



# PACEM in TERRIS

P E A C E O N E A R T H

A FRANCISCAN CENTER FOR SPIRITUALITY

## *Called by God*

"Called by God" was a favorite phrase of Shirley Wanchena's, particularly when she visited with hermit-guests. During such conversations, hermits often commented on how satisfying it must be to see her vision for Pacem in Terris realized and the dream so beautifully fulfilled. Invariably, Shirley would comment, "Wait a minute; this was not my idea!" And she would explain that it was God who called for an environment in which his people could come and be alone with him. "God simply asked me if I would do it," Shirley insisted, "and I replied that I would try."

Since that historic moment of initial call and response and through the myriad phases of creating Pacem into the reality it is today, God continues to call and many continue to respond echoing Shirley's "I will try!" From the early dreamers and builders to the present caretakers, staff and hermits, God still calls!

Over the years God has faithfully called his people to come and be alone with him in the silence and solitude of the hermitage. It is not unusual for hermit-guests to witness God's special call to them, individually, to come. It's all about God's initiative, God's call.

Since the opening of the first Pacem hermitages in 1988, God has called his people to come away from the overwhelming stresses and exhausting pace of life to holy rest. This gentle call is heard in cities and countrysides, through offices and board rooms, in schools and stadiums, in neighborhoods and high-rises: "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy burdened and I will give you rest..." (Matthew 11:28...30) The rest that God gives is full of love, compassion and understanding. Meeting God in the silence and solitude of a simple hermitage, free from all life's usual pressures and distractions, brings deep healing, forgiveness and restful peace to one's body, soul and spirit. Over the years, here at Pacem, we have observed this transformation in hermit-guest after hermit-guest. Now we clearly understand why it is that God calls for such a holy place like Pacem in Terris.

Is it time for you? Do you hear God's gentle call?

*But be Holy Ones  
in your entire way of life,  
as He who has called you is holy.*

*1 Peter 1-15*



# Pacem Spotlight

Many staff, former staff, board members and prayer partners gathered on February 18 for a special celebration marking Father Tim Nolan's 50th anniversary of priesthood. Upon his retirement from the Church of St. Paul in Ham Lake, where he had served many years as founder and pastor, he was invited to live at Pacem and share in its ministry. As he reminisces, "it felt like I had died and gone to heaven." Perhaps not heaven, exactly, but Father continues to savor his post-retirement here, about which he says, "what a gift, what a blessing to live and serve in this wonderful place of peace, caring for hermit-guests who come hungry for God and eager to pray!"



---

## Blessing Prayer for Pacem in Terris

*"We pray, O God, in your compassion,  
bless all the pilgrims who hear the call  
to journey to Pacem in Terris.*

*Holy Spirit greet them and embrace them with your peace;  
nourish them with the truth of your word,  
and transform their lives with your intimate love.*

*May their renewed lives bring them and  
their loved ones untold blessings."*

# Called by Name

For all its moments of beauty and wonder, life, at other moments, can leave us anxious, hollow, and disorientated, which are not bad to feel - uncomfortable, yes - but not bad to feel. These feelings cause us to search for lost joy, lost love, lost confidence, and lost meaning.

Mary Magdalene illustrates this “lostness” poignantly in her encounter with the resurrected Jesus. The touching episode which is recorded in John 20: 11-18, also mirrors what many who come to Pacem experience.

Witnessing the crucifixion of Jesus had seriously shaken Mary Magdalene’s world. Overcome by grief, she went to His tomb to seek His body. Mary Magdalene was a passionate woman, very aware of the pleasures of life and deeply entrenched in the sensible world. Caught up in her grief, she sought Jesus the man who died, not Jesus, the Son of God who came to save her and all of humanity. Steeped in this sensual and emotional world, Mary Magdalene misses the supernatural around her. Two angels greet her in the empty tomb, but she doesn’t find that extraordinary!

She turns and sees Jesus, but mistakes him for the gardener (verse 15) because she was looking for His lifeless body, not His resurrected one! How many times are we also blinded by grief, anxiety, stress, or the onslaught of communication streaming through our devices? How often, in the swirl of activity and noise, do we fail to recognize the Lord standing before us?



It’s in the silence of the garden early in the morning that Mary hears Jesus’ call. He calls her by her name with warmth and eagerness, “Mary!” And she immediately recognizes His voice and responds, “Rabboni!” (verse 16) Grief, confusion, and sadness vanish and joy, hope, and love fill her soul. Her temptation is to cling to Jesus, but that perfect joy is for heaven, for Jesus tells her “do not cling to me,” but to go share the Good News with his brothers and sisters.

Are the strains of life blinding you to the supernatural and leaving you anxious, hollow, or disoriented? Do you feel called to listen to His voice in the stillness?

Let Pacem in Terris be that peaceful garden where, in the silence, the Lord Jesus, triumphant and glorious, calls your name.

---

## With Grateful Hearts

We thank you for faithful support throughout the year. Closing the gap between our hermitage donations and the true cost of a hermitage stay is an ongoing need. Hermit guests of all faiths who are students or in some kind of ministry often are unable to make a full contribution ~ yet the fruits of their faith and prayer reach out to the local and global community.

Thank you for helping them and us!

Looking ahead...Please remember us when you are writing or updating your will. Making a bequest in your will or naming Pacem in Terris as a beneficiary of an insurance policy would leave a legacy of your personal love and faith. Future generations of hermit-guests would be blessed by your generosity. They may not be able to thank you personally, but God will!.

The legal title is: Pacem in Terris  
26399 Highway 47 NW  
Isanti, Mn. 55040

# ★ Hermit Testimonials

★ “I just wanted to thank you for making a place like Pacem In Terris possible and available. I did not leave Pacem the same person. I know my faith and relationship with God and the world have been enhanced.”

★ “I feel as if I’ve discovered a new definition of peace!”

★ “Just a note to let you know what a wonderful and special prayer experience it was for me staying at your hermitage. The silence was golden and the solitude enfolding – an experience I will return to have again.”

★ “Thank you again for everything. It was a beautiful day in a sacred space.”

★ “What an amazing blessing it has been for me to still myself in the presence of God, free from any distraction. From the moment I entered this place I felt peace flooding my soul.”

## TAKE NOTE

**A Hermitage Retreat  
makes a great present!**

**We have gift certificates available for any  
length of stay.**

**Call 763-444-6408 for more details!**

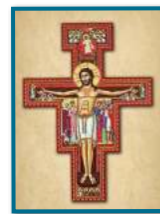
## The Call of St. Francis ‘Rebuild My Church’

In 1204, as Francis of Assisi was passing by the dilapidated church of San Damiano he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to stop and pray.

While praying in front of the crucified Christ on the San Damiano Cross, Francis heard Christ tell him three times, “Francis, *go and repair my house which, as you see, is falling into ruin.*” Francis, momentarily unable to move due to fear, came to his senses and prepared to obey the command. Francis started to repair San Damiano Church by physically placing new stones in its foundation until *Christ revealed to him that his mission was to renew, and, with the Holy Spirit’s help, breathe new life into “the people of God,” the Church.*

With permission from the Pope, Francis started three orders: the Friars Minor, (1209), the Poor Clares, (1212), and the Secular Franciscans formerly known as the Brothers and Sisters of Penance, (1221) These are referred to as the First, Second, and Third Order of St. Francis. Thousands of Franciscans have served Our Lord and His Church world-wide for 808 years thanks to Francis of Assisi’s obedience.

Today, the call of the Cross continues to remain a challenge. Pope Francis has remained faithful to his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, by taking on the challenge to “rebuild the church” and renew the people of God. Christ is the cornerstone and we are the living stones of the Church. Evangelization is the key to renewal as the Holy Spirit breathes new life into the Church.



*“We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, for by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”*