



Self-Guided Outdoor Pilgrimage

Mount Saint Francis, located in the foothills of Southern Indiana, is owned and operated by the Conventual Franciscan Friars. "The Mount" includes 400 wooded acres of walking trails, a 17-acre lake, and buildings housing the community of Friars who live here, the Retreat Center, Province offices, and the Mary Anderson Center for the Arts. In the Franciscan spirit of hospitality and care of God's creation, you are invited to enjoy this self-guided walking pilgrimage of the outdoor amenities offered to visitors. As you come on to the property from Highway 150, this guide begins on your right and continues in a counterclockwise loop to the trails and lake and returns you to the parking area on your immediate left.

Cordelier Park – In 1939 Cordelier Park was dedicated and work was begun to create a series of meditation paths with outdoor Stations of the Cross. Cordelier Park was named after a prayer fraternity called the Cordeliers – people who wore a symbolic cord of St. Francis under their clothing and said a special set of prayers thought to have been dear to St. Francis.

Please watch your step as you journey through the woods.



Stations of the Cross - The first stations were constructed here in 1948. The weather and

storms have beaten down the stations, most recently the ice & windstorms of 2009. The last renovations of the stations were completed and dedicated in November 2010. The original stations grew out of imitations of Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem which is believed to be the actual path Jesus walked to Mount Calvary. The object of the stations is to help the Christian faithful to make a spiritual pilgrimage through contemplation of the Passion of Christ. Since the 14th century pilgrims have said personal prayers as they walk the path. Many also read from various publications by spiritual writers. *Prayer – "Most High, glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart, and give me true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity, sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out Your holy and true command."* This is St. Francis' prayer before the Crucifix.



Canticle Tiles and Reclining Francis statue – To the left and below the Stations is a path of tiles depicting elements of the Canticle of Brother Sun. This particular path will take you to a bench where you can sit and face the statue of a Reclining St. Francis. This statue was dedicated in 2005 for feast of Francis. *Prayer - "Most High, all-powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor, and all blessing. To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no human is worthy to mention Your name."* St. Francis



St Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio statue - Perhaps the most famous story of St. Francis is

when he tamed the wolf that was terrorizing the people of Gubbio. While Francis was staying in that town, he learned of a wolf so ravenous that it was not only killing and eating animals, but people, too. Francis took pity on the people and the wolf as well and decided to go out and meet the wolf. He was desperately warned by the people, but he insisted that God would take care of him. Francis made the Sign of the Cross toward the wolf who immediately slowed down and closed its mouth. Then Francis called out to the wolf: "Come to me, Brother Wolf. I wish you no harm." At that moment the wolf lowered its head and lay down at St. Francis' feet, meek as a lamb. *Prayer – "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, protect us from the fears that bind us, and grant us the grace to live in peace with one another."*



Friars Cemetery – This area includes the cemetery, columbarium, large crucifix, and a statue of the Immaculate Conception. The first Friar was buried here in 1936.

Cemetery - The graves of the Friars are in concentric circles all facing the crucifix. These holy grounds serve as a resting place for Friars serving in the United States and foreign missions, as all come home to The Mount. Feel free to sit on



the bench and remember those you have lost, as you ponder the long history in the cemetery. *Prayer – "May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace Amen."*

Columbarium – In 2016, two columbaria were erected on the cemetery grounds. A columbarium is a vault or public storage with niches for the deceased's cremated remains. On this property, the one closest to the Friary is for the deceased Franciscans who choose that form of burial. The one closest to the entrance is for any donors or benefactors who choose to be housed (buried) here. *Prayer – "Almighty God, you love everything you have made and judge us with infinite mercy and justice. We rejoice in your promises of pardon, joy and peace to all those who love you. In your mercy turn the darkness of death into the dawn of new life, and the sorrow of parting into the joy of heaven; through our Savior Jesus Christ, who died, rose again, and lives for evermore. Amen."*



Immaculate Conception Statue – "Holy Virgin Mary, among the women born into the world there is no one like you. Daughter and servant of the most high and supreme King and of the Father in heaven, Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, Spouse of the Holy Spirit, Pray for us."



Center for Spirituality – The Center for Spirituality here at Mount St. Francis includes parts of the main building which houses bedrooms, meeting rooms and dining rooms for groups, as well as the youth center which has multiple rooms with bunk beds, meeting rooms & kitchenette, and chapel. These two buildings are connected by the chapel, which is the central focus on the grounds.

Front Artwork on Main Building – The construction of the chapel was completed in 1926. New doors were designed in 1986 and included bronze work inspired by St. Francis' own "Canticle of the Creatures". New glass doors were installed for the chapel and the bronze pieces were added to the front wall of the Retreat Center & Friary. Prayer - *"Most high, all powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor and all blessing. To you alone most high, do they belong and no human is worthy to mention Your name."* from *Canticle of the Creatures*



Statue of Francis in circle drive – Central to the building and property here at Mount St. Francis is the iconic statue from 1929 in front of the original school and current chapel. Prayer - *"May the Lord bless you and keep you; may God show His face to you and be merciful to*



you. May God turn his countenance to you and give you peace", A Blessing of St. Francis

Clare's Courtyard – St. Clare was a faithful follower and companion of St. Francis and founder of the Poor Clares. This bronze statue was donated in 1998 to Mount St. Francis. Prayer – *"Merciful God, who inspired holy mother Clare with a fervent love of Gospel poverty, through her intercession grant that we, too, might follow the poor and humble Christ in order to rejoice in seeing you in the perfect joy of your kingdom. Amen."*



St Joseph Statue - Prayer *"Be mindful of us, St. Joseph, and intercede with your foster Son for our Order (community). Let us see in our everyday work the opportunity of serving Our Lord."*



The Franciscan Crown – The Franciscan Crown Rosary includes seven clay sculptures created by Jim Brodfehrer that represent the Joyful Mysteries of the Virgin Mary. Prayer – *The Hail Mary...*



The Lake and Trails – Within the 400 acres of Mount St. Francis property there are six miles of wooded hiking trails and a 17-acre lake. Many people from the community enjoy the trails for walking and do not participate in retreats. Many others here for retreat take the time to sit by the lake, walk the trails or stop to pray at one of the three shrines on the grounds.

St. Anne Shrine – The St. Anne Shrine, located off Trail 8 was created by a member of Boy Scout Troop 36 and was given in memory of Gertie Banet by her family after her death in 1998. Prayer – *"O God, you bestowed on St. Anne such grace that she was found worthy to become the mother of Mary, who brought forth your only son. Grant that we may be helped by her intercession. Amen."*



Our Lady of Consolation Shrine – Our Lady of Consolation is the patroness of the Conventual Franciscan Province. This is another shrine built as an Eagle project built by a Boy Scout from Troop 36 in 2001. The shrine faces a small pond and bridge on Trail 9. Prayer – *"Mary, Loving Mother of Consolation, I confide to you my greatest need (pause and reflect). Please pray that the loving will of Our Father may always come first in my heart and my mind. Amen."*



Kateri Tekakwitha Shrine
The newest shrine on the property was dedicated to St. Kateri, who was the first Native American to be recognized as a Saint and is the patroness of ecology and the environment. This shrine

is across the lake on Trail 3 and is in memory of Bro. Bob Baxter.

The Cretan Labyrinth – Mowed in the grass of the old apple orchard, the labyrinth is an ancient walking meditation. It combines the imagery of a circle and the spiral into a meandering but purposeful path for silent prayer. Prayer – *Come Lord, Jesus*



Genesis One Meditation Path - A pathway created for those who wish to join in prayer and praise with all creation to God the Creator.



Those who choose to enter it are encouraged to walk slowly and reflect upon the great mystery of God's creative power. It is not recommended for groups, jogging or dog walking. Please watch your step. Prayer – *"Beauty ever before and behind me, above and below me, around and within me. God ever ancient and forever new"*