



Dear Brothers & Sisters

Secular Franciscan Fraternity

We gather at **7:30 p.m** on the **second Monday** of each month at:

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

Council Members

Minister

Stephanie Heavey, OFS
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Vice-Minister

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Spiritual Assistant

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Councilor-at-Large

Kay Crnich, OFS

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

Franciscan joy and laughter filled the minister's home on Sunday, November 18th, as fraternity members came in laden with boxes and bags of daily necessities for the homeless and appetizing dishes for potluck. All gathered in prayerful silence as Fr. Johnpaul presided at Mass and spoke to us from his heart. After our souls were nourished with the Holy Eucharist, our bodies were satisfied with the delicious entrées, salads and desserts of the potluck.

The highlight of the afternoon was packing the 120 Gift Bags for the homeless. Fifteen people gathered, in factory assembly line style, around the table laden with all the items to be packed into each bag: socks, toothpaste and brush, floss sticks, cotton balls, Q-tips, bandages, handiwipes, paper and pen, comb, facial tissues, handwarmers, candy. Many hands always make light work. So does congenial chatter.

Two days later, five heavy boxes of gift bags were safely and gratefully in the hands of the staff at the Marquard Center in Chicago. ☒

Our Monthly Gathering...

Our next fraternity gathering is on Monday, December 10, 2018. All professed will gather at 6:30 p.m. in the library for formation. Our next formation book, *Waiting for Love*, will be available for those who did not receive it in November. All the *Guides for the Franciscan Liturgy of the Hours* will be available for those professed who requested one.

Everyone has had time to review the list of possible Non-Council roles that will help strengthen the fraternity and to discern the ways in which he or she can be of service to the fraternity. We will focus on those roles and other ways in which you feel that the fraternity can be served and grow.

At 7:30 p.m. all members of the fraternity will meet in the chapel for a Communion Service followed by a brief business meeting. Afterward, we will gather in the ice cream parlor for Christmas socialization. ☒

Anniversaries

There are no specific anniversaries of profession in the month of December. So let us celebrate the great gift of vocation that was given to all of the professed.

God's blessings on our years of Franciscan living!

Common Fund – Nov. 2018

Beginning balance	\$2320.86
Deposits	927.00
Expenses	1187.42
Balance	\$2060.44

Deposits include Common Fund as well as the donations for the secular Franciscans who lost everything in the fires in Paradise, California.

Expenses include the fraternity's donation to the fire victims, as well as the expenses of renewing our website leases.

Please be generous in your donations to the Common Fund as there are also some expenses which will occur in December. We need to keep a minimum of \$1,500 in our bank account to avoid bank charges.

Thank You. ☒

Calendar for 2019

The new calendar for 2019 is on page 3 of this newsletter. Be sure to add the dates for our monthly gatherings to your calendar, whether it hangs on your wall, sits on the desk, or resides on your phone. ☒

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, who mourns in lowly exile here.

And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER

In the Service of the Transmission of Faith

That people who are involved in the service and transmission of faith, may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present.

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

That we may be counted with Mary among the brothers and sisters of the Lord, who hear His word and act upon it, we pray to the Lord,

For all the intentions confided to our prayers, that the Lord may have pity on His servants, filling us at daybreak with His kindness and giving us joy and gladness again, we pray to the Lord,

That we may not be among those who shut our ears to the cry of the poor, the sick, the helpless unborn, but champion their cause, we pray to the Lord,

For all our loved ones who life breath has returned to the God who gave it, that they may be with Him in His kingdom of light and love, we pray to the Lord,

WE PRAY FOR THOSE NEAR AND DEAR

[PRIVATE]

For all of our **shut-in sisters**, that the health issues that keep them separated from us will be attended to with compassion and love, we pray to the Lord,

For all the **residents of St. Joseph's Home** and for the **Little Sisters of the Poor**, who lovingly welcome us into their home each month, we pray to the Lord,

For our **homeless brothers and sisters** who are served by Franciscan Outreach, we pray to the Lord,

For our **aspirants** who are entering into Inquiry that they embrace the promptings of the Holy Spirit as they continue to discern their Franciscan vocation, we pray to the Lord,

Our Apostolates

Bringing the Gospel to Life, and Life to the Gospel in the spirit of St. Francis

BINGO. Meets one night per month at 6:30 pm in St. Joseph's activity room. Please pick one month in which to volunteer. Contact Sisters Kay or Mary Kay to sign up.

FRANCISCAN OUTREACH. This is a year round project. With the closing of the Marquard Center in Chicago, the fraternity will work with Our Lady of the Angels Mission, a Franciscan mission on Chicago's near west side. Sister Geri will coordinate this ministry and determine the ways in which we can be of service. Contact Sister Geri.

PRAYER & PRAISE MINISTRY. For our brothers and sisters unable to participate in our monthly gatherings due to poor health or transportation issues. For more information, or if you are ill or know of a member who is 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 are taken from any excess funds that are available in our Common Fund *after* all the fraternity obligations are met. The donations are given to: Franciscan Missionary Union, Franciscan Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL).

YOUTH PRAYER PARTNERS. Coordinated by Brother Tom, this apostolate matches up fraternity members with young people who are preparing for First Communion or Confirmation. For more information, please call Brother Tom.

2019 Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, all events are at St. Joseph's Home.

January

14: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

February

11: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

25: Council meeting, Sue's home

March

11: Monthly Gathering (Stations of the Cross)

April

08: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

22: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

May

13: Monthly Gathering (Crown Rosary)

June

10: Monthly Gathering (Anniversary Mass)

24: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

July

08: Fraternity Day of Recollection
(Holy Family)

August

12: Profession Mass

26: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

September

09: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

October

03: Transitus of our Holy Father Francis

14: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

28: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

November

11: Monthly Gathering (Mass – with Rite of Remembrance)

December

10: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

TBD: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

The newsletter was ready to go, until receiving this morning's meditation from Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM. In a few weeks we will be singing 'Joy to the World' at the top of our lungs (some of us anyways). What are we truly wishing 'to the world'? What IS Joy?

Joy and Hope

Generosity of Spirit

Thursday, November 29, 2018

For a week in April 2015, Archbishop Desmond Tutu visited His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his residence in exile in India. Their dialogue and interactions, facilitated by Douglas Abrams, became The Book of Joy. I'd like to share some of their hard-won wisdom with you today.

Suffering is inevitable, they said, but how we respond to that suffering is our choice. Not even oppression or occupation can take away this freedom to choose our response.

As our dialogue progressed, we converged on eight pillars of joy. Four were qualities of the mind: *perspective, humility, humor, and acceptance*. Four were qualities of the heart: *forgiveness, gratitude, compassion, and generosity*.

[Archbishop Tutu said:] "Our human nature has been distorted, . . . I mean, we are actually quite remarkable creatures. In our religions I am created in the image of God. I am a God carrier. It's fantastic. I have to be growing in godlikeness, in caring for the other. I know that each time I have acted compassionately, I have experienced a joy in me that I find in nothing else."

When we practice a generosity of spirit, we are

in many ways practicing all the other pillars of joy. In generosity, there is a wider *perspective* [*italics mine*], in which we see our connection to all others. There is a *humility* that recognizes our place in the world and acknowledges that at another time we could be the one in need, whether that need is material, emotional, or spiritual. There is a *sense of humor* and an ability to laugh at ourselves so that we do not take ourselves too seriously. There is an *acceptance* of life, in which we do not force life to be other than what it is. There is a *forgiveness* of others and a release of what otherwise might have been. There is a *gratitude* for all that we have been given. Finally, we see others with a deep *compassion* and a desire to help those who are in need. And from this comes a *generosity* that is "wise selfish," a generosity that recognizes helping others as helping ourselves. As the Dalai Lama put it, "In fact, taking care of others, helping others, ultimately is the way to discover your own joy and to have a happy life."

[*Near the end of their time together, Archbishop Tutu offered this blessing:*]

"Dear Child of God, you are loved with a love that nothing can shake, a love that loved you long before you were created, a love that will be there long after everything has disappeared. You are precious, with a preciousness that is totally quite immeasurable. And God wants you to be like God. Filled with life and goodness and laughter—and joy.

"God, who is forever pouring out God's whole being from all eternity, wants you to flourish.

God wants you to be filled with joy and excitement and ever longing to be able to find what is so beautiful in God's creation: the compassion of so many, the caring, the sharing. And God says, Please, my child, help me. Help me to spread love and laughter and joy and compassion. And you know what, my child? As you do this—hey, presto—you discover joy. Joy, which you had not sought, comes as the gift, as almost the reward for this non-self-regarding caring for others.”

Gateway to Presence:

If you want to go deeper with today's meditation, take note of what word or phrase stands out to you. Come back to that word or phrase throughout the day, being present to its impact and invitation.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu with Douglas Abrams, *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World* (Avery: 2016), 7, 193, 257, 275, 298.

Love One Another

... *The command I give you is this, love one another...* If we do this faithfully and zealously, we will experience the truth of the words of our Father Saint Francis, who says that love lightens all difficulties and sweetens all bitter-ness. We will likewise partake of the blessing which St. Francis promised to all his children, both present and future, after having admonished them to love one another even as he had loved them and continues to love them.

*Blessed Mary Frances Schervier
Foundress of the Congregation of the
Franciscan Sisters of the Poor
Feast Day, December 15th*

Dear Brothers & Sisters www.nwfranciscans.or

YOUR GIFT

Perhaps as a child, each Advent began with making a manger out of popsicle sticks or construction paper. Then every time you did something “good” or made a sacrifice or said a prayer, you put a tiny piece of straw into the manger. The more pieces the better, so that by Christmas Day there would be a soft bed for the Baby Jesus and you were so happy.

Then you grew up and years sped by filled with careers, marriages, children to nurture, aging parents to look after, illness, loss, grandchildren to love and do for. As each Advent has approached, the thought of that manger filled with soft straw for a Babe has surfaced. But the days of Advent fly by each year filled with all the preparation and decoration and all too soon you are kneeling at Christmas Mass and wondering what you truly did to prepare for the coming of our Savior.

In the rush of busy days and the slowing of memory, you may forget the many things you do so naturally, the quick prayers for someone, the smiles, the kind words, the many little deeds you do that are soon forgotten. You may forget – but He never does.

This Christmas morn, be assured that He sees a “manger” that is full and soft, filled to overflowing with your love for Him, expressed throughout this past year in all you did knowingly and unknowingly for others.

Merry Christmas!