

ST. FRANCIS RETREAT

A ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the Province of Santa Barbara.

549 MISSION VINEYARD ROAD • P.O. BOX 970 • SAN JUAN BAUTISTA, CALIFORNIA 95045 • (831) 623-4234 • DECEMBER 2021

Dear Friends,

THE DOORS ARE OPEN! We are so grateful, and our guests are thrilled to be back at St. Francis Retreat. They are excited about being able to gather with others. On May 10, we were elated to open our doors to the clergy of the Diocese of San Jose. Since that week, we have had guests during most weeks. Unfortunately, some individuals in our groups are hesitant to gather with others, so the numbers in our groups are smaller than before the pandemic.

Most of our staff has returned and are working hard to provide a beautiful place with delicious meals. They, too, are pleased to be back to work. They are a great group of employees!

On June 15, 2020, the retreat house hosted a regularly scheduled outdoor Sunday Mass for the first time. The Mass continues, but it has moved inside since the end of October 2021. People come from as far away as San Jose and close to San Juan Bautista and the Salinas Valley and Monterey area.

Our financial stability is fragile at best as we end our first quarter of the fiscal year. However, we can pay our bills by the generosity of the Province of St. Barbara of the Franciscan Friars and our benefactors. The province has provided us with two loans to keep our doors open and pay the staff. As we are all aware, since the pandemic, the costs of everything have increased. Thus, we provided a modest increase in wages to our employees to help with the rise in cost-of-living.

We continue with our weekly Advent and Lenten Days of Recollection, our monthly First Friday Days of Recollection, our annual 73rd Men's Retreat in January, GLBTQ Retreat in May, English Speaking Women's Retreat in June.

We wait for the arrival of a friar from El Salvador to serve the Spanish speaking with retreats, Days of Recollection in the coming months. We are currently waiting for his religious VISA to be issued.

Ed DeGroot, Director of Operations for the last twenty years, is looking forward to retirement. The past year has been a time of uncertainty for St. Francis Retreat and most of us. There have been some unhappy times, but we have attempted to maintain a sense of personal and corporate joy. St. Francis spoke of "perfect joy" as spawned by patience and humble acceptance. So may we approach the Advent and Christmas season with patience and acceptance of the uncertainty of life today.

Happy Advent and a Wonderful Christmas Season to All!

Fr. Ken Laverone OFM, the Friars and Staff of St. Francis Retreat

ST. FRANCIS COURT RENOVATION

On-Hold for Now!

For the past four years, we have been planning and soliciting funds for the renovation of St. Francis Court. We are most grateful for all those we have worked with, especially our architects Dave and Ravenna Huboi, an interior designer, and the three contractors who provided the project's bids. We were recently informed by those providing the grant for the renovation that the funds are not available at this time. Because of the pandemic, the pre-pandemic costs were approximately one-third less than the post-pandemic projection for the project. Previously donated funds for the renovation will be protected in a designated fund to be available when the project moves forward.



WISHING YOU A BLESSED HOLIDAY SEASON

Considering A Private Retreat?

Did you know that we have three cottages set aside for individuals and couples to use for private retreats?

Each has a fully furnished kitchen if you choose to do your own cooking. Two have two bedrooms and one is just a single. If our kitchen is open, meals can be purchased. Fr. Paul and Fr. Ken are both available for private conferences & spiritual direction.

Call (831) 623-4234 to check availability.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

St. Francis Retreat, a ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the St. Barbara Province, located in historic San Juan Bautista, California, provides a peaceful and contemplative environment conducive for renewal of mind, body and soul. In the Spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, the Center's staff commits itself to stewardship of the earth by honoring and preserving the Center's natural surroundings while extending hospitality and spiritual support to peoples of all faiths.

www.stfrancisretreat.com

St. Francis Retreat Santa's Wish List

Used Pick-Up
for use on the grounds

Golf Cart

Power Washer

Computer Workstation
with Windows 10 or 11

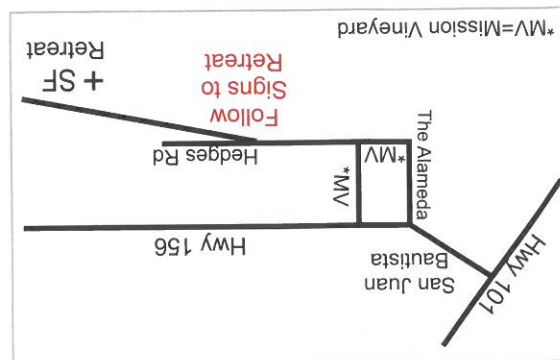
Large Screen TV

Good Used Tractor
with a front-end loader

St. Francis Retreat
LOTS OF MOTHER NATURE
& GOOD FOOD

**Want more, come, and
visit us more often !!**

WWW.STFRANCISRETREAT.COM
(831) 623-4234



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St. Francis Retreat



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Some Good News

SISTER WATER PROJECT

St. Francis Retreat has always had water issues. We have one well which provides 4,000,000 gallons of water a year. In the past few years of drought, with the lakebed dry, the well has dropped considerably. As a former retreat director once said, "No Water, No Retreat."

Thanks to the cooperative effort of civil engineering students at Santa Clara University, a plan has been designed to recharge our groundwater using an off-site well that has been out of service for over twenty years. Like much of the groundwater in the San Juan area, this well has a high concentration of nitrates due to decades of agricultural fertilizers used in the San Juan Valley. The students have designed a "bio-reactor" using eucalyptus wood chips to de-nitrify the water. This proposal has passed the scrutiny of two civil engineering review boards.

Other students from the university have assisted in applying for grants to cover the cost. We have received a pledge of \$23,000 from the Franciscan Action Network in Washington, D.C. and have received financial support from the Province of Saint Barbara. A separate grant is being prepared to present to the State of California Water Resources Board to fund water systems dealing with climate change challenges.

If you wish to contribute to this project, you may do so at our website, <https://stfrancisretreat.com>. Please mention in the comments that you want to earmark your donation to the Sister Water Project.



Blessing of the Grounds
for our filtration system water project.

Schedule Of Events

Sundays Mass 9:30 am-Retreat House Chapel

Advent Days of Recollection - Weekly

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Dec. 1 | What Does Advent Promise Me?
Fr. Paul |
| Dec. 8 | Where is God Leading Me this Advent?
Fr. Ken |
| Dec. 15 | Do I have Reason to Rejoice in the Lord?
Fr. Paul |
| Dec. 22 | What is Small that Brings Peace to Me?
Fr. Ken |

Days of Recollection - Monthly

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Jan. 7
2022 | Sacrament of Holy Orders
Fr. Paul |
| Feb. 4 | Sacrament of Marriage
Fr. Ken |



Lenten Days of Recollection - Weekly

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Mar 2
2022 | Ash Wednesday
Fr. Ken |
| Mar. 9 | What Does God Promise Me?
Fr. Paul |
| Mar. 16 | God Surprises Moses and Us
Fr. Ken |
| Mar. 23 | The Good News: God Removes the
Accusation Against His People
Fr. Paul |
| Mar. 30 | Do we Remember What God has Done
for Us? Fr. Ken |

Days of Recollection - Monthly

- | | |
|--------|---|
| May 6 | Sacrament of Penance Fr. Paul |
| June 6 | Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick
Fr. Ken |

Dates To Remember

Winter Luncheon Fund Raiser

December 12, 2021

11:00 am - 2:00 pm

Smoked Dry Rubbed Pork Ribs
and the Trimmings

Reservation: 831-623-4234 or

Website: stfrancisretreat.com



CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2021

Christmas Carols in Chapel

4:30 pm

Family Mass

5:00 pm



73rd Annual Men's Retreat

January 14-16, 2022

Fr. Ken, Director

Reservation: 831-623-4234 or

Website: stfrancisretreat.com

LGBTQ Retreat

May 20-22, 2022

Presenters:

Richard Jaco & Jan Stegner

Theme: One Ment/Building Bridges

Reservation: 831-623-4234 or

Website: stfrancisretreat.com

English Speaking

Women's Retreat

June 17-18, 2022

Presenter: Jan Stegner

Reservation: 831-623-4234 or

Website: stfrancisretreat.com

We, at St. Francis Retreat, have felt the same pains that you have during COVID, with loss of friends, income, and understanding what isolation really means. Our hope and prayers are that we all may remain safe, consider each other, and have better times ahead. May you and your family be blessed.



"Real power is moral power. It is the power of truth, beauty, and patience. Real power often looks helpless. Put a helpless infant in a room, and all present succumb to power of this babe, even the most powerful or ruthless. This is the kind of power God reveals at Christmas. Against all human expectations, God is born into this world as a helpless infant, unable to care for his own needs. The Christmas creche is the forever invitation to find God in our lives as an infant lying in the straw whom we need to pick up, nurture, and provide with human flesh."

From: Wrestling with God by Ronald Rolheiser