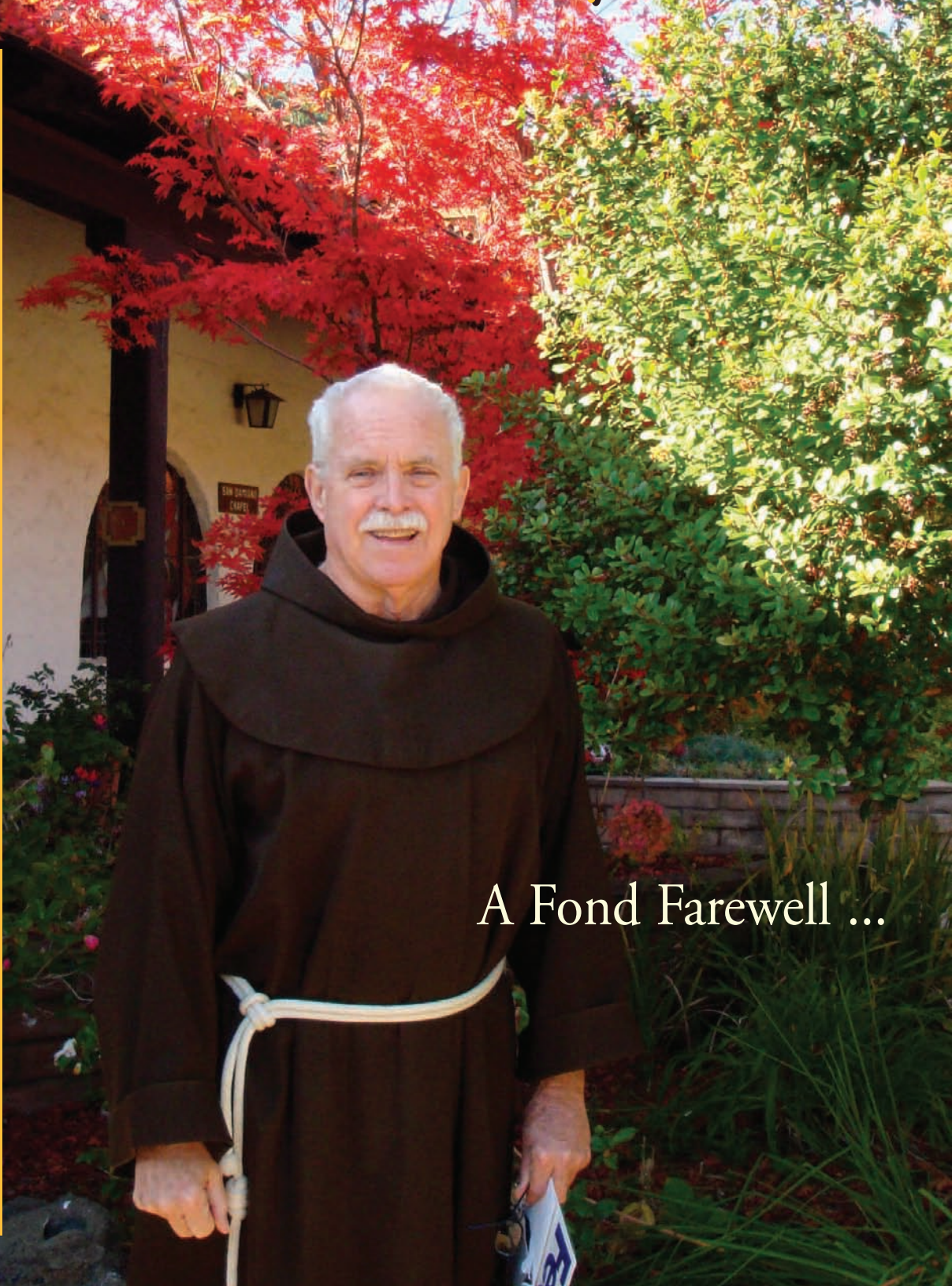




SAN DAMIANO RETREAT

# Fall/Winter 2014-2015



A Fond Farewell ...

# “HEALING HAPPENS HERE!”

FR. RAYMOND BUCHER, OFM, DIRECTOR



Over 18 years ago, the province assigned me to San Damiano. The placement was reasonable as I had the experience of directing the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale (even though they are retreat ministries that are dramatically different!). The assignment was opportune as well, for it afforded me proximity to my aging and wonderful mother.

So I came to San Damiano at the age of 57, enthused and committed to an ethic of effort, not necessarily one of success. Reverse those two numbers, and you get 75: the age of my Exit. I am grateful to my provincial who sees 75 as a suitable age for retirement (albeit, active retirement!). As I leave (sometime in September), I sense a deep gratitude for the people and programs provided by San Damiano.

## The People:

- **Friars:** from Brian and Barry to Rusty and Evan, each one helping to provide a Franciscan oasis here.
- **Staff:** from Victoria to Lisa participating in policy making, community, and networking. And, to a parade of employees both caring and creative, with special thanks to Kateri, my personal IT and secretary.
- **Board Members:** whose love for San Damiano enabled them to create a vision and capture resources very instrumental in helping me create the Capital Campaign, (see insert showing its success!)
- **Volunteers:** especially the Covenant Members, whose generous hearts called them to generous service.

## The Programs:

- **Presenters:** from Rohr and Rolheiser to D’Arcy and Rupp – not to mention the many giants in Franciscan Spirituality and in Contemplative practices.
- **Retreatants:** who came for healing and growth in their spiritual life, trusting us with their time and their resources.
- **Folks:** in some of my favorite programs: spiritual direction (mostly lay leaders), Options Recovery Service, and the LGBT ministry.

In all these programs, along with the serenity and beauty of our natural surroundings, I have tried to offer our guests healing and hope. You, dear retreatants, I pray, will offer my successor, Fr. Vince Mesi, your stellar support. He will bring a big Franciscan heart to San Damiano.

I’ll close with a few words from my first Newsletter article here in 1996:

**“What I bring to San Damiano is ME – far from perfect and with plenty of warts. Yet, like each of you, I am a unique expression of God’s creation. I’ll try to be the best me!”**

And my farewell prayer is that “you will be the best you.”

A joint celebration, my farewell, and my golden jubilee, will take place in early December. **Stay tuned!** Please remember one of my San Damiano Mottos: “Healing Happens Here!”

Paz Y Bien

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Ray Bucher OFM".

## FR. VINCE MESI NAMED NEW DIRECTOR

FR. VINCE MESI  
OFM



Dear Friends of San Damiano, my name is Fr. Vince Mesi, OFM. I so look forward to the very rewarding retreat ministry at San Damiano! I have been ordained 41 years and have spent much of that time in parish ministry. I do hope to bring my pastoral experience to my work at the retreat house. I see this as a great opportunity to minister in a new way, and as I grew up in San Jose, this will also be a chance to be closer to a lot of family still in the Bay Area. I thank Fr. Ray for putting his trust in me as I take on this new ministry as Director of San Damiano Retreat house. **Bless you!**

# Many Thanks To Our Capital Campaign Contributors

## HERE IS WHAT YOUR \$1,042,607 HAS ACCOMPLISHED:

- Thermostats in each bedroom that allow the occupant to determine the desired temperature.
  - Road renovations that furthered safety and enhanced an already aesthetic ambience.
- Dining room repainted, carpeted, and with new chairs, offering a fresh and welcoming atmosphere.
- Chapel remodel includes: stronger and longer lasting lights, an updated sound system, and repainted interior.
  - To come in the Chapel: tiling for the sanctuary, new carpeting for the nave and reupholstered chairs.—

Special thanks to the members of the Capital Campaign Committee especially its chairperson, Rodger Powers, and Rod Linhares who steered the Campaign to great success.

*(If we have forgotten anyone, please contact Kateri that we might acknowledge your gift.)*



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- Leona Watson
- Michelle Watts
- John Weber
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SEE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE NAMES.

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• And to ALL the people who sent us donations for the Capital Campaign without any names, and to the friars and staff of San Damiano Retreat, thank you for your generous support.

## CONGRATULATIONS BR. MIKE MINTON



Br. Mike Minton, OFM, has been with us for almost 2 years now as co-administrator and retreat presenter. We now congratulate him for two reasons. One, Br. Mike has been named to the position of Administrator of San Damiano. And, congratulations on professing Solemn Vows this August 30th in The Order of Friars Minor of the Province of Saint Barbara. Our joy and prayers go out to you!

BR. MIKE MINTON, OFM

## VISITOR REFLECTION



THE LABYRINTH

"San Damiano sits on a hill above the town of Danville, California. The natural beauty of this place is paramount. It is filled with magnificent gardens, trees, wildlife and meadows. This year I was pleased to travel to San Damiano in the summer. I have attended some retreat programs there and also spent time in rest. I am able to walk, pray, read, eat, write, and reflect. While I have friends that I love to see and visit with, this is time for connection with the Divine Grace. Certainly it is a Sacred place."

Karen Maxson,  
Sacramento, CA



## SAVE THE DATE

The annual Fall Auction/Dinner date is set for Sunday, October 26th. This year's event will include an opportunity to meet and welcome our new director: Fr. Vincent J. Mesi, OFM. Stay tuned for more information.

FALL FUNDRAISER



## LEGACY SOCIETY UPDATE

Our membership list for the Legacy Society continues to grow. Will you please consider being a part of that growing list and assure us of your support after your encounter with Sister Death? You can help assure San Damiano Retreat for future generations. People of at all income levels make a difference through gift planning and feel satisfaction in doing so. If you can help, please contact our Director at 925-837-9141, ext. 309.

WAYS TO GIVE

# Fall/Winter 2014-2015

## SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2014 MARRIED COUPLES A PAUSE IN THE ACTION

Fr. Mark Wiesner

This weekend will allow married couples to step back from the busyness of life, spend some time with God who put them together as a couple, and consider how their marriage is unique in His plan for the world. **\$320 per couple**

## SATURDAY, SEPT. 13, 2014 HEALTH & SPIRITUALITY: A LOOK AT HOW SPIRITUALITY IMPACTS HEALTH

Gale M. Haux, MS, MFT

We will explore the impact spirituality has on health by citing several studies which substantiate the positive affects religious faith has on health outcomes and review the medical model and the need for a more integrative approach towards healthcare. 3 CE Units available for MFT, LCSW, RN, & LVN's. Check-in at 8:30 am, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, lunch included. **\$45/\$55 for 3 CE units**

## SATURDAY, SEPT. 20, 2014 ILLUMINATING THE LIFE & REVELATION OF JULIAN OF NORWICH

Veronica Mary Rolf

This retreat invites you to enter deeply into Julian's Revelations about Christ's sufferings and unconditional love on the cross, as well as her beautiful teachings on prayer, salvation, and the Motherhood of God. Orbis Books published Veronica's book on Julian's Gospel in October 2013. You are encouraged to purchase the book before the retreat day. Check-in at 9:00 am, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm, lunch included. **\$55**

## TUESDAYS: SEPT. 23, 30, OCT. 7, 14, 21, & 28 WOMEN'S SIX-WEEK MINI RETREAT ABUNDANT GRACE: GIFT OF GOD'S LOVE

Kathy Miranda, MA

Grace is the substance of love, forgiveness, and hope. It takes us home to ourselves and brings moments of life to the level of holy. Come, as we together explore pathways of grace through prayer, ritual, group sharing, quiet time, and creative response. Writings will be available for each week's reflection. Check-in at 9:00 am, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm, lunch optional at \$10.

**\$20 per session, \$100 for series**

## SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2014 FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY FRANCISCANS, POPE FRANCIS, & THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

Fr. Joseph P. Chinnici, OFM

Taking the papal exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel" as a starting point, we will reflect on some major themes joining the papal program of ecclesial and social renewal with the vision of Francis and Clare of Assisi. Reflections on the providence

of God, the pursuit of peace, and the temptations confronting the contemporary Franciscan will be discussed. **\$230/\$205**

## SATURDAY, SEPT. 27, 2014 EVERYTHING IS SACRED

Sr. Joanna Bramble, CSJ

Everything is Sacred: how might we live in this awareness allowing absolutely everything to speak to us of God? How might I recognize God's presence in myself, in all beings, human and non-human? The day will include prayer, poetry, music, conversation, and silence. Check-in at 9:00 am, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm, lunch included. **\$55**

## WEDNESDAYS:

### OCT. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, & NOV. 5 EMBODIED PRAYER SERIES

Rev. Steve Harms, Elise & Kaleo Ching

East meets west in this journey of deepening your connection to the Divine through meditation, prayer, and Qigong, involving your body, mind, and spirit. Drawing from Judeo-Christian, Taoist, and Buddhist wisdom and compassion practices, this series invites you to explore, engage, and share your ever-unfolding spiritual awareness. Check-in at 5:30 pm, 6:00 – 7:30 pm **\$15 per session, \$75 for series**

## OCTOBER 3-5, 2014

### THE PASCHAL MYSTERY OF LIFE TURNING TRAGEDY INTO TRIUMPH

Fr. Patrick Foley & Joyce Mikal-Flynn, Ed.D., RN

During this weekend, we will explore the Paschal Mystery as a foundational model for what happens in the formation of every Christian's life. It can take various forms: trauma or crisis; sudden or chronic illness; economic upheaval; loss or failure. These events can be experienced as transformative. Participants will be guided through an application of this process to our own lives or the lives of others who have experienced a life-changing crisis. 8 CE Units for RN, LNV, MFT & LCSW's. **\$235/\$205**

## SATURDAY, OCT. 4, 2014 JOURNEYING IN THE SPIRIT: DAY FOR VETERANS TO CONNECT & SHARE

Peggy Dwyer, CSJ, MFT, Ret. Lt. Col. Byrne Sherwood, & Br. Mike Minton, OFM

This day will provide the place and time for veterans of all wars to come together for conversation, reflection and networking. Discussion will include what has worked, what hasn't, and what supports are needed. The team of facilitators includes a therapist, spiritual director, and several veterans. Check-in at 8:30 am, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, lunch included. **\$15**

## SATURDAY, OCT. 11, 2014 PRAYING WITH ICONS THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Fr. Leo Arrowsmith

As "Windows to Heaven" icons provide a focal point for prayer and contemplation. This retreat day allows time for explanation, inspiration and contemplation on six major Christ-centered icons. Iconography is experiencing a new renaissance as Christians see icons as "Theology in Color" and "Windows to Heaven". Check-in at 9:00 am, 9:30 – 3:30 pm, lunch included. **\$55**

## OCTOBER 24-26, 2014 INTERFAITH SPIRITUALITY THAT ALL MAY BE CHERISHED

Fr. Thomas P. Bonacci, CP

Interfaith Spirituality empowers us to become aware of the dignity and beauty of the other person precisely as a person in their own religious and cultural context, not to mention their political and economic circumstances. Our differences reveal the splendor of what it means to be alive, rich, and varied. The weekend is a humble attempt to discover and practice the principles that might constitute Interfaith Spiritual practice and love. **\$235/\$205**

## SATURDAY, OCT. 25, 2014 YOUNG ADULTS FINDING BALANCE

Paula Jenkins, MAR & Br. Mike Minton, OFM

Our day welcomes a wide array of young adults, so whether you are graduating from high school or in college, just starting a new career or have been working for a decade, are single, or married and have children, this retreat will offer something for you. We look forward to sharing a day of prayer, reflection, and inspiration! Check-in at 9:00 am, 9:30 – 3:30 pm, lunch included. **\$50**

## SATURDAY, NOV. 8, 2014 THE POWER OF GRACE THE UNEXPECTED GIFT ON OUR PATH

David Richo, Ph.D.

If we think back over the episodes and milestones of our lives, we notice that somewhere in each event there was a happening, something beyond our choice or expectation. We were somehow helped to make a leap or guided to something new. That special assistance, unmerited, unearned, unforeseen, often unnoticed, is called grace. It comes to us many times in life. We can learn ways to open to grace and find opportunity for growth and awakening. 5 CE Units for MFT, LCSW, RN, & LVN's. Check-in at 9:00 am, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm, lunch included.

**\$85/\$105 with CE units**



SUNDAY, NOV. 9, 2014  
**DAY OF DIALOGUE FOR GAY,  
 LESBIAN, BI-SEXUAL &  
 TRANSGENDERED PEOPLE**

Br. Mike Minton, OFM

"You are also a child of God, gifted and called for a purpose in God's design." [Always Our Children, USCC, 1997/98, page 4] The theme is "Remembering Our Dead." We will share stories and prayer. Family members and friends are welcome. 1:00 – 4:00 pm. No Cost

SATURDAY, NOV. 15, 2014

**INEQUALITY & FAITH  
 A PATH TO WHOLENESS**

Rev. Steve Harms, Ron & Linda Elsdon

Part of the I-SRV interfaith series, this day on "Inequality" will examine the connections between faith and social justice by identifying the core values held in common among our interfaith communities. An "Interfaith Panel" will present "Spiritual Foundations" in inequality along with dialogue and prayer. Check-in at 9:00 am, 9:30 – 3:30 pm, lunch included \$35

NOVEMBER 21-23, 2014

**GRIEF RETREAT**

**THE TASK OF GRIEVING**

Fr. Pdraig Greene

After a loss, there are certain tasks of grieving that must be accomplished for balance to return in life. Give yourself (or a loved one) the holiday gift of a weekend away with your grief in the presence of people who understand as you cherish the memories through prayer, writing, reflection, music and ritual. \$225/\$195

NOVEMBER 28-30, 2014

**THANKSGIVING SERENITY RETREAT**

**GROWING UP IN THE STEPS**

Fr. Philip Garcia, OFM

Spend the weekend in the beautiful and quiet hills overlooking the San Ramon Valley as you reflect on your growth in sobriety. \$225/\$195

SATURDAY, DEC. 6 & FRIDAY, DEC. 12

**ADVENT DAYS OF RENEWAL**

Dec. 6 with Sr. Joann Heinritz, CSJ and Dec. 12 with Fr. Patrick Foley. Each day will have opportunity for presentations, prayer, and reflection. Check-in at 9:00; 9:30 am – 3:00 pm, lunch included. \$35

DECEMBER 12-14, 2014

**SILENT ADVENT WEEKEND**

**A PLACE IN THE STABLE**

Br. Jeff Macnab, OFM

On this weekend, we will journey with the Incarnational story and reflect on our place and response to this story. By the end of the retreat, we will discover what gifts we desire to bring to the Christ Child and the gifts we receive. The beauty of the retreat house setting will be the backdrop for contemplation and restfulness. \$230/\$205

SATURDAY, DEC. 13, 2014

**SILENT CHRISTIAN MEDITATION**

**CONTEMPLATIVE ADVENT JOURNEY TO  
 CHRISTMAS**

Sr. Barbara Hazzard, OSB

The spiritual journey toward Christmas is the focus of this day. It will include the teaching and practice of Silent Meditation. Check-in at 9:30 am, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, lunch included \$55

DECEMBER 30 – JANUARY 1, 2015

**NEW YEAR'S RETREAT**

Fr. Patrick Foley

New Year's Eve presents a time for reflecting on the past year and anticipating the new year. Is your prayer for 2014 one of thanksgiving? Are you looking forward to 2015 as a time of newness and surprises? This retreat will offer you a time and place for prayer, reflection and anticipation. \$225/\$195

JANUARY 9-11, 2015

**FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY  
 PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL IN A  
 WOUNDED WORLD**

Fr. Michael Crosby, OFM, CAP.

Fr. Michael will address the contemporary implications of "the gospel." He will show how the "Gospel story" can easily be compromised by the "story" that serves to justify unhealthy dynamics at the heart of the self-image and understanding of our nation, our church, our own lives. He will concentrate on the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of John. \$235/\$205

SATURDAY, JAN. 10, 2015

**THE HEALING PEN**

**SELF-DISCOVERY THROUGH  
 JOURNALING**

Shoshana Kobrin, LMFT

Journaling can untangle frustration, help retrieve memories, and clarify goals. This workshop will explore the power and creativity of this tool as a healthy alternative to negative habits. The workshop is hands on and participatory using writing techniques and experiential exercises. 6 CE Units available for MFT, LCSW, RN, & LVN's. Check-in at 8:30 am, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, lunch included. \$85/\$105 for CE units

JANUARY 23-25, 2015

**HEALING & WHOLENESS**

**THE FREEDOM OF FORGIVENESS**

Carol Mitchell, Ph.D. & Tom Gorham, MA, CADC II  
 Failing to forgive often keeps us prisoners of the past. Come explore with us ways to experience a new freedom in the new year by forgiving ourselves and others. \$225/\$195

JANUARY 24-25, 2015

**AGING CREATIVELY WITH  
 WISDOM, JOY & BEAUTY**

Rena Grant & Elizabeth Bell

Coming alive to the gifts and graces of our elder years opens possibilities beyond our everyday thinking. Through prayer, poetry and reflection, we will open to the deeper meaning and wisdom available on the spiritual path of the aging journey. This retreat begins Saturday morning and ends with lunch on Sunday. \$125/\$105

**RESERVATION FORM**

**TO MAKE A  
 RESERVATION:**

please send this form & a  
 \$50 deposit per person to:

**San Damiano Retreat  
 Reservations  
 PO Box 767  
 Danville, CA 94526-0767**

**Register Online!**

[www.sandamiano.org](http://www.sandamiano.org)

*Deposits are non-refundable, but transferable to a future retreat (within one year) providing cancellation is received at least 7 days prior to the retreat.*

Phone: (925) 837-9141  
 Fax: (925) 837-0522

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip+4

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs: \_\_\_\_\_ All Rooms are Non-Smoking

Room Preference:  Private  Double Share With: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Retreat: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Retreat: \_\_\_\_\_

Dollar amounts for each retreat noted above are donations for "Private Room/Double Occupancy".

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Charge All  Deposit Only

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# SAN DAMIANO RETREAT

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## BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

*As autumn arrives, people in various places may notice a procession of animals—from dogs and cats to hamsters and even horses—being led to retreats or churches for a special ceremony called the Blessing of Animals. This custom is conducted in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi's love for all creatures.*



On Saturday, Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> at 2:00, the Feast of St. Francis, our Friars will bless all pets and pet owners. Meet in the front by the statue of St. Francis.

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

## DAY RETREATS THIS FALL

*Spirituality & Health*  
Gale Haux, MS, MFT  
Saturday, Sept. 13

*Julian of Norwich*  
Veronica Mary Rolf  
Saturday, Sept. 20

*Everything Is Sacred*  
Sr. Joanna Bramble, CSJ  
Saturday, Sept. 27

*A Day for Veterans of All Wars*  
Sr. Peggy Dwyer, CSJ, MFT  
Ret. Lt. Col. Byrne Sherwood  
Saturday, Oct. 4

*Praying with Icons*  
Fr. Leo Arrowsmith  
Saturday, Oct. 11

*Young Adults Day*  
Paula Jenkins, MAR &  
Br. Mike Minton, OFM  
Saturday, Oct. 25

See the insert for more.