

The Retreat House

SPIRITUAL CENTER OF MARIA STEIN & MONTEZUMA



We are Christians dedicated to serving the Lord, each other, families, parishes, and communities. We believe in God the Creator, His son Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, who guides us through the magisterium of the Catholic Church with its scripture and traditions and through the intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through the Spiritual Center of Maria Stein, we provide opportunity for spiritual growth, social development and community service. We will do this through facilities, staff, and programs.

THE SPIRITUAL CENTER THROUGH THE YEARS

by Deacon Greg Bornhorst

The Spiritual Center has been in Maria Stein as a Retreat House for as long as many can remember - either run by the Sisters of the Precious Blood, or a staff of lay people as it is today. Many do not realize, or have long forgotten, there was ever a closure and that the Retreat House is it's own entity and non-profit business in the area.

So when did it all happen? The Retreat House was built and run by the Sisters of the Precious Blood in the early 1960's on the property adjacent to the Shrine of the Holy Relics. In 1997 the decision was made by the Sisters to close the retreat house for a variety of reasons. Many noticed the loss in the faith community, which led to some wondering if it would be possible to purchase, renovate, and re-open it. As the Sisters were seeking a buyer, Deacon Jerry Buschur spoke with local businessman Mike Bruns about forming a steering committee to reopen it as a non-profit retreat center. After many meetings, consultations, and a feasibility study, the purchase was made and they began connecting people and resources to reopen. Through the leadership of the Board (seen here), Brother Tom Bohman, hundreds of volunteers, a devoted staff, along with guidance from the Holy Spirit, the renovations were completed and it was re-opened as its own 501c3 non-profit organization - dedicated by Bishop Moedel the fall of 1999.

While some things have remained the same over the years, there have also been some huge renovations to the building. All new heating and air conditioning was installed, an updated water filtration system was installed, and most recently an elevator was put in the lobby for better access to the lower level. The elevator installation also led to the conference rooms downstairs being updated. The dorms were renovated to accommodate many more people and other things have been done inside to create a peaceful atmosphere. Outside there have been many additions that include: the clean up of the pond and island and the installation of the large cross, rosary grottos, Stations of the Cross, a Respect Life memorial, shelter house, and concrete paths throughout the woods.

Thanks to the efforts of many, the Retreat House has become an important religious destination. With over 10,000 guests and serving over 20,000 meals annually, the retreat center continues to grow. Programs, retreats, and events have continued to increase and expand over the years to the point of turning groups away. This led to the purchase of our newest facility in Montezuma which was renovated and opened in March of 2018. The Spiritual Center has gone from an empty, closed property in Maria Stein, to a vibrant, active retreat complex with two locations today. We wish to continue the work of Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. God has never let us down, and He won't if we continue to believe and faithfully follow His guidance. It is rewarding to work with Christ. Colossians 3:23 tells us "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters". This message is one we look forward to sharing with others for years to come.



1961-Laying the corner stone of the retreat house



Original Board of Directors after re-opening in 1999: (left to right) Brother Tom Bohman, Ron Puthoff, Alvin Dues, Mike Bruns (hidden), Dale Schwieterman, Deacon Jerry Buschur, Deacon Greg Bornhorst, Tom Wehrhan, Mike Broering, Paul Huelsman

1962	Sisters of the Precious Blood opened the Maria Stein Retreat House at it's current Maria Stein location behind the Shrine
1997	Retreat House closes and goes up for sale
1999	The Retreat House was purchased and renovated- re-opened as non-profit organization run by lay people and a board of directors
2007	50' Stainless Steel Cross is dedicated on the island in the pond
2009	Rosary Grottos, concrete sidewalks, and paths were created throughout the woods
2012	Dorms renovated on the lower level of the building to accommodate 100 more people
2015	Elevator added in main lobby - downstairs conference rooms were renovated
2017	Montezuma Retreat House purchased and renovations began
2018	Montezuma Retreat House opened - Chapel dedicated by Bishop Binzer

OVER 1,000 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE 2 DAY OPEN HOUSE.

WE SERVED: 480 HAMBURGERS, 350 HOT DOGS, 42 PIES & 750 COOKIES



MARY DAHLINGHAUS (on left) attended Franklin School as a child



VIC & LUKE KLOSTERMAN Both attended Franklin School as children. Vic also works at the Spiritual Center and grilled the hamburgers one night of the open house.



CHARLES WILKER Attended the first class in Franklin School when it opened in 1941. There were only 5 boys & 5 girls in the class.



ANNE (BACKS) GRUSS (on left) Attended Franklin School for grades 1-6
CLAIRE BUSCHUR (on right) Taught at Franklin School for 4 years



FR. DUGAL & SISTER PAT WILL toured the new retreat center



THECLA BATIN
Volunteered in the Franklin School kitchen
CINDY HIGHT
Attended Franklin School for grades 1-6



JESS STEINKE Graduated 8th grade from Franklin School in 1954



BOARD MEMBER ED WERLING giving a tour to Dot Kanney and Regina Wendel who both attended school there

MONTEZUMA RETREAT CENTER

Open House Photos

JUNE 20 & 21, 2018



DALE & KATHY KLOSTERMAN

Dale's grandfather, John, was on the school board that started Franklin School and Dale also served on the Board of Education.



MARIE MCCLURG (left) and **DORIS (HEITKAMP) KEISER** (right) Attended Franklin school when it was only 4 classrooms



BUD PRESTON & BOB HEIN Bud taught Bob when he attended Franklin School as a child



ELLEN (KRAMER) MOELLER Attended Franklin School in 1941 - 1st class in the school



BUD PRESTON Principal (and a teacher) of Franklin School 1960-1968. Bud was in the 8th grade in 1941 when the school opened.



L-R: MARLENE RUTSCHILLING; SHARON NIXON; JERRI BUENING; JOAN HOMAN; THERESA HOMAN Daughters of the late LeRoy & Pauline Klosterman, who all attended Franklin School. Combined they attended a total of 37 years.