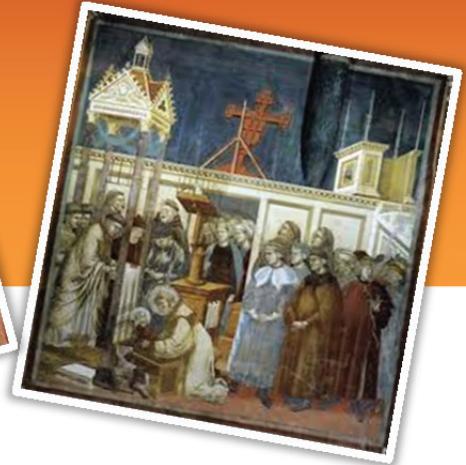
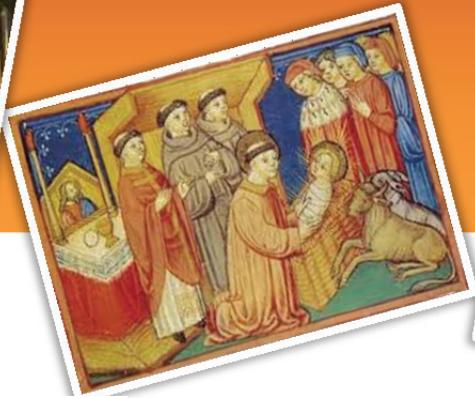
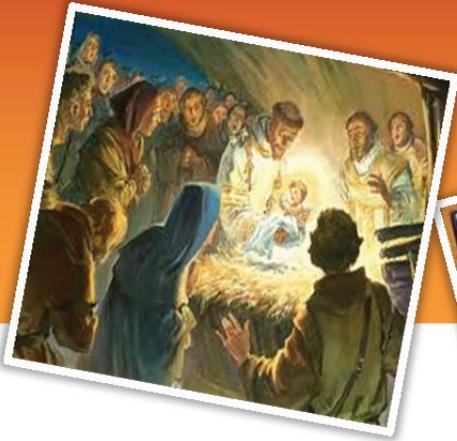


St. Francis Retreat

Christmas 2020

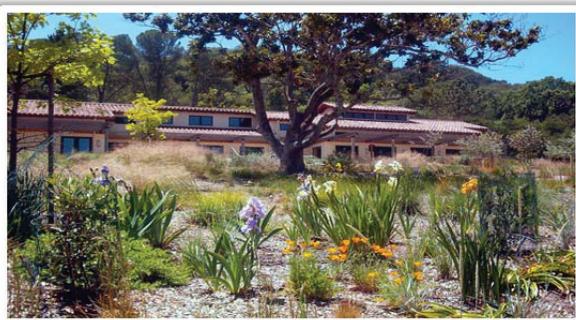
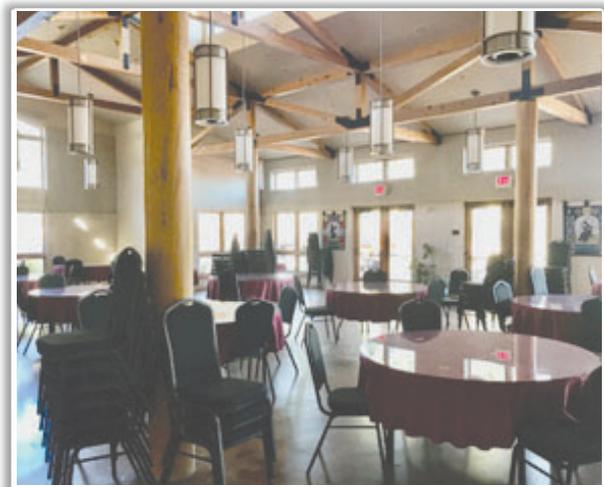


What A Year It Has Been!

The New Year started out like gang busters. The calendar for 2020 was filled with reservations for groups of all sizes and from many different places. Some were new and others had been coming to St. Francis for several years. We were looking forward to beginning the renovation of St. Francis Court that has been in planning for some time. There were great hopes for 2020.

March 18, 2020

Covid struck! Our last group left this day and no groups have been able to benefit from our wonderful facilities and grounds. In Franciscan tradition, our twenty-three employees would continue to be paid until July 1, 2020. Fortunately, we were able to take advantage of PPP, provided by the government, assisting with two months' salary. July 1, 2020, eighteen of our employees were furloughed or let go, because of a lack of work and no income to support them. Five were maintained as a skeleton crew and working fifty percent of their normal hours.



Summer 2020

There was hope that summer would enable us to open our doors. This did not occur. October looked promising, and this did not materialize. Now, here we are in December and future opening is not imagined until at least spring! Life is put on hold, not only for St. Francis but for all of us.



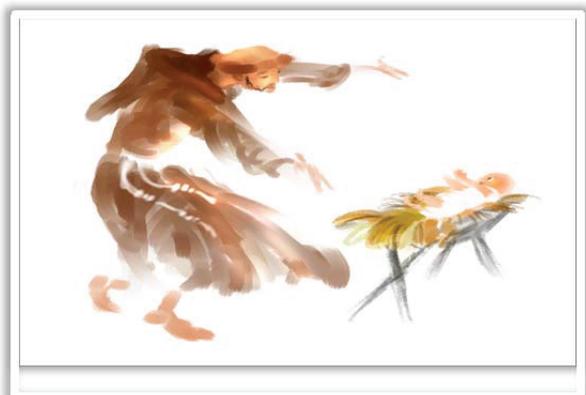
St. Francis Retreat

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Advent

Advent is a time of patient and hope filled waiting. Each Wednesday of Advent, a zoom Advent Day of Recollection is presented to help us focus us on Advent hope. Our topics will be: God Does Comes to All Who are Patient; Has Creeping Joy Found Its Way into My Life; God Speak to Me Where I Live; and A New Light Shines into My Darkness. Information and registration for these days can be found on our website: www.stfrancisretreat.com.



As this year comes to an end, let's be grateful to God for manifesting himself to each of us. The Staff at St. Francis Retreat are grateful to all our benefactors. This year, we are asking for your prayers and financial support to be able to meet our ongoing expenses. Our costs are **\$30,000** a month to keep our doors open to maintain our beautiful facility. Please consider a gift to St. Francis Retreat. You can contribute at: www.stfrancisretreat.com or send your gift by mail to St. Francis Retreat, P.O. Box 970, San Juan Bautista, CA. 95045.

Thank you very much for your support. Christmas Blessings to All!

Fr. Ken Laverone OFM, Executive Director and the Friars and Staff

Christmas 2020

We celebrate the hope and joy of light coming into our darkness. Unfortunately, many will not be able to gather with families or in Church to celebrate the new light. But it is a time of remembering who we are and the grace we can offer each other. We share our love and concern with family and friends this Christmas time.



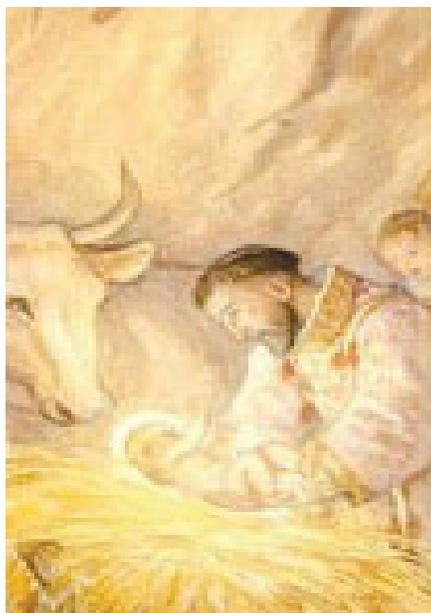
*From the staff at Saint Francis Retreat,
we wish you a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year.*

May God Bless You and Yours!

Donate Online

Click the button to donate securely through our website.

Thank you for supporting St. Francis Retreat.



Christmas 2013, Pope Francis made a visit to Greccio, the place where St. Francis created the first Nativity and a surprise visit to a group of young people nearby. Pope Francis told the young, "Reflect on two important signs: the star of Bethlehem and the baby in a manger. The sky is full of stars. But there is the star that inspired Three Wise Men to leave everything and journey into the unknown. We must all be on the lookout for a special star that calls us to do something great, to strike out on a journey. We must ask for the grace of discovering the star that God wants me to follow, because that star will lead me to Jesus. The second sign, when the angels tell the shepherds about a baby born in a manger. This shows, how God lowered himself to be like us, to walk before us, with smallness, with humility, which goes against pride, self-importance, and arrogance. Think about whether our lives are meek, humble and not full of pride. The Three Wise Men were very smart because they let themselves be led by the star. The splendor of Herod's palace did not fool them, because they were able to sense that the king they sought was not of this palace. Let our lives be guided by these two signs — two gifts from God. Always have that star that will guide us and the humility to rediscover Jesus in the little ones, the humble, the poor, and in those who are a cast off by society."