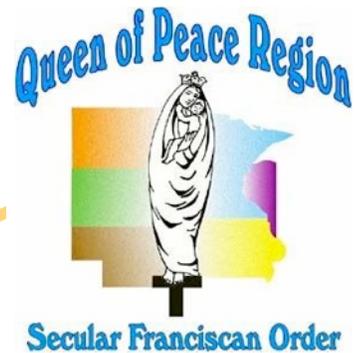


TRACINGS

ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS | www.queenofpeaceregion.org



Spring 2015, Issue 12

Minister's Quarterly Message

As I write this, we are a few days into the (very cold) New Year. Did you make any New Year's Resolutions? According to Neale Walsch, "Yearning for a new way will not produce it. Only ending the old way can do that."

The most popular resolution is weight loss. Most of us know instinctively that we have to get rid of the old (junk food) to make way for the new (healthy eating). The same holds true for our Spiritual/Franciscan lives. Are you confessing the same sins? Ask yourself, "what is the old and what do you want to be the new?" St. Francis and St. Clare both rid themselves (dying to self) of the old so that they would make way for the new (openness to God).

I think the reason that they have endure so long is not because of

their "Birdbath Franciscanism" but that they were always open the newness of God. It is very ironic that the two of them turned their backs on the societies of their day in favor of God and the societies of Assisi (of the last 800 years) have ridden their coattails. I suspect that they would be appalled at the profiteering.

Let us remember that St. Francis' dying instructions were for us "to do what is ours to do." That gives us a world of opportunity to end our old ways in favor of giving space to new ways. God Bless and make (more/new) room for God.

Peace and all Good



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Servant Leadership Opportunity

Become the next Tracings Editor! Answer the call to service as a Franciscan! Share your gifts with everyone in the Region! Putting together a newsletter is as easy as pie. All you need is a computer, MS Word and you are in business. (A MAC may work better.) Just download the template of your choice and plug in pictures and data. Regional fraternity members provide the content. The editor is responsible for putting it together, not writing the whole thing! And you only need to do it four times a year! Don't say no to this one—it is a privilege to serve. Contact the acting editor if you feel called. gordonofs@gmail.com



Formation

This Ash Business

Submitted by Keith and Margaret Gass
Regional Formation Team (Iowa Cluster)

The ashes used on Ash Wednesday are made from the previous year's palms. The priest burns the palms to make ashes, which he then blesses. On Ash Wednesday, the priest uses them to make the sign of the cross on the foreheads of the faithful to symbolize that we belong to Christ, who died on the cross, and that we are sorry for our sins.

This is in imitation of the cross or seal that is put on a Christian during baptism, when we are delivered from slavery to sin and the devil and made a slave of righteousness and Christ (Romans 6:3-18).

Catherine de Hueck Doherty discusses ashes in the following passage from one of her many books:

On Ash Wednesday we have ashes placed on our foreheads. What a curious custom. What does it mean, having ashes on your head? It means that you came from the earth and to the earth you will return. "Remember, man, that you are but dust."

Ah, but what dust! You are dust that is going to be one with God. Isn't that enough to make you dance, right in the middle of this ash business? We are not an ordinary dust - we are a dust that is going to be eternal, a dust that is going to be glorified, a dust that is going to be with God. So, let us prepare ourselves to receive that

"dust" with joy - a joy based on discipline - and let us enter the corridor of Lent.

Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves, of really straightening the ways of the Lord. What is it that we have to tear out of our soul, by the roots? What is it that stands between us and God? Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit? Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's hesitation. Let us be willing to surrender all that we have within ourselves.

Let each one of us open his or her heart to God, and let him wash us clean. Let him fill us with a hunger for him, and a thirst. Let him make us his own, so that when we come to Easter our joy will be beyond reckoning. All we have to do is pass from the old into the new. Leave behind the things that bind us away from God. Cut the cords with the scissors of love and go forth.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty, *Season of Mercy: Lent and Easter*

About JPIC

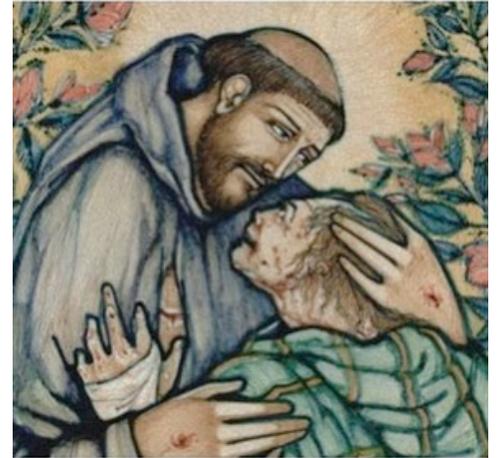
from Animatepeace.blog.com

What is **Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation**? For us Seculars, it is simply our rule in action. JPIC is based on the gospel. It bubbles up from the gospel. It is lived out from the gospel.

Friar Francisco O'Connaire, the Executive Secretary for the Interreligious JPIC Commission says, "The focus of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is to support the restoration of "right relationships"; with God, in

oneself, between people and with creation."

JPIC is not just something we do; it is who we are, as followers of Jesus in the way of Francis. It is an attitude that influences what we do and how we minister, with God, with ourselves, with other people and with creation.



The former Apostolic Commissions mainly embraced Articles 14-19 of our rule while JPIC embraces the wholeness of the rule, as do we who profess to that rule. The wholeness of the rule also includes prayer and contemplation, which is first and foremost, our fraternal communities as well as all our other communities, and Our Lady, Mother Mary, as Francis placed the protection of the Order in her hands.

Mission Statement for JPIC

The mission of JPIC is to assist Professed Secular Franciscans as they reflect on their relationship with God as manifested in the fruits of conversion in their lives. This with special regard to the daily choices made in the areas of justice, peacemaking and respect for all created things and people; as brothers and sisters of penance, bringing life to the Gospel and the Gospel to life.

~ From the OFS FUN Manual



Lent: Called to Feast on Gospel Life

By Sr. Lois Erpelding, OSF,
Spiritual Assistant, St. John Paul II
fraternity

In St. Mark's Gospel Jesus proclaims: "Reform your lives and believe in the Gospel." (Mark 2:15) In the past few weeks we have pondered the Gospel of Mark's opening chapters: the call of the apostles, Jesus' prayer, teaching in the synagogue, healing, driving out demons, and being hemmed in by crowds.

In St. Francis' twisted turns of his journey of young adulthood we sense a progression of Francis discerning his call. Francis was led away from being a warrior and physically rebuilding churches. In his early childhood, Francis was repulsed by the area reserved for lepers. During his time of early discernment, Francis met a leper, dismounted, kissed the leper, and experienced what would become a permanent life changing conversion. FAEDII,74 This conversion moment he previously

would have resisted; now he yielded to the opportunity of hospitality to one "on the outside of life". This conversion would eventually lead to more ministry to those with leprosy. With the help of God's grace, Francis became a servant and friend of the lepers. He modeled for his brothers service to our "brother Christians" with leprosy and inviting them to do the same.

Francis moved: from exclusion to inclusion; scorn and apathy to compassion; meeting those in forced isolation to one of being in relationship; from self-orientation to other orientation, from a partially closed mind to open heart and hands; from hindering approachability to fostering approachability; from youthful personal perspective to Gospel perspective; from privilege to Gospel life focused for himself and his followers.

Not only were the lepers bold, but so were Jesus and Francis in their ministry to those with leprosy. What bold movements will I choose in my spiritual growth this Lent? Like Jesus and Francis, to whom will I stretch my hand and

voice this Lent, dying to self and breaking forth renewed resurrection? In the words of songwriter Bernadette Farrell "Tremble when you meet the poor and see Christ in their eyes."

What conversion moments will I tremble with in gratitude as I acknowledge God's grace working through our words and actions? Yes, together we are marked with ashes and called likewise to: "Reform our lives and believe in the Gospel."



Regional Spring Gathering

The 2015 Spring Retreat, hosted by the St Francis of Assisi Fraternity, will be held at St Francis Convent, 116 8th Ave SE, Little Falls MN 56345 on Saturday, April 11, 2015. The topic will be on human trafficking with registration beginning at 8AM, coffee, juice and rolls provided. The retreat will begin at 8:45AM and close at 3:30PM. The cost, including lunch, will be \$25.00 by April 1st or \$30.00 after that date or at the door. No refunds will be made. Checks should be made payable to the St Francis of Assisi Fraternity and registrations mailed to Claudia Barnier, 7356 Cable Rd, Little Falls MN 56345.

The St Francis of Assisi Fraternity

JPIC Animator Appointments made!

The Executive Council appointed Cynthia Gunsolly, OSF and Mary Higgins, OSF to be the Regional Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Animators. Assignments are effective immediately.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Queen of Peace Regional Spring Gathering

The 2015 Regional Spring Gathering will be held at St Francis Convent, 116 8th Ave SE, Little Falls MN 56345 on Saturday, April 11, 2015. Hosted by the St Francis of Assisi Fraternity, the retreat will begin at 8:45am and close at 3:30pm. Cost, including lunch, is \$25.00 by April 1st or \$30.00 after and at the door. Checks to be made payable to St Francis of Assisi Fraternity and registrations mailed to Claudia Barnier, 7356 Cable Rd, Little Falls MN 56345

Annual Regional Fraternity Meeting

The Regional Fraternity meeting will be at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo, MN again this year. Fraternity Ministers, mark your calendars for 29 thru 31 May 2015. Invitation letter has been emailed with Registration form attached. The Minister's delegate (other than Vice Minister) must be selected then appointed in writing.

OFS Summer Seminar

A Servant Leadership Seminar will be the focus of the Summer Seminar for all OFS in Altoona, PA, July 9-12, 2015.

Nebraska Chapter of Mats: Servant Leadership Workshop

This Workshop will be hosted by St. Clare Fraternity on Saturday, August 8, at the Franciscan Monastery of St. Clare, 22625 Edgewater Road, Omaha, NE 68022. Contact Ann Reynek, OFS, for detailed information. areynek@cox.net

Queen of Peace Regional Fall Gathering

The 2015 Regional Fall Gathering, to be hosted by Saint Louis Fraternity, is scheduled for September 19th, 2015 in Rochester, MN from 9:00AM to 4:00PM.

2015 All Iowa Retreat

Now scheduled for Sunday, September 27th, 2015 at Otter Creek Nature Center, Tama, IA

Tracings

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