

Giardini, Mary D.

From: Mt. Irenaeus <peace@mountainonline.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2025 4:27 PM
To: Giardini, Mary D.
Subject: "Making All Things New!" - August 2025 - A Life AND a Ministry; Save the Dates; Franciscan Connections; Experience the Mountain!



Making All Things New

August 2025



Br. Kevin talks to us about Mt. Irenaeus being not just a Ministry but a Life *and* a Ministry and invites you to join us! Please click [HERE](#) to listen to his message.



The Mountain Echoes in the Valley

We invite our Mountain family to learn about an inspiring new ministry with Mountain and Bonaventure connections. [SEARCH, A New Franciscan Ministry](#) in the Diocese of Charlotte, is led by Fr. Roberto (Tito) Serrano, Fr. Casey Cole, ofm, and Fr. Jason Damon, ofm (pictured here

from left to right). Their hope for this ministry is a beautifully simple one: to prayerfully engage in the secular world, to meet people where they are, to listen to their longings, and to model a life of faith that can support each of us as we seek meaning and relationship.

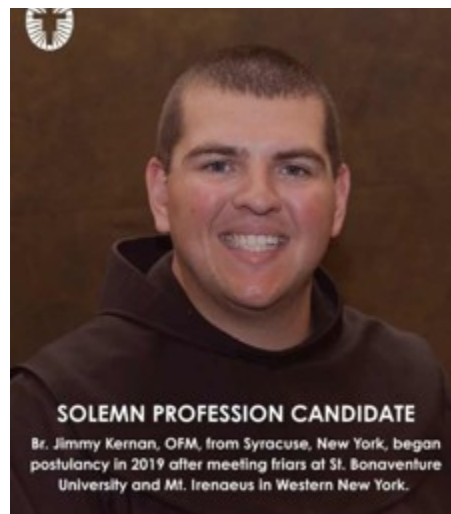
Fr. Jason is a Bonaventure graduate who spent rich time at the Mountain and served as a part of our On the Road outreach. In 2017 he ministered with the residential community at Mt. Irenaeus as he discerned his calling. He wrote of this experience: “I am grateful to Mt. Irenaeus for a lot of things, and near the top of that list is providing a space where I can simply listen to the stillness. Listen to the silence. Listen to my own heart, so often drowned out by the noisy, if well-intentioned, activities of life. Listen and contemplate God’s will for me in a world that seems so often to be wracked with brokenness and violence.”

Fr. Tito has also been moved by his time at the Mountain. When he worked and studied at St. Bonaventure last year, Fr. Tito documented on [Instagram](#) his time with the Bonaventure Men’s Rugby Team at the Mountain, offering gratitude for the way the Mountain creates space for work, rest, community, and prayer.

We listen to the ways the Mountain, offering companionship, quiet, and sustenance, nourishes and forms these rich vocation stories. They are testimony to the fact that the Mountain is a necessary place, a home to remind us, as Thomas Merton wrote in his journals, that “contemplation is the loving sense of this life and this presence and this eternity.” We celebrate these friars as they carry the grace of this loving sense into the valleys of our world.

Mountain Vocations

The Franciscan community of the [Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrates](#) five friars who will profess vows and three to be ordained on August 23rd. The Mountain family offers special prayers for Br. Jimmy Kernan, ofm, a solemn profession candidate, a member of our Board of Trustees, a St. Bonaventure graduate, and a dear friend and colleague to many. Br. Jimmy is from Syracuse, New York and began postulancy in 2019 after meeting friars at St. Bonaventure and Mt. Irenaeus.



Corporate success and clinical care gave way to quieter, more intentional life for two alumnae called back to their Franciscan beginnings.

[Click HERE](#) to read their stories.



Recently St. Bonaventure University's alumni magazine interviewed two special alumnae for their Summer 2025 issue. Those two Bona Grads are also our current Mountain Companions, Karen Pulaski ('84) and Mari Snyder ('90). If you didn't get a chance to read their amazing stories, please click on their links and take a moment to learn more about Karen and Mari.

Stories by Tom Donahue, '76 and photos by Danny Bush, '13, '15



Life as a Mountain Companion: Living faith and sharing purpose

[Click Here](#) to hear Karen's story.

Is God calling you to the Mountain?





Visiting the Mountain - A Feast for the Senses

~Mary Freeman

Each visit to Mt. Irenaeus evokes wonder, whether in the beauty of God's creation, the joy of community or the simplicity of gazing as I walk the Land. The Mountain is special in every season, but late summer and fall are times of transition, and beckon the same in me, and perhaps in all who make the journey up the hill.

The Mountain is a feast for the senses and the spirit—an evening shared with dancing fireflies, a walk in the woods alongside creatures rustling their own way through the thick undergrowth, the chirping of peepers in the night, the smell of freshly cut grass and bright blooms. Self-discovery abounds, in nature and in the company of others.

The acronym IYKYK speaks to all who have spent time at the Mountain, but for first time visitors, know that every Mountain experience is unique, and thus, all are welcomed with “Guidelines for an Experience of Mt. Irenaeus” in guest rooms and hermitages throughout the Land, to help focus on prayer, meditation, location and nature.



Orientation Team Leaders Visit the Mountain

~Molly Edgington

On July 10, I had the opportunity to go to the Mountain with the Orientation Team. This is a tradition with the team as we end our busy training week before the long-awaited sessions begin. With this being my last year on the team, I knew this night at the Mountain would be one that I would cherish.

We started as always with introductions and friendly greetings by everyone at the Mountain. We went swimming, had some fun jumping competitions, and then I talked a lot with Br. Joe about my recent trip to Assisi. Some members cooked, and we enjoyed a delicious pasta meal.

After we cleaned up, the real magic began. We made our way up to the Chapel. Br. Kevin asked if myself and some other seniors would like to share a reflection, and I was more than happy to do so. It is so hard to express what orientation means to me, but being surrounded by the peace of the Chapel and my best friends made it possible.

From there, one by one, something beautiful happened. Each member of

The guidelines, compiled by the late Fr. Joe Doino, ofm, entreat all to take a walk alone, to appreciate the special surroundings, for a special purpose, and to reflect upon them. Use all senses—smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch, stop thinking...and “experience the peace that surpasses all understanding.”

In the words of the psalmists, “Be Still and Know That I Am God.” Prayer, meditation, reflection, thoughts that have been awakened, gratitude, the journey of life, and of faith, await us all, on this Mountain.

“Guidelines for an Experience of Mt. Irenaeus,” are [available here](#).

the team began to become vulnerable, sharing parts of their lives no one knew. Sharing their reason for joining the team. Sharing their struggles and how they overcame them. We left that night more together than we came. We truly became a cohesive team that evening. Thank you, Mt. Irenaeus for an unforgettable experience.

*“Take Heart:
get up, He is calling you.”*

(IYKYK means If You Know You Know.)

40 Hours
of Giving

Be Still and Know
I Am God

Mt. IRENAEUS

SAVE THE DATE

September 8th at 8:00 a.m. ~ UNTIL ~ 12:00 Midnight on September 9th



Support the Mountain Auction

**Save the Date:
November 7– 15**

Bid on the trip of a lifetime to walk in the footsteps of St. Francis and St. Clare in Assisi! An extraordinary pilgrimage for two is up for bid during the annual Online Mountain Auction which begins on November 7.

Unique and inspirational items that capture our Franciscan heritage will highlight the auction along with Mountain handcrafted gifts and food items, many created by our beloved Mountain friars.

We will feature artwork and photography from Fr. Dan Riley, who left us beautiful pieces that will help us continue the work of the Mountain community. You'll also have a chance to bid on treasures from Assisi, SBU gifts and apparel, exciting travel



People who have blessed us with their presence are often sent away with a personal blessing from the resident community. Adam Watson and Audney Burnside who were with us nine weeks this summer are receiving that blessing at the end of Mass the last Sunday they were here. The blessing and a tau cross were given by Br. Kevin, Br. Joe, Mari Snyder and Fr. Lou. They certainly were a blessing for all of us.



Garlic Harvest 2025

We plant our garlic during our fall workday and it grows all winter and spring here. The crop looks excellent this year as we harvest it in July.

Will you help us plant next year's harvest? Please mark your calendar and **save the date** for this year's Fall

packages and many other surprises! Supporters will also be able to fund special needs at the Mountain.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission to join with Christ to “make all things new.”

Workday - **October 18!** Call Fr. Lou now to see if there are accommodations available. Our House of Peace phone number is 585-973-2470.

Upcoming Events:

Schedule and ways to participate can also be found online [HERE](#).

Every Sunday - Mass is at 11 am with a dish-to-pass brunch following Mass.

August:

Aug 20 - Student Event at the Mountain

Aug 22 - Student Event at the Mountain

Aug 23 - Board Member Br. Jimmy Kernan Professes his Solemn Vows in Albuquerque, NM

September:

Sept 1 - Mountain Offices Closed, please call the House of Peace at 585-973-2470

Sept 5 - Student Event at the Mountain

Sept 6 - Student Event at the Mountain

Sept 8-9 - 40 Hours of Giving Appeal starts at 8 am - please watch for video messages

Sept 12-13 - Mt. Irenaeus Board Meeting

Sept 14-17 - Friars on Retreat

Sept 20 - Student Event at the Mountain

Sept 27 - **11 am to 3 pm** - SBU Family Weekend Open House at the Mountain



Br. Joe Kotula and Summer Companion Audney Burnside enjoy a bonfire on a cool summer evening at the Mountain.



SBU Men's Basketball Team visited the Mountain in July.

October:

Oct 3 - Transitus
Oct 4 - Feast of St. Francis
Oct 11 - Closed Adult Event at the Mountain
Oct 12 - Mountain Offices Closed, please call the House of Peace at 585-973-2470
Oct 17 - Student Event at the Mountain
Oct 18 - **9 am- 4 pm - Mountain Workday - Save the Date**
Oct 18-20 - FAN Conference in DC
Oct 24 - Student Event at the Mountain



Orientation is a busy time at Bona's and we are happy to be part of their experience.

November:

Nov 7-16 - Mountain Online Auction!

Nov 7-8 - Mountain Board Meeting
Nov 14-16 - Intercollegiate Weekend at the Mountain
Nov 23 - Mountain Thanksgiving Dinner for Students
Nov 26-28 - Mountain Offices Closed, please call the House of Peace at 585-973-2470



December:

Dec 2 - SBU Tree Lighting on Campus
Dec 2 - Giving Tuesday - Help Us With a Major Project - exciting details to come!
Dec 3 - Advent Recharge Event on Campus
Dec 5 - Student Event at the Mountain
Dec 7 - St. Nick Late Night Delivery Event on Campus
Dec 10 - Advent Recharge Event on Campus
Dec 13 - Student Event at the Mountain
Dec 14 - Christmas at Bona's and Blessing of the Brains - on Campus
Dec 20 - Student Event at the Mountain
Dec 23-Jan 2 - Mountain Offices

Closed, please call the House of Peace
at 585-973-2470



Br. Jimmy Kernan, who celebrated Mass with
us this past Easter, will be professing his
solemn vows this Saturday.

+ Be Still



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