

Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order

Transforming the World Through Reverence

Our Mission

Inspired by the gospel of Jesus and the example of Francis of Assisi, the Capuchin friars of the Province of Saint Joseph, together with our partners in ministry, prayerfully build sister-brotherhood in the world. We attend simply and directly to the spiritual and other basic human needs, especially those of the poor and disenfranchised, promoting justice for all.

Sandal Prints

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Making all things new

*See, I am doing something new!
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
(Isaiah 43:19)*

Greetings and blessings to you. It's fitting that as I write this, the signs of spring and new life are all around us. To paraphrase Shakespeare, April has a way of putting a "spirit of youth into everything." Let us pray that our Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph remains forever youthful. Let us pray that we continually seek new ways, in openness to the Holy Spirit, to build sister-brotherhood and preach the Gospel of Jesus in the world.

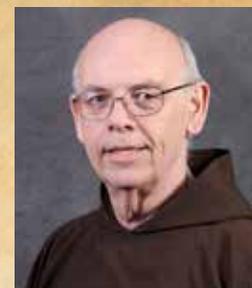
As we hold fast to that spirit of youthfulness, it's a period of new beginnings for several of our Capuchin ministries throughout the province. Friars are transitioning into new ministry roles. Among them, we welcome Br. Robert Wotypka as ministry director of Capuchin Community Services in Milwaukee as well as Br. Jerry Kessel as ministry director of Capuchin Retreat in Washington Township, Michigan. Br. Ed Foley is stepping into the role of Vice-postulator for

the Cause of Canonization of Blessed Solanus Casey. Blessings to these friars, and all friars, as they go about their work in ministry.

At the same time, we are gearing up for our next Provincial Chapter in 2020. The Provincial Chapter, held every three years, affords an opportunity for the Province to discern the promptings of the Holy Spirit and prayerfully consider how we live out our Franciscan charism. At Chapter, a new Provincial Council and a new Provincial Minister will be elected to guide our province into the future. My time as Provincial Minister will be drawing to a close, as I am "term-limited." I ask you to please remember in your prayers those friars who are now in the process of planning our 2020 Provincial Chapter. May the Spirit lead them and guide them in their work.

May God abundantly bless you, and those that you love.

Br. Michael Sullivan, OFM Cap.



*Br. Michael Sullivan,
OFM Cap.
Provincial Minister*

St. Anthony Place opens 60 units of supportive housing

Building includes space for Capuchin Community Services



St. Anthony Place, adjacent to St. Benedict the Moor parish, at 10th and State Street in downtown Milwaukee.



A view of a corner apartment unit at St. Anthony Place.



Br. Rob Roemer, OFM Cap, ministry director of Capuchin Community Services, tours the new building with Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele



Br. Michael Sullivan, OFM Cap speaks during the grand opening ceremony

St. Anthony Place, a 60-unit supportive housing development for residents formerly struggling with homelessness, held its grand opening March 15, 2019. Capuchin Community Services occupies space on the lower level for the offices of St. Ben's Community Meal, Front Door Ministry. In addition, the parish offices for St. Benedict the Moor have relocated to newly-renovated space on the first floor of St. Anthony Place, along with Ascension St. Ben's Clinic. In addition to offering permanent housing, the building has on-site case managers and other services to support residents as they build a sustainable pathway out of poverty.

"The Capuchins opened St. Anthony Hospital in 1931, and we are excited to partner in the building's rebirth as supportive housing," said Br. Rob Roemer, OFM Cap, ministry director of Capuchin Community Services. "A lack of affordable housing is a significant root cause of poverty that we see every day affecting the people served by Capuchin Community Services. We also asked our guests what was still lacking for them. They stated showers, laundry services and haircuts. We are expanding our services in the lower level of St. Anthony's to provide these necessities."

Many public and private funders partnered to bring the project to fruition. St. Anthony Place is owned



Br. Mike Bertram, OFM Cap, pastor of St. Benedict the Moor, offers a prayer at the start of the grand opening ceremony



Statue of Servant of God Stephen Eckert



Br. Rob Roemer, OFM Cap speaks with Tony Busalacchi, a supporter of the St. Anthony Place project



Br. Gus Cops, OFM Cap at the reception following the grand opening ceremony

and managed by Chicago-based nonprofit Heartland Alliance. The project was helped along by \$10.5 million in historic redevelopment tax credits and other government funding. In addition, more than 1,500 donors contributed in excess of \$2.5 million through a capital campaign organized by Capuchin Community Services.

As a hospital, St. Anthony was built during the Great Depression, and subsequently expanded, to serve Milwaukee's black community, who at that time were shut out of the mainstream health care system due to racial segregation and discrimination. Generations of Milwaukeeans were born at St. Anthony or received medical care within its walls. St. Anthony also served a vital role as a training ground for black physicians and

health care workers. It was the home of Wisconsin's first-ever African American chief of staff. For its role in Milwaukee's African American history, St. Anthony was placed on the National and State Register of Historic Places in 2017. The gravesite of the beloved Capuchin priest of St. Ben's and early civil rights advocate, Fr. Stephen Eckert, was relocated from a courtyard on the St. Anthony Place property to the Capuchin cemetery at Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin.

Br. Rob and his team, including Dan McKinley, Jessica Grochowski and Jim VanHoven, as well as incoming ministry director Br. Robert Wotypka, toiled long and hard along with many others to bring about this good work.

Scattering Seeds: Tap into Life chapter forms at Capuchin Retreat



Young adult ministry and outreach is in growth mode. Br. Tom Nguyen is now assigned at Capuchin Retreat, where one of his first to-do's was helping grow young adult ministry at the bucolic 95-acre retreat center north of Detroit.

Br. Tom helped incorporate Tap into Life – Capuchin Retreat, as the second Tap into Life young adult ministry group of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph. The first Tap into Life program was started at the Solanus Casey Center, and continues to thrive

under the leadership of Jessica Edwards.

Tap into Life – Capuchin Retreat takes place the first Sunday of each month with Mass at 6pm, followed by dinner and a talk and group discussion.

Know a young adult 18-35 years of age in the Macomb-Oakland area who would benefit from growing in their Faith? Invite them to follow Tap



Mt. Elliott Cemetery developing Blessed Solanus Casey Cremation Garden and Columbarium

As construction advances at the Solanus Casey Center, there are new developments taking shape across the street at Mt. Elliott Cemetery, as well. As a way to allow families to be at peace with Blessed Solanus Casey in perpetuity, Mt. Elliott Cemetery is developing the Blessed Solanus Casey Cremation Garden and Columbarium within view of the Fr. Solanus Casey Center.

With a completion date of Summer 2019, this columbarium will include a limited number of companion niches and satin urns with a total capacity of nearly 600 urns. Members of the public will have the opportunity to begin reserving space in the columbarium this spring by contacting Mt. Elliott Cemetery.

This elegantly designed columbarium includes a six-foot statue of Blessed Solanus as a Blessed and the Detroit community. Companion niche fronts include family inscriptions and are finished with gray granite. All souls who will be memorialized by satin urns within the columbarium's ossuary will be recognized

on a memorial band that covers the circumference of the feature, finished in black granite.

During the time that Blessed Solanus was a Capuchin friar at St. Bonaventure Monastery, he was known to walk the grounds of Mt. Elliott

Cemetery, founded in 1841, in reflection and prayer. The cemetery has long partnered with the Fr. Solanus Casey Center, St. Bonaventure Monastery and Detroit Capuchin friars for holiday masses and other special events.

Family service counselors with Mt. Elliott and Mt. Olivet cemeteries are available to meet with families interested in learning more and tours are available of the area where the columbarium is being constructed. Contact Mt. Elliott and Mt. Olivet at 313-365-5650 or by email at elliottinfo@mtelliott.com to learn more.



Expansion, renovations moving ahead at Solanus Casey Center



Work is ramping up at the Solanus Casey Center as part of a multi-year renovation and expansion made possible through the generous support of the A.A. Van Elslander Foundation along with other benefactors. As devotion to Blessed Solanus Casey continues to grow, the Detroit pilgrimage site housing his tomb has seen increased numbers of visitors. To accommodate more pilgrims, the Capuchins and our partners in ministry have developed an expansion plan that builds on the strong points of the existing Center, while adding new amenities and services for guests.

Early tangible signs of progress can be seen at St. Bonaventure Chapel. The Capuchins held a rededication Mass and blessing of the renovated St. Bonaventure Chapel and its new Sacred Heart Shrine in February. Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Donald

Hanchon celebrated Mass along with Solanus Casey Center Director Fr. David Preuss. The Mass capped off the most significant renovation of St. Bonaventure Chapel in many years. Improvements included the repainting of the chapel in its entirety, including the addition of frescoed angels near the chancel. Seating has been reconfigured to accommodate a larger congregation. Wireless “hearing loop” technology was installed as an aid for visitors with hearing impairments. A new altar and shrine to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was built using reclaimed architectural elements.

Meanwhile, design conceptualization continues on a planned building addition to the Solanus Casey Center. The addition would house an expanded gift shop and a new On the Rise Bakery and Café outlet where



visitors can sit down and enjoy a light lunch or cup of coffee. Additional parking facilities, green space and an outdoor worship space are in the works to enhance the visitor experience.

In addition, cleanup and beautification of the neighborhood surrounding the Solanus Casey Center has been underway for some time. The goal is to create a more welcoming environment for visitors and neighbors of the Solanus Casey Center. As part of this work, dead, hazardous and invasive trees and brush have been cut down. Future plans call for additional landscaping to harmonize with the overall site plan and enhance the beauty of the Solanus Casey Center.

Demolition work on the existing votive chapel and Rosary garden is set to begin this spring, with votive candles relocated to the creation garden near the Center's Mt. Elliott Street entrance. A new votive chapel will be built on the eastern edge of the Solanus Casey Center property.

The Capuchins are grateful to our benefactors as this exciting endeavor moves into its next phase. The friars ask visitors to the Center to bring an extra bit of patience, as construction will be ongoing for the next several years in and around the complex.

Photos by Jeff Kowalsky.