

# GRAYMOOR TODAY

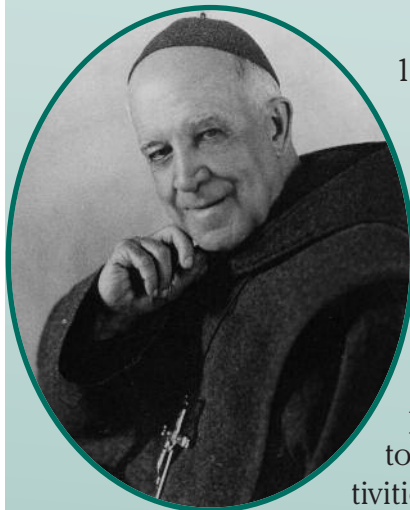
Newsletter of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement

## CHRISTMAS AT GRAYMOOR ~ FATHER PAUL'S SPECIAL TRADITION

Father Paul, the founder of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, celebrated Christmas with great joy. During Graymoor's early years, Christ's birth was observed at Christmas Eve Midnight Mass of which there were usually two— one in Little Flower Chapel at the top of the Holy Mountain and the other at St. John's Church near the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement convent. People travelled from far and wide to attend the services.

At St. John's, with the Sisters in the choir loft, the sanctuary was described as a "dream of beauty with superb music." After Mass, an image of the Child would be brought forward, and with a Priest holding it reverently, the people venerated the Infant as it was laid in the crib.

Father Paul was well known for entertaining Sisters and guests with recitations from Dickens' *Christmas Carol* and Longfellow's poem "King Robert of Sicily." Mother Lurana, the Sisters' foundress, noted in her diary that Father Paul "as usual read for us." Years later she commented that he read exquisitely and "we never weary of listening."



Father Paul Wattson, SA  
1863 - 1940

Since the early 1900s homeless wanderers had been making their way to Graymoor seeking shelter and food. Father Paul, who called these pilgrims of the road *Brothers Christopher*, and offered them shelter at St. Christopher's Inn, did not hesitate to include them in the festivities.



Holy Spirit Chapel at Graymoor

During the Great Depression, *The Lamp* reported that "we have entertained ex-Wall Street brokers side by side with masons, electricians, college graduates, quarrymen, cowboys, soldiers and sailors." Christmas for the *Brothers Christopher* was celebrated at St. Christopher's Inn where each man received a little gift. "Speeches, music and singing abounded and at the end refreshments. The love of the Christ Child was in every heart."

*continued on page 9 ...*

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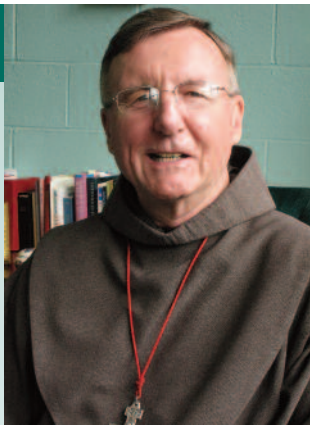
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## GLAD TIDINGS

by Fr. Bob Warren, SA

*And the Word became  
flesh, and dwelt among us,  
and we saw His glory . . .  
full of grace and truth.*

John 1:14



The great Russian writer, Dostoyevsky, wrote of Jesus' life—"His love is a harsh and dreadful thing. Harsh is being born among the lowest of the low in the poorest conditions and dreadful is dying nailed to a cross."

Dostoyevsky is forcing us to jettison the pretty Christmas card image that most of us have of the birth of Jesus and rediscover that Christ was born where He wanted to be—in a stable among the small, the needy, the doubting, and despairing. He was there because He knows that is where we are. He wants to be part of us and to be with us. He brought love among the ruins of a broken world.

So this Christmas as you gather with your faith community where Jesus still humbly comes in the spoken word and in a small piece of bread, I ask you to recall the opening words of John's Gospel—"The Word became flesh." That line takes the human beauty of the Christmas story and links it with the Divine.

It puts God in the straw, and the hands that hold Him are the hands of the Mother of God. The caroling angels are the servants of the Child and the Shepherds were made by Him. The Christmas star is His toy and He alone is the true King. We rejoice because the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

*And, that is Glad Tidings.*



## FRIAR VOCATIONS



Vocation interest in the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement is on the rise in the United States, in Europe and, most recently, in Africa (see page 4).

To encourage new vocations, the Friars host *Come & See* weekends for men considering the call to religious life as either priests or brothers. These are held at various locations throughout the year at Garrison, New York; Toronto, Ontario; Rome (Assisi), Italy; and Manila, Philippines. Each three-day weekend runs from Friday morning through Sunday afternoon. The number of participants is limited. Men should be between the ages of 18 and 40 years old, in good health, psychologically mature, and without major debt.

Once a man has expressed interest, he goes through a formal applications process and review by the admissions board. If accepted, he becomes a candidate. Candidacy is the preliminary phase in the formation process providing the man with the time and assistance for a gradual spiritual and psychological adjustment, and the personal development necessary for entrance into the postulancy and the formal program of formation into the fraternity.

In August, new candidates arrived in Rome and began orientation with **Br. Gregory Lucrezia, SA,** and **Fr. Dennis Polanco, SA.**

[AtonementFriars.org/Vocations](http://AtonementFriars.org/Vocations)  
800-338-2620, ext. 2126

### PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

HEAVENLY FATHER, WE THANK YOU FOR ALL WHOSE EYES YOU HAVE TURNED TOWARD THE LIGHT OF CHRIST AND WHOSE HEARTS YOU HAVE FILLED WITH THE COURAGE TO FOLLOW IN ST. FRANCIS' FOOTSTEPS, WORKING FOR PEACE AND UNITY, OFTEN AT GREAT PERSONAL RISK.

MAY YOUR GRACE COME UPON THEM AS THEY DISCOVER THE UNIQUE GIFTS WHICH THEY ARE CALLED TO SHARE IN PLACES TORN APART BY VIOLENCE, POVERTY AND INJUSTICE, AND MAY OUR PRAYERS SUSTAIN THEM, MAKING US ALL INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE IN THE WORLD TODAY.

AMEN



# FRIARS CELEBRATE SPIRIT OF ASSISI

## ... To Promote World Peace



Participants at Graymoor's Spirit of Assisi Day (l-r): Dr. Syed-Mohsin Naquvi, editor of the Islamic quarterly magazine, *The IIC Monitor*; Rev. Douglas Hostetter, Mennonite Church; Rev. Masamichi Kamiya, Buddhist Rissho Kosei-Kai Church; Fr. Elias Mallon, SA, moderator; Dr. Carl Murrell, representative to the United Nations for the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'i of the United States; The Most Rev. Donald Reece, DD, former archbishop of Kingston, Jamaica; Rabbi Lee Paskind, First Hebrew Congregation, Peekskill, New York.

On October 27, Pope Benedict XVI travelled to Assisi to mark the historic anniversary of *Spirit of Assisi* held 25 years earlier. The pontiff invited Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims to join him as “pilgrims of peace” at the site where on the same day in 1986, Pope John Paul II met the Dalai Lama and other world religious leaders to promote world peace. “As Christians, we want to invoke from God the gift of peace; we want to ask Him to make us instruments of His peace in a world torn by hatred, division, egoism and war,” Pope Benedict said. Minister General, V. Rev. James F. Puglisi, SA, attended the event

Following the example of the Holy Father, the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement invited leaders from Christian churches and other religious traditions to Graymoor for a daylong celebration and dialogue on “How can interreligious cooperation impact peace in the world?” The day included a talk by Fr. Steven McMichael, a scholar with the Franciscan Conventual Fathers and Brothers, who explained how the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi continues to influence peace in the world. The afternoon concluded with a concert and remarks by The Most Reverend Donald Reece, former archbishop of Kingston, Jamaica. Fr. John Keane, SA organized the event. Fr. Elias Mallon, SA moderated the morning dialogue.

Fr. James Gardiner, SA was one of the organizers of an event held on October 16, in Washington DC. Over 150 “pilgrims of peace” gathered at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land to inaugurate ten days of prayer for peace in anticipation of the gathering in Assisi. Representatives of a dozen religious traditions— from Baha'i's and Buddhists to Sikhs and Zoroastrians— offered prayers or other expressions for peace.



*Spirit of Assisi, 1986.*

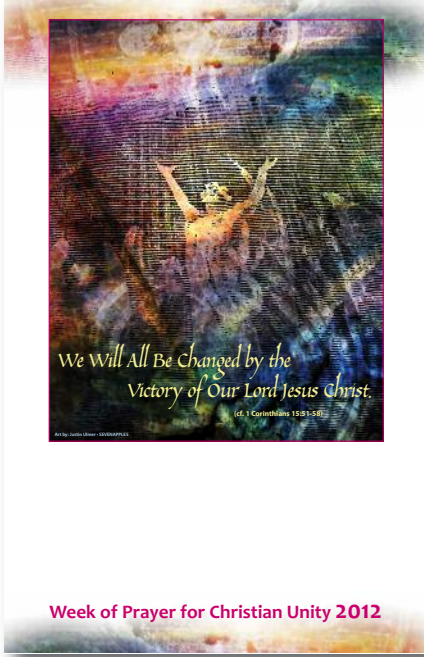


“Pilgrims for Peace” in Washington DC (l-r): Fr. Jeremy Harrington, OFM, guardian of the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land; Fr. James Gardiner, SA; and Fr. Avelino Gonzalez, director of the office of ecumenical and interreligious affairs of the Archdiocese of Washington.

© L'Observatore Romano



## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2012



Each year, the Friars join in prayer with other Christians around the world during the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. Initiated by the Friars' founder, Fr. Paul Wattson, it is held from January 18 through 25.

The *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* is an important expression of ecumenical activity at the local level. The theme and text for each year's observance are chosen and prepared by representatives of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and representatives from the World Council of Churches. This year the theme is from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, (15:51-58) *We will all be changed by the Victory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*— a paraphrase of verses 51 and 57.

In the United States, Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute develops, adapts, and publishes texts for use during the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*.

Materials such as prayer cards, posters, Services of the Word, and meditations for each of the eight days are available for purchase from Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute  
P.O. Box 300, Garrison, NY 10524

## FRIARS IN NAIROBI ~THREE WEEKS TO REMEMBER

by Br. Gregory Lucrezia, SA

In early September, I embarked on a journey that would have me living with the Capuchin community in Nairobi, Kenya for a little over three weeks. Fr. Dennis Polanco, SA, and Fr. Brian Terry, SA, joined me later in the month. We visited other Religious ministering in the area and we met with our Student Friars, Br. Simon Peter Ango, SA and Br. Deogratias Musabingo, SA, who served their summer ministries alongside other Franciscans helping the extreme poor in the slums of Nairobi and serving in local parishes.



Fr. Brian Terry, SA and Br. Gregory Lucrezia, SA, with schoolchildren in a poor area of Nairobi.

The purpose of our visit was to learn about the various ministries that other religious communities are engaged in should the Friars choose to start a foundation there. This is a complicated issue that requires not only examining the missionary, parish, educational, and formation needs but also understanding the culture of the people whom we would be serving. We made many new friends among the Religious and the Kenyans. We examined, we listened, we took voluminous notes— and we prayed.



Our founder, Father Paul dreamed of seeing his Friars as parish ministers and missionaries in foreign lands. If it is God's will, someday the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement will minister in Nairobi. It is in His hands.

Br. Gregory Lucrezia, SA, Fr. Brian Terry, SA, and Fr. Dennis Polanco, SA with Sr. Lilian Curaming, FMM, director of the Franciscan Study Center in Nairobi.

## FR. ORIANS NAMED DIRECTOR

**F**r. Thomas Orians, SA has been named director of the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in Garrison, New York. In addition to his duties at the Center, he is also associate director of the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute where he is coordinator of the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*.



Fr. Orians, a native of Tiffin, Ohio, in the Diocese of Toledo, entered the community in 1985 and was ordained in 1992. Prior to coming to Graymoor, he was associate campus minister of Felician College in Lodi/Rutherford, New Jersey. Among his previous assignments, he had been campus minister of Caldwell College in Newark, New Jersey, was on the steering committee of World AIDS Day of the World Health Organization, and served in pastoral ministry in Richmond, British Columbia.

**G**raymoor Spiritual Life Center offers weekend and weekday retreats for those from every walk of life—including families, married couples, seniors, and singles. It hosts weekly holy hours, Bible study, a centering prayer group, and Charismatic prayer meetings. In addition to hosting AA, NA, Al-Anon, and Recovery International meetings, Matt Talbot retreats and Dan Egan retreats are available for those recovering from alcohol and drug addictions to help them find the spiritual base for their continuing recovery.

A number of special programs and events over the Advent and Easter Seasons and throughout the year, including the inauguration of National Wildflower Week (the first Sunday in May), when wildflower seeds are blessed and planted; and the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, when the traditional procession with the Blessed Sacrament follows Mass. All are welcome to Mass on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. in Pilgrim Hall.

845-424-2111

## PROCESSION AND BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS IN HONOR OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



On October 2, over 100 pets and their human friends converged at Graymoor for the annual *Procession and Blessing of Animals* in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. **Fr. Tom Orians, SA,** and **Fr. Conan Hall, SA,** blessed the special visitors.

## Fr. Paul Wattson Lecture Series

**December 15, 2011**

The 14th Annual Conference in honor of Fr. Paul and Mother Lurana at Centro Pro Unione, Rome. The speaker is Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

**February 27, 2012**

at University of San Francisco, California  
The speaker is Bishop Antje Jackelen, Lutheran Bishop of Lund, Sweden.

With these lectures, which began in 1974 at Catholic University of America, the Friars honor the memory and work of their founder, Fr. Paul Wattson, and continue their efforts to realize the prayer of Jesus:

*“That all may be one...so the world may believe.”  
(John 17:21).*

**Upcoming Fr. Paul Wattson Lecture Series information will be available at [AtonementFriars.org/Lecture](http://AtonementFriars.org/Lecture)**



# INTERFAITH PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND. . .

*Fr. Damian MacPherson, SA, director of ecumenical and interfaith affairs, Archdiocese of Toronto, was one of the leaders of a Christian, Muslim, and Jewish pilgrimage to the Holy Land in September. Fr. Damian, Imam Abdul Hai Patel, the Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, and Judy Csillag have worked together in interfaith activities in Toronto for many years. Called "In the Path of Abraham," the trip sought to advocate for peace and understanding among the three faiths. This is their report.*

## *A rabbi, a priest, a minister, and an imam walk into . . .*

It sounds like the start of a joke, but it was a most serious effort to bring 58 Jews, Christians, and Muslims from Canada to Israel and Palestine to see for ourselves the complexity of three religions and two nations trying to live together in one land. What we witnessed and experienced in early September, as we went on what we called "The Path of Abraham" was intriguing and enlightening, fascinating and frightening, disturbing and disconcerting.

Earlier this year, the five of us decided to bring others along our path. The oldest member of our group was an 85-year-old of deep Catholic faith. The youngest were five students from Marc Garneau Collegiate, who were using this trip as a platform to bring a new model for inter-group relations back to their Toronto high school.

We deliberately sought out conflicting narratives. So we brought Jews to Jenin, where a few years ago the Israeli-Palestinian conflict made this one of the most deadly of cities, to listen to the regional governor from the Palestinian Authority. Then we took Muslims and Christians over the "green line" to Gush Etzion, the mother of all post-1967 settlements, to hear from the mayor of this community in Judea. We went together to Bethlehem, where a wall divides the city. In Hebron, the City of Abraham, we entered the Tomb of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs from Muslim and Jewish entrances.

**"We deliberately sought out conflicting narratives."**

We brought Muslim women to stay in a kibbutz founded by survivors of the Holocaust and spoke with Israeli Muslims on the streets of Nazareth and Jerusalem. We met with East Jerusalem Palestinians and learned of the difference in outlook and political orientation between them, Arab citizens of Israel, and residents of the Palestinian territories. In Haifa we learned how coexistence in that city differs from Jewish-Arab relations in Jerusalem or Galilee. And in a Catholic school that also teaches Christian and Muslim students to live together we met with a proud member of the Druze community who serves in the government of the State of Israel.

We reflected about the life and death of Jesus in the Church of the Nativity, on the Mount of the Beatitudes, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In Capernaum we learned of the role of the ancient synagogue in giving birth to both the church and mosque.



*Fr. Damian MacPherson, SA (left) and the planning committee.*



*At the airport.*



*Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem.*



*The Western Wall, Jerusalem.*



Along with our Muslim pilgrims, we went up to Haram al-Sharif, where they prayed in the al-Aqsa Mosque and Jews were prohibited from public or private prayer. We celebrated with Christian friends their baptismal reaffirmation in the Jordan River, danced together and apart (in separate male-female sections) at the Western Wall as the Jewish Sabbath began, and walked the Via Dolorosa as a mixed multitude.

The politics and polarities of security and human dignity were constantly with us. We passed through some checkpoints with ease and were stopped at another for two hours. We met with a Palestinian-American whose husband was killed in a disputed altercation with Israeli police in 2009 and a seventh-generation Jewish-Israeli whose daughter was blown up in a terrorist attack on a pedestrian mall.

Jews, Christians, and Muslims together toured the Temple Tunnels, whose opening helped to trigger the first intifada. We reflectively walked though Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust Memorial and Museum, and listened to a childhood friend of Anne Frank tell of her Holocaust survival and the death of her best friend.

**“Jews, Christians, and Muslims together toured ...”**

We walked through ultra-Orthodox and Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem and some of us rode on the new light rail that passes through East and West Jerusalem, joining Arab and Jewish sections both beyond and within the disputed borders of the city. We saw that gentrification takes place in Jaffa and the old Neve Tzedek neighborhood of Tel Aviv just as it does in downtown Toronto.

What did we learn? That the Holy Land breeds intensity. That simplistic ideas such as boycotts break down in the face of real people buying, selling, and consuming each others' products. That the biblical ideal of hospitality is still operative. That each religion has truth-claims which we ignore at our own peril. That each national group feels its cause is just. That the security barrier that protects Israelis— whether in the form of a wall or a fence— challenges the personal dignity of Palestinians. That despite the political disagreements, most people find ways to live with each other. That this is not a “tale of two cities” but a much more complex, multi-dimensional narrative affected by religion, nationalism, history, and geography.

And we discovered something about ourselves. We were noticed as Canadians and stories preceded our visits in some places. Wherever we travelled, people wanted to know about our unusual group and how life in Canada enabled us to imagine the possibility of Jews, Muslims, and Christians travelling together to learn about, with and from each other. Now that we have returned to our communities, the work begins.

**“... the Holy Land breeds intensity.”**



*Toronto high school students visiting the Lions Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem.*



*Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth.*



*Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth.*



*In Jenin with Governor Musa, of the Palestinian Authority.*



## FRIARS CELEBRATE SHARING HOPE



From left: Mr. and Mrs. John Heffernan; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Conniff; **Fr. James F. Puglisi, SA**; Mr. and Mrs. Peter X. Kelly,

The Friars held their *18th Annual Sharing Hope Celebration Dinner* on September 30 at The Pierre in New York City. The benefit honors those who have shown a commitment to helping others and inspiring hope. Mary Higgins Clark was the Master of Ceremonies. **V. Rev. James F. Puglisi, SA**, Minister General, presented the awards on behalf of the Friars.

This year the *Graymoor Sharing Hope Award* was presented to John and June Heffernan in recognition of their dedication to ensuring that underprivileged children receive quality educations.

The *Graymoor Award* was presented to Thomas Conniff, Esq., for his personal and professional commitment to public service and also for the efforts he has undertaken to further God's message of hope by dedicating his time, talent, counsel, and financial support towards helping Catholic schools, colleges, and universities.

Restaurateur and renowned chef, Peter X. Kelly, received the *Graymoor Community Service Award* not only for his efforts on behalf of the homeless and hungry but also for his support of charities that sustain pediatric care, child welfare, and education.

The proceeds benefit the Friars' ministries.



**Fr. James F. Puglisi, SA** and Mary Higgins Clark

To view more photos of the event please visit  
[AtonementFriars.org/SharingHope](http://AtonementFriars.org/SharingHope)

## WORLD TRADE CENTER MEMORIAL CROSS

September 11, brought more than 200 people to a candlelight prayer service at the World Trade Center Memorial Cross in the St. Jude Pond and Prayer Garden located on the grounds of Graymoor. The Friars and the Garrison Volunteer Fire Company hosted the gathering commemorating the tenth anniversary of the attacks.

The Garrison Volunteer Fire Company provided the color guard for the ceremony. James Copeland, President, Garrison Volunteer Fire Company, introduced the speaker, Putnam County Sherriff, Donald Blaine Smith (Brig. Gen. U.S. Army, Ret.), Master of Ceremonies was **Br. Ted Novak, SA**, Chaplain, Garrison Volunteer Fire Company. **Fr. Ken Cienik, SA**, (Capt. U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps, Ret.), gave the Invocation. Joseph Surace, Fire Chief, closed the service.

Constructed of steel girders and ash from the WTC site, the Cross was erected by the Ironworkers of Local 40, New York City. It was dedicated one year after the attacks— on September 11, 2002. A simple but powerful tribute to those who lost



their lives on September 11, 2001, it is believed to be the first such relic in the Hudson Valley.

To view a video of the event,  
visit [AtonementFriars.org/WTCMemorial](http://AtonementFriars.org/WTCMemorial)



# CHRISTMAS AT GRAYMOOR ~ FATHER PAUL'S SPECIAL TRADITION

...continued from page 1



Graymoor's life-size outdoor crèche is located near Pilgrim Hall and the St. Anthony Shrine.

On Christmas Day 1939, Father Paul recited for the last time his rendition of Dickens' *Christmas Carol*. *The Lamp* stated, "This is an age-old tradition at Graymoor and Father General in his interpretation of "Scrooge" seems to be better each year." Father Paul died less than two months later— on February 8, 1940.

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES AND RETREATS AT GRAYMOOR

Today, Father Paul's Christmas legacy is continued at the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center with First Vespers on December 24, in Pilgrim Hall. As part of the service, the story of St. Francis and how he began the tradition of the Christmas crèche is retold. Everyone is then invited to take part in a procession with lighted torches to the outdoor crèche for a simple prayer of blessing.

Mass in the Night is celebrated in Pilgrim Hall at 10:00 p.m.; on Christmas Morning Mass is celebrated at 11:00 a.m. Everyone, of course, is welcome.

In addition to two overnight retreats—"Christmas at Graymoor" (December 23 - December 25) and "New Year's on the Mountain" (December 30 - January 1), the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center offers special mini-retreats on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Both begin with a festive dinner and end with Mass.

## CRÈCHE EXHIBIT AT GRAYMOOR

No doubt Father Paul would be delighted by *Christmas Around the World*, an exhibit of more than 100 crèches from countries near and far on display at the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center during the Christmas Season.

The collection, started by the late **Fr. Joseph Egan, SA**, and added to over the years, features crèches made from materials as different as straw, wood, ceramic, stone, and paper— even elk horn. They are a charming reminder of what the Christmas Season is about.

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center  
GraymoorCenter.org  
845-424-3671, ext.2111  
AtonementFriars.org/Creche

## ST. CHRISTOPHER'S INN

STCHRISTOPHERSINN-GRAYMOOR.ORG

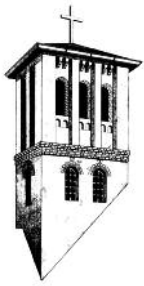
### Judge Visits St. Christopher's Inn

**H**onorable Marcia Hirsch, a Queens County Superior Court judge, toured St. Christopher's Inn on October 12. During her visit, Judge Hirsch, who has referred many defendants to the Inn for drug and alcohol rehabilitation, discussed their success. She said that nearly all had completed the program, which meant that their felonies were dismissed.

Judge Hirsch said a key aspect of the program is its length. "Four weeks isn't enough for rehabilitation. St. Christopher's three-month program meets a critical need. We've only had what I would call success stories when we send them here."



Judge Hirsch with **Fr. Bill Drobach, SA**, CEO and President, SCI and **Fr. John Kiesling, SA**, Spiritual Life Counselor.

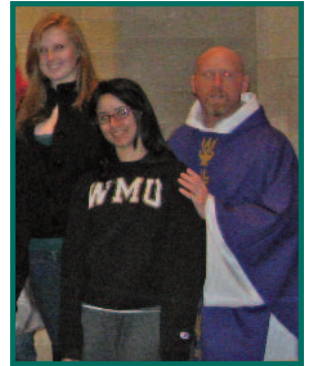


# BELL TOWER NOTES



V. Rev. James F. Puglisi, SA, Minister General, has been awarded second place in the theology book category by the Catholic Press Association of the US and Canada for *How Can The Petrine Ministry Be A Service To The Unity Of The Universal Church?* In the book, Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant theologians address the biblical tradition, the ecclesial history, the theology and the ecumenical dimensions of papal ministry for the promotion of Christian Unity. The Press Association described the work as “an important contribution to the evolving discussion of the place of Peter and Petrine ministry in the universal church. It is ironic, challenging and hopeful.”

Fr. Wilfred Tyrrell, SA, is Catholic chaplain and interfaith coordinator at Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York where he is also an adjunct instructor of Islam. He is a member of the Board of Directors of St. Christopher’s Inn.



Fr. Bernard Palka, SA has been assigned to the Friars’ parish, Christ the Redeemer, in Sterling, Virginia, as parochial vicar. Fr. Palka is the former CEO/President of St. Christopher’s Inn where he served for 16 years. [www.ctrcc.org](http://www.ctrcc.org)

Fr. Frank Eldridge, SA, is pastor at St. Odilia’s, an active Spanish-speaking parish in Los Angeles. During the Christmas season, the parish celebrates *Las Posadas*, a yearly tradition for many Catholic Mexicans and other Latin Americans symbolizing the trials that Mary and Jesus endured before finding a place to stay where Jesus could be born. 323-231-5930



Fr. Robert Langone, SA, has been assigned to the Chapel of Our Savior in Brockton, Massachusetts, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. While not a parish ministry, the Friars refer to it as an Atonement Center. Located just opposite the Westgate Mall, the chapel’s motto is “*Bringing Christ to the Marketplace.*” Young and old come to be nourished by the sacraments through daily masses and confessions, to receive spiritual counseling, or to purchase religious items in its well-stocked and thriving gift shop. 508-583-8357



## *The Friars are Calling!*

*"Hello, this is Fr. Bob. I'm calling to personally say thank you for your generous gift. We are deeply grateful for your support."*

*"Hello, this is Kristen calling on behalf of the Friars to ask you to consider making a donation to support their many wonderful ministries."*

*"Hi, this is Fr. Emil calling. I will be visiting your area next week and would like to stop by to personally say thank you for your many years of support."*

Yes, the Friars— or a few specially chosen representatives— have gone to the phones to try to reach you. Mostly, we're calling to say thank you. Occasionally, we're calling to clarify a prayer intention you sent and yes, sometimes we're calling to ask for your support. While some people absolutely do not like being called, others tell us they don't mind and are happy for the personal touch. Some even tell us they prefer a phone call— rather than our spending money on postage and the cost of sending another piece of mail.

So, the next time the phone rings, it may be us. However, if you don't want us to call, please call us and give us your name and address and we will be happy to make a note not to call.

To reach us, call 800-2620, ext. 3519.

## *New Video!*

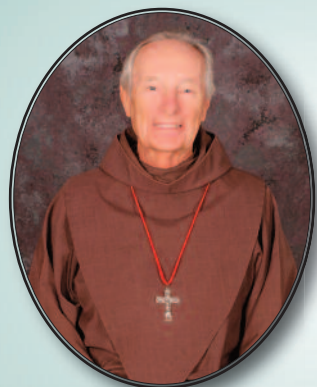
*Learn about the Friars' Mission and Ministries*

*AtonementFriars.org/Sowing*

*or call for a free DVD: 800-338-2620, ext. 3519*

## *Sowing the Seeds OF At-one-ment*

### *May He Rest in Peace*



*Fr. David Doerner SA  
1931 ~ 2011*

*Let us also  
remember and  
pray for our  
benefactors who  
have died.*



## EVENTS



**December 23 - 25**

**Christmas at Graymoor Retreat**  
*Graymoor Spiritual Life Center*

**December 24**

**Christmas Eve Mini-Retreat**  
*Graymoor Spiritual Life Center*  
Begins with First Vespers and procession to the outdoor crèche, includes a festive dinner and concludes after the Mass in the Night.  
(10:00 p.m. in Pilgrim Hall)

**December 30 - January 1**

**New Year's on the Mountain Retreat**  
*Graymoor Spiritual Life Center*

**December 31**

**New Year's Eve Mini-Retreat**  
*Graymoor Spiritual Life Center*  
Begins with First Vespers, includes a festive dinner and concludes with the First Mass of the New Year.

**January 18 - 25, 2012**

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

**February 27, 2012**

**Fr. Paul Wattson Lecture**  
**University of San Francisco**  
(see page 5)

**April 4 - April 8, 2012**

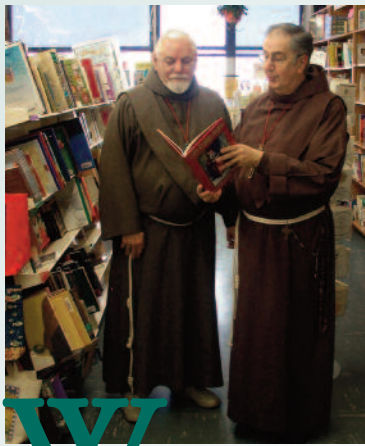
**Holy Week Retreat**  
*Graymoor Spiritual Life Center*



**For more information**

**800-338-2620**

**AtonementFriars.org/Events**



## Christmas Shopping at Graymoor & Gifts that Give more than once



When you shop for your Christmas gifts at Graymoor, you give not only a lovely present to a friend or relative, you also give to the friars. Every purchase supports their work in bringing healing and hope to those less fortunate.

The *That Nothing Be Lost Thrift Shop* offers floors of rare finds, everyday necessities, treasures, antiques, and bargains. Proceeds benefit St. Christopher's Inn, whose residents help staff it: 845-424-3635.

Through *Friary Studios* you can purchase a hand-crafted ceramic piece created especially for the Season by Br. Ted Novak, SA: [AtonementFriars.org/FriaryStudios](http://AtonementFriars.org/FriaryStudios).

The *Graymoor Book & Gift Center* offers a wide array of books, music, religious articles, stationery, and recovery items—all designed to speak to the heart and nourish the soul. With hundreds of items on hand, you will be sure to find something special. If you don't live near Graymoor, visit the new on-line store at [GraymoorBooks.com](http://GraymoorBooks.com)



[ATONEMENTFRIARS.ORG/MOBILE](http://ATONEMENTFRIARS.ORG/MOBILE)



[FACEBOOK.COM/ATONEMENTFRIARS](http://FACEBOOK.COM/ATONEMENTFRIARS)



[TWITTER.COM/ATONEMENTFRIARS](http://TWITTER.COM/ATONEMENTFRIARS)

### GRAYMOOR CONTACTS:

Benefactor Services 845-424-3671 ext 3519  
Book & Gift Center 845-424-2100  
GEII 212-870-2330

St. Christopher's Inn 845-335-1000  
Spiritual Life Center 845-424-2111  
Vocations 845-424-2126

*Privacy Promise Statement: From time to time we make information about our lapsed or inactive donors available to other Catholic Charities. If you do not wish your name shared, contact us and we will respect your wishes. If you no longer wish to receive requests for support from the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, please call 800-338-2620, ext. 3519.*

Graymoor Today · P.O. Box 301 · Garrison, NY 10524-0301 · 1-800-338-2620, ext. 3519 · [www.AtonementFriars.org](http://www.AtonementFriars.org)



## 'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIFT GIVING

Thanksgiving is the holiday set aside for reflecting on our many blessings and celebrating our gratitude by sharing with family and friends. During Advent and Christmas many share the joy of Jesus's birth by sharing their blessings through gift giving to family, friends and loved ones. These final weeks of the year are also traditionally when people make special charitable contributions.

Thinking carefully about what to give – and when to give – can help magnify the impact of your gifts. With careful planning, you may discover that your gifts have more charitable impact than you thought possible, and can reduce your overall tax bill.

### What to Give

**Cash** – While all gifts mailed or otherwise completed by December 31 qualify as tax deductible for 2011, gifts of cash, by check or through electronic transfer are the most popular ways to give. When itemizing your tax deductions, it is possible to eliminate or reduce income tax on up to one-half of your adjusted gross income. Depending upon where you live, you may also enjoy state income tax savings.

**Securities** – A gift of stocks, bonds or mutual fund shares may yield additional tax savings if they are worth more at the time of transfer than their original cost. Gifts of securities are usually deductible from income tax at their full present-day value as long as you have owned them longer than one year.

**Devalued Investments** – If you purchased investments that are now worth less than what you paid, you can sell them and make a charitable gift with the proceeds. This creates a loss that you may be able to deduct from other taxable income and then again as a charitable gift. These combined deductions could total more than the current value of your investment.

**Gifts From Retirement Plans** – Gifting assets accumulated through retirement plans can be a practical way to support a charity. If you are over age 70-1/2, you are required to make withdrawals from your IRA or other qualified plan. You can consider a charitable gift using all or a portion of your mandatory withdrawal amount.

**Life Insurance Gifts** – If you own a life insurance policy that is no longer needed, you may be able to donate the cash value and claim a deduction as well. Such gifts may also provide future estate tax savings.

For more information about Year-End Giving, Planned Giving, Estate Giving or Annuities, please contact:  
Fr. Emil Tomaskovic, SA ~ 800-338-2620, ext. 2137.

### GRAYMOOR TODAY

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