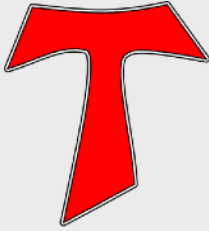


# TAU SHALOM

Emerging Fraternity | Secular Franciscan Order | La Crosse, WI



## Upcoming Dates

Wednesday 26 August.  
Regular Meeting, with  
initial Formation

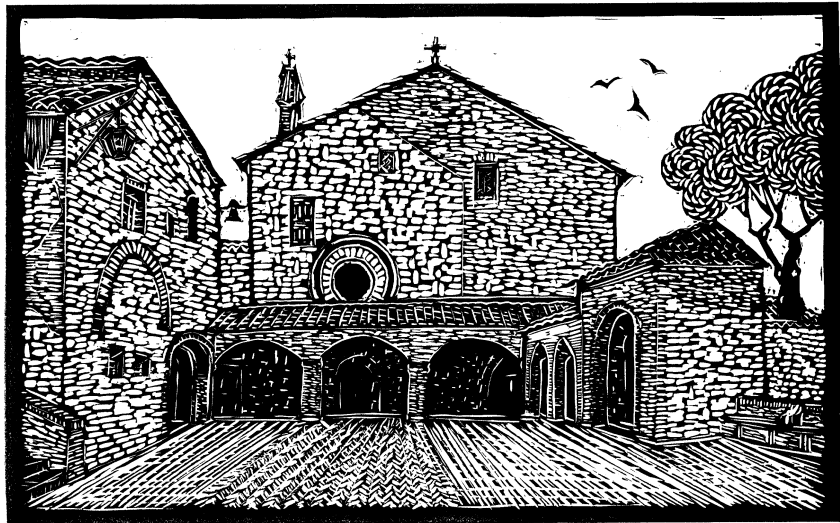
Saturday 12 September.  
Business Meeting, with  
ongoing Formation

## Prayer Intentions

For all students and  
teachers as they begin their  
school year, whether online  
or in person.

For families who are  
suffering with illness, death,  
depression, and financial  
pressures due to the  
COVID-19 pandemic

For our General Election in  
November, that elected  
candidates will be the  
choice of the Holy Spirit.



## Minister's Message

Pax et Bonum my dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

It is believed that the average adult makes approximately 35,000 decisions each day. Do I hit the snooze, or do I get out of bed at the sound of the alarm? Do I walk up the stairs one step at a time, or two? Do I fry up some eggs, or have cereal for breakfast? Do I pet Jack or Molly first as they greet me happily at the beginning of a new day?

Earlier this week we celebrated the memorial of dear Saint Clare. I've been contemplating the decision she made back in the year 1212 when she quietly snuck out of the walls of Assisi to meet brother Francis. That momentous decision would alter and transform the role of women throughout the Middle Ages.

I urge each of you to take time and read some of the writings of St. Clare. An excellent source of her writings is "Clare of



### Upcoming Meeting Information

We continue to meet virtually, using the Zoom platform. Please refer to the email from Emilio with information about logging into the Zoom meeting.

### From our Treasurer

Even though we're not meeting in person, please continue to support Tau Shalom with your financial contributions. Checks may be made payable to "Secular Franciscan Order, Tau Shalom." Send your contributions to:

Frederick Ellis  
 1320 Pinecrest Lane, #13  
 Onalaska, WI 54650-3479

Assisi, Early Documents", revised and expanded by Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M, Cap. Her letters are beautiful and powerful as they shed light on her unconditional love and devotion to Jesus Christ. Our decision to follow in the footsteps of dear St. Francis was also an extremely significant event! Albeit not as historical as St. Clare's discernment and decision, yours was an important one none the less. Your decision eventually placed each of you here with Tau Shalom, and for that I am very grateful. Each of your talents and personalities embody who we are as a fraternity!

I leave you with a portion of St. Clare's third letter to Agnes of Prague:

"Place your mind before the mirror of eternity! Place your soul in the brilliance of glory! Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance! And transform your entire being into the image of the Godhead Itself through contemplation. So that you too may feel what His friends feel as they taste the hidden sweetness that God Himself has reserved from the beginning for those who love Him. And, after all who ensnare their blind lovers in a deceitful and turbulent world have been completely sent away, you may totally love Him who gave Himself totally for your love, whose beauty the sun and the moon admire, whose rewards and their preciousness and greatness are without end; I am speaking of Him who is the Son of the Most High, whom the Virgin brought to birth and remained a virgin after His birth."

Please continue to be safe and healthy. I pray daily for each of you. I miss you all.

Your humble servant and minister,

**Kevin, OFS**

### *Spiritual Assistant's Message*

#### September Quarantine

This popular sounding word was actually referred to seasons and times in the Church. The word "quaranta" in some spellings means "40" and that immediately makes you think of the most famous quarantine, Lent.

The intended purpose of quarantine is to purify and restore – in time for a celebration of jubilation and joy (Easter). COVID quarantines prepare us to re-enter social structure and enjoy relief from worry and disease. On August 6, the feast of the Transfiguration, a harvest quarantine begins to prepare for the celebration of the Exultation of the Holy Cross on September 14. This is founded on a belief that what happened on Mount Tabor occurred 40 days before Good Friday. Thus, these were opportunities of renewal, reflection and maybe a new normal.

Our Father Francis kept many of these holy designated times. The one that comes to mind is the Lent of Saint Michael whose feast is on September 29. St Francis had a great devotion to this heavenly protector and if you pray the Office of the Passion, he invokes St Michael in various prayers. Yet it was during this “Lent” on September 17 he received the Stigmata. The place was LaVerna in Tuscany – beautiful to behold yet terrifying in its cliffs and ravines and its great attraction, for Francis and his close friars, for prayer, contemplation and transformation.

This pandemic could do the same for us. We pray for the intercession of Francis and Clare. We seek out the protection of St Michael. As members of the Franciscan family, may we offer our world an invitation to deepen ourselves in God in the “social distancing” of ourselves on these spiritual “LaVerna’s”. And with Saint Francis we pray. ...“St Michael, the Archangel, we pray, defend us ...”

## Fr Conrad OFM



I do not know whether civilization will survive or not but if we can continue to live with hope, and I really think we can because our Lord has given us his promise that he will stay with us at all times. He is the God of the living. He has overcome evil and death and his love is stronger than any form of death and destruction. That is why I feel that we should continually avoid the temptation of despair and deepen our awareness that God is present in the midst of all the chaos that surrounds us and that that presence allows us to live joyfully and peacefully in a world so filled with sorrow and conflict.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Henri J. Nouwen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the name.

## *JPIC Corner*

We are ambassadors of Peace and Good.

With all the turmoil and uncertainty in the world today it is more important than ever to listen for God's voice to look for opportunities to spread peace and good. It seems like there are so many

issues and forces trying to pull us apart today. It's easy to forget the humanity of people who seem different than us when, in reality, we are all one.

We have the chance to further our connectedness through a series of on-line Zoom events sponsored by the Franciscan Spirituality Center entitled *Racism and the Coulee Region: A Community Dialogue*. The series features local activists, speakers and artists to explore issues related to race and racism.

**AUGUST 25, 1-3 p.m.:** Guest speakers are Denise Christy Moss and Darrell Ferguson from the Enduring Families Project, which highlights re-enactments of local African-American historical figures to tell the history of La Crosse.

**SEPTEMBER 8, 6-8 p.m.:** Guest speaker is Diana Diazgranados, discussing *How to Talk to Youth About Racism*. Diana works as the project evaluator and mental health first aid trainer for Better Together, a youth mental health project in La Crosse County.

**SEPTEMBER 22, 6-8 p.m.:** Guest speaker is Walfsty Pierre, discussing *Mental Health and Collective Trauma in the Black Community*. Walfsty is a local outpatient therapist who seeks to normalize conversations about mental health in marginalized communities.

Each session is \$7. If cost is a barrier to attending, please call 608-791-5295 to make a confidential request to have the fee waived. [Please click here to register.](#)

Please consider attending one or more of these events. I feel they will contribute to our on-going conversation around issues of race relations.

**John Ott, OFS**

### *Formation Station*

Hello my Franciscan sisters and brothers! This month we are diving into Chapter 19 of The Franciscan Journey manual. The chapter is titled, *A Simple Way to Live*. The chapter itself is divided into two very clear sections. In the first section, Fr. Bach gives us a very helpful description and commentary of Article 11. Fr. Bach gives us nine points of commentary with the ninth point being the second half of the chapter. It focuses on the beatitudes and gives insight to how the Secular Franciscan can incorporate them into their lives.

Let me be honest for a minute, the Franciscans have always been known for vow of poverty and life of simplicity. This chapter for me was exactly what I needed to read to enflame my desire for that same simplicity in my life. It's not the simplicity that is attractive, but the desire to have nothing stand in the way of my relationship with our triune God. There is a real desire to avoid being possessed by possessions. Rather, I believe the desire is in allowing God to possess us in His infinite goodness. Fr. Bach also reminded me that we are not meant to "flee" the material world. The material world was not created "bad," but we are called to be in right relationship with God, others, the world, and ourselves.

The reflection ran even deeper. The rule challenges us to look inwardly and to allow the light of Christ to shine on all the places where our hearts yearn for possessions or power. On the surface I can say, "Of course! I don't seek power, I don't seek possessions, I don't let things get in the way of justice for all..." but in my own life, I realized that being comfortable with the way things are in my own life is something that I have that others might not. It is a difficult realization in my own life when I realize I am possessed by power and possession when I see the following things happening: 1) When I see my own desire and willingness to **not** want to make a connection between my unconscious actions and reality that they may impact others lives in a negative way, 2) When I don't take action to change my own life for the common good, because I may unconsciously fear that it may lead to "losing" something, whether a benefit, a material good, and status of power of some sort, and 3) When I have become complacent and disengaged with the reality others face on a day-to-day basis.

To me these are just a few places where I fall short, but this chapter has certainly been a great opportunity to reflect on my commitment of my baptism and my commitment of being a Secular Franciscan. There's a great freedom that is being offered by Christ, are we intentionally inviting Jesus to shine His Light on the shadowy places of our lives? May we strive to support each other as a fraternity on this endeavor and may we always do so with the joy and kindness that comes from heart full of love and service.

Peace and All Good,

**Emilio Alvarez, OFS**

Questions for Reflection:

Please review the chapter 19 carefully and write down items that stood out to you. Please be prepared to share with the larger group. How does Article 11 and the commentary resonate with your promise as a Secular Franciscan to live a life of simplicity? Are there areas for improvement or celebration?

### *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order - Article 11*

*Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for himself and his mother a poor and humble life, even though he valued creative things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children. Thus, in the spirit of the "Beatitudes," and as pilgrims and strangers on their way to the home of the Father, they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power.*

Simple living also takes shape by reducing material needs, by curbing a thirst for possessions and the domineering power that comes from ownership, and by using all God's gifts in a spirit of generosity, justice, and moderation. Gospel poverty for Secular Franciscans, then, consists in acquiring possessions justly, keeping needs to a minimum,

and using what they have as custodians for the generous benefit of others. In this way they live for the kingdom of God and not for this world according to the charter for happiness given in the “Beatitudes.”

from The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order with Catechism and Instructions (1981)

### *News from the Queen of Peace Region Fraternity Annual Meeting*

- Mary Seger was elected, by unanimous vote, as the new Queen of Peace Regional Fraternity secretary! We are tremendously proud to have a member of Tau Shalom sharing their talents with our regional fraternity. (She agreed to continue to serve as editor of the Tau Shalom newsletter.)
- The Queen of Peace Regional Guidelines update was approved. Once the new guidelines are published, we will make them available to each Tau Shalom member.
- The newly elected Regional Council is as follows:
  - Kim Pappas, OFS, Minister
  - Tim Taormina, OFS, Vice Minister
  - Mary Seger, OFS, Secretary
  - Edith Foren, OFS, Treasurer
  - Mona Wolney, OFS, Formation Director
  - Christopher Mathias, OFS, Northwest MN/ND/SD Councilor.
  - Gordon Walker, OFS, SE MN/WI Councilor
  - Luis Alvarez, OFS, IA/NE Councilor.

### *Birthdays and Profession Anniversaries*

Emily Alvarez - Birthday August 23

Tony Seger - Birthday September 14

Emilio Alvarez - Birthday September 15

Mary Seger - Birthday September 20

John Abendroth - Anniversary of Profession September 17, 2005

Emilio Alvarez - Anniversary of Profession September 24, 2018

Peggy Dubois - Anniversary of Profession September 24, 2018

Kevin Dubois - Anniversary of Profession September 24, 2018

John Ott - Anniversary of Profession September 24, 2018

Charlie Peters - Anniversary of Profession September 24, 2018

### *From the National Fraternity...*

Contributed by Sean O'Flaherty, Candidate:

"I have been thinking and reading about the effect of social media on contemplative life and Community, specifically religious community. My inclination was to recoil at it and seek reasons to diminish or banish it. This article helped put in context and make me feel more comfortable about utilizing current technical resources..."

[Embracing Technology in Times of Necessity and Change](#)

### *Grace Notes*

#### Message from the Tree

By simply being what we are  
Who we are  
We grow as we are meant to  
We live as we are meant to.  
By so doing,  
We bring Life to others  
And provide for others.  
Just as others provide for us  
And bring Life to us.  
Just by Simply Being.  
We are a Gift to you.  
Just as you are  
A Gift to Others.

Ray List, Candidate



Woods at Alverna, Italy