

Mt. Irenaeus
Board of Trustees Meeting
February 7, 2026
Minutes

Present:	Kathy Colucci	Excused:	Matrecia James
	Tom Conway, ofm		Mike Sullivan
	Matt Cressler		
	Christine Cusick		
	Matt Delforte		
	Mary Domes		
	Kathy Dougherty, osf		
	Jeff Gingerich		
	Jimmy Kernan, ofm		
	Dianne Kuzia Hills		
	Wendy Mann		
	Evan McElroy		
	Sarino Tropeano		
	Rob Buckla		
	Declan Donahue		
	Mike Fenn		
	Mary Giardini		
	Joe Kotula, ofm		
	Kevin Kriso, ofm		
	Michelle Marcellin		
	Lou McCormick, ofm		
	Natalie Pronio		
	Karen Pulaski		
	Kate Rinaldi Trosch		

Began meeting with prayer and discussion.

9:25 am – Move into board agenda.

Kevin Kriso began information/discussion on reaching out to the friars of the Province for potential future Mountain ministers.

- ❖ Joe and Kevin have gone to interprovincial retreats have talked to friars about the Mountain. No one will make any moves until the next Chapter meeting in July, 2026.
- ❖ Mike Fenn has been has also had contact with personnel from the Province.
- ❖ Phil Anderson, a lay person who runs Mission Integration for the Province, suggested bringing some friars to the Mtn who have never been there so that they can do fact finding.

- ❖ The Province has 57 ministries across the country and they are assessing which ones are viable. The number of friars in the Province are dwindling and will continue to do so. It is expected that by 2040 the Province could be down to 210 friars.
- ❖ Before Chapter, Phil and some friars will come and spend time with us to understand the ministry and fraternity, they will then go back and report. Mike Fenn is presuming that assessment will be quite positive.
- ❖ Matthew Cressler asked if we should be considering a life at the Mountain that does not have friars – considering the projections of the friar population by 2040.
- ❖ Kathy Colucci suggested having a smaller meeting with the Mountain friars, Kathy Dougherty, Jimmy Kernan, Tom Conway: those who know about religious life and how times will be changing – how can the Mountain be more welcoming to friars and religious; what will happen when things change? Perhaps this could help us see any blind spots we have and how to correct them.
- ❖ Jeff Gingerich told us that the campus friary is looking at all of this also. Stephen Mimnaugh is very supportive of the Mountain friary. The relationship between campus and the Mountain is stronger than ever. Jeff said to keep the campus friary in mind when looking for help at the Mountain.
- ❖ Dianne Kuzia Hills reminded us of the power of personal connections and personal invitations to be at the Mountain. That is how most of us came to be here, a personal ask.
- ❖ Rob Buckla suggested looking at our Strategic Plan – are there needs to update any plans? Is there a new iteration of the plan that would be helpful to make?

Ministry and outreach:

Natalie Pronio – Student Interaction

- ❖ To date, have had 834 student visits.
- ❖ Have 5 new groups requesting time at the Mountain and have 9 groups returning.
- ❖ We have 3 MCL interns this year. Two that help with communications (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) and one who helps Mary and Michelle with clerical work. We also have 5 students to take turns driving students to Sunday Mass.
- ❖ MCL (Mountain Community Leaders) is doing well. We have students from sophomore to senior. The group meets twice a month and the students lead the meetings. They will also be leading “Mountain Meditation” nights on campus once a month starting on Ash Wednesday.
- ❖ We are collaborating with University Ministries on “Lenten Recharge” events. Faculty and staff also come to these events.

Karen Pulaski – Council for Spirit and Life and Adult Formation

- ❖ The second round of the CSL formation pods is starting. Had some attrition, mostly those from the Province who did not understand the commitment. Karen will be more clear about the commitment going forward.
- ❖ There is a waiting list already for the next round of pods. These probably won’t be until March of 2027 so Karen can find facilitators.

- ❖ Weekends and More Branch are sponsoring a “Fire Side Chat” event with Sr. Margaret Carney and Jean-Francois Godet-Calogeras, they will speak on St. Clare and other women of the Franciscan movement. It will be live streamed and recorded then uploaded to YouTube, moderated by Br. Joe.
- ❖ June and July summer retreat weekends are 25% full.
- ❖ Women’s adult overnight is completely full. This takes place April 18th.
- ❖ Having Mountain in Your Home in Rochester on March 25th. Also having Mountain on the Road events March 20-22nd in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.
- ❖ Conducting a Lenten reflection series, like we did for Advent, but on a smaller scale. Still in the planning stages, but it will start on Ash Wednesday.
- ❖ The Young Alumni group will have their Lent Zoom series.
- ❖ Have had 1400 adult visits this year.
- ❖ We are continually widen the circle of our reach. People are willing to be put on wait lists for our events, Karen has never seen this kind of response to our offerings before. The ministry we provide is greatly needed now and people are responding. People who have heard about our events from others, are now finding us.
- ❖ Karen also participates in the Justice Circle on campus. It is a broad group. They are starting a thrift store in the Ministry Building. The food bank and thrift store will now both be in University Ministries. These are funded by a grant and they are student run.

Kevin Kriso – Resident Community update

- ❖ Declan Donahue has been with us since November as a Companion.
- ❖ He wants to be involved on campus and has met with Natalie and Alice.
- ❖ Declan is hoping to stay through the calendar year.
- ❖ Declan is going to the Francis Inn in Philly during spring break.
- ❖ He is going to volunteer at the Warming House once a week.

Committee Updates:

Jimmy Kernan made a motion to approve the minutes of the last Board meeting. Seconded by Sarino Tropeano. No discussion, all approved, no nay, no abstain.

Because we are short on time there will be no Executive Session today. Kathey Colucci will send out a Doodle poll to find a time for one in the near future.

Kathy congratulated Jeff Gingerich on the signing of an agreement with the Province which includes Quincy University and Siena. Prior to this there were many different agreements with the Province, but now it will be consistent with all entities.

Kathy Colucci talked about the agreement we put in place with SBU. It was set for 2 years with the ability to rollover. It has now been 2 years. Kathy Colucci and Jeff Gingerich will get together to talk through the agreement. Those that will be included in the meeting are

Kevin Kriso, Mike Fenn, Stephen Mimnaugh, Jeff, Kathy and a CFO from SBU. Jeff stated the process has been helpful and the committees are very strong.

Evan McElroy - Advancement Report

See report submitted to the Board site.

Rob Buckla – 3 Peaks Campaign (see report submitted and on the Board site)

- ❖ When began the campaign the thought was to attempt \$5 million. As of end of January 2026, we are at \$6M. This is thanks to very strong volunteers doing personal visits to prospects.
- ❖ We have 10 gifts which total \$4.3M, 18 six figure gifts. Have over \$1M in estate gifts.
- ❖ In talking with benefactors have made steps to make sure the Mt. Fund gifts do not go down because of the Campaign. Anticipate the Mt. Fund exceeding its goal for this year.
- ❖ Also, Rob is making sure that we are not taking money away from SBU donations.
- ❖ Do not anticipate any more \$1M gifts, but certainly 4-5-6 figure gifts.
- ❖ Looking the involve grads from the 1990's and 2000's.
- ❖ Rob has committed to staying on with the Mountain until December 31, 2026. He is willing to stay on as a volunteer after that time.
- ❖ He has a recommendation of a new total of between \$9-10M. This recommendation was accepted by the Campaign committee and the Advancement Committee. Wish to have a motion on it today.
- ❖ Have had benefactors volunteer the following challenges:
 - \$400K: they will match anyone who donates a \$100K or more.
 - Have another couple who will donate to a match to all the 1990 grads.
- ❖ Matt Delforte volunteered to host a fund raising evening at his house on Keuka Lake.
- ❖ Rob wants everyone to know that people are giving to this because they believe in the mission and the impact that the Mountain has on SBU and the student experience and they want to honor all the friars, not just Dan.

Evan McElroy made a motion to establish a 3peaks Campaign goal of \$9-10 Million. Second by Matt Cressler. No discussion, all approved, no nay, no abstain.

Kate Trosch - Finance (see report submitted and on Board site)

- ❖ Have an aggressive budget and are investing in the future.
- ❖ Assets went up from what is recorded - as of 12/31/2025 the investments are at \$6.2M.
- ❖ Have been spending money on capital projects.
- ❖ We have no debts to record, so Total assets = Net Assets on this report.
- ❖ Thrilled with where we are with fundraising.
- ❖ Report from Nolan group – from inception in 2013 we have a 9% total return. In the last 12 months it's a 17.5%. We have a balanced portfolio to bring in money, but keep it safe – not very risky and we do screen for Franciscan concerns.

- ❖ In the midst of the financial review: Took bids with 5 CPA firms – we went with Buffamante Whipple and Buttafarro from Olean. We have learned a lot and are still working with them.
- ❖ Kate, Martha Kopcienski, Mike Fenn are part of the Finance Committee. Steve Barry joined the team, he is a great asset. Also, Valentina Cossio recently joined, she graduated last year.

Sarino Tropeano and Mike Fenn - Buildings and Grounds

- ❖ Mike met with Tammy Hilmey (architect) on the Chapel extension. Mike shared a presentation that she drew up of the changes/additions to the Chapel. We are trying to create a more welcoming area with better accessibility. Mike and Sarino led a discussion on the drawings.
 - Tammy will act as the project manager and she expects it to take 2-3 months. Tammy will stay on for the entire project. Will have to find an alternate location for Mass during this time.
- ❖ Solar project – tesla batteries are installed, one inspection done and approved, only need one more by the town and then we are on line. Need to meet with an electrician to decide places will be serviced if the electric goes out. All good with state and federal rebate – should be about 30% of project, about \$26K. Mike, Joe, Sarino and Michelle met with Solar Liberty to go over how the battery system works.
- ❖ The Chapel basement project is just about done. It is mouse proofed, has new floor, lighting, rearranged cabinets. Need to sound proof bathrooms and figure out what to do with the ceilings.
- ❖ Joe has been spear heading electrical infrastructure changes. 150 amp panels in 3 buildings have been approved by the Board, the project is now underway. The electrician is getting ready to mobilize. Most of the work is outside, not inside, so buildings will not be down for long, minimal inside patch up work and the buildings will be down one at a time.

Dianne Kuzia Hills - Personnel

- ❖ Over the last couple of years we have been talking about hiring an Operations Manager. Job description has been done and posted on our website and an eblast went out.
 - This is an on-site job, not remote.
 - Will manage projects and also develop what other areas with which they would be involved.
 - Br. Joe asked if friar could take this position and also be part of the community. That would have to be investigated if it came up.
 - Decisions need to be made according to New York State labor laws.

Kevin Kriso - Evolving Initiatives

- ❖ Have had many people come forward who are interested in the Social Discourse Initiative. What is the Mountain style on doing it and the values?

- ❖ Want to root it in our faith tradition. It should not be a group of like minded people just agreeing with each other, but a place to have rational conversation.
- ❖ Programming – what are we going to do? Of the people who have come forward, each person would be able to offer a program.
- ❖ Talked about having difficult conversations, not shying away from them, but the need to have good will about it, not who's going to win and lose.
- ❖ Looking at longer term goals such as: Is there a separate space/place for this group and is there a Director? We started with that idea and realized it would not be the best place to start – will start the group as a Branch of the Council for Spirit and Life.
- ❖ Was a good deal of synergy and energy around this discussion and when the group re-convenes, they will start to define items and work toward a beginning.
- ❖ Would like to partner with SBU – Fr. Stephen Mimnaugh is interested in participating also.

Kathy Colucci closed the meeting.

Upcoming meetings:

April 24-25, 2026

September 11-12, 2026

November 6-7, 2026