Update from Fr. Michael



"Friary Renovations"

Many of you have probably heard through the grapevine that there will be some changes in the complexion of our friary community.

First, I want to express my gratitude to **Fr. Mark Curesky**, a familiar face here at St. Paul, who was Pastor after Fr. Herman and before Fr. Robert. After many years of full-time ministry, Fr. Mark has retired from active ministry.

Fr. Martin Kobos, another familiar face to our parish family, will also be concluding his service as a full-time Parochial Vicar.

Both Fr. Mark and Fr. Martin will continue to live here in the friary along with Fr. Raymond. While they will no longer carry the responsibilities of full-time ministry, they will continue to be an important part of our friary and parish community, sharing their wisdom, experience, stories, friendship, and support with us in many ways. I am deeply grateful for all they have given—and continue to give—to St. Paul Parish.

Taking over as our full-time Parochial Vicar will be **Fr. Theodore Neculaes**, who will arrive on September 8th. I am confident that you will welcome him with the same warmth, kindness, and open arms that you have shown to the friars of our community for more than 40 years.

On this page you will find a brife message from Fr. Theodore. I look forward to welcoming him with you and beginning this new chapter in the life of our parish family.

One final note: I am also grateful to our Franciscan Province of Our Lady of the Angels, which will provide for the room and board of Fr. Raymond, Fr. Mark, and Fr. Martin while they reside here at the St. Paul Friary. This arrangement allows these friars, who have given so much to the Church and to our parish, to remain part of our Parish community and to continue to share their friendship, wisdom, and support with us.

Please join me in welcoming Fr. Theodore to St. Paul Parish!



A Message from Fr. Theodore Neculaes

I will be 47 years old on September 9, 2026. I am from Luncași, a small village in Romania, where my parents live a peaceful life. I have one sister, who works as a caregiver. Since I began serving in other countries, I have returned to Romania every summer to spend a month with my family.



If you would like to know a little about my journey as a Franciscan friar, I felt called to the Franciscan life when I was 14 years old.

I began my formation at our seminary in Romania in 1994. After my ordination to the priest-hood on June 29, 2009, I served in Romania for four years.

I then spent seven years serving in Italy, where I lived and ministered in three beautiful cities: Rovereto, Padua, and Venice. It was a wonderful experience that allowed me to learn a new language, meet many people, and grow both personally and pastorally.

After returning to Romania for one year, I prepared the necessary documents to obtain a visa for the United States. In 2021, I came to the U.S. to study English in Northampton, MA. During those ten months, I lived in Holyoke, MA.

In 2022, I received an assignment to Shamokin, PA. I served as Parochial Vicar at Mother Cabrini Parish in Shamokin, Our Lady of Hope Parish in Coal Township, and St. Patrick Parish in Trevorton. I ministered in the Coal Region for a year and a half, actively participating in many aspects of parish life.

In 2024, I received a new assignment to St. Peter's Friary and Parish in Point Pleasant Beach, NJ. There I served as Parochial Vicar and was actively involved in a wide variety of pastoral ministries.

In 2026, I received a new assignment to St. Paul's in Berlin.

I have had wonderful experiences in every community where I have lived. I have been blessed to meet many Franciscan brothers and countless wonderful people. Every new assignment has been a gift from God. I am excited about this new assignment, especially because CT is known for its beautiful natural scenery and many places where I can enjoy hiking. Hiking is one of my favorite hobbies.

Since English is not my native language, I speak with a European accent. I hope you will find it easy—and perhaps even pleasant—to understand. I am happy to be here and look forward to meeting everyone.

May God be with us and give us the strength to do His will in all things.