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**#138**

*Founder's Forum*

**By any other name**

*I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you."--Luke 15:18*

We are living in a time when winning is the ultimate—the most important thing there is. The war in the Persian Gulf is just one example. No matter where you may stand, war is wrong, but both sides have difficulty admitting any wrongdoing. They are at odds with each other.

Being at odds in the church is wrong too, with the conservatives and the liberals going at each other. Everyone has a point, and these points are all valid in the eyes of the proposer. When winning comes to be more important than anything else in life (or in war or peace), anything can be justified if we win. The referee can't see everything and it's worthwhile risking what isn't fair to make the win. If the salesperson thinks the high sales record is the ultimate arbiter of success, he or she can afford to misrepresent the product or confuse the terms as long as the sale is made. The goal is more important than integrity in getting there.

We know, of course, that we ought to do right. And when we do wrong, one way we deal with it is to call it by a different name. Innocent victims of war, on either side, are easier to ignore when they are simply

"collateral damage." Calling wrong by some polite name does not change it: cheating is cheating, and deception is deception, and death is death no matter what name you attach.

The Prodigal Son fretted at home, his imagination toying with the fleshpots of the far country, thinking his desires a legitimate demand for independence. "Give me my *share*." Such a nice name.

**Calling wrong by some polite name does not change it: cheating is cheating, and deception is deception, and death is death no matter what name you attach.**

People in the church and without, long to be "independent." People in the church, every Sunday, live in that spirit of being "independent." But there is a more authentic name for these "independents." We are "sinners."

Out in the far country, with bright eyes looking into his, the Prodigal Son called what he was doing "pleasure." When he lost his money, he called it "bad luck." When he got down to feeding the pigs, he called himself "a fool." But when he thought straight about it, he said, "Father, I have sinned." That was authentic.

O God our Father, we would be honest with ourselves, avoiding the rationalizations that try to make wrong into right, and evil into good. Teach us, we pray, to cherish integrity as evidence of our devotion to you. Amen.

RTB

## • Once burned . . .



*James Teets*

In hindsight, I clearly see God working in my life in a particular way, four

years ago. My career has always been in management and administration, first with Standard Oil Supply in Northern Virginia and then in the theater ticket business in New York City. In 1977, when I responded to God's call and made my first profession of vows in the Brotherhood, I took up a ministry in a Bronx parish which included vestry work, the board of the parish's day school, numerous committees, advertising, and the liturgy.

Opportunities for service in the Brotherhood presented themselves in the form of appointments as administrative assistant, the editorship of the community's monthly newsletter, director of ecumenical relations, and assistant superior. (It is now quite obvious to me that I had spread myself too thin

and that, if unchecked, burnout was on the horizon.)

In my secular work for New York's largest theater ticket brokerage, I determined to witness to Christ in my business relations and as a counselor to my colleagues—this I executed with a certain amount of effectiveness and satisfaction.

In 1986 I became aware of a position in the World Mission unit of the Episcopal Church Center, as administrative assistant to the executive. With a degree of trepidation (I had then been with my theater firm for 18-and-a-half years) I applied for the Church Center job and landed it. Here, in retrospect, was the melding of my secular and my religious vocations. God had been active through the years in my business career to provide me with the skills and experience necessary to be of service to the church in its international mission and ministry. I quickly became involved with reorganizing the administration of the office, interacting with the finance depart-

ment, and working with overseas dioceses and other provinces of the Anglican Communion. This position also afforded me the opportunity to be of service to the domestic membership of the church in many ways. The talents which God had given me were being used for the purposes of the church.

My employment situation had changed; clearly this was a full-time church ministry. God was also at work when I was guided into new and less time-demanding parochial relationships, as I became associated with a new parish, in which I limit my ministry to the liturgical side. My responsibilities within the Brotherhood have also evolved, as I am now the treasurer and director of public relations. I serve on Council, and the education and the tithe counselling committees, and I am the community's master of ceremonies. Burnout is still possible, but I have become more aware of its danger through the many occasions of divine intervention along my personal journey.

## I will pour clean water ...



*Donovan Aidan Bowley*

It is always difficult for me to talk about myself, especially at length and not

as part of a general conversation. When the request to say something about my work and ministry appeared, I became, if not tongue-tied, then certainly typewriter-tied!

My life, the way I spend my time, falls into three general areas: Brotherhood, occupation, and "other." There is something of work and something of ministry in each.

In the Brotherhood, I am in my fifth year of annual vows. I serve as Provincial of Province I (New England), as a member of the education committee, and as chair of the agenda committee which develops a theme and program for each convocation. In these capacities I have the opportunity to work fairly closely with the other New England brothers on community events and on personal issues. Work on presentations for the community has led me into conducting quiet days and retreats. In one year I conducted thirteen of these, on a variety of topics, and attended several others. With Br Laurence Andrew Keller, I serve on the Advisory

Board for the Iona Cornerstone Foundation, which maintains Duncraig, a quiet house for people in the "caring professions" on the island of Iona, off Scotland's southwest coast. For three years I assisted at a local parish in capacities ranging from acolyte to retreat leader and speaker for confirmation classes. For the previous twenty years or so, I had been a communicant at another local parish, serving as acolyte, chalice, and for four years as a representative to the diocesan convention. I found I was approaching burnout, and learned for a time to be quite content to sit in the pew and be quiet. As a friar in very secular surroundings most of the time, I rely strongly on

the Brotherhood's semiannual convocations, and on provincial quiet days, as well as quarterly silent retreats, to keep "recharged."

After a number of years as a botanical ecologist—an arctic-alpine lichenologist—with side paths as a ranger and as a faculty member at Boston University, I came by circuitous paths to my current career in water-supply protection. For the past twelve years I have worked as a planner and program manager at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. One of my first projects resulted in compilation of maps which became the Massachusetts Water Supply Protection

Atlas—a series of transparent overlays for each of the 189 topographical maps which cover the commonwealth, and upon which many people have worked. This project also resulted in compiling the bulk of candidates for our first hazardous waste sites list. My current work is to manage a program to analyze water supply contamination incidents and clean up the contamination. I am also pro-grams coordinator of the department's Geographical Information System, a computer-based environmental resource mapping program, in which system is stored the most recent version of the original hand-drafted atlas, as well as vastly more information. I strongly believe that this

work in environmental protection is a ministry as well as work.

As for "other"—I am an amateur historian, interested in the early Celtic church and in early visitors to North America. I have earned a living as a carpenter, an amateur painter, photographer, and genealogist.

In short, my work is my ministry and my ministry is my work: they are each part of who I am. Any separation is only artificial, for the purpose of discussion. I seek to find God's face in the people and the world around me, to the best of my ability.

*Here and there with the Brotherhood and Companions Sisterhood . . .*

## Community notes



*Clare Fitzgerald, SSND, explores the difficulties inherent in the vow of chastity, especially the dangers in understanding the vow primarily in negative terms.*

### Winter convocation

The big news of the Winter convocation was the signing of a covenant of prayer and witness between the Brotherhood and the Graymoor Friary (see following pages).

In another event of convocation and retreat at Graymoor,

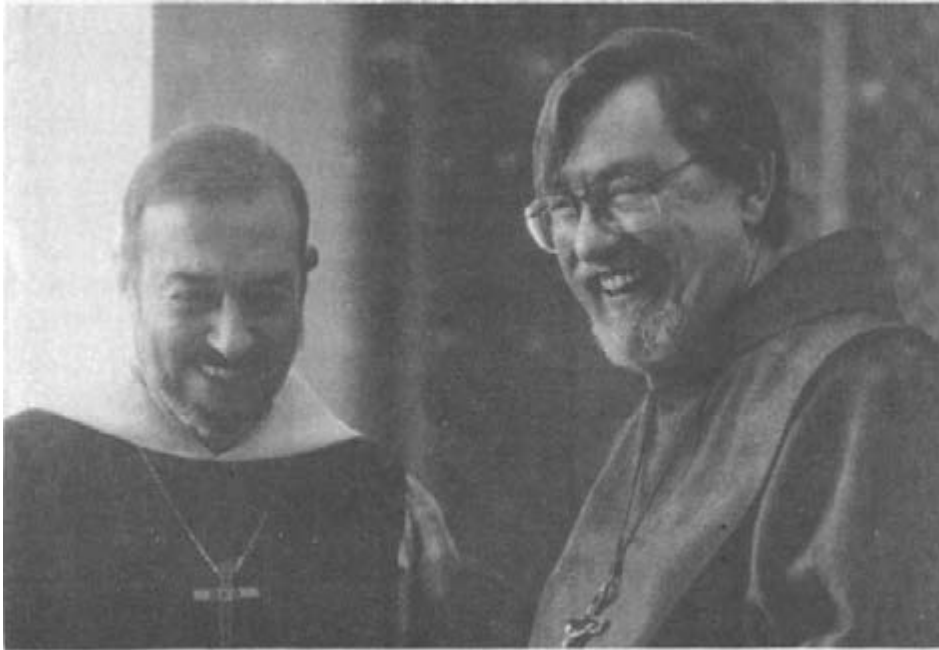
Sr. Clare Fitzgerald, SSND, gave a talk on the current movements in religious life, and focussed on the significance of the vow of chastity. Clare last spoke to the Brotherhood in 1986, and this second gathering was a helpful "reality check." It was especially interesting for many of the Gregorians to see how new trends

*(continued on page 6)*



*Tobias Stanislas and Clare, at the end of her talk.*

## SOLI DEO GLORIA + UT OMNES UNUM SINT



*Richard Thomas and Jack after the signing of the covenant.*

The Society of the Atonement was founded as an Episcopal community, but was received into the Roman Catholic Church early in this century. This January, an historic ecumenical event, reaching back to the community's Episcopal roots, took place at St. Paul's Friary, Graymoor, the Atonement mother house. Friary members voted unanimously to enter into a covenant of prayer and witness with the Brotherhood. The Brotherhood had met

at Graymoor for some years, and in 1989, was approached by several Graymoor Friars who felt that some sort of Roman Catholic / Episcopal connection might be possible through the two communities. At that time, the Brotherhood Chapter voted unanimously to begin regular prayer for the members of the Society of the Atonement.

About a year later, in recognition of the 1400th anniversary of St Gregory's election as pope, Pope

John Paul II invoked Gregory's historic mission (through Augustine) to the island of Britain, and offered "an ecumenical reflection . . . not only to the faithful of the Catholic Church but also to our brothers and sisters of the Anglican Communion," calling for the rediscovery of "the blessed ways of union and fraternal understanding," with Gregory as focus.

In response, the Brotherhood proposed a formal covenant of witness and prayer to the Graymoor Friars, who accepted it at their annual Chapter. Fr Jack Lewis, SA, Guardian of St Paul's Friary, and Br Richard Thomas Biernacki, BSG, founder and Superior General of the Brotherhood, signed the covenant in the Little Flower Chapel, on January 22. The covenant service included hymns linked to each community: Graymoor's "Covenant Hymn" with words by founder Fr Paul Wattson; and "Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones," the BSG "theme song"—in part because *Gregory* means "watchman." Also included in the worship was the psalm "O how good when brothers dwell in unity," and a reading of Christ's prayer that all might be one, from John's Gospel.

Br Richard Thomas presented Fr Jack with a large version of the Brotherhood cross, engraved with its motto, "*Soli Deo Gloria*"—"To God alone the glory." Father



Jack announced that as a symbol of the new relationship, partitions separating the communities in the Friary dining hall would be removed when the Gregorians were guests. Throughout the rest of the week, members of the two communities shared in each other's services of worship and prayer. In a closing farewell, Fr Peter Taran, SA, noted, "Even though you are leaving us for now, you will remain in our hearts because of the covenant and daily prayer which we now share. When you return in July, you will be coming home."

**THAT ALL MAY  
BE ONE: TO  
GOD ALONE  
THE GLORY**

In recognition of the XIV centenary of the elevation of St Gregory the Great to the papacy (September 3, 590), His Holiness Pope John Paul II issued a letter to all bishops, priests, and faithful, in which he invoked the historic pastoral act of Gregory in sending "the monk Augustine" on an expedition to the island of Britain. His Holiness took this opportunity to offer "an ecumenical reflection ... not only to the faithful of the Catholic Church but also to our brothers and sisters of the Anglican Communion." He went on to note that the sacred "seal of apostleship" originating with Gregory and carried out by Augustine "has lasted up to the present. Not only for proven historical reasons and associations, but also because of the many links which have

survived the events of the sad separation it can still act effectively and impel us to rediscover, in charity and truth, the blessed ways of union and fraternal understanding. Catholics and Anglicans alike look to Gregory with undimmed admiration and veneration, and as they tread the path of the ecumenical quest which they have undertaken they can meet the figure of this concerned pastor and listen once again to his words of reassurance, encouragement and consolation." In light of this pastoral letter, we acknowledge the following:

that the call to the religious life transcends the boundaries of ecclesiastical polity;

that the foundation of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory took place in the Roman Catholic Visitation Monastery, Riverdale NY, and the foundation of the Society of the Atonement took place in Saint John's in the Wilderness Episcopal Church, Garrison NY;

that both communities seek to serve the Body of Christ, "that all may be one"; and

that prayer is the primary means of bringing about that unity.

It is therefore resolved by the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory and the Society of the Atonement (Graymoor)

that the members of each community pray for each other individually and corporately, with special intentions for the

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the continuing Anglican / Roman Catholic dialogue;

that the members of each community take part in worship together to the extent permitted by their respective canons;

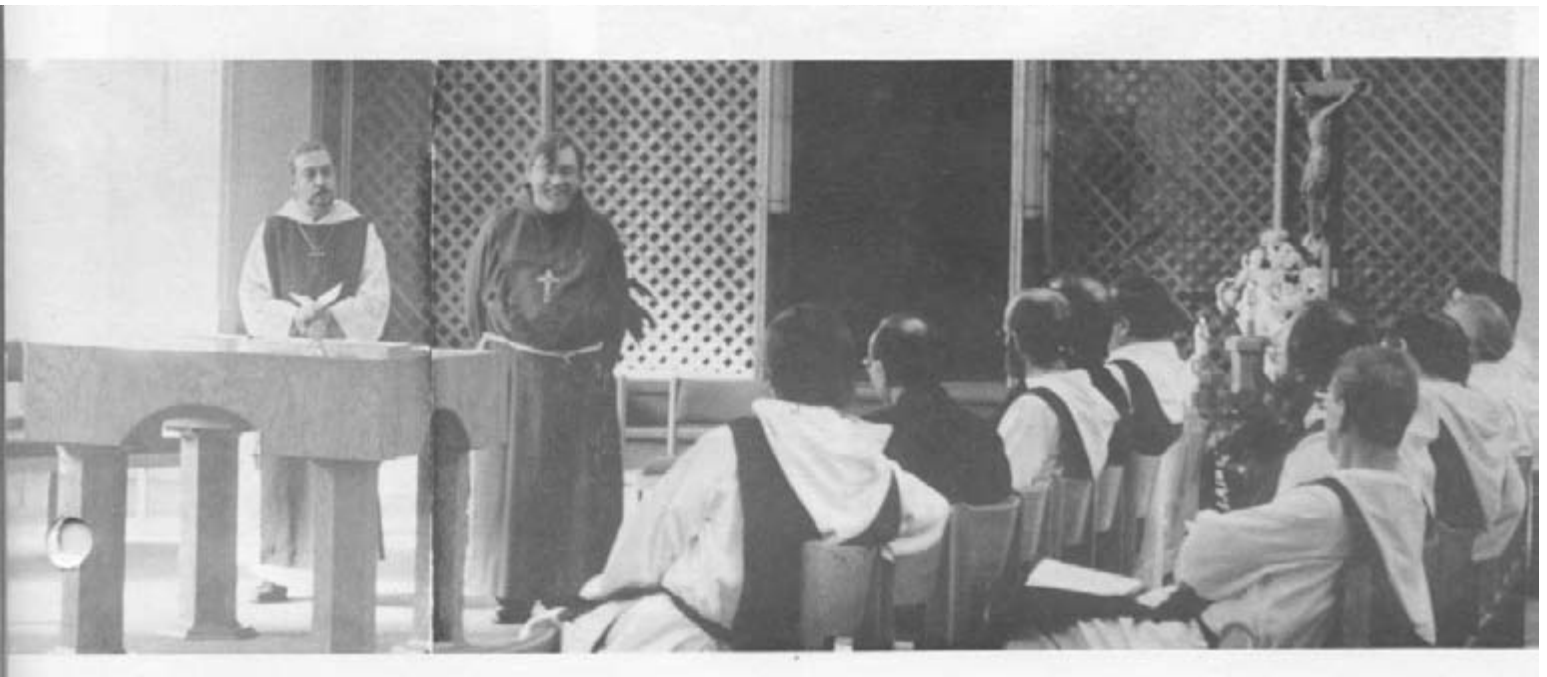
that retreat times be shared whenever possible, and that members of the Society of the Atonement be always welcome at the gatherings of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, particularly those at Graymoor;

that each community recognize the corollary nature of the motto of the other: "Soli Deo Gloria—That all may be one": that unity is to the glory of God as well as to our benefit; and

that the following or a similar prayer be used as a symbol of this covenant:

Almighty and everlasting God, you filled your servant Gregory with evangelistic zeal and with pastoral wisdom; and you gave to your servant Francis a burning desire to be one with Christ, and to build up the church: Enable the Society of the Atonement and the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory to preserve that zeal and fervor, and to exercise that pastoral skill to the upbuilding of your church, that all may be one, to your glory alone; and this we ask in the Name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*The 22d of January,  
A.D. 1991*



*(continued from page 3...)*

in Roman Catholic religious life had been anticipated within their own community. At the end of her presentation, Br Tobias Stanislas Haller presented her with a copy of *The State of the Religious Life*, an analysis and brief historical over-view of the topic, in which Sr Clare is twice quoted.

In the course of the convocation, Br Bernard Fessenden made his life profession of vows, and Brs Ronald Silas MacGregor and Richard John Lorino made their first professions. Brs Charles Edward LeClerc and Mark Harris were received into the novitiate, and four new postulants came our way: S Michael Phillips and Steven P Hill to the Brotherhood, and Carol Anna Taylor and Claudia H Girling to the Companion Sisterhood.

Br George Keith was commissioned as director of vocations, Sr Clare Connell as assistant director of vocations (for the Companion Sisterhood), Br Richard John Lorino as provincial of Province II, and Br Edward Ramón Riley as Council member.



*Ciarán Anthony Della Fera looks on as Richard John unwraps a profession gift.*



*Clare, with new postulants Claudia (1.) and Carol Anna.*



*Bernard Fessenden, life professed.*