

Lurana's Star

FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF ATONEMENT
41 Old Highland Turnpike
Garrison, NY 10524
www.graymoor.org

EDITORS
Sister M. Eilish Sweeney S.A.
Sister Roberta Southwick S.A.
developmentoffice@graymoor.org

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WINTER

No. 1



Motherhouse
Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement
Graymoor
41 Old Highland Turnpike
Garrison NY 10524

**Franciscans...
Missionaries...
Lovers of Creation...
Lovers of the Lord!**



Sister Eilish Sweeney

Dear Friend,

***Greetings, prayers
and best wishes to
you as we move
along into this New
Year of 2017!***

Time just seems to fly by! May this year be a blessed and happy one for you and your family.

In this edition of Lurana's Star I would like to share with you our life and ministries here at our motherhouse, better known as Saint Francis Convent, Graymoor.

A place to call "home" is so important in the lives of all of us regardless of where we come from. You will see as you read along that Saint Francis Convent was the name chosen by our Foundress, Mother Lurana, when she first started out and established our congregation here at Graymoor many years ago.

With all the festivities of Advent, Christmas and New Year's Seasons we were truly blessed both spiritually and materially. Thank you to all our good friends and benefactors who have taken an active part in our lives. We are blessed indeed.

On our part, you and your intentions are remembered in our daily prayers. You were also remembered in a special way during our Christmas Novena and our Holy Hour of Thanksgiving on New Year's Eve.

In the midst of these special Church Seasons it was in the plan of God to call home six of our Sisters to their Eternal Reward. Five of them died here at Graymoor while one Sister died in Japan.

Sister Mary Saunders from Co. Leitrim, Ireland, died on October 26, 2016.

Sister Rosita Perpetual from Dedham, MA, died on November 10, 2016.

Sister Colette Duffy, a native of South Boston, MA, died on November 15, 2016.

Sister Roseanne Saunders, a blood-sister of Sister Mary Saunders, also went home to God on November 15, 2016.

Sister Monica Marie Uchida, from Tottori Prefecture, Japan, died on November 21, 2016.

Sister Barbara Bernauer, from Muenster, TX, died on December 30, 2016.

***May their souls,
and the souls of all
the faithful departed,
Rest in Peace.***

God bless you and your family.

Gratefully,

Sister M. Eilish Sweeney

Saint Francis Convent

Back in October of 1898 Mother Lurana White, an Episcopalian nun, and Father Paul Wattson, an Episcopalian priest, met for the first time after several years of corresponding with each other. This meeting took place at Lurana's grandmother's home in Warwick, New York from October 3rd to the 7th.

It was during these days of prayer and reflection that Lurana shared with Father Paul that an invitation had been extended to her to establish a religious order in the Hudson Valley area of New York in a small hamlet known as Graymoor, Garrison, New York. Three ladies, two of whom were visiting from New York City with their friend in Garrison, discovered an abandoned interdenominational chapel and, deciding to follow the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, cleaned it up, restored it and made it presentable for the local people. The ladies named the area Graymoor after Rev. Albert Gray and William Moore, both of whom were involved in the building of the original chapel in 1875.



The original Saint John's Chapel as first seen by Father Paul and Mother Lurana in 1898

Leaving Warwick on October 7th Father Paul took the time to visit Garrison and the little abandoned church now known as Saint John's in the Wilderness. Obviously liking what he saw he wasted no time in sharing his thoughts and encouraged Lurana to make the foundation for the Society of the Atonement at Graymoor. Father Paul "viewed the church as 'the providential

means of bringing both the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement and the Friars to Graymoor.'"

On December 15, 1898 Lurana accompanied by her sister Annie and a young girl from Warwick, New York arrived at the first convent of the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement. This first convent was "the left portion" of a local house known as The Dimond House which was within a half-mile from Saint John's Chapel. The latter part of their trip from the station in Garrison to Graymoor was made by horse and sleigh for the snow lay deep on the ground. Oh, what faith and trust she had!



The Dimond House close to St. John's Chapel where Mother Lurana lived in the lower left portion for over a year upon her arrival to Graymoor.

On June 24, 1899 Lurana laid the cornerstone for the new Saint Francis Convent, better known today as "our original convent," being built close to Saint John's Church. On October 4, 1899 the new convent and chapel were dedicated by Bishop Leighton Coleman of Delaware. Lurana and her first Sisters officially moved into their new convent on Saint Luke's Day, October 18, 1899.



Our first official St. Francis Convent erected close to Saint John's Church in 1899

Saint Francis Convent

It was in this original convent that Lurana and the first Sisters of the Atonement lived and ministered among the local people through their services at Saint John's Church and home-visiting.

It was also in this convent chapel that the Week of Prayer originated in 1908, and here in 1909 the Society of the Atonement entered the Roman Catholic Church. For the next fifty-four years as our congregation grew and Sisters were sent out to establish missions--far and near throughout the United States, Canada, Ireland and Italy--this remained the Motherhouse of our congregation.



Our original convent as it stands today

In the early 1950's, with the growth of membership within our congregation, it became necessary to build a much larger convent to meet the needs of the Sisters. Our *Concise History* notes that "On November 7, 1953 the first wing of the Sisters' new convent was dedicated by Bishop Walter Kellenberg, Auxiliary Bishop of New York." This event took place on the 42nd anniversary of Mother Lurana's religious profession.

The first portion of the new Motherhouse showing the main entrance on the lower right



The final portion of the proposed project was completed in 1958.

With the final phase of the building, Our Lady of the Atonement statue held a prominent place as it welcomed family and friends to our Motherhouse.



In 2006 our Motherhouse was expanded with the addition of Lurana Health Care Residence and a new chapel. The entrance to our present Motherhouse convent and chapel is shown on our front cover. The Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, have been in existence for one hundred and nineteen years. We have, indeed, been blessed and together we have touched many lives.

In more recent years, due to age and health reasons, many of our active Sisters had to withdraw from their various ministries in various places throughout the world. When this reality strikes any of us, thank God we have the assurance of having a place to still call home and that is our present Motherhouse.



Rev. James Loughran, S.A., Bro. William Martyn, S.A., Rev. Agnes Campbell Saffoury and parishioners of the United Methodist Church in Highland Falls, NY, participated at the opening of our Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017 which took place in our convent chapel.

Saint Francis Convent

One of the many assets of our present Motherhouse is our chapel. Daily Liturgies celebrated by one of our Friars of the Atonement or a visiting Priest is the norm. Many of our friends, neighbors and retreatants are often present with us daily or on weekends. Our chapel is also open to them for quiet prayer and for participation in our Holy Hours.

Among the many congregational and other ministries that take place here at our Motherhouse proper or on the Graymoor grounds are: Administration, Treasury Department, Development Department, Human Resources, Gift Shop, Retreat Ministry, Health Care Department, Food Service, and Maintenance.

In the midst of all of the above important aspects of the daily routine of running a Motherhouse other individual Sisters, like **Sister Margaret Sikora** for example, coordinator of our Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Office, who keeps us well abreast of all the local, domestic and international issues of concern that need our support in various ways.



Sister Patricia Burke and **Sister Mary Nestor Prevoist** serve as Eucharistic ministers at our local hospital on a weekly basis.

Sister Mary Louise Natale, our well-known baker, often holds a Bake Sale, providing a wide variety of homemade breads, cookies, biscotti and much more for our Retreatants as well as for all those attending our weekend Liturgies.

Sister also finds time to join in the popular “music session” at our Lurana Health Care Residence on a bi-monthly schedule. She has uncovered many talents from among our senior Sisters.



Sister Margaret Sikora communicating awareness.



Sister Mary Louise, left, poses with two of our other talented musicians: Sister Ita Flynn at the piano, and Sister Loretta Guevarra who are more than willing to entertain our Sisters and staff.

Saint Francis Convent



Back in 1973 **Sister Ann Joseph Zajac** and **Sister Denis Marie Koi** began their Arts & Crafts Store, and every since they have been holding their annual Christmas Sale.



Sister Marjorie Moon, our resident artist, provides two weekly art classes for interested adults. The highlight of the year is their annual Art Show. It is amazing what they can accomplish.



Many of our senior Sisters gather each day for the recitation of the rosary, which is offered for our Congregation, families, friends and benefactors.

Saint Francis Convent



Saint Francis Convent Chapel

where our Sisters, Friars, Associates, retreatants, friends and neighbors often gather for daily Liturgy, recitation of the Divine Office, community/private prayers and Holy Hours. All are welcome!

Come apart and rest awhile.

Mark 6:31

In Memoriam



Sr. Mary Saunders, SA
July 2, 1924 -- Oct. 26, 2016



Sr. Rosita Perpetua, SA
Nov. 9, 1921 -- Nov. 10, 2016



Sr. Colette Duffy, SA
Nov. 8, 1914 -- Nov. 15, 2016



Sr. Roseanne Saunders, SA
July 26, 1925 -- Nov. 15, 2016



Sr. Monica Marie Uchida, SA
Dec. 21, 1931 -- Nov. 21, 2016



Sr. Barbara Bernauer, SA
Nov. 10, 1915 -- Dec. 30, 2016

“Nothing but Yourself, O Lord.”
Saint Thomas Aquinas