



Dear Brothers & Sisters

Secular Franciscan Fraternity

During COVID-19 we are gathering through Zoom or through partnering with a specific fraternity member.

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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.

MONTHLY GATHERING

During the next months, until the fraternity is able to gather in person, we will continue to meet with each other either virtually through the Zoom Group or as part of a pair.

Our **Spiritual Assistant, Brother Jerry** is responsible for the ongoing formation of our fraternity. He will contact the fraternity members, both the members of the Zoom group and the members who are paired. All comments and questions should be sent directly to him.

The fraternity will be using Pope Francis' *Fratelli Tutti* for our formation during February and March. The first half will be discussed in February and the second half in March. Brother Jerry will send all additional information.

2021 Partial Calendar

Below is the Fraternity Calendar of Events for the months of February and March. Subsequent monthly events will be guided by the Guidelines for COVID-19.

February

08: Zoom gathering for formation (Liturgy of the Hours)
Pairs will gather at a time that is convenient for both. Formation will discuss the first half of Pope Francis' *Fratelli Tutti*. Read the first four chapters and answer the questions in the Study Guide.

March

08: Zoom gathering for formation (Chaplet of Divine Mercy)
Pairs will gather at a time that is convenient for both. Formation will discuss the second half of Pope Francis' *Fratelli Tutti*. Read the remaining chapters and answer the questions in the Study Guide. ☒

Anniversaries

There are no anniversaries of profession in February.

And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR FEBRUARY

Universal intention – *Violence against women*

We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded.

LET US PRAY

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For **all living persons in the world** who are all beloved children of God just as we are, we pray to the Lord,

For **all the world's leaders – both secular and religious** - that they serve those for whom they are responsible, not with power and might, but with humility and justice, we pray to the Lord,

For **those in government in the United States**, that they forget their political affiliations and work in unity with their colleagues, we pray to the Lord,

For **all people who have contracted COVID-19** that they will survive the virus without complications, we pray to the Lord,

For **all members of our fraternity and their loved ones**, that the deepest desires of their hearts be granted, we pray to the Lord,

Prayer of St. Mother Teresa

Lord, take me where you want me to go.

Let me meet who you want me to meet.

Tell me what you want me to say.

And keep me out of your way.

This issue of Dear Brothers and Sister is only two pages in length instead of the usual four or more.

Go to the Edges - Ash Wednesday

Whatever your life situation may be, find some way to be in immediate contact with the little ones, the nobodies. Get in touch with the people who are of no account, who haven't made it into the great American midstream. Maybe they don't talk "right" and smell "right". They may not seem to be part of the "in" group.

If we of the middle-class Church have found ourselves scandalized by our own brokenness and imperfection, it's because we have separated ourselves from the broken character of almost all of reality.

When a severely disabled person confronts us, we're scandalized and afraid. Everything in our being, says, Oh, it shouldn't be that way, let's change it. But we can't change it. The only thing we know how to do is to draw apart, to pull away in fear, anger and disappointment with God. But God gives us each other. Those who are disabled can remind the rest of us who we are. We live under an illusion, thinking we're not handicapped or retarded, thinking we got it together.

We are afraid of those who appear to be weak because they come with the faces of the crucified Jesus. We push them to the edge of society. The elderly we shove aside because they remind us, that we, too, one day will be old. We ignore little children, thinking they don't know anything yet and have nothing to teach us. We shun disabled people, who remind us that our bodies are also one step away, any moment, from crippledness. People with mental disabilities painfully remind us that we really aren't very smart.

Refugees bring forth the fear within reach of us of not having a place to lay our head. Gays and lesbians remind us that we all are both feminine and masculine. Prisoners remind us we also are imprisoned and trapped.

There is a reason we push all these people far away and far apart. They represent everything we fear and everything we deny about ourselves. Yet to be touched by these people is to discover the deepest recesses of our own life.

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM
Radical Grace

