

Understanding and Navigating The Dark Night

A Weekend Retreat to Deepen the Contemplative Dimension of Life

Retreat guide *Shawn Kafader*



February 5-7, 2016

Begins with Supper on Friday at 6:00 PM
Ends after Lunch on Sunday

The Portiuncula Center for Prayer
9263 West Saint Francis Road
Frankfort IL 60423

*The two nearest rail stations to "The Port":
Hickory Creek (Rock Island Line) and Matteson (Metra Electric Line)*

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Contemplative Outreach - Chicago

This retreat will explore St. John of the Cross' concepts of the *Dark Night of the Senses* and the *Dark Night of the Spirit*. Together these have come to be known as *The Dark Night of the Soul*. God is present and active in these spiritual experiences offering us freedom to deepen the contemplative dimension of our lives.

We will also explore the difference between the spiritual experience of the Dark Night and Clinical Depression. An opportunity will be included for personal sharing of Dark Night experiences and exploring questions about the retreat topic.

TWO WAYS TO REGISTER

Lodger: two nights lodging and six meals.

(6:00 PM Friday – 2:00 PM Sunday)

Commuter: no lodging, six meals

(6:00 PM Friday – 2:00 PM Sunday)

What can I expect on this retreat?

Registration and room check-in at "The Port" begin at 4 PM on Friday. Dinner is served at 6. The retreat begins at 7.

This is primarily a silent communal retreat punctuated with several conferences and some time for optional sharing. The conference sessions will be clear and simple presentations of St. John's thinking, with handouts and reflection questions to ponder between sessions. It is not assumed that participants will know anything about St. John or have read anything by him before attending. It is hoped that the retreat will inspire you to go out and explore (or re-explore) his writings with a good foundation to do so.

The weekend will include extended periods of Centering Prayer. Saturday meals will be in silence. Mass is available on-site on Sunday morning with our hosts, the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, across from the Port. Sunday will conclude with a communal healing liturgy and a retreat evaluation.

Each Lodger will have a private room with a desk, sink, bed, comfortable chair and closet. The showers and toilets are located off the hallways. Commuters will have the many quiet spaces and comfortable lounge chairs spread throughout the Port. St. Francis Woods, the property surrounding the retreat center, has many walking trails both paved and unpaved, in an attractive park. and an inviting forest and creek.

What do I need to bring?

You may wish to bring your personal copy of the scriptures, although all rooms in the Port have a copy of the scriptures in them. Other useful items: (1) an alarm clock, (2) a journal, if you want to use one, and (3) if you normally use something other than a chair for your centering prayer periods, then bring what you use so that your prayer periods will be physically comfortable. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.

Who is the guide for the retreat?

The Rev. Dr. Shawn Kafader, D. Min., LCPC is an ordained non-denominational minister and Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor. Shawn enjoys offering contemplative retreats and workshops in the Chicago area as well as nationally and is a commissioned workshop presenter for Contemplative Outreach. Shawn is a Conversi lay Cistercian at New Melleray Abbey, Peosta, Iowa. Currently Shawn ministers on the Chaplain staff of Friendship Village of Schaumburg, Schaumburg, IL.

Prerequisite: *Please have a regular practice of centering prayer before registering for this retreat.*

Registration Form: Winter Weekend Retreat: February 5-7, 2016

 Lodger: \$220 includes six meals, two nights lodging in a private room, and materials. (Double occupancy \$200: please indicate roommate _____.)

 Commuter: \$125 includes six meals and materials, retreat common spaces.

(Scholarship financial assistance is available. Contact registrar for more information.)

Payment in full due before January 22, 2016. Please make your check payable to Contemplative Outreach and mail it, with your registration, to Alan Krema, 822 Bakewell Lane, Naperville IL 60565, (alkrema@gmail.com)

Name

Address

Phone

Email address

Lodging is limited: Please register early to ensure overnight accommodations.