

Dominican Retreat & Conference Center

1945 Union Street, Niskayuna, New York 12309
(518) 393-4169 www.dslcnny.org

Solitude on a Busy Highway

The Good News

March 2021

May the God of Spring be with you, delighting with you in the joy of newly budding life, thrilling your heart with a deepened awareness and experience of the life-giving moments of your days. May your springtime experiences strengthen your hope in the One who has come that we might have life...life to the fullest. May the blessing of Spring be upon you.

Maxine Shonk, OP



Many people have missed being a part of a praying community during this pandemic. We would like to offer some virtual ways of doing that each month – times in which we know we are connected to others in prayer. You may only be interested in one style or may wish to join us for all 3 types. Together we gather in a spirit of prayer.

Ways to Pray Together in a Virtual World

Sung Vespers in the Spirit of Taize – a combination of Taize chants, sung psalms, scripture and silence.

Thursdays 7-8 PM via Facebook Live

(Find Dominican Retreat & Conference Center and look for the live video.)

Dates March 11, April 15, May 13, June 17

Free Will offering

Centering Prayer – For those who simply want to pray with the group. It will include a brief reading from one of the writings of Thomas Keating and a 20 minute sit.

Wednesdays 7-7:30 PM via Zoom

(Register in advance to get link.)

March 24, April 28, May 26, June 23

Suggested offering \$5

Pause for Peace – a brief monthly pause to pray for peace in our world, in our communities and in our hearts.

Tuesdays ~ April 6, May 11, June 8 at 7 PM via Facebook Live

(Find Dominican Retreat & Conference Center and look for the live video.)



BOOK CLUB

APRIL 6, 13, 20 AND 27

TWO SESSIONS - 10 AM OR 7 PM

\$10 PER SESSION—\$35 FOR ALL 4

TITLE OF BOOK IS *THE ALCHEMIST* BY PAULO COELHO



From the Desk of the Administrator

Over the many years that I have been on the staff here at the retreat house, I have had the privilege of encountering so many kind, generous, faith-filled women and men. I am a better person because of those encounters. It is with that remembrance that I share with you the passing of Joan Hoffman during the last days of January. Some of you would have known Joan from attending a retreat with her. Others would have remembered her kind greeting when she answered phones in the office one day a week over the past 15 plus years. Most of you would know her, not by name, but as the clarinet player in the choir – praying and praising God with the beauty of song. Her music added depth and harmony to so much of what we were singing. The Dominican Retreat and Conference Center was home for Joan, and all who came here were family. She will be truly missed, and yet, the melody of her life will be heard and remembered often in this sacred space. Thank you, Joan, for being a part of the fabric of this ministry!



A. L., OP.

Choosing the Brave Journey ~ a virtual retreat for survivors of sexual abuse

March 19-21, 2021 with Sr. Carol Davis, OP

Sister Carol's note:

My dear sister survivors,
I wish you deep peace, health and safety.

It takes courage to sort through the wreckage of sexual abuse, the betrayal, hurt, rage, grief, loneliness, despair, heartbreak. We make the journey to reclaim self, to remember who we are as grace-filled daughters of God. The roads of darkness and light make for arduous travel. It is a brave journey to claim one's own voice and to distinguish that voice from the messages of abusers.

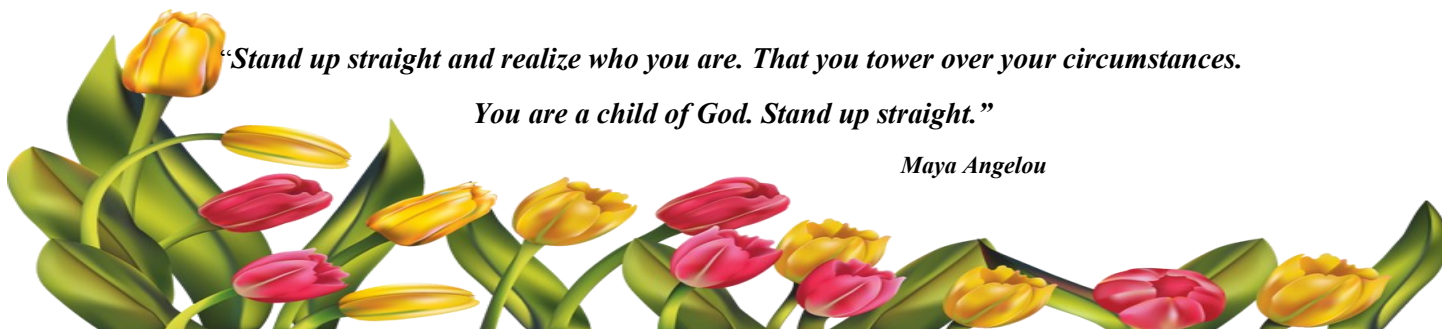
There is light and love and the flowering of new life when we claim the loveliness of our true soul self, when we re-claim the true innocence of being able to be found by warmth, friendship and even joy.

Suggested Offering \$75

"Stand up straight and realize who you are. That you tower over your circumstances.

You are a child of God. Stand up straight."

Maya Angelou



What a year it has been!



It's hard to believe that it has been a year since the Pandemic, which I named Pandora, has come to be among us! At times, it surely feels like it has been much longer than that. It may even seem like a lifetime or two. We have now gotten through what many if not all of us dreaded – the winter. Those long, cold, dark nights that I know I was dreading back in the Fall have passed. How did we get through them? What did they teach us? I remember dreading just the thought of those days. However, they came. I prayed. I learned more about Zoom than I ever wanted to know. I came to cherish those in my life who, perhaps, I had taken for granted before.

As the days get longer and brighter, I can take a deep breath (or maybe a sigh of relief). I can trust in the rhythm of the earth. The rhythm that every other year of my life has brought the hope of spring out of darkness of winter.

The hope of Spring can be seen as the fruit of our perseverance through the darkness of winter. We can now add our survival of the winter to our collective wisdom. I can hear myself saying, "If we got through the Pandemic, we can get through this." I think the hope of Spring is a bit sweeter this year because the darkness of winter at times seemed so bleak.

As we move into the brightness of Spring, let's continue to reflect on how we got here. Hopefully we know in a deeper way that God was with us in the winter, as God is with us in every season, always inviting us into deeper relationship. Always.

Sr. Jude Kapp, RSM



Book of Ruth

SCRIPTURE SERIES

March 3, 10, 24, 31
10 –12 AM

Presenter: Joy Galarneau
15 per session/\$55 for all four

LENTEN COMPASSION SERIES

March 9

Compassion for those who cause suffering

March 23

Compassion for those in need

7- 8:30 PM via Zoom

Director: Sr. Marilyn Vassallo, CSJ

Cost: \$15 per session



PRAYING THROUGH LENT~
Lenten Lectio via Zoom ~

Tuesday evenings 7– 8:30 PM
March 2, 16 and 30

Presenter: Sr. Susan Zemgulis, OP
\$15 per session/\$40 for all three



Sweet Hour of Music and Prayer "

With Mary Anne Brown

Via Zoom

Thursday April 29 ~ 2-3 PM

Free will offering

WOMEN'S THEME RETREATS

Jesus rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Mk4:39a

March 26- 28 ~ Director: Sr. Marilyn Vassallo, CSJ

April 23-25 ~ Director: Sr. June Fitzgerald, OP

April 30-May 2 ~ Director: Anita Davidson, OPA

HYBRID : Cost- In house \$205 (65 and older \$190). Virtual \$75



Mother Cabrini Health Foundation awards DRCC a second round of funding.



In December 2020, we received some welcome news that the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation has awarded the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center a \$142,000 grant for 2021. Thanks to the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, we were able to establish the *Spiritual Sanctuary* in 2020, which strengthened our outreach to meet the spiritual needs of a growing population of Seniors, Persons living with Disabilities and 12-Step Groups. Using this initial grant award, we were also able to quickly shift to a virtual presence, and for a time, safely reopen to offer both onsite and virtual retreats, programs, events, and prayer services. The 2021 award will support our *Spiritual Sanctuary* as we expand it to include veterans, as well as establish a Spiritual Health Care Standards training ground for those serving in health and human service roles.

The wounds of war, service and caregiving take a toll on the health and well-being of each soldier and health and human service provider, which can have a profound spiritual impact on one's life. Extending our *Spiritual Sanctuary* services to veterans and health and human service providers will offer a meaningful response to meeting their crucial and unique need for spiritual support and healing.

Sister Sue notes, "This opportunity to expand the *Spiritual Sanctuary* to veterans and health and human service workers is coming at the right time. There are many who need healing and comfort and some shared experiences that will boost their resilience, strengthen their faith and deepen their relationship with God."

Whether virtual or onsite, individuals will feel welcome and safe as they seek their own *Spiritual Sanctuary*. For more information please call (518)393-4169 or email dslcny@nybiz.rr.com or visit the website www.dslcny.org.



Girls' Night Out ~ Friday, May 7 ~ In-house only

Called to Wonder and Joy with Marni Gillard who will share life moments, make us laugh, and subtly invite us to travel the road of joy-chasing and wonder sighting.

\$25 per person in-house

Women's Day of Reflection ~ Saturday, May 8 ~10AM-3PM ~ Hybrid

Storying Wonder and Joy, Past and Present - Cultivating Both for Our Future
with Marni Gillard

In-house \$30 per person (lunch incl.) \$20 virtual
Both Programs and overnight stay \$80

Please join us as we welcome back author and transgender activist *Stephanie Battagline* for this two-part series as she guides us through her journey to her truest self as a transgender women in today's society. She will present how language, communication, spirituality, and allyship all play a key role in creating a supportive and inclusive culture that celebrates all transgender persons for who they are ~ divine children of God.

Dimensions of Gender

May 4 & 18—7-9 PM via Zoom

\$20 per session/\$35 for both



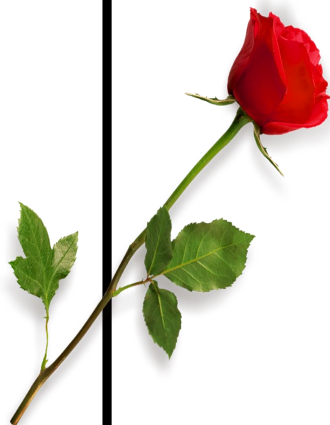
In collaboration with:
Heartland Center for Spirituality
You are invited to join the preached Retreat

*Living with Hope in an
Imperfect and Beautiful World*

With Sr. Melannie Svoboda, SND

May 24-28 ~ via Zoom
There will 2 presentations each day
At 11AM EST and 4PM EST

Cost \$100.
Go to our website for registration link
or
contact us at dslcny@nybiz.rr.com



Sr. Maria DeMonte, OP passed onto eternal life on February 8, 2020. Sr. Maria ministered in Latham for many years and promoted the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center with zeal! Many retreatants came for the first time because of her “prompting”. She will be remembered for her joy and compassion...and perhaps her devotion to St. Therese of Lisieux. May she rest in peace.



Week-long Hybrid Preached Retreat for Women Religious

June 28—July 4

Our Call to Be Human as Jesus was human



Being human is a lot harder than we may think...it is filled with disappointment, frustration, powerlessness, doubt, and uncertainty. This retreat will invite participants to explore how we have responded to the temptations present in every human experience to relieve the tension of being human.

*Directed by Fr. Raymond Dlugos, OSA, Augustinian Friar
\$450 in-house/\$240 virtual*

Spring came early this year. Unplanned for and very unexpected!! It arrived in the middle of January on a cold winter's day. Spring presented itself in all its newness and beauty on the steps of the Capitol Building in Washington, DC. However, the Capitol appeared as a fortress surrounded by high fences, blockades, police, and thousands of military women and men. Despite this setting, spring slipped into the picture with a message of hope.

It was difficult to watch the Inauguration and not remember what took place on January 6. In the midst of these memories, a young woman, wise for her age, approached the podium. She is a woman filled with energy, life, and words of hope to share with our nation. Amanda Gorman represents the hope of the young women and men in the present and future generations. In her poem, “The Hill We Climb,” Amanda places before us the reality of our nation as it is in the present and at the same time offers us hope as we move forward to address the divisions among us.

I found her poetry to be my introduction into Spring. Her words are real and presents me with ways to continue to use my light for the common good. And so, I present Ms. Gorman's challenge to us: “For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.”

Sr. Chris Connolly, OP





Step 10

Continued to take personal Inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

The first nine Steps helped me put my life in order. Step 10 offers me a way toward continued spiritual growth. It is the beginning of the maintenance Steps and suggests a **personal inventory**.

This Step is a critical Step in my on-going process of healing for it keeps me consciously aware of what is happening in my daily life. For me, a daily inventory is essential as it offers me an opportunity to live a more reflective life which gives way to more peaceful living, one day at a time.

And so, at the end of each day, I take a little quiet time to ponder one basic question which opens up an avenue of insight for me: *Did I like the person that I was in the world today?*

This is the critical question for me, because to like the person I am today means that I am growing more into that person that my Higher Power desires me to be. And for this I thank God.

If I did not like the person I was today, a second question comes into play: *Why not?* This simple question will often provide the answer for me. For as soon as I ask the question, my gut speaks to me, offering me insight into the dis-ease that I feel within.

It is a dis-ease that I cannot afford, because if left unattended, I will eventually look for something to soothe the discomfort that yearns solace.

I take the time to frame the situation: What happened? Who was involved? What did I do that caused such discomfort within me? And Why? What could I do differently next time? What is the amends that I need to make?

I don't beat myself up, but turn the situation over to the care of my Higher Power, seeking the grace that I need to do better tomorrow, and the courage to make the amends that I need to make in the new day, knowing that I do it with the loving hand of God, guiding my way .

PRAYER

Higher Power, I thank you for the wisdom of this Step which helps me to live a more reflective life. I thank you for the honesty with which it invites me to consider the daily events of my life so that I am able to live life with greater integrity and emotional balance which give deeper meaning to my relationship with you, others and myself. Amen

SPIRITUAL GROUNDWORK

Take some time for quiet reflection. Within the quiet of this space, invite your Higher Power to assist you in a review of your day:

Did you like the person you were today?

If yes, then thank your Higher Power for the grace given you throughout this day to do God's will for you. Name the graces you received.

If not, why not? What prevented you from experiencing the best of who you are? Name the situation. What happened? Who was involved? What would you do differently next time? Ask God for the grace to help you do better tomorrow?

Reproduced by permission from Sister Judith A. Terrameo, OSF, Pathway to Peace and Inner Freedom: Reflections on the Twelve Steps (Allegany, NY: The Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, 2018).

A New Look at the 11th Step

We will explore the use of *Lectio Divina* or *Holy Reading* using 12 Step literature as well as Centering Prayer and the Welcoming Prayer as tools for our prayer and meditation.

Directed by Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP

**Via Zoom ~ Saturday, April 10~ 1-4 PM
Cost \$20**

We would like to start a Virtual 12 Step Book Club

We will have Zoom meeting on April 29 to discuss how often we might meet.

We will have a meeting during the day at 10 AM and in the evening at 7 PM if there is enough interest.

Please register for one of these informational meetings for which there is no cost.

Subsequent meetings would be \$10

\$10,000 + Ministry Partner

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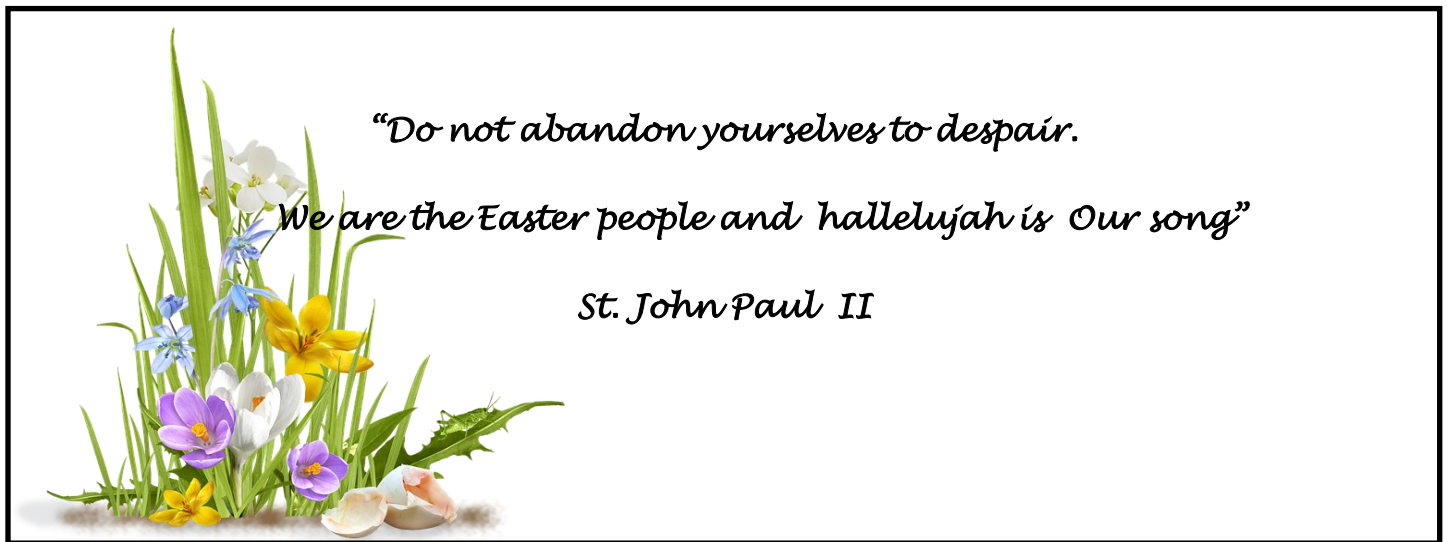
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