



January 2024

THE CALL

St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order *From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel*

Minister: Andrea Bender, OFS; Vice Minister: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS; Secretary: Thomas Bender, OFS; Treasurer: Ann Wester, OFS; Formation Director: Janette Martin, OFS; Councilors-at-Large: Ann Corro, OFS, Michael Landrigan, OFS

Meeting - 1:00 pm. - Sunday, January 14, 2024

- Opening Prayer – Ritual, p. 35.
- Ongoing Formation – Jan Martin, OFS will lead discussion on Reflection 1 in “To Live as Francis Lived”
- Business Meeting
- Liturgy of the Hours – Volunteers Needed! - Evening Prayer II for the Second Sunday of Ordinary Time

Hymn - TBD (Please bring your hymnal and breviary)

*Psalms/ Short Reading/Intercessions – Sunday Evening Prayer II from
Week II of the Psalter*

Antiphon for the Magnificat/Closing Prayer – Proper of Seasons

- Closing Prayers – Ritual, p. 36.

Remote Access to the Monthly Meeting Info

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85418000041?pwd=d0pFSDREaDJmdjZpNWlqbll4T20rZz09>

Meeting ID: 854 1800 0041

Passcode: 668951

Dial by your location

Phone: +1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

Meeting ID: 854 1800 0041

Passcode: 668951

Minister's Notes

*Matt 11:11 ...among those born of women
there has arisen no one greater than John the
Baptist.*

Sometime over Advent, I was reading
something that referred to this verse from

Matthew. The text pointed out that John the Baptist has two feast days, his birth, and his martyrdom. He is also focused on for two Sundays in Advent. In my usual day late and a dollar short manner, it took a couple days before it occurred to me that the Church

focuses on John the Baptist daily at Morning prayer. The Benedictus, or in English, the Canticle of Zechariah is poetry proclaimed by Zechariah after over nine months of silence. He starts out praising God. If you skip down to "You my child" these are words directed to his son, John the Baptist.

Are you the instrument of God's tender compassion the way John was? John as an adult was anything but a warm blanket or snuggly teddy bear yet he brought God's message of mercy and compassion. What is your excuse and how are you going to overcome it?

My other prayer theme requires understanding of the geography of my parish, St Charles where a copy of the Pieta replaced a small statue of Mary in the chapel of repose. I found myself singing "What child is this" (to myself) in front of the Pieta. Jesus was born to die.

My New Year's Eve gift from Bob Longo, OFS, our regional minister, is a blank fraternity annual report, to be returned, filled in, ASAP. It is an opportunity to report what we are doing, whether we are growing or shrinking, how we have invited, or included others. These are

Prayer Intentions

- Peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East and the victims of the violence.
- Bill Wester, Ann's husband, for successful treatment of heart issue – procedure 2/8/2024.
- Grace Coipuram, OFS
- Virginia Roccapriore, widow of Joseph Roccapriore, OFS
- Peace in Ukraine and protection for Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics there.
- For the Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.
- For those who will not pray for themselves and with no one to pray for them.
- For religious freedom and all imprisoned Christians imprisoned for their belief in God especially Bishop Alvarez of Nicaragua.
- For the poor, the hungry, and the homeless.

questions for all of us to ask ourselves. Has my status changed in the last year? What have I thanked God for? Scary thought- what was pending a year ago that is still pending?

Several fraternity members bought towels on sale for the next time we collected for the homeless. I have not scheduled towels as an item to collect because we need a volunteer to drive them out to the Lamb Centerr 2-3 times a year. Let me know if you are willing to transport the Fraternities' gift to the homeless and I will schedule a month to collect towels. In the meantime, please continue to donate to food banks. The big holiday push is over and, like the leftovers in your refrigerator, all has been eaten. The cupboards are bare. Let's fill them again.

Ongoing formation - We start "to live as Francis lived" this month. Once again, I will have copies available for sale, \$19, at the fraternity meeting. Jan asks that you read and pray over Reflection 1 - pages 2-5. There is also spiritual meat in the preliminary pages; the Introduction, etc.

Pax et Bonum, Andrea

- For our Holy Father Pope Francis.
- For the health and well-being, and safety and protection of all priests.
- For Marie, cousin of Anne Pastorkovich, who is undergoing chemotherapy.
- For Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, for depression.
- For the sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her
- For the repose of the soul of Maria Kang Gibson, OFS, past minister of St. Bonaventure Korean Fraternity, and the consolation of her family including Mary Claire and Joe Bender.

Professions

None in January

Birthdays of the Month

Terrence Lisbeth (25th)
Christine Plunkett (27th)

Necrology

James G R Rowe – January 1980
Dorothy Klinetop – January 12, 1982
John J Reilly – January 19, 1983
Sharon Smith – January 1985
Agnes L Warren – January 1986
Margaret Ambury – January 3, 1987
Mary Kimm – January 1991
Lillis R Wempe – January 1994
Frances Ambury – January 22, 2001
Vincent Klaus – January 1, 2006
Robert Victor Bailey – January 12, 2011

Secretary’s Note

As we are coming into a New Year, it is a time to take stock. Andrea offered questions in her *Notes* to get us started but included on page 6 is a reflection adapted from *Formation Friday* for January 5, 2024 to continue our stock taking.

Likewise, we celebrate the first Third Order sister from the U.S.A. to be canonized, St. Marianne Cope, OFS on January 23. Incidentally, she was beatified with a Dominican sister, Bl. Ascensión of the Heart of Jesus Nicol Goñi. Bl. Ascensión’s canonization cause is still pending. An excerpt celebrating her from an audience given by Pope Benedict after the beatification is on p. 8.

Peace and good,
Randy



Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-2022-1-Catalog-by-Mary-Lou-Coffman-OFS.pdf>

January 1

Mary, Mother of God

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2017-12/gospel-reflection-mary-mother-of-god.html>

January 3

Most Holy Name of Jesus

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=6850>

January 4

Bl. Christina of Tuscany, Virgin, Third Order Secular (d. 1310)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-christina-of-tuscany.html>

January 5

- Bl. Didacus Joseph of Cadiz, Priest, First Order, Capuchin (1743-1801)
https://www.capuchin.org/saints_blessed/didacus-joseph-of-cadiz/#
- Bl. Ruggiero da Todi, Religious, Order of Friars Minor (d. 1237)
<http://catholic.net/op/articles/1513/cat/1205/ruggiero-da-todi-.html#>

January 6

- St. Charles of Sezze, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (October 19, 1613 – January 6, 1670)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_of_Sezze

January 7

- St. Angela of Foligno, Widow, Third Order Secular (1248-January 3, 1309)
<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/saints/01/04/st--angela-of-foligno--franciscan.html>

January 8

- Bl. Eurosia Fabris Barban, Third Order Secular (September 27, 1866-January 8, 1932)
<https://stevenwood.com/reflections/franciscan/0108-18.htm>

January 9

- Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ (date for 2023)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism_of_the_Lord
- Bl. Giles of Laurenzana, Lay Brother, Order of Friars Minor (1443-January 10, 1518)
<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-giles-of-lorenzana.html>

January 10

- Bl. Gregory X, Pope, Third Order Secular (c. 1210-January 10, 1276)
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/gregory-x-pope-bl>

January 11

- St Thomas of Cori, Priest, First Order Friars Minor (1655-1720)
<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-thomas-of-cori.html>

January 12

- St. Bernard of Corleone, Priest, First Order Capuchin (1605-1667)
https://www.capuchin.org/saints_blessed/bernard-of-corleone/

January 14

- Bl. Odoric de Pordenone, Priest, First Order (1286-1331)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-odoric-of-pordenone.html>

January 15

- Bl. James of Pieve, Third Order Secular, Martyr (13th Cent.-January 15, 1304)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-james-of-pieve.html>

January 16

- Sts. Berard de' Leopardi of Calvi, Peter de' Bonanti of Sangemini, Otto de' Petricchi, Accursio Vacuzio and Adjutus of Narni, Protomartyrs of the Franciscan Order (d. 1220)
<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-berard-and-companions/>

January 17

- Bl. Giuseppe Tovinii, Third Order Secular (1841-1897)
<http://www.papalartifacts.com/portfolio-item/blessed-giuseppe-tovini/>
- Bl. Matthew of Girgenti, Bishop, Order of Friars Minor (d. 1451)
<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-matthew-of-girgenti.html#>

January 20

- Bl. Jean-Baptiste Triquerie, Priest, First Order Conventual (martyred 1794)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-jean-baptiste-triquerie.html>
- St. Eustochia Calafato, Virgin, Poor Clares (March 25, 1434–January 20, 1485)
<https://catholicsaints.info/saint-eustochia-calafato/>

January 22

Bl. Joseph Nascimbeni, Priest, Third Order Secular (1851-1922)

<https://theblackcordelias.wordpress.com/2009/01/22/blessed-giuseppe-nascimbeni-january-22/>

St. Vincent Pallotti, Priest, Third Order Secular, Founder Pallottine Fathers
(April 21, 1795-January 22, 1850)

<https://catholicism.org/saint-vincent-pallotti.html>

January 23

St. Marianne Cope, Third Order Regular (January 23, 1838-August 9, 1918)

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-marianne-cope>

January 24

Bl. Paula Gambarara-Costa, Widow, Third Order Secular (March 3, 1463-January 24, 1515)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-paula-gambarara-costa.html>

January 27

St. Angela Merici, Founder, Third Order Regular (March 21, 1474-January 27, 1540)

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Angela-Merici>

Bl. Paul Joseph Nardini, Priest, Third Order Secular, Founder of the Franciscan Sisters
of the Holy Family (July 25, 1821-January 27, 1862)

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20061022_nardini_en.html

January 28

Bl. Bienvenu de Recanati, Priest, First Order (1289)

<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-benvenute-of-recanati.html>

January 29

St. Francis de Sales, Bishop, Doctor of the Church, Codbearer (August 21, 1567-December 28, 1622)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_de_Sales

Bl. Francesco Zirano, Priest and Martyr, OFM Conv. (1565–January 25, 1603)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francesco_Zirano

Brother Juniper, OFM, Servant of God (d. 1258)

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/servant-of-god-brother-juniper/>

January 30

St. Hyacintha de Mariscotti, Third Order Regular (1585-January 30, 1640)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/st-hyacintha-de-mariscotti.html>

January 31

St. John Bosco, Priest, Third Order Secular (August 16, 1815-January 31, 1888)

www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-john-bosco/

Bl. Louisa Albertoni, Third Order Secular (1473-January 31, 1533)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-louise-albertoni.html>

February 3

Bl. Andrew of Segni, First Order Lay Brother (1240-February 1, 1302)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-andrew-of-segni/>

February 4

St. Joseph de Leonisse, Priest, First Order Capuchin (January 8, 1556-February 4, 1612)

<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/st-joseph-of-leonisse.html>

February 5

St. Jane of Valois, Founder, Franciscan Order of the Annonciades (1464-1505)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-jane-of-valois.html>

February 6

Martyrs of Japan, First Order Priests, Lay Brothers, and Third Order Secular (m. 1597)

<https://stevenwood.com/reflections/franciscan/0206-468.htm>

February 7

St. Giles Mary of St. Joseph, Lay Brother, Martyrs, Order of Friars Minor
(November 16, 1729–February 7, 1812)

<https://stevenwood.com/reflections/franciscan/0208-49.htm>

Bl. Pope Pius IX, Pope, Third Order Secular (May 13, 1792-February 7, 1878)

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12134b.htm>

St. Giovanni of Tiora, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Martyr (March 15, 1760, February 7, 1816)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-john-of-tiora.html>

February 8

Bl. Anthony of Stroncone, Lay Brother, Order of Friars Minor (1391-February 7, 1471)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-anthony-of-stroncone.html>

Bl. Jacoba de Settesoli, Third Order Secular (1190-February 8, 1273)

<https://franciscans.sg/blessed-lady-jacoba-of-settesoli-1190-1273/>

February 9

Bl. Leopold of Alpandere, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin (June 25, 1864- February 9, 1956)

https://www.capuchin.org/saints_blessed/leopold-of-alpandere/

February 10

Bl. Aloysius Stepinac, Bishop, Martyr, Third Order Secular (May 8, 1898 – February 10, 1960)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aloysius_Stepinac

Bl. Clare of Rimini, Poor Clare (1282-February 10, 1346)

<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-clare-of-rimini.html>

Taking Stock 2024 Our Lives of Prayer as Secular Franciscans

“As Minister General of a large Order, St. Bonaventure provided, among other things, spiritual direction for those seeking God. In a letter to Poor Clare nuns, he offered directives as to how we might enter into prayer by way of ‘descent.’ The steps are summarized as follows:

- Return to yourself; enter into your heart.
- Ponder what you were, are, should have been, called to be.
- What you are by nature.
- What you are through sin.
- What you should have been through effort.
- What you can still be through grace.
- Meditate in your heart.
- Let your spirit brood. (Are you resentful, angry, jealous?)
- Plow this field, work on yourself.
- Strive for freedom within, the freedom that leads to relationship with God, realizing that God will never force us to love him.
- Lack of self-knowledge and failure to appreciate one’s own worth make for faulty judgment in all other matters
- If you are not able to understand (and accept) your own self, you will not be able to understand (or accept) what is beyond you.”¹

Our Prayer Journey as Secular Franciscans²

The Rule calls us to:

- daily conversion
- prayer and contemplation

- frequent reception of the Eucharist, Reconciliation, and the other sacraments
- by imitating Christ's redemptive obedience

WE turn to God because we are to seek the FIRE that Jesus came to set. What do we need on our journey?

- We take as our "book" the poor and crucified Christ
- Our "inspiration" the writings of Francis, Clare, Bonaventure
- Our "guide" the Holy Spirit
- Our "model" Mary
- Our "core" the Gospel
- Our "focus" the life of penance we profess to live
- Our "sustenance" the Eucharist, Sacraments, and prayer.

Examen

- Are you able to acknowledge those habits that keep you from following Christ? Are you able to strip yourselves of them?
- How do you view suffering:
 - As a curse?
 - Or as an opportunity to enter into the redemptive suffering of Jesus?
- Is your heart and mind completely open to the will of God for your life?
- What is your comfort level? Has it changed any since you professed the Rule?
- What are the Stations of the Cross in your life?

Bonaventure reminds us; "*There is no other path but through the burning love of the Crucified.*" How do we enter into the Crucified? Bonaventure offers us a way:

Christ on the Cross
 bows His head,
 waiting for you,
 that he may kiss you;
 He stretches out His arms,
 that He may embrace you;
 His hands are open,
 That He may enrich you;
 His body is spread out,
 That he may give
 Himself totally;
 His feet are nailed,
 That He may stay there;
 His side is open for you,
 That He may let you enter there.
 St. Bonaventure, *Soliloquy I*, 39²

¹Bonaventure, *Perfectione vitae ad sorores* (Perf. Vit.) 1.5 (VIII, 109). Engl. trans. Jose de Vinck, "On the Perfection of Life, Addressed to Sisters," in *The Works of Bonaventure*, vol. 1, *Mystical Opuscula* (Paterson, N.J.: Saint Anthony Guild Press, 1960), p. 214. Quoted in: Delio, Ilia. *Franciscan Prayer* (Kindle Locations 613-616). Kindle Edition.

²FUN Manual, "The rule of the SFO," page 26-28 (of 46).

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE PILGRIMS GATHERED IN ROME
FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF
ASCENSIÓN NICOL GOÑI AND MARIANNE COPE (Excerpt)

Monday, 16 May 2005

...It is with great joy that I welcome you to Rome, dear brothers and sisters, for the Beatification of Mother Marianne Cope. I know that your participation in Saturday's solemn liturgy, so significant for the universal Church, will have been a source of renewed grace and commitment to the exercise of charity which marks the life of every Christian.

Marianne Cope's life was one of profound faith and love which bore fruit in a missionary spirit of immense hope and trust. In 1862 she entered the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Syracuse where she imbibed the particular spirituality of St Francis of Assisi, dedicating herself wholeheartedly to spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Her own experience of consecrated life saw an extraordinary apostolate unfold, adorned with heroic virtue.

As is well known, while Mother Marianne was Superior General of her Congregation, the then Bishop of Honolulu invited the Order to come to Hawaii and work among the lepers. Leprosy was spreading rapidly and causing unspeakable suffering and misery among the afflicted. Fifty other Congregations received the same plea for assistance, but only Mother Marianne, in the name of her Sisters, responded positively.

True to the charism of the Order and in imitation of St Francis, who had embraced lepers, Mother Marianne volunteered herself for the mission with a trusting, "Yes"! And for 35 years, until her death in 1918, our new Blessed dedicated her life to the love and service of lepers on the islands of Maui and Molokai.

Undoubtedly the generosity of Mother Marianne was, humanly speaking, exemplary. Good

intentions and selflessness alone, however, do not adequately explain her vocation. It is only the perspective of faith which enables us to understand her witness - as a Christian and as a Religious - to that sacrificial love which reaches its fullness in Jesus Christ. All that she achieved was inspired by her personal love of the Lord, which she in turn expressed through her love of those abandoned and rejected by society in a most wretched way.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us today be inspired by Bl. Marianne Cope to renew our commitment to walk the path of holiness...

https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2005/may/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20050516_beatificazione.html accessed on 1/9/2024.