



**THE POPE ST. JOHN XXIII FRANCISCAN FRATERNITY
 SECULAR FRANCISCANS
 DAVIDSONVILLE, MARYLAND**



Our MINISTER’S MUSINGS - by Ron Van Nest, OFS, Minister

How appropriate it is to be launching our first issue of our Fraternity Newsletter at a time we are celebrating an upcoming profession ceremony.

As we celebrate profession of our candidates, it is also a time for those who have been professed to reflect on the commitments we all made at that time. We committed to fervent prayer, twice a day, with emphasis on the **Liturgy of the Hours**. How many of us are fulfilling that commitment? We committed to a ministry of “**presence**” - simply being there: fraternity meetings – how is your attendance record? Presence in fraternity activities – soup and bread dinners; Donut Sundays; wine and cheese nights; Winter Relief dinners and other needs; suppers for our recovery houses; presence with our brothers and sisters who are shut-in!

This Newsletter marks the final project, of many, to be completed as we continue the creation of the Fraternity. Up to now, we have not had enough members to make a Newsletter necessary. We were once so small that every member was a member of the Council in some capacity. We called it the “**Council of the Whole,**” or **COW**, as we jokingly referred to it. We thank the Holy Spirit for our growth and now we need a Newsletter to keep everyone informed.

Key features of each Newsletter will be saving the dates for future events and staying current with birthdays and profession anniversaries. Jeanne Catrow will keep us posted on the progress of our candidates and orientees along with their future chapters, and the facilitators, who will be enhancing the learning of those chapters. Nina Teti will be sharing a spiritual thought for us, Chris Gordon will be sharing a Care for Creation message for us, and Judy Hool will keep us updated on the status of our Treasury.

May we continue to be blessed!

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Seeds of Life - by *Nina Teti, OFS*

What a joy and privilege in sharing my tucked away treasures I have gathered through my spiritual journey. We all need encouragement as we tip-toe through the garden of life. Knowing that what we say can bring comfort and peace. What a blessing to see hearts touched by the Grace of God. What a harvest to be, when seeds we sow produce fruitfulness!

Prayer to our Lady of Lourdes

Blessed, Immaculate Virgin, by your appearance in the Grotto of Lourdes, many have been cured of their infirmities, both spiritual and physical.

Mother of Mercy, healer of the sick, comforter of the afflicted, you know my needs and my sufferings. Look upon me with compassion. I come to you with confidence in your maternal intercession.

Obtain for me, from your Divine Son, O loving Mother, this special request. . .

(mention your needs here)

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for me.

Amen

God planted a seed of faith in our hearts,
all we have to do is:

Water it with prayers

Fertilize it with words of God

Cultivate it with lots of love.



Caring for Creation - by *Chris Gordon, OFS*

Caring for Creation means people too! So, I was on a Zoom recovery call, where men and women often share their innermost feelings. Discussions about friends, work and family and our impact on them are routine. Very often the subject of God comes up, sometimes referred to as a Higher Power. Any way someone can find a way to approach Our God, has got to be a good thing. As I recall, Jesus readily reached out to the Gentiles (which was everyone who was not Hebrew) as well as sinners of all sorts. I'm guessing you are wondering where we are going with this! So where is this God? Where do I suggest

we find him? This maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible!

When I share on this subject, I talk about looking around and seeing God everywhere. Sure, I can see and feel God in our Churches and Temples - they are designed to do that! But where do I feel closest to God? This is everywhere. When I look into the eyes of our two Golden Retrievers, Maddie and Sophie, is one place. When we go for a walk in the park, thru forests and fields, hawks circling overhead, squirrels rustling in the leaves, the flash of the white-tailed deer, birds singing and saying hello. With this vision of God everywhere with my ever so "minute" impact on the world, it is important to do the best with God's gifts. To make a difference, guided by His hands!

A great priest friend reminded me, a long time ago, that we never know when something we say or do can have an impact on someone. That we may never even know what that was, good or bad. What a responsibility! Sure, we hear of school teachers that inspire their students - politicians they inspire Presidents. But me, you?

A young man came up in the Narthex and wanted to tell me he was graduating college with a master's degree in environmental science. That we had done a number of projects - especially planting native plants and trees together here at Holy Family. God works in mysterious ways. May I end with a quote from one of my favorite verses, from the Letter of James: "What good is it my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works" (2:14)!

Franciscan Feature

(Francis of Assisi Early Documents – The Prophet – Vol III – Page 578-579)

The true servant of Christ, Saint Francis, was in certain things like another Christ given to the world for the people's salvation. So God the Father willed to make him in many of his actions conformed and similar to His Son, Jesus Christ. This is shown to us in the venerable company of the twelve companions and in the wondrous mystery of the sacred Stigmata and in the unbroken fast of the holy Lent which he made in the following way.

Once Saint Francis was alongside the Lake of Perugia on the day of Carnival, at the house of a man devoted to him, where he was lodged for the night. He was inspired by God to go to make that Lent on an island in the lake. So Saint Francis asked this devout man that, for love of Christ, he carry him with his little boat to an island of the lake where no one lived, and that he do this on the night of the Day of the Ashes, so that no one would notice. And this man, out of love – from the great devotion that he had for Saint Francis – promptly fulfilled his request and carried him to that island. And Saint Francis took nothing with him except two small loaves of bread. Arriving at the island, as his friend was departing to return home, Saint Francis asked him kindly not to reveal to anyone that he was there, and that he should not come for him until Holy Thursday. And so that man departed, and Saint Francis remained alone.

Since there was no dwelling in which he could take shelter, he went into some very thick brush that was formed like a little den or a little hut by many bushes and saplings. And in this place he put himself in prayer and contemplation of heavenly things. And there he stayed the whole of Lent without eating or drinking, except for half of one of those little loaves, as his devoted friend found on Holy Thursday when he returned for him; for of the two loaves he found one whole one and a half; the other half, it is supposed, Saint Francis ate, out of reverence for the fast of the blessed Christ, who fasted for forty days and forty nights without taking any material food. And thus, with that half of a loaf he drove away from himself vainglory and after the example of Christ he fasted forty days and forty nights.

Later in that place where Saint Francis had done such marvelous abstinence, God did many miracles through his merits. For this reason, the people began to build houses and live there, and in a short time a good, large village was built there, and there was a place of the brothers there, called the Place of the Island, and the men and women of that village still have great reverence and devotion for that place where Saint Francis made that Lent.



Formation Forum – by *Jeanne Catrow, OFS, Formation Director*

Praise Be God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!



St. John XXIII is blessed to have two Candidates, Penny Jones and Pat Sullivan, who are nearing the close of their Initial Formation. They are tentatively scheduled to receive their Professions on May 13, 2023.

In addition, there are six Inquirers who are continuing their Formation and discernment process in our fraternity. They are Michael O'Rourke, Karen Acker, Barbara Henry, Shawn Dickey, Peggy Carr, and Elizabeth Brownlee. By summer's end, these Inquirers will have celebrated their Rite of Admission in the Secular Franciscan Order.

Please keep these blessed men and women in your prayers as they follow the call of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Other news:

The Inquirers are beginning an apostolate to the Riva Recovery House by providing a dinner on the second Monday of each month. Anyone may join them – contact Jeanne Catrow for information.

For several months, Formation sessions have been led by professed members from our Fraternity. It is truly a blessing to have them share their spirituality and Franciscan journey with our Candidates and Inquirers. Thank you!

The Formation Team is comprised of Joe O'Dea, Penny Jones, Pat Sullivan, Mary Rohde, and Jeanne Catrow. Please contact any of these members with suggestions/concerns/questions about Initial Formation and Ongoing Formation.

Be at Peace!

Birthday Blessings

Ann Marie Pessagno March 14
 David Littleton June 4
 John Cobis June 30
 Theresa Tucker July 12
 Patricia Sullivan July 27



Kathy Brady July 28
 Sandy Horvath July 29
 Karen Acker July 29
 Penny Jones August 7

Professional Anniversaries

Jeanne Catrow May 8, 1979
 John Cobis June 12, 2005
 Kathy Brady September 17, 2016
 Kathy Duffy September 17, 2016
 Judy Hool September 17, 2016
 Sandy Horvath September 17, 2016
 David Littleton September 17, 2016
 John Treichel September 17, 2016
 Ron Van Nest September 17, 2016
 Marie Waleryszak September 17, 2016



Laura Benso November 17, 2018
 Sarita Palmer November 17, 2018
 Mary Rohde November 17, 2018
 Chris Gordon February 1, 2020
 Ann Marie Pessagno February 1, 2020
 Nina Teti February 1, 2020
 Eugene (Duke) Jones February 26, 2022
 Joe O'Dea February 26, 2022
 Theresa Tucker February 26, 2022

Prayer Intentions

Let us remember, in our prayers, all the intentions and needs of our Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity brothers and sisters. Let us especially remember to pray for the following loved ones in our lives God has summoned Home to be with Him and all those in Heaven:



Brother Michael Meza's Mother: Marie Meza
Sarita Palmer's Father-in Law: Ransford Palmer



Save the Date(s)

Fraternity Retreat	Saturday, March 4, 2023	8:00 AM 9:30 AM	Adoration/Confession/Mass Retreat Registration Begins (with Brother Michael Meza, OFM Cap.)
Lenten Soup and Bread	Friday, March 24, 2023	5:00 PM	Unity Hall. Sponsored by the Pope St. John XXIII Franciscan Fraternity
Profession Ceremony	Saturday, May 13, 2023	9:30 AM	For Pope John XXIII Franciscan Fraternity Candidates: Penny Jones and Pat Sullivan

Treasury Tidbits – January 2023 - by *Judy Hool, OFS, Treasurer*



Balance Brought Forward From 2022:	\$6,540.30
January Deposits:	\$ 415.00
January Withdrawals:	\$ 0.00
January Ending Balance:	\$6,955.30

Thank you for your generous donations. Our Fraternity will carefully and prayerfully manage the charitable contributions to serve our community.

Pax et bonum!

Attention: If you are interested in learning more about Secular Franciscans and our Franciscan ministry of living out the Gospel in our daily secular lives, or attending any of our monthly Secular Franciscan Fraternity meetings to learn more about us here at Holy Family Catholic Church, please contact our Minister, Ron Van Nest, OFS (ronvannest.ofs@gmail.com) or our Vice Minister, Ann Marie Pessagno, OFS (ampessagno@yahoo.com). All are welcome!