



Franciscan Retreats

FALL 2008

God bless us
every one!

*Rest assured of the friars' prayers
for the retreatants, friends, and
benefactors of Franciscan Retreats,
especially during the Christmas season.*



Bookstore Sale Saturday, December 20, 2008

We will be holding a special sale in the bookstore on Saturday, December 20. Someone from the retreat center staff will be on duty in the store from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.. We will offer a 20% discount on all merchandise and books in the store. Yes, on ALL of the merchandise and books in the store. This is a great opportunity to stock up on greeting cards and last-minute Christmas gifts for friends and family. See you there!

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As I write this column, we are in the midst of a national election, an economic downturn (hopefully, by the time you read this, we will be in the midst of an economic upturn), and one of the most beautiful autumns I have ever witnessed. Extremes have become the norm for us, which means that we live in a perpetual state of agitation. [It's probably not fair to accuse the foliage of being agitated, but you have to admit, the trees do stand out!]

Civility, respect, and a willingness to learn something from another, are all qualities that we need to counterbalance the excesses that surround us. We need to be grounded and centered during these times, and the best way to insure that stability is to maintain a regular life of prayer and reflection. Even if the best that we can do is to steal a few moments of time with God, it becomes so essential for all of us to have a still point from which we can deal with the stresses and the bad news that surround us. I know that when I don't take this time with the Almighty that I am prone to being irritable, caustic and a total pain to live with.

While I don't espouse being a Pollyanna about the state of the world, I think that there is a lot of Good News that breaks through our jaded outlook on our surroundings. I recall years ago when I visited my sister and her husband and family in Missouri how the local newspaper was filled with marvelous stories of people coming to the aid of others. From professional athletes who gave of their time to comfort sick children or offer encouragement to the homeless, to a man who randomly gave \$100.00 bills to those he met on the street, the local paper reminded everyone who read it that a lot of goodness still shines through the hearts and actions of our brothers and sisters.

As approach the feast of the birth of the Prince of Peace, and as we celebrate with family and friends this holy season, may we be sources of good news to all we meet and serve.

Bro. Bob Roddy, OFM Conv.



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"May the Lord give you peace!" St. Francis of Assisi

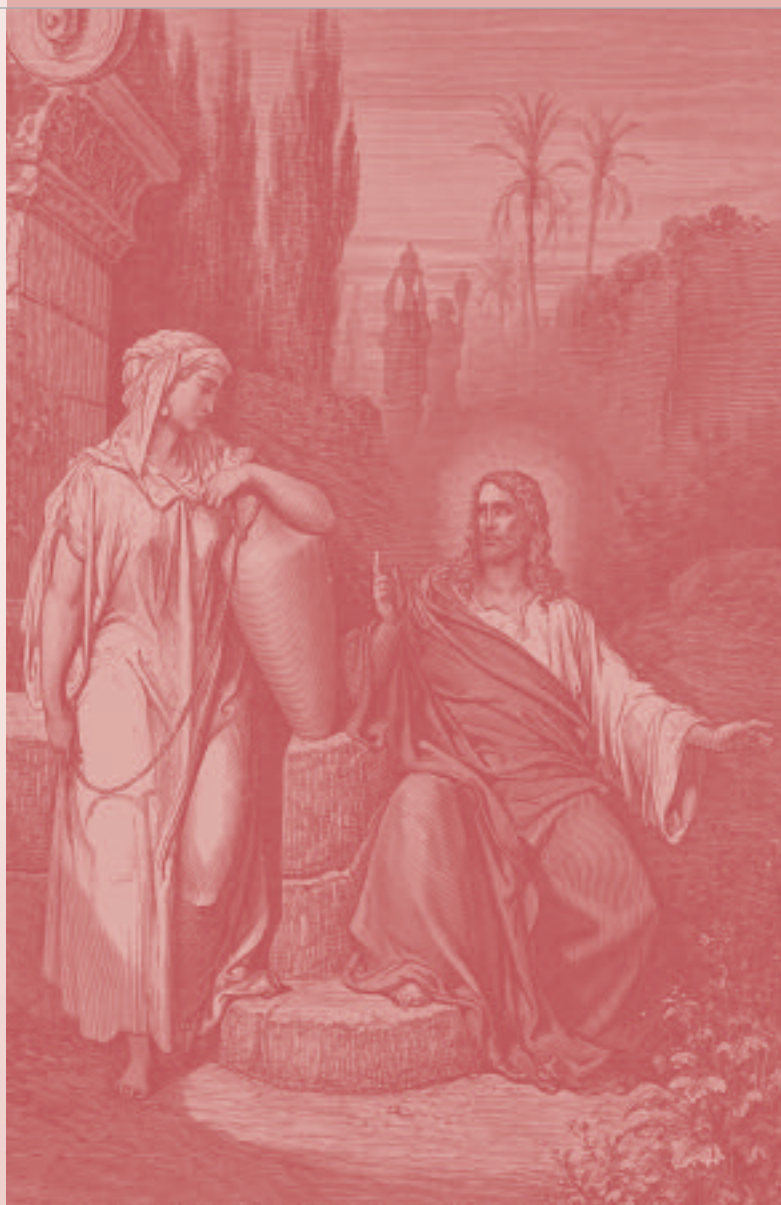
2009 Retreat Theme

Meeting Jesus Today

During the course of spiritual direction on a retreat, or in conversations with retreatants, we often hear of a hunger for a deeper relationship with the Lord, and a deeper life of prayer.

The operative word here is **relationship**. What kind of relationship do I have with the Lord? How are my relationships with others (family members, spouses, friends, workers, “enemies,”) lived out and how do these relationships impact my life of faith?

When we look at the Gospels, we find many stories of Jesus speaking with individuals; these encounters with Jesus can offer us insight into our own relationship with Jesus, especially the ways in which we meet Jesus today. Our hope is that by reflecting on these stories from the Scriptures we can come to a deeper relationship with Jesus; a relationship based upon love and trust rather than one of fear and anxiety.



Blessing of the Animals

On Sunday, September 28, 2008, we did the traditional “Blessing of the Animals,” at Franciscan Retreats. The gathering was a small, but appreciative group of pet owners who wished to have their beloved pets blessed.

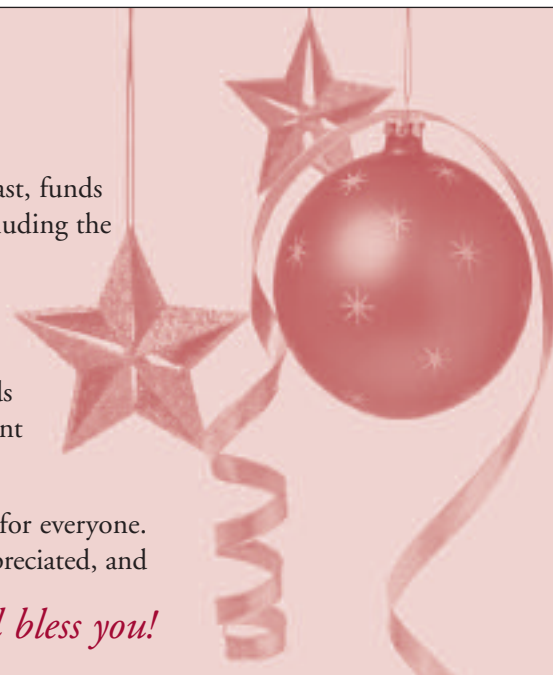
Annual Christmas Appeal

With this newsletter we also make our annual Christmas Appeal. In the past, funds raised from this appeal have paid for improvements to the retreat facility, including the new chairs for the chapel and chairs for the retreat center bedrooms.

Due to the expected increase in costs for natural gas, we have decided that the proceeds from this year's annual appeal will go towards energy costs for the retreat center. Should we be blessed with a mild winter, then whatever funds might be left after the winter months could be applied to a specific improvement project for Franciscan Retreats.

We understand that with the current economic conditions money is tight for everyone. Whatever sacrifice that you can make towards our annual appeal is greatly appreciated, and needed for us to continue our ministry here.

Thank you and God bless you!





Memorial Icons Blessed

On Sunday, September 28, the new icons of Saint Francis and Saint Clare, which now flank both sides of the Retreat Chapel Sanctuary, were blessed by Fr. Steve McMichael, Guardian of St. Joseph Cupertino Friary. The blessing took place in the context of a Memorial Mass for the members of the families who donated monies for the creation of the icons; nearly eighty people attended the special liturgy.

The icons are memorials to Leo Justen+, Katie Fox+, Pat Geronime+, Daniel and Alvina O'Connell+, Isadore Gergen+, and Eleanor Reasner+. The icons were written by Sister Paula Howard, OSB, of Mount Saint Scholastica Monastery in Atchison, Kansas. Sister Paula, a retired Mathematics teacher and school administrator has been writing icons since 2000, after she took a course in icon writing from the late Sister Mary Charles McGough, OSB, of Saint Scholastica Monastery in Duluth. (For more about Sister Paula Howard and her work, visit the Monastery's website: www.mountosb.org/icon/)



2008 Advent Days of Prayer

Our Advent Days of Prayer are a great way to spend some time in personal prayer and enrich your experience of Advent. This year's dates and presenters are:

December 3

Jesus, Born Into A Family

presented by Corrine Kindschy

December 10

Mary's Journey

presented by Wendy Coughlin

December 17

Receiving the Gift of Hope

presented by Terri Mifek

There is no specific charge for the day, though a suggested donation of \$25.00 is requested. Attend one, two or all three, and bring a friend!

Schedule for 2008 Advent Day of Prayer

9:30 Arrival (Coffee Available)

9:45 Gathering Prayer
Followed by first conference
Followed by confession

Free Time

11:30 Stations of the Cross

12:00 Lunch (BYO)

1:30 Second Conference

2:00 Mass

Departure



RETREAT SCHEDULE 2009

Please pray for these retreats, and think about joining us.

2009 WEEKEND RETREATS

Jan 9-11	Prayer Shawl Ministry
Jan 16-18	Women's Weekend
Jan 23-25	Women's Weekend
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Feb 6-8	Men's Weekend
Feb 13-15	Married Couples
Feb 27-Mar 1	Women's Weekend
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March 13-15	Women's Weekend
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April 9-11	Men's Holy Week
April 17-19	Married Couples
April 24-26	Women's Weekend
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May 15-17	Serenity Weekend for Men and Women (for those in AA and Al-Anon)
May 22-24	People with Disabilities
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Aug 14-16	Quiet Weekend for Men and Women
Aug 21-23	Women's Weekend
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Sept 11-13	Women's Weekend
Sept 18-20	Married Couples
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Oct 2-4	Women's Weekend
Oct 9-11	Women's Weekend
Oct 16-18	Women's Weekend
Oct 30-Nov 1	Friends of Francis Weekend (for men and women in the Secular Franciscan Order and all who are interested in St. Francis of Assisi)
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Nov 6-8	Women's Weekend
Nov 13-15	Quiet Weekend for Men and Women
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Dec 4-6	Serenity Weekend for Men and Women (for those in AA & Al-Anon)
Dec 11-13	Men's Weekend

MIDWEEK RETREATS

Jan 20-22	Women's Midweek
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April 21-23	Women's Midweek
April 28-30	Women's Midweek
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May 12-14	Women's Midweek
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June 16-18	Women's Midweek
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Sept 15-17	Women's Midweek
Sept 22-24	Women's Midweek
Sept 29-Oct 1	Women's Midweek
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Oct 6-8	Women's Midweek
Oct 20-22	Prayer Shawl Ministry

DAYS OF PRAYER 2009

LENT

March 4th
March 11th
March 18th
March 25th

ADVENT

December 2nd
December 9th
December 16th

FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE TO ROME AND ASSISI, 2009

We are currently in negotiations with Franciscan Pilgrimages to offer a Pilgrimage to Assisi and Rome from October 31 to November 9, 2009 [the group will depart the U.S. on October 30]. Fr. Steve McMichael, OFM Conv., Guardian of St. Joseph Cupertino Friary here at Franciscan Retreats, will be one of the Pilgrimage Guides. The group will be in Assisi from October 31 through November 5 (with trips to La Verna, and the Rieti Valley), and move to Rome from November 6 to November 9. By the time that you read this newsletter, we should have the price finalized, so please check our website: www.FranciscanRetreats.net, for more information or contact Director@FranciscanRetreats.net.

Sprucing up Franciscan Retreats

“The grounds have never looked better” “Everything is just gorgeous!” “The new carpet and chairs are terrific.” These remarks are representative of the sentiments of retreatants and visitors during the late Summer and Fall.

The credit for the grounds looking so terrific has to be shared by our Facilities Manager, Val Zwerber and our Chef and Kitchen Manager, Judy Miller—whose passion for food is rivaled only by her love of flowers—and our faithful volunteers, Julius Friedges, and Ray Liss. Bro. John assisted in planting some flowers by the dining room and adding the Franciscan Crown Rosary Walk. Bro. Bob did what he does best—watering. The addition of the underground sprinkler system was also a major help to keeping the lawns looking green and vibrant.

A welcome addition to the grounds are four lovely planters completed in June by Brian Sabalasky as an Eagle Scout Project. The planters, which grace the front entrance and the path to the retreat building, have added a great touch of beauty to the grounds.

In early July, the bedrooms of all three wings received a major make-over with new carpeting, which was donated by the Father John Deere Council of the Knights of Columbus. We could not have accomplished this project without the help of a large crew of volunteers who came and moved furniture and pulled up old carpet in preparation for the installation by Thibodeau Carpet. Our thanks go to Rich Myers for hauling the new bedroom chairs from St. Paul to the Retreat Center.

