



Franciscan
Spirituality Center

Dedicated to anyone seeking God, meaning and wholeness.

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MAY/JUNE 2022

At the Center

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Iconography Workshop
- Writing as a Healing Tool in Grief
- Christian Meditation
- Coming Home to Joy
- When Bad Things Happen:
The Book of Job for Troubled Times



You are invited to an open house!

Join us for refreshments and tours of our newly remodeled space during an open house for the public:

5:30-7 p.m.
Thursday, April 7
920 Market St., La Crosse

We have several new meeting rooms and guest bedrooms to unveil. Our meeting rooms can accommodate groups of 2 to 90 and feature state-of-the-art technology. Our bedrooms offer a comfortable and private experience while you are on retreat. Our building is more accessible than ever, and our fully stocked Sophia Bookstore awaits.



Grateful to continue an amazing ministry



“Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?”

These were the opening lines of the hymn, “The Summons,” that began the 2017 annual FSPA Sponsorship Conference, which also occurred the same week I began my time at the Franciscan Spirituality Center as the program and retreat coordinator.

I remember sitting in the large gathering space at the Viterbo Fine Arts Center and becoming overwhelmed with emotion not only by the words of the hymn but also at the feeling of peace and power that was present in the room as so many strong, collective voices joined together in song.

“Will you go where you don’t know and never be the same?”

This was the second line of the hymn, and those words hit home so deeply for me. I was hungry for a place of community and connection.

“Will you let my love be shown? Will you let my name be known, will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?”

This was the third line of the hymn, and I am continually moved and grateful to witness all of the ways the Franciscan Spirituality Center and Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration embody love, life, growth and wholeness, not only for so many of our participants, but for me as well.

The FSC is a place of hospitality, welcome and healing. It is a place where people can be made whole. I have seen, time and again, lives being transformed by the amazing ministries that happen here, and I am thrilled to do my part to ensure that the center continues to thrive for generations to come.

I am very aware that this is not a “new beginning.” This is simply a continuation of an amazing ministry in our community that has been present here for more than 40 years, and I am grateful to be a part of this now as the director.

I invite you to come and see what we’re about. There is something for everyone, whether you’re seeking to go deeper in your spiritual journey or simply looking for support, encouragement or various retreat opportunities. We’re honored when we can accompany you on your journey of seeking God, meaning and wholeness.

Peace and all good,

Jean Pagliaro

Jean Pagliaro, FSC Director



FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY CENTER Board of Directors

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Associate Spiritual Director



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Associate Presenter



Bernice Olson-Pollack
Associate Presenter



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Associate Presenter

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Associate Director &
Spiritual Director



Rose Elsbernd, FSPA
Spiritual Director



Sarah Hennessey, FSPA
Spiritual Director



Karna Marks
Spiritual Director



Stacey Kalas
Communications &
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& Receptionist



Jean Pagliaro named new director

In this issue of *At the Center*, you were greeted by our new director, Jean Pagliaro. Jean is likely a familiar face to you as she has been on staff at the Franciscan Spirituality Center for the past five years.

We are very excited about Jean's promotion and know that she will continue the incredible ministry of the FSC and the visionary leadership of Audrey Lucier, who retired February 25.

The Franciscan Spirituality Center Board of Directors selected Jean after a nationwide search, concluding that her vision for the future, her training in theology and trauma-informed care, and her experience working here best positioned her to carry the mission forward.

"Jean impressed us with her enthusiasm for the executive director role and for the Center in general. Jean's vision aligns perfectly with the FSC's mission. I am excited to have Jean as the FSC's next executive director," said Lyell Montgomery, FSC Board president.

Jean was hired in 2017 to be the FSC's program and retreat coordinator. She is also president of the Upper Midwest Association for Retreat and Spirituality Centers. Previously, Jean was an affiliate chaplain at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, the volunteer coordinator

at Coulee Region RVSP and pastor of Halfway Creek Lutheran Church in Holmen. She earned her Master of Divinity from Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago and her Bachelor of Arts in social work from Carthage College in Kenosha. She has extensive training in crisis response, community-based organizing and effective communication, as well as significant fundraising and grant-writing experience.

"I'm looking forward to continuing to grow our vision and mission in partnership with our staff, the FSPA, the La Crosse community and beyond," Jean said. "I personally have experienced abundant welcome, grace and hospitality during my time at the FSC, and that has led to personal transformation and a deep respect for what the Center offers people in their own faith exploration and journey toward wholeness and healing."

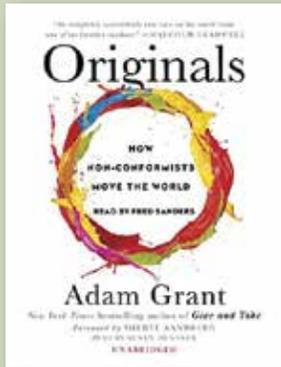
Jean lives in Onalaska with her husband, Matt; their children, Logan and Lydia; and two Labrador retrievers.

The FSC is a sponsored ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. It opened to the public in 1985 and welcomes people of all faith backgrounds and traditions. Other past directors have been Kathleen Kenkel, FSPA; Mary Kathryn Fogarty, FSPA; Vince Hatt and Jeff Dols.

Check out these book recommendations from Jean

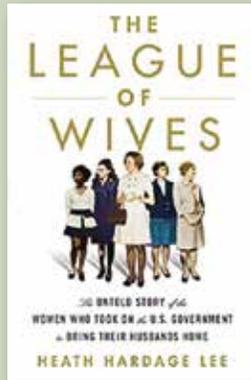
It's not an exaggeration to say Jean Pagliaro is never without a book. She is one of the most avid readers we've ever met! FSC staff members and St. Rose sisters often check in with her to find out what she's reading. We thought you might enjoy some of her recommendations, too.

What are you reading now?

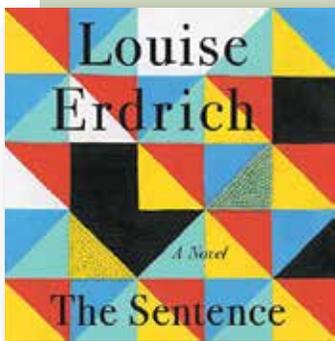


Self-Help : “Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World” by Adam Grant. I’m just starting this one and enjoying it so far!

Non-Fiction : “The League of Wives: The Untold Story of the Women



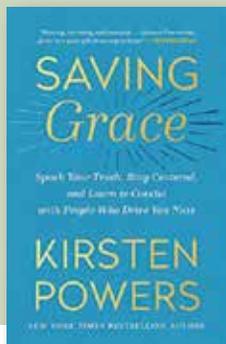
Who Took on the U.S. Government to Bring Their Husbands Home” by Heath Hardage Lee. It’s a remarkable story!



Fiction : “The Sentence” by Louise Erdrich. It’s a ghost story set in the author’s real-life bookstore in Minneapolis. It’s both funny and profound!

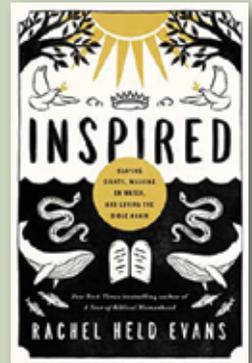


All-time favorite book(s) : “The House in the Cerulean Sea” by TJ Klune. Social worker Linus Baker is a case worker at the Department in Charge of Magical Youth. He oversees an orphanage where six “dangerous” youth live, including a garden gnome, Satan’s son (named Lucy) and a sprite. I thought it was going to be a lighthearted, mindless read, and it turned out to be one of the best and most moving stories of healing and acceptance that I have ever read!

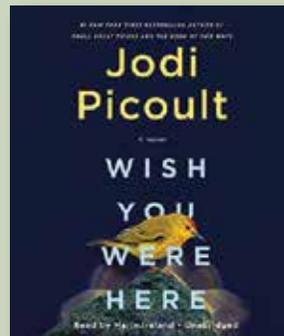


A new title in our Sophia Bookstore that has piqued your interest : “Saving Grace: Speak Your Truth, Stay Centered, and Learn to Coexist with People Who Drive You Nuts” by Kirsten Powers. I’m intrigued by the premise of the book that grace isn’t about being “nice” and that it can become a transformative force.

Most helpful book, in terms of your spiritual journey : “Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again” by Rachel Held Evans. It helped me wrestle with some deep questions of faith while at the same time offered comfort and hope.



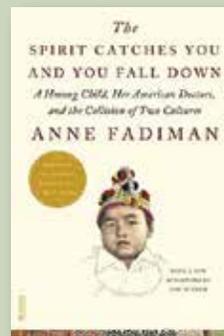
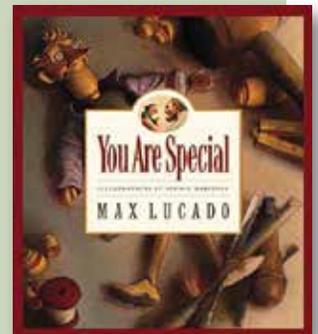
Favorite authors : Jodi Picoult, Rachel Held Evans, Shauna Niequist, Wally Lamb, Gregory Maguire, Brené Brown.



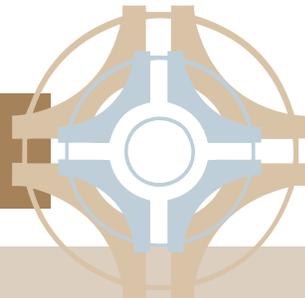
What’s a book that surprised you? : Jodi Picoult’s new book, “Wish You Were Here.” She is known for story twists, but this one made me gasp out loud when the story plot changed. It was an excellent read!

Your favorite genre : I love fiction of all kinds, and I’m constantly fascinated by authors’ imaginations and abilities to create stories.

One book you enjoyed reading to your kids? : “You Are Special” by Max Lucado. It’s a book about a group of wooden people who go around giving each other stickers (stars for good things they do and dots for mistakes they make). The message is that the Creator doesn’t care about stickers; the Creator loves us just because of who we are.



Toughest read, but most rewarding : In college I read “When the Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down” by Anne Fadiman. It is a heartbreaking, true story. The subtitle explains it best: “A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures.” It completely opened my eyes to the importance of empathy in institutions that provide care for others.



A NOTE ABOUT ONLINE REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION: We offer both in-person and virtual programs.

In response to direction from our local medical and public health authorities, we require all participants who attend in-person events at the Franciscan Spirituality Center to wear a mask when gathered indoors. If you register online, you will receive a confirmation email and receipt. If you do not receive this, please check your spam/junk folder or a secondary email address that you may have used. If it's not there, please call 608-791-5295 to verify that your registration was successfully completed.

On the day before the program, you will receive a courtesy email with a Zoom link and instructions on how to join the virtual gathering. If you have not received this link within 24 hours of the program start, please call our office at 608-791-5295 or email fscenter@fspa.org. Our office closes at 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and typically is not staffed on weekends, so it is especially important to make sure you have your Zoom link prior to evening and weekend programs.

FIVE-WEEK SERIES

GRIEF CIRCLE (IN-PERSON)

MAY 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 • Tuesday, 10 a.m.-noon

Facilitator: Rose Elsbernd, FSPA, and Karna Marks

Investment: \$25

Note: We are able to offer a discounted rate of \$10 for anyone who would like financial help to attend. Please enter the code GRIEF60 when you register online or call 608-791-5295.

Registration deadline: April 29

This group is for those who are grieving the death of a loved one. It is a place to share your thoughts, feelings and concerns about what is happening to you and where you can talk about your loss with other people who understand, because they also are grieving. Sometimes, friends and family, although well-intentioned, may not understand the meaning of your loss and the depth of your pain. The support of others on the same journey can provide a great deal of comfort and healing.

Support for this program is provided by the Mary Kathryn Fogarty, FSPA, Scholarship Fund.



COMMUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN MEDITATION (IN-PERSON)

MAY 4 AND 18

First and third Wednesday of each month, 6:30-7:30 p.m.



Facilitator: Robert Lynn

Investment: Freewill offering

Registration deadline: March 1/15

Christianity has a deep tradition of silent prayer in the form of contemplation or meditation. This community setting will practice Christian meditation in the tradition of John Main, learning to quiet the mind and experience divine presence. Other teachers in this tradition include Thomas Merton, James Finley and Sarah Bachelard. If you have an established meditation practice, deepen your practice by sharing it in community. If you are new to meditation, this is a gentle place to start and explore.

Robert Lynn has earned a Certificate in Theological Studies from Wartburg Seminary and has been practicing meditation individually and in a variety of group settings for several years.

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.

MEDITATION FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH (VIA ZOOM)

MAY 5 AND JUNE 2 • Thursday, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Sarah Hennessey, FSPA

Investment: Free (online donations may be made at www.FSCenter.org/donate)

Registration deadline: May 4/June 1



Meditation is proven to reduce stress and promote relaxation. All are welcome to join us for a time of rejuvenation. 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.

Sarah Hennessey, FSPA, is a spiritual director on staff at the FSC.



FRANCISCAN DAY OF SOLITUDE (IN-PERSON)

MAY 11 AND JUNE 29 • Wednesday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Facilitator: FSC staff

Investment: \$45, includes lunch and optional spiritual direction session

Registration deadline: May 4/June 22

Yearning for a day to unplug and pause from the stresses and demands of life? You are invited to spend a day of solitude at the FSC that will give you permission to simply BE. Solitude offers us a place to listen to and rest in God. We will gather together as a group to begin and end our day in prayer, spending the remainder of the time in solitude. You will have a private, comfortable room and a simple meal. Options include using our art room and meeting with a spiritual director if you wish.



GROUPS THAT MEET AT THE FSC

Depressed Anonymous meets every Monday, from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

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.

Saturday Morning Men's Group meets to discuss a current book related to spirituality from 9-11 a.m. every other Saturday. For more information, contact Vince Hatt via email at vjhatt@gmail.com.



WRITING AS A HEALING TOOL IN GRIEF (IN-PERSON)

MAY 14 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Presenter: Christy Wopat

Investment: \$60

Note: We are able to offer a discounted rate of \$36 for anyone who would like financial help to attend. Please enter the code HEALING40 when you register online or call 608-791-5295.

Book one of our bedrooms for use during the day as a quiet space to write for an additional \$25.

Registration deadline: April 29

After the death of a loved one, our feelings of sadness, pain and grief can get stuck. Often, writing activities can help us move forward toward healing. Spend a day with us learning effective writing tools and leave with a notebook full of ways to get that grief unstuck. The day will include instruction, individual writing time and group discussion time.

Christy Wopat is the author of "Almost a Mother: Love, Loss, and Finding Your People When Your Baby Dies" and "Always Ours," books she wrote to help break the stigma around infant and pregnancy loss. Christy has written for Still Standing Magazine, has been a guest on several podcasts about grief and has been a featured presenter at the International Death, Dying, and Bereavement Conference. She lives in Holmen with her family and also teaches elementary school.

Support for this program is provided by the Mary Kathryn Fogarty, FSPA, Scholarship Fund.



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



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 from 6-8 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month and on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. To see whether the group meets your needs, contact Vince Hatt via email at vjhatt@gmail.com.





2022 Programs and Retreats *continued.*

ART AS PRAYER (VIA ZOOM)

MAY 16 • Monday, 6-7:30 p.m.



Instructor: Mary Thompson

Investment: \$15

Registration deadlines: May 13

Suggested supply list: paints, pens, pencils, watercolor paper; brushes; water container; paper towels/rags.

Artistic expression offers the opportunity for spiritual growth, transformation and healing. This monthly open watercolor studio 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.



MAY THEME:

Prayer is the longing of the human heart for God. God-in-communion with us.
— Iliia Delio

As we gather to paint, we will celebrate spring by welcoming migratory birds back to the Driftless area. Our focus prayer will be Terry Tempest Williams's "I Pray to the Birds." We will explore the basics for creating a paint-prayer-poetry journal during the summer. You have the flexibility to use paint, pencils, pen and ink (choose your favorite!) to foster a connection to

your spirit animal. Please bring a photo of the insect, bird or other animal you'd like to portray, along with essential supplies.

Mary Thompson has a degree in fine arts and a master's degree in education. She has been an affiliate of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration for more than a decade. 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.

FSC spiritual directors are available to meet with you

- Do you need a compassionate, nonjudgmental listener?
- Do you long to grow spiritually and communicate with God?
- Have you experienced challenges in life such as grief, loss or significant changes?
- Do you seek self-acceptance, meaning and wholeness?

We invite you to connect with one of our spiritual directors.

Spiritual direction is the process of sharing one's sacred stories with a trained, compassionate listener. It can be helpful to anyone seeking spiritual growth, healing or a deeper connection with God and others. It is a time-honored practice of compassionate, nonjudgmental listening to another in a safe setting where what is shared is held with reverence and confidentiality.

To learn more, please call 608-791-5295.

ICONOGRAPHY WORKSHOP: THE GOOD SHEPHERD (IN-PERSON)

MAY 16-21 • Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday, 9-10 a.m.



Instructor: Phil Zimmerman

Investment:

- **Full:** \$700, includes private bedroom Sunday through Friday nights, all meals and all supplies
- **Commuter:** \$575, includes lunch and dinner Monday through Friday and all supplies

Registration deadline: May 9

Both a meaningful prayer practice and a technical art form, iconography traces its history to the beginning of Christianity. Icons are often referred to as "windows into heaven" and continue to be venerated by Orthodox Christians and others. Noted American iconographer Phil Zimmerman will guide participants step-by-step through the process of "writing" or painting an icon in the Byzantine style, following ancient guidelines and techniques while using modern artist's materials (acrylic paints, gessoed board, gold leaf). All materials and supplies are included. By the end of the week, students will have a beautifully completed icon varnished and ready to display.

Phil Zimmerman is the owner of St. John of Damascus Icon Studio in Pennsylvania, having studied iconography with Richard Osacky (the late Bishop Job, OCA Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest). Phil has created hundreds of religious icons for churches and private collectors throughout the world and has taught more than 2,000 students, some of whom have become noted iconographers themselves. Phil has offered retreats at the Franciscan Spirituality Center since 2001.

Please note: Class may extend into the evening hours on Friday for varnishing. Overnight guests may check in Sunday evening.

Another workshop (icon to be determined) is scheduled July 11-16.



COMING HOME TO JOY (IN-PERSON)

MAY 21 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Facilitators: Sarah Hennessey, FSPA, and Karna Marks

Investment: \$50, includes all supplies and lunch

Registration deadline: May 13

Nurture your body, mind and spirit with a day of self-care, play, creativity and lessons in resiliency. You'll be guided in the creation of an origami sun with personal intentions for healing and joy. Participants will be invited to reflection, movement, creative expression and discussion in a safe, welcoming environment. Come as you are. Let go of expectations. Together, we'll lean into fun and the power of the human spirit!



Sarah Hennessey, FSPA, and Karna Marks are spiritual directors on staff at the FSC.

WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN: THE BOOK OF JOB FOR TROUBLED TIMES (IN-PERSON)

JUNE 3-4 • Friday, 7-9 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



Facilitator: Peter Watkins

Investment: \$95, includes retreat with lunch on Saturday

Book an overnight stay for just an additional \$70 (breakfast included).



Registration deadline: May 27

In many ways, the Book of Job is the perfect story for what so many of us are experiencing today: loss, anxiety, and fear. Job's story of suffering and his bold honest search for answers cuts right through easy and superficial platitudes and clichés. This ancient story speaks to our hearts and guides us on a path toward real hope. During this retreat, we will courageously ask, "What do I do with my pain?" and "Where is God in suffering?" Through quiet reflection, contemplative prayer practices, engaging talks and small-group discussion, we will discover for ourselves how the God of life and love is present to each one of us, especially in times of struggle.

Peter Watkins, M.Div., is a certified spiritual director and retreat leader. He is a faculty member at Sacred Ground Center for Spirituality, where he is part of the formation program for aspiring spiritual directors. He has taught graduate level classes in Old Testament theology and has co-authored a high school textbook, "Guarding the Fire: A Spiritual Guide for Young Men" (Good Ground Press). He is also certified to give the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises.

SILENT DIRECTED RETREAT WEEKEND (IN-PERSON)

JUNE 3-5 • Friday, 7 p.m.–Sunday, noon

Facilitator: Rose Elsbernd, FSPA, and other spiritual directors

Investment: \$225, includes two nights' stay, all meals and three spiritual direction sessions

Note: We are able to offer a discounted rate of \$90 for this retreat to anyone who would like financial help to participate. Please enter the code SILENT60 when you register online or call 608-791-5295.



Registration deadline: May 27

A silent directed retreat is an invitation to deepen your connection to the Sacred and to yourself through solitude and silence in a community of prayer. You will have a private, comfortable bedroom, delicious meals and a daily meeting with a spiritual director who will listen to you and your unfolding story. Your days will be open for time in quiet spaces for reflection, with options for attending liturgy, praying in the chapel and creating art. You also may book additional nights with us if you'd like to extend the retreat; please call 608-791-5295 for details.

Support for this program is provided by the Norman L. Gillette Sr. Scholarship Fund.



HOW CAN WE RESTORE LOST TRUST? (VIA ZOOM)

JUNE 11 • Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon



Presenter: Elizabeth Lewis

Investment: \$35

Registration deadline: June 9

Loss of trust in our leaders and government institutions. Loss of trust in each other. Loss of trust in our ability to cope with and navigate our country's shifting landscape. For many of us, after the tumult of the past five years, these are wounds seeking healing and restoration. But where and how to begin? In this workshop—through lecture, discussion, writing, guided meditations and more—we will explore how to restore trust in ourselves and our ability to handle whatever challenges life throws our way as a starting point for renewing our trust in an often chaotic world.

A minimum of 10 participants is needed for this retreat to occur.

SUMMER SESSIONS

GOLDEN YOGA (IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM)

SESSION 1: JUNE 14, 21, 28
SESSION 2: AUGUST 2, 9, 16

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

Instructor: Amber Moesch

Investment: \$30 for each three-week session

Registration deadline: June 13/August 1

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. Participants will need a chair to offer modifications and balance support. The last 15 minutes of each class will include stretching exercises.

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.



Thank you for your leadership and friendship, Audrey!



FSC Director Audrey Lucier officially retired February 25. Luckily for us, she's staying in the area and will help with our Sophia Bookstore as a volunteer! She also will keep her email address during the leadership transition, so feel free to send her well wishes at alucier@fspa.org.

Audrey joined the staff of the Franciscan Spirituality Center in 2012 as program and retreat coordinator, and was promoted to director in 2013. She shared her gifts and knowledge through several programs and retreats, including *Journey Toward Wholeness*, *Enneagram*, *Divorce Recovery*, *Post-Election Listening Sessions* and *Labyrinth Walks*.

She coordinated the St. John's Bible exhibit and invited into our space dynamic speakers and spiritual teachers, including Tom Reese, Susan Pitchford, Gina Messina, Tom Ryan and Kay Lindahl. Audrey tirelessly advocated for the FSC, shepherding our staff through a successful endowment campaign, a major building renovation and the pandemic.

Audrey's deep, grounded spirituality; her sense of beauty and hospitality; and her skills in conflict resolution and team building helped us grow as a team. We are poised for a bright future. *Thank you, Audrey.*



AUDREY WAS HONORED WITH THE IVERSON FREKING ECUMENICAL RECOGNITION AWARD ON JANUARY 26.

Here is the speech she presented at the awards banquet:



Thank you to Bethany St. Joseph Corp., to Brad [Quarberg] and the board, Craig [Ubbelohde] and Gale [Bruessel] and the staff, for this award. I also want to thank Steve [Spilde] and the staff of the Franciscan Spirituality Center for nominating me.

I work with an ecumenical staff at the Center. Several of us are Catholic, but we also have a member of the Orthodox faith and no less than three ordained Lutherans. It's been a fruitful collaboration.



I love that this award is about religious faith, ecumenism and working together to make good things happen, things that have been important to me my whole life. I grew up in Bismarck, North Dakota, where my family attended the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

When the Catholic church council called Vatican II was convened by Pope John XXIII in 1962, I was in third grade at Cathedral School.

Vatican II caused a seismic shift in the way Catholics practiced their faith. Instead of

an emphasis on personal piety and getting to heaven, we began to be formed in a more social, communal faith here on earth.

Vatican II encouraged us to engage in acts of service, especially on behalf of the poor and other vulnerable people, and to work for peace and justice.

This is still how I think about being a Catholic. It is about making earth as it is in heaven. And faith is meant to be done with others.

I can still remember being taught at age 6 or 7 that only baptized Catholics could get into heaven. This made no sense to me!

Thankfully, as I grew up, Vatican II ushered in a new spirit of ecumenism that altered relations with our fellow Christians in town. We could have joint Thanksgiving prayer services, attend each other's weddings and funerals, and work together on community projects.

However, this didn't lessen the intense rivalry between the Catholic high school—the St. Mary's Saints—and the public high school—the Bismarck Demons. I'm proud to say that in my senior year, the Saints defeated the Demons in the state basketball championship!

Although my childhood faith formation opened the door to ecumenical relationships, it took a Lutheran pastor to help me step through. I noticed an ad in the paper for a position with Lutheran Social Services of WI and Upper MI.

The position involved traveling to the churches in the La Crosse Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to provide educational programs on topics such as parenting, marriage, aging and grief. The topics were interesting to me. Working in Lutheran churches, though, made me hesitate.

When I saw the ad a second time, I took it as a sign I should follow through and apply, and thus I met the Rev. John Yungerberg. During his long career with LSS, John helped many people to health and wholeness as a professional counselor and facilitated many adoptions.

John was a perfect sounding board for my questions about working in the Lutheran church. Unfortunately, cancer took John this past October.

It was by stepping out of my childhood faith into a different Christian tradition that I began to really get to know my faith on an adult level.

For example, I realized how unfamiliar I was with the Bible. I knew the stories that were read at Sunday Mass but little else about Scripture. The Lutherans I met in the programs I facilitated knew how to use their Bibles and even memorized passages! They inspired me to open up my Bible and, eventually, to study Scripture in theology school.

In turn, I found the Lutherans in my programs were curious about me, too, once they learned I was a practicing Catholic. One evening I arrived at a Lutheran church to lead a program offered to adults during Vacation Bible School. As I waited to begin, I watched the staff teaching the children there how to make the Sign of the Cross.

I was shocked, because this prayer and ritual was so Catholic. But then I was delighted, because it's a beautiful body prayer that honors our common Christian doctrine on the Trinity.

I marveled that in this little rural Lutheran church, I'd come full circle from my own Vatican II formation. We ended up talking about it in my adult program and praying the Sign of the Cross together that night.

One of the greatest honors ever paid me came near the end of my eight years with LSS. I was asked by Bishop April Larson to facilitate a difficult conversation within the churches of the La Crosse Area Synod. It was to prepare for a vote at an upcoming churchwide assembly concerning human sexuality and church practice.

Bishop Larson said that spending so much time in conversation with Lutherans and yet not being Lutheran made me the perfect choice to facilitate these conversations. The conversations were challenging and yet some of the richest I've ever been involved in.

The coronavirus pandemic has really brought home the saying, "If you don't have your health, you don't have anything." While studying public

health at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, I learned that "health" is not just the absence of disease.

Wholeness and health come in large part from connection to others, from feeling there is worth and purpose and meaning to your life, from being able to rise again from suffering, from hope and faith and love.

All these things pertain to our spirit. This is why I see our work at the spirituality center to be essentially about health and wholeness, and so vital at this time.

Our sponsors, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, have been a great inspiration for me. They are definitely in the world, making a big impact, but they ground their actions in continuous prayer. The sisters reach out into the community to see how they can work with others to make good things happen, and they encourage those of us in ministry with them to do the same.

This is the spirit of ecumenism and service that I hope survives and thrives, despite the changes we are seeing in religious identity at this time in our history.

It may no longer be so much about Catholics working with Lutherans. But there's still a great need for all of us to step outside our comfort zone of the people who look like me or believe as I do, for the sake of accomplishing something good together.

Experience tells us this doesn't dilute our religious identity or beliefs. It makes us stronger. It's how we bring about the reign of God on earth—as it is in heaven.



2022-2025

THIS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION PREPARATION PROGRAM IS DESIGNED FOR THOSE WHO:

- Are older than 30 and drawn to a deeper understanding of spiritual direction.
- Have not had formal training in spiritual direction.
- Are preparing for a ministry of spiritual or retreat direction and/or the practice of redemptive listening.
- Would like to deepen their spiritual and personal development.
- Have at least one year of experience receiving regular spiritual direction.

PARTICIPANTS LEARN BY:

- Attending required in-person and virtual workshops.
- Processing experiences with fellow participants.
- Practicing direction skills using monthly verbatims.
- Meeting quarterly with a supervisor who is an experienced spiritual director.
- Writing reflection papers on required books and articles.
- Participating in annual reviews.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Lifelong compassionate listening skills.
- Strong community development with cohort between 25-35 participants.
- Personal transformation and deeper spiritual understanding.
- Increased self-awareness and deeper interpersonal relationships.
- Certificate of completion as a trained spiritual director.

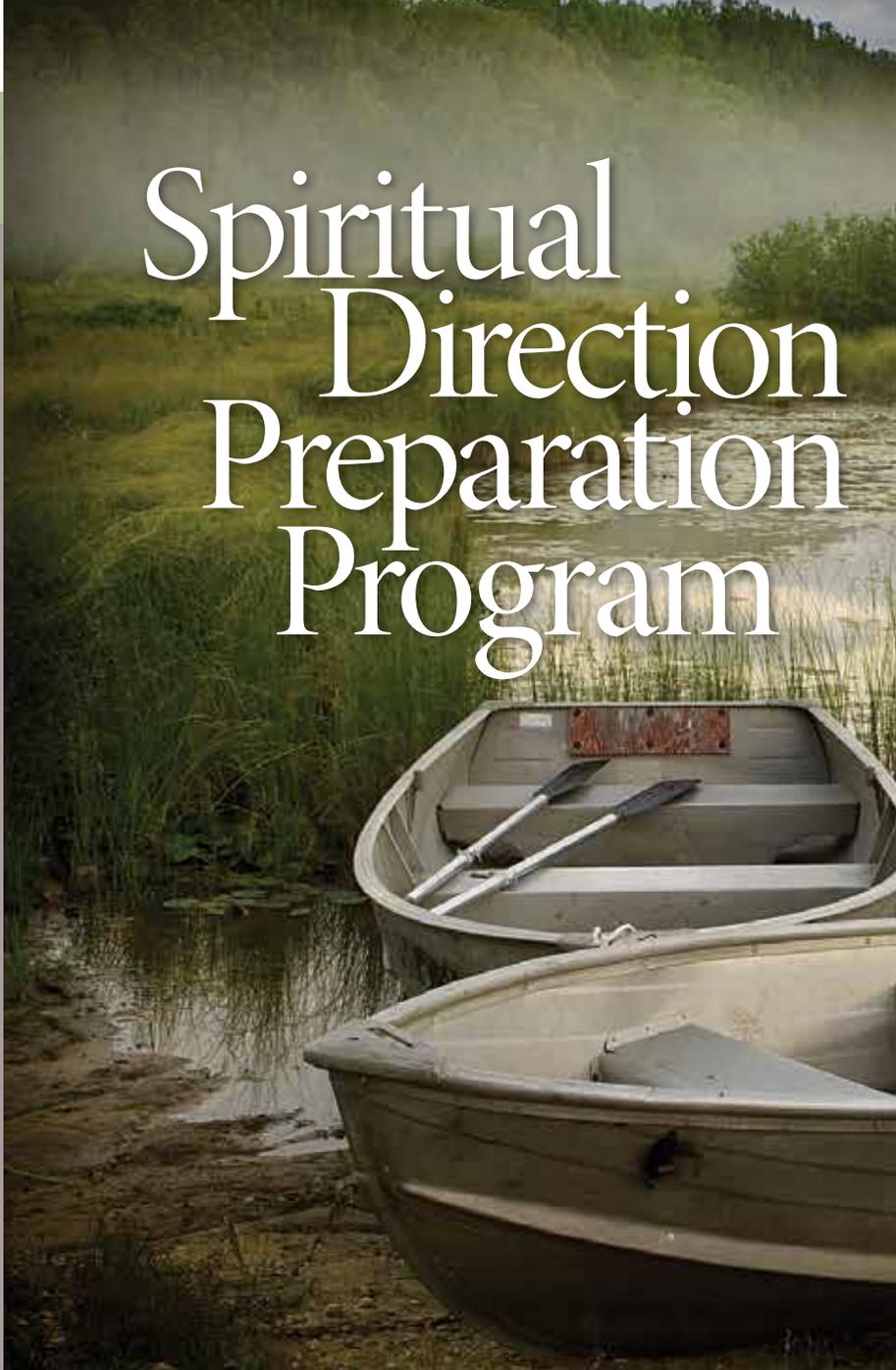
PROGRAM FEES: \$2,950 PER YEAR

(\$150 discount if the tuition is paid in full by September 1 of each year)

Fees include tuition for all in-person workshops, Zoom workshops, practicum in Year 3, quarterly meetings, annual review with supervisor and all administrative fees, meals and snacks. Fees are payable in installments. Please contact Steve Spilde, program director, about individual plans. Limited scholarships are available.

Housing is available at the Franciscan Spirituality Center for all of the workshops for an additional fee. Other expenses include the cost of your books, fees for spiritual direction and the required six-day, individual retreat.

Spiritual Direction Preparation Program



Do you wish to help others discover a personal, intimate relationship with God? Are you interested in preparing for retreat ministry or training to become a spiritual director? Are you looking to hone your deep, compassionate, nonjudgmental listening skills?

We invite you to consider our Spiritual Direction Preparation Program (SDPP).

Since 1985, we have trained more than 600 people in the practice of spiritual direction. This innovative training program provides a mix of workshops





AN INNOVATIVE, THREE-YEAR TRAINING PROGRAM

The program will begin in September 2022. Program details are available on our website, www.FSCenter.org.

Starting with this cohort, SDPP will integrate longer in-person gatherings with added virtual workshops. This will preserve the high-quality group interaction we treasure, yet reduce the travel time for those who come from a distance to participate in this long-respected program. This format also allows us to include much more content and provides additional opportunities for group processing of the material. There will be an in-person retreat option for the virtual weekends with an opportunity to stay at the Franciscan Spirituality Center and interact with fellow participants.



and real-life experiences to prepare individuals to share their compassionate listening skills as trained spiritual directors in their communities.

The Spiritual Direction Preparation Program extends over three years, giving participants an opportunity to integrate theory and practice. While SDPP prepares the participant to direct others regardless of their faith or religious affiliation, the Franciscan Spirituality Center teaches from the Judeo-Christian tradition. This program is designed to form and train candidates through practical workshops, verbatims, reflections, readings, quarterly meetings and one-on-one supervision.



SCHEDULE FOR SDPP COHORT 17:

YEAR 1

Gathering: Thursday–Sunday
September 8-11, 2022

Weekend: Friday–Sunday
November 4-6, 2022

Weekend: Friday–Sunday
February 10-12, 2023

Weekend: Friday–Sunday
April 14-16, 2023

YEAR 2

Gathering: Thursday–Sunday
September 7-10, 2023

Weekend: Friday–Saturday
November 3-4, 2023

Weekend: Friday–Saturday
January 12-13, 2024

Weekend: Friday–Saturday
April 5-6, 2024

YEAR 3

Practicum: Sunday–Saturday
July 28-August 3, 2024

Weekend: Friday–Sunday
October 4-6, 2024

Weekend: Friday–Sunday
March 7-9, 2025

Final Gathering: Thursday–Sunday
July 24-27, 2025

- In-person at FSC in La Crosse
- Virtual weekend by Zoom

IN NEARBY ST. JOSEPH'S RIDGE

Our hermitages have reopened for the season!

Why not treat yourself to a weekend retreat in one of our three cozy hermitages set on the edge of woodland in scenic St. Joseph's Ridge? This is an ideal setting to experience silence and solitude, spend time in nature, connect to God and simply rest. If you enjoy hiking, nature photography or birdwatching, there are miles of trails to explore. Many guests spend their time indoors reading, praying, journaling or writing poetry.

Each hermitage has a twin bed, easy chair, writing table and chair, electricity, stove, microwave, refrigerator, restroom and shower, electric fireplace, CD player and telephone for emergency. Guests provide and prepare their own food in the apartment-sized kitchen. Towels and bed linens are provided; please bring your own toiletries. Choose from three hermitages: Thea, Chiara and Sophia. No pets and no smoking, please.

Hermitages may be reserved Friday-Monday (minimum two-night stay) for a private or directed retreat. Extended stays may be possible; please call 608-791-5295 for more information. Cost is \$70 per night. Please add \$50 per spiritual direction session (scholarships are available).



FSC podcast explores spirituality

We invite you to listen to our *What is Spirituality?* podcast hosted by Steve Spilde.

Steve has featured a variety of guests, including Diana Butler Bass, Shannon K. Evans, Trace Bell, Vince Hatt, Sam Rahberg, Marcia Bentley, Tom Roberts, Linda Kerrigan, Barb Kruse, Mary Kathryn Fogarty, FSPA, and others! These are always insightful, engaging conversations, full of wisdom. It's fascinating to hear the personal journeys of spiritual mentors and thinkers, how they understand the divine, and where their search for meaning and wholeness has led them.

You can find a link to the podcast on our website, www.FSCenter.org.



Take a moment to reflect with us each week

Every Monday, we send out our weekly *Reflections From the Center* to 3,800 email subscribers. These thoughtful, inspiration poems, short essays and prayers are written by community members and shared free of charge. We are always looking for new contributors; we just ask that your work be original and have a spiritual theme. To submit a *Reflection*, please email Stacey Kalas at skalas@fspa.org. If you are not receiving these yet and would like to, please visit www.FSCenter.org and click on the JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST button. You can also find them published at <http://atthecenterreflections.blogspot.com>.

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 • www.FSCenter.org
FSCenter@fspa.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.



Franciscan Spirituality Center

FSPA • 912 Market Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

IT'S TIME TO LET GO OF BOOKS

By Vince Hatt

The second half of life is about letting go. Lent is about letting go.
The message to me: It is time to let go of your many books.

For the past 40 years, I have collected more 300 books on spirituality, religion, psychology and biblical studies. I have underlined thousands of passages and taken hundreds of pages of notes. My plan was to return to these passages to ponder them more completely and to reread some of the books.

The second half of life and Lent are also about honesty. Honestly, I rarely returned to any of these books. There was always the next book to read. Moreover, I was busy with spiritual direction, facilitating groups and giving presentations. Meanwhile, the books are on shelves in the basement collecting dust. They are doing absolutely no one any good there.

The Franciscan Spirituality Center has graciously offered to make them available to you. All I ask is that you give a donation of your choice to FSC for the books you take. My hope is that they help you.

Thanks for helping me take this step toward letting go. My next goal is to let go of the many T-shirts I have from races during the past 40 years.

Maybe next Lent.



VINCE HATT BOOK SALE

A sale of Vince Hatt's impressive book collection will start April 25 at the Franciscan Spirituality Center, 920 Market St. Hundreds of books will be offered. Vince simply asks that you make a donation to the FSC in exchange for your books. The sale will run for two weeks. You may shop from 8:30 a.m.- 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, or while you are here for a program.

Our semi-annual \$1 used book sale, featuring a general selection of gently used books on spirituality and other topics, will start May 9.

Follow us on :     

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