



April 2021

Holy Cross Retreat Center Newsletter

600 Holy Cross Road, Mesilla Park, NM 88047

www.holycrossretreat.org 575 524-3688

email: Director@holycrossretreat.org

With over 60 years of Retreat Ministry!

Have a Blessed Triduum and Happy Easter!

April 23-25 Recovering Alcoholics Retreat

led by Sr. Linda Fischer. Those involved in AA or Alanon will find this enriching. Sr. Linda will be here.



Apr 30-May 2 Retiro Contemplativo

Puede experimentar varias formas de Oración contemplativa, en español, con Padre Tomás Smith

May 21-23 *Fratelli, Tutti* This is a review of themes from the encyclical by Pope Francis and how we recover from the pandemic with a sense of Fraternity

June 18-20 Women's Healing Retreat with Sr. Helen Santamaria. This is a thoughtfully planned weekend in a very holy space where women can feel cared for, where they can share and listen to other women's experiences and feel a connection to one another, to oneself and to their God.



June 25-27 Desert and Mountain Spirituality a time to find peace and faith in our local environment. Explore the Scriptures and spend time at Dripping Springs as part of the retreat.

July 14 7:00-8:30pm "Your Story, Your Legacy: Exploring Your Spiritual Values" How do you want to be remembered?

July 23-25 The Fire Within A retreat on Desire, Sexuality, Longing and God, based on a book by Fr. Ronald Rolheiser. It is a followup to Sacred Fire.

July 26-30 Pilgrimage to the early Franciscan Missions in NM. Experience the history and current vitality of 400 year old missions with a group, led by Fr. Tom Smith OFM Conv.

August 6-8 Retreat on the Healing Power of Forgiveness. How can we forgive and learn from our painful hurts.



You can download a brochure at our web site: www.holycrossretreat.org under tab "Register for Retreats" or call us at 575 524 3688 to register.



It was almost five years ago in 2016 that we first began to welcome immigrants seeking asylum. This is a picture of two of the earlier families whom I recall. It has been enriching to meet so many people and see their relief and joy in finding a warm welcome and assistance.

As you know from the news there are more children and families coming to the border again. We are ready to provide hospitality again when the need is beyond what can be accepted in El Paso. Donations of toiletries, new underwear and socks, shoes, shoe strings, diapers and baby wipes, Nido baby formula, and money for non prescription meds, gas for transporting them, etc. would be appreciated. We want to help them feel welcomed and get united with their sponsors in the US. Gracias!

Groups arriving

With more people getting vaccinations they are feeling more comfortable in coming to the retreat center. We still ask for masks and distancing, of course, but several groups have come for day programs and now for overnights as well. Please look ahead and let us know if you want to verify something that is already scheduled or consider something new.

All of the staff are fully vaccinated as well...

Charity and Social Justice



Poverty is a central issue both inside and outside the Church. From the moment of his election, Pope Francis has emphasized the vision of a “Church that is poor and for the poor.” The reality is clear that there is much poverty around the world and in our own country. Responding to the needs of poor involves both charity and actions in the name of justice.

Works of charity provide for the immediate needs.

During this time of the pandemic, HCRC has provided 201 nights stay for medical patients, and 284 for homeless persons who are in transition to their own living space. We have prepared meals and personal support for our guests as well. Since March 2017 we have welcomed a man who is threatened with deportation, because he wants to care for his son who is a US citizen. With a change in immigration policy we are now preparing to welcome asylum seekers again to help them get to their sponsors in the US. Retreat ministry is our central focus, yet we expanded our mission statement to include assistance to the real poor in our midst.

Justice calls us to improve the systems which cause these stark needs. CAFé, the local community organizing group, lobbied for an increase in the minimum wage in Las Cruces and the retreat center paid that amount to our employees even though we are outside the city limits. With CAFé I have lobbied for a Paid Sick Leave bill for full and part time employees in the state. We will provide this for our staff. I have given testimony before the New Mexico state legislature supporting low income Tax Credits, and training for lower wage workers to decrease the dependency on fossil fuels while in transition toward ecologically friendly and sustainable forms of energy. All have been passed.

HCRC is also part of the immigration networks which promote a caring response to immigrants and a change in policies that are beginning to ease some restrictions. Retreats have focused on two papal encyclicals “Laudato, Si!” concerning respect for the earth, and “Fratelli Tutti” promoting care for all people, to increase awareness and acceptance of the principles of social justice in those documents.

Starting in March HCRC sponsored and is leading a **JustFaith** eight week program for priests in the diocese to learn about Poverty: A Biblical Perspective. This is the beginning of a thrust with the Bishop’s endorsement to promote Catholic Social Teaching among the clergy and laity. This can lead to more engagement promoting systemic changes that will improve the situation for all the poor in our state.



Charity and social justice respond to both the short term and long term needs through systemic change.

Tom Smith OFM Conv.

When thinking of gifts for Mothers day or other events consider going to our online Festival of arts page at:
<https://franciscanartfestival.org/>



Please patronize our artists!

Earth Day April 22, 2021

Since 1970 people have been celebrating a day to care for the earth. Pope Francis promoted it in his book Laudato, Si! We welcome you to join us at Holy Cross at 6:30pm on the 22nd to learn about our ecological efforts, including climbing to the roof of the Chapel to see the solar panels if you want! Come join us!



Holy Saturday Reflection



I have spent much of my life planning and working towards goals I have set for myself. Holy Saturday calls us to spend time in the space between what was and what will be, between loss and joy, between a time of unknowing and a time of knowing. In truth I spend much of my life there and yet I am always in a hurry to pass through this space to my envisioned future. After many years I know that things seldom work out the way that I planned – usually the twists and turns of life add layers and depth or send me in another direction all together.

Still, I immerse myself in the planning instead of living in the present. Yet if I pause, I find that there is so much grace in the in-between spaces. We find ourselves there now, as this pandemic has changed our daily lives. As we do on Holy Saturday, we wait, not knowing. We cannot clearly see to the other side or envision what the world will look like when the pandemic ends. Yet our sojourn in this borderland has taught us to understand and value the importance of human contact – the simple act of being present to one another in times of profound need with a hug, a touch, or a kiss goodbye. We have learned how vulnerable we are, and how the choices we make can affect the lives of many others. We have seen unspeakable tragedy, but we have also seen courage, and strength and sacrifice. Life and hope, faith and love dwell here in this in-between space.

Debbie Moore, manager