

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

As we prepare for our Fraternity picnic this month, I think it's a good time to share a short reflection on the role that fraternity has in our Franciscan journey. Fraternity keeps us from becoming self-centered, creates a place where apostolic work in the world is fostered, gives us strength where we are weak, gives opportunities to love others with all their goodness as well as their flaws and irritating ways. Fraternity provides an intimate spiritual family within a larger spiritual family of the Church where we can grow in holiness according to God's command, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:16). These excerpts taken from *To Live as Francis Lived*, (Leonard Foley) really point to the blessings that come with fraternity life. There is always the temptation to look at our gatherings as just another meeting, another isolated monthly commitment to get through. May God bless all of us and help us to be brothers and sisters to one another, a spiritual family to grow with. —Franz

Gospel Reading: Sixteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Mk 6:30-36

The apostles gathered together with Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat.

So they went off in the boat by themselves to a deserted place. People saw them leaving and many came to know about it. They hastened there on foot from all the towns and arrived at the place before them. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

Wisdom from Solanus Casey

- ❖ Let us thank God for the privilege of being made to resemble His Divine Majesty.
- ❖ We should make a virtue of earthly deprivations, by offering them all to our heavenly Father in union with Jesus, who said: "The Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."
- ❖ Unpleasant situations will always come out right if we only have a little confidence in the good God and our Blessed Mother.

This month's Fraternity Gathering

July 18, 2021, 12:30 p.m. – Potluck and Gathering

Bob and Jane's house (address and directions included separately)

Agenda:

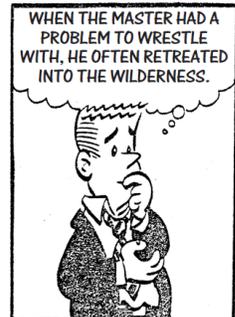
1. Opening prayer – Barb
2. PICNIC
3. Business
 - a. Approve minutes, assign ministries
 - b. Treasurer reports, bills, receipts
 - c. Formation report
 - d. JPIC report
4. Vocation and closing prayers

Next month's meeting: August 15, 2021.

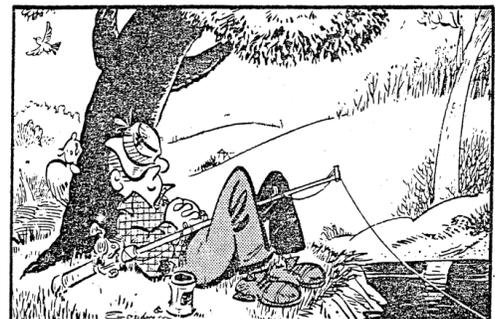
Ongoing Formation: TBD, *Fratelli Tutti*, Chapter 4.

PHILLIP'S FLOCK

By Doc Goodwin



WHEN THE MASTER HAD A PROBLEM TO WRESTLE WITH, HE OFTEN RETREATED INTO THE WILDERNESS.



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Faith Matters: Reflections from your Spiritual Assistant

At the last Regional Formation workshop it was noted that fraternities ought to engage more, as part of ongoing formation, in discussions around some of the controversial issues facing our society. In fact, it was decided that this topic will be the focus of the next formation workshop.

The renewed energy for this focus flows mainly from two articles of our Rule: Article 4, “going from gospel to life and life to the gospel” and Article 15, “let them . . . be in the forefront in promoting justice.” These articles speak to disciplines to be learned and practiced, and what better place is there to do that than in the friendly confines of fraternity.

We have talked about this before in our gatherings, but I thought I’d give a little more background. In ancient Athens the wealthy men of the city would gather in a forum to discuss and make decisions on questions related to the proper function of the city. The Greek word for city was “polis,” from which we get “politics.” In this self-governing democracy, the free-flowing debate was considered essential to making good decisions (by the way, only wealthy men could take part because they had servants who could do all the work on their estates, freeing them to spend time in the forum). Thus “politics” was a positive word describing this process and it had imbedded in it norms around respect, making sound arguments, listening, and negotiations.

Fast forward to today and this is still the ideal function of politics—to bring together diverse viewpoints in reasoned discussion and debate for the common good. As Franciscans we, too, bring our Gospel vision of life into these processes. To do that well we must be prepared to honor both the norms of the political process and our Christian perspective, as well as our Franciscan commitment to dialogue, justice and peacemaking. And we must be prepared to do this in a society where too often politics is overwhelmed by partisanship: the belief that only my “side” is correct, righteous, and worthy. Therefore the disciplines mentioned above come into play.

The first discipline is to see life issues through the lens of the Gospel. How can we apply the teachings of Jesus or the lessons of scripture to today’s situation? Or ask ourselves in honesty and humility, what would Jesus do? What wisdom does our Tradition offer? Or conversely, looking at the world around us, what questions are raised that we can bring back to scripture, Tradition? This is very different than looking in scripture or Tradition to find support for what we already believe.

The second discipline involves learning and practicing the skills needed to “be in the forefront”: showing respect, listening for understanding, seeking common ground, clearly naming and asserting one’s own position or values, negotiating and/or compromising, building consensus, etc. These skills can be learned but the only way to become proficient at them is practice, practice, practice. It’s nice to win an argument but maintaining relationships is far more important from a Franciscan perspective than scoring points. Sometimes we can only, as a friend always says, “disagree without being disagreeable.”

As Secular Franciscans we have for too long relied on our vowed brothers and sisters to do most of the heavy lifting when it comes to promoting justice in society. Now it is fast becoming our turn. —Bob

Franciscan Saints/Blesseds of the Month

8 ST GREGORY GRASSI

9 ST NICHOLAS PICK AND COMPANIONS

10 ST VERONICA GIULIANI

12 STS JOHN JONES AND JOHN WALL

13 BL ANGELINE OF MARSCIANO

14 ST FRANCIS SOLANO

15 ST BONAVENTURE

21 ST LAWRENCE OF BRINDISI

Giulio Cesare Russo was born in 1559 in the Italian city of Brindisi. His parents died early and he was raised and educated by an uncle. Giulio joined the Capuchins in Verona and took the name, Lawrence. He was an accomplished scholar and learned to speak several languages.

At the age of thirty-one, Lawrence was elected as the Provincial of Tuscany. He went on to establish several monasteries in the Holy Roman Empire during the Counter Reformation. Lawrence was elected as the Vicar General for the Capuchins and later served the Church as the papal nuncio in Spain. Lawrence died in 1619 and was canonized in 1881.

23 ST CUNEGUNDA

23 ST BRIDGET of SWEDEN

24 BL LOUISE OF SAVOY

27 BL MARY MAGDALENE OF MARTINEGRO

Blessing Bags, Round Two

List of possible items for the Blessing Bags that we will assemble at our August gathering:

- Granola bars
- Energy bars
- Individual applesauce w/ plastic spoons
- Beef jerky
- Bags of nuts
- Socks
- Cheese crackers/cheese and peanut butter crackers (good price at Sams)
- Hand sanitizer or soap (personal size)
- McDonald's gift cards
- LifeSaver candy mints
- Brown bags to hold items

We can talk about this more at the business meeting after the picnic.

—Jane

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

Here are some special dates in July for JPIC:

July 14 – St Kateri Tekawitha-Patron of Ecology and the Environment

July 28th – World Hepatitis Day

July 30th – World day against Trafficking.

—Darlene

Picnic Food List (just in case you forgot):

Bob/Jane: Sloppy joes and buns

Franz: Root beer floats

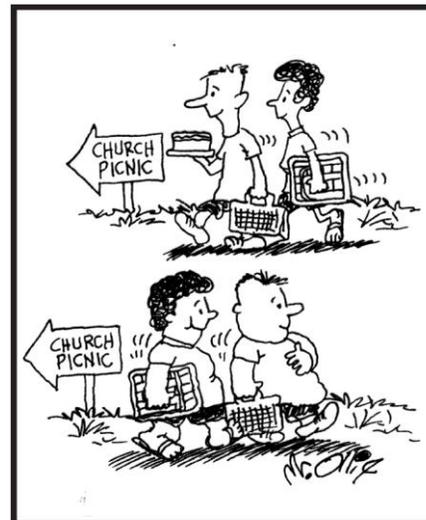
Barb: Veggie Tray

Darlene: Fruit Salad

Keith/Ellen: Chips and Pickles

Bernie: Beverages

Rob: Andes' Mints.



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ODDS 'N' ENDS

As you read this newsletter, representatives of the Order of Friars Minor from all around the world will be gathering for their general chapter in Rome. The chapter runs from July 3-18, 2021 and includes the election on July 13 of their Minister General. The theme of the chapter is: **Renewing our Vision, Embracing our Future.** The logo chosen for the chapter is shown to the left.

Please keep the OFMs and all Franciscans in your prayers.

—Bob

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil and Jeff Keane



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