



# Under the Oaks

OUR LADY OF THE OAKS RETREAT HOUSE  
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## The Hon. Guy Bradberry, Chairman Board of Directors

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A thank you note to those  
who make this ministry possible.....

To Sissy, the kitchen staff, maintenance staff, grounds crew and all those who care for our facilities—thank you for all you do for The Oaks and helping people behind the scenes. Many people come here with a crisis or burdens that they don't share with many and you provided support for them. Your ongoing dedication is a blessing to us all.

To our Jesuits—Father Steve Kimmons, Father Lou McCabe and Father Don Saunders—we are blessed to have you as our spiritual leaders. Because of your example, many are coming and getting involved in our ministry. We are helping many souls in our community thanks to your guidance. Your ministry is assisting hundreds not to struggle as much with the challenges that life brings.

To our Board of Directors—thank you for being a wonderful example of how a ministry should serve each other. Your kindness and generosity of your time are a blessing to everyone. I am looking forward to seeing your hard work continue to bless this ministry.

To Al Cain—you are an inspiring leader. Thank you for taking the Oaks and our ministry with our mission to serve the community to the next level. I am praying that all of us in this ministry will follow your example.

To all—thank you for being so generous with your time. The way you quietly lead is inspiring. Because of you, we are all living a more biblical life.

May God bless you and this ministry!



## Fr. Steve Kimmons, S.J.

"When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return

to Herod, they left for their own country by another road" (Matthew 2:9-12 NRSV).

My great "epiphany" occurred in the second grade when I was cast as one of the Three Wisemen in a Christmas production for our elementary school. My great enlightened moment revealed to me that I did not have a theatrical career ahead of me! Sweating profusely under the bright lights, while wearing a fake beard and woolen bathrobe to make me look Middle Eastern, I had to sing one verse of "We Three Kings of Orient Are," while presenting the Christ child with my gift of myrrh. I had no idea what the latter was and was upset that I could not bear frankincense. Of course, I had no idea what frankincense was either, but frankincense sounded so much better than myrrh. I hope the original three kings—Melchior, Caspar and Balthasar—were not as traumatized by the experience as I was in the second grade!

As the years have passed and I have given up hope of ever being on Broadway one day, I understand a lot more about the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. In reality, these are not so much gifts to be given to God, but are gifts that God has given to each one of us. In the Sacrament of Baptism, we are anointed with the kingly oil and given rule within the Kingdom of God. Sharing in the kingship of God is the purest of all gold. In the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, we

are drawn into the depths of the mystery of the divinity of Christ and given a share in that salvific life and mission. We raise our hearts and minds to him just as the frankincense rises to lift our prayers. In the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, we enter more deeply into the mystery of His life and death within us and realize that the One who was swaddled in the manger has broken the bonds of death and hell for each of us. We are anointed with the myrrh of our own mortality in full faith in the God of the Covenant who has robed us in immortality.

In the liturgy of Christ, Epiphany is not about stables and donkeys and Wisemen. Epiphany is a wedding celebration. As the Bride of Christ, we have been washed and made pure through Baptism and are readied for the union with the Beloved. In the Epiphany, the wedding gifts have been brought forth, and in the Wedding Feast of Cana, the water has been turned into wine for the celebration of the great wedding feast! In the liturgy of the Church, these events come together in this one Feast of the Epiphany.

Many years ago, in the second grade, I had no idea what I was doing on that stage. At times today, I am just as lost as I was then, but today I know we have a great director who is merciful, just and patient and helps us along the way. This great God will give us all the gifts we need as we journey along "another road" away from Bethlehem.



## Albert S. Cain, III Executive Director

My best wishes to all of you in this New Year. May the good Lord continue to bless you and your family.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Memorial Day weekend, on Thursday, May 26th through Sunday, May 29th, 2022, we will host our first Men and Women's Veterans Retreat here at the Oaks. I had the pleasure of attending such a retreat in 2021 at the White House, our Jesuit retreat house in St. Louis, and I concluded that our area would benefit immensely from such an event.

Using the traditional Ignatian theme of "Finding God in all Things", this retreat will focus on topics such as.....Where was God during my experience of serving my country?; What effect did God's intervention have on me then?; What is unique about my life as a result of that experience?; Where is God in my life today?; Can I see God today in myself, in others, and in the world?

As a veteran myself of the U.S. Marine Corps, it is my intention to direct a portion of this retreat along with two other veterans. Father Rodolfo (Rudy) Casals, S.J, is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy. He served two tours on active duty in the Middle East before becoming a Jesuit priest. Currently Father Rudy is enrolled in graduate school studying social work at Columbia University in New York.

We will also have the services of Dr. Lynn Aurich, a Marine veteran and Christian clinical psychologist in Lafayette. Dr. Aurich has been in practice for over 40 years in family and individual counseling. He has specialized in the psychological rehabilitation of people with brain injuries and related trauma and moral injury. He has also spent much time in the treatment of PTSD. Additionally, Dr. Aurich is an author and his most popular book, *Holy Spirit: Agent of Change*, clarifies the Holy Spirit's ability to produce remarkable and lasting change in individuals and the methods by which He achieves it.

The combination of the three presenters, their life experiences and their relationships with Jesus Christ we pray will provide for a rewarding, faith-building weekend. The format for the retreat is under development. While it will contain some of the traditional Ignatian preached retreat practices, we plan to provide a few new things. In addition to providing times for silence, we will also offer times for sharing. We also plan to have an interdenominational service in addition to the Catholic Mass.

The registration fee for the entire retreat will be \$200.00, and a \$25.00 deposit in advance will secure a room. We house 50, and a waiting list will be established with the 51st person to register. Please spread the "good news" of this retreat to other veterans. Those who are interested in attending are encouraged to call the retreat house and speak with Sissy (337) 662-5410 and register or visit our website at [www.ourladyoftheoaks.com](http://www.ourladyoftheoaks.com) and register on line.

I look forward to seeing each of you when you visit the Oaks for your annual retreat.



