

... More on Glen Rose ...

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tum Universe - Paradoxology, will be April 17-18.

Sr. Miriam has served on the Hartford, CT Archdiocesan Board for Urban Ministries, chaired a pre-synod subcommittee for considering the role of women, and led several major liturgical events.

Sister also served on a team that published a series of booklets for a network of small Christian communities for use as discussion guides.

Her Ph.D. is from Princeton Theological Seminary, and she also has three honorary degrees from:

Albertus Magnus College in New Haven, CT; Saint Joseph College in West Hartford, CT; and Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Sister Miriam Therese is a popular speaker and we are grateful that she has accepted our invitation.

Our Glen Rose Retreat/Gathering begins with potluck around 6 pm April 17 and will close with Eucharist about 3:30 pm with Father Joe Schumacher as the priest celebrant.

If you are interested in participating, registration forms will be mailed in March.

Keep In Touch

Do you have comments or questions about Partners in Ministry? Please contact us at:

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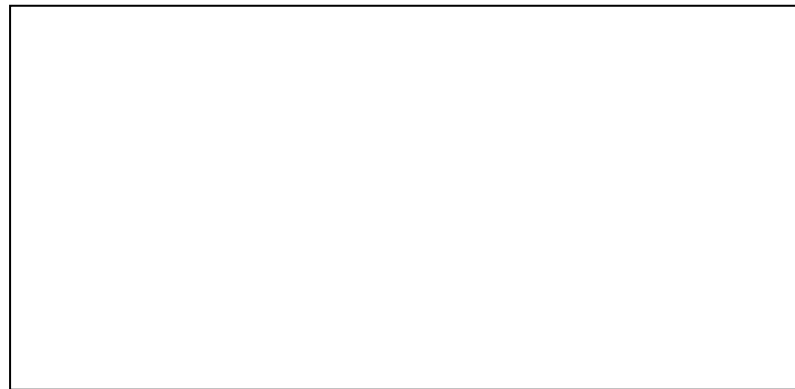
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Winter Advent/Solstice Celebration

Lay ministers ring in the season with singing, prayer



Retreat photos by Ed Houters

This year's Winter Advent/Solstice celebration was celebrated Dec. 21 at the Catholic Renewal Center.

By Barbara McAninch

"Sing out, earth and skies! Sing of the God who loves you! Raise your joyful cries! Dance to the life around you!" we sang out to begin our Winter Advent/Solstice celebration on December 21, 2008 at the Catholic Renewal Center.

The Solstice occurs on the darkest, longest night and shortest day of our year, and we stop to pray and reflect because the days following lengthen and bring us the light. During our Advent season we await that joyful light.

Lenore Sordyl Thompson planned our liturgy for this celebration using a combination of songs, Psalms, and readings from

"Winter Solstice at the Moab Slough" by Terry Tempest Williams and the "Daily Meditation" from the Henri Nouwen Society. Lenore played the piano beautifully and a holiday visitor, Kathleen Fones (Barbara McAninch's daughter) led the singing. The lectors were Marti Seaton, Dick Carpenter, and Barbara McAninch.

Thanks so much to all of them for sharing their gifts with us.

The pot luck dinner was filled with the usual great cooking of the Partners groups, and the clean-up was brightened by Lenore's playing of all of our favorite Christmas carols, allowing us to work and sing.

Prayer Requests

Please take a moment to pray for our family and friends, especially:

- David DeThomasis
- Cory Hejl, nephew of Cathi Staggs
- Mauricio Hernandez & St. Stephen's Support Committee
- Keith, Bea and children
- Ed Lesser
- Carlos and Terri Lynn Luster, daughter and son-in-law of Maria Ruemenapp
- Rudy Seward
- John and Donna Sweeney
- Joe Williams and Family on loss of his brother
- Louise Zeder and The Zeder Family
- Justice throughout our nation and our world for ALL people.

Join us for Glen Rose Retreat

By Barbara McAninch

Our speaker for the annual Glen Rose Retreat this April will be Sr. Miriam Therese Winter, a member of the Medical Mission Sisters and author of several books.

Sister Miriam Therese has just published a book entitled *PARADOXOLOGY: Spirituality in a Quantum Universe*, from which we take the title of our retreat.

This year's program, Glen Rose: Spirituality in a Quan

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Sr. Miriam Therese Winter

Round II of 2008-09 PIM II

By Larry Peplinski

As you may recall, the session planned originally for November was canceled because of inclement weather, so the second installment of Partners in Ministry II took place Jan. 24.

Fortunately, albeit a little nippy, the next session found a little under seventy, dedicated souls gathered again at Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Arlington. We came to continue our engaging discussion of Paul Lakeland's book *"Catholicism at the Cross Roads."* This time we centered on chapters 5, 6 and 7, and also spent some time focusing on the *Ten Steps Toward a More Adult Church*.

After we opened the morning with a little quiet, meditative time watching the video, "Because we love God," we began by discussing the chapters that were designated at the last gathering. Everyone was able to participate in the morning's discussion in an atmosphere of comfort and respect. It's always good when we can play together nicely.

We then broke up into separate table groups to discuss what might be done towards making the ten steps, as Mr. Lakeland spelled out, come to fruition. It was very enlightening to hear their responses and ideas. And all the delicious goodies that people brought to snack on during the morning helped it get to an even better start.

Monsignor Joseph Scantlin Pastor of Most Blessed Sacrament then shared with us his views on, and experiences with, Church Authority. It is a blessing when we can hear a priest speak candidly



Retreat photos by Ed Houters

A faithful group of lay ministers meet for Partners in Ministry II, which is in its second year of programming.

and knowing that what they have to say is done within a community of safety and protection. Someone wished that they could clone Fr. Joe!

The next meeting of PIM II will be at MBS on March 14th at 8:45a.m. to 2 p.m., only a month before the Annual Glen Rose Retreat. Although we had a wonderful turnout, there is always room for you, the one who wanted to attend but was unable to for whatever reason.

Every person who attends changes the dynamic of the group in ways we can't even define. The group is always incomplete, but your presence will make it more complete. We generally try to stay on topic, but occasionally someone

will bring up something related that makes our ears perk up and stirs our hearts because all of you are involved in various activities – a bunch of eyes will see a whole lot more than just one set.

That is one of the blessings of being community; when one grows, we all have the opportunity for growth. Our devoted Ed Houters has posted some pictures of the last session on the website, www.ministriesoutreach.org. Click on the PIM II at the lower left hand corner to get a taste of what you might have missed.

We'll see you in March though won't we? Is that everyone saying, "Of course," that I hear? Wonderful, I'll save a chair for you. Blessings and Peace.

Partners in Ministry the second time around

By Hester Bender

St. Thomas is one of my favorite saints. Because the Lord was so patient with Thomas, I have faith that His kind patience will be there for me, too. Partners in Ministry came into my life at a time when I was losing patience with myself and the Church.

After my divorce in the early 70s, I slipped quietly out of the Church, feeling there was no place for me. Several years ago, I returned to my Catholic faith but was struggling with the old feeling of not belonging. I was about to slip on out again, when Partners in Ministry came to Graham. Sisters' Kay and Pat to the rescue!

Before Partners in Ministry, I knew nothing about Vatican II. When I bought the book, I was quite sure that such a lengthy book, written by Bishops from around the world and translated from the Latin, would be impossible to read much less understand. Happily, I found the Documents quite readable and inspired. Vatican II brought the Church back into my world and answered many difficult questions for me.

The active part of the Church, for me, had always been the priests, brothers and sisters. I had never considered the importance of the laity. Vatican II wrote about the laity (which meant me!), with all its shortcomings, as the back bone of the Church. Without the laity there was no community. Without community there was no Church.

The Church, historically was inclusive rather than exclusive. The Documents further the idea of a global community, with all its differences, knit together by a love and worship of God. Partners in Ministry brought me out of my isolation, but Vatican II enabled me to fit within the Church. My search for a spiritual community was over.

After my initial course with Partners in Ministry, I was anxious to travel again, in community with others, through my Catholic faith. This continuing study is necessary for a doubting Thomas. I am now part of a wider community and find that there are those outside my own parish, who are there to help me grasp the complexity of scripture and Catholic tradition.

I look forward to those days together, when we pray, question, share, sing, celebrate and of course eat (thank you Mrs. Aziere for a great lunch each time we meet).

Guided by the wisdom of Sisters' Kay and Pat, we are encouraged to think, learn, pray and then step up to the plate...(not just the dinner plate!) The laity also has a God given vocation.

I think the quest to 'know' never ends. I will probably sign up a third time for Partners in Ministry because it challenges my mind, deepens my faith and brings me to a greater understanding and a closer relationship with, "My Lord and my God."

... Update on Harry Miller ...

By Pat Miller, ssnd

Because you have asked, I would like to update you on Harry and the difficult "spot" in which he finds himself.

The civil war in Sri Lanka has been going on since 1985, caused by the Tamils being thrown out of parliament by the Sinhalese.

They are on their "last legs" in a jungle, not allowing the people who are trapped there to escape.

So says the news, which also says



Harry Miller, sj

that the government army (read Sinhalese) shoots anyone who tries.

Harry is safe, in Batticaloa, some 50 -75 miles from the "jungle" in which the leaders of the Tamil Tigers are holed up.

He says that the government has thrown bombs at the hospital in which wounded tamils have been taken for treatment in northern Sri Lanka.

Pray for him, and especially for the people on both sides of this crazy war who want nothing but peace.