



PO Box 315, 315 S. Warren Ave.
Malvern, PA 19355-0315



Malvern Retreat House is blessed by our amazing
VOLUNTEERS!



THE GIFT OF THEIR TIME IS A TRUE TREASURE.

malvernretreat.com



The Annual Report recognizes those individuals, families, corporations, foundations and organizations who have made gifts to Malvern Retreat House in the 2019 calendar year. In compiling this Annual Report, Malvern Retreat House has made every effort to ensure its accuracy. Malvern Retreat House regrets any errors and invites the reader to contact the retreat house so our records may be corrected. Please write to the Office of Development, Malvern Retreat House, 315 S. Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA. 19355 or call 610-644-0400. Visit us online at malvernretreat.com



Hope, Healing, Growth

WE KNOW THAT ALL THINGS WORK FOR GOOD
FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD,* WHO ARE CALLED
ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE. (ROMANS 8:28)

*Rooted in our Catholic faith, we provide retreats, programs and events
that help people deepen their relationship with God and find peace.*



2019 Annual Report

Come As You Are

ALL ARE WELCOME HERE!



THE STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD
NEVER CEASES; HIS MERCIES
NEVER COME TO AN END;
THEY ARE NEW EVERY MORNING;
GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS.
(LAMENTATIONS 3:21-23)



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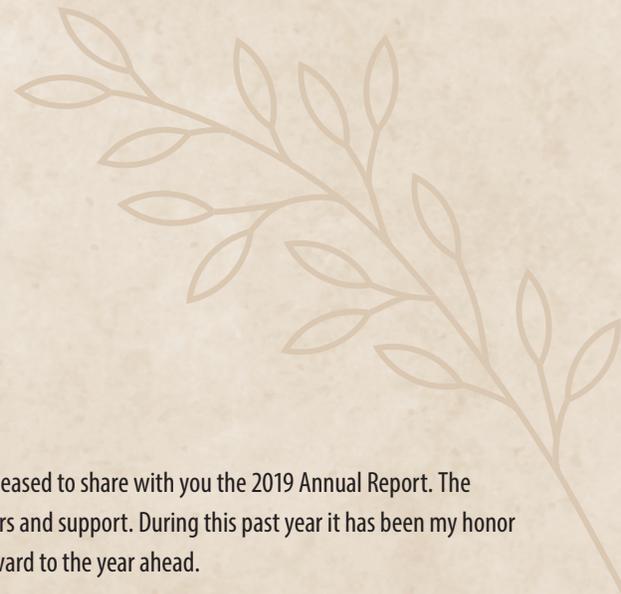
Raymond K. Walheim

MISSION

Malvern Retreat House provides a sacred place where men and women of all ages come to deepen their personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the retreat experience.



A Letter from the CHAIR



Greetings,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Malvern Retreat House I am pleased to share with you the 2019 Annual Report. The enclosed report showcases our growth made possible by your prayers and support. During this past year it has been my honor and privilege to serve as the Board of Director's Chair and I look forward to the year ahead.

There is new energy among Board members and associates at the retreat house. We have renewed our commitment to our recently revised mission and vision statements. I am grateful to all those who gave so much of their time and talent, including nights and weekends throughout 2019, in crafting our new, three-year strategic plan which launched in January.

As our vision states 'We are committed to being the leading Catholic retreat center in the United States, providing exceptional opportunities for people to encounter God and inspiring them to embrace and share their faith'. Being a leading retreat apostolate takes a huge amount of work not only by the Board and associates but the committed efforts from all who share the retreat experience including you as a member of the Laymen's Retreat League.

**“YOU HAVE PLANTED THEM,
AND THEY HAVE TAKEN ROOT;
THEY GROW AND BEAR FRUIT.
(JEREMIAH 12:2)**

Here at Malvern we are full of hope as we witness flourishing programs, events and retreats. Our mission, "Rooted in the Catholic faith, we provide retreats, programs and events that help people deepen their relationship with God and find peace." This statement was prayerfully composed reflecting upon everyone's experience at the retreat house whether it was a traditional weekend retreat, a day or evening of reflection, a program or an event. Our goal is for you to deepen your relationship with God and find peace from the daily distractions of your life. It is the benchmark for all we do.

President, Mark Poletunow, Rector Fr. Jim McGuinn, and all associates, as well as the Board see the priorities of the strategic plan - Spirituality, Expansion and Excellence as the pillars and essence of what we need to grow our retreat apostolate. In the following pages of this Annual Report you will see the effect of these focused efforts. Congratulations to Mark, Fr. Jim and all associates for their tireless efforts in fulfilling our mission.

Also, you will read the first hand testimony of a young adult retreatant who had a life changing experience, and in addition learn about one of our legacy families. I am confident you will appreciate the essence of their stories and find them meaningful as one who values the retreat experience.

We hosted almost 20,000 retreatants last year at this beautiful woodland setting of St. Joseph in the Hills. We cannot do this successfully without your prayers, efforts and generosity. You are an integral part of who and what we are.

In the coming year my hope and prayer is for you to experience a retreat that deepens your relationship with God and that you find peace as well.

Prosit,

Jacqueline Delaney
Chair



A Letter from the **PRESIDENT**

Dear Retreat Community,

“Renewed” or “renewal” are words retreatants often use to describe their experience at Malvern Retreat House. Even as times change in the Church, as well as in our culture, some things remain the same. Whether in 1919 or 2019, renewal remains a foundational word in describing the transformation one experiences in retreat. Saint Paul’s letter to the Romans reminds us about what God wants for us:

**“DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWAL OF YOUR MIND, THAT YOU MAY PROVE WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD, WHAT IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT.
(ROMANS 12:2)**

The year 2019 was a time of renewal for us. God used an ugly graffiti attack on our property as a way of reminding us about the need to turn to him through community and prayer, to have our grounds blessed again, and to incorporate more attention to safety and security. We spent time without a rector priest on staff, but the Lord renewed our ministry department by opening the door to Fr. Jim McGuinn, a creative, energetic and faith-filled priest; and added a committed permanent deacon, Tony Cincotta, to our team. Through the transition of one Board Chair to another, we experienced a new perspective by welcoming Jacki Delaney, the first woman Chair in the history of the retreat league.

As we continue to experience challenges with declining attendance and a lack of trust within the Church, our Board and staff recognized the need for MRH to undergo a new strategic plan with priorities of Spirituality, Excellence and Expansion. As a result, we are committed to being the leading Catholic Retreat center in the United States, providing exceptional opportunities for people to encounter God and inspiring them to embrace and share their faith.

As Paul encouraged the Romans, so are we to be encouraged. Jesus wants us to be filled with his life, love and light rather than be conformed to the world. He wants us to seek him, cling to him, more than ever as we try to challenge the brokenness and obstacles that often surround us. Our mission remains relevant: Rooted in the Catholic faith, we provide retreats, programs and events that help people deepen their relationship with God and find peace. In other words, we encourage renewal and trust that the Holy Spirit will complete magnificently the work we are doing.

Let us give thanks for this unique gift that we call Malvern Retreat House. May our efforts continue to draw many thousands of people to renewal, to a deeper relationship with Christ. God is so good, and his timing is perfect!

Prosit,

Mark J. Poletunow

President





A Letter from the **RECTOR**

Greetings,

KYW claims, "If you give us twenty-two minutes, we'll give you the world." While I cannot make such a grand promise, if you give me five minutes, I will update you on some of the things that happened this past year in terms of ministry at the Malvern Retreat House.

The end of St. Matthew's Gospel contains the famous scene of Jesus sending the apostles into the world and entrusting them with the Great Commission. This mission is to make and mature disciples. The Catholic Church now calls this two-step process the mission of evangelization. The mission of evangelization became the impetus and the guiding principal for the retreats, programs and events for 2019.

The new vision statement and mission statement were finalized, they are used to determine and inspire the direction of the retreats, programs and events. The three priorities of the plan are spirituality, excellence and expansion. Deacon Tony Cincotta joined Joanne Bouvier and myself in the ministry department. Deacon Tony is the Assistant Director of Ministry. He spent much of his career in law enforcement in Maryland and he and his wife Eileen have been a real blessing this past year.

The Retreat Committee and the Pilot Sub-Committee approved some changes and modifications for the weekend retreats. We have slowed down the pace of the retreats, adjusted the weekend schedule and modified the format for how some of the conferences on a retreat are given. A Malvern Retreat House Team has been developed to assist the retreat Director in giving the retreat.

Besides overnight retreats, there are various programs offered throughout the year at Malvern, and were given various names and titles. A common schedule has been developed for days and evenings of Reflection. We are excited that these adjustments have been well received and they will be used as new programs are introduced in the future.

A new prayer book was created to meet some of the spiritual needs. The book is called the Malvern Retreat House Liturgy of the Hours and includes Morning Prayer with the Angelus, Evening Prayer, and Night Prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

During the 2019 year, there was a growing interest in how some of the recommendations that were being offered were going to be implemented, so there are now videos on the retreat house schedule introducing and explaining some of these changes. More videos will be added regularly to the library, and future videos will be specifically created for Retreat Directors and retreat captains and their leadership teams.

Thanks for your five minutes and the next time you hear, "If you give us twenty-two minutes we'll give you the world." say a prayer for us that we will more and more fulfill our mission statement, to "provide retreats, programs and events that help people deepen their relationship with God and find peace."

God Bless,

Fr. James (Jim) McGuinn

Rector



Generations of FAITH

“**TRAIN THE YOUNG IN THE WAY
THEY SHOULD GO; EVEN WHEN OLD,
THEY WILL NOT SWERVE FROM IT.**
(PROVERBS 6)

The Our Lady of Fatima Men of Malvern Retreat will celebrate 75 years with Malvern this year. Thirty-four men attended the original retreat. Joseph Denny, Sr., and two sons, Joseph, Jr. and Francis, were part of that group. Amazingly, for six generations, the Denny Men have been coming to Malvern Retreat. They come for spiritual renewal, to stay connected, and to experience peace. The time spent here gives these good men an opportunity to pause and reflect on life's priorities.

Tim Denny, one of the seven sons of Joseph Jr., remembers how peaceful his father was at Malvern. And, he fondly recalls the first time he came with his dad when he was eighteen. These many years later, Tim recognizes that the world and the church have changed, and he has to work harder to bring new guys to the retreat each year. Recruitment takes effort and explanation. The Denny family is diverse and faith experiences are different. Yet, still, the Denny men come back each year. In this hectic world, they and so many others benefit from disconnecting and embracing the silence. Their experience is transformative and powerful.

We celebrate the Denny family!

HOPE & HEALING

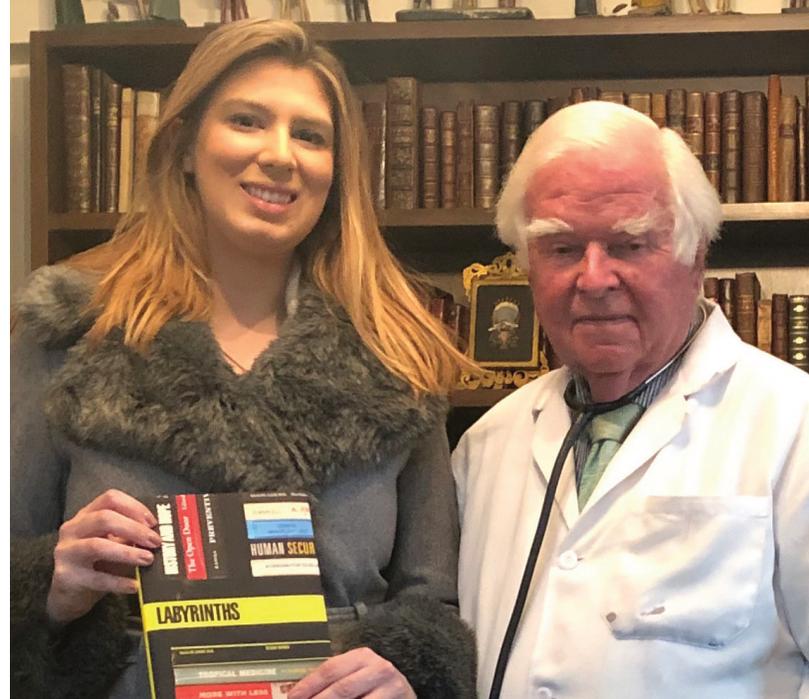
Carrying the Cross, Following Christ's Footsteps

By Alana Austin

ON A BEAUTIFUL, SPRING DAY LAST YEAR, I was chugging coffee and rushing to the White House for on-camera interviews with local, state and federal leaders. I hopped into an Uber with loads of camera gear and equipment, throwing on makeup in the backseat on the early drive over to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. As my full attention was fixed on preparing for the hectic and exciting day ahead, I started to feel like I was going to be sick. In the back of my mind, I had a sinking feeling. I knew something was seriously wrong. 'There's no time to deal with this,' I thought. My cell phones were already buzzing and beeping with emails, calls, and texts. I hurried through the Secret Service security screening, anxious to meet up with the White House staff and press team to set up for our interviews. But while waiting for our group to be escorted into the media row, I realized I was going to have an accident. In front of network journalists and the White House liaison, I tried to discreetly ask to be immediately taken to the restroom. Talk about humbling. I apologized for the inconvenience to my colleague and contact, and quickly pushed it out of my mind to get back to the assignments and deadlines. This was only the beginning. Little did I know, I was in for the journey of a lifetime, and it would not just be physical - but extreme suffering, followed by spiritual and emotional healing at a deep level. I was 28 years old, and fortunate to have always been active and in good health when this tough chapter began. For a couple of years, I had been in DC to report on politics for local news viewers around the country. It was a dream job and an amazing opportunity. Despite the stress and demands of journalism, I found time to keep up with volunteering and attending Mass regularly. But an unexpected medical crisis that nearly took my life put my faith on another level and changed me forever.

For months last year, I was mystified by an intensifying gastrointestinal illness. I finally accepted at the end of the summer that I needed a medical intervention. So, I began seeking help from doctors in September. My family and I researched top-rated specialists, facilities and procedures as my health rapidly deteriorated. My daily life, including interviews with lawmakers, were abruptly disrupted by severe pains and suffering. Deadlines were met and goals were achieved but the unknown illness ravaged my bodily functions.

This was a cross I did not think I was ready to carry. Thankfully, God placed many people and resources in place to save my life, refresh my spirit and enliven my soul. I credit Malvern Retreat as playing a major role in this healing story, offering extraordinary experiences.



...an unexpected medical crisis that nearly took my life put my faith on another level and changed me forever.

I realized this path was going to be spiritual when I found myself in the emergency department on my birthday, November 1st, which is All Saints Day. Instead of celebrating with friends, or attending First Friday Reparations church services with family, I was undergoing many invasive tests, but there were no solid answers. On this holy feast day, I offered up my suffering in reparation for my sins and those of my family. I started to pray the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ prayers much more intentionally, which profoundly aligned with my physical bleeding. I ended up in and out of the hospital five times that fall. The pain had become excruciating and unbearable, and I almost passed out several times from the agony of these gruesome and disgusting symptoms. I lost weight rapidly and could barely eat or drink anything for months. The lowest point was a week-long rollercoaster ride in a hospital with painful procedures and multiple misdiagnoses. We now know those highly-skilled doctors recommended the wrong treatment options that would likely have proved fatal.

Praise be to God that my family and I prayed for wisdom and direction from the Lord. Jesus Christ and Our Lady intervened. As my grandmother offered rosaries day and night for my healing, my mother prayed next to my hospital bed for a breakthrough. After much meditation and reflection, we chose to listen to the seemingly-illogical direction of the Holy Spirit, who guided us to decline the recommended procedures of multiple world-class hospitals. Instead, we chose to journey to a unique doctor who would treat, comfort and inspire our whole family.

Continued on page 12 →



A Letter from the **VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT**

Our Founders believed so strongly in Malvern Retreat House, and insisted that all are welcome, regardless of ability to pay. One hundred and eight years later, our Board of Directors continues to honor this commitment!

Why do I share this on the donation page of the annual report? Simply because it speaks to the necessity and importance of our development efforts. The \$250 suggested retreat fee covers the cost of your retreat stay, lodging, meals, programs and retreat directors. We need to raise additional funds for operations, general maintenance, scheduled capital improvements unbudgeted major repair, scholarships and increasing our endowment.

Through our various campaigns, Membership; Annual Appeal; Major Gifts; Deferred Giving; Memorials and our special events like our art show and golf outing, we raised \$615,000. Perhaps better said, the generous support of our donors allowed Malvern to serve 19,494 retreatants in 2019.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, Associates and all who came to Malvern, I thank our benefactors for ensuring that we can continue to fulfill our mission, *Rooted in the Catholic Faith, we offer retreats, programs and events that help people deepen their relationship with God and find peace.*

Prosit,

Michael T. Norton
Vice President, Development



In 2019,
our campaigns earned
\$615,000

In 2019, donor support
allowed Malvern to serve
retreatants totalling

19,494



ANNUAL APPEAL GIFTS

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James T. Owens
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ANNUAL APPEAL GIFTS

CENTENNIAL \$100 to \$249

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Paul J. Peterson
Patrick Phillips
Louis J. Picciano
Emil Pilacik
Eric Pilacik
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As Thanksgiving approached, I stood 30 pounds lighter and had to go on disability from my beloved career. I found myself in my parents' home as Mom and Dad became my round-the-clock caretakers, even for basic life activities. Many prayer warriors appeared in my life through this time. Amid the struggle, God orchestrated a beautiful tapestry of His servants to lift me up and carry me.

Through cries to God in prayer and intense suffering, His grace pulled us back from the cliff of an abyss. I somehow avoided blood transfusions, further surgical procedures and damaged organs. Incredibly, we made it to that fateful day, a turning point, when we visited Dr. Kevin Cahill. This Catholic doctor has led an extraordinary life and medical career over 50 years as an international humanitarian, caring for thousands of refugees in dire poverty as well as world leaders. During his work in 70 countries and 65 refugee camps, this brilliant physician learned how to diagnose and treat rare parasitic infections that are often overlooked. Upon examination, he determined I suffered from a severe case of amebic dysentery, along with a suspected secondary parasitic infection. His discovery saved my life. Little did I know Dr. Cahill started his career working alongside Mother Theresa, treating the dying poor in India. Later in life, he would treat Pope John Paul II after the attempted assassination. Both saints would become his lifelong friends. Speaking of Christian fellowship, I consider Dr. Cahill and his late wife, Kate, saints for devoting their lives to caring for the poor and neglected of the world while training and mentoring thousands of young physicians and their families. God placed this man in my life to begin my physical healing and offer invaluable life lessons that aided my spiritual growth.

With the future uncertain, my physical healing began on Thanksgiving Day. I started the first of four medications that day with the last round of drugs concluding on Christmas Day. This timing sent a powerful message. Amid these uncanny milestones, I expelled physical and emotional parasites.

As the medications cleansed my body, I committed myself to also healing the wounds of my soul. I yearned to hear again the preaching and receive the blessing of Father Jim Blount, a missionary priest that God sent to me on this journey. So, I decided to attend an Advent retreat at Malvern in December. During this weekend of beautiful prayer services, inspiring talks, and fellowship encounters with dozens of devout Catholics, I experienced an unexplainable healing. At a special service with Father Blount, Kathleen McCarthy told me I was becoming a new creation with a new heart and ministry. With full confidence, they assured me God would fully heal me, even though they knew nothing of my condition. As both prayed over me, and I touched holy relics, all of my buried pain and suffering burst out of my chest. The stone-cold stoic in me broke down and an uncontrollable wave of tears streamed down my face. I sobbed on my knees in front of hundreds. A public showing of emotion is completely out of character for me, but it erupted from the deepest part of my being. I believe God granted a miraculous healing as the stress and anxieties of this ordeal washed away. Within hours of this special blessing, my gastrointestinal system was resuming to normal. My doctor said a full recovery could take about six months. My Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, had another timeline.

I share this today with great joy and peace, and I hope my story will encourage readers to stay hopeful and endure their suffering to reach transformation. As 2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us, "whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come." He is truly the Divine Physician who will embrace, strengthen, and comfort us while healing our wounds, both seen and unseen, in untold ways. I once thought of this experience as the worst curse of my life, but have now come to see it as a series of blessings from God.

As I began recovering, my family and I found ongoing blessings after visits to the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul and the shrines of Saints Katharine Drexel and Padre Pio. Holy encounters occurred at Flame of Love prayer meetings, including a cenacle led by Eileen Piergiovanni, and at Candlemas celebrated by Monsignor Ralph Chieffo, pastor of Saint Mary Magdalen church. This devoted priest repeatedly counseled, prayed and blessed me.

To further heal, I attended Malvern's 'overcoming the world' retreat for young adults in February. This beautiful group of believers carried crosses of debilitating medical illnesses, career challenges and uncertain futures that can bring much stress, anxiety and financial burdens. Together in Christian fellowship, we confided, supported, and prayed for one another while we explored the true meaning of friendship with Christ. The retreat directors, both priests and laypeople, were dynamic, powerful, and compelling. Everyone in the room was attentive and prayers were offered with conviction. It was so uplifting to be around other young people who are devoted to the faith and committed to confronting the challenges of our time with hope, charity and love, sprinkled with tenacity and grit! Their beauty and kindness touched me.

At Eucharistic Adoration on Friday, after a fulfilling day of prayer and lessons at Malvern, I encountered a surreal and mystical experience. I may be a journalist, but I still cannot

**WE KNOW THAT ALL THINGS WORK FOR GOOD FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD,* WHO ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE. (ROMANS 8:28)**

fully articulate or explain what happened. I can only share I felt my heart release lingering bitterness and join in full union and connection with the Blessed Sacrament. I had never felt this way in my whole life. I put my full hope, faith and trust in the Lord and allowed Him to heal me. In this moment, I accepted His Divine Mercy. I felt the residual soreness from this ordeal and past injuries wash away. I felt the light of Christ emanate into my soul and move through my heart so tenderly. The stress about the future and the pains of the past faded, and the scars of earlier hurts began to heal. Finally, I could live fully in the present moment again and be overwhelmed with gratitude for the healing and transformation that God worked in my life. My family even grew closer together and deeper in their Catholic spiritual life. My faith has deepened, and I have a new level of appreciation for Jesus Christ, our Blessed Mother, and all the holy saints and angels, especially St. Michael and my guardian angel. I am also grateful for the prayers and blessings from many holy priests, especially Monsignor Charles Pope, pastor of Holy Comforter/St. Cyprian church in Washington, DC. I thank God for the unceasing prayers and support of many loved ones and new friends, especially those I met through Malvern Retreat.

As soon as I come onto the grounds of Malvern, I feel Christ's peace that transcends all earthly understanding. I left Malvern more confident and secure in God's love for me. I look forward to returning again for another retreat here to refresh and revitalize me. Meanwhile, I promise to be a light in the world and guard the joy I found through God's grace. And I vow to follow the Lord wherever He leads me next.

Welcome to the TEAM

Malvern Retreat House is excited to welcome four new associates to the staff. Malvern Retreat House continues to build our partnerships with schools, churches, ministries and non-profit organizations.

"We have developed dynamic faith-filled programming and unique events to expand our reach. The new staff will bring fresh thinking and innovative ideas to the already powerful team we have here at Malvern Retreat House."

MARK POLETUNOW, PRESIDENT OF MALVERN RETREAT HOUSE

JUAN GUERRA joined us in February as the Assistant Director of Ministry for Malvern Retreat House. Juan is originally from Cuba and his family settled in the Philadelphia area. Juan brings a wealth of non-profit and ministry expertise to MRH and a passion for bringing others closer to Christ. He has worked with Living Bridges, a Catholic family lay-organization, has served as Executive Director of ACLAMO Family Centers and most recently as Executive Director of Respect Life Ministry for the Archdiocese of Miami. Juan is looking forward to working with the Men of Malvern and other retreat groups as they expand their programs and invite newer attendees to experience MRH.

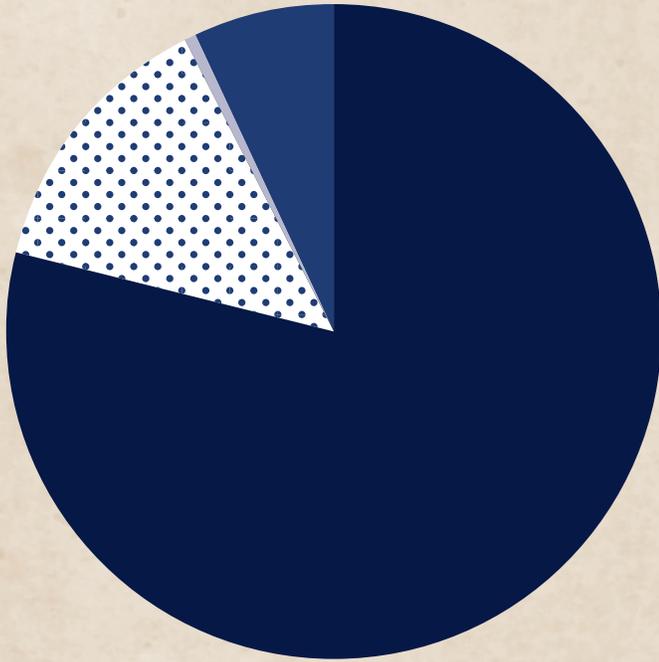
EDEL DONAHUE recently joined Malvern Retreat House as the Director of Marketing, Communication and Outreach. Edel grew up in the Philadelphia area and lives in Delaware County. She has worked in the non-profit sector for over 25 years serving as Executive Director for service based non profits in both Philadelphia and Northern Virginia. She is looking forward to expanding the outreach of Malvern Retreat House and is committed to the mission of helping people deepen their relationship with God and finding peace through our programs, retreats and events.

JULIA SANTORO was born and raised in Norristown, PA. Julia has a successful history of service for the Elmwood Zoo in managing guest services and was the Manager of Special Events, which included planning all of the in house fundraising events. Her time at Elmwood Zoo gave her a special love for wildlife! Julia's past experience inspired her to remain in the nonprofit sector and she is currently pursuing a certificate in Non-Profit Management at Drexel to feed her passion for helping non-profits live their mission and realize their vision. Julia is excited to help modernize the Malvern Retreat House systems while honoring the many traditions that have helped Malvern become a premier retreat destination.

CATHERINE (KATE) DOGGETT joined MRH as the Front Office Receptionist. Kate will interface with the Men and Women of Malvern retreat groups. Kate is from Delaware County and has a long record of accomplishment in the Delaware County Public Defender's Office. She has a PA Notary Public Certification and has a vast experience working with the public as a Legal Assistant. Kate joined Malvern Retreat House in early February after taking an early retirement. Kate is excited to be working in this beautiful setting and in such a positive environment.

Malvern Retreat House has developed an exciting line-up of retreats and events for men and women, married couples, religious and clergy. Our new staff will be fundamental to building relationships with these groups and within the broader community.

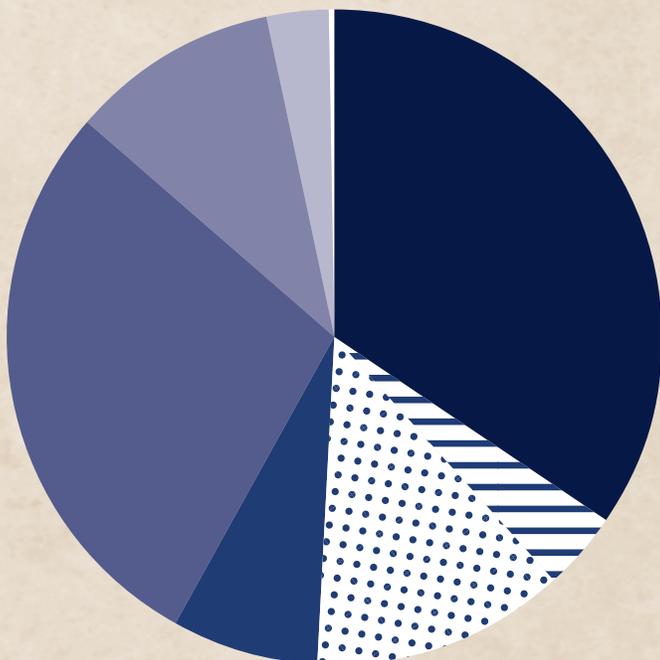
Our FINANCIALS



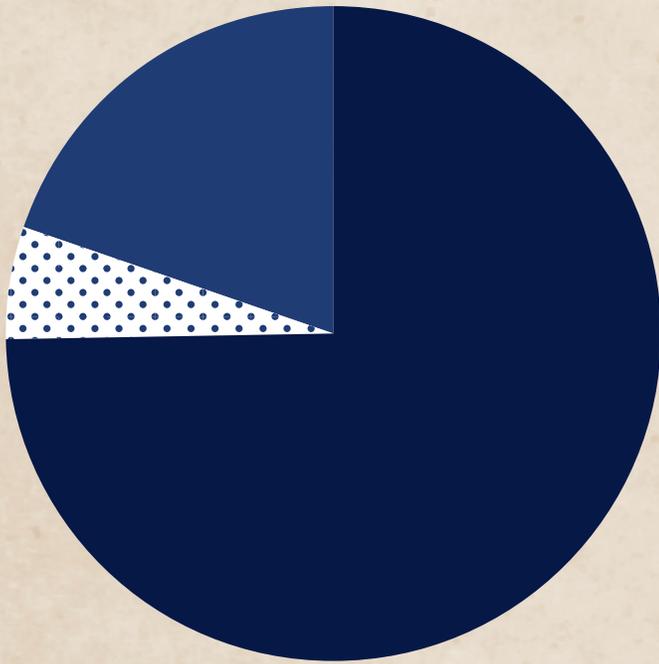
Revenue \$4,468,672

● Retreats	\$3,529,518
● Development	614,778
● Capital Campaign	490
● Other Income	14,401
● Investment Income	309,485
Total Revenue	\$4,468,672

Sources of Funds \$615,268



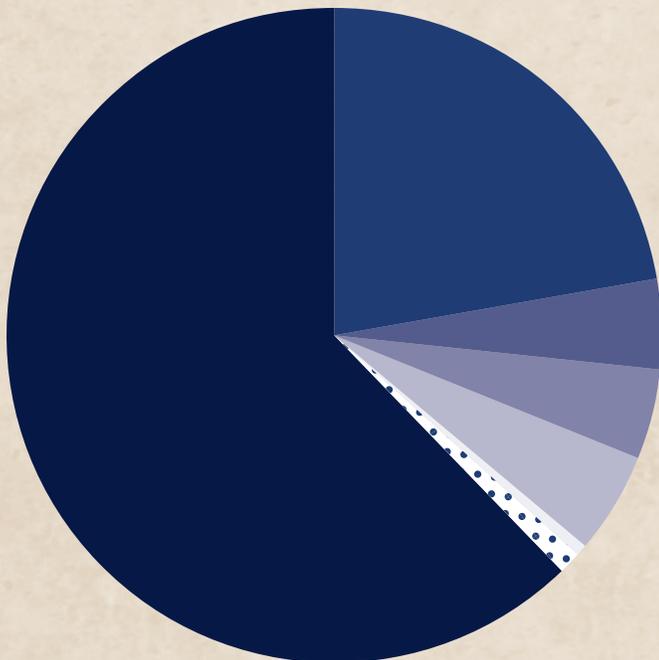
● Annual Fund	\$213,144
▨ Major Gifts	23,960
● Membership	76,601
● Remembrance	44,503
● Deferred Gifts	174,291
● Special Events	63,453
● Memorial Fund	18,826
● Capital Campaign Revenue	490
	\$615,268



Expenses

\$3,893,249

●	Retreats	\$3,200,945
●	Development	232,462
●	Administration	843,311
Total Expense		4,276,718
Less: Asset Depreciation		383,469
Total Expense, less: depreciation		\$3,893,249



Uses of Funds

\$615,268

●	Fundraising	\$137,869
●	Administration	27,001
●	Allocated Expenses	27,394
●	Printing & Postage	31,319
●	Memorials	2,212
●	Remembrance	6,667
●	Funds Allocated for Projects	382,316
●	Capital Projects	490
Total Development Expense		\$ 615,268