

St. Clare Fraternity Newsletter

Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania

January, 2020

Our Council: **Minister:** *Arlene Stewart*; Vice Minister: *Tom Brown*; Formation Director: *Katie Roberts*; Secretary: *Maryanne Sheofsky*; Treasurer: *Anne Pennsy*; Councilor: *Victoria Snyder*; Spiritual Assistant: *Brother Mike Tripka, TOR*

Minister's Message

Today as I sat and thought about the new year ahead, and all that it holds in store, I thought about Thomas Merton's prayer from "*Thoughts in Solitude*."

"My LORD GOD, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore, will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone."

May the Lord bless you all.

A Message from our Formation Director

We've been reading and reflecting on "Live Like Francis" by Jovian Weigel, OFM and Leonard Foley, OFM for some time. At our last meeting, we discussed Forgiveness and Being Christ to Others. This book has been invaluable to us as we discuss how to live our out calling as Franciscans. In addition to this book, we will discuss The Rule #2 from "Praying the Secular Franciscan Rule" by Luke Amato at our next meeting.

OFS NATIONAL AND REGIONAL NEWS

Lady Poverty Region Dates:

Lady Poverty Region Chapter Retreat May 29-31, 2020

Summer Seminar July 9-11, 2020 at St. Francis University, Loretto, PA

Summer Seminar

The 11th Summer Seminar for Secular Franciscans "Called to Act With Justice" will be held in July in Loretto. (See dates above). The seminar has been endorsed by the National Executive Council of the Secular Franciscan Order. Father Christopher Panagoplos, T.O.R. and David Seitz, OFS will lead this seminar. Registration information will be available in a few months.

St. Clare Fraternity News

Please continue to keep in your prayers those intentions which have been sent via email to the fraternity. We pray especially for those who are ill, anticipating surgery, special intentions, and those who have passed away in our parish and community.

Vicky Snyder announced that several residents of Christ the King Manor in DuBois have expressed an interest in joining the Secular Franciscans. Plans are being made to form a satellite of our fraternity. Updates will be given as they are provided.

St. Clare Fraternity Dates

Meeting January 13,2020 Reschini Hall

Rosary January 14,2020 11:00 am

Candidate Formation January 20,2020 Graystone Apartments

Happy January Birthday to our fraternity members:

18th Katie Roberts and Kathy Burke

31st Bernie Horner

Franciscan Holy Days

January 1 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

January 3 Holy Name of Jesus

January 7 Blessed Angela of Foligno

January 12 St. Bernard of Corleone

January 14 Blessed Odoric of Pordenone

January 16 Sts. Berard and Companions

January 20 St. Eustochia Calafato

January 24 St. Francis de Sales

January 27 St. Angela Merici

January 30 St. Hyacinth of Mariscotti

January 31 St. John Bosco

More about Blessed Contardo Ferrini

Contardo Ferrini was the son of a teacher who went on to become a learned man himself, one acquainted with some dozen languages. Today he is known as the patron of universities.

Born in Milan, he received a doctorate in law in Italy and then earned a scholarship that enabled him to study Roman-Byzantine law in Berlin. As a renowned legal expert, he taught in various schools of higher education until he joined the faculty of the University of Pavia, where he was considered an outstanding authority on Roman law.

Contardo was learned about the faith he lived and loved. “Our life,” he said, “must reach out toward the Infinite, and from that source we must draw whatever we can expect of merit and dignity.” As a scholar, he studied the ancient biblical languages and read the Scriptures in them. His speeches and papers show his understanding of the relationship of faith and science. He attended daily Mass and became a lay Franciscan, faithfully observing the Third Order rule of life. He also served through membership in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

His death in 1902 at the age of 43 occasioned letters from his fellow professors that praised him as a saint; the people of Suna, where he lived, insisted that he be declared a saint. Pope Pius XII beatified Contardo in 1947.

Thanks to people like Contardo, our Church long ago laid to rest the idea that science and faith are incompatible. We thank God for the many ways science has made our lives better. All that remains to us is to help ensure that the rest of the world, especially impoverished nations, gets to enjoy the fruits of scientific advances. Blessed Contardo is the patron saint of Universities.

Franciscan Spirituality

The spirituality of the secular Franciscan is intensely Christocentric and focused on Jesus, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, who became one of us in the Incarnation. Franciscan spirituality is primarily focused on Christ’s Incarnation, His Passion, and His Presence in the Eucharist. For secular Franciscans, Jesus is the inspiration and center of our life with God and with people. He is the way to the Father and the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us. (OFS Rule, Article 4). In His passion, Christ shows us how to embrace the will of the Father and to accept the crosses in our lives. And in the Eucharist, we experience the gift of God’s love and the reality that Christ remains among us. In one major respect, secular Franciscan spirituality differs from that of the religious. Secular Franciscans live in the world and their primary sphere of activity and influence is in the ordinary events of daily life: in their families, their communities, their workplaces and their parishes. (Source: Secular Franciscan website: <https://secularfranciscansusa.org/franciscan-spirituality/>)

Praying with St. Francis:

“Lord, help me to live this day, quietly, easily. To lean upon Thy great strength, trustfully, restfully. To wait for the unfolding of Thy will, patiently, serenely. To meet others, peacefully, joyously. To face tomorrow, confidently, courageously.