

The Dan Egan Retreat Movement



For Recovering Drug Addicts

1. What is a Dan Egan Retreat?

First, What it is not. It is not Narcotics Anonymous. It is not approved by Narcotics Anonymous. It is not affiliated with Narcotics Anonymous.

2. Then, What is it? What does it have to do with the Fellowship?

It is a spiritual tool, an instrument of grace to help those in the Fellowship to deepen their spiritual life, their life of prayer and meditation, their contact with God and the spiritual dimensions of the program.

3. What does the word "retreat" mean?

Since ours is a spiritual program, it is a good and prudent experience at times to "retreat" from the ordinary routine of daily life and just peacefully dwell on spiritual things. It refreshes the soul, gives us new lights and inspirations, motivates us with fresh zeal to better live the program and spread its message.

4. Where does all this take place?

It's usually a weekend experience at a Retreat Center specializing in "retreats." The "place" is always a peaceful setting, conducive to quiet thought and listening. A place free from city noise and confusion. A place and time to really get in touch with your Higher Power.

5. Are retreats something new?

Retreats may be new to most of us in the fellowship; but they have been around a long, long time. All kinds of people make weekend retreats: Doctors, Nurses, Married couples, bartenders, policemen. Even a retreat for prostitutes.

6. How did retreats start in the N.A. Fellowship?

People in the other fellowship began to experience the need for more spirituality than they were getting at meetings so they began to make weekend retreats. Soon they realized that these "ordinary retreats" were not oriented towards their steps and traditions, so they banded together and began making their own retreats. Right away they were faced with the practical problem: What do we call our retreats? A.A. couldn't "sponsor" them or "approve" them. So they called their retreat movement The "Matt Talbot Retreats" after the saintly Irish drunk, who heroically stopped drinking before there was an A.A.

In a word, then, a lot of people who came to N.A. through the other fellowship, brought with them the helpful custom of making an annual retreat. But because there were no specialized retreats for members of N.A., these addicts continued making Matt Talbot Retreats.

7. Why the name "Dan Egan"?

In 1982 a small group of Connecticut addicts in our N.A. fellowship began to sense that the Matt Talbot Retreats they made each year with the other fellowship were not enough. They seemed to be missing the very things that drove them to N.A. in the first place. Unique experiences, special needs and a rare brand of fellowship. After much prayer and discussion they made a decision to make a retreat by themselves and with any other members of our fellowship who desired to join.

First they found a Retreat House in

Willimantic, Conn. willing to accommodate them. Then they went looking for a name that would catch on. A name other recovering addicts would recognize. Several in the group had read the book "The Junkie Priest." One in the group got off a 30 year sentence back in '60 because the "Junkie Priest" successfully pleaded his case at court. Among themselves, then, they decided to call their first retreat the **DAN EGAN** Retreat. Next they had to find "The Junkie Priest," Fr. Dan Egan, S.A. to get his okay. By a typical act of Divine Providence, which we often experience in the program, "The Junkie Priest" was right there in Connecticut doing a drug prevention program. He could have been dead or in any other part of the world. At first Fr. Dan fought the idea of giving himself such an honor. Finally, he gave in to their logic.

8. How many attended the first DAN EGAN retreat?

Close to 65 men and women attended the first retreat. Fittingly, Fr. Dan Egan gave that retreat. So Connecticut is Retreat Group No. ONE. New York is No. TWO. New Jersey is THREE. Philadelphia is FOUR. Nine Dan Egan Retreats have been held since 1982. During the years ahead only God can foresee all the people in our fellowship who will find deeper peace and friendship with their Higher Power through such retreats.

9. Exactly what happens on a retreat?

Nothing really happens—ever! We let things happen. On a good retreat God will do for you spiritually only as much as you let Him do for you. He will never batter down the door of your soul. But the Con-

ferences are of such a nature that you're ready to let Him in. Conferences like: How to find God. How to contact Him. What prayer is all about. How to deepen your prayer life. What to do with grief and guilt. How to deal with daily temptations. How to sanctify ordinary things. What does spirituality really mean?

Usually the retreat opens on a Friday evening after supper. On Saturday there may be 2 Conferences in the morning, two in the afternoon and one in the evening. There is always an N.A. meeting on Saturday evening. The retreat ends around noon on Sunday, with 2 conferences in the morning. Of course there are three meals on Saturday and two on Sunday plus the opening meal on Friday night. Where else could you get all this, with beautiful surroundings and accommodations for about \$55.00?

10. If a few groups in our area wanted to have a retreat how do we go about it?

Form a search committee to find a Retreat House. A priest will help you. Once you're able to convince the Retreat House Director that you're reliable people, ask for an "open date." That may not be easy. That done, find a priest or clergyman in the program who has conducted spiritual retreats. Better still, one who has conducted a Matt Talbot or Dan Egan retreat. Again, that may not be easy. But, keep at it.

Then get the word out about the dates, making sure you give no impression that the retreat is an N.A. event. It is for those in the fellowship who wish to deepen their spirituality; but it may not be sponsored by N.A.

When you get an approximate number attending contact John A. Bailey Associates Inc., 544 Tolland St., E. Hartford, Ct. 06108-0668 and order the special, beautiful medallions pictured in this leaflet. Each person making the retreat receives the medallion at the Saturday night N.A. meeting.

If you need any specific advise, write FR. DAN EGAN, S.A., GRAYMOOR, GARRISON, NEW YORK 10524.

DAN EGAN RETREAT
GROUP NO. 1

Immaculate Retreat House
Willimantic, Connecticut

This certifies that

**HONESTY
OPEN-
MINDEDNESS
WILLINGNESS**

is a member of DAN EGAN RETREAT-GROUP NO. 1

Date _____ Medallion _____
Fr. Dan Egan _____
Retreat Master Secretary

Sample of Membership Card