

FMA FOCUS

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Franciscan Mission Associates
Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10551

Missions in Guatemala - Honduras - El Salvador, Central America



Virtue: Patience

Patience, as its Latin root makes clear, implies some suffering. Hence, the practice of bearing wrongs patiently is one of the spiritual works of mercy. One of the benefits of aging is an ability to see life more in context. At twenty if someone cut us off in traffic we would assume they were simply too selfish and self-concerned to notice our place on the road. As we reach middle age, we realize there are so many other possibilities: a sick child in the car, a dying mother to race to or simply life bearing down on that poor driver as they cut us off. At any age, it is important to take the time to be patient with ourselves, as God is. We need to accept our failings and forgive ourselves for them and start anew. God's love is unending and without reservations. If He can love us that way, can we try to have more patience with ourselves? Generous love makes patience easier, and as our Lord told us "By patient endurance you will save your lives." ■



DEATH'S POSITIVE ASPECTS

When we have lost someone near and dear, it is often difficult indeed to think positively about death.

Often, the pain of parting can be severe and life empty without their physical presence. This is our human mind, our limits in dealing with the concept of eternal life. We know once a parent or friend is gone from this world and we are left behind, there will be no more texts, no more emails or phone calls. We will, indeed miss them, as the Apostles and Mary missed Jesus once he died on the cross. What they did not all seem to understand is that while his body was gone, Jesus was not. The pain of losing a loved

one is real. Fortunately, time eases sorrow as we reflect in faith on the fact that our departed loved one has passed beyond suffering and rests safe in the hands of God whose love is limitless.

“For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life. Him I shall raise up on the last day.” (Jn. 6:40)

Knowledge of our own frailty impels us to pray that the human weakness we all share will be forgiven by our loving Father in heaven. And we know our Lord forgives all, “Merciful and gracious is the LORD, slow to anger, and abounding in kindness. He will not always accuse, and nurses no lasting anger” (Ps. 103: 8-9).

Of one thing our faith assures us, our dear departed remain close to us. We can help them by our prayers, by having Masses offered for them and by leading a Christian life. The church on our day buries us with white vestments in a joyous expectation of eventual resurrection. Death, like birth, may be

accompanied by pain but who long remembers the pain for the joy of life that follows, especially the eternal life that we enter after death.

The Christian meaning of death is revealed in the light of the Paschal Mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Christ in whom resides our only hope. The Christian who dies in Christ goes on to everlasting life. ■

Did you Know

You can continue to carry on the work of the Missions and the people they serve by remembering them in your estate plans. These legacies of love can be made in many different ways to fit your individual circumstances.

Consider making a bequest of whatever you wish to: Franciscan Mission Associates, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598. Or, if you wish additional information about making a will, please feel free to contact:

**Franciscan Mission Associates
P.O. Box 598, Dept. 1192
Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**



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Please address all correspondence to Father Robert, O.F.M., at P.O. Box 598, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10551. Please send changes of address six weeks in advance; if possible include your mailing label, and give both old and new address.



Our Missionary Task

Evangelization, the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is a basic duty of all Christians. It begins with each one of us though it doesn't end there. We are all in constant need of hearing and proclaiming Christ's good news, first of all to ourselves. We do this by internalizing the Word of God within us, making it a part of ourselves. It is not possible to give to others what we do not possess. Writer Madeleine L'Engle said this about her faith, "We do not draw people to Christ by loudly discrediting what they believe, by telling them how wrong they are and how right we are, but by showing them a light that is so lovely that they want with all their hearts to know the source of it." It is the joy of our faith that draws people in, the joy of our love of Christ that makes non-believers question their own dark path.

If you are looking for ways to deepen the joy you feel about your faith, and are looking for inspiration, find online or purchase a copy of Pope Francis' beautiful Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (the Joy of the Gospel). In it he exposes and details the joy of our faith, "REJOICE" angels exclaim to so many - God is here, God is good, God loves us. Pope Francis encourages the faithful to continue toward the beauty of our faith and not to wallow in the sorrow, "There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter." This focus on sin without hope is not our faith, it is not the way of Christ, and it is not the way Pope Francis sees as the New Evangelization.

*Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to
communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our
world.*

*Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's little
ones,
pray for us.*

Amen. Alleluia!

- Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium.

In discussing New Evangelization, his predecessor Pope Benedict Emeritus made clear it is not message but methods that is the "new" part. Pope Benedict "clarified that the New Evangelization is new, not in content but rather in its inner thrust; new in its methods that must correspond to the times; and new because it is necessary to proclaim the Gospel to those who have already heard it." So, as educators and parents and even concerned faithful, we can begin to use the tools of the day, the internet, and social media tools to follow the Vatican, and even Pope Francis - to have small snapshots all day of the joy of our faith. That way, in turn, we can spread our joy and our faith. ■



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ST. ANTHONY TEACHING US STILL

Pope Gregory IX, it is said, stated that if the Bible were lost, St. Anthony could reconstruct it from memory. Those of us devoted to St. Anthony can honor him fittingly by frequently reading and reflecting prayerfully on the Word of God in Scripture. With so many ways to access scripture a self-study with certain passages can be done at any time almost anywhere. One passage that is well worn but always worthy of review is in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. The church community at Corinth was young. Paul's letter reflects issues faced by first century Christians but some are comparable to today's society. Paul seeks to give followers guidance and support, because at the time, according to scholars, there were factions of the community who tried to lead some away from the true Word of God. Chapter 13 is one that is used in many weddings, and on one level it is fitting to describe the importance of love when beginning a marriage.



Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated,

it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury,

it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails. (1 Cor. 13: 4-8)

Husbands and wives should do their best to understand love as it is described here. But upon reflection and meditation it is more obvious that Paul meant this not as a mortal, human love but as the divine love God has for all of us. God's love "bears all things," and does not "brood over injury." As we know so often in our lives when we are lost or alone or we have turned our back on God, he is still there with his unyielding mercy waiting for us, loving us. God's love for us "never fails." If we just try to wrap our minds around that, it is not easy. God always, always loves us, always is alongside us. Often people wonder where our Lord is during suffering: He is alongside us. We don't see him because we don't look or lean into his grace. But when we do, when we embrace our Lord and his love, it carries us through anything.

Take some time this month and reread a familiar Gospel or scripture passage and see what more you can get out of it. St. Anthony will guide you. ■



Fall in Love with Church History

Each season of the year has its advantages and disadvantages. Fall appeals to many because it is a busy time. As schools open, social activities resume and a few of us are wise enough to begin our Christmas shopping well in

advance. In our religious and spiritual life, Fall is a good moment for us to renew our dedication to the Lord by attending Mass more often, or to read and review the readings we listened to in church the past Sundays. None of us should ever be content with the knowledge of God we learned as children. Our faith will benefit from reading a religious book. If you can't find one you are interested in at the back of church on the rack, try religious stores or the internet. Often reading groups, or book racks are filled with biographies of saints or scripture studies. If you are looking for something different how about lives and writings of our Popes? A good starting point is the Vatican website. It archives writings from Popes dating back to the beginning of the church. Leo XII who was Pope from 1878 to 1903 was known as "the Rosary Pope" for his dedication to Mary and to the recitation of the rosary. His many encyclicals dedicated to the rosary illustrate his devotion and he

was one of the loudest voices promoting Mary's ability to intercede for the faithful. His successor, Saint Pope Pius X, who reluctantly took the mantle of Pope, was known as "the Eucharist Pope." He lowered the age from 13 to 7 at which children could make their first Holy Communion. He believed the grace of the Eucharist: "Children have need of Him that they may be formed in habits of virtue; youth have need of Him that they may obtain mastery over their passions...there are none who can afford to neglect this great source of spiritual strength, none who can do without Him." More recently Pope Francis has given us many beautifully written encyclicals and exhortations on many themes, including care for our planet. In *Laudato Si*, our Care for our Common Home, Pope Francis reminds us we are stewards for future generations. "In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. 'Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.'" Each Pope's writings reflect his view and the contextual worldview. To review them is to get a sense of history and the hope each man had for his beloved flock. ■

VOCATIONS

Please pray for the young people at home and in the missions who are ready and eager to dedicate their lives to God and the spiritual welfare of His people.

Often all they really need is the special courage to hear God's call and to answer Him. Please join us in daily prayer, for God's grace in providing devoted brothers, sisters, priests, and religious for Christ's work in today's world.

For further information please write Fr. Robert, O.F.M. at
Franciscan Mission Associates, P.O. Box 598, Dept. 1194, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598

THE PROBLEM WITH EVIL

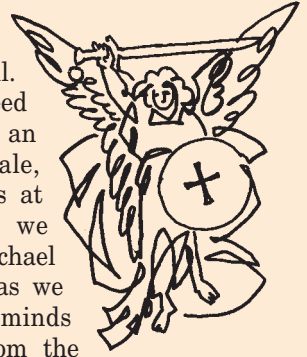
That there is something wrong in the world is a fact evident in every newscast and internet search. Each of us knows full well that we are sinners, and that evil exists not just “out there” but within our own hearts. Some calamity, which churchmen call original sin, is obvious enough. Learned philosophers have written volumes in an attempt to explain in a rational way why evil exists. Even those who believe in God are puzzled when they recall the words of Genesis, “And God saw all things he has made, and they were very good.” Man’s freedom allows him to pursue evil as a distorted vision of what is good, and God’s answer is to see evil as good, to draw good out of evil, and “to make all things work together unto good for those who love Him.” Our Savior transcended evil – sin, suffering, and death – by making it redemptive. So, too, must we overcome evil and a great way is to call in some saintly help, namely St. Michael the Archangel. The beautiful prayer to this vital saint begins with these lines;

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle

be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil.

We ask St. Michael, the warrior, to assist in our constant battles against the

devil and evil. That evil need not be on an immense scale, although it is at times. Often we ask for St. Michael to assist us as we shield our minds and souls from the onslaught of negativity in our world, that threatens to turn us from the path we should walk toward Jesus.



Later in the prayer St. Michael’s strength is invoked and asked to truly show his might.

And do thou, oh prince of the heavenly hosts,

Cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.

This prayer is said often at the close of daily or Sunday Mass. Its power seeks to preserve those worshippers as they depart and maintain a sense of security as they continue their day. There is no need to wait until Mass to say this strong and protective prayer. Remember, it is with our own convictions and the help of our Lord and the Saints, that evil can be kept at bay and eventually vanquished. ■

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Father Robert includes a special remembrance for all Franciscan Mission Associates benefactors on their birthday if he knows when it is. To be remembered at his Mass on your birthday please send him the filled in form below at any time.

My name is _____

My Birthday is: Month and Day _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Fr. Robert, O.F.M., Dept. 1195,
Franciscan Mission Associates, PO Box 598, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598

Director's Letter

Fr. Robert, O.F.M.

FRANCISCAN FRIARS/P.O. BOX 598/MOUNT VERNON, N.Y. 10551-0598

TEL. AREA CODE: 914 664-5604



Dear Friends in Christ,

Each Fall as the leaves change, we are grateful for another full season with our Lord. Plants and even animals take a rest during the Fall, they recharge and ready for the long winter months ahead. As faithful followers, we can also take the Fall to recharge – to renew our commitment to our Lord and our Lady.

The virtue we discuss in this issue of FOCUS is patience. We often work as adults, to have patience with children, or those less fortunate than we are. But do we extend that patience to ourselves? While we forgive others their transgressions we can often keep a list of our own faults and remind ourselves too often of how long that list is getting. This is not having a Christian attitude toward ourselves. Jesus forgave all who earnestly requested it and offered penance for their sins. How is it that He can forgive, but we cannot? If we need strength to help us remember the grace of Mercy, turn to God and he will open His arms to us. And we, in turn, must work to forgive ourselves, and have patience. God knows our inner beauty. During this Fall turn to Him and feel the Grace He always has for us.

God bless you and your loved ones,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Fr. Robert, OFM". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Robert, O.F.M.

CALL TO SERVE

A Firsthand Look at a Franciscan in Training

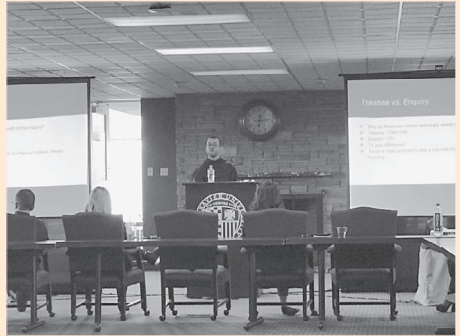
God calls men to serve with our Franciscan missions every day. One such man is Friar Josh who is in the post novitiate program in Chicago. Over the summer he was busy spreading the Good Word and learning the ropes. Here is a run-down of his summer in his own words.

With regards to summer ministry it was an excellent summer for me. In June I was in Brooklyn at Our Lady of Peace with Fr. Orlando and Bro. Courtland. It was a good experience of fraternal life, as they were both very welcoming. I loved the diversity of the parish, the English Mass and the Spanish Mass, as well as the traditional Latin Mass are all present there. It was a great learning experience for how to deal with different groups and try and make them one parish community. I also got to practice and study Spanish a good deal while I was there.

Afterwards I assisted at a meeting in Wappingers Falls for OFM secretaries of formation, vocation directors, and directors of ongoing formation. That was a good experience as well, being with brothers from all over the English

School Conference (ESC), talking about the beauties and challenges of Franciscan life and how to apply them specifically to ongoing formation.

Then I went to Central America for the next 6 weeks. It was my first time in this part of the world and it was truly eye opening. In short, I loved it. The people were incredible and their faith deeply touched me. I saw such poverty there





OUTREACH TO THE HOMELESS FOR FRANCISCAN MINISTRIES

Fr. Joseph, O.F.M.

One of the ministries that I was most proud of during my twelve years as pastor of the Shrine Church of St. Anthony of Padua in New York City was the JoyJ Initiative, a wonderfully Christian and uniquely Franciscan outreach to people living on the streets of Manhattan.

The JoyJ Initiative is based on the words of Jesus in John 15:11 – “I have told you these things so that My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.” In February, 2013, the first homeless outreach was held at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament in NYC with three volunteers distributing a few items from the back of a car. In June, 49 volunteers distributed 125 comfort bags at various locations in the city.

Not long after, representatives of JoyJ met with me in my office, to see if St. Anthony’s would like to get involved. Their idea was simple – that showing others the love of Christ would bring joy to the hearts of the homeless and the

but somehow a deep joy and a love of life. I was most of the time in Ataco, El Salvador at Immaculate Conception parish with Fr. Rafael. I also was able to spend a few days in Tegucigalpa, Honduras at the school there and I visited Valley of the Angels in Guatemala – all amazing and beautiful ministries of the province. My Spanish also improved considerably and the people were so willing to help me and teach me. The way of life was pretty different, so many stories of ways I got in trouble for “thinking like a person from the US!” But I consider myself so blessed to be able to have visited and experienced the missions in Central America.

I currently have four classes this semester so I am pretty busy! This is my last year at St. Xavier University, so in the spring I will be getting my BA in philosophy. Pretty excited about that. ■



food, shelter, medical assistance, legal help, etc. in Manhattan, ponchos, socks, toothbrushes and toothpaste, and many other items. But what was even more important was encountering each homeless person as a child of God, speaking to them, getting to know them, hearing their stories, even praying with them.

Each was given some bags, distinguished and easily recognized by their bright florescent green color, along with a similar green scarf for identity, and business cards. As word came back of the experiences, it became obvious that what we had set out to do was accomplished beyond our wildest expectations. Parishioners spoke of special encounters they had with the people on the street.

For me as pastor, it was an uplifting experience. And it showed what we are capable of doing in the future. Who knows where all of this will lead? The St. Anthony Chapter grew to hundreds of volunteers, many of them in their twenties and thirties. Many of these volunteers came forward as indispensable leaders of the initiative, not only on the parish level but also for the entire ministry itself.

Since then, the JoyJ Initiative has grown tremendously through the efforts of the many volunteers and the program leaders. The latest statistics can be found on its website. The number of volunteers – 2,817. Homeless lives touched 11,790. Essential items distributed: 148,000. As you can see, what started out with three volunteers working out of a car trunk has grown tremendously in six years. ■

needy – but also great joy to our own hearts as we encountered in a special way those that society had passed by.

In February 2014, one of the Blessed Sacrament group spoke passionately at all our parish Masses, and of the desire to bring that ministry to Saint Anthony's. The proposal was simple – each person could find in their own busy schedule some time to reach out to others by preparing "Comfort Bags" to be distributed on the street. And these would be the means by which we could encounter the poor Christ who did not have a place in which to lay his head.

The response was, to say the least, tremendous. Over 50 people signed up immediately for the establishment of a JoyJ Chapter at St. Anthony's, and many others donated to the project. As weeks went on, the enthusiasm grew. We had several organizational meetings, and what emerged was a new generation of parishioners getting involved in our parish.

Finally, after much discussion, deliberation, preparing, shopping and planning, the JoyJ Initiative at St. Anthony's was born. Comfort Bags were prepared which included street sheets-information on how to get assistance for

Words Worth Noting



It's hard to detect good luck – it looks so much like something you have earned.

Frank A. Clark

Nothing builds self-esteem and self-confidence like accomplishment.

Thomas Carlyle

My motto was always to keep swinging.

Hank Aaron

Courtesy is as much the mark of a man as courage.

Theodore Roosevelt

Act and God will act, work and He will work.

St. Joan of Arc

While I take inspiration from the past, like most Americans, I live for the future.

Ronald Reagan

I never wanted to be famous, only great.

Ray Charles

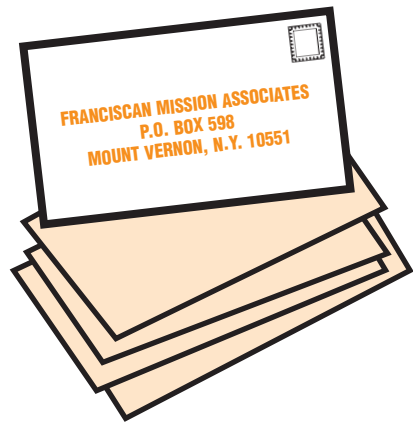
Nothing so strong as gentleness, nothing so gentle as real strength.

St. Francis de Sales

Women, like men, should try to do the impossible. When they fail their failure must be but a challenge to others.

Amelia Earhart

Our Readers Gladly Write...



Dear Father,

Ours is a real miraculous story. My husband Matthew and I walked to the bank and withdrew some money (\$500). We had a memorial Mass to attend later that day.

We stopped for lunch on the way home. Part of the way home I noticed that Matthew did not have the zippered oval purse and neither did I, and I asked where it could be.

My husband promised St. Anthony half of the money (\$250) if the purse were returned. I began to pray, saying I believed in bi-location of saints. Why not bi-location of lost articles?

After an hour or so I said to my husband, "look here on the floor between my chair and the refrigerator." So please, in thanksgiving to St. Anthony and the Holy Spirit, accept the enclosed check for \$250.

Most gratefully,
M. & J.Z.
St. Clair, MI

Dear Father,

I received the lovely memento today and I thank you very much. I carry it with me wherever I go. Like St. Francis of Assisi, I'm forever feeding all the birds in my yard. They know they will never go hungry here. I'm grateful for this nice weather we are having. Thanks again and this 92-year-old lady appreciates the medal.

As always,
E.D.
Santa Barbara, CA

Dear Father,

I want to thank you for your beautiful response to our donation for the Franciscan Mission Associates. We will treasure the lovely rosary beads. My sister and I appreciate your thoughtful, kind and classy response to our letter. The rosary gives us peace, comfort and strength to deal with the trials of life. Your gifts and prayers mean so much to us. Thank you for the time, effort and love involved. God bless.

F.H. and Sister R.
Lexington, MA

Dear Father Robert,

I have never written a note to any religious publication before. We prayed so much that my granddaughter would be accepted into the special college for students like her. This college would fit all the special needs to succeed in life. She got her acceptance letter this week. Just a heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the Blessed Mother, St. Anthony, St. Jude and all the angels and saints for this miracle for her. She now has a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother as we all do!

Thank you,
A grateful grandmother.

HAVING A HAPPY HEART

Temperament is something we all possess. Some of us tend toward optimism, others to a more pessimistic outlook on events. Cultivating a happy heart is an art which requires effort and practice, but is a real possibility for anyone who tries. A saint known for his joyful countenance is St. Philip Neri.

Born in Florence, Italy in 1515, young Philip was one of four children. His cheerfulness lead to adults calling him “good little Phil.” As he entered adulthood, Philip was sent to live with a wealthy family member and learn, and perhaps inherit, the family business. It was in San Germano, Italy at his apprenticeship that Philip had a mystical vision and believed he was being called by the Holy Spirit to live and serve our Lord and his Church. To better follow this, Philip set out for Rome. At first he lived with a family and tutored two young men, but this too was not enough for this future saint. So after a short time studying at St. Augustine’s monastery, Philip took to the streets to share his love of Christ and his gift of evangelization with the poor and truly anyone he encountered. This life is where Philip showed his true gift. After sharing his joy of the Risen Lord

with others Philip encouraged the newly evangelized to begin their work immediately, leading his followers to hospitals to help the sick or to the church to pray.



In 1551 Philip was ordained to the priesthood and began his mission to listen to confessions. Philip and his growing band of followers were called Oratorians because of their gift of listening and sharing the Word of God. He continued his work, eventually earning the title “Apostle of Rome.” He died at the age of 80 after a full day of listening to confessions.

Imagine if we take a page from St. Philip’s and look at all the good things you as a Christian share with God, with the Saints, with other faithful and with the angels. We can all keep happy-hearted by concentrating on a closer union with God in Christ. Our Lord has won the victory for us by His life, death, and rising again. All we need do is consolidate His triumph in our own life which, with divine help, we can. ■

Visit us on the web
franciscanmissionassoc.org

Two of God's Sainly Servants

None of us really knows why God created us and for what specific purpose. We spend our lives wondering and praying that we may fulfill His will. Many saints were called by God but were not expecting such a challenge. Saint Gregory the Great's feast day is celebrated in September. His leadership of the church and his elevation to Pope serves as a reminder that God knows what our lives will lead in a way we don't know. This prayer to St. Gregory can be said at any time this month to remind us of the power of our Lord and the peace we gain while leaning in to his will and plans for us.

*Father,
You guide your people with kindness
and govern us with love.
Give the spirit of wisdom to those you
have called to lead your church.
May the growth of your people in holiness
be the eternal joy of our shepherds.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son, who lives and
reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Another September saint with a very different path is St. Vincent de

Paul. His entire life was dedicated to serving the poor. He founded the Congregation of the Mission to supervise the formation of priests who would also serve his beloved poor. Schools and parishes to this day, hold St. Vincent de Paul drives to help those in need in their community. If this is what the Holy Spirit is calling you to do, look in your parish or your neighborhood to see where you would be the most help. In seeking your path, here is a prayer to St. Vincent you can also use:

*God our Father,
you gave Vincent de Paul
the courage and holiness of an apostle
for the well-being of the poor and the
formation of the clergy.
Help us to be zealous in continuing his
work.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son, who lives and
reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

God sees us and knows how we will impact the world. He knows our path. It is up to us to listen as He guides us, and not stubbornly go our own way. ■

ST. ANTHONY'S BREAD

Offerings in honor of St. Anthony, either in petition for a favor sought, or in thanksgiving for a favor received, are used to assist the poor. Thus, they have received the name, St. Anthony's Bread. Such offerings are also used to help educate priests and religious.

Fr. Robert will gladly send you a leaflet explaining the origin and purpose of this devout practice, now centuries old. Please write:

**St. Anthony's Bread, Franciscan Mission Associates
PO Box 598, Dept 1193, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**

Celebrating Our Lady in September

How often do we think of our Blessed Mother Mary? For many faithful it is multiple times each day. One of our most calming prayers is the Hail Mary. We hear the words and think of her cousin Elizabeth visiting. Two women celebrating the miracle of life with each other. “Hail Mary full of Grace the Lord is with thee.” In the most literal way this is accurate. The Lord is with Mary as she prepares for the birth of her child, our Lord. God is also watching over Mary as He has since the Angel Gabriel bore the news to her, that she willingly accepted. To honor Our Blessed Mother in September, why not brush up on some Marian Prayers? One of the most beautiful is the Memorare. The author is unknown, but the prayer is attributed to Fr. Claude Bernard who lived at the end of the 17th century and ministered to condemned prisoners. Unlike the Hail Mary - which honors Mary - the Memorare asks Mary for help. The prayer opens with words reminding us that no one who seeks help from Our Blessed Mother, “is left unaided.” The next piece implores Mary to help us, even though we are full of sin, “before thee we stand, sinful and sorrowful.”

We come to Mary knowing full well she, like our own mother on earth, loves us unconditionally and will always bring us closer to our Lord and show us mercy. “O Mother of the word incarnate despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.” When we pray to Mary, we also pray through her to her Divine Son Jesus and she will intercede on our behalf. How blessed are we to have Mary as our mother to listen and assist as we continue our earthly journey toward heaven.



Special Novena Schedule Fall 2019

All year round Franciscan Mission Associates conducts a regular schedule of spiritual and devotional exercises in which all benefactors are invited to take part. During the Fall months the Special Novena schedule is:

September 2-10/11-19	St. Jude Novena
September 21-29	Feast of St. Michael
September 26-October 4	Feast of St. Francis (in Assisi)
September 29-October 7	Feast of the Holy Rosary
October 7-15	Feast of the Holy Rosary
October 29-December 24	Novena to St. Anthony on the 9 Tuesdays before Christmas

All Franciscan Mission Associates, sponsors, and benefactors are asked to join in prayer for the intentions and petitions of those taking part in the exercises. Please pray also for our Franciscan missionaries, for the people they serve, for an increase in vocations and for all our associates. Holy Mass is offered each day for all benefactors and for the intentions they request. Kindly forward your petitions for the Novenas scheduled to:

**Father Robert, O.F.M., Franciscan Mission Associates
PO Box 598, Dept 1191, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**

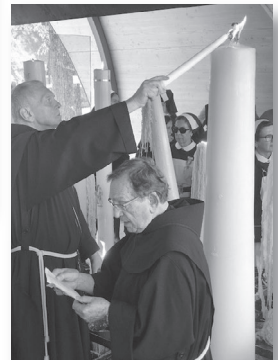
Each year Franciscan Mission Associates invites the faithful on pilgrimages. This May more than thirty followers of Christ spent 12 days visiting and praying in seven Marian Shrines in Portugal, Spain and France. Travelers stopped to pray in Fatima, El Camino de Santiago, Avila, Zaragoza, Lourdes, Montserrat and Barcelona. The chance to worship in these beautiful places allowed the pilgrims to grow closer to our Lord and each other.



Christ was alive in the hearts of the pilgrims in Fatima as they braved rainy weather and kept their spirits high.



One of our Pilgrims helping to carry the statue of Our Lady of Fatima during the Procession



Fr. Paul and Bro. Angelo - lighting a candle for all our benefactors in Lourdes



Mass being celebrated for our benefactors in Lourdes