

**OUR LADY OF SORROWS RETREAT CENTER
COMMUNITY OF JESUS CRUCIFIED
420 N. MAIN STREET
ST. MARTINVILLE, LA**

Our Lady of Sorrows Retreat Center was founded in February 1996 and is owned and operated by the Community of Jesus Crucified, a Catholic Association of the Christian Faithful canonically erected by Bishop Gerard Frey in 1986. The retreat center includes properties which originally formed the St. Martin Infirmary. Dr. Albert Corne and his wife Maude began a practice in St. Martinville in 1939 and then founded the St. Martin Infirmary in 1942. The original clinic building was located just north of the present pharmacy. In 1944 the Cornes built a home near Dr. Fournet's office, and the home was later expanded. That home now serves as a reading library, provides additional rooms for retreatants, and houses the retreat facility's conference room. In 1964 a new hospital building was constructed, which now serves as the main retreat house, housing 30 retreatants. The small two story house on Railroad Avenue, used for resident physicians and later by Acadian Ambulance as a satellite, now provides additional bedding for retreatants. In 1985 these three buildings and property were acquired by Our Lady of Lourdes Regional Medical Center (a health facility owned and operated by the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady). St. Martin Infirmary continued in operation by Lourdes only briefly. Subsequent to its closure part of the facility was leased to tenants.

In February 1996 Our Lady of Lourdes donated St. Martin Infirmary to the Community of Jesus Crucified "in consideration of the religious work done by the Community of Jesus Crucified, sanctioned by the Catholic Diocese of Lafayette, and in consideration of the further work to be done by the organization." The donation consisted of approximately 1.5 acres and three buildings, including the former hospital. After renovation the facility began to be used as a center for retreats beginning in 1996.

In September of 2006 the Community of Jesus Crucified acquired the adjacent property of Tilden Bonin which now serves as the kitchen, refectory, and rooms for volunteers who work the retreats. In 2007 the adjacent home with its property of Hermann and Marcelle Bienvenue was also obtained in order to accommodate the growing needs of the Center. This home is presently used to house priests who make retreats or days of recollection at Our Lady of Sorrows. In January 2008 ground was broken for the construction of Mater Dolorosa Chapel. The chapel was blessed and altar consecrated by Bishop Michael Jarrell, D.D. on September 15th (Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows) the same year.

Our Lady of Sorrows Retreat Center includes six buildings totaling about 20,000 ft² on about 2 ³/₄ acres. Silent retreats are conducted for men, women, married couples, priests and seminarians at no cost to the participants. Many diocesan and parish sponsored retreats are also held at the facility. Approximately 20 retreats are held at the facility per year and about 5000 persons have made retreats at Our Lady of Sorrows since its opening in 1996. *(rev. 10/23/09)*