

### What Is a Silent Retreat?

A silent retreat provides an opportunity for a woman to experience the love of God in her soul and the power of God as He moves in her life. It offers an invitation to a woman to release her responsibilities for everyone else and to allow God to be responsible for her for the weekend. It is a weekend tryst with the One Who loves her the most.

It is a time of rest and quiet, of pondering and prayer, of being still and listening with the ear of her heart. God will not disappoint. He will make His Presence felt and known. He will speak and it will be special.

This is an opportunity for each woman to tend to her personal relationship with her God... to fall in love with Him... to become aware of His yearning for her and His desire to be closer and more intimate. God waits for each woman to turn her undivided attention to Him and to slow down enough to let Him love her as He has always desired...to give her rest and respite in His Divine Presence. When any person loves someone, they make every effort to spend time with the loved one, to share their hearts and lives with them and to listen to the beloved speak to them. They attend carefully to the loved one. This is what a silent retreat is about, but the loved one is Divine... it is God. A woman and her God alone together! Imagine that!

Jesus set a fine example for us as it is written in scripture. (Mark 1: 32-39) Jesus, during His public life, consistently balanced the active life with silence and solitude. His relationship with His Father funded his active life. He was as busy as we are, but He never let His Father be less than top priority. Women understand the active and serving part, but often neglect the silent and solitude time with their God, which is what funds their actions with a loving attitude and the patience to carry out their duties.

It is said that God's first language is silence. A silent retreat then, is a woman's opportunity to be with God with no intrusions or distractions. A silent retreat is as important as her bible studies, her prayer groups and her community faith sharing times. It is a time for setting aside all a woman's worthy activities to engage in "alone time" with God. Can you give Him this one weekend? Just God and you? Think about it and pray about it.

Come... He is waiting for you!

Blessings ! Dianne Albrecht

## **Grand Silence**

**“God’s first language is silence,” says Fr. Thomas Keating. It allows us to be more aware of our inner world; it brings us to the center. The still, small voice of the great Mystery can touch us. In order to create an environment that allows us to enter this place of inner stillness, we will be observing Grand Silence this weekend.**

**Grand Silence invites us to come away and rest a while. Silence in this context is more than not talking, though that is certainly part of it. We cease greeting each other in any way. We allow each other to be completely free of hand gestures, body language, smiles, or eye contact. Strive to create a silent environment. Move chairs gently. Close doors softly. Quietly use table utensils. With freedom from social interaction and a quiet atmosphere, we find an inner stillness develops that invites us to deeper awareness of the things of the spirit.**