

annual report 2024



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.

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT – DECEMBER 2024

As we start 2025, we celebrate the 35th anniversary of the founding of the Bridges Foundation. Through prayer and the hard work of many, over all these years Bridges has provided the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola to the St. Louis area, helping people enhance their spiritual lives. As we look back on the 2023-24 fiscal year, we continue to rejoice in our blessings and achievements.

We started the current year of the Exercises in September 2024 with more than 30 retreatants at six locations, including new sites at Glendale Presbyterian Church and DeSmet Jesuit High School, which also serves as the site of our MAGIS program. These changes allowed us to serve new retreatants and provide continuing formation to our volunteers and others who wish to strengthen their understanding of Ignatian Spirituality.

we give thanks

We give thanks to God for the many volunteers who have answered God's call to give to our Bridges community of their time and talents. We include in these prayers of thanksgiving our prayer companions who work weekly with retreatants, as well as board members, committee chairs, and committee members who work together to accomplish the many tasks that make the Bridges Retreat and MAGIS possible. We appreciate all of the individuals who take time to give presentations at all of our sites, and we give special thanks to the site coordinators who make sure everything comes together at each site to ensure a faith-filled and spiritual experience for our retreatants.

we appreciate

Once again, we appreciate the hard work and commitment of Bridges' Executive Director Steve Givens. His mission and focus is to enhance and coordinate the many efforts of Bridges and its volunteers by spearheading key initiatives and promotional activities, building strong relationships with the larger Jesuit and Ignatian communities, and engaging in relationship building with individuals and organizations to better position Bridges for geographic and ecumenical growth.

Finally, we thank all who support Bridges financially. During the past year, their contributions allowed us to offer financial support to 34 percent of our retreatants. We continue to carefully manage our financial resources to further our mission and to be worthy of such support.

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 served 23 retreatants in 2023-24. 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 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. During 2023-24 we had 53 participants and 10 facilitators who led 8 small groups. The program meets for seven three-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

Marketplace Spirituality Retreat with Fr. Mike Harter, SJ

on March 28-29, 2025. Although preference is given to current retreatants, the retreat is open to all who have received the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

2025-2026 Bridges Retreat in Daily Life

Registration begins May 1 and closes August 22, 2025.

2025-2026 Magis – Greater Understanding, Love and Service

Registration begins May 1, 2025.

FOR THE 2024-25 MAGIS PROGRAM,
THE SCHEDULED SPEAKERS ARE:

Preparation Days

Fr. Paul Hoelsing

First Week

Jeff Harrison, SJ
Jeff Schulenberg

Examen and Call of the King

Paul Coutinho

Second Week

Dan Daly, S.J.

Discernment of Spirits

Pam Mason

Contemplating the Eucharist and Passion

Marian Love

Fourth Week

Virginia Herbers



Following the presentations (either in-person or pre-recorded video for online participants), each person participates in one of eight small groups. For the 2024-25 year, the small groups are:

Reimagining the Ignatian Examen Facilitated by Martha Broyles and Laurie Hannigan

Extracting Wisdom from the Parables of Jesus Facilitated by Dan Coughlin

Magis Speaker Forum Facilitated by Jill Carnaghi and Rick Lageson

Women as Integral Formators of St. Ignatius Facilitated by Mary White

Prayer Companion Training Facilitated by Marian Love and Steve Givens

Dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises Facilitated *in person* by David Harpring, Linda Leib, and David Dickey

Facilitated *online* by Hsin-hsin Huang, PhD

The Call to Discernment Facilitated online by Sharon Tan, PhD

Peer Supervision/Consultation for Prayer Companions Facilitated by Sister Thomas More Daly, OSU

Accomplishments of the Standing Committees in 2023-24:

MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Launched several new marketing and storytelling initiatives, including a new podcast version of our Bridges Conversations Facebook Live episodes.
- Our Webmaster oversaw the continuing development and maintenance of the Bridges website, including improving search engine optimization for those searching for Ignatian spirituality in the St. Louis area.
- Offered new event for the Bridges community and other interested individuals in March at Incarnate Word Parish — a morning of teaching and reflection with Father Joe Tetlow, SJ. Approximately 100 were in attendance.
- Following planning and oversight by the committee, the Executive Director took the lead on promotional activities, including issuing press releases and bulletin announcements, placing advertising in key markets, and publishing the quarterly newsletters and email direct marketing to community members.
- Noted St. Ignatius' Feast Day on July 31 via an email and on Facebook.
- Sent Thanksgiving Letter to previous donors and recent retreatants thanking them for their interest in Bridges as well as past contributions.
- Raised \$4,981 from 19 donors in our annual appeal, as well as another \$5,510 in memorial gifts and grants throughout the year.

PROGRAM CREATION AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

- Bridges Retreat in Daily Life was completed by 23 retreatants, including weekly sessions at Sacred Heart in Valley Park, Webster Groves Christian Church and an online group. A monthly group met at St Matthew the Apostle in North City. Faith

Sharing Day was held in the fall both in-person at the CSJ Motherhouse and online. The Marketplace Spirituality Retreat occurred in April with Danielle Harrison presenting, and the Sending Celebration took place in May at the CSJ Motherhouse and online.

- The Ignatian Community Retreat was planned and held in July with Fr. Pepe Ruiz, S.J. from the Jesuit Montserrat Retreat House in Dallas, Texas. There were about 40 attendees at the CSJ Motherhouse.
- 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 2024. Approximately 40 people attended.
- The current 2024-2025 Bridges Retreat is being offered at: Glendale Presbyterian Church, site coordinators are Carol Brescia and Kate Stroble; DeSmet Jesuit High School, site coordinators are Laurie Kohler and Theresa Tadrack; All Saints Parish in St. Peters, site coordinators are Dave Harpring and Martha Broyles; St Matthew the Apostle, site coordinator is Pam Mason; St. Louis University High School, site coordinators are Denny Klosterman and Dave Dickey; and the Online Group, coordinated by Karen Siebenberger. There are 28 total retreatants.
- Four first-year prayer companions were mentored by experienced prayer companions in the 2023-2024 retreat. Prayer companion training was not offered in 2023-2024. There are two first-year prayer companions in 2024-2025 and seven individuals are currently in prayer companion training for 2024-2025.
- 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 seven monthly in-person meetings and the recordings of guest speakers were used for online groups. There were 53 participants in 2023-2024.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Provided financial assistance in varying amounts to 34% of Bridges Retreatants. Provided financial assistance to 100% of all Prayer Companions who attended the Magis program as well as to 19% of all other Magis attendees. Financial assistance is made possible by generous donations from the Bridges Community as well as by 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 2023-2024 and also complied with all other governmental reporting regulations.
- As a qualified charitable organization, Bridges is able to accept a donation 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	2021 - 2022*	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
BRIDGES RETREAT**	\$39,449	\$22,660	\$22,305
MAGIS**	\$22,320	\$19,921	\$19,050
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$3,179	\$ -0-	\$2,930
OTHER SOURCES	\$7,891	\$5,686	\$ -0-
TOTAL INCOME	\$72,839	\$48,267	\$53,532
EXPENSES			
ADMINISTRATION	\$1,580	\$1,326	\$1,894
BRIDGES RETREAT	\$34,458	\$28,429	\$28,576
MAGIS	\$21,459	\$22,786	\$22,763
SPECIAL EVENTS	\$3,146	\$ -0-	\$3,236
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$60,643	\$52,541	\$56,469
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)	\$12,196	(\$4,274)	(\$2,937)
Donations/Fundraising <i>(not included above)</i>	\$5,726	\$13,250	\$9,801

* Both income and expenses were unusually high for FY 2021-2022 due to the large number of people who participated in both 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 2025 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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