

24 September 2007



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Greetings and blessings to all of you!

Although it is still quite early in this ministerial year, I am writing about a specific annual retreat offering for 2008. The Marianist National Retreat Commission has arranged for one of the Province-sponsored annual retreats in 2008 to be held in Ireland. Because of the limited space on this retreat as well as the need to make travel arrangements far in advance, I am announcing this retreat now before the publication of the retreat brochure in several months.

Ireland Retreat Information

- Dates** Sunday, March 16, 2008, to Sunday, March 23, 2008
Holy Week
- Place** Star of the Sea Retreat House, Mullaghmore, County Sligo, Ireland [cf. their website: <http://www.staroftheseacentre.ie>]
- Facilitator** George J. Cerniglia, S.M.
Provincial Assistant for Religious Life
- Theme** The geographical setting for this Province retreat calls us to explore the spiritual heritage of Ireland. Celtic Christian spirituality is an expression of a people being one with God in all their daily activities: from the lighting of the fire in the hearth each morning through the day to their retiring at night. From pre-Christian times there was, inherent in the Celts, an acceptance of the world of spirits interacting with the material world. With the beginnings of Christianity, Celtic spirituality baptized this sense. God, Mary, and the saints became part of their daily lives, living and interacting with them.

Two examples: St. Patrick's Breastplate, his protection against the enemy, [Christ be beside me, etc.] is a typical verbalization of this reality. On February 1, the feast of St. Brigid, crosses were made from reeds and placed in the barns as lambing season began as a reminder that Brigid was

interceding with God to protect and care for them. The broad strokes of Celtic spirituality will be woven into the retreat conferences. The Triduum liturgies will be celebrated with the local church.

Places 25, on a first-come, first-served basis

Costs Room, board and costs related to the retreat will be covered by the Province. Travel costs are the responsibility of the individual through his/her community. Applications for travel assistance, up to \$200, can be made to the Travel Assistance Fund.

Registration If you plan to attend the retreat, please fill out the enclosed registration form and mail or fax it to Donna Tucker at 4425 West Pine Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63108-2301, [fax] 314-533-0778, **no later than** Friday, October 12, 2007. You will receive a confirmation of your reservation within a few days. **Because of the limited space on this retreat, please do not make a reservation unless you are absolutely sure that you can attend this retreat. Also, please do not make airline reservations until you have received confirmation of a place on the retreat.**

Additional Comments

Brother James Contadino, director of the Marianist Community in Ballybrack, makes these additional comments and suggestions:

- Because of Holy Week, the church in Ireland has moved the celebration of St. Patrick's Day to Saturday, March 15, 2008. Therefore, travel to Ireland at that time will be heavy. The LATEST time of arrival in Dublin for the retreat would be Saturday morning, March 15. This would mean leaving no later than Friday evening from the United States.
- There will be transportation from the airport to the community. The cost is approximately \$10.
- The community will welcome retreatants any time after March 7 in order to accommodate those who would like to spend some time in Ireland before the retreat. They will assist in making arrangements for any tours or sightseeing for such visitors. Those who would want to stay after the retreat are welcome as well.
- The community has accommodations for nine visitors. These guest rooms will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis. After that, visitors would have to use one of the local hotels for approximately \$125 a night. Because of the proximity to St. Patrick's Day, it would be important to make hotel reservations as soon as possible.

- Besides registering for the retreat, those wishing to stay in the community house before or after the retreat should e-mail Jim [address below] so that rooms can be reserved.
- For those staying in a hotel, Bewley's Hotel, Leopardstown is recommended for quality, price and location. See their website:
http://www.bewleyshotels.com/leopardstown_sandyford_hotel_dublin.asp. Obviously, you can opt for other hotels/bed and breakfast accommodations. If you want to be nearby, the community is located in the south County Dublin/north County Wicklow area. If you have questions or need help, e-mail Jim.
- Transportation to and from the retreat house will be arranged; leaving Dublin on Sunday morning after the Palm Sunday liturgy and lunch, and returning after dinner on Easter Sunday. Transportation costs will be about \$50.
- Air travel should be arranged for arrival in Dublin. Transportation to the retreat house from the Shannon airport would be complicated and difficult.

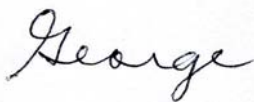
Hopefully this information covers most of the questions and concerns you might have about the retreat. Any further ones can be directed to me or to Brother Jim Contadino in Ireland. To send an e-mail to Jim use:

jimcontadino@yahoo.co.uk or jimcontadino@hotmail.com

The brochure with all the retreat offerings for 2008 will be published in late November. The Marianist National Retreat Commission has planned some interesting opportunities for renewal and growth through the various retreat offerings. I would encourage you to consider one of these Province-sponsored retreats.

May our Blessed Founder continue to bless our efforts in striving to become the "people of saints" he foresaw at Saragossa!

Affectionately yours,



George J. Cerniglia, S.M.
Assistant for Religious Life



REGISTRATION FORM

**Province Retreat
March 16-23, 2008**

**Star of the Sea Retreat House
Mullaghmore, Co. Sligo
Ireland**

Name _____

Community _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Are you willing to serve as: [please check]

- Celebrant of the Eucharist _____
- Reader _____
- Prayer leader _____
- Musician _____
- Cantor _____

If you would like to request financial assistance for travel, please indicate the amount needed [no more than \$200]: _____

Return **no later than October 12** to:

Donna Tucker
4425 West Pine Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63108-2301
[fax] 314-533-0778