



**A message from
Judith Schaum, SSND**

The fourth biennial retreat for persons who are co-ministers with the School Sisters of Notre Dame in the Atlantic-Midwest Province was held June 21-24, 2015 at Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, PA. The retreat, titled “Claiming the Fire Within”, was enjoyed by 24 women and men from our sponsored and co-sponsored ministries as well as province staff directors. The group included board members, teachers, administrators and staff personnel.

The retreat included time for prayer and reflection, communal prayer and rituals and the thoughtful and inspiring presentations by presenters: Sharon Kanis, SSND and Peggy Russell, Associates Director. Using the sub-theme of “Journey to the Center,” Sharon and Peggy led the retreatants to a deeper



Retreatants gathered for presentations, reflections and times of prayer.

Claiming the fire within

Malvern Retreat Center

sense of their own spirituality and the spirituality of Blessed Theresa and Mother Caroline. Several sessions also included reflections on the four province commitments (Water, Haiti, Immigration, Trafficking). As one retreatant stated: “I received very valuable information in knowing the history of the SSNDs and charism which will help a great deal at my organization.”

Interspersed with the prayer/reflection time and the presentations were related activities. One evening, the



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Sponsored and co-sponsored ministries along with staff directors were invited to participate in the retreat and to share their own spiritual experiences.



Sister Sharon Kanis (left in blue jacket) and Peggy Russel, Associates Director (below) were the retreat presenters.



retreatants created their own mandalas. Another evening there was a panel presentation comprised of three of the participants who spoke about their own spiritual experiences. And, of course, there was time for the retreatants to explore the beautiful grounds, patronize the gift shop or visit the shrines on the campus. One of the great benefits was the opportunity to meet new friends, other people who work in similar ministries. One person commented: "It was a great opportunity to meet and get to know others, hearing their stories and their experiences."



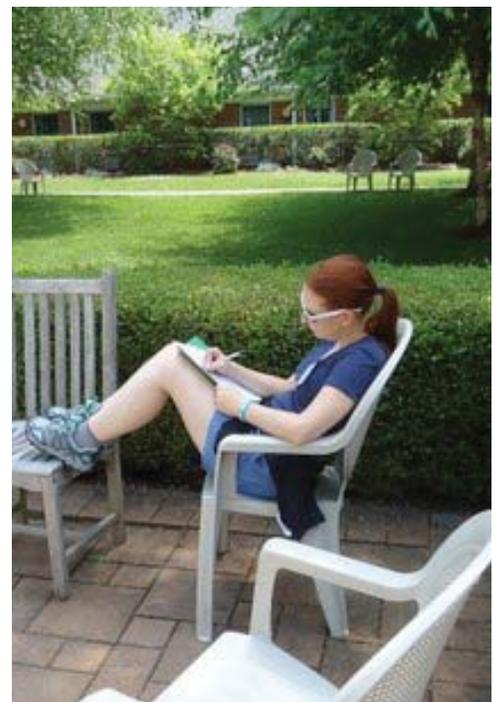
The Fire of God's Love

In one of her letters, Blessed Theresa said: "Our hearts remain cold and hard if they are not inflamed and melted in prayer." I am sure that each retreatant left Malvern with the fire of God's love and Theresa's charism burning more brightly and strongly. Thanks to all of you who prayed for the success of this retreat.

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Snapshots

Retreatants took time out to enjoy taking photos with a life-sized image of Pope Francis.



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