



THE ST. ANTHONY COMPANION

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 1

A Special Provincial Visit & Blessing

Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv. travels to Normandy, France to visit and bless the newly installed stained glass window of Fr. Ignatius Maternowski, OFM Conv.



The stained glass window of Fr. Ignatius Maternowski, OFM Conv., a Friar and U.S. Army chaplain killed during World War II D-Day invasion in Normandy, France, in its permanent installation in La Petite Chapelle de Cauquigny in Normandy.

June 6, 1944 is one of the most momentous dates in world history.

It is of course the date of the D-Day Invasion of Normandy, France in which Allied nations, led by the United States, invaded the beaches of France, beginning an assault that ultimately led to the liberation of Western Europe and the defeat of Nazi Germany.

More than 4,000 Allied military personnel are estimated to have been killed that day in one of the greatest sacrifices ever known for the cause of freedom.

Among the casualties was Army Captain Ignatius Maternowski, a Franciscan priest and chaplain with the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division.

In the early morning hours of the fateful day, Fr. Maternowski parachuted into the hamlet of Gueutteville with a large number of troops and immediately began ministering to wounded paratroopers

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YOUR SAVINGS,
YOUR LEGACY

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and the crew of an American glider, which had crashed nearby.

Fr. Maternowski quickly led efforts to transform a small cafe into a makeshift field hospital. Seeking to protect the wounded and other men under his command, Fr. Maternowski crossed enemy lines, wearing the red cross armband which identified him as a non-combatant. The Geneva Conventions had protected the safety of all wartime wounded, dying and non-combatants since 1929.

Fr. Maternowski invited a German officer to inspect the cafe to verify that it was indeed a medical facility and posed no threat to the Germans.

The effort cost him his life as he was shot in the back and killed by an enemy sniper when returning to his troops. He was just 32 years old, in the 5th year of his priesthood, and would become the only US Chaplain killed on D-Day.

The La Petite Chapelle de Cauquigny is a tiny, 800 year old chapel near the site of some of the fiercest fighting on D-Day and very close to the area where Fr. Ignatius was killed. And the church's interior was deemed the perfect place for a commemorative stained glass window, commissioned by the Our Lady of the Angels Province.

Created by renowned artist Joseph K. Beyer of the Beyer Studios in Philadelphia, Pa., the window depicts Fr. Maternowski in his Franciscan habit, standing in the French countryside, at dawn, with his Army helmet under his arm and his 82nd Airborne jacket, showing the red cross armband, in his hand. Various religious and military images also grace the magnificent piece of art, which was installed earlier this year.

In November, 2021, the Very Rev. Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv., Minister Provincial of the Our Lady of the Angels Province, traveled to France to see and bless the window. During his visit, Fr. James concelebrated a Mass with Fr. Marie Bernard Seigneur, the Parish Priest of Picauville and Sainte-Mère-Église.

"Father Ignatius shed his blood here in the soil of Normandy a few hours after he arrived," said Fr. McCurry during his homily. "He was the only American chaplain who died on D-Day. He offered his life for you, at the age of thirty-two years, as a martyr for the cause of human rights. His death gave testimony to the Gospel passage: "Whoever loses his life [for God's holy purposes] will save it" [cf. Luke 17:33]. Perhaps some-

day, the Catholic Church will declare Father Ignatius a "blessed," and eventually a "saint." Now, for you and for me, Father Ignatius is already regarded as a "holy" man of God, whose memory we invoke with honor, devotion, gratitude, and prayer."

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A close-up view of the Fr. Ignatius Maternowski stained glass window, created by Joseph Beyer of the Beyer Studios in Philadelphia, Pa., and installed in the La Petite Chapelle de Cauquigny in Gueutteville, France, near the where Fr. Maternowski was killed.

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Fr. James went on to describe Fr. Ignatius as a man of three distinct identities: Friar, Priest and Army Chaplain.

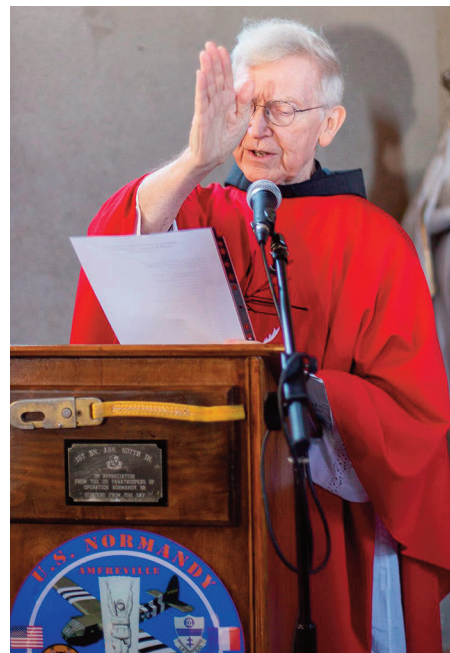
“He died wearing the uniform of the 82nd Airborne Division of the Army of the United States,” continued Fr. James. “However, he only wore the uniform of a chaplain, because he had first been called to wear the uniform of the Franciscan Order and the vestments of the Priesthood. He wore different clothes to manifest his different identities to particular communities, but all three of these uniforms signified one common message: Father Ignatius’s Christian love for all people, and his commitment to defend the dignity of every human person.

“Even now, in a secular and pluralistic age, this Catholic, Franciscan, Army captain – a simple boy from the small town of Holyoke, Massachusetts – embodies the very

highest aspirations of any branch of the human family. His commitment to the dignity of the human person was absolute. Now, because of this new stained-glass window, every person walking into Cauquigny Chapel can contemplate these truths. Every visitor can leave this chapel inspired by the conviction that love for humanity must know no limits, as evidenced by the life and death of Father Ignatius.”

Fr. James closed his remarks with the following Benediction:

O God of the sea, the air, and the earth -- God of sailors, airmen and soldiers -- send your blessing on this stained glass window in honor of the holy and heroic chaplain, Father Ignatius Maternowski, a Franciscan Friar and a Catholic priest. That all people who cross the sacred threshold of this chapel, and who meditate on the life and death of Father Ignatius, will be empowered to defend human rights, and to praise you, the Creator,



Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv. during his November visit to La Petite Chapelle de Cauquigny in France, where he blessed the installed stained glass window of Fr. Ignatius Maternowski, OFM Conv.

for the dignity of every human person. May Father Ignatius' example of boundless love inspire all who pray in this chapel near the place of his holy death.

I bless this stained glass window, +in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, with the hope that this sacred space will always be a place where hope overcomes despair, light overcomes darkness, faith overcomes doubt, joy overcomes sadness, and Love overcomes Hate--a place where the victory of goodness triumphs, by Your grace now and forever.

Amen.

Please look for additional coverage of Fr. Maternowski's story in the Fall issue of The St. Anthony Companion as we chronicle events from the 78th D-Day Anniversary to be held in June, 2022.



The Fr. Maternowski memorial resides about a mile from the grounds of La Petite Chapelle de Cauquigny. It depicts him administering the sacrament of Last Rites to a dead serviceman, shortly before Fr. Maternowski lost his own life trying to protect his men and the wartime rights of casualties of combat as offered by the Geneva Conventions.

Lord, what do YOU want me to do?

By Fr. Alex Cymerman, OFM Conv.



A portrait of St. Francis of Assisi depicting him in prayer with the Stigmata, or wounds, of Christ.

*“Lord, make me an Instrument
of Your peace:*

*Where there is hatred, let me
sow love; Where there is injury,
pardon;*

*Where there is error, truth;
Where there is doubt, faith;*

*Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;*

Where there is sadness, joy.”

That’s the iconic “Peace Prayer of St. Francis,” which was not written by St. Francis. Adopted by all Franciscans because it certainly expresses his mind, heart, and soul, it was written by someone with a Franciscan heart, in France, prior to World War II. The sentiments appear in

the writings of St. Francis, and his biographies show many examples of those virtues.

Pope John XXIII visited the tomb of St. Francis in Assisi to pray the day before he opened Vatican Council II. Pope Paul VI, in the first-ever papal visit to the U.S., addressed the United Nations on the Feast of St. Francis on Oct. 4, 1965, and famously pleaded, “No more war; war never again!” (“Jamais la guerre...!”) Pope John Paul II invited the leaders of all the world’s religions to Assisi each Oct. 4 to pray for world peace. And our current Vicar of Christ, a Jesuit, chose the name “Francis.” Many won-

dered which “Francis”? Might it be St. Francis Xavier, the great Jesuit missionary? The new Pope made it clear: It was “Francis of Assisi,” whose spirit and spirituality are desperately needed in today’s Church and world.

Born in medieval Assisi in 1182 to Pietro Bernadone, a wealthy cloth merchant, and his wife, Lady Pica, he was baptized “John.” Pietro was in France buying precious textiles when his son was born, but upon his return home, the father called his son “Francesco” – due to his love for all things French. The young and popular Francesco enjoyed a life

of luxury and followed his dream of becoming a knight.

Born into a good Catholic family who loved God and the Church, he prayed for many things: for health, for family and friends, for success as a knight, and for a lady-love. Injured in a skirmish between Assisi and a neighboring town, he returned home humiliated and very sick. He suffered a period of restless confusion until he was inspired to pray to God in a very different way. There his biography ends – and his real life begins.

In a small, run-down chapel outside Assisi, he prayed before the Cross of San Damiano: “Lord, what do YOU want me to do?”

Rather than asking for things, he was seeking direction: What was it that God wanted! The Lord answered: “Francis, rebuild my house which, as you can see, is falling to ruins.” Looking around, he saw that the place needed some fixing. That’s what he did—he fixed up a few old churches in the area. Some friends began to help, but before long, Francis – and his friends – discerned that the Lord was talking about more than construction. The Church of the Middle Ages was not quite what Jesus had intended. Wealthy and corrupt clergy, wars and killing, neglect of the poor, were all rampant.

Francis and his companions set upon a life and lifestyle to renew the Church. And that’s what they did! Teaching and preaching were their tools of renewal and rebuilding. Francis often said: “Preach always. When necessary, use words.” In other words, live the Gospel!

There is much more to say, but time and space limit me to his early life. What I suggest is that, like Francis, we are all called to be saints. That doesn’t mean acting “sweetly” and wearing a golden halo. Francis – and all saints at some point – discerned the following: Christ is more than belonging to a parish. That’s an important start. If and when we get to where we can honestly pray, “Lord, what do YOU want me to do,” the Lord will answer – and invite us to live both in the presence of the Lord and to live the presence of the Lord.

In Matthew, Ch. 28, Jesus sent His followers to teach all people what He taught them, and He promised He would not leave them – or us – orphans. He would always be with us and within us. Our Gospel is a call to mission. Like St. Francis said, “Preach always. If necessary, use words!”

*“Lord, make me an
instrument of
Your peace.”*

Our world and, yes, our Church, need rebuilding. We are falling to ruin. If you want a good prayer experience, when you are watching the news, surfing the internet, or scrolling through social media, believe that Jesus Christ is your guest. (Maybe even put a sacred image on that chair next to you to make it real!) As the news stories are told, ask Jesus what he thinks about that. I’ll bet you know! That may inspire how we think about the events of the day. Then, what can we do about it?

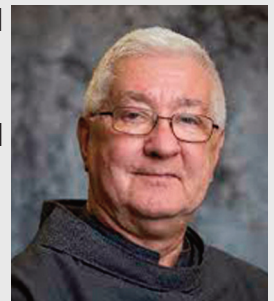
All through history the Church and the secular world have been plagued with problems. What saves us are those few people who honestly pray, “Lord, what do YOU want me to do?” The Lord tells them. And they do it. That’s true of the Church and secular society too.

So, my friends, St. Francis is not just for the birds. His story is meant to teach you and me that if we truly ask God, “what are we to do,” God will tell us.

So, let’s ask, then listen, and let’s do it.

About Fr. Alex

Fr. Alex B. Cymerman, OFM Conv., is currently retired near his Alma Mater, St. Francis High School in Athol Springs, NY, and thanks God for his 50-year priestly ministry serving in our Franciscan high schools, seminaries, and parishes in the northeast USA. His happiest memories are serving as Formation Director in the 1970's and 1980's; and as the "senior friar in residence" at our common novitiates in Indiana and California. He enjoys printing a weekly Gospel Reflection for family and friends. All that and Greek Yogurt, too.

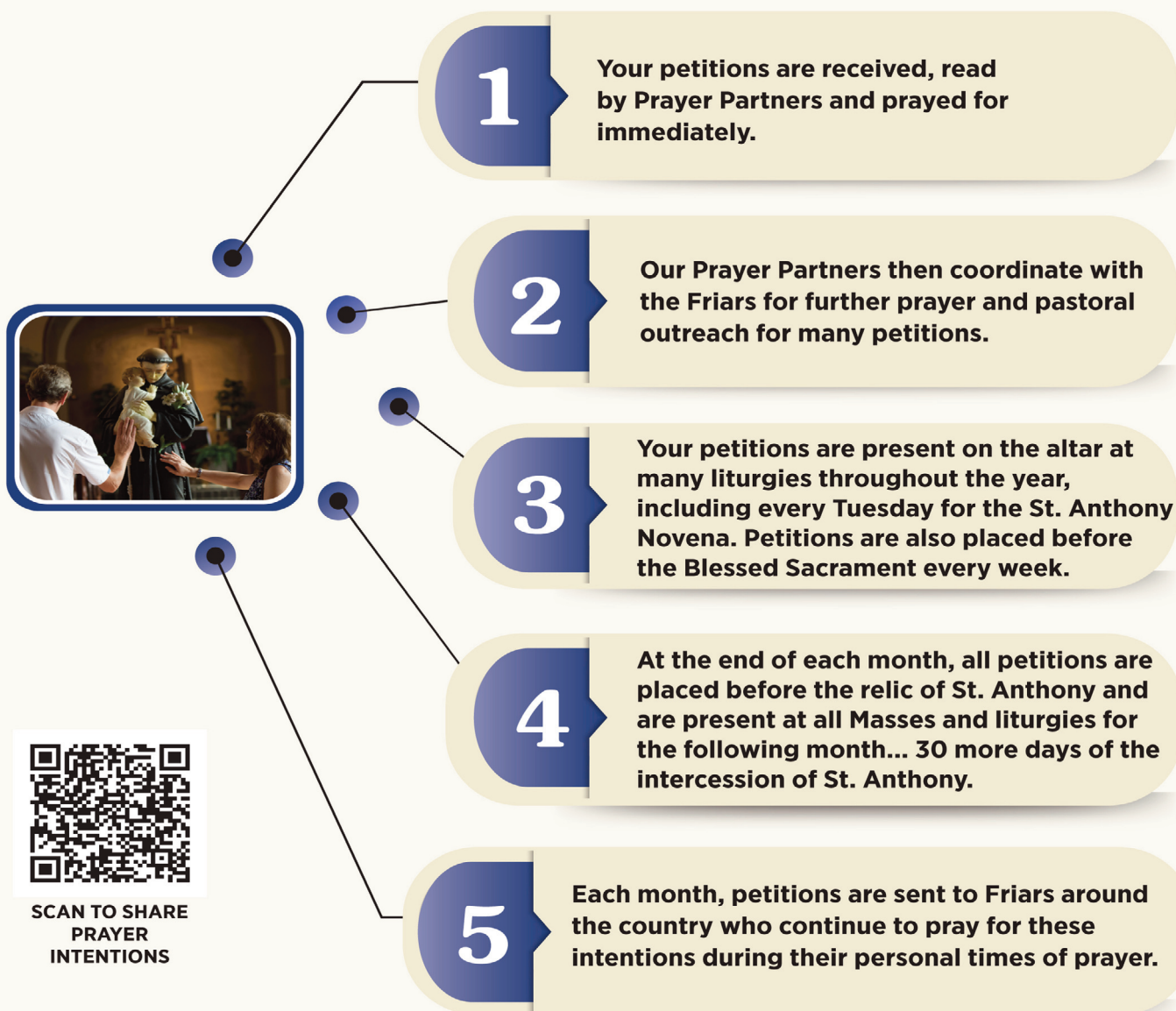


The Benefits of Your Prayers

Praying to St. Anthony for his intercession with our Lord on behalf of our friends and benefactors has been a central ministry for the Companions of St. Anthony since we began 30 years ago. We take this responsibility seriously and thought you might like to see exactly how we carry out this ministry on your behalf. Thus, we created the graphic depicted below to illustrate what happens after your prayers are submitted.

Your Prayer Benefits

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 30 years ago.



As you can see, you and your intentions are prayed over many, many times throughout the day, week, month, and year.

Visit us at:



183158

MISSION REPORT

Future Friars Need Your Help Today

As a fellow Companion of St. Anthony, you may not realize just how far your constant prayers and generous support travel and how deeply they change lives.

You go with us into 67 countries around the world where hundreds of young men hear God's call to serve and look to the Franciscan Friars Conventual for guidance every day.

And thanks to Companions like you, these same young men seeking religious life find a home where they can better discern their faith and vocation through the process known as formation.

The Franciscan Friars Conventual are excited to welcome these "future Friars" of modest means and backgrounds into one of our 86 houses of formation.

One of the houses that is bustling with activity is the St. Bonaventure Friary in Brazil where 10 aspirants and postulants,



Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv. (Center on hood of car), Minister Provincial of the Our Lady of the Angels Province, enjoying a visit to our new House of Formation in Brazil with student friars and staff.

and their educators, work together as they grow in faith.

The formation program in Brazil differs greatly from that in the United States. Unlike its U.S. counterparts, Brazil's aspirants spend their first year of formation in a non-academic setting.

Every Saturday the aspirants devote the day to baking bread – which they sell at the various parishes and convents, generating funds to support their formation program.

At least twice a week, they and their educators go out to celebrate liturgy (and provide the music) at the local Carmelite Nuns monastery, as well as one of the Capuchin churches.

The big challenge is transporting all 13 members of the community in two small cars. Every excursion requires more than one trip!

Next year we expect our numbers to grow and St. Bonaventure Friary will be a community of 20.

Our goal is to buy a 16-passenger van at a cost of \$40,000. Bread sales alone cannot cover a purchase this large. We pray for the help of Companions like you. Please consider making a gift today!

FRIARS FACTS:



FMA
Franciscan Mission Association

The above article is a condensed version of a piece on the FMA web site. From the beginning, the Companions of St. Anthony have supported the missionary works of the Franciscan Friars Conventual around the world. Help us share the hope of the Gospel. Please give today! www.franciscanmission.org.

Remember the Companions with a IRA Distribution

IRA Charitable Rollover

70 $\frac{1}{2}$
or older

Direct Up To
\$100,000

YOUR SAVINGS, YOUR LEGACY



Avoid taxes on transfers of up to \$100,000 from your IRA to support our cause.



Satisfy some or all of your required minimum distribution for the year.



Reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions.



Make a gift that is not subject to the deduction limits on charitable gifts.



Use your rollover to make payments on an existing pledge to us.

As you may already know, the IRS requires everyone to take a Required Minimum Distribution from their qualified retirement accounts at 70-1/2, if you turned 70-1/2 prior to 2020, or 72 if you turned 70-1/2 after Jan. 1, 2020.

To lessen the impact of these distributions on your taxable income, you can take advantage of a charitable IRA rollover to make a meaningful gift to the Companions of St. Anthony.

At 70-1/2 or older, you can transfer up to \$100,000 a year from your IRA to a qualified charity. If your spouse has a separate IRA, he/she can also make a charitable IRA rollover gift. The amount of the transfer will not be included in your taxable income and the transfer amount can count toward the IRA's required minimum distribution.

For an individual with a traditional IRA, with a required minimum distribution of \$30,000, such a distribution would be taxable at a marginal tax rate of 35 percent.

Using a charitable IRA rollover, however, this person could instruct his or her plan administrator to transfer \$30,000 to the Companions of St. Anthony, and the \$30,000 will no longer be included in his or her taxable income. This individual could also choose to direct a portion of the required minimum distribution, or a greater amount, not to exceed \$100,000, to the Companions.

IS THE CHARITABLE IRA ROLLOVER FOR YOU?

The charitable IRA rollover may be particularly appealing if:

- You want to make an outright gift to the Companions of St. Anthony that will have an immediate impact.
- You have a required minimum distribution, but do not need additional taxable income. A charitable IRA rollover can satisfy the requirement with a direct transfer.

- You have maxed out your charitable income tax deductions. An IRA distribution operates separately from tax rules that limit the tax benefit of individual charitable giving.

- You do not itemize your income tax deductions. If your IRA distribution goes directly to the Companions of St. Anthony, the amount of your distribution is never considered taxable income to you in the first place.

**TO LEARN MORE CONTACT
YOUR FINANCIAL ADVISOR
OR CALL US TOLL FREE AT**

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