

Dear Brothers & Sisters



February 2015

Newsletter of the

Northwest Franciscan Community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Palatine, Illinois

Secular Franciscan Order

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Submission deadline is the **last Tuesday** of each month.

For privacy, all personal addresses, phone numbers, email, prayer intentions, and (for non-council members) last names are removed from this web version.

From the Minister

■ **Passing of Father Kieran.** On January 12, our former Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Kieran, passed away at age 87. Not only was Fr. Kieran our spiritual assistant for 14 years, he also served the St. Clare Fraternity (Oak Brook) as their spiritual assistant for 22 years.

The Board of Directors and administration of Mayslake Village in Oak Brook held a special Memorial Mass for Father Kieran in late January to which they graciously invited us and St. Clare Fraternity. About 10 of our members were able to attend, and while there, we were especially delighted to visit with a former fraternity member, Sister Paula.

■ **Passing of Jean.** We were saddened to learn that a former member of our fraternity, Jean, passed away on January 23.

■ **Open House Notices.** April is our annual Open House, and we have included with this newsletter a notice for you to give to your parishes. Please be sure to deliver this information as soon as possible so it can be included in bulletins several weeks before our gathering in April. Also, personal invitations are the ideal way to let others know about our Order, so if you can, please try to personally invite at least one person to our Open House.

■ **Fair Share is Due.** The \$35 Fair Share (formerly called *Per Capita*) is due next month. The Fair Share is a yearly obligation for all *Professed* Secular Franciscans, which includes our shut-in and temporarily excused members, and supports our Regional and National fraternities. It is separate from our Common Fund donations, which benefit our fraternity.

Please give our Treasurer, Brother Tom, your Fair Share at this month's gathering, or you can mail it to him. If possible, please make out a separate check for the Fair Share. If \$35 is a financial burden for you at this time, contact Brother Tom. ☒

At This Month's Gathering ...

■ **Ongoing Formation.** Professed brothers and sisters, please read **Reflections 46-48** in *To Live As Francis Lived*. Jot down your answers for all "Questions for Reflection" and "Application to Daily Life", and be sure to read the recommended scripture passages and Franciscan writings.

Please be aware that **all Professed** are to attend ongoing formation and our monthly gatherings. If, for whatever reason, you're unable to attend, you *must* call our Minister, Lisa.

■ **Vespers & Social Time.** Everyone, please join us at 7:30 p.m. for Vespers, followed by a brief business meeting and social time (remember to bring your breviaries and your own mugs). ☒

Common Fund Report

■ **November** beginning balance: \$1,635.60, deposits: \$395, expenses: \$50, ending balance: \$1,980.60.

■ **December** beginning balance: \$1,980.60, deposits: \$270, expenses: \$781, ending balance: \$1,469.60. ☒

Next Monthly Gathering:

Monday, February 09, 2015

St. Joseph's Home
80 W. Northwest Hwy., Palatine

6:30 p.m.: Professed brothers and sisters, please arrive at this time for Ongoing Formation. Candidates are encouraged to observe.

7:30 p.m.: Start of our Gathering with Vespers, followed by a business meeting and social time. All welcome!

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You must call Lisa if you cannot attend.

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Our gatherings are at 7:30 p.m. on the **second Monday** of each month.

Our Apostolates

■ **Bingo.** Meets one night per month at 6:30 p.m. in St. Joseph's activity room. Everyone, please see the 2015 sign-up sheet at our gathering and pick one month for which to volunteer. For more information, call Sisters Kay or Mary Kay.

■ **Franciscan Outreach.** We collect items for delivery to the guests at Franciscan Outreach's Marquard Center. Call Sister Stephanie for more information.

■ **Prayer & Praise Ministry.** For our brothers and sisters unable to attend our gatherings due to poor health or transportation issues. For more information, or if you're ill or know of someone who's ill, please call our Infirmarian, Sister Jackie.

■ **Prayer Shawl Ministry.** We interweave prayers along with God's love, care, and warmth into the stitches as we knit or crochet shawls for others. For more information, contact Sisters Sue or Cyndy.

■ **Support (Money, Materials).** Quarterly donations from our Common Fund of any excess funds available *after* fraternity costs go to the following: Franciscan Missionary Union, Franciscan Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL), Amazon Relief.

■ **Youth Prayer Partners.** Coordinated by Brother Tom, this apostolate matches up fraternity members with children preparing for First Communion or Confirmation. We last prayed for Confirmands at St. Thomas of Villanova (Palatine), and will pray again for a new group of students when we have more details. For more information, call Brother Tom. ☒

Excerpt from *Evangelii Gaudium*

by Pope Francis (#112-113)

The salvation which God offers us is the work of his mercy. No human efforts, however good they may be, can enable us to merit so great a gift. God, by his sheer grace, draws us to himself and makes us one with him. He sends his Spirit into our hearts to make us his children, transforming us and enabling us to respond to his love by our lives. The Church is sent by Jesus Christ as the sacrament of the salvation offered by God. Through her evangelizing activity, she cooperates as an instrument of that divine grace which works unceasingly and inscrutably. Benedict XVI put it nicely at the beginning of the Synod's reflections: "It is important always to know that the first word, the true initiative, the true activity comes from God and only by inserting ourselves into the divine initiative, only begging for this divine initiative, shall we too be able to become — with him and in him — evangelizers". This principle of the primacy of grace must be a beacon which constantly illuminates our reflections on evangelization.

The salvation which God has wrought, and the Church joyfully proclaims, is for everyone. God has found a way to unite himself to every human being in every age. He has chosen to call them together as a people and not as isolated individuals. No one is saved by himself or herself, individually, or by his or her own efforts. God attracts us by taking into account the complex interweaving of personal relationships entailed in the life of a human community. This people which God has chosen and called is the Church. Jesus did not tell the apostles to form an exclusive and elite group. He said: "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19). Saint Paul tells us in the people of God, in the Church, "there is neither Jew or Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). ☒

Anniversaries This Month

09: **Mary Joan**, Professed in 2003; **Mimi**, Professed in 2009.

God's blessings for your years of Franciscan living!

Calendar

February

09: Monthly Gathering

09: Council Meeting (abbreviated), during social time of monthly gathering

March

09: Monthly Gathering

23: Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Arlington Heights Memorial Library

Remember in Your Daily Prayers

- All infirm, shut-in, and deceased fraternity members.
- All Candidates and Inquirers, and their formation instructors.
- Our entire Franciscan Family, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd (Secular & Regular) Orders: For strength in commitments, increase in vocations, and the work we do, especially for Franciscan Outreach, Franciscan Missionary Union, the Poor Clares in Palos Park, and Amazon Relief.
- The guests of Franciscan Outreach's shelter and soup kitchen: That they know God's loving care and overcome the difficulties that keep them homeless.
- Little Sisters of the Poor and the residents of St. Joseph's Home.
- Our families and loved ones.

Please pray that our fraternity and all Franciscans:

- Live the Holy Rule we've professed,
- Bring the Gospel to Life, and Life to the Gospel in the spirit of Francis,
- Live simply so that others may simply live, and
- Are active and participate in the Franciscan apostolates.