



The Little Flower Fraternity Secular Franciscan Order St. Margaret of Cortona Region

July 2025 Newsletter
Next Gathering: July 12, 2025
Burke's Hall at St Francis of Assisi Church

Minister's Message

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Blessings to all of you as we enter into the heart (and heat!) of our summer here in Maryland. As you know, St Francis maintained a deep love for nature and all God's creatures. Summer, with its abundance of natural beauty, lends itself to a sacred time of reflection and appreciation for all God's creation. I hope each of you can slow down and center yourself in the presence of our Lord during this sweet season.

As a newly elected minister, I spend a lot of time praying and considering what it means to be part of a fraternity—and specifically what it means to be a secular Franciscan. There are many beautiful and profound answers to what fraternity means and how/why God has called us into our Franciscan community. Today I want to remind you that our Franciscan calling is a gift. The Holy Spirit has invited us to live our lives in a holy, intentional, and communal way. Please remember that the fraternity is not just about meetings.

Fraternity life is dynamic and it is about ongoing conversion, presence, and support.

As part of our Franciscan calling, we have been given the gift of each other. We are called to walk alongside of each other in the same way that St Francis walked with his brothers and sisters. Specifically, we are called to seek and nurture holy friendships.

What is a holy friendship? A holy friendship is a mutual, sacred relationship deeply formed in God's love. It is much more than a casual, friendly relationship. Rather, it is a sacred bond with God at its center. Because of this, a holy friendship is set apart, privileged, and protected. It is no ordinary friendship because it is held in God's love and becomes part of His ongoing story for the salvation of our world. These sacred relationships have a larger purpose beyond the friendship itself: ***they help point both people toward God.***

What is my vision for the Little Flower Fraternity? I want us to find this holy closeness in our fraternal bonds. We are holy friends; we are family!!!! Each month we will take time to catch up. Each member will talk about themselves, what they are doing, good things, difficult things, health, family needs—all the things contained in your heart. I pray we can follow the prompts of the Holy Spirit to authentically and deeply live out our Franciscan charism.

I will look forward to discussing this in more detail at our next fraternity gathering on July 12th. I am also looking forward to seeing everyone during our fraternity picnic on July 27th.

Peace and All Good!
Teresa

Little Flower Fraternity on Retreat



Members of the Little Flower Fraternity spent time in prayer and reflection with our regional OFS brothers and sisters!

Reflect and Connect



Start making plans to attend the Quinquennial Celebration of the Secular Franciscan Order in 2026! Registration info link:
<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Q-Registration-information-page-updated.pdf>



The Little Flower Fraternity Picnic Hosted by the Evans Family!

July 27th

2:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Address: 1433 Sussex Road, Essex, MD 21221

Bring a dish to share, if you can!

Let Us Love as Jesus Loves

A reflection by Joan Kane, OFS

***"By this all men will know you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
(John 13:35)***

These are but a few of Jesus' words which are life changing. They lead us to ponder His love, a self-sacrificial love which He lived throughout His life. And His words are a command to us to love as He has loved us.

Such love demands so much of us that we may answer with a "hesitant yes." But in truth we must have the courage and wisdom to respond boldly. As St Teresa of Avila wrote:

"Christ has no body on earth but yours.

No hands, no feet but yours.

Yours are the eyes with which He looks compassionately on this world.

Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good.

Yours are the hands with which He blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet. Yours are the eyes. You are His body."

If we, in truth, are sent forth to be Christ to others, then we must go beyond the everyday, "normal" mindset of the human will, and take on our responsibilities as He would. All of our Franciscan spirituality is to lead us beyond the "normal" mindset" so that we develop a deeper union with Christ. St. Francis showed how very much he wanted to understand and share in the love of Christ - to the extent that he was permitted to share in the sufferings of Jesus' passion in a special way by receiving the stigmata. We who are followers of St Francis, seek to imitate that way of living, his selflessness, his understanding, his compassion, his love for God and for his neighbor.

The way we can love as Jesus did is by cooperating with the grace of God - surrendering our human will to the Divine Will. How else can we see all people as images of God, or find what seems to be an insurmountable problem as an opportunity for growth, love, and conversion that will ultimately result in a heavenly reward?

Loving as Jesus did asks the best from us, and brings out the best in us. It gives us energy and courage to live each day to its fullest, and it fills our days with the best of all purposes - to glorify Our Lord. It has the power to heal the brokenness of ourselves and others, and it permits us to be fully open to the life we are meant to live.

So let us not take Jesus' words lightly. We hear them so often that their impact could wane. But let the words be our mantra each day, and let us love as Jesus did.



Prayer Requests from Dennis, OFS

Fr. Bart Karwacki, OFM Conv., Diane Miente, OFS (RIP), Peter Bernardo, Donna Dellaglio, OFS, Lolita Jardeleza, OFS (RIP), John O'Hara, Melinda Fuentes, OFS, Al Gigel, OFS, Mary Lee Carroll, Loretta Lemons, OFS (RIP), Phil Pucher, OFS, Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Chrazanowski, Debra Carroll, Jaci Curry and Family



Let us pray for the intentions of the Pope– July 2025
For formation in discernment

Let us pray that we might again learn how to discern, to know how to choose paths of life, and reject everything that leads us away from Christ and the Gospel.

Little Flower Fraternity Celebrations for July

July Professions: None

July Birthdays: Ryan Chabot. Happy Birthday, Ryan!!!

July JPIC Message



Last month the Little Flower Fraternity was blessed by a presentation by the missionaries of Source of All Hope.

Their Mission: Our mission is to give Christ a home and to remain with Him, especially in all the places He's been neglected—the Eucharist, the homeless, and our own souls.

We take a unique and radical approach to the crisis of homelessness. While most programs address physical needs, we focus on addressing a deeper poverty—the pain of loneliness and isolation on the streets. Our approach is simple: we pursue and befriend the forgotten ones in our midst and share life with them day after day. We are not here to serve the poor—we're here to *love* them.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE SOURCE OF ALL HOPE MINISTRY IN PRAYER!



A reflection: Dennis Bernardo, OFS

Prayer for Obedience

Heavenly Father, grant me the grace to hear
Your voice and follow Your Will with a joyful heart.

Help me to seek Your Commandments
above all else and to live a life that reflects
Your Love and Mercy. Strengthen my resolve
to be obedient in all things, trusting that
Your Plan for me is good. May I serve You
faithfully, now and always. Amen.

Treasurer's Report—

2025.06.30

TREASURER'S REPORT

BEGINNING BALANCE \$3091.69

EXPENSES:

Infirmarian Mass Cards \$75.00

SFA Hall Rental June 14 \$75.00

EXPENSES TOTAL: \$150.00

DEPOSITS:

6.23.2025 Deposit #1 \$599.00

6.30.2025 Deposit #2 \$40.00

DEPOSITS TOTAL \$639.00

FINAL JUNE BALANCE \$3580.69

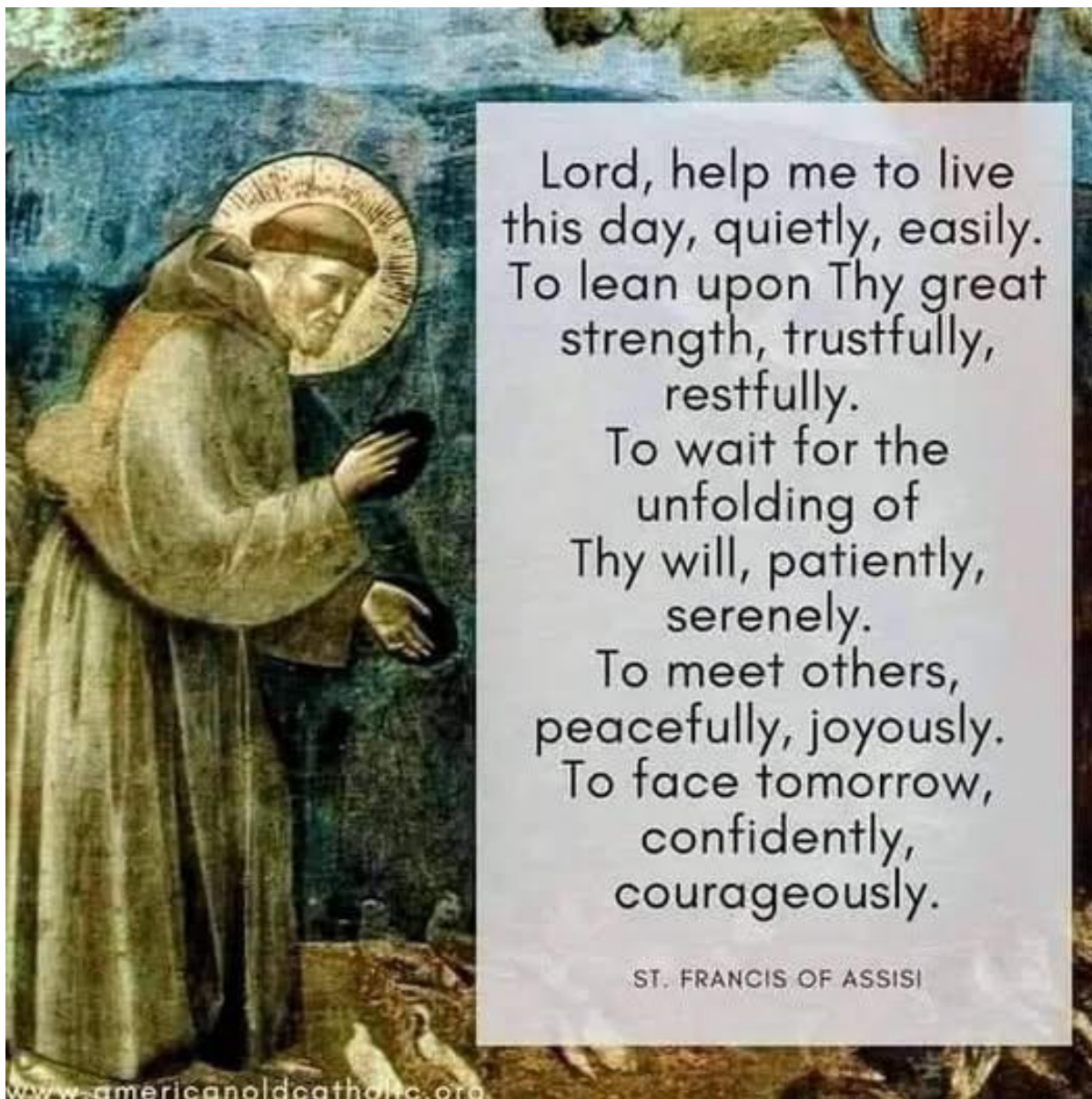
Of Note, if mailing your contributions to the treasurer, please send them prior to the 20th of each month. Thank you!

Little Flower Fraternity Monthly Charities



The Little Flower charity for the month of July will be Right to Life.

The Little Flower charity for August will be students in need. We will be collecting backpacks and school supplies.



Lord, help me to live
this day, quietly, easily.
To lean upon Thy great
strength, trustfully,
restfully.

To wait for the
unfolding of
Thy will, patiently,
serenely.

To meet others,
peacefully, joyously.
To face tomorrow,
confidently,
courageously.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI