



Welcome and Orientation **Centering Prayer Retreat – Intensive/Post Intensive** **May 20-26, 2018**

Dear Retreat Participant,

Welcome to our May Centering Prayer retreat at Mercy Center!

Experience has taught us that guidelines help in creating a fruitful retreat environment and answer some of the common questions. So we offer the following Guidelines / Orientation, especially for those of you who will be attending Mercy Center for the first time:

Arrival and registration is from 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm on the opening day of your retreat. Dinner is 6:00 - 7:00 pm in the Willow dining room on the first floor. Orientation and the opening of the retreat is at 7:15 pm in the Aspen room on the ground floor. **See attached schedule for an overview of the retreat.**

This is a silent retreat. After our initial meal and gathering on opening evening, we will cultivate a spirit of silence and mindfulness that will allow the gifts of the retreat to move deeply in us.

On this retreat we will have two tracks: intensive and post-intensive. Both groups will practice several periods of Centering Prayer each day. This is the heart of our retreat and it is expected that everyone will participate in these periods. Those on the intensive track will view videos of Thomas Keating's "Spiritual Journey" series. Those on the post intensive track will have more periods of Centering Prayer and the opportunity to view video talks geared for more experienced practitioners who are already familiar with the "Spiritual Journey" core teachings. Our schedule will include the option for gentle morning yoga and midday liturgy. There will also be the opportunity to meet with the retreat leaders, and plenty of free time for walking, reflection, and rest.

Meditation can be done sitting on a chair, a cushion, or prayer bench - all provided. If you prefer to bring your own cushion or bench, you are welcome to do so.

Wear comfortable, loose clothing and easy walking shoes. Retreatants find that time outdoors on our beautiful grounds can be an important part of the retreat experience. In kindness towards those who are allergic, we also ask that you do not bring or wear scented lotions, soaps, or perfumes.

Our food service department offers a variety of nutritious local food. It is not staffed for special dietary needs, but our meals will be vegetarian for this retreat. People find the food plentiful and satisfying. We also provide a small kitchenette with a stove and refrigerator on the bedroom floors, and you are welcome to bring supplemental food if you wish. You can put your name on it and store it in the refrigerator in the kitchenette.



Retreatant bedrooms are all individual and bathrooms are on the hallway. Bed linens, towels, and bathrobes are provided. You may want to bring an alarm clock and slippers.

To help your retreat leaders prepare, please read and respond to the brief questionnaire that is attached to this email. You can fill it in and email it back. We would appreciate receiving it as soon as possible.

BODY WORK

Body consciousness is an important part of our ministry here at Mercy Center. There will be opportunities for massage or healing touch, on arrival afternoon and during the contemplative free times. You can schedule body work ahead of time by contacting the person below with whom you wish to schedule.

Gerald Granucci, CMT, CSP (massage) – 650-240-6927

Rosemary Perino, CMT (massage) – 650-703-9656

Stephanie Capodanno, HTCP, CHTP at 650-784-5999

BOOKSTORE

Open on Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

PARKING

Parking is limited at Mercy Center. For this reason and for the sake of the environment, please consider carpooling if you know someone who is coming to this retreat.

Our group will be using the Forest Parking Lot, to the right as you enter the main gates. If you like, you can drive up the road and drop your luggage at the registration desk just inside the front door of Mercy Center, and then take your car back down to the parking lot. If a disability makes this difficult, please ask someone at the front desk for assistance.

You will find a campus map at:

mercy-center.org/PDFs/Registration/CampusMap.pdf

You will find directions to Mercy Center at:

mercy-center.org/directions.html

Again, a very warm welcome. We look forward to this time together. If you have any further questions, please call Cristina Esguerra at 650-340-7454.

Every blessing,

Catherine Regan
Centering Prayer Coordinator