



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
minister@nwfranciscans.org

Vice-Minister

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Formation Director

Jackie Leo, OFS
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Secretary

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Spiritual Assistant

Jerry Stecker, OFS
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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.

Our Monthly Gathering...

Our next fraternity gathering is on Monday, March 11, 2019. All professed will gather at 6:30 p.m. in the library for formation. Read Chapters 2 and 3 in *Waiting for Love* and reflect on the questions for discussion at the gathering.

At 7:30 p.m. all members of the fraternity will meet in the chapel to pray the Stations of the Cross. We will welcome into Candidacy our Aspirants, Jillian, Anthony and Marion. There will be a brief business meeting. Afterward, we will gather in the ice cream parlor for social time. ☒

Address to Secular Franciscan Order by Pope Saint John Paul II

Perhaps, you will not be required to pour out your blood as a martyr, but you will certainly be asked to give a coherent and steadfast witness in fulfilling the promises made at your Baptism and Confirmation, which you renewed and confirmed with your profession in the Franciscan Secular Order. By virtue of this profession, the Rule and the General Constitutions must represent for each of you the point of reference for daily living, based on your explicit vocation and special identity (cf. Promulgation of the General Constitutions of the SFO). If you are truly driven by the Spirit to reach the perfection of charity in your secular state, "it would be a contradiction to settle for a life of mediocrity, marked by a minimalist ethic and a shallow religiosity" (Novo Millennio ineunte, n. 31). You must be sincerely dedicated to that "high standard of ordinary Christian living" (ibid.), to which I invited all the faithful at the end of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

~ John Paul II, Address to the Secular Franciscan Order,
Friday, 22 November 2002

Anniversaries

Our dear **Sister** Dorothy will be celebrating her **45th Anniversary** of profession on March 30th. Congratulations to you, Dorothy, on your many years of faithfulness to the Franciscan charism.

Fair Share is Due

The **\$35** Fair Share is now due. It is a yearly obligation for the **Professed** including our shut-in and inactive members. The Fair Share supports our Regional and National fraternities. It is a **separate donation** from our monthly Common Fund donations which support our fraternity. Please write a separate check for Fair Share.

If you did not pay your fair share in January or February, please send your check for \$35.00 immediately to our Treasurer Sister Kathy. If \$35 is a financial burden for you at this time, please contact Sister Kathy. ☒

Common Fund – 2019

Detailed figures for the Common Fund will be given in the April newsletter. Please be generous in your contributions in March since the Fair Share had to be paid and there was no meeting in February. Thank You.

Annual Open House

April 8th is the date of our annual Open House. Invite friends, church members who have a Franciscan spirit to *Come and See*.

The word has gone out through the parish bulletins. However, word of mouth and of encouragement is always best. ☒

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And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR MARCH

Evangelization: That Christian communities, especially those who are persecuted, feel that they are close to Christ and have their rights respected.

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all Seculars called to follow Jesus and the gospel, may they follow Him in poverty and live simply for His sake,

For all who have asked our prayers in a time of illness or distress, that we may set our hopes completely on the grace of Jesus Christ, obtaining for them healing and relief,

For our beloved dead, that they may inherit the promise of eternal life, by Jesus to all His faithful,

WE PRAY FOR THOSE NEAR AND DEAR

[PRIVATE]

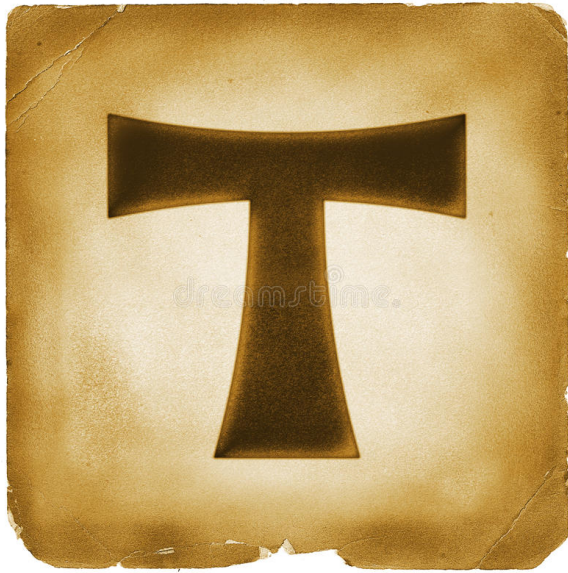
For all of our **shut-in sisters**, that the health issues that keep them separated from us will be attended to with compassion and love, we pray to the Lord,

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 all those who are served by **Our Lady of the Angels Mission** and for all those who serve at the mission, we pray to the Lord,

For our **brothers and sisters** in the first and second orders of the Franciscan family, we pray to the Lord,



Our Call to be a Secular Franciscan

This month we continue our stories of the path that led us to recognizing our call to become secular Franciscans. This is the story of Jackie who will celebrate the 20th Anniversary of her profession in July.

My Vocation Story or How Saint Anthony Helped Me Find the OFS by Jackie

A long time ago, when I was in college, I heard about “third orders.” It seemed wonderful that a person could be in a religious order and still be in the world. I knew that I wanted to be married and have children but I also was interested in my Catholic religion, living it and learning more about it.

Unfortunately, I had no information about where, when, or how these orders met. Life went on until I graduated from college, married and had children. Now, here is where my devotion to Saint Anthony helped me find this fraternity.

My mother introduced me to Saint Anthony when I was a youngster because I was always misplacing (losing) things. This upset both

Mom and I. She always said, “Say a prayer to Saint Anthony. He’s the saint that helps us find lost items. BUT, don’t forget to say a prayer of thank you when you find it!”

So, our dear Saint Anthony has kindly helped me find many things throughout my life. One day I lost a gold earring from a pair that my Godmother gave me for my 50th birthday. I said my prayer while I searched everywhere for that earring. I promised Saint Anthony, “This time, to thank you for interceding for me, I am going to say a thank you prayer AND learn more about your life.”

I found the earring tucked out of sight between the driver’s seat and the passenger’s seat in my car. That saved me a lifetime of explaining and apologizing to my Godmother. I kept my promise and read a biography of Saint Anthony. He was so much more than just a thing finder! He was a bible scholar, a great preacher, a miracle-worker even during his lifetime, AND a Franciscan. Now if you were taught by Franciscan Sisters and Friars you are probably laughing that I didn’t know these things, but my dear Irish sisters (BVM and Sisters of Mercy) taught us more about our Heavenly Father, our Blessed Mother Mary, and then the saints in general (especially Saint Patrick).

Shortly later, in April of 1997, I saw an invitation to come to an Information Night about the Secular Franciscans in St. Theresa’s bulletin. What caught my eye was the phrase, “Formerly known as the Third Order.” The invitation mentioned that there would be a Mass and refreshments.

I went and immediately felt right at home. I met Father Kieran, OFM. I was impressed with the way he celebrated Mass. I loved his dialogue homily because we all took part in it. I met Patrick. He was so gracious and put us at ease. What was wonderful was that I felt no pressure to sign up, commit immediately, or to make a contribution. I was happy to see both men and women there. The Minister, Marilyn, impressed me with her leadership skills.

I gave them my name, address, and e-mail. In a few weeks, I received the Fraternity Newsletter and was pleasantly surprised to see my name along with the other guests. Never underestimate the power of seeing one's name in print! It said to me, "The Franciscans knew you were there. They are happy you were there. It seems they want you to be one of them."

During the summer of 1997, the other guests and I attended Fraternity Gatherings and got to know the brothers and sisters of the NW Franciscan Community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In particular, Patrick and Tom answered our questions and provided reading materials about Saint Francis and Saint Clare.

In the fall of 1997, Delphine, Wanda, Paula, her husband Dick, and I started formation. We were all professed July 11, 1999. I was so proud that my husband, son, (our daughter was in Virginia), parents, Godmother, and our dear family friend, Father Welsh, attended my profession Mass.

Let me just say, in conclusion, that everything about Franciscan spirituality: love of the Gospel, respect for all creation, love of the poor, humility, joy, and love for our brothers and sisters in Fraternity appealed to me. I still find living the Holy Rule a challenge. But with the help of our Lord Jesus, his holy mother, St. Francis, St. Clare, and ST. ANTHONY I will "find" a way to live my Franciscan vocation until I meet with all the saints and my deceased family and friends in heaven. ☒

Sister Jackie

Seeing God in Creation

God brought things into being in order that God's goodness might be communicated to creatures, and be represented by them; and because that goodness could not be adequately represented by one creature alone, God produced many and diverse creatures, that what

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was wanting to one in the representation of the divine goodness might be supplied by another. For goodness, which in God is simple and uniform, in creatures is manifold and divided. —Thomas Aquinas [1]

Without a sense of the inherent sacredness of the world—of every tiny bit of life and death—we struggle to see God in our own reality, let alone to respect reality, protect it, or love it. The consequences of this ignorance are all around us, seen in the way we have exploited and damaged our fellow human beings, animals, the web of growing things, land, water, and even air.

If Christianity would have paid attention to the teachings and example of Jesus and Francis of Assisi, our planet—"Mother Sister Earth," as Francis called her—would perhaps be much healthier today. We have not honored God's Presence as the Christ in the elemental, physical world. We made God as small as our own constricted hearts. We picked and chose, saying, "Oh, God is really only in my group, in baptized people, in moral people, etc." Is there that little of an Infinite God to go around? Do we have to be stingy with God? As Isaiah put it "the arm of God is not too short to save!" (59:1). Why pretend only *we* deserve God, and that God is not for other groups, religions, animals, plants, the elements, Brother Sun, and Sister Moon?

God is saving creation and bringing all creatures back where they began—into union with their Creator. God loves everything that God has made! All created things God proclaimed "good" (see Genesis 1:9–31 and Wisdom 11:24–12:1). But we, with our small minds, can't deal with that. We have to whittle God and love into small parts that our minds can handle and portion out. Humans can't conceptualize or even *think* infinite or eternal concepts. We cannot imagine Infinite Love, Infinite Goodness, or Infinite Mercy.

We don't come to the Christ Mystery through concepts or theories but by connecting with *what is*—with Christ's immediate, embodied presence which is all around us. Notice that almost all of Jesus' stories and examples are nature- and relationship-based—never once academic theory.

We have not recognized the one Body of Christ in creation. Perhaps we just didn't have the readiness or training. There is first of all the seeing, and then there is the recognizing; the second stage is called contemplation. We cannot afford to be blind any longer. We must learn to see and recognize how broad and deep the Presence is if we are to truly care for our common home. *Richard Rohr, OFM*

Meditations@cac.org - February 22, 2019

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: Monthly Gathering (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

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 Kay.

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.