



OUR LADY OF THE
PINES
RETREAT + CENTER
1250 Tiffin Street, Fremont, OH 43420

Volume V Winter 2011

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OUR LADY OF THE
PINES
RETREAT + CENTER

Newsletter, Winter 2011

Volume V

1250 Tiffin Street, Fremont, Ohio 43420

419-332-6522

www.pinesretreat.org

Mark Your Calendar

TREE OF HOPE 2011

A Tree of Hope
Lighting Ceremony and Prayer Service
Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Come out and enjoy a spirit-filled prayer service around our lit Christmas Tree, with music provided by the Elementary Students of Bishop Hoffman Catholic Schools.
Refreshments to follow!

SECOND ANNUAL EVERGREEN ELEGANCE

...An Evening to Benefit the Pines
Friday, January 20, 2012
And
Saturday, January 21, 2012
6:30pm

Call our office to register for the event:
419-332-6522
Or email: Brenda@pinesretreat.org

Visit page 4 for calendar details or our website a www.pinesretreat.org

- Retreat Center Administrative Staff**
- Sr. Christine Pratt, OSU Executive Director
 - Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM Retreat Coordinator
 - Judy Zavala Finance & HR Specialist
 - Brenda Havens Administrative Assistant
- Retreat Center Board of Trustees**
- Sr. Dorothy M. Thum, RSM President
 - Msgr. William J. Kubaacki Vice-President
 - Ms. Katherine Oiemat Treasurer
 - Ms. Jeanne Heintschel Secretary
 - Sr. Cheryl Erb, RSM
 - Mr. Jason N. Kinn
 - Deacon Alfredo Diaz
 - Judge Michael Burkett



Dear Friends,

As we move into the seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas please allow this letter to serve as our message of recognition and gratitude for the many gifts that come to us from you. We are thankful for all that you have been and have given us in the past year. We have seen donations of time by volunteers who make beds, iron tablecloths, serve guests, clean and cook as needed. We could not fully provide for our guests without your hands-on-support. We are grateful for our friends who look at our corporal needs and respond. This year a faithful friend of The Pines, Hal Hawk of Crown Battery in Fremont, offered to underwrite a new sign at the entry of the property. It is a beautiful addition that resulted from a collaboration of the Pines, Jim King, the Administrator of St. Bernadine Home for the Sisters of Mercy, Crown Battery and WSCOS. Donations for Pines Partners and our Tree of Hope are gifts that allow us to continue providing a place for persons seeking a deeper relationship with God. We are grateful for the Board of Trustees and Committees who give countless hours of dedicated service to The Pines. They fully embrace the charism of Mercy hospitality. We could not exist without the sponsorship of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas-South Central Region and the prayerful support of the Mercy Sisters who reside next door at St. Bernadine Home. For all of you, we give thanks.

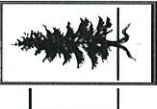
Advent and Christmas give us another opportunity to wish you all the blessings that God has promised us through the coming of His Son, Jesus. Our movement from Thanksgiving into Advent is immediate this year. It allows us to take the celebrative time to remember from whom all blessings flow into the season that reminds us of the Promise fulfilled by the coming of the Savior who brings love, joy, light and peace to all.

We are deeply aware that many of you may have experienced losses of loved ones, jobs and homes. You carry concerns for loved ones' health, financial insecurities, and fears for family members deployed to war zones during this past year. We celebrate too your weddings, births and other life-giving events that bring hope and joy to you. May you know the immensity of God's love for you in all the seasons of your life. Our prayers will be with you and all whom you love in the days ahead.

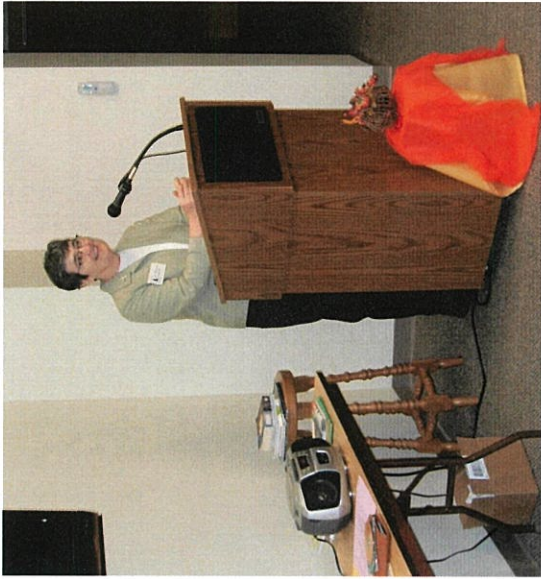
Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!

Sr. Christine Pratt, Executive Director and the Staff of Our Lady of the Pines

"Mercy bestows benefits, receives us anew and pardons us again and again."
Catherine McAuley



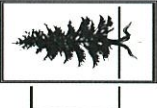
Around The Center . . .



Sister Melannie Svoboda, SND, was the retreat presenter for the Fall Women's Retreat: *Seeking the Holy in Every Nook and Cranny*. Retreatants enjoyed her sense of humor and her stories on how to find God in everyday life.



On a cool August morning, a group of pastors enjoyed spending time outside with their facilitator. They loved hearing the birds sing and sharing God's words with each other.



Catherine's Corner...



"Catherine's Corner" offers a space to reflect on quotes from Venerable Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas who sponsor Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center. Catherine offers both practical and profound words that teach us how to be prayerful people who respond to the Gospel and action in the everyday events of our lives. Catherine McAuley's practice of hospitality, offering a "cup of tea", reflects the spirit of welcome that we offer at Our Lady of the Pines.

"The spirit of prayer and retreat should be most dear to us, yet such a spirit as would never withdraw from (the) works of mercy. We ought to give ourselves to prayer in the true spirit of our vocation, to obtain new vigor, zeal and fervor..." Letters of Catherine McAuley

"Our hearts can always be in the same place, centered in God, for Whom alone we go forward or stay back." Letters of Catherine McAuley

In my "previous life" as I like to call it I was privileged to teach school for almost a quarter of a century or more. Most of that time was spent with teenagers, so truly the spirit of prayer and retreat was highly valued. The works of Mercy became our zeal and fervor as we served in the central city. It was at the Bible Center where we tutored and played but in reality learned much more than we gave.

Music was a special kind of prayer focus as women and men from various communities came together for the summer to share talents, time and truth. The vigor and youthful energy helped each of us put our hearts in the same place 'centered in God' as we served the children of the central city.

This was a time none of us will ever forget. The stories are etched in the fabric of our souls.

Midlife came and definitely not wanting to 'stay back' I left formal education while still loving it. With Catherine's words, 'we ought to give ourselves to prayer in the true spirit of our vocation, to obtain new vigor, zeal and fervor' I left family, friends, community and country to study a new ministry. The ministry of spiritual direction and retreat work.

This has proven to be a marvelous way to experience my God with all different kinds of people some whom have chosen to use Catherine's words, "to go forward or stay back." I have journeyed with groups and with individuals, I have journeyed with them in song and in silence, journeyed with art and with dance, we have prayed with scripture and with poetry always we have grace, often the transformation to deep peace.

My retreat ministry has given me a new vigor, a new zeal and a new fervor and I am grateful. It has opened my eyes to the wonder of what can be and I praise God for that.

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About the author: Sister Breta Gorman, RSM, is a Sister of Mercy of the Americas, South Central Regional Community. A long time educator and retreat director, Breta taught at McAuley High School in Toledo, Ohio and served at Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center for many years. She is a native of Lima, Ohio.

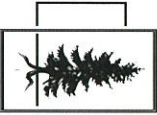
PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ANY CHANGE IN YOUR ADDRESS OR IF YOU'D LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL.

Visit our website at www.pinesretreat.org



Regina Brett signed numerous books at the November Lunch and Lecture: *Lessons for Life's Defours Big and Small*. Regina Brett is the author of *God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Defours*. She was named a Pulitzer Prize finalist twice for columns she wrote for the Cleveland Plain Dealer. This was her first visit to Our Lady of the Pines.

<p>Wish List</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSF approved Food Processor Dyson Sweeper Vellux blankets—twin size Monetary donations for art room supplies Canvas covered boards for wedding clay Portable White Board Vinyl White Round Table Clothes <p>Special Request: Golf Cart for handicap and elderly to view the grounds</p>	<p><i>"Our charity must be in our hearts and a charity such as Jesus Christ practiced while on earth"</i> Catherine McAuley</p>
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Mercy Alive...

The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas-South Central Region in their directional statement call for actions that will address their concern for the economically poor, especially women and children. They further state that the directional statement impels them to "act in harmony and interdependence with creation".

Living into Mercy

Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, has committed itself to living out this directive as we also reflects our commitment to live within the Catholic Social Teachings of the Church which includes Care of Creation as a mandate for living our faith.

We at The Pines are proud of the past and present efforts made to live this directive. For years, The Pines has been recycling cans, bottles and newspapers. We do not provide bottled water but use a water cooler that provides recycled jugs and is changed continually. We have begun recycling our cardboard boxes and plastics that arrive weekly with our food, gift shop items and other supplies that are shipped to us. The items are collected in a cost-free provided container and picked up weekly by Sandco, a local program that provides employment and income for those who are developmentally delayed. Our new sign at the entry of the property is made from recycled plastics and was constructed by WSOS (Wwandot, Sandusky, Ottawa and Seneca Counties), which is a social service program that includes employment for those in need. Also, the sign was donated by a local businessman whose company manufactures solar batteries.

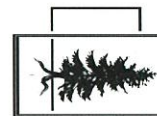
In 2009 we installed a coffee machine for our guests that provides Fair Trade organic coffee. This coffee is produced by persons who grow coffee using sustainable practices and also receive a just payment for their labors. The compliments on the coffee are continuous.

Our latest efforts into recycling are the most fun and truly live up to the slogan "Reduce, recycle, reuse". We feed many guests who come to The Pines for spiritual refreshment and renewal. Because we are a public restaurant-approved kitchen there are many regulations and directives that must be followed in the handling of food. One of those, of course, is when and how we may serve leftovers. When we do have some food leftover that may no longer be given to guests, we do offer it to staff. When the expiration date arrives for human consumption, we offer our food to the pigs owned by our Maintenance Director, Terry Drown. Terry reports that they eat anything and everything with great relish. To complete the cycle, Terry donated a whole hog to the Pines which continued the circle of life by preparing bacon, roasts, sausages and chops for our guests.

These simple efforts continue to live out the Mercy call for addressing poverty and need in our midst while caring for this beautiful earth given for our use by an ever-loving, ever-giving God.

Mission Statement

*Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, offers a space for all seeking a deeper relationship with God, self, others, and all creation.
The Spirit of Hospitality, a Mercy Charism, pervades the place, welcoming all who come.*



Around The Center....

Please Join Us For

*Supper
at
Dinner*

- an evening to benefit
Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center

Friday January 20
and
Saturday January 21
6:30 P.M.

We welcome you for a festive evening of fine food and fellowship. In order to better accommodate our guests, we are offering a choice of a Friday or Saturday evening seating. Tables accommodate eight people located throughout the Center's main floor.

\$85.00 Per Person Ticket
Cash Bar / Wine and Beer
Liquor License Compliant

Each evening will offer an opportunity to take home auction items.
Valet parking available

TO MAKE A RESERVATION FOR OUR DINNER

Contact Brenda Havens at 419-332-6522 or email Brenda@pinesretreat.org

Program Calendar 2011-2012

December

December 6: Reflection with a Cup of Tea: *The Gift of Waiting*
9:00am to 10:30am. Cost: \$7.00 (Registration required)
Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

December 9 to December 10: Advent Overnight Weekend: *Praying with Scripture—7:00pm to Saturday 3:00pm. Cost \$85.00; Commuter Rate \$40.00 (Registration required with \$25 Deposit).* This weekend offers background on how to pray with Scripture and make it a regular practice in your daily meditation. Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

December 12: Evening Prayer: *Advent Taizé—7:00pm. Cost: Free* will offering. This prayer form of light, scripture, music and quiet will be held in the Chapel. We will have live musicians and fellowship and refreshments afterwards to prepare ourselves for the season of Christmas.

December 14: Refresh Your Spirit Day: *The Secret Garden of our Memories—9:00am to 3:00 pm. Cost \$25.00 (includes morning snack and lunch; Registration is required).* We will walk through the garden of our "joyful and not so joyful" memories which have shaped us into the persons we are today. Presenter: Sr. Pat Meyer, OSF

January

January 10: Reflection with a Cup of Tea: *Radical Gratitude—9:00 to 10:30am. Cost: \$7.00 (Registration required).* In days where life can look "bleak", having a grateful heart can bring perspective into difficult situations. We will explore how gratitude can bring both freedom and lightness to life. Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

January 23: Prayer Evening: *Remains of the Day—7:00pm. Cost: Free* will offering. Everyday can end with a deep sense of gratitude. Come join us for wonder and peace as we enter the *Remains of the Day* with prayer. Refreshments will follow. Facilitator: Sr. Marianne Longo, RSM

January 25: Lunch and Lecture: *It's ALL Connected: Faith, Spirituality, and the Gospel—Noon to 2:00pm. Cost: \$15.00 (Registration required—includes lunch and lecture).* This presentation is designed to put the "heart" back into our beliefs and offer ways we can be Gospel to others. Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

February

February 8: Refresh Your Spirit Day: *Memories Make Moments—9:00am to 3:00pm. Cost \$25.00 (includes morning snack and lunch, Registration is required).* Give yourself the gift of time to deepen how you choose to remember your life moments. Presenter: Sr. Marianne Longo, RSM

February 13: Toast the Trees for Couples—6:00pm to 8:30pm. Cost: \$50.00 per couple. (Registration required). This event offers time to dine together and get some practical input for building a good relationship. Presenters: Pat and Chuck Krause. (See details on the next page)

February 18: Art Retreat Day: *Creative Mask Making—9:30am to Noon.*
Cost: \$20.00 (Registration required, includes a snack and art supplies).
Take a morning to simply have fun and create your own mask in celebration of Mardi Gras. Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

February 20: Prayer Evening: *Praying with Poetry—7:00pm. Cost: Free* will offering. We will be using a variety of poems for reflection in this evening of prayer. Refreshments will follow. Facilitator: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

February 23, March 1, 8: Lenten Book Study: *The Other Side of Chaos—9:00am to 10:30am* Cost: \$20.00 (includes all three sessions with refreshments); \$34.00 (with the book included, registration required). This book offers reflections that can help us get through life transitions. We will be using the text: *The Other Side of Chaos* by Margaret Slif. Facilitator: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

March

March 4: *Lent by Candlelight—6:00pm to 8:30pm. Cost: \$5.00*
Come to an elegant evening in candlelight for women, hosted by your neighbors and friends. We will have prayer and a presentation to enhance our Lenten Journey. This year's topic will be "Lent: A Time to Sort Out Inner Clutter and Gain Some Clarity." Table hostesses are needed for this event to create a table setting and bring refreshments for their table. The hostess also invites the guests for her table. If you would like to host a table call the Pines at 419-332-6522. Beverages will be served. Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, Retreat Coordinator at Our Lady of the Pines.

March 6: Reflection with a Cup of Tea: *A Cup of Hope—9:00am to 10:30am. Cost: \$7.00 (Registration required).* Our reflection will focus on the virtue of Hope. Many people struggle to find hope when faced with our current challenges. Holding a gentle cup of tea can open your spirit for a special time to nurture your heart and your attitude toward hope. Presenter: Sr. Marianne Longo, RSM

March 10: Mental Health Retreat Day of Prayer and Reflection: *Movement toward Recovery 10:00am to 4:00pm. Cost \$15.00 (includes lunch).* This retreat includes sessions of creative movement designed to promote and nurture mental and physical health, wholeness, and personal fulfillment. Presenters: Kathryn Mihelick and Andrea Shearer. To Register: Contact Marsha Rivas, Equal Access Ministries, 419-244-6711 or 800-296-8277 or mrvas@toledodiocese.org. (See details on the next page)

March 23: Lecture and Book Signing: *John Dear, S.J.—7:00pm. Cost: \$20.00 (includes a copy of the book and refreshments). Additional Books can be purchased for \$15.00.* Fr. John is an internationally recognized voice for peace and nonviolence. We are part of his cross-country tour promoting his new book, *Lazarus, come Forth!* (See details on the next page)

March 26: Prayer Evening: *Lent Taizé—7:00pm. Cost: Free* will offering. Come to this prayer form of light, scripture, music, and quiet. We will have live musicians and fellowship with refreshments afterwards.

March 28: Lunch and Lecture: *American Women Saints: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Frances Cabrini—Noon to 2:00pm. Cost \$15.00 (Registration required—includes lunch and lecture).* We will review the lives of these two great women who gave major contributions to Education and Health Care in the US. Presenter: Fran Benlein

See our website for more details on each of the above programs. For financial assistance, contact us for scholarship information.

Time, Talent, Treasure...

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ~1Peter 4:10

Pines Partners

Sister Donata Ovelgonne, RSM
Jerry Kuras
Sister Jane Fisher, RSM
Cheri K. Stodes
Crown Battery/Hal Hawk
Judy Thompson
St. Bernardine Home
John Shetzer
Elsa Bakkum
St. Joseph Parish, Marblehead
Sr. Joan Marie Warnement, RSM
Sr. Noel Frey, RSM
Martha & Floyd Hohnman

Other Donations

Fr. Nicholas Weibel
Fr. Anthony Gallagher
Mr. Ely Wahbeh-Bike
Mr. Don Frommer-Bike
Rosaria Sortino and "The Sandusky Girls" - 5 doz. Towels
Cassie Molyet-Heavy Duty Iron
Bob & Jane Daniel-Cream & Sugar Set
Joyce Smith—2 Blankets

In Honor of Jubilarians

Sr. Dorothy Thum, RSM
Sr. Kathleen Moross, RSM
Sr. Pat Carter, RSM
St. Catherine Convent
Barbara Blochowski
Rita T. Krall

Looking Ahead

Toast the Trees for Couples: *I do, I do, I do... Monday, February 13; 6:00pm to 8:30pm* The power of three in a marriage: We will be discussing the importance of having God at the



heart of the relationship from the beginning. This event offers couples time to dine together and receive some practical input on how to deepen their relationship with each other. Presenters: Pat and Chuck Krause. Pat is a Pastoral Associate for St. Paul Church in Norwalk and a former Social Worker. Chuck has been a self employed painter for 35+years. Both Pat and Chuck have been actively involved in their parish. Cost: \$50/couple (dinner and presentation)

Mental Health Retreat Day of Prayer and Reflection: *Movement toward Recovery: Saturday, March 10; 10:00am to 4:00pm:* The day will include sessions of creative movement

designed to promote and nurture mental and physical health, wholeness, and personal fulfillment. The retreat will aid in the exploration and experience of self-discovery and self-expression—the externalization of interior emotional and psychological issues. No dance training is needed to participate. If you can move, you can dance into wholeness. This day is sponsored by Equal Access Ministries, NAMI of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties, Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center and the Ursuline Sisters of Brown County. Presenters: Kathryn Mihelick and Andrea Shearer, Directors of Leaven Dance Company, a professional sacred dance ensemble. To Register, contact Marsha Rivas, Equal Access Ministries, 419-244-6711 or 800-296-8277 or mrvas@toledodiocese.org. Cost: \$15 (includes lunch)

Lecture and Book Signing: *John Dear, S.J.: Friday, March 23; 7:00pm:* Rev. John Dear, S.J. is a Jesuit Priest, Peace Activist,

Organizer, Lecturer, Retreat leader, and author/editor of 28 books on peace and nonviolence.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu has nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize. We are part of John's cross-country tour promoting his new book, *Lazarus, Come Forth!* The evening will include a lecture, questions, and a book signing followed by refreshments. Cost: \$20 (includes a copy of the book and refreshments).

