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## **Retreat, Birthday, Feast Day**

On March 17th afternoon we arrived at St Patrick's Pastoral Center in Bungoma Diocese for an annual spiritual retreat. Excitement for me was on several levels...

04/16/2022

...this kind of quiet time to spend with God is precious. COVID-19 had let up enough for these activities to resume and last but not least, I knew that my father was also attending this same retreat. While we were not

going to be speaking much – it is a silent retreat after all – I have found it refreshing to be around his physical presence. Did I also say that on the first night we were blessed by a visit from Bishop Mark Kadima, who a month ago had been installed in this diocese? Spiritually refreshing!

I was born on the night of March 18th – many years ago – but I am not a Patrick. I am a Joseph. My parents chose this name in honor of the Feast of St. Joseph celebrated on March 19th. This year, that decision had some pleasant implications. Because of the silence we were observing, my birthday was celebrated with cake and celebratory drinks not on March 18th, but was combined with the Feast of St. Joseph celebrations that were held here on the night of March 19th, 2021. My eldest brother – surprisingly – joined us at the retreat, both to spend time in prayer and

help celebrate this important Feast Day cum birthday. I was delighted.

If someone had missed God's sense of humor in all this, they might see it in my father giving the talk on Chastity – an oft revered subject in our culture – with my brother and I in the audience. I returned the favor in kind when the very next day I gave the talk on 'Plan of Life' where my father got to listen while I talked. We can only plan our lives so far, at which point God then takes things up from there.

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