



December 2021

# Our Mother of Sorrows Fraternity Ordo Franciscanus Secularis (OFS) A Member of Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity

Newsletter

Volume 6, 12

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## Annual Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 29 6:00 pm

**\*\*Please Note Time Change\*\***

St. Thomas Lower Level



You and your families are invited to our annual Christmas Party! We will have games, caroling, and family Christmas cookie decorating. Wear your own mask if you choose. Fully vaccinated members need not wear a mask unless they choose to. **Bring a snack to share.**

Because of the social nature of the evening, there will be no Zoom opportunity this month.

Please bring your own beverages and place settings. Also, please bring a dish to pass. The Council will be providing the main dishes.

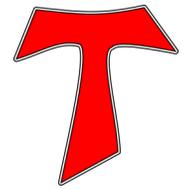
A-K: Bring Salads

L-M: Bring Desserts

**\*\*Please mail your fair share checks for the month if you don't plan to attend to Jeff Dills (address on the back on the newsletter). You may also electronically transfer your fair share using Venmo. You can find our account at @OMS-Franciscan-GR.**

# Celebrating the Milestones

Wishing our brothers and sisters many blessings!



## Professions

No anniversaries in January

## Birthdays

Rose Hickey	January 5
Marilyn Hawkins	January 19
Lois Flickinger	January 23

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## Message from the Minister

Well it has been another crazy year and it still doesn't look like we are at the end of the pandemic. We have learned a few things that seem to be an improvement in how we do fraternity, such as opening up the meetings to the homebound and distanced through Zoom, adding an electronic means to collect fair share, extending our prayer partners to include those that can't attend the meetings through the newsletter, just to name a few.

I want to take this time to thank the Council for working diligently to maneuver our fraternity through this trying time so well. They have certainly been open to letting the Holy Spirit guide them in leading our fraternal family.

I also want to thank all in the fraternity for their patience and cooperation in maintaining the viability our fraternity. There has been a learning curve in how we gather and communicate. You all bring a sense of hope for the future of Franciscan living.

Please accept my warmest wishes for the remainder of Advent, the Christmas season, and the New Year! God bless everyone one of this Franciscan family!

Pax et bonum,

Barbara Scott, OFS

## *Upcoming Fraternity Gatherings*

Dec 29	Annual Christmas Gathering	7:00 pm	St. Thomas
Jan 22	January Fraternity Gathering	8:00 am	St. Thomas (Saturday Morning)
Feb 19	Profession Renewal Mass	8:00 am	St. Thomas (Saturday Morning)

## 20th Quinquennial Congress Jubilee!

August 3-7, 2022 Phoenix, Arizona

The 20th Quinquennial Congress in Phoenix, Arizona will be a time to join a large gathering of Franciscan brothers and sisters to celebrate and renew our Franciscan calling in the spirit of conversion. You will not want to miss it! The theme for this Quinquennial is JUBILEE, to commemorate the 800th anniversary of Memoriale Propositi, as well as to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first Quinquennial Congress held in the United States. Given these two anniversaries, it will be a joyful event.

Early Registration through the end of December—[Register Here](#)

## JPIC report by Mary Vander Ploeg

During this time of Covid, I have been Mother of Sorrows JPIC (Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation) council member. It has given me an opportunity to listen to many podcasts and take part in groups sharing on the subject. Here are some of the things I have learned.

Brother Michael Perry, our Minister General, call JPIC an essential part of the Franciscan DNA. This teaching is not an option but a Franciscan identity in itself. There are many areas to discover: that call for outward action of an individual or group. However, before we look outward we need to look into ourselves. Reflecting on St. Francis and how he lived his life, Pope John Paul II called for an 'ecological conversion' in each of us so that we also can live in greater peace and harmony with the earth and our Creator. Promoting peace, justice and caring for creation becomes a pathway toward holiness. We have to take personal responsibility and give time as a fraternity to promote growth and change in our care for the earth on a personal and global level.

I was surprised that underlying this need are two basic skills we sometimes lose track of. The first of these is listening. The fraternity in the Detroit area realized they wanted to be a positive force during the racial unrest in their area this past year. They first needed to listen to the population affected by the injustice. They formed a weekly group that met to listen to a diverse group of people affected by this discrimination. Father Chelich teaches that in order to listen you have to have an empty mind. You cannot be formulating an argument or thinking of a response, but rather giving all your attention to what a person is saying. In Pennsylvania, a fraternity listened to people whose lifestyles and livelihood were affected by the use of land for mining. They were able to hear both sides of the issue and become instrumental in finding a workable solution.

The other skill mentioned often is our speech. Our speech shapes our relationships. There are three principles of speech I learned many years ago that can benefit all of us in daily life and in our specific goal of listening to others and shaping our conversation to respond to their needs. Rather than being judgmental we use a language of invitation.

\*Face to face principle – Only say something about another that you are willing to say to their face

\*Say only the good things men need to hear. We do not need to share our dissatisfactions or negative thoughts with others. Speak positively and in an up building manner.

\*Need to know principle – Does this person need the information you are giving them because they can be instrumental in a positive change?

We are living in a time where the enemy is attempting to divide and conquer us. We live with political controversy, civil unrest, vaccination controversy and immigration dilemmas. SO WHERE DO WE GET OUR INFORMATION? Historically information begins with our parents. They teach us to navigate the world we live in. Due to their formation, cultural background and prejudices, their thinking may not be appropriate for where we are today. Where do we look for our formation? Do we consult our favorite news channel or do we look to Catholic podcasts and scripture? Jesus navigated political unrest, conflicts and crucial conversations. He is our answer for caring for the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

## The Spirit Led to Serve—A Summary of the October Ongoing Formation presented by Michelle Bryk, OFS

### Summary by Keith Southerton, OFS

To all reading this letter, this is a summation of the presentation that Michelle gave at a previous MOS Franciscan meeting this fall. I wanted to send this out in a letter form for those that were not able to attend as she did such a great job describing leadership and service within our fraternity life.

Starting with Francis's call to scripture please read Ephesians 4 1:15

We are all called to lead in our own special way (as described in Ephesians 4 Verse 7). Brothers and Sisters, we are urged to live in a manner worthy of the call we have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, working with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace. One body and one Spirit, as we were also called to the one hope, the one Lord, the one faith, the one baptism in the one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesians outlines how a leader should lead, with servant leadership. It encourages people to lead with confidence knowing that you can do all things because He is by your side.

So, what does it take to be a leader today? A leader needs to have the following traits – trustworthy, respectful, and know one's talents. Francis asked us to serve and be in service of others, helping others to reach their full potential, encouraging the principle of co-responsibility. Today's leader does not pursue others to do his/her service; on the contrary, he/she is at the service of others, paying attention to the intrinsic value of the people, beyond their evident contributions, helping them to achieve even more. Each brother and sister in the Fraternity should remember the sense of co-responsibility, which commits him/her to work as a team alongside the "servant leaders". The leader is responsible for encouraging this principle of co-responsibility.

Secular Franciscans must keep in mind that whatever they do for the Order is always a fraternal service. What is explicit and expected for the Ministers and Councilors must also be the norm for all the brothers and sisters of the Fraternity. Brothers and Sisters fleeing from all ambition does not allow you to abandon service nor the responsibility to be a good leader and participant in the fraternity, rather you must show love for the Fraternity with a spirit of co-responsible service.

So, the obvious question is what gifts do you possess and how can you help the Fraternity and your Brothers and Sisters so that 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done' is put in to practice rather than leaving it for others to do.

The Church's emphasis on Stewardship should be second nature to us as Franciscans.

What we have has come from God.

We rightfully use those gifts we have in his service.

I want to leave you with thoughts on **Article 21: On various levels, each fraternity is animated and guided by a council and minister who are elected by the professed according to the constitutions.**

**Their service, which lasts for a definite period, is marked by a ready and willing spirit and is a duty of responsibility to each member and to the community.**

We have all felt called and have been drawn closer to Christ in our Franciscan journey. During our journey to become Franciscan we heard the Franciscan way and strongly identified with it or you would not have professed. Please reflect on this article as we prepare for our upcoming elections and if you are nominated then someone believes in you and the good things you will be able to do guiding this fraternity for the coming months.

# PRAYER PARTNERS

## for the Month of January



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Keith Southerton 616-881-3259  
Marge Krystiniak 616-780-9731

### NOTES

**\*\*Please note the new format\*\***

- We ask you to pray for the person you are partnered with all month.
- We encourage **either** person to call to check in or ask for prayer requests.
- All numbers are cell numbers, if available
- M=Mailing list  
F=Formation
- Prayer requests can be emailed to Barb Scott and Michelle Bryk

We encourage you to call your prayer partners and check in to see how they are fairing. Specific prayer requests can be sent to Michelle Bryk if needed.

## Fair Share Update

If you are excused from attending the fraternity gatherings and would like to send your fair share amount, please make check payable to Our Mother of Sorrows Fraternity and send your check to:

Jeff Dills, OFS  
2265 Burton Pines SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

OR Venmo to:  
**@OMS-Franciscan-GR**

## To Be Excused

If you are unable to attend a fraternity gathering due to health or other hardship reasons, please email:

Carol Dills    OMSGRsecretary@gmail.com  
Barb Scott    OMSGRminister@gmail.com

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