



# Conventual Franciscan Friars

# Saint Anthony's

## Newsletter

September 2019

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# The Pilgrim Journey

By Friar Steven J McMichael OFM Conv.

There is nothing like a pilgrimage to sacred places, especially Italy. As a pilgrimage director for Franciscan Pilgrimage Program while in Italy (and other places), I tell the pilgrims that we offer these programs as an experience of Italy with the eyes of a pilgrim, which means the following:



*Pilgrims perceive an internal dimension to pilgrimage, while tourists are concerned with the external journey alone.* While everyone is on the same external journey, each one's internal journey is different. A pilgrimage addresses that focus. Depth, not distance, is the goal. It is about experiencing these places that affect the heart and soul of the person. This is why pilgrimages to Italy never become boring to me, as the sacred places always teach me something different about myself and my own heart.

*Pilgrims invest themselves, while tourists avoid personal commitment.* A pilgrim allows the self to receive, to be ministered to, and attempts to let go of controls. I tell the pilgrims that they should let the places of Italy speak to them, but they can only do so if they are open to these places.

*Pilgrims will be affected by the pilgrimage, whereas tourists seek to remain untouched on a deep level by their experiences.* Thus, a pilgrim seeks new insights, discoveries, and transformation. It is about the experience of sacred space whether that is of nature or a sacred place such as a church or shrine.

*Both the journey and the arrival are important to the pilgrim, while only the arrival matters for the tourist.* The tourist wants to get there. The pilgrim's attention is on the entire journey from beginning to end. It is about what happens on the way,



Learning about ourselves as we make our way toward God



Fr. Steve preaching at the tomb of St. Francis in Assisi

not what happens at the end. It is about the experience that happens within the pilgrim as an experience of the heart.

*Community is formed for and by pilgrims; community is not sought by tourists.* Pilgrims come together as one from various places, cultures, and positions at these sites. We travel together as a community of pilgrims. The great experience is of sharing what each has encountered of the Divine while alone and in the group.

All of these reveal that if you can put on the lens of a pilgrim, the pilgrimage experience will be not only religiously enriching, but also life transforming!

For more from Fr. Steve about pilgrimage, please listen to an interview with him in the Province's podcast series, **Franciscan Voice**.



Dear Friends,

Franciscans have always been on the move. St. Francis himself traveled frequently, mostly on foot, throughout the region surrounding Assisi. We know he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. And this year we celebrate the 800th anniversary of one of his longest journeys – when he crossed the battle lines of a crusade and went into Egypt to meet with Sultan Malek al-Kamil.



Fr. John Elmer OFM Conv.

At the very same time, the first Franciscans were making their way across Europe and into North Africa, spreading the Gospel and 'rebuilding the Church,' the instruction St. Francis himself had received as he prayed in the San Damiano Chapel.

Today we continue to travel in the footsteps of our holy founder and his first followers. We try to keep in mind that our journey should always have a purpose: bringing the joy of the Gospel to all we meet. In this issue, we hear from four different Friars about faith journeys. Whether as missionaries or on pilgrimage, our aim as Franciscans is to connect people with Jesus Christ.

Also, we try to remember something important as we travel: we have as much to learn from others as we have to pass on ourselves. When we are with pilgrims, their yearning to deepen their faith and their relationship with the Lord inspires us to examine our own efforts in this regard. And our missionaries have learned to listen to those they serve – learning from them what they need, and finding the beauty of God's gifts in their native lands and culture.

But Franciscans never travel or work alone. You are our companions on these journeys of faith. Even when you are not present physically, your support paves the way for us, your prayers sustain our spirits, and your intentions are always remembered in our Masses and prayers.

On behalf of all the Friars, I thank you once again for your generosity.

As the seasons change and we head toward the end of the year, let us always remember one another in prayer, praising and thanking God for his gifts. And may God continue to pour His blessings upon you and your loved ones as you travel on your own faith journeys.

Peace and all Good Things,

Fr. John Elmer OFM Conv.  
Spiritual Director



## ST. ANTHONY'S CORNER

St. Anthony of Padua taught that our real purpose, our journey in life, was to seek the Kingdom of God. It is an interior journey, finding within our hearts the hidden ground of God's everlasting, overwhelming love for each of us, His children. The symbol of that ground is the eternal city of Jerusalem. St. Anthony leads us in this prayer:

*My brothers and sisters, let us therefore ask  
our Lord Jesus Christ,  
to grant us the grace to seek His kingdom,  
to build within us a moral Jerusalem,  
that we may attain to the Heavenly Jerusalem,  
to be made worthy to chant in its streets the Alleluia!  
in the company of angels.  
May He whose reign lasts throughout all ages  
grant us these requests  
and may the virtuous soul answer, Amen! Alleluia!*

## In Thanksgiving

Dear Fr. John,

I am thankful for a wonderful family, nice home, good friends, strength in my faith, continuing health and speedy recoveries.

D.K.

Dear Fr. John,

I am thankful for my family and friends, for our health, for my two boys, Kaleb and Ryan, and my hardworking husband, Nathan.

N.F.

Dear Fr. John,

I am thankful for many blessings, grace, aid in finding things, and peace of mind.

P.H.



# The Journey of a Missionary

## Brother Tony Droll in Zambia

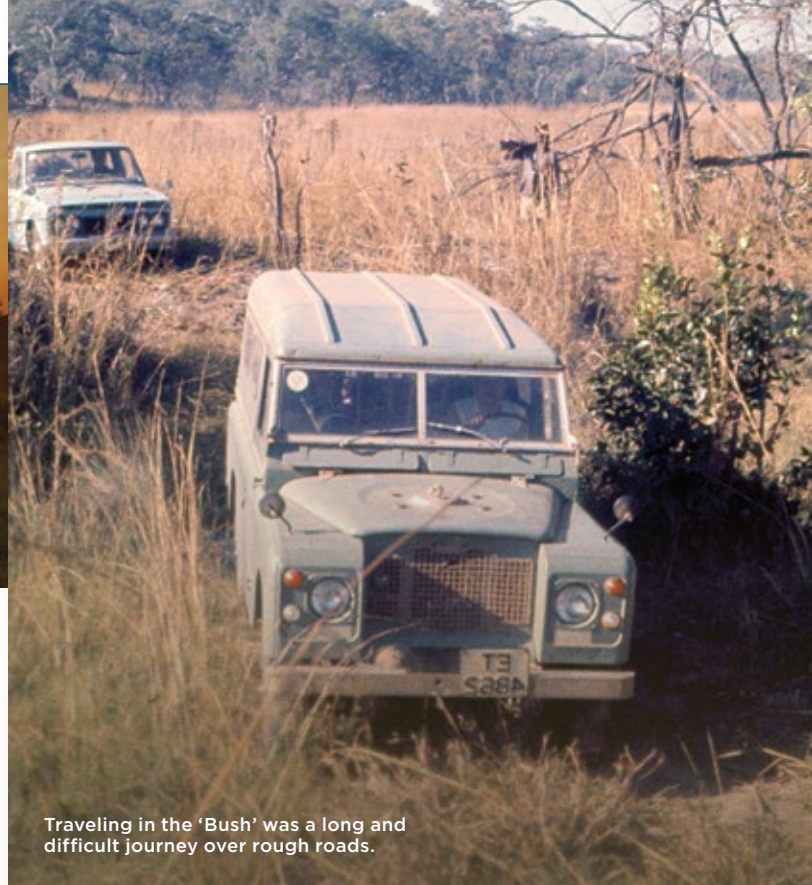
By Friar Don Halpin OFM Conv.

In 1965, Brother Tony Droll OFM Conv. was living in Chaska, Minnesota, caring for 35 dairy cows at the Assumption Seminary Farm. But if he was going to fulfill a dream, his challenge was to sell the cows, then get clearance to go to Africa as a missionary.

The dream quickly became reality, and Br. Tony moved to what was then known as Northern Rhodesia, and is today called Zambia, beginning a career of ministry that would span over 54 years.

He developed a habit of writing letters, including observations of interesting detail that made the area come to life. When he first arrived, the letters were filled with descriptions of travel: roads of sand, dirt, even a cowpath! There were some paved roads but only in more populated areas.

Br. Tony headed north and west from the settled area, into an area often called 'the Bush.' Each day traveling in the Bush is a long difficult journey over rough roads, over relatively few miles. Needless to say, such travel can be very hard on a vehicle, and shocks and springs can break, or lug nuts fall off causing the loss of a wheel. These were the roads of the 1960s.



Traveling in the 'Bush' was a long and difficult journey over rough roads.

All the while Br. Tony, ever observant, saw the poverty of the people. In letters he noted that the people were joyful, ever friendly and polite in their poverty. A woman could carry a baby on her back while balancing a heavy load on her head. Even though thin and apparently malnourished, people had the strength and determination to walk for miles. Children were unspoiled and polite, and curious. Even as he learned new languages, Br. Tony found a way of communicating: a language of the heart.

He wrote that he kept in mind the reason he is there: "for their education, betterment of conditions, and sharing of the knowledge of Jesus Christ." A simple meditation is his reflection on his first Christmas in Africa, a setting with no decorations, lights, or ornaments...only the poor Jesus, born, among the poor!

His descriptions go on and on, from building the church at Our Lady of Consolation Mission, to the use of radio for communication, to the changing and challenges of each season, and many others. I invite you to read more about this wonder-filled story of God's Providence, the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit that led the Friars in their work. Br. Tony was just one of these Friars, but his stories include many others who dedicated their lives to the Franciscan work of building the Church.



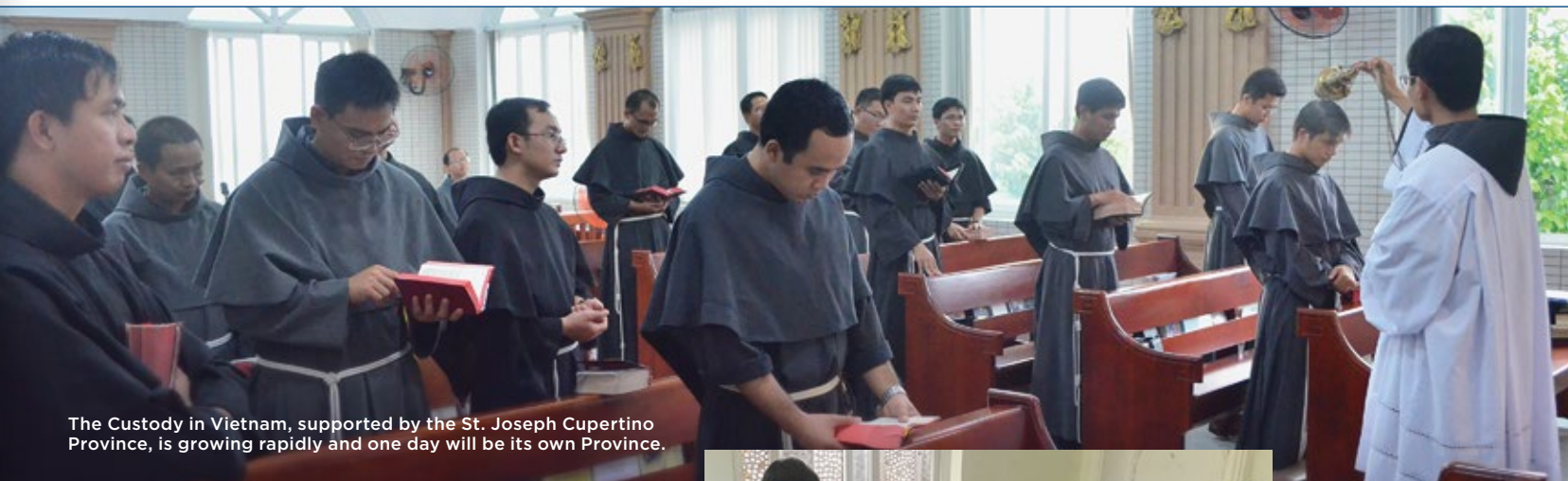
A woman could carry a baby on her back while balancing a heavy load on her head.

Br. Tony saw the poverty of the people, but noted that they were joyful, ever friendly, and polite despite their conditions.



For more of the story, please visit our website, [franciscansusa.org](http://franciscansusa.org), and click on the tab: **Br. Tony's Story**. Also, you can listen to a two-part interview with Br. Tony in the Province's podcast series, **Franciscan Voice**.





The Custody in Vietnam, supported by the St. Joseph Cupertino Province, is growing rapidly and one day will be its own Province.



In Vietnam, hospitals don't provide meals for the patients. Each Saturday a team of friars prepares a large pot of soup and takes it to the local hospital. (Fr. Ray is on the right.)

# Letting Myself be Led By Others

## A Friar on Pilgrimage

Friar Ray Mallett OFM Conv.

After years of welcoming and accompanying pilgrims, for the past year I have been a pilgrim myself. I am grateful for this gift of time, my first Sabbatical in my 43 years of ministry: grateful to the donors who have paid for these experiences as well their generosity to Franciscan missions like the one in Vietnam.

I was in Vietnam for three months and loved it. The Friars there are working with the Conventual Franciscan Province based in California, where I had worked for several years.

The Franciscan community in Vietnam is no longer "underground." The government has officially recognized them. Why? Because of the charitable works of the friars: caring for lepers; caring for orphans; feeding those in the hospital once a week; making 1,000 loaves of bread each Saturday; visiting and seeing that the forgotten are cared for; and helping in their local parishes.

After a quick stop in the US, I traveled to Spain to walk the Pilgrim Way, the Camino to Santiago de Compostela. Since I have

difficulty with my eyes that affects my sight, I traveled with a couple who were a great help to me. We walked the 120 miles of the Via de Plata (the Roman Way). It was the most difficult adventure in my life, much more than training and running a marathon.

My plan was to return to the US to work in parish ministry, but now I have been invited back by the friars in Vietnam to help their 20 postulants improve their English language skills. *(Postulancy is a period when people thinking about religious life try to listen to God's call, discerning their vocation.)*

If the postulants decide to enter the Novitiate, they will move to the Philippines where everything will be conducted in English, so fluency is necessary. They also must pass an English test to be accepted to study Philosophy and Theology.

These Vietnamese friars have dreams of one day growing as a Province and being a part of the evangelization of China and other parts of Asia. As long as my eyes let me, I hope I can be of some aid to their growth. Please pray for the Church of Vietnam.

## FRANCISCAN VOICE

The Podcast of the Province of Our Lady of Consolation

Hear Friars Jeffrey Hines and Randy Kin talk about the ministry that takes place at the Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation – eight episodes on *The Healing Power of God's Love.*



Available on  
iTunes and  
Soundcloud





# Pilgrimage: Risk and Rewards

“You Will Never Be the Same...”

By Friar Kenneth Davis OFM Conv.

We witness the annual migration of birds searching for the best resources to raise their young. Apparently it's worth the risk and effort to raise the next generation in today's world.

We can learn something from the example of sister stork and brother bunting. But not to encourage tourism! Rather to encourage a migration of the heart or what Christians have always called “pilgrimage.” Unlike a tourist, a pilgrim is vested in penance and conversion that includes visiting foreign lands.

But it is much more than just a geographic movement: it is an autobiographic moment, like St. Francis leaving his luxurious home to serve in a leper hospital. He called that his life of penance and refers to it as the beginning of his conversion.

In 1980, never having been on a plane and without the ability to even say “tortilla,” I departed my comfortable home for one of the poorest countries on earth: Honduras. I wasn't just ignorant of the language. Dictionary in hand, I asked one of the natives: “Where is the men's room.” As he pointed, he explained: “From that tree left is for men, and from that tree right is for women. Be careful of the snakes!”



Honduras is a beautiful country with many faith-filled people. However, corruption and violence are widespread, leading some people to risk death trying to flee in order to protect their families.



St. Joseph University Parish in Terre Haute, Indiana, has been twinned with St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Honduras since the late 1990s. This past March, they signed an agreement to continue this special relationship.

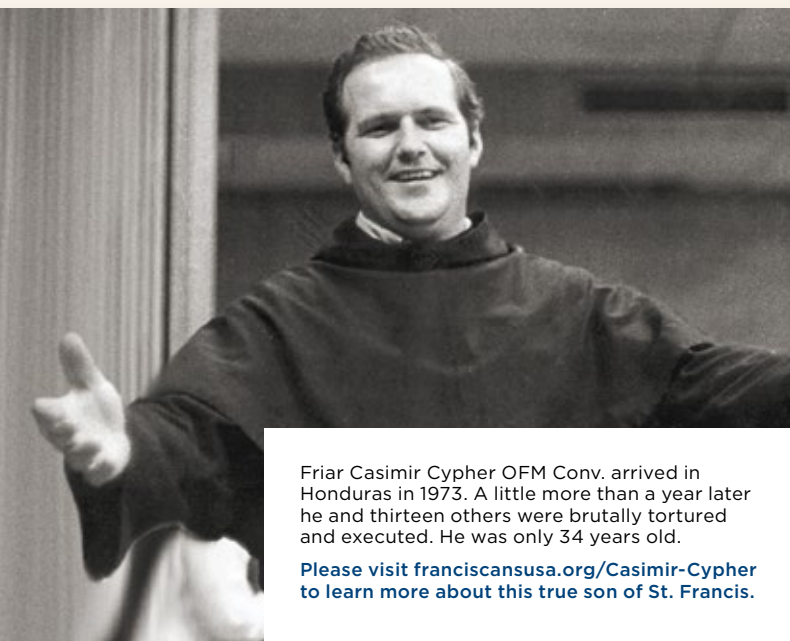
In 2016 Fr. Ken Davis was honored at the 25th anniversary of the National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry for his role at its beginning, and for serving as its only non-Hispanic president.

Although I returned home to finish priestly studies, like a migratory bird, I kept going back: first to learn Spanish, then to serve in our missions. And finally to support the efforts of RENEW in Central America in the new evangelization. For almost forty years I made an annual pilgrimage to these countries whose faith amid poverty enriched my soul amid wealth.

Much has happened in forty years. Streets I used to walk fearlessly at night are now dangerous by day. I know priests who have been kidnapped, friars who have been robbed, and lay supporters who have been murdered. America's appetite for drugs and our government's support of military juntas has led to such widespread violence and corruption that families risk death in order to escape. Like migratory birds, these parents believe the risk and effort is their best effort to protect their young. And they are as fragile and vulnerable as nestlings.

Whatever political party to which a reader belongs, I urge you to pray for these fellow pilgrims in this world. Better, I urge you to make a pilgrimage to get to know them. Invite them to your home. Invite them to your parish. You might even consider twinning your parish with another more needy in another country. Risk this pilgrimage, and you will never be the same. That is what conversion is all about!

We're all in this world for so brief a moment, and we all will be judged on how we have treated our fellow pilgrims, especially the most vulnerable. Some of us were born into circumstances more favorable for our young; others must journey to find a better life. Woe to us, the fortunate, if all we do is crow like a rooster without ever helping those trying to rise like a Phoenix.



Friar Casimir Cypher OFM Conv. arrived in Honduras in 1973. A little more than a year later he and thirteen others were brutally tortured and executed. He was only 34 years old.

Please visit [franciscansusa.org/Casimir-Cypher](http://franciscansusa.org/Casimir-Cypher) to learn more about this true son of St. Francis.

# A Gift that Gives Back

**You can help the ministry of the friars while achieving your financial goals**

What if you could help bring the Good News of God's love to the lonely and suffering, assist people in need, and at the same time secure an income stream for life? ***When you set up a Franciscan charitable gift annuity, you will receive income for life, reduce your tax burden, and support the Friars as they minister to God's people.***

**How a Franciscan Charitable Gift Annuity can work for you:**

1. You are 60 years or older
2. You create an annuity by transferring a gift of \$5,000 or more in cash, securities, or other property to the Province
3. The Province makes fixed payments to you for life
4. You will receive a charitable income tax deduction for the gift portion of the annuity
5. The annuity remainder is used as a resource for the ministry of the Friars

You may also make a gift of appreciated securities to fund a Franciscan Charitable Gift Annuity and avoid a portion of the capital gains tax. The fixed payments are determined at the creation of an annuity, and are based upon your age. By joining others who have taken this step, you are part of a distinctive legacy, strengthening the future of the Friars.

If you have any questions about Franciscan Charitable Gift Annuities, or the many other ways you can support the Friars, please contact Shaunna Graf, Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving at [s.graf@franciscansusa.org](mailto:s.graf@franciscansusa.org) or (812) 923-5250.



## Oberammergau 2020 Pilgrimage ONLY TEN SPOTS LEFT

**The Conventual Franciscan Friars host their first pilgrimage to the Passion Play in Oberammergau, Germany, in August 2020. We hope you can join us.**

The Passion Play is offered only once every ten years. It is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Having been spared the ravages of the Black Plague, the residents of Oberammergau vowed to present the life of Christ every ten years. The first presentation was in 1634. The year 2020 marks the 42nd time the play will be produced. The trip will include other sites in Bavaria, and conclude with two days of reflection at the Franciscan Friary of Maria Eck, led by Minister Provincial Fr. Wayne Hellmann.

We will keep this to a group of 35 (including our guides), ensuring a more intimate and personal experience. Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis, and therefore we would like registration forms returned by November 27, 2019. If you have any questions or would like a registration form, please call Becki Romans in the Mission Advancement Office: (812) 923-5250. We hope you will be able to share this experience with us.

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

Holly Delohery  
Ms. Margaret Klempa  
The Klempa Family  
Frank and Angie Sartor  
Alan L. Amann  
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Amiano  
Faris G. Attisha  
Gloria A. Barrientos  
Mrs. Barbara Bedner  
Mr. Clifford Blackburn  
Mr. Thomas Brannon  
Mr. Fred H. Cabral  
Ms. Blanche C. Carroll

Mrs. Ruth Cheshier  
Mr. and Mrs. Hans Christoffersen  
Ms. Rose Ciuppa  
Ms. Ruth M. Connolly  
Mrs. Frances Conroy  
Gloria Courtois  
Dr. Corazon C. David  
Lorraine De Muynck  
Mr. David Deshotel  
Ms. Donna J. Doti  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Falkner  
Ms. Jane A. Farrell-Beck  
Ms. Rosemary Flowers

Mr. Marco A. Frausto  
Mr. and Mrs. Phil Fujawa  
Mr. David L. Gahlinger  
Mr. José Gallegos  
Ms. Angela Gannucci  
Robert and Bertha Garza  
Jerome & Florence Golden  
Mrs. Barbara Gray  
Mr. Charles Gribi  
Amado Gutierrez  
Mr. Leonard Guzman  
Mr. and Mrs. Leo E. Halbleib, Jr.  
Susan Hanley

Ms. Ruth L. Harvey  
Flora L. Herkatta  
Mrs. Mary A. Herkimer  
Mr. Joseph Hinnegan  
Barbara Hojnacki  
Mrs. Josephine Jones  
Mr. Abelardo B. Joves  
Mrs. Rose Kimich  
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Kinder  
Ms. Marcia A. Kolovich  
Mr. Mathew Kulaga  
David and Rita Kulik  
Mr. and Mrs. Pasquale LaSusa

Mr. Robert M. Lavoie  
Mr. Carl A. Lekan  
Mr. Robert Letendre  
Linda Liston, MD, MPH  
Harold Bryan Longhouse  
Northshire  
Mr. Rudy Machala  
Ms. Lois J. Marker  
Mrs. Mary Lou Marston  
Helen R. McBride  
Madelon E. Megela  
Carolyn A. Miller  
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Miller



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Conventual Franciscan Friars**

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