

**CONDOLENCE LETTER TO MY BROTHERS AT THE OUR LADY OF THE MONASTERY
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
CONYERS, GEORGIA**

"For you, I wait all day long." Psalm 25:5d NRSV

We the pastor, ministers, officers and members of the historic Pilgrim Baptist Church of Rockford, Illinois do humbly pause to mourn, honor and celebrate the life, ministry and legacy of Father Anthony Delisi. He was my wife's Marilyn and my spiritual father: always there to give us calm, steady advice and encouragement. We dearly love him and pray with you as you mourn his transition from this life to rest. I met Father Anthony in January, 1996, when I came to the monastery to fast, pray and seek God's direction. He was then the guest house master and was just completing his first book, "Waiting on God." We became fast friends and he asked me on the third day of my visit to write the foreword for the book. I was astonished at his invitation because he seemed so gruff toward me, initially. That was Father Anthony's way of testing relationships and guarding his soft, compassionate and endearing interior. From that time on, he became my spiritual Dad and the monastery become my most favorite place on earth! I dearly love all the brothers and cannot wait to see you again! Your home will always be my home!

Father Anthony was a public theologian: always giving sage advice and modeling what it meant to be a Christian. He was humble, frank, resourceful, thrifty, ingenious, loving, obedient, creative, fatherly, ecumenical, and most of all: a faithful man of God. He helped the monastery make the difficult transitions in leadership and strongly supported the stellar leadership of Father Francis Michael. He was everything the monastery and Rockdale County needed during challenging times! When he sensed the growing poverty level in Rockdale, he founded the food pantry and enlisted volunteers to serve the suffering people alongside him, weekly. He created a delicious fudge recipe which he used to raise funds! He worked with lay leaders all over the United States to establish resources to sustain the monastery's future. Like the Old Testament Joseph, Father Anthony was an awesome administrator and servant of God!

I marveled at how many roles and jobs that Father Anthony did so well! He led in worship, tended his garden, made fruit cakes and fudge, counseled people from all over the world, worked in the gift shop and museum, led multiple lectures and seminars, and encouraged people of all races, classes and religions. He was a man who used incarnational theology to lead others to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. I regret that I cannot attend his funeral due to leading a funeral at the church I pastor today. However, please know that Marilyn and I will keep you in our constant prayers and will send a \$1000 love offering to be used to purchase a brick inscribed: "In loving honor of our beloved Father Anthony Delisi." Father Anthony has truly fought the good fight and has finished his course and now he awaits his crown of righteousness.....

Humbly Submitted: your brother, fellow servant and friend in Jesus,
The Reverend Doctor Kenneth R. Board, Senior Pastor, Pilgrim Baptist Church, Rockford,
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