



OUR LADY OF THE
PINES
RETREAT + CENTER

1250 Tiffin Street, Fremont, OH 43420

Volume VIII Fall 2012

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OUR LADY OF THE
PINES
RETREAT + CENTER

Newsletter, Fall, 2012

Volume VIII

1250 Tiffin Street, Fremont, Ohio 43420

419-332-6522

www.pinesretreat.org

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter we are experiencing a beautiful late summer day with evenings that hint at the Fall to come. Today we have 70 members of the Bishop Hoffman Catholic School in Fremont at The Pines in prayer and work as they prepare for their first day of school. Later we have members of the Ohio Episcopal Diocese coming for a retreat. Their retreat will overlap with the Anointing Vessels and the Catholic Hispanic Deacons of the Toledo Diocese-all of whom will be in the building together for the weekend. A day like today is only an example of what our summer was like. We have been blessed with many groups- our own sponsored retreats and hosted groups- all of which have kept the house full and our committed staff very busy these past months.

The staff at St. Bernadine Home next door has kept the grounds beautiful and assisted with parking. The sisters residing there continue to be our supportive and adjunct place of hospitality especially inviting our guests for liturgy and prayer. It has been a good season for all of us. As we look ahead to our future months we see more groups returning and new groups coming to experience what The Pines has to offer as they seek a closer relationship with God and a place of peace to work.



In all, we are grateful for you our faithful friends who support our work and have responded as volunteers and donors to assist us in carrying the Mercy mission of hospitality to so many. We thank you for your donations to our Pines Partners Appeal that went out with the last newsletter. The report on gifts received is on page 5 of this newsletter. Thank you to all who have responded so graciously to us. We were able to use the funds to support those who came on one of our retreats.

Also in this newsletter we are reminding you of our Tree of Hope that has become a part of The Pines Christmas tradition. The information regarding this is on page 3 of the newsletter. Every year we gather in prayer and ritual as we name all those for whom a remembrance has been sent to us and signified by lights on our beautiful outside tree. We hope again to have the Bishop Hoffman School Children's Choir and Cub Scout troop to assist us in our prayer. Last year over 90 persons participated in our Tree of Hope. You may also check our website or call our office at the number above for a memorial form to include your loved ones in our prayer on December 11, 2012.

May each of you continue to experience God's great love, mercy and compassion.

In the Spirit of Mercy,
St. Christine Pratt, OSU, Executive Director

"The tender Mercy of God has given us one another."

Quote from Venerable Catherine McAuley

Mark Your
Calendar

**3RD ANNUAL
EVERGREEN ELEGANCE**

...An Evening to Benefit the Pines

Friday, January 25, 2013

And

Saturday, January 26, 2013

6:00 p.m.

Watch for more details.

CALL TO BE PLACED ON OUR GUEST LIST

A TREE OF HOPE 2012

A Tree of Hope

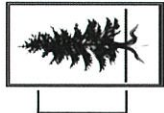
Lighting Ceremony and Prayer Service

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

Donations will be accepted prior to lighting the "Tree of Hope" and included in our Book of Remembrances.

Refreshments to follow!

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



Around The Center. . . .

A group of 19 women created and prayed with watercolor during the June Art Retreat at The Pines.



The Seminarians from the Toledo Diocese enjoyed their time together in our Dining Room. Each summer we look forward to welcoming these gentlemen to our Retreat Center.

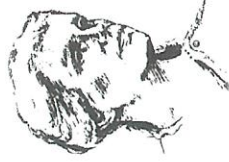


Due to the hot summer weather, many groups appreciated the use of our pool over the past three months.



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.



MERCY IN BLUEJEANS

Sometimes, for fun, I look up a word we bat around a lot to see what the literal meaning of it is. So I checked up on "mercy" in my *Oxford Pocket Dictionary*. First definition: "compassion or forbearance shown to enemies or offenders in one's power."

At first blush, I think, "Well, this definition isn't for me. What's next?" But then I pause. Who are my "enemies or offenders"?-and in what way are they in my power?

In the course of a normal, blue jean day, and most of my days ARE normal, my greatest "enemies and offenders" are probably the folks who unwittingly disrupt my plans, derail my projects, interrupt me when I'm answering e-mails or correcting papers or writing letters.

On a blue jeans day, my "offender" is the driver in front of me on a two-lane highway who inches along at 35 mph zone when I'm in a hurry but can't pass him because of oncoming traffic.

On a blue jeans day, my "enemy" is the woman in the checkout line at the supermarket who doesn't even reach for her money until she's told the cost and then has to burrow in her purse for her wallet, carefully extract and count the bills, and, with agonizingly slow fingers, pluck from her change purse the 69 cents she needs. I cringe as she says, "I think I have another penny here somewhere." Meanwhile, my ice-cream is melting!

Can I show them mercy? If so, how? And how are they "in my power"?

"Mercy" is not a soft, fuzzy thing. Compassion has to be a habitual attitude toward *all* people, even those who irritate us. And, unless we're saints, we all get a bit irritated in the course of a normal, blue jean day.

So! How to show mercy to my "enemies and offenders"? Pray for them. Bless them. Wish them well. Bishop Ken Untner of Saginaw, now deceased, once said that if we find ourselves feeling road rage toward another driver, we should raise our hand and bless him, saying our blessing out loud. (This DOES help!)

I can voice in my mind a small petition for the slow pokes of the world—especially the ones I tend to stand behind in line—and ask a blessing for them too. Perhaps they're a bit disabled or have arthritic fingers.

It requires discipline for me to do this, but I'm trying. So, while it takes no effort at all for me to feel mercy toward the veteran with the amputated leg, it can require a muscular, even a herculean type of mercy to quash my impatience with those who bug me. And to bless them instead.

But, in our blessing others, they come, somehow, in our power. Mercy is our power over them, even when unseen, because mercy is a grace, and grace is power. Mercy is a spiritual scarf of kindness we can wrap around others. It's a blessing. And, to paraphrase the Bard, our little act of mercy blesses both us, those who give, and those who receive.

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About the author: Sister Patricia Schnapp, RSM, a Toledo native, is a classroom veteran. Currently, she teaches English at Siena Heights University in Adrian, MI. She is also a volunteer teacher at a nearby state prison. Pat co-edited *The Best American Catholic Short Stories* (Sheed and Ward, 2007) and published *Alleluias and Amens*, poem-reflections on various gospels, in 2010. She's currently trying to learn to play a few chords on the banjo.

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



Mercy Alive...

Mercy Alive provides a glimpse of the charism and ministries of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americans. Each issue of the newsletter will highlight information related to the Institute, the South Central Region or a Sister of Mercy or Associate. Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center is a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, South Central Region. The region is comprised of some 700 sisters. 600 associates, one companion and thousands of staff members who also serve in Mercy sponsored programs and institutions in 18 states, Guam and Jamaica. All these affiliations strive to carry out the mission set forth by their foundress, Catherine McAuley.

When I began working at The Retreat Center in November of 2010, I had no idea of the wonderful plan God was setting into motion for my life. I am a local girl who enjoys living in Sandusky County. I'd been to Our Lady of the Pines a few times in my past, but was very impressed with the newly renovated Retreat Center. I'd never heard of a Hermitage before accepting my new position but was intrigued by the idea of a private time with God.

As I began to learn more about my new position as Administrative Assistant, I remember looking at our Master Calendar to the month of August of 2011 and the entire month was empty. I thought to myself, "No one must like to visit the Retreat Center in August." I realized that The Pines was still in a rebuilding phase after its closure for renovation. Today, as I continue to book many retreats, I can honestly say that August of this year was a very wonderful and fruitful month for the Lord at work among us. We enjoyed hosting 10 groups or Church retreats this month. Throughout the summer we experienced week long retreats back-to-back that required both flexibility and cooperation among staff and volunteers to turn the house around for the next group. Even the Hermitages were booked straight through August as well, with sometimes as little as 2 hours for cleaning to prepare for the next guest. God has been so very good to us here at The Pines. He is bringing such a wonderful faith-filled diversity of guests to this beautiful place.

"Why did Jesus call us? To unite us to Himself...the Spirit of Jesus animating over every thought and action."

Quote from Venerable Catherine McAuley

Over and over again we receive wonderful

evaluations about our staffs attention to every detail and the Mercy hospitality and grace that our guests receive while they visit. I'd like to share a few words from a lay woman who returned this year on a Private Directed Retreat. She shared her thoughts on her personal evaluation, "Thank you so much for your sacred prayer, presence, and vessel for God. The gifts of the Holy Spirit were so visible in all of your staffs kindness, sincerity, restraint, humanity, loving and sacred companionship, stillness, respect—so much gentleness and joy. You all gifted and held us in an incredible embrace in God's house while we ventured to be faithful to the inner work God was moving to do with us. Thank you for hugging us real good! May all of you be hugged eternally and blessed richly and abundantly for your self-offering for us." I believe this is why I was called to serve in my position at The Pines.

In closing, we hope to continue to welcome more folks each year to this beautiful place in Fremont, Ohio. This ministry is precious and important for the many Sisters of Mercy who have served here in our community, in the United States and in our World. I pray that the Lord would continue to bring many new friends to Our Lady of the Pines each year!

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About the Author: Brenda Hayes in the Administrative Assistant at Our Lady of the Pines. Her role at the Retreat Center includes booking individual and group retreat. She is married to John Havens and has two grown children.

Mission Statement

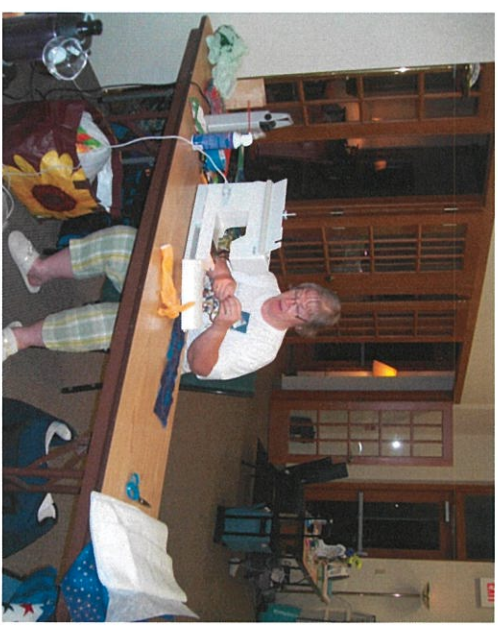
Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, offers a space for all seeking a deeper relationship with God, self, others, and all creation.

The Spirit of Hospitality, a Mercy Charism, pervades the place, welcoming all who come.



Around The Center...

We have hosted two different quilting groups this summer at The Retreat Center. First we had the Perfect Quilting Guild who have been coming to The Pines for several years. The newest Quilting Group is the "Just Quilt It" women. Our entire staff enjoys talking with these very talented ladies and admiring their various quilting projects.



Our Lady Of The Pines Retreat Center

Invites You to our Annual

A TREE OF HOPE

Lighting Ceremony and Prayer Service

December 11, 2012 - 7:00pm

Everyone is invited to *A Tree of Hope* lighting ceremony and prayer service on December 11, 2012 at 7:00pm. Donations will be accepted from those who would like to remember a loved one, express gratitude to another, or make a particular petition.

During the service, the names of those being remembered or recognized will be read and a light on the tree will be illuminated for each. The Children's Choir from Bishop Hoffman Schools will perform; homemade cookies and coffee, tea, and cocoa will be served.

Those being remembered will also be included in the weekly prayers of the staff and will be included in the *Book of Remembrance*. Donors will be listed on a sign in the retreat center, on the website, and in our quarterly newsletter.

For more information or to reserve a tree light for your special remembrance contact Brenda at 419-332-6522, visit us at www.pinesretreat.org or simply pick up a form at The Pines.



Program Calendar 2012

September

September 24: Evening Prayer: Mercy Day Evensong—7:00pm
Cost: Free will offering (Refreshments will follow.) This evening includes psalms, music and readings of Mercy prayed on this feast of Our Lady of Mercy. There will be time for quiet reflection in gratitude for graces received for the 100 years of the Sisters of Mercy serving in the Diocese of Toledo. **Facilitator: Sr. Breta Gorman, RSM**

September 28-29: Fall Overnight Retreat for Men and Women: Intimacy with Jesus in Prayer through Reflection on His Experiences—7:00pm Friday to 3:00pm Saturday. Cost: \$105 (includes meals and overnight accommodations); Married Couples Rate: \$165 (Limited rooms are available—call early); Commuter Rate: \$60 (includes Friday evening snack and Saturday lunch); Deposit: \$25 (for all rates). In this brief retreat, we will focus on many interesting moments in Jesus' life that show how He related to the different groups of people whom He encountered, and how they "felt" about His presence to them. **Presenter: Rev. Eugene Lauer**

October

October 3: Just for Men: Barbecue Spirituality: "Who's In Charge Here, Anyway?" 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Cost: \$15 (includes supper and presentation—registration is required.) Whether it's inborn or learned, men see themselves as mandated to be "super-heroes" - knowledgeable, capable, and willing in every situation of life. When they don't reach their standard, they judge themselves as second-rate or unmanly, when in fact they are beginning to connect with the source of their greatest power.

Presenter: Fr. Raymond A. Fisher has experienced a diversity of ministries in the Diocese of Toledo. Having completed forty years of assigned service, he now helps in area parishes as a "pinch hitter".

October 11, 18, 25: Spiritual Book Study: When the Blue Heron Flies—9:00am to 10:30am. Cost: \$30 (includes all three sessions plus a copy of the book—registration is required—refreshments will be provided.) In her new book, *When the Blue Heron Flies*, Sr. Melannie Svoboda, SND offers beautiful poems and reflections to help the reader slow down and reaffirm the mystery and beauty of everyday life with its graced times and difficult times. Over the three sessions we will reflect and discuss selections from this book.

Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

October 16: Refresh Your Spirit Day: Age, Wisdom Grace—9:00am to 3:00pm. Cost: \$25 (includes lunch and a morning snack—registration is required.) In her book, *The Gift of Years*, Joan Chittister states: "Old age... is the time to grow in new ways." While exploring the inspiring words of several wise authors, we will affirm our own inner truth, experiences and the attitudes we bring to aging. This day will give us time to pray, reflect and internalize our own gifts of age, wisdom and grace.

Presenter: Sr. Pat Meyer, OSF

For financial assistance, contact us for scholarship information.
www.pinesretreat.org

October

October 22: Prayer Evening: Prayer for Faithful Citizenship—Building the Kingdom of God—7:00pm. Cost: Free will offering (Refreshments will follow.) The prayer this evening will be for discerning hearts as we prepare for the November 6th Election. Our Church calls us to be Faithful Citizens -- faithful to the Gospel in our exercise of this great privilege of citizenship. This is not a political discussion nor will names or issues be discussed. We will pray for our personal and communal gifts of wisdom, understanding and generosity as we reflect on our role in service to all. The prayer evening is being co-sponsored by the Social Concerns Team of St. Ann Catholic Community, Fremont.
Facilitator: Sr. Christine Pratt, OSU

October 25: Evening Lecture: Say "Yes" to the Call of Aging--7:00pm. Cost: \$10 (Registration is required. Refreshments will follow.) This lecture will offer older adults a way to re-vision aging and become spiritual elders in their family and faith communities. **Presenter: Sr. Ann Billard, OLM, Ph.D.**

November

November 6: Reflection with a Cup of Tea: Who Are These Holy People? 9:00am to 10:30am. Cost: \$7 (Morning snack is included. Registration is required.) During this month of All Saints and All Souls, we reflect on our favorite, now deceased people. This reflection will invite us to cherish our conviction that our loved ones are always with us. **Presenter: Sr. Pat Meyer, OSF**

November 10: Grandmothers in Faith Together Retreat Day--9:30am to 4:00pm. Cost: \$35 (includes morning snack and lunch—registration is required.) This year's scripture focus will be: "Daughters of Eve" lessons for grandmothers from the women in Genesis. **Presenter: Ann Cavera, Author of *Grounded in God*, has master's degrees in education and pastoral studies.**

November 17: Workshop: Sisters' History is American History 10:00am to 3:00pm. Cost: \$50 (includes morning snack and lunch—registration is required.) Some overnight rooms are available for Friday, November 16. Contact Brenda at 419-332-6522 for information. Catholic Sisters are really the unsung heroines of American history. Not only did they establish hundreds of schools, hospitals, and social service agencies, they were the first sizeable group of female corporate executives and modeled new forms of leadership. Facts like this will demonstrate that, indeed, Sisters' history IS American history, in many and often unexpected ways.
Presenter: Margaret Susan Thompson, Ph.D.

November 26: Prayer Evening: Praying for Family and Friends 7:00pm. Cost: Free will offering (Refreshments will follow.) The holiday season offers an opportune time to pray for family members and friends. Come to this evening of prayer to pray for their specific needs and concerns.
Facilitator: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM

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

Sr. Marianne Longo, RSM

Larry Hulisz

John and Leanne Shetzer

Sr. Donata Ovelgonne, RSM

Sr. Breta Gorman, RSM

Sr. Mary Ann Brady, RSM

Andrew and Margaret Natale

Donation in Honor of Sr. Breta Gorman, RSM

Given by Bonnie Peltomos

Volunteers

Jeff Rosengarten

Laurie Brown

Barb Ronski

Marcia Reardon

Sr. Rose Oliveri, RSM

Sr. Dorothy Dalton, RSM

Cassie Molyet

Marian Miller

Jessica Zavala

Sr. Patricia Carter, RSM

2012 Pines Partners Giving Campaign

\$500-\$1,000

Robert Moyer

Anonymous Donor

\$100-\$400

St. Joseph Church, Marblehead, Ohio

Patricia Huffman

Bob and Sally Heid

Joette Rozanski

Joe and Diane Timbrook

James and Harriet Eberly

Fred and Elaine Rectenwald

Under \$100

Colleen Moyer

Donald Recker

Anonymous Donor (2)

Nancy Bolen

Bryan and Nancy Kuns

Sr. Christine Pratt, OSU

Fall Speakers at The Pines

Friday, September 28 to Saturday, September 29, 2012; 7:00pm Friday to 3:00pm Saturday. Fall Overnight Retreat For Men and Women—Intimacy with Jesus in Prayer through Reflection on His Experiences.

In this brief retreat, we will focus on many interesting moments in Christ's life that show how He related to the different groups of people whom He encountered, and how they "felt" about His presence to them. Through reflection on these experiences, perhaps we can discover some insights into praying in a more personal and down-to-earth way.

PRESENTER: Fr. Eugene Lauer, a priest of the Diocese



of Pittsburgh, recently completed a three-year term as director of the National Pastoral Life Center in New York. Before moving to New York, he had been director of the Hesburgh Renewal Center at the University of Notre Dame for seventeen years. Fr. Lauer had the rare experience of doing his doctoral studies in Rome during the last two years of the Second Vatican Council. **COST: \$105.00 (includes overnight accommodations and meals)**

COMMUTER RATE: \$60.00 (includes Friday evening snack and Saturday lunch)

MARRIED COUPLE RATE: \$165.00 (limited rooms are available) DEPOSIT is \$25.00 (required for all rate options.)

October 25: Evening Lecture: Say "Yes" to the Call of Aging--7:00pm. Cost: \$10



(Registration is required. Refreshments will follow.) This lecture will offer older adults a way to re-vision aging and become spiritual elders in their family and faith communities.

Presenter: Sr. Ann Billard, OLM, Ph.D., coordinates *Transformative Aging* programs providing spiritual direction, retreats, and workshops on the spirituality of aging, grief recovery, change and transition.

November 17: Workshop: Sisters' History is American History--10:00am to 3:00pm. Cost: \$50 (includes morning snack and lunch—registration is required.)



Some overnight rooms are available for Friday, November 16. Catholic Sisters are really the unsung heroines of American history. Not only did they establish hundreds of schools, hospitals, and social service agencies, they were the first sizeable group of female corporate executives and modeled new forms of leadership.

Facts like this will demonstrate that, indeed, Sisters' history IS American history, in many and often unexpected ways.

Presenter: Margaret Susan Thompson, Ph.D. is Associate Professor, History and Political Science at Maxwell School of Syracuse University.