



## Positive changes for MRCC

Based on a successful year-long feasibility study and outstanding leadership from the board and staff, the Marianist Province decided to fund our new boiler, AC unit, roof for the conference room/chapel and new bedroom windows. That's correct; we will not be running a capital campaign!

The board and I see this as a major vote of confidence from the Marianist leaders due to the mission and vision work, strategic planning, and new retreats generated by our retreat ministry the past few years.

When members of the Provincial Council told me that the retreat center is in the business of faith formation and not raising money, I realized we have been granted an incredible gift. During the next few months we will be gathering estimates for the work that needs to be completed. The staff and board will then prioritize the different projects and the Province has agreed to complete all the work in three years.

One of the findings of the feasibility study is the unanimous support for a new emphasis on family ministry, which includes family day programs and overnight family retreats. Marycliff was mentioned as a possible location for

family retreats and programs. To accomplish this goal we will need to facilitate a thorough evaluation of Marycliff which includes looking at building code and accessibility issues, adding a central AC system and other major improvements. Because of the work needed to

make this happen we will cease booking groups into Marycliff after 7/1/17.

The Marianist community will continue to live at Marycliff for the time being. It is our hope that the total cost of renovating Marycliff will be feasible.

In the meantime, through a generous donation from Holiday Inn in Eureka, half of our bedrooms now have queen size beds in them. We also have two twin beds in all the other rooms. This increases our capacity by 20 beds and will, for many retreats, make up for the unavailability of Marycliff.

The bottom line is that our present retreat ministry is very healthy and the future is indeed bright. The Province is clearly supporting our mission and strategic planning work. They are truly partners in a shared vision of how MRCC can continue to grow and meet the needs of God's people for the next 50 years!

*By Jim Ford*

***Our present retreat ministry is very healthy & the future is indeed bright.***

## Upcoming Retreats/Programs

Pages 3-6

### ***History Night***

Experience the history of the retreat center, the surrounding area and Catholic Church in St. Louis. Free!

### ***Lenten Retreat***

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

### ***Brand New Day***

Moving us outside our comfort zone and leading us to discover new ways of following the compass to the divine.

### ***Nature Wandering***

Being outside as a spiritual practice led by well know author and retreat director, Belden Lane



# ***Celebrating 50 years of service to God's people***

Fifty years ago the Marianist Brothers of St. Louis had a vision to move into the high school retreat business/ministry by opening this wonderful facility and staffing it with an energetic and dedicated employees. 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 16:** *"History Comes Alive!"* Celebrating our local history, 6:30pm to 8:30pm (See page 3 for more info.)

**March 22:** *"With Mary toward social Justice,"* Lenten program at St. Mary's High School. This particular night the theme will be "From the face of empathy to people of Action". The program, which starts with soup at 6:45pm, will also feature a children's program led by MRCC staff. Contact MRCC board member, Maureen Hoock, 314-420-1650 for more information.

**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 Evening

**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*

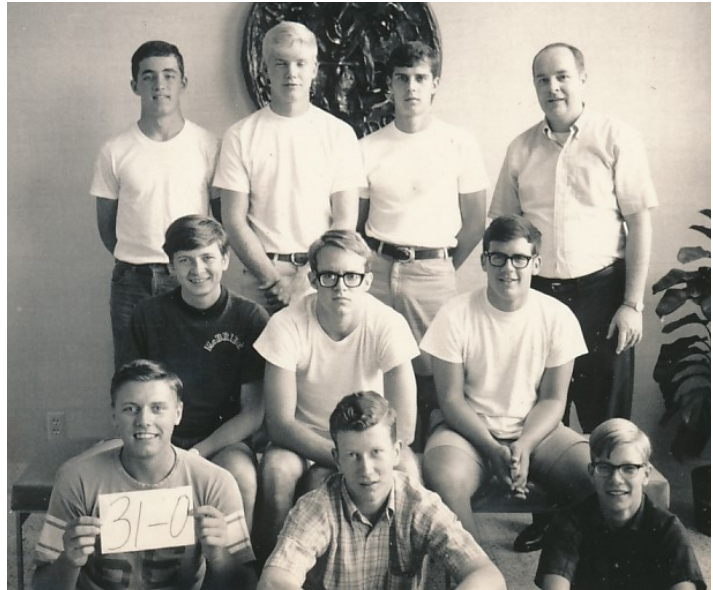
**August 13:** Family BBQ with the Board, staff and friends

**September 16 or 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.

**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 3:** Advent Concert with David Kaufmann at St. Joseph's Church in Manchester. 7pm. David, a well know liturgical composer from San Antonio, Texas, is a graduate of Chaminade High School and was very active in the initial ACTS retreats in St. Louis.



*McBride Students from September, 1969 on retreat at MRCC.*

*1st Row: Everding, Philips, Magditch; 2nd row: Sovonski, Dobby, Hoffman; Back row: O'Day, Lang, Galati & Br. Bro. Eugene Meyerpeter, SM, who was the founder of MRCC & its first director.*



*Mike participating in a recent work day at MRCC by cleaning the dining room windows.*

## ***New vision leads to expansion***

If you visit the MRCC you will notice a high degree of excitement as we move into 2017 and celebrate the 50 years of service to the Marianist community by the dedicated Marianists and lay members of the MRCC staff. Our excitement is not only over the 50 year journey but also looking ahead to the next 50 years with a vision to expand our services to countless groups and individuals who rely on the MRCC as a place of self meditation and prayer. Our excitement is echoed by those with whom we have shared our vision seeking feedback on our future direction.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to look back over the past 50 years and thank all the Marianists, the staff, and those supporting our mission who have contributed and prayed for the success of the MRCC in the past as well as our future.

Please join us in celebrating the various events taking place over the next year by visiting the MRCC and participating when possible.

By Michael J. Hagenhoff, MRCC President



## Save the date for these 2017 retreats & programs!

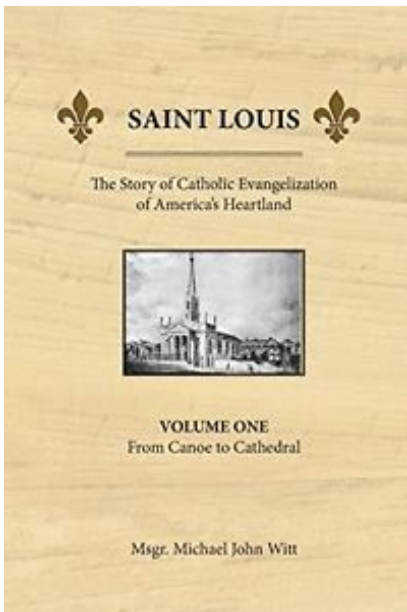
### History Comes Alive at MRCC

Thursday, February 16, 2017, 6:30 – 8:30,  
Admission is free and snacks will be provided.  
*Please call if you plan on attending*

Come and learn about the rich history of Glencoe, the Meramec Valley, The Marianist Retreat Center, Eureka, Wildwood and the early days of the Roman Catholic Church in St Louis. This is a free event, open to anyone interested in our local history.

History buffs will enjoy this three-part program dealing first with the history of the Glencoe area, it's early settlers and the

“Clubhouse Era” in its heyday along the Meramec River from Valley Park to Pacific. The second segment, deals with the early history of the Catholic Church in St Louis led by Msgr. Michael Witt, author of “The Story of Catholic Evangelization of America’s Heartland.” The third phase, led by Father Joseph Uvietta, SM and Sister Paulette Patriiti, OP deals with the 50 year history of the Marianist Retreat Center and the Marycliff Mansion from the time the property was acquired by the Marianist Order in 1947.



### 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

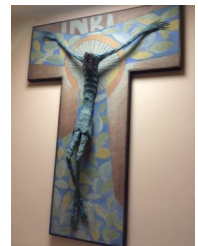
### ***“WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT SORROW AND SUFFERING AS WE REFLECT ON THE SUFFERING OF JESUS?”***

***Led by Sister Paulette Patriiti, 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.



# Retreat/program opportunities for 2017

## Celebrating God's creation!



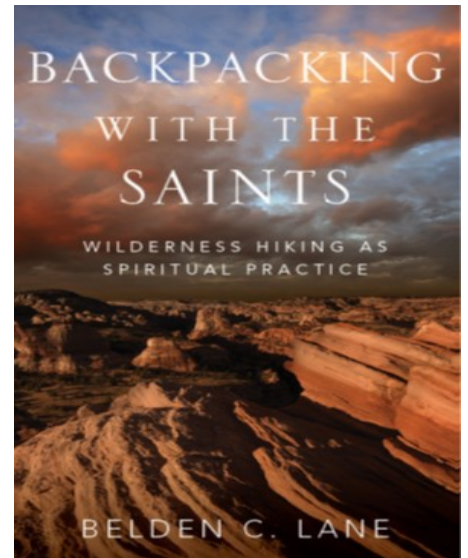
*Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind."*  
Genesis 1

### The Magic & Wonder of Birding

May 7, 2017

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.*



## 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 Hammarskjold, 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, June 25, 2017

*How our dogs model God's love by their example*

35 minutes conferences with 20 minutes of interaction:

- **Longing for a "pet:"** how God has hard-wired us for relationships with each other, with creatures and with Him
  - **Rolling in Something that Smells:** what our dogs can teach us about the Incarnation
  - Snack and walk time (Over 3.5 miles of trails on 120 acres)
  - **C.S. Lewis and Heavenly Pets:** a Christian reads MERLE'S DOOR and ponders angelic forms.
- 1pm to 4:30pm, Led by Msgr. Michael Witt

## Holy Grounds

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

*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 Coordinator  
Jim Ford, Executive Director*



## 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*

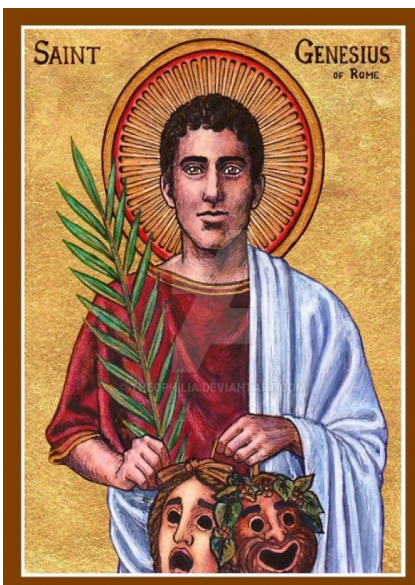
Led by Steve Givens. For those living with disease and those who care for them are invited to this quiet weekend away to contemplate and embrace God's movement in their lives. The weekend will offer presentations, music and a variety of prayer experiences as well as opportunities for solitude, contemplative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

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Palm Sunday Retreat</b> , April 7,8,9, \$190                       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Dog is my Co-Pilot</b> , June 25, 2016, \$30                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Good Friday Day of Prayer</b> , April 14, 2017, \$40               | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Junior Theater Camp</b> , June 19-21, 2017, \$150                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>The Magic &amp; Wonder of Birding</b> , May 7, 2017, \$25          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Senior Theater Camp</b> , June 19-21, 2017, \$50                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Brand New Day Retreat</b> , May 19-21, 2017 \$190                  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Embraced by God Retreat</b> , July 14-16, 2017, \$190                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Nature Wandering as Spiritual Practice</b> , June 2-4, 2017, \$225 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>8 Day Directed Retreat</b> , July 16-23, 2017, \$420 or ___ days @ \$70 a day |

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

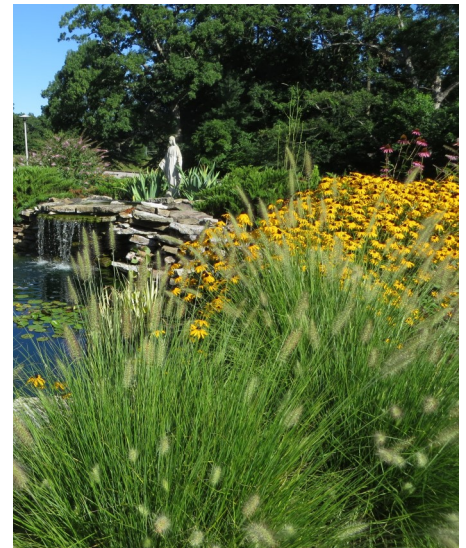
Special needs \_\_\_\_\_

(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 ONLY for the 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 / www.mretreat.org

### **Youth Program Updates**

Our high school retreats and days of reflection are going well at MRCC. One new program that has been well received this year was a leadership retreat called **One Call Away** which has been marketed to diocesan 7th and 8th graders. Schools who participated in the first program were St. Cecilia, Loyola, Marian and Our Lady of Pillar. The focus of this retreat is using Gospel values in peer support and being spiritual leaders.

Our **Urban Retreat** is an outreach to the youth group of St. Elizabeth Mother of John the Baptist (north St. Louis city) with the help of their pastor, Fr. Steve Giljum. Last year, we had a wonderful experience with this group. The theme of the retreat was: Whose Are You? appreciating our unique identity as children of God. This February we will welcome 22 more of these young people from St. Elizabeth's with the theme based on St. Paul and striving for true victory and run-

ning the race well.

The **Next Step II** will be held in June and is aimed at all high school students but is primarily designed for students who attend public schools. Last summer we had a terrific experience with students from diverse backgrounds sharing their faith and having a lot of fun encouraging one another on their faith journeys. (See picture on page 7) We also had teens from the retreat give talks on service, relationships, and what it means to live their faith in today's culture.

In service to building up the family, we are offering an intergenerational retreat called **Hearts of Mary**. The Hearts of Mary retreat is offered to girls ages 7-14 and their accompanying mothers, grandmother, or godmothers. It is designed to foster their relationship with Mary and build upon her virtues tapping into an authentic self-esteem based on what St. John Paul II called the "Feminine Genius". The retreat has had a wonderful response. We have thirty retreatants signed up.

**By Julie Hickey**

# The genesis of our Annual Appeal

The Annual Appeal for the support of the Retreat Center was begun in 2011 in an effort to raise necessary funds for needed improvements and programs that were beyond the limits of the operating budget. Prior to that time, the Center's only fund-raising was through special events, primarily the annual Trivia Night.

One day, Father Tim Foley, a former board member was here on retreat. He came into the development office and suggested we consider

embarking on an annual giving program patterned after a very successful drive conducted each year in his parish, Christ the King in University City. He explained that special events were fine, but required a lot of staff and volunteer time and effort, and only reached those folks who were inclined to participate. He felt that there was a broader constituency of people with an



interest in the retreat center who would support the retreat center if approached. He pointed out that you don't get results unless you ask. He offered, if we were interested, to bring the lay leader of the campaign at

Christ the King for a meeting to share their experiences and help us get started and that he wanted to start the campaign with a substantial personal gift.

We sent out a mailing to our database of about 1500 names resulting

in donations totaling \$ 13,295. Within two years, income from the annual appeal had grown to more than \$30,000, and assuming we reach our \$40,000 goal this year, the annual appeal will have generated over \$175,000 over the six years since its inception. We now have a cadre of donors on whom we can rely for their support on an annual basis, and our

database has nearly doubled in size.

The story doesn't end there. What has the money we've raised enabled us to do in terms of program services and facility improvements? Here are just a few examples:

- Outreach to low-income schools – Our Youth Team provides retreats at no cost for students at Cardinal Ritter College Prep, St Cecelia School in South City and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Ferguson

- Next Step Retreat - Retreat programs for Catholic youth who attend public schools – a major priority of the Archdiocese. (Pictured, the June 2016 Next Step Retreat.)

- Facility Improvements – The Retreat Center is 50 years old. Annual Appeal Funds have enabled needed upgrading and repairs – roofing, paving, new carpeting in the conference room and chapel.
- A fair wage for our 20 full and part-time employees.

We are grateful to Father Tim Foley for helping us create a fund raising vehicle that will serve us well for many years to come. Please consider a completely tax-deductible donation in support of this outstanding retreat ministry. **An envelope is enclosed in this newsletter for your convenience.**

*By Curtis Ballenger*

## *Trip to Marianist ground zero is amazing!*

On my recent trip to Spain, I was curious to go to Zaragoza and view the Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar. I knew that it was an important site in the Marianist tradition, but was uninformed as to the immensity of the Basilica or the significance to Catholics of “the Pillar”. The belief is that the Virgin Mary, during her lifetime, in 40 AD, came to Zaragoza in support of the ministry of the Apostle James, who was having a difficult time converting the Spanish people to Christianity. With God's help, she assisted in establishing a church there and produced a pillar that became the foundation of the original church. The pillar still exists in the exact spot where it first stood. Church leaders will not allow it to be moved. The faithful can go to a sacred place behind the altar where there is an opening in the wall exposing a portion of the pillar. The faithful can kneel and touch or kiss the pillar in reverence to the Blessed Mother and her miraculous deeds.

The significance for the Marianists comes from a visit to Zaragoza by Blessed William Joseph Chaminade in 1797. Father Chaminade was forced to flee from France in the face of persecution during the French Revolution. It was there, at the Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar, through fervent prayer that Father Chaminade received the vision to return to France and begin the job of restoring the Catholic faith which had been suppressed during the revolution. He returned to Bordeaux in 1800 and began forming small communities of both clergy and laity, resulting in the founding of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate (with the collaboration of Mother Adele) in 1816 followed by the Society of Mary (Marianist) in 1817.

The church is nothing short of unbelievable. The exterior is awe-inspiring and the interior is magnificent. If you're planning a trip to Europe don't miss a stopover in Zaragoza.

*By Curtis Ballenger*



*"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

## Retreats held at MRCC the past 6 months

### JULY

Year of Mercy Retreat  
Queen of All Saints ACTS  
Marianist Province Brothers  
Directed Retreat  
Let's Start

### AUGUST

Marianist Province  
Barat Academy HS  
Our Lady of Guadalupe  
St. Vincent HS  
St. Peters Parish  
Our Lady of Festus  
Contemplative Outreach  
Eliot Unitarian Chapel  
Marianist Province Council  
Alexian Brothers

### SEPTEMBER

Health Action  
Trinity HS  
Engaged Encounter  
St. Dominic HS  
Eureka Chamber  
Secular Carmelites  
Hidden Heart Ministry  
Daughters of Destiny  
Pax Christi  
Alexian Brothers

### OCTOBER

Mary Mother of the Church  
Bishop DuBourg HS  
Regnum Christi

### MRCC Cookie Ministry!



It is a Christmas tradition for our Guest Services Manager, Dianne Richardson (pictured here) and her staff to make cookies for our board members, donors, friends and staff. Once again they made thousands and thousands cookies and more than 50 large trays

of cookies were delivered to the doorsteps of board members and donors. What does it take to make so many wonderful and delicious cookies?

350 lbs. all-purpose flour; 100 lbs. oats; 15 lbs. cocoa powder; 100 lbs. margarine; 150 lbs. granulate sugar; 30 lbs. Raisins; 10 lbs. cranberries; 14 lbs. Walnuts; 10 lbs. pecans; 2 lbs. almonds; 2 lbs. almond paste; 100 lbs. brown sugar; 40 lbs. vegetable shortening; 70 lbs. chocolate chips; ½ gal maraschino cherries; 10 lbs. dried cherries; 6 cases (1080) eggs; 50 lbs. confectioner sugar; 8 lbs. baking powder; 10 lbs. white frosting ; 2 cases already made holiday shapes cookie dough; 2 cases gingerbread cookie dough  
..... and a lot of love!!!

After all the cookies were delivered we had several large boxes left over so we took them to Operation Food Search.

Immaculate Conception School  
Assumption Parish ACTS  
Chaminade College Prep HS  
Recovery Retreat  
Vianney HS  
Marianist Office of Sponsorship  
Nerinx HS  
BJC Hospice Weavings  
Harmony Harbor

### NOVEMBER

Our Lady of Festus ACTS  
St. Dominic HS  
SLU H.S. Faculty  
Bishop DuBourg HS  
Marianist Province Formation  
Notre Dame St. Louis  
SSM Health, St. Clair Hospital  
Notre Dame Cape HS  
Mindfulness In Nature  
Jonah St. Anthony Team

### DECEMBER

Advent Retreat  
Illuman Men's Group  
Notre Dame Cape HS  
St. Marys' University, Texas  
YOGA Retreat

*Thank you to all the groups, schools and churches that support our retreat ministry. It is a privilege to be a part of your spiritual journeys. **By Sabrina Archambault***