



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
formation@nwfranciscans.org

Secretary

Tim Panzica, OFS
secretary@nwfranciscans.org

Treasurer

Kathy Fischer, OFS
treasurer@nwfranciscans.org

Spiritual Assistant

Jerry Stecker, OFS
sa@nwfranciscans.org

Councilor-at-Large

Kay Crnich, OFS

The Transitus of our Holy Father Francis from this life to life eternal was beautifully celebrated on Thursday, October 3, 2019, in the chapel at St. Joseph's Home. Our **Spiritual Assistant Jerry, OFS**, led us in a ritual of commentary, prayer and song.

We were happy to welcome **Lukas** who joined us for the service and shared hospitality with us.

Our monthly gathering on Monday, October 14, 2019, included the packing of a Welcome Kit including all the items needed for bath, bed and kitchen when moving into an apartment. This kit was taken to Franciscan Outreach. It will be given to an individual who is transitioning from homelessness to a home of their own.

Perhaps, there is a similarity between the Transitus of Francis from earth to heaven and the transitioning of a homeless person into an apartment. If I were a homeless person who no longer had to sleep on the street but could do so in the warmth and comfort of my own bed, I know I would think that I had "died and gone to heaven".

Chapter 8 in *Waiting for Love* continued the theme of peace and love and was followed by a Communion Service in the chapel presided by our **Deacon Lou, OFS**. Thank you to our music coordinator **Sister Jackie, OFS**, and **Candidate Marion** who led us in song. ☒

Our Monthly Gathering...

Our November gathering will be held on **Monday, November 11th**. All professed and candidates will gather in the library for formation at 6:30 p.m. Please read Chapter Nine in *Waiting for Love* and be prepared to discuss the questions.

At 7:30 p.m., all will gather in the chapel for a Mass of Remembrance celebrated by **Friar Johnpaul, OFM**. Since we have been blessed by not losing any of our fraternity members to Sister Death, the Mass will remember our family and friends who have died during this past year.

Following will be a business meeting and social time in the ice cream parlor. ☒

Anniversaries

God's Abundant Blessings on our sisters as they celebrate their special day.

11/5/90 Rosemary
11/6/05 Mary Kay

WELCOME KIT PROJECT

The staff of FRANCISCAN OUTREACH was delighted and grateful for the Welcome Kit that Sister Kay and her husband took down to them.

After a long period of transition work between the staff at Franciscan Outreach and a homeless person, at least 28 homeless people have jobs and have been placed in apartments of their own in 2019 and given a Welcome Kit. So the need is great.

Providing completed WELCOME KITS to Franciscan Outreach for those transitioning from homelessness into living in an apartment is our new **ONGOING** project for the entire fraternity. Attached to this newsletter is a list of the items needed for one kit.

Sister Faith, OFS, eagerly and graciously offered to lead this ministry. Sister Faith will have **SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR EACH KIT**. Throughout the year, look for sales on these items and purchase them. When you do so, **let Sister Faith know what you have bought and she will add it to a list—or lists, if you buy more than what is required for one kit. KEEP THE ITEMS AT HOME UNTIL NEEDED.**

For example, Marion found a ridiculously low price for sets of good white dishes and purchased 3 sets. One was used for the kit we packed in October. The other two will be noted on the lists that Faith has for future kits.

When a list is full, Sister Faith will let us know and we will bring the items to the next meeting and pack the kit which will then be taken down to Franciscan Outreach. **T**

And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR NOVEMBER

Universal: Dialogue and Reconciliation in the Near East

That a spirit of dialogue, encounter, and reconciliation emerge in the Near East, where diverse religious communities share their lives together.

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all our dearly beloved family members and friends, who are now experiencing the wonders of eternal life,

For our fraternity members who have done what was theirs to do and now share the abundance of eternal life with our Father Francis and the King they all lovingly served,

For all who have given their lives in service to our country, that we might enjoy the hard earned fruits of freedom,

For all who live in this land of freedom and of opportunity, that we may always remember with thanksgiving this gift sought by so many others,

WE PRAY FOR THOSE NEAR AND DEAR

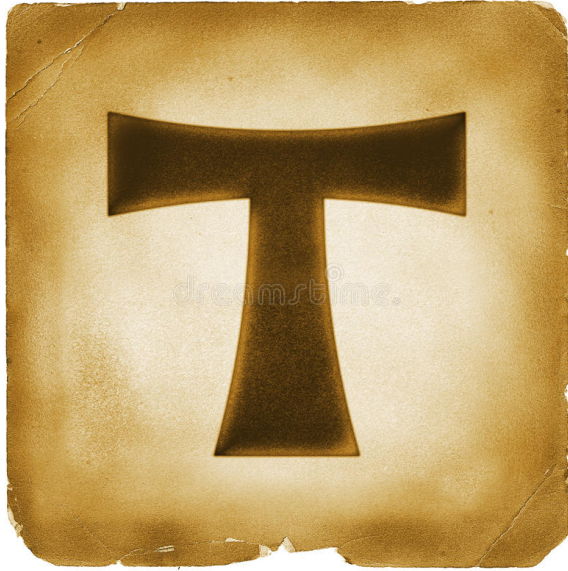
[PRIVATE]

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 Geri.

My Calling to My Secular Franciscan Vocation

May 13, 2013, was the day of my Profession in the Secular Franciscans. Little did I know how my life would be forever changed, enriched, and blessed. You see, God has to hit me over the head, sometimes, to have me get His message.

Initially, some dear friends exposed me to the awareness of the Secular Franciscans. At that time in my life I was committed to my parish Youth Group. When I hung up my involvement with the Youth, I then decided I could pursue my desires with the Secular Franciscans.

If you noticed, I said I could do it...I never considered this a calling to my vocation. It was just another commitment that I was going to be involved in.

I loved going through formation, but, once again, I was anxious to get on with the

profession. God bless Sue for her patience as at the time knowing it would take three years, I thought I may not live that long!. But then, at the end of formation, I didn't want to come out of my cocoon.

Through my formation, I learned the history of our Beloved Father Francis, and that of St. Clare, which touched me forever with their deep devotion to Jesus.

In his early life, Francis had an aversion to those afflicted with leprosy and it took great courage to overcome this aversion. I began to identify with my "lepers" and, through prayer and love of the Liturgy of the Hours, which didn't come easily at first, I began my intense Franciscan journey. As my love grew deeper in my vocation, I began to attend daily Mass. Six-thirty a.m. Mass was never a friend to me and still isn't today.

I also grew in my devotion to Our Blessed Mother which I had since childhood. I came across the book, *30 Day Retreat with Our Blessed Mother* by Michael Gaitley. This also changed my life. After finishing my first round of retreat, Our Blessed Mother revealed to me that many significant days of my life had occurred on her feast days...this blew me away.

My day of profession, May 13, was the same day as my First Communion, the same day that Pope St. John Paul II was shot, the same day that Our Lady first appeared to the children at Fatima. Of course, not all in the same year. My husband died on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes which was very significant as he had really missed his mother after her death. He was greeted into eternity by Our Lady, his first mother. My mother died on the feast day of St. Catherine Labouré, to whom Our Lady appeared and gave the Miraculous Medal. On March 25th of that year, Good Friday, I suffered a fracture of my vertebrae. I realized that these were forms of suffering to grow from and endure with His love. Being a secular Franciscan isn't for sissies.

On my actual profession day I was overwhelmed with the Holy Spirit as I then

realized that I was truly called by God and it wasn't another activity to which I chose to donate my time.

Through these past six years, it has been an amazing love journey—a love story where I have become aware of how deeply I am loved by God and the beauty of my Franciscan vocation.

I never knew the limitless love of our Lord for each of us. He is just out of this world with His abundant love and mercy which He gives to us when we let go. I never knew the freedom that comes with letting go of my ways, and His wonderful sense of humor when He humbly allows me to fall say "Okay, God, have it your way," realizing that His mercy covered over my pride.

Thank you for allowing me to share this walk with you and for listening.

My love to each of you, my fellow brothers and sisters,
Sister Geri, OFS

Common Fund – Oct. 2019

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Beginning balance | \$2993.25 |
| Deposits | 260.00 |
| Expenses | 100.00 |
| Balance | \$3153.25 |

Please know that while our balance looks very healthy, one half of it must be kept in the bank account to avoid paying the ridiculous monthly fees which will be charged if the balance falls under \$1,500. even for one day.

Also, there will not be a separate collection in 2020 for the Fair Share payment that is made each year to support the Regional and National Fraternities. Fair Share will come out of the Common Fund. That will reduce the balance considerably. An in-depth explanation will be in the December or January issues of the newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support of the fraternity. ☒

NAFRA Border Outreach Project

The cooperation of our Fraternity in this NAFRA project is without question living what we professed at its finest. It is the equivalent of the mercy and compassion Jesus and Francis showed to everyone who was needy.

I am delighted to report that we were able to donate \$250 worth of much needed baby wipes, and antibacterial wipes and lotions for the use of those detained at our borders. Thank you for your generosity to those who are most in need. The National Fraternity was able to present 1,000 bags of much needed items to those in Corpus Christi who are lovingly caring for the needs of the immigrants.

The segment below appears in the November 2019 issue of *Readers Digest* in an article about the *Nicest Places in America*.

Las Cruces, New Mexico - Mi Casa, Su Casa

At a time of crisis, the Reserve Center (in Las Cruces) has become a way station for thousands of asylum seekers from Mexico, about an hour away.

...There are plenty of Las Crucians who disagree with the government policy of accepting asylum seekers, and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has dropped more than 17,000 refugees in Las Cruces since last April for initial processing. But, from the start, Las Cruces has seen its role in purely humanitarian terms. "We're all focused on doing one thing: Let's take care of the needs of these people right now," says Fred Espinosa, a pastor at the Las Cruces First Assembly of God Church.

Residents have hosted their own donation drives and they open their homes and businesses to people needing a place to stay. They also volunteer as interpreters, medical and legal advisors, and guides.

"I'm very proud to be a resident of the city of Las Cruces, to see this community come together, from nonprofits to volunteers to the city of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, and faith-based organizations together as one," says fire department chief Eric Enriquez. ☒

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. Welcome Kits with necessities for kitchen, bed and bath are needed for every person transitioning from homelessness to an apartment. We will buy the items needed and fill kits throughout 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 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)~~

~~21: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home~~

June

~~10: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)~~

~~24: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home~~

July

~~08: Fraternity Evening of Recollection~~

~~— Please note change of venue. We will~~

~~gather at St. Joseph's in the Library as~~

~~usual~~

August

~~12: Profession Mass at St. Joseph's~~

~~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)~~

~~10: Council Meeting, St. Joseph's Home~~

***“But go and learn what this means:
'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'
For I have not come to call the righteous,
but sinners.”***

Matthew 9:13