



The Little Flower Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order

St. Margaret of Cortona Region

Be His Mirror !!

Next meeting: November 9, 2024

PROFESSION DAY FOR DONNA AND JON!!!

Brothers and Sisters of Penance,

Our next gathering is one of the most important gatherings under our Secular Franciscan Rule. We will gather on November 9, 2024 to welcome and initiate into our fellowship two candidates, our sisters, Jon Curry and Donna Dellaglio, by celebrating with them their permanent profession to live the fullness of the Gospel life in Jesus Christ walking in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. Please make every effort to be with us on Saturday, November 9, 2024 at 11 AM in St. Francis of Assisi Church.

Thank you for your continued faithfulness on your journey through this vale of tears as a Secular Franciscan. Each month, I have tried by these messages to encourage each of us in the Fraternity to live fully by our commitment to reflect on these truths and apply them to our walk with Jesus guided by Him, the Gospel, and our rule. In this endeavor, I have only fulfilled one of the duties of my role as Servant Minister to sow the seeds of how to live the Secular Franciscan life. All the growth that has happened in the Fraternity is the work of the Holy Spirit through the intercession of our Seraphic Father and the cloud of Franciscan saints in the heavenly realm.

It is often the small, daily steps we take that lead to the most profound growth, and I celebrate how these lessons are shaping us all. This month let us meditate on **Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."**

This verse is one of the most well-known passages of Jesus' teachings, in it He reveals a key truth about what it means to live in His kingdom. These words come from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, His teachings that turn the world's values upside down. When Jesus talks about being "poor in spirit," He is not referring to material poverty but to a heart posture — one of humility and recognition of our need for God. He reminds us that entrance into God's kingdom isn't earned by our efforts or achievements. Instead, it begins with acknowledging our spiritual need and dependence on Him. Imagine you're carrying a heavy burden, but you're reluctant to ask anyone for help. It's only when you admit you can't carry it alone that someone steps in to help you. In the same way, being "poor in spirit" means admitting that we can't do life on our own. It's recognizing that we need God's strength, grace, and guidance every step of the way, together with those He sends to us to help us, that is to say for us, our Fraternity family. Only when we humble ourselves can we fully experience the blessings of His kingdom.

This verse carries a profound promise: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Jesus teaches that the key to receiving the fullness of His kingdom lies in recognizing our need for Him. In a world that only rewards self-sufficiency and independence, this truth challenges us to embrace humility. Being poor in spirit isn't about feeling inadequate; it is about knowing from where our true source of strength comes.

This month, let us focus on what it means to be "poor in spirit." Examine your life. Where are you relying too much on your own strength? What are the areas where you need to let go and trust God's provision, particularly by calling you to your Secular Franciscan vocation? Jesus promises that when we come to Him in humility, the kingdom of heaven is ours—not just someday, but here and now.

As you reflect on this verse, I encourage you to ask: How can I embrace my need for God more fully? In what ways, by my Franciscan vocation, can I open my heart to receive the blessings of His kingdom today?

I am excited to continue this journey with you and see how these truths take root in our lives, transforming us from the inside out, from life to Gospel and from Gospel to life. Let us keep taking those small steps of faith — God works through them in ways we can not yet see.

During this month of November let us call to mind and ask the intercession of all the saints in heaven particularly our Franciscan saints. Let us also remember our Fraternity brothers and sisters over these 62 years of our existence who have gone before us into the fullness of the Kingdom of God in which we all desire to live forever marked with the sign of our faith.

May the blessings of the Lord our faithful God be with us all this month and always.

Peace and all good,

Phillip Francis Pucher, O.F.S
Servant Minister
Little Flower Fraternity OFS

Retreat...Connect



Day of Reflection for Inquirers and Candidates- March 29, 2025, 10AM-3PM (All are invited.)

Franciscan Monastery of Holy Land, 1400 NE Quincy St., DC

Given by Br. Michael Meza, OFM Cap., topic to be determined

Pilgrimage to Assisi and Rome (including LaVerna and Greccio!)

October 5-17, 2025 **SAVE THE DATE**

Led by Fr. Russel Murray OFM and Br. Adrian Peelo OFM

November Reflection - via Pope Francis (and Joan)

Pope Francis, in a weekly audience at the Vatican 12/30/20, (the end of the first year of the Covid pandemic) focused on the importance of thanking God and letting others see our gratitude.

He stated that Catholics can change the world by being "bearers of Gratitude," that thanksgiving is a hallmark of authentic Christian life and that we must not forget to thank, for if we are bearers of gratitude the world will become better, if only a little bit, but that will be enough to transmit hope - and our world sorely needs hope!.....Are we then not called to express gratitude? And with St. Francis leading our way, shouldn't joy reveal the gratitude in our hearts?

By being thankful, we are united, not opposed to, or divided from, our fellow man and our world. We truly see the good around us each day, the closeness and benevolence of people, the beauty and goodness of the world. But our hearts have to be still, we have to "ponder" as Mary taught us, to see the goodness and beauty.

We read Luke's gospel (17:11-19) about the 10 lepers. That gospel is all about gratefulness, and that gratefulness encompasses trust, healing, faith, and love. All 10 lepers did what Jesus asked. They trusted that they would be cured and that the priests would permit them to re-enter society. However, as we know so well, only one of the lepers, a Samaritan in fact (not loved by the Jewish people), returned to thank Jesus for healing him.

That Samaritan was grateful. He expressed his gratitude to Jesus. His gratitude came from his encounter with Jesus. He had believed in Him, trusted Him, and rejoiced at meeting and being healed by Him. He rejoiced because he was not only freed from the leprosy, but he also because he knew he was loved. First there was the encounter, then there was a gift of love.

Love is the heart of gratitude- when you give thanks, you express the certainty that you are loved. The love is His gift to each of us as individuals and as fraternity. This discovery of love is “the force that governs the world.” (Pope Francis) When we live in Christ, with Christ, and for Christ, nothing can prevent us from being thankful, and nothing should keep us from expressing our thankfulness joyfully. In the gospels, those who meet Christ often respond with joy, praise, and thankfulness. And we, we who have met Christ, do we remember to respond with joy, praise, and gratitude for the gifts of love he has sent to us?

In the parable of the lepers, two worlds can be defined: one for those who do not give thanks and one for those who do; those who take everything as if it is owed them, and those who welcome everything as a gift, as grace. In which group do you see yourself? Could there be certain times or certain circumstances, in which you take your blessings for granted?. Think about it.....? If you do, even just on occasion, fix that. Make expressing gratitude a must, and when you do, you will see that others start to recognize and thank God for the many gifts in their own lives.

The catechism states that “Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving, for... A prayer of thanksgiving always begins by acknowledging that grace precedes us. We were thought of before we learned how to think; we were loved before we learned how to love; we were desired before our hearts conceived a desire.” If we view life like this, “thank you” becomes the driving force of our day!!!! It is the power of sanctifying grace!

Gratitude shifts our focus from what we lack, to the abundance of what we have. Once we become oriented in this way, we will find we appreciate everything we have taken for granted - everything - our souls, our ability to walk and talk and share and....so much more. Everywhere, in everything. Blessings are all around us, and when we remember to count them, notice simple pleasures, and acknowledge that everything we receive is from God, when we live our lives as if everything were a miracle, which it is, our lives will be filled with gratitude and joy, and our smiles will become “the new pandemic,” the one that heals, gives hope, and thrives on love.

Celebrating thanksgiving as we do each year gives us a special opportunity to take stock of our lives, to ponder all we have to be grateful for. God’s presence to us, and the spirituality He has inspired us to have, is the best gift of the Secular Franciscan. So as we consider what makes Thanksgiving Day special to us, let us consider why our traditions and fellowship are meaningful, and most of all, let us celebrate the width and breadth and depth of the love of God- the source of all our joy and the reason for all our smiles. Be the bearers of gratitude that Pope Francis has asked us to be.

JPIC NEWS From Teresa



Publication Date: Tuesday, October 29, 2024

Reflection Date: Sunday, November 3, 2024 - [Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

You Are Not Far From the Kingdom of God

As our national elections loom, the United States is deeply divided. We watch separate partisan-affirming news and live in separate partisan cultural bubbles. Social media and entertainment industry algorithms target us based on education, race, class, gender, and geography, constantly appealing

to our partisan sensibilities. Sadly, for many, even the truth depends on political bias.

Our church, too, is divided by this partisan chasm. Pollsters predict the Catholic vote will be nearly evenly split. In our pews, the partisan divide is reflected in opinions on the Latin Mass, the role of women, teachings against the death penalty, and care for creation, or even views on Pope Francis.

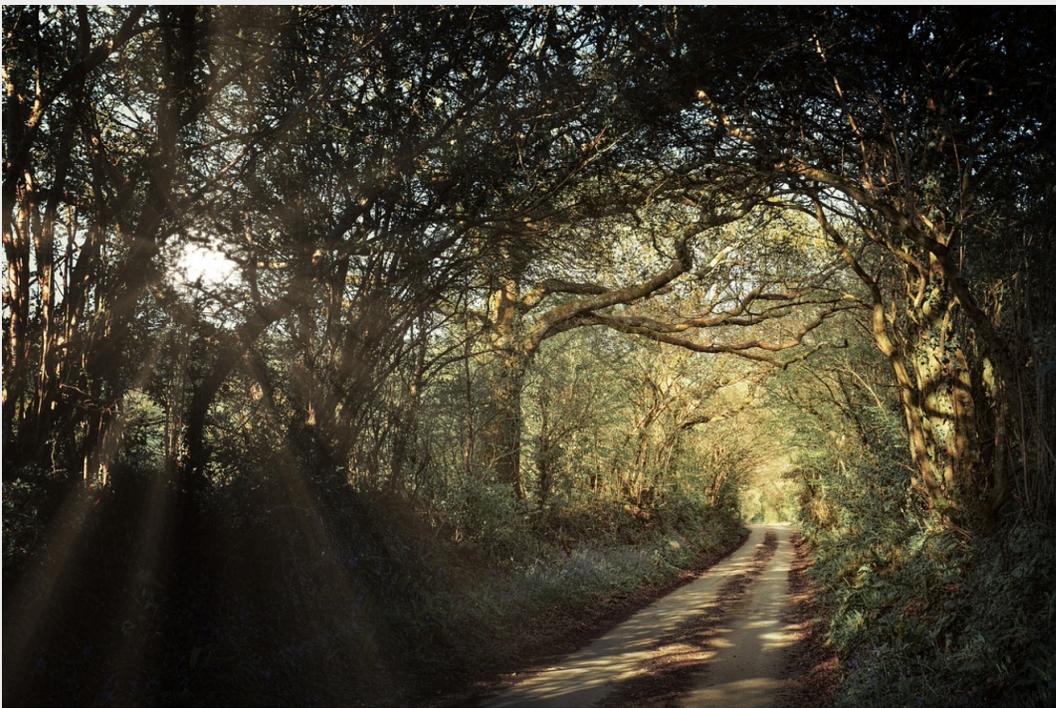


Photo via jplenio on Pixabay

The passage for the [Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time](#) from the Gospel of Mark reminds us of what should unify us. The setting is a familiar testing of Jesus by scribes. He is asked which is the first commandment, and Christ responds by quoting Moses' words from Deuteronomy on the unity of God and the command to love God, a love that unites us with God:

"Hear, O Israel!

The Lord our God is Lord alone!

*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul,*

*with all your mind,
and with all your strength."*

The scribe acknowledges, "He is One, and there is no other than He." We should pause and reflect that it is in the love of God that divisions dissolve. "He is the One," and in binding ourselves to the One in love, we are not divided.

Christ, however, does not stop with Moses' Old Testament commandment. He adds a second commandment to complete what began in Moses' revelation: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." This provides another level of unity. If unity is found in the love of God, it is also commanded to be shared through love of our neighbors — including those we may find most divided from us, as shown in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

The gospel reading from Mark concludes with Jesus seeing that the scribe understood this new commandment, saying, "*You are not far from the kingdom of God.*"

As the election approaches, in a nation suffering from partisan polarization, next Sunday's readings remind us where, as believers, we must look for unity: in love of God and in Christ's commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. This is our hope amid our nation's tragic division.

Franciscan Action Network will continue to work to bridge division and polarization, following Christ's instructions, by promoting love of God and love of neighbor.

Dennis' Inspiration:

Bless Us

God, please bless us with a need to respect ourselves and others.

Bless us with forgiveness that we may forgive others who do wrong against us, or those whom we hurt in any way.

Bless us with the power of love in all we do, in all we say.

Bless us that we may gain a better education, a better understanding of what we are learning.

Bless us with honesty, understanding, and compassion that we may be honest with others and ourselves.

Bless us with all these things. To you we are thankful.

"Peggy"

PRAYER REQUESTS

Helen and John Tumminello, Lynn Dabrowski Cindy Kebbe

Fr. John Whipple OFS (RIP) Rebeka and family (Phil's daughter), Toni Welsh (RIP),

Bob Elia, Jaci Curry Abby Forbes (vocation - Missionary Sisters)

Pope Francis' intention for the month and for the Eighth World Day of the Poor (November 7)

Theme for Nov.7: The prayer of the poor rises to God. "True wealth lies not in the good of the

World but in being loved by God and learning to love like Him.”

For a Shared Mission: We pray that the Church continue to sustain in all ways a Synodal lifestyle, as a

sign of co-responsibility, promoting the participation, the communion and the mission shared among priests, religious, and lay people.

Pope Francis additional prayers for those in the Middle East:

“I am with you, I am close to you.” Pope Francis utters these words to his brothers and sisters, but also to the men and women of every confession and religion who in the Middle East are suffering from the insanity of war:

To the people of Gaza who are in his thoughts and prayers every day:

To the mothers who weep while looking at their dead or wounded children, “like Mary at the sight of Jesus”;

To you “who are afraid to look up for fear of fire raining down from the skies”;

To you who “have no voice, for despite all the talk of plans and strategies, there is little concern for those who suffer the devastation of war, which the powerful impose on others”;

To you who thirst for peace and justice, “and refuse to yield to the logic of evil and, in the name of Jesus, “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

Birthday Celebrants

Ann German 11/24

Kathleen Hale 11/24

Linda Herilla 11/24

Profession Anniversaries:

none

Deceased Member Anniversaries:

Bettie Onorato 11/2/20

Angela Mulcahy 11/14/20

Treasurer’s Report

Starting balance:	\$2088.72
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Catholic Charities USA	
Hurricane Helene Relief	100.00
Mass cards and postage	24.60
<u>Expense Total</u>	\$ 124.60
<u>Deposit #1</u>	357.00
Deposit #2	20.00
<u>Deposits total</u>	377.00
<u>Final Balance October 2024</u>	\$2341.12

While we are having a Profession Mass and Gathering Celebration, we will be looking for both your attendance and your continued support of our common fund and charities. Please advise a council member if you cannot attend. Thank you.

Please make ALL checks – Common fund as well as monthly charity,
payable to: LITTLE FLOWER FRATERNITY

Mail checks to

Albert Gigel OFS

St. Martin’s Home, Little Sisters of the Poor

601 Maiden Choice Lane, Apt. 305

Catonsville, Md. 21228

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