

## The Clarion



St. Clare Fraternity

St. Edmond Church  
Rehoboth Beach, DE

April 2020

**“FOLLOW JESUS BY WALKING IN THE STEPS OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI, AND IMITATE HIS JOYFUL LOVE”**

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### **REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Please send your donation for the Common Fund to  
Kevin Mumford, ofs, 100 Ivywood Knob  
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

*Regional Fair Share: The annual Regional Fair Share is due. We contribute \$40 for each professed active member and each candidate, and \$20 for each professed excused member.*

### **MINISTER’S MESSAGE**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

During this challenging time, we find ourselves separated in a physical sense, but are blessed to know that we are connected to each other in our Fraternity, to Franciscans around the world; and we are reminded of the universality of the Church.

Our physical world has gotten smaller, but our spiritual world is without limits.

Pope Francis recently called for all Christians to respond to the coronavirus pandemic “with the universality of prayer, of compassion, of tenderness”, adding, “Let us remain united. Let us make our closeness felt toward those persons who are the most lonely and tried”.

“In these trying days, while humanity trembles due to the threat of the pandemic, I would like to propose to all Christians that together we lift our voices towards Heaven,” the Pope said.

It is at times like these that we are reminded that peoples of this world are our sisters and brothers and that we are all one family under God.

I found the following prayer on the website of Xavier University and want to share it with you:

Jesus, you traveled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus, heal us.

My sisters and brothers, let us remain vigilant in our prayers for each other and always remember the goodness of our God!

Peace and Good!  
Andy

### OUR FRATERNITY GATHERINGS IN 2020

\*June 11

\*July 9

\*August 13

\*September 10

October 8

November 12

December 10

\*During the months of June, July, August & September we will gather at St. John the Apostle Church in Milford. More information to follow.

Our brother Frank Rega shares with us this story From the Mirror of Perfection.

*How he censured one of his companions for showing a gloomy face.*

Blessed Francis used to say, "Although I know that the devils envy me the blessings that God has given me, I also know and see that they cannot harm me through myself, so they plan and try to hurt me through my companions. But if they cannot hurt me either through myself or through my companions, they retire in great confusion. Indeed, whenever I am tempted or depressed, if I see my companions joyful, I immediately turn away from my temptation and oppression, and regain my own inward and outward joy."

So the Father used to censure those who went about with gloomy faces, and once rebuked a friar who appeared with a gloomy face, saying, "Why are you making an outward display of grief and sorrow for your sin? This sorrow is between God and yourself alone. So pray Him in His mercy to pardon you and restore to your soul the joy of His salvation, of which the guilt of your sins has deprived it. Always do your best to be cheerful when you are with me and the other brethren; it is not right for a servant of God to show a sad and gloomy face to his brother or to anyone else."

It should not be imagined, however, that our Father, who loved dignified and sensible behavior, wished this spiritual joy to be shown in levity or empty chatter, for these things are not evidence of spiritual joy, but of emptiness and folly. He greatly disliked laughter and idle gossip in a servant of God; in fact he preferred him not to laugh, and to avoid giving others any occasion for hilarity. In one of his Counsels he gave an even clearer definition of the nature of spiritual joy in a servant of God, saying, "Blessed

is the Religious who has no pleasure or joy except in the most holy sayings and works of the Lord, and by these inspires men to the love of God in joy and gladness. And woe to the Religious who takes delight in idle and foolish talk, and by them provokes men to laughter."

By a joyful face, therefore, he understood fervor, thoughtfulness, and the disposition and preparation of mind and body to a ready undertaking of every good work; for this fervor and readiness often have a greater influence on people than by the good deed itself. Indeed, however good an action may be, if it does not seem to have been done willingly and fervently, it tends to produce distaste rather than edification.

So he did not wish to see a gloomy face, which often betrays a sluggish body and a melancholy mind. He always loved to see gravity of face and deportment both in himself and others, and did his best to encourage this by word and example. For experience had taught him that grave and restrained behavior provided a wall and strong shield against the darts of the devils; he knew that without the protection of this wall and shield the souls resembled an unarmed soldier among powerful and well-armed enemies, ever eager and intent on his death.

#### APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Andrea Lipchak	4/4
Beverly Stoner	4/6

#### APRIL PROFESSION ANNIVERSARIES

Janice McCarthy	4/15/1984
Dick McCarthy	4/15/1984
Rhona Prescott	4/20/2010

#### Prayer Requests

We continue to pray for all of our fraternity sisters and brothers who are ill and for the special intentions of:

Florence Bianco  
Pat Dubois  
Linda Sciallo  
Rhona Prescott  
Laraine Hofmann  
Nela Wintgen  
Janice and Dick McCarthy  
Lucy Deiaco  
Nicole Meringolo  
Andy Zampini  
Bonnie Coté  
Judy Bennett

We pray for all of our deceased relatives and friends and especially for: John Zell, OFS & Mary Lou Zell, OFS

Deacon Buddy Bianco, OFS  
Deacon Bob Leonzio  
Barbara Petrisko, ofs  
Bill Farrell, ofs  
Bill Walker, ofs  
Dee Matthews, ofs



## Fraternity In the Heart of A Pandemic

In May of 2019 my Capuchin Province gathered for our Provincial Chapter, a meeting held once every three years to discuss issues surrounding our way of life, and to elect a new leadership of service. At the last Chapter, we focused on the theme of fraternity, a fundamental aspect of our charism. Our founder Saint Francis of Assisi writes in chapter VI of *The Rule of the Lesser Brothers*, that “wherever the brothers may be and meet one another, let them show that they are members of the same family.” Given that the family bonds are not necessarily established by blood, Saint Francis underlines that the unity of the brothers is of the Spirit, and such a bond transcends the biological bond. In such a spiritual bond the brothers are expected to treat each other as equals without distinction, making their needs known to one another and being available for service when there is need.

Although the Lesser Brothers profess the three evangelical vows of poverty chastity and obedience, fraternity exist as a fourth vow that is implicitly embraced at the time of ones entrance into the Order. One cannot truly be a lesser brother without fraternity. The word fraternity itself is defined as a group of individuals having a shared profession which is often accompanied by a feeling of friendship and mutual support. The charism of fraternity lived by the lesser brothers is unique in that it goes beyond the immediate group of brothers and incorporates not just the larger family of brothers and sisters called Franciscans (Followers of Saint Francis of Assisi), but the the world at large. At the opening of the Rule, Saint Francis states that “the rule and life of the Lesser Brothers is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” These words embody the entirety of what it means to be a Franciscan. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is of love, service, inclusion, care, comfort, forgiveness. By living the Gospel of Jesus Christ, one is called upon to treat others as their brothers and sisters without distinction. Jesus Christ came for all humanity, and in commissioning his disciples, he commands them to spread his Good News to the ends of the Earth.

In this century, the concept of fraternity seems to have a truncated understanding among the people, one might even dare to say such a concept might be lacking in our society. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, there’s an invitation not just to members of the Franciscan family but to all of humanity to consider this vital Franciscan charism of fraternity. The present pandemic has instilled fear, pain, sorrow, confusion, distress in people not just in our immediate circles but around the globe. Only a fraternal bonding can elevate us from this calamity. A bond that breaks all cultural, racial, political and socio-economic walls and only focuses on the other. A bond that brings hope and not despair, a bond that encourages rather than discourages and above all, a bond that loves and not hate. Through the charism of fraternity we can truly love others as we love ourselves. No one wishes to suffer the pain caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and no one should wish it on another. The centrality of Christianity is to love one another from the heart by way of bearing each other’s burdens and faults. The practice of fraternity without barriers especially at a time like this is a triumph over the COVID-19 pandemic and other societal issues of all times.

Rigobel Azanwi OFM Cap

