

## From Book to Internet ... And, Now, in Paperback

It started out small enough: Creighton employees wanted to learn more about the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits.

But how would the typical employee, without guidance, delve into a 16th century text that was more often the provenance of Jesuits and other trained scholars?

"We knew that the *Exercises* were not a book to read," said Creighton's Maureen McCann Waldron, BA'75, MA'98, associate director of Creighton's Collaborative Ministry Office, "but a guide for directors, to give this retreat experience to others."

The Rev. Andy Alexander, S.J., vice president for university ministry, and Waldron also realized there simply weren't enough spiritual directors available to share the *Exercises* of St. Ignatius with the faculty and staff at Creighton who wanted to make the retreat.

Meanwhile, Waldron and Fr. Alexander had already begun the Online Ministries at Creighton, inviting 50 Creighton faculty and staff to write reflections on the Scriptures of the day. But there was a surprise, the pair soon learned. Not only were Creighton people finding the Daily Reflections helpful, but people from all over the world were tapping into them online, as well.

If the Daily Reflections were pulling in that kind of interest, what about the *Spiritual Exercises*? What about a retreat online, based on these spiritual treasures?

Fr. Alexander and Waldron say they knew that St. Ignatius encouraged his Jesuit and lay colleagues to adapt his *Exercises* to fit the needs of the people. So, over an eight-month period, the pair attempted to do just that: studying the *Exercises* in depth and translating them into an online experience adapted to the lives of busy people.

They also sought out colleagues, including the Rev. Larry Gillick, S.J., director of the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality at Creighton, and the Rev. Don Doll, S.J., world-renowned photographer. Fr. Gillick contributed reflections for each of the 34 weeks of the retreat, and Fr. Doll brought to life the retreat with photos touching on the weekly themes.



Photo by Mark Romeser

The Rev. Andy Alexander, S.J., and Maureen McCann Waldron, BA'75, MA'98.

As a final step, Waldron and Fr. Alexander added an opportunity for people making the retreat to share the graces they were experiencing, and, long before blogs existed, those sharings were posted on the Internet. Tens of thousands of those sharings now form a kind of online community for retreatants, as people read what others have written before them.

Now in its 10th year, the retreat not only has cut across geographic barriers, it has cut across language barriers, as well.

Today, the Online Retreat has taken off from the original English to also include Spanish, Japanese, Russian and Chinese, plus Swedish and Kiswahili, Eastern Africa's most popular tongue.

From there, it will go into audio as Mandarin and Cantonese.

All along the way, Fr. Alexander and Waldron say, people have wanted the user-friendly retreat they encounter online in book form.

"People don't always want to pray right at their computer," said Fr. Alexander. "They were looking for something easier to carry when they prayed in another room or even another city."

And, so, this fall, Creighton's online retreat is available in paperback, too, and, at 308 pages, it's pretty portable.

*Retreat in the Real World: Finding Intimacy with God Wherever You Are* by Fr. Alexander and Waldron was published this summer by Loyola Press.

The book is available through the Loyola Press website: [www.loyolapress.com/retreat-in-the-real-world.htm](http://www.loyolapress.com/retreat-in-the-real-world.htm).

The Creighton Online Ministries website is at: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html>.

### School of Medicine Establishes Phoenix Campus

Creighton's School of Medicine and St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix in June announced an academic affiliation that will create a Creighton medical school presence in Phoenix.

The Phoenix campus will be formally known as Creighton University School of Medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, a member of Catholic Healthcare West. The Creighton campus in Phoenix will be the only Catholic medical school campus located west of Omaha.

Under the new affiliation, Creighton will establish a fully operational campus at St. Joseph's that will offer two full years of clinical training. Creighton will expand its entering medical class from 126 to 152 students, starting in 2010. Forty-two, third-year students will move to Phoenix for their final two years of training, starting in 2012.

"With a looming shortage of health care providers, there has never been a more critical need for skilled physicians with high ethical standards and a commitment to Catholic values and traditions," said Donald Frey, M.D., Creighton vice president for health sciences. "Our collaboration with St. Joseph's Hospital ensures that the strong clinical and service-oriented approach of both institutions will be directed toward the development of the kinds of doctors America needs most."

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