

# The Flame

News & Events From The Cenacle Autumn 2021



Welcome to another rotation of seasons! As I was walking down Fullerton Parkway on the way to Lake Michigan, I said hello to one of my favorite trees – Gingko. I noticed that its fan-shaped leaves, just out fresh a few months ago, are already tinged on their edges, letting me know that Autumn is imminent, that Change is in the air. Change – the constant in our lives, whether dramatic or subtle – affects all the dimensions of our lives. We know this. It is marked off by babies being born, birthdays celebrated, graduations, new jobs, change of residence, loved ones dying and other events that register the passage of Time.



This is all a preamble to say that just as you have had to make changes in your life due to a shift in energy, a clarity of vision, fulfilling one's dreams, or family size, so, we, too, are undergoing many life changes for some of these same reasons. In fact, all of religious life is experiencing a major renovation, a call to something new. Religious life has stayed the same for so long that we have forgotten that it, too, is a living organism and, in fact, changes.

For the past four years, we have been reviewing our ministry, exploring alternative and suitable lifestyles, and praying for vision and discernment regarding that “something new” God is doing in our lives: see Isaiah 43:18-19. We have gradually been letting go of that which no longer serves the ministry or supports a life dedicated to prayer and contemplation. A great surrender has been in progress, following in the footsteps of our foundress, St. Thérèse Couderc. This is one foundational element of our charism. It is not only in her footsteps we trod, of course, because she followed in Jesus' footsteps. Attentive to this call, we have been listening deeply and responding in good faith. The Spirit has been with us every step of the way.

The journey of letting go and transformation unfolds thus. Consequently, and to our deepest disappointment, we have not been able to welcome you into the heartspace of the Cenacle. In August of 2017, we lost our retreat center in Houston to Hurricane Harvey. In 2020, partly due to COVID, we have sold our beloved “Ronky”. And now, again, partly due to COVID, we are in the process of selling our Retreat and Conference Center in Chicago. The other reason for the change is, like a significant percentage of religious congregations in North America, although our enthusiasm for the charism and dedication to the Gospel is unwavering, our energies are waning with no new life following behind us.

With the sale of these last three retreat centers, we have felt called to live out our mission in and around these geographic areas – Houston, Ronkonkoma, Long Island and Chicago. Many sisters have already relocated so that they can be a contemplative Cenacle presence, visible and accessible with and among the people. The last few will be moving from Fullerton Parkway to a Chicago residence upon the completion of the sale of the house.

Although Mother Thérèse, after years of practice, could say “how sweet it is,” referring to surrendering oneself to the Good God, we are still practicing and still in need of your prayers and support. We would be grateful for your on-going companionship on this awesome leg of the journey. Life is different already and it continues to change. We thank you for all your support and encouragement over the years and we look forward to seeing you by way of our new and emerging ministry. For now, it is mostly on-line, yet addresses the same needs, as we always have done: days of prayer, directed retreats, spiritual direction and other opportunities to feed your soul. Please pay a visit to our website at [cenaclesisters.org](http://cenaclesisters.org) for more information.

I want to thank Sr. Marguerite for allowing me to use her column to let you know we are still around in spite of many changes. She will return with the next edition of *The Flame*. May this season of grand changes be gentle upon you and bring you deep contentment and joy! You are always in our prayers!

Your sister in Christ,

*Pamela J. Falkowski, r.c.*

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Province Leadership



# New Online Programs and Retreat Offerings!

## IGNATIAN RETREATS

**OCT 14 - DISCERNMENT** (10:30am CST)  
(*\$20 / 90 Minutes / Joan McGovern facilitating*)

**NOV 18 - THE EXAMEN** (10:30am CST)  
(*\$20 / 90 minutes / Joan McGovern facilitating*)

Visit [cenaclesisters.org/retreats-program](http://cenaclesisters.org/retreats-program) for more information & registration on these and other retreats.

### Judith Valente & Lee Prescott

In November and January we are pleased to host yet again two engaging and popular facilitators, Benedictine Oblate Judith Valente (11/10/21 "Our Great African American Spiritual Guides") and Cenacle Auxiliary Dr. Deborah Lee Prescott (1/12/21 "Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography" & 1/26/21 on Catholics who resisted the Nazi Germany).

### John Philip Newell (11/20/21)

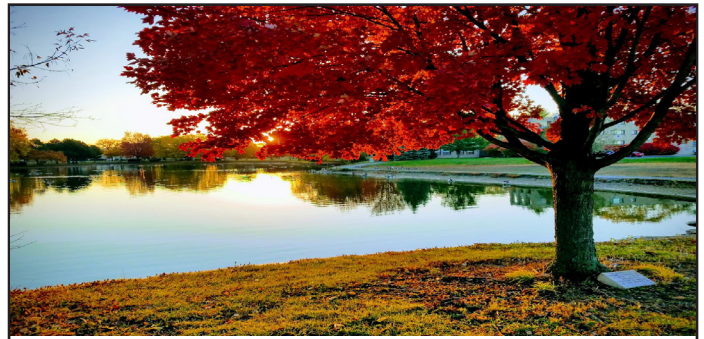
We are finalizing an online event with John Philip Newell (Earth & Soul) for Saturday November 20, 2021. For more information please check our website or email us at [ministry@cenaclesisters.org](mailto:ministry@cenaclesisters.org)

## **ADVENT RETREAT** *Justice Surging Like Waters* **December 4, 2021 (Online)** **9:00 - 12:00 (Central) \$30 per person**

As leaders in our communities engaged in personal and professional work of antiracism we recognize the importance of setting time aside to nourish our bodies and our minds in this work. This 3-hour workshop will create space and time for leaders to examine their own experience and to assist them to continue to work for racial justice in their communities and parishes.

- Take a Christ-centered approach in creating and fostering community in our shared space among other disciples committed to antiracism work.
- Learn techniques and strategies as a leader to care for yourself in this work and continue empowering others on their journeys.

Facilitators, from the Archdiocese of Chicago:  
Dr. Angela Swain & Clarissa Aljentera



## **CENTERING PRAYER** *Jackie Herbach, facilitating*

The Cenacle is pleased to continue to offer Centering Prayer online! After a successful series this summer, our free, live and online, Centering Prayer returns this autumn beginning on Monday October 18 and every Monday thereafter through December 6, 2021.

To learn about Centering Prayer, view Jackie's welcome video, or register for this weekly 50 minute online program, please visit our website: [www.cenaclesisters.org/retreats-programs](http://www.cenaclesisters.org/retreats-programs)

## **FROM SURRENDER TO GOODNESS**



Thank you! We were so very pleased to receive so many responses to our summer newsletter, where we asked: **In light of the Covid-19 Pandemic, when and how have you found yourself actively or intentionally surrendering yourself to God?**

We compiled many of the responses into a video, which you can watch on our YouTube channel. In light of the note from Sr. Pam, we would like to ask you a second question. You can send responses of no more than 300 words to [surrender@cenaclesisters.org](mailto:surrender@cenaclesisters.org). Our Ministry Office will anonymously compile the stories so we can share them and pray with them, together. The question is this:

**When or where have the simple, profound encounters of Goodness occurred in your life over the past year?**



THE CENACLE

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