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**SILENCE=DEATH**

Issue 1178

As followers of St. Francis of Assisi, the friars of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph strongly decry the killing of George Floyd. This violent act serves as a reminder not just of injustice in the present day, but of a 400-year history of white supremacy in the United States. We also object to the use of force, and the threat of military force in particular, against peaceful, unarmed citizens exercising their constitutionally-guaranteed right to freedom of assembly. All of this is fundamentally unjust, and it must end.

As Capuchin friars of the Province of St. Joseph, our work has long focused on racial justice. Our Capuchin brother, Servant of God Stephen Eckert, who ministered in Milwaukee in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, was — and is — a model for us today on working for justice and equality. Today that work is continued by friars and partners in ministry throughout our province as we seek to prayerfully build sister-brotherhood in the world.

Together with people of goodwill around the nation, we unite in prayer and call for action in the pursuit of truth, reconciliation, and reparation for the sin of racism. So let us pray together, asking the intercession of Stephen Eckert, for an end to racial injustice. And let us encounter one another, appreciate one another, and accompany the oppressed in our communities. Together we can fight for a more just society. We do this remembering Our Savior's commandment to "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." (John 13:34-35)

In sister-brotherhood, I wish you peace and all good.

Br. Michael Sullivan, OFM Cap.  
Provincial Minister

*"To kill, all we have to do is stand silent.  
The killing is already going on.  
All we have to do is stand by.  
Stay silent."*

*Steve Garnaas-Holmes*



## Statement of the U.S. Franciscan Provinces

“At a time when the COVID-19 virus has disproportionately attacked people of color, we have witnessed the killing of George Floyd and the protests, sometimes violent, which have occurred in our cities in its aftermath. Our hearts go out to all affected.

“Even though, following in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, we decry violence and desire peace, we stand in solidarity with our outraged African American brothers and sisters who demand an end to the deadly violence of racism. We cannot be indifferent when their God-given dignity is violated.

“As people of faith, we not only condemn the systemic racism that has led to these events, but we also re-dedicate ourselves to ending racial injustice in our provinces, in our Church and in our nation and creating that space where Dr. Martin Luther King’s Beloved Community will flourish.”

David Gaa, OFM  
Provincial Minister  
St. Barbara Province

James Gannon, OFM  
Provincial Minister  
Assumption BVM Province

Kevin Mullen, OFM  
Provincial Minister  
Holy Name Province

Thomas Naim, OFM  
Provincial Minister  
Sacred Heart Province

Jack Clark Robinson, OFM  
Provincial Minister  
Our Lady of Guadalupe Province

Mark Soehner, OFM  
Provincial Minister  
St. John the Baptist Province

### Unless

*At the cross the people stood by watching;  
and the leaders scoffed.  
—Luke 23.35*

That's all you have to do to abet the killing. Stay silent.  
The killing will go on, just fine.  
Thank you for your cooperation.

Three officers stood silent  
while a fourth killed a helpless man, slowly.  
Centurions at the crucifixion.

Unless you would like your own cross  
to bear. Unless you would stand with the man  
with the crown of thorns.

To kill, all we have to do is stand silent.  
The killing is already going on.  
All we have to do is stand by. Stay silent.

Unless you wish to take your faith that seriously  
in these serious times.  
Unless in you the Holy Spirit is already crying out.

Don't raise your voice.  
Don't protest.  
Don't question what happens.

Unless in this kingdom of death you  
would be resurrected.  
Unless you have already died and your life  
is hidden in Christ.

Don't object when the Emperor desecrates  
the holy place.  
Don't defy the secret police.  
Don't cry out. Don't disrupt.

Unless in you life is stronger than death,  
love is stronger than fear.

*Steve Garnaas-Holmes  
www.UnfoldingLight.net*

## *Burying Our Dead While Social Distancing*

Recently, three of our brothers were laid to rest in our provincial cemetery in Mt. Calvary WI.



*Burial of Kenan Siegel*



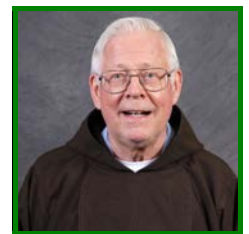
*Steve Kropp, provincial vicar,  
officiated at the burials*



*Burial of Lester Bach and Jim Magnan*

## *Ministry During the Pandemic*

*Ken Smits, Fond du Lac WI:* When the shutdown came, I was classified as an "essential" employee by Agnesian Health Care, which governs Nazareth Center and Court, where I minister to about 60 sisters. I found out that "essential" meant I could be called at any time and there could be no substitute, for instance, a retired priest. The sisters were confined to their rooms or households, with no distribution of communion. Consulting with the staff and sisters, the desire was for a televised Mass each day, carried out as fully as possible for their participation. So I celebrate Eucharist with homily each day with a few staff members: reader, one for intercessions, sacristan, and organist, all communicating as they wish. So there is the small worshipping presence of the community. No communion for the rest is a great hardship which many bear well, but not all, especially some of the sisters whose minds are failing. Promotion of a spiritual communion is a good alternative, but it doesn't work for everyone. I have spent time at the doors of sisters (keeping distance) trying to console the inconsolable. With considerable lobbying with Agnesian Health Care, we did get permission to give communion to everyone on Easter Sunday in their rooms. This was done by a few of the sisters.



*Ken Smits*

I have never been so busy in 11 years in this ministry. This has been a time of many meetings and consultations, as the staff and I seek to deal with the sister's needs and wishes. I am part time staff; 15 hours a week on five days. I worked eight days in a row between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, well over 40 hours in that stretch. The sisters wanted all the Holy Week and Easter services done as fully as possible. That required a lot of adaptation and imagination. We did have a full complement of ministers for all the services.

We are getting more adventurous now. We are planning a penance service with general absolution to a televised congregation before Pentecost Sunday. After Pentecost, we will have an anointing of the sick. After discussion, we decided that the grace of the sacraments can be given and received well enough through the television camera in our situation. Not that the television setup always works. But I have learned that when sound and/or picture fail, I go right on. Never let the camera run the prayer!





- Former friar Greg Pekarske-Siers will have neck surgery on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The father of Leo Amalanathan Vincent Antony Raj is recovering from a broken leg.
- Patrick Giffer (affiliate) has been diagnosed with cancer of the liver and will have surgery on June 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- The mother of Anthony Kote-Witah is gravely ill.
- Mary Derus, former housekeeper at St. Fidelis, died recently.
- Elizabeth Hormis, aunt of George Kooran, died recently.
- Anthony Dombrowski, brother of Francis Dombrowski, died recently.
- Gregory T. Boss (nephew of Dan Fox) died recently.
- Jerome Wilkins, father of Kristen Wilkins (provincial employee), died recently.
- Allan Von Kobs, Franciscan friar of the Holy Name Province (NY), died recently.
- Throughout this ordeal, our family, and most importantly Gavin, have been blessed by your consistent thoughts, support and prayers. This experience has confirmed my strong beliefs in the importance of family, the fundamental goodness of people and in the power of prayer. ~ Chris Celichowski, father of Gavin Celichowski. (Gavin is home from the hospital now and recuperating.)
- The Dombrowski family is grateful to all who have sent messages of condolence and abundance of prayer at the death of Anthony Dombrowski, the brother of Francis Dombrowski. May all keep safe.
- David Preuss has tested negative for COVID-19 and has been released from quarantine. He continues to recover from his two infections.

## HELLO JUNE

- 3 ..... Otto Bucher (B)
- 5 ..... Truong Dinh (B)
- 8 ..... James Andres (B)
- 13 ..... Anthony Scannell (N)  
Larry LaCross (B)
- 17 ..... Madalai Muthu Savariappan (B)
- 26 ..... Esther Boehnlein (B)
- 29 ..... Paul Reichling (N)  
Bernard Wagner (B)

### Updates...

- Our provincial chapter, originally scheduled to begin on June 1<sup>st</sup>, has been indefinitely postponed.
- Our provincial celebration of religious jubilees, originally scheduled for July, has been indefinitely postponed.
- Our celebration of perpetual vows *will be held* on August 15<sup>th</sup> in Detroit, with a limited number of invited guests so that social distancing can be maintained.



*It's important to be color coordinated!*