



# Our Lady of the Rosary Secular Franciscan Fraternity Williamsburg, Virginia

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Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

Merry 2020 Christmas to All!

Hard to believe a year ago your new Council was leading its first Fraternity Gathering and we were all busily putting together Christmas bags for Sr. Agnes - a whole year! Last Spring I asked what you were doing during the Covid 19 lockdown. Many of you sent replies which were included in the May Newsletter. What a bunch of resourceful folks! It would be interesting to learn what has changed for you in the last 7 months. What have you been up to? Send an update or a new remark to Karen to include in next month's Newsletter. So much has happened in this span of time, most of it unexpected, and many new skills honed. Who would have thought we'd be meeting & taking classes virtually, wearing masks going into banks (& not being arrested!), keeping away from Church & family members. The new last thought leaving home is usually not "Do I have my keys?" but "Did I remember my mask?"

Time has ticked away, & we've slowly adjusted to different ways of doing things - zoom, google meet, connect, webex meet - so many possibilities. My family has designated a specific day & time when we hold a virtual "family meeting" to keep each other aware of & up to date on what's going on in our lives & who needs help with what. Speaking of which, have you reached out to a fellow Franciscan lately? Have you called or sent a note to someone you know is homebound? I know "snail mail" isn't as popular or convenient as it used to be. I also know how nice it is to open the mailbox & find an unexpected "just because" card or letter. We are people who need each other, & barring physical contact that piece of paper closes distances & barriers. And it's not only the receiver who feels that joy; you as the sender will experience the satisfaction of letting someone know "You are not forgotten." Even a short email or text will do wonders.

I leave you with many wishes for a blessed & joyful Advent & Christmas Season. May the Birth of Our Savior renew your fervor in your Faith & in your Fraternity.

Pax et Bonum, Maria

Be as an adventurer, Exploring not new worlds but minds

### Important Dates:

12/05— Retreat— Advent Day of Spirituality  
10:00am— Noon

12/15 Marie Stephan — Birthday

12/20 Zoom Fraternity Meeting 1:00pm

12/28 Richard Churray — Birthday



### Praying for Our Deceased Brothers and Sisters

Joan Albrecht  
Edna Bartlett  
Gladys Branch  
Julia Carey  
Donald Carpenter  
Dorothy and Janice Carpenter  
Rose Coleman  
Josephine Decori  
Esme Esflavo  
Marian Garris  
Florence Gorden  
Jack Houlahan  
Dorothy and Don Johnson  
Lauren Pallazola  
Mark Pepper  
Daphne Pritchett  
Elma Stanbeck  
Lauren Sessa  
Denny Thiel  
Maria Torres



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## Message from Vice-Minister— Rick Churray, OFS

Happy Thanksgiving to all! I know it has been a very hard year, a very lonely year too. Yet I know I have much to be thankful for and I pray you do too. We have each other, we are all still here that is enough to be thankful for.

I miss each and everyone of you. I miss seeing your smiling faces, seeing you in fellowship with one another and miss us being together.. I believe we will be back together soon. I will continue to pray for each of you and I asked that you pray for me.

The loneliness caused by COVID-19 for my wife and I has been startling. We have 12 grandchildren and we only get to see two of them on a monthly basis. The others we only get to see on FaceTime or in a zoom meeting. We watched him grow before us yet we have no contact with them. So this is the hardest part for us. Prayerfully next year in April we will start traveling again. Our granddaughter in Wichita will receive her first communion in April. We will be there!

The loneliness comes also in the form of missing the communities our lives used to revolve around! And I'm sure each of you missed something you had before COVID-19.

My prayer for each of you is that you may find solace in your prayer time.

Please remember December 08 is the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY which is the Patronal Feast day of the United States.

Please remember to send any donations to our treasurer Barbara Massey. Make checked payable to "SFO" please just "SFO". In the memo line place the intention such as, common fund, Se. Agnes's client gifts, or Amazon relief. Thanks in Advance!

I hope to see you at our next zoom meeting but if not have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Pax et Bonum

Rick Churray



During the COVID-19 meeting restriction, if you wish to continue your monthly fraternity donation please send your check to treasurer, Barbara Massey, 862 Ventnor Drive, Newport News, VA 23608-8927. **Please make checks payable to SFO.**

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Before we know it Christmas will be upon us...Emmanuel with us once more...receiving & giving gifts. Wait; no gifts?!?

In the past our December meeting has been dedicated to putting together bountiful gift bags of necessities for Sr. Agnes' clients. And you have all been more than generous! Because of the continuing pandemic we'll not be able to practice in person this beautiful tradition. But Sister's ministry continues to grow, God be praised. She & her Sisters are now helping 40 persons.

Brothers & Sisters, this virus has already robbed us of so much! Will you let it rob you of your Christian spirit? Please, open your hearts AND your wallets! Think of how much you would have spent at the store, & add a little bit more if you can. Send your donation TODAY! (Do make sure to note on your check that this is for Christmas gifts.)



### **The Immaculate Conception – December 8**

"No sin would touch her, so that she would be a fitting and worthy vessel of the Son of God. The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the virginal conception and the birth of Christ, but rather to Mary's being conceived without inheriting Original Sin." (United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 142-143) Most of us readily think of Mary, Mother of God, during Advent. After all, Mary is the one closest to Jesus. From Mary we learn the greatest traits of the Christian: love, humility, justice, openness to God's grace, and willingness to act. Because this feast is so important, the Church has declared it a Holy Day of Obligation. For Franciscans this is a very special feast because of the devotion of Francis to Our Lady. Therefore, all Franciscans are to fast and abstain on December 7 in preparation for this great feast.



### **Our Lady of Guadalupe – December 12**

#### **The Story of Our Lady of Guadalupe**

The feast in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe goes back to the 16th century. Chronicles of that period tell us the story.

A poor Indian named Cuauhtlatohuac was baptized and given the name Juan Diego. He was a 57-year-old widower, and lived in a small village near Mexico City. On Saturday morning December 9, 1531, he was on his way to a nearby barrio to attend Mass in honor of Our Lady.

Juan was walking by a hill called Tepeyac when he heard beautiful music like the warbling of birds. A radiant cloud appeared, and within it stood an Indian maiden dressed like an Aztec princess. The lady spoke to him in his own language and sent him to the bishop of Mexico, a Franciscan named Juan de Zumarraga. The bishop was to build a chapel in the place where the lady appeared.

Eventually the bishop told Juan to have the lady give him a sign. About this same time Juan's uncle became seriously ill. This led poor Juan to try to avoid the lady. Nevertheless the lady found Juan, assured him that his uncle would recover, and provided roses for Juan to carry to the bishop in his cape or tilma.

On December 12, when Juan Diego opened his tilma in the bishop's presence, the roses fell to the ground, and the bishop sank to his knees. On the tilma where the roses had been appeared an image of Mary exactly as she had appeared at the hill of Tepeyac.



#### ***Prayer Request***

*Please keep in your prayers: Joe and Carol Murphy, and Kathy Clagg, OFS, from St. Conrad (Hanover) Fraternity*

*If you have a prayer request, please email your request to [karenrutherfordcoulson@gmail.com](mailto:karenrutherfordcoulson@gmail.com) to be included in our next newsletter!*



## Franciscan Spirituality is Incarnational

- It is based on the greatest gift of God to the human race
- The Word of the Father took on our flesh so that we could enter more fully into the life God has prepared for us.



Artist ~ Sieger Köder

## Advent Day of Spirituality

Our Advent Day of Spirituality will be Saturday December 5<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am to noon. Fr. John David Ramsey will be leading us in prayer and meditation.

Unfortunately, the retreat will have to be on Zoom. That is not the best option, but this year it's the best that we can do. If possible, make the call more retreat-like by lighting a candle, taking the call near your home altar, or other quiet location. Take the time to make the time special. Its two

hours of quiet away from the craziness of the secular Christmas season.



## December Formation

This month we will continue the book, *Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love*. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you as you read Chapter 1. Underline, highlight or otherwise identify those thoughts that spoke to you during your reading. I will be asking you to comment on what caught your eye as you read these pages. I have found it beneficial to prayerfully read the pages more than once to ensure a good understanding of the content. The first questions I will ask are: "What word or phrase stood out to you, and why? We will also discuss the questions for reflection on page 8. Another question I'd like you to pray on is an extension of question 3. How do you meditate on Clare's thoughts on the poverty of God as seen in the cross, or is this something new to ponder?"

### Upcoming Events

Dec 5 Advent Retreat (via ZOOM)

Dec 8 Immaculate Conception BVM, Patroness of the Seraphic Order

Dec 12 Council Meeting & Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas

Dec 20 Fraternity Gathering (via ZOOM)

Dec 25 Nativity of the Lord - Christmas

**Note: Meager showing? We need YOUR input for events at your parish or Other. Send to [qkfs13@gmail.com](mailto:qkfs13@gmail.com)**

## **Profile—Richard Churray, OFS**

My name is Richard Churray. I am the third born of six children. My parents had three sons and then three daughters. I was born December 28, 1950 in the borough of the Bronx in New York City. I lived in the Bronx for only nine days before moving to Long Island where I spent my first nine years. My family was a roving bunch. We originated in Pennsylvania in the town of Canonsburg which is south of Pittsburgh. My dad and mom had moved the family to New York for opportunities. When I was nine we move back to Canonsburg. Four years later we moved to the Detroit area. In 1970 I was drafted but chose to enter the Air Force. I spent 8 1/2 years in the A.F. before returning to civilian life. In 1981 I moved to Virginia to begin a 21.5 year career in the government. I retired at NASA Langley Research Center. In 1986 Barbara and I married. We have 4 sons and 1 daughter. Our daughter lives in New York and our sons live in Seattle, Wichita, Atlanta, and Williamsburg. The greatest blessing has come from our children who have given us 12 grandchildren! During this time of coronavirus we miss them dearly.

### **What inspired you to become a Secular Franciscan?**

All of my life I have had a desire to help people, to reach out in some way to those in need. During my time in the Air Force I had a tour of duty in Thailand. In Thailand the chapel sponsored monthly mission trips these trips involved working in an orphanage, a needy community and a leper colony.

I was forever changed by these trips. It touched my heart to be able to simply help these people who had so little or were pushed aside because of their medical condition. After returning home and returning to civilian life I continued finding ways to help people. While working in Hampton Virginia I volunteered at St. Vincent de Paul's Catholic Church serving the needy who came daily to the Back Door Ministry. I was in my element helping people, responding to God's call. To my surprise I was even involved in prison ministry for a while in Newport News. God continued to call me. I started looking for a way to serve God within a community. I looked for things concerning St. Francis. My father had a strong love for Saint Francis. My father loved St. Francis's Peace Prayer. He would at times be singing it. So this seed was planted by him. I search for a community near me and found our fraternity. It was with great joy that I attended my first meeting at St. Michael's Home. I walked in the door and was met by my old friend Glen Davis. I was as surprised as he was. I did not know he was a member. The members welcomed me with warm hearts at that meeting. So welcomed I began the process of becoming a professed Franciscan. On October 06, 2013 I became a Franciscan! My profession was at The Church of Francis de Sales in Mathews, Virginia. The minister at the time was Dennis Thiel. Since my profession I have held the position of vice minister.

### **What do you enjoy most about the monthly gatherings of our fraternity?**

I enjoy the gathering, I enjoy the fellowship we share! I love our formation time together as we learn what it means to be Franciscan.

### **What other community interests are you engaged in?**

In my parish of The Church of Francis de Sales I volunteer where needed. I was elected to the parish council and served for six years. I served as the chair and vice chair of the council. I was in charge of the grounds ministry, I am a lector and a lay Eucharist Minister (LEM's). I am presently the chair of the LEM's. During this time of COVID-19 restrictions I supply all the music for our Eucharist Celebration each Sunday. I conduct Eucharist Adoration monthly.

I have always loved and enjoyed helping people. Barbara and I both work for the G.U.E.S.T. Program (Gloucester United Emergency Shelter Team) in Gloucester Virginia. G.U.E.S.T. provides emergency shelter and meals for the homeless in our area during the winter months. Barbara and I have provided meals and overnight help on a yearly basis as needed.

Barbara and I also pick up food from our local Food Lion and deliver it to Hands Across Mathews (H.A.M.). H.A.M provides food, clothing, home repair and funds for necessities such as gas and power bills. I am a vice president of this organization and as such I put many hours in each week. On Wednesday we distribute food to between 60 and 100 families.

## Profile—Richard Churray, OFS Continued ...

**Do you have any goals for the fraternity, if so, what are they? How do you see yourself in accomplishing these goals?**

I would like to see our fraternity reach out to the other churches in Deanery 4 and 5. Our history began in the Hampton/Newport News area. I believe there are other who will flourish in our Franciscan community! We need to reach out. This outreach will strengthen and diversify our fraternity. Our leadership wants to do just this but we are limited by COVID-19 restrictions at this time.

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## Regional Retreat

Our Regional Retreat is set for May 21 – 23, 2021 at the Loyola Retreat Center in Faulkner, Maryland

<https://loyolaonthepotomac.com/>

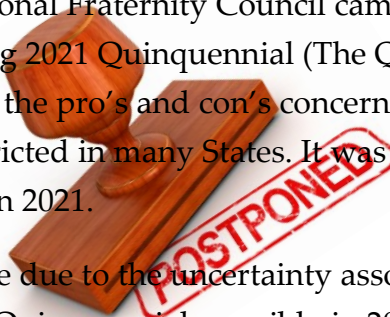
Our facilitator for the weekend will be Fr. Kevin Treston, OFM from the Holy Land Monastery in Washington, DC. For more information please go to <https://saintmargaretofcortona.org/upcoming-events/> and scroll down to the second event. The 2021 Retreat Centers cost for the weekend has not come out yet, stay tuned.



## 2021 Quinquennial

The National Fraternity Council came together by Zoom Teleconference, to discuss the upcoming 2021 Quinquennial (The Q) to be held in Phoenix, Arizona. The council weighed the pro's and con's concerning the COVID-19 pandemic that continues to keep us somewhat restricted in many States. It was the decision of the National Council to cancel the Quinquennial (The Q) in 2021.

This decision was made due to the uncertainty associated with the Pandemic. The council has set their sights to hold the Quinquennial, possibly in 2023. The new dates have not been set yet. The NEC has begun renegotiating the contract. Details will be relayed as soon as decisions are made. Stay tuned.



## Franciscan Saints Calendar

December - Month of the Incarnation

1. Bl. Marie-Angele Astorch, Virgin, Capuchin religious, d. 1665
2. Bl. Raphael Chylinski, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1741
3. St. Francis Xavier, Priest, had been a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute, Martyr, 1623
4. Bl. Francois Galves, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, Martyr 1623
5. Bl. Peter of Siena, Confessor, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1289
6. Bl. Elisabeth la Bonne, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1420
7. Bl. Louis Beltrame Quattrocchi, Confessor, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1951
8. Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the Seraphic Order, Holy Day of Obligation, Plenary Indulgence for tertiaries and cordbearers
9. Bl. Delphine de Glandeves, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1360
10. Bl. Conrad of Offida, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1306
11. Bl. Hugolinus Magalotti, Confessor, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1373
12. Discovery of the tomb of St. Francis 1820
13. Bl. Pius Bartosik, Priest, Conventual religious, Martyr 1941
14. Bl. Barthole Buonpedini, Priest, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1300
15. Mary Queen of the Seraphic Order
16. Bl. Honorat de Biala, Priest, Capuchin religious, d. 1916
17. Bl. Francois Bell, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, Martyr 1643
18. Bl. Mary Francis Schervier, Virgin, religious of the Third-Order Regular [living in community, under a Rule], d. 1876
19. Bl. Jean Discalceat, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1349
20. Bl. Antoine Galvao, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1822
21. St. Raphael Kalinowski, Priest, had been a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute, d. 1907
22. St. Francis Xavier Cabrini, Virgin, had been a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute, d. 1917
23. Bl. Nicolas Factor, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1583
24. Bl. Bentivolio of Bonio, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1231
25. Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Holy Day of Obligation
26. St. Albert Chmielowski, Confessor, religious of the Third-Order Regular [living in community, under a Rule], d. 1916
27. Bl. Matthia Nazzarei, Virgin, the Franciscan 2nd-Order; a "Poor Clare" sister, d. 1320
28. Feast of the Holy Innocents
29. Bl Gerard Cagnoli, lay brother, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1342
30. Bl. Margaret Colonna, Virgin, the Franciscan 2nd-Order; a "Poor Clare" sister, d. 1280
31. St. Gaspard Buffalo, Priest, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1836; Plenary Indulgence (Chant the Te Deum in public)

**HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY**

**5 Years**

Ani Kelly

Cindy Holland

**15 Years**

Glen Davis

**20 Years**

Sister Bernadette

Joan Beuhler

**25 Years**

Annie Pepper

Leo Wells