



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

Minister's Reflection

“Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise”. The merciful words of our Savior on the cross to the Good Thief come to my mind as we near the end of Lent with its Passion narratives. Whenever we say to Jesus, “remember me when you come into your kingdom”, we experience a new “today”. I know that Jesus wants us all to be with Him in Paradise and a key to that journey is forgiveness. We need to forgive others and we also need to ask for forgiveness. A good amount of courage, humility and compassion is required for forgiveness. Our human nature resists it, avoids it or tries to ignore it. St Francis once said, “I feel that I am the greatest sinner that ever existed.” This is an incredible statement, and sheds light on how he could forgive and be merciful to others, after knowing God’s forgiveness himself. In our fraternity life, I pray that we can all be generous in forgiving each other, when a hurtful word is said. Whether it be in Bible sharing or in our ongoing formation, a comment or an opinion may hurt, and the temptation is always to hold onto it, where it festers. We are brothers and sisters in a family where mercy and gentleness must reign. With that in mind, I ask for your forgiveness for the times when I did not act like the brother. May we all be reconciled with each other and become better witnesses to God’s mercy. —Franz

JPIC – (Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation)

From the Franciscan Action Network:

Plastic production is directly connected to climate change as 99% of plastics are derived from fossil fuels. U.S. shorelines are littered with millions of tons of single-use plastic. We must cut down our reliance on single-use plastics. While this can seem like a daunting task, we invite you to take a simple action as part of your commitment to [Living the Change](#).

Start with something small, like plastic straws. It's estimated that 1 billion plastic straws are used daily worldwide. Single-use plastic straws are not recycled. They are used for minutes and become instant plastic pollution, many times ending up in our oceans. However, several major U.S. cities, including Seattle and Washington, D.C., have limited single-use plastic straws. Let's build on this momentum.

—Jane

This month's Fraternity Gathering

April 28, 2019, 12:30 p.m. – Pot luck and gathering.

Holy Family Catholic Church, lower level
2430 West 3rd St., Duluth
Park in the lower (gravel) parking lot

Agenda:

1. Opening prayer – Barb
2. LotH – Keith
3. Gospel sharing – Darlene
4. Welcoming ceremony for Kathy
5. Ongoing Formation – Rob, Reflection 11 in **Live Like Francis**, or alternative
6. Business
 - a. Treasurer reports, bills, receipts
 - b. Formation and JPIC reports
7. Vocation and closing prayer

Next month's meeting: May 19, 2019.

Ongoing formation: TBD



Faith Matters: Reflections from your Spiritual Assistant

Article 9: The Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, was open to His every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of his family. The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently.

There's no doubt that Francis had a great devotion to Mary. He wrote prayers in honor of Mary. He dedicated his order to her as well. It is of Mary that Francis wrote, "Holy Virgin Mary, among the women born into the world, there is no one like you."

Like everything in Francis' theology this devotion was Christological, that is centered on Jesus Christ. Mary was special because she was the means by which God's gift of Jesus was brought into this world. Mary had a choice to make and she said, yes. That was her "complete self-giving" that is referred to in our Rule. It was Mary's willingness to open herself to God's call and action in her life that Francis revered, and held up as an example to all Franciscans.

We are also to imitate Mary by "praying earnestly and confidently." What does that mean? I believe it first means praying to God as the source of all goodness, knowing in faith that God knows us, knows our needs, and loves us unconditionally. We pray not to convince some divine "candy man in the sky" to give us what we want, but to conform our hearts and minds to the will of God. It is Mary's, "let it be done to me," and Jesus', "thy will be done." True prayer changes us, not God. Francis saw in Mary this notion of prayer lived out. May we approach our prayer in the same spirit.

Hail, O Lady,
Holy Queen,
Mary, holy Mother of God,
Who are the Virgin made Church,
chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven
whom he consecrated with His most holy beloved Son
and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,
in whom there was and is
all fullness of grace and every good.

Hail His Palace!
Hail His Tabernacle!
Hail His Dwelling!
Hail His Robe!
Hail His Servant!
Hail His Mother!

And hail all You holy virtues
which are poured into the hearts of the faithful
through the grace and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit,
that from being unbelievers,
You may make them faithful to God.

--Francis of Assisi

—Bob

Franciscan Saints/Blesseds of the Month

- 3 ST BENEDICT THE BLACK
- 16 ST BERNADETTE SOUBIROUS
- 17 ST BENEDICT JOSEPH LABRE
- 21 ST CONRAD OF PARZHAM
- 23 BL GILES OF ASSISI

Giles was the third young man from Assisi to join St Francis. He was a man of means and upon joining with Francis, Giles divided his entire fortune among the poor. In all aspects of life as a friar he lived out the values of poverty, humility, and piety. He was a diligent preacher and servant to the poor.

Giles wanted to go on pilgrimage to many of the holy sites around the Mediterranean. With Francis' blessing he traveled to sites in Italy, Spain and Jerusalem.

In the year 1219, at the great chapter of mats, Francis commissioned Giles to go to Africa with several companions, to preach the gospel to the Muslims. That mission failed. Giles returned to Italy to live out his days in prayer and service to others at a convent in Perugia.

- 24 ST FIDELIS OF SIGMARINGEN
- 28 BL LUCHESIUS

Wisdom from Fr. Solanus

- ❖ The Blessed Virgin Mary! Next to Jesus Himself, and always with Him, may she ever be our refuge and our stay during this pilgrimage on earth.
- ❖ Would that we were appreciative as we ought to be! How happy we would be simply in our creation and the faculties we are endowed with and the divine promises of eternal reward.
- ❖ God's mercy is above all his works, and His patience is essentially one with His mercy.

Gospel Reading, Second Sunday of Easter: Jn 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.



"What could I say? They ARE her most Eastery shoes."

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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Prayer over the people:
Direct, O God, we pray the hearts of your faithful, and in your kindness grant your servants this grace: that, abiding in the love of you and their neighbor they may fulfill the whole of your commands. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil and Jeff Keane

Filling in for Bil Keane, little Billy draws this Easter cartoon.



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ODDS 'N' ENDS

This month at our fraternity gathering we formally welcome Kathy Schmidt as she begins the Inquiry phase of Initial Formation. Praise and thanks be to God!

The CIOFS Family Commission announced its 2019 theme: **"The family in the different encyclicals and Catechism of the Catholic Church."** They suggest that fraternities reflect on this in ongoing formation. —Bob

Newsletter edited by Bob