

Greater Cincinnati Region

Winter 2016

Volume 4, Issue 2

Jesuits Among Us

As we reach the half-way mark of this service year, we realize how blessed we are to have been founded and continue to be served by the Jesuits among us. IVC's service year runs September 1st to June 30th (though most volunteers work year round and take time off throughout the year instead).

Our fall retreat was facilitated by Fr. Bob Ross, SJ. He reminded us that we are the stuff of stars and challenged us to spend time with God reflecting on our lives and purpose, trusting in the slow work of God with adult faith.

We welcome eight new Spiritual Reflectors to IVC Cincinnati, all Jesuits! Joining Sr. Mary Ann Humbert, SC, Jean Marie Stross, Tom Choquette, Fr. Bob Ross, SJ, and Fr. Bob Thesing, SJ are:

Rev. Al Bischoff, SJ

Rev. Joseph A. Bracken, SJ,

Rev. Patrick A. Fairbanks, S.J.

Rev. Matthew Gamber, SJ

Bryan Norton, SJ

Rev. Pete Sharkey, SJ

Rev. Bill Verbryke, SJ

Rev. Joseph Wagner, SJ

The response to Fr. Joe Folzenlogen's appeal to his Jesuit companions was so great that some are still awaiting assigned volunteers.

In November IVC was invited to be at the table with Directors of Works, Superiors and Jesuit and Lay Colleagues for a day of reflection and conversation. The Chicago-Detroit Provincial Fr. Brian Paulson, SJ led us through "the process we are undertaking this year, the both/and of community building, and service with theological storytelling." As provinces prepare for merging we reflect on our hopes for the future.

The New Year's Promise

2016 is off to a fresh and chilly start! Our volunteers brave the elements to continue to serve and be inspired by those they encounter.

Recent volunteer, Bob Meyer now tutors at Education Matters in Lower Price Hill. Bob shares how inspiring the mother of eight he has taught is on page 3.

Recent volunteer, Judy Singer has settled in at Churches Actives in Northside (after shadowing Michael Heinrichs) and is loving it.

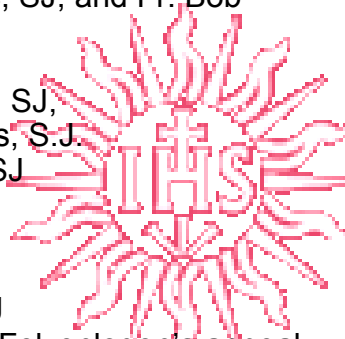
In February Bill Mackey will be starting an after-school tutoring program at Winton Hills Academy, an extension of the Making Sense of Language Arts Program. We need tutors!

Anne Holbrook and Tom Rebel have teamed up to serve Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly.

Gloriajean Wallace is back from her pilgrimage to the Holy Land as a part of her seminary requirements. Of course, on her day off she snuck in visits to hospitals and got a feel for how communication problems after brain injuries are handled there.

Jean Shannon is back in town and will be tutoring with her sister's class. "Doc" Leonard Anderson, who was with us a couple of years ago, even though he lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee, will be moving to Ohio in the spring & coming back to IVC.

Beth and Jerry Lea have joined our Regional Council and will be volunteering after they return from their pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago. Jerry is meeting up with Tim Boyle, who's going back again and Beth will meet up with Jerry later. See you **can** volunteer and still have time for that post retirement bucket list!



Ignatian Volunteer Corps, JustFaith & Prison Ministry



Paula Yerke

How do IVC and JustFaith make a difference?

Paula Yerke always had interest in prison ministry and so on retirement from teaching High School Theology, tried to connect with the prison Kairos program.

When she was not contacted after filling out an interest form, she put it on the “back burner” thinking the time was not right. Ignatian Volunteer Corps came to her attention and she joined volunteering with JustFaith ministries – spreading the word about JF in the Cincinnati area. JustFaith offers programs to parishes and other small groups that provide opportunities for individuals to study and be formed by the Justice tradition articulated by Scriptures and Catholic Social Teaching. In other words, it trains and forms the “haves” in our world to reach out to the “have-nots”. One program that JF offers is a module on Prison Reform called The Church of the Second Chance. Paula joined Immaculate Heart of Mary parish when they offered this program in 2015. This, along with the inspiration from IVC, re-kindled her desire to reach out to those in our prison system. She got in touch with the prison ministry contact for the Archdiocese and 8 months later (Prisons move VERY slowly requiring much patience!) was finally offering a program she created at Dayton Correctional Institute for women - a Scripture based study of Old Testament folks called Flawed & Fabulous. Paula is taking her Scripture and teaching knowledge gleaned from 21 years in the Archdiocesan high schools to women who may never leave the prison system and have little opportunity for this type of program. She feels it is her way to live out the goals of both IVC and JF.

Pope Francis' Addresses Prisoners in Philadelphia

The Lord goes in search of us; to all of us he stretches out a helping hand. It is painful when we see prison systems which are not concerned to care for wounds, to soothe pain, to offer new possibilities. It is painful when we see people who think that only others need to be cleansed, purified, and do not recognize that their weariness, pain and wounds are also the weariness, pain and wounds of society. The Lord tells us this clearly with a sign: he washes our feet so we can come back to the table. The table from which he wishes no one to be excluded. The table which is spread for all and to which all of us are invited.

This time in your life can only have one purpose: to give you a hand in getting back on the right road, to give you a hand to help you rejoin society. All of us are part of that effort, all of us are invited to encourage, help and enable your rehabilitation. A rehabilitation which everyone seeks and desires: inmates and their families, correctional authorities, social and educational programs. A rehabilitation which benefits and elevates the morale of the entire community.

Jesus invites us to share in his lot, his way of living and acting. He teaches us to see the world through his eyes. Eyes which are not scandalized by the dust picked up along the way, but want to cleanse, heal and restore. He asks us to create new opportunities: for inmates, for their families, for correctional authorities, and for society as a whole.

I encourage you to have this attitude with one another and with all those who in any way are part of this institution. May you make possible new opportunities, new journeys, new paths.

All of us have something we need to be cleansed of, or purified from. May the knowledge of that fact inspire us to live in solidarity, to support one another and seek the best for others.



**Jesus asked, "How many loaves do you have?"
Mark 6:38**

If the loaves represent how much desire I have to serve others, I have many loaves. If the loaves represent my ability to serve others, I perceive that I don't have enough loaves.

If I didn't trust and believe that the Holy One blesses my loaves, and thus multiplies them, I could never do what I'm doing. It takes my desire and ability, along with the grace of God, to do God's work.

O Holy One, I bring my loaves before You. I ask Your blessing of grace on me and my loaves. May I do Your will. How many loaves do I have? I have more than enough, with Your blessing.

Amen.

Anne Shaffer is Director of Cincinnati's Ignatian Spirituality Women's Team that gives retreats to homeless women. She shared this reflection from her journal with us at our January gathering.

"Economics of Compassion"

is a movement in Cincinnati to offset the mentality of scarcity and fear that our "upwardly mobile" "climbing the ladder" society preaches. Dr. Walter Brueggemann shares that our God is a God of abundance and generously gifts us; our economics should be compassionate and our resources shared.

As a part of our IVC monthly gatherings we have been reflecting on James Martin, SJ's book, The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything. In his chapter on The Simple Life he quotes Dean Brackley from "Downward Mobility" *"This vision means a fundamental equality of all human beings that overshadows all differences. ... The outcast has the potential to shatter my world. When I can identify with the outcast, allowing her to come crashing in on my world, the ladder collapses, exposed as a colossal fraud. The superiority of the great dissolves together with the inferiority of the small. If only for a moment we all appear...on equal footing. Identifying with the outcast enables us to identify with everyone. I can say "these people are just like me."* Martin asks, "But how do I do it?"

I see Ignatian volunteers identifying with the outcasts when they reach out to someone of a different race, different income level. One asked, "Why can't these children have the same opportunities as my grandchildren?" Another shares, "I was isolated from poverty, want, violence. Just miles away from me others were struggling and I did nothing. **These people are just like me.**" "I find myself outside of my comfort zone, yet I've never felt more alive."

*Thank you to our donors
who empower us
to nurture those
who nurture others!*

Scott Gilliam

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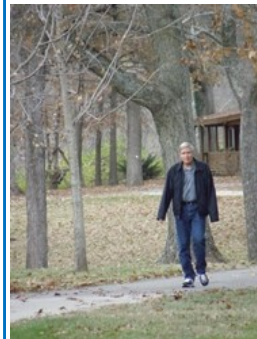
Michael & Rosemary Whitney

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Dennis Kinne and Linda Wihl

Louis and Anne Yauss

Paula Yerke



Bob Meyer at the Jesuit
Spiritual Center

Bob's Inspiration

Maria, her husband and 8 children moved from a west African country about 5 years ago. In the relocation program they were in, they had the choice of going to the USA or Australia. It seems education was not a priority for females where she grew up. Yet she definitely has very good mental abilities - she probably just lacked opportunity. I hope for her that the US is truly a land of opportunity. Her oldest son is at Xavier University; a daughter at Mercy High; and several children at St. Boniface in Northside. I think she is enthusiastic in her studies because her children are going to good schools and doing well. I am amazed at her talent, effort, and abilities in class - especially since she has to juggle family life and check on her 8 children in the process. She takes buses to get to Education Matters so at the end of our sessions we make sure she has a bus token to get home. She inspires me! *Bob Meyer*



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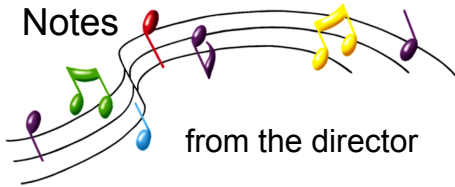
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Thank you to those of you receiving this by email. Not only are you empowering us to “Care for Our Common Home” as Pope Francis urges, you save the expenses we would incur.

To support the Ignatian Volunteer Corps Cincinnati with a tax deductible donation you can do so online at <https://www.gifttool.com/donations/Donate?ID=2033&AID=1984> (Be sure to designate Cincinnati in the drop down menu.)

Or send your donation to:
IVC Cincinnati
4714 Chickering Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45232

Notes



from the director

Sitting in the Cathedral listening to the choir of consecrated men and women singing in celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life the Spirit's presence was palpable! (Fr. Pat Fairbanks, SJ and Sr. Mary Ann Humbert, SC, IVC Spiritual Reflectors among them.) Enjoying the music, savoring the smiles, watching as one of the Franciscan monks fainted and

those around him sat him down silently and safely, and wondering how many years of giving were represented by them, I was in awe!

Then I closed my eyes and heard, “Come Holy Ghost, Creator blest. And in our hearts take up thy rest. Come with thy grace and heavenly aid to fill the hearts which thou hast made.” Indeed I was listening to hearts made and wed to God! And somehow witnessing their consecrated life made me feel the Spirit resting in my own. As the Year of Consecrated Life draws to an end remember to honor these men and women for all that they have sacrificed and shared with us.

We are only weeks into the Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis. This too is cause for celebration! As Pope Francis states: *“It is not a question of a mission reserved only to a few: “The Church, guided by the Gospel of mercy and by love for mankind, hears the cry for justice and intends to respond to it with all her might”. In this context we can understand Jesus’ command to his disciples: “You yourselves give them something to eat!” (Mk 6:37): it means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as small daily acts of solidarity in meeting the real needs which we encounter.”*

The women and men of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps heed this call in food banks, classrooms, homeless shelters, prisons, nursing homes, hospitals, free pharmacies, thrift shops, job training sites, and as housing advocates. They may not sing in a choir but they make heavenly music and the Spirit rests in their hearts as well! Thank you and may God bless you as you so richly bless others!