

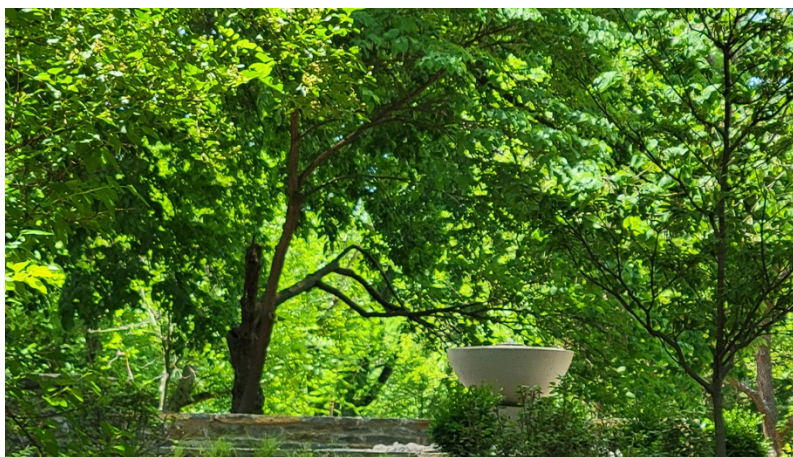


# The *Transfiguration* Quarterly

Vol. 78 No. 1

Winter-Spring 2025

Hilaritas—Benignitas—Simplicitas  
Kindness—Simplicity—Joy



“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” – Psalm 118:24

## **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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Photos from Bat Cave: Mattie Decker, Oblate

## Letter from our Sister Superior, Sister Diana Doncaster

Dear friends, Associates, Oblates; companions on the road,

It would be wonderful if we could all be together to talk, to share our lives, to worship and pray together, to support each other in Christ's love in these hard and soul-daunting times.



We have so many ways to communicate via phone, text, social media, the CT website ([ctsisters.org](http://ctsisters.org)), and even through that fine old institution, the U.S. Post Office. The more we are able to commit to stay connected, even from a distance, the better. We have each other and we have God holding us together. We are united in the privilege of prayer, for each other and for our hurting world. We love to hear from you, about your lives and concerns, to find out how we can best support you in prayer, to be reminded how we are bound together in the loving light of the Transfiguration.

So much has been going on that it would take many issues to fill you in, but here are some highlights.

In May, Sister Carina graduated with a Master of Arts in Theology from Xavier University after intensive study. We are very proud of all the hard work and dedication she put into earning her degree.



We were approached by the leaders of the Glendale Garden Club, asking if we would be willing to open our grounds for their annual fund-raising garden tour. It was a privilege to welcome people from all over to tour Transfiguration Gardens, to wander the grounds, and ask questions about what they discovered. The majority of visitors had two things to say. "I didn't even know that you were here." and "This place is amazing. So beautiful!" We let them know that they are welcome at any time to come enjoy the peace and the beauty of this part of God's creation.



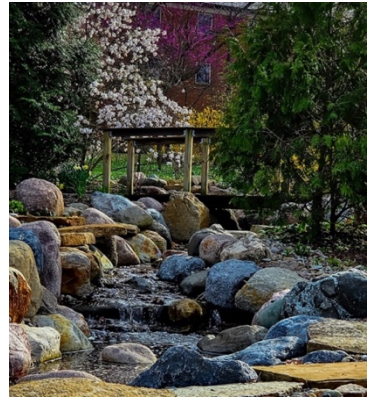
It was also a joy to hear from some grateful downhill neighbors that the bioswale system is working as designed, and that they have not had water running from our property into their basements, in spite of a series of heavy

storms which have blasted through the Midwest.



This is the largest of the bioswales, which those installing the system called The Big Dandy. This photo was taken shortly after yet another “100-year storm event”. We have been getting a lot of them in the past several years.

We have a couple of other favorite water features. One is the recirculating stream which provides beautiful music as the water flows over carefully placed stones. The other is a lovely, simple fountain which lives on our Gathering Terrace, just down from the back of the Convent. It, too, provides the gentle sound of water which soothes the soul.

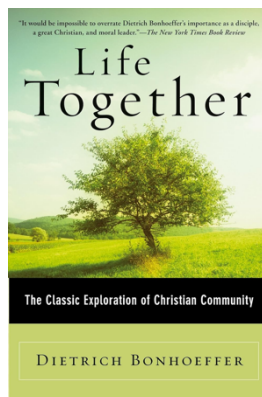


Bridge over a recirculating stream on the North Campus.



Another recent adventure and privilege has been our annual long retreat, led by our Chaplain General the Rev. Suzanne Wille, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Chicago. Her theme was “Life Together: Loving God by Loving One Another.” The

retreat was grounded in Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s classic *Life Together* which we used as reading during meals. It’s a daunting book; valuable for those willing to take seriously how we are called to live together as Christians. While very appropriate for those of us who live in a religious community, it also has value for congregations, families, friends who recognize their need of mutual support to risk living faithfully in these hard times.



Fortunately, Mother Suzanne is good at interpreting Bonhoeffer for today. He was deeply grounded in conservatively evangelical Lutheran theology and was writing from his experience of living in an illegal, underground seminary in Nazi Germany. Fortunately, also, we are pretty good at translating from all male language.

We were challenged to explore such questions as how we receive the gift of living in our community as it is, not as we fantasize it “should” be. How might we receive the grace of Christ to live more lovingly and generously for each other? How do we make use of our time alone for prayer, for attentiveness to God? How might we grow in kindness and genuine humility? What parts of ourselves do we keep hidden and why? How might we grow in trust to the point of being willing to speak openly about our sins and struggles?

This is strong medicine. We need it to be strengthened for even the riskiest service in the face of the rising tide of evil. We have much to consider, discuss, pray about and discern together from this rich and challenging retreat.

### The Johnston House



After many long discussions, meetings with unhappy neighbors who are passionate about historical buildings, contracting with three experts who went through it

with a fine-tooth comb, we made the final decision that the beautiful old Johnston House, on the corner of Albion and Albion, will have to come down. The cost to do all the repairs and updates, as well as long-term maintenance, is simply prohibitive when we have hungry people to feed, children to educate and protect, and a hospitality and retreat center which has been a blessing to many individuals and groups.

It's a complicated process. Much gratitude is due to Missy Price, our Head of Maintenance, who has coordinated countless details, and is in the process of figuring out the timing of several steps before the demolition company finally comes in.

We are also thankful for the Mayor of Glendale, Mike Besl, who, while sad about the decision, has been immensely helpful. One of his friends renovates old houses and will be taking off the slate-tiled roof for reuse. Another will help to remove some beautiful old architectural details

from within the house which we are offering to anyone living in Glendale who can make use of them. His daughter, Natalie Besl, and a member of the Historic Preservation Commission, Beth Sullebarger have worked to photograph the house, inside and out, so that there will be a visual record. Habitat for Humanity will remove for re-use the windows and doors – which are not historic. Once this is all done, the house will be skillfully taken down, and the footprint turned into a beautiful and welcoming part of our grounds. One of these years we will know how the land can best be used for ongoing ministry, but for now, we bid the house farewell with gratitude for all that it has meant to so many people over many decades.

Pray for us as we pray for you.

Many blessings to you all,  
Sister Diana



## Hope

We need it! Hope is one of the three Christian virtues along with faith and love. Turning to the Catechism in The Book of Common Prayer, the question is asked, “What is the Christian hope?” The answer: “The Christian hope is to live with confidence in

newness and fullness of life, and to await the coming of Christ in glory, and the completion of God’s purpose for the world.”

My hope is based on the fact that the war is over. Christ has won the victory! To be sure there are still some

occasional skirmishes. The evil one rears its ugly head from time to time, but skirmishes do not affect the outcome.

Our times, however, feel a bit more serious than mere skirmishes with evil. It feels like we are in a battle. When evil has numbers of willing souls, it is able once again to wage battle. I have said many times recently that the nature of evil is chaos, division, and lies. We are experiencing all of these in our current time. Battle inflicts injury, damage, and death. But battles do not affect the outcome either, not when Christ has won the victory!

When people are dying in war, when people are starving at the hands of others, when human rights are being stripped away, and the inherent dignity of every human being is denied, wherein is our hope? How can we hope when things get worse?

The simple answer is that our hope is not dependent upon current events. It is not based on historical events. Our hope is based on the future both here on earth and in heaven that God purposes. This understanding comes from Canticle 10, The Second Song of Isaiah (Is. 55:6-11) from morning prayer. Verse 11 is the climax of that canticle. It reads, "So is my word that goes forth from my mouth; it will not return to me empty; but it will accomplish that which I have purposed, and prosper in that for which I sent it."

We know this Word as Jesus, the incarnate Son of God. The risen Christ is the validation of Isaiah's prophecy. In Christ, God's purpose has been accomplished once and for all. Christ has defeated evil and death for all people for all time. Evil and death no longer have power over us.

As I write, Pentecost is but two days away. We will have celebrated the truth and the mystery of this victory for 50 days! Pentecost is not the last day of the celebration though. Pentecost is the celebration that through the Holy

Spirit, the celebration never ends! As Christians, we are the embodiment of the victory. By our loving presence and service in the world, we are called to restore hope to all who feel like they have lost hope.

To be honest, sometimes even we feel like we have lost hope when things are so bad. When we do, that's when we need not to rely on our feelings, but rather in the knowledge we have of Christ's resurrection. Our hope in Christ gives us confidence that it is God's purpose that we have life and have it abundantly. It is God's purpose that we are heirs of God's eternal kingdom. The assurance that this knowledge gives us is our hope. It is our hope that calls us and compels us to continue Christ's mission of reconciliation between God and humanity and amongst our neighbors.

I pray that in these coming days and years you allow this hope to be your driving force. This hope in our future that God wills for us is our motivation and energy to work towards that goal today.

As I've been praying recently: Abba, Father, your will be done in the name of your beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." – Romans 15:13*

The Rev. Tom Fehr, Chaplain  
Community of the Transfiguration

## Ministry of the Oblates



God does indeed work in mysterious ways. God put everything to do with becoming aware that there were Oblates of the Community of the Transfiguration (CT) and becoming and being an Oblate in my path at just the right time.

Kathleen McCarthy, Oblate

This path began with Sarah Ruston. She and I just happened to be at CT at the same time and had some deep conversations during which she talked about being an Oblate. She seemed to think I should pray about the possibility that I was called to be an Oblate. I considered and followed her advice and ultimately started the process of becoming an Oblate.

I do like the word “becoming.” While becoming an Oblate took action and commitment over a period of time by the candidate and Oblate director, somehow there was an inner transformation that seemed to happen to me. I didn’t do it, I was open to it, and I changed.

Becoming an Oblate took action and commitment over a period of time by the candidate (me), the other candidate (Krista Cameron), and the Oblate director (Sister Diana). We had some great conversations about the meaning of the Oblate Promises and how they played out (or could play out) in our lives. We also discussed living out our Baptismal Covenant and developing our Rule of Life. During this time there was an inner transformation that seemed to happen to me. I didn’t do it, I was open to it, and I changed.

This becoming, changing, developing has continued through this moment and I expect (hope) it will continue for the rest of my life.

The deep discussions I have had with other Oblates and Sisters over the years have stretched me to become, well maybe to discover my authentic self. I recognize God within me and around me. St. Patrick's Breastplate comes to mind:

Christ with me, Christ before me,  
Christ behind me, Christ in me,  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,  
Christ when I arise,  
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me.

This has made a remarkable difference in my life.

The Fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) are more prevalent in everyday life. My stepmother commented that nothing seems to upset me. Well, quite a few things are upsetting to me; but she is correct in that they are not unsettling. There is a quiet calm (Christ within) that is my anchor that holds me fast even during the storms of life.

It is not just in the storms that Christ within has made a difference. I enjoy sunsets more. I enjoy bird songs more. I enjoy the sweet smells of the morning more. I enjoy people more. This could go on for many lines. There is a richness I experience in life that is so much more than it was in the past. The depth of feelings of gratitude is deeper. Christ has

been within for a long time. But it is through striving to live out the promises, through deepening my relationship with God, that I am in touch with Christ within and all around.

Not only is my life better, but the lives of those with whom I interact regularly have been impacted positively. The light shines through me to those in my sphere. So many more meaningful discussions have occurred with friends and family. Friends confide in me and ask for my advice like never in the past. Most recently, I noticed a desire to grow closer to the Sisters of the Community of the Transfiguration. I asked to get together for visits to get to know them as individuals. They each set aside time in their schedules. I already knew they came from diverse backgrounds and had different interests.

I have also learned that how they each heard God's call, overcame obstacles and ultimately took vows is unique. Of course, they all have the common desire to grow closer to God and to share God's light. They each do this in their own way. There is such wisdom in these amazing women! I count myself as very fortunate to count them as friend and I enjoy their energy and presence whenever I am in their company.

My work background is as a teacher and coach for most of my career. Now the coaching has taken on a deeper spiritual focus. Coaching now revolves around faith, spiritual growth, and how to approach life. Through this, others have sought to develop their relationship with God. My cousin refers to this as the ripples on the water.

I am thankful for the ripples. Sarah was a ripple that contributed to my being a ripple. Of course, the Sisters, other Oblates and Associates, friends and family members on the path have also been ripples that have impacted me. Hopefully, together our ripples become waves that move toward God. There is always movement, always

becoming once one decides to ride the waves. Yes, God works in mysterious ways—sometimes with a gentle ripple caused by a question or suggestion to pray about possibilities.

Kathleen McCarthy, Oblate

*“God will give us all we need to do the work he wants us to do and to live as he wishes.” Mother Eva Mary, CT*

## Letter to the Associates



Dear Associates,

Greetings in the name of our Lord. It has been a very long time since I wrote to you. I hope that we can have the Quarterly on a regular basis. I pray that you and your loved ones are enjoying life and growing in grace.

Your concerns and joys are important, so please contact me by email, [sr.zach1@gmail.com](mailto:sr.zach1@gmail.com), snail mail, or phone, 513-888-7439. Let me know if I can assist you in any way.

I pray that your connection as an Associate remains important and sustaining to you. Our Community is seeking to discern God's will for our future. Your prayers and support are very important. Your dues do enable our ministries and are appreciated.

Thanks be to God and our helpers; our ministries are flourishing. The upcoming retreats are available both in-person and virtually. October 17-19, 2025 the Rev. Lisa

Tolliver, Oblate, will lead the retreat. Future retreats are planned for May 1-3, 2026 and October 2-4, 2026.

May God bless you,  
Sr. Jacqueline

## Have you considered becoming an Associate?



The first time I visited the Convent of the Transfiguration I truly felt as if I had come home. I did not even have words to describe the peace and settled-ness that came over me.

Molly Lin Dutina, Associate

In 1990 I asked the Rev. Carlton K. Gamble if I should pursue being a Third Order Franciscan or as Associate of the Transfiguration he replied, "Why not do both?" And so, I pursued both. When I told Sister Louise that I was writing a Rule of Life for the Franciscan order she said that would also be great for my Associate Formation. The Third Order requirements are stricter than those of the Convent. After a year of formation, I became an Associate on November 9, 1991. I have been attending Associate retreats as often as possible since that time.

I have found the support and encouragement of the Sisters to be invaluable. From Sister Margaret teaching a one-day retreat about a deepening prayer life to the various speakers at the Associates retreats who challenge me to love the Lord with all my heart, soul, mind and strength. The

opportunity arose once to make a private week-long silent retreat. It was truly life changing. My husband was delighted that I had a safe place to go for the retreat. He has even made a retreat at the Convent!

Learning to sing Compline #45: "To You before the close of day, Creator of all things, we pray, that in Your constant clemency our guard and keeper You would be" blessed me so much that I began collecting as many verse of the praise song as possible and using them at home. I was privileged to be at the Convent in 1992 when Mary Lou Kunkle found out she would be accepted at the Convent as a Sister. I rejoice to this day whenever I encounter Sister Hope (her chosen name).

Even when I left the Episcopal church for a time, I was still welcomed as an Associate at the Convent. The sisters became my sisters. The flower beds leant an air of ownership when I helped Sr. Mary Veronica in the gardens. We even had one or two gardening retreats to try to stay ahead of the growing abundance!



Many years ago, I realized I wanted to get to know the other Cincinnati area Associates who sat in silence with me during the Associate retreats. Many of us crocheted and knit during those retreats, so I formed a group called **Journey Together In Stitches, **JTIS**. Now under the organizational leadership of Lisa Hughes, we continue to meet once a month at the Convent for fellowship and knitting time. We try to meet Sr. Jacqueline's constant need for prayer shawls! She mostly gives them out at Ignatian Spirituality Project retreats.**

There are so many ways to serve the Convent from making prayer shawls, to library work, organizing the

archives, not to mention praying daily for the Sisters and their work! Knowing that the Sisters are praying for the Associates encourages me in my walk. I know that at any time I can contact them for more prayer! In 2018 when my husband was desperately ill and possibly dying, the Sisters not only prayed for us, but visited Bob in the hospital taking him a prayer shawl they had made for him. They also left one in his room for me! They recently lifted us both as we suffered our first bout of Covid.

My husband and I now worship regularly with the congregation at St. Timothy's Episcopal church in Anderson Township. Though we live on the far eastern side of Cincinnati in Clermont County I try to make it to each Associates' retreat and JTIS meeting.

If you have a chance to visit the Convent, I cannot encourage you enough to get there and rest! If you have ever considered becoming an Associate, please pursue that consideration and find what treasures wait you in the midst of the Sisters. You won't regret the time spent among them!

In Christ, Molly Lin Dutina

You can read Molly's blog at  
<https://treasures-in-plain-sight.org>



## **Transfiguration Spirituality Center**

The Transfiguration Spirituality Center is one of the ministries of the Society of the Transfiguration. There are two buildings, St. Mary's and BethAnna, for group accommodations – either

overnight or for the day – with a total sleeping capacity of 40. Facilities are provided for outside groups and TSC sponsors their own retreats and workshops. In addition to the two buildings for groups, there are also two guest spaces for singles and two for couples (two single beds in one bedroom) for private retreats. Guests have access to our gardens, walking paths, and an outdoor labyrinth. Groups both secular and religious, of any gender, from a wide variety of backgrounds and faith traditions are welcome.

Faith W. Lang  
TSC Guest Services Manager and Oblate

## Ministry at Bat Cave, North Carolina



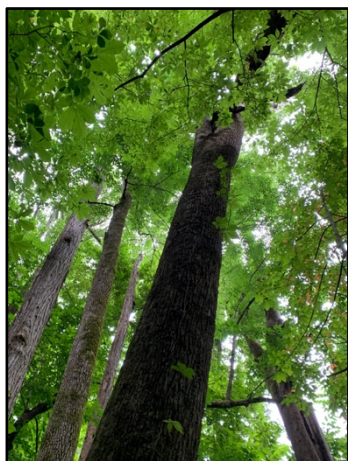
Little Pisgah Mountain on a cloudless day from the porch at Transfiguration House.

*“For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” Isaiah 55:12*

When I was asked to write for our Quarterly, it felt impossible, yet, as the leaves return to the trees and life has taken on its annual return to new life and joy, so have we all. The mountains are so happy today...they are more beautiful

than I, who have lived here now more than seven years, can ever remember!

Our caretakers, Craig and Michelle Aubert are very helpful volunteers with the Bat Cave Fire Station and thanks to the Sisters, we also have “Betty” the amazing Polaris which aided in their being able to bring food and supplies to many, not to mention the many adventures they have had in helping throughout the community as needed.



### Finding the Mother Tree

After the storm last fall, I was eager to spend time with our beloved Mother tree where so many participants have circled hands around, sat by, meditated beside, journaled with....and yet when I came down to the river...where WAS it? How could it be GONE? Slowly, as my perception shifted with the new placement of the river, now with an

“island”, I began to adjust my view and realized that indeed, the tree was still *here* but “moved”. It was now right next to the edge of the river! The land formally between the tree and the river was gone. It is now a helpful anchoring point for us to understand the magnitude of the land changes, and the rivers course which continues to sing sweetly over huge boulders and rocks.



We've been blessed to have our friend Liz Keuffer here from the Convent in June. It has been helpful to have her "eyes on" and to answer her questions and to share our experiences with her.

Immediately after the storm in September, we had no communication or access out except through the Sisters' land. Staff at the Fire Station asked if we could take down the Cyclone fence that Sister Mary Luke had installed years ago to close off access from Upper Bat Cave Road.



Liz Keuffer, Director,  
Transfiguration Spirituality Center

Recently we were blessed to have someone who offered his time and skills to install a fence, providing security and restoring our "enclosure". Just as we had so many, many volunteers who brought equipment and cleared our driveways, they have now made possible our entrance and ease of transportation to all our buildings.



Through all the changes, here is Hickory Nut Falls. Now that we are able (with a pass) to drive through Chimney Rock and our Church members are granted access to attend church on Sundays.

Hickory Nut Falls, June 10, 2025

Our beautiful outdoor “Sanctuary” set on the site of the first Church and School in Bat Cave in 1900 was nearly finished when Hurricane Helene arrived. Now it is nearing completion for events when the roads are restored.



For those who are wanting to know ‘when’, we are with you! We met with staff from the Department of Transportation recently and they thoroughly explained the way this will be done. NC Hwy 9 will not be closed, though it will continue as one lane as the missing portions are rebuilt.



Thank you all, for your prayers and gifts which have sustained and encourage us all. With the return of new life here, the Carolina Mountain Laurel, says it all.

Mattie Decker, Oblate

## Food for the Soul Ministry



Here are some of the highlights as to why Food for the Soul Ministry received the Enhancement Provider Award through the Hamilton County 513 Relief Bus.

Food for the Soul Ministry (FFTS) is being honored with the Enhancement Provider Award, for providing fresh produce and hot, nutritious meals to Hamilton County residents across more than 13 locations—distributing over 200,000 pounds of food in one year including meals like salmon croquettes with rice, chicken shish kebabs, grilled hot dogs, and meatballs.

Organically born during the height of the 2020 pandemic, FFTS emerged as a beacon of hope to address food access challenges, thanks to the vision of founding director Mary Knight and the overwhelming support of the Community of the Transfiguration, making FFTS their fourth official ministry.

Guided by the belief that access to nutritious food is a basic human right, the mission of FFTS is to stop food waste



and eliminate hunger by creating access to healthy food for people facing food insecurity.

Through strategic partnerships with more than 35 local organizations, FFTS serves residents across Hamilton, Butler, and Kenton counties—rescuing over 700,000 pounds of food and delivering an astounding

583,000 meals based on USDA guidelines. From 2022 to 2025 alone, they've served 243,000 hot meals.

Their wholistic approach extends far beyond meals. In partnership with organizations like Freestore Foodbank, TriHealth, and many others, FFTS offers a range of supportive services including on-site mammograms, free haircuts and styling, workforce development programs, and hands-on culinary training—with 63 graduates completing their cooking nutritional classes since 2022. Their consistent excellence in food service has earned them the Clean Kitchen Award from Hamilton County Public Health for two consecutive years (2024 and 2025).

Food for the Soul Ministry continues to nourish bodies, uplift spirits, and empower communities—one meal, one partner, and one act of service at a time. To learn more about this life-giving ministry, go to [foodforthesoulct.org](http://foodforthesoulct.org).

Mary Knight, Director  
Food for the Soul Ministry



## Puzzling Dreams

Genesis 40



“Scrupe, you are pondering hard. What’s on your mind?” asked Angel Seeking-Understanding-Eternally.

“Oh Sue, I’m just confused, Angel Strong-in-Capacity-for-Righteousness-and-Upholder-of-Perfection-in-Everything moved a jigsaw puzzle piece around the Heavenly Puzzling and Praying Board. I carried the dreams from the Beloved to Pharaoh’s Chief Baker and Cupbearer, but they

needed Joseph to interpret them. They had much waiting to endure. It doesn’t make sense to leave humans puzzled. Especially with Not-Nice-Dreams. I could have helped them much faster and better than God asked me to.

Lightning crackled around Sue. “Scrupe! I’m shocked! Are you questioning the ways the Holy One Loves?”

“Of course not,” Scrupe responded a bit defensively. “I just don’t understand.

“Aha!” Sue retorted. “Maybe you aren’t so worried about what is best for the humans. Maybe you are grumpy that you don’t understand all the ways you are asked to serve.”

“Of course not! I’m a servant of the All Knowing Whom I absolutely trust. Besides, you should talk.”

A Gentle, Chastening Presence embraced Scrupe.

“My dear friend,” came the Voice which Sang Love from Before the Beginning, “though you are Created to learn and grow eternally, you still get testy when your certainties are challenged, even by your friends.”

“But . . . but . . . but I don’t understand! Sometimes You have me carry dreams to your human children which make sense to them right away and give them clear directions. Why not for Pharaoh’s Chief Baker and Cupbearer? Isn’t it a lot more efficient that way?”

“Efficient?” the Holy Voice inquired with disconcerting mildness. “That sounds like the kind of idolatry which can chip away at the love I Created you to share.

“Idolatry! I worship and adore and love You! You are the One God. I would never, EVER worship idols! Ever!”

“Chill, Scrupe. Calm down. A little less defensiveness and a little more willingness to listen and learn will help you.”

Experienced, understanding laughter swept through the Heavenly Host.

Scrupe, resisted the temptation to glare at all those who were glimmering with amused compassion, and took a deep breath. “I’m listening.”

“There are many kinds of idolatry,” the Eternal Triune One explained. “It does not require bowing down to statues or ego-bloated, bloviating politicians which We know you would never EVER do.”

The angelic brows knitted suspiciously, suspecting that teasing was happening.

“Idolatry can be anything you allow to block your awareness of and love for Me, your Source, even for the best of all imagined reasons.”

“I don’t get it. How can helping humans to hear Your messages sooner and clearer be idolatry? Isn’t it Your Love I am taking to them?”

Angel Sue’s hand shot up. “I know! I know! It’s about humble obedience, isn’t it? Just doing what You tell us to do without even thinking about it? After all, we are Your servants. And a servant always obeys orders!”

Loving Grace held out a puzzle piece to Angel Sue. “Here’s the answer you just gave. Please show me how it fits in the Puzzle I just put on the Board.”

Were HeavenlyTime and Humantime the same, myriad stars would have been born, joyously lit up their part of the multiverse, and proclaimed the glories of their Creator in a massive, celebratory Supernova while Sue tried to find where the puzzle piece fit.

“I don’t understand. It doesn’t fit anywhere.” Angel Sue returned the puzzle piece. “I might have been wrong.”

“Well done, Sue. Even for angels, it is hard to admit to being wrong.” Something in Angel Sue softened, became gentler, more joyful.

“Wow,” Scrupe whispered.

“Precisely,” responded the Lover of All. “Being wrong is not a bad thing – unless you cling to it once you learn better. So let’s talk about your question. How can your concern for speed and efficiency be less than helpful to My children? Why might it be a form of idolatry?”

Scrupe glanced over at Sue who shrugged.

“Well . . . maybe someone isn’t ready yet?”

“Maybe.”

“But the Chief Baker – his dream was warning him that Pharaoh’s anger meant that he would be killed. Wouldn’t it be kinder to give him more time to prepare?”

“Would it?”

“Ummmmm . . . I don’t know. I mean . . . only You know his heart and what he really needs.”

“True. And?”

“Maybe the dream was helping him to get ready in ways I can’t understand? Maybe he needed to learn that You Are with him? Maybe Joseph needs to learn better how to use gifts you gave him to understand dreams? And maybe I was putting my way of fixing things in place of the Love you wanted me to carry? And maybe I should have asked you?

“Slow down, Scrupe. Maybe some of your answers point toward truth. But there is more. What good does it do for you to try to reduce the ways in which I Love to something you can understand? What good has it done My human children?”

The Word which challenges and teaches moved the Heavenly Host into Holy Silence as they reflected on that question. A new, complete puzzle appeared.

All of Humantime appeared on the Board for the angels to see. They saw families split and relationships die, abuse of children and elderly people, bloody battlefields, pogroms and genocides, resources which could have fed and cared for people in need wasted on elaborate shrines and

pompous political parades to assuage arrogant egos. They watched souls shrivel under the weight of inflexible systems. The Angelic Host were so overwhelmed by the evil; they could not see love and redemption at work – even that with which they were privileged to help. Eternal love mercifully let puzzle pieces come apart, leaving vast gaps in what the angels could see. Light shone even in the ugliest places.

Scrupe gazed hard at where a few pieces looked like they might fit together. The Chief Baker went calmly to the gallows – with Peace upholding him in the face of cruelty that comes from egomaniacal power. The Pharoah's Chief Cupbearer was so excited to get his place back that he forgot all about Joseph who had helped him understand his dream. Joseph sat alone in his prison, waiting, reflecting, slowly putting together the puzzle, which was his life, gradually recognizing the prideful arrogance which been so resented by his brothers.

"He has a long way to go, doesn't he?" Scrupe whispered.

"Yes, he does. So do you."

"He needs more time. I wanted him, and the others to see before they were ready. I wanted it my way and . . ." Scrupe's voice dropped to a shamed whisper . . . "to *earn* Your love and be praised. I valued being efficient and doing more than You asked me to which blocked me off from hearing You. I made myself too busy and prideful to love. That's my idolatry . . . this time." Scrupe's head drooped in despair. "Will I ever learn? Will You forgive me again?"

"Yes, you will learn again and again eternally and grow in My Way of Loving every time. Yes, I have already forgiven you. Yes, I need you to help Joseph learn, face his sins and follies, past, present, and future, and become the person I Created him to be, just as I am helping you become the angel I Created you to be."

"Wow", Scrupe whispered once again. "Thank You."

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Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books written in a foreign language. Do not now look for the answers. They cannot now be given to you because you could not live them. It is a question of experiencing everything. At present you need to live the question. Perhaps you will gradually, without even noticing it, find yourself experiencing the answer, some distant day.

— Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*

## **Calendar of Upcoming Events**

October 17-19, 2025: Associates Retreat led by The Rev.  
Lisa Tolliver, Oblate

May 1-3, 2026: Associates Retreat

October 2-4, 2026: Associates Retreat

## **Further Information and Resources**

### **Community of the Transfiguration**

495 Albion Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45246

513-771-5291

Website: [www.ctsisters.org](http://www.ctsisters.org)

### **Transfiguration Spirituality Center**

469 Albion Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45246-4653

[retreats@ctsisters.org](mailto: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 Ministry**

469 Albion Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45246-4653

[www.foodforthesoul.org](http://www.foodforthesoul.org)

Email: [mknight@ctsisters.org](mailto:mknight@ctsisters.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](http://www.bethanyschool.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BethanySchoolOH>

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Evening view of the Chapel.  
Spring 2025