

The Angelus

St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order
September 15, 2024



Minister: Michael Oliver
Vice-Minister: John DiBenedetto
Formation Director: Carmencita Fiesta
Secretary: Susan Jamison
Treasurer: Portia Fiesta
Counselors: Tom McGrath, Michaelle Sylla and Aurea Roland
Spiritual Assistant: Michael Huether

September Gathering Agenda

This month, we are gathering with other fraternities at the St. Joseph Cupertino 2024 Picnic Under the Arches.

The event is from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the courtyard of the Shrine of St. Anthony located at 12290 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD.

A Mass is available at 12:00 noon in the chapel.

Please note that spouses and children are also invited.

If you would like to bring some food to share, such as a side dish, pasta salad, other salad, fruit platter or fruit salad, or a dessert, it would be most welcomed.

Minister's Message

Michael Oliver

Peace and All Good!

Pope Francis's September message for the 2024 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, themed "Hope and Act with Creation," emphasizes the interconnectedness of faith, hope, and action in caring for our common home. Here are the key points:

Hope and Act with Creation

- Spiritual Foundation:** The theme is inspired by Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans (8:19-25), which speaks of the hope of salvation and new life in Christ. Pope Francis highlights that true believers are guided by the Holy Spirit, which empowers them to live out their faith actively and creatively in charity.
- Ethical and Theological Responsibility:** Caring for creation is not just an environmental issue but also an ethical and theological one. Pope Francis calls for a conversion of heart and lifestyle to address the degradation of the environment. This involves recognizing the disastrous effects of human actions on nature and setting

ethical limits on technological advancements.

3. **Community and Collaboration:** The Pope stresses the importance of joining forces with all people of goodwill to care for creation. This collective effort is essential for making meaningful changes and addressing global environmental challenges.
4. **Urgency and Vigilance:** Pope Francis urges believers to remain vigilant and proactive in their efforts to care for the environment. The Holy Spirit continually guides and calls for a change in lifestyle to resist environmental degradation and to witness the possibility of positive change.

Pope Francis's message is a call to integrate faith with action, emphasizing that caring for creation is a fundamental aspect of living out the Gospel. It encourages believers to be hopeful and proactive in their efforts to protect and nurture the environment.

Spiritual Assistant's Message September 2024

May the Divine Master grant us His peace!

With this article, I begin a new series based on an article entitled, "How One Saint's Ancient Insights Are Transforming Today's Church" by author Jon M. Sweeney. It could be a follow-up commentary on a book he wrote that some of you may have read: "When Saint Francis Saved The Church". As Franciscans, we can already say that our Seraphic Father saved the church from its corruption, clericalism, insincerity, and irrelevance by drawing people's attention to a renewal focused on the Gospel. Today, Francis continues to be the world's most popular saint and an inspiration to our current pontiff of the same name. But unfortunately, he is also still misunderstood.

If we are to come to really know the real St. Francis, we would have to dismiss our cultural and religious thoughts along with some half-baked legends. G.K. Chesterton once wrote, "Truth... must of necessity be stranger than fiction, for we have made fiction to suit ourselves." Case in point: The unreal version of Francis is one of the most famous fictional characters of history—too often a conglomerate of pictures and stories of a figure that sits with birds or speaks to wolves. These are momentous events that tell us of the life of St. Francis but put us in danger of keeping us from seeing the real Francis.

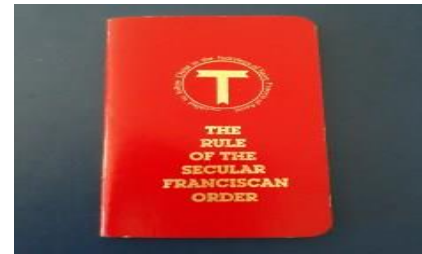
Oftentimes, our preference of saints are such serene fairytale images as sitting in a quiet garden among the flowers and singing birds with a statute of, perhaps, St. Francis nearby. Our ideas of saints like this are easier to handle than reality: they will always do what we expect of them. If we had the opportunity to invite Francis to our home for dinner, we would expect him to comment on those singing birds outside and even interpret what they are saying and be dressed well for dinner. But instead, he would beg for food from strangers, help you cook the dinner and wear his ragged and dirty clothing, having little concern but much humility for what he looked like. In the meantime, your other guests would certainly stare. So, let us not line up to see a serene legacy of Francis, but to see the real Francis which is far more compelling and significant than the imaginary one.

The actual word, "saint" is also partially responsible for our misunderstanding of not only Francis, but many other saints. Although, as Franciscans, we have a great appreciation of not only Francis, but many other of the saints. However, we tend to overuse the word saint and for improper contents. Many people hear "saint" and think "piety" and look at it as an otherworldly irrelevance. It has also been found that some saints of our histories, particularly of those who came after Francis,

set out consciously to be named as saints. We know as Catholic Christians, becoming a saint is, to say the least, a worthy achievement, but a spiritual self-consciousness was not a characteristic of the real Francis. He modeled his actions after the Jesus he met in the Gospels when he said after reading of them three times in a row, "This is what I want...". Some of the later saints read the accounts of earlier saints like Francis in order to make life plans according to what the blessed are supposed to do.

Next month, we look at how Francis transformed both the Church and sainthood.

Mike



Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order

CHAPTER TWO: THE WAY OF LIFE

Article 13. As the Father sees in every person the features of his Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.

A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.

Thoughts to ponder

Ask yourself - what features of Jesus does God the Father see in me? What features of Jesus do I look for - see - love - in others? Do you feel a sense of community with your fraternity? your parish? Have you seen - worked to improve - lowly conditions for others? How? If we have not experienced the lowly, is it our obligation to seek them out?



A friendly Secular Franciscan reminder!

If health or a special family obligation hinders you from attending our picnic gathering at the Shrine of St. Anthony, please contact our Vice Minister, John Di Benedetto, and let him know.

301-873-7883



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Dale Eppig—September 8th

September Professions

Mike Huether – September 27th
Lilian Soriano – September 14th

Our monthly Mass for our Living and Deceased Fraternity Members will be celebrated on September 15th, at Our Lady of Grace Church at 11 AM.



Apostolates Corner
Prayer Ministry

Lead:

Bette O'Connor

410-499-5504 oconnorbette46@gmail.com

Bette can be contacted by phone, text or email. If desired, your prayer requests will be shared with the entire Fraternity. We will be happy to feature prayer requests in the Angelus.

In addition, your prayer needs can be shared in the daily Zoom prayer gathering at 3 p.m. Finally, feel free to submit names to the group each month for prayer support.