Secular Franciscan Order August 2018 Newsletter



***“Receive God’s compassion in your life. Your small and big concerns matter deeply to Him. He awaits those sweet, heartfelt whispered prayers. Keep your connection with your Creator throughout the day by allowing your heart to speak freely and frequently. Our prayers soar with clarity to God’s ear and he cherishes them – silly, serious, deep, or simple!”***

***Excerpt from Tea Light Moments: Meditations to Inspire Your Day by Hope Lyda***

 Pray our priests may remain holy & devoted to God & The Blessed Virgin Mary!



***August Meeting Minutes!***

**A**ugust 4, 2018 Fraternity Meeting was held in The Outback at St. Jerome Catholic Church. We began the meeting with praying The Prayer Inspired by the Our Father located in our Ritual book on page 101. The prayer is a beautiful mini-meditation in and of itself!

Phyllis Prince, Candidate prayerfully read the Candle lighting remembering past, present & future Fraternity members.

Michael Freeman, OFS led us in the Opening Prayer for Fraternities on page 35 in our Ritual book.

Karen Parsons, OFS read a short meditational prayer, “Sacred Wounds” from The St. Clare Prayer Book, Listening for God’s Leading. We had a special guest, Thomas Watson, OFS who will be joining us for future meetings. He blessed us with his amazing testimony. Welcome, Thomas!

Dora Freeman, OFS reminded us that 2018 is the 40th year of the 3rd Order Secular Franciscans. “God turns to us / We turn to God / We turn to others”. Turning to God with no agenda is a very hard thing to do but humility is what we all have in common and are called to a life of humility. Bonaventure said, “poverty is a total dependence on God.” If we seek Divine aid with humility & a devout heart & it will be given. Dora then led a sort of Lectio with Article 6 & 7, page 14 in The Rule of the SFO. A wonderfully animated discussion followed. I always glean so much insight with listening to others share their ideas from their hearts. Our Members are striving for individual personal growth that enhances not only our Fraternity, but all those we come in contact with.

**A**lba Hernandez, OFS blessed us with an interesting synopsis of St. Maximilian Kolbe’s life & martyrdom. Holy Cards were made available to take home. The closing prayer was offered & meeting was adjourned.

Rachel Persicano, OFS has generously offered to stay after the meeting to continue Formation Class for the Candidates.



*Paraphrased from “A Spirituality For The Two Halves of Life”*

*Paula D’Arcy & Richard Rohr, OFM*

*“When my world seems to implode & my life falls apart, I feel like my purpose for life no longer exists, God might be saying, “YOUR life purpose has died! Embrace MY vision for your life. Stay open, watch where I AM takes you. Allow this stumbling block to break you open. Allow Holy Humility to bring you deeper into ME.”*





The Wild Goose is loose

**“I**  think I’m in Heaven. Yeah, no really, I think I’m in Heaven “This was spoken by one of the retreatants as he looked out the window at Manresa last week onto the spacious grounds lined with 150 year-old oaks with Spanish moss stretching downwards toward the ground. Here he felt loved, valued and accepted. He was not in Heaven as he was still alive and we all knew we were in Convent, Louisiana at the Jesuit Retreat House on the banks of the mighty Mississippi. A perfect setting for the Wild Goose. He and the other men were screened by their case managers as being clean and sober for at least two months and had expressed a turning toward God. **T**he Ignatian Spirituality project has now spread to 30 cities. It originated in Chicago by the Jesuits for the homeless who often are drug addicts or alcoholics. What attracted me to join was the opportunity to have a ministry of presence; to offer hope. Being Ignatian, it is aligned with his Spiritual exercises and correlates strongly with a 12-step program, especially the first 3. Without hope, despair and disordered thinking prevail. These men’s stories were so much like my dear brother Jeffreys. After losing everything including faith, there is little hope and love in their lives. **O**ur Heavenly Father is always there for us if we listen, yet we must do His will, not our own. This became a commonality amongst both the retreatants and facilitators…fears, selfishness, egos, lies.  **A**s is the case with most retreats there was plenty of delicious food (Gumbo, red beans, fried catfish, fried chicken, homemade pies) and it was all served at the table family style.  **T**ruly amazing and the Jesuits do not charge a cent to host this! There will be a get together in a month and some of the men will be back on the streets, yet if even one experiences true conversion that’s wonderful! One of the men whom I am most hopeful for has been clean and sober for 2 years. He literally lived under a bridge in New Orleans for 11 years but now rides his bicycle to work at the country club where he is a dishwasher. His fear of dying alone was what initially motivated him to get sober. How Blessed are those of us who have our own families and all of our Franciscan Brothers and Sisters!  **T**he chatter in my brain initially had me wondering was I wrong in going away and leaving Dora so near to going to Kansas City for the Formation Visioning Workshop in which I would be leaving her again. At the conclusion one of the facilitators, Deacon Jay, brought out bags for all. He put one next to me and said I’ll explain this in a bit. Jay had asked about my Tau earlier as he recognized it from his Godmother who was a Secular Franciscan. He recounted how she always told him she wanted to be buried in a shroud. When she died he went to the Poor Clare’s in New Orleans who gave him one for her to be buried in. Who knows, one day he may feel called to the Franciscan charism…..he is on the marriage preparation team at his parish with the minister of the St. Padre Pio Fraternity.  **W**ithin the bags were prayer shawls. The parish he belongs to has a prayer shawl ministry. He had promised the woman who had made the one he gave to me that whomever he gave it to would keep her in his prayers as well as her two sons, one of whom had died at birth .He explained that Carol was a little person (was one of the Ewoks in Star Wars) who had been discriminated against all her life and that the one son still alive was heavily into drugs. When I read the attached note I broke down in tears as she was from the parish Dora was baptized in in Slidell, Louisiana and attended through first grade.  **T**here are no coincidences. The Holy Spirit called me to go there; but I knew I had to give the prayer shawl to Dora. Now we are both praying for Carol, Ryan, and Chris!

Peace ~ michael

***Next Meeting: September 1st, 2018 in the Outback @ St. Jerome Catholic Church beginning 10:00 a.m.***

Early Birds: An opportunity to join together in The Holy Mass in the day chapel @ St. Jerome beginning 8:15 a.m.

Candidates and Inquirers Formation begins @ 9:00 a.m. in the Outback **AND** after our meeting @ noon!

9-8-18 6th Annual National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children

10:00 a.m. Mass, Rosary & Divine Mercy Chaplet sponsored by Citizens for a Pro-Life Society, Priests for Life, & the Pro-Life Action League. Takes place at Forest Lawn Cemetary, 8701 Almeda Genoa Rd, Houston, TX 77075. For more info & updates, contact Brother Joe Kollar [joekollar1@gmail.com](mailto:joekollar1@gmail.com) or 832-768-4010. The Mass time might change to accommodate the priest celebrating Mass.

9-9-18 DOCUMENTARY: In The Name of Peace: John Hume in America (Narrated by Liam Neeson)

University of St. Thomas @ UST’s Jones Hall, 3910 Yoakum Blvd. FREE EVENT

RSVP for those with mobility issues & for groups of 6 or more: 713-525-3592 or [irishstudies@stthom.edu](mailto:irishstudies@stthom.edu)

9-11-18 Day of Service & Remembrance

Vespers 6:00pm @ the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart followed by Service Projects @ 6:30pm

Dinner of burgers provided free of charge by the Young Adults Group. Bring a new DISH TOWEL.

For more info & to Pre-register, go to: [www.sacredhearthouston.org](http://www.sacredhearthouston.org)

October 6-7, 2018: Success: Full Relating with Friar Justin Belitz, OFM

Dominican Center: 6501 Almeda Rd, Houston, TX 77021

**Fiesta Franciscana** is again happening and it will be October 13, 2018 at the San Jose Mission (different spot than last year). Registration forms, etc. are not available yet....but mark your calendars for October 13th. It would be fun to all stay in the same hotel. Several of us have reserved a room at Embassy Suites by Hilton. 7610 South New Braunfels, San Antonio, TX 78235. (210) 534-1000. Present pricing: $173 with 2 queen beds. Cancellations can be made if something else more affordable or closer to the retreat site is found.

Booking now with a refundable deposit will guarantee we can all stay in the same place!

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For those unable to make the road trip to San Antonio, David Schubert, OFS is involved in an organization **RESULTS Educational Fund** that is hosting a fundraiser

***“The Seeds of Hope Benefit Dinner”.***

WHEN: Friday, October 12th, 2018

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Junior League, 1811 Briar Oaks Ln., Houston, TX 77027

COST: $150.00

Stay tuned as there will be a future online website to sign up to attend or just make a donation of your abilities. RESULTS is a movement of passionate, committed everyday people using their voices to influence political decisions that will bring an end to poverty.

**Mercy & Mary Retreat**

WHEN: Friday, October 19, 2018 7:15 pm – 8:15 pm

Saturday, October 20, 2018 7:45 am – 4:30 pm

WHERE: St. Theresa Catholic Church – Austin, TX

SPEAKER: Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, author of 33 Days to Morning Glory

CONTACT: Marian Missionaries of Divine Mercy (413) 944-8500, ext# 10

EMAIL: [events@marianmissionaries.org](mailto:events@marianmissionaries.org)

St. Thomas More Fraternity is hosting a “Franciscan Retreat Day” Saturday, November 17th, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Houston. FREE OF CHARGE

Topic: From Gospel to Life within the Franciscan Charism

Retreat Master: Fr. Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR from Pennsylvania.

For more info on Fr. Tickerhoof, go to: <http://www.franciscanstor.org/btickerhoofBIO/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EVENTS, PLEASE REFER TO E-MAILS FROM [secretary.StMaxSFO@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.StMaxSFO@gmail.com)

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