



**JESUIT SPIRITUAL RENEWAL CENTRE IN PICKERING**

July 2021

News Letter No. 32

**GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MANRESA**



Dear friends,

Hello from Manresa! I hope and pray that you and your loved ones are staying safe and that you have been vaccinated. Let's hope for some opportunities for a break this summer.

Our grounds have been beautiful this spring and early summer, thanks to the weather we are getting and to the hardworking people who care for the place. The weather is allowing us to engage in spiritual direction in various places on the lawn.

I want to give you a sense of what is happening right now. We start with a description from Fr. Michael Coutts of the televising of the TV Mass from our Chapel. Mr. Mike Hyland, the Chair of our Building Committee, offers some sense of the progress being made for the future. He also mentions recent Zoom retreats that you can check out. We also let you know about a couple of upcoming programs. Finally, Fr. Philip Shano offers a few reflections on our spiritual lives during this time of COVID.

God bless you and your loved ones! I look forward to welcoming you back in-person soon.

Fr. Henk



*Paul Baker's flower gardens -- Manresa 2021*

## TELEVISION MASS AT MANRESA

In the middle of the Covid-19 atmosphere, the Manresa Retreat Centre was buzzing with hope and optimism. The time: June 7-18. Loretto Abbey, where the Daily Televised Mass (DTVM) is taped, was closed for maintenance. The DTVM team under Deacon Mike Walsh came to St. Ignatius Chapel to tape six Masses a day for two weeks. June 7 saw moving trucks bring in lights, audio, video and sundry equipment. It looked like a Hollywood set.

For the next two weeks, 53 priests and two Bishops from Ajax to Hamilton came to celebrate Mass. Our own “home-grown” Henk van Meijel and Michael Coutts celebrated Mass every day – and twice on some days. It was an eye opening and jaw dropping experience as Jesuits from LaStorta and Rene Goupil came to view or even join in the taped Mass celebration. Kim States in the Kitchen and Marion Graham in housekeeping fed and tidied up each day. The experience was positive on the part of both visitors and hosts. “Let’s do it again” was echoed by all.



*St. Ignatius Chapel set up for TV Mass*

by Fr. Michael Coutts, S.J.

## PLANNING FOR A NEW BUILDING AND FUTURE PROGRAMS

As the Province of Ontario moves closer to relaxing Covid restrictions, Manresa is busy making plans for future retreats, and our Building Committee anxiously awaits the opportunity to gather in-person to discuss replacing Fleming Hall. To date, preparations continue towards the creation of our new building website, our Stakeholders subcommittee are busy working on the next steps to ensure a successful capital campaign, and our construction group await the construction industry to return to business as usual.

To coincide with the “Year of St Joseph” the Building Committee have dedicated its work to St Joseph as we pray for his intercession at every meeting. You may wish to pray with us as we journey together on this exciting new venture.

by Mr. Mike Hyland

## ***PRAYER TO ST JOSEPH***

*Dear St Joseph, as we plan Manresa's new retreat house, a place of refuge, healing, and inspiration, to "come and rest awhile", we ask you to journey with us.*

*Place all of us under your protection: those who plan for its construction, those who seek financial support from the community, all who offer their talents and time to make it become a reality, and all future retreatants.*

*St Joseph, carpenter and builder, patron of workers, patron of the Jesuits, patron of Canada and patron of the universal Church, please intercede for us with your Son, Jesus, in our task, guiding our decisions, and keeping us mindful that all is For the Greater Glory of God.*

*St Joseph, pray for us.*

*Amen*

## **MANRESA ZOOM RETREATS**

We're all looking forward to returning to our regular retreats at Manresa. Covid saw the Retreat Team adjust to the restrictions by offering Zoom Retreats to those of us stuck at home. Below are a few that Manresa offered by Zoom. You can watch them on Manresa's YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWzGTMP5TdEeduAdlZbsvZg>

Advent – "The Church in the Time of Covid" – Fr Michael Coutts, S.J. (retreat - School Chaplains)

January – "Gone Fishing" – Fr Michael Coutts, S.J. (Ignatian)

February – "Knowing Myself as a Child of God" – Fr Henk van Meijel, S.J. (Ignatian)

March – "... Until We Let Go Absolutely" – Julie Godwin (Women's 12 Step)  
"Rooted and Grounded in Love" – Fr John Sullivan, S.J. (Ignatian)

April – Triduum Weekend Retreat – Fr Henk van Meijel, S.J.

May – "Do I Need This Weekend Retreat? What is God's Call?" – Fr Michael Coutts, S.J. (Ignatian)  
"Igniting your Spirituality through the 12 Steps" – Kathy Dempsey (12 step)

June – "Silent Music: Encountering God in Silence" – Fr Scott Lewis, S.J. (Ignatian)

## **RETREATS COMING SOON**

*WE ARE OFFERING EIGHT DAY INDIVIDUALLY DIRECTED  
AND NON-DIRECTED RETREATS FOR MEN AND WOMEN*

The pandemic has limited the possibilities for in-person retreats. Most have been virtual. Manresa is pleased to offer two dates for in-person eight-day directed and non-directed silent retreats this summer. We ensure a safe environment with a limited number of participants.

An individually directed retreat offers participants a silent and peaceful setting for eight days for you to be in prayer and reflection and meet daily with an experienced spiritual director. If you would like a private retreat on your own with no direction, this too is available.

You will benefit from all the usual Manresa amenities: silence, a private room, three meals a day, daily celebration of the Eucharist, and access to the grounds at their summer best. There are no group activities. Space is limited, so you would be wise to sign up soon!

This retreat begins with dinner served at 5:30 p.m. and ends with a lunch.



*St. Ignatius Chapel*

### **EIGHT DAY INDIVIDUALLY DIRECTED RETREAT**

July 22, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m. -- July 30, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m. **OR**

August 3, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m. -- August 11, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m.

\$960.00 Suggested Offering

### **EIGHT DAY PRIVATE RETREAT - NO DIRECTION**

July 22, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m. -- July 30, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m. **OR**

August 3, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m. -- August 11, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m.

\$800.00 Suggested Offering

Register at <https://manresa-canada.ca/events/> OR email: [registration@manresa.ca](mailto:registration@manresa.ca)

**A JOURNEY OF HOPE - A Day of Reflection for Catholic  
Parents of Young Adults with Mental Health Issues**

**Saturday, October 2, 2021**

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at Manresa

Facilitated by Sr. Mary Rowell, csj

Suggested Offering: \$50.00

For information or to register contact:

**Mike Hyland: 647-296-2499 OR [mikehyland@bell.net](mailto:mikehyland@bell.net)**

**(N.B. A poster with the same information as above  
is at the bottom of this Newsletter)**

**FOOD FOR YOUR SOUL: JOHN CASSIAN,  
THE SPIRITUAL LIFE, AND COVID**

The pandemic and its resultant isolation have affected the psychological life of most of us. There are plenty of things out there about the effects on sleep, dreams, depression, and mental health. Spiritual well-being has also experienced an impact. I found help on the practice of the spiritual life in an unexpected source.

A year or so ago, a friend recommended a small book called *Thoughts Matter – The Practice of the Spiritual Life*, by Mary Margaret Funk, O.S.B. This Benedictine prioress brings us back to John Cassian, a fourth-century monk. He invited his early Christian readers to seek God by knowing and stabilizing their thoughts. Funk claims that “a mind at peace, stilled, available for conscious thinking at will is of major value for those of us who confront chaos, confusion, noise, and numbness.” Cassian and Funk help us see that all our random thoughts are clustered into several areas: food, sex, things, anger, dejection, acedia (or spiritual apathy), vainglory, and pride. It was in reflecting on Funk’s chapter on acedia that all kinds of lights went on regarding the relationship between pandemic isolation and acedia.

Acedia is an area that we don’t talk about very much. Most of us don’t really understand what it is. Funk sees it as profound weariness of the soul. My heart is distressed. A turning point in my insight into the connection with our pandemic isolation was when she said that hermits and desert dwellers were especially prone to acedia. In many respects, we have all been exposed to our hermit selves. What I mean by that is that the pandemic lockdowns and isolation have turned us inwards. Many of us turned to food or drink and other comforts. Perhaps the ones emerging intact from COVID will have become more monk-ish.

Funk says that most notions that are identified with acedia (spiritual sloth, laziness, etc.) don’t get to the heart of what it is, namely an illness of the soul. There have been many times this year when I have thought, I’m bored or I’m depressed or I am in a bad mood or I have no motivation or I’m listless. Or I think, what’s the use, why am I doing all this? Sleep patterns are off. Dreams are stranger or more vivid than usual. Funk refers to Psalm 91’s image of the *noonday devil*. She speaks of the soul being weary.

John Cassian’s writings were primarily directed to monks, but Funk stresses that his teachings are instructive for all who take seriously the spiritual life. Cassian says that the best way out of acedia is to reverse all the tendencies that come from the thought. This requires knowing ourselves and our tendencies. Avoid laziness or idleness. Try to be more focused on work. For me personally, it was recognizing that I was becoming too dependent on certain habits in order to avoid the effects of

acedia. The reliance was deadening me. Far better to feel the effects of the pandemic isolation than to cover them over!

Cassian and Funk have much more to offer us. I was struck by the reminder that acedia does have some advantages. For instance, the benefit of true leisure emerges. I think that I have become better this year at just relaxing and occupying myself with simple activities – a film on Netflix or sitting with a good book while relaxing under a tree.

by Fr. Philip Shano, S.J.

# A Journey of Hope

A Day of Reflection for Catholic Parents of  
Young Adults with Mental Health Issues



**Saturday, October 2, 2021**

**9:00 am—5:00 pm**

## Schedule for the Day:

Welcome & Opening Prayer  
Introductions & Story Telling  
Break  
Sr Mary's first talk  
Lunch  
Sr Mary's second talk  
Small group discussions  
Large group sharing  
Sr Mary's closing remarks  
Mass – Fr. Henk van Meijel, S.J.

**Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre**  
**2325 Liverpool Road**  
**Pickering, Ontario L1X 1V4**  
**manresa-canada.ca**

For more information or to register contact:

Mike Hyland at 647-296-2499 OR

mikehyland@bell.net

Space is limited.

Suggested Offering: **\$ 50.00** per person Includes break and lunch.

You may donate at:

<https://manresa-canada.ca/support-manresa/donate/>

*(Cheques are always welcome.)*



## **This special Day of Reflection will be facilitated by Sr. Mary Rowell, csj.**

Sr. Mary is a Sister of St. Joseph in Canada based at Villa St. Joseph Ecology and Spirituality Centre in Cobourg, Ontario where she leads retreats, courses, and is a spiritual director. She provides retreats and workshops across Canada and the United States. Formerly a nurse and nurse educator, Sr. Mary worked in health care and education around the world. Sr. Mary holds a Bachelors degree in Philosophy and a Masters in Medical Law and Ethics from the University of London, U.K. and a Doctorate in Theology from the University of Durham, U.K. where her research focused on the interface of bioethics and theology. Sr. Mary is also a member of the Board of Directors at Covenant House.