



Our Lady of the Rosary  
Secular Franciscan Fraternity  
Williamsburg, Virginia



2024

[www.olrsfo.weebly.com](http://www.olrsfo.weebly.com)

Message from our Minister ...

**We need pass through Good Friday  
for Easter Sunday to make sense**

While Easter is still a few days away, I am writing this as I wait for the Triduum to begin. The church I attended prior to moving to Williamsburg had a large crucifix behind the altar that was of the Risen Lord. At the time I thought it was the perfect crucifix to be displayed because we are an Easter people. Christ was raised from the dead, and we had been redeemed. It was only after I moved to Williamsburg and started my Franciscan formation that I started to understand the need to look on the crucified Christ as something to be desired, as something to imitate. Francis so closely imitated Jesus that he was blessed with the stigmata the wounds of the crucified Christ.

This past year, I have been both reading about St. Bonaventure and also reading some of the writings of Bonaventure. Through my readings I have come to appreciate Bonaventure's theology concerning the crucified Christ. Bonaventure sees the crucified Christ as the one who can restore in us the image of God. It is on the cross where we find the ultimate expression of God's love for the human race. Ilia Delio writes in *Simply Bonaventure*:

*"What Bonaventure deeply and powerfully illustrates is that the cross is the axis of transformation – from the human heart of stone into a natural heart of love. The cross is a mandala that integrates human weakness and divine compassion. . . the cross of Jesus Christ is our life, our suffering, our image, the human image that is at once shackled by the pain of sin and capable of total self-giving love."*

To imitate Christ, is to live a life of compassionate love. We are to turn towards God totally, become fully dependent on God for our needs, and loving others as God loves. Delio writes, "The imitation of Christ, especially Christ crucified, is not about embracing pain and suffering; it is about where the center of our lives is located, how receptive we are to God's love and, in turn, how we share love with others . . . . It is this spirit of self-giving love that leads to peace for only when each of our lives takes the form of the cross will the cross of the world be lifted up in glory."

**He is Risen, Alleluia!**

Easter blessings to you and your families,  
Peg

**Living Life**

by Jean Bloomer

You gave me life  
Almighty God.

I give it back to You.  
Do with it what You will.  
My life, while mine, is Yours.

Accept my offering-though small.  
'Tis all I have  
'Tis what you gave  
Let me return it full.



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**The Pope's Monthly Intentions**

**April**



**FOR THE ROLE OF WOMEN**

We pray that the dignity and immense value of women be recognized in every culture, and for the end of discrimination that they experience in different parts of the world.

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**Birthdays**

Leo Wells — April 17

Genni McGlynn — April 17



**Anniversary of Profession**

Karen Coulson 4/22/2017

Peg Crews 4/22/2017

Maria Fuentes-Sherman 4/22/2017

Donna Kendall 4/22/2017

Eileen Murray 4/22/2017



**Meetings**

**Next Fraternity Meeting— April 21st at 1:15pm (social gathering from 12:30-1:15)**

## From our Formation Director - Donna Kendall

### What I Learned From Saint Bonaventure

This past month, thanks to the Adult Formation Team at Saint Bede, I had the opportunity to lead four sessions on the "Spiritual Treasures of Saint Bonaventure." The topics that were covered were: Trinity, Creation, Humanity, and Incarnation. These four areas were taken directly from the first half of the book "Simply Bonaventure" by Ilia Delio, which several members of our fraternity (myself included) have been reading and discussing at regular intervals. This book is packed with a great deal of theology and deep spirituality that Bonaventure drew from his focus on the love Saint Francis had for our Lord, Jesus Christ. I believe the book is worth reading, but to be honest, presenting it to a group of people (Franciscans and non-Franciscan parishioners) during the liturgical season of Lent was a powerful experience. My goal, at the onset, was to share this goldmine of Franciscan spirituality during this holy season with the hopes of deepening our relationship with Jesus leading up to his passion, death, and resurrection. What I discovered, at the conclusion, was that I had only skimmed the surface of the unfathomable yearning we have for knowing and loving God. Bonaventure delves deeply into this yearning, and as I moved through his teachings, I found myself wanting to go even deeper, drowning, if you will, in the unlimited abyss of God's love. To travel into this abyss, one certainly becomes radically dependent on God. This journey is not about acquiring more book knowledge, it is about the abandonment of everything I am hanging on to that entangles me in so many other questions and concerns. We've talked about what to leave behind in our nets in order to follow Jesus; we've looked at leaving our root sins behind in the desert of Lent so that we can grow in our relationship with God. In March, we discussed stepping outside of our comfort zones to find Jesus in other, less pleasant, areas. Here we are in the Easter season, finding Jesus completely transfigured by the resurrection. Are we willing to dive into the deep end and be completely transformed as Saint Francis did? Bonaventure tells us "There is no journey to God that does not ultimately transform the entire person." Linking Bonaventure's thoughts about transformation and Christ's words about "unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies it produces much fruit" I reflected on that abyss. I realized that diving into it more deeply is exactly what is needed to be transformed into a Christ-likeness. Bonaventure encouraged me to desire a complete transformation. It is not an endeavor I can accomplish on my own. It is no longer about "what" I'd like to leave behind, but "who" – the "me" I've spent a lifetime creating. Happy Easter to all my friends, my family. Pax e bonum.

