Brothers,
May the Lord give you peace! This thanksgiving letter was inspired by my recent fraternal visit to our Friars in Greenwood, Mississippi.

Thanksgiving is my favorite “holy day.” However, like birthdays, anniversaries, Christmases and Easters, these special days come and go all too quickly, especially as we grow older.

On this Thanksgiving Day I give thanks:
• for the harvesting energies of food and water
• for Mother Earth and those who safeguard her into the future.
• for material wealth and good health.
• for the things I take for granted.
But these are not available to each of us in equal measure. There are certain dimensions to our lives that are universal, more fundamental. They offer deeper meaning to our thanksgiving. They may include but are not limited to:

- meaning in our lives, family,
- ministry, friars,
- fraternity, friends and significant relationships
- work, second chances.

I find myself numbed by life’s pace, especially since I became a great uncle, and witnessing my generation shrink through Sister Death. I find myself numbed by life’s pace as I begin to fill in my 2020 calendar. In the midst of this busy pace it is easy to lose sight of how we matter to each other; how we are making a difference in fraternity, ministry, and how I am preparing for eternal salvation.

So often, we are weighed down by the challenges facing the church, the Order of Friars Minor, our aches and pains, and by our smaller number of friars in the Province. So, I take this opportunity to say “Thank You;” thank you for getting up each morning and serving the people of God and your brothers of the Assumption Province; thank you for the nights you crawled back into your room, exhausted from a hard day of ministry.

On this Thanksgiving Day and every day, I am thankful for you and all you do for God’s people.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving.
Jim
Welcome to Father Bernardo

The General Secretariat of the Franciscan Missions in Waterford, Wisconsin, welcomes Father Bernardo Moya Montero, OFM, to the service of the missionary work of Franciscan friars throughout the world. Fr. Bernardo just completed an assignment as Director of the Office of Protocol at the Curia of the Order of Friars Minor in Rome, Italy, where he served for two years.

Fr. Bernardo was born in Queretaro, Mexico, and joined the Franciscans in 2008, entering the Province of Saint Peter and Paul, Michoacán, Mexico. He made his solemn profession on August 2, 2013. He completed his theology studies in the Holy Land in 2014 and was ordained to the priesthood on June 26, 2015. His first assignments include Provincial Director of Vocations and the Spiritual Assistant for YouFra (Franciscan Youth).

Father was attracted to the Franciscans because of a desire to serve people and to spread the message of the love and mercy of a compassionate God to all he meets. He notes that he is called to do “Franciscaneando,” being a Franciscan to everyone. He wants to share the Franciscan charism in his daily life and ministry. Fr. Bernardo enjoys listening to music, reading, and being among people to listen and learn from them about their passion to follow Jesus.

At the General Secretariat of the Franciscan Missions, Fr. Bernardo will serve as Coordinator of Mission Appeals and Coordinator of Mission Projects.

Welcome, Fr. Bernardo!
On October 27th, the Franciscan Missions celebrated the Holy Eucharist at St. Clare Parish in Wind Lake, WI. We honored Fr. Sante DeAngelis, OFM and Fr. Ponciano Macabalo OFM for their many years of service to the Franciscan Missions.

Fr. Edward Tlucek, OFM presided the Holy Eucharist and Fr. Michael Perry, OFM gave the Homily.

We are eternally grateful to Fr. Sante and Fr. Ponz for their dedication and faith in our mission. God bless them.
Who hasn’t heard a garage band? Drums, guitars and music loud enough to shake the walls.

Back in the day — meaning the late 1960s — a group of Wisconsin Franciscans formed a band called “The Franciscan Cords.” (The play on words — based on the knotted cord of a Franciscan habit — became shortened at times to “The Cords.”)

The Cords were based in Pulaski at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Friary. Jim Bertler (Br. Bonaventure then) and Jim Brojek formed the band in 1961. Bertler said the band practiced in the friary’s basement. The Pulaski Chamber of Commerce also met there and heard the music. Subsequently, they asked the group to perform at the Polka Days.

Bertler later left the Franciscan order, married and is now the choir director at St. Benedict Parish in Suamico). He said “The Cords” wanted to interest young people in vocations.

“My attitude back then,” he told The Compass, “(was) to show the teenagers that there was a fun side to religious life.”

The Franciscan Cords eventually released two singles and an album The Franciscan Cords – Spiritual Troubadours (1969). Bertler said the album “went worldwide right away,” thanks to the network the now-closed Franciscan Publishers had at that time.

Many of the songs may not be well-known today, but enjoyed fandom in their time. And a couple songs — many of which were written by Bertler — were rediscovered later. For example, the wild and raucous “Ghost Power” was selected for the first of eight volumes of garage bands releases marketed as the “Back from the Grave series,” begun in 1983.

Now modern audiences can hear The Franciscan Cords singles again thanks to re-releases from OKtay Records of Switzerland. The new singles are re-masters of the original Cuca Records releases.

The re-released 45s can be purchased at The Exclusive Company stores in northeast Wisconsin, or directly from Bertler at Jim.Bertler@catholicfinanciallife.org for $10 plus shipping.
On October 16th, the novices of the Franciscan Interprovincial Novitiate received their habits of probation at a ceremony that took place in the novitiate chapel at Old Mission Santa Barbara.

Br. Andrew Aldrich, OFM, of Assumption BVM Province, was among thirteen men who were invested. They began their novitiate as an overlay with the previous novitiate class, having been received by their respective Provincial Ministers on July 15th, the feast of St. Bonaventure. Each month following, the novices participated in ceremonies of gradual and deeper discernment. In August was the Divestiture Ceremony during which novices were invited to select things that were important that they would want to surrender or to write a document of attitudes which they would want to release (and others that they want to acquire) during the course of the novitiate. In September came the handing on of the Rule and Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor, followed by the investiture in October.

Their brothers of the Conventual and Capuchin novitiates both attended and participated. They provided a very rich music ministry of stringed instruments and voices, and served as readers of the Gospel from Matthew (16:24-27) and Thomas of Celano's story of Francis' embrace of the habit of penance after hearing the Gospel at the Portiuncula (18:21-22). Br. David Gaa, OFM, Provincial Minister of St. Barbara, reflected on the meaning of the habit of the friars minor – that the outward garment should reflect the inward reality, however imperfectly.

Friars representing the Provinces of the novices were called forth and Br. Joachim Studwell, OFM, representing Assumption BVM, presented Br. Andrew with his habit using the words, “Andrew, receive the habit of Probation of the Order of Friars Minor.” It continued this way with all the representatives and novices – Holy Name, St. John the Baptist, Sacred Heart and St. Barbara Provinces.

The representative friars and novices then proceeded into the mission sacristy. Here they vested, with assistance, and upon returning to the novitiate chapel, were greeted with the song, “These Alone Are Enough”, based on St. Ignatius of Loyola's Suscipe.
Following the blessing and dismissal, and indoor photos that followed, everyone went to a festive preprandium and a delicious Indian dinner. It was a heartwarming and edifying experience, not only for the novices receiving the habit of probation, but also for everyone who participated and attended. It was a hopeful sign of the Franciscan future to have the novices all together – the friars minor, the Capuchin and Conventual novices, and their formation team members.

**Novice’s Creativity in Wood**

*Written by Fr. Joachim Studwell, OFM*

Novices are encouraged to explore their creativity during the course of the year of probation in the Order of Friars Minor. Br. Andrew Aldrich, OFM, is exploring creativity through wood carving, that is, whittling. He has found this new-found hobby to be relaxing and engaging. He uses basswood, which is among the softer woods for carving. Here he is holding a “box and ball” he carved out of a single block of wood! Very clever and skillful! He is looking to develop this talent with more carving projects.

Photos submitted:
Andrew Aldrich holding this carving – wood frame with ball – from a single piece of wood

**Provincial’s Schedule**

Sunday, November 4th – Wednesday, November 7:
St. Francis Mission, Greenwood, MS

Thursday, November 8 – Saturday, November 9:
CTU Interculturation + Diversity Class

Sunday, November 11 – Tuesday, November 13:
Francis + Clare Friary Office, Franklin, WI

Wednesday, November 14 – Monday, November 19:
Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs Annual Staff Meeting, Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale, AZ

Tuesday, November 20 – Wednesday, November 28:
Francis + Clare Friary Office, Franklin, WI
Our friars - most recently Fr Rene Barczak - have cared for Poverello Fraternity in Philadelphia. In September, they merged with Queen of the Universe Fraternity to create SS Francis and Clare Fraternity. At the creation of the new fraternity, each member poured colored sand, the layers creating a symbol of the merger of fraternities (see photo).

To help celebrate the merger, each member got two ribbons to write on. On one they wrote something that bothered them about the merger and one was to be something wonderful they expect to happen. Everyone tied both ribbons on the branches, and then all prayed to Our Lady, Undoer of Knots. Since Queen of the Universe Fraternity is the older fraternity, bonded to the TOR, we expect the new fraternity to be bonded to the TOR friars when the dust settles.

(Photo of fraternity members courtesy of Kate Kleinert, OFS, St Katharine Drexel Regional Minister)
**Friary Personnel and Friaries:**

**Tony Cirignani:**
Tony’s broken ankle is healing slowly but it is healing. More time is needed for full recovery. Tony is back full time in ministry at Saints Peter & Paul Parish and St. Mary of the Angels Parish, Green Bay.

**Ponciano Macabalo:**
Ponce has stepped forward to assist Tony Cirignani at Saint Mary of the Angels Parish and Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Green Bay, WI. Tony, Ponce and Jim are working on a date of arrival for Ponce. Faculties have been requested for Ponce from the Bishop Ricken, Bishop of Green Bay.

**Sante DeAngelis:**
Sante continues to discern his future. He has moved from the friary in Waterford, WI to Queen of Peace Friary, Burlington, WI.

**Mario Nagy:** Mario is still waiting for his visa in order to travel to Russia. Since the meeting, Mario has received word from the General Administration that it is best not to return to Russia because of all the VISA restrictions. Mario and Jim Gannon will have conversations concerning future assignment.

**Edward Tluczek:** Ed has been assigned to residence at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Rectory, Waterford, WI. Ed serves as pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Waterford, WI and St. Clare Parish, Wind Lake, WI. Ascription is undecided.

**Jim Gannon:** Jim has been assigned to residence at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Rectory, Waterford, WI. Ascription is undecided.

**Austin Mysliwiec:** Austin has been assigned to residence at Assumption BVM Friary, Pulaski, WI where he will continue recovery from surgery.

**Norbert Bertram:** Norbert, a member of St. John the Baptist Province and a good friend to many a Friar of the Assumption Province, has requested to retire to Queen of Peace Friary, Burlington, WI. Mark Soehner, Provincial SJB and Jim Gannon have enthusiastically honored his request.

**Formation**

**Request for Initial Formators** – After a brief discussion the Council agreed that there are no friars from the ABVM Province available for any of the positions in initial formation.
Novitiate Report - Joachim offered comments about Andrew Aldrich’s experience in the Province prior to entering the Novitiate. Greg Plata (pictured right) will be briefed of the concerns.

Finance/Property

Treasurer’s Report: John Cella, provided the Council with financial information. Cash flow has been alleviated by significant contributions.

The Printery: The purchase of the building by the Gorman Group should be finalized by December 2018.

West Chicago: There are further complications with the potential sale of the property. A never ending story.

Holy Dormition Friary, Sybertsville, PA: The Province is interested in pursuing other options for the sale of the property. There is nothing happening at the present

St. Francis Friary, Burlington, WI: The building was vacated as of October 1, 2018. It is presently empty. There are several options but there is no definite direction at the present time.

St. Mary of the Angels, Green Bay: Agreement with the sale of the property to Commonwealth Development will be complete, December 2018.

Villa property: A person has stepped forward showing interest in purchasing the remaining acreage of the Villa.

Planning

Chapter Planning Committee: The Council spent time doing some visioning for the 2010 Provincial Chapter as well as the time leading to the 2023 Unification. Ed will share the fruits of this discussion with Paul.

Praesidium Update – The council participated in the CMSM Region V Meeting. At the meeting, the group received input on the releasing of the names of friars who have established allegations. Jim will meet with lawyers to determine “established” allegations. Jim informed the Council regarding our Praesidium Visitation. Everything seems to be in order.
FMU: With Mario Nagy retiring his FMU position Craig Wilking and Patrick McCormack have volunteered to fill this responsibility. The members of the Provincial Council are most grateful.

**Extra-Provincial**

**Renewal & Restructuring Timeline:** The Provincials are looking for a project manager, most likely a Friar, to keep the provincials and the process on target. The R+R Timeline needs to be presented to the members of the six participating provinces. A power point presentation will be crafted. Between Jim and the members of the Council, presentations will be offered in Burlington, Pulaski, Franklin and Greenwood within the first half of 2019.

**Response to the Letter sent on the Feast of the Stigmata** – Some fraternities crafted letters and sent them to their local Ordinaries.

**Canada Reunification** – Jim Gannon, Ed Tluczek and Steve Malkiewicz participated in the reunification of the two Canadian Provinces. The Unification was well celebrated. The Friars were gracious hosts. Many of the friars expressed gratitude for Steve's many years of service as a teacher at Newman Theological School.

**ESC Meeting:** The Assumption Province will host the April 1-5, 2019 meeting of the Provincials of the English Speaking Conference. The meeting will take place at the Dominican Retreat Center, Racine, WI.

**ABVM Friars on Pilgrimage:** John Cella will craft a flyer for the R+R Pilgrimages. The flyer will be sent to the members of the six OFM provinces. The flyer will ask for volunteers. In addition to the Rome/Assisi Pilgrimages, there will be pilgrimages to the California Franciscan Missions and possibly other Franciscan Mission sites in the Southwest.

**Other Reports/Committees**

**Friary Chapter Reports**

+ **Lourdes Friary:** Minutes received. Thank you.
+ **Holy Dormition Friary:** Starting to plan for 2019 unless something happens with the property. Thank you.
+ **Junipero Serra Friary:** Watched and discussed, “Conversations that Matter”. Thank you.
+ **Queen of Peace Friary:** There has been a change in Sunday schedule. Thank you.
+ **Assumption Friary** – no report
+ **St. Francis Greenwood:** Combined business meeting with friary chapter. The friars seem to be doing well. Thank you.
+ Holy Name Friary – no report
+ Francis & Clare Friary: Watched and discussed, “Conversations that Matter” Thank you
Reviewing minutes from friary chapters are an important part of each Provincial Council meeting. It is important that you forward your minutes to Edward, Provincial Secretary. Thank you for the minutes sent in.

Order of Franciscans Secular: Jerome provided a report regarding his position as the Provincial Spiritual Assistant. There is a strong desire to strengthen the relationship between the friars and the Secular Franciscans. There is a fraternity outside of Grand Rapids, MI. who is interested in bonding with our Province. In 2020, Jerome anticipates becoming more involved on the national level. Thank you, Jerome, for your ministry to the Franciscans Secular.

How have we responded to the Poor: A donation was made to the Sisters Program run by the interfaith non-profit Benedict Center, Milwaukee, WI. This street outreach assists women leaving prostitution and sex trafficking with skill building and case management. This program assists women at risk. The Council approved a $1,000 donation to the work of the Center.

Dates for the Provincial Council Meetings:
December 18, 19, 20, 2018: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI

Christmas Party with the Board of Directors of the Pilgrimage Program on December 19th

Advent Evening Prayer and dinner with Friars residing at the Milwaukee Catholic Home.

Queen of Peace Friars New Cell Phone Numbers

Andre Lemay: 262.806.5163
Carmen Scuderi: 262.806.5160
David Dodge: 262.806.5168
Emmanuel Bialoncik: 262.806.5169
Joseph Molinari: 262.806.2897
Michael May: 262.806.5180
Norbert Bertram: 513.458.9855
Family, friends, and friars said farewell to Fr. Carl Graczyk at his funeral mass on Saturday, November 10th at Queen of Peace Friary in Burlington, WI, as well as on Monday at Assumption Friary in Pulaski, WI. Burial followed midday prayer in the Provincial Cemetery.

Ministry Opportunity:
With the passing of Fr. Carl, the Dominican Sisters of St. Ann’s Rest Home where he served and lived as a full time chaplin, are eager to fill the vacancy left by his death. If you are interested, please contact Jim Gannon at jgannonofm@thefranciscans.net.

Alumni of Archbishop Ryan High School will sponsor a Mass of Remembrance for Fr. Carl at Our Lady of Calvary in Philadelphia, PA in January 2019. Exact date and time will be forthcoming.

Resurrection Catholic Church Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Fr. Laurian Janicki (2nd from the left) and Fr. Leslie Hoppe (2nd from the right) celebrate with Bishop Conlon at Resurrection Catholic Church’s 50th Anniversary Mass in Wayne, IL.