Dear Friend of the Franciscans,

I’m sure you will agree with me that 2020 has been a challenging year in many ways. Which is why, in this newsletter, I’d like to focus primarily on the progress and the good things that have happened in our Province.

First of all, I’m happy to report that as of this writing, we have not lost a single friar to the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a great blessing, especially for our elderly and infirm priests and brothers. We thank God and pray that this blessing will continue!

Also among the good news: Our two universities—Franciscan University of Steubenville and St. Francis University in Loretto—have been able to safely open for their fall semesters. As of this writing, both are operating without major trouble and their students are adapting well to learning online in addition to the classroom.

God has continued to bless our Province with faithful and courageous men who are not afraid to take on the challenge of Franciscan ministry. In 2020 we have been graced with five new priests, two men professing Vows and the reception of three new postulants. You will read about them all in this newsletter.

As I complete my first full year as Minister Provincial, I am struck by how merciful God is by giving us the strength and tools we need to endure the inevitable trials that life throws at us. And I’m also grateful that our beloved founder, Saint Francis of Assisi, had the wisdom and foresight to know how much his vision of ministry through prayer and service would be needed, not just in his own time but many centuries later!

I would like to remind you that the priests and brothers of our Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus never forget to include you in their prayers, and that your support of our ministries makes a difference in every place and every way that we serve. You wouldn’t believe how much of a “ripple effect” any gift can have, as it affects not only the ones who receive it but their families, their communities, and the world!

Thank you for your friendship and support… and thank God for bringing you and our Franciscan community together in order to better the world in His name.

Pax et bonum—Peace and good,

Fr. Joseph Lehman, T.O.R.
Minister Provincial

We’ve recently re-designed our web site to make it more functional and easier to navigate. You will find information about our ministries; gift items and spiritual greeting cards for every occasion; a way to share your prayerful intentions with us; and options for supporting our mission. Please come see us at: franciscanfriarsloretto.org
Five New Priests Ordained in Our Province

On July 11, 2020, five Brothers of our Province were ordained to the priesthood at St. Francis University in Loretto, PA. Stephen Mary Waruszewski, Matthew Simons, Zachary Burns, Rufino Corona, and Daniel Maria Klimek were ordained by the Most Rev. Mark Bartchak, Bishop of Altoona. The five new priests all celebrated their first Masses the following day.

God bless them and grant them strength and inspiration. Please pray along with us in the words of the Rite of Ordination: May they be worthy co-workers with our Order, so that by their preaching and through the grace of the Holy Spirit the words of the Gospel may bear fruit in human hearts and reach even to the ends of the earth.

Two Friars Profess Vows

On July 17, Brother Joseph Marie Krilich made his profession of Solemn Vows. A 2013 graduate of Franciscan University of Steubenville, Brother Joseph Marie holds a degree in chemistry. Spiritually, he has a great devotion to St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Recreationally he has an interest in athletics, especially soccer. He recently returned to his alma mater to serve as a teaching assistant and chaplain in the dorms and for the school’s soccer teams.

On September 12, postulant Matt Aubin professed his First Vows, becoming a Brother and continuing his life of service and discernment on the Franciscan road. Brother Matt is a 2017 graduate of Franciscan University, and was received into the novitiate a year ago.

Three Young Men Accepted as Postulants

This past summer, three men officially began their Franciscan journeys as postulants. Anthony Beltran, Matthew Crotteau and Matthew Bobby begin a process of prayer, service and discernment to discover whether a lifelong commitment to the Franciscan way of life is what God is calling them to. Their journey will be under the direction of Father Patrick Whittle, T.O.R.

(l-r): Anthony Beltran, Matthew Crotteau, Matthew Bobby, Fr. Patrick Whittle
Dear Father Richard,

I have used many of your Mass cards and love them. Thank you for offering Masses for so many of my family and friends.

I want to offer a suggestion if I may. I have recently been working hard to forgive some people who have hurt me in the past, and have prayed for them. I started sending them anonymous Mass cards and find that has been so very helpful! God must be sending me His Grace as I do this, and as Masses are said. Thank God!

I would suggest you add that intention and a special Mass of “Healing Love” that people could send. I wish I had done this long ago, as it is very healing for me as well.

Thank you for your continued work. I am enclosing a donation for you and the Friars. God Bless You!

—J. in New York
Donor-Advised Funds: A New Way of Giving

A donor-advised fund is like a charitable investment account, for the sole purpose of supporting charitable organizations you care about. When you contribute cash, securities or other assets to a donor-advised fund at a public charity, you are usually eligible to take an immediate tax deduction. Then those funds can be invested for tax-free growth and you can recommend grants to any IRS-qualified public charity. To learn more, please contact us via phone, mail or e-mail as listed on the last page of this newsletter!

The Dorothy Day Outreach Center

Brother Gabriel Amato, Director of the Dorothy Day Outreach Center in Loretto, PA, reports that the Covid-19 pandemic has been a real challenge. The Center provides food, clothing, financial aid and services for elderly and needy people and families in the area. During the pandemic, though, many of the people they normally serve are afraid to come to the Center.

The Center has received government-funded food shipments during the crisis. Financial assistance has also continued to go to families in need, at a higher rate than usual for obvious reasons. The Center has been providing Giant Eagle store gift cards which recipients can use to buy food, gas, or heating fuel for their homes.

With the return of the St. Francis University students this fall, more volunteers will be available, along with more options for reaching those who need help from the Center.

In Memoriam

Brother Bernard Nicolosi, T.O.R.—Died December 23, 2019

Brother Bernard Nicolosi, T.O.R., 82, died December 23, 2019 at Garvey Manor, Hollidaysburg, PA, after an extended illness.

Br. Bernard's long and faithful life as a Franciscan friar was spent in humble service to his brothers and the Church. For over 40 years, Br. Bernard served in various capacities across the Province: as treasurer at Holy Spirit Friary in Steubenville, OH; food service at Saint Francis Seminary in Loretto, PA; library staff at Bishop Egan High School in Fairless Hills, PA; and sacristan at Mount Assisi Friary in Loretto, PA. In addition, he served as the Local Minister at Mount Assisi Friary from 1992-1996. Generations of friars will remember him for his hard work and humorous spirit. Br. Bernard will be missed greatly by his community and family alike.

Father Richard Eldredge, T.O.R.—Died December 28, 2019

Father Richard Eldredge, T.O.R., 78—Pastor of Good Shepherd Catholic Community in Colleyville, TX—died December 28, 2019 at Baylor Heart Hospital in Plano, TX after an extended illness.

Fr. Richard was ordained to the priesthood on November 25, 1978. Holding a Doctorate in Psychology from Duquesne University and a Masters Degree in Divinity from St. Francis Seminary, he served on the faculty of Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH and St. Francis College in Loretto, PA. From 1988 to 1992, he oversaw the formation of friars preparing for solemn vows and the priesthood. For the past 24 years, he engaged in pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Fort Worth, at St. Maria Goretti Parish in Arlington, Sacred Heart Church in Seymour, and Good Shepherd Catholic Community in Colleyville. In addition to his parochial duties, he also served on the College of Consultors and Priest Council for the Diocese of Fort Worth and the Franciscan Provincial Council from August 2015 to July 2019. Fr. Richard will be missed greatly by his parish community, Franciscan brothers, and family alike.
Giving Tuesday is December 1 this year.

It’s a day for charitable giving during the holiday season, just as “Black Friday” and “Cyber Monday” are days for shopping. Please visit our website on that day to make a donation, then tell your friends about it on social media!

Join Our Monthly Giving Circle

By making modest monthly donations, you can make a truly impactful gift over time that could be much easier on your finances! Having this steady source of income is very helpful to Franciscan ministries during these unpredictable times, too. To join the circle, please visit our secure website at:

franciscanfriarsloretto.org/donate/monthly-giving-circle/

A Message From Br. Shane McGrenra, T.O.R.

It is hard to believe that it’s been 10 years since we started raising funds for the Dorothy Day Outreach Center (DDOC). What began as a simple plan for this humble Franciscan to combine a love for cycling with an urgency to raise $5,000 for the less fortunate in 2011 has resulted in $407,500 in donations over 9 years to the DDOC.

The ramifications of COVID-19 have affected all of us in big and small ways, not least those who rely on the DDOC, so we continue to keep an eye focused on supporting our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

This fall, for our 10th annual ride, the Erie Canal will be our destination, cycling nearly 400 miles from Buffalo to Albany. We have set a challenging goal of $92,500, which would allow us to reach $500,000 in gifts to the DDOC over the past decade. Who would have thought back in 2011 that this was attainable? But it is, because of your support of the DDOC’s mission.

Every dollar we raise will help the DDOC feed those who are hungry and comfort the poor who are in need. Charity for the poor is as consistent a message as any the Church preaches, and the DDOC epitomizes this.

To make your donation today by credit card, or if you have any questions, please call us at 814-472-3021.

On behalf of the Dorothy Day Bike Ride Committee and all other volunteer members, I thank you in advance for your generosity. May the Lord continue to bless our collective efforts for His greater honor and glory.

Sincerely,

Br. Shamus McGrenra, T.O.R. ’72
Saint Francis University
Franciscan Spiritual Gift Items

We offer the following gift items as a way of thanking you for your generosity in donating to the missions, ministries, and good works of our Franciscan community. To request one of these items, please check the appropriate box on the enclosed response form when you make your offering. All items are blessed by the Franciscan Friars, T.O.R.

Saint Patrick Magnet/Statuette

This magnet (2.75" diameter) depicts Saint Patrick himself in beautiful full color artwork with gold stamping. The magnet also comes with a metal tab that can be bent to create an easel, so that it can be displayed as a statuette on a table, desk, or shelf. Makes a wonderful gift! We can send you this item for a donation of $5 or more in support of Franciscan Ministries.

“Home At Last” Memorial Medallion

This coin-sized medallion, in the shape of a teardrop, is decorated with a Cross and the memorial poem: “Do not cry for me, all the pain and grief have passed—I am at the side of Jesus, at peace forever, home at last.” Also includes a prayer card inscribed with the same verse. We can send you this medallion in thanks for your offering of $5 or more in support of Franciscan Ministries.

Saint Anthony Pendant

This pewter medallion, with a stainless steel chain, lets you keep the Saint of Miracles close to your heart. It includes a booklet with information about Saint Anthony and a prayer honoring him. The suggested offering for this medal is $8.

“God Bless Our Home” Magnet Plaque

Place your home under God’s perpetual protection with this 2" x 3" laminated magnetic plaque. The full-color image features beautiful illumination-style decoration and a portrait of Christ. Makes a thoughtful housewarming gift, or a gift for anyone wishing for a safe and happy home! We offer this item in thanks for your gift of $6 or more.

Find us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/franciscanfriarstorloretto