



The Little Flower Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order

St. Margaret of Cortona Region

Come and be fed...body, mind, soul, and spirit!!

January 13, 2024

(2nd Saturday of each month)

Sisters and Brothers of Penance in the Little Flower Fraternity OFS,

The psalmist wrote at Psalm 90:12, "So teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

Arguably the most iconic New Year's Eve celebration in the world and in the U.S.A. happens every December 31, at midnight in Times Square in New York City. Now known simply as the "ball drop," the celebration first began on December 31, 1907 and has occurred, to note the passage from the old to the new year, for the past 116 years. Televised, since the dawn of the TV era, across the globe the countdown starts at 11:59 p.m. New York time when a huge, elaborate lighted crystal ball descends from a pole high above the street, reaching its base, to the roar of the crowd, at exactly midnight. The ceremony attracts millions of revelers who gather in Times Square and in front of TV sets in every corner of the globe to welcome in the new year.

"The passage of time—especially the end of one year and the beginning of another—reminds us that God's timing in our life is perfect. Even when we welcome the end of a particularly trying year, we know God's mercies are new every morning and that every new day, and year, is full of blessing and potential (Lamentations 3:22-24). We are also reminded to "watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (Matthew 25:13). (David Jeremiah, in Turning Point, a Daily Devotional.)

We have just celebrated once again Jesus' first coming. We yearn in the depth of our souls daily for His triumphant return. However, since we do not know the hour of His appearing, but the Father does (Mark 13:32), Jesus' words to us about that are emphatic, "Be ready!"

As you and I welcome 2024, let us keep one eye turned toward heaven. As dear Mother Angelica, our sister in Francis and Claire, advised, "Keep your head in heaven and your feet planted on earth. God has work for you to do." The year 2024 may see the return of Jesus Christ our King, however, whether He returns this year or not, let us continue to work on building up and living in the Kingdom of Love, as we pray constantly in preparation:

"Deliver us, O Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ." (Deliverance Prayer after The Our Father.)

In 2024, let us remember the fraternal life was so important to St. Francis of Assisi that he ruled the friars minor should never travel life's pathways alone but at the very least in twos. Let us commit to walking together in the way prescribed for us in the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order by committing ourselves to attending the monthly gatherings of our fraternity for prayer, formation and fellowship.

Here are the dates of our fraternity gatherings for 2024 please place them on your calendar:

January 13; February 17 (the only gathering not on the second Saturday of the month); March 9; April 13; May 11; June 8; July 13; August 10; September 14; October 12 (Fraternity elections); November 9; December 14.

The year ahead 2024 promises to be a tumultuous and challenging year for our Church, our world, our nation, our state and city metropolitan area, our fraternity and ourselves, let us not shy away from what the Lord is calling us to do for Him, let us be steadfast of heart and of good courage, neither let us be dismayed, remembering in the words of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, "that here on Earth God's work must truly be our own."

May the Lord bless us and keep us; may the Lord let his face shine upon us; and may the Lord grant us in 2024 His forgiveness and His peace. Amen.

Joyfully in Jesus,

Phillip Francis Pucher, O.F.S, Minister

Agenda for meeting- !!! Feel free to bring a friend/family member

9- Holy Mass

10- Liturgy of the Hours

10:15- Presentation by Fr. Bart

10:50- Social and JPIC survey

11:20- Ongoing Formation (book) This is My Body- review of preface and pages 1-11

11:45- Chaplet of Divine Mercy

12- Dismissal



Retreat...Reconnect

Opportunities for spiritual growth and/through community service



Remember: The Apostolic Penitentiary granted the request for obtaining the plenary indulgence for all the faithful who from 8 December 2023 to 2 February 2024 visit the churches run by Franciscan families and fulfill the other requirements for a plenary indulgence, namely, be in the state of grace, receive Communion, go to confession within 21 days of the visit, and pray for the intentions of the Pope (Our Father and Hail Mary)

You can read more about this privilege at <https://ciofs.info/.../plenary-indulgence-on-the.../>

*****HELP US HELP ST. FRANCIS CHURCH FOOD PANTRY! *****

PLEASE BRING NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS TO EACH GATHERING!

January reflection provided by Phil

Let go. Let God. ☩

“There is an old Catholic saying that grace builds on nature. This means that we can learn a lot about our spiritual lives if we pay attention to the world in which we live.

There are lists to be made and things to be done. Our minds are filled with a litany of all the tasks we are responsible for.

Underneath the busyness are two things that drive our activity: our initiative and self-responsibility. The busier we are, the more we feel responsible for completing the tasks on our to-do list.

This interior posture may help us stay on track, but it can harm our prayer and our relationship with God.

Let's pay attention to the theological reality of the Incarnation. If we do that, **we see clearly that God is forever taking the initiative.**

God is the one who promised through prophecy in the Old Testament that he would send the Messiah.

God is the one who sent the Angel Gabriel to Mary.

God is the one who conceived life in the womb of the Virgin.

God is the one who took the initiative to become man and reveal himself to us in the flesh.

Our God is a God who is forever taking the initiative. **He is ceaselessly reaching out to us.**

Furthermore, because he takes the initiative in our lives, God wants the responsibility of leading us. **When you and I feel the burden of responsibility, it threatens our capacity for receptivity.**

Prayer becomes just another item on our to-do list, another task to complete and check off. **Instead of receiving from God, we may be tempted to make things happen.**

But on our own initiative, we cannot lure God to us. We cannot produce spiritual experiences under our own power.

But this does not need to be the case, nor is it God's desire for us. **Remember: God is forever taking the initiative.**

Relax. Take a deep breath. Let the Lord take the lead. Let the Lord take responsibility.”

☩
SEP

by Fr. Mark Toups

Upcoming Conferences:

Saturday, February 3, 2024, 9:30 am -3:00 pm

Topic: Christ Living in Me:

Lent on LaVerna with St. Francis of Assisi, presented by Fr. Russel Murray, OFM

Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America, DC

Cost: \$30.00 (includes lunch)

Saturday, February 24, 2024, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Day of Reflection for Inquirers and Candidates

Topic: Living a Penitential Life presented by Fr. Stephen King

Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America, DC

Cost: \$50.00 (includes lunch)

Secular Franciscan Pilgrimage: June 16-28, 2024

<https://www.franciscanpilgrimages.com/product/secular-franciscan-pilgrimage-to-assisi-and-rome-june-16-28-2024/#>

Phone: 414-427-0570

Chapter of Mats **SAVE THE DATE**

September 6-8, 2024

Claggett Center, Adamstown, MD

(Details to Follow)

NEWS

Starting this month, Social time will be mid meeting

Please bring a drink and snack if you would like. We will provide donuts and coffee.

Also, the ongoing formation for this year will start with the book, This is My Body by Bishop Barron. Please read the preface and to the middle of page 11 for the meeting this month. Be ready to discuss this information and/or to ask questions if needed.

NEW: Inspiration for the month (provided via Dennis Bernardo)

From heaven our caring Father
Watches over us from above.
Guiding us by His Wisdom
And teaching us how to love.
He surrounds us daily with angels
And gifts us with caring friends;
He places His beauty around us,
His goodness never ends.
He's the Creator of the universe
And everything in it you see;
From the highest lofty mountain
To the tiniest honey bee.
So each new day when we awake
And open wide our eyes,
Let's send up loving thanks to Him
For all that He provides.

PRAYER REQUESTS

*In order to protect the privacy of our Sisters and Brothers,
we are only listing the names of those who have asked for/or are in need of our prayers.*

Fr. Bart Barb Bruno Mike Huether Bob Curry and family

Joann Sweeney (Jim Davis' daughter -RIP)

Darlene Stamm (Cathy P,'s daughter) Cindy Evans

Luther Cook (Jaci's son) Joan Kane

Pope's intention for January: For the gift of diversity in the Church.

We pray that the Holy Spirit may help us to recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community and to discover the richness of different traditions and rituals in the Catholic church.

Birthday Celebrants

Dennis Bernardo	January 2
Frank Passaro	January 6
Kelly Frederick	January 12
Teresa Knauff	January 19
Albert Gigel	January 20
Cathy Polkowski	January 20
Marissa Reynoso	January 20
Michael Huether	January 21

Profession Anniversaries:

Lisa Gough	January 23, 2011
Marissa Reynoso	January 31, 2015

Deceased Member Anniversaries: None

Treasurer's Report:

Beginning Balance 12/1/23	\$1,572.01
Income	351.20
Expenses	392.94
Check Balance 12/31/23	\$1,530.27

Please make ALL checks – Common fund as well as monthly charity,
payable to: LITTLE FLOWER FRATERNITY

Also, please keep our contact information in a place with your Will and/or final wishes so that your loved ones can notify us at the appropriate time.

Mail checks to

Stas Chrazanowski
2772 Lighthouse Point E, #310
Baltimore, MD 21224

Little Flower Fraternity Council

Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Bart Karwacki, OFM Conventual

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