



ArchIndy
Creation Care
Ministry



OUTDOOR SACRED SPACES



ARCHDIOCESE
OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

Spring Edition 2025

OUTDOOR SACRED SPACES



INTRODUCTION

We are excited to share with you the Outdoor Sacred Spaces Guide in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. This project was a team effort of the Creation Care Ministry and the leadership at each sacred space.

It is our hope that this resource of outdoor sacred prayer and art will encourage you to rediscover a religious vision of God's creation, think about your own impact on our planet, and support the communities who are the caretakers of these beautiful spaces we have in our community. As you visit, we encourage you to share your photos and journeys with us and via social media.

BE A PILGRIM OF HOPE DURING THE 2025 JUBILEE YEAR

Catholics across the world are invited to join or initiate Pilgrimages of Hope for Creation during this special Jubilee Year. 2025 also marks the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's *Canticle of the Creatures* and the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical "*Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*." Pope Francis speaks of our interconnectedness with each other and our moral responsibility to care for the Earth. A pilgrimage can help give you that little "nudge" to recommit and be renewed in living out our call as Christians to create a more peaceful, loving, and harmonious world. We encourage you to discover our local treasures and a new spirit of integral ecology as you embark on your own pilgrimages this year. To connect with other Catholic pilgrims visit www.catholicpilgrimsofhope.org.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE?

In this guide you will find the outdoor areas of each site highlighted. **Please contact each site to confirm hours and visitor information.** We encourage you to take return trips and discover their beauty in the future!

As we compiled this guide we became aware of many outdoor sacred spaces outside of the Archdiocese and of other faith traditions that we hope to include in future versions. If you know of any, are part of a parish with a unique outdoor space, have other feedback or would like to help us translate this guide into Spanish, please let us know.

WHO IS THE CREATION CARE COMMISSION?

Creation Care Ministry in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis began in 2015 at the encouragement of then Archbishop Joseph Tobin. The commission, composed of volunteers from different parishes and under the guidance of Pastoral Ministries, provides education about creation care and outreach to parishes, people and priests of the Archdiocese. We seek to help parishes reduce their environmental impact, and to facilitate sustainable actions on the Archdiocesan level.



Prepare for pilgrimage...and have fun!



PLAN AND PAUSE FOR PRAYER

Take a moment to pray whether in the car on your drive or while visiting. Explore a new devotions.

[Laudato Si' Full Text](#) | [Laudate Deum Full Text](#) | [Rosary Meditations](#)

[Prayer to Care for Our Common Home](#) | [1 Climate, 1 World Reflections](#)

[How to pray with a labyrinth](#) | [Via Creationis](#) | [Laudato Si' Chaplet](#)



GIVE BACK

With generous spirits, the religious communities and staff of these sacred spaces care for the land God has entrusted to them and open their hearts to visitors. We encourage you to visit their gift shops or websites and prayerfully consider supporting their work.

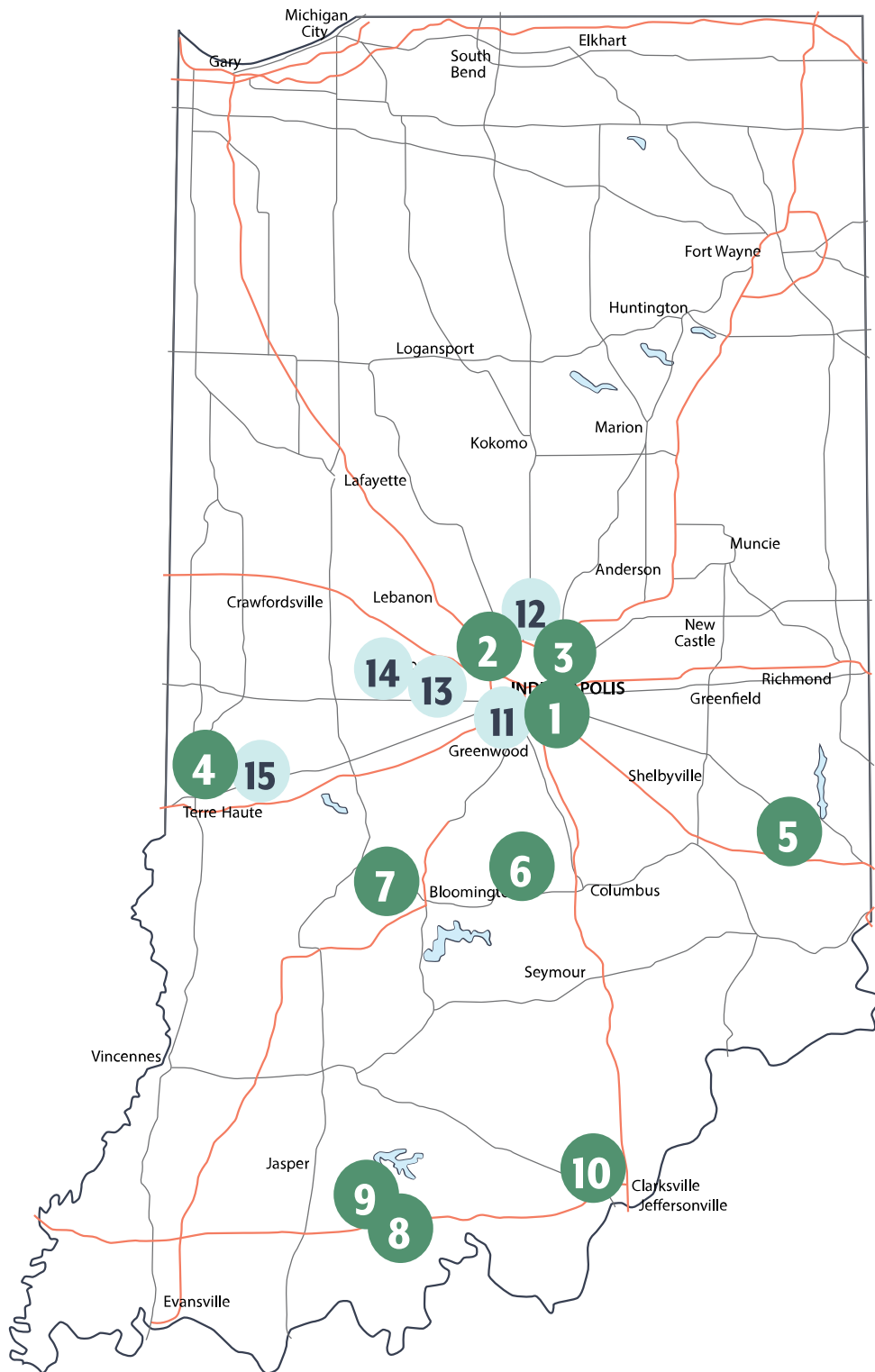


LEAVE NO TRACE

As we spend time outdoors, it's important keep in mind that we are all connected. Following the Leave No Trace 7 Principles can help minimize our impact on the planet. Visit www.Int.org for more info.

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel & camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Leave what you find
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors





OUTDOOR SACRED SPACES

1. Our Lady of Grace Monastery
2. Marian University
3. Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
4. The Woods*
5. Oldenburg Franciscan Center*
6. Camp Rancho Framasa
7. The Farm
8. Saint Meinrad Archabbey
9. Monastery Immaculate Conception**
10. Mount St. Francis
11. Holy Cross / St. Joseph & Calvary Cemetery
12. Our Lady of Peace Cemetery
13. St. Malachy Cemetery North
14. St. Malachy Cemetery West
15. Calvary & St. Joseph Cemetery

 Archdiocesan Cemetery

*Site is part of the National Register of Historic places

**In the Diocese of Evansville, but included in this guide due to its proximity to Saint Meinrad Archabbey



1

Our Lady of Grace Monastery

Sisters of St. Benedict | Beech Grove, IN

A serene oasis on the southeast side of Indianapolis, the nearly 40 acres of Our Lady of Grace Monastery is home to a 1-acre organic **Peace and Nature Garden** with a walking path, benches, plants, and artwork. Stop by the peaceful cemetery or take time to pray with the hand crafted outdoor **Stations of the Cross**. View the [garden brochure](#) ahead of your visit for reflections and to prepare for a native plant hunt. Open for individual use all year, but please call for group use.

(317) 787-3287 ext. 0

[Get directions](#)

olgmonastery@benedictine.com [Did you know?](#)

www.benedictine.com



2

Marian University

Indianapolis, IN

Tucked in the heart of Indianapolis at Marian University lie several unique religious art and prayer spaces plus the 75 acre Nina Mason Pulliam **EcoLab**, a certified **St. Kateri Habitat** with over 3 miles of trails dedicated to the exploration of science and stewardship of the environment. On the south end of the Ecolab, visit the **St. Francis Colonnade** with Stations of the Cross. Enjoy the peaceful **Blessed Mother Mary Shrine and Rosary Walk** and stop by the **Nativity Scene** mural. The EcoLab is open to the public daily from dawn to dusk.

(317) 955-6505 (EcoLab)

[Get directions](#)

dbenson@marian.edu

[Map & parking](#)

www.marian.edu/faith/religious-art



3

Our Lady of Fatima

Retreat House | Indianapolis, IN

Home to many indoor faith-filled programs throughout the year, Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House is an outdoor destination of its own for rest and reflection. Within the 13 wooded acres visitors will find trails to a **prayer labyrinth**, **Rosary Walk and Prayer Garden**, and **Stations of the Cross** (booklets available in the office or 1st Station). Take a moment to enjoy God's creation at the memorial gardens or the **Our Lady of Fatima and Holy Family Shrines**. Trail access at the south end of parking lot. Open daily for individual use. Please call weekdays to check if groups are using the space.

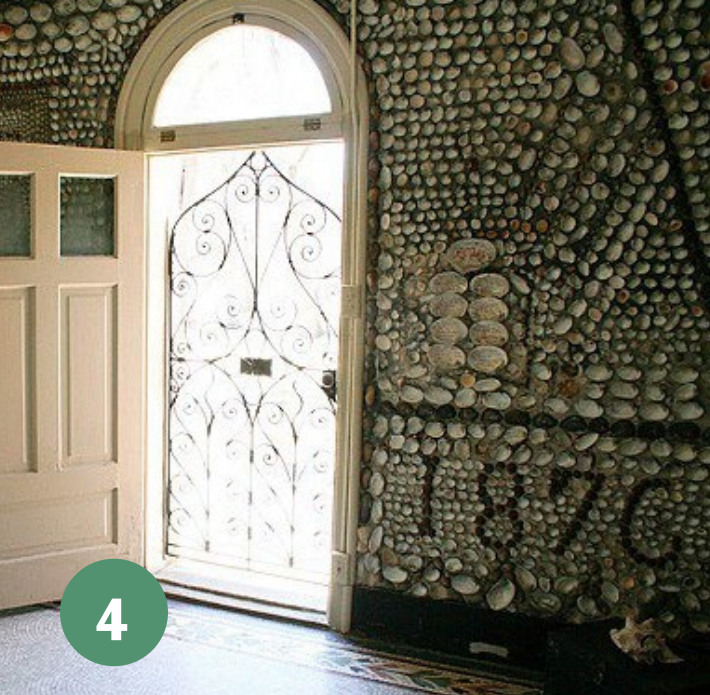
(317) 545-7681

[Get directions](#)

fatima@archindy.org

[Did you know?](#)

www.fatimaretreathouse-indy.org



The Woods

Sisters of Providence | Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN

Rooted in spirituality, the home of the Sisters of Providence is the perfect place to immerse yourself in God's creation. Visit outdoor sites in the life of **Saint Mother Theodore Guerin** (Indiana's first saint) including the **Saint Anne Shell Chapel** and **cemetery** with some of her remains; pray with the **Stations of the Cross**, **labyrinth**, and at **Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto**; visit alpacas, organic gardens & more at the **White Violet Center for Eco-Justice**. Download the **self-guided tour**. Indoor destinations are closed, but Linden Leaf Gifts & the Farm Store at White Violet Center are open.

(812) 535-2925
jcraven@spsmw.org
www.spsmw.org/visit

[Get directions](#) 
[Did you know?](#)



Oldenburg Franciscan Center

Sisters of St. Francis | Oldenburg, IN

Experience renewal and relaxation during a **Day of Quiet Renewal** at the Oldenburg Franciscan Center in southeastern Indiana. Enjoy quiet spaces, grab a book from the library, sit and read, journal or simply be still and enjoy God's gift of nature on the grounds of the Sisters of St. Francis. Take a walking tour of the **shrines and cemetery**. Visit **Michaela Farm** to view the grounds, visit the Farm Store, and take a **labyrinth walk**. Dine at local restaurants or bring a packed lunch. The Center offers coffee, hot chocolate, tea & snacks. Spiritual direction is available. Please schedule in advance.

(812) 933-6437
center@oldenburgofs.com
www.oldenburgfranciscancenter.org/

[Get directions](#) 
[Did you know?](#)



Camp Rancho Framasa

Catholic Youth Organization | Nashville, IN

Nestled in the beautiful hills of Brown County, CYO Camp Rancho Framasa is a peaceful destination for both children and adults to hear God's voice in the beauty of nature. Come for a scheduled program or just to explore the 297 acres including the **Grotto**, **Stations of the Cross trail** and many other hiking trails. Visit the **Chapel** and stop for a prayer by the lake. Please email well ahead of your visit to check if the camp is open to the public that day. Can't make it to Brown County? Bring camp to the classroom with "**CYO to Go**" faith, art, science, and leadership programs.

(812) 988-2839 x 122
registrar@campranchoframasa.org
www.campranchoframasa.org

[Get directions](#) 
[Did you know?](#)



The Farm

Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center | Bloomington, IN

Known locally as “The Farm”, the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center in south central Indiana is a haven of peace and prayer for many, supported by Mary’s Children and the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate. As you stroll through the rolling hills, reflect on Mary’s life at the **Seven Sorrows Path** or **Rosary Walk**. Pray with the outdoor **Stations of the Cross**. Visit the **relic of St. Faustina** (indoors). Stop by the Retreat Center (open daily from 9am - 6pm) or Bookstore (Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 3pm) upon arrival for helpful information on touring the grounds.

(812) 825-4742
www.maryschildren.com

[Get directions](#) 
[Did you know?](#)



Saint Meinrad Archabbey

Benedictine Community | St. Meinrad, IN

Nature reveals God’s glory to those who visit Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Marble steps lead up to the stunning facade of the **Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln**. Gentle paths through the woods reveal a myriad of **shrines and sculptures**. Outside the chapel of **Monte Cassino**, surrounded by trees and panoramic views, sits a peaceful **prayer garden**. A majestic **limestone cross** stands in front of St. Gregory Hall. The public is welcome to explore outdoors (church and buildings may be open) or visit the Gift Shop (open daily) for the walking tour brochure.

(812) 357-6611
mschumacher@saintmeinrad.edu
www.saintmeinrad.org

[Get directions](#) 
[Did you know?](#)




Monastery Immaculate Conception

Sisters of St. Benedict | Ferdinand, IN

Walking around the colonnade at the “Castle on the Hill” visitors are greeted with a spectacular view and a deep sense of peace and gratitude for God’s creation. On Grotto Hill, walk flower bordered paths, visit the **Stations of the Cross**, pray on the **Rosary Steps** and light a candle at the **Lourdes Shrine**. Take a stroll through the serene gardens, pause on one of the many benches, and reflect at **Hildegard’s prayer labyrinth**. Guided tours are offered Tuesday - Sunday or by appointment. Or enjoy the splendor of the Monastery campus, Gift Shop, and Brewery on your own.

(812) 367-1411
jabreen@thedome.org
www.thedome.org

[Get directions](#) 
[Did you know?](#)



Mount St. Francis

Center for Spirituality | Mt. St. Francis, IN

The home of the Conventual Franciscan Friars sits on 400 beautiful acres with nearly 10 miles of [walking trails](#) and a 17-acre lake. Visitors will find many statues and shrines throughout the campus including **Clare's Courtyard** and the **St. Kateri Tekakwitha Shrine**. Pray in the peacefulness of the **Cretan Labyrinth** or **Genesis One Meditation Path**. Visit Cordelier Park which contains the **Outdoor Stations of the Cross**, **Canticle (of Brother Sun) Tiles**, and **St. Francis and Wolf of Gubbio statue**. Buildings are closed but download or pick up on site the [Self-Guided Pilgrimage](#) and [map](#).

(812) 923-8817

retreats@mountsaintfrancis.org
www.mountsaintfrancis.org

[Get directions](#)

[Did you know?](#)

Cemeteries

Around the Archdiocese

When strolling through a Catholic cemetery visitors are immediately reminded of the holiness of the grounds - statues, symbols of faith, and prayer gardens adorn the land where the faithful rest. These sacred spaces are a tangible sign of God's presence at the completion of life's journey and the promise of the resurrection. Visiting the grave of a loved one may evoke sadness, yet the Catholic cemetery is a sign of hope in God and of our reverence for the remains of the deceased. Experience peace as you visit, immersed in the beauty of creation and surrounded by those who have shared our faith. Listed here are cemeteries in the Catholic association and those on the grounds of sites in this guide. Some parishes also have cemeteries associated with their properties.

Archdiocesan Cemeteries

Visit www.catholiccemeteries.cc for more info

- 11 Holy Cross / St. Joseph & Calvary Cemetery
435 W. Troy Ave Indianapolis, IN 46225
- 12 Our Lady of Peace Cemetery
9001 N. Haverstick Indianapolis, IN 46240
- 13 St. Malachy Cemetery North
267 E. 56th Street Brownsburg, IN 46112
- 14 St. Malachy Cemetery West
State Road 136 Brownsburg, IN 46112
- 15 Calvary & St. Joseph Cemetery
4227 Wabash Avenue Terre Haute, IN 47803

On-site Cemeteries

- 1 Our Lady of Grace Monastery
1402 Southern Ave, Beech Grove, IN 46107
- 4 Saint Mary of the Woods
1 Providence Pl, St Mary-Of-The-Woods, IN 47876
- 5 Oldenburg Franciscan Center
22143 Main Street Oldenburg IN, 47036
- 7 Mother of Redeemer Retreat Center
8220 W. State Road 48 Bloomington, IN 47404
- 8 Saint Meinrad Archabbey
200 Hill Drive St. Meinrad, Indiana 47577
- 9 Monastery Immaculate Conception
802 East 10th Street, Ferdinand, IN
- 10 Mount St Francis
101 St Anthony Drive Mt St Francis, IN 47146

Did you know?

Background information on saints, sacred spaces, and spirituality.

Benedictines in Indiana

The story of all Benedictines begins in sixth-century Italy. St. Benedict of Nursia, wrote a Rule for monks living in communities dedicated to prayer and work. Monasteries for men (and then for women) were established, and monasticism spread throughout Europe. In the mid-1800's the first Benedictines arrived in the United States to establish permanent monasteries. St. Meinrad Archabbey was founded directly from the Abbey of Einsiedeln in Switzerland. The first Benedictine women arrived from St. Walburga Abbey in Eichstätt, Germany, settled in St. Marys, Pennsylvania, and established multiple foundations, including one in Erie, Pennsylvania. From Erie, sisters went to Covington, Kentucky, where they founded St. Walburg Monastery. The Covington sisters founded Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Indiana that founded Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. In a midday address on July 11, 2005 (the feast day of St. Benedict), Pope Benedict XVI encouraged us to live as St. Benedict - to "prefer nothing to the love of Christ." The Rule of St Benedict remains one of the great classics of Christian spirituality.

Learn more about St. Benedict at www.osb.org

1

Our Lady of Grace Monastery

Paul C. Schulte, Archbishop of Indianapolis, had a desire to have a home for the elderly in his diocese. In 1955 he approached the Ferdinand sisters with the prospect of opening such a facility. Because the Ferdinand community was relatively large, the sisters decided to found a daughter house and an academy for high school girls, in addition to the archbishop's request. The mission of the Sisters of St. Benedict is to seek God in everyone and everything and to live in community founded on prayer, work, and hospitality. Throughout history, Benedictines have been referred to as "ecobuilders" because they look at the long-term impact of the land. Benedictines are also called to care for all the tools of the monastery with reverence, which includes its natural resources. The Sisters at Our Lady of Grace Monastery exemplify these values, starting with their work in the 1950s to transform the 30 acres of swampland that, in addition to the monastery building, now includes St. Paul Hermitage, a retirement and nursing care facility for the aged and the Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, housed in the former academy.

More at www.benedictine.com/about

3

Return to Sacred Spaces

Our Lady of Fatima

Between May and October 1917, the Virgin Mary appeared to three children—Francisco and Jacinta Marto and their cousin Lúcia dos Santos near Fatima, Portugal. Mary asked the children to pray the rosary for world peace, for the end of World War I, for sinners, and for the conversion of Russia. She gave them three secrets and five prayer, including the prayer said for forgiveness of sins at the end of each rosary decade. Mary promised the children that during the last of her six appearances she would provide a "sign" so people would believe in the apparitions and in her message. A crowd of about 70,000 people gathered on October 12, 1917 to see the miracle that Mary had promised. After appearing to the children for some time, Mary cast a transparent veil over the sun and multi-colored lights were strewn across the landscape. The sun began to spin and appeared to veer toward earth before jumping back to its place in the sky. Devotion to Our Lady of Fatima continues to bring hope and comfort in suffering and uncertainty, just as she did to the people of Portugal embroiled in war. The Feast of Our Lady of Fatima is celebrated on May 13.

The movie, *Fatima*, is available through many streaming platforms at www.fatimathemovie.com

4

Saint Mother Theodore Guerin

Saint Mother Theodore was a woman of courage, determination and compassion. From a young age she faced many challenges, yet entered religious life with the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé sur-Loir, France. Saint Mother Theodore was sent to various parishes in France where she taught, helped the poor and cared for the sick. When the bishop of Vincennes, Indiana requested sisters to come to the New World to help with the influx of Catholic immigrants, Saint Mother Theodore traveled for nearly three months with her five companions to the remote wilderness known as Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Despite the obstacles, Saint Mother Theodore was able to open an academy for girls in less than a year. She continued to establish schools throughout Indiana and Eastern Illinois, opened two orphanages in Vincennes and free pharmacies at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and Vincennes. Remembered as a woman devoted to prayer, an educator, caregiver and leader, her love and respect for nature is still evident in her beloved woods. Saint Mother Theodore died May 14, 1856 and was canonized on Oct. 15, 2006.

More at www.spsmw.org/about/saint-mother-theodore-guerin/

5

Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg

The Sisters of St. Francis in Oldenburg, IN began with 24 year-old Sister Theresa (Genevieve) Hackelmeier's journey from Vienna, Austria to establish a new congregation in southeastern Indiana. In addition to their local educational ministry, they cared for orphans, maintained a garden presided over by Sister Michaela Lindemann (later the farm), and became pioneers in education, opening schools across the Midwest and founding Marian College in 1936 as a liberal arts and teacher education college. The Sisters of St. Francis have long maintained a responsive engagement with the social conditions of the time - in 1892 opening the only school for African American children in segregated Indianapolis, undertaking missionary work among Native Americans in the western US, and embarking on foreign missions. Today the Sisters of St. Francis continue to sponsor Marian University (now in Indianapolis) and Oldenburg Academy as well as supporting the ministries of Michaela Farm, Oldenburg Franciscan Center, and the Nia Kuumba spirituality center in St. Louis, MO. Throughout 167 years, the Sisters have continued to carry out the vital mission of living and spreading the Gospel.

More at www.oldenburgfranciscans.org/history1.html

6

Camp Rancho Framasa

The original 280 acres of land where CYO Camp Rancho Framasa is located was donated by Bert Dingley in 1946. Dingley was the first champion of the organization that would later become involved with Indy Car Racing. Dingley donated the land to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to be used as a summer camp for the youth of the Church. His one stipulation was that the camp be named Rancho Framasa, created by combining the first two letters of his daughters names (FRAncis, MArgaret, and SAMuela). The camp now serves 230 children each week of the summer and is host to many groups year round. Catholic identity and traditions are an integral part of camp. Prayer is a part of each day. Campers learn that we are called to walk humbly with God: putting others before ourself and being in the present moment with the camp community. Camp Rancho Framasa also focuses on living simply and being stewards of the earth. Camp staff are role models who are supported on their personal faith and professional journeys. The camp is known for its inclusive philosophy where campers of all abilities participate together in one inclusive environment, receiving state & national awards.

More at www.campranchoframasa.org

7

Mary's Children & The Farm

Mary's Children is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide a haven of peace and prayer for those who come to the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center ("The Farm"). The name Mary's Children was given by the Blessed Virgin Mary in a message to Ruth Ann Wade. Deeply moved and guided by messages Ruth Ann began receiving from our Lord Jesus and His Blessed Mother in the early 90's, Ruth Ann and Jim Wade, gave up their home, their farm, and the future they had planned, dedicating their land in Bloomington, Indiana to the Mother of Jesus. (The Messages have been published by Mary's Children in four volumes of: Lessons and Messages to the World from Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary.) As Ruth Ann's prayer group grew and more pilgrims came to The Farm, outdoor prayer paths, a Chapel, Retreat Center, and Guesthouse were erected. In 1999 the Archdiocese of Indianapolis gave permission to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel and in 2005, the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate arrived at The Farm to begin their ministry in Bloomington Indiana and support the needs of the Retreat Center.

More at www.maryschildren.com/about-us/history

8

Saint Meinrad & the Archabbey

Saint Meinrad (b. circa 800) was a Benedictine monk who had a reputation as a wise and holy man despite living as a hermit for much of his life. He was murdered by two robbers after inviting them in for food and drink (despite having a premonition of his impending death), thus earning him the title "Martyr of Hospitality." His hermitage became the site of the Benedictine Abbey of Einsiedeln in Switzerland. In 1854 a local priest in southern Indiana requested the presence of these monks from Switzerland to help serve the pastoral needs of the growing German-speaking community and to prepare local men to be priests. Upon establishing the abbey, it was named after Saint Meinrad. Education and priest formation remain part of Saint Meinrad's ministry, as the monastery operates a graduate seminary and school of theology and has other monks in parish work, chaplaincies and diocesan assignments. The monks live by the Rule of St. Benedict and with the motto *ora et labora* (pray and work). They gather in community five times each day to pray and celebrate Mass.

Listen to chant and liturgical music composed by the monks at www.saintmeinrad.org/the-monastery/liturgical-music/downloads

9

Monastery Immaculate Conception

The Sisters of St. Benedict came to Ferdinand, IN, in 1867 from St. Walburg Monastery in Covington, KY to fill a need for teachers who could speak German. The community rapidly grew and the teaching ministry expanded to more than 75 schools in 12 states and 5 countries, plus a training school for teachers (Saint Benedict College). The 20th century was a time of great expansion, yet by the end, the Ferdinand Benedictines, like all religious communities, experienced declining numbers and corporate changes — among them, the closing of St. Benedict College and Marian Heights Academy. But with the losses came growth, new life, and new opportunities. In 1978, they opened a retreat center to offer programs for spiritual renewal and personal growth. St. Benedict's Brew Works was opened in 2015 in what had been the Academy's art building and the Academy's gymnasium was converted into Monastery Event Hall. Benet Hall was transformed into affordable housing for senior citizens in 2016. Today, Monastery Immaculate Conception stands as a tangible sign of the sisters' enduring faith. Truly - "all guests who present themselves are welcomed as Christ."

More at www.thedome.org/about/history

Franciscan Spirituality

Franciscan Spirituality is an incarnational, earthy spirituality; God is close to Creation, not far away, “up there.” As St. Bonaventure put it, God bends down to us, lifting us up. The Franciscan way of life hinges on the synthesis of action and contemplation; prayer leads to work and ministry, work and ministry bring us back to prayer. Franciscans have a profound reverence for the human person as one made in the Image and Likeness of God and understand that Creation and the World, despite the impact of Sin, remain fundamentally Good as Gifts from God. In its witness to Fraternity, Franciscans have an appreciation of and reverence for the individual within the global community. Franciscan Spirituality acknowledges the necessity of human work and strives to uphold the value of human labor and the dignity of workers; it insists on a commitment to social justice by striving for solidarity with the poor and marginalized; it seeks to give concrete expression of and commitment to global and local peacemaking by seeking and initiating the process of reconciliation.

More at www.mountsaintfrancis.org/franciscan-spirituality



We hope you enjoyed your visits! For more resources and ideas for caring for creation visit: www.OurCommonHome.org

