



# the Seraph

News and Notables of  
St. Bonaventure  
Province

November 2015



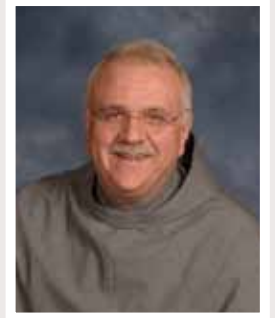
*More photos inside ...*

## A Word from Our Provincial

Dear Friars,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

We're preparing as a nation to celebrate Thanksgiving. But for us Franciscans, every day is Thanksgiving because of what the Lord wants to do for us if we let Him. As men of the Word, who have professed the Gospel, we know how the Lord wants to be active in our lives if we would only cooperate with Him.



On All Hallows' Eve, our brother, Arturo, was ordained to the transitional diaconate by Bishop Rassas. In his homily, Bishop Rassas retold the story of St. Catherine Drexel's meeting with Pope Leo XIII. She was bemoaning the fact that there were not missionaries working with the Native and Black Americans. Pope Leo looked at Catherine and said: "So why don't you do something about it." St. Catherine took to heart Pope Leo's question and founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, whose main ministry is to work among the Native and Black Americans.

Reflecting on the second spiritual theme of our Four Year Plan, Mission and the New Evangelization, Pope Leo XIII's question can be asked of us: Men of the Word, men who have professed the Gospel, what are we doing concretely to continue the mission of the Church and speak Gospel values, attracting more people to Christ and His Church?

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If we keep on preaching with our dated words and terminology, the people of today will close their hearts and minds to our message. How do we preach Christ and live the Gospel in such a way that people are attracted to our message and can encounter the living Christ in our words and actions?

To be hip for the sake of being hip will not attract people to Christ and His message. But by being authentic to our calling, authentic to our vowed life, men who daily live poverty, chastity, and obedience – this is what people will notice, and then encounter the living Christ. Following Jesus' example of mercy, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, shelter to the homeless, clothing to the naked, a kind word and a visit to those who need it – this is the path to continue the Mission of Jesus Christ and en flesh the New Evangelization. We do not need another workshop, talk, or conference on the New Evangelization. We just need to roll up our sleeves and get busy about the work of Jesus Christ and His Church.

As we gather on Thanksgiving Day around the Table of the Lord and then at our dining room tables, let us not be afraid to truly give thanks to God the Father for all that he has done and continues to do for us. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit is at work in us, and we are continuing the Mission of the Church and witnessing to the New Evangelization. Can we do better? Of course we can. Are we called to better? Of course we are. And giving thanks, having grateful hearts, shows how open, ready, and willing we are to let God be God in our lives. Part of the Mission of Jesus Christ is to be led; part of the New Evangelization is letting ourselves be renewed and excited again with the person and message of Jesus Christ!

Happy Thanksgiving, and may the way we give thanks show the world that we are imbued with the joy of the Gospel, ready and willing to preach and teach as Jesus did, leading people to Him!

God bless,  
Michael

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to our calling, authentic  
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men who daily live poverty,  
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*Ordination to  
the Diaconate  
October 31, 2015*



# *Transitus, Solemn Vespers, & the Feast of St. Francis at Marytown*



On October 3rd, the friars of Marytown commemorated the Transitus of St. Francis, led by the Formation Community. Friar Arturo Felix gave the reflection. They were joined by visiting friars and guests.





# News from Peoria



The Feast of Saint Francis was celebrated at **Holy Family** with *40 Hours of Devotion* before the Blessed Sacrament. All Creatures of our God and King were blessed, followed by the celebration of Transitus, during which Father Patrick gave a reflection on Saint Francis and the Eucharist.

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## Peoria Vocation Conference



On October 18th – 19th, Province Vocation Director Fr. Hans, along with Br. Bernard Mary, attended the *'Wake Up the World!'* vocation conference organized by the Diocese of Peoria. Other religious communities and many students and young adults were in attendance. The Booth was busy, with many people asking questions and taking vocational material. Br. Bernard Mary shared his testimony to the assembly, along with a Salesian Sister. The friars then spent Sunday at our Holy Family Parish, where Fr. Hans preached on 'vocations' at all the Masses.

More News from Peoria on Page 7

Fr. Jim Henning celebrated his 63rd birthday on September 25th while the Peoria Fire Department was standing by until all the candles were safely extinguished!!! Brother Juniper Kriss (in absentia) also celebrated his 69th birthday on September 29th! Ad multos annos!!!



# Blessing the Animals at St. Anthony's, Rockford



Neither rain nor blustery winds will keep **Holy Family** parishioners from taking part in the festive annual *"Trunk or Treat"* hosted by the parish's Men's Club. The goblins feasted on hot dogs, pizzas, and plenty of other dishes, and not a single ghoulish went home that night without a trunk load of candy! (See if you can pick out Father Tony in one of the pictures, behind the wheel crashing the party!!!!)



# All Saints Friary, Dearborn Heights

The Friars are keeping busy with various apostolic endeavors. Their ministry helps evangelize Detroiters and keeps the Conventual Franciscan Friar name alive and well. Of note is Tony Fox and his ministry. His campus ministry work allows him to be of service to the parishes of Dearborn and Dearborn Heights. It also allows him to be the 'unofficial' chaplain to professional sports teams. It seems that Tony has been called upon to celebrate Mass for this year's visiting professional football teams. Tony appears to be nonplussed about this ministry. Apparently American Football is not a highly-followed sport 'down under.' A more popular sport is something called Cricket. In any event Tony was recently asked to celebrate a vigil Mass for the 29th Week in Ordinary Time. That particular week the Detroit Lions were playing the CHICAGO BEARS! Again, Tony was nonplussed. While visiting the friary, Jim Henning heard about this Mass. His eyes bugged out.

He was almost jumping up and down (what an image). Tony didn't understand the 'honor' he was getting to have Mass for the McCaskey Family and the rest of the Chicago Bears. If this isn't great enough, the visiting teams give the priest celebrating Mass tickets to the game. WOW. Talk about a unique ministry!

Jim O'Brien, Tom Hercegovics, Justin Kusibab, and Tony Fox have also been kept busy with hospitality. Several groups have spent time in the Detroit area learning about the Church in Detroit, offering us opportunities for Evangelization. The Friars at All Saints are always gracious hosts. Thank you guys, and Go Bears!



Work on the Mausoleum roof

# Preaching Tour



From October 6th – 9th the student friars and their directors travelled to Dearborn Heights, MI, to visit with our friars at St. Hedwig's Cemetery (All Saints Friary), and to hold an evangelization event at the University of Michigan - Dearborn and Henry Ford Community College where our Fr. Tony Fox is the campus minister.

The friars spent the day on campus talking with students and distributing materials on the faith. They were warmly received, and there were many grace-filled experiences with people. In the evening, the friars joined students at the Newman Center for Mass, where Deacon friar Giles gave the homily, and an animated holy hour, where Br. Bernard Mary shared his thoughts on 'The Joy of the Gospel'. The night concluded with Benediction and a light social.

It was a wonderful experience and the students hope to take this evangelization mission to other University Campuses in the future.

More photos on page 9



# *Celebrating 100 Years of Parish Life*



Jim Henning and Justin Kusibab joined the people of Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish (Our Lady of Guadalupe - new name of clustered parish) as they celebrated 100 years of parish life.

The Conventual Franciscans have staffed the parish for 90 of its 100

years. It was founded in 1915 when St. Hedwig parish was growing rapidly. In order to handle the burgeoning population of Southwest Detroit, the Conventual Franciscans were invited to establish a new parish one mile west of the existing parish - the birth of Our Lady Queen of Angels.

The history is long and reflects not only the Polish ethnic heritage, but the committedness of the people. Many families who endured the turbulent 1960s still reside in the neighborhood. Even as many Dioceses mandate the consolidation of parish communities, the faith of the people survives.

On Sunday, October 18, the parishioners celebrated along with Archbishop Allen Vigneron, the Franciscan Sisters of Hamburg New York, priests from the area, and many former parishioners who returned for the celebration. Topping off the day was a delicious Polish meal served at the Knights of Columbus Hall (City Chicken, meatballs and gravy, and much more).

*Note: Friars who served at Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish*  
Anthony Labedis - 1970 - 1974,  
Justin Kusibab - 1987 - 1994,  
Juniper Kriss - 1989 - 1990,  
Jim Henning - 1997 - 2005

# News from Australia



## **Happy Feast of St. Francis**

The Friars of Kellyville celebrated the Feast of St. Francis by going out to “Mezze Me.” The restaurant serves “tapas style” Mediterranean foods.

Pictured from left to right: Br. Louis Schmid, Fr. Gerard Lofranco, Br. Jerry Payne, Br. Dominic Levak, Fr. Robert Melnick, Fr. Adrian Robson and Fr. Alejandro López. The waitress served the fabulous entreés (Australian for “appetizers”) on a couple of large plates with pita bread.

**The Melbourne Cup** The Kellyville Friars gathered to watch the most anticipated Australian sports event of the year: the world-renowned Melbourne Cup! The community prepared for the day with a lunch-time drawing of their horses for this famous race, held every first Tuesday of November. Foreigners were locked out as Br. Louis’ horses won first and second and Fr. Adrian-John Robson’s took third and last place! The first-time Melbourne Cup winner for 2015, Prince of Penzance, was ridden by jockey Michelle Payne, the first female to ever take home the coveted Cup! Good on her!

The Friars at **Mount Saint Francis Friary in Kellyville, NSW Australia** lost Millie the goat in late September. Actually, she went to a better place: a local petting zoo/farm. She was getting to be too much for the friars. As the community had only one goat, she felt lonely. A local petting farm was willing to take her and she probably imagines she died and went to Heaven, as she now belongs to a small herd of hooved critters, including goats.



Fr. Gerard Lofranco, Br. Jerry Payne and Br. Louis Schmid in one last photo with Millie before her departure. In typical troublesome Millie fashion, the goat couldn’t help herself from nibbling Br. Louis’ cord.



CFC meeting in Chicago, October 12-13

# Other News



We congratulate *friar Thomas Fetz* on receiving the ministry of acolyte on October 28. The Most Reverend Donald J. Hying, Bishop of Gary, Indiana, officiated.



*Friars Anthony and Simon* represented the Province at a celebration of Bishop Perry's 40th Anniversary of ordination. Priests and religious from all over Chicago attended the event on November 5 at St. John Cantius Church.



Happy Birthday to *Fr. Michael Zielke*



## Upcoming Events

**November 29, 2015**

Saint Anthony's, Rockford: Blessing of the new Church Doors, Sunday November 29 (following the 9 a.m. Mass)

**January 4, 2016**

Epiphany Celebration: Monday January 4 at Marytown, Vespers at 5 p.m., dinner to follow

**February 5, 2016**

Friars Study Day on the Constitutions (presented by Friar Tim Kulbicki): Friday February 5 at Marytown. Presentation 2 p.m., Vespers and dinner to follow

*....seek the answer in God's grace, not in doctrine; in the longing of the will, not in the understanding; in the sighs of prayer, not in research; seek the bridegroom not the teacher; God and not man; darkness not daylight; and look not to the light but rather to the raging fire that carries the soul to God with intense fervour and glowing love.*

*St. Bonaventure*

