

## Charis Seekers' Retreat, Covington, KY, USA



“Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7: 7) In this spirit twenty-three young adult women and men came together for the Charis Seekers' Retreat at the Covington Provincial Center March 22 – 23, 2014.

The retreat consisted of witness talks, quiet reflection and small group sharing. Joe Tallarigo spoke on knowing himself and identifying influential people and experiences that have formed him into who he is today. Rosie

Stephan addressed what drives her life today, where are her major time and energy commitments, how these reflect who she desires to be, and what desire she has to change what is important in her life. Sarah Messmer spoke on naming the realities of pain and hurt in life, to seek out God's action in the suffering and God's healing, and to find hope and new life in these experiences – discovering the paschal mystery in life. The talks were touching and thought-provoking. After each talk was a time of quiet reflection with questions related to the talk. Small group sharing was an important element in which the young adults could talk about what was happening in their own lives and how they saw God at work there or how they would like to recognize that divine presence. Young adults were trained to facilitate the sharing. On Saturday evening, the Sacrament of Reconciliation was offered in the context of a prayer service with a beautiful reflection and candle lighting ceremony. After celebrating Sunday Liturgy, the group gathered for a culminating reflection and activity on the overall impact of the weekend, and a closing ritual. The young adults were grateful for the opportunity to meet new people and share faith with those their own age and going through some of the same things. As a follow up, they will be invited to a movie or game night as well as a cookout during SND Forward in June. Another retreat will be offered in the fall.

Several sisters served as the core team to train and work with the young adult leaders – Sister Kathleen Mary Hine from Chardon, Sister Mary Reinette Kroeger, Sister Mary Shannon Kriege, Sister Jean Marie Hoffman, and Sister Mary Ruth Lubbers from Covington. Their commitment to the Charis Retreat experience was instrumental in this retreat being able to be offered and having been so successful.

