

## Newsletter

January 2022

"I have done what is mine to do; may Christ teach you yours!" —Francis of Assisi

With all the activity of December over, life returns to a slower pace in winter. Its at this time of year that I start to think about a retreat. All the early sources are unanimous in reporting that St Francis would retreat to places of solitude, in caves, mountaintops and even an island in a lake. Celano wrote, "He would spend the night alone praying, in abandoned churches and in deserted places where with the protection of divine grace, he overcame his soul's many fears and anxieties." We know from the Bible that this was following a similar pattern as Jesus who, "withdrew to deserted places to pray." Luke 5:15-16. I feel the pull this time of year to make a retreat, slow down, pray with the Gospels and listen to what God has to say. Some other goals: 1) opportunity for self-knowledge 2) potential growth for inner freedom and integrity of life 3) opportunity to surrender to Christ and experience rebirth. Perhaps the Lord is calling you to a place of solitude to draw closer to Him. Pray about that and see where the Spirit leads. Happy New year. —Franz

### This month's Fraternity Gathering

**January 16, 2022, 12:30 p.m. – Potluck and Gathering**  
**Holy Family Catholic Church, social hall**  
**2430 West 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Duluth**  
**Park in the west parking lot**

#### Agenda:

1. Opening prayer – Rob
2. LotH – Franz
3. Gospel sharing – Keith
4. Ongoing Formation – Barb: *Fratelli Tutti*, Chapter 6
5. Business
  - a. Approve minutes, assign ministries
  - b. Treasurer reports, bills, receipts
  - c. Formation report
  - d. JPIC report
6. Vocation and closing prayers

Next month's meeting: February 20, 2022.

Ongoing Formation: TBD

### Formation

#### Our Servant Leader Models: Francis and Clare



- All the brothers are equal—they follow Christ, the true leader
- The MOST HIGH revealed to Francis what he should do
- The leader should be the least of all

- Her vision was to live the Gospel—she inspired others to follow Christ
- She led by her virtues and behavior more than by her office
- Was persistent in her determination while being obedient



### Council Meeting Agenda

Council meeting will immediately follow the fraternity meeting.

1. Opening Prayer
2. Approve minutes, agenda
3. 2022 Spring Gathering
4. Annual report
5. Other
6. Closing prayer



—Jane

## **Gospel Reading: Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Lk 6:27-38**

Jesus said to his disciples: "To you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. To the person who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other one as well, and from the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic. Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount. But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

"Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give, and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you."

## **Franciscan Saints/Blesseds of the Month**

- 7 BL ANGELA OF FOLIGNO
- 12 ST BERNARD OF CORLEONE
- 14 BL ODORIC OF PORDENONE
- 16 STS BERARD AND COMPANIONS
- 24 ST FRANCIS de SALES
- 27 ST ANGELA MERICI

Angela Merici was born in 1470 in northern Italy. At a young age she lost both of her parents and her sister. At age 13 Angela entered the Third Order of St. Francis. She gave up all her possessions and took a vow of chastity.

Angela inspired other young women who gathered with her in her way of life. They devoted themselves to teaching and serving the poor. This core of women eventually became the Ursuline Order, which continues to this day focused on education of youth. Angela was canonized by Pope Pius VII in 1807.

- 30 ST HYACINTH OF MARISCOTTI
- 31 ST JOHN BOSCO

## **JPIC – (Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation)**

From Pax Christi USA:

### **VOW OF NONVIOLENCE**

Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I vow to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount:

*"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God... You have learned how it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy,' but I say to you, 'Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. In this way, you will be daughters and sons of your Creator in heaven.'"*

- ☐ by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;
- ☐ by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence; by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;
- ☐ by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live;
- ☐ by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth.

God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it. Amen.

(Keep this copy) \_\_\_\_\_

—Darlene

## Faith Matters: Reflections from your Spiritual Assistant

[Note: this is the first of a series I should have done last year in honor of the Order's 800th anniversary. I'll chalk it up to the distraction of Covid-19. In any event, throughout 2022 I will focus on various historical moments and key themes of the Secular Franciscan way of life.]

### Memoriale of 1221

Secular Franciscans around the world celebrated the 800th anniversary of the official establishment of the Order. The year 1221 marks the verbal approval by Pope Honorius III of the papal bull *Memoriale Propositi*. The authorship of this document, which no longer exists and is only known through later revisions, is usually credited to Cardinal Ugolino, who assisted Francis in many of his interactions with the hierarchy of the Church. In the *Memoriale* he worked to convert the informal penitential way of life laid out by Francis in the two letters "*Exhortation To the Brothers and Sisters of Penance*" into the legislative style of official church documents. It carries little of the inspiring language of those earlier documents, which will be the subject of later reflection.

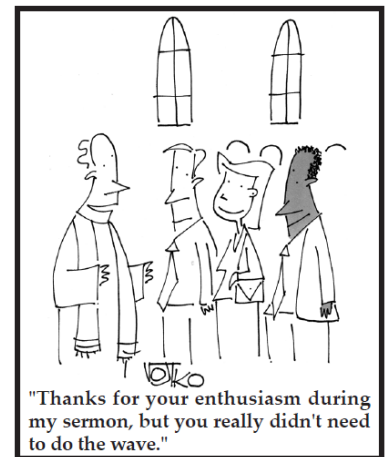
Where and when the Franciscan Third Order actually began is lost to history. Several ancient accounts place the founding at various times and places in Italy. A common story told among Seculars is that a merchant from Poggibonzi, Luchesi, and his wife, Buonadonna, in 1213 asked Francis how they could live his way of life. Francis, in turn, wrote a simple rule for them to follow.

Regardless of how the Order started, the important thing to remember is that it was an organic movement, not a planned-out organization. People from all walks of life were inspired by Francis and spontaneously wanted to be a part of his Gospel-inspired way of life. This way of life was quickly embraced by many couples and single men and women who did not feel called to the stark poverty of the friars and nuns, especially widows. These mostly lay people zealously practiced the lessons Francis taught concerning prayer, humility, peacemaking, self-denial, fidelity to the duties of their state, and above all charity. Like Francis, they cared for lepers and outcasts.

*Memoriale Propositi* created a legal status for these followers of Francis that allowed them to stand apart within society. The rapid growth of the Third Order very quickly became a force in the medieval world of central Italy and beyond. Since one of the rules established by *Memoriale* forbade the use of arms for members of the Order, legions of men who adopted this way of life could not be drafted by the nobles into their frequent and petty military adventures that erupted between the cities and regions in that era. Opposition from civic leaders eventually led to a change in the Rule of 1289 but that is a story for another month.

As Secular Franciscans today, we do not follow the *Memoriale* but it holds an important place in our history as an Order in the Church. It represented the first written rule approved by a pope for the fledgling Franciscan movement (the Rule for the Friars Minor was approved in 1223).

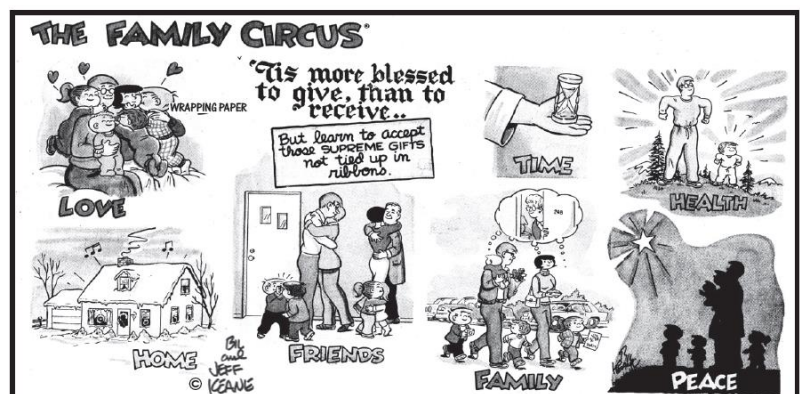
God willing and the pandemic don't rise—to paraphrase the old saying—Secular Franciscans will finally get a chance this August to hold the national assembly that was denied us by Covid-19. If you have the means to get to Phoenix, I encourage you to make plans to attend. I know some from the fraternity are going. If you cannot attend, please hold the attendees in prayer from August 3-7, 2022. — Bob



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### THE FAMILY CIRCUS



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## Pictures from the December fraternity Christmas party



### ODDS 'N' ENDS

Here's a picture of the new cart for our fraternity library. It will make our library once again easily accessible to our members. It will be stored in the new closet Holy Family gave us to use, and rolled out at fraternity gatherings.



—Bob



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Newsletter edited by Bob