

In Memory of Sr. Attracta O'Neill, SA

~ Written by Sr. Theresa Cristina ~

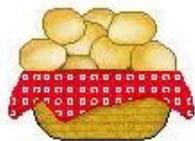
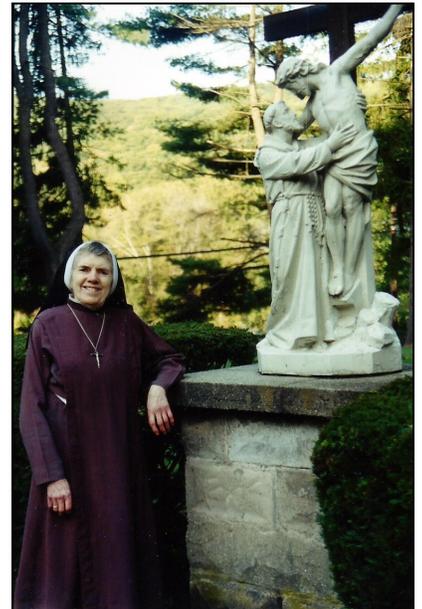
June 25, 1924—May 11, 2014



John O'Donohue in his book, *Anam Cara*, wrote: "If you send out goodness from yourself, or if you share that which is happy within you, it will come back to you multiplied ten thousand times ... the more love you give away, the more love you will have." If you could, imagine the most incredible story ever, the life of our Sr. Attracta, who came to us as a later vocation from Moulnahorna, County Cork, Ireland. Her missions were few, Motherhouse, Graymoor, Washington Retreat House, and Graymoor again.

What do we know of these years, this special person who filled our lives and our taste buds, her simple prayer, her welcoming smile, one who truly saw life to be lived in God's faithful love and those many who came into her kitchen. Her humor, her delight, her kindness and invitations to sit and have a cup of coffee or tea were her hallmark. Her quiet, gentle ways always comforted.

The week after Sister went home to God, the Sisters from the Residence, the Assisted Living and the Convent gathered to remember her, sharing times in the kitchen, ministry with her, where she healed and held everyone important: men from the Inn, homeless and hungry wherever there was a back door, retreatants who received special take home packages and not to forget, all those who would pass her as she sat in her chair near the Nurses' desk. Often, Sr. Attracta would ask, "What time is it? What time will Mass be? What are we doing next?" And most gentle was her care for you and how you were doing, reminding you to get something to eat or drink.



A woman of prayer, her name in Latin/Gaelic means, "drawn to." All who knew her, from the Sisters to the Friars, to the men of the Inn, to the employees, those who shared ministry with her in the kitchen, anyone who came in her path, knew this woman with a down-to-earth spirituality, who only wanted to nourish soul as well as body, her presence satisfied so many not to mention her mashed potatoes and pies. She truly embodied Mother Lurana's wish for each of us, that our lives be a life lived and not a work done.

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Sr. Attracta's intentions were remembered as we prayed the Franciscan Crown, the mystery of the Resurrection with the intention of poverty and humility. Truly, Sr. Attracta, you have given much love and prayer, and much love and prayer be with you. May you enjoy the depth of God's love for you. ~ by Sr. Theresa



The following excerpt was written by Sr. Attracta. It is good to see her own handwriting and to read how she loved Rossinver and later, her love for Graymoor.

I was born in Co Cork Ireland in 1924.
I had wonderful parents Denis O'Neill and Catherine Creedon
one brother Jeremiah and one sister Mary Ellen
After my parents died I saw an add in the paper by the
Sisters in Rossinver, I wrote to them and got a nice
letter from Sr. Mary Angela, I had an talk with her and
I entered Rossinver, I spent a year there and I loved it,
when I came to Graymoor needless to say I loved and
everything about it, after Profession I spent 13 years in
the Hostel kitchen and loved it there.
I went to the Retreat House in Washington and spent
20 years in the kitchen and I really loved it, from
there I came back to Graymoor and I have been here in
the Convent kitchen since.
As you can see my has been a very simple one
but thank God all has gone fairly well.

Sr. Attracta