



PACE E BENE

TAU FRATERNITY

**Tau Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order – Herndon, Virginia
St. Margaret of Cortona Region**

<https://tauofs.org/>

January 2021

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Peace and all good!

Pope Francis has a new book.

“What’s that?,” you say. “Didn’t he just release an encyclical?”

Indeed he did; *Fratelli tutti* (“*Brothers all*”) was promulgated on October 3, 2020, on the Feast of St. Francis.

But Pope Francis — either because he’s not sure how many non-Catholics (and possibly even Catholics) will read an encyclical, or because he has more to say — has now published a book, *Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future* (\$26.00; Simon & Schuster).

It’s a slim volume — 149 pages — but it’s crammed with powerful and possibly transformative ideas about what community and change mean in a world impacted by the Coronavirus.

On the back cover of the book, there are seven major points drawn from the interior pages; I’d like to share these with you, followed by some of my own thoughts on each.

(1) “To come out of this crisis better, we have to see clearly, choose well, and act right. Let’s talk about how. Let us dare to dream.”

See clearly; choose well; act right. If you’ve ever undergone any kind of trauma in your life — and most of us have — you may also have experienced a sort of telescoping sensation: Things we once thought were terribly important can fade into the background, while true essentials move front and center. If there is any blessing at all in the devastating COVID-19 global ordeal, perhaps it is that humanity will receive the grace to **see** how we are all connected; **choose** a future in unity; and **act** for the benefit of the common good.

(2) “We must redesign the economy so that it can offer every person access to a dignified existence while protecting and regenerating the natural world.”

Pope Francis returns to the idea of what our basic humanity should entitle each of us to — a dignified existence. He sees this through both a universal and an individual lens. In Pope Francis’ calculus, a dignified existence includes three building blocks of security: land, lodging, and labor; “the three Ls.”

Land conserved and cared for so all can share its bounty — fresh air; clean water; and food. Lodging in the sense of the common earth we all share, and one's own home to live in. Labor not as "the exclusive privilege of the employed or the employers, but a right and duty for all men and women."

(3) "What is the greatest fruit of a personal crisis? I'd say patience, sprinkled with a healthy sense of humor, which allows us to endure and make space for change to happen."

We readily understand Pope Francis' point about patience; suffering and trial have long been advanced as unsought opportunities for spiritual growth. But how can we possibly laugh in the midst of a personal crisis? Humor, Pope Francis suggests, can afford us perspective; and that perspective can in turn help us to survive. Even the Mayo Clinic agrees that humor is healthy: "A good sense of humor can't cure all ailments, but data is mounting about the positive things laughter can do." See more here: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456>

(4) "When I speak of change I mean that those people who are now on the edges become the means of changing society."

This would require an inversion of power; it would mean the powerful not only giving access to power by actively listening to those on the margins of society, but also sharing their power with the dispossessed by enabling them to become agents of change. Is this possible? What might such trust look like? There is much talk of "personal responsibility" as a requirement for the poor to change their condition — but not so much for those with a grip on the levers of societal power. A truly just world needs to be a more equitable world, without a chasm between rich and poor; powerful and powerless.

(5) "We do not possess the truth so much as the truth possesses us, constantly attracting us by means of beauty and goodness."

"What is truth?" Pontius Pilate asks of Jesus, as recorded in John 18:38. We can imagine Pilate's query delivered in a sneering tone; and indeed, he doesn't wait for an answer. The Roman governor's casual and contemptuous dismissal of the idea that truth exists is startlingly contemporary. The Truth incarnate stands before Pilate, yet he doesn't see it. The truth must be, as Pope Francis says, something that possesses us; something — Someone — who grips us; grips our attention; grips our heart. Truth cannot be restricted to a cold equation in a textbook — it must involve a living encounter with the Person of Jesus, and the humanity He so loves.

(6) "Sin is a rejection of the limits that love requires."

At its root, sin is a failure to love — to love ourselves, to love one another, to love God. When we individually sin, we distance ourselves from the Divine, and our failure can make us disappointed in ourselves. As a result, we may experience a lack of healthy love for our own person — and we cannot love others if we do not first love ourselves. And if we do not love others, it's much easier to sin against them. We can easily see the destructive cycle at work here — sin is never isolated; it ripples out, creating a spiritual tremor that can spread beyond the comfortable boundaries we may at first perceive.

(7) Our greatest power is not in the respect that others have for us, but the service we can offer others."

Humility, as we know, is a predominant Franciscan spiritual trait — and one that Pope Francis also encourages. But again, it's an inversion of the expected. Our society doesn't actively promote humility, and respect and prestige are the yardstick most commonly applied to measure individual and even collective worth. Flip the script, says Pope Francis — don't seek to be elevated; seek to serve. The act of giving — giving of ourselves — is the mightiest deed we have in our possession, and it's the most radically unique. Only you can give of yourself — no one else can.

As we turn our hopes to better months ahead, we might want to use Pope Francis' seven points as a sort of New Year's primer; a way to engage the months ahead in a spirit of positivity and optimism — optimism that things can and will improve. And as we do, I send you my prayers for a blessed and Happy New Year!

Holding you all in prayer,

Kimberley

RECAP OF LAST GATHERING

OPENING PRAYER

Walter Gawlak, OFS offered an opening prayer.

PRESENTATION

Kimberley Heatherington, OFS gave a short presentation on *A Franciscan Christmas* by Kathleen M. Carroll. The book focuses on who was at the creche. Kimberley read excerpts from scripture and observations from the author for the following:

- Jesus
- Mary
- Joseph
- The shepherds
- The magi
- The angels
- The villagers
- The star
- The animals

CHRISTMAS FELLOWSHIP

In lieu of ongoing formation, Tau members shared Christmas memories.

PRAYER SUBMISSIONS

Please keep the following members, relatives, and friends in your prayers:

For physical and spiritual healing of Bill Brewster's son Richard Lee; Cynthia Filan-Kim's sister; Sally White; Sally's sister Linda; Richard & Carole Clarke and their grandsons Liam and Rory; Helen Broxmeyer and her daughter Susan; William Brewster; Irene Naveau; and Kay Flynn. For the repose of the soul of Ambrose Kim. For the patients and Sisters at the Missionaries of Charity Gift of Peace House. For the people affected by Coronavirus and their caregivers. For the Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic and its patients. For all peoples who suffer persecution. For the victims of natural disasters. For the lonely and brokenhearted who feel despair during the holidays. For all those who are in need of our prayers who have been inadvertently omitted from this list.

Please forward prayer requests to Vera Stewart, OFS by the 14th of the month, so that they may be included in the newsletter.

APOSTOLATES

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Help to feed the hungry. Cyndy Filan-Kim, OFS volunteered to shop and deliver food to the St. Vincent de Paul Society chapter at her parish. Money from the Tau General Fund will be used to purchase needed food items. If you wish to contribute, please send a check to Cyndy.

Thank you!

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY HOSPICE APOSTOLATE

Mark your calendars for our next meal drop off for the hospice patients at the Missionaries of Charity Gift of Peace House in Washington, DC, on Saturday, February 13.

Please contact Pat B., OFS or Joe M., OFS if you are interested in preparing a dish. Joe will be doing curbside pickups from volunteers who cook, on Friday night and early Saturday morning.

As always, thanks to St. John Neumann Parish for its financial support, and all of the volunteers who cook.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

INDIVIDUAL APOSTOLATES

Apostolates of the First Brothers and Sisters of Tau Fraternity

By Sally White OFS

This article is the second in a series of articles about those brothers and sisters who were part of the first two formation groups of devoted Catholics who wished to join the fraternity. This series hopes to show how they grew in their formation over the years and how they developed their own personal apostolates after their profession. The first article was about Frank Bowen OFS in the November newsletter. This article is about our sister, Veronica O'Donnell OFS.

"HOW CAN I HELP?"

Veronica O'Donnell, OFS

We all know about St. Veronica who offered her veil to Christ so he could wipe away the sweat and blood from His face as he made his way to Calvary. She represents compassion for others who are hurting. Likewise, our sister, Veronica O'Donnell, OFS, is a living example in our community of that same compassion for others, both within our fraternity and with the outside world.

Veronica began her formation in one of the earliest formation groups in 1995. Her formation director still remembers her contributions during formation. Veronica would succinctly summarize the discussion in simple human language so that the Rule could be easily applied to one's life. While others were tied up in theological knots, she untied them. She always found ways to include others in discussions during formation, the general gathering and family time. No one ever felt left out when Veronica was present.

After Veronica was professed in 1998. She never sought or campaigned for a spot on the Council being content to organize the library. However, when the Council could not find a treasurer, she agreed to assume the office. During the remaining years she continued to show her compassion for the Tau community through her volunteering to lead the Hospitality Committee feeding us all at our monthly gatherings, special parties and picnics.

In addition, she applied the Rule to her life outside of Tau through her volunteer activities with St. John Neumann Catholic Church, the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Bargain Loft and Reston Hospital. At her parish she was the parish librarian for 20 years and facilitated the Little Rock Scripture Study. She has volunteered in the Reston Hospital Gift Shop for the last twelve years for 2 days a week. She was a docent guide at the Shrine of Immaculate Conception for ten years. Finally, she was a volunteer for 8 years at the Bargain Loft, part of Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help (FISH) a nonprofit organization that helps the poor in the Reston/Herndon area.

It was one of those volunteer activities with her parish that led directly to the establishment of the Tau group apostolate with the Gift of Peace House, a hospice run by the Missionaries of Charity Sisters in Washington DC. Approximately ten years ago Veronica began to drive an elderly lady from her parish, to Washington DC to deliver food monthly to the Sisters. As her friend advanced in years Veronica became concerned for her friend and asked her if the Tau fraternity members could provide food every other month. It was agreed by her friend, St. John Neumann Parish and Tau fraternity that Tau fraternity would take on this mission. St. John Neumann Parish agreed to donate money for food supplies and Veronica and her small group of Franciscans began this group apostolate.

For years Veronica led this apostolate gathering volunteers to help until very recently. In the beginning, her most regular volunteers were Bill Bouffard OFS, Clari Claus OFS, Frank Bowen OFS, Eric Larin OFS, and Bill Richey OFS. Sometimes the food was prepared in advance in Veronica's home and then others like Irene Naveau OFS joined in the cooking. Ten years later the apostolate she began and built is still a group apostolate of Tau volunteers.

In addition to her apostolate with the Sisters, whenever Veronica found out a brother or sister was in need, she would ask **“How can I help?”** Sometimes she would organize food deliveries. Her delicious Polish food and other yummy recipes helped many Tau families over the years. She delivered books for the Tau homebound to read. But the best example of her many acts of compassion and devotion to our community can be summed up in her ministry to one of our dearest sisters, Irene Naveau OFS.

About eight or nine years ago she began her friendship and apostolate with Irene. She joined Irene by phone in reciting the Liturgy of the Hours daily for the last 8 or 9 years. During these years she took Irene to countless doctors’ appointments, shopping, and visits to the Franciscan Monastery for confession. She organized birthday and holiday luncheons for her. A constant bedside visitor to Irene at numerous hospital stays, she sat by her side during some of her dialysis sessions. She helped Irene get her motorized wheelchair when she could no longer rely on a walker. During the pandemic, she continues to shop for Irene and pray the Liturgy of the Hours by phone. She is looking forward to the day when Covid is gone and she can take Irene to their outings to the Franciscan Monastery and luncheons.

Never “tooting her own horn”, over twenty-two years later, Veronica is still doing compassionate acts today. It is not clear when she finds time to sleep.

OUR NEW CANDIDATE!



Congratulations to Lisa Jaeger! On December 19, 2020 at St. Joseph Church, Tau Fraternity held the Rite of Admission, welcoming Lisa as a new candidate. Pictured above is the creche at St. Joseph

Pictured Left: Josh Goldberg, OFS; Lisa Jaeger; Kimberley Heatherington, OFS; and Cyndy Filan-Kim, OFS.

TAU COMMITTEES

If you are interested in participating actively in one of our Committees, take a moment to chat with the chair:

- Hospitality Committee – Veronica O’Donnell, OFS
- Interfaith/Ecumenical Committee – Kimberley Heatherington, OFS
- Infirmary Committee – Sharon Goldberg
- Recruitment Committee – Vacant
- Technology Committee – John Ata, OFS



World Interfaith Harmony Week

Annual UN Observance Week: Feb. 1-7

The World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the UN General Assembly on September 23, 2010 by H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan. Just under a month later, on October 20, 2010, it was unanimously adopted by the UN and henceforth the first week of February will be observed as a World Interfaith Harmony Week.

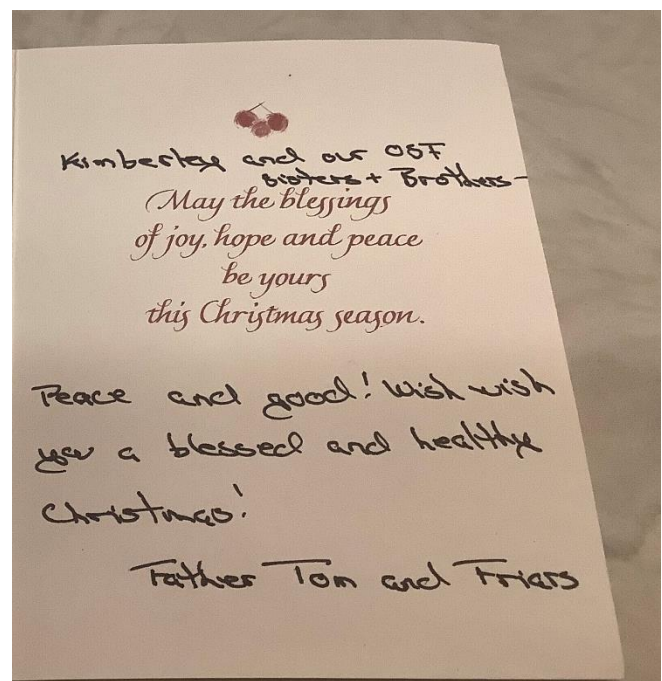
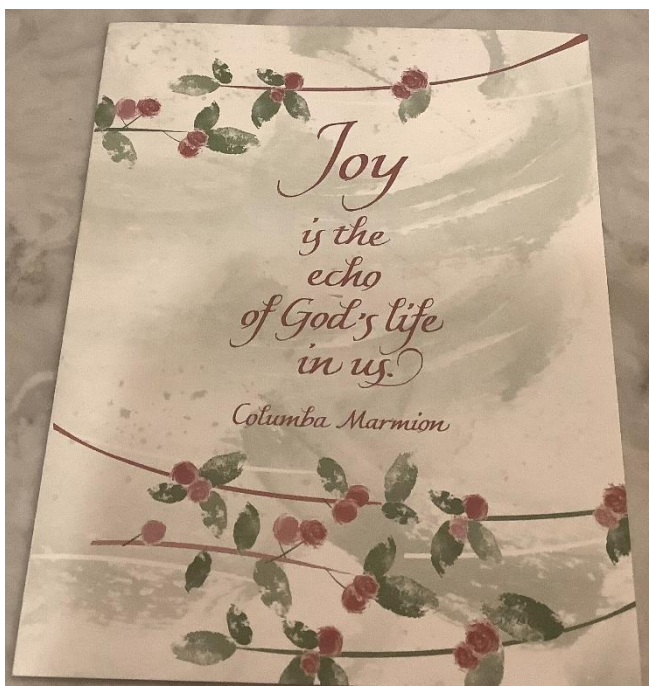
The World Interfaith Harmony Week is based on the pioneering work of [The Common Word initiative](#). This initiative, which started in 2007, called for Muslim and Christian leaders to engage in a dialogue based on two common fundamental religious Commandments; Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour, without nevertheless compromising any of their own religious tenets. The Two commandments are at the heart of the three Monotheistic religions and therefore provide the most solid theological ground possible.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week extends the Two Commandments by adding 'Love of the Good, and Love of the Neighbour'. This formula includes all people of goodwill. It includes those of other faiths, and those with no faith.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week provides a platform—one week in a year—when all interfaith groups and other groups of goodwill can show the world what a powerful movement they are. The thousands of events organized by these groups often go unnoticed not only by the general public, but also by other groups themselves. This week will allow for these groups to become aware of each other and strengthen the movement by building ties and avoiding duplicating each others' efforts.

It is hoped that this initiative will provide a focal point from which all people of goodwill can recognize that the common values they hold far outweigh the differences they have, and thus provide a strong dosage of peace and harmony to their communities.

GREETINGS FROM THE TORS



COMING UP IN JANUARY

January is the Month of the Holy Name of Jesus and His Holy Childhood *

- Jan 1 – Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord – Holy Day of Obligation
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
- Jan 2 – Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus
Vicki Shanholtz' Birthday
- Jan 3 – Celebration of the Epiphany of the Lord (UCCB)
Tau Fraternity Meeting
- Jan 4 – Feast of Blessed Angela of Foligno
Feast of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Veronica O'Donnell's Profession
- Jan 5 – Feast of St. John Neumann
- Jan 6 – Epiphany of the Lord
- Jan 11 – Kimberley Heatherington's Profession
- Jan 12 – Baptism of the Lord
Gail Dowling's and Walter Gawlak's Birthday
- Jan 15 - Barbara Sliver's Birthday
- Jan 18 – 25 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- Jan 23 – Feast of the Marriage of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Jan 24 – Feast of St. Francis de Sales
Vera Stewart's Profession
- Jan 25 – Carol Clarke's Birthday
- Jan 27 – Irene Naveau's Birthday
- Jan 29 – Feast of St. Francis de Sales
Gil Donahue's Profession
- Jan 31 – Feast of St. John Bosco
Richard Clarke's Birthday



* See the Franciscan Calendar for more dates: <http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/traditional-franciscan-calendar.html>

POETIC REFLECTION

Submitted by Helen Broxmeyer, OFS

Big Bang Theory Number Two

Human beings were launched into the world
By a God who was an optimist. They were richer than God,
And smarter than He was, too, and they filled the Earth
And subdued it. From a virtual Big Bang,
Their intelligence traveled outward, until they discovered
They'd misplaced God, and lost track of His wisdom.

The journey ended with an ever-expanding mass
Of primal chaotic know-how finally exploding,
And returning to the Infinite Source from which it came ;
While God, for His part, thought, with good-natured forbearance,
« Looks like it's time to put out Version 3.0... »

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« God loves nothing so much as the man who lives with wisdom.
For she is more beautiful than the sun,
And excels every constellation of the stars. . .
She reaches mightily from one end of the Earth to the other,
And she orders all things well. »

The Book of Wisdom 7:28-29 and 8:1
2nd to 1st Century B.C.

Helen Broxmeyer
December 11, 2020

NEXT TAU FRATERNITY GATHERING

Date: Sunday, **January 3, 2021**
Location: TELECONFERENCE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS– Call-in information will be sent via email.
Schedule: 1:30 pm – 1:35 pm Opening Prayer & Member Prayer Offering: **TBD**
1:35 pm – 2:15 pm Presentation & Discussion: "Francis and the Eucharist" **Father Rufino, TOR**
2:15 pm – 2:25 pm Break
2:25 pm – 3:05 pm Ongoing Formation & Discussion
3:05 pm – 3:15 pm Break
3:15 pm – 3:25 pm Angelus & Liturgy of the Hours
3:25 pm – 3:35 pm Business Meeting
3:35 pm Closing Prayer

INITIAL FORMATION:

Senior Candidates: Chapter 25 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Candidates: Chapter 13 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Aspirants: Chapter 1 in *The Franciscan Journey*

ON-GOING FORMATION:

Let's start the new year with a group discernment of how formation in 2021 will best serve our needs, especially as we continue to serve each other and many outside our circle virtually. I will send you some additional material after Christmas to help focus. One of those sources will be the Formation Friday reflection from November 27th:

More about Formation

MEANS OF GROWTH: (We Nourish)—we nurture our vocation and the vocation of our members—both new and long-time. Aspirants require focused discernment of their vocation. in ongoing formation, we also benefit from discernment—discussing with the Holy Spirit how strong our vocation is—or if it has become diluted and weak. We are in a constant state of formation as Franciscans.

ASSIMILATION: (We Absorb) through example and sharing of information. Secular Franciscans “wrap” the member in the charism of St. Francis— Sometimes we are the “wrappers” and sometimes we are the “wrapees.” Slowly, the charism is absorbed if the soil of the vocation is fertile (Transfer of culture and values)—Formation immerses members (both new and professed) into the living community that is the fraternity.

INTEGRATION of values: (We enter) Franciscan values become a part of us— the charism becomes automatic

ONGOING CONVERSION: (We examine) We will not move forward every day. When we slip back, we resolve to do better. We help one another to do this.

TRANSFORMATION:—(We are changed) The end result of formation should be transformation. The end point of everything we are and do as Secular Franciscans must be to become more like Christ and closer to him.

THE ANGELUS

During the Epiphany, we will precede the Liturgy of the Hours with the Angelus.

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.
Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with Thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen
V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.
Hail Mary, etc.
V. And the Word was made Flesh.
R. And dwelt among us.
Hail Mary, etc.
V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
LET US PRAY

LITURGY OF THE HOURS:

Epiphany of the Lord:

Hymn: #81 – As With Gladness Men of Old: pg. 1596 (Verses 1 and 2)

Everything: Epiphany, Evening Prayer II: pg. 214

Readers: TBD**



****Please contact Kimberley Heatherington, OFS if you would like to volunteer to do the following:**

- **Opening Prayer**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Psalm 1**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Psalm 2**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Psalm 3**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Scripture Reading and Responsory.**

For the next newsletter, please send your prayer requests and submissions to Vera Stewart at thevastewarts@gmail.com or call or text (703) 459-6958. If you call and do not get an answer, please leave a voicemail message.