

# Life Together in One Heart



## Update

Since our last Bulletin the Priory buildings have taken on a youthful appearance. The new vinyl siding is attractive and eliminates the demanding maintenance task of re-staining the wood facing that has served for many years. It adds a valuable insulation factor for winter heating. Extensive necessary repairs have also been done to our Morningside Guest House.

Maria Guarino's thesis for a Doctorate in Philosophy at the University of Virginia, *Listen with the Ear of the Heart: A Contemplative Ethnography of Musical Performance, Communal Religious Life, and Mystical Spirituality among the Monks of Weston Priory*, made intriguing reading during meals in the fall. The Community is honored by her sensitive and provocative study.

The Gallery Shop has been replenished with a two year supply of wool from our sheep processed by Green Mountain Spinnery, a co-operative in Putney, Vermont. Creative pottery, woodworking, and calligraphy by the brothers are also available in the Gallery Shop.

## May

From May 28 to June 3, the Priory hosted four young men for the semi-annual Monastic Experience. Richard Meyer from Huntington Valley, Pennsylvania; Michael MacDonald from Monterey, Massachusetts; Christopher Pantazi from Warren, Rhode Island; and Samuel Bauer from Boston, Massachusetts joined the brothers for seven days, sharing the daily life of the



l to r, Rich, Mike, Chris, and Sam

community. They entered into prayer, work, discussions, and meals with interest and enthusiasm.

## June

On June 21, Luis Arancibia and Teresa Casillas and their three children from Madrid, Spain, together with Teresa's mother from Buenos Aires, Argentina, brought greetings from the Trinitarian Nuns in Suesa, Spain. Their visit gave occasion to renew the friendship that is growing with the Sisters' community in Spain following the visit of four of the Weston brothers in the Spring of 2010.



l to r, Teresa and Luis

## July

During July, newspaper articles in the Burlington Free Press and the Upper Valley News featured the work, prayer and hospitality of the Priory community.

On July 19, four of our Benedictine Sisters traveled from Mexico to Weston. Sisters Roberta, Guadalupe, Margarita and Antonia spent two weeks with the community and joined in work, prayer, and recreation with their



l to r, Sisters Roberta, Guadalupe, Margarita, and Antonia

ebullient familial spirit. The presence of our Mexican Sisters is always a time of joyful sharing and reunion. Each time a small group of the Sisters come to be with us, we feel the presence of the full Congregation that works with such devotion for the poor in Mexico.

## August

On August 11, Timothy Byrnes, Professor of Political Science at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, presented a fascinating reflection on his book, *Reverse Mission; Transnational Religious Communities and the Making of US Foreign Policy*, in the Visitors' Center. The book explores the different yet complimentary vision of "reverse mission" of the Jesuits, Maryknoll Sisters, and Weston Priory. Timothy has known the Weston community for the past thirty-five years and has spent time visiting the Mexican Benedictine Sisters. His



Tim Byrnes

parents, Bob and Helen Byrnes, are longtime friends of the Priory.

The Board of Directors and friends of VAMOS celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of VAMOS by Bill and Patty Coleman in the Visitors' Center on August 25<sup>th</sup>. Patty presented a dynamic historical perspective on the birth of VAMOS. Besides Eucharist, picnic lunch, and exchange, participants were treated to a new VAMOS video by Sean Dougherty.



l to r, Patty, Alejandro, Dick and Agnes Dougherty

## September

Brother Richard attended the Abbots' Congress of the Benedictine Confederation in Rome from September 16 to 27. Cistercian Trappist monk, Michael Casey, presented a stimulating paper on monastic autonomy. Belgian sociologist, Michael Hochschild, addressed the Congress on the contemporary question of "Benedictines Between Continuity and Change." The Congress is held every four years and brings together the leadership of Benedictine monasteries throughout the world.

## October

A large audience gathered in the Visitors' Center on October 13 to hear Robi Damelin, a bereaved mother whose son, an Israeli soldier, was shot and killed by a Palestinian sniper at a military checkpoint in the West Bank. She offered an inspiring testimony and challenge with the topic, "On the Road to Reconciliation, A Conversation with Robi Damelin." Together with hundreds of other bereaved Israelis and Palestinians, she is working to show that reconciliation between individuals and nations is possible through dialogue and mutual understanding. More information can be found on any one of these websites: [www.theparentscircle.org](http://www.theparentscircle.org) , [www.onedayafterpeace.com](http://www.onedayafterpeace.com) and [www.bloodrelations.org](http://www.bloodrelations.org)



Robi Damelin

The community had the extraordinary experience of a first-hand view of life for Christians in Pakistan with the visit of Father Emmanuel Yousaf and Andrew Jilani from October 20 to 22. Father Emmanuel is National Director of the Catholic Peace and Justice Commission in Pakistan and Andrew is Associate Professor and Research Adviser at Smith College in Amherst, Ma. They described the precarious existence of the small minority of Christians in Pakistan. The visit was a reminder to the com-

munity that brother Michael is, in a way, a gift from Pakistan. Following his graduation from the University of Calgary, he taught English as a volunteer for eight months in Pakistan. He then journeyed from home in Lethbridge, Alberta, to become a brother in Weston Priory.



l to r, Andrew and Father Emmanuel

## November

On November 3, the Priory hosted a workshop presentation by the organization, Migrant Justice/Justicia Migrante, in the Visitors' Center. Migrant Justice "works to engage, educate and organize communities and allies to effectively challenge US immigration, economic, and trade policies and practices that adversely affect farm workers and family farmers." Due to the large number of migrant workers on farms in Vermont, support for the work of this organization is critical in this area. Information about Migrant Justice can be found at <http://migrantjustice.net>.

Directors and friends of Dismas of Vermont gathered for their semi-annual meeting and time for reflection at the Priory from November 9 to 11. Special good news at this meeting is the progress for a new Dismas House in Hartford, Vermont. With the clearing of legal permits, the project can now move forward. It has been a privilege for the Priory to be associated with Dismas and their work of assistance and rehabilitation for persons leaving prison since the beginning of this much needed ministry.



Over, Migrant Justice



Natalia, Migrant Justice

## December

As brother Robert celebrates his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday this month, we give thanks for the meaning our monastic life at Weston Priory and the renewal that Vatican Council II have brought to his many years.

It is in this spirit of thanksgiving that all the brothers send you our loving greetings and sincere best wishes during this Christmas and New Year celebration.

"Peace to all who are far and near!" (Ephesians 2:17) ■



Eliasar, Migrant Justice

Credit:

Page 13: Official Vatican Extraordinary Medal of Pope John XXIII celebrating the convocation of the Ecumenical Council Vatican II. By famed Italian sculptor Giacomo Manzù.