

# The ARK

SEPTEMBER 2010  
VOLUME 21,  
EDITION 4

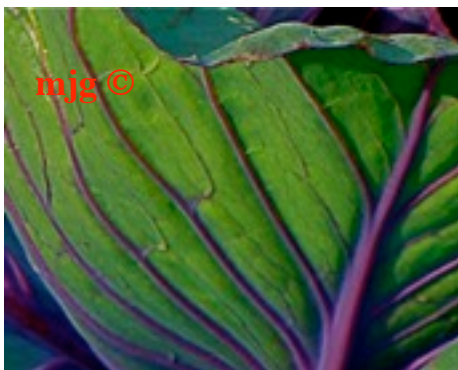
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**Not all families look the same,  
but each family is very  
important, both to its own  
members and to the survival of  
all of society.**



**Sandhill Cranes  
at Pheasant Branch Nature  
Conservancy, in Madison Wisconsin.  
Observed just before the start of the  
2010 AAIF Biennial Conference.**

The American Association of Interchurch Families Biennial Conference took place at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Wisconsin in July 2010



Red Cabbage in the garden at Holy Wisdom Monastery

**Interchurch Families:  
Christian Unity  
Made Visible in our  
Households**



**The First Report after the July 2010  
AAIF Biennial Conference held  
at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Wisconsin  
"Learning from Benedictine Spirituality" with an emphasis  
on the family, community and society**

**AAIF Conference  
Highlights**



**2010**

**Make plans now to attend the next  
AAIF Biennial Conference  
to be held in 2012**

**Please see [www.aifusa.org](http://www.aifusa.org) for on-going updates**

Dr. Lynn Turner of Marquette University gives a presentation about communication in families as one of the Keynote Speakers for the 2010 Biennial AAIF Conference at Holy Wisdom Monastery



## Communication in the Family

presented by Dr. Lynn Turner

Each family unit has its own set of rituals and practices. Language patterns are unique to each family. In this sense, all marriages may be considered an intercultural, if not, an interfaith marriage. It can be a big source of conflict for any new family to blend traditions. All marriages are a negotiation of two cultures. All marriages are intercultural and create a new culture. Even men and women come from two different cultures.

In 2010, we have moved from an institutional marriage to a companion marriage. In a companion marriage, your partner becomes your friend and soulmate. In earlier times, in an institutional

Apple Orchard at Holy Wisdom Monastery



marriage, the perspective was simply a need to provide children for that marriage. If we live longer, it is more difficult to find a life long soul mate. Our world is shrinking; we travel more now and further. We may tend to have a more global perspective.

By the 1990's there had

**"In order to unite with one another, we must love one another; in order to love one another, we must know one another, we must go and meet one another."**

~ Cardinal Mercier

### Sharing Our Stories:

If you are wondering if you should or should not plan to attend one of the upcoming biennial AAIF Conferences (the next one will be in 2012) please consider how much can be learned through the informal process of sharing our stories in a relaxed atmosphere. Many times, it is during the pre or post tours or times of relaxation where some of our most poignant and humorous stories surface. These moments are not to be missed. **Have you ever wondered under what circumstances a four year old interchurch child might be most likely to ask a parent what the difference is between Santa Claus and God or Jesus? The only way to find out the answer to such a question is through the AAIF Biennial Conferences.**

become a greater increase in marriages between people who seemed to not share a similar background according to a study done by Hughes and Dickson. However, the way we are looking at the figures may not tell the whole story. There may be other dimensions to consider, for example, a person's level of commitment to their own faith and/or their willingness to consider marrying someone from another denomination. Where the couple has married within the same denomination when the levels of commitment change within their denomination they then become a form of a mixed marriage.

Religious orientation, although appearing to be from different denominations, can be intrinsically important to both spouses so that they actually have that in common. There may be some extrinsic interests, such as social justice, for example, that the couple share in common that work to bond them together. Other factors, like having a strong and supportive social network of friends and family is beneficial to their relationship. People who come from different traditions may not get the support needed from their church of origin.

Bringing different traditions into the marriage needs to be negotiated. This is done slowly. With dialogue even the meaning for words

should be compared and contrasted for their understood meaning. Avoid mind reading. Avoid acting in isolation.

As one example, Dr. Turner explained that she is concerned about having multiple TV sets in a home. No one will ever learn how to negotiate if they have more than one TV set in their home growing up.

Find your common ground, what you do agree on. Speak in non-defensive ways. Use relationship reminders such as, "You know I love you, but I need ..." However, Dr. Turner cautions us not to throw out the entire list of grievances all at once.

Repeat back what you heard the other person say that was

hurtful, and ask for a different action in the future. Use "I" messages such as "I felt" to help to diffuse the situation. Sometimes it will be necessary to ask when it would be a good time to talk without distractions.

Working toward "Compassionate Communication," acknowledge 80% of the time and talk 20% of the time. Listen respectfully, dwell in difference peacefully, or find a third way. "You may not always get the results you have set out to get", Dr. Lynn Turner cautioned, "but that is the nature of communication."

~ M.J. Glauber



Father George Kilcourse and Dr. Daniel Olsen

# 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference

## Opening Plenary: Benedictine Women of Madison



Sister Lynne speaks to AAIF Members on Friday evening - The other sisters spoke as well.

### Gathering Knowledge from the **Benedictine Women of Madison**

From July 9 through July 11, 2010, The American Association of Interchurch Families (AAIF) officially held their biennial conference on the grounds of Holy Wisdom Monastery of the Benedictine Women of Madison. Some of us arrived a day early and left a day or two late so that we could spend more time together enjoying the area.

On Friday evening, the Benedictine Women of Madison spoke about their journey toward the creation of this award winning monastery building and the creation of an ecumenical community. I am including links from their website and other sources to show their journey.

<http://www.benedictinewomen.org/index.html>

<http://www.benedictinewomen.org/downloads/Benedictine%20Spirituality%20in%20the%2021st%20Century.pdf>

[http://www.benedictinewomen.org/care/care\\_envhistory.html](http://www.benedictinewomen.org/care/care_envhistory.html)

[http://www.benedictinewomen.org/care/care\\_green\\_building.html](http://www.benedictinewomen.org/care/care_green_building.html)

<http://www.buildinggreen.com/auth/article.cfm/2010/5/1/Benedictine-Monastery-Receives-Highest-LEED-Score/>

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/US/04/25/green.monastery/index.html>

<http://www.sacred-destinations.com/usa/holy-wisdom-monastery>

[http://www.benedictinewomen.org/care/care\\_in\\_the\\_news.html](http://www.benedictinewomen.org/care/care_in_the_news.html)

<http://www.homedesignfind.com/green/benedictine-monastery-wins-highest-leed-platinum-in-usa/>

I believe that the Benedictine Women of Madison have done an excellent job of explaining their journey on their own webpages. What they have created is beautiful; this serves as a wonderful role model for all of us. Photos of their facilities are included at the links above.

Rather than strictly re-telling their story, I will try to take the lessons I gathered from their journey that can be used in interchurch family situations and share them with you in a later issue of the ARK.

### AAIF City Chapters: Listening Project

Are you interested in meeting and talking to other interchurch families in your city between AAIF Biennial Conferences?

PLEASE SEE [WWW.AIFUSA.ORG](http://WWW.AIFUSA.ORG) FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

PLEASE CONTACT:

[AAIF.co.chair@gmail.com](mailto:AAIF.co.chair@gmail.com)

or Laura & Franz Green at

[fandlgreen@cox.net](mailto:fandlgreen@cox.net)

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO FORM A CITY CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA OR HOW TO FIND THE AAIF CITY CHAPTER CLOSEST TO YOU.

PLEASE CONTACT:

[MJGLAUBER@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MJGLAUBER@GMAIL.COM) FOR THE ARK - AAIF LISTENING PROJECT MATERIALS TO BE USED BY YOUR AAIF CITY CHAPTERS.

Sharing meals made from fresh garden ingredients



# Ecumenical Corner

from April 2010

## Harvesting the Fruits

Cardinal Walter Kasper, the president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, has recently published a book in which he tries to reap the fruit of over forty years of ecumenical dialogue. He believes that is the most important task before the Christian Churches today.

What prompted Cardinal Kasper to write the book was the fact that the many dialogues in which the churches are involved have produced rich fruits which often are not known to many people, even clergy, of the churches. After so many years and so much good work by bishops, theologians and members of the dialogue teams, it is time to

come to know what has been produced and what it means to the goal of Christian unity.

His book concentrates on the dialogues in which the Catholic Church has been a partner. These include the bi-lateral dialogues such as the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogue, the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue (ARCIC), the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue, the Pentecostal-Roman Catholic Dialogue, and so forth. It also includes the multi-lateral dialogues between the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches (the Working Group).

There are other



Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS speaking at the 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Wisconsin

dialogues at the national and local level, but the Cardinal's book does not cover these numerous dialogues.

### What are the fruits?

Prominent among the fruits of the dialogue are the Justification by Grace in Faith (JDJF) of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic International Commission which was approved by the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican in October 1999. This agreed statement resolved in substance the major obstacle to

Continued on the next page "Harvesting The Fruits"



Either formally or informally important information is shared.



Time to enjoy being with other interchurch families who are now long-time friends or the chance to meet new friends during the 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference.

unity between Lutherans and Roman Catholics since the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Luther himself said that if the Vatican and Lutherans were ever able to bridge their differences in this area, there would be no reason for "us" to be Lutheran. The nature of this historic breakthrough would take considerable space to explain, but it is one of the outstanding achievements of the modern ecumenical movement. It has changed the ground work of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue as well as those of other dialogues between Rome and the churches of the Reformation.

A second very important dialogue with rich fruits is the Anglican-Roman Catholic International dialogue (ARCIC). The "Final Report" focused on three major issues dividing Anglicans and Roman Catholics, namely Eucharist, Ordination and Authority. These issues are so important that Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, who served as the president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity after Cardinal Bea, said in a famous sermon delivered at St. Mary's in London, that if Anglicans and Roman Catholics could agree on the two first issues (Eucharist and Orders) there would be a "new context" to explore the issue of the validity of Anglican Orders today. (Pope Leo XIII had declared these orders invalid in his famous "Apostolicae Curae" encyclical of 1896.) Both the Lambeth Conference in 1988

and the Vatican in 1994 approved "The Final Report".

In the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogues (there are two major dialogues, the bishop's international dialogue, and the bishops and theologians' international dialogue). the focus has been on the nature of the Church and sacraments, especially Eucharist and Orders. They are important theologically and in the promotion of greater unity between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox communions.

## Conclusion

What does all of this progress mean for people in the pews? It means first of all, the Catholic Church is very serious about promoting Christian unity. Pope John Paul II said it is a pastoral priority for himself and for the Catholic Church. It also means, as the document on Christian unity of the Second Vatican Council, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (The Reintegration of Unity) says, Christian unity is everyone's business. We all need to do all we can through work and prayer to move this important part of the church's mission to fruition. It means that "reception" of the ecumenical work approved by the churches should be thoughtfully integrated into the lives of all Christians.

Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS

*Re-printed with permission from Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS, who regularly writes and distributes: "Ecumenical Corner." Blessed Sacrament Father Ernest Falardeau is totally dedicated to the cause of ecumenism – dialogue and cooperation among Christian churches. He has dedicated much of his life and ministry to working in the field. Fr. Falardeau was appointed to the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue by Edward Cardinal Egan of the Archdiocese of New York.*

*We promote unity in all our activities: within our Christian communities, among denominations that share the same baptism, and among everyone who works towards world unity. (Rule of Life, 38)*  
- Ernest R. Falardeau, SSS, S.T.D.

The prairie in bloom in July 2010



**"How do interchurch couples decide how to tithe, especially when one spouse is staying home and not working, while their children are infants?"**  
**Have interchurch couples given any feed back on this topic?"**  
~ interchurch spouse

In the last edition of the ARK the practice of  
“Lectio Divina” was introduced  
Here let us continue by

Tall Grass Prairie



## Ecumenical Corner June, 2010

### The National Workshop on Christian Unity

Reprinted with permission from  
Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS

The National Workshop on Christian Unity is celebrated each year for ecumenical officers who serve Catholic Archdioceses and Dioceses and judicatories of other Christian Churches as well as executives of ecumenical agencies at the national, regional and local levels. It is regularly attended by three hundred to four hundred persons both clergy and lay. The Catholic Church has a national association of ecumenical officers presently

Ecumenical Corner NWCU  
continued on the next page

## Practicing ‘Lectio Divina’ using Psalm 148

### *Laudate Dominum*

- 1 Hallelujah!  
Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise him in the heights.
- 2 Praise him, all you angels of his;  
praise him, all his host.
- 3 Praise him, sun and moon;  
praise him, all you shining stars.
- 4 Praise him, heaven of heavens,  
and you waters above the heavens.
- 5 Let them praise the Name of the  
LORD; for he commanded, and they  
were created.
- 6 He made them stand fast for ever  
and ever; he gave them a law which  
shall not pass away.
- 7 Praise the LORD from the earth,  
you sea-monsters and all deeps;
- 8 Fire and hail, snow and fog,  
tempestuous wind, doing his will;
- 9 Mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars;
- 10 Wild beasts and all cattle,  
creeping things and winged birds;
- 11 Kings of the earth and all  
peoples, princes and all rulers of  
the world;
- 12 Young men and maidens, old  
and young together.
- 13 Let them praise the Name of  
the LORD, for his Name only is  
exalted, his splendor is over  
earth and heaven.

14 He has raised up strength for his  
people and praise for all his loyal  
servants, the children of Israel, a  
people who are near him.  
Hallelujah!



- Take the time to read over Psalm 148 several times.
- Find something that draws your attention or that sparkles in it for you.
- Spend some quiet time thinking about the lines that sparkle for you.
- Write a prayer or a statement to share about this psalm and how God has been present in your daily lived experience as interchurch families. Do you see any connections with you, God and your lived experience in an interchurch family?
- Please share this with other Ark readers, if this pleases you. We would like to read your prayers and your reflections. Please send your prayers or reflections to [mjglauber@gmail.com](mailto:mjglauber@gmail.com)



Native prairie flowers in bloom at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Wisconsin during the 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference.

called CADEIO (The Catholic Association of Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers.) Other churches have similar associations: EDEIO (Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers) LERN (Lutheran Ecumenical Representatives Network). Methodists and Presbyterians have their organizations. I have reported on some of these National Workshops in the Ecumenical Corner, and it would be useful to report on this year's gathering in Tampa, FL, April 19-22, especially since it seemed to reach an important landmark in the ecumenical movement.

The theme of the NWCU was **"You are Witnesses to these things"** - like many previous themes, the same as that of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year's overriding emphasis was reception of ecumenical agreed statements that have been formally accepted by the churches in bi-lateral or multi-lateral agreements. It also encompasses other significant progress in the ecumenical dialogues of the Christian churches whether with Orthodox Churches or Churches of the Reformation.

### The National Program

The NWCU is organized by a national planning board whose

*Growing up, I had lived exclusively in a Roman Catholic culture. Nothing had prepared me for even the possibility that I might marry someone who might be Protestant. Being in an interchurch marriage has opened up my understanding to greater possibilities for Christian Unity and how the Roman Catholic Church desires Christian Unity."*  
- Interchurch Wife

Richard  
and Nancy  
House talk  
with Father  
Ernest  
Falardeau  
during the  
2010 AAIF  
Conference



members serve the Christian churches at the national level and make decisions concerning the location and program of each National Workshop. This year's program was especially rich and highlighted a number of prominent ecumenists from the Christian churches. Among them were the Workshop Opening Service Homilist, the Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church in the United States, Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, GA, president of the US Catholic Bishops' Ecumenical Commission, Reverend Dr. Bruce Chilton, Professor of Religion at Bard College who led the two Bible Study Sessions, giving first century background to the Jewish Passover and the Christian Eucharist. Other speakers included Rev. Dr. William G. Rusch who spoke on Local Reception and Rev. Dr. Tom Best who spoke on Doing Mission Ecumenically.

Archbishop Wilton Gregory's presentation was very well received. He clarified a number of recent documents from the Vatican and gave their context. Among the documents he explained were the Roman Catholic-Lutheran joint declaration on justification by faith (JDJF), the papal "motu proprio" Anglicanorum Coetus which describes the conditions under which Anglicans might become Roman Catholics while preserving some elements of the Anglican Tradition. Archbishop Gregory also stressed the background to the Holy Office's statement on sister churches and communion between the churches of the Reformation and the Catholic Church.

### Network Programs

Among the workshops presented in Tampa, a number stressed

## Prairie and Hardwood Savanna Restoration at Madison, Wisconsin



**Ecumenical Corner NWCU**  
continued from the previous page

the reception of ecumenical documents. Father Jared Wicks, SJ, for example, at the CADEIO Luncheon explored some of the fruits to be gleaned from the several dialogues at the international level which are an affirmation of a common faith on baptism, Eucharist and – with some reservations – authority in the churches. Joseph Small, a Presbyterian Ecumenist with a long record of scholarly work, conducted a workshop on the impact of the World Council of Churches' study on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, in which he pointed out the great care with which Presbyterians preserve the ancient Christian tradition regarding ordination



and the celebrants of the Eucharist.

### Conclusion

It is difficult to measure the kind of progress that takes place between one national workshop and another. But there was a general consensus in Tampa that significant ground had been gained during recent years – especially the last fifty years – and so it is time to gather the fruits of that progress at the local levels. Such reception requires an open mind and heart as well as some study of the results of the various dialogues. As Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Commission for Promoting Christian Unity, has indicated, we have reached another level or plateau from which to launch further progress toward the goal of Christian unity and full communion. God bless our efforts and our prayers.

Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS

## Pheasant Branch



## Nature Conservancy



AAIF Members made a pre-conference tour together of this nature preserve in July 2010

Interchurch Families meet.

A meal is shared

.....at IHOP.

The pancakes, eggs and bacon are tasty.  
The time together is priceless.



## The Significance of the Name "Interchurch"

By Daniel J. Olsen, Ph.D

The recently re-instituted R.C.I.A. process, whereby the Catholic Church welcomes new members into its community, has much to teach us regarding the issue of properly naming interchurch marriages. Baptized non-Catholic Christians seeking to become full members of the Catholic community are called "Candidates for full communion" and their process of formation is to be grounded in their prior status as baptized members of the Body of Christ. They are not "better" than "catechumens" who remain unbaptized; however, the theological significance of their baptism dictates that they be identified differently so that appropriate attention is paid to their ongoing spiritual life within the Christian community.

I bring this understanding of the meaningfulness of language with me as I wade through the confusing language that continues to be applied to marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics. As recently as Paul VI's 1970

landmark text *Matrimonia mixta*, mixed marriages were defined simply as marriages between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, Christian or otherwise. The 1983 Code of Canon Law and the 1993 Roman Catholic Ecumenical Directory more specifically identify mixed marriages as being between Catholics and non-Catholic Christians. Even with this helpful distinction, however, a level of misunderstanding exists regarding what is meant by the term mixed marriage among Catholics and other Christians today. Moreover, this term does little to underscore positively the sacramentality of these unions.

A recent book by Robert Hater entitled, *When a Catholic Marries a Non-Catholic* (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2006), chooses to speak about marriages between two Christians from different traditions as "interfaith" marriages. This general designation may do well to underscore the role of "faith" in

Laura and Franz  
Green,  
AAIF Co-Chairs



The Significance of the Name "Interchurch" continued on the next page

these relationships, but it remains vague because it includes the marriages of Catholics with Christians and non-Christians alike.

On the recently established United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's website "foryourmarriage.org" one can find an article posted by Emilie Lemmons entitled, "Marrying Someone of a Different Religion." Surprisingly, this article addresses not only marriages between Catholics and members of other religions, such as Jews and Muslims, but also Catholics marrying non-Catholic Christians. Although both Hater and Lemmons take adequate time to explain the differences regarding how the Catholic Church differentiates between a Christian marriage and a marriage between a Catholic and

a non-Christian, the lack of clarity on what is implied in these titles remains theologically problematic.

Within this proliferation of terms, "interchurch" marriage has been chosen by this association

(AAIF) as the most adequate referent to apply to your unions. This designation is

then compared to "inter-religious marriage", which identifies a marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian, and "mixed marriage", which says nothing about the religious commitments of the spouses involved. There are hopeful signs that the term interchurch is taking root. The US Catholic/Reformed Dialogue chose to use "interchurch" in its recent joint publication "Interchurch Families: Resources for Ecumenical Hope" (Westminster John Knox Press, 2002). Also, Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity addressed your families as interchurch in his hope-filled 2003 letter to your worldwide gathering in Rome.

In all, it is always worthwhile to be as clear and precise as

possible regarding the language used for naming your status as Christian couples. Much like those going through the RCIA process, not all marriages are the same

theologically or pastorally and need to be identified as such. Language forms us in meaningful ways

and Catholics (as well as other Christian communities) should not simply lump all "mixed marriages" together and hope that the unique gifts and challenges of each of these types of marriages will sort themselves out. The term "interchurch" does much to underscore the common belonging to Christ in your families and reminds everyone of the divisions which continue to plague the Christian community. To clear up the language used by church leaders, theologians and pastoral ministers to identify your status as sacramentally married couples (at least from a Catholic perspective) would help to underscore the spiritual unity you already share and poignantly point out the Christian community's need for ecumenism. Continuing to reflect on why you choose to name yourselves "interchurch" and expressing clearly the significance of this naming to others likely will remain an essential task in the coming years.

*Daniel Olsen completed his Ph.D. in Constructive Theology from Loyola University Chicago in 2008. Prior to entering his graduate studies, he was a Pastoral Associate in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Over the past several years he has taught courses at three universities, most recently St. Mary's University of Minnesota. He currently lives in suburban Chicago with his wife and two children.*



# Eucharist, Challenge to the Churches

## the 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference in Wisconsin

The National Council of Churches is working on a report to send as a response to the World Council of Churches regarding the Nature and Mission of Church. Working within a group, "Mission and Unity," Father Ernest Falardeau as part of the National Council of Churches is examining the mission and nature of church in conjunction with a study of the unity for which we are looking. The group is composed of mostly academically oriented people. However, there are some who do pastoral work. Paulist Press will publish these studies in an anthology. Father Ernest Falardeau is a member of the Blessed Sacrament Father's, an international congregation that is 200 years old.

They have decided to relate the experience of the eucharist using the theme of a journey. Expanding the theme of the journey a bit, and one would need some food for that journey. Each contributor will be asked to contribute a personal story that will be woven into an explanation of the meaning of the Eucharist.

One element of the journey is that it is made by walking, and life isn't always so tidy and neat. Life is an adventure. We don't know the ending. We can't predict the ending. Father Falardeau compared the Eucharist with the family dinner table. The family table is necessary. Everyone in the family gathers around the table for the evening meal. No one went to bed hungry. All the squabbles were left behind. When a new child is born into the family, room is made for that child at the table. Once gathered around the table, everyone has an opportunity to share stories from their day. It is a place of reconciliation in the family; all are made good.

We worship God because God is the Lord and so great. We belong to God. We don't go to church to feel good, but because we owe reverence to

God. Father Falardeau cited the following book:

[Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church \(Contemporary Greek Theologians Series, No 4\)](#) by John Zizioulas. For Zizioulas, this communion of the Trinity is the model to be embodied not only by the Church as the communion of all churches, but by the very person as well: we only are who we are when we are in communion with God and one another. Being is not static, but in time and in relation. If the Church is fundamentally the communion of churches, what do we make of churches that are in ecclesiastical and/or confessional division? It is with this question that John Zizioulas ends his book; it is an abrupt ending, too, that leaves the reader in a state of suspension. Yet, what better

**Bur Oak at Pheasant Branch Nature Conservancy, Madison, Wisconsin**  
This old tree is fire resistant so it is ideally suited for the prairies and the hardwood savannas of Wisconsin.



way to end it? From theology as the contemplation of God to the reality of a fragmented Church.

John Zizioulas says that 'The revealed truth, cannot belong to a solitary being. It is distributed among persons in all their variety; it resides in the great interchange of life by which each exists for and through all the others. Christian spirituality - life in the Holy Spirit - is of its very nature something that "we" share, our self-awareness being awakened by our sense of being in communion with others.' Another reviewer of this book says that John Zizioulas' book 'is a fine piece of systematic theology. Zizioulas builds his reflections on personhood, the church and the ministry on the basis of communion.'

Zizioulas' book is a deep and thought provoking book that many indicate have completely shifted their paradigm by which they define Christianity. 'Every so often a book comes along that manages to rotate and shake up your paradigm in such a way that, after the shift is over, you suddenly see things not only in a new way, but in a new way that makes far greater sense,' says one reader, who then adds, 'For Zizioulas, this communion of the Trinity is the model to be embodied not only by the Church as the communion of all churches, but by the very person as well: we only are who we are when we are in communion with God

**We only are who we are when we are in communion with God and one another.'**

and one another.' This same reviewer notes that 'The most heartening thing about this book, however, is the fundamentally pastoral angle that Zizioulas takes.'

In this way the Trinity is seen as communion and the church is essentially eucharistic. We become what we receive in the Eucharist. Our moral challenge is to recognize the body of Jesus in the eucharist. Seeing that others are the same as us and that the world might be one is a moral imperative learned through the eucharist.

Understanding that we are all one carries economic and political consequences. How do we change hearts? We are like a family. We are all human beings with all the same rights. God saves all. Our challenge may be to look for the face of God in the stranger or people who at first seem different from us at first glance. Reaching out in charity and kindness with hospitality using the example we were shown at Holy Wisdom Monastery seems like a very good way to start.

Conference notes by  
~ M.J. Glauber



# International Conference INTAMS

The Household of God and Local Households: Revisiting the Domestic Church

Catholic University of Leuven, 10 – 13 March 2010

Plenary Sessions (in chronological order) official summaries may be found at the following link:

<http://www.intams.org/events-col10-plenarysessions.pdf>

## IFIN March 2010: Leuven: The Household of God, The Domestic Church

### Theme

'In the growing body of theological and spiritual literature on the family over recent years there is hardly any publication that does not explicitly refer to the

“domestic church”. Christian households are said to be or called to become “little churches of and in the home”. Since the Second Vatican Council’s retrieval of this concept from patristic precedents, more recent magisterial teachings of the Roman Catholic Church speak of the Christian family as “a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion” (FC 21). In spite of this broad interest and official endorsement, however, the concept itself today still dwells in a “doctrinal vacuum” (Michael A. Fahey).



**Father George Kilcourse, with Guy Montgomery in Madison Wisconsin** touring a Unitarian Church designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, after the 2010 Biennial AAIF Conference.

Where the model of the “church in miniature” is not used to further align the family with the ecclesial institution, it simply serves as a ‘pious metaphor’ to restore some spiritual dignity to the Christian household. Likewise, theological treatises on the Church seem more concerned with its universal character than with its smaller, local units and so the “domestic church” has remained a marginal and exotic note in ecclesiology as well. One may wonder, however, whether small communities, as families are, have indeed so little to tell the

“new family of God” to which Christ has called his disciples



Prairie flowers in bloom, July 2010, Wisconsin

AAIF Discussion continued on the next page

to belong. Can the churches really afford to neglect the specific competences that families have when it comes to serving and sharing with each other, to dealing with differences and otherness of its members, be they related to gender, age, ethnicity or religious conviction, and to encountering God in ordinary life with its everyday ties, duties and responsibilities?

The conference in March 2010 served to revisit the critical notion of domestic church and to explore the potential, both theological and pastoral, that the idea of *minusculae Ecclesiae* may have for the life of the churches and of families.

The conference was targeted towards scholars and practitioners who are working in the fields of ecclesiology, family studies, ecumenical theology, moral theology, social ethics, practical theology, contextual theology, public theology, gender studies, feminist theology, church history, biblical studies,

## Hospitality has Biblical roots

artwork at Holy Wisdom Monastery



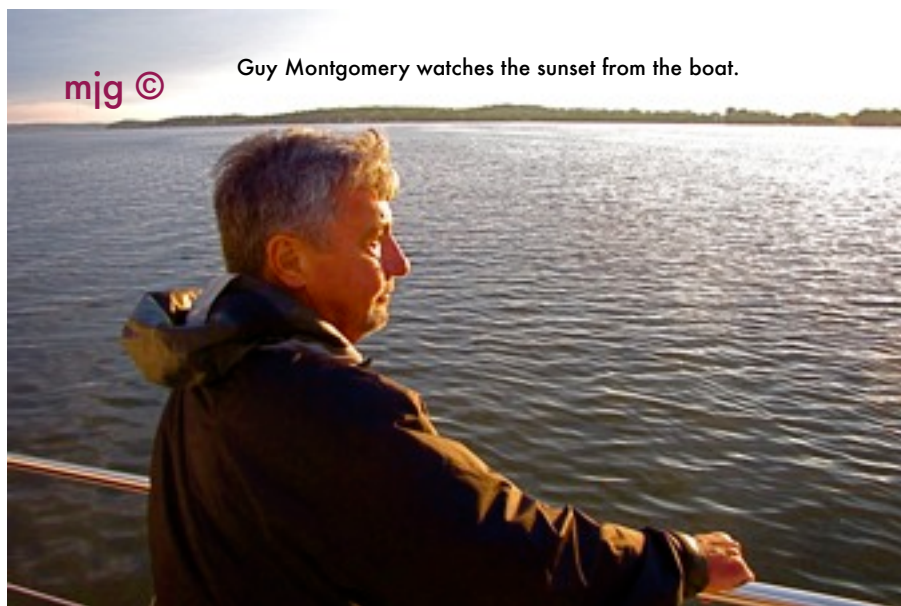
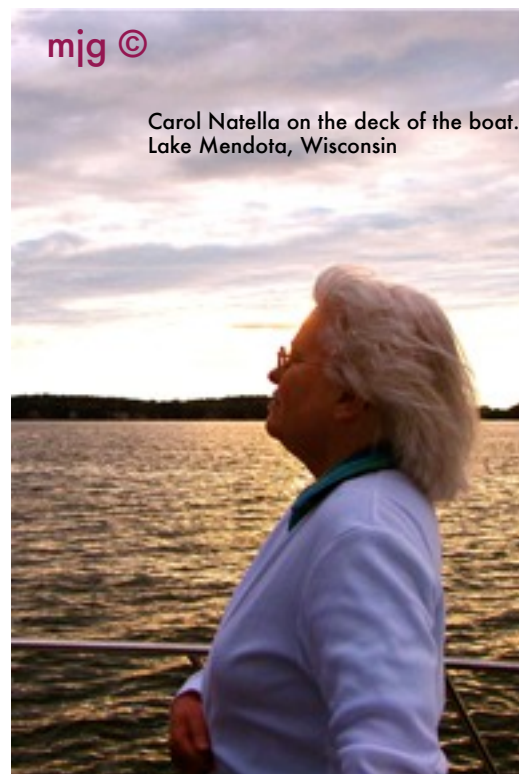
patristics, and hermeneutics, amongst other fields.' <http://www.intams.org/events-col10-theme.htm>

In March 2010, there was an international gathering at Leuven, Belgium of the Interchurch Families International Network concurrent within a broader INTAMS Conference. IFIN presented topics dealing with “the Household of God, the Domestic Church.” The Domestic Church is also

known as the Little Church of the home or the miniature church by some denominations. They are different terms that refer to the same concept of the family as church.

Interchurch Families would like to tell churches why they need to be involved with us, as well, and

AAIF Discussion continued on the next page



in what ways they do not need to be concerned.

The definition of family has changed over the past century. We now have “blended families” created from second marriages, and “non-legal” marriages that function otherwise like marriages in many traditional ways. If we are to discuss the family and the domestic church as a group of people who live together, this could define college students who pool their financial resources to share apartments during college. Solomon, used his kingly judgment to decide which of two mothers was best suited as a parent, but we have gotten away from this kind of reasoning. So defining “family” is far more difficult in our world today than in earlier times. We wondered why the recent USCCB pastoral directory on marriage was not more realistic and why the Vatican’s PCPCU Ecumenical Directory had been ignored as it was created?

Ray Temmerman, from Canada, had presented a paper at INTAMS noting that as interchurch families we do not have to discover unity, but that we already have the unity.

Interchurch families model unity that eludes our churches.

Summary of discussion notes taken during the 2010 AAIF Conference by M.J. Glauber



Father George Kilcourse:

**Feast of St Benedict  
and St. Scholastica**  
– July 11, 2010  
**(Holy Wisdom Monastery)**

Wisdom 7:7-10,15-16;

1 Corinthians 2:6-10;

Matthew 5:13-16

Once upon a time I spent a week on retreat at a hermitage hidden in the woods. It was April and spring arrived early that year. The days passed uneventfully. A spring shower bathed the greening landscape one afternoon. The silence engulfed me. By the fourth day I discovered what the Desert Fathers and Mothers have reported: living alone in silence and prayer, you suddenly discover there is no one else around to blame for mishaps or forgetfulness. No wonder the early monastics describe

the desert as the place where you learn to wrestle with your own demons.

Crackling logs in the fireplace chased away each morning’s chill—a lingering reminder that winter had not yet completely exited. As the sun set against a rose-purple horizon, deer grazed in the meadow only a few yards from the porch where I sat whispering Psalms.

On the seventh day I gathered my backpack and hiked to the place where I’d parked the car. I’d just been reflecting on my retreat in that hermitage: I was so proud of my humility! Arriving at the iron gates guarding the monastic enclosure, I punched on the keyboard the secret “code.” (Some “secret”: the 4 digits were the date of the monastery’s foundation!) The mechanical gates unfolded and I drove past. I got out of the car to close them, again punching the 4 digits.

Feast of St Benedict and St. Scholastica continued on the next page

Nothing happened....  
Again... punching with more pressure. Nada! I tugged at the gate to coax it, but to no effect.

All of a sudden I grew impatient. I started to worry. What if I can't get the gates closed? So I began walking briskly toward the monastery when I sighted Brother Guerric strolling in the distance. With his woolen cap, rosy cheeks, and mellow voice, Guerric epitomized the quintessential monk. It was as if Garrison Keillor had been morphed into a monastic mode. I quickly explained my predicament. Guerric listened and his mischievous eyes sparkled. A long silence followed before he advised me, "George, get off the grid." ....I was clueless.... I told him again what had happened. A smile curled on Guerric's face. This time, in his best NPR-voice, he repeated more slowly,

"George...get off...the grid."  
And he pointed. It suddenly dawned upon me. I drove the car forward 10 feet and the gates glided together.

No doubt Brother Guerric's message rescued me from an embarrassing moment that day. But the more I reflected, the better I came to understand that he was also intimating a deeper monastic metaphor of the spiritual life. That message has never stopped echoing in my heart and mind: "George, get off the grid." Thus, my segue into today's feast celebrating St. Benedict and St. Scholastica.

When Jesus speaks in today's gospel to remind us that "you are the salt of the earth," something humble and ordinary—salt—bears a sacramental meaning. Our first reading from the Book of Wisdom builds a bridge for us to reach the

revealed and yet concealed meaning. The alternative is to be clueless—what T.S. Eliot named so well in the Four Quartets: "to have had the experience but missed the meaning." No doubt the table of hospitality that Wisdom spread before her included a small container of salt to coax out and intensify the flavors of the food she offers. In Greek, Wisdom is "Sophia." The Latin word for Wisdom is sapientia, which literally means "to taste the experience." In the contemplative life we desire to be transformed in an experience of God's love. We "taste" the experience of God. It's an all-involving experience of God at the core of our deepest, truest self; our

Feast of St Benedict and St.Scholastica continued on the next page



Detail from art work shown at the right



Benedictine Religious art made by other Benedictines for this order at their request.



restless hearts find quiet and peace. Wisdom fulfills our yearning. And our transfigured lives glow with a radiance like Wisdom herself, giving glory to God.

Benedict begins the Rule with an invitation: "Listen... with the ear of your heart." To live life un-attentive or un-attuned to the ear of our hearts means to live at a very superficial level. Our lives can become so focused on the busy-ness, on the distractions, that we lose our capacity for a deeper spiritual consciousness. William Faulkner described well our predicament as "a frantic steeplechase toward Nothingness." It happens when we find ourselves "on the grid," anxious, impatient, self-centered, and living a shallow existence. Our pilgrim way breaks down, paralyzed and directionless.

A well-cultivated interior life—lived with Benedictine rhythms of prayer, meditation, and contemplation—thrives on our experience of God's presence. So we give thanks and praise for the dynamism of God-as-Trinity. But we'd best be careful not to confuse the interior life with a privatized existence. Our interior life has transforming effects upon our exterior life. The best contemporary definition I know for contemplation is simply, "Contemplation is any way that you have to penetrate illusion and touch reality." The wisdom of Benedictine spirituality invites us to live within a community of relationships, a community of shared commitment, and to be open even to the communal experience of grace.

Kathleen Norris (of The Cloister Walk fame) describes

### Father Kilcourse reflects on the wisdom of St Benedict and St. Scholastica

continued from the previous page

St. Benedict's hard-won insights into the peaceful maintenance of monastic order codified in the Rule. Norris compares it with his sister, St. Scholastica's natural understanding of the shared spiritual life. St. Gregory the Great concluded wisely about St. Scholastica that, "she did more [than Benedict] because she loved more." Translation: the only person in the room wiser than St. Benedict would be St. Scholastica!

When St. Benedict outlines the 12 steps of humility for monks, the penultimate 11th step includes this aphorism: "A wise man is known by his few words." Oh, my! (Looks at

text continued on the next page

Photo below of Yippy Clem and the Clem's children, July 2010, at the AAIF Biennial Conference on Sunday





View from the window of the Assembly Hall on Sunday Morning at Holy Wisdom Monastery

“The Book of Wisdom builds a bridge for us to reach the revealed and yet concealed meaning.”

The alternative is to be clueless—what T.S. Eliot named so well in the *Four Quartets*: “to have had the experience but missed the meaning.”

**Father Kilcourse reflects on the wisdom of St Benedict and St. Scholastica -**

text continued from the previous page of God to taste. How few respond to the Word that takes flesh in our midst! How dim are the eyes that fail to see the presence of God dwelling among us! St. Benedict charged us to “prefer nothing else to Christ.” We cherish Christ’s presence. From Christ we learn that action without contemplation is sterile. The corollary is just as compelling: contemplation without action is selfish and greedy.

There is an echo to St. Benedict’s invitation to “listen...with the ear of your heart” in a favorite line from Thomas Merton. From his hermit hut in Kentucky he reminded us: “We begin to heal those to whom we listen.” So our hearts are attentive and attuned to follow the pilgrim paths of dialogue, of personal story-telling, and openness to the Other.

Our ecumenical vocation is not unlike what Flannery O’Connor, the Georgia fiction

text continued on the next page



Assembly Hall at Holy Wisdom Monastery on Sunday (watch) My novitiate will have to be prolonged—but not your listening!

A final observation: This Sunday Assembly gathered today at Holy Wisdom is “the salt of the earth.” We’ve not lost our savor. We’ve learned to resist complacency and inertia—to stay off the grids! It’s nonetheless a costly discipleship to stay savory and to beard the radiance that Sophia / Wisdom shares with us.

How many linger in those places where the salt has lost its taste! In places where there is, in fact, no experience

**Cooking pots - at Holy Wisdom Monastery:**



**Sunday Morning Assembly at Holy Wisdom Monastery:**



Interchurch Families joined in the Benedictine form of worship at Holy Wisdom Monastery.

# Father Kilcourse reflects on the wisdom of St Benedict and St. Scholastica

- text continued from the previous page

writer, once described. She once was asked how to believe in the Christian practice of "seeing Christ" in one another. She paused upon hearing the question (a very monastic pause, I'm sure...). Then she replied, "Well, for some people you have to squint hard!"

*"listen...  
with the  
ear of  
your  
heart"*

the pilgrim path. Loitering on grids causes the salt of your spirituality to grow tasteless.

Grids are distractions that dim the radiance of Wisdom. Grids are bogs in the spiritual life that keep us from affirming the dignity of every person and the integrity of creation.

On this feast of Benedict and Scholastica, may we find new strength to recognize Christ in others. Listen with the ear of your heart to those whose journey converges with yours. Stay awake! Stay off those grids that interrupt your progress on

As friends of God and prophets, persevere in the tradition, ever new, of Benedict and Scholastica. And be steadfast witnesses to our conviction that amid our world's turmoil we are kissed by God!

—Fr. George Kilcourse  
Bellarmino University

Lamar Burton speaking with Father Kilcourse on the optional boat cruise after the 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference in Wisconsin



**\$5,000 Essay Contest**  
**- Faith & Prosperity -**  
**SEVEN Fund Essay**  
**Contest - All Entries**  
**Due before October**  
**15, 2010**

The Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty's mission is to improve the capacity and effectiveness of the faith community in its collective effort to reduce poverty and disease. While we often hear of secular efforts to fight poverty and its related issues, we rarely hear profound stories describing the experiences of people who integrate a spiritual perspective. The notion of creating wealth is often stigmatized, and business people regarded as too self-interested to be a force for positive social change. But what if they are informed by a spiritual worldview? A faith-based approach helps one regard material rewards from a perspective of temporary stewardship. Sound business principles ensure that efforts result in more than a handout, instead growing into self-sustaining solutions that affirm the dignity of all. Faith compels us to act with others for the common good of all.

<http://www.sevenfund.org/faith-and-development/>

## “Non-Catholic Annulment”

by Kay Flowers

Why does a divorced non-Catholic have to get an annulment in order to marry a Catholic? We can identify with the anger or reluctance others may express when told that they need an annulment, for we have gone through this painful and often invasive process ourselves.

Been there, done that, got the t-shirt.

But when you marry a Catholic, you're getting a package deal. The Church is included in your life, just like the in-laws.

Because the Church has a spiritual responsibility for all her members, non-Catholic spouses come under that same umbrella to some extent.

A Catholic who marries a divorced person without benefit of annulment cannot fully participate in the sacraments and cannot receive the Eucharist. This would be detrimental to the Catholic's spiritual growth. This is why the Catholic Church wants to verify the sacramental nature of any former marriage.

Marriage between baptized Christians is considered a valid union, unless proven otherwise. The Catholic Church recognizes that marriage as a sacrament, regardless of the denomination

Annulment is the determination that a marriage harbored pre-existing conditions that prevented a binding

commitment. Although a legal marriage contract was made, there was no sacramental content as God intended. Therefore any children of an annulled marriage are considered legitimate, for they were conceived in a legal, though not sacramental, marriage.

True sacramental marriage involves both spouses relying on God's grace. Both show willingness right from the start to serve each other and God—to look after each other's needs first, to work out conflicts, and to raise their children Christian through example and instruction. God has an active part in their marriage. They are also psychologically able and

mentally mature enough to fulfill the intention of a permanent, caring partnership. This is the sacramental “content” the diocesan tribunal looks for when an annulment is sought. If this content was missing, an annulment may be granted. So why isn't a divorce contract enough? Civil law is not the same as canon law. Whereas divorce dissolves a marriage contract, annulment merely determines that the marriage had no content as God intended. Unlike divorce, annulment does not dissolve anything, but it may provide emotional closure from the former marriage. If you are a divorced person, Catholic or otherwise, who wishes to

Continued on the next page “Non-Catholic Annulment”

**“And Jesus said to him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has no where to lay his head.” ~ Luke 9:58**



remarry in the Catholic Church, it is absolutely essential to determine whether or not you are truly free to marry. This is the primary function of annulment.

The second function is far-reaching— to provide healing for you, whether it means regaining your self-esteem, choosing to forgive yourself and others, resolving emotional issues, or learning what was wrong in your previous marriage so you can learn from your mistakes and rely on God's help not to repeat them.

Ephesians 4:32 instructs us to forgive others as God forgives us—not because anyone deserves it, but because the price has already been paid for it. One non-Catholic woman mentally placed her unfaithful husband at the foot of the cross where Jesus was suffering and dying. Then she backed away and left him there. Now he no longer owed her a debt; he owed Jesus.

Forgiveness is a powerful tool for healing. It means choosing to give up the right to get even and leaving our vindication up to God. In essence, we hand over to Him any IOUs we have emotionally collected from people we feel owe us an apology, a better life, unconditional love, respect—whatever. When we give God complete control of our lives, we can enjoy the abundant life He offers.

Another non-Catholic woman was apprehensive about dredging up painful memories of her abusive marriage, but she went through the annulment as an act of sacrificial love for her Catholic fiancé. With God's help, she chose to forgive her mentally unstable ex-spouse and she was set free to love again.

Sixteen years later, we are still happily married.

**Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it."**

**~Hebrews 13: 1-2**



Dennis and Kay Flowers live in Ohio, where they work with engaged couples in both Catholic and interchurch marriage readiness.

Together they wrote *Catholic Annulment, Spiritual Healing* (Liguori). Kay also wrote an award-winning biblical novel, *Caleb's Daughter* (Booklocker).



**OBSERVATION:**

**"Interchurch Families tend to share their time and talent in their local communities at rather high levels; This community resource may be under recognized"**

**~ interchurch spouse, AAIF Member**

**1 Corinthians 13:1-2** 1. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

## Revelation 21:1-6

I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life."



The Bible verses reflect a time when Christians were being persecuted. The language is coded, but well understood by Christians at that time. The bride and New Jerusalem refer to the church. The one on the

throne is God. The beginning lines indicate a new heaven and earth; old ways are gone. God lives among human mortals; this is the new way. God, who is the beginning and the end provides our water as a gift for the very essence of our life. This gives us our own foundation and relationship on earth in the present moment doing God's work.

The implications for interchurch couples/families are immeasurable. We have begun a new millennium. All things can be made new again.

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Application of Revelation 21:1-6 for interchurch families made by M.J. Glauber



**Burr Oak Leaf of the Hardwood Savannas of Wisconsin are naturally fire resistant. ▲**  
Prairie fires are a natural part of the prairies which occur near the hardwood savannas.

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## New children's sabbaths manual

*From Norton Healthcare Office of Church and Health Ministries*

The National Observance of Children's Sabbaths manual is a multi-faith resource for houses of worship to use as they confront the reality children in our nation and communities face and lift children up through worship and prayer and acting on their behalf. This year's manual, "**Blessed to Be a Blessing: Lifting Up the Next Generation,**" focuses on how faith communities can address child poverty. This resource manual is now available for download and can be used as a year-round child advocacy resource or in preparation for planning a celebration during the National Observance of Children's Sabbaths weekend, October 15-17.

Once again:

**\$5,000 Essay Contest - Faith & Prosperity - SEVEN Fund Essay Contest - All Entries Due before October 15, 2010**

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Flowers in bloom in the prairie restoration at Holy Wisdom Monastery during the 2010 Biennial AAIF Conference

- Many thanks to Carol and Dave Natella, Dr. Daniel Olsen, Father George Kilcourse, Father Ernest Falardeau & Kay Flowers for their contributions to this edition of the ARK.
- Many thanks to Elizabeth Montgomery, Father George Kilcourse for their work in making the 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference possible.
- Many thanks to Father Ernest Falardeau, the Rev. Elaine Hall, Lamar & Diane Burton, Dave & Carol Natella, Laura & Franz Green and Father George Kilcourse for their on-going and continued efforts to serve interchurch families and AAIF, and ecumenism.

Please send written contributions for future editions of the ARK to [mjglauber@gmail.com](mailto:mjglauber@gmail.com) attention "ARK article"

*Looking forward to the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference - Please save the date, details to follow at [www.aifusa.org](http://www.aifusa.org)*

**THE ARK, A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF INTERCHURCH FAMILIES**

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**The ARK**

SEPTEMBER 2010  
VOLUME 21;  
EDITION 4



Pheasant Branch Nature Conservancy, photo taken during one of the optional pre-tours before the 2010 AAIF Biennial Conference