



Conventual Franciscan Friars Saint Anthony's Newsletter

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An International Friary *for a* Global Franciscan Order

Expanding the House of Formation in San Antonio

By Friar Tim Unser OFM Conv.

Here in San Antonio, Texas, our friary is getting smaller. The building isn't shrinking, of course, but the number of student friars living here is growing larger.

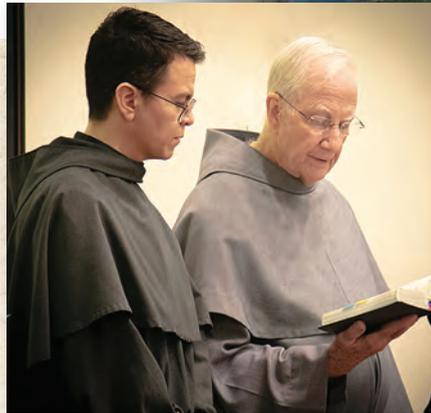
Young friars from around the world are living here together, growing in their commitment to Conventual Franciscan life while completing the studies that will lead to priesthood or other ministries. Currently, we have friars from Mexico, South Korea, Haiti, Bahamas, Vietnam, Cameroon, and from across the United States.

Now other Provinces around the world are serious about wanting to send their students here. There is continuing globalization of the Franciscan Order, with the growing cooperation of the provinces around the world. We now have to meet the responsibilities that come from this movement. A movement to bring together students who will learn from one another and then work together in the future.

Our friary in San Antonio is becoming the environment for that to happen. We currently crowd 14 friars into our existing structure. But we are beginning a renovation and expansion project that will allow us to house a total of 30 friars while providing larger spaces for both studies and recreation.

Following the lead of Pope Francis, The Oblate School of Theology, where our students attend, has opened its doors to a more profound pastoral theology. The Holy Father urges us to look at people pastorally to focus on their needs. The Oblate School of Theology is establishing that mentality in its course offerings.

The Church isn't a lot of buildings. The Church is people, and this project is all about people.



Friar Cristian Martinez and Friar Tim Unser



Morning prayers at our House of Formation

Just as the Church is moving in a global direction, our Franciscan formation is moving that way also. We are aware of the various cultures our students come from, and we pay attention to the gifts they bring. Every day in our friary, this intercultural exchange is experienced, worked out, and lived.

In addition to having students from around the world, our next step is to welcome friars from other cultures into our formation team. Not only will this enable us to meet the needs of the international students, but it will also give our U.S. students a stronger sense of the global reach of the Franciscan Order.

Of course, this will take a more significant investment from our Province. While these international provinces are rich in vocations and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they can't fully finance the education of all their Friars.

We have taken on the challenge of providing the funding they need for formation and education and a facility where that can happen. We ask you to continue your prayerful support as we move forward. May God bless you for your generosity!



Fr. John Elmer OFM Conv.

Dear Friends,

As you can see from this issue, this is an exciting time for both the Conventual Franciscan Order and the Province of Our Lady of Consolation.

The presence of young friars from all around the world is a blessing for the Conventual Franciscan Order. These young men are responding to the Holy Spirit, embracing the challenge of the Gospel, and taking their first steps in the path of St. Francis of Assisi.

In our House of Formation in San Antonio, Texas, we have student friars from the US and six other countries and hope to have more countries represented in the near future. This intercultural house is a sign of the direction in which the Order is moving. The walls between Provinces and countries are falling. Friars are beginning to work together based on talents and interests rather than geography.

Of course, any time you have people from different cultures and backgrounds (not to mention languages), there must be an adjustment, compromise, and patience with one another. This part of their education is just as important as their classroom work and will benefit the people we serve many years into the future.

We are grateful for your prayerful support of all our ministries, but especially for the education and formation of our student friars. They are our future, yours, and the Order. The lives they will touch and the people they will serve will benefit from your generosity.

Also, in this issue, we remember Br. Angelo Catania. Always a brother for hospitality to all, he waited up for traveling friars to arrive, no matter how late. He would be ready to fix them something to eat or show them to their rooms. But most importantly, he had been praying for their safe travel.

May Br. Angelo now rejoicing in Eternal Life continues to pray for all of us as we travel on our road toward God. And please remember that the friars always include you and your intentions in our Masses and prayers.

Peace and all Good Things,

Fr. John Elmer OFM Conv.
Spiritual Director



ST. ANTHONY'S CORNER

St. Anthony of Padua wrote that "there are six things necessary for prayer: the sweet smell of intimate devotion, joy in troubled times, the tears of contrition, mortification of the body, single-heartedness of life, and almsgiving. These six traits make prayer sincere, pure, and fruitful, rising up to the ears of God."

Here is one of his prayers of adoration and thanksgiving:

*Everything that is in Heaven, including the angels,
everything which exists on the earth and under the earth,
everything that is in the air and in the water,
everything that moves, exists, and is,
comes from the Highest Good,
the Cause of all things,
and the fountain of Goodness.
To Him be honor and glory for all ages. Amen.*

In Thanksgiving

Dear Fr. John,

I am thankful for being able to live on my own and for my caring family and friends.

R.C.

Dear Fr. John,

I am thankful for prayers answered when I had to have a battery replacement on my pacemaker. Thanks to St. Jude, St. Anthony, Our Lady of Sorrows, Infant Jesus of Prague, and the Miraculous Mary.

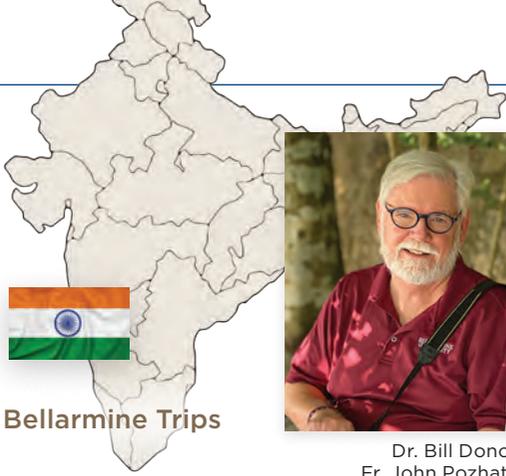
B.J.

Dear Fr. John,

I am thankful for Gasper surviving CPR and that he is with us today and hopefully for a long time yet.

C.Y. & G.Y.

Incredible India



Dr. Bill Donovan and Fr. John Pozhathuparambil



Hospitality of the friars - welcoming ceremony

Reflections of a Decade of Bellarmine Trips

Incredible India. This is both a statement and an explanation for all things that one might encounter while visiting the beautiful state of Kerala, India. Kerala is full of life, simplicity, contradictions, complexity, and yet somehow, it all works. It all makes sense.

India is a wholly new experience for most westerners. Going to Europe is like visiting a cousin while going to India is like visiting a stranger. Exploration of unfamiliar experiences begins with the first day on the road while driving on the opposite side of the road during heavy traffic. It can be a scary experience on that first day. I say to my students, "Relax; our drivers know what they are doing." As the days pass, they learn that there is an order to all the disordered driving. The lines on the road are for fun because no one keeps the line and automobile horns, a never-ending symphony. When the vehicles come too close to each other, I remind them there is a space only Indian drivers can see. They all giggle.

The smell of spices, women in sarees, men in dhoti, crowded pathways, animals, and humans are crossing the highways, spicy food. All these experiences are unfamiliar. At the end of the day, this incredible India invites you to create poems, engage questions, open hearts wide, and be at peace.

The goal of the Bellarmine India trip is to encounter new religions and cultures not usually encountered in America. Trip participants have ten days to explore Hindu, Islam, and Eastern Christian religions, health, education, culture, beauty (Kerala is lovely), and shopping. In the past ten years, friars have taken more than two hundred students and staff to India for life-changing experiences. Dr. Susan Donovan, President of Bellarmine University, wrote to Fr. John Pozhathuparambil, "I am impressed with the program you provide to our students and partnerships that you have made."

Bellarmino was impressed enough for the annual trip to become part of its IDC 400 level course, which Fr. John teaches, making the class a truly unique and immersive experience.

Each day in India is a new day exploring the unknown, the experiences life-transforming. For some, this transformation happens from sharing cultures and shared experiences that transcend culture while finding new friends at Union Christian College. For others, this occurs when experiencing Assisi Snehalaya, a home for those with AIDS, or while visiting Indian churches, mosques, and temples.

Each evening the group gathers to evaluate the day, with each student taking turns to discuss the day's events. The sharing time makes me proud, witnessing what the students learn from the trip and how it changes their lives and views. People ask me, "What is the best part of the trip for you?" I say this is it. When lives and opinions change because of the India trip, that is the moment for me.

At the end of the trip, it is difficult to leave. One student writes, "I'm finally home, but I've left a piece of my heart in India. Thank you, Friar John, for this amazing opportunity and for all the kindness that you've shown me over the past 12 days. I've walked away from this experience with an understanding of a different culture, a newfound sense of who I am, and a beautiful group of friends."

In March, Fr. John and the friars will host a reunion of people who have participated in the India trip. It will be a beautiful occasion for former India trip participants to meet and share experiences, wear Indian clothing, enjoy Indian music, dance, and taste delicious Indian food. As always, this is open to everyone; all are welcome!



Visiting Union Christian College



The students were immersed in the culture and traditional garments



Celebrating Mass at Assisi Snehalaya

From Mount St. Francis to New Mexico to Zambia – Sustainability from the Sun!

The St. Francis Friary in Zambia joins Holy Cross Retreat Center

As the Patron Saint of ecology, animals, and nature, St. Francis of Assisi praised all creatures as brothers and sisters under God, understanding the connection we have with the earth and all living things. In November 2018, the Conventual Franciscan Friars of Our Lady of Consolation Province launched the Franciscan Earth Care Initiative as a public and spiritual commitment to modeling the Franciscan vision of environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Thanks to our generous donors St. Francis Friary, in Zambia, joins Holy Cross Retreat Center in Mesilla Park, NM, and Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality in Mount St. Francis, IN, as the third major solar panel installation. These installations will allow our friars to become more self-reliant in the face of a critical national energy crisis. To see these installations and our other projects, follow the Franciscan Earth Care Initiative on Facebook and Twitter!



Examples of how the St. Francis Friary in Zambia are becoming more eco-conscious and self reliant

St. Francis Friary Solar Project

A True Ecological Gift!

by Friar Katongo L. Chilambwe OFM Conv.



St. Francis Friary in Zambia has been blessed with an invaluable Franciscan gift. Recently, the mission, through Our Lady of Consolation Province, received a generous donation with funds raised by Dr. Robert Barnet and his wife, Dr. Carol Taylor, for the purchase and installment of a solar kit comprising of 36 solar panels, six inverters, and eight lithium batteries.

This gift comes at a time when Zambia is facing an unprecedented energy crisis as a result of decreased water levels at the central hydropower station at the Kariba dam, thus drastically affecting electricity generation. Zambia experienced the full impact of climate change in the form of drought in the 2018-2019 rainy season in most parts of the country, especially the southern region.

Due to overreliance on hydropower, the poor rains caused Zambia to incur an energy deficit of nearly 80% of electricity generation. As a result, the main power utility company has introduced rolling blackouts for long as 18 hours per day. However, in mitigating this energy crisis, the government is investing in several additional solar, hydro, and thermal power, which may be a long time coming.

St. Francis Friary has been adversely affected by constant and prolonged power cuts. Six hours of electricity per day, often in the middle of the night, left Zambia crippled. The mission has struggled to irrigate its vegetable gardens, water the lawn, and operate communication devices, among other activities. Not anymore!

“The newly installed solar equipment provides 24 hours supply of energy to the mission, thereby normalizing its day-to-day activities.”

Solar at the mission qualifies as a “true” Franciscan ecological gift, conscious of St. Francis’s care for the environment and wildlife. The friars at the mission engage in simple lifestyles that promote the integrity of creation and ultimate responsibility for the earth or as Pope Francis refers to our “common home.” Part of the friar’s eco-conscious lifestyle is the keeping of chickens, goats, pigs, and (yet to be realized) fish farming. Another eco-driven initiative is the manufacturing of organic manure from animal waste for growing vegetables.

Solar energy at the mission adds a more robust initiative of investing in renewable energy. Additionally, with the installed solar panels, the mission can cut costs of electricity, thereby increasing its support for the vulnerable people through both the Social Teacher program of Fr. Andrew and the student support program of Br. Tony.

Our solar program is a true Franciscan ecological gift. Moreover, it is an aid in living out our Franciscan ideal of sharing what we have. We send thanks to the OLC Mission Advancement Office and its generous donors for the donation of funds for solar equipment.

Franciscan Fraternity – A Global Brotherhood

Our student friars share takeaways from their cultural experiences abroad

Friar Calin

MADRID, SPAIN

The first month was a challenge, but at the same time, I was learning how to feel at home away from home. The friars of Spain are humble and very hospitable. The friary, connected to a parish, allowed me to interact with the parishioners of Our Lady of the Rosary Parish and help with liturgies. I have even had the honor of teaching the Auxiliary Bishop of Madrid how to eat a cheeseburger, but that is a story for another time. The experience of living not only in Madrid but living in a community of good friars on this side of the world has opened my mind, heart, and appreciation of the greater Franciscan order.



Friar Alberto

WÜRZBURG, GERMANY

Along with myself, there are friars from India and Romania, also learning German. The Fraternity has been, for me, the most significant gifts that I have received since joining the order. It is a word that since going to my first Come & See Retreat and going through formation I've heard repeatedly. We do not all share the same nationality, but we are all brothers. We might not all speak German yet, but we share a way of life that knows no borders. All of us, whether far from home or close, have, like Francis, tried to follow what the Most High, Himself revealed to us...for me, it has led me to Germany.



Friar Pedro

SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR

While being abroad in San Salvador, there are many things that I have learned. The experience that has had the most significant impact on me is going out to marginalized indigenous areas for mission. As people shared their narratives, and as I read Scripture to the people, Scripture becomes so alive to me. The way their stories relate with what I read in Scripture and the way these people in their own life live out Scripture is something that energizes and evangelizes me in such a beautiful way.



†Br. Angelo Catania OFM Conv.

A Friar Who Greeted God's People with an Open Heart

No matter where you came from or who you were, Br. Angelo Catania OFM Conv. had a gift for making you feel at home. Pilgrims and retreatants from across the country knew they could always count on his attentive ear and open heart.



Br. Angelo died on November 13, 2019, in Libertyville, Illinois. He was born Carmen Joseph Catania on March 22, 1942, in Oak Park, Illinois. He professed Simple Vows as a Conventual Franciscan on July 15, 1963, and Solemn Vows on July 15, 1966.

Br. Angelo's cousin Ronald Catanzaro said "He was a true son of St. Francis for more than 50 years. He was a great family member, always present in our lives. He's going to be missed by all."

Following a few years of service in Chaska and Prior Lake, Minnesota, most of his decades of Franciscan service were spent in southern Indiana at the Mount St. Francis Center for Spirituality, or in Carey, Ohio, at the Basilica and National Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation. Through those years he worked in several different areas: cook, administration, retreat center staff member, and as part of the Shrine's pilgrimage team.

When he wasn't greeting the buses at the Shrine in Carey, Br. Angelo was famous for his 'park-bench ministry,' either moving from person to person, or sometimes simply staying in one place as the pilgrims came to greet him. He listened to their stories, sharing in their joy or consoling them in their sorrows.

"Brother Angelo will be remembered by thousands of pilgrims to Carey," said Bishop John Stowe OFM Conv., a former member of the Province who is now Bishop of Lexington, Kentucky. "He was often the face of hospitality for the shrine: he relished greeting the pilgrims as they arrived on buses and sending them off with prayer as they departed. He was also known to have sung a verse of 'That's Amore,' especially with Italian-American pilgrims."

"Br. Angelo excelled at the ministry of presence," said Friar Jim Kent OFM Conv. "He had an ability to be truly with people, and always tried to be aware of others' needs. He had such a listening heart and understood the value of giving people his time. He left a lasting impression on people."



The gift that truly gives back

Charitable Gift Annuities

If you are 60 and older, you qualify to receive payments for life with a Franciscan Charitable Gift Annuity. Please contact Shaunna Graf at (812) 923-5250 or s.graf@franciscansusa.org today!

We are sponsoring a pilgrimage to Italy in September/October 2020 and hope you can join us!

Franciscan Celebrations – Celebrating Franciscan History in Padua and Assisi

In Venice and Padua, our group will celebrate the life of St. Anthony and visit important sites in Catholic history. In Assisi, we will celebrate the Feast of St. Francis (October 4th) and visit the sites so important to him. We will have plenty of time to absorb the wonders and peace of this medieval city, and reflect amid sacred places. We will share most meals with the group and friars, sampling exceptional food and beverages. There are also side trips where you can deepen the experience of Franciscan spirituality.

Friars Andrew Martinez and Steve McMichael will lead this experience. Fr. Andy has a great love for Rome, while Fr. Steve is an expert in Franciscan history, and knows some of the out-of-the-way

places (and restaurants) the locals like to keep secret. We'll be able to visit places ordinarily off limits to all but Franciscans. This will make the experience uniquely enriching, even for those who have previously visited Padua and Assisi.

We will limit this to a small group of about twenty, ensuring an intimate and personal experience. Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis, and we request registration forms be returned by June 1, 2020. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Becki Romans in the Mission Advancement Office, 812-923-5250.

We hope you can travel with the friars on this special trip.

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

Ms. Margaret Klempa
The Klempa Family
Frank and Angie Sartor
Mr. and Mrs. John Althen
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Amiano
Zehour Shaya Asmar
Faris G Attisha
Caroline Babtist
Jerry and Brenda Baylor
Keith and Diane Bean
Mrs. Barbara Bedner
Patricia Berg & Gene Babos
Col Frank Bertagnolli, (Ret)

Kathleen and Jack Best
Thomas and Patricia Biergans
Maude Bigford
Arnold C. Bishel
Mr. John Bott
Mr Arnold J Boudreau
Mrs. Carol Bourgeois
Mr Thomas Brannon
Mr. and Mrs. Victor Broccolino
Mr. Fernando Cardoso
Valerie Carroll
Mr James A Carton
Mrs. Sharon R. Ciacio

Maria Estela Martinez De Logan
Mr. Paul G. Denit
Mr. David Deshotel
Mr Thomas V Doktor
Mr. Al Drumm
Mr John S Durkin
Ms. Helen Dwyer
Ms Margaret F Ellis
Ms. Theresa Evans
Richard Faillace
Ms Teresa Falco
Mrs. Thomas Finlay
Mr. and Mrs. Chris Foksiewicz

Mr. Jose Gallardo
Ms. Angela Gannucci
Mr. Joseph Ganzel
Rene A Garvey
Robert and Bertha Garza
Mr Janusz Gibes
Losia Giliana
Ms Diane Gneda
Mr. and Mrs. John J. Gokelman
Mr. and Mrs. Federico Gomez
Mr Michael J Griffith
Ms Shirley Haberlack
Judge Robert Hanophy KHS

Ms. Patricia Harter
Ms Frances Hartman
Mr. Jerry L. Haushalter
Margaret Hennessy
Mr. Charles J. Hoffer
Amelia Hollywood
Mr. James J. Hubner
Ms Margaret B Hutson
Ms. Maria A Imbrogno
Mr. Marvin F. Ingerson
William, and Betty Jarboe
Mr. and Mrs. David Jesme
Mrs. Catherine Jochum



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

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