



October 2020

# Holy Cross Retreat Center Newsletter

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*With over 60 years of Retreat Ministry!*

## Celebrate Francis!

The month of October often has a variety of events commemorating St. Francis of Assisi. Even though Francis lived eight centuries ago his impact is widely felt even now.

The **Rule of the Secular Franciscans was approved in 1221** for those who wanted to follow the life and spirituality of St. Francis, but were married or did not want to become religious. On Saturday October 3rd, the Secular Franciscan Fraternity of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which meets at Holy Cross, will have a day of recollection on "Sister Death." Then everyone is invited for the **Transitus celebration at 7:00pm in the main Chapel.** This is a beautiful recognition of the life of Francis and his passing to new life in Jesus.



The Retreat Center is also having an **Enchilada Dinner on Saturday, Oct. 3rd, 4:00-7:00 just prior to the Transitus Service.** There will be a choice of red or green enchiladas with beans and rice for \$7.00. Drinks and biscochos will also be available. You can eat spaced apart indoors, outdoors, or take it as a carry out to your home. All proceeds assist the retreat center during this time of pandemic.



### Franciscan Art Festival

Many thanks to all of you who bought raffle tickets and made extra donations as well. Even though we lost income in other areas, we almost tripled our income from the raffle!

Some of the artists are participating in our online Art Festival since we couldn't have regular sales. Please visit [www.FranciscanArtFestival.org](http://www.FranciscanArtFestival.org) to view and perhaps buy some of the artwork. This helps them, and also the retreat center. This site will be up all year so you can use it when shopping for gifts also. More artists can still register at that site.

"Just wanted to let you know that I received calls, and a couple of orders from our virtual fair! I'm confident more will come in over time." Rachel Davis, artist online

### UPCOMING FRANCISCAN RETREATS

*You can attend each of these retreats in person, as a commuter, or online—whichever is your preference,*

**Oct. 23-25 Women's Healing Retreat, led by Sr. Helen Santamaria and Sr. Elisa.** Their experience and prayer is directed especially to women who have experienced loss of respect, love, and safety among others.



**Nov. 13-15 Men's Spirituality Retreat** based on the book Sacred Fire by Ronald Rolheiser. Delve into the stages of life, how to give your life away, and die gracefully. Fr. Tom Smith will be leading the retreat, and the NM Knights of Columbus are cosponsors.



**Dec. 4-6 Advent Family Retreat** to prepare ourselves to celebrate Advent and Christmas more fully as Catholics. There will be special activities and prayer times to help us appreciate both the history and the richness of these seasons. There is a special family rate, and don't let finances keep you from coming.



*Please call 575 524-3688 for more information, to verify the status of the retreat, and to register. You can see a full brochure at [www.holycrossretreat.org](http://www.holycrossretreat.org), under "register for retreats."*

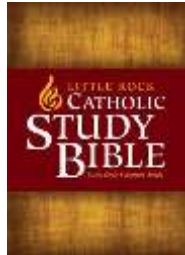


**Pope Francis** will be in Assisi on October 3rd to sign and publish his new encyclical, "**Fratelli, Tutti,**" promoting human fraternity and friendship among all people. In this time of many divisions among people and nations, this will be a good call to treat one another as Brothers and Sisters. You can print an early copy by typing `Vatican.va English` in a browser, then clicking on Encyclicals after Oct. 3rd..

## Coping with the Pandemic

All of us are trying to find ways to deal with the restrictions and isolation as a result of the Corona virus presence in our lives. During a retreat on grieving the weekend of Sept. 18-20th, several people commented on the struggles involved with visiting the sick, being present to those dying, and attending funerals—among all the other limitations. Perhaps being part of one of the retreats here can be helpful, whether you feel comfortable coming the Holy Cross or prefer to participate virtually.

I would like to relate the experience of one family I know in their efforts to stay united and grow in faith. An older couple with nine children told me that they wanted to do something extra to help their family and their faith after the pandemic started. **They started a weekly Bible study for their adult children.** Some of them are active Catholics, others inactive, some part of other Christian communities, and one is a very active Jehovah Witness. They agreed to meet together on Sunday afternoon. They are using the Little Rock Scripture Study program and meet online since they live in different cities. One of their children doesn't believe in anything now and chose not to participate but all the others have not only been part of the family study, but they also talk about it with their spouses and children.



The couple is delighted to see the response and they feel more united as a family than before. The arguments they would sometimes have with the one who is a Jehovah Witness have instead evolved into faith filled discussions.

From mid-March through December the Retreat Center has lost over \$380,000.00 in income from cancelled retreats. We have chosen to continue paying our employees since they are not eligible for unemployment and we do not want to lose their cumulative experience in serving our retreatants with skill, love, and Franciscan values. It would be understandable to focus on the loss of income, or the difficulty of paying salaries. Instead, our days have been filled with examples of the generosity of those who have supported us through general donations, purchasing raffle tickets, or in-kind donations. We are grateful. In choosing to live in gratitude we don't minimize or ignore the difficulties, but they are not draining our spirit.

In coping on the pandemic it may help to reflect on how we can be grateful for unexpected surprises, how we can be attentive to others even from a distance, and how small gestures of care make a difference.



A donor bought us a new garden tractor and mower, just because she wanted the grounds to always look extra nice! Many

## "Come and See" Weekend

**Men who are considering the Franciscan life or some other form of religious life are welcome to a Vocation weekend called "Come and See" October 16-18th at Holy Cross.** You will have the chance to learn about St. Francis, speak with other young adults who are in formation as well as other active friars. There will be time to pray and discern where the Lord is leading you. There is no cost for the weekend. For more info, contact Friar Mario Serrano OFM Conv. at 210 643 8157 or [friarmario-serrano@gmail.com](mailto:friarmario-serrano@gmail.com) to consider joining the fraternity of the Franciscan friars. Come or encourage someone!



The **Grieving Retreat September 18-20** provided 21 people with the opportunity to pray and talk about losses in our lives and how we can respond with the help of God and others. A 1000 piece puzzle was used as an image throughout the retreat. It was dropped on the floor as a sign of how our life can feel shattered after a significant loss. Part of the healing is being willing to put our life back together to some degree. Four of the retreatants were able to pick the pieces up, and reassemble it. Retreatants were later asked to choose pieces from the puzzle to represent the loss of a person, or skill, or health or other losses in their lives.

This left a puzzle with spaces  
that cannot be filled by anyone else.  
Life continues yet the loss is never really replaced.

**HCRC wants all who come here to be safe and comfortable. All guests will have a single room.**

**Serving meals will be done by our staff. Areas will be cleaned and disinfected throughout each day. We will position people at a distance and insist that masks be used when with others. With your cooperation we minimize risk and enjoy time together.**