

MONTSERRAT

Jesuit Retreat House

600 N Shady Shores Drive † Lake Dallas, TX 75065 † Phone: (940) 321-6020 † MontserratRetreat.org

Spring/Summer 2017

Montserrat News

An Update from Your Retreat House



Dear Friends in Christ,

Since I started at Montserrat in August 2015, I have been blessed to witness so many people come on retreat and share how Jesus is personally working in their lives. It is an honor to have been missioned here by the Jesuit Provincial as the Executive Director of Montserrat. Encountering Jesus Christ through the Spiritual Exercises has given me a deeper understanding of the person of Jesus Christ. The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola have definitely stretched me and opened the door for a more intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Many retreatants who come to Montserrat experience this same deepening when coming on retreat.

As we come to a conclusion of fiscal year 2016-2017 (June 30), we reflect on this past year. In the past 10 months, we have served 3,734 individuals through programs such as weekend silent retreats (794 people), diocesan events (682), contract groups (947), and day events (1,311). Of the 794 weekend silent retreatants, Montserrat has been able to provide partial and full financial assistance to over 250 individuals (over \$37,500) through your generosity. Your donation truly makes a difference in the lives we serve. Recently, a financial assistance recipient sent me a letter addressed to our donors expressing his gratitude. I have enclosed a copy of that letter as an illustration of the spiritual impact a retreat can have. Over the past year and a half, I have seen many changes here at Montserrat. Outside of welcoming two new Jesuits to Montserrat, Fr. Chris Schroeder S.J. and Fr. John Lan Tran S.J., we are expanding our programs for [Hispanic](#) and [Young Adult](#) ministries. This year we have introduced an additional retreat in Spanish, two days of reflection in Spanish, as well as the upcoming Young Adult Retreat in July.

While we are working vigorously to spread the mission of Montserrat, we have also made physical improvements around the retreat house in order to foster the prayerful and reflective atmosphere. This past year, we have replaced the hail damaged roofs of Advent Hall, Simon Commons, Assumption Hall, St. Ignatius Chapel, and the workshop. We have recently completed the much anticipated renovations to [St. Ignatius Chapel](#), and we await completion of the landscaping around the bell tower between the Chapel and St. Joseph Hall. The Chapel now has a brand new projector and sound system. The addition of two large windows allows for more natural light inside of the Chapel and has accentuated our stained glass windows. We have also replaced three of the original air conditioning units in Assumption Hall. Retreatants often remark about the grounds of Montserrat, exclaiming that they look more beautiful than ever. However, there is still work to be done to our aging campus. As we look to the immediate future, we will be repairing and resealing the driveway, landscaping around the Chapel, and making improvements to St. Joseph Hall by replacing energy inefficient windows and HVAC units. These projects will further enhance the grounds and efficiency of the retreat house.

The [2016-2017 Annual Giving Campaign](#) is coming to a close; we are \$52,494.34 short of our goal of \$250,000. Your donation to the Annual Giving Campaign (AGC) allows us to provide financial assistance to retreatants in need and to make the necessary improvements for this place that many refer to as their spiritual home. Please prayerfully consider your own retreat experience and how much of an impact a retreat at Montserrat has affected your life, as you make your donation to the 2016-2017 Annual Giving Campaign. As always, you remain in our thoughts and prayers.

In Christ,

Joseph Hamaty
Executive Director

2016-2017 Annual Giving Campaign

Remaining,
\$52,494.34

Donated/
Pledged,
\$197,505.70

“A letter from a financial aid recipient to our donors...”

Dear Montserrat Scholarship Donors,

I am a recipient of a scholarship for a three-day retreat at Montserrat. Due to your generosity, I have been blessed with an experience I will not soon forget. I came here with some expectations, and on Thursday evening (before the first conference) I sat before the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and in prayer Jesus spoke to me and said, “I have no expectations of you...” I wept. I came struggling with guilt and anxiety; Jesus told me to leave it at the gate!

Since Jesus had no expectations of me, I decided I would have no expectations of Him and just go to the Prayer Conferences and listen to God all weekend in silence. I had come wanting to become a better husband and father, but I left that at the gate too. (That would be a byproduct of just listening without expectations, according to Fr. Anthony.) Just listen. Be silent and be still...relax.

God spoke. Be humble, stop trying to do it all. Give it to God. Let my good deeds become God's good deeds. Let my faith become God's faith. Let my worship become God's worship. I'm just going along for the ride. If I would just get out of the way, God would DO the right things in my life. I'm reminded of a bumper sticker “Let go and let God.”

I worked for 20 years in high-tech and was what some would consider successful but at 50 years of age I find I am now suddenly disabled with crippling bipolar and generalized anxiety disorders. These plague me for no apparent reason; doctors say it's all chemical, that is, there's no external stressors that bring it on. I have tried counseling, medication, even electroconvulsive therapy all with no success; but, during this weekend that YOU have provided, I have been symptom-free! Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your most precious Christ-like gift! I will one day “pay it forward.”

In Christ,

Your brother

Upcoming Retreats
[Register for Your Retreat Today](#)

Men's Retreats	
#42 Sep 14-17	#5 Jan 25-28, 2018
#50 (Advent) Nov 30 - Dec 3	#11 (Lent) Mar 15-18, 2018
#3 Jan 11-14, 2018	#15 (Holy Week) Mar 25-28, 2018
Women's Retreats	
#28 Jul 20-23	#46 Nov 2-5
#39 Sep 7-10	#7 Feb 1-4, 2018
#44 Sep 28 - Oct 1	#10 (Lent) Feb 15-18, 2018
Women's "Into the Deep" Retreat Oct. 27-29	#12 (Lent) Mar 8-11, 2018
#14 Apr 5-8, 2018	
Open Retreats	Special Audiences
5 Day Directed Retreat Jun 22-27	#33 Para Hombres, Mujeres, y Parejas Aug 4-6
8 Day Directed Retreat Jun 22-30	#4 Women's Recovery Aug 17-20
#95 Young Adult Retreat Jul 7-9	#2 Men's Recovery Retreat: Jan 5-7, 2018
#98 2-Day Retreat Aug 11-13	#38 Para Hombres, Mujeres, y Parejas Feb 9-11, 2018
#96 Couples Retreat Nov 9-12	Vietnamese Retreat Mar 23-25, 2018
#99 2-Day Advent Retreat Dec 4-6	
Days of Reflection	
July 1	Dec 9 (Vietnamese)
Aug 5	Feb 3, 2018
Sep 2	Feb 14, 2018 (Ash Wednesday)
Oct 7	Mar 3, 2018
Nov 4	Mar 17, 2018 (en Español)
Nov 18 (en Español)	Apr 7, 2018
Dec 2	

Suscipe Prayer - St. Ignatius Loyola

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will. All I have and call my own. You have given all to me. To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace, that is enough for me.

Montserrat's Mission

The Mission of Montserrat Retreat House is to bring the transforming Good News of Jesus Christ to individuals and society.

- Our work is anchored in and grows from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. We realize our mission primarily by offering silent retreats. This experience, culturally and ecumenically sensitive, helps establish and sustain the spiritual life of men and women.
- Montserrat's mission is also realized in the work of the St. Edmund Campion Jesuit Spirituality Center which offers programs and retreat workshops for the serious disciple, and those working in ministries in the church.
- We make the facilities and services available to the local churches for use by groups of Catholics and those of other faiths.

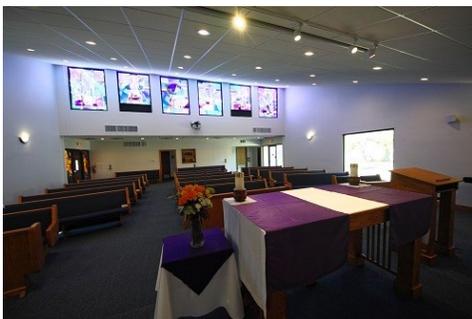
“What’s New at Montserrat? / ¿Qué hay de Nuevo en Montserrat?” by Fr. Chris Schroeder, S.J.

Montserrat retreatants often make a point of committing to a yearly retreat to help maintain and deepen their spiritual life. That means that we regularly have retreatants on our weekend retreats who have been coming to Montserrat for 20, 30, even 40 or 50 years. With such longevity, however, it can be easy to fall into a rut, settling for “good enough.” Fortunately, St. Ignatius’s reminder to always seek the “greater glory of God” pushes us at Montserrat to seek ever new ways of reaching people with Christ’s transforming good news.

For example, Montserrat has greatly expanded its Spanish language programming. In January, we created a second Spanish weekend retreat and had 36 first-time retreatants as Fr. Anthony Borrow delivered his “Taza de Te” (Cup of Tea) retreat. We have also begun offering Spanish language Saturdays of Renewal, such as Fr. Chris Schroeder’s presentation on St. Frances Xavier Cabrini and Bl. Miguel Pro as examples of following Christ on the way of the cross. Our newly begun Spanish “retreat in everyday life” has received high levels of interest, requiring us to form a second group already! People are hungry for Spanish spiritual development, which makes sense since over 50% of U.S. Catholics under the age of 35 are Hispanic. At Montserrat we are glad to help meet this growing need.

Another area of major Catholic growth in North Texas is among parish-based retreat movements. Programs like A.C.T.S. (Adoration, Community, Theology, Service), C.R.H.P. (Christ Renews His Parish), and Cursillo have provided a shot in the arm to the life of many parishes. Because these retreats are high-energy, community experiences, though, they often are hard to follow up on. Fortunately, some local ACTS leaders reached out to Montserrat to develop a new “Into the Deep” retreat designed to introduce alums of community-based retreats of any type to silent Ignatian retreats. Our first men’s Into the Deep retreat was a wild success, with many of the participants saying it was just the spiritual next step they were looking for. We have every hope that the fall women’s edition will be just as fruitful!

Montserrat is also developing a retreat to help introduce young people to the experience of silent retreats. The [Contemplatives in Action](#) retreat will provide times for both silent prayer and reflection as well as small group interaction. Through the course of the retreat Fr. Chris and Mr. Joseph Hamaty will help participants to become contemplatives who can discover God’s work even in the busyness of daily life.



Las personas que frecuentemente asisten a retiros en Montserrat, realizan un compromiso a un retiro anual para ayudar a mantener y profundizar su vida espiritual. Eso significa que regularmente tenemos personas los fines de semana en nuestros retiros quienes han asistido a Montserrat por 20, 30, hasta 40 o 50 años. Sin embargo, con esa longevidad, puede ser fácil caer en la rutina, conformándose con lo “suficientemente bueno.” Afortunadamente, el testimonio de San Ignacio de siempre buscar la “mayor gloria de Dios,” impulsándonos a Montserrat a buscar siempre nuevas maneras de llegar a las personas con la buena nueva transformadora de Cristo.

En primer lugar, Montserrat ha ampliado enormemente su programación al español. En enero, creamos el segundo [retiro en español](#) y tuvimos 36 personas nuevas lo cual el P. Anthony Borrow ofreció su retiro “Taza de Te.” Luego P. Chris Schroeder presento el segundo Sábado de Renovación en español, compartiendo la vida de Santa Francisca Javier Cabrini y el Beato Miguel Pro como ejemplos a seguir a Cristo en el viacrucis. También empezara un “Retiro en la vida diaria” en español que ha recibido niveles altos de interés. Las personas están ansiosas por el desarrollo espiritual en español, lo cual tiene sentido ya que el 50% de católicos en los Estados Unidos menores de 35 años son hispanos. En Montserrat estamos encantados de ayudar a satisfacer esta creciente necesidad.

Otra área de importancia en el crecimiento Católico en el Norte de Texas es el movimiento de retiros parroquiales. Programas como A.C.T.S (Adoración, Comunidad, Teología, Servicio), CRHP (Cristo renueva su parroquia), y Cursillos han ofrecido una inyección de vida a muchas parroquias. Porque estos retiros son una gran energía y experiencia comunitaria, aunque a menudo son difíciles de seguir. Afortunadamente algunos líderes locales de ACTS se acercaron a Montserrat para desarrollar un retiro nuevo “Into the Deep” diseñado para presentar éstas personas en retiros silenciosos e Ignacianos. Nuestro primer retiro Into the Deep para hombres fue todo un éxito, ya que muchos de los participantes afirmaron que fue el siguiente nivel espiritual que estaban buscando. ¡Tenemos la esperanza que la edición de mujeres será igual de productiva!

Asimismo Montserrat está desarrollando un retiro para ayudar a presentar personas jóvenes a la experiencia de retiros silenciosos. El retiro “The Contemplatives in Action” ofrecerá tiempo para orar en silencio y reflexión así como la interaccione grupos pequeños. Mediante el curso del retiro el P. Chris y el Sr. Joseph Hamaty ayudaran a los participantes a convertirse en contemplativos quienes puedan descubrir la actividad de Dios incluso en el ritmo de la vida diaria.





Since November 2017, I have been assigned to Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House to work as a retreat director. Thus, I became one of the four Jesuit priests working at Montserrat. Our daily tasks entail giving talks, doing spiritual direction, presiding at Mass, and helping with other chores during retreats. Overall, I find this a dream job.

Looking back, I grew up in a very traditional Catholic setting in South Vietnam in the seventies. For the first fourteen years of my life, I lived in a rural, all-Catholic village, having parents and grandparents who could trace their Catholic heritage back several generations. Spirituality, for me, meant attending daily Mass and other devotional practices such as Eucharistic Adoration, the Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, or other religious activities—especially during Lent and Advent. In that setting, prayer was all being at Church, reciting rote prayers, and asking for things. (Nowadays, perhaps in some circles, these practices have become almost obsolete, because some may view them as boring and meaningless. If used properly, I think, they are still useful means to lead us to God. At times, I still use them, and I encourage retreatants to use them as they find them helpful.)

Several big events happened to me in the 1980's. In 1983, I came to the U.S. as a “boat person,” the term that was used to describe Vietnamese refugees who fled Vietnam by boat in the late 70's and the 80's. Several years into my stay in America, I attended a three day retreat led by two Jesuits. This was my first time attending a retreat. Prior to my encounter with the Jesuits, retreats were reserved for the spiritual elites, that is, the priests and nuns. For us lay people, “retreats” usually meant Advent or Lenten days of recollections, which normally consisted of long sermons and longer devotional practices. Until then we never had any “luxurious” lay retreats in which lay people could go away for a few days to retreat houses. As lay people, we were unfamiliar with the strange concepts of “meditation,” “contemplation,” “discernment,” etc.

What happened at the Jesuit retreat, though, was that I learned some ways to do “mental prayer.” These methods helped me to grow in my spiritual journey by connecting God to daily life in a real and meaningful way. More importantly, they provided a different mode of understanding God. God, in my understanding back then, was a powerful, omnipotent being who existed outside of time and space and who somehow controls the world. My image of God resembled a combination of a policeman, a judge, and a powerful old man with a white beard. Yet, I was told repeatedly that God loves us and cares for us. For some time, I struggled to reconcile this idea of a loving God with the realities of life's suffering.

Later, in 1997, I entered the Jesuits. As I went through training, my interest in spirituality continued to grow. Nowadays, the term spirituality, for me, means how we live our faith in daily life. It is about how we practice our faith, how we pray not only by praising and worshiping God, but by how we discern and respond to God, how we carry-out our beliefs by making choices based on our morality and our convictions, how we recognize who God is, who we are, how we are to relate to God, and ultimately, how we find joy and meaning in our lives. In this sense, spirituality provides a deep foundation for life. In many ways, spirituality can form the foundation of our life.

As I spend more time at Montserrat, I have become more convinced of the value of spirituality in people's life. It is a privilege to work with retreatants, as many them struggle in their journey to find God in their daily life. My joy comes from seeing many retreatants discover how God works in their lives, how people change, how they strive to love and care for others, and how they try to be good amidst much difficulties. Indeed, Montserrat is a great place to be.

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Retreat House.**

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St. Ignatius Honor Roll

In order to meet the future demands of the mission at Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House, Montserrat is accepting legacy or planned gifts through an endowment with *The Catholic Foundation*. This is typically done through life insurance policies, retirement funds, estate planning, and other ways. Consider joining the [St. Ignatius Honor Roll](#) and have your legacy continue through the ministry at Montserrat. Contact Joseph Hamaty, *Executive Director*, at 940-321-6020, at Director@MontserratRetreat.org, or visit our website at MontserratRetreat.org/planned-giving.

Communications

Our monthly newsletter will be emailed (if an email is on file) on a regular basis. Please provide us your email address by contacting the office or by signing up at montserratretreat.org/newsletter in order to receive an electronic copy. Follow us on Social Media: [@MontserratJRH](https://www.facebook.com/MontserratRetreat), [facebook.com/MontserratRetreat](https://www.facebook.com/MontserratRetreat), and at [youtube.com/MontserratRetreat](https://www.youtube.com/MontserratRetreat)

