

# The Porter

St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, MD  
Secular Franciscan Order – December 2018  
<http://stconradannapolis.sfousa.org/>

## Council

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The Porter deadline for the January issue is January 7. Please send news, prayer requests, poems, or interesting things that you think other members may enjoy to: Joan Faltot, 8217 Grainfield Rd, Severn, MD 21144, or send by email (address above).



### Fraternity Meeting

**Saturday, December 15, 2017**

**St. John the Evangelist, 607 Ritchie Hwy., Severna Park, MD 21146**  
**8:30 Mass -- Church. Meeting 9:15 – Gathering Space Meeting Room**

### Refreshments



**Pot Luck Christmas Brunch.** Everyone should bring some food or drink to share. Glen Burnie/Pasadena has the supplies and will hand them off to Annapolis/Eastern Shore. NOTE: We will not have access to the room until 8:30 a.m., so we will need a few fraternity members to miss part of the Mass in order to set up food and maybe tables and chairs.

### Liturgy

Welcome Ceremony for Ruth Shea

### Formation

Brs Diogo and/or Rigo will present a short Advent reflection

### Special Outreach

Shoebboxes for Apostleship Of The Sea, see page 3 for additional information

### Prayer Requests




*For our sick and/or homebound members:* (Please help us update this list.) Brigid Cobb (cataract surgery), Audrey Donnelly (two small fractures in pelvis; receiving physical therapy at home), John McHugh (Joe's brother), Rita Rossi, Katherine (Mary Henry's daughter-in-law), Bob Mochi (husband of our regional executive Councilor Barbara Countryman), Evelyn Jones' niece, Genny Wilbourne's granddaughter Jessica, Peggy Rideout (Mary Musselwhite's daughter), Joan's husband Bill Kvetkas, Mandy (Kathleen Sievers' niece), Teri Egan, Pat Troup.

### Birthdays

Dennis Mallon – 12/17	Jenny Moreira – 12/31	Ed Wilbourne – 1/16
Marie Shelton – 12/26	George Ryan -- 1/7	

### Profession Anniversaries

Santa Ragot – 12/14/ 1980	Lita Millan – 1/10/2002
Harry Thompson – 1/10/1991	

<p><b>Outreach</b></p>	<p>For more information, contact Denise.  <b>Lighthouse Shelter Lunches:</b> Thursday, December 27, 9:30 a.m. at home of Joan Kvetkas  <b>Phoenix Academy "Backpacks":</b> Wednesday, December 19, 12:30 p.m. in cafeteria</p>
<p><b>Treasury</b></p> 	<p>Common Fund balance: \$436.95 ☹️ yikes where did all the money go???</p> <p>Professions are the most expensive activity for a fraternity. The Profession ceremony last month involved both St. Conrad fraternity (Sarita Palmer) and our emerging fraternity Pope St. John XXIII (Laura Benso and Mary Rohde). The decision was made to split shared expenses by 1/3 St. Conrad - 2/3 Pope St. John XXIII. However, in order not to delay payments, St. Conrad approved and authorized payment in full for all of the bills at our Council meeting on December 3. Pope St. John XXIII will be sending our fraternity a check to reimburse their portion of the event.</p> <p>And as a double whammy... Only a few fraternity members found the common fund basket at the Profession reception. <b>So if you missed your contribution in November, please try and put in a bit extra at our next meeting.</b> In January, the Council will meet and discuss end-of-year donations to charities. If you wish to recommend a charity, please drop an email to Pat.</p> <p><b>REMINDER</b> - Please remember to use the memo line of your check to designate how you wish your contribution to be directed. There are 3 possible designations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common Fund (this covers fraternity operations and the Sabu family in India),</li> <li>• Phoenix Academy (for student weekend food packs), and</li> <li>• Tokens (bus tokens for the Lighthouse Shelter clients).</li> </ul> <p>You can write one check and direct your contribution to any or all three areas.  Example: \$20 Com / \$10 Phoenix / \$5 Token. None of these amounts should be interpreted as being what is expected from any particular member.  Cash contributions are also acceptable, but checks are preferred.</p>
<p><b>Council Meeting</b></p>	<p>Monday, January 7, 9:30 am at Tyrrells.</p>

## COMMUNITY

### **Minister's Minute:**



I was thinking about writing about the importance of the Incarnation in the Order, as I have for the last two Decembers, but nothing was coming. So I went to Google and found this extract almost immediately.

Because humans are creatures in God's image and likeness, each person bears an inviolable dignity. Authentic humanness requires that this dignity be made concrete and embodied in daily human life. Just as God made known divine love "in the flesh" through the person of Jesus, so, too, must we humans bring our belief in human dignity to bear on the ordinary activities of daily life. \* \* \*

The humility of the Incarnation pointed Francis toward a distinct manner of understanding the human person. Because God became human in Jesus Christ, all of humanity was deified, i.e., graced by God and given access to become God-like.

Francis saw Jesus as the model human being who set the standard and marked the way for all other humans to travel on the journey of daily life toward the fullness of life with God. In unfathomable wisdom, God chose to use the means of our very humanity to communicate great divine love for us.

Francis organized the first living Nativity scene in the town of Greccio to help people see, in real life and in their own time and place, what the love of God looks like and the extent to which God would get to restore human dignity. In

the scene, we see the generous love of God made concrete, but also the marvelous capacity of humanity — even an unsophisticated baby — to communicate that love. Like a parent who out of love freely chooses to suffer with or for a child so that the child might grow and be empowered to come to full maturity, so too God chose to love humanity into life.

Francis wrote, admonishing his followers: “Consider O human being, in what excellence the Lord God has placed you, for He created and formed you to the image of His beloved Son according to the body and to His own likeness according to the Spirit.” (Admonitions 5:1)

It is reverence for the life of God, present in each person, and the fact that Jesus came to us in human form that stirred in Francis a profound reverence for all human life.

This was written by Dawn Nothwehr, OSF. She is a Franciscan Sister of Rochester MN, and professor of Catholic Theological Ethics at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. The extract above is from her book as summarized in a paper available at <https://www.franciscantradition.org/resources/custodians-of-the-tradition>, a web site I recommended to you in an email a month or two ago. See you Saturday. Pat

## **OUTREACH – THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA – CHRISTMAS GIFT BOXES**

At our December Fraternity Meeting, our fraternity will again be collecting gift boxes for the Apostleship of the Sea. The Apostleship of the Sea distributes gift boxes “dockside” to crews of ships that will arrive in the Port of Baltimore during the Christmas Holidays. Here is how to prepare your gift box:

Step 1: Find a heavy duty cardboard or plastic shoe box

Step 2: Fill the box with the following suggested items:

Personal items: toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, combs, nail clippers, mouthwash, shampoos, conditioners, soap, shaving cream, deodorant, q-tips, disposable razors,

Clothing: socks gloves, scarves, caps

Handy Fun Stuff: pens, pencils, writing supplies, English dictionaries, 2019 calendars, pocket-sized address books/planners, scotch tape, playing cards, travel-sized games, reading materials (magazines, paperbacks), non-perishable foods/snacks/candy, **wholesome DVDs**, a small Christmas card or blessing signed from a member or members of your organization.

Step 3: Wrap the box with Christmas paper

Step 4: Remember to bring it to our Fraternity Meeting on December 15

## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**THE SAINT AND THE SULTAN “TAKING BACK OUR HUMAN FACES”- DEC 13<sup>TH</sup> 7-8:30 PM AT ST. JOSEPH ODENTON A SYRIAN FAMILY WILL SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THEIR JOURNEY TO US.**

**ADVENT DAY OF PRAYER SAT DEC 22 10 AM-4PM DIRECTED BY FR. GREG FRIEDMAN OFM AT THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY**

**HAVE YOU SEEN THE CRÈCHE EXHIBIT AT THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY? IT’S AN AWESOME EXHIBIT FROM SO MANY COUNTRIES. DON’T FORGET TO TOUR DOWNSTAIRS TO SEE THE RECREATED SITE OF CHRIST’S BIRTH. PICK UP THE HOLY LAND REVIEW FOR *WINTER 2017* AT THE DESK WITH ARTICLES BY FR. GREG ABOUT THE WORD AT CHRISTMAS AND THE REAL SAINT NICHOLAS AS WELL AS AN ARTICLE ABOUT BR. ELIAS.**

## JPIC -- JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION, ANIMATOR JUDITH TYRRELL, OFS

Have you ever made a Jesse tree during the season of Advent reflecting on those whom God used to prepare the hearts of His people for the birth of Jesus Christ the Messiah—Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David and others. One scene from Moses and The Ten Commandments has always stayed with me when a poor slave girl cries out to God, “How long, how long until you send us the deliverer? Today in the Office of Readings from Isaiah 24 “The earth mourns and fades, the world languishes and fades: both heaven and earth languish. The earth is polluted because of its inhabitants, who have transgressed laws, violated statutes, broken the ancient covenant.” We all long for that “new heavens and that new earth” we hear so much about in these days of Advent as we long for the Incarnation anew at Christmas in our own hearts and in the whole world.

We who as Secular Franciscans “should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which ‘bear the imprint of the Most High’ and should strive to move from exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship”(Rule 18) have cause for response when we read these headlines in the paper:

Study: India’s air pollution killed a million-plus in 2017 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/12/07/bad-air-kills-more-than-million-indians-year-study-says/?utm\\_term=.7fe9f432bc91](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/12/07/bad-air-kills-more-than-million-indians-year-study-says/?utm_term=.7fe9f432bc91)

Five myths Climate Change- good for discussion [https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/five-myths/five-myths-about-climate-change/2018/11/30/9fba233a-f428-11e8-bc79-68604ed88993\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.d2f0df2a8104](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/five-myths/five-myths-about-climate-change/2018/11/30/9fba233a-f428-11e8-bc79-68604ed88993_story.html?utm_term=.d2f0df2a8104)

Global carbon Reaches Record-We are in deep trouble UN leaders says [https://www.washingtonpost.com/energy-environment/2018/12/05/we-are-trouble-global-carbon-emissions-reached-new-record-high/?utm\\_term=.55eb3fd3265b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/energy-environment/2018/12/05/we-are-trouble-global-carbon-emissions-reached-new-record-high/?utm_term=.55eb3fd3265b)

Off course, on a warming planet-24<sup>th</sup> UN conference on Climate Change reports –emissions not down but up [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/a-kind-of-dark-realism-why-the-climate-change-problem-is-starting-to-look-too-big-to-solve/2018/12/03/378e49e4-e75d-11e8-a939-9469f1166f9d\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.21c273fa54f5](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/a-kind-of-dark-realism-why-the-climate-change-problem-is-starting-to-look-too-big-to-solve/2018/12/03/378e49e4-e75d-11e8-a939-9469f1166f9d_story.html?utm_term=.21c273fa54f5)

And what about the report that’ Greenland is melting 50% faster than preindustrial levels’ leading to “Climate refugees “!!! Search Greenland CNN report and Climate refugees youtube.

I believe that we are turning the tide in national politics admitting that Climate Change **and** forest management had an effect on the fires in California. I believe education at the youngest levels and up can lead to change in our attitudes toward our carbon footprint and its effect on the world—one plastic bag maybe not but hundreds and hundreds of them not used can save some fish and birds and reduce the islands of pollution in our streams and oceans. Can we “bundle” our trips to the store during this busy season? We can make a difference with our letters to the White House and Senate and House supporting the protection of the environment. Pray, think about it, do something!!!

PRAYER FOR HEALING VICTIMS OF ABUSE (A SIN AGAINST HUMAN DIGNITY)-at Mass of the Immaculate Conception DC  
God of endless love, ever caring ever strong, always present always just: You gave your only Son to save us by the blood of the cross. Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace, join to your own suffering the pain of all who have been hurt in body, mind and spirit by those who betrayed the trust placed in them. Hear our cries as we agonize over the harm done to our brothers and sisters. Breathe wisdom into our prayers, soothe restless hearts with hope, steady shaken spirits with faith: Show us the way to justice and wholeness, enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy. Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts, heal your people’s wounds and transform our brokenness. Grant courage and wisdom, humility and grace, so that we may act with justice and find peace in you. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

## ENVIRONMENT

The following is reprinted with permission from the **Bay Journal** which is available free in both digital and paper formats. For more information <https://www.bayjournal.com/subscription>. The following article illustrates the complex and delicate balance of the environment

### Depletion of nitrogen in forest soil could reduce trees' ability to offset climate change

- By Timothy B. Wheeler on November 21, 2018

Forests worldwide are using up the nitrogen in their soil, a new study found. That's a bit of good news for the Chesapeake Bay, which is ailing in large part from too much nitrogen getting into the water. But the study's authors warn that a widespread decline of nitrogen in forest soils bodes ill for efforts to prevent global climate change.



*Forests absorb nitrogen in the soil that might otherwise pollute local waterways, and they help offset climate change by drawing carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. (Dave Harp)*

The study, published recently in the journal [Nature Ecology & Evolution](#), analyzed the chemistry of more than 43,000 leaf samples collected from hundreds of tree species worldwide from 1980 to 2017 and found that the levels of nitrogen in them, which fuel the trees' growth, has declined. Rising carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere and longer growing seasons from warmer temperatures are promoting increased tree growth, the authors suggest. As a result, they wrote, forests' demand for nitrogen is outstripping what's available in the soil.

The Earth's forests have been expected to mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon as they draw carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to help them grow. But nitrogen helps to provide the energy that trees' leaves use in photosynthesis to produce food — sugars — from water and carbon dioxide. Trees won't necessarily get larger if

one ingredient in that balanced recipe grows without a corresponding increase in the other.

"This result suggests that [carbon] sequestration potential is going to hit a limit," said Andrew Elmore, a study co-author and professor of landscape ecology at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science [Appalachian laboratory](#). Rising carbon dioxide levels will still boost plant growth, he said, but not by as much if the nutrient is in short supply.

Much of the scientific and public discussion about nitrogen has been about how there's too much of it in coastal waters, causing algae blooms and oxygen-starved "dead zones" where fish and shellfish struggle to survive. But Elmore, who's conducting research at the [National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center](#) in Annapolis, said the focus "has hidden this long-term trend in unamended systems that is caused by rising carbon dioxide and longer growing seasons."

The Chesapeake Bay, though, has benefitted from the increased use of nitrogen by forests. Woodlands in the watershed have been getting a big dose of the plant nutrient because of airborne nitrogen from coal-burning power plants and vehicle emissions.

Research by Elmore's Appalachian lab colleague Keith Eshleman has shown that federal clean air regulations have curtailed those nitrogen emissions over the last two decades, reducing the amount of nutrients runoff into streams that ultimately flow into the Bay.

Forests already yield some of the lowest nitrogen runoff of any land use in the 64,000-square-mile Bay watershed. This study indicates that rising carbon dioxide levels and longer growing seasons have reduced nitrogen runoff even more, as trees consume even more of it.

"Decreasing atmospheric deposition, longer growing seasons, and elevated atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> are all contributing to declining [nitrogen] export from western Maryland forests," Elmore said.

While that's helping to clean up the Bay, Elmore said, the declining nitrogen availability in forests means climate change could be more extreme than previously thought, and it could have far-reaching effects beyond simply rising temperatures.

"There's a whole slew of insects and birds," Elmore said, that depend on plants and trees for food. "If nitrogen is not as available to the trees or other plants, then it's not as available to the insects and birds as well." He cited [press reports](#) of a recently published study that reported a 76 percent decline from 1989 to 2016 in flying insects in German nature preserves.

"Beyond declines in leaf chemistry, we are seeing grazing cattle become more protein limited, pollen protein concentrations decline, and reductions of nitrogen in many streams," said Joseph Craine, the study's lead co-author and an ecologist with Jonah Ventures, a private research firm specializing in environmental DNA sequencing. "These dots are starting to connect into a comprehensive picture of too much carbon flowing through ecosystems."

Elmore said that he thinks the threat of nitrogen depletion in forests is serious enough to consider whether action

ought to be taken to somehow "fertilize" pristine wooded landscapes to counter the effects of rising carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. Similar "geo-engineering" proposals, such as the suggestion to "seed" the oceans with iron so they'll lock up more carbon, have been highly controversial, as critics question their effectiveness and the potential for unintended consequences.

"I've never been an advocate for geo-engineering," Elmore said, "but on the other hand, if insect populations or bird populations start crashing, that's biodiversity [at stake]."

A quick calculation by an Appalachian lab graduate researcher suggested that applying chemical fertilizer to forests could yield a net reduction in climate change, as the increased forest growth would more than make up for the carbon emissions from fertilizer production.

"This new study adds to a growing body of knowledge that forests will not be able to sequester as much carbon from the [atmosphere] as many models predict because forest growth is limited by nitrogen," said Eric Davidson, director of the UMCES Appalachian laboratory in Frostburg. The findings provide new evidence, he said, that "decreases in carbon emissions are urgently needed."