

# THE FRANCISCANS

October 4, 2009

Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi

Dear Friends,

May the Lord give you peace!

I'm writing to you on this feast day to ask for your help. The following words are from a message that Saint Francis of Assisi gave to his first friars:

*Wherever the brothers may be and meet one another, let them show that they are members of the same family. When any brother falls sick, the other brothers must serve him as they would wish to be served themselves and, in case of the greatest need, they can entrust him to someone who should do what needs to be done for his sickness.*

Throughout our lives as friars, we are called to care for one another. This is especially true when our physical bodies require additional support or attention. In his own lifetime, Saint Francis had to rely on his brothers to look after him, and when they didn't have adequate resources, he had to entrust the care of his own sick and failing eyes to the Pope's personal physician.

Today, the Franciscans turn to you—our friends, coworkers and supporters in ministry—for help in caring for our friars in need. Working together, we can provide for our elder friars' needs and continue to be God's leaven in our world by the witness of our fraternity-in-mission.



Celebrating 50 years as friars, the class of 1959 gathered to share their golden jubilee.

Our elder friars spent their earlier years serving God and all of us. Whether we were just starting out in our life of faith, or starting a family, or grieving the loss of a loved one, or facing the challenges that come with any new beginning or ending, these friars comforted, encouraged and guided us when we needed their kindness, faith and wisdom.

Now, we're the family that must help them, just as they have helped us. Today I ask you to give generously to support our elder friars, men who continue to give to us, even in the humble act of receiving our care.

Following the 800-year-old tradition of Saint Francis of Assisi and his followers, our elder friars have preached the good news of Christ through the examples of their lives and through a great variety of works, each according to his own particular gifts and calling.

These elder brothers fed the hungry, sheltered the homeless, taught in schools and universities, prayed quietly while practicing skilled trades, guided others in private and public prayer, reached out to share the Gospel with people of other lands and languages, and reached in to visit those confined to homes, hospitals and prisons.

Even now, living with the challenges that accompany physical aging, many of our elder friars continue to serve the larger community—assisting pastors and parishes, spending time with visitors at retreat centers and historic missions, holding us all in quiet prayer.



Father Ponchie Vasquez, OFM, and Father Peter Krieg, OFM, enjoy an afternoon together at an assisted living center. When a friar needs more help than a friary can offer, nearby care centers allow us to provide good care and sustain fraternal life.

As a sign of appreciation for their years of dedicated service, you can help us to provide these friars with the treatments, medications and assisted living or nursing care that they require. It's only with your assistance that the Franciscans can meet these needs adequately.

Moreover, your gift will honor the memory of our friars who have died this past year. Their years of faith now find completion in the embrace of their Creator, and they remain in the memories of those of us who knew them.

The Franciscans turn to you for a charitable contribution today. Please help us to provide the things our elder friars need. And, as always, we ask for your prayers, the spiritual enrichment sustaining our strength and vision, now and for the future.

Your generous support—support for men whose lives of service have become testaments to the goodness of God—truly makes a difference!

Yours in Christ and Saint Francis,

Brother John Summers, OFM



Brother Timothy Arthur (on the left, talking with the Minister General of the Franciscan Order) has worked tirelessly as an archivist for many years, preserving the history of the friars. Recently, he celebrated his 75th birthday!

Photo by: Peter Jordan Photography ([www.peterjordanphoto.com](http://www.peterjordanphoto.com))

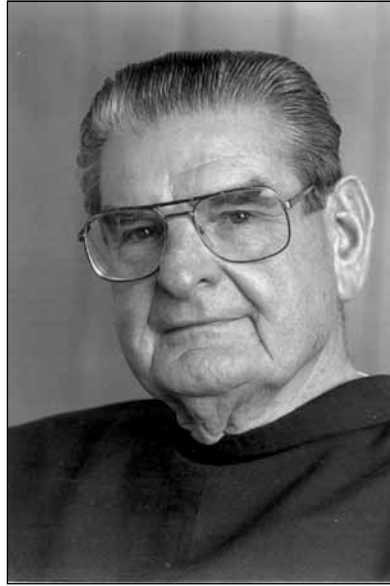
P.S. You can give secure online donations to The Franciscans on the Web at [www.sbfranciscans.org](http://www.sbfranciscans.org). And please consider including The Franciscans in your will and estate plans.

The next page shows our friars who passed away this year. We invite you to send us the names of deceased loved ones you would like us to enter into our MEMORIAL BOOK FOR THE DEAD, which is reserved at all times in our friary chapel. The Franciscans will remember them, and you, in our prayers throughout the year.

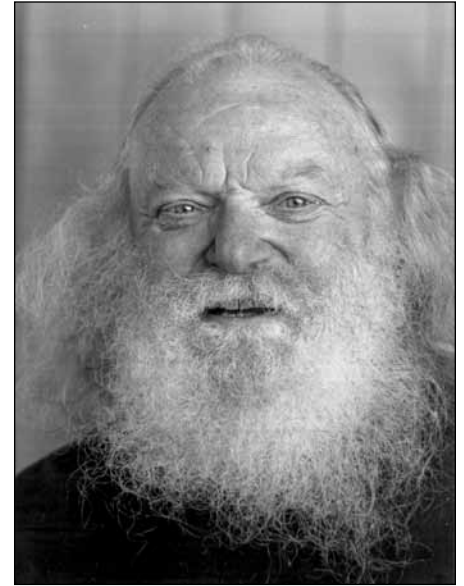
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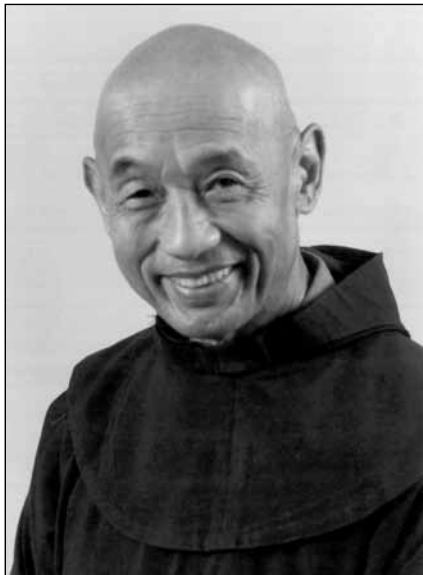
**Father Kieran McCarty, OFM**  
 historian and professor  
 soft-spoken and shy,  
 respected by all who knew him  
 died 27 December 2008 at age 83  
 65 years a friar,  
 59 years a priest



**Father Jerome Ahles, OFM**  
 parish pastor  
 bright, well-read,  
 and a gentleman  
 died 7 February 2009  
 at age 92  
 70 years a friar,  
 64 years a priest



**Brother Wenceslaus  
 ("Wencie") Farlow, OFM**  
 bookbinder and herbalist  
 a quiet sort  
 known for his smile  
 and his startling beard  
 died 21 May 2009 at age 90  
 65 years a friar



**Father Emery Tang, OFM**  
 teacher and principal,  
 photographer and author,  
 retreat master and gardener  
 delivered inspiring messages  
 with simplicity and humility  
 died 8 June 2009 at age 81  
 62 years a friar, 57 years a priest



**Father Floyd Lotito, OFM**  
 friend and advocate for the poor  
 congenial and concerned,  
 interested and interesting,  
 easy-going and peace-filled  
 died 14 July 2009 at age 74  
 55 years a friar, 48 years a priest