

ISSUE 3 • 2024

the Capuchin Journey

Magazine of
the Province of
St. Mary of the
Capuchin Order

Burning Love of the Crucified

From the Provincial Minister

Pease and all good things to you. I write this welcome to the latest edition of *The Capuchin Journey* while attending our general chapter in Rome.

Many of you already know that every three years, the friars of the Province of St. Mary gather for a provincial chapter. During the four or five days that we are together, we discuss the life of the Province, our ministries, and the spiritual, physical and emotional well-being of the friars. We also listen to reports on vocations and formation, finances, and property. We also elect our provincial minister and provincial council to lead and guide us for the next three years.

Every six years, all the provinces of the Capuchin Order send their provincial ministers and delegates to Rome for a general chapter. For three weeks, they discuss the status of the entire Order. They hear various reports on the life and work of the Order. They elect our general minister and general council to govern the Order for the next six years.

It is a wonderful experience to be with brothers from all over the world, in one place, at one time. It is so easy for us to adopt a provincial mindset that we can forget that the Capuchin Order is represented throughout the world. We are 9,684 members worldwide—certainly representing many territories, cultures and languages—but we are only one Capuchin Order. I think of Saint Paul's analogy in his first letter to the Corinthians, comparing the Church and her members to the human body: we are many parts, but only one body.

In the course of the general chapter, we had the great and joyous privilege of meeting with our Holy Father, Pope Francis. We greeted him with a thunderous applause at which he smiled and acknowledged our joyful gathering. (I think he has a soft spot for us Capuchins!) Prior to greeting each one of us individually, the Holy Father shared a

brief reflection with us. He recalled three dimensions of our Franciscan spirituality, which he asked us to consider while gathered for the General Chapter. These are fraternity, availability, and commitment to peace.

Pope Francis reminded us to make fraternity our priority and to promote it in all our friaries. He affirmed our availability, and he exhorted us, saying, "Try always to be simple, free and available, ready to leave everything behind and to go wherever the Lord calls you, without seeking recognition or making demands, with open hearts and arms." He also affirmed our commitment to peace, saying, "Your ability to draw near to all, so as to merit being called the 'friars of the people,' has made you, over the centuries, expert 'peacemakers' capable of creating opportunities for encounter." It sure was a great blessing to be with the friars together with the Holy Father.

My brothers and sisters, your support of our friars and our ministries; your prayers for us ... and for new vocations; and your friendship and confidence in us allow us to live our Franciscan charisms—not just in word but, more importantly, in action! May I thank you for your devotion and continued trust in us? It sure makes a difference in the lives of our friars each and every day. It's no wonder that the brothers regularly pray in thanksgiving for our benefactors like you! May God bless and keep you!

Fr. Robert J. Abbatiello, OFM Cap.

Fr. Robert Abbatiello, OFM Cap., Provincial Minister



Capuchin Charisms

FRATERNITY calls the friars to promote genuine relationships among all people and nations so that the world may live as a single family under the gaze of its Creator.

MINORITY enables them to walk with the people they serve and be accepted as one of their own.

CONTEMPLATION requires they give priority to a life of prayer, especially contemplative prayer, to listen to God's guidance in their mission.

MINISTRY promotes the apostolic dimension of Capuchin life in proclaiming the Gospel and assuaging the hunger, despair, and loneliness of those among whom Christ would have walked.

JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION are uniquely Capuchin because an essential part of the mission of St. Francis was to strive for all of God's creation to live in peace and harmony.

Province Mission

The needs of the poor and the demands of justice shape our every ministerial endeavor. We attempt to promote equality for all people within our fraternity, in the churches dedicated to the gospel of Christ, and in the larger world. Capuchin friars minister in a wide variety of settings. Service to people of a variety of cultures in North America and around the globe allow us to witness God at work in countless ways.

Here in the Northeast United States, the Province of St. Mary serves through any number of institutions dedicated to the service of real human needs and the proclamation of God's love. Urban, suburban, and rural; poor, blue collar, and middle class; Latino, Asian, and English-speaking—the friars can be found living amid all these diverse circumstances.



CAPUCHIN FRANCISCANS
PROVINCE OF ST. MARY

the Capuchin Journey

Magazine of the Province of St. Mary of the Capuchin Order

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Cover: A replica of the San Damiano cross in the lower church of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Italy.

Opposite page: Br. Celestino Arias and Fr. Robert Abbatiello at the Mass of Thanksgiving after the election of Fr. Roberto Genuin as general minister of the Capuchin Order, Rome, Sept. 3.

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The Capuchin Journey is our way of letting you know how the Province of St. Mary fulfills its mission. You, as part of our community, share this vision of service to those in need. Through this publication, we want you to see how we use the resources you so generously provide to us. We hope the contents of *The Capuchin Journey* will convey a sense of the work we do and how valuable your contributions are to this work.

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Around the Province



Br. James Donegan (right) with fellow friars from around the world at the 86th general chapter of the Capuchin Order in Rome.

General Chapter: Brothers for Mission

As this issue of *The Capuchin Journey* was going to press, the 86th general chapter of the Capuchin Order was coming to its conclusion. Every six years, friars from every corner of the world gather in Rome to deliberate about the global mission of the Order, to make decisions concerning the life and work of the friars, and to elect a general minister and general council.

The theme of this year's general chapter was "The Lord has given me brothers... to go out into the world." Broadly, the friars assembled at the chapter addressed the theme of fraternal collaboration across continents and cultures. Specifically, they touched on the St. Lawrence of Brindisi fraternities, intentional missionary fraternities that have emerged in Europe and the Americas. They also evaluated the *Ratio Formationis*, the Order's plan of formation enacted

in 2018, and how well its implementation has implanted the charisms of the Order around the world.

On Sept. 5, Fr. Robert Williams, provincial minister of the Province of the Stigmata (New Jersey), was elected to the general council, representing the friars of the North American and Pacific Capuchin Conference. He will move from his provincial headquarters in Union City, N.J., to Rome, to serve with Fr. Roberto Genuin of Italy, who was re-elected general minister. He succeeds our brother **Br. Celestino Arias**, who concluded his six-year term on the general council and is returning to the Province. We thank Brother Tino for his extraordinary service to the Order, and we warmly welcome him back!

For much more about the general chapter proceedings, visit capitulum2024.ofmcap.org/en/home-en-2/. Read Fr. Robert Abbatiello's letter on Page 2 for a personal perspective on the general chapter.



Brooklyn Formation Program Launches

This summer, the Province commenced a new program of post-novitiate formation in Brooklyn, in collaboration with a neighboring province.

Going forward, after they complete novitiate and make their first profession of vows, our post-novices will spend two years at St. Michael Friary in East New York. They will be joined by their post-novice brothers from the Province of the Stigmata. After this period of time, our post-novices will move to Jamaica Plain, Mass., for theological studies.

Br. Shawn Natola, who made his first vows on July 27, is our first post-novice to participate in this new program. He is joined by fellow post-novice **Br. Yovani Salas** from the Stigmata Province. **Br. Miguel Ramirez**, a friar from the Stigmata Province, is the director of the Brooklyn post-novitiate program.

Post-novitiate is a time for brothers to make progress in maturity and a time of preparation to make a choice to be Capuchins for life. The goals of the post-novitiate program in Brooklyn are to integrate the prayer life of novitiate into an active life of ministry; to get a greater introduction to Province of St. Mary and the rhythm of a provincial fraternity; to deepen the Capuchin Franciscan identity; to begin full-time Capuchin ministry; to discern

more deeply the call to be a Capuchin for life; and to grow in leadership and affective maturity.

We wish Brother Shawn, Brother Yovani, and Brother Miguel joy and peace as they live the Gospel life in brotherhood at St. Michael Friary.



Br. Shawn Natola (center) makes his first profession of vows before Fr. Robert Abbatiello as Br. Miguel Ramirez (right) bears witness.



Fr. Carlos Cortéz

¡Bienvenido, Fray Carlos!

Our fraternal collaboration with the Custody of Our Lady of Hope (Guatemala-Honduras-El Salvador) took a concrete step forward this spring. On June 12, our brother Fr. Carlos Cortéz arrived to begin his ministry in the Province. After spending some days at Our Lady of Sorrows Friary in New York City, he settled in at St. Francis of Assisi Friary in Jamaica Plain, Mass. His assignment is to study English in preparation for service as a chaplain with Capuchin Mobile Ministries. We warmly welcome our brother to the Province!

Governance of Guam Mission

The Custody of Star of the Sea, encompassing Guam and Hawaii, was changed into a provincial delegation by a decree of General Minister Fr. Roberto Genuin. This puts the mission territory under the direct jurisdiction of the Province. Accordingly, **Fr. Robert Abbatiello**, the provincial minister, appointed a delegate and two councilors to oversee the mission. They are **Fr. Eric Forbes**, delegate; **Br. Jason Chargualaf**, first councilor; and **Fr. Felixberto Leon-Guerrero**, second councilor. “We thank these brothers for their willingness to serve at this time in the newly formed delegation, and we look forward to a stronger fraternal relationship with the brothers serving in Guam and Hawaii,”



Br. Jason Chargualaf, Fr. Eric Forbes, and Fr. Felixberto Leon-Guerrero of the Delegation of Guam.

said Father Robert. “Let us remember each other in prayer, and, as always, let us pray for an increase in vocations to our Capuchin Franciscan way of life.”

Friars of Note



Br. James Peterson was appointed chancellor of the Diocese of Portland, Me., effective Sept. 1. Brother Jim served the Archdiocese of Boston for many years as vice chancellor and assistant to the moderator of the curia for canonical affairs. He was also a member of the archdiocese's review

board in the assessment of complaints of child sexual abuse by clerics. He holds a law degree from Villanova University School of Law in Villanova, Pa., and a doctorate in canon law from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. In a meeting with the local ordinary, Bishop James Ruggieri, and the vicar general, Msgr. Marc Caron, **Fr. Robert Abbatello**, provincial minister, expressed his gratitude for their confidence in our brother to hold this important position in the diocese. "We congratulate Brother Jim on this new position, and we're grateful for all his work in the Archdiocese of Boston. I'm sure he will be sorely missed," he said.



Br. Paul Fesefeldt and **Br. Anthony Zuba** (top and bottom) led a retreat for Capuchin Mobile Ministries volunteers on July 20 at Holy Cross Retreat House in North Easton, Mass. The retreat was an introduction to Franciscan spirituality and the Capuchin charisms (see box on Page 2). The volunteers learned about God's calling of St. Francis of Assisi through his encounters with lepers. They also had an opportunity to share how God called them to minister to the homeless with the friars. The retreat talks and small-group discussions



helped volunteers learn about the Franciscan approach to building community and serving others.



Fr. Eric Forbes, a published author, has invested his literary talents once again. He has written a biography of Madeleine Bordallo, one of Guam's most distinguished citizens. Now 91, Bordallo served as Guam's delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives for 16 years. She was also a lieutenant

governor of Guam, a senator in the Guam legislature, and Guam's first lady. Father Eric's book was launched on Monday, July 22, before a large crowd at a local bookstore. "Madeleine Bordallo is a living legend on Guam," he said.



Fr. Patrick Sullivan, a living organ donor, earned three medals in track and field events for his age bracket at the Transplant Games of America in Birmingham, Ala., July 5-10. Representing Team Liberty of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metro area and competing in the 70

years-and-over age group, he took the gold in both the 5K race and the 400-meter dash, and he earned the silver medal in the 60-meter dash. With his comrades, he earned the gold medal in the less vigorous Trivial Pursuit team competition. Father Pat also concelebrated a Mass at the Cathedral of St. Paul in Birmingham, with many of the participants from the games present.



Fr. Matthias Wesnofske (right) was recognized for his many years of service as spiritual assistant to the Secular Franciscans. He received the San Damiano Award from the Franciscan Brothers of Brooklyn at their annual celebration of the feast of Our Lady of the Angels of Portiuncula

on Aug. 3 at St. Anthony High School in South Huntington, N.Y. "The brothers always celebrate the Portiuncula with the seculars that we minister to in the region as spiritual assistants," said Br. Richard Contino, OSF. "The San Damiano Award is given each year to those who share in the charism of the Franciscan Brothers. We try to select a lay person, a brother, and someone involved with the seculars." From 1991 to 2020, Father Matthias served as a local, regional, provincial, and national spiritual assistant to the Secular Franciscan Order, including three decades of service to the Tau Cross Region on Long Island.



Fr. Norbert D'Souza was appointed assistant director of post-novitiate formation at San Lorenzo Friary, Jamaica Plain, Mass., effective Sept. 1. Previously, he was hospital chaplain at Mercy Medical Center in Rockville Centre, N.Y. He collaborates with **Fr. John Koelle**, director of the

post-novitiate program in Jamaica Plain, in guiding the post-novices through academic studies and ministry preparation as they progress toward final profession of vows.

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Capuchin Family Ministries' Summer Events Shine Brightly

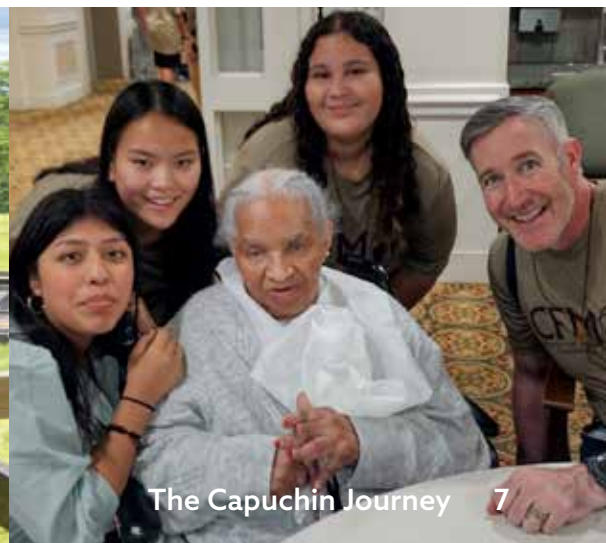
Capuchin Family Ministries' summer youth events continue to glow. We have been blessed with growth in quality of service and impact over the last five years.

Summer Outreach Week, headquartered at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center, Wappingers Falls, N.Y., June 22-27, invited teens and adults to serve at nursing homes, vacation Bible School, street outreach, and bunk-bed construction. Five friars—Fr. Michael Greco, Br. Carlos Hernandez, Fr. Erik Lenhart, Fr. Fred Nickle, and Br. Yovani Salas of the Stigmata Province—were blessed to serve alongside three Franciscan Sisters of the Infant Jesus

and 36 teens and 16 adults from New York and New Jersey. Each day began and ended with prayer. We celebrated Mass, reconciliation, and adoration to power our service spiritually.

The volunteers also participated in theological reflection groups. Teen volunteer Grace Gavigan said she “enjoyed that we had time to sit silently in a world where everything was in a rush. I was able to think about things that I never thought about before. Hearing about the graces that different people received was exemplary.” And teen volunteer Odin Adler said, “I have grown to see the joys of service.” Amen!

First-time volunteer Giovanna Clemente of Albertus Magnus High School in Bardonia, N.Y., helped build 10 bunk beds. (To date, CFM has built and donated 200 beds to needy children throughout the Hudson Valley.)



She reflected: “I had never been away from home, so I felt homesick and just wanted to see my family. Over the course of the week, it got easier as God guided me through this venture. The community here also played a big part in making me feel comfortable and adjust to being away from home.”

The Capuchin Appalachian Mission made its 31st trip to Harlan, Ky., July 6-14. A team of 42 teens and adults from four states gathered with Father Erik, Father Fred, Brother Carlos, Br. Leo Rojas, Postulant Patrick Honan, and Fr. Michael Moon of the Archdiocese of New York.

In Harlan, Most Holy Trinity Parish once again became our host and home base. Our vacation Bible school group experienced great growth in the past two years. Our outreach group has developed to connect with more people. And our senior ministry remains a highlight for the residents who always look forward to “Father Fred’s group.” There were enough missionaries this year to field two manual labor teams, which labored in the hot sun to repair homes and make friendships in Harlan.

Deacon Tom Bennett of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in West Nyack, N.Y., said he will remember the local woman who made clothespin crosses: “She is a reminder that sometimes we are ministered to while ministering.” He will also

remember a pregnant woman who was excited to receive baby shoes: “It is a reminder to find joy in the little things.”

Each evening, we celebrated Mass followed by dinner, quiet time for journaling about the day, and small theological reflection groups. On one night we had the opportunity to have adoration and benediction. Longtime volunteer Jonathan Goldwasser praised the “amazing liturgies” and said, “Attending a CAM Mass feels like spending time joyfully praising the Lord as a community of believers with the same purpose and mission.” All the groups in their ministry sites had the opportunity to relieve the material needs of their neighbors, but most of all, they served them simply by being present in the moment and letting them know that God loves them and that there are people that care about them.

“The Lord has blessed us with incredible friendships; we have seen families grow and flourish, and we have witnessed the Lord’s healing presence in our own lives and the lives of those we serve,” said Father Erik.

The Catholic Literature & Arts Summer Program is the only Catholic theater camp in the country that creates new productions of musical theater based on Scripture and the saints each year.

For its seventh season, CLASP staged a revival of Father Erik’s original musical on the Book of Ruth, retooled this year as *Ruth: From Moab With Love*.



With over 30 grade schoolers, 26 high schoolers, 18 adults, and 4 Capuchins, CLASP had its largest company yet. In less than a week, from auditions on July 27 to the Aug. 2 performances, we became the cast and crew of *Ruth*.

“CLASP is a uniquely Capuchin ministry that gathers all the gifts of the Church to present something beautiful to the Lord,” said Father Erik. “CLASP invites participants and audiences to enter into the world of the Word of God and find our place in the story of salvation.”

Our teenagers gave rave reviews. “The music was super pretty, and the liturgy was very moving. Everything about it was amazing,” said Cassidy Sullivan. “In CLASP I learned that God really exists. You can see it in the people being so open and nice. And how everyone can become a family in a week. I’m definitely coming next year!” said Sara Mojica. “I’ve learned that family doesn’t have to be blood-related. It’s the people who make you feel comfortable, who you can trust, who you can find joy in. People who will be there for you during hard times. And I found that at CLASP,” said Grace Gavigan.

Many thanks to St. Martin de Porres School in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., where the production took place, and to Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center for lodging our theater company.

Community Steps It Up for Summer Service Programs

Capuchin Family Ministries received a boost from friars and benefactors when the Province held its first-ever walk-a-thon fundraiser on June 15. Our community sponsors and teams of walkers grossed \$52,000, and all the proceeds went to support our service projects in Appalachia and the Hudson Valley.

The teams had just finished their final laps around the track at Archbishop Stepinac High School in White Plains, N.Y., when Fr. Michael Greco, director of the development office, announced that the Province would do another walk-a-thon next spring. This met with resounding cheers from the adults, teenagers, and children who had spent the last hour circling the track or playing cornhole, Kan Jam, and other fun family-friendly activities off-track.

With such enthusiasm from the community for the friars and their good work; with so many donors pitching in to support Capuchin Family Ministries; and with a gorgeous late spring morning, who could disagree that God wanted us to succeed?

We thank our provincial staff who pulled this fundraiser together, especially Melissa Ronan, Heather Stanghellini, Mary Ellen Yannitelli, and Bruce Crilly. Many blessings to all our benefactors and community sponsors. To make a donation to Capuchin Family Ministries, go to <https://www.capuchin.org/cfm-donate/>.



Leave a Living Legacy

Make a planned gift
to extend the Capuchin
mission for years to come.

by Fr. Michael Greco



As the provincial director of development, I get to spend time with generous people of faith like you who contribute financially to the Province of St. Mary. Certainly, my plan in the future is to get out of our office in Yonkers, N.Y., more frequently to travel around the country and visit you, our friends, and thank you for the many ways you support our Capuchin life and ministries.

Among our many cherished associates, there exists a special group of people who are so committed to the Capuchin charisms that they have included the Province of St. Mary in their estate plans. These dedicated partners are members of our Capuchin Legacy Society. One becomes a member by committing to what is called a planned gift. There are many ways to pledge such a gift (see Pages 12-13). We would love for you to become a member of our legacy society.

To help you understand more about this special relationship, I interviewed two current members: One is a woman who has been connected to the Capuchins from early childhood; and the other is a gentleman who has gotten to know us later in his life.

'This Is God's Work'

Theresa Brokowski's earliest contact with the Capuchins was unintentional. From a window of the grade school at St. Casimir Church in Yonkers, N.Y., young Theresa had a view of the majestic, graceful spires of Sacred Heart Church uphill. Then, one day, she got a closer look.

"Thanks to my mother, I once attended, reluctantly, services at this magnificent edifice and witnessed the solemnity of the Transitus, commemorating the death and passing of St. Francis," she recalled. "Watching and listening to the friars at prayer was a moving experience. A sense of unusual peace and holy atmosphere prevailed, an unforgettable moment. It was the first of many visits I made to the church."

Years later, after college and subsequent employment in northern New York State, Brokowski returned to Yonkers, a stone's throw from Sacred Heart. Her casual greetings after Mass with the always-visible Capuchins led to lengthier conversations and invitations to become more active in the parish. Eventually, after turns as a lector, Eucharistic minister, and member of parish committees, she became a trustee.



Dan and Margie Sullivan, pictured with Fr. Michael Greco, are including the Province of St. Mary in their will.

Now, after many years of giving her time and talent and treasure, Brokowski is leaving a legacy gift to the Province.

"I'm convinced that the scope and the breadth of the Capuchin charisms and mission must continue, and to do so, ongoing funds are needed," Brokowski said. "This is the reason that necessitates and demands my support through a legacy gift, confident that I have had a small part in the great Capuchin endeavor."

Brokowski believes that the Capuchins of the Province of St. Mary are fulfilling the vision of St. Francis of Assisi through lives of fraternity, prayer, simplicity, and a dedication to serve the needy.

"This is God's work," she said. "My ongoing mission is to spread this message to others, to encourage them to do the same."

Faithful to Works of Mercy

Dan Sullivan, 92, first met the Franciscan friars as a freshman at Siena College in 1950 and later attended parishes and a retreat center that they staffed in Arizona. He met Margie, the love of his life, while they worked together at Motorola.

Years later, Dan and Margie became acquainted with the Capuchins of our Province through our mailings. They have been making monthly gifts to the Province of St. Mary since June 2013. "We wanted to financially support your good works to help the poor and needy, so we began our first monthly donations to the Capuchins," Sullivan said.

Now the Sullivans have remembered the Province of St. Mary in their will.

"We recognized your commitment to helping those in need and providing important spiritual guidance to them," Sullivan said. "We decided that we would financially support such a dedicated organization whose mission was to faithfully provide the corporal works of mercy to those in need and want. We hope that our donations to the Capuchins will help them to continue their great work, perhaps even to expand it."

Offering a legacy gift has given Dan and Margie joy.

"God has blessed us in so many ways. It does bring great joy to us both, when we can share some of His blessings He has given us with others. Especially to those so much in need of physical and spiritual help and healing," Sullivan said.

8 ways to pass on your values



Plan Your Legacy With Your Will or Trust

You have worked hard to accumulate assets throughout your life, but without a valid will or trust at your death, those assets will be distributed according to state law. Wouldn't you rather determine that distribution yourself? Including a bequest in your will or trust to individual beneficiaries or a charitable organization such as ours may be the best way to make a meaningful gift in the future. Plus, it allows you to change your mind at any time.

Why Include a Bequest in Your Will or Trust?

The reasons that donors make charitable bequests are generally as varied as the donors themselves, but perhaps one common denominator is a sincere desire to give back to the community or to a particular charitable organization. Other advantages include:

IT'S EASY. Making a bequest is as simple as inserting a few sentences into your will, such as, "I give \$10,000 to the Province of St. Mary of the Capuchin Order."

IT'S REVOCABLE. With a bequest, you are not actually making a gift until your death. Until then, you are free to alter your plans, eliminating the worry that you might make a commitment you could later regret.

IT'S TAX-SMART. Your estate is entitled to an unlimited estate tax-charitable deduction for bequests to qualified charitable organizations.

8 Ways to Make a Bequest

The following types of bequests can apply in the case of gifts to individual heirs or charitable organizations.



- 1** SPECIFIC BEQUEST. This is a gift of a certain item to an individual beneficiary. “I give my diamond ring to my niece Samantha.”



- 2** GENERAL BEQUEST. This is usually a gift of a stated sum of money. “I give \$15,000 to my cousin Jim.”



- 3** RESIDUARY BEQUEST. This is a bequest of an estate after all other bequests, debts, and taxes have been paid. “I leave 15 percent of all the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate to my son Ryan.”



- 4** CONTINGENT BEQUEST. This is a bequest made on the condition that a certain event must occur before distribution to the beneficiary. “I give \$20,000 to my daughter, Gail, provided she is living upon my death.”

The following types are special considerations that apply only to charitable bequests.



- 5** UNRESTRICTED BEQUEST. A gift like this—without conditions attached—allows the charitable organization to determine the wisest and most pressing need for the funds at the time of receipt. “I, [name], of [city, state, ZIP], give, devise and bequeath to [legal name of organization] [written amount] for its unrestricted use and purpose.”



- 6** RESTRICTED BEQUEST. This is a gift dedicated for a specific purpose or project. “I, [name], of [city, state ZIP], give, devise and bequeath to [legal name of organization] [written amount] for its [project or purpose].”



- 7** HONORARY OR MEMORIAL BEQUEST. This is a gift given “in honor of” or “in memory of” yourself, in your family’s name or on behalf of someone else. “I, [name], of [city, state ZIP], give, devise and bequeath to [legal name of organization] [written amount] in honor of [person’s name], for [reason for gift].”



- 8** ENDOWED BEQUEST. This bequest is invested with and becomes part of our endowment. An annual distribution is made for the purpose you designate. Because the principal remains intact the fund will generate support in perpetuity. “I, [name], of [city, state, ZIP], give, devise and bequeath to [legal name of organization] [written amount] as an endowment with a spending rate in accordance with the institution’s current policy.”

For more information, simply call us or visit with your estate planning attorney today.

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Catholic Faith and Works in Japan

by Br. James Donegan

The Province of St. Mary has been engaged in international mission for generations, sending priests and brothers to Asia and Latin America. Today, there are 14 friars serving in the Delegation of Japan, where the Capuchins have had a presence since 1947. Br. James Donegan, the provincial mission director, made a visitation of Okinawa and mainland Japan in early July. Here is his report.

On July 1, I landed in Okinawa, Japan, with Fr. Mariosvaldo Florentino, general secretary for mission animation for the Order. There, I had the opportunity to visit the two friaries and the various ministries of the brothers. On the evening of the Fourth of July, I had supper with our brother Bishop Wayne Berndt of the Diocese of Naha, and with Bishop Emeritus Berard Toshio Oshikawa, a Conventual Franciscan.

Father Mariosvaldo and I continued on to mainland Japan to visit the two friaries and the ministries of our brothers there. One of these was St. Bonaventure Friary in Fukuoka. There, two of our brothers work in parishes, while a third is

studying Japanese. The friary was established originally by the Franciscans, who later departed from there because of diminishing numbers. The Capuchins took their place in 2011.

Of particular note in the friary is that the chapel has a *fumi-e*, a likeness of a religious image that those suspected of being Christians were required to step on during the Tokugawa Shogunate. Those who would not do so were subject to torture and martyrdom. In this instance, the image could be described as a sort of anti-relic, as it is an object which the holy martyrs specifically did not touch.



The brothers also met with Most Rev. Josep Abella, bishop of Fukuoka and a Claretian missionary. They participated in the Sunday Masses of the Takamiya Catholic Church, located next to St. Bonaventure Friary, and the Minoshima Pastoral Center, whose mission includes pastoring the small Spanish-speaking Catholic population in Fukuoka. Thus the Mass at Minoshima was celebrated Japanese and Spanish.

Our visitation culminated with a journey to the brothers in Mine, around 85 miles north of Tokyo. There, the brothers attend to several parishes in the Diocese of Saitama, as well as two kindergarten classes that are run by the diocese.

More than half the population of Japan is Buddhist, while less than 2 percent of the people are Christians. Nearly all the staff and students of the kindergarten classes are non-Catholics. Nonetheless, the brothers see their involvement with the children as important to their mission, as they perform such activities as blessing the children and their parents for their birthdays.

The parishes in this diocese have many people who are not Japanese, due in large part to the presence of foreign workers in the area. As a result, one parish attended to by the friars has bilingual Masses in which English, Spanish, or Vietnamese are used together with Japanese.

While visiting all the places where the friars of the Mine fraternity serve, we also met with Bishop Mario Michiaki Yamanouchi. Bishop Mario was born in Japan but moved with his family to Argentina at the age of 8. He joined the Salesians as an adult and then returned to Japan. From his unique outsider-insider perspective, he said it was important for the Church to help migrant peoples become a part of their adopted society; and for their contribution to that mission, he valued the Capuchin presence in his diocese.

Please pray for our brothers in Japan, that they may continue to grow in our fraternal life and ministry in the country.



Opposite page: above, mausoleum for Capuchin missionaries at the friars' church in Oroku, Okinawa; inset, a *fumi-e*, a religious image that many Japanese Christian martyrs of the Tokugawa Shogunate refused to trample upon; lower right; Br. Paul Hideki Tamano. On this page, top: Bishop Wayne Berndt's residence in Naha; from left, Fr. Naveen Joseph Sequeira, Bishop Emeritus Berard Oshikawa, Br. Jim Donegan, Bishop Wayne, Fr. Mariosvaldo Florentino, Fr. Maxim D'Souza, Fr. Claver D'Souza, and Fr. Hoang Nguyen. Above, from left: Br. Yasunori Francis Hashiya; Fr. Peter Von Essen; and Fr. Ajit Rodrigues, receiving birthday cards and crown from 3-year-olds at Sei Maria (Holy Mary) Kindergarten in the Diocese of Saitama.

An 800-Year Mystery

We Contemplate the Stigmata of St. Francis

“There is one path to God, through the burning love of the Crucified.” St. Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey Into God*

“... conform your life to the Mystery of the Lord's Cross.” from the *Rite of Ordination to the Priesthood*

by Fr. Gerard Mulvey

In September 1224, two years before he died, Francis of Assisi received the wounds of Christ during a period of intense prayer on Mount La Verna. On Sept. 17, the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, Franciscans around the world began a season of commemoration for the 800th anniversary of this miraculous event. This is a time to remember an event that speaks not only of the holiness of the Poverello of Assisi but also of our Franciscan vocation to follow Christ crucified each day in prayer, in community, and in service.

I invite you to take some time to contemplate this mysterious event. Read the accounts in the legends of St. Francis written by Thomas of Celano or St. Bonaventure.

A Vision and Mystical Union

Imagine Francis in solitude and in prayer on La Verna. He is contemplating the Cross and the Passion of Christ. It is around the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. According to the legends, Francis has a vision of a seraph with six wings nailed on a cross. The vision moves Francis into deep prayer. It is a moment of profound union with the crucified Lord, who Francis had longed to follow and live for completely. When the vision was over, Francis was marked with fleshy nail prints in his hands and feet, and his side was pierced.

He kept these wounds a secret, as best as he could. Only a few friars were aware of what happened. By the time of Francis' death, some other friars, Clare of Assisi, and a few others had seen the wounds. They were regarded as a great wonder, Brother Elias wrote at the time of Francis' death.



For many, the wounds were seen as a divine approval of Francis' legacy, analogous to the papal confirmation of Francis' rule for his Order of Lesser Brothers in 1223. But the stigmata were more than an approval of the Rule or of Francis himself. The stigmata were a manifestation of Francis' union with the crucified Lord. They manifested his deep desire to unite himself continuously with the Lord.

A Time of Pain

Some scholars say that Francis went to La Verna at a very painful time in his life. He had ceded leadership of the Order he founded and was dismayed at where the Order was going. He felt that it was drifting from the original inspiration he shared with the first friars. Also, he was saddened at the news of another crusade to the Holy Land. He had witnessed the violence and bloodshed of the Fifth Crusade. He was concerned about the welfare of Sultan Malik al-Kamil, whom he befriended when he attempted to make peace at Damietta in 1219.

All this led Francis to seek the hermitage in La Verna to devote himself to prayer and solitude. He sought strength by reading the Gospels and contemplating the mystery of the Cross. That prayer manifested itself in his own bodily sharing in the wounds of Christ. “Francis became what and to whom he was praying,” writes Franciscan Fr. Michael Cusato.

The Message of the Stigmata

What does this wonderful yet mysterious event say to us 800 years later? How does it challenge us in our daily life as Capuchin friars, as religious, and as laity?

Over the years, the two quotations above have inspired me to pattern my life after Christ crucified, as a Capuchin friar and a priest. The quote from St. Bonaventure often guides me through the liturgies of Holy Week, especially on Good Friday. These words from the Rite of Ordination have often come to mind during

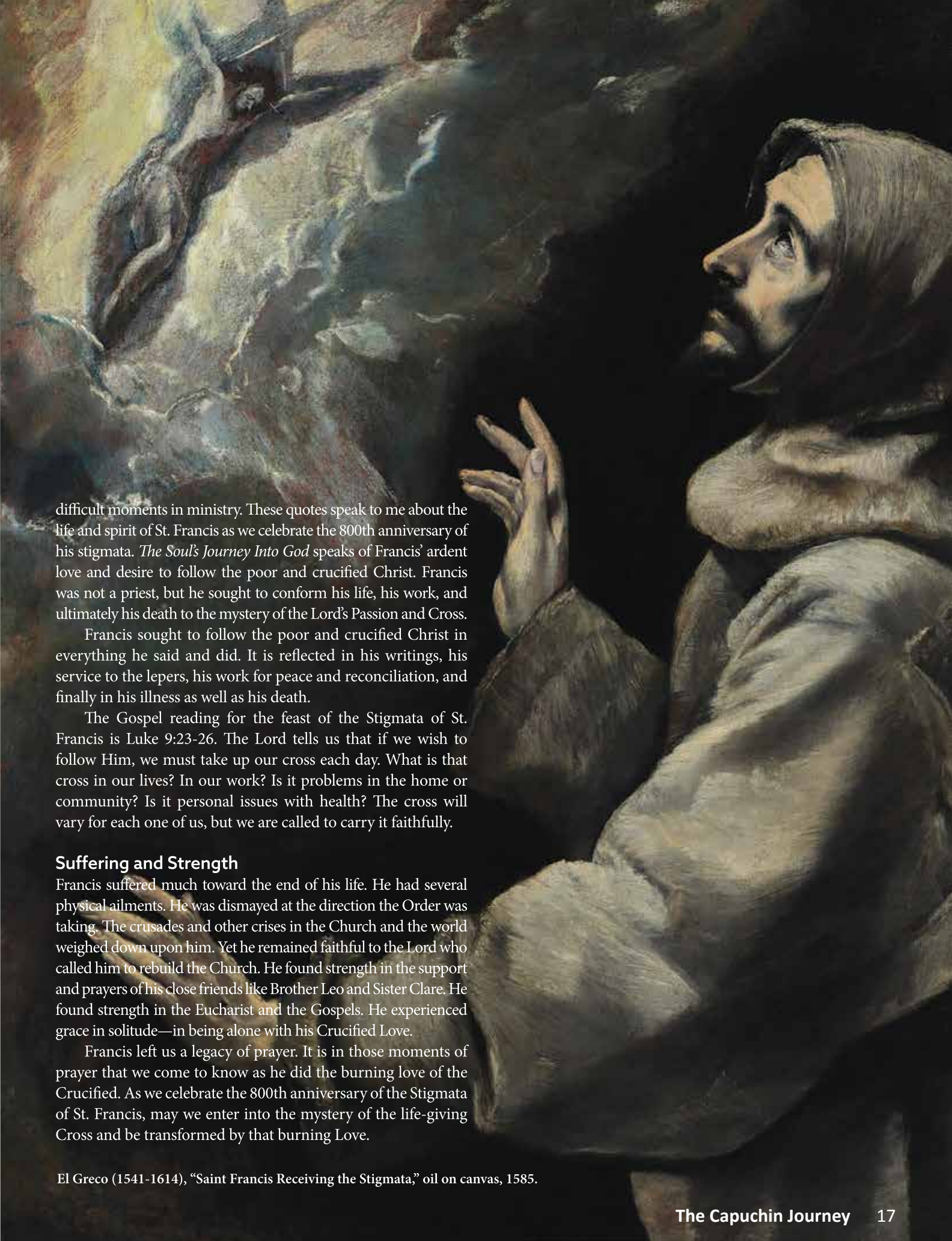
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difficult moments in ministry. These quotes speak to me about the life and spirit of St. Francis as we celebrate the 800th anniversary of his stigmata. *The Soul's Journey Into God* speaks of Francis' ardent love and desire to follow the poor and crucified Christ. Francis was not a priest, but he sought to conform his life, his work, and ultimately his death to the mystery of the Lord's Passion and Cross.

Francis sought to follow the poor and crucified Christ in everything he said and did. It is reflected in his writings, his service to the lepers, his work for peace and reconciliation, and finally in his illness as well as his death.

The Gospel reading for the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis is Luke 9:23-26. The Lord tells us that if we wish to follow Him, we must take up our cross each day. What is that cross in our lives? In our work? Is it problems in the home or community? Is it personal issues with health? The cross will vary for each one of us, but we are called to carry it faithfully.

Suffering and Strength

Francis suffered much toward the end of his life. He had several physical ailments. He was dismayed at the direction the Order was taking. The crusades and other crises in the Church and the world weighed down upon him. Yet he remained faithful to the Lord who called him to rebuild the Church. He found strength in the support and prayers of his close friends like Brother Leo and Sister Clare. He found strength in the Eucharist and the Gospels. He experienced grace in solitude—in being alone with his Crucified Love.

Francis left us a legacy of prayer. It is in those moments of prayer that we come to know as he did the burning love of the Crucified. As we celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Stigmata of St. Francis, may we enter into the mystery of the life-giving Cross and be transformed by that burning Love.



Feeding Our Neighbors in New York City

Giving the hungry something to eat is core to the corporal works of mercy. It is one of the ways we can minister to Jesus Christ himself, for he says that when we give food to the least among us, we give it to him (see Matthew 25:31-46). As Christ gives himself to us in simple food and drink in the Holy Eucharist, so we are to give ourselves to others.

The food pantries at our Capuchin parishes are feeding the poor and also feeding Christ, especially in New York City.

The mission of Our Lady of Sorrows' food pantry is to provide nutritionally balanced non-perishable and perishable food to families and individuals living in the Lower East Side of Manhattan who are in need and struggling with food insecurity. Families and individuals come from diverse backgrounds and struggle every day to survive in a city that is always changing.

"Our clients struggle with physical as well as mental challenges," said Nivia Mendez, coordinator of the parish food pantry. "Many cannot get benefits because they do not

fulfill the criteria and requirements for receiving benefits. Our clients live on extremely limited budgets. They cannot afford to buy extras such as personal care items and often cannot afford to purchase lifesaving medications. Their resources are limited, and they have had to make difficult decisions regarding what items they can purchase with limited funds. After paying rent and covering necessary expenses they have very little if no money for food or anything else. This is a common situation our clients deal with daily. Since the pandemic, their circumstances are more challenging because of the rising costs of everything."

Our Lady of Sorrows' food pantry is a safe space where people can find common ground, as the volunteers and the food pantry coordinator can relate to many of the challenges their neighbors face. "People need someone to listen to and understand what they're going through and who could assist them to have stability and independence," Mendez said.

Fr. Thomas McNamara, the pastor; Fr. Benedict Ayodi, the parochial vicar; and the other Capuchin brothers at

Residents of midtown Manhattan wait in line to be served at St. John Bread of Life Food Pantry at Church of St. John the Baptist.

Our Lady of Sorrows Friary fully support the pantry. At times, the friars help with distribution at the pantry.

The pantry's clientele is mostly Asian, African American, and Latino, with a small percentage of immigrants from other parts of the world who come regularly, once a month, to the food pantry. "Recently we have had an influx of about 10 to 15 percent of migrants calling to receive food bags. We have a bilingual staff, which helps in communicating with the new and current clients. Most of our volunteers speak English and Spanish fluently with a Chinese volunteer who assists with the Asian clients," Mendez said.

"As servants of God, we make every effort to understand and fulfill the needs of our community in the Lower East Side of Manhattan in New York City. We want to help them be independent and self-sufficient," she added.

At the other end of Manhattan, the food pantry at Good Shepherd Parish conducts a weekly food distribution with the help of Cabrini Immigrant Services.

According to Alba Fresco, a parishioner who has volunteered at the pantry for several years, Good Shepherd serves over 400 families a week. Volunteers gather all day on Fridays to receive deliveries and to package groceries for individuals and family households. They reconvene on Saturday mornings to distribute the packages.

Fr. Thomas Faiola, the pastor, initiated the partnership with Cabrini Immigrant Services to better meet the food and nutrition needs of parishioners and the Inwood community. The food pantry coordinator is Paul Kwon, who works at Cabrini.



Certain clients of the food pantry who have disabilities or health issues that preclude them from showing up to receive food can get deliveries made to their home if they live within certain ZIP codes of the parish.

In addition to operating its own food pantry, Good Shepherd collaborates with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York to stage a "pop-up food pantry" every so often. The Feeding Our Neighbors program of Catholic Charities sponsored a pop-up pantry on June 21 in front of Good Shepherd School. "Numerous parishioners volunteered, providing much-needed food assistance to the neighborhood," Fresco said.

In midtown Manhattan, where great wealth conceals great poverty, the pantries at our combined parish of Holy Cross and St. John the Baptist serve diverse communities, truly being "Christ in the City" for them.



Good Shepherd Parish hosted a 'pop-up food pantry' sponsored by Catholic Charities on June 21.

The St. John Bread of Life Food Pantry, started by the late Br. Paul Crawford in the 1970s, provides for the physical needs of our poorest neighbors who live between 14th and 59th Streets, from river to river. In addition to groceries, it provides free services through partnerships with local businesses and public authorities, such as flu shots, SNAP application interviews, and clinics on senior citizen benefits.

Saint John Bread of Life distributes food to those in need every other Wednesday between 11 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in the church hall. The pantry serves hundreds of people weekly, with a large number being children. Many of our clients come from Spanish-speaking and Chinese-speaking immigrant households of three or more members.

For many years, Crossroads Food Pantry at Holy Cross Church has been meeting the nutrition needs of residents in Hell's Kitchen, Chelsea and Clinton, and environs, from West

30th to West 57th Street and from 5th Avenue to 12th Avenue. It operates every other Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. all the year round. The pantry is run by volunteers with no paid staff.

The food pantry has been busier than ever. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, Crossroads served 28,692 neighbors and gave out 177,887 pounds of food annually. In 2023, it served a total of 42,361 neighbors: 3,088 children, 33,259 adults, and 6,014 seniors. Many of the households served are Asian and Latino immigrants. In addition to food and with the assistance of local businesses, Crossroads provides flu shots, Medicare and Medicaid assistance, and food stamps information.

All of our parish food pantries are supported by the Province's Capuchin Food Pantries fund and by private donations. You can help us continue helping our hungry neighbors. Please make a donation to the Province today.



Top photos: the late Fr. Francis Gasparik distributes Thanksgiving turkeys at Church of St. John the Baptist. Above: Br. Gabriel Conlon and Fr. Benedict Ayodi (right) with volunteers at the Our Lady of Sorrows Parish food pantry.

In Memoriam

Fr. Eugene O'Hara, Br. Roger Deguire, and Fr. Don Bosco Duquette



Having a death in the family is always hard. Suffering more than one death at the same time is even more sorrowful. In one week, we lost three of our beloved brothers, all of whom lived at our fraternities in Yonkers, N.Y. Fr. Eugene O'Hara and Fr. Don Bosco Duquette were a part of St. Clare Friary, our senior fraternity; Br. Roger Deguire was part of Sacred Heart Friary and a pillar of the parish community. All of them died at home. All of them are missed very much.

The following obituaries only hint at the richness of the lives these outstanding friars lived. But God knows their character and their faith, and so do we who were privileged to live, pray, and work with them.

Fr. Eugene O'Hara

Fr. Eugene O'Hara passed peacefully on Aug. 26; he was 89 years old.

Peter O'Hara was born in Manhattan on Jan. 27, 1935. He graduated from Glenclyffe, the Capuchins' high school seminary in Garrison, N.Y., in 1953, and was invested as a novice in Milton, Mass., on Aug. 31 that same year with the religious name Eugene. He made his perpetual profession of vows on Sept. 1, 1957. After studies at Mary Immaculate Friary in Garrison and St. Anthony Friary in Hudson, N.H., he was ordained to the priesthood on June 24, 1961.

He began his ministerial career in 1962 at Sacred Heart Parish, Yonkers, as parochial assistant and religion teacher at the parish high school. Administration and education would be his apostolate for the next two decades, serving as prefect and professor at St. Mary Seminary in Garrison, then professor at St. Anthony in Hudson, then administrator at Sacred Heart High School in Yonkers.

A new chapter began in 1982 when Father Eugene became director of the Capuchin Mission Association at

St. John the Baptist Friary in New York City. For 12 years he was a support for our friars serving in our international missions. This champion of our missionary brothers then himself became a missionary for two years, with one year in Guam and one year in Hawaii.

In 1996, Father Eugene came to St. Fidelis Friary in Interlaken, N.Y., and became pastor of St. James the Apostle Parish in Trumansburg, N.Y. Except for a two-year interlude at St. John XXIII Friary in Seminole, Fla. (2006-2008), he served the people of God in the Finger Lakes region for the next 17 years.

In 2013, Father Eugene retired from active ministry but continued to reside at St. Fidelis for six more years. He resided at St. Clare Friary from December 2019 until his death. He was pre-deceased by his parents Peter and Nora. He is survived by a sister, Ann; a niece, Maureen; and others.

Br. Roger Deguire

Br. Roger Deguire died on Sept. 1 at the age of 71.

Brother Roger, the son of Stanislaus J. and Alice B. Laplante-Deguire, was born on June 4, 1953, in Woonsocket, R.I. He entered postulancy at Mary Immaculate Friary, Garrison, N.Y., on Jan. 31, 1976, and then novitiate at St. Lawrence Friary, Milton, Mass., on Aug. 31, 1976. Brother Roger pronounced his first vows on Aug. 16, 1977.

Brother Roger continued his religious formation at St. Anthony Friary, Hudson, N.H., 1977-79. He professed

his perpetual vows on June 20, 1981, and resided at Mary Immaculate Friary, Garrison, N.Y., until 1984; there, he served as the house tailor.

In 1984, Brother Roger was transferred to St. John the Baptist Friary, New York City, where he earned his B.A. from Fordham University and ministered to AIDS patients at St. Clare Hospital, New York City.

For the next 29 years, Br. Roger resided and ministered in Sacred Heart and St. Clare Friary, Yonkers. In 1995, he served the Sacred Heart fraternity as fraternal vicar and also as parochial associate of Sacred Heart Parish until 2011. Brother Roger served as the curator of the Capuchin Heritage Museum since 2002, provincial archivist since 2008, and part-time Sacred Heart Parish staff until his death.

Brother Roger is survived by his brother Paul; his sister Jeanne Deguire-Crepeau; his sister Lucille Deguire; his brother Richard; his brother Roland; his sister Helene Beauregard; his nieces and nephews; and many lasting friends and parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish, hundreds of whom attended his funeral on Sept. 7.

Fr. Don Bosco Duquette

Fr. Don Bosco Duquette died suddenly on the evening of Sept. 1 at the age of 92.

John Duquette was born to John W. and Susan F. Hickey-Duquette in Pittsfield, Mass., on April 29, 1932. He attended Craneville Elementary School, Dalton, Mass.; Dalton High School, Dalton; St. Joseph High School, Pittsfield; and Holy Cross College, Worcester, Mass. John served in the U.S. Army from 1954 to 1957 and received an honorable discharge as Specialist Second Class. Before entering religious life, John worked as a landscaper during the summer months and as a credit manager for the *Manchester Union-Leader*.

John entered the novitiate at St. Lawrence Friary, Milton, Mass., receiving the name Don Bosco on Aug. 31, 1959. He

pronounced his first vows on Sept. 1, 1960, and perpetual vows on Sept. 1, 1963, at Mary Immaculate Friary, Garrison. Father Don Bosco resided at St. Anthony Friary, Hudson, N.H. for one year, where he completed his philosophy requirements, and at Capuchin Theological Seminary, Garrison, for four years for his theological studies. He also studied at St. Paul's University, Ottawa, Ont., Canada, receiving his S.T.L. in 1966. Father Don Bosco was ordained to the priesthood in Garrison on Nov. 28, 1964.

Father Don Bosco's first assignment was working in the Catholic Information Society (1966-69), residing at St. John the Baptist Friary in New York City and then at St. Pius X Friary, Middletown, Conn. For the next seven years, he served as the novice master at St. Lawrence Friary, Milton.

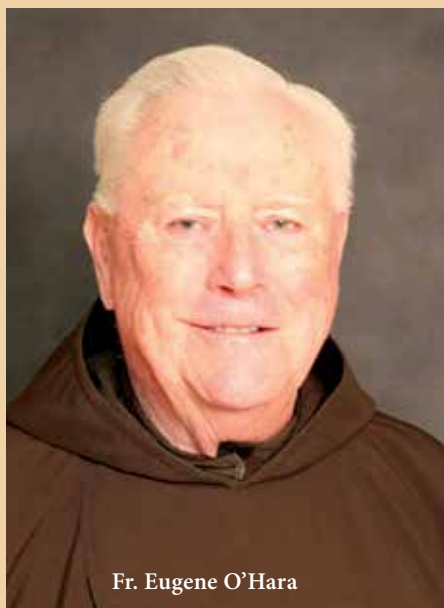
Father Don Bosco was elected and served as vicar provincial minister from 1976 to 1981; and as provincial minister from 1981 to 1984, residing at St. Conrad Friary, White Plains, N.Y.

For the next 26 years, Father Don Bosco ministered as a vicar and parochial assistant at Sacred Heart Parish, Yonkers (1984-1987); St. Pius X, Middletown, Conn. (1987-1993); and St. Joseph, Portland, Me. (1993-2010).

After retiring, he requested to return to St. Pius X, and as a senior friar, he offered parochial assistance and supply ministry. His challenging health issues led him to his final residence at St. Clare Friary in 2019, where he happily remained with his brothers until his death.

Father Don Bosco was survived by his sister, Kathleen Penna of Pittsfield; his sister-in-law, Judith Duquette of Dalton; and his nieces and nephews. He was fondly remembered by many parishioners, with whom he kept in contact, of Sacred Heart Parish, Yonkers; St. Pius X Parish, Middletown; and St. Joseph Parish, Portland.

You can read more about Father Don Bosco in our feature article on him in the previous edition of *The Capuchin Journey* (Issue 2, 2024).



Fr. Eugene O'Hara



Br. Roger Deguire



Fr. Don Bosco Duquette

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St. Francis of Assisi Friary
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34 South Chestnut Street
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Good Shepherd Friary & Parish
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Holy Cross Residence & Parish
329 West 42nd Street
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St. Clare Friary
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**If you are interested in supporting our mission, please contact
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