



the Seraph

News and Notables of
St. Bonaventure
Province

Issue #2 2022

A WORD FROM OUR PROVINCIAL

My Dear Brothers in Christ,

The Lord give you peace!



We have completed our 2022-2026 Quadrennial Chapter and many are beginning to move themselves and their poverty to new assignments.... new beginnings....and new adventures. It is both an exciting time and a time to give our thanks to all who have helped us throughout the previous term. Let us especially hold in our hearts the beloved parishioners of Saint Anthony of Padua Parish in Rockford, IL and Holy Family in Peoria, IL for their many years of prayers, dedication, financial support, and countless kindnesses to the friars throughout the years. The experiences and stories passed down by the friars who have been so blessed to minister there are legendary.

The decision to withdraw from these parishes whose hearts have become united with the hearts of our friars was not easy. The tears shed testify to our mutual disappointment. But please do not see this difficult decision as a failure. Rather, it is an opportunity for us all to become new wine skins and take in what the Lord wants to give us through these changes.

This inspiring poem was written by one of the loving hearts God has touched through our ministry to her and her family:

Good Franciscan Shepherds

*Glimpsing God's grace
in the kind face
of a rare friend
who dares to care
and not pretend
to be more than others,
touching the core
of sisters and brothers
with genuine concern, love,
and humility above
power, spite, and pride –
choosing mercy's side.*

*Through God's eyes they see the gifts in those around
allowing creativity to abound*

*Lifting people up, filling our cup,
not tearing down,
but sharing the crown
of everlasting life,
healing our hearts of strife.*

*To Christ's love they point,
with peace they anoint.*

*The holy Catholic faith they teach;
with wisdom and compassion they preach...*

*celebrating Sacraments,
bearing life's predicaments,
walking with us on the journey,
praying for us unceasingly,
building sacred community
for God and Christian unity.*

*Fully human they press into God's perfect will,
helping others grow, act justly, be still.*

*Jesus shows them and us the better way
with the Holy Spirit's guidance each day.*

*St. Francis gives true inspiration
in their lives of love and devotion.*

*Conventual Franciscans of Saint Bonaventure Province,
we're so grateful for your good shepherding
and humble service.*

Continued from Page 1

While we will no longer minister at Saint Anthony of Padua and Holy Family parishes, our work in the Lord's vineyard continues in Australia, Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Green Bay, and in Central Illinois. Like the Magi who followed the star to Bethlehem and found Jesus, we are called by our Franciscan way of life to be a shining light that helps everyone to see Jesus. Our friends and benefactors who help us in our ministries are co-partners in our mission. God has implanted a spark of the Divine in each of us. And when we work together for building up God's Kingdom, we become the shining light reflecting the light of Christ for all to see. Invoking the trinity of gratitude, "Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!" to all our friars, relatives, friends, and benefactors who do so much to support our mission as we follow our call to serve the Lord and each other for the glory of God Almighty and for the Immaculata.

Peace and all good!

Invested in the Habit



Eric Rewa



Paul Utterback

Eric and Paul join five others in the novitiate at Arroyo Grande.



Conventual Franciscan Novices
2022-2023

Front L-R: Connor Ouly, Colden Fell, Bob Moynihan, Marvin Fernandez
Back L-R: Paul Utterback, Andre Miller, Eric Rewa

Chapter Part I



From Top Left - New Definitory with Minister General Carlos Trovarelli | Swearing in of new Provincial by Minister General | Mass, April 26 | Swearing in of New Definitory



First Week of Chapter - Province Photo



Chapter
Part 2



July 1, 2022



Swearing in of Guardians





*Celebrating the
end of Chapter
with a
Pizza Party!*



Welcome to Our Postulants



Three men were officially welcomed into the CFF Postulancy Program on July 8, 2022. The Rite of Beginning Fraternity was held at the formation house located at St. Bonaventure Friary. Friar Paul Joseph Langevin, Minister Provincial of St. Bonaventure Province presided at the welcoming ceremony. Friar Michael Heine, Minister Provincial of Our Lady of the Angels Province, was also present. About a dozen friars from nearby friaries joined in welcoming our new postulants. Our new postulants are: James Muzzey (SB) from Holland, MI (originally from Germany), César Perez (OLA) from Paramus, NJ (originally from the Philippines), and Adam Wozniak (OLA) from Syracuse, NY. After the welcoming ceremony, a fraternal dinner was enjoyed by everyone.



Thank you and blessings! On the first weekend of July, friars from the Province of Kenya assumed pastoral responsibility for St. Rose in Clintonville, WI and St. Mary's in Bear Creek, WI in the Diocese of Green Bay. **Simon Minyati and Ayub Mwenda** will be assigned there in addition to a third friar from Kenya who will join them later. We thank Simon and Ayub for their time and service in St. Bonaventure Province and wish them every blessing as their Province begins this new mission!

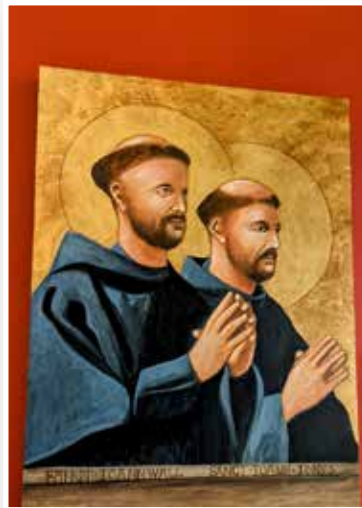


The students at **Saint Josaphat School** shared their support and prayers for Ukraine.



A New Shrine

Recently, liturgical artist Joe Malham designed a new shrine at **St Thomas of Canterbury** to honor the Martyrs of the English Reformation. As part of this project, Joe created an original painting of Saints John Jones and John Wall, Franciscan Martyrs. **Our novices Eric and Paul served as the models.**



St Francis Friary modeling the Fetz collection (House of Hansen, designer) at the annual parish fashion show.



Friars Bede and Jason arrive for their assignment at **Mary, Mother of God Parish** (combination of Saint Ita, Thomas of Canterbury and Gregory the Great churches)

Jason will profess his solemn vows here on August 14th and be assigned here afterward. Bede will be ordained early in the new year.



In February, **St. Ita** had a holy hour for the canonization of Father Augustus Tolton, the first African-American Catholic priest. Bishop Joseph Perry, postulator for the cause, presided. The Postulants were on hand to offer their prayers.

Friar Bernard Mary Fonkalsrud has two articles published in the Diocese of Broken Bay magazine (**Broken Bay News**), where he works. One is on the Stations of the Cross, the other is about the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). They are reprinted here (with permission) on the following pages.



Walking in the Footprints of Christ

Whenever I am watching a movie or show which features a church building, often one of the first things I look for to test if it is Catholic or not are the Stations of the Cross. These devotional representations of Jesus' Passion and Death have become so integral to our Catholic aesthetic, particularly because they only came

into more general use after the protestant reformation, though the devotion does originate much earlier.

Since the Gospel events, the Holy Land has always been a place of pilgrimage for Christians with a desire to walk in the footprints of Christ in His final moments along the

'Via Dolorosa' to His crucifixion. Of course, this pilgrimage was a costly, perilous, and extensive journey to make from Christian Europe, and so some considerate Church people began to think outside the box, such as St Petronius of Bologna in the 5th Century. He erected the church of Santo Stefano (the first Christian martyr) in his diocese which contained imitations of the Holy Land shrines such as those found at Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre; but these were still limited local devotions.

During the tumultuous times of the Holy Land Crusades (12th-13th Centuries), St Francis of Assisi made pilgrimages to the Holy Land to preach and to serve Christians under siege in 1219. While there, of course, the famous event of his meeting with Sultan al-Kamil of Egypt occurred. Though the wars continued, the Franciscans gained much respect amongst both the Christians and the Muslim people and were permitted to minister safely uninterrupted in the Holy Land since that time. In 1342, Pope Clement VI made the Franciscans the official custodians and protectors of the holy places.

Like St Petronius before them, the Franciscans wanted to make the Holy Land pilgrimage more accessible, and so in the 15th and 16th centuries they developed a series of outdoor shrines representing some of the events of the Passion, numbering between seven and as many as thirty, usually located along the route leading up to their churches. In 1686, Pope Innocent XI gave the Franciscans the exclusive permission to erect such shrines in their churches and extended the Holy Land pilgrimage indulgence to any Franciscan church. St Leonard of Port Maurice himself



erected more than five hundred such representations in his lifetime, firmly solidifying the devotion as associated with the Franciscan Order. In 1731, Pope Clement XII extended the permission for any church to erect Stations of the Cross, but with the requirement they must only be blessed by a Franciscan priest, though this last requirement was removed in 1862, to accommodate those places where no Franciscans were available; he also fixed the number of stations to the fourteen that we are familiar with today, half Scripturally based, and the other half traditional.

During the Holy Year of 1975, Pope Paul VI approved a new series of purely Scripturally based Stations of the Cross, beginning with the Last Supper and concluding with the Resurrection. These came to more attention when Pope John Paul II used these Stations on Good Friday 1991 at the Colosseum. Pope Benedict XVI approved the wider use of this 'Scriptural Way of the Cross' as complementary to the traditional fourteen stations, not as a replacement.

Over the years the Stations of the Cross have become a much-loved devotional practice for all Catholics, particularly during the season of Lent as we commemorate the great sacrifice of Christ on the Cross for our redemption. Beginning with the actual Holy Sites themselves, to replica shrines, beautiful artistic depictions, the deep saintly meditations, and today the annual Passion Plays that bring these events to life so dramatically every Good Friday; the Stations of the Cross help us to be transported outside of time and unite ourselves more fully with the minds and emotions of those who lived it over two-thousand years ago.



“It is no use walking anywhere to preach, unless our walking is our preaching.”

St Francis of Assisi.

Therefore, being touched and in awe at his glorious Resurrection at Easter, we become witnesses of the Gospel to the ends of the world. “It is no use walking anywhere to preach, unless

our walking is our preaching.”
St Francis of Assisi.

**By Br. Bernard Mary Fonkalsrud
OFM Conv.**



Joining the Body of Christ

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For many people, including those inside the Church, one might think that becoming a Catholic Christian is as simple as a few drops of water on the head, but in reality, the process is a much more engaging and personal journey.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, currently more commonly known as the RCIA, is the official process by which a non-baptised person grows in their knowledge, appreciation, and love of Jesus Christ and His Church, and is made a full member of the 'Body of Christ' at the Easter Vigil when they are presented to the community and receive the

Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist). In ancient times, Catechumens (those undergoing formation to become Christian) would be apprenticed to a Christian whose home they would move into and fully immerse themselves in the faith and practices of their 'sponsor.' In our modern times the experience isn't quite as involved but is still designed to envelope the Catechumen into the life and practice of a Christian with their sponsor accompanying them as a mentor.

The process is facilitated at local parishes by devoted and knowledgeable Catechists and their teams whose main role is to walk alongside the Catechumens as they are introduced to who Jesus is and the

As well as 'teaching' about the faith and the Church, the process encourages Catechumens to reflect on their own life's journey and what draws them to Christianity and the Catholic Church, their relationship with Jesus, and how their lives have been touched by the hand of God in different ways.

main facets of our Catholic faith. As well as 'teaching' about the faith and the Church, the process encourages Catechumens to reflect on their own life's journey and what draws them to Christianity and the Catholic Church, their relationship with Jesus, and how their lives have been touched by the hand of God in different ways. The process helps to incorporate the Catechumens and their families into the life of the local parish community, and to become effective witnesses and disciples to those around them. People approach the Sacraments of Initiation because they have had an encounter with Christianity that has impacted their lives and they have developed a desire to be united to this beautiful Family of Faith and come to know Jesus Christ. The RCIA process helps to flesh out these thoughts and feelings and encourages Catechumens in their discernment towards Baptism.

Though the RCIA process at its core is directed towards the unbaptised, those baptised Christians from other denominations seeking full communion with the Catholic Church are often encouraged to undertake the process as 'Candidates,' where they can fully participate in the sessions and catechetical formation and be received, together with the Catechumens, into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil, completing their initiation by being Confirmed and receiving their first Holy Communion.

Every year brave individuals step forward to take a deep dive into the Catholic faith through the RCIA process, and if presented effectively and received openly, come out the other end on fire for the faith and filled with the grace of the Sacraments they received at Easter. As we approach

Easter 2022, we continue to pray for those who will become the newest members of our Christian family, and that others will be responsive to the calling of Jesus Christ to union with His Body, the Church.

"In 2019 I was invited to do the RCIA program (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) which welcomes people into the Catholic Church. The sessions were very friendly and informative, giving me the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the Catholic faith and traditions. The welcome that we all felt on being received into the Catholic Church at the Vigil Mass was very special and a joyous occasion that I'm incredibly thankful for." – Marie Watson, North Harbour.

'After having our two daughters, my calling to God became stronger and I would find myself speaking with Him in times of need. In the past year, my desire to be closer with God became stronger. Then, I came across the Parish Bulletin seeking expressions of interest for the RCIA program. I read it thinking, 'God is speaking to me!' This was the beginning of my RCIA journey. The journey has been intense and life changing and I will always be grateful for the devotion and spiritual guidance that my RCIA mentors and Fr Bogus have shown me.' – Irene Loke, Pymble.

'Since my recent conversion I've found a certain peace that I never had before and a clarity of thought I didn't know I could achieve. I believe that to be our best selves we all need a peaceful mind, the steady accumulation of wisdom, an understanding of the world around us and importantly the knowledge to guide virtuous action. Following Christ through communion with the Catholic

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Church has given me these wonderful gifts." – Benjamin Allen, Pymble.

Have you ever thought about becoming Catholic?

To enquire about the RCIA process, contact your local Catholic parish, www.bbcatholic.org.au/parish-community/parishes

Or contact Br. Bernard Mary Fonkalsrud OFM Conv., the Sacramental Life and RCIA Coordinator for Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay. bernard.fonkalsrud@bbcatholic.org.au | (02) 8379 1632

Upcoming Events

Friars' Day: Tuesday, August 9th, Great America

Marian Conference & Kolbe Award: Saturday, August 13th, Marytown

Jason Warrer's Solemn Profession of Vows: Sunday, August 14th @ 3PM, St. Ita

Loaves and Fishes Gala: Saturday, October 8th, Milwaukee Athletic Club



The best perfection of a religious man is to do common things in a perfect manner. A constant fidelity in small things is a great and heroic virtue.

St. Bonaventure
Painting by Vittore Cirielli, ca. 1481-1502