

Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity



LITANY OF HUMILITY

O Jesus! Meek & humble of heart
Hear me. From the desire of
being esteemed

Deliver me, Jesus

From the desire of being loved...
From the desire of being extolled...
From the desire of being honored...
From the desire of being praised...
From the desire of being preferred to others...
From the desire of being consulted...
From the desire of being approved...
From the fear of being humiliated...
From the fear of being despised...
From the fear of suffering rebukes...
From the fear of being calumniated...
From the fear of being forgotten...
From the fear of being ridiculed...
From the fear of being wronged...
From the fear of being suspected...

That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be esteemed more than I...
That, in the opinion of the world, others
may increase and I may decrease...
That others may be chosen & I set aside...
That others may be praised & I unnoticed...
That others may be preferred to me in everything...
That others may become holier than I, provided
that I may become as holy as I should...

Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val (1865-1930)
Secretary of State for Pope Saint Pius X

The morning started off with Phyllis & Eileen going through the interview process with Dora Freeman, the Formation Director and Fr. Mike Van Cleve, our Spiritual Assistant while the professed and candidates visited with delicious goodies. We are so excited that Phyllis and Eileen will be continuing on their journey with us as they move into candidacy!

Amy Le then lead us in a lovely Lenten prayer which ended with a Foot Washing of one another's feet. [the water was even warm!] Performing the actual foot washing and then being on the receiving end was a sobering reminder of what Jesus calls us to & how St. Francis walked the walk. We are called to serve, not be served.

Dora Freeman lead us in a spiritually moving Lenten Day of Reflection. It was based on Daniel Horans books on the seven last words of Jesus. Lots to ponder and take in. The group sharing was deep. I'm sure Amy's foot washing ceremony lent itself to the mood of the group. The morning

*Christ on the cross bows his
head,
Waiting for you,
That he may kiss you;
His arms are outstretched,
That he may embrace you,
His hands are open,
That he may enrich you,
His body spread out,
That he may give himself totally,
His feet are nailed,
That he may stay there,
His side is open for you,
That he may let you enter there.*

*Bonaventure
Soliloquy*

Our Rule 19: Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.

Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others.

Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend toward the ultimate encounter with the Father.

Striving and Tending

As Franciscans we are called to daily conversion. I can strive all I want; but if I myself am not joyful how in the world can I bring joy and hope to others?

Father Dave Pivonka, T.O.R. led a revival at the Charismatic Center last night. He spoke of when Francis was called to rebuild the church it was a period of renewal. Our Church continues to need renewal. He stated that Christians must be joyful. In the midst of suffering we are to leave our troubles at the foot of the Cross and find Joy as we move toward the ultimate encounter with the Father. In his book Breath of God he writes:

Joy is a concrete sign or fruit that the Spirit of God is working in your life. St. John XXIII is often called the 'happy pope.' He spoke of joy being a true sign of the Holy Spirit. When speaking of joy in his apostolic exhortation Joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis reminds Christians that we must not constantly look like we are returning from a funeral.

Father Dave jokingly said that with Pope Francis we find for the first time in a Vatican document the term "sourpuss"

In this same book he writes of one of his favorite images of Francis, standing with arms open wide in prayer with the Father. We must open up ourselves and allow the Holy Spirit to animate us as we go about our secular lives and do what we have been called to do. We must remain open to what we are called to do.

I am looking forward to our Regional retreat and the topic "Perfect Joy". It would be an understatement to say I sure need some Joy right now. I find inspiration in the motto that inspired Saint Junipero Serra in his life and work "Siempre adelante! Keep moving forward!"

In the homily of the canonization mass for St. Junipero Serra Pope Francis stated "For him, this was the way to continue experiencing the joy of the Gospel, to keep his heart from growing numb, from being anesthetized. He kept moving forward, because the Lord was waiting. He kept going, because his brothers and sisters were waiting. He kept going forward to the end of his life. Today, like him, may we be able to say: Forward! Let's keep moving forward!"

At the Regional meeting Brother Juniper shared with us the beauty of Therese, the Little Child of Jesus. All she wanted to do was love and please Jesus. She wrote that she was a little ball, and that the Baby Jesus could joyfully play with. He also spoke about the Toy story movies in which the greatest joy of the toys was when the children would play with them. I also see another side when the old traditional toy, Woody the cowboy; is threatened by the flashy and new astronaut toy Buzz Lightyear. It seems we are always looking for the new and improved version of this or that. Our wants far outnumber our needs. Our world fills us with so many distractions and passing moments of pleasure and happiness, yet we only find true joy when we are open to the Holy Spirit and do what our Heavenly Father wants us to do. Often, through the Gifts of Wisdom and Counsel we know what to do; yet we do not have the Fortitude to do it as it is so much easier to join in on the gossip or to remain silent.

God is Love. (1 John 4:8).

We are all created in the image and likeness of God. Nothing else can bring true joy. We must reflect this love always. We must keep moving forward!

Father Pivonka offered a recommendation in the previously mentioned book. How often do people ask you to pray for them or a loved one? Why not stop, and pray right then for a moment with them? How much more meaningful would that be. We can immediately bring **joy** and **hope** to others.

Our heavenly father, who knew our name before we were born, did not create us to be a wooden cowboy, ball, or toy astronaut. He breathed life into us to be in paradise with Him. All we have to do is allow His spirit to animate and be our advocate and Trust in Him.

Jesus, I Trust in you.

michael

We are not just Franciscans at our gatherings and in our Churches. We must be in the forefront and visible. Recently our sister, Fabiola, had the opportunity to donate a large amount of materials from her work to the Studium Theologicum Franciscanum in Quito, Ecuador. Following the completion of a project in Ecuador, her company had modems, phones, electrical equipment they were going to destroy. Fabiola stepped in and said someone could use this. We were able to reach our Regional Minister, who in turn got her in touch with the International Fraternity, who steered her to Fr. Mario Oretaga who works at the Catholic University of Cuenca. Within hours, Fr. Mario was picking up most of the materials donated. Good work, Fabiola!

A BIG THANK YOU to all who participated in this year's Caritas Day, our third year in a row! It was hard work sorting a lot of dirty old shoes, but well worth the effort. Some people will be getting some nice Easter shoes! Thanks, David, Martha, Ike, Alan (his two sons Jack & Aidan), Dora, Phyllis, Danny, Maria and Alba. Mercy in Motion!

NEXT MEETING: APRIL 7, 2018. We'll be back in the Outback House. Initial Formation 9:00-10:00, Regular Gathering begins at 10:00. Bring your white booklet "From Gospel to Life" (the Rule book).

REMINDER: The retreat is coming up May 4-6 in Lake Charles. Registration forms have been emailed. Scholarship money is available. We encourage car pooling; a gas stipend is available also. We must firm up the details of who is going when at our next meeting,

