



Rooted and growing in the light of God's love.

THE WEST VIRGINIA INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUALITY

1601 Virginia Street East, Charleston, West Virginia, 25311
304.345.0926 (main) 304.345.8206 (fax)

Email: wviscr@aol.com

Website: www.wvis.org

Facebook: The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality

NEWS FROM WVIS

2020 #4

Message from our Executive Director

Sister Carole A. Riley, CDP, Ph.D.

Dear WVIS Friends:

Today the sun is brightly shining in a cloudless sky. Its beauty hides the COVID deadly virus lurking in unsuspecting places. We have no sure way of coping in our now masked presence. We can feel afraid of the unknown. I winced at the picture of my 5-year-old niece donning a pink mask. A diabetic young father sends his children to school. We move forward to live with this new reality. Now, it is clear that our salvation, safety, and future are in God's hands.

We yearn to befriend the stranger who appears in our homeless, brothers and sisters of color and religious diversity. We recognize our utter dependence on the God of Providence. We awaken to our responsibility to co-create our world and to love by wearing a mask, social distancing, contacting the lonely and isolated, breaking economic barriers to create human bonds. What a challenging time! I make acts of faith, hold ZOOM contemplative prayer gatherings, and simply bless as I can everyone with every breath remaining. I bless you daily in COVID, a time of spiritual deepening.

The call which is loosening
your roots to false ground,
invites you to be free
from all you have outgrown.
What is being transfigured is your mind
the more faithfully you can endure here,
the more refined your heart becomes.
We praise the God who invites us to
Compassion, Justice and Right Relationships
(*adapted from O'Donohue, 2008*)



Sister Carole Riley CDP

Sister Carole A. Riley, CDP, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Can you help?

WVIS receives many gifts listed on our 'needs' list each month. Thank you for your generosity. We currently have needs for:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Hand Sanitizers | Paper Towels and / or Kitchen Dish Towels |
| Case White Copy Paper | Rubbermaid (or similar) food storage containers |
| Small Corolle Casserole Dishes | Case of white dinner napkins |
| Laundry detergent | Case of beets, carrots, and/or applesauce |

Most of these items are available through Amazon. If you have an Amazon account, you can purchase and ship directly to WVIS.

Message from our Board President

Rev. David S. Lake.

Pastor, First United Methodist Church
Waynesburg, PA
dslake2000@gmail.com



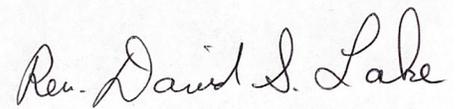
Isaiah 43:19

*I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.*

While driving the other night I realized it was time to clear the haze from the headlights of the car. Years ago, I used a 3-step process. Now there is a 2-step process. First you dampen the headlight and then use this special cloth that actually makes the headlight seem hazier and then it is wiped with a special sealant. This sealant must then be allowed to dry for 24 hours. The end result – whoever is driving this car will be able to see better at night...their headlight vision will improve.

As we entered this year, some of us talked about the need to have God's 2020 vision. Many of us are wondering about God's vision with all that has gone on. What steps do we need to take to clean up our vision? What do we need to wipe away to enable us to see around us as God sees?

Lord God, the winds blow, storms rage. You are our refuge. Floods rise, waves batter. You are our refuge. Wars ravage, violence threatens. God you are our refuge. Corruption rules, greed reigns. God you are our refuge. We cry to God; God hears us. God is our refuge. We are safe; we are warm. Thanks be to God. Amen.



RETREATS / PROGRAMS AT WVIS

Weekly Programs at WVIS via Zoom

Third Monday: Healing Service 6 - 7 pm
Third Tuesday: Merton Chapter 7 - 9 pm
First & Third Tuesday: G.R.A.S.P. 6 - 8 pm
Wednesdays: 11th Step Contemplative Prayer 7 pm
Thursdays: Contemplative Prayer 5 pm
Thursdays: Women's AA Group 5:30 pm

To learn more, email: wviscr@aol.com

Ignatian Exercises

If you feel called to make the 30-day Exercises of St. Ignatius in its 10-month format, please contact the director of your choice:

Robert Sylvester: bsyl@msn.com
Donna Becher: donna.becher@gmail.com
Rev. Meredith Hutchinson: Mercomp@aol.com

Sr. Molly Maloney, OSF: wvissrmolly@aol.com
Margaret Nagum: chesedpeg@gmail.com
Sr. Carole Riley: wviscr@aol.com

Almost Heaven Retreats 2020

In the midst of this pandemic, you can still make a retreat and stay safe. To meet the needs of individuals who are yearning for quiet and prayer in this challenging time, consider this option...

The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality
is offering individually directed retreats by:
ZOOM OR FACETIME

Retreats can be scheduled through December 20, 2020. For more information, either call: (412) 901-4259 or e-mail: wviscr@aol.com. Donation for your retreat will be negotiated with your spiritual director.

Putting Grant Funds to Good Use - by Joseph Cronin

In March 2020, WVIS received a grant from the Pallottine Foundation to be used to improve our outreach into surrounding counties including Kanawha, Putnam, Cabell, Lincoln and Boone counties in South Central West Virginia, and Greenup, Boyd, and Pike counties in Kentucky.

The \$6,600 in grant funding was used to purchase and install the technological equipment needed to convert the main meeting room (the Cenacle) into a state-of-the-art Video Conferencing Center. In addition to the hardware and software needed for videoconferencing, WVIS expanded its Zoom account to accommodate multiple hosts and users which allows for expanded programming including:

- Five daily and weekly AA meetings that reach out to people in all counties mentioned above – WVIS regularly has over 400 people weekly attending meetings that would otherwise not be able to attend regular AA meetings.
- 12 Step Spirituality videoconference (in planning) offered to multiple area Recovery Centers where live-in patients have limited abilities to get out and attend AA and NA meetings.
- Ongoing classes, seminars, and symposiums related to Spirituality, Spiritual Direction sessions, and training for Associate Spiritual Directors.



Coronavirus has slowed progress on implementation, (a little). However, we continue to move forward. Watch email, Facebook, and website for upcoming offerings.

New Beginnings in WVIS Associate Spiritual Direction Training Program

“Life is about accepting the challenges along the way, choosing to keep moving forward, and savoring the journey.” I feel that this quote truly captures what many of us have been experiencing, especially since the beginning of the pandemic!

Each year, as the calendar turns to the month of September, the faculty, and staff of WVIS look forward, with great anticipation, to welcoming our first semester Associate Spiritual Director Interns. The familiar rhythm of gathering, getting to know one another, learning together, socializing at breaks, sharing meals and prayer was the norm.

However, for this academic year of 2020, we, like all other places of education and formation, have been challenged to adapt to the present reality of the pandemic in order to keep everyone safe. As a result, there will be a new norm for the students participating in first semester training. This Fall they will be participating in all classes from the comfort of their own homes/offices while WVIS uses the technology of video conferencing in which to gather, form community and learn from one another.

WVIS welcomes ten new students who are choosing to move forward as the spiritual path they have been traveling has led them to the formation community at The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality. These professional women and men live in Illinois, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. They each bring extraordinary gifts and enthusiasm for this work. I hope you will join us in welcoming them and praying for this new class as they discern their call to the ministry of spiritual direction. We are grateful to savor this part of their journey with them.



Sr. Molly Maloney, O.S.F., M.A., L.M.T
Coordinator of the WVIS Associate Spiritual Direction Training Program

Reflection and Prayers

Going More Global in 2020

“WVIS is always looking for new, innovative ways to expand its ministries,” according to WVIS founder and executive director, Sister Carole Riley, CDP and Ph.D. According to Sister Carole, “The WVIS Reflections and Prayers Booklets, which began in the first part of this millennium are now being distributed to people on all the inhabited continents of this world.”

Advent and Lent Reflections Updated

To be responsive to the needs of the global audience, the WVIS Advent and Lent Reflections were updated. All reflections are now aligned with the actual days in these two Penitential Seasons in the Church Year.

Blessed Are...Living the Beatitudes - Now Available

When Jesus, as a Rabbi, delivered His **Sermon on the Mount**, He used the Eight Beatitudes to address all the members of His audience. He not only called His audience **Blessed Are**, but He also gave them hope for **Living the Beatitudes** in daily Life.

The WVIS Theme for 2020 has been *A Vision of Hope*. The publication, *Blessed Are...Living the Beatitudes* is one of the many ways WVIS ministries are being responsive to this annual theme. You can view the reflections online by visiting wvis.org and clicking on the Events/Programs tab. To order your copy, call the office at 304-345-0926 or e-mail your request to: wvisreg@aol.com.



Bob Harrison

**WVIS Reflections and
Prayer Ministry,
Co-editors**



Susie Pace

You breathe on my attempts
To be a person of kindness.
You touch my soiled efforts
To reach out in forgiveness.
You hold carefully my desire
To give comfort and care.
You receive my every prayer
No matter how crumbled it is.
You give all of this a sacred hue,
A liberal blessing of your love.
- Karl Rahner

Tuesdays with Merton - webinar series

This webinar series, presented by the International Thomas Merton Society and the Bernardin Center at Catholic Theological Union, is offered on the second Tuesday of each month. *The series is free, however registration is required.*

Upcoming Presentations include:

- Christopher Pramuk - *What Does God's Gender Have to Do with It? Merton's Awakening to the Feminine Divine* on November 10, 2020, 8 pm ET.
- Jonathan Montaldo - *Thomas Merton's Contemplative Exercises for Entering the School of Our Lives* on December 8, 2020, 8 pm ET.
- Jim Finley - *Topic: TBA* on January 12, 2021, 8 pm ET.
- Christine M. Bochen - *Created for Joy: Becoming Who We Are, Together* on February 9, 2021, 8 pm ET.

Thank you to Fr. Bill for providing this information. You can learn more and register by visiting **The Merton Center** website at merton.org.



Rev. Bill Petro, M.A. is a Spiritual Director and Supervisor. frbpetro42@gmail.com

Taste and See the Goodness of God

In the mid-80s a chaplain friend suggested I try spiritual direction after I began a 12-step program (Overeaters Anonymous). God provides! Over the next 30+ years, I was guided into an ever-deepening relationship with God. When my first director (of more than 20 years) became too ill to continue, God led me to another director, perfectly suited to my current life situation.

Upon relocating to Charleston, I found my way to West Virginia Institute for Spirituality, and continued spiritual direction, and got involved in parish Bible study groups and ministries. So many opportunities became available to me through WVIS including:

- The successful completion of my training in spiritual direction,
- The privilege of directing individuals through a 19th Annotation Retreat in Everyday Life, a 3-day retreat, and an 8-day retreat.

- The gift of leading a wonderful group spiritual direction book series.
- The ability to attend Thomas Merton Group meetings.
- A variety of opportunities to lead contemplative prayer sessions and Soup-and Silence noon retreats.

God is waiting to feed you in ways you never imagined. I have had profound moments of grace and renewal and would invite (nudge?) you to explore your own heart and see where you may be called to taste and see the goodness of God. Please feel free to reach out to me to discuss any of these experiences of God's goodness.



Donna Becher is a WVIS Associate Spiritual Director

Directing Retreats as an Intern

Recently I was inspired with a homily highlighting Peter asking Jesus if he could come to Him across the water. Having the trust of Peter to walk toward Jesus through the storm is how I initially felt when asked by my directee to give her a six-day retreat. In the past, I had directed one-day retreats but never a six-day. However, like Peter, I said yes right away trying not to show any nervousness or negative reaction. When I began praying about the retreat, I grew more nervous and had to remind myself of Jesus' response to a flailing Peter, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt...why do you doubt?"

The training to give an Ignatian Directed Retreat was one of the reasons I felt the Formation Program at WVIS was right for me. Grateful for the initial education; and placing my trust in Jesus and the guidance of my supervisor, the retreat went very well. My directee's evaluation comments were positive as she felt God had spoken to her throughout the retreat. For that I was grateful because I wanted to keep *me* out of the retreat and help her to find God more intensely.

Placing my hand in Jesus' during this retreat helped me to walk on water so that my outstretched hand could become the hand of Jesus for my directee.



*Sr. Mary Irene Sorber, SCC
WVIS Associate Spiritual Director Intern*

The Spirituality of Covid-19

Covid-19 has touched the whole world and changed our daily lives. The pandemic caused many to reflect and to remember the song we sang as children "He's got the Whole World in His Hands."

We witnessed the fact of God having the world in his hands several months ago when the global economy shut down, no planes, no restaurants, no public schools, no social gatherings. We witnessed hospitals struggle with obtaining supplies, and shortages in the grocery stores while many became unemployed.

At the same time, Covid-19 has been a relationship builder. Many are calling upon the Lord as never before – wanting God to do something about their situation. While for others, this time has caused them to build, strengthen and go deeper in their relationship with God.

As we seek to get back to a sense of normal in our lives, the truth of the matter is that we won't come out of this global pandemic unscathed, untouched, or unchanged. Thousands have died, people we know and people in our own families. Unfortunately, many more will die.

We pray to God while our medical responders fight, we pray to God while our experts give direction, and we pray as our leaders move to open the country.

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith;"

*Rev. Dr. Michael A. Poke Sr.
WVIS Associate Spiritual Director
Pastor Saint Paul MBC
michaelpokesr@gmail.com*



Emotional Sobriety Online Program

Emotional sobriety, according to author Gerald May, MD, gives us freedom *of* desire rather than freedom *from* desire. This 6-week program helped participants grow in their awareness of both their illusionary programs for happiness and the triggers that snag or grab them. Awareness helps give us freedom from our attachments and enables us to rewire our brains to live more freely. For additional information on this program, please email sally@sayyes2yourlife.org.



*Ms. Sally Orcutt, OP
WVIS Associate Spiritual Director Intern*

West Virginia Institute for Spirituality
1601 Virginia Street East
Charleston, WV 25311

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Charleston, WV
Permit No.
162

_____ **I would like to help The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality**

I am enclosing a donation: \$ _____

WVIS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Credit Card: _____ Visa _____ Master Card _____ Discover

Name on card: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

_____ **Please send me information on** _____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work ph: _____

Email address: _____

**Mail to: West Virginia Institute for Spirituality
1601 Virginia Street, East
Charleston, WV 25311**

The West Virginia Institute for Spirituality offers services to all without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religious creed, disability, sex, ancestry or national origin.