

the Newsletter

St. Augustine Secular Franciscan Fraternity, Est. 1875



Next Meeting:

**September 19
in the Lower Room
of St. Augustine
Church**

Life on the AT: A Franciscan Perspective

Part 1: Introduction

[Parts 2 and 3 forthcoming]

By Josette Baker, ofs

My trail name is "Terrapin." Its origins are Algonquian after "*torope*," referencing several species of North American turtles. Slow..... but steady, goes the terrapin. Like the creature, I carry all my belongings on my back in a shell called a backpack. Long distance backpacking is a pilgrimage to a sacred place, a journey through God's incredible creation. The beauty and majesty experienced in the wilderness merge in the silence transforming one's spirit into a state of awe and contemplation where words become inadequate. Backpacking is also a test of physical strength, endurance, fortitude, courage, and absolute trust in Divine Providence. In May of 2021, I began a month long "section hike" on the Appalachian

The newsletter begins with a lead article and is organized into five categories (see Contents below): **Augustinian Announcements** (fraternity business), **Our Caring Community** (news about us and our apostolates), **For Our Franciscan Spirit** (essays on Franciscan spirituality), **Rejoice! Prayers & Celebrations** (special intentions, profession anniversaries, etc.), and **OFS Resources** (to connect us to the worldwide OFS community).

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See page 6 to vote on the newsletter's name!

St. Augustine Secular Franciscan Fraternity

Based in Pittsburgh, PA, the St. Augustine Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order is called to rebuild the Church in the example of our Seraphic Father St. Francis of Assisi. We seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ through apostolic activity in fraternity and in the world, going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel.

Minister Elena Spitzer, OFS
Vice-Minister Liz Cooke, OFS
Secretary Roberta Heinz, OFS
Treasurer Jack Patnik, OFS
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The Newsletter

The monthly newsletter of the St. Augustine Fraternity of the Order of Franciscan Seculars, The Newsletter aims to animate our fraternal life and mission in its OFS charism, and to communicate and record the activities and intentions of the entire fraternity. It is emailed to the fraternity on second Sundays. Print copies, mailed and available at fraternity meetings, use recycled paper.

Submissions

All submissions are welcome! Please email them to robertfallonrobertfallon@gmail.com. They are due on the day of fraternity meetings and will be considered for the following month's issue. Submissions should be Franciscan in tone and content, are subject to editing, and are not guaranteed for publication.

Trail, a 2,190-mile-long hiking trail from Maine to Georgia.

My son Michael was my trail partner. When undertaking a challenge of this scope, success is best achieved when you partner with persons of integrity, character, common sense, and optimism. Add a heaping dose of humor with the ability to laugh at yourself; then life is good and memories flourish. Mike brought these qualities to our team. He adopted the trail name "Oh bloody hell!" soon after climbing several 4,500-foot mountains. Over the next month, we shared our skills and experience providing mutual support, encouragement, and even a kick in the pants along the way.

The AT section we selected lies within my family's home state of Virginia, where our English colonial ancestors settled ca. 1746. Jonathan Denty (maternal ancestor) was a farmer on a small parcel of land, raised a family, served in the Fairfax Militia, and later at Valley Forge in the Revolution. He was a trustee at the historic Pohick Church in Lorton where George Washington rented a pew. Isaac Nichols (paternal ancestor) was a Quaker whose family migrated to America seeking religious freedom. He provided early leadership for the Friends as a trustee donating land from his vast holdings to establish the Goose Creek Meeting House in Purcellville, still serving the Quaker community today. Our journey presented the opportunity to traverse the forests and mountains of Virginia on foot, experiencing the countryside firsthand as our ancestors did in colonial times.

The hike began at the James River Footbridge (the longest bridge on the AT), then would follow the trail north to Front Royal, the terminus of the Shenandoah National Park, called the "Shennies" for short. We planned to backpack a total of 184 miles, northbound, or NOBO in hiking language. We set aside 30 days to reach our goal.

Preparations began during the winter months. I purchased a new and lightweight pack manufactured in Utah. I assembled and tested my camping gear, weighing each item that I planned to carry, then began a regular exercise program. (During the Covid Quarantine I had gained 20 lbs. and was out of shape.) By June, my pack base weight was about 19 lbs. Base weight doesn't include food, fuel, and water. "Lucy," the name I gave my new pack, became a regular companion on my training hikes. I researched local weather and anticipated warm days and cool nights. Rain was to be expected, so in addition to my hooded rain jacket, I purchased a lightweight backpacking umbrella as added protection from both rain and sun. Although we both had previous backpacking experience, this trip was the longest mileage attempt. It required identifying and contacting available shuttles to transport us from the trail to nearby resupply points. I carried my cell phone and charger. Dead spaces in the mountains are numerous with no signal available. Finally, I purchased *Guthooks*, an inexpensive phone app to locate our GPS position, hostels, and resupply points. For backup, I carried a hard copy of the AT Guide taking only the maps needed. Being away for a month required arrangements for personal finances, mail, and securing my home.

On the first of May, Mike and I stood at the edge of the James River Footbridge packed and ready to begin our adventure. We offered prayers entrusting all to God's loving care and providence, a practice we continued throughout our hike. Seeing the familiar white blaze of the AT, we began climbing up a steep hillside to John's Hollow, our first campsite. At that moment, I realized and understood the limitations of true poverty, having only the clothing I wore on my back and the little I had stowed in my pack to survive. As we gained elevation out of the lowland floodplain, we were treated to spectacular aerial views of the James River winding through the Virginia countryside, the footbridge, and the active railroad tracks in the distance. I trusted the Lord had our backs.

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Augustinian Announcements

Council Corner

Our first “in-person” fraternity meeting since February 2020 was held last month at the picnic grove in Penn Hills. What a wonderful time! A little prayer, a little business, a little formation, and a whole lot of long overdue visiting. Let’s pray that we can continue to have in-person gatherings. The interim council had its first gathering on August 9th. It was good. We’re spending much of our time getting to know the responsibilities of the positions, developing an understanding of the fraternity’s needs, and learning how to best serve the community. Needless to say, we’re in a time of active transition! There are a few things to mention:

1. We will continue to be vigilant concerning Covid and the safety of our fraternity members by monitoring local and state guidelines to see if they impact our monthly gatherings.
2. The survey results that were compiled last November have NOT been shelved! It is a document that is valued and is being used as we move forward.
3. We missed many of you at the August fraternity meeting. Moving forward, remember, ***you must let us know*** if you are unable to attend a meeting. Yes, there’s room for us all to get back “in the groove.” See you September 19th!

Agenda for September 19 Meeting

- 1:30 Rosary in the chapel (before meeting)
- 2:00 Meeting begins with Liturgy of the Hours in the chapel
 - Transition to lower room
 - Business meeting
 - Ongoing formation – Jeanne M. (Francis, Founding Spirit)
 - Fellowship with light refreshments
- 4:15 Closing prayer with prayer requests

Calendar

Note: Events marked “P” are sponsored by our brothers at The Port, a ministry of the Capuchin Franciscans. See portpgh.com.

September

- 11 P: Capuchin Cafe
- 12 P: Songwriter Cafe
- 18 P: Drawing Workshop
- 19 Fraternity Meeting
- 23 P: Padre Pio Mass

October

- 17 Fraternity Meeting



Announcements

Ongoing Formation

What Ongoing Formation topics are you interested in hearing about at our monthly fraternity meetings? Please let Jeanne McNulty, ofs, know: 230 36th St. #709, Pittsburgh, PA 15201, or mcnulty.jeanne@gmail.com.

Book Group

Book groups are starting back up this month. We want you to join us! Wednesdays at 2pm or 7pm. Continuing with the book *Live Like Francis*, part 4, “Going Out into the World.” Beginning September 22nd. If interested contact Elena at elenacspitzer@gmail.com or 301-471-7487.

The Port

The Capuchins at St. Augustine’s have a new evangelical ministry called *The Port* (word play on Porziuncula). It aims to be a point of connection to draw people together across a variety of interests: prayer and spirituality, art and beauty, intellectual formation, athletics, and outdoor activity. Recent events include an exhibition of sacred art with the Assisi Arts Community. Visit The Port online at portpgh.com or in the new friary at 3620 Butler St. in Lawrenceville.

OFS Tees and Hoodies

At the August Council meeting, Jeanne and Roberta proposed that the fraternity create brown tee-shirts and hoodies with a Secular Franciscan logo. Council embraced the idea, and now the fraternity must decide on the logo and design. Please brainstorm and exercise your creativity by sending Jeanne your verbal description, drawing, or digitally drawn design! It should feature the Tau cross and the words “Secular Franciscan,” and to enable other fraternities to purchase them,

it should not include our fraternity name. Please email or snail mail your design ideas to Jeanne McNulty, ofs, 230 36th St. #709, Pittsburgh, PA 15201; mcnulty.jeanne@gmail.com.

Newsletter

The Newsletter Team invites you to vote on the new name of the newsletter! The following list includes all possible nominations. **Please vote for two names, marking your first choice with a “1” and your second choice with a “2.”** When votes are tallied, first choice names will receive 2 points and second choice names will receive 1 point. The name with the most points wins the election and becomes the new name of our newsletter.

- ___ **Franciscan Community News**
- ___ **The Franciscan Compass**
- ___ **Franciscan Leaves**
- ___ **In Communion**
- ___ **A Little Life**
- ___ **Pace e Bene**
- ___ **The Pittsburgh Tau**
- ___ **Poverello's Gazette**
- ___ **The Pittsburgh Poverello**
- ___ **Tau Now**
- ___ **zuppa!**



Please submit your vote to Rob Fallon by phone (419-575-7987), email (robertfallonrobertfallon@gmail.com), or USPS (1311 King Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206). All votes must be received by the end of day on October 1, 2021. The Newsletter Team will make every effort to enable all brothers and sisters to vote.



OUR CARING COMMUNITY

Apostolate News

Newsletter

Beginning with this issue, our fraternity has a new Dream Team working on the newsletter: Lisa Joy, Josette, and Rob. At the August 15 meeting, we distributed a survey to learn better how the newsletter can serve the needs and interests of our community. We have followed up with emails and phone calls about the survey to make sure everyone's voice is heard. Thanks to everyone who has responded! *Please see the Augustinian Announcements section below to vote on the newsletter's name!*

The Dream Team welcomes your further feedback. How do you like what you see here? What can we do better? We're eager to receive your submissions: announcements, prayers, poems, quotations, articles, cartoons and jokes. All submissions are welcome—this is your newsletter! Please see the sidebar on page 2 for how to submit your contributions. Moving forward, ***submissions are ideally due on the day of fraternity meetings***, a schedule that affords the team two weeks to draft an issue.

We will be emailing most copies of the newsletter and using recycled paper for printed copies, in accordance with our Franciscan values. Finally, this very font is Franciscan, too! It was especially designed for the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, and we have been authorized to use it for our newsletter. This font, called Franciscus, is a modernized version of the medieval Italian script associated with early Franciscan communities.

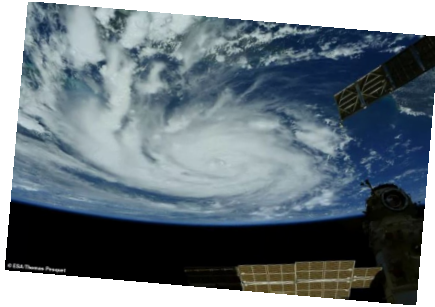
Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

Excerpts from Barbara A. Holmes, [Crisis Contemplation: Healing the Wounded Village](#) (CAC Publishing: 2021).

The crisis begins without warning, shatters our assumptions about the way the world works, and changes our story and the stories of our neighbors. The reality that was so familiar to us is gone suddenly, and we don't know what is happening....

If life, as we experience it, is a fragile crystal orb that holds our daily routines and dreams of order and stability, then sudden and catastrophic crises shatter this illusion of normalcy. . . . I am referring to oppression, violence, pandemics, abuses of power, or natural disasters and planetary disturbances. . . .

We can identify three common elements in every crisis: The event is usually unexpected, the person or community is unprepared, and there is nothing that anyone could do to stop it from happening. Even if there are signs everywhere that something is not right, we tend to ignore the warnings and the signposts. Not even sky writing, or messengers from other worlds, would be able to shift our gaze from the comfort of our daily routines. Thus, the slave catchers, the roundups for native removal, the pandemics, devastating hurricanes, and volcanic eruptions catch us off guard. . . .



When the unexpected happens during a communal crisis, we are not alone. We are with friends and neighboring villagers, and we all experience the same break in reality. Bereft of words, all of us hold the same question: How could this be happening? . . .

I consider crisis contemplation to be an aspect of disorder that prepares communities for a leap toward the future. This is a leap toward our beginnings. We are not just organisms functioning on a biological level; our sphere of being also includes stardust and consciousness. We all have a spark of divinity within, a flicker of Holy Fire that can be diminished, but never extinguished.



Too Much Praise

A Christian guy named Bill saw an ad online for a Christian horse, so he went to check it out. The horse's owner said, "It's easy to ride him. Just say 'Praise the Lord!' to make him go and 'Amen!' to make him stop." Bill got on the horse and said, "Praise the Lord!" Sure enough, the horse started to walk. "Praise the Lord!" he said again, and the horse began to trot. "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" he yelled, and the horse broke into a gallop. Bill was enjoying his ride so much that he almost didn't notice the cliff he and the horse were about to go over. Bill shouted "AMEN!" at the top of his lungs, and the horse stopped right at the edge of the cliff. Relieved, Bill said, "Phew! Praise the Lord!"



St. Sarah's Laughter

FOR OUR FRANCISCAN SPIRIT

Keeping the Rule

Prologue: Exhortation of Saint Francis to the Brothers and Sisters in Penance In the name of the Lord! Chapter 1: Concerning Those Who Do Penance

All who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength (cf. Mk 12:30), and love their neighbors as themselves (cf. Mt 22:39) and hate their bodies with their vices and sins, and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and produce worthy fruits of penance.

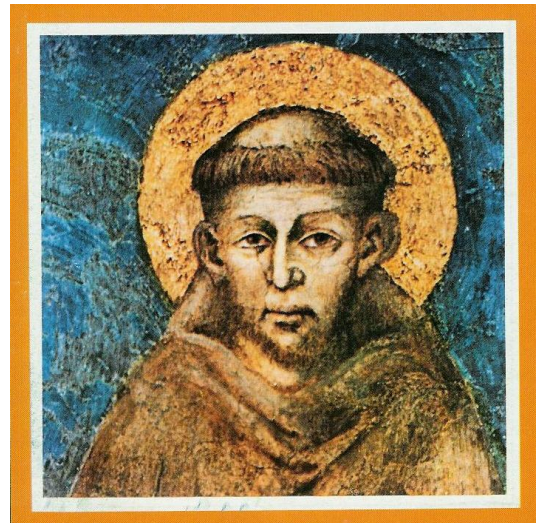
Oh, how happy and blessed are these men and women when they do these things and persevere in doing them, because “the spirit of the Lord will rest upon them” (cf. Is 11:2) and he will make “his home and dwelling among them” (cf. Jn 14:23), and they are the sons of the heavenly Father (cf. Mt 5:45), whose works they do, and they are the spouses, brothers, and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Mt 12:50).

We are spouses, when by the Holy Spirit the faithful soul is united with our Lord Jesus Christ; we are brothers to him when we fulfill “the will of the Father who is in heaven” (Mt 12:50).

We are mothers, when we carry him in our heart and body (cf. 1 Cor 6:20) through divine love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to him through a holy life which must give life to others by example (cf. Mt 5:16).

Oh, how glorious it is to have a great and holy Father in heaven! Oh, how glorious it is to have such a beautiful and admirable Spouse, the Holy Paraclete. Oh, how glorious it is to have such a Brother and such a Son, loved, beloved, humble, peaceful, sweet, lovable, and desirable above all: Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave up his life for his sheep (cf. Jn 10:15) and prayed to the Father saying: “Oh, holy Father, protect them with your

name (cf. Jn 17:11) whom you gave me out of the world. I entrusted to them the message you entrusted to me and they received it. They have known that in truth I came from you; they have believed that it was you who sent me. For these I pray, not for the world (cf. Jn 17:9). Bless and consecrate them, and I consecrate myself for their sakes. I do not pray for them alone; I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word (cf. Jn 17:20) that they may be holy by being one, as we are (cf. Jn 17:11). And I desire, Father, to have them in my company where I am to see this glory of mine in your kingdom” (cf. Jn 17:6-24).



Franciscan Saint of the Month

Blessed Raymond Lull (1232-1316; September 5) is one of the most fascinating



figures in the history of the Secular Franciscan Order. A Catalan linguist, philosopher, theologian, alchemist, novelist, and mystical poet, he began his adult life by serving as marshal and high steward to King James of Majorca. After receiving visions of Jesus on the cross and hearing a sermon about Saint Francis, however, Raymond left his post at age 30. He founded a college to teach Arabic to missionaries heading for northern Africa, and became known for the respect he showed to his Muslim brothers and sisters. "It appears to me, O Lord," he wrote of the Crusades, "that the conquest of that sacred land will not be achieved save by love and prayer and the shedding of tears as well as blood... We must put an end to the material war between Christians and Saracens, because so long as it lasts neither side can begin those peaceful discussions which will certainly result in the triumph of the Cross." He traveled widely and restlessly. At age 60, he

professed into the Third Order on a pilgrimage to Assisi. A contemporary of Jacopone da Todi and St. Louis, and a personal friend of Blessed Duns Scotus, he was martyred on his third mission to Tunisia and was beatified in 1847. Today he is known as a precursor to the Spanish mysticism of Sts. Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, as the "Catalan Dante," as the author of one of the most important medieval treatises on chivalry, and for possibly contributing to the development of the enneagram.

Franciscan Holy Days

September

- 17 Stigmata of Our Holy Father Francis
- 18 St. Joseph of Cupertino
- 20 St. Francis Mary of Camporosso
- 23 Finding the Body of St. Clare
St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina

October

- 1 Franciscan Crown Rosary
- 3 Transitus of St. Francis
- 4 Our Holy Father Francis
- 6 St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds
- 11 St. John XIII

Rejoice! Prayers & Celebrations

Birthdays

Late September

17 Ann Restaine
22 Jennifer Kiley

Early October

11 Mary Ann Dapprich

Profession Anniversaries

Late September

18 Clara May Byerly
19 Steve Sawczak
25 Jennifer Kiley

Early October

15 Michael Cresanta

Please Pray for Our Homebound Sisters and Brothers

Clara Byerly
Evelyn Conflenti
Mary Ann Dapprich
Thomas O'Connell

Angie Rhodes
Marie Stockey

and also for Betty Fritzley

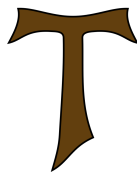
Pope's Prayer Intentions

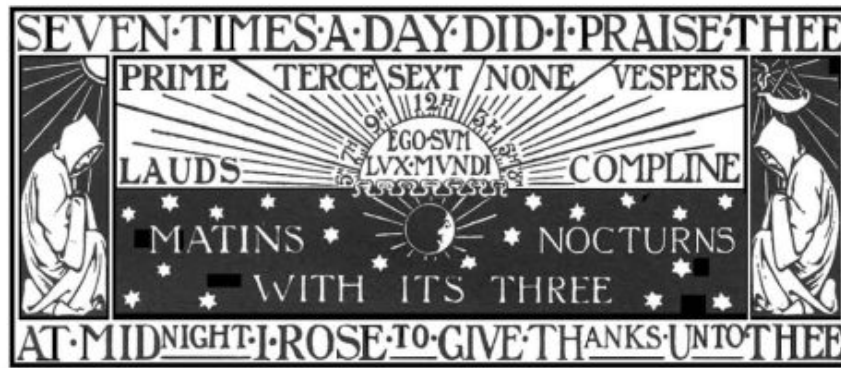
September: An Environmentally Sustainable Lifestyle

We pray that we all will make courageous choices for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, rejoicing in our young people who are resolutely committed to this.

October: Missionary Disciples

We pray that every baptized person may be engaged in evangelization, available to the mission, by being witnesses of a life that has the flavor of the Gospel.





Liturgy of the Hours

Sunday, September 19 + Psalter I 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Morning Prayer pp. 42 along with page 529

Evening Prayer pp. 48 along with page 530

Sunday, September 26 + Psalter II 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Morning Prayer pp. 116 along with page 530

Evening Prayer pp. 122 along with page 531

Sunday, October 03 + Psalter III 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Morning Prayer pp. 192 along with pages 532

Evening Prayer pp. 197 along with page 532

Sunday, October 10 + Psalter IV 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Morning Prayer pp. 262 along with pages 533

Evening Prayer pp. 267 along with page 534

Sunday, October 17 + Psalter I 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Morning Prayer pp. 42 along with pages 534

Evening Prayer pp. 48 along with page 535

National Prayer for Vocations to the OFS

O good and gracious God,
God of mercy, compassion, generosity, and love,
as we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis,
choosing daily to live the Gospel life,
help us to help others
to recognize their vocation as a Secular Franciscan
that you have already planted in their hearts.
Help us, so that together we all may work
to bring the Gospel to life. Amen.

Franciscan Foodie: Easy Pineapple Cherry Crisp

Ingredients

20 oz can crushed pineapple or peaches
21 oz can cherry pie filling or apple
1 package (15.25 oz) yellow cake mix
1 cup chopped nuts
12 cup butter, cut into small pieces

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Grease a 9 x 13-inch baking pan.
Pour crushed pineapple into pan; spread evenly. Spread cherry pie filling on top of pineapple. Sprinkle cake mix over cherry pie filling. Sprinkle nuts over cake mix. Top with small pieces of butter. Bake for 1 hour.



OFS Resources

St. Augustine Fraternity Website & Facebook Page

www.ladypovertyregion.org/st-augustine-fraternity-1
www.facebook.com/staugustineofspittsburgh

Regional OFS Website & Newsletter

www.ladypovertyregion.org
La Probrecita: Not online

National OFS Website & Newsletter

www.nafra-sfo-org
The Tau: http://www.nafra-sfo.org/tau-usa/tau_newarticles.html

International OFS Website & Newsletter

www.ciofs.org
Vox Franciscana: <https://ciofs.info/news/vox-franciscana/>

Retreats and Pilgrimages

St. Francis Pilgrimages: www.stfrancispilgrimages.com

