



Jesuit Retreat House
4800 Fahrwald Road
Oshkosh, WI 54902

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
Paid
Oshkosh, WI
Permit No. 272



Reflections Newsletter
Volume 38 • No. 4 • December 2024

4800 Fahrwald Road
Oshkosh, WI 54902
920.231.9060
800.962.7330 (WI only)
www.JesuitRetreatHouse.org



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

Gift A Retreat

Looking for the gift that keeps on giving? Consider a gift certificate towards a JRH retreat. Encourage someone you love to experience the quiet, peace and prayer of a retreat and deepen their relationship with Christ. Gift certificates are available for weekend preached retreats based on the Spiritual Exercises or 12-Steps and for our longer directed retreats. Call Tamara at (920) 231-9060 to purchase a retreat gift certificate.



Or A JRH Tree

Dedicating a tree on the grounds of JRH is a beautiful way to memorialize a loved one, honor your family, or demonstrate gratitude. With a gift of \$1,000 you'll have the ability to provide text for a permanent plaque that will be affixed to the tree of your choice (about 45 are available.) Your gift supports the care and maintenance of the retreat grounds. Contact Kathleen at kludington@jesuitretreathouse.org for more information.

Mark Your Calendars

Announcing the first two programs of our 2025 Lakeside Speakers Series:

Wed. Feb. 12 Fr. Joe Mattern – "The World Will Be Saved By Beauty," a quote of Dorothy Day. This program features a trio of jazz/classic musicians presenting Day's vision in real time.

Wed. Mar. 12 Sr. Elise Cholewinski, OSF – "Original Baptism - Original Sin." Begin Lent with a new perspective on this holy season.

April 9 and May 14 programs to come.



Shalom, Peace Salaam!

Despite the turmoil and woundedness we see or even experience in our world—war and violence, persistent poverty, hunger, sickness, bullying and exploitation—as we approach Christmas, I try to stay focused on peace. Christmas, the birthday of the Lord, is also the birthday of peace. "For he is our peace," wrote St. Leo the Great.

The ministry here at JRH is very much one of peace. As many retreatants comment, our space—indoors and out—is one of beauty, peace, and comfort. The silence of our retreats also contributes to their serenity. Silence, tranquility, beauty, and comfort are all conducive to prayer, and prayer draws us closer to Christ, even amidst our sometimes chaotic lives.



In recent months the Jesuit Retreat House has shared the experience of peace in new ways. In October, we held a one-day retreat for young adults. Shortly thereafter, we welcomed a group of Spanish speaking retreatants for our second *retiro en español*. Both were made possible by grants from the Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Green Bay. Then in early November, a group of spiritual directors and retreat directors gathered at JRH for a first Ignatian spirituality workshop. We often receive a gift of peace through the prayerful togetherness and unique community that characterizes each retreat. The retreat has reoriented us to a path of peace marked by increasing patience, forgiveness, with encouragement to live more virtuous lives.



In early December, the retreat house hosted a candlelight Mass and ecumenical prayer service focusing on the Peace Light of Bethlehem to remind people of Christ's message of love, peace, friendship, and the deeper meaning of Christmas. This continuing flame originated from the grotto of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem and has been shared person to person throughout the world as an ongoing light of Christ.

Sometimes we find peace in other, more practical and material ways: an embrace from a friend, the comfort of a home-cooked meal, or flicker of a fire on a cold winter evening. In practical ways, the Lord of Peace has blessed us with new staff and new equipment. Our office has a new staff member: Tamara Richardson joined our team as registrar in November. Tanya Hielke continues to be part of JRH's team but will shift to part-time in the new year. The new furnace installed in the Campion farmhouse this fall conveys peace through its warmth and comfort. And Chuck Linde feels a bit more at peace having finally replaced our 2002 pick-up truck with a newer 2020 model.

I hope that in this new year each of us renews the presence of peace in our own hearts and in the communities where we live, so that, in the words of Pope Francis' Prayer for Peace, "our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam!"

Blessings!

Mark A. Carr, SJ.

Fr. Mark Carr, SJ Executive Director

Come As You Are

First time retreatants are drawn to JRH for different reasons. Catherine had been invited by her 12-Step sponsor. She agreed to give it a try, yet even after that first experience in 1996 she wasn't convinced of the power of retreat. Her second retreat, however, had such an impact that she's returned another 49 times including as a coordinator.



Catherine says the 12-Step program is the foundation of her spirituality. The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises she first experienced in the retreat setting built upon that foundation. Through deeper spiritual guidance training including The Universe Story and the teachings of Jesuit Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Catherine has learned to meld her science education as a nurse with her spirituality. She credits these three spiritual movements as the building blocks of her daily spiritual practice which lead her to continue to grow in her relationships with God and others. "I hope others are attracted to JRH because they see the impact it has had in my life."

"If I must describe the coordinator role in one word, it would be hospitality – before, during and after retreat. As a coordinator, we welcome and encourage, but don't require retreatants to participate in the sacred traditions. We recognize that each of us arrive at a different place on our own spiritual journey. I firmly believe that JRH helps transform us to a greater place of faith, love, and service," she shared.

Universal Apostolic Preferences



The Society of Jesus' four Universal Apostolic Preferences adopted in 2019 capture our imaginations, awaken our desires, and unite us in our mission:

- promoting discernment and the Spiritual Exercises
- walking with the excluded
- journeying with youth
- and caring for our common home

JRH embraces each of these preferences through its Ignatian based retreats, programs designed for those in recovery, Spanish speakers, and young adults, commitment to helping those with limited financial means, and ongoing stewardship of our beautiful grounds. Thanks to all who help JRH live this mission!

Ripples Of Faith

As retreatants often see on the water of Lake Winnebago, a ripple has the calming, inspirational effect of wisdom in our hearts and minds similarly affecting the hearts and minds of others. Shared experiences and lessons in faith passed down from father to son, likewise, have a transformational power. Just ask Tom Kelly.

In 2005, Jerry Kelly had his first retreat at JRH, joining a group of men from his home parish of St. Mary's Visitation, Elm Grove. Jerry attended his group's annual retreat without fail, except for 2007 as he was battling prostate cancer. That year on Saturday evening Jerry was surprised at his home and was helped into a fellow retreatant's car and delivered to JRH for the healing service. All the men gathered around Jerry to pray for healing and within weeks Jerry was back to work and cancer free.

That same retreatant, Jeff Hughes, had one more surprise in store for Jerry a few years later. Jeff picked up Jerry's 21-year-old son, Tom, from Marquette University, and brought him to Oshkosh.



"It was my first time voluntarily going on a retreat," Tom says. "I had been on retreats in grade school and high school, but for the first time, I had total ownership. I was excited and a little bit scared, to be honest. But I knew how much it would mean to my dad, and I wanted to spend that time with him. We experienced so much as both individuals, and together as father and son."

When on retreat together, the two had a standing Saturday afternoon appointment to share what they'd been praying about. For the first few years, we took a walk around the grounds. As Jerry's health continued to decline, they'd sneak away for a drive through the countryside to talk. On what would be their last retreat together in March 2018, they simply sat in Jerry's truck and talked. Tom has since dedicated a tree in his dad's memory near that parking spot.

Tom continues to attend an annual retreat at JRH. "I'm still the youngest member of my retreat group, but don't worry, I'm working hard to make sure that isn't the case for long," Tom says. "New friends are going to join our group or maybe start their own. My wife will make her first retreat at JRH in a few months. The ripples continue."

Sharing your own personal JRH experience may have an impact you couldn't have predicted. Invite a friend to join you on retreat and create your own ripples of faith and prayer.

Support The Ministry: Ways To Give

In addition to retreat offerings, the Jesuit Retreat House, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, relies on donations of all sizes to continue our retreat ministry. Your gift helps us to foster spiritual enrichment rooted in the Gospels, the Catholic tradition, and the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola through a rich atmosphere of quiet, peace and prayer. Please prayerfully consider your support of our ministry through one or more of the following giving opportunities.

Annual Appeal

The Annual Appeal asks for your financial support for capital projects such as facilities renovations and infrastructure upgrades. Please join us to help men and women discover all the graces offered by the Spiritual Exercises.

Tree Dedication

For a donation of \$1,000 a donor may dedicate a young tree planted on JRH grounds. A plaque placed on the tree will identify who or what is honored or remembered.

Ministry Support

Support of the Ministry donations are unrestricted funds used to support all areas of our ongoing retreat ministry.

12-Step/Recovery

This fund helps ensure the continuation of the current retreat offering model that welcomes those who are unable to pay the actual cost of a retreat. Contributions to this designated fund support all 12-Step/recovery/addiction programs held at or sponsored by JRH and people in recovery/addiction programs.

Additional Ways To Give

Matching Gifts

Please check with your employer to see if they offer a matching gift program which may increase and, in some cases, double the impact of your gift.

IRA/QCD Donations

IRA owners who are at least 70.5 years old can make tax-free donations to charity through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs):

• Amount

In 2024, IRA owners can donate up to \$105,000 tax-free through QCDs. Married couples with separate IRAs can donate up to \$210,000 combined.

• How it works

The IRA trustee must send the donation directly to the charity. The IRA owner doesn't receive the distribution, and the donation doesn't count as an IRA distribution.

• Tax benefits

QCDs are tax-free and count toward the year's required minimum distribution (RMD) for those who are at least 73 years old. The deduction lowers the donor's adjusted gross income (AGI).

St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J. Endowment

The St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Endowment is the primary endowment of the retreat house. All endowment gifts are permanently restricted. Income generated from the endowment's principal may be used only to support all retreats and/or programming offered by the Jesuit Retreat House.

We gratefully accept one-time or monthly recurring gifts.

Checks can be mailed to:
Jesuit Retreat House
4800 Fahrwald Rd.
Oshkosh, WI 54902



For the fastest, most secure process, please make your donation online at www.jesuitretreathouse.org or scan the QR code.

• Timing

To make a QCD for 2024, IRA owners should contact their IRA trustee soon to ensure the transaction completes by year-end.

Please click on the donate page of our website for details on transferring stock ownership to JRH.

Planned or Deferred Gifts

We appreciate your consideration of including the Jesuit Retreat House as part of your planned or deferred gifts plan. These options can provide you and your loved ones with important benefits now and in the future. Some gifts allow donors to retain income for life and avoid certain capital gains taxes, all while assisting JRH in its mission to help retreatants discover and respond generously to God's personal invitation to wholeness and holiness. Please discuss these options with your tax advisor.

For more information or questions on making a gift to JRH, please contact Kathleen Ludington, Director of Advancement, at (414) 217-2956 or kludington@jesuitretreathouse.org