

The Servant



*When in our music
God is glorified...*

Nathanael Deward Rahm at
the organ console of Saint
Paul's Church, Columbus,
Indiana

#270

Epiphanytide 2024

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Ronald Augustine as thurifer and master of ceremonies for Lessons and Carols at Atonement, Chicago

Pressed to grow

Dios aprieta, pero no ahorca—God squeezes but he never chokes.

I mentioned this wonderful saying in my last Forum; it was given to me by a dear friend, Mickie Reyes, and has been a watchword for me for several years. As this year opens before us, we face some very serious trials: not just the election which presents challenges in many ways; not just the political strife which takes many forms. The entire fabric of our society is changing right before our eyes. The church is not exempt! In many places in the land churches are losing members; they are not growing, and I believe God is squeezing us. He is applying pressure to change; to adapt, and to look at what the church will be in the years to come.

I think one of the issues we face is reflected in something I have taught the members of the Brotherhood over the years: it is our task to build bridges and cross those bridges, to carry out our various ministries. When those ministries reach a time when we are spent and weary, and there are others trained to carry on, we then need to move aside to leave the work to them.

One of the challenges we face in the church today is summed up in six words — we've always done it that way. Those words, even when not spoken out loud, are nonetheless at work in many of our parishes. When new people come to the parish, they need to be welcomed and involved. I believe we are not always willing to help new members cross the bridge and take on tasks and ministries. In many places we are afraid and unwilling to integrate new members.

As the new year unfolds before us, let us resolve to help the church to grow by helping others, both new and present members, to take on some of the work onto which we tend to hold, because *we have always done it that way!* The Brotherhood is an example of how this has worked. We were called “the Flexible Friars” by Bishop Paul Moore. We have allowed God to squeeze — and while he has changed us, he has never choked us. Be assured that change and growth are signs of life.

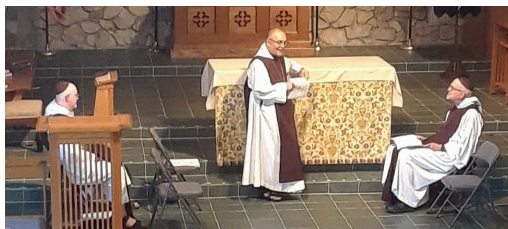
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Here and there with the Brothers

Community Notes

Province 5

Brothers from Chicago and Richmond, Indiana, traveled to Columbus, Indiana, on September 15–16 for their Holy Cross Foundation Day retreat weekend. They were welcomed by Ælred Bernard Dean (Indianapolis) at Saint Paul's



Ælred Bernard chats with Francis Jonathan (l) and Joseph Basil, just prior to Evening Prayer.

Episcopal Church, where he is priest-in-charge. On September 15 the brothers and parishioners prayed Evening Prayer together followed by a lovely dinner (*photo below*) provided by parish members, with much good fellowship.

Provincial Nathanael Deward Rahm (Chicago) led the brothers and parish members in meditations based on the late Dr Margaret Guenther's book, *My Soul in Silence Waits*. At the Holy Eucharist (*photo below, taken just before the liturgy*), Ælred Bernard was celebrant, Nathanael Deward organist,

On September 16, Minister



Francis Jonathan Bullock (Indianapolis) preached, Ronald Augustine Fox (Chicago) was lector and Joseph Basil Gauss (Chicago) served as acolyte.

⦿ Ronald Augustine and Joseph Basil took on roles in the Institution of the Rev Charles Everson



Ronald Augustine with Canon Reyes and Fr Everson as Canon Reyes reads the letter of institution

as the 12th Rector of Church of the Atonement, Chicago, on October 18. Ronald Augustine was MC and Joseph Basil sang in the Atonement Choir. The event drew 188 to the church, and their YouTube channel had 352 views. The Rev Canon Julia Sierra Reyes, Canon for Ministry, represented Bishop Paula Clark at the institution.

⦿ Francis Jonathan was on retreat in October at Saint

Gregory's Abbey in Three Rivers, Michigan, (r) in preparation for completing one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education. This is his final requirement to complete his MDiv. God willing he will graduate in May 2024 — our prayers are with him daily.



✠ On November 17–18, Ronald Augustine and Joseph Basil represented the Church of the Atonement as delegates to the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago Diocesan Convention in suburban Lombard, Illinois. *(Photo at right)*



(l to r standing) Joseph Basil and Ronald Augustine (seated) Mtr Joy Rogers, Fr Everson, Mtr Norma Sutton

✠ On December 3, Ronald Augustine and Joseph Basil participated in Lessons and Carols for Advent at Church of the Atonement in Chicago. Ronald Augustine was MC and thurifer and Joseph Basil sang in the combined Atonement Choir and the Saint Cecilia Choir *(seen below; Joseph Basil is in the second row at the left.)*



Province West



Members of Province West gathered September 22–24 in San Antonio for a fall retreat. William Henry Benefield (West Texas) and his husband Christopher hosted the event in their home. James Patrick Hall (Colorado), Angel Gabriel Roque (Rio Grande) and Minister Provincial David Benedict Hedges (Arizona) joined vocationers Bonifacio Gutiérrez and Jorge Canales, both of the Diocese of the Rio Grande,

for the gathering. The event began with Evening Prayer on Friday and a lovely dinner prepared by William Henry and Christopher, joined by James Dennis OP (the Anglican Order of Preachers). On Saturday morning David Benedict celebrated the Holy Eucharist commemorating the feast of Our Lady of Walsingham, and in the afternoon Angel Gabriel presented a series of directed conversations on the topic of racism. After Evening Prayer, the brothers enjoyed a lovely Tex-Mex dinner out at La Fonda, San Antonio's oldest Mexican restaurant, joined by William Henry's mother Kay. On Sunday, the



(l to r) Jorge Canales, Angel Gabriel, Bonifacio Gutiérrez, James Patrick, and David Benedict

brothers attended the Holy Eucharist at Saint Mark's Church (*photo at left*), San Antonio's historic downtown parish church. After a casual lunch back at the house, the visiting brothers took their leave and began their homeward travels, spiritually refreshed from their time together.

⌕ At the Conventions of the Diocese of California on October 28 and December 2, at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, two of our brothers were on hand to serve and assist with the proceedings. Richard Edward Helmer (California) continued as Secretary of the convention, and Angel

Gabriel came in from the Seminary of the Southwest at Austin to provide Spanish language interpretation for the event. They were joined by members of the Community of Saint Francis and the Society of Saint Francis in San Francisco who led the Convention in spiritual reflection before each ballot.



Richard Edward and Angel Gabriel outside the cathedral doors just before the rehearsal for the electing convention



Richard Edward (with Bishop Andrus) instructs the members of the electing convention, in prep for voting.

voices with music from *Lift Every Voice and Sing II*, Taizé, anthems, and of course the *Hymnal 1982*. Guests served as celebrant, preacher, gospeler, and deacon of the mass. (All David Luke needed to do was to serve as host and welcome folks with his usual exuberance, which he found an easy task on this wonderful day).

⌕ All Saints' Day found David Luke Henton (Rio Grande) hosting all six El Paso congregations at his patronal parish (All Saints) for a Festival Eucharist, necrology, and luncheon. His congregation's Singer Saints lifted



Richard Edward with delegates of his parish, Our Saviour, Mill Valley



✙ William Henry and James Patrick attended the annual Conference of the Society of Catholic Priests North America at Saint Mary's Episcopal Church in Kansas City in early October. In the photo at left they are joined by the Rev Dr Melanie Rowell, Convener of the Society.

✙ Angel Gabriel arrived at the Seminary of the Southwest in Austin on August 2, moving in as he begins his preparation for ordination to the priesthood, sponsored by the Diocese of the Rio Grande. Classes began August 26, and this semester includes Spiritual Practices of Ministry, Old Testament, the Letters of Paul, and Applied Theology. His favorite course is Liturgical Theology, which he says helps him appreciate the history, the nuances, and the actions of the Holy Eucharist. He's a busy seminarian, not only attending classes, but taking part in leading worship in the chapel, singing in the seminary choir, and doing various work-study jobs on campus. In particular, his skills as a native speaker of Spanish are put to use providing language support services for the counseling department, and tutoring students who are learning Spanish. This winter he will take a January Term intensive course in Border Ministry, including a five-day visit to ministry sites along the US/Mexico border in and around Laredo, Texas.



Angel Gabriel with Ellie Simpson, Chair of the Committee on Dispatch at the California convention



Richard Edward and Angel Gabriel photo-bombed by Sir Francis Drake

✙ Angel Gabriel was featured in the Advent 2 episode of the "Prophetic Voices" podcast series: "Preaching and Teaching Beloved Community." The series is available on the website of The Episcopal Church.

