



## Minister's Message - FEAST ON FASTING

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Penance,

Feast on Fasting? Now that is a strange thing to say, is it not? So what could that possibly mean? Well for one thing, when we fast we do not feast. Right? Well perhaps we do. Maybe we are feasting on the riches of heaven and growing in virtue. What kind, you might ask, how about patience, endurance, understanding and self-discipline, to name a few?

When our beloved Francis went to an island in the Lake of Perugia for forty days with nothing but a loaf of bread, he somehow survived. He was filled with something more. I suggest that he survived on a willingness to trust in God's providence and ability to meet his needs as he went through a sort of purification. At least those are my thoughts. Do you have an idea that you would like to share? It is certainly worth meditating on and then gain greater insight into this mystery.

We should ask St. Francis to guide us through the forty days of Lent. I believe that he would tell us that fasting, almsgiving and repentance are indeed a part of our journey for growing in holiness. Choosing a more difficult path leads to trust in the one who gave up His life for us on the cross. We eventually learn that He is enough. Abstaining from the things we most enjoy creates a kind of vacuum in us so that the Holy Spirit can come and fill us with his beautiful gifts. What would you like to have? I could certainly use knowledge, wisdom and understanding to help me negotiate the difficulties of daily life.

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You see, in the end, I think it is about letting go of some of the things we think we need and letting Him fill us with what we really need. I believe that's what Francis and Clare did. I think it is possible for us to do the same. It certainly is worth trying.

Peace and all good,  
Teresa

T



**Spiritual Assistant Reflections:**

Dear Franciscan Brothers and Sisters,

We are in the season of Lent, a time when we get to dive even more deeply into our Franciscan vocation of constant conversion and to live as brothers and sisters of penance. Every year, on the second Sunday of Lent in the midst of our Lenten penances we listen to the beautiful story of the Transfiguration. Jesus' divinity is manifestly revealed on top of Mount Tabor as his clothes turn radiantly white and his face shines like the sun. It is given as an image for his disciples and therefore for us to see what is taking place "under the hood" in Jesus even as he goes about his daily ministry and especially as he makes his way to the cross. What is this radiant light? So much: His divinity, the Holy Spirit, the eternal love of the father burning within Him and bursting out, all goodness, the father's vibrant and loving voice crying "My beloved Son", Jesus everlasting return to the father.... And of course, so much more. The transfiguration is a place of continual contemplation.

And that contemplation is so important for us as we go about our daily lives, our penances, and experience the cross that has been given to us. Because, for us too, there is a lot going on "under the hood". What can be said of Jesus in his nature is also true for us by grace, God's very life in us. Saints have said that if we could see truly what is happening in us when we are in the state of grace we would die of sheer delight and joy. This life of God in us, is also a place of continual contemplation and meant to be a source of deep encouragement for us.

This truth is not always clear to us especially as we experience the difficulties of life. But I wanted to share an image which my pilgrimage group received while we were on Mount Tabor (the Mount of Transfiguration!) overlooking the valley of Megiddo.

It was a beautifully clear bright sunny day and the view of the valley stunning. But a number of the pilgrims could not get their cameras to work quite right. Instead, their pictures were all radiantly whited out catching only the image of the pilgrims. There are probably many natural reasons that could explain the phenomena, but it did not happen anywhere else on our pilgrimage and I maintain that it is very significant that it happened for us at this particular site. It reminds us of the beauty of God's life, eternal love, and radiant voice dwelling in us in our everyday life and crosses and even as we continue through this beautiful season of Lent!

Peace and every good,

Fr. John

T



**Formation Director Notes:**

Dear Franciscan Brothers and Sisters,

This month we continue with our reading and contemplation of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order.

These assignments will require time placing yourself in the presence of God. I recommend at least one half-hour a week in His Presence as you read the articles. Pray to The Holy Spirit for guidance during that time. As you read discern the movement of the Holy Spirit and allow Him freedom to speak to you regarding the Rule.

Chapter 2 “The Way of Life” Articles 4 & 5

The Little Red Book Pages #15-16

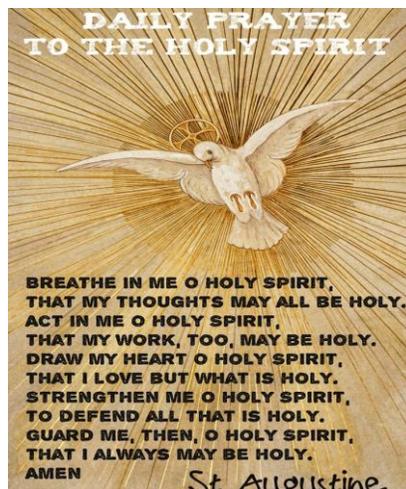
From Gospel to Life Pages #12-13

**Questions for Reflection:**

1. Is Christ the “inspiration and center” of my life as it was to St Francis? How?
2. How do I embody and live out “going from gospel to life and life to the gospel”?
3. How do I actively “seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ”?
4. How do I seek Christ in Sacred Scripture? In the Church? In Liturgical activity?

We will share our thoughts and reflections on the Articles at our March meeting. And let us pray for and open and lively conversation that we may see how living The Gospel in the manner of St. Francis inspires each of us as we seek The Living God.

Peacefully,  
Patti OFS T



**A Plea for Mercy in Troubled Times**

Submitted by Shirlann Biser, ofS

O Greatly Merciful God, Infinite Goodness, today all mankind calls out from the abyss of its misery to Your mercy - to Your compassion, O God; and it is with its mighty voice of misery that it cries out.

Gracious God, do not reject the prayer of this earth’s exiles! O Lord, Goodness beyond our understanding, who are acquainted with our misery through and through, and know that by our own power we cannot ascend to You, we implore You: anticipate us with Your grace and keep on increasing Your mercy in us, that we may faithfully do Your holy will all through our life and at death’s hour. Let the omnipotence of Your mercy shield us from the darts of our salvation’s enemies, that we may with confidence, as Your children, await Your final coming - that day known to You alone. And we expect to obtain everything promised us by Jesus in spite of our wretchedness. For Jesus is our Hope: Through His merciful Heart, as through an open gate, we pass through to Heaven. T

(Diary of Faustina, 1570)



## Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation- JPIC

**FMSC:** The February FMSC was 2/19. Three Franciscans were present. Smallish turnout ..... with enormous results!! Joyce multi-tasked at the front of the table, doing vitamins, veggies, and soy. Shirlann was super-human in the middle putting bags on the funnel, scooping rice and checking the weight of each bag, adjusting when necessary. It was quite impressive. I took up the rear sealing and boxing. It was all I could do to keep up with them!! We packed 5 & 33/36 boxes. That's a total of 213-bags, each of which contain 6 full meals. Grand total of number of kids fed~~ (drumroll, please.....) = 1278. Thank you, ladies!!



The following are the upcoming dates already scheduled:

Saturday 3/19 @ 11:30am

Saturday 4/09 @ 11:30am (What a beautiful way to begin Holy Week)

Saturday 5/21 @ 11:30am.

Of course, all are welcome! Let me know a couple of days beforehand if you plan to join the regulars.

**Food Shelf Collection:** Thank you to all who brought **non-perishable food items** to the last meeting. The donations MORE than filled the shopping satchel I brought with me. We will continue this activity at the in-person monthly meetings going forward. No pressure, but if you are able to contribute something it would be greatly appreciated by the hungry in our community. Due to COVID, many organizations have cancelled their food drives (including my own parish), so food donations are needed more than ever right now. Also appreciated are paper goods and personal hygiene items (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc.) as those items are not eligible for purchase with EBT funds. These will go to ACBC Food shelf in Anoka.

**Pro-Life: Peace** begins in the Womb!! I go to the **Planned Parenthood** in St. Paul the first Wednesday of every month to pray the Rosary in celebration of ALL life, born and unborn. Please feel free to call me any Wednesday that you are available to join me from 10-11am (although I am pretty much a pansy if the weather is lousy) .....happy to carpool from Epiphany. If there is any single Ministry that is critical to the JPIC mission, it is likely this one. Please pray doubly-hard about your ability to come along or meet me there for any part of that hour. March was this past week, so the next date is: April 6.

**Holy Hour:** I have taken a Holy Hour at Fr. John's Parish from 10-11am on Thursday's. Partly to thank Fr. John for the great Blessings of his ministry to, and membership in, our Fraternity. Specifically, I intend to offer that Holy Hour for our elected politicians.... that they may lead with Justice and Integrity in hopes of furthering Peace in our cities, our nation, and our world. The crisis in Ukraine makes this ministry particularly critical at this time. Feel free to join me any Thursday. I likely will frequently go for coffee or lunch afterwards. WAIT~~ maybe I'll give that part up for Lent. 😊

Lastly~~ something special for Lent.... collection of "hotel" sized samples of shampoo, conditioner, soap, lotion & toothpaste for the **Franciscan Brothers of Peace Homeless Ministries (St. Paul)** at our March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Come on!! Clean out your bathroom cupboards and give them to somebody who really needs those tiny bottles of personal care products.

Peace to you All~~ Linda

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*Profession  
Kharen Serra, ofs  
Joyce Weiskopf, ofs*

*February 27, 2022*





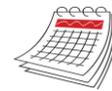
I ask to be admitted to profession of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order and to make a permanent commitment to the gospel life. The experience during my time of formation has strengthened me in the conviction that the Lord is calling me to observe the holy gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ by following the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.

Source: *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order* T



- Repose of the soul of Robby Miller.
- Repose of the soul of Anne Schanel.
- For our friend Mary and her family, in thanksgiving for the gift of God's healing grace.
- Healing from cancer for brother-in-law Dave
- For Tom and family – comfort
- For the people of Ukraine, peace and protection
- For the conversion of Putin
- Healing for Kaylen and his wife
- Successful hernia surgery for Gordon on March 11. No complications or infection. Speedy recovery.
- Teresa as she has cataract surgery March 9 that all goes well.
- Cousin Kim, for peaceful passing (from cancer).
- My Aunt Sr. Brigid, in Thanks and Praise to the Lord for her faithful 50+ years as a Religious Franciscan Sister; may God and His holy Angels protect and console her.
- For the love and acceptance of our crosses, and for a fruitful Lent to grow in holiness and virtue. T

## Calendar



- 3-26-22 – Council Meeting by Zoom – 11am
- 3-27-22 Fraternity Meeting – 2 to 4 pm  
At Epiphany and by Zoom if unable to attend in person  
Adoration 1:30 to 2 pm  
Ok to bring unopened “store bought” treats
- 4-23-22 Council Meeting by Zoom – 11am
- 4-24-22 Fraternity Meeting – 2 to 4 pm  
At Epiphany and by Zoom if unable to attend in person  
Adoration 1:30 to 2 pm  
Ok to bring unopened “store bought” treats



Thank you to all my Franciscan friends who showed love and kindness on my profession. I was blessed with hugs and gifts; including cards, letter, books of wisdom, and lent with Francis, picture and medal of him, cross and delicious wrapped candy. The carefully planned Profession Mass followed by the reception celebration for Kharen and me with the beautiful cake was so very much appreciated.

God's Blessings, Joyce Weiskopf, OFS

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## St. Francis: Artisan of Peace

By Pat McCloskey, OFM

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**“Peace be with you” echoed from Jesus’ life through the life of St. Francis of Assisi. We are called to allow it to reverberate through our lives as well.**

Perhaps no other virtue is more associated with St. Francis of Assisi than peace. He made peace with people, with animals, in the Church, and within civil society. This peace grew out of his honesty about his relationship to God, others, and himself. Before seeking peace with people and creation around him, Francis had to find peace within himself. That was a challenge faced with times of deep prayer.

In his time, the peace that Francis showed with birds, wolves, lambs, larks, and worms reminded his contemporaries that Adam and Eve lived in total harmony with all creatures before they were sent from the Garden of Eden. The serpent in the Garden of Eden promised Eve and Adam knowledge and power that would equal God’s, but the serpent’s promise was worthless.

Women and men suffering from leprosy were perhaps the most universally despised social group in Francis’ day. The Lord led Francis to recognize them as his brothers and sisters. His respect for them as equals in God’s creation brought peace to these afflicted ones. Peace is both a wonderful and a much-abused word. Because we seek peace constantly, it has many counterfeits. For example, peace at any price always yields no peace at a very steep price.

Francis promoted peace among his friars, among the Poor Clares, among the Secular Franciscans, among all people. Thomas of Celano writes that the immensely popular Francis “seemed to be a man of another world”

(First Life, 36). Francis called people back into the peace and harmony of a world into which God had created the human family and which was as fragile in Francis’ day as it is in our own.

Peace is a gift from God. Human actions that cooperate with God’s grace activate peace in the world. On October 27, 1986, St. John Paul II invited leaders of world religions to Assisi to pray and fast there for the sake of world peace. At the concluding prayer service, the pope called those present and everyone who would hear or read his words to be “artisans of peace.” Francis of Assisi was certainly an artisan of peace.

Earlier the same pope had designated Francis as the patron of ecology. Francis learned to appreciate God’s gift of natural resources, not to dominate them selfishly. All of creation pointed Francis toward God. He would have agreed with Dante Alighieri, who wrote in the Divine Comedy that over the gate of heaven is the affirmation, “In his will is our peace.”

“Peace be with you” echoed from Jesus’ life through the life of St. Francis of Assisi. We are called to allow it to reverberate through our lives as well.

### Living as Francis Did

Peace is a work of justice; it does not come about by a display of superior strength or military might. In fact, it can be argued that those who “live among social outcasts, among the poor and helpless, the sick and the lepers, and those who beg by the wayside” most truly effect the cause of peace and justice by changing society at its very roots: its people.

### Growing with Francis

Make a sign of peace today in some small way. Help to effect a change in the world with an act of justice and love.

Source: Franciscan Spirit Blog, January 19, 2022. **T**

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**Spiritual Assistant:**

Fr. John Bauer, OFS

**Franciscan Holy Hour**  
Franciscan Brothers of Peace



Every First Friday at 7:00 p.m.

Adoration + Franciscan Crown Rosary  
Chanted Compline + Benediction

Please Join Them via Live Stream on  
YouTube

**Meetings**

Meetings are typically held the last Sunday of each month at Epiphany Catholic Church in Coon Rapids at 2pm. Meetings are preceded by Adoration at 1:30pm We will also try to Zoom meetings for those unable to attend in person and if there is inclement weather making driving dangerous. Call Teresa Walker with questions. Visitors are welcome. T



**Newsletter Articles:**

The Newsletter of the Saint Alphonsa Fraternity is published every month. We seek to follow traditional conventions of journalism. For example, articles are ended with the symbol, T. Include author name and/or source. Deadline for articles is typically the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month. However, feel free to submit articles, prayers, meditations, etc. at any time stating which month you would like it published. You do not have to wait until the deadline. Articles and prayer requests should be sent to:

Carol Schiebold, ofs, Editor  
schieboldmn@gmail.com

T



**March Birthdays:**

**3 -19 Ellen Drasin**

**Visit our Website:**

**www.**

**<http://queenofpeaceregion.org/coon-rapids-st-alphonsa>  
Webmaster needed!!!!**