



The Tau Signature

Tau Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order – Herndon, Virginia
St. Margaret of Cortona Region

August 2015



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Minister's Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Please remember that our August meeting will revert back to St. Joseph's. We will be using room 210 from 12:30 to 1:30 pm and Room 209 from 1:30 to 4:30 pm.

Peace and blessings, Pamela Brooks, OFS

Recap of Last 6/7/15 Meeting

Opening/Formation:

We started with our opening prayer, followed by Walter Gawlak's reading of the Rainer Maria Rilke poem "Go to the Limits of your Longing." Thereafter, grace was said before our meal/social time. At 2 o'clock, Bob Calderon announced that he elected to cancel the On-Going Formation portion of our meeting due to the fact that a number of our members had not yet received a copy of our new formation book Catching Fire, Becoming Flame. Our earlier plans to copy chapters 1-3 and forward them to our members via email had to be scratched due to possible violation of copyright laws. Bob noted that the chapters for the reading assignment remained chapters 1-3 for August.

Presentation:

Gil Donahue led off a presentation titled "The Importance of Pilgrimage to the Practice of Faith" with later assistance from Vera Stewart and Bob Calderon. He began by providing a general definition of "pilgrimage," followed by a citation of the elements of a pilgrimage, which he indicated were as follows:

- **Pilgrimage involves Penance.** A pilgrimage combines a physical effort on our part, a form of penance, with an opportunity to deepen our understanding of a spiritual truth or the life of a holy person.
- **Distance is not important; intention is.** It is not necessary to travel far in order to make a pilgrimage. There are several appropriate sites in the greater Washington metropolitan area: the Franciscan Monastery in

DC; the Shrine of St. Anthony in Ellicott City, MD; the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the St. John Paul II Center in DC; the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (old cathedral) in Baltimore, MD; and the Mother Seton Shrine in Emmittsburg, MD.

-- **Pilgrimage sites are holy places.** Our personal spirituality is enhanced by getting closer to places connected to holy people and special events in the spiritual realm. In some places we can literally walk in the footsteps of Our Lord or the saints. Doing so enhances our understanding and deepens our devotion. Pilgrimage sites may contain unusual artwork, unique relics, special settings, historical significance, and the site of miracles.

-- **Opportunity to develop kenosis and have an epiphany.** To make the most of a pilgrimage, we should try to be as open as possible to the experience (kenosis). Ideally, a pilgrimage can be an opportunity to approximate an epiphany—perceive special closeness to God. It can be for us similar to the experience that Peter, John, and James had at the Transfiguration. It is a “mountain-top experience” that can spur us to greater spiritual fervor when we return home.

-- **Opportunity to know Our Lord better by walking with Him.** Think of the two disciples who met Our Lord on the road to Emmaus following the resurrection (Luke 24:13-35). The Lord opened up the scriptures to them as they were walking; later, they recognized Him in the breaking of the bread.

-- **Opportunity to serve.** Making a pilgrimage can deepen our faith and energize us to be more active in expressing our faith through good works. We can both learn from, and minister to, fellow pilgrims. All of us who “seek the Lord” are pilgrims, after all.

After Gil’s general presentation, Bob and Vera shared their experiences while on separate pilgrimages to Italy.

Business Meeting:

- Pam relayed news that Father Alberto had returned from leading the pilgrimage to Italy. He told Pam that he prayed for blessings of the fraternity while thinking of us during the pilgrimage.
- Pam reminded us that the regional fraternal visit was slated for our November meeting.
- Pam also extended thanks to the hospitality committee for making this year’s picnic another success. Special thanks went out to our grillmaster, Erik Larin, who did a splendid job cooking.
- Bill Bouffard, the recruitment chairman, addressed the members about his plan for the upcoming open house on 4 October. He stressed that we need to let people know that we exist. He cited a case where the membership of two fraternities dwindled down to six people, because they became complacent, thinking that people would simply come to them. Bill recommended that we secure a table at each of our parishes, manned by two volunteers. People should step up to volunteer. He suggested that we post ads in the church bulletins; place notices on LinkedIn; ask to speak at parish Masses; send electronic ads; and lastly ensure we had numbers at our open house on 4 October. Each of us should attempt to identify someone who has a vocation.
- Clari and Irene announced the first “Breakfast with Tau for Saturday, July 18. The event was to begin with Mass at St. Josephs at 8am. Afterwards, participants will proceed to the Virginia Kitchen in the Kmart Shopping Center in Herndon. If you cannot come to both the Mass and breakfast, then you should feel free to come to whatever fits your schedule. Please notify Clari no later than Thursday morning, so that she can let the Virginia Kitchen know whether to expect a large party or not. All are welcome!

St. Vincent de Paul

Please remember to bring your food donations – they are greatly appreciated. Note that I attempt to load up my vehicle with your donations before and after the opening prayer. I do check during breaks and after the meetings for late arrivals. If you have something that you cannot bring in yourself, let me know and I will give you a hand. Thanks! Terry

Prayer Submissions

Please forward prayer requests to me (Terry Rinker) by the 14th of the month, so that they may be included in the newsletter. Please keep the following members, relatives, and friends in your prayers:

Sally & Gary White, Sally's sister, and Sally's friend Rene

Mary McCarthy

Richard & Carole Clarke and their son Liam

William Brewster

Helen Broxmeyer

Fr. Alberto's father

Kimberley Heatherington

And for all those who are in need of our prayers who have been inadvertently omitted from this list.



Tau Fraternity: Next Meeting Date

Tau Fraternity General Meeting:

Sunday, August 2. Please read chapters 1-3 in our new On-Going Formation book Catching Fire, Becoming Flame, by Albert Haase, OFM.

St. Joseph's – Room 210 from 12:30 to 1:30 pm and Room 209 from 1:30 to 4:30 pm.

12:30 - 1:30 Inquirer/Candidate Formation

1:30 - Opening Prayer

1:35 - 2:10 Social time with meal

2:10 - 3:00 On-going formation

3:00 - 3:10 Break

3:10 - 3:30 Saint presentation or other

3:30 - 4:00 Liturgy of Hours, business meeting, and closing prayer

Readings for the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time:

Hymn: #182 – O God, Our Help in Ages Past

Pg 786 – Psalter, Week II/Evening Prayer II

Pg 623 - Gospel Canticle and Concluding Prayer

For the next newsletter, please send your prayer requests and submissions to Terry Rinker at reknir12@yahoo.com, or call (703) 383-0562.

