



PACE E BENE

TAU FRATERNITY

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

<https://tauofs.org/>

May 2020

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Peace and all good!

When I wrote my last Minister's Message to you, we were not yet in the full grip of the Coronavirus pandemic. A national emergency had not been declared, case numbers were not rising daily, and we could — for the most part — move about freely, even if with some caution.

Things are of course very different now.

Since then, we are daily besieged with scary images and stories. We are cut off from family, relatives, churches, and communities, except by virtual means. And now we have spent possibly our very first Easter watching a Mass rather than being an active part of it.

Strange days, indeed.

You have probably read many spiritual commentaries about the graces to be found in all of this. And there most surely are graces — tremendous and inspiring public images of sacrifice; of compassion; of Christ-like emptying of self. The personal opportunity to slow down, to take more time to pray and reflect.

Yet there is also a persistent feeling of “disjointedness”, for lack of a better word. We want back what we have lost; we crave a return to normal.

As Franciscans, we might also find ourselves focusing on what remains; on what is truly essential. Does such a crisis have a way of “spiritually recalibrating” us, whether we want this, or not? Does it clear away and clarify?

Perhaps. But for those who have lost loved ones, livelihoods, or financial security, it is tough to meaningfully interpret a catastrophe of this scale through a lens of personal mercy.

So I would suggest that maybe we not try. Not right now.

In the midst of such extraordinary circumstances, it is impossible to apply an infallible spiritual calculus. Instead, we might just adopt St. Faustina's simple mantra, “Jesus, I trust in you.” We will probably need to come out on the other side and look back, before we may be able to make any sense of this — and even then, that may not be guaranteed. But even still: “Jesus, I trust in you.”

Sometimes, it's all we can say.

Holding you in prayer,

Kimberley

RECAP OF LAST GATHERING

**DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC, THE
APRIL TAU GATHERING WAS CANCELED.**

PRAYER SUBMISSIONS

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

For physical and spiritual healing of Sally White; Richard & Carole Clarke and their grandsons Liam and Rory; Helen Broxmeyer and her daughter Susan; William Brewster; Irene Naveau; Kay Flynn; and Catherine Williams. For the patients and Sisters at the Missionaries of Charity Gift of Peace House. For the people affected by Coronavirus and their caregivers. For the Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic and its patients. For all peoples who suffer persecution. For the victims of natural disasters. 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, OFS by the 14th of the month, so that they may be included in the newsletter.

APOSTOLATES

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Help to feed the hungry. Food donations for the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry will be collected during each monthly gathering. Thank you to Terry Rinker, OFS who has graciously delivered food to the food pantry at St. Leo the Great. Terry is moving out of the area. This month, Cyndy Filan-Kim, OFS volunteered to deliver food to the St. Vincent de Paul Society chapter at her parish. Money from the Tau General Fund will be used to purchase needed food items. If you wish to contribute, please send a check to Cyndy or to the Tau P.O. Box.

Thank you!

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY HOSPICE APOSTOLATE

The Mother Superior of the Mission of Charity convent in Washington DC is asking us to continue to pray for the Gift of Hope hospice patients. She said, "Your prayers are so important to us right now." Hospice patients have illnesses like cancer. Others are recovering from catastrophic events like a stroke. They are particularly vulnerable. Please pray for the patients as well as the sisters.

The Sisters are trying to limit the number of people entering the hospice right now, including volunteers, out of caution for the patients. Additional information will be provided in the June newsletter regarding restrictions, if any, affecting the hospice apostolate.

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
Interfaith/Ecumenical Committee – Kimberley Heatherington, OFS
Infirmarian Committee – Sally White, OFS
Recruitment Committee – Vacant
Technology Committee – John Ata, OFS

INTERFAITH/ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE

Religions for Peace | unicef

 Dr. Vinu Aram Director, Shanti Ashram	 Rev. Kosho Niwano President Designate, Rissho Kosei-kai	 H.E. Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah; President, Forum for Peace in Muslim Societies, Abu Dhabi	 H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel Metropolitan of France	 Ms. Bani Dugal Principal Representative to the UN, Bahá'í International Community	 Mr. Homi Gandhi, President, Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America	 The Most Rev. Antje Jackelen, Archbishop of Uppsala, Primate of Sweden, Church of Sweden
 H.E. Sheikh Shaban Ramadhan Mubaje Grand Mufti of Uganda	 H.E. John Cardinal Onaiyekan, Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja, Nigeria	 Ms. Aruna Oswal, Vice President, World Jain Confederation	 Grand-Father Dominique Rankin, Algonquin Hereditary Grand Chief	 Chief Rabbi David Rosen, KSG CBE, International Director of Interreligious Affairs, American Jewish Committee	 Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh, OBE KSG Chairman, Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha	

Launch of GLOBAL Multi-religious Faith-in-Action COVID-19 Initiative

Campaign engages the world's religious communities through Religions for Peace's global, regional and national networks in a collective, multi-religious response to the COVID-19 pandemic

(7 April 2020 | Global) *Religions for Peace (RfP)* and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have launched a **global Multi-religious Faith-in-Action COVID-19 Campaign** in order to involve religious leaders in prevention and assisting program connected with the worldwide COVID-19 crisis.

The campaign affirms the unique and influential roles of religious leaders and actors in influencing values, attitudes, behaviors and actions that affect the development and wellbeing of the world's children.

As multitudes prepare for religious observances around Passover, Easter, Ramadan and Vaisakhi (Vesak) and Ridván, *RfP* and UNICEF will equip religious leaders to ensure the health and safety of their communities by supporting the development of virtual worship services, providing webinars on public health, facilitating effective engagement in national-level policy and programs, promoting messaging through social media campaigns, and advancing projects to counter stigma and discrimination.

RfP has mobilised senior leaders and Interreligious Councils convening the world's religious and spiritual traditions – including Bahai, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Sikh, Zoroastrian and Indigenous spiritualities – and its interfaith youth and women's networks to engage their communities across the world to advance these goals.

Senior-most leaders from 13 diverse traditions conclude the statement saying, “We stand united in this global [interfaith moment of hope and solidarity](#) for the survival, protection and development of our children, families and communities.”

The full statement is available [here](#).

<https://rfp.org/launch-of-global-multi-religious-faith-in-action-covid-19-initiative/>

COMING UP IN MAY

May is the Month of the Holy Virgin Mary *

May 3 – Feast of Sts. Philip and James, Apostles
Tau Monthly Meeting

May 14 – Feast of St. Matthias, Apostle

May 25 – Dedication of the Basilica in Assisi

May 26 – Feast of St. Philippe Neri

May 27 – Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

May 30 – Ascension of Jesus

Feast day of St. Joan of Arc

May 31 – Feast of the Queenship of Mary/Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Tau Retreat

Due to the Coronavirus, the Tau Council plans to hold a virtual retreat, possibly on May 16, 2020. Details will be provided via email.

POETIC REFLECTION

Systems

My husband was a systems engineer. For him,
Systems were everywhere, with their own elegant structures –
Endlessly fascinating. Whether material objects
Or the mysteries of human behavior; all waited
To reveal their inmost secrets and become useful.

Francis of Assisi, in his own day, saw
The world as a system. (He was always ahead of his time.)
For Francis, all of God’s Creation was a unity,
All of its parts were “Brothers” and “Sisters,” even
The humblest living thing, or the smallest pebble.

What would Francis say about our “enemy,”
The Coronavirus? He understood that each
Part of Creation had its own purpose, though
We couldn’t know what some of those purpose were.
And today I’m guessing (only guessing, mind you)

That he'd say that even viruses have their reason –
Otherwise, why would they exist? So perhaps while fighting them,

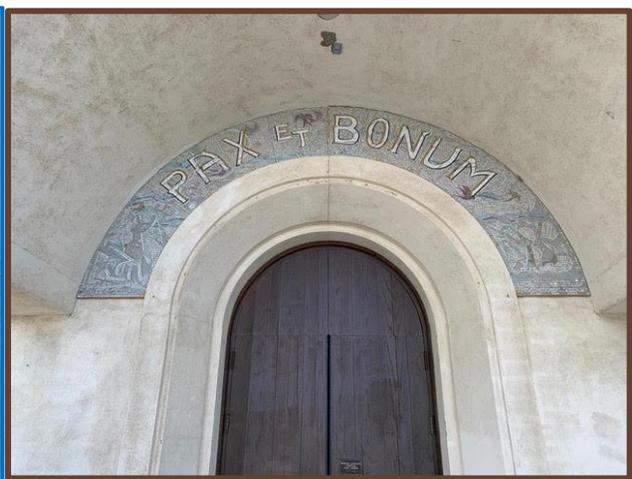
We might need an attitude adjustment:
From panic to acceptance of God's being in control –
Like Job, bowing to the knowledge that we cannot know
Everything as He does, who holds the Universe in His hands,
And who knows us better than we know ourselves.

Speaking from an age of countless insecurities,
Francis would surely say that if we can accept
Our little place in the grand system of Creation,
Then we might know peace in the plague year.

Helen Broxmeyer
3-23-2020

PRE-QUARANTINE VACATION

Joe Boyle visited St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in La Quinta, CA



PRAYER

The Way, The Truth, and The Life

By Cynthia Filan-Kim, OFS

Stay with me, Jesus
Throughout my day
Light my path,
You are the Way

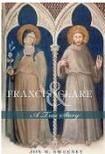
Guide me, in Truth,
To love, to serve
My brothers, my sisters
In Your Most Holy Word

As I lay down to rest,
And darkness fills the night
Stay with me, Jesus
You are the Life!

NEXT TAU FRATERNITY GATHERING

Date: Sunday, **May 3, 2020**

Location: TELECONFERENCE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS— Call-in information will be sent via email.



Schedule: 1:30 – 3:00 pm

- Opening Prayer: **TBD**
- Family discussion, in lieu of a presentation
- Ongoing Formation: General discussion of assigned material in *Francis & Clare: A True Story*
- Abbreviated Liturgy of the Hours
- Closing Prayer

*At the May virtual meeting, we will elevate our Aspirants —
Barbara, Lisa, Sharin, and Stanley — to Inquirer status.*

INITIAL FORMATION:

Senior Candidates: Chapter 29 in The Franciscan Journey

Candidates: Chapter 17 in The Franciscan Journey

Aspirants: Chapter 5 in The Franciscan Journey

ON-GOING FORMATION:

Read Chapters 1-4 in Francis and Clare: A true Story by Jon M. Sweeney. Because conducting on-going formation virtually with a half hour time frame will be interesting to say the least, feel free to focus on one

chapter that presents you with new insights particularly into Clare's life. If we only cover one or two chapters, we will adjust the assignment for next month.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS:

Fourth Sunday of Easter:

We will follow the abbreviated, which is available online for free at <https://us.magnificat.net/free>.

Reader: **TBD**

If you would like to volunteer to provide the opening prayer or to do the Liturgy of the Hours Reading, please contact Kimberley Heatherington, 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.