



# LAY MINISTRY PROGRAM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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## CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK SISTER ANGELA

As you know from reading the article in the Tablet and our e-blasts, in September Sr. Angela will be leaving the Pastoral Institute to assume the new diocesan position of Secretary for Catholic Education and Formation. It seems appropriate, therefore, that we pay tribute to her leadership of the Pastoral Institute that began in 2000.

For countless numbers of people, Sr. Angela has been the face of the Pastoral Institute and the excellent programs that prepare lay persons for leadership in the Church in Brooklyn and Queens. Her attitude of service is evident in the great lengths that she has gone through for the many persons over the years that have been a part of the Lay Ministry Program. The joy that she gets from her ministry is apparent by the smile that always seems to crease her face.

Sister has shown boundless energy as she planned, administered, met and drove all over this diocese to make sure that the newest class site was satisfactory or to observe instructors, to lead the days of reflection or meet with pastoral associates, to coordinate supervisors and make sure that pastors understood the necessity of having well-formed lay leadership. All the while Sr. Angela models what it means to be a humble servant leader.

On behalf of all of the lay pastoral leaders that you have touched, thank you and best wishes in your new position.

*May you enjoy a relaxing and fun summer.  
If you are traveling, we wish you a safe journey!*

## ALUMNI REUNION 2009

Nearly 100 commissioned lay pastoral leaders gathered at the Mary Louis Academy on Saturday, May 30th for the annual Alumni Reunion. The day began with a presentation on the topic of "Theology of the Body" by Dr. Joanne Heany-Hunter, professor at St. John's University. Afterwards there was time for catching up with familiar faces and meeting new people while

enjoying a lovely lunch. This event also served as a fundraiser for the Pastoral Institute Fund for Lay Leadership Formation and we are proud to report that \$2,000 was raised due to the generous nature of the alumni. Thank you to everyone who helped to plan this event, with special appreciation to those who donated baskets for our raffle.



**“Christ has no  
body now but  
yours,  
No hands, no  
feet on earth but  
yours,  
Yours are the  
eyes with which  
he looks  
compassion on  
this world.  
Yours are the  
feet with which  
he walks to do  
good,  
Yours are the  
hands, with  
which he blesses  
all the world.  
Yours are the  
hands, yours are  
the feet,  
Yours are the  
eyes, you are his  
body. ”**

- St. Teresa of  
Avila

## ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Congratulations to our alumni who have completed their

M.A. Degrees in Theology at St. John's University:

Susan Karcher (Class of 2002)  
James Lonergan (Class of 2004)

## REPORT ON FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY

A great big thank you to all who pitched in during these difficult financial times to help raise over \$5,500 for the Pastoral Institute during this past year. A little over \$4,000 will be deposited to the **Pastoral Institute Fund for Lay Leadership**

**Formation** that will help to pay tuition for needy participants and/or parishes. Included in this total is \$2,000 in individual donations and \$2,000 raised in connection with the Alumni Reunion. Also, almost \$1,500 was collected in

dues which have helped defray the expenses that the Pastoral Institute incurs in connection with the Alumni Association and its offerings. Many blessings to all those who helped in any way, big or small!

## PASTORAL INSTITUTE'S WEBSITE

In connection with a diocesan initiative to revamp its website the Pastoral Institute has made modifications to its content. Visit us on the web and see our new videos and brochures. You

will also find a presentation about the Lay Ministry Program made by Joe Freda (Class of 2008) at St. Joan of Arc. Joe's talk was the first time that the Pastoral Institute has appeared

on YouTube. We plan many more changes to our website in the coming months including the addition of more videos and a section specifically for our alumni.

[http://www.dioceseofbrooklyn.org/pastoral\\_inst/lay.aspx](http://www.dioceseofbrooklyn.org/pastoral_inst/lay.aspx)

## SPEAKERS PROGRAM

During the months of February and March the Pastoral Institute piloted a program where commissioned pastoral leaders visited and made presentations at parishes in the diocese to talk about the Pastoral Institute and its Lay Ministry Program. These talks were well received by everyone involved and we intend to have more of these. But we need your help.

In order to reach more people and tell them about **“the best kept secret in the diocese”** we need more volunteers to go out to the parishes. Not everyone has to be a speaker because we need people to accompany them to make sure things are coordinated and to distribute materials. In addition to one weekend spent at a parish, the time commitment

involves two meetings – one for training and one for evaluation – at the Immaculate Conception Center in Douglaston.

If interested in helping or if you have questions, contact Jerry Tortorella by phone or email at 718-229-8001, ext. 350 or [pastoralinstitute@rcdob.org](mailto:pastoralinstitute@rcdob.org).

## ONLINE CONTINUING EDUCATION

As a commissioned lay pastoral leader you are encouraged to continue your formation and to take seriously the need to constantly update and enhance your theological understanding and spiritual development. One way to do this is to take advantage of the Pastoral Institute's partnership with the University of Notre Dame's Satellite Theological Education Program (STEP), which provides online continuing education

opportunities. To date there have been 16 enrollments in courses taking advantage of the Diocese of Brooklyn's 50% discount that makes the tuition for each course less than \$50. Comments received so far have been very positive concerning the learning experience.

STEP has over **40 online courses available** and all are designed with the adult learner in mind. Most are six weeks

long and require about a 3-5 hour commitment each week. Included in the offerings are courses on scripture, prayer, liturgy & sacraments, Catholic social teaching and Jesus Christ. We hope that many more of you will take advantage of this exciting endeavor. To register and enroll go to <http://step.nd.edu> to create an account and register for a course.

## MESSAGE FROM SISTER ANGELA

Although I will not leave the Pastoral Institute until August 31st, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your cards and best wishes as I assume the new position of Secretary of Catholic Education and Formation. I am touched by the messages of affirmation and gratitude that have been sent to me as well as those expressed personally at the Alumni Reunion on May 30th.

The past nine years at the Pastoral Institute have been rewarding ones for me. I can count many blessings that have been showered on me during that time - graces that have enabled me, in collaboration with others, to develop programs for the formation and education of

the laity in our Diocese. As I look back, there is no doubt that one of the choicest blessings that I have received is meeting the wonderful women and men who have been part of the lay formation programs. Your love of God and the Church, your commitment to ministry, your zeal and enthusiasm that you bring to your work, and your willingness to go beyond what is required, are hallmarks that are very visible to me.

One of nice things about my new ministry is that I will continue to stay connected to the Pastoral Institute and to meet you as I move about the Diocese. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there

is ever anything that I can do for you.

I leave the Pastoral Institute in very capable hands. Jerry Tortorella is a gifted leader who will bring the Institute and the Lay Ministry Program into its next phase. He is supported by a dedicated Alumni Executive Committee who work very hard in developing new initiatives and in providing sound advice. Add to that the support and contributions of all our Alumni and we have a formula for success.

Again, my deepest gratitude and love to each of you.

- Sister Angela

**“Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.”**

- Gandhi



## SECOND ANNUAL ALUMNI RETREAT

Despite the eventual Sunday rain, our Alumni Retreat started out on the very pleasant first Friday of May with a lovely supper and gathering in an upper room of the Passionist Retreat House in Riverdale, NY. About 20 people were led by Bev and Bob Bienemann, who had previously led Myers-Briggs Type workshops for the Pastoral Institute. We began at 5pm Friday, reflected on four presentations, a Saturday evening mass and social, and a

closing ritual Sunday morning.

Overall, the retreat's theme “Tools for the Journey” was designed as a respite from the immediacy of pastoral cares

*“I have called you by name ... you are precious ... and I love you”*  
(Isaiah 43:1-4)

and daily life. Through the four reflective sessions we were

guided to look more deeply at our prayer lives, reminded that silence can be a blessing, to forgive as much as possible and that God's grace and presence are always with us.

Bev and Bob left us with inspiration from the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians: “May we experience the breadth and depth and height of God's love.”

**“Who you are inside is what helps you make and do everything in life.”**

- The World According to Mister Rogers

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SUMMER READING

Need a book recommendation for this summer... or two or three? Here are some from the Alumni Executive Committee members:

- The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver
- Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin
- The Shack by William P. Young
- A Mercy by Toni Morrison
- The Story of Edgar Sawtelle by David Wroblewski
- Interpreter of Maladies by Jhumpa Lahiri
- Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust by Immaculee Ilibagiza
- The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows

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**Newsletter Editor:** Catherine Lou



**Have you moved? Do you have an email address? Please remember to update your contact information with the Pastoral Institute in order to stay connected.**

## INFORMATION ON RETREAT LOCATIONS

### Retreat Centers in the local area:

#### **Ss Peter & Paul Spirituality Center**

Immaculate Conception Center  
Douglaston  
718-229-8001, ext. 310

#### **Bishop Molloy Passionist Retreat House**

86-45 Edgerton Blvd.

Jamaica, NY  
718-739-1229

<http://www.bishopmolloy.org>

#### **St. Ignatius Retreat House**

Inisfada - 251 Searington Rd.

Manhasset, NY  
516-621-8300

<http://www.inisfada.net>

The following retreat locations are approximately within a 2-4 hours driving distance:

#### **Stella Maris Retreat Center**

981 Ocean Avenue  
Elberon, NJ 07740  
732-229-0602

<http://www.stellamarisretreatcenter.com/>

#### **St. Edmund's Retreat**

99 Yacht Club Road  
Mystic, CT 06355  
860-536-0565

<http://www.endersisland.com/>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please keep us informed of any happenings in your life, including accomplishments, experiences in ministry, but most especially about your family. If you have lost a loved one, or are dealing with illness or a difficult situation, we would like to hear from you so that we can keep you in our prayers and offer support.
- We welcome your comments and suggestions. If you would like to submit material for the next edition, please contact us at:  
[AlumniLayMinistry@gmail.com](mailto:AlumniLayMinistry@gmail.com)