



La Verna E-Vision

Be the Bridge to Fraternal Life

Vol. 5

Christmas edition

2020



*"We are mothers when we carry the Lord Jesus Christ
in our heart and body through divine love.
We give birth to him through a holy life."*

St. Francis of Assisi

Regional Minister's Message by Jeff Gumz OFS

My brothers and sisters in St. Francis.



What a challenging year 2020 has been for all of us as we continue to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. But every challenge can offer us times of Spiritual growth as individuals and as an Order.

I am so thankful for my relationship with God and each and every one of you during these troubling times. From the 3rd Sunday of Advent, St. Paul gives us a guide for how to live out our faith during the coronavirus epidemic: *Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit* (1 THES 5:16-219). We can't let COVID-19 quench the Spirit! Through phone calls, Zoom meetings or face-to-face, each of you have provided me and others with times of consolation and hope during these difficult days.

Each of the La Verna Region Fraternities confront the COVID-19 crisis in unique ways. For example, the St James Fraternity in Wausau gathers via conference call to maintain contact with each other. Recently they joined together in a Memorial Service for our Fraternity brothers and sisters who have died during the past year and to discuss a chapter from the book "To Live as Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans" by Leonard Foley, OFM, Jovian Weigel, OFM and Patti Normile, OFS.

Since the summer, the St. Ann Fraternity in Green Bay has been meeting in person at St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Church in Green Bay. Everyone wears a face mask and practices social distancing. Each member brings their Shorter Christian prayer books, so they can pray evening prayer together. After prayer they have a short business meeting and then ongoing formation which focuses on living our Rule during the time of the coronavirus. The St. John Neumann Fraternity in Rhinelander, WI has been utilizing Zoom to communicate with their members. They meet with candidates going through initial formation, pray the Rosary together, discuss Franciscan books and gather as a Fraternity using the Zoom video conferencing technology. I'm amazed and inspired by how our Fraternities continue to "gather" with and support each other during these challenging times.

On Sunday, December 13, 2020, The La Verna Regional Executive Council met with Local Ministers on Zoom. After an opening prayer, we broke into breakout groups to discuss the following question: What changes do you notice taking place in your life during this pandemic? During our large group discussion, we talked how we miss hugging one another, attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist. There was frustration in how this global pandemic was affecting our Fraternities and families. The use of technology like Zoom and conference calls has been difficult for some of our older members. But even with these frustrations several people expressed a sense of resilience in discovering what is truly important in life. Our Spiritual Assistant, Br. Jerome mentioned how this difficult time can be a journey of conversion. At the end of our Zoom gathering we agreed to continue to meet on a monthly basis to support one another.

St. Paul advised us in the verse from the 3rd Sunday of Advent, to "pray without ceasing." Please join us each Wednesday at 7:00 PM (Central) as we continue to pray a Rosary to overcome the COVID-19 crisis. Call the following number: 978-990-5000 and enter the access code: 328279. Please pass on the information to other Franciscans.

Wishing everyone a joyous Christmas! May you be reminded of the humble birth of Jesus and raise your thoughts to Him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Jeff Gumz, OFS
Minister of the La Verna Region

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Our New Spiritual Assistants Reflections

A blessed and joyful spiritual assistant installation ceremony for Janet Dubec, Karen Juntikka, and Richard Hoffmann was held at the St. Anthony Spirituality Center in Marathon on September 29, 2020. The newly-certified spiritual assistants will serve assigned fraternities located in northern and western Wisconsin. Each of the Secular Franciscans contributed their personal reflections about their journey on becoming a spiritual assistant.

Janet Dubec, OFS spiritual assistant -

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Chippewa Falls

Believe it or not, I wasn't always as straightforward and self-explanatory as I am these days. It's been a slow but deliberate growth where I have experienced a change to be a faithful Franciscan to where I want to learn to make the spirit of my Franciscan lifestyle authentic.

When I first thought of the Spiritual Assistant formation responsibilities, it seemed to project so long into the future, and one that I didn't feel prepared to even start, because of a basic knowledge of theology. But, with encouragement from close secular friends and the members of my St. Elizabeth of Hungary fraternity, I was encouraged to apply. To my surprise, there was never a question in being approved once all the preliminary paperwork was done. Then I said to myself: "Uh, oh, look what I've done! Now, I've got to get serious!"

The increase in knowledge and genuine and heartfelt acceptance of what I had to do was only the beginning; it was the growth in relationships that meant the most to me! I had others around me to talk to and ask questions on a depth that was so affirming and REAL! Conviction, dedication, stick-to-it-tiveness from others made me keep trying when my first reaction was "ugh - another half chapter to finish and three essays to tackle". Even my method of answering the SA study questions fell short. I answered them like they were purely for an academic result with bullet points to make them as short and concise as possible. I remember thinking, if not voicing, 'It answered the question, didn't it?'

And then, one day, it dawned on me. I was supposed to share how to appreciate and manage a situation or

behavior referenced in any one chapter with experience and knowledge, and how to resolve it based on faith and commitment to the Rule, and not merely regurgitate a set of facts, true as they may be. The responses were about my experience, my revelations, my thoughtful attempts to resolve for the health and well-being of the fraternity.

Another valuable benefit to me was the myriad of authors I became exposed to. Some I already knew like Richard Rohr, OFM and Ilia Delio, OSF to name a couple. Even Murray Bodo, OFM, whom I met on pilgrimage to Assisi in 2012, attracted me with his poetic style. This search also encouraged me to reach out to make the 'Journey into God', the most fulfilling of techniques and experiences that can be consistently renewed for a lifetime.

I can probably sum up what my life has become in one word - HUNGER! There was always something more. But, this wasn't just for me. It wasn't just a matter of passing it on like teaching simple math but, again, building up in relationship with those with whom I would share a life of commitment to the way of life inspired by St. Francis in acceptance of a life of love shown him by Christ Himself.

And, then the night arrived for the official installation within the celebration of the Eucharist! In addition to the privilege of serving fraternity, I was blessed to have the significant individuals involved in my formation and mentoring present to celebrate with me. So many blessings to cherish for the many months and years to come.

So, therefore, I truly do look forward, with a little apprehension and respect for the unknown, to take all that I have been given and then make it my own so that it will eventually exude the genuineness of what



Following their spiritual assistant installation ceremony, Secular Franciscans Janet Dubec, Richard Hoffmann, and Karen Juntikka pose for photos at the St. Anthony Spirituality Center.

St. Francis held dear when he prayed his prayer of peace: “Blessed are the peacemakers”!

Karen Juntikka, OFS spiritual assistant - Queen of Heaven Fraternity, Wisconsin Rapids

Heartfelt gratitude and hopefulness are the words that come to mind as I look back on that day of formal ceremony for becoming a Spiritual Assistant in our LaVerna region. Heartfelt gratitude that I was to become part of the monumental changes that were happening in the Franciscan Order and hopeful that I would be deemed worthy of such a role. I remain hopeful and pray that our all good God will provide the leadership of our region with the compassion and wisdom it will need as it goes through this time of many changes. Pax et Bonum.

Richard Hoffmann, OFS spiritual assistant - St. Anthony Fraternity, Marathon

Becoming an SA has been one of the milestones in my life. Ever since high school, there was something that the Franciscans believed about God, people, and nature that seemed to conflict with what I learned about them. I knew about the Franciscans, but they were just another missionary order to me. I knew there was a Franciscan parish in Appleton – my parents were baptized, confirmed, married, and buried from St. Joseph parish. My sister was a gym teacher there for several years. Later in life I started attending retreats at St. Anthony’s Retreat Center. In 2005, or thereabouts, Kay Derks asked me to attend one of the gatherings at St. Anthony’s, which I did and was later professed in 2008.

But it was when I became Formation Minister for the Fraternity that I began to really understand what it means to be a Franciscan and why Franciscan Theology was so important to every aspect of my life. I began reading the essential documents and modern Franciscan authors, such as Murray Bodo, Ilia Delio, Richard Rohr, Sister Mary Therese Downing, Brother Short and many others, some of whom I have been privileged to meet and study with in person.

And then classes began to start to train Secular Franciscans to be spiritual assistants. It was then

that I really got to know one of our Regional SA instructors, Lee Ann Neibur. A little later I met Br. Jerome Schroeder, OFM Cap who lived the Franciscan way of life, and was absolutely passionate about what Franciscans believed, about God, who we are, and what creation is. They each passed on that conviction and passion onto me, and made me want to share with Secular Franciscans and the world what it really means to be Franciscan. Now as a spiritual assistant I am able to do that. And that is the main reason why becoming an SA is one of the milestones of my life. Peace and All Good.

A Christmas Reflection in a Challenging Time
by Lee Ann Niebuhr, OFS

Beloved La Verna Region Secular Franciscans,

In this year of turmoil, as Christmas is swiftly approaching, we are reminded of the COURAGE of a young girl whose YES teaches us to follow God’s plan for us even when it takes her to a stable in Bethlehem. The child Jesus enters a world filled with fear and uncertainty. Mary’s FAITH in Joseph’s WISE decision to flee from Bethlehem inspires us to FOLLOW the path Jesus sets before us even when we do not know the way. Let Mary’s HOPE for a better world for her Son become our HOPE that each of us becomes a LIGHT in the darkness that REFLECTS the warmth of Christ’s love for all creation.

Franciscans are people of COURAGE, FAITH AND HOPE. The year 2020 has tested us in ways we could not have imagined. Like Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus and later St. Francis, we have experienced many challenges, but we have PERSEVERED. I don’t know about you, but it seemed to me that when I thought things couldn’t get worse, they did. Many friends and relatives also experienced tragedies of one kind or another. I often did not succeed at being the best version of myself . . . I wish I could have had a “do over” on many days.

A Christmas Reflection, Continued on page 5

A Christmas Reflection, cont'd from page 4

It took COURAGE for Joseph and Mary to flee Bethlehem. It took courage for Francis to forsake all material wealth in order to rebuild the church. Each of us individually and as fraternities has had to make some courageous decisions about how to keep growing in our Franciscan charism during the pandemic. Each fraternity has come up with its own response to gatherings. It takes courage for us to go forward, and we will continue to make adjustments as situations change. One of our Franciscan sisters sent me a little message about courage. I gladly share it with you in the hope that it might help on one of those “no good very bad days.”

Courage does not always roar.

Sometimes it is the quiet voice

at the end of the day saying,

“I will try again tomorrow.”
AMEN!

Like all of you, I long for the day when we can be
TOGETHER IN PERSON!

OFS News - Fraternity

Becoming a Centenarian in Franciscan Life

By Richard Hoffmann, OFS



Margaret Shidell, OFS
St. Anthony Fraternity

professed as a Secular Franciscan and became part of St. Anthony's Fraternity, the very same fraternity her mother professed into years earlier.

Margaret Shidell, OFS, of Marathon reached a celebrated milestone on October 23rd. She turned 100. And Margaret also passes another milestone by celebrating her 32nd year of being a Secular Franciscan. At the age of 68, Margaret was

Margaret began her Secular Franciscan journey when her husband, Joseph, whom she married on June 28, 1941, was in a nursing home. A Secular Franciscan neighbor invited Margaret to come and see a fraternity gathering and witness what it means to be a Secular Franciscan. She visited the fraternity, and under the guidance of the formation director, Germaine Ritger, Margaret committed herself to follow the gospel, the way of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi.

Margaret knew that she did not just join another club that happens to meet once a month. She said that she was joining a movement of people who commit themselves to live life in a new way, one that permeates every second of one's life. And Margaret has been faithful to that commitment and is an example that all of us can follow.

When Margaret professed she brought the same love and devotion to her new family that she had and still has for her home family. At home, she was a loving wife to Joseph, always being there for him, and still remains as a doting, loving mother to her four children, 11 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren, whom she never stops talking about. Margaret schedules her events around Franciscan events, making sure to attend our monthly gatherings. In fraternity she brings joy and the Francis and Clare spirit by greeting each of us with her sparkling eyes and warm smile. Her heart is always open to others.

Becoming a Secular Franciscan made her think more about *the* church and the people she meets. It helped her become stronger in her religion, and a person of great prayer. The rosary is one of her favorites, and she has a special devotion to the Eucharist, being able to receive the Holy Communion daily, even during the pandemic.

But Margaret has also been a person of action. She worked at St. Anthony's Retreat Center in the kitchen, visited the sick in the hospital and nursing homes, something she especially liked to do. Fr. Dan Crosby, OFM Cap, who was the director of St. Anthony Spirituality Center, said it best when he wrote, “How I wish I could be there to celebrate Margaret's 100th birthday!

Franciscan Centenarian, continued on page 6

Franciscan Centenarian, cont'd from page 5

I remember her well from my 15 years at St. Anthony's. She was always (even in difficult times) a peaceful, caring, warm and welcoming presence in our midst. We always felt comfortable in her presence. I think this all comes from her peaceful acceptance of herself – from her deep faith – and then she just naturally brought that to all around her.”

Thank you, Margaret, and we all echo the same.

Happy 100th birthday and 32nd anniversary of being a Secular lighting up our life. You are one of God's beloved Disciples!

Peace and All Good.



The La Verna Regional Executive Council

The REC is here to help your Fraternity in any way possible. Do not hesitate to email or call any member of the REC with a concern you may have. Current members of the REC are:

Minister - Jeff Gumz, OFS -
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ncranewms@gmail.com, 715-204-4113

Councilor - Sharon Dale, OFS -
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The La Verna E-Vision newsletter is published three times a year, is a communication vehicle with the La Verna Region, and presents information that relate to the Secular Franciscan Order way of life. The La Verna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA consists of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The region's geographical area is divided into three districts: Southeast, Central, and Fox Valley. Permission to copy materials printed in *La Verna E-Vision* is given freely except where the copyright is specifically reserved to the author or artist. *The La Verna E-Vision* copy editors: Ed Boss, efbofs@gmail.com and Jeff Gumz, jagumz@gmail.com. Cover illustration credit - Diocesan Publications.

PeaceMakers: Assessing the Franciscan Landscape In Our Lives

by JoAnn Boss, OFS,
La Verna Region Formation Chairperson



With people socially distancing as the world tries to curb the spread of COVID-19, the Zoom web video conference has stepped up as a safe tool used for workshops and retreats. With that in mind, our La Verna Regional Formation Team presented its first virtual retreat/workshop via Zoom on how to be PeaceMakers for our local formators and newly-professed. The virtual gathering took place on November 6 - 7, 2020.

Br. Jerome Schroeder, OFM Cap opened the meeting with a poem on “whisper me over the waters,” followed by a video to set the tone for the workshop/retreat. One retreatant expressed how the video transported her imagination through a river full of weeds and then approaching clearwater. The film portrays that the deeper we go with God in the “moving waters”—although murky at first—our world becomes more transparent, and the river bottom is plainly seen. Through mediation and prayer may the Holy Spirit’s purity enter into your senses—to clearly see, hear and feel. Why not speak with your formation instructor and plan a spiritual meditation experience for your fraternity? Here are a few other highlights of the workshop:

- Teri Doughty, OFS reminded us of a plan for conversion proposed by the late OFS National Minister Deacon Tom Bello. As a Franciscan fraternity we extend our prayer and sacramental life together in becoming “... joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly. They shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.” Can you ask your local formator to share this plan with you and your fraternity?

- Br. Jerome assisted us in taking a closer look at “What is Peace” in our Franciscan life. Given the current restrictions of Covid-19, retreatants shared how to carry peace onto their Franciscan community. In spite of Covid-19, can we say and believe in the words of Br. Jerome:

“Oh God, help me to face the truth about myself no matter how beautiful it is!”

- Nick Crane, OFS helped us come alive with his inspirational music and words of peace. One Zoom participant suggested reading *Ragamuffin Gospel: Good News for the Bedraggled, Beat-Up and Burnt Out* by Brennan Manning. It’s “worth reading,” Nick added. Check it out.

- Sally Crane, OFS renamed formators as “Formation Specialist.” We are not experts. We are formed and always will be forming, she said. Formators confirm and confront the ups and downs of the formation process with those aspiring to be professed. Sally gave a special name to help us understand how peace may stir in our hearts. This three-lettered word is an informal adverb called “ish” which is commonly used to modify or moderate something previously stated. For example, “The color of my car is red-ish. The ish in “red-ish” just says it’s sort of red. Sally presented an amazing short video that featured how “ish” thinking helps us “look” at our need to accept others “right where they are” and that is good enough!” Maybe your formator can share with the fraternity the “ish” story written by Peter H. Reynolds. Like the true teacher she is, Sally made a word splash to help us connect the dots ... between these two meanings: peace & “ish”

During our Zoom gathering, we were honored to have as a guest visitor our National Formation Chairperson, Diane Menditto, OFS. Diane attended our Friday and Saturday sessions. You may recognize Diane’s name from the weekly Formation Fridays that she posts on our TAU-USA Facebook. Her supportive words about the retreat/workshop was “... **It was very well done. Kudos.**” This comment along with the responses of other attendees were very affirming for our Formation Team.

You don’t have to be an elected formator or a newly professed to focus on growing in our Franciscan

identity and life. We all are called to “that radical interior change which the gospel calls ‘conversion’... Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.” OFS Rule, Article 7. As your La Verna Region Formation Chairperson, I hope this article plants some seeds for further exploration, wonder, and resting in our Triune God!

Can't get enough formation news and views? Go visit the TAU-USA website for more information on becoming peacemakers.

[How-to-Talk-Like-a-Franciscan-RFD-Workshop-2020.pdf \(secularfranciscansusa.org\)](https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/How-to-Talk-Like-a-Franciscan-RFD-Workshop-2020.pdf)

La Verna Region Treasurer's Report

31 November, 2020

The overall status of the Region's finances is Green. FINANCIAL REPORT (attached)

The Checking account balance is \$33,949.43 broken out as follows;

Regular Checking = \$ 25,448.89

Retreat Subsidy Fund = \$3,838.08

Education/Training Fund = \$4,062.46 (\$998.00 JDSSG remaining)

Fair Share Fund = \$600.00

Pending near-term 2020 bills – None - Pending near-term 2021 bills - \$6,494.00 (est), OFS-USA Fair Share

FAIR SHARE STATUS REPORT

1st Quarter Fair Share receipts = \$7,660.00 (18 Fraternities)

2nd Quarter Fair Share receipts = \$5,740.00 (18 Fraternities)

One fraternity has taken advantage of the 2nd quarter option of paying partial.

Three fraternities took advantage of the 2nd quarter option of paying nothing.

3rd Quarter Fair Share receipts = \$6,840.00 (17 Fraternities)

3rd Quarter Fair Share still owed = \$400.00 (1 Fraternity)

One fraternity took advantage of the 3rd quarter option of paying nothing.

One fraternity paid for both the 3rd & 2nd quarter they opted not to pay.

One fraternity paid for the 2nd quarter they opted not to pay.

4th Quarter Fair Share receipts = \$5,500.00 (12½ Fraternities)

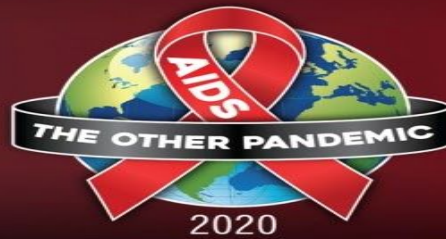
4th Quarter Fair Share still due = \$2,000.00 (5 Fraternities)

Both funds have seen small losses but are still more than when originally started.

The General Fund is currently at 140% of the current budget. Goal is 140%

Respectfully submitted by .Bob Henning, OFS, Regional Treasurer

La Verna Regional Fraternity OF S						Approved	
STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENSE						2020	
FOR PERIODS ENDED DEC 31, 2020 and 2019						2020	
	THIS YEAR	Budget	Budget	Approved	Approved	Approved	Approved
	Y. T. D.	11 months period	Variance	Last Year	Budget	Budget	Budget
	2020	2020	Favorable	2019	22 Jun 2019	08 Jun 2020	2020
			(Unfavorable)				Amended
							Budget
BEGINNING BALANCES:							
REGULAR CHECKING	10,079.07			6,748.66			
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND	3,838.08			3,838.08			
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND	4,062.46			837.48			
RETREAT/EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FD	25,000.00			25,000.00			
CUSTODIAL FUND	25,547.00			25,547.00			
CASH ON HAND	0.00			0.00			
FAIR SHARE FUND	500.00			500.00			
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS -	69,026.61				62,521.20		
REVENUE:							
DONATIONS	830.20	4,138.75	(3,308.55)	4,515.42		4,515.00	4,515.00
FAIR SHARE FUND	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00		0.00	0.00
INT. RETREAT ENDOWMENT FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		708.00	0.00
INTEREST EDUCATION FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		708.00	0.00
SPECIAL MEMORIALS	0.00	0.00	0.00	410.00		0.00	0.00
CHAPTER	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,664.00		1,664.00	0.00
FAIR SHARE - 358 + 24 @ 80.40	26,110.00	27,023.33	(913.33)	30,425.00		29,440.00	29,480.00
SA WRKSP	0.00	687.50	(687.50)	1,460.00		1,525.00	750.00
INTEREST CUSTODIAL FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1,464.00	0.00
MISC & FORMATION WS INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,490.00		0.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE	27,040.20	31,849.58	(4,809.38)		42,964.42	40,024.00	34,745.00
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS	96,066.81				105,485.62		
EXPENSES:							
STIPENDS & EXPENSES	1,300.00	2,383.33	1,083.33	2,845.70		3,000.00	2,800.00
RENT INCLUDING EQUIPMENT	500.00	458.33	(41.67)	500.00		500.00	500.00
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	139.00	45.83	(93.17)	0.00		50.00	50.00
EDUCATION/TRAINING	0.00	3,286.25	3,286.25	3,585.39		3,585.00	3,585.00
MEETING ROOM & FACILITIES	0.00	183.33	183.33	1,035.00		200.00	200.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES	0.00	458.33	458.33	636.98		500.00	500.00
DONATIONS	1,500.00	2,291.67	791.67	410.00		2,500.00	2,500.00
ADMINISTRATIVE EXP	729.03	333.67	(395.36)	585.39		364.00	364.00
NEWSLETTER	0.00	550.00	550.00	0.00		600.00	600.00
TRAVEL EXP & EXPENSES	708.35	4,125.00	3,416.65	9,983.72		9,983.72	4,500.00
FAIR SHARE TO OFS USA - 382@17	6,494.00	5,952.83	(541.17)	6,732.00		6,477.00	6,494.00
ANNUAL CHAPTER	0.00	-	0.00	5,761.27		5,800.00	0.00
VISITATION / ELECTION	0.00	-	0.00	641.00		2,500.00	0.00
RETREAT SUBSIDY	200.00	91.67	(108.33)	580.00		580.00	100.00
FAIR SHARE FUND	0.00	-	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00
SA WRKSP	0.00	907.50	907.50	2,870.75		1,997.00	990.00
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	0.00	45.83	45.83	291.81		500.00	50.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	11,570.38	21,113.57	9,543.19		36,459.01	39,136.72	23,033.00
GAIN OR (LOSS) FOR PERIOD	15,469.82	10,736.01	4,733.81		6,505.41	887.28	11,712.00
ENDING BALANCE	84,496.43				69,026.61		
CURRENT BALANCES:							
REGULAR CHECKING	25,448.89	140%		10,079.07			
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND	3,838.08			3,838.08			
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND	4,062.46			4,062.48			
RETREAT / EDUCATION CATHOLIC FUND	25,000.00			25,000.00			
CUSTODIAL FUND INVESTMENT (JC)	25,547.00			25,547.00			
CASH ON HAND	0.00			0.00			
FAIR SHARE FUND	600.00			500.00			Outstanding
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS	84,496.43			69,026.61			Checks
CUSTODIAL FUND (5283)-JC bequest + St Pascal Baylon gift as of 10/31/20, last 12 mo = 44.00% Gain / (loss)	29,157.31	5%	\$	1,457.87			
CATHOLIC FOUNDATION FUND (5205) as of 10/31/20	3,610.31						
* St Francis of Assisi + Anonymous + REC Last 12 mo +4.00% Gain / (Loss)	28,214.02	5%	\$	1,410.70			
Bob Henning, OFS, TREASURER	3,214.02						
	12/01/20						

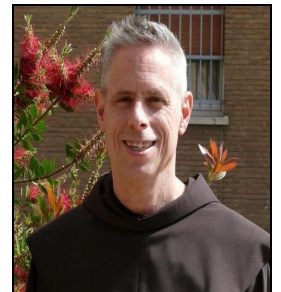


GLOBAL SOLIDARITY, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
A message from Minister General for World AIDS Day 2020
by Br. Michael A. Perry, OFM

Rome, December 1, 2020

May the Lord give you peace!

Every year, on December 1, the world community is invited to pause and reflect on the reality and impact of HIV and AIDS on the human community. It is a time to remember and pray for all 38 million of our brothers and sisters who are living with HIV, their families and friends, and to pray for the millions more who have lost their lives to AIDS (more than 32.7 million).



The year 2020 has been marked by the SarsCoVid-2 pandemic (CoVid-19), which is affecting the lives and livelihoods of the global human community. CoVid-19 is showing us just how interconnected global health is with other critical issues, including increasing social and economic inequalities, assaults on human rights and dignity, and threats to the environment.

As the world turns its full attention to the CoVid-19 global pandemic, there is a danger that the ongoing HIV/AIDS pandemic could be forgotten, that the battle to defeat it might experience a setback, and that national and international attention and funding could be reduced.

Pope Francis in his recent encyclical *Fratelli tutti* warns us that “In today’s world, the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading, and the dream of working together for justice and peace seems an outdated utopia ... [We fail] to realize that we are all in the same boat” (30). For the Pope, it is only when we come to realize that “no one is saved alone; we can only be saved together” (32).

Much progress has been achieved in recent years, but many challenges remain. Let us unite our energies and our prayer as we contend with the two viruses and their terrible consequences: HIV/AIDS; and CoVid-19.

Let us urge our national leaders to continue to guarantee adequate financial support for safe, effective, and affordable antiretroviral and other necessary drugs to combat HIV and treat related illnesses. As disciples of the risen Lord Jesus and followers of our Seraphic Father Francis, may we never cease to love, support, and pray for our brothers and sisters who are living with or affected by HIV and AIDS. Let us also pray for our own brothers who live with the virus and who, despite the challenges they face, continue to serve the needs of God’s people, especially the poor and forgotten.

Yours fraternally, Br. Michael A. Perry, OFM - Minister general and servant

SHEPHERDS' SONG

by Ellen Jennings, OFS
Portiuncula Fraternity - Franklin, WI

What wond'rous gift this early morn,
A child in the stable born!
Could this be the one we seek,
A simple baby so mild and meek?

The prophets did foretell this day,
But - really now - a babe in the hay?
How can this child be a king,
With no gold crown or a jeweled ring?

We are simple shepherds keeping herd,
But we really did hear the glorious word,
And on the hillside we did clearly -
(Or did we, really?) - angels see!

We must have seen them, this we know,
Because they bent to us so low.

We were afraid and we did fling
Our bodies down when we heard them sing.

And what joyous noise they made on high,
Compelling us to head-on nigh,
So we made sure our sheep were fed,
Before we ran to this meager bed.

And now, behold, as we gaze upon,
The Reason we had been led on.
Such light and peace we feel Him bring,
Amazing blessings upon us cling.

So we must remember this Treasure found,
And spread the news through the town.
Who knows, maybe, some time this may,
Be known by all as Christmas day!

Our Lady Queen of Heaven Fraternity Celebrates Memorial Service

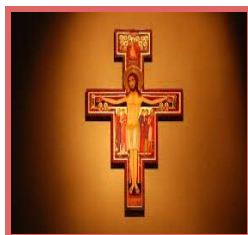
by Sharon Dale, OFS

Our fraternity celebrated its annual Memorial Prayer Service during our October gathering. Each year we remember all deceased fraternity members, recently deceased family members, and close friends of members. Cheryl Erickson, OFS and Candidate Patti Quinnell prepared this year's prayer service with the song "Give Thanks and Remember" and Scripture readings. While our minister Patrick Ruesch, OFS read each name of the deceased, a fraternity member lit a candle and a small bell was rung. Following this, we then prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet together. The picture shows the awesome display of angels framing the candle lights in the foreground.



2020 Secular and Religious Franciscan Obituaries La Verna Region

Fraternity	Name	Date of death
St. Paschal Baylon, Wind Lake	Rosemary Stemie	11/23/2019
St. Joseph, Appleton	Jeanette Bayer	8/21/2020
St. Joseph, Appleton	Claire O'Connell	12/4/2019
St. Joseph, Appleton	Lois Rose	3/10/2020
St. Joseph, Appleton	Elsa Ruscoe	8/21/2020
St. Joseph, Appleton	Joan Schaefer	12/20/2019
St. Joseph, Appleton	Helen DeGroot	10/1/2020
St. Anthony, Marathon	Erna Jansen	6/25/2020
St. Anthony, Marathon	Alvina Linsmire	5/26/2020
Sacred Heart, Oshkosh	Joan Reiter	8/10/2020
Sacred Heart, Oshkosh	Joan Schirger	12/31/2019
St. John Neumann, Rhinelander	Patricia Lietz	9/6/2020
St. James, Wausau	Mary Ann Mizwinski	1/8/2020
St. James, Wausau	Davy Steg	2/21/2020
St. Josaphat, Milwaukee	Mary Fedor	8/9/2020
St. Peter, Stevens Point	Lawrence Krutza	10/13/2020
Deactivated St. Francis Milwaukee	Elaine Whiting	11/21/2020
St. Joseph, Appleton	Delphine Diermeier	11/19/2020
St. Joseph Province - Capuchin	Fr. Marty Pable, OFM	11/19/2020
St. Joseph, Appleton	Joyce Baldwin	12/05/2020



Mark Your 2021 Calendar

- **January 15, 2021 - 6:30 pm to 9 pm Mini Formation Retreat/Workshops:** A Zoom web conference gathering presented by the La Verna Region Formation Team for local formators and newly-professed who were unable to attend the November 2020 formation virtual conference.
- **Retreat at the St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon, WI**
Silent Theme Retreats - Separating the Wheat from the Chaff in Our Lives -
January 29 - 31, 2021, and March 26 - 28, 2021-presented by
Lee Niebuhr, OFS, Rita Simon, Elizabeth Schussler and Deacon Mike Harvey,
and Fr. Frank Corradi

We have all been moving through dramatic and incredibly challenging times this year. Perhaps this upheaval in our “normal” lives has called you to reevaluate what is really important in your life and what, at the core, really matters. Let us explore how the gift of dark times, when we are drawn to go deeply into silence with deep listening, allows the Spirit to lead us to new life and transformation.

This retreat will be offered in January (29th – 31st, 2021), and March (26th – 28th, 2021, Palm Sunday). The March retreat is for women only. At all sessions, **check in begins at 3 pm on** Friday evening, followed by **orientation and 6:00** and supper at 6:30. The retreat concludes after the noon meal on Sunday. **All sessions are limited to 20 participants! Register early!** Cost \$200. To register and reserve your spot call 715-443-2236 or visit www.sarcenter.com

All retreat guests will be asked to wear a mask or cloth face covering in common areas except at mealtimes. We strongly encourage each guest to bring his/her own face covering; however, a limited number of masks will be available for those who do not have their own. **If you are unable to attend due to financial obstacles, please contact us regarding payment plans or other options.**

- **Secular Franciscan social media and prayer sites:**
 - St. Josaphat Fraternity (Milwaukee)
<https://www.facebook.com/StJosaphatOFS/> This is a current site on fraternity, Franciscan media, archdiocese news, spiritual events, and more.
- **Help overcome the COVID-19 by praying the rosary together.** Come join with your fellow La Verna Region Secular and religious Franciscans and pray the Rosary each Wednesday evening. To access the audio conference call from your home, please dial the following number: 978-990-5000 and then enter the access code: 328279. Rosary begins at 7 p.m., and usually runs about 25 - 30 minutes.
- **February 19, 2021 6:30 pm to 9 pm** A virtual gathering for supporting and sharing for all local formators and their teams. We will focus on our formation experiences taking place within our local fraternities. More information TBA.