

ST. LOUIS FRATERNITY NEWSLETTER  
JANUARY 2022



**REFLECTIONS FROM OUR FRATERNITY MINISTER**

Francis and Joy

There's a story about St. Francis and how, one day on a walk with another monk named Brother Leo, he explains the concept of perfect joy. They're out on a cold winter day, shivering through the thin rags they considered coats, when Francis tells Leo that even if they become the holiest of all monks it would not be perfect joy. They walk through the cold a bit further, and Francis says that even if the monks become miracle workers it would not be perfect joy. They walk on in silence and Francis elaborates more, saying even if they become the wisest of all people, renowned for prophetic insights, this too would not be perfect joy.

Francis continues describing magnificent visions of glory and success, saying that none of these would be sufficient. Finally, Brother Leo has had enough and asks Francis, "Teach me what is perfect joy."

The answer Francis gives is surprising: "If, when we shall arrive...all drenched with rain and trembling with cold, all covered with mud and exhausted from hunger...and the porter comes out in anger to drive us away with oaths and blows, as if we were vile imposters...if we bear all these injuries with patience and joy, thinking of the sufferings of our Blessed Lord, which we would share out of love for him...here, finally is perfect joy.

**PERFECT JOY ??**

If standing in a mud pit during a cold rain after being physically attacked is his idea of joy, St. Francis must have a different definition than I do.

Digging deeper into what he means, though – I think he’s right. His insistence is that suffering is joyful when it is an act of love.

If joy is connected with love, it stands to reason that we suffer when those we love suffer and that, too, is joy because it’s a sign of our love for them. Even when we feel like we’re the only person for whom life is a struggle, we still know that God is with us and He is suffering with us because He loves us, and that, too, is joy.

Love, Peace and Joy this new year!

Deacon John

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## **REFLECTIONS FROM OUR SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT**

A New Year evokes hopeful desires for the future. But this year I feel clouds over us dimming our hope: social distancing restrictions to mitigate the spread of the Covid-19 virus, factionalism in government, increase in the cost of living, emotional fatigue, concerns for friends and relatives facing health concerns, and the list goes on. So, what do we Franciscans do? We sing and praise God that we are children of God whose tender love and care are unwavering. During a general audience in 2014, Pope Francis gave us this message of hope:

*“Christian Hope is not simply a desire or wish; it is not optimism. No! For a Christian, hope is expectation, a fervent, passionate expectation Of the ultimate and definitive fulfillment of a mystery: the mystery of love Of God in which we were reborn and are already living.”*

At a recent fraternity meeting I became aware that we cannot muster up hope alone. We need the witness of each other, the encouragement of each other, and the shared prayer with each other to be our better selves in this winter season. Physically we are experiencing the cold of a Minnesota winter that tends to keep us indoors and isolated. The pandemic has further isolated us and we can be withdrawn into our own cocoons. I invite us to use our imagination and imagine a future full of HOPE: increased attendance at our fraternity meeting, renewed fervor in our ministry to the poor and marginalized, a decrease of the pandemic, and lightheartedness that is characteristic of those who follow Francis of Assisi, - a joyful, optimistic saint. Together we make life better for ourselves and others while at the same time we give glory to God.

-Sister Ramona Miller

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#### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Greg Brunn – belated Happy Birthday January 4 😊

\*There are no Anniversaries of Profession this month.\*

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#### **FRANCISCAN RULE # 11**

Trusting the Father, Christ chose for Himself and His mother a poor and humble life, even though He valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God’s children. Thus, in the spirit of the Beatitudes, and as pilgrims and strangers on their way to the home of the Father, they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power.

#### **FORMATION**

Larry will lead us in a discussion of Reflections 19 & 20 from [Live Like Francis](#) at our next gathering on Saturday, February 12 from 10:00 AM until 12 Noon in the O’Day Room at the Church of St. John the Evangelist.

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## REFLECTION FROM OUR FORMATION MINISTER

On a Monday in January every year we have a national holiday to celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., so I would like to take a moment to talk about a person, who in my view, lived a radical kind of life like our Father Francis. I want to share with you a great song about his life and his Christian mission by James Taylor. (See lyrics below). In the song it talks about being “bound together” and there is a prayer for the Lord to shine light on us. It continues: “When I open my eyes, I want to drink my fill, from the well on the hill.”

Martin Luther King is often quoted from many of his speeches, but I was really struck by the following quote which was presented to St. Mary’s faculty at our convocation Friday: “Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace... a soul generated by love.”

Loving God, help us to serve you in the way of Martin Luther King and especially following the example of our Blessed Mother who said, “Let it be done to me.” We offer our measly gifts and talents to you this day. Amen.

-Larry Price

### SHED A LITTLE LIGHT

Oh, let us turn our thoughts today  
To Martin Luther King  
And recognize that there are ties between us  
All men and women living on the Earth  
Ties of hope and love  
Sister and brotherhood

That we are bound together  
In our desire to see the world  
Become a place in which our children  
Can grow free and strong

We are bound together by the task  
That stands before us

And the road that lies ahead  
We are bound, and we are bound

There is a feeling like the clenching of a fist  
There is a hunger in the center of the chest  
There is a passage through the darkness and the mist  
And though the body sleeps  
The heart will never rest

Shed a little light, oh Lord (shed a little light, oh Lord)  
So that we can see, oh yeah  
Just a little light, oh Lord. (just a little light, oh Lord)  
Want to stand it on up  
Stand it on up, oh Lord (stand it on up, Lord)  
Want to walk it on down  
Gonna shed a little light, oh Lord (shed a little light, oh Lord)

Can't get no light from a dollar bill  
(Don't see me no light from a dollar bill)  
Don't give me no light from a TV screen, oh no, no  
When I open my eyes, I want to drink my fill  
From the well on the hill  
I know you know what I mean

Shed a little light, oh Lord (shed a little light, oh Lord)  
So that we can see, oh yeah  
Just a little light, oh Lord (just a little light, oh Lord)  
Want to stand it on up  
Stand it on up, oh Lord (stand it on up, oh Lord)  
Stand on up, Lord  
Want to walk it on down  
Gonna shed a little light, oh Lord (shed a little light, oh Lord)  
Shed a little light, Lord

There's a feeling like the clenching of a fist  
There is a hunger in the center of the chest, oh yes  
There is a passage through the darkness and the mist  
And though the body sleeps  
The heart will never rest

Oh, Let us turn our thoughts today  
To Martin Luther King  
And recognize that there are ties between us  
All men and women living on the Earth  
Ties of hope and love  
Sister and brotherhood

Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: James Taylor

Feedback

## Web results

[James Taylor - Shed A Little Light Lyrics | AZLyrics.com](#)

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