

ADVENT 2010

250 Oak Grove Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025-3218
(650) 325-5614
www.vallombrosa.org

Advent

Advent is both a beginning and an end, an alpha and an omega of the church's year of grace.

Too often considered merely a season of preparation for the annual commemoration of Christ's birth, this rich and many-layered season is actually designed to prepare the Christian for the glorious possibilities of the parousia.

It is a season of longing and expectation—
"Come Lord Jesus"

~ William Storey,
from *Days of the Lord*

In This Issue

- Moving On
- POTPOURRI: Reflecting on New Beginnings
- Vallombrosa Sounds
- Advent Sunday Readings
- REFOCCUS



VALLOMBROSACENTER

Moving On

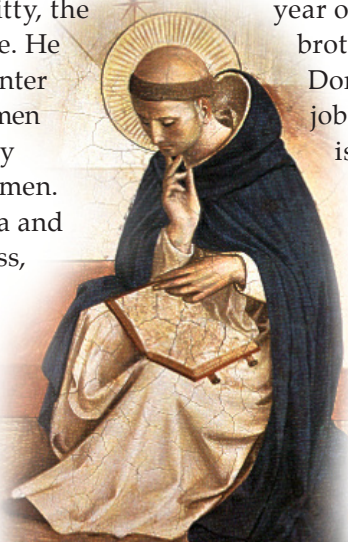
There is a saying among Dominicans, my religious community, that when one meets one Dominican he or she meets one Dominican. The implication, of course, is that we are all very different. When I came to Vallombrosa after years of service at Stanford University I hoped to begin a long period of direct service to the Archdiocese of San Francisco. There was a kind of "romantic" feeling about taking up a ministry for this local church that was, in a sense, carrying on the work of the first Archbishop of San Francisco, Joseph Alemany – an earlier Dominican. San Francisco has always been the heart of our work on the West Coast and we come upon traces of Archbishop Alemany's genius nearly everywhere.

It was not Alemany who began the work of the Church at Vallombrosa. Rather, it was Archbishop John Mitty, the fourth Ordinary of this See. He had a vision of a retreat center geared to the needs of women to match the center served by the Jesuits in Los Altos for men. He established Vallombrosa and brought, wouldn't you guess, Dominican Sisters from Washington State to work with the Archdiocesan priests who served as directors. The Sisters

stayed for a few years and then moved on to other work. It was many years between the last Sister leaving Vallombrosa and my coming. When I arrived I thought I could bring the flavor of our long ministry in the Archdiocese with me. My few years here were wonderful for me and, as is so often the case, the staff made me look good. I presumed I would be here for many years to come.

One of the hallmarks of Dominican ministry is that we elect our superiors – even local superiors. I was very surprised, then, to find that the community of Dominicans at St. Dominic's Parish and Priory in the City had elected me to serve as their Prior (religious superior). This came as a surprise for many reasons including the fact that our Novitiate, the first

year of training for our priests and brothers, is also located at St. Dominic's. In our tradition the job begins as soon as the election is approved by the Provincial. So, in March I became the Prior of that community in San Francisco. I explained that I had both a work and a life at Vallombrosa so they would have to give



Continued last page

POTPOURRI: Reflecting on New Beginnings



We have a lot in common – Fr Patrick and I. We both grew up in the same North Bay Area city of Vallejo; we were

both educated by the Dominican Friars and Sisters at Saint Vincent Ferrer elementary and high school; we both entered the Dominican Order, though years apart [I like to remind him that he is much older]; we both served in campus ministry in Eugene, Oregon and in parish ministry in Berkeley. And now I follow in his footsteps as the new Director of Vallombrosa Retreat Center. While we share many values in common, our attitudes and approaches are often very different.

Much of my initial time at Vallombrosa is being spent in listening, especially to the Advisory Board, and to both individuals and groups who want to share their creative ideas about future programs for the Center. We are in the midst of transformation and changes, including our support staff and administration. You will find some new faces, including mine,

the next time you visit, but the same contemplative and prayerful spirit.

While Vallombrosa was originally established to provide retreat experiences for women, its outreach has extended over the years to include a wide variety of retreat experiences for men and teens. I am particularly interested in initiating a new retreat experience for fire fighters, police officers and EMT's on the topic of death. These men and women face death daily in the line of duty, the death of those they work with, and their own. How can we extend to them the strength that comes from Faith, and the hope that comes from their belief in Jesus Christ? Another of my ideas is "Vallombrosa on the Road." Can't come to us? Then we'll come to you. We are working with parishes within the Archdiocese to bring some of the programs we offer at Vallombrosa closer to you.

Like many organizations, we find ourselves face-to-face with the present economic crisis. Instead of responding to the crisis by raising prices on our retreats, or nickel-and-diming you to death, as some might do, we have decided, instead, to freeze our pricing for 2011. That's good news for all our retreatants.

Vallombrosa Staff

Rev. George Matanic, O.P.
Director

Kathryn Gray
Associate Director

Jaynie Fedele
Conference Coordinator

Nancy Greenfield
*Program Coordinator,
Catholic Wedding Preparation*

Rachel Avelais
Operations Assistant

Vallombrosa Sounds

This year Vallombrosa Center celebrates the first anniversary of the formation of the Vallombrosa Choir under the direction of Patrick Feehan. Last year, Patrick and the choir provided music for various retreat groups, along with special events that were open to the public. This year we are delighted to announce that Patrick and the Vallombrosa Choir will provide music for the Thanksgiving Prayer Service on **November 21**, and the Christmas Lessons and Carols on **December 19**. Both programs are at 2pm and both are open to the public. For more information about these events visit www.vallombrosa.org.





VALLOMBROSACENTER

Please note: Events listed in **Bold** are sponsored by Vallombrosa Center and are open to the public. To sign up for an event please visit our website at www.vallombrosa.org or simply fill in the **Retreat Registration Form** on the back side of this calendar.

SEPTEMBER 2010

September 13 - 15

Moreau Catholic High School Kairos

September 16

Sacred Heart Prep Parent Association Meeting

September 17 - 18

St. Anthony's Parish Pastoral Council Retreat

September 20-21

De La Salle High School Retreat for Juniors

September 21 - 24

St. Ignatius College Prep Kairos

September 24 - 26

SF Catholic Engaged Encounter

September 25

REFOCCUS: Marriage Preparation and Enrichment: Part 1

September 27 - October 1

New Pastor's Retreat

OCTOBER 2010

October 1 - 3

Catholic Business Journal

October 2

REFOCCUS: Marriage Preparation and Enrichment: Part 2

October 8 - 10

Holy Spirit Parish Retreat

October 9

REFOCCUS: Marriage Preparation and Enrichment: Part 3

October 9 - 10

AMOR Dei Charismatic Community

October 14

Sacred Heart Prep Parent Association Meeting

October 15 - 17

Catholic Community at Stanford Fall Retreat

October 16 - 17

St. Vincent de Paul Young Adult Group

October 22 - 24

Beginning Experience

October 22 - 24

St. Gregory Catholic Church Women's Retreat

October 22 - 25

Imagery International

October 25

Notre Dame High School Retreat for Juniors

October 28 - 31

Workaholics Anonymous

October 28

St. Francis High School Retreat for Juniors

October 30

Holy Korean Martyrs Parish Retreat

October 30
Advent Sunday Readings:
A Workshop for Lectors and Preachers
at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco

NOVEMBER 2010

November 3
Advent Sunday Readings:
A Workshop for Lectors and Preachers

November 4
Advent Sunday Readings:
A Workshop for Lectors and Preachers

November 5 - 7
Diocesan Antiochian Women's Retreat

November 6
Catholic Wedding
Preparation/Pre-Cana

November 9 - 12
Junipero Serra High School Kairos

November 12 - 14
SF Catholic Engaged Encounter

November 19 - 21
St. Anthony Charismatic Ministry Group

November 16 - 19
St. Ignatius College Prep Kairos

November 22 - 24
Moreau High School Kairos

November 21
Thanksgiving Prayer Service
with the Vallombrosa Choir

November 25
Thanksgiving Day - *Closed*

DECEMBER 2010

December 3
Advent Silent Retreat

December 19
Christmas Lessons and Carols
with the Vallombrosa Choir

December 25
Christmas Day - *Closed*



Vallombrosa Center – Retreat Registration Form

For day events, your cancelled check is your receipt. For weekend events, a \$50 deposit is required; confirmation notices will be sent. Deposits are non-refundable, but transferable to a future event within the year.

Name of Retreat: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____ E-mail: _____

If the event is a weekend event, please complete the following:

Single room _____ Shared room, shared with _____

Mail to: Vallombrosa Center, 250 Oak Grove Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025-3218

Advent Sunday Readings:

A Workshop for Lectors and Preachers

How do the readings for each Sunday of Advent relate to each other? Most of us understand the connection of Isaiah to Advent, but what about Paul's letter to the Romans? Is there a pattern in the annual cycle of readings for Advent? Will the same or similar themes occur next year in cycle B? And, on any given Sunday of Advent, how are the readings interconnected? How did Vatican II impact the choice of readings? And what is the role of the liturgical calendar and seasons of the church year?

Explore these questions in a four-hour workshop led by Fr. George Matanic, O.P., Director of the Vallombrosa Retreat Center. Fr. George joined Vallombrosa in July after serving as the Director of the Catholic Community at U.C. Riverside. He has a Master's Degree in Liturgy from the University of Notre Dame.

Please join us for this workshop at Vallombrosa on Wednesday and Thursday, November 3rd and 4th from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. We are also taking this workshop "on the road" as part of a new program which we're calling "*Vallombrosa on the Road*". Our first stop will be at Saint Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco

on **Saturday, October 30th from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.**

Our hope is that by taking our programs "on the road" to parishes around the Bay Area, it will be a more convenient format that will reach a larger audience and bring our community together. Stay tuned for more information on "*Vallombrosa on the Road*".

To sign up for this workshop please visit www.vallombrosa.org, contact Jaynie Fedele, Jaynie@vallombrosa.org or simply fill in the registration form on the calendar insert.



REFOCCUS: Seeking a Religious Wedding or Marriage Enrichment

Are you civilly married, that is, married outside the Catholic Church, either by a justice of the peace, a judge, or a minister without a dispensation from the Catholic Church? Has your marriage been "blessed" by the Church?

Well, REFOCCUS is a program designed especially for you. No, that's not a spelling mistake! The double "C" stands for "Couple Communication." REFOCCUS is actually a dual program, intended both for marriage enrichment and as a marriage preparation tool for couples civilly married more than two years, who are seeking a religious wedding.

What does that mean? To have your marriage blessed by the Catholic Church requires preparation and the necessary paper work. The process that validates your marriage is called "Convalidation", often referred to as "blessing" your marriage in the eyes of the church. It allows the Catholic partner to receive Communion and the other sacraments.

REFOCCUS can be offered in a number of formats: as a weekend retreat, a one- or two-day workshop, or a series of workshops on weeknights or weekends. Vallombrosa Center is offering its first REFOCCUS workshop led by Fr. George Matanic, O.P., Director of Vallombrosa Retreat Center. Fr. George is a certified trainer for FOCCUS and REFOCCUS and has taught many priests, deacons and lay ministers in the Bay Area and Phoenix how to facilitate these programs. Soon, Vallombrosa will be offering a workshop to train lay ministers in the parishes on the proper use of FOCCUS. Keep an eye on our website and newsletter for dates and times.

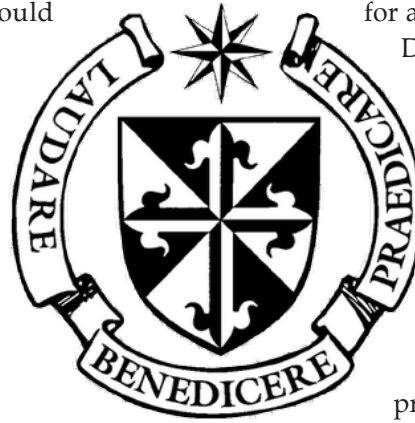
To sign up for this workshop please visit www.vallombrosa.org, contact Jaynie Fedele, Jaynie@vallombrosa.org or simply fill in the registration form on the calendar insert.

Moving On (continued)

me time to finish up my time here and prepare to move. My Novice Master of many years ago was fond of reminding us that simplicity was a central virtue for us to cultivate. We knew we were on the right track when we could move from place to place in just one trunk. I thought about it and realized that after so many years of ministry I can still do that with one exception: my "trunk" now has 16 wheels and U-HAUL printed on the side.

When it was time to search for a new Director I was delighted that the Archdiocese decided upon another Dominican to replace me. I felt less guilty about the move and quite sure that Vallombrosa would be in good hands. Father George

Matanic, O.P. would be coming from the Newman Center at U.C. Riverside to take over the ministry here. He will belong to our Dominican Community located across the street from Vallombrosa and will settle in for many years to come. Fr. George has been a pastor in Los Angeles and Berkeley, a campus minister at the University of Oregon and U.C. Riverside and a Diocesan Administrator for the Diocese of Phoenix. He spent time studying



for and receiving a Master's Degree in Liturgy from the University of Notre Dame.

It will be difficult for me to say goodbye to the Vallombrosa Community but I do so with the knowledge that Fr. George will bring his own style of ministry, preaching and leadership to this beautiful place. I know you will like him and I hope you can see those Alemany-like footprints continue in his life and work. Thank you all for your generous support. Now it is off to the fog!

Fr. Patrick LaBelle, O.P.

Quick Look Calendar

September 25

REFOCCUS: Marriage Preparation and Enrichment

October 2

REFOCCUS: Marriage Preparation and Enrichment

October 9

REFOCCUS: Marriage Preparation and Enrichment

October 30

Advent Sunday Readings: A Workshop for Lectors and Preachers at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco

November 3

Advent Sunday Readings: A Workshop for Lectors and Preachers

November 4

Advent Sunday Readings: A Workshop for Lectors and Preachers

November 6

Wedding Preparation/Pre-Cana

November 21

Thanksgiving Prayer Service with the Vallombrosa Choir

December 3 - 5

Advent Silent Retreat

December 19

Christmas Lessons and Carols with the Vallombrosa Choir



VALLOMBROSACENTER

250 Oak Grove Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025-3218

TIME VALUED

PLEASE SHARE WITH A FRIEND

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MENLO PARK CA
PERMIT # 109