

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

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

THE FRANCISCAN SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

June 2022

**Next Meeting: June 4th at 10:00 am
At Neumann Hall (behind the Old Church)**

Saint Joseph Cafasso – June 19th

Saint Joseph was born in 1811 at Castelnuovo of pious parents. At the age of six he was already called a saint. As a youth in the public schools and later as a student in Cheri seminary, he continued to be an object of respect because of the innocence of his life, his gravity, humility, observance of rules, and his fervor at prayer. He was frequently referred to as another Aloysius Gonzaga.

As head of the seminary, Joseph quickly completed the arduous task which Father Guala had begun but had not been able to finish. Saint Joseph Cafasso completely rooted out the pernicious doctrines of Jansenism and those of other reformers, reviving the teachings of St Francis de Sales and of St Alphonse Liguori, which clearly point out the way to Christian perfection.

In his tireless zeal for the diving glory and the salvation of souls, Joseph combined example with words. He did all he could to promote devotion to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, toward whom he manifested great love, and never ceased urging the faithful to approach the great banquet daily. Our Blessed Lady had been the object of his devotion ever since his boyhood days, and he now sought to inspire others to love her with filial devotion.

His solicitude extended also to the ministers of the altar, whom he encouraged in zeal and effort to gain souls for Christ. He was a member of the Third Order of St Francis, and used to recommend this institution as the ideal society, especially for priests who are cut off from worldly associations. By his counsel and help he persuaded his dearest pupil, Don Bosco, to found the society of St Francis de Sales, or the Salesians, whose work for Church and souls has been outstanding.

After doing such great things for God and meriting the veneration of all who knew him, Joseph humbly begged God to erase his memory altogether after death. Worn with hardships, but enriched with merits at the early age of only forty-nine years, Saint Joseph Cafasso died the precious death of the just on June 23, 1860, fortified with the sacraments of the Church.

Because of his virtue and the miracles performed through his intercession, Pope Pius XI in the Holy Year of 1925, added his name to the list of the blessed, and in 1947 Pope Pius XII declared Saint Joseph Cafasso to be a saint.



Saint Joseph Cafasso

HAPPY SPRING!

Birthdays:

- Mary Jo Fero (25th)

Prayer Intentions:

- Maggie & Her Family
- Lynn & Her Family
- Joseph Sampson in Ghana
- The refugees & others affected by the Ukraine Russian conflict

May Meeting: 9:00 am Mass at St. John's & then meeting in Neumann Hall

Formation: We will be having Elections at this meeting. Also Please bring your Crown Rosaries. We will discuss again Part 1 of the book Aim Higher

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."
(James 1:12)

From “The General Constitutions of The SFO” – Article 17-4

“Participation in the service of sanctification, which the Church exercises through the liturgy, prayer, and works of penance and charity, is put into practice by the brothers and sisters above all in their own family, then in the fraternity and, finally, through their active presence in the local Church and in society.”

A Day at the Franciscan Center of Baltimore

Brothers and Sisters, on Monday, May 23rd, Jerry, Elaine and myself drove down to Baltimore to work at the Franciscan Center of Baltimore. We had to register in advance on their website. It became an enjoyable experience for all 3 of us. Depending on the day and what they have planned, you may be asked to different jobs. Cindy, the volunteer coordinator, was very friendly and when she initially gave me a job, I thought it was best for me not to do it so she gave me another one that I loved. Due to the weather being nice, we worked outside under a permanent tent. Jerry and Elaine helped with women who came to receive diapers, baby clothing, play pens and other items that they need for their infants. I helped out handing out sandwiches, soup and waters to who they refer to as “the clients”. We started at 10:00 am and finished at 1:00 pm. I would guess that we served about 350+ people. We felt safe due to the set-up, the people know what to expect and the employees of the Center. We got to interact with the clients, and it was nice to feel that we made a small impact on them. I have one man come up to me and ask me questions regarding COVID-19 and he has a sister who was tested positive and what impact on her job. The other workers were great! One guy, Angelo, who was my age, was on the streets, doing drugs, etc. but then finally cleaned up his act and felt the need to give back due to his “conversion”. Another man, Jason, was at Howard University as an Education Policy Director but was let go and subsequently received a settlement due to being let go without valid cause. He also felt the need to “humble himself and give back to the community”. He wore the Tau necklace, too. 😊

Jerry is looking to schedule going forward setting up a date once a month to help out at the Franciscan Center. It is a 45-minute ride from St. John the Baptist Church to the Center (one good thing about Covid – much less traffic). We will publish, either in the newsletter or via email, when we have those dates. At least the Center appears that they have generally sufficient volunteers to help – it appears to be rare that they are desperate for help (which is a good thing). Jerry will also be putting together a collection of all places we can as individuals or small groups help out to spread out “St. Joseph Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order SPIRIT”.

– Greg Gering

FRANCISCAN TEACHINGS

The Greatest Gift We Can Give God

We as human persons are made with infinite desires that only God can fulfill. But because we’re fallen, we tend to live at the level of our superficial desires—desires for comfort, fun, fame, wealth, pleasure, success. These desires are not bad, but the rosary helps us be more aware of the soul’s deepest desires, which are for God. As St. Catherine of Siena taught, the greatest gift we can give to God in prayer is not the finite work of saying the words but our “infinitely desirous love” for God that is expressed in those words and that is being drawn out of our souls in prayer.

- from the book Praying the Rosary Like Never Before: Encounter the Wonder of Heaven and Earth by Edward Sri

The Hail Mary: Jesus at the Center by Edward Sri, Franciscan Spirit

At first glance, the Hail Mary seems to be primarily about Mary. However, as St. John Paul II emphasized, this prayer is meant to focus our attention on Jesus Christ. “Although the repeated Hail Mary is addressed directly to Mary, it is to Jesus that the act of love is ultimately directed” (RVM, 26).

We can see this in the first part of this prayer, which is drawn from the words that the angel Gabriel and Elizabeth used to greet the mother of the Messiah. These words do not focus primarily on Mary but on what John Paul II calls “the wonder of heaven and earth” over the mystery of the Incarnation taking place inside her.

First, imagine being the archangel Gabriel. You’ve existed long before the Blessed Virgin Mary was born, before the village of Nazareth was built, before the people of Israel were established. Indeed, you’ve existed before the sun, moon, stars, and planet Earth were created. And from before the creation of the world, you have been worshiping and adoring the all-mighty, all-powerful, infinite God.

Indeed, the Lord is with Mary as he has never been with anyone else from the beginning of time! Similarly, consider Elizabeth’s words to Mary. Elizabeth, the Bible tells us, is “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Luke 2:41). That means she has been given prophetic insight. So she knows that Mary is pregnant not with any ordinary child but with the holy Son of God. And in wonder over that mystery of Mary’s son, Elizabeth exclaims, “Blessed are you among women!... for blessed is the fruit of your womb” (Luke 2: 42).

This is what the Hail Mary is all about. Every time we say the Hail Mary, we enter into that ecstatic praise of heaven and earth over the mystery of Christ—heaven represented by Gabriel, and earth represented by Elizabeth. By repeating these biblical words in the Hail Mary, we participate in heaven and earth’s joyful response to the mystery of God becoming man.

As John Paul II explains: “These words...could be said to give a glimpse of God’s own wonderment as he contemplates his 'masterpiece'—the Incarnation of the Son in the womb of the Virgin Mary.... The repetition of the Hail Mary in the Rosary gives us a share in God’s own wonder and pleasure: in jubilant amazement we acknowledge the greatest miracle of history” (RVM, 33).

Cardinal Zen’s Arrest: A Window Into Religious Persecution in China and Hong Kong

By National Catholic Register

The world was horrified this week by the arrest of Cardinal Joseph Zen, the beloved 90-year-old former archbishop of Hong Kong, by the Chinese authorities. He’s accused of “colluding with foreign forces,” and if found guilty will probably spend the rest of his life in prison.

President Xi’s anti-religious policy of “Sinicization” has been applied viciously since 2018 — the year that the Vatican signed a controversial pact with Beijing giving control over the appointment of bishops. China’s Muslim Uyghurs were thrown into massive concentration camps. Christians were too numerous to suffer that fate, so instead Xi enforced new laws that “absorb the Churches into the Communist Party and mean that priests, bishops, pastors are required to indoctrinate their flock in Communist Party dogma.”

All Christians must display “enthusiasm, fervor and love for the party,” and there must be quotes from President Xi in every sermon. Crucially, all Chinese children are forbidden to be taught Christianity. Their parents, meanwhile, must read from Bibles crudely doctored by the CCP. Incredibly, the story in St. John’s Gospel of the woman taken in adultery has been twisted so that Jesus stones her to death, because Xi’s Community Party teaches that everyone must obey the law and there can be no forgiveness.

The crackdown on Catholicism in Hong Kong, where the Communist Party does not technically control religion, has been more subtle but no less sinister. “There can be no dissent, there is closer surveillance, and there are angry articles being written in the Beijing mouthpiece paper threatening Cardinal Zen, saying he’s responsible for student protests.”