

Newsletter of the Blessed Giles Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order

Aug 6th	7:00PM	Formation Class: at the home of Curt and Priscilla Treska 1518 Kenilworth, Cleveland, OH, 44113 (216-319-8361)
Aug 13th	6:00 PM 6:30 PM 7:00 PM	Council Meeting Liturgy of the Hours Family Gathering – <i>Begin meeting in Hospitality Room</i> at St. Anthony's Church (6750 State Rd., Parma)
Aug 27th	7:00 P.M.	Formation Class: at the home of Curt and Priscilla Treska 1518 Kenilworth, Cleveland, OH, 44113 (216-319-8361)

August's Family Gathering

Father Ted Haag, OFM, will be guiding us in reflection and prayer regarding St. Clare. Come to learn, be engaged, be transformed and energized to take the inspiration of St Clare to the world.

Meet in the Hospitality Room at 7 for the Meeting (no Mass this time).

Welcome Back Father Ted!

Father Ted has been formally named our Spiritual Advisor. During our Family Gathering last month, he talked about plans for the future but also about our mutual journey to grow together as a Fraternity. Let us begin to work together to become active agents of God's love in the footsteps of Francis and Clare.

Thanks Father Doug!

A tremendous THANK YOU for the years of joyful service as our Spiritual Advisor. Please know that you are always welcome to join with us to share your spiritual gifts and enjoy our continued appreciation. Be well and be with us whenever you can!



(Byz. Poor Clares)

Prayer List:

Father Doug Makowski, Father Walter Dolan, OFM, Curt Treska, OFS, , Nick Precario, OFS, Mary Jane Precario, OFS, Cathy Yappel, OFS, Noah Monsour, OFS, Gary Papson, OFS, John Petcher, OFS, Kate Robson, OFS, Sr. Lucille

And remember all those who are ill or in need, in our Fraternity and beyond!

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August's Celebrations

Birthdays:

4th Larry Vavro

*"The summit of wisdom is to
do good works, avoid evil,
and meditate on the judgments of
God.*

Bl. Giles

Looking Ahead

The September Family Gathering will be the Ice Cream Social. Make sure you come for the fun and fellowship (and calories).

Also in September (schedules holding to plan) we will be celebrating the Rite of Welcome for new candidates as they start their Formation journey towards full Profession.

And speaking of Profession, we will be celebrating Profession in October for the candidates who have been studying and praying for full admission into our Secular Franciscan Order.

As the Rite of Welcome and Profession are joyful occasions for our entire Fraternity, please plan on attending and lending your support and encouragement to your brothers and sisters.

Quotes from St. Clare of Assisi

"Place your mind before the mirror of eternity! Place your soul in the brilliance of glory! And transform your entire being into the image of the Godhead Itself through contemplation."

"He Christ is the splendor of eternal glory, "the brightness of eternal light, and the mirror without cloud."

"Gaze upon Him, consider Him, contemplate Him, as you desire to imitate Him."

"I come, O Lord, unto Thy sanctuary to see the life and food of my soul. As I hope in Thee, O Lord, inspire me with that confidence which brings me to Thy holy mountain. Permit me, Divine Jesus, to come closer to Thee, that my whole soul may do homage to the greatness of Thy majesty; that my heart, with its tenderest affections, may acknowledge Thine infinite love; that my memory may dwell on the admirable mysteries here renewed every day, and that the sacrifice of my whole being may accompany Thine."



"Totally love Him, Who gave Himself totally for your love."

St. Clare of Assisi

From Catholic On-Line at www.catholic.org

Clare was a beautiful Italian noblewoman who became the Foundress of an order of nuns now called "Poor Clares." When she heard St. Francis of Assisi preach, her heart burned with a great desire to imitate Francis and to live a poor humble life for Jesus. So one evening, she ran away from home, and in a little chapel outside Assisi, gave herself to God. St. Francis cut off her hair and gave her a rough brown habit to wear, tied with a plain cord around her waist. Her parents tried in every way to make her return home, but Clare would not.

Soon her sister, St. Agnes joined her, as well as other young women who wanted to be brides of Jesus, and live without any money. St. Clare and her sisters wore no shoes, ate no meat, lived in a poor house, and kept silent most of the time. Yet they were very happy, because Our Lord was close to them all the time.

Once, He saved them from a great danger in answer to St. Clare's prayer. An army of rough soldiers came to attack Assisi and they planned to raid the convent first. Although very sick, St. Clare had herself carried to the wall and right there, where the enemies could see it, she had the Blessed Sacrament placed. Then on her knees, she begged God to save the Sisters.

"O Lord, protect these Sisters whom I cannot protect now," she prayed. A voice seemed to answer: "I will keep them always in My care." At the same time a sudden fright struck the attackers and they fled as fast as they could. St. Clare was sick and suffered great pains for many years, but she said that no pain could trouble her. So great was her joy in serving the Lord that she once exclaimed: "They say that we are too poor, but can a heart which possesses the infinite God be truly called poor?" We should remember this miracle of the Blessed Sacrament when in Church. Then we will pray with great Faith to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist: "Save me, O Lord, from every evil - of soul and body." Her feast day is August 11.



Aug. 15 OFS Rule Reflection
CHAPTER ELEVEN
PRAYING THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

“As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do.” Rule Chapter 2 §8

It was St John Vianney, the Curé of Ars, who was a member of the Third Order of St Francis (Secular Franciscan) who is attributed with saying that it was the power of the Church lay in the gathering of people to pray together: “A single person praying,” he used to say, “is like a single match. It provides light in a dark room, and that is good. But a church full of people praying is like a bonfire; the whole area is lit up.” We could say the same when we gather together as a fraternity to pray. A single voice in prayer is good; but a fraternity praying is far more effective because they pray with the voice of the whole Church.

One of the first activities that Francis and Clare undertook in following Christ was the recitation of the Divine Office. There is frequent mention of the gathering of the community in prayer in the Early Writings of the Franciscan Order. The praying of the Liturgy of the Hours was one of the practices that brought the community together to share their praises of God. It was time to celebrate the wonderful gifts God had given them and to appreciate each other in this unique way. It was time when they joined with the whole Church in prayer in response to Jesus command to “always pray.”

Some have speculated that it was probably from the practice of praying the Divine Office that both Francis and Clare came to their conversion to the Gospel life. By steeping themselves into the Word of God and reflection, they learned the meaning of following Christ in all its richness. They came to understand the great love that God had for us all and the sacrifice Jesus made to bring us back to God. Therefore, we could consider this gathering together to pray the psalms as an important element in developing Franciscan fraternity. It makes us conscious of God throughout the day and aware of his loving presence.

It is important that we learn more about the psalms and the Divine Office because it will help us appreciate more deeply how God prefigured the saving activities of Jesus Christ through his inspired writers in the Old Testament. Many of the psalms speak of Jesus himself and of the promises of the Kingdom. They reflect every emotion in our lives and give us fresh insights into God’s care for us through Salvation History. The psalms are always a rich source for our reflections and a guide to better Christian living.

Liturgy receives a special place of importance in the Franciscan Family just as it did for Francis and Clare. How can we translate this into our own personal attitudes? The danger is that by frequent recitation of the psalms, they could become routine, just a habit with no depth of meaning. How can we solve this? We must make our liturgical prayer more personal, more meaningful and “prayerful”. Jesus himself warns us about this. Prayer must not be allowed to become just a recital of a formula, meaningless ritual. One way to do this is to seek variety in the way we celebrate the Divine Office. There are many alternative ways suggested in the Introduction to the Breviary. It suggests having those celebrating taking a greater role in its presentation and the use of music to “bring the mere words to life.”

Many SFO fraternities include the recitation or celebration of the Divine Office as part of their monthly or more frequent meetings. It is good if this could be prepared beforehand so that it does not just become a “chore” to be done, instead of an expression of our praise of God and thanksgiving for his gifts of each other.

Questions for Discussion

What are the benefits of gathering together to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours?

Why did St Francis and St Clare place such importance on the Divine Office?

Suggest some ways that the Liturgy of the Hours could be celebrated more fruitfully.

How can music play a greater role in our gatherings for prayer? Perhaps the media could be used to assist us in our celebrations e.g. the use of a CD or DVD player, or tape recorder.

Edited from FRANCISCAN LAY SPIRITUALITY
Norbert Pittorino, ofm

Submitted by Curt
Treska, OFS

**With your PC or
SmartPhone Visit:**

www.divineoffice.org

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings>



What is Franciscan Spirituality?

Within the Catholic Church there is a rich variety of spiritualities. We speak, for instance, of “Benedictine spirituality”, “Dominican spirituality”, or “Franciscan spirituality” – to name a few.

These spiritualities have their origin in great spiritual leaders after whom they are generally named; for example, Benedictine spirituality is from St. Benedict and so on. A particular spirituality is a specific system, or schema of beliefs, virtues, ideals and principles which form a particular way to approach God and therefore all life in general.

Just because these spiritualities are different does not mean they are contradictory. They all arise from the same Christian heritage and they all aim at the same goal – to love as Jesus loved. The difference is a matter of emphasis. These differences in emphasis give each spirituality its unique character traits. In other words, each spirituality has its “preferred” virtues, ideals and principles without negating all the others. These preferred emphases are what make up each particular spiritual system. Franciscan spirituality, then, is that spirituality which comes from St. Francis and evolved within the Franciscan order. It has its own unique emphasis which characterizes it as “Franciscan”.

A general schema for Franciscan spirituality would look like this:

1. Franciscan spirituality is rooted in the general Judeo-Christian, Roman Catholic and Biblical traditions. It is rooted in the general Trinitarian theology of the Church.
2. It is Christo-centric focusing primarily on the Incarnate Jesus.
3. The humility and poverty of the Incarnation of Jesus is the pattern and model for Franciscan life (Imitation of Christ), theology (Primacy of Christ) and its approach to all creation.
4. This downward direction, movement, tendency is called *Minority*.
5. *Minority* is expressed in *Poverty* and *Humility*. *Poverty* is the external expression of *Minority* while *Humility* is the internal expression of it.
6. Along with *Minority*, *Fraternity* is essential to Franciscan life. *Minority* safeguards and effects *Fraternity*.
7. The third pillar of Franciscan life is *Penance*. *Penance* is on-going, continuous conversion.
8. The fruit of all this is the perfection of love with a particular Franciscan emphasis on peace and joy.

What are the elements that make up Franciscan Spirituality?

17 Essential Elements of Franciscan Spirituality:

1. To live the gospel according to the spirit of St. Francis (Articles 1,4,5,14)
2. To be converted continually (Articles 2,4,5,7,9,12,16)
3. To live as sisters and brothers of all people and of all creation (Articles 13,18)
4. To live in communion with Christ (Articles 1,4,5,14)
5. To follow the poor and crucified Christ (Article 10)
6. To share in the life and mission of the Church (Article 6)
7. To share in the love of the Father (Articles 4, 12)
8. To be instruments of peace (Article 19)
9. To have a life of prayer that is personal, communal & liturgical (Article 8)
10. To live in joy (Article 19:2)
11. To have a spirituality of a secular nature (Articles 3,6,8,11,13,14)
12. To be pilgrims on the way toward the Father (Article 11:2)
13. To participate in the apostolate of the laity (Articles 15,16,17,18,19,24)
14. To be at the service of the less fortunate (Articles 13,14,15)
15. To be loyal to the Church in an attitude of dialogue and collaboration with her ministers (Article 6:2)
16. To be open to the action of the Holy Spirit (Articles 1, 4:2)
17. To live in simplicity, humility and minority (Article 11:1)



*Edited from
The Franciscans of Canada
G.W. Irving, OFS*

Submitted by Curt Treska, OFS