

# ...A Book for St Francis

SUMMER 2015 UPDATE

*"We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way"*

- St Francis of Assisi



Thanks to your support and prayers the Franciscans of Halifax have been able to continue this year in our path of following the call of Christ to St. Francis, when he invited him to "Go and rebuild my Church." This is what we strive to do in all of our ministries, and through our continued education and formation.



Clockwise from left:  
Br. Pio's priestly ordination;  
Sr Angela's first vows;  
our active sisters; Brs. John and Augustine's first vows in Rome;  
St Catherine of Siena Parish

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Whenever we pray together as a community, in our convents, in the parish, or in any other gathering, one of our intentions is always for our friends and benefactors, those of you who are so generous to our Franciscan family. Your love, encouragement, and support are a source of joy for each of us, and it is impossible to overestimate how much of a difference this makes in the lives of the Franciscans of Halifax. As members of the Body of Christ, we are never in isolation, but all rejoice in the joy of one brother, and participate in the life of each sister.

What we have accomplished in this past year through the Providence of God would not be possible without you. You have helped us realize the significance of our vocation, our baptismal call to holiness in every celebration of vows, priestly ordination and our daily experiences as we serve the people of God in the Church of Halifax-Yarmouth.

Over past year we were blessed to celebrate the first vows of three of our members. Br John and Br Augustine made their first vows in Rome in the fall, and Sr Angela made her first profession in the spring here in Halifax. In May we joyfully celebrated the ordination of Fr Pio to the ministerial priesthood. This was an occasion of great joy for our community and the Church of Halifax-Yarmouth.

We are called to provide good things to those who seek spiritual nourishment along with us. To this end, we still have many brothers and sisters engaged in different studies, preparing to serve the Lord and the Church in whatever way he may make evident to us. Our contemplative sisters, Sr Patricia, Sr Therese and Sr Phyllis, along with Fr Joseph, their chaplain, continue to uplift us and sustain us as our spiritual battery to accomplish all that we are called to be.

This year Fr. Pio and Br. Paul completed their theological studies in Ottawa. Fr Pio is now in Rome to begin studies in *Patristics*, the study of what our fathers in faith have to teach us about God. Sr Edith Marie and Sr Teresa completed another year at the Dominican College, and are well into their theological studies. Brs Augustine and John are in Rome and have begun their philosophical studies, joining Br Peter who is studying theology there, and Fr Christopher who is engaged in Biblical studies. Fr Roberto continues his formation with the brothers in Rome on behalf of the Franciscans of Halifax. Sr Ilaria successfully finished her year at Dalhousie University in the Music department, and played in several recitals and concerts, a delightful gift to all the members of our community. This year Sr Miryam, Sr Catherine and Sr Gemma entered a new program at the Atlantic School of Theology called the Diploma in the New Evangelization, to better understand how we can bring the Gospel to the people in our Archdiocese.

Br Paul, upon the completion of his theological studies, has begun his pastoral year at Blessed Mother Teresa Parish in Halifax. Fr Francesco and Br Grant have completed their pastoral assignment in Truro after five years. Br Grant is continuing his diaconal ministry serving at the Daily Bread Outreach program at St Mary's Cathedral. The Franciscans of Halifax have entered a new relationship with Veritas Catholic Books and Gifts, and Br Grant (named the new President) and Srs Elizabeth, Edith Marie and Teresa are developing a sustainable vision for its future within the Church, and society. The parishioners of St Anthony's in Dartmouth continue to be blessed by the presence of Deacon Br Nathanael and his call to serve them at the table to the Word, the table of the Eucharist and the table of Charity. Fr James, along with Sr Rita, continue to build up the Body of Christ in St Theresa's and St Catherine's churches. Sr Bernadette and Sr Gemma continue in roles of service to the Archbishop and for the Pastoral Life and New Evangelization at the Catholic Pastoral Centre.

The sisters in May opened a new convent in Halifax providing a space for the sisters who are studying and room for those whom the Lord will send to us. The new convent is under the patronage of St. Agnes of Assisi, the sister of St. Clare.

The Franciscans of Halifax are in the process of entering an agreement with the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth and St Catherine of Siena Parish to serve over the next 25 years. This is a step which will assist the pastoral needs of the parish with stability, continuity and consistency, helping us to grow deeper in our relationships with one another.

Through your generous support may the Lord continue to inspire us to lead a life worthy of our vocation, our baptismal call to holiness, forming us as disciples of Christ in our faith community. Through the inspiration of St Francis: do what is necessary, then begin what is possible, and soon, you will be doing the impossible.