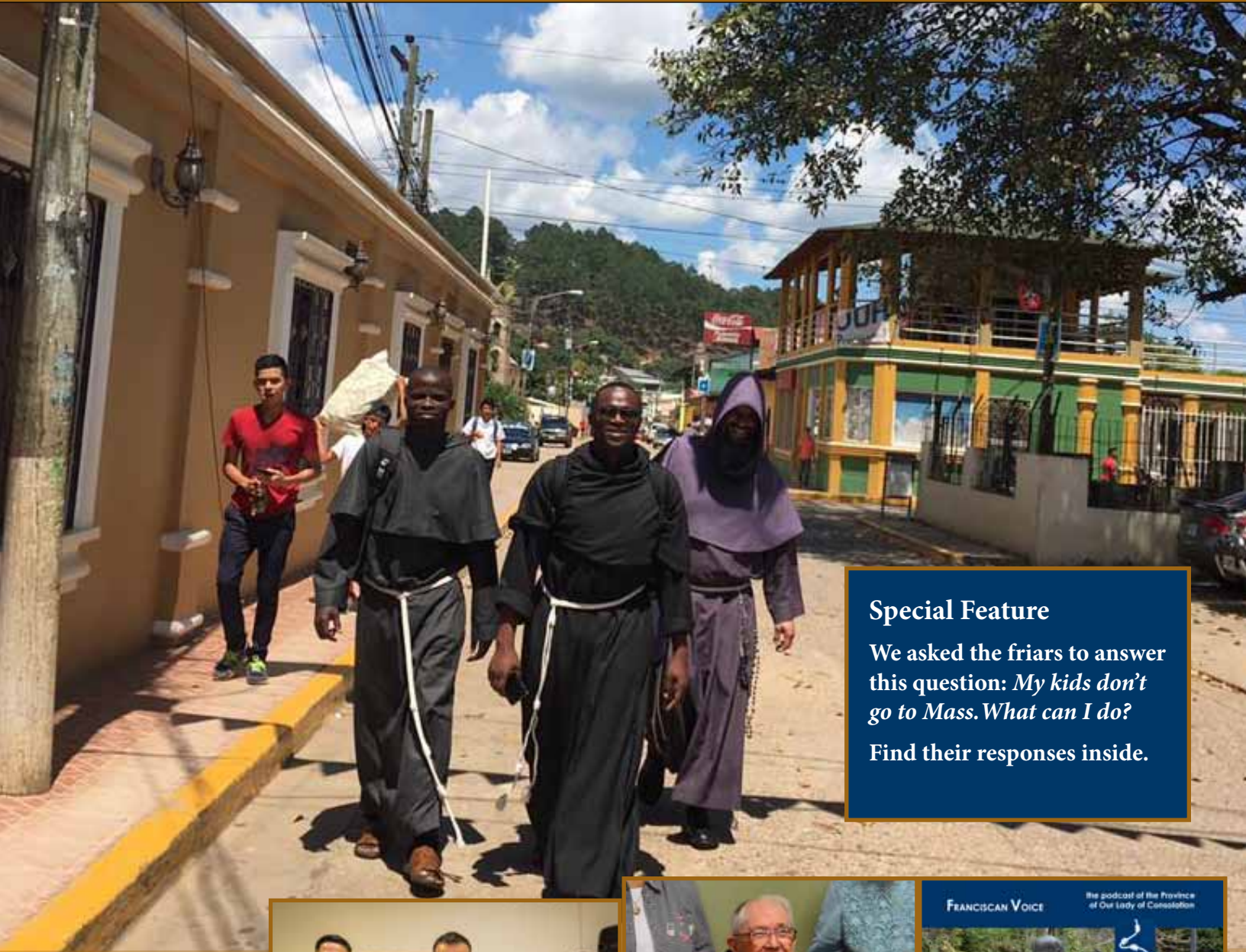




Conventual Franciscan Life

Published by the Friars of the Province of Our Lady of Consolation

Fall 2017



Special Feature

We asked the friars to answer this question: *My kids don't go to Mass. What can I do?*

Find their responses inside.



Friars Profess First Vows



Fr. Maurus Hauer Celebrates 100th Birthday



Introducing Franciscan Voice

Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience



*Represented in the three-knotted cord,
these are the vows of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual.*



Friday, July 21, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in El Paso, Texas, Friars Alberto Bravo, Pedro Lopez, and Calin Vidaurri professed their temporary vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. These vows are sometimes referred to as First or Simple Vows - but as Fr. John Bamman points out in a 'pre-vow' interview, there is nothing simple about them. (You can listen to this interview - *The Joy of Franciscan Commitment* - on Franciscan Voice.)



These First Vows normally last three years. During this time, Alberto, Calin, and Pedro will continue their studies while ministering and living in community as Conventual Franciscans.



Above Photos Top: Friar Pedro Lopez professes his First Vows into the hands of Minister Provincial Fr. Jim Kent. Bottom: Friar Calin Vidaurri signs his name in the Vow Register. **Below** Friars Andy Martinez and Miguel Briseno present Friar Alberto with the 3-knotted Cord representing the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. **Right** Family group photo!

Photos courtesy of Al Baeza



***Interested in learning more about the
Conventual Franciscan Vocation?***

Vocation Information:

Midwest: Fr. John Bamman, OFM Conv.

FranVoc@aol.com | 800.424.9955

Southwest: Fr. Andy Martinez, OFM Conv.

VocationOfficeSW@yahoo.com | 575.652.3603

“Beep, Beep!” by Friar John Bamman, OFM Conv.

This is the sound of many Tegucigalpa (in Honduras) drivers tapping their horns. It is a helpful driving habit to inform a bicyclist or motorcycle or big truck, “I see you.” This helps the population of 1.12 million people navigate the city of Tegucigalpa, especially when many intersections don’t have stoplights or signage. I imagine without the kindness of a “beep-beep” there would be many more accidents and emergencies.

Nineteen friars from all over the Franciscan world gathered for what Pope Francis calls an “encuentro.” This is a mission outward to join with the other, to meet the other, to reach out in a humane and encouraging way to acknowledge “I see you.” We all had the experience of encuentro by visiting local Hondurans. We visited with them on their land, in their neighborhood, and sometimes in their own houses to share our stories.



After our individual encuentros we dove into the writings of Pope Francis’ document *Evangelii Gaudium*. We enjoyed presentations by Conventual Franciscan Bishops John Stowe (from Lexington, Kentucky) and Enrique Montero (from San Isidoro, Costa Rica) which pushed us all to study and learn from the text in a more profound way.

One of the stern challenges from Pope Francis was to avoid pettiness, routine, and small-minded thinking that can be an evil poison infecting fraternities. This poison will eventually mummify the community and turn our friaries into museums. The overarching tenor of the Pope Francis’ writings encourage us to engage with the world, move outward beyond our comfort zones, and participate in the encuentro.

I feel so grateful for this intercultural experience shared with friars from all over the Franciscan world. I can’t wait until my next visit with my newfound brothers, all of us chasing after St. Francis.



On a visit to Campamento we arrived at Doña Liche’s house where she proudly displayed her new oven which she constructed by hand. The previous night the rains cascaded through her roof to wash away her old stove, so she rebuilt a new mud stove to show us. We also met her daughter, grandchild, and another grandchild on the way. We were in a maze of hillside houses filled with family relatives who welcomed us Franciscans from Zambia, US, and Central America. We even had the furthest arrival from India, Friar Dominic, who was delayed 2 and 1/2 days and almost didn’t make it to Honduras.



Peace & all good

My kids don't go to Mass. What can I do?

At our parishes and retreat centers, and even in more casual conversations, we hear this question frequently. In the letters and email we receive asking for prayers, this is the number one request. And it isn't just about high school kids — people are worried about their adult children as well.

We asked several of our Friars how they respond when they hear this question. Here are some of their replies. For the complete symposium, please visit www.FranciscansUSA.org

Fr. Tom Merrill



The starting point for parents whose teens and adult children have stopped going to church needs to

be here: **Whether they know it or not, we are all searching for God, and God searches for us. I would encourage parents to share how their own search for God and His gift of faith have made a difference in their lives.** They might invite their children to share a personal example from their own lives when they were younger when they really felt close to God and why. After their children have shared their experiences, have the parents ask them if they still think about God and reach out to Him.

A good point of departure for encouraging teens and millennials and older adults to return to church is to emphasize that our deepest needs can never be addressed through technology, but only in direct human communication. Technology is only a tool or a means, not the end of forming relationships. Would they not admit that when they really

need someone to listen to them they would prefer to talk with someone face to face instead of a “friend” on FaceBook? Hopefully, parents can help their children own and appreciate their own experiences or those of others known to them that helped them bond with others and with God. **Faith in God and human relationships are not meant to be kept to oneself, but shared with others, especially in a common expression of faith in worship of God.**

Fr. Charles McCarthy



Why would they? “Go to Mass” can be like “Go to the dentist,” “Go to school,” “Go to bed.”

Identity in faith life needs to be more than a “Go to...” We all seek and need purpose, respect, and to feel valued. Going to a static and often anonymous “place” is not where that sense of engagement and acceptance is found.

The disconnect which I perceive is in the lack of engagement between “church” and “Church.” **Going to Mass needs to be connected with feeling welcomed and being part**

of whatever the “place” is.

I had two grandmothers. One was not much interested in seeing us or hearing us. Even when we visited, we'd say hi, and then be put outside so as not to mess the place up and disturb the quiet. The other grandmother was an “earth-mother”!! She couldn't get enough of us. We couldn't get enough of her. She traveled with us – an adult with five children in the back seat of a ford sedan. I'm sure she came out bruised, but kept us counting cows and green cars on the road. “Going to Oak Lawn” meant going to grandma's house. YES! “Going to Chicago” was also “going to grandma's!” “Do we have to.”

There is no magic potion or special blessing to “get someone” to “go to Mass.” Or “to church.” Rather, how do we “engage” each other in the “mission” of “the church” or “the parish?” How do we, as adults, create a sense of respect of opinion and growth in values in the community with which we worship? That becomes a question that is tackled differently in each Christian community. **“A place” won't be much of an interest. “An acceptance” will draw life and energy.**

A Liturgy, or “Mass” is life-giving and attractive when the people gathered there begin to be less anonymous to one another. **When we invest**

our lives in the life of a place that invests its life in us, then we grow together. “I want to go!” “I need to go!” are statements of connection. “I don’t want to go” is a disconnect. What’s my engagement?

Fr. Christian Moore



This is a distressing challenge for all of us, not just for parents and grandparents. When someone says he’s spiritual but not religious it

means he’s going it alone, without a connection to a faith community for support. It leads to isolation and can lead further to other problems. **It’s hard to tell a person that isolation can lead to trouble like drugs and alcoholism, and even suicide in the worst cases.**

Growing up in Catholic ‘ghettos,’ people all believed the same thing. We all went to Church more not to go to hell than to try to get to Heaven. Communities have changed, they’re more mixed, and we don’t teach, or really believe that you will go to hell if you don’t go to Mass.

Being a Catholic Christian takes discipline, but there isn’t a hunger for God that makes people want to take that on. **We need to show them somehow that true happiness comes from a willingness to endure the effort, sometimes the pain, of making our lives better — the discipline of prayer, exercise, a good diet. It all goes together.**

Spiritual things can seem unappealing until you do them and see how your life is getting better. The things that seem very appealing at first can lead in the other direction.

I believe that we have to trust that God is involved in all things. God wants us to be the best version of ourselves, and Church is a part of all that: developing a deeper relationship with God in prayer and community. We need to invite young people to be a part of that, encouraging them to embrace God, to want to go to Heaven rather than telling them to fear hell.

Fr. Tony Vattaparambil



My first expression, perhaps like any other pastor, is “we shall pray for him/ her together.” And I would also say, God hears the cry of the parents

for their children. **The best example is that of St. Monica and St. Augustine. For 30 some years Monica prayed for her ‘intelligent’ son. She never gave up, and God answered her tears.**

Parents, please value your faith and practice it. **Let your children see your devotions and other faith expressions.** Definitely those expressions will work well later in their life.

Pastors and parents have to work hand in hand to engage our young adults in the social activities of the faith community/ parish. Let them feel comfortable in being at our sacred space. Let them understand themselves that the faith we profess

inside our churches has also an extension outside by reaching out to the needy. Let our young ones know that prayers inside the church and their social engagement are the two sides of the same coin.

Fr. John Pozhathuparambil



Do not judge them for not going for Mass; that is my strongest advice for parents and grandparents who have young

and young-adult children. Pray for them and accompany them as a friend. I know it is challenging. If you become too much of an authority figure, you may lose them. Be a friend who hears them, understands them, and cares for them.

They millennials like to hear reasons, especially reasons why we go to Mass. Once you get to them through your friendship, tell them the reasons why they should go to Mass. **Once you can convince them by words and BYYOURLIFE of the benefit of going to Mass, you will surely win them over.**

YAFraM

Yound Adult Franciscan Ministry is led by Conventual Friars from India (Fr. John Pozahathuparambil, Fr. George Munjannatu, Fr. Jijo Thomas). They begin to open up a world of opportunities for young adults by inviting them to attend retreats, to serve the poor, or to participate in the Sacrament of Mass. In this way, the friars are building a community of faith, one person at a time, and revitalizing a generation that yearns for peace in this fast-paced world. For more information about this important outreach, please visit:

www.yafram.com

Happy 100th Birthday to Fr. Maurus Hauer, OFM Conv.

A Century of Life, Eight Decades of Franciscan Service

On October 6 (the day before his 100th birthday) family, friends, and Friars gathered in the Chapel at Mount St. Francis, Indiana, to celebrate the life of Fr. Maurus Hauer OFM Conv. Through thousands of baptisms, hundreds of marriages, and countless hours in other sacramental ministry, Fr. Maurus has spent his life accompanying others on the path toward God.

It was 85 years earlier, in the midst of the Depression, in that same Chapel that Fr. Maurus began his Franciscan journey as a first-year student at the Mount's minor seminary. He often tells the story of the Sister who was his eighth-grade teacher sending him over to the Parish rectory to tell the Friar/pastor that he wanted to be a priest. Fr. Maurus says the priest told him, "Okay kid; get back to class."

In his homily for the occasion, Fr. Jim Kent OFM Conv. added that Fr. Maurus was worried that if they looked at his grades there was no way he would be accepted. But as Conventual Franciscan St. Joseph Cupertino proved, superior academic achievement isn't required to follow Jesus and St. Francis of Assisi.

After Solemn Profession and ordination, Fr. Maurus was sent to the Southwestern US where he served nearly 55 years of his priestly ministry. He also served parishes in the Midwest. In addition to his pastoral duties, Fr. Maurus taught school and helped with the upkeep of parish facilities.

Now Fr. Maurus carries on his ministry of prayer. Through his recitation of the Rosary, in his Masses, and in the quiet of his days, he prays for all those he baptized and served, those who support the Province, and his brother Friars. He told us recently that he was praying for those suffering in the wake of hurricanes and earthquakes.

Toward the end of a life filled with achievements, Fr. Maurus gives all the credit to God's gifts: "I can look back at my life and see that the Lord had his finger on me," he says. And that is what we love best — the quiet humility and ever-present smile of a Friar, one of St. Francis' little brothers.



Photos Top: Fr. Maurus remains a baseball fan and was happy to receive a St. Louis Cardinals baseball cap and shirt as birthday gifts. **Middle:** Six Benedictine Sisters traveled from Indianapolis to be with Fr. Maurus on his birthday. Sr. Louise, to the right of Fr. Maurus, was the principal at St. Anthony's in Clarksville, Indiana, when Fr. Maurus was pastor there. **Bottom:** Fr. Maurus gives credit for his vocation and his 'wonderful life' to his parents (pictured), and especially to God.

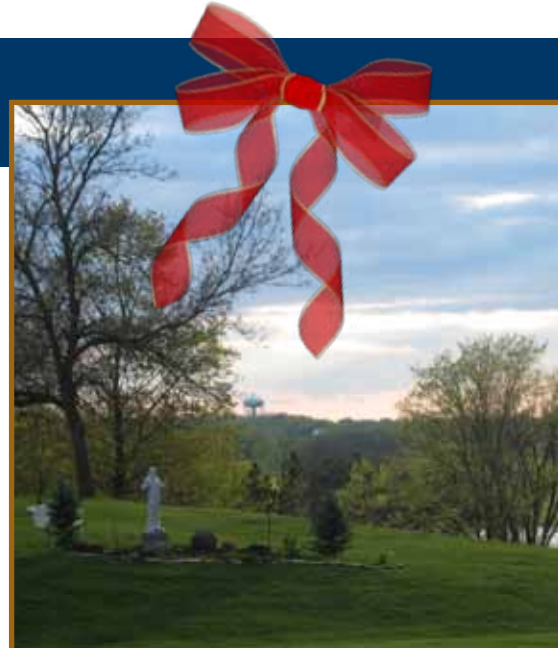
Spiritual Enrichment A Great Christmas Gift!

Need a gift for that person who is hard to shop for?

Finding the perfect gift for someone special in your life can be a real challenge. Instead of battling crowds at the mall or spending hours looking online, what about a gift certificate for a retreat?

Each of our retreat centers offers comfortable accommodations in beautiful surroundings. While on retreat, there are no worries about cleaning, cooking, or other jobs – it's time alone to renew a relationship with God and recharge the spirit. What better gift could you give to someone you love? Or to yourself?

*For more information and links to our four retreat centers, please visit
www.franciscansUSA.org*



Introducing...

Franciscan Voice is the podcast from the Conventual Franciscan Friars of Our Lady of Consolation Province. It is available on our website, as well as on SoundCloud and iTunes. Here are just a few of the episodes available:

Hospitality: A Franciscan Response to the Immigration Conversation (Fr. Tom Smith)

The end of the World? Yes, but not the way you think... (Fr. Jude Winkler)

My kids don't go to Mass...What can I do? A conversation with Friar Jude Winkler

Miracles, Apparitions, and the Power of Prayer-- Reflections on a Novena (Fr. Paul Gawlowski)

FRANCISCAN VOICE

the podcast of the Province
of Our Lady of Consolation



Reflections and reviews by
Conventual Franciscan Friars.

Alpha & Omega Fund

As we prepare for another year of service, we need your help to continue growing our Alpha & Omega Fund. Several of our friends created this fund to support our Friars as they first enter into Conventual Franciscan life, and later as they continue to minister in their 'golden years.' Some of our most challenging costs (as is the case with many of you) are for education and medical care.

Giving Back to Our Senior Friars

We are committed to helping our senior Friars 'age in place,' staying for as long as possible in their Friaries. It is important that they spend their golden years surrounded by a community of brothers. But for this to happen, we need bedrooms and bathrooms that are easily accessible. We need a safe way to navigate through buildings with more than one floor.

Assuring that senior Friars have a safe and secure place to live allows them to continue ministering to others as they age. Of course, sometimes our Friars need to be cared for, either temporarily or long-term, in healthcare facilities. This adds to the already-increasing medical costs of our Friars.

Vocation/Formation

Our initial seminary/formation program teaches young men what it means to be Franciscan. For the support of those living in community, praying together, being immersed in Franciscan spirituality, and receiving the academic preparation necessary for ministry, our formation cost averages \$47,289 per student.

In addition to our other student Friars, on July 21 of this year, three men professed first vows as Conventual Franciscans. Not only were these young Friars beaming with joy, so were their families and friends — and their Franciscan brothers. Earlier in July we welcomed three more men who will spend the year as Novices, determining whether God is calling them to Conventual Franciscan Life.

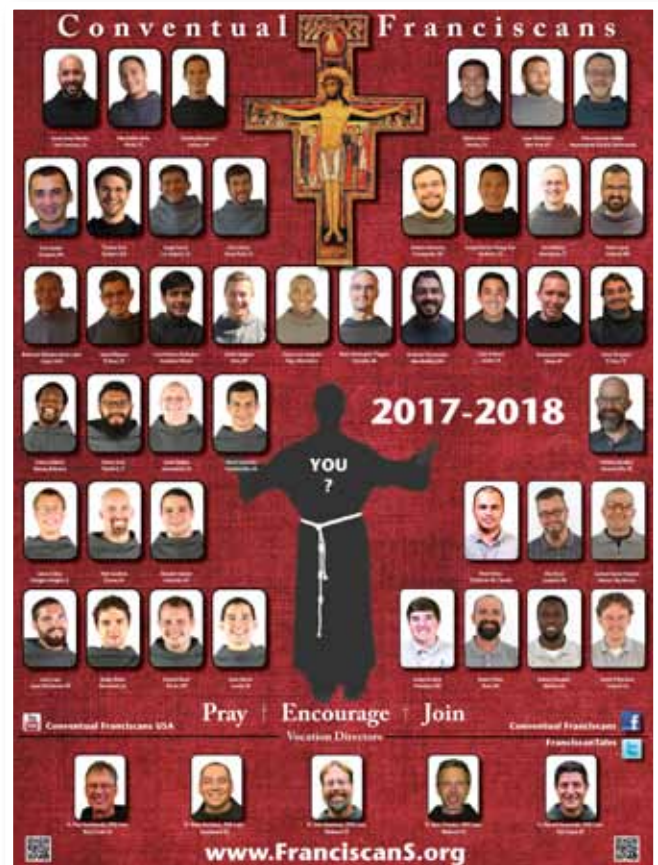
We could not continue to grow our brotherhood without your prayers and financial support.

If you are interested in investing in our Alpha & Omega Fund, please contact Becki Romans in our Development office:

***b.romans@franciscansusa.org
(812) 923-5250
103 St. Francis Boulevard
Mount St. Francis, Indiana 47146***



Pictured above are Conventual Franciscans Mario Serrano and Ken Gering. Fr. Ken, who passed away recently on All Saints Day, continued to serve as a nursing home chaplain until his final illness. Fr. Mario was ordained last year and ministers to students from several colleges in the Terre Haute, Indiana, area, while also serving as Associate Pastor at St. Joseph University Parish.



Above is this year's vocation poster. These are the student friars, novices, and postulants from the four Provinces in the United States. Please keep these men, as well as all those considering a Franciscan vocation, in prayer. Look for the full-size poster in your parish!

