

New “silent” houses to be dedicated at St. Peter Upon the Water.

St. Peter upon the Water: A Center for Spiritual Direction and Formation was established with the permission of then Archbishop Patrick Flores prior to his retirement. In March of 2006, Archbishop José H. Gomez celebrated a Mass on Indian Creek, a tributary of the Guadalupe River.

Saturday, June 27 Archbishop Gomez marked a new chapter in the development of this valuable ministry as he dedicated two newly completed buildings on the 170 acre facility. One duplex is named “Mary Anne’s Cottage,” in memory of Mary Anne Collins, a charter member of St. Peter upon the Water Spiritual Formation Team. A Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated last December.



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The second building will be dedicated as the “St. John Vianney House” in response to Pope Benedict XVI’s proclamation of the Year for Priests. St. John Vianney is the patron of all parish priests. The house is a gift to St. Peter upon the Water, funded entirely by a generous donation from Beverly Pevehouse of Midland and Kerrville, the center’s founding benefactrix. It has been built and used by all the bishops and priests of the Archdiocese of San Antonio for silent retreats and personal reflection.



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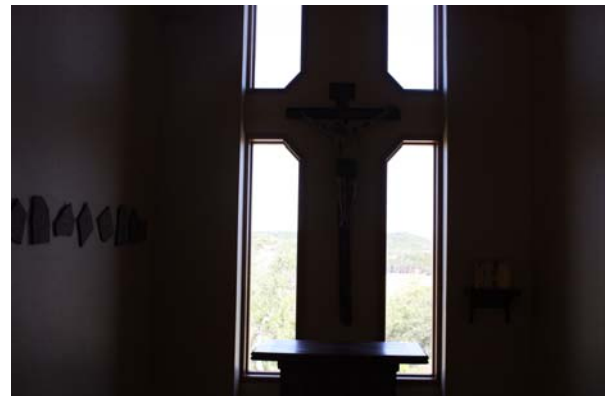
“I am deeply moved by the generosity of Beverly Pevehouse,” said Archbishop Gomez. “I know that St. John Vianney House will be a wonderful blessing to the Archdiocese of San Antonio, as is the entire ministry of St. Peter upon the Water. I can think of no greater gift to the people of the archdiocese than to be served by bishops and priests who are reenergized by

the grace that will come from their opportunity to reconnect with the heart and soul of their ministry.” The trustees of the center, in accepting this gift, have dedicated its use to the archbishop and the archdiocese.

In 2004, Msgr. Mike Boulette, St. Peter upon the Water’s founder and director, began this ministry to offer the gift of Christian spiritual direction to the archdiocese in response to the growing number of people desiring guidance in their spiritual lives. It also offers a Formation Program for Spiritual Directors so that persons with gifts of wisdom, faith and discernment can be formed to guide the spiritual journey of others.



“The John Vianney House will be of great benefit to the priests of the archdiocese and we are very blessed to have the archbishop and Msgr. Boulette make this possible,” said Father David Garcia, former rector of San Fernando Cathedral and current director of the Old Spanish Missions for the archdiocese. He continued, “I myself prefer silent retreats to any other kind. Once you get into the silence it can be very powerful and at the same time cleansing. It helps you clear away the busyness we easily find ourselves into as priests so that we can more clearly listen to the voice of God. Silence in an atmosphere of nature and the wonders of God's creation puts things back into perspective and allows me to rethink what is really important in my life as a priest.”



Father Frank Macias, pastor of St. Leo the Great Church in San Antonio, ministers to 4,000 families. When asked about the need for a resource like St. John Vianney House, he said, “Sometimes we need to get away to reflect and review the ministry we are providing.”

The church generally encourages priests to make an annual retreat and a monthly day of reflection. Father Larry Christian, rector of Assumption Seminary commenting on the priest’s need for this opportunity said, “Solitude and community are the foundation of

the spiritual life. However, in order to get in touch with the contemplative side you have to have periods of silence, and that's something you can't do in a typical rectory because you can have people coming to the door any time, day or night."

St. John Vianney House at St. Peter on the Water is located about one hour from San Antonio, in the beautiful Hill Country in Ingram. Father Macias said "It would be easier to take of advantage of this opportunity, just because it is near. It will be a place to recharge our spiritual batteries and have a wonderful, quiet rest."



St. John Vianney House will be a welcome addition to the ongoing spiritual formation of our priests, Father Christian said, adding "The archdiocese hasn't had a place where priests can specifically do this kind of place to have a silent retreat." In the busy life of a priest, he continued, "It is important to have a resource like this conveniently located in order to make it practical and develop the practice of this type of spiritual reflection."



Mary Anne' Cottage will be available for occupancy beginning August 1. Persons may arrange to make personal directed retreats or receive more information on receiving spiritual direction or for applying to the formation program, by calling (830) 367-5959, by emailing her at secretary@stpeteruponthewater.org, or by going to the website, www.stpeteruponthewater.org .