

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center
Celebrating the Universal Call to Holiness



THE RAY

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Warm Advent Greetings to all our friends, old and new!

After a wonderful Inaugural Wine and Cheese Reception with the Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKi, Archbishop of Milwaukee, and about eighty invited guests on October 24, 2010, it is our joy to connect with you in our first issue of *The Ray*, the quarterly newsletter of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center. These newsletters will keep you informed of the growth of the Center and provide you with solid Catholic spiritual reading that we hope will be a source of support for you in your quest for personal holiness.

In my talk on the Spiritual Works of Mercy at the Inaugural Reception, I referred to the impeccable scholarship of the late American Jesuit, Father Jules J. Toner, S.J., a twentieth century American Jesuit from the Detroit Province who mentored me for many years. His writings have set the standard for Ignatian discernment for generations to come and are foundational for the work and mission of Our Lady of Grace in providing high quality Spiritual Direction and Vocational Discernment in the Catholic tradition.

His published works are in the areas of Philosophy and Ignatian Spirituality. As we prepare our hearts for Christ's coming at Christmas, and prepare our lives for His coming in Glory at the end of time, it is my distinct privilege and blessing to share with you during this Advent Season, an unpublished excerpt of a powerful homily on *WAITING* that Father Toner delivered in 1967 at a First Vows Ceremony for a Cenacle sister. Enjoy! And Happy Waiting!!!

Mary DeSantis
President

First Annual Wine and Cheese Reception

Sunday evening, October 24th, brought many friends of Our Lady of Grace to Christ King Church in Wauwatosa. As a prelude to the formal program, three violinists played a number of hymns and heavenly melodies. We were honored to have Archbishop Jerome ListECKI speak to us about the great need in our world for increased prayer. Receiving spiritual direction is one way that individuals can deepen their own prayer life and strengthen their relationship with the Lord. The Archbishop observed that times of stress and interior searching often yield, ultimately, an increase in vocations. Miss Mary DeSantis, president of Our Lady of Grace, gave a talk on the benefits of spiritual direction in one's striving for holiness.

Board members Ellen Mary Raster and Beth Hanan then briefly described the history and goals of the Center, and ended the formal program by inviting all guests to a lovely array of refreshments including artisan cheeses, wine and an espresso bar. It was a joy to see so many of our guests, including the Archbishop and several other priests, and friends from a number of parishes and schools enjoy the fellowship of the evening. We are grateful to a number of people who contributed their time, talent or resources to help make our event a success, including Fr. George Gajdos at Christ King, Sargento Foods and Brewers Two Café. We look forward to the next event.

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center Achieves Tax-Exempt Status!

Like any non-profit, Our Lady of Grace aims to fulfill its mission in a fiscally conservative way. While the Center typically charges a fee for spiritual direction, and also receives consulting fees for retreat work, etc., we work hard to be careful stewards of our limited financial resources. Thus, it is fitting that the Center's application for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status was approved in record time by the IRS this past November. We have gratefully received a number of donations from friends and supporters of the work of the Center, and must continue to rely on such benefactions in order to maintain and expand its work. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all of you who have supported our mission both spiritually and financially, and we give our "prospective thanks" to those who will be moved to support the Center in the coming weeks and months.

Volunteer Opportunity

From time to time the Center needs assistance with clerical tasks, desktop publishing, data entry and a variety of other projects. If you would to help, please contact Mary at the Center.

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SERMON AT CEREMONY OF FIRST VOWS
BY
JULES TONER, S.J.
1967

(excerpt from page 3)

...To wait for Christ in the Church is to wait with our lamps burning, aflame with faith and hope and love and with the deeds of love which prepare the world for His coming, by which we set others on fire and help them to keep their lamps burning. If we remember and look forward to Christ's coming with longing but without the works and suffering of love for Christ in our brothers and sisters, our lamps have gone out. If we work and suffer but fail to remember and to expect Christ as the source and model and meaning of our work and suffering, if He ceases to be a living presence in us, in ourselves and in those we work for, if faith in Him and love for Him and hope for His coming die, then our lamps have gone out.

God is fire, Holy Scripture says it. And Christ said: "I am coming to cast fire upon the earth and what will I but that it be kindled?" He came bringing fire. That was His first coming. At the last coming, He comes to gather up all the fire which He has cast upon the earth. He will come to gather all of our flames into the eternal living flame of His Father's love. Be waiting with your lamps burning to hear the cry: "Behold, the Bridegroom comes. Behold, the fire-bringer comes. Behold the fire-gatherer comes. Behold, the wedding of eternal fire with all that is aflame with the life of Christ is now. Come, all who are fire and enter into the kingdom of fire, the kingdom of love, the kingdom of God who is fire, who is love!" Be waiting like Mary, who was always waiting. Your waiting must be especially like her waiting in the Cenacle for the coming of the fire of the Spirit. See her there, aflame, burning and shining for the whole Church—a quiet, gentle sweet, and powerful flame that rises to meet the descending flame of God. As she does so, she touches all about her into flame and gathers them with her into God—quietly, gently, sweetly, but powerfully. May you be waiting like that until all your waiting is over.