

**“...how rich we all are
in the harvest
of God’s love for us...”**

Yes, it is harvest time here in the Northeast, and on the Mountain. While people in other parts of the world struggle to bring in their fields of grain and many in the world long for food, we find ourselves with an abundance. To harvest means “to gather in the fruit of a season.” For we have sown seeds haven’t we? We have poured out our lives in different ways and then there grows the opportunity to gather what has been sown and matured and bring it in so it can be shared with others. We all know a bountiful harvest when we see one! I see one happening on the Mountain as you read this. Young and older friends of ours are now in one way or another, participating in our lives. **Karen** has joined us for a year and is harvesting the richness and fullness of a wonderful life lived so well elsewhere and now with us. **Claire** and **Jimmy** joined us for a period of time during the summer and, in one way or another, will remain active in our life from a distance. And so we have this opportunity, what we call “cross-fertilization;” the co-mixing of lives, the gathering of seeds of life, continuing to sew them over and over again for a more abundant harvest.

In early September I was blessed to be in Florence, Italy. I was for the wedding of my niece, **Emma Riley** to **John Manente**. Families gathered from many parts of America, from Europe and other countries, to be together for over 4 days, and in the midst of this, to celebrate a wonderful marriage ceremony. It was truly the harvesting of love of generations, of lives lived well, of worries and concerns in the past that blossomed into the fullness of hope and happiness for the future.



Members of our summer 2022 core community: Lou McCormick, ofm, Dan Riley, ofm, Jimmy Kernan, Karen Pulaski, Joe Kotula, ofm and Claire Fisher (front).

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FRANCISCAN MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY

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To be in Italy again was such a blessing for me. As you may all know it is the home of our Franciscan life, the home of St. Francis and St. Clare, their sisters and brothers. Lively places, though they are ancient, still carry and tell the story of our earlier times. They echo, they bear the harvest of earlier commitments of Franciscan women and men who labored the fields of the poor, and the rich as well, during a time of great social change.

After a wedding at a villa on a Mountainside, I returned to Florence for two days. During my short visit there, I went to the ancient church, Santa Croce, which was one of the early churches of our Franciscan family. The origin of Santa Croce is linked to two decisive factors, the spread of the religious message of Francis of Assisi, 1182 – 1226, and the distinctive politics and culture of Florence. "In the late Middle Ages, in fact, Florence had a Republican system of government and institutions, a reflection of its innovative economic and social organization. As for St. Francis, we are speaking of one of the most charismatic figures of the Middle Ages: a spiritual leader who set out to follow the example of Jesus and bring solace to the humble and the defenseless." (Guide to the Basilica of Santa Croce)

The first friars arrived in Florence in the winter of 1209 and were an early band of brothers and some sisters. It was a few years before our "Way of Life" was confirmed. Followers of Francis were primarily a band of youth who were bringing the Good News to others in the simplicity of their lives to a young culture and a new economy that was split between the wealthy, the merchants, and the poor. A traumatic change was going on from agricultural and feudal based systems to more of a mercantile or commercial system. Including Francis when he was a youth, people were identifying with what they had, their appearance and stature, rather than with their person. Our brother, Francis, "The poor man of Assisi," through his own conversion in Christ, celebrated how rich we all are in the harvest of God's love for us and called us to celebrate the fact that we and each creature are "God's children now!"

Santa Croce, not yet a church, was first a gathering place where many came and it became a symbol for the time of the convergence of the poor, the wealthy, the skilled, the gifted, artists, artisans, politicians and also the hard-working women and men of the fields around Florence. The church was built in a marsh land but now its Piazza spreads out in the midst of a city that grew around it and people gather before it and wander through it to have a chance to experience again a place that was built - not first because they wanted a place of religious glory - but because people were gathering to hear the Word of God, the "Good News" proclaimed by the early friars and they needed a cover so that they might assemble.

This is not unlike the beginning of the Mountain or the time we are in now. Our interest in buildings early on, and indeed now, is not first to have more structures (!), but to care for life that is growing here on the land we have or land that we hope to gain.

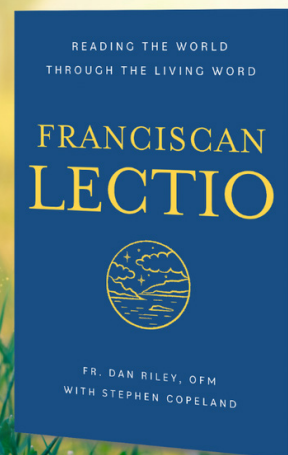
Life stretches all of us and also brings a harvest from our earlier years of

longing for more, for a fruitfulness that would serve more here and far from here. We have been blessed to have people coming from many places, many areas and regions, indeed around the world, to take a little time on our Allegany hilltop called Mt. Irenaeus. The young and old arrived here and created what was in the day of Francis called "communes," places where a population gathers to share life with one another and often crossing over cultural divides.

In fact, if you were to walk through Santa Croce today you would find within its floors and on its walls, memorials to some of the great artists, politicians and scientists of that age and after that time. Some examples of these people are Michelangelo, Galileo, the great poet, Dante, who challenged the world of his time in sacred verse that is still recited in classrooms and in gatherings, and others like him, including the politician and philosopher Machiavelli!

"This unique Franciscan reader is like not in its field—and so well put together! Who someone think of this before? It took us a long time to sincerely honor our own inspired souls."

—Fr. Richard R.



While others skirted around them or left them aside, they were welcomed into this church and to the Franciscan community that was of the one faith of "the Holy Cross." Santa Croce, the dying and rising of Jesus for all of creation, all women and men so that within Jesus Christ we would travel home one day and be at home with the Father.

This simple journey continues to be one that reminded me of our own Mountain journey. In an age when division by way of politics and materiality can keep us from one another, our faith can bring us together. Our desire to serve the poorest among us, our ongoing concern for creation and the climate might gather many of us from politics and poetry to the possibility of "making all things new in Jesus Christ."

Peace!
~ Dan Riley

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...hr, O.F.M.



I am grateful for the encouragement of many of you, and for Richard's endorsement as well as others, to have finally written a book!

In the next several months, we will be traveling to different places, opening up "Franciscan Lectio" in our Mountain style.

To order a book, visit us on-line at www.mountainonline.org/book. You will also find a discount code, a video and a podcast!

Find us as we wander around!

Peace,

~ Dan Riley, ofm

A retired Occupational Therapist, a Friar in formation, and a rising college sophomore. Their stories share the experience of a vibrant summer community. They each arrived here on a different path, and brought unique gifts to enhance the core community of the Mountain this summer. As someone who is blessed to live in and out of life at the Mountain, it was a joy to be part of the circle.

As I read each of their reflections, I had a chance to think about my relationship with each of them. I have known Karen for a while now as a Mountain board of trustee and a leader on our Council for Spirit and Life. She shared parts of her discerning about spending a year as a Mountain Companion, and I felt blessed to walk along this path with her. I'm so grateful she has taken this leap of faith, jumping head first into all that is part of Mountain life.

Claire I remember meeting at our 2021 Fall workday, where she and a friend came up to lend a hand. I still remember our energetic conversations driving back to campus that day. As a journalism major we eventually asked her to become our Communications intern, and I was thrilled when we received her application to become a summer intern. She is far more mature than I will ever be and I'm so excited to see what her future holds.

I didn't know Jimmy well from his days as a Bona student, and I was delighted to get to know him this summer. Along with Karen and Claire, Jimmy jumped right into the Mountain life and ministry. I really enjoyed our conversations, and understanding his journey as a young man making a lifelong commitment to follow the Franciscan life. In particular, Jimmy was always generous as I continuously peppered him with questions about what life as a young friar living in community at the Mountain is like, and how we might attract others to give it a try.

And I am also very grateful for the four brothers who make up our core community and their generosity in welcoming Karen, Claire and Jimmy into the life of the Mountain. It's easy to take this for granted but consider your own home and welcoming 3 new people into your daily life, and what an effort that would be! I am a witness to how they each do this in their own way.

As I think about wrapping this reflection up, the phrase that popped in my mind was that this will be the "new normal" of Mountain life. As mentioned in previous newsletters we continue to invite others to consider this way of life, because we envision our future to be a mixed community of professed and laity, men and women, younger and a little less young! This summer gives me hope for such a future. May God Bless us as we continue down this path, with deep gratitude for these three wonderful friends.

~ Mike Fenn



The wood we collected may be green now, but future guests will enjoy a crackling fire on a cold winter day!

Warmest greetings to our Mountain family! As the summer comes to a close, and our students at SBU are returning to campus, I realize I am getting ready to enter the fourth month of my experience as a Mountain Companion here at Mt Irenaeus. September still remains, in many ways, what marks the beginning of a new season for me - despite the fact that it has been several years since I have been starting a new school year! With this feeling often also comes a time of reflection to ask myself "Am I living my life well? Am I living the life that God calls me to?"

The past three months have been nothing short of amazing. For those of you who may not know me, I retired from a wonderful career of 32 years as an Occupational Therapist in July of 2021. For the first time in my life, I intentionally made no plans. I wanted to create space in my life - space in which to really hear what God might call me to, if only I was truly listening. In order to do that, I had to take myself out of the driver's seat. When I allowed that space, I found that my heart kept returning to a desire to be a part of the Mountain in a way I had never been before. While I have been involved in the Mountain since the early 1980's, I found I felt called to more actively live the mission and vision. The brothers graciously welcomed me into the life, and I began a journey like no other. After much discernment and a trial month, I

moved to the Mountain on June 1 where I now live full time.

I often get asked "What is a typical day like?" The short answer is - there is no typical day at the Mountain! My time this summer was spent in many ways that allowed me to live out and lean more deeply into our Franciscan manner of life: working in the garden, hauling firewood in preparation for the winter, taking my turn preparing meals (sometimes for 5 and sometimes for 20!), preparing for guests through laundry and cleaning, canning produce - simply immersing myself in the everyday experiences of our Gospel Manner of Life. I also was invited to participate in community prayer and mass several times a week, to assist in developing and leading summer retreats, and to welcome students into our Franciscan traditions and beliefs. There is a continuous flow of people from all walks of life that come to the Mountain for many different reasons - and I got to be a part of their journey as well. Meeting and spending time with Richard Rohr as well as attending the Franciscan Federation Annual meeting with my community were highlights of my summer.

Life here has been wonderful - and challenging on many fronts. It demands authenticity, honesty and a constant evolution of my faith. But it also promises a way of life that allows me to move deeper and deeper into

my relationship with God and those around me. Everywhere I have turned, I have been welcomed and encouraged to continue to expand my experience - to take on new challenges, to explore my own beliefs more deeply, and to more fully understand how my own gifts might be expressed in our mission and vision. I do this by striving to be "more fully alive" in this intentional community comprised of both vowed and lay men and women who give selflessly of themselves in service to God and others.

As I move forward into the fall, I will seek with help from my brothers - to further define where and how I might be further engaged. There are so many opportunities, and this can at times be overwhelming - I want to say "yes" to everything! I know if I can quiet myself and listen, God will lead me . . . look where he has led me so far!

I encourage you if you can - try to find some quiet time and to create some prayerful space - where might God lead YOU if you are truly listening?

~ Karen Pulaski



Arriving at Mt. Irenaeus at the end of June, I had just finished up an intensive missionary experience in San Francisco. I had a wonderful experience in San Francisco, working among the people at St. Anthony Foundation, being present to anyone who needed an ear to listen, and doing anything I can to help the people that would come to us there. It was transformative in my life as a friar, and as a person in the world. After this experience in San Francisco, knowing that I was heading off to begin studies in the fall, I was being drawn to seek something different. With prayer and discussion, I decided to come back to Mt. Irenaeus, returning for the first time since being a student at St. Bonaventure.

Received by the warm welcome of the first summer weekend, I felt as if I was a part of not only the core community, but the wider Mountain community. The summer provided continuous opportunities to form relationships with so many different people. I shared conversations with people from all walks of life and was fortunate enough to share my Franciscan life with them. I am in continuous gratitude for all the people I have encountered over my short time at the Mountain, renewing old connections and forming new relationships.

The hosting of St. Bonaventure students continues to be an incredible experience. I remember the Mountain being a formative part of my St. Bonaventure experience. It was in being back now as a friar, that I begin to understand how holistic the experience is for all people. I received more love, grace and hope from my interactions with students than I could ever have imagined. These students amazed me in their insights, passion and love for one another and the world. They serve as a beacon of hope for the future.

Throughout the summer, the life at Mt. Irenaeus gave me space to continue to reflect on my previous experiences as a Franciscan, and work on developing who I want to be as a friar. I was continually inspired by the practice of "Remember, Reflect and Respond" that was used in processing our weekends, overnights, and life together. This practice allowed me to continue to look at the stories and memories of my time in San Francisco in a new light. This time and experience helped me see my past in a new way, inspires me today and leads me into the new beginnings of the journey of life.

As I begin again in Chicago, I will carry this experience at Mt. Irenaeus with me. This experience becomes part of my remembering now but will continue to help me reflect and respond to my new journey ahead of me.

~ Br. Jimmy Kernan, OFM



Jimmy Kernan, friar in initial formation, with us for the summer.



Commissioning of new student leaders with Tau Crosses.



Enthusiastic "Becoming Bonnies" students traveling from service trip to service trip with a wacky driver!

The first time I arrived at Mt. Irenaeus in September of my freshman year, the only thing Fr. Dan said to me was, "You were meant to be here." This sentiment only grew as the weeks and months went by in my relationship with the Mountain. The people of Mt. Irenaeus see something special within everyone who comes to visit or stay.

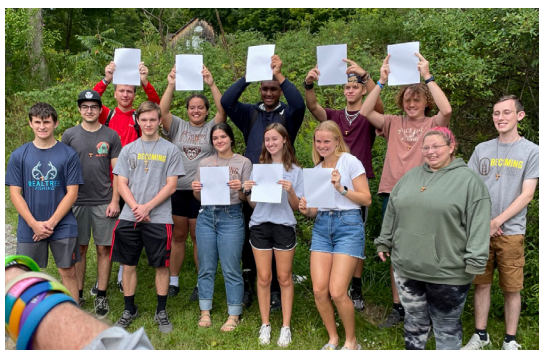
Karen and I often joke about our frequently asked question "What does a typical day in life look like?" The honest answer is that there is never, ever, a day quite like the one before it. The assured answer is that we all start together in prayer. Especially on Fridays with morning adoration, we made sure to start our days with intentional prayer and community. From there, the rest of the day would unfold naturally. On special days, Karen and I would have our own chapter meetings which could last up to an hour! Strengthening my sisterhood with Karen was a very special and important part of my time at the Mountain. We would then go on to complete our tasks for the day, gardening, weed whacking, laundry, sweeping, retreat planning, etc.

But what was more rewarding was the time when we were not just "doing tasks." The community time spent together was the most important part of those periods. I vividly remember Karen, Br. Kevin, Br. Joe, Jimmy, and I doing the task of loading wood onto a trailer and stacking it back correctly into a shed. While it was hot, buggy, and we were all tired, I remember the laughing most of all from it. When we would do our outdoor tasks, I would always ask everyone to play games with me. Memory, I Spy, verbal Scategories, anything to make the log stacking fun—and it always was. How does the Mountain balance this community with solitude? My perfect example of that is Fr. Lou. When the rest of the resident community went away for the week, Fr. Lou and I decided to have our version of a "rager." For us, this meant discussing our current reads over ice cream. He and I both love to read and it was the perfect balance of conversation and reading time for both of us; we both had a blast. It became extremely unimportant what we were actually doing, and more important who we were doing it with.

Another key lesson I learned from the Mountain was how I saw myself with nature. During our Summer Anti-Racism Dialogue, we scheduled "time on the land." Not knowing what that meant, I went for a simple walk. Thinking about my day, what I wanted for lunch, and confused why I was doing this outside. I decided to go pick some daisies for a centerpiece for St. Joseph cabin. When I walked by Fr. Dan with my bouquet, his face was suddenly filled with joy looking at the flowers. He was grinning ear to ear, radiant that I had made something so beautiful like that with nature. I thought later to myself, "That must be how God looks at all of us." The flowers did nothing out of the ordinary, but all together in unison, they made something so special! It all made sense to me.

The people at the Mountain are the most caring people I have ever met. They remember you; they know you, they always look out for you, and most of all, they love you. When you come to the Mountain, you never know what to expect or what you will inevitably gain from the experience. I may not know the full effects for many months or years. What I do know is how lucky I am to have had this experience.

~ Claire Fisher



Freshmen students from SBU on 1st annual "Becoming Bonnies" service program sponsored by Mt. Irenaeus, Franciscan Center for Social Concern and Bona Responsds.

Over time we have built a collection of materials of our Mountain history; plans for buildings, landscape and other projects.

Along with this we have recently received a group of substantial books on Franciscanism.

We would like to hear from anyone who might have an interest/skill in sorting through these materials as well as someone who could help us establish a better library under our Chapel along with this new collection of books.

If you are interested in volunteering for this project, please contact Michelle Marcellin (mmarc@sbu.edu; 716-375-2096).

You are welcome to come and stay a few days to accomplish this task, or come day by day if you wish.



Summer time at the Mountain – the living is easy and the bounty from the garden is plentiful!



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Help us as you can, join us
when we come to where you are.

We welcome to the Mountain and Saint Bonaventure University,
Fr. Stephen Mimnaugh, ofm, the new University Chaplain.

MT. IRENAEUS ADVANCEMENT UPDATE

Thanks to you, Giving Tuesday has become the Mountain's largest single fundraising effort over the past 5 years, with last year's donations totaling just short of \$44,000 in support of the Life and Ministry lived out at Mt. Irenaeus. This year, Giving Tuesday takes place on November 29 and we hope that, with your help, we will surpass last year's total.

Please make sure to join our email list so that you don't miss out on exciting updates and challenges, with some of our friends stepping up to match your gift! If you see our posts on Facebook or get an email from us, please forward it to family and friends who might choose to help us too!

SAVE THE DATE • November 4 -November 13, 2022 • Online Auction Features Unique Items

Mark your calendars! Place a bid and help us spread the word to friends and family.

The Mountain Online Auction begins November 4 and runs through November 13. Mountain friends from near and far can join in the fun and bid on hundreds of special items.

The Auction will feature Franciscan and Mountain items including original artwork and photography by Fr. Dan Riley, ofm, handmade gifts from the Mountain, Bona gear, home and kitchen items, and signed sports memorabilia.

Stay tuned to the Mountain Facebook page, website and emails for more exciting details on how you can take part in this popular event and help support the Mountain!

Thank you for your ongoing support. We look forward to seeing many of you at the Mountain, a Mountain-on-the-Road experience, or online.

With gratitude, we thank you. Pax et Bonum,

Jackie Lanzillo
Volunteer Mountain Development
Chairperson & Board Member
jlanzillo@rochester.rr.com

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PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING



Daniel A. Hurley ofm
Legacy Society

Contact Mary Schlosser at
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We are a 501c3 that relies on private donations. It's now easy to make an annual, honor or memorial gift through our Mountain website (www.mountainonline.org). Just click the donate button.