

The Angelus

St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order
July 20, 2025



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

July 20th Gathering Agenda

Opening Prayers - page 35 in the Ritual book;
page 63 in the new version

Business

- Welcome new visitors, birthday and profession acknowledgements

Formation

- From Gospel to Life – Greg
- Who will be on our next council? - Tom

Food and Fellowship

Liturgy of the Hours - Evening Prayer

Closing Prayers - Page 36 in the Ritual book;
page 64 in the new version

Minister's Message

We are well into Summer now. What do you think of when pondering July? The first and, perhaps, most obvious answer is Independence Day on July 4th and the accompanying fireworks.

July is also a popular month for vacations, particularly at the beach. Family gatherings are also popular with outdoor barbeques. From a Catholic perspective, the month of July is dedicated to The Most Precious Blood of Jesus.

This month's theme points us towards spiritual renewal and salvation. July is an opportunity for both physical and spiritual regeneration.

As we think of The Most Precious Blood of Jesus, it is critical to remember that each drop that flowed from the wounds of Jesus was a pledge of man's eternal salvation.

St. John Chrysostom calls the Precious Blood "the Savior of souls"; St. Thomas Aquinas, "the key to heaven's treasures"; and St. Ambrose, "pure gold of ineffable worth".

So then, as we enjoy the many fruits of July (e.g., the 4th, fireworks, a beach visit, family barbeque, etc.) let us also focus on the gift of Jesus' Most Precious Blood.

Peace and all good!

Michael

SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT'S MESSAGE July, 2025

Greetings to you all!

We continue with our discussion on the Franciscan Tradition based on the resource, "Discovering the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition" by John V. Kluse. Here we finish up on the characteristics of Scholasticism, look at the scholastic method as it applies to the Dominican and Franciscan traditions, and begin viewing the main figures and characteristics of Franciscan Intellectual Tradition.

The dialectical method of Scholasticism involves the discussion of the pros and cons of various issues within the Christian faith before a firm and final decision on what the best response should be. Scholars of both traditions did, however, arrive at significantly different conclusions. We will see why as we continue our look into the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition.

As we should know, there were two leading Franciscan scholars who were understandably involved in the development of the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition: St. Bonaventure (1221-1274) and John Duns Scotus (1266-1308). While these two theologians explored the issues of the sacraments, sin, and redemption, it is the manner they came to understand God, creation, and Jesus that is most significant here for our discussion of the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition.

Three important conclusions were made on the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition's emphasis about God, creation, and Jesus:

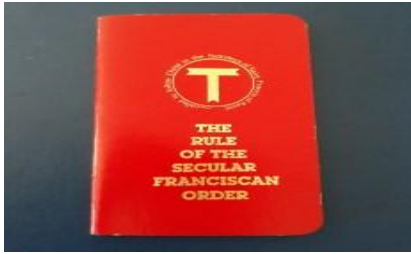
- 1) The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition stresses God as a relationship of overflowing love and goodness who is completely free.
- 2) The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition emphasizes that creation is a reflection of a loving, free, and good Creator, who is in relationship with His creation and who willed into being every individual and unique creature that exists.
- 3) The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition emphasizes that the Incarnation of the Son of God in the person of Jesus was a free and intentional expression of God's self-giving love and humility and an affirmation of humanity's dignity and goodness.

These conclusions tell us that in order to best explore the Franciscan understanding of God, we have to go back to the basic Christian belief in the Holy Trinity as it is expressed in the Nicene Creed. We are all familiar with this classic statement of our Christian faith as it is a part of our Sunday worship not only our Catholic Church but of other Christian churches as well.

Next month, we'll talk about how these three persons of the Blessed Trinity are explained in terms of the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition.

Peace!

Mike



In essence, St. Francis invites people to recognize the inherent value and interconnectedness of all creation, fostering a sense of responsibility and love towards every creature as a reflection of God.



Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order

CHAPTER TWO: THE WAY OF LIFE

Article 18

Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which "bear the imprint of the Most High," and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.

Thoughts to ponder

So, what did St. Francis mean by this statement?

Here's a breakdown of what St. Francis likely meant per Magisterium AI:

1. **Respect for all creatures:** St. Francis advocated for a deep respect for all of creation, both living (animate) and non-living (inanimate). This respect stems from the belief that all creatures reflect God's presence.
2. **Imprint of the Most High:** The phrase "bear the imprint of the Most High" suggests that every creature, in its own way, reveals something about God. Creation is seen as a manifestation of God's glory and goodness.
3. **Moving from exploitation to kinship:** St. Francis encourages a shift in perspective from viewing creation as something to be exploited to recognizing a "universal kinship". This means seeing all creatures as brothers and sisters, deserving of care and respect.
4. **Gospel Values:** Secular Franciscans strive to live the Gospel as St. Francis of Assisi did. The rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is to observe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi.



Apostolates Corner

Prayer Ministry



Lead:

Bette O'Connor

410-499-5504 oconnorbette46@gmail.com

Bette can be contacted by phone, text or email.

If desired, your prayer requests will be shared with the entire Fraternity. We will be happy to feature prayer requests in the Angelus.

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

Happy Birthday and Profession anniversary!

(No July birthdays or Professions)

A friendly Secular Franciscan reminder!

If health or a special family obligation hinders you from attending our gathering, please contact our Vice Minister, John Di Benedetto, and let him know.

301-873-7883

Reminder

Our monthly Mass for our Living and Deceased Fraternity Members will be celebrated on July 20th, at Our Lady of Grace Church at 11 AM.

Our fraternity was well represented by Portia, Carmencita, Aurea and Ingrid at the Region Formation retreat in late June.

It was a three-day, two-night event held at the Priest Field Pastoral Center in Kearneysville, WV

I see a lot of happy and faith-filled people!

