

"I have done what is mine to do; may Christ teach you yours!" —Francis of Assisi

November brings us to the end of the liturgical year and reflections on the saints and eternal life. Liz and I walked with my mother-in-law, Barb Garni, as she completed her earthly journey last month. We are so thankful to all of the fraternity members who prayed for us and expressed sympathy and support during a difficult time for our family. I think that consoling those who grieve is a beautiful act of mercy or charity. We have all dealt with the loss of loved ones and know how comforting it is to have good friends and family praying and offering help. Its easy to forget the importance of this service when our lives are so busy. Yet, I know that its at these difficult times that community is needed most; friends, family, parish and fraternity. Burying the dead is a corporal work of mercy that is in reach of all of us but sadly is often not responded to. I like that our fraternity remembers our deceased members during the liturgy of the hours. They are our brothers and sisters and need our prayers too, and our prayer for them is an act of mercy. May God help us to live charity and mercy in our daily lives, especially with those who are sorrowing.
—Franz

This month's Fraternity Gathering

November 17, 2019, 12:30 p.m. – Pot luck and gathering.

Holy Family Catholic Church, social hall
2430 West 3rd St., Duluth
Park in the parish office parking lot (west side)

Agenda:

1. Opening prayer – Barb
2. LotH – Jane
3. Gospel sharing – Bob
4. Ongoing Formation – Speaker, Michael Orman:
Creating wills (General Constitutions, Article 23.3)
5. Rite of Admission for Kathy Schmidt
6. Damiano schedule for 2020
7. Business
 - a. Approve minutes, assign ministries
 - b. Treasurer reports, bills, receipts
 - c. Formation report
 - d. JPIC report
8. Vocation and closing prayers

Next month's meeting: December 15, 2019.

Ongoing formation – Franz: *Live Like Francis*, Reflection 14

Gospel Reading, 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time: Lk 21:5-19

While some people were speaking about how the temple was adorned with costly stones and votive offerings, Jesus said, "All that you see here--the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down." Then they asked him, "Teacher, when will this happen? And what sign will there be when all these things are about to happen?"

He answered, "See that you not be deceived, for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and 'The time has come.' Do not follow them! When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for such things must happen first, but it will not immediately be the end." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues from place to place; and awesome sights and mighty signs will come from the sky.

"Before all this happens, however, they will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony. Remember, you are not to prepare your defense beforehand, for I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute. You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives."

Faith Matters: Reflections from your Spiritual Assistant

Article 21: *On various levels, each fraternity is animated and guided by a council and minister who are elected by the professed according to the constitutions.*

Their service, which lasts for a definite period, is marked by a ready and willing spirit and is a duty of responsibility to each member and to the community.

Within themselves the fraternities are structured in different ways according to the norm of the constitutions, according to the various needs of their members and their regions, and under the guidance of their respective council.

“Without a vision the people lose restraint; but happy is the one who follows instruction” (Proverbs 29:18, NABRE). The footnotes for this passage read, “This much-cited proverb has been interpreted in several different ways. “Vision” and “instruction” mean authoritative guidance for the community. People are demoralized without credible leadership, but any individual heeding traditional instruction can still find happiness.” Usually when people hear this passage they think about the need for leaders who can inspire those they lead to move boldly into a better future.

Leadership in the SFO is both an awesome responsibility and something that each one of us is called to exercise. At the forefront of each fraternity, at all levels, is the elected council, led by the Minister. The Minister and council are tasked to “animate and guide” the fraternity. That means they have a special responsibility to listen to the voice of God alive in our midst (our vision) and discern how to best help members respond to God’s call.

While the council members have specific leadership roles, we all are called to leadership in two ways: 1) we actively participate in supporting the fraternity and sharing in the work of leading prayer, offering our wisdom in fraternity discussions or assisting in our apostolates, and 2) we make ourselves available for council service when called forth by fraternity members in elections. Every one of us has something to offer to the fraternity, and we offer our gifts generously for the good of all. Our spirit is that of Servant Leadership.

This past September we were blessed to have our first fraternity election. Those members elected to the council are clearly “*marked by a ready and willing spirit.*” Let us support them in their service and continue to hold them in our prayers. —Bob

Franciscan Saints/Blesseds of the Month

- 4 ST CHARLES BORROMEEO
- 7 ST DIDACUS OF ALCALA
- 13 ST FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI
- 14 ST NICHOLAS TAVELIC
- 17 ST ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY
- 18 BL SALOME
- 19 ST AGNES OF ASSISI

Agnes was the younger sister of St. Clare of Assisi. After she joined Clare at her convent their father came along with several relatives to bring Agnes back home. According to legend Agnes then became fixed to the spot and the men couldn’t move her no matter how much they tried. They left her there.

Agnes devoted all her spare time to prayer and contemplation. In 1221 Francis sent her to Florence to head up a new convent of Poor Ladies there. Later he sent her to several other cities to establish further houses.

When Clare was close to death in 1253, she sent for Agnes to assist her in her final days. Before she died Clare predicted that Agnes would soon join her. Agnes died three months later.

- 24 COMMEMORATION of ALL DECEASED of the FRANCISCAN ORDERS
- 26 ST LEONARD OF PORT MAURICE
- 27 ST FRANCIS ANTHONY FASANI
- 28 ST JAMES OF THE MARCH
- 29 ALL SAINTS OF THE FRANCISCAN ORDERS

ODDS ‘N’ ENDS

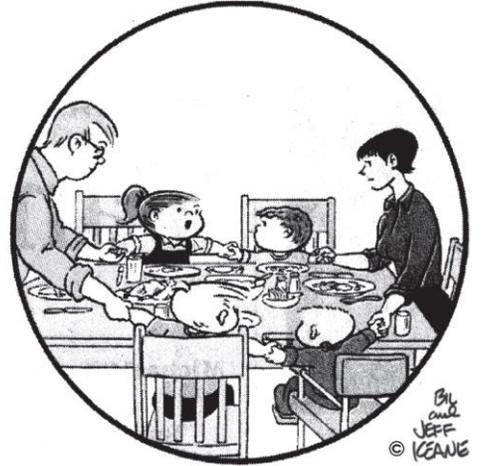
Lenten Retreat opportunity.

Jane and I have set up a directed retreat the weekend of February 28-March 1 at the Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center on Trout Lake in northern Wisconsin. The retreat director will be Sr. Marla Lang, FSPA, who led Darlene in her pre-profession discernment retreat. There is room in the cabin for other fraternity members who would like to attend this retreat. Let me know if you are interested. —Bob



Some of the fraternity members at the Damiano volunteer dinner

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil and Jeff Keane



"We hafta hold hands while we say grace so nobody gets a head start eating. Right, Mommy?"

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Barb's recognition at the volunteer dinner



Our new Fr. Solanus Casey painting with the frame Kathy found, along with Franz



"One order loaves and fishes. Would you like fries with that?"

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Newsletter edited by Bob

Faithful Democracy" Money in Politics Campaign

Overview of the Campaign:

The Gospel of Matthew tells us that we must not serve God and money. (Matthew 6:24) After hearing God's call to "rebuild His Church" a young St. Francis famously renounced his wealthy merchant father and all his worldly possessions. Our faith teaches us that we must recognize each person as a gift from God, and that we must emphasize the importance of the essential humanity and dignity of each person. And, as Pope Francis calls us to "meddle in politics" we interpret this concept as a requirement that all Americans must have an equal say in the public square.

Following the Gospel example of Jesus and taking our cues from both St. Francis and Pope Francis, the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) has taken the lead on an interfaith coalition, "Faithful Democracy" looking at the issue of money in politics. The coalition looks at the issue from both a faith and legislative perspective, using the issues of climate change, gun violence prevention, and immigration/private prisons as catalysts. Ultimately, we seek to advocate for overturning the Citizens' United ruling and passage of some form of public financing to stop the corrosive influence of unchecked big money on our democracy.

It is imperative that for a fully functioning and representative government of all Americans that we institute reforms in the areas of campaign finance, voting rights, and good governance. FAN has been an instrumental faith voice calling for those reforms since the Citizens United decision nearly a decade ago.

From the coalition's beginnings in the wake of the Citizens United decision, FAN and Faithful Democracy's work with the WISC (Washington Interfaith Staff Committee) was unique—it was multi-issue and worked with both faith-based and good governance partners including Public Citizen, Common Cause, People for the American Way, and Democracy 21. FAN and Faithful Democracy are now seen as the major faith-based players on issues of money in politics and good governance. The WISC community involvement in the work of getting big money out of politics stretches back even further than the passage of Citizens United. "Religious Leaders for Campaign Finance Reform" was instrumental in the passage of McCain-Feingold in 2002. After Citizens United, it was imperative for WISC to once again focus on issues of good governance and FAN was tasked with taking the lead.

Join us as we bring about the Kingdom of God here on earth and implement vital reforms that are necessary to have a fully functioning and healthy democracy.



FAN's Jason Miller with fellow Virginia Residents on Lobby Visit to Senator Warner's office in 2014.



FAN Staff attended the July 2019 U.S. Senate Introduction of the Amendment to Overturn Citizens United in front of the Supreme Court.