Fr. Colin King, far right, and a team of committed volunteer dental professionals pose for a photo after a long day of providing care to local Jamaicans. Fr. Colin has established a critically-needed health and dental clinic in Jamaica that serves rural communities. See page 3 to learn more.
Dear Friends,

Have you been able to find more time in your life for prayer this Lent? Like many of you, I followed the Lenten booklet, Lent with Maximilian Kolbe, Daily Reflections, written by Carol Ann Morrow from Franciscan Media.

What a truly inspiring saint of modern times. People tell me how much they enjoy the daily reflections and learning about the saints. We love the feedback, but we need your help.

Could you let us know who you would like to see featured in future booklets? Do you have a favorite saint? We can't make any promises, but it would be very helpful in our planning.

You can send an email to friarworks@franciscan.org or call us at 513-721-4700 and ask for Dan or Colleen. You can also send your suggestion to Friar Works at 1615 Vine St., Cincinnati, OH 45202. We would like to hear from you.

Wishing you a Happy Easter, the day for sharing and spreading love all around the world

God Bless you.

Fr. John Bok, OFM, Friar Works Co-Director
The Holy Spirit in Jamaica

It's hard to believe that it has been almost three years since Fr. Colin's ordination to the priesthood in June of 2017! About two years ago, Fr. Colin began the monumental task of creating a medical clinic in Jamaica to provide much-needed health and dental care to the people in the rural communities the friars serve.

The clinic—complete with exam rooms—is now built and has been up and running. It is the only source of medical care that many of the Jamaican people can feasibly receive, as hospitals are far away, often cost prohibitive, and require transportation that many don't have.

“The sad reality is that the Jamaican people are suffering, and the clinic is one way that we can provide some relief, help, and sometimes life-saving measures,” says Fr. Colin.

Since it was first opened, about ten medical mission groups have generously volunteered their time and services to staff the clinic and help patients in various capacities. Recently, a group of doctors visited from North Carolina and donated supplies, such as aspirin and gauze.

Dentists Without Borders has been twice, too. On their last visit, they saw over 350 students over a three-day period. Sadly, tooth decay at a young age is a problem in Jamaica, but one that Fr. Colin is trying to combat with prevention and education.

IT IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF MEDICAL CARE THAT MANY OF THE JAMAICAN PEOPLE CAN FEASIBLY RECEIVE...

Fr. Colin explains that while they’ve come a long way and accomplished quite a bit, there’s still more to be done. He would like to hire a nurse to staff the clinic a few days per week (in between visits from mission groups) so that the clinic remains open on a regular basis. He also hopes to expand the clinic in the future so that it has the capacity to take on more groups and patients. Currently, if there is overflow, they utilize extra space in the church.

Another future goal is to provide comprehensive women’s health services, such lifesaving preventative screenings for women.

Fr. Colin also wants to create a separate pharmacy dispensary where people can get medication. Imagine not having access to the pharmacies that we have here in America! If we feel sick, we can pick up some cold medicine at the nearest grocery store. The people in Jamaica do not have that luxury.

The clinic currently needs donations of basic medication, such as cold medicine and over-the-counter pain relievers and fever reducers. It can be a challenge for the medications to go through customs quickly, though, so prayers are appreciated for speedy arrival!

Medical mission groups and charitable organizations are also needed to help staff the clinic during the year. It takes many months of paperwork prior to arrival, so please keep that timeframe in mind if your group is considering a trip. Equipment donations are always needed and appreciated.

Fr. Colin explains that it’s been a difficult journey to get where they are today, but that they couldn’t have done it without the incredibly generous support of benefactors and volunteers near and far, for which they are grateful. Jamaicans have donated their time and talents, people have sent donations from all over the world, and many groups have visited to physically help.

“It’s amazing how the Holy Spirit works,” says Fr. Colin. “We’ve been blessed with what we need when we needed it most. We started with nothing and now we are able to help the community in a capacity we never have before.”

If you are interested in supporting the friars’ medical clinic or would like to plan a medical mission trip, please contact Colleen Cushard at ccushard@franciscan.org or 513-721-4700, ext. 3219.

Setting up the dental clinic for the day.
Are you confused about novenas? If so, you are not alone. We receive plenty of emails and calls from people who are concerned that they are not praying the novena the “right” way. Sometimes, they sheepishly ask, “What exactly is a novena?”

A novena is one of the oldest and most remarkable traditions of faith. It is a series of Catholic prayers that you consistently pray over nine weeks, nine days, or nine hours. Why nine? “Novena” is derived from the Latin word novem, meaning nine. I remember Br. Gene Mayer, OFM, telling me that his mother used to set the timer on the stove for the top of every hour for nine hours to say her novenas.

You may pray to obtain special graces, to plead special favors, or make special petitions, but the idea is to do it consistently over nine weeks, nine days, or nine hours. Novenas usually have more of an urgency or need. No fixed rules need to be set for making a novena, other than to persevere in prayer.

Join the Franciscans and thousands of others as we begin the Solemn Novena to St. Anthony on April 14. We will recite these powerful prayers each Tuesday until the novena ends on June 9. We will celebrate the Feast of St. Anthony on June 13.

For over 130 years, pilgrims have visited the National Shrine of St. Anthony on Tuesdays to pray the novena at the 2:30 p.m. service and 7 p.m. Mass.

You can visit StAnthony.org/PrayNovena to sign up to receive weekly email reminders (complete with audio options) that include everything you need to know about praying the novena with us.

You can also send us your prayer intentions and we will place them at the National Shrine of St. Anthony.

YOU ARE INVITED!
At our provincial office, the friars and staff are loyal St. Anthony followers, just like you. We pray for St. Anthony’s intercession on a regular basis for items lost, failing health of loved ones, upcoming surgeries, needs of the poor, and anything else you might imagine. This story is from one of our own.

“In Bless St. Anthony, I just love the way he works in my life.”

I am the accountant for the province and many of the financial records I deal with are on a recurring monthly basis. Some of this monthly information is kept on index cards that have been passed down to me from previous accountants, records going back for decades. Every month, on the 25th, I take out those cards from my file box and write checks or other tasks pertaining to them.

A few months ago, on the 25th, I went to my file box, but they weren’t there. That’s when I remembered that the last time I saw the cards I was holding them as I was leaving the office and just threw them on my desk. My mother has a very strong devotion to St. Anthony, so I find that if I ask for his help by invoking her, he is especially responsive.

Kind of half-heartedly I said, “Oh, for heaven’s sake. St. Anthony, my mom says you can find anything, will you please help me find those cards?” and looked around my desk again, but no cards. Because I had to get the checks out that day, the 25th, I spent a great deal of time finding the information through other sources.

Over the following weeks I searched everywhere. Every drawer, every file, every stack of paper, even in cabinets I rarely use, but those cards did not appear. When the 25th came around, I again had to spend more time finding the information for the checks.

On the 20th of the next month, when the cards still hadn’t appeared, I realized that I may need to recreate a whole new set of cards, which would be very time consuming. I emphatically said out loud, “St. Anthony, if you are going to help me find these cards it needs to be now.” I stepped away from my desk for a minute. When I got back to my desk, my eyes went right to a funny bump-up of my desk calendar. I picked up the edge of the calendar and there were my original set of cards!

Thank you, St. Anthony!
**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.

**Lenten Reflections Series 2020**

Join us for the third presentation in our Lenten Reflections Series 2020, as Fr. Murray Bodo, OFM, presents St. Francis and the Cross at the St. Anthony Shrine, 5000 Colerain Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45223. Presentation begins at 7:00 p.m on April 8. Fr. Murray is a delightful speaker and the author of the well-known book, *Francis: The Journey and the Dream*, published by Franciscan Media. For more information about Fr. Murray’s books and poems, visit his website at murraybodo.com

**IS GOD CALLING YOU TO BECOME A FRIAR?**

More Information

becomeafriar@franciscan.org

Call or text Br. Tim Lamb at 513-218-3547

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**WE’VE UPDATED OUR PLANNED GIVING ORGANIZER**

The changes were minor, but we think it is easier to follow. This organizer still allows you to give thoughts to your personal wishes in calm recognition of the inevitable. Have you ever shared with anyone which readings you would like at your funeral? How about what music you would like? Where will your family find your important documents?

We know this isn’t one of the easiest things you will ever do, but we think you will agree that this booklet will make things less stressful for your family during a devastating time.

To receive your free copy, contact:

Colleen Cushard

friarworks@franciscan.org

513-721-4700

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