



The Franciscan Legionnaire

Newsletter of the Friars Legion of St. Peter's Church in the Loop
 110 W. Madison St., Chicago, IL 60602 ❖ Phone: 312-372-5111
 E-mail: FriarsLegion@aol.com ❖ Web Site: www.stpetersloop.org

May the Lord give you Peace~

St Francis of Assisi wrote in his Last Will and Testament that this greeting of Peace was revealed to him by the Lord. St Francis encouraged everyone to use this greeting. We read in his Testament (1226):

"God revealed a form of greeting to me, telling me that we should say, 'May the Lord give you peace'." ("Il Signore ti dia la pace!" in Italian)

What would happen if we would use this greeting of Peace instead of Hello! or Hi! or How are you? Imagine yourself answering the phone with the words: May the Lord give you Peace! Maybe the next sound would be "Click!" as the person calling you hangs up, thinking this is a wrong number. I wonder how many people would respond with the words: Thank You! – I needed that blessing!

By Baptism all are invited to be instruments of the Lord's Peace, everywhere. So, spread Peace of the Lord. Let me know what your experience is when you say to others: May the Lord give you Peace! We are all hungry and thirsting for peace. "When I was hungry, you gave me to eat. When I was thirsty, you gave me to drink. (Matthew 25). Let's be generous in greeting and blessing each other with Peace!

Golden Jubilee – 50 Years!

June 21, 1960 – Do you remember where you were on that date? What you were doing? With whom were you spending that longest day of 1960, yes, fifty years ago? I remember!

I was nineteen years old in 1960. I had completed four years of high school and two years of college at

our St Joseph Franciscan Seminary in Westmont IL, twenty miles west of Chicago. The next step in my journey in becoming a Franciscan Friar of the Sacred Heart Province was to take the train from Chicago to Effingham IL, two hundred miles south of Chicago, and go three miles east to Teutopolis IL. Franciscan Friars first arrived in Teutopolis IL from Germany in 1858 in response to the Bishop's invitation to serve the German speaking Catholics in central Illinois. The Friars built a church, a novitiate and a college. We friars still serve St Francis Parish in Teutopolis.



On June 12th, 1960, twenty-one of us young men began an eight day Retreat to prepare us for the *Investiture Ceremony* on June 21. The ceremony was held in the parish Church with hundreds of Friars, family and friends praying and supporting us as we began a new life. I remember the day as sunny and very hot. After the homily (sermon in those days) each of us individually approached the Provincial for the Investiture. We removed our black

suit coats. With the help of two friars, the Provincial dressed us with the Franciscan habit – brown robe, hood, white cord - and then pronounced the name by which we would be known in the Order. This was the first time we had heard the name the Provincial had chosen. "Henceforth, you will be called Masseo!" he said to me. I said to myself: "Ma who?" I had never heard this name before. During that year from June 21, 1960 to June 22, 1961, I typed every story I could find on Brother Masseo. Much to my happy surprise, Masseo was one of the first followers of St Francis in 1207 and is buried near St Francis in the basilica in Assisi. Masseo is the Medieval Italian for Matthew. Masseo was my name for seven years. I changed back to Charles because so many people had difficulty

saying the name, spelling the name, and because the Vatican Council II (1962-1965) reminded us of the importance of our Baptism into Christ. **Baptism** is the transforming event of our journey of life. My Baptismal name was Charles. I was answering God's call to live my baptism as a Franciscan Friar.

So there I was 19 years old, wearing a Franciscan habit, answering to a new name, and beginning my life as a Franciscan Friar. Fifty Years since that day. How did I arrive at this Golden Jubilee so soon? I thought only old Friars celebrated their Golden Jubilees. Well, guess what! I was ordained a priest forty-three years ago. In 2017, I hopefully will celebrate fifty years as an ordained priest. This year marks fifty years of wearing a brown robe and hood with a white cord and sandals.

Like two people walking down the aisle after proclaiming their wedding vows, I did not know what was waiting for me in the years ahead as a **Friar Minor** (*Friar*=Brother, and *Minor*=not Major League, but *Minor* League – without power, prestige, money; no need to climb and control....) And so began the journey of sharing my life with my brothers and out of that shared Franciscan life of prayer and Gospel living, to be a brother to every person I would meet - and to meet every person with respect and joy, with love, openness and acceptance.

One of the first challenges in novitiate in 1960 was to learn how to walk upstairs while wearing the robe (the habit) and to learn to tie the three knots in the cord that symbolize our vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Learning to *make the knots in the cord* was much more simple than the daily challenge of living the vows, these Gospel values that all Christians are called to live daily.



When I was at the University of Notre Dame in 1975-1976, the students in Grace Hall where I was an

Assistant Rector, would regularly ask me what the three knots meant. I would then hold my cord so they could see the **three knots**. I would explain how each knot represented one of the three values of the Gospel that Jesus taught us and how we are all called to live them in our own state of life, whether married or single or in a religious community:

Poverty – how we relate to material things, as gifts of the Lord to enjoy and share, not to hoard for our own selfish use.

Chastity – how we relate to ourselves and others, always with respect and love, whether single, married or living in community.

Obedience – which means literally “to listen thoroughly, completely”, how we are all called to listen to God's Word and not just our own, as God speaks to us through Scripture, the Church, in our hearts and through others. As Franciscans we are committed to listen to our leaders, our Guardians and Provincial. St Francis never used the title Superior for the Brother leading the community. Rather St Francis used the word Guardian, one who looks after the needs of the other brothers, who listens to the Friars and discerns with them God's will. We are all called to listen to God's will and not do whatever we want to do.

One day at Grace Hall, as I was explaining the meaning of the three knots, the three vows, I held up my cord and covered one of the knots with my hand so only two knots were visible. I said: “If you ever see me with only two knots, don't ask.” Till this day, some of those Grace Hall Domers will call and ask me how many knots I have tied in my cord. With God's grace and my brothers' support during these fifty years, I can still respond: “All three knots are still tied!”

The first thirty-eight years of my Friar life were shared with large communities of 30 to 45 Friars. These years from 1960 to 1998, found me in the seminary in Cleveland Ohio where we studied philosophy, in the seminary in Teutopolis IL for four years of theology, in Westmont IL where I taught music and religion for seven years, at St Peter's for twenty years in Chicago where I was on the staff for twelve years and pastor for eight years. Ah! those wonderful years at **St Peter's in the Loop** where thirty of us Friars ministered to thousands of people every day, where we had the privilege to live together and minister together in the

“Emergency Room for hope and healing in the Loop”

with masses, confessions, counseling, adult education, spiritual direction, with a smile and with a listening heart.

I coined that phrase one day as someone asked me: “If St Peter’s is not a parish, then what is it?” I opened my mouth and as usual something came out unexpected. What I said was that St Peter’s is an Emergency Room. An ER - for what? For hope and healing for all in the Loop. And so St Peter’s has been and continues to be. Hopefully, with your help St Peter’s will continue for many years to be that Emergency Room for hope and healing.

In these last twelve years, I have lived with two Friars. What a difference from living with thirty or forty Friars! With only three of us sharing our lives, our faith, our praying and playing, our working and eating together, we have to show up, to be there for each other. No hiding with only two others in the Friary. And show up we do, in good times and in bad, in joy and in sorrow, in supporting and cheering each other onward, in lifting up and walking with one another when the journey is difficult and a challenge, and when we get on each others’ nerves. Brothers together through it all!

I learned that one basic aspect of living the Gospel Life in Franciscan fraternity with other men as my brothers, is itinerancy (*iter* is Latin for journey) – to be on the road, on the journey, going from town to town. Sometimes we pause for a few weeks or years in one place. But we are ready to move on to the “next village” when necessary. This is what St Francis recognized in the Gospels as the pattern of Jesus and apostles – always ready to move on to the next village. I used to say that at St Peter’s we were preachers to the itinerants, not so much itinerant preachers – all those people who would come in the doors for prayer and quiet, for peace and hope.

Since I left St. Peter’s in 1998, I have been an itinerant preacher of God’s Good News. I have preached from Singapore and Malaysia to Jerusalem and Rome, from Rio Rancho NM to Enfield CT, from Chicago to New Orleans, from Orlando to San Francisco. And I have loved every mile of the journey, every person I met, every restaurant I had to dine in. Two gifts the Lord



has blessed me with so that I can travel and preach as a Friar Minor are these: I can sleep in any bed and eat any food on my plate – except Jalapeno peppers, and the like. Such hot spices give me the hip-cups. People everywhere are so kind and thoughtful. Oh, there are a few exceptions. Give people the benefit of the doubt that they are doing their best, no matter what it looks like. People are like an ice cube floating in your Scotch, or...Ice Tea: only one tenth is above the water, the rest is below the surface.

My heart is filled with gratitude for the many graces and the many people who have walked with me during these Fifty Years of Franciscan Living. My first *thanks are to God* who saw fit to call me to this way of life when I was in fourth grade at St Agnes School in Chicago Heights. Sr Agnetis kept me after school one day and simply said: “Chuckie, you should be a Franciscan when you grow up.” My response was: “Yes, S’ter” i.e., Yes, Sister. Ever since that day..... I never saw a Friar until I went to the seminary after 8th grade. Being a Franciscan just sounded right. I wanted to be a doctor too, but becoming a Franciscan got me more excited. So here I am, by the Grace of God. I had to learn the difference between a monk and a friar. Franciscans are friars not monks. Monks live in monasteries or abbeys and have an abbot as superior – a more vertical sense of community. Friars are brothers to each other, and together are brothers to everyone. (There are only four other Orders who live this horizontal related life as brothers: Carmelites, Augustinians, Dominicans and Servites.)

My mother and father always supported me, through grade school, high school, college and all through my life. Whatever I wanted to be and to do was most acceptable to them. How freeing to have such parental

support. *My two brothers and two sisters* gave me their support these years. I was blessed with many uncles, aunts and cousins and friends who cheered me on. More than once I thought of leaving. Then I would hear my 1960 Novice Master's voice: "Many times it will look greener on the other side of the fence, but remember, over there, the grass is just as hard to cut." So I would take another look at life and it's blessing and challenges. *And* -After finally learning how to tie those three knots in my cord, why not stay.

Two of my fellow Golden Jubilarians are on the Staff of St Peter's: Fr Elric Sampson OFM and George Musial OFM. ~Blessings on all my classmates from 1960 and all who are celebrating their Golden Jubilee.

Your Personal Financial Considerations

Today pre and post retirees are increasingly concerned about running out of money during their lifetime. During pre-retirement, most people focus on accumulating assets for retirement. Once they retire, effective strategies to distribute and manage

accumulated assets is of equal importance so that as a retiree one can maintain one's financial independence. To help you to develop custom solutions toward financial well being during retirement, you may want to consider the following:

- * Cover basic expenses
- * Get a guaranteed income for life to meet income shortfall from pension and Social Security
- * Maximize your required minimum distribution income from your qualified plans
- * Maximize your CD income
- * Manage market volatility
- * Hedge against inflation
- * Accumulate assets on a tax deferred basis
- * Provide funds to heirs generally income tax free
- * Minimize estate taxes
- * Leave a legacy
- * Protect income in case you need Long-Term Care
- * Make a charitable bequest

As you can see, there is much to consider and ponder over. To help you with this very important process, St. Peter's Church offers you a free no obligation service. For more information and a review of your current plan, call Peter Wells at 847-543-4886.

Fr Chuck Faso, OFM www.frchuckofm.org

APPLICATION FOR YEAR-LONG MEMORIAL CANDLE

(Please print, leaving a space between each word.)

To be lit in honor of:
Living Deceased

Requested by:

Date candle is to be lit: Immediately Specific Date

The offering for the Memorial Candle is \$150.00. Please enclose a check for the full amount with this form.

APPLICATION FOR PERPETUAL ENROLLMENT IN THE FRIARS LEGION

(Please print, leaving a space between each word.)

Please Enroll:
as a Perpetual Member of the Saint Peter's Friars Legion.
Living Deceased

Your Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

OFFERING: Individual, \$25.00 Family, \$100.00 (Immediate family, parents and children)