



PACE E BENE

TAU FRATERNITY

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

<https://tauofs.org/>

February 2021

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Peace and all good!

The 54th World Day of Peace took place on January 1, 2021.

One might be forgiven if — considering the level of domestic and worldwide conflict we still witness on a daily basis — it went unremarked. That the World Day of Peace has not thus far succeeded in eliminating war, is not, however, the point. The point is awareness. Did you realize that, in 2020, 69 countries were involved in some degree of armed conflict?

Much like “love”, the frequent overuse of “peace” — as a word and as an idea — has led to its generalization; repeated casual and vague invocation has progressively drained it of both meaning and power. And given the pervasiveness of war, it also perhaps seems impossible; unrealistic — Let there be peace on earth? Has there ever been? Can there ever be?

In attempting to answer that question, we might first ask: Why do we accept sustained conflict? And what would authentic peace look like?

To avoid being overwhelmed, we perhaps think of peace as elusive; unachievable. Pope Francis warns against this tendency in his message for the 2021 World Day of Peace: “We need to stop and ask ourselves what has led our world to see conflict as something normal, and how our hearts can be converted and our ways of thinking changed, in order to work for true peace in solidarity and fraternity.”

How might we work “in solidarity and fraternity”?

To start, we cannot view ourselves in isolation. We cannot see ourselves only as members of our own particular family; only as residents in our own specific community; only as a singular exponent of the faithful within defined parish boundaries; or even just as a citizen of a certain state or country, while remaining largely unaware of what takes place beyond our borders.

Does that sound like the dreaded specter of globalism? It is globalism, for certain — but in the best, most intentioned, most universal, and most caring and cared for, sense. As Franciscans, we are brother and sister to all; by nature of our vocation and our profession, we do not have the luxury of parochial thinking.

Returning to the idea of authentic peace, in his address, Pope Francis explained that the theme of the Day is “dedicated to caring for others and for creation.”

This is an integrated idea that maintains we will never have a world free of conflict if we don't first care for one another, and for the earth. These are twin and connected concerns that cannot be teased apart. A toxic and damaged earth creates conflict as people compete for ever-scarcer resources — land, food, and water — and as climate refugees and migrants seek new homes in countries that may not welcome them. This is not a potential future; it is the current day.

Dr. Martin Luther King — whose national holiday we marked on January 18 — said, “True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.” Dr. King also observed, “Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

We don't even have to all agree to have peace — but we do have to respect one another.

As we work to eliminate conflict, we must also work to build the conditions capable of sustaining peace, both at home and abroad. This requires an awareness that is sensitive to economic and educational inequity, social and religious prejudice, and the myriad forms of injustice that inhibit human thriving and dignity.

This is what Pope Francis refers to as “a culture of care.” He describes it this way: “The *culture of care* calls for a common, supportive and inclusive commitment to protecting and promoting the dignity and good of all, a willingness to show care and compassion, and to work for reconciliation and healing, and to advance mutual respect and acceptance. As such, it represents a privileged path to peace.”

Conditions can be changed — will be changed — but only if we continuously and consistently attune ourselves to our shared humanity; only if we make our voices heard to those in power — and only if they understand that we have a priority for peace.

Peace must be tended; cultivated. It can be fragile, or it can be bold — but the need for it can't be ignored.

You can read Pope Francis' message for the 2021 World Day of Peace at this URL:

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20201208_messaggio-54giornatamondiale-pace2021.html

Holding you all in prayer,

Kimberley

RECAP OF LAST GATHERING

OPENING PRAYER

Kimberley Heatherington, OFS offered an opening prayer.

PRESENTATION

Brother Joseph Marie Krilich, TOR introduced a guest speaker, Father Rufino Corona, TOR. Father Rufino explained that he has explored humility in creation and Franciscan spirituality. He cited St. Francis' *Letter to the Entire Order* and the *1st Admonition*. Some highlights from the presentation are as follows:

- The Letter to the Entire Order says that God puts himself in our hands.
- To add historical context, in the time of St. Francis, groups formed that saw that Jesus came in poverty. However, the groups were heretical in that based on their logic, they did not believe that Jesus is present in the Eucharist. Francis wanted to keep a relationship with the Church, and he understood the importance of the Eucharist, which can only be brought forth through the hands of a priest.
- In the *1st Admonition*, the Holy Spirit reveals the Son, who reveals the Father.
- St. Francis always mentions Mary in association with the Trinity.
- Jesus is not just here [in the Eucharist] for us to see, but also for us to receive him.
- At the heart of Franciscan Spirituality is the work of the Trinity in the incarnation and Humility in the incarnation.

ONGOING FORMATION

Walter Gawlak, OFS began an open discussion on what we can do to become a more cohesive and nurturing fraternity. He briefly talked about the five elements of formation:

- Means of growth (We nourish)
- Assimilation (We absorb)
- Integration of values (We enter)
- Ongoing conversion (We examine)
- Transformation (We are changed)

Walter referred to the following questions, which were sent to the fraternity via email, and asked for ideas for formation.

- ✦ How do I help others in my fraternity (new and professed) on their way toward the full realization of their vocation as Christians and as Franciscans?
- ✦ How does formation (my own and the fraternity's program) help me toward a personal union with God the Father in Christ through the Holy Spirit?
- ✦ How does the plan of formation in my fraternity facilitate our members' experience of community and sense of mission in the world and in the Church?
- ✦ Describe how you discern for yourself and help others in the fraternity to discern.

Members offered the following ideas:

- ✦ We can have prayer buddies.
- ✦ Anyone interested could participate in a group bible study. It could be a scriptural study of the gospels to reinforce our Franciscan vocation. This may be done virtually.
- ✦ Anyone interested may take the course that Richard Rohr is hosting on *The Franciscan Way of Life* and share the information with the Fraternity.
- ✦ Members may keep individual journals and share writings and book recommendations with the Fraternity.
- ✦ We could read and discuss Pope Francis' books *Let Us Dream* and *Fratelli Tutti*.
- ✦ Volunteers for presentations can discuss relevant topics such as Duns Scotus or one of the mystics.
- ✦ Someone should reach out to people who have been missing meetings.
- ✦ We should return balance between prayer and action – we have been focusing more on spirituality and prayer and away from Franciscan action.
- ✦ We can participate in programs such as the Ascension Press *Read the Bible in a Year* podcast with Father Mike Schmitz. Information for this, including a link, is on the St. Joseph Parish website.

Walter ended formation with a prayer from the Sisters of St. Joseph.

PRAYER SUBMISSIONS

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

For physical and spiritual healing of Pamela Brooks' great nephew Logan and their family; Erik and Paola Larin; Bill Brewster and his son Richard Lee; Cynthia Filan-Kim's sister; Sally White and her sister Linda; Richard & Carole Clarke and their grandsons Liam and Rory; Helen Broxmeyer and her daughter Susan; William Brewster; Irene Naveau; and Kay Flynn. For the repose of the soul of Ambrose Kim. 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. Cyndy Filan-Kim, OFS volunteered to shop and 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.

Thank you!

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY HOSPICE APOSTOLATE

Thanks to the many volunteers who cook a meal for the hospice patients at the Missionaries of Charity Gift of Peace House in Washington, DC. We appreciate the participation of not just Fraternity members, but also of spouses and family members who have been generous in their support. And as always, thanks to St. John Neumann Parish for its financial backing.

We continue to serve the patients at the Gift of Peace House remotely during the pandemic, cooking dishes in volunteers' own homes. Joe plans on doing our next curbside pickup from volunteers on Friday, February 12. And Pat B., OFS and Joe M., OFS will do the curbside meal drop off to the hospice on Saturday, February 13.

Please contact Pat or Joe if you are interested in preparing a dish or helping the hospice in any other way. Whether or not you are able to cook, please consider remembering the patients and the good work of the Sisters in your daily prayers.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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 – Sharon Goldberg
Recruitment Committee – Vacant
Technology Committee – John Ata, OFS

INTERFAITH/ECUMENICAL COMMITTEE

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FRANCISCAN UNITY (JCFU)

Video Conference

January 14-16, 2021

“Intersections in Our Life - in Christ, Saints Francis & Clare”

From January 14-16, 2021, the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity (www.franciscanunity.org) held a multi-day conference which was attended by 25+ Franciscans from different secular orders around the United States. These orders included:

Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis

OFS - Roman Catholic

<https://secularfranciscansusa.org>

The Third Order Society of St. Francis

TSSF - Episcopal/Anglican

<https://tssf.org>

Order of Lutheran Franciscans

OLF - Lutheran

<https://www.lutheranfranciscans.org>

Order of Ecumenical Franciscans

OEF - Ecumenical

<https://oeffranciscans.org>

You can watch a video that summarizes the work of the Committee at the JCFU website (www.franciscanunity.org).

The conference examined several elements of Franciscan unity that all of the orders share, whatever their denomination. These are:

- shared baptism: a common relationship with God
- shared vocation: a radical conversion to follow the Gospel
- shared charism: all are Christ-centered
- shared prophetic voice: striving for justice and peace

Following personal introductions from all attendees and a brief review of each order's background, these elements were examined during the multi-day conference through presentations followed by discussion.

The core values and essentials of each order are closely aligned, in terms of making Christ known; a desire for simplicity; and care for creation.

We are perhaps most closely joined in our shared baptism, which is a shared witness.

Baptism is universal, and has in common many of the same sacramental symbols — water; light; anointing oil — from tradition to tradition. It welcomes us into the Church; we are all in God's family, and all are part of the same journey. We can build peace and harmony, while accepting our differences.

Spiritual ecumenism begins with what unites us; Franciscans strive for justice and peace among all people. Each of us is called to unite, not divide; to open paths of dialogue, not build new walls.

Having a shared vocation implies being conformed to the image of Christ by a radical interior change that the Gospel calls conversion. What is our common thread? Our central and core beliefs — baptized by the water and the Spirit — and that we have all accepted Jesus.

Love is the fundamental vocation of every human being, and we also share this. What shall we do with this love? "Whom shall I send?" (Isaiah 6:8). "Rebuild my Church" — that was St. Francis' call.

We also share a radical conversion and transformation — we all answered the call. We are each called to pick up our cross daily as a Franciscan family, to serve all in need of our love. This is our vocation!

Our shared pledge is to:

- Lady Poverty: emptying ourselves
- Chastity: purity of heart and soul
- Obedience: be dutiful/reverent to our respective Rules

See the parallels; hear the common language; sense the Franciscan charisms; experience the same Christ-centered spirituality!

We are family — and can all bear witness to God's love in the world.



World Interfaith Harmony Week

Annual UN Observance Week: Feb. 1-7

The World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the UN General Assembly on September 23, 2010 by H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan. Just under a month later, on October 20, 2010, it was unanimously adopted by the UN and henceforth the first week of February will be observed as a World Interfaith Harmony Week.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week is based on the pioneering work of [The Common Word initiative](#). This initiative, which started in 2007, called for Muslim and Christian leaders to engage in a dialogue based on two common fundamental religious Commandments; Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour, without nevertheless compromising any of their own religious tenets. The Two commandments are at the heart of the three Monotheistic religions and therefore provide the most solid theological ground possible.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week extends the Two Commandments by adding 'Love of the Good, and Love of the Neighbour'. This formula includes all people of goodwill. It includes those of other faiths, and those with no faith.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week provides a platform—one week in a year—when all interfaith groups and other groups of goodwill can show the world what a powerful movement they are. The thousands of events organized by these groups often go unnoticed not only by the general public, but also by other groups themselves. This week will allow for these groups to become aware of each other and strengthen the movement by building ties and avoiding duplicating each others' efforts.

It is hoped that this initiative will provide a focal point from which all people of goodwill can recognize that the common values they hold far outweigh the differences they have, and thus provide a strong dosage of peace and harmony to their communities.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGN UP NOW!!

Tau Fraternity Gatherings are much more beneficial to all of us if we all participate! Sign up for a presentation, opening prayer, and/or one of the Liturgy of the Hours readings.

COMING UP IN FEBRUARY

February is the Month of the Holy Family *

- Feb 2 – World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life
- Feb 3 – Feast of the Martyrs of Japan
Feast of St. Blasé
- Feb 7 – 14 – National Marriage Week
- Feb 7 – Tau Gathering
- Feb 8 – International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking
Profession of Vicki Shanholtz and Bill Brewster
- Feb 10 – Bill Bouffard's birthday
- Feb 11 – Apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes, 1858
World Day for the Sick



Feb 13 - Missionaries of Charity Hospice Apostolate Food Drop-off

Feb 17 – Ash Wednesday

Liz Welborn's birthday

Feb 18 – Feast of St. Bernadette of Soubirous

Feb 21 – Feast of St. Margaret of Cortona (Some sources indicate that her feast day is Feb. 22, and some May 16)

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

FRANCISCAN PRESENTATION

On Sunday, January 24, 2021, Fr. David Dodd, TOR gave a presentation “St. Francis and Scripture.” Kimberley Heatherington, OFS provided the following highlights.



- St. Francis regarded Scripture as a love letter from God to humanity.

- Faith Comes by Hearing: St. Francis' society was more accustomed to hearing rather than reading the Word of God; many couldn't read, and there were few books. They also were not as distracted as we are, so they retained information differently. To them, Scripture was not static, but a dynamic presence.

- Living Presence of Scripture: St. Francis didn't see the Bible as just a historical text; his attitude was to approach the texts as the person of Christ, finding the living presence of Christ in Scripture.

- Knowledge of Scripture: St. Francis had a vast knowledge of Scripture; he quotes it frequently in his letters and writings. His breviary had an appendix of Gospel texts. He also had much of his knowledge from the liturgy, as Scripture was read / heard / chanted.

- Scripture as a Living Presence: St. Francis didn't refer to Scripture as “Scripture” or “the Bible”; he instead called it “holy words” or “fragrant words” of the Lord. We see this idea in three ways:

(i) Sacramental Formula: St. Francis regards the Eucharistic body and blood of Jesus as connected to Scripture — we can't have the Eucharist without the Word (Christ / Scripture). It is a Living Word; St. Francis references the Word of God as incarnational. For him, there is no division between the word and the Sacrament.

(ii) Liturgical Texts: St. Francis indicated special care should be given to “other liturgical objects that contain His holy words” - such as missals; prayers of the Church; etc. that make the Word present.

(iii) Preaching: St. Francis urges reverence for those who hold the ministry of preaching; again, it is the connection of Word and Sacrament.

St. Francis cites Scripture hundreds of times in his writings; for some specific examples, see the *Early Rule* (Ch. 22); *Admonitions* (1); and *The Second Letter to the Faithful* (36-41). St. Francis understands that the way the Lord is always present with His people is through his Word; it is presence / voice / action. It is not static!

Franciscan spirituality can be summed up as the crib (Incarnation); the cross; and the Eucharist.

- Application for Us - Ways to Increase our Knowledge of Scripture:

- Liturgy of the Hours

- Audio Bible or Bible in a Year podcast with Fr. Mike Schmitz

- Enthroned the Word of God in your home; read from the Daily and Sunday Gospel readings

- Read Scripture sacramentally; Scripture is the incarnation of letter and spirit

BOOK REVIEW

Submitted by Valerye Milleson

***More or Less: Choosing a Lifestyle of Excessive Generosity* (Jeff Shinabarger)**

"I invite you to join me in a series of social experiments that challenge us to ask what is enough? in life. This question may begin to challenge the way you see the world today. That's okay. When we choose to draw a line in every aspect of our lives, we choose what is enough. We are given the opportunity to define what is enough. There is a great tension in walking this line of more or less, but this tension creates great opportunities. Living on less creates the potential to do much more for others." (Shinabarger)

Shinabarger's book, *More or Less: Choosing a Lifestyle of Excessive Generosity*, focuses on the questions: *What is enough? What is excess? Where do we, as individuals, draw a line? and How do we draw that line?* Through a series of stories and personal examples, he guides his readers on a journey of self-reflection and, ideally, related social activism.

Asking the question *What is enough?* is not new. The recent popularity of minimalism, Marie Kondo, and similar movements highlight the appeal to many people to reset their lives by thinking about how much "stuff" they have and eliminating the excess. What Shinabarger adds to this conversation is the element of activism and solidarity in this process, which he does by inviting readers to engage in what he calls "enough" experiments.

One example in his book involves the question of *What is enough food?* In this experiment, Shinabarger and his wife made a point of eating only the food they had in the kitchen pantry and refrigerator/freezer until it was used up, ultimately making it 147 (not necessarily well-balanced) meals for two. Although prompted by a need to cut expenses due to the "dreaded after-Christmas credit-card bill," the experience prompted the couple to compare their resources to others without: the hungry, the impoverished, those in food deserts, and so on.

In another example, Shinabarger's wife, who works as a physician assistant in a neighborhood clinic where many patients were uninsured and lacked access and/or financial resources to drive to appointments, spent one Lent season walking to and from her work (1.5 miles away) every day, rain or shine, heat or cold. She spent her walks praying for her patients and gained a new empathy for the fatigue and struggles of people without the convenience of easy transportation.

There are many other examples (read the book if you want more!), but his final chapter offers specific guidance on how readers can create and complete their own enough experiment, a condensed version of which I will share here:

1. Start with *what*. Ask yourself, "Is there something I might have too much of?" Examples could be food, clothing, books, time, transportation...anything you might have in abundance. It's probably best to start small for your first experiment, and to focus on something you can work with within a reasonable timeframe.
2. Now link your *what* with a *who*. This can be an individual person, a group of people suffering a lack or injustice related to your *what*, or maybe even an issue or movement. Pick a *who* you can keep in mind, suffer alongside, and act in solidarity with as you live out your enough experiment.
3. Set your *parameters*. What are the rules for your experiment? When will you start, how long will it last, what are the boundaries, etc.? Here's a hint: if you can't easily explain your experiment to someone else, you probably need to refine your parameters.
4. Think of what you will do *afterwards*. This can change depending on your experiment, but is there a way you can take the experiment beyond yourself? Will there be an excess to give away? Can you share your experiences to inspire others? Be creative.

If you don't have a clear *what* but instead a *who*, you can reverse 1 and 2 above. But the goal isn't to make this overly complicated; the goal is to find an area in your life where you can think critically about

your own line of more or less and see what opportunities it can provide to change your own life and the lives of others.

With Lent around the corner, this can be a fun and meaningful way to engage in an apostolate activity that is contemplation and action (the best of both worlds!). And be sure to share your results with the rest of us.

ESSAY – SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

“My kingdom is not of this world. . .” (John 18:36, KJV)

“Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” (Mark 12:17, RSVCV)

My own perception is that these two sayings of Jesus are the theological foundation for the principle of Separation of Church and State. Ideally, this principle enables the Church to speak to the State in an unambiguously prophetic way – to speak truth to power when necessary. This in turn benefits the State by helping to preserve the integrity of the secular government. It also ensures that the Church won’t become complicit in the inevitable sins of the State, but will have the time and energy to be watchful over its own very human tendencies toward sin.

Helen Broxmeyer
January 17, 2021

NEXT TAU FRATERNITY GATHERING

Date: Sunday, **February 7, 2021**
Location: TELECONFERENCE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS– Call-in information will be sent via email.
Schedule: 1:30 pm – 1:35 pm Opening Prayer & Member Prayer Offering: **TBD**
1:35 pm – 2:15 pm Presentation **TBD**
2:15 pm – 2:25 pm Break
2:25 pm – 3:05 pm Ongoing Formation & Discussion
3:05 pm – 3:15 pm Break
3:15 pm – 3:25 pm Angelus & Liturgy of the Hours
3:25 pm – 3:35 pm Business Meeting
3:35 pm Closing Prayer

INITIAL FORMATION:

Senior Candidates: Chapter 26 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Candidates: Chapter 14 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Aspirants: Chapter 2 in *The Franciscan Journey*

ON-GOING FORMATION:

Review the material in Chapter 2, A Stranger on the Road, and Chapter 6, Dialogue and Friendship in Society, in *Fratelli Tutti*. While some of the issues that Pope Francis addresses in his encyclical might be beyond our ability to control, these chapters on the Good Samaritan and dialogue raise issues that we can address. We will break up into small groups to discuss our thoughts. I will send you questions for reflection before the gathering.

THE ANGELUS

During Ordinary Time, 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

LITURGY OF THE HOURS:

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time:

Hymn: #33 – O Christ, You Are the Light and Day: pg. 1541

Canticle of Mary Antiphon and Prayer: Evening Prayer II: pg. 249

Everything else: Sunday, Week I Evening Prayer II: pg. 712

Readers: **TBD****

****Please contact Kimberley Heatherington, OFS if you would like to volunteer to do the following:**

- **Opening Prayer**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Psalm 1**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Psalm 2**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Psalm 3**
- **Liturgy of the Hours Scripture Reading and Responsory.**

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.