



PACE E BENE

TAU FRATERNITY

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

<https://tauofs.org/>

April 2021

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Peace and all good!

At Lent, we all perhaps struggle with the same thing: What should I give up? Some item of food? A particular habit? Social media? Watching cat videos? The choices are seemingly endless, and often very personal.

But in addition to not doing something during Lent, I also like to try to do something. Typically, that involves Lenten reading — and this year, my choice is Dr. Edward Sri's *No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ's Passion* (2019, Ascension).

I highly recommend this book, which takes you by the hand from the Garden of Gethsemane to Golgotha, explaining along the way in great yet accessible detail the Scriptural significance of what we are witnessing.

One thing that always strikes me about Christ's Passion is that, for the inhabitants of Jerusalem — as well as its many visitors in town for Passover — the 24 hours that would eventually change the world was, at the time, just another day.

As Christ was tried, beaten, had a crown of thorns forced upon His head, was compelled to carry His cross to His place of crucifixion, and was finally fastened to an instrument of torture and left to die, most people simply went about their business.

Think about it: The day that Love was crucified was for many a day just like any other. Only later did this "ordinary day" become so remarkably significant.

Sometimes, it's all too easy to judge the actions of those we find in Biblical narratives — i.e., "I would have stayed with Jesus" or "I would have realized what was happening, and how important it was."

But in reality, how often do we also just "go about our business" without Christ in mind?

We are prey to so many daily distractions; so many things competing for our time, attention, and resources — in short, we live in the midst of a continuous bombardment of static, and it's very easy to feel that our "spiritual frequencies" can get scrambled by it.

How to focus, so we can accompany Jesus?

One helpful method can be visualization — and a very effective prayer tool is what is traditionally known as “St. Patrick’s Breastplate”:

As I arise today, may the strength of God pilot me,
the power of God uphold me,
the wisdom of God guide me.
May the eye of God look before me,
the ear of God hear me,
the word of God speak for me.
May the hand of God protect me,
the way of God lie before me,
the shield of God defend me,
the host of God save me.
May Christ shield me today...
Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit,
Christ when I stand,
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

With this powerful prayer, we are literally surrounded by Christ, in every direction — and we are encouraged to “put on” the mind and love of Christ so we can be His hands and feet in the world, giving a Gospel example to all those we encounter throughout our day.

Try it — and see if it heightens your daily awareness of Christ.

Wishing you a most blessed Easter and holding you all in prayer,

Kimberley

RECAP OF LAST GATHERING

OPENING PRAYER

Kimberley Heatherington, OFS offered an opening prayer.

A blessing from St. Clare's second letter to Blessed Agnes of Prague:

What you hold may you always hold.
What you do, may you always do and never abandon.
But with swift pace, light step and unswerving feet,
so that even your steps stir up no dust,
Go forward, the spirit of our God has called you.

PRESENTATION

Walter Gawlak, OFS introduced a video provided by Sally White, OFS and shared on screen by Josh Goldberg, OFS. The video by Bishop Barron, entitled “The Sacraments: Lesson Four – Reconciliation” discussed the importance of reconciliation. Some highlights from the video are as follows:

- We are all sinners; we need to be healed.
- God offers his grace, and we often refuse it. So, we need a sacrament of healing.
- Mortal sin is our turning away from the source of life. God wants us back in right relationship with him.

- Jesus came to forgive our sins.
- Contrition is the feeling of being crushed by the weight of sin.
- The culture of “I’m ok; you’re ok” is counter to contrition.
- A firm purpose of amendment is critical.
- Perfect contrition means that we want to please God. It is not a fear of consequences or punishment.
- Satisfaction comes to the penitent through the penance that the priest assigns.
- The priest’s words of absolution are the restoration of friendship with Christ. That is why a priest should always say yes to a request to hear confession and will be silent when asked about someone’s confession, even if his life is in danger.
- Pope Francis said that the confessional should never be a torture chamber; it is a place of welcome and restoration.

ONGOING FORMATION

Walter Gawlak began small group discussions on the four letters of St. Clare to St. Agnes. The groups reflected on the following:

First Letter – Clare’s hymn celebrating Agnes’s “sacred exchange,” the giving up of the things of time for the things of eternity.

1. What brings you the most joy in life? Can you in any way relate to Clare’s insistence that the embrace of poverty brings joy?
2. Have you experienced glimpses of the mystery of your own poverty becoming joy within your life?

Second Letter – Clare writes of vocational identity and fidelity in regard to papal authority yet discerning a way to disagree with legitimate authority.

1. How would you describe your own experience of discovering your vocational identity? What aspects of your vocational identity would you be unable to compromise?
2. Have you even been scorned by good people because of a commitment that your conscience could not compromise? How did your spirituality survive this contempt?
3. How would you describe your own personal commitment to the poor?

Third Letter – Clare reminds Agnes not to get upset about anything other than “the one necessary thing.”

1. How have you practiced seeing the faces behind the food that you eat in your own life? How has this practice changed your eating habits?
2. When have you had to discern the time for action and the time for waiting? Is your personality more inclined to action or waiting? What have been the fruits of action and of waiting in your life?
3. Have you tried placing yourself in the brightness of eternity? What was difficult for you about this prayer? What images of God’s glory have been helpful in your prayer?

Fourth Letter – Clare, nearing death, writes to a sister who is the “other half of her soul.”

1. Have you ever experienced God providing for your physical needs? How can a Christian discern when to prudently plan for his or her needs and when to trust God to provide for these needs?
2. How have Clare’s letters spoken to your heart? Have your life and prayer changed since you met Clare?

After the small group breakouts, the Fraternity reconvened and held a 10-minute discussion; members commented on their group’s discussion of the Four Letters of St. Clare.

Walter mentioned the 2nd order in 2011 had 20,000 Poor Clares in 75 countries and that we support a Poor Clare Monastery in New Jersey and inquired if anyone knew how we came to support the Poor Clare Monastery? Gail Dowling, OFS, explained the history regarding a Professed member, Karen

Stapleton, who lived in Leesburg and had a very prominent career and how she received calling a in her 40's and as a result she sold everything and joined the Poor Clares in New Jersey!

In the next meetings, we will discuss Sister Ilia Delio, OSF's *Clare of Assisi, A Heart Full of Love, the Introduction* and Chapter 1, "The Poverty of God." It's a beautiful book on her spirituality, which has questions for reflections at the end of the chapters. Walter Gawlak, OFS provided two other options if you have already read the book or find the author Sr. Ilia too difficult to read.

PRAYER SUBMISSIONS

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

For physical and spiritual healing Al Carroll and his family; Bill Brewster and his son Richard Lee; Cynthia Filan-Kim's sister; Sally White and her husband Gary; Richard & Carole Clarke and their grandsons Liam and Rory; Helen Broxmeyer and her daughter Susan; Irene Naveau; and Vera Stewart. For the repose of the soul of Kay Flynn. 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 country of Myanmar and its citizens. 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 send prayer requests to Kimberley Heatherington, OFS.

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

Please note that our next meal delivery to the Missionaries of Charity Gift of Peace House has been postponed. There will be NO DELIVERY ON SATURDAY, APRIL 10. Look for the new date, probably in late April, which will be decided over the next couple weeks.

Please contact Pat B., OFS if you are interested in preparing a dish for the April meal or helping the hospice in any other way. And 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



Pope urges Abrahamic religions to pursue path of peace in Iraq

Pope Francis meets with representatives of the three Abrahamic religions at Ur of the Chaldeans in Iraq, and urges Christians, Muslims, and Jews to journey along a path of peace under the stars of the promise God made to Abraham.

Pope Francis speaks to Iraq's religious leaders

March 6, 2021

By Devin Watkins

On the second day of his Apostolic Journey to Iraq, Pope Francis traveled to Ur of the Chaldeans, the birthplace of the three major religions—Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.

His meeting there was billed as the highpoint of his efforts to promote interreligious dialogue and fraternity in the Middle Eastern nation.

“This blessed place brings us back to our origins, to the sources of God’s work, to the birth of our religions,” [the Pope said in his speech to representatives of the three Abrahamic religions](#).

Journey home

Returning to Ur, the birthplace of Abraham, “we seem to have returned home,” added the Pope. He was speaking at a venue set up next to what tradition holds was Abraham’s house, near the Great Ziggurat of Ur.

“It was here that Abraham heard God’s call; it was from here that he set out on a journey that would change history. We are the fruits of that call and that journey.”

The Pope went on to note that God asked Abraham to count the stars and promised the patriarch that his descendants would be as numerous. “He saw us.”

As representatives of those descendants gathered in his birthplace, the Pope urged everyone to look up to heaven as we journey upon earth.

‘We look up to heaven’

Pope Francis reflected first on the lessons we can learn from stargazing.

He said those same stars which our father Abraham looked upon still illumine our darkest nights “because they shine *together*.”

“Heaven thus imparts a message of unity,” said the Pope, “the Almighty above invites us never to separate ourselves from our neighbours. The *otherness* of God points us towards *others*, towards our brothers and sisters.”

The Holy Father also urged the faithful of all religions to preserve fraternity through love while lifting our eyes toward heaven and worshipping God.

“This is true religiosity: to worship God and to love our neighbour,” he said. “In today’s world, which often forgets or presents distorted images of the Most High, believers are called to bear witness to his goodness, to show his paternity through our fraternity.”

Clouds of terrorism, hatred

The Pope then recalled that “God is merciful” and that the greatest blasphemy is “to profane His name by hating our brothers and sisters.”

He said believers cannot be silent when terrorism abuses religion, since violence and extremism are not born of a religious heart.

Lamenting the “dark clouds of terrorism, war, and violence” that have overshadowed Iraq, Pope Francis recalled that “all ethnic and religious communities have suffered.” He especially lifted his voice in defense of the Yazidi community, many of whom have been murdered, sold as slaves and forced to convert.

And the Pope prayed for those who have fled Iraq or been abducted, asking God that “they may soon return home.”

“Let us pray that freedom of conscience and freedom of religion will everywhere be recognized and respected; these are fundamental rights, because they make us free to contemplate the heaven for which we were created.”

Stars shining in darkness

Pope Francis went on to recall the destruction and death wreaked by the so-called Islamic State in the north of Iraq.

Despite the devastation, “some stars kept shining”, he said, pointing to the many examples of joint efforts to rebuild churches and mosques.

As these places of worship are rebuilt, he urged everyone to make pilgrimages to holy places, “for it is the most beautiful sign on earth of our yearning for heaven.”

He recalled that Abraham build altars to the Lord in various places, and prayed that all might find in the patriarch the inspiration to make our houses of worship “oases of peace and encounter for all.”

“By his fidelity to God, Abraham became a blessing for all peoples,” said the Pope. “May our presence here today, in his footsteps, be a sign of blessing and hope for Iraq, for the Middle East and for the whole world. Heaven has not grown weary of the earth: God loves every people, every one of his daughters and sons!”

Journey together on earth

The Pope then considered Abraham’s example of journeying in this world while keeping his eyes fixed on heaven.

“For Abraham, looking up to heaven, rather than being a distraction, was an incentive to journey on earth, to set out on a path that, through his descendants, would lead to every time and place.”

The patriarch’s journey involved sacrifices, said Pope Francis, yet reminds us that “we need one another.”

“On our own journey, we are called to leave behind those ties and attachments that, by keeping us enclosed in our own groups, prevent us from welcoming God’s boundless love and from seeing others as our brothers and sisters.”

Path of peace

Pope Francis said our stargazing also pushes us along “the way of peace.”

The Covid-19 pandemic, he noted, has shown us that no one can ignore the suffering of others, especially the most vulnerable.

Peace, he added, requires alliances that do not pit *us* against *them*, but ones that unite us by overcoming division.

The Pope added that hatred is the true enemy. “Anyone with the courage to look at the stars, anyone who believes in God, has no enemies to fight,” he said. “He or she has only one enemy to face, an enemy that stands at the door of the heart and knocks to enter. That enemy is *hatred*.”

Steps toward fraternity

Finally, Pope Francis encouraged the faithful of the three Abrahamic religions to find inspiration in our common father, and turn our weapons into instruments of peace.

“It is up to us to remind the world that human life has value for what it is and not for what it has. That the lives of the unborn, the elderly, migrants and men and women, whatever the colour of their skin or their nationality, are always sacred and count as much as the lives of everyone else!”

Abraham’s journey, he concluded, was a “blessing of peace.” In our own day, our journey toward peace requires concrete steps of fraternity, working together to achieve something good.

“Brothers and sisters of different religions, here we find ourselves at home, and from here, together, we wish to commit ourselves to fulfilling God’s dream that the human family may become hospitable and welcoming to all his children; that looking up to the same heaven, it will journey in peace on the same earth.”

Watch a video and listen to a story here:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-03/pope-francis-iraq-interreligious-meeting-ur-chaldeans.html>

REMEMBERING KAY FLYNN



Catherine “Kay” Flynn was a faithful Catholic who joined Tau Fraternity in 1999 and made her profession on September 10, 2000. She was an active member of her parish St. John Neumann, where she taught religious education to junior high children and adult religious education (RCIA) for those converting to Catholicism. She was also a passionate supporter of the Right to Life movement and attended every March for Life from 1975 to 2016. Not only did Kay attend the March, as part of her apostolate, she collected donations from Tau Fraternity members in support of the March for Life. Although she had been professed excused for a few years, Kay enjoyed keeping up with Tau Fraternity through the Tau Newsletter and sent donations to Tau when she could. In the last year of her life, Kay was a resident of Aarondale Retirement Community in Springfield, Virginia. She moved home with her son Daniel and daughter-in-law Donna, under hospice care shortly before her death on March 11, where she was

surrounded by her children. To read her full obituary, see

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/fairfax-va/catherine-flynn-10095847>.

COMING UP IN APRIL

April is the Month of the Holy Face and the Redemption *

- Apr 1 – Maundy Thursday
- Apr 2 – Good Friday
- Apr 3 – Holy Saturday
 - St. Benedict the Moor Feast Day
- Apr 4 – Easter Sunday
 - Frank Bowen’s birthday
- Apr 11 – Joe Boyle’s birthday
 - Tau Gathering
- Apr 22 – Heber Garcia’s profession
- Apr 24 – Walter Gawlak’s & Erik Larin’s profession
- Apr 25 – Gil Donahue’s birthday



The Holy Face of Jesus
from the image of
Veronica's veil
(The veil is kept in St.
Peters Basilica, Rome.)

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

First Annual Virtual Franciscan Connections Virtual Conference

Sponsored by The Franciscan Study Center at Tilburg University and The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University

Topic: Lesser Ethics: Retrieving the Good Life in the Franciscan Tradition

When: June 24 & 25, 9:00am – 2:00pm

Free, no registration fee

Register at [Franciscan Connections Conference | Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University \(sbu.edu\)](#)

Virtual Secular Franciscan Conference

Topic: Living Franciscan Values in our Contemporary World

When: June 28 – July 1, 7:30am – 9:00pm

Registration Fee: \$50, due by June 1

Register at [Living Franciscan Virtues in our Contemporary World Virtual Conference | StBonaVenue](#)

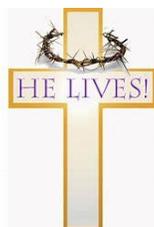
AN EASTER PRAYER

[Easter Prayers \(xavier.edu\)](#)

Good and gracious God,
Our most glorious Creator,
As we greet the signs in nature around us:
Of Spring once again regaling us in bloom,
In the songs of returning birds and fields soon to be planted,
We give you praise for an even greater sign of new life: the resurrection of your Son,
Our Lord Jesus Christ, that we especially celebrate at this time.
The sadness and despair of his death has given way to the bright promise of immortality.
For the Resurrection is our guarantee that justice will triumph over treason, Light will overcome darkness,
and love will conquer death.
As we celebrate, we also dare to ask for your grace that we may live the promise given to us,
By imitating the life of Jesus in reaching out to the poor, the marginalized, the least among us,
As we strive to be neighbor to all those we meet,
We ask your special blessings each and every day on our President.
Working with him may we strive to make this great country of ours a beacon of hope and justice in a
world hungry for peace and so in need of your love.
We praise you in this Easter season. Change our lives, change our hearts to be messengers of Easter joy
and hope.
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord forever.

Amen.

- *Fr. Larry Snyder*, president of Catholic Charities USA, offered at the fourth annual White House Easter Prayer Breakfast on April 8, 2013



NEXT TAU FRATERNITY GATHERING

Date:	Sunday, April 11, 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 Bill Richey, OFS Pope Francis' new book, <i>Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future</i>
	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	Regina Coeli & Liturgy of the Hours
	3:25 pm – 3:35 pm	Business Meeting
	3:35 pm	Closing Prayer

INITIAL FORMATION:

Senior Candidates: Chapter 28 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Candidates: Chapter 16 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Inquirers: Chapter 4 in *The Franciscan Journey*

ON-GOING FORMATION:

We will read the Introduction and Chapter One of Ilia Delio's *Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love*. We will discuss the questions at the end of Chapter One in small groups.

THE REGINA COELI

During Easter, we will precede the Liturgy of the Hours with the Regina Coeli in English

V Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.

R For He whom thou didst deserve to bear, Alleluia

V Hath risen as He said, Alleluia.

R Pray for us to God, Alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia.

R. Because Our Lord is truly risen, Alleluia.

LET US PRAY

O God, who by the resurrection of Thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, hast vouchsafed to make glad the whole world, great, we beseech Thee, that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ Our Lord. AMEN

LITURGY OF THE HOURS:

Second Sunday of Easter:

Hymn: #112 – Alleluia! The Strife is O'er (verses 1-3): pg. 1627

Psalms with Antiphons from Easter Sunday: pg. 429

Everything else: pg. 455

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.