

annual report 2023



MISSION STATEMENT

Bridges Foundation offers opportunities to anyone seeking to deepen their relationship with God and God's people through ongoing formation grounded in the experience of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola in Everyday Life. The foundation members assist individuals in spiritual growth so they can transform themselves and their world.

CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rev. Mr. Gary Peterson, *President*
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Vicki Harpring, *Magis Coordinator*
Sue Givens, *Bookkeeper*
Jon Givens, *Webmaster*

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT – DECEMBER 2023

As we close out calendar year 2023, we are about halfway through another great year of bringing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola in Everyday Life to a committed group of 23 individuals in the St. Louis and beyond. They are growing in their relationship with Jesus, learning to trust God more deeply, and more clearly discerning the Lord's call.

This has been a powerful year of prayer and spiritual growth not only for our retreatants but also for the many people who support the Bridges Foundation. There are many who dedicate their time and efforts to achieve the Bridges mission, but most significant and crucial for us are our dedicated prayer companions, who weekly walk alongside their retreatants, pray for them, share their knowledge of Ignatian Spirituality, and witness their own spiritual experience to help the retreatants grow spiritually. Without their commitment and willingness to answer Gods' call to serve, we could not fulfill our mission year after year.

Following our strategic plan, we are continuing to look for new sites in different geographic areas to make it easier for people to participate, and well as continue our online presence. We will continue to find ways to better support our prayer companions in their efforts to learn about Ignatian Spirituality and deepen both their abilities to companion retreatants and their own spiritual lives.

Executive Director Steve Givens continues to shepherd the organization's dreams, plans and ideas into action by :

- > Building closer relationships with those in the local and national Ignatian community, including the Office of Ignatian Spirituality for the Southern and Central Province.
- > Spearheading key promotional activities, including his monthly "Bridges Conversations" series on Facebook Live.
- > Engaging in conversation and relationship building with individuals and organizations to better position Bridges for geographic, ecumenical and ethnic diversity growth.

Bridges remains financially stable and, thanks to sound business management and generous gifts from individuals, family foundations and other organizations, we were able to provide financial support to more 40 percent of our retreatants. We thank everyone for their support.

I encourage you take some time to read this Annual Report and learn about the activities and accomplishments of our board committees, all of which are critical to the Bridges Foundation's success in our mission.

Grace and Peace.

Rev. Mr. Gary Peterson
President

Bridges Ignatian Retreat in Daily Life

The 19th Annotation Retreat of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola sponsored by the Bridges Foundation is currently serving 23 retreatants. This retreat bridges one's spiritual life with everyday life and provides a structure and process aimed at assisting the retreatant in an ever-deepening relationship with God and increasing awareness in ridding oneself of inordinate attachments. The retreatant and an experienced companion meet for 34 one-hour sessions. In addition to the individual sessions, weekly or monthly group meetings are held at each site for the purpose of providing a communal experience and to offer reflections and faith sharing on various movements of the Spiritual Exercises. The schedule includes a Faith Sharing Retreat in October, a Marketplace Spirituality Retreat in the spring and a Sending Celebration and Dinner in mid-May.

Magis – Greater Understanding, Love and Service

The Magis Program, structured for those who have completed the 18th, 19th or 20th Annotation Retreat, functions to support the participant in growing and living the Ignatian Way within a community setting. Currently we have 56 participants and 10 facilitators who lead eight small groups. The program meets for seven 3-hour Saturday sessions, beginning in September and concluding in April. Each gathering begins with two presentations on various movements of the Exercises followed by small group sessions on various Ignatian topics.

upcoming events

A Special Morning with Fr. Joseph Tetlow, SJ on Saturday, March 23, 2024 at Incarnate Word Parish in Chesterfield.

Marketplace Spirituality Retreat with Danielle Harrison on April 26-27, 2024. Although preference is given to current retreatants, the retreat is open to all who have received the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Ignatian Community Retreat with Pepe Ruiz, SJ on July 19-20, 2024, at the CSJ Motherhouse. Open to all.

2024-2025 Bridges Retreat in Daily Life

Registration begins May 1 and closes August 25, 2024

2024-2025 Magis – Greater Understanding, Love and Service

Registration begins May 1, 2024.

THIS YEAR'S MAGIS SPEAKERS ARE:

Preparation Days

Virginia Herbers

First Week

Danielle Harrison

Examen and Incarnation

Jeffrey Harrison, S.J.

Second Week

Mark McKenzie, S.J.

Discernment of Spirits

Philip Steele, S.J.

Contemplating the Eucharist

Hsin-hsin Huang, PhD

Contemplating the Passion

Steve Givens

Fourth Week

Carla Mae Streeeter, OP



Following the presentations (either in-person or pre-recorded video for online participants), each person participates in one of eight small groups, namely:

Scripture, Imagination, & the Creative Process led by Steve Givens

Extracting Wisdom from the Parables of Jesus led by Dan Coughlin, with David Harpring

Interfacing the Spiritual Exercises with 12 Step Spirituality led by Rick Lageson, J.D.

Racial Healing and the Spiritual Exercises led by Kate Stroble

Dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises led by Hsin-hsin Huang, PhD.

Prayer Companion Support and Resource Sharing Group led by Joan Kletzker and Laurie Hannigan

Peer Supervision/Consultation led by Sister Thomas More Daly, OSU.

Online Group: Reflecting on the Spiritual Exercises with Anthony de Mello led by Sharon Tan

Accomplishments of the Standing Committees in 2022-23:

MARKETING COMMITTEE

- Reviewed and confirmed the charge of the committee regarding our marketing efforts to those within Bridges and those we are interested in attracting to become retreatants via the website, social media sites, emails, and advertisements via religious magazines, newspapers, and parish bulletins.
- Conducted a brief survey regarding the effectiveness of the Bridges Foundation website and made appropriate updates.
- Combined the efforts of the Development Committee with the work of the Marketing Committee to create one committee to more seamlessly work at "raising friends as well as funds." Identified a calendar for Development efforts.
- Raised \$13,250 from 29 donors, including \$3,248 in estate and memorial gifts given in memory of Joan Felling.
- Outlined a schedule and content areas for the quarterly e-newsletters.
- Began process to update list of parish promotion ministers to help publicize the retreat.
- Instituted two new programs: Social media testimonial project asking individuals to tell their Bridges story in 100 words or less, and a special "friend-raising event" featuring Joe Tetlow, SJ on March 23 at Incarnate Word Parish in Chesterfield.

PROGRAM CREATION AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

- Bridges Retreat in Daily Life was completed by 26 retreatants in 2022-23, including weekly sessions at Sacred Heart-Valley Park, Webster Groves Christian Church, and an online group; and monthly sessions at St. Louis University High School and St Matthew the Apostle Church. Special events for the retreatants included: Faith Sharing Day, which was held in the fall; the Marketplace Spirituality

Retreat, which occurred in April with Hung Pham, S.J. presenting "Running Together Towards Life;" and a Sending Celebration that was held in May. All of these events were held both in-person at the CSJ Motherhouse and online.

- Prayer Companion Morning of Sharing was planned and held in June at Webster Groves Christian Church.
- We offered and coordinated information sessions to market the Bridges Retreat at several sites throughout the St Louis region and online in the summer of 2023. Approximately 40 people attended.
- The current 2023-2024 Bridges Retreat is being offered at Webster Groves Christian Church, site coordinator is Carol Brescia; Sacred Heart-Valley Park, site coordinators are Dave Harping, Theresa Tadrick & Angela Castro; St. Matthew the Apostle, site coordinator is Pam Mason; and the Online Group, coordinated by Sharon Tan. There are 23 retreatants.
- Six individuals completed prayer companion training and four moved forward as prayer companions in the current retreat. There are five first-year prayer companions being mentored by experienced prayer companions in the 2023-2024 retreat.
- Magis— Greater Understanding, Love, and Service Program that provides ongoing formation of prayer companions and enrichment for others who have received the Spiritual Exercises was offered in 7 monthly meetings in person and the recording was used for an online group. There were 61 participants in 2022-2023. There are 56 Magis participants in 2023-2024.
- The Felling Fund was established in memory of Joan and Jim Felling who were part of the founding of the Bridges Foundation in 1988. The fund helps to support ongoing development of Bridges prayer companions.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Provided financial assistance in varying amounts to 44% of Bridges Retreatants. Provided cost free access for Magis to all Prayer Companions and also partial assistance in varying amounts to 25% of the other Magis participants. Financial assistance is made possible by generous donations as well as the donated services of some Bridges Prayer Companions, Magis speakers and Magis group facilitators. Income for Bridges and Magis is received from pledges made by retreatants and participants based upon what they can afford.
- Received a \$2,000 grant from the Angela Merici Fund, thanks to efforts of Sr. Thomas More Daly, OSU.
- Filed Form 990 with the IRS for fiscal year 2022-2023 and issued required Form W-2s or Form 1099-NECs for volunteer stipend payments made during 2023.
- As a qualified charitable organization, Bridges is able to accept donations from a qualified retirement account as directed by the owner of the account, if the donation is made pursuant to Section 408(d)(8) of the Internal Revenue Code, which applies to individuals over age 70-1/2.

fiscal status report

	FISCAL YEAR		
INCOME	2020 - 2021*	2021 - 2022**	2022 - 2023
BRIDGES RETREAT***	\$15,010	\$39,449	\$22,660
MAGIS***	\$17,677	\$22,320	\$19,921
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$-0-	\$3,179	\$ -0-
OTHER SOURCES	\$4,660	\$7,891	\$5,686
TOTAL INCOME	\$37,347	\$72,839	\$48,267
EXPENSES			
ADMINISTRATION	\$454	\$1,580	\$1,326
BRIDGES RETREAT	\$17,187	\$34,458	\$28,429
MAGIS	\$16,866	\$21,459	\$22,786
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$-0-	\$3,146	\$ -0-
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$34,507	\$60,643	\$52,541
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)	\$2,840	\$12,196	(\$4,274)
Donations/Fundraising (not included above)	\$9,426	\$5,726	\$13,250

*Because of a change in fiscal year end, FY 2020-2021 includes 13 months of income and expenses.

** Both income and expenses were unusually high for FY 2021-2022 due to the usually large number of people who participated in the Bridges and Magis programs for that year.

*** Includes donated services.

information sessions

BRIDGES RETREAT IN DAILY LIFE INFORMATION SESSIONS

During each summer, the Bridges Foundation offers Information Sessions for those who desire to make the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. For any questions regarding location, date and time of the 2024 Information Sessions, visit our website or call 314-401-2072 or email executive.director@bridgesfoundation.org.

Find us at:

- bridgesfoundation.org
- facebook.com/bridgesfoundationst/

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