



Our Lady of the Rosary
Secular Franciscan Fraternity
Williamsburg, Virginia



www.olrsfo.weebly.com

2024

Message from our Minister...

Brothers and Sisters of Francis and Clare,

This month I would like to share some of what was done at the Chapter of Mats in September. The gathering was held at the Claggett Center in Maryland. It's an Episcopal retreat center and it was a wonderful place to hold the meeting.

Our theme for the weekend:

Secular Franciscans - 800 years.

Where we were – Francis and the Early Penitents

Where we are – Identify strengths and challenges

Looking to the future – Where is the Holy Spirit leading us

We met in a large group to hear presentations on each topic and then broke into small groups for discussion. The small groups consisted of a mix of Franciscans representing

English, Spanish, Korean and deaf fraternities. It was a great perspective of the region as a whole. Each small group had a facilitator who focused the group on the specific questions the region wanted us to answer and everyone had a chance to participate. The scribes wrote down our answers to bring back to the regional team for consolidation and summarization. This definitely was a working retreat, but there was also morning and evening prayer, Mass, and social time. It was an opportunity to meet others from around the region, help gather data for future planning, and forge connections. This Chapter of Mats was for all Secular Franciscan in the region not just members of individual councils. I wish more people from our fraternity were able to go.

For this month and the next two months I will be asking you the questions we were asked. I would like to spend a short time discussing your answers so we can get a better perspective of where Our Lady of the Rosary stands on each of these questions. Please take the time pray over each question and formulate your answer. You might consider taking notes to bring to the next meeting.

What is your favorite story of Francis, Clare, or the early companions and why?

What aspects of our historical charism speak to you now? Can you give a practical example from our history? (See short article on Franciscan charisms below.)

How would you describe Franciscan spirituality to someone who had never heard of St. Francis? Name the top three attributes you consider most important and why.

How does our 21st century situation compare and contrast with St. Francis's 13th century society? Does this affect how we live our Rule of Life (positively or negatively)?

Think about writing a concise statement that you would be able to use if someone asked you about the Secular Franciscans.

Peace and all good! Peg

What is a Charism?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines charisms as “graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church, ordered as they are to building up, to the good of men, and to the needs of the world (Article 799). I think Busted Halo makes it more specific to us as an Order of the Church by saying, a charism can be understood as **“the gifts from God that allow a person or group to live out the Gospel in relation to the world around them”**

Franciscan Charisms common to the entire Franciscan family

Continuing Conversion

Upholding the dignity of the human person

Family – Fraternity – Community – Relationship

Dynamic Orthodoxy (reevaluation orthodoxy in each new age – new rules)

Evangelization

Hospitality

Joy

Particular Charism of the Secular Franciscan order

Because Seculars live in the context of ‘the world’, we enjoy a privileged position to demonstrate that there is no disjunction between life in the world and living the Gospel.

The Secular Franciscan Order is an autonomous, unified branch of the Franciscan family living a specifically secular vocation in fraternity.

The special charism of Secular Franciscans involves spiritual contemplation and immersion in the world.

The challenge for Seculars is to bring the two realms together.





Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity worked together to create a collage entitled "We Are Franciscans, We Care For All Creation."

From our Formation Director ...

What We Yearn For

By the time I was born three of my four grandparents had already passed away. The only grandparent I came to know was my maternal grandmother and she was, as they say, long in the tooth by the time I came along as my mother was the ninth of ten children. We visited Italy every few years during the summer and I came to know Maria Domenica as a woman of deep, unshakable faith and strength of character, even in her advanced years. She was losing her eyesight, her teeth, her hearing, her hair, and her mobility – but she never lost sight of her faith in God. She carried a rosary in the pocket of her black dress; she always wore black because my grandfather had died decades before. Though my teenage cousins often jokingly mocked her and laughed at her appearance, I relished her slobbery and sweaty embraces because for me, they were short-lived. On the long trans-Atlantic journey home, my heart would feel heavy because I didn't know if she would still be there the next time we visited.

Shortly after our visit to Italy when I was sixteen, we received word that my grandmother had passed away peacefully in her sleep. My mother wept for weeks and often asked me to sit with her and pray for my grandmother's soul. The yearning I felt my entire life to spend more time with my grandmother had deepened with her death. I had wanted to know her better, to see her more often, and to listen to her stories – things which I believe some of my cousins took for granted. My longing for the unique affection shown by a grandmother left a lifelong yearning in my heart that affected me deeply. Though I spent precious few moments with her, I knew my grandmother loved me – and I know she still does. I can feel her presence when I exercise my own grandmother moments. She's whispering to me to make every moment count. And while I actively cherish my present circumstances, I still yearn for her slobbery, sweaty embrace.

As I grew older, I came to realize that *yearning* is a gift. Years ago, when I read the passage in the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine which says, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in You," I came to understand that nothing that we yearn for in this life can ever be completely satisfied. We yearn for something much greater than what can be found in a temporal world. We yearn for eternity, we long for perfection in love, we hunger for fulfilment or gratification that cannot be met by any aspect of creation. This yearning is for God; this *hunger* is for the bread of life. I consider this yearning to be a gift because complacency is a sort of death; complacency in faith is a like a cousin of hopelessness when we think that nothing can ever be better than this. But our faith tells us that "no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no heart of man conceived, what God has ready for those who love Him." (Cor. 2:9)

There are ample Scripture verses which describe this lifelong yearning for God, my favorite is found in Psalm 42: "Just like a deer that craves streams of water, my whole being craves you, my God." Jesus meets us one on one in the Holy Eucharist. Francis yearned for the living, breathing presence of Jesus in his most holy and precious Body and Blood. He longed for the freedom that living in unity with Christ gave him. When he died, he said these words from Psalm 142, "Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name." As devout Christians and Franciscans, we yearn for the embrace of God when we leave this place on earth.

Pax e bonum

Donna Kendall



The Pope's Monthly Intentions



October: For the Synod

We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

Birthdays

September 24 — Paul Reardon

October 2 — Susan James

October 12— Barbara Massey

October 18— Ann Pepper



Profession Anniversaries

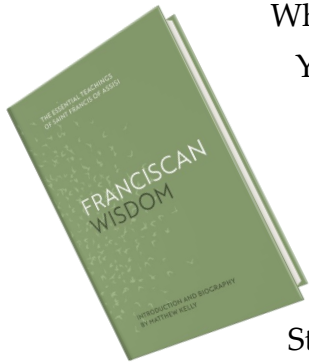
Glenn Davis—October 15, 2005

Deanne Marshall— October 13, 2003

Marie Stephan—October 4, 1999

Next Fraternity Meeting—October 20th at 1:15pm (social gathering from 12:30-1:15)

Franciscan Wisdom



What's the first thought that comes to mind when you hear the word "holiness"? You probably don't think "contagious passion for life," or "the answer to every problem in the world."

And yet, holiness is both those things, and more.

It's also the reason why St. Francis of Assisi has attracted and influenced people of every belief and background for centuries...

St. Francis surrendered himself completely so that God could work through him.

And 800 years later, he continues to inspire art, to appear in gardens, and to inspire people who also wish to be the best versions of themselves and leave the world a better place.

So we scoured the writings of St. Francis and other Franciscans for spirituality, insight, and practice—and compiled what we found in *Franciscan Wisdom*.

Inside this beautiful, hardcover book, **you'll find 365 days' worth of inspiration to help you:**

Do the small, ordinary things with great love.

Develop a holiness that crosses the bounds of religion and prejudice.

Find your best, truest, highest, and most authentic self in Jesus.

Visit Dynamic Catholic to purchase your copy today!



Dynamic Catholic

Be Bold. Be Catholic.®