I have often wondered what was really going through the minds of the disciples of Jesus during His passion and death. Jesus was the person who gave meaning to their lives. They had pledged their lives to Him. Remember in the gospel, we are told that when Jesus called, they just left everything and followed him. Then came Good Friday. All those hopes were smashed into a million pieces with a terrible thrust of a soldier’s spear. All those pledges, all those dreams, all those hopes died with Jesus on the Cross. Then it happened, as the sun rose on Easter Sunday, Jesus rose with it and appeared to his disciples. He was more radiant and more fully alive than they had ever seen him before. At that moment the power of Easter began to work in the lives of the disciples. At the command of Jesus, they set out to carry the news of Easter to the four corners of the earth. They preached the Good News everywhere. The power of Easter began to work in peoples’ lives just as it had in their own. Wonderful things began to happen. Despair began to give way to hope. Darkness began to give way to light. Hatred began to give way to love. Sorrow began to give way to joy. In short, everywhere the disciples preached, the power of Easter began to work miracles in people’s lives. And those miracles have not stopped yet. They continue to happen in our time.

And that is Glad Tidings.

Pray with Fr. Bob – AtonementFriars.org/Pray

Come and See Weekends

“How wonderful it is to be surprised by God’s call, to embrace His word, and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, in adoration of the divine mystery and in generous service to our neighbors! Your life will become richer and more joyful each day!”

Pope Francis Palm Sunday Message, March 2015

April 17 is the World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Please pray, encourage, invite, affirm men and women to respond to God’s call generously and say, “Here I am, send me!”

Three times a year, the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement invite men 18 years old to 40 years old who may be considering a call to religious life and service to the church as a priest or brother. This year, “Come and See” weekends are being held at Graymoor on March 11-13, April 15-17 and October 7-9. These weekend experiences allow entry into conversations with the friars to discuss their vocation journeys and for the friars to get to know more about those men who are interested in our way of life. The weekends are filled with conversations, prayer, reflections, and time in the beautiful sacred spaces of Graymoor. Advance registration is required.

Please email VocDirector@AtonementFriars.org or call (800) 338-2620, ext. 2126 for more information. Graymoor is located in Garrison, NY, north of New York City and across the the Hudson River from West Point.

Guild members will receive regular updates on the progress of the cause for canonization of Fr. Paul of Graymoor and are invited to participate in promoting devotion to this Servant of God. Benefactors of Graymoor and the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement are not automatically made Guild members, but can elect to join the Guild. In addition, members are granted spiritual benefits through inclusion in Masses and Novenas.

Director of the Guild, Rev. Joseph Di Mauro, SA, said, “Fr. Paul of Graymoor Guild Members are granted these spiritual benefits: inclusion in a weekly Mass at Graymoor, daily remembrance in the prayers, Masses and works of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, inclusion in the Friars’ Holy Week Triduum and Christmas Triduum of Masses, inclusion in the Novena to Our Lady of the Atonement from June 30 to July 9, her Feast Day, and an annual Novena to the Holy Spirit for the intentions of Guild Members and the canonization of Fr. Paul of Graymoor.” In addition, the Guild Director will pray for intentions sent to the Guild each day and for the canonization of Fr. Paul of Graymoor.

Please consider joining the Fr. Paul of Graymoor Guild as we pray for his canonization. To learn more, visit FrPaulofGraymoor.org. On the website, you can request a prayer card, register for membership and express prayer intentions and report favors received through your petitions through the intercession of Fr. Paul.
Pope Francis began the Year of Mercy by inviting believers and people of good will to discover and share the mercy of God. He has done this with the opening of the Holy Doors not only in Rome, but earlier during his challenging trip to Africa. The invitation is not to limit the doors, but for the movement to God’s grace in many churches, shrines, and cathedrals everywhere. God’s mercy is available everywhere and for all who respond to it.

Doors traditionally in liturgy and in anthropology are central places for prayer, revelation, and discovery within the human family. In describing these doors and other ritual moments often they are spoken of as liminal, from the Latin word “limen” for threshold. As believers approach the doors, they stand on the threshold or the entryway. Better they stand in the threshold, where one literally has a foot in each of their worlds. As they move through the doors, they know their everyday world, and they move to a newer and different world. It is a very present moment, where one can look to the past and look to the future. Here there are choices and decisions. Here, there is an encounter with something new. It is invitational to a new experience of life.

While the Holy Doors are very real, they are symbolic, i.e. invitational to an integrated experience. These doors, as we have seen in the media, can be opened as Pope Francis and others have done. They can be knocked on. They can be kissed and venerated as we have seen pilgrims do on approaching. Many can pass through the passageway, and usually we are not alone. On our spiritual journey such we can imagine bringing our everyday world in the place of the Mercy Seat of God. God both waits on the inside and moves toward us to welcome us to his mercy and peace. He invites us to bring others with us and to help show the Doors of Mercy to others.

During the Year of Mercy we may be tempted to overly ritualize the move through the doors. We may long to stay in the House of God. The Holy Doors swing widely in both directions. We move to encounter God within, but like God Himself we pass through the doors, and He shows Himself in our world.

Several years ago I worshipped at St. Jerome Church in West Baltimore, MD. On Sundays the great doors were opened to welcome the faithful to worship. Equally fascinating was the vision as the community left the church. Immediately across the street were abandoned rowhouses. The challenge of those rowhouses was invitational to the congregation. With work and support, an ecumenical redevelopment group rehabilitated the houses and people of limited means moved in. The doors of the church invited the mercy of God both in the coming and in the leaving. God’s mercy lived both within and without.

Rev. C. Donald Howard, SA
Washington, DC
Rev. Tom Orians, SA, has been selected as a Missionary of Mercy by the Vatican. The Missionaries of Mercy are specially selected priests who have been granted “the authority to pardon even those sins reserved to the Holy See,” the Pope wrote in Misericordiae Vultus, (The Face of Mercy), the document officially proclaiming the Holy Year. On February 9, Father Orians travelled from Graymoor where he serves as Director of the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, to Rome. That afternoon, the Holy Father met with all the Missionaries of Mercy to prepare them for their mission. On February 10 at the Holy Mass of Ash Wednesday, the Missionaries of Mercy were sole concelebrants with Pope Francis. The Holy Father conferred the mandate on the Missionaries during this celebration.

The priests were chosen on the basis of their ability to preach well, especially on the theme of mercy, and by their ability to express God’s love, patience and with an “understanding of human fragility.” Each required a recommendation from his Religious Superior or bishop.

These Missionaries of Mercy are to offer “a living sign of the Father’s welcome to all those in search of his forgiveness.” Their role will be to serve as inspiring preachers of mercy, heralds of the joy of forgiveness and compassionate confessors, especially attentive to the difficult situations of each person.

Missionaries will be invited by individual Diocesan Bishops within their particular country to give missions or facilitate specific initiatives organized for the Jubilee, with a particular attention given to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Holy Father has granted these Missionaries the authority to pardon even those sins reserved to the Holy See. These reserved sins are those committed when the person is aware of the penalty and commits the sin anyway. Normally, absolution in these cases requires either the intervention of a local bishop or the Apostolic Penitentiary, which is the Vatican “court.” During the Year of Mercy, which ends on November 16, 2016, these special Missionaries of Mercy will be able to grant absolution in cases where the person is repentant.

For more information on the Year of Mercy, visit AtonementFriars.org/YearofMercy
A Friar Reflects:  
A Hospice Chaplain Visits the Sick  
by Brother John O’Hara, SA

On the Feast of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 1984, several of my clients and associates became ill with what was to be later called HIV/AIDS. Their abandonment became a concern because it was apparent that they needed help and care during their illness; thus my introduction to palliative care hospice began.

Over the decades I have volunteered in Canada and the United States under the direction and training of professional hospice nurses and doctors as the discipline has expanded and moved forward in supportive care techniques.

Moving to New York City after my formation period in Toronto, I became associated with the Hospice Team at St. Vincent’s Hospital until its closing several years ago. The team usually assigned me to loner men in the last stage of their illness, whatever the cause may be. We journeyed together advised by the team of social workers, nurses and doctors to make that time pain free and to address their pastoral needs and often overseeing the burial plans for those without family or friends. I still possess many death certificates because there was no one else present. I was not the only one offering this pastoral mercy to those in need. Perhaps it was our way of paying back for care given to our loved ones or following Christ’s call to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, visit the ill and bury the dead. I now read about doula programs being developed for end-of-life care, much the same as for those who wish to assist a birthing mother, as more volunteers find this a rewarding experience. If you want to stop a conversation at a cocktail party just tell someone who asks what you do ... they are gone in a minute. It is so hard for many people to address end-of-life issues, but this is, in fact, a change in life style one may envision. It takes empathy, an ability to listen, to be quiet when necessary, a sense of humor, faith, patience and, of course, a willingness to accept what is right in front of you. Personal prayer is essential to sustain one’s equilibrium. All illnesses are present in today’s hospice population.

All of us are astounded by the people we come in contact with and their ability to allow us into their lives at a very personal time. As one may expect, there are no two experiences alike but many share the natural rhythm that the Creator has put in place. The progression can be predicted many times, and it is the skill in observation that the caregiver is able to share with others as they travel with their loved one. We can help explain the events that are taking place and what may be expected. This, of course, is not medical advice, but rather comments from an experienced observer of previous passages. It is a privilege to be present.

In this Year of Mercy hospice caregiving is a natural consideration. Recently, I have been invited into the Chaplaincy Ministry. This is a new experience for me as I discover the unique conversation essential from care-giving. I am learning on the job to inquire on a higher level of pastoral ministry from my past experience. The questions, issues, and listening skills which are unique to Chaplaincy are a discovery process. It is learning and growing in a mercy ministry. May God help me.

Brother John O’Hara, SA, is a member of the Mission Support team for the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement and is Chaplain for Hudson Valley Hospice. He was a partner in ProCreation Canada LTD of Montreal and Toronto, and owner/proprietor of Verbatim Photography Inc. of Montreal and Toronto. He was a Benedictine monk at the Westminster Abbey in Mission, British Columbia. He now specializes in decorative photography and lectures on the Expression of One’s Spirituality through Photographic Process.
Franciscan At-One-Ment Mission Project: Authentic and Life Giving

“If your heart is leading you to do something, go try it,” says Minister General of the Friars, the Very Rev. Brian Terry. “When you find the right thing, you’ll taste authenticity and feel a real resonance that will make sense to you—it will give you life. That’s what the Franciscan At-One-Ment Mission Project is about.”

The Franciscan Friars of the Atonement have created an experiential path to discerning God’s call to ignite your faith. With Jesus and St. Francis as guides, young men are invited to serve in one of the Friars’ “At-One-Ment” ministries of healing and reconciliation as a volunteer with the Franciscan At-One-Ment Mission Project from June 17-August 14, 2016. The Franciscan Friars of the Atonement are offering this summer volunteer program for single Catholic men, age 19-25, who have completed at least two years of college.

Volunteers will choose one of two tracks: the first track is helping homeless and chemically dependent men regain their lives as productive members of society at St. Christopher’s Inn (stchristophersinn-graymoor.org), a temporary homeless shelter dedicated to the physical, emotional and spiritual healing of men struggling with alcohol abuse and drug addiction; the second track is designed to provide experience in fostering religious dialogue so that all Christian faiths and world religions may work together to bring reconciliation to our divided, hurting world. Volunteers selecting this track will work with Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute (geii.org) in Manhattan, which promotes Christian unity and interreligious dialogue. As part of the eight week program, participants from the second track will travel to Rome for a three week course on ecumenical and interreligious movements/dialogue at the Friars’ Centro Pro Unione (prounione.urbe.it).

“You have to test things out on your own,” said Father Terry. “You can’t Google life.” However, you can learn more about this summer experience by visiting AtonementFriars.org/ MissionProject.

If you are interested in discerning how God is calling you to deeper service, and you feel you meet the application criteria, don’t delay! Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until April 1, 2016. Applications received after the deadline will be reviewed on the basis of availability. For information and an application, visit or contact Paul Krenzelok at (845) 424-2122 or email PKrenzelok@AtonementFriars.org.
Our Ministries

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center

In the Franciscan tradition of hospitality, Graymoor Spiritual Life Center (GSLC), is a ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement. In addition to hosting many retreats throughout the year, the GSLC welcomes organizations holding weekend and weekday retreats, conferences, days of renewal and recollection, meetings, pilgrimages and other events. We welcome individuals and groups of all faiths desiring a space for contemplation, worship and dialogue.

Graymoor is home to the outdoor Shrine of St. Anthony, the historic St. Francis Chapel, and the tomb of Atonement Society founder Servant of God Fr. Paul Wattson, Apostle of Christian Unity and Charity, an outdoor labyrinth with a Peace Pole and many other places for peaceful reflection, contemplation and prayer.

Located on a mountaintop overlooking the Hudson River Valley, available facilities include overnight guest rooms that can accommodate up to 112 people, seated dining room for up to 300, a library/meeting space, three chapels, as well as break-out space and seminar facilities that can hold up to 650. Meal service is available. We welcome individuals and diverse groups, and we seek to meet their needs. Contact the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center at (845) 424-2111 or email GSLC@AtonementFriars.org. For a schedule of upcoming Graymoor retreats, visit GraymoorCenter.org.

St. Christopher’s Inn Certified for Narcan Training

St. Christopher’s Inn is now a Certified Opioid Overdose Prevention Training Center, the only one in western Putnam County, NY. Several staff members have already been trained so they may train others to save lives. Rob Casasanta, St. Christopher’s Inn staff member and EMT, will be the lead trainer.

While opioid abuse has become a widespread epidemic, new methods are being developed to help prevent some of the drug-related deaths and give people a second chance at recovery. Naloxone, also known by the trade name Narcan, has been proven effective against opioids. It can be administered through a simple nasal spray, and works by attaching itself to the opioid receptors in the brain to protect them from the opioids.

Through Narcan training seminars, participants can learn how and when to administer the lifesaving antidote that can reverse the fatal effects of an opioid overdose and save a person’s life. Participants will learn how to recognize an overdose, what to do during an overdose, how to provide rescue breathing during an overdose and how to administer Naloxone.

Upon completion of the training, participants will be certified to administer Naloxone and will receive a free Naloxone rescue kit. The training sessions are free and open to the general public as well as to first responders as a part of New York State’s efforts to help those struggling with opioid and heroin addiction.

St. Christopher’s Inn will open the training program to the community-at-large, with sessions to be conducted approximately once a month. For more information on when the trainings will start and how to register, visit www.StChristophersInn.org.
Rev. Elias Mallon Presents with Jewish & Muslim Faith Leaders

Rev. Elias D. Mallon, SA, participated in a presentation with Rabbi David Seed, incoming chair of the Christian Jewish Dialogue of Toronto and Dr. Hamid Slimi, an Imam who is the former chairman of the Canadian Council of Imams, in a presentation called “Difficult Texts” sponsored by the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, on January 17 at the Catholic Pastoral Centre. The purpose of the day was to reflect on some challenges in the sacred texts of these three Abrahamic faiths.

Rev. John Keane Received MLK Community Service Award

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Award was presented to the Rev. John Keane, SA, a Franciscan Friar of the Atonement, by the leaders of the PAPA, an interfaith collegium of recognized religious leaders from 90 Houses of Worship (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Unitarian, Jewish and Muslim) at an interfaith prayer service in Peekskill commemorating Dr. King, Jr.

2016 Archdiocese of Toronto Student Writing Contest Winners

Fr. Dan Callahan, SA, Pastor of St. Joan of Arc parish in Toronto, Ont., and Fr. Damian MacPherson, SA, Director of Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs for the Archdiocese, presented awards to winners of the Annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity student writing contest co-sponsored by the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement and The Catholic Register. Students wrote essays on the chosen theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, “Called to Proclaim the Mighty Acts of the Lord” Winners selected were: First Place – Sharanya Tiwari, St. Augustine Secondary School, IPad 32GB; Second Place – Raquel Seara, Loretto College, Kobo Aura Tablet; Third Place – Vincent Pham, Chaminade College School.

New Affiliates Named

Mary Higgins Clark, the best-selling novelist, and her husband, John Conheeney, were named Affiliates of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement during a luncheon at Graymoor on Monday, December 11. The couple was selected for this honor because they bear witness to the gospel in their daily lives by their use of “time, talent, substance and opportunity” for the good of others. They have joyfully supported the Friars’ ministries personally, financially, professionally and spiritually with great benevolence and friendship over many years. As affiliates, they are entitled to participate in all the spiritual benefits of the Congregation in life and death, and they are to be granted and accepted in all of the Friars’ Houses.

Rest in peace.

Msgr. Richard Albert
(formerly SA)
(1946-2015)

Father Charles Brozat, SA
(1927-2015)

Father Walter Gagne, SA
(1944-2015)

Brother Robert Taylor, SA
(1938-2015)

Brother Liam Young, SA
(1932-2015)
Benefactor Appreciation Days

Each year, around the U.S. and at Graymoor, benefactors are invited to share in prayer, fellowship and enjoy some Franciscan hospitality with the Friars of the Atonement and Mission Support staff. These Benefactor Appreciation Days give the Friars a way to say thank you for supporting their ministries of healing and hope.

Each Benefactor day includes a morning reception, Mass, complimentary lunch and an update on the Friars’ ministries.

The benefactors who attend these Appreciation Days tell us that they are very moved by the experience:

“Our time was beautiful and so much welcomed in spending it with our dear Friars of the Atonement.” —C.T.

“Thank you for taking the time and energy to visit Christ the Redeemer. It was informative, beneficial, and I only felt the goodness and commitment of charity from all of the Friars. Especially appreciated the Mass and the anointing for healing during the liturgy. May God bless you all!” —H.D.

“I love benefactor days because, in no particular order of importance, Graymoor is special to me as a real holy place where I believe many favors asked by the friars there have been granted: meeting the people there who are responsible for development provides an opportunity to answer questions, explain programs and how contributions are used. The residents of St. Christopher’s Inn provide a graphic example of successful rehabilitation work done there, the fruits of their labor, so to speak.” —F.H.

“Attending the reception and Mass events at Graymoor is a spiritually enriching experience enhanced with a sense of so much commitment and love. Thank you for the experience.” —J.S.

“I left with a feeling of profound calmness and humility. Do yourself a favor and join them the next time you are invited.” —J.L.

2016 Graymoor Benefactor Appreciation Days

Thursday, April 28, 2016
Thursday, June 9, 2016
Thursday, September 8, 2016

Upcoming Benefactor Appreciation Days in the U.S.

Friday, March 11, 2016
St. Andrew the Apostle Church, 3008 Old Raleigh Road, Apex, NC 27502

Monday, April 11, 2016
Catholic Conference & Formation Center, Dallas, TX

Wednesday, April 13, 2016
The Franciscan Renewal Center, 5802 E. Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85253

Save the Date
Thursday, May 12, 2016
7th Annual Sunset on the Hudson Cocktail Party at Xavier’s X20 in Yonkers, NY

For more information
contact Lisa Koesling at 1-800-338-2620 ext. 2137.
You’re Invited to the 7th Annual Sunset on the Hudson

The Franciscan Friars of the Atonement are hosting their seventh annual Sunset on the Hudson cocktail party on Thursday, May 12 at 6:30 pm at Xavier’s X20 on the Hudson, 71 Water Grant Street, Yonkers, New York. This promises to be an “Extraordinary Evening” with outstanding hors d’oeuvres and dessert from the kitchen of acclaimed chef-owner Peter X. Kelly. Guests will enjoy dishes incorporating classic French technique with Italian and Spanish influences, and Asian embellishments, which create a wholly original cuisine unique to the Hudson Valley. A live band and incredible silent auction are also part of the festivities. The evening’s honorary chair is renowned author Mary Higgins Clark. Kacey Morabito, of Hudson Valley FM Radio Station WHUD, is the master of ceremonies. Enjoy this exciting event and support the ministries of the Friars. Individual tickets for Sunset on the Hudson are $185. Sponsorships are available. For reservations, call (845) 424-2137 or visit: www.AtonementFriars.org/Sunset

Fr Bob Warren and Mary Higgins Clark Welcome Guests to Sunset on the Hudson.

FRANCISCAN FRIARS OF THE ATONEMENT - GRAYMOOR

Save The Date

SHARING HOPE
CELEBRATION DINNER

23rd Annual Sharing Hope Celebration Dinner
Friday, October 7, 2016
The Pierre Hotel, NYC
6:30PM - 11:00PM

Introducing the St. Anthony Prayer Walkway

This is your chance to forever be a part of the St. Anthony Shrine at Graymoor! Last year, to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the St. Anthony Shrine at Graymoor we established the St. Anthony Shrine Prayer Walkway. Be a part of something special – have a special tribute message engraved in a commemorative brick that will be placed in the Prayer Walkway leading to the altar at the St. Anthony Shrine at Graymoor.

To Share in the St. Anthony Prayer Walkway:

1. Select your brick size and print the personal message you would like engraved into the brick.
2. Send us your prayer intentions on this form and be part of our St. Anthony Perpetual Novena of Masses.
3. To order a Tribute Brick in honor of St. Anthony or a loved one and in support of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement please complete this form and return it in the reply envelope or go to www.AtonementFriars.org/PrayerWalkway

If you need special assistance in ordering your brick(s), please call our Benefactor Services Manager, Cathy DeVitta at 845-424-2132.

Yes! I would like to place a special tribute brick in the Prayer Walkway at the St. Anthony Shrine at Graymoor.

My gift of $325 for an 8” x 8” brick
My gift of $175 for a 4” x 8” brick
My gift of $55 for a limited-edition Lily brick (no inscription)

Please print your personal tribute message that will be etched into the brick in the area below.

Tribute Brick Inscription

Character Limit: 4” x 8” – 3 lines of 18 characters
8” x 8” – 6 lines of 18 characters

Please note: All imprints are subject to the approval of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement.

Go Mobile!

m.AtonementFriars.org

Get a code reader:
iPhone App Store: get “Scan”
Android Play Store: get “QR Droid”

GRAYMOOR CONTACTS:

Office of Mission Support  888-720-8247  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 888-720-8247.

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Graymoor Today is a publication of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, a Roman Catholic religious community with social, ecumenical and pastoral ministries in the United States, Canada, England, Italy and Japan. Since 1898, they have worked for the reconciliation of men and women with God and each other as well as serving those in need.