



September 2024

THE CALL

St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order

From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

Minister: Andrea Bender, OFS; Vice Minister: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS; Secretary: Thomas Bender, OFS; Treasurer: Ann Wester, OFS; Formation Director: Janette Martin, OFS; Councilors-at-Large: Ann Corro, OFS, Michael Landrigan, OFS

No Meeting this Month!

Most of us will be at the Chapter of Mats

Minister's Notes

Earlier this summer, while praying the rosary, I realized the first mystery is a private moment. There is no crowd. So it has been with my faith journey, and maybe yours. It starts privately, intimately, you and God. It grows from there. You can't share what you don't have. We can love because we have first been loved by God. We start by receiving from God. The movement of the mysteries flows from a private moment to one in which the faith or the flame of faith is shared with bystanders.

My favorite set of mysteries are the Joyous Mysteries. We start with a conversation between Mary and Gabriel. As far as we know, no one else is there. After ten Hail Mary's, when we repeat Gabriel's greeting, we move to Mary and Elizabeth, with John and Jesus playing supporting roles in utero. Again, we repeat part of the conversation ten times. By the time we reach the Nativity, Jesus is a major player, the major player. The focus at any birth is on the baby. The crowd has grown. At a minimum, we have Mary, Joseph, and a bunch of animals. We probably have a passerby and definitely visiting shepherds. Jesus was a Jew from a Jewish family. The next two

mysteries move to the Temple, to the presence of God for the Jews of the time. Mary and Joseph follow the Law and present the newborn male child at the temple. Imagine the conflicting emotions of presenting Jesus, whom they know is God, at the temple, the presence of God at the temple. Again, the group grows, not only is the Holy Family in a crowd of people, but Simeon and Anna both recognize someone beyond human experience. After all, presenting a baby at the temple was probably a daily occurrence. But not this baby. We are back in the temple twelve years later when Jesus is found by his parents in conversation with the priests. Once again, we have a crowd. Once again, we have many not recognizing what they see.

This pattern holds for the Sorrowful Mysteries. The Agony in the Garden is a private moment. Human eyes can only see Jesus, though he is in conversation with His Father, if this cup can pass... This private moment grows to a crucifixion at a public crossroads. Again, most do not recognize what they have the privilege to be witness to.

The Glorious Mysteries start privately, no witnesses to

the resurrection, just to its effects. The Fifth Mystery takes place in heaven, amid great rejoicing.

The Luminous Mysteries are a little harder to buttonhole. I think partially because I did not grow up with them (can't quite call them new-but that is what I mean). That said, the Luminous Mysteries still follow the pattern of starting small. Yes, there were crowds around John at the Lord's baptism. The people clued in to something extraordinary going on were few and far between. If more people had been aware – Jesus' trip into the desert would not have been possible.

Where are you in your faith journey? Are you at a private moment or are you experimenting with going out – including more people? To cycle back to a private moment – to be fed again – is to be expected. Some call it going on retreat. We are called both by our baptism and our profession to go beyond.

This weekend we will not have a fraternity meeting because many in the fraternity are going into a crowd at the Chapter of Mats to recharge and explore where we are headed as an order (other than old age, decline, and death). If I don't see you there, I will see you in October. Please pray for us.

A piece of sad news. Ann and Bill Wester are leaving town. They will be moving to relocate close to their children/grandchildren in the very near future. Since they are seriously downsizing material gifts are probably not welcome. As always, the best thing you can offer is prayers. Ann plans to be at the October fraternity meeting. Let us greet her in October with a spiritual bouquet-a Mass card, a note promising a rosary or two, whatever you are moved to as you think about the gifts she has given the fraternity. I also plan to let fellowship run longer in October. Please share food then.

He must increase. I must decrease. This week we celebrated the Passion of John the Baptist. This saying resonated in my prayer life. Two points:

1. It is sure hard to decrease while your husband is on various committees planning for Chapter of Mats and

you are being sucked in while supporting him. I am happy to be supporting him and awfully glad I am not on a Mats committee. I am very glad my early requests to help were ignored or overlooked.

2. I am well into my 6th year as minister. I should be preparing the Fraternity for a new minister-I should be decreasing. Have you decided what role the Holy Spirit is calling you toward for the Fraternity? I would like to hear from you. Last month's appeal had no results. When you get the Call electronically, you can reply to that email-no need to look up an email address. I guess we all need to trust the Holy Spirit more-you need to trust the Holy Spirit will provide you with the skills and/or support (a.k.a. graces) to be a fraternity officer. I need to trust the Holy Spirit has this under control. It would help my trust if some people at least let me know they are thinking about it.

Pax et Bonum,

Andrea

Professions

9/11/2016

Andrea Bender	Irenaeus
Thomas Bender	Thomas More
Sita Chakrawarti	Clare

Birthdays of the Month

September - None

October

Ralph Palasek (6th)
Bernadette Lozano (23rd)

Necrology

James R Dimond (Min.) – September 23, 2015
Rev. Cornelius O'Brien – September 7, 2019

**PRAYER FOR THE ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA
REGIONAL CHAPTER OF MATS**

September 6-8, 2024

Most high and glorious God,
we ask for your blessing
upon our upcoming Chapter of Mats.

We thank you for our call to live the Gospel
following the example of our Seraphic Father Francis.

We thank you for those who have gone before us,
who preserved our charism throughout the centuries.

We thank you for our current leaders,
who serve us and help us to grow in our understanding
of our vocation.

And we thank you for future leaders,
the shepherds that are to come.

We ask you to send down your Holy Spirit upon us as
we journey toward our 2024 Chapter of Mats.

Prepare all of us, Lord, as we ask
for fraternal Love to love as you love;
Humility to listen to one another;
Wisdom to see the future you would have us build;
Courage to follow your direction; and
Grace to spread seeds of goodness and joy throughout
our time at Chapter and beyond.

Lord, as we anticipate coming together to celebrate
Where we were, where we are, and where we are called
to be as Secular Franciscans,
let us remember to see and treat all
“...as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.”¹

And so we pray,
Holy God, draw us together as a community,
take charge of our Chapter of Mats,
and lead us into the future.

Father, we adore you and give you all
praise, honor, and glory,
Through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
In union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer Intentions

For...

- Peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East and the victims of the violence.
- Peace in Ukraine and protection for her Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics.
- For blessing for Pope Francis’ trip to Asia.
- Ann and Bill Wester as they prepare to move.
- Grace Coipuram, OFS
- Patricia Kennedy, mother of Joseph Kennedy, OFS who is recovering from congestive heart failure.
- Virginia Roccapriore, widow of Joseph Roccapriore, OFS.
- Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, for depression.
- For friends of Liz, Mark who is undergoing chemo for stage 4 melanoma and Dan who has Parkinson’s Disease.
- For April’s friend whose father suddenly died.
- The sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her.
- April’s friend, whose husband avoids Church, and his ex-wife who never went to Church.
- The Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.
- Religious freedom and for all persecuted for their belief in God.
- Prisoners, the sick, poor, hungry, lonely, homeless, unemployed and those with no one to pray for them.
- For the work of the Order of Malta in Bethlehem in this time of strife and war.
- The union of all Christians.
- The health, protection and guidance of all priests and bishops including Pope Francis.
- For vocations to all branches of the Franciscan family.

Secretary’s Notes

The first thing that made me pause when putting together this edition of The Call was realizing that I should remove Pat

Riggles, OFS from the professions list for this month since she is now a member of Tau Fraternity in Herndon. Pat, you will always have a home with us in St. Thomas More Fraternity. Thank you for your quiet witness and service in with us and thank you for your witness in seeking a fraternity to belong to when you needed to move out of the area. (Pat, you will still get *The Call*. Please keep in touch.)

This month is the 800th anniversary of St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. Page 8 has St.

Bonaventure's description of this mysterious event.

Page 4 has a new devotion, circa 2010, the Franciscan Family Chaplet. A short chaplet to pray for vocations to all branches of our order.

Page 5 has Fr. Jerome's reflection for this month in which he addresses the good of labor.

Peace and Good,
Randy

Franciscan Family Chaplet

<https://franciscanchaplet.wordpress.com/>

By Nicholas H. Kovacs, OFS

Beginning:

Make the sign of the cross and recite "The Apostle's Creed".
Then recite the "Hail Mary" 3 times.

First Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the First Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Second Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Second Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Third Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Third Order, both Regular and Secular, increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Conclusion:

End by reciting 1 time: "*We adore You, O Lord Jesus Christ, because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*"
Say the "Glory Be" 3 times for the intentions of the Pope and his continued holiness.
Make the sign of the cross.

Note: This chaplet can be said as a Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis on October 4.

Nihil Obstat: Dr. Sandra Magie, Ph.D., S.T.D, Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: + Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, August 19, 2011

Labor

When I was a child, September was still the start of school, directly after Labor Day. When school districts started to move the start of the school year earlier, some protested because high school students had summer jobs and families had vacations—during which, it was expected, some of the students could still be working at resorts. Originally, the teens would have been working on farms. Still, they should labor.

After I finished school, I heard more and more frequently about schools that required some kind of public service; this was already required in my high school for those who would join the National Honor Society. No surprise that Catholic schools would require some practice of the Gospel that would help someone, but the move increased across the public realm as well.

St. Francis saw the value of work. As Scripture says, “He who will not work, should not eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) Even when he was too ill to work, Francis still wanted to work, to contribute to the life of the brothers. Monks through history practice “ora et labora,” prayer and work as twin pillars of their lives. There is a value to work.

The Lord God Himself worked for six days to create the universe. And he saw that it was “very good,” in spite of the eventual failings of certain creatures.

There is a value to work.

Recognizing the value of labor is a big part of the reason for the celebration of Labor Day. For some, it is merely a “day off” for vacations and picnics. But the intent is to stir us to recognize those around us who help bring food from the fields to our table or who make sure that we are safe and clean. From Nurses to Sanitation Workers, so many unglamorous jobs we take for granted still compel many to work even on this day of “vacation” from labor.

Perhaps paying attention can inspire gratitude, and gratitude might help us to respect more those people who are so crucial in our society, yet still so invisible.

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For your reflection (choose one and share your reflection with another member of your fraternity):

1. St. Paul wrote (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11): In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others.” Think about a time when you realized you were just doing busywork, appearing to be busy. What was going on in your heart? Was there “a disorderliness” about your thoughts?
2. Do you have a spiritual practice to help bring order to your busy-ness, to help yourself work more effectively?
3. St. Paul also cautions us against appearing to be busy by being busy with the affairs of other people. What business of others is distracting for you? How do you resist the temptation to busy yourself with another person’s affairs when they are doing exactly the thing that irritates or distracts you?
4. How do you plan to (or did you) thank someone for their labor this month?

Jerome, ofm
National Spiritual Assistant
OFS Animator, OFM Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe ofs.assistant@friars.us

Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-01-2023.pdf>

September 1

St. Beatrice of Silva, Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Silva

September 2

Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault, Priests and companions, First and Third Orders, Martyrs of Carmes (d. 1792)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/martyrs-de-carmes.html>

September 4

St. Rose of Viterbo, Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-rose-of-viterbo.html>

September 6

Bl. Liberatus of Lauro, Priest, First Order (d. 1260)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-liberatus-of-lauro.html>

September 7

Bl. Gentle of Matelica, Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-gentle-of-matelica.html>

September 8

Bl. John Tomachi and Sons, Third Order Secular, Martyrs (d. September 8, 1628)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-ioannes-tomachi/>

September 9

Bl. Seraphina Sforza, Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-seraphina-sforza.html>

September 10

Bl. Lucy de Freitas, Third Order Secular, martyr (d. 1622)

<https://joyfulspirit139.blogspot.com/2014/11/bl-lucy-de-freitas.html>

September 11

Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona, Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-bonaventure-of-barcelona/>

September 13

First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)

<http://franciscanchapelcentertokyo.org/history-of-franciscan-friars-in-japan/>

September 17

Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

<https://catholicism.org/the-stigmata-of-saint-francis-of-assisi-1224.html>

St. Zygmunt Szczesny Felinski, OFS, Archbishop of Warsaw and Founder, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary (Nov. 1, 1822-Sept. 17, 1895)

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20020818_felinski_en.html

September 18

St. Joseph of Cupertino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual
(June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-joseph-of-cupertino.html>

September 20

St. Francis Mary of Camposso, Friar, OFM, Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/francis-mary-of-camporosso.html>

September 21

Bl. Elizabeth Amodei, Third Order Secular, (1475-February 4, 1498)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-elizabeth-amodei.html>

September 22

St. Ignatius of Santhia, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2002/documents/ns_lit_doc_20020519_ignazio_en.html

September 23

Finding the Body of St. Clare

<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/library/gallery/incorrupt/incorrupt.htm#-Clare>

St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin

(May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)

<http://padrepiodevotions.org/a-short-biography/>

September 24

St. Pacificus of Severino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-pacific.html>

September 26

St. Elzéar of Sabran (1285-September 27, 1323)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elzear_of_Sabran

Husband and Wife,
Secular Franciscans

Bl. Delphina of Glandèves (1284-November 1358)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphine_of_Glandeves

Bl. Aurelio of Vinalesa and Companions, Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)

<https://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/03/blessed-aurelio-of-vinalesa-presbyter.html>

Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone, Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-lucy-of-caltagirone.html>

September 28

Bl. Bernadine of Feltre, Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernardin-of-feltre.html>

St. John of Dukla, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Conventual (1414-1484)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Dukla

September 29

Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel

<http://catholicstraightanswers.com/who-is-st-michael-the-archangel/>

September 30

Bl. Charles of Blois, Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-charles-of-blois.html>

October 1

Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena, Priest, Third Order Regular (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-nicholas-of-forca.html>

October 3

Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

October 4

Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/solemnity-of-saint-francis.html>

October 5

Bl. Felicia Meda, Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-felicia-meda.html>

October 6

St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Third Order Secular (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
<https://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2018/06/st-mary-frances-of-five-wounds-of-jesus.html>

October 10

St. Daniel and Companions, Angelo, Domnus, Hugolinus, Leo, Nicholas, and Samuel
Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs of Morocco (d. October 10, 1227)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-daniel-and-companions.html>

Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska, Founder, Third Order Regular May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Truszkowska

THE SACRED STIGMATA

*Chapter 13 of the Major Lend by
St. Bonaventure, OFM*

It was a custom for the angelic man Francis
never to rest from the good,
rather, like the heavenly spirits on *Jacob's ladder*,
he either *ascended* into God
or *descended* to his neighbor.
For he had so prudently learned
to divide the time given to him for merit,
that he spent some of it working for his neighbor's benefit
and dedicated the rest
to the tranquil excesses of contemplation.

Therefore,
when he emptied himself
according to the demand of times and places
to gain the salvation of another,
leaving the restlessness of the crowds,
he would seek the secrets of solitude and a place of quiet,
where freeing himself more freely for the Lord,
he would shake off the dust that might have clung to him
from the time spent with the crowds.

Therefore,
two years before he returned his spirit to heaven,
after a variety of many labors,
he was led by divine providence
to a high place apart called Mount La Verna.
When according to his usual custom
he had begun to fast there forty days
in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel,
he experienced more abundantly than usual
an overflow of the sweetness of heavenly contemplation,

was on fire with an ever intense flame of heavenly desires,
and began to be aware more fully of the gifts of heavenly entities.

He was carried into the heights.
not as a curious *searcher of the supreme majesty*
crushed by its glory,
but as a *faithful and prudent servant*,
exploring God's good pleasure,
to which, with the greatest ardor he desires
to conform himself in every way.

Through a divine sign from heaven he had learned
that in opening the book of the Gospel, Christ would
reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in
him and from him. After completing his prayer with
much devotion, he took the book of the sacred
Gospels from the altar and had his companion, a holy
man dedicated to God, open it three times in the name

of the Holy Trinity. All three times, when the book
was opened, the Lord's passion always met his eyes.
The man filled with God understood that, just as he
had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he
should be conformed to him in the affliction and
sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out of this
world.

And although his body was already weakened
by the great austerity of his past life
and his continual carrying of the Lord's cross, . . .
he was in no way terrified,
but was inspired even more vigorously
to endure martyrdom.
The unconquerable enkindling of love in him
for the good Jesus
had grown into *lamps and flames of fire*,
that *many waters could not quench so powerful a love*.

With the seraphic ardor of desires
therefore,
he was being borne aloft into God;
and by compassionate sweetness
he was being transformed into Him
Who chose to be crucified out of
the excess of His love.

On a certain morning about the feast of the Exaltation
of the Cross, while Francis was praying on the
mountain side, he saw a Seraph having six wings,
fiery as well as brilliant, descend from the grandeur of
heaven. And when in swift flight, it had arrived at a
spot in the air near the man of God, there appeared
between the wings the likeness of a man crucified,
with his hands and feet extended the form of a cross
and fastened to a cross. Two of the wings were raised

above his head, two were extended for flight, and two
covered his whole body. Seeing this, he was
overwhelmed and his heart was flooded with a
mixture of joy and sorrow. He rejoiced at
the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the
appearance of the Seraph, but the fact that He was
fastened to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of
compassionate sorrow.

He marveled exceedingly
at the sight of so unfathomable a vision,
knowing that the weakness of Christ's passion
was in no way compatible
with the immortality of the seraphic spirit.
Eventually he understood from this,
through the Lord revealing it,
that Divine Providence had shown him a vision of this sort so that
the friend of Christ might learn in advance
that he was to be totally transformed
into the likeness of Christ crucified,
not by the martyrdom of his flesh,
but by the enkindling of his soul.
As the vision was disappearing,
it left in his heart a marvelous fire
and imprinted in his flesh a likeness of signs
no less marvelous.

For immediately the marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet as he had seen a little before in the figure of the man crucified. His hands and his feet seemed to be pierced through the center by nails, with the heads of the nails appearing on inner side of the hands and the upper side of the feet and their points on the opposite sides. The heads of the nails in his hands and his feet were round and black; their points were oblong and bent as if driven back with a hammer, and they emerged from the flesh and stuck out beyond it. Also his right side as if pierced with a lance, was marked with a red wound from which his sacred blood often flowed, moistening his tunic and underwear.

As Christ's servant realized that he could not conceal from his intimate companions the stigmata that had been so visibly imprinted on his flesh, he feared to make public the Lord's sacrament and was thrown into an agony of doubt whether to tell what he had seen or to be silent about it. He called some of the brothers and speaking in general terms, presented his doubt to them and sought their advice. One of the brothers,

Illuminato, by name and by grace, understanding that Francis had seen something marvelous that made him seem completely dazed, said to the holy man: "Brother, you should realize that at times divine sacraments are revealed to you not for yourself alone but also for others. You have every reason to fear that if you hide what you have received for the profit of many, you will be blamed for burying that talent." Although the holy man used to say on other occasions: "My secret is or myself," he was moved by Illuminato's words. Then, with much fear, he recounted the vision in detail, adding that the one who had appeared to him had told him some things which he would never disclose to any person as long as he lived. We should believe, then, that those utterances of that sacred Seraph marvelously appearing to him on the cross were so secret that people are not permitted to speak of them.

Regis J Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., William J. Short, O.F.M., editors, *The Founder: Volume II of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, New York: New City Press, 2000, pp.630-3.



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From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

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No Meeting this Month!

Most of us will be at the Chapter of Mats

Minister's Notes

Earlier this summer, while praying the rosary, I realized the first mystery is a private moment. There is no crowd. So it has been with my faith journey, and maybe yours. It starts privately, intimately, you and God. It grows from there. You can't share what you don't have. We can love because we have first been loved by God. We start by receiving from God. The movement of the mysteries flows from a private moment to one in which the faith or the flame of faith is shared with bystanders.

My favorite set of mysteries are the Joyous Mysteries. We start with a conversation between Mary and Gabriel. As far as we know, no one else is there. After ten Hail Mary's, when we repeat Gabriel's greeting, we move to Mary and Elizabeth, with John and Jesus playing supporting roles in utero. Again, we repeat part of the conversation ten times. By the time we reach the Nativity, Jesus is a major player, the major player. The focus at any birth is on the baby. The crowd has grown. At a minimum, we have Mary, Joseph, and a bunch of animals. We probably have a passerby and definitely visiting shepherds. Jesus was a Jew from a Jewish family. The next two

mysteries move to the Temple, to the presence of God for the Jews of the time. Mary and Joseph follow the Law and present the newborn male child at the temple. Imagine the conflicting emotions of presenting Jesus, whom they know is God, at the temple, the presence of God at the temple. Again, the group grows, not only is the Holy Family in a crowd of people, but Simeon and Anna both recognize someone beyond human experience. After all, presenting a baby at the temple was probably a daily occurrence. But not this baby. We are back in the temple twelve years later when Jesus is found by his parents in conversation with the priests. Once again, we have a crowd. Once again, we have many not recognizing what they see.

This pattern holds for the Sorrowful Mysteries. The Agony in the Garden is a private moment. Human eyes can only see Jesus, though he is in conversation with His Father, if this cup can pass... This private moment grows to a crucifixion at a public crossroads. Again, most do not recognize what they have the privilege to be witness to.

The Glorious Mysteries start privately, no witnesses to

the resurrection, just to its effects. The Fifth Mystery takes place in heaven, amid great rejoicing.

The Luminous Mysteries are a little harder to buttonhole. I think partially because I did not grow up with them (can't quite call them new-but that is what I mean). That said, the Luminous Mysteries still follow the pattern of starting small. Yes, there were crowds around John at the Lord's baptism. The people clued in to something extraordinary going on were few and far between. If more people had been aware – Jesus' trip into the desert would not have been possible.

Where are you in your faith journey? Are you at a private moment or are you experimenting with going out – including more people? To cycle back to a private moment – to be fed again – is to be expected. Some call it going on retreat. We are called both by our baptism and our profession to go beyond.

This weekend we will not have a fraternity meeting because many in the fraternity are going into a crowd at the Chapter of Mats to recharge and explore where we are headed as an order (other than old age, decline, and death). If I don't see you there, I will see you in October. Please pray for us.

A piece of sad news. Ann and Bill Wester are leaving town. They will be moving to relocate close to their children/grandchildren in the very near future. Since they are seriously downsizing material gifts are probably not welcome. As always, the best thing you can offer is prayers. Ann plans to be at the October fraternity meeting. Let us greet her in October with a spiritual bouquet-a Mass card, a note promising a rosary or two, whatever you are moved to as you think about the gifts she has given the fraternity. I also plan to let fellowship run longer in October. Please share food then.

He must increase. I must decrease. This week we celebrated the Passion of John the Baptist. This saying resonated in my prayer life. Two points:

1. It is sure hard to decrease while your husband is on various committees planning for Chapter of Mats and

you are being sucked in while supporting him. I am happy to be supporting him and awfully glad I am not on a Mats committee. I am very glad my early requests to help were ignored or overlooked.

2. I am well into my 6th year as minister. I should be preparing the Fraternity for a new minister-I should be decreasing. Have you decided what role the Holy Spirit is calling you toward for the Fraternity? I would like to hear from you. Last month's appeal had no results. When you get the Call electronically, you can reply to that email-no need to look up an email address. I guess we all need to trust the Holy Spirit more-you need to trust the Holy Spirit will provide you with the skills and/or support (a.k.a. graces) to be a fraternity officer. I need to trust the Holy Spirit has this under control. It would help my trust if some people at least let me know they are thinking about it.

Pax et Bonum,

Andrea

Professions

9/11/2016

Andrea Bender	Irenaeus
Thomas Bender	Thomas More
Sita Chakrawarti	Clare

Birthdays of the Month

September - None

October

Ralph Palasek (6th)
Bernadette Lozano (23rd)

Necrology

James R Dimond (Min.) – September 23, 2015
Rev. Cornelius O'Brien – September 7, 2019

**PRAYER FOR THE ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA
REGIONAL CHAPTER OF MATS**

September 6-8, 2024

Most high and glorious God,
we ask for your blessing
upon our upcoming Chapter of Mats.

We thank you for our call to live the Gospel
following the example of our Seraphic Father Francis.

We thank you for those who have gone before us,
who preserved our charism throughout the centuries.

We thank you for our current leaders,
who serve us and help us to grow in our understanding
of our vocation.

And we thank you for future leaders,
the shepherds that are to come.

We ask you to send down your Holy Spirit upon us as
we journey toward our 2024 Chapter of Mats.

Prepare all of us, Lord, as we ask
for fraternal Love to love as you love;
Humility to listen to one another;
Wisdom to see the future you would have us build;
Courage to follow your direction; and
Grace to spread seeds of goodness and joy throughout
our time at Chapter and beyond.

Lord, as we anticipate coming together to celebrate
Where we were, where we are, and where we are called
to be as Secular Franciscans,
let us remember to see and treat all
“...as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.”¹

And so we pray,
Holy God, draw us together as a community,
take charge of our Chapter of Mats,
and lead us into the future.

Father, we adore you and give you all
praise, honor, and glory,
Through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
In union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer Intentions

For...

- Peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East and the victims of the violence.
- Peace in Ukraine and protection for her Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics.
- For blessing for Pope Francis’ trip to Asia.
- Ann and Bill Wester as they prepare to move.
- Grace Coipuram, OFS
- Patricia Kennedy, mother of Joseph Kennedy, OFS who is recovering from congestive heart failure.
- Virginia Roccapriore, widow of Joseph Roccapriore, OFS.
- Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, for depression.
- For friends of Liz, Mark who is undergoing chemo for stage 4 melanoma and Dan who has Parkinson’s Disease.
- For April’s friend whose father suddenly died.
- The sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her.
- April’s friend, whose husband avoids Church, and his ex-wife who never went to Church.
- The Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.
- Religious freedom and for all persecuted for their belief in God.
- Prisoners, the sick, poor, hungry, lonely, homeless, unemployed and those with no one to pray for them.
- For the work of the Order of Malta in Bethlehem in this time of strife and war.
- The union of all Christians.
- The health, protection and guidance of all priests and bishops including Pope Francis.
- For vocations to all branches of the Franciscan family.

Secretary’s Notes

The first thing that made me pause when putting together this edition of The Call was realizing that I should remove Pat

Riggles, OFS from the professions list for this month since she is now a member of Tau Fraternity in Herndon. Pat, you will always have a home with us in St. Thomas More Fraternity. Thank you for your quiet witness and service in with us and thank you for your witness in seeking a fraternity to belong to when you needed to move out of the area. (Pat, you will still get *The Call*. Please keep in touch.)

This month is the 800th anniversary of St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. Page 8 has St.

Bonaventure's description of this mysterious event.

Page 4 has a new devotion, circa 2010, the Franciscan Family Chaplet. A short chaplet to pray for vocations to all branches of our order.

Page 5 has Fr. Jerome's reflection for this month in which he addresses the good of labor.

Peace and Good,
Randy

Franciscan Family Chaplet

<https://franciscanchaplet.wordpress.com/>

By Nicholas H. Kovacs, OFS

Beginning:

Make the sign of the cross and recite "The Apostle's Creed".
Then recite the "Hail Mary" 3 times.

First Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the First Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Second Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Second Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Third Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Third Order, both Regular and Secular, increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Conclusion:

End by reciting 1 time: "*We adore You, O Lord Jesus Christ, because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*"
Say the "Glory Be" 3 times for the intentions of the Pope and his continued holiness.
Make the sign of the cross.

Note: This chaplet can be said as a Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis on October 4.

Nihil Obstat: Dr. Sandra Magie, Ph.D., S.T.D, Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: + Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, August 19, 2011

Labor

When I was a child, September was still the start of school, directly after Labor Day. When school districts started to move the start of the school year earlier, some protested because high school students had summer jobs and families had vacations—during which, it was expected, some of the students could still be working at resorts. Originally, the teens would have been working on farms. Still, they should labor.

After I finished school, I heard more and more frequently about schools that required some kind of public service; this was already required in my high school for those who would join the National Honor Society. No surprise that Catholic schools would require some practice of the Gospel that would help someone, but the move increased across the public realm as well.

St. Francis saw the value of work. As Scripture says, “He who will not work, should not eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) Even when he was too ill to work, Francis still wanted to work, to contribute to the life of the brothers. Monks through history practice “ora et labora,” prayer and work as twin pillars of their lives. There is a value to work.

The Lord God Himself worked for six days to create the universe. And he saw that it was “very good,” in spite of the eventual failings of certain creatures.

There is a value to work.

Recognizing the value of labor is a big part of the reason for the celebration of Labor Day. For some, it is merely a “day off” for vacations and picnics. But the intent is to stir us to recognize those around us who help bring food from the fields to our table or who make sure that we are safe and clean. From Nurses to Sanitation Workers, so many unglamorous jobs we take for granted still compel many to work even on this day of “vacation” from labor.

Perhaps paying attention can inspire gratitude, and gratitude might help us to respect more those people who are so crucial in our society, yet still so invisible.

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For your reflection (choose one and share your reflection with another member of your fraternity):

1. St. Paul wrote (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11): In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others.” Think about a time when you realized you were just doing busywork, appearing to be busy. What was going on in your heart? Was there “a disorderliness” about your thoughts?
2. Do you have a spiritual practice to help bring order to your busy-ness, to help yourself work more effectively?
3. St. Paul also cautions us against appearing to be busy by being busy with the affairs of other people. What business of others is distracting for you? How do you resist the temptation to busy yourself with another person’s affairs when they are doing exactly the thing that irritates or distracts you?
4. How do you plan to (or did you) thank someone for their labor this month?

Jerome, ofm
National Spiritual Assistant
OFS Animator, OFM Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe ofs.assistant@friars.us

Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-01-2023.pdf>

September 1

St. Beatrice of Silva, Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Silva

September 2

Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault, Priests and companions, First and Third Orders, Martyrs of Carmes (d. 1792)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/martyrs-de-carmes.html>

September 4

St. Rose of Viterbo, Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-rose-of-viterbo.html>

September 6

Bl. Liberatus of Lauro, Priest, First Order (d. 1260)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-liberatus-of-lauro.html>

September 7

Bl. Gentle of Matelica, Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-gentle-of-matelica.html>

September 8

Bl. John Tomachi and Sons, Third Order Secular, Martyrs (d. September 8, 1628)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-ioannes-tomachi/>

September 9

Bl. Seraphina Sforza, Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-seraphina-sforza.html>

September 10

Bl. Lucy de Freitas, Third Order Secular, martyr (d. 1622)

<https://joyfulspirit139.blogspot.com/2014/11/bl-lucy-de-freitas.html>

September 11

Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona, Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-bonaventure-of-barcelona/>

September 13

First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)

<http://franciscanchapelcentertokyo.org/history-of-franciscan-friars-in-japan/>

September 17

Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

<https://catholicism.org/the-stigmata-of-saint-francis-of-assisi-1224.html>

St. Zygmunt Szczesny Felinski, OFS, Archbishop of Warsaw and Founder, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary (Nov. 1, 1822-Sept. 17, 1895)

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturg/saints/ns_lit_doc_20020818_felinski_en.html

September 18

St. Joseph of Cupertino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual
(June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-joseph-of-cupertino.html>

September 20

St. Francis Mary of Camposso, Friar, OFM, Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/francis-mary-of-camporosso.html>

September 21

Bl. Elizabeth Amodei, Third Order Secular, (1475-February 4, 1498)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-elizabeth-amodei.html>

September 22

St. Ignatius of Santhia, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2002/documents/ns_lit_doc_20020519_ignazio_en.html

September 23

Finding the Body of St. Clare

<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/library/gallery/incorrupt/incorrupt.htm#-Clare>

St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin

(May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)

<http://padrepiodevotions.org/a-short-biography/>

September 24

St. Pacificus of Severino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-pacific.html>

September 26

St. Elzéar of Sabran (1285-September 27, 1323)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elzear_of_Sabran

Husband and Wife,
Secular Franciscans

Bl. Delphina of Glandèves (1284-November 1358)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphine_of_Glandeves

Bl. Aurelio of Vinalesa and Companions, Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)

<https://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/03/blessed-aurelio-of-vinalesa-presbyter.html>

Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone, Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-lucy-of-caltagirone.html>

September 28

Bl. Bernadine of Feltre, Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernardin-of-feltre.html>

St. John of Dukla, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Conventual (1414-1484)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Dukla

September 29

Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel

<http://catholicstraightanswers.com/who-is-st-michael-the-archangel/>

September 30

Bl. Charles of Blois, Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-charles-of-blois.html>

October 1

Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena, Priest, Third Order Regular (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-nicholas-of-forca.html>

October 3

Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

October 4

Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/solemnity-of-saint-francis.html>

October 5

Bl. Felicia Meda, Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-felicia-meda.html>

October 6

St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Third Order Secular (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
<https://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2018/06/st-mary-frances-of-five-wounds-of-jesus.html>

October 10

St. Daniel and Companions, Angelo, Domnus, Hugolinus, Leo, Nicholas, and Samuel
Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs of Morocco (d. October 10, 1227)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-daniel-and-companions.html>

Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska, Founder, Third Order Regular May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Truszkowska

THE SACRED STIGMATA

*Chapter 13 of the Major Lend by
St. Bonaventure, OFM*

It was a custom for the angelic man Francis
never to rest from the good,
rather, like the heavenly spirits on *Jacob's ladder*,
he either *ascended* into God
or *descended* to his neighbor.
For he had so prudently learned
to divide the time given to him for merit,
that he spent some of it working for his neighbor's benefit
and dedicated the rest
to the tranquil excesses of contemplation.

Therefore,
when he emptied himself
according to the demand of times and places
to gain the salvation of another,
leaving the restlessness of the crowds,
he would seek the secrets of solitude and a place of quiet,
where freeing himself more freely for the Lord,
he would shake off the dust that might have clung to him
from the time spent with the crowds.

Therefore,
two years before he returned his spirit to heaven,
after a variety of many labors,
he was led by divine providence
to a high place apart called Mount La Verna.
When according to his usual custom
he had begun to fast there forty days
in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel,
he experienced more abundantly than usual
an overflow of the sweetness of heavenly contemplation,

was on fire with an ever intense flame of heavenly desires,
and began to be aware more fully of the gifts of heavenly entities.

He was carried into the heights.
not as a curious *searcher of the supreme majesty*
crushed by its glory,
but as a *faithful and prudent servant*,
exploring God's good pleasure,
to which, with the greatest ardor he desires
to conform himself in every way.

Through a divine sign from heaven he had learned
that in opening the book of the Gospel, Christ would
reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in
him and from him. After completing his prayer with
much devotion, he took the book of the sacred
Gospels from the altar and had his companion, a holy
man dedicated to God, open it three times in the name

of the Holy Trinity. All three times, when the book
was opened, the Lord's passion always met his eyes.
The man filled with God understood that, just as he
had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he
should be conformed to him in the affliction and
sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out of this
world.

And although his body was already weakened
by the great austerity of his past life
and his continual carrying of the Lord's cross, · ·
he was in no way terrified,
but was inspired even more vigorously
to endure martyrdom.
The unconquerable enkindling of love in him
for the good Jesus
had grown into *lamps and flames of fire*,
that *many waters could not quench so powerful a love*.

With the seraphic ardor of desires
therefore,
he was being borne aloft into God;
and by compassionate sweetness
he was being transformed into Him
Who chose to be crucified out of
the excess of His love.

On a certain morning about the feast of the Exaltation
of the Cross, while Francis was praying on the
mountain side, he saw a Seraph having six wings,
fiery as well as brilliant, descend from the grandeur of
heaven. And when in swift flight, it had arrived at a
spot in the air near the man of God, there appeared
between the wings the likeness of a man crucified,
with his hands and feet extended the form of a cross
and fastened to a cross. Two of the wings were raised

above his head, two were extended for flight, and two
covered his whole body. Seeing this, he was
overwhelmed and his heart was flooded with a
mixture of joy and sorrow. He rejoiced at
the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the
appearance of the Seraph, but the fact that He was
fastened to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of
compassionate sorrow.

He marveled exceedingly
at the sight of so unfathomable a vision,
knowing that the weakness of Christ's passion
was in no way compatible
with the immortality of the seraphic spirit.
Eventually he understood from this,
through the Lord revealing it,
that Divine Providence had shown him a vision of this sort so that
the friend of Christ might learn in advance
that he was to be totally transformed
into the likeness of Christ crucified,
not by the martyrdom of his flesh,
but by the enkindling of his soul.
As the vision was disappearing,
it left in his heart a marvelous fire
and imprinted in his flesh a likeness of signs
no less marvelous.

For immediately the marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet as he had seen a little before in the figure of the man crucified. His hands and his feet seemed to be pierced through the center by nails, with the heads of the nails appearing on inner side of the hands and the upper side of the feet and their points on the opposite sides. The heads of the nails in his hands and his feet were round and black; their points were oblong and bent as if driven back with a hammer, and they emerged from the flesh and stuck out beyond it. Also his right side as if pierced with a lance, was marked with a red wound from which his sacred blood often flowed, moistening his tunic and underwear.

As Christ's servant realized that he could not conceal from his intimate companions the stigmata that had been so visibly imprinted on his flesh, he feared to make public the Lord's sacrament and was thrown into an agony of doubt whether to tell what he had seen or to be silent about it. He called some of the brothers and speaking in general terms, presented his doubt to them and sought their advice. One of the brothers,

Illuminato, by name and by grace, understanding that Francis had seen something marvelous that made him seem completely dazed, said to the holy man: "Brother, you should realize that at times divine sacraments are revealed to you not for yourself alone but also for others. You have every reason to fear that if you hide what you have received for the profit of many, you will be blamed for burying that talent." Although the holy man used to say on other occasions: "My secret is or myself," he was moved by Illuminato's words. Then, with much fear, he recounted the vision in detail, adding that the one who had appeared to him had told him some things which he would never disclose to any person as long as he lived. We should believe, then, that those utterances of that sacred Seraph marvelously appearing to him on the cross were so secret that people are not permitted to speak of them.

Regis J Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., William J. Short, O.F.M., editors, *The Founder: Volume II of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, New York: New City Press, 2000, pp.630-3.



September 2024

THE CALL

St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order

From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

Minister: Andrea Bender, OFS; Vice Minister: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS; Secretary: Thomas Bender, OFS; Treasurer: Ann Wester, OFS; Formation Director: Janette Martin, OFS; Councilors-at-Large: Ann Corro, OFS, Michael Landrigan, OFS

No Meeting this Month!

Most of us will be at the Chapter of Mats

Minister's Notes

Earlier this summer, while praying the rosary, I realized the first mystery is a private moment. There is no crowd. So it has been with my faith journey, and maybe yours. It starts privately, intimately, you and God. It grows from there. You can't share what you don't have. We can love because we have first been loved by God. We start by receiving from God. The movement of the mysteries flows from a private moment to one in which the faith or the flame of faith is shared with bystanders.

My favorite set of mysteries are the Joyous Mysteries. We start with a conversation between Mary and Gabriel. As far as we know, no one else is there. After ten Hail Mary's, when we repeat Gabriel's greeting, we move to Mary and Elizabeth, with John and Jesus playing supporting roles in utero. Again, we repeat part of the conversation ten times. By the time we reach the Nativity, Jesus is a major player, the major player. The focus at any birth is on the baby. The crowd has grown. At a minimum, we have Mary, Joseph, and a bunch of animals. We probably have a passerby and definitely visiting shepherds. Jesus was a Jew from a Jewish family. The next two

mysteries move to the Temple, to the presence of God for the Jews of the time. Mary and Joseph follow the Law and present the newborn male child at the temple. Imagine the conflicting emotions of presenting Jesus, whom they know is God, at the temple, the presence of God at the temple. Again, the group grows, not only is the Holy Family in a crowd of people, but Simeon and Anna both recognize someone beyond human experience. After all, presenting a baby at the temple was probably a daily occurrence. But not this baby. We are back in the temple twelve years later when Jesus is found by his parents in conversation with the priests. Once again, we have a crowd. Once again, we have many not recognizing what they see.

This pattern holds for the Sorrowful Mysteries. The Agony in the Garden is a private moment. Human eyes can only see Jesus, though he is in conversation with His Father, if this cup can pass... This private moment grows to a crucifixion at a public crossroads. Again, most do not recognize what they have the privilege to be witness to.

The Glorious Mysteries start privately, no witnesses to

the resurrection, just to its effects. The Fifth Mystery takes place in heaven, amid great rejoicing.

The Luminous Mysteries are a little harder to buttonhole. I think partially because I did not grow up with them (can't quite call them new-but that is what I mean). That said, the Luminous Mysteries still follow the pattern of starting small. Yes, there were crowds around John at the Lord's baptism. The people clued in to something extraordinary going on were few and far between. If more people had been aware – Jesus' trip into the desert would not have been possible.

Where are you in your faith journey? Are you at a private moment or are you experimenting with going out – including more people? To cycle back to a private moment – to be fed again – is to be expected. Some call it going on retreat. We are called both by our baptism and our profession to go beyond.

This weekend we will not have a fraternity meeting because many in the fraternity are going into a crowd at the Chapter of Mats to recharge and explore where we are headed as an order (other than old age, decline, and death). If I don't see you there, I will see you in October. Please pray for us.

A piece of sad news. Ann and Bill Wester are leaving town. They will be moving to relocate close to their children/grandchildren in the very near future. Since they are seriously downsizing material gifts are probably not welcome. As always, the best thing you can offer is prayers. Ann plans to be at the October fraternity meeting. Let us greet her in October with a spiritual bouquet-a Mass card, a note promising a rosary or two, whatever you are moved to as you think about the gifts she has given the fraternity. I also plan to let fellowship run longer in October. Please share food then.

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1. It is sure hard to decrease while your husband is on various committees planning for Chapter of Mats and

you are being sucked in while supporting him. I am happy to be supporting him and awfully glad I am not on a Mats committee. I am very glad my early requests to help were ignored or overlooked.

2. I am well into my 6th year as minister. I should be preparing the Fraternity for a new minister-I should be decreasing. Have you decided what role the Holy Spirit is calling you toward for the Fraternity? I would like to hear from you. Last month's appeal had no results. When you get the Call electronically, you can reply to that email-no need to look up an email address. I guess we all need to trust the Holy Spirit more-you need to trust the Holy Spirit will provide you with the skills and/or support (a.k.a. graces) to be a fraternity officer. I need to trust the Holy Spirit has this under control. It would help my trust if some people at least let me know they are thinking about it.

Pax et Bonum,

Andrea

Professions

9/11/2016

Andrea Bender	Irenaeus
Thomas Bender	Thomas More
Sita Chakrawarti	Clare

Birthdays of the Month

September - None

October

Ralph Palasek (6th)
Bernadette Lozano (23rd)

Necrology

James R Dimond (Min.) – September 23, 2015
Rev. Cornelius O'Brien – September 7, 2019

**PRAYER FOR THE ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA
REGIONAL CHAPTER OF MATS**

September 6-8, 2024

Most high and glorious God,
we ask for your blessing
upon our upcoming Chapter of Mats.

We thank you for our call to live the Gospel
following the example of our Seraphic Father Francis.

We thank you for those who have gone before us,
who preserved our charism throughout the centuries.

We thank you for our current leaders,
who serve us and help us to grow in our understanding
of our vocation.

And we thank you for future leaders,
the shepherds that are to come.

We ask you to send down your Holy Spirit upon us as
we journey toward our 2024 Chapter of Mats.

Prepare all of us, Lord, as we ask
for fraternal Love to love as you love;
Humility to listen to one another;
Wisdom to see the future you would have us build;
Courage to follow your direction; and
Grace to spread seeds of goodness and joy throughout
our time at Chapter and beyond.

Lord, as we anticipate coming together to celebrate
Where we were, where we are, and where we are called
to be as Secular Franciscans,
let us remember to see and treat all
“...as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.”¹

And so we pray,
Holy God, draw us together as a community,
take charge of our Chapter of Mats,
and lead us into the future.

Father, we adore you and give you all
praise, honor, and glory,
Through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
In union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer Intentions

For...

- Peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East and the victims of the violence.
- Peace in Ukraine and protection for her Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics.
- For blessing for Pope Francis’ trip to Asia.
- Ann and Bill Wester as they prepare to move.
- Grace Coipuram, OFS
- Patricia Kennedy, mother of Joseph Kennedy, OFS who is recovering from congestive heart failure.
- Virginia Roccapriore, widow of Joseph Roccapriore, OFS.
- Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, for depression.
- For friends of Liz, Mark who is undergoing chemo for stage 4 melanoma and Dan who has Parkinson’s Disease.
- For April’s friend whose father suddenly died.
- The sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her.
- April’s friend, whose husband avoids Church, and his ex-wife who never went to Church.
- The Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.
- Religious freedom and for all persecuted for their belief in God.
- Prisoners, the sick, poor, hungry, lonely, homeless, unemployed and those with no one to pray for them.
- For the work of the Order of Malta in Bethlehem in this time of strife and war.
- The union of all Christians.
- The health, protection and guidance of all priests and bishops including Pope Francis.
- For vocations to all branches of the Franciscan family.

Secretary’s Notes

The first thing that made me pause when putting together this edition of The Call was realizing that I should remove Pat

Riggles, OFS from the professions list for this month since she is now a member of Tau Fraternity in Herndon. Pat, you will always have a home with us in St. Thomas More Fraternity. Thank you for your quiet witness and service in with us and thank you for your witness in seeking a fraternity to belong to when you needed to move out of the area. (Pat, you will still get *The Call*. Please keep in touch.)

This month is the 800th anniversary of St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. Page 8 has St.

Bonaventure's description of this mysterious event.

Page 4 has a new devotion, circa 2010, the Franciscan Family Chaplet. A short chaplet to pray for vocations to all branches of our order.

Page 5 has Fr. Jerome's reflection for this month in which he addresses the good of labor.

Peace and Good,
Randy

Franciscan Family Chaplet

<https://franciscanchaplet.wordpress.com/>

By Nicholas H. Kovacs, OFS

Beginning:

Make the sign of the cross and recite "The Apostle's Creed".
Then recite the "Hail Mary" 3 times.

First Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the First Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Second Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Second Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Third Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Third Order, both Regular and Secular, increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Conclusion:

End by reciting 1 time: "*We adore You, O Lord Jesus Christ, because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*"
Say the "Glory Be" 3 times for the intentions of the Pope and his continued holiness.
Make the sign of the cross.

Note: This chaplet can be said as a Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis on October 4.

Nihil Obstat: Dr. Sandra Magie, Ph.D., S.T.D, Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: + Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, August 19, 2011

Labor

When I was a child, September was still the start of school, directly after Labor Day. When school districts started to move the start of the school year earlier, some protested because high school students had summer jobs and families had vacations—during which, it was expected, some of the students could still be working at resorts. Originally, the teens would have been working on farms. Still, they should labor.

After I finished school, I heard more and more frequently about schools that required some kind of public service; this was already required in my high school for those who would join the National Honor Society. No surprise that Catholic schools would require some practice of the Gospel that would help someone, but the move increased across the public realm as well.

St. Francis saw the value of work. As Scripture says, “He who will not work, should not eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) Even when he was too ill to work, Francis still wanted to work, to contribute to the life of the brothers. Monks through history practice “ora et labora,” prayer and work as twin pillars of their lives. There is a value to work.

The Lord God Himself worked for six days to create the universe. And he saw that it was “very good,” in spite of the eventual failings of certain creatures.

There is a value to work.

Recognizing the value of labor is a big part of the reason for the celebration of Labor Day. For some, it is merely a “day off” for vacations and picnics. But the intent is to stir us to recognize those around us who help bring food from the fields to our table or who make sure that we are safe and clean. From Nurses to Sanitation Workers, so many unglamorous jobs we take for granted still compel many to work even on this day of “vacation” from labor.

Perhaps paying attention can inspire gratitude, and gratitude might help us to respect more those people who are so crucial in our society, yet still so invisible.

=====

For your reflection (choose one and share your reflection with another member of your fraternity):

1. St. Paul wrote (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11): In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others.” Think about a time when you realized you were just doing busywork, appearing to be busy. What was going on in your heart? Was there “a disorderliness” about your thoughts?
2. Do you have a spiritual practice to help bring order to your busy-ness, to help yourself work more effectively?
3. St. Paul also cautions us against appearing to be busy by being busy with the affairs of other people. What business of others is distracting for you? How do you resist the temptation to busy yourself with another person’s affairs when they are doing exactly the thing that irritates or distracts you?
4. How do you plan to (or did you) thank someone for their labor this month?

Jerome, ofm
National Spiritual Assistant
OFS Animator, OFM Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe ofs.assistant@friars.us

Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-01-2023.pdf>

September 1

St. Beatrice of Silva, Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Silva

September 2

Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault, Priests and companions, First and Third Orders, Martyrs of Carmes (d. 1792)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/martyrs-de-carmes.html>

September 4

St. Rose of Viterbo, Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-rose-of-viterbo.html>

September 6

Bl. Liberatus of Lauro, Priest, First Order (d. 1260)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-liberatus-of-lauro.html>

September 7

Bl. Gentle of Matelica, Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-gentle-of-matelica.html>

September 8

Bl. John Tomachi and Sons, Third Order Secular, Martyrs (d. September 8, 1628)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-ioannes-tomachi/>

September 9

Bl. Seraphina Sforza, Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-seraphina-sforza.html>

September 10

Bl. Lucy de Freitas, Third Order Secular, martyr (d. 1622)

<https://joyfulspirit139.blogspot.com/2014/11/bl-lucy-de-freitas.html>

September 11

Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona, Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-bonaventure-of-barcelona/>

September 13

First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)

<http://franciscanchapelcentertokyo.org/history-of-franciscan-friars-in-japan/>

September 17

Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

<https://catholicism.org/the-stigmata-of-saint-francis-of-assisi-1224.html>

St. Zygmunt Szczesny Felinski, OFS, Archbishop of Warsaw and Founder, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary (Nov. 1, 1822-Sept. 17, 1895)

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20020818_felinski_en.html

September 18

St. Joseph of Cupertino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual
(June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-joseph-of-cupertino.html>

September 20

St. Francis Mary of Campososso, Friar, OFM, Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/francis-mary-of-camporosso.html>

September 21

Bl. Elizabeth Amodei, Third Order Secular, (1475-February 4, 1498)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-elizabeth-amodei.html>

September 22

St. Ignatius of Santhia, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2002/documents/ns_lit_doc_20020519_ignazio_en.html

September 23

Finding the Body of St. Clare

<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/library/gallery/incorrupt/incorrupt.htm#-Clare>

St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin

(May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)

<http://padrepiodevotions.org/a-short-biography/>

September 24

St. Pacificus of Severino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-pacific.html>

September 26

St. Elzéar of Sabran (1285-September 27, 1323)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elzear_of_Sabran

Husband and Wife,
Secular Franciscans

Bl. Delphina of Glandèves (1284-November 1358)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphine_of_Glandeves

Bl. Aurelio of Vinalesa and Companions, Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)

<https://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/03/blessed-aurelio-of-vinalesa-presbyter.html>

Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone, Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-lucy-of-caltagirone.html>

September 28

Bl. Bernadine of Feltre, Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernardin-of-feltre.html>

St. John of Dukla, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Conventual (1414-1484)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Dukla

September 29

Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel

<http://catholicstraightanswers.com/who-is-st-michael-the-archangel/>

September 30

Bl. Charles of Blois, Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-charles-of-blois.html>

October 1

Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena, Priest, Third Order Regular (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-nicholas-of-forca.html>

October 3

Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

October 4

Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/solemnity-of-saint-francis.html>

October 5

Bl. Felicia Meda, Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-felicia-meda.html>

October 6

St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Third Order Secular (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
<https://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2018/06/st-mary-frances-of-five-wounds-of-jesus.html>

October 10

St. Daniel and Companions, Angelo, Domnus, Hugolinus, Leo, Nicholas, and Samuel
Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs of Morocco (d. October 10, 1227)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-daniel-and-companions.html>

Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska, Founder, Third Order Regular May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Truszkowska

THE SACRED STIGMATA

*Chapter 13 of the Major Lend by
St. Bonaventure, OFM*

It was a custom for the angelic man Francis
never to rest from the good,
rather, like the heavenly spirits on *Jacob's ladder*,
he either *ascended* into God
or *descended* to his neighbor.
For he had so prudently learned
to divide the time given to him for merit,
that he spent some of it working for his neighbor's benefit
and dedicated the rest
to the tranquil excesses of contemplation.

Therefore,
when he emptied himself
according to the demand of times and places
to gain the salvation of another,
leaving the restlessness of the crowds,
he would seek the secrets of solitude and a place of quiet,
where freeing himself more freely for the Lord,
he would shake off the dust that might have clung to him
from the time spent with the crowds.

Therefore,
two years before he returned his spirit to heaven,
after a variety of many labors,
he was led by divine providence
to a high place apart called Mount La Verna.
When according to his usual custom
he had begun to fast there forty days
in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel,
he experienced more abundantly than usual
an overflow of the sweetness of heavenly contemplation,

was on fire with an ever intense flame of heavenly desires,
and began to be aware more fully of the gifts of heavenly entities.

He was carried into the heights.
not as a curious *searcher of the supreme majesty*
crushed by its glory,
but as a *faithful and prudent servant*,
exploring God's good pleasure,
to which, with the greatest ardor he desires
to conform himself in every way.

Through a divine sign from heaven he had learned
that in opening the book of the Gospel, Christ would
reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in
him and from him. After completing his prayer with
much devotion, he took the book of the sacred
Gospels from the altar and had his companion, a holy
man dedicated to God, open it three times in the name

of the Holy Trinity. All three times, when the book
was opened, the Lord's passion always met his eyes.
The man filled with God understood that, just as he
had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he
should be conformed to him in the affliction and
sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out of this
world.

And although his body was already weakened
by the great austerity of his past life
and his continual carrying of the Lord's cross, . . .
he was in no way terrified,
but was inspired even more vigorously
to endure martyrdom.
The unconquerable enkindling of love in him
for the good Jesus
had grown into *lamps and flames of fire*,
that *many waters could not quench so powerful a love*.

With the seraphic ardor of desires
therefore,
he was being borne aloft into God;
and by compassionate sweetness
he was being transformed into Him
Who chose to be crucified out of
the excess of His love.

On a certain morning about the feast of the Exaltation
of the Cross, while Francis was praying on the
mountain side, he saw a Seraph having six wings,
fiery as well as brilliant, descend from the grandeur of
heaven. And when in swift flight, it had arrived at a
spot in the air near the man of God, there appeared
between the wings the likeness of a man crucified,
with his hands and feet extended the form of a cross
and fastened to a cross. Two of the wings were raised

above his head, two were extended for flight, and two
covered his whole body. Seeing this, he was
overwhelmed and his heart was flooded with a
mixture of joy and sorrow. He rejoiced at
the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the
appearance of the Seraph, but the fact that He was
fastened to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of
compassionate sorrow.

He marveled exceedingly
at the sight of so unfathomable a vision,
knowing that the weakness of Christ's passion
was in no way compatible
with the immortality of the seraphic spirit.
Eventually he understood from this,
through the Lord revealing it,
that Divine Providence had shown him a vision of this sort so that
the friend of Christ might learn in advance
that he was to be totally transformed
into the likeness of Christ crucified,
not by the martyrdom of his flesh,
but by the enkindling of his soul.
As the vision was disappearing,
it left in his heart a marvelous fire
and imprinted in his flesh a likeness of signs
no less marvelous.

For immediately the marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet as he had seen a little before in the figure of the man crucified. His hands and his feet seemed to be pierced through the center by nails, with the heads of the nails appearing on inner side of the hands and the upper side of the feet and their points on the opposite sides. The heads of the nails in his hands and his feet were round and black; their points were oblong and bent as if driven back with a hammer, and they emerged from the flesh and stuck out beyond it. Also his right side as if pierced with a lance, was marked with a red wound from which his sacred blood often flowed, moistening his tunic and underwear.

As Christ's servant realized that he could not conceal from his intimate companions the stigmata that had been so visibly imprinted on his flesh, he feared to make public the Lord's sacrament and was thrown into an agony of doubt whether to tell what he had seen or to be silent about it. He called some of the brothers and speaking in general terms, presented his doubt to them and sought their advice. One of the brothers,

Illuminato, by name and by grace, understanding that Francis had seen something marvelous that made him seem completely dazed, said to the holy man: "Brother, you should realize that at times divine sacraments are revealed to you not for yourself alone but also for others. You have every reason to fear that if you hide what you have received for the profit of many, you will be blamed for burying that talent." Although the holy man used to say on other occasions: "My secret is or myself," he was moved by Illuminato's words. Then, with much fear, he recounted the vision in detail, adding that the one who had appeared to him had told him some things which he would never disclose to any person as long as he lived. We should believe, then, that those utterances of that sacred Seraph marvelously appearing to him on the cross were so secret that people are not permitted to speak of them.

Regis J Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., William J. Short, O.F.M., editors, *The Founder: Volume II of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, New York: New City Press, 2000, pp.630-3.



September 2024

THE CALL

St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order

From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

Minister: Andrea Bender, OFS; Vice Minister: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS; Secretary: Thomas Bender, OFS; Treasurer: Ann Wester, OFS; Formation Director: Janette Martin, OFS; Councilors-at-Large: Ann Corro, OFS, Michael Landrigan, OFS

No Meeting this Month!

Most of us will be at the Chapter of Mats

Minister's Notes

Earlier this summer, while praying the rosary, I realized the first mystery is a private moment. There is no crowd. So it has been with my faith journey, and maybe yours. It starts privately, intimately, you and God. It grows from there. You can't share what you don't have. We can love because we have first been loved by God. We start by receiving from God. The movement of the mysteries flows from a private moment to one in which the faith or the flame of faith is shared with bystanders.

My favorite set of mysteries are the Joyous Mysteries. We start with a conversation between Mary and Gabriel. As far as we know, no one else is there. After ten Hail Mary's, when we repeat Gabriel's greeting, we move to Mary and Elizabeth, with John and Jesus playing supporting roles in utero. Again, we repeat part of the conversation ten times. By the time we reach the Nativity, Jesus is a major player, the major player. The focus at any birth is on the baby. The crowd has grown. At a minimum, we have Mary, Joseph, and a bunch of animals. We probably have a passerby and definitely visiting shepherds. Jesus was a Jew from a Jewish family. The next two

mysteries move to the Temple, to the presence of God for the Jews of the time. Mary and Joseph follow the Law and present the newborn male child at the temple. Imagine the conflicting emotions of presenting Jesus, whom they know is God, at the temple, the presence of God at the temple. Again, the group grows, not only is the Holy Family in a crowd of people, but Simeon and Anna both recognize someone beyond human experience. After all, presenting a baby at the temple was probably a daily occurrence. But not this baby. We are back in the temple twelve years later when Jesus is found by his parents in conversation with the priests. Once again, we have a crowd. Once again, we have many not recognizing what they see.

This pattern holds for the Sorrowful Mysteries. The Agony in the Garden is a private moment. Human eyes can only see Jesus, though he is in conversation with His Father, if this cup can pass... This private moment grows to a crucifixion at a public crossroads. Again, most do not recognize what they have the privilege to be witness to.

The Glorious Mysteries start privately, no witnesses to

the resurrection, just to its effects. The Fifth Mystery takes place in heaven, amid great rejoicing.

The Luminous Mysteries are a little harder to buttonhole. I think partially because I did not grow up with them (can't quite call them new-but that is what I mean). That said, the Luminous Mysteries still follow the pattern of starting small. Yes, there were crowds around John at the Lord's baptism. The people clued in to something extraordinary going on were few and far between. If more people had been aware – Jesus' trip into the desert would not have been possible.

Where are you in your faith journey? Are you at a private moment or are you experimenting with going out – including more people? To cycle back to a private moment – to be fed again – is to be expected. Some call it going on retreat. We are called both by our baptism and our profession to go beyond.

This weekend we will not have a fraternity meeting because many in the fraternity are going into a crowd at the Chapter of Mats to recharge and explore where we are headed as an order (other than old age, decline, and death). If I don't see you there, I will see you in October. Please pray for us.

A piece of sad news. Ann and Bill Wester are leaving town. They will be moving to relocate close to their children/grandchildren in the very near future. Since they are seriously downsizing material gifts are probably not welcome. As always, the best thing you can offer is prayers. Ann plans to be at the October fraternity meeting. Let us greet her in October with a spiritual bouquet-a Mass card, a note promising a rosary or two, whatever you are moved to as you think about the gifts she has given the fraternity. I also plan to let fellowship run longer in October. Please share food then.

He must increase. I must decrease. This week we celebrated the Passion of John the Baptist. This saying resonated in my prayer life. Two points:

1. It is sure hard to decrease while your husband is on various committees planning for Chapter of Mats and

you are being sucked in while supporting him. I am happy to be supporting him and awfully glad I am not on a Mats committee. I am very glad my early requests to help were ignored or overlooked.

2. I am well into my 6th year as minister. I should be preparing the Fraternity for a new minister-I should be decreasing. Have you decided what role the Holy Spirit is calling you toward for the Fraternity? I would like to hear from you. Last month's appeal had no results. When you get the Call electronically, you can reply to that email-no need to look up an email address. I guess we all need to trust the Holy Spirit more-you need to trust the Holy Spirit will provide you with the skills and/or support (a.k.a. graces) to be a fraternity officer. I need to trust the Holy Spirit has this under control. It would help my trust if some people at least let me know they are thinking about it.

Pax et Bonum,

Andrea

Professions

9/11/2016

Andrea Bender	Irenaeus
Thomas Bender	Thomas More
Sita Chakrawarti	Clare

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Bernadette Lozano (23rd)

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Lord, as we anticipate coming together to celebrate
Where we were, where we are, and where we are called
to be as Secular Franciscans,
let us remember to see and treat all
“...as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.”¹

And so we pray,
Holy God, draw us together as a community,
take charge of our Chapter of Mats,
and lead us into the future.

Father, we adore you and give you all
praise, honor, and glory,
Through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
In union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer Intentions

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- Peace in Ukraine and protection for her Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics.
- For blessing for Pope Francis’ trip to Asia.
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- Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, for depression.
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- For April’s friend whose father suddenly died.
- The sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her.
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- The Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.
- Religious freedom and for all persecuted for their belief in God.
- Prisoners, the sick, poor, hungry, lonely, homeless, unemployed and those with no one to pray for them.
- For the work of the Order of Malta in Bethlehem in this time of strife and war.
- The union of all Christians.
- The health, protection and guidance of all priests and bishops including Pope Francis.
- For vocations to all branches of the Franciscan family.

Secretary’s Notes

The first thing that made me pause when putting together this edition of The Call was realizing that I should remove Pat

Riggles, OFS from the professions list for this month since she is now a member of Tau Fraternity in Herndon. Pat, you will always have a home with us in St. Thomas More Fraternity. Thank you for your quiet witness and service in with us and thank you for your witness in seeking a fraternity to belong to when you needed to move out of the area. (Pat, you will still get *The Call*. Please keep in touch.)

Bonaventure's description of this mysterious event.

Page 4 has a new devotion, circa 2010, the Franciscan Family Chaplet. A short chaplet to pray for vocations to all branches of our order.

Page 5 has Fr. Jerome's reflection for this month in which he addresses the good of labor.

Peace and Good,
Randy

This month is the 800th anniversary of St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. Page 8 has St.

Franciscan Family Chaplet

<https://franciscanchaplet.wordpress.com/>

By Nicholas H. Kovacs, OFS

Beginning:

Make the sign of the cross and recite "The Apostle's Creed".
Then recite the "Hail Mary" 3 times.

First Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the First Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Second Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Second Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Third Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Third Order, both Regular and Secular, increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Conclusion:

End by reciting 1 time: "*We adore You, O Lord Jesus Christ, because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*"
Say the "Glory Be" 3 times for the intentions of the Pope and his continued holiness.
Make the sign of the cross.

Note: This chaplet can be said as a Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis on October 4.

Nihil Obstat: Dr. Sandra Magie, Ph.D., S.T.D, Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: + Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, August 19, 2011

Labor

When I was a child, September was still the start of school, directly after Labor Day. When school districts started to move the start of the school year earlier, some protested because high school students had summer jobs and families had vacations—during which, it was expected, some of the students could still be working at resorts. Originally, the teens would have been working on farms. Still, they should labor.

After I finished school, I heard more and more frequently about schools that required some kind of public service; this was already required in my high school for those who would join the National Honor Society. No surprise that Catholic schools would require some practice of the Gospel that would help someone, but the move increased across the public realm as well.

St. Francis saw the value of work. As Scripture says, “He who will not work, should not eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) Even when he was too ill to work, Francis still wanted to work, to contribute to the life of the brothers. Monks through history practice “ora et labora,” prayer and work as twin pillars of their lives. There is a value to work.

The Lord God Himself worked for six days to create the universe. And he saw that it was “very good,” in spite of the eventual failings of certain creatures.

There is a value to work.

Recognizing the value of labor is a big part of the reason for the celebration of Labor Day. For some, it is merely a “day off” for vacations and picnics. But the intent is to stir us to recognize those around us who help bring food from the fields to our table or who make sure that we are safe and clean. From Nurses to Sanitation Workers, so many unglamorous jobs we take for granted still compel many to work even on this day of “vacation” from labor.

Perhaps paying attention can inspire gratitude, and gratitude might help us to respect more those people who are so crucial in our society, yet still so invisible.

=====

For your reflection (choose one and share your reflection with another member of your fraternity):

1. St. Paul wrote (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11): In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others.” Think about a time when you realized you were just doing busywork, appearing to be busy. What was going on in your heart? Was there “a disorderliness” about your thoughts?
2. Do you have a spiritual practice to help bring order to your busy-ness, to help yourself work more effectively?
3. St. Paul also cautions us against appearing to be busy by being busy with the affairs of other people. What business of others is distracting for you? How do you resist the temptation to busy yourself with another person’s affairs when they are doing exactly the thing that irritates or distracts you?
4. How do you plan to (or did you) thank someone for their labor this month?

Jerome, ofm
National Spiritual Assistant
OFS Animator, OFM Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe ofs.assistant@friars.us

Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-01-2023.pdf>

September 1

St. Beatrice of Silva, Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Silva

September 2

Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault, Priests and companions, First and Third Orders, Martyrs of Carmes (d. 1792)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/martyrs-de-carmes.html>

September 4

St. Rose of Viterbo, Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-rose-of-viterbo.html>

September 6

Bl. Liberatus of Lauro, Priest, First Order (d. 1260)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-liberatus-of-lauro.html>

September 7

Bl. Gentle of Matelica, Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-gentle-of-matelica.html>

September 8

Bl. John Tomachi and Sons, Third Order Secular, Martyrs (d. September 8, 1628)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-ioannes-tomachi/>

September 9

Bl. Seraphina Sforza, Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-seraphina-sforza.html>

September 10

Bl. Lucy de Freitas, Third Order Secular, martyr (d. 1622)

<https://joyfulspirit139.blogspot.com/2014/11/bl-lucy-de-freitas.html>

September 11

Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona, Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-bonaventure-of-barcelona/>

September 13

First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)

<http://franciscanchapelcentertokyo.org/history-of-franciscan-friars-in-japan/>

September 17

Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

<https://catholicism.org/the-stigmata-of-saint-francis-of-assisi-1224.html>

St. Zygmunt Szczesny Felinski, OFS, Archbishop of Warsaw and Founder, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary (Nov. 1, 1822-Sept. 17, 1895)

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20020818_felinski_en.html

September 18

St. Joseph of Cupertino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual
(June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-joseph-of-cupertino.html>

September 20

St. Francis Mary of Camposso, Friar, OFM, Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/francis-mary-of-camporosso.html>

September 21

Bl. Elizabeth Amodei, Third Order Secular, (1475-February 4, 1498)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-elizabeth-amodei.html>

September 22

St. Ignatius of Santhia, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2002/documents/ns_lit_doc_20020519_ignazio_en.html

September 23

Finding the Body of St. Clare

<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/library/gallery/incorrupt/incorrupt.htm#-Clare>

St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin

(May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)

<http://padrepiodevotions.org/a-short-biography/>

September 24

St. Pacificus of Severino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-pacific.html>

September 26

St. Elzéar of Sabran (1285-September 27, 1323)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elzear_of_Sabran

Husband and Wife,
Secular Franciscans

Bl. Delphina of Glandèves (1284-November 1358)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphine_of_Glandeves

Bl. Aurelio of Vinalesa and Companions, Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)

<https://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/03/blessed-aurelio-of-vinalesa-presbyter.html>

Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone, Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-lucy-of-caltagirone.html>

September 28

Bl. Bernadine of Feltre, Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernardin-of-feltre.html>

St. John of Dukla, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Conventual (1414-1484)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Dukla

September 29

Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel

<http://catholicstraightanswers.com/who-is-st-michael-the-archangel/>

September 30

Bl. Charles of Blois, Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-charles-of-blois.html>

October 1

Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena, Priest, Third Order Regular (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-nicholas-of-forca.html>

October 3

Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

October 4

Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/solemnity-of-saint-francis.html>

October 5

Bl. Felicia Meda, Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-felicia-meda.html>

October 6

St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Third Order Secular (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
<https://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2018/06/st-mary-frances-of-five-wounds-of-jesus.html>

October 10

St. Daniel and Companions, Angelo, Domnus, Hugolinus, Leo, Nicholas, and Samuel
Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs of Morocco (d. October 10, 1227)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-daniel-and-companions.html>

Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska, Founder, Third Order Regular May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Truszkowska

THE SACRED STIGMATA

*Chapter 13 of the Major Lend by
St. Bonaventure, OFM*

It was a custom for the angelic man Francis
never to rest from the good,
rather, like the heavenly spirits on *Jacob's ladder*,
he either *ascended* into God
or *descended* to his neighbor.
For he had so prudently learned
to divide the time given to him for merit,
that he spent some of it working for his neighbor's benefit
and dedicated the rest
to the tranquil excesses of contemplation.

Therefore,
when he emptied himself
according to the demand of times and places
to gain the salvation of another,
leaving the restlessness of the crowds,
he would seek the secrets of solitude and a place of quiet,
where freeing himself more freely for the Lord,
he would shake off the dust that might have clung to him
from the time spent with the crowds.

Therefore,
two years before he returned his spirit to heaven,
after a variety of many labors,
he was led by divine providence
to a high place apart called Mount La Verna.
When according to his usual custom
he had begun to fast there forty days
in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel,
he experienced more abundantly than usual
an overflow of the sweetness of heavenly contemplation,

was on fire with an ever intense flame of heavenly desires,
and began to be aware more fully of the gifts of heavenly entities.

He was carried into the heights.
not as a curious *searcher of the supreme majesty*
crushed by its glory,
but as a *faithful and prudent servant*,
exploring God's good pleasure,
to which, with the greatest ardor he desires
to conform himself in every way.

Through a divine sign from heaven he had learned
that in opening the book of the Gospel, Christ would
reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in
him and from him. After completing his prayer with
much devotion, he took the book of the sacred
Gospels from the altar and had his companion, a holy
man dedicated to God, open it three times in the name

of the Holy Trinity. All three times, when the book
was opened, the Lord's passion always met his eyes.
The man filled with God understood that, just as he
had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he
should be conformed to him in the affliction and
sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out of this
world.

And although his body was already weakened
by the great austerity of his past life
and his continual carrying of the Lord's cross, . . .
he was in no way terrified,
but was inspired even more vigorously
to endure martyrdom.
The unconquerable enkindling of love in him
for the good Jesus
had grown into *lamps and flames of fire*,
that *many waters could not quench so powerful a love*.

With the seraphic ardor of desires
therefore,
he was being borne aloft into God;
and by compassionate sweetness
he was being transformed into Him
Who chose to be crucified out of
the excess of His love.

On a certain morning about the feast of the Exaltation
of the Cross, while Francis was praying on the
mountain side, he saw a Seraph having six wings,
fiery as well as brilliant, descend from the grandeur of
heaven. And when in swift flight, it had arrived at a
spot in the air near the man of God, there appeared
between the wings the likeness of a man crucified,
with his hands and feet extended the form of a cross
and fastened to a cross. Two of the wings were raised

above his head, two were extended for flight, and two
covered his whole body. Seeing this, he was
overwhelmed and his heart was flooded with a
mixture of joy and sorrow. He rejoiced at
the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the
appearance of the Seraph, but the fact that He was
fastened to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of
compassionate sorrow.

He marveled exceedingly
at the sight of so unfathomable a vision,
knowing that the weakness of Christ's passion
was in no way compatible
with the immortality of the seraphic spirit.
Eventually he understood from this,
through the Lord revealing it,
that Divine Providence had shown him a vision of this sort so that
the friend of Christ might learn in advance
that he was to be totally transformed
into the likeness of Christ crucified,
not by the martyrdom of his flesh,
but by the enkindling of his soul.
As the vision was disappearing,
it left in his heart a marvelous fire
and imprinted in his flesh a likeness of signs
no less marvelous.

For immediately the marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet as he had seen a little before in the figure of the man crucified. His hands and his feet seemed to be pierced through the center by nails, with the heads of the nails appearing on inner side of the hands and the upper side of the feet and their points on the opposite sides. The heads of the nails in his hands and his feet were round and black; their points were oblong and bent as if driven back with a hammer, and they emerged from the flesh and stuck out beyond it. Also his right side as if pierced with a lance, was marked with a red wound from which his sacred blood often flowed, moistening his tunic and underwear.

As Christ's servant realized that he could not conceal from his intimate companions the stigmata that had been so visibly imprinted on his flesh, he feared to make public the Lord's sacrament and was thrown into an agony of doubt whether to tell what he had seen or to be silent about it. He called some of the brothers and speaking in general terms, presented his doubt to them and sought their advice. One of the brothers,

Illuminato, by name and by grace, understanding that Francis had seen something marvelous that made him seem completely dazed, said to the holy man: "Brother, you should realize that at times divine sacraments are revealed to you not for yourself alone but also for others. You have every reason to fear that if you hide what you have received for the profit of many, you will be blamed for burying that talent." Although the holy man used to say on other occasions: "My secret is or myself," he was moved by Illuminato's words. Then, with much fear, he recounted the vision in detail, adding that the one who had appeared to him had told him some things which he would never disclose to any person as long as he lived. We should believe, then, that those utterances of that sacred Seraph marvelously appearing to him on the cross were so secret that people are not permitted to speak of them.

Regis J Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., William J. Short, O.F.M., editors, *The Founder: Volume II of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, New York: New City Press, 2000, pp.630-3.



September 2024

THE CALL

St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order

From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

Minister: Andrea Bender, OFS; Vice Minister: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS; Secretary: Thomas Bender, OFS; Treasurer: Ann Wester, OFS; Formation Director: Janette Martin, OFS; Councilors-at-Large: Ann Corro, OFS, Michael Landrigan, OFS

No Meeting this Month!

Most of us will be at the Chapter of Mats

Minister's Notes

Earlier this summer, while praying the rosary, I realized the first mystery is a private moment. There is no crowd. So it has been with my faith journey, and maybe yours. It starts privately, intimately, you and God. It grows from there. You can't share what you don't have. We can love because we have first been loved by God. We start by receiving from God. The movement of the mysteries flows from a private moment to one in which the faith or the flame of faith is shared with bystanders.

My favorite set of mysteries are the Joyous Mysteries. We start with a conversation between Mary and Gabriel. As far as we know, no one else is there. After ten Hail Mary's, when we repeat Gabriel's greeting, we move to Mary and Elizabeth, with John and Jesus playing supporting roles in utero. Again, we repeat part of the conversation ten times. By the time we reach the Nativity, Jesus is a major player, the major player. The focus at any birth is on the baby. The crowd has grown. At a minimum, we have Mary, Joseph, and a bunch of animals. We probably have a passerby and definitely visiting shepherds. Jesus was a Jew from a Jewish family. The next two

mysteries move to the Temple, to the presence of God for the Jews of the time. Mary and Joseph follow the Law and present the newborn male child at the temple. Imagine the conflicting emotions of presenting Jesus, whom they know is God, at the temple, the presence of God at the temple. Again, the group grows, not only is the Holy Family in a crowd of people, but Simeon and Anna both recognize someone beyond human experience. After all, presenting a baby at the temple was probably a daily occurrence. But not this baby. We are back in the temple twelve years later when Jesus is found by his parents in conversation with the priests. Once again, we have a crowd. Once again, we have many not recognizing what they see.

This pattern holds for the Sorrowful Mysteries. The Agony in the Garden is a private moment. Human eyes can only see Jesus, though he is in conversation with His Father, if this cup can pass... This private moment grows to a crucifixion at a public crossroads. Again, most do not recognize what they have the privilege to be witness to.

The Glorious Mysteries start privately, no witnesses to

the resurrection, just to its effects. The Fifth Mystery takes place in heaven, amid great rejoicing.

The Luminous Mysteries are a little harder to buttonhole. I think partially because I did not grow up with them (can't quite call them new-but that is what I mean). That said, the Luminous Mysteries still follow the pattern of starting small. Yes, there were crowds around John at the Lord's baptism. The people clued in to something extraordinary going on were few and far between. If more people had been aware – Jesus' trip into the desert would not have been possible.

Where are you in your faith journey? Are you at a private moment or are you experimenting with going out – including more people? To cycle back to a private moment – to be fed again – is to be expected. Some call it going on retreat. We are called both by our baptism and our profession to go beyond.

This weekend we will not have a fraternity meeting because many in the fraternity are going into a crowd at the Chapter of Mats to recharge and explore where we are headed as an order (other than old age, decline, and death). If I don't see you there, I will see you in October. Please pray for us.

A piece of sad news. Ann and Bill Wester are leaving town. They will be moving to relocate close to their children/grandchildren in the very near future. Since they are seriously downsizing material gifts are probably not welcome. As always, the best thing you can offer is prayers. Ann plans to be at the October fraternity meeting. Let us greet her in October with a spiritual bouquet-a Mass card, a note promising a rosary or two, whatever you are moved to as you think about the gifts she has given the fraternity. I also plan to let fellowship run longer in October. Please share food then.

He must increase. I must decrease. This week we celebrated the Passion of John the Baptist. This saying resonated in my prayer life. Two points:

1. It is sure hard to decrease while your husband is on various committees planning for Chapter of Mats and

you are being sucked in while supporting him. I am happy to be supporting him and awfully glad I am not on a Mats committee. I am very glad my early requests to help were ignored or overlooked.

2. I am well into my 6th year as minister. I should be preparing the Fraternity for a new minister-I should be decreasing. Have you decided what role the Holy Spirit is calling you toward for the Fraternity? I would like to hear from you. Last month's appeal had no results. When you get the Call electronically, you can reply to that email-no need to look up an email address. I guess we all need to trust the Holy Spirit more-you need to trust the Holy Spirit will provide you with the skills and/or support (a.k.a. graces) to be a fraternity officer. I need to trust the Holy Spirit has this under control. It would help my trust if some people at least let me know they are thinking about it.

Pax et Bonum,

Andrea

Professions

9/11/2016

Andrea Bender	Irenaeus
Thomas Bender	Thomas More
Sita Chakrawarti	Clare

Birthdays of the Month

September - None

October

Ralph Palasek (6th)
Bernadette Lozano (23rd)

Necrology

James R Dimond (Min.) – September 23, 2015
Rev. Cornelius O'Brien – September 7, 2019

**PRAYER FOR THE ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA
REGIONAL CHAPTER OF MATS**

September 6-8, 2024

Most high and glorious God,
we ask for your blessing
upon our upcoming Chapter of Mats.

We thank you for our call to live the Gospel
following the example of our Seraphic Father Francis.

We thank you for those who have gone before us,
who preserved our charism throughout the centuries.

We thank you for our current leaders,
who serve us and help us to grow in our understanding
of our vocation.

And we thank you for future leaders,
the shepherds that are to come.

We ask you to send down your Holy Spirit upon us as
we journey toward our 2024 Chapter of Mats.

Prepare all of us, Lord, as we ask
for fraternal Love to love as you love;
Humility to listen to one another;
Wisdom to see the future you would have us build;
Courage to follow your direction; and
Grace to spread seeds of goodness and joy throughout
our time at Chapter and beyond.

Lord, as we anticipate coming together to celebrate
Where we were, where we are, and where we are called
to be as Secular Franciscans,
let us remember to see and treat all
“...as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.”¹

And so we pray,
Holy God, draw us together as a community,
take charge of our Chapter of Mats,
and lead us into the future.

Father, we adore you and give you all
praise, honor, and glory,
Through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
In union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer Intentions

For...

- Peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East and the victims of the violence.
- Peace in Ukraine and protection for her Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics.
- For blessing from Pope Francis’ trip to Asia.
- Ann and Bill Wester as they prepare to move.
- Grace Coipuram, OFS
- Patricia Kennedy, mother of Joseph Kennedy, OFS who is recovering from congestive heart failure.
- Virginia Roccapriore, widow of Joseph Roccapriore, OFS.
- Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, for depression.
- For friends of Liz, Mark who is undergoing chemo for stage 4 melanoma and Dan who has Parkinson’s Disease.
- For April’s friend whose father suddenly died.
- The sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her.
- April’s friend, whose husband avoids Church, and his ex-wife who never went to Church.
- The Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.
- Religious freedom and for all persecuted for their belief in God.
- Prisoners, the sick, poor, hungry, lonely, homeless, unemployed and those with no one to pray for them.
- For the work of the Order of Malta in Bethlehem in this time of strife and war.
- The union of all Christians.
- The health, protection and guidance of all priests and bishops including Pope Francis.
- For vocations to all branches of the Franciscan family.

Secretary’s Notes

The first thing that made me pause when putting together this edition of The Call was realizing that I should remove Pat

Riggles, OFS from the professions list for this month since she is now a member of Tau Fraternity in Herndon. Pat, you will always have a home with us in St. Thomas More Fraternity. Thank you for your quiet witness and service in with us and thank you for your witness in seeking a fraternity to belong to when you needed to move out of the area. (Pat, you will still get *The Call*. Please keep in touch.)

This month is the 800th anniversary of St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. Page 8 has St.

Bonaventure's description of this mysterious event.

Page 4 has a new devotion, circa 2010, the Franciscan Family Chaplet. A short chaplet to pray for vocations to all branches of our order.

Page 5 has Fr. Jerome's reflection for this month in which he addresses the good of labor.

Peace and Good,
Randy

Franciscan Family Chaplet

<https://franciscanchaplet.wordpress.com/>

By Nicholas H. Kovacs, OFS

Beginning:

Make the sign of the cross and recite "The Apostle's Creed".
Then recite the "Hail Mary" 3 times.

First Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the First Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Second Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Second Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Third Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Third Order, both Regular and Secular, increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Conclusion:

End by reciting 1 time: "*We adore You, O Lord Jesus Christ, because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*"
Say the "Glory Be" 3 times for the intentions of the Pope and his continued holiness.
Make the sign of the cross.

Note: This chaplet can be said as a Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis on October 4.

Nihil Obstat: Dr. Sandra Magie, Ph.D., S.T.D, Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: + Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, August 19, 2011

Labor

When I was a child, September was still the start of school, directly after Labor Day. When school districts started to move the start of the school year earlier, some protested because high school students had summer jobs and families had vacations—during which, it was expected, some of the students could still be working at resorts. Originally, the teens would have been working on farms. Still, they should labor.

After I finished school, I heard more and more frequently about schools that required some kind of public service; this was already required in my high school for those who would join the National Honor Society. No surprise that Catholic schools would require some practice of the Gospel that would help someone, but the move increased across the public realm as well.

St. Francis saw the value of work. As Scripture says, “He who will not work, should not eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) Even when he was too ill to work, Francis still wanted to work, to contribute to the life of the brothers. Monks through history practice “ora et labora,” prayer and work as twin pillars of their lives. There is a value to work.

The Lord God Himself worked for six days to create the universe. And he saw that it was “very good,” in spite of the eventual failings of certain creatures.

There is a value to work.

Recognizing the value of labor is a big part of the reason for the celebration of Labor Day. For some, it is merely a “day off” for vacations and picnics. But the intent is to stir us to recognize those around us who help bring food from the fields to our table or who make sure that we are safe and clean. From Nurses to Sanitation Workers, so many unglamorous jobs we take for granted still compel many to work even on this day of “vacation” from labor.

Perhaps paying attention can inspire gratitude, and gratitude might help us to respect more those people who are so crucial in our society, yet still so invisible.

=====

For your reflection (choose one and share your reflection with another member of your fraternity):

1. St. Paul wrote (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11): In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others.” Think about a time when you realized you were just doing busywork, appearing to be busy. What was going on in your heart? Was there “a disorderliness” about your thoughts?
2. Do you have a spiritual practice to help bring order to your busy-ness, to help yourself work more effectively?
3. St. Paul also cautions us against appearing to be busy by being busy with the affairs of other people. What business of others is distracting for you? How do you resist the temptation to busy yourself with another person’s affairs when they are doing exactly the thing that irritates or distracts you?
4. How do you plan to (or did you) thank someone for their labor this month?

Jerome, ofm
National Spiritual Assistant
OFS Animator, OFM Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe ofs.assistant@friars.us

Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-01-2023.pdf>

September 1

St. Beatrice of Silva, Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Silva

September 2

Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault, Priests and companions, First and Third Orders, Martyrs of Carmes (d. 1792)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/martyrs-de-carmes.html>

September 4

St. Rose of Viterbo, Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-rose-of-viterbo.html>

September 6

Bl. Liberatus of Lauro, Priest, First Order (d. 1260)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-liberatus-of-lauro.html>

September 7

Bl. Gentle of Matelica, Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-gentle-of-matelica.html>

September 8

Bl. John Tomachi and Sons, Third Order Secular, Martyrs (d. September 8, 1628)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-ioannes-tomachi/>

September 9

Bl. Seraphina Sforza, Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-seraphina-sforza.html>

September 10

Bl. Lucy de Freitas, Third Order Secular, martyr (d. 1622)

<https://joyfulspirit139.blogspot.com/2014/11/bl-lucy-de-freitas.html>

September 11

Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona, Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-bonaventure-of-barcelona/>

September 13

First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)

<http://franciscanchapelcentertokyo.org/history-of-franciscan-friars-in-japan/>

September 17

Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

<https://catholicism.org/the-stigmata-of-saint-francis-of-assisi-1224.html>

St. Zygmunt Szczesny Felinski, OFS, Archbishop of Warsaw and Founder, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary (Nov. 1, 1822-Sept. 17, 1895)

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20020818_felinski_en.html

September 18

St. Joseph of Cupertino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual
(June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-joseph-of-cupertino.html>

September 20

St. Francis Mary of Camposso, Friar, OFM, Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/francis-mary-of-camporosso.html>

September 21

Bl. Elizabeth Amodei, Third Order Secular, (1475-February 4, 1498)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-elizabeth-amodei.html>

September 22

St. Ignatius of Santhia, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2002/documents/ns_lit_doc_20020519_ignazio_en.html

September 23

Finding the Body of St. Clare

<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/library/gallery/incorrupt/incorrupt.htm#-Clare>

St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin

(May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)

<http://padrepiodevotions.org/a-short-biography/>

September 24

St. Pacificus of Severino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-pacific.html>

September 26

St. Elzéar of Sabran (1285-September 27, 1323)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elzear_of_Sabran

Husband and Wife,
Secular Franciscans

Bl. Delphina of Glandèves (1284-November 1358)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphine_of_Glandeves

Bl. Aurelio of Vinalesa and Companions, Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)

<https://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/03/blessed-aurelio-of-vinalesa-presbyter.html>

Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone, Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-lucy-of-caltagirone.html>

September 28

Bl. Bernadine of Feltre, Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernardin-of-feltre.html>

St. John of Dukla, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Conventual (1414-1484)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Dukla

September 29

Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel

<http://catholicstraightanswers.com/who-is-st-michael-the-archangel/>

September 30

Bl. Charles of Blois, Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-charles-of-blois.html>

October 1

Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena, Priest, Third Order Regular (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-nicholas-of-forca.html>

October 3

Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

October 4

Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/solemnity-of-saint-francis.html>

October 5

Bl. Felicia Meda, Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-felicia-meda.html>

October 6

St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Third Order Secular (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
<https://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2018/06/st-mary-frances-of-five-wounds-of-jesus.html>

October 10

St. Daniel and Companions, Angelo, Domnus, Hugolinus, Leo, Nicholas, and Samuel
Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs of Morocco (d. October 10, 1227)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-daniel-and-companions.html>

Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska, Founder, Third Order Regular May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Truszkowska

THE SACRED STIGMATA

*Chapter 13 of the Major Lend by
St. Bonaventure, OFM*

It was a custom for the angelic man Francis
never to rest from the good,
rather, like the heavenly spirits on *Jacob's ladder*,
he either *ascended* into God
or *descended* to his neighbor.
For he had so prudently learned
to divide the time given to him for merit,
that he spent some of it working for his neighbor's benefit
and dedicated the rest
to the tranquil excesses of contemplation.

Therefore,
when he emptied himself
according to the demand of times and places
to gain the salvation of another,
leaving the restlessness of the crowds,
he would seek the secrets of solitude and a place of quiet,
where freeing himself more freely for the Lord,
he would shake off the dust that might have clung to him
from the time spent with the crowds.

Therefore,
two years before he returned his spirit to heaven,
after a variety of many labors,
he was led by divine providence
to a high place apart called Mount La Verna.
When according to his usual custom
he had begun to fast there forty days
in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel,
he experienced more abundantly than usual
an overflow of the sweetness of heavenly contemplation,

was on fire with an ever intense flame of heavenly desires,
and began to be aware more fully of the gifts of heavenly entities.

He was carried into the heights.
not as a curious *searcher of the supreme majesty*
crushed by its glory,
but as a *faithful and prudent servant*,
exploring God's good pleasure,
to which, with the greatest ardor he desires
to conform himself in every way.

Through a divine sign from heaven he had learned
that in opening the book of the Gospel, Christ would
reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in
him and from him. After completing his prayer with
much devotion, he took the book of the sacred
Gospels from the altar and had his companion, a holy
man dedicated to God, open it three times in the name

of the Holy Trinity. All three times, when the book
was opened, the Lord's passion always met his eyes.
The man filled with God understood that, just as he
had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he
should be conformed to him in the affliction and
sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out of this
world.

And although his body was already weakened
by the great austerity of his past life
and his continual carrying of the Lord's cross, . . .
he was in no way terrified,
but was inspired even more vigorously
to endure martyrdom.
The unconquerable enkindling of love in him
for the good Jesus
had grown into *lamps and flames of fire*,
that *many waters could not quench so powerful a love*.

With the seraphic ardor of desires
therefore,
he was being borne aloft into God;
and by compassionate sweetness
he was being transformed into Him
Who chose to be crucified out of
the excess of His love.

On a certain morning about the feast of the Exaltation
of the Cross, while Francis was praying on the
mountain side, he saw a Seraph having six wings,
fiery as well as brilliant, descend from the grandeur of
heaven. And when in swift flight, it had arrived at a
spot in the air near the man of God, there appeared
between the wings the likeness of a man crucified,
with his hands and feet extended the form of a cross
and fastened to a cross. Two of the wings were raised

above his head, two were extended for flight, and two
covered his whole body. Seeing this, he was
overwhelmed and his heart was flooded with a
mixture of joy and sorrow. He rejoiced at
the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the
appearance of the Seraph, but the fact that He was
fastened to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of
compassionate sorrow.

He marveled exceedingly
at the sight of so unfathomable a vision,
knowing that the weakness of Christ's passion
was in no way compatible
with the immortality of the seraphic spirit.
Eventually he understood from this,
through the Lord revealing it,
that Divine Providence had shown him a vision of this sort so that
the friend of Christ might learn in advance
that he was to be totally transformed
into the likeness of Christ crucified,
not by the martyrdom of his flesh,
but by the enkindling of his soul.
As the vision was disappearing,
it left in his heart a marvelous fire
and imprinted in his flesh a likeness of signs
no less marvelous.

For immediately the marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet as he had seen a little before in the figure of the man crucified. His hands and his feet seemed to be pierced through the center by nails, with the heads of the nails appearing on inner side of the hands and the upper side of the feet and their points on the opposite sides. The heads of the nails in his hands and his feet were round and black; their points were oblong and bent as if driven back with a hammer, and they emerged from the flesh and stuck out beyond it. Also his right side as if pierced with a lance, was marked with a red wound from which his sacred blood often flowed, moistening his tunic and underwear.

As Christ's servant realized that he could not conceal from his intimate companions the stigmata that had been so visibly imprinted on his flesh, he feared to make public the Lord's sacrament and was thrown into an agony of doubt whether to tell what he had seen or to be silent about it. He called some of the brothers and speaking in general terms, presented his doubt to them and sought their advice. One of the brothers,

Illuminato, by name and by grace, understanding that Francis had seen something marvelous that made him seem completely dazed, said to the holy man: "Brother, you should realize that at times divine sacraments are revealed to you not for yourself alone but also for others. You have every reason to fear that if you hide what you have received for the profit of many, you will be blamed for burying that talent." Although the holy man used to say on other occasions: "My secret is or myself," he was moved by Illuminato's words. Then, with much fear, he recounted the vision in detail, adding that the one who had appeared to him had told him some things which he would never disclose to any person as long as he lived. We should believe, then, that those utterances of that sacred Seraph marvelously appearing to him on the cross were so secret that people are not permitted to speak of them.

Regis J Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., William J. Short, O.F.M., editors, *The Founder: Volume II of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, New York: New City Press, 2000, pp.630-3.



September 2024

THE CALL

St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order

From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

Minister: Andrea Bender, OFS; Vice Minister: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS; Secretary: Thomas Bender, OFS; Treasurer: Ann Wester, OFS; Formation Director: Janette Martin, OFS; Councilors-at-Large: Ann Corro, OFS, Michael Landrigan, OFS

No Meeting this Month!

Most of us will be at the Chapter of Mats

Minister's Notes

Earlier this summer, while praying the rosary, I realized the first mystery is a private moment. There is no crowd. So it has been with my faith journey, and maybe yours. It starts privately, intimately, you and God. It grows from there. You can't share what you don't have. We can love because we have first been loved by God. We start by receiving from God. The movement of the mysteries flows from a private moment to one in which the faith or the flame of faith is shared with bystanders.

My favorite set of mysteries are the Joyous Mysteries. We start with a conversation between Mary and Gabriel. As far as we know, no one else is there. After ten Hail Mary's, when we repeat Gabriel's greeting, we move to Mary and Elizabeth, with John and Jesus playing supporting roles in utero. Again, we repeat part of the conversation ten times. By the time we reach the Nativity, Jesus is a major player, the major player. The focus at any birth is on the baby. The crowd has grown. At a minimum, we have Mary, Joseph, and a bunch of animals. We probably have a passerby and definitely visiting shepherds. Jesus was a Jew from a Jewish family. The next two

mysteries move to the Temple, to the presence of God for the Jews of the time. Mary and Joseph follow the Law and present the newborn male child at the temple. Imagine the conflicting emotions of presenting Jesus, whom they know is God, at the temple, the presence of God at the temple. Again, the group grows, not only is the Holy Family in a crowd of people, but Simeon and Anna both recognize someone beyond human experience. After all, presenting a baby at the temple was probably a daily occurrence. But not this baby. We are back in the temple twelve years later when Jesus is found by his parents in conversation with the priests. Once again, we have a crowd. Once again, we have many not recognizing what they see.

This pattern holds for the Sorrowful Mysteries. The Agony in the Garden is a private moment. Human eyes can only see Jesus, though he is in conversation with His Father, if this cup can pass... This private moment grows to a crucifixion at a public crossroads. Again, most do not recognize what they have the privilege to be witness to.

The Glorious Mysteries start privately, no witnesses to

the resurrection, just to its effects. The Fifth Mystery takes place in heaven, amid great rejoicing.

The Luminous Mysteries are a little harder to buttonhole. I think partially because I did not grow up with them (can't quite call them new-but that is what I mean). That said, the Luminous Mysteries still follow the pattern of starting small. Yes, there were crowds around John at the Lord's baptism. The people clued in to something extraordinary going on were few and far between. If more people had been aware – Jesus' trip into the desert would not have been possible.

Where are you in your faith journey? Are you at a private moment or are you experimenting with going out – including more people? To cycle back to a private moment – to be fed again – is to be expected. Some call it going on retreat. We are called both by our baptism and our profession to go beyond.

This weekend we will not have a fraternity meeting because many in the fraternity are going into a crowd at the Chapter of Mats to recharge and explore where we are headed as an order (other than old age, decline, and death). If I don't see you there, I will see you in October. Please pray for us.

A piece of sad news. Ann and Bill Wester are leaving town. They will be moving to relocate close to their children/grandchildren in the very near future. Since they are seriously downsizing material gifts are probably not welcome. As always, the best thing you can offer is prayers. Ann plans to be at the October fraternity meeting. Let us greet her in October with a spiritual bouquet-a Mass card, a note promising a rosary or two, whatever you are moved to as you think about the gifts she has given the fraternity. I also plan to let fellowship run longer in October. Please share food then.

He must increase. I must decrease. This week we celebrated the Passion of John the Baptist. This saying resonated in my prayer life. Two points:

1. It is sure hard to decrease while your husband is on various committees planning for Chapter of Mats and

you are being sucked in while supporting him. I am happy to be supporting him and awfully glad I am not on a Mats committee. I am very glad my early requests to help were ignored or overlooked.

2. I am well into my 6th year as minister. I should be preparing the Fraternity for a new minister-I should be decreasing. Have you decided what role the Holy Spirit is calling you toward for the Fraternity? I would like to hear from you. Last month's appeal had no results. When you get the Call electronically, you can reply to that email-no need to look up an email address. I guess we all need to trust the Holy Spirit more-you need to trust the Holy Spirit will provide you with the skills and/or support (a.k.a. graces) to be a fraternity officer. I need to trust the Holy Spirit has this under control. It would help my trust if some people at least let me know they are thinking about it.

Pax et Bonum,

Andrea

Professions

9/11/2016

Andrea Bender	Irenaeus
Thomas Bender	Thomas More
Sita Chakrawarti	Clare

Birthdays of the Month

September - None

October

Ralph Palasek (6th)
Bernadette Lozano (23rd)

Necrology

James R Dimond (Min.) – September 23, 2015
Rev. Cornelius O'Brien – September 7, 2019

**PRAYER FOR THE ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA
REGIONAL CHAPTER OF MATS**

September 6-8, 2024

Most high and glorious God,
we ask for your blessing
upon our upcoming Chapter of Mats.

We thank you for our call to live the Gospel
following the example of our Seraphic Father Francis.

We thank you for those who have gone before us,
who preserved our charism throughout the centuries.

We thank you for our current leaders,
who serve us and help us to grow in our understanding
of our vocation.

And we thank you for future leaders,
the shepherds that are to come.

We ask you to send down your Holy Spirit upon us as
we journey toward our 2024 Chapter of Mats.

Prepare all of us, Lord, as we ask
for fraternal Love to love as you love;
Humility to listen to one another;
Wisdom to see the future you would have us build;
Courage to follow your direction; and
Grace to spread seeds of goodness and joy throughout
our time at Chapter and beyond.

Lord, as we anticipate coming together to celebrate
Where we were, where we are, and where we are called
to be as Secular Franciscans,
let us remember to see and treat all
“...as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.”¹

And so we pray,
Holy God, draw us together as a community,
take charge of our Chapter of Mats,
and lead us into the future.

Father, we adore you and give you all
praise, honor, and glory,
Through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
In union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer Intentions

For...

- Peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East and the victims of the violence.
- Peace in Ukraine and protection for her Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics.
- For blessing for Pope Francis’ trip to Asia.
- Ann and Bill Wester as they prepare to move.
- Grace Coipuram, OFS
- Patricia Kennedy, mother of Joseph Kennedy, OFS who is recovering from congestive heart failure.
- Virginia Roccapiore, widow of Joseph Roccapiore, OFS.
- Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, for depression.
- For friends of Liz, Mark who is undergoing chemo for stage 4 melanoma and Dan who has Parkinson’s Disease.
- For April’s friend whose father suddenly died.
- The sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her.
- April’s friend, whose husband avoids Church, and his ex-wife who never went to Church.
- The Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.
- Religious freedom and for all persecuted for their belief in God.
- Prisoners, the sick, poor, hungry, lonely, homeless, unemployed and those with no one to pray for them.
- For the work of the Order of Malta in Bethlehem in this time of strife and war.
- The union of all Christians.
- The health, protection and guidance of all priests and bishops including Pope Francis.
- For vocations to all branches of the Franciscan family.

Secretary’s Notes

The first thing that made me pause when putting together this edition of The Call was realizing that I should remove Pat

Riggles, OFS from the professions list for this month since she is now a member of Tau Fraternity in Herndon. Pat, you will always have a home with us in St. Thomas More Fraternity. Thank you for your quiet witness and service in with us and thank you for your witness in seeking a fraternity to belong to when you needed to move out of the area. (Pat, you will still get *The Call*. Please keep in touch.)

This month is the 800th anniversary of St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. Page 8 has St.

Bonaventure's description of this mysterious event.

Page 4 has a new devotion, circa 2010, the Franciscan Family Chaplet. A short chaplet to pray for vocations to all branches of our order.

Page 5 has Fr. Jerome's reflection for this month in which he addresses the good of labor.

Peace and Good,
Randy

Franciscan Family Chaplet

<https://franciscanchaplet.wordpress.com/>

By Nicholas H. Kovacs, OFS

Beginning:

Make the sign of the cross and recite "The Apostle's Creed".
Then recite the "Hail Mary" 3 times.

First Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the First Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Second Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Second Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Third Decade:

Begin by saying: "*St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Third Order, both Regular and Secular, increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness.*"
Then recite the "Our Father" and recite 10 times the following: "*My God and my all!*"

Conclusion:

End by reciting 1 time: "*We adore You, O Lord Jesus Christ, because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.*"
Say the "Glory Be" 3 times for the intentions of the Pope and his continued holiness.
Make the sign of the cross.

Note: This chaplet can be said as a Novena in preparation for the feast of St. Francis on October 4.

Nihil Obstat: Dr. Sandra Magie, Ph.D., S.T.D, Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: + Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, August 19, 2011

Labor

When I was a child, September was still the start of school, directly after Labor Day. When school districts started to move the start of the school year earlier, some protested because high school students had summer jobs and families had vacations—during which, it was expected, some of the students could still be working at resorts. Originally, the teens would have been working on farms. Still, they should labor.

After I finished school, I heard more and more frequently about schools that required some kind of public service; this was already required in my high school for those who would join the National Honor Society. No surprise that Catholic schools would require some practice of the Gospel that would help someone, but the move increased across the public realm as well.

St. Francis saw the value of work. As Scripture says, “He who will not work, should not eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) Even when he was too ill to work, Francis still wanted to work, to contribute to the life of the brothers. Monks through history practice “ora et labora,” prayer and work as twin pillars of their lives. There is a value to work.

The Lord God Himself worked for six days to create the universe. And he saw that it was “very good,” in spite of the eventual failings of certain creatures.

There is a value to work.

Recognizing the value of labor is a big part of the reason for the celebration of Labor Day. For some, it is merely a “day off” for vacations and picnics. But the intent is to stir us to recognize those around us who help bring food from the fields to our table or who make sure that we are safe and clean. From Nurses to Sanitation Workers, so many unglamorous jobs we take for granted still compel many to work even on this day of “vacation” from labor.

Perhaps paying attention can inspire gratitude, and gratitude might help us to respect more those people who are so crucial in our society, yet still so invisible.

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For your reflection (choose one and share your reflection with another member of your fraternity):

1. St. Paul wrote (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11): In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others.” Think about a time when you realized you were just doing busywork, appearing to be busy. What was going on in your heart? Was there “a disorderliness” about your thoughts?
2. Do you have a spiritual practice to help bring order to your busy-ness, to help yourself work more effectively?
3. St. Paul also cautions us against appearing to be busy by being busy with the affairs of other people. What business of others is distracting for you? How do you resist the temptation to busy yourself with another person’s affairs when they are doing exactly the thing that irritates or distracts you?
4. How do you plan to (or did you) thank someone for their labor this month?

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Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-01-2023.pdf>

September 1

St. Beatrice of Silva, Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Silva

September 2

Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault, Priests and companions, First and Third Orders, Martyrs of Carmes (d. 1792)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/martyrs-de-carmes.html>

September 4

St. Rose of Viterbo, Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-rose-of-viterbo.html>

September 6

Bl. Liberatus of Lauro, Priest, First Order (d. 1260)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-liberatus-of-lauro.html>

September 7

Bl. Gentle of Matelica, Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-gentle-of-matelica.html>

September 8

Bl. John Tomachi and Sons, Third Order Secular, Martyrs (d. September 8, 1628)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-ioannes-tomachi/>

September 9

Bl. Seraphina Sforza, Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-seraphina-sforza.html>

September 10

Bl. Lucy de Freitas, Third Order Secular, martyr (d. 1622)

<https://joyfulspirit139.blogspot.com/2014/11/bl-lucy-de-freitas.html>

September 11

Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona, Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)

<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-bonaventure-of-barcelona/>

September 13

First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)

<http://franciscanchapelcentertokyo.org/history-of-franciscan-friars-in-japan/>

September 17

Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

<https://catholicism.org/the-stigmata-of-saint-francis-of-assisi-1224.html>

St. Zygmunt Szczesny Felinski, OFS, Archbishop of Warsaw and Founder, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary (Nov. 1, 1822-Sept. 17, 1895)

https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturg/saints/ns_lit_doc_20020818_felinski_en.html

September 18

St. Joseph of Cupertino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual
(June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-joseph-of-cupertino.html>

September 20

St. Francis Mary of Campososso, Friar, OFM, Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/francis-mary-of-camporosso.html>

September 21

Bl. Elizabeth Amodei, Third Order Secular, (1475-February 4, 1498)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-elizabeth-amodei.html>

September 22

St. Ignatius of Santhia, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2002/documents/ns_lit_doc_20020519_ignazio_en.html

September 23

Finding the Body of St. Clare

<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/library/gallery/incorrupt/incorrupt.htm#-Clare>

St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin

(May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)

<http://padrepiodevotions.org/a-short-biography/>

September 24

St. Pacificus of Severino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-pacific.html>

September 26

St. Elzéar of Sabran (1285-September 27, 1323)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elzear_of_Sabran

Husband and Wife,
Secular Franciscans

Bl. Delphina of Glandèves (1284-November 1358)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphine_of_Glandeves

Bl. Aurelio of Vinalesa and Companions, Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)

<https://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/03/blessed-aurelio-of-vinalesa-presbyter.html>

Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone, Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-lucy-of-caltagirone.html>

September 28

Bl. Bernadine of Feltre, Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernardin-of-feltre.html>

St. John of Dukla, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Conventual (1414-1484)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Dukla

September 29

Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel

<http://catholicstraightanswers.com/who-is-st-michael-the-archangel/>

September 30

Bl. Charles of Blois, Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-charles-of-blois.html>

October 1

Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena, Priest, Third Order Regular (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-nicholas-of-forca.html>

October 3

Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

October 4

Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/solemnity-of-saint-francis.html>

October 5

Bl. Felicia Meda, Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)

<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-felicia-meda.html>

October 6

St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Third Order Secular (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
<https://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2018/06/st-mary-frances-of-five-wounds-of-jesus.html>

October 10

St. Daniel and Companions, Angelo, Domnus, Hugolinus, Leo, Nicholas, and Samuel
Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs of Morocco (d. October 10, 1227)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-daniel-and-companions.html>

Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska, Founder, Third Order Regular May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Truszkowska

THE SACRED STIGMATA

*Chapter 13 of the Major Lend by
St. Bonaventure, OFM*

It was a custom for the angelic man Francis
never to rest from the good,
rather, like the heavenly spirits on *Jacob's ladder*,
he either *ascended* into God
or *descended* to his neighbor.
For he had so prudently learned
to divide the time given to him for merit,
that he spent some of it working for his neighbor's benefit
and dedicated the rest
to the tranquil excesses of contemplation.

Therefore,
when he emptied himself
according to the demand of times and places
to gain the salvation of another,
leaving the restlessness of the crowds,
he would seek the secrets of solitude and a place of quiet,
where freeing himself more freely for the Lord,
he would shake off the dust that might have clung to him
from the time spent with the crowds.

Therefore,
two years before he returned his spirit to heaven,
after a variety of many labors,
he was led by divine providence
to a high place apart called Mount La Verna.
When according to his usual custom
he had begun to fast there forty days
in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel,
he experienced more abundantly than usual
an overflow of the sweetness of heavenly contemplation,

was on fire with an ever intense flame of heavenly desires,
and began to be aware more fully of the gifts of heavenly entities.

He was carried into the heights.
not as a curious *searcher of the supreme majesty*
crushed by its glory,
but as a *faithful and prudent servant*,
exploring God's good pleasure,
to which, with the greatest ardor he desires
to conform himself in every way.

Through a divine sign from heaven he had learned
that in opening the book of the Gospel, Christ would
reveal to him what God considered most acceptable in
him and from him. After completing his prayer with
much devotion, he took the book of the sacred
Gospels from the altar and had his companion, a holy
man dedicated to God, open it three times in the name

of the Holy Trinity. All three times, when the book
was opened, the Lord's passion always met his eyes.
The man filled with God understood that, just as he
had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he
should be conformed to him in the affliction and
sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out of this
world.

And although his body was already weakened
by the great austerity of his past life
and his continual carrying of the Lord's cross, · ·
he was in no way terrified,
but was inspired even more vigorously
to endure martyrdom.
The unconquerable enkindling of love in him
for the good Jesus
had grown into *lamps and flames of fire*,
that *many waters could not quench so powerful a love*.

With the seraphic ardor of desires
therefore,
he was being borne aloft into God;
and by compassionate sweetness
he was being transformed into Him
Who chose to be crucified out of
the excess of His love.

On a certain morning about the feast of the Exaltation
of the Cross, while Francis was praying on the
mountain side, he saw a Seraph having six wings,
fiery as well as brilliant, descend from the grandeur of
heaven. And when in swift flight, it had arrived at a
spot in the air near the man of God, there appeared
between the wings the likeness of a man crucified,
with his hands and feet extended the form of a cross
and fastened to a cross. Two of the wings were raised

above his head, two were extended for flight, and two
covered his whole body. Seeing this, he was
overwhelmed and his heart was flooded with a
mixture of joy and sorrow. He rejoiced at
the gracious way Christ looked upon him under the
appearance of the Seraph, but the fact that He was
fastened to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of
compassionate sorrow.

He marveled exceedingly
at the sight of so unfathomable a vision,
knowing that the weakness of Christ's passion
was in no way compatible
with the immortality of the seraphic spirit.
Eventually he understood from this,
through the Lord revealing it,
that Divine Providence had shown him a vision of this sort so that
the friend of Christ might learn in advance
that he was to be totally transformed
into the likeness of Christ crucified,
not by the martyrdom of his flesh,
but by the enkindling of his soul.
As the vision was disappearing,
it left in his heart a marvelous fire
and imprinted in his flesh a likeness of signs
no less marvelous.

For immediately the marks of nails began to appear in his hands and feet as he had seen a little before in the figure of the man crucified. His hands and his feet seemed to be pierced through the center by nails, with the heads of the nails appearing on inner side of the hands and the upper side of the feet and their points on the opposite sides. The heads of the nails in his hands and his feet were round and black; their points were oblong and bent as if driven back with a hammer, and they emerged from the flesh and stuck out beyond it. Also his right side as if pierced with a lance, was marked with a red wound from which his sacred blood often flowed, moistening his tunic and underwear.

As Christ's servant realized that he could not conceal from his intimate companions the stigmata that had been so visibly imprinted on his flesh, he feared to make public the Lord's sacrament and was thrown into an agony of doubt whether to tell what he had seen or to be silent about it. He called some of the brothers and speaking in general terms, presented his doubt to them and sought their advice. One of the brothers,

Illuminato, by name and by grace, understanding that Francis had seen something marvelous that made him seem completely dazed, said to the holy man: "Brother, you should realize that at times divine sacraments are revealed to you not for yourself alone but also for others. You have every reason to fear that if you hide what you have received for the profit of many, you will be blamed for burying that talent." Although the holy man used to say on other occasions: "My secret is or myself," he was moved by Illuminato's words. Then, with much fear, he recounted the vision in detail, adding that the one who had appeared to him had told him some things which he would never disclose to any person as long as he lived. We should believe, then, that those utterances of that sacred Seraph marvelously appearing to him on the cross were so secret that people are not permitted to speak of them.

Regis J Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. Conv., William J. Short, O.F.M., editors, *The Founder: Volume II of Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, New York: New City Press, 2000, pp.630-3.