

ST. ANTHONY'S BREAD

THE FRANCISCANS' NEWSLETTER KEEPING OUR
FRIENDS, BENEFACTORS AND FAMILIES UP TO DATE



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Four Friars Make Solemn Profession

Over a thousand people from Singapore and beyond attended the solemn profession of Friars Robin Toha, Crispus Mosinoh, Sixtus Pitah and Gerald Tan, at the Church of St Mary of the Angels, Bukit Batok, on 8th February 2020.

The solemn profession mass, presided by the Minister Provincial of Holy Spirit Province, Friar Phillip Miscamble, began with a procession: firstly, of the four friars accompanied by their parents, then followed by the other Franciscan friars and celebrants. Gracing the event with their presence were families from

Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, diocesan seminarians, religious congregations including the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (FSIC), the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM), the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM), the Redemptorists, Canossian Sisters, Infant Jesus Sisters, Gabrielite brothers, Good Shepherd sisters, Missionaries of Charity (MC) sisters, Carmelite friars, secular Franciscans and many others.

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Spreading The “Godspell” Message

Dear family and friends,

May the Lord give you peace!

We missed an issue at the start of this year. We apologise to our readers and I would like to explain why. Between September and October last year, the friars were in the midst of planning for the future. Since we are part of the larger Franciscan brotherhood in Australia and New Zealand, much collaboration and planning needed to be done with our brothers there. And after that was achieved, the friars from Singapore and Malaysia assembled to talk about future possibilities, our avenues and what we have learnt from the last three years.

While much was achieved in terms of work and planning, it was also a wonderful opportunity to simply enjoy the company of fellow brothers. We prayed together, laughed together, shared our worries about the future and talked about our anxieties, hopes and joys.

Back in September 2019, the friars staged a successful play titled “Godspell” at the National Library Theatre. The production was so well-received that it was restaged a few months later in Australia during the Provincial Chapter. Eager to share the message of the Gospel of Matthew to the masses, we have embarked on an ambitious plan to bring it to the shores of Sabah and Sarawak this June! How exciting is this? Well, the friars in formation have already begun on necessary legwork for this project – from drawing out the budget, to contacting the various stage venues in Kota Kinabalu and Kuching. Though daunting to say the least, the years of formation have put them in the right stead for this very special mission. Through drama and the arts, we hope that the joy of the Gospel may be proclaimed to all who are thirsting for the Lord, and that hearts may be set ablaze by the message of Jesus!

This is undoubtedly a bold and different approach – a progressive change in the right direction hopefully. So yes, there will be changes. But like any change in life, there will also be anticipation and apprehension. There will be the pain of letting go and venturing what may seem to be blindly into the unknown. But with God as our inspiration and guide, there is little room for fear.

Similarly, as the world is now faced with a very volatile COVID-19 pandemic, no one seems to know what the immediate future holds. However, this blind spot in the situation seems to have forged a solidarity among humanity. People have stepped forward to help both neighbour and stranger; living out the Commandment, “Love your neighbour as yourself”.

Our growth is not possible without you, our benefactors and friends. Thank you so much and may God, during this Lenten season, continue to bless you and your families always.

Have a grace-filled Lenten journey and may 2020 be a year filled with the blessings of God!



Friar Aiden Peter Jr, OFM
Editor





What was unique about this solemn profession was the blessing of the four friars by their parents, a ceremony similarly found in an Indonesian traditional wedding. The Custos of the Custody of St. Anthony, Friar Derrick Yap thanked the congregation who came from near and far, in spite of the on-going threat of the COVID-19 virus in Singapore.

The four friars who just had taken their solemn profession will continue to stay at Greccio Friary, Chestnut Drive as they continue their studies at St Francis Xavier Major Seminary, Singapore. They are expected to conclude their seminary formation by 2021.



Finally, and most importantly, we thank the Lord for calling each one of us on the path of holiness and conversion. Whether as consecrated religious or not, may all of us be channels of peace and grace after the example of our beloved saint, St Francis of Assisi.

The Franciscan Friars present

The Francis Project 2020

Featuring songs from Broadway Musical Godspell.

DATE: 7-10 MAY 2020

TIME: 7.30PM

VENUE: LEVEL 1 AUDITORIUM, CANA

Watch out for ticket booking announcement through Franciscans.MySg Facebook page and other social media platforms!

In September 2019, the friars in formation debuted a successful play titled “Godspell” at the National Library Theatre. It was a production that everyone gushed about for weeks to come. Encouraged by such positive reception, the friars went on to restage it a few months later in Australia during the Provincial Chapter.

Now, the production has expanded into a full-blown project to share the message of the Gospel of Matthew to the masses. And so it is with much excitement and pride that we want to announce to everyone that we intend to bring “Godspell” to the shores of Sabah and Sarawak this coming June! The friars in formation look forward to proclaiming the joy of the Gospel to all who are thirsting for the Lord through drama and the arts. This is uncharted territory for these young friars, but their zeal and trust in God will accompany them on this bold and exciting journey. With God as their inspiration and guide, there is little room for fear.

Three Men Welcomed into Postulancy

On 8th February 2020, we were blessed to have Julian Chua (from Church of St Mary of the Angels, Singapore), Sylvester Singh (from Church of Christ The King, Singapore), and Timothy Fong (from Sacred Heart Cathedral KK, Sabah) begin their Franciscan life in our Custody.

The new postulants were welcomed by the brothers at St. Anthony Friary Chapel in a simple but meaningful liturgy with brother Philip Miscamble, the Minister Provincial.

Under the direction of Friar John Soh, the three postulants will begin their journey as Franciscans. Apart from activities such as gardening, household chores, studies, and recreation in a typical day, they are also undergoing initiation year in the historical College General in Penang, studying subjects including Salvation History, Growth & Spirituality, Vatican II, Introduction to Liturgy, and Music. They are also involved with the apostolate for the blind.

When asked about their wishes in this journey, all three expressed a desire to follow Christ in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi. “In my postulancy, I hope to flourish in living the gospel of Jesus Christ,” shared Br Timothy, “to be assisted in pondering the innermost roots of my vocation and to experience the Franciscan life step by step.” Br Julian, likewise, hopes “to be immersed in Franciscan community life, prayer, and ministry”, and adds that he seeks “to be guided in the preparation for religious life.” Br Sylvester hopes to deepen his love of Christ through a fraternal life of joy, prayer, and service with his fellow brothers. “I pray for the grace of openness to the Holy Spirit, our Teacher and Guide.”

Let us pray for our three new postulants in this stage of their discernment.



My Gift in Honour of St Anthony

I enclose a gift of \$ _____ :

- For the Formation and Education Fund
 To be used as you see fit

Kindly make cheques payable to
The Order of Friars Minor (S) Ltd

Malaysian Cheques may be made out to
Franciscan Friars

Return this tear-out in an envelope to:
Franciscan Development Office
5 Bukit Batok East Ave 2, Singapore 659918

Please send a receipt to: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

My Petition

Dear Franciscan Friars,

Please pray with me for the following intentions:

From 2 to 7 February 2020, a formation meeting was held for the **Guardians and Superiors of the Custody of the Holy Land**. Br. Antonio, General Definitor, and Br. Cesare Vaiani, General Secretary for formation and studies of the on-going Formation of the Custody took turns to speak; they proposed a guided reading of the Handbook for the Guardians, applied to the particular context of the Holy Land. The speakers also presented some insights into issues that are useful for the service of the Guardian and Superior in the perspective of social psychology.



As a wartime missionary priest in Aleppo, Father Firas Lufti was witness to the trauma of a generation of Syrian children whose entire lives have been spent in the uncertainty and tragedy of war. Seeking to create a place of safety and healing for these children, Fr. Lufti founded the **Franciscan Care Center's** post-traumatic war treatment program in Aleppo in 2017. Since its founding, its staff of clinical psychologists, volunteers, and social workers have served 1,500 Syrian children from the ages of 6 to 17 years old. The Franciscans also care for abandoned young people with Down syndrome and autism, and pregnant mothers in need of assistance. The Franciscan Care Centre in Aleppo is one of the projects to be funded by the Catholic Church's Good Friday Collection this year.

The start of the year saw fresh appointments within the **Custody of St Anthony**. Having completed the 2019 Custody Chapter in October last year, and after much consultation, prayer and deliberation, our Custos, Friar Derrick Yap, announced new appointments to the friars on 25 Oct 2019. The new appointments took effect on the 1 Jan 2020, and run until the end of 2022. Assignments of offices, along with movements of members within the communities take place once in three years, following a Custody Chapter or meeting. For the full list of appointments and movements among the brothers, please visit www.franciscans.sg/appointments2020.

my petition to st anthony

"Holy Saint Anthony, you are the consolation of so many people. We come to invoke your help, confident of experiencing your goodness and power. Pray for us to the Father of Mercies, that we may obtain the graces we need for ourselves and for our loved ones. Amen."



ST. ANTHONY'S BREAD

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Join us for our weekly devotion
sessions online on Tuesdays at
go.stmary.sg/st-anthony-devotion.



In this new volume of St Anthony's Bread, we are pleased to feature parts of sermons by our Patron Saint, Anthony of Padua. "Off the Blessed Tongue" of Brother Anthony, whose very tongue remained incorrupt after his death, a testament to the Saint's gift of preaching the Word of God. It was St Bonaventure who took the tongue reverently into his hands and exclaimed, "O blessed tongue, which has always blessed God and caused others to bless Him, now it appears evident how great were your merits before God!"

Behold, Your King Comes To You Meek, That He May Be Loved

“**A**ll this was done that it might be fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet (Zechariah) saying: Tell ye the daughter of Sion: Behold, thy king cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass and a colt, the foal of her that is used to the yoke” (Mt 21.4-5).

The actual words of Zechariah are: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy king will come to thee, the just and saviour. He is poor and riding upon an ass and upon a colt, the foal of an ass. And I will destroy the chariot out of Ephraim and the horse out of Jerusalem; and the bow of war shall be broken” (Zech 9.9-10).

Sion and Jerusalem are the same city, Sion being the citadel of Jerusalem. They stand for the heavenly Jerusalem, in which is the sight of eternity and the vision of lasting peace. Her daughter is Holy Church, and to her, you preachers, say: “Rejoice greatly by your works, and shout for joy in your mind.” This joy is conceived as being of such great and heartfelt happiness that words cannot express it. Behold the king, of whom Jeremiah says: “There is none like to thee, O Lord: thou art great, and great is thy name in might. Who shall not fear thee, O king of nations?” (Jer 10.6-7) He, as is told in the Apocalypse, “hath on

his garment and upon his thigh written: King of kings and Lord of lords” (Apoc 19.16).

The swaddling-clothes are his garment, and his ‘thigh’ is his flesh. At Nazareth he was crowned with flesh as with a diadem; at Bethlehem he was wrapped in swaddling clothes as his purple. These were the first insignia of his reign. At each, the Jews raged, like people wanting to deprive him of his kingdom. In his Passion he was stripped by them of his garments, and pierced with nails. There his kingdom was completely fulfilled, for after crown and purple he lacked only a sceptre; and this he took when he went out, bearing his cross, to the place called Calvary (cf. Jn 19.17). Isaiah says: “The government was laid upon his shoulder” (Is 9.6), and the Apostle: “We see Jesus, through suffering death, crowned with glory and honour” (cf. Heb 2.9).

Behold, then, thy King, coming to you for your benefit; meek, that he may be loved rather than feared for his power; sitting upon an ass. Zechariah calls him, “Just and saviour, poor and riding upon an ass.” There are two proper virtues for a king, justice and piety. Your king is just, in respect of justice, rendering to each according to his works. He is meek, and a redeemer, with respect to piety. He is poor, as the Apostle says in today’s Epistle: “He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant” (Phil 2.7).