



Michelle Sherman is a spiritual director at Bergamo. Read her reflection below!

The Bergamo Break

Pause, pray, and stay connected with the latest news at Bergamo

Spiritual Direction (Spiritual Companionship) at Bergamo

Spiritual Direction (also referred to as Spiritual

Companionship or Accompaniment) is a spiritual practice developed in relationship by meeting regularly with a spiritual director. This companionship inspires people to experience authenticity in their lives as they connect with and explore their relationship with God. The purpose is to deepen one's spirituality and growth, paying ever closer attention to what God is inviting you to. God is the real director in the relationship. The spiritual companion is a professionally trained, active companion who helps you to recognize, appreciate, and be attentive to the movement of God in your life.



Etched into a plaque in the main hallway of the Bergamo Center for Lifelong Learning is the description that Bergamo was founded "to educate people of all ages and from all walks of life to appreciate their full human potential and their social responsibility to the human community." It is with this same spirit of renewal, education, ecumenism, and commitment to the common good that Bergamo welcomes groups of all ages to *deepen self-awareness, develop the interior life, and elicit a personal and communal faith response to changing times*. These three invitations can be explored through spiritual direction.

Spiritual directors (also called spiritual companions) are trained in the art of listening and accompaniment. Meeting with a spiritual companion provides the opportunity to prayerfully reflect on your life, God's presence with you, and how you may be called to respond to God and those around you in your daily life.

Meeting with a spiritual director may be especially helpful for you if you are:

- desiring a prayerful space to "unpack" all that is happening in your life
- seeking to deepen your relationship with God
- hoping to explore new ways of prayer
- looking for accompaniment to discern the call of the Holy Spirit
- experiencing a crossroads or life transition

-By Michelle Sherman, spiritual director (companion) at Bergamo

We have several trained spiritual companions here at Bergamo (pictured, from left to right: Michelle Sherman, Joe McHugh, Don Jackson, Carol Jackson, Stephen Rivet). If you are interested in meeting with one of them, please visit our [Adults Programs](#) page for more information. No long-term commitment is required. You are welcome to meet with a spiritual companion for a meeting or two just to try the experience.

Save the Date! September 28

Celebrate the **feast of Pope St. John XXIII**, Bergamo's patron saint (Bergamo is named after his Italian birthplace!), through a **delicious dinner and engaging program!** This is a **new event**, so do not miss out - all are invited! More details to come soon.



Faces of Bergamo: Meet Fr. Gene Contadino!

Please tell us about yourself.

I was born in Cincinnati, OH, to parents who valued Catholic education – a fact that made all of the difference in my life! I attended Purcell High School, which is where I was first introduced to the Marianists and entered the Society of Mary at the age of 18. Later, in ministering at the University of Dayton, I held several positions among the staff, on the faculty, and in administration. Carrying the Marianist charism allowed me to bring that value-added quality to our many coworkers and students.



I also served as pastor of St. Francis de Sales parish in Cincinnati for 10 years. Working at this thriving Marianist parish and school had challenges that are present in urban schools, but it was an experience filled with warmth, positivity, and a spirit of family.

How have you been involved with Bergamo/the Mount Saint John property?

I have been involved with Bergamo and the Mount Saint John campus in numerous ways over the years. As a student at UD, I did dishes here! I worked at the Queen of Apostles Church from 1977 to 1983, and one summer I even lived in the basement of Bergamo (where a Marianist community previously resided)! I have attended many wonderful and significant Marianist events and retreats here over the years, and I have served on the Board of Trustees since 2021.

What is a highlight of your involvement at Bergamo?

My perpetual vow retreat was on the property and was a significant and memorable event in my life.

What are your hopes for Bergamo's guests and for the organization?

I am currently excited about working with Kelli Kinnear, Bergamo's new executive director (since June 2024), and the enthusiasm she brings to the organization.

I have many hopes for Bergamo and for all those who come here. I hope that high

school retreatants have a seed planted that will blossom in their hearts. I hope everyone who comes here is renewed and refreshed. I hope their time here encourages them to pay attention to the planet, to the universe even, and their connection to it. In the Spirit of Pope Francis, I hope they sharpen not only their religious attention, but their attention to the earth. Bergamo is not just a place to get away from life, but a place to get into life, and have a more meaningful existence.

Finally, the success of Bergamo does not just depend on the staff. I hope that a dedicated group of people can come together to support Bergamo - with their time, finances, and ideas - and help Bergamo to become all that it can be.



BERGAMO IS HIRING!



The Bergamo Center is looking to hire one or more **weekend guest services coordinators!**

Serve Bergamo's mission by supporting retreatants and other guests on weekends. Flexible shifts are available.

Click this image to learn more!




Bergamo Faith-Sharing Group Recap

This spring, Bergamo sponsored an adult faith formation program for the first time in recent years.

The Bergamo Lenten faith-sharing group consisted of 7 adults of different ages who met weekly to prayerfully reflect on and share about their weeks and pray with scripture. Each week a participant also shared a longer account of their faith journey, namely, the ups and downs in their lives and how they have seen God working through these experiences. Multiple times, the given faith journey led to such fruitful discussion that the group ran out of time to do the other scheduled prayer activity! The group also participated in a daylong retreat, led by Brendan Dillon and Bergamo-affiliated spiritual directors Joe McHugh and Stephen Rivet, who guided the group through different prayer experiences including lectio divina, visio divina, and "Emmaus walks."


The weekly sessions were facilitated by Brendan Dillon, Bergamo's Guest Services Coordinator, who hoped that bringing together adults of all ages would allow participants to share wisdom and perspectives from different life stages. Kyle, one of the participants, expressed his appreciation of this aspect: "I was initially skeptical about the intergenerational emphasis, but as we began to share our individual faith journeys, our connections transcended the age gaps and we bonded over our collective desire to grow deeper in our relationships with God. We grew together, and that was very special."

Several of the group members even decided to continue meeting beyond Lent! If you are interested in joining a similar program, be on the lookout for more Bergamo-sponsored programming (and feel free to send us ideas of future programs you want to see happen)!



Plan Your Faculty/Staff In- Service at Bergamo!

Bergamo Center is the perfect place to have your opening year Faculty/Staff Retreat or In-Service! Everything you need is right here: a spacious large gathering room; plenty of break-out rooms; a coffee bar with tasty flavored syrups; a chapel for prayer; a filling & delicious meal; beautiful grounds to explore; oh, and did we mention coffee?!



Go to our website to find out more and inquire about open dates.



Calling Chaminda Julienne Alumni!

Bergamo and Chaminade
Julienne are partnering for the
June 20 - 22 CJ Reunion
Weekend! Reserve your lodging
at Bergamo, relive your Kairos
Retreat experience, and enjoy
the beautiful grounds of MSJ in
between reunion events. Close
the weekend by celebrating Mass
in Bergamo's Roncalli Chapel,
followed by light refreshments &
a short tour of our facility. Click
this image to reserve a room for
one or more nights.



Spring



Spring Highlights

Springtime here at Bergamo was ushered in by beautiful tree blossoms and wildflowers in full bloom around the grounds of Mt. St. John, as well as a few guests who helpfully grazed around the solar panels for us - not BAAAd!

Inside our retreat center on almost any given week throughout March and April, you could find our building filled with high school retreat groups. Our Catholic school partners that offer Kairos retreats typically have their final retreats in the spring, as the seniors hand over leadership to the juniors.

Of our weekend adult groups, there were many church group retreats, and we were also pleased to welcome a group from Wright Patterson Air Force Base, composed of retired military men who came here for a spiritual retreat. Enjoying Bergamo for the first time was the National Leadership Team from Pax Christi USA (a membership organization, grounded in the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching, whose vision is to work toward "a more peaceful, just, & sustainable world."), as well as the family of St. Gabriel Family of Parishes. And last but not least, we all enjoyed our guest, Frank Beazley, who traveled here all the way from Nova Scotia, Canada, for a week-long self-directed retreat at Bergamo!



BERGAMO SUMMER ARRIVALS



June

UD Mission Based Staff
Retreat
Seton HS Junior Retreat
American Sewing Guild
Purcell Marian HS Senior
Kairos Retreat
The Noble Circle Project
Men We Think 4 a Change
CJ Reunion Alums
Fairmont Presbyterian
Church
OH Association of Garden
Clubs
United Women in Faith

July

Seton HS Senior Kairos
Marianist LIFE Summer
Program
Ignatian Spirituality
Project
Women Affirming
Women



August

Midwest Native Plant
Conference
Seton HS Junior Retreat
Bishop Leibold Faculty
Retreat
Moeller HS Campus Ministry
Exec Board
Seton Richmond School
Marianist Provincial Council
Carroll HS Faculty Retreat
Women We Think 4 a
Change
UD Callings Program
Carroll HS Junior Retreat
St. Thomas Mar Thoma
Church

3 Minute Retreat

Pause. Breathe deeply. Slowly read the following passage three times.

Then the angel said to the women in reply, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.' (Matt 28: 5-7)

Reflect. What parts of my life feel "dead?" How can I bring these to Christ that he might renew them? *Christ, let your Resurrection grow in my heart. Amen.*

Connect with Us

Spend the day at Bergamo! Attend an upcoming **Day of Rest and Healing:**
June 17, 23-25, July 18, 22-23, 31, August 11-14, 26-28

Find more information on our website: www.bergamocenter.org (under "Adult Programs")

Interested in booking a group? Contact us at (937) 426-2363 or info@bergamocenter.org.

Check out photos from your group's visit to Bergamo and other updates on our Facebook and Instagram pages!



Join Our Cause

Please consider supporting Bergamo's mission of providing excellent programming and facilities.

Donate

The Bergamo Center 4400 Shakertown Rd., Dayton, OH 45430

Bergamo Center for Lifelong Learning | 4400 Shakertown Rd. | Beavercreek, OH 45430 US

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