



# Friar News

SAINT JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO PROVINCE | FALL 2019 | FRANCISCAN FRIARS CONVENTUAL

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Franciscan world has just finished celebrating a number of important feasts. For our Province, we rejoiced in the patron saint of the Province, Joseph of Cupertino. For all Franciscans—formal and informal, the remembrance of the Stigmata of Francis caused us to reflect on the importance of the cross in Francis' life. For the entire church, the solemnity of Saint Francis on October 4th reminded us of a life that had many twists and turns in it before attaining the glory of God.

I believe that there are several virtues which were highlighted on these three days. Simplicity of life, both spiritual and actual, were characteristics that marked these celebrations. These men did not strive for complex and extravagant ways of living. Their focus was to draw people to God. God made their lives complex by the special gifts that He gave them.

Both Joseph and Francis trusted in the wisdom and will of God. God was the strength and direction given to them and sought by them. They waited on God to do things in His own way. That waiting included a significant amount of silence—whether during Joseph Cupertino's mystical levitations or Francis' desired times of lengthy retreat and private prayer.

May I encourage all of us to meditate on these various virtues and on the attitudes that the saints adopted in their relationship to God. A simple, prayerful and trusting lifestyle with moments of silence could only benefit us all.

Since I will be leaving for the Philippines and Vietnam in the middle of November and not returning to California until 2020, I want to wish you, your loved ones and your cherished friends a happy Thanksgiving and a blessed and grace-filled Christmas, experiencing deeply God's love and care.

Rev. Victor P. Abegg, OFM, Conv.

Minister Provincial, Conventual Franciscans of California



**Above: Our Minister Provincial, Fr. Victor and Wayne Mulei, a postulant from our Province currently stationed in Chicago.**



Left: On July 3rd at evening prayer, five men were officially welcomed as Franciscan postulants—the beginning stage of their formation. Fr. Victor, Minister Provincial of St. Joseph of Cupertino Province (California), presided and offered a moving reflection on the Divine call and the various mantles that are placed over us as we respond to God's voice (see the story of Elijah and Elisha in 2 Kings 2).



Right: Friar Alejandro Maria Arias of Our Lady of the Angels Province with his Provincial, Fr. James McCurry, O.F.M.Conv., stands next to the Icon of our Seraphic Father Francis, which was designed and painted by Friar Alejandro for this year's celebrations of the Solemnity of Saint Francis.



Above: Friars and supporters gather for the celebration of the *Transitus* (passing) of Saint Francis of Assisi on the evening of October 3rd at the Shrine of Saint Anthony in Ellicott City, MD. "It was a time of joy for all present. We are reminded that Saint Francis still has words to say to us today. We are to live the spirit of Saint Francis wherever we go. He reminds us to be peacemakers. He tells us to love God above all else. He reminds us to have concern for all creation. He also reminds us that we all have gifts to share. Never be afraid. God will be with you even when you think He is absent." Pray for one another and for Franciscans throughout the world that they remain faithful to their call. – Brother Christopher Garcia from California (second from the left)



Left: September 14th: Friar Nicholas and another catechist at the Archdiocese of San Antonio's Catechist Teachers' Retreat.

# Congratulations to Fr. Jacob Carazo on his recent installation as 17th Pastor of Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Pismo Beach, CA!



Left: On September 11th, there was a gathering at the National Shrine and Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

D.C. Friar Christopher Garcia writes: "It is only fitting that we cross paths this day. It is truly a somber day for all peoples. Let us remember that hate must not define us. We are all called to love one another. We are called to be Christ to others. We are to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters. No matter if we disagree with others, we all have dignity. Never lose sight of that."



Bottom Right: July 16, Mex. City, D.F. —There is no greater advocate than Mary. She goes by many titles, but today we honor her as Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

It was truly a blessing to be able to celebrate with the local Carmelite community in Mexico City and great to reconnect with my Carmelite Brother.

No matter what struggles you are going through, Mary will always lead you to her Son, our Lord. I always recommend establishing a devotion to Mary. For those who want to know more, never be afraid to ask.

—Br. Christopher Garcia





Above Right and Below: Franciscan Youth of the Conventual Franciscan Vietnam Delegation. This year the event was held at the Vietnamese Martyrs Friary in Van Mon on July 25-26th. The youth gathering (YNG) had delegates from seven regions representing two dioceses in the rural north of Vietnam. There were about 150 participants. The vision of the Franciscan Youth movement is to help empower the youth to boldly live out their faith in love, service, word and action.



Left: The Friars of the Delegation in Vietnam accepted the invitation of Bishop Joseph Nguyen Tan Tuoc to care for the parish of Lo 6 Region. The new church was dedicated and blessed on July 19, 2019. This was a remote mission parish at its start forty years ago. The parish is under the patronage of Mary, Mother of God; the church seats about 500 people; there are new or remodeled offices, classrooms, a children's home and accommodations for guests and clergy—all on one-half acre.

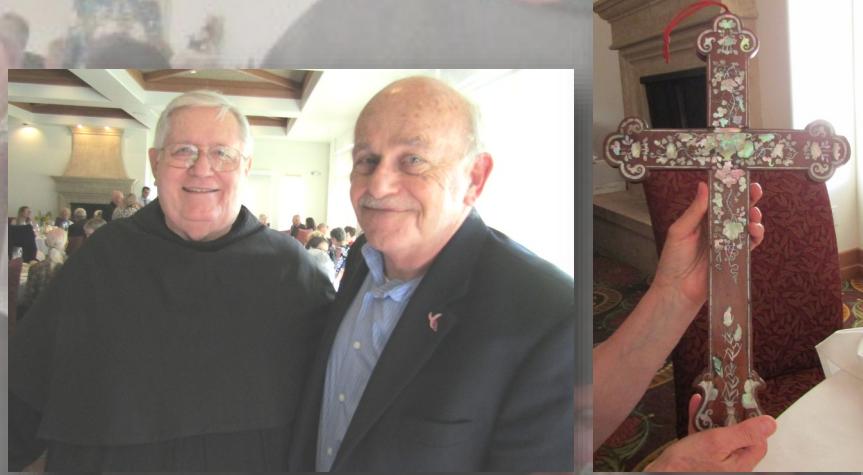


Left: Friars travelled hundreds of miles to participate in the solemn celebrations of Our Lady's Assumption at the National Shrine and Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation in Indiana. A solemn outdoor procession with the statue of Our Lady of Consolation was a highlight of the events on August 14th and 15th.

Center Left: October 9th, Postulant Wayne Mulei writes: "Today we had another great day at Saint Joseph Home for the Elderly. We played some games while remembering our childhood, went to Mass, helped serve lunch, assisted with faith sharing and played Bingo. Many thanks to the Little Sisters of the Poor and their work with the elderly. God bless the residents for making us feel welcome."



Right and Below: The annual fundraising dinner and auction, sponsored by Saint Paul the Apostle Parish in Pismo Beach, took place in San Luis Obispo on September 15th with 15 Friars and many parishioners. Among the auction items were a jewelry box and a crucifix done in the Imperial Vietnamese style of inlay in dark hard wood. Thank you to the many people who travelled far to join us and to all of our extremely generous supporters and volunteers who gave very liberally of their treasure, talent and time.



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 **Conventual Franciscans of California & California Franciscan Vocation**

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**Province Website:** [franciscanfriars.org](http://franciscanfriars.org)

**Vocation Website:** [FranciscanDiscernment.org](http://FranciscanDiscernment.org)



Mosaic of the Most Holy Theotokos and the Infant Christ inside the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C.