



Memo

Date: February 14, 2022
To: Priests
From: The Most Reverend Bernard E. Shlesinger III
Re: Clergy invitation - Retreat at Purification Heritage Center

You may recall last year that the Purification Heritage Center (PHC) offered a special opportunity to make a retreat in the lovely pastoral setting of the first Catholic Church congregation in the state of Georgia.

For those of you who are not familiar with PHC, it encompasses the church of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Locust Grove Cemetery, the oldest Catholic cemetery in the state and Heritage Preserve; and a retreat site that is being developed to host future retreats, meetings and pilgrimages on the land where the first Catholics settled in 1790.

PHC's vision is to create a sacred place to seek, find and renew faith. And, they are once again extending an invitation to all priests of the archdiocese who are interested to visit and use the time for rest and reflection in this rural setting. Visits are available for up to five days. While the cabins are not yet completed on the retreat site, priests are invited to stay in the town of Washington, Georgia, in the Fitzpatrick Hotel, just 10 minutes north of PHC. All lodging is complimentary through 2022, and priests will receive a welcome basket with snacks and a stipend for meals during their stay. Washington has a beautiful historic Catholic cemetery named St. Patrick and a near-by revolutionary war battle site called Kettle Creek Battlefield.

You will have the opportunity to say your daily Mass at the church of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary with the possibility of saying Mass for retreat groups that overlap your visit. Additional prayer time at the cemetery is available along with the opportunity to pray the Joyful Mysteries in Grace Garden and pray along the Seven Sorrows of Mary Walk. A dock house is available for a place of relaxation and the pond is fully stocked if you would like to cast a line. There are a series of walking trails around the property for exercise and enjoyment.

Over the past year, ten of your brother priests have made retreat at PHC, including Archbishop Hartmayer. If you would like to speak with one of them about their experience, Amanda Hailey can provide you with names. You may reach out to her at ahailey@archatl.com. For more information, visit www.purificationheritagecenter.org.

To make arrangements for a visit, please contact Betsy Orr of PHC at 678-662-9588 or betsyorr@me.com. I encourage you to consider a retreat at PHC, the cradle of our faith in the state. I think you will find it to be a wonderful time of renewal, rest and reflection.