

Dominican Retreat & Conference Center



1948-2024



76 years of Caring for the Spirit

The Good News

December 2024



May you be blessed by the God of PEACE who stills the heart that quakes with fear or doubt or confusion. May you discover your peace in the "Godseed" of your own being and in the flowering of your inner goodness. May the warmth of your peace bring calm to those who tremble in fear and uncertainty. May the blessing of PEACE be on you.

- Maxine Shonk, OP -

From the Desk of the Administrator:

I recently came across something I wrote about thirty years ago. As we move into these winter months, it seemed appropriate to share with you. May we all find peace in our hearts, and places of peace in our lives.

**In a world that is constantly in motion,
it is difficult to be still.**

**In a world where we are surrounded by noise,
it is difficult to be quiet.**

**In a world where so many demands are made of us,
it is difficult to receive.**

**Yet we all need a quiet place where we can simply be,
collect our thoughts
and listen to the voice of God speaking to us.**



Sung Vespers in the Spirit of Taize

In-house and via Zoom
Thursdays: Jan. 30, Feb. 13,
Mar. 20
7- 8 pm Free will offering

Virtual Centering Prayer

Wednesdays: Jan. 15, Feb. 26, Mar. 26
7-7:30pm via Zoom
Suggested offering \$5

Pause for Peace

Tuesdays: Jan. 7, Feb. 4, Mar. 4
7-7:15pm
Via Facebook Live



REMINDER OF DECEMBER PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

December 1, 8, 15, 22 ~ 7- 7:30pm via Zoom *Advent Wreath Lighting with the Galarneau-Braungard Family*

December 3, 10, 17 ~ 10am-Noon via Zoom *Advent Scripture Study led by Dr. Joy Galarneau*

December 3, 10, 17 ~ 7-8:30pm via Zoom *Lectio Divina led by Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP*

December 6-8 *Advent Silent Retreat for Men and Women led by Fr. Ray Dlugos, OSA*

December 18 ~ 7-7:30pm via Zoom *Virtual Centering Prayer*

December 19 ~ 11am-3pm In-house with lunch *A Day with "It's a Wonderful Life" presented by Jim Dillon*

December 21 ~ 2-4pm *Annual Christmas Concert*

December 23 ~ 7-7:15pm *Pause for Peace*

December 31 ~ 7:30pm *New Year's Eve Evening of Reflection with
Fr. Dan Dwyer, OFM*



December 7- 23 ~ 10am-5pm daily *DRCC Tree in Festival of Trees at the Schenectady County Historical Society*



Free will offering

WINTER WALKERS CLUB RETURNS

10am-Noon

Tuesdays: Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28

Thursdays: Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27

During these long winter months, we invite you to drop in...

- ~ walk our hallways for fitness
- ~ spend time in our chapel for prayer and reflection
- ~ see old friends and make new ones over a hot beverage
- ~ browse our gift shop

Come be renewed in your home away from home.

Nurturing the Nurturer: Spiritual Self-Care for Caregivers

Caregiving, whether for others or ourselves, is an act of love and responsibility. Often, however, the constant giving can leave us depleted—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

While self-care includes physical and emotional well-being, this program will focus on spiritual self-care as a vital part of personal wellness.

Through reflection, discussion, and guided activities, participants will explore how nurturing their spiritual well-being can lead to a more balanced, peaceful, and fulfilling life, both in their care-giving and in their personal lives.

Led by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner

January 11 ~ 10am-3pm In-house Cost: \$35 (includes lunch) via Zoom \$25



Peace is not something you wish for; it is something you make, something you are, something you do, and something you give away.
Robert Fulghum

The Holdovers



RETREAT TO THE MOVIES *THE HOLDOVERS*

January 14, 21, 28 ~ In-house 6:30-8:30pm

“The Holdovers” is a story about love finding its way into the lives of some lonely people left behind at an empty boarding school during Christmas break in the early 1970’s. Join us as we view and discuss the very untypical (but meaningful) Christmas movie.

Presented by author, educator Jim Dillon

Free will offering

“COME AWAY AND REST A WHILE” ART JOURNALING PROGRAM

Feeling overwhelmed by the demands of life? Ready to find a place of peace and restoration? Join us for a unique four-session art journaling program based on our DRCC theme for 2025, “Come away and rest awhile.” (Mark 6:31)

Each session will focus on different aspects of rest, using scripture and art journaling as tools for relaxation and spiritual renewal. No artistic experience is necessary - just a willingness to explore, create, and reflect.



Led by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner
Jan. 15, 22, 29 and Feb. 5 - 7:00 - 8:30 pm via Zoom
Cost: \$15 per session or \$55 for all four

Virtual Book Club

Tattoos on the Heart by Fr. Greg Boyle

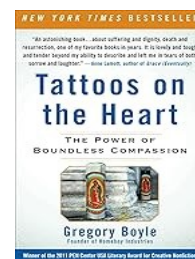
Discover the power of boundless compassion and radical love in *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*.

We will explore the themes of compassion, forgiveness, and the possibility of transformation in our own lives.

Led by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner ~ Jan. 16, 23, 30 ~ 10-11:30 am. Via Zoom

Cost: \$10 per session or \$25 for all three

(Copies available in our book store)



WOMEN’S THEME RETREATS

Jan. 24-26 ~ Guest Director: Mary Rosmus

Jan. 31 - Feb. 2 ~ Guest Director: Mary DeTurrís Poust

“Come away and rest awhile” Mark 6:31

In-house \$225 (65+\$210); via Zoom \$90

It is with great sadness that we share with you that Wendell Harris, one of our beloved massage therapists died recently. Wendell was a good and gentle man who helped many retreatants with not only his skillful hands, but also with his kind presence. As retreatants were here to tend their souls, Wendell assisted by tending to their soles. We are grateful for his life and Ministry here at the DRCC!





Mary's Expectation Dance
By Marion Honors, CSJ

DANCING IN THE HEART OF THE HOLY ONE

We will enter the story of the Universe as the over-arching fabric of our lives, as the presence of the Holy One in our very being. We are filled with gratitude as we deepen our reflection on the 14 billion years of gift and grace that the story of the Universe is to us.

Presented by Sr. Lin Neil, CSJ

Please join us on Tuesday, February 4 ~ 10am-3pm (lunch incl.)

Cost: In house \$35 via Zoom \$25

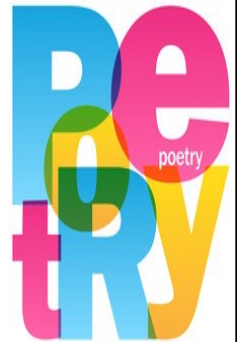
POETRY AS PRAYER

February 6 ~ 6:30-8:30 pm via Zoom

Through poems by modern poets - Mary Oliver, Seamus, and others - we will discover how the language of poetry serves as a doorway to the divine, sharpening our vision and inviting us into deeper prayerfulness.

Presented by poet Anne Marie Blum

Cost: \$20



Lincoln Lecture—*Mary Surratt: Guilty or Not Guilty*

February 10 ~ 7-8:30pm

Mary Surratt was convicted and hanged for being an accomplice in the conspiracy, led by John Wilkes Booth, to assassinate Abraham Lincoln. Some historians have said that Mary Surratt was innocent and was wrongfully convicted. This year you will sit as the jury. You will hear the evidence, and the arguments made by the prosecutor and her defense counsel. We will then ask you to render your verdict- guilty or not guilty.

Presented by Thomas Hoffman, Esq.

In-house & via Zoom \$15



Centering Prayer Retreat

The Contemplative Journey

This retreat will encourage you to deepen your prayer practice in an atmosphere of silence within a supportive community of prayer.

Facilitated by Fr. Bill Sheehan, OMI

February 14-19

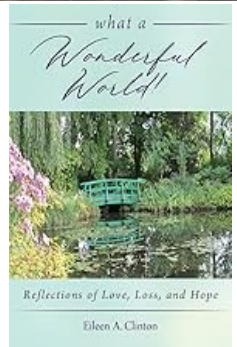
In-house (\$550) and via Zoom (\$275.)

Finding Meaning and Hope After Loss

Everyone has a story to tell—a story of love and of loss. Join Eileen Clinton, author of *What a Wonderful World: Reflections of Love, Loss, and Hope*, for an inspirational workshop on the challenges one faces after loss.

February 25 ~ 10am-3pm (including lunch) In-house only. Cost:\$35

(copies of Eileen's book are available in our book shop)



We look forward to the time when the power of love will replace the love of power.
Then our world will know the blessings of Peace.
-William Gladstone

Let There Be Peace

In a world brimming with anxiety and uncertainty, it is easy to feel our peace slipping away. The demands of daily life, constant news, and even the unknowns of tomorrow can fill us with tension. Yet when we walk through the doors of the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center, a calm washes over us. It is a sacred space, a place where the stillness helps us remember that true peace is possible.

This inner peace is a gift Jesus offers: "Peace, I give you,..." It is a lasting peace not found in the world. It is a peace that holds us steady, no matter what's happening around us. At the Retreat Center, this feeling of wholeness and calm becomes our template for what inner peace can be, grounding us in love and trust. Yet when we leave this Spiritual Sanctuary and face the challenges of the everyday, how do we maintain or regain our inner peace that seems easily lost to the noise of the world?

In Peacemaker Classes brought to local schools this year by Sister Sue and Dr. Joy, they shared a simple mantra that reflects this truth: "Breathe in Jesus. Breathe out peace." The children discovered that with each breath, they are reminded of His presence within them and the peace that flows from Him. Bless these children who teach us to focus on Jesus and meditate on His holy words of comfort and reassurance, reminding us that we are never without our holy and beloved friend, Jesus. As we move through the challenges of daily life, let us hold on to this peace and share it with others. May the peace of Christ be with you always.

~Mary Anne ~



SPIRITUAL JOURNALING - *Journaling in God's Holy Presence*

February 26 ~ 9:30am - 2:30pm

Join us for a half-day workshop on connecting with God through spiritual journaling. Together, we'll explore our personal faith journeys, reflect on scripture, and learn how journaling can deepen our relationship with Jesus. Through guided prompts and moments of prayer and music, discover how to see God's presence in everyday life. Whether you're new to journaling or have experience, this workshop offers a refreshing way to nurture your faith and grow closer to God.

Facilitated by Mary Anne Brown

Cost: \$35 In-house (lunch incl.) and via Zoom \$25



Join us for a day of Reflection with the St. John's Bible

Guided by Sean Conley and Dr. Joy Galarneau. Explore the history of hand-written and hand-illuminated Bibles; Encounter and pray with the sacred images; Experience Visio Divina; and Encounter the women of the Saint John's Bible

*In-house March 1st ~ 10am - 3pm (lunch incl.)
Cost: \$35*

ASH
WEDNESDAY

EVENING OF REFLECTION

MARCH 5

The evening begins with dinner at 6:30pm followed by a presentation by Fr. Tom Fallati entitled "*Hearing God's Voice Anew: A Lenten Call,*" and ends with Mass at 8:30

In-house ~ dinner, presentation, and Mass with distribution of ashes \$25/via Zoom \$15



WEEKEND RETREAT FOR YARNCRAFTERS March 7-9 (In house only)

Come spend a weekend with other yarncrafters exploring how our knotted and tangled yarn can be a metaphor for our lives and our spiritual journeys. Take some time to look at our tangles and knots, and perhaps even see how they might be untangled.

Please bring with you one of your tangled balls of yarn —you know it's there just waiting for you...

Our guide for the weekend is Anita Davidson, OPA

Cost: In-house \$225 (+65 \$210)

LENTEN SCRIPTURE STUDY

“You plotted evil against me...but God turned it into good...” Genesis 50:19

Favoritism? Foul play? Forgiveness? Oh my!

Join us for a 6-part mini-course featuring the story of Joseph in the Book of Genesis, chapters 37-50 facilitated by Dr. Joy Galarneau

10am-Noon via Zoom

Tuesdays: March 11, 18, 25

April 1, 8, 15

Cost: \$20 per session/\$100 for all 6



LENTEN LECTIO DIVINA

Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP will use passages that correspond to the Lenten Scripture Study

7-8:30pm via Zoom

Tuesdays: March 11, 18, 25

April 1, 8, 15

Cost: \$15 per session/\$75 for all 6

Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS will be returning to lead two programs:

Wednesday, March 12

A Day of Reflection to remember and honor Saint Titus Brandsma, O.Carm, and those whose holy courage brought light into the darkness of the Holocaust.

Thursday, March 13

Celtic Day of Reflection

Save the dates and stay tuned for more details.



Soup and the Stations
March 26, Apr. 2, 9, 16 ~ Noon - 2pm



Looking for a way to enter into the Lenten Season? Join us as we pray the Stations of the Cross. Each week we will have the opportunity to gather for a simple lunch of soup followed by a different version of the Stations of the Cross. Come for any or all!
 Cost: \$10 each/\$35 for all four

12 STEP PROGRAMS

United by the Steps:

A Cross-Program Journey Through the 12 Steps
 Via Zoom



Wednesdays - 7-8:30 pm

Jan. 8	Jul. 9
Feb. 12	Aug. 13
Mar. 12	Sept. 10
Apr. 9	Oct. 8
May 14	Nov. 12
Jun 11	Dec. 10

Join us for a year-long journey through the 12 steps as we explore the shared wisdom and unique insights offered by different recovery programs. Each month, we'll focus on one step, comparing its interpretation and application across various fellowships. Through guided reflection, discussion, and personal practice, participants will gain a deeper understanding of recovery principles and how they can be applied to their own lives. Whether you're new to the steps or a long-time practitioner, this program offers a supportive and inclusive space to grow together, drawing strength from the diverse experiences of individuals working the 12 steps in different forms.

Come connect, share, and explore the universal principles that unite us in recovery.

Led by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner

Cost: \$15 per session/ \$165 for the entire series

Retreat for Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse *Creating a Safe Place: Setting Boundaries*

March 14-16 (In-house Only)

This retreat offers a compassionate, spiritual exploration of boundaries - what they are, why they matter, and how to set them with confidence and grace. We will delve into the role of boundaries in healing, how to communicate them, and ways to manage emotions like guilt and shame. Together, we'll affirm that everyone is worthy of respect and a safe space.

Led by Sr. Sue Zengulis, OP *In-house \$225 (65+\$210);*

Breaking Free from Shame:

Healing in Recovery through the 12 Steps

Are you ready to let go of the shame that holds you back in recovery? Shame is a powerful emotion that often fuels addiction and complicates the healing process. It isolates, disconnects, and can make recovery feel like an uphill battle. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Take the next step toward healing. Join us to explore how shame affects addiction and recovery...and more importantly, how to move beyond it.

Presented by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner
 January 12 ~ 2-6pm with dinner
 Cost: \$30 In-house or \$20 via Zoom

MEN'S 12 STEP RETREAT Feb. 7-9 *GIFTED AND SIFTED*

By God's grace and the support of our fellows, we have been gifted with the gift of sobriety. To get there we needed to sift through our thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. And to deepen the gift, we need to continue to sift- separating what feeds recovery from what starves it. Join us as we explore and share our experience, strength and hope about the gifting and the sifting of 12 step spirituality.

Led by Fr. Dennis Mason, OFM Conv.
In-house \$225 (65+\$210);

Our own Dr. Susan Barber Skinner has a new book out entitled Path to Hope, which she describes as a *Minimalist Playbook* that will guide you through a year of growth, reflection and fulfillment. Autographed copies will be available in our book shop.

thank you!



Underwriters

Dominican Sisters of Peace
Siena College Franciscan Friars
Dr. Susan Fiore
Jean Mann
N.J. Morris
David & Shobha Smith
Lisa Tubbs

Benefactors

Rev. Patrick J. Butler
Dr. Robert Leupold
Richard & Meg Sapia
Deacon & Mrs. Richard Thiesen
Laurie Wagner

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Deacon Tom & Kathy Sharrow
Honorable Paul Tonko
Pat Van Slyck

Honorary Committee

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Jo Anne Assini & Ken Bulko
Mary Jane Beaulieu
Michael & Harrilyn Beehner
Debbie Botch
Denis & Margaret Brennan
Bob & Rosemary Casale
Karen Connors
Carol Davitt
Susan Hollander
Phyllis Huber

Honorary Committee (continued)

Fr. Jim Kane
Kathy & Jack Kavanaugh
Barbara Lang
Bill & Mary Liz Leitch
Al & Maureen Manzella
Chris Morrow
Evelyn Mulderry
Janet B. Nardolillo
Our Lady of Assumption
Dr. Carl & Joann Paulsen
Jim & Pat Policastro
Jo-Anne & Gary Rafalik
Michele & Fred Shellard
Cheryl Steinhorst
Jack & Susan Sweeney
Kerrie Wolf-Piechota

Friends

Anonymous (3)
Laurene Arsenault
Elaine Bair
Kathy Biondo-Palaski
Don Brooks & Mary Anne Brown
Jean Cremen
Catherine Crohan
Mary Cummings
Virginia Grover
Michael Jakubowski
Kim Klementowski
Mary Leonard
Adel Luciano & Bill Kropp
Mary Jane McNamara
Ann Pawlik
Kathryn Remillard
Joyce Sammo
Honorable James Tedisco
Mary Ellen Witkowski
Rick & Sue Yager
Anne Yunick



Our 26th annual More Than Just Desserts was a delicious success this year because of you! We are so grateful to all of you who support this ministry through this yearly event. We also want to thank our event committee, our cooks and servers, all who donated items for our auction, and our classical guitarist—Sean Calhoun!

Registration Form for ANY Program:

Please fill out what applies to you & the program you are attending and mail with your payment to:

**Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
1945 Union St., Niskayuna, NY 12309**

Mrs. Ms. Mr.
Name Other _____

Address _____

City/ST/Zip _____

County _____

Phone (h) _____

(w) _____ (c) _____

Email _____

(Email is necessary for virtual retreat)

Name of Program _____

Check one: ___ in-house or ___ virtual

Retreat Date/s _____

Promoter _____

Dietary Needs _____

Special/Room Requests _____

Deposit: _____ coupon
Amount \$ _____ Check # _____

N.B. There is a \$20.00 fee for returned checks.

*Credit Card Reservations may be made via
website (www.dslcny.org)*

*or
phone (518-393-4169).*

For Grant purposes:

Age: Under 65 65/+

Veteran? YES NO

(Office Use Only)

BK _____ DB _____ CONF. _____ List _____

MICHAEL MINER - COFFEE HOUSE

Sunday, March 2 - 7-9 PM

Michael Miner is a Singer Songwriter and recording artist from the New York Capital Region who has been writing and playing music for thirty years.

Music is one of the greatest forms of communication, and songs tell stories in ways that are unique and powerful. In his music, Michael shares his stories of Faith, Family and Love. Join us for what promises to be an enjoyable evening of fun and music.

(All ages welcome)

Cost: \$20



We are pleased to introduce our newest staff member Karen Bond...

I'm so very excited to have joined the staff here at the DRCC. I have been a retreatant for about ten years. I am happy and grateful to become part of this caring community, and to continue promoting the mission of bringing peace, solitude, and fellowship that so many find here.

I am married and the mother of three. I taught in Early Childhood programs for ten years. I also taught writing. I currently make time to write and have been published locally and online. I am part of the Cursillo movement; the Interfaith Community of Schenectady and sit on the Ecumenical and Interreligious Commission for the Diocese. I value interfaith dialogue and a commitment to understanding one another in our diversities.

Howard and I will be working together to welcome you, answer questions, and provide you with the information you need to enjoy your time within these walls.

~Karen~

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about his feelings. He said, "I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is vengeful, angry, and violent. The other wolf is peaceful, loving, and compassionate."

The grandson asked him. "Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?"

The grandfather answered, "The one I feed." -unknown





Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
Dominican Spiritual Life Center
 1945 Union Street, Niskayuna, NY 12309

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Or Current Resident



*May the spirit of Christmas bring you peace,
 The gladness of Christmas give you hope,
 The warmth of Christmas grant you love.*

~Happy holidays from the DRCC staff~

We hope to see you at our

Annual Christmas Concert

Saturday, December 21 2:00 - 4:00 pm

\$5.00 Coupon

Present this coupon to receive \$5.00 off
 a day or evening program at:
**Dominican Retreat & Conference
 Center**
Niskayuna, NY

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 www.dslcny.org

\$10.00 Coupon

Present this coupon to receive \$10.00
 off a weekend program at:
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 Center**
Niskayuna, NY