

## **Mercy Center – Welcome and Orientation For Our Contemplative Retreats**

Dear Retreat Participant,

Welcome to a contemplative retreat at Mercy Center!

Experience has taught us that guidelines help in creating a fruitful retreat environment and answering some of the common questions. So we offer the following Guidelines Orientation, especially for those of you who will be attending Mercy Center for the first time.

### **ORIENTATION**

- **Arrival and registration:** you may arrive and check in two hours prior to the start of the retreat, on the opening day. Check the retreat schedule for start and end times. Orientation and the opening of the retreat takes place in your designated conference room.
- After our initial meal and gathering on the opening evening, we will cultivate a spirit of silence and mindfulness that will allow the gifts of the retreat to move deeply in us. Please refer to the retreat schedule to see the level of silence and conversation on this retreat.
- For retreats that include meditation: meditation can be done sitting on a chair, a cushion, or prayer bench – all provided. If you prefer to bring your own, you are welcome to do so.
- Wear comfortable, loose clothing and easy walking shoes. Part of the retreat experience may include some time outdoors on our beautiful grounds if desired. In kindness towards those who are sensitive, we also ask that you do not bring or wear scented lotions, soaps, or perfumes.
- Our food service department offers a variety of nutritious local food. However it is not staffed for special dietary needs, nor are our meals generally vegetarian. There are always salads and other options for non-meat eaters – most people find the food plentiful and satisfying. We provide a small kitchenette with a stove and refrigerator on the bedroom floors, and you are welcome to bring supplemental food if you wish. You can put your name on it and store it in the refrigerator in the kitchenette.
- Retreatant bedrooms are all individual and bathrooms are on the hallway. Bed linens, towels, and bathrobes are provided. You may want to bring an alarm clock and slippers.



## **BODY WORK**

Body consciousness is an important part of our ministry here at Mercy Center. We have massage and healing touch practitioners with whom you can schedule an appointment when you arrive.

[Click here for more about scheduling Body Work](#)

## **PARKING**

Parking is limited at Mercy Center. For this reason and for the sake of the environment, please consider carpooling if you know someone who is coming to this retreat.

Mercy Center retreatants use the Forest Parking Lot, to the right as you enter the main gates. If you like, you can drop your luggage at the registration desk just inside the front door of Mercy Center up the road, and then take your car back down to the parking lot. If a disability makes this difficult, please ask someone at the front desk for assistance.

## **MAP AND DIRECTIONS**

[Click here to view and download Mercy Campus map](#)

[Click here to view and print Directions to Mercy Center](#)

Again, a very warm welcome from all of us at Mercy Center. We look forward to this time together. If you have any further questions, please call Cristina Esguerra at 650-340-7454.

