

"Top of the Line"

Bergamo Center for Lifelong Learning
Newsletter

March, 15, 2015

Communication

In an effort to communicate in ever more effective ways Bergamo has expanded its tools to stay in touch...



Facebook is a popular tool for communication and Bergamo now has an official Facebook page. Some may recall Bergamo Facebook pages in the past, but they were not created properly through an organizational account.

"[Bergamo Center – Non-profit Organizations](#)" is now the official page. Please take time to visit and Like Us!



The Bergamo Center is developing a list of friends of the Center to keep in contact with. Constant Contact is the email tool adopted to get the word out on events and development of the Center through this newsletter. Link with [Bergamo at Constant Contact](#) if you wish to be in regular contact with Bergamo events.



The [Bergamo Center website](#) has been updated to include an archive of recent newsletters and is now including links to websites of retreat groups and conferences hosted at Bergamo. If groups would like their websites or facebook pages featured on our website please contact Director [Brent Devitt](#)

Teachable Moments at Bergamo

When young people visit Bergamo Center for Lifelong Learning recently, they also have been learning about the Marianist religious who live and work on the property and gain an appreciation of Mount Saint John's 105-year history.



Bro. Jack Somerville, with the support of **Kevin Kozlowski**, youth director at Bergamo, provides these introductions to youth retreat groups. Thanks to Jack and Kevin for identifying a timely, integral way of making Marianist religious life more visible to young people.

Found in one of the Bedroom Bibles...

To whom it may concern,

"I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, I will tell of all your wonderful deeds." Psalms 9:1

Our experience at Bergamo has been not only amazing but deep and surprisingly not what we thought it would be. We have learned things about people you would've never guessed. It makes us wonder why we are quick to judge someone, but completely change our minds when we hear the person's own struggles. We have only been here for 16 hours, but we are coming to the end of one night's stay and have realized that we have made connections with strangers and friends that will never be forgotten... Our peace and love goes out to you.

Sincerely,

_____, Class of 2016

Featured Retreats - St. Francis Parish

St. Francis Parish in Centerville has over the years embraced the concept of providing opportunities for rest, reflection and regeneration with annual weekend retreats at the Bergamo Center. The men of the parish just held their 38th annual retreat in January and the women recently held a successful 21st annual women's retreat in February.



Invitations to the [St. Francis Women's Retreat](#) are sent to all the Dayton area parishes. Women have come from as far as Texas and California in the past because they were invited by a friend. Most who attend are Catholic, but women of other

faiths attend, including some who are inquiring about the Catholic Church. The mission is to provide a safe place for women to experience and respond to the love of God. The topic is chosen by the facilitator of the retreat, and then an environment and atmosphere is provided that helps promote an awareness and opportunity for deeper reflection and relationship with God. Many women come with a lot of burdens and brokenness, and this is an opportunity for them to be surrounded by love, healing and forgiveness.

The women's retreat features three teaching sessions with a facilitator, small group discussion, praise and worship music, quiet reflection, personal quiet time, Christian Yoga, a spa area, socials in the evenings, Spiritual Direction, Rosary, Adoration with Reconciliation, and a closing mass on Sunday. Everyone is made aware of what the Bergamo center has to offer: labyrinth, grounds and grotto (Weather permitting)



Joanie Rauch, this year's leader shares, "We are extremely grateful that Bergamo Center is so convenient to everyone in the surrounding area and that you have always been so welcoming and supportive of our mission. We are extra thankful for the kindness and generosity of your staff. This year, someone cleaned off the snow from the cars of all the women in the parking lot!! That really meant a lot to us."



As many as 60 men from up to 8 parishes attend the [St. Francis Men's Retreat](#), the majority are from St. Francis parish. The purpose of the retreat is to give men an opportunity to begin their year with

a focus on men's relationship with the Lord and to leave with their spiritual batteries charged.

The men's weekend offers a variety of Catholic faith experiences from morning and evening prayer, the rosary, Mass both days, Reconciliation, Adoration, contemplative time and four presentations by a retreat master.

Marc Martens, one of the men's retreat organizers and a member of the Bergamo Board of Trustees says, "We try to provide them with hands on spiritual inspiration and practical suggestions to help them grow in their faith and to be better fathers, sons, husbands and grandfathers. Many agree it is a great way to start their year! "

St. Francis parish is a great example to other parishes how to develop a retreat experience for men and women. In fact one other retreat is a direct spinoff of the women's retreat. Women of nearby Ascension parish have organized their own "Led by the Light" retreat over the past few years.

Over please...

In Times of Loss...

In some situations there are open windows the Bergamo Center has to serve families who've had close ties with Mount St. John by offering lodging for family members surrounding the death of a loved one. This past summer the Bergamo Center was able to offer lodging to family members of **Fr. Paul Marshall, SM** at the time of his funeral. More recently we received the following note from the **Paul Gehred** family after offering lodging under similar circumstances:

Thank you very much for making space for the Gehred family. This time has been made much more healing for having had the Bergamo Center as a gathering space and lodging.

Bocce Coming to Sieben Hall

Andrew Volk, a sophomore at Alter High School, pursuing his eagle scout project has been in conversation and planning with Bergamo Director Brent Devitt to bring bocce to Mount Saint John in Sieben Hall. The design is to create 60 foot portable courts that can be set up in the gymnasium. Each court will cost approximately \$1,200. The St. Charles K of C's council has committed a donation of \$250 and further donations from other area groups are welcomed.



Andrew and the Bergamo Center are partnering with the John Pirelli Lodge of the Sons of Italy in America for expertise and experience in bocce, primarily through the club's bocce local aficionado, Kevin Sorice. Kevin helps manage the bocce courts and events at the Italian Club and has consulted with *Scene 75* in the construction of outdoor courts there. To our knowledge the proposed indoor courts at Bergamo would be the first indoor Bocce venue in the Dayton area.

Bocce is an Italian variety of lawn bowling played on a 60 to 90 foot dirt or grass court. Bocce is growing in popularity. It is an ancient game, relatively simple to play by people of all ages and abilities. Even one of our modern day saints, Pope John Paul II was known to play the game!



Staff Congratulations

- Congratulations to **Gene Ketter**, who is our Custodial and Housekeeping Supervisor, and also a Grandpa again. Evan James was born last week.
- Front Desk receptionist, **Connie Chatterton** is proud of grandson Austin Agnor who will be recognized at the Annual Youth Ministry Awards program for the Dayton area by the Serra Club and Knights of Columbus.

Prayers

- Please pray for our adult guests and high school retreatants through the month of March that they find comfort and inspiration during their visits to Bergamo.
- For the Paul Gehred family, in their time of grief and healing amid the loss of Paul, husband and father.
- In thanksgiving for our donors, benefactors and prayer supporters.

Prayers are a regular feature of this bulletin. If you would like to share a prayer or ask for prayers just send a note or email to Brent Devitt – brentd@bergamocenter.org.

"I Lived" – Theme of WG'14

Bergamo Youth Director, Kevin Kozlowski reports that 73 youth from throughout the Archdiocese, guided by 12 retreat team members attended the 14th annual World's Greatest Retreat at the Bergamo Center over Feb. 27-March 1. The theme was expressed in a stained glass creation that now graces the lobby of the Center.



Invitation to contribute topics and articles...

The next publication of the *Top of the Line* will be April 15. If any-one has something to contribute to this communication please submit items by the 25th of the month to: brentd@bergamocenter.org



Marianist Feast Days in March

St. Joseph, Spouse of Mary – March 19
Annunciation of the Lord – March 25

March Staff Birthdays

Ron Early – March 29
Brent Devitt - March 31



March Retreats/Events (Approx. # of Participants)

World's Greatest Retreat (73) Feb. 27-March 1
McAuley HS (45) – March 2-3
Lasalle Kairos (60) – March. 4-6
Pre Cana (100) – March 7
Hartley Kairos (85) – March 8-11
St. Leonard (25) – March 12-13
Enneagram (25) – March 12-16
Creative Quilters (50) – March 13-14
Come Share the Spirit (25) – March 13-15
Mental Health Recovery Bd. (25) – March 14
Alter Kairos (65) – March 17-20
Chaminade Scholars (20) – March 20-21
Beginning Experience (41) – March 20-22
Watterson HS (60) – March 22-23
Chaminade Julienne Kairos (65) – March 23-26
Bergamo Bd. of Trustees Orientation (15) – March 24
Warren Co. Quilters (20) – March 26-29
Ignatian Spirituality project (20) – March 28-29
Carroll HS (45) – March 29-30
Mt. Notre Dame HS (45) – March 30-31

Quote

"But your house, and you must be mercy!"

Letter from Ven. Marie Thérèse de Lamourous
to Therese Rondeau, 1819