

La Verna E-Vision

Be the Bridge to Fraternal Life Easter edition



Minister's Message

My brothers and sisters in St. Francis,

As I write these brief notes for our upcoming newsletter, I am a couple days away from

receiving my second dose COVID-19 vaccination. A sense of optimism is in the air. Every Wednesday since March 25, 2020, we have been praying a Rosary for the end of the COVID-19 crisis. God is listening to our prayers. To join our 7 pm CT weekly Rosary, call: 978-990-5000 and enter the access code: 328279.

The end is in sight, but we cannot spike the ball at the 5 yard line like Dr. Fauci reminds us. We must remain vigilant. In this cautious spirit, the La Verna Regional Council (REC) has decided to hold a blended Chapter of Elections this year. This blended event will be part online using Zoom and part in person. Many of the business issues like reports and budgets will be handled using Zoom. However, according to Canon Law, we need to hold our elections in person, no exceptions for COVID-19. Below are the dates for our upcoming Chapter.

June 18, 2021 from 6-8 PM Central will be part 1 of our Virtual Chapter held via Zoom. We will focus on nuts and bolts issues like budget and reports. June 19, 2021 from 6-8 PM Central will be part 2 of our Virtual Chapter held via Zoom. We will focus on formation and spirituality.

June 26, 2021 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM Central, local ministers (or their delegate) and the REC will meet in person at St. Mary of the Angels Church (650 S Irwin Ave, Green Bay, WI 54301) to carry out our elections. Dennis Ross, OFS, will be our Presider at the Chapter of Elections and Fr. Chris Shorrock, OFM, Conv. will be the Friar Witness.

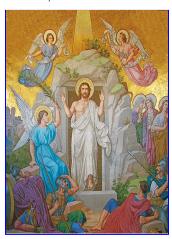
Mary Magdalene Announces Easter Message

by Ed Boss, OFS

Mary Magdalene's faith journey did not end when Jesus died on the cross. John's Gospel reading explains how Mary's faith took on a dramatic transformation.

Jesus Appears To Mary Magdalene

Mary stood outside the tomb crying where Jesus was buried, but when she bent over to look into the tomb,



she saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," Mary said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this moment, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, thinking he was the gardener. A moment later, she recognized Jesus'

voice calling her "Mary," and in return she called Jesus by his Jewish title, "Rabbouni" (John 20:16).

Filled with new faith proclaiming that Christ is risen,

Mary quickly returns to the disciples proclaiming "I have seen the Lord!" and reports Jesus' message: "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Her faith journey goes from grieving the departure of Jesus, to announcing his resurrection to the disciples. Mary

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Magdalene is often called the apostle to the apostles.

Easter Message - continued on page 2

Minister's Message continued from page 1

Secular Franciscans at all levels continue to meet either virtually or in person during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a reminder, if Fraternity members are deciding to meet in person, always remember to wear a mask, maintain at least 6 feet of physical distancing, wash or disinfect hands often and stay home if you are sick. The Local Ministers of the various Fraternities in the La Verna Region are meeting each month via Zoom with the REC. Discussion topics have ranged from Franciscan hope in a challenging world to planning for the upcoming Chapter of Elections. JoAnn Boss, OFS and the Formation team is holding periodic gatherings using the Zoom technology. The conversations at these formation gatherings have been very deep and led by the Holy Spirit. I am meeting virtually with other Regional Ministers located throughout the United States every couple of months to discuss challenges we face as Regional Ministers.

One of the blessings of the pandemic has been the use of technology like Zoom and Free Conference Call to gather virtually, a benefit I see continuing even after the COVID-19 crisis ends. The discussions during these virtual gatherings has allowed me to grow deeper in my Franciscanism. On Friday, March 19, 2021, during a Formation Zoom gathering, Joe Kuczkowski, OFS, shared, we need to have a "radical acceptance of others." Br. Jerome also said the pandemic has allowed us to take a "fast" from the negativity of our society. Joe and Br. Jerome's ideas really hit home for me. This time of physical distancing has made me more aware of how important our connections with others are. I have a deeper appreciation for my relationships with my Franciscan sisters and brothers and I look forward to the day when we all can gather again in person. With the Holy Spirit as our guide let's live out our Rule each day.

Peace and Joy! Jeff

Mary Magdalene's Easter Message - continued from page 1

I like to think Franciscans sometimes witness our faith journey similar to Mary Magdalene: sometimes mistaking Jesus for the gardener, but only later to recognize that Christ is right there with us all the time.

Our daily preoccupations with family, local fraternity duties, careers, even with our best intentions, like Mary Magdalene standing in the garden next to Jesus, may catch us off guard. But hopefully only for a moment or two. Or at least until His voice calls out our name. Easter blessings to you and your family.



Your Vision through the OFS Articles

by JoAnn Boss, OFS Formation Team Chairperson

Franciscans love celebrations! Our charism praises life in daily prayer and embraces Gospel wisdom steeped within our Rule. Saint Francis said in our Rule Prologue: "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."

You may remember that in June 2018 we celebrated the 40th Anniversary of our 1978 Rule which succeeded the "Memoriale Propositi" written in 1221, which was then approved by Pope Honorius III. That OFS-USA celebration lasted an entire year. During 2018, Lee Ann Niebuhr, OFS, La Verna Regional Spiritual Assistant, encouraged each of us to instill ongoing formation focus by: "1) Explain each specific [Rule] article in his/her own words; 2) Write comments about each article; 3) Write a list of suggestions for living out the article in 2018 and beyond"[1] Take a moment today to revisit your focus of our Rule. What words or comments helped your revision on how you lived out the OFS articles? What daily conversion comes to mind and how is your heart celebrating that transformation?

Your Vision - Formation - continued from page 2

Now in 2021 we will again celebrate our Rule. This time it's the $800^{\rm th}$

Anniversary of our First Rule "Memoriale Propositi." Along with the Third Order Regulars, we recall how ordinary people, "good people", wanted to follow Francis' message and his way of life that reflected the life of Jesus in the Gospel. How



may we go about following Francis' message?

Our Franciscan movement today is played out within Chapter 3 of our OFS Rule—**Life in**

Fraternity—which outlines articles 20 through 26. In spirit, these six articles are precious gifts that describe our Franciscan identity to the community. By working these six articles, they take us from saying we are Franciscan to working Franciscan. Articles 20 - 26 are the heart and soul of the management of our Order, which bestow spiritual fruits of formation within us and our fraternal community.

Without a firm and ever-growing foundation of Chapter 2—**The Way of Life—**articles 4 through 19, becoming and being Secular Franciscan would wax and wane. Co-responsibility for our Order would rest only in a few elected professed. I dare to say our Secular Franciscan Family would look more like a club or social gathering, or at best, a great book club discussion group or religious program, not a Way of **Life**. We are a Family, as Chapter One, articles 1 to 3 note. The Secular Franciscan Order Rule sets the tone for us to be Family. It confirms us to be in fraternity as "... brothers and sisters, led by the Spirit, strive for perfect charity in ... [our] own secular state. By ... [our] profession ... [we] pledge ... [ourselves] to live the gospel in the manner of Saint Francis by means of this rule approved by the Church."

Our OFS International, National, and Regional Councils are striving to offer greater support and guidance to all fraternities, far and wide as well as our local La Verna fraternities. In 2021, the OFS General Chapter will celebrate Animate and Guide with Servant Leadership. It is detailed in the document INSTRUMENTUM LABORIS which Diane Menditto OFS. USA National Formation Commission Chairs as outlined in five of her Face Book Formation Fridays February 12, 2021 through March 12, 2021. Her questions are a great way to examine our Franciscan way of "being" and how to "be" more fully engage our Franciscan identity. "How does the ongoing formation program [or initial formation] in your local fraternity make YOU celebrate being Franciscan?"

The COVID-19 virus postponed celebrating our special Jubilee anniversary of the Quinquennial Congress that was to happen this summer. But no fear! We will get to celebrate this next summer **2022** as we "renew our Franciscan calling in the spirit of conversion" August 3-7, 2022 Phoenix, AZ. We can



get into the swing early and begin to consider attending or with the spirit of conversion make plans to renew our Franciscan call in our local and regional gatherings.

Lets Celebrate!

[1] OFS-USA Initiatives For Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the OFS Rule – update June 1, 2018

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, minister@lavernaofs.org. Cover illustration credit - Diocesan Publications.

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 - minister@lavernaofs.org, 920-393-9087

Vice Minister - Bob Crane, OFS - viceminister@lavernaofs.org, 715-204-9671

Secretary - Kathy Sutliff, OFS - <u>katsut@charter.net</u>, 715-369-3367

Treasurer -Bob Henning, OFS - treasurer@lavernaofs.org, 906-273-0374

Councilor - Nick Crane, OFS - ncranewms@gmail.com, 715-204-4113

Councilor - Sharon Dale, OFS - shadale@wctc.net, 715-423-4136

Councilor - Teri Doughty, OFS - OFS4TERI@GMAIL.COM, 920-231-4838

Regional Spiritual Assistant -Lee Ann Niebuhr, OFS lamniebuhr@gmail.com 715 356-1009

Regional Spiritual Assistant -Br. Jerome Schroeder, OFM Cap jschroeder@gmail.com

Formation Director - JoAnn Boss, OFS <u>iboss@mv.wctc.edu</u> 262 250-9251

International OFS News -

Franciscan"Well4Africa" project refreshes land, people and spirit

During the European OFS and YouFra Congress held In Lithuania in 2018 a social initiative was born. Since the theme of this Congress was "Whoever believes in me, rivers of living water will flow from within him" (Jn 7:38), the initial



purpose of this social initiative was to bear concrete fruit ensuring safe drinking water for three

"Well4Africa" - continued on page 5

communities in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Malawi. After the Congress, seeing serious support from many national



fraternities, the CIOFS Presidency decided that "Well4Africa" was to become a permanent project of the whole Secular Franciscan Order, entrusting its management to the National Council of Lithuania. The

social initiative of the OFS has fully implemented 6 water projects and has two more under way.

"Well4Africa" has

already completed Namane and St. Lawrence water projects in Malawi, Kihani water project in Uganda, Sibi water project in



Ghana, Shisong water project in Cameroon and St. Peter's well in Masenyane, Zimbabwe. At the moment, "Well4Africa" has Kongo water project in Ghana under way and is starting the initial phase of a new project in Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre, Zimbabwe.

The Leadership of the US-6 Franciscan Friars













Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province • Holy Name Province • Our Lady of Guadalupe Province Sacred Heart Province • St. Barbara Province • St. John the Baptist Province

National OFM News - March 2021 -

In accordance with the Catholic-Franciscan tradition, which recognizes and celebrates the God-given dignity of every human being, the leadership of six provinces belonging to the Order of Friars Minor in the United States have added their support to a statement signed by Catholic bishops and dozens of religious orders and institutions that condemns bullying and other acts of violence toward LGBT youth.

Ten U.S. Catholic bishops signed a statement in January 2021 that supports the Tyler Clementi Foundation in its vital work of standing up for LGBT youth, who are vulnerable to and experience high rates of bullying, harassment, violence and suicide. In signing on to this statement, the leadership of the Franciscan friars reaffirmed their support of their LGBT sisters and brothers and condemned any form of violence against them.

The Franciscan leaders who signed the statement are Fr. Jim Gannon, OFM, of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province (based in Franklin, Wis.), Fr. Kevin Mullen, OFM, of Holy Name Province (New York City), Fr. Ron Walters, OFM, of Our Lady of Guadalupe Province (Albuquerque, N.M.), Fr. Thomas Nairn, OFM, of Sacred Heart Province (St. Louis, Mo.), Fr. David Gaa, OFM, of St. Barbara Province (Oakland, Calif.) and Fr. Mark Soehner, OFM, of St. John the Baptist Province (Cincinnati, Ohio).

The statement, "God Is on Your Side: A Statement from Catholic Bishops on Protecting LGBT Youth," is below: As we see in the Gospels, Jesus Christ taught love, mercy and welcome for all people, especially for those who felt persecuted or marginalized in any way; and the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that LGBT people are to be treated with "respect, compassion and sensitivity."

US-6 Friars - continued on page 6

US-6 Friars - continued from page 5

All people of goodwill should help, support, and defend LGBT youth; who attempt suicide at much higher rates than their straight counterparts; who are often homeless because of families who reject them; who are rejected, bullied and harassed; and who are the target of violent acts at alarming rates.

The Catholic Church values the God-given dignity of all human life and we take this opportunity to say to our LGBT friends, especially young people, that we stand with you and oppose any form of violence, bullying or harassment directed at you.

Most of all, know that God created you, God loves you and God is on your side.

Draw

"And when I am lifted up, I shall draw everyone to myself."

John 12:32

I sensed this "draw" in a recent gathering of formators from the La Verna region. It was palpable. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we went to a level of honest, humble sharing that brought joy to my heart. We reached beyond doing to being. Longing to grow into the mind and heart of Christ rose up. We left our political and cultural camps for a while to go outside our usual conversation into communion with each other. The quest for holiness was sprang up. We encouraged each other with heartfelt stories of our struggles to live the Gospel life.

This connecting at a deeper level with our sisters and brothers, this gentle surprise that happened between us, I strongly believe, a **key** to a new springtime for Franciscans. It shapes and forms our identities in Christ as no amount of book learning could ever do. Books are fine but fall limp in the presence of hearts meeting hearts, enlightened with the Spirit Francis prayed for before the Crucifix.

The following poem is about cherishing such moments:

Password

often I forget it cannot find it try the wrong one

our meeting fails never happens

how I cherish when I do not need one

when I can be with you without a

password

May the Christ Easter in Us!

Br. Jerome Schroeder Capuchin Franciscan

Good Morning Good People

Click on this wonderful Capuchin video link and watch and listen to encouraging words from our Franciscan brothers and sisters. The **Good Morning Good People** greetings are short and sweet and may help you understand the paschal mystery of people everywhere: https://www.facebook.com/CapuchinFriars/videos

La Verna Region OFS News —

Mark our Calendar

Retreat at St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon, WI

• Seeing Yourself (And Others) As the Beloved - May 14-15, 2021

Using St. Bernard of Clairvaux's reflections on the Song of Songs, Lee Ann Niebuhr, OFS will help us discover, or rediscover, the depth of love and desire that God has for us, the Beloved. Through learning to recognize ourselves as Beloved of God, we will also come to see that all of humanity is God's Beloved, and God's will for us is to love God and God's Beloved in return.

All attendees to retreat session check in begins at 3 pm on Friday, followed by orientation at 5:45 p.m. and supper at 6:00 p.m.. The retreat concludes at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday. Participants may extend their stay with private retreat time Saturday evening and Sunday morning for an additional fee. This session is limited to 24 participants. Register early! Cost \$105. To register and reserve your spot call 715-443-2236 or visit www.sarcenter.com.

La Verna Region Secular Franciscan events and links

- **St. Josaphat Fraternity** (MIlwaukee) https://www.facebook.com/StJosaphatOFS/ A current social media site on fraternity, Franciscan media, archdiocese news, and more.
- Help us 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.
- Virtual Chapter held via Zoom, part 1 June 18, 2021 from 6-8 PM Central. We will focus on the nuts and bolts issues like budget and reports.
- Virtual Chapter held via Zoom, part 2 June 19, 2021 from 6-8 PM Central. We will focus on formation and spirituality.
- La Verna Region Chapter of Elections June 26, 2021 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM Central, local ministers (or their delegate) and the REC will meet in person to carry out our elections at St. Mary of the Angels Church (650 S Irwin Ave, Green Bay, WI 54301)
- **Quinquennial** <u>August 3-7, 2022</u> at Phoenix, AZ Saint Francis would gather the members of the Order for a chapter of mats where the members of the Order would take up their mats and meet for the purpose of prayer, formation, sharing and jubilation. We continue that tradition. Every five years, members of our National Family gather for the same purpose. Our documents call this a "National Congress," and this gathering has come to be known as the "Quinquennial," or "Q" for short. Of course, today, we are far more comfortable we don't have to sleep on mats but our intention is the same.

LaVerna Region Treasurer's Report 06 March, 2021

The overall status of the Region's finances is Green.

FINANCIAL REPORT (attached)

The Checking account balance is \$31,750.05 broken out as follows;

Regular Checking = \$ 23,249.51

To be deposited = \$ 465.00

Retreat Subsidy Fund = \$3,838.08

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

Fair Share Fund = \$600.00

Near-term 2021 bills

\$6,494.00 (est), OFS-USA Fair Share - Paid

\$500.00 Archive room rent

FAIR SHARE STATUS REPORT (attached)

4th Quarter 2020 Fair Share receipts = \$7,420.00 (18 Fraternities)

1st Quarter 2021 Fair Share receipts = \$3,568.75 (13 Fraternities)

1st Quarter 2021 Fair Share still due = \$1,103.75 (5 Fraternities)

Both funds have seen significant gains.

The General Fund is currently at 143% of the current budget.

Respectfully submitted by

Bob Henning, OFS, Regional Treasurer

STATEMENT	egional Fra	& EXPENS	E				Approved	Approved Ammende
FOR PERIODS E	, 2021 and	2020		Approved		2020	2021	
	THIS Y	EAR	Budget	Budget	Last Year		Budget	Budget
	Y. T.	D.	3 months period	Variance	Actual		22 Jun 2019	
	20	21	2021	Favorable	2020		LL 0011 2013	21 3011 202
BEGINNING BALANCES:				(Unfavorable)				
REGULAR CHECKING	25,968.89				10,079.07			
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND	3,838.08				3,838.08			
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND	4,062.46				4,062.46			
RETREAT/EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FD CUSTODIAL FUND	25,000.00				25,000.00			
CASH ON HAND	25,547.00				25,547.00			
FAIR SHARE FUND	0.00				0.00			
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS -	600.00	DE 045 40			500.00			
and an arman		85,016.43				69,026.61		
REVENUE:								
DONATIONS	0.00							
FAIR SHARE FUND	0.00		1,505.00	(1,505.00)	916.20		4,515.00	4,515.0
INT. RETREAT ENDOWMENT FUND	0.00		0.00	0.00	100.00		0.00	0.0
	0.00		233.33	(233.33)	0.00		708.00	700.0
INTEREST EDUCATION FUND	0.00		233.33	(233.33)	0.00		708.00	700.0
SPECIAL MEMORIALS	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.0
CHAPTER	0.00		554.67	(554.67)	0.00		1,664.00	1.664.0
FAIR SHARE 356 + 24 @ 80-40	3,568.75		9,826.67	(6,257.92)	28,030.00	,	29,440.00	
SA WRKSP	0.00		508.33	(508.33)	0.00		1,525.00	29,480.0
INTEREST CUSTODIAL FUND	0.00		466.67	(466.67)	0.00			1,525.0
MISC & FORMATION WS INCOME	0.00		6.67	(6.67)	0.00		1,464.00	1,400.0
TOTAL REVENUE		3,568.75			0.00		0.00	20.0
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS		88,585.18	13,334.67	(9,765.92)		29,046.20	40,024.00	40,004.0
		00,003.10		-		98,072.81	Suntrace di la la constitución de la constitución d	
EXPENSES:				Favorable				
STIPENDS & EXPENSES	0.00			(Unfavorable)				
RENT INCLUDING EQUIPMENT	0.00	TOWN BUY	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,300.00		3,000.00	3,000.0
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	0.00		166.67	166.67	500.00		500.00	500.0
EDUCATION/TRAINING			-	0.00	139.00		50.00	0.0
MEETING ROOM & FACILITIES	0.00		1,266.67	1,266.67	1,400.00		3,585.00	3,800.0
OFFICE SUPPLIES	0.00		66.67	66.67	0.00		200.00	200.0
DONATIONS	0.00		200.00	200.00	0.00		500.00	600.0
	0.00		833.33	833.33	1,500.00		2,500.00	2,500.0
ADMINISTRATIVE EXP	49.13		120.00	70.87	773.03		364.00	360.0
NEWSLETTER	0.00		200.00	200.00	0.00		600.00	600.0
TRAVEL EXP & EXPENSES	0.00		3,271.91	3,271.91	750.35		9.983.72	9,815.7
FAIR SHARE TO OFS-USA 368@17	6,239.00		2,164.67	(4,074.33)	6,494.00		6,477.00	
ANNUAL CHAPTER	0.00		2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00		and the same of th	6,494.0
VISITATION / ELECTION	0.00		833.33	833.33	0.00		5,800.00	6,000.0
RETREAT SUBSIDY	0.00		193.33				2,500.00	2,500.0
FAIR SHARE FUND	0.00		190.00	193.33	200.00		580.00	580.0
SA WRKSP	0.00			0.00	0.00		0.00	0.0
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	0.00		990.33	990.33	0.00		1,997.00	2,971.0
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	0.00	6,288.13	16.67	16.67	0.00_		500.00	50.0
GAIN OR (LOSS) FOR PERIOD	HARMET .		13,323.58	7,035.45		13,056.38	39,136.72	39,970.7
		(2,719.38)	11.09	(2,730.47)		15,989.82	887.28	33.2
ENDING BALANCE		82,297.05				0.0 0.11		
		UL, LUI .UU			-	85,016.43		
URRENT BALANCES:								
REGULAR CHECKING	22,784.51		4.002		05005			
RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND	3,838.08		143%		25968.89			
EDUCATION/TRAINING FUND	4,062.46				3838.08			
RETREAT / EDUCATION CATHOLIC FUND *	25,000.00				4062.46			
CUSTODIAL FUND INVESTMENT (JC)	25,547.00				25000.00		-	
CASH ON HAND	465.00				25547.00			
FAIR SHARE FUND	600.00				0.00			0
TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS	82,297.05				600.00 85016.43			Outstanding
					00010.40		-	Checks
USTODIAL FUND(5283)-JC bequest + St Pascal Baylon gift	33,162.06	5%	\$ 1,658.10		31951.54			
s of 1/31/21, last 12 mo = +15.00% Gain / (loss)	7,615.06	0	1,000.10		6404.54			
ATHOLIC FOUNDATION FUND (5205) as of 1/31/21	32,089.23	5%	\$ 1,604.46		30917.86			
St Francis of Assisi + Annonymous + REC			.,		00.11.600			
ast 12 mo +15.00% Gain / (Loss)	7,089.23				5917.86			
Bob Henning, OFS, TREASURER	03/03/21				3317.00			

That I May See

by Bill Johnson, OFS St. Paschal Baylon Fraternity, Wind Lake, WI

> Beyond prejudice injustice hatred and war

Lord, that I may see

Beyond abuse of power gluttony, greed and lust

Lord, that I may see

Beyond indignity neglect, discouragement and fear

Lord, that I may see

Your Love Your Peace Your Gifts Your Glory

Lord, that I may see

You!

In all hearts In all souls In all life

