

Giardini, Mary D.

From: Mt. Irenaeus <peace@mountainonline.org>
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2025 12:48 PM
To: Giardini, Mary D.
Subject: "Making All Things New!" - September 2025 - SBU Teams at the Mountain; Meet Our 4 New Board Members; Invitations; Help Wanted!



Making All Things New

September 2025



In August, the [SBU Men's Rugby Team](#) joined the Mountain community for a day away. We were excited to welcome the team back to the Mountain for a tradition that we genuinely love being part of!

Board of Trustees Update

At our September 2025 Board meeting, we welcomed four new Trustees:



- **Matthew Cressler** – A 2006 Bona graduate, "Student for the Mountain" and summer companion, Matt is a writer and scholar with a doctorate in religious studies from Northwestern. He serves as Chief of Staff for the Corporation for Public Interest Technology in Washington, D.C.
- **Christine Cusick** – Christine is a Professor of English and Director of the Honors program at Seton Hill University in Greensburg, PA. She is a 1997 Bona graduate and "Student for the Mountain" who received her doctorate from Duquesne.
- **Mary Domes** – Mary had a 28 year career as an educator after receiving her degree at St. Bonaventure in 1986. She currently focuses on community building at Neumann University in Aston, PA., where her husband Chris is the President. The Domes are long-time friends and supporters of Mt. Irenaeus.
- **Dianne Kuzia Hills** – Dianne is the Executive Director at My Brother's Table, the largest soup kitchen on Boston's North Shore. A 1985 Bona's graduate, Dianne has a long affiliation with Mt. Irenaeus, including previous service on the Mountain board and as board chair.

We also elected board officers for the 2025-2026 year:

- Kathy Colucci - Chair
 - Dianne Kuzia Hills - Vice Chair
 - Tom Conway, ofm - Treasurer
 - Sarino Tropeano - Secretary

Three long-time board members and recent officers have departed the board after many years of distinguished service. We are grateful that each one of them will continue to participate on committees of the Board, and may decide to return after a year of absence. Thank you for your service to Mt. Irenaeus!

- Jackie Lanzillo
 - Otto Rothermel
 - Kate Rinaldi Trosch

Learn more about the Board of Trustees by [clicking HERE](#).



The Women's Rugby Team Nourishes Connection and Community at the Mountain

~ Elizabeth Lyons, SBU '28

Our trip to the Mountain was a short but memorable experience. During our grueling two weeks of preseason, the team plans a day to travel up to the Mountain. It is an experience that everyone looks forward to every season! Not only is it a great time for everyone to get to know each other, but we also take time to reconnect with nature.

This year, our trip up to the Mountain included exploring the land, helping clear the trails, reflection, and dinner. While exploring the land, some went swimming in the pond, while others walked on some of the many trails that encompass the house. Being surrounded by trees and the sounds of nature made us realize how important it is to take time and slow down. One meaningful part of the trip was cleaning up the trails; it was a small thing we could do for those who welcomed us into their home.

Later, we gathered in the Chapel for a reflection period. It was a great reminder of how necessary it is to take



Residence Life Staff Pauses for Reflection and Renewal at the Mountain

~ Maddalena Masciale-Walmer, SBU '28

During Resident Assistant (RA) training, we had the opportunity to spend an evening away at the Mountain. While some RAs had been to the Mountain previously, many were introduced and immersed in the beauty of the Mountain around us for the first time. As one who goes to the Mountain regularly, one of my favorite things is going up and watching others experience Mt. Irenaeus for the first time.

The RAs hiked, wandered the grounds, swam in the pond, and sat in the sunshine - there was an activity for all! We were given the opportunity to be paired up with another RA to get to know them better and take a mindful walk around the grounds, reflecting as an RA on the upcoming year ahead. I was paired with the current RA of the floor I was the RA to last year! It was lovely to bond with her, share ideas of floor events, and give tips on how to handle the craziness of freshmen men.

a moment and listen to those we are surrounded by. Our night wrapped up with a homecooked meal. Everyone working together to cook and clean made the process very simple and more meaningful. One of our team's values is community, and that theme was carried throughout the day, in everything we did. We are so grateful for the time spent at the Mountain and cannot wait to go back!



We had a wonderful dinner, which we helped make, and headed up to the Chapel for more reflection and discussion about our roles as RAs. I am so thankful to be part of such a wonderful group of students on campus, who are able to provide support to other students and be role models for all.



St. Francis Calls us to Unity in *The Cantic of the Creatures*

As we prayerfully anticipate the feast of St. Francis on October 4th, may we take time to reflect on his hymn, *The Cantic of the Creatures*, which celebrates its 800th anniversary this year. In this [brief reflection](#) from Franciscan Media, Friar Murray Bodo describes *The Cantic of the Creatures* as the sum of St. Francis's spirituality and life because he "praises God by being a part of all of the created world." May our Mountain community near and far take time in God's creation in anticipation of this feast day and trust that through 'earth, water, air, and fire,' we are united as One.



Anticipating the Mountain Auction

Dreaming of a special getaway? Check out the Mountain Auction on November 7 -16 to bid on a once-in-a-lifetime Assisi pilgrimage, two spectacular trips to the New England



Adopt A Trail at the Mountain

With five to six miles of trails, the land at Mt. Irenaeus welcomes all back into the woods, with a reminder to "only to leave footprints" while enjoying the trails' beauty and reverencing their growth. These Mountain trails welcome hikers and walkers seeking contemplation in a multitude of ways, from wandering on paths adjacent to Holy Peace Chapel or attempting a

shore, and a VIP experience at Saratoga.

You can bid on exclusive Mountain and Franciscan gifts like Fr. Dan's original paintings, a handmade creche by Br. Joe, blessed Rosaries, Tau crosses, artwork from Assisi, and handmade jams and jellies from the land.

Bonaventure fans will love the SBU gear, including hats, shirts, jackets, Bona Wolf bobblehead, and other logo items for your home. We are also pleased to offer a dinner with University President Dr. Jeff Gingerich and his wife Betsy.

You'll also have the chance to fund programs and projects at the Mountain community, including student events. Watch your email, check our [website](#) and watch [Facebook](#) for links and updates.



more rigorous hike the length of Peter's Path.

Maintaining the trails is an ongoing process, and thus the Mountain "Adopt-a-Trail" initiative was introduced this month. Several trails already have been adopted; but there are more than a dozen that remain, awaiting seasonal caretakers to clear overgrowth, pick up fallen branches, and ensure the trails are navigable for all who visit the Mountain. The initiative is intended to allow individuals to come three or so times a year, at their convenience, to participate in basic trail maintenance; no heavy lifting or mowing is involved. This is an opportunity to preserve the beauty and wonder of the Mountain trails for others while, at the same time, immersing oneself in nature's tranquility and peace.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Adopt-a-Trail initiative can contact **Br. Joe Kotula, ofm, at 585-973-2470.**

Mari Shares About Her Coming Departure as a Mountain Companion

The restlessness has returned - not just in the skies, but within me. Living in community at Mt. Irenaeus for nearly a year now has gifted many blessings and borne many fruits, yet the restlessness I've come to know in these midlife years has made its prompting obvious, again.

This time, I sense it's giving me permission; it is gently nudging me to get rooted. I'm a homebody at heart. With three years volunteering and a half-dozen temporary addresses mostly from my two years at the U.S.-Mexico Border, I need to discern where I'll call home for the future. So I've made a hard, mixed-feelings decision to complete my time here at The Mountain, on November 1.

That said, earlier this summer, I had also conveyed to Kevin and Mike, Joe and Lou, Karen and Kathy that the life I've been envisioning is one that can allow for a short return in the future — for a few days, weeks, or perhaps for a season. If helpful, the Mountain family can call upon me.

I trust, too, that the source of this restlessness is the Holy Spirit, and that the Spirit is at work in others, calling them to the Mountain. Indeed, my going may very well mean someone else's call to come is already underway.

Read Mari's full reflection on our website by [CLICKING HERE](#).



"Come, Try our way of life!"
Come, Climb the Mountain!
St. Francis

Help Wanted! Housekeeping Needs Following Overnight Gatherings

As the above piece noted, Mari Snyder is set to move on to her next phase of life, and we couldn't be happier she committed a year to live in community at the

Mountain. We are so grateful to Mari for being part of our life in this way, and she knows that Mt. Irenaeus will always be home to her.

One of many gifts that Mari shared over the year was her ability to prepare our spaces for the next guests, after a larger group of students or adults stayed overnight. This includes cleaning the bedrooms and bathrooms of the House of Peace, as well as the cabins that were used. She was also part of the laundry process of all the sheets and towels.

We are looking to find friendly individuals who would be able to take on the responsibilities above to help ease the burden on those who remain in community at Mt. Irenaeus. Most of these larger gatherings are already scheduled, so we can plan ahead when the help is needed. We are looking to have this in place by the beginning of November. **There would be compensation for these services.**

If you are aware of anyone who would be a good fit for providing such services to Mt. Irenaeus, please reach out to Karen Pulaski at kpulaski5204@aol.com.



Thank You!

In September, we conducted our second 40 Hours of Giving campaign, which debuted in 2024 in celebration of our 40th anniversary. The first campaign, planned by a group that included our beloved founder, Fr. Dan Riley, was a great success, happening only weeks after Fr. Dan's passing. We are blessed to report that you responded enthusiastically again, putting us on a strong path toward meeting our annual revenue goals.



Fall Work Day

AT MT. IRENAEUS
Saturday, October 18

Schedule

- 10 am—Assemble in the House of Peace
- 10:15—Prayer and work group assembly
- 12:30 pm—Group Lunch Provided
- 4 pm—Work Concludes and Gathering for Reflection, Thanks and Prayer

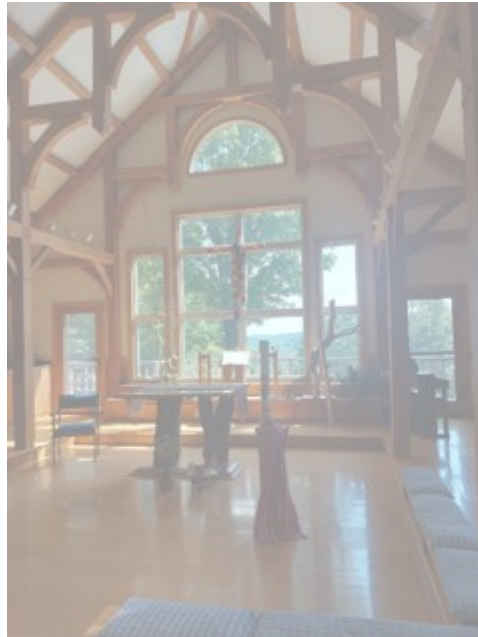
Looking for accommodations for Saturday night?
Please call Fr. Lou at 585-973-2470

Please sign up by [CLICKING HERE](#) to let us know you are coming.



MANY THANKS for your generosity, which brought us over \$60K in Donations!





Adult Women's *Overnight* at Mt. Irenaeus

October 11, 2025
2:00p.m.
to
October 12, 2025
2:00p.m.

Just a few spots remaining!

Contact Karen Pulaski for
more information or to
register!
kpulaski5204@aol.com

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.

September:

Sept 27 - **11 am to 3 pm** - SBU Family
Weekend Open House at the Mountain
Sept 29 - 6:30 pm - *Humanity at
the Border* presentation - on
Campus

October:

Oct 1 - 6:30 pm - *Rebuild My
Church* - a one-person play about
the life of St. Francis - On
Campus

Oct 2 - 6:30-8 pm - *Mountain on
the Road in Buffalo* - [Click HERE
to Register!](#)

Oct 2 - 1 pm-3 pm - Blessing of
Pets - University Ministries



Oct 3 - 7 pm - Transitus - On Campus

Oct 4 - 4 pm - Feast of St. Francis - On Campus

Oct 11 - Closed Adult Event at the Mountain

Oct 12 - Mountain Offices Closed, please call the House of Peace at 585-973-2470

Oct 15 - 6:30-8 pm - Mountain on the Road in Rochester -

[Click HERE to Register!](#)

Oct 17 - Student Event at the Mountain

Oct 18 - 9 am- 4 pm - Mountain Workday - [Let us know you can help by Registering HERE!](#)

Oct 18-20 - FAN Conference in DC

Oct 23 - Student Event at the Mountain

Oct 24 - Student Event at the Mountain

November:

Nov 1 - Student Event at the Mountain

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 5 - Student Event at the Mountain

Dec 13 - Student Event at the Mountain

Dec 14 - Christmas at Bona's and Blessing of the Brains - on Campus

Dec 23-Jan 2 - Mountain Offices Closed, please call the House of Peace at 585-973-2470



Virtual Transitus Service

Thursday, October 2nd

7:00pm Eastern Time

Online via Zoom

Free

Join Franciscan Justice Circles across the U.S. for a moving online Transitus Service. Together, we'll honor the passing of St. Francis of Assisi and reflect on how his life continues to shape our shared call to peace and justice.

Register for Transitus Event

Not sponsored by Mt. Irenaeus but we thought some of you might enjoy this opportunity.



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