



Dear Friends of Mount Manresa

A spiritual director, who knows me from my previous assignment, described me to a mutual friend as “choosing to bloom where he is planted.” The description continues to bring a smile to my lips. In Jesuit life we are regularly uprooted and transplanted to new soil. As a gardener, I know the transplants do not always take. So I am glad to know that I bloomed, at least eventually!

Our previous Provincial, Fr. Gerald Chojnacki, S.J., requested that I prepare the way for a lay Director. He was convinced that the Jesuits needed to rely on the expertise of the laity to make our retreat houses viable. So I worked with our Advisory Board to develop a true governing Board for Mount Manresa, with the Provincial and his Consultors as the Members of the Corporation. I am indebted to those founding Directors in establishing a Board that is itself flourishing under the chairmanship of Mr. Richard Nolan. Their commitment and enthusiasm helped carry me through demanding times.

As I read the words of Fr. Terrance Shealy, S.J., the first Director, I believe his vision continues to guide us almost 100 years later. Fr. Shealy held that the laity should run Mount Manresa with the Jesuits assisting. We are returning to our founding vision. I am stepping down as the Director, and Mount Manresa will hire its first lay Director. I will remain in residence in Staten Island and part of my responsibilities will be to assist in the transition. I will also work with the Jesuit Collaborative and the New York Province as we try to do a better job in making the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius available to the widest possible audience.

When the time comes, I hope you will join me in welcoming Mount Manresa’s first lay Director. I can promise the new Director the support of a vital Board and a committed staff. The Board committees will assure continuity through a change of leadership. The Lay Preachers working on our retreat teams have moved Mount Manresa into an era of partnership with the laity. The Circle of Friends has committed itself to a continued advancement effort on behalf of the retreat house. The many volunteers and friends of Mount Manresa have made this a stronger ministry, well rooted in the Metropolitan area.

To return to my garden image, the community that is Mount Manresa has prepared the soil for a next generation of planting. The Board will evaluate candidates for their potential to flourish in this soil and climate. I will continue to add my energies to our enterprise. I look forward to another season of vibrant growth and abundant blossoms!

In the Peace of Christ,

Edward J. Quinnan