

ST MARY OF THE ANGELS FRATERNITY  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER  
THE ANGELUS \* FEBRUARY 9, 2020



*“Be good, love the Lord, pray for  
those who do not know Him. What a  
great grace it is to know God!”*

**—ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA**

 **Minister: Susan Jamison**  
**Vice-Minister: Sonia Bernardo**  
**Spiritual Assistant: Michael Huether - Formation Director: Tom McGrath**  
**Secretary: Portia - Treasurer: Carmencita Fiesta**  
**Counselors: Lilian Soriano, Mary Badjo & Irma Jean-Baptiste**  
**The Angelus: Mary Badjo**



## February 9<sup>th</sup> Fraternity Meeting Agenda

**\*Greetings to Father Kevin Treston and Barbara Countryman**  
who are conducting the Regional Visitation.

**Opening Prayer & Prayer to Our Lady Of Lourdes, led by Carmencita**

**Announcements** (until 1:20 pm)

Mention of the passing of Capuchin Friar and renowned writer **Lester Bach**  
Please remember to pray for his soul.

Our tentatively scheduled date and time for the **40 Days For Life Spring Campaign** is **Wednesday February 26<sup>th</sup>, at 1 PM** in Bethesda MD, Your prayerful presence and witness to life is the source of miracles. 16,742 lives have been confirmed as saved by this worldwide campaign. Countless more women have silently changed their minds and spared their babies.

March guest speaker arranged by Genie: **Matt Aujero, Campus Minister The Catholic Student Center at University of Maryland, about Maryland Coalition Against Pornography**

**Update: Genie's and Sonia's efforts to bring us "Life in the Spirit"**

**Directory: Updated draft.** Please provide us the Franciscan Saint's name you chose at our Franciscan Naming Ceremony and/or a favorite quote and we will include that too!

**Results of Our Survey:** The majority of our members would like to see a continuation of our studies of **LIVE LIKE FRANCIS, WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A SECULAR FRANCISCAN, LIFE IN THE SPIRIT & PILGRIMAGES**

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Sonia's Presentation on **Chapter 9, Live Like Francis 1:20 to 1:35**

**Christian Prayer** led by Tom McGrath 1:35

**Break / Prayer Partners** by Mary

Mike's presentation on **Lent and on upcoming area retreats.** 2:05 to 2:20

Tom's presentation on **What It Takes t We will use Chapter 2 in *What It Takes To Be an OFS Franciscan*—Relationships and Unity.** 2:20 to 2:35



### Minister's Message, by Susan

As you know, we have all been praying for Lilian's son who is in critical condition at the Cedar Sinai Hospital in Beverly Hills California. Lilian has been struggling to travel there in order to be at his bedside in the ICU. Lilian's daughter spent several weeks out there to be by her brother's side and was able to stay with a friend and drive the difficult freeways from downtown LA to the Hospital. That friend was unable to house Lilian and, anyway, Lilian would not have been able to drive on the crowded downtown freeways even if she rented a car. Lilian was greatly perplexed as to how she could visit her son. As you can imagine, finding an affordable hotel in Beverly Hills is impossible and her closest friend lives in Long Beach, which is at least a 4 hour daily round trip to the Hospital using public transportation.

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, I was speaking with our regional councilor Barbara Countryman on the phone talking about how we pray for each other and I mentioned Lilian. Barbara inspired me to call Lilian that same evening to see how things were going and if I could be of any help. We all know Lilian has been through so much in the past six months. While talking to Lilian later that same evening, and hearing about her housing plight, I was inspired by our Good Lord to do a google search for a Secular Franciscan Fraternity in Beverly Hills. Lo and behold, there was a link to a Facebook page for St. Joseph's Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in Los Angeles. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-Center/St-Josephs-Fraternity-of-the-Secular-Franciscan-Order-in-Los-Angeles-72504770801/>

I was able to send the Fraternity a message explaining that Lilian and I were Secular Franciscans in Maryland, etc., and told them about Lilian's son's condition and her housing dilemma and asked if they knew anyone who could help. A dear lady named Aida, also a Filipino, almost immediately responded to me. We texted and talked on the phone and conference-called with Lilian. **This morning Aida confirmed to Lilian and to me that she had found Lilian free housing with Aida's church friend who lives near the hospital and that Aida and her husband would be picking Lilian up from the LAX airport.** Lilian had offered to pay something and still wants to but it is clear that this offer is from the bottom of their hearts and no remuneration is wanted. Now Lilian can visit her son in relative comfort. What had seemed impossible just became possible.

You can imagine how I felt. So very grateful and amazed. Lilian is now able to spend precious time with her son and be supported by the loving care of fellow secular Franciscans and Catholics. We are so blessed to belong to such a loving and generous Franciscan Family. So very blessed. Lilian will travel to LAX on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Please continue to pray for the recovery of Lilian's son.



BY MIKE HUETHER, OFS

**This is the second of three articles on our Father Francis's deep devotion to prayer from my writings of my spiritual assistant's training and based upon the tenth chapter of St. Bonaventure's, "The Major Life of Saint Francis".**

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**When Francis was alone in prayer, he passionately connected with his Lord in deep secrecy, defending himself before his Judge while speaking intimately to Him. The friars who were with him at the time can account for his crying and pleading for God's mercy for sinners, weeping for the passion of Christ.**

**He could also be seen levitating and surrounded by a shining cloud as he prayed before a cross: his hands outstretched. The brilliant cloud was an indication of the miraculous light within him. God's wisdom was revealed to him only letting others in on it when the good of his neighbor showed itself along with moments with the love of God. He often referred to God's gift as bestowed only when it is really deserved and not as an invaluable treasure lost for the sake of a worthless reward.**

**Francis was very cautious to appear normal—as if nothing happened to him—when he came off a prayer experience that widely transformed him. He did not want to lose out on the progress made interiorly by being esteemed and rewarded by his friars with his ability to make such a spiritual experience. He would actually hide his visits of the Lord from others for fear of others realizing his ease of bringing about the presence of the Lord. He avoided all outward signs of deep loss to ecstasy to the Lord's presence and loss of heart to God. He would say to his friars that if any one of them is visited by God in their prayers, they should say, "Lord, you have sent this comfort from heaven even though I am a sinner and unworthy, and I entrust it to your keeping because I know I only steal your treasures...you should seem a sinner as much when leaving prayer as you did entering it as if you have received no new favor."**

**The abbot of the monastery of San Giustino in the Perugia diocese visited Francis to discuss his spiritual life with him. At the end of the meeting, he**



asked Francis to pray for him. After the abbot had gone his way, Francis began to pray for him. At that moment, the abbot felt a warm joy of spirit unlike any of his previous experiences. He became lost in ecstasy and completely beside himself for God. After he came out of this state, he realized the power of Francis's prayer. He developed a great love for Francis's order as a result and told many of his associates about this incident.

Francis had a regular routine of reciting the Divine Office with much reverence and devotion. Although in poor health in many areas of his body, he always stood erect while reciting the psalms and hours, never cutting them short due to any discomfort. Even when traveling and in the middle of rain, he would interrupt it to do the devotion. He often said of it, "If our bodies must take their food in peace—our bodies which will one day be the food of worms... what peace and quiet should not our souls enjoy to receive their food, which is the food of life?".

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Next month, in my third and final article on Francis's devotion to prayer, we'll talk of Francis's undivided attention to and authenticity of prayer and his deep honor for God's name. —Mike





February...

Happy Birthday to Joyce Routh on February 28<sup>th</sup>.

No profession anniversaries.

Continue your prayers for our ill members. Pray especially for Lilian Soriano's son, quite ill in California, and Michael Oliver's brother-in-law Vince who is recovering from a difficult back surgery and sepsis.

Blessings, Genie

### *A message from our Secretary, Portia...*

God's love has been poured into our hearts How can we love one another as Christ has loved us? Paul the Apostle tells us that "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Romans 5:5). Jesus poured out his Holy Spirit on his disciples at

Pentecost and he pours out his Spirit today on all who believe in him. If we yield our hearts to Jesus and submit to his will for us, then the Holy Spirit will purify all that is unloving, unkind, and unforgiving in us. The Lord wants to transform our minds so we can understand his word of truth and life which has power to set us free from ignorance, unbelief, deception, and prejudice. This is the power that overcomes the world - the triumphant cross of Christ which breaks the destructive forces of sin, hatred, and division. And we share in the power of Christ's victory by embracing the cross which the Lord Jesus sets before each one of us.



February ... by Mary Badjo. February is that month of dormancy, if not when we hibernate in our homes, then when we retreat into the sanctuary of our heart. Winter months invite solace and solitude, a time of rest and rejuvenation for the bustling spring and summer months ahead. What better way to prepare ourselves for Lent (which arrives early in February this year) than to ponder these inspirational saints whose feasts we celebrate this month?

#### St. Brigid of Ireland — February 1

A contemporary of St. Patrick (who likely baptized her mother), Brigid was named after a Celtic goddess. Her story is fascinating, as she was born of a slave woman (who was a Christian) and the woman's master. She was incredibly beautiful, so much so that her father set up an arranged marriage for her and a bard. She refused, having vowed her virginity to Christ, so she prayed to be made physically unattractive (which was granted) until she made her permanent vows. St. Brigid notably founded two monasteries, one in Kildare that was deliberately built above a shrine to the Celtic goddess of her namesake. In this way, she continued St. Patrick's mission of baptizing pagan icons. St. Brigid is the patron of newborns, cattle, dairymaids, and midwives. Her feast day is February 1.



#### St. Francis Nagasaki — February 6



Francis was a Japanese physician who became Catholic through the instruction of a Franciscan missionary in the sixteenth century. As a result, he became a Franciscan tertiary and a catechist following his conversion. Sadly, Francis, along with twenty five other faithful Catholics was martyred by crucifixion during the persecution of Christians by the Taiko of Japan at the time, Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Francis and his companions were all canonized as the martyrs of Japan in 1862 by Pope Pius IX. Their feast day is on February 6 and is listed as Ss. Paul Miki and Companions. (Though they were martyred on February 5, their feast day occurs the day after because of a conflict with St. Agatha's feast day.)

#### St. Valentine — February 14



Almost everyone in western culture celebrates Valentine's Day, though unfortunately without considering the fact that he was a saint. While there is a paucity of factual information about St. Valentine, we do know that he was born in third century Rome and was martyred after refusing to denounce his Catholic faith. It's likely the association between the saint and courtly love occurred as a result of baptizing the pagan holiday, Lupercalia, in the eighteenth century. Because his feast day is celebrated on February 14, that is what unofficially made St. Valentine the patron saint of happy marriages, engaged couples, young people, and love.





### St. Josephine Bakhita — February 8

For many years, Josephine Bakhita was a slave but her spirit was always free and eventually that spirit prevailed. Born in Olgossa in the Darfur region of southern Sudan, Josephine was kidnapped at the age of 7, sold into slavery and given the name Bakhita, which means fortunate. She was resold several

times, finally in 1883 to Callisto Legnani, Italian consul in Khartoum, Sudan. Two years later, he took Josephine to Italy and gave her to his friend Augusto Michieli. Bakhita became babysitter to Mimmina Michieli, whom she accompanied to Venice's Institute of the Catechumens, run by the Canossian Sisters. While Mimmina was being instructed, Josephine felt drawn to the Catholic Church. She was baptized and confirmed in 1890, taking the name Josephine. When the Michielis returned from Africa and wanted to take Mimmina and Josephine back with them, the future saint refused to go. During the ensuing court case, the Canossian Sisters and the patriarch of Venice intervened on Josephine's behalf. The judge concluded that since slavery was illegal in Italy, she had actually been free since 1885. She soon became well loved by the children attending the sisters' school and the local citizens. She once said, "Be good, love the Lord, pray for those who do not know Him. What a great grace it is to know God!" The first steps toward her beatification began in 1959.

She was beatified in 1992 and canonized eight years later.

### St. Blaise — February 3

St. Blaise is known by many titles, among them "physician of souls" and "saint of the wild beasts." He is most commonly known as the patron saint of throat illnesses, however. Many Catholic churches worldwide celebrate his feast day (February 3) with a special blessing of throats, using two blessed candles in a "v" shape across each person's neck. Though little historical fact is known about St. Blaise, we do know that he was considered a miracle worker even in his day and lived much of his life as a hermit in a cave. Many churches have been named after him, especially in the United Kingdom. In Kent, England, there exists St. Blaise's Well, which is claimed to have water with healing properties in it.





**What is the cross that I must take up  
daily in order to follow the Lord Jesus?**

**When my will crosses with God's will, then his will must be done.**

**The cross of Christ sets us free to live no longer for ourselves but for Christ and his kingdom of peace, joy, and righteousness (moral goodness). Our calling and privilege is to serve as Christ has served and to love and he has loved. That is the way we share in the glory of our heavenly Father who gave us his beloved Son who laid down his life for each one of us. The distinctive mark of every disciple and follower of Jesus Christ is love - a love that is ready to forgive and forget past injuries, to heal and restore rather than inflict revenge and injury.**

**The cross of Jesus is the only way to pardon, peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Every other way will fail or fall short of the glory and victory which Jesus Christ has won for us through his death and resurrection. If we embrace his love and truth and allow his Holy Spirit to purify and transform our hearts and minds, then we will find the inner freedom, joy, and strength we need to love without measure, to forgive without limit, and to serve without reward - save that of knowing we are serving the One who wants to be united with us in an unbreakable bond of peace and joy forever.**

**"Lord Jesus, your love knows no bounds and surpasses everything I could desire and long for. Fill me with the fire of your love and with the joy of your Holy Spirit that I may freely serve my neighbor with loving-kindness, tenderhearted mercy, and generous care for their well-being."**

**Daily prayer is courtesy of Don Schwager © 2019. Don's website is located  
at [DailyScripture.ServantsOfTheWord.org/Readings](http://DailyScripture.ServantsOfTheWord.org/Readings)**

**Submitted by Mary Badjo**