



K A N S A S T M I S S O U R I T O K L A H O M A

Minister's Message

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Are you convinced to pray?

"If I am not convinced that praying and talking to God is the very best use of my time, I will never find time to pray." I remember sitting in church when Fr. O'Brien said this. I was struck to the heart. Praying is THE best use of my time! How often had I said to God, "Sorry, God, I have a busy day today. This will have to be short." The best use of my time? Right away it reminded me of Cain and Abel and offering God the best fruits of our harvest. What are THE "best fruits" of my day?

In a world that only values Doing and Producing, sitting and talking to God can, on the outside, look like doing nothing and not making anything. On the outside it looks like inactivity and laziness. But I know that without this vital communication with the God of Life, my day would be, and at times I still tell myself I am too "busy" to pray, or my life is too hectic to stop and listen. The demands of the day pull and tug at my time. But it is only when I

stop doing and start being (with God) that I can clearly hear His Voice in my heart.

Poor Dona, how she waits on me and God. She is so good at giving us a lot of notice as to when our articles are due for our Newsletter. But I know that until I am quiet and listen to God, I will never know what it is He wants me to say. I know that time spent at the computer without hearing His word in prayer is useless. God's Word has transforming power if we will only listen. His Holy Spirit can work miracles in our lives if we will only take the time to sit quietly and let Him come in. And so, she waits as I clear my desk top and my head to stop and wait on the Lord.

So here we are at the beginning of a new Lenten season. How are you going to make this Lent transform your life? I thought about my usual Lenten practices of giving up my favorite three "C's" - coffee, Coke and chocolate. But, in fact, I have already eliminated coffee and Coke (but never chocolate!) from my diet, so it doesn't seem like much of a sacrifice any more.

(Continued on next page)

Then Fr. O'Brien's words came back to me. Am I convinced that praying is the best way to spend my time? As Franciscans we should know that prayer comes in many forms. There is the prayer of silence deep in the cave of our souls, when it is only me and God. Like Samuel we KNOCK at God's door and pray, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Then wait in quiet anticipation for Him to give us our "marching orders" for the day.

This form of pray is necessary, vital! Yes go into that "classroom of silence" and talk to God with a heart open to hear his Word and ready to surrender to His Will. But we should never pray so that we can stay in our quiet rooms, safe and protected. NO, as Franciscans we must go out of ourselves and out of our comfy homes and into the world. So, in prayer, ASK God for fortitude and faith to move beyond your comfort zone. Pray:

"Lord, call me out onto the stormy water with you.

Let me laugh at the waves and dance on the water.

Let my faith be so strong knowing that you are with me that there is no fear.

Send me your Holy Spirit to banish all my fears.

Take me by the hand and lift my heart to the Father"

Then fortified with God's strength and a holy faith, SEEK to find the poor, the needy, the sick, the lonely. To give our time prayerfully to those whom God wants us to help. Pray:

Lord, send me somebody to serve today. Give me someone who no one

else will serve. Someone who has been forgotten and abandoned by the world.

Let me be the light in their dark day. Let me be the salt that flavors their life with

love. Show me how to be You for them.

And for those days when we are at our weakest and need to lean on others for help, don't deny others the chance to serve you. Be a grateful receiver as well as a giver.

This last prayer is so important. I remember I offered to take dinner to a family of four, whose mom, though young and vibrant, had an operation to remove cancer. I didn't know the family, but when the call was put out, I felt the need to respond.

When I called to set up the time of delivery, the lady was so gracious. And on my arrival, she said that at first it was hard to accept help especially from so many relative strangers. She was used to doing the giving and the switch to be on the receiving end seemed somehow wrong. However, as she prayed, she remembered how difficult it was for her to meet someone who seemed resistant to accept her help. Then it dawned on her. Without a willing receiver, it is hard to be a loving servant. After that, she learned to bow her head in humility, and accept assistance with a smile.

So, when someone is sent to serve you, remember to pray:

Lord, help me be a humble and willing receiver. Let me make my holy servant's burden light and the yoke easy by being both gracious and joyful at their offering. And I pray you bless this servant with the gifts of the Holy Spirit for their offering of love to me.

Lastly, maybe we need to remember how to pray as Mary prayed. When there was a need, as at the wedding feast at Cana, she told Jesus, "They have no wine." Then, she walked away leaving the situation to Him. She went to the servants and said, "Do whatever he tells you." She knew Jesus could and would take care of everything. That's the faith of a true servant. State the problem. Leave the problem with God. And wait for God to act, doing whatever He tells you to do. And of course, we can always depend on the intercession of Mary.

My prayers this Lent, both quiet and active, will be for all of us in the Juan de Padilla Region. I pray for our humility and the fortitude to do God's will no matter how hard. I pray for our poverty in both body and spirit, never to take more than what we need and to willingly give to those who are poorer than us. I pray for our obedience to God and to those whom God has placed over us. And, I pray for our holiness that manifests itself daily in the small choices we make to do the right thing.

See Christ,



Be Christ



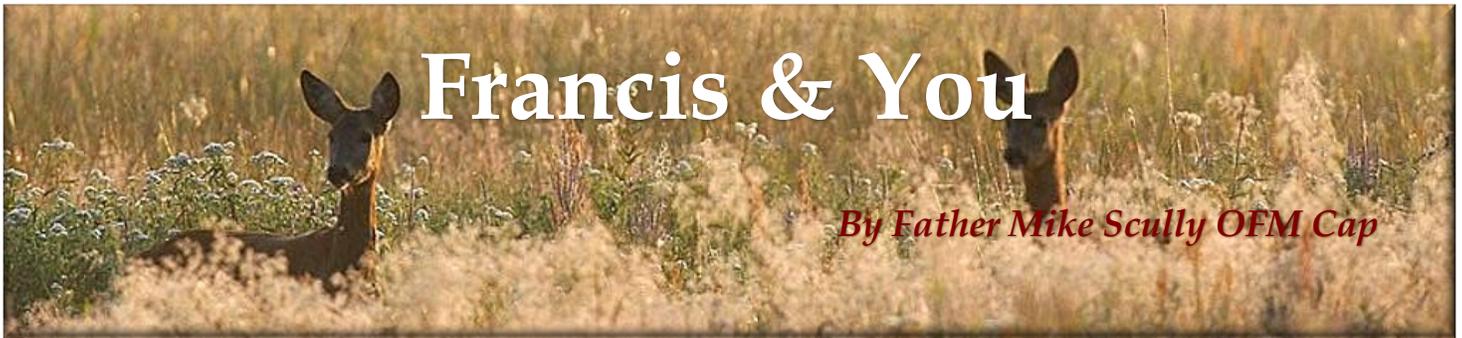
God give you peace and holiness,

Judith, OFS



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“THAT IS WHAT I WANT”—THE GOSPEL, NOT AN EASY TASK

REFERENCES:

Omer Englebert, St. Francis of Assisi

It was while hearing Mass in the restored chapel [of Portiuncula] that Francis received the revelation of his true vocation. This event probably took place on the 24th of February 1208, the feast of St. Matthias, while the priest was reading the Gospel passage in which Jesus maps out a rule of conduct for his apostles. “Go,” said the Savior, “and preach the message, ‘the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!’ ...Freely you have received, freely give...Do not keep gold, or silver, or money in your girdles, no wallet for your journey, nor two tunics, no sandals, nor staff” ...[Francis] asked the priest to explain...Francis thrilled with happiness...and exclaimed enthusiastically: “That is what I want!”

[chapter 4]

David Knight, His Way

People...don’t usually ask the questions that would put their whole lives under the light of Christ. They tend to settle for the more obvious moral laws—as learned in the catechism during grade school, or as understood and interpreted by the people around them. Such people look upon the Ten Commandments as safe-channel markers. Anyone who has not crossed their clear and obvious line is on the right path out of harm’s way. They do not want to sail by a compass, such as the Scriptures or the example of Christ: they don’t look beyond their channel; and they don’t look up at the stars. They just want to be “kept in line” by the laws; they are not interested in orienting themselves toward a deeper understanding of the Lawgiver, so that the divine attitudes and values which inspired the law will become the very law, the interior compass of their own hearts. In other words, they want their consciences left alone.... “Religion” is a searchlight that shines on a rather narrow track; what goes on outside of that track is not illumined by religion at all.

Popular Poster

If it were a crime to be a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you.

I have always appreciated David Knight’s challenges, both in his book His Way as well as his books written for religious men and women, Cloud By Day, Fire By Night. I’ve liked them because they challenge me to be better at what I am doing. Challenges were part of Francis of Assisi’s life. He accepted them, and he gave them to others.

The Gospel was the original challenge for Francis, and especially the words of Jesus in the Gospel to go and sell everything and follow him. Francis accepted those words as the compass of his life, no matter what way his life would unfold. It led him to a life that some considered impossible to live. Even Pope Innocent III found his original rule, one that included mainly Gospel quotes, too difficult. It took one of his Curial members to remind him, “If we reject this poor man’s request on such a pretext [that the Gospel was too austere to follow], would not this be to declare that the Gospel cannot be practiced, and so to blaspheme Christ, its Author?” Everyone realized the difficulty of the life that Francis proposed, a life that Francis insisted was nothing more than what Jesus told him to do.

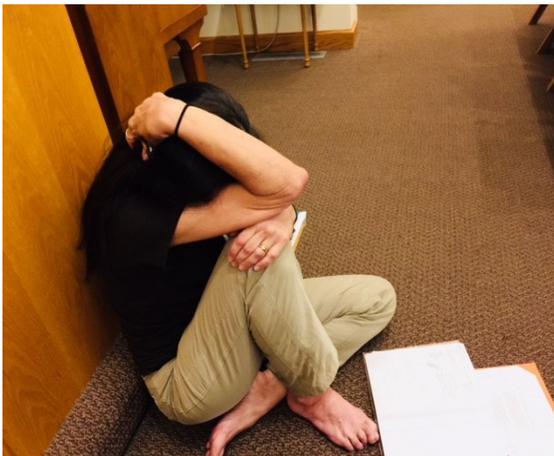
Continued on the next page

The Gospel remains a challenge for the modern Franciscan. We know what that Gospel entails. We read it every day; we make retreats; we pray words that remind us of what we promise. The question that should surround us is: do we mean it—really?

Because if we mean it, there will be evidence that we are Franciscans. We will spend significant amounts of time thinking about the Gospels, we will understand that we must be more of a contributing part to our friary-life, we won't be so negative about decisions that a majority want, we will want to discuss rather than condemn, to smile rather than ridicule, to reform ourselves rather than criticize the efforts of others.

The Franciscan life is not easy. Francis knew that because the Gospel that he accepted was not easy. If we take the Gospel as seriously as Francis did, we will ask ourselves some difficult questions, and probably change some things that we are doing right now.

1. *If Christian people would live by the light of Christ, as David Knight suggests, what would be the principal effect in our world?*
2. *David Knight criticizes that people are “not interested in orienting themselves toward a deeper understanding of the Lawgiver.” Do you believe that such a criticism can legitimately be made of Franciscans today? Yes or no and why?*
3. *What are the most demanding directives of the Gospel?*
4. *What do the people of our world expect of a Franciscan?*
5. *What is the most important challenge that our lives as Franciscans should give our world?*



~ St. Francis of Assisi, *The Earlier Rule*

Let all the brothers be careful not to slander or engage in disputes; let them strive, instead, to keep silence whenever God gives them the grace.



GospelThink

by Father Michael Scully OFM Cap.

*“A unique way to meditate on the Gospels
With questions Jesus might ask”*

People often ask Our lord how and what to pray. At once time, he answered with what seems like a formal prayer, namely, what we have come to call the “Lord’s Prayer”. In reality, that prayer was not meant to be a formal statement to be memorized as it has in our Church – and right so because it was Jesus’ actual answer. What better way to pray than with the Lord’s own words?

Actually the Lord’s Prayer was a spontaneous prayer of thoughts that were uppermost in the Lord's mind instructing the people how to put God’s ideas into their own prayer. How do we continue that type of prayer? Such is the purpose of these meditations. How do we put into words the ideas which the Lord considered most important?

A necessary thought connected with the Lord’s words and actions in the Gospels is that no matter what part of the Gospels we choose, there will be something that the Lord wants us to know. We can easily make a spontaneous pray out of it. Such is the reasoning behind these sets of books The Gospels were written or why they were written in such as way, we can learn from the English translations.

“GospelThnik” is “user friendly”. Only 10-15 minutes each day to read the Gospel passage and think about what the meditation suggests. Leading questions are designed to lead into personal thinking in prayer.

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THE FORMATION CORNER



Janice Keeley
Formation Director
In the Sea of Galilee

I have never met any Catholic who is not fascinated by and in love with Padre Pio. In October, 2014, my husband and I were privileged to go to Italy and visit San Giovanni Rotondo, where St. Pio lived. St. Pio's body is actually lying in a glass vault for viewing. His spirit there was amazing! While we were there we picked up a small book from which Mark reads to me each morning as I prepare breakfast. The following short notes from St. Pio come from that small book, "Have a Good Day! A thought for each day of the year." It was printed at San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy, 2012. Each day includes portions of letters he wrote responding to the MANY letters he received. These letters spoke loudly to me this past week, because the Juan de Padilla Formation Team has been discussing how to help members better understand Franciscan Contemplation. St. Pio speaks of "meditation," but as a Franciscan, one can recognize in his writings what we know about "contemplation," to which we are called by article 8 of the Rule, which states that "prayer and contemplation" should be "the soul of all (we) are and do."

St. Pio says:

February 19: The Christian soul never lets a day go by without meditating on the passion of Jesus Christ.

February 20: In order to imitate Jesus, we must reflect each day on the life of the One we intend to take as our model. From our reflection is born esteem for his acts and from esteem springs the desire and consolation of imitation.

February 21: Be patient in persevering in this holy exercise of meditation and be content with taking small steps, until you have the legs to run, or better still, wings to fly. Be content with obedience which is never an easy matter for a soul which has chosen God as its portion, and resign yourself for now, to being a little bee in a hive. Always humble yourself lovingly before God and men, because God speaks to those who truly have a humble heart before Him and He enriches it with his gifts.

February 22: I cannot at all dispense you from meditation for the sole reason that you feel you gain nothing from it. The holy gift of prayer, my good daughter, is in the right hand of the Savior, and to the degree to which you are emptied of yourself and your own will, the Lord will communicate this to your heart.

February 23: The true reason why you don't succeed in meditating well is this, and I am not mistaken: You approach meditation with a certain, special alteration, coupled with the great anxiety to find some object which can console and content your spirit. And this is sufficient to see to it that you never find what you seek and do not rest your mind on the truths you meditate upon or empty your heart of affections.

February 24: He who does not meditate is like a person who never looks in the mirror and therefore does not bother to be tidy when he goes out, since he can be dirty without knowing it. The person who meditates and thinks of God, who is the mirror of his soul, tries to discover his defects, attempts to correct them, controls himself and straightens out his conscience.

Remember that St. Francis continually and constantly had Jesus before his face, where ever he looked, in whatever he saw. Gaze upon the poor and crucified Christ. See him in a crucifix, in the neighbor who is always wanting something from you, in your grandchild...Consider how much this poor, humble, loving Lord loves you. Praise Him. Thank Him. Join yourself to Him. Imitate Him. Make the Lord's values your own and take Him into your world. St. Clare says, "Never let the thought of Him leave your mind."

Janice



Mother Frances Cabrini Fraternity Continues to Grow in Liberal, KS



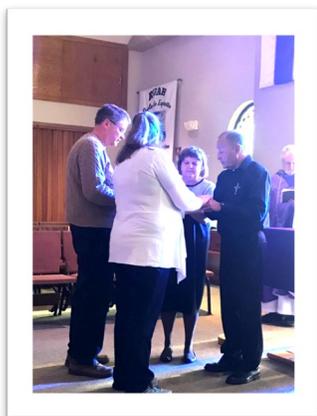
Front row left to right: Sivia Rojas, Mary Amerin, Fr. Jeff Ernst, OFM Cap, Deacon Hector Rios, Matilda Scheuer, Paula Diepenbrock, Eva Hickman. Back row (l-r) Judith Cronk, Brenda Lager, Fr. Jim Dieker, Chris Hickman, Stanley Cordova, and Dan Diepenbrock.

A New Profession for Mother Cabrini Fraternity

Profession of Deacon Hector Rios OFS, at the right in black. The profession was presided over by Brenda Lager, Minister of St. Joseph the sponsoring fraternity, Chris Hickman, Minister of St. Frances Cabrini, and Eva Hickman, Formation Director. In the background is Fr. Jeff Ernst, Pastoral Visitor. Judith Cronk, Regional Minister was Fraternal Visitor.



Deacon Hector's wife, Fr. Jeff, Fr. Jim Deiker, Vice-Minister of St. Frances Cabrini, and newly professed Deacon Hector Rios. The Profession took place at Mass in the chapel at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Liberal.



Rite of Admission for Sylvia Rojas

Sacred Heart Fraternity Growing in Emporia, KS



Fran Hudson, Teresa Sturm, Mary Lou Young, Dena Kaminski, Dorothy Krueger, Jim Krueger (no relation).



L-R. Teresa Sturm, Dena Kaminski, Amanda Pritchard, Melanie Pritchard associate member, Rebecca Cheek.



Dorothy Krueger, Mary Lou Wright, Jim Krueger spiritual animator, Marina Zeller candidate



Marina Zeller a candidate in formation, with Fran Hudson.

Thank you to Fran Hudson for the photos.



SISTER DEATH

NAME	FRATERNITY	CITY, STATE	DATE
Esther Corzatt OFS	St Joseph	Hays, KS	April 1, 2018
Carol Eker OFS	St. Elizabeth	Leewood, KS	May 31, 2018
Arnold Dean Chavez OFS	Holy Family	Tulsa, OK	August 15, 2018
Lance B. Reichenberger OFS	St. Anthony	Wichita, KS	October 3, 2018
Marie Easton OFS	Little Portion	Tahlequah, OK	February 21, 2019

Please notify Judith or www.juandepadillasfo.com of the death in your fraternity



Prayer Requests

Recently there have been a few members who have “unsubscribe to the regional sfojuandepadilla.org email lists. This seemed to be from a few prayer requests that went out with a blank message.

- Some reported that they were concerned that there was a hack or malware problem. **This was NOT the**

case. It was a simple “human error” where the prayer request was not copied to the message. **MAILCHIMP email and the Regional website are EXTREMELY SECURE.**

- Others reported that they have too much email, that they prefer not to receive the prayer requests and apparently prefer not to simply delete the prayer email.



For one of these reasons (or others not known) a few members hit unsubscribe to the list. When one unsubscribes to the “MailChimp Juan” emails, you are automatically cut off from all regional news and business.

Responding to these needs, two different MailChimp email lists have been set up for you:

1. **GENERAL NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Those who unsubscribed from the "Prayer Request" list will receive a new subscription request for this list).
2. **PRAYER REQUESTS** (you have already subscribed or unsubscribed to this list – no action required on your part for this).

Remember – If you are in need of prayers for yourself or others and want to submit a prayer request to your brothers and sisters, send an email to: prayer@sfojuandepadilla.org

St. Joseph Fraternity - Hays, Kansas - New Apostolate

Baby Jesus Travels to Homes for the Sanctity of Life

By Geri Rupp OFS, Kansas Councilor

Franciscans For Life

The St. Joseph Fraternity in Hays, Kansas has begun a new apostolate for Life. In November 2018, the fraternity voted to begin the traveling Infant Jesus Statue for Life.

Starting that December, the members signed up on a monthly rotation to have the statue visit their home. During the month the Franciscans will pray to end abortion, end infanticide, and for all people to respect life from conception to natural death. More than ever before there is a need to pray and make reparation for the offenses against Life. Please join us in praying for an end to abortion and respect for all Life.



“If you hear of someone who does not want to have her child, who wants to have an abortion, try to convince her to bring the child to me. I will love that child, who is a sign of God's love. I will take any child, any time, night or day. Just let me know and I will come for him.” ... Mother Teresa

Holy Eucharist Fraternity Hosts Day of Reflection

Today I will
listen for
Your voice



Father Ed Wills was the presenter at the Day of Reflection hosted by the Secular Franciscans of the Holy Eucharist.

Father Ed's presentation was divided into various sections; Christ – the New Adam, the New Moses and the New David. He discussed the **Seven "I AM" Sacraments of Jesus and Bearing the Name of Christ**

in the world. After each presentation he lead members in discussions and reflections on their own lives. Father Ed demonstrated his talents as a great musician, playing the guitar and leading the group in song.

Father Ed Wills entered the Catholic Church in 2000 and became a Catholic priest in July 2018. He is a former Protestant minister who pastored an independent church and later was a priest in the Charismatic Episcopal Church.

He did his undergraduate studies in theology at Oral Roberts University specializing in ancient languages and his graduate work at the University of Dallas in theology, literature, and philosophy. Ed lived for two years with the Discalced Carmelites where he taught Greek and Old Testament. It was there that he learned the ancient practices of prayer, intentional breathing, and meditation.

When Ed served as a Naval officer, he was struck with the similarity between monastic breathing and specialized breathing techniques used by Navy pilots and the Navy Seals. Later, as an entrepreneur, he discovered the usefulness of intentional breathing and meditation to enhance creative imagination and the decision-making process.



Father Ed is a popular public speaker, retreat leader, and spiritual director. Some of his recent talks can be found on this website. (<http://www.edwills.net/conference-talks>) He is also a renowned Bible teacher, known for his knowledge of Biblical languages, archeology, and ancient cultures. His *Four Keys to Understanding Scripture* revolutionize the way we all read the Bible.

Holy Eucharist's Day of Reflection was a thoughtful, entertaining and reflective day for the Secular Franciscans in the KC Metro Area. We are thankful for their hard work in bringing great speakers to our area each year.



Father Ed Wills , an accomplished singer and guitarist

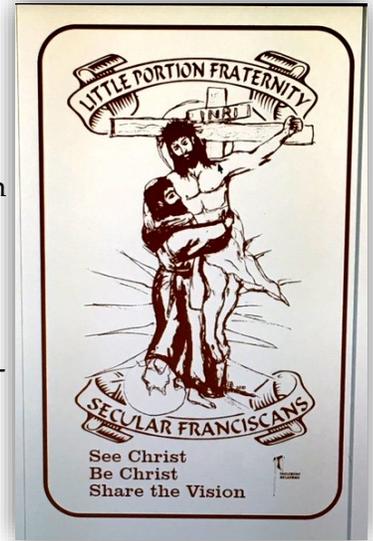
Ed Wills' latest book, *Learning to Listen to God* reviews the prayer techniques of the saints and helps the reader form their own modality of prayer through which they can encounter God and hear his voice in their lives. In the book Ed teaches breathing and meditation techniques from the ancient hesychastic practice of the desert monks whose presence in the Judeo-Christian tradition dates back to Elijah the prophet (circa 800 B.C.). He also reviews the prayer life of Saints John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Ignatius Loyola, and others who have given us different models of prayer. With Father Ed's background in Greek and Hebrew, he is often called upon for Biblical translation.



Deacon Mark Keeley OFS

Little Portion News

On February 2 and 3, Deacon Mark Keeley OFS, was privileged to give the homily as a visiting deacon, at a neighboring church in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Deacon Mark focused his homily on how St. Francis fulfilled what Jesus is asking of us all. He was also able to speak some about a Franciscan vocation.



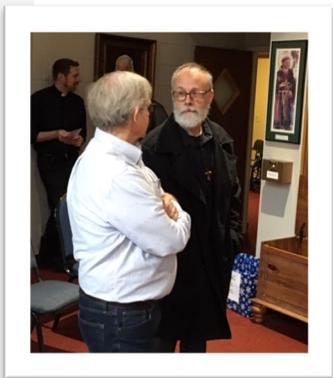
Fraternity banner created by artist Gerald Allen OFS

Following the Mass, members of Little Portion Fraternity presented information about their fraternity and the Secular Franciscan Order.



John Witosky OFS, Janice Keeley OFS, Mary Mead OFS and Deacon Mark Keeley OFS talk with Father Stuart Crevcoure, pastor of St. Brigit and parishioners at Come & See events

On December 1, Little Portion Fraternity presented an Advent Day of Reflection for parishioners at Saint Brigid parish, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Steve Hamby OFS, was the featured speaker, presenting, "The Wonder and Joy of the Incarnation." The script and hopefully the video will soon be made available on the Little Portion Fraternity page of the JDP Website, (www.sfojuandepadilla.org)



SMOKY VALLEY PRINTING UPDATE:

Due to a change in policy, payment must now accompany orders from Smoky Valley Printing. Please be sure to send a check with your orders. They do not have credit cards capability due to increased costs. For questions please contact Claudia Kauzlarich, National Treasurer.
Email: Claudiakauz.sfo@gmail.com



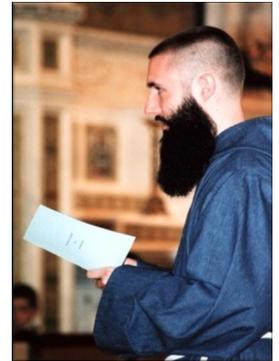
Father Giles Gilbert, OFM Conv. Appointed to Conference of National Spiritual Assistants



Father Giles Gilbert was recently welcomed as a member of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA), representing the OFM Conventuals. The National Conference of Spiritual Assistants works hand-in-hand with the National Executive Council in pastoral matters, just as the Regional and local Spiritual Assistants serve the Regional and local fraternities. A friar from each of the Obediences, OFM, OFM Capuchin, OFM Conventual and TOR, make up the

Conference.

Father Giles was previously Brother Giles of the Little Brothers of St. Francis in Boston. He is known there as the Little Brother with the magnificent beard! He returned to the Midwest in 2009 to answer his calling to the priesthood with the OFM Conventuals. After his ordination, Father Giles became Parochial Vicar at Holy Family Parish in Peoria, IL and the Local Spiritual Assistant to Sacred Heart Fraternity of Secular Franciscans. In 2018, he was appointed as a Regional Spiritual Assistant to serve the Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity of Central Illinois.



He is humbled and grateful for the privilege and responsibility to begin ministry as a National Spiritual Assistant representing the Order of Friars Minor Conventual to the National Fraternity (OFS-USA). He is happy to be at the service of the Order and is very grateful for the many ways in which Secular Franciscans have shaped his vocation and ministry as a friar and priest.

Top photo is by Bob Stronach, OFS, taken at the 2018 National Chapter. Bottom photo is of Brother Giles' solemn profession with the Little Brothers in Boston, and was provided by Father Giles.



January 26, 2019 Carol Allman and Joseph Novak were Welcomed as inquirers into Queen of the Angels Fraternity in Buckner, MO. Pictured (l-r) Dave Forbes, Janice Cox, Jo Keller, Virginia Forbes, Helen Boos, Jo Novak, Carol Allman, Kathy Johnson, Dona Gibbons and Margaret Madsen. Not pictured were Kelli McSwain, Yvonne Minters, Ruth Shatt, Jean Kliebert, Bart and Sylvia Ridge.

Queen of Angels Celebrates Apostolates to the Poor, and the Parish



Queen of Angels Fraternity provides food for the local food bank each month. The apostolate culminates during the Christmas season with the adoption of a local elementary school family, providing food, gifts and clothing. (bottom right picture)

During Advent, members set up a display of St. Francis with the story of the Creche in the lobby of the Church of the Santa Fe.

This year, members held a Christmas pot luck dinner and showed the newly released "The Sign of Contraction" by Fr. Dave Pivonka TOR.

Spiritual assistant, Monsignor Kaiser OFS, always provides a lesson on Franciscan history or saint at every gathering. Vice Minister, Dave Forbes presented Monsignor with a gift of appreciation at the dinner. Later, Santa's Elves (Dave & Virginia Forbes) distributed white elephant gifts to everyone as members spread Franciscan Joy by telling stories and jokes. All had a great time.



St. Anthony Fraternity – Wichita, KS Helping the Community



Representatives of the St. Anthony Fraternity Secular Franciscan Order in Wichita donated a check for over \$1,100 Saturday, Dec. 8, to the St. Jude Food Pantry, a ministry of the Wichita parish. Accepting the check were Father Jim Mainzer, pastor, and Sharon Meckenstock, ministry coordinator. The check to the pantry will feed about 300 families because they buy groceries at the Kansas Food Bank at a heavily discounted price. After the check presentation, the Franciscans gathered at a local restaurant for lunch and camaraderie. The fraternity also gives \$50 a month to one of two ministries – the St. Anthony Family Shelter or the Center of Hope.

Chapter of Elections 2019 – Nomination Committee Selected



In the near future, you will receive a notice from the regional minister regarding the Chapter of Election. Chris Hickman, Larry Menestrina, Ann Marie Neuok, Sylvia Ridge, and Sue Swayngim will serve as a Nomination Committee to create a slate of candidates for the Regional Executive Council which consists of the minister, vice minister, secretary, treasurer, Kansas Councilor, KC Metro Councilor (includes KS/MO fraternities in metro area), and Oklahoma Councilor.

If you have felt the desire to give more for our Order by working as a Servant Leader for your brothers and sisters at another level, please consider accepting a nomination or contacting a members of the nomination committee to run for the Regional Council.

Plan to Attend the Premier of the Movie

UNPLANNED – MARCH 29, 2019

Unplanned is the inspiring true story of Abby Johnson's journey of transformation. All she ever wanted to do was to help women. As one of the youngest Planned Parenthood directors in the nation, she was involved in upwards of 22,000 abortions and counseled countless women about their reproductive choices. Her passion surrounding a woman's right to choose even led her to become a spokes person for Planned Parenthood, fighting to enact legislation for the cause she so deeply believed in. Until, the day she saw the ultrasound of an unborn child...that changed everything, leading Abby Johnson to join her former enemies at **40 Days for Life**, and become one of the most ardent pro-life speakers in America.



Abby Johnson

This movie could not have come at a more critical time in our nation's history. The state of New York recently decided that life doesn't exist unless you're lucky enough to be born. We all saw the New York legislature cheering as the governor signed the most egregious abortion bill since Roe vs Wade, 46 years ago. The New York governor then ordered the One World Trade Center spire to be lit up pink in celebration of their Progressive Victory.

See the movie on March 29th. Go to the website <https://www.unplannedfilm.com>, and see why the location of the movie had to be secret and find the movie guide, resources and much more. Together, let's pray and act to turn this country around.

—Dona Gibbons OFS



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

2019 Launch of **"Click to Pray"**... *worldwide apostolate of prayer*

Pope Francis launched a new app this year called **"Click to Pray,"** which connects Catholics to a global network to share prayer intentions via their smartphones. The pope opened the new app using an iPad during his Angelus address Jan. 20 and encouraged young Catholics, in particular, to download the smartphone app to pray the "Rosary of Peace" ahead of World Youth Day.



Pope Francis

"Click to Pray" allows users to post prayer intentions and view other prayer requests in six languages. After posting on the social network, one can track how many Catholics around the world have prayed for their request.



The Android and iOS app includes the pope's monthly prayer intentions, all of the mysteries of the rosary, and daily prayers for morning, afternoon, and night. In each of these sections, users can click a box to indicate that they have completed the prayer and view how many others also prayed.

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer) addresses the challenges facing humanity and assists the mission of the Church. We pray and work to meet the challenges of the world identified by the Pope in his monthly intentions, while walking a spiritual path called the "Way of the Heart."



Outreach to First Nation People & Trip to the Tohono O'Odham in Arizona



Members of the Brother Jacoba Fraternity in Lawrence, KS participated with the Outreach to First Nation People charitable foundation to take a load of clothing, blankets, shoes, toys and books to the Tohono O'Odham (Desert People) in southern Arizona. The foundation was created by Monica Olivera OFS who is a member of our fraternity. She is the ministry's director. Two other fraternity members are on the board of directors: Dan Lonnquist OFS, secretary, and Lynne Lonnquist OFS, treasurer (husband and wife). The foundation exists to provide material support for remote Native Americans, who are among the poorest of the poor. The foundation obtains clothing, bedding/linens, toys and furniture by way of donations from local churches in the Lawrence area. Fraternity members, along with other local volunteers, help

with collecting the donations, sorting and boxing them, loading the truck and making the deliveries. Some of the tribes we have served are the Navajo, Hopi, Potawatomi, Winnebago and now the Tohono O'Odham.



The money to run the foundation comes from donations. They have twice received two grants from the National OSF. For this trip they also received a generous gift from the OFM Cap by way of the Catholic Campus Center at the Haskell Indian

Nations University in Lawrence. Many thanks to them.



Monica learned of the Tohono O'Odham from a native who lives in Lawrence. This got Monica in touch with some people on the reservation. They made a special request for help setting up a children's library at several sites on the reservation. One of our members, Gloria Creed-Dikeogu OSF, is a professional librarian. Working through her contacts she was able to obtain thousands of books from different libraries. Also, the children of the parish school at Saint John Catholic Church (Lawrence) donated hundreds of books. In total we estimate that over 3700 books were taken to the rez, with over a thousand left over. A friend of Monica's build bookshelves to accompany the books. Along with the books and shelves many boxes of clothes, blankets, toys and some furniture were loaded onto the truck.

The drivers were Dan Lonnquist and Bob Brill OFS. It was a 20 hr. drive from Lawrence to Sells, AZ, the largest city on the reservation (population ~2800, ~2700 ft elevation). Other members of the fraternity made their own ways by car and air. These were Monica, Connie OSF and David (inquirer) Ehrlich, and Ruth Entwistle OFS. Also present were Christina Benecke (board member) and her brother in law Kevin.



(Continued on the next page)



Foreground (l-r) Monica Olivera OFS, Dan Lonquist OFS and Judy Snyder; back row: David –Inquirer, and Connie OFS Ehrlich, Christina Benecke, Linda Miller, Kevin, Ruth & Bob Brill OFS

met Father Ponchie Vasquez OFM. He was a delight! The other churches where we dropped off goods were an Assembly of God and Presbyterian. Quite the ecumenical exercise! On Sunday we set up the library at a house of a native in Pisano, AZ. Good luck finding that on a map. On Monday, Feb 4, we made our ways back to Lawrence.

All I can now tell you is that it is true of what we sing in the “Channel of Peace” song. It is in giving that we receive. Peace to all, Bob Brill and Dan Lonquist

The Tohono O’Odham live in the Sonora desert in southwest Arizona. Their reservation is about the size of Connecticut and straddles the US/Mexico border. They were there long before there was a USA or Mexico and any border between them. They asked us to come down during their annual parade, rodeo and powwow in Sells, Az on Feb 2&3. We were treated to a lot of native culture and hospitality. We were blessed. We also had the experience of being on the reservation during one of the rare couple of days where it actually rained.

On Saturday and Sunday the boxes of clothing, blankets and toys were dropped off at three different churches. One of these was Saint Mary’s run by the OFM of the San Solano Missions. There we



CALENDAR EVENTS 2019

DATE	EVENT	Location
March 9, 2019	Visitation – Our Lady of Sorrows	Prince of Peace – Olathe, KS
April 4-7, 2019	National Formation Workshop	TBA
April 6, 2019	Election – Little Portion	St. Bridget Church – Tahlequah, OK
April 7, 2019	Visitation – Sr. Stanislaus & St. Adalbert	St. Anne Church, Broken Arrow, OK
April 11, 2019	Elections – Sacred Heart	Sacred Heart Church, Emporia, KS
April 12, 2019	Regional Formation Committee	Haskell Catholic Center, Lawrence, KS
April 13, 2019	Regional Executive Council Meeting	Haskell Catholic Center, Lawrence, KS
May 5, 2019	Visitation - St. Francis of Assisi	St. Anthony’s Hospital, Oklahoma City, OK
June 7-9, 2019	Annual Summer Gathering – Fr. Charles Smiech, OFM	Spiritual Life Center- Oklahoma City, OK
June 22, 2019	Elections – Queen of the Angels	Church of the Santa Fe – Buckner, MO
July 11-14, 2019	Summer Seminar “Clare of God: A Spirituality of Our Time”	St. Francis University, Loretto, PA
July 12, 2019	Regional Formation Committee	Haskell Catholic Center, Lawrence, KS
July 13, 2019	Regional Executive Council Meeting	Haskell Catholic Center, Lawrence, KS
August 26-29, 2019	National Gathering of Regional Spiritual Assistants	Mercy Center, St. Louis, MO
August 29-Sept 1, 2019	JPIC National Gathering	TBA, St Louis, MO
September 6-8, 2019	Regional Chapter of Elections	Spiritual Life Center, Wichita, KS
October 15-20, 2019	NAFRA Chapter, Pax Christi Liturgical Center	Corpus Christi, Texas



Fr. John O'Brien OFM

St. Francis of Assisi – Oklahoma City, OK



Neal Dunnigan, OEF a professed brother in the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans and an associate in the St Francis of Assisi fraternity in Oklahoma City relocated to Cork, Ireland from the United States in 2018 to continue his studies as a hospital chaplain intern. Minister, Bill Full submitted Neal's recent interview for your reading enjoyment...

Fr. John O'Brien, OFM joined the Franciscan Order in 1975 and studied Philosophy and Theology. He has been an ordained priest since 1985 and has worked as a teacher, chaplain and advisor. John is the author of several books (available through Amazon), including: • [Loneliness Knows My Name](#) • [Love Rescue Me: The Healing Power of Love](#) • [My One Friend is Darkness: A Lament for Those who Weep](#) • [Rachel's Tears and Mary's Song](#) • [Return to Gethsemane](#) • [Silent Music of Love: Teach us to Pray](#) • [Therese and the Little Way of Love and Healing](#) • [Waiting for God: From Trauma to Healing](#) • [With Thee Tender is the Night](#)

NEAL - I see that you have been a Franciscan since at least, 1975. Would you share with us some of the places that you have served and some of the ministries that have been most significant to you?

JOHN - I joined in 1975. Before that I had the dream of becoming a scientist, but a nagging voice called me to the religious life. There are many places I served. I worked as a teacher for a time. I learned a lot from my students and tried to engage with their questions. I worked (and still do) as confessor and that is the role that stands out for me. My most interesting public role was with London Wasps rugby union team. Shaun Edwards is a friend of mine. He brought me over to Wasps' games and they started winning when I came over. They became European Champions. It was a blessed time and I met so many who were searching for faith (There are some articles on the internet on Fr. John and Shaun Edwards).

NEAL - I first located you last year on LinkedIn when I was relocating to Ireland and looking to find some friendly Franciscan faces. That is also how I found out about your books. People often think of LinkedIn as a social media site for job seekers and business networking. How has this kind of social media been helpful to you in your ministries?

JOHN - I came late to social media. I met people who only communicated via social media and so I joined. A friend put me on LinkedIn and I met many people there. The same is true of Facebook. It is the modern way to meet people.

NEAL - One of the reasons for this interview is that in the US people are so familiar with contemporary Franciscan writers like Murray Bodo and Richard Rohr. I thought it would be good to help introduce the American Franciscan community to some contemporary Franciscan thought from outside of the US. Before we go more into your own writing, can you share with us what contemporary authors Franciscans in Ireland (yourself included) are reading these days?

JOHN - There are many varied writers. You mentioned Richard Rohr and Murray Bodo. Our men in Central America would read the liberation theologians. I read people like Raymond Brown and his work on scripture. I am also influenced by Walter Brueggemann. I found his work on "The Psalms and the Life of Faith" very powerful. I read Karl Barth and Hans Urs Von Balthasar. They wrestled with faith and its expression in the modern world. I learned so much from them.

NEAL - At what point in your life did you feel the call to write and how did you pursue that calling?

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JOHN - When I was in Cork I wrote a little piece for the SFO newsletter and I found people read it. I began writing at that time. C.S. Lewis said that we read to know that we are not alone. I was aware of the great number of people who suffered mentally. A psychiatrist friend of mine used prayer and meditation as therapy. He was more influenced by Buddhism. I saw scripture, and the lives of holy people, as providing resources for prayer and healing. I see my books as a shared prayer and meditation leading to acceptance and healing.

NEAL - I was very struck when I first looked at your list of book titles. A lot of powerful and potentially scary words: Gethsemane, Waiting, Trauma, Rescue, Loneliness, Darkness, Lament, Weep, Night. Do these suggest a common theme or evolution of thought across your books that you could share with us?

JOHN - They represent a common theme. The reason these issues are so scary is we do not want to face them. We run from them, but that doesn't make them go away. The only way out is through. In our age, so many face this struggle alone and the rate of those who take their lives in our society is alarmingly big. I write to let those who suffer know they are not alone. Acceptance leads to healing.

NEAL - One of the interesting things that I noticed in *Loneliness Knows My Name* is that you make extensive use of secular literary references to describe the human condition. The references are from both popular culture and literary "classics". Can you tell us more about your approach of leveraging secular literature to illustrate spiritual points?

JOHN - Secular literature lays bare the human condition. We can only approach God as we are, broken and unsure, and place our lives in his hands. Writings, songs, art and poetry help us express who we are and it is in our darkness that we allow God's light to shine. I was influenced in this by St. John Paul II and Von Balthasar. Barth quoted extensively from secular culture. I remember John Paul quoting Bob Dylan. Von Balthasar quoted from literature. This helped me look at using secular culture as a means to express the human condition and our need for healing. Meeting Jesus in our darkness is the means for healing.

NEAL - In the US currently, Christianity is challenged both by the growing population of disillusioned "nones" who view Christianity as ineffectual and irrelevant, and also by the "religious right" who see Christianity as an apologetic for an Ayn Rand style capitalistic dystopia. In your lifetime, you been witness to major changes like Vatican Council II, the secularization of the Irish Republic, and the extensive scandals of clergy abuse and its ecclesiastical cover up (something shared in the US). What is your own perspective or message as to how you see God calling this generation of disciples/apostles, particularly Franciscans?

JOHN - The abuse scandals have rocked all our faith. I, too, was abused and it has blighted my life. I write about this, sharing the things that have helped my own healing journey. I see one of the challenges is facing our reality. We must look at why people found the priesthood and the religious life a safe place to live. We must also look at why so many young people entered our life and then left. Some said it was because of the lack of faith they found. Related to this, others said it was the lack of humanity and compassion they found. This is surely related to the lack of faith. Because people leave the Church this doesn't mean their pain goes away. The suicide rate among so many is a witness to this. Because of the abuses people no longer find the Church a safe place and feel alienated from the comfort of the Church. This is a great injustice. A friend whose son had been abused asked me to write "My One Friend is Darkness" so that her son could see that there is someone who cares. He was an altar boy and was devout in his own way. Now he lives in a world of loneliness and pain and feels far from the Church. A friend who suffers from depression asked me to write about St. Thérèse because she found her a great help but didn't know about her. So I wrote "Thérèse and the Little Way of Love and Healing". Thérèse said she would be love in the heart of the Church.

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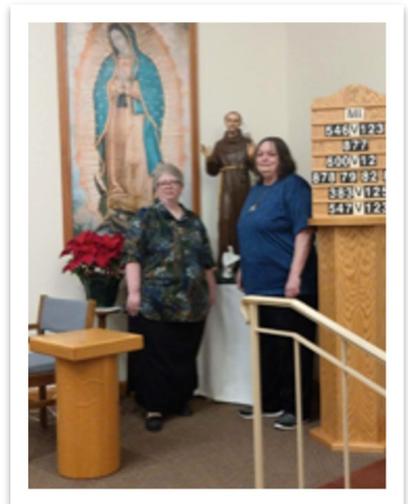
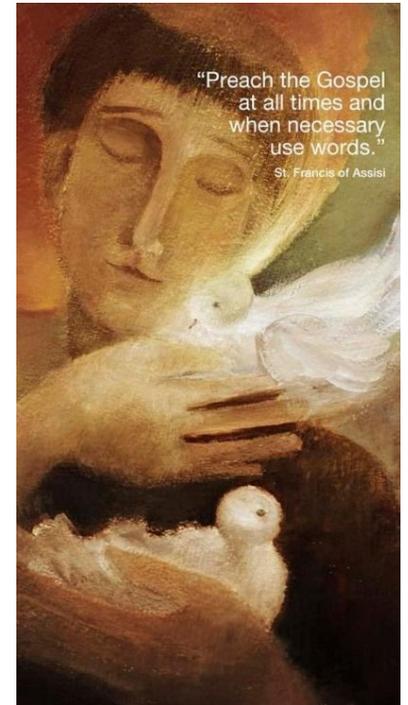


I never believed this was an innocent, pious remark. Indirectly she points out that love is often lacking and from this I believe abuses arise. We have to look at who Jesus the Christ is for us today. We have to meet him in prayer. The Holy Spirit is love and we are called to incarnate this love. None of these are automatic, but we must begin a journey to discover true faith in the modern world and also to incarnate the love of the Holy Spirit.



John O'Brien can be reached at: FrJohn754@GMail.com

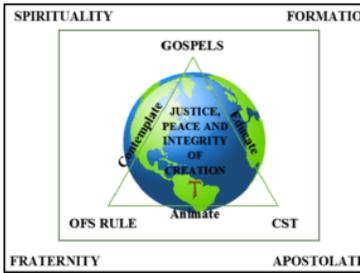
Holy Eucharist Professes Two New Members



Stan Sikorski OFS—formation director, Sherry Slavin OFS, Father Mike Scully OFS—Regional Spiritual Assistant, Dyan Hugh OFS and Maria Epperson OFS, minister.

The Secular Franciscans of the Holy Eucharist Fraternity professed two new members on Sunday, February 3, 2019. They are Dyan Haugh OFS and Sherry Sue Samantha Schonberner—Slavin OFS. Father Scully was the celebrant and received their profession.

Newly professed sisters; Dyan Haugh OFS and Sherry Sue Samantha Schonberner-Slavin OFS.



Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation

I am excited to report on two JPIC-related action initiatives that have been or are about to take place by fraternities in our region:

On the first week in February, five professed Secular Franciscans and one person in orientation from the Brother Jacoba Fraternity in Lawrence, Kansas took thousands of books to the O'Odham Indian reservation in a very remote area of Arizona. This is a very poor reservation that is also very isolated. We had learned that they had no school library for their children's school. Libraries in the state were contacted, other organizations were contacted and individuals were asked to look through their book collections and donate to this project. Our Seculars spent the night in the area and spent some time with the people of the reservation, getting to know them better. I suspect that more will be happening to help this reservation in the future.

We have all heard reports concerning the poverty and food scarcity in Venezuela. Mother Cabrini Fraternity in Liberal, Kansas, through its JPIC animator Stanley Cordova contacted me stating their fraternity wanted to donate their money raised from Lenten soup suppers to Venezuela, and wanted to know how to contact a fraternity there to get them the money. I have contacted Carolyn Townes, our national JPIC animator who has also made some CIOFS contacts. The money raised will go to Claudia Kauzlarich, our national treasurer, who will send it to a CIOFS contact in Venezuela who will get it to a fraternity there. The complication is that regular mail and money shipments are not taking place there and delivery, for a variety of reasons, is not reliable and could possibly never happen. Thanks to Mother Cabrini for this great Lenten idea!

It is my understanding that the NEC wants us to focus on building fraternity life this year. JPIC activities can be a great way to do that. Small fraternities can collaborate with other fraternities or other groups to have that experience of building fraternity through service.

Serving together is a great way to get to know and love your fraternity family better. Once we know and love one another unconditionally, we can love joyfully, which is a wonderful example for the rest of the world to see! I have found that if I'm not loving my fraternity family in joy, then I have some spiritual and attitudinal work to do!

Service is also a great way for all of us to grow our empathy and understanding of those in need and to grow in our understanding of the systemic issues in our society and culture that create and perpetuate that poverty, lack of medical care, lack of hospitality and help for the homeless and for immigrants and refugees, or whatever the issue is. We can then consider advocacy for changes that would create a more just society.

Have a prayerful, blessed and fruitful Lent, everyone! God bless you all!

Susan Tabor OFS,
JPIC Animator

