



Holy Grounds

Fall 2016

Volume 11, Number 1

A quarterly publication of the Marianist Retreat & Conference Center



50 years of serving God's people

"Your hospitality is the best. I've never felt so welcomed and cared for" is a comment from a guest who was on a retreat held here this past summer. As we prepare to celebrate next year 50 years as a retreat ministry we are grateful that with Mary, we have been able to engage in the religious, spiritual and educational development of all God's people. This past year close to 5000 adults and young people experienced Marianist hospitality when they entered onto our Holy Grounds. If we go back to October of 1967 when we began, we can proudly assert that we have positively affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of God's people! See page 8 for a full year of activities!

"Family Fun Day with the Saints" on Sept. 25, 2016 here at MRCC!

On Sunday, September 25, 2016 from 2pm - 5pm The Marianist Retreat Center will offer a FREE outside event with fun activities for families. The program includes: a Saints scavenger hunt, arts and crafts stations, storytelling, Saint foods, a photo booth, games, live music with by Life Teen musician Kyle Huelsing and much, much more including a "Heart Room" prayer experience in our chapel. The day will take place rain or shine and there is no charge. RSVP to: info@mretreat.org. For more information on the day go to: www.mretreat.org. (Picture to the right, Bro. Mel's St. Anthony, located in our lobby.)



The 2016-2017 retreat schedule

Pages 3-6



Old favorites & new retreats!

In addition to our yearly Advent and Lenten retreats and summer directed retreats we will be offering some new retreat experiences including "Dog is my Co-Pilot" with Msgr. Michael Witt and "Wandering as a spiritual activity" led by author and national retreat leader Belden Lane.



Investing in our Mission & Vision

Thanks to all of our wonderful donors for enabling us to surpass last year's goal for the Annual Appeal, producing a total of \$ 38,095.00 in contributions. Combined with the net proceeds of our "Trivia de Mayo" dinner & auction of \$13, 529, our annual fundraising goal of \$ 50,000.00 was achieved. Since its inception in 2011, the Annual Appeal has produced a total of \$136,842.00 in support of our Retreat Center.

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Improved Grounds

be a favorite feature, we have upgraded the decorative fountain next to Marycliff and the Shrine of St Joseph with an attractive fountain that lights up at night. Park benches are placed there for meditation and prayer.

The Brother Mel Meyer Memorial Sculpture Garden now features an attractive fence that incorporates the original iron gates from the "Old Entrance" to the property. The garden is beautiful in all seasons, but especially in the spring when the many varieties of iris are in full bloom. The Sculpture Garden continues to be a work in progress, requiring many volunteer hours of planting and weeding. This is an opportunity for you gardeners out there who are seeking a meaningful outlet for your "green thumbs". See page 7 for more volunteer opportunities.

Speaking of Brother Mel, following his passing in 2013, the Retreat Center has been given quite a treasure trove of his sculptures and paintings which are placed within the building and around the property. Some items came from Brother Mel's studio on the Vianney High School Campus, such as "The Lord of the Dance" and a sculpture of St Anthony, The Patron Saint of Lost Things, both of which now adorn the lobby of the retreat center. Other sculptures were donated to us by St George Catholic Church in Linn, Missouri, including a very large contemporary scul-

ture of the Holy Family, which now graces a wall in the main conference room.

Another striking, very large sculpture of the risen Christ with his hand outstretched in a symbolic gesture of welcome now graces a newly developed section of the Sculpture Garden thanks to the volunteers from The Assumption Church Men's ACTS group.

The Collection of Brother Mel's works now displayed at the Retreat Center is one of the largest anywhere. Aficionados of religious art may come here on retreat focusing exclusively on the inspirational works of Brother Mel. A descriptive pictorial guide has been developed to facilitate your retreat experience.



Haven't been to the Retreat Center for awhile? When you come, you will notice some things that will enhance your retreat experience that were not here before:

We now have a beautiful outdoor Prayer Labyrinth just to the east of the Center that gives our guests an experience of "The Ancient Path of Wisdom and Peace".

We also now have a wonderful Grotto, a peaceful, tranquil, prayerful venue with rustic seating, a statue of the Blessed Mother beside the Cross, and a much improved trail making it more accessible. These two projects, as well as the newest addition, Serenity Point, were the result of Eagle Scout Projects.

In addition to our waterfall and fountain in the circle out front, which continues to

Mission and Vision

continue from page 1

Many generous donors have recognized the vital importance of the retreat center's ministry for the 2500 youth and 2300 adults who benefitted spiritually in retreat programs last year. We maintain a pledge that no person is turned away through inability to pay the fee for a retreat experience. Indeed, a number of retreat programs are offered free of charge to schools in low-



income areas, notably, St Cecelia School in South St Louis, and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Ferguson. Other schools who lack the funds for transportation and

lodging, notably Cardinal Ritter Institute are served on their own campus as an outreach program of the Center's Youth Team.

Suffice it to say that fees received from retreat groups do not cover the actual annual costs of providing our services, and our 50 year old facility presents maintenance challenges requiring capital expenditures substantially beyond our financial means.

The success of our Annual Appeal is vital to our present and future needs. We ask that when you receive our appeal in the mail this October, you will consider the Marianist Retreat Center at the top of your list for charitable giving. It is richly deserving of your continuing financial support. We invite you to come for a visit, enjoy a day on our beautiful grounds, and experience first-hand the presence of the Holy Spirit which abounds at this special corner of God's kingdom.



Retreat Opportunities for 2016-2017

THE ADVENT RETREAT:



ISAIAH, MARY, JOHN THE BAPTIST: 3 FACES OF ADVENT

December 2,3,4, 2016

The rich imagery from Isaiah, the “fiat” of Mary, and the fiery figure of John the Baptist dominant the days of Advent as they stir anticipation in the hearts of God’s people. We will focus on them and their continued impact on the faith community of God’s people.

*Starts with Dinner on Friday and ends with Lunch on Sunday.
Led by Fr, Tom Santen, Lucia Signorelli and Steve Givens*



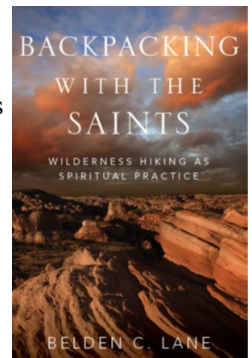
Nature Wandering as Spiritual Practice

Led by Belden Lane

June 2-4, 2017

This retreat, based on his book, “Backpacking with the Saints,” will explore the following themes and activities: “Wandering in nature may be the most essential soul craft practice that any of us can have in a society like ours,” says Bill Plotkin. Belden Lane draws on his years of solo backpacking (hiking with the saints along Missouri trails) to suggest a pattern of wilderness spirituality that can be lived in everyday life. This is rooted in Hildegard of Bingen’s sense of the “greening” power of the Spirit as alive in all things.

Lessons from the trail include the importance of traveling light with Dag Hammarskjöld, the practice of mindfulness with Thich Nhat Hanh, failure and forgiveness with Martin Luther, and the celebration of Holy Folly with Thomas Merton. The retreat offers opportunities for various types of wilderness wandering, exercises in meditation, small group work, storytelling, and rituals drawn from the natural world. “Going out” into nature, as John Muir said, is really a way of “going in” to the heart of things. Starts with Dinner on Friday and ends with Lunch on Sunday. Belden is a retired Theology Professor from SLU.



Dog is my Co-Pilot A Day of Recollection With Your Dog!

Sunday, October 2, 2016,
Noon to 4:30pm, Led by Msgr. Witt

How our dogs model God's love by their example

35 minutes conferences with 20 minutes of interaction:

Noon - **Longing for a "pet:"** how God has hard-wired us for relationships, with each other, with creatures, with Him

1pm - **Rolling in Something that Smells:** what our dogs can teach us about the Incarnation

2pm - Snack and walk time (Over 3.5 miles of trails on 120 acres)

3:30pm - **C.S. Lewis and Heavenly Pets:** a Christian reads MERLE'S DOOR and ponders angelic forms.

4:30pm – Conclusion of the Day of Recollection



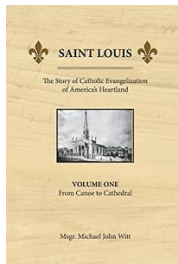
Save the date for these 2017 retreats & programs!

A retreat based on virtues of Mary and how to apply them practically in our lives. The retreat is designed for young girls ages 7-14 to attend with their mother, grandmother, aunt, or godmother. The event will have Mary related talks, games, music, crafts, adoration, sacrament of reconciliation, and Mass. It is an overnight retreat, dinner, breakfast, and lunch will be provided. 5 pm arrival and 4pm departure on Sunday. Cost: \$75 per adult & \$25 per child.

Led by MRCC staff Julie Hickey & Jane Furey.

Hearts of Mary Retreat

Jan 28-29, 2017



THE PALM SUNDAY RETREAT

April 7, 8, 9, 2017

with Msgr. Michael Witt

From Palm Sunday to Easter, from Canoe to Cathedral, a Lenten reflection based on our Catholic Heritage

Msgr. Witt is the author of the new book, "Saint Louis: The Story of Catholic Evangelization of America's Heartland," Starts with Dinner on Friday and ends with lunch on Sunday

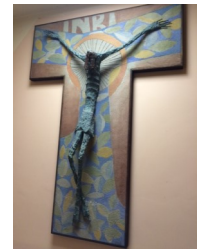
"WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT SORROW AND SUFFERING AS WE REFLECT ON THE SUFFERING OF JESUS?"

Led by Sister Paulette Patrilli, OP & Father Jose Ramirez, SM,

The day will begin at 8:30 am with a continental breakfast. Morning prayer, 9:15 am followed by the first conference. The day will end with Good Friday Services

GOOD FRIDAY RETREAT

April 14, 2017



The 3rd Annual **TRIVIA DE MAYO** MAY 6, 2017

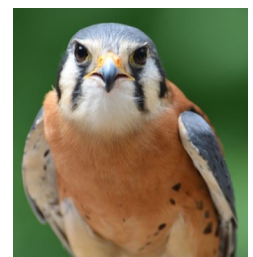
*A MRCC fund raising event that includes a wonderful buffet featuring **Mexican cuisine**, a streamlined and fun **trivia** experience, a silent **auction** and **live music** held at the Retreat Center. The cost is \$50 per person.*

"Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind." Genesis 1

In this special program, birding aficionado Kevin Renick will lead a bird walk through the lovely grounds of the Marianist Retreat Center in Eureka, MO during the peak of the fabled spring migration, and point out the songs that fill the air and help participants spot the winged wonders. He'll also give a talk about learning to appreciate birds and why they are so critically important to understanding both our environment and the spirit of "otherness."
includes continental breakfast.

"Birds are the eyes of Heaven." Suzy Kassem

The Magic & Wonder of Birding May 7, 2017





Save the date for these 2017 retreats & programs!

The Brand New Day Retreat

May 19-21, 2017

A weekend retreat that moves us outside our comfort zone and leads us to discover new ways of following the compass to the divine.

Some of the ways we will be experiencing our Creator: Setting of the Sun, River Walk, Evening Bonfire & Circle of Song, Presentations and workshops, Rising Sun, Meditation, Small Group Discussions & Journaling, Nature Walks, Coffee House (Bring your instruments!), Walking the Labyrinth, Prayer experiences encompassing many different faith traditions. Led by MRCC staffer Diana Gorham assisted by MRCC board member Rich Young & MRCC Director, Jim Ford. Starts with dinner on Friday and ends with Lunch on Sunday.



A weekend retreat exploring the spirituality of living with cancer and other chronic diseases

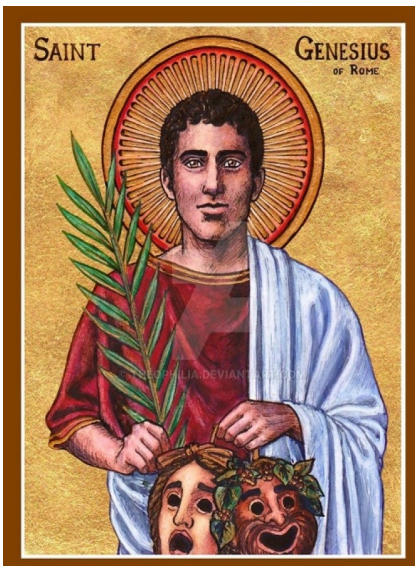
Led by Steve Givens. For those living with disease and those who care for them are invited to this quiet weekend away to contemplate and embrace God's movement in their lives. The weekend will offer presentations, music and a variety of prayer experiences as well as opportunities for solitude, contemplative walking and quiet prayer, journaling, and sharing with other participants. Cost for the overnight retreat is \$190, which includes a copy of Givens' book. Starts with Friday dinner & concludes with Sunday lunch.

Embraced by God

July 14-16, 2017

DIRECTED RETREAT July 16 - July 23, 2017

A Directed Retreat is a quiet, private retreat. This experience invites people to leave the busy-ness and noise of daily lives behind, enter into deep quiet, and there encounter the voice of God. The retreat is for 7 days. If you cannot make the entire retreat, you may make it for 3, 4 or 5 days. Directors: **Sister Janet Dohr, CPPS, Sister Paulette Patritti, OP, Father Jose Ramirez, SM, Sister Anne Simms, OP, Father Joseph Uvietta, SM.**



Theater Camp, June 19, 21, 2017

St. Genesius Theater Junior Camp is for children ages 6-12. The students will play theater games, do character work, learn basic choreography and songs and present a short showcase of what they have learned for the parents on the last day. Christian virtues and a wholesome, supportive environment is an essential part of this camp. The camp will be run by 2 theater professionals and high school volunteers. Lunch and snacks are provided. Camp is from 9 to 3pm each day. The cost is \$150.00 per student. (St. Genesius is the patron saint of the theater.)

St. Genesius Theater Senior Camp is an overnight camp held on June 19, 20, and 21 for high school freshmen- seniors. This camp involves applying their talents and virtues to working with younger children and helping them with their camp that runs from 9-3. The evening will be composed of the campers putting on a workshop version of a brand new musical based on the founding of the Marianists, entitled "Spectacle". This workshop will be rehearsed primarily in the evenings at MRCC and will be performed in an informal workshop staged reading and singing at 8 pm on the final night of the camp. The cost is \$50 per student meals and lodging are provided and scholarships are available.



MRCC Registration Form: 2016-2017

Please mark which retreat/program you are attending, complete the information requested, detach this form & mail it with your payment to:

MRCC. PO Box 718, Eureka, MO 63025

- Dog is my Co-Pilot**, October 2, 2016, \$30
- Advent Retreat**, December 2-4, 2016, \$190
- Hearts of Mary**, January 28,29, 2017, \$75/\$25
- Palm Sunday Retreat**, April 7,8,9, \$190
- Good Friday Day of Prayer**, April 14, 2017, \$40
- The Magic & Wonder of Birding**, May 7, 2017, \$25
- Brand New Day Retreat**, May 19-21, 2017 \$190
- Nature Wandering as Spiritual Practice**, June 2-4, 2017, \$225
- Junior Theater Camp**, June 19-21, 2017, \$150
- Senior Theater Camp**, June 19-21, 2017, \$50
- Embraced by God Retreat**, July 14-16, 2017, \$190
- 8 Day Directed Retreat**, July 16-23, 2017, \$420 or ___ days @ \$70 a day

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE / ZIP _____

Phone # (____) _____ EMAIL _____

Special needs _____

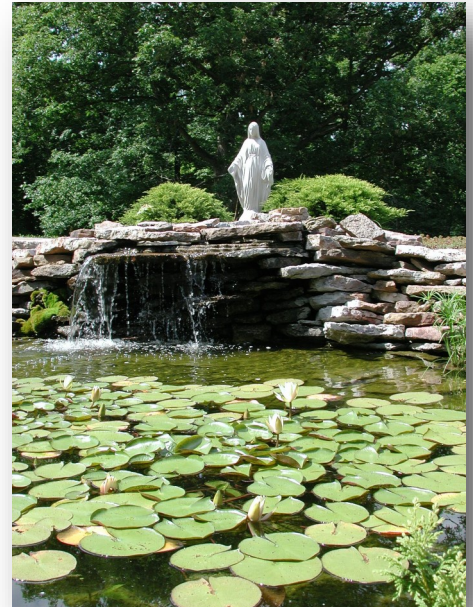
(Examples: "First Floor, Diabetic, Vegetarian, Gluten Free, etc....")

Registration Fee (\$25 non-refundable deposit) enclosed \$ _____, Check # _____

Or: Visa ___ MC ___ DISCOVER ___ CARD# _____

Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____

- **Body Therapy is available for the Advent, Palm Sunday & Directed Retreats.**
\$45, payable directly to the Therapist. ___ Healing touch or ___ Massage therapy



The Marianist Retreat and Conference Center

636-938-5390 / 636-938-3493 (fax) / Email: info@mretreat.org

For more information about all these retreats go to: www.mretreat.org

Other Retreats Hosted by MRCC that you may be interested in:

No More Turning Away From Intimacy: An experiential retreat for men in recovery: to awaken, deepen, and embolden the journey towards fuller intimacy with self, others and God. Led by MRCC Board member Richard Young, MDIV, MSW, LCSW, CSAT, CMAT. Specializes in addiction treatment. December 9-11, 2016,

St. Alban's Women's Retreat: March 24-26, 2017

"Rebirth in Christ on the Tree of Life: A Process of Inner Transformation" Both "old wine" and "new wine," Kess Frey introduces a Christian, contemplative interpretation of the Qabalistic Tree of Life. This living allegorical Tree is said to predate the birth of Jesus and to have its earthly roots in ancient Hebrew Mysticism. Kess, from Anchorage, Alaska, will explore the way that Christ, the Word of the Father, stands in the center of creation's Universal Tree of Life and in the soul of each individual as the divine indwelling. Sponsored by Contemplative Outreach . June 26-30, 2017

Christian Discipleship: A Call to Communion led by Fr. Binu Edathumparambil, MSFS, August 18, 19, 20, 2017

4 seasons work day program



Through the many years of the Retreat Center's existence, the various tasks involved in keeping the building and grounds in tip-top shape were the job of the Marianist Brothers residing at Marycliff. In recent times their numbers have become fewer and their ability to keep pace with the needs has lessened. In an effort to fill some of the gaps, it is hoped that a positive response to this new program will enable us to satisfy the needs.

Four seasonal volunteer work days are pre-scheduled, one of which has already concluded on July 30th. Six hearty souls participated and much was accomplished. Nancy Gass, her two sons, Jacob and Adam (Adam's Eagle Scout Service Project was the establishment of our prayer labyrinth), the always faithful Jerry Mooneyham and none other than the President of our Board of Directors, Mike Hagenhoff, together with Curtis Ballenger from the Center Staff all worked diligently for four hours repairing curbs, hauling wheelbarrows of soil into the garden, weeding, planting, cleaning sculptures and policing the grounds. The day began with a hearty breakfast and ended with a delicious lunch, prepared by Dianne Richardson, our Guest Services Manager.

If you are interested in helping, our fall work day is scheduled for **Saturday, November 19th** beginning at 8:00 am for breakfast. So give us a call if you'd like to come and help in this important work. Curtis or Jim, 636 938-5390. Looking ahead, the Winter and Spring work days are: **Winter: January 14, 2017** (Likely Inside work) **Spring: April 15, 2017** (After you pay your taxes.)

New Face at MRCC

There's a new face at the Retreat Center, and he's hard to miss. His name is Mike Partl (We call him Big Mike), and he represents a wonderful addition to our maintenance staff. The amazing Brother Irv Wachtel has handled all the maintenance duties at the Center by himself for many years. He is still vibrant and active, but isn't as young as he once was, causing the Board to develop a strategy for future maintenance staffing. One Board member put it this way, "If Brother Irv suddenly became incapacitated, we'd have to close our doors." He is the only person who knows the intricacies of the Heating and AC, the boilers, well, water softener, you name it. The Holy Spirit works in mysterious ways. In this case, Mike Partl appeared in our midst and relieved our concerns for the future.

Mike is retired from the Laborers Union, and is skilled and experienced in many areas of maintenance. Not only that, but he has an array of tools and equipment, including a Bobcat, hydraulic log splitter, heavy duty power washer, and jack hammer which he cheerfully makes available for use on the property, simplifying tasks that would otherwise have to be contracted out at considerable expense. He lives close by in Pacific with his lovely wife, Pam. Mike and Brother Irv already are an effective team, working well together in addressing the many challenges a fifty year old facility presents.

Mike has, in a very short time, established himself as a very valuable member of the center staff, always willing to go above and beyond expectations to make MRCC a better place. His cheerful personality is a breath of fresh air and his strong work ethic sets a positive example for others on the staff.

September 8: Today we celebrate the **birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary**. Let us pray: *Mary, you are the new Eve and the mother of all nations. You gather all the poor of the earth and tenderly console them. You gather all the diverse peoples of our world and invite them to work for justice and reconciliation. We place ourselves in your care today. Renew in us the dedication to live a life of faith modeled on your example and witness your virtues of humility and openness. Amen.*

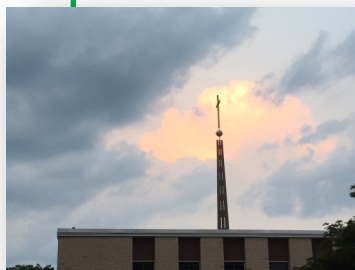
Holy Grounds

Volume 11, #1, Fall 2016
Staff Writer: Curtis Ballenger
Proof Readers: Fr. Jose Ramirez, SM
Lay Out and Design, Jim Ford

In 2006 the MRCC Newsletter debuted as a marketing device of our development program. Due to budget and time restraints it was eventually phased out until now.

MRCC - 4000 Highway 109,
Eureka, MO 63025
(636) 938-5390
infor@mretreat.org
www.mretreat.org

Marianist Hospitality is exemplified to the fullest degree in our wonderful leadership team:



Sabrina Archambault, Operations Coordinator
Dianne Richardson, Guest Services Manager
Curtis Ballenger, Development Director
Fr. Jose Ramirez SM, Chaplain
Bro. Irv Wachtel SM, Maintenance Supervisor
Julie Hickey, Youth Team Director

It is an honor and a pleasure to work with these spirit-filled and talented people. Our new year is filled with excitement and promise which is a tribute to the entire MRCC Staff. Jim Ford, Executive Director

Marianist Retreat Conference Center

4000 Highway 109, PO Box 718, Eureka, MO 63025
(636) 938-5390 www.mretreat.org

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"Ours is indeed a grand work, a munificent work, universal in scope." Blessed William Joseph Chaminade

"With Mary, to engage in the religious, spiritual and educational development of all God's people." MRCC's Mission

Marianist Retreat & Conference Center

5



YEARS OF SERVING
GOD'S PEOPLE IN
ST. LOUIS! mretreat.org

A monthly celebration throughout 2017

Almost 50 years ago the Marianist Brothers of St. Louis had a vision to jump into the high school retreat business/ministry by opening this wonderful facility and staff it with a energetic and dedicated staff. Since that humble beginning, hundreds of thousands of youth and adults have encountered God on these holy grounds. We have decided to have a year long celebration to thank God for blessing our ministry and to proclaim to the St. Louis area that we will be here for another 50 years so please come! Highlights of this year include:

January 28, 29: *Hearts of Mary Retreat*

February 15: Celebrating our local history, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

March 22: Lenten family program at St. Mary's High School

April 7, 8, 9, Palm Sunday Retreat: *From Palm Sunday to Easter, from Canoe to Cathedral, a Lenten reflection based on our Catholic Heritage .*

May 6: Trivia de Mayo

May 19, 20, 21: *The Brand New Day Retreat*

June 2, 3, 4: *Nature Wandering as Spiritual Practice Retreat*

July 14, 15, 16: *Embraced by God Retreat*

August 13: Family BBQ with the Board, staff and friends

September 17: Family of Mary" Event at MRCC

October 8: The Marianist Family Festival! The BIG event on a Sunday Afternoon, celebrating 50 years to the week. Actual dedication date was October 1, 1967. (Oct. 8 was the Open House.)

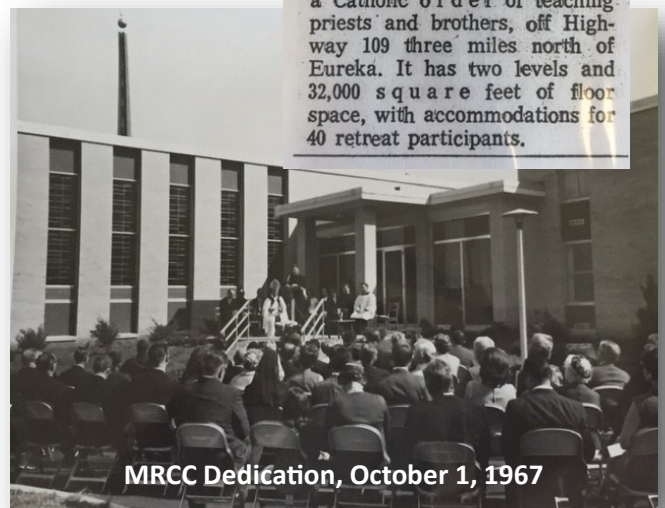
November 18: Thanksgiving Celebration / Fried Chicken meal and a live Broadway review show for all who have contributed to our ministry. (1pm to 5pm)

December (TBA): Advent musical program and end of the year celebration at the Sheldon or Chaminade HS.

NEW MARIANIST CENTER TO BE DEDICATED OCT. 1

The new \$1,000,000 Marianist Apostolic Center near Glencoe will be dedicated at 2 p.m. Oct. 1, it was announced. An open house will be held at the same hour Oct. 8.

The retreat and lay educational center is on 130 acres owned by the Society of Mary, a Catholic order of teaching priests and brothers, off Highway 109 three miles north of Eureka. It has two levels and 32,000 square feet of floor space, with accommodations for 40 retreat participants.



MRCC Dedication, October 1, 1967