

# Dear Brothers & Sisters



July 2016

Newsletter of the

## Northwest Franciscan Community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Palatine, Illinois

Secular Franciscan Order

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Submission deadline is the last Tuesday of each month.

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

## From the Minister

How graced we were in June to attend our monthly fraternity gathering on an evening filled with numerous opportunities to thank our God for all His blessings. First, it was the feast of the beloved Franciscan saint, Anthony of Padua, whom our Father Francis considered to be "his bishop". June was also the month in which we celebrated the feast of our fraternity's patron, the Immaculate Heart of Mary. And we welcomed Fr. Dennis into the Franciscan family as a Candidate. Thank you to Fr. Dennis and to our Brother Dcn. Lou, for bringing our Lord Jesus to us in the celebration of the Mass, and to Sister Jackie and Brother Tim for leading us in song.

During the breakout portion of ongoing formation, Sister Jackie shared a priceless quote that speaks to the heart of every secular Franciscan, and echoes the heart of our Father Francis: In her early days of teaching, she was talking with a second-grade teacher about how hard it was to deal with "problem" children in her class. The other teacher simply said, "*The most unlovable person is the person most in need of love.*"

■ **Portiuncula Regional Gathering.** The annual Regional Gathering for the Feast of the Portiuncula is **Saturday, August 06**, at Mayslake Village (Oak Brook). This gathering, which occurs when the weather is good for traveling, is a great opportunity to pray and socialize with our brothers and sisters in the larger regional fraternity. There will be a sign-up sheet at this month's gathering for those planning to attend.

■ **Summer Get Together.** At this month's gathering, we'll again have a signup sheet during social time for a summer party at my home on **Sunday, July 31**. This is a family gathering, not only for you, my brothers and sisters, but also for your spouses, and children who may share your home with you. Please see me if you wish to bring a dish to the party. ☒

## At This Month's Gathering ...

■ **Ongoing Formation.** Our Spiritual Director, Brother Patrick, will lead us in a discussion of **Life in Fraternity**, focusing on Articles 12-14 of our Rule. Please meditate on these articles and how we can better imitate our Father Francis in following them, both individually and as fraternity.

Please be aware that **all Professed** are to attend ongoing formation and our monthly gatherings. If, for whatever reason, you're unable to attend, you *must* call our Minister, Sister Stephanie.

■ **Vespers & Social Time.** Everyone, please join us at 7:30 p.m. for Vespers, followed by a brief business meeting and social time (remember to bring your own mugs). ☒

## Common Fund Report

by Stephanie Heavey, OFS, Minister

A heartfelt *thank you* to all brothers and sisters for responding to the needs of our Common Fund as mentioned in last month's newsletter. As a result, we did not have to pay the minimum balance service charge last month. At the last council meeting, our Spiritual Assistant, Brother Patrick, stated that the national fraternity encourages individual fraternities to have enough reserve funds to cover the expenses for several months. Not much different than the goals for personal finances.

## Next Monthly Gathering:

Monday, July 11, 2016

St. Joseph's Home  
80 W. Northwest Hwy., Palatine

**6:30 p.m.:** Professed, please arrive at this time for Ongoing Formation. Candidates and Inquirers are encouraged to observe.

**7:30 p.m.: Start of our Gathering** with Vespers, followed by a business meeting and social time. All welcome!

\* \* \*

**You must call Stephanie if you cannot attend.**

\* \* \*

Our gatherings are at 7:30 p.m. on the **second Monday** of each month.

While looking through the last two years of fraternity expenses, I had a great joy in realizing how diligent the previous council had been in prudently using the Common Fund. *Thank you* to previous council members Brothers Tom and Patrick, and Sisters Lisa, Jackie, Sue, and Kay, for wisely using "the Master's talents". ☒

## Our Apostolates

■ **Bingo.** Meets one night per month at 6:30 p.m. in St. Joseph's activity room. Everyone, please see the sign-up sheet at our gathering and pick one month for which to volunteer. For more information, call Sisters Kay or Mary Kay.

■ **Franciscan Outreach.** We collect items for delivery to the guests at Franciscan Outreach's Marquard Center. Call Sister Stephanie for more information.

■ **Prayer & Praise Ministry.** For our brothers and sisters unable to attend our gatherings due to poor health or transportation issues. For more information, or if you're ill or know of someone who's ill, please call our Infirmarian, Sister Jackie.

■ **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 from our Common Fund of any excess funds available *after* fraternity costs go to the following: Franciscan Missionary Union, Franciscan Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL), Amazon Relief.

■ **Youth Prayer Partners.** Coordinated by Brother Tom, this apostolate matches up fraternity members with children preparing for First Communion or Confirmation. We last prayed for a group of students on their journey to Confirmation, and will pray again for a new group of students when we have more details. For more information, call Brother Tom. ☒

## Directory Updates & Corrections

Please make the following **changes** to your copies of our Member Directory:

- [PRIVATE] ☒

## Footprints in the Sand (new version)

by Mark Littleton, from *Escaping the Time Crunch* (1990)

Imagine you and the Lord Jesus walking down the road together. For much of the way, the Lord's footprints go along steadily, consistently, rarely varying the pace. But your prints are a disorganized stream of zigzags, starts, stops, turnarounds, circles, departures and returns. For much of the way it seems to go like this. But gradually, your footprints come more in line with the Lord's, soon paralleling His consistently. You and Jesus are walking as true friends.

This seems perfect, but then an interesting thing happens: your footprints that once etched the sand next to the Master's are now walking precisely in His steps. Inside His larger footprints is the small 'sand print', safely enclosed. You and Jesus are becoming one.

*continued on page 3 ...*

## Anniversaries This Month

11: **Jackie**, Professed in 1999.

*God's blessings for your years of Franciscan living!*

## Remember in Your Daily Prayers

- [PRIVATE]
- All infirm, shut-in, and deceased fraternity members.
- All those in initial formation and their formation instructors.
- Our entire Franciscan Family, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> (Secular & Regular) Orders: For strength in commitments, increase in vocations, and the work we do, especially for Franciscan Outreach, Franciscan Missionary Union, the Poor Clares in Palos Park, and Amazon Relief.
- The guests of Franciscan Outreach's shelter and soup kitchen: That they know God's loving care and overcome the difficulties that keep them homeless.
- Little Sisters of the Poor and the residents of St. Joseph's Home.
- Our families and loved ones.

**Please pray that our fraternity and all Franciscans:**

- Live the Holy Rule we've professed,
- Bring the Gospel to Life, and Life to the Gospel in the spirit of Francis,
- Live simply so that others may simply live, and
- Are active and participate in the Franciscan apostolates.

## 2016 Calendar

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

### January

- 10: Monthly Gathering (Profession Mass)
- 24: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### February

- 08: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)
- 22: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### March

- 14: Monthly Gathering (Stations of the Cross)

### April

- 11: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

### May

- 09: Monthly Gathering (Franciscan Crown)
- 23: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### June

- 13: Monthly Gathering (Mass, Feast of IHM)

### July

- 11: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)
- 31: (Sunday) Fraternity Summer Gathering, 2 p.m., Stephanie's home

### August

- 08: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)
- 29: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

### September

- 10: (Saturday) Fraternity Day of Recollection, St. Colette's  
*Replaces regular fraternity gathering*

### October

- 03: Transitus of our Holy Father Francis  
*Replaces regular fraternity gathering*

### November

- 14: Monthly Gathering (Mass, with Rite of Remembrance)
- 20: (Sunday) Franciscan Outreach Project, Stephanie's home  
Council meeting, Stephanie's home

### December

- 12: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

"FOOTPRINTS", continued from page 2 ...

This goes on for many miles. But gradually you notice another change. The footprint inside the larger footprint seems to grow larger. Eventually it disappears altogether. There is only one set of footprints. They have become one.

Again, this goes on for a long time. But then something awful happens. The second set of footprints is back. And this time it seems even worse. Zigzags all over the place. Stops. Starts. Deep gashes in the sand. A veritable mess of prints. You're amazed and shocked. But this is the end of your dream.

Now you speak. 'Lord, I understand the first scene with the zigzags and fits and starts and so on. I was a new Christian, just learning. But You walked on through the storm and helped me learn to walk with you.'

"That is correct."

"Yes, and when the smaller footprints were inside of Yours, I was actually learning to walk in Your steps. I followed You very closely."

"Very good. You have understood everything so far."

"Then the smaller footprints grew and eventually filled in with Yours. I suppose that I was actually growing so much that I was becoming like you in every way."

"Precisely."

"But this is my question, Lord. Was there a regression or something? The footprints went back to two, and this time it was worse than the first."

The Lord smiles, then laughs. "You didn't know?" He says, "That was when we danced." ¶

## Reflection for July, Month of the Precious Blood

by Fr. John A. Hardon, SJ, from *The Precious Blood of Christ*

Devotion to the Precious Blood is not a spiritual option, it is a spiritual obligation, and that not only for priests, but for every follower of Christ. I really believe that one of the symptoms of modern society (and I would even include, sadly, modern Catholic society) one of the symptoms of a growing, gnawing secularism is the lessening and the weakening of devotion to the Precious Blood. ...

I found this passage in the oldest document, outside of sacred scripture, from the first century of the Christian era – to be exact, from Pope St. Clement I, dated about 96 A.D. Says Pope Clement: "Let us fix our gaze on the Blood of Christ and realize how truly precious It is, seeing that it was poured out for our salvation and brought the grace of conversion to the whole world."

To understand the meaning of the Precious Blood we must get some comprehension of the gravity of sin, of the awfulness of offending God, because it required the Blood of the Son of God to forgive that sin. We are living in an age in which to sin has become fashionable.

This veneration of the Precious Blood, which is the first element in our devotion to the Precious Blood means that we have a deep sensitivity to the awfulness of sin. Sin must be terrible. It must be awful. It must be the most dreadful thing in the universe. Why? Because it cost the living God in human form the shedding of His Blood.

*Lord Jesus, You became Man in order by your Passion and Death and the draining of your Blood on the Cross, might prove to us how much You, our God, love us. Protect us, dear Jesus, from ever running away from the sight of blood. Strengthen our weak human wills so that we will not only not run away from the cross, but welcome every opportunity to shed our blood in spirit in union with your Precious Blood, so that, dying to ourselves in time we might live with You in Eternity. Amen.* ¶