

**THE ST. JOSEPH FRATERNITY OF
THE SECULAR FRANCISCANS**

**ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA REGION
"ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARI"**

THE FRANCISCAN SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

December 2021

**Next Meeting: December 4th at 10:00 am
At St. John the Baptist Library room after Mass**

Blessed Honoratus Kozminski– December 16th

Wenceslaus Kozminski was born in Biala Podlaska, Poland in 1829. By the age of 11 he had lost his faith. By the age of 16 his father had died. He studied architecture at the School of Fine Arts in Warsaw. Suspected of participating in a rebellious conspiracy against the Czarists in Poland, he was imprisoned from April 1846 until March of 1847. His life then took a turn for the better, and in 1848 he received the Capuchin habit and a new name, Honoratus. He was ordained in 1855 and dedicated his energies to the ministry where he was involved, among other things, with the Secular Franciscan Order.

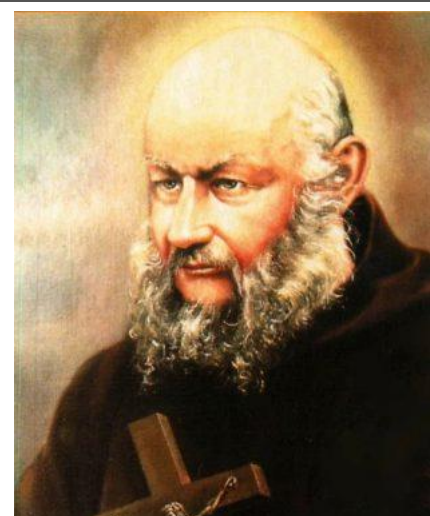
A 1864 revolt against Czar Alexander III failed, which led to the suppression of all religious orders in Poland. The Capuchins were expelled from Warsaw and moved to Zakroczym. There Honoratus founded 26 religious congregations. These men and women took vows but did not wear a religious habit and did not live in a community. In many regards, they lived as members of today's secular institutes do. Seventeen of these groups still exist as religious congregations.

Father Honoratus' writings include many volumes of sermons, letters, and works on ascetical theology, works on Marian devotion, historical and pastoral writings, as well as many writings for the religious congregations which he founded.

When various bishops sought to reorganize the communities under their authority in 1906, Honoratus defended them and their independence. In 1908, he was relieved of his leadership role. Nevertheless, he encouraged the members of these communities to be obedient to the Church.

Father Honoratus died on December 16, 1916, and was beatified in 1988. His liturgical feast is celebrated on October 13.

Father Honoratus realized that the religious communities that he founded were not truly his. When ordered by Church officials to relinquish control, he instructed the communities to be obedient to the Church. He could have become bitter or combative, but instead he accepted his fate with religious submission, and realized that the gifts of the Religious were to be gifts to the larger community. He learned to let go.



Blessed Honoratus Kozminski

HAPPY ADVENT

Birthdays:

- Victoria Wharton (11th)

Prayer Intentions:

- Maggie & Her Family
- Lynn & Her Family
- Marge Butta
- Christine Heinrich
- Janis Donley
- Those who are still suffering from the effects of the COVID-19 lockdown

December Meeting: 9:00 am
Mass at St. John's & then
meeting in the Library

Formation: We have started
doing a decade of the Crown
Rosary at the meetings - bring
your Rosary!

"True wisdom is founded on the fear of the Lord; who but a fool would despise such wisdom, and the lessons she teaches?" (Proverbs 1:7)

From “The General Constitutions of The SFO” – Article 15-3

“Secular Franciscans should pledge themselves to reduce their own personal needs so as to be better able to share spiritual and material goods with their brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. They should give thanks to God for the goods they have received, using them as good stewards and not as owners.

They should take a firm position against consumerism and against ideologies and practices which prefer riches over human and religious values and which permit the exploitation of the human person.

What does it mean to be Humble?

From Our Fraternity’s Spiritual Assistant, Donna

This has always intrigued me. Is it meekness, shyness, or being timid? And what does being humble have to do with my soul? Well, let’s find out what the early scholars had to say about being humble. The dictionary defines “humble”: most often refers to a losing of pride or arrogance.

Saint Bonaventure, a Franciscan scholar said:

“As pride is the beginning of all sin, so humility is the foundation of all virtue. Learn to be humble and not as the hypocrites, humble merely in appearances.”

Saint Augustine, not a Franciscan, but a scholar:

“It was pride that changed angels into devils: It is humility that makes men an angel.”

Saint James, the apostle, says in James 4:6-

“God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

Blessed John Duns Scotus- This man is unique. Martin Luther said Bonaventure made him go crazy trying to understand him. This is the way Blessed John Duns Scotus made me feel. The more you study him, the deeper you grow into his heart. Free will to Duns Scotus “is the innate capacity of human beings to chose whether or not to love” A person’s ability to be individual, specifically, their “thisness.”- or uniqueness, remains a hidden mystery to each person. Dun Scotus says, “The wearing of the conical hat is to stimulate the brain.” This is where the term “thinking cap” comes from.

Blessed Brother Giles of Assisi:

“No one can come to the knowledge of God except through humility. The way of going above is to go below. Through humility man findth grace before God and peace with men”.

And of course, our seraph father Saint Francis:

“We can never know how patient or humble someone is when everything is going well with him. But when those who should cooperate with him do exactly the opposite, then we can know. A man has as much patience and humility as he has then and no more.”
Well, my Brothers and Sisters, there you have it. Make the decision for yourselves. For myself, I will be more aware of my uniqueness, for the life of my soul.

Peace and God Bless,
Donna Willard

FRANCISCAN TEACHINGS

CHRIST IS PROCLAIMED BY OUR LIVES

“ The Franciscan path of prayer that leads to peace is a path of transformation and witness. Christ is proclaimed not by words but by the example of one’s life, one’s willingness to suffer or perhaps offer one’s life for the sake of another. Christ lives in that Christ lives in us—in our bodies, our hands, our feet and our actions. This is the challenge for our time with its emphasis on rationality and materialism, the challenge of divine risk, of allowing God to enter our lives and lift us out of the doldrums of mediocrity, privatism and individualism. We are called to be vulnerable to grace so that we may be transformed into the living Christ. -

Franciscan Prayer by Ilia
Delio, OSF

Excerpts from **ST. FRANCIS AND THE GIFT OF GRECCIO** by Murray Bodo, OFM

“But what makes Greccio unique in the life of St. Francis is what happened there at Christmastime in 1223, three years before he died. He came there wanting to celebrate Christmas in a new way, a midnight Mass with a real ox and donkey and with townspeople gathered around witnessing this live Christmas crèche. Christmas was the dearest of feasts because it revealed the profound humility of God in choosing to become a little baby, helpless and in need of us, just as we were when we were newborn babies.

For St. Francis, Christmas was linked inseparably to the Passion as well, because to become a human being means suffering and death. And there is already suffering in the Incarnation in God’s becoming human, leaving behind the trappings of divinity, emptying himself, as St. Paul says in his Letter to the Philippians, “becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (2:8).”

“In doing so, St. Francis hoped that people would see themselves in the Christmas scene. It would not only be about something that happened 1,200 years ago in Bethlehem, but it would be something that was happening then and there to them. Their ox and donkey would be in the crèche, their children would see Christmas happening in Greccio, and everyone would see that the Christ Child comes to us in our own place and time at Christmas.

And, in fact, a knight of Greccio by the name of John of Velita said that at one point in the Mass the baby Jesus appeared in the crib and seemed asleep. Francis then went to the crib and took the baby in his arms and seemed to wake him up.”

“At that first Christmas crèche at Greccio, St. Francis wanted to show everyone there how close God was to them, how humble God is, how like a child is God who loves us unconditionally. God is not removed in some faraway, mystical place; God is with us, and we can love him with affection and overflowing love, as God has first loved us and continues to love us. For St. Francis, a personal love of Jesus is the heart of Christian spirituality. And he himself was in constant conversation with Jesus.”

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION EVANGELII GAUDIUM OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS

IV. Social dialogue as a contribution to peace

238. Evangelization also involves the path of dialogue. For the Church today, three areas of dialogue stand out where she needs to be present in order to promote full human development and to pursue the common good: dialogue with states, dialogue with society – including dialogue with cultures and the sciences – and dialogue with other believers who are not part of the Catholic Church. In each case, “the Church speaks from the light which faith offers”, contributing her two thousand year experience and keeping ever in mind the life and sufferings of human beings. This light transcends human reason, yet it can also prove meaningful and enriching to those who are not believers and it stimulates reason to broaden its perspectives.

239. The Church proclaims “the Gospel of peace” (Eph 6:15) and she wishes to cooperate with all national and international authorities in safeguarding this immense universal good. By preaching Jesus Christ, who is himself peace (cf. Eph 2:14), the new evangelization calls on every baptized person to be a peacemaker and a credible witness to a reconciled life. In a culture which privileges dialogue as a form of encounter, it is time to devise a means for building consensus and agreement while seeking the goal of a just, responsive and inclusive society. The principal author, the historic subject of this process, is the people as a whole and their culture, and not a single class, minority, group or elite. We do not need plans drawn up by a few for the few, or an enlightened or outspoken minority which claims to speak for everyone. It is about agreeing to live together, a social and cultural pact.