

Mercy Notes

A NEWSLETTER OF THE FRANCISCAN COMMUNITY OF MERCY

General Chapter 2015

On February 11, 2015, the Franciscan Community of Mercy will gather at The Bosque Center in Albuquerque, NM to experience the Order's General Chapter.

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Stories from the Vineyard

The Franciscan Community of Mercy welcomes the Franciscans of Las Cruces to the Order as we enter a new phase of the Order's growth and development.

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And the Lord Gave Me Brothers...

Fr. Jason C. Lody, FCM ~ Minister General

The Franciscan Community of Mercy, a religious Order that is part of the American National Catholic Church, is a dynamic collection of men and women across the United States who seek to live in the footsteps of Christ as modeled in the way of St. Francis of Assisi. We often describe our Order as "religious life re-envisioned" because we live out our Franciscan vocation in ways that reflect our unique skills and way of life. Yes, you can be married or non-ordained, a man, or a woman, and still fully embrace the Franciscan vocation. We



A celebration of community, an experience of growth!

do not live in community which greatly expands our reach to those in need. We've seen tremendous growth in our community and vocation inquiries continue to come in as people see our community members in action and desire to be part of this

great movement within the Church. For the past five years I've been blessed to serve the community as the elected Minister General and the successes of our community are a direct result of the Holy Spirit working within the men and women of our Order. St. Francis was not perfect and the good news is we're not expected to be perfect either. We're expected to be our best and try our hardest to live the Gospel life we profess. As you read through our newsletter and share in this witness, I invite you to enter into a prayerful dialogue with the Divine and rejoice in His goodness so that the Lord may continue to bless us with brothers and sisters!

Pax et Bonum! Fr. Jason, fcm

COMMUNITY NEWS

The people in darkness have seen a great light...the Lord of our longing has conquered the night!

VOCATIONS...

The Vocations Office of the Franciscan Community of Mercy remains a busy and exciting place! There has been great interest in the community since its foundation and there is no indication that any slowing down will be seen in the near future. The vocations ministry remains dedicated to fostering a discerning and intentional process where inquirers and the community alike move in a deliberate and prayerful approach.

The process used for application and screening of inquirers and candidates is aligned with the process in place with the American National Catholic Church and remains effective, thorough, and fair for all parties involved. Above all else, the community seeks sincere, prayerful and holy friars and sisters. The vocations ministry is committed to helping to welcome these future friars and sisters into the Franciscan Community of Mercy.

GENERAL CHAPTER 2015...

On February 11, 2015, members of the Order will gather in Albuquerque, NM for General Chapter. In the Franciscan tradition, a General Chapter is a blend of spiritual and business development so that all members of the Order can share in the strategic growth and planning necessary for continued success. The theme of this year's General Chapter is "Inner Poverty: The Admonitions of St. Francis." The spiritual development will be driven by the Admonitions of St. Francis among other writings. The business development will focus on Order communications, vocation outreach, finances, and expanding our ministerial opportunities.

We invite you to pray for us with our Order as we gather for this very important opportunity to build community, nourish our souls, and renew our Franciscan Spirit! Saints Francis and Clare, Pray for Us!



Welcome Friar John Bye-Torre, FCM!

In July of this past summer, we witnessed Friar John Bye-Torre transfer his final vows from a previous Franciscan community. This transfer was done in the presence of the Las Cruces FCM community and the parish community of Holy Family ANCC. Friar John will be ordained to the Diaconate on Sunday, February 15, 2015 at Holy Family ANCC. Friar John, may the Lord continue the good work that He has begun in you! Friar John also serves as Secretary to the Presiding Bishop of the ANCC.



NEW JERSEY

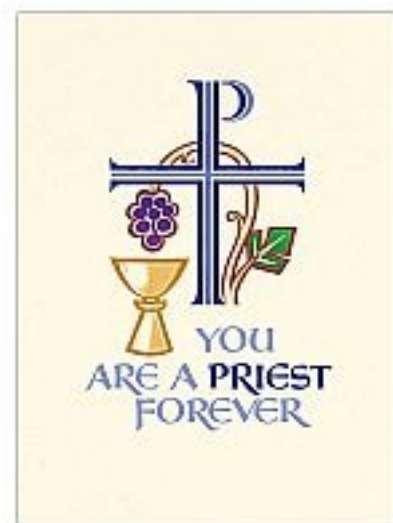
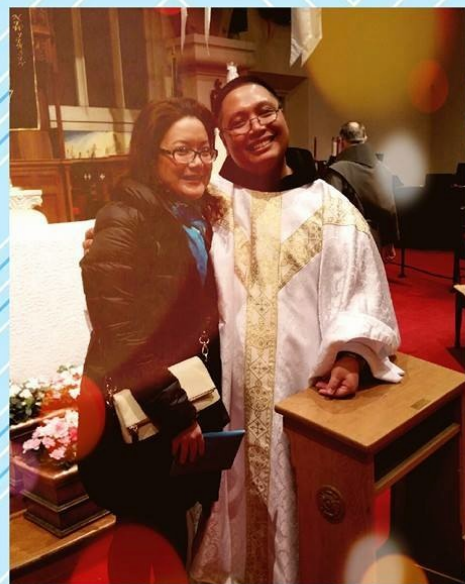
By the grace of God and with the affirmation of the people, the Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM, Presiding Bishop of the American National Catholic Church ordained our brother, Geety Reyes, FCM to the priesthood. Friar Geety's ordination took place on Saturday, January 3, 2015 at 11:00am. The ordination ceremony took place at St. Francis of Assisi parish in Glen Ridge, NJ.

LAS CRUCES

The parish community of Holy Family ANCC continues to minister to the faithful in Las Cruces, NM. The FCM community at Holy Family works hard to be visible signs of God's mercy and unconditional love, particularly ministering to those who otherwise feel excluded from or pushed out by their institutional churches. Fr. James Lehman, FCM serves as pastor of the parish and oversees the local FCM community.

FORMATION

Fr. Anthony Lipari, a priest of the ANCC ministering in New Jersey, was invested in the habit of our Order in July 2014. With this investiture, Fr. Anthony joins our other novices in preparing for the profession of first vows. The process of novitiate lasts one year and we look forward to announcing Fr. Anthony's profession in the Summer of 2015. Our community now has three novices preparing for first profession. All members of the FCM formation community gather for formal Franciscan studies weekly and these classes are led by Friar George Lucey, FCM, our community's Director of Formation. Please pray for all of our men and women who are in formation and discerning a vocation with our Order.



GENERAL CHAPTER 2015

Inner Poverty: The Admonitions of St. Francis

Lord,

As we prepare to celebrate the FCM General Chapter, look upon your entire Franciscan family who place their trust in you.

Lord, may every sister and every brother who participates in this General Chapter be open to listening in faith to the voice of the Spirit and accept your Word, as did your servant St. Francis.

Lord, grant to all chapter members, prudence in judgment, wisdom in discernment and foresight in planning for the future of the Franciscan Community of Mercy.

Lord, may we all feel the presence of your mother, and our mother, the Immaculate Virgin, so that the work of the chapter may be fruitful and a courageous witness to our love for you and for all human beings.

Lord, through the example and intercession of St. Francis, help us to live every decision of the chapter, going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel, and always keeping our eyes fixed on your Crucified Son.

Amen.



From The Rule and Life of the Franciscan Community of Mercy...

Chapter VII: Fraternal Love

23. Because God loves us, the brothers and sisters should love each other, for the Lord says, "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12). Let them manifest their love in deeds (cf 1 Jn 3:18). Also whenever they meet each other, they should show that they are members of the same family. Let them make known their needs to one another. Blessed are they who love another who is sick and seemingly useless, as much as when that brother or sister is well and of service to them. Whether in sickness or in health, they should only want what God wishes for them. For all that happens to them let them give thanks to our Creator.