

ASSISI-NEWS – APRIL 2009



*In the US with “the Spirit of Assisi”
The White House seen from Pennsylvania Avenue, 9th March 2009*

Dear Assisi-friends,

During these first days of April, as I start writing this *ASSISI-NEWS*, spring has in earnest announced its arrival in Umbria. The sun is shining from a clear blue sky and temperatures reach up to around 20 degrees Celsius during the day. Forsythia and other early flowering bushes and trees have almost ceased flowering, while all sorts of beautiful green shades are appearing in the form of bushes, trees and in fields, where cereals already stood at the height of 20cm by the middle of April. The green spaces are embellished by millions of little yellow, red, blue, purple and white flowers, while the birds chirp as if in intense joy that the light now in earnest has returned to our northern hemisphere.

In the subsequent days it turned warmer and warmer, and the deep and very uplifting Easter retreat in Assisi was thus this year additionally blessed with steady spring weather full of sun and warmth, and it was as if nature’s miracles unfolded right before us.

Of course Easter in Italy was marked by the big earthquake, followed by several big aftershocks, which hit the area of L’Aquila, approximately 100 km south of Assisi. Admittedly Italy is used to these natural disasters and a huge rescue effort was therefore quickly underway. It will carry on for some time with up to 50,000 people being temporarily re-housed. Several people in Denmark have sent me concerned emails and so I can report that Assisi wasn’t damaged, even though we felt the tremors. Of course this doesn’t make the

tragedy any less for the thousands of people affected, and in the Easter group we did hold a service to strengthen the inner support from the Angelic Kingdom to the area.

In the US with *"the Spirit of Assisi"*

As I shortly relayed in the last issue of *ASSISI-NEWS*, the month of March was marked by a longer absence from Assisi, which was a trip for almost three weeks to the US with *"the Spirit of Assisi"*. It was an exceptional trip, and this *ASSISI-NEWS* is therefore dedicated to the US and the role of the vast country as a reformer of civilization, which has again been revived after the election of Barack Obama. As this is a longer story the usual account of life in Assisi has been omitted from this newsletter.

The account of the US-trip is partly a recount of the travel diary, which I shared during the trip with the group that consciously accompanied me on the inner levels, plus some subsequent reflections:

After staying one day in Rome and spending inspirational time with Fr. John Kapenda OFM Conv. from Zambia (*ASSISI-NEWS*, August 2008) I was taken to the airport early on Sunday morning by a cheerful brother from "Seraphicum", a Franciscan monastery in Rome, where I had spent the night.

In the separate airport terminal for travellers to the US and Israel I was, not surprisingly, met by the comprehensive security checks which have been introduced after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. The checks, carried out by friendly security staff, included many thorough interviews concerning the purpose of my trip, why I was travelling back via Frankfurt, if I had packed the bags myself, etc and my visa and passport were thoroughly examined by four or five different security staff members on the way out to the aircraft. However, everything went well and I made it out to the plane.

The big aircraft was full to the brim, but as I had a window seat I could easily follow what was going on during the 10 ½ hours flight from Rome to Washington. We travelled in the direction of the sun and in the continuous daylight I therefore had a beautiful view of the earth, when it wasn't occasionally covered by clouds, and I could follow our route on the little TV screen which each passenger had access to.

The purpose of the trip was to bring *"the Spirit of Assisi"* to the US as a mainly invisible inner work of intensifying and spreading the divine vibrations and streams which, according to the inspiration, is beneficial especially now that the US, headed by Obama, is given intense spiritual help to return to a course where the great nation takes on a role as carrier and reformer of civilization. On the outside I was on my own in this mission, but not on the inner level. We were a group of 25 people – we call it "the Group of Shepherds" – who had taken particular responsibility for this mission by daily, during the entire trip, consciously to be available for the inner divine collaboration, which from the Kingdom of God was furthered at exactly that time. The work turned out to be so intense and demanding, due to the great spiritual attention, that many members of the group had to withdraw from most external activities and just give over to the intense burning divine inflow day and night.

The inner work during the flight and arrival in Washington

The inner work started already when the flight departed from Rome and it was for me quite notable. We flew approximately two hours north until we came to the southern part of England. During this part of the trip it was easy to "create the track" from Assisi because we are many who repeatedly travel between Denmark, Norway, Rome and Assisi, where we have been utilised for this work. These first hours of the trip were therefore more of a deepening of

the work, which had already been carried out. I sensed it as if there was already established not just a track, but a wide lightpath.

When the plane changed direction towards the northwest it became differently demanding, and I had to give up being present on the outer level in order for me to turn inwards and be quiet for the inner work. We flew diagonally across England, Ireland and up towards Greenland, which we got very close to the southern tip of. After this we changed direction for southwest and flew over the completely snow and ice covered Alaska and Canada, after which we continued over the northern part of the US in order for us to land in Virginia's international airport, Dulles, which is approximately 50 km from Washington.



*Washington with the US Capitol in the centre of the photo
Behind the Congress building is the Mall, which ends at Lincoln Memorial
In the foreground at the right is the powerful US Supreme Court*

Following the long and tiring flight the further safety checks and delivery of fingerprints on arrival was a trial. However this was over and done with relatively quickly and the friendliness of the security staff was a relieving experience, just as the brilliant sunshine helped to brighten up the mind. Following a tremendous snowstorm just a week earlier, with temperatures far below freezing, it was now almost summer temperatures in Virginia. In the airport 25 degrees humid heat hit me and so my winter coat and boots seemed completely out of place, but turned out to be very useful later during the stay at the US east coast. Two of the sisters from my order awaited me at the airport, and I was therefore in good company during the approximately 45 minutes drive to the convent. Curiously I looked around and was particularly hit by how varied the architecture of the houses was and by how the US, at least in this area, seems to be lacking behind Europe when it comes to the way of supplying power. Heavy, tilting wooden pylons and extremely thick power cables, which are evidence of the huge American power consumption, run alongside most streets with thousands of “connectors” into the houses. It appeared as a huge and not very pretty mess of cables, which must be extremely vulnerable to the many storms that also tear through this area of the US east coast, even though the damaging hurricanes have lost some of their force by the time they get this far north. As mentioned, Washington's big international airport, Dulles, is situated in the state of Virginia. During the approximately 50 km we also came into contact with the state

of Maryland before reaching the “District of Columbia” – the area that makes up the capital of the US, and which isn’t a federal state, but belongs to the federal Congress.



The main building of the convent of “Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement” in Washington

The first time I caught sight of my sisters’ house after the drive, I felt a rush of inner joy, and it was as if an old bond of love came alive. I felt as if I was taken back about 150 years – to the southern States. I saw before me Scarlett O’Hara and Rhett Butler coming to meet me, and scenes from “Gone with the Wind” came alive inside me. The main building at my order’s convent in Washington is indeed a typically beautiful, well-off southern state estate with white columns at the entrance which support a terrace on the second floor above the entrance. Also the library and the many little rooms are stately spaces with beautiful antique furniture, lamps and curtains and the beauty and cosiness spreads from here to the rest of the convent. I sensed thus, that I had come to the perfect place for my inner work and my enthusiasm was even greater because the convent is furthermore peacefully situated on the outskirts of the city, at the northeast side of Washington, in a very beautiful setting on a range of hills surrounded by numerous monasteries and churches. The enthusiasm continued for the entire eight days while I was in Washington. This northeast area makes up a small holy area in the pulsating city and because of the many churches and religious houses it is called “Mini Rome”. There is a lot of Mary-vibration just around my sisters’ convent and close to this is a very beautiful centre for culture dedicated to Pope John Paul II, which I also sensed as very influenced by Mary. The closest building is a beautiful orthodox church with golden onion domes and the Catholic Church’s national shrine in the US, the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, is also close by together with a number of other monasteries, churches, Catholic universities and seminars.



The White House seen from the Southside on 9th March 2009

The work around the White House

The most important mission in the US was and is to support the inner work for the White House, which is intensively sought promoted after Obama and his staff have moved in. Therefore I had decided that, even though I would probably be tired after the long trip, I had to go to the White House already the day after my arrival. Immediately after breakfast the leader of the convent willingly drove me into town and the entire first day in Washington was therefore marked by the moment when I first looked through the railing surrounding the White House, which was a very moving experience for me. Several months' inner and outer preparation had now become a reality and in the brilliant sunshine with 20 degrees in the sun, I stood – and “the Group of Shepherds” with me on the inner level – in that spot, where our inner work was to be focused. I took in the incredibly beautiful, shining palace, built by the first president of the US, George Washington. In a very big flourishing park, where a squirrel was so tame that it sat by the railing and begged for food, lies this magnificent palace with many wings, which is if anything a house symbolising the grandeur of the United States and the power of the American president. On this first day I spent three hours at the White House. Together with “the Group of Shepherds” I meditated in the park opposite the main entrance, where a big group of Tibetan refugees in colourful outfits quietly demonstrated to free Tibet from China. After the meditation I slowly walked in meditation all the way around the White House to draw a track, which would form a kind of firewall around the inner work in the shape of a grail, made from the golden love of Christ, which is under intensification inside/around the house. It was intense burning inner work with fire, which nevertheless was “softened” on this first day by the compassionate love of Christ and the beautiful, embracing stream of the Sacred Heart of Mary and Jesus.



In the park opposite the White House was a group of Tibetans gathered in a quiet demonstration for a free Tibet

Despite the tightened security measures following 9/11, with police everywhere around the house and access roads which are heavily guarded, I was surprised how close we can get to the White House which is only approximately 100m inside the park from the north side by Pennsylvania Avenue. The stream of people, especially from the building which contains the Oval Room and to the main building, was obvious from where I was standing. I don't know with certainty if Obama was at home at that moment, but it was easy for me to sense how he works in the high, creative consciousness, which can comprehend and find the solutions to the big, complicated problems which he, the US and the world as such, has inherited from the former administration.

The grandeur and almost majestic beauty of America can be sensed intensely in Washington, and not at least by the White House. Already on this first day in Washington, when the sister drove me through the city, I had a sense of the beauty of Washington with its broad avenues, big flourishing parks, numerous monuments and museums from the changeable history of the US and the world, together with the extremely well kept beautiful government and administration buildings, which are to be found everywhere in the city centre. The seed to the human brother-sisterhood is – as is the case all over the US – also obvious in Washington. In the busy city centre, people of all races walked around and their noble business dress revealed how all these races worked side by side in the capital. The population of Washington city centre is approximately 600,000, rising to around seven million when the suburbs are included. Some of these suburbs are amongst the most severe criminal environments in the US, and in one of these ghettos it is outright dangerous to move around due to the rough drugs- and gang violence. Even though all races seem to be represented and working side by side in Washington's city centre, it is still the case in the US, as in Europe, that the majority of Afro- and Latin Americans along with Asians work in jobs which are badly paid and less attractive. This is also the case in Washington, where I didn't see one single white taxi driver and the gardeners who next morning worked in the convent garden, had obviously all roots in Latin America. As is the case with most big cities in the US, Washington is a melting pot of

different races and cultures, which in our time continues to be expressed through tension and many conflicts.

The work around the White House continued during the subsequent days, as we in “the Group of Shepherds” had been asked to have main focus on this inner work. Throughout a number of days it was attempted to further a greater breakthrough so the divine inflow could make contact with the heart centre of the earth. A few days later I dwelled again for four or five hours as close to the White House as I could get, just like I again walked all the way around the building. Great was the joy in “the Group of Shepherds” that this breakthrough succeeded after the preceding six days of very intense, burning inner work. A number of us received very uplifting inspirations and impressions of how Christ, as the great Lord of Love, had now really “captured” the White House with such a strong and golden fire of love, that the Golden House seems a more fitting name in the future for this beautiful mansion.



Statue of Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial

Tour of Washington with the Lincoln Memorial

As the track to the White House had been forged on the first day during my stay, I could dedicate more time to stay at the convent, since a lot of work could take place from here. But already the second day in Washington was enriched by one of the sisters inviting me on a tour of the city.

The tour of the city in very charming buses, which looked like the early American busses, was a realisation of the last inspiration I received before the departure. This showed how golden tracks were to be forged the length and breadth of Washington. In an intensely burning inner work we rode the length and breadth of Washington with two longer stays, namely by the Lincoln Memorial and the US’s national church, the Anglican National Cathedral of Washington. From this cathedral the presidents are buried and a special service is held the day after the inauguration of a new president, including a service on 21st January this year, where Barack and Michelle Obama were the guests of honour. As was inspired before the departure, the Lincoln Memorial was a place of divine inflow marked by embracing,

compassionate love, and it was very moving to read Abraham Lincoln's visionary speech in Gettysburg during the American Civil War while standing by the big statue of him. The mild weather from the previous day had changed, and the big beautiful memorial for Lincoln which ends the Mall, was cold from the wind from the Potomac River, which winds its way past. We still managed an hour of inner work in this place before we continued towards the north-west part of Washington, where the National Cathedral is situated.

We drove through one interesting part of the city after another. In Washington no house is permitted to be taller than the dome of the US Congress, and therefore there was a good view of the many buildings and roads of the city. It hit me how incredibly much more beautiful Washington must be in the spring, summer and autumn. There are simply trees everywhere and Washington is especially famous for its thousands of Japanese cherry trees especially planted alongside the river. Never have I seen a city with so many trees – not an avenue, boulevard or street are without trees, and I sensed strongly how Washington has all the seeds to be the shining center, from where all of the US is lifted in consciousness, as it was shown in the preliminary inspirations for the US mission.



*US Capitol on 11th March 2009
The House of Representatives is to the left. The Senate to the right (outside the picture)*

US Capitol

The third day in Washington was dedicated to the stay at the third point of focus for the divine inflow which we had been asked to work with during the preliminary inspirations, namely Capitol Hill, which houses the US legislative assembly, the Congress consisting partly of the Senate and partly of the House of Representatives. The leading sister at the convent was my excellent guide and after a stay at the US Supreme Court, which is situated behind Capitol Hill, she took me inside the Congress, where we joined a small group which had a special tour. After having watched a very inspiring film in a beautiful cinema, which introduced us to the history behind this highest legislative chamber in the US, we crisscrossed through most of the big building. When I stood in the old senate room where the fathers of the constitution agreed upon the constitution of the US, which was ground-breaking at its time, it was to me as

if old memories had come alive. Also in the old Supreme Court, I could almost see and sense the judges with their white-powdered long curly wigs deciding some of the earlier times' big controversial questions. We were also high up inside the dome in a magnificent round room which was covered in marble and decorated with beautiful paintings and statues of famous presidents and senators from the early years of the US history. It is interesting that the US Congress building is built as a huge church with several domes for the divine inflow. The main inflow goes down through the big dome, which is known around the world as one of the symbols of Washington and the government power of the US.

The Congress building of the US isn't less than impressing and of a majestic beauty. Marble, beautifully carved wood, paintings and statues are simply everywhere and inside the building I sensed a living inner connection to the higher ideals of democracy, freedom and equality, which the constitutional fathers of the US, as the first in world history, included in the constitution so ground-breaking for its time. Also the later substantial supplements were similarly ahead of any other country in the world, including Europe, which didn't have as much as a trace of democracy at that time. The strength of these seeds for higher ideals is clearly felt inside the Congress – even if the following approximately 200 years have been very difficult with regards to manifesting and upholding the ideals. It was – as at the White House two days before – a very big and inspiring experience for me to be on Capitol Hill.



The room inside the dome at US Capitol

At the end of the visit and the inner work inside the Congress itself, we walked all the way around the big building and I therefore also saw it from the other side, where Obama a month and a half earlier had been sworn in as the 44th president of the United States of America. Afterwards we strolled partway down the Mall, where the approximately two million people witnessed Obama's inauguration on that freezing cold day in January. During our trip down the Mall the weather from the previous day had changed again to sunshine and mild temperatures, and great was my joy to experience how the first magnolia trees were blooming. The Mall is surrounded by about 20 museums which are part of what is called the Smithsonian Institute. They are splendid, very beautiful buildings, which seem to cover

almost anything that can be exhibited, but after the visit to the Congress there was only strength enough left for a shorter visit at the museum for the Native Americans (the Indians and Eskimos). This museum was also incredibly beautiful – both inside and out, with all details taken care of. The museum was so impressive in its communication of history and present times that I have to visit it again next time I come to Washington. All the museums of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington are completely free to visit, by the way, so if you have several weeks for visiting museums there is an abundance of them in the US capital, without ever having to open your purse.



US Capitol from the westside, where Obama was sworn in

Meeting with the “Fellowship Foundation” behind the “National Prayer Breakfast”

Before going to USA I received some “inner” impressions, which meant I wrote to some of Father Mizzi’s American contacts, whom I had either met here in Assisi, or whom I knew of because of his mention of them and my later written communication with them. This meant that a further interesting task was added to the programme. The “Fellowship Foundation” group, which organizes and sponsors “the National Prayer Breakfast” in Washington D.C., invited me to lunch at the foundation’s headquarter in Washington. “The National Prayer Breakfast” has been held since 1953 as an annual series of meetings between the president of the US, other politicians and well-known personalities together with religious leaders from all over the world. In our time around 3,500 delegates, from over 100 countries, attend the main meeting which is held in one of Washington’s biggest meeting rooms. Throughout a number of years Father Mizzi travelled to these meetings every year, where he met, amongst others, President George Bush Senior and President Clinton, as well as many members of the US Congress and other notabilities and of course religious leaders from the World Religions. The main meeting always takes place on the first Tuesday of February, and on 3rd February this year – besides Tony Blair as a guest speaker - Barack Obama was the keynote speaker.

During this lunch in Washington at the “Fellowship Foundation” I was invited to talk about Father Mizzi and his mission to members of the foundation who knew and loved him. Otherwise I can tell that the group started its work in 1935 – in the middle of the big

depression – with the purpose of gathering a group of people, who did everything they could to help the suffering people during the depression. The group decided to do more, that is, to get together for prayer regardless of what political party they belonged to or religious background they had. In their joint prayer and meditation work they asked for inner support to work as “ambassadors for reconciliation” with Jesus as a role model and based on love for God and thy neighbour, for instance following the teachings of Jesus to love thy neighbour as thyself. In our times the mission of the group is particularly carried out through contact and interaction with the leaders of nations from many corners of the international community, with the vision that when the hearts of these leaders are touched, it will have a positive impact on the poor and oppressed children and young people in all the countries concerned. In the US the “Fellowship Foundation” forms support groups for members of Congress, business people, etc, just as they organize prayer groups for selected areas. In recent times these have worked in, amongst other places, the Pentagon and the Ministry of Defence. Many former prominent politicians have been linked to the foundation and in our time it is said that Hilary Clinton and Al Gore, as well as other high ranking senators and members of the House of Representatives, are linked to it.



The headquarters of the Fellowship Foundation in Washington

Fourth day in Washington was therefore dedicated to this task. In the continuously beautiful, sunny and mild weather I was driven, by one of the members, through Washington’s town centre and across the Potomac River to the beautiful hilly area of Washington called Georgetown where, by the way, the Pentagon and the famous Arlington cemetery, containing the graves of JF Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, are to be found. When I arrived at the headquarters of the “Fellowship Foundation” I had the same sense as when I arrived at the convent of my sisters a few days earlier. The property, which is situated in a big lush park, is truly a rich Southern State villa (a gift to the “Fellowship Foundation”), and again my thoughts went to Scarlett O’Hara and Rhett Butler. Also the inside of the house was nothing short of beauty and luxury everywhere, and when we were served a choice three-course dinner in the dining hall, on priceless china with silverware and crystal glasses, I felt almost out of place as a poor (and happy) Franciscan. But the people I met were open, warm,

humorous and very straight forward and the conversation around the table was nice and relaxed. All in turn shared their memories of Father Mizzi and at the end I had the floor, where I yet again found that what I said mattered less, and that the most important thing was to try to bring “*the Spirit of Assisi*” to this group and this house.

If you feel like reading Barack Obama’s beautiful speech, which focuses on spirituality, during “the National Prayer Breakfast” in February this year, you can access it on the following link:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/05/us/politics/05text-prayer.html?pagewanted=1&_r=2

In my continuous efforts to follow how Obama’s renewing work is going I have also come across the speech he held to the US Congress on the night of 25th February. It is the president’s annual keynote speech to Congress and the citizens of the US, where he outlines his vision for the nation. As usual it was a brilliant speech – direct, visionary and uplifting – and of course Obama received a big round of applause, just as the opinion polls show that support of and trust in Obama is increasing across the US population. You can read Obama’s entire speech on the following link if you are interested:

http://news.sky.com/skynews/Home/World-News/Barack-Obama-Full-Text-Of-US-Presidents-Address-To-Congress-Outlining-His-Vision-For-America/Article/200902415229149?lpos=World News First World News Article Teaser Region 1&lid=ARTICLE_15229149_Barack_Obama%3A_Full_Text_Of_US_Presidents_Address_To_Congress_Outlining_His_Vision_For_America

Proceeding to New York

It was with sadness and promises of returning that after eight days in Washington I said my goodbyes to the dear sisters whose care and attention at the lovely convent was a great help to me while I focused on the inner work. This Monday morning the weather in Washington was greyer than grey and during the approximately 400 km long drive the landscape continued in the same grey shades with almost endless field and wood areas, which bears witness to how incredibly big the US is. The journey on the Greyhound bus was marked by the intense inner work of drawing the track to make up the leg of the triangle between Washington and New York. During most of this trip I therefore spent most of the time just being quiet and focusing inwards. After four hours drive up through the states of Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey we reached the state of New York, where in the misty horizon I for the first time caught a glimpse of the Manhattan skyline with buildings, which looked like huge monuments reaching for the sky. After further half an hour’s drive through a large industrial estate outside New York City, we reached the peninsula of Manhattan through a tunnel under the river.

When I got off the bus I immediately sensed the strong contrast to the wonderful peace and majestic beauty, which characterize Washington, and which I had come to appreciate. The noise and hectic life of New York hit me in such a way that my first impression was, that this is one of those cities, amongst many others, that I don’t feel very good in. The houses are so tall that you can only glimpse the sky by looking straight upwards. In the relatively narrow street where I found myself, pedestrians were rushing from place to place and there were cars everywhere in a chaotic, noisy confusion, particularly the yellow taxis that New York is known for. However, I had an uplifting experience of the fact that also the New York Americans are friendly and helpful as I needed to find my way from the bus station on Manhattan to the big central train station. An obviously poor afro-American guided me helpfully towards a cab, where another afro-American, with roots in Ghana, smiling and

chitchatting drove me the relatively few streets to Grand Central Terminal. At Grand Central another afro-American smilingly helped me to get a ticket and to find the right train.



The Statue of Liberty and the Manhattan Skyline

I had been asked to call my sisters at Graymoor so they could pick me up at the station, but my mobile phone didn't work. This was a tricky situation. On the train there were some American men, with roots in Ireland, who willingly called the convent on their mobile phone and helped me with the suitcases to the place in front of the station where a sister would pick me up. As this took longer than expected a friendly Latin-American lent me their mobile phone so another call could assure me that I was in the right spot.

The welcome at Graymoor, my order's mother-convent, was just as heartfelt as in Washington. There are approximately 70 sisters at Graymoor, and all knew that I, their only Scandinavian lay sister, would be coming on my first stay. I received so many heartfelt hugs, with wishes of a good stay, that I can't remember all the names of the happy, very smiling and humorous sisters, and a welcome committee of sisters guided me around the big area of the convent, which lies in an opulent, luxuriant nature, on a small mountain surrounded by ravines and other forest clad mountains.

Graymoor is indeed a sacred place with vibrations, reminiscent of Assisi – especially Holy Spirit and Mary & Jesus Sacred Heart vibrations, while I didn't sense the intense and burning vibrations which are in an inflow of the golden Christ. I sensed immediately that the abundant nature is so alive from nature's inner beings that a natural grail is created here, and the inspiration, which I received on that same day, gave several surprising impressions of the significance of this grail for both Washington and New York. The convent's many different buildings are kept in beautiful beige colours with dark brown woodwork, which matches the original buildings from the opening by the two founders back in the 1800s, and the new big church is very simply laid out with huge windows out towards the scenery. In the large park statues of especially Mary (the Lady of the Atonement, who appeared to Mother Lurana, the female founder of the order), but also Jesus, St Francis and St Clare are to be found around

the place. The many rooms in the convent buildings are furnished beautifully for their purpose, and the retreat house consists of the cosy rooms of an American home with comfortable furniture. My little room was nothing short of charming, and I felt how Graymoor is a perfect place for healing the tired inner bodies after the intense work of fire in Washington. As the very grey Monday weather had now changed to sunshine and about 16 degrees Celcius after a frosty night, it was very noticeable that spring was also now on its way to Graymoor.



Some of the convent buildings at Graymoor

Inner work in New York at Ground Zero and the UN building

An early morning shortly after arriving at Graymoor one of the sisters accompanied me on my first daytrip to New York City. It was brilliant sunshine with such lovely spring warmth on this day, that we, along with the New Yorkers, took off our coats and enjoyed the sunshine. It was a day marked by “track-work” criss-crossing Manhattan with visits at some of the locations of divine inflow, which had been inspired prior to the trip. We started off with a boat trip from Manhattan’s Southern tip to Staten Island, where we passed closely by the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island and also had an incredibly beautiful view of New York’s skyscrapers. From here it was possible to get an overview of the many neighbourhoods, which make up New York City on both sides of the East River and the Hudson River, which separate Manhattan from the other town districts.

After the boat trip we strolled a few kilometres on Downtown Manhattan to an old warehouse, South Street Seaport, with magnificent views of Brooklyn Bridge, probably the most famous bridge in New York, which we Europeans have seen in countless American films. After eating our lunch in the lovely spring weather by the water, we strolled further down Wall Street where we hailed one of the thousands of yellow taxis, which almost take up all of New York’s streets. We were taken to Ground Zero, where I was absorbed in the inner work for the next hour and a half. Ground Zero itself is today a building site with cranes and a non-transparent railing, but the closest neighbour is a small Presbyterian church, St. Paul Chapel,

which played a big role following the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre. When the Twin Towers collapsed, all the surrounding skyscrapers were damaged and urgently had to be evacuated. But as by divine intervention this little church wasn't hit, even though it is situated even closer to the place than some of the other buildings that were damaged. St. Paul Chapel became a refuge for the several thousands of volunteers and rescue workers, where they could sleep, be silent, pray and recover after yet another heartrending effort digging through the rubble to find the dead.



The Ground Zero buildingsite seen from the small cemetery by St. Paul Chapel

It was a deeply moving experience for me to be on this spot, from where a shockwave in September 2001 went through all of mankind. Outside the church there are today a long row of pictures with text, showing the work at Ground Zero during the first six months. Together with a large group of young people, who were just as touched as I was, I passed all the pictures in quiet meditation and read the story – a story which bears witness to the fact that in the midst of all the pain, thousands of people came together to help. Also the church itself has become a place of pilgrimage, and contains many testimonies of those difficult months in the history of the US – a tragedy which deeply affected us all. I grieved on the behalf of all mankind, and felt the presence of Mary, with her embracing love, to such extent as if she was physically amongst us. I understood on a deeper level the inspiration which was given prior to the trip that in this place a compassionate, embracing love is being down-poured, which helps us to identify with each other and to feel the tie of love, which makes us brothers and sisters of the same family. Despite the suffering which happened in this place in 2001, I therefore also experienced that an outstanding help is given here these days, to open the layers in us that just wish for peace and love amongst people. It is uplifting that Ground Zero and this little humble church is continuously visited by millions of people, who in this way are enriched by the beautiful embracing love.



The inside of St Paul Chapel is filled with memories from the rescue mission following the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center

After the inner work at Ground Zero it was time to visit the other place of divine inflow in New York, the UN building. The queues were long outside the entrance, but Sister Eilish was worth her weight in gold on this trip. She deftly led us to the front of the queue because we weren't part of the groups of young students waiting, but just two Franciscans who wished to pray inside the UN building. We remained in the vestibule for about an hour (it's no longer possible to get inside the UN building itself – it has been closed since the 9/11 attacks). In the vestibule we sought to intensify a very beautiful inflow, which is both fiery, but which is also softened by streams I sensed as clarity and compassion. The inner work was like settling very beautiful, brilliant golden stars in the grail, which is beneath the UN building.



The UN Secretaries General in the vestibule of the tall FN building

Now it was late afternoon, and exhausted we went back to Grand Central in midtown Manhattan to get the train back to Graymoor. We were so tired while on the train that we missed our stop where a sister had arrived to pick us up and take us by car the last 20 km to the convent. We naturally had a lot of fun out of this situation. We almost managed to involve the entire train carriage in our blunder, and all our fellow travellers and the conductor sought kindly and with much humour to help us. We ended up staying on the train for two more stops while the sister in the car hurriedly tried to catch up with the train. She didn't succeed, and therefore we got an extra 15 minutes in the pleasant and typically American suburb, which lies closer to the convent.

All in all it was one of those days I remember with delight, despite the exhaustion after the demanding track- and inflow work. I developed a deeper impression of New York as a melting pot between races and cultures, and again I experienced so much warmth and helpfulness from all sides, taxi drivers, waiters, fellow travellers. It was an uplifting experience which gives hope to the development of New York as a place where people of all races, cultures and religions live side by side in ways that mirrors the diversity of how the physical life is expressed – without it causing harm or pain.

Inner work at the Statue of Liberty in New York

After a day of rest at the convent, I was again in New York City. It was snowing lightly and the temperature was just below freezing this early morning when I started out by car and then by train, and I thought spontaneously to myself: “Yes, what don't we do for the Kingdom of God instead of remaining in the tempting warm bed?” When I arrived at Grand Central Terminal on Manhattan an hour and a half later the snow had thankfully stopped, but I was still happy that I had brought my winter coat as it was cold by the sea. It is somewhat of an exercise in patience to get onto the ferry to Liberty Island, which is the name of the little island where the Statue of Liberty is situated. In Danish her name is “the Goddess of Freedom”, and when I told the sisters that we call the lovely lady a goddess they looked at me in wonder. They had never heard of this before, but she does look like a goddess who keeps the high ideals burning, doesn't she? Even though it is no longer possible to get inside the statue and climb up inside her head after 9/11, she is still such a sought-after tourist attraction that the queues to get on the ferry, after paying admission and going through a very strict security check, are enormous. It took approximately an hour to get onboard the ferry, but then it didn't take long before I was once again able to enjoy the beautiful view of Manhattan's skyline yet and to arrive at Liberty Island.

There is a wonderful atmosphere of light, clarity and overwhelming joy on Liberty Island and the inner connection to the high ideals of freedom are very apparent. After having walked all the way around the Statue of Liberty while meditating, I sat down by her feet at the time where we in “the Group of Shepherds” had agreed to be available for the inner work, which quite obviously was being poured down from high divine levels under Christ and highly vibrating universes of light. I had impressions of both golden love, which appeared as beautiful sparkling golden stars, being poured down together with a stream marked by great clarity and purity, which appeared as an immensely beautiful blue stream. Even though the inner work was demanding, it was also marked by much warm-heartedness and an uplifting vibration of joy.

It was a completely different experience to visit Ellis Island, which was the next stop for the ferry before it returned to the southern tip of Manhattan again. The buildings on Ellis Island are today laid out as a museum for the island, which was the gate to “The Land of Dreams” for millions of poor, suffering immigrants from Europe, and which came to seal their fate. All immigrants went through a strict approval process, where they for example were examined

both physically and mentally and many were, due to suspicion of contagious disease and similar, or just because of the mood of some random authoritative on that particular day, put on the first boat back to Europe again. For some the gate to the Promised Land opened, but for others it was closed again and they were sent back to an even poorer and more abysmal life in Europe, after they had sold all their belongings to buy the ticket to America.



The building on Ellis Island, which received the hopeful immigrants

Ellis Island, which by the immigrants was also called "the Island of Tears", is still deeply marked by the heaviness, which the shattered hopes and the deep desperation has planted in this place. It seemed to me as if there still isn't direct spiritual attention on transforming the heaviness of Ellis Island, and I felt that there wasn't focus on any particular inner work during my stay on the island. Maybe the place needs to be transformed through the divine inflow into the Statue of Liberty, when the time has come? In any case, I thought about the fact that the route of the boat-trip from Manhattan isn't right as it goes Manhattan – Statue of Liberty – Ellis Island – Manhattan. Even people that aren't particularly sensitive must feel the heaviness on Ellis Island, which at best can help them to get in contact with their own personal heaviness, after which there could be a lift at the Statue of Liberty – that is, if the route went to Ellis Island first.

The trip home

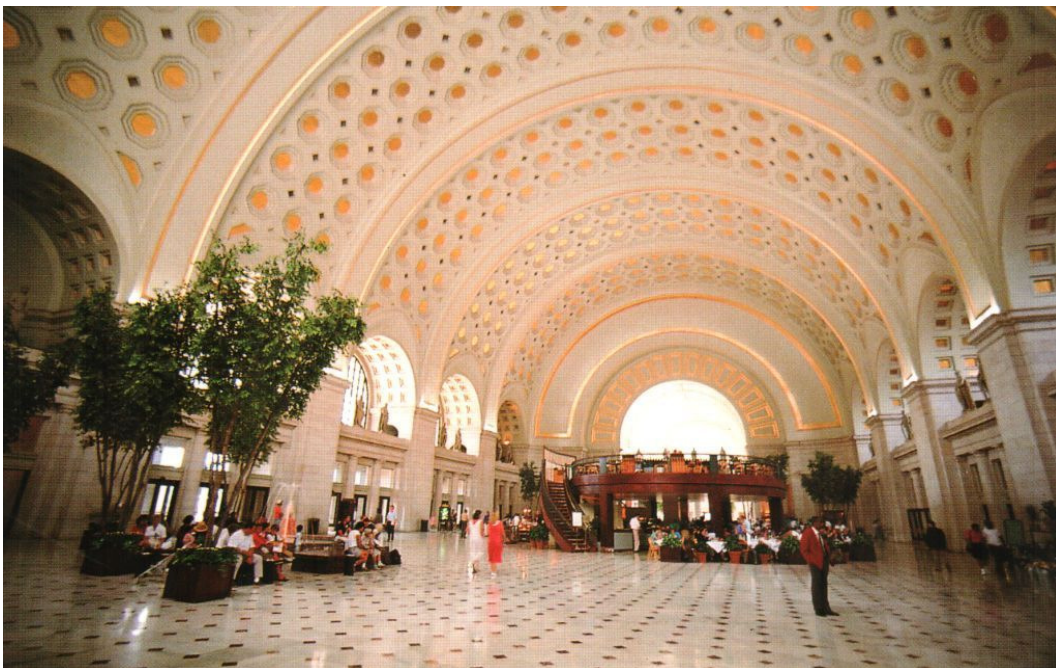
The last days in New York were primarily used for relaxing at Graymoor with intensification of the beautiful Grail of the Holy Spirit. The last day in the US I stayed close to the Atlantic Ocean, more specifically at the summerhouse of the sisters on Long Island, where the healing of the tired inner body continued. Late in the evening I was taken to J.F.K. airport to embark on the long trip back to Assisi, drawing the last leg of the triangle, which is the track between New York and the Assisi-grail.

Reflection

It was a trip which has given me much food for reflections both during the trip and also after I have returned home to Assisi. My reflections have especially concentrated on the inner work.

It was very uplifting to receive inspirations after returning home on how we succeeded beyond expectations, and that the inner support to Obama and his staff, through the grail in the White House, has been considerably strengthened. Of course this work continues.

My reflection is also about the US. I had a very moving impression of the magnificent country and a population, which I feel an inner love-connection to. Even though I only managed to see a fraction of the country during this trip, I managed to get a clear impression of its vastness. Washington's luminous beauty and New York's melting pot of races and cultures have made a big impression on me. Everything seems grandiose in the US – for better or for worse. Streets, houses, parks and cars are large, and this causes the well-known enormous level of energy consumption in the US. As an example of this is how both New York and Washington have lavishly beautiful central stations, respectively Grand Central Terminal and Union Station. They are magnificent, amazingly high ceilinged buildings with marble, decoration and beauty everywhere. Great was my wonder when I discovered that these buildings were heated to almost comfortable summer temperatures. I mentioned my surprise to one of the sisters, who looked at me in astonishment and answered “*But it is cold outside*”. When we went deeper into the dialogue regarding energy consumption for this heating, she said that it was a good thing that Obama and the new administration has focus on changing to more green energy, and that the awareness of the US population on energy consumption and renewable energy is increasing.



One of the great heated halls at Union Station in Washington

One of the other aspects of the US, which I think about, is the spontaneous warmth, helpfulness and hospitality which I met everywhere, not just in my order, where the warm welcome and helpfulness was almost overwhelming. When I am in a foreign country I like to move around on public transport, also on my own, because it is an opportunity to observe and talk to the “normal” population. No matter where I came into contact with people and despite what race, culture or social class, I was met with helpfulness and warmth which clearly bears witness to partly a beautiful quality in the American national soul, partly that people fundamentally feel like forming “proper human connections”.

I also had deeper conversations, not only with sisters and brothers, but also with several other people I met. When I told them that I had come to pray for the new administration, the US and the world following Obama's inauguration, and that a group of people from Denmark and Norway were involved in the inner work, they expressed great gratitude and emotion. Amongst those I met was a large group of young university students, who were staying at the convent in Washington. Under the guidance of their teachers these university students had taken a week out of their calendar for charity work in the community. They were all dressed in the same t-shirts, and every morning they went into Washington's poor neighbourhoods in small groups, to offer their assistance. The group was a mixed lot of afro-Americans, Latin-Americans, Asians and white Americans, and it was uplifting for me to experience their teamwork and enthusiasm for tackling the job. One evening I spoke more deeply with some of them. They expressed their great happiness and hopes for the possibility of positive change which the election of Obama has brought, not just in the American society, but also in the international community. They were almost ashamed of the American conduct during the last decade, not at least the past eight years, and much regretted the impression that we Europeans and the rest of the world had developed of the US during those years. *"We are many, who want and wish for the renewal, which means that we again start to live up to the higher ideals,"* was one of the young student's statement to me.

During the last days of my stay at the convent in Washington, a large group of Afro-American women arrived for an annual meeting to prepare the voluntary, ecclesiastical relief effort in their community. I had several uplifting conversations with some of these women, who naturally also expressed great happiness that Obama had been elected. Great was my love to these women as I participated in one of the Masses they held in the convent church. Dressed up in colourful outfits from the African continent they stroked up their hymns with such enthusiasm and joy, that it was as if the sun was shining more brightly at the entire convent. One of my sisters at the convent, who is of European descent, said with enthusiasm *"Afro-Americans have such a beautiful spirituality, which all of us can learn from,"* and I thought of how beautifully and diverse mankind expresses itself in the US. Naturally there are still difficulties with integration and extremist groups exist with strong race discrimination in the American society, however it is nevertheless enriched by diversity, which every one of us can learn much from.



*Meeting with Barack Obama at Union Station in Washington
Sr. Mary insisted on taking this picture since I didn't get to meet with Obama in the White House*

During Barack Obama's recent visit to Europe we all got an impression of how dedicated, cleverly and persistently the new administration works for the higher ideals. There were probably many of us who, in addition to being connected as an inner support, followed Obama's speeches and journey with interest around the G20 summit, at NATO, in the Czech Republic and in Turkey. My overall impression of this journey was that the impulse of renewal succeeded greatly during this first visit to Europe, and that it will rub off positively on all the heads of state, civil servants and other people, who took part in, or made themselves familiar with, the meetings.

It is obvious that there are enough challenges and issues to tackle, also in the American society. Just to mention an example: During my stay in the US I learned more about the big scandal surrounding the world's biggest financial institution, AIG, which recently paid outrageous bonuses to leading staff out of the taxpayers' money, which the new administration has pumped into the ailing company in the form of financial aid packages. The news media in the US talked about nothing else during those days and it seems as if the general public is feeling that enough is enough with the greedy financial world, which has sent the whole world economy into recession. Barack Obama thundered against this abuse of taxpayers' money and his Secretary of the Treasury is investigating the possibilities of taking legal action against the company, just as the House of Representatives in Washington sent out a clear signal, while I was in the city, by passing a law on 90% taxation of those bonuses with the purpose of returning the money to the Treasury.

It is very obvious that the battle against the greediness, which during the past 20 years has destroyed the US economy making the difference between the few rich and countless poor and the middleclass, into a gulf, has now in earnest been taken up by Obama and his staff. This egoism and irresponsibility has brought this great country, with the high ideals, onto a course where the ideals about the individual's freedom of a minority of already affluent Americans, is distorted into ruthless abuse.

Barack Obama spoke during this period repeatedly about the need for a complete change of attitude in the US and in the international community as a whole. To further this change in attitude it must be said that the recent G20-summit in London was a success, as one of the outcomes was an agreement to subject the free capitalism to controls and rules, which can counteract money being drawn from the population for personal gain.

During my stay in the US Obama, as the first president ever, gave an interview to the famous talk-show host Jay Leno, whose program is watched by the millions of Americans that normally don't read the newspapers. If you feel like reading a written recount of this talk-show, where Obama for instance talks about the important change in attitude which is needed in the American society, so that the vibrations from the great ideals and values in the constitution on a new level can feed the American national soul, you can find Obama's reflections during the talk-show, on this link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/20/us/politics/20obama.text.html>

Obama and his staff are brilliant at using the general media to spread and strengthen the impulse of renewal, and it is obvious that they are vibrating out into layer after layer of society, even though it will of course take time before the attitudes are changed. The White House has a homepage, which is daily updated and which, for instance, contains a description of what especially the president, but also the vice president and possibly other secretaries are working on. The president's weekly address to the nation has also been restored after Obama's arrival at the White House. Previously this was a radio broadcast. Together with

text, slide-shows and videos about the White House activities, for instance also about the trip to Europe, the weekly address is also available as a video on the home page. If you feel like staying up-to-date with the work of the new administration, you can visit the site on this link:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

To conclude this **ASSISI-NEWS**, which is dedicated to the impulse of renewal in the US and in the world as a whole, I would like to tell this sweet story, which a member of the **ASSISI MISSION** has sent me:

One of my good friends visited a family on the exact day that Obama's inauguration was transmitted on TV. It was a beautiful and solemn day, and I experience just as you write, that he brings hope, joy and vision – an order, which adjusts itself to the universal harmony. The little boy of just 5 years of age in the aforementioned family could of course not understand all that was happening on TV, but he sensed that something exceptional was being transmitted, and with wonder he asked during the transmission: "Has Jesus returned?"

Let us continue to be a tool for the visions of hope, renewal, unity and co-operation, which very clearly, almost as a wave of redemption, has started all over the world. Let us feed all that furthers trust, idealism and enthusiasm with the fundamental knowledge, that no challenge is too big for an individual or for mankind that seeks peace, co-operation and unity. The help, which flows to us these days from the Kingdom of God, will inspire us to both individual and collective solutions, which bring us further on the way in God's great plan of unity of all mankind.

Love – peace and all good from Assisi

Bente



This is how close we can get to the White House – the northside by Pennsylvania Avenue



*Pennsylvania Avenue, which is closed to vehicles in front of the White House.
The White House is to the right of the picture*

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