

Operations Report – April 2020 Board Meeting:

Strategic Planning Initiatives – with the Coronavirus, we were unable to meet our objective of meeting with two viable consultants to help guide us through the process. However, we have been having some lively discussions about the future of the Mountain.

We've put a great deal of effort at a grassroots level, inviting others to join us, as part of mountain companion ministry, and reaching out to individual friars to consider life with us. However, our discussions recently have focused more on opportunities to work more deeply with leadership of the Global OFM community as a way to vision our future.

You may recall Dan and Kevin were supposed to be going to La Verna, Italy as part of a vital conference around the contemplative perspective of the Franciscan Life and its importance in the future. This initiative could lead to partnership with Rome and friar communities around the world to show a unique way of living as a Franciscan.

In a similar way the Provincial director of the Southwest Province has become interested in our way of life as well, and has asked us to put a proposal together as to how could best service the United States community as we move toward a national province very shortly.

Within our own Holy Name Province, we have begun discussions with Father Kevin Mullen about the importance of the Mountain as part of the current ministries, and how we might be reclassified before moving into a merged, national province. Part of our conversation with Kevin will include the interest that is bubbling up from these other important pockets of the Franciscan world.

We will continue to work to find other friends to join us, whether it's reaching out to friars on a personal level, as well as interest in the mountain companion ministry. Of course, our primary ministry will continue to be co-missioned with Saint Bonaventure University in helping provide a transformation experience to its student body and community. However, these initiatives allow us to think in a larger way about our life and how it might impact the world, and how we might assure its growth and vitality for generations to come.

Connected to this, a number of friars in formation that will be joining us this summer. Initially going to Assisi for pilgrimage over the summer, we offered to have join us at the mountain for a month's time as part of their formation. This could be a time of learning for us about how we welcome others to experience the Mountain life, becoming a "fully formed friar" then going back out to a ministry they are called to (or perhaps joining us?). This could be a model of how we could serve the larger Franciscan community.

Other Projects:

Reaching out to our friends: We have a few initiatives that have us reaching out to friends, we want to connect with once more, each with its own objectives:

Living Stones –we have written a letter to our 100 or so living stones, those who we recognized last year for the significant contributors they have been to the life of the mountain. The letter will share an update about life at the mountain right now, as well as our plans to work on a strategic plan. It seeks their input and to be engaged in some way, perhaps helping to invest in our future. It also notes that we plan to have another living stones event sometime in 2021

Senior council (working name) – We have many friends who are significant board members and other ways of contributing in the past. Some we have struggled to keep engaged in the life of the mountain. This idea would allow us to draw them back in, perhaps quarterly, to share the important work of the Mountain. The objective would be to engage them, and perhaps seek their help in whatever way we need to for our future.

Younger alumni initiative – This has us looking to connect with alumni from the past 20 years who we were strongly connected, but we have lost touch with. This would first have us reconnect with, ask how the Mountain may serve them as part of their life today, and eventually ask them to become more involved in the mountain. We already connected with some young some friends who are interested I helping guide this initiative.

Partnership with SBU to inviting others into this life – We have collaborated with Saint Bonaventure to create a new academic/service learning experience as part of SBU 104. This would allow students to the Life and Ministry of the mountain, while receiving room and board and academic credit.