

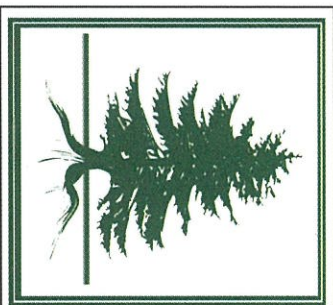


OUR LADY OF THE  
**PINES**  
RETREAT CENTER

Sisters of Mercy  
1250 Tiffin Street  
Fremont, OH 43420

Issue 1—Fall 2010

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OUR LADY OF THE  
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RETREAT CENTER

Newsletter, Fall 2010

Volume 1, Issue 1

1250 Tiffin Street, Fremont, Ohio 43420

419-332-6522

www.pinesretreat.org

“Welcome back to the Pines”

**Mark Your  
Calendar**

<p><b>Tree of Hope</b></p> <p>December 7, 2010 7:00pm</p> <p>Join us for the prayer service and tree lighting ceremony</p> <p>To remember a loved one To express gratitude To offer a special petition.</p> <p><b>Donation:</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>\$25 Green Light</td> <td>\$50 Red Light</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$100 White Light</td> <td>\$500 Star</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$1,000 Tree Sponsor</td> <td>Other Blue Light</td> </tr> </table> <p>Watch for more details</p>	\$25 Green Light	\$50 Red Light	\$100 White Light	\$500 Star	\$1,000 Tree Sponsor	Other Blue Light	<p><b>Evergreen Elegance</b></p> <p>...An Evening to Benefit The Pines</p> <p>Friday, January 21, 2011 Or Saturday, January 22, 2011 (offering two options) 6:30pm</p> <p>Join us in our newly renovated Center For an evening of fine food and fellowship \$100— per person Reservations: 419-332-6522</p> <p>Watch for more details</p>
\$25 Green Light	\$50 Red Light						
\$100 White Light	\$500 Star						
\$1,000 Tree Sponsor	Other Blue Light						

Visit page 4 for calendar details or our website at [www.pinesretreat.org](http://www.pinesretreat.org)

**Retreat Center  
Administrative Staff**

Sr. Christine Pratt, OSU  
Executive Director

Mrs. Denise Biddle,  
Director of Finance & Operations

Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM  
Retreat Coordinator

**Retreat Center  
Board of Trustees**

Sr. Dorothy M. Thurn, RSM  
President

Mr. Joseph Wasserman  
Vice President

Mr. Robert Daniel  
Treasurer

Sr. Cheryl Erb, RSM

Ms. Jeanne Heintschel

Mr. Jason N. Kinn

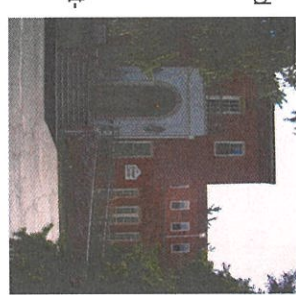
Rev. William J. Kubacki

Ms. Katherine Oermat

Dear Friends of the Pines,

Welcome back to the Pines. If you have not attended any of our programs, participated with a group we have hosted or visited our new website, you may think that we forgot you or as one person thought, we were closed.

This, our first newsletter in two years, describes much of what has kept us occupied over these years and how we continue to provide many spiritual and growth filled experiences to all who come to the Pines. As you read the following pages, I believe you will find that the commitment to the spirit of Mercy established by Catherine McAuley and nurtured by the Sisters of Mercy who ministered here over many years continues today. The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, South Central Region have affirmed the financial contributions made by the then Sisters of Mercy, Cincinnati Province in 2008 that allowed for the extensive renovation of the facility. The Board of Trustees, appointed by the Leadership of the Mercy Sisters, assures that the mission and legacy of Mercy continues as they develop the policy and long range plans for the Center. The staff has been developed to meet the present and future ever-changing needs of the Pines and those we serve. An increasing number of friends, old and new, have stepped forward to serve on committees and to volunteer their time providing assistance in everything from housekeeping to fundraising.



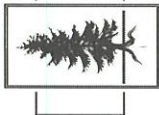
The Spirit of Mercy is alive in all facets of our ministry at the Pines. We invite you to come and see for yourself the many changes that have made the Pines a place for many to come and discover and rediscover God's action in their lives. Also, visit our website often as it will be updated periodically with the latest news and offerings made available through us.

The words of Catherine McAuley have given direction to all that is provided through the Pines as we strive to live the Gospel of love and justice: *Our center is God from whom all our actions should spring, and no action should separate us from God.*

May God bless you for your prayers, friendship and support. We look forward to seeing you here soon.

Sr. Christine Pratt, OSU

“If the love of God really reigns in your heart, it will quickly show itself in the exterior.” Catherine McAuley



### Around The Center. . . .

The Book of Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 tells us there is an appointed time for everything, a time to tear down, a time to build, a time to weep, a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.

All those involved in the Pines have experienced these emotions and more as physical, program and personnel changes took place beginning in early 2008. Though challenging, the changes included every aspect of the Pines from its sponsorship relationship with the newly established Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, South Central Region through the development of new programs and new relationships with religious, civic, educational and social service organizations.

The following is a list of the many changes that have occurred to ensure and sustain the mission of the Pines for years to come.

#### Facility Renovation

What was expected to be a project that took a few months became a year-long process forcing the building to be closed for several months; an inconvenience well worth the wait.

- Fully air-conditioned building
- New air tight windows
- 37 bedrooms (10 with private baths)
- 9 additional private bathrooms for general use
- 4 private restrooms on first floor
- Fully handicapped accessible
- ServeSafe certified dietary staff
- Health code compliant kitchen
- Expanded conference room to seat up to 90 persons
- Smaller conference rooms –up to 25 capacity

*We are grateful to Tiffin Mercy Hospital who provided their gently used office and conference furniture to the Pines following the building of their new facility.*



### 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 with 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. In this issue, I would like to reflect on her recommendation on prayer:

***"Prayer is a plant, the seed of which is sown in the heart of every Christian. If it is well cultivated and nourished, it will produce abundant fruit, but if it is neglected it will wither and die."***

In our culture which offers so many sources of communication from the internet to texting, we need more than ever to take time to be still and listen to what is going on in our hearts. As we watch the news and see what is happening not only in the United States but in countries on the opposite side of the globe, how do we respond? Often we become numb or overwhelmed. As we deal with family, work, and life and death issues, we may have the same response as the course of a day's activities propels us into a non-stop pace.

If we take time for prayer, we stop and make space for God and tend our relationships. We realize that we are not alone. God is with us in all of our life events. God is with us as we tend a sick child, make an important life choice, take care of a business transaction, work on a project for school or tend elderly parents. Praying nourishes a sense of hope in us. God wants us to ask for help and desires to bless us abundantly. It is only in prayer that we can recognize God or hear God speak in the quiet of our hearts. As we pray, we also grow in compassion. We discover new ways to deal with difficult situations with respect, generosity, and courage. As

the abundant fruit from prayer leads to hope and trust in God, neglecting our need to process what is going on in our lives can leave us feeling scattered and helpless.

Often we pray but don't listen to God's response. As a result we don't recognize that God is actually answering us. How does God speak? In words like "trust", in a call from a friend, or an internal sense that things are going to be ok. For me, simply walking around the grounds at Our Lady of the Pines, calms me down. This offers me the open attitude I need to address the life events that are "pressing on me." It is in this "being" space that God can communicate with me.

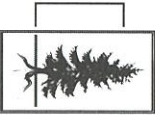
A simple practice of recalling five blessings at the end of each day can cultivate hope. A blessing may come in the form of a card in the mail, a phone call, or recognition of the beauty of creation. We can extend the prayer by asking God to help in areas where we or others need assistance. As the month goes on, we may notice more easily how God has been with us in the course of a day. Gradually, we will become witnesses of hope and will have a Gospel influence on all those we meet. Thus the seed of prayer produces abundant fruit.

.....

#### About the author:

Margaret J. Marszal, HM, a Sister of the Humility of Mary, is the new retreat coordinator at Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center. She has a BSE in Education from St. John's College of Cleveland, an MA in Art Education from Miami University of Ohio, and an MA in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska.

Sr. Margaret was a former director of Villa Maria Retreat Center which is now Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center in Villa Maria, PA. Her most recent ministry was at St. Jude Catholic Church in Elyria, OH as a pastoral associate. Sr. Margaret is also an experienced presenter and spiritual director.



## Mercy Alive...

### The Sisters of Mercy

Headquartered in Belmont, N.C., just outside of Charlotte, the Sisters of Mercy – South Central Community is comprised of 18 states, Jamaica and Guam. It is one of six Communities that make up the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas in North, South and Central America; the Caribbean; Guam and the Philippines. In the South Central Community, some 700 sisters, 600 associates, a companion, and thousands of staff members serve in Mercy-sponsored programs and institutions that share in our mission of following the example of Mercy foundress, Catherine McAuley. To learn more, visit [www.mercysc.org](http://www.mercysc.org).

### The roots of the Sisters of Mercy reach back into Dublin, Ireland in the 1820s.

That is when Catherine McAuley, a Catholic layperson, recognized the needs of the economically poor – especially women and children – and began her ministry to help them. She used an inheritance to open the first House of Mercy on Lower Baggot Street in Dublin to shelter, feed and educate women and girls. Although her original intention was to gather Catholic lay people to minister as social workers, she established a religious congregation at the suggestion of the Archbishop of Dublin who wanted to see her work continue after her death. In 1831, Catherine and two companions took their vows as the first Sisters of Mercy.

### Across the Globe

Today, the Sisters of Mercy continue the mission of deepening their relationship with God and serving others, particularly those who are sick, economically poor and uneducated. There are now Institutes, Congregations and Federations of Sisters of Mercy in the Americas, Australia, Great Britain, Ireland, New Zealand, Newfoundland, and the Philippines.

The first sisters arrived in America from Ireland in 1843 and

spread across the country, establishing schools and hospitals. More than 5,000 sisters formed the Sisters of Mercy of the Union, which dissolved in 1991 to form the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

### Transformations of the Americas

Since 2005, 25 regional communities making up the Institute have transformed into six communities – including the South Central Community, which formed in September 2008. Made up of the former regional communities of Baltimore, Cincinnati/Jamaica, St. Louis, and North Carolina/Guam, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas – South Central Community unites more than 700 sisters.

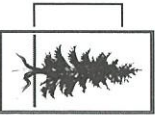
With its administrative offices in Belmont, North Carolina, the sisters of the South Central Community today continue the charism of Catherine McAuley through ministries in healthcare, housing, education, social services, and pastoral care.

*“The blessing of unity still dwells amongst us and oh what a blessing, it should make all else pass into nothing.... This is the spirit of the Order, indeed the true spirit of Mercy flowing on us...”*

— Catherine McAuley, 1841

## 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...

### Board of Trustees

The structure and role of the Board of Trustees has changed to meet the directives of the Sisters of Mercy to establish this independent ministry while still being sponsored by the South Central Region. This involved developing a strategic plan that called for their continual oversight and responsibility for setting the vision, policies and financial growth and stability of the Pines. The 9 member board represents a diversity of interests, backgrounds and gifts that continues to grow in its own development and in seeking new membership committed to the mission of the Pines and its ministries. To accomplish this, the Board has established three committees: the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee and the Fund-Development and Marketing Committees. We are fortunate to have many gifted people who have stepped forward to assist the Board particularly in its marketing and fund-development efforts.

### Staff

During this past year, staff changes occurred to complete the needed organizational structure. After a year-long search which began in 2008, Sr. Christine Pratt, OSU became the Executive Director whose responsibility is to carry out the strategic plan and vision set forth by the Board, including involvement and networking with the larger community beyond Fremont. To facilitate other administrative needs, the previously contracted financial services of St. Bernardine are now in-house. Denise Biddle has become the Finance Director in addition to her role as Operations Director. Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM is the new Retreat Coordinator with the primary responsibility of developing and implementing our retreat programs including daytime and overnight retreats. We are also working with a wide range of presenters and co-sponsored opportunities. An administrative assistant along with dietary, housekeeping and maintenance personnel along with voluntary assistance round out the staff.

### Programs

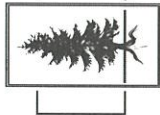
The Pines continues to offer a variety of opportunities for spiritual growth and development. (See Page 4 for description of upcoming events). At the same time we have developed new programs that are co-sponsored with other groups. Some examples of such programs are: a successful retreat for the unemployed with the Fremont Ministry Association; a Christmas dinner and party for the Liberty Center Family Shelter in partnership with St. Ann Catholic Community, Fremont. This is now an annual event. We are working with the Diocesan Equal Access Office for a March retreat for those who are mentally ill. In addition, The Pines, offers a contracted presenter for Catholic Charities, Diocese of Toledo providing parish missions and workshops on Catholic Social Teaching. We are presently working on providing a space for spiritual support for families of those who are deployed in military assignments, especially to Afghanistan and Iraq.

We continue to host many groups who find The Pines the ideal location for their own time away for spiritual enrichment, prayer and planning. Groups who have used our facility include: Catholic Schools Teacher Retreats, a variety of church denomination from all over Northern Ohio, Fremont Memorial Hospital, Terra Community College, Hayes Presidential Center, to name a few. We are the site for Deacon Formation in the diocese and several clergy days of prayer. We will be hosting Bishop Armando Colin of Mexico City, Mexico as he visits the migrants in Northern Ohio in October.

Our two hermitages continue to be a popular place for individuals seeking their own private place for prayer and rest.

*“...I just knew that Catherine McAuley’s presence was in this very holy and sacred space. I felt a deep sense of welcome and gracious Mercy hospitality from all present on your staff. Thank you for helping to make my retreat so meaningful and complete.”*

~Sr. Carolyn Rosica, RSM—July 2010 Directed Retreat



## Program Calendar 2010

### September

**September 14: Reflection with a Cup of Tea: 9:00 to 10:30am:** Cost: \$7~Based on Blessed Catherine McAuley's emphasis on Mercy hospitality with a cup of tea, this morning will offer nourishment for body and spirit with a light breakfast and a presentation on faith and spirituality. This month's presentation will be: **Dealing with the Crosses in our Life in a Lighter Style.** Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM, Retreat Coordinator, Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center.

**September 20: Walking the Labyrinth: 7:00pm** (free will offering) Once a month we will be offering different prayer styles for folks to participate in at Our Lady of the Pines. For September we will introduce the labyrinth. The labyrinth is a form of walking meditation that has been used by many cultures. In the Christian tradition, it was popularized in the Middle Ages as a form of pilgrimage. All are welcome. Refreshments will follow.

### October

**October 6: Reflection with a Cup of Tea: 9:00am to 10:30am** Cost: \$7~This month's presentation will be: **The Rosary: It's meaning and Presence in Our Lives.** Presenter: Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM.

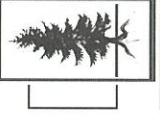
**October 7: Just for Men: Barbecue Spirituality: 6:00pm to 8:00pm** Cost: \$12~Our guest speaker will be Rev. Gerald Chmiel, Pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Point Place, Toledo. He will explore "When you are at the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on!" This men's evening of prayer includes spiritual reflection, outdoor barbecue and fellowship. Bring your own beer.

**October 8-9: Grandmothers in Faith Together: Friday, 7:00pm to Saturday 4:30pm:** Cost: \$85~The focus for this retreat is a scripture study on the trails of five strong women found in the Gospel of John. In addition to prayer for the needs of her grandchildren, the overnight retreat offers your grandmother time for informal conversation as well as quiet time to reflect, read, or take a walk on the beautiful grounds of the retreat center. Presenter: Ann Cavera, Author of *Grounded In God*

**October 14: Refresh Your Spirit Day** (formerly Desert Day)—9:00 to 3:00pm: Cost: \$25~Autumn Thoughtfulness: This will be a day apart to relax and look at our patterns of living. It will be day to dream and remember and be grateful for all that has been and can be. Presenter: Sr. Breta Gorman, RSM. Breta, Sister of Mercy of the South Central Community of the Sisters of Mercy of Americas, is a spiritual director and retreat director

**October 18: Prayer for the Harvest: 7:00pm** (free will offering.) In October we will pray for the harvest. Come to the Pines for an evening prayer of praise and gratitude to God for the gifts of land, water and sun and the labor of farmers and farm workers that all may eat. All are welcome. Refreshments will follow.

## 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

### Volunteers

Jamie Biddle  
Deb Brenneman  
Laurie Brown  
Steve & Barbara Grycza  
Dennis & Judie Kelley  
Beebe Kindred  
Robyn Mygrant  
Ryan Mygrant  
Joan Schmidt  
Mary Shaffer  
Howard Stultz  
Jim Walter  
John Yanas

### Donors

Lucy Eckstein  
Janet Eskra  
Jim & Jane Ewald  
Norman & Jean Foss  
Ken & Pat Gabel  
Rich & Linda Geyman  
Sister Noreen Gray RSM  
Ed & Mary Lou Guyer  
Suzanne Hauser  
Phil & Amy Hoffman Family  
Theresa Hoffman  
Floyd & Martha Hohman  
Kathy & Ken Burkin-Humbard  
Sue Idczak  
Mrs. Judy Just  
Marian Kindred  
Rev. William J. Kubacki  
Jack & Dottie LaPata  
Mary A. Ledwedge  
Sister Marianne Longo, RSM  
Aleeta Looker  
Pastor Patricia J. Lull  
Patricia Macey  
Dean & Judy Meinke  
Mary Jo Monak  
Margaret Moss  
Peggy Moss  
Sheila Nelson  
Carolyn & Sonny Nieset

### Memorial

Raymond Drown  
Margaret Foss/  
**Pines Partner**  
Anonymous  
Jamie & Denise Biddle  
Carole Dugan  
Deanna Dutro  
Susan Fox  
Valerie French  
Barb Grycza  
Jim Jackson  
Jim King  
Amy Marcum  
Deb Miller  
Cheri Srodes  
Pastor Dale Schaefer  
St. Ambrose Women's Group  
Monica Yates

### General Contribution

Karen Gottwald  
Theresa Hoffman  
LiteraryCoterie  
J. Thomas Reineck  
**Honor 2010**  
**Jubilarians**  
Jerry Kuras  
Sr. Margaret Wasserman RSM

### Tree of Hope

2009  
Anonymous  
Sister M. Gloria Auer RSM  
Jim Banks  
Sisters of St. Bernardine Home  
Jamie & Denise Biddle Family  
Sister Jane Boes  
Mary & Mike Brickner  
Deborah Brower  
Sister Patricia Carter  
Robert & Anna Crotty  
Robert & Jane Daniel  
Raymond D'Angelo  
Sister Macrina Dorrigan RSM  
Patricia Dykas  
Lucy Eckstein  
Janet Eskra  
Jim & Jane Ewald  
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Riney & Carol Robertson  
Joette M. Rozanski  
Helen T. Shannon  
Sandy Sherman, OSU  
Simplex Grinnell Fire/Security  
Jeanne Heintschel  
Herman - Kinn  
Funeral Home  
Hohler Furnance &  
Sheet Metal  
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Mason Funeral Home  
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Mercy Health Partners  
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Helen T. Shannon  
Sandy Sherman, OSU  
Simplex Grinnell Fire/Security  
Jeanne Heintschel  
Herman - Kinn  
Funeral Home  
Hohler Furnance &  
Sheet Metal  
Keller Ochs, Koch &  
Mason Funeral Home  
Lochotzki Masonry  
Mercy Health Partners  
Michael Construction  
Ohio Met  
Steve Miller  
Scott & Kathy Otermat  
Simplex Grinnell  
State Farm/Phil Havens  
St. Charles Hospital  
Andrew Swartz  
Terra College Foundation  
Valley Electric Company  
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### Looking Ahead

#### Toast the Trees for Married Couples

February, 14, 2011—6:00 pm

#### Lent by Candlelight

March 13, 2011—6:00pm

#### Art Retreat : Mandalas ~

#### Woven and Drawn

June 24-26, 2011

#### Directed Retreats

July 24-31, 2011 & September 18-24, 2011

### December

**December 3-4: Advent Women's Wellness Retreat: Advent: A Coming Into Being: Friday, 7:00pm to Saturday, 3:00pm:** Cost: \$85. This is a retreat for women who seek a connection with God and themselves amidst busy lives. Presenters: Joanne Kosta, Amy Hoffman, and Sr. Margaret Marszal, HM. Joanne and Amy have sought frequent and ongoing personal and spiritual growth opportunities while balancing the demands of family life and the wellness needs of others. They welcome opportunities to encourage and empower women who want to continue developing unique and individual relationships with God.

**December 7: Reflection with a Cup of Tea: 9:00am to 10:30am** Cost: \$7.00~December's presentation will be **A Pause for Advent before Christmas Comes.** In our culture, Advent has become a season of "rush-rush" with all the activities for Christmas rather than a time of "hush-hush" or quiet to prepare for Christ's coming. This day will focus on the true meaning of Advent by reflecting on Scripture and music that will deepen our awareness of how God is present in our lives each day. Presenter: Fran Benlein, liturgist, musician, spiritual director, and presenter in the Diocese of Toledo.

**December 7: Lighting of the Tree of Hope 7:00pm**  
**December 13: Advent Taizé 7:00pm**(free will offering)~This prayer form of light, scripture, music, and quiet will be held in the Mercy Conference Center. We will have live musicians and fellowship. All are welcome. Refreshments will follow.

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Visit our website at [www.pinesretreat.org](http://www.pinesretreat.org)