



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

Sue Gribbon, OFS
viceminister@nwfranciscans.org

Formation Director

Jackie Leo, OFS
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Secretary

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Treasurer

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Spiritual Assistant

Jerry Stecker, OFS
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Councilor-at-Large

Kay Crnich, OFS

Our gathering on Monday, September 9th was warm and spirited, full of fraternity fun and humor. Everyone joined in a lively discussion of the latest chapter read in *Waiting for Love*. Within that circle of fraternal warmth and love, we prayed the Liturgy of the Hours. One could feel the arms of God holding all of us in a huge embrace. Fraternity at its best. ☒

Our Monthly Gathering...

Our first fraternity gathering is on **Thursday, October 3, 2019**, to honor the Transitus of our Holy Father St. Francis from earthly life to eternal life. All secular Franciscans are expected to attend this service. It should take precedence over any activities that one might normally attend on Thursday evening.

Please gather in the chapel at 6:30 p.m. for this remembrance of the last minutes of our Holy Father's life on earth. Afterward, we will gather in the ice cream parlor to celebrate the gift of vocation that God has given us. Please bring a treat to share with your brothers and sisters in fraternity.

On **Monday, October 14, 2019**, we will assemble in the library at 6:30 p.m. for our monthly gathering. **All items for the Welcome Kit should be brought to this meeting.** We will pack the bins before formation begins.

Please read Chapter 8 in *Waiting for Love* and be prepared to discuss the chapter and questions. Our formation will be followed by a Communion Service in the chapel, a short business meeting and hospitality in the ice cream parlor. ☒

I have done what is mine to do; may the Lord now teach you what you are to do.

St. Francis of Assisi, as he lay dying

Anniversaries

God's Abundant Blessings on our sisters as they celebrate their special day. Sister Cyndy's vocation story is on page 3.

October 11, 2010 **Sue B.**
 Cyndy

Member Directory – Corrections

Correct email address for **Suzanne** is:
[private]
The “j” is missing in the directory.
Her birthday is March 9.

Correct phone number for **Marion** is:
[private]

When I entered **Anthony** information, I inadvertently elevated him to a position with the Vatican. [private].

Please make these changes to the directory which was sent to you with the September newsletter. Thank You. ☒

Mother Cabrini Celebration

There will be a sign-up sheet at Transitus on October 3rd, and at our gathering on Monday, October 14th for the Mother Cabrini celebration which will take place on Saturday, November 9th at the Franciscan Sisters convent in Frankfort, IL. It is a beautiful venue. Not to be missed. Perhaps members can carpool. Since lunch at the celebration is a potluck, each fraternity is asked to bring a dish – one dish per fraternity. We will address that at the October 14th gathering. The sponsoring fraternities will provide the remainder of the luncheon. ☒

And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR OCTOBER

Evangelization: A Missionary “Spring” in the Church

That the breath of the Holy Spirit engender a new missionary “spring” in the church.

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all members of the Franciscan order, that we follow Pope Francis’ intentions for October, not only by praying for a breath of spring, but also by being a breath of spring by our actions,
For all those who hold positions of power in governments throughout the world that they remember the successful nonviolence of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela on October 2nd, The International Day of Non-Violence,

WE PRAY FOR THOSE NEAR AND DEAR

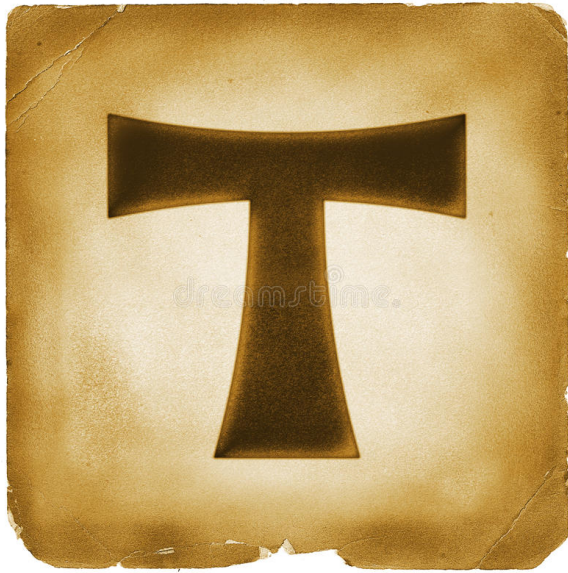
[private]

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 **the members of our fraternity** in the many capacities in which we participate, 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 our Sister Cyndy .

My good friend Sue and I met in 2003 as we entered the Called & Gifted Lay Ministry Program through the Archdiocese of Chicago. We graduated in 2005 and decided that as a graduation gift to ourselves we would take a trip! Rome was the obvious place, the heart and head of our religion. Sue was really into St. Francis, so we also needed to get to Assisi. All I knew about him at that time was that he loved animals.

Let me step back and say that our Program Director for the C&G handed out St. Francis Holy cards to us, gave us a San Damiano cross on a chain and a San Damiano pin to wear. When we had our monthly formation days out at the seminary, the environment set up always included a large San Damiano Cross. Again this meant nothing to me and our program director never really talked about St. Francis, maybe he assumed we knew as much as he did. The original San Damiano cross, currently hangs in the Santa Chiara (St. Clare) Church in **Assisi**.

Stepping into this church the first time, I did not expect to see the San Damiano Cross, this was a very moving experience and we went to this church more than once on our own.

The priests on this trip, one Franciscan and one Dominican, held an informal gathering so that fellow pilgrims could get to know them and one another a little better. They also explained their role and commented that they were here for our spiritual needs while on this pilgrimage.

After dinner on our first night in Assisi, I was moved to ask our Franciscan priest, Friar Johnpaul, if he and I could talk. I told him I needed to do this tonight or tomorrow night, but before we got to Rome and before I lost my nerve. I guess I needed to have a clean soul before entering Rome. After all, Rome is the head of our church. Little did I know, until I experienced it, yes, Rome is the head of our church but Assisi is where I experienced the spirituality of our Religion.

Anyway, it was a solid 15-minute walk straight up the hill to the Piazza in Assisi. I remember talking all around the issue I wanted to discuss, but I still didn't give up anything as I wasn't yet sure I'd be making a confession. Walking through the quaint medieval streets of Assisi we came to the Piazza del Comune. This was the center of life for the town, a place St. Francis often walked, laughed and sang with his friends, and felt God's powerful love especially after his own conversion. Looking back, I now know St. Francis was there with me on this special night as was the Holy Spirit!

Once up at the Piazza we found an outside café where we could sit. After I poured out my heart, our Friar reflected back to me the essence of what I had shared, the pain of what I had carried and the truth of what I had come to know. He also reminded me that I had already been forgiven by God. Now I needed to forgive myself!

When I was finally ready to accept forgiveness and at the exact moment of absolution, I physically felt this dark painful secret/sin flutter out of the left side of my head where I had "stored" it, for lack of a better word. Soon afterwards, I was exhausted and headed back to the hotel. Sue was already in the room and

wanted to know if everything was OK. I told her that our Friar and I had a good talk and now I just needed to take a shower and go to bed. As soon as I got into the shower and turned on the water I had a physical meltdown, I broke into tears and sobbed and cried out loud. The pain that I had been carrying around with me was so fully replaced by God's love and mercy that it overwhelmed my human body and it entered into the only other place it could go, my spirit! This physical meltdown/Spiritual high continued daily for almost three months. This was God's way of continuing to engage me, of giving me this awesome gift of His presence in my life. It eventually tapered off from daily to weekly to no more.

My spiritual director Fr. Bob, early on told me not to expect this to continue to happen. He said some people never get to experience this in their lives, some experience it only once and some after they experience it once expect to feel God's presence this intensely all the time and they are greatly dissatisfied and feel let down by God when it doesn't happen. I was fortunate to have someone tell me not to ever expect it again but if I do receive this gift again that is exactly what it is, a gift from God.

My friend Sue and now my Franciscan sister knew about the OFS as she had family members who were Secular Franciscans. I started learning more about St. Francis and OFS and told Sue I was interested in taking another journey with her, and hoped she was, too. We were professed into the order on October 11, 2010. It was and continues to be a wonderful journey.

Sister Cyndy, OFS

2019 Calendar

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

- 09: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

Our Apostolates

ADDOLORATA VILLA. Volunteer to work in a variety of areas serving the residents of this Francisco home. For more information, contact Sister Sue G.

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. Members will purchase items needed for Welcome Kits for people transitioning from homelessness into apartments. Kits will be put together at fraternity meetings during the year. For more information, contact Sister Faith.

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: Little Sisters of the Poor, 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.