

1883-1983

St. Bonaventure Monastery

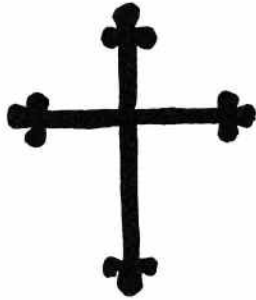
a century of prayer and sharing

**St. Bonaventure Monastery**

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*St. Bonaventure Chapel and Monastery, March, 1983,  
viewed from Mt. Elliott Cemetery*



**St. Bonaventure Monastery**  
**1883 - 1983**  
**A Century of Prayer and Sharing**

By Catherine Bicknell, ph.d.  
Archival Research by  
Father Donald Wiest, O.f.m. Cap.

Cover Design by Brother Leo Wollenweber, O.f.m. Cap.

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fidelity press  
detroit, michigan

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1740 Mt. Elliott, Detroit, Michigan 48207

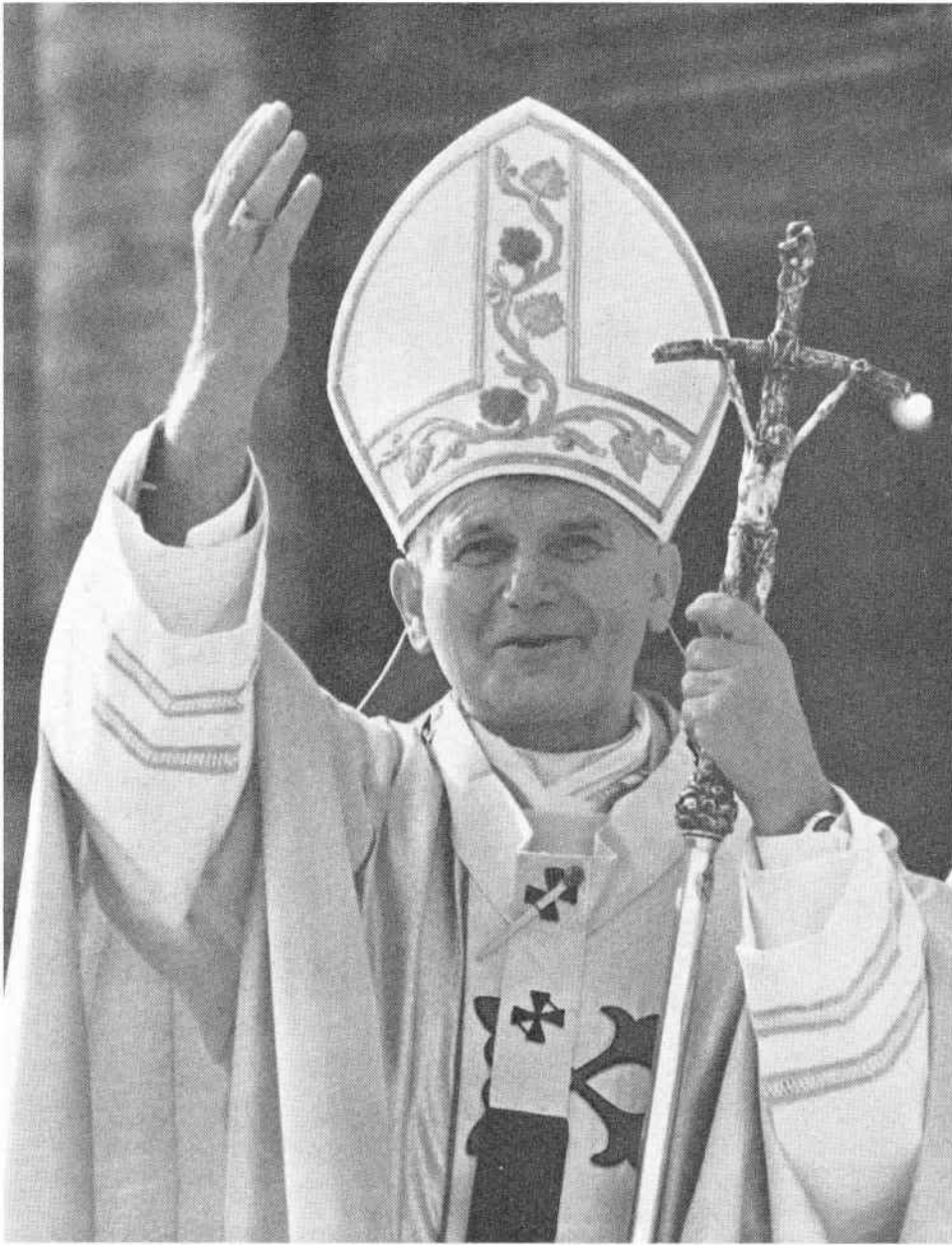
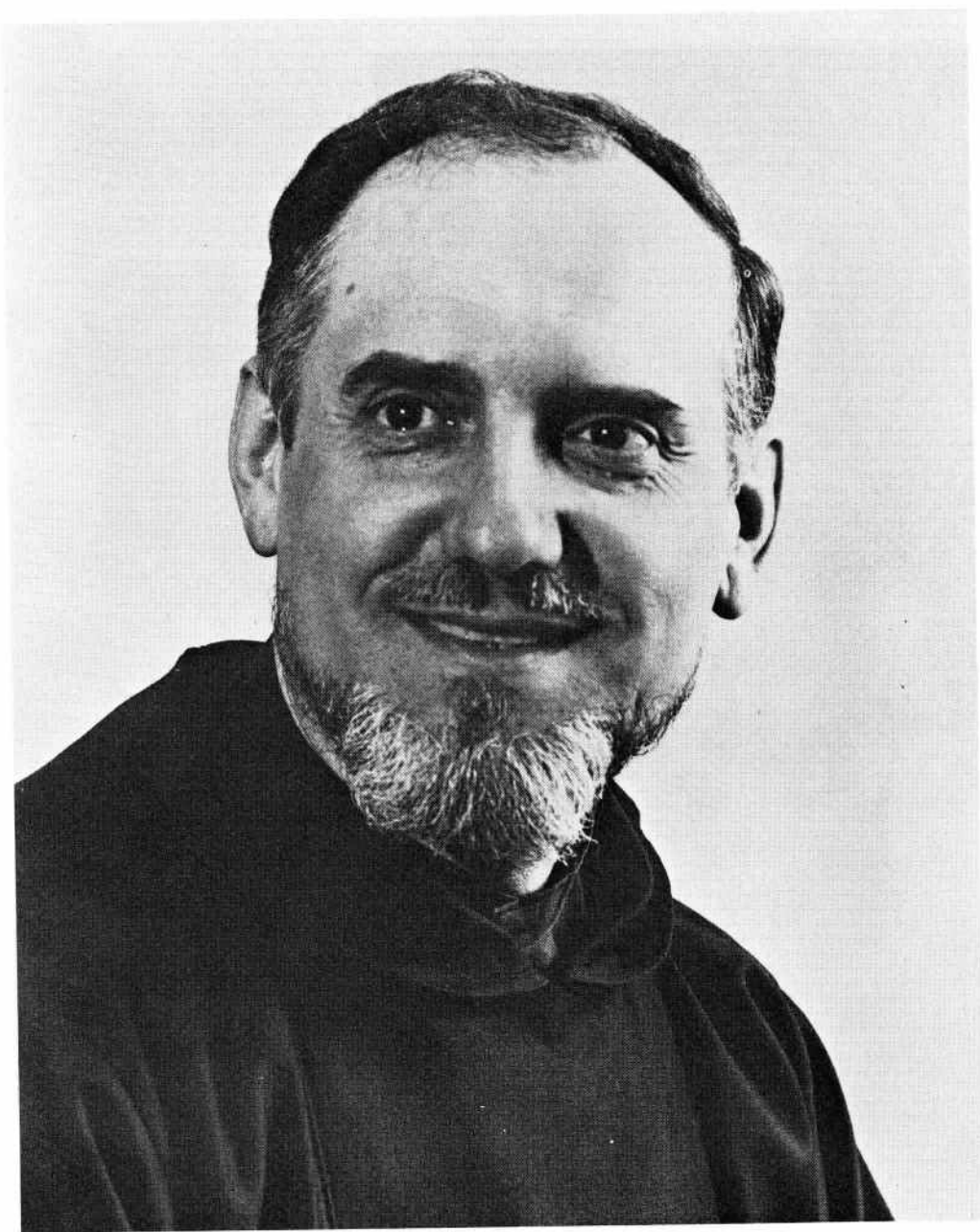


FOTO DI ARTURO MAKI

*His Holiness Pope John Paul II*



*Most Rev. Flavio Carraro, Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin*



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT  
1234 WASHINGTON BLVD.  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226

April 29, 1983

Dear Father Kafer and Capuchins at St. Bonaventure's,

It is my pleasure to join with you and the people of Detroit as you celebrate the 100th Anniversary of St. Bonaventure Monastery. I am sure this edifice has been a source of faith for thousands over the last century. In joining you on this special occasion, together we give heartfelt thanks to Almighty God for granting the friars the grace to serve His Church through the Monastery and its works.

The first chapel built in 1883 has expanded through the years. I am aware of not only the buildings of your order, but also the work of the friars at St. Bonaventure's. Your availability for spiritual guidance and the Sacrament of Reconciliation has been and continues to be a help to so many in need. Your willingness to assist in area parishes, nursing homes, to meet peoples' spiritual and temporal needs on a daily basis has been an integral part of your history from those early beginnings. Yours is a special ministry as followers of St. Francis of Assisi. It is my hope and prayer that your good works will continue as you begin your next century.

For the assistance you have given to the Church of Detroit so readily and generously through the years, I thank you. May you continue to grow in spirit and service and may your efforts serve God's greater glory to spread His Gospel of love and salvation.

I ask God to bless you, as well as all those who have gone before you. I promise you my continued prayers and blessing.

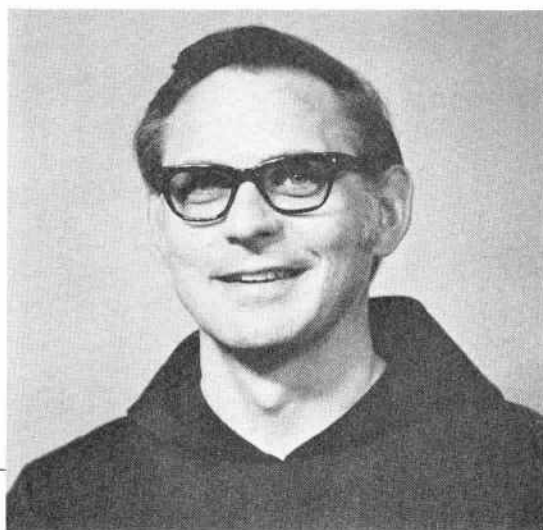
With all best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours in Christ,

+ *Edmund C. Byrne*  
Archbishop of Detroit

Reverend Gerald Kafer, O.F.M.Cap.  
St. Bonaventure Monastery  
1740 Mt. Elliott Avenue  
Detroit, Michigan 48207





The Province of St. Joseph  
of the Capuchin Order

1740 Mt. Elliott Avenue  
Detroit, Michigan 48207  
(313) 579-2100

— Office of the Provincial —  
July 20, 1983

To the Capuchin Community at St. Bonaventure Friary,

On the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the friary of St. Bonaventure's on Mt. Elliott, I want to congratulate all of the Capuchins currently living at the friary. I want to extend to you the best wishes of the entire Capuchin Province on this happy occasion and assure you of our continued fraternal and prayerful support. We are grateful for the witness that you present in the city of Detroit and the Franciscan spirit in which you continue to fulfill your commitment as Capuchins. May the Lord continue to bless you in your service of all of God's people.

I also want to use this occasion to extend a hearty thank you to all those people who have been our spiritual benefactors through these 100 years. We have experienced a great deal of love and generous giving on the part of so many people for such a long time; we do not want to take this for granted! I want to express a special thanks to everyone who has contributed to our way of life. We are grateful for the blessing we have received from the Lord who has provided us the opportunities to serve so many people over the past 100 years. I thank you, all the people of God, especially for your prayers and also the many and varied gifts that we have received from you. May God bless you for your generosity.

I am grateful to the many Bishops, priests, religious sisters and brothers, and others who have been a part of our lives through these years. In a special way, I want to thank the Archbishop of Detroit, Most Reverend Edmund Szoka, for his continued prayerful support. We are happy to be here. We are grateful for the ways in which we have been welcomed into the archdiocese through the years. We count upon the continued blessing of the archdiocese as we attempt to serve the people of the archdiocese.

One of our own brothers is on my mind as I write this letter, namely, our Brother Solanus Casey. We are grateful for the fine model of religious life that he was for us who knew him and whose spirit continues to bring blessings into our lives. I pray that all of us who are currently living in the city of Detroit and who will be living here in the future will be able to benefit from his example and live up to the ideals of Francis that he portrayed.

In the spirit of gratitude for God's love that has come to us in so many ways, I want to say thank you to the Lord. Without God's providential care we would not be here and not be able to celebrate this Centennial of St. Bonaventure's Friary and Chapel. We thank the Lord for what He will continue to accomplish in our midst in the future. We place our lives and our commitments in God's hands in order that they may be brought to fruitful fulfillment.

Fraternally,

*Br Ron Smith OFM Cap*

Ron Smith, Capuchin  
Minister Provincial



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
LANSING

JAMES J. BLANCHARD  
GOVERNOR

July 11, 1983

Fr. Gerald Kafer, O.F.M. Capuchin  
Superior  
St. Bonaventure Monastery  
1740 Mt. Elliott  
Detroit, Michigan 48207

Greetings;

I am pleased to extend to you my personal and official congratulations as you mark the Centennial of the St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit.

This year marks the anniversary of the arrival of the Capuchin Friars in the State of Michigan. We recognize that the Capuchin Fathers have accomplished a great deal for the poor and the afflicted of our society. The charitable works that the Capuchin Monasteries have given to the citizens of Michigan transcends the lines of different religious faiths. We are indeed grateful for the caring spirit you have maintained over the years for those who are needy in spirit as well as needy of the material necessities of life.

On behalf of the state of Michigan, I congratulate you for having achieved this major milestone in the history of the St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit.

Kind regards.

Sincerely,

*James J. Blanchard*  
JAMES J. BLANCHARD  
Governor



*City of Detroit Executive Office*

*Coleman A. Young, Mayor*

June 1, 1983

Fr. Gerald Kafer, O.F.M., Capuchin Superior  
St. Bonaventure Monastery  
1740 Mt. Elliott  
Detroit Michigan 48207

Dear Fr. Kafer:

The milestone you celebrate this year -- the centennial of St. Bonaventure Monastery -- is made more evident to those of us who are aware of the work the Capuchin Kitchen has been doing in its own, long standing feed-the-hungry program.

The weekend of September 30 - October 2, 1983 will be one filled with historical meaning for the Capuchins, as you mark the 100th anniversary of your arrival in the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan.

May this be the beginning of 100 more years of good works on behalf of the people of Detroit.

Sincerely,

  
COLEMAN A. YOUNG  
Mayor

*“We must be faithful to the present moment,  
or we will frustrate the plan of God for our lives.”*

– FATHER SOLANUS CASEY

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## Special Terminology

For the administrative purposes of the Capuchins, the United States is divided into six geographical areas called *provinces*, and the head of each province is known as the *minister provincial*, or simply as the *provincial*. The four elected friars whose job is to advise him were once called *definitors*, and are now called *councillors*. The group they formed was the *definitory* and is now the *council*. The meeting at which the provincial and his councillors are elected is the *provincial chapter*. The head of the worldwide Capuchin Order in Rome is the *minister general*. The meeting at which he and his councillors are elected is the *general chapter*. The delegates who accompanied the provincial to the general chapter in Rome were formerly known as *custodes*. The head of each house in the province is the *guardian*, or *local superior*. In the absence of the guardian, the *vicar* is in charge. The *novitiate* year is traditionally the first year in the Order. *Cleric novices* were destined for the priesthood. The friars' private chapel was called the *choir*.



*St. Francis of Assisi, by Simone Martini*



*"As manifested in the lives of the saints,  
if we strive and use the means God has  
given us, we too can ascend to great  
sanctity and to an astonishing familiarity  
with God—even here as pilgrims to the  
Beatific Vision."*

—FATHER SOLANUS CASEY

## 1. FOLLOWERS OF ST. FRANCIS

### St. Francis

The Capuchins are a religious community of men who have chosen to live the Gospel as followers of St. Francis. Born near the end of the 12th Century, Francis of Assisi modelled his itinerant brotherhood on Christ and his disciples. From his day until our own, religious and laypeople alike have continued to draw inspiration from the way in which St. Francis took the Christian ideals of poverty, devotion, and charity and translated them into the everyday realities of his life.

As a youth, Francis was an unlikely candidate for a saint who would inspire thousands to give up the world. The son of a wealthy cloth merchant, he and the young nobles of Assisi were conspicuous in the town for their fine clothes and boisterous merrymaking. Like many of the young men of the time, Francis was influenced by the troubadour movement, which extolled the ideals of knighthood and chivalry. Twice he rode off to war and twice his dreams of glory collapsed in defeat. After his first battle, he was captured and held prisoner in neighboring Perugia for a year. After his return to Assisi, he insisted on riding off to war again, but his broken health forced him to turn back. It was during the

period of disappointment and convalescence that followed that Francis began to experience his conversion. In prayer and seclusion, he tried to know God's will, and in time, God showed him the way.

One day, Francis met a leper on the road. Instinctively, he recoiled from the sight of the man's rotting flesh, and yet something compelled him to approach and embrace him. Looking the beggar in the eyes, he recognized him as his brother and as Christ. Francis had been well-known for his charity up to this time, but this action separated him from the mere alms givers. From this point on, his love for others extended not only to the most beautiful, privileged, and virtuous, but to those who had been rejected by society. Like Christ, he was able to walk without fear among the physically and mentally afflicted, as well as criminals, traitors, heretics, and infidels. And because he saw all men as his brothers, he opened closed hearts.

Kneeling in front of the crucifix at the Church of San Damiano, Francis seemed to see Christ's lips move and heard him say, "Francis, repair my Church, which is in ruins." Taking these instructions literally, he

sold some of his father's cloth and gave the money to the priest at San Damiano for repairs. Francis' generosity had already brought him into conflict with his father, but this episode led to a permanent rift. Infuriated, his father sued him for the money he had taken. In front of the bishop, who was their judge, Francis stripped himself of his fine clothes and returned them to his father, declaring that from that time he would recognize no earthly father, but only his Father in Heaven.

## The Rule

Francis made up his mind to rebuild the Church spiritually by living his life as a disciple of Christ, taking as his rule Christ's own words: "As you go, make this announcement: 'The reign of God is at hand.'" (Matt. 10:7) "Provide yourselves with neither gold nor silver nor copper in your belts; no traveling bag, no change of shirt, no sandals, no walking staff." (Matt. 10:9) Later, his way of life was confirmed when he and his first follower went to Mass, and after asking the priest to open the missal three times and read at random, heard: "If you seek perfection, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor. You will then have treasure in heaven. Afterward, come back and follow me." (Matt. 19:21) "Take nothing for your journey, neither walking staff nor traveling bag; no bread, no money." (Lk. 9:3) "Whoever wishes to be my disciple must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps." (Lk. 9:23)

Francis' mendicant community was approved by the Pope in 1209, and by 1223, three years before his death, his followers numbered thousands of professed friars, as well as a community of nuns called the Poor Clares, and a Third Order of laypeople. The Pope and many of the brothers pressured Francis to provide a more detailed set of regulations for the friars, and the final Rule which he revised in 1223 retained the original Gospel spirit. The friars were called upon to pray, preach, and minister to their fellowman, while leaving the satisfaction of their daily needs in the hands of the Lord.

## The Capuchins

By the time Francis was canonized in 1228, his following had become a significant force in the Catholic Church. Among the Franciscans, however, there was a conflict between those who wanted a strict observance of the Rule, based on absolute poverty, and those who wanted to observe it more leniently. Like St. Francis, the strict observers believed that they should never touch money or own anything either individually or in common. The others wanted to build monasteries, churches, and schools.

Because of this continuing tension, three autonomous branches of the Franciscan Order evolved: the Conventuals, the Observants, and the Capuchins. Today, each branch has its own Constitutions and customs, but all profess the Rule of St. Francis. The Constitutions provide the explicit principles and regulations of the Orders and change in response to the times.



*Father Bernardine  
of Asti,  
Vicar General of the  
Capuchins 1535-1538,  
1546-1552*

Woodcut from *Flores Seraphici*, by  
Coloniae Agrippinae, 1640

The Capuchins began when Matteo da Bascio and two companions, all Observants, asked the Pope for permission to found their own community, in which they would strive to observe the Rule of St. Francis "to the letter." The word Capuchin comes from "capuche," the hood, or cowl, which they sewed onto their robes and which distinguished them from the other two branches of Franciscans. Pope Clement VII approved the Capuchin reform on July 3, 1528, and put the little group under the jurisdiction of the Conventuals. On January 23, 1619, Pope Paul V

established the Capuchins as an independent branch of the Franciscans.

The Capuchins reached their highest development during the mid 1700s, when there were sixty-four provinces with a membership of 34,000 friars, but by the end of the century, the Order had been greatly reduced by plagues and political oppression. During and after the French Revolution and the political upheavals that followed it in Europe, many monasteries were suppressed. By 1884, a year after the Capuchins had established themselves in Detroit, the Order worldwide hit its low point, with a membership of only 8000 friars. Today, the number has grown to 12,000.

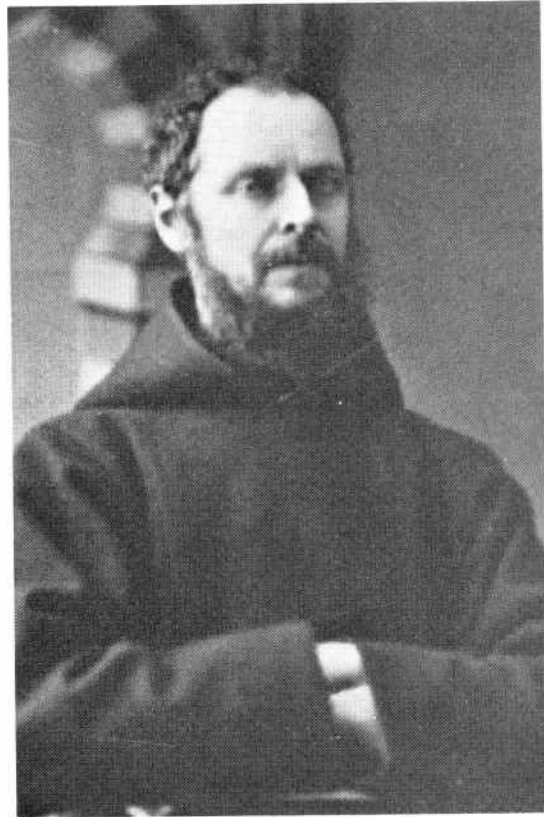
## The Capuchins in America

The Capuchins were in North America from the first years of colonization. In 1632, mission work was begun in Acadia (Nova Scotia) and northern Maine, which lasted for forty years, and extended as far south as Virginia. When the Catholics and their Capuchin pastors were expelled from Nova Scotia, the Capuchins looked for a new field of ministry. In 1722, the Capuchin coadjutor to the Bishop of Quebec, sent a group of Capuchins to New Orleans, where they served until 1766 as rectors of the Cathedral.

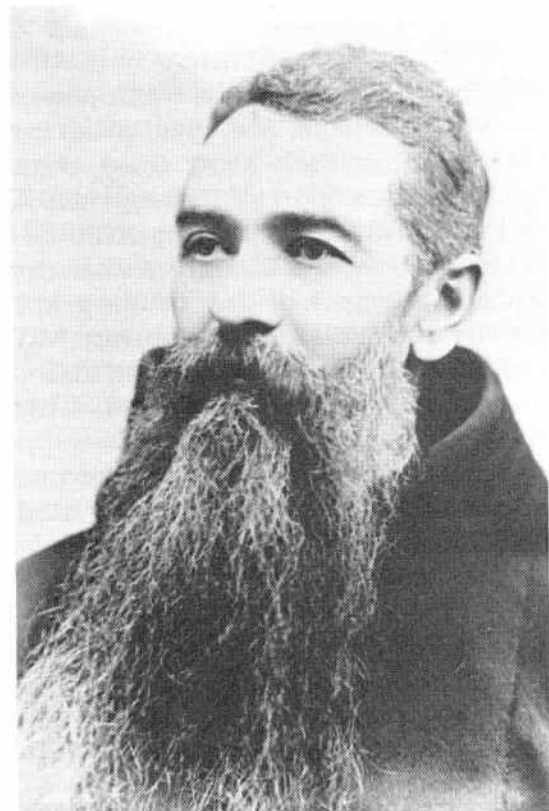
During the Revolutionary War, Irish Capuchins who had found religious asylum in France were chaplains on the French ships which came to the aid of the colonies. After the war, an Irish Capuchin was pastor of St. Peter's, the first Catholic church on Manhattan Island. From then until the beginnings of the Province of St. Joseph some eighty years later, individual Capuchins came to the United States as missionaries under the jurisdiction of their European provincials.

## Pioneer Priests

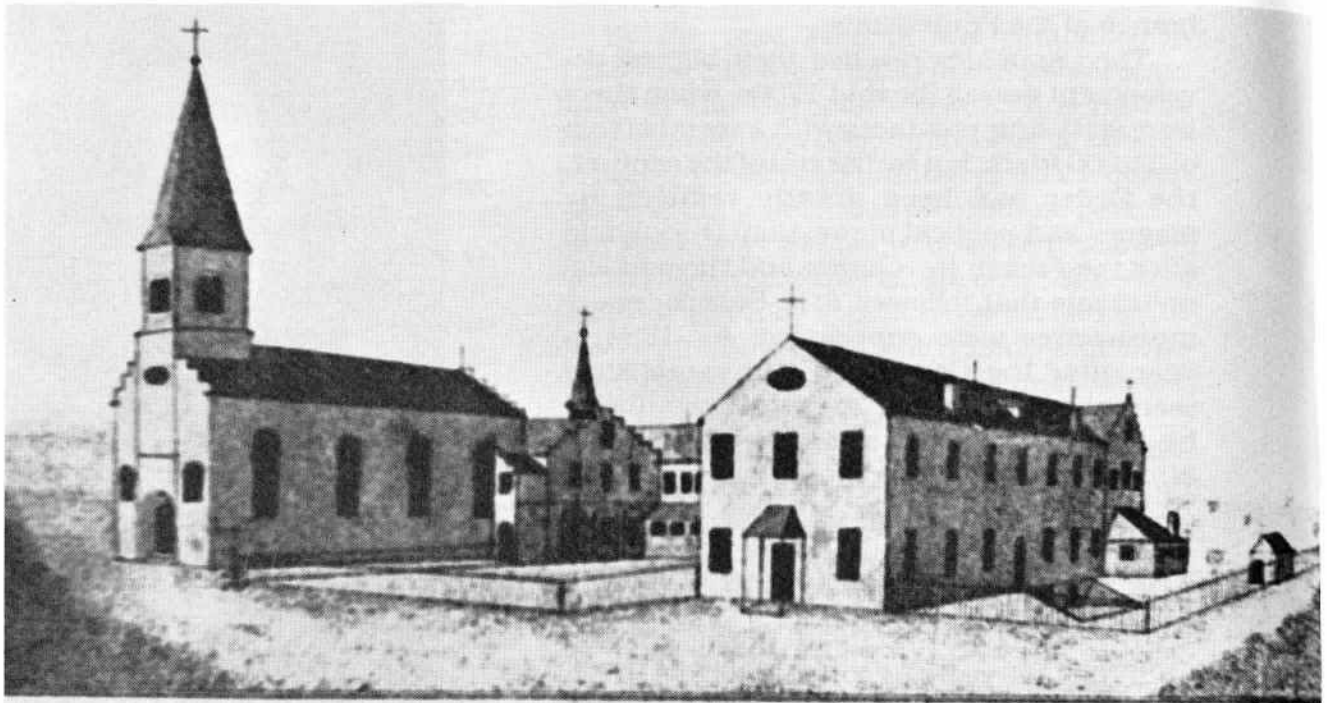
The Province of St. Joseph was born as a result of the religious zeal and adventurous spirit of two Swiss diocesan priests, Father Gregory Haas and Father John Frey. Father John Frey was later to take Bonaventure as his religious name, and found St. Bonaventure Monastery, in Detroit. They were among the European priests and brothers for whom



*Father Francis (Gregory) Haas  
1826-1895*



*Father Bonaventure (John) Frey  
1831-1912*



KLOSTER CALVARIA WISCONS.

the attraction of foreign lands was a powerful incentive at that time, but their situation at the outset makes their story truly extraordinary. It was the plan of Father Haas and Father Frey to establish the Capuchin Order in the United States, although neither priest was a Capuchin or had any training in the Order's customs, rules, or community way of life. Furthermore, they were without financial resources of their own or benefactors, and the Swiss Capuchins were not eager to support their plans. The two priests were determined to be Capuchin missionaries, however, and on April 12, 1856, they drew up an agreement in which they formally wrote out their intentions:

The undersigned bind themselves, for the greater honor of God and the Immaculate Virgin Mary, to the following four promises: (1) to observe the Rule of St. Francis for life; (2) to meditate three-quarters of an hour every morning, and when on mission a half hour; (3) to make a particular examen daily before dinner; (4) to select the United States as their future field of labor

and to devote their lives to missionary work.<sup>1</sup>

The hope of Father Haas and Father Frey was to take a novice master and priest and brother candidates with them to assist in the foundation of a Capuchin community. Responding to their enthusiasm and persistence, the Swiss Capuchins did not outrightly refuse approval, but were unwilling to immediately provide either money or men.

Finally, on July 16, 1856, the pair set off alone from Antwerp for New York, leaving family, friends, and ecclesiastical careers behind. Their developing Franciscan spirit was tested to the full as they lived in close quarters with men from a chain gang who had been unshackled and put on board their ship before it sailed. Arriving in the United States almost penniless on September 2, 1856, they made their way across the country, depend-

1. Bittle, Celestine N., O.F.M. Cap., *A Romance of Lady Poverty*, (Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co., 1933), p. 35.

*Mt. Calvary in 1864.  
Left to right: church, annex  
of the original Latin school,  
monastery in rear,  
and new college wing.  
From an old wash drawing.*

ing for subsistence on the meager hospitality shared by Catholic priests in the cities they travelled through. Arriving at their Wisconsin destination, they were warmly received by Milwaukee's Bishop John Martin Henni.

## From Monastery to Province

Bishop Henni was particularly happy to receive Father Haas and Father Frey because they spoke German and most of the Catholics in Milwaukee were German immigrants. Like the Swiss Capuchins, he responded to their plans to found the Order in Wisconsin with skepticism and insisted that they each take charge of a parish for awhile, so that he could test their seriousness. Finally, convinced that they were resolved to become Capuchins, he gave them a choice of locations on which to found their monastery.

On a hilltop site called Mount Calvary, twelve miles east of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, the Province of St. Joseph had its beginning. Father Haas and Father Frey obtained property on which a mission church stood and took over the direction of the parish and parish school, taught by Sisters. When a novice master finally arrived from Switzerland, the little community began to take shape. The two priests were invested as Capuchin novices on December 2, 1857, receiving as their religious names Father Francis Haas and Father Bonaventure Frey.

During the twenty-five years between the arrival of the two founding fathers in Milwaukee and the community's decision to build a monastery in Detroit, the seed which was planted in Wisconsin grew beyond all expectations. The expansion took place despite internal and external frictions between the strong-minded priests and settlers, a major fire which destroyed most of the newly built monastery in 1868, and staggering debts incurred during the Civil War period when interest rates were exorbitant. By the time Father Bonaventure chose a site in Detroit, in 1883, the community had evolved in its organization from foundation (1857) to commissariat (1864) to custody (1875) to province (1882), and counted seven monasteries, most of them with parishes attached, in Wisconsin and around New York City.

The Capuchins had accepted parishes in the dioceses where they were located at the request of the bishops, but had done so somewhat reluctantly, as it was against traditional Capuchin practice. They were increasingly eager to found a monastery which would not include parochial duties. Because the seminary at Mt. Calvary was producing secular priests in greater numbers than Capuchin religious to satisfy the need for native-born diocesan priests, the province's leadership also wanted a monastery where the novices could be trained in a totally Capuchin atmosphere.

*"God, who loves tiny beginnings, will know as He always does know, how and when to provide developments."*

—FATHER SOLANUS CASEY

## 2. ST. BONAVENTURE MONASTERY IN DETROIT

### The Choice of Detroit

The idea of founding a Capuchin community in Detroit was expressed as early as November 13, 1860, by Father Francis, who wrote to the minister general, in Rome:

Since it would not be good to have too many priests crowded together in one place, especially on account of the great poverty of the mission, we have decided to build a hospice in some other diocese. We were thinking of Detroit, due to its favorable location and the great dearth of German-speaking priests there. The hospice would consist of two Fathers and one or two lay brothers, and we feel confident that it would prosper and bring us many candidates for the Order.<sup>1</sup>

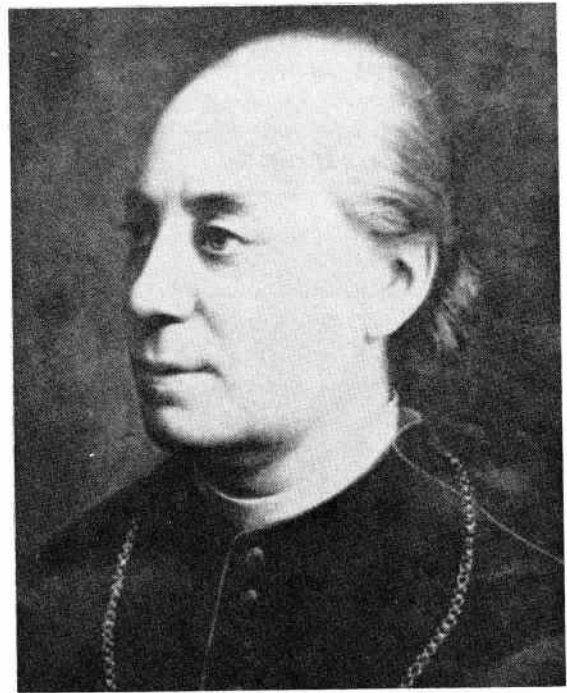
At the first chapter after the custody was raised to the rank of a province in 1882, it was decided to build a monastery with no parish duties at a site located between the houses in Wisconsin and New York. Fort Wayne, Indiana, was the first choice, but the bishop's diocesan board of consultors wanted the Capuchins to take charge of a parish, so

Father Bonaventure set out for Detroit. Like Fort Wayne, Detroit had the advantage of being within the boundaries of the province, midway between Wisconsin and New York, and on a major railroad line between Chicago and New York.

### Father Bonaventure

Father Bonaventure was responsible for overseeing the foundation of St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit and it was after his patron saint that the monastery was named. Whereas Father Francis Haas was the undisputed spiritual leader of the Capuchin community, Father Bonaventure was the builder. It was he who assumed the burdens of debt and oversaw construction, and he who was primarily responsible for the expansion of the province. According to contemporaries, he was a man of great charm, knowledgeable about business, literature, and the arts. In the best Franciscan tradition, he was comfortable with men and women from the highest to the lowest strata of society.

1. Bittle, Celestine N., O.F.M. Cap., *A Romance of Lady Poverty*, (Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co., 1933), p. 129.



*Caspar Henry Borgess,  
Bishop of Detroit,  
1871-1887*

## Finding a Place in Detroit

Father Bonaventure made his first visit to Detroit on about November 22, 1882, and was welcomed by Bishop Caspar Henry Borgess, who granted him permission to select a site for a monastery.

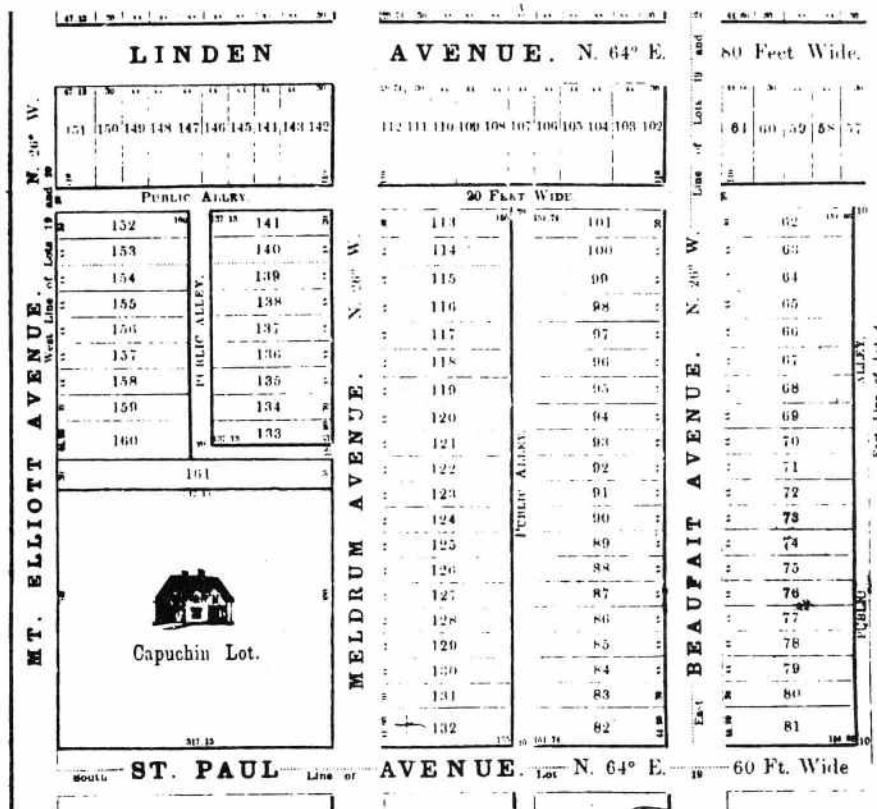
The eastern sections of Detroit were only sparsely populated, and Father Bonaventure wanted to be among the people, so he looked first in the western part for a place to build. He found a suitable piece of property on Fort Street which extended to the Detroit River, but the land was located one street from the boundary of a parish which had recently been established by the Redemptorist Fathers, and when the provincial superior of the Redemptorists learned about Father Bonaventure's plans, he quickly came to Detroit and objected to Bishop Borgess. Though the bishop did not think that the monastery would interfere with the Redemptorists' parish, Father Bonaventure decided not to buy the property, so as to avoid friction in the future. For the same reason, he decided not to consider another property nearby.

On the east side, there was land available near the city waterworks, but this did not appeal to Father Bonaventure. He decided instead to build the monastery across from Mt. Elliott Cemetery, where Bishop Borgess promised to grant the Capuchins permission to conduct graveside services.

Father Bonaventure returned to Detroit a second and third time in December, 1882, and January, 1883, but with no results. On his fourth trip to Detroit, toward the end of March, he decided to purchase a piece of land located on what was known as "Russell's Grove." The property was on Mt. Elliott Avenue facing the cemetery, just outside the eastern city limits of Detroit, in the township of Hamtramck. The chronicler of the monastery described it as follows:

Russell's Grove consisted of a little wood in which people loved to hold picnics during the summer months. Schoolchildren chased frogs and birds there, and at night it was a hangout for loafers and cutthroats. It is claimed that passersby were frequently robbed here, or even murdered. Father Lawrence Henn, at the time when he was master of novices, removed a rope from a tree in front of the monastery, on which someone was either hanged or had hanged himself. The entire vicinity was very sparsely populated; only here and there could one see an old, dilapidated little house. The streets were laid out, but they were so bad that they were hardly passable in rainy weather. There were no streetcar lines throughout the neighborhood. On Gratiot Avenue the horsecars went about as far as Antoine Street; on Champlain out to Elmwood Avenue; and on Jefferson Avenue hardly any farther.<sup>1</sup>

1. Chronicle, I, p. 5.



## The Property

The land purchased by Father Bonaventure was part of one of the original French "ribbon" farms, so called because they had narrow frontage on the Detroit River and extended back two or three miles. On April 20, 1811, George Meldrum had received a grant from the government of the United States for 144.7 acres of land between the tracts owned by Phillis Peltier and Louis Beaufait. The property extended from the river to present-day Mack Avenue and from Mt. Elliott to what is now Beaufait. In 1850, the estate was divided among the Meldrum heirs, and lots 19 and 20 were allotted to George B. Russell in a deed dated November 19, 1850. The lots were bounded by the present streets of Mt. Elliott and Beaufait on the west and east, East Vernor on the north, and St. Paul on the south, and the tract became known as "Russell's Grove."

Lots from the Russell property were sold to John Robinson, in 1858. On April 20, 1883,

Father Bonaventure purchased part of lot 19 from John Robinson's heirs for \$5500. The property measured 347.13 by 300 feet and consisted of 2.39 acres. It extended from Mt. Elliott on the west to Meldrum on the east and to St. Paul on the south. The deed was officially recorded on May 11, 1883.

Father Bonaventure's selection of this particular site made good sense in terms of the Capuchins' intentions for their work in Detroit. Not being encumbered by the duties of a parish, they could contribute to the diocese in traditional Franciscan ways, offering the diocesan priests weekend assistance, taking charge of mission churches attached to the parishes, and presiding upon request at funeral services in Mt. Elliott Cemetery. Since the neighborhood to the north and east of the monastery site was already attracting a Catholic population that would grow as the city expanded, various fruitful ministries among the people were also bound to develop.



## Formal Permission for a Monastery

On May 8, 1883, a document was drawn up granting the Capuchins formal permission to establish a monastery under conditions agreed upon by Father Bonaventure and Bishop Borgess, namely that:

1. The Capuchin Fathers of this monastery will have no parish connected with their church or chapel.

2. Requiem High Masses will not be celebrated on Sundays or holy days of obligation.

3. On Sundays and holy days of obligation, only low Masses will be celebrated and only before 9 o'clock in the morning.

4. One high Mass may be sung on the feasts of St. Francis, St. Bonaventure, St. Anthony, St. Louis, and St. Elizabeth, but if these days fall on a Sunday or holy day of obligation, only before 9 o'clock in the morning.

5. Sermons and public instructions will be given only in the afternoon, followed, on Sundays and holy days, by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

6. Besides the Third Order, no other confraternity or religious society shall be established without special permission of the Bishop.

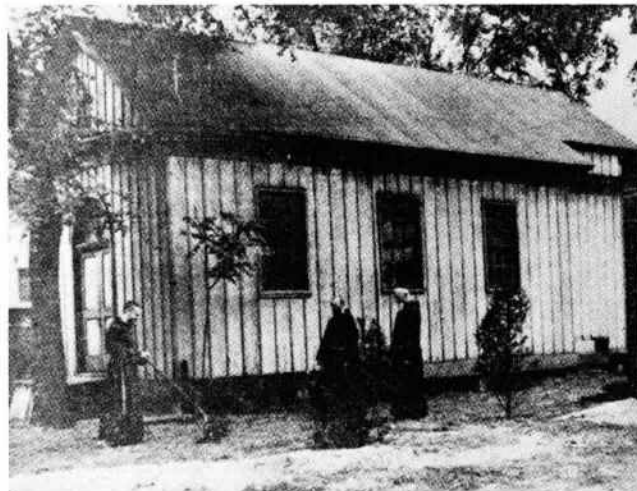
The purpose of these limitations was to avoid drawing people away from their own parishes and to allow the Capuchin Fathers time to help the pastors in nearby parishes during services on Sundays and holy days.

On May 17, 1883, Bishop Borgess granted the Capuchins permission to conduct graveside services in Mt. Elliott Cemetery.

As further proof of his goodwill, Bishop Borgess provided the Capuchins with a letter of recommendation to use in collecting alms for their building, in which he said:

As the Capuchin Fathers have purchased property opposite the Mount Elliott Cemetery, and are about to erect thereon a monastery for their community and a chapel, we beg to commend them to the generosity of the Catholics of this city to aid them in their pious undertaking. They are not to have a parish nor to perform parochial duties, but only to assist the reverend pastors upon special invitations extended to them. Therefore, they depend entirely on the charity of the faithful for their subsistence.

Father Bonaventure's application to Rome for official permission to establish the monastery was accepted by the Holy See on June 7, 1883, and executed by the minister general of the Capuchins on June 21st.

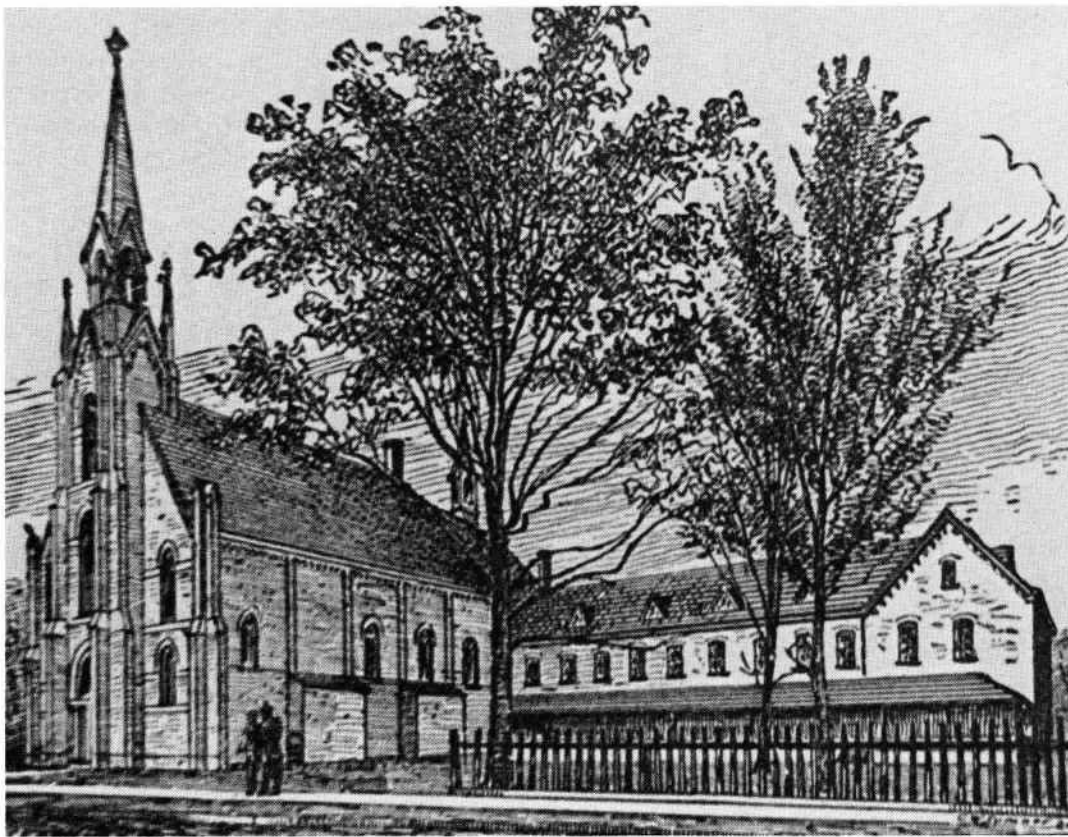


*Wooden chapel built by Brother Lucius Fuchs near the north entrance to Mt. Elliott Cemetery, later moved to the monastery garden*

## Getting Settled

At first, Father Bonaventure stayed with the Karrer family, who were relatives of Father Francis Haas, and for six months served as assistant to Father J.F. Friedland, pastor of St. Joseph's Church. Then, accepting the offer of Mr. John Reid, superintendent of Mt. Elliott Cemetery, he moved into the house Mr. Reid had recently vacated in the cemetery, a one-story brick building which at one time had served as a powder house. From this location, he was able to supervise the construction of the monastery and chapel.

Father Bonaventure was soon joined by Brother Lucius Fuchs and Brother Clement Livoni. On April 18, 1883, he wrote in his diary that he read Mass for the first time in their temporary home on a poor, small altar. Brother Lucius built a frame chapel behind the house, which became a favorite place of devotion for people visiting the cemetery. On Sundays, there were often too many to fit inside and they stood all around the little structure. The friars' house was situated near the north entrance of the cemetery, across Mt.



*Pen sketch of the proposed chapel and east wing of the monastery, 1883*

From *History of Detroit*, by Silas Farmer. Courtesy of the Burton Historical Collection

Elliott from today's Third Order Hall, and the chapel was on the site where the Palms family mausoleum now stands.

It was not long before the young community began to grow. Father Jerome Henkel had already arrived from Mt. Calvary. On February 21, 1883, he preached a Lenten sermon at St. Boniface Church, and then took temporary charge of St. Alphonsus, in Greenfield. Father Anastasius Duckgeischel arrived on May 1st and apparently replaced Father Jerome at St. Alphonsus for awhile.

## Construction of the Monastery and Chapel

In making plans for the chapel and monastery buildings, Father Bonaventure first contacted the New York architect who had worked for him on other houses, but then decided it would be better to find a competent local architect. He hired Mr. Peter Dederichs, Jr., architect of the Grotto at the Church of the Assumption, on Gratiot, and of St. Mary's Church downtown. The plan was for the chapel to be 100 feet long by 42 feet wide, and

for the monastery to consist for the time being of the east wing only.

The contract for the foundation was signed on June 26, 1883. The house chronicle lists various contractors for the work: A. Chapoton, Jr. did the masonry, Archenbromm & Meier, the stone work, N. J. Hopson, the iron work, and Adam Orth built the slate roof. The plumbing was done by Dickson and Sullivan, and the plasterers were Schaefer and Bommersheim. Brother Lucius oversaw the carpentry work. John Biery was a carpenter and the carpenter for the arch and vault of the chapel was Master Carpenter Moore. Mr. Kessler volunteered his labor. For the excavations, Eberhard Karrer provided a horse and wagon, and a group of Polish Catholics donated their services for the digging.

While the excavation was in progress, a layer of quicksand was discovered which ran beneath the proposed foundation from east to west, and barrels of cement were sunk to provide a solid bottom.

Local enthusiasm was apparent on July 29, 1883, when between seven and eight thousand people attended the blessing and laying of the cornerstone for the Capuchins'

chapel and monastery. The crowds testified in part to the fond memories immigrants from Europe retained of the Capuchins in their homelands. More than twenty-five Catholic benevolent societies marched to the monastery, the Great Western Band leading the parade, followed by the Detroit National Guards and the Montgomery Rifles. The procession had left City Hall at 3:00 p.m. sharp and proceeded down Woodward to Jefferson, and Jefferson to Mt. Elliott. Mr. Paul Gies, a member of the local German community, was marshal of festivities, and music for the celebration was provided by the choir of St. Joseph's Church.

The ceremonies began at 4:00 p.m., led by Bishop Borgess, who was assisted by his vicar general, the Very Reverend Peter Hennaert, and his secretary, Reverend Camille Maes. Reverend Friedland of St. Joseph's parish spoke in German, extolling the merits of religious orders in general and of the Capuchins in particular. He was followed by Father Moeller, a Jesuit from St. Peter and Paul's parish, who spoke in English on the progress of the Catholic Church in the United States.

Many priests from the area attended the cornerstone laying, as well as the four Capuchin friars living in Detroit and the provincial, Father Bonaventure, with his four definitors who had come in from Wisconsin and New York.

A solemn document was enclosed in the cornerstone which mentioned some of the Capuchins' most outstanding benefactors up to this time, such as Francis Palms and Joseph and Gerard Karrer.

Father Bonaventure had met with his definitors for two days before the cornerstone laying, and they had decided to dedicate the new chapel and monastery to St. Bonaventure, an early Franciscan minister general, cardinal and scholar. During the course of the meetings, it was also resolved to move the novitiate from Mt. Calvary to Detroit. In a letter dated September 10, 1883, approval was subsequently given by the minister general in Rome.

Construction of the east wing of the monastery and the chapel, including the friars chapel in the back, moved along rapidly. By the end of January, the community of five friars were able to move out of their tem-

porary quarters in Mr. Reid's house and into their new home.

On February 5, 1884, Bishop Borgess came to bless the monastery with only the friars present. The provincial definitory met on this same occasion, and canonically set up the Capuchin community with the following members: Father Ignatius Ullrich, guardian; Father Jerome Henkel, vicar; Father Lawrence Henn, novice master; and Fathers Anastasius Duckgeischel and Stephan Sack. Brothers Lucius Fuchs and Clement Livoni were in charge of the domestic work. The definitory also ordered that the novitiate be transferred from Mt. Calvary to Detroit as soon as possible.

On April 15, 1884, the novice master, Father Lawrence Henn, arrived from Mt. Calvary with one cleric novice, Frater Joseph Wald, and the monastery thereby became the home of the novitiate. The first investiture of novices took place on April 20th with three candidates. During the course of the year, six cleric novices and two brother novices were invested with the Capuchin habit.

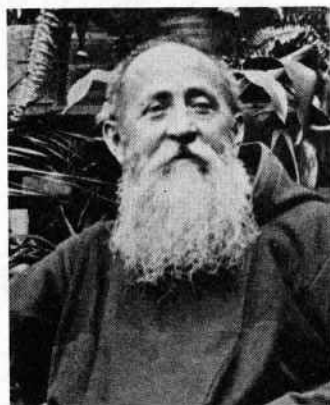
## Preaching the first Mission

The Capuchins were now ready to begin their work in earnest among the Catholics of Detroit. From March 9-22, 1884, Fathers Bonaventure, Ignatius, and Jerome preached the first of many missions to be given in and around Detroit, at St. Joseph's Church. The *Stimme der Wahrheit*, a local German weekly, made the following report:

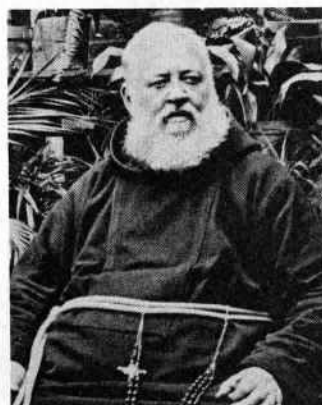
The mission of the Capuchin Fathers was blessed in such abundance by the good God, that it may without exaggeration be considered the most successful mission of the parish in the twenty-seven years of its existence. We refrain from every flattery, but merely register the following facts, graciously communicated to us by the Reverend Father Friedland; they speak for themselves:

1. About 3600 people received the Sacraments.
2. About 400 men, who had not confessed for periods of from three to forty years, reconciled themselves with God and returned penitently to Mother Church.
3. Many who had fallen under the ban of excommunication were again

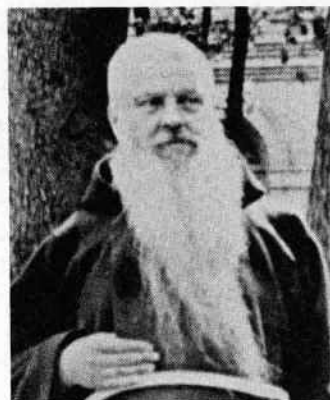
The first  
Capuchin  
Community at  
St. Bonaventure's  
FEBRUARY 1884



Fr. Ignatius Ullrich  
(guardian)



Fr. Jerome Henkel  
(vicar)



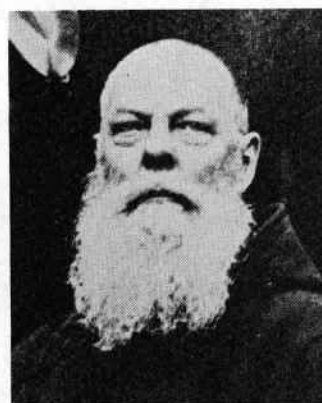
Fr. Lawrence Henn  
(novice master)



Fr. Anastasius  
Duckgeischel



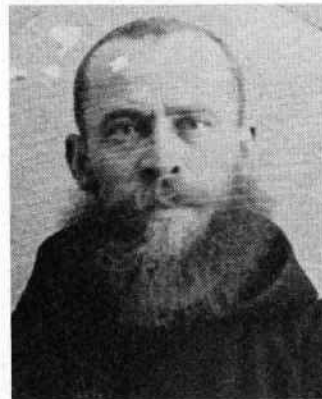
Fr. Stephen Sack



Br. Lucius Fuchs



Br. Clement Livoni



Frater Joseph Wald,  
cleric novice

received into the Church. These, of course, did not all belong to the parish of St. Joseph, but came from various parts of the city. The zealous devotion to the Sacred Heart has evidently brought about the conversion of so many stray members of the flock and made the mission so eminently successful.

## Journey to Rome

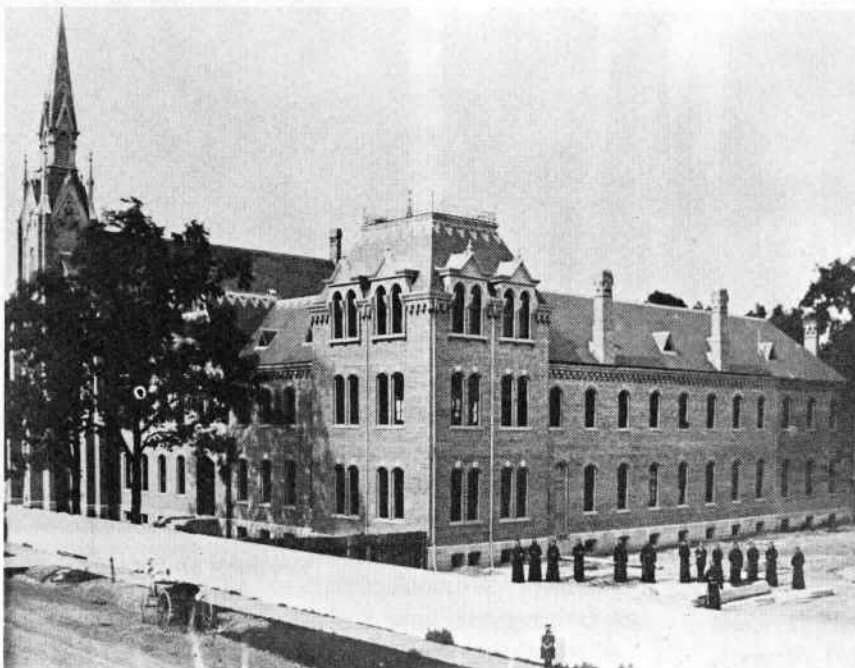
On April 16, 1884, Father Bonaventure and the two custodes general, Father Lawrence Vorwerk and Father Luke Rasch, left for Rome to attend the general chapter of the Order. Father Anthony Rottensteiner, provincial vicar, wrote to Father Bonaventure from Mt. Calvary: "I protest most solemnly against the election of yourself or of your companions to the office of Definitor General or perhaps even to that of General: that would be a detriment to the Province ..."<sup>1</sup> Father Anthony did not know how close his joking protest came to the reality, as Father Bonaventure received nineteen votes for definitor general on the first ballot, an office which would have obliged him to move to Rome.

1. Bittle, Celestine N., O.F.M. Cap., *A Romance of Lady Poverty*, (Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co., 1933), p. 301.

## Dedication of the Chapel

The dedication of the chapel took place on Sunday, July 13, 1884, and once again, the Catholics of Detroit turned out to give witness to their support for the Capuchins. The ceremonies were conducted by Bishop Borgess, followed by a solemn pontifical high Mass, during which St. Joseph's Church choir provided the music.

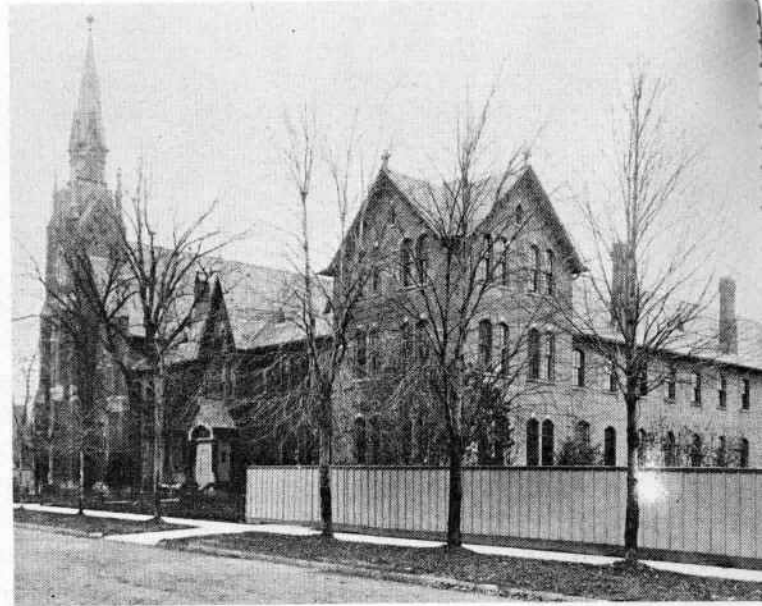
After the Gospel, Bishop Martin Marty, O.S.B., Vicar Apostolic of the Dakotas and a close friend and former schoolmate of Father Bonaventure's, preached the sermon in English. He spoke of St. Francis and his numerous spiritual sons, especially the Capuchins in Europe and in mission lands. Then, focusing on what the Capuchins had accomplished for the spread of the Kingdom of God during the last quarter of a century in America, he cited St. Bonaventure Monastery as a source of blessings for the city and diocese of Detroit. At the end, he addressed the Germans in the audience, describing his friendship and school days with Father Bonaventure, absent in Rome, and thanking Bishop Borgess and the German Catholics of Detroit for their generous support of the Capuchins in the construction of their monastery and chapel. At the end, he warmly encouraged the listeners to become members of the Third Order of St. Francis.



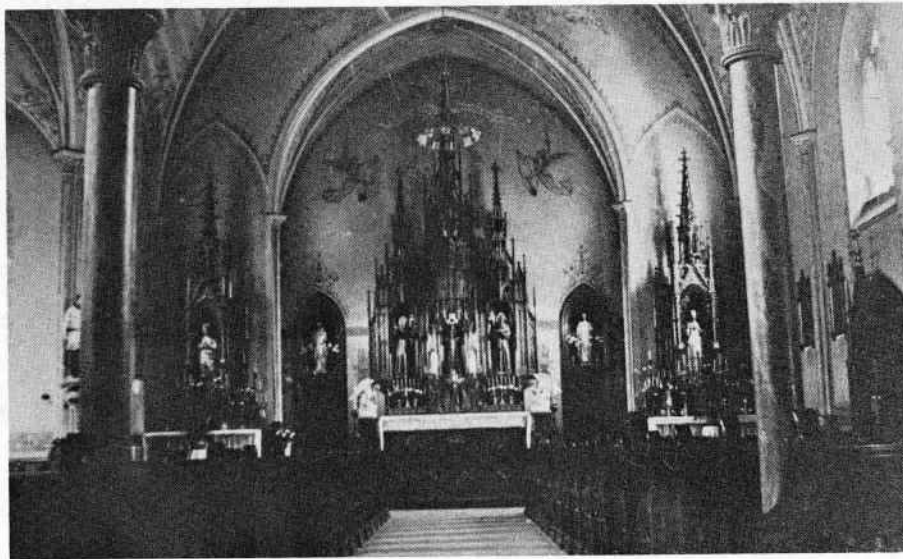
*Chapel  
and monastery  
as completed  
in October,  
1885*



*The high altar (ca. 1900)*



*Remodelled roof over the southwest corner, 1899*



*Early interior of the chapel*



*Vestment and chalice cabinet  
in the sacristy built by  
Brother Lucius Fuchs*

## Completion of the Monastery

During the early summer of 1885, construction was begun to complete the south and west wings of the monastery quadrangle. The architect, Peter Dederichs, Jr., and most of the same contractors were hired again and by mid October, construction was far enough advanced for the second provincial chapter to be held in Detroit. At this meeting of superiors and delegates from all the houses in the province, Father Francis Haas was elected provincial, and all but two of the community at St. Bonaventure's were transferred to other houses, with only Father Ignatius Ullrich remaining as guardian, and Brother Lucius Fuchs. Eight priests and four brothers were now assigned to the community, thus doubling its size. The quadrangle was completed on November 19, 1885, and with its completion, the monastery became the official residence and headquarters of the provincial.

## Expansion

Up to this time, the eastern city limits went only as far as Mt. Elliott, but before the end of 1885, they were extended to Baldwin Avenue, and the monastery property became part of Detroit. In November, 1885, John Robinson's heirs sold two blocks surrounding the Capuchins' lot to Traugott Schmidt. The land was subdivided and given the lot numbers which are still used today.

The Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order had become a civil corporation on June 24, 1885, and the articles of incorporation were filed with the State on September 14th. Because the province had not yet been legally incorporated, Father Bonaventure had found it necessary to purchase the property for the monastery in his own name two years earlier. On January 21, 1886, he transferred the property title to the Province of St. Joseph. During this same year, the province purchased from Traugott Schmidt and his wife an additional strip of land 30 feet in width, adjacent to the north side of the property and extending from Mt. Elliott to Meldrum Avenue. The Capuchins paid \$900 for what was designated as lot 161, where the Soup Kitchen now stands.

## Furnishing the Chapel

The monastery chapel was German Gothic in style, reflecting the backgrounds of the early friars, most of whom were from Germany and Switzerland. In tune with a tradition of Capuchin churches, the altars, statues, and even the candlesticks would be carved of wood. Architect Dederichs had obtained his bricks from kilns at Conner's Creek, and the stained glass windows would come from local firms.

The original chapel had one central doorway, and there were two parts to the interior. The public chapel seated a maximum of about 230 and was relatively small, as the monastery was not to have a parish. The back chapel, or "choir," was where the friars gathered for their morning and evening prayers and to recite the Divine Office.

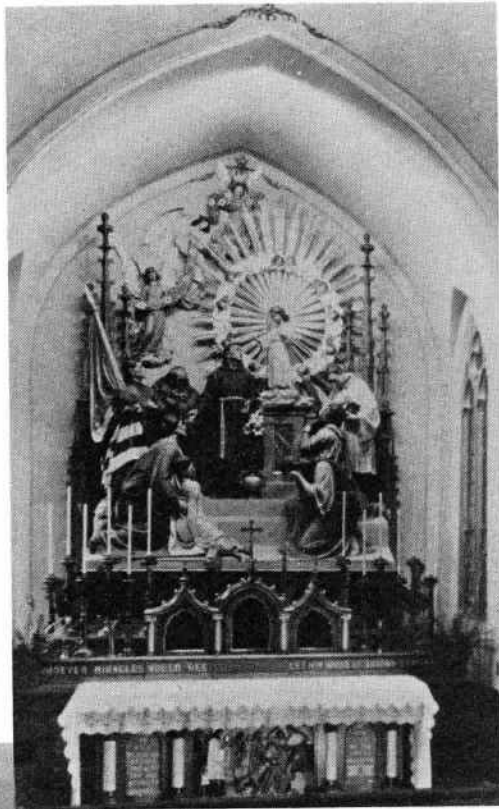
The interior of the new chapel was initially quite bare, but furnishings were gradually acquired through benefactors, who from the beginning saw this as a special place of their own. Though some of the statues and altars have now been taken down or replaced, the following gives credit to those who were responsible for the original adornments which gave the chapel its warmth and character for most of its one hundred years of existence.

The stained glass windows, from a firm on Gratiot Avenue, were donated by priests and laypeople from Detroit, Hamtramck, Conner's Creek, and as far away as Iowa and New York. The windows in the friars chapel were the gift of Reverend J. A. Hendrickx of Center Line, Michigan. The church bell was blessed on July 3, 1884, in a ceremony in which Mr. John Reid and Mr. McGlade participated as "sponsors."

Brother Lucius Fuchs built the large vestment and chalice cabinet in the sacristy and the altar in the friars chapel. Both were made of cherry taken from a grove on the property and decorated with hand carving in the German style.

In March, 1885, Mr. Peter Dingemans donated a communion rail with wood carvings for the main chapel. The same month, the Blessed Virgin Mary altar was given by the French Catholic families, Godfroy and Hamlin, who also donated money for a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and one of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In October, 1886, Mr. Joseph Pulte had the Sacred Heart of Jesus

*St. Anthony  
altar after  
1926 remodelling  
(photo, 1927)*

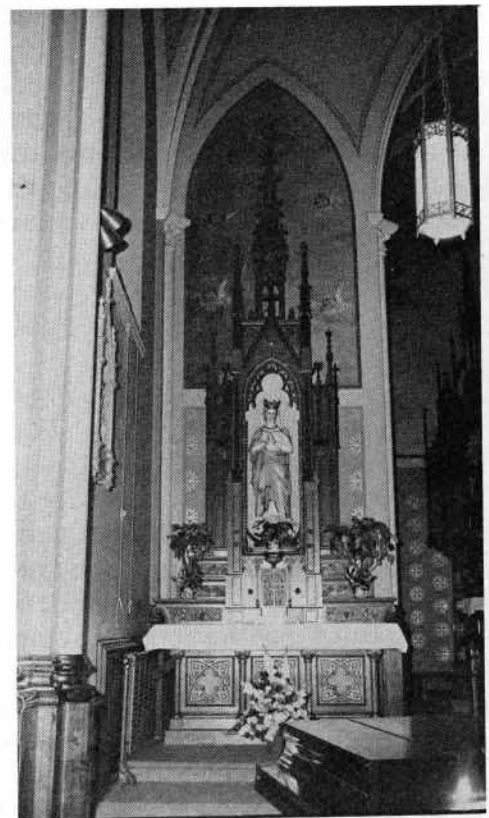


*St. Therese  
of Lisieux altar  
(photo, 1927)*



*Sacred Heart of Jesus altar  
(photo, 1983)*

*The  
Blessed  
Virgin  
Mary  
altar  
(photo, 1983)*





altar constructed in memory of his deceased wife. Both altars were built by Mr. Anthony Osebold, a local carpenter who had studied the art of fine wood carving in Berlin, and who had also carved the wooden altars at St. Joseph's church.

During the summer of 1886, work was begun on the new High Altar, the St. Anthony altar, and pews to replace the chairs originally used in the church. The St. Anthony altar was completed in time for Easter Sunday, 1887, and stood in the place of the High Altar, which was not yet finished.

Through the efforts of Dr. August Kaiser, on July 29, 1886, the City Council granted an extraordinary permit to build a crypt beneath the private chapel for the burial of deceased friars. Ten burial niches were planned, but none was ever used. The first friar to die at St. Bonaventure's was Father James Stuff, who succumbed to tuberculosis on January 31, 1887. The records show that he was buried among the priests in Mt. Elliott Cemetery on February 3, 1887.

In 1887, the monastery received a German Gothic-style monstern as the gift of Mr. Jacob Hansen of Detroit. Mr. Hubert Weiden of Grand Rapids donated a stone statue of St. Bonaventure, which was placed in the niche above the front entrance of the monastery.

The new High Altar was finished by early 1890 and the St. Anthony altar moved to a small side chapel. The High Altar was built of oak in the Gothic style by Mr. Osebold, through the generosity of Mrs. Rose Nebel and the deceased Mrs. Anastasia Allemann, members of the Karrer family. It was consecrated on March 25, 1890, by Bishop John Foley, at a service in which Reverend Friedland of St. Joseph's parish preached in German and English. On November 29, 1890, two statues arrived for the High Altar, one of St. Francis, donated by the Third Order, and the other of St. Bonaventure, a gift from Mr. Aloysius Kaelin of Toledo, Ohio.

In December, 1891, the Third Order bought a large chandelier for the chapel. In 1898, the ceiling was lowered in the friars chapel because of the echoes which were set up when the Office was chanted. In 1900, two statues were placed in the niches over the doors of the sanctuary leading to the friars chapel. The Third Order donated a statue of

St. Joseph, made in Munich, to Father Gabriel Messmer on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee. A statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, also made in Munich, was purchased with money donated by benefactors and taken up in special collections in the chapel. The statues were originally placed over the doors beside the high altar.

In 1913, a new vestibule and front entrance with three doors were built for safety reasons, to accommodate the crowds on Sundays and special occasions. In the 1940s, the interior of the chapel was repainted, with a fresco executed behind the main altar by a local artist named Von Mach.

## Special Devotions

### SACRED HEART

Father Francis Haas had a deep devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and saw Sacred Heart devotions as a way of fostering the prayer life of the friars and the people. On July 16, 1886, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith granted his petition to make the chapel of St. Bonaventure's a seat for the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart in the United States, and during the next twenty years, he and succeeding provincials affiliated nearly one hundred local confraternities. Toward the end of 1889, Bishop John Foley gave permission for the Blessed Sacrament to be exposed in the chapel on each First Friday from the beginning of the 6:00 a.m. Mass to the end of the 8:00 a.m. Mass. In January, 1910, permission was granted to have a weekly Holy Hour with the people.

There were several observances introduced into the St. Bonaventure community as a result of devotion to the Sacred Heart, including celebration and Mass on the feast of the Sacred Heart, First Friday Holy Hours, and special penances.

Sacred Heart devotions had periods of greater and lesser popularity over the years. Because of changing circumstances and poor attendance, the Holy Hour was finally discontinued in the public chapel around February 6, 1953. The friars' First Friday Holy Hour in their chapel was conducted until 1969. Today, a First Friday Holy Hour is again being held by members of the Third Order.

*Interior  
of chapel,  
1927*



*View  
of the back  
of the chapel,  
1927*



## ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA AND ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX

When the chapel was built in 1883, a small side chapel was built off the north wall to be dedicated to the early Franciscan, St. Anthony of Padua. In time, it would contain an altar and several pews.

Returning from a general chapter in Rome in the spring of 1884, Father Bonaventure brought back papal permission for the St. Anthony's altar to be a "privileged" altar at which a plenary indulgence would be granted for each Mass celebrated there for a deceased person. In October, 1895, Bishop Foley granted permission for the Blessed Sacrament to be exposed during the Mass every Tuesday in honor of St. Anthony, with Benediction after the Mass. This practice continued up to the late 1940s. On April 16, 1900, a relic consisting of a bone of St. Anthony, enclosed in a silver reliquary, was received from the minister provincial of the Conventual Friars at the Basilica of St. Anthony, in Padua.

On April 24, 1898, the St. Anthony Guild was introduced and within two years, 700 people had enrolled in it. Devotions to St. Anthony were added to the Tuesday morning high Mass, and special devotions with a sermon were held every Tuesday evening. The popular devotion continued until the late 1960s.

St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower, was canonized in 1925. Because of her popularity with the people, and his own special devotion to her, the guardian, Father Capistran Claude, built a new side chapel in her honor in 1926. The construction coincided with plans to widen the chapel. To balance the symmetry, the St. Anthony chapel facing the St. Therese chapel was enlarged to twice its original size and remodelled. Both chapels, with new altars and wooden statuary, were donated by the Albert Rose family in memory of their daughter.

### BLESSING OF THE SICK

On Wednesday afternoons for many years, the St. Maurus Blessing for the Sick was given, with veneration of a relic of the True Cross. Permission for the blessing was granted by the bishop in January, 1910. The service became especially popular after

Father Solanus Casey was transferred to St. Bonaventure's, in 1924. Before giving the blessing, Father Solanus would preach a simple "ferverino," to which the people listened in rapt attention, moved by the spirit which animated him. Today, a prayer service for the sick is still held in the chapel on Wednesday afternoons, with many people attending.

## Chapel Services

When Bishop John Foley became Bishop of Detroit, he confirmed all the Capuchins' previous rights and privileges on December 14, 1888. In addition, he permitted them to have a high Mass on August 2nd, the feast of Mary Queen of Angels and the Portiuncula Indulgence, and in June, on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, both feastdays for which Franciscans have a particular reverence.

Attendance at services was probably small in the beginning, when the chapel was only poorly furnished and the streetcar lines did not come as far as Mt. Elliott Avenue. But gradually, especially as public transportation improved, the number of people coming to the chapel increased. We do not have the original records of the Sunday Mass schedules followed during the first twenty-five years, but low Masses were apparently celebrated at 6:00 and 8:00 a.m. on Sundays, and a 5:00 a.m. Mass was later introduced. On weekdays, there was a Mass at 6:00 and another at 7:30 or 8:00 a.m. Confessions were heard on Saturdays and before feastdays from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., and from 7:00 or 7:30 p.m. until all had been heard, often not until 9:30, 10:00, or even later. Confessions were also heard in the morning before and during Masses.

The monastery chapel was not supposed to have a parish connected with it, but in 1888 or 1889, Father Ignatius Ullrich, the guardian, may have inquired whether a parish could be taken on, because on March 10, 1889, Bishop Foley informed him that his consultants had advised against it.

As a consequence of the growing popularity of the chapel, neighboring pastors began to be concerned over the number of their parishioners attending services with the Capuchins. In 1890, the pastor of St. Charles lodged a formal complaint with the bishop,

*Chapel  
as decorated  
in the 1940s  
(photo,  
1982)*



claiming that the Capuchin chapel was drawing people away from his parish on Sunday mornings. He argued that the parishioners were not hearing their Sunday sermons and announcements and that the Capuchins were collecting pew rents, thus depriving other parishes of these contributions, as well as of the regular Sunday collections. The bishop appointed a commission to look into the matter, which did not judge that the Capuchins were acting outside their rights or recommend that any action be taken.

In October, 1902, when a group of people asked Bishop Foley to establish a parish near the monastery under the care of the Capuchins, his unexpected reply was that it did not pertain to the Capuchins to have parishes, but to do penance!

In an effort to reduce the large number of people coming to the chapel on Sundays and holy days of obligation, it was decided on March 19, 1903, to have the last Mass at 7:00 instead of 8:00 a.m. and to omit the reading of the Gospel and announcements. But the crowds continued to be as large as before and a year later, the last Mass was rescheduled at 8:00 a.m.

Beginning in 1895, the number of Holy Communion distributed in the chapel each year was recorded in the monastery chronicle. Up to 1906, when Pope St. Pius X urged

the practice of frequent Communion, people usually received Communion only a few times a year, or on a monthly basis. In 1895, there were 7,416 Communion distributed. By 1900, the number had increased to 12,416 and in 1905, to 14,522. After 1906, Communion rose to 20,000, and by 1916, to more than 30,000.

From the beginning, people loved to come to St. Bonaventure's for confession, and the chapel became known as a "refuge for sinners." On the days before Christmas and Easter, and the last Saturday before Trinity Sunday, six priests were kept busy until late at night hearing confessions.

## GRAVESIDE SERVICES

The monastery chronicle also gives statistics for graveside funeral services from 1884 to 1907. The Capuchins performed these services at Mt. Elliott Cemetery when the person's own pastor could not attend, or at the request of the relatives of the deceased and with the permission of the pastor. In 1884, there were 117 funeral services. By 1890, the number rose to 418, and by 1899, to 569. Thereafter, the number decreased, as other Catholic cemeteries were established in the area. From 1905 until at least 1918, the Fathers provided the same service at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.



*Grapevine bower,  
removed in  
1958*

*“What I love about the Order is the Franciscan spirit, a life of contemplation and activity blended—a life of prayer and action.”*

—FATHER BERNARD BURKE

### 3. Life inside the monastery

#### The Cloister

Up until relatively recent times, the lives of the friars at St. Bonaventure's were much the same as those their Capuchin brothers had lived for centuries in the monasteries of Europe. The monastery's traditional architecture—a quadrangle formed by the chapel and three wings with an enclosed yard in back—reflects a desire to be self-sufficient and self-contained. Within its walls, the friars managed the practical aspects of their daily lives much as their families had on the well-run farms on which many had grown up.

Today, we are happily able to draw upon the memories of three of the friars who entered St. Bonaventure's before 1930: Brother Gaul Neumann, who entered as a candidate in 1915 at the age of seventeen, Father Bernard Burke, who entered as a novice in 1919, and Father Donald Wiest, who entered as a novice in 1927. All three are now living in active retirement at St. Bonaventure's.

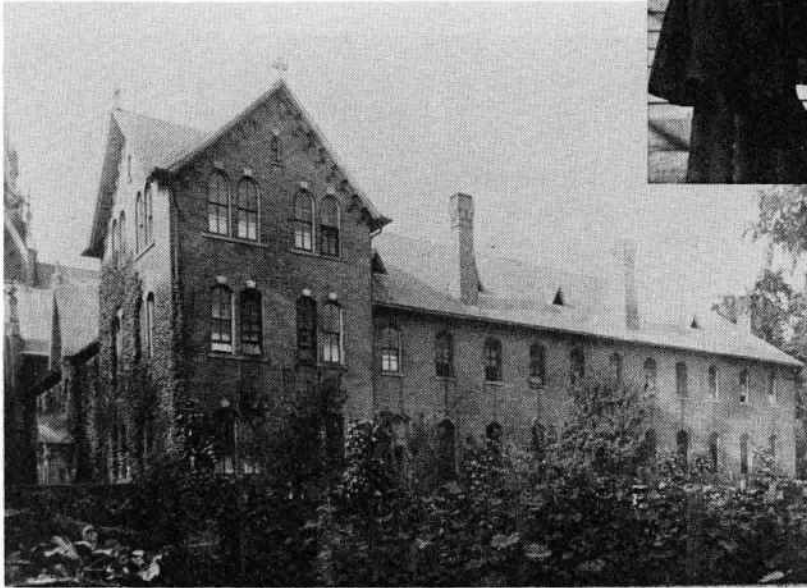
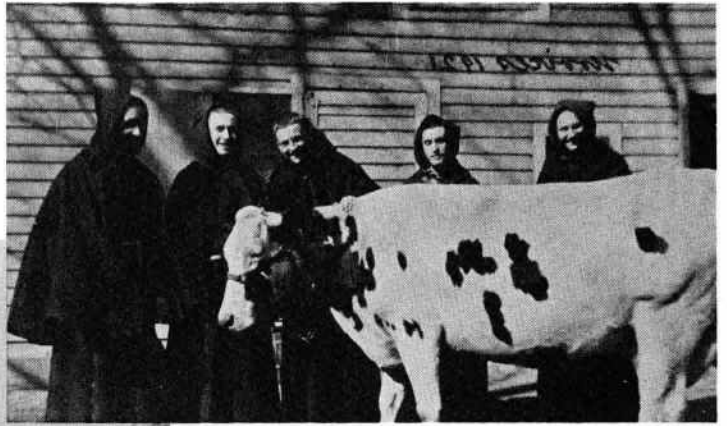
When Brother Gaul Neumann arrived in 1915, the spirit of the founding European fathers was still present. Father Bonaventure had died there only three years before, in 1912. The midwest Capuchins were known as

a German Order and would remain so until the 1920s. The monastery chronicle was kept in German until 1918, and the Third Order had both English and German-speaking branches until 1926. During the Office, which the priests recited in Latin, the brothers would retire to their oratory and repeat their “Hail Marys” and “Our Fathers” in German. Brother Gaul's family was part of the large German population on Detroit's east side which the monastery served, and he had grown up in the German-speaking parish of St. Elizabeth's, on Canfield and McDougall.

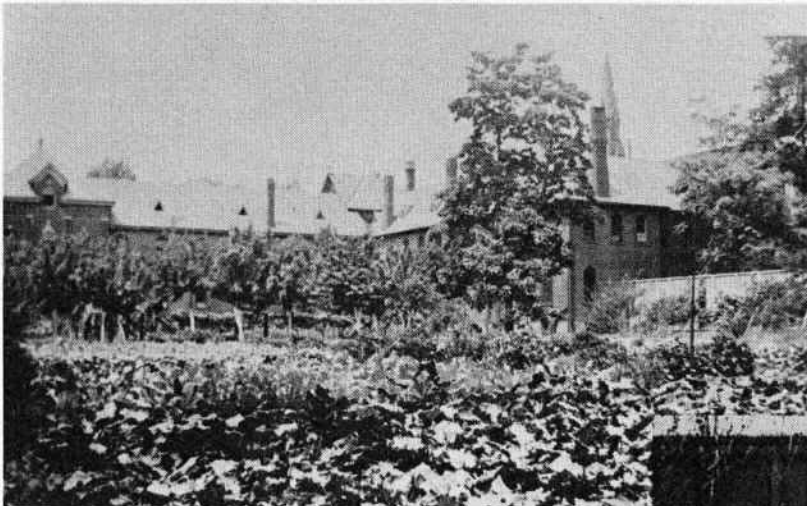
If the modern world invaded monastic life in the early days, it was mainly in the form of modern conveniences. In 1897, the monastery and chapel had electric lights for the first time, and in 1907, a hot water system was installed to heat the chapel when the original hot air system began to emit thick smoke. The first telephone was in use in 1909.

In other ways, however, the friars took care of their needs by relying on their own resources. In 1915, there were two cows and some chickens in the barn in the northeast corner of the yard behind the monastery.

*Novices  
with monastery  
cow,  
1921*



*Vineyard at southwest  
end of the garden  
(photo, between  
1900-1911)*



*Vegetable  
garden at southeast  
end of the  
garden  
(photo after  
1912)*

*Brother Samuel Timmers  
bringing home some supplies  
along Mt. Elliott Ave.  
(photo  
1900-1911)*



Friars seated in the garden. (photo 1923).  
The covered walk was removed in 1958.

Left to right:  
Seated: Father Agathangelus of Waspik  
(secretary to the minister general), Father  
Benno Aichinger (minister provincial),  
Father Joseph Anthony of Persiceto  
(minister general of the Order), Father  
Ignatius Ullrich (guardian)  
Standing: Father Capistran Claude, Father  
Gabriel Messmer, Father Cyprian Abler



Friars at recreation in front of covered walk  
along the east side of the garden (photo in  
the early 1910s)

In the foreground, viewed from left to right:  
Seated: Father Leonard Wojchiechowski,  
Father Ignatius Ullrich,  
Standing: Father Crescentian Voelpel,  
Father Charles Strahberger (with violin)  
Seated: Brother Lucius Fuchs, Brother  
Luchesius Spruck, T.O., Father Lawrence  
Vorwerk, and a visiting priest



Photo courtesy of Detroit Free Press



Brother Arnold Sauter calling the friars to prayer



Altar of the friars chapel, with lectern supporting large psalter for  
praying the Divine Office (photo before 1929)

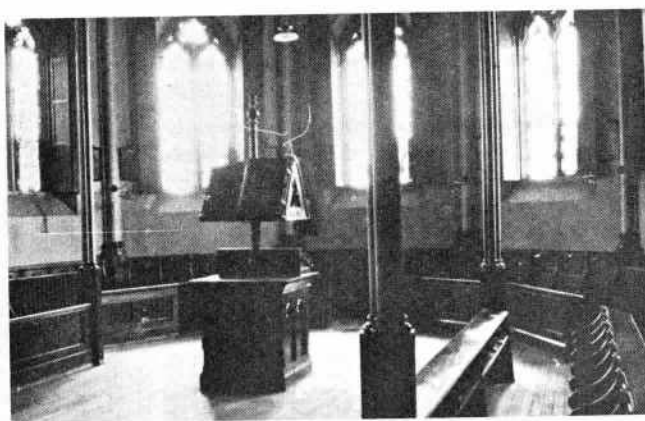
From the cows' milk, the brothers made their own butter and cottage cheese. There was also an extensive vegetable garden, and a potato patch along the east wall. What was not eaten was canned, or stored in the root cellar in the monastery basement. Outside the refectory window, in the southwest part of the garden, was a vineyard, and the German Fathers made Mass wine on a press they had installed in the basement. A second pressing of the grapes produced the table wine which the friars were allowed to savor on festive occasions. The basement also contained a bake oven, where bread was made for a week at a time, and a large clothes washer, which the brothers had to turn by hand. Outside, the little chapel built by Brother Lucius Fuchs had been brought over from Mt. Elliott Cemetery and served as a carpentry shop. Between the potato patch and the barn was a recreation area, with arbors and a covered walk with benches, and a volleyball court where the novices played at recreation time.

The friars had taken a vow of poverty and their material lives were simple and frugal. Inside the monastery, Brother Francis Spruck's tailor shop turned out the brown woolen robes worn by the community. Beneath their robes, they wore underwear made of coarse woolen material. They slept on corn husk mattresses and pillows, and the sheets and pillowcases were made of mattress ticking. The floors were of bare, unvarnished wood, and the coal furnace in the basement gave off only enough heat to keep the chill off. This was the life that the Capuchins had chosen as followers of St. Francis and they accepted it, the novices as part of their training and the professed friars as part of their discipline.

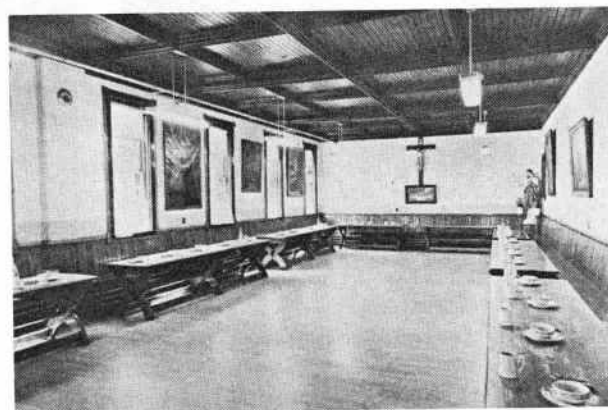
The friars' day was organized around prayer and work. In 1915, they were up at 4:30 a.m. and later at 5:00 a.m. They were wakened by the sound of "clappers," two pieces of wood struck together. Since none of the novices and few of the brothers wore watches, the monastery ran on what was called "claustra time." The correct time was kept on the chapel clock, and all the clocks in the monastery were set five minutes ahead, so that the friars would always get where they were going on time. Morning prayers consisted of the Angelus, the Litany of the Saints, and meditation, and were followed by Mass at



*Friars at meditation*



*Back section of the friars chapel with lectern for holding the large psalter (photo before 1929)*



*Simple and unadorned refectory, or dining room. Following the words of St. Francis, the friars ate what was set before them, with the blessing of God.*



6:00 a.m. The friars remained in the chapel offering their private prayers until 7:00 a.m., when everyone went in to breakfast. They sat on wooden benches built along the walls of the refectory and were silent at meals, except on Thursdays and Sundays. During the meal, the priests took turns reading aloud from the Bible or the lives of the saints. Between All Saints on November 1st, and Christmas, the friars fasted, and no meat was served.

All the waking hours were regulated, and prayer was an integral part. Several times a day, the community was called to the chapel to pray. Working in the kitchen, the brothers took turns leading the rosary as they peeled potatoes and prepared vegetables for the mid-day meal. The day ended at 9:30 p.m. with everyone in bed and the lights out.

## The Novitiate

The novitiate was at St. Bonaventure's from 1885 until 1929, when it was moved to the newly built St. Felix Monastery in Huntington, Indiana. From 1939 on, the brothers and clerics novitiates were separate, and until 1959, one or the other was always at St. Bonaventure's. The brothers novitiate was there from 1939 until 1952, the clerics novitiate from 1952 until 1957, and the brothers novitiate from 1957 until 1959. After 1959, both novitiates were located elsewhere.

During the novitiate year, the novices studied the life of St. Francis, the meaning of the vows, the Franciscan Rule, and the Capuchin Constitutions. The goal was to become imbued with the spirit of St. Francis and to get used to the discipline and self-denial of community life. It was the first year of training to prepare the brothers for a life of service in the religious community, and the clerics for their future priestly ministries. Part of what the novices had to learn was to give up part of their personal freedom and live in obedience to a higher authority. Father Bernard says:

Our primary objective in the novitiate was to adapt ourselves to the monastic mode of living, not to look ahead to see what line of activity we would engage in for the rest of our lives. That was pretty well outlined for us later on. They'd assign us to a particular post and you did your best to acquaint yourself with the requirements of that

ministry and then carry it out. You worked on assignment, not on choice. And part of the novitiate training was to accept the assignment as God's will in your life. It was figured out by those with legitimate authority and they assigned you to a position that they felt you were qualified for.

Concentrated as they were on developing their spiritual life, the novices rarely went outside the walls of the monastery. Twice a year, they went for a walk across the street in Mt. Elliott Cemetery. Otherwise, they confined themselves in their free time to walks and volleyball in the monastery garden, and conversation in the recreation room.

The brother novices spent the day learning the trades which would enable them to keep the monasteries running smoothly. They worked under the professed brothers learning tailoring, sandal making, cooking, baking, carpentry, gardening, and indoor and outdoor maintenance. In the evening, they had a class on the vows and the Franciscan spirit.

The clerics had classes all morning and in the afternoon did manual work from 3:00 until 5:00 p.m., under the supervision of the novice master and his assistant. In the winter, they shovelled snow; in the summer, there was gardening; and at all times during the year, they kept the chapel clean and worked in the kitchen.

## The Capuchin Vocation

Most of the young men who came to St. Bonaventure's as novices had attended St. Lawrence Seminary, the Capuchins' preparatory school at Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin, and most were from a rural or small town background. Those in Detroit had usually been drawn to the Capuchin way of life through their own, or their parents' association with the monastery.

Brother Gaul Neumann's mother was a Third Order member, and he remembers that his specific inspiration for joining the Capuchins was a 1915 Sunday rotogravure article on the friars that showed the brothers working in the kitchen and garden and the Fathers doing their spiritual work.

Father Bernard Burke and Father Donald Wiest both entered the Order after graduating

from St. Lawrence Seminary. During the last two years of school, Father Bernard had worn the Third Order habit of the scholastics, the students who had already decided to become Capuchins. Both he and Father Donald had originally planned to be diocesan priests and decided to enter religious life as a result of their impressions of the Capuchins at Mt. Calvary. Father Bernard tells of his decision and of the somewhat typical response of his parents:

You used to see the Capuchins at the Office in their community prayer, and see them coming and going from the monastery to the college building, and it appealed to me. So I determined to follow that type of living, much to the chagrin of my people at home. They liked to have a priest out where they could see him, where he could be in touch.

The pastor of Father Donald's church was an alumnus of St. Lawrence and had already sent two or three other boys from the parish school there. While at St. Lawrence, Father Donald joined the Third Order and, attracted by the Franciscan ideals of the Capuchins, decided to enter the novitiate.

Brother Leo Wollenweber, who grew up on the eastside in St. Martin's parish, entered the novitiate in May of 1940. He says: "St. Francis had a tremendous attraction for me. First, I joined the Third Order here at St. Bonaventure's, and then about a year later, I decided to join the Order."

Brother Ignatius Milne grew up in St. Charles parish, in which the monastery is now located, and remembers hearing about Father Solanus as a boy. He started going to the chapel because they had the first Mass in the city, which he used to attend after working all night in a bowling alley. For awhile, he took Latin classes at the monastery while he was thinking of joining the Maryknolls, and he got a chance to see the brothers at their work. In November of 1940, he entered the novitiate.

Father Albert Sandor (who was a brother for many years before becoming a priest) says that he was "always inclined toward the Franciscans because of their joyfulness and simplicity." He entered the clerics' novitiate in 1956 and the brothers' novitiate in 1958, both of them in Detroit.

Brother Joe Howe entered the novitiate in 1958 in Detroit and completed it in 1959 at Baraga, Michigan. Like Brother Gaul, he was attracted to the Capuchins by something he read:

I didn't enter religious life till I was almost twenty-nine, so I'd been thinking about it for quite awhile. Then I saw an advertisement for the Capuchins in a magazine. They were here in Detroit, although I admit I'd never heard of them, because I was from the west side, and the east side was almost like another country. So after I got the information and literature, I decided that's what I wanted.

## The physical plan of the Monastery

The way the monastery was set up, the novitiate quarters were on the second floor of the east wing, with the priests' recreation room and the kitchen below on the first floor; the professed priests and brothers were on the second floor of the south wing, above the refectory; the provincial's suite was on the second floor of the west wing, and the front office rooms on the first floor. At the southwest corner, the guardian's office and bedroom were on the second floor, the tailorship on the first, and the furnace room in the basement below. The third floor, or attic, was the library.

In 1912, a new wing was built onto the monastery, extending south from the quadrangle along Mt. Elliott, which provided for a library on the third floor; new quarters for the guardian, an infirmary with a chapel, and eight other rooms on the second floor; and a bishop's suite, visitors' dining room, and ten other rooms on the first floor.

In January of 1927, fire broke out in the attic of the south wing. The damaged areas of the south and east wings were afterwards rebuilt according to the original designs.

The wooden fence enclosing the monastery garden was replaced with a brick wall in the early 1930s. The friars had purchased a special burial plot in Mt. Elliott Cemetery years before, but in 1943, the City Council gave them permission to have their own cemetery, and in September and October of that year, the remains of the thirteen men buried in Mt. Elliott Cemetery were brought

back to St. Bonaventure's, and a cemetery established in the southwest corner of the garden. A wooden lattice fence was built around the cemetery, which was replaced years later by a wire cyclone fence.

In the 1960s, the old chapel in the yard, which was being used to store lumber, was taken down and replaced by a carport.

## The Provincial Chapters

The provincial chapter met at St. Bonaventure's every three years from 1885 until 1945. Then, in the spring of 1946, the provincial, Father Clement Neubauer, was appointed minister general of the Capuchin Order by the Pope, and moved to Rome, which meant that another provincial chapter had to be called the same year to elect a new provincial. In 1952, the regular provincial chapter was cancelled when the province was divided into two provinces and the provincial and councillors for both were appointed by Rome. The last chapter held in Detroit was in 1955. After that, the meetings were held at the larger monasteries to accommodate the increasing numbers of delegates.

There was an interesting ritual for voting attached to the chapters held at St. Bonaventure's. The superiors and delegates met in the monastery refectory and voted for the provin-

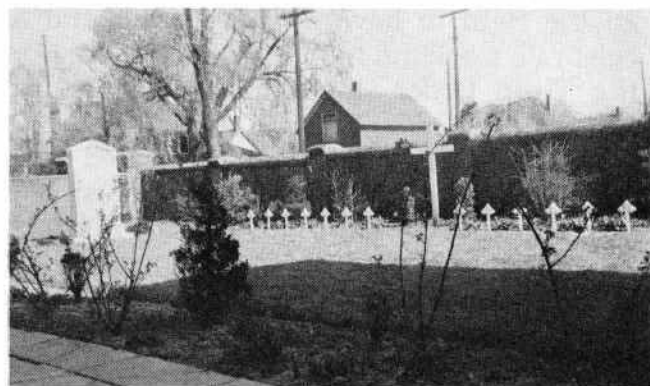
cial and each of the four councillors separately by secret ballot. As the ballots were counted, on each of which was the candidate's name and the friar's mark, they were strung onto a piece of heavy string. At the end, the papers were burned in a little portable stove used only for this purpose. Before the last chapter, a stove was built into the wall of the refectory facing the yard. Today it is still there, covered by a removable piece of wood panelling, bearing silent witness to the old customs.



*Bas relief statue of  
St. Francis of Assisi  
in the monastery cemetery*



*New wing added in 1912, facing Mt. Elliott Ave.*



*Monastery cemetery, 1943*

*"The Third Order has been tied together with the monastery from the beginning, which is how it is meant to be. The Seculars receive the spirit of St. Francis by relating to and being associated with the First Order, and they become the leaven in their parishes and their homes and the places where they work. It is the Franciscan family that we are dealing with at St. Bonaventure's, and the Secular Franciscans are very much a part of that."*

—FATHER JOGUES CONSTANCE

## 4. the third order

The spiritual direction of the Third Order, or what since 1978 has been called the Secular Franciscan Order, is one of the most important ministries of the monastery. Recognition of the tertiaries, today's Seculars, dates from Bishop Borgess' 1883 permission to the Capuchins to establish a monastery in Detroit, in which he specifically acknowledged the right to have a Third Order and to celebrate a solemn high Mass on the feasts of the Third Order saints, St. Louis and St. Elizabeth.

There are third orders connected with other religious orders, but the largest and best-known is the Third Order of St. Francis. It is a measure of the personal holiness which the Franciscan Third Order promotes that so many of its members have been officially recognized for their sanctity.\* In addition, a number of historically famous people such as Christopher Columbus and Dante have been members.

It was the Third Order that made the force of the Franciscan movement felt in Europe in the Middle Ages. Recognized as a religious organization, the tertiaries were exempted

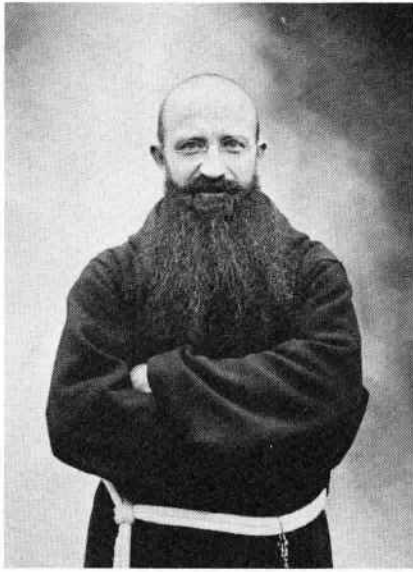
from swearing allegiance to other men or bearing arms, thus undermining the entire system of fealty to local lords on which feudalism was based.

### The Third Order in Detroit

A Third Order had apparently already been organized by the Franciscan Fathers at St. Mary's Church downtown before the arrival of the Capuchins, in 1883. Since many Detroit Catholics were recent European immigrants, it is probable that they were already tertiaries in their homelands. The first official meeting of the Third Order at St. Bonaventure's was held on May 29, 1887, and eleven rules were adopted concerning such things as the schedule of meetings, dues and donations, Masses for the dead, blessings, and absolutions.

Within a short time, the Third Order had seventy members, and by 1900, the number had risen to 225. The group was originally German-speaking, but during the 1890s, the English speakers asked if they could convene separately, and each group subsequently held their meetings on different Sundays. This continued until June 21, 1926, when the Ger-

\* See Appendix, p. 90



Father Cyprian Abler

REMEMBRANCE OF  
**The First Silver Jubilee**  
 OBSERVED IN  
 ST. BONAVENTURE  
 CONFERENCE  
 OF  
**The Third Order of  
 St. Francis**  
 BY

John Furlong, 1882	Andrew Weitzel, 1890
Ladislaus Jasinski, 1885	Theodor Feldmann, 1892
Albertina Buchholz, 1876	Margaret O'Connor, 1887
Christina Karrer, 1877	Marg. Harrington, 1888
Margaret Trahey, 1879	Agnes Nett, 1888
Anna M. Gebauer, 1882	Mary Neumann, 1888
Margaret Anker, 1883	Louise Pellerin, 1888
Anna Frumviller, 1883	Elisabeth Schwartz, 1888
Paul. Gendernalik, 1883	Ellen Bosquett, 1889
Louise Robin, 1883	Barbara Weber, 1889
Justina Buehler, 1884	Amelia Haas, 1890
Mary Plotske, 1885	Caroline Herbst, 1890
Walburga Cordes, 1886	Anna Roggenbuck, 1890
Mary E. Hewelt, 1886	Margaret Fischer, 1891
Mary Kennedy, 1886	Katherine O'Regan, 1891
Elisabeth Mues, 1886	Emelia Schottler, 1891
Angeline Ott, 1886	Mary Higgins, 1892
Anna Siebert, 1886	Mary Sullivan, 1892
Mary Lange, 1887	Joanna Kohnle, 1892

DETROIT, NOVEMBER 25, 1917

✠

Early members of the  
 St. Bonaventure Conference  
 of the Third Order

man branch was merged with the English branch.

Until 1908, when the Third Order was reorganized under Father Crescentian Voelpel, the guardian of the monastery was generally also spiritual director of the Third Order. With the energetic direction of Father Cyprian Abler from 1915 to 1925, and enthusiasm generated by retreats, many new members joined. From the early years, meetings had been held in the chapel and the officers had met in the front office rooms of the monastery. In the fall of 1915, plans for a separate Third Order Hall were approved by the Capuchins, who agreed to pay for construction with help from Third Order donations. The building was begun and completed in 1916. Located directly north of the monastery, it serves today as the Capuchin Community Center. Father Cyprian also encouraged the system of promoters, one person from each parish who kept in touch with the parish's Third Order members. In 1923, there were 42 promoters. The same year, the name of the Third Order Conference was changed to Third Order Fraternity, and toward the end of 1924, the organization was civilly incorporated.

## The Eucharistic Mission Band

A sewing circle began in 1917, when Miss Clara Kaiser started making "rabats," black pieces of cloth attached to Roman collars in place of a tie, for poor missionary priests. The German and English speaking groups agreed to start sewing for the poor, in cooperation with the St. Vincent de Paul Society, but the work stopped when the guardian withdrew permission to use the Third Order Hall for this activity.

In November of 1921, a successful fund-raising bazaar for the missions gave the apostolate of sewing a new start and led to an organizational meeting of the Eucharistic Mission Band on March 12, 1922. The purpose was to sew sacred vestments and altar linens, mainly for the Capuchin missions, but also for other poor missionaries.

The Eucharistic Mission Band has continued its work up to the present, sending donations to needy Capuchin missionaries for use in educating priests and catechists,



*Early Mission Band Members, with Father Alvin Lafeir*

rebuilding chapels, printing religious materials, supporting clinics, and the like. By the end of 1983, it is estimated that they will have contributed well over \$75,000 in donations of liturgical vestments, linens, and financial aid. Today, the Eucharistic Mission Band also makes burial shrouds, scapulars, and cords for the Secular Franciscans. Members of the group meet to sew every Tuesday morning from September until June, on the third floor of the Third Order Hall. They are a self-governing unit within the Secular Franciscan Order.

## Beginnings of the Soup Kitchen

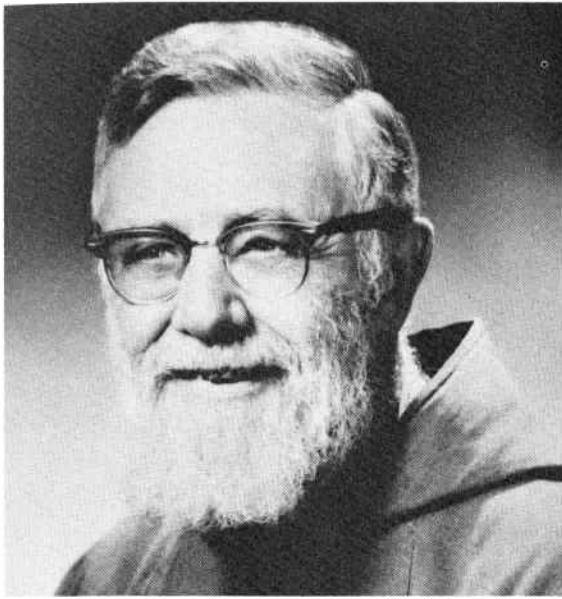
The Depression brought an important new apostolate to the Third Order. For years, Brother Francis Spruck and Father Solanus Casey, working in the front office of the monastery, had followed the Franciscan tradition of sharing food from the friars' kitchen with hungry men who came to the door. With the beginning of the Depression, however, the situation became more than they could handle and the guardian, Father Ulrich Danner, urged the Third Order's spiritual director, Father Herman Buss, to organize a soup

kitchen for the poor run by the Third Order. The idea was first suggested by Father Salesius Schneweis, the Third Order's provincial visitor, on April 3, 1930. At a meeting on October 26, 1930, Father Herman announced to the officers:

A soup kitchen for the poor conducted by the Third Order members in the Third Order Hall will be opened up around November 1st. The kitchen will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. A bowl of soup and bread will be served. Several farmers have given us a donation of various kinds of vegetables, but no bread and meat. We need your help, either in gathering supplies or assistance in the kitchen.

Only nine or ten people stood in line on the soup kitchen's first day of operation, but before the end of the month, 935 were being served. The work was carried on by Third Order volunteers, including Father Herman's mother. Once a month, the members sponsored a card party to raise funds.

On December 3, 1930, a meeting was held to design a system and select a committee to run the soup kitchen. Mr. John Crowe was appointed general chairman with power to choose committees for volunteers, publicity, collecting, and supplies and utensils.



*Father Herman Buss*

Father Herman went with the volunteers to farms near the city to collect potatoes, vegetables, and meat for the soup. Father Solanus, who had grown up on a farm, also accompanied Third Order members on collecting tours, and frequently came over from the monastery office to offer his encouragement to the workers and hungry men being fed, and give them his blessing. Early on, Mr. Ray McDonough volunteered his services, and his energy and generosity were a godsend to the soup kitchen for almost thirty years. Through his contacts, he was able to enlist the help of stores, bakeries, and dairies.

During the worst years of the Depression, between 1000 and 2000 men a day were fed and the line on Mt. Elliott stretched up to Kercheval on one side, and down to St. Paul on the other. Besides soup, bread, coffee, and sometimes dessert, the soup kitchen provided bread and milk for the men to take home to their families, and distributed donations of clothing, which were stored in the Eckels' barn next door.

1933 was a critical year. With funds running out, the salaries of the two kitchen assistants had to be stopped. Events began to point toward a change in leadership. In July, 1933, Father Herman was transferred and



*Serving bread and soup at the Soup Kitchen: Father Mathias Nack, a Third Order member, and Father Solanus Casey*

Father Titus Tettenborn appointed the new spiritual director of the Third Order. In September, the soup kitchen committee decided to raise money by raffling off an automobile, but the ticket proceeds barely covered the cost of the car. Father Titus announced that Third Order funds should be used for helping needy families, especially those in the Third Order itself, and that the monastery would run the soup kitchen, if necessary. At the same time, differences of opinion regarding operation had arisen between the soup kitchen committee and the supervisor, Mr. McDonough. Early in 1934, or just before, Father Mathias Nack, the new guardian of the monastery, took over the direction of the soup kitchen. The Third Order donated the use of their building and continued to make monthly contributions.

## Growth of the Fraternity

In 1918, the Third Order had 466 members. After Father Herman Buss became spiritual director in 1927, he organized a mass meeting at the Knights of Columbus Auditorium on March 25, 1928, to make the Third Order better known. In 1931, there were 968 members, and in 1932, 1,795. Mem-



*May  
Crowning  
of the statue  
of the  
Blessed Virgin Mary  
Father  
Theodosius Foley,  
preaching.  
(ca. 1941)*



*Making  
way for  
Third Order  
Hall,  
1939*

*Profession of Third Order novices, 1976*







*New Third Order Hall completed*

bership then declined to 1057 by January, 1934. When Father Alvin Lafeir became spiritual director in 1937, he zealously recruited new members for both the Junior and Senior Fraternities.

In 1924, the Eckel property next to the Third Order Hall was purchased with the idea of building a new hall to replace the old one, but the idea didn't gain any momentum until 1936 and 1937, when a building fund was established under Father Titus Tettenborn and his successor, Father Roman Ament. The architect, Mr. Gies, estimated that the building would cost between \$45,000 and \$50,000. It would have a lower level for a library, kitchen, dining facilities, and furnace room, and an upper level with a large auditorium and stage. Near the front door of the upper level would be office rooms, and on the third floor, a room for the Eucharistic Mission Band. The building was completed in 1939, and the old Third Order Hall given over to the exclusive use of the Soup Kitchen.

The new building was dedicated on September 24, 1939, by Archbishop Edward Mooney at a ceremony attended by 1200 persons. Today, the size of the auditorium gives a sense of how large an organization the Third Order was at its peak of membership when all the meetings were held there.

## JUNIOR and Intermediate Fraternities

A Junior Third Order Fraternity had been started by Father Regis Neeser on February 2, 1926. The idea was revived by Father Titus Tettenborn, and the Junior Fraternity given its own organization, on October 14, 1934. The age limits were sixteen to twenty-five, with the option of remaining until the age of thirty. Meetings were held every month, and through the next forty years, the young people organized varied religious, social, and recreational activities, as well as charitable projects. A number entered religious life, and others united in the sacrament of marriage. In 1951, Junior membership reached a peak of 650, but declined in the late 1950s and 1960s, and as of May, 1975, the Juniors were absorbed by the Senior Fraternity.

After the Second World War, an Intermediate Fraternity was established for returning servicemen and young engaged and married couples, who felt that they were too old for the Junior Fraternity and too young for the Senior Fraternity. Single persons from 25 to 35 years of age were eligible, and married persons up to 35. The group was established informally around 1946 and became a separate fraternity in June of 1960.

The numbers remained fairly steady between 250 and 350 for almost twenty years, but in the 1970s, membership decreased and on July 15, 1974, all the members transferred to the Senior Fraternity.

The head of the Third Order Province had his office in the monastery until 1949. The Third Order had acquired a house in the late 1940s directly north of the Third Order Hall and equipped it with rooms for materials. The Father Commissary, Father Fergus Pease, transferred his office there in March, 1949. The next commissary, Father Conrad Polzer, moved the Third Order Bureau to Milwaukee.

On September 19, 1955, the Third Order acquired property and a building for a retreat house in St. Clair, Michigan. St. Lawrence Retreat was donated to the First Order on January 24, 1965. Today, it is run as a retreat center for young people and a new retreat center has been in existence in Washington, Michigan, since 1968.

The St. Bonaventure Federal Credit Union began in 1950. Today, it serves Third Order members and is also open to members of the Father Solanus Guild and Capuchin employees.

The St. Bonaventure Fraternity hosted two provincial conventions of the Third Order in 1931 and 1934, and a national convention in October, 1962.

## The Secular Franciscan Order Today

*"The rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people."* (From the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order)

The present active membership of St. Bonaventure's Secular Franciscan Order is approximately 700, including over twenty novices. The Seculars meet monthly at different times and in different places. Besides the meetings at the Secular Franciscan Hall, groups meet at church facilities in the suburbs, and in "cell groups" at one another's homes.

The focus of the monthly meetings has

changed somewhat. Whereas in the past, the emphasis was on the talk given by the spiritual assistant, today there is increasing participation by the Seculars themselves. Before the meeting, the group reads a topic presented in the *Poverello*, the Secular Franciscan publication, which forms the basis for discussion and sharing. Several times a year, there are events and activities in which members of all the groups come together, including a picnic, ice-cream social, spaghetti dinner, and square dance. The Eucharistic Mission Band sponsors a Mass and brunch twice a year. On October 4th, the Feast of St. Francis, the Seculars and First Order join together for Mass and a celebration, and on Community Day, the first Sunday in November, the Seculars gather to reaffirm their commitment. Once a year, usually in March, there is a Mass and social for the First and Third Orders in the area, who number around 3000. The Second Order, that of cloistered Franciscan religious women, is not represented in Detroit at the present time.

The St. Bonaventure's fraternity is one of the largest in the country, and unlike many of the others, has the advantage of having two priests to work with them, which means that one or the other is able to attend most meetings or functions. Father Jogues Constance and Father Silas Baumann are currently the spiritual assistants. Besides being able to offer their knowledge of the Church, and their spiritual insights as religious, they are available to Third Order members for counseling. The Seculars and friars at the monastery are mutually supported and inspired by their close relationship and attend one another's gatherings as members of the same family.

Becoming a Secular Franciscan is a gradual process. There is a six months' postulancy period and a year's novitiate before profession. In 1983, Mrs. Marie Amore, Connie and Ralph Hardwick, and Bill Pennefather, are in charge of novice instructions. During the novice year, the candidate's attitudes and seriousness of purpose are tested. St. Francis was the most ecumenical of saints, and his followers must have an outlook which is tolerant and accepting of others. At the same time, they follow Francis' goal of rebuilding the Church from within and gain their

strength and meaning from working in their parishes. As Franciscans, they are also committed to simplicity and moderation in the way they live, and riches and power are not motivating factors in their lives. They are devoted to the example of Christ and the Gospel, which they must make into a living part of their daily lives, serving as examples to others.

Making the Secular Franciscan commitment is not like joining a Catholic Club; it is a lifelong vocation. The Secular Franciscan Order is recognized by the Church as a means of living the Gospel and attaining eternal salvation. Symbolically, the Third Order walk immediately behind the First Order in church processions, and many Seculars are buried in the Third Order habit.

The Seculars do whatever they can to support the friars at St. Bonaventure's in their work. They help the Soup Kitchen by conducting a yearly drive for canned goods, and by volunteering in the Meals at Home program. The Young Franciscans serve food on Saturdays. Seculars help the Capuchin missions through the Eucharistic Mission Band, by being contact people and collecting donations for the Seraphic Mass Association, and through their own donations. They are responsible for the maintenance of their own building, and have supported the recent renovation of the chapel and monastery. During construction, the Third Order Hall has been used for Mass, confessions and counseling, and while the work continues this summer, the Capuchin Community Center's neighborhood children's program will be held there rather than in the monastery yard.

In the 1970s, Father Baldwin Beyer, Capuchin chaplain at the nearby nursing homes, had Third Order members trained and certified as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, so that they could help him in taking Communion to nursing homes and hospitals. Today, the Seculars continue this ministry on their own.

Twice a year, the Seculars organize a rummage sale in the Third Order Hall for people in the neighborhood. They have collected about \$43,000 over the years in their World Hunger Program, much of which has been distributed through Catholic Relief Services. Under the

auspices of the Capuchin Seminary Guild, they contribute money to put seminarians through school. A few years ago, the Third Order helped a Vietnamese refugee who came to the United States. He lived at the monastery until his son was able to come over, and the two of them are now living together in their own house.

With the money they collect in donations at meetings and fundraisers, the Seculars are also able to take care of some of the needs of their own members. The fraternity's infirmary keeps track of people who are in the hospital, and members go to visit them. Necessary items like hospital beds are bought for those who are confined at home, and furniture and clothing are collected in the Third Order Hall for the benefit of the needy.

The Secular Franciscan Order at St. Bonaventure's is governed by a council to which fourteen officers are elected every three years. The council appoints promoters, who are in charge of communications between the fraternity membership and the council. There are fifty-five promoters at the present time, under the direction of fraternity coordinator, Richard Hulan. The Secular Franciscan Order has its own separate organization from the First Order. The president of the province lives in Milwaukee, and the world president is headquartered in Rome. In 1983, the Detroit Seculars have two staff people at St. Bonaventure's: Mary Poole works in the office and Merrill Williams is in charge of the Third Order Hall. Irene Siemion is in charge of the St. Bonaventure Federal Credit Union.

Throughout the years, Third Order members have occasionally lived at the monastery. Father Cornelius Murphy's father, Vincent, lived there in the 1940s and again in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Brother Gabriel Badalamenti has been living at St. Bonaventure's since the early 1940s. During the Second World War, he went to Guam with Capuchin missionaries from St. Bonaventure's and was interned with them by the Japanese for almost four years. Many years before that, Brother Francis Spruck's father also lived at the monastery. When his wife died, he and his two sons and a daughter left New York and entered religious houses. Brother Francis and his father are both buried in the cemetery behind the monastery.

Capuchin Soup Kitchen building (1760 Mt. Elliott Ave.)



## 5. the soup kitchen

Father Herman Buss, under whose guidance the Soup Kitchen was organized in 1930, remembered the early days as times which required daily miracles. Speaking of Father Solanus, he said:

Troubles then, he'd just bless them. When we were out of bread, I'd rush over from the Soup Kitchen, come over here, and he'd be sitting at his desk writing. "Father Solanus, there are about three, four hundred men waiting for bread, and we ain't got any." "Ah," he said, "Don't worry." So many times. We went over to the Soup Kitchen to tell the men to settle down, sit down, take it easy. And then the drivers came in with a full load of bread. There was one time, Father Solanus blessed it and the truck came in with bread, bread, bread, bread, bread, bread. Oh, man. And the guy unloading—the baker, the delivery man—he looks at it and says, "My truck isn't big enough to hold that."<sup>1</sup>

When the direction of the Soup Kitchen passed from the Third Order to the monastery in 1934, the guardian or his delegate became director, assisted by Ray McDonough, who supervised the work. Brother Ignatius Milne

offers the following appreciation of Ray McDonough and his contribution.

He really cared for people. He worked all night and then came down here and worked all day for years. You know, sacrifice shows your caring, your willingness to do that. And he could beg anything from anybody. He was known down in Eastern Market. He could go down into any shop and say, "I need meat," and they'd give him a couple barrels of meat. When he was asking something from the city, he wouldn't go in grovelling. His attitude was if we weren't doing this, you would have to do it. We used to have the garbage trucks come every day because of him. He was a politician that way.

In its early days, as now, the Soup Kitchen was a collective effort which depended on the involvement of civic and business leaders, other charities, and city officials. The Capuchin Charity Guild was organized early in 1939 by a group of Catholic and non-Catholic laymen for the purpose of raising funds for the operation of the Soup Kitchen. All the Capuchin directors worked with the Charity Guild on their annual benefits of the early years: the Baseball Dinners, the Soup Bowl games, and

1. Interview at the monastery, June 23, 1978. Father Herman died on October 11, 1978.

the John W. Smith Old Timers Bowling Matches.

The directors were also helped by local farmers who set aside plots of land for the Soup Kitchen, or donated part of their crops in the fall. Ray McDonough organized the labor involved in the planting and picking. During the summers, he had boys under legal jurisdiction sent out to the country to work and went regularly to check on how they were doing. He also had help from men from the line at the Soup Kitchen and from his fellow employees at the Kennedy Dairy Company, where he worked at night. For a time, the Capuchins raised beef on farmland belonging to Ed Roney, the first President of the Charity Guild.

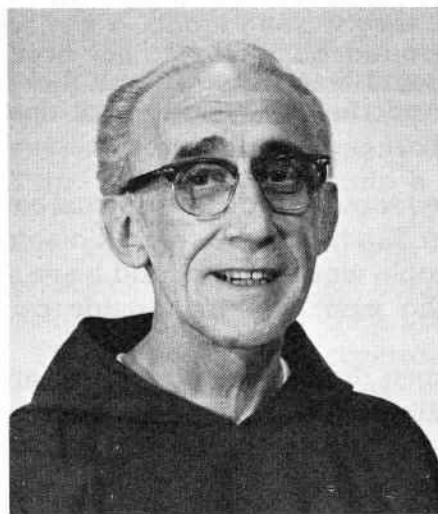
Father Jim Zelinski remembers that during his novitiate year at St. Bonaventure's, in 1954, the novices went up to farms north of the city three times to pick carrots and potatoes for the Soup Kitchen. Once, the novices unwittingly got Ray McDonough in trouble when they stopped and he bought them a newspaper. Later, when the novice master, Father Elmer Stoffel, found out that they had suddenly become experts on the last All Stars baseball game, he had a few words with Ray about the novitiate program's goal of keeping the young men removed from the world.

From the beginning, the Soup Kitchen offered a place to go for help to those who had nowhere else to go. One of the stories from the Depression involves a man who was walking down to the river to drown himself when he saw the line in front of the Soup Kitchen and stopped to ask what was going on. Someone told him there was a free meal, so he stood in line that day and for many days afterwards. Eventually, when the Depression was over, he got a job again as a salesman and for a long time after that, donated \$1500 a year to the Soup Kitchen.

Brother Ignatius Milne remembers how during the 1950s, he would stand at the front window of the monastery and watch the people lining up on Mt. Elliott. Only two hundred could be seated at a time, so there might be four or five hundred outside waiting. He observed how they would take care of one another.



*Mr. Ray McDonough in truck,  
and Father Bernard Burke*



*Brother Ignatius Milne*



*Line of men waiting to be served in the Soup Kitchen*

How often I saw it. You'd see an alcoholic bombed out, fallen on the ground, and the good Christians going into church, they'd walk right past him. I can understand their natural fear. But a fellow alcoholic would reach down and pick him up, because they weren't afraid. A guy lying on the ground was going to get hurt. They cared and reached down and picked him up. And they'd both stumble down the street.

He saw some of the same mutual caring in the Soup Kitchen when after finishing the meal, people would get up and leave so that those who were waiting outside could sit down.

The men did not have to profess any particular religious beliefs in order to be fed. According to Father Bernard Burke, director from 1945 to 1958:

That was sort of a principle that we followed, not to proselytize over there. If they were influenced by the charity work itself and asked us about what motivated us for doing such a thing, we'd tell them. And if that brought them to our way of thinking in religious matters, we helped them along, of course. But we wouldn't go out and in any way try to manipulate them into thinking our way religiously.

The same ecumenical feeling carried over to the Capuchins' supporters. Paul Sander-

son, who has been president of the Capuchin Charity Guild for over twenty years, says:

Even though the Soup Kitchen's run by the Capuchins, we're not concerned with what religion the person is we're feeding, or what religion the person is who's helping us raise the money to feed him. As long as they're dedicated and have a feeling for their fellow man, they're all right in my book.

In June of 1967, Father Rock Janowski and Brother Albert Sandor took over the work of the Soup Kitchen as co-directors. For six months before that, Brother Albert had been cook in the monastery kitchen and had given out bagfuls of produce once a week to the neighborhood women for their families. During the riots of July, 1967, the Soup Kitchen was designated an emergency site by the city and two or three hundred bags of donated food were handed out every day. The food package program soon became a ministry in itself. On Fridays, Brother Albert gave out packages from the side door, keeping track of those who came regularly and visiting their homes. He asked the women for help in managing the food package program as a way of getting them "involved" in the work. Other services, which had been managed informally, also began to be organized. The rooms to the left and right of the entrance to the Soup



*Father Rock Janowski distributing food from the side door of the Soup Kitchen*

Kitchen were set up with racks for men's clothing, and Father Rock and Brother Albert let it be known that they were available for counseling from the time the meal was over until 4:30 or 5:00 p.m.

When Father Austin Schlaefer took over as director of the Soup Kitchen in 1970, he reorganized and expanded the program. The menu was changed from soup to a full meal, professional counselors were hired, and a breakfast program was started. The environment was visibly improved by means of dropping the ceiling, painting the walls, and putting shutters on the windows. Because of the broadening of services, and the participation of the neighborhood community in different self-help activities sponsored by the Soup Kitchen, the name was changed to Capuchin Community Center.

Father Austin also tried to broaden the base of the Community Center's support by responding to each donation with a letter. He said:

That was the most satisfying part of the job. I used to write up to fifty letters a day myself. At Christmas, I'd stay up until late to get them out. It really became a kind of ministry in itself, because you get a relationship, even if it's just by mail or by phone. I remember I had a principle for myself, too, that if a person gave a quarter

or 50 cents, they'd get the same kind of letter as if they'd given \$10,000.

Father Austin was always impressed by people's generous responses to the Soup Kitchen, the baker who would bake a couple hundred extra loaves a day, or the health food store owner who wanted to donate enrichment products to put in the food. Like all Capuchins, Father Austin's own motivation has to do with the value of caring:

The goal is not to change people, the goal is to feed people because Jesus said to feed the hungry. That's number one. Second is that if there's just food given, there's not much advantage, but the food given with love is quite different. Love and care. And that's the reason people come back, not because of the food. And I have a private theology that no person that has been cared for is quite the same afterwards, no matter what his other external condition, or physical condition. So I never have a sense of frustration about how you measure success. Are you treating people in a human way as people? Whatever internal change might take place is God's work.

In the early 1970s, Brother Ignatius Milne helped Father Austin at "Meldrum Manor," a two-family residence owned by the Capuchins on the street behind the monastery, which had been used as a meeting place for a neighborhood youth group organized by the Center, and then converted into a halfway house for ex-offenders by Father Rock Janowski. Many of the men who came to Meldrum Manor were sent there because they had nowhere to go when they got out of prison. The purpose of the program was to provide shelter and meals for them until they could find work. Brother Ignatius had the following reaction to working with the residents:

When I came home from Meldrum Manor, I'd lie in bed and think, My God, what a terrible thing it would be to be sick and never get a phone call, never get a card. What a horrible feeling that would be, and that's the way they were. Because of their problems, the family didn't want them around. Nobody cared whether they were living or dead, or sober or drunk. So you just picture motivating yourself without any other support. That takes heroism. I just wonder if I could do it.



*"Meldrum Manor"*

Of his experience at Meldrum Manor, Brother Ignatius says: "You wondered sometimes if it was worth it all, this time and effort and emotion and everything, but I think they got a message that somebody cared without any strings attached."

The line at the Soup Kitchen has always been a measure of Detroit's economic situation. As conditions get worse, the demands on the Soup Kitchen's resources increase. Brother John Raniszewski, who started working at the Soup Kitchen in the fall of 1982, says:

Through the months of October, November, and December, we experienced an awful lot of people here. Over 1300 people would come through the meal program within two hours. And I was overwhelmed by the people that were coming, the struggles they were having. They were at one time financially set and now their finances are gone. There were a lot of factory workers, car workers, that just didn't have anything to live on anymore. So they would bring their whole families here.

The Soup Kitchen has continued to expand according to the needs of the times. Under Brother Charles Mueller, director from 1973 to 1978, the Capuchin Annex and Jef-



*Brother Larry Groeschel organizing donations in the Capuchin Annex*

erson House were established. Originally organized by Brother Gus Cops, the Annex is run today by Brother Larry Groeschel, who gives furniture and clothing to the people referred to him by the Soup Kitchen counselors, and periodically raises money to operate the Annex with rummage sales for the people in the neighborhood. Father Bob Skeris runs Jefferson House, a rehabilitation program for men recently out of prison, or who are recovering from drug or alcohol addiction, located on Seminole and East Jefferson. The Meals at Home program, funded by the City of Detroit, is presently directed by Brother John Raniszewski and Brother John Scherer. It was originally organized by Brother Duane Sigelko, who was followed by Brother Wayne Sigelko, Brother Jerry Smith, Brother Sam Ciraulo, and Brother Joe Monachino. Employees of Capuchin offices along the block, Secular Franciscans, and brothers from the monastery are among the volunteers who deliver meals.

Under the directorship of Father Lloyd Thiel, the Capuchin Community Center has cooperated in the organization of the COTS (Coalition of Temporary Shelters) program which provides emergency housing. The Cen-



ter's most recent expansion is an emergency food package program opened in Delray in response to the hunger problem in the city resulting from unemployment. The man behind many of these innovations is general manager Lewis Hickson, honored in 1982 as a "Michigianian of the Year" by the *Detroit News*. The Capuchins and their staff feel that expansion of services is necessary to serve people whose hunger is symptomatic of other difficulties. Rather than being just another revolving door and referring people to other agencies, they try to deal directly with as many aspects of the problem of poverty as possible.

The Charity Guild has also expanded its efforts to keep up with the higher costs of operating the Soup Kitchen. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the annual fall Football Dinners balanced the spring Baseball Dinners. Since 1973, an annual SOCK (Support Our Capuchin Kitchen) Dinner has replaced both sports benefits. The funds raised at the SOCK Dinner are supplemented by proceeds from the annual Buddy's Pizza Night, the annual Knights of Columbus Dinner Dance, and other benefits organized during the year. The majority of the funds continue to come through smaller, individual donations, however. The man or woman who is moved to forego some pleasure by taking \$5, \$10, or \$20 out of the budget for a donation remains the backbone of the support of the Soup Kitchen.

Father Lloyd Thiel, who has directed the work at the Capuchin Community Center since 1979, speaks of the donations they receive there in terms of the good stewardship exercised by the benefactors over the material goods entrusted to their care by God. The Capuchins, in turn, are responsible for the gifts committed to their care. As intermediaries between the poor and those who are able to help, they have a double responsibility. They must use the gifts to serve the poor in the spirit of caring in which they are given, and bring the benefactors into the ministry itself by communicating to them, through letters, newsletters, and talks, what the lives of the poor are like, and some of the frustrations, complications, and difficulties that they endure. In this way, the benefactors are better able to imagine and appreciate not only the

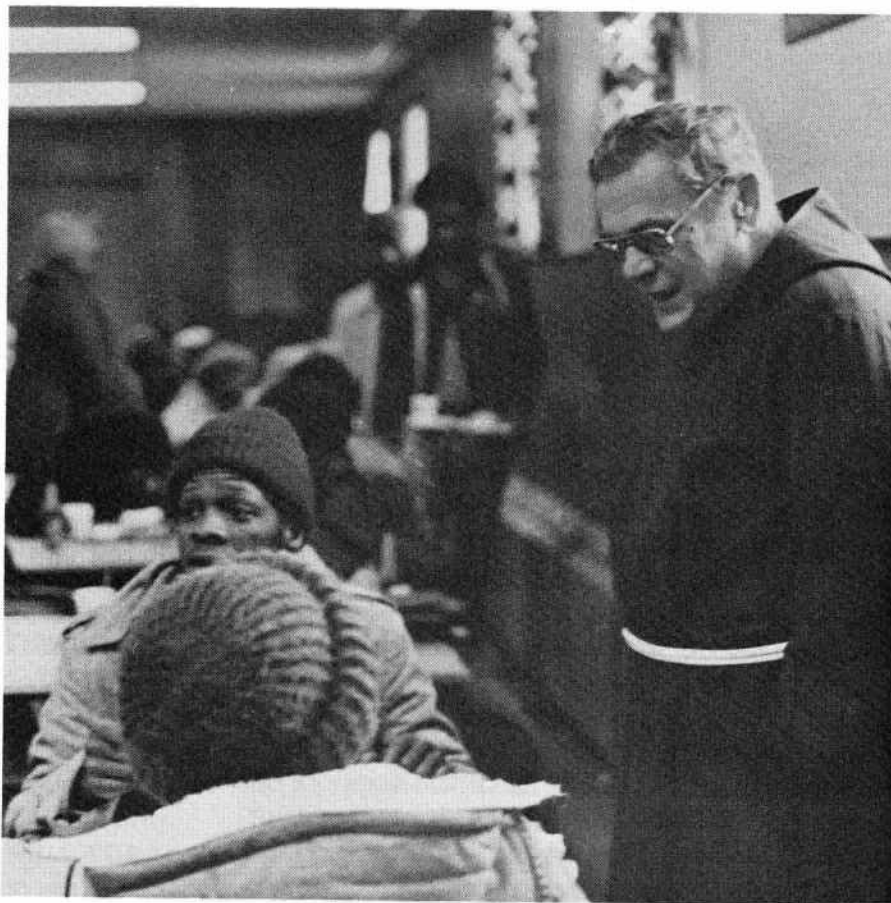
needs of the poor, but the world they inhabit, which is all of our world and which we can improve. Father Lloyd admits: "I don't know what's going to change society that we will no longer need these kinds of handouts, or what's going to change the people who have learned to become dependent on them." The change that he is sure of is the change in the hearts of those who are touched by caring and given new life and reason to hope, and the change in the hearts of those who through sharing and being touched by the lives of the poor, gain a new awareness of society's problems and injustices, and of their own ability to make a difference.

Father Jerry Kafer, the guardian of St. Bonaventure's, who along with the three other Capuchin councillors and the provincial, is on the Board of Directors of the Capuchin Community Center, says of the relationship between the monastery and the Soup Kitchen:

The most important thing the monastery is involved in right now is its physical presence in the inner city, and our ministry is primarily through the Soup Kitchen. What the Capuchins are good at is giving. They're not institutional change people. I would say that their primary gift is sharing with people to help them keep going. They're not against systemic change and I think they support it indirectly and even financially in their own ways, but they're saying, "We're limited, and what we're doing here is basically helping people survive." There are people who will say, "Well, then, you're doing more harm than good." I don't believe that.

The men and women in the line know what they owe to the program. One of them, employed part-time now at the Soup Kitchen, hopes he has finally gotten the better of the alcoholism which for years has crippled his life. He says of the Soup Kitchen:

So I found out about this place here and I started coming down. And they treated me real nice, the people who served me the food. They treated me better than some of my own relatives. Right now, I have food at home sometimes, but it runs out and it doesn't last me for the whole month. And I'm just glad that this place is down here because it's not only helping me, but it's helping a lot of other people that don't get anything. And I just pray to the Lord that he will make me stronger and that he will



*Father Lloyd Thiel, director of the  
Capuchin Soup Kitchen (Capuchin Community Center)  
1979-*

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Photo, courtesy of Steve Rybicki



*Man leaving  
the soup Kitchen  
after the noon meal*

eventually give me some kind of job where I can get paid every week. But I'll probably still come down here yet, you know, because I've been coming down so many years.

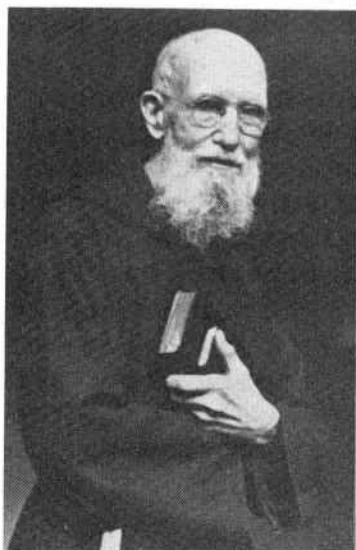
The Capuchin Community Center helps different people in different ways. It is a means for continuing to exist, a place to congregate away from the dangers of the street, and somewhere to come for advice with the forms, bills, emergencies, and domestic and parenting problems that can't be handled alone. For many, the Center is a place of last resort after all other resources have been exhausted. And for all, it is a place where they can be sure of being treated as people and not as numbers lost in a confusing, impersonal system.

## AUGIE

A layman who has been connected with the Soup Kitchen and monastery for over forty years is Augie Nielsen. Beginning in the early 1940s, he peeled vegetables for the soup and helped keep the kitchen and dining room clean, for which he was given food and board.

Augie lived like a man who had taken his own private vows. When Brother Albert Sandor and Father Rock Janowski took over as co-directors in 1967, he was sleeping in the basement on a mattress which he laid down next to the shelves. The two friars offered him their offices upstairs where he'd have some fresh air and his own bathroom. As the neighborhood continued to deteriorate, however, the Capuchins worried about Augie's sleeping in the building all alone. Father Rock bought two German shepherds to guard the offices at night, and Augie subsequently moved to the monastery, where things were more quiet and orderly. When Father Quentin Heinrichs was director of the Soup Kitchen from 1958 to 1967, the doors had been closed after the noon meal and Augie had been able to do a thorough job of cleaning off the tables, but now that people were coming in for counseling in the afternoons, he was frustrated by the hard time he was having getting his work done.

In the monastery today, Augie continues to work steadily and efficiently, saying little, impelled to keep things straightened up by his sense of the way things should be, and his loyalty to the Capuchins.



*Servant of God,  
Father Solanus Casey*

*"We do well to remember how very short, after all, it is till our suffering—and our time of merit, too—will be over. Let us offer everything, therefore, to the divine Spouse of our souls, that He may accept it as helping Him to save immortal souls—our own included."*

—FATHER SOLANUS CASEY

## 6. father solanus casey

For many people in Detroit, St. Bonaventure's is synonymous with the name of the man who for twenty-one years worked at the monastery's front desk, healing those who came in to speak with him, and leading them back to the sacraments.

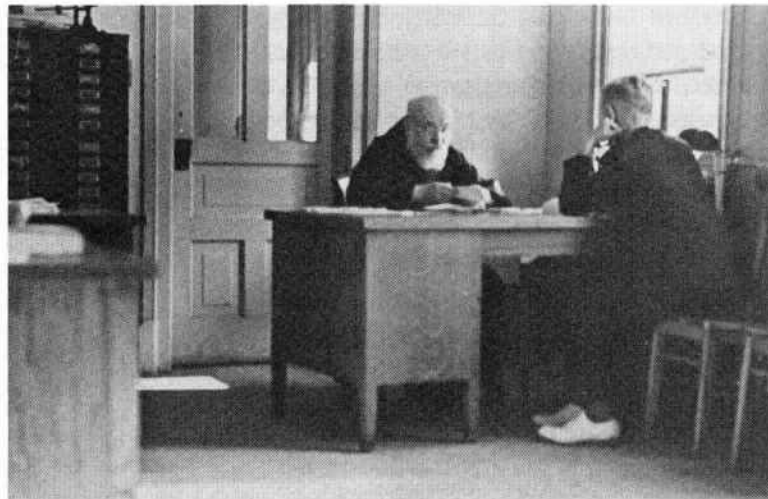
On Christmas Eve, 1896, Bernard Casey arrived at St. Bonaventure Monastery after a long train ride from his family's home in Superior, Wisconsin. He was twenty-six years old and had already worked, studied, and endured both joys and hardships in his life. The sixth of sixteen children born to Irish parents, Bernard had tried to supplement the family income by working as a logger, prison guard, and streetcar conductor when the family farm had fallen on hard times. His parents and brothers and sisters were strong, independent, religious people and throughout his life he would remain close to them. Before applying to the Capuchins, Bernard had studied at the diocesan seminary, in Milwaukee, but had left due to academic difficulties. Later, during his studies in philosophy and theology at St. Francis Monastery, in Milwaukee, he had encountered similar problems with classes in German, and Latin textbooks.

On January 14, 1897, Bernard was invested as a Capuchin novice and received the name Solanus. After completing his studies, he was ordained as a "simplex" priest on July 24, 1904. Due to his limited ability as a student, his superiors judged that the faculties for hearing confessions and preaching doctrinal sermons should be withheld from him. Because of these limitations, Father Solanus served most of his priestly life as a monastery porter, or doorkeeper. It must have caused him many humiliations, as it was work usually performed by brothers rather than priests. However, it put him in touch with many people coming for advice and consolation and would constitute his life's most important ministry.

From 1904 until 1924, Father Solanus served at Capuchin friaries in Yonkers, New York, and in New York City as sacristan, porter, and director of altar boys. During those years, it became clear that he had special gifts for obtaining favors and foretelling events. In 1923, while he was stationed at Our Lady of Angels Friary, in Harlem, the provincial, Father Benno Aichinger, asked him to begin keeping notes of the special favors



*Brother Francis Spruck, porter  
for nearly fifty years*



*Brother Francis at  
receptionist's desk*

reported through the Seraphic Mass Association. This organization had been started some years before in Switzerland as a means of supporting the Capuchin missions. Father Solanus eagerly promoted it since the intentions of those he enrolled were included with the others for which hundreds of Capuchin priests worldwide offered Mass every day.

Father Solanus came to St. Bonaventure's in 1924 as assistant porter to Brother Francis Spruck, who needed more time to tend to his other duties as monastery tailor. His job included calling the priest or brother whom the visitor wished to see or speak to, receiving and recording Mass intentions and stipends, enrolling people in the Seraphic Mass Association, and answering questions. The extent of his special concern and compassion, however, was such that people were soon waiting in line to see or speak with him.

People brought every kind of problem to Father Solanus: spiritual questions, health, business, and marital crises, or grief over the loss of a loved one. He never hurried anyone, but listened patiently morning, afternoon, and evening, seven days a week, as people poured out the difficulties that burdened them. He offered words of comfort and gave his blessing, suggesting, if the person were Catholic, that he attend Mass more often, and give more time to prayer.

One of the people helped by Father Solanus was Father Cornelius Murphy, re-

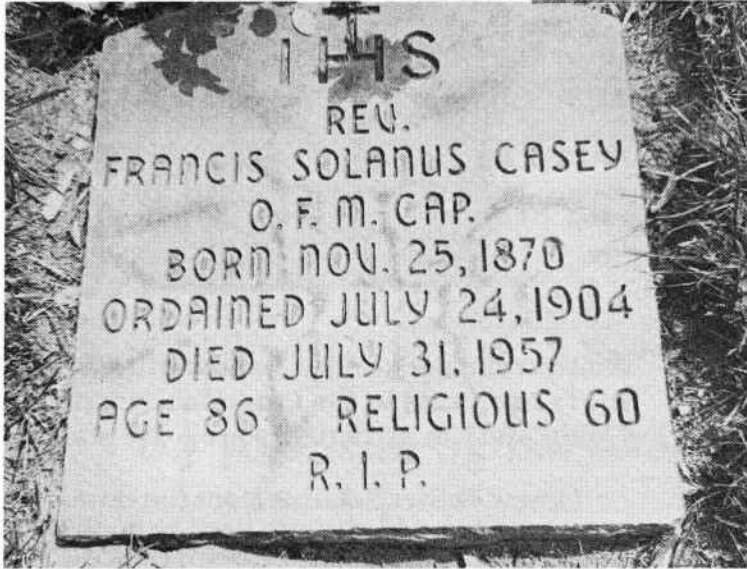
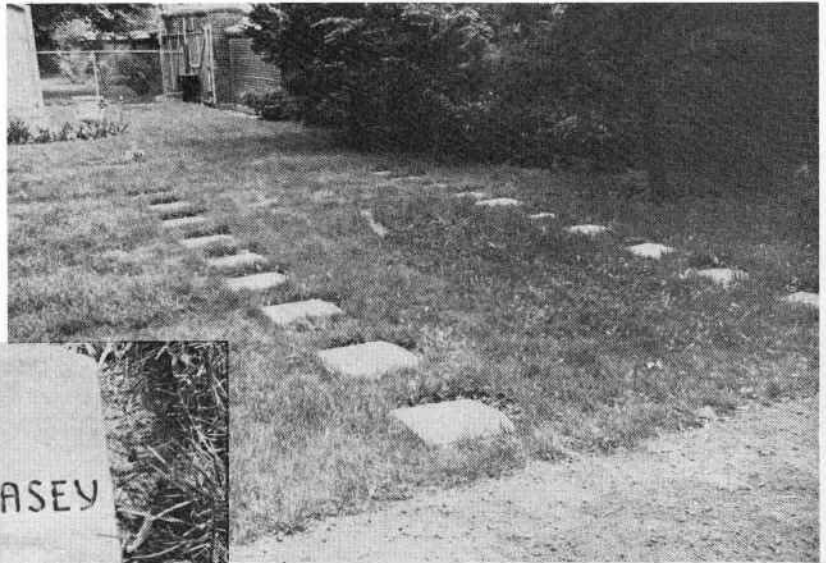
cently returned to St. Bonaventure's after thirty-one years in the Capuchin missions in Guam and the Marianas Islands. He states:

I knew Father Solanus from the time I was a little kid. My parents used to come here and I would come with them. He's the first Capuchin I ever met. He'd be sitting in the front office. There were two desks there, one for old Brother Francis to take care of the ordinary business, then the other one for Father Solanus, and that's where all the business was. From his desk out to the corridor and from the corridor out to the street, they were lined up to see him.

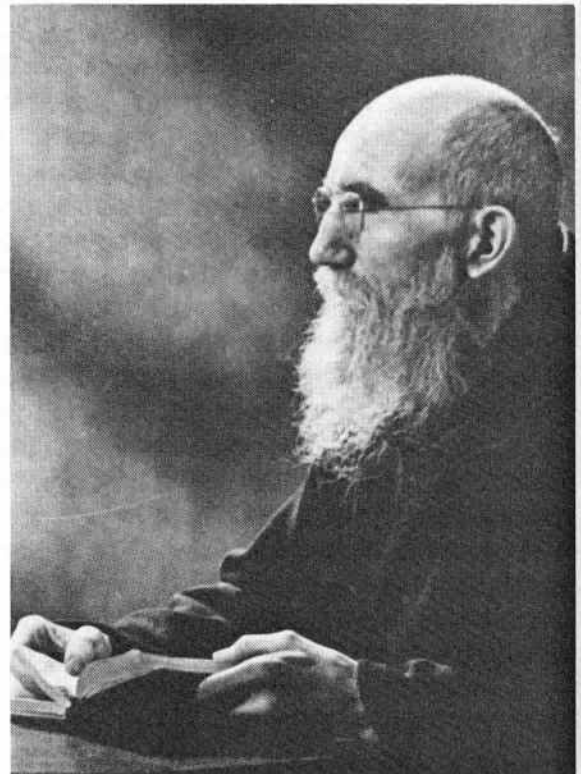
Father Solanus cured me. When I was in high school, I had scarlet fever, and in the hospital I got mumps, chicken pox, and nephritis. When they said the nephritis was getting chronic, my parents took me to Father Solanus, and he said, "Well, tomorrow is the Blessed Mother's Day, Saturday, and he'll be improved by 50%, and then he'll gradually get better." The next day, they did a urinalysis and the doctor gave a written report with everything itemized and it was all 50% improved from before.

Father Solanus had tremendous faith in the efficacy of the Mass, and when people came back to him reporting improvements in their health, or the resolution of financial or family problems, he never took credit, but gave all praise to God. He spent long hours in the chapel praying for solutions to people's

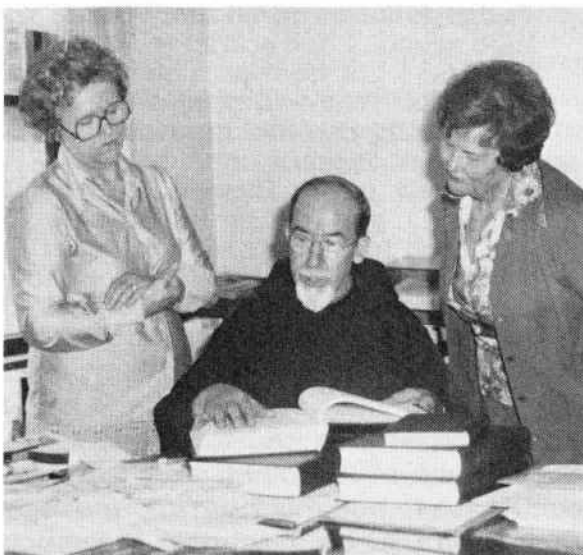
→  
Simple  
grave marker  
for Father  
Solanus Casey



Monastery cemetery, with grave of  
Father Solanus Casey, second from far  
end in the second row



Father Solanus Casey



Brother Leo Wollenweber, vice-postulator  
shows the writings of Father Solanus  
to Guild members, Dorothy Fletcher  
and Lillian McKellar

problems and his own faith inspired faith in those who came to him. The fact that so many favors were granted made him famous all over the city and people were constantly phoning, writing, or visiting the monastery for his blessing.

When Father Solanus was seventy-five, his superiors decided that the public's demands were impairing his health. In 1945, he was transferred to St. Michael's Friary in Brooklyn, New York, where he again served as porter. The following year, he was assigned to complete retirement at St. Felix Friary, in Huntington, Indiana, where it was hoped he could live in peace and quiet and give himself to prayer without disturbance.

On Sunday, January 26, 1947, Father Solanus returned to Detroit to offer a solemn Mass with his many friends celebrating his Golden Jubilee as a Capuchin friar. At the dinner and reception held afterwards in the Third Order Hall, over two thousand people came by to congratulate him. Unfortunately, an article in the *Detroit News* the day before, which disclosed that he was now living in Indiana, ended his seclusion there. Father Werner Wolf, who was a novice in Huntington, Indiana, while Father Solanus was there, remembers that people were always calling from Detroit, and sometimes busloads of people came down to see him. So many letters were addressed to Father Solanus that a friar secretary had to be appointed to help with his correspondence.

Father Solanus was officially transferred back to St. Bonaventure's in Detroit on May 10, 1956, so that he could receive better and continuous medical treatment for his failing health. On January 14, 1957, he celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of his entrance into the Capuchin Order in a private ceremony in the chapel. As he knelt and repeated his vows at the age of eighty-six, he was overcome with emotion and faltered and then stopped. Another priest came to his aid and finished the reading for him.

When a Detroit newspaper article on the Capuchins mentioned that he had returned, the monastery office immediately received an avalanche of phone calls, but this time the answer to whether Father Solanus could be seen had to be no. Finally, he was taken to St. John's Hospital for the last time on July 2,

1957. Despite his intense physical suffering from the skin disease which covered his entire body, his attitude remained one of hope, acceptance, and an inner joy. The day before he died, he announced, "Tomorrow will be a wonderful day." At 11:00 the next morning, he raised himself in bed and his last words were, "I give my soul to Jesus Christ." He died on July 31, 1957.

The magnitude of the spiritual work Father Solanus had done was apparent after his death from the long lines of people who waited to view his body for the last time. Five thousand people visited the Van Lerberghe Funeral Home, and about 10,000 filed through the chapel of St. Bonaventure's the next day. The funeral was held on August 3rd and the monastery chapel was packed. Outside, crowds lined both sides of the street. Father Solanus' brother, Monsignor Edward Casey, celebrated the funeral Mass and Father Gerald Walker, the Capuchin provincial, gave the sermon. After the final absolution by Bishop Henry Donnelly, Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit, Father Solanus' body was carried to the monastery cemetery. A simple service was held at the grave and people were allowed to file past the coffin and sprinkle it with holy water.

## The Father Solanus Guild

In the beginning, the movement to canonize Father Solanus was essentially a lay movement. As Father Bernard Burke says: "I don't think Father Solanus or the other friars thought too much about canonization. He was simply a good friar, a good member of the Order, devout, dedicated, full of faith, and companionable." Like St. Francis, Father Solanus was revered by the people, to whom he devoted his life in service. Shortly after his death, a group of laypeople expressed an interest in starting a Father Solanus guild, but the superiors felt that the time was not right and discouraged their plans. In 1960, the subject was brought up again. This time, the guardian and the provincial approved the idea. The Father Solanus Guild was formally established on May 6, 1960, with Father Rupert Dorn as the first moderator. On July 31st of that year, the third anniversary of Father Solanus' death, a memorial Mass was

held. At a meeting conducted afterwards, officers were elected and Mrs. Clare Ryan, the original promoter of the idea, became the Guild's first president. The purpose of the Guild was to preserve the memory and example of Father Solanus, and to collect writings and materials concerning his life and work.

The cause of Father Solanus is now officially under the jurisdiction of the Church. On October 4, 1966, Father Paschal Siler was appointed Vice-Postulator for the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of Father Solanus Casey, and simultaneously became director of the Father Solanus Guild. The vice-postulator is the representative of the Capuchin postulator general, in Rome, whose job is to investigate and promote the cases of Capuchins who are regarded as holy men. Since 1974, Brother Leo Wollenweber has been vice-postulator for the cause, and Brother Richard Merling, director of the Father Solanus Guild. Laypeople continue to be the backbone of the organization, meeting regularly in local "circles" to discuss Father Solanus' life, directing fundraising efforts, and disseminating information about him.

In 1976, the Capuchins petitioned John Cardinal Dearden, Archbishop of Detroit, the diocese in which Father Solanus had died, to advance the cause. He gave his approval and issued a formal request, in 1977, for Father Solanus' writings. These were all gathered and by 1981, all preliminary documentation was ready to be presented to the Sacred Congregation for Causes of Saints, a special department of the Roman Curia. The materials included written testimonies from people who had known Father Solanus. A formal petition was then drawn up by Cardinal Dearden asking the Holy Father to permit him to introduce the cause in the archdiocese. The vice-postulator also requested letters of endorsement from various bishops around the country, particularly from those places where Father Solanus had lived and worked: La Crosse, the diocese where he had been born; Superior, Wisconsin, where he lived; and New York and Indiana, where he had worked so many years. All of the bishops sent letters of endorsement to the Holy Father, requesting that Father Solanus be considered as a worthy candidate for sainthood. These documents were studied by the Sacred Congregation ear-

ly in 1982, and on June 4th, 1982, received a favorable vote. The documentation was then given to the Pope, who gave his approval on June 19, 1982, for the Archbishop of Detroit to proceed with the formal investigation.

In the current stage of the process, people will be asked to testify in person before a panel appointed by the archbishop. That testimony will endeavor to show that Father Solanus was indeed a very holy man, who practiced the virtues to an extraordinary, or heroic, degree. There have been over 200 written testimonies since his death and the most important ones are formally sworn to and signed. These will be included along with those of the witnesses who give their testimony in person. When completed, all this material will be sent back to Rome to the Sacred Congregation for Causes of Saints for the final judgement and decision.

There are three steps leading to canonization: venerable, beatification, and canonization. Venerable is that stage at which the Sacred Congregation approves and accepts the testimony from the diocesan process and recommends it to the Holy Father. If he approves the finding of the Sacred Congregation, he declares the person venerable, which is to say that the person did indeed practice the virtues to a heroic degree. At this point, however, only private devotion is permitted. Two miracles are required to go further to beatification, when the Church approves the person's veneration by the people. Public devotion is now permitted on a local level and a statue or picture can be placed over an altar in churches. The miracles considered must have occurred after the death of the Servant of God. For canonization, a continuing reputation for sanctity and intercession must be demonstrated, and two more miracles since the time of beatification are usually required. When canonization is completed, public devotion is permitted universally throughout the church.



*"We should ever be grateful for and love the vocation to which God has called us. This applies to every vocation, because after all, what a privilege it is to serve God, even in the least capacity."*

—FATHER SOLANUS CASEY

## 7. capuchin formation today

### Capuchin Training

Today, the men in Capuchin formation come to Detroit for their first stage of training after novitiate year. From Detroit, they go on to friaries in other cities for the next phase. The following description of how one becomes a Capuchin is included to shed some light on the changes which have occurred since earlier days, when most of the men were recruited through St. Lawrence Seminary, in Wisconsin.

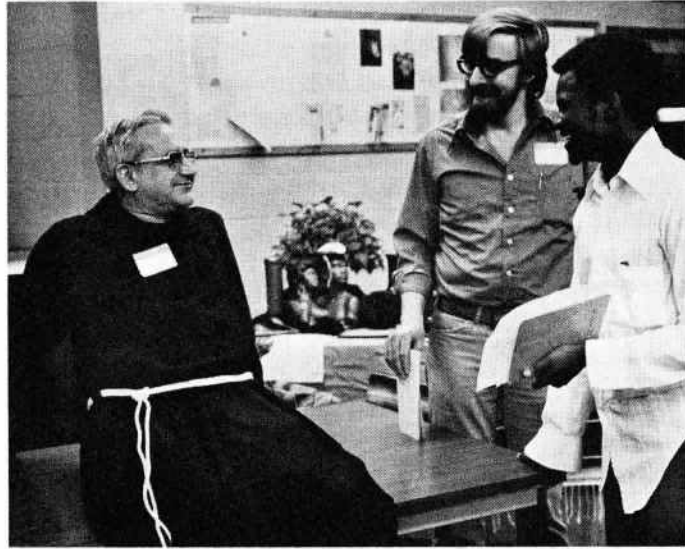
The way men enter the Order today, and their subsequent training, has changed in response to changes in society and the Church. Since Vatican II, the tendency has been to lengthen the pre-novitiate stage, so that by the time a man enters the novitiate, he has a realistic idea of what life in a religious order will be like. Men who express an interest in the Capuchins are encouraged to work, study, and attain some personal growth and independence before committing themselves to community life.

The Capuchin Vocation Office is located in the Mission Building, down the block from the monastery. Father Werner Wolf and Father John Holly work with adult candidates, and Brother Len Gibeault is in charge of recruiting

boys of high school age for St. Lawrence Seminary.

Post high school age men who are interested in the Capuchins may affiliate themselves with the Capuchin Associate Program, either as non-residents or residents. The emphasis is on recruiting men with a vision of Francis, and an aptitude for prayer and community life, who are attracted to ministries which assist the poor. Although the Capuchins do not work with the poor exclusively, most of their monasteries are located in inner city areas, and they have traditionally served as missionaries on Indian reservations and in foreign countries.

The associate lives either at home or with a Capuchin community, and generally continues the course of studies or job he has already embarked on, while receiving spiritual direction from a Capuchin on a regular basis, and meeting with other members in his group. The men remain in the pre-novitiate, or residency, program until they have attained the necessary spiritual commitment and level of maturity, a period which varies, depending on the individual's stage of development when he begins. During



*Father Werner Wolf, Brother Carl Schaefer, Brother Bob Smith taking a break between sessions of a Live-in Retreat*

the last several months of the residency, the associate enters the postulancy program, which is the immediate preparation for the novitiate.

The Capuchin Associate Program began in 1968 under Father Irvin Udulutsch, who was succeeded by Father Werner Wolf. The Detroit pre-novitiate was originally located in the former convent of St. Margaret Mary. The move to the former convent at St. John the Evangelist's ended in 1982, when the parish buildings were torn down in the demolition of Poletown. Today, the former convent at Assumption Grotto houses the pre-novitiate program, under the co-directorship of Father Werner Wolf and Father Lloyd Thiel.

Formal entry into the community begins with the novitiate year. The novitiate program is presently located at St. Rita's parish in Racine, Wisconsin. The major change in recent years is that while still purposefully somewhat secluded, the novitiate program has opened up more. The men engage in Capuchin ministries on a limited basis, such as visiting hospitals or jails, or teaching religious education. They have "Intercommunity" once a week, during which they meet with novices from several other religious com-

munities of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The fact that all but one of the communities belong to women's religious orders means that the men have the opportunity to view the challenges of religious life from another point of view.

At the end of novitiate year, the novices make their first vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, which are renewed yearly up to a limit of nine years, until they are ready to take final vows.

The men come to Detroit after novitiate year to enter Phase I of Capuchin formation, during which they integrate what they learned in the novitiate into their daily lives, participating in various ministries and continuing to test their readiness for life in the Capuchin community. They live at St. Bonaventure's, where the guardian, Father Jerry Kafer, is a Phase I team member, or at the Boston Blvd. house, under the direction of team leader Brother Jim Vaughn, or at St. Boniface, directed by Father Dan Fox. During this period, the candidate finishes his college education or pursues other training he will need to minister as a Capuchin friar.

In 1983, there are four men in formation at



*Father John Holly (standing),  
at lunch during a Live-in  
Retreat*

St. Bonaventure's: Brother John Raniszewski is working at the Capuchin Community Center and taking courses in the area of social services; Brother John Scherer also works at the Center and is involved in a pastoral education program; Brother Joe Monachino is assistant business manager at the monastery, works as a volunteer for the Wayne County Youth Home and Team for Justice, and is enrolled in a counselling program; and Brother Jim Thode is kitchen manager for the monastery and is studying theology and philosophy.

St. Bonaventure's gives the candidates a taste of monastery life in a large community and traditional setting. They have the opportunity to meet friars who represent the whole range of Capuchin experience and ministries, from returned missionaries, to experts in canon law, to the men who are working with the poor at the Community Center, or who work in the Third Order, mission, and vocation offices. Because the monastery is the home of the provincialate, the men are in contact at meals and recreation with the provincial and the men who come to visit him from other houses of the Order, and from Rome. The monastery gives the candidates role

models to study and follow, and the existence of the various Capuchin activities along the block gives them a chance to try out different ministries themselves.

## The Changing Role of Brothers

Another modern development in Capuchin formation is that the priest and brother candidates are no longer separated, and the brothers are no longer in charge only of domestic work in the community. A resistance to the second class status of the brothers in the monasteries began even before Vatican II, perhaps as part of the spirit of the times that brought about the push for equality among minorities in the larger society. The experiences of Brother Richard Merling, who made his solemn vows on March 19, 1968, give an idea of the changes the brothers have gone through and their situation today.

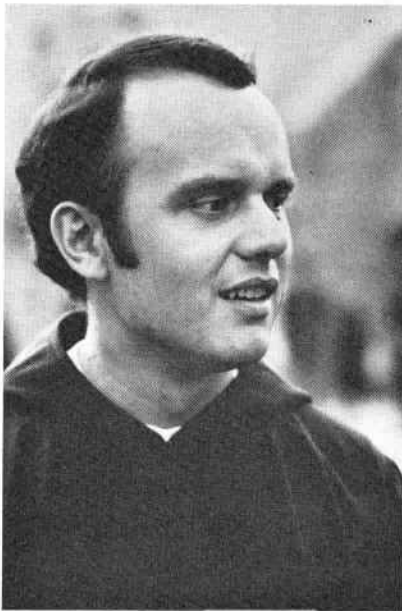
In June of 1968, Brother Richard was assigned to a Capuchin parish in Milwaukee to help the pastor, a job which before had gone exclusively to seminarians during their summer vacations. Prior to this, at Crown Point, Indiana, the director of brothers had asked

him as senior brother to investigate different vocational schools in the area for classes which the brothers might benefit from. This was a departure from the traditional system in which the younger brothers learned their trades under the supervision of the older brothers. Around this time, a couple of brothers' conferences were held to discuss issues relating to the brothers in the province and what might be done to help them in their work.

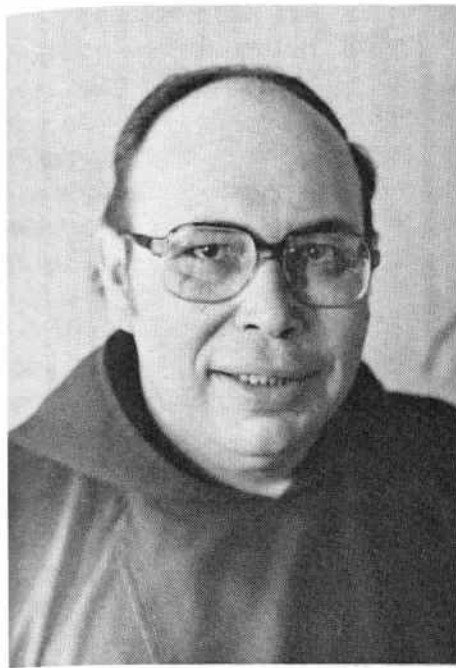
In June, 1968, Brother Richard asked permission to go to St. Elizabeth's, in Milwaukee, when someone was needed for parish work. There he taught fourth grade religion classes, took the Eucharist to parishioners confined to their homes, and visited people in the hospital. During that period, Father Bob Skeris, today director of the Capuchins' Jefferson House, in Detroit, met with Brother Richard and other brothers working in Milwaukee to help prepare them for parish work by conducting classes on Scripture and the sacraments.

Today, Brother Richard is director of the Father Solanus Guild and vicar, or second in charge, at St. Bonaventure's. He is also spiritual assistant to a Secular Franciscan group in Windsor. Other brothers at St. Bonaventure's also work in administration and direct programs formerly run by priests. Brother Leo Wollenweber is vice-postulator for the cause of Father Solanus, and helps regularly at St. Kieran's parish, on Sundays. He and Brother Richard and Brother Ignatius Milne conduct prayer services for the sick. Brother Larry LaCross works at the chancery office in charge of purchasing. In accordance with the changes brought about by Vatican II, brothers at St. Bonaventure's now serve as lectors and distribute Communion during Mass. Within the province, brothers have been appointed guardians of houses, and have become permanent deacons.

The evolution of the formation program has in many ways brought the Capuchins closer in spirit to the original community of St. Francis, who called all his followers "frater," a Latin term for brother from which "friar" is derived. The changes allow for individual growth and are in line with the Capuchins' call to read and respond to the signs of the times.



*Brother Richard Merling*



Father Jerry Schmidt

*"Blessed be God in all His designs! And in these designs, not merely including, but positively stressing the humiliations and crisis after crisis He sometimes permits, even while by His grace He fortifies us to profit by them all, more than by anything else, save by the actual reception of the very Sacraments themselves."*

—FATHER SOLANUS CASEY

## 8. ST. BONAVENTURE'S TODAY

### The Front Office

The front office ministry has always had a special importance at St. Bonaventure's, since the monastery was established without a parish, and the friars were therefore intended to serve the diocese in ways which would supplement the efforts of the parish priests. In the beginning, it could be said that the entire monastery served as the front office staff, as whoever was available would respond when someone asked to speak to a priest or brother. Because during the past ten years or so, the priests and brothers have tended to have specific assignments which take them outside the monastery, a front office staff has been assigned. Father Jerry Schmidt is currently in charge of the front office, and Father Silas Baumann works part-time. During the last year, they were joined by Father Rafel Flask, from Malta. Father Jerry was preceded by Father Francis Faraci, Father Tom Zelinski, and Father Cyril Langheim.

During the years when the neighborhood around the monastery was mainly of European Catholic descent, the front office took a burden off the large Catholic parishes in the area by directing catechetical instructions for

the children attending public school. The classes were given by volunteer lay teachers in the Third Order Hall on Saturday mornings, and prepared the children for First Holy Communion in May. A special Children's Mass was held on Sunday mornings at 9:15 in the chapel. The number of children receiving First Communion varied between sixty-five and 115 a year, and the program lasted from 1928 until about 1950, by which time the majority of the Catholic population had moved away.

One of the traditional ministries of the front office is hearing confessions. From the beginning, the Fathers have served as confessors to the diocesan priests of the area, as well as to laypeople. Father Jerry Schmidt estimates that an average of between 350 and 400 people come to confession each week, with the highest numbers during the periods around Christmas and Easter. At these times, he often works six hours at a time, with two or three other priests helping. Confessions are heard in the chapel Monday through Saturday, at 10:00, 11:00, and 12:00, and at 3:00, 4:00, and 5:00.

The front office priests provide convert instructions, averaging six to ten a year. They also provide marriage instructions and perform marriage ceremonies. Perhaps because of Saturday afternoon Masses, there has been a decline in parish weddings in recent years, and couples are sometimes married at St. Bonaventure's. Today, the people who come to the monastery for convert or marriage instructions, baptism, or First Communion, are usually people from the suburbs. The people in the neighborhood at the present time tend to be Baptists and Pentecostals rather than Catholics.

The front office ministry of counseling was most popular when Father Solanus was monastery porter. Today, the front office staff continues Father Solanus' ministry of concern for the people who come for spiritual assistance. Anyone who wishes to speak to a priest can stop at the reception desk, or call and make an appointment. Counseling may be for one or several sessions, depending on the person's own desires and needs. If the situation warrants it, the priests make referrals to psychiatrists, marriage counselors, or social workers, with whom they are willing to work.

Father Jerry estimates that up to 15% of the people who come in for counseling are Protestants. For them as for many of the Catholics, the choice of the monastery probably has to do with a desire for complete privacy in disclosing their difficulties.

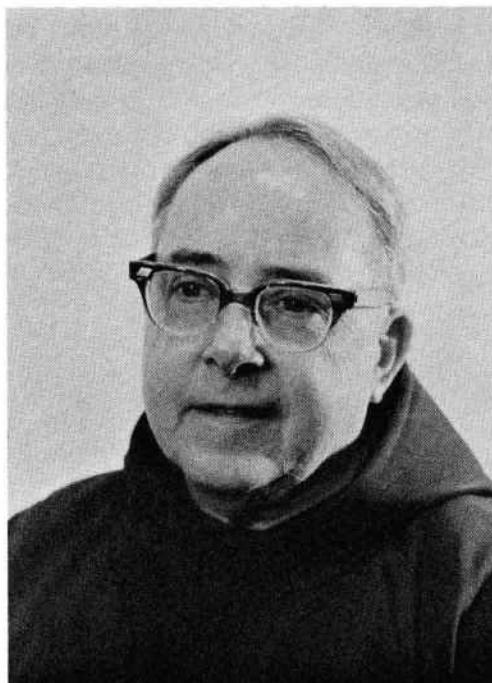
The front office telephone ministry ranges from answering questions about religion or morality to crisis intervention and minor counseling.

## Other Ministries

Throughout the years, the Capuchins have been confessors to women's religious Orders in the Detroit area, and have directed retreats for them.

The Capuchins have traditionally given weekend assistance to local parishes for Sunday services, but they are doing this less frequently now than they used to. Father Jerry Schmidt or Father Jerry Kafer says Mass at St. Bonaventure's on Sunday mornings, and the other is available to help at other churches. The Capuchins cover Annunciation and St. Charles churches, and St. Barnabas in East

Father Cornelius Murphy



Detroit when an extra priest is needed. Arrangements for such assistance are made through the guardian, Father Jerry Kafer.

For many years, the Capuchins have been chaplains at nearby nursing homes. Today, Father Cornelius Murphy gives the Blessing of the Sick, and says Mass and distributes Communion in twelve nursing homes in the area. He was preceded in this work by Father Bob Wheelock, Father Baldwin Beyer, and Father Bruce Riski.

## The Provincialate

Historically, the monastery was the home, as well as the headquarters, of the provincial, but two years ago, Father Ronald Smith, now in his second term as provincial, decided that it wasn't necessary for him to live in the same place where he had his office, and he now resides at the Capuchins' house on Boston Blvd.

The provincial offices in the west wing of the monastery include the provincial's suite, the vicar provincial's office, the provincial secretary-treasurer's office, the provincial secretary's office, and the block bookkeeper's office. Currently, Father Keith Clark is vicar provincial, Brother Larry Ampe is provincial secretary-treasurer, the provincial's secretary is Julie Shank, and the block bookkeeper is Brenda Boatman.

The provincial is only at the monastery about a week a month during the year. The rest of the time, he is on visitation tours, during which he has a private conference with every member of the province, or is attending provincial council meetings, or other events. When he is absent from the province on official business, the vicar provincial assumes his authority.

In the old days, the provincial was first in the house and was deferred to as such. He would be served first at meals, and his words carried appropriate weight at community meetings. In recent years, more effort has been made to keep provincial business separate, so that it will not interfere with community life.

The friars are proud that their provincial is headquartered with them. According to Father Keith Clark, the vicar provincial: "The friars at St. Bonaventure's are protective of the provincial. If you wanted to hear a good word about a provincial, you could find it here. I experience being here as a very supportive thing."

## Changes in Monastic Living

The last twenty years have brought a new openness to monastic living. Members of the community work outside the monastery more often than before, and laypeople are employed inside to work with the friars. There has also been a general loosening of the old monastic disciplines. Hourly schedules no longer exist where every minute is accounted for, and the friars have more input into the decisions which affect their lives, such as work and living assignments.

There are now only a few living areas in the monastery which are private. Otherwise, lay women work as receptionists at the front desk, in the provincial offices, and in the kitchen, and visitors, including the friars' mothers, sleep in the guest quarters. Brother Larry LaCross, the last brother to be assigned as receptionist, was replaced by Doris Hensley. Today, Patti Zane and Ruth Wojcinski alternate as receptionists during office hours seven days a week, and the friars take calls and answer the door at other times. A member of the community runs the kitchen, with help from a lay cook. At present, Brother Jim Thode



*Recreation room,  
formerly the  
refectory*



*Community  
dining room,  
1982*

is kitchen manager, and Ruth Walker, cook.

The friars gather together for morning and evening community prayers, but otherwise, everyone follows his own schedule and rises and goes to bed when he wishes. Meals are eaten in the dining room off the kitchen, and breakfast and lunch are served cafeteria style from a warmer. In the evening, the community gathers at 5:30 for dinner together. There is a Gospel reading at the end of the meal, and afterwards, all the friars help do the dinner dishes.

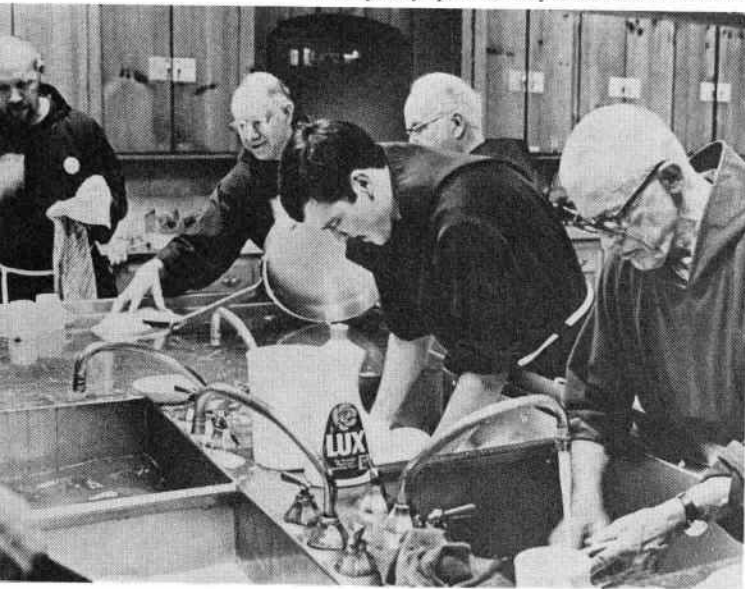
Every house department is run on a budget, and there is a constant attempt to keep operations simple and costs down. The same effort is made in the individualized budgets submitted to the guardian at the beginning of the year. Everyone's budget is different, based on his needs, and every friar operates on a monthly allowance. Says Brother Joe Howe, director of maintenance for the house:

It depends on the personality of the person, really. Some have a craving to go to movies more often. Some couldn't care less if they go or not. Some people like to buy books, some don't. Some smoke. Some need razors and shaving cream. It depends on what a person's idea of poverty is, what he really thinks he needs.

The increased flexibility in schedules and budgets is helpful to the friars in their ministries, which make different demands upon them, particularly in the hours when they are absent from the monastery, and expenses incurred by such things as travel, and work materials.

Like most organizations of whatever size, the friars at St. Bonaventure's need a representative government through which they can express their ideas and dissatisfactions. The group which exercises this function, and which oversees the running of the house, is the local Board, comprised of the guardian, the house vicar, a member elected at large, the business manager, and the director of maintenance. At present, these members are Father Jerry Kafer, Brother Richard Merling, Father Jogues Constance, and Brother Joe Howe. Brother Larry LaCross was business manager, but now works fulltime at the chancery. Typical of the kind of subjects brought by the Board to house meetings for

Photo by Tony Spina, courtesy of the Detroit Free Press



*Washing dishes after dinner*



discussion are the way in which a feastday or anniversary will be celebrated, the recent renovation project in the chapel, or changes in house policies.

The domestic work around the house is a community effort and the friars do the vacuuming, dusting, and floor scrubbing themselves. A list of areas that have to be kept clean is posted and the priests and brothers choose their assignments, which change about twice a year.

As the guardian, Father Jerry Kafer, explains, all living organisms change, because to live is to change, and this phenomenon is presently occurring within the Capuchin way of life. But although the mode of living may be different, the spirit remains the same. St. Francis told his followers in the Rule that each one should confidently make known his need to the other, so that the other might minister to him. And each one should love and care for his brother as a mother loves and cares for her son. Father Jerry concludes:

Though the structures have changed, and the expressions are more varied, and the rules fewer, the Capuchin way of life remains the same. We exist for one another and it is our concern for each other which overflows to the people we are in touch with in our ministries. It is through the way we lead our lives that we give praise and thanks to God for all good gifts.

## The Capuchin Block

The Capuchin "block" extends along Mt. Elliott from St. Paul on the south to Kercheval on the north. It begins with the monastery and chapel and continues with the Capuchin Community Center, the Third Order Hall, a parking lot, and the Mission Building.

Up until the 1950s, the provincial secretary was responsible for the missions. In 1952, when the province was divided, a separate office of the provincial secretary for the missions and delegate for the Seraphic Mass Association was established at St. Bonaventure's, with Father Bernard Burke in charge. Father Bernard's office was in an old frame house located in what is now the parking lot between the Third Order Hall and the present Mission Building. When Father Eugene Roessler was



Altar in the friars chapel (photo, 1982)



Friars praying the Liturgy of the Hours together (May, 1983)



*The Capuchin Mission Building (1820 Mt. Elliott Ave.)*



*Friar on his way toward the Mission Building*

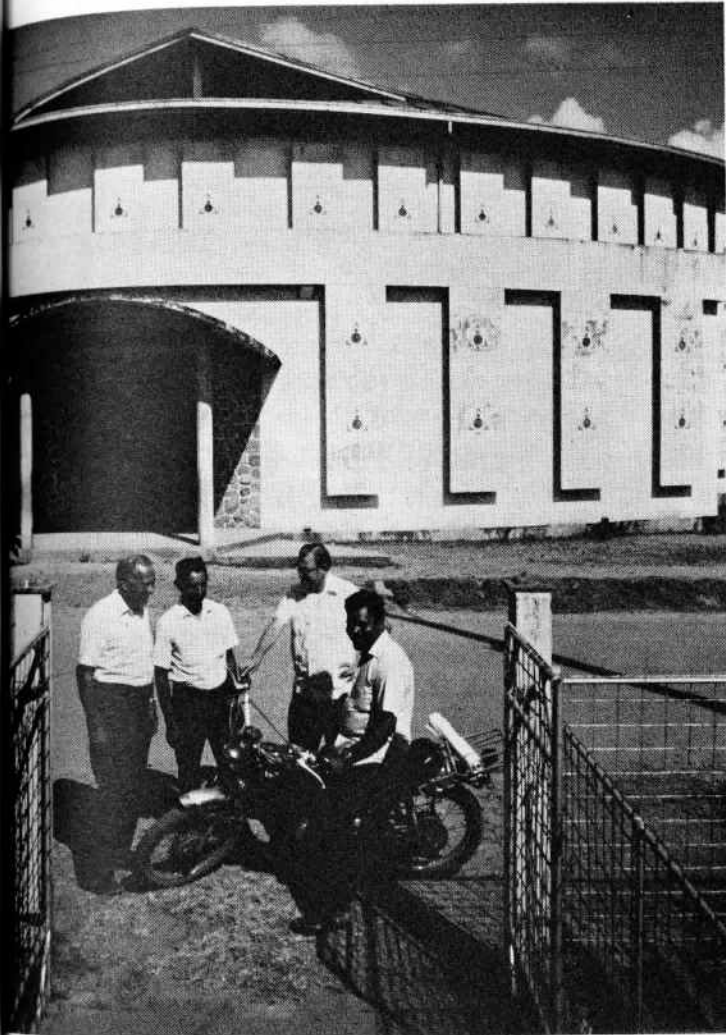
assigned to the monastery, in 1954, he established an office for editing the mission magazine, *Sandal Prints*, in the same building. In 1955, Father Eugene took over Father Bernard's position as secretary for the missions, and was succeeded in 1962 by Father James Mausolf. Since 1974, Father Jim Zelinski has been secretary for the missions, and for the past seven years, Brother Jim Vaughn has been procurator for the missions. As of July 15th, 1983, Brother Jim Magnan has been assigned to take their places.

When more space was needed for the mission offices, the present Mission Building was erected in 1959, with a partial basement, a first floor, and a second floor over the front of the building. Enlarged in 1966, the building now houses the Capuchin Mission Association office (formerly the Seraphic Mass Association), the Mission Office, Vocation Office, Communications Office, and Capuchin Seminary Guild, as well as a print shop and packing and mailing rooms. Since 1971, the provincial archives have also been located in the Mission Building.

## MISSIONS

The Capuchin Missions staffed by men from the Province of St. Joseph are financed by the provincial Mission Office, in Detroit, through the Capuchin Mission Association and direct donations. Other poor missionaries around the world are also helped directly or through the Capuchin general headquarters, in Rome.

The office serves the missionaries in many ways, one of which is by ordering and shipping things that are needed, ranging from auto and machine parts to guitar strings, from chalices to typewriters, and from Bibles to personal items. The office helps the missionaries with their health and continuing education needs by making doctor's appointments at home, obtaining school transcripts, and paying bills. Other projects that have occupied the staff are helping in drawing up contracts with local bishops, communicating with various organizations about human rights and justice matters the missionaries are concerned about, and reprinting and shipping Bibles to Nicaragua in the Miskito Indian language.



*Father Camillus Doerfler  
and Father Joseph Wolf  
speaking with Miskito  
Indian deacons  
in front of the church  
designed by  
Brother Isidore Herriges,  
at Puerto Cabezas,  
Nicaragua*

*Brother Len Gibeault*



Most of the missionaries from the Province of St. Joseph are working in Central America, with a few in Guam and the Marianas, Australia, the Ryukyu Islands and the Near East. Many of those in Central America have joined the vice province which has recently been established there.

### VOCATIONS

The development of a fulltime provincial vocation office has been gradual. It has always been felt that the individual friars themselves do the best job of recruiting for the Order by communicating their enthusiasm for their calling to others. For many years, vocation work was a part-time job, which did not exclude performing other ministries.

Today, the vocation department has three fulltime staff people and two divisions, focusing on post high school and high school candidates. The Capuchin Vocation Office for the Province of St. Joseph, staffed by Father Werner Wolf and Father John Holly, works with adult candidates. Their responsibilities include providing information and spiritual guidance to men who are interested in joining the Capuchin Order. Through the process of interviews, weekend retreats called Live-ins,

and visits to friaries and Capuchin ministries, a candidate decides whether he wants to get further acquainted with Capuchin life. If the answer is yes, the first step is the Associate Program, which has non-resident and resident components. The Vocation Office directs the non-residency program, in which each candidate has a Capuchin spiritual director and is required to come to retreats and sessions with the vocation staff. The staff leads the candidate through the non-residency program to residency and postulancy, programs which are located in various friaries in the province. In Detroit, they are in the former convent at Assumption Grotto. The vocation staff spend much time on the road, as well as responding to inquiries from men in all parts of the province.

Brother Len Gibeault is vocation counselor and recruiter for St. Lawrence Seminary, the Capuchins' preparatory high school for brothers and priests at Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin. His office processes the candidates he recruits from the six dioceses of Michigan. This involves travel, transporting sixth and seventh graders to the seminary for visits, and conducting summer retreat days for interested grade school boys.

## COMMUNICATIONS

In 1964, the Province of St. Joseph developed a communications department for the first time, headquartered in the Mission Building. The co-directors were Father Julian Stoeberl and Bill LaForte. In succeeding years, Father Allen Gruenke and Father Cullen Schippe succeeded Father Julian as co-directors. Since 1977, Bill LaForte has had sole responsibility for the work. Today, he is in charge of the Communications and Development Office and oversees the Seminary Guild, which raises money to support Capuchin friars in training in Milwaukee, Chicago, and Detroit, as well as older friars in continuing education programs. The office also serves other houses in the province in the area of development with advice and written materials. As director, Bill's main jobs are fund raising, internal and external communications, and Capuchin publications. Among these are *Sandal Prints*, which portrays different aspects of Capuchin ministries and is published six times a year. *KIT* (Keeping in Touch), a monthly publication which focuses on informal news in the province, the *Messenger*, published ten to twelve times a year, which contains formal information, such as documents and minutes of meetings, and *Inforum*, which gives friars the opportunity to address ideas and opinions to the Province. He has two fulltime employees and one part-time employee working with him. In the 1970s, a photo shop was set up in the basement next to the print shop, which makes it possible to do the whole process of photo-offset printing of the Capuchin publications, except *Sandal Prints*, within the building.

### St. Bonaventure Monastery

The monastery stands for different things to different people, even among the Capuchins themselves. The ideas which follow, taken from interviews, also suggest the variety of personal gifts which the friars bring to their community and to their ministries.

In the beginning, St. Bonaventure's held a central position in the province, located as it was midway between the eastern and western houses. Today, it is the center of many provincial activities, represented by the offices along

the block. According to Father Jim Zelinski of the Missions Office: "In a way, everyone in the province sees St. Bonaventure's as their home. It's been the central headquarters for so long that we kind of refer to it as the motherhouse of the province." As a central house, and one of the largest monasteries, St. Bonaventure's also serves as a "safe haven" for the friars of the province, where they can live when they are studying at local schools, home from the missions, or ready to retire. It has the important function within the province of being a welcoming place the friars can count on when they need it.

The medieval cloistered design of St. Bonaventure Monastery immediately plunges the visitor into history, and the portraits on the walls of the founders and the provincials who have lived there are reminders of a rich past. Brother John Scherer, currently in Phase I of the formation program, gives the following impression: "I'm always mindful of St. Bonaventure's being so old and having such a history, and that it was the home of so many great men. I think there were a lot of saints here, not just Solanus."

Working in the Vocation Office and living at the Grotto house, Father Werner Wolf appreciates the opportunity the monastery offers for the Capuchins of Detroit to be together. "Everything flows in and out of St. Bonaventure's," he says, adding that because so many Capuchins work on the block but live elsewhere, the monastery provides a center of communications, spirit, and support.

Father Silas Baumann, who works in the front office ministry, says that from the beginning, the Capuchins' apostolate in Detroit has been to minister to the people, and St. Bonaventure's has developed the reputation of being a place where people can go for help. In the same vein, Brother Joe Howe refers to St. Bonaventure's as "kind of an oasis where people can come to pray or talk to somebody, a place that's available when people have problems and just want to get away for a little while." The people of Detroit have also turned to the monastery in times of happiness, seeking guidance in becoming better Christians, and with thanksgivings for blessings.

Father Rafel Flask, a Capuchin priest and poet from Malta who recently lived at St. Bonaventure's while studying at the Universi-

ty of Detroit, noticed that driving along Kercheval Avenue from the east side, there was a sharp visible difference between Grosse Pointe Park and Detroit. Driving further downtown, the neighborhoods are full of boarded up and abandoned houses and stores. And then, suddenly, at the end of Kercheval, one turns and sees the monastery, a place of activity and life. In this vision of St. Bonaventure's, he sees a sign of hope for the city.

Father Jerry Kafer, the guardian, stresses that the Capuchins receive from the people they minister to, as well as give: "It is not we who are the beacon in the middle of the darkness; if anything, it's the reverse. I don't think this community stands here giving witness of how people should live as much as they receive from the people who are living and struggling with life in all of its cruelty and who are teaching us a lesson." He sees a further dimension of sharing between the community and monastery at the Wednesday afternoon prayer service for the sick: "I see people coming here with their illness every week, not because they believe that they can come here and everything is going to be fine for them. They come here and they support each other."

Sharing is what the Capuchins do best. It is Brother John Raniszewski eating lunch every day with the people in the Soup Kitchen line, even when some of them don't know what a Capuchin is and laugh at his robe. It is Father Cornelius, survivor of many illnesses himself, patiently ministering to the sick in the nursing homes. It is the artist, Brother Leo, carefully saving carved pieces from the old confessionals so that they can be used someday to beautify the chapel. It is Father Jerry Schmidt spending his day off making house calls to Livonia and Mt. Clemens to visit people who can't come to the monastery. It is the old friars sharing their recollections, and the young friars sharing their dreams. And, finally, it is the laypeople outside the monastery sharing their faith, their resources, and their crosses, which gives the Capuchins their reason for being in Detroit.



### my PRAYER

I pray	I pray
That my life	That my life
Be a worthy one	Be closer
Living	To my God
As much as I can	Whom I can reach
As a person	Not far from me
A human person	A God of love
A whole person	Who is with me
Few things I need	In struggles
One thing I really do	And in victories
I need to love	I pray
I pray	Every day of my life
That my life	To be faithful
Will not be closed	To myself
For those around me	To others
I need so much	To God
To feel the warmth	I pray
Of human hearts	For strength
Close to mine	To love and care
Sharing love	
And care and joy	
Sharing faith	
And doubt and pain	

—Father Rafael Flask, O.F.M. Cap.



*Members of St. Bonaventure Monastery, as of April, 1983*

*Left to right:*

*Standing: Donald Wiest, Joseph Howe, Cornelius Murphy, Larry LaCross, Ignattius Milne, Leo Wollenweber, Gabriel Badalamenti, John Raniszewski, Bernard Burke, Rafel Flask (Malta), John Scherer, Joseph Monachino, Leonard Gibeault, Daniel Vena, James Thode, Gerald Schmidt*

*Seated: Mr. August Nielsen, Jogues Constance, Gerald Kafer, Richard Merling, Gaul Neumann*

## appendix

### FRIARS ASSIGNED to St. Bonaventure Monastery as of June 1, 1983

Badalamenti, Brother Gabriel  
Burke, Father Bernard  
Constance, Father Jogues  
Gibeault, Brother Leonard  
Howe, Brother Joseph  
Kafer, Father Gerald (Superior)  
Kroll, Brother Thomas  
LaCross, Brother Larry  
Louzon, Brother Bede  
Merling, Brother Richard (Vicar)  
Milne, Brother Ignatius  
Monachino, Brother Joseph  
Murphy, Father Cornelius  
Neumann, Brother Gaul  
Raniszewski, Brother John  
Scherer, Brother John  
Schmidt, Father Gerald  
Skervis, Father Robert  
Thode, Brother James  
Wiest, Father Donald  
Wollenweber, Brother Leo



**PROVINCIALS OF THE  
PROVINCE OF St. Joseph  
HEADQUARTERED  
AT St. BONAVENTURE MONASTERY**

Father Bonaventure Frey	1882-1885	Father Theodosius Foley	1936-1939
Father Francis Haas	1885-1887	Father Theodosius Foley	1939-1942
Definitor General in Rome	1887-1895	Father Clement Neubauer	1942-1945
Father Anthony Rottensteiner	1888-1891	Father Clement Neubauer	1945-1946
Father Lawrence Vorwerk	1891-1894	Minister General in Rome	1946-1952
Father Bonaventure Frey	1894-1897	Minister General in Rome	1958-1964
Father Lawrence Vorwerk	1897-1900	Father Edmund Kraemer	1946-1949
Father Lawrence Vorwerk	1900-1903	Father Cyprian Abler	1949-1952
Father Gabriel Messmer	1903-1906	Father Cyprian Abler	1952-1955
Father Antonine Wilmer	1906-1909	Father Gerald Walker	1955-1958
Father Antonine Wilmer	1909-1912	Father Gerald Walker	1958-1961
Father Gabriel Messmer	1912-1915	Father Gerard Hesse	1961-1964
Father Antonine Wilmer	1915-1918	Father Gerard Hesse	1964-1967
Definitor General in Rome	1920-1926	Father Rupert Dorn	1967-1970
Father Benedict Mueller	1918-1921	Father Rupert Dorn	1970-1973
Father Benno Aichinger	1921-1924	Father Lloyd Thiel	1973-1975
Father Benno Aichinger	1924-1927	Father Lloyd Thiel	1975-1978
Father Benedict Mueller	1927-1930	Father Ronald Smith	1978-1981
Father Benno Aichinger	1930-1933	Father Ronald Smith	1981-
Father Benno Aichinger	1933-1936		
Definitor General in Rome	1937-1938		

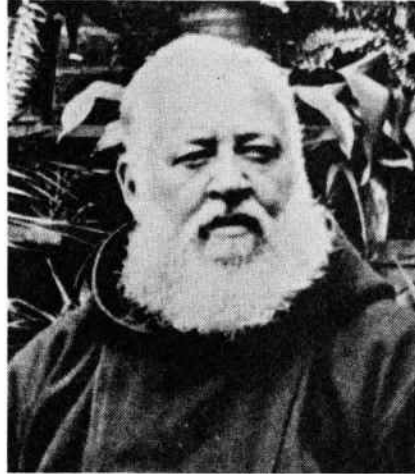
**GUARDIANS OR LOCAL SUPERIORS  
OF St. BONAVENTURE MONASTERY**

Father Ignatius Ullrich	1884-1885	Father Marion Roessler	1936-1939
Father Ignatius Ullrich	1885-1888	Father Mathias Nack	1939-1942
Father Jerome Henkel	1888-1891	Father Marion Roessler	1942-1945
Father Timothy Grossmann	1891-1894	Father Bernard Burke	1945-1946
Father Casimir Lutfring	1894-1897	Father Bernard Burke	1946-1949
Father Casimir Lutfring	1897-1900	Father Bernard Burke	1949-1952
Father Capistran Claude	1900-1903	Father Raphael Poeppel	1952-1955
Father Honoratus Schmidt	1903-1906	Father Bernard Burke	1955-1958
Father Honoratus Schmidt	1906-1909	Father Cassian Latondress	1958-1961
Father Jerome Henkel	1909-1912	Father Cassian Latondress	1961-1964
Father Ignatius Ullrich	1912-1915	Father Rupert Dorn	1964-1967
Father Ignatius Ullrich	1915-1918	Father Paschal Siler	1967-1970
Father Crescentian Voelpel	1918-1921	Father Paschal Siler	1970-1973
Father Ignatius Ullrich	1921-1924	Father Daniel Rebain	1973-1974
Father Innocent Ferstler	1924-1925	Father Jogues Constance	1974-1975
Father Capistran Claude	1925-1927	Father Ronald Rieder	1975-1977
Father Capistran Claude	1927-1930	Father Mel Hermans	1977-1978
Father Ulrich Danner	1930-1933	Father Mel Hermans	1978-1981
Father Mathias Nack	1933-1936	Father Gerald Kafer	1981

*Guardians or Local Superiors of Saint Bonaventure Monastery*



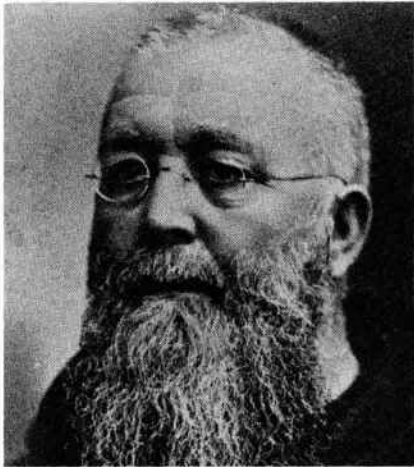
*Fr. Ignatius Ullrich*  
1884-1885, 1885-1888,  
1912-1915, 1915-1918,  
1921-1924



*Fr. Jerome Henkel*  
1888-1891, 1909-1912



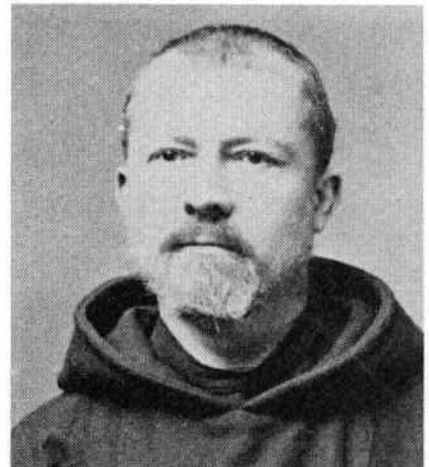
*Fr. Timothy Grossmann*  
1891-1894



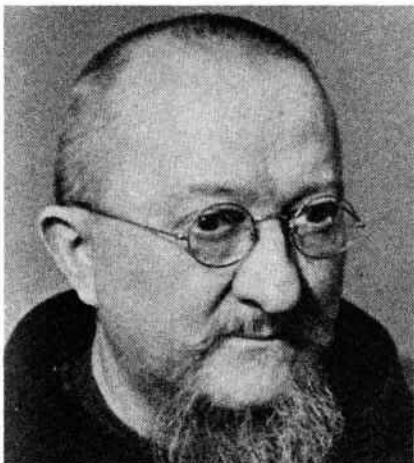
*Fr. Casimir Lutfring*  
1894-1897, 1897-1900



*Fr. Capistran Claude*  
1900-1903, 1925-1927,  
1927-1930



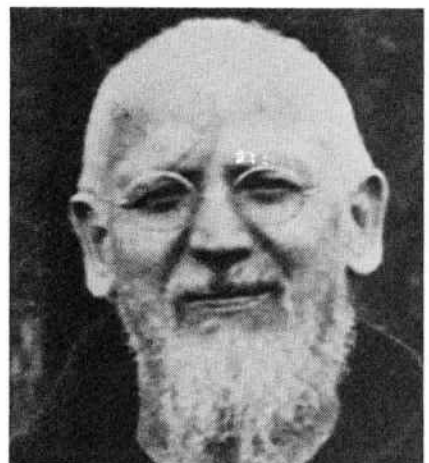
*Fr. Honoratus Schmidt*  
1903-1906, 1906-1909



*Fr. Crescentian Voelpel*  
1918-1921

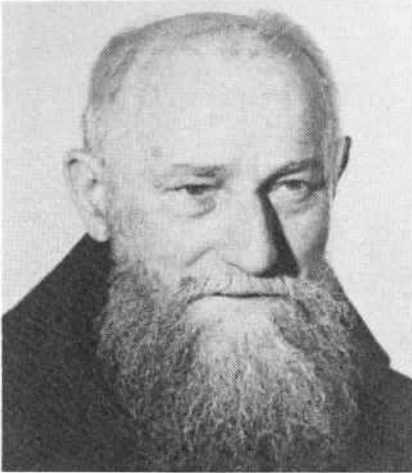


*Fr. Innocent Ferstler*  
1924-1925

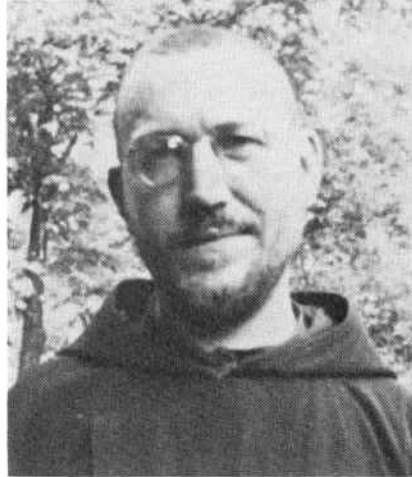


*Fr. Ullrich Danner*  
1930-1933

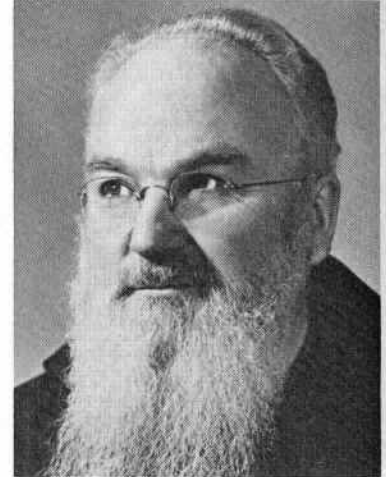
*Guardians or Local Superiors of Saint Bonaventure Monastery*



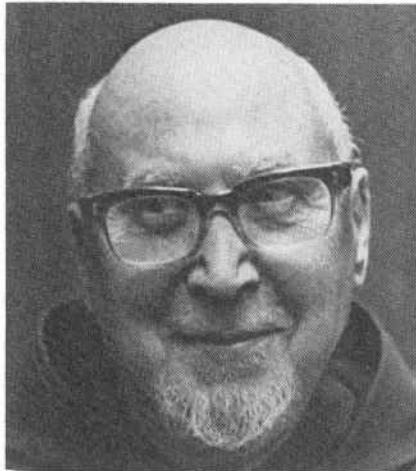
*Fr. Mathias Nack*  
1933-1936, 1938-1942



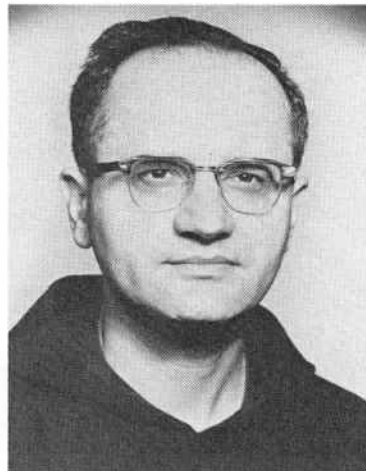
*Fr. Marton Roessler*  
1936-1939, 1942-1945



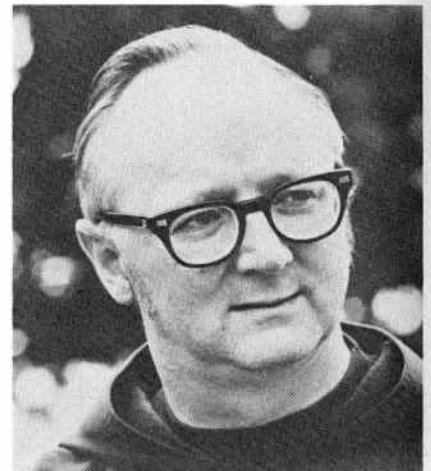
*Fr. Bernard Burke*  
1945-1946, 1946-1949,  
1949-1952, 1955-1958



*Fr. Raphael Poepfel*  
1951-1955



*Fr. Cassian Latondress*  
1958-1961, 1961-1964



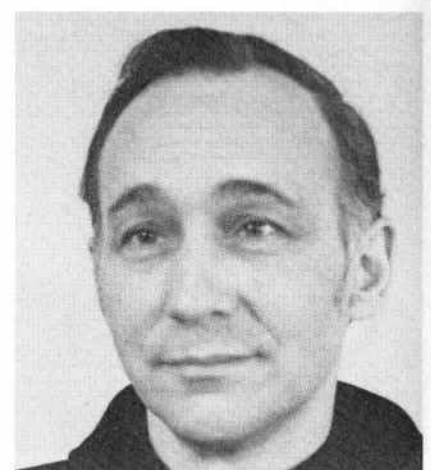
*Fr. Rupert Dorn*  
1964-1967



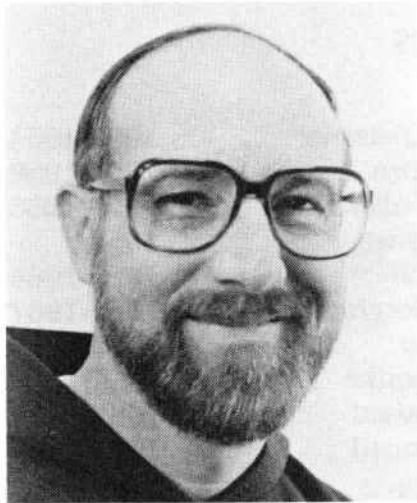
*Fr. Paschal Siler*  
1967-1970, 1970-1973



*Fr. Daniel Rebain*  
1973-1974



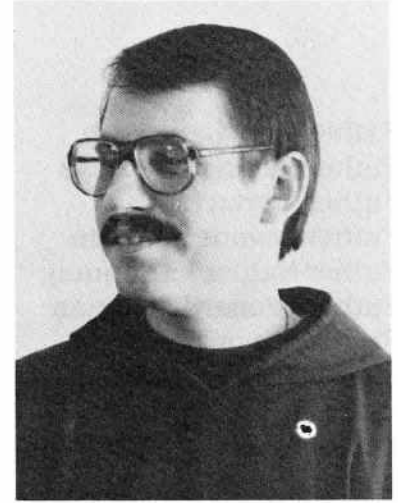
*Fr. Jogues Constance*  
1974-1975



Fr. Ronald Rieder  
1975-1977



Fr. Mel Hermans  
1977-1978, 1978-1981



Fr. Gerald Kafer  
1981-

## NOVICE MASTERS at St. Bonaventure

Father Lawrence Henn	1884-1885	Father Cosmas Niedhammer	
Father Camillus Gnad	1885-1891	(brothers)	1939-1952
Father Gabriel Messmer	1891-1903	Father Elmer Stoffel	
Father Crescentian Voelpel	1903-1915	(clerics)	1952-1957
Father Gabriel Messmer	1915-1920	Father Donald Brody	
Father Francis Busalt	1920-1926	(brothers)	1957-1959
Father Clement Neubauer	1926-1929		

## THIRD ORDER SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

Father Crescentian Voelpel	1908-1909	Father Alvin LaFeir	1937-1941
Father Crescentian Voelpel	1909-1912	Father Cyril Langheim	1941-1945
(English branch)		Father Marion Roessler	1945-1946
Father Bernard Heilig	1909-1912	Father Simon Hesse	1946-1949
(German branch)		Father Lawrence Merten	1949-1958
Father Crescentian Voelpel	1912-1915	Father Jerome Tuller	1958-1959
(English branch)		Father Cyril Langheim	1959-1964
Father Ignatius Ullrich	1912-1915	Father Carmel Flora	1964-1969
(German branch)		Father Lance Kronzer <sup>1</sup>	1969-1972
Father Crescentian Voelpel	1915-1916	Father Glenn Risse	1971-1978
(English branch)		Father Jogues Constance <sup>2</sup>	1973-continuing
Father Cyprian Abler	1915-1916	Father Joseph Maloney	1978-1981
(German branch)		Father Silas Baumann	1981-continuing
Father Cyprian Abler	1916-1925		
(both branches)			
Father Regis Neeser	1925-1927		
Father Herman Buss	1927-1933		
Father Titus Tettenborn	1933-1936		
Father Roman Ament	1936-1937		

1. Since 1971, two priests have been Spiritual Directors of the Third Order.
2. In 1978, the title of Spiritual Director was changed to Spiritual Assistant

## THIRD ORDER ASSISTANT SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

Father Cyril Langheim	1936-1941	Father Leopold Gleissner	1953-1954
Father Ralph Diederichs	1941-1942	Father Rupert Dorn	1954-1956
Father Myron Netzel	1942-1943	Father Jerome Tuller	1955-1958
Father Leander Gribbin	1943	Father Bertin Samsa	1958
Father Nathaniel Sonntag	1943-1944	Father Alaric Wolf	1959-1964
Father Leonard Stegman	1944-1945	Father Warren Bergman	1964-1967
Father Simon Hesse	1946	Father Paul Hahn	1967
Father Thomas Weier	1946-1949	Father Allen Gruenke	1967
Father Blase Gitzen	1949-1952	Father Fred Cavaiani	1968
Father Cassian Latondress	1952-1953	Father Tom Schmied	1969

## THIRD ORDER PREFECTS

### SENIORS\*

Theodore Feldmann (mentioned again in 1915)	1908
George Slater	1918
Dr. Henry B. Sullivan	1921-1927
John Schuster	1927-1933
John Kaufman	1933-1936
Lenore Jungwirth, Sister Prefect	
Theodore Becker	1936-1937
Bertha Goeddecke, Sister Prefect	
William H. Gallagher	1937-1939
Mrs. Edith Kenny, Sister Prefect	
James Insell	1939-1945
Mrs. Edith Kenny Vice-Prefect of Women	1942-1945
Thomas Rutledge	1945-1951
John Connelly	1951-1957
Arthur Spindler	1957-1964
Frank McCarroll	1964-1970
Phillip Lesperance	1970-1978
John Amore	1979-

### INTERMEDIATES

Vern Huddas	1952
James Barry	1955-1960
Charles Giacona	1960-1961
Tom Ricard	1961-1967
Leo Bartnik	1967-1973
Jerry Marsh	1973-1975

### JUNIORS

Henry Barclay	1934-1935
Marius Risley	1935-1936
Rene Rosseel	1936-1938
William Lareau	1938-1939
Thomas Lareau	1939-1940
Lloyd Groth	1940-1941
Gilbert Polasky	1941-1942
Jack Koslosky	1942-1943
Lee Rotherme	1943
Joseph Dueweke	1943-1945
Marion Hourigan	1945-1946
Vernon Huddas	1946-1950
Maurice Greenia	1950-1953
James Heymes	1953-1956
Harry Beusterien	1956-1958
John Bulick	1959-1960
Tom DeLuca	1960-1962
John Rice	1962-1963
Rene Montpetit	1963-1964
Anthony Baresi	1964-1967
Keith Sheasley	1968-1970
Tom Brodeur	1971-1973
Jo Ann Kleer	1974-1975



\* Complete information not available.

## PRESIDENTS of the Eucharistic Mission Band 1922-1983

Florence Kaiser	Selina Wollenweber
Madelene Klement	Vera Schulte
Leonora Jungwirth	Ann Lano
Emilie Moigneu	Evelyn Olden
Anne Schneider	Sylvia Stanik
Anne Kane	Jennie Oliver
Anna Stevenson	Helen Jedrek

## CAPUCHIN DIRECTORS of the Soup Kitchen

Father Herman Buss	1930-33	Father Quentin Heinrichs	1958-67
Father Mathias Nack	1933-36	Father Rock Janowski, Co-Director	1967-70
Father Ulric Danner	1936-39	Father Albert Sandor, Co-Director	1967-70
Father Marion Roessler	1939-45	Father Austin Schlaefer	1970-73
Father Bernard Burke	1945-58	Father Charles Mueller	1973-78
		Father Lloyd Thiel	1979-

## Other Capuchin Ministries Associated with the Soup Kitchen

Father Bryan O'Rourke, House of Determination, Ujamaa Community School  
 Brother Roy Hoelscher,<sup>1</sup> House of Determination, Ujamaa Community School  
 Father Rock Janowski, Director, Meldrum Manor  
 Father Austin Schlaefer, Director, Meldrum Manor  
 Brother Ignatius Milne, cook, Meldrum Manor  
 Brother Gus Cops, Capuchin Annex  
 Brother Frank Voris, Soup Kitchen food management  
 Father Bob Skeris, Director, Jefferson House

Brother T. L. Michael Auman, G.E.D. classes, Jefferson House  
 Brother Duane Sigelko, Meals at Home Program  
 Brother Wayne Sigelko, Meals at Home Program  
 Brother Jerry Smith, Meals at Home Program  
 Brother Sam Ciraulo, Meals at Home Program  
 Brother Joe Monachino, Meals at Home Program  
 Brother Mark Davis, Meals at Home Program  
 Brother Larry Groeschel, Capuchin Annex  
 Brother John Raniszewski, Meals at Home Program and Soup Kitchen office  
 Brother John Scherer, Meals at Home Program and Soup Kitchen office

1. Brother Roy has since left the Order and is today assistant manager of the Soup Kitchen.

## Presidents of the Father Solanus Guild

Mrs. Clare Ryan	1960-64	Patrick Blake	1970-74
Mrs. Dorothy Fletcher	1964-68	Richard Wollenweber	1974-79
Edward Wollenweber	1968-70		

(Since 1980, the Father Solanus Guild has been directly under the charge of the Capuchins. Brother Richard Merling has been director since 1980.)

## Vice-Postulators for the Cause of Father Solanus

Father Paschal Siler	1966-1974
Brother Leo Wollenweber	1974-

## Capuchin Saints and Blessed

### SAINTS

St. Joseph of Leonissa, priest  
 St. Conrad of Parzham, brother  
 St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, priest  
 St. Ignatius of Laconi, brother  
 St. Felix of Cantalice, brother  
 St. Crispin of Viterbo, brother  
 St. Lawrence of Brindisi, priest  
 St. Francis Mary of Camporosso, brother  
 St. Seraphin of Montegrano, brother

### BLESSEDS

Blessed Bernard of Corleone, brother  
 Blessed Innocent of Berzo, priest  
 Blessed Didacus Joseph of Cadiz, priest  
 Blessed Benedict of Urbino, priest  
 Blessed Leopold of Castelnovo, priest  
 Blessed Felix of Nicosia, brother  
 Blessed Agathangelus, priest  
 Blessed Cassian, priest  
 Blessed Bernard of Offida, brother  
 Blessed Apollinaris of Posat, priest  
 Blessed Angelus of Acri, priest

## Third Order Saints and Blessed

Fifty-two members of the Third Order have been canonized and ninety-two beatified. Among the better known are:

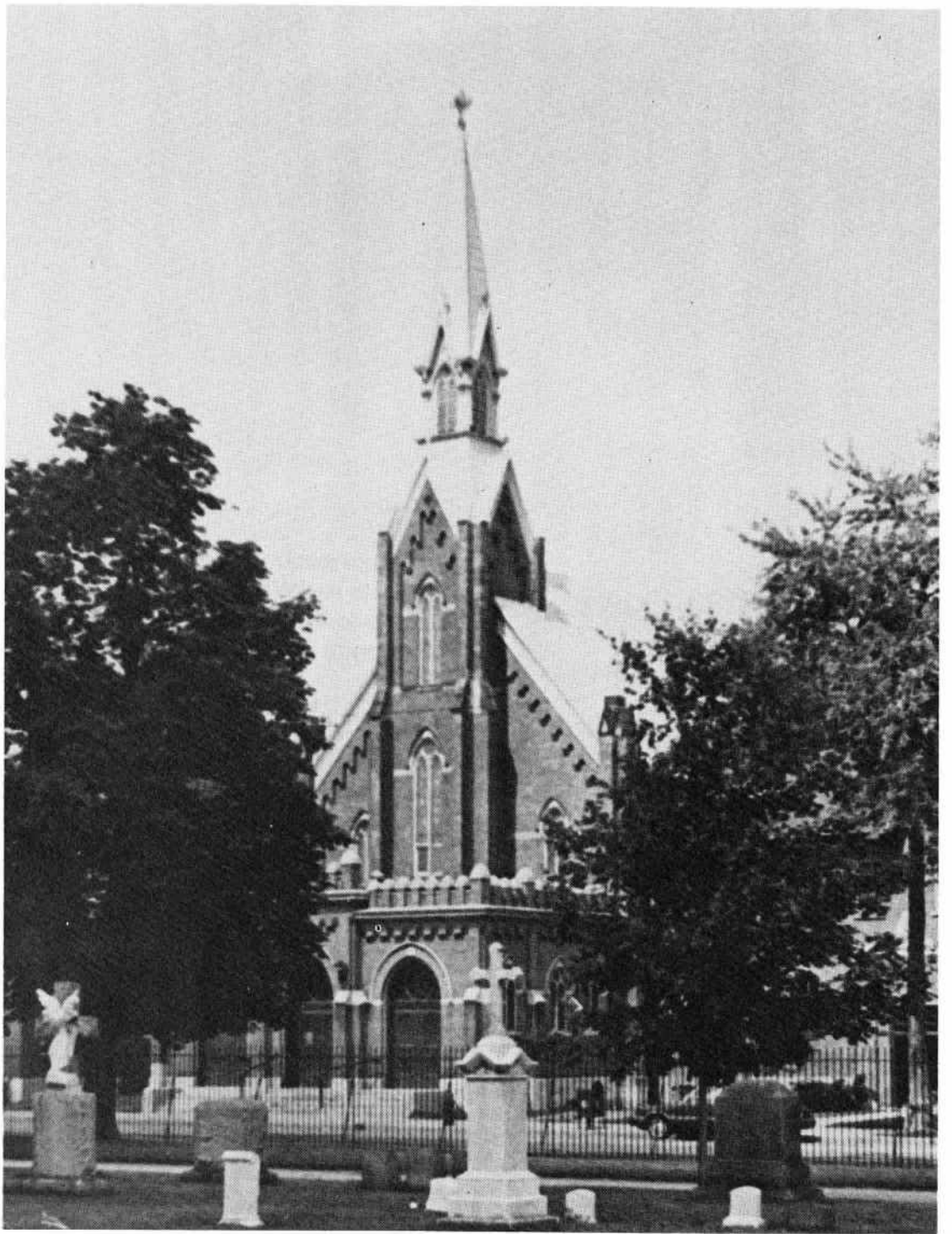
### SAINTS

St. Ferdinand III, king	1252
St. Louis IX of France, king	1270
St. Clare of Montefalco, virgin	1308
St. Joan of Arc, virgin	1431
St. Thomas More, martyr	1535

St. Charles Borromeo, cardinal	1584
St. John Mary Vianney, priest	1859
St. John Bosco, priest	1883
St. Pius X, pope	1914
St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, virgin	1917

### BLESSED

Gregory X, pope	1276
Charles de Blois, duke	1364



*St. Bonaventure Chapel, viewed from Mt. Elliott Cemetery, 1982*



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