

LAY LEADERSHIP UPDATE

December 2012

VOL III NO 5



A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we begin a new liturgical year, we are challenged to take up our baptismal call to be prophets of the Messiah: to straighten the crooked roads of our lives, to transform “deserts” barren of love into places of welcome and reconciliation, to gather up the lost and forgotten, and to proclaim the coming of God’s Christ in our midst. Here is how we are presently engaged in our call:

Praying with St. Ignatius Retreats. Having completed our fall 8 week retreats at **Assumption Parish (Broadview Heights)** and at **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (West)**, we now turn to preparing for our Lenten retreats which will take place at **St. Basil the Great (Brecksville)** and at **Lakewood Catholic Academy (LCA)**. Retreat teams are now formed: The **St. Basil Team** is comprised of three members of that parish: Margaret Balewski, Rich Jerdonek and Judith Wood, SSJ/TOSF. In addition, Joan Carney will be the Retreat Team Leader and Phil Sterrett, Laura Kuhn and Mary Ann Burke, SND will complete this team. Those who have responded to the call to become the **LCA Retreat Team** are Patrick Cleary-Burns (Retreat Team Leader), Peggy Duffy, OSU, Marian Durkin, CSA, Marcia Lewan and Claudette Matero. Please pray for our retreat teams and for all who will be engaging in these retreats.

Nurturing the Call. On December 1st, Mary Ann Flannery, SC led a group of 16 leaders in a program designed to address leadership challenges that arise during the 8-week retreats offered at St. Ignatius High School and at our diocesan parishes. Drawing on her background as professor of rhetoric and composition as well as her experience as retreat leader, Sr. Mary Ann encouraged us to know the people and culture of the group to whom we minister. What are their beliefs, attitudes and values? Drawing on each other’s wisdom and experience we left enriched and encouraged. (See p. 2 for the Spring Series announcement)

Food for the Journey. Our November gathering continued the process of applying Teresa of Avila’s *Interior Castle* to our ministries of spiritual direction, retreat leadership and pastoral ministry. Reflecting together on the Third Dwelling Places of Teresa’s spiritual classic, the gathered community of 14 leaders engaged in a spiritual formation process which included prayer, ritual and conversation. We meet again on December 8th to conclude the fall portion of this interior journey. (See p. 2 for details on the Winter/Spring series.)

3-YEAR LAY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM PLAN

As part of the JRH Board’s “Roadmap for the Future” (Strategic Plan), I was asked to complete a 3-Year Program Plan. To ground the plan in multiple perspectives, I invited representatives from various *Spiritual Exercises* ministries in northeast Ohio to advise me on this plan.

The Advisory Group met three times (in August, September and November) to complete the process. Members included: Rita Carfagna, Adam Green of Walsh Jesuit High School, Dr. Ed Hahnenberg of John Carroll University, Dr. Nancy Rowell and Jerry Skoch of St. Ignatius High School. Judith Cauley will be presented on December 10th on



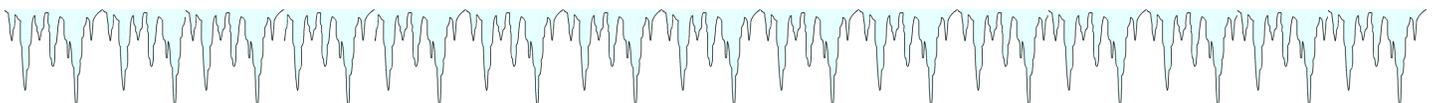
Lay Leadership Advisory Group Members: Rita Carfagna, Nancy Rowell (front row), Adam Green, Jerry Skoch and Ed Hahnenberg (back row)

CALLED AND SENT SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROGRAM

Living Prayer: My Life in God. This past October, 33 participants from Blessed Trinity Parish completed their 6-week experience of this retreat-in-daily life. This completes the plan to offer this module once during the 2012-2013 program year.

Ignatian Spirituality: Grounding for Life and Leadership. 15 members of the Board of Regents at St. Ignatius High School will gather for the first of this 7-part module on December 3rd. Martha Campbell and Rich Jerdonek will co-lead the series.

On November 15th, Sharon Bramante, Pat Cleary-Burns, Laura Kuhn, and Martha Campbell engaged in a stimulating roundtable planning session in support of the design and development of two new modules of the Called and Sent Program, **Discernment and Decision Making** and **The Christian at Work in the World**.



DEEPENING OUR AWARENESS - SOMETHING TO PONDER



Waiting in Darkness*

A Reflection by Richard Rohr, OFM

The darkness will never totally go away. I've worked long enough in ministry to know that darkness isn't going to disappear, but that, as John's Gospel says, "the light shines on inside of the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it" (1:5). Such is the Christian form of yin-yang, our own belief in paradox and mystery.

We must all hope and work to eliminate darkness, especially in many of the great social issues of our time. We wish world hunger could be eliminated. We wish we could stop wasting the earth's resources on armaments. We wish we could stop killing people from womb to tomb. But at a certain point, we have to surrender to the fact that the darkness has always been here, and the only real question is how to receive the light and spread the light. That is not capitulation any more than the cross was capitulation. It is real transformation into the absolutely unique character and program of the Risen Christ.

What we need to do is recognize what is, in fact, darkness and then learn how to live in creative and courageous relationship to it. In other words, don't name darkness *light*. Don't name darkness *good*, which is the seduction that has happened to many of our people on both left and right. They have not been taught wisdom or discernment for the most part. The most common way to release our inner tension is to cease calling darkness *darkness* and to pretend it is passable light. Another way to release your inner tension is to stand angrily, obsessively against it, but then you become a mirror image of it. Everyone can usually see this but you!

Our Christian wisdom is to name the darkness as darkness, and the Light as light, and to learn how to live and work in the Light so that the darkness does not overcome us. If we have a pie-in-the-sky, everything-is-beautiful attitude, we are in fact going to be trapped by the darkness because we are not seeing clearly enough to separate the wheat from the chaff (the more common "liberal" temptation). Conversely, if we can only see the darkness and forget the more foundational Light, we will be destroyed by our own negativity and fanaticism, or we will naively think we are *apart from the darkness* (the more common "conservative" temptations). Instead, we must wait and work with hope inside of the darkness – while never doubting the light that God always is – and that we are too (Matthew 5:14). that is the narrow birth canal of God into the world – *through* the darkness and into an ever great Light..

*Reprinted from *Preparing for Christmas with Richard Rohr*.

TEACHER IN THE MIDST OF DARKNESS

In what parts of your life are you trying to push away darkness instead of living with it as a teacher and transformer?

- Richard Rohr, OFM



COMING IN 2013 ... SAVE THESE DATES

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY EXPLORING THE INTERIOR CASTLE WITH TERESA OF AVILA

Continuation of the Fall Series
Facilitated by Martha Campbell

Open to Spiritual Directors, Retreat Leaders, Pastoral Ministers and Those Who have Made the Full Spiritual Exercises

Saturday Mornings from 9:30 - 11:30
(Coffee and Conversation beginning at 9:00 a.m.)
January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20
Held at The Franciscan Center, Garfield Heights
Contact Martha Campbell for registration details.



NURTURING THE CALL EXPLORING PERSONALITY TYPE FOR PERSONAL GROWTH AND MINISTERIAL EFFECTIVENESS

Facilitated by Joe Konen

Open to Leaders/Facilitators of the Parish Retreat Program and the St. Ignatius & Walsh Spirituality Program for Adults

Thursday Evenings from 6:30 - 8:30
(Coffee and Conversation beginning at 6:00 p.m.)
April 11, April 25 and May 9
Held at St. Ignatius High School
Register deadline: Monday, March 11th
To register contact Janet Lehane at
jlehane@ignatius.edu



IGNATIAN CURRENTS

Facilitated by Ed Hahnenberg, PhD

The Christian at Work in the World: Our Calling

Friday, May 17th from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Saturday, May 18th from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Held at the Jesuit Retreat House

THE LOYOLA EXPERIENCE Ignatian Spirituality Institute Anniversary Pilgrimage

June 13 - 22

All are welcome! Don't miss this opportunity!
For information contact Carol Polish
cpolish@jcu.edu or (216) 397-1599

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