

FRIARWORKS

FRANCISCAN MINISTRY & MISSION

THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PROVINCE • SUMMER 2011 • VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1



Filling Souls

by Colleen Cushard

When volunteer extraordinaire, Barb Coyle, approached me about the Fill Their Bowl, Fill Your Soul event, I liked the idea but wondered if it was feasible.

The night was an opportunity to communicate the desperate situation millions face everyday because of the unequal distribution of food in our world. But there was nothing in the budget for such an

continued on page 2

Large photo: Event chair Barb Coyle assigns dining levels to guests. Inset left: A bowl of rice is dinner for more people than not in the world. Middle: beans and weiners – a typical soup kitchen meal. Right: A few lucky diners enjoy multi-course meal.



DEAR FRIENDS,

May was a busy month for the friars. Almost all the friars of our province assembled for Chapter May 23-29. Chapter is the highest decision-

Fr. Frank

making body in the province. We gather every three years to make major decisions, select leadership, reflect on our way of living and set direction for the future. It is a time of tremendous importance to our province.

It's also a great time to reconnect with all of my brothers. For many of us, this is the only time we get to see one another. We have fun praying and playing together.

Probably the most exciting time was when tornados passed through the area and we had to take refuge in the basement. We felt safe in St. Meinrad's castle-like structure. Then the power went out for 20 hours — making life even more interesting! Being without power and water helped us to appreciate the simple things in life. Some friars felt their way along the dark corridors and went to bed while others talked and partied in the recreation area until the security light batteries wore down.

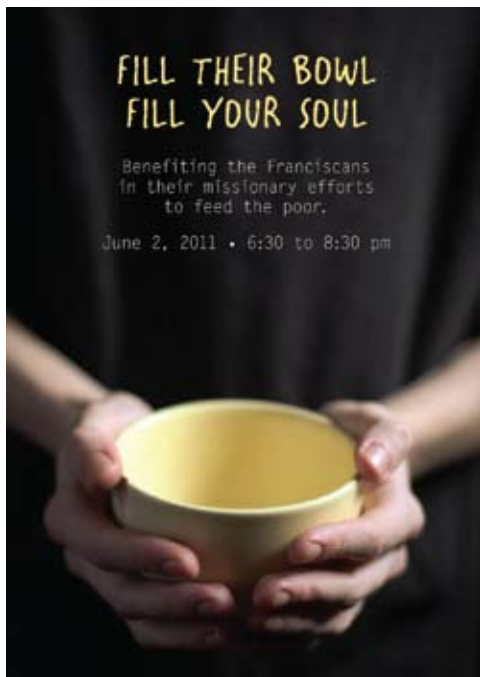
We had to help the elderly friars with the stairs — but we made it. We continued our meeting without a microphone or other modern technology. Our meeting concluded a day early, but the storms made it a memorable experience.

Enjoy reading this issue of *Friar Works*. It's such a pleasure to report on the good works of my brothers. We are most grateful to you for your support which allows our work to continue in the spirit of St. Francis. May God bless you and give you peace!

Fondly,

Frank J. Jasper, OFM.

**Fr. Frank J. Jasper, O.F.M.,
Provincial Vicar**



The event invitation



The prayer vigil



Fr. Jim talks about his experiences in Jamaica.

Filling Souls

continued from page 1

event and we would have to get a lot of help. Then we *did* get a lot of help and Barb emphatically reasoned that this was God's way of telling us this really needed to be done.

On June 2, at St. John Neumann in Fairfield, OH, over 152 friends and benefactors and 20 volunteers attended the Fill Their Bowl event. Fr. Jim Bok, Br Richard Goodin and Br. Al Mascia shared their experiences serving the needs of the hungry and homeless in the missions and on the streets. There were touching and even heart-breaking moments.

Life is about choices. But some of life is also chance. None of us can choose who we are born to or what

country we are born in. The circumstances of our birth are completely out of our control. Many believe it was pure luck that we were born into this land of plenty.

This night was a game of luck, too. Each person was given a playing card upon arrival. Those with the lucky number seven were fed a meal typical of what we would serve in our homes — only

22 of the 152 people in attendance. They dined on salad, lasagna, Italian bread and dessert. That represents 15% of the world's population.

Those with a club card ate a meal similar to what would be offered in a soup kitchen — 46 people dined on beans and wieners, apples and cookies.

A heart card represented the other 55% of the world's population dining only on rice and water. That was 84 of the 152 gathered that night.

The visual representation was certainly powerful. Most of us only think about *what* we are going to eat for a meal and not *if* we are going to eat. Most enjoy our meals in the company of family or friends and not with strangers at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter. Most of us do not know what it is like to go to bed hungry. That night reminded us just how much we have to be thankful for.

continued on page 3



St. Anthony's Corner

Dear Fathers

Enclosed is my donation to St. Anthony Bread. I promised St. Anthony a donation if my car repair bill was not too high, hopefully less than \$600. Instead of

\$600—it was \$19.17! Praise be to God. Even the mechanic was surprised the repair was so minor. — *Barb*

Thank You St. Anthony

I have been praying to St. Anthony to help my husband with his prostate cancer. He just had surgery and the cancer was contained in the prostate and he is now cancer free. St. Anthony does hear and answer our special intentions. I am still praying for other intentions and have no doubt that he will hear my prayer. Thank you St. Anthony for being in my life.

— *Susan, AL*

Favors Received

Thank you for successful breast cancer treatment for my daughter and for favors received. — *Alice, TX*

Herald His Saintly Life

I was born on St. Anthony's feast day and have always felt called to herald his saintly life. Every time I have prayed to him he has answered me and I am very grateful for his constant care for me. I was very fortunate to be trained in nursing by the Franciscan sisters! Thank you, St. Anthony.

— *Mary, OK*



We are most thankful for your support of our work.

Have you considered remembering the Franciscan Friars in your estate plans?

You can leave a legacy through your will, life insurance, retirement plan, charitable remainder trust or other vehicle.

Your gift will play a crucial role in helping to secure our future while enabling the Friars to continue living the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to the vision of St. Francis of Assisi.

You may contact the Friar Works/Franciscan Ministry & Mission office at 513 721-4700 or friarworks@franciscan.org. We encourage you to consult with your tax advisor or attorney as well. We are pleased to work with them to fulfill your wishes.

Filling Souls

continued from page 2

After the meal, a candlelit prayer service was held. Everyone started with a lit candle and every 3.7 seconds one flame was extinguished representing one death. As the room darkened, it sent chills down the spine to know that so many people died of hunger in such a short amount of time.

Thanks to all our friends and volunteers who shared this evening with us. Special thanks to the following for helping to make this night possible:
Bramkamp Printing • Jane Bobel Graphic Design • Ron Rigler Michael Wilson Photography St. John Neumann Church



Fr. Jim chats with a guest.



Teen volunteers Claire and Charlie Bobel Fonner with event chairs Colleen Cushard and Barb Coyle.



Fr. Al shared his experiences working with the hungry and homeless through song.

When Fr. Max Langenderfer told me what his name meant, I thought he was kidding. It's certainly fitting. Langenderfer means "the tall man from the small village." Max is undeniably the tall man at 6'ft 6" and he grew up in the village of Glendale on the north side of Cincinnati. His life with the Franciscan friars began in 1960 at St. Bernard's Roger Bacon High School. It continued at Duns Scotus College in Southfield, MI, St. Anthony novitiate at Mt. Airy in Cincinnati and Holy Family novitiate, Oldenburg, IN. He was ordained in 1973.

After ordination Max was assigned to Bishop Luers High School in Ft. Wayne, IN. He left the USA in 1979 to be a missionary on Biliran Island in the eastern Visayas, Philippines.

Max actually discovered his missionary vocation in 1972 as a deacon in Chinle, AZ, on the Navaho reservation. "I was blessed to get to know the Navaho way of life through the family of Augusta Sandoval. I am still in contact with Augusta through her daughter Cecelia." For six summers Max substituted for friars and visited almost

every friary in New Mexico and Arizona.

In 1986 he volunteered for the O.F.M. Africa Project, a new way of doing missions through international and intercultural fraternities, with emphasis on formation of African Franciscans. He arrived in the small southern African country of Malawi in November, 1986.

In June of 1987, they moved the postulancy and novitiate to a small village in the hills of Dowa appropriately named Imfayatonse, "we will all die."



Fr. Max and parishioners

They built mud brick houses with grass roofs. His diet was corn meal, pumpkin leaves, and beans. It was as close as they could get to a traditional African style of life. No vehicle, only one Honda motorbike which was his salvation. However, the young men who joined wanted to go to school, not live in a village.

In September 1992, Max arrived in Nairobi, Kenya, to a new job in a new fraternity as Provincial Treasurer. He stayed in that job for 14 years. There was some pastoral work: Sunday Masses at Kenya High, a national girls' high school and one of the best in Kenya.

When he returned to Kenya in 2007, he took up itinerant preaching in the form of classes in Franciscan Mission History and Spirituality for Franciscan sisters' formation programs in Kehancha, Wanguru, Kikuyu, Kapsabet, and Langata, Kenya

In 2010, Fr. Max left Africa and is now serving as pastor at St. Joseph parish in Savanna-la-Mar, Jamaica.

Life as an Air Force Chaplain Requires Constant Adjustments

By Bob Bruno, O.F.M.



Fr. Bob

Balancing prayer and fraternity in pastoral ministry as a chaplain in the Air Force Chaplain Corps has been a challenge of constant adjustments. Each of my 15 tours of duty were defined by a different set of circumstances.

The challenges and needs of a youthful faith community continuously impacted by the demands of national defense has kept the daily pace of life brisk and unpredictable.

Given that backdrop, and being a morning person, it's natural for me to begin each day in the quiet solitude of prayer around 4:45 a.m. Daily Mass at the Academy is at 7 p.m. Without those anchors, a day of constant activity is off-balance from the beginning.

Fraternity is most often generated by inputs of sincere welcome and warm hospitality. Wherever I am, I want the institution I am a part of to reflect a warm and welcoming posture. The chaplain corps is a natural counter balance to a culture that by mission requirement is rigid in discipline. I love being in the lead position to set that tone, and it is amazing how contagious that tone becomes.

In the Chaplain Corps of the United States Navy, the senior ranking captain is known as the Gray Shepherd. I have adopted that title as my own, being the Air Force Chaplain Corps' Gray Shepherd for the past six or so years. It's like being the elder statesman of a tribe who gets called for seasoned advice. It's a role I relish, as someone with more years behind him than ahead of him setting up those who have more years ahead for success. In a context of denominational pluralism, now to include secularists, non-theists and free thinkers, this has been an awesome experience of pastoral ministry and leadership.



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'I've grown up' in Jamaica

Moving On

By Toni Cashnelli

When tourists took Br. Richard Goodin to dinner at a fancy resort, "I didn't feel comfortable," he says. After a year of ministry in Negril, Jamaica, "I identified more with the hustlers walking the beach." When away from the soup kitchen, "I wondered what was going on with Jerry, a guy who's pretty stoned and going down the wrong path."

Reflecting on his year in Jamaica, Richard is fairly sure he fulfilled his objectives. "I definitely expected to grow up as a Friar Minor, as a Catholic, as an American. I think I've grown up tremendously in all those aspects. I've grown up as a Catholic because I took my Catholicity to the streets," where he coordinated St. Anthony's Kitchen. "I didn't have the safety of a seminary to chat about some lofty idea or the safety of a Friary where you're on my turf. I didn't even have the safety of a church." His milieu was "in the streets, at the Kitchen, in the grocery stores—not in church. That's where I work best, right off the cuff, staring the issue in the face."

His mission in Jamaica was "to discern my Solemn Profession commitment. I think I did that. I said Yes to the Province, the Province said Yes to me, now I'm officially gonna make solemn profession [Aug. 27 at St. Clement]." He came with no preconceived ideas. "I didn't know what I was gonna do on a daily basis. I had been to Jamaica briefly as a tourist, a spring break college kid. It's different than a monk running a soup kitchen." Adapting to the methods and styles of the friars at Mary, Gate of Heaven, "I did what I was told to do, and all my energy went into fitting in. I became the boundary guy, the rule enforcer. That helps balance our tremendously open response to the poor here."

Asked how he is perceived by Jamaicans, Richard says his visiting parents were told, "He's a very

good guy, very stern, very disciplined (that's a compliment).' They like my enthusiasm and [the fact that] I want to know their culture. The 'Rastas' like that I grew my hair out; they call me 'Rasta' up and down the beach. I don't mess with them, I don't ask about their drug habits. I care about whether they're happy or sad. Parishioners like me because I listen to them. I'm a white man, not a Jamaican, and I take their opinion highly. People have told me I have an inspiring story, being a rich kid and becoming a friar."

He says he will most remember "my Jamaica grandmas," three women at the soup kitchen who taught him Patois and the skills he needed to make things happen in a time-challenged, "soon come" society. He will miss walks on the beach, fruit from the yard, the breeze from the sea. "You can't talk about the sunshine enough," he says. "I think it's one reason people [despite their troubles] can smile every day. It adds a whole different character to the day." In Jamaica, "You get to live in summer all year long. Island life helps an American escape from some of the cages we naturally grow up in: cell phones, technology, TV, movies, media, calendars, clocks. Here, all that stuff can just melt off."

But in many ways, Jamaica is a prisoner of its past. "It is a third-world country. It is a poor nation, a broke nation and profoundly shaped by slavery. The 'thieving'

is hard to deal with. Everyone will steal from you. There is no moral code around the idea of stealing."

This "radical" experience in some ways parallels his walking pilgrimage across Virginia in 2009, and the same questions apply: "How can I go back to school and be a student and do it in a very radical way without pushing it too hard?" In the sane, safe environment of education, he'll need to work on "how to be creative, how to keep myself interesting." With eight Postulants set to arrive and five headed for novitiate, Richard looks forward to the influx of youth in the province. "We need to create a culture for the youthful Friar Minor," he says. "I'd like to be a part of that."

Thanks to his experience in Jamaica, "I seem to be more interested in who we are and how can we authenticate and purify our way of life so people out there have an option" in deciding what to do with their lives.

"I've learned a lot here. I think I'm starting to grow into my Franciscan values."



Br. Richard distributes First Holy Communion to a young parishioner he trained in the sacraments.



Br. Richard talks about life in Jamaica at the Fill Their Bowl, Fill Your Soul event.



Fr. Jim Bok receives Br. Richard's renewal of profession ("until the time of my solemn profession").



Ali, Stephanie, Steve, Kathy and Adam in Jamaica.

an amazing experience for all of us. We will never forget it. We went with our two daughters, Ali and Stephanie, and son, Adam. We also went with another family and a woman from our parish. It opened our eyes and changed our lives! We witnessed the warmth of the Jamaican people, as well as the dire poverty that afflicts the majority of them. We also witnessed the resolve of the Franciscans to minister to them, not only spiritually, but physically. Their determination to provide the basic necessities of life – food, clothing, shelter and unconditional love – consume their daily lives and they continue that mission tirelessly. It was heartwarming to witness and humbling to be a part of.

I heard that you wanted to do something to raise funds for the missions and decided on a garage sale. How did that all come about?

We returned from our trip determined and committed to continue to aid the Franciscans in their mission to help the beautiful people of Jamaica. We would keep them in our prayers and send donations when we could but we wanted to be able to help on a larger scale. With the agreement of our “mission team” and the support of our pastor and parish community, we raised almost \$2000 with the garage sale!

What would be the most important reasons for you to support the Franciscans?

The most important reasons for us to support the Franciscans is their commitment to and the love they have for the least of God’s children. When we were in Jamaica we were privileged to witness this first hand. Fr. Jim with his brothers, Tom and Richard, tirelessly minister to the people of Mary Gate of Heaven Church as well as anyone they come upon along the way or who finds their way to their doorstep. The spirit of St. Francis lives on in these men. The need continues around the world and with our help their work can continue.

Monthly Giving

Consider joining the group of people already committed to monthly giving by having your gift automatically charged to your credit card every month. For more information or to sign up, call 513-721-4700, visit www.stanthony.org or fill out the form below. Send the form to: Friar Works, 1615 Vine Street, Ste 1, Cincinnati, OH 45202-6492

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by Colleen Cushard

Kathy and Steve Doll

How did you and your family get involved with the Franciscans?

Our initial association with the Franciscans began in 1989 when our oldest son, Eric, attended Roger Bacon High School. Fr. Jim Bok was principal at the time and a lifelong friendship began. Nine children and 23 years later, our friendship has deepened as well as our involvement.

Tell me a little about your mission trip to Negril, Jamaica.

The mission trip to Negril last summer was an amazing experience for all of us. We will never forget it. We went with our two daughters, Ali and Stephanie, and son, Adam. We also went with another family and a woman from our parish. It opened our eyes and changed our lives! We witnessed the warmth of the Jamaican people, as well as the dire poverty that afflicts the majority of them. We also witnessed the resolve of the Franciscans to minister to them, not only spiritually, but physically. Their determination to provide the basic necessities of life – food, clothing, shelter and unconditional love – consume their daily lives and they continue that mission tirelessly. It was heartwarming to witness and humbling to be a part of.

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Vision Statement

The friars of St. John the Baptist Province are members of the Order of Friars Minor, a Franciscan brotherhood founded in the 13th century by St. Francis of Assisi. We serve the People of God as Catholic brothers and priests, devoting our lives to the search for God in a communal life of poverty, prayer, and service to others.

FRIARWORKS

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