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January 2024

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

Newsletter

Volume 9, 1

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Fraternal Gathering

Wednesday, January 31 7:00 pm

ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE PARISH—BASEMENT

1449 WILCOX PARK DR SE

GRAND RAPIDS MI 49506

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/J/2978878119](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2978878119)

MEETING ID: 297 887 8119 | PASSCODE: OMSOFS

THIS MONTH WE WILL TAKE TIME TO REVIEW AND REFLECT ON THE
MINISTRIES WE SUPPORT INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY
AND HOW THEY RELATE TO OUR APOSTOLATE

Fair Share Contributions

Mail: MARK MANN, OFS

1007 DIAMOND AVE NE

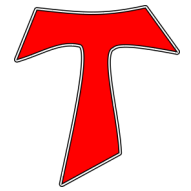
GRAND RAPIDS MI 49503

Electronic: Venmo @OMS-Franciscan-GR

Mark Your Calendars

Feb 28	Fraternal Gathering	7:00 pm St. Thomas Ministry Ctr
Mar 20	Professions & Renewal	7:00 pm St. Thomas Church
Apr 24	Fraternal Gathering	7:00 pm St. Thomas Ministry Ctr

Prayer Petitions



Professions

Jim Howard, OFS Feb 21
Linda Lee Spencer, OFS Feb 21
Virginia Champion, OFS Feb 28

Memorials

Rev Edward Kubiak, OFS Feb 04
Kathleen Wild, OFS Feb 14

Birthdays

Pat Fiebig, OFS Feb 02
Joe Bialczak, OFS Feb 04
Sarah Wagner, OFS Feb 06
Jan Windy, OFS Feb 10
Jerry Swiatlowski, OFS Feb 22
Nancy Supran, OFS Feb 24

In Formation

Mike Ghering
Jack Hartman
Eileen Schmuker
Chris Willmeng

Homebound

Dorothy Deja Margo Kiel Fran Walker
Verona Dunn Ted Kusmierz Peg Wegenka
Pat Fiebig Harriet Pilson Kay Wilson
Marge Gessner Claire Pinsonneault

Reminder: Send prayer line requests to Michelle Bryk, OFS
E-Mail: michellebofs@gmail.com
Phone: 616-485-5783

Message from the Minister

Brothers & Sister!

As I write this, we are enjoying a brief respite from the cold (and snow) with a bit of a thaw for which I am very thankful. Partially because it gives me hope that Spring is not too far away but mostly because it allows me to clear out the ice and snow that filled the walkway and drive. But more realistically, I'm thankful because it gives me time to prepare in time for the next snow — It's January after all.

Speaking of preparation, although we just entered into Ordinary time, we look ahead and realize Lent is just around the corner with Ash Wednesday coming in a few short weeks on February 14th. Lent is a time of personal reflection and renewal as we get ready to celebrate Easter on March 31st.

Collectively as a Fraternity we also take time to reflect and renew before celebrations. Our next two Gatherings will give us some time of reflection on our Fraternal Life as we then look forward to celebrating the profession of our candidates in Formation on March 20, 2024. (Note that we moved that date from our typical last Wednesday to the 3rd Wednesday in order to avoid conflicts with Holy Week.)

Lastly I have one additional item for your consideration. For a time, one of our former candidates in formation, Cory Mitchell assisted the fraternity in the capacity of our JPIC Animator. However, as some of you may know, Cory made the difficult career decision to move to Portland Oregon for his current job. We wish him all success but that leaves us with a gap. If anyone in the Fraternity is curious about filling that Animator role, please reach out to anyone on the Council to express your interest.

Peace and all good,

Chris

Counting to Forty

In February, we enter into the Forty Days of Lent. The Byzantine (Greek Christian) tradition calls this the Great Fast, the Bright Fast, the Joyful Fast. How do you think about Lent? Is it simply 40 days with a few extra prayers? Do you think about "ashes to ashes" and the reality of our short lives? Perhaps prayers, fasting, and almsgiving all have a role in preparing you to celebrate the Resurrection.

How can Lent be "Great"? Well, first of all, it is a long period of time, more than a month. St. Francis also kept that "other Lent", the 40 days before Christmas. So this Lent soon-to-start is also "Great" in that it precedes the Great Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord. We also have the habit of making lenten resolutions, so this Lent becomes "Great" for us because we bring an intentional spirit, a desire to make specific choices in order to come closer to God and to become more aware of God's presence.

Lent, these 40 days mostly in the winter season, surely cannot be "Bright"? And yet as the preparation for our Paschal celebrations, Lent is Bright because it is full of the Light of Christ, who is our Pascha, our Passover, our Resurrection and Life. Have you had a Lent in the past that helped you to be aware of its brightness, its holding the Light of Christ? It can be exciting in a time of chosen deprivation to open one's eyes and heart to realize the treasury in front of us, more visible through our chosen poverty and lessening.

Remembering to keep Lent as the "Joyful Fast" can help us to see Christ in our Lent and our lenten practices. Some people prefer to make a "positive" choice, but I think a joyful resolution to "do without" something that is good and attainable for us is a way of positively choosing the poverty of Christ.

Let us keep this Lent as the Great Fast, the Bright Fast, the Joyful Fast that the Church invites us to celebrate as we grow to full maturity in Christ.

May the Lord grant you peace!

Jerome, ofm

OFS Animator, OFM Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe
National Spiritual Assistant

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:

MARK MANN, OFS
1007 DIAMOND AVE NE
GRAND RAPIDS MI 49503

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:

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Chris Bueche OMSGRminister@gmail.com

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