

UNITED IN MISSION N

ATLANTIC-MIDWEST PROVINCE

Transforming the world through education

October 2021

This summer took on a new feel and character as people looked forward to vacation and time with family and friends, plans that were compromised last year due to the pandemic. In anticipating summer, many people dream about what they would like to do, including things they have to neglect through the year to fulfill the demands of work and life. One of my favorite summer pastimes is reading. This summer, I found myself rereading *After Silence*, a collection of poems by the beloved Sister Maura Eichner, SSND. One poem that especially resonated with me is "*Initiate the Heart*":



Consider the season's wheel
the turn of summer
creeping over
leaves one incurved tendril
on the vine,
one pointed peak of sweet,
late clover.

Initiate the heart to change
for it is wiser so,
accepting the splendor
of the hour white with
clematis or snow.

Fortify the will with peace;
no season taking root,
tranquil in mist, in warmth,
in frost, each bears fruit.



Initiating the Heart: Seeking Sabbath Time



As we move into fall and hope for the white of winter, we look back on how Sabbath times – no matter how brief or extended – initiated our hearts, by claiming the power that comes with resting and disconnecting from the claim of overly active and challenging schedules. Sabbath time, a time for rest, is essential to who we are as mission leaders and our service to mission and ministry. This is a time to rejuvenate mind, body, and spirit, reflect on our life experiences and deepen our vision for mission and ministry.

We feature reflections from some of our colleagues on the importance of Sabbath time and how this sacred time of rest during the summer months rejuvenated them and brought new insights as they returned to ministry. We thank our contributors for sharing their stories!

Fall Blessings,

Patrick Laorden
Associate Director
Ministry Services

Yvonne DeBruin
Director
Ministry Services



Cary and her mother on a walk.

Cary Rositas-Sheftel

Board Member

Corazón a Corazón, Chicago

Sometimes I am not that good at taking breaks. Most of my activities switched to virtual since the pandemic. Even though I spent more time at home, I kept feeling fatigued. I recently discovered that Stanford University developed the “Zoom Exhaustion and Fatigue” scale (ZEF) and my scores helped me realize that I needed to pause and to embrace self-care strategies, my Sabbath time.

The pandemic taught me to be aware of what matters in life and not take anything for granted. Sure, I was able to see everyone using video calls, but nothing compares to being in person. I was able to hug my mom and my dad again and meet my niece Sofia for the first time. All my family in Mexico filled my spirit with joy.

Now, I am intentionally carving time to walk outdoors even if I have a lot of work, devote time to count my blessings, meditate and pray. I read books that allow me to travel with my imagination to other places in the world and enjoy sitting in my backyard contemplating God’s creation in nature.

The pandemic is still here however, disproportionately affecting the Latinx community. My mom always reminds me “si quieres hacer un buen trabajo, date tiempo para afilar tu hacha” (in order to do a good job, a craftsman must allow time to sharpen the axe). Sharpening my

tools means not to forget my daily Sabbath time to be at peace. During fall, practicing good self-care strategies will allow me to be a better board member for the families and children we serve at Corazón a Corazón. With a constantly renewed spirit, I will be better at accompanying our community by seeing opportunities and learn from challenges.

“Look not forward
with anxious care
but upward in a
spirit of Faith and
Hope.”

– Mother Caroline Friess



Henry's grandkids at the beach.

Henry Kornstedt

Director of Technology

AMSSND

Normally I find it hard to shut down completely. Part of my job is to be available to leadership and my team when needed. There are times when I feel it is necessary to take time for myself, to unwind and reflect on what’s important. This summer, thanks in part to my dedicated team, I had the chance

to disconnect. I also thank my poor cell phone service 😊. For me, Sabbath time includes relaxation, fun, and family and friend connections.

I’m not normally a beach person, but I managed to have a couple days of relaxation. It had a profound relaxing effect on me because I’m normally attached to my phone. To spend time just chilling out and taking in the sound and feel of the ocean has a great effect on my spirit and soul. I saw God’s blessing in my life through an earlier trip. It was a trip away with family that included much time with my grandkids.

My grandkids keep me active. I never want them to think a phone is more important than time spent together. They are truly a blessing to me and to spend time with them playing in the sand and surfing helps me to see the joy in life. Times like these, I feel God is telling

me it is ok to take time away. Coming back from this downtime helped me to strengthen two points for my role as a department leader. The first is to ensure that I give each member of my team the support they need for time away from work and time with family. The second is that I continue to take time to reflect and withdraw. A true Sabbath time helps reenergize me for ministry.

“You have made us for
Yourself, O Lord, and
our heart is restless
until it rests in You.”

– St. Augustine, Confessions

(Continued from page 2)



Laurie (left) with her family on vacation.

Laurie Lindauer

*Communications Manager
SSND Collaborative*

Timing is everything. As a wife, mother, homeowner and full-time SSND communications manager, juggling the demands of life takes a great deal of time management. I think God knew this when he commanded us to “keep holy the Sabbath day.” It seems that even before modern times, it was recognized that setting aside time to rest and renew – to get away from the chaos of activity – was important. Jesus, too, invited his dis-

ciples, after they had been so busy they were even forgetting to eat, to “Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while,” (Mark 6:31).

When I first learned about the “Claiming the Fire Within” retreat hosted by Ministry Services, I excitedly marked the dates on my calendar. It had been several years since I afforded myself the opportunity to make a retreat. The timing wasn’t right, I’d tell myself, always having an excuse to not commit. But this one fell just past the completion dates for several major projects, and right before a planned family vacation – perfect timing.

Although the retreat ended up being virtual, it still provided the experience of taking time out, letting go of the busy-ness and prioritizing what’s important. I am so grateful to the retreat staff for the creative prayer services, guided meditations and reflection questions and to the other participants for sharing

their insights. With a solid focus on Blessed Theresa and Mother Caroline, the retreat provided me with a new passion to “Trust and Dare” and embark on new adventures.

At the conclusion of the retreat, I interviewed for a new position as Communications Manager for the SSND North American Vocation Team. I could feel the rewards of the previous days and could successfully claim the fire within. It was definitely time well spent.

“When the bell calls to prayer, recognize it as the invitation of the divine bridegroom to rest in his heart ... there to gather new strength, new comfort, and new courage.”

– Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, *Letter #5327*



Greta, the German Shepherd – DOG or GOD?

Yvonne DeBruin

*Director of Ministry Services
AMSSND*

Sabbath-keeping has become more difficult, as the business of life has increased. Perhaps the “sheltering-in-place” order of the pandemic gave us back some Sabbath moments. I, too, am not exempt from giving into the temptation to busy

myself over the weekends. One way I keep Sabbath is making an annual retreat. I could not go last summer due to pandemic-related closings of retreat houses, so I was more eager to go this year. I intentionally look for places rich in nature to experience creation and my Creator in the most unadulterated way possible. I gain perspective and it allows me to look at life and ministry from a distance, looking at my reality as God would look upon it.

The retreat theme for this summer focused on the struggles in the life and ministry of Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, which shed light on struggles in my own life. The experience of creation lightened what could otherwise be a heavy subject. One evening, as I took a walk into the fields after dinner, I was surprised by a German Shepherd who ran away from home, was lost, and sought the safety of my company. Reflecting on the encounter with

the DOG (reading GOD backwards) was an inspiring play with both word and God.

If you ask me what a retreat is about, I say retreats are ‘play-time with God’. God knows the demands of ministry and life, and lures me into playfulness, may it be with words, creation or finding refreshment in a pool. I discovered the Sabbath time of retreat as essential for renewing my commitment to ministry, deepening my relationship with God and gaining clarity in my evolving call and vision for my life and the ministry God entrusted to me.

“Above all trust in the slow work of God. Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be.”

– Teilhard de Chardin, *Hearts on Fire*



Reflection Questions



What does the term “Sabbath time” evoke in you?
How has “taking Sabbath” this summer initiated your heart
for change the fall and winter seasons may bring?



Upcoming Events



October 22-23, 2021

Ministry Formation Session III (Virtual)

November 9 or 10, 2021

New Employee Orientation (Virtual)

November 12-13, 2021

Virtual Retreat

[Transforming Spirituality in a Time of Plague](#) (Carmelite Nuns of Baltimore)

March 4-5, 2022

Ministry Formation Session IV (Onsite/Virtual TBD)

June 28-30, 2022

Proclaiming the Fire Within Retreat (Onsite/Virtual TBD)

*Those who previously attended the Claiming the Fire Within Retreat are eligible



Resources



Claiming the Fire Within 2021 Recordings

Blessed Theresa: Risking in Faith, Presenter: Sister Joan Penzenstader, SSND

Mother Caroline: The Work of Unity, Presenter: Suzy Blackburn

The Spirit (Fire) of Love Gives Everything, Presenter: Sister Charmaine Krohe, SSND

2021 Fall Board Address - Foundation Day (Sr. Charmaine Krohe, Provincial Leader, 7 min 40 sec)

Building Social Justice in the Classroom (Teaching for Change)

Reconciling God, Creation and Humanity – An Ignatian Examen (Ecological Examen)

The Time is Right for Organizational Learning (Stanford Social Innovation Review)

7 ways to refresh your Sabbath (U.S. Catholic)

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Yvonne DeBruin
Director of Ministry Services
(410)377-7774 x1153
ydebruin@amssnd.org

Patrick Laorden
Associate Director of Ministry Services
(203)762-4113
plaorden@amssnd.org