



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

2024 #1

Message from our Executive Director

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

Dear Friends of WVIS,

February is a Paschal mystery month for me. The bleak weather speaks of death yet I celebrate the birthdays of loved ones, focus on giving affirmations on St. Valentine's Day, and ponder the beginning of Lent...a time of remembrance and penance. During our WVIS 25th anniversary year, I practice morning Resurrection gratitude. Today I chose the words of O'Donohue "remind me that morning is when I become a pure vessel for what wants to ascend from silence. I want my imagination to know the grace of the unexpected and to reach beyond imitation and the wheel of repetition into the deep of the unfinished and unresolved. May my longing inhabit its dream in the Great Belonging" (2008, p 46, adapted). Savor the mystery of each day. Cultivate gratitude. Live with Mystery.



There are many new projects and initiatives in our 25th anniversary year. I hope you will support us with your ideas, prayers, and the treasure of time and talent. May WVIS provide shelter in your life so that when you come here you feel at home, tranquil, and at peace. May this place and our ministry be a safe space for you and a place of self-discovery. May you never leave this place without feeling a blessing from the God who loves us all. I eagerly await to see you in person at our house rededication in April.

Pray with me these words of St. Anselm of Canterbury as we move through this anniversary year of grace and renewal:

Teach me to seek you,
For I cannot seek you unless you teach me,
Or find you unless you show yourself to me.

Let me seek you in my desire;
Let me desire you in my seeking.
Let me find you by loving you;
Let me love you when I find you.

You bless us with your presence in the WVIS family. Let us pray for each other.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Sister Carole A. 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



Dear Friends,

As I have eased into 2024 I have been reflecting upon what has caused me to be grateful. First – I am grateful for family. My wife and I entered the New Year while on vacation for 2 weeks due to the generosity of family. I am extremely grateful for the time we had together - away from the calls and demands of regular workdays!

I am forever grateful for God's call and claim upon my life. I am fortunate to have been raised in a Christian home where serving God was a normal and daily part of my life. God's presence has continued to be a strong part of my life throughout my 40 years of church service. I am grateful for those people and places that have, over the years, continued to shape and mold me into the one who seeks to be a faithful follower of Christ today.

I am grateful for WVIS and the many lives that have been changed and transformed through all the various programs offered. What a joy to be celebrating 25 years of "mindfulness and inner peace" with all of you.

May God continue to challenge and shape us daily!

In Christ,

Rev. David S. Lake

RETREATS / PROGRAMS AT WVIS

Upcoming Programs through WVIS via Zoom

Little Pieces of Light: a 5-week Lenten Group Spiritual Direction Program - starts February 20th

Abiding in Hope: a 5-week Lenten Group Spiritual Direction Program - starts February 20th

Transitions: Danger or Opportunity - WVIS Conference held on Saturday, March 9

To learn more about these upcoming opportunities, visit the website at <https://www.wvis.org/programs>

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: meredithhutchison@comcast.net

Margaret Nagem: chesedpeg@gmail.com

Sr. Carole Riley: wviscr@aol.com

Almost Heaven Silent Directed Retreats

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

Retreats can be scheduled at any time of the year. Learn more by visiting our website at <https://www.wvis.org/retreats/almost-heaven-retreat> or calling Sister Carole directly at 412-901-4259.

What is Your Favorite WVIS Memory?

December 28th was the first celebration of the 25th Anniversary year at WVIS. It began via Zoom as friends from across the United States and in Germany joined presenter Sister Cheryl Clemons, OSU, and others for a time of memories, prayers, and shared gratitude. You can visit the website and watch the evening by going to <https://www.wvis.org/2024/01/12/wvis-25th-anniversary-celebration-begins>.

One participant wrote of the “many happy memories of day and nights spent at the Cenacle” while another of gratitude for the “many ways WVIS has opened my heart to a God I no longer have to understand.” Sister Molly related that her “heart leapt for joy” when she saw the smiling faces on Zoom and the “full circle” provided in the celebration of WVIS associates past and present brought together that evening.

WVIS invites you to join in the celebration. The next event will be on April 13th at 2 p.m. in Charleston, West Virginia. There will be an in-person re-dedication of the retreat house that includes an ecumenical prayer service and reception. We hope you will join us. If you have questions about this event, please email Sister Carole at wviscr@aol.com.

It was such a blessing to hear the stories of so many who have been touched by their time spent at WVIS. We'd like to hear *your* stories too. In each issue of the newsletter and, where possible, on the website, we want to share stories during this anniversary year. I hope you will add to the joy and celebration by sharing your memories, stories, and photos with us. To do so contact Sally Orcutt via email at sally@sayyes2yourlife.org or PJ Scarr at pjlohrscarr@gmail.com.

PJ Scarr is a WVIS Associate Spiritual Director - Charlottesville, VA. She also serves as the editor of the newsletter pjlohrscarr@gmail.com



Celebrate the Spirit Outreach

It is a privilege to write about the ministry of WVIS' CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT. “CTS” is a planning committee comprised of dedicated persons who celebrate recovery and promote the spirituality of the Twelve Steps. Every Thursday from 9:30 am. to 11:00 a.m. a group of volunteers meet with the patients at the Addiction Healing Center at St. Francis Hospital to share our stories of experience, strength, and hope.

Thanks to the hospitality of Reverend Randy Richardson, Pastor of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, and counselors at the Addiction Healing Center, we host 4 events a year at Trinity's Fellowship Hall in Charleston, WV. These special gatherings integrate the Addiction Healing Center patients and alumni with the recovery community. Our most recent event, with 70 participants, was held on December 16th and was titled “Home for the Holidays, Embracing our Miracles.”

We are grateful for the many people working behind the scenes who create these events that support the journey of those in recovery. It is GIFT to experience the increasing number of participants with each celebration!



*Sr. Molly Maloney, O.S.F., M.A.
Bob Sylvester, M.A.
WVIS Associate Spiritual Directors
CTS Planning Committee Members*



Visit our website at www.wvis.org

Reflections and Happenings

Reflection on a 30-day Silent Retreat

WVIS offers 30-day in-person Ignatian Silent Directed Retreats at the Retreat House in Charleston, West Virginia. Recently, retreatants were gracious enough to share some of their recorded reflections of this special journey. For more information on making a 30-day retreat, visit <https://www.wvis.org/retreats/30-day-spiritual-exercises> or contact Sister Carole Riley, CDP at wviscr@aol.com

Welcome	To this, you have come Parting ways Coming apart Or is it a part?
Introduction	Ready to acquire But how, with this cold heart? Mixed up “How” wondering
Insight	Lurking Behind and between Wisdom, humor, insight and beauty Hidden in the printed word
Wisdom	This peace Spirit within Under skin Presence alive
Flight	Freedom aloft Allowing a past melt away The unknown now Has arrived Amen. Alleluia



Sister Jeanne Rollins is a member of the Sisters Of St. Francis Of Penance And Christian Charity, in Redwood City, CA

Reverend Marsha Anderson is an Associate Pastor at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Raleigh, NC. She and her husband live in Durham, NC with their three children.



Love tumbled through the door
and said, “Stay. I’ll slow down if you will.”
Maybe Love was always slow, in the steady way.
I tried to breathe, to ease, to steady myself,
and Love breathed with me
through awe and grief,
showing me rest, relief,
the relentless thrum
of Love’s heartbeat,
filling, reaching each fingertip and toe
of my life and yours.
And theirs. Love isn’t bothered easily, like me.
Love embraces, whispers,
“life...life...life...life...”
and the whispers are loud when you listen.
The noticing turns, becomes a
thrum
drumbeat
ringing in your ears,
in every corner,
beneath every rock.
The stone rolls
to show
life
when all signs are
dread death and failure:
Life...Life...Life...Life...
renewed, anew, a new,
again, again, again,
always.
Steady.
Slow.
Here.
Drawing trust from wounds
and surrender that is freedom.
All that thrumming life buoys us...
and on Day 31,

continued...

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 \(tgkvf.org\)](http://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.

Love is still there,
breathing,
singing life, life.
Love thrums, drums,
our new song,
on and on and on.

Note: In addition to sharing the poem she wrote while on retreat, Reverend Anderson shared these words with us about her 30-day Ignatian Retreat experience.

I was surprised, during my first 30-day Ignatian retreat this fall, to find that my fears were unfounded. Before the retreat, I'd wondered about my ability to sit still for so long. I questioned my resolve as I looked out over 30 whole days of prayer before me.

However, I was enchanted to find (or remember) that God is more interesting and delightful than I could ever imagine. The time intentionally turned toward God was adventurous and imaginative, surprising, and layered. I found that wherever my focus landed, the context was divine and holy love. And that love showed me, time and again, that we are all invited into a way of life that is always bathed in love and that radiates love toward those around us.

Life is complex and sometimes painful, and Love can hold it all and bring us all to new life.

Creation Cares...

Little things you can do to make a big difference!

Read and pray with Pope Francis in his October 4, 2023 Laudate Deum, an urgent follow-up to Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home which reads in part:

"... Eight years have passed since I published the Encyclical Letter Laudato Si', when I wanted to share with all of you, my brothers and sisters of our suffering planet, my heartfelt concerns about the care of our common home. ...our responses have not been adequate... This is a global social issue and one intimately related to the dignity of human life."

Full text available at: <https://www.jesuits.global/2023/10/04/laudate-deum-pope-francis-renews-his-call-to-protect-our-common-home/>

Also, during these bleak midwinter months – take action to protect some of God's vulnerable people in your

neighborhood – the unhoused. Local shelters, churches, United Way, and other organizations rely on volunteers to assist in overnight warming centers as temperatures become dangerously low. Check to see how you might help.



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



WVIS Wish List Items

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

1. 3 sets of white sheets for twin bed
2. Monetary donations for youth retreat materials
3. Copy paper and/or colored paper
4. Monetary donations toward electric bill
5. Monetary donations for Roof Replacement fund
6. Freezable main dishes and desserts for 8 people
7. Paper products such as tissues, towels and toilet paper
8. Gift cards to Amazon, Walmart, Target and/or Aldi
9. Microwave covers for dishes

Most of these items are available on Amazon and can be shipped directly to WVIS.

Are you local? WVIS has need of local volunteer...

WVIS has a need for a gardener, a file clerk, and for individuals that can help with meal preparation. Specifically we need:

- Vegan casseroles for 8 that can be frozen
- Main dishes for 8 that can be frozen
- Any dessert that can be frozen

Do you have an 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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