



The
Transfiguration
Quarterly

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Benignitas—Simplicitas—Hilaritas
Kindness—Simplicity—Joy



Lenten Roses

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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Letter from our Sister Superior, Sister Diana Doncaster

Greetings to you all,

As I'm writing this, Lent is coming toward us at a great rate. I'm eager for that healing season, the name of which comes from the Old English *lencten*, or springtime. As the tree outside my window is covered with the latest snowfall, that seems unlikely, but it will eventually shed its winter coat.

One of the practices we are offering again this year is shedding possessions. It is appallingly easy, even for those of us living under a vow of poverty, to acquire more than we need. Those of us who enjoy various forms of handwork are especially prone to the struggle with too-muchness. When I discovered the delights of beading, I was thrilled to have found a hobby "which wouldn't take up much space". HA! Too-muchness strikes again. SABLE – Stash Accumulation Beyond Life Expectancy is real.

Our shedding of things is twofold. We are working together on communal possessions like wall art, coffee table books, etc. The other aspect of shedding is our personal "stuff". How I admire those who are disciplined about not letting stuff build up.

Most important in the process of shedding is honest, prayerful examination of attitudes and habits which do not reflect who we are called to become. Some are seemingly small things like "I have to have this for my meals" or "I will not sing this hymn" or inner criticisms about little things that get on our nerves and negatively, subtly affect our relationships. There are habits of complaining, judging, and entitlement. Some struggle with excessive self-criticism, which is not to be confused with honesty about areas of necessary growth and, dare I use the word, of sin.

Perhaps the hardest to shed are thoughts of revenge and retribution on those who are causing so much harm to so many people. Can we replace those understandable desires with genuine prayer which entrusts them to God for holy justice and mercy?



Motka wonders what all the fuss is about shedding. She thinks it's easy.

While we are putting part of our prayerful focus on shedding during Lent, it is a process which is appropriate for every season. It is how we make space in our homes and hearts for the love and compassion of God to well up in us and, through us, to others.

It would be wonderful to hear from you what you think about this, and how shedding might be a spiritual practice in your own lives.

Many blessings, for Lent and beyond, **Sr. Diana**

PS: A useful shedding/decluttering resource is 40 Bags in 40 Days, found at <https://www.whitehouseblackshutters.com/40-bags-in-40-days/>

Fasting and Feasting During Lent



Photo: Shutterstock

- Fast from judging others; Feast on the Christ dwelling in them.
- Fast from emphasis on differences; Feast on the unity of life.
- Fast from apparent darkness; Feast on the reality of light.
- Fast from thoughts of illness; Feast on the healing power of God.
- Fast from words that pollute; Feast on phrases that purify.
- Fast from discontent; Feast on gratitude
- Fast from anger; Feast on patience.
- Fast from pessimism; Feast on optimism.
- Fast from worry; Feast on divine order.
- Fast from complaining; Feast on appreciation.
- Fast from negatives; Feast on affirmatives.

- Fast from unrelenting pressures; Feast on unceasing prayer.
- Fast from hostility; Feast on non-resistance.
- Fast from bitterness; Feast on forgiveness.
- Fast from self-concern; Feast on compassion for others.
- Fast from personal anxiety; Feast on eternal truth.
- Fast from discouragements; Feast on hope.
- Fast from facts that depress; Feast on verities that uplift.
- Fast from lethargy; Feast on enthusiasm.
- Fast from thoughts that weaken; Feast on promises that inspire.
- Fast from shadows of sorrow; Feast on the sunlight of serenity.
- Fast from idle gossip; Feast on purposeful silence.
- Fast from problems that overwhelm; Feast on prayer that strengthens.

William Arthur Ward (American author, teacher, and pastor, 1921-1994.)

Oblates: Sharing Our Stories of Faith

I would like to share with you a close encounter with God that fuels my relationship with Jesus and God. I was 19 when I was spear fishing near a fishing pier. Kids on the pier started throwing fishing weights and hooks at me. I swam under the pier to get away from them. They were determined to continue attacking me by getting on their stomachs to throw under the pier. They hit me about six or seven times, and one hit my head. I couldn't breathe. I swam to the end of the pier that was a much larger area under cover. I recuperated and swam out as fast as I could.

As I came up for air and took four deep breaths, I was hit by an eight-ounce pyramid sinker on my left frontal lobe. It triggered seizures and convulsions and my body was shaking violently. I saw darkness then a white light as I looked up and was in conversation with God.

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12



I didn't want to die and had more to do. I felt that if I did that tragedy would destroy part of my family. The feeling at that time was much greater than love. There are no words that adequately describe that time and experience.

Photo by Constant Loubier on Unsplash

As I woke up under water and came to the surface coughing up water, I was able to swim to the shore where people were waiting to help me out of the water. While standing on the beach, I could feel the sin of the world on me. How much of a burden it is on all of us that we don't know or feel it until it's taken away and replaced with Christ's love.

The ambulance was at the beach, and my dad took me to the hospital where I had brain surgery on a Sunday night. The next day I couldn't talk. I had to relearn how to read, speak, and write. As my recovery began, God and Christ saved my life and gave me a second chance to have a personal relationship with them.

My mother Suzanne Olmstead had a long relationship with the Sisters. This gave me an opportunity to develop a relationship with them beginning in 1984 when I visited the convent. Mom later moved to Cincinnati and rented a house on the grounds of the convent. When I came to visit her, I enjoyed going to the Daily Offices with the Sisters and I became an Associate for several years. I developed a closer relationship with Christ and the Sisters and later I became an Oblate.

Learning that the Sisters were prayer warriors for 60 or 70 years, I was attracted to that experience of devotion to prayer. My relationship with Christ grew as I became more centered in Christ. I took on roles at my home parish to be a lay eucharist visitor, serve at the altar, and participate in Bible study. The experience of that white light has never left. It continues to grow and motivate me to deepen my relationship with God.

I know that when I die, God’s love will be with me as it shines on my soul. It continues to shine on all of us even when we can’t feel it. It is there looking out for our brothers and sisters in Christ. **Barkley Jackson, OBL CT**

Are you interested in becoming an Oblate? Please contact the convent by calling 513-771-5291 and ask to speak to or leave a message for Sr. Teresa or Toni Thomas-Feren, OBT CT.

Letter to the Associates

Dear Associates,

All Associates and other interested persons are invited to join our monthly meetings on Zoom on the last Thursday of each month (unless there is a conflict with a civic holiday such as Thanksgiving Day). If you want to join these monthly meetings, please let me know. I hope other regional groups of Associates could also join together to meet in person or visit on Zoom. Let me know if you would be willing to try to form a group and I will give you information.



Please mark your calendars for the Associates retreats scheduled for May 1-3, 2026 and October 2-4, 2026.

The spring retreat in May will be led by **Bishop Melissa Skelton**. The topic will be “Emotion and Grace: George Herbert’s Poetry as Windows onto the Spiritual Life”. The poetry of George Herbert, an Anglican poet, provides emotional and spiritual transparency that has inspired the admiration and delight of readers since

the 17th century.

Archbishop Skelton is an American Episcopal bishop (most recently Bishop Provisional in the Diocese of Olympia), who has

also served in the Anglican Church of Canada. She has worked in numerous for-profit companies, non-profit organizations and church-related institutions. She is married to The Rev. Eric Stroo, a deacon in the Episcopal Church, and is grandmother to five grandchildren.

The Associates retreats are open to others, so please invite a friend to join you. Let me know if you have any questions about annual dues or other concerns. We value you and you are a vital part of our community. God bless you. **Sr. Jacqueline**



An Associate's Journey

Imagine a scrapbook with pictures. Just three for this story: one from my youth, one from middle age, and one as an older woman. The captions would read “The sea and thee”, “A Sister of mercy”, and “A saint of justice”.

Kathryn Courtney, CT Associate

The sea and thee

When I was 10 years old, I was confirmed at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in Long Beach, California. My parents taught me about the house of God as our church and about God's creation (cathedral-the sea, the mountains and all of nature). God's presence was everywhere. As a child I remember these words from worship: “The sea is His and He made it and His hand prepared the dry land.”



My father taught me to surf and when I was twelve I was already in local competitions. At age fifteen my surfing coach suggested I try tandem surfing. Although ballet and gymnastic lessons helped me, I needed a partner, just like paired ice skating. My coach found Chris who was a former football player and surfer. We competed together. To prepare for an upcoming contest, Chris suggested a night surfing session at

Huntington Beach Pier in California.

Tandem Surfing, Makaha Hawaii 2013
Photo credit: Ron Brazil

This was a new experience for me. There were lights on the pier, and we could see the very BIG waves. Then it happened on that dark night. A large “rogue wave” could be heard breaking far beyond the pier. We were too far out to paddle back to the shore. As the swell approached, Chris picked me up and threw me over the top of the wave to save my life. He yelled “I’ll come back for you.” A riptide pulled me out to sea. I was beyond the pier lights in the distant darkness.

I was horrified and humbled. I’d take a deep breath, dive under the wave, feel the swell surge over me and come up for air. Then repeat. I thought each time was my last. Then, unexpectedly, I became aware of the presence of God. I was alone with my Lord, and I could call on His name to be near me. In my mind I could hear the verse from “Away in a Manager” that we sang in the children’s choir at Christmas. “Be near me Lord Jesus I ask thee to stay, close by me forever and love me I pray.”

In the 1960’s there was no 911 service or a cell phone that Chris could call for help, just a pay phone to police. He chose to be my lifeguard and came looking for me, dead or alive. He retrieved a waterproof flashlight from his car. Back on our tandem surfboard he risked his life and paddled out. After an hour he found me, exhausted and weak. I was so grateful to Chris and to Christ. Years later Chris died of cancer. At his funeral I learned his full name was Christian. He was one. And, in the ocean we could glorify God with our skills of surfing remembering always “the sea is His and He made it.”

A Sister of mercy

I felt a calling early in my career to teach and administer in higher education. In my middle age living in Seattle, I was working at a Jesuit university. As an Episcopalian and former lay campus minister in southern California, the Society of Jesuits let me worship at mass every morning before work. Prayer life at work was sacred for me. One year a decision was made to teach the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (founder of the Jesuits). It was a blessing for me to work with students and be enriched with this opportunity. Small groups of faculty and administrators formed for a year, each with a Jesuit as our spiritual director. Weekly, we’d begin by sharing about experiences of the prior

week. Sister Helen, a life-professed Franciscan nun, was in our group.

One week was horrible and humbling for me. A group of “rogue students” started an underground newspaper. It was derogatory, mean-spirited, and vulgar towards administration, faculty and staff. It was my job in the Dean of Students office to find these students. I was so traumatized in my job I sought outside counseling to deal with my sadness about the students’ behavior, my anger, and hurt toward my colleagues.

After our Spiritual Exercises session, Sister Helen comforted me and showed such mercy. She called every day to check on me and sent me a package a few days later. In her career, a student hurt her. His behavior was very disruptive and difficult. She wrote a story about him to share at a masters in teaching conference. Along with this article she sent me a personal note: “Remember all is gift and our students are gifts from God. I’ve come to realize in my career that some students are ‘gag-gifts’.” Sister Helen’s humor, mercy and compassion stayed with me during this ordeal. Her Franciscan faith and Christ-like ways encouraged me further towards joining a convent. When she moved back east to her convent’s Mother House we kept in touch for several years at Christmas. One year I got a note that Sister Helen had died.

We never found the “rogue students”. What I did find in the first edition of “Chicken Soup for the Soul” was a copy reprinted of Sister Helen’s story that she once sent to me in the campus mail. It’s entitled “*All Good Things*” by Helen F. Mroska. Ephesians 2:10 reminds me of her: “For we are God’s masterpieces. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us to do long ago.” I’m grateful for Helen, my sister-friend of mercy. I’ll always remember her.

A Saint of Justice

When I was living in Los Angeles, I had joined a bible study group. Except one member, all were Third Order Franciscans in the Episcopal church and belonged to St. Thomas of Hollywood. Thinking the Third Order was my calling I did a lot of spiritual discernment and soul searching. One group member Jo invited me to a retreat at the Community of the Transfiguration. As soon

as we arrived I felt at home. This spiritual community provided a gracious welcome, warm hospitality, peaceful grounds, and gentle worship. Complines always quiets and completes my day. I did not want to leave! Then a trip to Assisi, Italy, with Jo and others associated with the Community of the Transfiguration was offered. For me it was a dream coming true because St. Francis is my favorite saint.

My time traveling with this group was great. I enjoyed everyone, especially Sister Jean Gabriel and Sister Lynn. I learned so much about St. Francis. I call him my saint of social justice. He did so much for the poor and sick, especially lepers. He helped Clare and other women of his time to follow their



calling to serve God. When in La Verna I learned of the count and countess who gave St. Francis their castle. They are considered the first third orders as husband and wife. Francis served all, even God's creatures. The blessing of the animals in October each year is an annual activity at my church in California. Upon our return to Ohio, I met with Sister Jacqueline to begin the process to become an Associate.

Sr. Jean Gabriel & Sr. Lynn, Assisi, Italy 2013

Closing

I'm asked by friends how I became an Associate? The short answer is with God's help. The longer response is that my faith formation has taken a lifetime. In each of these three significant life experiences on my spiritual journey, I traveled with Jesus.

Until we see one another again, I wish you "waves" of blessings and God's loving invitation for a holy Lent. To paraphrase Micah: may it be a time to do justice like St. Francis, love mercy like Sister Helen, and a humble time to be with God like my time in the sea. **Kathryn Courtney**

Ministry at Bat Cave, North Carolina Springtime and New Life at Transfiguration Preserve

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. — Isaiah 11:9

These words came easily to mind as I began to write this. It's good to be able to reach for words when there are none. So many new signs of life popping up everywhere...some from underneath the ground, daffodils and soon will come the trillium and other "ephemerals". We've just had a huge storm in late February when I was snowed in for 10 days unable to get out until a young excavator from Edneyville came in his big tractor and was finally able to drive up our road. All of us here have learned to cope and make do with what's necessary.



Our church (The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, Bat Cave, (<https://www.ectransfiguration.org/>)) has a firewood ministry that kept me with plenty of wood for the woodstove. The only challenge was the layer of ice over the snow that kept us from walking down the road. We learned that by experience!

Lynette Staton with Bat Cave Disaster Relief and Muffy

It's impossible to describe the terrain and destruction that remains. Our church now coordinates and assists the Mennonite groups that are helping here. Many are staying there and at the Bat Cave Fire Station with the Amish and other organizations that have helped. A grant received from a church in Charlotte has made



possible the construction of the “Hope Center” that will be an additional building at the Saylor house (our old rectory) to house laundry machines and also internet for anyone in the area in need. Our little church continues to be teaming with people who have come to help with rebuilding and restoration. We know now, this is going to be for a long time.

Laughing Waters Retreat at Gerton is accessible and I have offered two Nature and Forest Therapy walks there. In April, I will be guiding Forest Bathing walks for the Chimney Rock Staff in preparation for a walk there in November. I’ve been invited to offer a 2-day workshop, “Writing with Nature”, at Warren Wilson College (May 30-31st) and in the summer at Montreat’s “Women’s Connection” conference and also at Grandfather Mountain.

The blessings here abound each day. I know the word bandied about these days is ‘resilience’; but ‘endurance’ and ‘flourishing’ are words that come to mind as I see this little community finding its way—not ‘back’ but simply “here, now”. There’s a new friendliness and also a sense of beginning to believe that spring and new life are up ahead.

Surprises arise, too. I received a call from David Lee our friend with Conserving Carolina, who received a call from BBC in Bristol, England who had read about their “Kudzu Warriors”. They asked if they could come film as part of their new “GREEN EARTH II” with David Attenborough. David Lee asked me for permission for them to come here! I assured him that BBC would be welcome and that yes, we have plenty of kudzu and the root they are interested in seeing.



I’m grateful for this Quarterly, which provides a link with our larger community worldwide. What a gift! I received a call from an Associate, Ann Lewis, originally from Florida, who lives near Asheville now. She learned about the Sisters’ history and presence here at Bat Cave through reading the Quarterly. Her husband, who was a medical doctor, has passed away. However, many years ago, Mattie Decker and Ann Lewis

they went to the Dominican Republic working and helping the Sisters with their ministry there. I had the joy of meeting with Ann on March 3.

Mattie Decker, Oblate CT, Director of the Bat Cave ministry, Mindfulness Instructor and a Nature and Forest Therapy Guide.

Capturing the Remarkable History of our Chapel

Sister Jacqueline, who is in so many ways our resident historian has done a marvelous job in explaining the incredibly rich history of our Chapel in a new film. This is something that you won't want to miss seeing. Here is the link for you to view and share:



<https://youtu.be/tJbRNICDCQ?si=R2T8yszpY1xBL3Gd>

Rekindling the Gift: A Year of Grace and Transition at Bethany School

When I reflect on this year at Bethany School, I return again and again to gratitude. Gratitude for the Sisters of the Community of the Transfiguration, whose courageous “yes” in 1898 continues to ripple through our classrooms today. Gratitude for Mothers Eva Mary Matthews and Beatrice Martha Henderson, who responded to the needs of children in Cincinnati with bold faith and practical love. And gratitude for a community that still believes education is both intellectual formation and sacred work of the heart.

Bethany is the first ministry of the Community of the Transfiguration, and that truth is not merely historical—it is spiritual. We remain bound to our sister ministries—Food for the Soul, St. Monica’s Recreation Center, the Transfiguration Spirituality Center, and Transfiguration North Carolina—as one body serving Christ in different ways. To lead within that ecosystem has felt less like administration and more like stewardship.

This year, guided by 2 Timothy 1:6 — “Rekindle the gift

of God that is within you” — we adopted the theme Rekindle the Gift Within. It has shaped our chapel reflections, classroom conversations, and community gatherings. In a world often marked by division and uncertainty, we have reminded our students that their identity is rooted not in fear, but in belovedness.

One moment crystallized that truth for me. During a Character Monday gathering, a guest speaker, Imam Soliman, shared his story of being arrested by ICE and spending several months incarcerated without just cause. He spoke with remarkable composure and grace. When the program concluded, one of our eighth graders quietly pulled him aside and asked, “May I pray for you?” There, in the middle of our gymnasium, a young Bethany student placed a gentle hand on the Imam’s shoulder and prayed aloud—for healing, for justice, and for peace. It was not rehearsed. It was not performative. It was simply faith made visible. In that moment, I saw the legacy of the Sisters alive in real time.

The ISACS (Independent Schools Association of the Central States) accreditation process has also invited us into deeper reflection—examining curriculum, strengthening academic systems, and ensuring that excellence and equity remain intertwined. We have also introduced a merit-based scholarship for returning students, an affirmation of achievement and a commitment to opportunity. These developments are important, but they are not the heart of our story.

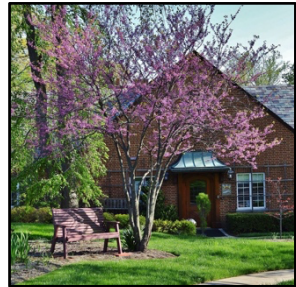
The heart of our story is formation. Stakeholders often call Bethany “home.” I now understand why. It is a place where prayer anchors the day, where teachers serve with devotion, and where children are invited to grow into their fullest selves—academically, spiritually, and socially.



The Sisters planted something extraordinary 127 years ago. That seed has weathered seasons of change and challenge, yet it continues to bear fruit. And as I watch our students lead with compassion and courage, I am reminded: the gift is still here. It flickers in chapel hymns, in whispered prayers, in small acts of kindness. Our calling is simple and sacred—to tend the flame, to trust the Spirit, and to keep rekindling what God has already begun. **Dr. Jasmine B. Harris**, Interim Head of School, Bethany School (<https://bethanyschool.org>)

Respite Days and Retreat for Women Clergy

The Transfiguration Spirituality Center is pleased to announce the return of our Women Clergy Respite Days in 2026. You are invited to take time to pause, reflect, and renew yourself. The mornings will include refreshments, reflection, prayer, and sharing, followed by lunch at a nearby restaurant.



March 5, June 4, September 10, December 3

Join us for one or all of these dates. We will gather at 9:30 AM. The program will be from 10 AM to 12 noon, followed by lunch. There is no charge for the morning program, but please consider making a freewill offering to cover costs.

Rest and Rekindle Women's Clergy Retreat: October 5–8, 2026



A time to rest and recharge. A time for solitude. A time to relax and connect with other women clergy. A time for walks in the beauty of creation. There is no formal program. Nothing is required. This is your time to do what feeds your soul.

Opportunities for spiritual direction, massage and Reiki will be available. Our hope is that whatever your ministry as an ordained woman, you will return

to it well rested and renewed.

More information about these events is found online at <https://ctsisters.org/ministries/transfiguration-spirituality-center/events/#/events>. If you have any questions, please contact Liz Keuffer at liz@ctsisters.org.

Transfiguration Gardens

In 2023, the Community of the Transfiguration undertook a major land renewal project in their back yard, formerly called the North Lawn. The project was completed and the land was consecrated in 2025. It has been christened Transfiguration Gardens. This gently wooded area features walking paths, benches, an outdoor altar, a fountain, a recirculating stream, and a small cabin. This shady space provides a verdant retreat for our Sisters, employees, students and guests. Be sure to visit. More information is found at online at <https://ctsisters.org/transfiguration-gardens.html>.



Knowledge of Salvation: Genesis 44

Angel Strong-in-Capacity-for-Righteousness-and-Upholder-of-Perfection-in-Everything sat wondering and watching, trying very hard to dredge up love for Joseph, the Viceroy of Egypt.

“Those are excellent questions, Scrupe,” responded the Most High God, the Lover and Beloved. “Would you like to discuss them?”

“Oh please! Yes please!!”

“Then let’s start with the one that is heaviest on your heart.”

Scrupe sorted through concerns, arranging them carefully on the top of the nearest *cumulonimbus incus* (anvil) cloud. “I . . . I guess I’m most worried about Joseph because he is still making his brothers suffer. And his father is suffering too, even though Joe doesn’t mean to hurt and scare him. Jacob – I mean Israel – hurt people too. But Joseph! I know his brothers made him suffer a lot, but he won’t let it go. He is sooo stubborn and proud. And, added Scrupe, head hanging, “I don’t like him at all or want to be with him anymore.”

“Come, let us reason together,” said YHWH Elohim. “Joseph was thrown into a pit and then sold into slavery by his brothers because they were jealous of him, of their father’s favoritism. He ended up in a stinking prison for something he didn’t do. You are asking a lot, expecting him to let all that go on your schedule.”

“But what about forgiveness? The brothers have repented . . . or at least some of them feel guilty. So shouldn’t Joseph forgive them by now?”

“HMMMMMM,” responded the Teacher. Scrupe began pacing. “Isn’t that one of Your expectations for all of Your children – that they forgive each other so that You can then forgive them?”

A gentle, divine sigh wafted through Heaven and sent stars and galaxies dancing around the universes.

“What?!” Scrupe demanded. “What did I say?”

“We need to explore what forgiveness means.”

“But – I’ve read whole libraries full of books about forgiveness.”

Eternal Love stayed silent, gazing tenderly (and with some amusement) at Scrupe who became lost in the loving, compassionate gaze of Merciful Grace.

Finally the Voice spoke softly. “You know a lot about what various of My children have thought, said and written, for better or worse. You know a lot about what you think, how you want humans to behave, and what you think I should do. But how much are *you* really letting go – living real, costly forgiveness?”

“Well, there was the time when I . . .”

A Divine Brow lifted. Scrupe drooped.

“Dear one, you have been battling with questions of judgment and forgiveness since We Created you. And you have made progress. But you have much more to receive from Us which means you have much more to release so you can make space in your heart for what you need.”

“Wait! How is this about me? I’m trying to help Joseph who is refusing to forgive and making bad worse by continuing to frighten and punish his brothers.”

“Joseph is battling in his own heart. He is still broken from all he suffered and from pretending he is not. He lives with fear of everything being stolen from him again. You cannot help him

until you clear more from your own heart. You cannot help him until you live his agony. With a compassionate Hand, God-Who-Is-With-Us produced a large dumpster, several huge recycling bins, and the Heavenly Mirror of Truth.

A Cloud of Mercy covered Scrupe while the Holy Work was going on. Sacred Open Heart surgery is deeply private – strictly between the beloved creature and the Inexorably Loving Creator until the creature is ready to help others.

Scrupe looked at the overflowing dumpster and the huge pile of pain, doubt, resistance, anger, self-righteousness, struggle, loneliness and other issues in the recycling bins. “That was all in my heart!”

“It was. Thank you for entrusting it to Me.”

“When are You going to make it all go away?”

“I’m not.”

“Wait! What? Those are my sins and failings and I gave them all to you so now you make them go away. You forgive me. That’s how it works.”

“These, yes. You are finished with them.” The dumpster disappeared. The recycling bins remained.

“I don’t understand. Why are those still here? That junk is terrible, ugly, evil. They are parts of me that I hate and never want to see again.”

“They are only ‘terrible, ugly, evil’ if you refuse to work with Me to Redeem, Restore, Reuse them for good. For your good and for Joseph’s good.”

“How can they ever be good?”

The Healer quietly chose pieces of deep resentment and self-justifying judgment from the bins, then picked up the Heavenly Mirror of Truth. “Come hold these and look into the Mirror.”

“But they *stink!*” Scrupe objected.

The Divine Gaze did not turn away. Scrupe sighed and received the pieces, nose wrinkling in distaste.

“Good. Now look into the Mirror.”

The angel obeyed reluctantly, then stared with wide eyes, seeing understanding, compassion, and difficult prayer in place of putrid, destructive trash.

“How is that even possible?” Scrupe demanded.

The Heavenly Choir started a soft chorus of “With God, all Things are Possible”.

“Scrupe, forgiveness is hard, costly work. Even once the choice is made to forgive, the feelings of hurt and anger don’t necessarily go away. There is no formula, only willingness to enter into the struggle. It is the willingness, the wrestling, the consent to live Love even when it is frightening and seems impossible and even when you are still furious and frustrated. It means costly prayer; opening your heart to allow My Love to flow through you to the other, even when you are not able to like them. My children need to learn this over and over again.”

“Wow,” Scrupe gasped gratefully. “I’m not nearly as mad at Joseph as I was before.” There was a long, thoughtful pause. “But I still want him to do better and forgive his brothers and . . . maybe . . . I sort of understand him better. And thank You that I don’t have to like him.”

“That’s the idea, My friend. You and he are finding ways to let Me help you clean out your hearts and to transform them.”

Scrupe grabbed a Bible and started paging through until the first chapter of the Gospel according to Luke turned up. “So that’s what Zechariah means in the prophecy about Your children receiving knowledge of salvation BY the forgiveness of their sins. You forgive and help them learn forgiveness.”

“That is one clear glimpse of one facet of Truth, Scrupe. Don’t try to force love. Simply live it as well as you can and be willing to let go of junk to make space for it.”

As Scrupe looked at the massive recycling bins, hope, beauty, compassion, and so many other gifts started to appear from what had been there before.

“Cooooooooooooooooo!” the angel breathed.

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Calendar of Upcoming Events



May 1-3, 2026: Associates Retreat

August 6, 2026: Feast of the Transfiguration

October 2-4, 2026: Associates Retreat

October 5–8, 2026: Rest and Rekindle Women's Clergy Retreat

Further Information and Resources

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



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Transfiguration Spirituality Center

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Transfiguration North Carolina

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Food for the Soul CT Ministry

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St. Monica's Recreation Center

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Bethany School

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