Connected in Spirit

Perhaps one of the simplest definitions of community is a group of people who share something in common, who feel a sense of belonging, and who find strength and encouragement in the connections between and among them.

The first three weeks of March 2022 have shouted “community.” Our community is comprised of those who are able to gather in person, as well as those who connect with us virtually. The photos in this issue of Blessings share some of the opportunities to gather in person. We know those unable to gather in person are connected to us in spirit. Enjoy!
Community Day of Reflection
Saturday, March 5, 2022

As part of our Anniversary year celebration, Wheaton Franciscan Sisters and Covenant Companions gathered for a day of reflection with our own Sr. Sheila Kinsey.

Sr. Sheila's presentation, titled Way of Nonviolence: From Crisis and Conflicts to Reconciliation and Healing, reminded us that 25 years ago the Sisters, Covenant Companions, and staff at Our Lady of the Angels (OLA) made a formal commitment to Nonviolence. This commitment to nonviolence involved practicing common courtesy, creating a hospitable environment, embracing a positive attitude, and communicating to develop a common understanding.

This commitment was carried out through signs that reminded visitors that OLA was a nonviolent zone; signs at the entrance/exit of the property were added to extend peace to all who entered the property. Over the years the way the values of nonviolence were expressed have changed, but the intention has not. Sisters, Covenant Companions, and staff continue to focus on creating a hospitable environment where peace is extended to all.

Eleven community members, including Sr. Sheila, participated over Zoom. Thirty-eight gathered in person. This was the first in-person gathering of this type since March 2020. The room vibrated with so much energy it was felt on screen. The input was rich and the sharing profound. A community bound by love and a commitment to a way of nonviolence yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Sr. Sheila Kinsey is the Executive Co-Secretary for the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission of the Union of Superior Generals (USG) and International Union of Superior Generals (UISG). She was appointed to the position in 2015, upon completion of her term as general councilor for the congregation in Rome.

Sr. Sheila is actively involved in issues related to poverty, human rights, refugees and migrants, anti-trafficking, peacebuilding, environment, sexual abuse, and collaboration. Currently, she serves as the Coordinator of the UISG Campaign: Sowing Hope for the Planet. In April 2021, Sr. Sheila was appointed by Pope Francis to serve on the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.
Welcome Back

March 6, we welcomed members of the faith community back to the Chapel for Sunday Mass. Although it was the first Sunday of Lent, a few quiet (and not so quiet) *alleluias* were heard among those gathered. We are happy to be able to continue our Livestream services and hope that our "digital" community is enjoying the camera and sound enhancements.
Sisters and Staff
Spring Luncheon
March 9, 2022
Can you guess the theme?
Peace Walk for Ukraine
In your abundant love, O God, you direct the course of all things in the world that you have created, and you gaze with kindness upon the whole human family.

Look, then, upon your daughters, our friends, our sisters, whom we commend to you with the joy and gratitude of our hearts.

In the charisms of their lives, inspired by the spirit of Mother Clara and Mary Ward, and through their selfless offerings of chastity, poverty, and obedience, they reflect your desire for the whole of creation, and make visible the very mission of your Son, Jesus Christ.

As we extend our blessing, joining with that of the Spirit that always hovers over them, we promise them our continued love, our constant prayer, and our deepest gratitude for their commitment and their witness in all that they do, and all that they are.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. AMEN!

by Fr. Phil Horrigan
March 2022