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 Official Newsletter of Our Lady of Guadalupe Province, Order of Friars Minor, Albuquerque NM
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Franciscan Partners in Ministry . . .

— Bruce Michalek, ofm —

It was back in 1998 when the **Franciscan Partners Program** was officially started, thanks to a generous Grant of \$10,000 from the Sisters of St Agnes (*a.k.a. Agnesians*). Our first Partner was a young college graduate from Connecticut who volunteered at our then mission in Juarez, Mexico. Not only did the young man prove to be successful in his ministry but he also ended up finding the *love of his life* and marrying her. The young man, Glenn Gannon is still married and lives in San Francisco, CA.



*St Michael's Partners
 Robert Meehleib, Verna Mae Cardy, and
 Erlinda Saganan*

I wish I could say that all of the volunteer/friar matches were as successful as that first one but, unfortunately that is not the case. The Program has had its share of *bumps and bruises* along the way but I still believe that it has merit and that it can have a positive influence on the people that we serve.

The intent of the program is to provide lay ministers to our various mission sites so that they can be **mentors to the local native people**. The volunteers who come to us have varied backgrounds. The latest class of Partners include a retired airline baggage handler, a student nurse, and semi-retired teachers and laborers. They are all working and praying along side our friars at **St Michael's Mission, Ganado, Chinle, and Many Farms**. A unique feature about this group is that they are all local



*Mary, Mother of Mankind Church
 St Michael's AZ*

participants. The group of eight is made up of five Navajo and three Filipinos who are long term residents of the area.

I asked all of the Partners how they have been influenced by the Franciscans. Here are some of their comments:

“My influence by the Franciscans probably was even before I was born. My mother was given a prayer card (by Fr Cormac, RIP) for a girl and I was born on April 17. I grew up around the Franciscans.” . . . “The Holy Spirit inspired and drew me to St Francis. I saw the movie, ‘Brother Sun, Sister Moon’ before I had my first child and I named him Francis and he was actually born



Our Lady of Fatima Church at Chinle

on October 4th (the Feast Day of St Francis).” . . . “In the spirit of St Francis, I have become more active in the service of my neighbors. It has allowed me to be more compassionate and forbearing.” . . .

“Franciscan mission and simple living teaches me to be humble, patient, and a God fearing person.” . . . “The Franciscans gave me a spiritual home. They live in the Gospel and they provide their care for the poor and oppressed.” . . . “The Franciscans have

taught me to be more prayerful. They have helped me in my recovery from alcohol (14 years sober). Showed me how to help others joyfully.” . . . “I have learned that there is a joy in working to help others.”

With the exception of the one student nurse, all of the others are “second career” vocations. *Proof positive that one is never too old to answer God’s call.*

And, what do they do? Here’s a short list of their ministries: *Teaching RCIA; AA meetings; aiding transients with temporary housing and dry goods; Food Pantry; helping with Sunday bingo; transport people for medical appointments; Eucharistic Minister; building and land maintenance; museum docent; Lector; Catechetical teacher; ushering; Sunday bulletin editor; altar servers; sacristan; and book keeping.*



*Ganado Franciscan Partner
Mike Sandoval*

in the Program. They receive the same monthly stipend but are not eligible for health insurance.

The volunteers come with a willingness to commit themselves to ministry for a period of twelve months. We provide them with a monthly stipend of \$250.00 to cover their food and personal expenses. We also provide them with health insurance. The host site must provide housing and transportation if the Partner is coming from another part of the country. Since this particular group of



*Chinle and Many Farms Partners
Liana Garcia, Mary Ann Burbank, Chlowie
Decena and Oscar Arnante*



St Anthony Chapel at Many Farms

Application Forms for Franciscan Partners are available for the asking. The process of acceptance includes letters of recommendation, educational background, job/ministry history, and a Verified Volunteers background check. **Associate Partners** are men and women currently volunteering at the mission site who have been loyal and faithful volunteers for multiple years. They are recommended by the local Friar community for participation



All Saints Church at Ganado

volunteers are all local, there is no need for housing. I am constantly amazed and humbled at the generosity of these wonderful volunteers. They are a **real example of Catholic Christian maturity**. They have accepted their baptismal calling to be ministers.

Mystery of History: Lotario Ortega, Part II

— Brother Bernard Keele —

[While that which Lotario Ortega describes in his childhood experience as son of a trader living on or near the Navajo Reservation from a bygone era, may seem strange and far away, we can, as Franciscans today, clearly relate to the places, the sights, and the interactions his family conducted with the native people. Whether it is places like St. Michael's Mission, Ganado, the road to Gallup, the



Br Bernard

mountains near the Arizona border or objects such as Navajo blankets and rugs, essential commodities, or the cultural and spiritual aspects of the people that pervade and surround the senses, this experience is common to many, but paradoxically unique to all. To hear from a 'non-native' who has lived among the Navajo, it is not difficult to detect in their descriptions and stories the signs and clues of a perspective remarkably similar that of a student - not a teacher. Like that of follower, and less a leader. Like that of a bystander, and less a participant. An open-hearted life-experience on the reservation is still enmeshed with the richness of wonder, gratitude, and the trust of a child, confronted with the hardships of learning - as if for the very first time. Mutuality, reciprocity, respectful dialogue springing from an authentic place in the heart are still cherished values Franciscans hold dear as ambassadors of peace, mercy, love and

solidarity.

History can be argued, I think, to possess a neutral quality. However, like a tool in a bag of resources, what do we do with it moving forward in time? History is just there. It is a story. It is what happened. We can learn if we choose to be students of it. We can better understand the present in light of the context that history provides. We can use this 'history' to formulate our goals with properly assessed dimensions. We can use history to better define objects and circumstances that confront us. History is also 'inspiration'. History is 'understanding'. History is 'direction'. History is 'value', 'healing', 'clarity' and certainly indispensable for communication.

As a reader, I hope you have been enjoying these series of articles on the 'mystery' of our history as it has related to our Franciscan presence with the Navajo people since the late 1800's. - Br. Bernard Keele]

Continuation of Interview (August 25, 2017) with Lotario Ortega (b. 1922), son of Navajo trader Lotario Ortega, Senior, Veteran and retired lawyer with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Albuquerque, NM.:



Lotario Ortega

"I came to know Navajo primarily by what you would call osmosis. I was in the store helping my folks. I didn't wait on customers. They did that mostly and I would just listen to the conversation between my father and mother and these people. We spoke very little Spanish - mostly - although my folks [were] fluent in Spanish - so was I - but I learned that from my grandmothers. We didn't speak Spanish in our house - all this time - so my knowledge of Navajo is primarily quantities [and] numbers. I

can still remember my numbers and recite them from one to a hundred - any time you want. [1] – t'áálá'í, [2] – naaki, [3] – táá', [4] – di'I', [5] – ashdla', [6] – hasta'a', [7] – tsosts'id, [8] – tseebíi, [9] – náhást'éi, [10] – neeznáá - and on infinitely. I never forgot my numbers,



Fr Berard Heile, ofm - second from left- recording Navajo words. Can anyone identify the other friar?

and I never forgot the commodities. Like sugar was 'áshiih likan'. 'Ashiih' is the Navajo word for 'salt' while 'likan' is sweet-salt. And onions were called 'tl'ohchin'. Potatoes were called 'nímasii yázhí'. 'Yázhí'. Why 'yázhí'? I don't know. 'Yázhí' is 'small', so apparently [this was] to distinguish from bigger potatoes. And I got to learn the word for horses - 'li'í'...and for cows - 'béégashii'. And for sheep - 'dibé'. So my knowledge of Navajo is primarily commodities, goods ,and numbers.”

“Most of my contact with the Franciscan priests were with my attendance at Sunday mass. I went to school five days a week in Gallup and there I had contact with the priests that were assigned to the Sacred Heart Church and the school.

And I wasn't too familiar with the particular priests at St. Michael's except those that I came in contact with on Sundays. And [at] the school that I went to, we learned to serve mass. And, of course, to serve mass in those days, you had to be able to respond to the priest in Latin - on all the prayers. And I was the only one in the congregation - since most of them were Navajo people, - who had any knowledge of Latin or Latin prayers. So I got to be a pretty familiar person at the Sunday Mass. The one I remember the most was Father Berard [Fr. Bernard Haile O.F.M. d. 1961]. Father Berard is a little, short, - very small man - but the saintliest person I ever come across - including Father Jerome [Fr. Jerome Hesse O.F.M. d. 1966], who was also a saintly individual. Anyway, I got to know them by where they were assigned. Like at one time, Father Emmanuel [Fr. Emmanuel Trockur O.F.M. d. 1977], who had been one of the priests in the St. Michael's area, he was assigned at Houck, [AZ] which is on Highway 66 south of St. Michael's. And I got to associate the priests with the parish that they were assigned to.”



*(L-R) Fr Jerome Hesse, ofm
Fr Emmanuel Trockur, ofm
Br Francis, ofm
Br Gervase, and unknown.*

“The one I remember most vividly, other than Father Berard was Father Arnold Heinzmann [d. 1941]. He was a big man - big and heft. And a very interesting individual because he had the ability - if you want to call it that - to do business. He could buy and sell



Fr Berard Heile, ofm

property. He could buy and sell commodities to supply this great number of Catholic missionaries that were assigned to him. So he had to make sure that they could supply the needs of the priests there. And one of the things that I remember was that he purchased a farm that was on the road just north of St Michael's on the Black River towards Fort Defiance. Well it was a nice farm but they had to have somebody to farm it, and of course, Navajo people did not have that kind of background. So he came across a German family. And I say 'German' because I think the man spoke German. The family name was 'Schmaltz' and the woman may not have been German. Anyway, they had a bunch of children. Here, he has a built in family - and we are talking a lot of

children - and they know how to farm. And they know how to raise cows, and whatever else goes into

the farm. And they were there supplying the group at St. Michael's - the group of priests - and what is in the back of a parish [later Lotario recalled the word 'friary'] - I don't know. Anyway, they had to minister to a lot of people there and they had to supply all these priests with something to eat - and there was this farm. As it turns out this particular group of people [the Schmalz family] intermarried with people in Gallup. The reason why they could intermarry is because these people were all Catholic. They could intermarry in Gallup because [the others] were either Irish or Croatian, both of whom were Catholic. So they intermarried and started dynasties of their own - if you want to call it that."

To Be Continued . . .

Into Our Traditions #15 October 2017

— Jack Clark Robinson, ofm —

If our local communities are our privileged place of encounter with God, as I have spoken of them in the last few months, then there is something else that we must remember: we do not have local chapters because we live in community, we live in community so that we can have truly fraternal and real local chapters! If we are not truly living together, our local chapters could be, would be, purely theoretical affairs. But because we live together, we know which friar left the dirty dishes in the sink and which friar washed them. If we did not live together, we would not know which friars are surly and silent at meals, and which friars are ready to share the stories of the day, the stories of that day's encounter with God through others, even if the stories are not uplifting, but puzzling or sad or challenging.



Dishes in the sink and stories at the table indicate lives of service along with moments of contemplation and theological reflection. They are the building blocks of Franciscan life. They are Franciscan life! They are God on the ground! Real chapters are places for encountering God because they are places for encountering our brothers. And we encounter them most deeply when we know them deeply through frequent interaction with one another. House Chapters must at times deal with the business matters of budgets, practical statements of our deepest values applied to our financial resources. They must deal with schedules, practical statements of our deepest values applied to our resources of time. Chapters must deal with house duties and maintenance, practical statements of our deepest values applied to our working with and for each other, as well as our care of our most immediate environment. But House Chapters must also be places for encountering God, because we are ready and willing to deeply know and to deeply share with our brothers our faith and the call to Franciscan living God places in our hearts and lives.

The General Constitutions speak of the local chapter just this way: *Article 240, §1 The local Chapter, at which the Guardian or his substitute presides, constitutes the fraternal government of a House, in accordance with the General Constitutions, the Statutes and rules of procedure. §2 In Houses where there is no Discretorium the local Chapter functions as the council of the Guardian.* Without living together, sharing our lives and faith, how could we hope to possibly be a fraternal governance for each other, or to serve as a true council for the Guardian, who is to be "our brother in charge," with all of the understanding, care and compassion which that implies?

Article 241: It is the duty of the local Chapter, particularly through dialogue, to study and promote common projects, to foster harmony and an active and responsible cooperation among all, to examine and evaluate what has been done by the fraternity or by individual friars, and to treat of matters

of major importance. The local Chapter can be the most immediate and deepest source of renewal of our fraternal lives by keeping alive within each of us through real life experiences of dialogue, what it means to truly work out something when we did not necessarily begin with a common idea, harmony and cooperation. The examples of dialogue that we offer each other and the world, not by always agreeing but by always being committed to being agreeable with one another, sharing our best selves, even when we do not share the same point of view on the matters before us speak of real fraternity. We must examine and evaluate what is done by the fraternity and by each of us within it. No community and no one grows without honest and helpful criticism. If we are not up to challenging ourselves to become better communities and friars, we will undoubtedly fall into habits and practices that will chip away at our spiritual, fraternal and ministerial life. We will become lesser brothers, rather than Friars Minor. *Article 242, §1 All the solemnly professed friars in each House make up the local Chapter. §2 The particular Statutes are to make provision for the manner in which those friars not yet solemnly professed are to participate in the local Chapter.* We need each other! All of us! Always! Everywhere!

Here is a corresponding thought from the General Statutes: *Article 32, §1 It pertains to the Guardian to promote and regulate all work in his respective House. He is to remember however, that his principal responsibility is to unite and protect the Friars assigned to the various tasks in the fraternity. §2 It is the responsibility of the local Chapter not only to deal with the problems regarding the progress of work, evangelization and pastoral care, but also to seek solicitously reports on the work of each Friar in order to establish and foster fraternal communion.* The Guardian is to be about uniting and protecting the Friars, chiefly from distractions which could arise from their work, and to keep them in fraternal communion, while all of us are to seek to grow in our fraternal life by knowing and caring about the work of all our brothers. We need each other! All of us! Always! Everywhere! First and foremost we need vibrant local communities, where we can truly know each other, and be known to each other; care for each other, and be cared for by each other, all as brothers! The best of our tradition calls us to “act locally” to produce a global, fraternal good.

Jack's Journeys

Sat-Mon, 7-16 Oct Host ESC, General Minister and Definitorium in the Province
Mon-Thur, 16-19 Oct Juntos como Hermanos Meeting at A Becoming Place
Sat, 21 Oct Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library 50th Anniversary Celebration
Tue, 24 Oct Eucharistic Day with the Poor Clares
Thur, 26 Oct Business Advisory Committee
Fri, 27 Oct Academy of American Franciscan History Meeting



Birthdays Greetings . . . 24 October 1975 – Miguel Alcantar

Please consider sending in articles for the Padre's Trail Newsletter. Pictures are very much appreciated but you should also include descriptions of the people or places in the pictures. I have not yet mastered the art of mind reading! Thanks . . .

Bruce Michalek, OFM — Editor Pro-tem, Padre's Trail