

Year of Mercy Series SETS RECORDS



Sister Gabriele Uhlein

Our October series on Mercy brought close to 300 people to Franciscan Retreats and Spirituality Center for all three evenings.

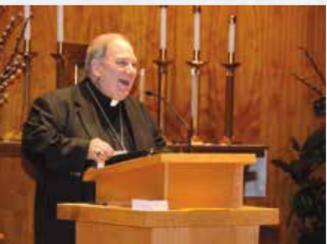
Sister Gabriele Uhlein, a Wheaton Franciscan Sister, spoke of the connection between Pope Francis and St. Francis of Assisi on October 12. Through a series of visuals and quotes from Pope Francis and St. Francis, Sr. Gabriele offered many keen insights into understanding the continuity between these two men.

Archbishop Bernard Hebda spoke to a packed Chapel on October 19. Using the Parables of the Return of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, Archbishop Hebda showed how these parables are windows into the Mercy of the Father as revealed by Jesus. To bring his points home, Archbishop Hebda distributed color reproductions of Rembrandt's "Return of the Prodigal Son," (which also hangs in the Retreat Center Chapel) and Vincent Van Gogh's, "Good Samaritan." Archbishop Hebda noted that as disciples of Jesus we sometimes have to get our hands dirty, to get involved, and to take risks.



Gabriele and Diane Kes

On October 26, internationally known composer and liturgist, **Fr. Jan Michael Joncas** addressed a packed Chapel on the "Music of Mercy." Through slides and song, Fr. Joncas examined the notion of mercy in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Participants experienced the many nuances of the meaning of mercy in the Scriptures.



Archbishop Bernard Hebda

The turnout for all three events was quite overwhelming, especially on the evenings when we were scrambling to find chairs for everyone. Many people who attended these evenings had never been to the retreat house before so the evening gave us an opportunity to show off the facility.



Fr. Jan Michael Joncas

Many thanks to Sister Gabriele Uhlein, Archbishop Hebda and Fr. Joncas for making this October series such a success.

Christmas Open House – 50th Anniversary Style



As a way of wrapping up our 50th Anniversary celebrations 'in style' we added a Chili Feed this year! Cooked by our Wonderful Chef Judy and served by our loyal volunteers of the Order of Franciscans – Secular, a warm bowl of Chili before heading to the outdoor attractions is sure to hit the spot.

Since this involves an evening meal we're beginning at 6:00 PM – earlier than usual, and ending at 8:00 PM, our traditional ending time. The popular luminary lit trail, roaring bonfire (with popcorn), spiced cider and hospitable Friars are all part of this 'Season of Christmas' evening again. There is no charge for this event – your sharing of time during the busy Christmas Season is a present in itself!

Just Around the Corner...

There are still some wonderful retreats to take advantage of to provide a 'breather' before the Holiday Season and reflect as another year wraps up.

Serenity Retreat – for Those in Recovery, December 2-4. Sr Linda Fischer returns to share her popular program for people recovering from addictions.

Men's Weekend Retreat, December 9-11. Presented by Bishop John Stowe, a friar from our province who now serves as the Bishop of Lexington, KY.

Advent Days of Prayer, Thursdays of December 1, 8 and 15, 2016, 9:15 – 2:45. Advent Days of Prayer are a delightful means of bringing oneself into the true Spiritual meaning of Christmas. Hurry up and take time to slow down to reflect on the sacred mysteries of Christmas.

Bring your own lunch – the retreat center will provide beverages.

ADVENT Days of Prayer 2016

Persons of Faith and Courage in the Nativity Stories

Mary, Elizabeth, Zechariah, Joseph, the Shepherds, and the Wise Men, during the Advent-Christmas Season, we hear their names as the Scriptures are proclaimed. Who are these figures in Jesus' story? What role do they play in his early life? What can their lives and example say to us as disciples in 2016? For each of these people, Jesus' coming presents a moment of crisis and decision and ultimately a deepening of their faith and trust in God's providence.

Our 2016 Advent Days of Prayer will focus on these individuals and groups who were a part of Jesus' early life. Each day will begin with coffee and other refreshments between 9:15-9:45 a.m. A prayer service with the day's retreat conference will begin at 9:45. There will be opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, personal prayer and reflection, as well as a guided prayer experience. Participants bring their own lunch for the day; the retreat center provides beverages and a treat. The afternoon concludes with the Stations of the Cross followed by Mass.

- 9:30 a.m. Gathering Time** – Coffee available in Dining Room
- 9:45 a.m. Welcome (Chapel)** Followed by Opening Prayer & Conference (Chapel)
- 10:30 a.m. Opportunity for Confessions or Spiritual Direction**
- 11:30 a.m. Guided prayer experience (Chapel)**
- Noon Lunch (Dining Room)**
- 1:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross (Chapel)**
- 1:45 p.m. Mass (Chapel)** Followed by departures

December 1, 2016: Joseph and Zechariah: Blessed Are Those Who Love and Protect presented by Br. Bob Roddy, OFM Conv.

December 8, 2016: Mary and Elizabeth: Blessed Are they Who Trust presented by Jayne Krim

December 15, 2016: The Shepherds and the Wise Men: Blessed Are Those with Eyes to See presented by Cindy Geiger

Suggested offering for the day: \$20.00. Pre-registration is encouraged (so we know how many handouts and worship aids to prepare), but is not necessary.

LOOKING BACK and LOOKING AHEAD

by Bro. Bob Roddy, OFM Conv., Director

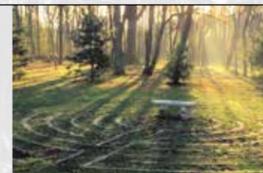
"Prior Lake's 50th Anniversary is coming up soon. Make it something special." If I heard this statement once, I must have heard it at least ten-plus times from our Lay Board of Advisors and our Province Definitory from the moment I took over as Retreat Director.

With the help of a dedicated 50th Anniversary Committee: Bonnie Unzen, Steve Schier, Paula Spranger, Dick and Patty Schlader, Joan Nedeau, Lenore Piene, Bob Beck, Fr. Jim Van Dorn and myself, as well as countless other special event volunteers, we truly made our 50th Anniversary Year **something special**.

From the Spaghetti Supper in January, to the "Mass on the Grass" in July and the October Mercy Series, I have heard many wonderful stories about Franciscan Retreats and Spirituality Center and the deep love that people have for this special place. I have also met numerous people who set foot on the retreat center property for the first time: "I always wondered what this place was," seemed to be a common theme, "It's gorgeous back here!" was another observation.

Yes, it is "gorgeous back here," but the beauty of Franciscan Retreats and Spirituality Center shines even more brightly in the lives of those who have been transformed by a retreat or a day of prayer here. "This place is my second home." "I don't know what I would have done if this place hadn't been here." "Did you plan this retreat specifically for me?" Time and time again retreatants have shared their stories of healing (both physical healing and spiritual healing), of reconciliation and of insight that came to them during their retreat.

As I walk through the buildings and the grounds I think of the Friars, the lay staff and the many volunteers who have given so generously and completely to make this a place of healing and of hope. My heart is filled with gratitude for those who have gone before us, those who continue to support us and those who have yet to find the missing peace here at Franciscan Retreats and Spirituality Center.



Our 2017 Retreat Theme: Find the Missing Peace – Pathways to Prayer

The Retreat Preaching and Ministerial Staff have formulated the theme for the 2017 Retreat Season: **Find the Missing Peace – Pathways to Prayer**.

During this retreat, we will explore some of the different types of prayer, as well as some of the joys and challenges all of us face in prayer. We will discover that the pathways of prayer, though many, all flow from the same source: that deep desire in all of us to draw closer to the Lord. We will also address some of the tougher questions regarding prayer: Why aren't my prayers answered? I take time to pray, but nothing happens! I am too busy to pray. (To quote, Fr. Xavier, "People who say that they are too busy to pray are too busy.") Please join us in 2017!

Retreat Conference Titles:

1. **Prayer: Steering Wheel or Spare Tire?**
2. **Prayer: Magic or Mystery?**
3. **Prayer: The Path to Transformation and Freedom**
4. **Prayer: Guiding our Feet into the Way of Peace**

Looking Back... 50th Year Anniversary Events



Mass in the Grass

SUMMER



Labyrinth Addition



October Mercy Series

Thank you for all your generous support in 2016 and the past 50 years!

SPRING



Spaghetti Dinner Crew



Christmas Open House and Chili Feed

Find the missing peace on a retreat in 2017!