



The Bergamo Break

Pause, pray, and stay connected with the latest news at Bergamo

Bergamo Celebrates the Season(s)

Guests who visit Bergamo in December or early January can enjoy the sights of the season as the building is decorated for Advent and Christmas. The holly was hung by the front desk with care, in hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there - and he *did* make an appearance to provide Purcell Marian retreatants with candy canes and a prayer on his feast day (December 6).

Visitors will also notice several Nativity scenes, or "crèches," around Bergamo. These crèches are on loan from the University of Dayton's Marian Library, whose

collection includes over 3,600 Nativities from over 100 cultures (according to their website). We are grateful to be able to display some of these crèches at Bergamo including one from a Guatemalan artist made of ceramics, another from Switzerland made of resin and wood, and two other wooden nativities from the Egyptian Coptic Christian community and Italy (pictured above). Bergamo also received a crèche from local artist Mike Nygren, whose nativity includes less-traditional figures such as the son of one of the Magi.

These crèches serve as a good reminder of the reason for the season and fill our building with a sense of joyful sacredness. We hope they warm your heart during your next visit as you warm yourself by our fire!



Faces of Bergamo: Meet Sr. Teresa Laengle!



Please tell us about yourself. *I am a Sister of Charity of Cincinnati and serve on their Leadership Council. I have previously worked as a high school science teacher and principal and served in retreat ministry.*

How long have you been involved with Bergamo?

I began the Ignatian Spirituality Project (ISP) at Bergamo in 2010 and helped lead it through 2023. (ISP offers retreats for men and women who have experienced homelessness and/or are recovering from addiction.) I also took a course in spiritual direction and met with spiritual directees at Bergamo.

I currently serve on Bergamo's Board of Trustees.

What is a highlight of your involvement at Bergamo? *Leading the ISP retreats (pictured on the right). ISP is a wonderful ministry and Bergamo is an excellent setting to host them. In one of my first retreats, a woman gave a witness talk and shared her life's story. Immediately, another woman did the same. It was a profound experience to hear the resiliency that these women had shown in their lives.*



What do you hope guests will take away from their time at Bergamo? *I hope they develop a closer relationship with God and know they are loved by God. I hope they better understand themselves, the gifts they have, and that they are capable of change with God's help. For ISP retreatants, I hope that know they are loved by the retreat team, and that we accept them no matter what they have done in the past.*



November Gratitude

As the month of November encourages us to pause and give thanks for our blessings, we cannot help but think of the many guests who we are grateful to serve each day!

On any given weekday last month, you could find our center filled with high school students. Moeller, Chaminade Julianne, and Alter High Schools held Kairos retreats here, and we served students from Alter, Elder, Carroll, and Mt. Notre Dame, who all gathered here for their junior retreats. We also hosted adult groups including the Ohio Retired Religious Educators, who gather annually (at various locations) to reconnect and pray together. Two men's 12-step recovery groups graced our halls as well, coming together to pray and support one another (and put our new coffee machine to good use!). We are so thankful for ALL of our guests, both young and old, who walk through our doors and hopefully find a place of peace and renewal while connecting with God and with one another.

An Advent Reflection: Waiting in Kairos Time

by Brendan Dillon, Guest Services Coordinator for the Bergamo Center

During Advent, we spend four weeks waiting (and definitely not celebrating or decorating...) for the coming of Christ at Christmas. While four weeks is

not a long time to wait, and might in fact fly by for many of us, we also wait on a deeper level. We wait for something to end - prejudice, an illness, or a toxic situation. We wait for something to begin - healing, a fresh opportunity, a more empathetic nation, or a sense of clarity. We ask God, "When will the next chapter start? Why must we wait?" While God's perceived silence can feel frustrating, taking a broader view might assure us that our waiting is not in vain. Much of our human and religious history has been spent waiting for something greater.

An analogy popularized by the scientist Carl Sagan invites us to think of the universe's history as a calendar year. The universe began 13.8 billion years ago with the Big Bang on "January 1" and the present day is "December 31 just before midnight." In this exercise, you might be surprised to learn when humans originated - perhaps you guess they emerged in September...

[Article Continues Here](#)



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There are now even more ways to stay connected to all of the great things happening at Bergamo! We have expanded our social media presence with an Instagram page. Make sure to follow us - click the button below!



December Arrivals

Advent Gathering (hosted by Neomi De
Anda & Martin Rosenau)
Villa Madonna High School Junior Retreat
Purcell Marian High School Kairos Retreat
St. John Paul II Parish Family Youth
Retreat
New Community Church Retreat
Spiritual Direction Participants
Ignatian Spirituality Project Men's Day of
Reflection

*Please remember our guests in your
prayers this Advent.*



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Bergamo Center

Nonprofit organization

A Catholic retreat center founded by the Society of Mary that offers an environment of hospitality, peace, and spiritual renewal.

4400 Shakertown Rd, Beavercreek, Ohio

bergamocenter.org



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3 Minute Retreat

Pause. Breathe deeply. Slowly read the following passage three times.

*The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior;
he will rejoice over you with gladness, and renew you in his love,
he will sing joyfully because of you, as one sings at festivals.
(Zepheniah 3:16-18a)*

Reflect. What parts of your life can you offer to God for renewal?

Pray the following prayer or one of your own. *Lord, be born again in my life this Advent and Christmas. Amen.*

Connect with Us

Spend the day with Bergamo! Attend an upcoming **Day of Rest and Healing:**
January 28, 29, 30, February 12

Find more information on our website: www.bergamocenter.org (under "Adult Programs")

Interested in booking a group? Contact us at (937) 426-2363 or info@bergamocenter.org

Check out photos from your group's visit to Bergamo and other updates on our Facebook and Instagram pages!



Join Our Cause

Please consider supporting Bergamo's mission of providing excellent programming and facilities.

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