

A publication of the Marianist Retreat & Conference Center

Holy Grounds

Fall - 2018

Volume 13, #1

Be Still Here

“Let your light shine before others!”

In the above quote from Matthew 5: 16, Jesus is challenging all of us to share the light and love of God with all we meet. And why should we do this? Jesus continues, “that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Here at the Marianist Retreat Center for the past 51 years our mission has been to share God’s light with the people of St. Louis. We have attempted to do this through our many retreats, programs, events and our involvement in the St. Louis area.

So how are we doing? Here are some comments taken from evaluations filled out at the end of our retreats. The question, “what was most helpful for you?”

- The in-depth insights and presen-

tations spoke deeply to me. If only “ordinary” church was this way – imagine how hearts would resonate.

- The beauty of the prayer experiences.
- This is the best yet and I’ve been coming for many years. The most challenging, but the most rewarding. More direction and resources this time. Sessions seemed meatier somehow.
- I have been on retreat at the MRCC many times over the years. This was far and away the best one I’ve experienced. It was superbly organized, and all the team members expressed these gifts. I loved the team approach. Wonderful blend of music, silence, poetry, and art, all experienced by me as prayer.

- What an awesome week. The atmosphere was so conducive to prayer, being peaceful and comfortable – an awesome great God so present.
- God is so present in your wonderful grounds. (Note: the above picture was taken by Skip Moreland at the pergola just south of Marycliff.)

In this issue of our *Holy Grounds* newsletter you will find information on our upcoming retreats and programs, updates on our Marycliff Retreat Family Lodge and a look back at the past year. Please consider attending a retreat, making a donation to our annual appeal or passing this information on to a family member or friend. How can our retreat ministry help you “let your light shine before others?” Jim Ford

Inside: upcoming retreats and events



Join us in our mission!

“Fund-raising is proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission.” Fr. Henri J.M. Nouwen

2018 – 2019 ANNUAL APPEAL

Each year we appeal to our supporters for donations to assist us in our retreat initiatives and to help us maintain and improve our beautiful building and grounds. The financial assistance provided by the annual appeal along with financial help from the Marianist Province have made many positive improvements possible:

- We now have a new “zoned” air conditioning and heating system that is much more efficient and cost-effective.
- No more leaky roofs – Extensive repairs to the roof over the conference room and chapel have been completed.
- New insulated windows have been installed in all guest rooms and protective storm windows over the stained glass windows in our beautiful chapel. (See inside back cover for more building improvements.)

Your donations have helped us to increase our outreach to low-income schools and organizations and to initiate new programs serving Christian families. The Hearts of Mary Retreat for mothers and daughters and the Sons of Joseph Father and Son retreats are proving to be meaningful additions to our ministry. They are serving as a prelude to a new emphasis on family retreat ministry to take place soon when construction is completed on the Marycliff Family Retreat Lodge.



Through your contribution to our Annual Appeal you will be participating in a ministry that is truly grand, and because of your generosity we will all benefit. “You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity...” (2 Cor 9:11) Thank you for being a partner in our mission. We rely on your prayerful generosity to continue and expand our vital retreat ministry. God’s Peace
Mike Hagenhoff, President, Jim Ford, Executive Director.

A reply envelope is attached for your convenience in responding.



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info@mretreat.org

www.mretreat.org

Sabrina Archambault: Operations Coordinator
Dianne Richardson: Guest Services Manager
Curtis Ballenger: Development Director
Mike Partl: Maintenance Coordinator
Julie Hickey: Program Coordinator
Jim Ford: Executive Director

The Marycliff Retreat Family Lodge

Our new emphasis on family retreat ministry will soon take a giant step forward as we move ever closer toward the completion of the Marycliff Family Retreat Lodge. The Holy Spirit has definitely been in our corner as we have succeeded in raising the necessary funds to begin restoring this stately, historic mansion to its former grandeur. When completed, it will be a safe and comfortable facility that families can enjoy on their spiritual journey for years to come. The additional lodging and meeting space at Marycliff will also give the Retreat Center more flexibility in serving multiple groups and groups requiring more space than is currently available. Renovation is expected to be completed in the summer of 2020.

The Christian family is intrinsically holy and sacred. We believe it to be the foundation of the Church and the core of society. Family is our first and primary experience of community, forming our values and nurturing our faith.

We ask you to join with us as we venture into this exciting new ministry serving the families of St. Louis. In addition to the costs related to restoring Marycliff, staffing and operating the new program during the initial phase of its operation will also present financing challenges. YOU ARE A PARTNER IN OUR MISSION OF SERVING GOD’S PEOPLE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT.

Donate on line at www.mretreat.org or call 636-938-5390



Retreat opportunities for 2018-2019



Spirituality of the Wisdom Years

Wednesday, 10/3/2018

9am to 3pm

Like every stage of life, the "wisdom years" present their own unique challenges and blessings. They are a time of transition, of redefining who we are and who we're called to be. On this Day of Recollection, we'll use our Blessed Mother, Mary, as our model in discerning God's will and responding to it, learning to ponder in our hearts as she did. Through this process, we will learn to move through knowledge to wisdom, through uncertainty to acceptance and peace. The day will include presentations, discussion, journaling, and time for quiet reflection and walking the grounds, culminating in a prayer service. The day includes lunch. Cost is \$45 per person.

The Silence of the Christian Mystics



October 21, 2018

12:30pm to 4:30pm - \$30

This half-day retreat on Christian contemplation is about experiencing God in the silence of our heart as practiced through the centuries by the Christian mystics. Through the artistic medium of mystical poetry, music and readings we can elevate our own state of God-centeredness to enter contemplation's path that leads us to God within.



THE ADVENT RETREAT

In the light of hope

We hope because we want something better. But there are many times in our lives that we need to go through doubt, hurt and confusion before we can make our way into the light of hope. We admit that we need our all-loving God. This retreat will center on these themes and how the joyful preparation for Jesus' coming during this special season of Advent can foster hope in our lives.

This silent retreat will also include Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, reflective talks, music, art, poetry, prayer services and time to immerse into the beautiful and holy season of Advent. This retreat starts at 4pm on Friday and concludes on Sunday at 1pm. Cost \$195

Nov. 30, Dec. 1, 2, 2018.

Cost: \$195 includes 6 meals, a private room and bath, towels and linens.

Led by Fr. Tom Santen, Lucia Signorelli, Steve Givens and Jim Ford



Retreat opportunities for 2018 - 2019

Christmas Family Retreat

Dec. 28 - Dec. 30, 2018

Games, carols and festivities allow families to continue the spirit of the Christmas season! Enjoy crafts, faith sharing, Mass, prayer, nature walks, movies, and down time to just “be” with God and with your loved ones! Optional trip to Hidden Valley Sky Resort is available. 6 meals, private rooms & baths, from Fri., 5pm to Sun., 1pm. (Pictured, last year’s Christmas Retreat.)

MRCC: \$165 per adult, \$85 per child(4 -18) 3 & under free
Hidden Valley (last year rates) - Skiing: Pass w/rental fees range from \$79 per person to \$36 depends on age. Tubing: \$22/\$26 per person per day. We will get a group rate if we have enough sign ups. Pay at retreat. www.hiddenvalleyski.com



Girlfriends in Grace

January 12 -13, 2019



A Celebration of Friendship!

Come...to remember.

Come...to share your stories.

Come...to deepen your bonds of friendship.

Come...to give thanks to our loving God.

The retreat will include some large group presentations, but each group of friends will function as its own small group for discussions. There will be a variety of activities and plenty of time to just kick back and bask in the beauty of your nearest and dearest girlfriends. Time for prayer will be available, and the celebration of the Mass will take place on Sunday. The retreat starts Saturday at 1pm and will end Sunday at 5pm. The cost is \$108 per person and includes a private room, with a bathroom and shower, linens, towels, 3 meals and snacks.

Hearts of Mary Retreat

January 26 - 27, 2019

An intergenerational retreat exploring the feminine genius



The Hearts of Mary Retreat is designed to foster in various generations what St. John Paul II called the “feminine genius,” by exploring how to apply the love and virtues of Mary to our modern-day lives. This retreat is offered to girls ages 7-14 and their accompanying mother, grandmother, aunt, or godmother. The event will have Mary-related talks for adults and children as well as games, music, crafts, Eucharistic Adoration, sacrament of Reconciliation, and Mass. It is an overnight retreat with 2:00 p.m. arrival on Saturday and 4 p.m. departure on Sunday. Dinner, breakfast, and lunch will be provided. The cost is \$85 per adult and \$35 per child. Led by MRCC Staff Julie Hickey and Jane Furey. Pictured above, the HOM retreat, January 2018.

“You can tell when you walk into a retreat center if it is a place of prayer. Your Center is. You can feel it when you enter the MRCC grounds.”

Kim Ryan, Bethany Fellowship



Retreat opportunities for 2018-2019

PALM SUNDAY RETREAT

April 12, 13, 14, 2019

Led by Msgr. Michael Witt

In a series of reflective talks Msgr. Witt will lead retreatants through a Lenten journey that will help prepare you for the Easter Season. The weekend will include a Stations of the Cross Prayer Service, time for prayer & meditation in the chapel and on our beautiful grounds, Mass and a reconciliation service. Cost \$195

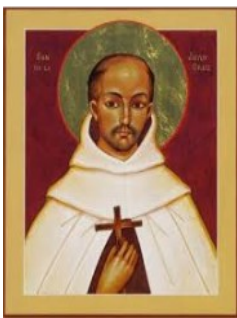


Good Friday
Day of Prayer

The day will focus on the words of Jesus from the cross and their message of love and suffering for all of us.

Friday, April 19, 2019
8:30am to 3pm

Led by Sr. Paulette Patritti, OP & Fr. Jose Ramirez, SM
\$40 includes breakfast and lunch



Join us as we explore the spiritual journey of **St. John of the Cross**

Dark Night of the Soul

Night of Sense, Night of Spirit

March 7-10, 2019

"There is an unknowing that is higher than all knowledge, a darkness that is supremely bright; and in this dazzling darkness, divine things are given to those who seek Him..." St. John of the Cross

The weekend will allow time for presentation on the stages of spiritual life as exemplified in the writings of John of the Cross, small group process, periods of contemplative prayer in community and free time for reflection and rest.

Presenter: Susan Komis. Cost: \$195 includes 6 meals, private bedroom & linens

8 DAY DIRECTED RETREAT

July 14 - July 21, 2019



BE STILL HERE

Directors: Sister Janet Dohr, CPPS, Sister Paulette Patritti, OP, Father Jose Ramirez, SM, Father Joseph Uvietta, SM. Cost: \$430

Theater Camp, Music/Art Camp



Led by Julie Hickey and Rose Fischer for 6-13 year olds (day camp) and high schoolers who mentor the day students and workshop their own production in the evenings & stay overnight, Theater Camp, June 17-19, 2019 and Music/Art, June 24-26, 2019



MRCC Registration Form: 2018-2019

You can register on line at www.mretreat.org or fill out a registration forms below & mail it with your payment to:

MRCC, PO Box 718, Eureka, MO 63025

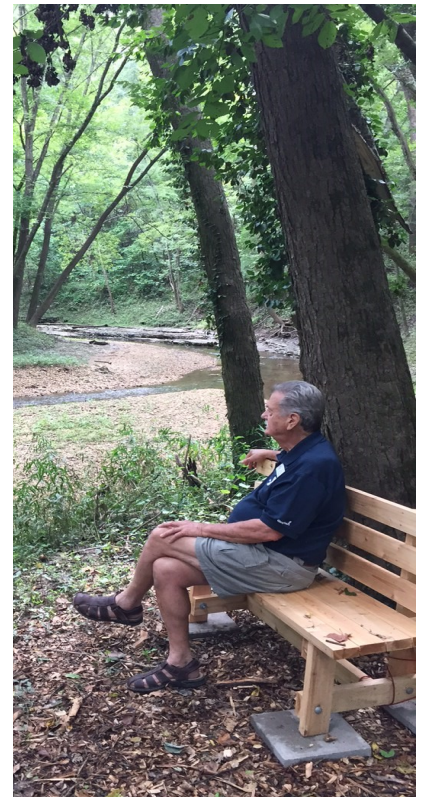
Wisdom Day, October 3, \$45
Christian Mystic Day, October 21, \$30
Advent Retreat, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, \$195
Christmas Retreat, Dec. 28-30, \$195/\$85
Girlfriend Retreat, January 12-13, \$108
Hearts of Mary, January 26-27, \$85/\$35

Dark Soul Retreat, March 7-10, \$195
Palm Sunday Retreat, March 12-14, \$195
Good Friday Day, April 19, \$40
Theater Camp, June 17-19, \$150
Senior Theater Camp, June 24-26, \$50
8 Day Directed Retreat, July 14-21, \$430 or ___ days @ \$75 a day

NAME OF RETREAT _____
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 _____



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NAME _____
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The Marianist Retreat & Conference Center

636-938-5390

636-938-3493 (fax)

Email: info@mretreat.org

Picture on left: looking east
from our roof



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



MRCC 2017 - 2018: 50 Highlights & Accomplishments

Fifty Year celebration: a year of highlighting MRCC's service to God's people including:

- History night, in Feb., over 110 people
- Special retreats including Nature Wondering with Belden Lane in May
- Spectacle, the musical about the history of the Marianists, attracted 120 people in September
- Marianist Family Festival, brought in over 300 people in October
- Advent David Hoffman concert, Saint Joseph Parish in Manchester, hosted 130 people

Mission Integration Plan:

- Supporting and living out the Marianist charism as witnessed by staff hospitality, the presence of Brother Richard, the artwork of Brother Mel, staff and board prayer and formation
- The evolution of the family ministry program as exemplified in the Hearts of Mary, Sons of Joseph and Christmas family retreats and the remodeling of Marycliff
- The commitment to social justice through a new relationship with the St. Louis County "Social Justice for All" faith group.
- Our growth in the area of working with young adults

Marycliff Retreat Family Lodge:

- Evolution of the family ministry mission over a 2 year period
- Strong support of donors, with over \$1.89 million raised since January 2018. Goal. \$2.5 million by Dec. 2018
- Remodeling, from a dream to reality
- It will reopen in the summer of 2020

MRCC Staff:

- Strong support and dedication from our staff members
- In retreat evaluations they receive high grades from guests for hospitality and quality of service

- They are always looking to improve ministry with creative suggestions
- Guest Services continue to reach out to our community with the Christmas cookies, bakery, and catering programs

Building Improvements:

- New 70 ton chiller
- Two new boilers
- New heating and cooling units in each bedroom
- Overall HVAC system accessible by computer program
- New water valves in the dormitory basement area
- New high efficiency, double pane windows in each bedroom
- News storm windows on chapel stain glass windows improving temperature efficiency and decreasing outside noise
- Replaced cracked window in the lobby
- Recycled many of the metals taken out of the retreat center
- New energy efficient lights in all meeting spaces and rooms

New library Program:

- We are grateful for our new volunteer librarian Pat Sainz who has reorganized the library
- We have doubled the size of the library in the past year
- New 30 day book loan program

Building usage continues recent history of strong numbers:

- Weekend occupancy rate, 84%
- Week day occupancy, 69%
- Last summer we projected 73 retreats and 2877 guests. Our final totals were 77 retreats and 2975 guests
- We have attracted several new groups to the center this year
- We continue to reach out and serve low income schools, parishes and groups
- Reaching a variety of faith groups

The Board of Directors continues to be a source of strength for this retreat ministry:

- August retreat a highlight of the year
- Phone calls, emails, texts, and drop ins of board members are examples of how they support staff and programs
- Committee meetings are at the core of the board of director's work
- This year the board played a major role in evolution of our family ministry

The message, **BE STILL HERE**, is at the core of our retreat ministry message:

- Our grounds and buildings continue to be an amazing space to encounter God
- The new Beatitudes Walk is a welcome addition to places to pray and meditate on the grounds
- New steps to Hamilton creek adds accessibility to Serenity Point

And the rest:

- Our website is a key component of attracting new people to our ministry and also a convenient way to sign up for a retreat and make donations
- Strong working relationship with the town of Wildwood and the chamber of commerce of Eureka
- Annual Appeal: six straight years of growth, \$15,000 to \$47,000
- We are continuing to grow in our use of social media including emails with Constant Contact, and messages on Twitter, Instagram .
- Budget strengths: program income predictions were accurate
- Four seasons volunteer program continues to attract a variety of friends of the ministry to help upkeep our grounds
- The commencement of the next fifty years of service to God's people in St. Louis!

From a February 2018 retreat evaluation: Exceeded all expectations. *Food was delicious, facilities immaculate, staff hospitable and welcoming. Best retreat house in all of STL area.*

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 magnificent 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

Inside: upcoming retreats and events

Go to **www.mretreat.org** for more information

STAFF MEMBER PROFILE

The epitome of Marianist hospitality



When you call the Retreat Center on the phone or when your group arrives for the retreat experience, there is always a friendly voice and a helpful and welcoming smile that makes a positive first and lasting impression. That voice and face belong to Sabrina Archambault, our Operations Coordinator. To many, Sabrina represents the heart and soul of the Retreat Center. She serves a vital role in creating a welcoming and accommodating atmosphere for all who come here. Sabrina has served faithfully on the MRCC staff for over 12 years, serving a key role in scheduling new groups as well as making

sure all groups who come here have a pleasant and fulfilling retreat experience. In addition, Sabrina is responsible for payroll and accounting functions and is a vital member of the Leadership team.

SAVE THE DATE: 5/4/19

The 5th Annual



TRIVIA DE MAYO



**Be still
here**