



June, 2020

Dear Omega Retreat Center Guests,

It is my hope this letter finds you and yours well. As key persons with A.C.T.S and other retreat groups within your parishes and church communities, may you and your partners in ministry find ways to navigate the effects of this pandemic in your ministry. We are together in knowing that life has changed; and, together, in living in this uncertain state of not knowing when, and, if, things will normalize.

I thought it best to give an update on changes at Omega Retreat Center and on COVID-19 protocols which have been enacted here. We are officially **CLOSED through July** and, at this point, retreat groups have cancelled until the beginning of October. Many have expressed that their retreat teams have not been able to meet in a safe manner and, therefore have not been able to adequately prepare for their retreat.

During this time that we have been closed, some changes have taken place. Omega no longer has use of Casa de Guadalupe (Team House), as the Benedictine Sisters will now be utilizing this building. Omega will be using the building vacated by Children's Inn. The new name for this building is "Haider-Kean Inn", in honor of the two women who fostered medically frail children from 1990 - 2019.

Beds have been added to Haider-Kean Inn, as well as to Lidwina's Dwelling (building attached to Chapel), for team members. These changes bring **our new occupancy count to a total of 70 beds for both team and retreatants. (You may remember that we previously had 83 beds.)** I highly encourage the future Directors and Heads of Teams to schedule a tour closer to their retreat date so as to have a visual of our new configuration.

We anticipate that when we begin to accept retreat groups again, we will still be concerned about the pandemic and, certainly with the safety of our guests. Be assured that we will be following the guidelines from the CDC, the state of Texas, and the Archdiocese of San Antonio. **It may be that we will not be able to accept 70 retreatants, as we will follow the recommended percentage of occupancy. For example, today the recommended percentage is 25-50% of occupancy. If we were open today, we could only accept between 18 persons at 25% or 35 persons at 50% of occupancy.**

Proper social distancing will need to be observed in EVERY aspect of the retreat: in the bedrooms, Dining Room, Presentation Room, Agape area and, in our Christ The King Chapel. We will provide for daily temperature checks, hand sanitizing, extra sanitizing of bathrooms, chairs, and tables. ALL will be asked to comply with our protocols. As SAFETY IS PRIMARY, masks are to be worn since all on retreat come from different households; handwashing following having coughed, sneezed or having touched one's face. The Candlelight tradition will need to be seriously considered. Whether Omega will allow it to take place is unclear at the moment. For everyone's safety, if anyone were to display symptoms while on retreat, they would need to return home immediately. If anyone were to become sick with the virus after leaving a retreat weekend at Omega, our Office would need to be immediately notified so we could take appropriate action for others who were on retreat at the same time.

We, at Omega, have our guests' safety as our highest concern and, we will be monitoring every group. We will ask for compliance to our protocols. If you have any questions, please call me at (830) 816-8470 or you can send an email to omegaretreatcenter@gmail.com.

Respectfully and in God's Peace,

Sr. Bernadine Reyes, O.S.B.

Director of Ministries