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Greetings
From the Community Minister

Dear Friends,

The older I get, the faster time seems to pass, and here we are in the season of autumn! The words from Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, vs. 1-8 come to mind, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every matter under heaven.” (NRSV) Perhaps you also may remember the song, “Turn! Turn! Turn!” from 1965 by the singing group, The Byrds.

This new season of autumn fills me with wonder, seeing how God’s creatures in the wild take care of themselves by packing away food needed for the winter. I am also in awe of how nature heals after being injured. These miracles of nature call me to reflect on the many ways we are called to be healers in our world.

We at St. Francis are graced to witness the healing your support provides in the lives of those touched by our ministries. In this issue of our magazine you will read about healing experienced by a man Sister Janice Rospert worked with in a prison in West Virginia. You will see how the staff of the Franciscan Earth Literacy Center continues to teach and invite children and adults to grow in understanding and use of renewable energy sources that heal the earth. St. Francis Senior Ministries offers a variety of support groups for residents and for family members and caregivers to help understand physical and other types of changes that occur in the aging process. The St. Francis Spirituality Center staff and volunteers are providing opportunities for spiritual healing for those suffering from cancer and from post-traumatic stress disorder. Our lives and our ministries are dedicated to healing and wholeness.

So as seasons change and healing comes through the support of one to another, we become instruments of peace in our world. We are so grateful for your support of those we are called to serve. You are an instrument of healing in our wounded world.

Gratefully,

Sister Sara Aldridge
Community Minister

The Gift That Keeps Giving

Your support for the St. Francis Community is of great value to us, and it is our goal to make it rewarding for you as well. That’s why we want you to know about the financial tools you can use to plan your gift to us so that it can return benefits to you:

- You can make a gift as a cash donation that can be designated for special needs.
- You can make a gift that insures your family and the St. Francis Community are remembered through a bequest.
- You can give a gift of real estate, which can be more beneficial than giving cash.
- You can turn surplus life insurance coverage into a gift.
- You can make a gift through company-sponsored pension and profit sharing plans.

Please contact Sister Joanne Lammers at 419.447.0435 and she will be glad to answer any questions you have.
On September 13, Reverend Glen Shedlock, pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Canal Fulton, Ohio, arrived on the St. Francis Campus to begin a new chapter in his spiritual journey. According to Glen, it is a long overdue adventure of writing his book entitled, *Back to Eden*. He chose the campus through much contemplation and prayerful discernment, because he sought to align himself with the mystery and energy of the Divine Love that had inspired this endeavor.

Glen had served as a minister for 9-10 years following his ordination. “My experiences were incredibly difficult and painful, so I left and pursued a new ministry in hospice chaplaincy and served as a spiritual counselor for 13-14 years in Stark-Tuscarawas County. I had a disconnect moment and hole between my soul and what I was supposed to be doing. There was a big ‘unsettledness’ in my spirit. It just was not me or what I was supposed to believe. It was while I was working with hospice care that I started putting the pieces back together and figured things out. As I watched people, I witnessed profound spiritual pain, not just physical pain. People were not just physically dying, they were spiritually dying,” said Glen.

He continued, “At the end of their journey, I watched them struggle with the end. Would God accept them? They had feared being rejected based on what they were taught or not taught. I watched people suffer. When the lights came on, I finally understood what was wrong. In the end, we just want to be loved, unconditionally, and be accepted for who we are. That is when I had my AHA! moment. All of this poured into my head. Things finally clicked. Everything just is. We were called to do the opposite of what we should be doing.”

Glen shared how his relationship with a friend, Barry Bordenkircher, evolved from passing strangers to something much bigger. Glen and Barry first met in 1995 because of their ministry. Both men served at churches in Northwest, Ohio, and met while attending a church meeting. However, it was not until 2010, that their paths would cross again. Soon after, Barry and his wife attended a course called “Return to Eden” that Glen offered at his church. Both men determined that “God brought us together for that moment … a divine calling,” said Barry. From that night there was a strong bond that formed as they both shared the same experiences and yearnings and the same “warped” spiritual conceptions. As a result, Barry became Glenn’s partner in writing.

Barry has visited the St. Francis Spirituality Center many times over the years for denominational meetings as well as private retreats. He describes the campus as a *thin place*. “It is a spiritual setting where the physical world and spiritual world connect. The veil between them becomes transparent and the soul feels its connection to the divine,” explained Glen. “There are no barriers, no separation. There is a Franciscan ideology here that fits perfectly.” He continued to explain how Franciscan priest Richard Rohr, a writer and theologian, is a big part of it. “There is a strong connection to him and a close reflection to what we are both about,” added Glen.

According to Glen, the key point of the book is, “If you believe it, you will become it.” Barry added, “If you believe God is truly a God of love, nothing can take that away. Your image of God creates your reality.” The men hope that this book is used as an invitation to restoring joy. “If this is the path of original blessing, it changes everything. It wipes away all of the illusions, lies and egos. St. Francis understood this. Always was, always will be. To bless, to bless, to bless;” said Glen.

While the men do not have a completion date for the book, they feel that they are off to a good start. “It will happen in its time,” said Glen. “The momentum is building.”
Moving Forward Together

On August 1, St. Francis Spirituality Center hosted a retreat entitled *Embraced in Hope: Moving Beyond the Shock of a Cancer Diagnosis* for those recently diagnosed with cancer. According to team member Karen Gies, a clinical nurse specialist and manager at Mercy Cancer Center in Tiffin, it is always important to have emotional and spiritual support, not just the physical support. “This retreat added a piece to their ability to fight the disease,” said Karen.

The retreat has encouraged Susan Cook, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in March 2015 after undergoing a routine mammogram. “This retreat has helped me see that I’m not alone on the journey, and how important it is to have a good attitude and stay positive,” explained Susan. “The support provided by the speakers and the meditation that Sister Edna offered was very touching and useful,” she added.

During the retreat, each participant chose a slip of paper with an inspirational quote or prayer on it. Susan chose the slip which read

**GOD OF STRENGTH, I LEAN ON YOU AS I WALK THROUGH UPS AND DOWNS. I TRUST THAT YOUR COMPASSIONATE CARE AND LOVE WILL UPHOLD ME. I PLACE MY BURDENS ON THE LAP OF YOUR LOVE. TOGETHER WE MOVE THROUGH THIS DAY.**

“That was one of my favorite verses. I have actually read it during morning announcements at work since it had special meaning,” said Susan.

For the last seven years, Susan has worked at St. Francis Home. “I love these residents, they are like family to me,” she shared. Having a strong support system, whether it involves family, friends, co-workers or even neighbors, is a very important part of the coping process.

On Saturday, November 21, the same team will be offering another cancer retreat in preparation for the holiday season from 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. A continental breakfast will be provided. The suggested cost is $20.00 and includes the retreat and lunch. Financial assistance is available.

**What is a cancer retreat?**

A journey through the medical, emotional, social and spiritual dimensions of what to expect, how to cope, and how to move forward in confidence…all offered in a peaceful retreat setting.

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**Meet the Team Members**

Michelle Clinger, Ph.D., LPCC
Karen Gies, R.N.
Alice Frazier Snook, L.S.W.
Sister Janet Hay, OSF, M.S.N.
Sister Edna Michel, OSF, M.A.

To learn more about the next cancer retreat or other programs, visit our website at [www.franciscanretreats.org](http://www.franciscanretreats.org)
Give an Honorary Christmas Gift

Use the enclosed envelope to contribute an item below to St. Francis Spirituality Center as a Christmas gift in honor of a loved one. St. Francis Spirituality Center will send a Christmas gift acknowledgement to the honoree in your name.

- **Scholarships for Spiritual Renewal and Healing:**
  - $35 for day of reflection
  - $150 for overnight retreat
  - $500 for week long retreat

- **Bed Sheets for Guest Bedrooms**
  - $25/twin Size
  - $50/full Size

- **Bedspreads for Guest Bedrooms**
  - $50/single
  - $80/double

- **Furniture for Rooms and Lounges**
  - $500/recliner for bedroom or lounge
  - $45/floor lamps for the bedroom

- **Painting of (10) Guest Bedrooms**
  - $225/room

Thank you to all of our sponsors and to those volunteers and businesses that made this event such a huge success.

**SAVE THE DATE**

Live Nativity, Sunday, December 6, 2015
Jeff Blake shares his testimony having been released after 14 months in Beckley, West Virginia’s Federal Prison Camp.

Back in 2011, I was asked by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) to spend 14 months visiting their “facility” in Beaver, West Virginia, known as Federal Prison Camp (FPC) Beckley or simply Beckley. Always trying to be a gentleman, I complied.

Life at the FPC was a melting pot with men from all aspects of life; rich and poor, young and old, big and small, and, of course, guilty and not guilty. All races and cultures come together, albeit unwillingly, to spend their “bid,” or prison term, in one shared space.

The FPC itself and its guards are not meant to be the punishment or retribution distributed by the DOJ. The time away from your life and family is. It isn’t always the separation that takes its toll on the inmates, but time itself. Boredom reigns as king at the FPC.

Life becomes bearable at the FPC when an inmate finally finds a way to do his time. Some inmates exercise their days away, some read, while others sleep. It is said that many inmates find religion while incarcerated, as though it’s some type of façade inmates put on to dupe the rest of world into thinking they really have changed. I suppose some do not, but I know firsthand that many do know that Jesus truly comes to them with his saving grace. After all, Jesus himself said “Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.”

– Enter Sister Janice.

It was a Wednesday, early evening. One of my new acquaintances at Beckley asked me to attend a Bible study. As I walked to the building from my barracks, I noticed this diminutive lady, walking very briskly, with perfect posture, carrying a few bags and books and smiling as though she had not a care in the world. Once the study began, this lady introduced herself to me as Sister Janice and immediately asked me to tell the group about myself. Although I am a very private person, for some reason I did what she asked of me without hesitation.

During my tenure there, the group studied Old Testament history and the Book of Revelation. These studies have left a resounding and permanent mark on me. Rather than having my time in prison define the rest of my life in a negative context, with Sister Janice’s love and help, I think of my time in prison as a blessing and a gift that continued my conversion to be a better witness to Christ Jesus by being a better Catholic.

It is very apparent to me that Sister Janice is extremely special. In a very disarming way, she could get someone to lead the study, open up in prayer, offer a reflection at a communion service or tell where one had seen God “this week.” It was nearly impossible to say no to one of her requests.

Sister Janice truly cares for all the men. She has this desire to not just teach but to know and love them. Sister loves as in “the will of the other for the sake of the other.” There is no other way to explain how this barely 5’ tall instrument of God’s grace would have the nerve to offer federal prison inmates, including one 6’-11” former professional athlete and more than a few drug dealers, a class on compassion. Yet, she did. About 10 of us took this wonderful study on turning from anger and resentment to love and compassion through the gift of forgiveness and understanding. Her love overwhelmed us.

Upon leaving Beckley, I was saddened to think that, due to DOJ guidelines, it would be three years before I could communicate
with Sister Janice. Then one day, out of the blue, I received a letter from her saying that she had been given permission to communicate with the now-released men she had ministered to.

I was overwhelmed that I was one of the men Sister Janice had chosen to contact. I immediately called her, and it was as though we had not skipped a beat. Since then, my wife and I have travelled back to Beckley a few times to visit Sister Janice. Warmth and love radiated from her being as we went sightseeing and were guided through the natural beauty of the Beckley area. She sees beauty in all of God’s creations and submits herself to the peace of accepting His will. That love and peace emanate from her and are communicated to those around her. It is why she is always smiling!

My wife and I were blessed to also meet the people of her local parish. Their love and appreciation for all Sister Janice does at her parish were apparent in their glowing words for her and her works. We, too, are blessed by knowing her.

Sister Janice is one of the few people in my life that I can say has impacted me to the point of making a change in my life and my thinking. Meeting and getting to know her brought me to a conversion, a metanoia, and I will always be grateful to God for blessing me by sending me to Beckley.

Jesus tells us, “No one can have greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Sister Janice has devoted her life to ministering to the imprisoned. No one has a greater love for the imprisoned than she.

Give an Honorary Christmas Gift

Use the enclosed envelope to contribute an item below to Sisters of St. Francis as a Christmas gift in honor of a loved one. The Sisters will send a Christmas gift acknowledgement to the honoree in your name.

- Residential Treatment for Addicted Persons
  - $100/month

- Education in Mexico
  - $25/month per child
  - $250/per computer

- Living Expense for Missionary Working with Poor
  - $350/month

- Prevention for Victims of Human Trafficking Workshop
  - $350/workshop or annually

- Support our Sisters
  - $1,100/month for retirement care
  - $1,000/year for education

- Workshop on Christian Nonviolence
  - $350

- Living/Working Expense for Sister in Voluntary Ministry
  - $1,500/month

- Sponsor Documented Immigrant
  - $500 for green card
  - $10 for citizenship test

- Assistance for those in Need
  - $50/trip for transportation
  - $400/family for utility bills
  - $50/toddler car seat

Dancing in the streets, feathers, beads & masks
What more do we need to have a blast?

Mardi Gras
Save the Date
21 & over event

Friday, February 5, 6:00-10:30 pm

Elizabeth Schaefer Auditorium
St. Francis Campus, 190 St. Francis Avenue, Tiffin
Tickets $30.00 each · Table reservations call 419-447-0435
Proceeds benefit the ministries of the Sisters of St. Francis

Mardi Gras tickets make great Christmas gifts!
Support Groups Offered at St. Francis Home

Alzheimer’s Support Group

Bobbie Welter recently attended an Alzheimer’s Support Group meeting. Unfortunately, she can only attend when she is able to find someone to stay with her husband who has Alzheimer’s. Bobbie came looking for answers that would help her cope with her husband’s condition and their daily struggles. She arrived mentally and physically drained and concerned about his safety. She may not have left with all the answers but she left knowing that she was not alone. Others that attended reminded Bobbie how important it is for caregivers to get rest and take care of themselves. They admitted that sometimes joining a support group and at other times seeing a professional is necessary. They offered encouragement around the table. She had been through a rough couple of weeks with her husband. “He reacts to the full moon,” she said. She asked the group if anyone else had dealt with this before and was surprised to learn that several others have as well.

The Alzheimer’s Support group’s purpose is to provide educational and social opportunities and an avenue for group sharing and support for persons who are coping with a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or other forms of dementia. At a recent meeting, Rachel Fabrizio (Social Worker at St. Francis Home) and Kim Dunn (Unit Manager of our Alzheimer’s Unit) shared information about Med-alert, a device worn on the wrist or as a necklace that is available through the Alzheimer’s Association. They also suggested devices for caregivers to use in assisting their loved one with walking or when transferring patients to chairs. The support group consists of people who have something in common. It may be a spouse, mother, mother-in-law, or best friend.

They all are dealing with someone who is battling Alzheimer’s Disease, and they are looking for answers and support. They share stories about medications that they have tried, concerns that they have, struggles and fears that their loved ones have encountered. They offer suggestions on how music can have a calming effect or trigger memories. At the August meeting, “The Healing Power of Music” was discussed. Josiah Lee shared that “music does make a huge impact.” He shared that there was a resident playing the piano in the Alzheimer’s Unit who would ask if they minded him playing for his wife, Bonnie. Even though he could only play one song repeatedly, it was perfectly soothing to her.

Josiah Lee continues to attend the Alzheimer’s Support Group despite the fact his wife Bonnie died on July 19, 2015. “She was diagnosed 10 years ago and had been a resident at St. Francis Home for over a year,” he recalled at the August meeting. Josiah now comes to support others who have a loved one battling the disease and continues to share Bonnie’s story.

St. Francis Home also offers Care Consultation, available through Northwest Ohio’s Alzheimer’s Association. It includes assessment of needs, assistance with planning and problem solving and supportive listening. The organization’s services can be reached by calling 1-800-272-3900 or emailing alzheimersnwo@alz.org.

Parkinson’s Support Group

Shirley Magers was diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease in 2007. She resides with caregiver daughter Gemma Marschke. They both agreed that it is helpful to hear what others who have the disease are going through and receive advice they can share with others. Gemma commented, “There is such diversity within the group. There is a sense of community that is created. At first I had reservations, but when you share everyday life experiences, you can see and understand the progress of the disease.” Gemma feels fortunate that as a healing practitioner, she can share her knowledge of complementary therapies like yoga that have helped her mother.

Shirley said that her mother had Parkinson’s Disease and lived here at St. Francis. At first St. Francis did not offer a support group so Shirley attended meetings at Trinity United Church of Christ in Tiffin, but it eventually dissolved. She now attends the meetings which are held on the 4th Thursday of each month from 1:00-2:30 p.m. at St. Francis Home. “This is so much more personable,” she said. The participants are also able to give input on which topics they are interested in hearing about. “All of the topics have been very interesting,” said Shirley, “I really liked the talk on breathing exercises.”

In the future, the group is considering topics that include how
According to Rachel Fabrizio, social worker at St. Francis Home, there have been programs on balance with “Yoga Chuck” Burmeister. An overview of “Big & Loud” therapy offered at St. Francis focused on movements and speech. In the fall they will be having a pharmacist speak. At the meetings, Rachel shares useful or helpful literature from the Parkinson’s Foundation and other publications that may be of interest.

Bev Martin, a local Wellness Advocate for doTERRA Essential Oils, explained which supplements and oils most benefit the symptoms of Parkinson’s patients. “Oils are good for memory for Alzheimer’s patients, too,” she said, “and they can be an alternative to taking pills for those who cannot swallow.” There is scientific proof that oils have calming effects which Parkinson’s patients have to deal with on a regular basis, and they can improve sleep and brain function.

Shirley and Gemma have also shared research information that has been provided by the Cleveland Clinic. Shirley has been involved in a research study that provides helpful information.

**International Low Vision Support Group**

In 2012, the International Low Vision Support Group (ILVSG) was first offered on the St. Francis Campus. Each month, a new topic is presented through a free monthly webcast about topics such as eye diseases, living successfully with low vision and much more. The webcast is hosted by MD Support, a leading non-profit organization offering information and help for many people affected by macular degeneration and related eye diseases. The program, which is held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 10:30 a.m. at St. Francis Home, lasts about 30-45 minutes and is followed by a discussion among the participants and led by Jean Overmier. The ILVSG is sponsored by MD Foundation.

In October, the topic was “Aids & Technology for Low Vision.” An update was given on what optical, non-optical and high tech devices are available. Previous topics have included Living Using a Cane-Is it for me?, All About Glasses, Don’t Let Low Vision Bring You Down, Training & Raising Guide Dogs, and The Latest Pharmaceuticals. A printed monthly newsletter is also offered to attendees.

In January 2002, Richard Glanz had stopped working for the most part, due to his vision problems, but was able to still do some of his job by phone. He has been dealing with vision problems for the past 13-14 years. Richard has been attending meetings regularly for several years and describes himself as very open-minded and always willing to learn more. “I think it’s good for me to have a perspective in case it happens to me someday,” Richard said. “Some months the topic applies to me and other months not so much, but it does not mean it won’t be important to know in the future.” He continued, “It is always good to know things in advance and these programs make you aware of what services are out there if and when the need arises. And, it doesn’t hurt to have a refresher course from time to time. Some of this stuff you need to hear more than once.” Richard described another benefit of the ILVSG. “Some of this information you get from doctors you can handle alone, but others can get depressed easily and need support,” he said.

For more information, visit [www.mdsupport.org](http://www.mdsupport.org).

**Give an Honorary Christmas Gift**

Contribute an item below to St. Francis Senior Ministries as a Christmas gift in honor of a loved one. St. Francis Senior Ministries will send a Christmas acknowledgement to the honoree in your name.

- **60 Resident Electric Beds**
  $1,935 each

- **Furniture Fund for Renovated Common Areas & Residents Rooms**
  - Chairs: $500 each
  - Tables: $1,000 each
  - Power lift furniture: $1,500 each
  - 42” Flat screen TV’s for resident’s rooms: $498 each

**Friends and family who have a loved one with Low Vision, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s or other dementia, whether they are living at home or in a care facility are always welcome to attend support group meetings. All meetings are held in the Multi-purpose Room at St. Francis Home, 182 St. Francis Avenue, Tiffin. For more information, call 419.447.2723.**

**SAVE THE DATE**

Annual Memorial Service, Sunday, November 1, 2015
A reunion was held in late September at the Franciscan Earth Literacy Center (FELC) for area children and mentally handicapped adults from the School of Opportunity in Tiffin that attended any of the recent summer camps. According to Sister Shirley Shafranek, FELC educator, the purpose was “to show parents how important it is to keep children connected to nature by spending time in the woods, interacting with the center’s animals, and simply playing outside.” She continued, “Having time to play outdoors and outside of school, sports and other organized activities allows them to use their imagination and learn in an unstructured setting. So many kids today have their entire lives organized or they are inside playing with electronics that they do not always have an opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors.” This event allowed campers to bring their parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents or whomever to FELC and share with them what they learned over the summer. While visiting the woods, campers and families were able to participate in a scavenger hunt, try geocaching, make a fossil or footprint to take home and more. Before leaving everyone was able to sit around the fire and enjoyed s’mores. Sister Shirley hopes to make the reunion an annual event.

### Give an Honorary Christmas Gift

Use the enclosed envelope to contribute to the children’s environmental class items below as a Christmas gift in honor of a loved one. FELC will send a Christmas gift acknowledgement to the honoree in your name.

- **Education Supplies Fund**
  - $10 each child served
  - (Expect a minimum 4000 children annually)

- **Sponsor a Child to Attend Camp**
  - Low-income scholarship of $100 each (covers meals & supplies)
  - (Expect 50 scholarships needed annually)

- **Seeds of Hope Farm Supplies**
  - Garden tools, seeds, soil amendments kits - $100 each community garden plot sponsored
  - (Expect up to 20 families in need of help this year)

- **Sponsor a Special Summer Program**
  - $500 for guest speaker fees, offered twice yearly

- **Homeschooler’s Science Class Program**
  - $300 for supplies and transportation annually

- **Sponsor a College Intern to Train and Assist at FELC**
  - $3000/year per each intern
A Happy Camper

Ten-year-old Maliyah Young made some new friends, tried pottery for the first time, spent the night in the woods and experienced much more while attending some summer camps on the St. Francis Campus. According to her mother, Danielle Spaulding, “Maliyah really enjoyed the camps and they kept her very busy.” During “Extreme Game” camp, Maliyah enjoyed playing the game “Flinch,” a Native American game in which you had to try and make somebody flinch. “Sister Shirley taught us a lot of interesting facts about the Native Americans, too. Years ago they used rocks to play some of the games,” Maliyah explained. “We were lucky because we got to use a soft, squishy ball instead,” she added. One of the highlights of the camps for Maliyah was getting to sleep in the woods during “I Will Survive” camp. “I wasn’t scared,” she said. “We were able to explore the woods, learn how to build a fort, make cool forts, cook our own dinner and start a fire and roast marshmallows,” she said. Maliyah also attended pottery camp, for the first time, taught by Sister Jane Omlor. “She taught me so much about clay and all of the cool things you can do with it. It was fun getting messy without getting in trouble,” said Maliyah.
“Hold back nothing of yourselves... so that he who gives himself totally to you may receive you totally.”

— St. Francis of Assisi

Congratulations to our Jubilarians who are celebrating 50 years of sisterhood.
Front Row: Sister Veronica Marie (Bonnie) Smith & Sister Joyce Ann Hoile
Back Row: Sister Leanne Kerschner, Sister Myra Arnone, Sister Angela Marie Keil & Sister Ritamarie Miller

Residents from Friedman Village at St. Francis attended the Seneca County Fair wearing tie dye shirts that they made. Pictured: Ruth Williams (seated) with her daughter Vicky Welly (standing behind her) and Dorothy Neiling (right).

Alana Fox enjoyed learning how to make pinch pot monsters, slab turtles, and coil ice cream bowls at pottery camp this summer with Sister Jane Omlor.