

GOOD NEWS

from Provincial Minister, Fr. James Gannon, OFM



April 2016

Issue #6



Fr. James Gannon, OFM

The Role of the Family in Nurturing Vocations to Religious Life and Priesthood

“And so, what do you want to be when you grow up?”

I can recall the day my eighth grade teacher, Sr. St. Austin, and the associate pastor of the parish, Fr. Peter, asked this question to the soon to be teenaged, eighth grade boys and girls. It was a question asked during a vocation awareness day. The question was followed by another question, “Would you consider being a religious Sister, Brother, Priest?” Hesitantly, a few hands were extended into the air.

Within our various ministries, when we have that opportunity, do you ask the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” A simple question. Several national vocational surveys say that it is one of the most important questions parents, teachers, pastors, could ask young people. The simple question, this personal invitation, plants the vocational seed.

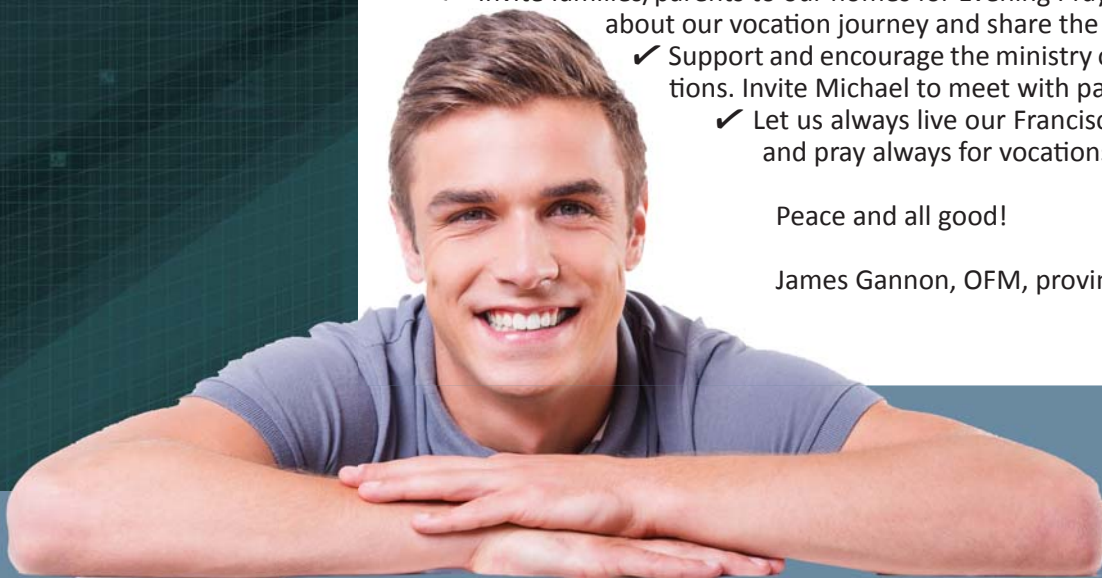
April 1, 2016, I attended the annual meeting of Major Superiors of Women and Men with the Archbishop of Chicago, Archbishop Blase J. Cupich. A major portion of the day was dedicated to the Vocation of Religious Sister, Brother and Priest. Brother Paul Bednarczyk, C.S.C. (Executive Director for the National Religious Vocation Conference), summarized a national survey which focused on the role of the family in nurturing vocations to religious life and priesthood. The survey also pointed out that the nurturing role of the family must be supported by religious women and men - - you and me.

How do we, as Franciscans, help build a culture of vocations in families?

- ✓ When the opportunity presents itself, ask the questions: “What do you want to be when you grow up? Would you consider being a religious Sister, Brother, Priest?”
- ✓ Take notice of the families who participate in the ministries and social service activities of the parish.
- ✓ Share your vocational journey as a Franciscan. Talk about your faith journey and the men and women, including Sisters, Brothers, Priests, who have had an important influence on you.
- ✓ In our Franciscan Friaries and parishes, sponsor an evening of prayer and discussion on the religious vocation, for parents and families, (Outlines available online *Vocation Network.org*)
- ✓ Invite families/parents to our homes for Evening Prayer and Dinner and be proud to talk about our vocation journey and share the history of our Assumption Province.
- ✓ Support and encourage the ministry of Michael Surufka, Director of Vocations. Invite Michael to meet with parents and families
- ✓ Let us always live our Franciscan Vocation, invite others to join us and pray always for vocations to Religious Life.

Peace and all good!

James Gannon, OFM, provincial minister



INSIDE

Report on the latest English Speaking Conference (ESC) meeting in Moses and Mt. Sinai come to St. John, Indiana

94th Meeting of the English Speaking Conference

152nd of the Order of Friars Minor Ministers Provincial
Holy Family Parish ~ St. Patrick Friary, Galveston, Texas

Participants in the ESC Meeting

- President: Hugh McKenna, OFM, Provincial Minister, Ireland
- Vice President: Kevin Mullen, OFM, Provincial Minister, Holy Name Province
- Jim Gannon, OFM, Provincial Minister, Assumption BVM Province
- Patrick Lonsdale, OFM, Custos, Immaculate Conception, England
- Jack Clark Robinson, OFM, Provincial Minister, Our Lady of Guadalupe Province
- David Gaa, OFM, Provincial Minister, Saint Barbara Province
- Algirdas Malakauskis, OFM, Provincial Minister, Province of St. Casimir, Lithuania
- Maec Le Goanvec, OFM, Provincial Minister, Province of St. Joseph, Montreal Quebec, Canada
- Richard Stanley Grech, OFM, Provincial Minister, Province of St. Paul the Apostle, Malta
- Primo P. Piscitello, OFM, Provincial Minister, Immaculate Conception Province
- Jeffrey Scheeler, OFM, Provincial Minister, St. John the Baptist Province
- William Spencer, OFM, Provincial Minister, Sacred Heart Province
- Robert Mokry, OFM, Provincial Minister, Province of Christ the King, Cochrane, Alberta
- Paul Smith, OFM, Provincial Minister, Holy Spirit Province, Australia
- Caoimhin O'Laoide, OFM, Definitor General
- Thomas Washburn, OFM, (IC), Executive Secretary

Monday, April 4, 2016

Review of report from the Franciscan Interprovincial Team (FIT)

- Between October 2015 and January 2016, over four hundred friars have participated in regional meetings or friary chapters to review the four models of restructuring which emerged from the August 2015 Techny Meetings. Approximately 120 pages of friar comments are presently being transcribed by FIT. These comments will be shared with the Friars in general.
- A national survey is being constructed by FIT. This survey will be forwarded to all Friars. This survey will allow Friars to provide personal feedback on the Four Models.
- Four Summer Interprovincial Gatherings:
 - ✓ A time of "getting to know you" history and sharing by the Friars of the seven Provinces in attendance; more than 200 Friars.
 - ✓ Reflection on what the Order of Friars Minor is asking as outlined in the documents of the Order and the General Chapter of 2015.
 - ✓ Major presentation by a Church Leader, (the four speakers will be announced in the letters to the Friars), on what the Church of the 21st Century needs from the Order of Friars Minor, in the United States.
 - ✓ A social analysis on the part of the Friars of our current situation in the United States.
 - ✓ A review of the Four Models in light of the four items listed above.
- Review and critique a tentative agenda for the August 22-26, 2016 meeting of the Seven Provincial Administrations from the Seven OFM Provinces in the United States, Techny, IL.

English Speaking Conference of the Order of Friars Minor

- Orientation to the English Speaking Conference and welcome to new Provincial Ministers: David Gaa, OFM, Saint Barbara Province, Algirdas Malakauskis, OFM, Province of St. Casimir, Lithuania and Robert Mokry, OFM, Province of Christ the King, Cochrane, Alberta

Tuesday, April 5, 2016

Introduction to and meeting with the the new Leadership of the General Secretariat for Franciscan Missions, Waterford, WI:

- Ms Tyler Curtis, Operations Manager
- Friar Teofil Czarniak, OFM, Executive Director

Meeting with the Leadership of Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission.

- Russ Testa, President of JPIC Commission and Mark Schroeder, OFM

Review of Conference Liasons Assignments and Expectations:

1. JPIC: Jim Gannon
2. Mission and Evangelization: Richard Grech
3. Development Directors/Treasurers: David Gaa
4. Initial Formation & Studies: Jeffrey Scheeler
5. Vocation Directors/Ongoing Formation: Marc LeGoanvec
6. CFIT/AAFH: Jack Clark Robinson
7. Monastery of the Holy Land Board: Robert Mokry
8. Communication Directors: William Spencer
9. American Franciscan Liturgical Commission: Tom Washburn
10. Franciscan Mission Service: Tom Washburn

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

- Update and discussion on the English Speaking Conference Centers of Learning: Canterbury, Antonianum, Franciscan Institute (Bonaventure University), Franciscan School of Theology (San Diego, CA).
- Update and discussion on Mega-Conference meeting with OFM's, OFM.Caps, OFM, Conv.

Photo, right: Members of the English Speaking Conference.



- A survey will be formed by the three Family Representatives and sent to the Provincial Administrations of all the Franciscan entities to establish a level of interest. If there is interest, a date in 2017 will be set for this conference.
- Presentation and discussion on the collaboration between the Secretariat of Franciscan Intellectual Tradition and the Academy of American Franciscan History. Liaisons: Kevin Mullen and Jack Clark Robinson.

Thursday, April; 7, 2016

Update on Financial Situation of the Order: John Puodziunas, OFM

- After reviewing the origin of our financial situation, John presented a plan for the future Actions taken since discovery of our financial situation:
 - Setting of priorities for disbursements and implementing strategies for improved financial administration.
 - Appropriate changes in the personnel charged with the administration of finances.
 - Appointment of a legal representative distinct from the General Economo.
 - Formation of an International Commission for Economic Affairs (CIRE) charged with the general oversight of all financial matters, but first priority is set on a debt management plan.
 - Cooperation with civil authorities to determine how this financial crisis happened with the primary goal being setting up systems and structures to avoid such an occurrence in the future. A secondary goal is to attempt to recoup the lost investments.
- The Debt Management Plan - DMP 2045, approved by the General Definitory on March 18, 2016. The details of the plan will be forwarded to each Friar.

Canonical Input Regarding Suspensions, Dismissals and Dispensations

Aidan McGrath, OFM, General Secretary.

The General Procurator (G.P.) is the office of the General Curia which takes care of relations with the Holy See (GGSS 145 §1). It is the responsibility of the General Procurator to handle and to solicitously expedite, in the name of the General Minister, all business of the Order which must be submitted to the Holy See, except those regarding the causes of beatification and canonization (GGSS 150 § 2).

It is absolutely necessary that the Ministers of the Order properly transmit the documents and information which are required by law, jurisprudence and the praxis of the Roman Curia in each case referred to the General Procurator, so that he may be able to deal, in a solicitous and diligent manner, with affairs at the Holy See.

The present edition of the Manual (in the expectation of a new edition in conjunction with the Manual of the General Secretariat) has been revised and updated, taking into account the new norms of procedure of some Congregations and of the updating of the Order's legislation, as well as having the intention of helping those who have to prepare the redaction of documents in an easy and uniform manner. The "Normae servandae in casibus aliqua graviora delicta tractandis", requested by the 2003 General Chapter, has also been added to the text.

The procedures to be followed for the more frequently occurring and more important cases to be presented to the Holy See are contained in the Manual and, at the same time, the documents, information and all that is necessary and requested in each case are indicated.

Friday, April 8, 2016

Vocation Directors Sub Committee

- Approval of updated particular norms.

Purpose

The English Speaking Conference of Vocation Directors is a great source of collaboration, fraternity and support for each member of the conference as it continues to explore the different avenues and possibilities of attracting young men to our Franciscan way of life.

Guests At The ESC Meeting

- Ms. Tyler Curtis, Operations Manager and Teofil Czarniak, OFM, Executive Director, General Secretariat for Franciscan Missions, Waterford, WI.
- Russ Testa and Mark Schroeder, OFM (SB), President and Vice President of the JPIC Commission
- John Puodziunas, OFM, General Economo of the Order of Friars Minor
- Aidan McGrath, OFM, General Secretary of the Order of Friars Minor

Provincial Minister, James Gannon, Calendar

- April 18-21: Newark, NJ, meeting with Bishop Kurt Burnette, Eparchy of Parma
- April 22-27: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI
- April 28-May 2: Holy Land Commissariat, Washington, DC
- May 3-6: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI
- May 7-22: Co-director Franciscan Pilgrimage for Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity Health Care, Manitowoc, WI.
- May 23-29: Francis + Clare Friary, Provincial Council Meeting, Franklin, WI
- May 30-June 1: St. Junipero Serra Friary, Edinburg, Texas
- June 2+3: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI
- June 4-6: Franciscan Sisters Jubilee Celebration, Pittsburgh, PA + St. Martha Parish 50th Jubilee Celebration, Philadelphia, PA.
- June 7-25: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI
- June 26-29: Working Retreat, Provincial Council, Door County, WI



Provincial's Meeting (right)

Aidan McGrath, OFM (left) Secretary of the Order





Teofil Czarniak, OFM, newly appointed Executive Director of Franciscan Missions, Waterford, WI.



Thomas Washburn, Executive Secretary of the English Speaking Conference (ESC)



Primo Piscitello, OFM, Provincial Minister of the Immaculate Conception Province, New York.



John Puodziunas, OFM, former Provincial Minister of the Assumption Province, Franklin, WI, current Economo General of the OFM Franciscan Order.

Photo: Francis Jasper, OFM

Membership

Membership consists of the Vocation Directors from each member entity of the English Speaking Conference:

Assumption BVM Province, Wisconsin
Christ the King Province, Western Canada
Commissary of the Holy Land, Washington, DC;
Holy Family Custody, Illinois;
Holy Name of Jesus Province, New York;
Immaculate Conception Custody, England;
Immaculate Conception Province, New York;
Our Lady of Guadalupe Province, New Mexico;

Province of Ireland, Ireland;
Province of St. Paul, Malta;
Sacred Heart Province, Missouri;
Santa Barbara Province, California;
St. John the Baptist Province, Ohio;
St. Joseph Province, Eastern Canada;
St. Casimir Province, Lithuania
Associate Member: Holy Spirit Province, Australia

Officers

The Committee has three officers: President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer.

President: A President is elected by simple majority of the membership present at the meeting of election. In the event that the office falls vacant, the Vice-President assumes the Presidency until the next meeting, at which point, an election among the membership takes place.

The President works with the Vice-President, Secretary and Provincial Liaison to set the agenda for meetings. The President chairs all meetings of the Committee. The President is responsible for the completion of the Annual Accountability Report to the Provincial Minister of the Conference.

The President also maintains regular contact with the Vocation Committee Presidents from the Capuchins, Conventuals, and TORs.

Vice-President. The Vice-President assists the President in his duties and fills in for him in his absence.

Secretary/Treasurer. The Secretary is responsible for the minutes of each meeting and communicating them to the membership. The Secretary maintains a roster of current vocation directors of each member entity and their contact information. The Secretary also serves as Treasurer.

As Treasurer, in communication with the Executive Secretary of the Conference, he is responsible for maintaining an accurate account of the funds and expenses of the Committee. The Treasurer will oversee the financial records of the Committee and is responsible for making an annual financial report to the Committee and to the Conference.

Terms

Each officer will be elected by at least a simple majority of the Vocation Directors Committee. The term of each office is three years with the possibility for reelection if so desired by the Committee and candidate.

Meeting Schedule

The Vocation Directors Committee meets at least once a year. The officers will meet in person or by phone prior to the Committee meeting for planning purposes.

Funding

The work of the Committee is funded by an equal sharing of the expenses of the meetings by the member entities. This will be determined by the Treasurer annually. Basil Valente, OFM (HN), elected Chair of the Vocation Directors.

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This newsletter was written by James Gannon, OFM, (right) Provincial Minister of the Assumption Province. It was designed, printed and distributed by the Communications Office of the Assumption Province.

Report on the Mega-Conference of Vocation Directors September 6-10, 2016.

St. Anthony Friary, 357 2nd St. North,
St. Petersburg, FL 33701-2931



Michael Perry, OFM, General Minister of the OFM Franciscan Order

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Michael Perry, O.F.M., Minister General
“Lesser Brothers on a Vocation Journey of Mercy”

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Moises Gutierrez, O.F.M.
Sacred Heart Province
“Celebrating Franciscan Diversity in Vocational Ministry: Encouraging Men of Various Ethnic Backgrounds”

Daniel Horan, O.F.M.
Holy Name Province
“Spirituality and the Strategic Use of Varied Media Channels to Promote Vocations

Hugh McKenna, OFM
ESC President’s Report



Michael Surufka, OFM, Vocation Team, Assumption BVM Province

Questions from Minister General, Michael Perry, presented by Hugh McKenna, President of the ESC of Provincials:

1. Indicate three requirements and two principal challenges for living fraternity and minority well in the entities of the Conference.
2. How was the General Chapter’s final document received?
3. The other question, from Michael, was: Any suggestions for a theme for the forthcoming plenary council which may be held in Nairobi.

If you have any reflections on these three questions, please forward them to me. I would greatly appreciate if you can send me your thoughts.

--Jim Gannon, OFM

General Definitor’s Report: Caoimhin O’Laoide, OFM

Initial details for the Fall Meeting of the ESC,
hosted by St. Joseph Province, Eastern Canada,
October 10-14, 2016



Panel members, April 1, 2016, Chicago Archdiocese sponsored discussion of religious vocations with Major Superiors of Women and Men.

MOSES PREPARING FOR APRIL UNVEILING IN ST. JOHN, INDIANA

St. John, IN. – Article from the Times of Northwest Indiana

Shrine of Christ's Passion is adding Mount Sinai scene.

St. John, Indiana: It is not easy building a mountain, especially one that includes an eternally burning bush, but Frank Schilling did his best.

Schilling's Shrine of Christ's Passion on U.S. 41 is preparing to open its latest feature, Moses descending Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments, by the end of April 2016. It took more than 160 semi-truck loads full of boulders, some weighing several tons, and smaller rocks to create a realistic mountain.

The idea for this addition to this popular shrine came in 2010 but had to wait until 2013 for the actual construction to begin because of the other work being done at the site. A system of tiles and drains had to be installed to create a stable base for the thousands of tone of rock and dirt. Schilling said that recent rains have really tested the system.

With the drainage system in place, Schilling said he and Ray Linz, a landscape architect, who also happens to be married to his niece, spent long hours placing the materials just right.

Almost a mile of cable was needed to provide the lighting and sound system for the display. Making the burning bush, where Moses receives the Word of God, seem realistic, took several tries, he said.

"We tried three or four avenues, but everything looked too artificial. We decided the best way to have the brightest glow to symbolize it, and people can imagine it. There are branches the light shines through to make it appear real. At night you can see the glow from the highway about a quarter mile away."

As with the Stations of the Cross path, visitors to the Moses scene can push a button to get a narration that includes the "voice of God" reading the Ten Commandments. **The "Voice of God" was provided by Reverend Sergius Wroblewski, a retired Franciscan Priest who resides at Lourdes Friary, Cedar Lake.**

Schilling had hoped to have the new shrine open for Easter weekend, but the time was unable to complete the project. The unveiling and dedication is planned at the end of April with the help of Bishop Donald Hying and the Reverend Sammie Maletta, who is on the Board of Directors for the Shrine,

"The main reason we did this: we were bombarded by the Supreme Court rulings saying that we could not have the Ten Commandments in the courts or the schools, or in the public arena", Schilling said. "I told my wife, 'What can we do?' The only thing we could do was build something that looked like Mount Sinai and have Moses coming down the mountain.

"I hope this will be here for hundreds of years for people to see."

When you make a trip to visit the Friars at Lourdes Friary, Cedar Lake, make sure you stop to see the two shrines; Stations of the Cross and the Ten Commandments. Also, visit a very fine gift shop.



Making Mt. Sinai in St. John, Indiana



Fr. Sergius Wroblewski, OFM. -- what God sounds like.



Moses arrives in St. John, Indiana