

Dominican Retreat & Conference Center



1948-2026



78 years of Caring for the Spirit

The Good News

September 2026



May the God of *Hospitality* be with you, making a home within your heart and blessing you with Divine Presence. May you be the one with welcome in your eyes and the warmth of embrace etched upon your hand, the hand you extend to everyone who blesses you with presence. May the God of *Hospitality* be with you.

~ Maxine Shonk, OP ~

From the Desk of the Administrator:



Hospitality can make a difference in our world. Many of you may be familiar with the story in the books of Kings about the Shunammite woman who offered hospitality to the prophet Elisha. (2 Kings 4:8-17) At first, she offered food as he passed through town. Later, she and her husband made a space (room) on the roof for him to rest from his travels when passing through.

This story reminds me to ask myself a few questions:

How am I open and welcoming to all those who cross my path? How do I show hospitality to the stranger?

And...how do I show hospitality to myself? How am I generous and accepting of all parts of me - the parts I like, and the parts I'm not so proud of? What does hospitality to myself look like?

One of the blessings of being in this ministry of retreats is to be able to witness so many who come on retreat and allow God to be hospitable to them! When we take the time to rest in the presence of God's love, God strengthens our hearts to be more kind and more gentle with ourselves, so that we can go forth to share that kindness and gentleness with all those we encounter.

Maxine Shonk, OP

Virtual Centering Prayer

Wednesdays: 7-7:30pm via Zoom
Sept. 23, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec.. 9
Suggested offering \$5

Sung Vespers in the Spirit of Taizé

In-house and via Zoom
7-8 pm
Sept. 30, Nov. 5, Dec. 3
Free will offering

Pause for Peace

Via Facebook Live
Tuesdays: 7-7:15pm
Oct. 6, Nov. 10, Dec. 29
Free will offering



REMINDER OF SEPTEMBER PROGRAMS

Sept. 22 ~ Spiritual Support for Recovery Helpers ~ 10am-3pm
Led by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner

Sept. 23 ~ Threads of Care - *Shepherding, Wool, and the Sacred Rhythm of Creation*
Led by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner & Mary Taylor, OPA

Women's Theme Retreats - *Do not worry about anything*

Sept. 18-20 ~ Directed by Sr. Annie Killian, OP

Sept. 25-27 ~ Directed by Sr. June Fitzgerald, OP

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE Sept. 21

We invite you to stop in and pray for peace. The Retreat House Chapel will be open from 9am-9pm.

There will be all day adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with prayer experiences and special programming throughout the day.



Let us, together, pray for the peace our world so deeply needs!

Highlights include:

9am: Sr. Annie Killian, OP, will guide us through "St. Dominic's Nine Ways of Prayer".

Noon: Mary Anne Brown will offer a "Sweet Hour of Prayer".

3pm: Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP, Will lead us in a visual litany of prayer for the world.

8pm: Sr. Sue will lead us in a prayer service in the Spirit of Taizé to close out our vigil.

SOUL COLLAGE led by Dawn Baker Savoring the Community Suit

Soul Collage is a beautiful contemplative and creative practice in which we create personal collage cards from images that call to us in meaningful and often intuitive ways. These cards then help us listen more deeply to the wisdom within our souls.

For this workshop you are encouraged to bring images of people, animals and places in your own personal sacred community. Materials will be provided.

In-house September 29 ~ 7-8:30pm Cost: \$35



"If I Knew You Were Comin' I'd've Baked a Cake"

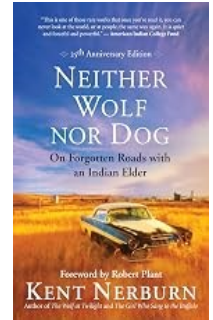
Now I don't know where you came from
 'Cause I don't know where you've been
 But it really doesn't matter

Grab a chair and fill your platter and dig, dig, dig right in (Eileen Barton)

Virtual Book Club

Neither Wolf Nor Dog is a powerful and thought provoking book that takes readers on a journey into the heart of Native American culture. Kent Nerburn explores the complexities of history, identity, and the struggle for understanding. Led by Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP and Dr. Joy Galarneau

***Via Zoom 7—8pm ~ October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Cost: \$10 per session/\$45 for all five***



A GATHERING FOR INTROVERTS AND THOSE WHO LOVE THEM

OCTOBER 21 ~ 10AM-12:30PM followed by lunch

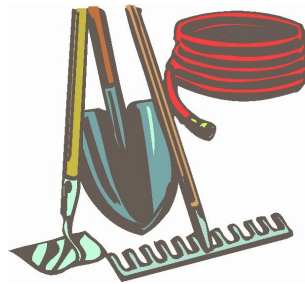
We will explore the myths and truths about this most misunderstood personality trait and discover the many gifts introverts bring to the world.

Led by Joyce Salimini

In-house \$25

GROUNDS DAY

**OCTOBER 28
9AM-3PM**



HELP US PREPARE FOR WINTER

- ◆ BRING YOUR GLOVES, CLIPPERS & RAKES
- ◆ PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE (518-393-4169)
SO WE KNOW WHEN TO EXPECT YOU.
- ◆ WE'LL SUPPLY LUNCH

GOOD GRIEF:

Carrying Love Forward Through the Season

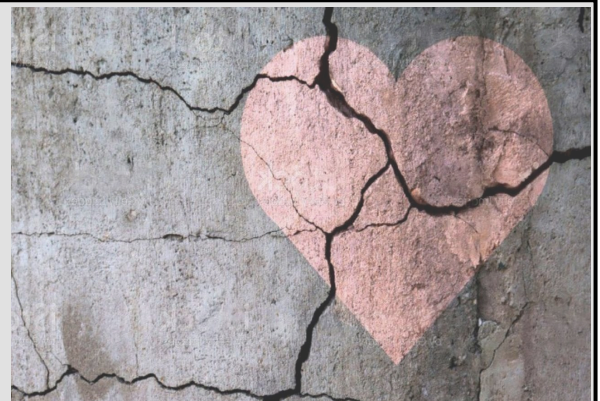
The holiday season can be especially challenging after the loss of a loved one. Familiar traditions, gatherings, songs, and memories can awaken feelings of sadness and longing. Yet there are gentle ways to honor those we miss while caring for ourselves and finding moments of peace.

Join others who understand the journey of loss for a morning of reflection, conversation and encouragement.

Led by Mary Anne Brown

November 5 ~ 10am-Noon followed by lunch

In-house Cost \$25



Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

1 Peter 4:9-10

Lighting the Way to Christmas:

An Afternoon of Merry Making with the Advent Wreath



Get ready to welcome Advent and the holiday season with this family-friendly opportunity to learn about the Advent Wreath and make your very own to take home.

Supplies Provided. Cocoa and cookies included.

Led by Dr. Joy Galarneau and Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP

Sunday, November 8 ~ 1-4pm

In-House: Cost \$ 10 per adult/kids free

One Advent Wreath per family

THE WRITE TIME

Thursday, November 19 ~ 10am-Noon

Join Karen Bond and like-minded writers for our *second* get-together in a quiet, inspiring space for two hours of writing—memoirs, personal essays, short & long stories, journaling, and more! Bring what you're working on or write something new.

We'll also have prompts for those writers looking for that inspiration and encouragement.

Coffee, tea, and light snacks available ~ Free will offering



HEART AND SOUL QUEST For Women

***Putting the pieces together—
Honoring and crafting the mosaic
of my life.***

We live in a hurried and chaotic world where we may find ourselves constantly on the move. Come take some time to slow down. Examine the beauty of each tile—each aspect of your life. Contemplate the placement, the prominence of each piece as you step back to honor, admire, and perhaps rearrange a few tiles in the mosaic of your life.

This weekend will include input, time for journaling and reflection, and time to share with other women as we explore our lives more deeply.

Led by Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP

November 20-22

In-house \$225/via Zoom \$90

CULTIVATING GRATEFULNESS

NOVEMBER 24 ~ 10AM-3PM

**NOTHING RESTORES LIGHT TO THE SOUL
MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN WHEN WE
CULTIVATE GRATEFUL HEARTS.**

**SPEND TIME WITH US AS WE DEEPEN OUR
CONNECTION WITH THIS THANKSGIVING
SEASON AND THIS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE THAT
WILL ENRICH OUR LIVES WELL BEYOND THE
DAYS OF THIS SEASON OF THE YEAR.**

LED BY JOAN HORGAN

**IN-HOUSE COST: \$35
LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED.**



**"Hospitality is the key to new ideas, new friends, new possibilities. What we take into our lives changes us.
Without new people and new ideas, we are imprisoned inside ourselves."**

—Joan Chittister—



Scripture Study ~ December 1, 8, 15

"Angels, Shepherds, Magi, Oh My!"

Join us for this special Scripture Study featuring the Supporting Cast of Christmas! Together we will explore the accounts of Jesus' birth in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke; paying special attention to just a few of the "minor characters" whose presence sheds much light on the identity of Jesus and illuminates our own call to discipleship.

Facilitated by Dr. Joy Galarneau

10am-Noon via Zoom

\$20 per session/\$55 for all three

Wreath Lighting

November 29, and
December 6, 13, 20

7 -7:30pm via Zoom

Hosted by the
Galarneau-Braungard
Family —
Joy, John, and Georgie

Join us as we light the
candles of Hope, Peace, Joy,
and Love

Free will offering

Lectio Divina

December 1, 8, 15

7- 8:30 via Zoom

Led by Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP

Scripture passages will

correspond to the

Advent Scripture Study

Cost: \$15 per session/

\$40 for all three

When Grief Hits you out of nowhere - What can you do?

The more we understand the grief process, the better prepared we are to cope with the uncertainties that lie ahead. Author Eileen Clinton will explore the phenomenon often referred to as Grief Surges or *sudden temporary upsurges of grief (STUGs)*, by providing common causes and helpful coping strategies. Join us...

December 9 ~ 10am-3pm

In-house only \$35

Directed by Eileen Clinton

DRCC will be sponsoring a Tree in the
Festival of Trees at the
Schenectady County Historical Society.

The Festival runs from December 5 through 27
10am-4:30pm daily.

Please stop by the Historical Society,
located at 32 Washington Avenue in
Schenectady to see Our Tree in
the lovely display that rings in
the Yuletide Season.



Save the Date!

**MEN'S DAY OF REFLECTION
DECEMBER 12
TIME, TITLE & PRESENTER TBA**

WORDS MADE FLESH

Coloring Your Silent Present Moment Mantras
with BROTHER MICKEY MC GRATH

December 3

10am-3pm

**In-house only
Cost: \$35**



It's more important then ever, in these volatile and unsettling times, to start our mornings in the peaceful awareness of God's loving presence in every moment. Praying with MANTRAS—which are holy words and phrases deeply personal to us—are excellent ways to be mindful that God is always—at every moment—alive and well in our hearts and souls.

On this day-long retreat, Brother Mickey will help us give visual form and colorful shape to our morning prayers. Art is a perfect way to get lost in the present moment awareness that we are never alone and that creating beauty is the best way to calm our fears and anxieties. Don't watch the news. Don't text. Don't talk. Just listen to the silence. The Holy Spirit never, ever leaves us alone.



3 WISE MEN and 3 WISE WOMEN

On this weekend retreat we will explore the ways in which the Wisdom Figures of the Joyful Mysteries—from Mary's Annunciation and her Visitation with Elizabeth to Mary Magdalene on that Glorious Easter morning—can help us re-discover **HOPE, OPTIMISM, and CREATIVITY** in these challenging times.

*"ALL THROUGH LOVE,
NOTHING THROUGH FEAR."* St. Francis deSales

Presented by Br. Mickey McGrath, OSFS

In-house cost \$ 225 via Zoom \$90

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE THE SEASON
WITH THE DRCC CHOIR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

2 - 4 PM

In-house and via Zoom

Followed by COOKIES and cocoa



DECEMBER 31 EVENING OF REFLECTION

Join us as we ring in the New Year with an armchair pilgrimage to the Holy Land! Fr. Rick Lesser will be our guide. He will share highlights and insights from the three pilgrimages that he has made to the Holy Land. Together, we will travel to the land that Jesus called home.

The evening begins at 7:30pm with three options:

- ♦ In-house evening only \$35 (concludes at app. 12:30am)
- ♦ In-house evening program with overnight accommodations and breakfast \$70 (concludes at 10am)
- ♦ Enjoy the evening from your home via Zoom \$25

RECOVERY PROGRAMS

RECOVERY EVENINGS—A MONTHLY GATHERING FOR REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

October 7 ~ Resilience and Renewal

November 4 ~ Gratitude and Grace

December 2 ~ Living the Promises

Facilitated by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner 7:00-8:30pm via Zoom

Cost: \$15 per session

WOMEN'S RECOVERY WEEKEND SPIRITUALITY TODAY

OCTOBER 9-11

Spirituality is about sacred energy and relationship with God, ourselves and one another. Join us this weekend to listen, reflect, pray and celebrate together all that we have and all we are seeking in our challenging world. Lightheartedness will be available to all.

Facilitated by Sr. Kay Kanick, RSM
In house only \$225 (65+ \$210)

EVENING OF GRATITUDE

Join us for an evening of fellowship, reflection, and gratitude with friends in recovery. We'll begin by sharing dinner before viewing the award-winning documentary *Bill W.: Conscious Contact*. Following the film, we'll gather for an informal conversation, sharing insights and reflections.

We welcome you to come and celebrate gratitude, community, and the continuing gift of recovery.

Led by Dr. Susan Barber Skinner
November 17 ~ 6-8:30PM

In-house cost \$25 (Scholarships available)

MORE THAN JUST DESSERTS

Speaking of HOSPITALITY...

You are invited to the 28th Annual *More Than Just Desserts* event to be held on October 25, 2026.

Please join us for fun, music, laughter and an array of delicious delights while supporting the ministry of the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center.

During the first hour of the event, you will have the opportunity to:

- enjoy delectable food including many hot and cold appetizers, a carving station, soups, wine and soft drinks, as well as a hot chocolate bar
- view and select silent auction items for bidding
- purchase raffle tickets and much more

At the close of the auction you are invited to continue to share with friends, and taste many enticing, exquisitely prepared desserts available in the dining room.

We are looking forward to seeing you at this special event on
Sunday, October 25 ~ 5-7pm.

The More Than Just Desserts Committee

Honorary Chair Bishop Mark O'Connell

Co-Chairs Joan Thiesen and Susan Sweeney

**Susan Cafariella, Shannon Kelly,
Cheryl Steinhorst, Kerrie Wolf-Piechota,
Sr. Susan Zemgulis, OP**

"More Than Just Desserts" *Reservation Form*

R.S.V.P. before Monday, October

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

I/We **will** attend as:

\$50 per person \$ _____

I/We **cannot** attend, please accept this
contribution \$ _____

Enclosed is my check # _____ amount \$ _____ or

bill my M/C _____ Visa _____ Discover _____

Expiration date _____

(Please **PRINT** name as it appears on card)

Please make checks payable to:
Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
1945 Union Street, Niskayuna, NY 12309

(For those attending, the tax deductible portion of your contribution is the amount in excess of \$25 per person.)



ASSOCIATES CORNER

Being an Associate of the Dominican Sisters of Peace has given me a sense of belonging to a community where I can share my faith with others and also grow in my faith. I feel the Lord has led me to follow the Dominican Charism: Prayer, study, community and service. Through prayer, study and monthly gatherings, I strive to live and preach the Gospel message through both my words and actions. Our community is comprised of men and women from all walks of life and our members come from all denominational backgrounds. —Mary Ellen Powers, OPA—

If you would like more information or have any questions regarding the Dominican Associates please contact Linda Borowsky at Dove21@aol.com.

"Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become friend instead of enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines." —Henri Nouwen—

Welcome Home

The word hospitality comes from the Latin *hospes*, meaning both “guest” and “host.” From its earliest roots, hospitality has been more than offering food, shelter, or comfort; it is the sacred practice of making room for another person. Throughout Scripture, hospitality is a sign of God’s presence and love. Jesus reminds us “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35), connecting our welcome of others with our welcome of Christ himself.

I remember arriving at a retreat center many years ago after a long drive through rain and heavy traffic. I was tired, frustrated, and wondering if I should have come at all. Before I could even set down my bags, a volunteer greeted me with a warm smile and simply said, “We’re glad you’re here.” Nothing extraordinary happened, yet those few words changed everything. In that moment, I felt less like a visitor and more like someone who belonged.

Hospitality is often easiest when circumstances are comfortable, yet its deepest expression may be found in challenging moments—offering patience when we are tired, extending kindness to those who are different from us, listening without judgement, or making space for someone carrying grief, uncertainty, or loneliness. Every smile, greeting, shared meal, and helping hand becomes an invitation for another person to know they matter.

One of the greatest compliments we hear from retreatants is “I feel at home here.” As people pass through the doors of our retreat center, many arrive carrying burdens, questions, or simply longing for a rest. May our ministry of hospitality continue to assure each person who comes among us that they are welcomed, valued, and loved. In a very real sense, we are saying “Welcome home.”

~ Mary Anne ~

Registration Form for ANY Program:

Please fill out what applies to you & the program you are attending and mail with your payment to:

Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
1945 Union St., Niskayuna, NY 12309

Mrs. Ms. Mr. Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/ST/Zip _____

County _____

Phone (h) _____

(w) _____ (c) _____

Email _____

(Email is necessary for virtual retreat)

Name of Program _____

Check one: ___ in-house or ___ virtual

Retreat Date/s _____

Promoter _____

Dietary Needs _____

Special/Room Requests _____

Deposit: _____ coupon
Amount \$ _____ Check # _____

N.B. There is a \$20.00 fee for returned checks.

*Credit Card Reservations may be made via
website (www.dslcny.org)*

*or
phone (518-393-4169).*

For Grant purposes:

Age: Under 65 65/+

Veteran? YES NO

(Office Use Only)

BK _____ DB _____ CONF. _____ List _____

**If you would prefer to receive your
“Good News”
as an e-mail rather than a paper copy
please contact the office at 518-393-4169**

Consider yourself at home

Consider yourself one of the family

We've taken to you so strong

It's clear, we're going, to get along

Consider yourself, well in

Consider yourself a part of the furniture

There isn't a lot, to spare

Who cares?...Whatever we've got, we share!



~by Lionel Bart for the film “Oliver”



Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
Dominican Spiritual Life Center
1945 Union Street, Niskayuna, NY 12309

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit # 961

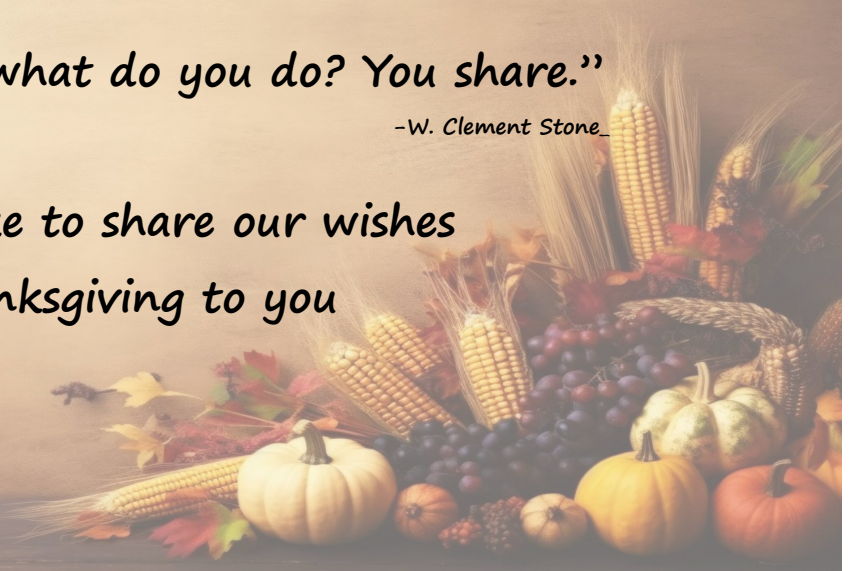
Or Current Resident

Place label here

"If you're really thankful, what do you do? You share."

-W. Clement Stone

***We at DRCC would like to share our wishes
for a very Happy Thanksgiving to you
and yours.***



\$5.00 Coupon

Present this coupon to receive \$5.00 off
a **day or evening** program at:
**Dominican Retreat & Conference
Center**
Niskayuna, NY

The Good News
published four times a year
Dominican Retreat & Conf. Center
1945 Union St, Niskayuna, NY 12309
518-393-4169
dslcny@nybiz.rr.com (email)
www.dslcny.org

\$10.00 Coupon

Present this coupon to receive \$10.00
off a **weekend** program at:
**Dominican Retreat & Conference
Center**
Niskayuna, NY