For more than 70 years, Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford has offered guests the opportunity to rest, reflect and discover the peace of God.

"On our spiritual journey, it is essential to be able to step back and take stock of our relationship with God and with those who surround us each day," says Father David Cinquegrani, a Passionist priest, who recently celebrated his 25th jubilee of ordination and has been retreat director for 23 years. "St. Paul of the Cross, the founder of the Passionist Congregation, knew this well, and therefore established the retreat ministry as a key mission of his followers."

Holy Family is a Catholic retreat house in the Passionist tradition, welcoming people of all faiths who want to deepen their connection with God. "In the Spirit of Trust" is written on a sign posted on the main entrance into the retreat center.

The phrase, which serves as this year's retreat theme, is intended to build more Christian people on their journey of faith to bring about a world of justice and peace as members of the body of Christ.

"He invited lay persons into the Passionist monasteries to find perspective in their lives by carving out sacred space to be with the crucified Christ in prayer," Father Cinquegrani adds.

Outdoors, the nearly 50-acre campus sits on a hill with deer grazing on the back lawn and wooded paths inviting guests to wander and discover. The grounds include miles of walking paths, a koi pond, perennial gardens, ceramic and illuminated Stations of the Cross, playing fields for school groups, statues of saints and plenty of benches for reflection.

Also on the grounds is an expansive labyrinth made from cobblestone recycled from New York City streets. Its circular design represents the circle of peace and infinity. Priests and brothers who lived at the retreat center, including Joseph Leo Flynn, one of Holy Family's founders, are buried in a small cemetery on the property. Since the coronavirus pandemic began, more people have used the grounds, says Luke Giroux, director of administrative operations.

Open for three years inside the retreat building, the Monastery Gallery of Art unites the arts with diverse faith traditions. Artists of all backgrounds are welcome and the artwork rotates regularly. The main chapel, which seats more than
200 people, is open during retreats and for Mass on Sundays. A smaller chapel is available daily for private reflection. A gift shop selling a collection of inspirational books and handcrafted items is located inside. There is an area to purchase Mass cards.

The purpose of Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center, Giroux explains, is to “deepen your connection and relationship with God” and “to bring in the spirit of tranquility and trust.”

**Grotto**

A grotto with Mary has been part of the grounds of Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford since it opened in 1951.

**Stations**

The nearly 50 acres at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center include walking trails, a koi pond, playing fields, gardens, a labyrinth and Stations of the Cross.

**Chapel**

The main chapel is used during retreats at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center. A weekly Mass, open to the public, is held on Sundays at 7 p.m.

**The Holy Family**

A statue of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is the centerpiece of the Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center. Artwork of the Holy Family can be seen inside the center and amid the grounds.

**PRAYERFUL EXPERIENCES**

Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center is located at 202 Tunxis Road, West Hartford. The grounds are open for private reflection from sunrise to sunset, even during the winter months. A Mass open to the public is celebrated on Sundays, 7 p.m., in the main chapel. The Monastery Gallery of Art is open to the public during regular hours. For more information and a schedule of retreats, call 860.521.0440 or visit holyfamilyretreat.org. The gift shop is open Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and some weekends. Call 860.760.9734 for additional hours or visit holyfamilyretreat.org/giftshop. Volunteers are needed in the gift shop and the front desk. Open houses will take place in 2022 or call for an individual tour.