



the Seraph

News and Notables of
St. Bonaventure
Province

Issue #2 2019

A WORD FROM OUR PROVINCIAL

Dear Friars,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

I am reading a book by Matthew Kelly titled: ***Perfectly Yourself, Discovering God's Dream For You.*** It won't make the best-seller lists for philosophy and theological books, but it is a solid spiritual book helping its readers to take the time to pause, reflect, meditate, and ask oneself some serious questions to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ.



Chapter seven's lesson is *Unburden Yourself*, which can be briefly stated: simplify, simplify, simplify. He states that our lives have become burdened with too much stuff – from clothes to shoes to food choices to just too much stuff – that our lives have become filled with clutter, congestion, and confusion. Sometimes it's easier to bemoan the fact that all this clutter, congestion, and confusion fill our lives, making it seem as if we are victims. But deep down it is easier to blame others rather than take control, ask the tough questions, and grow as men of the Gospel – vowed religious who have professed the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

You saw from Fr. Paul Schneider's email that much work has happened behind the scenes as we begin the hard work of gathering information to put a strategic plan together for our Extra-ordinary Chapter in 2020.

- Do we really know whom we are as individual friars, called by the Lord to walk in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, who so perfectly reflected the light of Christ?



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- Do we clearly understand our mission as the Province of St. Bonaventure?
- What is our identity as Franciscan Friars in the Conventual tradition?
- Are the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience something of the past, or are they just as pertinent today as when St. Francis professed them in the 13th century?
- Why are we still in existence as a Province after eighty years?
- What does it mean to be a Conventual Franciscan in the Third Millennium?
- Is our type of life relevant for today's world?
- Should we merge with another Province?
- In what type of ministries and apostolates should we be involved?

Many more questions will surface in the coming months. Will we have the heroic courage to answer these questions honestly? I think we will because, as some friars believe, we friars do our best work when we are faced with some of our most difficult challenges.

We are about to enter Holy Week, one of the most important times of our faith. Our Lord has shown us that when we stay focused on the will of God, what seems daunting and almost impossible to do can be done. Jesus Christ conquered sin and death and rose from the dead on the third day!

As we enter into Holy Week and celebrate the Paschal Triduum, our faith will be bolstered. We will be reminded again that nothing is impossible with God! Celebrate the upcoming holy days with renewed vigor. Let Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection truly give us the strength and courage to continue our journey as men of the Word, living the Gospel in word and deed, so that for another eighty years St. Bonaventure Province will continue to make a difference, not only in the Franciscan Order but in the world!

Happy Easter! God bless,
Michael



God is here in our midst and if we have the eyes, the ears, the hearts, and the minds of faith, we can see Him active.

St. Thomas of Canterbury & St. Ita Parishes

On May 31, 2019, these two parishes
will be combined.

PHOTOS

On page 2: Stations of the Cross with Fr. Arturo
Below and counterclockwise: Stations of the
Cross; Brother Ayub and Fr. Simon; Parish
Epiphany Concert; Burmese Community
Celebration; Rwandan Community Mass



Holy Family in Peoria

On Wednesday, March 20 Friar Giles Gilbert gave a Lenten talk and reflection: “Francis, Poor and Humble: Sign of Contradiction.”

After the talk, he hosted a showing of the new documentary film on the life of St. Francis: “St. Francis of Assisi: Sign of Contradiction,” which was produced by the Ministry of the Wild Goose and 4PM Media.

On Friday, March 22 Holy Family hosted a “Corda Pia,” inviting all the

friars from our Cluster: Fr. Patrick Greenough, Fr. David Huebner, Br. Juniper Kriss, Fr. Jim Henning, and Fr. Steve McKinley. The “Corda Pia” is one of the oldest devotions of the Franciscan Order in honor of Christ Crucified. It particularly honors the Five Wounds of our Lord Jesus Christ, borne in the stigmata of our Seraphic Father, St. Francis of Assisi. It is traditionally prayed during the Lenten season, especially on Fridays. The theological and spiritual foundation of this devotion is taken from I Peter 2:24 – “By his wounds you were healed.” This pious exercise was composed by the Servant of God, Fra Filippo Gesualdi da Castrovillari, Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual from 1593-1602, later bishop of



Cariati. The name “Corda Pia” comes from the first two words of the opening hymn: “Corda pia inflammantur, dum Francisci celebrantur, stigmatum insignia.” It means: “Gentle hearts are set on fire in the telling of Francis’ stigmata.” Francis conformed himself totally to the Crucified Christ and was signed with the wounds of His Passion. In accord with the fervor of his soul, we honor the Cross and Wounds of Christ, as well as the sorrow of His Most Holy Mother, the Virgin of Sorrows. The program used was adapted by Friar Thomas Fetz OFM Conv. for English-speaking countries from the multi-lingual program used at the tomb of St. Francis.



Marytown First Class Relics



On Sunday March 31,
Fr Benedict solemnly received
the First Class Relics of
the Blessed Martyrs
Bl. Michał Tomaszek and
Bl. Zbigniew Strzałkowski
from Br Jan Hruszowiec,
Curator of the Relics.



Marytown continued



PHOTOS

Beginning top left clockwise:

Romanian Friars Fr. Emilian and Fr. Cyprian with Bro. Donald visiting Bro. Martin at Little Sisters!

St. Michael before and after restored by Bro. Donald's sister Gail

Bro. Paschal getting his hair styled by Bro. Tarcissius

Sisters, Eileen and Maureen at reception desk at Marytown

Inter-Novitiate Soccer Team

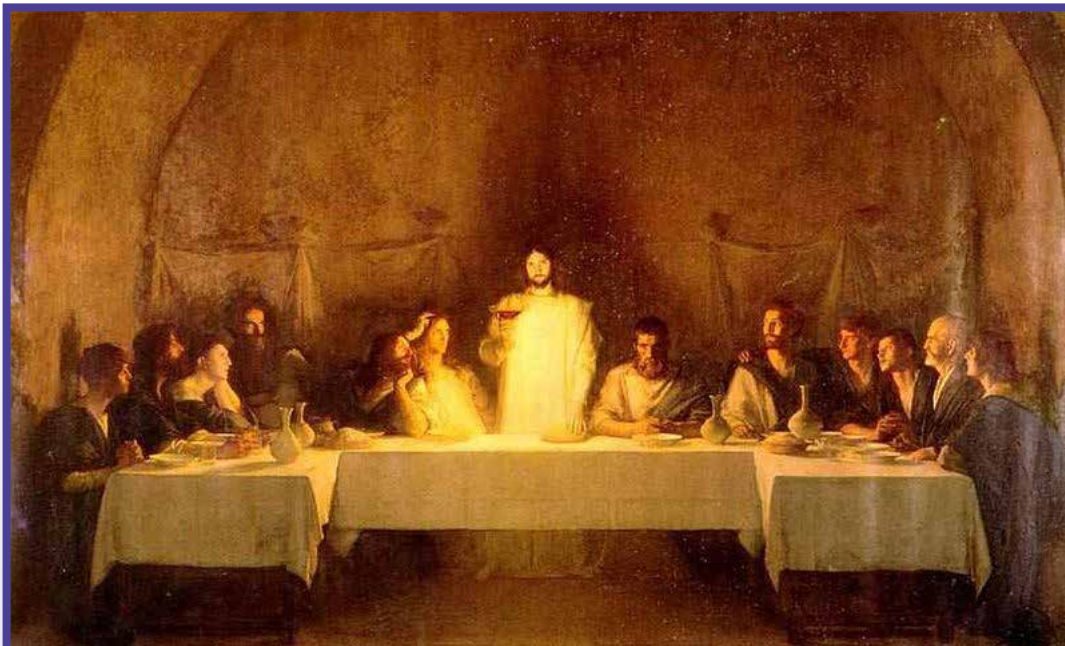
Our Inter-Novitiate Soccer Team that played a good game yesterday (Sat. April 6th), against the Los Angeles seminarians on their home turf at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo (north of LA). Although we didn't win the game, we surely won the day with our enthusiasm and camaraderie. After the morning game there was a cookout and then a tour of the grand seminary. We returned home tired and sunburned but proud of our combined Franciscan efforts!

Peace,
Joseph and Maurice



Upcoming Events

- May 31** *Combining of St. Ita and St. Thomas of Canterbury*
- Monday, July 15** **Friars' Day** *Topic: Mission Advancement with Sr. Georgette Lehmuth OSF, President and CEO, National Catholic Development Conference, **Marytown***
- Sunday, July 21** **Profession of Temporary Vows of Friar Matt Bradley, **Marytown**, 5 pm, Dinner to follow**
- Friday August 2** **Profession of Solemn Vows of Friar Bede Thigpen, **Marytown**, Solemn Vespers, 5 pm, Reception to follow**
- September 2019** **Profession of Solemn Vows of Friar Bernard Mary Fonkalsrud, *Exact date to be determined, **Our Lady of the Rosary, Kellyville*****
- Wednesday, October 16** **Study Day on the revised Constitutions, with Friar Tim Kulbicki, **Marytown**, 1:30 pm**
- September 16-17, 2020** **Extraordinary Provincial Chapter**



As He revealed Himself to the holy apostles in true flesh, so He reveals Himself to us now in the sacred bread. And as they saw only His flesh by an insight of their flesh, yet believed that He was God as they contemplated Him with their spiritual eyes, let us, as we see bread and wine with our bodily eyes, see and firmly believe that they are His most holy Body and Blood living and true. And in this way the Lord is always with His faithful, as He Himself says:

Behold I am with you until the end of the age.

St. Francis of Assisi
The Admonitions