



**Franciscan
Spirituality Center**

Dedicated to anyone seeking God, meaning and wholeness.

VOLUME 29 • NUMBER 1

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

At the Center

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- A Virtual Women's Christmas
- Overcoming Challenges With Grit and Grace
- Tonglen: Developing Compassion During Difficult Times
- Marriage at Midlife: Taking Time to Dream Again
- Virtual Poetry Café



New location!

We've temporarily moved our offices to River Crossing Square, 500 Second St. S., Suite 201, downtown La Crosse, while renovations to our 920 Market St. location are underway. You are welcome to visit us during business hours to make registration payments, browse our Sophia Bookstore or meet with your spiritual director. Our phone number is the same, so please call 608-791-5295 for more information.




A light in the world



January is traditionally the season of resolutions and fresh starts. It's also the month I start to notice the light changing and the days getting longer, a hopeful sign in such a cold month.

But as I write this, the November elections are over and I am not feeling hopeful or energized for a fresh start. Instead, I'm feeling profoundly sad that we are still a house divided. The elections failed to bring clarity about how to resolve the most difficult issues of our day that affect every human being living in this country and on this planet.

I feel alienated from roughly half of my neighbors who see things so differently from me. It feels like a family that has been split apart by arguments over an inheritance. To add to my grief, so many of the arguments get mixed up with religion, revealing the deep divide there, too.

It's been a roller coaster of a year with a deadly pandemic and bitter racial unrest on top of the elections, and no doubt we are exhausted and want to put it all behind us. We want to get back to the lives we had one year ago.

But we are in liminal space right now. There's a change underway, and there's no going back to what was, but we haven't yet come through to a new place.

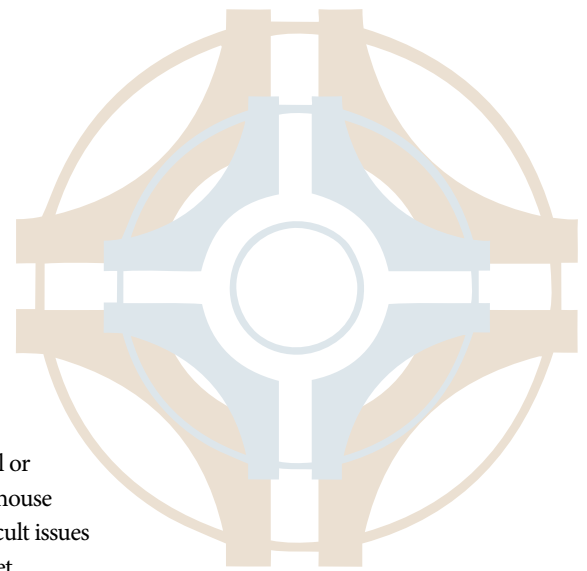
I take comfort from St. Paul's advice to an ancient Christian community: No matter what's going on around you, hold fast to the words that give life and be a light in the world [Phil 2:14-16]. Here are the words that give life to the FSC's mission: In each of us lives the Sacred. We need each other. Paying attention to our spiritual needs leads to healing and peace. Each of us can contribute to the healing of all creation.

I hope this new year brings you to a place of light, healing and peace. Thank you for letting us accompany you on this path.

Peace and all good,

Audrey Lucier

Audrey Lucier, FSC Director



FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY CENTER

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Associate Spiritual Director



John McHugh
Associate Presenter



Bernice Olson-Pollack
Associate Presenter



Tom Roberts
Associate Presenter

Ready...Set... *Art Dash*

A FUNDRAISER FOR THE FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY CENTER



Our signature fundraiser, *Art Dash*, is an elegant yet fun evening to celebrate beauty, creativity and generosity. When you purchase a ticket, you not only support the Franciscan Spirituality Center's mission, you support and recognize artists. All of the pieces available in the "dash" are created by local or regional artists. The artists are our neighbors, our friends and, now, part of our Franciscan family. We are so grateful to each and every one of them. Each is as generous as they can be. Some are very well known in art circles, and others are rising stars. Some donate multiple pieces each year, and many decline the small stipend we offer to help offset the cost of materials. We couldn't do this event without them!

We enjoy seeing the variety of art mediums and each artist's vision and style. We especially love seeing the connections and new friendships that are made as artists meet the winners of their works. Everyone who buys a \$100 Dash ticket goes home with a piece of artwork – which piece depends on the luck of the draw. If you come with a spirit of openness and a willingness to be surprised and delighted, you are sure to have a blast. One of our favorite comments came from a guest who told us she didn't end up with the piece she initially was hoping to get, but she realized she got the one she was meant to have. Another couple who attends each year told us they don't "need" any more art for their own home, so they select pieces to give as gifts. Talk about paying it forward!

We hope you will join us! Last year's event was postponed due to COVID-19, but we are hopeful for this spring. You can see a preview of the art and purchase tickets at www.FSCenter.org/artdash.



Karen Dunn



Crystal Dulaney



Jess Hetchler

ART DASH ■ Thursday, March 25

WHERE: The Cargill Room at The Waterfront Restaurant and Tavern, La Crosse.

TIME: Social hour begins at 5:30 p.m., and the dash for art promptly at 6:30 p.m.

- Tommy Orrico will be on site to sketch free caricatures.
- Also new is a wine pull (blind draw for a bottle of wine) courtesy of Festival Foods and Mathy Construction/Dutcher Crossing Winery.



Dani McAlister



Ashton Hall



Phil Addis



William Eddy



Mary Lou Ferguson



Elise Boam



Tim Hammond

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Pump House Regional Arts Center
Kristy Walz
Laurie Swan
The Frame Gallery

More than 90 pieces are available. Pictured are just a few of the participating artists.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES WITH

Grit & Grace

Our annual women's conference celebrating resilience and faith will be presented in a virtual format. Though we won't be able to provide lunch and snacks, we invite you to brew a cup or two of your favorite tea to sip as you listen to these inspirational women share their stories. (This time of year is typically when we would have our annual tea party event, but we're adjusting as needed.)

Our keynote speaker will be **Kao Kalia Yang**, a Hmong-American writer, teacher and public speaker based in Minneapolis.

Kalia will reflect on her spiritual journey into writing. She comes from a people who are new to what is written; a long time ago, the Hun Chinese outlawed the Hmong written language. The women and girls tried to hide it in their clothing. Hmong women are celebrated the world over for their embroidery, but few know it was once a vessel for their stories, histories and lived experiences.

Kalia's talk will address the questions: What does it mean to reclaim something that is no more, in an entirely new language, in a new land? and How does her own journey help situate herself in the pains and sorrows of others, and speak to their fears and faith?

ABOUT OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER



KAO KALIA YANG • MINNEAPOLIS

Born in the refugee camps of Thailand to a family that escaped the genocide of the Secret War in Laos, Kalia came to America at the age of 6. She has earned degrees from Carleton College and Columbia University, and is the award-winning author of *The Latecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir* (Coffee House Press, 2008) and *The Song Poet* (Metropolitan Books, 2016),

which has been adapted into an opera by

the Minnesota Opera and will have its premiere in spring 2021. She recently debuted her first children's book, *A Map Into the World* (Carolrhoda Books), and a co-edited collection titled *What God Is Honored Here?: Writings on Miscarriage and Infant Loss by and for Native Women and Women of Color* (University of Minnesota Press). Her second children's book, *The Shared Room* (University of Minnesota Press), and a collective memoir about refugee lives, *Somewhere in the Unknown World* (Metropolitan Books), were published in 2020.

In a video introduction available on the FSC's YouTube Channel, Kalia shares part of her story in *What God Is Honored Here?: Writings on Miscarriage and Infant Loss by and for Native Women and Women of Color*, a poignant and heartbreakingly beautiful book that she also co-edited.

In reflecting on her own miscarriage, she writes: *"In the days after, we went through our lives, a piece at a time, looking for the parts that could hold him, a ghost baby, a dream baby, a baby that was but never will be. I looked at autumn, my favorite season, as I had never seen it before, barren, full of bold promises waiting to die. Words made no more sense."*

The traumatic experiences of miscarriage and infant loss disproportionately affect women who often have been cast toward the margins in our country. *What God Is Honored Here?* offers an integral perspective on how culture, religion, spirit and body unite in the reproductive lives of women of color and Indigenous women as they bear witness to loss, search for what is not there and claim for themselves and others their fundamental humanity.



To view Kalia's video, please visit www.FSCenter.org and click on the YouTube button.

ADDITIONAL SPEAKERS



LISA MCCORMICK • TOMAH

As the parent of a sex trafficking victim, Lisa has made it her life's purpose to share her family's story so others understand the dangers of trafficking and how easily our vulnerable children can get caught up in it. Lisa's son, Jeffrey, was recruited into a sex trafficking ring out of Madison and exploited until his death, at age 17, in September 2016. Her faith and her desire to spare

other families the tragic consequences of trafficking, drug addiction and bullying put her on the path of advocacy. She frequently speaks to schools, churches and other groups on how to recognize and help at-risk youth. She is a member of the Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Advisory Council and is featured in the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families documentary film about youth sex trafficking in Wisconsin. Lisa walks alongside parents, grandparents, caregivers and all others, giving hope that they are not alone in this journey.

SARAH JOHNSON • WINONA

Sarah is a licensed professional counselor and has more than 25 years of experience working in the prevention, youth development and counseling fields. She is the mental health director at the La Crosse Area Family YMCA and will be speaking as a human being who happens to be a mental health professional. Incorporating some mindfulness practices into her talk, Sarah will share about what led her to integrate mindfulness into her professional and personal life and the profound impact it has had on her quality of life.



CAROLYN BOSTRACK • LA CROSSE AREA

Carolyn is a fierce mother of three, corporate leader, author (*F.I.E.R.C.E. Transform Your Life in the Face of Adversity, 5 Minutes at a Time!*), motivational speaker and life and business strategist. Carolyn's life story is one of personal and professional transformation. Carolyn has gone from standing in line at the Salvation Army to earning her doctorate. Her life's purpose is to provide hope and inspire people to move from fear into focus. As she writes on her website, "While my past has a permanent stamp on my life, it doesn't define me. My past trauma and abuse has positioned me to develop and leverage my grit so that I can serve other women who want to transform their lives, too."



NEW DATE • NEW FORMAT

JANUARY 16

Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
through Zoom videoconferencing

Investment: \$50

To register, visit www.FSCenter.org
or call 608-791-5295



THIS EVENT IS
SPONSORED BY:

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AND





For your health, safety and peace of mind, most of our programs are offered through Zoom videoconferencing. You can participate using a smartphone, laptop or tablet. If you do not have internet access, you can call in with a landline telephone and join the gathering that way. If you register via our website, you'll be sent a confirmation email. You also will receive a courtesy email the day before or the morning of the program, containing the Zoom link. If you do not receive these emails, please check your spam/junk folder or a secondary email that you may have used. If you have not received this courtesy email by the afternoon of the program, please call 608-791-5295 before 5 p.m.

A VIRTUAL WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS (VIA ZOOM)

JANUARY 6 • Wednesday, 6-8 p.m.

Presenter: Deb Hansen

Investment: Supplies are included in the price and can either be picked up at our FSC location or mailed to your address if out of town.

• **Curbside pickup:** \$25 OR **Supplies shipped:** \$30

Registration deadline: December 23

Women's Christmas is rooted in a delightful Irish tradition. On the Feast of Epiphany, the celebration of the coming of the Wise Men to the Infant Jesus, Irish women left the care of their households to the men for a few hours so they could enjoy each other's company away from their domestic responsibilities, especially after the busyness of Christmas preparations. At the FSC, we bring together the tradition of Women's Christmas and the Feast of the Epiphany for this special program, offered this year through Zoom videoconferencing and with a theme of *Tending Our Hearths and Gladdening Our Hearts*. You are invited to leave behind your responsibilities to enjoy the companionship of other women gathered virtually at our home hearths for a time of ritual and reflection for light, healing and gladness. (See page 11 for more details.)



FOUR-WEEK SERIES

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENNEAGRAM (VIA ZOOM)

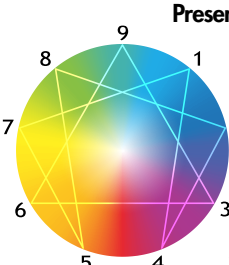
JANUARY 6-27 • Wednesday, 6:30-8 p.m.

Presenters: Audrey Lucier and Steve Spilde

Investment: \$60 for four-week series, includes online assessment

Registration deadline: January 1

The Enneagram is a powerful tool for understanding ourselves and others, and refers to nine different personality styles (the Greek word ennea means nine). The style we favor affects what we see as important and how we act in our relationships. In this introduction to the Enneagram, you will learn about the gifts and challenges of your personality style, how to grow beyond your default way of doing things and how to better understand people with other styles. You'll have the opportunity to complete an online assessment to help begin your process of discovery. This series, offered through Zoom videoconferencing, is ideal for people new to the Enneagram or who would like a refresher.



MEDITATION FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH (VIA ZOOM)

JANUARY 7 and FEBRUARY 4 • Thursday, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Sarah Hennessey, FSPA

Investment: Freewill donations are appreciated at www.FSCenter.org/donate

Registration deadline: January 6/February 3

Guided meditation is proven to reduce stress and promote relaxation.



Join us for a time of rejuvenation through videoconferencing. We'll start with a guided meditation that includes relaxed breathing, a body scan and a visualization. Afterward, we will have a brief discussion. Gatherings are on the first Thursday of the month, and you are invited to attend any or all sessions as your schedule permits. All are welcome.



SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR LIVING WITH DEPRESSION: A RETREAT WITH MONICA COLEMAN (VIA ZOOM)

JANUARY 9 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon

Presenter: Monica Coleman

Investment: \$30

Please note: If cost is a barrier to attending, please call our office at 608-791-5295 to request a confidential scholarship. We would like everyone who can benefit from this program to participate.

Registration deadline: January 8

The isolation and stress resulting from COVID-19 has tripled the rate of depression in U.S. adults in all demographic groups. Like many other experiences of suffering, living with depression can render hope and faith difficult. This virtual retreat will discuss how living with depression challenges common notions of faith, spirituality and religious teachings. During our time together, we will redefine faith in the context of depression. We will discover beliefs and spiritual practices that support and empower individuals that experience depression.

Monica A. Coleman, Ph.D., is an award-winning scholar, writer and minister. Read more about her on page 12.



We are always adding new online experiences.

Be sure to check our website, www.FSCenter.org, and Facebook page @FSCenterLaCrosse for updates.

A SHELTERED DAY OF SOLITUDE (VIA ZOOM)**JANUARY 12 and FEBRUARY 17**

Tuesday or Wednesday,
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Deb Hansen

Investment: \$25, includes optional spiritual direction session

Registration deadline:

January 11/February 16

Sheltering at home during these uncertain times is difficult. *A Sheltered Day of Solitude* gives you the gift of connecting to the Sacred, creation and others who are spending an intentional day of solitary reflection. We will begin our day by meeting together on Zoom for an opening blessing and suggestions for reflecting on the month's theme.

You may choose to have an optional remote spiritual direction session during your day. To bring the day to a close, we will gather together once again on Zoom to reflect on our day and share a closing blessing. Reflections on the month's theme are sent with the Zoom link to provide a framework for the day. If you are not able to find complete solitude for the day, we recommend you create as peaceful of an environment as you can under your individual circumstances.



January: *Consciously Cozy*
February (Ash Wednesday):
Lenten Journey

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES WITH GRIT AND GRACE (VIA ZOOM)

JANUARY 16 • Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Presenters: Kao Kalia Yang, Lisa McCormick, Carolyn Bostrack and Sarah Johnson

Investment: \$50

Our second annual celebration of inspirational, resilient and spiritual women features keynote speaker Kao Kalia Yang, an award-winning Hmong-American writer, teacher and public speaker based in Minneapolis. Kalia will reflect on her spiritual journey into writing and explore what it means to reclaim something that is no more, in an entirely new language and in a new land, as well as how her journey has helped situate herself in the pains and sorrows of others. This virtual retreat day also will include talks by three local women whose powerful stories offer lessons for all of us. Lisa McCormick of Tomah will share her story of hope and anti-trafficking advocacy in response to her teenage son's tragic death. Carolyn Bostrack of the La Crosse area will offer inspiration for moving from fear into focus to transform your life. Sarah Johnson of Winona will explore the benefits of mindfulness on quality of life, both professionally and personally.

Note: This event was rescheduled because of COVID-19. Previous registrations will be honored. If this new date doesn't work for you, please call 608-791-5295 to request a refund or to gift your registration to a friend.

Gundersen Health System and Rotary Works Foundation are co-sponsors of this event.

**BODY MOVEMENT CLASSES****GOLDEN YOGA (VIA ZOOM)**

SESSION 1: JANUARY 5, 12, 19, 26; FEBRUARY 2, 9

SESSION 2: FEBRUARY 16, 23; MARCH 2, 9, 16, 23

Tuesday, 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Instructor: Amber Moesch

Investment: \$50 for six-week session or \$10 per class

Registration deadline: January 4/February 15

Golden Yoga provides a safe approach to improved strength, balance and flexibility. Each class includes a gentle flow of seated stretches, standing poses and balance exercises demonstrated through Zoom videoconferencing. Participants will need a chair to offer modifications and balance support. The last 15 minutes of each class will include stretching exercises and conversation (over Zoom) to help foster a sense of community.

Amber Moesch loves sharing the movement and poses of yoga as a way to practice mindfulness. By helping her students link movements and breath with awareness, she creates classes that wake up the body and quiet the mind. Amber draws on her many years of experience and training in yoga and restorative exercise to create classes that are tailored to the students who show up.

**VINYASA YOGA (VIA ZOOM)**

SESSION 1: JANUARY 6, 13, 20, 27; FEBRUARY 3, 10

SESSION 2: FEBRUARY 17, 24; MARCH 3, 10, 17, 24

Wednesday, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Instructor: Bernice Olson-Pollack

Investment: \$50 for six-week session or \$10 per class

Registration deadline: January 5/February 16

Vinyasa flow is a moving meditation that guides you toward a sense of calm and links poses together with smooth sequencing. This practice also promotes the integration of breathing mindfully with the postures to deepen the relationship with your internal Self.

Bernice Olson-Pollack, M.S., is a Community Counseling YogaFit-trained instructor, Tai Chi for Health Institute, Sun Style tai chi instructor and American Council on Exercise-certified personal trainer. She has a harmonious blend of mind/body, health and wellness experience that she shares with her participants. Her accessible teaching style creates a comfortable learning environment for diverse abilities. She encourages all to discover their own path toward a healthier way of living.





2021 Programs and Retreats *continued.*



ART AS PRAYER (VIA ZOOM)

JANUARY 18 and FEBRUARY 15 •

Monday, 6-7:30 p.m.

Instructor: Mary Thompson

Investment: \$10 per session

Registration deadlines: January 17/February 14

Artistic expression offers the opportunity for spiritual growth, transformation and healing. This monthly open watercolor studio offered through Zoom videoconferencing is a chance to play and learn new techniques without worrying about perfection or finished product. Meet new friends and practice listening to your heart as you paint. No art experience is necessary.

Supplies needed: watercolors, brushes, paper, pencil, paper towels and a kneaded eraser.

JANUARY: Enjoy an evening exploring the cosmos during this session. Thomas Keating said, "Silence is God's first language. Everything else is a poor translation." We will immerse ourselves into the silence and "luminous darkness," and intuitively respond with color, movement and the powerful pull of the cosmos. Deep calls us into deep. (Psalm 42:8) If you have cotton medical gauze, please bring it to this session. If not, we'll explore other ways to create texture.

FEBRUARY: Thomas Merton says that nature speaks to us in "the voice of the present moment," which for him is a celebration – a festival. Come paint with us during an evening of celebration in which we will listen through art to the secret language of nature while also engaging in the practice of being fully present. Our focus will be on painting a landscape with a splash of red color where the cardinal shows up to join our winter festival.

Mary Thompson has a degree in fine arts and a master's degree in education. She has delighted in the creative arts since her first box of crayons. Besides teaching art to all ages, Mary has supported the healing of women in recovery through the practice of art therapy.



TONGLÉN: DEVELOPING COMPASSION DURING DIFFICULT TIMES (VIA ZOOM)

JANUARY 23 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon

Presenter: Sharon Lukert

Investment: \$20

Registration deadline: January 21

During times of uncertainty, we as humans tend to contract in order to protect ourselves from pain and suffering. Paradoxically, this adds to our sense of disconnection and pain. Tonglen, which translates from Tibetan as "giving and receiving," is a meditation practice of breathing in suffering and breathing out loving-kindness. This shifts our natural tendency of self-preservation and invites us to live openly and compassionately, even during the most difficult of times.

Pema Chödrön, a well-known Buddhist teacher and author, writes about Tonglen extensively. She has stated that Tonglen practices offers us "the opportunity to work with compassion, kindness, gentleness and generosity," especially in a time of suffering and confusion. This morning retreat, offered through videoconferencing, will introduce you to the foundations of the practice and provide guided meditation periods, discussion, time for questions and extensive resources to prepare you to practice this ancient tradition with understanding and confidence.

Sharon Lukert has been a chaplain for 20 years and recently retired from Gundersen Health System. She has been a practicing Tibetan Buddhist studying under Pema Chödrön for more than 25 years. Sharon is a meditation instructor and facilitator for workshops, retreats and study groups focused on Buddhism, meditation, death and dying education, and bereavement support.



GROUPS THAT MEET AT THE FSC

Depressed Anonymous continues to meet every Monday, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., by conference call. This is a 12-step group for those dealing with depression to generate positive energies, form friendships and find support. If you are interested in participating in this free meeting, please call Gayle at 608-406-7990.

Conversations That Matter is a men's group that provides the opportunity to dialogue with other men on issues that matter in their lives. This group meets via Zoom videoconferencing from 7-9 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. To see whether the group meets your needs, contact Vince Hatt via email at vjhatter@gmail.com.

PRACTICING GRATITUDE IN CHALLENGING TIMES (VIA ZOOM)**JANUARY 30** • Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon**Presenter:** Elizabeth Lewis**Investment:** \$25**Registration deadline:** January 29

Spiritualist Stephen Levine has described gratitude as “a way of seeing and being.” Leading gratitude researcher Robert Emmons calls gratitude “an antidote to negative emotions,” such as fear and anxiety, that can help us positively cope with life and life’s disappointments.

In the midst of pandemic life and an ever-changing political and social landscape, approaching life with an attitude of “thanks be to all things” can be mentally, emotionally and spiritually challenging – and doable. In this virtual workshop, we will delve into both spiritual and research-based approaches to gratitude to discover how gratitude practices can provide a solid-ground path of daily renewal, healing and forward movement during times of loss, transition and stress. This workshop experience will include guided visualizations, resilience-building gratitude practices, short writing exercises and discussion.

Elizabeth Lewis is a spiritual coach, motivational speaker, writer, artist and teacher.

**PRAYER AND YOGA: FINDING BALANCE (VIA ZOOM)****FEBRUARY 6** • Saturday, 9-10:30 a.m.**Presenters:** Sarah Hennessey, FSPA, and Bernice Olson-Pollack**Investment:** \$15**Registration deadline:** February 5

“Yoga is the study of balance, and balance is the aim of all living creatures: it is our home.” – Rolf Gates.

Join us through the twin practices of prayer and yoga, words and movement, as we explore balance during this morning of prayer practices and simple yoga poses, offered through videoconferencing. No experience is necessary; all abilities are welcome.

FSC BOOK GROUP**BURNOUT: THE SECRET TO UNLOCKING THE STRESS CYCLE (VIA ZOOM)****FEBRUARY 9** • Tuesday, 6:30-8 p.m.**Facilitator:** Jean Pagliaro**Investment:** \$5, participants will need to purchase their own book for this event**Registration deadline:** February 8

Burnout: Many women in America have experienced it. What’s expected of women and what it’s really like to be a woman in today’s world are two very different things, and women exhaust themselves trying to close the gap between them. How can you “love your body” when every magazine cover has 10 diet tips for becoming “your best self”? How do we parent, work and continue to “do it all” in the midst of a global pandemic? Biological sisters Emily Nagoski, Ph.D., and Amelia Nagoski, D.M.A., write about ending the cycle of feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Join us for an evening to discuss the book and also to explore ways to personally engage in healthier spiritual, physical and emotional practices.

**SIP AND PAINT: FAMILY/FRIEND TREE (VIA ZOOM)****FEBRUARY 11** • Thursday, 5:30-7:30 p.m.**Instructor:** Laurie Swan**Investment:**

- \$12 per canvas if no materials are needed
- \$15 per canvas if materials are needed (curbside pickup only)

Registration deadline: February 8

Join us via Zoom videoconferencing for a fun evening of painting and fellowship! You’ll have the option to put in names of family members, friends or simply leave the hearts blank on this tree. The evening will include a devotion and instructor-led, step-by-step painting. Participants are invited to enjoy beverages and snacks during our time together. Paint on your own, with your family or with your friends. All are welcome!

Materials needed if you are purchasing on your own:

- 11-by-14 canvas
- Paintbrushes in various sizes
- Acrylic paint (yellow, white, red, brown, black and green)

**REGISTER**

HOW TO REGISTER: Go online to www.FSCenter.org. Payment for most events is due at the time of registration. To pay a portion now and the balance at the time of the event, please register by phone at 608-791-5295.

DEPOSITS: If indicated, the deposit is due at the time of registration and will be applied to the total fee. The balance is due two weeks before the start of the event.

REFUND POLICY: If you cancel at least 48 hours before the start time of the event, we will refund your payment. Deposits are not refundable.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: If you would like to attend a program but cannot manage the entire investment, please call Laurie Swan, FSC office manager, at 608-791-5279. We are committed to serving all on their spiritual journey and will hold your request in confidence.



2021 Programs and Retreats *continued.*

NAVIGATING TOGETHER: A VIRTUAL GRIEF RETREAT (VIA ZOOM)

FEBRUARY 20 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon

Facilitator: Jean Pagliaro

Investment: \$15

Registration deadline: February 19



Grieving the death of a loved one involves many difficult challenges. Often, we feel overwhelmed with tasks and emotions. You're invited to spend a day, through videoconferencing, in community with other people who are experiencing grief. Through discussion, time for reflection and creative expression opportunities, there

will be space for you to both express your grief and consider new paths that might be part of your healing.

SHELTERED-AT-HOME SILENT DIRECTED WEEKEND

LENT: AN INVITATION TO BEING LOVED (VIA ZOOM)

FEBRUARY 19-21 • Friday, 3 p.m.-Sunday, noon

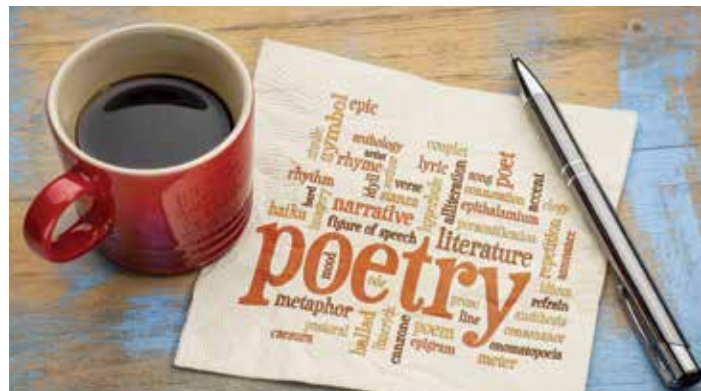
Facilitator: Deb Hansen

Investment: \$90, includes three spiritual direction sessions

Registration deadline: February 18

Limited to 5 participants.

Each day during this virtual retreat, we will reflect together on the weekend's invitation to being beloved. You then are invited to set aside time and space in your own home where you can enter into silence, solitude and personal reflection with the day's readings and suggested practices. Daily spiritual direction sessions will provide a time for you to share what is personally unfolding within you with a compassionate listener.



VIRTUAL POETRY CAFÉ (VIA ZOOM)

FEBRUARY 25 • Thursday, 6:30-8 p.m.



Facilitator: Sarah Hennessey, FSPA

Investment: \$5

Registration deadline: February 24

Bring your beverage of choice and your favorite poetry, either written by you or by another author, for a time of sharing and reflection. During this dark time of winter, poetry can bring a little light and hope into our lives.

MARRIAGE AT MIDLIFE: TAKING TIME TO DREAM AGAIN (VIA ZOOM)

FEBRUARY 27 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Presenter: Mike Hesch

Investment: \$30 per couple

Registration deadline: February 24

Have you reached the point in your marriage where you're not raising young children and are looking to focus on your relationship as a couple? Join us for a lighthearted, virtual retreat that will help you gain new perspective on yourself, your partner and your couple relationship. The day will include reflection, large-group sharing and time for you to talk and dream as a couple.

Mike Hesch serves on the board of the FSC and is a senior adviser in Workforce Learning at Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse. He is a frequent speaker/group facilitator in the areas of servant leadership, leadership development, communication, team-building and executive coaching.



Like us on Facebook for more information about these upcoming programs and events.



JOIN US FOR A VIRTUAL

Women's Christmas

**FIFTH
ANNUAL
EVENT**

This special event brings together the Irish tradition of Women's Christmas, in which women left the care of their households to the men so they could enjoy each other's company for a few hours, and the Feast of the Epiphany.

This year, we'll gather through Zoom videoconferencing for an evening of renewal, ritual and reflection.

Our theme is *Tending Our Hearths and Gladdening Our Hearts*. We will begin by lighting our hearths (a candle) and enjoying a simple meal of soup. Next, with a cup of lemon balm tea by our side, we will reflect on the healing properties of lemon balm, described since the 16th century as an herb to gladden the heart. As we reflect and engage in ritual to heal the bruises of the past year and welcome our hopes for the new one, we will prepare a flower pot in which we plant lemon balm seeds. In doing so, we can each have our own pot of this heart-gladdening herb.

January 6 • Wednesday, 6-8 p.m.

PRESENTER: Deb Hansen

INVESTMENT: Curbside pickup: \$25 OR Supplies shipped: \$30
Supplies are included in the price and can either be picked up at our FSC location or mailed to your address if out of town

REGISTER: www.FSCenter.org or 608-791-5295.

SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR THE EVENT

MEALTIME:

- Program and soup recipe*
- Tealight candle for our hearth fires*
- Soup mix*
- Lemon balm tea to brew for the ritual*
- Finger Fancies—A Christmas napkin (handmade by Rose Elsbernd, FSPA)*

RITUAL:

- Flower pot
- Potting soil
- Tissue paper*
- Lemon balm seeds*
- Plant marker*

*Mailed to those unable to pick up supplies at the FSC. If you are opting to have supplies mailed to you, you will need to provide your own flower pot and soil.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR LIVING WITH DEPRESSION

A RETREAT WITH *Monica Coleman*

(VIA ZOOM)

This virtual retreat will discuss how living with depression challenges common notions of faith, spirituality and religious teachings. During our time together, we will redefine faith in the context of depression. We will discover beliefs and spiritual practices that support and empower individuals who experience depression.

Participants will learn:

- religious challenges experienced by individuals living with depression
- seven religious teachings that undermine/invalidate the experience of depression
- three religious principles that support the journey of faith and depression
- spiritual practices to engage while living with depression

Monica A. Coleman, Ph.D., is professor of Africana Studies at the University of Delaware. She spent more than 10 years in graduate theological education at Claremont School of Theology and Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Answering her call to ministry at age 19, she brings her experiences in evangelical Christianity, Black church traditions, global ecumenical work and Indigenous spirituality to her discussions of religion.

She is the author or editor of six books and several articles that focus on the role of faith in addressing critical social and philosophical issues. Her memoir, *Bipolar Faith*, shares her lifelong dance with trauma and depression, and how she discovers a new and liberating vision of God. Her book *Making a Way Out of No Way* is required reading at leading theological schools around the country.

She speaks widely on navigating change, religious diversity, mental wellness and surviving sexual and domestic violence.

JANUARY 9

Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon (via Zoom)

Investment: \$30

Register: www.FSCenter.org or 608-791-5295



Jean Pagliaro, FSC program and retreat coordinator, reflects on her first encounter with Monica Coleman:

In my final year of seminary, I enrolled in a course called Process Theology, which was described as a “capstone” course to systematic theology. I previously survived two systematic theology courses, both of which were the most challenging classes I had ever taken. Understandably, I was nervous about this class and the professor, Dr. Monica Coleman. While I don’t remember all the topics we covered over the course of the semester, I remember immediately being put at ease by her relaxed, engaging presence. I also remember her passion and energy around topics such as mental health, social justice and womanist theology.

The one assignment that I still remember was based on Rainer Maria Rilke’s *Letters to a Young Poet*, in which Rilke wrote a series of profound responses to a young poet on surviving as a sensitive soul in a harsh world. Our task was to change that into *Letters to a Young Seminarian* and write our own advice for students just entering seminary. While the course was “heady” just by means of its topic, Dr. Coleman was able to make it very relatable, fun and relevant to everyday life.

I am so excited to welcome Monica Coleman to the FSC and for her to share her story and offer her insights on mental health and spirituality. I know the day will be engaging, relevant and meaningful.

At the Center newsletter is published six times a year on earth-friendly paper with a higher recycled content. Find us on Facebook and Twitter.



Franciscan Spirituality Center

920 Market St., La Crosse, WI 54601

608-791-5295

FSCenter@fspa.org • www.FSCenter.org

Identity

The Franciscan Spirituality Center is a sacred place that welcomes everyone. We are rooted in the Gospels and sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.

Mission

The Franciscan Spirituality Center is dedicated to supporting anyone in their search for God, meaning and wholeness.

We live this mission because we believe:

In each of us lives the Sacred.

We need each other to recognize and honor that part of ourselves.

Responding to spiritual hunger is necessary for growth, healing and peace.

As we grow in wholeness, we contribute to the healing of all creation.

Core Values

In keeping with the tradition of our Franciscan founders, we hold these core values:

Sacredness: Believe that in every person and all creation lives the Sacred.

Respect: Acknowledge the dignity, diversity and worth of each person as a unique image of God.

Community: Through prayer, empathy and sharing, create a safe, peaceful place.

Hospitality: Welcome all with compassion, acceptance and celebration.

Professionalism: Commit to competence, quality, trust and personal spiritual development.

What We Do

The Franciscan Spirituality Center guides and directs processes for prayer and offers personal presence to anyone on their sacred journey as co-creators of a just and peaceful world.

The FSC offers individual and group spiritual direction, guided and preached retreats, daylong programs and events. Staff is available for off-site workshops, presentations and programs.



Pictured from left are Celesta Day, FSPA; Joan Weisenbeck, FSPA; master iconographer Phil Zimmerman; and Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA. Sister Joan was instrumental in establishing the popular iconography workshops at the FSC and continues to write (paint) icons.

New scholarship named for Sister Joan

In the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare, we honor and respect everyone in their search for spiritual healing, growth and renewal, and will not turn anyone away because of inability to pay. We are pleased to announce a new scholarship fund to help us fulfill this mission.

This new fund is named in honor of Joan Weisenbeck, FSPA, and is available to anyone who needs financial assistance to attend our Spiritual Direction Preparation Program or receive spiritual direction from one of the FSC spiritual directors. The fund was established through a financial gift from Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, and Celesta Day, FSPA, and was given on the occasion of Sister Joan's birthday.

Sisters Marlene and Celesta shared this statement:

"We established this scholarship in Sister Joan's name to honor her ministry at the Franciscan Spirituality Center for more than two decades, both as staff member and board member. Her creative energy in promoting the Franciscan heritage of the Center, her steadfast accompaniment of people on their spiritual journeys, and her beautiful prayer forms have assisted countless people in finding clarity on the path of life. We hope others will want to contribute to this scholarship fund in her name so that her legacy of loving service will be sustained into the future."

Sister Joan left big shoes to fill when she retired from the FSC, but she continues to bless our ministry through her dedicated service on our board of directors. Her gentle and kind manner, her deep wisdom and her attention to quality and beauty in all things are just a few of the reasons we love working with her.

In thanking Sisters Marlene and Celesta, FSC Director Audrey Lucier wrote:

"This is a wonderful gift in honor of someone who has played such a key role in the history of the FSC. As retreat coordinator and spiritual director, Sister Joan profoundly shaped how we provide spiritual direction at the FSC, especially group spiritual direction, and the formation of new spiritual directors in SDPP. She mentored many of us in the art of gracious hospitality and a beautiful environment, and she led many outstanding programs and retreats here. I especially think of her role in the iconography retreats, which have continued here for so many years. She continues to shape our mission through her role as secretary-treasurer of our FSC Board."

If you would like to request a scholarship, please call 608-791-5295 and ask to speak to our office manager, Laurie Swan. And if you are in a position to help grow the fund, any size contributions are welcome. Gifts can be made through the DONATE button on our website, www.FSCenter.org, or by calling 608-791-5295.



Franciscan Spirituality Center

FSPA • 912 Market Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Have you checked out our podcast yet?

FSC spiritual director Steve Spilde is guided by many questions in life. One of his favorites is: "What is spirituality?" In our new podcast series, he introduces some of the spiritual mentors in his life as they reflect on this question and share what they have discovered on their own personal journeys.



So far, we've heard from Rita Heires, FSPA; Mary Kathryn Fogarty, FSPA; Jolynn Brehm, FSPA; Vince Hatt, Barb Kruse, Linda Kerrigan and Father John Heagle. More episodes are in the works! Please visit our website, www.FSCenter.org, for a link to the podcast (<https://www.fsccenter.org/content/programs-retreats/podcast-what-is-spirituality>) and enjoy great conversation and spiritual wisdom.

FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY CENTER Board of Directors

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COMING THIS SPRING



Starting March 7:
Family Nidra Yoga with Sue Tomashek.

Continuing-education opportunity:
Lucy Abbott Tucker will present *Exploring Supervision: A Workshop for Spiritual Director Supervisors* on **May 24-28**. Spots are filling fast; please visit www.FSCenter.org for details. Scholarships are available; please call 608-791-5295.

New retreat with Carl McColman:
Registration is open for *All Shall Be Well: Joyful Prayer With Julian of Norwich* on **May 14-16**.

Follow us on :     

The Franciscan Spirituality Center is a sponsored ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.