



The Little Portion

THE RITE OF PROFESSION

A Permanent Commitment to the Gospel Life



On June 1, 2024, the St. Anthony Fraternity witnessed the profession of permanent commitment of the gospel life in the Secular Franciscan Order of Patricia Bird and Steve Hilger. The Rite of Profession occurred during celebration of the Mass, officiated by Father Ken VanHaverbeke, at the Spiritual Life Center in Wichita, Kansas.

Read more about Patricia's journey to permanent commitment to the Gospel Life in this issue.

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF ST. ANTHONY FRATERNITY

BY LARRY MENESTRINA

St. Anthony Fraternity, Wichita, Kansas celebrated their 100th Anniversary in 2022. Our Fraternity has a rich Franciscan history so here is a brief story of how it all began. The earliest written records of our Fraternity date back to November 25, 1923. In the parish records we researched we could not find any photographs of Fraternity events from the 1920's through the 1950's. What we found were Fraternity Council meeting minutes, membership rosters beginning with the 1920's, copies of our first newsletter called the *Little Portion*, and small notebooks with written records of meeting events.

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Mission Basilica San Diego de
Alcala



San Luis Rey de Francia

GOSPEL TO LIFE: SPREADING CHRIST'S WORD BY EXAMPLE

BY JACKIE SIMON

Over Easter, I was blessed to be able to travel to San Diego, CA to visit an old friend. She and her husband were medical Missionaries in Belize two different times and then worked in Yakima and Toppenish, WA helping the migrant farm workers. Her husband passed away three years ago. She now lives near two of her sons in San Diego.

We were able to visit two different California Missions. San Luis Rey de Francia is still an active Mission for Franciscans. Twenty-six Franciscan friars live on the premises and 6,000 people a year go there for retreats. The cemetery dates to 1798 with graves and crypts also having recent

dates. The Mission has a very rich history and was very peaceful.

The other was Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcala. It is the oldest in California. My friend's son was married there. I am always amazed learning the history of places I visit.

The Mt Soledad National Veterans Memorial honors veterans, living or deceased, from the revolutionary war to the current war on terror, with an image of the veteran.

I find that wherever I travel there is an opportunity to spread our Franciscan values by example, talking to strangers, or just being kind or even tolerant when needed.

"The Church has always esteemed highly this form of life prompted by the Holy Spirit 'for the good of the Church and the human community.'" ~ *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order, p. 2*

WHAT DOES FREEDOM MEAN?

What does freedom mean? It is certainly not doing whatever you want, allowing yourself to be dominated by the passions, to pass from one experience to another without discernment, to follow the fashions of the day; freedom does not mean, so to speak, throwing everything that you don't like out the window ... Let us not be afraid of life commitments, commitments that take up and concern our entire life! In this way our life will be fruitful! And this is freedom: to have the courage to make these decisions with generosity.

~Pope Francis *His Essential Wisdom* p. 129

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF ST. ANTHONY FRATERNITY— 100 YEARS PLUS AND STILL GOING STRONG

BY LARRY MENESTRINA

Our Fraternity's history is tied directly to the establishment of St. Anthony Church which has its beginning in September 1887 under its first name of St. Boniface Catholic Church serving primarily German speaking immigrant Catholics.

What's interesting is that St. Anthony Church sits on a tract of land on the northeast corner of Second Street and Ohio Ave. that was purchased from Buffalo Bill Mathewson for \$4,000.00. Due to a booming Catholic population, construction of a new church began in 1902 and was completed and dedicated on September 17, 1905, under the new name of St. Anthony of Padua after the 13th century Franciscan Saint.

An admiration for the Franciscan Priests who served the parish from 1890 to 1988 was perhaps the catalyst for the establishment of an OFS Fraternity. No mention of the Third Order appeared in early parish documents, and no official date can be confirmed to document the establishment of our Fraternity in parish files, the archives of the Franciscan Province that served the parish, nor the Fraternity's records. From the St. Anthony Parish One Hundred Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Commemorative Book it states on page 61, "Oral history places the beginning of the Fraternity at St. Anthony's to 1905-1907". This means that St. Anthony Fraternity may have been started before 1922/23 but there are no written records to prove this except by word of mouth.

In June 1988 our beloved Franciscan Friars bid farewell to St. Anthony Parish. Despite the loss of our Friars St. Anthony Fraternity has carried on through the years. We have had a history of apostolic giving and support for the poor and needy in the Catholic Diocese of Wichita. Some of our apostolic projects included preparing gift boxes for the Mothers of St. Anthony Family Shelter.

In 2007 we started what we call our “Christmas Project” by preparing gift packages for the families at St. Anthony Family Shelter. In 2010 we shifted our Christmas Project focus to the St. Jude Lord’s Pantry, a local Parish ministry that provides sacks of food items to hundreds of people each Monday morning. After a few years of providing mainly canned food items we changed our contribution efforts by donating money directly to the Lord’s Pantry ministry since they could purchase food directly from the Kansas Food Bank for much better prices.

A long-standing tradition with St. Anthony Fraternity is the wonderful, social gatherings at our monthly meetings.



St. Anthony Minister, Larry Menestrina, and Vice Minister, Larry Dougherty, working the Information booth at the Catholic

and a wonderful lunch.

We are very fortunate to have as our Spiritual Assistant, Sister Mary Catherine Blanding, Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister. Sister Mary Catherine provides us with a beautiful spiritual reflection each month followed by discussion and prayer. We are so Blessed to have her in our Fraternity.

This has been a brief history of St. Anthony Fraternity’s 100 plus years of Service and Formation to the Wichita Community. Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis, Wichita, Kansas. We look forward to many more Blessed years of Service and prayer in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.



St. Anthony Fraternity presenting Fr. John Fogliasso, Pastor of St. Jude Parish, a check for \$1,000.00 in support of the Lord’s Pantry. The fraternity has been contributing this amount for the past 10 years.

Each year during the first weekend in August our Fraternity sets up an information table at the Midwest Catholic Family Conference held at the Century II convention center in downtown Wichita. Several thousand people attend the Conference each year.

St. Anthony Fraternity also sponsors three mini retreats each year at the Spiritual Life Center, (SLC). These retreats are held on Saturday mornings and start with Mass, followed by a presentation, fellowship discussions,



Sister Mary Catherine (IHM), Spiritual Assistant to St. Anthony Fraternity



COVID-19 COULD NOT STIFLE PROFESSIONS TO THE GOSPEL LIFE

Through the years we have celebrated Fraternity Professions at several different churches in the Wichita area.

During the COVID-19 pandemic St. Anthony Fraternity continued with its activities, including profession of permanent commitment to the gospel life.

Above Pictured: Professions of Julie Siegman and Larry Dougherty at Holy Savior Catholic Church, September 2020.

ST. ANTHONY FRATERNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Minister—Larry Menestrina, St. Jude

Vice Minister—Larry Dougherty, Holy Savior

Secretary—Jacqueline Simon, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Treasurer—Chet Kirby, St. Joseph

Councilor—Chris Riggs, St. Mary Cathedral

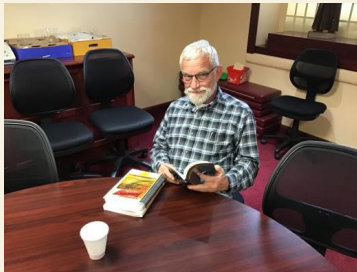
Councilor—Kristi Stubbings, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Director of Formation—Deacon Hector Rios, Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Spiritual Assistant—Sister Mary Catherine, IHM



Patricia Bird, OFS
Professed June 1, 2024



Steve Hilger, OFS
Professed June 1, 2024

SHARING LOVE BY KRISTI STUBBINGS

Sharing Love...
We can't hold onto it
It holds us.
We can't keep it to ourselves
It doesn't belong to us.
It is freely given
The gift infused into our
very Being.
It is perpetually
replenished—
Allowing it to flow through
us,
It touches the world.

MY JOURNEY TO PROFESSION

BY PATRICIA BIRD

Fr. Mike Scully, OFM Cap. was addressing the Juan De Padilla Summer Conference of 2022: ***“To all of you, inquirers, know that the SFO, even though secular, is not a social club. You are inquiring to enter a religious order! Do not consider it lightly.”*** At that very moment I realized the magnitude of my commitment to the Franciscans.

Formation, as a candidate, helped me focus on discerning my call to become a Franciscan; to prayerfully grow into a Franciscan spirit, to thoroughly understand my commitment and the rule of the SFO and thus accept the lifelong responsibilities associated with the Rite of Profession.

As I progressed in formation, prayer became even more valuable as the very foundation of any corporal act of charity, whether feeding the homeless at the Lord's Diner or visiting with the inmates of the local county jail. Furthermore, ongoing formation also reinforced how Francis found his strength in his devotion to the Eucharist and, consequently invited me to expand my adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. As time went by, confidence increased in my ability to fulfill my ultimate commitment to the fraternity.

I found myself pondering how will this impact my life moving forward?

The Rite of Profession to permanent commitment to a Gospel life is a public and ecclesial act performed within the celebration of the holy sacrifice of the Mass. It is a public reaffirmation of Baptismal and Confirmation vows and a personal commitment to live one's life according to the Gospel within the charism of St Francis of Assisi.

Unlike Holy Orders to the Priesthood, which confer powers to administer sacraments, the Rite of Profession will not alter my state in secular life other than help me deepen my relationship with Our Lord Jesus

Christ by going from Gospel to life and from life to Gospel from that day forward. It is the reward to finally have a purpose and a place to become fully an instrument of God's will by surrendering all to Him as did St Francis.

It is also my expectation to grow beyond the day of Profession. As Franciscans, we all benefit from the passionate reports of Brothers and Sisters' endeavors in various apostolates such as the quiet ministry of presence to the dying, the relentless efforts to manifest the rights of the unborn or the preservation of human dignity in marginalized social theaters. Each report is very inspirational and kindles an individual desire to further contribute to the building of the Kingdom of God.

Through the brotherhood of the fraternity, I expect to deepen an already active prayer life, – both private and communal –, and truly commit myself to follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and listen more closely to the very voice of God.

So, if the Lord wishes to send me on a new mission as a Franciscan, I must be ready to answer the call: “Come, follow Me.”

My heart is looking forward to celebrating this benchmark in my spiritual journey. This is what “Profession” means to me.

***Most High, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my
heart
and give me true faith,
certain hope and perfect
charity,
sense and knowledge, Lord,
that I may carry out
Your holy and true command.***

Francis of Assisi – The Saint
Vol.1 – p.40

WHAT WE'RE READING -

A BOOK REVIEW OF "THE PRESENCE OF GOD"

BY CHRIS RIGGS

I've been reading a book by Dominican Father Anselm Moynihan titled "The Presence of God" and would like to share a few thoughts about what Father Moynihan calls God's Fourfold Presence.

He writes that theologians speak of four ways in which God is present in his creation. God is in all things "by what is called his presence (using the word in a restricted sense)," he writes. Father explains that everything in creation is open to God's eyes and that God is observant of everything.

God is also present by his "power," he says, in that all things are subject to God's divine providence – he rules all things. Thirdly God is present by his "essence," in that he is in direct, immediate contact with everything in creation and is the source of its being and movement.

Fr. Moynihan says the fourth presence of God, "indwelling," is restricted to men and angels, those able to possess sanctifying grace, allowing God to dwell within them.

He goes on in the book to explain how everything happens for the greater glory of God, and how the universe was created to share God's eternal life and happiness. Fr. Moynihan also writes about how God permits evil and sin and how both will ultimately work out for the good of the world as a whole.

"God is working according to a plan, a plan worthy of his infinite wisdom," the author writes.

He also touches upon prayer, the trinitarian nature of God, and how the Eucharist is "meant to lead us to and be fused with the presence of the Word of God within our souls."

The 72-page paperback book is not an easy read but it's not overwhelming. Of course, who outside of St. Thomas Aquinas can truly understand the nature of God?

*"The Secular Franciscans, gathered together in fraternity and in the oneness of spirit with all the People of God, celebrate the mystery of salvation, revealed and communicated to us in Christ, with prayers and thanksgiving and by renewing their commitment to a new life. ~
Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order, p. 2*

GOD'S LOVE STORY IN THE MIDST OF NEGATIVITY

BY SISTER MARY CATHERINE

Sometimes the news' darkness can get one depressed.

However, is this response logical? God is always at work in His *Love Story*. God's Love Story is Jesus writing His story in each of our lives. If He is working, helping all with their life's journey, why be excessively saddened? (It's human to be saddened at offenses against God and

life's trials, but not excessively.)

The 'negativity bias' isn't a bad response; it helps us respond to threats more quickly. However, given the effects of original sin, this psychological tendency seems unbalanced. To use trite phrasing, life isn't a bed of roses, but neither is it all doom and gloom.

(continued on p. 6)



Sometimes the news' darkness can get one depressed.

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

ST. ANTHONY FRATERNITY (WICHITA)

SFO St. Anthony Fraternity meets the first Sunday of the month in St. Clare Room (lower level), St. Anthony Church, 258 N. Ohio Ave., Wichita.

Faith formation begins at 1PM. General meeting is at 2:15.

Peace and Every Good!



GOD'S LOVE STORY IN THE MIDST OF NEGATIVITY (CONTINUED)

BY SISTER MARY CATHERINE

Magnificent people influenced the 16th & 17th centuries---Michelangelo, Palestrina, (a Secular Franciscan) Shakespeare and such **Secular Order Franciscans** as Saints Frances de Sales, Catherine of Genoa, Charles Borromeo, and Blessed Mary of Agreda.

At this time some were bemoaning their society and thought the end was

near. It seemed dark. But yet was this the whole picture?

The City of God exists alongside the City of Man. If more truly believed this, and trusted God's presence in the present, peace and joy would prevail over the angst that can damage our interior.

While being realists, let us focus on God's *Love Story*.

BIDDING FAREWELL TO WICHITA

BY BRYAN BURKEMPER

I have been part of St Anthony's Fraternity for the past 15 years or so. Over that time, I have been working to develop a keener focus on the eternal vs. worldly demands and distractions. I was attracted to Francis of Assisi because of his strong and abiding faith and like Francis I knew that the best example of God's love is his creation. Being a part of our Franciscan family, I have experienced many joys and sorrows including the passing of Robert G., and Adam N. (COVID-19), Larry's wife Nataliya, and Steve's wife Jonelle. Now I am embarking on yet another journey as Cindy and I plan to move to our house in Florida. This decision has come about gradually and not without a lot of second guessing. Remember, it took me over 4 years to make my profession. I'm usually cautious, if nothing else. Lately, I have been trying to cozy up to the Holy Spirit and lean on His wisdom and guidance. This Pentecost my pastor told me that the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church and animates it the way our soul animates our bodies. Only He is providing supernatural life to the body of Christ. That really hit home with me.

Getting back to us moving, we will be making several trips both flying and driving over the next few months to get settled. Since we are in the Panhandle, the driving won't be too bad. Our son Danny has been living there since 2013 (Air Force) both on base and off. He has promised to help us -- we'll see. Also, my brother Ken and his wife own a home about 4 blocks away. This could be challenging; we're only a year and a half apart in age, but he still calls me his "little" brother so pray for us. Our son, Matthew, will take over the care of our home in Derby (he teaches at WSU) so we will have a place here to come home to anytime. We will miss our grandchildren, as our son, David, and his family live in NW Arkansas (think Walmart) and our daughter, Christy and her family are here in Wichita. This is a huge and bittersweet change for us so we ask for your prayers as we pray for you.

In case anyone is in the neighborhood or passing thru our address is --

102 Beachwood Dr, Panama City Beach, FL 32413

The house is standalone with 3 Bedrooms - it's just the two of us, large yard, and a private pool across the street. You won't be disappointed. Did I mention that Ken is a master chef!

God's Blessings to each of you....For up to now!