

SPRING 2022 • VOL.27, NO.1

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# **The Way** of St. Francis



# Encounter

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THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS PROVINCE OF SAINT BARBARA

# Prayer, Fraternity, Joy, Service

The Franciscan Friars of the Province of Saint Barbara are members of a Roman Catholic religious order, from a diversity of backgrounds and cultures, dedicated to serving the poor and promoting justice, peace, care of creation, and reconciliation in the joyful and prophetic spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.

★ ★ ★

## **The Way** of Saint Francis      SPRING 2022 • VOL.27, NO.1

*The Way of St. Francis* is a free publication, for those who provide time, treasure, and talent to the Franciscan friars, Province of St. Barbara (OFM). We appreciate your support, and welcome your comments. Address letters to the editor or any other questions to *The Way of St. Francis*, 1500 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Oakland, CA 94601 or email us at [TheWay@sbofm.org](mailto:TheWay@sbofm.org).

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★ ★ ★



**ON THE COVER:** At sunset, Friar Robert Brady reaches to touch the cross atop Grotto Hill at San Xavier del Bac Mission, on the Tohono O'odham St. Xavier reservation, at the southern tip of Tucson, Arizona, in the Sonoran Desert.

Photo courtesy of Peter Jordan

[www.sbfranciscans.org](http://www.sbfranciscans.org)



inside

# Encounter



## FEATURES

- 10 on the cover  
Culture of Encounter  
**Keith Douglass Warner, OFM**
- 14 common ground  
Gather and Listen  
**Daniel Barica, OFM**
- 18 prayer  
Litany of the Holy Spirit  
**Richard Rohr, OFM**
- 20 concerning care  
St. Clare's Care  
**John Feister**
- 24 friar's life  
Greetings From Guaymas  
**Adolfo R. Mercado, OFM**

## DEPARTMENTS

- 4 dear friends
- 5 calendar
- 6 along the way
- 7 donor profile
- 8 snapshot
- 30 at last





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dear friends

# Peace & all good!

**We've devoted this issue of *The Way* to listening.** I suppose I should stop speaking right there! Seriously, though, our Church worldwide is in the midst of a two-year listening session, spelled out a bit in Fr.

Keith Douglass Warner's article on p. 10.

It's got a fancy name, the Synod on Synodality. You could interpret those words as, "coming together to listen," and listen in perhaps a new way. The heart of it can be wrapped up in a few words from Pope Francis: "Our journey of listening to one another can be an authentic experience of discerning the voice of the Holy Spirit." Where we go from there is a journey of faithfulness and discovery.

Our fellow friar and beloved friend Richard Rohr contributed a Litany of the Holy Spirit from one of his earlier works to be a centerpiece of sorts to this issue. We have other features on the pillars of this Synod: communion, participation, and mission.

We are *together*. We all *have a part to play*. We all are *called to mission*, preaching the good news in word, in charity, in works of justice. In this issue, we've tried to highlight some ways we—our friars and supporters—are living up to those challenges in a Franciscan spirit.

During Lent this year, we have nothing but hope for a future when we are maskless and in closer community with one another. After this 2-plus year retreat of sorts—if you could call it that—may we reemerge and reenergize in an Easter of gospel spirit. That's the work of the Holy Spirit, where we are loving one another sharing with one another, *listening*, as we sing at our Easter Vigil, with hearts "ablaze with light."

God bless,

**Fr. David Gaa, OFM**

Minister Provincial, Province of St. Barbara

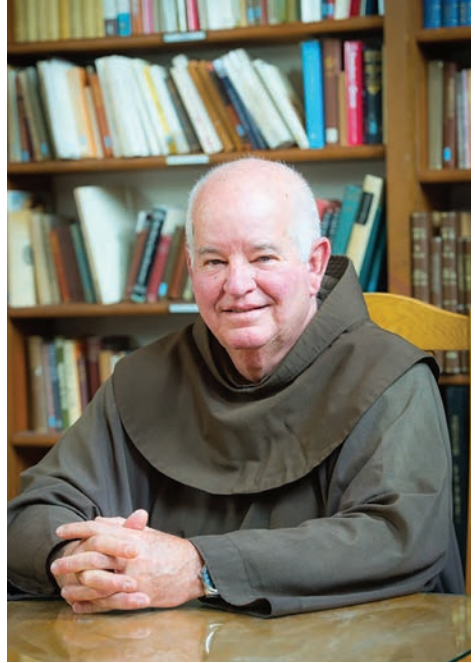


Photo: @www.peterjordanphoto.com

# calendar



Photo: Bradley Tuel, OFM

**San Damiano Retreat**  
**Danville, California**  
**sandamiano.org**  
**925-837-9141**

## ***Emerging from the Pandemic: 5-week Series on Addictions***

**Sundays, 3/6–4/3**

**Facilitators:**

**Jim Greer & Jan Stegner**

You are invited to attend any or all weeks: Excessive work (3/6), Food addiction (3/13), Internet addiction (3/20), Substance abuse/addiction: alcohol, prescription drugs, or other substances (3/27), codependency on spouses, relatives, friends, or others (4/3). Each session begins with a box lunch at 1 p.m. and ends at 4 p.m.

## ***Be Still: Introduction to Christian Meditation***

**3/12, 10 a.m.**

**Facilitators: Donna Lack &  
Teresa Cheung**

## ***Retirement & Purposeful Aging: What's Next in My Life?***

**3/25–26, 2 p.m. (in-person)**

**Facilitator: Jim Briggs**

As you think about your retirement years and move into this next chapter of your life, this retreat will explore the benefits

and joys as well as the challenges and concerns ahead. How do we live this stage of our life well and see aging as a blessing?

## ***Monthly Book Series: Reflections on the Inner Life by Joyce Rupp***

**4/5, 10 a.m. (Zoom)**

**Facilitator: Kathy Miranda, MA**

## ***Divine Love: A Retreat for Women***

**4/8–10, 3 p.m.**

**Facilitator: Colette Lafia**

Bring a friend, mother, sister and step into the sanctuary of community, as we open our hearts to the infinite flow of God's love. In this retreat, Colette Lafia will draw from her new book, the *Divine Heart*, and explore seven transformative ways of putting divine love at the center of your life—receptivity, delight, expansiveness, vulnerability, acceptance, mystery, and gratitude.

## ***Holy Triduum Retreat***

**4/14–16**

**Facilitators: Laura Woodworth-  
Gibson & Jim Gibson**

Experience the Holy Triduum (Holy Thursday evening, Good Friday & Saturday's Easter Vigil) as one continuous journey end-

ing in Christ's triumphant resurrection. The retreat begins on Holy Thursday and concludes with brunch on Easter Sunday.

## ***Fourth Step Recovery Retreat***

**4/22–24, 3 p.m.**

**Facilitator:**

**Fr. Anthony Garibaldi, OFM**

The goal of this Fourth Step Retreat is to provide a time and safe space for a person to take this important step on their recovery journey. This Fourth Step Retreat is open to members of any 12-Step group (AA, NA, OA, etc.). In order to remain anonymous, you will not be asked to identify your particular group.

## ***Married Couples Retreat***

**5/20–22**

**Facilitators: Karla & Richard  
Obernesser, Fr. Rusty Shaugh-  
nessy, OFM**

Join us for a weekend filled with fun, laughter, and connection. We will redefine life-giving love and enrich the Golden Rule ("Do unto others as you would have them do unto you") by beginning with YOU.

*continued on page 28*

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## along the way

### **Ablaze with Light**

By Dan Lackie, OFM

On the morning of December 21, I sat on the front steps of Old Mission Santa Barbara with the memory of a song strumming my heart: “Dear one, the world is waiting for the sunrise.” Composed in the aftermath of World War I, it was a favorite of my friend and confrere, the late Father Christian Mondor, a man of true and vivid hope.

I was waiting for the sunrise on that solstice morning with a small group preparing to enter the church, with Father Larry Gosselin leading us in prayer.

Constructed 200 years ago, the building itself was waiting for the sunrise. Like a number of California missions, it was constructed with a solstice window to coordinate its interior light with the light of the sun, a design detail drawn from Chumash culture. At sunrise on solstice the sun illuminates the image of Mary above the altar to the left and slowly moves across the reredos linking all creation to the divine action in the sanctuary, inviting all into the fullness of Christ.



Photo: Paul Wellman

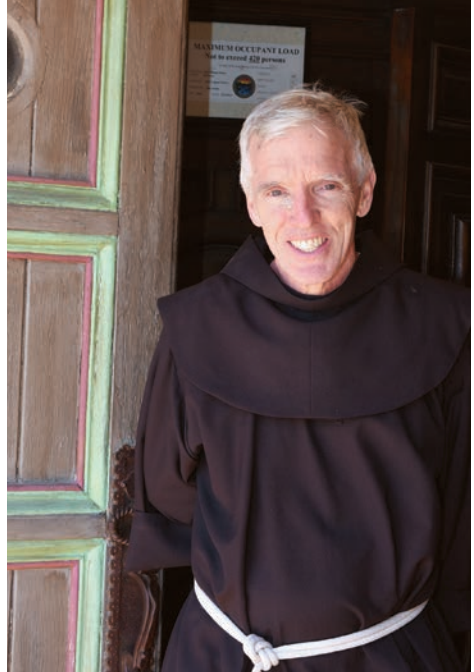


Photo: John Feister

Perhaps the most striking scene is when the sun’s ray comes directly up the center aisle and spotlights the tabernacle. It’s awe-inspiring now, even as it surely was a thrilling, transcendent moment in a time before spotlights.

As I watched the horizon I knew, as I suppose we all did at that point, that the famous window was not going to work its magic quite so dramatically this year, not with this blanket of gray clouds filling the sky. Undaunted, Father Larry spoke to us about the radiant dawn we were all waiting for, the dawn of an interior space, in our hearts.

Gazing into the darkness as the light did its best to break it open, we could see that the fulfillment was not going to come as we wanted or expected. Yet for those with the eyes to see there was beauty and peace—even music in the heart!

May that beauty and hope be yours this Easter! ❖

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*Father Dan Lackie, OFM, is pastor of St. Barbara Parish, Old Mission Santa Barbara, pictured on the left.*

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## donor profile

### Matthew and April Quilter

By Joe Ledbetter

Matthew Quilter had a defining moment early in his life that would eventually lead to a nearly 35-year relationship with the Franciscans. Born Irish, coming to the US as a child, by seventh grade he was looking toward religious life. "At that time, Irish tradition was, the eldest child would go to the religious," he recalls. "So, just like athletes talk to colleges, I went through and looked at all the orders and ministries."

Matthew ended up spending two years in an upstate New York seminary before returning to San Francisco to finish high school. He would earn his BA at Princeton and a law degree at the University of Pennsylvania.

Matthew once again returned to San Francisco, working the campaign trail with state senatorial candidate Barry Keen and then as a union organizer with the California State Law Enforcement Officers, and ultimately in business law. "When I was first practicing in the Bay Area, one of the senior partners was also Catholic and had been doing work helping the Franciscans," Matthew says. "He asked me to join in the effort. It's through this that I met Frs. Joe Chinnici and Mel Jurisich."

Legal service grew to deep friendship. During a trip to Rome in the early '90s, Fr. Mel connected Matthew to fellow Franciscan, Fr. Chris Tomatis. The two of them became fast friends. Matthew would later confide in Fr. Chris that he was going to propose to his future wife, April. Fr. Mel, at the last minute, officiated at Matthew and April's wedding.



Photo courtesy of Matthew and April Quilter

#### April and Matthew Quilter with Father Mel

The newlyweds honeymooned in Rome. (Fr. Chris welcomed them at the hotel when they arrived.) The couple's children, Fiona and Jarred, were baptized by Fr. Mel.

"There is just such great personal warmth," Matthew reflects on his nearly 35 years, both social and professional, with the Franciscans. "How do we support these people who wish to sustain and grow their relationship with Christ?" Along with other philanthropic activities, Matthew and April have been supporting the friars for a long time, usually giving once a year around the holidays. Then they decided to become bigger contributors throughout the year. "We realized that ministries need support year-round."

In particular, the Fraternal Care Trust appealed to them because it supports the older friars in retirement and the education of younger friars so that, as Matthew puts it, "*our* work is continued." His emphasis on the word *our* is apt, as Matthew recently became a Trustee for the Fraternal Care Trust. "What is so distinctive about the Franciscans is the people and outward, brotherly service," Matthew says. "It's

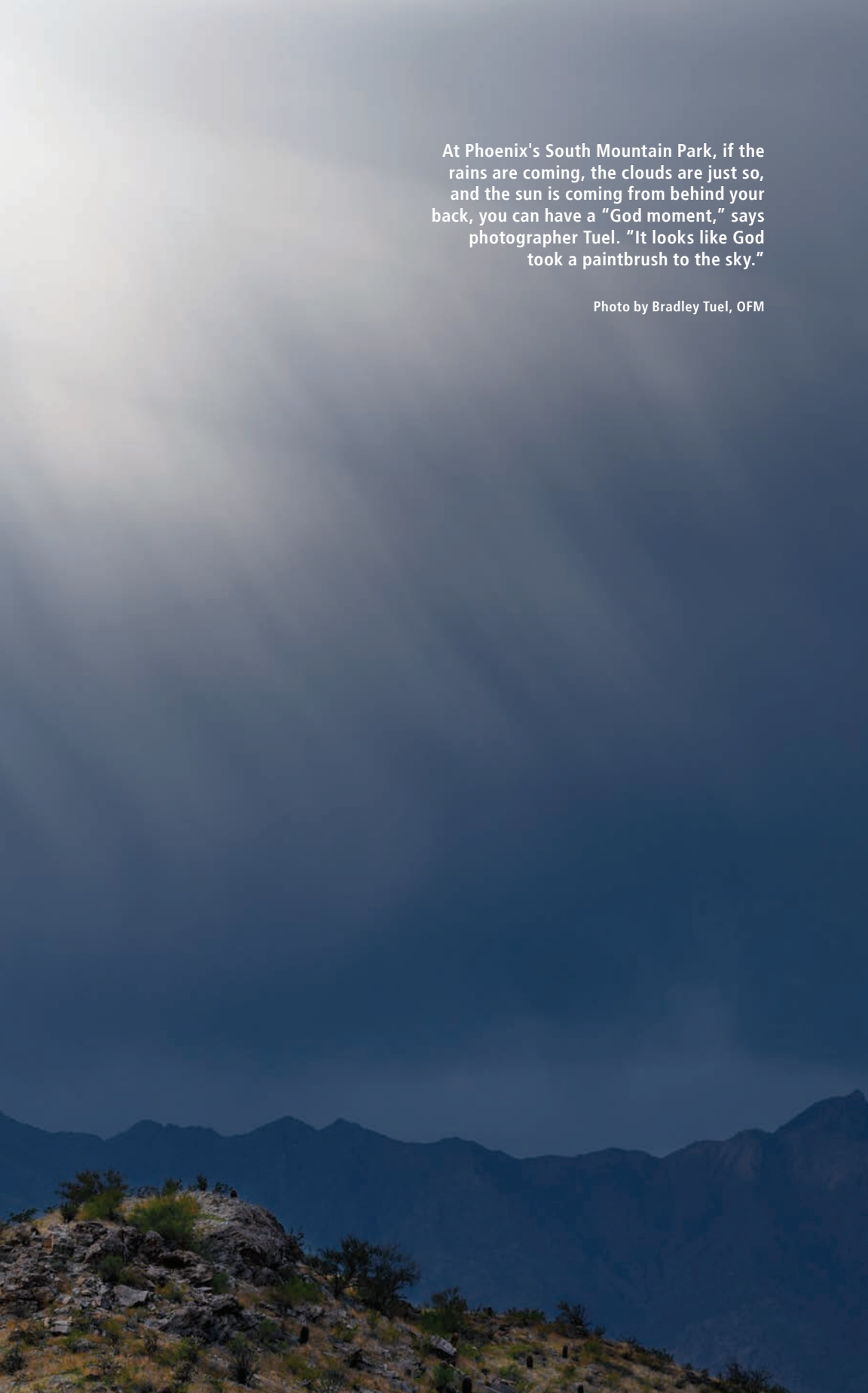
*continued on page 29*

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snapshot





A dramatic landscape photograph showing a rocky mountain peak in the foreground, covered with sparse desert vegetation. In the background, a range of blue-toned mountains stretches across the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and bright sunbeams (crepuscular rays) fan out from the upper left corner, creating a powerful and ethereal atmosphere.

At Phoenix's South Mountain Park, if the rains are coming, the clouds are just so, and the sun is coming from behind your back, you can have a "God moment," says photographer Tuel. "It looks like God took a paintbrush to the sky."

Photo by Bradley Tuel, OFM

# Culture of Encounter

BY KEITH DOUGLASS WARNER, OFM

We're in the midst of a two-year, churchwide listening session. Pope Francis is calling the Church into an unusual synod at this time because we, all of the Church, need to renew a basic skillset: listening, reflecting, acting. That is what the pope is speaking of when he promotes a "culture of encounter," a key phrase of his papacy. And if we start like St. Francis of Assisi, the pope's inspiration, we listen and reflect as widely as possible, to and with everything and everyone around us. Then we align our lives accordingly. Indeed, that spirit of St. Francis is driving this moment in the worldwide Church, more than it has since the 13th century.

Pope Francis uses *encounter* in two

primary senses. First, encounter is a keyword for contemporary spirituality, one that includes fostering social human development, that is, justice.

Its second sense is missionary: the culture of encounter is culture that continuously reaches out to all peoples, churning toward peace.

A Franciscan lens can help us to understand better and live this culture of encounter. Let's take a deeper look at these ways the pope challenges us to move beyond ourselves.

## Art of encounter

Pope Francis set the stage for this two-year synod back in 2020 with the encyclical he signed in Assisi's Basilica



Photo courtesy Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops

**Playful Pope Francis gestures to his student listeners, "I can't hear you!" His posture is a message to the Church: Listen more carefully to one another.**



Encounter is about respect, care, patience, solidarity. Here friar David Gaa talks with a St. Anthony's Dining Room guest in downtown San Francisco.

Photo courtesy of St. Anthony Foundation

of St. Francis at the grave of St. Francis. That document, *Fratelli Tutti*, takes its title from the Admonition of St. Francis that calls for a love “that transcends all boundaries.” In contemporary language, the title refers to a bond among all people.

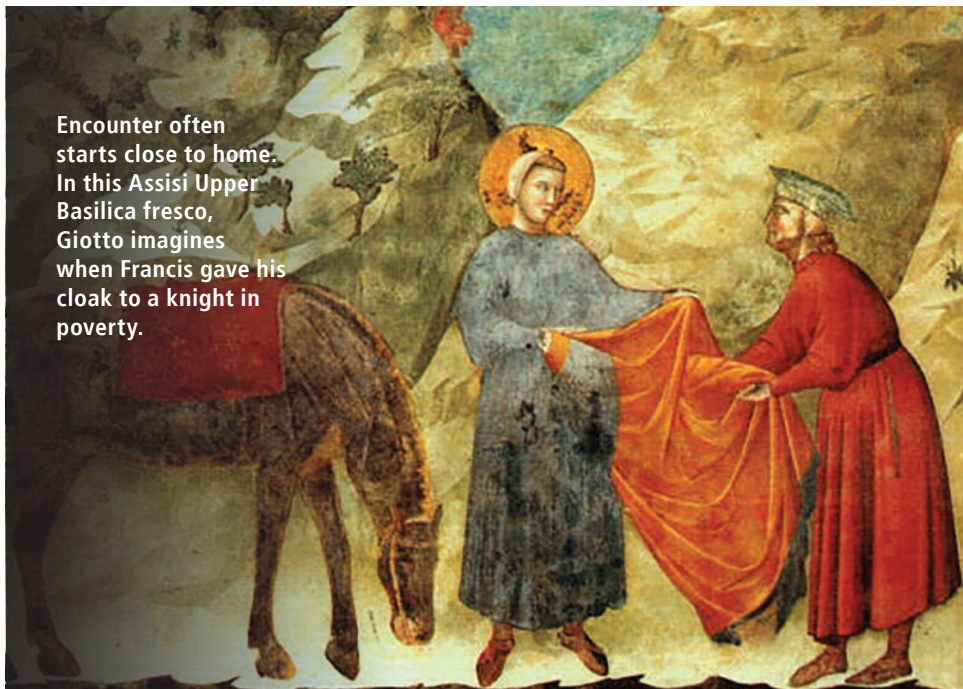
The best presentation of the pope’s spirituality of encounter, I think, is his discussion of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25–37) in chapter 2 of the encyclical itself. When I read it, I hear a Jesuit novice master leading a formation class about the parable, but also about how to creatively imagine ourselves in the position of the Samaritan or of the other characters. In brief, the parable’s encounter is one of mercy between a Samaritan and a Jew, an encounter of mercy that crosses social and political boundaries. This is the key for understanding encounter as a keyword for contemporary spirituality, a spirituality that fosters human social development everywhere.

The encounter itself opens up a whole roomful of meaning. “Life itself for all of its confrontations, is the art of encounter,” says the pope. He quotes here not the archaic Church documents that he and his writers know so well, but rather a Jesuit-trained Brazilian poet, Samba de Bencao, father of the Bossa Nova!

*“The parable’s encounter... crosses social and political boundaries. This is the key for understanding encounter as a keyword for contemporary spirituality.”*

It is the pope’s only cited source for the word. That in itself says something about “stepping outside of the boundaries” that being open to encounter demands.

Encounter often starts close to home. In this Assisi Upper Basilica fresco, Giotto imagines when Francis gave his cloak to a knight in poverty.



Legend of St. Francis: St. Francis Giving His Mantle to a Poor Man, by Giotto di Bondone

What are the traits of this encounter? First, the pope writes, is the ability to sit down and listen to others, to care, to welcome. We seek out points of contact to get to know others different from ourselves and to build bridges from our social reality to theirs. When we go about our business, we seek ways to include everyone. That humility, that respect, that spirit of hospitality is the key toward social reconciliation. It is the key to peace.

This approach is fundamentally

*"From the time he turned away from his selfish youth, St. Francis spent his life in a conversion journey, as an example for us to follow."*

aligned to the Church's missionary activity. We go out to others with mutuality, with respect, with, as the pope says, "the weapons of dialogue." Let us

teach our children, he says, the good fight of the culture of encounter! In that approach to mission, we place at the center of all of our activities the human person, who enjoys the highest dignity. We nurture respect for the *common* good. That, in itself, is not some preordained program; rather it is a process, an approach and reality that changes and conforms as we go.

If this seems to resonate with the spirit of our own St. Francis of Assisi, you're reading this correctly. From the time he turned away from his selfish youth, St. Francis spent his life in a conversion journey, as an example for us to follow.

Each of the famous episodes of St. Francis' life can be seen as icons, that is, images that form in us a point of prayer and understanding. Each represents an encounter of St. Francis, encounters that we can discover in our own life journey.

St. Bonaventure's biography of St. Francis presents these icons to us: a poor man, a noble knight, poor beggars, Jesus Christ at the crucifix of San Damiano, the bishop, the brothers, the



pope, Sister Clare, the birds, the sultan, the seraph. Obviously, exploring these is far beyond what we can do in this short article, but you can find tellings of each of these encounters easily enough.\* They are points of prayer and understanding for your own encounters.

These icons of the life of St. Francis will prepare you more fully for encounters with real people outside of your normal circles, perhaps, in your own community. As you open yourself to these situations of encounter, perhaps you can reflect and pray over the following questions: How do you listen? How CAN you listen? Who could you listen to that you might not ordinarily listen to? How do you create or participate in opportunities to listen?

Of course, these are not abstract things! Once we imagine some ways to start or to improve our listening, we must find ways to actually be with people outside of our normal circles. We can look to St. Francis for inspiration.

Remember, the culture of encounter that Pope Francis is asking of the

Church is a cycle of listening, reflection, and action. Listen, reflect, act. The result, if our hearts are open, is a more peaceful world, one where the swords literally are exchanged for “weapons of dialogue.” Social transformation into a world of justice—where we peaceably, respectfully, mutually build each other up—is the fruit of that encounter. ♦

\*Places to read about St. Francis’ encounters include *The Reluctant Saint*, by Donald Spoleto, and *Francis: the Journey and the Dream*, by Murray Bodo. For a great visual meditation, pray over depictions of St. Francis’ encounters in the Assisi basilica itself, at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Saint\\_Francis\\_cycle\\_in\\_the\\_Upper\\_Church\\_of\\_San\\_Francesco\\_at\\_Assisi](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Saint_Francis_cycle_in_the_Upper_Church_of_San_Francesco_at_Assisi).

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*Brother Keith Douglass Warner, OFM, serves as Chief Learning Officer at Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship, at Santa Clara University. He is a practical social ethicist in the Franciscan tradition.*



A volunteer steps out to turn the tables between poverty and plenty, to his neighbor’s delight. The volunteer will learn that his neighbor has something for him too.

Photo courtesy of St. Francis Center Instagram

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common ground

# Gather and Listen

BY DANIEL BARICA, OFM

This past October, Pope Francis launched a global model of gathering for the entire Catholic Church. What he is calling a synodal process will be a means to enhance communion, participation, and mission in the years ahead. Many dioceses and archdioceses have begun to implement this plan of bringing Catholics together for mutual listening, trusting that the Holy Spirit speaks through all of God's people, not just the hierarchy.

Here at Our Lady of the Angels, a Franciscan conventual church in the Diocese of Phoenix, we are poised to implement the Pope's synodal process. Our intent is to create a vision for our faith community derived from gathering and listening.

Although the faithful have been worshipping at the Casa since its founding 70 years ago, a new church building was erected four years ago to accommodate the growing numbers. Newly erected



**Fr. Daniel Barica preaches joyously at Our Lady of the Angels in Scottsdale. The synod is a moment when his congregation will listen closely to one another.**





Photo: ©www.peterfordphoto.com

**Members of Our Lady of the Angels Conventual Church are adjusting to all manner of change. The synod process will help open channels of listening.**

buildings, new leadership, new ways of worship and ministry introduced during the pandemic—all these are part of the changing landscape at the Franciscan Renewal Center. Many are left with questions: Who is the faith community now and what are their needs? How has the pandemic changed the ways and expectations of worship and ministry? What kind of Church is the Holy Spirit leading us to be?

All the entities and ministries at the Casa share a common mission: renewing lives through spiritual growth, healing, and transformation, with service to others. Having a mission helps groups define who they are and serves as a constant reminder of what their work/ministry is about. Having a vision, however, helps a group identify where they want to go. Currently, the Casa shares the broad vision of the St. Barbara Province of Franciscans.

After many years of pastoral leadership, I have come to learn how important a particular vision is in order to strategically plan, set goals, and measure movement forward. Success as a leader, for me, is measured through the

strategic steps we take on the journey toward realizing our vision.

Along the way, ideas will percolate from community members on what to do, yet to move forward, it is important to embrace only those that realize the vision. Consequently, it is much easier

*"All the entities and ministries at the Casa share a common mission: renewing lives through spiritual growth, healing, and transformation, with service to others."*

to let go of any idea, even a good one, that is not a step toward the vision.

Our local process of articulating a vision began last July when we asked community members to come to one of three listening sessions. There we all listened to what was on each other's minds and hearts and what gifts we all might offer to move forward as a community.

Among those who attended, 14 coun-



Photo courtesy of Dan Barica, OFM

The listenings at the Casa led to an advisory council, which in turn, will broaden the listening effort through a series of gatherings that will reach everyone.

cil members were chosen for an advisory council representing a diversity of ages, gifts, and experience. The first and most important task of the council will be to organize listening sessions for the entire

*“Having a clear, personal, and communal vision, one that aligns with the gospel, is a trustworthy way of navigating any challenge that life brings.”*

community. We seek to hear how the Holy Spirit is speaking through each one and where God may be inviting us to go as a faith community.

The listening sessions will be based on the Pope’s synodal process, gathering people in small groups, guided by prayer and several pointed questions. Facilitators will be assigned to guide the listening and to take note of what is being said. Comments will be pooled together under like-themes. From them we hope to weave together the threads for creating a vision, our North Star for strategic planning in the years ahead.

It is one thing to ponder how history will evaluate us but Christians believe that Christ is the ultimate judge. A global pandemic has brought the world to its knees and taken many victims, but there have also been opportunities for growth. Along the way, we have had to make choices for ourselves and for our communities. Have the baptized followers of Christ formed and informed themselves and their choices predominantly through the gospel?

Having a clear, personal, and communal vision, one that aligns with the gospel, is a trustworthy way of navigating any challenge that life brings. Faith communities will benefit greatly by coming together to listen, with love, to one another as a way of identifying a common, Christ-centered vision, if they don’t already have their own. It is a certain pathway for healing the past and stepping forward with grace into the future. ❖

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*Franciscan Father Daniel Barica is rector of Our Lady of the Angels Church at the Casa (Franciscan Renewal Center) in Scottsdale, Arizona.*



# Franciscan Synodality



(l to r) Friars David Paz, Peter Boegel, William Minkel, and Ponchie Vasquez are in the footsteps of St. Francis, the listener.

Photo: Luis Rosado

**The Franciscans have had a synodal listening process** for our own governance and planning since the beginning. Provincial Chapters, normally occurring every three years to address elections and business, typically last up to five days. Chapter decisions have the highest level of authority, so it is important work.

Many friars will tell you, though, that the best part of Chapter is about coming together and catching up with friendships. There is a synergy in gathering, because fraternity is the glue that holds us together, making us authentic, credible, and even prophetic witnesses for our Church.

In fact, occasionally, friars from various provinces gather together to hold a “Chapter of Mats.” The title is derived from the simple bedding used to sleep outdoors below the town of Assisi in the summer months when these gatherings would occur.

These Chapters have no pressing business or elections, but instead are gatherings devoted solely to celebrating fraternity. One was held in Denver, Colorado, in 2018, for OFM friars in US provinces. It was a far cry from St. Francis’s early, solitary, mystical experiences, but, as he said in his 1126 *Testament*, “The Lord gave me some brothers.” A collaborative community was born.—D.B.

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prayer

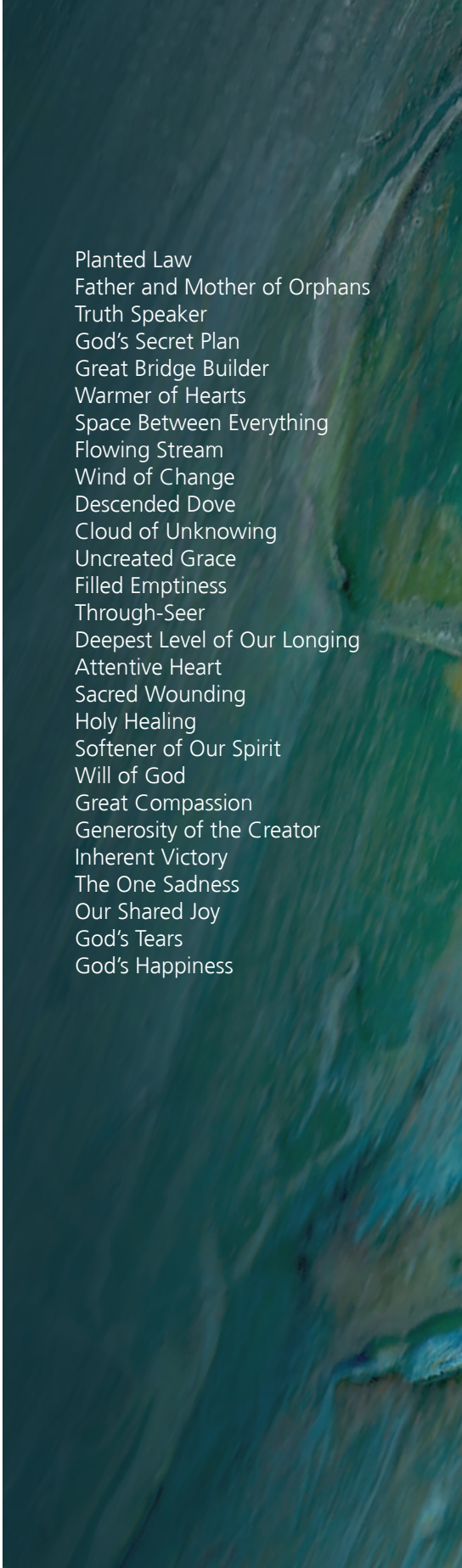
# Litany of the Spirit

BY RICHARD ROHR, OFM

I have become convinced that rediscovering the power, gift, and meaning of the Holy Spirit is the key to the recovery of the contemplative mind and heart. Rather than write a long theological article which few might read, I offer you an old-style Catholic litany to teach the mystery experientially—which is how the Spirit teaches! Instead of a verbal response to each title, I recommend that you take a calm breath in and out while reciting each sacred name. These are metaphors to help describe the Holy Mystery Within, and to begin the constant and conscious breathing called prayer. Many of them are based on images found in John's Gospel and Paul's Letters. You hopefully will find more metaphors of your own inside this precious realization.


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*Richard Rohr is a friar of Our Lady of Guadalupe Province in New Mexico.*



Planted Law  
Father and Mother of Orphans  
Truth Speaker  
God's Secret Plan  
Great Bridge Builder  
Warmer of Hearts  
Space Between Everything  
Flowing Stream  
Wind of Change  
Descended Dove  
Cloud of Unknowing  
Uncreated Grace  
Filled Emptiness  
Through-Seer  
Deepest Level of Our Longing  
Attentive Heart  
Sacred Wounding  
Holy Healing  
Softener of Our Spirit  
Will of God  
Great Compassion  
Generosity of the Creator  
Inherent Victory  
The One Sadness  
Our Shared Joy  
God's Tears  
God's Happiness





The Welcoming Within  
Eternal Lasting Covenant  
Contract Written on Our Hearts  
Jealous Lover  
Desiring of God  
Pure Gift of God  
Indwelling Presence  
Promise of the Father  
Life of Jesus  
Pledge and Guarantee  
Eternal Praise  
Defense Attorney  
Inner Anointing  
Reminder of the Mystery  
Homing Device  
Knower of All Things  
Stable Witness  
Implanted Pacemaker  
Overcomer of the Gap  
Always Already Awareness  
Compassionate Observer  
Magnetic Center  
God Compass  
Inner Breath  
Divine DNA  
Mutual Yearning Place  
Given Glory  
Hidden Love of God  
Choiceless Awareness

Implanted Hope  
Seething Desire  
Fire of Life and Love  
Sacred Peacemaker  
Non-Violence of God  
Seal of the Incarnation  
First Fruit of Everything

You who pray in us, through us,  
with us, for us, and in spite of us

Amen! Alleluia! ✠

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concerning care

# St. Clare's Care

BY JOHN FEISTER

Last November, folks at St. Boniface Church in San Francisco's Tenderloin District decided to reopen a pandemic-closed program. Before the closure, Franciscans there had allowed people who live on the streets to come in and rest awhile.

The program reopened last November and now uses the extensive services of St. Anthony Foundation, a long-established, nearby Franciscan ministry. St. Clare's Care is the program's new name. It's a place where people still can find respite from life on the streets, but also can find connection to all manner of nearby services that will improve their quality of life.

"St. Clare's safe haven was the Church," says St. Anthony Foundation CEO Nils Behnke. He's speaking of St. Clare of Assisi, Francis's good friend and

in many ways cofounder of the Franciscan movement. "It's a place where she felt safe and protected. In the same light we strive to make St. Boniface and this program a haven for our guests, where they feel safe and protected."

But the Church of St. Boniface is not only safe in the physical sense: "It's also a place and program where we can nourish the spiritual needs of our guests," says Nils. The guests come into the massive church itself and might finally get some extended sleep on a back pew, might talk to someone who cares, or might just sit in holy silence, taking in the majesty of their surroundings.

## Connecting point

As their newly arrived guests rest, the staff of St. Clare's Care are hard at work, finding ways to help beyond respite.



Photo courtesy of St. Anthony Foundation

**Standing at the front gate of St. Boniface church, friar Jimmy Kernan serves at St. Clare Cares, a ministry of hospitality to people on the streets.**



"Come to me, all you who are weary," says Jesus. In the church, during the day, people can simply find a safe place to stop and sleep. Other help is nearby.



Brother Juan Luis Guerrero is one of the Franciscans who serve as "navigators" outside church. Lay or Franciscan, these navigators meet guests at the front door, literally and figuratively. At the door of the church, they offer a doorway to get people's lives back on track. "We invite people to go to the church so they can feel more safe inside and also so they can rest. At the same time we connect with them. We talk to them, like, for example, we ask them if they need a shower or if they need to do their laundry." Those are two of the

nearby services of St. Anthony Foundation.

"So sometimes people make an appointment to use the showers, and then they come to the church and they dress while they're waiting for their turn." (There are three showers, three washers, three dryers.) If you need to see a doctor you can just visit the clinic." The navigators help the guest to be aware of what the other services are and how to use them. ("If it's an emergency we call 911," Juan Luis adds.) There's also the Foundation's technology lab, where

guests have access to the internet or simply to phone-charging stations.

Brother Jimmy Kernan is another of the new friars, like Juan Luis, who is spending these months from November 2021 through spring 2022 at St. Boniface. He, too, serves as a navigator, but he also helps to make connections between St. Clare's Care and the various departments at St. Anthony Foundation, a fairly large program. There are a lot of moving parts! "We all wear name tags with titles. My job title is, 'Franciscan friar!'" As do other friars here, he wears many hats.

Maybe a better title for him would be *connector*: "There's one building right across the street and then the other one down the block that is the rest of the resources. I think working with St. Anthony's directly has helped us connect guests to all of our other services." One might think he would have an office for all of that coordinating. "No," he says, then laughs. "My office is the streets!"

Other friars, Brother Dick Tandy for one, serve in other roles. He, a longtime friar, is chaplain.

One of Jimmy and Juan Luis's classmates, Brother Andrew Dinegar, serves on the security team. Of course, the team is unarmed, "but sometimes they

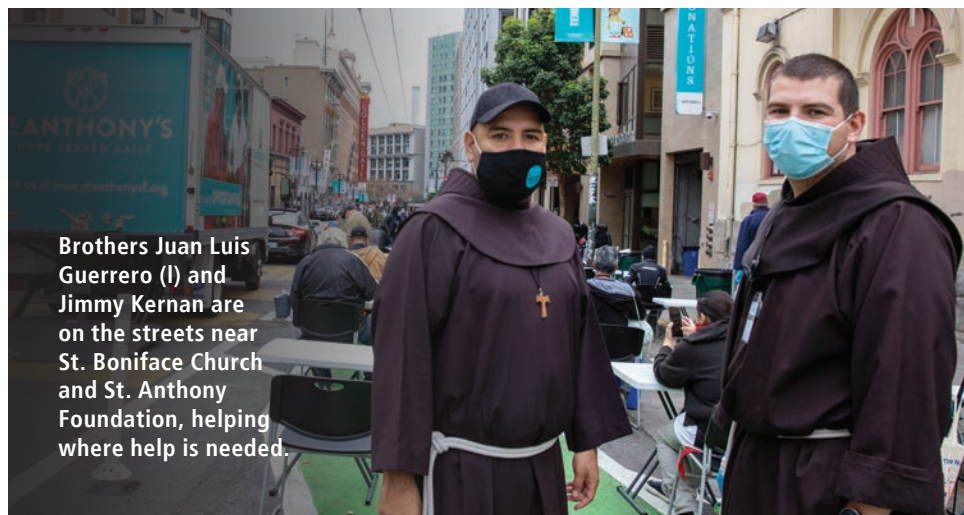
carry handcuffs," says Jimmy. "Their main role is to keep everyone on the block safe. It's a policing method that is based around de-escalation. So it's about having conversations with people and trying to talk through problems. But every once in a while there are physical altercations, so they might need the handcuffs. But it happens rarely, which is a good thing!"

### A peaceful place

All told, St. Anthony Foundation serves about 1,000 guests each day, says Brother Jimmy, primarily in St. Anthony's Dining Room, where guests come to be served by volunteers from around the Bay area. By no means is everyone coming down the street to St. Clare's Care. Jimmy estimates that he helps about 50 people each day, no small number.

"Some come just a little overwhelmed," he says. "They need so much that they don't know what they need at that moment. For someone who's maybe never even been in that situation before, they don't know where the services are."

Brother Jimmy and the other navigators spend the time it takes to listen to people's stories, tell them about the various services, and help them navigate



# St. Clare of assisi



**St. Anthony Foundation chose** to name the program at St. Boniface Church in honor of St. Clare of Assisi, friend of St. Francis and a pioneering woman in the Catholic Church. Clare, who lived from 1194-1253, was from a wealthy, noble Assisi family.

As a young woman she was drawn to the simple witness that St. Francis and his followers were living outside the walls of Assisi. She boldly left her family to be with the friars, first living in a nearby women's monastery before Francis and his brothers invited Clare and her followers to live in the chapel at San Damiano, just down the hill from Assisi.

There Clare lived a long life as a contemplative. She remained a friend of Francis, and in the many years after Francis died, fought successfully to keep the ideals of the Franciscan movement intact: to live a gospel-inspired lifestyle without earthly possessions.—J.F.

among them. "Listening's a huge part of it. We can give advice, but I think that all comes from listening and hearing what these people are going through. It's so overwhelming, living on the street. How many of us have to choose between taking a shower or finding clean clothes? They have to plan out and pick and choose things that most people get, day-to-day."

It can be overwhelming for him, too, Jimmy admits, "but I think something that's so great about the ministry here is that there's so many people around to help. We can't help everyone instantly, but generally we can find ways to get them the help that they need at some point."

There's something about providing a peaceful place to sleep that stirs

Jimmy's heart: "It's like 'Come you who are weary and burdened. I will give you rest.' The first thing Francis asked us to do is live the gospel. To be able to do that in such a direct way, to the weary, burdened one, who lives such a hard life on the streets, we say, yeah, come rest with us, be with us and let us share in this. And when their faces light up...It's just a beautiful thing to see." ♦

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*John Feister is editor of this publication.*



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the friar's life

# Greetings from Guaymas

BY ADOLFO R. MERCADO, OFM

*Friar Adolfo R. Mercado, from Sacramento, completed his novitiate, made his first profession, and is now in studies at the Franciscan School of Theology (FST) in San Diego, California. Last summer he spent time with friars at Casa Franciscana Outreach, a ministry in Guaymas, Sonora, Mexico, sponsored by our St. Barbara Province. Here is a glimpse of his immersion from two mailings we received from him, during and at the end of his experience.*

**July 2021**

*¡Hola, Hermanos!* Greetings from Guaymas, where it has never been cooler than 75 degrees and the humidity keeps life balmy. I was given the afternoon of the day I arrived to settle into the friary and the next day was filled with ministry. There is never a dull day here. In fact, there is so much a friar can get involved with, I had to sit down and create a schedule to make sure I can experience what is being offered.



**Mercèdes cleans beans which will be cooked and served at Méson de Jesús in Guaymas. The ministry prepares and serves meals daily at the food shelter.**





Photo: ©www.peterfordphoto.com

Friars Antonio (I) and Adolfo have come to the *edijos* to bring a propane stove to Doña Manuela, revered community leader, who stands between them in her dirt-floor home.

Weekday mornings I rotate throughout different ministries on site; afternoons are committed to external ministries. It has been a real blessing to get to know different team members from different ministries in service to residents of the larger Guaymas area: Urban Guaymas, Yaqui villages, *ejidos* [post-1920 revolutionary government agrarian communities, privatized in the 1990s and in the midst of urban sprawl], and migrants. I have had some extremely powerful conversations with Casa Franciscana Guaymas staff as they shared their connection to these ministries. Since I was raised in a bilingual (Spanish/English) home, there was no language barrier to share stories. Through many stories, much context was shared to help me gain a deeper understanding why the many ministries that comprise Casa Franciscana Guaymas are so beloved. Here staff volunteer to take food to the migrants or donations to Yaqui Villages.

Staff is very compliant with government and provincial pandemic regulations. For example, in Mexico, one is expected to also disinfect shoes before entering a building. There are small mats

at all entrances filled with sanitizing liquid and a dry mat to step into before walking into a store, office, or business. My size-12 shoes barely fit into the mats at some places; I imagine some of our brothers doing a little dance to get their bigger shoes properly sanitized!

Some staff do the same in their homes. Mesón staff daily go out to collect donations (tortillas, bread, meat) and all bags and crates are also wiped down before being processed. We also keep a log of all staff temperatures and staff check in with each other when they notice a marked fluctuation from one day to the next. The communal worldview is magnified during these pandemic times.

The local Franciscan community lends this experience much depth and connection to our Rule. At Casa Paz + Bien in the Punta Arena neighborhood we are three friars: Antonio Galindo from the Province of Saints James and Francis (Jalisco) serving as our guardian/formator to Br. Ronald Orozco and me. Both Ronald and I are in our first year of simple vows. When Fr. Martín Ibarra returns from California, we will be four!



Photo: Octavio Duran, OFM

Br. Ronald, through Junípero Serra Province (Baja California), completed his postulancy here in Guaymas; Ronald has served as our local guide. There are no postulants in town during summer, but there are four in residence otherwise.

Twice we have already visited and enjoyed some life-giving fraternal time. Fr. Antonio Galindo served in formation for many years and was formator to many friars in Serra Province (and a bishop in Durango). He was also a definitor for Jalisco Province (to the south) when Serra Province was erected. It was fun hearing Brs. Antonio, Nacho, and Iván (visiting) catch up. Nacho and Iván studied at FST; conversations are rich when friars get together!

## August 2021

Guaymas continues to struggle with its response to the COVID pandemic. As a port city, it receives boats weekly that have crossed the Pacific, and daily that are working in the Gulf of California.

When I arrived in Guaymas, there was much buzz about a boat from India that had docked in Mazatlán, after which crew and passengers spread along the coast. When testing resulted in many new positive cases for the Delta variant of the coronavirus, it highlighted how interconnected the world is. As folks

were talking about the boat from India, I thought of the many migrants riding the trains we meet daily.

Last month I spoke about the response to the pandemic in Guaymas. Amid the heightened and even greater response than when I lived in California, during the time I was there, the Guaymas area did move from yellow to orange. All ministry was done outside with masks and no physical contact. Mass was offered indoors with reduced capacity, and the bells to remind neighbors to come to Mass were not rung. Remoteness has offered some protection to date, but the world is interconnected. Let us remember these communities in our prayers.

Amidst the pandemic restrictions, days were nonetheless kept busy with ministry. Staff is keenly aware that during the pandemic, needs are increasing. Mornings were committed to rotating through different ministries on-site to learn about the diverse needs we respond to down there. This also offered the opportunity to connect with more staff.

The morning ministry rotations were the Mesón food ministry, pharmacy, social work, youth center, administration/facilities, and tending to the chapels. Afternoons were focused on external

ministry, traveling to remote communities, or meeting the people riding the trains, moving to a new place.

Through external ministry I gained a better appreciation for the region and the role of the Yaqui villages. Visiting the *ejidos* communities offered new insight into the Mexican Revolution and its effects. As I left Guaymas, the region moved to red. In Guaymas's Punta Arena

neighborhood, where Casa Franciscana is, as well as out in the Yaqui Villages and *ejidos*, folks do not have the resources to implement the recommended safety measures. Those are hard facts.

The time in Guaymas offered much to pray about daily. It was an experience that will undoubtedly continue to surface in prayer, conversations, reflections, and papers. ♦



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**SCAN ME**

***Putting Our Hands Out in  
the Dark with Hope***

**5/27–29**

**Facilitator: Jim Greer**

This retreat will be based on the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. There is only one requirement for the retreat: an openness to a “higher power,” whatever that means to you.

***Men’s Retreat: Finding Our  
Lost Dreams***

**6/3–5**

**Facilitator: Jim Greer**

This retreat will attempt to raise men who have been tested during the past years by COVID and other difficulties, from a survival mode to a mode of hope and excitement about the future through a renewed faith in Christ.

***Coming to Believe We  
Matter***

**7/1–3**

**Facilitators: Margaret Riley &  
Jim Greer**

This retreat focuses on the truths that we are worthy of recovery and ongoing support at all stages of sobriety and life. The retreat is for people of all ages and stages of sobriety. We will provide a safe environment for expression so that the battle against indifference can be arrested a day at a time. To attend you need only to desire to grow spiritually.

**Franciscan Renewal Center  
Scottsdale, Arizona  
thecasa.org  
408-948-7460**

***A Brush with God***

**3/31–4/3**

**Facilitator: Peter Pearson**

Christ, the Good Shepherd, is a beloved image in the Christian tradition. During our weekend together, we will paint the image of Christ, the gentle shepherd, using a step-by-step process in which everyone will complete his or her own icon. No previous experience or innate talent is required.

***Holy Week 2022***

**2 sessions: 4/10–13 & 4/14–17**

**Facilitator: Fr. Andre Cirino,  
OFM**

Part 1: This retreat will center on the art of journaling with a focus on the passion of Jesus Christ. Part 1 will be an introduction to spiritual journaling, focusing on the many events of the Passion with an emphasis on what St. Bonaventure calls the affective dimension of Franciscan spirituality. Part 2: During the Paschal Triduum, we will examine and pray St. Francis’ Office of the Passion, his own personal, spiritual journal of scriptural meditations.

***Retirement & Conscious  
Aging Retreat***

**5/13–15**

**Facilitator: Jim Briggs**

As you consider your retirement years and grasp the reality of

growing older, this retreat will explore the benefits and joys as well as the challenges and concerns ahead. How do we live this stage of our life well and see aging as a blessing?

***Emmaus Retreat for  
Grieving Parents***

**5/27–5/29**

**Facilitators: Marianne Gouveia  
& Greg Eckerman**

EMMAUS Ministry for Grieving Parents is a unique ministry that serves the spiritual needs of grieving parents whose children of any age have died by any cause, no matter how long ago. The retreat is offered by grieving parents who have lost children of their own. We provide an opportunity for parents to gather in a sacred, warm, and compassionate space with others who know their pain.

***Grief & Loss Retreat***

**6/3–5**

**Facilitator: Timothy Ringgold,  
MT-BC**

Anyone who has known the joy of love has most likely experienced the pain of loss. Grief is a natural part of life, yet we all grieve differently and often need help to find our way through it. Retreat leader Tim Ringgold provides a supportive setting where you will gain new insights into the grief process and discover ways to heal and move forward from this intense and painful period.



***Marriage: It's Not for the Faint of Heart***

7/8–10

**Facilitators:** Ryan M. Sheade, LCSW, & Erica Tatum-Sheade, LCSW

This retreat will help to develop your relationship beyond simply "doing what you're supposed to" or "making it work" and into a marriage that is fulfilling and full of meaning and purpose for both partners. These positive changes are created not from dependency on one another, but from the understanding that a foundation of marriage is to learn, change, and grow *with* the relationship while accepting our partners and ourselves.

**Serra Retreat**  
**Malibu, California**  
**serraretreat.com**  
**310-456-6631**

***Men's Retreat***

4/22–24

**Facilitator:** Sr. Carol Quinlivan, CSJ & Fr. Charlie Smiech, OFM

Let us walk in faith and in confidence. Join us in this retreat and be renewed and refreshed for a future filled with goodness and countless blessings.

***Las Vegas Women's Serenity Retreat (Over 60)***

6/17–19

**Facilitator:** Leslie Becker

Please join us as we safely celebrate our 11<sup>th</sup> year at Serra Retreat!

donor profile: Matthew and April Quilter:

*continued from page 7*

relationship-driven service not only among those providing it but to the various ministries with people. Those are the cornerstone of the Catholic faith and social teachings." ❖



Photo at Serra Retreat by John Folster

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at last

"Listening is much more than simply hearing. Hearing is about receiving information, while listening is about communication, and calls for closeness."

—Pope Francis



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Synod  
2021  
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