

THE LITTLE PORTION

March 2019

Next Fraternity Gathering

March 25, 2019

St. Joan of Arc Meeting House

Law Street
Aberdeen, MD

AGENDA

7:30 pm: **Opening Prayer** page 35 of Ritual Book
The Fraternity is happy to celebrate **The Rite of Admission** for Anne Dulik and Roland Willard.
The Rite of Admission is found in the Ritual Book Pages 11- 17.

Ongoing Formation: Discovering The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition Questions 2 and 3 on page 8. **Closing Prayer** followed by **Social**.

No Need to Bring Liturgy of the Hours Book.

St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina Fraternity

Ordo Saecularis Franciscanus
St. Margaret of Cortona Region



Upcoming Event - Regional Retreat

Where: Priest Field Pastoral Center, 4030 Middleway Pike, Kearneysville, WV 25430-3742

When: May 31 - June 2, 2019

What: TBA

Presenter: Br. Michael Meza, OFM

When: May 31 - June 2, 2019

Who: All Secular Franciscans, including candidates, inquirers and spiritual assistants

PRAYER INTENTIONS

The Simmons Family: Mary, Ed, Brian,
Mary Anne, Cecelia, Eliot, Ed Jr, and Noel
Ron Teller
Pierre LaCour
Jeffrey Teller Jr.
Roland Willard
Joan Jackson
Jo Magness-Murtaugh
Mary Rose Scelsi
Margaret Wise
Marilyn(Donna's cousin)
Richard Elliot
Allen Siegel



For all those in our Book of Intentions



March Profession

Mary Simmons 3/23/86

Apostolate Donation

February \$20 to The Franciscan Center

March \$20 to The Padre Pio Foundation

Meeting Change

The April Fraternity Gathering falls on April 22nd the day after Easter. St. Joan of Arc Parish is closed that day and we are unable to meet there. Ginger has been able to obtain the Meeting House on May 13th. Bonnie has been able to change her normal Monday evening work schedule that day as well. **Our next Fraternity Gathering will be May 13th at 7:30pm.** Our regular meeting in May falls on Memorial Day and we will be unable to meet then. Therefore, the May 13th Gathering will take the place of both the April and regular 4th Monday meeting in May. Hope that everyone can accommodate the change and be with us on **May 13th.** Thank you for your understanding.

Minister's Message

More on Article 7 of the Rule

7. United by their vocation as "brothers and sisters of penance," and motivated by the dynamic power of the Gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the Gospel itself calls "conversion". Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.

On this road of renewal, the sacrament of reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father's mercy and the source of grace.

"Pope John Paul II wrote that " Being converted means returning to the very grace of our vocation, it means meditating upon the infinite goodness and love of Christ, who has addressed each of us and, calling us by name has said: " Follow Me."

Pope John Paul puts this into practical words when he stated that being converted means continually " giving an account" before the Lord. There is first the giving an account of our hearts about our service, our zeal and our fidelity , for we are Christ's servants. Then we must give an account of our negligences and our sins, of our timidity, of our lack of faith and hope, of our thinking only " in a human way" and not "in a divine way." Here , we need only think of St. Peter who objected when Christ said he must suffer and die." God forbid it" he cried out, " this must never happen to you!" " Get away from me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my way, for these thoughts of yours are men's thoughts, not God's" (Mt.16:22-23).

Another point that Pope John Paul recommends is that in being converted, there is implied seeking again the pardon and strength of God in the sacrament of reconciliation. The new version of the Rule in Article Seven puts the same directive in this rather stilted manner. " On the road to renewal, the sacrament of reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father' mercy and the source of grace" A prudent and consistent use of this sacrament assists us greatly in our renunciation of self and our growth in the love of Christ and others. It is the best way to learn the habit of giving cheerfully for God loves a cheerful giver. " Each one should give, then, as he had decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty, for God loves the one who gives gladly" (2Cor9:7)."

From: Called to Live the Dynamic Power of the Gospel. Commentary on the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. by Philip Marquard, OFM. pp.26-27

St. Ignatius Parish had a Lenten Mission this week which was given by a Dominican Friar, Fr. Bill Garrett, O.P. from Washington, D.C. He celebrated daily Mass which I had the opportunity to attend one of the two weekdays he was here.

Because of the reference to sin and forgiveness in the readings of the Mass, Fr. Bill wished to give a short catechesis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Since Article 7 of our Rule mentions the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I thought I would share some thoughts.

Fr. Bill opened with the statement from St. Augustine that "the more we are concerned about others' sins, the less we are concerned about our own". He went on to talk about mortal sin which we all realize is deadly to the soul. Fr. Bill said "the soul is so severed by mortal sin that it is a state of total nothingness." Nothingness brings to my mind blackness, desolation, emptiness and coldness.

As for venial sin, it does not destroy the soul because "venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds." (CCC 1395). We can be forgiven of venial sins by praying a devout Act of Contrition or a Rosary. So why is it important to confess our venial sins by way of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and why is frequent confession recommended? Fr. Bill called regular Confession, "spiritual hygiene". We are cleansed of our sins by Christ and showered with his grace and mercy. It keeps us on the path of conversion with more clarity and strengthens us spiritually. Without regular confession, Fr. Bill said "we can slowly drift into a hardness and numbness toward sin".

Our rule states that “the sacrament of reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father’s mercy and source of grace.” I pray that the Holy Spirit guides us to make frequent use of this Sacrament so our conversion process is more firmly rooted in God’s mercy and grace, preventing us from “numbness toward sin”.

Bonnie Ng, O.F.S.

“But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins, upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed,” Isaiah 53:5

Words of St. Padre Pio

We Christians are doubly made in the image of God. First, we are in his image through nature insofar as we have been given intelligence, memory and will. Second, we are in his image through grace, because sanctification through baptism leaves the most beautiful image of God on our souls. Yes, sanctifying grace has imprinted on us the image of God to such an extent that we ourselves almost become gods through participation. I am referring to St. Peter’s lovely expression that we have now become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4).

You see how great our dignity is. We are great, however, only if we keep that sanctifying grace.”

From: Padre Pio’s Spiritual Direction For Every Day. by Gianluigi Pasquale. P.80

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Thoughts from the Spiritual Assistant for March.

On the nineteenth of March, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Virgin Mary.

In one of his more famous sermons, the great Franciscan preacher St. Bernardine of Siena proclaimed that St. Joseph "was chosen by the eternal Father to be the faithful foster-parent and guardian of the most precious treasures of God, his Son and his spouse. This was the task which he so faithfully carried out."

Jesus and Mary, God's "most precious treasures," were people that Joseph could quite literally call his family.

It was he who provided for and protected them in the dangerous world of first-century Palestine. God's greatest treasure truly became Joseph's treasure, the focus of his life and love.

As Franciscans, it goes without saying that God and our families are central to our lives as well - families in the natural sense of course, but also the spiritual family that is our Franciscan Order. The Charism of St. Francis calls us to more than an association of like minded people or to an organized team with a specific mission to accomplish. Our charism calls us beyond generic expressions of community to truly become family - a family whose greatest treasure is the Gospel Life of Jesus Christ.

As we continue on our journey through Lent, let us pray for the grace to grow in devotion to our Franciscan family, to the sisters and brothers that God has blessed us with in our St. Pio Fraternity and beyond. May St. Joseph intercede for us and teach us to love and serve this family with courage and gentle humility - and in so doing, draw ever closer to the Heart of Jesus - our Lord, our Savior, our Brother, and our Friend. Amen!

I pray these weeks of prayer, fast, and giving are bearing much fruit for all of you!
I am grateful to be part of your family!

Yours in Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Francis,

Br. Emmanuel

