Dear Sisters and Brothers ~

May the Risen Lord give you peace!

April 14, 2019, Palm Sunday, the recessional hymn at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Waterford, WI, was Were You There When They Crucified My Lord? Instead of singing, the Director of Liturgical Music asked that we ‘hum’ the hymn. As the snow was falling outside, from a Spring winter storm, the packed church broke out in a powerful, reverent “Hum” of Were You There... Indeed, the tone was set for a holy week!

This year, Holy Week, holds a surprising coincidence for Christians, and for all people of good will; the Easter Season and the commemoration of Earth Day converge April 22, 2019: the fifty days of Easter and the 49th international observance of Mother Earth.

Perhaps, to many of us in the church, the celebration of Earth Day may be an unwelcome guest. However, since Pope Francis’ Encyclical, Laudato Si, and his “urgent challenge to protect our common home, can bring the human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change” [13]. This encyclical may well become one of the most important sources of our Catholic Social teaching. It may also become one of the most important challenges to the followers of Francis of Assisi, who referred to our “common home” as his “mother and sister.”

It is all about relationships: the relationship of God’s love for all creation; the relationship of Good Friday, Easter Resurrection and Earth Day. This relational experience is an opportunity for reflection on the crisis facing the human family and all of God’s creation: human waste, human neglect, human sin and death. Earth Day’s relationship with Good Friday and Easter Resurrection helps the church, as well as all people of good will, to remember that God’s love is universal. Jesus’ sacrifice is for all the Earth. As Paul said, “We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (Romans 8:22)

May this year’s convergence and celebration of Good Friday, Easter Resurrection and the commemoration of Earth Day help us to move closer toward the heart of God and the heart of the world. Perhaps it may move us to reflect, once again, on Francis’ Encyclical, Laudato Si, and to infuse its teaching into our words and actions. May it empower us to go out and renew the Order of Friars Minor in the United States and “renew the face of the earth.”

Christ is risen! He is truly risen!

Jim Gannon, OFM
Friary Personnel

James DeSales Wisniewski
James has an appointment after Easter with Bishop Hying, Bishop of Gary, to determine his status as a deacon with the Diocese.

Robert Sembrat
Bob has requested a move to Queen of Peace Friary in Burlington. Jim met with Paul Reczek and Provincial Nurse, Charlene Duley to prepare for his move.

Jason Welle
Jason was “officially” appointed Dean at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI), Rome, Italy. This summer he will be traveling to many parts of the world as part of his responsibilities as Dean of PISAI. He will be attending the Chapter of Mats in August. Congratulations to Jason!

Stanley Janowski
For almost ten years, Stan served as manager of Francis Meadows in Burlington, WI. He had a wonderful relationship with the residents and workers of the building. Stan served them faithfully and lovingly, and kept F.M. at full to capacity during his tenure. Stan retired from his position last month. The Provincial Council sent him a letter recognizing his years of service.

Paul Belco
Paul is presently living at St. Eugene’s Rectory in Fox Point, WI with Justin and Joel. Sometime after Easter, and when the winter snows melt, Paul plans to visit Holy Dormition Friary in Sybertsville, PA, to visit the Friars and reflect on the possibility of joining the fraternity.

Len Cornelius
Len is a bi-ritual member of St. John the Baptist Province but considering the possibility of investigating joining the fraternity of Holy Dormition and serving as chaplain to a community of Contemplative Nuns, Holy Annunciation Monastery.
Mario Nagy
Mario landed safely in Havana, Cuba where he has joined Friars from other Provinces of the Order. He reports that he is being kept busy and active in the Franciscan Parish. After three months, when his visitor’s VISA expires, he will return to the States and discern with the Provincial Administration about his potential return to Cuba.

Laurian Janicki
On his recent visit to the Philippines, Andy Brophy visited Laurian in the Philippines. He has registered for the August Chapter of Mats in Denver, CO.

Gus Fraszczak
While in the Philippines, Andy Brophy also visited with Brother Gus. Gus, who served at Rieti House, is now a resident. The Assumption Province is assisting with the cost of his care. Gus is recovering from hip replacement surgery and dealing with prostate cancer.

Sergius Wroblewski
Because of the need of extra care, not available at Queen of Peace, Sergius is now a resident at St. Anne’s Salvatorian Campus, Milwaukee, WI. He and Melvin are roommates.

Maxwell Klug
Jim, after having conversations with Friars responsible in Maxwell’s Priestly Formation, and receiving their recommendations, the council approved his request to pursue a Master’s Degree in Social Work while pursuing his M.Div, at CTU.

Temporary Friars from Mexico
The summer of 2018, our ABVM Province hosted two friars from Mexico, Alexis and Saul. They attended Sacred Heart School of Theology, enrolled in class for learning the English Language. They also experienced the hospitality of the Assumption Province. They were a “hit” at Polka Days in Pulaski. We have been approached, once again, to host two friars this summer. The council agreed to host the friars through the Doogee Fund. The friars in initial formation would enroll in English classes at Sacred Heart School of Theology and reside at Queen of Peace Friary, Burlington, WI, and experience the Assumption Province.

Property Updates
Franciscans Downtown, Stevens Point, WI
Placid Stroik reported that a new landlord initiated a review of our lease of the property. After consultation with Placid, the council agreed to a one year lease.
Burlington Property (right)
One of the major components for “Renewal and Restructuring” is “Getting Our House In order.” One of the components includes buildings and properties. There are on-going conversations with advisors who work with religious institutions.

St. Mary of the Angels Parish, Green Bay, WI
There is a second request from the congregation of St. Mary of the Angels Parish in Green Bay, for the remodeling of the Church. We have been generous to the Parish in the way we have taken care of the building. We invested significant money in the building prior to the present remodeling of the church. We will send an additional $5,000 toward the project.

Holy Dormition, Sybertsville, PA
After two years of conversations and discussions concerning our Sybertsville property, a proposal has been presented and accepted. The details, still being worked out, would allow us to continue our presence and ministry. Many thanks to John Cella, Brian Bangart, and Jerome Wolbert for keeping these conversations moving in a positive direction.

Villa
The remaining 82 acres are listed with Place Perfect Reality. We renewed our listing with them. Our current listing of the property was recently reduced to $199,900, in an effort to attract a buyer.

Assumption Friary, Pulaski, WI (left)
The Friary is presently for sale. Gorman Group has submitted the required $25,000 earnest money with the future purchase of the Printery Building. If any friar has any personal belongings in the Printery Building, YOU MUST REMOVE THE ITEMS ASAP.

West Chicago
Our realtor has suggested that when we have an interested buyer for the property, we meet with the city of West Chicago and discuss what they would allow us to do on the property so we can try to negotiate with interested party at that point.
Planning

Chapter Planning Committee
Edward Tlucek, liaison to the Chapter Planning Committee, gave an update from the January Meeting of the Planning Committee. The Council was in favor of inviting friar guests from other provinces to our Chapter as we did at the last Chapter. It was also suggested that Provincial Nurse, Charlene Duley, address the Chapter on the state of the care of our Senior Friars. There was some discussion about moving the election of definitors from Thursday morning to an earlier time.

St, Francis Mission, Greenwood, MS
Joachim Studwell provided an update on activity at St. Francis Mission. Joachim commented on the Hispanic Community and on the Secular Franciscans. Two major issues surfaced:
- The finances are in a critical state.
- The leadership of the Parish is asking for a conversation with the Provincial Council regarding the future of the Family Life Center.

Discussion on the document from the June 2018 Plenary Council of the Order of Friars Minor, Nairobi, Kenya:
“Those who have ears, let them listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Order of Friars Minor, today.”
Jim reported that the US-6 Provincials have committed to using this document as the foundation of “Renewal” for Franciscans in the United States. Following the discussion on the document, it was decided that Jerome Wolbert would prepare three friary chapter handouts to be used by our friars. The handout would include discussions on how to implement the document in the lives of our friars. Ed volunteered to prepare a prayer service to accompany each handout. These handouts will be sent out prior to the Chapter of Mats which is to be held in Denver at the end of July. These will be held in April, May and June.

Extra-Provincial

Legal Matters
Jim updated the council on the weekly response to the Bishops of the United States concerning compliance to the Standards of Ethical Behavior in Ministry and the Protection of Children and Young Adults. These conversations on this most important issue facing the Church are intense and will be on-going for a long time.
Other Reports/Committees

Friary Chapter Reports
+ Holy Dormition Friary: Minutes received. Thank you.
+ Junipero Serra Friary: no report
+ San Damiano Friary: no report
+ Queen of Peace Friary: no report
+ Assumption Friary –no report
+ St. Francis Greenwood: Minutes received. Thank you.
+ Holy Name Friary –no report
+ Francis & Clare Friary: no report

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.

The Poor
How have we responded to the Poor: Each Council member will contribute individually to Jerome Wolbert to be used to help the poor in the Hazelton, PA area.

**Dates for the Provincial Council Meetings**
- May 14, 15, 16, 2019: Lourdes Friary, Cedar Lake, IN
- June 25, 26, 27, 2019: St. Anthony Padua Friary, St. Petersburg, FL.
- September 10, 11, 12, 2019: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI
- October 8, 9, 10, 2019: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI
- December 17, 18, 19, 2019: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin, WI
  - This is also our Corporate Meeting with the Board for the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs.
- January 14, 15, 16, 2020: Francis + Clare Friary, Franklin WI and Queen of Peace Friary, Franklin, Burlington, WI
- March 10, 11, 12, 2020: Holy Dormition Friary, Sybertsville, PA
  - May 12, 13, 14, 2020: Lourdes Friary, Cedar Lake, IN
- Provincial Chapter May 31, June 1, 2, 3, 4, 2020: Siena Retreat Center, Racine, WI

**Reminder**
If you have not already, please sign up for the 2019 Chapter of Mats!
Deadline is April 30th.
You can sign up at [www.nixmeetings.com/mats2019](http://www.nixmeetings.com/mats2019)
Jubilee 2019 Celebrations

Thursday, August 15, 2019
Solemnity of the Assumption of the
Blessed Virgin Mary
11:00 Eucharist
St. Clare Church
Wind Lake, Wisconsin
Reception and Dinner immediately after the Eucharist
in St. Clare Parish Hall

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Do you have news, photos, or stories to share?
For inclusion in the next issue of the Provincial Press, email them to awtretow14@gmail.com.