

Dominican Retreat & Conference Center

1945 Union Street, Niskayuna, New York 12309
(518) 393-4169 www.dslcny.org

Solitude on a Busy Highway

The Good News

December 2011

Many of you have already had the opportunity to admire the statue that is currently in our chapel and have wondered who this is. It is a rendition of St. Catherine de 'Ricci, the patroness of our congregation, created by sculptor, Phyllis Kulmatiski. About a year ago, Phyllis offered to create the "saint of your choice" as one of the silent auction items for our More Than Just Desserts event. The lucky winner of the item generously donated it to the house so that many people would be able to enjoy her work!

St. Catherine (1522-1590) was a cloistered nun who lived in Prato, Italy. She was a mystic, was devoted to the passion of Christ and was a great spiritual director. She was always aware of what was going on outside of the cloister and yet did not let that interfere with cloistered life. A woman of deep faith, she was also very practical in her assessment of situations, and both tactful and compassionate to all those with whom she had contact.

The words around the base of the statute are a quote from one of Catherine's letters – "With patience we can remain joyful and overcome everything." Written on the book in her hands are the words "Amici mei" -my friends– the first two words of the Passion Canticle that she was directed to write.

As we anticipate the celebration of the birth of Jesus, may these words of Catherine ring clear.

***"He comes now no longer to be born
into this universe, but rather
into the tiny world of the human heart."***



*Know that all of us here at the
Dominican Retreat and Conference Center
wish you a Blessed Christmas!*

From our Administrator

Sr. Susan Zengulis, OP

Advent is a time of such joyful expectation-just watch any child as the days get closer to Christmas! The wonder as the little ones look at the colored lights; the serious manner in which they take on finding just the right tree; their curiosity of what is inside the beautiful wrappings; and their pride in giving just the right gift to someone they care about.

When the busyness of the holidays leaves us breathless, remember that Jesus says we are to be like little children. Take some time to wonder at God's gracious generosity and humility in becoming one of us; be serious about putting in some time for prayerful reflection; look and listen

with curiosity at the beauty of the people and situations that God is placing in your path each day; and take pride in your ability to share your gifts with those around you.

Advent is a time of joyful expectation...expectation of Love being born again in our lives. May we see it, hear it, and know it in our hearts!



Heaven and Earth



All of creation is a House of Prayer. Within each task and each moment is a spark of the Divine. Come explore your part in this dance of spirit and life! Each program will include a presentation and/or discussion on the topic of the day, followed by a delectable lunch where the conversation can continue to unfold. Our presenters are:

March 7 – **Sr. Carol Davis, OP** presenting

The Wisdom and Healing of Wilderness

March 14 – **Kay Olan (Ionataiewas)** presenting

People of the Longhouse: Iroquois Teachings

March 21 – **Father Rich Broderick** presenting *The Burning Bush*

Come for the whole series or any part! \$20 for each session or \$55 for all 3!

Into the Silence

We welcome Father Bill Sheehan back once again to direct our 5 day Centering Prayer Retreat.

This centering prayer retreat will offer time to consciously go deeper into the ground of our being in order to experience our unity with God. *Dates: February 17-22*

This retreat is open to both men and women. You may attend all or part of the retreat.



Annual Carol Night...

December 21st, 7:30 PM.

Bring the family and join the Dominican Retreat & Conference Center Volunteer Choir in celebration of this joyous season. Sing along, or just sit back and listen to this program of sacred music.

A free will offering will be taken to benefit a local charity.



**Join us for Vespers
in the Spirit of Taize:**

December 8

January 12

February 9

March 8

Seize the Hope which is Set Before You

(Sr. Bernice Carroll, csj)



It is once again time to catch up our readers as to what is going on through our awesome, hard working promoters and so many people who assist them.

We had a wonderful day together in early September when with the help of our facilitator, Sr. June Fitzgerald, OP, we shared stories, had fun and learned of the *theme for 2012*. Our promoters were very excited when they realized that the word “*Hope*” is to be the focus of each of their upcoming retreats.

“... *Seize the hope which is set before you*” says Paul to the Hebrew people, (*Hebrews 6:18b*).

For so many people, this past year has been extremely difficult; sometimes it is hard to truly believe that there is light anywhere at all. Sometimes the only light that people have experienced is the love and compassion that we and thousands of other people have brought to them. Each of you reflect the *light of Hope* in your own unique way.

Each of you who have come on retreat bring back to your local area the presence of God that you have experienced on your weekend. As staff, there is such excitement in our hearts as we feel your energy and your uplifted hearts and spirits as you go out the door on Sunday.

All of you are awesome witnesses to the truth that hope comes from within first and then is expressed outwardly through God’s love to each person around you. We are so grateful for each of you who do just that to those around you.

My HOPE is to see each of you who read the “Good News” on a theme weekend in 2012!!!



Why Lincoln???

Tom Hoffman is returning to DRCC to once again share with us insights about Abraham Lincoln. **This time he will look**

at the early life of Lincoln. Have you ever wondered why Lincoln? Why Tom became so attracted to Abraham Lincoln?

Tom was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1944. As the Germans entered Hungary, Tom’s family was annihilated with the exception of Tom, his mother, sister and brother. They were hidden by 2 non-Jewish employees of his father. These employees took a grave risk in doing this because they certainly would have been tortured and killed if they had been caught. The family was in hiding 4-5 months even though the war was ending because the Germans still wanted to kill more Jews. While in Hungary, Tom’s mother went looking for food for the children. One time she ended up bartering her diamond engagement ring for

ONE egg.

From Hungary they went to France and then to the US. In NYC Tom’s mother sold stockings in order to support her children. The terrific act of the people who saved Tom and his family inspired Tom to become a lawyer so that he too could help people. He does this by representing poor people, returning children to their families and working to exonerate the innocent.

Currently Tom is working to free a man who has been unjustly imprisoned for 33 years.

Abraham Lincoln was a just and decent man, this is what attracted Tom to him and lead him to become a Lincoln scholar with a library of over 1000 books on Lincoln. It is said that when Lincoln was asked to write his biography for the nation it consisted of one page and was about the annals of the poor. This resonated with Tom and he feels not only privileged to present on Lincoln at DRCC but also feels privileged to work on exonerating the innocent.



Book Review

by Marylyn de Gonzague, Dominican associate, retreatant and volunteer



Title: *Coming Down the Mountain: How to Turn Your Retreat into Everyday Living*

Author: *Thomas Hart, Ph.D.* (Seattle, Washington, Theology teacher and counselor)

Copyright 1988 Paperback, 101 pages, \$8.95

As the subtitle suggests, this handy little book is intended to help men and women sustain the enthusiasm and resolve that so many people experience at the end of retreat: "This time I'm going to make it last."

The author's work in spiritual counseling prompted him to publish this tool to help those who are trying to put a "Christian vision into practice." The book is organized into six chapters each containing seven days' worth of material for thought and reflection, a related scripture passage, and a Christian action.

The topics offered for reading and reflection are universal concerns, such as loving people who are different, forgiveness, friendship, play, and the cross. The author uses different approaches to the topics, including real-life examples, significant authors in spirituality, and events from the life of Christ that exemplify how we might face

challenges in our daily life. *The topics are arranged to build in a progression from focusing on our personal needs, branching out into our family and social circles, to broader topics of social justice.*

They can also be read out of order, according to what meets your need on that day.

While the title implies the book is intended to be used following retreat, it is actually a guide that could be used for daily prayer at any time.

The writing style is conversational and understandable. The author shows an understanding of human hopes and weaknesses, and presents encouragement for readers to continue moving forward on the journey to union with Christ.

Many people who make retreats regularly already have their own pattern and structure of prayer, and would not find this book particularly helpful. However, for those who get lost in where to start, I think **Coming Down the Mountain** could be a useful tool to develop a habit of daily prayer. A six-week time frame would get the user into a pattern of daily reflection and scripture reading that can be carried on into the rest of the year.

Christmas Gift-Giving Favorite Recipe: OREO CANDY CANE BARK

Another Recipe

from the Home of

Larry the Lobster

(With help from Nabisco)



3 pkg. (6oz. each) **BAKER'S** Premium White Baking Chocolate

15 **OREO** Chocolate Sandwich Cookies, coarsely chopped (about 2 cups)

3 candy canes, crushed (about ¼ cup)

COVER large baking sheet with foil; set aside. Microwave chocolate in large microwavable bowl on HIGH 2 min. or until almost melted, stirring every 30 seconds. Stir until chocolate is completely melted. Stir in chopped cookies.

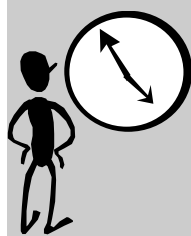
SPREAD immediately onto prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with crushed candy canes; press candy lightly into chocolate with back of spoon.

REFRIGERATE 4 hours or until firm. Break into pieces. Store in a tightly covered container in refrigerator. **Makes 1 1/2lb. or 18 servings**

Substitute: Prepare as directed, substituting 10 starlight mint candies for the candy canes.

Make Ahead: Bark can be stored in refrigerator up to 2 weeks.
(Nabisco – Holiday Appetizers & More)

Day/Evening Programs December 2011-March 2012



Times on calendar indicate the **scheduled time** for the actual beginning and end of the program.

Registration begins a half-hour prior to the start of the program.

Breakfast with the Saints

St. Francis De Sales
December 7 10:00 AM-11:30 AM
Sr. Barbara Ebner, OP \$15.00

Annual Carol Night
December 21 7:30 PM

Dominican Retreat House Choir
directed by **Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP** free will offering

New Year's Evening of Reflection

A New Year Filled with God's Love
December 31 7:30 PM-1:00 AM
Rev. Marty Fisher \$25 eve/\$50 overnight

Soup with the Saints

January 17 *St. Cecilia* (Ceil Amendolia)
January 24 *St. Martin de Porres* (Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP)
January 31 *St. Francis De Sales* (Sr. Barbara Ebner, OP)
6:30-8:15 PM \$40 for all 3/\$15 each

Day of Retreat for Men and Women

Midwinter Oasis
January 21 10:00 AM-3:00 PM
Claudia Gregoire \$30.00

Evening Presentation with Soup

Chicken Soup for Body and Soul
January 26 6:30-8:30 PM
Sr. Monica Murphy, CSJ \$20.00

Presentation

The Young Life of Abraham Lincoln
February 13 7-8:30 PM
February 14 10:00 AM-11:30 AM
Tom Hoffman \$15.00

Evening of Reflection for Married/Engaged Couples

February 14 6:20-9:15 PM
Rev. Dan Dwyer, OFM \$45 per couple

Ash Wednesday Evening of Reflection

Now is the Acceptable Time
February 22 6:20-9:15 PM
Rev. Bill Sheehan, OMI \$25.00

Evening of Reflection for Men

March 6 6:20-9:15 PM
Rev. Tim Keating, CSsR \$25.00

Heaven and Earth: Morning Presentation with lunch

March 7 *The Wisdom and Healing of Wilderness*
(Sr. Carol Davis, OP)
March 14 *People of the Longhouse: Iroquois Teachings*
(Kay Olan (Ionataiewas))
March 21 *The Burning Bush* (Rev. Rich Broderick)
10:00 AM-1:00 PM \$55 for all 3 or \$20 each

Celtic Day of Reflection

Storytelling the "Sainted" Irish: Patrick, Brigid, and Some Not-So-Saintly Heroes
March 17 9:45 AM-3:00 PM
Marni Gillard \$25.00

Lenten Day of Reflection

March 13 9:45 AM-3 PM
Rev. Tim Keating, CSsR \$25.00

Lenten Evening of Reflection

Lent: If you want to be reborn, then let yourself die.
March 27 6:20-9:15 PM
Rev. Chris DeGiovine \$25.00

Celebrate Advent and the Christmas Season

December 7: **Breakfast with the Saints**
St. Francis De Sales 10:00-11:30 AM

December 21: **Annual Carol Night** 7:30PM
Dominican Retreat House Choir
directed by *Sr. Sue Zemgulis, OP* free will offering

December 31: **New Year's Evening of Reflection**
A New Year Filled with God's Love
Rev. Marty Fisher 7:30 PM-1:00 AM



Weekend Programs December 2011-March 2012

Retreat for Adult Children of Addictive Families

Eagerly I Seek You: Exploring our Heart's Desires
December 9-11

Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, PhD \$185.00

Weekend for Men and Women

Dreaming in Winter
January 13-15

Sr. Carol Davis, OP \$195.00*

Scripture Weekend for Men and Women

Jesus the Healer, Jesus our Friend
January 13-15

Sr. Kitty Hanley, CSJ \$195.00*

Women's Theme Weekend

"... Seize the hope which is set before you" (Hebrews 6:18b)

January 27-29
Rev. David Lupo, SSCC \$195.00*

Women's Theme Weekend

"... Seize the hope which is set before you" (Hebrews 6:18b)

February 3-5
Sr. Lois Barton, CSJ \$195.00*

Retreat for Men Concerned with Alcoholism

Trust God, Clean House, Help Others
February 10-12

Br. Kevin Kriso, OFM \$195.00*

5 Day Centering Prayer Retreat

Into the Silence
February 17-22

Rev. Bill Sheehan, OMI \$375.00
Per diem \$65 w/overnight \$90

Woman to Woman Weekend

TBA
February 24-26 \$195.00*

Sr. Lois Barton, CSJ

Lenten Silent Retreat for Men and Women

TBA
March 9-11 \$195.00*

Weekend for Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse

Freedom to Live
March 16-18

Sr. Carol Davis, OP \$195.00*

Weekend programs begin Friday with sign-in at 7:00 PM and conclude early Sunday afternoon.

***Weekend Retreats - \$195.00 (beginning Jan. 2012)
Seniors(65 and older - \$180.00)**

Be assured however that no one will ever be turned away for lack of funds. Thank you for your understanding and for all you have done in the past to support the Retreat House.

For information on any program listed on pages 5 & 6, please call (518) 393-4169 between 9:00 AM-4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, or email dslcny@nycap.rr.com. You can also view our calendar on the web at www.dslcny.org.

Complete this **REGISTRATION FORM** and include with deposit (\$50.00 non-refundable for Weekend Registration) To save time and postage, Credit Card Reservations can be via
 web(www.dslcny.org)
 faxed (518-393-4525)
 phoned in (518-393-4169)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/St/Zip _____

Phone (h) _____ (w) _____

E-mail _____

Please register me for the following Program:

_____ Date _____

Deposit: \$ _____ Check #: _____

Credit Card: M/C Visa Discover

_____ Exp. _____

Signature (for Credit Card Authorization)



Katie's Recovery Corner

After 12 wonderful years of coordinating the 12 Step Recovery Retreats, my time has come to step down. I feel so blessed to have had this opportunity as my life has been so enriched by this experience. But this is not the last you will see me.

I will continue coordinating the CASAC training sessions.. I now have the opportunity to spend a good part of the winter in Florida. Other than that you will see me around DRCC helping out as needed.

Sr. Barbara Ebner, OP will assume the 12 Step Retreat programming responsibilities in the new year. Sr. Barbara brings much rich experience to this work and you will find your association with her very rewarding.

Upcoming programs include: Retreat for Adult Children, Weekend for Men Concerned with Alcoholism, Retreat for Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse and a Weekend Retreat for Men and Women in Recovery . **For more information on these programs please visit our web site: www.dslcny.org or call 518-393-4169.**

Chicken Soup for Body and Soul

Thursday Evening January 26

Presenter:

Sr. Monica Murphy, CSJ



We'll start with homemade hot chicken soup with warm crusty bread followed by a presentation nurturing your relationship with God and concluding with evening prayer in the spirit of Taize.

Can you Help Us?

How would you like to be an important part of the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center?

We are in need of women and men who would like to be of service. If you are interested in volunteering your time, there are opportunities available in the dining room/kitchen area, periodic mailings, and seasonal grounds days.

A few hours of your time are all that is needed. We would sure like to have you join us. We always provide a meal and conversation when you volunteer with us.

Please call Ceil Amendolia at 518-393-4169 for information.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Celebrate Valentine's Day at Dominican Retreat and Conference Center.

We begin with prayer, enjoy a lovely candlelight dinner, listen to a presentation and celebrate Eucharist together.

February 14,

6:20-9:00PM

With Fr. Dan Dwyer, OFM



Conference Center Update

Shawn Palleschi, Conference Director

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone! I can't believe that it is this time of year already. We have been very busy at the Retreat House, but we can always be busier.

Have you all looked at our web site www.dslcny.org? You can take a tour of the retreat house and reminisce about your favorite retreat, meet the staff, see our smiling faces, and look up programs that you would like to attend.

On the calendar there are also hosted programs that are booked, you can see open days or get ideas for programs of your own to have at our beautiful facility.

We welcome Confirmation Retreats, Church staff meetings, not for profit board meetings, etc. Consider having your next program at Dominican Retreat and Conference Center. I look forward to assisting you with the details. Shawn



13th Annual *More Than Just Desserts*

More than Lucky for DRCC!!

(article by Deb Schultz, DRCC secretary)

Through months of hard work and the dedication and generosity of all who support **More Than Just Desserts** (the Dominican Retreat and Conference Center's fundraiser), we have reached a **new record of 27,916!!**

We begin by thanking God for the multitude of blessings bestowed on us! God indeed knows our desire at the Retreat House is to offer a place of peace, hope and healing to all. God's answer to our need was to send us the best people in the world to help us continue our mission. God's first gift was to send Joan Thiesen to chair the Events Committee. These women worked as one tireless body to produce a fundraiser that was an entertaining and financial success. They've raised the bar on both levels!



Committee members, left to right: Joan Theisen, chair, Sr. Mary Aimee, Rosemary Prock, Esther Swanker, Joan Egan, Cathy Coan, Susan Sweeney, Carol Leupold, Kathie Ziobrowski. Joan Blando missing from photo.

The contributions of the vendors who donated their services or products is appreciated more than they'll ever know. The raffle and silent auction items were a hit with all the bidders – everyone pleased with their newly acquired prize ... or prizes!



Paul Cooney and Stan Zengulis, promoters for our annual Men's Retreat, enjoy some refreshment.

Looking for a description of support? Look no further than the faces of our loyal behind-the-scenes staff and volunteers! Too many to name, but God knows who they are ... we know who they are ... and those who attended may have been fortunate enough to catch a glimpse as they catered to our needs.



Betty Carey and Margaret Roberson consider their silent auction bids.

There were so many ways we needed help and each step of the way, God gave us gifts through the generous prayers and actions of all who contributed so graciously of their time, talent and/or treasure. To one and all – may God bless you as abundantly as you have blessed us. Peace ... and unending THANKS!

(continued on page 9)

More Than Just Deserts...continued

We give special thanks to Doris Hoffman for her gift of the beautiful hand-stitched, heirloom quality quilt in the **Oopsie Daisy** pattern. This year we made **\$1585.00** on the quilt raffle.

Joann Assini, daughter of Marge Assini, a long-time friend and benefactor of the retreat house, was the lucky winner. Marge was attending the party when the lucky ticket was drawn.

Introducing a few new Program Directors



The **Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Ph.D.**, serves as Priest Associate of Grace Episcopal Church in Amherst, Massachusetts. A noted retreat leader and spiritual director, she has focused recent retreats on divine/human intimacy, spiritual awakening, and the sacredness of Creation. Her memoir, Holy Hunger: A Woman's Journey from Food Addiction to Spiritual Fulfillment (Vintage, 2000), portrays her recovery from an eating disorder and from growing up in a dysfunctional family. Her second book, Christ's Passion, Our Passions (Cowley, 2002), explores forgiveness, hope, and compassion in light of Jesus' last words from the cross. Margaret lives with her family in Northampton, Mass.

December 9-11, 2011 Rev. Margaret will facilitate our retreat for **Adult Children of Addictive Families**. The theme she has chosen is *Eagerly I Seek You: Exploring our Heart's Desires*. Her Website: www.holyhunger.com.

We're already planning for Lent



February 22: **Ash Wednesday Evening of Reflection**
Now is the Acceptable Time
Rev. Bill Sheehan, OMI

March 9-11: **Lenten Silent Retreat for Men and Women**
Rev. Aedan McKeon, OP

March 13: **Lenten Day of Reflection**
Rev. Tim Keating, CSsR

March 27: **Lenten Evening of Reflection**
Lent: If you want to be reborn, then let yourself die
Rev. Chris DeGiovine



Kay Olan (Ionataiewas) Kay Olan (Ionataiewas), Mohawk educator and storyteller taught elementary school in NYS for over 33 years, after which she worked as Director of the Mohawk Community of Kanatsiohareke for almost three years. She has been giving cultural presentations and sharing the stories of the Haudenosaunee for the last twenty-five years.

On March 14, as part of our Heaven and Earth Series, Kay will present one version of the Iroquois Creation Story, as she speaks to us on the topic *People of the Longhouse: Iroquois Teachings*. It is an epic story that describes the worldview of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois).

Other presentations in this series include: *The Wisdom and Healing of Wilderness* with Sr. Carol Davis, OP on March 7 and *The Burning Bush* with Father Rich Broderick on March 21.



Br. Kevin Kriso, OFM, resides in Western New York and ministers mostly with college-age young adults. He has backgrounds in counseling and theology and has led recovery retreats for over 20 years. February 10-12, Brother Kevin will facilitate the retreat for Men Concerned with Alcoholism. His theme for the Weekend is *Trust God, Clean House, Help Others*.

May 4-6, 2012 we will offer a weekend retreat for men and women in 12 step recovery. Director and theme to appear in our next newsletter.

Or Current Resident

Place label here



**Looking for a different way to
bring in the New Year?**

Come celebrate with us. There will be input, refreshments, and time for personal reflection. We will conclude the program and welcome the New Year with the celebration of Eucharist. You can choose to stay overnight or to return home after Mass. Program begins at 7:30PM. Our presenter for the evening is Father Marty Fisher and the theme is *A New Year Filled with God's Love.*

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\$5.00 Coupon

Present this coupon to receive \$5.00 off
a **day** or **evening** program at:
Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
Niskayuna, NY

\$10.00 Coupon

Present this coupon to receive \$10.00
off a **weekend** program at:
Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
Niskayuna, NY