

Serving the Dear Neighbor



NEWS FROM THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH
3427 GULL ROAD, NAZARETH

Love of Neighbor Brings Many Together for Day of Service

Hundreds of sisters, associates, friends, and supporters of the Congregation of St. Joseph gathered on April 29 in churches, ministries, and other organizations (some founded by our sisters), as well as in other locations across the United States for our congregation-wide service day. Here are just a few photos of the faces and places where we served in or near our center in Nazareth and also in Kalamazoo and surrounding areas.

A big **THANK YOU** to all who joined us in service to the *dear neighbor!* ●



^ Comstock Community Center in Kalamazoo.



^ Pope Francis Center Soup Kitchen in Detroit.

^ Manna Meals in Detroit.



^ Many sisters volunteered to knit baby clothes and blankets for Gianna House in EastPointe.

< Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit.





Mission Haiti

Update on Collaborative Education Effort

^ Sponsored Haitian school girls pose with Sister Mary Ellen Gondeck, CSJ (at left standing), Sister Sue Torgersen, CSJ (at left kneeling), and Sisters Jeanette Bussen, CSJ, from Baden, PA (at right kneeling), and Sister Mary Ellen O'Connell, CSJ, from Boston (at right standing).

Off the southern tip of Florida, situated between Cuba and the Dominican Republic, lies the tiny country of Haiti. The Congregation of St. Joseph has had a relationship with this struggling country for many years through a U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph initiative called Mission Haiti, Inc. This year, from March 12 – 20, 2017, Sisters Mary Ellen Gondeck, CSJ, and Sue Torgersen, CSJ, and associates Judy Iantosca and Brooke Whitten and her three daughters, traveled to Haiti to see the program, which sponsors 10 girls from elementary through secondary school and beyond, in action. They were joined by sisters and associates from several different St. Joseph communities, and Shelley Butler, a Mission Haiti board member from the Twin Cities.

The focus of the trip was to check in on the sponsored girls and the Companions of Jesus, the Haitian congregation who sponsor Annunciation School where the 10 girls are being educated. Six of the girls are in 5th grade, four are in the 4th grade.

The group visited Annunciation School (grades 1-6) and College Coeur de Marie (grades 7-13), both in Leogane, Haiti, a town badly damaged by the disastrous 2010 earthquake. Mission Haiti also supports several students on the college level at Notre Dame University in Port-au-Prince.

“College Coeur de Marie, the secondary school that we visited, has risen from the rubble of the 2010 earthquake largely due to the generosity of our congregation’s Generous Promise Grant Fund, the U.S. and Canadian Federations of Sisters of St. Joseph, Caritas Germany and of course Mission Haiti,” said Sister Sue Torgersen, CSJ. “We continue to work together with these great partners to address critical situations in our world – a great example of how we demonstrate our mission of unity!”

The group spent an afternoon with the students on the playground dancing, blowing soap bubbles,

taking pictures, and just enjoying being together. "It was delightful to have some of the women from the Village of Jesus, which is on the same property as the school, join us," said Sister Mary Ellen Gondeck. "It was especially fun to see the girls interact with the other young women who traveled with us as they were closer to their age."

At College Coeur de Marie, the group spent time with the students who were eager to greet them and talk about what they were learning. "While they spoke about learning algebra, science, history and more, we wanted to learn of their hopes for the future," said Sister Sue. "Hearing their dreams for their futures – teaching, accounting, nursing, and doctoring – was hopeful, but it was also painfully clear that while an education will benefit them in many ways, choices and opportunities in Haiti are limited." At present, only 2% of Haitian students go on to a university.

At the University of Notre Dame in Port-au-Prince, the group got a chance to network a bit on behalf of the Mission Haiti program. They met Sister Alta, President of the Companions of Jesus, and the executive secretary for Monsignor Andre who is President of the University – good contacts both as the program tries to move on to the university level.

The group then traveled to Santa Chiara where they visited a home started by Gerry Straub, a Secular Franciscan, former network television producer, author, teacher, lecturer and documentary filmmaker. Gerry has spent time in some of the poorest countries in the world, and he and his wife have opened their hearts and a home to those most in need around them in Haiti. The home is a refuge to 48 young children



^ Two students at Annunciation School in Haiti.



whose parents often have no choice but to take them along to work in a crowded market, or lend or rent them out to a family where they work an entire day for a bowl of rice in return. "Seeing the faces of the children in this home, who range in age from 6 months to about 11-12 was a delight," said Sister Mary Ellen. "Gerry and his wife not only provide food and shelter for the children, but also offer hope and a place for them just to be kids." •

For more information on Mission Haiti and how you can help, visit MissionHaitiInc.org.

< Students in their classroom show off their work.

JUBILEE 2017



Standing from left to right, Sisters Diane Densmore, Rita Schafer, Jeanne Marie Greenen, Clara Hayashi, and Valerie Binder. Seated from left to right, Sisters John Cassian Logue, Mary Ann Ankoviak, Sandra Melanson, and Beverly Nonte.

JUBILEE CELEBRATION 2017

Nine sisters from the Congregation of St. Joseph celebrated 50, 60, and 75 year Jubilees on Sunday, July 23, 2017, at our Nazareth Center in Kalamazoo. Dozens of sisters and associates were involved in preparing for the Jubilee celebration which marks the anniversary of a sister's entrance into religious life.

The festivities began Saturday evening with the lively and traditional "Cabaret," at which several sisters entertained with poetry, music and other special talents. The following day included a Liturgy in Holy Family Chapel with Presider, Bishop Paul Bradley and Concelebrant, Reverend Michael Howell. After the homily, the Jubilarians were invited by Sister Christine Parks, CSJ, a member of the Congregation Leadership Team, to renew their vows. After Mass, all moved to the dining room for dinner and social time together with family, friends, and each other.

Please join us in congratulating all 41 sisters celebrating jubilees this year. •



Sister John Cassian Logue, CSJ 75 Years

"I thank God for every moment of life, trusting Him who has never failed to keep me striving to live, love and serve his plan for me and His world. What else could I hope for?"



Sister Mary Ann Ankoviak, CSJ (Sister Camille)

60 Years

"I celebrate this jubilee year with gratitude hoping to continue to cooperate with the call of God and give the best I can, knowing in my heart I've done that with the strengthening grace of God."



Sister Valerie Binder, CSJ (Sister Nathan)

60 Years

"I thank God that I have been privileged to have spent my life with so many great women, always open to the voice of the Spirit. And there's more to come! Alleluia! Thank you, loving Creator!"



Sister Jeanne Marie Greenen, CSJ

60 Years

"I have come to Nazareth [from her home community of Tipton, In.] where a new CSJ family has been for me full of grace, full of hope, and full of interesting and ever-new discovery. As I celebrate this Jubilee, my heart is filled with joy, love, and gratitude for the gifts of Life, of God's faithfulness, and the Congregation of St. Joseph."

JUBILEE 2017



Sister Sandra Melanson, CSJ
(Sister Joseph Mary)
60 Years

"I am thankful to my family, friends, the Congregation, and all those who have been a part of these sixty years. Your love and support continue to call me to live out my vocation as a Sister of St. Joseph and our charism, 'that all may be one.'"



Sister Beverly Nonte, CSJ
(Sister Azariah)
60 Years

"My first teaching ministry was at St. Anne's in Detroit where I met many Hispanic families and attended Mass in Spanish. This began my love for the Hispanic community which continued over the years as a missionary in Peru, South America, and in pastoral work. Sharing in the life of the people, the culture, the music, the liturgical celebrations have remained one of my most precious gifts."



Sister Rita Schafer, CSJ
(Sister Mary Julianne)
60 Years

"In this Jubilee year I continue to be grateful to my family and the Congregation for their support over the years. As I spend time to celebrate the present and reflect on the past, I hope to continue to journey into the future with hope and trust as we continue to be the Congregation of the great love of God. "Bless the Lord, oh my soul: I will praise the Lord all my life."



Sister Diane Densmore, CSJ
50 Years

"Just as I believe the Trinity has been an integral part of my spiritual life, I believe I have been supported by a trinity of communities: my family, the Sisters of St. Joseph and the ministry of teaching. All three communities have enabled me to grow, to be challenged, to be loved, to build friendships and relationships, and to meet God in the 'dear neighbor' It is through the CSJ charism – 'that all may be one' – that I have been able to live and move within, among and between these interconnected communities."



**Sister Clara (Reiko) Hayashi,
CSJ**
50 Years

"Religious life for me is to seek Jesus' way and follow him. My greatest joy was making final vows with the Sisters of St. Joseph. I am very thankful that Jesus called me to religious life – without this call my life would be empty."

Congratulations,

to all 41 sisters celebrating
Jubilees from around the
congregation this year!

To view full biographies, visit
us online at www.csjoseph.org,
and click on "Connect With Us"
then "Jubilarians."

SISTER SPOTLIGHTS

Sister Grace Scola

She may be 92, but nothing stops Sister Grace Scola, CSJ, from making life beautiful and fun for the 100+ sisters who reside at our Nazareth center.

Sister Grace enjoys cooking and entertaining, so she and former head nurse Jana VanAntwerp of the Nazareth Assisted Living Area created the “Meet and Eat Program,” a special time for small groups of residents to gather for a family-style, home-cooked meal, and lively conversation. The meal is served complete with linen tablecloths and napkins, fine china and goblets, candles and flowers. The groups are kept small so the sisters can enjoy a “fine dining” experience and each other’s company.

These special dinners occur every two or three weeks from October to April. “Without the nurses and the housekeeping and maintenance staff who assist with the many details, it would not be a successful event,” said Sister Grace. “The volunteer waitresses enjoy the event as much as their sister guests, and everyone is most appreciative!”

When the Nazareth Alumni Association learned about these dinners, they presented Sister Grace with an annual donation to buy food and supplies for her projects. Some of her friends as well as the Nazareth sisters donate to the fund as well.

What’s clear is that Sister Grace enjoys being active. “Keeping busy and active is very important, especially when getting older,” she said. “Of course, the doctors always advise me to keep moving.” •



Sister Mila Sones

You can take the woman out of her culture but you certainly can’t take the culture out of the woman. Sister Mila Sones, CSJ, was born in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and joined the Medaille community of Sisters of St. Joseph in New Orleans in 1975. However she made Nazareth her home community in 2010.

As a member of the Social Committee for the past six years, Sister Mila has planned various activities for the sisters, some with a particularly Southern spin. Her festive spirit has especially come in handy for the annual Mardi Gras party. This pre-Lenten celebration has been a mainstay at Nazareth since Sister Grace Scola (see above) started them in 2010, but Sister Mila has added a bit more New Orleanian authenticity to it with the phrase, “laissez le bon temps roulé,” which is French for, “let the good times roll.” For supper the sisters are served po’ boys (baguettes filled with roast beef and a special sauce), and then the sisters dress up in Mardi Gras costumes and parade around the dining room to the song, “When the Saints Go Marching In.”

In addition to her social planning, Sister Mila also helps in the computer lab, drives sisters to doctor appointments, and has been on the Pastoral Care Team at Borgess Gardens where she ministered to sisters regularly.

While moving from the South to Michigan was definitely a cultural shift, it didn’t faze Sister Mila because she was welcomed so warmly by the Nazareth sisters. “I love Michigan summers,” she said, “they’re so mild compared to those down South.” •



SISTER SPOTLIGHTS



Sister Patricia Mullen

Sister Pat Mullen, CSJ, can't help but be a woman of loving service to others. She has done this all of her life both at home and with the Sisters of St. Joseph, whom she knew while growing up. Since coming home to live at the Nazareth center 10 years ago, Sister Pat has undertaken sewing ministry for the sister residents and even some employees.

"I just respond to needs when they come," she said. "It helps keep bodies and souls stitched together." Most of what Sister Pat sews are personal clothing items such as hems, alterations and repairs, but she also sews bedspreads, pillow cases, and other projects as they arise.

Sister Pat has been sewing since she was in ninth grade when, as she states, her mother marched her and her sister down to the Singer store in town to attend sewing classes and learn how to use patterns for simple dresses and skirts. Her mother, an excellent seamstress, coached her and frequently went shopping with her to find remnants and materials for Sister Pat to experiment with.

She started her sewing ministry at Nazareth by simply coming upon it. "I found myself to be of service just by being here," she says. "People would ask me sewing questions and then I'd do a project."

"I like sewing. Actually I enjoy it," she said. "It's a wonderful hobby and it allows me to be creative in a ministerial way where I can engage with others, assist with their sewing needs as well as get to know them while chatting on a variety of topics." ●



Sister Sue McCrery

As director of Spiritual Care at Borgess Ascension in Kalamazoo, Sister Sue McCrery, CSJ, is the only sister still working in the hospital founded by our Sisters 128 years ago. She manages a team of chaplains who serve the medical center with an average of 280 patients every day.

"The mission of the hospital, similar to the mission of the Congregation, is to serve people most in need, the poor and the vulnerable," said Sister Sue. "We see people at the beginning (lots of new babies) and the end of life."

Sister Sue directs a staff of 10 chaplains of various denominations. She also oversees the Catholic Communion ministers, a group of about 15 volunteers from local parishes who take Holy Communion to Catholic patients daily.

"Chaplains are there to support patients, their families and the staff as they struggle with pain or difficult diagnoses or the sudden death of a loved one," said Sister Sue. "The chaplain's job is not to preach to people about God or try to convert them, but rather to invite them to connect with their personal source of strength, their beliefs or their faith community."

Sister Sue said that while most people are not comfortable talking about death, she and her staff need to be. "I find that if people are given the chance to talk about their fears and worries about death, they often open up," she said. "That's the opening we're looking for. Then we can help the patient face the reality of their situation, which often leads to a connection with God." ●





For one sister, what started out as a mere love for Spanish grew into a major program and service to the Hispanic community in Detroit.

In 2001, after 45 years of classroom teaching, Sister Marie Benzing, CSJ, wanted to do something different. She went to Peru for one month and resolved to continue studying Spanish at Wayne State University (WSU) in Detroit. She also contacted Sister Consuelo Alcala, CSJ, to help her learn Spanish, which had by now become a hobby. To further her progress, Sister Consuelo invited her to join a group of women in her ministry with the Latino population in Detroit at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish.

"I didn't understand much," said Sister Marie, "but I continued to meet with them and my Spanish started to improve."

Soon, Sister Marie began tutoring the women's children and that endeavor grew so much that she had to ask friends to help her. Among them were sisters and WSU students in Spanish and education. "There were five of us to work with 10 children," she said. "The children were so beautiful, and it was a fun experience for all of us. We began to see a community developing among the women, children and volunteers." The ministry became known as Centro de San Josè, or St. Joseph Center.

She also created an enrichment program that offered children Saturday workshops in creative writing, cooking, art, science and even field trips within the Detroit area.

Centro de San Josè

How love of teaching and Spanish became new ministry for one sister in Detroit.

< Sister Marie Benzing, CSJ, and Maria del Carmen Calderon, a graduate of the G.E.D. program.

The women's group had also grown into an adult G.E.D. program. "Some of the women did not have any formal education past the third grade," said Sister Marie. "They knew they needed more and we were able to provide it for them."

The adult program is conducted in Spanish to prepare adults for the G.E.D. test so they can get jobs. They take the test in Spanish. "The people know they must learn English but they start developing their math, reading and writing skills in Spanish," said Sister Marie. "Then they take our English classes and become bilingual."

Over the summer, Sister Marie looks for volunteers for a two-week summer children's program in August that focuses on math and reading. Sisters and associates from across the congregation have volunteered for this program during the past seven years. "We have quite a component of youth from high schools, colleges and even some 8th grade volunteers who do very well."

"I like teaching," said Sister Marie. "It has always been enjoyable and satisfying, but I wanted something different than the classroom after I retired. I was in good health and still had a lot of energy. None of these things were planned, they just evolved."

"We took one step at a time and things just unfolded," said Sister Marie. "It has been a totally amazing experience. •

ASSOCIATE NEWS



First Associate to Serve at International Centre in France Begins Two-Year Term

< From left to right, Sister Sandra Melanson, Olga Bonfiglio, and Sisters Rose Roberts and Grace Scola.

Olga Bonfiglio recently became the first associate to serve on the staff of the International Centre in LePuy, France. She began a two-year term at the Centre in July.

Sister Patty Johnson, Executive Director of the Sisters of St. Joseph Federation who helped Olga navigate the application process, shared that as more associates, partners in ministry, and lay people with significant contacts with the Sisters of St. Joseph attend various programs at the International Centre, it is appropriate for a lay person to be on staff.

“For me, this appointment is both a privilege and an exciting challenge,” said Olga. “I will be part of the congregation in a new and very different way, and I hope to encourage more people to take advantage of the Centre’s programs and facilities in order to experience the place where the Sisters of St. Joseph were founded.”

Olga, who hails from Detroit, has lived in Kalamazoo most of her adult life. She served as a Sister of St. Joseph in the Nazareth community from 1975 to 1984 and worked at Nazareth College and Borgess Medical Center as a public relations director. Most recently, she worked part-time in the History Room at Nazareth as an archival assistant and as the Nazareth correspondent for CSJ Communications.

“I consider this work to be a ministry,” said Olga. “It makes me feel closer to the global congregations of Sisters of St. Joseph and to the global nature of our world today. That I will be in LePuy, the foundation of all our congregations, makes it more delightfully essential. I look forward to welcoming people from all over the world who want to participate in the SSJ history and charism.” •

Michigan Associates Minister to Families in Need

On Eagle’s Wings, the name one group of CSJ associates has given their Conversation Circle, recently made its second donation of items to Center for Hope in Flint. Center for Hope is a program of Catholic Charities that serves homeless and needy individuals and families in Genesee County, Michigan. In December 2016, On Eagle’s Wings, along with other contributors, made a donation of socks and other needed items to Center for Hope. With the assistance of friends, the group made another donation in June, this time of laundry detergent, bar soap, and children’s clothing from Little Dresses, a non-profit group. As individuals, the members of On Eagle’s Wings are involved in a variety of ministries. As a Conversation Circle, they are a living embodiment of the mission of the Congregation of St. Joseph to love and serve the *dear neighbor* without distinction. •



^ CSJ Associate and On Eagle’s Wings member Teresa Blundell (second from right), with Center for Hope staff. Other members of On Eagle’s Wings are Evelyn Mazzola, Connie Ozanich, and Jeanne Worden.

In Memoriam...

Sister Martha Ann Oldani, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on June 11, 2017, after
66 years of religious life.



Sister Lynn Roebert, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on October 15, 2016, after
61 years of religious life.



Sister Geraldine Arnold, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on June 7, 2017, after
67 years of religious life.



Sister Doris Wood, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on August 20, 2016, after
80 years of religious life.



Sister Elizabeth Naughton, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on May 14, 2017, after
81 years of religious life.



Sister Joan Gagner, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on July 30, 2016, after
79 years of religious life.



Sister Marciana Hennig, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on December 4, 2016, after
87 years of religious life.



Sister Anelda Servick, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on July 4, 2016, after
70 years of religious life.



Sister Marie Beaulac, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on October 22, 2016, after
69 years of religious life.



Sister Borgia Anne McGee, CSJ

Entered into eternal life
on June 17, 2016, after
74 years of religious life.



We **Celebrate** the lives of all our sisters who passed away this year.

Message from Leadership

Dear friends,

As part of our Congregation of St. Joseph family you are an integral part of our efforts to bring the message of God's love to the world in ways that inspire action on behalf of others. Since August 2007, when seven founding communities of St. Joseph came together to be one as the Congregation of St. Joseph, we have experienced the abundance of God's great love through our relationships with each of you.

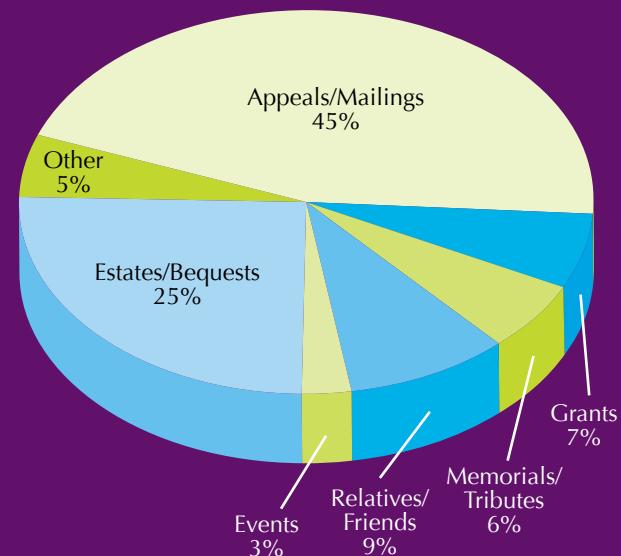
As we celebrate our 10th year, we celebrate the generosity by which you and others in our communities across the country have embraced us and have continued to support our mission, our ministries, our lives and needs. Your support has enabled us to take risks to broaden our lives, to expand our ministries, and to live our promises in an active and inclusive way. This includes our commitment to care for our sisters and at the same time to more fully respond to the emerging needs of our neighbors and our world. New initiatives, ministries, and partnerships, new uses for some of our buildings and land along with new ways and places for our sisters to live in community in some of our locations are all a part of our efforts today. They reflect our vibrancy and compassion and our commitment to stay attentive to the needs of a world in desperate need of our care.

Thank you for helping bring God's message of unifying love to our communities. With your support and prayers we are moving forward filled with gratitude and hope!

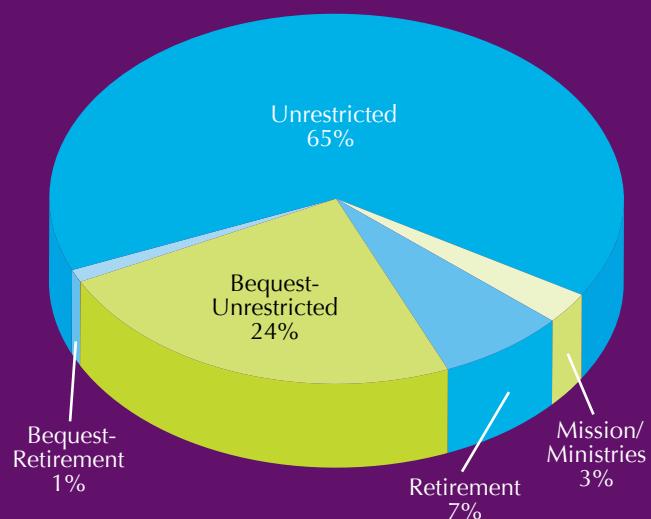
With profound gratitude,
The Congregation of St. Joseph Leadership Team

Annual Giving Report

Revenue Sources



Donor Designated Uses



*This reporting documents the sources and designated uses of the charitable donations received by the Congregation in 2016. This includes the gifts received by the Congregation that are designated to some of our sponsored ministries while gifts sent directly to our ministries are not included here. We rely on the generous support of our benefactors and openly share how gifts received on behalf of the Sisters of St. Joseph are used.

The legacy of caring and mission of our congregation begun by our first six Sisters in LePuy, France more than 360 years ago continues today because of the support provided by donors and friends. There are many ways you can help including through your prayers, direct annual gifts, membership in our Circle of Friends monthly sustaining donor circle, and through your will and estate plans.

To learn more please contact Pat Milenius at 216.252.0440 or visit www.csjoseph.org.



CONGREGATION OF

St. Joseph

3427 Gull Road
Nazareth, MI 49074-0034

Spotlight Photo



Sisters enjoying a presentation at the Spring Wellness Conference held at the Nazareth center this past April. The event was organized by Healthcare Coordinator Cheri Fraaza, and included workshops on grief, vision and hearing care, and also a stretching class by Tai Chi instructor Ed Kehoe, who was back by popular demand.

Stay Connected...

There are many ways to stay connected to the sisters, associates, and ministries of the Congregation of St. Joseph:



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Follow us on YouTube at Congregation of St. Joseph



Sign up to receive our sister-written blog, Beyond the Habit



Sign up to receive our biannual magazine *imagineONE*. Go to www.csjoseph.org, click on "Connect With Us"



Coming Soon to...

Congregation of St. Joseph
Transformations
SPIRITUALITY CENTER

16th Annual Community of Caregivers Conference:

Compassion for Self

Monday, September 18, 2017; 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Facilitated by Robert J. Wicks

Spiritual Direction

Individual

Our directors meet with people during the day, evenings, and/or weekends depending on what works for both director and directee.

Group

Group Spiritual Direction Orientation is a prerequisite for those new to the group process. Group Spiritual Direction sessions are offered each semester, with afternoon and evening sessions

For more details about Spiritual Direction and all of our programs, visit us online at TransformationsCenter.org