

To move forward, retreat!

Last week I spent a few days at Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, New York. West Park is on the western side of the Hudson River, directly across from the Vanderbilt Mansion in Hyde Park. For those who have never been there- go. For those who have (I don't need to tell you this)— go back!

From their website:

Holy Cross Monastery is part of the Order of the Holy Cross, a Benedictine Community of the Anglican Communion. Father James Otis Sargent Huntington founded the Order of the Holy Cross in 1884 in New York City. The community settled in West Park in 1902. Our facilities consist of two Guesthouses, the Monastery Church of St. Augustine, and the Monastic Enclosure, located on twenty-six magnificent acres on the west bank of the Hudson River.

The primary ministry of Holy Cross Monastery is to guests on individual and group retreats. Our Guesthouse is among the largest monastic retreat facilities in the Episcopal Church. Rooms are available for overnight stays so that you can join with us and explore the spiritual dimension of your life. We estimate that about 5,000 people visit us each year. (Note: the cost of an overnight stay is about \$70, meals included).

In addition to our guest ministry we also manufacture incense, publish, and operate a book and gift shop.

The primary work of the community is worship and prayer, which are the central components of our daily life.

I have spent time alone at the monastery prior to my ordination and just before coming to St. Barnabas in 2007. I also travel up once a month for Spiritual Direction with one of the brothers, but I have never gone on a guided group retreat before. It was both refreshing and fun.

I joined six other women priests in a time of meditation, prayer, silliness and silence that was exactly the thing to reinvigorate my energy as we enter Advent. It is one of the ironies of ministry that the time we are telling everyone to slow down is actually when most clergy are going full-tilt from

From the Rector

one event to the next, not practicing what we preach.

So, I commend the monastery experience to any and all of you, whether you go alone, with a group, or take advantage of one of the guided experiences they offer regularly (check out their website at www.holycrossmonastery.com for more information on upcoming programs and lectures).

There are quite a few folks here at St. Barnabas who have found the peace and tranquility of The Great Silence (observed from 8:30 p.m. until 8:30 a.m.) restful and restorative. There are others who have found a place to enter a deep spiritual experience through the observance of the chanted worship in their chapel, or simply wandering the lush grounds and walking the labyrinth.

We clergywomen spent many hours in one another's company, and alone as well, talking, eating (did I mention the Culinary Institute trained chef?) singing and laughing. We returned refreshed and renewed, prepared and excited to begin to tell again the greatest news the world has ever heard: A child will be born in Bethlehem, and he shall be Emmanuel, God With Us.

I hope that you may seek and find a time of silence (and perhaps silliness) in the whirlwind that begins to swirl around us every year about this time. And, if you'd like to do it with more intention, give yourself the gift of a day and night at the monastery!



Pictured above: Tell-tale signs of a women's clergy retreat: popcorn crumbs, votive candle, hairclips, a lone Oreo, icon.

—Advent Blessings,
Nora †

The Rev. Canon Andrew M.L. Dietsche Elected Bishop Coadjutor

ON NOVEMBER 19TH, AT A SPECIAL ELECTION convention held at Manhattan's Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, the Rev. Canon Andrew M.L. Dietsche was declared the bishop coadjutor-elect of the Episcopal Diocese



of New York — a position giving him automatic right of succession to the current Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Mark S. Sisk, when he retires.

Dietsche, a Poughkeepsie, NY resident who is currently on the diocesan staff as Canon for Pastoral Care, was elected in the third round of balloting by a majority of the active clergy (176 of a total 262) of the diocese and of delegates from all of its congregations (131 out of a 233). Canon Dietsche was one of two candidates nominated "from the floor" in addition to the five who were put forward at the end of August by a special Committee to Elect a Bishop. The bishop coadjutor-elect must now receive the consent of a majority both of the other diocesan bishops of the Episcopal Church and of the standing committees of the Church's dioceses, before being consecrated in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Saturday, March 10, 2012.

He will then work alongside Bishop Sisk with, in Bishop Sisk's words, "responsibility for all those who enter the ordination process, as well as the search process for all congregations who begin their search for new clerical leadership. Over time, and following consultation with the bishop coadjutor, additional duties and areas of jurisdiction will be assigned."

Dietsche will become the new Diocesan Bishop on Bishop Sisk's retirement, which must take place on or before his 72nd birthday in August 2014. Canon Dietsche issued the following statement on the announcement of his election: "I am deeply honored and humbled by my election today as Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of New York, a diocese I have long ago come to know and love so deeply as Canon for Pastoral Care. I look forward to continuing to serve this community in the years to come in this new role to which I have been called. It has

Ready & Waiting

THIS PHOTO DEPICTS Advent for me. The dog is

poised and ready, muscles tense and eyes sharp, ready for its owner to come through the door. This dog is full of hopeful expectation, full of trust that good things are about to happen. This dog has great faith that her owner is coming back soon and she is ready and eager to be present when it happens.

So much about the weeks leading up to Christmas are about preparation. Silver is polished, the special dishes taken out of the attic, gifts are purchased, wreaths are hung. It is common for preachers to bemoan the busyness of the holiday season because it can distract us from the true meaning of Christmas, but I think that this season of preparing to celebrate Christ's first coming can remind us that we are also expectant for his imminent return.

Although we can't see her face, I

From the Assistant Rector

think we can easily imagine the look on the dog in the photo's face. Her eyes are bright, her head held high, her nostrils sniffing for an indication that her owner is approaching. There is probably some drool hanging from her lips. She has no guilt about the chores she didn't do while the owner was away. She's already forgotten about the loaf of bread she nicked

from the kitchen counter and totally devoured. She is focused on her waiting and she knows with every wag of her tail that a joyful reunion is going to take place.

My hope and prayer is that we can find the time and the space to prepare our hearts to greet our Lord, even as we string the lights

and launder the sheets for the guest bed. May our eager expectancy and prayerful waiting guide and inform all of the care and preparation we put into the events of the holiday season.

—Lindsay †



also been a pleasure to come to know the other candidates in this election, and I have been blessed to be included in their company. It is a poignant and powerful thing to find that one is the bearer of the hopes of others, and each of us who accepted nomination for this election has had that learning, been lifted up by the love and prayers of many, and felt the weight of that responsibility. I am thankful for each of the candidates with whom I made this journey, and for the faith, courage and grace with which they have adorned our diocese and our election. May God continue to shower them with every blessing. I believe that it is especially a privilege to be with the church in uncertain times. It is the greatest gift to face challenges which

surpass our ability and understanding, for it is only then that we learn what it really means to trust God. We are in a season in which so much of our common life, the life and health of so many churches, and the resources on which our ministries and our mission have depended, can no longer be taken for granted. The challenges with which we will contend in this next chapter of our life will test us, but I am certain that, God being our helper, we will prevail over fear and doubt and by the witness of a courageous faith give glory to God. I thank the clergy and people of New York for inviting me to lead them into that wonderful future, and I ask God's blessing on this, our great Diocese of New York." †

—Nicholas Richardson

From the Music Department

Reflections on Christ's Nativity, December 11, At 5:00 PM

OF COURSE, DECEMBER IS THE MONTH that really rattles the nerves of church musicians all over the world. Christmas is a big deal, theologically and musically. There are just huge amounts of music that have been written for Christmas, and much of it of the greatest beauty. Here at St. Barnabas we try to tap into this wondrous repertoire, and, in so doing, incur our share of hard work and frazzled nerves.

Reflections on Christ's Nativity, our annual lessons and carols service, will be held on **Sunday, December 11 at 5:00 PM**. As most of you know, this "lessons and carols" is not the standard one done by many churches. Our "lessons," are not only from the Bible,

but also extend into a large realm of other poetry -- old and new, sacred and secular. In so doing, it extends our thoughts much more on the meaning of the birth of Christ and its significance in the Christian experience of life.

Once again **David Nicholson** has selected the readings for this year's program. These readings are mostly 20th century authors -- Richard Wilbur, Madeleine L'Engle, Dylan Thomas, D. H. Lawrence, Robert Frost, and several others. They speak of life -- sorrow, pain, excitement, joy, laughter.

The music is meant to compliment the readings. There will be a piece by Mendelssohn. (Can you ever go wrong with Mendelssohn?) English composers will be represented by Geoffrey Bush and John Rutter. As many of you know by now, Rutter is a contemporary composer, but he writes in a most appealing style. He is particularly noted for his fine arrangements of traditional carols (We will have a French carol to sing.) and his original composing. We will sing what is probably his newest published composition.

We will have some Americana with a rollicking arrangement of a hymn dating

from around 1800, and I have found a little gem of a choral piece by William Grant Still. Still (1895-1978) was an African-American composer with more than 150 compositions to his credit. "He was the first African-American to conduct a major American symphony orchestra, the first to have a symphony performed by a leading orchestra, and the first to have an opera performed by a major opera company." His piece is a small beauty. And there will also be music by several other composers.

It should be an enlightening and enjoyable afternoon. Come; bring friends, bring neighbors.

Christmas Eve

There will be some wonderful Advent music as a prelude to a lovely Christmas Eve. If you are going to have Christmas music and instruments, what could be better than a harp or a flute! We will have both! **Ruth Armato**, harp, and **Sandy Miller**, flute, will play on this occasion by themselves and to accompany our carols, hymns and our other vocal music.

Again, it should be a beautiful Christmas Eve in the St. Barnabas style. †

—**Donald Butt**

■ ■ ■ BRIEFS & BULLETINS ■ ■ ■

A reminder to donors who make gift distributions from security accounts:

If you are planning to transfer securities or cash, please let the office know what type of stock, how much, and for what year, so we can correctly credit your gift. If you have questions, please call the office (591-8994).

Staff Christmas Gifts

If you would like to donate to staff Christmas gifts, please make your check to the Church of St. Barnabas and mark "Staff Gifts" in the memo and deliver it by **December 20th** to the attention of the Rector.

Memorial Flowers at Christmas

If you would like to give flowers this Christmas in memory of loved ones, flower envelopes are available in the church and McCormack Lounge. Please deliver the envelope to the St. Barnabas office by **December 20th**. A

large envelope is attached to the office door to collect flower envelopes.

Pledge envelopes

If you request pledge envelopes for 2012, they will be available for pick-up before the end of the year in the ushers' alcove in the Church.

Bible Study in Advent:

Advent Through the Eyes of Those Who Waited; Wednesdays at 11:30 in the Lounge

During Advent, we are going to study the Scriptures leading up to Jesus' birth. First, the prophets in the book of Isaiah present us with the idea of waiting and preparing for the Messiah--our work for Advent. Next we meet John the Baptist who announces the coming of the Messiah. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the main subject of sessions three and four. Protestants, until recently, have not given her much consideration, but we have much to

learn about patience and courage from the mother of Jesus. Finally, we learn from Elizabeth about how to accept a blessing so long in coming that it is no longer expected. Come to any or all of these classes!

Jesse Tree Sunday, Dec. 11th

The 10 o'clock service will be an interactive, intergenerational service where everyone participates in telling the stories that lead up to the first Christmas through the decorating of our Jesse Tree.

Please join us for fellowship and conversation!

Dinner on **Friday, December 2nd at 7:30 p.m.** or Sherry and Tea on **Sunday, December 4th at 4:00 p.m.**

Nora and Lindsay will facilitate a conversation about angels and angelic messengers. It's sure to be lively and fun. Sign Up sheets are in McCormack Lounge. †

2011 Clothing Sale

THIS YEAR THE CLOTHING SALE WAS held one week earlier than in the past, but our enthusiastic customers still came out in droves. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the 16th annual Clothing Sale another huge success. Despite the fact that the economy is still in tough shape and people are still so careful about what they spend, we have grossed approximately \$54,000 to date. Many customers commented how much they appreciated the great bargains! If we all pay our IOUs we may even inch up a bit more so please be sure to do your part and pay your IOU promptly. Once we determine all of our income and expenses we will then know the total amount of money that will be available for our outreach grants (see below about the grants process.)

The benefits of the sale

We should all be very proud that our church is able to hold such a tremendous event that benefits so many.

Our parish benefits by being able to provide so much in the way of outreach to community organizations. To date we have been able to give back over \$360,000 in grants. We also benefit from the opportunities created for fellowship with parishioners and non-parishioners who work on our behalf. We might not otherwise get to know some of these people as working side by side with someone is a completely different type of fellowship than we experience at our regular coffee hour for example. Further, the sale creates the perfect opportunity for non-parishioners to enter our beloved St. Barnabas and experience us in action through our words and deeds.

Our customers benefit from the terrific bargains they receive on their purchases. To some the hunt for the perfect



Betsy Wilson helps out in the Sale's Christmas department.

piece is a thrill (and who doesn't love a good deal?) and to others the need for clothing at bargain prices is a necessity.

Local charitable organizations also

benefit directly by the donations of large quantities of clothing and shoes that are left over at the end of the sale. They then either sell or distribute the items to help their organization or the people they serve. Below is a summary of the groups that came to take the leftover clothes and how they will be used.

There is one woman who must be singled out for her tremendous efforts to get the clothing into the hands of those who are desperately in need. A wonderful woman named Mavis, a member of the Faith Deliverance Tabernacle in Yonkers and the founder of the Medical Outreach Mission (a non-profit organization helping to improve the standard of healthcare in our local communities and the Caribbean) came on Monday after the other organizations had a chance to select items that would fit their needs. She arrived with her grandson and said she would take everything else that was left. We were immensely grateful as one of the major goals of this sale is to get usable, good

Where did the unsold clothes go?

On Monday, 11/15 representatives from many organizations came in to take unsold clothing. Clothing went to:

- **IFCA (Interfaith Council for Action), Ossining.** IFCA seeks to sustain community, diversity, and opportunity through affordable/workforce housing and vital social services in the communities it serves. They will distribute clothes to the people they serve as well as sell some items in their thrift shop. Money raised in their shop supports their social services programs.

- **M.O.M. (Medical Outreach Mission) and Faith Deliverance Tabernacle, Yonkers.** Please read about this above!

- **Midnight Run, Dobbs Ferry.** Clothes gathered will be distributed on upcoming runs to NYC.

- **"Pathways to Success", the Vive School, Yonkers Public School System.**

They provide interview-appropriate clothing to both male and female students so that they are properly dressed for interviews and other employment-related activities.

- **The Nearly New Shop of the Junior League of Westchester-on-Hudson, Tarrytown.** The Nearly New Shop, operated by the Junior League, is a fundraiser for the League and proceeds from the shop support the community projects of the Junior League.

- **Temple Gate Fellowship Church, Guyana.** Pastor Carl Webster Sobers sends large donations of clothing and shoes to his church and other area churches in Guyana where they are distributed to people in need.

- **"Changing Winds", South Dakota Native American Reservations.** A local community member comes to select clothes that are shipped to the Changing Winds organization. Changing Winds then distributes clothes on reservations where some of the most dire poverty exists in our nation.

- **Groundwork Hudson Valley, Yonkers.** New to us this year, Groundwork is an organization that works through area churches and other local organizations to help create healthy communities which can then in turn help to create healthy physical environments in which to live. The churches affiliated with Groundwork are involved with communities in Yonkers and Mt. Vernon that provide many social services.

Have you paid your IOU?

If you used an IOU sheet for clothing, the Christmas room or the Café, please be sure to pay it as soon as possible so we can finalize the numbers. The IOU sheets are in the main office and you can leave your check with Sue Stanley. Please be sure to write "Clothing Sale IOU" in the memo line and to mark your IOU as "paid" in the book. Thanks!

quality clothing into the hands of people who need it. As I was helping her bag clothes she said to me, "You all would be shocked to see the level of need that's out there." She then added, "You also have no idea what you do by providing all of these clothes for free to the people."

Mavis and her church open their doors several times during the winter and give away the clothes that we give her to the people in her surrounding community who are most in need. Of course we could not do this without people like Mavis who are called by God to be on the frontlines of helping. In 2008 Medical Outreach Mission honored St. Barnabas at a dinner for what we give to them. Often times it seems to me that should be turned around the other way. The next time you are outside the choir room have a look at the plaque hanging on the wall to the right of the door. This is the plaque that St. Barnabas received when we were honored. It makes me think about how what we do impacts those whom we may never see nor meet.

Thank you to all the workers!

Of course, none of this great work could happen without all of our dedicated workers. The list of names is too long to include here so we send our sincerest thanks to everyone who helped to set-up, hang posters, haul big black bags, ticket, price and hang clothes, sort shoes, straighten the racks, bins and tables, empty the dressing room, cashier, pack, greet our customers, help our shoppers, and count the money. Thank you to everyone who donated clothes and other items and who encouraged their friends to donate to us. Thank you to the Christmas Crew for bringing seasonal cheer to the sale



Above: Natalie Moore sells treats to the shoppers in the Clothing Sale Café.



Left: (left to right) Elvina Schullere, Brenda Horrell, and brother Drew Horrell staffing the Men's Department.

crazy work weeks. Last but certainly not least, huge thanks go to Thomas Richardson who is a jack-of-all-trades extraordinaire! This event truly is a team effort.

What's next?

We will once again hold the Annual Clothing Sale Dinner (date to be determined) where we will review and vote on the slate of grant applications. All are welcome to attend this dinner, so watch for more details to come.

It is so gratifying that we are able to hold this phenomenal outreach event right in our own parish – an event that helps people and charities in our local communities and beyond. Thank you!

**—Cathy Hansen &
Linda Pierpont, Co-Chairs**

and to the Café Crew for running our Shopper's Café and keeping the workers and shoppers well fed! Thank you to everyone who helped to keep our Café well-stocked with delicious homemade soups, bread and baked goods. Thank you to Sue Stanley once again for all of her support and good cheer amid two

The Grants Process

After Thanksgiving grant applications will be available in the church office and anyone is welcome to submit an application. Ideally we seek applications on behalf of local community organizations where there is a connection with one of our parishioners and where our money can make a difference in the organization. The deadline for receiving applications will be made public and after that date a committee of approximately six parishioners will meet to review the applications and make a proposal for where and how our money will be distributed most effectively. The official slate of proposed grants is then presented at the Clothing Sale dinner. People in attendance at the dinner may discuss the slate and ask questions, and then ultimately vote to approve a slate. Applications are not guaranteed to be approved but we do try to reach out to a wide variety of organizations where our money can make an impact.

InCommon

**The Church of St. Barnabas
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MISSION STATEMENT: The Church of St. Barnabas, Irvington is a Christian community, grounded in the Episcopal tradition, which celebrates the love of Christ through regular worship, fellowship and music. Our goals are to grow in faith, both within ourselves as individuals and by welcoming others from a variety of backgrounds and stages of life, and to reach out and share God's abundant gifts with others.

Best wishes for a blessed Christmas season

