



## Finding Jesus at San Damiano

July 2024 | 0007

### Finding Jesus with Frassati



Pope Francis recently delighted "Frassati Fans" throughout the world with his announcement that Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, "will be a saint soon."

Frassati has inspired legions of Catholics—especially young adults—to strive to be "perfected as our Heavenly Father is Perfect." Although his family was extremely wealthy and weak in their practice of the Faith, young

Frassati was a passionate Catholic—constantly occupied with corporal works of mercy and serving in an extraordinary way the needs of the poor. He was a man of joy who delighted in the glorious Presence of God in the beauty of nature about him... especially in his beloved mountains... "Mountains... mountains... mountains; I love you!" His motto, *Verso l'alto!* means, "on to the heights," and refers to summits both "geological and spiritual" where God may be found.

Celebrate the impending canonization of P.G. Frassati the weekend of **October 18-20**, with *two of our young Arlington priests*. **Fr. John Paul Heisler** and **Fr. Joseph Townsend** will lead a band of young adults on retreat... beginning at the feet of Christ at San Damiano, through a series of conferences on Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati's life and spirituality... then *"Verso l'alto"* ... on to the heights... with Vespers prayed on the summit of one of the more spectacular *summits amidst the mountains in Shenandoah National Park*.

For more information email [Deacon Mark Maines](#) or check out the [San Damiano Website Frassati](#) page.



### Why a "Silent" Retreat?

by *Father John Riley*  
Spiritual Director  
San Damiano Retreat Center

For many years I have encountered men and women at the end of a retreat who have remarked in these or similar words: *"You know, I was really afraid at the thought of spending an entire weekend in silence... but it was... wonderful."*

Isn't it strange that people "fear" silence? Well... perhaps not, considering how we are trained and conditioned by our culture to technologically inundate every waking moment (and even sleep) with beeps, chirps, alarms, music, information, notifications, conversation, facts, figures, images, haptics, flashing lights, and sound bytes.

### No wonder we are distracted in prayer!

A silent retreat affords the opportunity to leave behind the noise and distractions which eclipse the quiet whisperings of the Holy Spirit in the deeper realms of our souls. Sitting quietly with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament we can "treasure and ponder" the Word uttered in Eternal Silence and echoing in the words of the Gospels. Without silence we cannot truly *listen*... and as one old sage put it, "In prayer, if you do not learn how to listen, you shall never hear."

Perhaps the most eloquent consideration of seeking God in silence is heard in the simple and profound words of St. Teresa of Calcutta:

Being silent... *"plunges us into deep silence of God where aloneness with God becomes a reality. The Word of God is speechless today. In the Eucharist His silence is the highest and*

### —MORE RETREATS—



#### A Silent Retreat for Men: August 23–25

Fr. John Riley will lead a "Band of Brothers" to Christ's feet; Single Men, Husbands, Fathers to listen and seek Jesus in deep, quiet prayer.

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### St. Ignatius of Loyola Men's Silent Retreat:

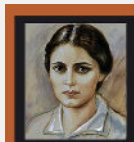
We will study St. Ignatius' battle plan on how to win "the identity war," focusing on the importance of knowing Jesus Christ, recognizing who we are in Him, and helping others to discover their true identity. Retreat Leader, Fr. Dave Dufresne.

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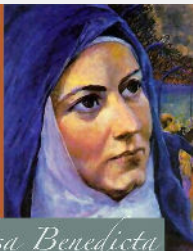
*truest praise of the Father. We need silence to be alone with God, to speak to Him, to listen to Him, to ponder His words deep in our hearts. In silence we are filled with the energy of God Himself that makes us do all things with joy."*

Many of the retreats we offer at San Damiano embrace a spirit of silence which allows those gathered here to rest... and listen... to hear and discern the promptings of the Holy Spirit, the wisdom of the Son, and to know and glory in the loving gaze of Our Father in Heaven. Amen

## Finding Christ in the Cross with Edith Stein



Edith Stein



*St. Teresa Benedicta*

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### Women's Retreat November 15-17

Edith Stein is considered by many to be one of the greatest philosophers to ponder what is often described as "the Feminine Genius." Although her life and her gifts were extraordinary, her wisdom and spirituality illuminate many of the challenges and situations that confront women in our times; wives, mothers, professionals.