



**Jesuit Retreat House**  
4800 Fahrnwald Road  
Oshkosh, WI 54902

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*The Jesuit Retreat House in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, fosters spiritual enrichment rooted in the Gospels, the Catholic tradition and the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Our ministry is dedicated to creating a rich variety of retreat experiences and providing an atmosphere of quiet, peace and prayer in which men and women of all faiths are encouraged to discover and respond generously to God's personal invitation to wholeness and holiness.*

[www.JesuitRetreatHouse.org](http://www.JesuitRetreatHouse.org)

## Aging Gracefully with Gratitude

Some time ago an elderly Jesuit said to me, "When you get old, half of you hurts and the other half doesn't work." The problem with this clever saying is that it essentially looks to the past. Such an attitude is pessimistic, denying any good that comes from aging. It is a trap residing in a culture that adulates youth and vigor. Any spirituality of aging must account for limited resources, reduced time remaining, and profound gratitude for our past.

During a counseling session, an elderly woman was having a terrible time coming to terms with aging. She especially resented the fact that she could not do things that had been easy for her in the past. People would offer help and she refused help. I finally said to her, "your only response to these offers should be, 'Thank you.'" She came back a year later and said that this advice had changed her whole attitude toward aging. So, we have gratitude for help given to us.

We often do not know the impact our words and actions have on others. In the past year or so several of my former

students have contacted me concerning a course they took from me. One was fifty-six years ago. The other two were from about forty years ago. The one from fifty-six years ago came from a high school student who remembered me and the material I taught. The other two were from college students who remembered content in detail from two different courses. So, we have gratitude for the good that we have been able to accomplish.

Finally, as we age, sometimes we just sit and think and sometimes we just "sits." This leisure helps us to grow in our love of Jesus and his Father because when we just sit and think we are often actually praying. And when we just sit, we make time for our God to come and live with us. So, we have gratitude for time to draw closer to the One we will soon meet.

- By Fr. Jack Treloar, SJ



## Reflections Newsletter

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## We Are One Body

The contemporary church song "We Are One Body" reminds us of our relatedness and togetherness, not only with God but with each other. Its refrain, "We are one body, one body in Christ ..." comes from the letters of St. Paul. Other verses in the song highlight the Eucharist, the Church, and our own participation as members of Christ's body.

Every year, in mid-June, the Church draws our attention to the Eucharist when it celebrates *Corpus Christi* the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. St. Ignatius of Loyola writes of the Eucharist as "the greatest sign of God's love for us." When we receive the Eucharist at communion we share in Christ's life and love. "We Are One Body" sings of the experience with these words: "... When you eat my body, you drink my blood, I will live in you, and you will live in my love."

Living in Christ's love and letting Christ live in and through us makes us part of his Body.

Those of us who work at JRH do our best to live in Christ's love and serve Christ's body through our ministry. Sue Philipp, our business manager, just celebrated forty years with JRH. In September, she will shift to being part-time and will retire at the end of this calendar year. Mike Casey joined JRH in February and has taken over bookkeeping responsibilities from Sue. We also recently welcomed Denise Weddig to our housekeeping staff.

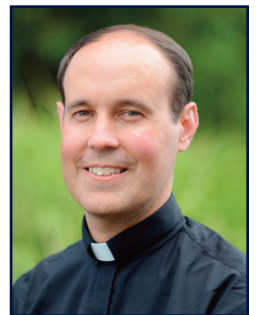
Later this month, another staff change at JRH is Br. Lee Colombino, SJ, moving on from JRH as part of an ongoing vocational discernment process. Then, this fall, Fr. Gene Donahue, SJ, will move to the St. Camillus Jesuit Community near Milwaukee. At St. Camillus, he will take on a new primary mission of praying for the Church and Society, something he already does faithfully each day before the Blessed Sacrament. Fr. Gene and Br. Lee, who served at JRH for 16 years and 3 years respectively, leave lasting marks on JRH's ministry.

Volunteers are also integral to JRH's ministry. Mike Schneider helps maintain the flower beds, Kathy Kreie assists Tanya with pre- and post-retreat tasks, Marianne Sheahan is organizing our library, Ruth Hoenick keeps the art room supplied, and Mike Hamby built raised beds and a fence for a new vegetable garden. These are a few ways that people live as the Body of Christ.

I hope and pray that each of our experiences at JRH—through the Sacraments, as a community, and in personal prayer—helps us identify and grow as "one body in Christ."

In Christ,

Fr. Mark Carr, S.J.  
Executive Director





## JRH, A Family Affair

For some retreatants, going on retreat is a tradition that has been passed down from one generation to the next, gets spread out and shared as the family increases in size, and becomes a shared part of family life and history. Families rooted in faith—even with their disagreements and foibles—are miniature Bodies of Christ, and places of holiness, nurturing, love, and sacrifice. Below are some glimpses of families that come to JRH. If the trite plaques in the wall décor aisle at Target or Hobby Lobby are correct in saying “Family makes this house a home,” then maybe the Jesuit Retreat House should change its name to the Jesuit Retreat Home. Consider sharing the JRH experience with your family!



### Gerri Lehrmann's Family

#### Who comes?

My daughter Mary Michael, my best friend (and Mary's Godmother) Nan Moesch, and I come to JRH every year. In the past, we've

been joined by my sister Marilyn, daughter-in-law Tracy, and Nan's daughter-in-law Mary. Over the past seven retreats, my son Mike has come to assist with my wheelchair transfers. More than once, he has been mistaken as a Jesuit priest during the “Women's Only” retreat!

#### How did you start coming?

In 1980, I heard about JRH from a friend. With 5 kids, I was worried my husband couldn't manage me being gone. Also, because I was using canes and a wheelchair, I wasn't certain if my needs could be accommodated. But I'd always wanted to make a retreat and my husband and family were supportive, so I went. 40+ years later, I'm still going! My college roommate Nan joined me in 1993 and we started helping as retreat coordinators. My daughter Mary joined us in 2002 and has been coming ever since. Attending our annual JRH retreat is so important to me and has been transformational in my relationship to God and my growth towards self-acceptance.

#### When do you come?

We all come during the women's retreat #040, in September when the weather is perfect. Even when there's rain, it always feels sunny inside. Being surrounded by the beauty of Lake Winnebago and enjoying nature paths are sure to put anyone in a peaceful, joyful state.

#### A favorite memory?

Every year we create new memories, each special in their own way, but I'd say that what I appreciate most is the silence.

In this space of peace, we can focus on being present to God and letting Him into our hearts.



### The Paul Eberle Clan

#### Who comes?

I first came in the early 1990s with my dad. My wife Paula has been a regular retreatant over our 30+ year marriage. As our children moved into adulthood, we invited them to experience JRH. My daughters Samantha and Mary Kate have attended with Paula. My sons John, Kevin and Greg have attended with me. Kevin has brought a few of his friends to join our group.

Our men's retreat group has grown over the years to include my father-in-law Tim Scanlon, my brothers-in-law Greg and John Scanlon, and my sons-in-law Seamus Young and Austin Barrett. In March 2023 my older brother Richard attended for the first time. Many friends have joined me over the years, including MUHS classmates Tom Heinen and Joe Pickart, who received milestone pins this year. Everyone experiences retreat in their own way and may experience something different from year to year.

#### How did you start coming?

My dad Gene Eberle was a regular annual retreatant from the very beginning of JRH in the 1960s, attending with other men from our parish, St. Mary's in Elm Grove—and his good friend from high school Rob Lauer (both MUHS Class of 1943). I attended my first retreat with him in the early 1990s after moving back to Wisconsin. Over the next 15 years, my dad and I attended many retreats together (with Rob Lauer and his son Rob II). My dad died in 2005; I continue to view JRH as one of his greatest gifts to me as a son. I can remember the first morning prayer from my first retreat, sitting next to my dad, as clearly as if it were yesterday. JRH was a special place for my dad, a special place for us to spend a weekend together, and now a special place I can share with my kids, family and friends.

#### Growing together with God?

The weekend retreats provide me a special time to disconnect from the world, and the space and quiet to listen for God. My life away from JRH is filled with all the chaos, noise, busy schedules, and life events that provide the joys and challenges of life. At JRH, I can step away from all of that and find space for God to be heard. I highly recommend leaving your cell phone at home!

I've come to appreciate that God works through all types of people and can reach us in a variety of ways and locations. For me, and I hope for all who come with me, JRH is a holy place that provides the quiet to hear the “gentle whisper” of God's voice, the love, healing, and forgiveness Jesus brought to the world, and occasionally a little wisdom from the Holy

Spirit. Experiencing all of that with my family and friends keeps us coming back every year.

### Fredericks & Finks

#### Who comes?

Mark Frederick writes: My father-in-law, Art Fink, my brothers-in-law, Dave, Tom, Mike, Dr. Chris Zukowski, and Matt Sauer. My dad Jerry made a retreat before he passed away in 2017. My son Matt. My brother Michael. My nephews Dan and Drew Fink and Jack Nash have all attended. Also, my wife Debbie, her mother Ann Fink, our daughter Maggie has attended. Many of my best friends have joined us as well.



#### How did you start coming?

The interest in a silent retreat for my father-in-law, Art Fink and his best pals, Dr. Michael Keelen and John Dunn came from their Marquette High School retreats. They wanted to continue that tradition as adults and as fathers of growing families. These three men started coming to JRH in the late 1960s. When their children finished college, it was “suggested” that they too attend. Because of the example our parents set for us we started coming to JRH in 1984.

#### A favorite memory?

The “classroom of silence” is the best draw. The Spiritual Exercise talks are wonderful. The beauty of the lake is huge. Golden silence helps create a freedom of spirit to praise and thank God for all our gifts and challenges too.

### Bell & Matthews

#### Who comes?

Darlene Bell, her daughter Shelene Matthews and granddaughter Haylie. Her late husband Dick also went on JRH retreats.



#### How did you start coming together?

Darlene was the first to go on retreat. Then, in 1986, she invited Shelene when she was 16 years old. In 2013, Shelene invited Haylie when she was 15 years old. Over the years we each have invited friends to join us on retreat.

#### When do you come?

Typically, we attend 12-Step retreats in May and August. We've also rented the Campion hermitage and invited other family members to join us there to have a weekend away.

#### A favorite memory?

Sr. Marie used to read a bedtime story after the Saturday night sharing session. Some of us would grab pillows and lay on the floor. Others would stretch out on the couch or sit comfortably in chairs. Sister would pull up a rocking chair and read the book *Love You Forever*. Her soft tender voice would calm everyone down and ready us for bed.

#### Growing together with God?

Being in silence allows us to just be still and to listen to what we often don't take the time to hear, whether it be the water crashing against the shore or the sound of the wind. The quiet lets us sit or walk together and not have to say a word and be comfortable in silence.

In part because of their retreat experiences, in 2006 Darlene was confirmed Catholic, followed by her husband Dick in 2007, and daughter Shelene in 2008. Confirmations were soon followed by sacramental marriages for Darlene and Dick in 2007 and Shelene and Damone in 2016. JRH has helped so much in opening our eyes and hearts to God in ways we never thought possible.

## Buckeyes, Lindens, & Oaks

*It is enough to recognize that our body itself establishes us in a direct relationship with the environment and with other living beings. The acceptance of our bodies as God's gift is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father and our common home ...*

– *Laudato Si* §155

This spring JRH planted 32 new trees and 17 replacement trees. This year's new trees include: chestnuts, buckeyes, catalpas, hackberry, ginkgo, honey locusts, burr oak, linden and elm trees. This is the last planned large planting in response to losing so many trees to the emerald ash borer in recent years.

Consider honoring the life or legacy of a family member, retreatant, loved one, or friend with a memorial tree. The money raised from memorial trees is used to support our ongoing retreat ministry and keep our grounds beautiful. For more information or to select a tree, contact Dcn. John Ingala at (920) 230-6992 or by email at [jingala@jesuitretreathouse.org](mailto:jingala@jesuitretreathouse.org).

