



Franciscan Mountain Retreat

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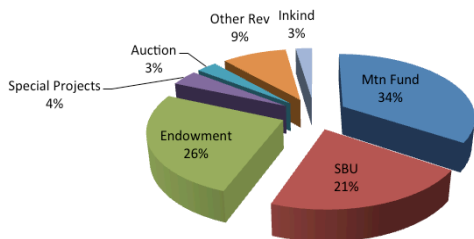
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2014-2015 REVENUE ALLOCATION

Mtn Fund	—	\$175,000
SBU	—	\$108,500
Endowment	—	\$131,880
Special Projects	—	\$20,000
Auction	—	\$15,000
Other Rev	—	\$47,500
Inkind	—	\$12,000
TOTAL	—	\$509,880



THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATED TO OUR ANNUAL MOUNTAIN FUND!

We surpassed our goal and raised an unprecedented amount of over \$201,000. Many thanks to all of our phonathon volunteers – you are terrific! Special thanks to **Marv Stocker** who once again chaired our Mountain Fund with his unbounding enthusiasm and countless hours of dedication. Our Mountain Fund provided over 34% of our 2014-15 budget of \$509,880. Here is a chart showing the breakdown of all of our revenue sources.

With much gratitude, Mary Schlosser.

Our 30th Anniversary Celebration

The Weekend of September 19-20, 2015

Saturday

2:00 p.m. Memorial Celebration in the Labyrinth

3:30 p.m. Mass at Holy Peace Chapel

followed by a dish-to-pass supper and concert

Sunday

11 a.m. Mass followed by a dish-to-pass brunch

For more information, please contact the Mountain office at: 716-375-2096 or mount.irenaeus@gmail.com



"Join with Jesus Christ in making all things new!"

*"In the days to come,
the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established
as the highest mountain and raised above the hills.*

All nations shall stream toward it..."

(ISAIAH 2:2-3)



"Life is good!" You may have worn this expression, have it somewhere in your home today. If you have recently been in our House of Peace at Mt. Irenaeus and in our Great Room and visited the beautiful framed icon of **Dan Hurley, OFM**, you will see his outstretched hand and bright eyes greeting you.

The iconographer, **Br. Robert Lentz, OFM**, so fittingly placed a cup of coffee in Dan Hurley's hand extended in hospitality and friendship as, Dan would always offer all of us, and simply printed on this cup, "Life is good." ...Indeed it is! We give thanks for 30 years and more of Mt. Irenaeus' "Gospel manner of life and ministry" that you may be living and practicing where you live now.

Dan now reaches out to us from his place at God's great table in heaven with many others there who have helped to shape and form our Mountain life. **We give thanks for all of our friends and benefactors who have also formed our life for 30 years and more.**

September 19, 2015 we will celebrate our 30th anniversary, remembering our living and deceased friends, founders and those who continue to form Mountain life.

If we look deeply into each other's eyes, "the lamp and window of our heart," we might see the light, but also the darkness of someone's journey, the difficult and the delightful, both fear and hope. St. Francis of Assisi on fire with the Gospel in a dark time of the world and church looked deeply into the eyes of many and with others shaped a Gospel way of life. It was the convergence over 30 years ago, of hurt and hope, longing for more than what we were finding, that stirred and formed many of us, drove our hearts to seek and find "the Mountain."

The journey of hope, the capacity to imagine and create "a new heaven and a new earth" is at the center of the human journey, particularly when we "join with Jesus Christ in making all things new." This is also our Vision and Mission Statement for Mt. Irenaeus. In a very human world our human hearts and lives call out for what was from the very beginning and continues to be the journey of Mt. Irenaeus. It now goes well beyond our little hill in Allegany County with people who have been touched by our life, longing for a life of hope and the grace and capacity to create a new time in the world and in the Church and in other religious expressions. As Vatican II asked us 40 years ago, and now our Pope Francis does today - you and I open our eyes to "the signs of the times" with the hope and bright eyes like Dan Hurley's, believing in the possibilities of a change in the world - new signs and new times.

While I was at St. Bonaventure University, and prior to my joining the friars, studying biology, learning about life, I met other friars that carried, in their own way, the wonderful qualities that Dan Hurley did for us at the Mountain. Friars who opened their lives to us and formed and shaped the Bonaventure experience. Prior to my return to St. Bonaventure University I studied theology in Washington, DC and delved into a graduate seminar deep into the early traditions and teachings of our Christian experience. Simultaneously, being supervised during these studies, I worked with college students at State and private colleges in Washington from 1969 to 1971 in a time of great difficulty for our country and indeed the world. I could hear and resonate with the concerns I heard and found in Washington, as our Capital, the continued suffering of racial segregation as well as economic division pointed out to us by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who was killed during that time.

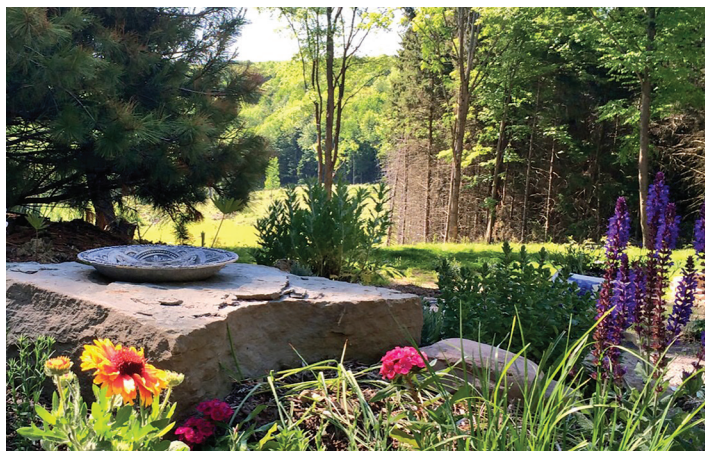
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Mt. IRENAEUS

FRANCISCAN MOUNTAIN RETREAT

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Social turmoil was in many neighborhoods in America, as we also see now, and was rising up in our educational institutions. There was anger and anxiousness about the war under everyone's skin, no matter what your opinion about it, and in everyone's heart, which was disturbing many of our relationships. We could hear and resonate with the issues and the needs and often felt helpless and could feel discouragement.

During my studies, I knew our Franciscan Gospel Journey of Christ lent the joy and hope of the Gospel for the human journey of the world. Our incarnational theology, our belief in creation, made its way through to us who were formed differently in our earlier church experience less emphasis on sin and more on redemption! "The bright hope of our immortality," that St. Paul talks about, was breaking in on our hearts as young men who would soon be missioned out, having taken our vows and some of us recently Ordained.

In the fall of 1971, having been Ordained just two weeks before, I was assigned to move into Devereux Hall and begin a campus ministry program at St. Bonaventure University. I found myself in the midst of student protests that friars had endured for a few years and this was some of the reason why I was brought to Bona's. One night the Student Senate assembled the student body in the large arena of Reilly Center. They voted to either take over the library or move their protest, as a sit-in, to the Friary Chapel. I had encouraged the students, in a prior conversation, to reverence the library: not to enter it this way and to keep open our conversations, our dialogue that was beginning. The Student Senate animated the student body that night of 700-900 students to move towards the friary Chapel and to take it over in protest and begin their sit-in. I passed with them from Reilly Center to the then friary (now Doyle Hall) and as I passed by my Guardian, Fr. Evan Banks who stood in the corner watching this procession, I said, "Evan, what do you want me to do?" And he said, "Do what you can, do what you need" and smiled a nervous smile.

It was in the midst of that protest while students were loud in conversation under our side altars that I understood more deeply the call from Isaiah to forge our "swords into plow shares" ... from aggression into the cultivation of life - and read it then and reflected on it with the students, and others, who had crammed into the Chapel. Soon, in the midst of things I saw and asked the President of the Student Senate to go outside for a conversation. With my usual animation and emotions I said to him, (I am sure very loudly) "We need to go away for a weekend. We need to find a home so that we

can create among ourselves some experience of 'home' here. We need to find a way to live with each other on this campus beyond our alienations so that we can continue to learn more here, learn more about how to live well here."

By the fall of 1972 the need for a fully formed campus ministry program had emerged from these earlier difficulties and the longing for healthier church experience at Bona's. A team had been formed of those of us who had been in ministry and in my leadership I was asked to choose between two buildings that might work with some renovation as a Center for our new ministry programs and activities.

At that time, and with the same breath, (I believe it truly was God's own breath, God's Spirit) came the call to form, weekend retreats like the one when Fr. Gervase White and I took the Student Senate away for what became a profoundly healing and transformative experience in an old rectory in the country. **At the same time, and in the same breath, was the need and longing for a Center on our campus.**

Besides a Campus Ministry team and a campus center, we needed a community also further into the country, so that we could find and form a deeper way of praying and practicing our faith on campus.

We had a calling that emerged to go from the campus and the marketplace at Bona's to hillsides and places around where I could find homes that I could rent for a weekend.

Many people (many of them real characters!) have been part, and continue to be, of our story and its own drama as we continued to develop and move ourselves towards a place of peace to be named, "Mt. Irenaeus." In many ways modeled on the themes and teachings of the now famous American practitioner and teacher of our faith, **Thomas Merton**, our dreams we knew were deeply real and needed to gain a greater reality in expression as well as in contemplation. Many were involved in this dreaming and in the practical creation of this God-missioned expression, which had always been deep in the life of Francis and Clare and in our Franciscan movement of women and men from the very beginning in its many expressions, "eremo" for Franciscan solitude found within community living.

This deep Franciscan vision and mission is ancient and forever new. This dream, now becoming real, rose up in the hearts of so many that if I mentioned them here it would be a very large and heavy volume with too many pages to number! You will hear from a few of our early student founders and you have heard from others before on these pages, and you will,



over the coming seasons and years, hear from more.

Eventually, in our first years, the fulfillment of the flesh and blood reality of Mt. Irenaeus needed so deeply, had been blessed and wanted a core community.

After two summers in Allegheny Dan Hurley and I were blessed to move our experience to West Clarksville where the Mountain community has resided and offered hospitality for 30 years and more. This, our first summer on the Mountain, felt like it lasted 25 years as it was full of blessings and learning with **Chris Domes** and **Kevin Sweeney** as members of our core community and visits from **Harry Monaco** and others as well. In our earliest of days **Joseph Kotula, OFM** joined us while still in formation and then, in his final vows, took on a rare and unique role in the Mountain, never to be duplicated by anyone else, his singular gifts and his thoughtfulness, his pure and contemplative heart has shaped and formed many relationships as well as shaped and formed our land and its facilities. **Louis McCormick, OFM**, after years of teaching and time in high schools, had been joining us for summers to enjoy prayer. He and his delightful mother, **Helen**, came and went from our life until Louie finally said he thought he would like to join us. His choice and Joe's were essential. We were now able to become a friary and our Province established us as one. However, ours is a friary without walls or a separate building, our friar community here - as you and others have joined us here - is shaped, formed, held together by our Gospel manner of life and ministry for others.

Early friars and their sisters, women and men of other places and times, have always longed and worked for peace, and have found partners in other religions and cultures to foster peace. Often it was in wooded places, but also in cities, that their hearts were opened and in intimate relationships and basic forms of prayer that they listened and understood, that they dared to "taste and see the goodness of God" and the turmoil of the world at the same time. They realized that God's love for all of us is love for the world with all its light and darkness. It is hard to believe a little place, though many acres, can contain all of us. Well it doesn't! And it never will! It has always been within the hearts of many that we would see this and then take it so that others might see, dream and live it as well. Well beyond this little place in West Clarksville now, well beyond and hopefully flowing further, will always be people who, like Dan Hurley, will handout the cup, a simple one, a simple cup that says, as our hearts would and as our eyes see, that truly "life is good" and, as St. Bonaventure says, "Pax et Bonum," peace and all good to you, to the whole broken world and earth and all who long to be One and as a more contemporary teacher of ours says: "And the deepest level of communication is not communication, but communion. It is wordless. It is beyond words, and is beyond speech, and is beyond concept. Not that we discover a new unity...And what we have to discover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are."

—Thomas Merton

Peace!
ignacio



When Fr. Dan started to explore properties for settling the Mountain, I had the privilege to join him on multiple escapades. We searched for land both near and far from campus, and there was no shortage of beautiful places to see. But none was quite as charming, as varied in landscape and so wonderfully situated as the property on Roberts Road. The grove of pine trees, the stands of hard woods, the valley just out back from the little farmhouse, the knoll with expansive views of the mountain range, and the little meadows on the back corners, were just an awesome combination of features attached to a wonderfully varied terrain. At some point during our first visit I recall Dan saying excitedly, "I think this is it."

The older couple who owned the property were equally as charming as the land. The owner took us around the property sitting on a flatbed trailer, pulled by his tractor. As we faced backward, the tractor lurched up the main trail, and he would lean back to point out various sites. We returned soon with other board members and friends of the Campus Ministry, and there was a gathering excitement that indeed the Mountain was soon to have a mountain to call home. The day we agreed to the purchase, Dan and I had a celebratory drink. We got a bit carried away with the excitement, as I can recall that I missed an important meeting with my advisor, **Professor Carl Wagner** -- also a Mountain Board member -- but who was no less disappointed in my lapse. I got a finger wagging.

The first exciting year at the new Mountain home was quite a bit more rugged than what guests experience now. There was only the little old farmhouse with a few bedrooms and one common area and kitchen. But it was no less communal and celebratory of the life and nature of the land than the Mountain is today, with its more decorous and accommodating living and prayer spaces. Fr. Dan Hurley provided his characteristic charm and brotherly affection to the place, as Dan's sidekick, and recent alumni and student leaders, like Chris Domes, made for a small but welcoming and warm core community. The list of tasks to be completed, both imminent and long-term, was so great, and Dan's ideas as rich and florid as ever, but it never seemed tiresome or burdensome. There was a sense that a family had arrived to this space, and was ready to properly fill it out and blend in wonderfully with its surroundings.

— Dennis Culhane

In the summer of 1985 the early Franciscan community of Mount Irenaeus settled on a mountain in Allegany County New York. It was a beautiful Western New York summer. The details and the events of those summer months are vividly rooted in my memory. I often reflect on the sounds, the sights, the people, the quietness, the laughter, the food, and joy of those days. Father Dan Hurley, Father Dan Riley, Keven Sweeney (SBU '85) and I moved into the small ranch style home on Roberts Road and began our life as the first community on the Mountain. During one of the first nights following evening prayer and dinner the four of us were in the small living room reflecting on the move up the mountain, including our accomplishments and what lie ahead. Settling into this remote 200 acre farm off a dirt road in West Clarksville, New York began to enter into our consciousness. We all wondered how the summer would unfold. The conversation that evening encompassed our hopes and our anxieties. As we began to wrap up the conversation Dan Hurley said with a twinkle in his eye, "I wonder if anyone will find us up here."

Many people did find and experience the Mountain that summer. During those early days as a fledgling Franciscan community I witnessed joyful optimism, care for creation, compassion, and resilience. I was profoundly impacted by that community experience 30 years ago. The summer of 1985 forever changed my life. We all began to learn, understand, and appreciate how transformational this place could be for people. Working together we cleared brush for Sunrise Cabin until dusk. We gathered for Mass and in the morning and evening for prayer in the screened



tent behind the house. I fired up the old International Farm-All tractor, borrowed the neighbor's brush hog, and cleared some of the trails. We welcomed visitors and friends for retreat and we laughed and prayed together. Teaching Dan Hurley how to operate the Cub Cadet riding mower was a treat. At one point I was running alongside shouting instructions on how to slow the mower down. Finally he brought the Cub Cadet to an abrupt stop just

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short of the pond and we burst out laughing. You could sense the presence of God in our work, in our conversation, in our prayer, and in our life as a community. Since those early days I have remained connected to the Mountain. My wife Mary and I have found the Mountain to be an anchor to us as a married couple. It has helped me to understand my calling as a servant leader. The many wonderful Mountain experiences have followed me and have served as guidepost in my professional life in Catholic higher education. Mt. Irenaeus continues to serve as a foundation in my spiritual journey. Looking back over the last 30 years it has been a privilege to be immersed in the life of the Mountain. Last fall as I sat on the rooftop terrace of Casa Papa Giovanni in Assisi, Italy my encounters and involvement with the Mountain flooded over me. Mary and I were on a Franciscan pilgrimage and as we gazed across the sprawling Umbrian Valley I reflected on my own Franciscan journey. At that moment I was so grateful for Mt. Irenaeus and thanked God for the summer of 1985.

— Dr. Chris Domes

Though I wasn't on the Mountain Board when the Ernst property was first purchased, I joined prior to most of the building that has taken place since. I have such fond memories of early board meetings in the original building on the property. We were so fortunate to have a number of wise elders - **Michael Shane, Mike Schaffner, Don Swanz**, to name a few. We were shoulder-to-shoulder during meetings in the original house, whether in the living room or on the porch. **Lucho Skandar** took on much of the early work of building and expansion. He is a master craftsman.

What never changed as the Mountain began to expand was the prayerful, thoughtful approach of the board, and of the larger Mountain community also involved in the decision making. I am forever grateful for how the Mountain has evolved, for the betterment of both the St. Bonaventure students/community, and the larger local community. And I'm particularly grateful for having been a part of those early days of dreaming, visioning, and praying.

— Mary Piccioli

15TH ANNUAL MOUNTAIN AUCTION

NOVEMBER 7, 2015

People often ask us "How can I help?" One large way to help us is to participate in some way with our annual Mountain Auction. You can help us carry on our mission in at least one of these three ways:

- **Join us** on this wonderful evening as we gather together to celebrate and support the Mountain. This year the auction will be on November 7th at the Premier Banquet Center, Olean, NY with Mass starting at 5 pm and the silent auction at 6pm.
- **Donate an auction item** – any new gift in any price range is a blessing to us and will help us in our efforts. Gifts can be homemade or store bought – what would you bid on?
- **(Co-)Host a gift-gathering party.** Gather your friends – it need not be formal – and either ask them to bring a gift or "pass the collection plate." Summer barbecues, family reunions, Friday nights with friends can all be an easy way to help us gather gifts.

For more information about the auction or other ways to help, please visit our website at www.mounti.com, email us at mount.irenaeus@gmail.com or call 716-375-2096.

Thank you very much for any help you can give us.

Kim Palmer and Mike Sullivan.

Co. Chairs Mountain Auction Committee.

SUMMER AT THE MOUNTAIN

Mt. Irenaeus welcomes you to join us here this summer.

We have been blessed with individuals, families and various church groups over the years joining us here. With you and others in mind, **we have planned a series of Wednesdays** whose dates and themes are noted below.

Every Sunday we celebrate a Eucharist, open to everyone, at 11 a.m. with a dish-to-pass brunch following. You are also welcome to join us on most days for any of our prayer times or to take a walk in the woods, visit our Chapel which is open to women and men of all traditions, or find your own way around our labyrinth in a grove of trees near our Chapel.

We hope you will join us for one or more of these special days. For more information call the Mountain at 585-973-2470.

July 1st

Creation, Especially on the Land with Us

July 8th

The Presence of God, Contemplation, an Encounter in Silence

July 15th

Home, Hospitality, Creating a Space within Oneself for God to Dwell

July 22nd

Hope and Healing, Stepping Out into the World