

Franciscan Alumni Association



Volume 31, Issue 1

Spring 2020

Established May 28th, 1989

Serving Provinces of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. John the Baptist

www.franciscan-alumni.org

Reunion 2020—Fraternity, Reflection, Fun—June 25-28



We are delighted to invite you to come to the **St. Francis Retreat House** in Easton, PA this June. The 23-acre campus has a familiar look and feel, nestled in a secluded nature setting, much like many of our Franciscan formation centers of old.

The all-inclusive feature of this reunion weekend is reminiscent of our time in formation, where all our needs were met. The biggest difference with the Retreat House is that you won't need to sneak in the beer and wine. It will be provided!

We know that this will be a trip for many alumni and guests, but we are grateful to have been offered very reasonable rates for lodging and meals at the Retreat House. We hope this will enable you to make travel plans to be with one another for a fun weekend and deepen fraternal bonds. We also hope that we might have time to reflect on the future of our association, especially as we foresee now the joining of six of the USA OFM provinces in 2023.

St. Francis Retreat House is about 20 minutes from the **Allentown/Bethlehem/Easton (ABE)** airport and less than a 90-minute drive from the **Newark (EWR)** and **Philadelphia (PHL)** airports. There is a bus from the Newark airport that comes close to the Retreat House. The drive from Cincinnati is about 8 hours. We hope some might want to drive together, if possible, and we can share names of those who offer to do this.

You can see updates to the reunion plan, "reflective questions" for the retreat sessions, and additional sightseeing information at franciscan-alumni.org/reunions.

Schedule of Activities

Thursday

- Arrive and check into your room, explore the campus
- 6 pm dinner, followed by a walk outside or chat with other alumni in one of the lounges
- 8 pm evening social together
- End with singing the *Ultima*

Friday

- 8 am optional Mass with the local community
- 8:30 am breakfast
- 10 am small group tours of C. F. Martin Guitar Company in nearby Nazareth, PA (\$3 fee)
- Noon lunch at the retreat house (free/included) – or – lunch in nearby Bethlehem, PA (individuals pay if going to a restaurant) and walking tour of the quaint, lovely downtown area; maybe stroll over to the "steel stacks" of Bethlehem Steel, which are right there, too
- Have a restful afternoon or gather at 4 pm to begin a comfortably paced "**meditative walk in creation**" on the beautiful grounds of the retreat house or a nearby park with trail guide Frank Lopez '77
- 6 pm dinner and introductions
- 7 pm to 8-ish reflective session together: "**Our Franciscan Mosaic**"... sharing stories about formation years and how we have been living the Franciscan charism ever since
- 8:30 pm big-screen movie night with snacks and beverages

2020 Reunion Plan, Continued

Saturday

- 8:30 am breakfast
- 9:30 am reflective session: “**Our Present Realities and Hopes**” ... what are our experiences and challenges in living the Franciscan charism in the present and the future
- 10:15 am break for coffee and goodies
- 10:30 am reflective session: “**Our Futures Joined Together**” ... How might we be more united as brothers and as a Franciscan family network in the future? Some time for visioning about where the FAA might adapt with the impending unification of six USA Provinces, including St. John the Baptist and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

* **There will be alternate activities for those who choose to not attend all of the retreat sessions:** board games, card games, more exploring of sites on campus or nearby in Easton or Bethlehem with family and classmates.

- Noon lunch
- “**A Journey into Our Roots**” with Loren Connell, OFM
- Free time for relaxing or an activity as described above in the schedule
- 5 pm Franciscan Alumni Mass in the main chapel (alumni musicians are welcome to assist)
- 6 pm dinner, award presentations & remembrance service
- Evening social with snacks and beverages -- and sing-along, including a few Glee Club songs, songs from other formation programs, Fr. Ric’s retreat songs, etc.

Sunday

- 8:30 am breakfast
- 10 am optional Mass with the local Sunday community
- Noon lunch (departure per your itinerary)

Cost for those staying at the St. Francis Retreat House:

Thursday to Sunday: 3 nights, 9 meals, evening socials, coffee and juices during the day: **\$189 / person**

All lodging and meals included: Thursday supper, Friday breakfast/lunch/supper, Saturday breakfast/lunch/supper, and Sunday breakfast and lunch

Friday to Sunday: 2 nights, 6 meals, evening socials, coffee and juices during the day: **\$161 / person**

All lodging and meals included: Friday supper, Saturday breakfast/lunch/supper, and Sunday breakfast and lunch

Or if you wish to stay at the nearby Hampton Inn:

Lodging: Hampton Inn and Suites, 200 Gateway Drive, Bethlehem PA 18017 / 610-868-2442

Guaranteed rates for “Franciscan Alumni Reunion” are \$99 plus tax for Thursday evening and \$139 plus tax for Friday and Saturday evening. A continental breakfast is included. They will hold 10 rooms for us until June 4th. If the following link doesn’t work when clicked, copy and paste it into a browser to register online:

https://secure3.hilton.com/en_US/hp/reservation/book.htm?inputModule=HOTEL&ctyhocn=BLMPAHX&spec_plan=CHHFAR&arrival=20200625&departure=20200628&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT

Meal plans for commuters: **\$114** for Thursday to Sunday or **\$76** for Friday to Sunday

* The listed prices for St. Francis Retreat House are totals. No tax will be added.

** Please note that the lodging and food rates at St. Francis Retreat House are very special (cheap) so we won’t be able to prorate a signed-out meal, a late arrival, or an early departure. Thanks for understanding!

How to sign up for the Franciscan Alumni Reunion, June 25-28, 2020

Registration Form:

You can use this form to mail in your registration and deposit money -- or call Kathy or Carol at the St. Francis Retreat House at 610-258-3053, ext 10 -- or go online and register at: <https://whennow.com/event/franciscan-alumni-reunion>.

Checks should be made out to: St. Francis Retreat House. A credit card may be used online or by phone.

Name _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

Home Address _____

Please complete this section if staying at St. Francis Retreat House:

Thursday-Sunday ☐ or Friday-Sunday ☐

Do you plan to be at supper on the day you arrive? _____

Number of persons in the room (1 or 2): _____

Name of additional person in room: _____

Total deposit with registration (\$35 per person) \$ _____

Please complete this section if commuting (and staying at home or at the hotel):

Thursday-Sunday ☐ or Friday-Sunday ☐

Do you plan to be at supper on the day you arrive? _____

If you are commuting, you can pay for a meal plan when you arrive

Please **register directly with Hampton Inn** for your lodging (see contact info above)

Travel with a fellow alum?

☐ Yes, I am willing to let my name and contact information be known to others in my area or along the way who might like to travel together and share transportation costs.

If mailing your Registration Form, please send it to:

St. Francis Retreat House, 3918 Chipman Road, Easton, PA 18045

If staying at St. Francis Retreat House, please include a check for the deposit amount (\$35 per person).

Your contact information is requested in case we need to reach you about any changes or to help find you if you get lost during the reunion. Your information will not be shared without your permission.

Contact person for questions: Fr. Henry Beck, OFM: 610-258-3053, ext. 13

You may wish to visit www.stfrancisretreathouse.org to see photos and more information.

2019 Humanitarian Award: Dave Seibert '70

by Henry Beck, OFM '70

It is humbling and inspiring to hear of the many good things that the Franciscan alumni are doing with their lives, especially in terms of service to those in need.

We came to the St. Francis Seminary, to the Brothers' School, to Duns Scotus, to St. Leonard's, or to other formation programs because of Christ's touch in our lives and often especially drawn by the Franciscan spirit of hospitality, joy, and service.

Hopefully our time in formation allowed God to deepen this Christic and Franciscan charism through our prayer together and our common life. These values and this inspiration have continued to grow long past our time in formation.

We've seen this enfolded again and again in the recipients of our FAA Humanitarian Award over the years. The 2019 recipient is no exception.

We wish to acknowledge and affirm through our FAA fraternity the witness and good work of Dave Seibert, St. Francis Seminary class of 1970 and Duns Scotus College graduate in 1978, during his life so far.



"I have a simple commitment to find little things easily done."

"Thanks to my family upbringing and remarkable generous examples of my three sons and wife, I have been blessed to have a number of remarkable volunteer opportunities over the past few decades. Of course, my 8 years with the Franciscans plays a big part here also."

Dave volunteered, along with many of us at Sarah Fisher Home, with the children there. After leaving Duns Scotus, Dave was employed as a child care worker at the home. He worked with the youngest residents... boys and girls aged 4-7. "Best job I have ever had."

Dave also had the honor and pleasure of working in a program with high school youth from his parish and from all over the country in a program named "Young Neighbors in Action."

This is a national program based on the "Seven Principles of Catholic Social Teaching" of the US Catholic Conference of Bishops and promoted by the Center for Ministry Development.

This program involves a week-long service commitment by teams of high school youth working in various cities at homeless shelters, soup kitchens, community centers, children's programs, environmental centers, community gardens, and senior centers. Dave was able to do 15 weeks over a span of 11 years with a few hundred youth and other adult participants. "I learned so much from them," Dave offered.

Dave also was fortunate to be a part of coordinating and leading a few dozen co-workers in mentoring programs at Detroit Public Schools.

And he also worked with the friars who founded the “Canticle Café” at St. Aloysius. Here Dave and fellow volunteers served meals, made sandwiches to be distributed on the streets, and stocked shelves in the food pantry. Dave was involved with other projects at St. Al’s, too.

Dave’s commitment with “Young Neighbors” led him to a long-time commitment to the food-bank. “Gleaners Community Foodbank has provided life-changing experiences for me.”

He helps to run a “client-choice” food pantry two nights a week. This style of food pantry allows the clients to “shop and make choices” of the food they want.

“I have met so many wonderful clients over the years.” He is delighted to experience the hope that grows in individuals through these experiences. Dave offers that he has also “met and trained remarkable volunteers” there. Dave finds great joy in teaching volunteers of all ages “that the tiniest things make huge differences” and that “changing the

world can be fun.”

Just last year, Dave joined a team of volunteers at Freedom House Detroit. This house is an Asylum Seeker Residence. This ministry houses 40+ asylum seekers. All services (legal, education, housing, and others) are provided for free. 90% of the applicants at Freedom House get approved for asylum. Once a week Dave meets with a “language partner” and helps him improve his English-language skills.

Jane: A Colleague’s Reflections

“My words to describe Dave are faithful, faith-filled, kind, and gentle. I worked with Dave several times with ‘Young Neighbors in Action.’ He has a vocation with young people and a heart for all people. He always watched for the people — the teens on the margins — and went to them to

listen, engage them, and make them feel at home. His easy-going nature and quirky sense of humor resonates with everyone! He does what it takes to make community when others can’t see that it exists.

Dave’s love of justice and of people have made an impact on so many. We will never know the depth or breadth of that impact, but for him — and for us, that’s okay. Seeds sown for others to nurture and to see to fruition!”

Conclusion

Doing little things well ... and letting this grow and develop. Thanks, Dave, for your inspiring witness. We, your brothers and sisters, are delighted to affirm your efforts and various ministries ... with the 2019 FAA Humanitarian Award.



2019 Christian Life Award: Jeremy Harrington, OFM '50 by Rick Kasper '70

The 2019 Franciscan Alumni re-union was held in Southfield, Michigan, where many of the festivities were celebrated at Transfiguration Parish. Fr. Jeremy Harrington, who is associate pastor there, received the Alumni Association's "Christian Life Award" because — through word and action — he has been an exemplary witness of Jesus Christ in the spirit of St. Francis.

During the presentation speech, Rick Kasper pointed out three gifts that Fr. Jeremy has used through the years to be such a strong Christian witness.

Affirmer of Human Goodness

Fr. Jeremy affirms people mainly through his warm smile and loving eyes, but also through compassionate words.

Evangelizer & Servant of the Gospel

Fr. Jeremy recently celebrated his 60th Anniversary of Ordination. He began his ministry by teaching teens for 4 years at Roger Bacon. He then became associate editor of St. Anthony Messenger. He served the Messenger for over 30 years, later as editor, CEO, and publisher. During 14 years of this time, he also served on the SJB Provincial Council. The only break he took from the Messenger was to serve as Provincial Minister for 9 years, from 1981 to 1990. Fr. Jeremy also served beyond the Province as General Visitor for the Custody of the Holy Cross in Illinois, Santa Barbara Province in California, Christ the King Province in Canada, and for the English Province of Great Britain.



Encourager & Animator to Use Your Own Gifts

Fr. Jeremy encouraged Fr. Murray Bodo, OFM to write a book about St. Francis, which led to the birth of ***The Journey and the Dream***. He encouraged Richard Rohr, OFM to develop his audio-cassette series on ***The Great Themes of Scripture***, which kick-started Richard's International preaching and teaching career.

Fr. Jeremy has also encouraged many to use their God-given gifts in witnessing to Jesus Christ and building God's Kingdom.

Congratulations, Fr. Jeremy!



Reflections from a First-Time Reunion Attendee by Dave Burkitt '77



SFS Class of '77 pals Tom Shumate, Dave Burkitt, Mike Daly, and Frank Lopez in Michigan, 2019

For the longest time I have wanted to attend the annual reunion. Then in 2019, I was in the midst of several changes in my life that allowed me the time to go. I wasn't really sure what to expect, but I recalled feeling welcome upon arrival at St. Francis Seminary as a young student, so I hoped I would be welcomed back to participate in the reunion.

My experience as a student at St. Francis Seminary has remained a significant part of my adult life. Many times over the years, I've looked at pictures taken "back in the day" that reminded me of a thoughtful time in my life, when I was seriously considering the priesthood. From that time and experience, I've been able to share with many colleagues the

blessings of my Franciscan journey, which helped prepare me to work as a lay minister. I often thought of St. Francis when working with patients with HIV in Hollywood at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament. So, even after the passage of many years, my time at St. Francis Seminary is a big part of my life, and thus, an important reason for reconnecting with schoolmates at the reunion.

From the time I arrived and throughout the reunion event I was very happy to be involved, chatting with schoolmates about our experiences, and visiting several missions in the area. During a slideshow presentation, one of my classmates pointed out that I was in a picture. I was in shock! I

didn't recognize my former self, but hey, I was happy to see the picture! I was actually helping other seminarians with their studies in that photo. Amazing!

Toward the end of the reunion, Tom Shumate '77 suggested I help the Franciscan Alumni Association Board of Directors, and, after thinking about it, I volunteered. I am happy to be a part of this Franciscan mission. I look forward to the 2020 retreat and hope to see my classmates again and other seminarians and family members who are able to attend. This is time well worth spending and it is uplifting, rejuvenating. The planning team and others who worked on the reunion event did a great job. Bravo to everyone!

Reuniting and Remembering in Southfield

by Rick Gardner '75

The **2019 Chapter Reunion** got off to a good start on Thursday, June 20 at Shields Restaurant in Southfield, Michigan. Our host friars from the Church of the Transfiguration joined approximately thirty additional alumni for dinner. It was an enjoyable evening as old friendships were renewed and new friendships were begun.

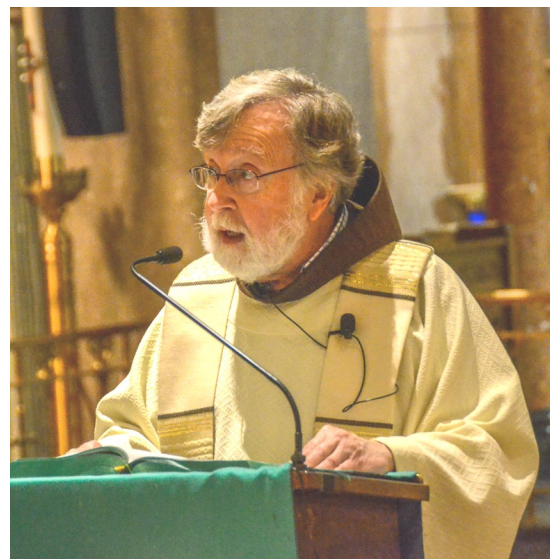
After morning prayers and breakfast at the hotel, Friday saw a number of us in a convoy driving towards downtown Detroit. The first stop was a pleasant visit with

Fr. Maynard Tetreault, OFM and Brother Louie Zant, OFM, at the friary of St. Moses the Black. The conversation was interesting and entertaining. Fr. Maynard is quite a storyteller!

The next stop was the Holy Moly Donut Shop, a popular place for the locals. From there we went to St. Dominic Outreach Center, which operates out of a two-story home. Every room, including the basement, had items intended for distribution to those

in need. The workers that day were in the process of sorting clothing donations.

We then descended upon St. Aloysius Church in downtown Detroit for the 12:15 Mass to celebrate the Feast of St. Aloysius. Fr. Loren Connell, OFM knew we had arrived as he could hear us chatting a little too loudly out in the vestibule. Fr. Loren



Loren Connell, OFM

presided at the Mass and afterward shared the history of the church and invited us to explore it.

The original reunion plans called for a cookout at the Friary on Fri-



Maynard Tetreault, OFM and Bro. Louie Zant, OFM



Alumni tour group at St. Moses the Black Friary



We began in the former chapel. Even though the altar was no longer there, you could sense from the reverence displayed by all that the chapel was a very special place for all who lived at DSC and that this was the heart of their community.

As we walked the halls and toured the children's class-



Magnolia Wurgler,, daughter of Fr. Orlando Jaquez

The office of the church's bishop was interesting, to say the least. It was quite a large office, with many hunting trophies and stuffed and mounted exotic animals.

The tour of the former Duns Scotus evoked a lot of emotion. Several expressed sadness and disappointment at the changes that have taken place. But, for many, the tour brought back happy and

day evening, however, attendance at this reunion – almost seventy at times – was so great that a cookout wasn't deemed feasible. Instead, we had a dinner in the parish hall. Brothers Eric and Philip made sure everything went smoothly and even served as bartenders.

Saturday morning began with morning prayer at the hotel. Even being forewarned, the hotel staff had difficulty preparing enough food fast enough for our large contingent... but the food was very good and satisfying.

The highlight for the day was a guided tour of the former Duns Scotus College, which is now the Word of Faith International Christian Center. Fr. Jeff Scheeler, OFM, the pastor of the Church of the Transfiguration, had arranged for the tour.

rooms, several present recalled the former uses of the facilities. On the upper floors where walls had been changed, alumni were trying to figure out where their rooms used to be.

We were shown the large auditorium where the present church conducts and broadcasts its services. It was quite impressive with a large stage and theater seating.



Nine from the Class of '70... Sitting: Bill Ritter, Dale Recinella, Rick Wissel
Standing: John Devine, Dave Imhoff, Rick Kasper, Jeff Scheeler, Henry Beck, and Dave Seibert

2019 Reunion (Continued)

sweet memories. Here are a few quotes from alumni regarding the tour:

Fr. Frank Jasper, OFM: *"As the last guardian at Duns Scotus, I was curious to see what they had done with the building. I was also pleased that many of my negative impressions along the way had basically subsided."*

Michael Kruzich, Duns Scotus College graduate of 1979: *"The tour of the former Duns Scotus College was for me more than mere nostalgia. I was certainly curious to see the changes, but more than anything I felt grateful and blessed to have studied and lived there for 5 years. A few memories*

that surfaced: The Duns Scotus Players under the direction of Fr. Leander; the Franciscan Mothers Club spring card parties where students served coffee in the smoke filled undercroft of the chapel; the singing of the Transitus service "O Most Soul" written by Fr. Peter Ricki; the celebration of the Feast of St. Francis with the entire refectory packed to the gills with visiting friars, benefactors and dignitaries – and the resounding singing of the Ultima – in harmony! I was also reminded that it



was at Duns Scotus and throughout my formation years that I developed an abiding love for God through personal prayer and contemplation. I am grateful to have been taught in the Franciscan tradition!"



Starting with back left: Pat Daly, Dave Gehring, Butch Feldhaus, Mark Kling, John Roberts, Paul LaRou, Bern Schwartz, Jerry Kaelin, Bob Buescher, Paul Landers, Fr. Jeff Scheeler, Dave Burkitt, Bryan Reising, Jim Lubinski, Joe Van Hagen, Dan Meyer, Mike Thomas, Fr. Jeremy Harrington, Dave Seibert, Gary Wintz, Bill Ritter, Dan Robitaille, Chuck Lawrence, Fr. Gary Frishkorn, Rick Wissel, Dennis Kirby, Mike Daly, Rick Kasper, Bro. Philip Wilhelm, Tom Shumate, Joris Heise, Savio Russo, Gary Bales, Ed Schellenbach, Matthew Gallegos, Dale Recinella, Ralph Hatke, Mike Kruzich, Frank Lopez, Mike Utterback, Danny Sedillo, Dave Macovei, Rick Gardner, Dave Imhoff, Fr. Henry Beck

Gary Bales, SFS class of 1972: *"The tour of Duns Scotus was a nice experience even though I didn't attend the school but got to see the reaction of those that did and hear their stories."*

Everyone reconvened Saturday evening for Mass at the Church of the Transfiguration. It's always a moving experience to hear the voices of so many



Back row: Joyce Daly, Debbie Schellenback, Dee Gehring, Barbara Larue, Sally Bales, Kathie Lopez, Kathy Wissel; Front row: Ellie Wurgler, Magnolia Wurgler, Nan Imhoff, Deb Ritter, Marilyn Schwartz, Andrea Lubinski, Peggy Backus

one last morning prayer together and one last breakfast before we said our farewells and headed our separate ways.

This was a wonderful, joyful, rewarding reunion. We thank Fr. Jeff Scheeler, OFM, and all the Franciscan Friars at the Church of the Transfiguration for all the planning and the hard work in organizing the activities and events.

Before closing, we want to take this opportunity

to impress upon everyone that the Franciscan Alumni Association exists for the benefit of all men who were in any formation programs of St. John the Baptist Province and Our Lady of Guadalupe Province. The Association from its inception was meant to provide strength, support, communication, consolation and reconciliation to these men by building upon the common bond of love of God and in our attraction to St. Francis of Assisi.



Chuck Lawrence & Ellie Wurgler



Seven of the nine alumni from the Class of '69 who attended: Dave Macovei, Bern & Marilyn Schwartz, Danny Sedillo, Jerry Kaelin, Bob Buescher, Dan Meyer, Mike Utterback

talented singers raising their voices in harmony during Mass!

After posing for a group photograph in the church after Mass, we proceeded to the parish hall for dinner and award presentations. The awards presentation

was followed by the more somber Remembrance Ceremony in which we recognized and remembered our brothers who passed away since the last reunion. We ended by singing The Ultima.

On Sunday morning, we shared

Franciscan Alumni Association

St. Anthony Friary
5000 Colerain Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45223

www.franciscan-alumni.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Photo credits for this newsletter:

Thanks to Frank Jasper, OFM '64 for photos on page 8, top of page 9, top of page 10, and bottom of page 11

Thanks to Dave Imhoff '70 for the rest of the pictures, except for the one below, which was courtesy of Frank Lopez '77



Dave and Fr. Frank sharing pixel stories

The Franciscan Alumni Association newsletter is mailed to approximately 1,200 members for whom we have addresses. The only cost of production is the expense of printing and mailing. Additional stories and photos are available on the website. Thank you for your interest and support!

Franciscan Alumni Association Board of Trustees

<i>President & Database Mgr</i>	Rick Gardner
<i>Vice President</i>	Mark Kling
<i>Provincial Liaison</i>	Ric Schneider, OFM
<i>Treasurer</i>	Paul Landers
<i>Secretary, Website</i>	Butch Feldhaus
<i>Awards</i>	Rick Kasper
<i>Newsletter</i>	Mike Niklas
<i>Revitalization</i>	Mike Thomas
<i>Members at Large</i>	
Gary Bales	Henry Beck, OFM
Dave Burkitt	Ted Gomez
Frank Lopez	JD Moya
Mike Niehaus	Joe Sears