Dear Friend of the Franciscans,

Pax et Bonum! Peace and Good!

This is one of my favorite times of year. There is still some fall foliage on the trees, and the winter cold hasn’t set in yet. We have Thanksgiving to look forward to, and then Advent and the Christmas season!

Saint Francis lived an austere lifestyle, but he was a great lover of Christmas. It was he who created the tradition of the Christmas crèche, or nativity scene, when he used members of his congregation, and some local farm animals, to create a living tableau at a Christmas Mass whose homily he was preaching. He understood that a life of poverty and austerity in service to God should be a joyful one!

As we take stock of the past year, there is reason for rejoicing. Over the summer we welcomed two new Brothers who professed their Solemn Vows; two others made their First Profession of Vows, and four postulants formally entered the Novitiate. We currently have more than a dozen men in various stages of formation in our Province.

This, along with a record-breaking incoming freshman class at Franciscan University of Steubenville, gives me assurance that God and the Blessed Mother are continuing to watch over our community.

Another thing that reassures me of that is the support, both financial and prayerful, that we have gotten from you and our other friends and supporters. Your support of Franciscan ministries makes you no different from the people who gave bread to Saint Francis and his brothers when they walked the streets asking alms for the poor. Bless you for your kindness!

Please look over this newsletter to learn about some of the things that have been going on in our Province over the past year. I wish you a peaceful, joyful and blessed Christmas and holiday season, and a brilliant New Year!

Sincerely in Saint Francis,

Father Richard, T.O.R.
Franciscan University of Steubenville Welcomes Record Freshman Class

In August, Franciscan University of Steubenville, OH welcomed the largest class of incoming freshmen in its 72-year history. A total of 680 new students enrolled, joining a student body of more than 2,700.

The University’s president, Father Sean Sheridan, T.O.R., says, “Students often tell us they want to experience a living Catholic culture that points them to what is good, true and beautiful, while being prepared for their God-given career or vocation. Today’s record enrollment confirms that Franciscan’s excellent academics and strong faith community continue to fulfill that desire.”

Saint Francis University in Loretto, PA also welcomed more than 350 incoming freshmen, who will graduate in the university’s 175th anniversary year in 2022.

Our Franciscan Community Continues To Grow

Our Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus continues to welcome young men with vocations to Franciscan religious life.

On July 20, Brother Marius Strom and Brother David Dodd took their Solemn Vows at Mount Assisi, pledging to dedicate their lives to poverty, chastity and obedience as members of the Third Order Regular.

Brother Marius serves as an instructor in the Engineering Department at Saint Francis University. Brother David, after his graduation from Franciscan University of Steubenville, spent his apostolic year with Works of Mercy, a student missionary organization.

On May 26, Brother Kolbe Spencer and Brother Augustine Joseph Murphy made their First Profession of Vows. They will now undertake apostolic work and additional prayer, reflection and guidance in the hope of taking their Final Vows next year.

The day before, four of our Postulants had taken the step of formally joining the Novitiate, and entered a period of work, prayer, learning, and further discernment on their path to hopefully becoming Franciscan brothers or priests.

Matthew Aubin entered the discernment process as a postulant, and in September was given the Franciscan Tau Cross as a sign of his embracing the spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi.

God bless and guide all of these young men on their Franciscan journeys!
Preparing For Giving Tuesday

We have “Black Friday” and “Cyber Monday” to kick off the commercial and material aspects of the Christmas season. But now we also have “Giving Tuesday,” dedicated to charitable giving as we remember whose birthday we are celebrating!

Giving Tuesday is the Tuesday after Thanksgiving—November 27 this year. On that day, people choose one or more nonprofit charities and make as generous an online donation as they can. Then, they are encouraged to share on their social media accounts to encourage their friends to give also. In 2017, this system of “viral giving” resulted in about $274 million in charitable contributions.

The Franciscan Friars, T.O.R. will be participating in Giving Tuesday this year, and we hope that you will consider remembering us on that day! We will have more information leading up to the day itself... please Like our Facebook page to stay up to date:
https://www.facebook.com/franciscanfriarstorloretto

Mount Assisi Hosts Our Annual Provincial Gathering

In early July, almost 100 Franciscan priests and brothers met in Loretto for our Province’s annual summer gathering. These gatherings have been part of Franciscan life since the time of Saint Francis, who called the famous “Chapter of Mats” (so called because the friars brought their own straw mats to sleep on).

We have the summer gathering each year between the formal Provincial Chapter meetings, which are held every three years. At the gathering we celebrate Mass and prayer, discuss Provincial business, recognize Jubilees and investitures, and catch up on what’s going on with our fellow Franciscans from across the Province.

Saint Francis’ Legacy... and Yours!

“We have been called to heal wounds, unite what has fallen apart, and bring home those who have lost their way.” This is the calling of Saint Francis of Assisi, and of those of us who strive to follow in his footsteps.

We look forward to carrying his vision of love, prayer and service into a new year of ministry. We pray we can continue and expand our work and serve God in every new opportunity He gives us. We serve through...

• Our food pantries and soup kitchen; • Wellness and senior care programs; • Literacy and language tutoring; • Constant prayer, liturgy, and the Sacraments; • Education, including the two Catholic universities we administer; • Individual ministries of service and prayer by all our priests and brothers.

As a partner in our ministry, you too are a part of Francis’ legacy. And we hope you’ll continue to join us in meeting his challenge. The enclosed folder outlines opportunities to do so through year-end charitable gifts, helping you decide on how to make the most effective gift you can in the most financially responsible way. Together, we can do so much more than we could apart!

We would be happy to discuss other planned giving options with you. For more information please call us at (814) 419-8880, email us at info@franciscanfriarstorloretto.org, or write to us at the address on the last page of this newsletter. Thank you and God bless you for your faithful support, and your prayers!
Loretto Dorothy Day Center Moves Into New Location

We know many of our friends were saddened when the Friar's Shop in Loretto closed its doors in September. But there is a silver lining!

The former location of the shop, at 115 St. Mary's Street, will become the new location of the Dorothy Day Center, affiliated with Saint Francis University. Founded in 1981, the Center offers a way for students to live out Franciscan values by volunteering to assist needy people and families in the southwest Pennsylvania area.

This new location will provide the Center with a significant upgrade in space.

RICH Program Kicks Off In Altoona-Johnstown Diocesan Schools

On September 20, elementary schools in the diocese gathered to kick off the RICH (Respect, Integrity, Courage, Humility) program—a new initiative in all diocesan schools this academic year. Father Malachi Van Tassell, T.O.R., President of Saint Francis University, was the keynote speaker. Brother Stephen Waruszewski, T.O.R., and Brother Rufino Corona, T.O.R., sang and highlighted saints who embody respect, integrity, courage, and humility.

Father Michael Scanlan Posthumously Awarded Poverello Medal

Father Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., the late and much-loved President of Franciscan University of Steubenville, was posthumously awarded the Poverello Medal on March 3. The award, named after Saint Francis of Assisi’s nickname of Poverello, meaning “little poor man,” is the highest award given by the university for the embodiment of Franciscan values and mission.
The Patron Saints Bracelet

This beautiful Bracelet can provide you with inspiration for any prayer need. Each of the 12 hematite panels carries a full-color miniature of a saint or holy image: the Sacred Heart, Saint Anthony of Padua, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Christ of the Divine Mercy, Our Lady of Fátima, Guardian Angel, Our Lady of Knock, Our Lady of Lourdes, the Sorrowful Mother, Saint Francis of Assisi, the Blessed Virgin of the Miraculous Medal, and Saint Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio).

The elastic wristband fits almost anyone, and the Bracelet comes blessed by the Franciscan Friars, T.O.R. Suitable for a man or a woman, and makes a wonderful gift! You may request this Bracelet in thanks for your gift of $12 or more in support of our ministries.

Saint Anthony Italian Glass Bead Bracelet

The Bracelet features 10 unique Italian black glass beads, and can serve as a chaplet. Attached is a pewter medallion depicting Saint Anthony with the Baby Jesus, and a Franciscan Tau Cross. Elastic wristband makes for an easy fit. The Bracelet is blessed by the Franciscan Friars, T.O.R. We can send you this Bracelet in gratitude for your gift of $12 or more in support of Franciscan ministries.

Blessed Saint Anthony Medal

This pewter medal, 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 medal is blessed by the Franciscan Friars, T.O.R. This Medal can be sent in gratitude for your offering of $10 or more in support of Franciscan missions and ministries.

Promises of the Sacred Heart Prayer Book

This 48-page booklet contains prayers and meditations on the Twelve Promises that Our Lord revealed to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque for those who venerate the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Along with the many other prayers and quotations included, the book offers a perfect way to practice daily devotion to the Sacred Heart. You can request this booklet as a “thank you” gift for your offering of $4 or more in support of Franciscan ministries.
Our 2018 Jubilarians

Here are the priests and brothers of the Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus who celebrated milestone anniversaries of profession or ordination in 2018. Congratulations to all of them; please keep them in your prayers as we wish them many more years of faithful service.

Fr. Ivan M. Lebar, T.O.R.
60 Years Ordained
Taught high school for many years; worked in parish ministry in Arizona and Virginia and West Virginia; retired to Loretto in 2014, and serves in the ministry of prayer.

Br. Paul McMullen, T.O.R.
60 Years Professed
Has served in internal ministry in our Province, on the General Council in Rome, in pastoral ministry in Fort Worth, TX, and now serves as Econome of St. Francis Friary in Loretto.

Fr. Joseph F. Connelly, T.O.R.
50 Years Ordained
Served many years in Secondary Education in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and as Principal of Bishop Egan High School; served in parish ministry in New Jersey and in Florida; has served as Pastor at Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs, in Sarasota, FL for many years.

Fr. James V. Gigliotti, T.O.R.
50 Years Professed
Served many years in secondary education at Bishop Egan High School and in parish ministry in Florida; was pastor of St. Maria Goretti Church in Arlington, TX, and presently is pastor of St. Andrew Catholic Church, Fort Worth, TX.

Fr. Terence J. Henry, T.O.R.
50 Years Professed
Served many years on the faculty of Bishop Egan High School and as first Principal of Connell-Egan Catholic High School; for 13 years was President of Franciscan University of Steubenville, and now teaches part-time at St. Francis University.

Br. Damien Koehler, T.O.R.
50 Years Professed
Has served the Province in many internal ministries of the community, and at present serves in the ministry of prayer at St. Francis Friary, Loretto, PA.

Fr. David Kraeger, T.O.R.
50 Years Ordained
Served in education at Bishop Egan High School, Franciscan University, St. Francis Seminary in Loretto, and St. Francis University. For many years he served as associate and then Pastor of parishes in the Diocese of Fort Worth, TX. He now serves in the ministry of prayer at St. Francis Friary.

Br. Shamus J. McGrenra, T.O.R.
50 Years Professed
Has served the Province in Higher Education at St. Francis University, and for 21 years in the Admission Department of St. John’s University, Queens, NY; served at St. Francis Prep School, Spring Grove, PA. He continues to serve St. Francis University, working with international students.

Fr. Salvator J. Stefula, T.O.R.
50 Years Professed
Served the province in secondary education, and then in parish ministry in Fort Worth, TX; Bradenton, FL; Honolulu, HI; and at present, is Pastor of St. Patrick’s Church, Tampa, FL. He also served many years in the U.S. military as Chaplain.

Fr. Augustine Belinda, T.O.R.
25 Years Ordained
Has served in Province internal ministry for many years; served as associate pastor in Virginia, and as a pastor in South Dakota. Has been retired for many years and serves in the ministry of prayer at St. Francis Friary.

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