



## Happy Mother's Day

Greetings to all of you in this month of May – one of the most beautiful months of the year and fittingly set aside in honor of that most beautiful Woman, Mary! This year the friars will once again have the honor of hosting a local Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima at the friary. Our Lady will be with the community from May 8 through May 29. All of you, our friends and benefactors, will be entrusted to the special care of Our Blessed Mother as the friars gather each day to pray with Her.

We have a full summer coming up at the friary. Our seminarians will be wrapping up their semester with final examinations in mid-May then returning to Annunciation Friary

for a couple of months. It will be great to have them home. Time keeps flying for them as they get closer and closer to ordination. If all continues according to plan Br. Leonard, Br. Patrick and Br. John Paul will all be ordained as transitional Deacons next Spring. Then, God willing, in the Spring of 2012 the three of them will be ordained to the Holy Priesthood together, and Br. Paschal will be ordained as a transitional Deacon. Keep praying for all four of our seminarians. It is such a joy to see the Holy Spirit at work in each of them, forming them as priests of Jesus Christ. We wait patiently but with great expectation for this great blessing that God is preparing for the Franciscan Missionaries in 2012.

Over the summer we will be hosting a couple of discernment retreats. Br. Patrick serves as our Vocation Director and exchanges emails or phone calls with several young men every week who are discerning a vocation to the Priesthood or Permanent Brotherhood. He has organized these *San Damiano Discernment Retreats* to provide some of these men with an opportunity to step apart from the world for a few days and listen with greater attention to the invitation of God. They are provided with a firsthand experience of Religious Life and attend conferences on the spiritual life and discernment. God always sends some great young men for these retreats, many of them future Priests or Brothers. Some are encouraged to pursue the diocesan priesthood and will end up serving you in your parishes one day. Others are helped to find a Religious Community that best suits the prayer life and sort of apostolate the man seems called to. And, yes, we always pray that God will lead some of them to become friars in our own community. Please join us in that prayer!

This August 14, Br. Pio and Br. John Paul will be making their Perpetual Profession of Vows. Both of these friars have been real gifts to our community since the first day they visited and when they entered back in October 2004. We are proud of them. Pray for Br. Pio and Br. John Paul as they make their 30-day retreat this summer and prepare to make this total gift of themselves to God in their final vows. Be sure to tune in to the televised Mass on August 14 to join them for this solemn occasion and to rejoice with us.

To all of our own mothers, to Mother Angelica and to our Blessed Mother, Mary, special blessings for a Happy Mother's Day!

Peace,  
Fr. Anthony Mary, MFVA  
Community Servant



### About the M.F.V.A.'s, "Missionarii Franciscani Verbi Aeterni"

As *Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word*, we are a religious order of Priests and Brothers, founded by Mother Mary Angelica, P.C.P.A., in 1987, who are seeking to live an authentic renewal of consecrated life in the Franciscan tradition. Living in obedience, without anything of our own and in chastity, we share a common life of prayer before the exposed Blessed Sacrament and in Total Consecration to the Mother of God according to St. Louis Marie de Montfort. As consecrated friars, we bear new names in religion of various Saints or Blesseds as well as Our Blessed Mother's.

We are dedicated to the work of evangelization - preaching and teaching the Catholic Faith so as to seek out the lost and make known to all men the love and salvation of Jesus Christ. "The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back." - *Ezekiel 34:16*

### Contact Information

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## A Unique Saint

Believe it or not, the saints were human just like us. It is easy to think that their lives were far different from ours. Many times we idealize the saints and put them on a pedestal and this affects our attitude toward the humdrum, wear-and-tear activity of everyday life. It seems to let us off the hook—they were the holy ones so that we do not have to be. This says something very important about us: that we are still in need of conversion, taking on the mind and the heart of Christ and striving for heroic holiness. We can be saints, and great ones too!

Let's take a quick look at the saints. Do you think the apostles were saints from the get-go? The Gospels give us a clear account of their weakness, their lack of faith in trying circumstances, their fear and pride. The apostolic community was arguing up to the very end about who was the greatest. Each had all-too-human ideas about who the Messiah was supposed to be and what he was supposed to do. Put some flesh-and-blood into the scriptures next time you read and the apostles



come to life. They were just like us. They had the same temperaments and tantrums, they became grumpy and grouchy and they had pet peeves and personalities. Still, it was the Lord who chose them to be His own.

We can come up with very creative reasons why we could never become holy. We are always making excuses

for what we did wrong and for not doing what we know is right. We forget that God is the one who accomplishes all that we do. It is God who calls each one of us to be a saint and gives us the grace to do so. He calls us in our everyday circumstances, in the present moment, to discern and to do His will. The holiness of the saints translates simply into trust and faith in our state in life.

We always want someone else to be the saint, to make our life a joy and to carry our burdens. Yet, in time and with prayer we will tire of looking "out there" for holiness and peace. The world will never satisfy us. Happiness is an inside job. The truth is that the Lord is already here for us, offering Himself at every moment to us. He has not left us orphans, but offers us His very life. He gives us the grace to accept every day as a gifted opportunity to love beyond even our own capacity.

It is time for us to make a decision to be a saint in the unique circumstances Continued on page 2 ...

# 40 Days for Life



During the 40 days of Lent some of the MFVA Friars joined the local 40 Days for Life group to pray outside of the Planned Parenthood abortion clinic located in Birmingham, AL.

## A Unique Saint Continued ...

of our life. God's Providence has ordered all things for our good, even the difficult, and He is the one we must please. To do this is hard (it may not always seem peaceful), it does take great faith and trust in the God who will carry out His good work in and through us. He will glorify Himself in us.

Be thankful to God for all of the graces He sends us everyday. Be thankful for others too. The saints did not become holy because they did not struggle...their lives show us that. They became saints moment by moment as they strove to unite themselves to God in the present moment and to do His work. God gives us the grace to become a

saint. We need to give our love to Him and wait patiently for our hope to come true.

Br. Paschal Mary, MFVA



**Quester's Corner**

Donations to our community can be sent via check (made payable to the **Franciscan Missionaries**) or online at [www.FranciscanMissionaries.com](http://www.FranciscanMissionaries.com)

*"May it please Thee O Lord to reward with eternal life, all those who do good to us for the sake of Thy Holy Name"*

# Easter 2010



The Holy Thursday Mass



The Easter Vigil



On Holy Thursday Fr. Anthony Mary celebrated the Mass of the Lord's Supper. He also washed the feet of the Friars. On the evening of Holy Saturday Fr. Mark Mary celebrated the Easter Vigil Mass. As seen above, Fr. Mark blesses the Easter Fire that was used to light the Paschal Candle.