

**Giardini, Mary D.**

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**From:** Mt. Irenaeus <peace@mountainonline.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 21, 2025 2:45 PM  
**To:** Giardini, Mary D.  
**Subject:** "Making All Things New!" - November 2025 - Update from Mike Fenn, Student Reflections and Upcoming Events!



Making All Things New

November 2025



November has already been a very busy month for Mt. Irenaeus - [click HERE](#) or on the video above to hear an update from Executive Director Mike Fenn.

Our **25th Annual Mountain Auction** concluded last Sunday and a flurry of bids on the last day propelled us towards our goal. Thank you to everyone who helped make our auction a success!

The [Mountain online store](#) closes this Sunday, November 23. Check out our clothing and accessories to find some perfect gifts for your family.

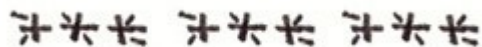
NEW: ***25 Days of Gratitude!*** This year, we asked our friends to help us express our gratitude this Advent, and they came forward with some lovely reflections. For every day in Advent (November 30 to December 24) we will have a new reflection on gratitude for you to read or share with others. Please look for an email on Saturday, November 29 and the following three Saturdays with the week's list of reflections.

As you may know, **December 2 is Giving Tuesday**. This year we are offering you a sneak peek into what a student weekend away would be like: from a video of the action to inside information about the planning process and the formation of spiritual leaders. The video will be produced by our media interns. Please join us on December 2 and show your support if you are able!



### **Connection and Celebration**

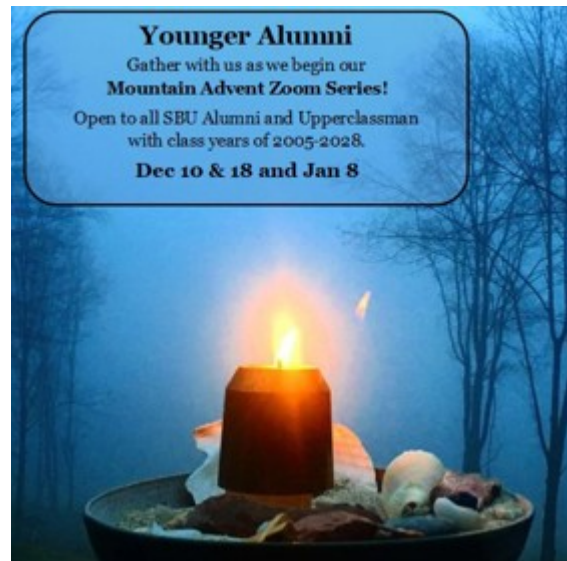
The Franciscan Friars Providence of Our Lady of Guadalupe shares a story of Mt. Irenaeus ministry in a recent article that captures our celebration of Laudato Si' through the "Echoes of the Earth: An Open



Day Away Celebrating Nature and Autumn” program.

The day long event brought together Mountain, St. Bonaventure, and local community members as an invitation to celebrate our care for God’s creation through action, community, and contemplation.

Please take a moment to read the story [here](#).





# Wise Men Still Seek Him

CHRISTMAS AT  
MT. IRENAEUS

Christmas Eve

7:00 p.m. Mass

Christmas Day

11:00 a.m. Mass

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New Year's Eve

No Mass

New Year's Day

11:00 a.m. Mass

Every Sunday

11:00 a.m. Mass & Community Brunch

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**One Last Visit:  
Fall Women's Overnight  
~ Madison Sears, Class of '29**

From the moment I participated in Becoming Bonnies and had the privilege of staying at the Mountain for a week, I knew I loved being there.

As a first-year student, my college transition hasn't been easy. Earlier in October, I made the decision to transfer to a college closer to home. But before I did that, I chose to register for the Women's Overnight, and I'm so glad I did. The day before, I thought to myself: Is this worth it? Do I really want to go when I'm leaving so soon?

The truth is, I almost didn't go. But when I got there, I knew that I was exactly where I was supposed to be in that moment.



**"God's Presence Etched into  
Every Wall:"  
Dance Team Evening Away  
~ Kirra Bentley, Class of '29**

As a freshman, everything about St. Bonaventure University's dance team has been new to me, including the biannual visit to Mt. Irenaeus. I heard my teammates talk about it, but I wasn't sure what to expect. The only thing I knew for certain was that I was in for something different.

On the day of our visit, I was tired and felt a migraine coming on. To be honest, I wasn't sure I wanted to go; I worried I'd spend the evening feeling miserable. But I'm not one to go back on my word, so I met my team behind Plassmann Hall, trying to keep an open mind. The drive up didn't help, I started to feel carsick and braced myself for a long night.

Then something unexpected happened. As soon as I stepped out of the car, all that apprehension melted away. I was immediately struck by a feeling of warmth and comfort. For me, it felt like what you get from spending a quiet weekend at your grandmother's house, baking cookies and watching TV together.

It was a time to reflect on the semester so far and how my college experience had been going. It gave me an amazing opportunity to talk to other college students who were feeling some of the same things. It truly gave me time to ground myself and to breathe after making so many big decisions.

Although I'm still choosing to transfer, I will forever be grateful for Mt. Irenaeus and everyone involved in making the space so beautiful. I hope that other college students appreciate the beauty and find the comfort they need while visiting.



The Mountain was beautiful, with reminders of God's presence etched into every wall. The Chapel was no less breathtaking, and the moments spent by the fireplace with my teammates and members of the community reminded me how many people care about us, even when we don't always see it.

One of my favorite parts of the visit was the kindness and hospitality of the friars and community. As a newcomer, I expected to feel out of place, but the Mt. Irenaeus community immediately put us at ease. They welcomed us like family and even guided us through making a homemade spaghetti dinner; though they definitely carried most of the load while we figured out where things went and how to run the dishwasher.

Another blessing of the Mountain was the chance to truly disconnect. Being away from campus and technology for a few hours was such a gift. I didn't touch my phone — not because I didn't have service, but because I didn't want to. I wanted to be fully present, focused on my teammates, on God, and on the peace that came with being surrounded by nature.

This visit to Mt. Irenaeus reminded me that God has a plan for each of us. It felt clear that we were all meant to be exactly where we were that evening. On behalf of the SBU Dance Team, thank you to everyone at the Mountain who made our visit possible. We can't wait to return!



## Love in Action: The Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference

In October, a delegation of students and staff attended the Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C.

Mt. Irenaeus and University Ministries team members Karen Pulaski, Natalie Pronio, and Alice Miller Nation brought eight students from St. Bonaventure University to the weekend conference, which focused on putting Franciscan justice and love into action through lobbying for bills on Capitol Hill.

Check out [this video](#) on our student Instagram page to see a glimpse of the experience through the eyes of our students!



## Mountain Store: Open Now Until Sunday Night, Nov 23!

[Click HERE](#) to view the Mt. Irenaeus store and find many gifts that not only please your family and friends but also support the Mountain! From clothing and hats to accessories - many fun items to choose from in a wide variety of sizes and colors!



## Fire and Light: ASIA Day Away

On November 1, ASIA (Asian Students in Action) spent a day at Mt. Irenaeus. One of the big focal points of this year's ASIA day away was the combining of time at the Mountain with Diwali, which is a traditional festival of lights celebrating the victory of good over evil. The ASIA students and Mountain team planned the day with Diwali in mind, and a beautiful and enriching blend of cultures and traditions emerged.

While at the Mountain, the students cooked a large meal, spent time in nature, decorated diyas (small clay bowls to hold a candle), and engaged in a blended faith experience in the candle-lit Chapel. The night ended in typical Diwali fashion, with sparklers! It was a joy and a gift to welcome ASIA to the Mountain, and we were fortunate to experience this special celebration of Diwali on the Mountain.



### 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.**

#### November:

**November 1-29** - Stop by Holy Peace Chapel and add your loved one's name to our Altar cloth to be remembered in prayer.

Nov 23 - Mountain Thanksgiving Dinner for Students

Nov 26-28 - Mountain Offices Closed, please call the House of Peace at 585-973-2470

**Nov 30 - 25 Days of Gratitude Begins**



Our first coating of snow this year!



Connect with us on Facebook

Nov 30 - **First Sunday of Advent - Hope**

**December:**

Dec 2 - SBU Tree Lighting on Campus

**Dec 2 - Giving Tuesday**

Dec 5 - Student Event at the Mountain

Dec 6 - **1 pm** - Outdoor Stations of the Cross at the Mountain

Dec 7 - **Second Sunday of Advent - Peace**

Dec 7 - Student Event at the Mountain

Dec 10 - **8 pm** - Young Alumni Zoom - [click HERE](#)

Dec 13 - Student Event at the Mountain

Dec 14 - **Third Sunday of Advent - Joy**

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

Dec 18 - **8 pm** - Young Alumni Zoom - [click HERE](#)

Dec 21 - **Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love**

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

**January:**

Jan 8 - **8 pm** - Young Alumni Zoom - [click HERE](#)



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The glow from Brother Sun coming up over Roberts Rd towards the Mountain a little after sunrise!

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