



PACE E BENE

TAU FRATERNITY

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

December 2018

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Happy Advent! It is hard to believe that we are once again beginning another liturgical year. Where has 2018 gone? We, as members of Tau Fraternity, have been very blessed this year! We professed four candidates, we added new aspirants who moved on to become inquirers. we added our first affiliate and we welcomed a transfer from another fraternity. We have had a wonderful on-going formation program! The May retreat was an excellent opportunity for spiritual growth and increased fellowship. I want to thank each and every one of you because without you, Tau fraternity would not be what it is. Life in the secular world is not easy. I take comfort in knowing that I am not the only one feeling challenged at times in living my faith and Franciscan spirituality in a world among people who do not always see things the same way. You are each a blessing to me! 2019 will be an important year for Tau. A new council will be elected in August. It is never too soon to begin prayerfully considering whether or not you are being called to be servant leaders of our fraternity. If you are interested in a particular position on the council, please reach out to the council member holding that position and we will be happy to answer your questions. I look forward to celebrating the first Sunday of Advent with you on December 2! Peace and blessings,

Pam

RECAP OF LAST MEETING

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer for our Deceased Loved Ones

O God of all life, pour Your consoling grace upon all who mourn the passing of their loved ones. Hear our prayers for those we love dearly who have gone before us into the life to come. Look kindly on our departed family members, relatives, and friends, especially those we entrust to Your eternal mercy and goodness.

(Here pray for your beloved deceased by name.)

Consider their deeds by caring, kindness and charity. Forgive them any sins they may have committed, and grant them the everlasting reward of Heaven

Welcome my beloved deceased into the company of the Saints, where tears are no more, and suffering and pain are over. Where there is great joy, abundant life and peaceful rest in Your gracious presence. I pray one day to be united again with all my loved ones who have passed away, so that together we may praise You forever and ever. Amen.

RITE OF ADMISSION

Immediately following the call to order and opening prayer, we held the rite of admission from pages 11-15 of the Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order. This ceremony elevated Nellie Aston to candidate.

ONGOING FORMATION

Walter Gawlak, OFS began the discussion on Chapter 4 “Signs of Holiness” from Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation on the Call to Holiness “Gaudete et Exsultate.” He asked the following questions:

- Perseverance, patience, and weakness: How have you been turning to God in tough times? How are you persevering and finding patience?
- Joy and sense of humor: Have you been tested in rejoicing in all things lately? When was the last time you laughed at yourself?
- Boldness and passion: Are you seduced by complacency?
- Community: Think of moments when you placed yourself quietly in prayer with our Lord.

Next month we will discuss the last section – Chapter 5 “Spiritual Combat.”

PRESENTATION

Gil Donahue, OFS is the newly appointed Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) coordinator for the St. Margaret of Cortona Region. He said that the concept of JPIC is not an add-on to Catholicism. It is integral. The Franciscan connection between peace and justice is that in order to have peace, people must be dealt with justice. Regarding the integrity of creation, the right to life is not just anti-abortion; it goes through natural death and all points in between. Poverty comes in many different forms. The poor have difficulty finding a way out of poverty. If we believe in justice and peace, we should be concerned with the poor and poverty. Gil defined five possible arenas for action:

1. Family
2. Community
3. State
4. Nation
5. World

The first two are direct action arenas. The other three are advocacy action arenas. The National Tau Newsletter says that we should be walking with two feet. Gil created a penitential calendar that could be used in any month to focus on the Rule and the five arenas.

FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY

In remembrance of our deceased Tau Fraternity brothers and sisters, we prayed a Franciscan Crown Rosary. Jim Haynes, OFS led the rosary.

PRAYER SUBMISSIONS

Please keep the following members, relatives, and friends in your prayers:

For physical and spiritual healing of Pam Brooks and her son and brother; Sally White and her sister; Richard & Carole Clarke and their grandsons Liam and Rory; Helen Broxmeyer; William Brewster; Irene Naveau; Ron Kauffman; Kay Flynn; Ed Geiger; and Terry Rinker. For the safety of the citizens of Aleppo, Syria during the civil war. For all peoples who suffer persecution. For the victims of natural disasters. For the Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic and its patients. For all those who are in need of our prayers who have been inadvertently omitted from this list.

Please forward prayer requests to Vera Stewart by the 14th of the month, so that they may be included in the newsletter.

APOSTOLATES

ST. LEO THE GREAT FOOD PANTRY

St. Leo the Great in the City of Fairfax runs a food pantry. Note that I attempt to load up my vehicle with your food donations before and after the opening prayer each month. I 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. After the meetings, I take the food collections and drop them off at the church for transfer to the food pantry. Whatever monetary donations I get, I deposit into the Tau bank account and write a check in the amount so that St. Leo knows that the check is coming from Tau fraternity. Keep up the good work in food donations – they are greatly appreciated. **All checks should be made out to "St. Leo the Great."**

Thanks!!
Terry Rinker, OFS

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY COOKING HOSPICE

Our fraternity cooks for the Gift of Peace hospice on the second Saturday every other month. St. John Neumann Parish provides \$200 for us to buy groceries. Four or more of us meet at St. Joseph's parking lot at 7 a.m., drive to northeast D.C. and share our stories along the way. We cook for 60 people, including the other volunteers who work that day. Mother Teresa's nuns look in on us to make sure we know where kitchen wares can be found. They always express their gratitude to us with their great smiles. We're usually back at St. Joseph's parking lot by noon. Come and join us at least once. It's a heartwarming ministry.

The next Cooking Hospice Ministry trip will be on December 8th. We will meet at St. Joseph's school parking lot at 7am and will return by noon. All are welcome to lend a hand! If you would like to participate, please contact Veronica O'Donnell, OFS.

INDIVIDUAL APOSTOLATES

Mother of Mercy Free Clinic – The free clinic opened on December 6, 2017 to serve 4,500 people living in low-income households in Manassas and Manassas Park who don't have insurance. It has a waiting room and four exam rooms, as well as office. It is staffed with volunteer doctors, nurses, and other personnel and is open four hours a week. The professed excused continue to participate as prayer warriors for Mother of Mercy Free Clinic in Manassas, VA. Please continue to save your prayer cards, rosaries and medals and give them to Vera. Sally White, OFS will mail a box to the clinic in December. If you are interested in participating as a volunteer at the clinic or as a prayer warrior, you can sign up on the diocese volunteer website, www.cdda.net

St. Jude's Ranch for Children - Sally is collecting greeting cards. Used cards will be re-purposed by the St. Jude's Ranch for Children. Please save the front of the cards (NOT Disney, Hallmark or American Greetings), and bring them to the Monthly Tau meeting. Also, if you have unused greeting cards, please bring them also. Sally supports the Military Mama Network by sending Christmas cards to active duty military personnel on deployment, and she sends the other cards to deployed troops and to families of veterans who have lost their

lives. Vera will deliver the cards to Sally. For more information about the St. Jude Ranch program, see <https://stjude ranch.org/recycled-card-program/>.. To learn about the Military Mama Network, see <http://militarymamanetwork.org/>.

Helping Homeless Veterans - We have many homeless veterans in our immediate area. The Loudoun Elks in Sterling, Virginia, has a grant from the federal government to help provide and furnish housing for homeless veterans. The Elks' program has found housing for over forty veterans and family members since the organization received the grant. Many of these homeless veterans have only a few possessions and have been living outside in dire conditions such as sheltering under bridges. Some veterans are mothers with small children. So even when moving into an apartment, the participants need household goods especially bedding and other linens. Please bring new or gently used clean linens to the December meeting or deliver them to Sally.

Warm Clothing Drive – Clari Claus, OFS is collecting hats, scarves, gloves, mittens and the like to needy children at Herndon Elementary School. Cash donations are also welcome; Clari will do the shopping for you! Please bring any and all donations to our December gathering.

TAU COMMITTEES

If you are interested in participating actively in one of our Committees, take a moment to chat with the chair:

Hospitality Committee – Veronica O'Donnell, OFS
Infirmarian Committee – Irene Naveau, OFS
Recruitment Committee – Bill Bouffard, OFS
Technology Committee – John Ata, OFS

COMING UP IN DECEMBER

December is the Month of the Incarnation *



- Dec 2 – First Sunday of Advent
 - Tau Fraternity Meeting
 - Richard Clarke's Profession
- Dec 3 – Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle
 - Feast of St. Francis Xavier
- Dec 5 – Bill Bouffard's, Jim Haynes', & Liz Welborn's Profession
- Dec 6 – St. Nicholas
 - Ron Kauffman's Profession
- Dec 8 – Feast of The Immaculate Conception – Holy Day of Obligation
 - Frank Bowen's Profession
 - Cooking Hospice Apostolate
- Dec 9 - Second Sunday of Advent
- Dec 12 – Discovery of the tomb of St. Francis, Feast of Our Lady of Guadeloupe
 - Ed Geiger's Profession
- Dec 13 – Memorial of St. Lucy
 - Meeting with Father Alberto
- Dec 15 – Mary Queen of the Seraphic Order
- Dec 16 – Third Sunday of Advent
- Dec 23 – Fourth Sunday of Advent
- Dec 25 – Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ – Holy Day of Obligation
- Dec 26 – Feast of St. Stephen
- Dec 27 – Feast of St. John the Apostle
- Dec 28 – Feast of the Holy Innocents
- Dec 30 – Denis Dunn's Birthday
- Dec 31 – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Who are we, God our Father,
amidst all of your creation?
Yet you so loved the world
that you sent Jesus, your Son,
to live fully as one of us.
I rejoice that he is beside me now.

From
<http://www.prayingeachday.org/reflec tdecember.html>

* See the Franciscan Calendar for more dates:
<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/traditional-franciscan-calendar.html>

SAINTS OF THE SEASON

St. Lucy

St. Lucy, whose name can mean "light" or "lucid," is the patron saint of the blind. She is often seen with the emblem of eyes on a cup or plate. In paintings, she is often depicted with a golden plate holding her eyes and often holds a palm branch, which is a symbol of victory over evil.

Saint Lucy's Prayer:

Saint Lucy, you did not hide your light under a basket, but let it shine for the whole world, for all the centuries to see. We may not suffer torture in our lives the way you did, but we are still called to let the light of our Christianity illumine our daily lives. Please help us to have the courage to bring our Christianity into our work, our recreation, our relationships, our conversation -- every corner of our day. Amen

https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=75

St. Stephen

St. Stephen is often depicted with stones, a Gospel Book, a miniature church and a martyr's palm frond. He is the patron saint of Altar Servers, bricklayers, casket makers and deacons and his feast day is celebrated on December 26.

A Prayer by Deacon Keith Fournier

Lord Jesus, you chose Stephen as the first deacon and martyr of your One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. The heroic witness of his holy life and death reveals your continued presence among us. Through following the example of his living faith, and by his intercession, empower us by your Holy Spirit to live as witnesses to the faith in this New Missionary Age. No matter what our state in life, career or vocation, help us to proclaim, in both word and in deed, the fullness of the Gospel to a world which is waiting to be born anew in Jesus Christ. Pour out upon your whole Church, the same Holy Spirit which animated St Stephen, Martyr, to be faithful to the end, which is a beginning of life eternal in the communion of the Trinity.

https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=137

St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas is celebrated as the patron saint of several classes of people, especially, in the East, of sailors and in the West of children. He is also the patron saint of Russia, Greece, Apulia, Sicily and Loraine,

St. Nicholas Prayer:

God, Who didst grace the Blessed Nicholas as protector of imperiled innocence whilst he lived, and after his death by countless miracles, grant that by his merits we may be freed from perversion of justice while alive and from the fires of Gehenna after death. Amen.

https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=371

UPCOMING EVENTS

National Geographic Museum Exhibit

Theme: Tomb of Christ

When: Now through January 2, 2019

See <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/dc/exhibitions/tomb-of-christ/>

Discussion on Child Sex Abuse Scandal

When: Thursday, December 13, 2018 at 7:30pm

Where: St. Joseph School, Rooms 214 & 215

THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

From: <https://www.catholic.org/advent/advent.php?id=2>

You're all familiar with the Christmas song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" I think. To most it's a delightful nonsense rhyme set to music. But it had a quite serious purpose when it was written.

It is a good deal more than just a repetitious melody with pretty phrases and a list of strange gifts. Catholics in England during the period 1558 to 1829, when Parliament finally emancipated Catholics in England, were prohibited from ANY practice of their faith by law - private OR public. It was a crime to BE a Catholic.

"The Twelve Days of Christmas" was written in England as one of the "catechism songs" to help young Catholics learn the tenets of their faith - a memory aid, when to be caught with anything in *writing* indicating adherence to the Catholic faith could not only get you imprisoned, it could get you hanged, or shortened by a head - or hanged, drawn and quartered, a rather peculiar and ghastly punishment I'm not aware was ever practiced anywhere else. Hanging, drawing and quartering involved hanging a person by the neck until they had almost, but not quite, suffocated to death; then the party was taken down from the gallows, and disemboweled while still alive; and while the entrails were still lying on the street, where the executioners stomped all over them, the victim was tied to four large farm horses, and literally torn into five parts - one to each limb and the remaining torso.

The songs gifts are hidden meanings to the teachings of the faith. The "true love" mentioned in the song doesn't refer to an earthly suitor, it refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the presents refers to every baptized person. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the song, Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge which feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings, much in memory of the expression of Christ's sadness over the fate of Jerusalem: "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have sheltered thee under my wings, as a hen does her chicks, but thou wouldst not have it so..."

The other symbols mean the following:

- 1 Partridge in a Pear Tree = Jesus Christ, Son of God
- 2 Turtle Doves = The Old and New Testaments
- 3 French Hens = Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues
- 4 Calling Birds = the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists
- 5 Golden Rings = The first Five Books of the Old Testament, the "Pentateuch", which gives the history of man's fall from grace.
- 6 Geese A-laying = the six days of creation
- 7 Swans A-swimming = the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments
- 8 Maids A-milking = the eight beatitudes
- 9 Ladies Dancing = the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- 10 Lords A-leaping = the ten commandments
- 11 Pipers Piping = the eleven faithful apostles
- 12 Drummers Drumming = the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed

NEXT TAU FRATERNITY GENERAL MEETING

Date: Sunday, December 2, 2018

Location: St. Joseph Catholic Church

Schedule: 12:30 - 1:30 Inquirer/Candidate Formation
1:30 - Opening Prayer – **Bill Bouffard, OFS**
1:35 – 2:05 On-going formation
2:05 – 3:30 Christmas Party
3:30 - 4:00 The Angelus, Liturgy of Hours, business meeting, and closing prayer



INITIAL FORMATION:

Senior Candidates: Chapter 22 in The Franciscan Journey

Inquirers/Candidates: Chapter 12 in The Franciscan Journey

All are welcome to join the Initial Formation groups.

ON-GOING FORMATION:

We will conclude our exploration of Pope Francis' *Call to Holiness in Today's World* with Chapter 5, "Spiritual Combat, Vigilance and Discernment." We will briefly return to personal reflections on how we have begun to implement the signs of holiness that we discussed in Chapter 4.

In January, we will begin our review of Spirituality and the twelve-step program in Richard Rohr's Breathing Underwater. Members are requested to purchase a copy of the book.

THE ANGELUS

During Advent, we will precede the Liturgy of the Hours with the Angelus.

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace,

The Lord is with Thee;

Blessed art thou among women,

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

Pray for us sinners,

Now and at the hour of our death. Amen

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. And the Word was made Flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS:

First Sunday of Advent

Hymn: #63 – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel: pg. 1577 (Verses 1 and 2)

Psalms: Week 1 Evening Prayer II: pgs. 712

Everything else: First Sunday of Advent, Evening Prayer II: pg. 45

Reader: **Josh Goldberg, OFS**

For the next newsletter, please send your prayer requests and submissions to Vera Stewart at thevastewarts@gmail.com or call or text (703) 459-6958. If you call and do not get an answer, please leave a voicemail message.

