
June 18, 2009

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Summer Evenings of Re-Creation to open anniversary celebration at Mt. Irenaeus

Mt. Irenaeus will open its annual Summer Evenings of Re-Creation series on Wednesday, June 24, with a session hosted by two of the Franciscan Mountain retreat's founding friars.

The series of six Wednesday gatherings on the retreat's hilltop acreage in Allegany County, some 25 miles from the St. Bonaventure University campus, will also serve as the opening of a year-long silver anniversary celebration, marking the retreat's 25th year at its town of West Clarksville location.

What began as a summertime retreat housed in an off-campus dormitory on Union Street in Allegany has grown into a sprawling hilltop community of friars devoted to providing a place for spiritual reflection. The 387-acre site includes a large community house, a chapel, cabins and 10 miles of trails.

Fr. Dan Riley, O.F.M., guardian of Holy Peace Friary at Mt. Irenaeus, who began the summertime retreats in Allegany 27 years ago with Fr. Dan Hurley, O.F.M., said the anniversary celebration will include a special overnight retreat in the fall with a concert, outdoor Mass and guest educator, and will close with another big event in the summer of 2010. Other events will be held throughout the year "to celebrate what it is we're doing and to take our mission out to others," said Fr. Dan. Additional information about all events will be announced as details are finalized.

The Summer Evenings of Re-Creation, which are free and open to all, will establish the theme of the anniversary celebration by focusing on the need to "begin anew," said Br. Kevin Kriso, O.F.M., a member of the friar community at Mt. Irenaeus and coordinator of the evening series.

"It's a phrase St. Francis used near the end of his life," said Br. Kevin. "It's a reminder that in spiritual terms it's always today, that we need to begin again to go back to those things that have always been important, but that we sometimes forget are important."

Each of the summer sessions will revolve around a theme that is fundamental to the Mt. Irenaeus mission, but each will also take a course determined in large part by the participants, said Br. Kevin. "Someone will hopefully open up a topic that's going to be important in everybody's lives and give folks a chance to experience it, and to think and talk about it in terms of our fundamental values," he said.

Each of the evenings will open with Mass at 4:45 p.m., followed by a dish-to-pass supper at 6 p.m. After supper, participants will walk to the chapel for the evening of reflection, lasting from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

The schedule of sessions, their topics and presenters include:

June 24: An overview of Mt. Irenaeus and its mission, presented by Fr. Dan Riley, Fr. Dan Hurley, and Larry and Bonnie Orsini.

July 8: "Silence and Solitude," presented by Fr. Bob Struzynski, O.F.M., and Vic Vena.

July 15: "Simplicity," presented by Fr. Dan Riley, Br. Joe Kotula, O.F.M., and others.

July 22: "Service," presented by Br. Kevin and Bridget Walsh.

July 29: "Hospitality of the Heart," presented by the Fr. Louis McCormick, O.F.M., and others.

Aug. 5: "Community and Nature as Healing Places," presented by Br. Joe, Vic Vena and others.

For directions to Mt. Irenaeus and other information about the Franciscan mountain retreat, visit their Web site at www.mounti.com.

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County undersheriff to lead Office of Safety and Security

Cattaraugus County Undersheriff Timothy Whitcomb will take over as the director of the university's Office of Safety and Security on Jan. 18, 2010.

Interim director Joe Stomieroski will continue in his role until Whitcomb begins his duties at the start of the spring semester.

Whitcomb has been with the County Sheriff's Department since 1991, serving as undersheriff since 2005. He's also been an adjunct lecturer at St. Bonaventure and JCC since 1996, the last three at SBU teaching courses in criminology and juvenile delinquency.

"The addition of Tim Whitcomb as the director of Safety and Security is a home run for St. Bonaventure," said Rick Trietley, vice provost for student life. "Tim possesses outstanding leadership and interpersonal skills that will serve our students, faculty and staff extremely well. His charisma, leadership philosophy and passion for excellence are exactly what is required to take the Safety and Security department to the next level of service to our campus community."

Whitcomb holds degrees from Genesee Community College, Empire State College and St. Bonaventure, where he earned a master's in counselor education (2001). He's also graduated from Erie Community College's Police Services Training Academy and the FBI's National Academy in Quantico, Va.

Whitcomb was valedictorian for Leadership Cattaraugus' class of 2008.

"I can think of no one more qualified than Tim to take on the demands of managing the St. Bonaventure campus security program, where interacting with colleagues in both the law enforcement and academic communities is a daily need," said Brent

Issacson, special agent with the FBI. "Tim knows both communities and cultures so very well."

Also, longtime security officer Ralph Aloia has been named to the new position of Fire and Life Safety Officer. Aloia, who has 14 years of fire safety experience, has worked at St. Bonaventure for 23 years.

Aloia becomes the second-ranking member of the Campus Safety and Security Office.

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Newsmakers

During June and July, Fr. Michael Calabria, O.F.M., lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages, will be directing an English-language program at the St. Leo the Great Coptic-Catholic Seminary in Cairo, Egypt. Chris Harris, a fourth-year Arabic student, will be assisting him.

Mark Wilson, Ph.D., assistant professor of economics, and Rodney Paul, Ph.D., associate professor of economics, had the paper "Testing Market Efficiency and Bettor Biases in the Baseball Totals Market" published in the most recent issue of the Journal of Business, Industry, and Economics.

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