



PACE E BENE

TAU FRATERNITY

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

<https://tauofs.org/>

July 2021

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Peace and all good!

“The poor you will always have with you.”

Jesus makes this prophetic — and frequently quoted — observation in the Gospel of Mark, verse 14:7.

Mark 14:7 is also the theme for the annual World Day of the Poor, which will take place on Sunday, November 14, 2021.

For context, the World Bank estimates 767 million people around the globe are living in extreme poverty — i.e., living at or below \$1.90 a day income. The number of people living on less than \$3.10 a day is 2.1 billion. Combined, that's almost 3 billion souls in poverty, out of a total earthly population of 7.6 billion.

On June 13, Pope Francis released his official message for the 2021 World Day of the Poor, urging a changed outlook and unified, concrete global action to combat these scandalous statistics.

He minced no words:

“If the poor are marginalized, as if they were to blame for their condition, then the very concept of democracy is jeopardized and every social policy will prove bankrupt... There seems to be a growing notion that the poor are not only responsible for their condition, but that they represent an intolerable burden for an economic system focused on the interests of a few privileged groups.”

Setting the scene for Mark 14:7, a woman is anointing Jesus' feet with costly ointment — a pre-figuration of the anointing of his body after death, in preparation for burial — but she is rebuked for her devotional act; the ointment could have been sold and the money given to the poor, say the onlookers. But Christ basically tells them to knock it off, because “The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.”

Mark 14:7 is sometimes invoked by those who wearily choose to assess the problem of poverty as unsolvable. Jesus is telling us, they reason, that we will always have the poor with us because poverty can never be truly eradicated. A more malignant perspective further divides the impoverished into “the worthy poor” and “the unworthy poor”, neatly categorized based upon their perceived moral failings while

tidily ignoring the sometimes messy realities of life. (And, it must be said, also effectively jettisoning any necessity for aid as simply “enabling” the needy.)

So — according to this utilitarian social calculus — if poverty can’t be eliminated, well, then, we shouldn’t feel too bad, or maybe even try that hard — because Jesus didn’t think it could be fixed, either, right? It’s just the way it is? Always has been, always will be?

But what if Jesus’ words are instead a commentary on — or even a condemnation of — human inaction? Since he “did not need anyone to testify about human nature; he himself understood it well” (John 2:25), perhaps Jesus is saying the poor will always be with us because He knew we would never have the collective social and political willpower to change that situation. Thus, “the poor you will always have with you.”

Food scarcity is a critical issue for the poor — yet the world’s farmers grow enough food to feed 1.5x the world’s people, or 10 billion people, while the current global population is 7.6 billion.

But to return to Pope Francis’ warning, democracy is indeed threatened by poverty. Why? The inherent inequality of ongoing, generational poverty — the conditions it creates and sustains in society — threaten democracy precisely because they are a shameful witness.

When and where democracy is proposed as the best political and social system, reigning autocrats and dictators can — and do, in defense of themselves — say: If that’s so, then why are so many of your citizens still poor? Unhoused? Sick and bankrupted by medical bills (the leading cause of bankruptcy in the U.S.)? That the same conditions might exist in even greater proportions in their own countries becomes secondary — a rhetorical blow is effectively landed, and doubt is planted among developing countries entertaining the idea of democracy.

But how to confront the manifold human, social, and political menaces of poverty?

Pope Francis again:

“With great humility, we should confess that we are often incompetent when it comes to the poor. We talk about them in the abstract; we stop at statistics and we think we can move people’s hearts by filming a documentary. Poverty, on the contrary, should motivate us to creative planning, aimed at increasing the freedom needed to live a life of fulfillment according to the abilities of each person... This is a challenge that governments and world institutions need to take up with a farsighted social model capable of countering the new forms of poverty that are now sweeping the world and will decisively affect coming decades.”

As St. Francis once said, “Let us begin again... for up to now, we have done little or nothing.” With almost 3 billion of our fellow human beings living in daily poverty, St. Francis’ statement — while maybe harsh — still seems to apply.

You can read Pope Francis’ entire message for the upcoming World Day of the Poor here:

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/poveri/documents/20210613-messaggio-v-giornatamondiale-poveri-2021.html>

Holding you all in prayer,

Kimberley

RECAP OF LAST GATHERING

OPENING PRAYER

Joe Boyle offered an opening prayer:

“Lord, I do seek You, but I also realize that I never seek You enough. You are there, waiting for me in countless ways. You are calling me into a deeper silence and solitude. In the deserted places of life, You desire to minister to my soul. Help me to listen to You and to make the journey to You. And as I find You, help me to truly embrace the conversion of heart You have in mind for me. Jesus, I trust in You.” (Source: My Catholic Life, 1/16/20)

PRESENTATION

Bill Bouffard, OFS gave a presentation on the modern slavery. He began by saying that his talk comes from a compilation of his research, which he calls "Slavery in Our Time." The purpose of the presentation is primarily to bring awareness to issues and also to motivate action. Bill recited a quote from Frederick Douglass:

I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land. Indeed, I can see no reason, but the most deceitful one, for calling the religion of this land Christianity. I look upon it as the climax of all misnomers, the boldest of all frauds, and the grossest of all libels...,,

Bill then asked if we are any different than the individuals described in the quote? He described situations of modern slavery. Examples of common industries where this type of mistreatment occurs:

- Fast food restaurants,
- Agriculture - Farming of cocoa beans for the production of chocolate,
- Mining – for gems and minerals, and
- Clothing manufacturers.

The mistreatment stems from factors such as low labor pay and lack of safety laws in other countries. We are responsible, especially as Franciscans, for being conscious of the issues and of where we stand. We should do something about the issues.

The issues are not only in other countries. Bill stated that there are pockets of poverty in northern Virginia. Because of the internet, we cannot feign ignorance to the issues. Signs of our poverty include the rise of human suffering, social ills, and global issues. The Franciscan way is solidarity with the suffering and marginalized.

Bill recited the following quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

On the parable of the Good Samaritan: "I imagine that the first question the priest and Levite asked was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But by the very nature of his concern, the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'"

In concluding the presentation, Bill proposed an action plan:

- 1) Focus on an area for change.
- 2) Seek a path for making a small change.
 - a) Choose an industry.
 - b) Establish a small team to research what is happening in the industry.
 - c) Establish POCs to contact other Franciscan Regions to ascertain their interest in the issues.
- 3) Identify members of the Senate and Congress who can influence change.
- 4) Identify other groups globally that can offer support.

Some comments and suggestions members made after the presentation include:

- Contact SFOs living in a place where the issue is occurring and obtain more information to increase our awareness.
- Obtain a list of companies that are ecofriendly or ensure equitable labor pay so that we can patronize them.
- At grocery stores, you can find products that are organically grown and fairtrade certified.
- It is important to think about what we buy and what it means.

As a result of the presentation, Bill will inquire whether members would like to join a group to carry out the action plan.

ONGOING FORMATION

Walter Gawlak, OFS talked about what he discovered and did as he read Chapter three of *Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love*. Some of his activities and thoughts were:

- He thought about the cross. He has several that are special to him. He prefers to look at the suffering Christ. In addition to suffering, he sees humility in Christ on the cross.
- He thought about Francis and the cross at San Damiano, the stations of the cross, and the occasion of the stigmata of St. Francis.
- He pondered contemplation and action.
- He thought about suffering and how trivial his complaints were compared to what Christ did for him and us.

Walter then led a discussion about what the members got out of the chapter. Some comments shared were:

- On page 33, the book says, “Contemplation begins not by penetrating ourselves to discover our own faults and failings but by going out of ourselves to see the sufferings of the other by gazing on the other.” This is meaningful.
- The paragraph on page 31 that begins with “The gaze on the crucified Christ is an embrace of the heart, a desire to allow the otherness of God’s love into our lives” is moving. The statement, “Poverty helps create this space [within the heart to receive what we see and to embrace what we see] because when we are free of things that we possess or that possess us we are able to see more clearly and to receive what we see within us” is especially meaningful.
- The discussion that Jesus is on the cross is the image of the word of God, not just a corpus is significant.
- The love on the cross is profound. It is about relationships with God and with others.
- The reflection on radical dependency – Jesus depending on God the Father and us depending on Jesus is important.
- Christ’s suffering and sacrifice is for each one of us. It is not just for others, but it is for me too. Jesus shows us on the cross [in the image of the crucifix and in his actions] how much he loves us.
- What worked for Clare may not work for us. It is not a failure if we try and it doesn’t work.
- Do I fear the reflection?
- The author tells us to gaze not to escape but to engage.
- Gazing at the cross is peaceful. It causes us to reflect on life. It is a beautiful reflection of love with arms outstretched and causes us to think of how we can be this in the world.
- I struggle with the image of the crucifix. How is this a symbol of love? It is difficult to look at someone who is tortured and see love.
- Jesus suffered so much because he loves us so much.
- We are all wounded. How you behave with your wounds is important. It is difficult to admit weakness.
- Today is the anniversary of D Day. Imagine the soldiers and their families and how they gazed at the cross for solace.

After the discussion, members were divided into small groups. Each group discussed the following questions from page 40 of the book:

1. What does it mean to you to be created as an “image of God?” How do you grow in this image?
2. How can the cross help you to accept yourself and others? In what ways can the mirror of the cross be a positive tool for Christian growth?
3. How does the cross reveal to us authentic humanity? What are some ways we can foster relationship with the crucified Christ in our search for true humanity?

PRAYER SUBMISSIONS

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

For physical and spiritual healing Valerye Milleson; 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; and Irene Naveau. 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

Thanks to our Brothers and Sisters who cooked for the Missionaries of Charity Gift of Peace House in June. Pat B., OFS and Joe M., OFS delivered the meal to the Sisters on Saturday, June 12, along with several extra dishes from our generous volunteers. Your efforts are so appreciated by the Sisters and hospice patients.

Please contact Pat or Joe if you are interested in preparing a dish for our next delivery in August 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.

Pace e bene!

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



Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington
Annual Unity Walk

Sunday, September 12, 2021

Save the date — the annual Unity Walk will take place in person this year, on September 12!

Visit houses of worship and religious centers from different traditions, in a public celebration of solidarity among the many faiths and cultures in our region. An Opening Ceremony and Resource Fair is also featured.

<https://ifcmw.org/programs/unity-walk/>

More information to follow...



POETIC REFLECTION

Submitted by Helen Broxmeyer, OFS

The Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1947)

What drew the Bedouin shepherd-boy onto the cliffs
That day, dimming his eyes with boredom, inducing him
To throw a stone into one of the caves,
Shattering a clay jar, and also our assumptions?

Even the most eloquent words available
Cannot come close to defining the indescribable,
Nor draw a boundary to hem in the infinite.
Divine intervention remains an ever-present possibility,
Though not always surrounded by the classical signs
That thundered to the prophet Moses, "I AM WHO I AM,"
Yet passed before Elijah on Horeb in complete silence.

Helen Broxmeyer
May 31, 2021

COMING UP IN JULY

July is the Month of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ *

- Jul 1 – Feast of the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- Jul 2 – Feast of the Visitation of Our Lady
- Jul 3 – Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle
- Jul 4 – Tau Fraternity Virtual Gathering
- Jul 6 – Feast of St. Maria Goretti
- Jul 9 – Feast of the Martyrs of China
- Jul 10 – Sally White's birthday
- Jul 14 – Feast of St. Bonaventure
Kimberley Heatherington's birthday
- Jul 18 – Feast of St. Camillus de Lellis
- Jul 19 – Feast of St. Vincent de Paul
- Jul 23 – Feast of Blessed Louise of Savoy
- Jul 25 – Feast of St. James the Apostle
- Jul 26 – Memorial of Sts. Joachim and Anne, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Jul 31 – Memorial of St. Ignatius of Loyola



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

O PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS

O Precious Blood of Jesus, infinite price of sinful man's redemption, both drink and laver of our souls, Thou who dost plead continually the cause of man before the throne of infinite mercy; from the depths of my heart, I adore Thee, and so far as I am able, I would requite Thee for the insults and outrages which Thou dost continually receive from human beings, and especially from those who rashly dare to blaspheme Thee. Who would not bless this Blood of infinite value? Who doth not feel within himself the fire of the love of Jesus who shed it all for us? What would be my fate, had I not been redeemed by this Divine Blood? Who hath drawn it from the veins of my Savior, even to the last drop? Ah, this surely was the work of love. O infinite love, which has given us this saving balm! O balm beyond all price, welling up

from the fountain of infinite love, grant that every heart and every tongue may be enabled to praise Thee, magnify Thee and give Thee thanks both now and for evermore.
Amen.

NEXT TAU FRATERNITY GATHERING

Date: Sunday, **July 4, 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: **Walter Gawlak, OFS** - Profession
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

Attendance Reminder: While attendance policies were relaxed during the Coronavirus pandemic, as of July, regular attendance policies will return. This was announced at June's General Meeting.

Please remember to let a member of the Council know in advance if you must be absent for a meeting or other scheduled event.

INITIAL FORMATION:

Senior Candidates: Chapter 31 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Candidates: Chapter 19 in *The Franciscan Journey*

Inquirers: Chapter 7 in *The Franciscan Journey*

ON-GOING FORMATION:

We will read Chapter 4 in *Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love*. The chapter is about Image and Identity. Spend some time thinking about your True Self as it relates to the Image of God and your False Self and how that person relates to God. Do you think you have a False Self? If so, how do you unmask it? Let's discuss these questions and the questions at the end of the chapter at our July 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

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:

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time:

Hymn: #32 – Now Thank We All Our God: pg. 1540 (or O Trinity of blessed light from Divine Office podcast)

Gospel Canticle and Prayer: Evening Prayer II: pgs. 619,618

Everything else: Sunday, Week II Evening Prayer II: pg. 786

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.