



Conventual Franciscan Friars Saint Anthony's Newsletter

May 2018

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

Franciscan Intercultural Collaboration

Joining Together to Serve God's People

By Friar John Pozhathuparambil OFM Conv.

In 2007 Fr. Adam Bunnell OFM Conv., a Friar from the Province of Our Lady of Consolation (OLC,) visited India to attend the ordination of Fr. Leo Payyappilly (who now serves as the Conventual Franciscan Provincial in India). Seeing a young and vibrant Indian Custody, he envisioned inviting Indian Friars to work in the US, especially among young adults who had drifted away from the Catholic Church. Initially this was called the Kerala-Kentucky Project, named after the state where the Indian Province is based and the state where the Friars from India settled first.

This was another step in a decades-long commitment by the OLC Province to work across cultural and political borders and build intercultural collaboration among Conventual Franciscans. In the 1940s the Friars went to Africa to serve in what was then called Northern Rhodesia and is now Zambia. Today the Zambian and Indian Provinces are among the fastest growing in the world.



A young Friar takes a 'selfie' with some of the minor seminary students in India

Over the past ten years this intercultural initiative has spread to many parts of the US and Canada. There are seven friars from India working right now in this project. They serve in parishes, campus and young adult ministries, and with two more arriving this year, we will soon be working in prison ministry and other areas of service. Meanwhile, Friars from Zambia continue to visit the US to build their ministerial skills and continue their education.

The collaboration has developed in many other ways. I have served as a member of the OLC Province Definitory (leadership team) for the past three years. OLC Friar Charles McCarthy OFM Conv. is preparing to preach a retreat for Pre-Novices and Novices in India. There are 20 Indian Novices this year, giving us great hope for the future. Some OLC Friars have spent time in India during their sabbaticals, visiting the sites of Friars' missions as well as experiencing the history and culture of India. One of the Zambian Friars will lead a retreat for OLC Friars later this year.

The pioneers of the Kerala-Kentucky Project came to build a ministry for young adults aged 24-35 who are away from the Church. In 2013 we had the formal launch of the ministry as YAFraM (Young Adult Franciscan Ministry) in Louisville. We have hosted various weekend and daily retreats and programs that have connected us with a number of young adults in Kentucky



Friar John Pozhathuparambil at the Franciscan Kitchen with volunteer John Brucato, Friar John Bamman, and student Friar Roberson Lubin

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Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, we are getting ready for our Provincial Chapter. That is our name for a gathering of the Friars every four years to review the past and prepare for the future. It is also the time where we elect our new leadership team, which we call the Definitory, who will work over the next four years with our newly-elected Minister Provincial, Fr. Wayne Hellmann OFM Conv.



Fr. John Elmer OFM Conv.

During the Chapter, we will make decisions on how we can serve God most effectively with the human and financial resources we have. It is because of your prayerful support that we can have conversations like this. We will join together each day at Mass and community prayer, and you and your intentions will be remembered.

As you can see in this newsletter, we are fortunate to be a part of a growing, international Conventual Franciscan Order. The Province of Our Lady of Consolation has been able to share our resources and experience with Friars from around the world, especially those in Zambia, India, and Central America. They in turn have enriched us with their culture and spiritual gifts, as well as their enthusiasm and determination to serve God's people, especially the poor.

And here in the US, we are fortunate that young men continue to discover the joy of the Gospel and want to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. Several young men are in our formation program: as Postulants in Chicago, novices in California, and newly-professed Friars studying in San Antonio, Texas, and Washington, DC. In the midst of his studies, each new Friar spends one year living and working in one of our communities. We have been happy to have Friar Andrew Hennessy living with us this year at Mount St. Francis.

We also said goodbye recently to one of our beloved Friars, Br. Bob Baxter. He was the retreat director at Mount St. Francis, but that was only a small part of what he did. We will miss his gifts and work, but most of all we will miss his ability to make us laugh and keep us humble.

We know that many of you struggle and have times of sorrow in your lives. Please know that in the midst of your daily joys and troubles, we are with you in prayer. May St. Francis continue to intercede for all of us, and may God continue to pour his love and blessings into your lives.

Peace and all Good Things,

Fr. John Elmer OFM Conv.
Spiritual Director

ST. ANTHONY'S CORNER

We hear it over and over, that people today are more divided than ever before. While it is true that there are many divisions today, between countries and between political parties inside countries, it was just as true during St. Anthony's life. One of the saint's early biographers told how St. Anthony "called back to brotherly peace those who disagreed with each other..." He even once walked from Padua to Verona to plead for the release of a politician being held prisoner by the opposition.

St. Anthony would also encourage people:

Fight error with courage and kindness.

Look around you and see the injustice that chains so many people.

Take time for quiet prayer.

Know your faith, and let that knowledge burst into flame in your heart.

Let us ask St. Anthony to intercede for us, asking God to grant each of us the grace to seek Him more sincerely and follow the teachings of Jesus more closely. And let us pray for our priests and women and men religious, especially the Conventual Franciscan Friars, that through their lives and examples they may inspire us to find and do God's will in our lives.



The Apostolic Year *Working in the Lord's Vineyard*

When a man decides to join the Conventual Franciscan Friars, he begins a process of education and experience that has come to be called formation. Because each person is unique, the formation may follow different paths.

But whether the new Friar desires to serve as a Brother or go on to ordination as a priest, he will spend one year away from the classroom, living and working with a community of Friars.

“We call it an Apostolic Year,” said Fr. Paul Schloemer OFM Conv., the Director of Formation for the Province of Our Lady of Consolation. “The Friar is sent into the vineyard, to be in ministry as opposed to learning about it. The minimum formation period for a brother is five years, and six years for a priest. The Apostolic Year fits into that time.

“The Friar will work with the Formation Director to decide what would be valuable for both the needs of the Province and for him. And since the Friars study together with men from other Provinces, it’s a good opportunity to expose him to the ministries and personalities for our Province.”

Friar Andrew Hennessy attends Catholic University in Washington, DC, but has spent this year at Mount St. Francis in southern Indiana working in various ministries there and in Louisville, Kentucky. He spends several days a week at the Franciscan Kitchen, a hot-lunch provider for the hungry and homeless in downtown Louisville. He has helped out at local parishes staffed by the Friars, and with the local youth ministry program of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. In what’s left of his spare time, he’s been working on a plan to make the Mount’s facilities more energy-efficient.

Recently he helped lead a men’s outdoor retreat, a story that was picked up in national Catholic news and websites.



Friar Andrew promoting the Men's Retreat.



Friar Andrew praying with a guest at the Franciscan Kitchen.

It's a great experience of living the daily life of being a Friar

Friar Andrew

“It’s a great experience of living the daily life of being a Friar,” Friar Andrew said. “The ministerial experience helps build confidence as well. It’s provided an opportunity to make more of a contribution and impact on the Province.

“It’s been good to live with more mature Friars while learning to balance community life in a multi-apostolate house. There are Friars who teach or work in parishes or in retreat ministry, and you learn how they adapt their different schedules and responsibilities to their life in the Friary.”

It is through your prayerful support that our young Friars are educated and have the opportunities to serve God’s people. For more information about our Alpha and Omega Fund, which was created to educate our younger Friars and serve the needs of our senior men, please contact the Province Development Office.



Fr. Mark Weaver and Bishop Enrique Montero (center front row) pose with their former novices during meetings in the formation of the Custody of Mary, Mother of Mercy.

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and Indiana. Three Friars serve as campus ministers at Bellarmine University in Louisville and Catholic University in Washington, DC.

Recently, two different groups of Conventual Franciscans in Central America joined to create a unified jurisdiction called a Custody, one step short of becoming an independent Province. The Friars there chose to work with OLC Province as they move through this process. OLC Friars will continue traveling to Central America over the next few years, supporting the Custody with their advice and expertise as Central American Friars build their structure and broaden their areas of ministry.

Joy-filled with a gift for teaching

†Br. Bob Baxter OFM Conv.

A joy-filled Friar with a gift for teaching, Br. Bob Baxter OFM Conv. was known for his humor and quips. Though he could seem irreverent at times, those occasions only made more obvious his reverence for the most important things: his profound faith in God, his devotion to Franciscan life, and his love of the Scriptures, which he knew intimately.



As a native New Yorker, he loved the Yankees, “black and white cookies,” and combative conversation. “He was uninhibited and larger than life,” said his sister Elaine Tracy. “He had charisma; people were drawn to him.”

For the first 25 years of his life as a Friar, Br. Bob was a high school religion teacher, director of parish religious education, and youth minister — sometimes all three at the same time. He served in schools and parishes in St. Louis, Missouri; Lorain, Ohio; and Indianapolis, Indiana.

In 2001, Br. Bob was elected Secretary of the Province of Our Lady of Consolation and in 2008 began serving as director of retreats at Mount St. Francis in southern Indiana. It was there that he established a reputation for bringing the Scriptures to life in his weekly Bible Study classes. Like St. Francis of Assisi, Br. Bob helped people understand that the Bible, the New Testament in particular, is about real people and real lives. Also like St. Francis, he loved Christmas and celebrating its true meaning: that through the Incarnation Jesus became a human being, just like each one of us.

Lexington (KY) Bishop John Stowe OFM Conv. was one of Br. Bob’s students at Lorain (Ohio) Catholic High School. He said: “... he knew the attractiveness and the joy of the Gospel, and embraced the freedom of living that Gospel in the spirit of Francis of Assisi.”

“He was our brother, but also a brother to so many others,” said his sister Elaine. “I think I know how he would console us all: He’d say to get over it; go out and do good things!”

The funeral Mass for Br. Bob was held in the Mount St. Francis Chapel on Thursday, April 5. For more pictures and a celebration of Brother Bob’s life, please visit the Province website: franciscansUSA.org

Br. Bob passed away on March 22, 2018, in New Albany, Indiana. He was born Robert Byrne Baxter, Jr., to Robert Byrne and Theodora (Tuomey) Baxter on September 5, 1949, in Bay Shore, New York. He was predeceased by his parents and is survived by his uncle Robert N. Tuomey (Joan), sisters Anne B. Humes (Bill), Elaine B. Tracy (Bill), Julie Baxter (Rob Robinson), Clare Baxter, and Margaret B. Helmig (Albert), brothers William E. (Robin) and James E. (Felice) Baxter, and five nephews and nine nieces. He professed Simple Vows as a Conventual Franciscan Friar on August 5, 1972, and Solemn Vows on November 1, 1976.



Br. Bob Baxter and Br. Mike Austin on the move during 2008 Assembly.



Br. Bob Baxter speaking at 2010 Chapter.

The collaboration has enriched all of the Provinces involved. With its wisdom and experience, the OLC Province has helped guide the growing Provinces through periods of financial and other struggles. On the other hand, the youth and energy of the developing Provinces has inspired the American Friars, and they are able to see the return on the decades of investment of the Friars’ efforts and the generous support of their donors.

May God continue to bless this collaboration, and to bless all of those who support these important Conventual Franciscan ministries.



Fr. Richard and Fr. Peter visited with Fr. John Elmer in the Development Office.

May you know the joy of your generosity in helping others

As we continue this season of renewal, many of you have asked us how you can do more to support the ministries of the Conventual Franciscan Friars. We would love to share with you how you can support our ministries and maintain, or even improve, your financial assets. **We would like to invite you to consider a charitable gift annuity** to support the work of the friars in the Province of our Lady of Consolation.

Many of us have found ourselves in the financial squeeze that comes from having significant assets, but less income. A gift made to the Province of Our Lady of Consolation through a charitable gift annuity both supports our ministries and helps unlock added income for you.

Our charitable gift annuity program allows you to receive lifetime income while providing support for the future of our Province. Our province has a proven record of managing charitable gift annuities and providing friends like you annual income for life. At the same time we are strengthening the future of our Province.

An annuity is a contractual agreement between a person age 60 or older and the Conventual Franciscan Friars. You transfer a minimum of \$1,500 in cash, securities or other assets to us and you are paid a guaranteed income for life. When the time comes for you to go to Heaven, the remainder is a gift to support the



Friars Bob Roddy and Steve McMichael with longtime friend (and Honorary Member) Mary Hart

Friars and our ministries. The older you are when the contract is established, the higher your gift annuity payout rate becomes. You will be able to claim a substantial portion of the gift as a charitable contribution, as well as receive a portion of your payments as tax-free income.

We would love to send you a confidential proposal showing what an annuity would look like for you. You can request this calling Becki Romans, our Director of Major/Planned Giving at (812)923-5250, or emailing b.romans@franciscansusa.org.

Thank you so much for your prayers for us and for helping us to remember that the love of God is always present.

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FRANCISCAN VOICE

The Podcast of the Province of Our Lady of Consolation

Reflections and reviews by Conventual Franciscan Friars

Available on *iTunes* and *Soundcloud*



Dear Friars,

Here is my offering for our Franciscan missions, the poor, our Franciscan students, and for the care of our elderly and sick Friars.

\$15 \$20 \$25 \$50 \$ _____

Please charge my offering of \$ _____

To my: MasterCard Visa American Express

Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

I would like to learn more about including the Conventual Franciscans Friars in my will or estate planning.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

We would like to remember you on your birthday.

My Birthday: _____

Please pray for my intentions

In Thanksgiving

I have enclosed an additional offering as a memorial-burse in honor of Br. Bob Baxter OFM Conv.

\$ _____



Please use the enclosed envelope and return to the Conventual Franciscan Friars of the Province of Our Lady of Consolation.

Saint Anthony's Newsletter May 2018

Please pray for the intentions of those here, and for all your Franciscan family:

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|--|---|---|
| The Delohery Family
Frank and Angie Sartor
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Fearon
Ms. Dawna J. Felgar
Carol and Vincent Piacenti
Mrs. Joanne Rizzarda
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel J Kin
Mr. and Mrs. Dick L Lawson
Mrs. Audrey McCarthy
Mrs Celia McCoy
Drs. David and Jane Silk
Mr. Peter Heekin
Mrs. Robert Gray
Dan and Joan Ludwig
Mary Jayne Crawford
James and Mary Canarecci
Mrs. Mary Ann Beenen
Dr. and Mrs. Gordon Miller
Mr Carl A Lekan
Sylvia Zawita
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Kelleher
Robert Corona
Ms. Christine Kirby
Ms. Joana Gallo Marsteller
Mr. Al Drumm
Eleanor Malatesta
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Faris G Attisha
Ms. Sarah J Dixon
Mrs. Dolly Lukose
Mr Jose Lafayette
Mr Keith Janousek
Ms Diane Kalcich
Mr John J Cannon
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Sr. MaryTheophilia Tworzyolo, CSSF
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Mr Clifford L Lajoie
Mr. David McKernan
Ms Moira A. Harnett
Mr. and Mrs. James N David
Ms Renee Louis
Rene A Garvey
Mr. Kenneth Flood
Mrs. Rosalina Allijandro |
|--|---|---|

In Thanksgiving

Dear Fr. John,

On March 15, 2018, we celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Thank You Lord- It's been a good life!

B.G.

Dear Fr. John,

In thanksgiving to St. Anthony for answering my prayers for suitable employment for my son and prayers for his family after nearly 2 months of unemployment. Thanks be to God!

S.Z.

Dear Fr. John,

In thanksgiving for the healing of my grandson, Anthony, who was very sick with cancer. Many people prayed for him and he is now healed at 19 years old. He was very sick for two and a half years.

A.T.G.



Province of Our Lady of Consolation, Inc. Conventual Franciscan Friars

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