



Summer can be a good time to open the windows and let a little fresh air in. The focus of this online newsletter is to give our guests and visitors an open window view of what is going on at the Bergamo Center. In the spirit of the Vatican Council, convened by our patron St. John XXIII and in the present context of synodality promoted by Pope Francis we strive to open our windows and doors for the people of God to gather to pray, to retreat, to plan, and to vision a future church.



**Called to be Peacemakers: A Virtual Retreat inspired by Pope John XXIII and Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of *Pacem in Terris***

October 7, 2023  
10am-2pm Eastern Time  
Online Offering on ZOOM.

Registration Link: [Bergamo Website Events \(retreatportal.com\)](http://Bergamo Website Events (retreatportal.com))

This year is the 60th anniversary of the seminal Catholic social tradition encyclical promulgated by Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris* [Peace on Earth], as well as the 40th anniversary of the U.S. Catholic Bishops peace pastoral, *The Challenge of Peace*.

Bergamo's unique mission grounded in the Marianist charism, in the spirit of ecumenism, and informed by the life and work of John XXIII has several natural connection points to celebrate this anniversary year. The John XXIII statue in the Bergamo courtyard is a physical representation of one connection, as it was commissioned to reflect *Pacem in Terris* and bears the inscription: "There can be no peace in the world unless each [person] is at peace in [their] own heart." --John XXIII

What does it mean to be a peacemaker?  
How am I called to embody peace?  
How do communities pursue justice?

We invite you to these reflection questions and more during this virtual retreat experience.

Join internationally-acclaimed artist Bro. Mickey McGrath, OSFS; Pax Christi USA National Chair Charlene Howard; and Marianist Sr. Emily Sandoval as they each share images or examples of building peace in the world.

Additional prayer leaders and facilitators include Dr. Neomi De Anda, Executive Director of the International Marian Research Institute at the University of Dayton, Michelle Sherman of Pax Christi USA, and Tiffany Hunsinger of the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative.

There will be off-camera time for quiet reflection, small group sharing, and a break for lunch. The cost for this virtual retreat is \$10.

Scholarships are available - please email [msherman@paxchristiusa.org](mailto:msherman@paxchristiusa.org) for scholarship information.

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### ***Spiritual Direction at the Bergamo Center***

Spiritual Direction (also referred to as Spiritual Companionship or Accompaniment) is a spiritual practice developed in relationship by meeting regularly with a spiritual director. Spiritual Directors at the Bergamo Center have offered over 120 Spiritual Direction sessions in the past year. Carol & Don Jackson, Michelle Sherman and Sr. Teresa Laengle have comprised the Spiritual Direction team offering 1 hour sessions with directees at Bergamo.

Sr. Teresa has recently moved to Cincinnati to take on some administrative roles with the Sisters of Charity. She will no longer be able to offer spiritual direction at Bergamo, but she does intend to continue as a trustee on the Bergamo Board of Trustees for the remainder of her term. We thank Sr. Teresa for her gift of service to our Bergamo guests and directees, in particular her role in initiating and coordinating the *Ignatian Spirituality Project* at Bergamo.

At this same time, we introduce Stephen Rivet as a new spiritual director at Bergamo. Stephen is in the process of moving full time to Ohio. He has experience as a consultant and spiritual director and is, in fact, a board member of Spiritual Direction International.

Here is a [link to what Spiritual Direction is](#)



### ***Days of Rest & Healing***

The Bergamo Center welcomes individuals seeking a personal day of retreat for Rest & Healing. The Center selects and offers a certain day each

[and some short bios](#) of the current list of spiritual directors who count Bergamo as their home base for spiritual direction.

Spiritual Direction can also be an optional activity within our *Days of Rest and Healing*. For more information about *Days of Rest and Healing* and to register for a day, please use this [registration form on our Bergamo website](#).

month for personal retreats. The recommended offering for this retreat is \$50 which includes a box lunch. The opportunity for Spiritual Direction is offered and may be arranged separately.

#### Day of Rest & Healing Retreat Sample Schedule:

9:00 Arrival, Visit Room, short self-guided tour  
AM Optional Spiritual Direction, Use of Mary Mother of Mercy Chapel  
12:00 Box Lunch  
PM Optional Spiritual Direction, Walk the property, Grotto, Room rest  
4:00 Close the day

[Registration for upcoming Rest & Healing Days](#)

### Tour de Gem

Once again the Bergamo Center is participating in the Tour de Gem Charity Cycling Classic. Those interested in joining the team or supporting Bergamo and the riders who are pedaling for Bergamo this year are encouraged to go to [Tour de Gem 6th Annual Cycling Classic Dayton 2023](#). There are numerous riding options including a 10 to 40 mile trail ride and even a virtual option for those wishing to ride at another time or at another location.

In just 5 years, the Tour de Gem has raised over \$350,000 for 60+ Nonprofits in the Dayton area. Bergamo has received \$2,265 in funds in two years of participation in 2021 and 2022, largely through small yet generous donations to support the riders who have signed up for the event. Currently, our Executive Director Brent Devitt and trustee Neomi De Anda and her husband Martin Rosenau are pledged to ride this year. Please consider giving them your support.



*Tour de Gem supporting cyclists in 2022 included left to right Martin Rosenau, Neomi De Anda, Mike Minardi and Brent Devitt*



## **Bergamo Welcomes New Guest Services Coordinator Brendan Dillon**

Welcome to Brendan Dillon, new Guest Services Coordinator at the Bergamo center. Brendan is eager to discuss retreat and conference plans groups and individuals might have at the Bergamo Center.

Before accepting the position with Bergamo, Brendan worked most recently as the Parish and Community Relations Coordinator at Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley. He has experience as a Religion Teacher at Chaminade Julienne High School and worked in Campus Ministry as an Augustinian Volunteer at St. Augustine High School, San Diego

Brendan has a Master of Arts in Theological Studies and a Bachelor of Science in Biology both from the University of Dayton. Probably where Brendan developed his skills most in Marianist hospitality and retreat work was while attending, leading, and directing the Marianist Family Vacation Summer Retreats at the Governor's Island in Russells Point, Ohio.

The Guest Services Coordinator at Bergamo is responsible for the marketing and management of the guest experience at the Bergamo Center for Lifelong Learning. Reporting to the Executive Director, the Guest Services Coordinator schedules groups using overnight, meeting, and dining spaces, and serves as a liaison between guests and Bergamo Center staff. The position is responsible for the supervision of front desk staff and providing overall coordination with the contracted dining services provider. The Guest Services Coordinator works to ensure the mission of Bergamo Center is sustained, promoting the Center as a premier destination for conferences and retreats in southwest Ohio.

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### **Eagle Scout Jacob Keller Contributes Leopold Benches**

Eagle scout candidate Jacob Keller, a senior at Oakwood High School, chose as his Eagle Scout project to build six Leopold benches to go in the Br. John Soehnel Meditation Grove. The meditation grove is a bit of a secret gem at Mount Saint John. It sits on the remains of former farm structures dating back to the 1960's when much of the Mount Saint John property was yet a working farm. With the chairs in place the grove draws visitors to sit and reflect awhile.

A Leopold bench is a type of bench named after the renowned wildlife professor, conservationist, and author of *A Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold. The bench style lends itself well to meditation, bird watching and photography. The backrest provides a sturdy support for the elbows while using binoculars or cameras to observe nature. The Aldo Leopold bench is a very simple, yet classic, bench for any yard, park, deck or patio. It is simple to build and uses a small amount of material. Perhaps this is what makes it a favorite of conservationists.

The benches Jacob constructed were made with pressure treated wood. Other benches at the Bergamo Center were crafted in the same style with untreated wood salvaged from the pallets that carried the 100 solar panels that were installed at Mount Saint John this past spring.

With the popularity of Buddy Benches and Kindness Benches they are a place for folks to sit comfortably in pairs for prayer, dialogue and friendly companionship. Thank you, Jacob, for making Mount Saint John an even more reflective and comfortable place to enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

*Pictured left to right: Jacob Keller and fellow scouts*

*Marley Lansaw, Judah Schwartz (Not pictured is Joseph Hong who also helped with the project)*



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# Called to Be Peacemakers:

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Saturday, October 7  
10 AM - 2 PM Eastern

with guest speakers:

Charlene Howard

Bro. Mickey McGrath, OSFS

Sr. Emily Sandoval, FMI



with Dr. Neomi De Anda, Tiffany Hunsinger,  
and Michelle Sherman



Register at  
[www.BergamoCenter.org](http://www.BergamoCenter.org)

## Support Bergamo

Please consider supporting the sustainability of the Bergamo Center by making a donation. Your gift will change the lives of those on retreat, helping each one to grow closer to God. Thank you!

[Donate Here!](#)

If you don't currently follow us on social media, we encourage you to do so! [We are on Facebook](#). Please invite your friends to follow us, which will be a blessing for us and for them! Connect with Bergamo

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