

Up to Now

Newsletter of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region of the Secular Franciscan Order

Covering the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia,
and portions of West Virginia and Pennsylvania



Fr. Philippus Philippus, OFM/Cap

Volume 23 Issue 1

Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing.

August 2019

Partnering with Our OEF Brothers and Sisters That they all may be one (John 17:21)

On the weekend of June 27-30, I had a very faith-filled and spiritually enlightening experience with 40-50 individuals charged with the workings of the Holy Spirit. They were not only faithful brother and sister members of other Christian churches and congregations, but were also our Franciscan brothers and sisters of other Christian denominations. The event I was a part of was the 35th Annual Convocation/Chapter of the OEF, the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans. When I took on the call to be the region's Interfaith/Ecumenical Chairperson last February, our minister Bob Longo recommended that I attend this event. Then Mike Carsten, OFS, Interfaith/Ecumenical Chairman of the National Executive Council, invited to attend. He asked me to represent our National Minister, Jan Parker, which I was honored to accept. This annual Convocation/Chapter is the OEF equivalent of the OFS National Chapter held each year in the fall. Many OFS members are not familiar with the OEF, as was my case prior to last February, so I will explain this order of our other brothers and sisters in Saint Francis and relate my experiences with them during this weekend.

The Order of Ecumenical Franciscans is a much younger order than the OFS. At their past chapter they celebrated their 35th anniversary. The OFS goes back a couple of centuries in the United States alone. Because they are so young, they do not have nearly the number of members that the OFS has. Comprising membership in all of the Christian

(See "OEF" on page 3)



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Regional Minister's Message



Dear Sister and Brothers in Francis and Clare,

In June 2019, the Franciscan Conventuals concluded their month-long General Chapter and met with Pope Francis at the Vatican. In his message to the Conventual Franciscans, Pope Francis invited them to live in a spirit of fraternity, littleness, and peace.

After reading the papal message, I realized that this message can also apply to the Secular Franciscan way of life.

I would like to summarize a few of our Holy Father's comments:

- Your Constitutions guarantee the Order's charism and its extension into the future.
- The Gospel is the Franciscans' "rule and life" and the mission is to be a living Gospel.
- Fraternity is a central aspect of life for those who follow in the footsteps of St. Francis. "Fraternity is a gift to welcome with gratitude. It is a reality ever 'on the path,' in construction, which requires each person's contribution."
- Littleness is a difficult path because it is opposed to worldly logic, which seeks success at any cost and desires to occupy the first place.
- St. Francis told Franciscans to be humble and to spend their lives in the service of others.
- Preach peace, in the spirit of the traditional Franciscan greeting: "Pax et bonum."

Peace can be interpreted as reconciliation with ourselves, with God, with others, and with creatures.

Reconciliation consists in concentric circles that begin in the heart and extend out to embrace the whole universe. But in reality, it begins in the heart of God, the heart of Christ.

This type of peace is more than an absence of problems, because it emanates from the presence of God within us.

- Living a life of fraternity, littleness, and peace requires continuous formation that promotes gradual conformation to Christ, in every sphere of life. It is a personalized formation of the heart that changes our way of thinking, feeling, and acting; a formation that teaches fidelity.

As Secular Franciscans, how do we live our way of life both in our fraternities and outside of our fraternities?

Our Rule tells us:

22. [The local fraternity] becomes the basic unit of the whole Order and a visible sign of the Church, the community of love. This should be the privileged place for developing a sense of Church and the Franciscan vocation and for enlivening the apostolic life of its members.

Our General Constitutions give us guidelines as to what it means to be in fraternity. I have cited a few Articles for you to ponder:

Article 26

Section 2. In the fraternity, the brothers and sisters should promote mutual understanding and they should see to it that the atmosphere of their meetings is welcoming and that it reflects joy. They should encourage one another for the good.

Article 30

Section 1. The brothers and sisters are co-responsible for the life of the fraternity to which they belong and for the SFO as the organic union of all fraternities throughout the world.

Section 2. The sense of co-responsibility of the members requires personal presence, witness, prayer, and active collaboration, in accordance with each one's situation and possible obligations for the animation of the fraternity.

Article 40

Section 3. Participation in the meetings of the local fraternity is indispensable presupposition for initiation into community prayer and into fraternity life.

Article 42

Section 4. Profession does not only commit those professed to the fraternity, but also in the same way it commits the fraternity to be concerned with their human and religious well-being.

Article 53

Section 3. Insertion into a local fraternity and participation in fraternity life is essential for belonging to the SFO.

(See "Minister's Message on p.3)

Section 4. The fraternity remembers with gratitude its brothers and sisters who have passed away and continues its communion with them by prayer and in the Eucharist.

Article 100

Section 2. The secular Franciscans should fulfil with dedication the duties with which they are occupied in their relations to the local Church. They should lend their help to activities of the apostolate as well as to the social activities existing in the diocese. In the spirit of service, they should make themselves present, as the fraternity of the SFO, within the life of the diocese. They should be ready to collaborate with other ecclesial groups and to participate in pastoral councils.

Section 3. Fidelity to their own charism, Franciscan and secular, and the witness of

building fraternity sincerely and openly are their principal services to the Church, which is the community of love. They should be recognized in it by their "being", from which their mission springs.

Sisters and brothers, as we continue on our Franciscan Spiritual journey, let us keep in mind the importance of coming together in fraternity. The Secular Franciscan Order is not just an Order within itself, but plays an important role in the Church and thus helps make up the Church. Therefore, our Franciscan roots make us successors of St. Francis.

Your Franciscan brother in Christ,

Bob Longo, OFS

Regional Minister, St. Margaret of Cortona Region



("OEF" from page 1)

faiths, there are even smaller numbers of representatives of each of these faiths and denominations. There are a few members who are Catholic. I met one married couple who actually were members of the OFS who transferred and took their profession into the OEF that weekend.

The order does not have local fraternities mainly due, perhaps, to their small numbers, but they do meet informally within their geographic locations for such business as formation and socials in gatherings called fellowships, which are similar to OFS regional chapters. They rely mainly on their annual chapter as a whole membership gathering for most of their business, ceremonies of formation, and socials. Their rule is similar to our current rule of 1978, with modifications suitable for their faiths. They do not have any bondage to the Franciscan first orders, but are, according to their rule, under the supervision of and accountable to an advisor chosen from their general membership.

During the course of this weekend, there were the usual business meetings, formation sessions, and presentations. There were also morning and evening prayer services similar in format to the Liturgy of the Hours, many with music. There were ceremonies similar in style to the admission of OFS inquirers to candidacy and profession. Final interviews for those to be professed were done by members of their Servant Council, who were the equivalent of our National Executive Council. Three

individuals were professed during this weekend: each had a formation counselor who acted as the equivalent to an OFS sponsor but he/she also did the formation sessions for the candidate. It, obviously, did not take me long to realize--as they did inform me--that a great deal of their formalities were modeled after those of the OFS. This makes sense: why recreate the wheel when ultimately we are all about the same thing: an interchange of Gospel and Life. I plan to keep in communication with our brothers and sisters of the OEF and keep them in the loop with regards to all our future efforts as a regional and national fraternity in living and promoting our common Franciscan charism.

Finally, I again request of all the fraternities of the region to let me know of any efforts, campaigns, or activities their members are engaged in with other Christian or non-Christian faiths or denominations, churches, or religious associations, either by sponsorship or participation. How do you feel it is promoting interfaith/dialogue with these ecclesial communities. I'll let the fraternities of the region know about them and use them as models of how they also can be involved in our ecumenical efforts. Thanks to all who are already engaged in this great work of ministry!

You can see the Rule of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans on the next page.

*Mike Huether, OFS
Interfaith/Ecumenical Chairman*

<https://www.oefranciscans.org/>

General Rule of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans

1) We covenant together, as the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans, to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people. Franciscans should devote themselves especially to careful reading of the gospel, going from gospel to life and life to gospel.

2) We seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ in our brothers and sisters in Sacred Scripture, in the church, and in liturgical activity.

3) We shall go forth as witnesses and instruments of the church's mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by our life and words, called like Saint Francis to rebuild the Church and inspired by his example. Let us devote ourselves energetically to living accountable to our respective denominations and in our spiritual fellowship with Christians everywhere.

4) As the successors to the original "brothers and sisters of penance" and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let us conform our thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls, "conversion". Human frailty calls us to strive for this conversion daily.

5) Following the example of Jesus, let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all we are and do. Let us participate in the sacramental life of the church, above all the Eucharist. Let us join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms in use in the church.

6) The Order of Ecumenical Franciscans shall follow the example of Mary by imitating her self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently.

7) We shall faithfully fulfill the duties proper to our various circumstances of life. We shall also follow the poor and crucified Christ and witness to him even in difficulties and persecutions.

8) Christ chose for himself a poor and humble life, even though he valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying our own material needs. Let us be mindful that according to the gospel we are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children. We strive to purify our hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power.

9) As members of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans, with a gentle and courteous spirit, we accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ. A sense of community will make us joyful and ready to place ourselves on

an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom we shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.

10) We shall individually and collectively be in the forefront of promoting justice by testimony of our human lives and courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, we shall make definite choices in harmony with our faith.

11) We shall esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in creation, redemption and service of the work of humanity.

12) In our families, we shall cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity, and respect for life, striving to make a sign of it of a world already renewed in Christ.

13) We shall respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which bear the imprint of the "Most High" and we shall strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation toward the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.

14) In obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ and the example of Saint Francis, we are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly. We are compelled to seek out ways of resolving conflict through non-violent means, trusting in the presence of the divine soul in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.

15) Since we are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let us accept death serenely as an encounter with our God.

16) As members of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans, we covenant to draw up by a Personal Rule of Life based on the rule of this order and falling into these disciplines: Worship, Prayer Penitence, Work, Lifestyle, Mission, Obedience, and Community. We shall always be under supervision of and accountable to an advisor.

17) Admission into this Order is gradually attained through a time of orientation, a period of formation of at least two years and profession of the Rule. The entire community is engaged in this process of growth and formation. Profession by its nature is a permanent commitment. Members of any Christian denomination may belong to the OEF. The Order is a self-governing body whose members meet annually, and is governed by its professed members who shall elect officers and make rules as they see fit, in accordance with this Rule and in harmony with Jesus Christ.

Br. Louis Canter, OEF has set these principles to music so that they can be chanted by the community in worship. Click below to listen!

[The OEF Principles Sung](#)

What Are We Doing?

The Catholic Day of Action: My First Disobedience

“Who will speak if we don’t?”—we sang the Marty Haugen song repeatedly during the press conference portion of the Catholic Day of Action to protest detention of immigrant children in Washington DC July 18, in between inspiring talks by Catholic sisters, priests, FAN Executive Director Patrick Carolan, and Claribel Guzman from El Salvador, who is facing deportation. After the outdoor rally, we headed into the Senate Russell Office Building rotunda for a civil disobedience action—my first ever.

While I have participated in a number of large marches over the past few years, I never really considered showing up for smaller protests that carried the real possibility of arrest until recently. After all, I work full time for a non-profit peace-oriented organization already... and I would have to take time off to protest...and my employer might not like me getting arrested...and my husband might disapprove... and my young adult children might be scandalized, and... well, there were plenty of excuses.

At the same time, staying within my comfort zone was becoming untenable. My work on the Middle East still seemed important but insufficient; what was I doing about peace, human rights, and social justice right here in the United States? Yes, I prayed, voted, supported organizations such as FAN doing good work, and kept informed about the issues, but I increasingly felt I should do something more—especially as a professed member of the Secular Franciscan Order since 2016. Our Rule is bracing on this point: “Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.”

Then in the summer of 2018, an invitation arrived. An email from FAN announced an upcoming pilgrimage to Assisi from an organization called Pace e Bene, with the express aim of connecting Franciscan values and spirituality to a life of nonviolence.

The trip in June 2019 was like a week in heaven: visits to the major sites in the lives of St. Francis and St. Clare, daily mass with invigorating homilies by Rev. John Dear, lectures by Ken Butigan bringing out the revolutionary social and peacemaking initiatives of the two saints, deep conversations with fellow pilgrims who had varied experiences in spirituality and activism—and all while surrounded by the matchless beauty of the medieval city of Assisi and Umbrian countryside. I came away feeling encouraged and inspired, accompanied on the journey by new friends.

So when Patrick Carolan invited me, just a few days after my return from Assisi, to the July 18 protest, I suspected

the time for action had come. Still, I was nervous. Would a protest against detention of immigrant children really do any good? Would I be glad or sorry at the end of the day that I participated? I prayed for guidance over several days.

After participating in a webinar for potential participants, some of my fears were allayed. The protest seemed well planned, and the organizers presented a clear

theory of change: we would do the civil disobedience to show that some Catholics were willing to take risks to speak out for immigrant children—and hopefully to inspire more Catholics to speak up as well. The organizers were clear about what would happen at the protest, what the risks were for those who would be arrested, and what the police processing would involve. They told us to bring photo ID, \$50 to pay the likely misdemeanor fine, a Metro card to get home—and not much else.

Organizers and protestors gathered early on July 18 at a church near the Capitol to meet in person and go over the details. Asked for a show of hands, a large number said we were doing civil disobedience for the first time.

After the press conference on the lawn, we headed into the Russell building and found the rotunda. We donned signs with photos of children who had died in detention and formed a large circle, with several participants lying down to form a cross in the center. After a blessing by a priest, we chanted a few slogans and started praying a rosary—and almost immediately the police interrupted with a warning to disperse. By the third warning, those who were not willing to be arrested had left. When I saw Sister Marie Lucey of FAN being led off in handcuffs, I knew it was getting real. The police were as courteous as they could have been, with many looking uncomfortable arresting nuns in veils, priests in Roman collars, Franciscan friars in brown robes, and lay people praying the Hail Mary.

Nothing quite prepared me for the disempowered feeling of having my wrists zip tied behind my back. There followed several hours of police processing: transport to a police station, pat-downs, belongings put into plastic bags, sitting on folding chairs in a large, semi-open room that was very warm but made tolerable with fans and bottled water. My fellow detainees did not complain, but provided cheerful encouragement and interesting conversation—



Michelle Dunne with Patrick Carolan

particularly the large contingent of Sisters of Mercy. As each detainee finished the paperwork, paid the fine, and was released, the remaining cheered and applauded, while even the police officers grinned at our good cheer. Outside the station, protest organizers were waiting to offer water, snacks, rides, and thanks. I rode the Metro home with one of the other 70 people arrested, and we were surprised to discover that we were fellow parishioners.

I arrived home, where my husband promptly ordered my favorite pizza and listened to the story of the day. While I had feared he would disapprove of my participating in civil disobedience, he told me he respected what I had done.

As I relaxed in the evening, I recalled that during my Assisi pilgrimage I had asked Pace e Bene training coordinator Veronica Pelicarić how I could discern whether to undertake greater activism. She quoted to me civil rights leader

Howard Thurman: "Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it."

Although the Catholic Day of Action left me perspired, exhausted, and hungry, did it make me come alive? Yes indeed, I think it did. After all, whether on detention of children or any other important issue of peace and justice, who will speak if I don't?

by Michele Dunne, OFS
Mount St. Sepulchre Fraternity

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St. Margaret Of Cortona Regional Retreat

Deepening Our Vocation

A tribute to Brother Michael Meza, OFM, Cap.

You have been a blessing with the many gifts you've shared,
you opened up your heart and showed us that you cared.
As we breathe in God's Spirit we are refreshed within,
we rid ourselves of worldly things that causes us to sin.
It's important to be humble as St Francis was humble too,
If we imitate him our lives will be renewed.

As Franciscans we need to challenge to make a difference every day,
to be a witness to the world in what we do and say.
We must see Christ in everyone and love them where they are,
for God made them in his image as his bright and shining stars.
We can't live out our vocation unless we feel Christ's pain,
By living our Baptism, Confirmation and Reconciliation God will
Change our fate,
so we will have a deep conviction within as people of his faith.

We renew our vows each Easter and give God another yes,
now it's time to reflect and give him our very best.
You've shared with us many things that have happened in your life,
like the bowl of Hosts that spoke to you, part of the Body of Christ.
Then there is your humor as you confessed your anger as a man,
don't have a fix for that, I guess you need a conversion van.
We're on a mission to build up our church which is yearning for new growth,
we'll go out with the Rule of Life and many seeds to sow.

There is someone out there longing to make his life complete,
we will offer him what you have taught us on this great Retreat.
We have learned much from you, so we'll take the joy of Jesus everywhere,
and no matter where you are, we'll keep you in our prayers.

— Bettie Onorato
Little Flower Fraternity

Fraternity Mapping Tool

Early this year, Jan Parker, our National Minister, asked Regional Ministers to provide basic information about our local fraternities gathering dates and locations, so we could map them on the OFS USA website. At long last, we have a visual tool showing every Local Fraternity on a map!

The beauty of this achievement is one need only to enter a City/State and the map will pinpoint close by fraternities. Contact information for each region is listed. This information will need to be updated periodically, but it is a terrific start.

Thanks to the Regional Ministers (or delegates) for providing the information and Lee Potts, OFS, for putting together the mapping tool. We'll be posting an announcement on the website, Facebook and Twitter....so feel free to help us spread the word. Test it out and let us know what you think.

To call up the map and locate your fraternity or a fraternity, you may wish to visit go to <https://secularfranciscansusa.org/map-of-local-fraternities>

Mission Opportunity

for Secular Franciscans to assist Project Oak Tree

National Councilor Donna Hollis, OFS and local fraternities in the area work directly with refugees in Las Cruces through Project Oak Tree.



Secular Franciscan Order - USA



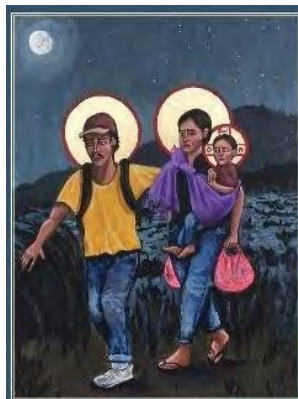
Roman Catholic
Diocese of Las Cruces

This is a “MISSION” opportunity for Secular Franciscans and others to come and help.
Groups of 1-25 are welcome.
VOLUNTEERS and donations are needed.

Project Oak Tree

The Diocese of Las Cruces provides basic Christian hospitality to refugees as they are released from *Customs and Border Protection* and *Immigration and Customs Enforcement* into Southern New Mexico.

Read more about the project here:
<https://rcdlc.org/oaktree>.



Families arrive once a week on Tuesday mornings. We feed them, give them shelter and safety and clothing that has been donated. The families remain with us for a few days until we can arrange transportation to their Sponsors.

“Our focus is to show God’s love and acceptance.”

Volunteer Information

How can volunteers help?

There is a lot involved during their stay in which volunteers can help. You do not have to speak fluent Spanish to show hospitality. We do need Spanish speakers who can help with calling the Sponsor families and getting them tickets to their destination.

If you are interested in coming to help:

Contact Donna Hollis (see below). A tour of the different facilities can be arranged. Also, a motel is rented on the weekends to receive a greater amount of people and we can always use extra volunteers. Local volunteers from the different hospitality sites help with this project.

Donation Information

Monetary Donations can be sent to:

Holy Cross Retreat Center
600 Holy Cross Rd.
Mesilla Park, NM 88047

Tel. (575) 524-3688.

Include ‘Refugee Donation’ in check memo.

Constant items are needed:

Personal travel size hygiene supplies are welcomed. Also needed: lip balm, hairbrushes, hair ties, small and medium belts, shoelaces, new underwear and socks for children and adults (Sm./Med.) Some of these items are taken away from them at the holding cell in El Paso.

Please contact: Donna Hollis, OFS 575-649-8265 donnadancerfeet@aol.com

“The presence of Migrants and Refugees and of vulnerable people in general is an invitation to recover some of those essential dimensions of our Christian existence and our humanity that risk being overlooked in a prosperous society.”
(quote from Pope Francis message for the 2019 Word Day of Migrants/Refugees)

Franciscan Mission Service

Providential Curveballs

Recently, Amy Brandt completed her year of service as a DC Service Corps member serving with Franciscan Mission Service in Washington, DC. Here, she reflects on the experience of learning to trust in God's providence.

"Jesus, just provide." A frequent prayer of mine that is often laced with expectations.

I often question the providence of our creator, as if God hasn't carried me to safety and joy countless times. I almost feel like the Verizon guy (who now works for Sprint?) as I cry out, "Can you hear me now? Good. Can you hear me now? Good. What about now?"

A year ago, when faced with the unknown, I would flip a switch and go into survival mode. I would hand over the reins of decision making to my anxiety and I'd sit back and entertain the worst-case scenarios in my mind.

But over the past 12 months, I've received invitation after invitation to challenge that approach: To trust in the providence of a community of initial strangers. To trust in the providence of an old 15-bedroom house with a lot of character. To trust in the providence of a \$20 weekly food budget. To trust in the providence of technology to stay connected with family and friends across the country. To trust in the providence of God.

The challenge to surrender expectations is an endeavor I still wrestle with today. When I pray that the world will provide for my needs, I actually mean "provide for my needs in this exact way that I have pre-planned out." Which, if you have had any sort of encounter with the world, you will know that wild cards and curveballs are God's signature move.

So, this year, I have had the opportunity to learn how to see beauty in the curveballs. As I was prayerfully freaking out about the unknowns that will accompany this next chapter of my life, with the conclusion of DC Service Corps, I asked

myself, "Am I scared that my needs won't be met in the future because I don't think God provided this year?"

As soon as the question came to mind I was flooded with the countless gifts and lessons of this year in DC: I have witnessed incredible kindness and patience from my many housemates; I had the time and space to explore the intersection between faith and work; I got to see so many new places and regions of this beautiful country I call home; I developed a foundation of sustainable self-care; I gained an appreciation for simple living; and I am learning how to better love others and myself.

"Although my needs were met in ways that differed from my expectations, the way things played out evoked more beauty and personal growth than I could have imagined."

My basic physical, emotional, and spiritual needs have been provided for in an abundant fashion. Although my needs were met in ways that differed from my expectations, the way things played out evoked more beauty and personal growth than I could have ever imagined. I am reminded that the curveballs and wild cards, as annoying and scary as they are, are just the voice that God has chosen to express His providential nature and unconditional love.

And every once in a while, He will throw me a bone, answering my prayers in the way that my heart consciously desires, calling me home to my family and friends and the place that I love.

As I prepare to face a whole new chapter of unknowns, instead of handing the reins to my fears, I trustingly give them to God, to the world, and to the community I will be joining. Checking my expectations at the door, I brace myself for the providential curveballs that will surely make their way into my horizon.

Interested in a serving with Franciscan Mission Service? Check out the FMS website at www.franciscanmissionservice.org to learn more about our programs and about opportunities in Washington, DC or overseas.



Mark Your Calendar

October 3, 2019 – Transitus of Our Seraphic Father Francis.

St. Clare Delaware Fraternity,
St. Edmond Church, Rehoboth, Del.,
3:00 p.m.

St. Francis Triangle Fraternity, St. Francis of Assisi Church,
Triangle, Va., 7:00 p.m.

As we learn of more celebrations, they will be forwarded to you.



November 22, 2019 – Meeting of Regional Council with national visitation team. Friday evening, Country Inn and Suites.

November 23, 2019 – Chapter of Ministers and National Visitation. St. Clare Parish, 714 Myrth Avenue, Essex, MD 21221. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.



Youth and Young Adult Commission

To Provide Deep Roots for Young People

The prophet Micah, who lived about 700 years before Christ, tells us that the Lord requires us “Only to do the right and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8) Although I cannot find the exact reference, our seraphic father, St. Francis, is reported to have stated, “We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way.” The OFS Rule 6 admonishes us to “go forth as witnesses and instruments of her mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life and words.”

The prophet Micah and St. Francis lived in worlds radically different from, yet in many ways remarkably similar, to ours. The threats of external and internal violence, abject poverty, and the questioning of belief in long-held religious practices, and other issues have caused many to lose hope for the future.

Pope Francis addresses this issue in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christus Vivit*, to Young People and to the Entire People Of God.

Today, the allure of false prophets and glittering riches give rise to “a false cult of youth that can be used to seduce and manipulate young people.” (180) And then, “If someone tells young people to ignore their history, to reject the experiences of their elders, to look down on the past and to look forward to a future that he holds out, doesn’t it then become easy to draw them along so that they only do what he tells them?” (181) This is clearly seen by our witnessing one of the greatest exodus of believers, especially among the young adult population. Pope Francis has long recognized this problem and has given us in his exhortation a clearly prophetic message on how to go forward in healing the many wounds in our culture.

In this reflection, I will focus only on Chapter Six, “Young People With Roots.” We have all seen a tree that has been uprooted and blown over by strong winds. Like trees, young people (and older as well) need to have strong, deep roots to withstand the storms they encounter. As Franciscans, we must create an environment that will provide strong roots for them to nourish their lives. We want them to be firmly rooted as adults and not a bunch of tumbleweeds blown about by the shifting winds. In the first few paragraphs, Pope Francis exposes some of the cults

that contribute to this lack of firm roots and “proposes another way, one born of freedom, enthusiasm, creativity and new horizons, while at the same time cultivating the roots that will nourish and sustain us.” (184) Our call as Franciscans to care for all of creation clearly requires us to provide this type of nourishment. Young people are encouraged to “care for your roots, because from the roots comes the strength that is going to make you grow, flourish and bear fruit.” (186)

The next few paragraphs of the exhortation tell of the necessity of providing the means young people and adults need to connect with each other to share wisdom. Paragraphs 187-191 are a blueprint on how adults can accompany and advocate for young people. It requires us to create spaces where both the young and the adults can have an openness to listen honestly to each other. We have many years of adult experience and more than 800 years of Franciscan wisdom to pass on to the next generation. Sharing this wisdom allows us to formulate together

dreams and visions for the future (192-197) by sharing the dreams and visions of the past. The trust and knowledge we gain by this sharing allow us to take risks together (198-201).

In closing, we are told that “If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future. To revisit the past in order to learn from history and heal old wounds that at times still trouble us. To

look to the future to nourish our enthusiasm, cause our dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom. Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire minds with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands.” (199)

I urge each fraternity to have at least two or three people read the exhortation and share and discuss key points with the members, and then have the fraternity decide on a course of action. The exhortation can be found at: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost-exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20190325_christus-vivit.html

Harry Ford, OFS
Youth and Young Adult Co-Chair



Around the Region

WELCOME TO OUR NEWLY ADMITTED

Selma DeLeon, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Lauren Alicia Flax, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Christyann Helm, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.



St. Francis Fraternity (Triangle) newly admitted: Bob Eves, OFS, Rosa Pugsley, William Gray, Dottie Gray and Bobbie Ruiz, OFS

NEWLY PROFESSED

Selma DeLeon, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Lauren Alicia Flax, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Christyann Helm, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Rick Jaime, OFS, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
 Wayne Miller, OFS, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.



Our Lady of the Rosary newly professed From Left to Right First Row: Joan Buhler Second Row: Leo and Chris Wells, Sister Juliana LSOSF, Barbara Massey, Maria Fuentes-Sherman, Susan James, Cindy Holland Third Row: Carol Murphy, Ed Gerhard, Sister Agnes LSOSF Last Row: Rick Churray, Father Gerry Kaggwa, Paul Reardon, Terry Carlino, Bea Sanford

Lynn Myrick, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Clarence Neason, OFS, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.



St. Francis Fraternity (Triangle) newly professed: Ulli Vaerst, OFS, Marley Redden, OFS, Wayne Miller, OFS, Jenny Schrader, OFS, Rick Jaime, and Clarence Neison, OFS. (Inset Jim O'Shaugnessy, OFS)

Jim O'Shaugnessy, OFS, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
 Paul Reardon, OFS, Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity, Williamsburg, Va.
 Marly Redden, OFS, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
 Jenny Schrader, OFS, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
 Christine Tantisunthorn, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
 Ulli Vaerst, OFS, St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
 Joel Vaughn, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Washington, D.C. .



St. Francis Fraternity (Washington) newly professed: Christy Helm, OFS; Selma DeLeon, OFS; Chris Tan, OFS; Lauren Flax, OFS; Charles Joel Vaughn, OFS; Lynn Myrick, OFS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED

Portiuncula Fraternity, Kearneysville, W.Va.

Minister: Carl Ewald, OFS
 Vice Minister: Beth Benedetto, OFS
 Secretary: Cheryl Ewald, OFS
 Treasurer: Kathleen York, OFS
 Formation Director: Susan Burke, OFS
 Councilor at Large: Yoli Hackney, OFS

(See "Around" on page 11)

("Around" from page 10)



Portiuncula Fraternity Council: Secretary, Cheryl Ewald, OFS; Minister, Carl Ewald, OFS; Formation Director, Susan Burke, OFS; Vice Minister; Beth Benedetto, OFS; Treasurer, Kathleen York, OFS; Councilor at Large, Yoli Hackney, OFS

St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.

Minister: Geri Flynn, OFS
 Vice Minister: James Kim, OFS
 Secretary: Denise Donaldson, OFS
 Treasurer: Gerry Pinkas, OFS
 Formation Director: Sherry Lewis, OFS
 Councilor at Large: Lita Maisel, OFS



St. Joseph Cupertino Council: Geri Flynn, OFS, Minister; James Kim, OFS, Vice Minister; Denise Donaldson, OFS, Secretary; Gerry Pinkas, OFS, Treasurer; Sherry Lewis, OFS, Formation Director; Lita Maisel, OFS, Councilor at Large

St. Francis of Assisi (Deaf) Fraternity

Minister: Consuelo Wild, OFS
 Vice Minister: David Koche, OFS
 Secretary: Sally Mooney, OFS
 Treasurer: Peter Noyes, OFS
 Formation Director: Janet Noyes
 Councilor: Dorothy Steffanic

St. Thomas More (Harrisburg) Fraternity

Minister: David Kozemchak, OFS
 Vice-Minister: Theodore Rudy, OFS
 Secretary: Mary Catherine Tierney
 Treasurer: Kathy Giera, OFS
 Formation Director: W. Ken Ritchey, OFS
 Councilor 1: Andrea Richardson, OFS
 Councilor 2: Richard Fairfax, OFS



St. Thomas More (Harrisburg) Council: Minister, David Kozemchak, OFS; Vice-Minister, Theodore Rudy, OFS; Treasurer, Kathy Giera, OFS; Formation Director, W. Ken Ritchey, OFS; Councilor #1, Andrea Richardson, OFS; Councilor #2, Richard Fairfax, OFS; Secretary, Mary Catherine Tierney (not pictured)

Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.

Minister: Kimberley Heatherington, OFS
 Vice Minister: Josh Goldberg, OFS
 Secretary: Vera Stewart, OFS
 Treasurer: Cynthia Filian-Kim, OFS
 Formation Director: Walter Gawlak, OFS



Tau Fraternity Council: Josh Goldberg, OFS, Vice-Minister; Kimberley Heatherington, OFS, Minister; Vera Stewart, OFS, Secretary; Cynthia Filian-Kim, OFS, Treasurer; Walter Gawlak, OFS, Formation Director

LOSSES IN THE FAMILY



Jane Donohoe, OFS, February 24, 2019. She was a member of St. Conrad (Annapolis) Fraternity, although she had been inactive for some time. She was 91 years old.



Harry Logel, OFS, April 5, 1938-July 17, 2019. Harry was professed in the St. Francis of Assisi (Triangle) Fraternity in Triangle, Va., on August 18, 2018, and was a beloved member of the fraternity.



Judith Ryerse, OFS, July 2, 2019. Judi was one of the first members of the re-activated St. Francis of Assisi (Triangle) Fraternity. She had been unable to participate in the fraternity for several years due to illness.



Photos by Bob Traube and Bob Longo

Franciscan Saints, Blesseds and Feasts

(Click on the name to go to a Web link.)

AUGUST

- 16 [Bl. Francis Chici of Pesaro](#), Third Order Secular, hermit (d. 1350)
- 17 [St. Roch of Montpellier](#), Confessor, Third Order Secular (c. 1295-August 16, 1327)
- 18 [Bl. John Louis Loir and Companions](#), Priests and Martyrs of Rochefort
- 19 [St. Louis of Toulouse](#), Bishop, Order of Friars Minor (February 9, 1274-August 19, 1297)
- 21 [St. Pius X](#), Pope, Third Order Secular (June 2, 1835-August 20, 1914)
- 23 [Bl. Bernard of Offida](#), Friar, OFM Capuchin (November 7, 1604-August 22, 1694)
- 25 [St. Louis IX](#), King of France, Patron of the Third Order Secular (April 15, 1214-August 26, 1270)
- 25 [Bl. Maria del Transito Cabanillas](#), Founder, Franciscan Tertiary Missionary Sisters (August 15, 1821-August 25, 1885)
- 28 [St. Junipero Serra](#), Priest, Alcantarine Friars Minor, missionary (November 24, 1713-August 28, 1784)

SEPTEMBER

- 1 [St. Beatrice of Silva](#), Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)
- 2 [Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault](#), Priests, and companions, martyrs, First and Third Orders (d. 1792)
- 4 [St. Rose of Viterbo](#), Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)
- 5 [Bl. Gentle of Matelic](#), Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)
- 6 [Bl. Liberatus of Lauro](#), Priest, First Order (d. 1260)
- 9 [Bl. Seraphina Sforza](#), Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)
- 11 [Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona](#), Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)
- 13 [First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans](#), martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)
- 17 [Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis](#)
- 18 [St. Joseph of Cupertino Friar](#), Order of Friars Minor Conventual (June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)
- 20 [St. Francis Mary of Camporosso Friar](#), Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)

- 21 [Bl. Elizabeth Amodei](#), Third Order Secular (1475-February 4, 1498)
- 22 [St. Ignatius of Santhia](#), Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)
- 23 [Finding the Body of St. Clare](#)
- 23 [St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina](#), Priest, Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)
- 24 [St. Pacificus of Severino Priest](#), Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)
- 26 [Bl. Aurelio of Vinales and Companions](#), Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)
- [Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone](#), Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)
- [St. Elzear of Sabran](#), (1285-September 27, 1323)
- [Bl. Delphina of Glandenes](#), (1284-November 1358) Husband and Wife, Secular Franciscans
- 28 [Bl. Bernadine of Feltre](#), Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)
- [St. John of Dukla](#), Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual (1414-1484)
- 29 [Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel](#)
- 30 [Bl. Charles of Blois](#), Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)



OCTOBER

- 1 [Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena](#), Priest, Third Order Regular (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)
- 3 [Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi](#)
- 4 [Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis](#)
- 5 [Bl. Felicia Meda](#), Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)
- 6 [St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds](#), Third Order Secular (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
- 10 [St. Daniel and Companions](#), Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs (d. October 10, 1227)
- [Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska](#), Founder, Third Order Regular (May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
- 11 [St. Pope John XXIII](#), Pope, Third Order Secular (November 25, 1881-June 3, 1963)
- 12 [St. Seraphin of Montegranaro](#), Religious, Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (1540-October 12, 1604)

- 13 **Bl. Honorat Kozminski**, Friar, Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (October 16, 1829-December 16, 1916)
 - 17 **Bl. Balthazar of Chiavari**, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (1420-October 17, 1492)
 - 18 **Bl. James of Strepur**, Archbishop, Order of Friars Minor (c. 1340-October 1409)
 - 19 **St. Peter of Alcántara**, Priest, Franciscan Stricter Observance (1499-October 18, 1562)
 - 20 **Bl. Contardo Ferrini**, Third Order Secular (April 5, 1859-October 17, 1902)
 - 23 **St. John Capistrano**, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 24, 1386-October 23, 1456)
 - 23 **Bl. Josephine Leroux**, Poor Clare, martyr (January 23, 1747-October 23, 1794)
 - 25 **Bl. Maria Jesus Ferragut**, virgin, and companions, martyrs of Valencia [Maria Veronica Masiá, Maria Felicity Masiá Ferragut, Isabel Claduch Rovira, Milagros Ortells Gimeno], Poor Clares, d. 1936
 - 26 **Bl. Bonaventure of Potenza**, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventuals (d. October 26, 1711)
 - 29 **Bl. Thomas of Florence**, Friar, Order of Friars Minor (1370-October 31, 1447)
 - 30 Anniversary of the Dedication in Consecrated Churches of the Seraphic Order
 - Bl. Angelo of Acri**, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (October 19, 1669-October 30, 1739)
 - 31 **Bl. Christophe of Cahors**, Friar, Order of Friars Minor (c. 1172-October 31, 1272)
- 6 **Bl. Teresa Manganiello**, Third Order Secular, (January 1, 1849-November 4, 1876)
 - 7 **Bl. Marguerite de Lorraine**, Poor Clare Nun (1463-November 2, 1521)
 - 7 **St. Didacus of Alcalá**, Friar, Order of Friars Minor Observant (c. 1400-November 12, 1463)
 - 8 **Bl. Raynier of Arezzo**, Friar, Order of Friars Minor (d. 1304)
 - 8 **Bl. John Duns Scotus**, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Doctor of the Church (c. 1266-November 1308)
 - 9 **Bl. Gabriel Ferretti**, Priest, First Order (1385-November 12, 1456)
 - 11 **Bl. Mary Crucifixa**, Secular Franciscan Order (February 19, 1782-December 16, 1826)
 - 12 **Bl. Giovanni della Pace**, Third Order Secular (1353-November 12, 1433)
 - 14 **St. Nicholas Tavelic and Companions**, Croatian Friar, Order of Friars Minor Martyrs of Palestine (c. 1340-November 14, 1391)
 - 15 **Bl. Mary of the Passion**, Founder Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (May 21, 1839-November 15, 1904)
 - 17 **St. Elizabeth of Hungary**, Secular Franciscan, Patroness of the Third Order (July 7, 1207-November 17, 1231)



NOVEMBER

- 3 **Bl. Helen Enselmini**, Poor Clare Nun (1208-November 4, 1242)
- 4 **St. Charles Borromeo**, Secular Franciscan Cardinal, Protector of the Friars Minor (October 2, 1538-November 3, 1584)

Collect polystyrene peanuts and bubble wrap in a plastic bag and deliver them to UPS Mailbox storefronts. They will reuse the material for packing their shipments.

Season of Caring for Creation

1 September – 4 October

Starts: September 1 – World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation
Pope Francis recently proclaimed it as a day of prayer for creation, as the Orthodox Church has done since 1989, to “draw from our rich spiritual heritage the reasons which feed our passion for the care of creation.”

Ends: October 4 – Solemnity of Saint Francis of Assisi
As our Seraphic Founder, Saint Francis gives us a model to imitate, celebrate and reflect on as the Patron of Ecology and author of the Cantic of the Creatures.



Pope Francis uses the phrase ‘integral ecology’ and warns against a narrow scientific focus on the modern environmental crisis. It might best be seen as a type of package to guide our daily living. Focused first on Christian worship of the Creator of all, **Integral Ecology** has implications for choices in the human journey, our life style and values - to confront the impact of ‘dictatorial economics’ on the world’s poor and the earth itself. The Pope invites us to revisit the integral connection between Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

Week One: September 1 – 6



Most High, all powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessing.

To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no man is worthy to mention Your name.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him.

And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Call to Prayer: All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Encourage us in our struggle for justice, love and peace. We thank you for being with us each day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Reading: The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet: "Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest". (Laudato Si #48)

Moment of Contemplation... *(Take some time in silence...)*

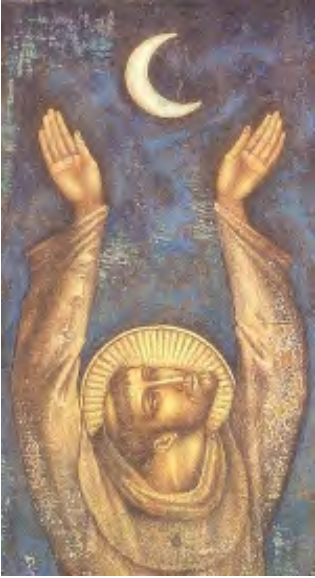
"Our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us." (Pope Francis)

Reflection Question: What is the violence I do towards the environment – in what I do and in what I fail to do?

"Cultivating and caring for creation means nurturing the world with responsibility and transforming it into a garden, a habitable place for everyone." (Pope Francis, World Environmental Day Homily, 2013)

Prayer for the Week: All-powerful God, Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Week Two: September 7 – 13



Praise be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.



Call to Prayer: All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Encourage us in our struggle for justice, love and peace. We thank you for being with us each day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Reading: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever. (Luke 1: 46-55)

Moment of Contemplation... *(Take some time in silence...)*

"The earth is the Lord's and all it holds, the world and those who dwell in it. For he founded it on the seas, established it over the rivers." (Psalm 24:1-2)

Reflection Question: How can I show mercy to my brothers and sisters and all of creation?

Action for the Week: Consider Meatless Mondays – think about the benefits of abstaining another day from meat for yourself and for the environment.

Prayer for the Week: All-powerful God, Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Week Three: September 14 – 20



Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you light the night and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.



Call to Prayer: All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Encourage us in our struggle for justice, love and peace. We thank you for being with us each day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Reading: Prior to the cauterizing of the veins between Francis' eyes and ears, he spoke thus to the fire: 'My brother fire, that surpasses all other things in beauty, the Most High created you strong, beautiful, and useful. Be kind to me in this hour, be courteous. For I have loved you in the past in the Lord. I beseech the great Lord who made you that he temper your heat now so that I may bear it when you burn me gently.' When his prayer was ended, he made the sign of the cross over the fire and then remained fearless. (Adapted from Celano, Second Life of St. Francis)

Moment of Contemplation... (Take some time in silence...)

"As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God." (Psalm 42:2)

Reflection Question: What would I be willing to bless that I have previously feared or scorned?

Think about the precious wonder of water – from your Baptism to the shower you took this morning. Thank God for this gift and ask the Holy Spirit to help you to be a good steward of the gifts that reveal God's love for us.

Prayer for the Week: All-powerful God, Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Week Four: September 21 – 27



Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed are those who endure in peace for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Call to Prayer: All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Encourage us in our struggle for justice, love and peace. We thank you for being with us each day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Reading: One day Francis was filled with joy because he was beginning to enjoy God in all creatures. He went through the streets singing and inviting everyone to sing along with him. Then he came upon an almond tree, and he said, 'Brother Almond, speak to me of God,' And the almond tree blossomed. (From a legend of St. Francis)

Moment of Contemplation... (Take some time in silence...)

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth... Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." (Matthew 5: 5, 9)

Reflection Question: How can I demonstrate being meek towards God's created Earth?

Action for the Week: *Embrace the silence this week. Turn off everything unnecessary. Reflect on God's glory in Creation: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork."*

Prayer for the Week: All-powerful God, Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Week Five: September 28 – October 4



Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no living man can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin. Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.

Call to Prayer: All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Encourage us in our struggle for justice, love and peace. We thank you for being with us each day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Reading: Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others. Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend toward the ultimate encounter with the Father. (OFS Rule, Art. 19)

Moment of Contemplation... (Take some time in silence...)

"This is what I want from you: to do justice, to love compassionately, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

Reflection Question: How do I trust in the presence of the "divine seed" in all of God's creation?

Action for the Week: Participate in a Transitus Service. If you cannot get to one, then pray Evening Prayer I and/or the Office of Readings from the red Proper Offices of Franciscan Saints and Blessed in the Liturgy of the Hours.

Prayer for the Week: All-powerful, most holy, most high, supreme God: all good, supreme good, totally good, You Who alone are good, may we give You all praise, all glory, all thanks, all honor, all blessing, and all good. So be it! So be it! Amen.