

**St Mary of The Angels Fraternity  
Order of the Secular Franciscan  
The Angelus  
December 19, 2021**



**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**







***Our Christmas Party!***  
***Our Christmas Meeting***  
***will be devoted to our***  
***Joyful Christmas Party!***

As discussed in our last meeting, please bring a dish to share, a centerpiece (if you volunteered for that), any extra decorations you think would add to the beauty and a wrapped gift valued at \$5 to \$10 for our gift exchange.

**Please bring a Christmas Card for the folks at Dorothy Day.** If you have Holy Cards that we could add in, please bring them. The ladies will be getting a necklace from us. We will sign the cards at the meeting and decorate them with candy canes.

Christian Prayer will be led by Tom.

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Minister's Message

Christmas is truly the most joyful Holy Day and Season of the year. It is also undeniably busy. And being busy trying to bring Christmas Cheer to your loves ones and many others too is truly Franciscan Sacrifice and Calling . It is part of our Gift of ourselves to the Christ Child.

God Bless us all in our endeavors to bring Jesus to others and to help them to feel the love of God through you this Season.

Susan

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy December Birthday!

2 – Carol Smith;

7 – Alina Zygmunt;

9 – Genie Dutton;

19 – Madonna Goody;

21 - Greg Davis

Pray for the needs and intentions of our members. Joyce Routh is grateful for all the prayers offered for her daughter, Terri Ann, now home from the hospital.

Mass for the living and deceased fraternity members will be celebrated at the Shrine of St. Jude on Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m.

Needs continue for non-perishable food items for the needy in our neighborhoods.

See [www.facebook.com/St.Stephen'sfoodpantry](http://www.facebook.com/St.Stephen'sfoodpantry) for details.

Cash and check donations, as well as, gift cards to grocery stores are gladly accepted.

**Blessings, Genie**

SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER, 2021

WHERE THERE IS INJURY, PARDON

IT IS IN PARDONING THAT WE ARE PARDONED

This is the fourth of my articles on the Peace Prayer of St. Francis, based on "Instruments of Christ, Reflections on the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi" by Albert Haase, OFM. This month, we portray both the third and thirteenth lines of the prayer which speak of one of the cardinal topics of our faith and necessary if we are to consider ourselves as true instruments of Christ's peace: forgiveness.

Totally unique to the Lord is one of His familiar teachings from the gospel of Luke: "Be merciful just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." (Luke 6: 36-37). This, we all can understand. But when we read another passage equally as familiar to us as: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Exodus 21:24), we find this difficult to understand in the same context in terms of the meaning of justice. Jesus Himself, found difficulty

(Continued)





with this passage and consequently challenged this teaching.

Proposing a radical change in the understanding of forgiveness, He stressed that justice is served only when we freely share with others the gift that God has given to us specifically for that very purpose. Paul summarizes this: “Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive.” (Colossians 3: 13).

There are no limitations or boundaries when it comes to divine forgiveness: “Not seven times, but seventy times seven times” (Matthew 18:22).

Jesus also never insisted that people beg or even grovel for pardon. As He hung upon his cross, He looked beyond Himself to all of us as He cried out, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they are doing” (Luke 23:34). We should also never make our forgiveness hinge upon or prompted by another’s apology: it should always be presumed and unconditional. In Luke’s Gospel, the story of the sinful woman portrayed some people craving for pardoning, but have never learned how to directly ask for it.

We should forgive not as a response to another’s request. We forgive only because it is our Lord’s requirement. We forgive because it is a cure for bitterness and provides us the way to closure.

Then there is the matter of pardoning. Pardoning is the making of the choice to let go of the past and to bring about closure. In order to let go of a past injury or hurt, we are often counseled with that familiar expression: “forgive and forget”. But we often find ourselves unable and even unwilling to forget, which leads us to believe that we are not able to forgive either. Forgiveness does not necessarily involve bad memories disappearing forever and wounds healing without a trace of a scar. Remember, the Risen Christ will always bear the wounds of His Crucifixion, but they have long since stopped bleeding. In both forgiving and pardoning, we make the conscious decision to stop living in the past and deliberately choose to free ourselves from it by electing not to dwell, mention, or remind others of what wrongdoing occurred.

We close the door, lock it and throw away the key to the portal of the past. In time, the anxiety and restlessness is quieted and we begin to know peace.

The Peace Prayer, then, prompts us to develop the ability to close the door on past hurts and betrayals. By dedicating ourselves to others, we learn to offer pardon, forgiveness, and love freely and unconditionally to all who injure us in any way.

Peace, Mike

## LET'S REALLY CELEBRATE THESE AMAZING DECEMBER FEAST DAYS!

### **DECEMBER 13— St. LUCY**

Lucy, whose name can mean "light" or "lucid," is the patron saint of the blind. She is often seen with the emblem of eyes on a cup or plate. In paintings, she is often depicted with a golden plate holding her eyes and often holds a palm branch, which is a symbol of victory over evil.

Lucy's history has been lost and all we really know for certain is that this brave woman who lived in Syracuse lost her life during the persecution of Christians in the early fourth century. Her veneration spread to Rome so that by the sixth century the whole Church recognized her courage in defense of the faith. Because people wanted to shed light on Lucy's bravery, legends began to crop up. The one that has passed the test of time tells the story of a young Christian woman who vowed to live her life in service of Christ. Her mother tried to arrange a marriage for her with a pagan and Lucy knew her mother could not be swayed by a young girl's vow, so she devised a plan to convince her mother that Christ was the better partner for life. After several prayers at the tomb of Saint Agatha, Lucy saw the saint in a dream. St. Agatha told Lucy her mother's illness would be cured through faith, which Lucy used to persuade her mother to give the dowry money to the poor and allow her to commit her life to God. While Lucy and her mother were grateful to God, the rejected bridegroom was deeply angered and betrayed Lucy's faith to the governor Paschasius. The governor attempted to force her into defilement at a brothel, but the guards who came to take her away were unable to move her, even after hitching her to a team of oxen.



### **DECEMBER 27- St. John the Apostle**



St. John the Apostle, the son of Zebedee and Salome, was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. John was called to be an Apostle by our Lord in the first year of His public ministry. He is considered the same person as John the Evangelist, John of Patmos and the Beloved Disciple. John's older brother was St. James the Great, another one of Jesus' Twelve Apostles. Jesus referred to the brothers as "Boanerges," meaning "sons of thunder." John is believed to be the longest living apostle and the only not to die a martyr's death.

John, along with Peter and James, were the only witnesses of the raising of Daughter of Jairus, and the closest witnesses to the Agony in Gethsemane. John was the one who reported to Jesus they had "'forbidden' a non-disciple from casting out demons in Jesus' name." This prompted Jesus to state, "he who is not against us is on our side."

John and Peter were the only two apostles sent by Jesus to make preparations for the final Passover meal, the Last Supper. During the meal, St. John sat next to Jesus, leaning on him rather than lying along the couches. of all who read them today.