

# Weekly re:Cap



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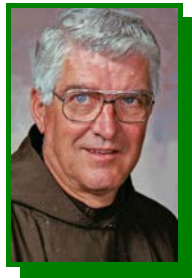
Week ending 6 January 2017

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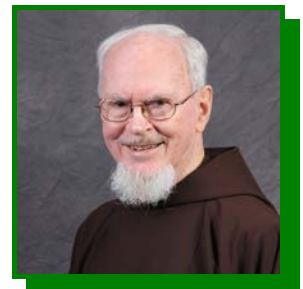
## 2017: Platinum, diamond, gold and silver jubilee year for 9 brothers



Fabian Fehring  
Platinum: 70 years



Vernon Wagner  
Platinum: 70 years



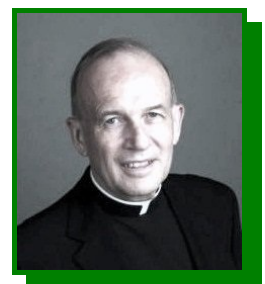
Reynold Rynda  
Platinum: 70 years



Daniel Crosby  
Diamond: 60 years



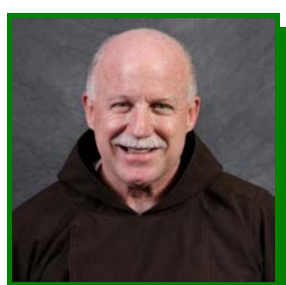
Albert Sandor  
Diamond: 60 years



Edward Foley  
Gold: 50 years



Walter Balduck  
Gold: 50 years



Raymond Stadmeyer  
Silver: 25 years



Biju Parakkalayil  
Silver: 25 years

*Friars, relatives and friends will gather in Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin on 21 July to celebrate the anniversaries of the first profession of vows of our brothers!*

# Porters and Posadas

by Rhonda Miska



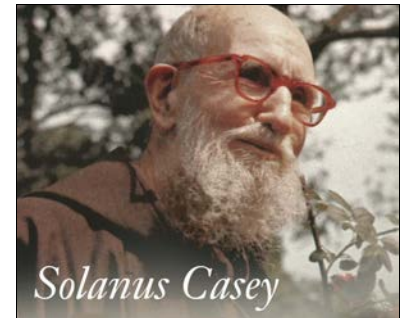
Rhonda Miska

“Welcome!” my Capuchin Franciscan postulant friend greeted me as he opened the large wooden door, inviting me inside from the early-winter chill. There was a handsome plate beside the door, announcing to visitors that this large old house is St. Conrad Friary. “Who is St. Conrad?” I asked. “He was a porter,” my friend answered. “He opened the door and extended hospitality to visitors.”

As we made our way into the foyer he continued, gesturing to an icon on the wall “This is Solanus Casey, who is a candidate for beatification. We have quite a few Franciscan porter saints.”

I was surprised – porter saints? Surely, it is easy to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary holiness of courageous missionaries, wise theologians, inspiring preachers, tireless pastoral workers and valiant martyrs. But porters? Why would the church choose to lift up and honor the holiness of those who spent their lives as doorkeepers?

The unexpectedly large number of porter saints is a testament to how central *hospitality* is in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The refrain repeated over and over in the Hebrew Scriptures is to remember that since we were once strangers in the land of Egypt, we are to welcome strangers now. And scripture reminds us continually that when we welcome the stranger, we welcome God: Abraham entertaining angels unaware in Genesis; Cleopas and his companion inviting the stranger on the Emmaus road in for a meal, only to discover Jesus in the breaking of the bread; Jesus insisting to his bewildered followers that when we welcome the stranger, we welcome Him.



This truth is made visible during the Advent season when Mexican and Mexican-American Catholics act out the Gospel through the practice of *Las Posadas* (literally, “the inns”). For nine consecutive nights, we gather to re-enact the journey of Joseph and Mary asking for shelter in Bethlehem. It is a deeply incarnational practice which literally challenges us to stand in the shoes of travel-weary Mary and Joseph, or to stand in the shoes of those in relative warmth and safety indoors that have to respond to their request. “In the name of heaven, I ask you for shelter,” a group sings in Spanish outside a locked door.

After being turned away several times, the door is opened and the group representing the Holy Family is welcomed in joyfully. “Enter, holy pilgrims,” is the jubilant refrain of those inside as they offer hospitality to the stranger – who is Christ.

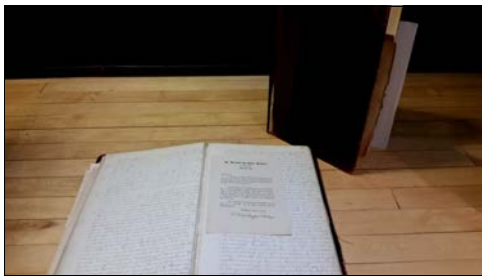
Tragically, in the past weeks since the election, we have seen a heart-breaking, disturbing rash of hate crimes, many directed at immigrants, especially those from Latin America or the Middle East. In the face of our current political and social reality, the witness of porter saints like St. Conrad and the *Las Posadas* tradition offer an urgent challenge and poignant invitation for Christ-followers, not only to open doors and keep a safe distance, but to open ourselves to conversion through encountering the stranger. To see the stranger as a blessing, not a burden. To believe we may catch a glimpse of our God if we dare to unlatch the lock, turn the doorknob, and step onto the threshold to greet those who knock.

St. Conrad, and all you porter saints, pray for us — that we, too, may open doors and make room for the coming of Emmanuel.

*Rhonda Miska, a former Jesuit Volunteer and member of Giving Voice, is a candidate with the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters and freelance writer who teaches religious studies at Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa. She studied at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, and her past ministries include congregation-based community organizing, coordinating a shelter for people who are homeless, accompanying migrant children in legal proceedings, and living in community with adults with special needs.*

## St. Ben's chronicles "appear"...anonymously!

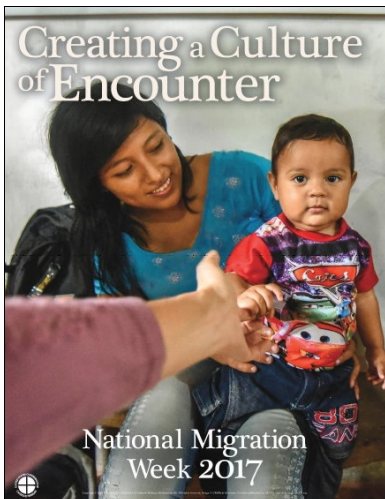
Steven Avella, a diocesan priest and professor at Marquette University, recently contacted Mike Bertram, wishing to present him with something important for St. Benedict the Moor Parish. Steven mentioned that there was one condition: *that the donor remain anonymous.*



Steven presented Mike with two books that are the original chronicles of St. Benedict's, beginning with the efforts to construct a church for black Catholics in the city of Milwaukee. Pictured atop the open book is an invitation from Philip Steffes, announcing the dedication of St. Benedict the Moor Church on March 2, 1924; it also invites people to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of Stephen Eckert on February 19.

Mike Bertram said that the chronicles are filled with newspaper clippings and other pertinent printed materials. He hopes to read through the books and share information with parishioners on some of the hidden stories that a formal history of St. Benedict's does not recount.

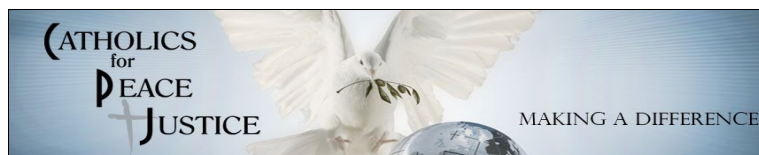
## National Migration Week: 8-14 January



For nearly a half century, the Catholic Church in the U.S. has celebrated National Migration Week, an opportunity for the church to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, including immigrants, refugees, children, and victims and survivors of human trafficking. The theme for this year's observance draws attention to Pope Francis' call to create a culture of encounter, and in doing so to look beyond our own needs and wants to those of others: "For me the word *encounter* is very important...Encounter with others. Because faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others."



During this National Migration Week, let us all take the opportunity to engage migrants as community members and neighbors — all of whom are worthy of our attention and support.





Ken Webber and Leo Kolbe, cousin and uncle of André Weller, respectively, died recently.

Joan Cook, sister of Oliver Bambenek, was hospitalized recently for heart issues.

Michael Crosby has been diagnosed with esophageal and colon cancer. His doctor will be assessing his status to determine what course of action to pursue.

Matthew Gottschalk suffered a stroke recently, and is receiving therapy.

Randolph Graczyk was hospitalized briefly for heart-related issues. Doctors inserted two stents.

Lawrence Sparacino, OSA (brother of deceased friar Francis Mary Sparacino) recently underwent triple bypass surgery.

Rita Petrie, affiliate of the province, was scheduled for knee replacement surgery.

Joe Monachino suffered a minor stroke recently.

An epiphany in solitude.  
At times when I am all alone  
and on my couch lying prone,  
Those moments re-enter my mind  
and clocks start to rewind.  
And I am lost once again,  
Soaking in the memories' rain.

I hear voices, I hear cries,  
I hear my tongue rolling with lies.  
And guilt overwhelms me,  
so strong I want to flee,  
but I must see, I must see  
my wrongdoings, my cruelties.



Sometimes, when I think about  
my past, I start to doubt  
the point of my existence;  
is guilt now my subsistence?  
There creeps a pain in my heart,  
the haunting ghosts of the past.

A fool have I been all my life!  
in misdeeds I wasted my life!  
An epiphany, a realization  
I am damned for damnation!  
So now I pledge to do some good,  
my spirit's burning like the wood.

~ Zain Tariq

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

*Happy, Happy New Year!  
We wish you all the best,  
Great work to reach your fondest goals,  
And when you're done, sweet rest.*

*We hope for your fulfillment,  
Contentment, peace and more,  
A brighter, better new year than  
The one that came before!*



- 6 ..... Albert Sandor (B)  
Epiphany (F)
- 9 ..... Gary Keegstra (B)  
Lawrence Groeschel (B)  
Gerald Kessel (B)
- 10 ..... Betty L'Esteve (B)
- 11 ..... Carl Schaefer (B)