



THE ST. ANTHONY COMPANION

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2

Companions Pray for You Throughout the Year



The basket of Companions prayer petitions sits before the altar at the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City, Maryland.

Every day, friends from all over the country send the Companions of St. Anthony prayer petitions in handwritten letters, reply cards from our mailings, emails, Facebook messages, and voicemails. Praying to St. Anthony for his intercession with our Lord on behalf of our friends and benefactors has been a central ministry of the Companions since it began over 25 years ago. The Franciscan Friars Conventual of the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City, Maryland, their

brother Franciscans around the country and the world, and their lay prayer partners hold up these many petitions before God in many ways throughout the year.

When prayer petitions are mailed in to us, either on personal stationery or on reply forms from our mailings, they are read by our staff who pray for them immediately. Our lay Prayer Partners will often write an encouraging note to someone, reminding them that God loves them and that the Friars are

praying for them; other times they send a Mass card to someone grieving the loss of a loved one; sometimes they even call on the phone so that someone in

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The basket of monthly benefactors to the Companions of St. Anthony sits before the relics of St. Anthony at the Shrine of St. Anthony.

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dire need will hear the sound of a caring voice.

The lay Prayer Partners coordinate with the Friars for further prayer and pastoral out-

reach for many petitions. Petitions are placed in a basket outside the private chapel of the Friars at the Shrine of St. Anthony, and the Friars take a petition into prayer each time they

enter the chapel. Though the Friars of the Shrine personally pray for Companions petitions every day, in some cases, when a priest is needed immediately, a Friar will reach out to him or her. Lastly, some petitions are sent to Friars around the country who continue to pray for these intentions during their personal times of prayer.

On the third Saturday of each month, the lay Prayer Partners gather to pray for the many intentions that come in. Following Mass at the Shrine, the Prayer Partners retire to a private room to pray. This prayer takes many forms: some read petitions as they pray in their own words while others pray the Rosary while reading petitions, and some write notes, also. In

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Companions Comments

“Thank you for the wonderful items of St. Anthony that you send me. After hearing stories of St. Anthony, I’ve not only learned a lot about him but also about myself and what I can do for God.”

Friend of St. Anthony, Syracuse, NY

“I am writing to tell you of my deep love and devotion to St. Anthony. He has been my closest intercessor to Mary and the Trinity. Mostly I pray for my brother’s MS. St. Anthony has protected him from the harsh results of this disease for 20 years. Please continue to spread his love!”

Anonymous

“I received a miracle today. I went to the store and I left my pocket book on the basket. I returned right away when I realized what I had done. I was praying to St. Anthony, the Virgin Mary, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus to find my pocket book. When I arrived at the parking lot, the basket

was still there with my pocket book in it! I could not believe that after 20 minutes it would still be there. Thank you, St. Anthony.”

A.R., Springfield, MA



In April 2016, Companions Jay and Jean Dugas from Albuquerque, New Mexico visited the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City, Maryland.

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whichever form it takes, the petitions of our Companions are lifted up by their fellow lay Companions before our Lord.

Prayer petitions are present at many liturgies throughout the year. Every Tuesday, petitions from the prior week are taken in a basket to sit before the altar at the Shrine of St. Anthony for Mass and the Tuesday Novena to St. Anthony. These same petitions are taken back to the Shrine on Thursdays and placed before the Blessed Sacrament during Adoration. At the end of each month, the names of all benefactors to the Franciscans are placed in a basket before the relic of St. Anthony and are present at all Masses and liturgies for the following month. In this way, the intercession of St. Anthony is continued for an additional 30 days.

A special aspect of prayer at the Shrine is the lighting of candles in our chapel. Pilgrims come every day to seek St. Anthony's intercession at Mass and in private devotion before his relics. Many will end their pilgrimage by lighting a candle for their intentions. For all of the requests to light candles that are mailed in from around the country, the Friars of the Shrine light them throughout the week.

Lastly, Masses and Novenas are said multiple times throughout the year for the intentions of the Companions of St. Anthony. Besides daily and weekly Masses, your intentions are remembered during special Feast Days and Holy Days. We encourage you to send us your intentions to be included in these special Masses, which are listed in the schedule to the right.

As you can see, the intentions that our Companions send in to us are prayed over many, many times throughout the day, week, month, and year. It is a special blessing the Friars have to be entrusted with these needs, and it is their great privilege to have the opportunity to speak to God, through St. Anthony, on behalf of so many.

Visit www.companionsofstanthony.org to submit a prayer petition to the Friars online! In addition you can watch a video of thanks from Friars at the Shrine of St. Anthony!



Pilgrims Carlotta Salazar from Virginia and her sister Elizabeth Ledesma from Texas made the long journey to the Shrine of St. Anthony in March 2016 as part of their Lenten devotions.

Spiritual Benefits of Masses and Novenas for Companions of St. Anthony

- Novena to St. Anthony every Tuesday of the year
- August 11 Feast of St. Clare
- August 15 Feast of the Assumption/
St. Anthony Birthday
- September 18 Feast of St. Joseph Cupertino
- October 4 Feast of St. Francis
- Oct. 24-Nov. 1 All Souls Novena
- December 16-24 Christmas Novena
- December 25 Christmas Mass
- Nine days before Lent Novena
Ash Wednesday
- Nine days before Easter Novena
Easter Sunday
- Nine Days before St. Anthony Novena
June 13
- Daily Mass at the Shrine of St. Anthony
- Daily Mass at the Porciuncula Friary,
Provincial House
- Weekly Mass at the Tomb of St. Francis, Assisi, Italy
- Weekly Mass at the Tomb of St. Anthony,
Padua, Italy

Praying for the Intercession of the Saints

By Fr. Jude Winkler, OFM Conv.

One of the most consoling promises that Jesus has made to us is that whatever we pray for in His name will be granted. He has promised to be our intercessor with the Father, and that we will never feel cut off from the power of God.

If Jesus made this promise, then why should we bother praying for the intercession of the saints? Should we not simply pray to Jesus, trusting

that He will grant us whatever we need?

What is Prayer

Before we can address that question, there is a more basic question to ask. Does Jesus really grant all those things for which we pray? Very often we pray for something for years and years and we never seem to receive it. So what are prayers and how do they work?

At times we approach prayer as if God were a machine and we have to place the proper fuel in that machine to make it work. Our prayers are that fuel, and if we strike the proper mixture of novenas, candles and promises to reform our lives, then God is all but obliged to give us what we want.

At other times, we recognize that God might not grant us what we want. Therefore, our prayers seem more like tokens which we place in a slot machine. We say our prayers and pull the lever, hoping our three oranges—our miracle—will pop up.

Prayer as Relationship

All of this is to take a very mechanical approach to our relationship with God. God is not a machine which we prime with our prayer. God is a person, and our prayers are communication, an expression of love and trust. In prayer, we join our love to that of God and we trust that God will respond to our need in the most loving way possible. This is where some of the confusion lies. We almost always believe that the most loving response to our prayers would be to grant what we want when we want it. God often realizes that we can be more loving people if the response to our prayer is



A pilgrim, about to receive the Holy Eucharist, reaches out to touch the statue of St. Anthony, seeking his intercession.

not the miracle that we request. Sometimes we learn patience when our request is not granted, or we learn to trust in the midst of suffering, or we learn to persevere in our request.

Praying as a Community

Because prayer is an expression of love, we often ask others to join us in prayer for a particular need. It is not that we will develop a greater weight of prayer when more than one person is praying for a need. It is that when I express love, I naturally want others to participate in my love. It makes a difference when I am praying together with a friend or with my Church for a particular need. The more love that is expressed, the easier it is for us to respond to God's response with love and trust.

The Community of Saints

What has been said about wanting our family and friends to join us in prayer for a particular need can also be said of the saints. We can pray to God without asking for the intercession of the saints, but because our prayer is an expression of love, we want everyone in our community of love to join us in our prayer.

But who exactly are saints? At its broadest definition, saints are people who were so in love with God and with their sisters and brothers in this life that they continue to express that love even after their deaths. Their love is stronger than death. They will continue to express love for those who are

“Our prayer to the saints for their intercession in our time of need... is an act of faith in the belief that love is stronger than death.”

still on this earth until they are once again in Heaven.

Most of us have experienced this in our own lives. We have a favorite relative, or a husband or a wife who has passed away. At first, we were overwhelmed by the loneliness of separation. It feels as if all the love which we had shared had somehow been defeated and now we were all alone. Then one evening we felt a presence alongside of us. We were not afraid; we did not think it was a threatening presence. We simply knew that our loved one was there with us. We began to talk to that person. We began to feel the help of our loved one in difficult times.

The Church's Saints

This experience teaches us what the saints mean for us. The saints are all those who have gone to heaven. Yet, the Church has chosen certain men and women whom it has officially proclaimed as saints. These are women and men who were so courageous and generous in their love that everyone knows that they are in heaven. Their love was so large and expansive that they want to

reach out and embrace the whole world. These, in fact, are the two basic requirements for one to be canonized: that there be a devotion to that person and that the intercession of that person be proved through the miracles obtained by praying to that person. When this has been certified, the Church proclaims that these heroes are both examples of lived faith and intercessors in time of need.

Never Lonely

If we think of what all of this means, we realize that the heavens are literally packed with people who love us and who are willing to intercede for us. One of our greatest fears in the modern world is that we will be all alone and lonely. The doctrine of the communion of saints is the guarantee that we are part of a loving community which even death cannot separate. Our prayer to the saints for their intercession in our times of need, whether it be the saints from our own family or those saints whom the Church has officially proclaimed, is an act of faith in the belief that love is stronger than death.

“God Gave Us Brothers...”

Franciscan Vocation News

Investiture



On July 20, 2016 at the St. Francis of Assisi Friary Novitiate in Arroyo Grande, California, the Very Reverend Fr. Michael Zielke, OFM Conv., Minister Provincial of St. Bonaventure Province, presided and preached at Vespers for the 2016 Investiture Ceremony. There were fifty Friars in attendance, as we welcomed seven new Novices, vested in the habit of our Order. Our province congratulates our newest Novice: Friar Jason DeMartini.



Postulants

Left: Director of the St. Bonaventure Friary Postulancy, Friar Paschal Kolodziej, OFM Conv. (far left) & Assistant Director, Friar Anthony Lajato, OFM Conv. (far right) will direct our 16 new Postulants in a year of immersion into the Franciscan way of life, common prayer, class instruction, and outreach ministries.

Friar Nick Rokitka Ordained to Holy Priesthood

Right: It is with praise and gratitude to the Most High God that the Friars joyfully celebrated the ordination to the Holy Priesthood of our brother, Friar Nicholas John Rokitka, OFM Conv. conferred by Bishop John Eric Stowe, OFM Conv. of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky on June 25, 2016 at St. Casimir's Church in Baltimore, Maryland. The day was filled with joy and fraternity, as friars, family and friends from all over the province gathered in celebration. Pictured here are the newly ordained Fr. Nicholas and Bishop Stowe. Please pray for Father Nick in his ministry!



Simple Vows



On July 21, 2016 the Franciscan Friars Conventual of North America celebrated the joy of the Profession of Simple Vows (also known as First or Temporary) Vows of seven Novices, at St. Paul's Church, in Pismo Beach, California. Congratulations go to Friar Roberson Lubin, Friar Jacob Minjarez, Friar Brian Mary Tougher, Friar Jaime Zaragoza, Friar Timothy Blanchard, {bottom row} Friar Franck Lino Sokpolie, and Friar Marco Antonio Didden. Many thanks go to their Novitiate Formators: Director Fr. Giles Zakowicz, OFM Conv. (far left, back), and Assistant Director Fr. Maurice Richard, OFM Conv. (far right, back)!

Solemn Vows



Each summer, friars who are approaching their solemn, or final, vows make a special pilgrimage to Assisi to explore the rich Franciscan history of the area, accompanied by veteran friars. For the last week, the men continue delving into the life of St. Francis of Assisi and his followers, with a focus on living out their Franciscan calling. Pictured here are the four Friars with Our Lady of the Angels Minister Provincial, Fr. James McCurry (left to right: Antonio Sandoval, Don Bassana, Emanuel Vasconcelos, and Maximilian Avila. Please keep all the Franciscan Friars Conventual in formation in your prayers during this important step in their vocation.

Friar Nick Spano Ordained a Deacon



On Saturday, August 6, 2016, at San Damiano Mission in Brooklyn, New York, Friar Nicholas Spano, OFM Conv. was ordained a Transitional Deacon by the Bishop of Brooklyn, His Excellency, the Most Reverend Nicholas Anthony DiMarzio. Friar Nick was supported by many of the friars of our province, his family, friends and a large assembly of the people he serves. Please keep Friar Nicholas in your prayers.

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Visit us online at
www.companionsofstanthony.org

Sharing the Gift of Your Faith and Love

How can you ensure that the legacy of your earthly journey will live on?

A gift made to the Companions of St. Anthony through your Will can be used to share your faith in the Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ with the least of our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

Your legacy will live on through our service to the poor and needy in soup kitchens and homeless shelters, Catholic schools, hospitals, parishes and prison ministry. Your generosity will assist the Franciscan Friars Conventual serving in parish ministry, and as teachers, chaplains, counselors, preachers, in

retreat centers and youth programs and as missionaries in distant lands.

If you have already prepared a Will, a simple codicil can be added. If you have not yet written your Will, please contact an attorney to assist you.

Here are four options for making a bequest:

1. A Percentage of Your Estate

To leave a percentage of your estate to the Companions of St. Anthony, please state in your Will: "I give, devise and bequeath to the Companions of St. Anthony of Ellicott City, Maryland, _____% of my estate."

2. Specific Property

To leave a specific piece of your property, please state: "I give, devise and bequeath to the Companions of St. Anthony of Ellicott City, Maryland, (description of property), located at (exact location)."

3. Residue of Your Estate

The portion of your estate that is left after specific bequests to your family and loved ones have been distributed is referred to as the "Residue."

To leave such a bequest, please state: "All residue of my estate, including real and personal property, I give, devise and bequeath to the Companions of St. Anthony of Ellicott City, Maryland."

4. Specific Dollar Amount

A bequest of any amount will be deeply appreciated and would have an important impact in caring for the poor and needy. To leave a specific dollar amount, please state:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the Companions of St. Anthony of Ellicott City, Maryland, the amount of \$_____."

Please be assured that a revocable gift listed in your Will can be changed at any time.



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