

MARY, QUEEN OF ANGELS FRATERNITY

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER—USA + ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA

+ FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER +

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Live a Life Worthy of Your Call

Lent IS A TIME TO
GROW
CLOSER TO JESUS

*Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them;
for then you have no reward from God in heaven...
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

[Matthew 6, 1,21]

INFIRM and HOMEBOUND

“The brothers and sisters, progressing in age, should learn to accept illness and increasing difficulties and to give a deeper sense to their life.” (GC 27) In your charity please remember in prayer and in personal visits our homebound members: **at Home:** Janet Azeles, Camilla Palazzi, Cheryl Hengst; **at Garvey Manor:** Mary Margaret Kramar; Friars Adrian, Bill, and Terrence; **at St Stephen’s Living Center:** Mary Rita Stoltz; **at Graystone Manor:** Shirley Dougherty; **at St Bernardine Monastery:** Friars Eugene, Robert, Anthony, Giles, Seraphin, and Tello. Please inform our Infirmarian, **Mike**, of any member who is infirm and/or homebound so that a visit can be arranged and/or a card be sent, bringing them our prayers and fraternal wishes.



LOOKING FOR THAT SPECIAL GIFT



Should you be looking for a religious gift, books, cards, or a gift for any occasion, visit The Friar’s Nook across from St Bernardine Monastery, Route 36 South, 4 miles from Hollidaysburg.

Hours during pandemic: **Fridays and Saturdays, 10 AM to 4 PM.**

FEBRUARY 2021 SECULAR FRANCISCAN SAINTS AND BLESSED

02	Presentation of the Lord
03	St Blaise, Bishop and Martyr Martyrs of Japan
06	Sts Peter Baptist and Companions, OFS Bl Pope Pius IX, OFS
08	Bl Lady Jacoba of Settesoli, OFS
11	Our Lady of Lourdes, Day of Prayer for the Sick
12	Bl Cardinal Charles Ferrari, OFS
14	St Valentine
16	St Veridiana of Florence, OFS
17	Ash Wednesday Presidents’ Day
18	St Bernadette Soubirous, OFS
19	St Conrad Confalconieri of Piacenza, OFS
21	St Margaret of Cortona, OFS
22	Chair of St Peter
24	Bl Pope Innocent IX, OFS
27	Bl Louise Albertoni, OFS





Invitation to the Observance of the Lenten Discipline

Brothers and sisters,
every year at the time of the Christian Passover
we celebrate our redemption
through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.
Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration
and to renew our life in the Paschal Mystery.

We begin this holy season by remembering our need for repentance,
and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the Gospel.
We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes, an ancient sign,
that speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life,
and marks the penitence of the community.

I invite you in the name of the Lord Jesus,
during this pandemic to observe a holy Lent
by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and works of mercy,
and by reading and reflecting on the Word of God.

Let us bow before our Creator and Redeemer, as we pray:
Most high, glorious God,
You have created us out of the dust of the earth:
may these ashes be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence,
so we may remember that only by Your gracious gift
are we given everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

THE POPE SPEAKS



With the Holy Father's Apostolic Letter "*With a Father's Heart*," Pope Francis recalls the 150th Anniversary of the declaration of St Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Pope has proclaimed a "*Year of St Joseph*", from 8 December 2020 to 8 December 2021.

And so, we listen and reflect: "St Joseph's spiritual path is not one that explains, but accepts, which does not mean that he is 'resigned.' Instead, he is courageously and firmly 'proactive,' because with the Holy Spirit's gift of fortitude. Full of hope, he is able to accept life as it is, with all its contradictions, frustrations and disappointments. St Joseph did not look for shortcuts but confronted reality with open eyes and accepted responsibility for it" (4).

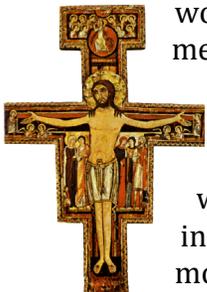
In his encyclical on social friendship, "*Fratelli tutti*," Pope Francis, inspired by St Francis of Assisi, gives us a proposal for a way of life marked by the flavor of the Gospel. It is a call to love others as brothers and sisters, recognizing and loving every person with a love without borders. It is a call to encounter others in a way that is capable of overcoming all distance and every temptation to engage in disputes, impositions, or submissions.

In the face of present-day attempts to eliminate or to ignore others, *Fratelli tutti* is an invitation to respond to God's call with a new vision of fraternity and social friendship.



And so, we listen and reflect: "Life exists where there is bonding, communion, and fraternity. Every healthy, authentic relationship open us up to others; we cannot reduce our lives to ourselves or to relationships with a small group (89). Universal openness is existential rather than geographical; it has to do with our daily efforts to expand our circle of friends, to reach out toward the margins, to include those whom I do not naturally consider part of my circle of interests even though they are close to me" (97).

SECULAR FRANCISCANS IN TIMES OF GREAT CHANGES



The magnetic eyes of the Christ of the Cross of San Damiano transfixes our gaze. Cheap words and conventional responses find to place here. One simply sits—gazing, considering, meditating, then imitating. With time, we are altered, keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Illusions are scattered and the real becomes visible.

The Incarnation of the Word becomes one of our kind, sharing our flesh and blood through Mary, our bonds of love, and our suffering and death. As bodily creatures, we are with all of creation vulnerable to contagion and disease. We are also vulnerable to the insidious spiritual contagions of perversions of justice, willful infliction of pain for spite, mockery of the good—all on display today as during the Crucifixion.

Covid-19 has exposed a great many things that have been at least partially hidden, including economic uncertainty, ethnic and racial inequality, political instability. Pleas for justice flood empty streets. In more hidden corners of society—the elderly in nursing homes, children without meals—the most vulnerable risk being overlooked and remain overexposed. "*The Cross is steady while the world is turning*" (motto of the Carthusian Order).

Litany of Solidarity and Hope During the Pandemic

For those who are sick
For those with chronic illnesses and underlying health concerns
For all those who are suffering

For those who are lonely
For those who have no one to check on them
For families that are separated

For those who are unemployed
For those suffering financial hardships
For those who face an uncertain future

For those who are suffering from physical or emotional abuse
For those who are disproportionately suffering
because of societal structures and unjust policies
For those who are overwhelmed by anxiety and stress

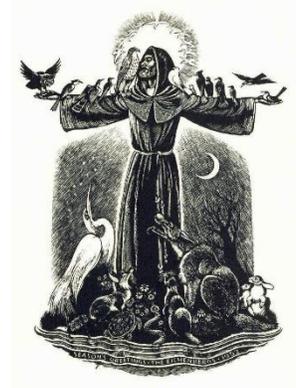
For those who are dying
For those who have died while saving the lives of others
For all who have lost their lives

For firefighters, police, and emergency medical workers
For doctors, nurses, and all health care professionals
For public officials, business leaders, and educators

For peace to our city and in our world
For renewed friendships among neighbors
For solidarity and unity among all people

For patience and perseverance
For calm in the midst of fear
For light in the darkness

Most high, glorious God,
You are our comfort and our hope. Hear our prayers and strengthen us in our time of need. Inspire us to acts of solidarity and generosity and give us hope of a brighter day. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



OUR COUNTRY UNDER THE PROTECTION OF MARY

Loving and gracious God, we remember that Your plan for us is fullness of life lived with love, justice and mercy. Be with us and our entire nation as we work together with our newly elected leaders in all levels of society. Help us keep the common good before us.

Strengthen our gifts of wisdom, courage and respect for the views of others. Deepen within the willingness to act in solidarity with those who are economically poor, and with the voiceless seeking fullness of life in society.

Help us be persistent in evaluating political remedies with what they will do for people, to people, with people, and what they will mean for the health and care of our planet.

Help us support one another in exercising our precious responsibilities as citizens in a representative democracy. Strengthen us to continue to work with our leaders, seeking an ever more just society that acts in harmony and interdependence with all creation.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Patroness of our country, in the name of Jesus her Son, in union with the Father and together with the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

