

Why Retreats?

County Commissioners go on retreats. Boards of Directors and Planning Commissions go on retreat. Seriously (fanatical?) religious sorts of all types “make retreats” or go on retreat. But me? Why would I go on a retreat? In the age-old marketing question, “What’s in it for me?”

As Catholic Christians there are a lot of answers to that question. Let me just offer a few of them to you, as parish leaders and individual parishioners. Why go on retreat? Why organize retreats for your parishioners?

- To follow Jesus, who both began and sustained his ministry with time away: to confront temptation, to rest, to pray, to be taught by God and learn from God.
- To delve into what saints and mystics have told us over and over again: God is hidden and quiet and so we must set ourselves apart, in quiet, to hear and see God.
- To spend time getting reacquainted with God, to examine the priorities of life and to make concrete and practical resolutions for improvement. Retreats can be a powerful step toward personal conversion. By Father Francis Hoffman, J.C.D.
<http://www.osv.com/tabid/7631/itemid/4699/Why-go-on-a-Spiritual-Retreat.aspx> 4-12-11
- To offer time to rest, heal, reflect, and renew our spirit. Retreat is a time to cocoon so that we may emerge renewed, refreshed, and ready to return to our everyday lives with a new perspective. A retreat gives us time for uninterrupted meditation so that we may go deep within and spend time with ourselves. <http://www.dailyom.com/articles/2005/1004.html> 4-12-11
- To place ourselves in a position to receive what God gives. It is an intentional "setting ourselves apart" to listen, to have no agenda of our own, to simply be open to God. It is being vulnerable to God, disallowing distraction and allowing God time to work in a significant way in our hearts. <http://bethelretreathouse.com/faq/59-why-do-we-go-on-retreat.html> 4-12-11
- To explore issues in depth and exchange ideas with each other in a relaxed environment; to improve working relationships; or to become well acquainted in order to work effectively as a team. <http://bookstore.icma.org/freedocs/Retreat%20IQ%20Excerpt.pdf> 4-12-11

Perhaps one or more of those reasons resonates with a deeply felt need for you, for segments of your parishioners, or for the entire parish. ConSpirita Consulting Network can help you discern the audience, listen for the Spirit’s direction and then design, develop and deliver retreats for your parishioners. Why not give us a call or send us an email? It could be the Spirit’s nudge!