Secular Franciscan Order september 2018 Newsletter

 

***The Secular Franciscan Order was established by St. Francis of Assisi more than 800 years ago. Our purpose is to bring the Gospel to life where we live and where we work. We look for ways to embrace the Gospel in our lives and try to help others to do likewise.***

**2018 is the 40th year of the 3rd Order Secular Franciscans**

 **“Did you know Saint Francis of Assisi wrote sixty hymns of praise and worship and**

**encouraged church music in every way he could!”**

**All Creatures of Our God and King **

All creatures of our God and King. Lift up your voice and with us sing – Alleluia! Alleluia! Thou burning sun with golden beam. Thou silver moon with softer gleam! O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong. Ye clouds that sail in heaven along. O praise Him! Alleluia! Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice, Ye lights of evening, find a voice! O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou flowing water, pure and clear, Make music for thy Lord to hear, Alleluia! Alleluia! Thou fire so masterful and bright, Thou givest man both warmth and light! O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

And thou, most kind and gentle death, Waiting to hush our latest breath, O praise Him! Alleluia! Thou leadest home the child of God. And Christ our Lord the way hath trod. O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless, And worship Him in humbleness, O praise Him! Alleluia! Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, And praise the Spirit, Three in One! O praise Him, O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Francis of Assisi** (1182-1226) *Translated by William H. Draper (1855-1933)*

September 1, 2018 St. Maximilian Fraternity Meeting was held in The Outback at St. Jerome Catholic Church. We began the meeting with praying from the Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order, page 35, led by Amy Le, OFS.

Consuelo Davis, OFS prayerfully read the Candle lighting remembering past, present & future Fraternity members.

Joe Swonke, OFS led us in the Liturgy of the Hours for the day. Beautifully Done!

Dora Freeman, OFS led a special prayer for Franciscan needs and our specific Fraternity’s needs. Emphasis was placed on the recent scandals in our precious Catholic Church.

Together, we read from The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, Article 8, pg. 16. We then discussed its relevance and meaning in light of the recent Cardinal/Bishop’s sexual scandals. Dora Freeman, OFS then presented a guided meditation, followed by more discussion & heartfelt sharing. The focus was on prayer and contemplation.

Amy Le, OFS shared a handout on the Season of Creation which is an annual celebration of prayer and action to protect the environment. We were given information on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) with their mission statement and how our Rule of Life is integrated. We then took turns reading from the Canticle of Creation, had a quick break, then had private/personal time to ponder the Canticle. We gathered back together and shared what was on our hearts. It was beautifully written and gave us all words to continue to ponder.

Karen Parsons, OFS brought a children’s book ***she wrote*** on The Canticle of Creation. It was beautifully illustrated and fit in so perfectly with Amy’s discussion. Copies available for purchase – contact Karen.

A sign-up sheet was passed around to volunteer to bring **toiletry items** for the people who pass through Casa Juan Diego. A list has been emailed to our Fraternity so everyone will be able to participate if they so desire. Bring your items to the next meeting, 10-6-18.

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. David Schubert, OFS stayed to share his wisdom and insight!





**Rebuild My Church**

It is with heartfelt gratitude that I had the opportunity to participate in the Formation Visioning Workshop held recently in Kansas. The work that was accomplished there is certainly going to impact our Order and our Church.

 The participants included our National Executive Council, Regional Formation Directors, Regional and Provincial Spiritual Assistants and 12 of us who had read the information in the Tau and applied for a chance to participate. Truly a blessing and one I took seriously. I joked with Dora that whenever I have gone to conferences I tend to miss a session for one reason or another. This was unlike anything I have ever before attended and I did not want to miss a thing!

The preplanning that National had done was evident from the start, and to have Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR, as our keynote speaker was awesome. He expressed how glad he was to be addressing a group of Franciscans. He challenged us in so many ways. He remarked that just as Francis was called to rebuild our Church, so too are we. Are we equipped to do this? Is our Formation sound? Why do so many people profess and then disappear? We as Franciscans are counter-cultural and must remain Christocentric as the secular world has turned away from Christ. Jesus Christ must be at the center of all we do, and our formation must go from Gospel to Life and life to gospel. He asked the question, what if we had no books? No CDS or DVDs? What would we do? Hmmmmm

His 2-hour talk was over way too fast; but he gave permission for an audio recording that is on our Nafra site. I will share additional information at our October gathering. There is also a full length movie he has. You can see the trailer by googling St. Francis movie ”Sign of Contradiction” and going to the 4PM site.

 This Formation Visioning Workshop sure came at the right time as our Church is going through a very difficult time. The evil one is having his way. Some are turning away from our Church and many good priests are questioning their vocation. He shared that with this recent wave of scandals traveling in his Friars robe has had its issues. As we were getting ready for a break, a couple of the participants asked the Friars and Spiritual Assistants to stand and know that we love them and will continue our praying for them and all our Church. The next morning, Father Nic, TOR, from Haiti humbly said how moved he was from all of our support, but that we, the Secular Franciscans represented the future of our Franciscan Family. WHOA……

 I found the following passage posted by Paul on the Franciscan Discernment Blog on Nov. 13, 2017. It reads:

 On one occasion, a parishioner brought to the attention of St. Francis a priest involved in a scandalous affair. He asked St. Francis to go and correct the priest involved in a scandalous affair. The first thing St. Francis did was to kneel and kiss the hands of the priest. (From the Thirteenth-Century Testimonies #6.) St. Francis was not condoning any possible wrong behavior of the priest, but instead was teaching us that God works through his church, even when its ministers fall short. Whenever St. Francis met a priest, he would kiss his hands, because no matter how sinful or corrupt the priest, Christ still comes to us through those hands (in the Eucharist).  St. Francis said, “If I were to meet at the same time some saint coming down from heaven and any poor little priest, I would first pay my respects to the priest and proceed to kiss his hands first. I would say, ‘Ah, just a moment St. Lawrence, because this person’s hands handle the Word of Life and possess something that is more than human. These hands have touched my Lord, and no matter what they be like, they could not soil Him or lessen His virtue . . . To honor the Lord, honor His minister . . . He can be bad for himself, but for me he is good.”

As Catholics we believe in the True presence in the Holy Eucharist. It is only through our Priests that the Holy Spirit comes down and turns the bread and wine into His Most Sacred Body and Blood. We must not be passive when the beast is allowing our Church to be attacked. We must speak out and defend our Holy Church and Her Religious. Just as our father Francis wanted everyone to go to Heaven, we too must continue to pray and do penance for all sin. Let us remember the words of our Seraphic Father Francis, who said, ”We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way”.

Peace

michael

***Next Meeting: October 6th, 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!

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. COST: $150.00

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

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 and 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 or 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



Pray for Carol, Ryan & Chris!

Refer to our Minister’s August post

