

PACEM in TERRIS

P E A C E O N E A R T H

Cause to Celebrate!

Alleluia! Alleluia! At Eastertime, the generosity of God shines forth and covers the universe, the world, and each one of us. The gifts of God are revealed through all times, shining everywhere, in all ways, as He gives, gives, gives!

Jesus, our Lord and Savior, was pure gift—sent forth through the generosity of the Father—to bring the light of love into a darkened world. Jesus, sharing the fullness of the Father’s love and generosity, generously embraced the poverty of the Cross that we might have the gift of freedom from our sins and the gift of eternal life!

Through the never-ending generosity of our God we received the greatest of all gifts: the Holy Spirit, the life and love of the Father and the Son, that we might truly be “one” with them, that the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—would dwell within us. Glory to God!

Our 40 days of Lent for 2008 are finished. We were invited to pick up our cross and follow Jesus. The invitation continues for us to lay down our lives for our family and friends and, yes, our enemies. We are invited to give, to “imitate the image and likeness of God.” That also means to imitate the generosity of God. A sobering and exciting invitation! How did we



“Our Redeemer” by artist Mark Balma hangs in Pacem’s chapel.

do? How are we doing? What more do we want to do? What does God want us to do? Join with us as we ponder those questions throughout the year ahead. ◆

It’s Our 20th Anniversary!

On May 1, 2008, Pacem in Terris will celebrate the 20th anniversary of this hermitage sanctuary. The first three hermitages (St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Anthony) were opened on May 1, 1988, and the first guest hermits arrived!

For 20 years, God has poured His love and mercy on His hermits. We have seen it and give testimony to it! Pacem in Terris is a gift from God to the people of God. We have great cause to celebrate the generosity of God!

We searched our hearts for a way to say “Thank you” to God, for a way to celebrate this spiritually rich and fruitful two decades. Everything led back to “reflect the generosity of God.” We said, “Yes, Lord, what would you have us do?” We believe He answered, and we invite you all, hermits and friends, to be part of this celebration of generosity! The enclosed insert will share our thoughts and plans. ◆

*“In generous spirit
pay homage
to the Lord,
be not sparing
of freewill gifts.”*

Sirach 35:7

Pacem's History

The story of Pacem in Terris is about God's love and the faith of His people.

As a religious education director, founder Shirley Wanchena was deeply aware of people's spiritual hunger, their universal need to experience God's love, and their longing to discover His plan for their lives.

With prayerful discernment and counsel, in 1979 she accepted God's invitation to "Create an environment where my people can come and be alone with me." Based on the history of the church and Shirley's personal prayer experience, this translated into

the building of hermitages. With the prayers and practical support of family and friends, in 1982 the first 80 acres of forest and prairie land were purchased. Church and county approvals were given to establish a hermitage retreat center.

On May 1, 1988, three hermitages were ready and the first hermit guests arrived. And people continued to arrive, learning about Pacem from newspaper articles and word of mouth. The hermits' stories, notes, and testimonies confirmed that this retreat center was God's plan. Miracle upon miracle revealed the unique ways God ministered to each person and drew them into an intimate experience of His great love for them.

Throughout the years, Pacem in Terris has been enriched spiritually by official blessings of the church through pastors, local bishops, and Pope John Paul II.

Whenever the need for additional hermitages, land, roads, trails, and equipment became evident, God provided the funds through the generous hearts and gifts of His people.

Today, Pacem in Terris has 240 acres and a total of 19 hermitages, including a beautiful community building, Our Lady of Pacem.

The mission of Pacem in Terris continues as we prayerfully seek God's will and wait in joyful expectation of what is to come. ♦

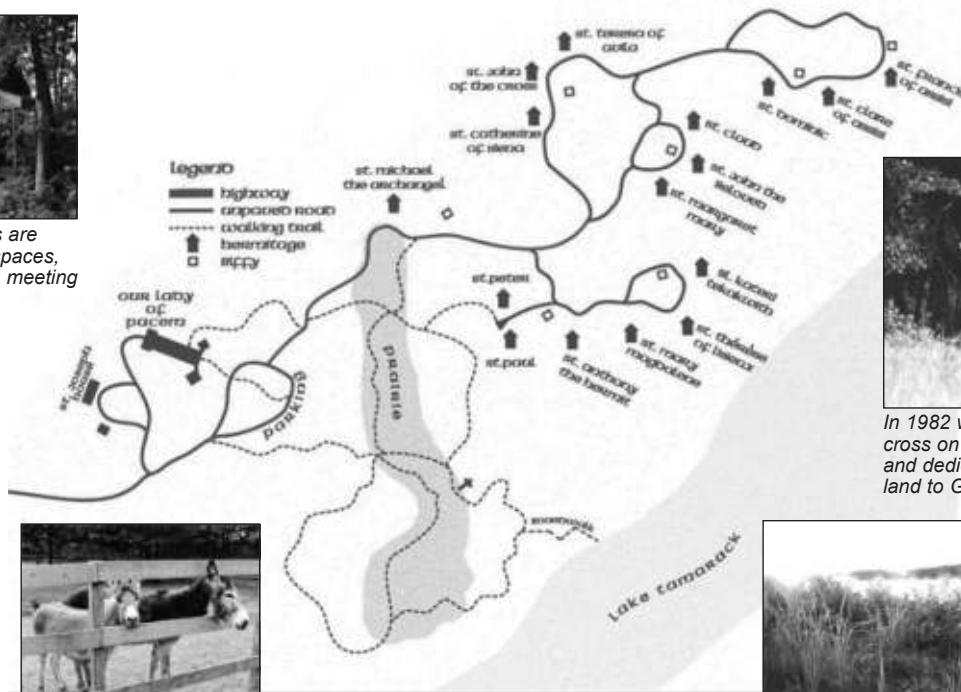
Pacem in Terris



Pacem's hermitages are simple but elegant spaces, as befits an intimate meeting with God.



Simple but tasty hermit fare: homemade bread, fruit, cheese, and our special date-nut muffin.



In 1982 we placed a cross on the prairie and dedicated the land to God.



Our eight baby burro, Shiloh, was born in 2006.



The boardwalk was completed in 1989 and is a favorite destination.

20 years of growth and blessings

Three hermitages open and the first hermit guests arrive

Visitation house with pole barn and 20 acres purchased

Papal blessing
Four more hermitages open

San Damiano house, garage and 40 more acres purchased

Three more hermitages open

Six more hermitages open, plus three indoor hermitages
Our Lady of Pacem opens and is dedicated

Prayer Partners are formed; now about 430 people pray daily for Pacem

Since the beginning, about 8,000 hermits have come "to be alone with God"

1988

1991

1992

1994

1996

2000

2003

2008

“Coming Home”

Pacem in Terris (*Peace on Earth*) is a spiritual home for our hermit guests.

It begins when you turn onto the driveway and move from the smooth tarred road, becoming aware of the sound of gravel crunching under the wheels of the car. Driving more slowly, you take a deep breath and a quiet peace fills the restless space within you. You have stepped outside the world of schedules, expectations, and responsibilities into a world of peace and freedom. You have arrived at a spiritual home prepared for you by God.

Following the “guest parking” signs, you park your car and walk a short wooded path to the main house—in the early years, you arrived at St. Joseph House; now you arrive at Our Lady of Pacem. About the names: We invited St. Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, to be a prayerful provider for Pacem. The miracles that needed to happen to secure the very first Pacem home happened. St. Joseph House became the first “welcome home” stop for staff and hermits. And then after

many years had passed and more hermitages and roads were built, once again we enlisted St. Joseph and the many hermitage saints to pray for our additional housing needs. Through the generosity of believers, more hermitages were built and the miracle that is Our Lady of Pacem community house now provides a warm welcome to all our guest hermits.

Like everyone who arrives home tired and weary from daily life, you need some time to let go, to symbolically “kick off your shoes” and enjoy that deep breath of freedom. We give you a simple, warm welcome and inquire into any special needs. This helps prepare you to enter the heart of the spiritual home, the hermitage. It’s the special “room” that’s prepared for your intimate time alone with God. There you find your true spiritual home, the home of the heart, where the Holy Spirit dwells. The Holy Spirit welcomes you, and in God’s great love, cares for you—body, soul, and spirit. ◆



St. Joseph House, our first home, was purchased through an auction in 1987.



Our Lady of Pacem community house opened in 2000 to great rejoicing!

“Come unto me,
all you who are tired and weary,
and I will give you rest.”

a cloud of witnesses

✦ “I hear there’s a retreat center opening up by you,” someone commented at a mutual friend’s wedding. This was my first introduction to Pacem in Terris, long before a building, a hermitage, or even a sign existed. Little did I know that this conversation starter would begin a 25-plus-year relationship. It became my family’s privilege to move branches, dig holes, put out fires, feed workers, and eventually to participate in an alone time in a hermitage. Friendships grew, more buildings were added, personnel changed, visions unfolded, dreams fulfilled, milestones celebrated, and plans changed—but God has remained constant, steadfast, and perceptibly present.” —Jan Janicke

✦ “As neighbors, we thank you for letting us be part of the dream! We have had the privilege of helping Pacem grow with our prayers and financial support, and many times being friends ‘in deed’ when those special needs arise! The Lord’s peace is truly present at Pacem. A quiet place beckoning to each one of us to lay down our burdens and rest with the Lord for a little while.” —Tony and Audrey Deschenes

✦ “A blessing came—because of a mountain of dirty dishes, patience was learned. A blessing came—because of a mistake in a recipe or a dropped dish, humility grew. A blessing came—because of the selflessness of all, our God-given guests are fed and nourished and built up.” —Dawn Thill

Pacem Profile

The first time artist Mark Balma stayed in a hermitage it felt so painful being alone that he drove to a mall for a while. “But I learned that Jesus meets us wherever we are,” says Mark. Over the years since that time, he’s left Pacem a lasting gift: his paintings and drawings that grace the community house, including the chapel painting of Christ. “In the painting, Jesus walks toward us with open arms,” says Mark. “There is no judgment; we are simply lost sheep needing to be found.” ♦



Mark Balma's gift of sacred art enriches our hermits' experience.

Dear friends,

Sometimes 20 years seems like a day. Looking backward, scanning those years, it feels as if all of you—friends, family, and hermits—have been part of one big gathering of the faithful. It certainly calls for a celebration!

If we could have a “virtual” anniversary party right now, you’d all be invited. We’d gather around in a comfortable circle and share our faith stories. Then we’d have a great feast—with a Pacem muffin for dessert! And afterward, I’d give you a big hug and send you home with a gift.

I’ve pondered long and hard about that gift, knowing that “silver and gold have I none.” What could I possibly give all my dear friends? Then I thought of my “storehouse”—it is full of hope. I asked Jesus about sharing it all and he said, “Absolutely, there’s more!” I can use it all up and, like the loaves and fishes, it never runs out.

I am so excited! You will each leave with a huge portion of HOPE—as much as you can carry, all wrapped in a prayer of faith with a ribbon of love. With HOPE you will always know God’s love—and that makes all things possible.

Each of you is a priceless gift to me. Thank you for coming to the party!

With a grateful heart,

Shirley Wanchena

An Appeal for Peace

The generosity of so many people has provided hermitage retreats for the faithful for 20 years. Now we need to look to the future and ensure that this “oasis of peace” will continue to be available for you and the generations to come.

We need you to be “Partners” with us just like our Prayer Partners, who offer Pacem the spiritual strength of their daily prayers. We are so grateful for them and ask them to please not stop praying for us, not for a single day. And so we ask those of you who are supporting us financially, please do not quit. We need all of you to be our partners to provide for the practical needs necessary for us to function every day.

Yes, this is our personal appeal to ask you for help today for our ever-increasing operational needs. And we ask you to look with us into the future, to be our partners—whether through endowment funds, stocks, wills, insurance policies, etc.—whatever fits your financial situation and planning.

The world is getting faster, louder, and busier. Together, with your generosity and partnership, we can continue to provide the people of God with an oasis of peace.

The legal title is:

**Pacem in Terris
26399 Highway 47 NW
Isanti, MN 55040**

“Give and there will be gifts for you . . . because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.”

Luke 6:38 (J.B.)