retreat for Recovering Alcoholics
- St. Mary's Home & School Teacher Appreciation
- St. Adalbert Parish Staff
- Solanus Casey Retreat
- Diocese of La Crosse Curriculum Planning
- Centennial Celebration
- OFS LaVerna Regional Chapter
- Know Your Faith w/Fr. Jim Bartelme

HOSPITALITY

I have a confession. Yes, I work at a Franciscan spirituality center, and I am a Benedictine Oblate. Before you judge, Benedictines and Franciscans share many values, one of them being hospitality. But what exactly does hospitality mean? In my role as Hospitality Coordinator, I've discovered that hospitality means something slightly different to everyone.

According to Webster's, hospitality is defined as "the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers." A pretty broad definition, open to interpretation. Some synonyms for hospitality include friendliness, warmth, welcoming, kindness and generosity. And there's a whole industry built around hospitality where synonyms might be entertainment, catering, and food.

What about the ministry of hospitality, which is really what we're talking about when we connect it to spiritual practices? As a Benedictine Oblate, I live my life according to the rule of Benedict, who boils hospitality down very simply to "love of neighbor." Hospitality, as understood by Benedictines, requires openness to being transformed by the other - whether through an idea, a person, or an experience. St. Francis (who, I like to think, followed some of the ways of St. Benedict) defined hospitality as valuing every person as God does and doing all within our ability to welcome each person and help them realize how important and precious they are in the eyes of God. Ultimately then, every



minister of hospitality is an ambassador of Jesus Christ!

Hospitality is a common value across most religions and cultures. One of the many virtues Jesus demonstrated was his desire to serve instead of being served. A minister of hospitality works in this same way, with the same spirit of service Jesus had. How we manifest that spirit may look different in each of us. I may show hospitality by praying with a grieving widow or listening to the guest who simply needs to talk. For someone else, hospitality might mean a hot cup of coffee and a warm meal. And for yet another, hospitality might mean carrying a heavy bag or offering a soft, clean bed. All of these are hospitality. All are ways we can be Christ to those we encounter each day, and each is equally important.

I would like to challenge you to live the value of hospitality in your daily life. If hospitality is already part of the fabric of who you are, then I challenge you to go a step further, to push hospitality beyond the basics toward real sacrifice. What that means for each person will again be very different. Perhaps I can learn to

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Thank You to All the Centennial Volunteers!

Our Centennial Celebration on Sunday, June 10, was a grand success with nearly 500 people coming through our doors! Thank you to everyone who helped in any way. It took months of planning and patience, which couldn't have happened without all of you. Special thanks to the Centennial Committee who worked so hard all year. Thank you to the many volunteers who welcomed guests, organized the procession, served as tour guides and aides, manned the booths, and worked in the kitchen. Thank you to the Knights of Columbus who parked hundreds of cars! Thanks also to those behind-the-scenes volunteers who made St. Anthony's shine!

After a brief break—to breathe and bask in the glow of this success—we will begin planning for next year's three-day extravaganza August 16-18, 2019 (including games, a bonfire, and two Masses.) If you have questions please contact Barb Ceranski at barbceranski@gmail.com. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Marie Fleisner.

NOTE: Date Change for this Summer's Volunteer Week: July 29 – August 2, 2018

Due to some scheduling conflicts, we've had to change the dates of Volunteer Week by just a few days. We need your help! We have many projects to accomplish around the building, grounds, and garden. You are invited to volunteer for a day, a few days, or the entire week!

There will be evening activities or time to just relax and enjoy the Center and its grounds. There will be time for prayer and meditation, with a special mini-retreat on Wednesday evening. Check in will begin Sunday, July 29 at 6:00 p.m. Work projects begin Monday morning following the 8:00 a.m. breakfast. We wrap up on Thursday, August 5 with a Mass of Thanksgiving at 11:15 a.m. followed by a Volunteer Appreciation lunch.

RSVP to Marie Fleisner:

- For overnight accommodations. Available starting Sunday, July 29 at 6:00 p.m.
- For days/times you can help out. This helps for meal planning.
- For the type of work you would be interested in.
- For the Volunteer Appreciation Supper.

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listen to the person whose political views are radically different from mine. Perhaps I can stop judging the purple-haired, pierced, tattooed girl I encounter on my daily walk. Perhaps I could initiate dialogue with my atheist neighbor, or maybe I could brush up on my Spanish (unused for 20+ years) so I could communicate with the Hispanic family that just moved into the neighborhood.

Conflicts, violence, and intolerance are common in today's society. We humans, despite our common humanity, are very diverse in many ways. I believe God intended that diversity to be our strength, but we don't often think of it that way. More often than not, we use our differences to exclude, disregard, and reject. Imagine if we used the Franciscan (and Benedictine) value of pure hospitality to treat all people as our guests. Our world would be a very different place, indeed!

~Marie Fleisner

Update on the Elevator Project

We have been working hard the past several months writing grants to help secure funding for our much needed elevator. We've secured a few grants and a few private donations, but we are a long way from our goal of \$140,000. Many of the thousands of guests coming to St. Anthony Spirituality Center each year are elderly, and many of our meeting spaces and guest rooms are currently not accessible by those with mobility issues. There are very few first floor guest rooms, which (if you've ever been here on a weekend, you know) fill up quickly. Due to the age of the building, and taking cost into consideration, we plan to install a limited use/limited application elevator. Specifications (for those who like detail) of the elevator include the following:

- Fully automatic operation with two-speed sliding doors
- 1:2 cable hydraulic system with gradual acceleration and deceleration
- Rated for up to 1400 pounds
- Stainless steel fixtures with lit indicators
- Three stops - Basement, First Floor and Second Floor

Due to its location, the installation will include remodeling an existing bedroom and converting it to a private suite (bedroom with private bath.)

If you would like to help fund our elevator (to "Give St. Anthony's a Lift"), contact Marie Fleisner to make your tax-deductible donation.

Farewell, Aaron!

It is with a touch of sadness that we must announce that Aaron Martin, our head of maintenance since 2014, has accepted a position with the Village of Marathon. His last day will be July 13th.

