



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

Peace and all good be with you,

As I sit in front of my computer, I keep musing over the fact that what I am going to write now is a far cry from the message I had planned to write several weeks ago. As I have heard over and over, "This isn't the Lent we planned, but it is the Lent we were given." Yes, the life we are living now is most likely nothing like we had originally imagined when we started Lent.

But even amid all the isolation and loss, the most exhilarating phenomenon I have noticed during our weeks of staying home is that everything I read and hear seems to have a stronger impact on me than before. I scour the news more carefully looking for the truth. Scriptures I read have deeper and more eminent meaning. Routine prayers that we say every day (Rosary, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Morning and Evening Prayer, etc.) all seem to have greater impact on me and stay with me longer each time. Have you noticed that too? And to think, all we needed to get to this point was to take away the many distractions and activities of an average day, so that what is left, is the silence to hear God and the time to do His will.

I hope you had the chance to see Pope Francis' address and reflection to the world concerning our struggle with COVID 19. In it he recalled the scene in which Jesus and the apostles were in the boat when a storm comes up. Jesus is calmly sleeping, but the apostles wake him and cry to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

Do you not care? How could they even say that! Who cares more than Jesus who gave up everything to become man and live his life with the poor? Who would give up his life in a cruel and excruciating way to save us all?

So, after calming the storm, Jesus asks them, "Why are you afraid? Have you no Faith?" Had they not seen how Jesus turned water into wine? Had they not seen him heal lepers, paralytics, and blind men? Why would they think He would not protect his dearest friends? Not care?

But then in this Sunday's gospel (raising of Lazarus) what is the first thing we hear both Martha and Mary say to Jesus on his arrival in Bethany? "If you would have been here, he would not have died." As if to say, "Where were you? Why were you so late? Don't you care?"

In both gospels we see desperate humans in crisis looking for help. And right now, that's exactly where are we. I've read many an article or email or Facebook post asking why God is doing this to us.

Why doesn't He save his faithful ones from this disease? Why doesn't He put an end to this pandemic? Doesn't God care? Have you felt yourself leaning in that direction too? It would be easy to do. But this disease is not the work of God. According to Fr. Rijo Mulavarickai, OFM Conv., God does not wish harm. God does not wish evil. God can only wish good. God only participates in activities that result in good.

(continued on Page 2)

So, if something happens to us, if we find ourselves struggling or in pain, if we trust God, we must look for the good that God is expecting to come out of this situation in our life. Sometimes the only way we grow stronger and holier is by facing our worse fears or by challenging our complacent approach to life. Like the song by Collin Raye says, “I prayed for strength, and I got pain that made me strong. I prayed for courage, and I got fear to overcome. When I prayed for faith, my empty heart brought me to my knees. I don’t always get what I want. I get what I need.”

Fr. Rijo continued to note that in 1935 The Hoover Dam was built in the Black Canyon on the Colorado River on the border of Nevada and Colorado. This is what they call an arch gravity dam, which means that the stronger the force of the water pushing against the dam the deeper it embeds itself into the rock and the stronger it becomes.

Is that what is happening to us now? Do we feel God pushing on us now to make us stronger? If you do, stop and look carefully. Look for the will of God to make you a better person. Look for God’s intention that you become a holier Christian. Look deeply to discover how God is showing you how to become a more-saintly Franciscan.

As Matthew Kelly says, “This is the time for the making of saints.” We can do this by doing what God puts in front of us each day with quiet love and compassion. God is not asking us to do big things or monumentally important things. He just asks us to respond to every day, ordinary situations with love. Maybe we have forgotten that.

These last 3 weeks of Lent we have looked at the gospels which are called the Scrutinies. These gospels present situations that raise questions of faith and trust. They are meant for the catechumen who are preparing for entry into the church, but in truth apply to all of us. They ask all of us to deal more deeply with our own faith. The story of the Samaritan woman, the curing of the blind man and the raising of Lazarus from the dead reveal scenarios where we might doubt and question our faith.

Being scrutinized is not a bad thing. Only when we are scrutinized, interrogated like the blind man was by the Pharisees, do we finally “see” and then are willing to go the rest of the way and believe. But it is difficult. We are often tested by God so that we question or doubt our faith to be sure of what we believe. Having doubts is not a bad thing. Matthew Kelly says that doubts are invitations to know God in a new and deeper way. And once we can answer those important questions and believe, we see clearly but only when we have trained ourselves to look with the eyes of God. The world uses only human eyes that are clouded with fear, greed, selfishness and confusion. That’s easy enough to recognize in these last weeks as the “shelter in place” process began. Hoarding, blaming, unprecedented fear of other people. We can only see clearly when we try to see as God sees. God doesn’t see enemies. God only sees His children.

These are times to lean more than ever on your fraternity brothers and sisters. Even though we cannot meet monthly face to face, I urge you to find ways to stay in touch and try to carry on your fraternal love. The REC, like the NEC, continues to meet via Zoom, a free online audio and video meeting app. It was easy to set up (and trust me, I am not the savviest computer operator!), and it worked beautifully. My family even had a Zoom reunion last week with my mom and several of my brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews. It was a wonderful time together.

I have heard of local fraternities using it too. Some are conducting their Initial Formation meetings on Zoom so not to fall behind on sessions. Some fraternities are using simpler conference calling meeting formats. Anything. Just try to stay in touch. And between meetings, call each other. We need to talk to each other, pray with each other and listen to each other.

(Continued on next page)

We are brothers and sisters in Christ, and Christ is with us always. Share His presence with those who are alone and scared. Be there always for your fraternity members. And let us pray.

Lord, you ask us not to be afraid. But we are silly people, and our faith is weak. Though we doubt you, Lord, do not give up on us. Please do not let go of us. Hold tightly to our hands, and tell us once again, Lord, "Be not afraid."

See Christ



Be Christ

With the peace that only Christ can give,

Your sister,

Judith



What is the Zoom meeting app.?

The videoconferencing app, Zoom may not have been a household name before the coronavirus outbreak. But now, it seems, it is everywhere. Businesses are using it to hold meetings in this time of self isolation. Growing numbers of people are also using it socially to catch up with friends virtually while stuck indoors.

What is it?

In many respects Zoom does nothing new. It's a cloud-based video conferencing tool where you can host calls with others. Users can open chat rooms with attendees all sharing the feed from their webcams, thus giving the illusion of a typical meeting.

When we learned that the National Executive Council was using Zoom to improve communication and cut down on travel time and expenses, we knew that we had to try it too. So we did! We found it to be great tool and will facilitate more frequent communication. Incidentally, it will save the region a good deal of money for travel expenses. The Regional Council feels that you and your fraternity can also benefit more directly by using this application. Just download the app onto your computer or phone.

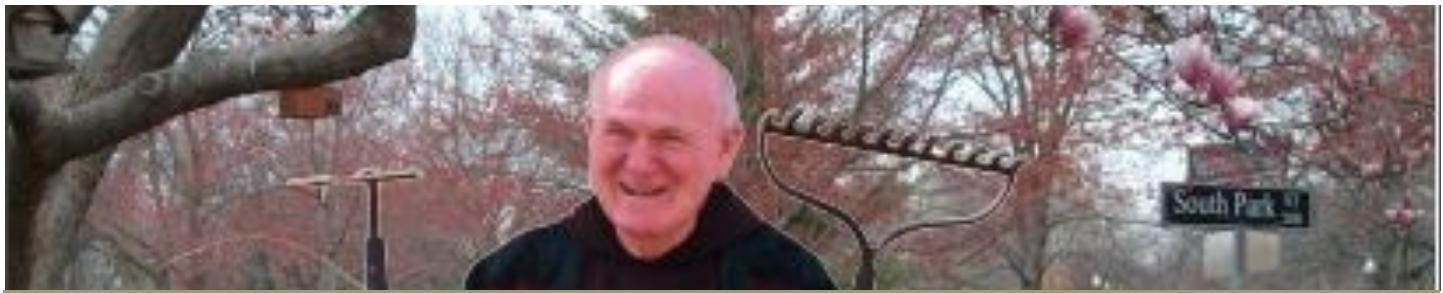
<https://zoom.us/download>

You will be able to have a free membership which will allow you to hold an unlimited number of meetings. Each session is limited to 40 minutes and 100 participants! How many of you have fraternities over 100 members!!! (maybe your families are that big!) There are numerous video tutorials that will help you along the way. Here is a link you might want to explore:

<https://zoom.us/docs/doc/Education%20Guide%20-%20Getting%20Started%20on%20Zoom.pdf?zcid=1231>

An important notice about Zoom—do not post your Zoom meeting on Twitter or Facebook. That will make it a public meeting and open to others you do not want intruding into your meeting. Only send invitations to those you want to join your meeting, you could choose to add a password as well.

Peace, Dona



Words from Father Mike Scully OFM Cap. Regional Spiritual Assistant

BEING SICK AND BEING A THIRD ORDER MEMBER

[Note: I am using "Third Order Member" rather than "Secular Franciscan.]

REFERENCES:

Omer Englebert, St. Francis of Assisi

So long as [Clare] was not totally incapacitated, she took care of her sick daughters, even of their humblest needs. When her Sisters came back from begging, she washed their feet and kissed them reverently. In the winter, she would get up in the middle of the night and tuck in their bed clothes; and in the morning, it was often she who, the first one up, rang the bell and lit the lamps, so as to give extra rest to the nuns who had this duty.

[Clare was] ill for twenty-nine years. ... Her infirmities, arising from her excessive penances, had made her a permanent invalid, nearly always bedfast. But her soul was as serene and ardent as on that night in her youth when Francis received her first vows. She dragged herself to the offices of the community whenever she could.

[chapter 8]

Sister Frances Teresa, OSC, Living The Incarnation

*The most demanding struggles, and the ones which most mature us, psychologically and spiritually, are those that come upon us unsought, always undesired and for which we feel we have had no preparation at all. The struggles that we freely undertake, such as fasting, are much easier, simply because we remain in control. **We can always decide to stop. What, though, are we to make of those formative experiences of pain and distress which we do not choose and do not like, perhaps can hardly bear, and which we cannot bring to an end when we are tired of them?** ... What becomes of joy then? What happens then to our prayer and our praise and our thanksgiving? [my emphasis added]*

[chapter 5]

M. Scott Peck, M.D. The Road Less Traveled

It is because of the pain that events and conflicts engender in us that we call [them] problems. And since life poses an endless series of problems, life is always difficult and full of pain as well as joy. Yet it is in this whole process of meeting and solving problems that life has its meaning. ... Therefore, let us inculcate in ourselves and in our children the means of achieving mental and spiritual health. By this I mean let us teach ourselves and our children the necessity for suffering and the value thereof, the need to face problems directly and to experience the pain involved.

[section 1]

Francis of Assisi. The Rule of the Friars Minor

When any brother falls sick, the other brothers must serve him as they would wish to be served themselves.

[chapter 6]

Tim McGraw. Angry All The Time

You ain't the only one who feels like this world left you far behind. I don't know why you gotta be angry all the time.

^^^^^



During this time of the pandemic, it is good to think in terms of those who are sick and those who will be sick because of the virus, and how we should respond as Third Order Franciscans..

It should be noted that the most difficult people in ministry are often the people who are sick. A country song called “Angry All The Time,” carries that thought very well: the person in the song must leave the relationship because there is nothing else that he can do to salvage the situation. All too frequently, there is deep-seated anger among people, even among Third Order Members, that dictates behavior, and it comes out especially when we are not feeling well. We are all painfully aware that each of us have our own “quirks” which we will “protect” at all costs, and let it dominate what we say, think and do. The job of a healthy person (something that we all want to be) is to be involved in the process of confronting and solving the unhealthy parts of our lives. (Such is the reasoning behind having a good spiritual director or confessor who will ask us the difficult questions, questions that we really don’t want to answer.)

There are some things that can be said about illness as we think of the pandemic that is affecting all of us.

1. A Franciscan cannot allow mental or physical pain to dominate thinking.

It may be too strong a statement to say that “All of us are sick.” Maybe it would be better to say that we are all in need of help at some time in our lives. Whatever our sickness, whether physical or mental, especially the sicknesses that we can’t control (see Sr. Frances Teresa’s statement above), we must understand that sickness can take over our lives. We have to continually fight against that happening. Just because I am old doesn’t mean that I have a weapon that I can use against someone else. Just because I don’t feel well (for whatever reason) doesn’t mean that the rest of the people around me should suffer. Easy to talk about, difficult to do.

Sr. Frances Teresa’s statement above is especially true for us and our world during this time when a virus completely controls the way we are living. We did not choose this illness, but it is up to us to accept it with the faith-filled knowledge that God is with us and that God will truly work with us as we fight the virus.

2. Care for the sick is a primary Christian directive, and therefore a directive for Franciscans.

I think as ministers that we help the sick fairly well. We have excellent hospital chaplains, pastors, associate pastors, and so forth, and one of the things that makes us excellent is our work with the sick. I personally have heard that comment from people who speak about Franciscans in particular, especially the Franciscan sisters. I believe that the same should be said about the way we treat the Franciscans and others around us. That help will come in many forms, of course, and I am fully aware that some may not want direct help. But should we not be open to give a word of affirmation or support to our own brothers and sisters when they are in need? I say that especially during this time of pandemic when so many of us are truly afraid of what is happening around us.

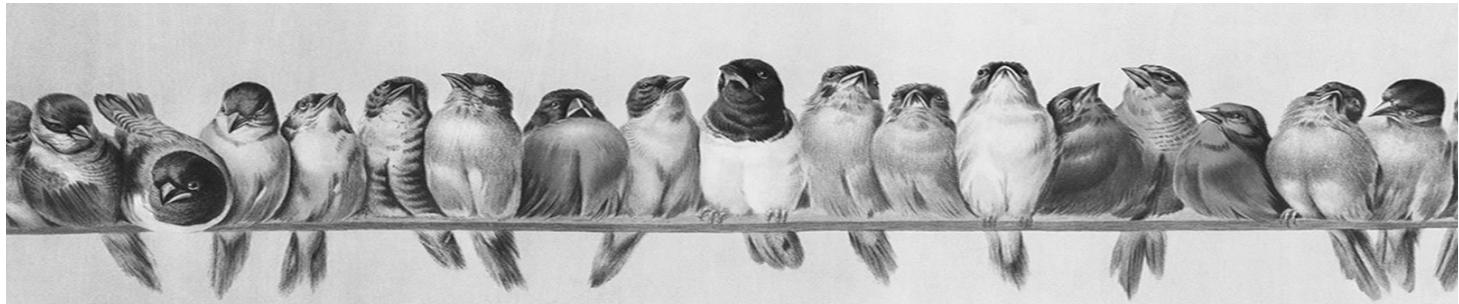


3. When we are sick, we should be open to others' help.

I don't suffer well and I don't think any of us do. When others are helping us, we must accept their help graciously. If we are sick or growing old, we must understand that we can do it well.

In light of that, there must be a special place in our prayers for all of the doctors, nurses, and volunteers that are working the "front lines" in this pandemic. In our meetings, we should pray for them in a special way.

- 1. Give some examples of the kind of pain and suffering that we do not choose, and must still live with in some way.***
- 2. Do you agree with Scott Peck who maintains that "it is in this whole process of meeting and solving problems that life has its meaning." Yes or no and why?***
- 3. Do you think that our Fraternity is setting a good example with regard to care of the sick? Yes or no and why?***
- 4. What are the best ways of confronting the unhealthy parts of our lives?***
- 5. [personal question] Do I let any sickness dominate my actions, especially the present pandemic? Yes or no and why?***
- 6. [personal question] Do I treat my fellow Franciscans (and others) with the respect that I should? Yes or no and why?***
- 7. [personal question] Looking back to the last time that I was sick, did I accept well the help that was given? Yes or no and why?***



St Francis of Assisi ~ Oklahoma City , OK

Hold Elections March 1, 2020

On March 1 the St Francis of Assisi fraternity in Oklahoma City, OK held their council elections. A picture of the new council is shown below. From left to right the council members are:

Kay Sullivan: secretary (second term) *Kay has had to resign since the election.*

Sue Swayngim: VM (second term)

Marti Jones: treasurer (first term)

Bill Full: minister (second term)

Formation will be covered by the whole council.

Ann Marie Neuok (from Broken Arrow) was the Spiritual Assistant. Janice and Mark Keeley came in from Tahlequah to witness the elections. Richard Cronk and Cindy Full (both candidates) were the tellers and Kay was the secretary for the election.

Under Judith's supervision yours truly got to cut his teeth on running an election. Fortunately for him it was an easy one.

A good time was had by all. By Bob Brill OFS



(left—right) Kay Sullivan, secretary, Sue Swayngim, vice minister, Marti Jones, treasurer, Bill Full, minister



Brenda Lager OFS

Brenda Lager OFS, Regional Kansas Councilor,
Appointed Regional Secretary

Due to the school closings to help prevent the spread of the Corona virus, Kay Sullivan OFS , asked to be excused from her responsibilities both as the Regional Secretary and from her position as secretary for St. Francis of Assisi fraternity. Kay helps care for three young boys full time. She has her hands full. Please pray for her and for all the families dealing with home-bound kids during this time.

Brenda Lager OFS, Western Kansas Regional Councilor has accepted an appointment as Regional Secretary . Brenda, professed for 11 years in St. Joseph Fraternity in Hays, KS. She is currently in her second term as that fraternity's minister. She previously served on the fraternity council as the secretary and helped with formation.

Brenda is the lead teacher of a toddler classroom in a childcare center that serves lower income and special needs children.

Brenda has a son, Michael, who is a sophomore in college and a daughter, Leah, who is a junior in high school. Brenda serves her parish as a lector, rosary scheduler and leader, Eucharistic adorer and assists with taking the Eucharist to a nursing home each month.

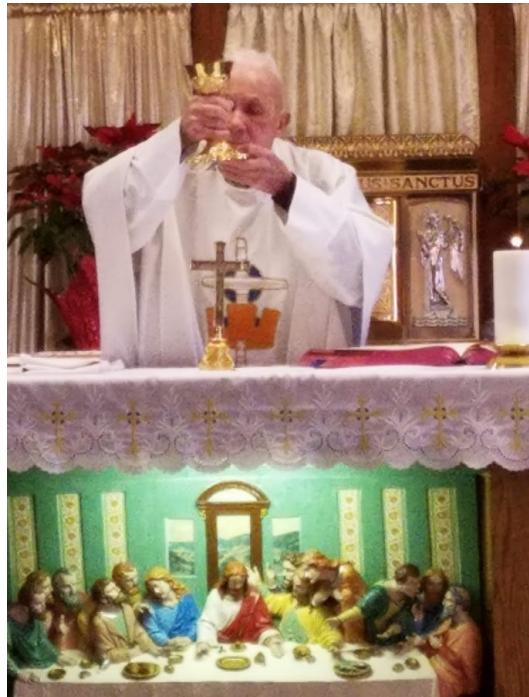
Brenda enjoys spending time with Troy Haas OFS, her significant other, family and friends. She loves reading, learning traveling and stopping in churches to visit. Let us pray for our dear Kay. *Thank you, Brenda for your service.*

Queen of the Angels Fraternity Annual Traditions



Each year, Monsignor Kaiser, spiritual assistant, blesses salt and oil with the exorcism blessing from the Roman Ritual. He also blesses water and other items provided by each members. Members will use the blessed sacramentals around their homes and in their cooking. Afterwards, the fraternity took Monsignor to lunch at his favorite local restaurant.

A "Baby Shower for Mary" will be sponsored by the fraternity in the month of May. The project will gather items for babies and their mothers as part of the Life Apostolate.



Monsignor Kaiser celebrates Mass at the Church of the Santa Fe



Dave Forbes, Joe Novak, Monsignor Kaiser, Sylvia Ridge, Helen Boos, Jo Keller, Virginia Forbes and Kelli McSwain gather around the tables where the salt received the exorcism blessing. Other items blessed were olive oil, candles, water and other sacramentals.



Joe Novak, Monsignor Kaiser, Cathy Herndon and Dave Forbes share stories after lunch.



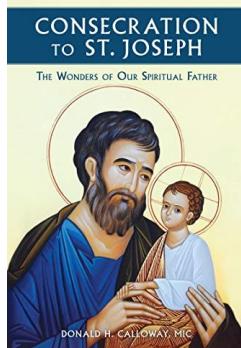
Jo Keller- minister, Monsignor Kaiser- spiritual assistant, Sylvia Ridge- counselor and Bart Ridge.

St Joseph's Fraternity in Hays, Kansas

Makes Important Consecration

St. Joseph Fraternity, Hays, KS committed to making a consecration to St. Joseph as a fraternity. We used the book Consecration to St. Joseph written by Fr. Don Calloway. We began on February 16, 2020 and planned to attend Mass on March 19, 2020 and make the consecration together after Mass, then celebrate with a meal together at a member's home. Due to the events of the Corona Virus members consecrated on their own in their own way. There is a plenary indulgence attached to this consecration for the year of 2020 with the usual conditions of completing an indulgence.

By Brenda Lager, Minister



Drawing on the wealth of the Church's living tradition, Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC, calls on all of us to turn to St. Joseph, entrust ourselves, our Church, and our world to our spiritual father's loving care, and then watch for wonders when the Universal Patron of the Church opens the floodgates of Heaven to pour out graces into our lives today. Definitely a book for our time, Consecration to St. Joseph is dedicated to meeting the challenges of the present moment and restoring order to our Church and our world, all through the potent paternal intercession and care of St. Joseph. This book has everything you need to take your love and devotion to St. Joseph to a whole different level: a thorough program of consecration to St. Joseph; information on the 10 wonders of St. Joseph; and prayers and devotions to St. Joseph. Accessible, motivating, this book will kick off a great movement of consecration to our spiritual father and change the world.

Have you made your consecration to St. Joseph yet? If not check out Fr. Calloway's book on Amazon—

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B083BFGDYS?tag=sa-sym-new-20&linkCode=osi&th=1&psc=1>



Novena Prayer to St. Rocco (or Roch)

O Great St. Rocco, deliver us, we beseech thee, from the scourges of God; through thy intercession, preserve our bodies from contagious diseases, and our souls from the contagion of sin. Obtain for us salubrious air; but, above all, purity of heart. Assist us to make good use of health, to bear suffering with patience; and, after thy example, to live in the practice of penance and charity, that we may one day enjoy the happiness which thou has merited by thy virtues. St. Rocco, pray for us (say three times).

For more information on St. Roch (or Rocco)see: http://saintroccosfeast.org/St_Rocco.html



Monsignor Raymond Burger
celebrates Mass



Renee Schmit OFS volunteers at Villa
St. Francis Nursing home in Olathe, KS



Love in Motion

What is love? Countless books, movies, and songs are devoted to love yet how many people understand it? Many believe that love is a feeling which comes and goes. If it is felt, then love is present. However, if the feeling is absent, then love has disappeared. A mother holding a newborn baby feels some of the strongest feelings of love while bonding with her baby. Yet that baby will grow, and bring about other feelings as well. She will feel anger and frustration. There will be a day when the mother will want to run away, but she does not. Why? Men might abandon a woman when the feeling is gone, but a mother will not leave her child.

Love is an action. Love is an investment in another human being. Love is a choice. A mother chooses to stay. She has invested her hopes, dreams, and her life in this little being. She cannot and will not walk away. This is love. Love wakes her up each day to feed, clothe, teach, and tenderly care for another. Even on a day when the child is a tiny terror, she still loves. This, people can understand.

How can we then love others? What about the stranger, the homeless, the prisoner or the ill? What does love look like then? Will you have warm, loving feelings towards them? Maybe, however, you can make a choice to treat them with kindness, respect, compassion, and empathy. You can feed, clothe, shelter, and heal them. This is love. The Good Samaritan is an example of love in motion. Once in motion, the feelings will come.

Genna Ferrell, Minister, Our Lady of Sorrows Fraternity



Pope Francis recites the rosary at the Shrine of Our Lady of Divine Love in Rome in this 2018 file photo. On March 11, 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, he entrusted the world to Mary. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Mary, Health of the Sick

Prayer to Mary, Health of the Sick

O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm. You, Patroness and Protector of the People of the United States of America, know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen. Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.



Sister Death

NAME	FRATERNITY	CITY, STATE	DATE
Marie Easton OFS	Little Portion	Tahlequah, OK	February 21, 2019
Norma Karhoff OFS	Sacred Heart	Emporia, KS	March 30, 2019
Susan Marie Lee OFS	St. Francis of Assisi	Oklahoma City, OK	May 8, 2019
Jorge Vazquez OFS	St. Joseph	Hays, KS	September 24, 2019
Alice Kowalewski OFS	St. Stanislaus & St Adalbert	Broken Arrow, OK	October 29, 2019
Elizabeth Dietrich OFS	Holy Eucharist	Independence, MO	November 2, 2019
Gerald Allen OFS	Little Portion	Tahlequah, OK	November 11, 2019
Trini Velasquez OFS	Holy Eucharist	Independence, MO	November 21, 2019
Rosemary Hoffmans OFS	Our Lady of Sorrows	Olathe, KS	February 10, 2020
Peggy Michaels OFS	Holy Eucharist	Independence, MO	March 23, 2020

(Please let Judith know of any deaths in your respective fraternities.)



Gathering? Retreat? Which is it?

At our last REC meeting one of the area councilors brought up a question that came from one of the local fraternities. They were confused as to what are the differences between a “Gathering,” a “Retreat,” and a “Day of Reflection.”: They wanted to know why we had changed our Regional Retreat to the Summer Regional Gathering. Let me try to explain.

First of all, I confess that I was the one who wanted to change the name of our retreat to a gathering. I had been attending the regional retreats for several years (6 to be exact at the time I was first elected to the REC.), and I remember my first one very well. I went expecting a time of nearly constant prayer that was directed by a keynote speaker who would give us reflections and questions for us to work out in our personal prayer time. I expected a lot of quiet time and inward focus. I also expected simple meals and little else. To me, that was what a retreat was supposed to be, as I had experienced in my pre-Franciscan days.

But when I got there it turned out to be more of a celebration, and not just at night, but all day, every day. Since the entire Regional Fraternity only met, and still only meets, once a year, it was the only time many people saw each other. There was talking, laughing, and eating – oh, my, the eating. To me it was more of what our Order describes as a Gathering, where we pray, yes, and learn, yes, but also share, rejoice and celebrate our fraternity family.

So if you are looking for a definition for Retreat in the Catholic faith, I would have to say that it is simply an amount of time (from a few hours to even months) spent away from one's normal life and often away from home for the purpose of reconnecting with God in prayer. Although the practice of leaving one's daily routine and home to spend time with God is as old as Christianity itself, this form of retreat was popularized in the Catholic Church by St. Ignatius of Loyola in the 1520's when he was still a layman. This was when he would direct other men in participating in his Spiritual Exercises. Whatever form of prayer and meditation is used, the format is much the same. There are talks by a knowledgeable Catholic speaker, time to reflect on what was said to us, private and group prayer as well as Masses and other prayers of the Church. There is also often fasting or a focus on lessening one's food to imitate Jesus' fast in the desert.

You can see my confusion in calling our time together in the summer a Retreat. So now let's look at the definition of a Gathering, a la Franciscan.

We are directed by our National Fraternity that local fraternities are to participate in monthly gatherings. These are not meetings, as meetings have the secular connotation of business meetings. A small portion of the monthly gathering can be used to include a business meeting, but it should never be the main focus of the gathering. The business of the fraternity is usually handled in the Executive Council meeting which is separate from the gathering. A gathering should include prayer, Ongoing Formation, a small portion of business and social time. The largest portion of a gathering should be Ongoing Formation with the social time being a close second. This is the time for us to be renewed and grow in being Franciscans, which is

why Ongoing Formation is so important. Also, being in fraternity or community is what Francis had in mind for all of his followers. Being together, supporting each of our fraternity brothers and sisters spiritually as well as emotionally, physically and psychologically is part of our job. By learning how to live in our small Franciscan communities, we learn how to take Christ out into the world, how to be Christ for the world.

So maybe you can see why I see our time together in the summer as a Gathering.

As for Day of Recollection, this is really a mini retreat. It usually has the basic format as a retreat except it is only a few hours or maybe one full day, but the focus and attitude is much the same as a retreat – quiet reflections, directed talks and prayer.

Hope that this helps. If there are any other questions, I would be more than happy to address them here in the newsletter or via email. Keep in touch with your area councilors and keep them informed as to what is happening in your fraternity.

by Judith Cronk OFS



20th Quinquennial Congress : Phoenix Arizona August 18-22, 2021

CELEBRATE AND RENEW OUR FRANCISCAN CALLING IN THE SPIRIT OF CONVERSION

Renew your spirit as we Gather together to grow, learn and reflect upon our vocation as a Secular Franciscan. Interact with Brothers and Sisters from all three Orders. Among the Dynamic Presenters are:

- ◆ Father Couturier, OFM Cap, is the Dean of the School of Franciscan Studies at Saint Bonaventure University.
- ◆ Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv, our second keynote presenter, is from the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky. He is the third bishop of that diocese and was consecrated as bishop in 2015.

(If you are interested in helping now with the Q 2021 planning, or during the Q, please contact Susan Simeone, 602-315-1950 or sksimeone@cox.net.) For more information see: <https://secularfranciscansusa.org/2019/12/13/20th-quinquennial-congress-phoenix-arizona-august-18-22-2021/>





How fast the world has changed this Lent. We hear about this on the TV and internet and can see with our eyes the changes in our communities. Local churches have “temporarily:” closed, travel is limited, and we have to stay 6+ feet away from each other.

We have worries about the our health and that of our families, toilet paper, face masks and bills. These are challenging times and we could become fearful. Fear is powerful. When fear becomes a force in your life, it branches off into worries, stress and anxiety.

Pope Francis has granted many unique opportunities for plenary indulgences this Lent by praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Stations of the Cross and the Holy Rosary.

The **Formation Friday** emails are sent each week to all fraternity formation directors, ministers and spiritual assistants are meant to help each fraternity to build up their formation programs. If you haven’t seen hear about these, ask. Don’t forget that Father Scully has told us to always read a biography about St. Francis. And now is the perfect time!

Our Regional Website <https://juandepadilla.org> has important Franciscan and Catholic resources from daily readings, Masses, prayers, formation lessons and movies. (This is a great time to become more familiar with the joy and beauty of our website.)

Many Catholic organizations are trying to help us stay upbeat and use this time of self quarantine to help us focus and grow our spiritual life. On-line books, YouTube videos and movies are now available free of charge. The Capuchins, EWTN and our local parishes are provide on-line Masses, Adoration and teachings. Many of these opportunities have been sent to you on the “Juan” emails.

There is power in words, most especially in Sacred Scriptures, because these are God's words. God's Words are life-giving, soothing, and give power to our days.

We are about to celebrate one of the greatest gifts God has given to help for the time we are in—the **Feast of Divine Mercy**. Trusting in God is essential and can sooth the storms of life. (*For more information on Divine Mercy see: <https://www.thedivinemercy.org/message/devotions/pray-the-chaplet>*)

Jesus, I trust in You

Dona Gibbons OFS,
Regional Formation Director



The Hour of Great Mercy

In His revelations to St. Faustina, Our Lord asked for a special prayer and meditation on His Passion each afternoon at the three o'clock hour, the hour that recalls His death on the cross.

At three o'clock, implore My mercy, especially for sinners; and, if only for a brief moment, immerse yourself in My Passion, particularly in My abandonment at the moment of agony. This is the hour of great mercy. In this hour, I will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion (Diary, 1320).

As often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it; invoke its omnipotence for the whole world, and particularly for poor sinners; for at that moment mercy was opened wide for every soul. In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world — mercy triumphed over justice. (1572)

My daughter, try your best to make the Stations of the Cross in this hour, provided that your duties permit it; and if you are not able to make the Stations of the Cross, then at least step into the chapel for a moment and adore, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, My Heart, which is full of mercy; and should you be unable to step into the chapel, immerse yourself in prayer there where you happen to be, if only for a very brief instant. (1572)

From these detailed instructions, it's clear that Our Lord wants us to turn our attention to His Passion at the three o'clock hour to whatever degree our duties allow, and He wants us to ask for His mercy. In Genesis 18:16-32, Abraham begged God to reduce the conditions necessary for Him to be merciful to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Here, Christ Himself offers a reduction of conditions because of the varied demands of our life's duties, and He begs us to ask, even in the smallest way, for His mercy, so that He will be able to pour His mercy upon us all.

We may not all be able to make the Stations or adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament, but we can all mentally pause for a "brief instant," think of His total abandonment at the hour of agony, and say a short prayer such as "Jesus, Mercy," or "Jesus, for the sake of Your Sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world."

This meditation, however brief, on Christ's Passion brings us face-to-face with the cross, and, as Pope John Paul II writes in *Rich in Mercy*, "It is in the cross that the revelation of merciful love attains its culmination" (8). God invites us, the Holy Father continues, "to have 'mercy' on His only Son, the crucified one" (8). Thus, our reflection on the Passion should lead to a type of love for Our Lord which is "not only an act of solidarity with the suffering Son of man, but also a kind of 'mercy' shown by each one of us to the Son of the Eternal Father."

Looking for an Apostolate?

How to make a Face Mask

You will need a cotton fabric, any print for all men, women and children

Cotton flannel for the backing

1/8" flat braided elastic

Cut the elastic 7" long for adult or children

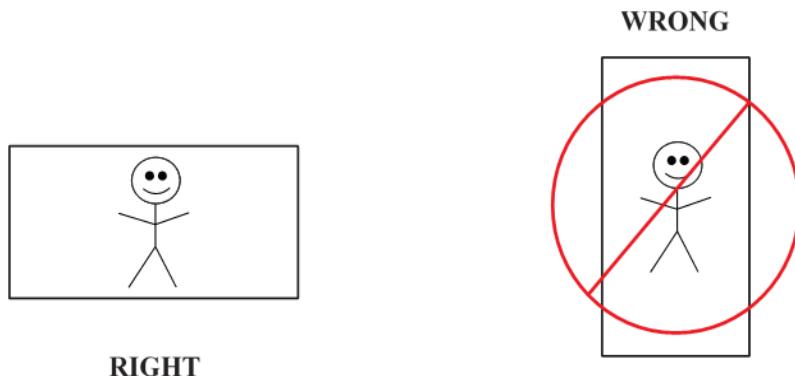
You can make 2 sizes: Adult (9"x6") or Child (7.5"x5")



1. Put right sides of cotton and flannel fabric together.
2. Starting at the center of bottom edge sew to the first corner, stop. Sew end of elastic to corner. A few stitches forward and back will hold this.
3. Sew to the next corner, stop, and bring the other end of that same elastic to the corner and sew a few stitches forward and back.
4. Now sew across that top of the mask to the next corner. And repeat #2 to the corner.
5. Sew to next corner and sew in the other end of the same elastic.
6. Sew across the bottom leaving about 1.5" to 2" open. Stop, cut the thread. Turn inside out.
7. Pin 3 tucks on each side of the mask. Make sure the tucks are the same direction.
8. Sew around the edge of the mask twice.

It is so easy to make this.

Be sure any fabric design is placed horizontally.



Full Tutorial on our Facebook and Website





C A L E N D A R E V E N T S 2 0 2 0 - 2 0 2 1

Date	Event	Location	Responsible Person(s)
TBA 2020	St. Elizabeth—Visitation	Leawood, KS	Frat: Cronk; Pas: TBA
June 9 ,2020	St. Maximilian Kolbe—Elections @ 7 PM	Atchison, KS	Frat: Bob Brill; Pas: TBA
July 4, 2020	St Frances Cabrini—Establishment Ceremony @ 8:30 am Mass	Liberal, KS	Frat: Cronk; Pas: TBA
July 25, 2020	Queen of the Angels—Visitation @ 10 am	Buckner, MO	Frat: Cronk; Pas: TBA
August 20-23, 2020	National Formation Directors Workshop	King House Retreat House, Bellevue, IL	Regional Formation Director & KC Metro Councilor
September 12, 2020	Regional Chapter @ 9:30 am	Sacred Heart Church, Emporia, KS	Ministers, Spiritual Assistants
September 11-14, 2010	Franciscan Youth & Young Adult Animator Training	King's House Retreat Center, Bellevue, IL	FY/YA Animator
October 4, 2020	Br. Jacoba—Elections @ 1:30 pm	Lawrence, KS	Frat: Sylvia Ridge; Pas: TBA
October 2020	National Chapter, Sheraton Detroit Metro Airport	Romulus MI	Regional Minister
November TBA 2020	St. Anthony—Elections	Wichita, KS	Frat: TBA; Pas: TBA
November TBA 2020	Holy Family—Visitation	Tulsa, OK	Frat: Cronk; Pas: TBA
June 2021	National Visitation/Summer Gathering	Wichita, KS	Frat: TBA; Pas: TBA
August 18-27, 2021	20th Quinquennial Congress,	Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel, Phoenix, AZ	All welcome

The Presidents of the two bodies representing the Bishops' Conferences of European Countries (COMECE and CCEE) have released a our common prayer to God for help, comfort and salvation:

God our Father, Creator of the world, almighty and merciful, out of love for us
 You sent your Son into the world as the doctor of our souls and our bodies,
 Look upon your children who, in this difficult time of confusion and dismay in
 Many regions of Europe and the world, turn to you seeking strength, salvation and relief,
 Deliver us from illness and fear, heal our sick, comfort their families,
 Give wisdom to our rulers, energy and reward to our doctors, nurses and volunteers,
 Eternal Life to the dead.
 Do not abandon us in the moment of trial but deliver us from all evil.
 We ask this of Thee, who with the Son and the Holy Spirit,
 live and reign forever and ever.

Amen.

PEACE, JUSTICE & INTEGRITY OF CREATION

By Susan Tabor OFS, Regional PIC Animator



Hello, dear Franciscan Family!

May our Lord grant you peace!

As I write this, (and probably as you're reading this), we are at a very precarious time in the history of our country and world, in the throes of a pandemic. Each day we are seeing the numbers of those who have been infected and of those who have died from the novel coronavirus increase. We know, though, that our God is bigger than this virus and will carry us through it. Who knew that all the world would be experiencing a Lent of sorts with those of us who travel the Lenten journey each year?

I have recently become aware of two new animators who have joined us: Troy Haas from Hays and Kenton Miller of Tulsa. Welcome, Troy and Kenton!

I was made aware last night that the National Executive Council (NEC) of the OFS decided at their meeting yesterday to cancel the JPIC gathering that had been scheduled at Marytown in Libertyville, Illinois for May 7-10. It will take place at a later date, yet to be determined. In the meantime, a Zoom meeting will be scheduled online soon to continue the envisioning discussion that was begun at our previous gathering. I will pass along details to animators as soon as I know them.

It only seems right to reflect a bit here on lessons that can be learned from the Covid-19 virus pandemic. I'd also like to connect them to some of the principles of Catholic social teaching. You could continue this discussion in your fraternity meetings or in your fraternity email chains.

In case you want a reminder of the principles of Catholic social teaching as you pray and reflect, here they are:

- Life and Dignity of the Human Person.
- Solidarity.
- Care for God's creation.
- Call to Family, Community and Participation.
- Option for the Poor and Vulnerable.
- Rights and Responsibilities.
- Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers.

Pope Francis said in his Urbi Et Orbi blessing service homily this past Friday that he sees this crisis as God's way of calling us to live differently, not as a form of retribution. A loving God teaches. I've read and heard of so many examples of people noticing environmental changes during this time. The air is clearer! There is less noise! And the birds are incredibly happy (probably because the air is clearer and there aren't so many humans invading their space!) Our earth sustains all of human life, and is so important to the survival of all life. Thus, I am growing in my appreciation of caring for God's creation, as I'm more aware of creation and am thinking about it more deeply.

I've also re-learned how much I value connection with people and how much I miss it on a day-to-day basis, and especially the spiritual connection through Church.

And at the same time, I've also learned how much we can still do to reach out to and connect with people in ways that are really works of mercy and are caring for each other: Random phone calls, helping with errands, praying for and with people over the phone or in an online group, etc. Doing these things in quarantined solitude has increased my fullness of understanding of the concept of the dignity of life and the dignity of the human person

Staff at our parish distributed lists to several of us of people to call; people whom they determined to be in vulnerable populations. In doing this, we were serving solidarity by letting them know their parish loved them and was praying for them.

Many people are learning support and appreciate their families in new and different ways. Many parents are experiencing an expansion of their role as teachers as their children finish their school year at home. We also hear about concerns that so much time at home may increase the incidence of domestic violence in families, and we pray for families that are struggling with anger issues and other issues that exacerbate anger; we pray for peace for those families and for ways in which those families could be strengthened now and beyond this time. Demonstrated here is the call to family, community and full participation.

Which of the Catholic social teaching principles have you learned most about during this time? Are you looking at these principles in the same way you always have, or do you view them in a different way now?

Happy Easter, brothers and sisters! Let us allow Christ's death and resurrection to touch our lives in profound ways, enflaming our hearts with the love of Jesus and sending us forth to be the body and blood of Christ to the world!



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