

**ST MARY OF THE ANGELS FRATERNITY
ORDER OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN
THE ANGELUS * AUGUST 21, 2022**



**Minister: Susan Jamison
Vice-Minister: Sonia Bernardo
Spiritual Assistant: Michael Huether - Formation Director: Tom McGrath
Secretary: Portia - Treasurer: Carmencita Fiesta
Counselors: Lilian Soriano, Mary Bajo & Irma Jean-Baptiste
The Angelus: Mary Badjo & Susan Jamison**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy August 12th Birthday to Lilian Soriano and Tom McGrath!

The monthly Mass for living and deceased fraternity members will be on Saturday, August 21st at 11 a.m. at Our Lady of Grace Church.

Thanks to Michaele Sylla, Michael Oliver and John DiBenedetto for taking their time to conduct the mandatory audit on our financial records.

Prayers: Please pray for healing for Brenda Dawson and Hazel Cummings' husband, Marty, Carol who is having a hip replacement and this month, Jim Wall and Marilyn who is caring for him, and Genie and all of our Fraternity members in general, living and deceased.

Sonia Barnardo will lead our August Meeting! Thank you Sonia, we love your peaceful Franciscan Spirit and your loving charisms.

AUGUST MEETING AGENDA

In Person and By Zoom

Opening Prayers

Reflection on Chapter 26 Of *Live Like Francis* by Alina

Followed by Group Discussion

Presentation on Treasurer's Report

by our amazing Treasurer Carmencita.

Break

"Attitude of Gratitude", a presentation by Sonia

Evening Prayer by Tom

Closing Prayers



SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT'S MESSAGE

August, 2022

This is the twelfth and final article of my series on the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi based on the book: “Instruments of Christ: Reflections on the Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi” by Albert Haase, OFM. We conclude our discussion with a summary of what the prayer means for Francis and for ourselves.

For over one hundred years, much guidance and inspiration attributable to St. Francis of Assisi has been given to those who pray the Peace Prayer. We are attracted to it by its simplicity and straightforwardness in presenting all aspects of the teachings of Christ. The two parts of this prayer address Jesus as “Lord” and then “Divine Master” making us aware that by our baptisms (and our professions, too) we are all “little Christs” (lesser Brothers and Sisters). We empty ourselves as did Christ Himself, surrender and serve God, His will, and however else He wishes us to do.

The first part of the prayer asks us to be instruments of the peace given to us as a gift of the Risen Christ. It is not the absence of war and conflict kind of peace which involves darkness, despair, doubt, injury, hatred, and sadness, but the Easter kind of peace containing faith, hope, joy, light, love, and pardon. We obtain this kind of peace when we follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Divine Master.

The second part of the prayer makes us aware that if we are to be these little Christs, then we cannot be self-centered, but other-centered: “Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love...” the priority and preference is in the other and not in ourselves. It is about giving to others and not taking for ourselves: about pardoning others and not ourselves.

The Peace Prayer does a full circle beginning and concluding with a reference to the Resurrection: “For it is in dying that we are born to eternal life”. As little Christs, we begin our lives with Christian spirituality and after following in the footsteps of our Lord and Divine Master, we finish knowing that we made the effort to dedicate ourselves to God and all humanity.

Peace and all Good, Mike

I have mentioned several times that I am listening to the BIBLE IN A YEAR podcast with Father Mike Schmitz. I started on January 1st but one can start anytime. I could say a lot about the many books of the Old Testament which are at moments incredibly inspiring and uplifting but often pretty depressing. Nonetheless, the less frequent uplifting passages are far far more powerful than the depressing ones because they prophecy JESUS and speak of God's FIDELITY and HIS eternal PROMISE of undeserved salvation.

Please indulge me as I give you a brief rendition of some biblical history even though I am a novice at best. **I promise that I will end on a Franciscan note of great appeal.**

After Moses brings the Hebrews out of slavery in Egypt and to the border of the Promised Land, Joshua takes them into the Promised Land. At God's command Joshua leads them into battle after battle to annihilate the indigenous pagan people living there. Why? The Hebrews had be protected in their own religious beliefs and set apart from other peoples in order to be formed into a nation into which our Savior could be born. But, unfortunately, the Hebrews fail to completely follow directions and leave some pagans living. Some of them end up marrying with those pagans and other who they come into contact with and many Hebrews fall into pagan worship and evil practices and other apostasies.

There are glorious moments such as when King David is promised that the Messiah would be born into his royal lineage, but this is shortly thereafter followed by a civil war under his grandson's rule wherein the tribes of Israel are split into two kingdoms, the Southern Kingdom and the Northern Kingdom. The smaller Southern Kingdom included Jerusalem and the Temple built by Solomon and was made up of the tribe of Judah, that being King David's tribe, and the tribe of Benjamin. The Northern Kingdom was comprised of the remaining 10 tribes of Israel.

Both Kingdoms had many bad kings and much apostasy but the people of the Southern Kingdom of David's line were more faithful to God than those of the Northern Kingdom. God sends prophets to both Kingdoms warning them and exhorting them but often to no avail.

God finally punishes the apostasy of the Northern Kingdom and in 701 BC permits the Assyrians to conquer it and deport all of the people. In their place, people of five other nationalities are sent into it to settle there. Neither the deported ten tribes nor their descendants were ever able to take back the Northern Kingdom.

After the Assyrians capture and deport the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom, Assyria also tries to conquer the Southern Kingdom. God alone protects it and it stands. Nevertheless the Kings are still not generally good and the people persist in falling frequently into apostasy. One wonderful King reigns who is fully righteous, King Josiah, but he dies in his 30s in the Kidron Valley just below where Jesus would later be transfigured in front of 3 of His apostles.

In 598 BC, God acts to stop the apostasy of the Jews in the Southern Kingdom by allowing them to be taken captive by Babylon. Even after the first wave of exile, the Jews continue to be fall into deeper apostasy and God permits, in fact commands, that two more waves of exiles be taken until only a remnant of the lame and crippled are left there.

Are you still with me? The prophet Ezekial is an exiled Jew living in Babylon who God calls to exhort the Jews there to fidelity. In Chapter 9 of the Book of Ezekial, Ezekial is mystically taken from Babylon back to Jerusalem to the Temple built by Solomon. He is shown the continuing apostasy of the Jews in the temple and outside of it. **Ezekial hears God command his Angels to kill the people of Jerusalem for their paganism and desecrations but first God has his angles mark the few who lament and grieve the apostasy of the people with a mark. What is that mark? It is the Tau, the last letter of the Hebrew Alphabet which is the shape of a cross. And so those marked with the Tau on their foreheads were saved!**

What a great feeling to know that God was saving those marked with the Cross and truly even better, how wonderful to see the Tau Cross so exalted. I believe this is the first mention of a Cross in the Bible and here it is a Tau Cross and a SAVING CROSS for the faithful.

I found this so inspiring that I then searched the Internet and found this excerpt from a website called Franciscan Seculars.

<http://franciscanseculars.com/history-of-the-tau/>

“THE SIGN OF THE SAVED – OF GOD’S PEOPLE

The Tau took on the specific meaning from Ezekiel 9:4 as the sign of those chosen by God, a sign of those who will be saved.

Go all through Jerusalem, and mark a “Tau”¹ on the foreheads² of all who deplore and disapprove of all the evil practices in the city.” I heard him say to the others, “Follow him through the city and strike. Show neither pity nor mercy, kill and exterminate them all. But do not touch anyone with the sign of the Tau

Ezekiel 9:4



THE TAU AND THE FRANCISCAN HABIT

St Francis was so excited by the meaning of this symbol that he used the Tau as a signature or a sign on his letters, much like people who could not write their name used “X” to indicate their mark, or agreement. This was then verified by a notary who would write “This is the true mark of ...” indicating he witnessed the act of the person making it. The mark, a cross, became the signature of the person’s name. Francis was able to write and so he used the Tau as a symbol, seal, a coat of arms, a flag or standard, indicating that he saw himself as a “Champion of the Tau and of the Cross”.



The Franciscan habit becomes a symbol of Christ – the Tau

THE TAU AND THE FRANCISCAN HABIT

St Bonaventure said that the Franciscan Habit is nothing less than the Cross of Christ to which the friar is tied by the cord with three knots symbolising: POVERTY, CHASTITY, OBEDIENCE. When wearing his habit, when a friar stands with his arms outstretched he becomes a Tau, a living Tau.

Today Franciscans both religious and secular wear the Tau Cross as a sign of their commitment to Christ and the power of his love, his message, his grace, to transform us into the very best person we can possibly become.”

