



WHAT IS A RETREAT?

by Fr Dennet Jung, OFM

Retreat” is one of those words that have multiple meanings. There are business retreats and there are military, political, and spiritual retreats, just to mention a few. In the corporate business world, leadership of an organization steps away from everyday tasks to revision their goals, renew their efforts, and to generate long-range policies and planning to promote their productivity. In the realm of spirituality, women and men choose to step back from the everyday busy-ness of job, school, and family responsibilities to re-new, re-fresh, and re-form themselves to more generously and more consciously do what they need to do in the spirit of their God-given faith.

Going on a retreat is not a FELT NEED for everyone, though it is arguably a REAL NEED. What we FEEL and what we NEED are not always aligned. A retreat, a few days of stepping back is a preparation for moving ahead, moving to what God is calling us to be and do in our lives. During this time of “stepping back” we have the opportunity to get in closer touch with our inner selves, with the God who dwells within us, and thus to see more clearly who we are, where we are going, and what really matters in life. This time of retreat gives us the grace of being quietly in touch with the Spirit of God who continues to speak to us, to be in touch with our brothers and sisters who are also seeking this renewal, and to listen to the voice or voices of those who seek to lead us to a deeper awareness of the Gospel we claim to embrace. Retreat is never easy. It implies surrender, a dying to what IS in order to come alive to what WILL BE, what will take us to a deeper and fulfilling meaning in our lives.

When I lead/guide men and women on retreats, my hope is to help them see their basic goodness, their potential for greatness, and the love of a forgiving and compassionate God that provides for this awareness and accomplishment. My hope is realized when these retreatants ENJOY being with one another and at the same time humbly acknowledge that there are deeper realities to be discovered and appreciated which they do not as yet perceive. Our God is a God of all; and life is not just about me, but about God and all creation. To move out of ourselves in a spirit of gratitude is the foundation of joy in our lives, a joy that Jesus wants us to have in its completeness. (John 15:11) Prayer is “moving out of ourselves to the OTHER and to others,” and gratitude is an acknowledgement of our dependence on God who provides for us in all circumstances. If prayer and gratitude are in place, joy will surely follow. I need to retreat in order to become a person of prayer and gratitude. After all, I do want to be happy. And God wants that for me also.

January 13, 14 & 15, 2012 - Fr. Dennet Jung, OFM

Good Neighbor Retreat (Men) “Letting God Love You”---Isaiah 58: 9-14 gives us the message “Let go and let God.” Because in our weakened human condition we desire to “hold on”, to take and to grab, to “do it on our own,” we weaken our ability to discover and experience God’s love in our life. We think we do not need a physician (Luke 5: 21-32) because only the “sick” do! Our false assumption is that we are not sick or in need. Offering: \$160.00

January 20, 21 & 22, 2012 - Fr. Dennet Jung, OFM

Friends of St. Francis (Women) “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”---Three Johanne stories (the Samaritan Woman, the Man born blind, and the Raising of Lazarus) tell us much about ourselves and about Jesus befriending us. Through the Scriptures we come to know our God as revealed in the Word-Made-Flesh and we come to know ourselves as God made us to be and become. Offering: \$160.00