

Faith and Sharing, Jacksonville, Florida



By Sr. Rita Baum

In 1980-81, after trying two different forms of retreat "for people with disabilities", I made retreat in Detroit to learn about the retreat called "Faith and Sharing". I was inspired by the inclusion of young, old, married, single, and people with disabilities, all together on retreat at a beautiful facility, a seminary. I doubted we could do this in our Diocese of St. Augustine, where we had no seminary or catholic college, just a camp with bunk beds and no air conditioning, but the Detroit Animator, George Leach, SJ, assured me that "poor and simple" is good. He also connected us with Fr. George Strohmeyer as a potential Animator.

Our first Faith and Sharing, Summer of 1982, was blessed by Bishop John Snyder participating full time as a retreatant, Fr. George Strohmeyer as Animator accompanied by about ten Core Members from L'Arche Erie and a good cross section of people from the Diocese. Even in the simple camp environment (with parishes coming in to provide meals) we created a Katimavik for ongoing meditation; and the same spirit of F&S as was experienced in Detroit.

For some years local priests and laypersons were invited to animate. Then Sr. Maureen Kelley OP and Fr. Ron Camarda felt called to continue this as a dedicated annual ministry.

Facilities have grown to include a next-door retreat center, separate Chapel, air conditioning in the cabins and an aquatic center.

Our 2018 retreat, May 20-24, still has openings and members from other Communities would be very welcome. Contact Rita Baum SSJ, at rbaumssi@yahoo.com or 904-826-7365. 💜



Retreat 2011

