



July 2023

## ***THE CALL***

### **St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order**

*From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel*

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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, July 9, 2023**

- We are collecting towels for the homeless.
- *Opening Prayer* – Ritual, p. 35.
- *Ongoing Formation* – Penance, Poverty and Joy

Please read the General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order (at least Art. 1-36) The General Constitutions, promulgated in 2000, the Secular Franciscan Rule in our time.

The 2020 updated translation can be found online at [www.secularfranciscansusa.org](http://www.secularfranciscansusa.org) -> Resources -> Guidelines, Forms & Other Resources -> Other Resources / OFS Governing Documents -> The General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order (2000) or:

[https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020\\_Dec-updated-Translation\\_OFS-General-Constitutions-s1469.pdf](https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020_Dec-updated-Translation_OFS-General-Constitutions-s1469.pdf)

Secular Franciscan profess to follow the Rule completely. You have professed to fulfill the whole Rule. Integrity requires that you do what you professed to do. As we reflect on the SFO Rule, let its meaning, and demands soak into your mind and heart and life. From within yourself, discover ways to express the Gospel in daily life. Contribute the Franciscan flavor and perspective to the world and Church. It will make a difference in society and the Church. It is called *faithfulness*. - Fr. Lester Bach, OFM, Cap.

- *Fellowship*
- *Business Meeting*
- *Liturgy of the Hours* – Evening Prayer II for the Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – verse for the Canticle of Mary and Concluding Prayer are from the Proper of Seasons, the remainder is from the Psalter, Week II, Sunday, Evening Prayer II. Hymn TBD. Please bring your breviary and hymnal.
- *Closing Prayers* – Ritual, p. 36.

#### **Remote Access to the Monthly Meeting Info**

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85418000041?pwd=d0pFSDREaDJmdjZpNWlqbII4T20rZz09>

Dial by your location  
Phone: +1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 854 1800 0041  
Passcode: 668951

## Minister's Notes

Servant leadership seems to be an oxymoron. How can one be a servant and a leader? A servant is acting for another. A servant often does simple tasks to free the person being served to do more valued tasks. A servant takes orders. The servant doesn't issue orders. So how can they lead?

Servant leadership is collaborative. It invites others to participate. It empowers. Terrence gave us a good example of servant leadership. As he prepared to leave Virginia, He came to several fraternity meetings offering different tasks for other members to pick up. He followed through with whatever was needed to at least start the task. I even got an empty 3 ring binder with a list of items that should be in it when I was elected minister.

Last month I ended the fraternity meeting asking for everyone's help packing up. By the time I finished 2 brief conversations, the chairs were put away, the snack table was cleared, and I needed to hop to it to pack technology before the table went away. I didn't even have to carry stuff down the stairs. Thank you! We work best when we work together.

On another vein, I received this letter through Jan Martin: "The Mother of Light Center (MOLC) is a charitable non-profit run and managed by volunteers. MOLC was founded on February 2, 2019, to serve the community in need of food, supplies, and spiritual nourishment. We serve 3700 households. A personal phone is the only phone to communicate with providers of food like the Capital Area Food Bank, Target, Ltd., Wegman, Whole Foods and area Churches. In addition, we deliver food to area neighborhoods and personally check by phone on individuals receiving food delivered. No corporate funds are received, everything is through private donations.

We would be grateful to receive monetary support for phone services at approximately \$215 a month. This would allow us to continue our services in a streamline way with a MOLC phone number and no personal phone."

Jan Martin recognized the need and I asked for details in writing. The need is real and one that I think we could fill if we worked together so it is not too great a burden on anyone's budget. I suggest a two-year commitment. By then we would have had an election and the new council could re-evaluate whether to continue..

Pax et Bonum,  
Andrea

Blessed Solanus Casey, OFM, Cap. Quotes

Worry is a weakness from which very few of us are entirely free. We must be on guard against this most insidious enemy of our peace of soul. Instead let us foster confidence in God, and thank Him ahead of time for whatever he chooses to send us.

*We must be faithful to the present moment, or we will frustrate the plan of God for our lives.*

Gratitude is the first sign of a thinking, rational creature.

*Death can be very beautiful - like a wedding - if we make it so.*

Mary gave birth to Christ in a manger at Bethlehem--the rest of us 33 years later--under the cross at Calvary.

*The only science that gives purpose to every other science is the science of religion - the science of our happy relationship with, and our providential dependence on God and our neighbor.*

## Prayer Intentions

Grace Coipuram, OFS

Virginia Roccapiore, widow of

Joseph Roccapiore, OFS

Healing for Bernadette Lozano, OFS  
after her hip re-replacement

Peace in Ukraine and protection for Ukrainian  
and Ruthenian Rite Catholics there.

Denise, Ann Wester's sister-in-law, having  
surgery to remove a brain tumor on July 24<sup>th</sup>.

For the Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.

For those who will not pray for themselves and  
for those who do not have anyone to  
pray for them.

Bishop Alvarez, incarcerated in Nicaragua as a  
political prisoner for his faith

Patrick Birello, OFS after his second surgery.

For the poor, the hungry, and the homeless.

For Amy Seldin and her family, and her  
clients that are asking for prayers.

Peace in the world, and brotherhood among all  
peoples and nations.

## Professions

*No professions in July*

## Birthdays of the Month

Ann Wester (9<sup>th</sup>)

Angela Gill (12<sup>th</sup>)

Patrick Birello (12<sup>th</sup>)

Joseph Kennedy (16<sup>th</sup>)

## Necrology

Hilma M. Boyd – July 14, 1989

Dorothy Furey – July 3, 2014

## Secretary's Notes

The deadline for the Regional Retreat has been extended to July 10<sup>th</sup>. There are still slots available. The flyer is on p. 4. See Ann Wester no later than the meeting Sunday for financial assistance. Unfortunately, Andrea and I are still awaiting grandchild #3 and cannot commit to this. (Continued on p. 5.)

## St. Bonaventure, OFM Quotes

Christ has something in common with all creatures. With the stone he shares existence, with the plants he shares life, with the animals he shares sensation, and with the angels he shares intelligence. Thus, all things are transformed in Christ since in the fullness of his nature he embraces some part of every creature.

*Men do not fear a powerful hostile army as the powers of hell fear the name and protection of Mary.*

The best perfection of a religious man is to do common things in a perfect manner. A constant fidelity in small things is a great and heroic virtue.

*Any old woman can love God better than a doctor of theology can.*

In beautiful things St. Francis saw Beauty itself, and through His vestiges imprinted on creation he followed his Beloved everywhere, making from all things a ladder by which he could climb up and embrace Him who is utterly desirable.

*To know much and taste nothing-of what use is that?*

Not only do they offend thee, O Lady, who outrage thee, but thou art also offended by those who neglect to ask thy favors ... He who neglects the service of the Blessed Virgin will die in his sins ... He who does not invoke thee, O Lady, will never get to Heaven ... Not only will those from whom Mary turns her countenance not be saved, but there will be no hope of their salvation ... No one can be saved without the protection of Mary.

*Every creature is a divine word because it proclaims God.*

Since happiness is nothing else than the enjoyment of the Supreme Good, and the Supreme Good is above us, no one can enjoy happiness unless he rises above himself.

*He, therefore, who wishes to ascend to God must first avoid sin, which deforms nature.*

In all your deeds and words you should look upon this Jesus as your model.



**"What Next? Seeking, finding, losing the way with Francis of Assisi as our (sometimes confusing) guide".**

**ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA REGIONAL RETREAT**  
**Loyola Retreat House, Faulkner, Maryland**  
**FRIDAY, July 21, – SUNDAY, July 23rd, 2023**

The cost per person is **\$275 (all single rooms)** all meals included.

If you can attend the retreat, start making your reservations as soon as possible.

A non-refundable deposit Check, for \$175, is required.

Make check payable to: **St. Margaret of Cortona Region**

The deadline to send your deposit check is **July 10, 2023.**

When sending your check, include the following: Your name, email address, and the name of your Fraternity

**Mail check to:**

**Peter Noyes**

**1904 Atkisson Road**

**Joppa, MD 21085-1811**

If you have questions concerning cost or non-refundable deposits, contact Peter at:

[pnoyesofs@gmail.com](mailto:pnoyesofs@gmail.com)

All information can be found on the regional website at:

<https://saintmargaretofcortona.org/upcoming-events/>

**AGENDA (Bring your Liturgy of the Hours)**

**Friday**

4:00 PM Check-in  
 7:00 PM Dinner  
 8:00 PM Welcome/Evening Prayer (LOTH)  
 Fr. Charley - "Who am I, God?"  
 "God comes to us disguised as our  
 lives" - R. Rohr  
 9:00 PM Social

**Saturday**

8:00 AM Breakfast  
 9:30 AM Morning Prayer  
 10:00 AM Fr. Charley - "Who are You, God?"  
 Images of God, and: Doubts as  
 stepping stones to faith."  
 11:00 PM Our human relationships as  
 parables of our God relationship:  
 intimacy, loneliness, love, and  
 "dark night"  
 12:30 PM Lunch  
 1:00 PM Quiet Time (Adoration in the

Chapel)  
 3:00 PM Fr. Charley - "A compass is not a  
 map!" - Difficult choices and  
 discerning "the will of God".  
 5:00 PM Mass (in the Chapel)  
 6:00 PM Dinner  
 7:30 PM Evening Prayer  
 7:45 PM Social

**Sunday**

8:00 AM Breakfast  
 9:30 AM Morning Prayer  
 9:45 AM Fr. Charley - Who are we? –  
 believers, Catholics, Franciscans  
 and seekers - in a world and a  
 Church that are changing and  
 facing hard decisions?"  
 12:30 PM Lunch - Departure

(Continued from p.3.) This month we celebrate on of my favorite Franciscan saints/blesseds, Blessed Solanus Casey, OFM, Cap. of Detroit, and Seraphic Doctor, St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio.OFM. Text boxes with quotes from both and an article from the

TAU-USA by Tom Bello, OFS from Fall of 2013 are in this edition of *The Call*.

Peace and Good,  
Randy

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### Saints of the Month

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

July 1

St. Junipero Serra, Priest, Alcantarine Friars Minor, missionary (November 24, 1713-August 28, 1784)

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/franciscan-spirit-blog/the-franciscan-saints-junipero-serra/>

Blesseds Marcello Maruzzo, Friar OFM (23 July 1929 – 1 July 1981) and Luis Navarro, OFS (21 June 1950 – 1 July 1981) Martyrs of Guatemala

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcello\\_Maruzzo\\_and\\_Luis\\_Navarro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcello_Maruzzo_and_Luis_Navarro)

July 3

Bl. Marie Anne Fontcuberta, Foundress, Franciscan Missionaries of the Mother of the Divine Shepherd (January 13, 1827-July 3, 1886)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peregrina\\_Mogas\\_Fontcuberta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peregrina_Mogas_Fontcuberta)

July 4

St. Elizabeth of Portugal, Third Order Secular (1271-1336)

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Elizabeth-of-Portugal>

St. John Zhang Huan, Martyr, Franciscan seminarian (August 1838-July 9, 1900)

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/zhang-huan-john-st>

Bl. Modestino of Jesus and Mary, Priest, OFM of the Alcantarines (September 9, 1802-July 4, 1854)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domenico\\_Mazzarella](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domenico_Mazzarella)

St. Peter Zhang Banniu, Martyr, Secular Franciscan (1849-August 1838-July 9, 1900)

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/zhang-banniu-peter-st>

July 8

Ss. Gregory Grassi, Hermine Grivot and Companions, First Order and Third Order Religious and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of China (d. 1900)

<https://stevenwood.com/reflections/franciscan/0708-1042.htm>

July 9

Bl. Marija of Jesus Crucified Petković, Foundress, Third Order Regular (December 10, 1892-July 9, 1966)

[https://www.vatican.va/news\\_services/liturgy/saints/ns\\_lit\\_doc\\_20030606\\_petkovic\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20030606_petkovic_en.html)

11 Martyrs of Damascus, Eight Franciscan Friars and Three Maronite Laymen (July 9, 1860)

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/damascus-martyrs>

St. Nicholas Pieck and Companions: Anthony Hornaer, Anthony of Weert, Cornelius, Francis, Godfrey, Jerome, Nicasius, Peter, Theodoric, Willehad, Martyrs of Holland (d. 1572)

<https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11065b.htm>

St. Veronica Giuliani, Capuchin Poor Clare (December 27, 1660-July 9, 1727)

<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-veronica-giuliani.html>

July 12

St. John Jones and John Wall, First Order, Martyrs of England (c. 1530-1598; 1620-1679)

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saints-john-jones-and-john-wall>

Ss. Louis and Zelig Martin, Third Order Secular, First Spouses Canonized Together

<http://saintsresource.com/louis-and-zelig-martin/>

July 13

Bl. Angeline of Marsciano, Foundress, Third Order Regular (1357-July 14, 1435)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angeline\\_of\\_Marsciano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angeline_of_Marsciano)

- July 14  
St. Francisco Solano, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Missionary (March 10, 1549-July 14, 1610)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis\\_Solanus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Solanus)
- July 15  
Bl. Bernard of Baden, Third Order Secular (c. 1428-July 15, 1458)  
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernard-of-baden.html>  
St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, Cardinal, Minister General Order Friars Minor, Doctor of the Church (1221-July 15, 1274)  
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Bonaventure>
- July 16  
Canonization of St. Francis on July 16, 1228 by Pope Gregory IX  
<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/bull-of-canonization-of-st-francis-of-assisi-mira-circa-nos-7860>  
St. Marie-Madeleine Postel, Foundress, Third Order Regular (November 28, 1756-July 16, 1846)  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/postel-marie-madeleine-st>
- July 18  
St. Camillus de Lellis, Capuchin Novitiate before founding Ministers to the Sick (May 25, 1550-July 14, 1614)  
<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-camillus-de-lellis/>
- July 19  
Bl. Peter of Cresci, Priest, Third Order Secular (d. July 19, 1323)  
<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-peter-cresci.html>
- July 19  
Bl. Herman Stepien, First Order Conventual, Polish Martyr (October 21, 1910-July 19, 1943)  
<https://carmelitesph.org/memorial-of-blessed-karol-herman-stepien/>
- July 21  
St. Lawrence of Brindisi, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, Doctor of the Church (July 22, 1559-July 22, 1619)  
<http://catholicism.org/saint-lawrence-of-brindisi-apostolic-doctor.html>
- July 23  
St. Kunigunde of Poland, Abbess, Poor Clare Sisters (March 5, 1224-July 24, 1292)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kunigunde\\_of\\_Poland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kunigunde_of_Poland)
- July 24  
Bl. Louise of Savoy, Poor Clare Nun (December 28, 1461-July 25, 1503)  
<http://stevenwood.com/reflections/franciscan/0724-23.htm>
- July 25  
Bl. Antonio Lucci, Bishop, OFM Conventual (August 2, 1682-July 25, 1752)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio\\_Lucci](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_Lucci)
- July 26  
St. Bartolomea Capitanio, Third Order Secular before founding another order (January 13, 1807-July 26, 1833)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bartolomea\\_Capitanio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bartolomea_Capitanio)
- July 27  
Bl. Archangelo of Calatafimi, Religious, Friars Minor of the Observance (d. 1460)  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/archangelo-calatafimi-bl>  
Bl. Maria Maddalena Martinengo, Capuchin Poor Clare nun (October 5, 1687-July 27, 1737)  
<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-mary-magdalene-martinengo.html>  
Bl. Nevolo of Faenza, Third Order Secular (13th Cent.-July 27, 1280)  
<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-nevolo-of-faenza/>

July 28

St. Alphonsa of the Immaculate Conception, Franciscan Clarist Congregation  
(August 19, 1910-July 28, 1946)

[http://www.vatican.va/news\\_services/liturgy/saints/2008/ns\\_lit\\_doc\\_20081012\\_alfonsa\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/2008/ns_lit_doc_20081012_alfonsa_en.html)

Bl. Mary Teresa Kowalska, Capuchin Poor Clares, Martyr (d. 1941)

<https://www.capdox.capuchin.org.au/saints-blesseds/maria-teresa-kowalska/>

July 30

Bl. Bertrand de la Tour, Cardinal, Order of Friars Minor (c. 1262-1332)

<http://stevenwood.com/reflections/franciscan/0730-23.htm>

Bl. Solanus Casey, Priest, OFM Capuchin (November 25, 1870-July 31, 1957)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solanus\\_Casey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solanus_Casey)

August 2

Feast of St. Mary of the Angels of the Portiuncula - Plenary indulgence available

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12286a.htm>

August 4

Bl. Frédéric Janssoone, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (November 19, 1838-August 4, 1916)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frédéric\\_Janssoone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frédéric_Janssoone)

St. John Vianney, Priest, Third Order Secular (May 8, 1786-August 4, 1859)

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08326c.htm>

August 6

Bl. Maria Francesca Rubatto, Founder, Capuchin Sisters of Mother Rubatto  
(February 14, 1844-August 6, 1904)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anna\\_Maria\\_Rubatto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anna_Maria_Rubatto)

August 7

Bls. Agathangelus and Cassian, Priests, OFM Capuchin, Martyrs (d. 1638)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-agathangel-and-cassian.html>

August 8

Holy Father St. Dominic, Founder of the Order of Preachers and Cordbearer  
(August 8, 1170-August 6, 1221)

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05106a.htm>

August 9

Bl. John of La Verna, Religious, Order of Friars Minor (1259-August 9, 1322)

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

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### **The Franciscan Command to Smile!**

**By Tom Bello, OFS**

Our Brother Bill Short, who blessed us at the Q, has a wonderful set of tapes entitled *The Treasure of a Poor Man: St. Francis of Assisi and Franciscan Spirituality* ([www.nowyouknowmedia.com/franciscan.html](http://www.nowyouknowmedia.com/franciscan.html)). In this set, Brother Bill gives 12 enlightening talks about various aspects of Franciscan Spirituality. In the ninth talk, entitled "No Gloomy Hypocrites! Spiritual Joy to Frustrate the Devil," Brother Bill relates how St. Francis in the Rule of 1221 as much as mandates the spiritual practice of showing joy to all without exception.

In the *Omnibus of Sources*, page 38, the Rule of 1221, Chapter 7, reads: "And all the friars, no matter where they are or in whatever situation they find themselves,

should like spiritually minded men, diligently show reverence and honor to one another without murmuring (1 Peter 4:9). They should let it be seen that they are happy in God, cheerful and courteous, as is expected of them, and be careful not to appear gloomy or depressed like hypocrites."

"This may be the only Rule in the Catholic Church that has a positive command about being cheerful," exclaims Brother Bill! He then makes several points about what I call this command to smile.

First, paraphrasing Brother Bill, it is not true that this command arises merely to generate the simple-minded, jovial, heavy-set friars like one may see in the comics, the

movies or on cookie jars. No. Brother Bill says that the Rule of 1221 may have come out of a time of considerable sadness and even doubt for St. Francis. The Order he had founded may have seemed to be growing away from him; he didn't feel at times that he had a place in the Order. St. Francis may have even been tempted to leave the Order, Brother Bill suggests. Thus, this command arises out of a genuine struggle against a darkness of spirit.

Second, again paraphrasing, this command focused not merely on the individual, but on the effect the individual produced on the people the individual encountered. In other words, this command to be "happy in God, cheerful and courteous," pointed as much outwardly as inwardly. Indeed, just one line before the command above, the Rule of 1221, Chapter 7, reads, "Everyone who comes to them, friend or foe, rogue or robber, must be made welcome." (Ibid.)

I pause to ask myself, "Do I always greet everyone, without exception, with cheer and joy? I must answer that I do not, yet St. Francis exhorts his followers that welcome and gladness must be on our faces, even before a "foe, rogue or robber."

More than this, these Franciscans were living in fraternity, and they must not show their inner doubts and depression to those with whom they lived and worked and prayed lest the others lose their own spiritual joy. Brother Bill relates how the others around him constantly described St. Francis as "cheerful," but when St. Francis felt that inner darkness, he would withdraw into prayer so as not to bring those he so loved down.

Again, I pause to ask myself, "Am I a cause of joy or do I bring sadness and doubt into the family circle, into the fraternity gathering?" And what about you?

Third, the deeper spiritual importance of this command to show joy was to combat the devil. Thomas of Celano writes in Chapter 88 of the Second Life in the , page 465: "St. Francis maintained that the safest remedy against the thousand snares and wiles of the enemy is spiritual joy. For he would say, 'The devil rejoices most when he can snatch away spiritual joy from a servant of God. He carries dust so he can throw it into even the tiniest chinks of conscience and soil the candor of mind and purity of life. But when spiritual joy fills the heart,' he said, 'the serpent throws off his deadly poison in vain. The devils cannot harm the servant of Christ when they see he is filled with holy joy. When, however, the soul is wretched, desolate, and filled

with sorrow, it is easily overwhelmed by its sorrow or it may turn to vain enjoyments.'

"The saint, therefore, made it a point to keep himself in joy of heart and to preserve the unction of the Spirit and the oil of gladness. He avoided with the greatest care the miserable illness of dejection, so that if he felt it creeping over his mind even a little, he would have recourse very quickly to prayer. For he would say, 'If the servant of God, as may happen, is disturbed in any way, he should rise immediately to pray and he should remain in the presence of the heavenly Father until he restores unto him the joy of salvation. For if he remains stupefied in sadness, the Babylonian stuff will increase, so that, unless it be at length driven out by tears, it will generate an abiding rust in the heart.'"

Again, to paraphrase Brother Bill, other spiritual traditions in the Catholic Church may stress seriousness and gravitas, but the Franciscan spiritual tradition takes joy very seriously. The devil's "dust" and "an abiding rust in the heart" must be avoided both in ourselves and in our influence on others.

Yes, my beloved sisters and brothers, there is much in the world around us to cause great dismay. We see hatred and war, violence and abuse, poverty and starvation. Yes, there may be much in our families and fraternities to cause us to worry and doubt. We see faction and discord as we pray to be instruments of God's great peace. And yes, speaking for myself, I am a fallen creature, always beset by the devil, the world and the flesh. Sometimes I fall down. Sometimes I don't do what I should do to help others. Sometimes I may cause others to fall.

Nonetheless, as children of the same all-loving, all-forgiving, all-powerful God, as permanently professed followers of Ss. Francis and Clare in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, let us heed seriously this aspect of spiritual joy so firmly grounded in the Franciscan spiritual tradition.

Let us strive to be cheerful and welcoming to all we meet, to combat that darkness in ourselves and in others.

Let us never cease praying and working for our families and fraternities to be places where true spiritual joy in the Lord resides and where we are recognized by all as people "happy in God, cheerful and courteous."

And may the Peace of Christ and the Spiritual Joy of Ss. Francis and Clare abide always with us, I pray in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit

(Accessed 7/5/2023 - [https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Tau\\_USA\\_077\\_fal\\_13.pdf](https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Tau_USA_077_fal_13.pdf))