

# PACEM IN TERRIS

P E A C E O N E A R T H

## Gathering Together

Often times we are asked, “With hermit guests from so many faith backgrounds gathering together at the Pacem dinner table, how do you handle the tension that must arise during the mealtime conversation?” And we simply answer, “What tension?”

For eighteen years, we have had the privilege of sharing meals together with hermits who come from twenty-five different faith backgrounds. To our knowledge, no one has felt uncomfortable because of their differences. Instead, we’ve witnessed many guests celebrating the fun of “being one in the Spirit” with new friends. These hermit companions experience a sense of unity within the Christian family and a new respect and genuine appreciation for each other.

Many of you have been at the Pacem dinner table. For the most part, we don’t know where our guests come from, how they

live, what they do for recreation, what kind of financial success they enjoy, what kind of car they drive, etc., etc. So what is the mealtime conversation about? God. Retreats. Discernment.



“Love one another, as I have loved you.” *Jn 13:34*

Food. Favorite recipes. Telling stories. Memories triggered by the general conversation. Laughter. Our guests have all come to be alone with God. Most of them are Christians, followers of Jesus Christ. They view the Scriptures as “Good News.” They believe in the presence of the Holy Spirit. They believe in the power of prayer. And they are all hungry for God, for love, to love and be loved. It is truly a holy experience to be “one” with one another. As we gather together around the table, we are inspired by being a part of the Body of Christ, strengthened through mutual unity and love, and closer to becoming the answer to Jesus’ prayer to the Father “that they may be one as we are one.” *Jn 17:22* ♦

### Meal Prayer

**Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from Thy bounty through Christ our Lord. Amen. And may the Lord provide for the needs of others.**

*“They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”*

*Acts 2:46-47 NAB*

# Just a note...

For years, I have encouraged our guests to enter the hermitage with a disposition similar to one of giving the Lord a blank check. "Lord, I put my trust in you, you decide what you want from me for this time" is a prayer I have used in my own life. This blank check offering is a great act of trust. When we pray this prayer we are opening ourselves to be stretched beyond our comfort zone...sometimes way beyond. It was in this spirit of being open to "whatever" that I believe the Lord called me to step away from Pacem. My heart and soul are deeply vested in Pacem; the thought of leaving was almost more than I could bear. Yet it was as though God's question to me was, "Do you love this ministry enough to lay down *your* vision for yourself at Pacem, and make room for something new?" So, trusting in God's plan, I have. I am blessed to be working nearby for one of our founding board members, Keith Waters. I will remain on the board of directors and forever keep you, the Lord's cherished guests, in the heart of my prayers. And I ask for your prayers as this next season of my life and the life of Pacem unfolds. Please feel free to contact me if you desire; my new email address is jeffreyw@keithwaters.com.

God bless you one and all,

*Jeffrey Wanchena*

## Ministry Support

*We rely on the grace of God and the goodness of others to sustain the ministry of Pacem. Here are some of the ways you can help make it possible for others to know the deep peace of God's loving presence in the hermitage:*

**Adopt-A-Day:** With a gift of \$365, sponsors select a feast day, birthday, anniversary, or other day that has personal meaning. We unite in prayer for your special intention on that day. (*Adopt-A-Day* gifts may be spread throughout the year as monthly pledges). Currently, 45 individuals and one faith community have adopted 53 days!

**Monthly Pledge:** Committing to monthly giving of any amount helps us meet Pacem's operating expenses throughout the year.

**Prayer Partners:** You are invited to join nearly 300 hermits and friends who pray for the guests in a particular hermitage each day. *"We will give ourselves continually to prayer."* (Acts 6:4)

## Meet Saint Mary Magdalene

A loyal follower of Jesus, Mary Magdalene knew him, listened to him, talked to him, loved him. She was present at the foot of the cross with his mother Mary and his friend John as they witnessed Jesus' death.

According to the account in John's Gospel, early Sunday morning after the crucifixion of Christ, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body and found him missing. She ran to tell Peter and John, who ran back and saw the empty tomb.

After they left, Mary remained behind. As she looked into the tomb, two angels asked why she was weeping. She replied, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him." She turned and saw



Jesus, but she didn't recognize him, mistaking him for the gardener. Then he called her by her name and she responded "Rabboni!" The first person to see Christ after his resurrection, Mary Magdalene announced to the disciples what Jesus had told her, that he would be returning to his Father, God (John 20:1-18).

Mary Magdalene's encounter with the risen Lord shows us what can happen as we quiet our hearts and listen for his voice. He wants to make himself known to us just as he revealed himself to Mary. As we experience his presence, we, too, can say, "I have seen the Lord" (John 20:18 NAB). *The Church has set aside July 22nd to celebrate the life of Mary Magdalene.* ♦

# In the Company of Saints

A good time was had by all, as prayer partners and volunteers recently joined us for a day of appreciation!

**H**earts filled with gratitude...that was Pacem's message to the 35 Prayer Partners and Volunteers who were able to attend our Annual Appreciation Day on Saturday, March 25. And it's a message we hope all those who support the mission of Pacem through their prayers, time, and talent will take to heart, even if you weren't able to join us for the celebration.

Jeffrey recalled all the prayer that went into bringing the call of Pacem to a physical reality. Pacem was built on prayer, continues to be sustained by prayer, and will grow on prayer power. Currently there are 298 Prayer Partners who daily pray for the hermits, staff, and benefactors!

As Fr. Tim Nolan reminded those present, our prayers are joined with those of the Saints in heaven. We are all saints with a small "s" as we offer prayers along with our brothers and sisters in heaven through Jesus, the one mediator. And here at

Pacem, we share in the special prayers of the patron saints for each hermitage and building at Pacem. Our hermit guests are so grateful for the prayer power that surrounds their stay, and Shirley read some notes from guests who continue to sing God's praises for his faithfulness. Then Christina Baumgartner and Tom Klein shared their experiences of being Prayer Partners.

**E**qually important are the volunteers who share their time and skills...from afghan making to wood cutting and everything in between. Without them, Pacem would not be able to accomplish all that it does.

Although Appreciation Day has ended, the gratitude in our hearts continues on: *"I give thanks to my God at every remembrance of you, praying always with joy in my every prayer for all of you, because of your partnership for the gospel from the first day until now"* (Phil 1:3-5). ♦

from our hermits' hearts

♥ "Dear Siblings in Faith, Would you have a hymnal I could use? I am especially seeking a hymn, 'All is well with my soul!' Thank you."

♥ "I came here out of complete desperation and in great need of God. It has been a long time since I have connected with Christ. My life is in chaos because of it. The peace, the deafening silence, was both scary and life-giving. I thought perhaps I would come and cry my heart out, beg for forgiveness, and then go home healed and free. But rather than repentance, the message was "rest." And rather than an emotional rollercoaster, I experienced the simple, profoundly deep love and peace of Christ. Your mission has revived my spirit, given me perspective, and renewed my vision. Thank you for your servanthood."

♥ "Friends, it is really amazing to see what a slave I have become to time. To have the opportunity and challenge of spending even a day with no time limit or agenda, rather than my constant state of being busy-minded, has been eye-opening. God wants to show me how to listen to him so I can live out my life in Christ. I need to practice listening a whole lot more. May Pacem continue to be blessed."

## Appreciation Day Glimpses...



The day began with prayer and singing in the chapel, and a reflection from Fr. Tim about the communion of saints.



Our kitchen workers, from left to right: Susan Wanchena, Kathy Weissman, Kay Burhite, and Carol Swenson.



All the "saints" enjoyed each other's company during a light lunch and sharing time of Pacem experiences.

## Pacem Profile

You'll see our newest staff member, Amanda Cameron, whirling around Our Lady of Pacem with a cheery smile, sparkling eyes, and a joyful spirit as she prepares the hermitages and helps with housekeeping and kitchen tasks. Amanda is a 2005 graduate of the Catholic Studies Program at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, and is planning to continue her education in nursing. In the meantime, Pacem is blessed by her fresh vitality and everyone is inspired by her deep love for God. ♦



*Towels folded just so, courtesy of new staff member Amanda Cameron!*

## Dear friends,

I have a fierce desire to protect all the people God has given me to love - including my children (6), grandchildren (15), and our Pacem hermit guests (6,000 + spiritual children!). This protective instinct seems to get activated when somebody needs something. It can be a baby with a pinched finger, a child who fears not being accepted, a hermit guest dealing with a shattered relationship, illness, lost job, loneliness, and so on. Whenever I'm alerted to a need in any of those whom God has given me to love and serve, at seventy-eight I still want to jump into action. Yet years of sensing the needs of others have taught me to strive for right order in my responses and to remember that God's ways are not our ways, but they are the best ways.

"For all things there is a season" (Eccl. 3:1) is a verse that has often inspired and comforted me. Although sometimes I still resist the changes our all-knowing God allows, I trust that those who love God and prayerfully seek his plan for their lives will be guided in the ways of holiness. I am trusting that guidance now in this season of change for my son Jeffrey and for Pacem. And I am trusting that same guidance for all of us as we journey on in our spiritual lives.

With the peace of Jesus,

*Shirley Wanchena*

## Looking for Volunteers

One of our ongoing prayer requests is that we would have the volunteers we need to help us with the mission of Pacem. If you have the time, we would gratefully welcome you to assist us in the following areas:

**Kitchen:** preparing salads, baking, setting table, cleaning shelves, etc.

**Laundry:** laundering, folding, and storing sheets and towels

**Office:** entering data, stuffing brochures

**Main house:** washing windows, caring for plants, cleaning restrooms, vacuuming floors

**Library:** cataloging books

**Outdoors:** cutting trees, removing brush, staining buildings

**Barn:** cleaning the corral

(Because of insurance purposes, volunteers need to be 18 or over.) Call Julie or Alain at 763-444-6408, and we'll set up a time for you to help. We'd be delighted to have you become a member of our wonderful Pacem Volunteers!

*Love is not put in your  
heart to stay,  
love is not love 'til you  
give it away.*

*A n o n y m o u s*