



# Day Sabbatical

**“Come to me, all who labor and are weary,  
and I will give you rest.”**

Matthew 11:28



# Before You Begin

## What to Expect

The Day Sabbatical is a one-day spiritual retreat, meant for anyone-but especially that person who thinks he or she is too busy to take it. There is no agenda, only a basic schedule:

<b>8:45 AM</b>	Arrive & settle in
<b>9:00</b>	Welcome & preparation ( <i>Conference Room B — lower level</i> )
<b>9:30</b>	Morning retreat time / Spiritual direction appointments
<b>12:00 PM</b>	Lunch ( <i>Gathering Hall — main level</i> )
<b>1:00</b>	Afternoon retreat time / Spiritual direction appointments (until 4:00)
<b>4:30</b>	Debrief & closing ( <i>Chapel — main level</i> )
<b>5:00</b>	Departure

## What to Bring

- Bible, journal & pen
- Comfortable shoes or hiking boots
- Seasonal attire (check the forecast)
- Water bottle
- Sketchbook & drawing materials (if you connect with God through art)

## What Not to Bring

- Cell phone (turn it off or leave it in the car)
- Laptops, tablets & other devices
- Recreational reading (unless it's something you're working through with God)
- Anything that will distract you from resting & hearing God's voice

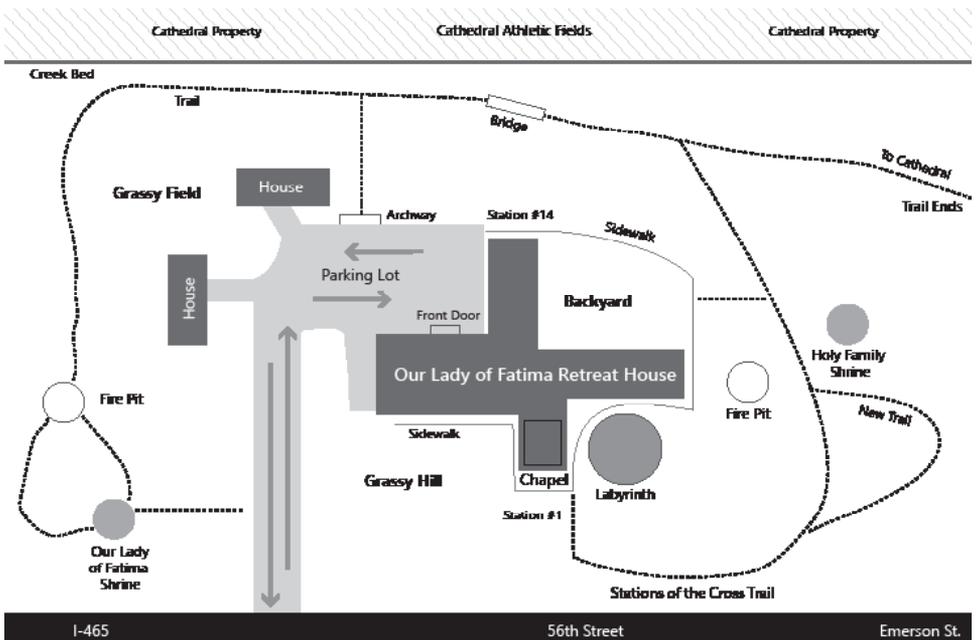


# Fatima House

*Chapel, Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis, IN*

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House is a ministry of the Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis. You're free to explore the facilities and grounds, indoors and outdoors. Detailed maps and information are available at the front desk, but here are a few highlights:

- Walking trail — Modest trail for easy walks (some inclines; muddy when wet)
- Stations of the Cross — A wooded prayer walk to contemplate Jesus' passion
- Labyrinth — Another tool for prayer, like a "micro pilgrimage" (see pp. 10-11).
- Chapel — If not in use by another group, you're welcome to pray, read, or simply sit.





# Taking A Retreat

## How to Take a Spiritual Retreat

Let's be honest: slowing down and being quiet is *hard*. We're used to busyness and noise. Even when we get away from distractions, we find that our internal chaos isn't easily stilled. If that's where you find yourself, don't worry. The Lord knows right where you are and just what you need. If you're unsure what to do on a spiritual retreat, or even a little uncomfortable with it, this retreat guide is meant to help you on your way. Use it as much or as little as it is helpful to you!

### ❧ *Morning Retreat Time* ❧

#### *Silence (10 min)*

Once you've found a quiet spot to settle down, get into a comfortable but alert posture. Take in your surroundings, engaging your senses. What is restful and restorative about the sights, sounds, and smells around you? Take the first 5 minutes to enjoy that and to still your mind and heart. When you're ready, use a short, repetitive prayer (maybe "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me") to center yourself on God. Keep praying it to return your attention to him anytime you're distracted. In this time, just listen for God's voice. You may or may not hear something, but don't force it. Your Father will speak and help you hear when it's time.

#### *Opening Prayer*

After beginning in silence, take a moment (as long as you need) to open your end of the conversation with God in prayer. For example:

*Heavenly Father, you have made me to know you and to be known by you, and you've been faithful to me every step of my journey. Here I am, Lord. I want to be in your presence, to abide in your love, and to become more fully the person you made me to be. Renew me with the love of your Son; refresh me with the power of your Spirit; and restore my walk with you where I have turned aside. Let your peace be upon me and your rest be within me as I seek your face. I pray this in the strong name of Jesus. Amen.*



### ***Song of Praise***

If you like, continue your prayer in the form of a song, whether you sing it aloud or silently in your heart. Perhaps you have a favorite memorized that helps you find rest in God or re-anchor your faith in Christ. Or perhaps this would capture what you need:

IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL

*When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll,  
Whatever my lot thou hast taught me to say,  
“It is well, it is well with my soul.”*

*It is well (it is well) with my soul (with my soul),  
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
Let this bless'd assurance control:  
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate  
And has shed his own blood for my soul.*

*My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought,  
My sin, not in part, but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more—  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

*And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,  
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,  
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend;  
Even so, it is well with my soul.*



# Taking A Retreat

*Canticle Prayer Room, Chiara Center, Springfield, IL*

## ***Scripture Readings (30 min - 1 hr)***

Using the *lectio divina* exercise on the next pages, spend some time in God's Word. You can use the suggested passage or another passage toward which you sense the Lord leading you, perhaps one of the following:

- Psalm 42:1-5—*"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God..."*
- Psalm 62:5-8—*"Find rest, O my soul, in God alone..."*
- Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23—The Parable of the Sower
- Mark 10:13-16—*"Let the children come to me..."*
- Luke 8:22-25—The Calming of the Storm
- John 15:1-11—The Vine & the Branches

## ***Prayer Walk or Journal (30 min - 1 hr)***

Take a walk through the grounds or facility where you're having this retreat. As you walk, pray about what the Lord brought to your attention as you read Scripture. Alternatively, you may want to journal about those readings or words from God.

## *🌀 Lunch 🌀*

Sharing a meal in Christ-centered community is a wonderful part of a retreat. However, your time so far might have left you with an array of thoughts or emotions. If you don't feel particularly like being with others during lunch, *that's perfectly fine*. Feel free to take your food to a quiet location to continue meditating on what the Lord has brought up to you. However, don't be afraid to open up to others and ask for help and prayer, even over lunch.



*Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, Indianapolis, IN*

## ❧ *Afternoon Retreat Time* ❧

### ***Prayer Walk (20-30 min)***

Whether or not you did this earlier, get your blood flowing after lunch with a walk. You can pray as you go, but don't make this intense. Instead, make this a time to enjoy the place where the Lord has brought you. In prayer, thank God for the beauty of his creation, for the gift of time, and for other blessings he has given you.

*The following retreat activities can be done in any order throughout your afternoon.*

### ***Sacred Spaces (1-2 hrs)***

If your retreat location includes special spaces for devotional practices, spend some time in one or more of them. (Fatima House is home to several such spaces: the chapel, with its contemplative quiet and "visual liturgy;" a Stations of the Cross pathway, with sculptures of Jesus' passion to meditate on; and a labyrinth for a prayer "micro pilgrimage"-see pp. 10-11.)

### ***Spiritual Direction (1 hr)***

If your retreat experience offers it, consider taking advantage of time with a spiritual director. The goal of such a conversation is to *recognize* the movement of God in your life, to *reflect* on it with your whole being, and to *respond* to the invitations he's giving you. Good spiritual directors don't give you answers; they help you hear the voice of Jesus more clearly so that you can surrender to his love and calling.

### ***Scripture Readings & Journaling (30 min - 1 hr)***

### ***Silence & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)***

As your time draws to a close, leave space to wind down in the same way you began: not in writing or speaking, but in silence before the God who has been with you and will soon lead you back home. Let his words to you from this retreat take root in your heart. After a few minutes of silence, conclude by thanking him for this day and his words to you. Confess your continuing need for his grace, and ask him to give you faith and love to respond.



# Lectio Divina

## Reading the Bible for Spiritual Transformation

*Lectio divina* (“divine reading”) is an ancient practice of reading Scripture that is more like prayer than Bible study. Too often we read God’s Word as an assignment rather than an encounter with him. In *lectio divina*, we slow down and come to the Bible reflectively, reading a short passage multiple times at a relaxed pace, each time listening in a deeper way.

### *Prepare: Pray*

Begin your time with a short prayer of thanks for God’s loving presence and request for him to speak. Offer him your mind, emotions, and will. Sit silently for a minute. When you’re ready, read the passage slowly and contemplatively, pausing between each reading.

### **1** | *READ*

Read with a listening spirit. Watch for a key word or phrase that jumps out or seems ripe with special meaning. Read with your own life in mind, not the church or the world in general. Notice especially how God or Jesus seems to you in the passage, or how you experience him personally right in this moment.

### **2** | *REFLECT*

Reflect on that significant word or phrase, letting it sink into your heart. Notice your emotions, desires, and imagination. What is God stirring in you through this passage? Don’t rush to any kind of “application.”

### **3** | *RESPOND*

Ask the Holy Spirit to form a prayer in you, and then pray that to God. It might as simple as the word or phrase that stood out from the text; it might be much more. Allow God to guide your prayer.

### **4** | *REST*

Simply be present with God in what this passage has brought. Rest here, not trying to make something happen or planning for how you’ll put anything into practice. Receive your Father’s love as you linger. Close when you feel done.



## Colossians 3:1-4

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.



# The Labyrinth

*Fatima House labyrinth, Indianapolis, IN*

## A Pilgrimage Close to Home

Labyrinths are an ancient tool of prayer, dating back to at least the 12th century. Because most people could not afford to go on spiritual pilgrimages to the Holy Land, labyrinths were constructed in cathedrals and outdoor spaces to bring the purpose of pilgrimage closer to home: to become more aware of God in Christ with us on our journey.

*Labyrinths are not mazes, nor are they something magical. Walking the labyrinth is not a newfangled technique to jumpstart your spiritual life. It is a slow, quiet, meditative practice that has historically attended to the desire to make a journey toward God...*

*In walking the labyrinth you leave behind the noise and hurry of life. Just as you would pack simply for a pilgrimage, you offer your load to Jesus as you begin your prayer journey. The prayer-path structure moves you slowly toward the center and toward God. At times you are close to the center, further along the path you may be farther from the center.*

*This represents the reality of the spiritual journey. But as we keep moving, we are always getting closer to the center and to God, no matter how far away it looks in real space. At the center of the walk you can stop and rest in the presence of God, listening for his word to you. With his word in your heart you begin your journey back to the world.*

*- Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*

A maze is an intellectual puzzle, a challenge for your mind to reason its way to the exit. But a labyrinth is an intuitive task; there are no blind alleys, dead ends, or wrong turns. There is only one way in and one way out. And the journey through it requires only surrender to God, not mastery of navigation.

The modes of prayer that pilgrims adopt in a labyrinth are *listening* and *contemplative* prayer. Most of the journey is spent patiently listening for the still, small voice of God, enjoying his walk with us and receiving his grace. We also pray simple prayers or passages of Scripture that help to tether our wandering thoughts to the Lord and to make space for him to speak.



*Chartres Cathedral labyrinth, built c. AD 1220*

## Walking the Labyrinth

The practice of walking a labyrinth might look like introspective navel-gazing from the outside. But it is really your opportunity to meet in prayer the God who walks with you in all of life. You're reflecting on, "How does this pathway mirror my own journey with Jesus?"

1. At the labyrinth entrance, pause to quiet your mind, heart, and body. Take slow, deep breaths. Invite the Lord to lead and speak to you, perhaps with one of these prayers:
  - *"Speak, Lord, your servant listens."* (1 Sam. 4:10)
  - *"Teach me your ways, O Lord; show me your paths."* (Ps. 25:4)
2. Begin your walk. Keep your eyes on the path before you, not on the twists and turns ahead. Don't rush. You might pray a passage slowly as you navigate the labyrinth:
  - Psalm 23 (The Shepherd's Psalm)
  - Psalm 139:23-24 (*"Search me, O God, and know my heart..."*)
  - Matthew 6:9-13 (The Lord's Prayer)

As you walk slowly and pray, be mindful of how the Lord is speaking to you. When he says something, hold onto it. Notice especially:

- How is he loving you and showing grace to you?
  - What do you need to surrender to live more fully in his love and presence?
3. When you arrive at the center, offer to the Lord what you need to surrender. (You could kneel and open your hands.) Stay in the center for as long as you want, abiding in Christ's presence and receiving his love. Ask for grace to return to life in the world.
  4. When you sense it's time, make your way back out from the center in the same way you entered. Stop and listen as you are prompted by the Spirit. Hold onto those words, and return to them in the days to come. Do you sense God calling you to something new?
  5. At the exit, pause and thank God for walking with you. Confess your trust in him to continue do so. Offer a short prayer of dedication: "Lord, I commit my way to you."

