

Franciscan Spiritual Center

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Mission Statement

Franciscan Spiritual Ministries is a ministry sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. Rooted in Gospel values and in the prophetic spirits of Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi, we seek to provide environments, experiences and resources which enable persons to meet God in both stillness and activity. With hospitality, simplicity and joy we welcome all as brother and sister.

Camelot Revisited



Clare A. D'Auria OSF

In the Summer, 2002 newsletter, I bid farewell to Clare Andrew D'Auria OSF, the Center's Program Coordinator, who had just been elected to congregational leadership. For Clare, serving as program coordinator at that time in her ministry, was a "Camelot — a bright shining moment" all of us wouldn't forget.

After serving in congregational leadership for these past six years, Clare answered the call to return to minister here at the Center. It isn't a surprise that she is "sincerely grateful to have been missioned again to the Franciscan Spiritual Center." She says, "it is both a joy and a gift — a real homecoming — for me to be able to return to this kind of ministry, especially to retreat work and spiritual direction, serving those who come desiring to deepen their relationship with God."

Clare, too, had a major role in the "Camelot" she experienced during her previous ministry in the Center. She has an extraordinary gift of capturing the rhythm of the Spirit in any event and using that gift in all she does and shares. Take time to check our upcoming events. You will notice that, in her Lenten day, Clare is focusing on the music of God's love. Don't miss this chance to make your Lent days different!

Join me in welcoming Clare home again!

God bless.
Sister Christa

Just a reminder . . . for those who wish, we are beginning monthly e-mails to those who wish to receive them. If you are interested and have not already contacted us, e-mail us at fsc@osfphila.org.

**A CONVERSION TOWARD GOD'S ABUNDANCE:
SEEING THE WORLD ANEW**

Mary Beth Ingham CSSJ

March 15, 2009 • 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.



The Lenten Season offers us the graced opportunity to turn to God, an invitation to growth, grace and conversion. Such conversion to God requires the reorientation of our hearts, minds and our living — acts of justice, peace and gestures of love. Join us for our annual Charism Day as we welcome Mary Beth Ingham CSSJ. Mary Beth will gift us with a Franciscan world view as she enflashes the topic: *A Conversion Toward God's Abundance: Seeing the World Anew*. In her presentations, she will expand on the implications of Lent as a time for renewed vision of the world, God's love and our own journey.

Mary Beth Ingham CSSJ, a sister of St. Joseph of Orange, California, is the Professor of Philosophy at Loyola Marymount University and, during the 2008-2009 academic year, the Kenan Osborne OFM Visiting Scholar at the Franciscan School of Theology, Berkeley. Mary Beth has published several books and articles and has presented numerous programs throughout the country. She contemporizes critical questions of the present day. Participants appreciate her clarity, simplicity and humor. Mary Beth is no stranger to us. It is with great delight that we await her return.

Additional Lenten Programs

LOVE CHANGES EVERYTHING:

THE MUSIC OF LENT

Clare D'Auria OSF

March 11, 2009 • 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

\$30 includes lunch (\$10 deposit)

EMBRACING THE OTHER

Kevin Barr

April 1 2009 • 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

\$20 includes dinner (\$10 deposit)

FROM HEARTS OF STONE TO HEARTS OF LOVE: A YOUNG ADULT EVENING

Mary Beth Antonelli OSF and Margie Winters

March 24, 2009 • 5:00 - 8:30 p.m.

\$10 includes dinner (due with registration)

Oops!

Please note these date corrections to programs/retreats in our recently mailed brochure:

HIV/Aids Caregivers: Spirit Alive by Bernadette Kinniry RSM and Siloam

March 6-8, 2009

Guided Retreat: *The Passionate Love of God* by Michael Laratonda FMS

July 13-19, 2009

Hosted Groups — July through December, 2008

RELIGIOUS

Assisi House Volunteers
 Calvary Baptist Church* (DE)
 Cheltenham Presbyterian Church
 Chinese Catholic Community
 Daylesford Abbey Community
 IHM Creative Liturgy* (MD)
 New Ways Ministry
 National Catechetical Leadership* (DC)
 Marianist Family Retreat Center (NJ)
 Neumann Adult Spirituality*
 Pendel Hill Administrators
 Resurrection/Transfiguration Prison Ministry*
 St. Francis DeSales Confirmation
 St. Joseph University Campus Ministry
 St. Joseph on Brandywine Confirmation (DE)
 St. Francis SFO (NJ)

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

Values Seminar
 Franciscan Ministries Program
 Brown Bag Artists

HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

St. Francis Hospital (DE)
 Fair Acres Circle of Life*

EDUCATION

Diocese of Wilmington School Board (DE)
 Drexel Neumann Academy
 Nativity Parish School Board
 St. Anthony School (DE)
 St. Elizabeth High School Freshmen (DE)
 St. Joseph School Faculty
 St. John Holy Angels Faculty (DE)
 The Catholic High of Baltimore Juniors (MD)

NEUMANN COLLEGE

Advent Retreat
 Faculty Retreats
 Ethical Leadership Evening
 Nursing Students Gathering
 Chaplain/Coaches Evening
 Sports/Spirituality Recollection

**first time at our Center*

Center Hosts Neumann College Personnel Days



High Tea during one of Neumann College's eight one-day retreats at our Center.

When the Middle States Review commended Neumann College for “offering what the world needs for the 21st century” the administration was prompted to offer their personnel an opportunity to reflect on and share what it is that they are “offering the world.” In the series of eight one-day retreats two themes were emphasized: nurturing one’s spirit and reflecting on what Neumann offers the world through Catholic Education in the Franciscan Tradition. Secondly the day was one to say “thank you” for all the faculty has done and continues to do to promote the mission and values of the college. Each day

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began with prayer and reflection on celebrating the beauty of Catholic Education in the Franciscan Tradition which included readings from Papal Documents, Franciscan Sources and contemporary Scholars in the Tradition. In addition to input from video and powerpoint presentations on defining the College's Catholic Franciscan identity, there were times for individual reflection and followup table sharing on the question, "What is ours to do: personally, divisionally and college-wide to continue this Mission?" The day closed with afternoon tea (including Irish soda bread freshly baked by a Sister of Saint Francis) and conversation that nourished the spirit.

The participants expressed their sincere gratitude for so many things . . . "having time to reflect in a peaceful environment," "the opportunity to get to know their colleagues," and "the deepening of their understanding of the Catholic Franciscan Mission." The highlight for many probably was "the opportunity to partake of 'proper tea' in an atmosphere that promotes hospitality and conviviality"!

The First Snowfall



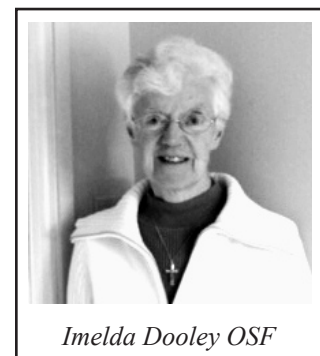
*Sister Veronica Leo Diamini
enjoys her first snowfall.*

Do you remember this year's first snowfall? Certainly, Veronica Leo Diamini, a Capuchin Poor Clare who was making her annual retreat here, will remember. Coming from South Africa only a few months before, she had never witnessed a snowfall until she woke up that morning. Taken with surprise, she ventured out in sandled feet to touch the flakes as they fell and blanketed the landscape. With delight and in "love with the beauty," as she put it, she went from place to place. Never had she experienced the coldness or the wetness of it. With gratitude for her retreat experience, Veronica returned to her ministry cooking for the clients at the House of Hospitality in Wilmington. Tucked in her memory and

camera was a story to share, a story of her amazement at the spacious Center and the winter wonderland she won't forget.

Sister Imelda Dooley OSF

So often we miss what goes on "behind the scenes." For the past several years Imelda Dooley OSF has worked in our library, processing new books, verifying and adding them to our computer list. Each month she even made time to go to Riddle Village, a nearby retirement facility, where she gave lectures on St. Paul. Imelda will now be assisting the Ministries Foundation of the Sisters of St. Francis. We are grateful for her desire to continue to support us as a volunteer of hospitality and wish her God's blessing with her new ministry.



Imelda Dooley OSF

The Human Face of Trafficking

Ethel Howley SSND, Ronald Chance, Bridget Rooney

March 21, 2009 • 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

\$10 (includes lunch)

The Franciscan Spiritual Center, as a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, is grateful to be able to offer this program on human trafficking, a plague in our nation and world. Human trafficking is considered 21st century slavery. This global slave trade presently holds 27 million people in bondage. That's more than the total population of Australia, and more than double the size of Los Angeles. Victims of human trafficking are overwhelmingly children or women. Alone and destitute, they have no one to turn to and nowhere else to go. According to the U.S. State Department 2008 Human Trafficking Report, about 50 percent of transnational victims are minors, and roughly 80 percent are girls and women. Clearly, the modern slave trade is predatory by nature.

Today the sale of women and girls is becoming as common as the sale of illegal drugs. Shockingly, it is estimated that human trafficking is profiting as much as \$9.5 billion a year. Seriously consider attending this symposium. Mark your calendar today: March 21, 2009. Come and learn about human trafficking. Become informed about community needs and the importance of what ONE person can do.

Marketing the Mission Is a Mission

Anthony Albence, Susan Cotterall, Helen Menold, members of the Marketing Committee of the Spiritual Center's Advisory Board, met earlier this year with Christa Thompson OSF to focus on their goals for the coming year. Anthony Albence, chair of the committee, describes the Committee as "dedicated to ensuring that a wide audience knows of the vital ministries of the Franciscan Spiritual Center." He feels that so many people in today's hectic and unsettled society are in need of a place to center themselves and to reconnect with their spiritual dimension. In order to promote "the treasures of the Center's holistic approach and Franciscan charism in our region" the committee is looking at various means to highlight day programs and special events. Part of the plan is further developing the website to keep pace with the growing use of the internet by many as a primary means of meeting needs.



Anthony Albence leads members of the Advisory Board's marketing committee through a needs assessment.

A Unique Prayer Experience

Did you know that each month persons gather for a contemplative morning at Clare House? The day begins with a brief prayer and presentation by Jean Ustasiewski OSF, after which the participants spend an hour in private reflection. The morning closes with sharing and prayer. This year the focus



of the mornings is God's creation. In November Randy Schaffer, a regular participant, purchased and brought all the materials necessary for a most unique prayer experience. After the reflection time, she encouraged everyone to choose a brush and a color and to make strokes on a common canvas. Each person was amazed at the personal talent that she contributed to the whole to enhance the final product. At the end, Randy added some final strokes to tie the picture together. The picture, entitled ***Our Prayer***, portrays the richness of prayer in bright color and words of peace, harmony, hope and companion. This original work of art hangs in Clare House. When you come, be sure to look for it!

What the Hermits Are Saying

August, 2009, will mark the fifth anniversary of the opening of the hermitages. Whether persons are there for a day, a weekend, a week or a month, they are grateful . . .

The only comment I have is a prayer invoking God's blessing upon all who conceived, sanctioned and maintained the idea of a hermitage experience. Through the prayer experience of the visitors, may the Lord continue to inspire the Franciscan Sisters and lead them in the path that gives life.

— Rev. Msgr. Valentine Awoyim

It was perfect. A modern version of Walden Pond. A perfect place to read, write and reflect. Thank you for sharing your space! I'm sure you will see me back again.

— Jennifer Kramny

The wonder of Creation enfolds the Hermitages in the forest's song of life. At one with the environment, the interior and exterior blend seamlessly. Though placed for maximum light and cross-breezes, the windows provide privacy if desired. The placement of the hermitage on the land, lends an extra measure of security along with the aesthetic. Though simple by design, the furnishings were carefully chosen to provide comfort. Thoughtful details like a sturdy walking stick to help navigate steep paths and binoculars and bird book were much appreciated. In the spirit of Franciscan hospitality, the Hermitages provide sanctuary and respite for a weary soul to open to God's grace for renewal and refreshment. Thank you, Sisters, for this gracious gift.

— Linda Rowe

Gazing into the Future

FOR THOSE JOURNEYING WITH CANCER . . .

Tim Brown SJ will join us on the weekend of September 18-20, 2009, for a program. Using his book, *Psalms and Compassions: A Jesuit's Journey through Cancer*, Tim will help participants enter the *Psalms* as great poetry and allow the vivid imagery of them to provide comfort, strength, and peace. The weekend program will culminate with a healing service.

FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR MOTHER EARTH AND ALL CREATION . . .

Pam Wood will present *Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth* on October 23-25, 2009. The book, *Care of Creation*, coauthored by Pam, was the center spread in the December 12, 2008 issue of the *National Catholic Reporter*. It was also noted in a featured article, *A Return of Love for Love*, an article which frequently cites excerpts from St. Francis's *Canticle of Creation*. Join us this weekend as we reflect and nurture a Franciscan spirituality of our Mother Earth.

FOR THOSE WANTING TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ISLAM . . .

Michael Calabria OFM returns October 30-31, 2009, to continue our examination of the Islamic religion. This year he will offer *One God — Two Faiths: Christians and Muslims in Dialogue*.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ASKING ABOUT BISHOP THOMAS GUMBLETON . . .

He is returning for an Advent retreat weekend, *Darkness to Light: Birthing Peace in Our Hearts and World* to be held December 4-6, 2009.

FOR THOSE IN TOUCH WITH OUR GLOBAL REALITY . . .

We look forward to having Immaculee Ilibagiza grace our center for our Annual Charism Day, March 7, 2010. Immaculee Ilibagiza is a living example of faith put into action. Her book, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*, became a New York Times Best Seller. In it Immaculee shares her miraculous story of survival — a story of faith, hope and forgiveness. Today Immaculee is regarded as one of the world's leading speakers on peace, faith, and forgiveness. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

FOR THOSE WHO ENJOY CELTIC SPIRITUALITY . . .

Carmel Boyle, renowned singer/songwriter and recording artist of spiritual songs, will present *Journey of a Celtic Heart* on the evening of March 23, 2010. Through her creative, reflective expression she touches and stirs the heart and soul bringing peace and healing. Come, take a symbolic pilgrimage of the heart to the sacred places on your own soul's journey.

FOR SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA . . .

The congregation's pastoral and senior services offices are offering a day of retreat entitled *Harvesting Wisdom in the Second Half of Life* to be presented by Rose Wisnewski OSF on October 10, 2009.

Just a reminder . . . registrations for 2009-2010 programs will begin May 1, 2009

For those who have been relying on our website, we apologize for the problems over the last several months as we worked out the glitches which occurred when we changed servers. We are happy to be back up and running so check us out! A full preview of 2009-2010 programs will be available on our website by the end of March.

