

**St Mary of The Angels Fraternity
Order of the Secular Franciscan
The Angelus
December 18th, 2022**



Minister: Michael Oliver
Vice-Minister: John DiBenedetto
Spiritual Assistant: Michael Huether Formation Director: Carmencita Fiesta
Secretary: Susan Jamison Treasurer: Portia Fiesta
Counselors: Sonia Bernardo, Tom McGrath, Michaele Sylla
The Angelus this Month: Susan Jamison



OUR ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to Michael Oliver, our new Minister!

John DiBenedetto, our new Vice-Minister

Susan Jamison, our new Secretary

Portia Fiesta, our new Treasurer

Carmencita Fiesta, our new Formation Director

Sonia Bernardo, Tom McGrath and Michaelle Sylla, our new Counselors

THANK YOU FOR STEPPING UP SO GENEROUSLY TO SERVE OUR WONDERFUL FRATERNITY

Our Christmas Party

will be held on December 18th at our normal meeting time in our normal meeting space. Please remember to bring food to share and a gift for our gift exchange!

Prayer, food, fellowship and fun in, roughly, this order:

12:30 pm - Gather and social time

1:00 pm - Meeting begins with a re-enactment of the manger scene with everyone participating as one of the characters who were in attendance.

We will follow this with Christian Prayer

2:00 pm - Let the potluck meal begin!

2:30 pm - the gift exchange

3:00 pm - end of meeting



Happy Birthday! And we have a lot of birthdays!

Carol: December 2 . Alina: December 7. Genie: December 9

Madonna: December 19, Greg: December 21

A Belated *Thank You* to everyone who brought to our October Meeting coats for Father Michael's Mission and/or clothes for the immigrants coming into to DC and being assisted by St. Peter's Church on Capitol Hill!

Your Generosity Truly Reflects God's Heart!

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

December 2022

In pondering what to write as my first message as your new Minister, I considered many options. It would be appropriate to focus on Advent which we, as Catholics and Franciscans, know is the period of preparation extending over four Sundays before Christmas. The word advent comes from the Latin adventio, "to come to" and refers to the coming of Christ. We could also focus on Christmas traditions and giving. Instead, I would like to share a beautiful message sent to me by Genie Dutton regarding Susan's servant leadership over the past six years as our Minister. Here is her message:

With gratitude to the Holy Spirit

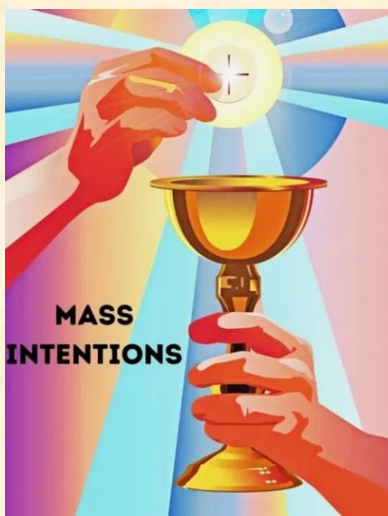
Jesus came to give example and to reveal the Father. Susan Jamison, as former Minister, gave example for our Fraternity involvement through following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. A few examples: Sandwiches to the homeless in D.C.; establishing a food donation program at the Dorothy Day Shelter and donation of purses for Valentine's Day to the shelter ladies; setting up help with a California fraternity so Lilian Soriano could visit her very ill son; wheelchair trip for Genie Dutton to her physician; began zoom prayer meetings and provided us with our beautiful Directory; established with her parish at St. Mary's in Barnesville the Brides for Haiti sale of wedding dresses to help support a small village in Haiti. (See the article in the Parish Times for October.) All of us have a ministry of love and help and it is also a witness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Most are sacrificial in some way, but let the Holy Spirit expand your ministry if He chooses.

Genie Dutton

I pray that I will successfully follow in Susan's footsteps as a true servant leader and, together as a Fraternity, we can add to this impressive list of accomplishments in service to others.

May the blessings of the Holy Family be with you this Christmas season and may God's love guide you throughout the New Year.

Peace!
Michael



Our Monthly Mass for Deceased and Living Members will be celebrated

Sunday December 18th at 11 AM at Our Lady of Grace Church

May the Lord give all of you peace!

This is the second of my series on the role of the Secular Franciscan in the spread of the Franciscan charism in the societal world of the third millennium. The content here is based on the reference of, "The Franciscan Charism in the Third Millennium" by Anselm W. Romb OFM Conv. Here, we will speak of how our Order became secular and most desired by St. Francis and also where the cloistered Franciscans also fit in.

Prior to the time of St. Francis, secularity was second rate when it came to service to God. At that time, priests and religious did live among the laity, but they did not work alongside of them as did the original followers of St. Francis and the tertiaries who appeared later on. More often, a religious was found in a cloister. The dignity of labor was part of the charism of the Benedictines at this time. Before St. Francis, the medieval spiritual master was St. Anselm of Canterbury. He encouraged young men to enter monastery retreat as a measure of salvation and vocation but discouraged all other ways. Even though a great number of clergy joined his movement, St. Francis considered his movement—which later became the First Order—a call of the layman to the Gospel life. Thus, before he established his own charism, he states in the First Rule, "The brothers should occupy themselves in the arts they understand...Each should remain in the skill or craft from which he was called to religious life...And they may keep the tools and instruments necessary for their work" (First Rule, Chapter seven). Even though in Scripture, we see Christ calling fishermen and publicans away from their occupations, soldiers, farmers, merchants, and other lay persons were counseled simply to live justly and lovingly by St. John the Baptist. St. Francis considered his brothers as leaven in the lump of dough mingling with the common folk in their homes, fields, and shops. The First Order later became more apostolic. This is because the clergy, whose ministry work is preaching, needed to do their duty as members of the Order. Supposedly, Francis did not stress learning among the unlearned brothers in order to keep his Order from being too clericalized. It was the Third Order which eventually became the lay Franciscan movement—what Francis really intended from the beginning.

Franciscans of the cloistered groups, such as the Poor Clares, are difficult to understand as being a part of the charism of the Order. How can the cloistered community life they demonstrate be an example of the evangelical life of Christ which can be successfully lived in all centuries of time? Franciscans—even cloistered ones—cannot be void of the worldly needs and at the same time maintain the charism. Secularity or societal involvement presents a violation to their way of life, but then again, all acts of faith are risky. Franciscans should not be realistically insulated from the world. So, the Poor Clares should be set in the midst of a city where everyone can see the life of voluntary poverty and the sharing with the disadvantaged what may be given to the monastery or convent as alms, as well as welcoming them to their pantry. For now, the Poor Clares are not permitted by their rule to go among the laity, but they can live alongside of them. They need to be compatible with the ability to gain the attention of the world and the display of visible results of their ministries. They proclaim the hope of the Resurrection of Christ by their intimacy with God rather than with visible activities; making the silent, prayerful, and poor Christ present to the Church and the world. The Poor Clares, thus, are a version of the Franciscan charism where accessibility is an aspect of the Gospel life even with the option of secularity.

A most blessed and joyous Christmas and spiritually prosperous New Year to all! Mike