The *Transfiguration* Quarterly

Vol. 79 No. 3 **Fall 2026**

Benignitas—Simplicitas—Hilaritas
Kindness—Simplicity—Joy

Our Mission

Inspired by our enduring faith in the love of Jesus Christ, we improve the lives of youth and adults in our community by nourishing the body, mind, and soul.

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Faith Lang, Oblate CT

Letter from our Sister Superior, Sister Diana Doncaster

Dear friends and companions on the Way,

As good Episcopalians, we have strong opinions on the subject of change. However, there is no evading it and there are opportunities for spiritual and emotional growth in the midst of it.

Some changes are joyful. Bethany School has welcomed a new Head, Dr. Fabio Hurtado, who introduces himself later in this issue. We miss our wonderful Interim Head, Dr. Jasmine Harris, but are already appreciating Dr. Hurtado's brand of creative, energetic leadership. We had a lot of fun blessing the new playground at the school and have even more ongoing fun watching the children clamber all over it. Adventure abounds there. Some of us wish we had the youth and energy to do some clambering ourselves, but we are coping with the changes of aging and are attempting to be realistic. Sigh.

Some changes we would be grateful to miss out on. For example, there were the massive storms which blasted through the Midwest recently. The initial storm front unleashed tornado warnings which sent us all to the basement for nearly an hour, totally changing our plans. (How dare it change OUR essential plans!) We give thanks for the minimal damage we sustained and continue to pray for those who suffered far more. Our neighborhood was out of power for four days. Gary, Indiana is still without power two weeks and counting as this is being written. For some the storm caused permanent change – change which calls us again to prayer and to reminders that anything can happen at any time. The only constant is God and the choices we have to respond with kindness, compassion, love.

> Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. – *Colossians 3:12*

There are changes which come with aging. It's easy to complain about them and feel sorry for ourselves. I'm skilled at that. But there are alternatives. Spiritual Directors International, in a program called "Aging as Spiritual Practice", wrote "As the season begins to shift, we're reminded that change can be a gentle invitation: to pause, listen more deeply, and make space for what is unfolding within and around us. These transitions can open unexpected doors, beckoning us to notice where we are being called next."

There is a lot of wisdom in that – though it can be hard to receive for people accustomed to being active and independent. It's especially difficult for those used to giving help rather than needing it. How do we start to shift into that more open, vulnerable attitude when hard change comes? At this point, all I can suggest is asking God, "Where are you in this? What are you asking of me now? How can I be of service? What do I need to let go? What do you want me to receive in the midst of this?"

We do not take to change easily, even if there is no logical or theologically sound reason to object. Yet change seems to be how God works, how we are shaken and challenged into greater awareness, more awed worship, more creative service and joy. Certainly, God showing up in the person of Jesus is an example of the wildest, most outrageous change from "the way things had always been done". As Bishop Deon Johnson wrote,

God, the Great I AM, the sculptor of the mountains, the crafter of the universe, the voice of creation, entered into our world and changed EVERYTHING!

We know this, but because change can be frightening, our temptation is to turn this example of God's startling, new revelation into consistent, inflexible religion. May Christ lead us away from such temptation.

Mother Eva was an exceptionally wise woman. Even as she founded a religious order with valuable spiritual traditions and practices, she also knew that inflexibility, sticking rigidly to our preferred plans and ways of doing things, is potentially destructive. She saw that openness and vulnerability to change could be a gift if we receive it gracefully. As she put it in one meditation:

The soul that can bear interruptions serenely, that is able to turn quietly from one occupation to another without any obvious effort, to take from her own chosen use of time to minister to another's need, is going far toward making her time into a string of beautiful, well-matched pearls – precious things strung together on a commonplace thread. Mother Eva

This is true of large and small interruptions to our plans. It is true of interruptions to and changes in how things are done. It even points us to generous response to the kind of horrendous changes we are seeing in how many of God's diverse children are being brutally treated. In every case, we have our choice about how to respond. May Christ guide us to always respond with kindness, compassion, love.

Or so I think as Fall approaches when the leaves start to change colors and drop onto the ground. Of course, my opinions are always subject to change. Blessings to you all, **Sister Diana**

Welcoming our New Chaplain

With joy and thanksgiving, I am privileged to announce that we are soon to welcome the Rev. Melanie Slane as our new Chaplain. How happy Bishop White and her staff are is another question, since Melanie is leaving her important service as Transition Minister for the Diocese of Southern Ohio to come to us. However, they too, agree that her skills and passions are ideal for the Sisters and all our diverse ministries. We hope the hard-working members of the diocesan staff will come for frequent visits, not only to catch up with their friend and colleague, but to take advantage of time to rest, pray, and let God restore them. That's one good reason we are here.

Before entering into the ordination process, Melanie worked with the Young Adult Service Corps in the Philippines and in Tanzania and has some amazing stories to share. She brings 13 years of experience as a priest in parish ministry as well as in aiding congregations through their times of transition. She has served in Missouri, in Washington, D.C. and in Cincinnati. She has a deep sense of call to the Community of the Transfiguration, and

prayerful enthusiasm about working, not only with the Sisters, but with all of our varied staff, with Oblates and Associates, and with guests and others served by our ministries. She comes with much creativity and energy, along with compassion and a pastoral heart.

Her first official day will be September 30. A date for a service of installation in the chapel has not yet been finalized. We hope that you will be able to join us in person (and are exploring possibilities for at least video recording if not live-streaming) for this celebratory service of welcome once the date is announced.
—Sister Diana

Feast of the Transfiguration, August 6, 2026

The celebration of our feast day was joyful. The Rt. Rev. Kristin Uffleman White, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio, preached a marvelous sermon and Dr. John Deaver provided excellent music and hymns. The Sisters, Oblates, Associates, guests from Bethany School including the new headmaster and his wife, as well as other friends of the community filled the Oratory. The morning Holy Eucharis celebration was followed by a terrific breakfast prepared by the staff of the refectory kitchen.

Bishop Kristin Uffleman White, Sisters, Oblates, and other guests on August 6, Feast of the Transfiguration

At the Evensong service at 5 p.m. Jill Maples of Christ Episcopal Church in Eureka, California, was received as a new Associate. Terry Noble of Cincinnati took her first life-time vows as an Oblate. The other Oblates present renewed their vows (annual or lifetime).

Letter to the Associates: Sharing Good News

Dear Associates,

Greetings in the name of our Lord. We had an inspiring service on the Feast of the Transfiguration with Bishop Kristen White preaching. There were many Oblates and Associates joining us. At the Evening Prayer service, we received a new Associate, Jill Maples, and the Oblates renewed their vows. I continue to be amazed at the richness of our dedication to the Transfiguration. There are so many insights and lessons in this mysterious event.

Sr. Diana, Jill Maples, Sr. Jacqueline

Together with Oblate Toni Thomas-Feren, I visited Christ Episcopal Church in Eureka, northern California. It was wonderful to be welcomed by Oblate Stephanie Schultz, Father Daniel DeForest London, and all the Associates there. We received a new Associate Cynthia Packard on July 19.

Toni Thomas-Feren and Cynthia Packard

We continue to value your prayers and support. We also continue to discern the next steps in our communal life. We give thanks for our ministries and the many lives that are touched.

I enjoy hearing from you. Please let me know if I can assist you. May God enrich and transfigure your lives.

May God bless you, **Sr. Jacqueline**

Ministry as Chaplain Associate, Seaman's Church Institute

The Rev. Deacon Anne Reed of Christ Church in Glendale, Ohio, is an Associate of the Community of the Transfiguration.

Discerning a call in ministry is a lifetime journey. What suits us in early life may no longer be our ministry as we move from one decade to the next. In my case, the call to serve as a Chaplain Associate with the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) began in the early 1990's. In 2010, the "Christmas at Sea on the River" program captured my heart as folks at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati helped prepare gift boxes for the vessels serving the inland water system. It was then I realized that SCI served not only the ports in New York and New Jersey, but also inland ports like Paducah, Kentucky, and all along the Ohio River. In October 2018 I took CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management) training along with others entering this volunteer ministry, and my Chaplain Associate service began.

The ministry of chaplaincy through SCI, like other chaplaincy ministry, is not a 9 to 5 responsibility. As a volunteer, I work with the Supervising chaplain in Paducah, who calls me into service as required. Responding to incidents (i.e. deaths of crew on or off vessel, accidents, etc.) on vessels passing through the port of Cincinnati is my primary responsibility. But it has been a blessing to serve in other ways.

For six summers the State University of New York (SUNY) Maritime College has invited SCI to provide chaplains for their nine-week Summer Sea Term. It has been my privilege to serve three of those summers, once on the 'old' vessel and twice on the new vessel. That deployment lasts between two to three weeks and is shared among three other chaplains. Those trips aboard the Empire State have taken me from New York to Philadelphia

(where I saw the new ship under construction); New York to Nassau, Bahamas; and Southampton, UK to New York.

Most significantly for Chaplain Associates, we are cheerleaders for the mariners, who work the inland river system. We raise awareness of this profession, and we reach, out at least annually, through "Christmas at Sea on the River," giving away hand-knit or crocheted hats, scarves, socks, and other items that meet the requirements of the program. To learn more about SCI and "Christmas at Sea", visit www.seamenschurch.org. If you are in the Cincinnati area and want to help pack the gifts for the mariners in early December, contact me at Christ Church, Glendale (https://christchurchglendale.org/clergy-and-staff). **—Rev. Deacon Anne Reed**

Transfiguration Retreat: Embracing our Roots in a Strange New World

The Rev. Jeff Bunke

The Rev. Jeff Bunke, who has been a friend of the Community of the Transfiguration for more than 40 years, will lead this retreat **October 2 - 4, 2026.** He has worked with congregations in transition to help them navigate away from "the way we've always done it" into the strange new world of transformed ministries.

For many communities this means a radical shift away from the Church as they've known it into collaborative and non-traditional forms of ministry not contemplated by mainline denominations.

The retreat will offer meditations and encourage reflections around the radically shifting landscape of the Church in this generation and explore ways in which God's Spirit is inviting and empowering us to be God's instruments on the way. The *Tree of Life* reflection process will be used to guide personal and group reflection. — **Father Jeff Bunke**

Transfiguration Gardens

The Quiet Garden Movement is a network of beautiful gardens and outdoor spaces for prayer, stillness, contemplation and an appreciation of the natural world. It began in England and now has gardens across the world. Transfiguration Gardens is the 13th garden in the United States to join The Quiet Garden Movement.

The north campus at the Convent has been completely renovated with the work of Rachel Robinson of Design Landscape Architecture and Eric Dawalt of Ridgewater Storm Water Management. Dry stream beds were designed to direct storm water into bioswales which capture rainwater, allowing it to seep slowly into the ground. There is now a 20,000-gallon underground tank that stores rainwater to be accessed during times of drought. Invasive plants were removed and replaced with native plants. In July 2024 Bishop White of the Diocese of Southern Ohio blessed the land and worship space.

Come and see! Let the beauty of this place calm your soul and body. You can explore the spectacularly beautiful and peaceful grounds of the Transfiguration Gardens with a self-guided tour by using this QR code.

More information is found online at https://ctsisters.org/transfiguration-gardens.html. —**Faith Lang**

Bethany School Welcomes Dr. Fabio A. Hurtado Head of School

Our daughter Grace, a junior at Denison University, recently returned from 6 weeks in County Roscommon, Ireland, as part of a summer program for budding archaeologists and anthropologists. She says it was “magical”. But her description and pictures include digging perfect rectangular 3–5 foot-deep ditches while analyzing the minute details of the soil profiles. Her time there taught her so much physically, culturally, and spiritually. Also, never use the word “dirt”, she says. Too vague. Grace and I have developed, over the past two years, a letter writing father-daughter relationship with her in Ohio seven hours away from home. Letters include postcards, short notes, and sometimes 3–5 page epistles. Our names for the envelopes often include funny creative "middle names” like “Grace “the Anthropologist” Hurtado and Fabio “the Hobbit” Hurtado. She said of my last letter that I am a “master at letter writing”. I say of everything she sends me, that it’s the best thing I have ever read. I write all this to talk a little about love.

Six weeks, and what now feels like 6 months ago, my wife and I packed all our (too many) belongings and moved to Fairfield, a northwestern suburb of Cincinnati. We are both educators and I had accepted the new role of Head of School at Bethany School here in Glendale. In November, we had survived a grueling two-day interview as one of four candidates for the position. At the end of the first day, towards 9 PM, as we headed back to the Holiday Inn Express, exhausted and overwhelmed, I turned to my wife Tere and said matter-of-factly, “If I tell you I am going to take this job, slap me!” Who am I, after all, to think I could do this work that is so complex and so big and so important? Isn’t it fascinating when our feelings of fear stop taking account of reality? After all, I had been an educator for 30+ years and a school leader for about a dozen of those. In my head I was equipped, but in my heart fear

reigned. The very next morning, my interview day started at the Convent. My wife and I sat in a circle with nine of the Sisters. We did introductions and then shared community and fellowship for a brief time. I walked out of the Convent, after an hour, turned to my wife and said, "If they offer me this job, I am going to take it." She replied, "I know." Where God's love is, there is no fear (1 John 4:18).

Our theme for this school year at Bethany School is "Where Love Grows". The phrase is inspired from a song written for the 125th Anniversary of the founding of the Society of the Transfiguration from a few verses in the song that read:

When Mother Eva knew a school was needed long ago,
she said that Bethany would be the place where love would grow.

Growing ourselves, and helping others grow, in doing our best in serving others is how Saint Thomas Aquinas defined love. I am struck by the phrasing of the word "*would*" in the song. It implies beautifully that love is our responsibility. Love "would" grow *if* we are faithful in writing letters and staying connected to each other. Love would grow, *if* we listen to the quiet voice of the Holy Spirit breathing life into our fearful hearts. While God is ready to pour out love, we must empty ourselves to become willing bearers of that love.

Our hope for this year at Bethany School, and for all of us who share ministry and time with the Sisters, Oblates, and Associates of the SOT, is that we may experience love in the place where we are for Love is incarnate. And that we may allow ourselves to grow as students of the Master of Love, the God who is writing with our lives a perfect letter for all the universe to read.

—Dr. Fabio A. Hurtado, Head of Bethany School

St. Monica's Recreation Center

In the last weekend of June, the staff of St. Monica's Recreation Center in the Lincoln Heights community and the Transfiguration Spirituality Center hosted once again its Annual Moms' Retreat. Mothers of the children who come to St. Monica's Recreation Center were provided a day of rest, renewal, and encouragement. It was an opportunity to support and empower these mothers, who work daily to support their children and families. They enjoyed yoga, manicures, massages, crafts, peaceful walks, quiet moments on the patio of the Transfiguration Spiritual Center and the beautiful gardens of the north campus. A delicious lunch was provided the staff of **Food for the Soul**.

> Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.
> Proverbs 22:6

Ms. Kimberly Huckleby, Founder and Director of Ladies of Leadership, provided inspiring conversation about womanhood, prayer, authenticity, and much more. The purpose of the one-day retreat was to let each mother know that they are seen, valued, and deeply loved. Mothers' faith, wisdom, courage, and consistency anchor their family over time. Their vital role in nurturing children can shape the character and direction of a whole household.

Transfiguration North Carolina
Bat Cave, NC

> Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness.... (Isaiah 43:18

Father John Roberts, Rector, Church of the Transfiguration outside our emerging "Hope Center"

These words from Isaiah have been a constant companion for me for a while now. As Autumn begins, so does more construction with new fervor! Something new is coming. A road! And hope! And Possibilities!

What is most present in my awareness in this time of year is how we are intricately part of Nature. We are changing and growing, feeling this autumn as no other. For the first time, in strong collaboration with our Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, and Conserving Carolina, we are aware of a future, and possibilities! Up until now, it was not so evident since Hurricane Helene. Our new "Hope Center" represents this beautifully—a place for anyone in the Hickory Nut Gorge in emergency who needs internet access, laundry, and provides storage for all the emergency equipment and supplies.

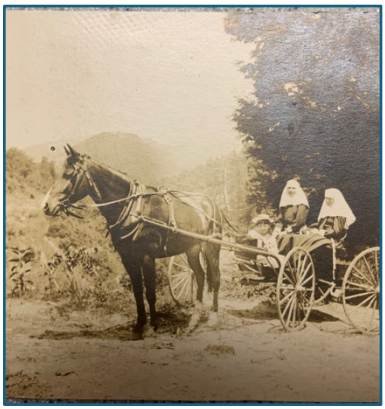
My biggest news in the past while is that Sister Teresa was here for several weeks and during that time, a stream of people seemed to flow in and out of the house wanting to meet her and make time to visit. Two of our visitors, on two different evenings were Kieran Roe, Executive Director of Conserving Carolina, and Tom Fanslow (also known to Sister Teresa as Tom Bombadill of Middle Earth and Lord of the Rings fame). These two men have been close friends and supports, over many years now. Another was Evelyn Thatcher, granddaughter of Bishop Paul Matthews, Mother Eva's brother. Each spent much time describing the changes and possibilities that are at least in the works of imagination…seeing opportunities for the future. I will write more about these at another time, but I wanted to share the spirit of this "doing a new thing" as very real and present in our hearts and minds.

For example, because I am unable to offer events here, due to the roads being closed, I've offered Nature and Forest Therapy events at other places in our area: Grandfather Mountain and Montreat Conference Center; Warren Wilson College "Writing With Nature" and Forest Bathing. I continue to teach Mindfulness Meditation online and on land weekly at the Fairview Library.

Through it all, the presence of the Sister's ministry is a felt ongoing blessing in this place, by many, despite the visible and outer mayhem of change and devastation, lo, for two long years. Our Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration is a light house in this time, along with the Bat Cave Fire and Rescue department. The "stunned" sensation is beginning to turn to a visible sense of hope and promise. Our Church has hosted Mennonites and Amish,

and parishioners from Episcopal churches—and others—and the Fire Station has hosted the same including "Spokes of Hope" and many, many individual volunteers from all over. Our caretakers, Craig and Michelle Aubert are now Volunteers in the Fire and Rescue team, and grateful to have an addition to their garage to assist with their work helping to maintain our property.

"Nature moves slowly, but everything gets done" are words I was taught in Norway during my training in Nature and Forest Therapy. Each day I witness this and give thanks for learning to slow down, listen, and discern what is next. Perspective arises, along with surprises. When Sister Teresa was here, nearing her 91st birthday, yet here she was working away every day on her writing. She had digitized her handwritten letters to Sister Alice from 1986–87 when she had been in Nicaragua, first with "Witness for Peace" and later working in the diocese, with also letters from Guatemala where she attended language school before returning to Nicaragua. The relevance of what is in these letters, (Daniel Ortega was even in the news while she was there!) appears to be a possible book. Alice Garrard, from our church, who is also a writer, said one day after visiting—I know the title! It's "*Letters to Alice."* Which they literally are, providing a story that unfolds as relevant and meaningful to our time now in 2026.



Who could know how this ministry would weave and wind through time? It's a question I ponder daily as I think of Mother Eva in her wagon with Sister Beatrice as Thomas the horse brought them from the train in Asheville (1897). May we all remain true and keep our lives awake to possibility.

Mattie Decker, OBL CT

Planting Seeds of Mission

For the past three summers, St. Barnabas Episcopal Church's youth have gone on mission trip to Bat Cave, North Carolina, to the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration – a church started by

the Sisters in 1906. On the first day of this summer's mission trip, we began to build some new playground equipment for the church. It may seem like a little thing; but there are no playgrounds in this area following the flooding of Hurricane Helene. People from all around stop to play on the swings and slide that were there in front of the church. We brought with us a little playhouse, a fairy garden and a climbing gym. Like any build-it-yourself project, on several occasions we began to be convinced the play gym was missing a part, or something was bent and it wouldn't go together. Through the ingenuity and commitment of one of our youth members, we eventually got all the pieces together, planted flowers, and created a new little garden.

The following day was less satisfying though. We were clearing land nearby that had been destroyed by the hurricane. We were working at a campsite that a family had run for 40 years. They had lost half of the camping sites. The river itself had reclaimed much of the land. Mudslides and downed trees had destroyed other areas. We were instructed to rake several sites, then spread grass seed and straw on these camp sites cut into the hillside. Looking up at the mountain at the sites they wanted us to help with felt overwhelming. Would it even make a difference? But we just started raking and with a small seed spreader spraying seeds and coming behind spreading straw over the seeds.

Two hours later we were out of straw, and all the sites had been covered. We looked at each other kind of surprised that we had done it. We realized it looked just a little less like a bare mountain and actually like a place one might pitch a tent.

Going on a mission trip is a reminder that sometimes, we don't get to see the fruit of our labor. We might never know if those seeds take root. Not every effort turns out exactly the way we might hope. And yet, our job is to offer what we have – our time, our sweat, and our willingness to show up and hear the stories of people who lost everything, and each day they start again. Just showing up is a seed that is planted.

Mission is trusting that God will use our efforts to grow the kingdom beyond our expectations. The seeds planted in Bat Cave make a difference and not just to the community in western North Carolina. Our youth come back changed. They discover God in new people and places. They learn that their service, presence and hard work is a source of hope. It inspires them to continue to share God's love in the world. We are already planning our trip back to Bat Cave next year. **— The Rev. Canon Jane Gerdsen, St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, Cincinnati, Ohio**

Be Transformed by the Renewing of the Mind
Genesis 46

Angel Strong-in-Capacity-for-Rightousness-and-Upholder-of-Perfection-in-Everything approached the Throne of Grace with unwontedly thoughtful humility and made a loving, trusting reverence.

The Creator and Lover of All beamed a welcoming smile; the Light of Blessing. "Scrupe, Our Beloved angel. You give Us so much joy!"

"I do?" Scrupe asked, startled? But I keep messing up and having to ask You for help."

"It means you are willing to learn and grow. That gives Us joy."

"Wow!" said Scrupe, wide-eyed. "Sometimes I forget how utterly cool Your Love Is."

Delighted laughter shimmered around the Heavenly Courts as the Teacher waited for Scrupe's prayer.

"Will you help me help Jacob?" Scrupe finally asked. "He's having a rough time moving to Egypt, even though he is so anxious to see Joseph again."

"How do you see his struggle?"

"Um . . . he's not coping very well with realities of so much change. Moving to Egypt is filled with uncertainties. You know how humans can be when things do not stay as they believe they should be."

"Why do you think that is?" Only one listening closely would hear the gently amused, loving smile behind the serious question.

Scrupe pondered momentarily. “Of course, we angels know that When You Created all that is, You Created change as axiomatic for mortal lives and worlds. I’ve noticed that many humans struggle with it.”

“Why do you think that is?” When the Holy One repeats a question, it’s a big deal question. Scrupe was duly thoughtful.

“I think that, for humans, there is comfort in predictability, in certainty. In consistently doing and saying the same thing in the same way. In having traditions that do not change. I think they feel safer that way.”

“And angels?”

“Well . . .” Scrupe was thoughtful. “It’s different for us. You are always the same. We know that, whatever happens, You will not change. Your love will not change so we don’t have the same problems with change that humans do.”

That naïve assertion, reflecting convenient forgetfulness, produced varied reactions among the Heavenly Host, but even the laughter came with the kindness of experienced understanding and deep empathy.

“What?!? What did I say? What’s so funny?”

“Oh, my dear angel, you have been growing and changing and struggling with the process since I brought you forth.” With gentle encouragement Scrupe allowed memories to flow – recollections surfaced of what had been new insights which had stretched the angelic heart, moments of stark honesty and new self-awareness, times of disillusionment and hopelessness which had been overcome by increasing vulnerability to Grace.

Scrupe gasped at the acute discomfort of having illusory certainties challenged. Anger surged as overconfidence retreated. Fear oozed from depths Scrupe normally evaded examining.

The Heavenly Host embraced Scrupe with tender prayers. Divine Truth wove those prayers into new strength to receive and grow through painful insights.

“You are distressed, Scrupe. Why do you think that is?” It was the third time of asking.

Scrupe tried to deflect. “I do not know how best to help Jacob again. He’s had so many hard times, failures, some triumphs, hurtful losses – it’s been one change after another all his life. He is desperate to see Joseph again after believing he was dead, but now he is stopping partway to Egypt. You’d think after all this time he

would know that You work with them through even frightening and dangerous change."

Efforts at avoidance and deflection don't work on the Creator. Scrupe's memories became more insistent. The angel received the freedom to examine them. From first having been brought forth from the Heart of Love, Scrupe had been doing some things well, making mistakes, receiving new insights, learning fresh ways of understanding how to serve. Different words, different images, diverse facets of Holy Truth.

"Why do you find such differences, such changes, so hard to accept?"

"I do not know," Scrupe finally admitted.
"Please help me understand."

"Well done, Scrupe. You are again opening to
true, worthwhile change."

"I . . . I am?" "Yes. You are admitting that, for all you have learned, for all of the gifts you have received and shared, you still don't know everything, even about yourself. Recognizing that you will always have to grow and learn and change within yourself makes it possible for you to live and love through all kinds of change, regardless of its source. That makes it possible for you to help your human charges because you are growing in understanding."

Scrupe pondered for several eternities.

"But You are unchanging, aren't You? But sometimes You seem to change. I don't understand."

Eternal Kindness again offered Scrupe the gift of remembering. "Look at all the ways in which you have experienced Us," Love suggested.

Scrupe watched in wonder as eons passed in review. "It's like You are eternally changing but You are not. How is that possible?

"WE ARE the same, but not bound by your understanding of the kind of sameness I AM. You will never reach the end of the kind of changes needed for you to encounter more and more of Me. I AM the God of surprises and everlasting, ever-changing abundance that is the same Love. The more you let yourself risk being shaken out of who you want Us to be, the more you will discover and the freer you will be."

"Is that what Jacob needs to learn?" "Remember I renamed Jacob Israel because of his willingness to wrestle with new and challenging insights. He has become comfortable in his grief, in manipulating his sons and limiting what he is willing to accept.

Moving to Egypt means loss of that control. So, he has stopped the journey in Beersheba, hoping that making sacrifice will return control to him because he is terrified. He needs to remember that I was with him through all of the changes in his life. He needs to let his heart grow again."

"He is being fussy about all the details of the sacrifice," Scrupe noted. "He believes that if he does it in what he believes is the one right way, he will have more control over Me."

"But that's just plain silly," Scrupe objected.

"Of course. He isn't even consciously aware that he believes that. It just shows up in his actions and efforts to control every aspect of the rite."

Again, angelic memories flowed. Scrupe had struggled over and over again as other angels created new ways to worship, composed new music of praise and adoration.

"Sometimes I wish you hadn't made me so much like them," Scrupe muttered.

"How then could you help them to be freer to accept love and growth, joy and wonder, and caring for each other in all kinds of times and seasons?"

Scrupe sighed. "Love is costly, always," Eternal Self-Giving Love offered a gentle reminder.

Scrupe received a fresh infusion of that glorious gift. "But worth it. Oh, so worth it."

With new understanding and increasingly experienced compassion, Scrupe went to help Israel wrestle some more.

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

October 2-4, 2026: Fall Retreat

Further Information and Resources

CT Quarterly issues are now available online at https://ctsisters.org/newsletters.html.

Community of the Transfiguration
495 Albion Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45246
513-771-5291. Website: www.ctsisters.org

Transfiguration Spirituality Center
469 Albion Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45246-4653
retreats@ctsisters.org (Also on Facebook)

Transfiguration North Carolina
P.O. Box 115, Bat Cave, NC 28710
513-771-2171
https://ctsisters.org/ministries/transfiguration-north-carolina/

Food for the Soul CT Ministry
469 Albion Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45246-4653
www.foodforthesoul.org

St. Monica's Recreation Center
10022 Chester Road, Cincinnati, OH 45215-1505
Phone: (513) 771-7806
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/p/St-Monicas-Recreation-Center-100063481002860/

Bethany School
555 Albion Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45246-4649
Website: www.bethanyschool.org
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/BethanySchoolOH

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