



Offerings

March / April 2019
Volume 6 • Issue 2

The cost of this newsletter was subsidized by Neil and Marie LaBrake in honor of Rev. John Rose, whose ministry at St. Augustine's parish inspired them to discover their God-given gifts and introduced them to the Spiritual Renewal Center.

RECURRING GROUPS

The Center has a variety of regularly meeting groups for your spiritual growth. **Newcomers are always welcome.**

Our **Catch the Spirit** Bible Study Group, led by Marise May, OSF, meets **Tuesdays**, 10-11:30 a.m. to discuss the readings assigned for the coming Sunday.

The **Contemplative Prayer Group** meets **Wednesdays**, 5:30-6:30 p.m. If you'd like to attend, contact Tom O'Connor at 315-313-3758.

The **Women's Faith Sharing Group** meets once a month on a **Thursday** from 3 - 4:30 p.m. Led by Kathy Papa (315-457-4922), members meet for mutual spiritual encouragement as they navigate life. Upcoming meetings include March 21 and April 11.

Exercise Your Spirit: A Lenten Journey

Five Thursdays, March 14 - April 11
9:30-11:00 a.m.
Led by Gerry McKeon, SJ



This Lent, join us for a 5-week adventure in prayer, modeled after the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola. During our time together and on one's own during the week, we will explore themes of bringing our fears and anger to God in prayer, forgiveness, and Christ's healing and love; we will pray using specific scripture passages on these themes. Our hope is that, through this Lenten Journey, participants will come to a deeper experience of God's liberating Presence. Fee is \$60, or whatever you can afford.

ABOUT US

The Spiritual Renewal Center is an ecumenical Christian ministry that provides spiritual direction and renewal opportunities to all members of the community.

VISIT US AT

1342 Lancaster Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210
spiritualrenewalcenter.com
315-472-6546

OUR STAFF

Jim Krisher, Director
Meg Castellini, Communications
Michael DePew,
Administrative Assistant
Marise May, OSF,
Programming Associate

HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, &
Wednesday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The Center will be closed
April 19, Good Friday
April 22, Easter Monday

Do you feel called to the ministry of spiritual direction?

Horizons is our two-year training program in spiritual direction. For nearly thirty years, the Spiritual Renewal Center has been training men and women for the vitally important ministry of spiritual direction. Have you sensed that God might be calling you to this work? Consider applying for our two-year HORIZONS Foundational Program for the Training of Spiritual Directors. Horizons is a practicum-based program for people wanting to develop their gifts for this work. For more information, contact Jim Krisher at 315-472-6546.

Upcoming Workshops & Events

Register today by calling 315-472-6546,
email: mail@spiritualrenewalcenter.com or visit our website
spiritualrenewalcenter.com

Renowned Scholar Returns to the Center



Cristobal Serrán-Pagán returns to the Spiritual Renewal Center March 21-22 for two events! Cristobal is a professor of philosophy and religious studies at Valdosta State University in Georgia. His PhD is in religious studies and he specializes in world religions and the history of philosophy. He is a widely recognized expert on the Spanish mystics and Thomas Merton. His newly released book is *Saint John of the Cross: His Prophetic Mysticism in the Historical Context of Sixteenth-Century Spain* (available in our library).

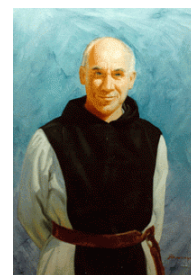
Teresa of Avila and the Stages of Prayer Workshop open to everyone Thursday, March 21, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Teresa of Avila is one of the greatest mystical teachers of prayer in the Christian tradition. Dr. Serrán-Pagán will offer insights from Teresa on the different stages of prayer as we move towards union with God. He will draw primarily from her book *Interior Castle* and from other contemplative writers to explore her metaphors of climbing a spiritual ladder through the different dwelling places within the inner castle. Cristobal has followed the footsteps of Teresa and John of the Cross, having been born and raised in Spain himself. This presentation is open to all interested persons. We're sure you'll find it to be both inspiring and motivational. Fee: \$20, or whatever you can afford.



Spiritual Formation: Wisdom from Thomas Merton For Spiritual Directors and Pastoral Ministers Friday, March 22, 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon

In this workshop, Dr. Serrán-Pagán will address the importance and practice of spiritual formation in the life and writings of Thomas Merton. Merton became a master of novices at his Trappist monastery, and he frequently stressed the need to actively educate the mind and the heart, drawing on his monastic tradition. But Merton also learned from his interfaith dialogues with people of other religions, especially the Dalai Lama. Cristobal will compare some of their views on the role of spiritual formation and education and how relevant these teachings are for people in ministry today. Fee is \$35, or whatever you can afford.



Living Jesus' Hospitality

Thursday, April 4, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Presented by Erica Olson-Bang, Ph.D.

Hospitality is one of Jesus' defining practices. He facilitates the feast at the wedding of Cana; he gathers his disciples around the table, most famously at the Last Supper; he dines with sinners, prostitutes, and tax collectors. Hospitality also occupies a central place in Jesus' parables: in many, the feast is a metaphor for the kingdom of God and one's admittance depends on whether a person has been hospitable. Given how central hospitality is to Jesus' teachings and practice, we will explore what we can learn from Jesus' hospitality and how it can be applied to the modern world, with its unprecedented number of migrants, refugees, and others in desperate need of welcome.

Dr. Erica Olson-Bang received her Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from Fordham University in 2012. She taught Religious Studies at the College of New Rochelle for five years before relocating to Syracuse with her family. Fee: \$20, or whatever you can afford.



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Even the Stones Will Cry Out: A 24-hour Spring Retreat Friday, April 12, 7 p.m. - Saturday, April 13, 7 p.m.

With the approach of Spring it's time for our annual 24-Hour Retreat, to be held at Christ the King Retreat House. Our theme is "Even the Stones Will Cry Out." Friday evening begins with an inspiring talk by one of the Center staff, followed by a relaxing time of fellowship and refreshments. On Saturday, two more speakers will enhance our prayer and reflection. There will be an opportunity to speak with a spiritual director, if desired, and time for personal silence and prayer. A Eucharistic Celebration will be offered. This Palm Sunday weekend retreat will be a beautiful way to enter into Holy Week.

The fee is \$140, which includes private room, Friday evening snacks, three Saturday meals, and all the services of the retreat. The retreat is organized by Marise May, OSF. Please register by April 8 either online or by calling the Center; \$50 deposit required.

Enneagram Insights for Christian Growth Thursdays, April 25 and May 2 (two sessions) 6:45 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Presented by Jim Krisher, Center Director

The enneagram is a way of understanding human personality believed by many to originate in the writings of the 4th century Christian desert monastic Evagrius Ponticus, who wrote of nine "distracting thoughts" that can impede our way to God and peace of heart. The enneagram presents nine fundamental compulsions that can affect us in negative ways as we walk life's journey, and teaches that in each of us one of these compulsions predominates.

Participants will learn about the nine types, identify their own basic compulsion, and explore how this understanding is useful in our relationships with ourselves, others, and God. This event frequently fills to capacity, so register NOW online or by calling the Center at 315.472.6546. Fee is \$45, or whatever you can afford.

What Does Grace Look Like? is a series of reflections about God's grace. This month's feature written by Center Director, Jim Krisher.

What Does *Grace* Look Like?

He came into my office one cold winter's day and sat down in the rocker with his coat wrapped around him. I had never seen this man before, and I have never seen him since, but he had come to tell me a strange tale that I've never forgotten.

He told of how he had struggled in his life and had become an alcoholic. His wife and family had long since left him by the time he finally hit bottom and got sober. But then it all caught up with him—guilt for the anguish he'd caused, regret at missed opportunities. Now he was facing the bleak prospect of living his remaining years totally alone.

One night he decided to end his life. He decided he would begin drinking again, figuring he would just drink himself to death. So he got into his car and drove to a bar where he used to spend a lot of time. He backed the car into a space, moved the gear shift into park, and turned key into the off and locked position. Strangely, the engine just kept running. Startled, he twisted key back and forth, but the engine just kept running!

Then he got mad, took the keys, jumped out and headed for the bar anyway, leaving his car idling. But somewhere inside himself he knew that this was God calling him back to life, away from self-destruction. So he returned to the car and drove home. Once he was in his driveway, the engine turned off as normal and never again had a mind of its own.

He had no doubt that God had been reaching out to him, and he was filled with a tearful gratitude he could barely express. He couldn't make any sense of it, yet there was this astonishing fact: he had been pulled back from the brink of disaster, and he would never be same again.

That's what *Grace* looks like.

Spring Retreat in Daily Life

Eight Wednesdays, May 1 - June 19, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. or Eight Thursdays, May 2 - June 20, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

This eight-week Ignatian retreat involves daily prayer exercises which help us to accept and live out of God's unconditional love. As we pray with Gospel passages, we hope to discover obstacles to our relationship with God, revealed to us by Christ's tender mercy and compassion. In response to our heightened awareness through this prayer, we are freed to make choices more in tune with God's desires and to collaborate with him in building up God's reign on earth.

Participants commit to praying 20 - 30 minutes each day and using a journal to jot down their reflections. We will gather weekly for group sharing and input.

Materials will be given for prayer and spiritual reading. This retreat will be led by Gerard McKeon, SJ, Marise May, OSF, and Rose Wagner, OSF, all of whom are seasoned spiritual directors and have extensive experience with the Spiritual Exercises. Fee is \$100, or whatever you can afford.



Save the Date!

Dr. Monica Weis, SSJ returns to the Center, May 16th for an evening of renewal using poems of early Irish hermits and Trappist monk Thomas Merton. Check our website for more information!

Connect with the Spiritual Renewal Center

Get social with the Spiritual Renewal Center and find us on Facebook and Instagram today. You can also share your email address with us at spiritualrenewalcenter.com and get the the latest information sent right to your inbox.



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