

SISTER DEATH

FR. MATTHEW L. GASKIN, OFM, 88 years of age, a professed Franciscan friar for 64 years, died on Saturday, June 5, 2010, at Holy Name Friary in Ringwood, NJ. He would have celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination on June 13.

Fr. Matthew was born November 20, 1921, in Buffalo, NY, to Edward and Irene Gaskin. On December 11 he was baptized Edward George at St. Gerard Church in Buffalo.

He was received into the Order of Friars Minor in Holy Name Province on August 12, 1944, at St. Bonaventure Friary in Paterson, NJ, receiving the name Matthew Lawrence. He professed his first vows there on August 14, 1945, then pursued the usual two-year course of studies in philosophy, receiving his B.A. from St. Bonaventure University in 1947. He studied theology at Holy Name College in Washington, D.C., where he professed his final vows on September 17, 1948. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 11, 1950, by Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, in the Chapel of Trinity College in Washington, D.C. Upon completion of his studies at Holy Name College in 1951, Fr Gaskin was assigned to the Pontifical Anthonian Athenaeum in Rome, receiving his Licentiate in Sacred Theology.

In 1982 he began his long association with the Secular Franciscan Order. In 1984, he was named Provincial Spiritual Assistant to the SFO of Holy Name Province. Residing in Buffalo until 1986; moved to St. Francis Friary in NYC; then to St. Anthony Friary in Butler, NJ, in 1987, which remained his home for the next 17 years.

Fr. Matt continued as Provincial Spiritual Assistant until 2001. From 1993-99, he served as the National Spiritual Assistant, and as Spiritual Assistant to the National Formation Commission, as well as the National Peace and Justice Commission. He served in this role during a crucial period during the life of the Secular Franciscans in the United States, as they moved from a traditional structure under the oversight of the First Order provinces to national regionalization. Fr. Matt provided crucial leadership during this process and was named the Regional Spiritual Assistant to the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity. He retired from active ministry in Butler in 2002, but due to failing health, took up residence at Holy Name Friary in Ringwood, in 2004.



1921—2010

Upon Father Matthew's death, tributes and stories came pouring in. Here are but a few honoring this special man whom many of us were blessed and privileged to know. May he rest in the peace of God.

—Editor

RON PIHOKKER, SFO

"He loved and dedicated much of his ministry to the SFO. Father Matt was a sought after speaker and retreat master, a gifted writer and was very passionate about his dedication to the SFO. In recent years, Father Matt suffered from Parkinson's Disease and resided at the Friars' Infirmary—St. Francis Friary in Ringwood, NJ. He was a very dear friend and brother—like a second father to me; his passing will leave a big hole in our hearts. I am very happy to say that my wife, Jody, and I along with Dick Morton, SFO, former National Minister, had visited with Father Matt the previous afternoon. It was a great privilege to have spent some time with him just before his death. We brought him a chocolate milkshake which he enjoyed with a flourish. We were with him until 5:30pm. He went to sleep at 8:00pm and when the nurses checked on him at 10:00pm he was gone. A peaceful death. Praise God for the gift of Fr. Matt!"

FR. BOB BRADY, OFM

"Fr. Matt was so dearly loved and thought of by Franciscans across our country. May this thought be of consolation to all the sisters and brothers who benefited from Fr. Matt's many gifts, most of all for his love and care, as well as his amazing place in the history of our National Fraternity, through his great gift of ministry to each one of us! We have much to be grateful to God for in this wonderful, loving and giving friar! May Christ welcome him into His loving arms!"

MARIE AMORE, SFO

"I remember Fr. Matt with such admiration and love. He was so dedicated to the SFO, and to all those who served it. He taught me many lessons. I thank God for Matt's life and spirit. May he pray for us as he spends his life after life with God."

KAY PELLETIER, SFO

"What a wonderful gift Fr. Matt was to the SFO, and to the Franciscan Family. It was a privilege to have known him and worked with him over the years. May he be resting in peace and rejoicing with Francis and Clare in the heavenly kingdom."

BILL WICKS, SFO

"We lost a good friend. He gave us much. His legacy will live on."



With great sorrow the Friars of the ABVM Province announced the death of their brother, the **MOST REV. BASIL SCHOTT, OFM**, Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. On June 10, 2010, Metropolitan Archbishop Basil fell asleep in the Lord following a seven-month battle with cancer.

Archbishop Basil was born on July 21, 1939, in Freeland, PA. He entered the Novitiate of the Byzantine Franciscans on August 3, 1958. He was ordained to the priesthood on August 29, 1965 by Bishop Stephen Kocisko. On July 11, 1996, he was ordained Bishop of Parma, Ohio, and on July 9, 2002, he was enthroned as the fourth chief shepherd of the Byzantine Catholic Church of Pittsburgh.



Bill Wicks, SFO, shared that many will remember Archbishop Schott when he presided at the celebration of the beautiful Byzantine Rite Mass at the 2007 Quinquennial Congress, and some will remember the time when as members of the NAFRA Council, they participated in Mass at his beautiful Church in Pittsburgh in 1998. "From my perspective, he was a gentle and welcoming Franciscan brother."

"By the grace of God, I am a Christian; by my actions a sinner; by my calling a pilgrim traveling from here to there. In my knapsack is the Bible and a few crumbs of bread. That is all."

From Archbishop Basil's homily at the Liturgy of his enthronement.

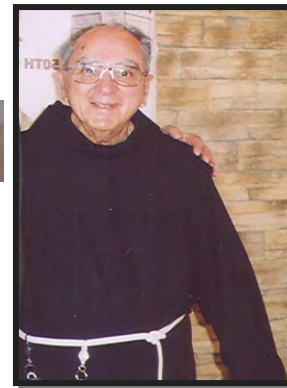


Beloved **MOTHER** of CIOFS Minister General, Encarnacion del Pozo, OFS,

died peacefully at 6:30 on August 13, 2010, surrounded by all her children. Encarnita shared how her mother had accepted her long time death with serenity and strength, and asked that we keep her mother and the entire family in our prayers.



FR. THOMAS M. NICASTRO, OFM (1916—2010)



Dearly loved former pastor at Saint Anthony of Padua Church in NYC, entered into eternal rest on July 13, 2010.

Fr. Tom arrived at Mt. Alvernia,

Wappingers Falls, NY, in 1967 where he served as Director of Retreats and Spiritual Assistant of the Secular Franciscan Order. It was in this ministry that Fr. Tom displayed the depth of his talents as a spiritual leader both to those who came to Mt. Alvernia as well as the people in the surrounding communities. To further strengthen his ministerial abilities, Fr. Tom took time out of his busy schedule and commuted to Iona College in New Rochelle, NY, for three years earning a Master of Science Degree in Counseling.

After 37 years of devoted and caring ministry at Mt. Alvernia, Fr. Tom retired at St. Anthony Friary, Catskill, NY, in September 2004 to continue to thank God for helping him "to fulfill successfully his ambition and dream of being a good and prayerful friar, and a good and caring priest for all peoples—no matter what ministry he was involved in".



TOM BELLO, SFO

"I remember him as a good, gentle and intelligent friar with a true love for us Seculars. I'm sorry for the loss we are feeling now, but later when we share the stories and remember the memories, Father Matt will live much longer than this current sadness. May the angels sing him to his rest, and may all the Franciscan saints welcome him home".

JAN PARKER, SFO

"I have very fond memories of Fr. Matt. When I was such a newbie as Director of Formation for my province (in 1990, before regionalization), I attended a Formation Workshop in Denver. This "eye-opening" workshop was conducted by Fr. Matt and Ron Pihokker — they "formed" me as a Formation Director. They were wonderful".

FR. RICHARD TREZZA, OFM

"Matt had a passion for the SFO and knew that it could be more than it was. For that reason, he rejoiced in the Rule of 1978 and, searching for a better way for it to be lived out, brought to maturity the idea of the Apostolic Commissions. He jumped enthusiastically into his ministry of making the SFO better known to the friars and encouraged me personally to get involved on the Regional and National levels. I was happy to follow him as SA to the Formation Commission and was able to assist in furthering his vision of Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel while serving as SA to the National Commission Chairs. It has been a pleasure to succeed him as Provincial SA for Holy Name Province.

As a group of brothers, we in Holy Name Province will miss him because among his other ministerial accomplishments, he was just a good friar who loved the fraternity, the Order and the Church. He always referred to himself as a "true son of the Council (Vatican II)" and as far as I am concerned, was always disposed to be of assistance to the Church and the Order. He will be missed. May he rest in the peace of Christ"!