



the Seraph

News and Notables of
St. Bonaventure
Province

Issue #2 2024

A WORD FROM OUR PROVINCIAL

My dearest brothers, greetings and peace to you!



Please accept my apology for the long delay since our last *Seraph* newsletter. It is an important part of our tradition and a means of sharing our celebrations within the Province - especially for our friars who are not always able to be with us for them.

While email communications updating the Province on "This and That" have been consistent, nonetheless, I have enlisted support so that our newsletter will once again be issued regularly.

It was a tremendous blessing to have had my annual visit with our brothers down under where the Holy Spirit continues to move them in the many ministries and good works they do for the local church in Kellyville and Springvale/ Dingley Village. The Minister General issued a letter to our brothers wishing them every blessing during the time of

the annual Assembly and his apology that he could not be present due to other commitments. In his message, Carlos noted, "So many of our jurisdictions that were rich in vocations and active with exciting ministries have had to accept diminishment in some capacity due to manpower, age, health, and the changing times. The cycle of growth and retreat are simply part of life." He also encouraged the Delegation, "The time now is to come together with good will to actively plan for a future that will resolve many challenges especially during this 70th anniversary of your jurisdiction (1954-2024)."

The Province and Federation are not immune from this same "cycle of growth and retreat". However, after acknowledging some of our own bewilderment and disappointment that other men are not as inclined in this present age to join us in our pilgrimage in the Franciscan journey, I am deeply proud of our shared resolve to live our fraternal life with joy and hope, to help carry each other's crosses, and to give God the glory in the accomplishments He does through each of us as we share our time, talent, and treasure with each other in our shared mission

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Investiture of Novices

Above Novices and Provincials

Right: Novice James with Friar Paul Joseph & Novitiate Community



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and vision of living the Gospel life. Let us never forget our Order is a gift for the Church. May each of us never lose sight of the gift of our vocational call and give a grateful witness of it and “...powerfully bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every effort of faith, that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in him” (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

As we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints and the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, let us recall and give God thanks for all the many joys and gifts of our confreres and our family members whom we miss with great affection. In our holy longing to be united with them,

let us remember that for your faithful, Lord, life is changed not ended as the bonds that unite us together as a holy family are not broken with death. Let us trust in the immense goodness and power of God who turns the pain of death into a threshold and gift of everlasting life. May this upcoming season of Advent be a time to better prepare ourselves to one day cross that threshold mindful of the words of Saint Paul, “I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us” (Romans 12:18).

Peace and all good!

friar Paul Joseph



Friar Anthony Ruffolo renews his vows

Friar Anthony, spending his apostolic year at the Basilica of St. Josaphat, renewed his vows in the presence of the Friars, Parish staff and Parish Pastoral Council on July 11th.

He will be involved in religious education, RCIA, pastoral care, liturgical ministries and the parish school.

Welcome to Jennifer Georgis

Dear Brothers and Friends,

I am honored and excited to join the St. Bonaventure Province as the new Director of Mission Advancement. It is a privilege to become part of this community, and I look forward to working closely with the friars and all the ministries that make the St. Bonaventure Province a center of Catholic faith, Marian devotion, and service.

Together, I believe we can build upon the incredible work already being done, while investing in the education of future friars and the continuation of respectful care of the retired and infirmed friars. I am grateful for the warm welcome I’ve received so far and look forward to getting to know each of you as we move forward together in hope and collaboration.

Brightest Blessings,
Jennifer Georgis





Mary, Mother of God - Transitus 2024
(Photos courtesy of parish volunteers Damian Chlanda & Dan Lagacy)



+Friar Michael Glastetter Conference Room

Bishop William Patrick Callahan dedicated the new +Friar Michael Glastetter Conference Room at the **Basilica of Saint Josaphat**. Mrs. Jacqueline Glastetter was in attendance along with a good friend of the friars, Mrs. Ann Komm. That weekend, Bishop Callahan presided at the Vigil Mass followed by a reception at the Basilica in honor of his retirement where plans for renewing the Bishop William P. Callahan Parish Center were announced with the parish and community. Former staff members of the Basilica who worked with him were on hand.



Updates on Vocations Ministry

Since arriving in the U.S. three months ago, I've certainly hit the ground running! I want to thank Fr. Paul Joseph Langevin for stepping in to manage Vocations during the transition and for giving me a great head start with contacts. Even without any major promotional efforts, the Holy Spirit has been guiding inquirers our way, mainly through our Provincial website.

Before leaving Australia, I was already able to meet with men virtually, and it's been inspiring to hear their stories and see their sincere desire to discern God's will. Since arriving stateside, I've had the opportunity to meet men in person and introduce them to our life and ministries with visits to the House of Studies, Marytown, and the Basilica of St. Josaphat.

In late September, I hosted my first "Come & See" weekend at Kenmore, welcoming seven men. The event was a great success, with attendees expressing gratitude for the experience and the chance to engage with the friars and postulants. Many of them left with a stronger sense that the Franciscan life could be their calling. I've been able to stay in touch with all the men, and most are continuing their discernment with us.

Looking ahead, the CFF will host a common "Come & See" weekend at the Chicago House of Studies in November, and our next local SB "Come & See" weekend will take place at Marytown in early December.

I've also had the blessing of connecting with a troop of Catholic Boy Scouts, visiting multiple college campuses, attending men's conferences, and participating in Diocesan Vocation Fairs. Alongside Stephanie Held, our Vocations Communications Coordinator, we've been working hard to update our Vocations materials, including brochures, booklets, bookmarks, and social media. We've also created new pull-up banners and other exhibition items.

Currently, nine men are actively discerning their vocation with us, and one is in the application process for 2025. I'm hopeful that one or two more will start the process by year's end.

Thank you all for your continued support and prayers for Vocations. Remember, we're all 'Vocation Promoters,' working together to inspire others to consider life as a friar. Sometimes, it just takes asking the question, "Have you ever thought about becoming a Franciscan?"

Br. Bernard Mary Fonkalsrud OFM Conv.
Vocation Director



The Rock of Faith

St. Ann's has been growing and going through many exciting changes and one of them was to get a new sign in the front of Church that expressed the Spirit of St. Ann's. So it was decided that a Rock was the perfect sign. Because our Church is built upon the Rock of our Faith in Jesus. So that even "when the rains fall and the flood comes and the wind blows, it will not fall" for it is founded on the Rock of our Faith in Jesus. As the song goes, "No storm can shake our inmost calm while to that Rock we are clinging!" And now every time anyone drives by and sees the new sign, we hope that in all things and at all time, they too may cling to Jesus as their Rock on whom they too can rely.



Bridges

This is not just a bridge!
Something that one walks on
to get to the other side.

This bridge is so much more.

There's water under this bridge.
At those times in your life when you can't let go,
come here and stand on this bridge.
And leave it behind.

Some bridges need to be burned;
at those times in your life,
come and stand here, and burn that bridge.
And start over.

And other bridges need to be built.
At those times in your life,
come and stand here, and find the courage to build
a bridge.
And take the first step and connect with someone.

This Bridge of Marshall County
is no ordinary bridge.

It can be a place of starting over,
of leaving behind,
and connecting.

Bridges take us places,
not just physically, but also emotionally
and spiritually.

So, take your time crossing over them.
Even pause to reflect on where you were and
where you are going.

For they are a path from where we have been to
where we are going.

The city of **Toluca** has numerous walking trails and a bridge was installed to connect them. Fr. Patrick Greenough was asked to bless the bridge. The following is the homily he gave and after blessing the bridge the song "Bridge over the River Kwai" was played as all who attended crossed over.



Pet Blessings

The Postulants from the CFF at our **House of Studies** assisted Fr. Paul Mary Schneider in “blessings of pets” for the Feast of Saint Francis in our neighborhood. Great weather, cookies (for the pet owners), and “treats” for the pets with their blessings - all went well.



Mary, Mother of God Parish – Chili Cook-off 2024

On Saturday, October 12 we had our annual parish chili cook-off. There were 12 entries in the competition and over a hundred people came out to taste who had the best recipe! Thank you to everyone who joined us in Jubilee Hall and supported this fundraiser for the parish. We also deeply appreciate those who volunteered to set up, cook, serve, and clean up at the event. None of this would be possible without your teamwork.

Congratulations to our winners!

- 1st Place (Gold) - The Montesinos Family
- 2nd Place (Silver) - Bailey Pleva
- 3rd Place (Bronze) - Mark & Rainer Franzen
- *Most Unique - Fr. Thomas Fetz, OFM Conv.

*Photos courtesy of Fr. Alejandro Lopez, OFM Conv., Jeff Fizer, & Lauren Franzen



Basilica of Saint Josaphat

The Basilica has begun a Spanish mass for school families once a month. Every second Sunday at 4 :30 p.m. about 100 people gather for mass in the undercroft chapel.

The friars received a master class in making Polish sausage from Michael Krass, long time parishioner of the Basilica. His uncle was a friar.



Memorial Day Mass & Grill Out

On Memorial Day, hundreds joined the friars and staff of the **St. Hedwig's Cemetery** for the annual Memorial Mass. The service – which included Holy Mass, acknowledgement of the veterans present, and a speaker – took place Monday morning on the cemetery lawn. Afterwards, employees and their families were invited to the Friary for a grill out with a full spread of drinks, snacks, desserts, and more. Luckily, the weather remained mild and there was sunshine for most of the day. It was a lovely way to honor those in our armed services and their families as well as the staff of St. Hedwig's Cemetery.



CFF Retreat

Celebrating the 800th Anniversary of The Canticle of the Creatures

San Pedro Retreat Center
Winter Park, FL
January 26-31, 2025
Fr. Michael Perry, OFM



St. Paul Passionist Retreat Center
Detroit, MI
July 20-25, 2025
Fr. Robert Williams, OFM Cap.



Villa Maria de Mar Retreat Center
Santa Cruz, CA
September 1-6, 2025
Fr. Bill Short, OFM



Holy Cross Retreat Center
Mesilla Park, NM
October 26-31, 2025
Fr. Greg Friedman, OFM



Upcoming Events



Provincial Definitory Meetings

November 4, 2024

December 16, 2024

February 4, 2025

March 25, 2025

May 27, 2025 (including annual Saint Hedwig Cemetery and Mausoleum Board of Directors Meeting)

July 15, 2025

September 9, 2025

November 4, 2025

Come & See Weekends

CFF Come & See weekend @ **House of Studies, Chicago** - November 8-10

SB Come & See weekend @ **Marytown, Libertyville** - December 6-8

Friar Hilary RADUK, OFM Conv. (Minister Provincial of Saint Francis of Assisi Province (KENYA)

visiting the Province and USA **October 28-December 1, 2024**

Province Epiphany Party Monday, January 6, 2025 @ Marytown

CFF 2025 800th Anniversary of the Canticle of Creatures Retreats

January 26-31, 2025 in **Winter Park, Florida**

July 20-25, 2025 in **Detroit, Michigan**

September 1-6, 2025 in **Santa Cruz, California**

October 26-31, 2025 in **Mesilla Park, New Mexico**

2025 General Chapter in Rome June 1-21, 2025



*Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, and the honor,
and all blessing,
to you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no human is worthy to mention Your name.
Praised be You, my Lord, with all Your creatures*

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