



## *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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*Councilor-at-Large*

Kay Crnich, OFS

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

March rains could not keep us from gathering for our triennial Visitation from the Mother Cabrini region. The Pastoral Visitor was our regional Spiritual Assistant, Brother Marc. The Fraternal Visitor was Lisa Ann, who is the regional secretary.

We spent an evening talking about our fraternity and evaluating its strength and weaknesses.

We are strong with fifteen professed members and five candidates in formation--all of whom actively participate in the life of the fraternity. We have five shut-in sisters who can no longer actively join us at gatherings. They are contacted on a monthly basis by our infirmarian, Sister Kay, who also sends the monthly newsletter to them. We also have one aspirant who is discerning a secular vocation.

We are strong in our ongoing formation which occurs every month at our gathering. The spiritual assistant of our fraternity, Brother Jerry, seeks many ways in which to keep the fires of our vocations burning in our hearts. His enthusiasm encourages us to strive each day to be more like our Father Francis.

We are strong in our commitment to each other and to the communities of which we are part. We are active, both as a fraternity and as individuals in many varied ministries in our parishes and in our communities.

We need to reach out to the young people in our parishes and let them know who we are and what we do as secular Franciscans.

The fraternity gathered to pray the Stations of the Cross. Since March 9<sup>th</sup> was the actual birthdate of Brother Marc and our Sister Sue, we celebrated those happy occasions afterward. ☒

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### **Our Monthly Gathering...**

There will not be an April fraternity gathering because of the coronavirus. However, we will still continue our formation. Our Spiritual Assistant, Jerry, OFS, will send an email outlining how we will connect. Read Chapter Twelve in *Waiting for Love*. ☒

## And So We Pray...

### PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR APRIL

#### Freedom from Addiction

We pray that those suffering from addiction may be helped and accompanied.

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### PRAYER FOR OUR COMMUNITY

*O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world. [Please add your own intentions.] . . . Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God, amen.*

*Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM*

### LET US PRAY

**Response: Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the grace to **love each other enough** to do all we can to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, we pray to the Lord,

For **the workers** in the stores who are putting themselves at risk so that we can buy our food and necessities, we pray to the Lord,

For **all civil, health and service workers** who are also working to keep our lives as normal as possible, we pray to the Lord,

For all of our **homeless brothers and sisters** who are severely impacted by the closure of many places where they can find warmth each day, we pray to the Lord,

For all **those who live lonely lives** in homes for the elderly and sick and are now confined to their rooms, we pray to the Lord,

For **all parents with young children** whose energy must be rechanneled during these weeks, we pray to the Lord,

For **all those who have no one to pray for them**, we pray to the Lord,

## Anniversaries

Our Spiritual Assistant, Jerry, OFS, will be celebrating his profession on April 30. *Abundant blessings be his.*

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## THE PERSON JESUS LOVES

As the worshipers arrived on a late November morning at the Lutheran Church in White Lake, North Dakota, they were met by a rather disturbing sight.

*An apparently homeless beggar sat on the front steps of the church, wearing tattered clothing, a wool cap pulled down over his eyes, and clutching a bottle in fingerless gloves. They had never seen anything quite like this in White Lake, North Dakota.*

*Most worshipers simply walked around the man, or stepped over him, as he sat there. Some muttered words of disapproval, and others suggested that the man move to another doorway before the Sunday School children arrived. One member told the man, in no uncertain terms, that the Salvation Army in Minot was a more appropriate place to sleep it off.*

*At one point, a kind woman brought the man a Styrofoam cup of hot coffee, but not one person asked the man to come in out of the cold, and certainly nobody invited him in to join them in worship.*

**Imagine, then, the people's surprise during the processional, when their homeless friend made his way into the pulpit, took off his cap, and the people recognized that it was their pastor! *A God Flash***

The pastor began his remarks that morning in this way: ***"I did not do this to embarrass you or to poke you in the eye. I did it to remind us that this is a person that Jesus loves, and he has called us to love him, too."***

Thanks to Steven Molin for sharing this story.

Fr. Medard Laz

*Treats for the Soul*

March 18, 2020

## V.I.R.U.S.

### St. Francis of Assisi was the virus of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Sound shocking? Because our minds are programmed to think of a virus as only being something “bad”. Couldn’t there be “good” viruses, too?

*What is a virus? One definition is: a small piece of genetic material surrounded by a protein shell. Viruses are so small that a microscope is necessary to visualize them, and they have a very simple structure.*

Doesn’t that sound like a good definition of our Father Francis? He only sought to be a very small, unseen, simple part of creation surrounded by the shell of God’s Love. However, it wasn’t long before his simple way and the joy it created “infected” others. They were eager to join him. He began to understand that God meant for him to infect others by sharing with them his love for God and all of His creatures and creation.

*A virus cannot live long by itself. It must find a host to which it attaches itself. The virus penetrates the host and turns it into a replica of itself.*

Was there ever a better replica of St. Francis than St. Clare? From them, multitudes of men and women were infected with the desire to live their lives in the simple way that Jesus taught. The way of the Gospels.

Men became brothers and, beginning in Italy, communities spread like wildfire across Europe. Women hurried to join Clare and founded monasteries throughout Italy and other countries.

Others longed to follow in their footsteps but could not because of the responsibilities of their lives. The Brothers and Sisters of Penance was born, another replication of the virus that began with Father Francis.



Vibrant  
Inspired  
Reverent  
Undaunted  
Seculars

*Can we become viruses for good in our own time?*

*How can we as secular Franciscans bring the joy of Francis to others?*

*What can our fraternity do to spread the word of the love of God to a society that needs it desperately?*

As we have seen with the coronavirus, all it takes is one viral cell to infect another which infects others which....

Perhaps our fraternity can be the V.I.R.U.S. which will begin a new pandemic of love and care for all God’s creatures and creation.

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*This Holy Week is our opportunity to experience the Fourteenth Station of the Cross and the loneliness of the tomb as we are forbidden to participate in the Triduum.*

*But after the tomb we know that there is always the GLORY OF THE RESURRECTION.*

*Easter Blessings to You and Those You Love!*

## 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 inter-weave 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 B. 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:, Francis-can 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.

***Bringing the Gospel to Life  
and  
Life to the Gospel.***

## 2020 Calendar

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

### January

~~13: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)~~

### February

~~10: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)~~

### March

~~02: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home~~

~~09: Monthly Gathering (Stations of the Cross)~~

### April

13: cancelled due to coronavirus

27: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### May

11: Vocation Day (Mass)

### June

08: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

22: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### July

13: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

### August

10: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

24: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### September

14: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

### October

12: Monthly Gathering (Crown Rosary)

26: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### November

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

### December

14: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

TBD: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

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