



THE WEST VIRGINIA INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUALITY

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NEWS FROM WVIS

2024 #2

Message from our Executive Director

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



*We bless these years, for all we learned for all we loved, and lost,
And for the quiet way it brought us near to our invisible destination.
No one knew the name of this day,
born quietly from deepest night.
We seldom notice how each day is a holy place,
where the Eucharist of the ordinary happens,
transforming our broken fragments into the
eternal continuity that keeps us.
So, we give thanks for the secret work
through which the mind of each day, and the wisdom of each soul
Become one.*

These words of blessing from John O'Donohue's *Book of Blessing* (2008) inspire us as we continue our celebration of Thanksgiving for the gift WVIS has brought not only to our satellite areas and Charleston but through Zoom to many continents in our troubled world. We strive to be a place of shelter, comfort, and healing. To be Eucharist in the ordinary.

God blesses our efforts and leads us by secret ways. As you read these words give thanks with me for the people who have crossed our threshold and those whom you have touched by your blessed presence.

Personally give thanks for the blessing you are to me and to WVIS. Join me in the practice of loving kindness to yourself and to those God allows you to meet daily. Allow your ministry to flow from your prayer, your daily time resting in God's presence.

Sister Carole Riley CDP

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

Visit the WVIS website (www.wvis.org) to learn more about spiritual direction, retreat options, and upcoming programs.

Message from our Board President

Rev. David S. Lake

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



Greetings WVIS Community,

I love the time of spring! Although the winter was easy where I am located, south of Pittsburgh, I enjoy the time when I get outside and start planning for our garden. I now realize there are unexpected benefits to this. In the book *Composting For a New Generation* one can read: “When you are working with compost or soil in the garden, you inhale these bacteria (*Mycobacterium vaccae*) or come in contact with the bacteria through your skin...triggering your body to release serotonin, a natural mood stabilizer.”

Life is filled with unexpected blessings. One “thing” can lead to multiple blessings occurring. Take for instance WVIS: “a living prayer, in the heart of the city.” There are many blessings – known and unknown – that have taken place from the hands of those involved in her ministries.

Lives have been changed and transformed because of the many spiritual directors and others from her past and those today that seek to guide and direct. I can only imagine what God has in store for those yet to be called!

May the joy of Christ’s presence guide us into the blessings of tomorrow.

With a Grateful Heart,

Rev. David S. Lake

RETREATS / PROGRAMS AT WVIS

Weekly Programs at WVIS via Zoom

Third Tuesday: Merton Chapter 7 - 8:30 pm
Wednesdays: 11th Step Contemplative Prayer 7 pm
Monday - Friday: Contemplative Prayer 7 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 (19th Annotation), please contact the director of your choice:

Robert Sylvester: bsyl@msn.com
Donna Becher: donna.becher@gmail.com

Sr. Molly Maloney, OSF: wvissrmolly@aol.com
Rev. Meredith Hutchinson: meredithhutchinson@comcast.net
Margaret Nagem: chesedpeg@gmail.com
Sr. Carole Riley: wviscr@aol.com

Silent Directed Retreats

WVIS offers multiple options for you to make an Ignatian Silent Directed Retreat of any length (3-, 5-, or 8-days).

The Retreat House is open, or if you desire the privacy of a private space, you can make your retreat at the Hermitage onsite (but separate space.) Additionally, if you prefer, WVIS Directors offer retreats via Zoom.

Retreats can be scheduled at any time of the year. Learn more by calling Sister Carole at 412-901-4259.

The Celebration Continues Retreat House Re-dedication Held April 13th

WVIS 25th Anniversary Celebration continues. On Saturday, April 13th, over 30 individuals gathered to celebrate the re-dedication of the West Virginia Institute for Spirituality (WVIS) Retreat House. It was a beautiful time for friends old and new to join together and embrace the truth that at WVIS truly all are welcome. Please visit our website www.wvis.org (link is at the bottom of Home page) to see a slideshow and join in the celebration. Below are some of the pictures that have been part of this year's anniversary celebration.



Nazareth Chapel dedicated in 2013 is a sacred space for retreatants and the community.



Rev. David Lake, WVIS Board President welcomes those attending the re-dedication.



Pat Grebe, Tom Scarr, PJ Scarr, and Liz Deal



Dr. Elaine Soper and WVIS Board member Molly Linehan Belcher



Dr. Robert Harrison and Executive Director Sr. Carole Riley, CPD, Ph.D.



Sr. Mary Irene Sorber, SCC and Leanna Lake



Original Board Member Ed Neely, Associate Spiritual Director Eileen Chwalibog, Leanna Lake, and original Board Member and current Satellite leader, Cindy Neely.



WVIS Serenity Garden dedicated in memory of Sr. Mary Pellicane, RC (inset) and her devotion to those in the Twelve Step Recovery Program.



Associate Spiritual Directors Donna Becher and B.A. Miskowicz

Visit our website at www.wvis.org

Reflections and Happenings

WVIS - the Legacy of the Cenacle Retreat House

This is the 25th Anniversary of the West Virginia Institute for Spirituality (WVIS), the legacy of the Cenacle Retreat House. The Cenacle Retreat House was established in a former convent at 1117 Virginia St. East after Joseph H. Hodges, former bishop of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese, asked the Cenacle Sisters to develop a retreat center in downtown Charleston. When the retreat house was closed, WVIS was born. During this anniversary year I have been re-collecting memories of not only WVIS but also The Cenacle, for the Cenacle was also the mother who birthed WVIS.

The Cenacle was my retreat home for eight years beginning in 1992 when I entered Spiritual Direction and ultimately the Associates Training Program. It was there that I grew to know our merciful, loving God as mother. Raised in a patriarchal era and in a sin-based formation in Catholic school in the 1950's, it was nothing short of a miracle to have my image of God changed so radically. That transformation happened during my first eight-day retreat where I spent so many hours in that beautiful chapel.



This picture shows the marble behind the altar in the Cenacle chapel, and that marble played a significant part in my meeting mother God. For you see, I am a nurse and I tend to see

everything through a nurse's eyes. One retreat day, as I contemplated this marble background, I was seeing the mammographic image of a woman's breast. What a miracle that this image of a breast that feeds the young would frame the Eucharistic table. Remembering the countless hours of nursing my three babies, I once again felt that deep satisfaction of satisfying their

hunger, consoling, and comforting them. As a mother knows, these are moments of union. And I knew this is God's experience of feeding me. As with a mother and her child, there is nothing but Love.



Cindy Neely is a founding WVIS board member. She is an Associate Spiritual Director, Associate Ministry Director and serves on the faculty of WVIS.

WVIS and Hermitage House

On April 13th the WVIS Retreat House and the Ardath S. Francke Hermitage were re-dedicated. At this ceremony Ardath's spirit was very much in evidence. We are so grateful that even though she was unable to attend in person, Ardath's daughter Paula offered this missive in memory of her exceptional mother.

Ardath's spirituality began before she was born. Her parents and grandparents were God-fearing people whose ancestors were Scottish migrants. They were all church-goers; and for them, life was hard and God was in charge. The eldest of eight children, her father became the head of the household and his mother's strength when he lost his father at the age of 14.

When Ardath came into his life as his first child and only daughter, he was already experienced in childcare. Before she was even two years old, he would sit in his great oak rocker each evening with Ardath on his lap and read from the *Hurlbut's Bible Stories*. Ardath's father gave her confidence and encouraged her to become all that she was capable of becoming.

As she practiced daily prayer with a contemplative prayer group from WVIS, changes took root in her heart and life. As she studied with WVIS to become a spiritual director, she began to encounter a feeling

Leave a legacy that will help others by contributing to WVIS through The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation. You can donate online by going to The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation (tgkvf.org) and donate to the WVIS Endowment Fund or mail your donation to WVIS Fund, c/o The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, P.O. Box 3041, Charleston WV 25331. Contact Michelle Foster, at 304-346-3634 for more information.

of truth – specifically, the aspect that the Kingdom of God is now, focusing the presence of God in her present life.

Her greatest gift was a hungry heart which longed to do God's will. That yearning led her into daily prayer, worship services, scripture readings and the companionship of praying people. She felt this was a gift of God's grace for which she could do nothing to earn, for it was freely given to her, and she wanted others to experience the gift of God's grace through the safe and nurturing space of the Hermitage house.

If you or someone you know is seeking a time away to deepen their relationship with God, please contact: Sr. Carole Riley, CDP, Ph.D., Executive Director at wviscr@aol.com or visit our website for further information: www.wvis.org

Ardath S. Francke



Creation Cares...

Little things you can do to make a big difference!

Laundry Time!

As the days lengthen and all Creation springs forth with God's glory, we yearn to get outside and "dance in the forest, play in the fields...". But what if the fields are muddy and you've got grass stains on your knees?

Consider using laundry sheets, instead of plastic jugs of liquid laundry detergent or pods. They come in a packet (cardboard and easily recyclable) and look like thick dryer sheets. They're concentrated, highly effective laundry detergent and extremely portable. I always take a few when I'm going to do laundry away from home.

Earth breeze and Tru Earth are excellent brands and can be purchased online directly with subscription options that make them even more affordable.

"There are three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbor, and with the earth itself!"

- Pope Francis in Laudato Si:

On Care for our Common Home



*Creation Cares is offered by Donna Becher,
WVIS Associate Spiritual Director*

A Fig Tree Grows in Charleston

A fig tree planted years ago by Sister Mary Pellicane still stands in the courtyard of WVIS in Charleston, WV. At one time it looked unwell but with some care it is green and healthy once again, bearing fruit. It is a reminder of the resilience and strength of the person who planted it and it stands strong for the 25th Anniversary.



What would its first gardener, Sister Mary Pellicane, say about this 25th year celebration? What would she say about the WVIS of today – its members and its mission?

This question was posed to a few who knew her well. Some of the responses probably won't surprise you. "Thank God, you made it!" "Boy that garden is spiffy." "It's a miracle; we started with less than 40 dollars." "Look where we are now, all by God's grace."

It was suggested that Sister Mary Pellicane would have urged all of us to "follow our call." But among those who knew her best, there was one consistent response. She would have said we were "doing good in the shade of the capital," much like her beloved fig tree.



WVIS Wish List Items

WVIS receives many gifts on our needs list each month. Thank you in advance for your generosity. Our most pressing needs at this time are:

1. Donations to help offset utility, lawncare, and/or telephone bills.
2. Amazon gift cards
3. Donation of \$125 for tuning the piano
4. Prepared "freezable entrees or desserts" (local)
5. Volunteer(s) to do the layout for Thema or the Newsletter - skills needed Microsoft Word, Adobe InDesign, or basic website skills. Email wvis_sally@aol.com if you are interested and want to learn more.

Do you have another area of expertise that might benefit WVIS? We would love to have you volunteer with us. Contact Sister Carole Riley at wviscr@aol.com

Visit our website at www.wvis.org

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

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