



Magnificat House of Discernment

..... Newsletter

Inside this issue . . .

- Margaret says goodbye
- Magnificat House Retreat
- Reflection on Synod

Coming soon at MHouse . . .

- MMM Night in October
- Workshop on Prayer and Discernment
- Discerners visit communities

Margaret Uche Says Goodbye

I moved in to the Magnificat House of Discernment because I needed clarity as I discerned a vocation to religious life. I needed to experience what it would be like to live in community, and I wanted to meet congregations of women in order to find the one that was right for me. **Living in Magnificat House has helped me to do all these.**

I am happy to announce that I have been admitted as a candidate for continued discernment with the Dominican Sisters of Peace. I will be moving to Connecticut in October to start my initial phase of the formation. Drawn by their charism of preaching the Gospel to a global community, I hope to bring Jesus to everyone I meet and glorify God in everything I do as a Dominican Sister of Peace. I am grateful to the Archdiocese of New Orleans for establishing the Magnificat House of Discernment, to the Mentors who directed the House, and to everyone who has helped me during my time here. It has been a blessing to be here



We at Magnificat House of
Discernment wish
Margaret Uche
a spirit filled journey to a life
consecrated to God. Our prayers
and support go with you!

Magnificat House Accepting Applications

If you think God may be calling you to explore life as a woman religious, consider applying to live for six months to a year at Magnificat House. Mentors help residents find a spiritual director who will assist them with formal discernment. Residents also have many opportunities to spend time with various religious communities both within the New Orleans area and across the country. [Click here to download the application packet](#) or call 504 861-6281 to request an application be sent to you in the mail. Applications must be received by July 31 in order that interviews can be conducted and recommendations received in time for the September 1 opening retreat.

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Magnificat House Retreats A Reflection by Stephanie Roca

During the past month, we discerners of Magnificat House have participated in two retreats. First we attended a "Come and Serve Retreat" hosted by the Sisters of Charity in New Orleans, and then we had our twice-a-year house retreat in recognition of our new community. Both of these retreats proved pivotal in our discernment process because not only did we learn about the communities around us, we learned about ourselves.

As most people know, when a religious community wishes to educate others on that which makes their community special, they host an event called a "Come and See." The retreat held by the Sisters of Charity was different because the sisters did more than educate us on their history and mission. Because it was a "Come and *Serve*," we spent half the weekend in the Lower Ninth Ward repairing a house that had been damaged by Katrina. We painted the trimming, re-grouted the kitchen and repaired doors and trimming with caulk. In this way, we did not simply learn about Vincentian spirituality, we experienced it first-hand.

The weekend with the sisters was quickly followed by a second retreat attended by all members of the Magnificat House. Since our previous house retreat, our numbers had decreased from 8 to five and we had two new members. So this retreat was a chance to regroup as a community and plan events for the remainder of the year. Held at the Sisters of Mount Carmel's vacation house, this retreat was also one of relaxation and reflection. This house retreat was a blessing! It provided the opportunity to address the needs of our "new house" as well as ease the transition of becoming a new community.

As women discerning the call to religious life, the retreat with the Sisters of Charity proved to be incredibly beneficial. Together with four other young women, we spent just as much time working and learning about the sisters as we did learning about each other and having fun. In three days we created our own community of companionship and shared love for God. Thus if I had to describe the retreat in one sentence, **it was an encounter with normal women in love with God.**

Reflections on the 9th General Synod by Catherine Fisackerly



Over the past month, I had the opportunity to participate in three synod meetings for the Archdiocese of New Orleans. The first synod meeting was at St. Rita Catholic School in New Orleans, hosted for archdiocesan parishioners. The second was for men and women religious, and was held at Notre Dame Seminary. The third was for the young adults in the archdiocese, held at Holy name of Jesus School. In these three meetings, men and women who were single, married or religious all had the opportunity to come together and speak from their hearts and minds about how to better our local Catholic church.

While I enjoyed all three meetings, my favorite was the one for young adults—the most obvious reason being that I am a young adult myself. At this meeting I was among my peers and could participate more actively. The relaxed atmosphere allowed us to be more open in sharing our thoughts on the archdiocese while having fun and enjoying ourselves.

It was comforting and encouraging to hear a commonality between the three groups in regards to the desires, hopes and concerns for the archdiocese. In my experience, one common topic was even to encourage a sense of unity between the different communities in the archdiocese (i.e. between the religious and laity, or the poor and wealthy, or the Hispanics and African Americans). Other common topics included youth participation, the meaning of single life, and service to the poor. The synod meetings were a wonderful opportunity for us to come together and assess the needs of our community, as well as find ways to implement solutions using our own gifts and talents. **In short, the synods is providing a means of determining how we the parishioners can better serve the Archdiocese of New Orleans.**