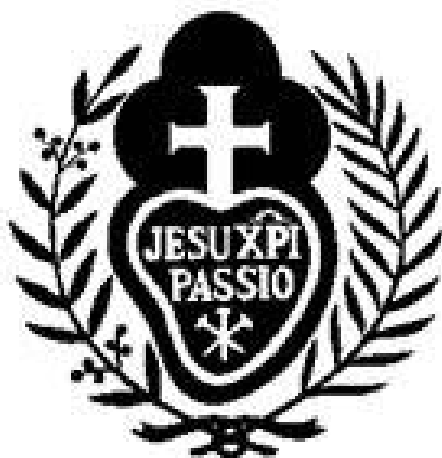
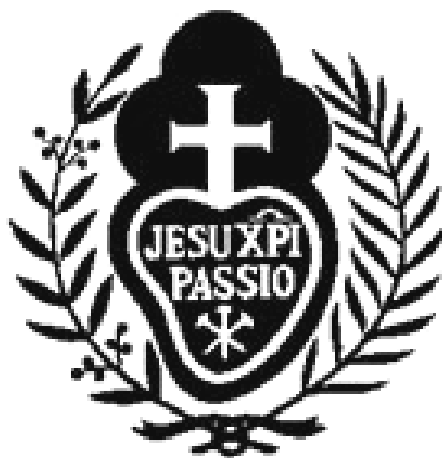

St. Paul of the Cross
Passionist Retreat Center



STRATEGY HANDBOOK
FOR THE MINISTRY
OF PROMOTION



Saint Paul of the Cross Retreat Center Mission Statement

Saint Paul of the Cross Retreat Center
is a spiritual facility in the Catholic tradition,
continuing the spiritual legacy
of Saint Paul of the Cross,
founder of the Passionists.

We welcome all
who desire to deepen their relationship
with God and with one another
by proclaiming the Love of Jesus Crucified,
as we share his healing, reconciling,
and redeeming message.

We foster this through our weekend retreats,
special spiritual programs and
workshops, and hosted events,
in prayerful and peaceful surroundings.

Strategy Handbook for the Ministry of Promotion

This handbook has been assembled from the ideas, insights and actions of many who have experienced a retreat at St. Paul of the Cross Passionist Retreat Center.

The staff at St. Paul is truly grateful for all the input provided that has helped to make this handbook possible.

If you have an idea that works for you in your promotion efforts, please share it with the retreat staff member so that it can be included in future editions of this handbook.

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A Retreat Promoter's Prayer

*My Lord, God of Mystery and Awe,
Your choice of servants amazes me.*

*You could have chosen from
among those wiser and more talented,
yet You have chosen me.*

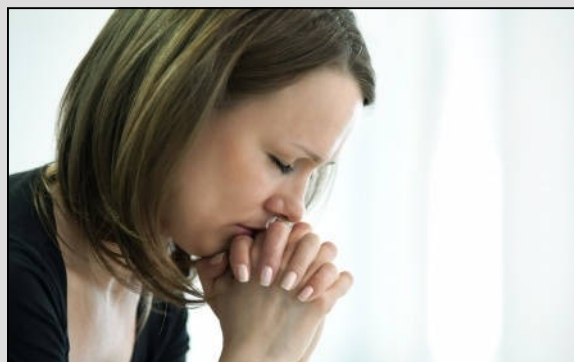
*You have invited me to encourage others
to spend a weekend in retreat,
to have a few days to focus on
their relationship with You.*

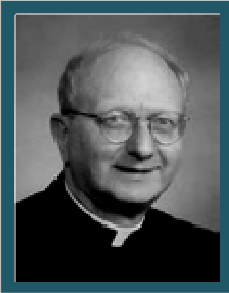
*I am honored by this opportunity
and I want to thank you for it.*

*May my ministry of retreat promotion
be for me a means of grace and
a means for building up
Your kingdom.*

*May this holy work I am about
to perform call forth from within me
greater personal holiness.*

*Please send your blessing
upon me.*





May 2015

Dear Promoters and Co-Promoters,

Our longstanding tradition at Saint Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, as well as at other Passionist Retreat Centers throughout the country, has been to invite retreatants from parishes and various organizations to contribute to the important work of inviting others to participate in retreats. The dedication of our many promoters and co-promoters over the years has created a solid foundation upon which our retreat movement has been built. Thank you for being a part of this tradition.

I want to begin by expressing our appreciation for your willingness to serve as a Promoter, Co-Promoter, or member of the promotion team. Please know that the members of our staff and retreat team are grateful for all that you do to encourage retreats in your parish, within the organizations of which you are a member, or among co-workers. Thank you for your participation in this important aspect of our retreat ministry.

In the following pages, this Promoters' Handbook presents a variety of materials and offers excellent suggestions for the promotion of retreats within your group. Among the materials presented are: a Promoter's Prayer, bulletin announcements, pulpit talks, a promoters' checklist, and other items that we hope you will find helpful.

I am grateful to the members of the Promotion Committee who helped to revise this current edition of the Handbook. The dedicated members of this committee, most of whom also serve as weekend chairpersons, will be happy to assist you in your promotion efforts and to answer any questions that you might have.

Let us continue to pray that the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the inspiration of Saint Paul of the Cross, our Founder, will bless all of our efforts to further the retreat ministry here at Saint Paul of the Cross.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Gerald Laba, C.P.
Retreat Director

Strategies for Promoting Retreats

As a retreat promoter, you already know and understand the power and benefits of a retreat at St. Paul Monastery. You know what a retreat means to you, yet that may be very different from what it may mean to someone else. Add to this the difficulty of putting into words or conveying your feelings about what a retreat means, and you—like most everyone else in a similar position of encouraging others to make a retreat—are faced with a real challenge.

This handbook includes a collection of techniques and ideas that have been used by promoters to bring other members of their faith community to St. Paul's Monastery for retreats.

Some techniques will work for you; some will not. Others are just basic, time-tested things you can and probably should do because they're known to work. Some are simply ideas worth trying. Some things you will be comfortable doing; others may be outside your comfort zone.

There are, however, more than enough techniques and ideas in this document for you to choose—and feel comfortable using. Try them and—over time—develop your own set of techniques that work.



A 7-STEP PLAN

1. Identify your audience.
2. Get buy-in where needed.
3. Start with “general” tactics.
4. Progress to “individual” tactics.
5. Communicate one on one.
6. Follow up often.
7. Sign up retreatants.



1. Identify your audience.

Identify the people or groups of people most pre-disposed to attend a retreat in the parish. Consider targeting the following individuals:

- Those who've made retreats before.
- Participants in Catholic activities—like Men's Catholic Fellowship groups in parishes.
- Those involved in liturgical ministries—like Eucharistic Ministers, lectors, ushers, and choir members..
- Members of Catholic organizations, like the St. Vincent DePaul Society, Knights of Columbus, Christian Mothers, and CDA.
- CCD, RCIA and adult formation instructors.
- Parish volunteers, including summer festival organizers and social ministers.
- Parishioners and friends with whom you have a personal relationship.

2. Get buy-in.

You can't do it alone and—in most cases—you may even need permission to do some things involving retreat promotion.

(Continued on page 6)

A 7-STEP PLAN

(Continued from page 5)

First of all, because your parish is often the center of promotional activity, contact your pastor for both buy-in and approval. He can



become your strongest ally and may be able to open doors to opportunities that you cannot.

You'll need your pastor's permission for things like hanging posters, allowing pulpit talks or staffing a table in the entrance for promotion and sign-ups.

Also be sure to enlist the help of other leaders of your targeted groups. This might include the Knights of Columbus Grand Knight, an officer of the Christian Mothers or a leading member of a your parish's Mens' Fellowship group.

Another effective idea along these lines is to partner with other retreat promoters—for example, the promoter of women's retreats if you're promoting men's

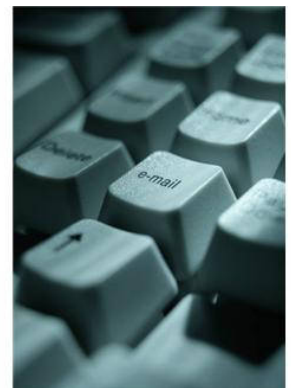
retreat. Also consider contacting retreat promoters of other parishes for sharing ideas or co-promoting.

TIMEFRAME: 6 MONTHS BEFORE THE RETREAT

3. Start with “general” tactics.

Although you will never want to pass up opportunities to approach individuals one-on-one about retreats, you should plan to first promote retreats in a more general way. Some ideas along these lines include church bulletin notices, sign-up posters in the back of church, testimonials from the pulpit, and even a general mailing to parishioners—to “blanket” the parish and develop a general awareness about St. Paul retreats within the parish community.

- Ask to have brief announcements printed in your Church bulletin.
- Give 5-minute talks before groups.
- Post promotional retreat posters.
- Staff a table with a sign/poster at church events
- Hand out retreat leaflets
- Have a speaker do a brief pulpit talk
- Send an email to a list from a church-affiliated group from which you have permission to use the addresses. NOTE: In the first email message, be sure to also ask permission from the recipient to send further email, as it's unlikely the email addresses on the list were provided for the purpose of being “marketed” to.



AIDA

There's an old time-proven marketing methodology with the acronym **AIDA**. It represents something that can work in many different areas where the goal is to influence someone to do something.

A – Attention (Awareness): Attract the attention of individuals.

I – Interest: Raise interest among potential retreatants by demonstrating the advantages and benefits of making a retreat.

D – Desire: Convince individuals that a retreat meets or satisfies their needs.

A – Action: Lead individual to take the step of inquiring about a retreat or actually signing up for one.

(Continued on page 7)

A 7-STEP PLAN

(Continued from page 6)

Where to start? Consider members of parish groups or other Catholic organizations

- Knights of Columbus
- RCIA Program Participants
- Lectors
- Christian Mothers
- MOM's Group
- Christian Men's Fellowship
- Eucharistic Ministers
- Parish Counsel
- Envision Teams
- Choir members
- Ushers
- Greeters
- CCD Program coordinators
- School Teachers
- Ladies of Charity

TIMEFRAME: 2-3 MONTHS BEFORE THE RETREAT



4. Time for “individual” tactics.

The most effective recruitment tactic, proven time and time again, is individual, person-to-person contact and interaction. This means communicating with potential retreatants one-on-one, whether it be in person, over the phone, or even by e-mail.

Using your target groups, now make contact with individuals about attending a retreat. Maybe you noticed a hint of interest from someone in the audience

when discussing retreats at a church group meeting, or perhaps a friend or a parish member told you of someone they felt might attend a retreat. Then there's always the possibility that an individual will take the initiative and contact or approach you about attending a retreat.

- Call the individual if you have a phone number.
- Contact him or her by e-mail if you have an e-mail address.
- Or, best of all, approach the individual in person.

TIMEFRAME: ANYTIME BUT ESPECIALLY WHEN THE RETREAT WEEKEND DRAWS NEARER

5. Communicate one on one.

What do you do next?

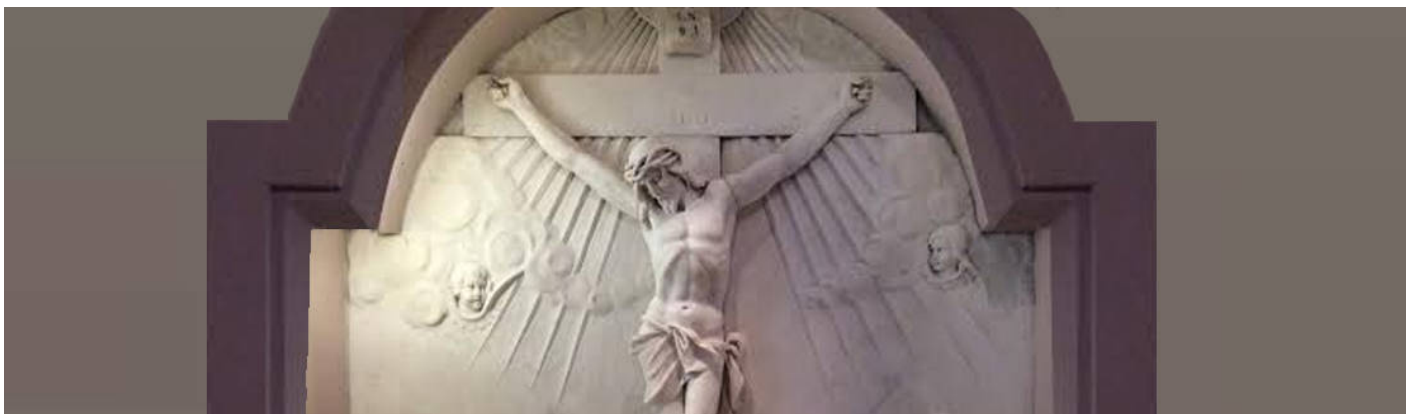
- Engage the individual in discussion about what a retreat can do for her or him.
- Describe as best you can what a “typical” retreat weekend is like—what it is and what it's not.
- Describe your own retreat experiences and the spiritual benefits you received as a result of attending a retreat.
- Ask for the individual's contact information as well as permission to contact him or her about attending a retreat. Promise the individual that you will respect his/her privacy and decision to make a retreat.

Remember that promoting a retreat at St. Paul should not be a “hard sell” involving pressuring someone to attend. God asks that we invite people and share our experiences with them. It is His responsibility to inspire within the person a desire to attend the retreat. Once an invitation has been extended, leave it in God's hands to help the person choose.

TIMEFRAME: ANYTIME

(Continued on page 8)

A 7-STEP PLAN



(Continued from page 7)

6. Follow up, often.

If, in the course of your promotional efforts, you have interested individuals in attending a retreat—even if that interest is not strong—you need to stay in contact to develop the interest and encourage the individual to commit to attending the retreat.

There is no magic number regarding how often to follow up—or how to do it. It really depends on the situation. You don't want to pressure anyone to attend, and you also don't want to be a nuisance. Contacting a slightly interested potential retreatant too often could have an undesirable effect on your efforts. Whether you follow up by phone, e-mail or in person also depends on the situation and the individual. An e-mail message is much less obtrusive to most than a phone call. On the other hand, a text message would likely be considered by most as going over the line.

TIMEFRAME: AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT BEING ANNOYING

7. Sign them up!

If the grace of God prevails, our efforts and time result in Catholics answering the call to attend a retreat at St. Paul Monastery. Request individuals to call the retreat office and provide the information needed to reserve a place at a future retreat.

TIMEFRAME: ANYTIME

PROMOTION TEAM ACTIONS

Your promotional team should be meeting during the months leading up to the retreat to discuss your teams efforts, what's working and what's not—and possible changes in tactics to get more potential retreatants to sign up.

About two months before the retreat, meet as a team to review the status of all efforts. Identify areas that need further attention and follow-up.

Determine if there are any other promotional efforts that would be worthwhile to do in the upcoming month.

Confirm those who will do pulpit testimonials, and review outline of their comments. Confirm the date with your pastor to ensure the pulpit talk is still in the Mass schedule.

Consider asking the priests of the parish to promote attendance at the retreat in their remarks during Mass on the week after the pulpit testimonials.

Confirm who will be undertaking other promotion activities (talks, phone calls, mailings, etc.) and when the activities will take place.

Consider new activities to undertake.

One month before the retreat, meet with your promotion team members review the status of efforts.

Identify areas that need further attention and follow-up.

Send a list to St. Paul Retreat Center to confirm intended participation. Ask them to cross-reference the list with people already registered, and if someone who is intended has not yet registered, to inform the parish promoters so that these people can be called.



TOOLS TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY

In the following pages are examples of techniques and tools available to you in helping you implement your promotion plan. Feel free to use as many as you wish—but be sure to customize them to reflect your own style and information.

Obviously some of the content included in these sections—such as the testimonials—should never be altered.

Also think about use these ideas to develop completely new techniques and tools to help make your efforts as effective as possible.

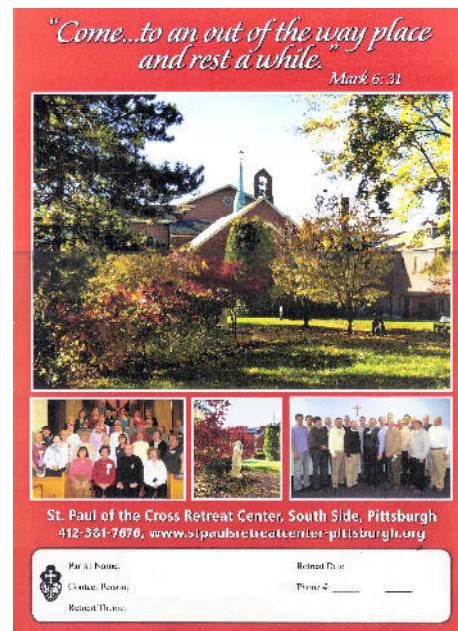
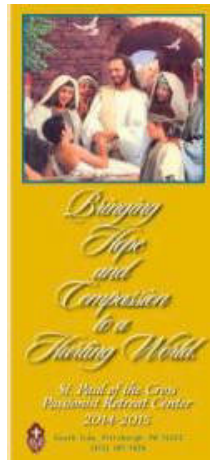
So, how do you use the content in this handbook?

There are several ways to incorporate the content of this handbook into your own efforts. First of all, there's nothing in this handbook that can't be improved, so feel free to adapt the content!

You can copy it by hand if you'd like, print it out to use or copy and paste content from a PDF of this handbook into your own materials. However you use it, be sure that it's to your own liking so that you're comfortable using it.

Other resources available to you and your promotion team include:

- Promotional leaflets
- Promotional Posters featuring Retreat Theme
- Sign-up Posters
- Retreat Newsletters
- PDF of this handbook



Contact the Retreat Center Office for these items or for more information on how you can use the ideas and content in the handbook.

St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center
148 Monastery Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Phone: **412-381-7676**

E-mail: stpaulrcpa@cprov.org
or jcolaizzi@cprov.org

Web: www.stpaulsretreatcenter-pittsburgh.org



Living Our Faith in A World of Change



INFORMATIONAL FLYER

WHAT IS A RETREAT AT ST. PAUL'S?

One might describe it as a wonderful opportunity to rest, reflect and recharge. The emphasis is on spiritual renewal and personal growth. Your retreat weekend begins Friday evening with dinner at 6:10 pm. The next 43 hours will be filled with private and group prayer, fellowship, the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, interesting workshops, Liturgy of the Eucharist, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, spiritual direction with the retreat staff, quiet time and rest.

A retreat is **not** kneeling and praying the entire time; **nor** is a retreat complete silence. There are areas of the retreat center and times when we observe silence, but there are also areas where you can socialize.



Many retreatants comment that they come away from the weekend feeling relaxed, at peace and recharged in their spiritual lives.



Many have returned year after year, to get re-centered with God. If you have never experienced a retreat at St. Paul of the Cross, you really owe it to yourself. So please

consider making a retreat. Also think about inviting your sons/daughters, mom/dad, nephews/nieces, a neighbor or friend to join you on the weekend.

The suggested offering for the weekend is “_____,”

which includes two nights stay and five meals. If you are interested in coming for just Saturday and Sunday, the suggested offering is “_____,” which includes four meals. Also, our parish has a sponsorship program, with limited funds, to make the retreat available to woman/men in the parish regardless of financial situation. If you would like assistance to attend, please contact (pastor). All inquiries are strictly confidential.



Why St. Paul's?

In 1852, four members of the Passionist Congregation traveled from Italy to Pittsburgh at the invitation of Bishop Michael O'Connor. Though they knew no English, these men carried the seeds of their community to the rich soil of the New World. Within two years, this monastery was dedicated in honor of their founder, St. Paul of the Cross, and this beautiful 14-acre site on the South Side, began inviting people to deepen their relationship with God and with one another. So, why not?



FLYER/BULLETIN INSERT

(PARISH NAME) (WOMEN'S/MEN'S) RETREAT INFORMATIONAL BREAKFAST (DATE)

Following 0 :00 AM Mass in the Church Hall

Learn more about the annual women's/men's retreat at St. Paul of the Cross or simply join us to celebrate the fellowship of women/men in our Parish.

We hope you can join us. No RSVP is necessary.

If you have any questions, please call (Name) at (phone number) or (Name) at (phone number).

20XX Retreat Logistics:

- Dates: (_____)
- Retreat Start & End Times: (Friday 5 PM to Noon Sunday)
 - Location: St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center
148 Monastery Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA
(approx. XX miles from <parish>)
- Meals: Dinner Friday, 3 meals Saturday and breakfast Sunday

What a few of our retreatants had to say about their experiences:

"I loved it! And I needed it! I had no idea how much I needed it. Everyone get something different out of a retreat. This retreat was 10 years to the day from the death of my mom. God works in strange ways. One of the topics for the weekend was "Letting Go!" I thought it was going to be about letting go of your anger or sins. The speaker was talking about letting go of the HURT, EMPTINESS, ANGER, LONLINESS and SADNESS you are feeling, and let God into your heart. Now this woman had no idea what I was thinking or feeling or why I was even there, but she was talking to me." —Linda

"I had never been on an overnight retreat, so I was a little nervous about it. What I found was that the whole experience was beautiful. First, the women, not just from St. Sylvester, but all the other parishes participating, were so friendly and welcoming. I felt comfortable meeting and sharing with them from the very beginning. The presentations from the retreat team were interesting and pertinent to our everyday lives. We had time to think about the messages and talk about them. In addition, we had time to be alone to walk or pray or read. The small room with one twin bed was comfortable, warm and cozy. It was a relaxing, refreshing weekend after the hectic, busy holidays. I look forward to doing it again next year." —Marie

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT EXAMPLES

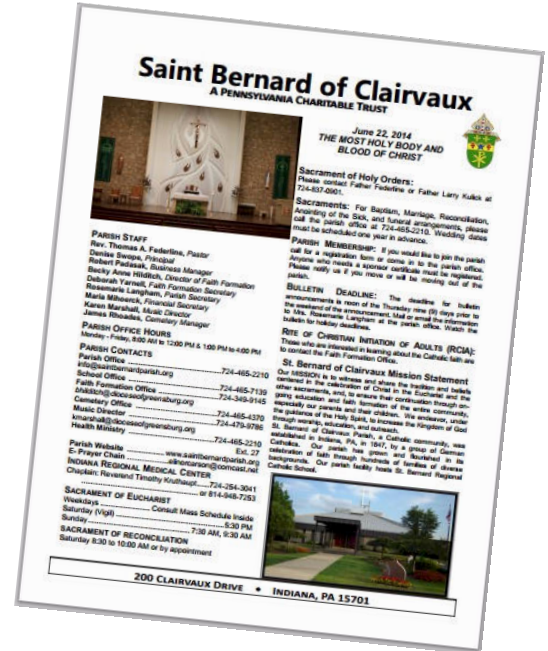
Do you know that the women / men of (parish name) have made annual retreats to St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center on the Southside since (year)? Please mark your calendar now for the weekend of (dates) and seriously consider devoting less than 40 hours of your time to deepen your faith and refresh your body, soul and spirit! Enjoy delicious food, Christian fellowship and quiet reflection in the beautiful surroundings of the Monastery on the South Side. All you need to do is go; God will do the rest. For more information call (contact information) or pick up a brochure at the entrances of church.

Several times we hear in the gospels how Jesus left his family and disciples to go and meet the Father in Prayer. Possibly, Jesus needed to reconnect a bit with the Father; rest in His presence, gain some clarity for what it was He was supposed to do and He needed to be rejuvenated. As Christians, we have those same needs. As we preach, teach, and heal – whether we are single or married, with young or grown children, or with no children, working inside or outside of the home, we are care givers. Care giving is a quality that marks all Christians, and making a retreat allows us to also reconnect with the Father, regain focus and clarity that may be lost within us. The invitation is open to all women; mothers, grandmothers, daughters, granddaughters and nieces (men, fathers, grandfathers, sons, grandsons and nephews) who want to spend some quality time with God at St. Paul's Monastery on (dates). For more information, call (contact information).

From high upon the hill overlooking the South Side, the world looks fresher and more hopeful. Come experience the beauty that is St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center on (dates). For information or reservations, pick up a brochure located at the entrances of church or call (contact information).

Please join us for a Men's / Women's Retreat at St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, a sacred place of rest and spiritual refreshment, (dates). Information brochures are located at the entrances to the church, or contact (contact information).

Come experience rest, relaxation, opportunity for prayer, quiet time, fellowship and a renewed awareness of Christ. This retreat may help you fulfill your spiritual quest in seeking and living the Gospel of Jesus in a deeper and more personal manner. Join us for a prayerful and peaceful weekend.



Experience a spiritual adventure and the opportunity to share in the faith journey of others at (Parish Name). Prayerfully consider making a retreat this year at St. Paul of the Cross the weekend of (dates). For information or reservations, pick up a brochure located at the entrances of church; call (contact information).

It's important to take time to listen to the gentle voice of God. Retreats at St. Paul of the Cross are designed to give you that time. For information or reservations, pick up a brochure located at the entrances of church; call (contact information).

A monastery is a public witness of people trying to follow Christ in their daily lives. In the very heart of the Church, a monastery is a sacred space where people come for retreat, for prayer with the community, and for an experience of peace and renewal.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT EXAMPLES

Please join us for a Women's / Men's Retreat at St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, a sacred place of rest and spiritual refreshment. Information brochures are located at the entrances of the church, or call (contact information).

It's important to take time to listen to the gentle voice of God. Retreats at St. Paul of the Cross are designed to give you that time. For information or reservations, pick up a brochure located at the entrances of church; call (contact information).

A monastery is a public witness of people trying to follow Christ in their daily lives. In the very heart of the Church, a monastery is a sacred space where people come for retreat, for prayer with the community, and for an experience of peace and renewal.

A retreat at St. Paul's of the Cross Retreat Center, what a great way to begin the sacred time of Holy Week. It's not too late to sign up. For more information, pick up a brochure at the entrances of church or contact (contact information).

The Women's / Men's Retreat Group at (parish name) invites all women / men to St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center the weekend of (dates) – a Spiritual Spa awaits you there. Nestled on the South Side slopes, St. Paul's Retreat Center is a place that offers the comfort and relaxation of a spa that nourishes the spirit. It is a place where you can rest your body from the stresses of everyday life; reflect on your relationship with God; and, revitalize your soul through fellowship and prayer. The theme of this year's retreat is Lord, Tell Me a Story to Guide Me . . . The Parables of Jesus. For more information, please contact (contact information).



If your parish has a sponsorship program, you may want to add this to each bulletin announcement.

We have a sponsorship program, with limited funds, to make the retreat available to woman/men in the Parish regardless of financial situation. If you would like to sponsor a retreatant in whole or in part, or if you would like assistance to attend, please contact (pastor). All inquiries are strictly confidential.

Bulletin announcement for the weekend you are on retreat.

The women / men of the parish are on retreat this weekend at St. Paul of the Cross. Please keep them in your prayers, that they may enjoy their gift of reflection and renewal in the Spirit.

LETTERS

that can also be modified to use as in e-mail messages

AN INVITATION

November 19, 2009

Dear _____,

Have you ever thought of a retreat as taking a vacation with God? Just the two of you visiting and the Other already knows you and desires to give you all the graces you need? It is time once again to start planning for (Parish) Women's / Men's Annual Retreat to St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center. Our retreat is scheduled for (dates).

The theme for this year's retreat theme is: (Current Theme)

Please consider this your personal invitation. Enclosed are two reservation forms, one for you and one to share with another should you care to ask a friend or relative to join you (Please do!).

Keep in mind, a retreat can help you find hope, support and strength to grow closer to our Lord. The program emphasizes an atmosphere of peace and prayer, and most of all love of God and for each other. The retreat experience is a perfect fit for all; God will meet you wherever you are!

Prayerfully reflect on joining the women / men of (parish name) for this weekend retreat as we learn more about the word of God, and how we are to live as one Body, through mutual service to each other, based on our own special gifts. Contact a member of our promotion team if you have any questions or would like help with your reservations. Call me if you would like to car pool for this weekend.

Sincerely,

(List the members of your promotion committee with contact information).

(Include website address and reservation forms.)



PULPIT TALK EXAMPLES

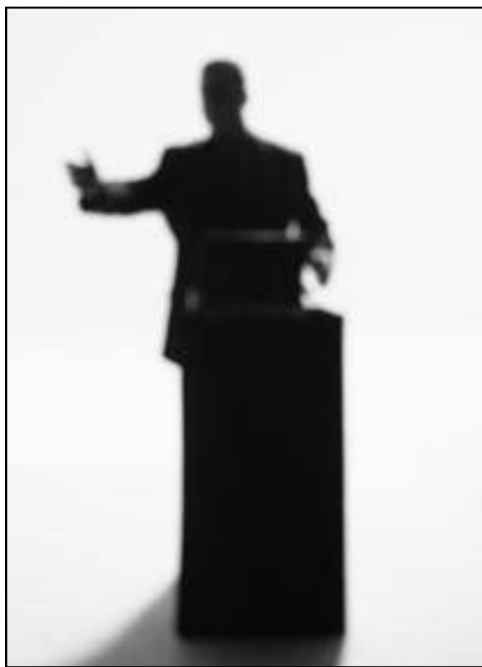
I've been asked to talk to you about the Retreat which is held annually at St. Paul of the Cross Monastery on the South Side. This year's retreat will be held on the weekend of (dates).

We know from the gospels that Jesus left his family and disciples to go and meet the Father in prayer. Sometimes He went to a mountain, sometimes to the desert. He left after he had been preaching, teaching and healing. I imagine Jesus

needed to reconnect a bit with the Father; He needed to rest in His presence, gain some clarity for what it was He was supposed to do and He needed to be rejuvenated. As Christians, we have those same needs, as we preach, teach, and heal – whether we are single or married with young or grown children or with no kids, working inside or outside of the home, we are all caregivers. Care giving is a quality that marks all of us; making a retreat allows us to also reconnect with the Father. Sometimes in our care giving and other daily tasks, we lose sight of what it is we are doing. We lose a sense of purpose. A retreat helps us to regain some of that clarity.

What I like most about retreat is feeling like a part of this parish community. Many men/women make the retreat – there were over 50 retreatants last year from our parish. Some I know, others I did not but met during the retreat to build that sense of bonding with parish members, a sense of community, and bring this back to our parish and family.

Something else I love about retreat is just the opposite of that. It is knowing that I can be alone and do what is best for me. The retreat staff sets a very nice



schedule with talks, group and individual prayer, the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation, liturgy of the Eucharist, Eucharistic adoration, rest and of course meals; but I like knowing that I am not locked into any set schedule – I know that I can break away and that no one will come looking for me.

Lastly, it is important to mention that a sponsorship program was initiated to make the retreat available to every woman in the parish regardless of financial situation. If you would like to

sponsor a retreatant in whole or in part, or if you would like assistance to attend, please contact our pastor. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

Thank you for your time and if you feel a tugging on your heart telling you to attend, I pray that you will follow your heart.

Thank you.

A yellow notepad with a spiral binding on the left side. The word "Notes" is written in large, bold, black marker at the top. The notepad has horizontal lines and a vertical red margin line on the left.

PULPIT TALKS/PRESENTATIONS

Each of us is engaged in a personal battle, a life's struggle if you will, with two hungry wolves pulling us in opposite directions, "One to do good and one who tempts us to do evil. It's not a battle we can win on our own. We constantly fall short, say the things we wish we hadn't, do the things we didn't want to do and waste our time on things we really shouldn't be doing.

How many of you have more free time this year than you did last? Are your jobs less stressful, less demanding? Has the explosion of electronics; cell phones, i-pods, personal hand-held devices and the internet simplified your life or made you instantly available for the latest problem, issue, gossip or family crises creating more tension, distractions and temptations? Do you have more time or less time to think contemplate and pray? How about time for family dinners and activities, or have activities taken over all your "free time?"

Sometimes you have to Retreat to move forward. Step away from the din of work, amusements and activities to re evaluate where you are and how you want to focus your time and energy.

A self designed "Retreat" at beautiful St Paul's Monastery atop the scenic South Side Slopes is the perfect escape to reorder your life, reestablish priorities, reaffirm your faith and strengthen your relationship with your Father in Heaven who wants to help you in your struggles to overcome evil. A retreat, whether silent or interactive, is always "active." A "self designed" retreat might include meditation to gain insight, reading to grow in wisdom and knowledge,

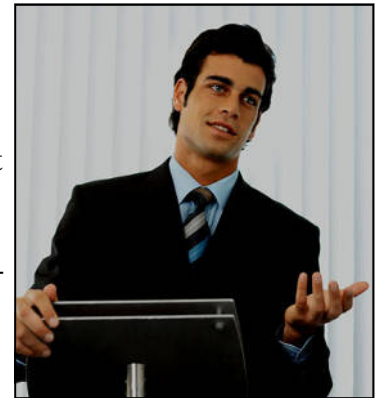
reconciliation to find healing and time to be still and feel the presence of God.

Valentines Day is next week. Wouldn't a vacation retreat at St Paul's be a great gift for your spouse? The rewards will amaze you.....

Lent is an excellent time to join the Parishioners of (parish) on (date). Bring a friend, a relative or a son or daughter soon to head off to college or just come for yourself and find a friend at St Paul's

The cost is reasonable, you determine what you can afford and the schedule is flexible for one night, a Saturday or through Sunday noon. Choose the schedule that best fits your needs.

Remember, the wolf that wins the battle in your life is the one you feed. Will you accept my invitation to feed the Good Wolf @ St Paul's this year



Take a brochure at the door and sign up today. If you have questions contact (list members of promotion team), me or any the parishioners who've benefited from a Retreat Forward at beautiful St Paul's.

Thank you and have a super weekend

Let's go Stillers, lets go.

My sincere thanks to (pastor / priest) as well as all of you, for allowing me a few minutes to invite the women / men of the parish to experience a wonderful retreat weekend at St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center. My name is _____ and I have been a member of _____ parish for 25 years.

In the very heart of the Church, a monastery is a sacred space where people go for retreat, for prayer with the community and for peace and renewal. St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, is that place.

During my retreat each year, I cherish the time I spend, sitting alone with God, sharing my thoughts,

concerns and worries with Him, taking this quiet time to listen to God's gentle voice, to regroup and grow closer to God. A retreat helps me to recapture my peace of mind. The Monastery Garden, with its many walkways and beautiful Stations of the Cross, give me the opportunity to experience the joys of God's creation. The whole weekend gives me time to appreciate the gifts God gives me.

Several times we hear in the gospels how Jesus went "up on the mountain by himself to pray." How much do we need to "go up on the mountain to pray." With

(Continued on page 17)

PULPIT TALKS/PRESENTATIONS

(Continued from page 16)

so many responsibilities, jobs, children, grandchildren, parents, home, organizations -- the list goes on. Most of us, say to ourselves often, "I wish I had more time to just - pray!" Well, here's your opportunity -- would you like to go to a place where you can leave life's burdens behind and get reacquainted with God? St. Paul's Retreat Center is that mountain". Give the weekend exclusively to God. All you need to do is trust God -- and go! God will do the rest.

The theme for this year's retreat is (Current Theme).

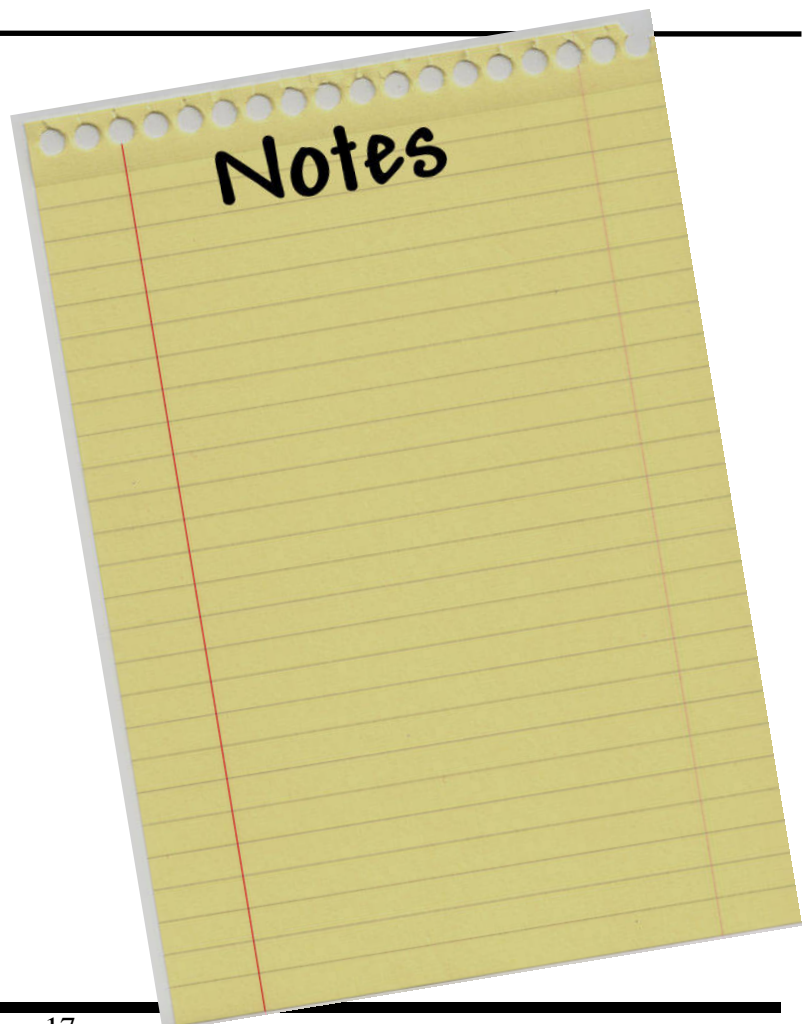
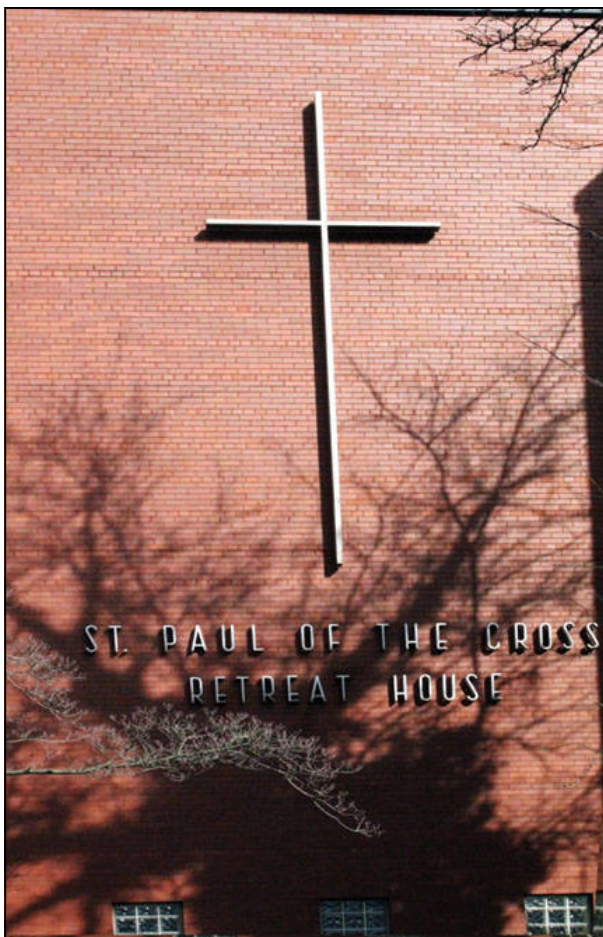
Your retreat weekend begins Friday evening with dinner at 6:10 PM. The next 43 hours will be filled with private and group prayer, fellowship, the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, interesting workshops, Liturgy of the Eucharist, quiet time and rest.

The retreat dates are (). Registration forms are included in the Retreat Pamphlets located at the entrances of church.

Also, look for the notice in the bulletin with more information. After Mass, retreatants will be available to answer your questions or take your reservation.

We have a sponsorship program to make the retreat available to every woman / man in the Parish regardless of financial situation. If you would like to sponsor a retreatant in whole or in part or if you would like assistance to attend, please contact Father _____. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

So please, prayerfully consider taking some time to spend with our Lord; "Come up to the mountain. St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center." Thank you.



INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES

Use them in flyers, letters, and more.

A RETREAT AT ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS RETREAT CENTER

Imagine!

Imagine a place that loves you unconditionally.

Imagine a place where you can find the solitude to be alone with your thoughts.

Imagine a place where friendships are made and fellowship is common.

Imagine a place without cell phones, televisions and pagers.

Imagine a place with no deadlines or commitments.

Imagine a place where you can share a laugh or a tear with a good friend.

Imagine a place with a garden where you can walk with the Lord.

Imagine a place where Jesus can be found if you seek him.

Imagine a place for prayer.

Imagine a place where in silence you can hear the whisper of God.

Imagine this place.

ST. PAUL'S RETREAT CENTER

Join us for a weekend retreat.

Imagine the possibilities.

(Dates)

For more information, pick up a brochure at the entrance to church or call

(Place contact information here).

Poem by Mark R. Fickley – Retreatant)



INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES

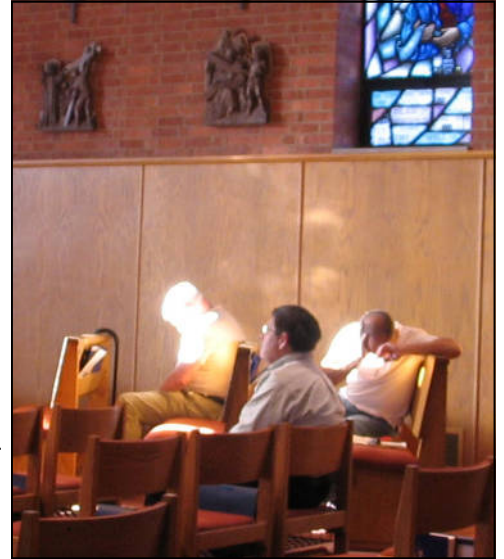
Be still and know that I am God ...

Be still and know that I am God ...

*Silence is golden. silence is deafening,
silence can be very uncomfortable.*

Certainly retreats are about silence: praying, meditating, communing with God. BUT, retreats are much more than silence. They are interactive: sharing, participating, immersing, healing, reconciling, growing, planning and committing. Often I adapt the schedule to give me more personal time to think and find myself. Participants say it's the most relaxing weekend they've ever spent; more refreshing than a vacation....

Strong men and independent women, with tears in their eyes, recall how meaningful the weekend was and how they wish it could continue. For me, I recall the hour I spent praying before the Blessed Sacrament; The moonlight shining brightly on the body of Christ, surrounded by the Stations of the Cross, imperfect me, all alone with Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit. It was awesome!.



You really need to come and discover your own weekend. Did you make some New Years Resolutions this year? Lent is coming and you may want to share some of your plans with your best friend, your Father in Heaven. He's silently waiting for you to speak to Him; but you have to get away, turn off the TV, shut down the computer and turn off the cell phone so you can hear God speak to YOU. Be still and know that God loves you.... Unconditionally.

Valentines Day is just around the corner. Wouldn't a vacation retreat be a great gift for your spouse, your child headed off to college, a neighbor, a relative, a friend and FOR YOU! The cost is reasonable, the schedule is flexible, so consider joining us for all or part of the weekend. I promise your return on this investment will be Priceless. Isn't it time to join your friends and fellow parishioners and attend a retreat at beautiful St Paul's Retreat Center above the Scenic South Side Slopes. For more information, take a brochure and call a member of the promotion team.

Be Still.... Listen.....Christ is waiting for you to answer His Call.....

Thank you

We hope to see you at St Paul's.

TESTIMONIALS

Use them in letters, email messages, pulpit talks, and more.

September 5 – 7, 2008
St. Ursula – Women

I came with St. Ursula women, including my mother, though I moved from that parish to Canonsburg (St. Patrick) 20 years ago when I married. I love this place. It is respite from the frenzied pace of activity in my home with high-energy teenagers.

I have long recognized that we are to be tools in God's hands, but this weekend has brought into focus the idea that we can share in God's love to be the presence of Christ for others. What a sacrament!

Love and prayer. I hope to draw both to higher levels as I go home from here.

Diane

October 10 – 12, 2008

What a wonderful place to renew my spirit and connection to God. The environment is so peaceful and refreshing. Staff and retreatants are a blessing. Eucharistic adoration was a special blessing.

May God's peace and blessing give us strength to return to our world that can be so contrary to our lives here.

Nancy

October 3 – 5, 2008
St. John the Baptist

Rejoice in the Lord and let Him lead you this weekend. He knows what you need, and He will take you there. May Christ's peace be with you.

September 12 – 14, 2008
St. Philip, Crafton – Men

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Welcome to this scared place! May God's abundant love touch you and heal you while on your retreat. Whether it's your first time or your 50th, I know God has something special planned for your time here. Give God your all this weekend and He will reward you tenfold!

In Christ,
Joe

October 3 -5, 2008
St. John the Baptist Unity – Men

This is my 1st retreat! It has been a wonderful experience. Having the time to talk to God with no interruptions has been a blessing. It has helped me work through my problems and put them into perspective. Thanks to friends who made the suggestion that I come and to the great staff here. As I sit writing this and hearing the morning music, I feel such a calming in my heart. I hope I will be able to return next year.

In Christ,
Rick

October 11 – 13, 2008
Womens – Unaffiliated

Dear fellow retreatant:

This is my 3rd retreat. May you find clarity in what brought you here. Allow your heart and mind to relax, reflect and feel God's love. Attending this special place has allowed me to grow in my faith, learn something new about myself and centers my life back to Christ – where it should always be! I hope and pray for all that share this with me.

Thank you Lord for everything in my life. The pain along with the joy, for I know all is directed by You. You are always present in my life.

In Jesus Name,
Diane

September 5 – 7, 2008
Women

What a joy to begin this journal on the first weekend retreat of 2008! How lucky I am and how lucky are you who will visit St. Paul's in the coming weeks/months. I wish you peace . . .

Our theme for the weekend is Love. Saint Paul certainly wrote an inspired letter to guide us to love. Through each chapel service, conference and meditation, I truly felt God calling to me to continue His will. He wants me to share His message of love and service to others.

Sitting in the garden alone was where I felt Jesus beside me. I hope that you will feel His presence and be inspired to follow His will for you.

MORE TESTIMONIALS YOU CAN USE

September 5 – 7, 2008

Women

“Love” – I’m taking it with me back to my family.

“Music” – Joining in Christ’s song.

“Joy” – In a good confession and hopes for a better prayer life.

“Legacy” – To all who read this, I’m praying for you.

SR

September 12 – 14, 2008

St. Philip - Men’s

I got the opportunity to know the meaning of Love – As you lay in bed, look at the crucifix.

St. Alaysius – Womens

In the shared prayer workshop, we read Matthew 6:25-29. I found it very helpful with problems weighing on my heart. This session was so relaxing and peaceful.

As always, the staff is welcoming and kind.

I hope that your weekend will bring you closer to God and that, for just a little while, you will forget all the stress and trials in your everyday life and know that “Love never fails.”

Peace,
Colleen

September 26 – 28, 2008

St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center – How Awesome!

This weekend has been a great time to reflect and to thank God for all He has done for us. The priests here are tremendous and always willing to speak to us personally and give of their precious time. THANK YOU! I especially loved the music from Henry Caruso. What a talented man! THANK YOU! God Bless St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center and Staff and God Bless those who read this!

God’s peace and love fill you hearts!
Damion

September 15 – 17

My retreats are a real spiritual uplift. All of the food is nourishing and very tasty—not only for your physical health. More importantly, its’ nourishing for your spiritual health. It’s a basketful of food for thought. It is a time to relax, unwind, step away from the rush to nowhere, a time to listen and hear God talking to you.

Vince

I come on retreat to:

Reinforce my relationship with God

Let God inspire me in ways that I never expected

Discern situations in my life

Refresh my spiritual life

It’s a great weekend of rest and relaxation

It’s an opportunity for great fellowship with other retreatants

I appreciate the atmosphere and hospitality

The greatest part is an exciting spiritual renewal that we all need

I give God my undivided attention

Get re-energized

Become and stay spiritually well

Open our arms to feel the warmth; Open our ears to hear the song; Open our eyes to see the light – and open our hearts to the love of God.

You must experience a retreat to appreciate a retreat – Try it!!!



REMINDER POSTCARD

•



There's a very quite, spiritual place on top of a hill in Pittsburgh that we know you'd like to visit.

**REMINDER—OUR
ST. PAUL RETREAT IS
COMING UP SOON!**

(DATES)

St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center

JUST A NOTE

... to let you know that October 20 is St. Paul's feast day. I have been thinking of the wonderful time we had at our last retreat and am looking forward to (the date for the retreat) for our next retreat.

We hope you will be able to join us!

So please mark your calendar for (dates of retreat) to attend (Parish) Women's / Men's retreat at St. Paul of the Cross!

Sincerely,

(contact information)

www.catholic-church.org/stpaulsretreatcenter/



SAVE THE DATES!

Women's / Men's Retreat: (Dates)

To register, call: 000-000-0000

A FEW MORE IDEAS

SPONSORSHIP

Perhaps your parish—or someone in your parish—would consider sponsoring a retreatant?

Talk with your pastor. He may be willing to arrange for the parish, a parishioner, or a parish group provide the funds to sponsor a retreatant.

Some parishioners may not be able to make a retreat, but may want to sponsor another retreatant.

By setting up a sponsorship program in your parish, you may make it possible for anyone in your parish, regardless of financial situation, to experience a retreat at St. Paul's Retreat Center.

MEET WITH PARISH GROUPS

Ask parish groups or other Catholic organizations if can approach their members to discuss retreats. Offer to bring a something to eat and many parish organizations will welcome a short presentation. Consider contacting:

- RCIA Program Participants
- Lectors
- Christian Mothers or Christian Daughters of America

- MOM's Group
- Christian Men's Fellowship
- Eucharistic Ministers
- Parish Counsel
- Envision Teams
- Knights of Columbus (only members can attend meetings)
- Choir members
- Ushers
- Greeters
- CCD Program coordinators
- School Teachers
- Ladies of Charity

USE E-MAIL!

Today e-mail is considered an accepted and normal means of communication . Use email lists—your own as well as those of others that you have permission to use—to publicize retreats, provide information about them and encourage prospective retreatants to attend a retreat at St. Paul's.

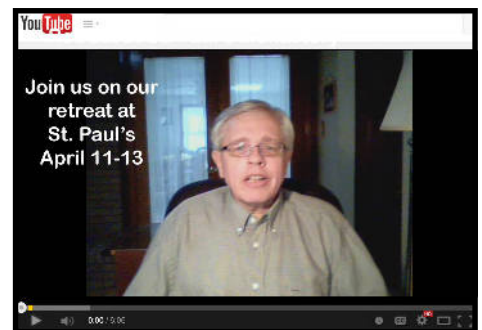
WEB PROMOTION

Many groups and organizations and most churches now have web sites. Ask if your parish or

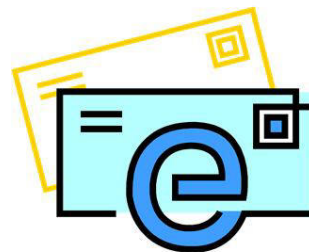
other organizations would consider running an announcement on an upcoming retreat.

YOU-TUBE VIDEO?

It's not as crazy as it sounds. If your computer has a camera or an attached webcam, you can easily record yourself making a brief presentation about an upcoming retreat.



Upload it to YouTube (you do have to first create an account (free and painless). When prompted for your publishing choice after uploading your video, select "unlisted." This will allow the video to be available to only those who have the web address, which you provide selectively. Provide it to prospective retreatants and parish groups—and have it published with retreat announcements in the church bulletin, on flyers, in letters, etc.



RETREAT FAQs

Is this a silent retreat?

No. While the retreat includes a limited number of quiet times, discussion is encouraged. The priests and lay staff are also available for a voluntary and confidential one on one discussion.

I'm a little shy and don't know any of the current retreatants. Will I feel left out?

That is not likely. You will be surrounded by other Catholics who are typically very welcoming. Discussions are as intimate as you prefer and we spend a lot of time laughing, sharing and bonding during the weekend. Even if you do not know any participants at the beginning of the weekend, you will probably be pulled into the loving embrace of the weekend and will look forward to the following year's events.

Can I bring my own food or drink to the retreat center?

Alcohol is not permitted, but other snacks and drinks are allowed. One tradition of one parish, because their women's retreat is often in January, is to bring leftover Christmas cookies, pies or treats. Vending machines are also available for snacks and drinks. The cafeteria serves generous portions at every meal, starting on Friday evening, and includes coffee, tea and desserts.

I don't consider myself particularly devout or religious. Will I feel alienated or overwhelmed with too structured of a schedule?

The retreat is a very personal experience. All you need is a desire to deepen your relationship with God. This is your time to explore your own spirituality and you do that at your own pace. You choose which sessions to attend and they are geared to help you think about many diverse subjects. You will likely leave the retreat feeling much closer to God and with a sense of peace. You will use the time on retreat to reflect on the issues that are important to you. You

will find that the range of spirituality among other retreatants is wide. You will have a chance to talk with others about their personal struggles, families, friends and day to day events. The retreat will give you a lot to think about and you will have plenty of time to pray and reflect during the weekend, but you will also hear a lot of laughing and bonding with other engaging retreat participants.

I understand that I can offer whatever I want to attend the retreat, but there is a published recommended offering that would be difficult for me to pay. Also, I do not feel comfortable attending a retreat and not paying what's expected.

The suggested offering is just that—"suggested." You will be provided an envelope for your offering during the retreat. The envelopes are not marked, so offerings are completely anonymous. It's completely understandable that all individuals who attend St. Paul Retreats vary in their economic means. Some who can afford more often offer more to help the retreat center balance lesser offerings. There is no shame in offering a lesser amount. The much more important thing is that you attend the retreat!



WEEKEND RETREAT AGENDA

Typical weekend retreat agenda at St. Paul's

(Note: Agenda may change year to year)

Friday Evening

- 4:30 Registration
- 5:30 Eucharist in Monastery Church (Optional)
- 6:10 Dinner
- 7:25 Introduction and Overview of the Theme
Opportunity for Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday

- 7:30 Rise
- 8:00 Morning Prayer
- 8:20 Breakfast
- 9:15 Conference I
- 10:45 Music in the Liturgy
- 11:15 Eucharist
- 12:15 Lunch
- 1:45 Workshops
- 4:00 Conference II
- 5:00 Promoters Meeting
- 5:30 Parish Meetings
- 6:10 Dinner
- 8:15 Night Prayer

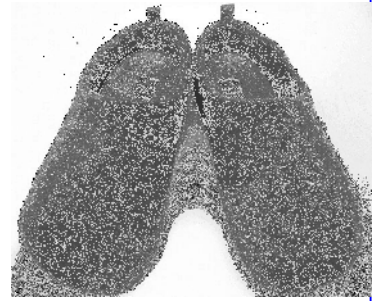
Sunday

- 7:30 Rise
- 8:00 Morning Prayer
- 8:20 Breakfast
- 9:20 Conference III
- 10:30 Gathering
- 11:00 Eucharist

* The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also available in the Monastery Church on Saturday from 3:00-4:00 p.m. and 7:00-7:30 p.m.

What to bring on retreat...

- Comfortable clothing
- Sleepwear
- Slippers
- Robe
- Personal Care Items
- Soap, shampoo
- Hair Dryer (women)
- Medications
- Pillow (only if you like your own)
- Additional towels & wash cloths (towel provided in room)
- Reading material if desired
- Comfortable shoes



Optional Items to bring:

1. Spiritual reading material
2. Pocket Bible
3. Rosary



CHECK LIST FOR PROMOTERS / CO-PROMOTERS

RESERVATIONS

Reservations should be made as soon as possible. There are four (4) ways to make your reservation:

Call the Retreat Office at 412-381-7676

On-line—www.stpaulsretreatcenter-pittsburgh.org

Via e-mail—stpaulrcpa@cpprov.org

Complete the registration form which is found in the retreat brochure and mail to:

St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center
148 Monastery Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

(Please indicate retreat group and the date of your retreat.)

DEPOSIT

Please mail your \$50 non-refundable deposit or you may use a credit card. We accept Master Card, VISA, and Discover. We also accept bank debit cards. If you have any questions, please contact John Colaizzi at 412-381-7676 ext. 137.

The \$50.00 deposit confirms your room.

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

If a retreatant has a 'serious' medical condition, please be sure to make her / his reservation as soon as possible. We want to accommodate those with medical concerns in the best way possible.

If there is a particular room that you would like, please mention this at the time you make your reservation. We will try to accommodate you if at all possible.

Please do not call and ask for your room number. In order to accommodate everyone, room assignments are reviewed on the Friday morning of your retreat and many times we need to make changes.

DECEASED RETREATANTS

It is very important to all of us that we keep our deceased retreatants in memory and in prayer.

Please do not wait until you are on retreat to report retreatants who have passed away.

Notify Mary Ann Laba at 412-381-7676 ext. 136 when you learn that a retreatant has passed away. If we are given enough notice and if a Passionist is available, he may be able to visit with the family at the funeral home. We will then send a Perpetual Enrollment to the family of the deceased. We will add the name of the deceased to your parish list and include the name of the deceased in our newsletter.

REGISTRATION

Registration begins at 4:30 PM.

Many times we've hosted group at the Retreat Center and we need time for the transition from the day program to set up and prepare for the retreat. If we have a large group staying with us for the day, there will also be limited parking until their program ends at 4:00 PM.

If you arrive early, you may be asked to remain downstairs in the Dining Room until our transition has been completed. We appreciate your cooperation regarding this matter.

RETREAT CANCELLATIONS

Please notify the Retreat Center of any cancellations as soon as possible.

Many times, particularly when we have large retreats, people are placed on a waiting list. Please notify the Retreat Center of any cancellations by Thursday afternoon before your retreat so that we can accommodate people on the waiting list.

We have a limited number of rooms to accommodate those with 'serious' medical conditions. If you requested one of these rooms and you are not attending the retreat, please notify the Retreat Center so that we can accommodate others with special needs.

Unfortunately, it is often the case that we are not notified in regard to cancellations. In the meantime, rooms have been prepared and assigned, food has been purchased, our dining room staff has been assigned, and materials have been printed for the weekend.

We will, therefore, appreciate the courtesy of receiving a call regarding a cancellation ahead of time.
Thank you!

DINING ROOM

Encourage your retreatants to meet others and enjoy the company and fellowship of your parish group as well as others attending the retreat.

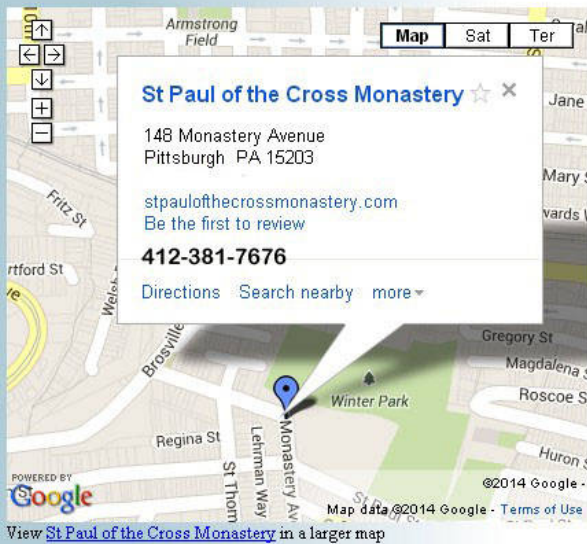
Dietary Needs – Please contact John Colaizzi at 412-381-7676 ext. 137 the Tuesday before your retreat (see retreat brochure).

RETREAT STIPEND (as of June, 2015; Subject to change)

- Friday Evening, Saturday, and Sunday--\$215.00
- Friday Evening, Saturday, and Sunday (Commuter)--\$170.00
- Saturday and Sunday—\$170.00
- Saturday only—\$110.00
- Married Couples—\$375.00

How to get to the Retreat Center at St. Paul's Monastery

Directions to St. Paul of the Cross Monastery



You can find your way to St. Paul's Monastery by following the directions below.

By Plane: Take the Airport Bus to the Hilton Hotel - Taxi to St. Paul's

By Bus: Take a taxi from the Bus Depot to St. Paul's

By Car: Enter your starting point below.

[Directions by Google Maps](#)

From:	<input type="text" value="Enter your starting point here"/>
To:	<input type="text" value="148 Monastery Ave, Pittsburgh, PA"/> <input type="button" value="Go"/>

[Gadgets](#) powered by Google

Want written directions? Click on the .pdf file below.

Written Directions to [St. Paul of the Cross Monastery](#)

