



Dear Brothers & Sisters

Secular Franciscan Order
Palatine, Illinois

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

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**Newsletter submissions welcomed
by 25th of each month.** Send to:
minister@nwfranciscans.org

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

Our February gathering continued the animated conversation on mercy as we discussed Pope Francis' topic *The Patience of Mercy*. It is easy to think of Patience and Mercy as two separate entities, forgetting that showing great patience with someone is also being merciful.

Thank you to Deacon Lou, who led the Liturgy of the Hours, and to our musicians, Sisters Jackie and Sue, and Brother Tim. It was beautiful to see our brothers and sisters, sitting side-by-side, warmly enveloped in the prayer shawls made by Sisters Sue and Cyndy. A special thank you to Sister Kathy, for once again cheerfully taking over the duties of hospitality on short notice. ☒

Our Monthly Gathering...

All professed will gather on Monday, March 12th, at **6:30 pm**, in the library for formation. Please try to arrive a bit before that time so we can start promptly at 6:30. Please read the last chapter in *The Holy Year of Mercy*, chapter 8, Mercy and New Life, and complete sections: Understand, Grow, Reflect, Act. At **7:30 pm all with gather in the chapel** for the Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. This will be followed by social time in the ice cream parlor. ☒

Anniversaries

God's Blessings to our **Sister Dorothy**, who celebrates her 44th anniversary of profession on March 30th. ☒

Welcome to Valerie

who joined us at our gathering in February. We invite you to join us on March 12th at 7:30 pm in the chapel and afterward for social time. ☒

Live Simply so that Others can simply live.

Annual Open House in April

Monday, April 9th, is our annual Open House. Please consider those persons in your life who show an interest in your secular Franciscan vocation and invite them to *Come and See*. All guests are invited to join us at **7:30 pm in the chapel** for a Word and Communion Service and for hospitality afterward in the ice cream parlor. All professed will gather at **6:30 p.m.** in the library for formation. ☒

Common Fund – February 2018

Beginning balance	\$2,789.50
Deposits	442.00
Expenses including Fair Share	1155.13
Balance	\$2,076.37

Fraternity Survey

A survey form for professed members of the fraternity and candidates was included with the February newsletter. *Your unabridged thoughts, opinions, suggestions and complaints are necessary for the vitality of the fraternity as it enters its 57th year.* If you have not responded to this survey, please review the questions posed and bring the completed survey to the March gathering **and give it to Brother Jerry**. (The survey can also be emailed to the minister.) The council will review the surveys at the March 26th Council Meeting. Your input will be used to determine the ongoing course of the fraternity. ☒

Member Directory

Included with this newsletter is the updated Member Directory. **Please update your cell phone directories, phone books, etc.** to include **new cell phone numbers**. Home phones are no longer the most efficient way to pass on timely information. Thank You. ☒

And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR MARCH Formation in Spiritual Discernment

That the Church may appreciate the urgency of formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and communitarian levels.

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For the conversion of our hearts and minds during this Lenten season, that we would strive to imitate our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, we pray to the Lord,

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, the unemployed, for those suffering from depression and addiction, and for all those in any kind of danger, we pray to the Lord,

For our local community and its needs, that we would act as witnesses to the love and mercy of Christ as we love our neighbors as ourselves, we pray to the Lord,

For the many people entrusted to our prayers, especially:

[PRIVATE]

All our shut-in sisters, always in our hearts, we pray to the Lord.

For our departed loved ones and fraternity members, that with them we may one day behold the face of God, we pray to the Lord,

Let us praise our loving Redeemer, who gained for us this season of grace, and pray to Him, saying:

Lord, create a new spirit in us.

*Christ, our life, through baptism we were buried with you and rose to life with you,
- may we walk today in newness of life.*

*Lord, you have brought blessings to all mankind,
- bring us to share your concern for the good of all.*

*May we work together to build up the earthly city,
- with our eyes fixed on the city that lasts for ever.*

Healer of body and soul, cure the sickness of our spirit,

- so that we may grow in holiness through your constant care. ☒

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. Fraternity members can either donate to the cost or purchase the specific items for 120 Gift Bags which are made up in November for the homeless guests at the Franciscan Outreach soup kitchen in Chicago. Contact Sister Stephanie for more information.

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 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 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: Franciscan Missionary Union, Franciscan Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL) and Amazon Relief.

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.

2018 Calendar

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

January

~~08: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)~~

~~22: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home~~

February

~~12: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)~~

March

12: Monthly Gathering (Stations of the Cross)

26: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

April

09: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

May

14: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

28: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

June

11: Monthly Gathering (Lectio Divina)

July

09: Fraternity Day of Recollection

(Holy Family Parish)

23: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

August

13: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

September

10: Fraternity Elections (Liturgy of the Hours)

24: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

October

03: Transitus of our Holy Father Francis

replaces regular fraternity meeting

November

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

18: (*Sunday*) Franciscan Outreach Project, Stephanie's home

December

10: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)



HOW DID JESUS DIE?

"After they had crucified him"

Matthew 27:35

"Then they crucified him"

Mark 15:24

"...they crucified him"

Luke 23:33

"There they crucified him"

John 19:18

These words are all the information that has been given in the four Gospels of the New Testament. The authors of the Gospels and the early Christians had intimate knowledge of crucifixion and its horrors. Crucifixions were repeated with some regularity; the details varied. It served the Romans well as a deterrent to would-be-rebels and insurgents in their vast empire. Most of all, any one who has suffered the loss of a beloved cannot describe the minute details of what occurred without tearing open the wounds in one's own heart.

Twenty centuries later, there have been many questions left unanswered by the terseness of the Gospels. However, scientific, medical and archaeological developments in the past century have provided answers to many of these questions. In March of 1986, an article was published in JAMA (The Journal of the American Medical Association), entitled *On the*

Physical Death of Jesus Christ.

Given JAMA's venerable position in the medical world, the authors spent much time in researching and authenticating as many details as they could. They used the writings of contemporary Jewish and Roman authors of the first century which described the Jewish and Roman legal systems and methods of punishment. They used the descriptions of the last hours of Jesus' life as written in the Gospels, the scientific evidence gleaned from the Shroud of Turin which is considered to be the actual burial cloth of Jesus, and recent archaeological findings which provide valuable information concerning Roman crucifixion practices.

Historical Date of Passion and Crucifixion

Various adjustments in the calendar have caused controversy about the actual years of Jesus's birth and death. Most credible evidence places the birth in either 4 or 6 BC and death in 30 AD. Using the dates recorded for the Passover in 30 AD, the Last Supper would have been observed on Thursday, April 6 (Nisan 13) and Jesus' death on Friday, April 7 (Nisan 14).

Gethsemane

Given the depth of His love and compassion, the hours of the Last Supper had to be extremely emotional and stressful for Jesus, knowing that "His hour" was coming. It was the last time He would be with His own who didn't have a clue. Leaving the Upper Chamber which was in the part of Jerusalem called the Upper City, he walked a long distance with his disciples to the Mount of Olives. His anxiety had to be increasing. In Gethsemane, "He was in such agony and prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood on the ground" (Luke 22:44).

Hematohidrosis is a rare medical phenomenon which can be brought on by extreme stress. As

the anxiety passes, the blood vessels dilate to the point of rupture and blood seeps into the sweat glands. It leaves the skin very tender and sensitive to pain.

Health of Jesus

Jesus had to be in good physical condition given the rigors of traveling by foot throughout Palestine for three years. However, during the 12 hours between 9 pm Thursday evening and 9 am Friday morning, he had suffered great emotional distress, as evidenced by the hematomas. He had been abandoned by his closest friends. He had endured a beating after the first Jewish trial. He had spent a very traumatic and sleepless night. He had been pushed and prodded back and forth for more than 2.5 miles to and from the various trials. He had been given no water or food. All of this would have made him more vulnerable to the horrific effects of the scourging He endured. Pain and loss of blood could create circulatory shock and determine how long a victim would survive on the cross.

Crucifixion

It is thought that crucifixion itself probably began among the Persians. Alexander the Great introduced the practice to Egypt and Carthage where it became known to the Romans who perfected it as a form of torture and capital punishment designed to produce a slow death with maximum pain and suffering. It was a humiliating and cruel method of execution that was usually reserved for slaves, foreigners, insurgents, and the vilest of criminals. Roman law protected Romans from crucifixion, except perhaps in the case of desertion by soldiers.

The cross itself was formed by an upright post (stipes) and a horizontal crossbar (patibulum). Archaeological and historical evidence strongly indicate that the low Tau cross was preferred by the Romans in Palestine at the time of Jesus.

This was a cross where the patibulum was affixed to the top of the stipes. The titulus (plaque) advertising the victim's name and crime was affixed on top of the stipes. (The Latin cross which is commonly seen in churches affixed the patibulum lower than the top of the stipes and placed the titulus just above it on the surface of the stipes. A cross typically weighed 300 lbs.

A condemned man already weakened by trauma and flogging was required to carry the patibulum (crossbar) to the place of execution. The crossbar weighing 75-125 lbs. was placed on the nape of the victim's neck and across both shoulders. Usually the beam was fastened with ropes to the person's outstretched arms. The person was accompanied by a Roman military guard. One soldier carried the titulus. The guard would not leave the site of crucifixion until they were sure of the victim's death.

Outside the city walls, the stipes (vertical post) was permanently secured in the ground. The patibulum would be removed from the shoulders of the victim, he would be disrobed and thrown to the ground. His arms would be fastened to the patibulum with ropes, and, quite often, nails would be driven through his wrists. (In Jesus' time, the wrist was considered part of the hand. Archaeological finds including an ossuary containing the bones of a crucified man verifies that the nails were driven through the wrists. The nails in the ossuary were iron spikes about 5 to 7 inches long with a square 3/8 inch shaft. The Shroud of Turin also documents that the nails were driven through the wrists rather than the palms which could not support the weight of a person's body.

Once both arms were affixed to the patibulum, it and the victim together were lifted onto the vertical stipes. On the low Tau cross, four soldiers could easily accomplish this. Then, the feet were affixed by nails or ropes. Ossuary findings and the Shroud of Turin both suggest that nailing was the preferred Roman practice. The titulus was attached by nails or cords just above the victim's head.

The major physiologic effect of crucifixion, beyond the pain, was a marked interference with

normal respiration, particularly exhaling. The weight of the body, pulling down on the outstretched arms and shoulders, tended to fix the muscles in an inhalation state and hinder passive exhalation, so exhalation was diaphragmatic. Breathing was shallow. Hypercarbia (abnormally elevated levels of carbon dioxide) occurred and the victim would struggle to exhale adequately. However, the only way to do this would be to push up on the feet which would place the weight of the body on the tarsals in the nailed feet and cause searing pain. Muscle cramps, involuntary twitches of the hands, would add to the pain. Eventually the hypercarbia would become so severe that the victim could experience disorientation, panic, hyper-ventilation, convulsions, asphyxiation.

The medical consensus determined that while the actual medical cause of death could vary for each victim, there were two most prominent causes. There were hypovolemic shock (excessive loss of blood) and exhaustion asphyxia. Other possible contributing factors included extreme dehydration, stress-induced arrhythmias, and congestive heart failure with the rapid accumulation of pericardial and pleural fluids. Death by crucifixion was, in every sense of the word, excruciating (Latin, *excruciat*, or “out of the cross”).

Crucifixion of Jesus


Jesus was apparently so weakened by the severe flogging that He could not carry the patibulum from the Praetorium to the site of the crucifixion, about one third of a mile. The soldiers “As they led him away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus.” (Luke 23:26). Once at the site, His clothing, except for the loincloth, was removed, which reopened the wounds on his back. He was offered the mixture of wine and myrrh (gall), but after tasting it, refused to drink it. He and the two thieves were crucified and the titular attached to the cross. While scripture does not

make it clear whether He was crucified on the Tau cross or the Latin cross, archaeological findings favor the former. Also the fact that one of the bystanders offered Jesus a drink of wine from a sponge placed on the stalk of the hyssop plant, which only grows about 20 inches long.

Death of Jesus

Two aspects of Jesus’ death have been the source of great controversy, namely, the nature of the wound in his side and the cause of his death after only several hours on the cross. “Pilate was amazed that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. And when he learned of it he gave the body to Joseph of Arimathea. (Mark 16:44-45)

The controversy over the wound in the side stems from difficulty in explaining with medical accuracy the flow of both blood and water. This is based on the assumption that the blood flowed first and then the water as described in John’s Gospel. However, in ancient Greek, the order of words usually denotes order of prominence and not time sequence. The water could have proceeded first from the pleural (lung) and pericardial (heart) fluids, followed by the blood from the right atrium or right ventricle.

The rapidity of death was most likely caused by the severe state of exhaustion and severity of scourging with extensive loss of blood. The fact that Jesus cried out in a loud voice and then bowed his head and died suggest the possibility of a catastrophic terminal event, acute cardiac failure or a fatal cardiac arrhythmia. 

My Jesus Crucified, have mercy on us.

(Those who may wish to read the whole article can access it in its entirety. Just Google On the Physical Death of Jesus godandscience.org. The JAMA site will only give an abstract unless one signs up and pays a fee.)