



Companions on the journey



Fall 2010

Mount Saint Francis, Colorado Springs, Colorado

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Mission:

We, Companions of the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, are people called to live our baptismal promises by sharing in the mission and vision of the Sisters of Saint Francis. We live our Christian commitment according to our gifts and circumstances in life.

Vision:

Companions will be open and respond to immediate needs.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

“Be still and know that I am God”. What a beautiful and challenging quote from Scripture!

As we approach the season of autumn may we take the time to be still and listen to God especially through all of His creation.

The changing of the summer season is very

noticeable. The days grow shorter. The leaves and foliage gradually turn to beautiful colors of yellow, orange, red, brown, and then gently fall to the ground. The air is a little nippy some mornings, and the feeling of change is around us.

Just as each of us will experience the change of seasons individually, so too the gradual changes in our own personal lives are taking place. Whether we are in the summer, autumn or winter season of our life, may we take the time to listen and reflect as we continue our spiritual, physical and emotional pilgrimage. Let us appreciate and be grateful to our awesome God for the life He has given us. May we do the best we can for ourselves, our neighbor and for God.

I am pleased to share with you that the Leadership Council has appointed me to continue as the Companion Directress. Together we can share and spread the Gospel of the Lord and walk in the footprints of St. Francis.

Sister Michelle Micch OSF



New Companion

Peace to you from the southeast! I was asked to relate a little of my recent experiencing in becoming a Companion. I am

happy to do just that.

When I initially received the Companion formation materials from Sister Michelle, I guess I really didn't know what to expect. I was surprised to find that the materials and the book *St. Francis and the Foolishness of God* could be so relevant to where I am in my life. It was all so current and “spot on” as people now say. Maybe somewhere in the back of my mind I had thought that it would all just be informative and “religious,” but it included things I could use everyday. It was a true learning experience. St. Francis' ideals can be for anyone in any situation...not just priests and nuns!

I was able to travel to Mt. St. Francis a couple of days early before the July 2010 Companion Retreat and stay in the Franciscan Retreat Center right on the grounds. It was a time to see the beauty of the Mount nestled away in the Rockies. I was able to relax, view the local wildlife, meet many of the Sisters, enjoy lots of Franciscan hospitality, and join with the community in prayers. Being away from my regular routine let me spend time with the Lord and reflect on the commitment I was going to make. When the time came for the simple ceremony which was held during the Sisters' Evening Praise, I felt like I was really ready to promise to walk with the Sisters and the other companions. Please pray for me, friends, as I do for you.

Allan Hunt

2010 Companion Retreat



The weekend retreat with Father John was very interesting to us. He expressed that we should always be in the present and to share the gifts that we have been blessed with. He said that we should not look at the leper, the homeless as “untouchables” ,but to embrace them as we would want Jesus to embrace us. We are to put the face of Jesus on others. We are to use the voice of Jesus on others not just those we love (our families, loved ones, etc.) but to those that are unloved, unwanted, shunned. I loved his statement of, “pray to want” to do those things. Don’t just pray for Him to help you. He said you have to pray to WANT to be good; pray to WANT to do the right things...He said that if we don’t ask for wanting to do those things, how can we expect to do them with the right heart?

Judy Garcia, Albuquerque
Companion

Thank you for the privilege of attending the Companions Retreat on July 30-31.

As a new Secular Franciscan, I was most anxious to attend this Franciscan "prayer" retreat. It was especially meaningful since it was my 58-year birthday and my first as a returning in full communion with the Catholic Church.

Prayer is often one of the most difficult parts of my walk with the Lord. I "talk" naturally enough, but it is hard for me to really pray without structure. This retreat gave me many wonderful suggestions for making it a more powerful part of my religious formation.

This retreat, the round table discussions, and the friendly warm reception by the Companions gave me a wonderful start on prayer for my Secular Franciscan walk. After attending the retreat and

getting to know several of the Companions, my additional walk as a Companion was rewarding.

Mary Ann Thomas
Secular Franciscan

The Wood-pecker's Homily

Interrupted Morning Prayer....
What is that wood-pecker doing?
Persistent racket, sharp as nails,
Infusing its way into the wooden cross a-top the old church steeple;
Rattling and shaking the intense solemnity of its tower structure,
As if petitioning entrance into its mystery and its virtue.

Suddenly, complacent demeanor startled into awareness....
while there, in the piercing of the word, the wanting spirit gains passage into crucifixion.
Tenaciously, boldly entering the presence of the passion, through each splintered grain of wood, with a fervor that stirs the senses....
lifting them high on the cross to be joined with the Savior.
The long desired and awaited intertwining, unexpectedly emulated in the wood-pecker's homily,
evokes the bitter-sweet wounding into the gospel's solitary way.

Laura Hughes, S.F.O.
August 2010

Candidates Bios



I was born in Colorado Springs at Memorial Hospital. I was raised in Goodland Kansas and traveled a lot before marrying my husband. I have lived in Canon City area for the last 30 years.

My parents are both deceased. My father was ex-military. Both my parents were professional cooks (not what I would call "chefs", but working cooks).

I have been married for 28 years. I have 4 children: 3 girls and 1 boy. I have 9 grandchildren and 1 or 2 on the way.

I have one main interest beside Church and family that is genealogy. I have been researching my family history since 1989. I have found all my ancestors for 7 generations back and a lot farther back than that. I do research for the Local History Center and do several side projects as well. I am the county coordinator for the Fremont County COGenWeb page online. I went professional in 2000-2002. I still do research for others as well, but I don't charge for it.

I also collect stamps and read, but most of the time, I love playing on the computer, especially Facebook. It is a wonderful resource to keep up with family that I wouldn't ordinarily be able to do.

I used to belong to the Episcopal Church and participated in many activities. I was the vestry clerk for 1 1/2 years. I taught vacation Bible school one year, worked with the Altar Guild, and took care of the library. I was also a Eucharistic Minister and lector for many years. I belonged to the Episcopal Women and the Daughters of the King. I lived by a self-imposed rule for several years as well.

I have been involved with several "missions" over the years. I worked with the local "Pregnancy" Center (counseling against abortion)" for a few years, Boys and Girls Scouts, 4-H, Hospice, literacy, etc.

I am a convert to the Catholic Church by Profession of Faith (1977). I have been away from the Catholic Church for quite a while; however, I was finally able to get all the paper work done to allow me to fully participate in the Church the week before Easter this year. So far I am only involved in a couple of "activities". I do the altar linens every two months. I also lector at Daily Mass, usually once a week or so. Eventually, I want to be a Eucharistic Minister, do Befriender Ministry, and possibly a lector. I am in the process of becoming a Secular Franciscan, and eventually would like to become a hermit.

My professional life has run a wide gamut of semi-skilled jobs. I have been a nurse's aide (mostly in nursing homes), home health care provider, unarmed security guard. I am a veteran of the US Army, where I served as a Colorado licensed EMT basic in the ER at Ft. Carson and the NCOIC of the Dermatology Clinic. I am currently a part time student at Pueblo Community College's AAS degree for Office Management: Medical Transcription, Medical Billing, and Office Management specialties. I am disabled. Basically, I can't stand or walk for long periods.

I am a 5-year survivor of endometrial cancer.

I have a special interest and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Passion, Divine Mercy, and the Holy Mother. I made my Montfort and IM consecration to them on the 16th of July. My patron Saint is Mary Magdalene, but I am also very devoted to St. Francis and St. Clare.

Mary Ann Thomas

Companion Goals for 2010

At the business meeting during the Companions' retreat the following goals were discussed and approved by consensus.



1. ***Weekly participation with the sisters in Eucharistic Adoration.*** Once again the companions were invited to participate in the Eucharistic Adoration.

This is a special time with our Lord.

Remember you may have your adoration before the Blessed Sacrament or in the quiet of your home- which ever is best for you.

2. ***Awareness of the poor/sick in your area.*** This is a need that we felt that each of us can participate in according to the local need whether in the family, neighborhood, and parish or at work. Mother Theresia Bonzel worked with the poor wherever it was needed according to the times.
3. ***Vocations:*** First of all, pray so that we ourselves may remain faithful to whatever vocation God has called us to witness. Secondly, continue to pray and be aware of any young women you meet who may be interested in a religious vocation. Often they are waiting to be asked or guided in the right direction. Sister Frances Sedlacek (719-955-7015) is our vocation directress.
4. ***Companions.*** Two women requested to become companions during the retreat. Have you asked someone to be a Companion and journey with you?

Please keep these goals as a reminder of your commitment to partner with the Sisters of St. Francis and follow in the footprints of Jesus through the example of St. Francis and Ven. Mother Maria Theresia Bonzel.

Companion Becomes a Resident



Candidate with the Community

During Evening Praise on Sunday, August 15, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Adrian Cunningham became a Resident Candidate with our

Community. Adrian, from Kewanna, IN, has been in vocational discernment with our Community for about two years. In the fall of 2009, Adrian decided to enhance her vocational discernment by becoming a Companion. She made her commitment as one of our Companions in May of this year.

The Resident Candidacy program is the last and most intense step of our vocational discernment program. When a woman becomes a Resident Candidate, she moves to Mount St. Francis and lives in the vocation/formation house. Thereby, she can more readily participate in and experience our prayer life and community living. At the same time, a Resident Candidate continues to experience some major parts of her previous life as she continues to be financially independent and responsible. Discernment continues during the Resident Candidacy—a three to six month period, with a mutual decision between the Candidate and the Community for the Candidate to either begin the Formation program as a Postulant or to end her discernment with the Community.

Sister Frances, vocation minister



Franciscan Celebrations

During the coming weeks, we as Franciscans will be celebrating two major feast days. On September 17th is the Stigmata of St. Francis. This feast commemorates

the event when St. Francis received the five wounds from Christ. This day also is the birthday of Ven. Mother Theresia Bonzel, so our Congregation has a double celebration.

On October 4th we celebrate the death of St. Francis. This is a major feast for all Franciscans. To commemorate this event, the sisters invite all companions, spouses and friends who are able to attend the “Transitus” the evening prayer commemorating the death of St. Francis, celebrated on the evening before (October 3rd). It will be held at 7:00 p.m. in St. Francis Parish Church. Come celebrate with us!

PEACE TO ALL!

Colorado Springs Meeting Dates

- **Sunday, September 19th** – Companions and sisters have pot luck at noon in the Sisters’ dining room.
- Sunday, October 17th at 1 p.m. in 3R
- Sunday, November 21st at 1 p.m. in 3R
- December – no meeting

Denver Meeting Date

The companions in the Denver will meet **Saturday, September 18th**. The meeting will begin with a pot luck, followed by a short business meeting and then a review of the study book that will be used during this coming year.

Study Book for the Coming Year

The companions in Colorado Springs, Denver, and Lincoln have chosen the following book to be studied during the coming year. “Living in the Power of the Holy Spirit, a Catholic Bible Study” by Rich Cleveland. The books are \$8.50. The books have arrived and they can be purchased on Sunday, September 19th.

Changes in Address:

Please use my cell phone in contacting me which is 719-649-4847,

Mount Saint Francis – 7665 Assisi Heights
Colorado Springs, CO 80919 -3837
Voice: (719) 649-4847
Web site: www.osfcompanions.com
Director: Sister Michelle Micek, OSF
Editor: Janet Galyardt