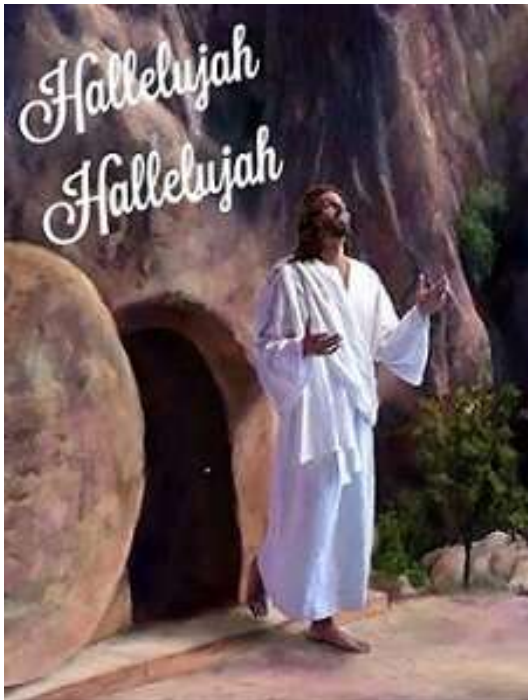




Spring, 2020

He is not here, but he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day.

--Luke 24: 6-7



Ignatian Community Retreat July 17 & 18

Mark your calendar for the 2020 Ignatian Community Retreat. Our facilitator this year is J. Michael Sparough, S.J. from the Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House in Barrington, Illinois, and his topic is *Praying with the Writings and Reflections of Pope Francis*. Fr. Sparough is co-author of the book *What's Your Decision? An Ignatian Approach to Decision Making*.



J. Michael Sparough, S.J.

All are welcome -- bring a friend!
Friday, July 17, 2020 - 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm
Saturday, July 18, 2020 - 8:30 am to Late Afternoon
Sisters of St. Joseph Retreat and Provincial House,
6400 Minnesota Ave., St. Louis, MO 63111
Capacity is 95 participants
Cost is \$70, includes lunch on Saturday
A limited number of rooms are available.
Register online by July 8 at
<http://bridgesfoundation.org/ignatian-community-retreat-registration/>
More Information is online at
<http://bridgesfoundation.org/programs/ignatian-community-retreat/> or by contacting Linda Leib at linda.leib@bridgesfoundation.org or 314-313-8283.
△

Spread of Coronavirus Affecting Bridges Programs

The coronavirus which started in China in late 2019 has spread to other parts of the world and is beginning to have far-reaching effects in the United States. The St. Louis area has not yet been hit as hard as some other areas of the country, but it is best for everyone to be extra diligent in taking steps to avoid contracting the virus. A state of emergency has been declared by the President of the United States and by the Governor of Missouri.



Several programs run by the Bridges Foundation have seen changes and cancellations as a result of this global pandemic. The Bridges retreat has had some site group meetings canceled while others are under review as this is written; it remains to be seen how the group meetings will be handled over the next several months. *The retreatants will finish the 19th Annotation Retreat.* One-on-one meetings with retreatants and prayer companions will continue, with arrangements to be made by each individual pairing. Some are deciding to meet face to face while others will talk on the phone or electronically.

The Marketplace Spirituality Retreat which had been scheduled for the first weekend of April and was to have been directed by Mark McKenzie, S.J. has been postponed and re-scheduled for December 11 & 12, 2020. Participants will have the opportunity to save the date or be refunded. We hope the 2019 – 2020 Bridges participants will be enthusiastic about an opportunity to gather as a group.

There were two more sessions scheduled in the Magis program, on March 21 & April 25, but both have been canceled. The Magis program for 2019-2020 has thus been completed. Refunds to participants are being discussed and will be addressed at a later date.

The Ignatian Community Retreat is scheduled for July 17 & 18 and the facilitator is J. Michael Sparough, S.J. Plans for that event remain in place and it is hoped that the coronavirus issue will have been resolved by that time. Further information and how to register is on page 1.

The coronavirus presents us with a situation that none of us have seen in our lifetime. It is uncharted territory for all of us, and it calls for patience, reason and understanding. This is a time to set aside many of our desires and wishes and to think of acting for the common good. Remain calm and remember that faith and prayer can sustain us through difficult times. △

A Coronavirus Prayer

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness." At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

-- Taken from America Magazine, courtesy of Linda Leib

Madonna della Strada

There is a picture of Madonna della Strada at the Church of the Gesù in Rome, the first Jesuit Church and the mother church of the Society of Jesus. It is an image that is thought to have originated in about the thirteenth century. It is a small painting of the Virgin and Child that has a legion of devoted followers and admirers.

In the days near founding of the Society of Jesus, in 1540, Ignatius of Loyola preached daily at an intersection outside of a church in the heart of Rome known as Santa Maria della Strada, which was given to Ignatius by Pope Paul III in that year. It was located at a crossroads on the ceremonial route of the popes. As is evident when one reads his autobiography, Ignatius had long held a very strong devotion to the Virgin Mary. Ignatius became acquainted with the image then located in the adjacent church, which was known as Madonna della Strada, Italian for Our Lady of the Wayside or Our Lady of the Good Road. He had an immediate affinity for the image.

The original fresco (a wall painting produced on damp plaster) was painted on the wall of Saint Mary of the Way. The image shows the Christ child with rosy red cheeks and a crown on his head, seated on his mother's left arm, a book in his left hand with his right arm raised and giving a blessing. His mother is wearing a crown also, a type of Eastern basilissa or imperial icon; she has a healthy glow to her and a facial expression that makes those who view it feel drawn into the image. Ignatius for many years had intended to build a fine church to serve as the mother church for the Society of Jesus but died in 1556 before the project was ever begun. Some years later the Church at Santa

Maria della Strada was torn down to make way for the construction of such a church on the same site in Rome, commencing in 1568. The still uncompleted Church of the Gesù was opened in 1575 and at that time, in accordance with Ignatius' wishes, the painting was placed temporarily above a side altar. In 1582 it was moved permanently to its own chapel to the left of the high altar, where it remained for centuries. It is said that Mary protected Ignatius in battle during his days in the military, and devotees of Madonna della Strada have claimed for hundreds of years that it has healing powers.



Madonna della Strada

A restoration project of the painting was undertaken in 2006 by scientists from La Sapienza University in Rome, and as expected it revealed some interesting data about the icon and its history. It was thought to have very likely been painted originally as a fresco on a

(continues on page 4)

Madonna della Strada

(continued from page 3)

damp wall in the church of Saint Mary of the Way. Further inspection showed that it was a piece that had been broken off from a larger wall painting (long before Ignatius ever saw it) which had been lost over time. Since then at least two layers of paint had been added, and the fresco had been detached from a wall and affixed to canvas (a fragile process developed in the nineteenth century known as *strappo d'affresco*, used for conservation purposes). The canvas was attached to a piece of slate. The scientists undertook the delicate task of removing centuries of grime and residue that had accumulated, revealing a glorious image in rich colors.

Today Madonna della Strada is still on display at the Church of the Gesù in Rome for all to see, just a few feet away from the tomb of St. Ignatius, and it continues to have quite a following. It is located between an altar dedicated to Ignatius of Loyola and the main altar of the Church.

There is a chapel dedicated to Madonna della Strada at the University of Scranton in Scranton, Pennsylvania, at Loyola University in Chicago, and at Zilber Hall, Marquette University in Milwaukee. A copy of the image hangs in the Le Moyne College Chapel in Syracuse. The feast of Our Lady of the Way is celebrated by the Jesuits on May 24. △

Happy Easter!

Easter Sunday is April 12



This is the newsletter of the Bridges Foundation of St. Louis. The newsletter is published quarterly and distributed as a PDF file via email, free to anyone who would like to receive it. Thank you to the contributors to this issue: Linda Leib and Tom Simon.

Quarterly issues are sent late in the months of March, June, September, and December. The deadline for submission of material is on the 15th day of each of those months for inclusion in the issue to be mailed later that month. Look for your next issue around the time that the seasons change.

The deadline for submissions to the next issue of the Bridges Newsletter is June 15, 2020. Please send articles, letters, mailing list additions and deletions, and other correspondence to: Tom Simon, Editor, 1730 Derrynane, Manchester, MO 63021, or by email to tsimon@tsimon.com.



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