

“Christ stands in the midst of every heart;
he stands in the middle so that from him,
as from a **hub**, all the lines of grace might
stretch outward to us who are
at the circumference,
revolving and moving about him.”

~ *St. Anthony of Padua, an Easter Sermon*

Passing by the flooding Susquehanna in southern Pennsylvania,
watching the beginning of what was a significant disturbance to the lives of people living there, I made my way towards Washington, DC. Coming around the City I found I-495 flooded, overflowing with brown water and entered bumper to bumper desperate traffic, which had actually been dense and tense all the way from Pennsylvania. For a few hours I was uncertain if we could have a “Mountain in your Home” that evening in Arlington, VA. **Wendy Mann** and her husband, **Brian Guttman**, had planned this one for months. I was journeying from a wonderful time in Rochester in a home in Pittsford where we found the depths of all our journeys surfacing. From Pennsylvania to Maryland and D.C. there were road closings because of heavy rain and flooding.

Making my way to Wendy’s home, and as others gathered, some traveled for more than an hour and a half for what would have been a usual 15-20 minute journey. Each of these homes filled with the happy longing of those who made their way there. Settling into Arlington and Wendy’s living room, a number of candles were lit as we relaxed in quiet, opening to meditation and conversation and – **then the power went out!**

As possibly with your hearts, our hearts have been darkened and dispirited, not only by this storm, but the storms of the world, the storms of our own lives at times, storms of other origin. Breathing, opening up our dense and tense core, we shared, in Arlington and Rochester, New York as well the night before, the Gospel by candlelight, the **light of Christ**. Lit too by **Cyprian Consiglio’s** song, “There is a Light,” often a part of our prayerful settings, we felt quiet delight as light filled the room. Last minute arrival of a couple of others in each setting opened us again to a welcoming and a settling in even more deeply, even in a bit of dark in Arlington - - - the Light that we believe in truly overcame our darkness.

More and more I know people will go almost any distance to find hope, catch their breath, share wisdom, as they seek the Light wishing to become “living stones,” “new timbers,” as we say, for a new world and a new Church.



Mt. IRENAEUS

FRANCISCAN MOUNTAIN RETREAT

Visit Mt. Irenaeus online at www.mounti.com or email us at mountain@sbu.edu



Breathing in the Rochester home of Amy and Dave Thomas,

one of their friends imagined himself taking his breath for the first time! I believe he said something like *"I don't remember breathing before now!"* Might we have that feeling ourselves, or sometimes we might be gasping for breath. We might feel out of breath and then pause, (*possibly pausing right now*) to know our breath. We might feel it's cool fire of hope and longing as we did in both of these homes for the others. We long, as Francis and Clare did, that others might come to life, come into life with us, come back to life. We are imagining, risking to imagine that as they did, we will live a new life, a new life for others.

Over 30 adults gathered in Dave and Amy's home in Pittsford, near Rochester. Getting and sending calls from my phone the next day, the excitement of people who had entered there flowed with me, even more than the tumultuous Susquehanna River flowed with me towards Washington, a flood of more than rain arriving with me in the home in Arlington as others arrived.

More and more many others wish to join us. Many, though small circles, are no longer only "from Bona's." Others came among us because Mountain friends invited them for these evenings.

The Scripture passages that we shared these evenings (and then on to Connecticut the next week "in a home" there) **challenge us.** We all desire mercy and desire to show it to one another, leaving behind resentments, finding "patience, kindness and gentleness" within us and among us, the very power to shape "a new heaven and a new earth." We long to renew our families, our neighborhoods and the Church. Forgiveness will find its way in this truly stormy world!

As on the Mountain, the Mountain's life and inspiration wants to make its way, in a time of drought for some and flood to others, to homes and hearts around our Country.

We believe and know that the opening quote from St. Anthony invites us to real-ize that, *"Christ stands in the midst of every heart; he stands in the middle so that from him, as from a hub, all the lines of grace might stretch outward to us who are at the circumference, revolving and moving about him."*

Our lives want to move, becoming part of *the* movement.

From panic and passivity and a seeming lack of purpose, we want to put our feet in the "footprints of Jesus Christ" as St. Francis invites us. There is a moving, evolving life that we find with one another whether we are from Bona's or some other college or walk of life, community or tradition.



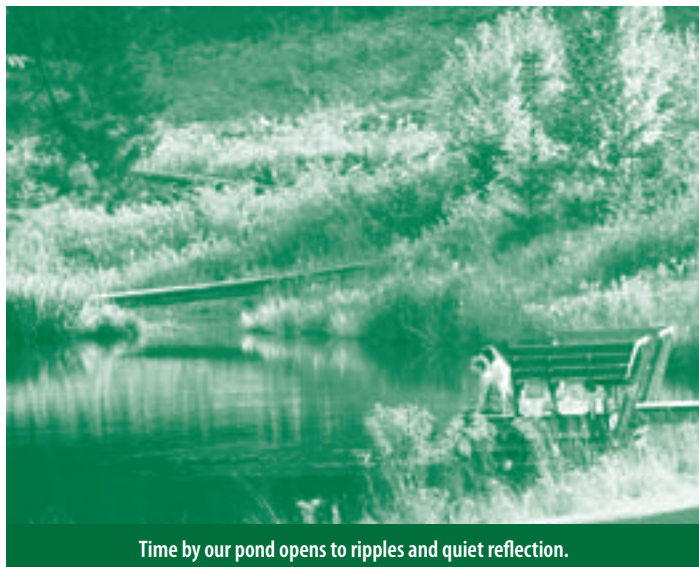
SBU's Men's Rugby Team in for an overnight.



Taking contemplative time in the woods.



SBU Cross Country Team enjoyed an afternoon with us.



Time by our pond opens to ripples and quiet reflection.

We gather to seek the Christ who seeks all others, who is in all others, who is “all in all.” As **Joe Kotula, ofm** often helps us to know, “Mountain isn’t only on the Mountain.” It is in our homes. It is in our hearts. It is in the world.

Groups from St. Bonaventure University have filled our homes and cabins to overflowing as fall has entered these hills. Earlier we needed to set up tents around our chapel!

Over the past few years **Fr. Michael Blastic, ofm** has brought his teaching to Mt. Irenaeus, opening up our early Franciscan tradition with contemporary insight. This October, though he cannot be with us, we will enter our fall Mountain Family retreat (October 14-15) reflecting on his article, “The Conversation of Franciscans: Ministry in the Cosmic Context.”



Sue English makes her commitment as a Secular Franciscan to Anita Dutcher, ofm.

We, trying to live this “style or manner of life and ministry” at the Mountain, on campus and on the road today, turn to both contemporary and ancient teachers. In a time of apparent scarcity in church participation and leadership, we risk the foolishness of the Gospel of Luke 5:1-11 After a night of “empty fishing nets.” We try again and then to become “fishers of men and women.” Jesus says to us now in the midst of our tiredness and uncertainty, as he did to Simon-Peter, “put out into deep water and lower your nets again for a catch!”

Abundance awaits us when we look for it and live and work together. We believe against disbelief (the septic individualism of our time), that we can help each other. We begin to grow in our conviction that we have come from and return to a God of overflowing, “living waters,” flooding us now – with love! This is the bountiful God of mercy, justice, love and peace who calls us that we might call out to others.



SBU Resident Life Staff gather by the pond.

We do this, **Michael Blastic** tells us, by – “conversatio”; conversation, “going among” others. The *behavior* itself becomes proclamation – it affects healing, unity and reconciliation. You begin to see other more and more “in Christ,” images of Christ, the life and light of divine presence emerging from the darkness. **Our “conversatio” or style, or manner of life and ministry for today helps us hear together and believe in action that “darkness is not dark for you, O Lord!” ...even as so much would flood our lives we find the high ground of the Mountain which lies within us all!**

WE ARE THANKFUL TO YOU!
Peace!
1998/99



Rick Mikolajczyk and Tom Blazjewski with Bob Patterson begin excavation for La Paz.



Construction continues as we find other benefactors to complete this hermitage.

MOUNTAIN COMPANIONS

We are, once again, considering Mountain Companions. Part of Dan Riley's sabbatical was to research where other friars might be living "beside other, others beside friars" in common mission as in the California Franciscan retreat houses. Though we are not a "retreat house," we have had people, over time, wish to live with us, take on some of our daily labor, join in prayers, bring their particular skills and interests in life to the Mountain as "partners in our life and ministry."

Have you thought of this for yourself (or might you know another) who would wish to take a break from their personal or professional life to join us for a period of time? Is there someone in a place of personal growth and transformation that would want to "pick up a shovel" or help us with our mission and our messaging to others?

In our very beginning we shared our life with college students, young graduates who joined us in our summer life. We now have opened again the question and are seeking details that might help us mature the possibilities for year round or seasonal "**Mountain Companions.**"

If you have questions or would like more details, please contact us at mmarc@sbu.edu.

LA PAZ – *the name of our new hermitage* - is in its early stages of construction! Soon, and hopefully within a season or two, we will also complete the renovation of the "Taylor House" as we open our lives to guests and solitude, further enriched "silence, simplicity and service." **With your help** we seek to deepen our four "S's" both here and "on the road," on the Bonaventure campus. It is interesting, isn't it, that we enter into "conversatio," the word lifted up for us by Michael Blastic, by finding the "behavior" of inner life leaning out and longing for the whole world.

WELCOME John Coughlin, ofm!

We are excited to welcome **John Coughlin, ofm** to the Mountain resident friar community! John entered the Franciscans in 1995, took his final vows in 2001 and was ordained a priest in 2002.

He spent the last nine years ministering at our friar inner-city, Spanish-speaking parish in Camden, NJ- quite a different setting than his current Mountain home!

In recent years John has felt a call to experience more silence and a different kind of ministry and he and we spent several months discerning his call to the Mountain life and ministry. We are happy to report he is now with us and I for one am happy there is a friar younger than me in the house!

iBienvenidos John!
Kevin Kriso, ofm



Joe Kotula, ofm and John Coughlin, ofm lead students on a reflective walk.

REFLECTIONS OF OUR SUMMER COMPANIONS

Being an intern and resident at Mount Irenaeus this past summer was an experience that honestly touched my life and reshaped the person that I am at my very core. We used the term “intern” to describe our role to the public, but a much more appropriate way to describe my life at The Mountain would be as one brother in a large, tight-knit family. With every service that I offered to the Mt. Irenaeus community—whether it was working in the gardens, accommodating guests or leading retreats—I received lessons that were infinitely more valuable than anything I had to give. The constant flow of sparkling people that I met offered me rich stories and friendships that were always difficult to bid farewell to when they had to return home. I will always look back at my summer stay at Mt. Irenaeus with a mixture of pride, nostalgia and happiness—the only way I can describe my feelings about the time I spent up on The Mountain.

- Kevin Cooley



Summer Interns with others at the Mountain participate in Radical Joy for Hard Times.

Mount Irenaeus is the type of place anyone can feel comfortable. Living at the Mountain for the summer allowed me to not so much be a weekly participant in the Sunday worship but allowed me to really take part in the way of life and community at the Mountain. Through talking together, eating together, working together and praying together, we became an intimate community. Through spending time outdoors, Mass, morning and evening prayer, and conversations, it was quite easy to grow in spiritually. Silence, meditation and prayer are the means through which we at the Mountain are guided by God. It was a true blessing to be part of the Mountain community for a summer and I look forward to our relationships as we continue to grow together.

- Keith Kristich

A breath of wind, a flutter of leaves, an arc of sunlight sprayed against the wooden floor and I'm back at the piano, looking at hilltops and mist through the chapel's broad glass windows.

Such moments flicker in my memory from summer. Tenuous threads tie them together, but an overall theme dances on the horizon, too distant to grasp.

Nevertheless, love shouts louder than most. “The more we love the more human we become,” Brother Kevin told me in one of our semi-weekly meetings. Father Dan wood burned a stump with the word love as a parting gift.

I learned a lot about love. It breaks you down or builds you up, welcomes you with open arms or leaves you staring at the thin silhouettes of insects outside your tent as you wait for sleep.

I saw tears and laughter shed for love, heard stories of sacrifice and hope highlighted in chapel time, felt it pulse from the music played beneath my palms. I saw it in eyes and felt it in hugs.

Love will remain that Great Mystery, a savior that works miracles with our awkward hands, granting life to a world that often wants to run. I am powerless to grasp its grandeur, but blessed to feel its song. So, thank you all.

- Brett Keegan



We are striking out in new directions here at the Mountain, from “the hub,” Christ, on campus and elsewhere, “going deep” in our original calling. As “lines of grace.” We are finding new life in our mission and seeking new life for the world. We are foolish enough to believe in new possibilities, aren't we, and trying them out with one another. Will we? Even now in your own home and wherever you are sitting, we are sitting together, we are breathing deeply of the Spirit. And flooded with light in a dry time, we are finding a home in each other's hope ... we are joining the other “fools for Christ” and dreaming, living the best we can for a “new heaven and a new earth!” “Come climb the Mountain and catch your breath” ... two perennial sayings here ... wherever you are!



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Alleluia, alleluia. Shine like lights in the world as you hold on to the word of life. Alleluia, alleluia.
(Philippians 2:15d, 16a)

TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE

We continue to give thanks and reach out to friends to donate their time, talent, and treasure to support the ministry at the Mountain. As you can see, there are a number of ways you can contribute to the Mountain.

TIME: *Become a member of one of our committees: Development; Buildings & Grounds; Finance; Way of Life; Hospitality; and Board Development. Or perhaps you could become part of our Work & Reflection Weekends usually held in the spring and fall.*

TALENT: *Is there a particular skill or ability that you would like to share with the Mountain? We are in need of landscapers, housekeepers, music ministers, to mention a few.*

TREASURE: *Donate through our Mt. Fund Appeal, Mt. Auction, Special Projects, or through Planned Giving. As you may know, St. Bonaventure University provides a fourth of our annual operating budget and the remaining comes from private donations. There are many ways to make your contribution. You can visit our website at www.mounti.com and click on Give & Support, you can contact Michelle Marcellin at mmarc@sbu.edu or 716-375-2096, or you can mail a donation to Mt. Irenaeus, Mt. Fund, P.O. Box 100, West Clarksville, NY 14786.*

*For more information, please contact **Mary Schlosser**, Coordinator of Volunteers and Development at mschloss@sbu.edu or 716-375-2081.*

HOLIDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Thanksgiving
November 24, 2011
11:00 a.m. Mass

Christmas
December 24, 2011
9:00 p.m.
Christmas Mass at Night

December 25, 2011
11:00 a.m.
Mass for Christmas Day

New Year's
December 31, 2011
11:00 p.m.
New Year's Eve Prayer Service

January 1, 2011
11:00 a.m. Mass