

**ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO FRATERNITY**  
**Gathering – February 15, 2015**

**Ministers Message**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Francis and Clare,

Our Regional Retreat is March 20-22 at Priestfield, West Virginia, south of Hagerstown, Maryland. Please find the form to fill out on the last page of this newsletter if you would like to attend.

A NON-REFUNDABLE deposit of **\$50** is required. **Make check payable to ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA REGION** and mail check and form by **March 6<sup>th</sup>**

to: Mary Lou Coffman, ofs  
2862 Beechtree Lane  
Woodbridge, VA 22191  
Phone: 703.221.1846  
E-mail: [marylousfo@gmail.com](mailto:marylousfo@gmail.com)

Tobit 4:7-11 -**7.** give alms from your possessions, and do not let your eye begrudge the gift when you make it. Do not turn your face away from anyone who is poor and the face of God will not be turned away from you. **8.** If you have many possessions, make your gift from them in proportion; if few, do not be afraid to give according to the little you have. **9.** So you will be laying up a good treasure for yourself against the day of necessity. **10.** For almsgiving delivers from death and keeps you from going into the Darkness. **11.** Indeed, almsgiving, for all who practice it, is an excellent offering in the presence of the Most High.

I added the above scripture from Tobit to reflect on for our ongoing formation for our February Gathering. Our guest speaker will be, Br. Manny, OFM. Conv. who will talk to us on Secular Franciscan promises of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Most of you may remember Br. Manny who gave a talk on our Blessed Mother several years ago at one of our Gatherings. We will go into the conference room at 1:45 instead of our normal 2 PM time.

We will end our Gathering with professed members of our community renewing their promises made at their profession and Evening Prayer to follow.

The Fraternity's total Christmas gift to St. Vincent de Paul in Baltimore was \$275. Thank You so much for your Franciscan generosity. Please make every effort to attend our February Gathering.

*Your Fraternity Council*

**Letter from Our Spiritual Assistant – Br. Lawrence LaFlame, OFM. Conv.**

Brothers and sisters in Francis,

As I was preparing my talks about Jonah here at the Shrine I was really wrapped-up in one of the main messages of the book of Jonah. That message was how we, as readers and hearers of the text, respond to the final question of the text, a question that actually concludes the entire book of Jonah. The Lord asks Jonah,

**The Flyer**



**Our Fraternity Council**

**Minister:** Bob Longo, OFS  
410-921-0040  
**V. Minister:** Sherry Lewis, OFS  
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**Formation:** Geri Flynn, OFS  
410 730-4395  
**Secretary:** France  
Staudenmann OFS  
301-294-3085  
**Acting Treasurer:** Jerry Yu, OFS  
410 988-5753  
**Councilors:** Lita Maisel OFS  
410 747-2374  
Cindy Mohler, OFS  
410 747-4589  
**Spiritual Assistant:**  
Br. Lawrence LaFlame, OFM. Conv  
410 531-2800

**EVENING PRAYER**



No need to bring your  
Liturgy of the Hours

All will receive a handout.

Liturgy of the Hours in front  
of the San Damiano Cross



**Please Pray For ...**

- Connie Baker**, OFS
- Donna Duncan**, OFS
- Marlene Feaga**, OFS
- Mary Ferrara**, OFS
- Joy Kubricky**, OFS
- Marie Lindung**, OFS
- Jim Manning**, OFS
- Georgianna Papazian**, OFS
- Nancy Seaton**, OFS
- Jim Tebo**, OFS



**OUR DECEASED BROTHERS AND SISTERS**

- Frances Bastress**, SFO
- Joe Bezila**, SFO
- Jerry Cichowicz**, SFO
- Shirley Costello**, OFS
- Joe Cykoski**, SFO
- Stella Cykoski**, SFO
- Claire Lee Davison**, SFO
- Adela Duff**, SFO
- Charles Ferrara**, SFO
- Dolores Fritz**, OFS
- Marilyn Gilson**, SFO
- Richard Hall**, SFO
- Frances Langbehn**, SFO
- Bob Lewis**, SFO
- Jean Manning**, OFS
- Yvonne Proch**, SFO
- Betty Taylor**, SFO
- Bud Tenley**, SFO
- Regina Yeager**, SFO
- Dorothy Zalewski**, SFO

“You [Jonah] are concerned over the plant which cost you no labor and which you did not raise; it came up in the night and in one night it perished. And should I not be concerned over Nineveh, the great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot distinguish their right hand from their left, not to mention the many cattle?” (Jon. 4.10-11). It appears, at first sight, to be a quite confusing question. For me I could never get why the last phrase is there about the cattle, and it puzzled me for quite a while.

I began to study the text and prayer over it, read it meditatively and read commentaries about it. In doing so I think I have a clearer understanding of what the question, which is directed to the reader, is asking. Jonah’s response to what has happened in the second part of the book appears to be one that is extremely selfish. Jonah is angry because this plant, with which he had nothing to do, gave his pleasure; it provided him shade from the desert heat, but it was then destroyed overnight by a worm and Jonah became angry at God. God is teaching him a lesson here, and Jonah may or may not have gotten it (Jonah never answered the question). At issue is Jonah’s belief of the superiority of the Jewish people as a part of the Covenant which God has chosen them for. God, on the other hand, sees the calling of the Jewish people for manifesting God’s glory and greatness to the pagan world. Certainly, Jonah does not do that in spite of God’s statement that he is the God not just of the Jewish people but of non-Jewish peoples as well as the animals.

When I think about this I am reminded that for us, as Christians (the new chosen people, if you will) do we follow Jonah’s lead as considering ourselves as superior to those who are not Christians? God is the God of everything and everyone and in his eyes all of creation is made up of his creatures. We tend to see ourselves, as humanity, as the pinnacle of creation and, therefore, as superior to all the rest of creation. Even worse, as Christian humans we see ourselves as superior to all those who are not Christians, whether members of other religions, agnostics or atheists.

When I think of St. Francis and his profession of humility as the second most important part of his life (his brotherhood was primary) I realize that if he were to respond to God’s question he would speak to Jonah of the realization that in the eyes of God all of creation is equal, i.e. all of creation is a manifestation of God in some way. It is this fact of everyone and everything being creatures that led Francis to see everything as equal. All of humanity is equal in the eyes of God, I think that he would say and continue by saying stop being superior to others and to things for you are really not in God’s eyes. In fact, I think that the love of creation that we find in the Canticle of the Creatures is a reflection of Francis’ manifestation of the equality of everything in God’s eyes.

This gives us much to think about. Do we see ourselves as ‘better than others’ because we are Christians, or Seculars, or people (as opposed to things)? Should we not realize that *our* chosen-ness is not something that gives us superiority, but something that shows us that we are all the same in God’s eyes? Our purpose as chosen, like Jonah’s and the Jewish people, is to live a life in which people will wonder about us and ask us why our lives are so different and why we are so happy. At that point, Francis would say, we may begin to speak to others about the Lord and our discipleship. Remember the saying attributed to Francis: “Preach to the people, and if you have to . . . use words!”



## Treasurer's Report

**Beginning Balance:** \$ 552.52  
 Income **753.00**  
 Total **\$1305.52**

### Expenses:

Christmas Gift to  
 Fraternity members **215.46**  
 Franciscan Friars **100.00**  
 Brother Lawrence **50.00**  
 Birthday Gift  
 to Br. Lawrence **50.00**  
 Website Fee **15.00**  
 Total Expenses: **\$ 430.46**

**Ending Balance:** \$ 875.06

Thank You for your monthly  
 contributions

**\*\* Donation to St. Vincent de Paul: \$275**

## Thomas Merton's *The Seven Storey Mountain*

Is one of those books in which new meanings can be discovered every time it is read. My edition of the book was published in 1948, the year that I was born, so, this book is not exactly about current events. I finished reading it on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Merton's birth. My first time reading this book was many years ago, a long time before I became a Franciscan. Reading it now, as a Franciscan, I can gather meanings that I probably missed the first time. A better understanding of Franciscan spirituality does help to understand some of the dilemmas that Merton faced. I had seen this book referred to in some online reading I am doing about ministry to young adults and wanted to answer the question for myself "Would this book be something to which the young adults we are trying to reach could relate?"

Briefly, the book covers the period from Merton's birth to when he entered the Cistercian Monastery in Kentucky. He had little religious upbringing in his life, was orphaned by 16, and spent time wandering around between schools and colleges. He traveled extensively from England to America, France, Cuba and various other places. Thomas spent many hours observing the people and customs where he visited and often noted the Catholic culture of the regions. Many hours were spent holding down various jobs and trying to decide what would be his place in life. It is hard now to relate to the pre-war world of young Thomas Merton and the basically carefree life-style of going from place to place. One of the more interesting aspects is his instruction before he became a Catholic were certainly not up to RCIA classes of today! Also, the entrance requirements for the monastery seemed a little less rigorous than today. Of course, they made up for it once you were inside. The Catholic world of young Thomas Merton would take quite a bit of explaining to most Catholics, especially the young adults of today.

One of the things that I am sure I missed the first time I read the book were his comments on contemplation found in the Epilogue. The greatest surprise to me was when he stated that "America is discovering the contemplative life." I suspect he would be pleasantly surprised to see that that statement is even more relevant today. There is a major rebirth in the interest and practice of contemplation in all four of the major Catholic Spiritualities. Many Centers of Contemplation, WebPages and Facebook groups are concerned with centering prayer, Ignatian prayer, Lectio Divina, etc. One resource listed at least 22 books on contemplation and centering prayer. It was also fascinating to read of St. Bonaventure's writing about St. Francis' moving between the active and contemplative life.

A recent article by Fr. Daniel Horan, O.F.M. in *America* magazine (Jan. 19-26, 2015) talks about how Thomas Merton can speak to the millenials. While unknown among most, once discovered, Merton resonates and speaks to this generation. Why? Fr. Horan talks of Merton's on-going conversions, his challenges to the injustices of his time, and his active engagement with the people and problems of his time. One observation that Fr. Horan makes is that "when young adults are exposed to Merton's writings and thought, they are captivated and can often relate to his experience of conversion, his openness to the diversity of others and his radical commitment to social justice and peace." What better teacher for the young adults than one they can recognize as living or having lived as they do? – Harry Ford, OFS

## February Birthdays



Thom Partenope, OFS	2/06
Charlene Heyden, OFS	2/15
Jerry Yu, OFS	2/26
Kevin Kulesa, OFS	2/26



## Remembering Your Profession

Will Witherspoon, OFS	2/08/04
Joan Bundy, OFS	2/16/14
Chris Donaldson, OFS	2/16/14
Harry Ford, OFS	2/16/14
Kathy Ford, OFS	2/16/14

## Upcoming Events

### Our Next Book Sharing Meeting – All Are Welcome

Date: Saturday, March 7th - 2:15 pm ~ 4:00pm

Place: Jerry Yu: 2812 Green Shade Ct., Ellicott City, MD 21042

Tel: 410 988-5753

Book: "Francis, the Journey and the Dream", by Murray Bodo

Chapters: "A Prayer for Seekers" - Page 115

"The Touch" - Page 116

"Sister Death" - Page 117

"Afterword" – Page 118

### “Reach” Art Exhibit at the Carroll Art Center

Our brother, Patrick Caughy, will have some of his pottery included in an exhibit in Westminster, January 8 – February 28, 2015. The exhibit, "Reach" is featured at the

Carroll Art Center: 91 Main Street, Westminster, MD - 410 848 7272

[http://www.carrollcountyartscouncil.org/eventdetail.asp?event\\_id=1231](http://www.carrollcountyartscouncil.org/eventdetail.asp?event_id=1231)

### 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Archdiocesan Social Ministry Convocation Saturday, March 7, 2015

#### The Joy of the Gospel: The Call to Celebrate & to Serve

Start Time: 8:15 to 3:30 PM Where: Seton Keough High School  
1201 S. Caton Ave, Baltimore, MD 21227

Registration is \$10.00: lunch is provided for those who pre-register

Keynote Speaker is Sr. Patricia Chappelle, SNDdeN  
Executive Director of Pax Christi USA

Fourteen workshops are offered for morning and afternoon sessions. There will also be a Social Ministry Fair throughout the day.

Brochures will be available at our February Gathering.

**OUR GATHERINGS** – Active members should make every attempt to attend our Gathering every month. If you are unable to attend due to illness, work or family obligations, please contact a council member (see page one for telephone numbers). If you are professed and miss a gathering, please send your check for the Common Fund to:

Jerry Yu, OFS  
2812 Green Shade, Ct.  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Editor: Bob Longo, OFS [blongosfo@gmail.com](mailto:blongosfo@gmail.com) Fraternity Website: <http://stjosephcupertino.sfousa.org/>



## Calendar

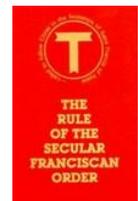
### At the Friary

#### Br. Lawrence's "The Lord" Book Study Group

February 11, 2015 - June 3,  
2015 7:00pm. - 8:30pm.

Come join Br. Lawrence on the First Wednesday of the month as he explores themes present in the book "The Lord" by Romano Guardini. Guardini was one of the most influential Theologians and authors of the 20th century and his work had a profound impact on many including Popes John Paul 2nd, Benedict 16th, and Francis. If you are interested in this book study please let the front office know so Br. Lawrence can email you the full schedule. "The Lord" is available for purchase in the Shrine gift shop. 410 531-2800

#### Rule 7 of the Secular Franciscan Order



United by their vocation as brothers and sisters of penance, and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls conversion. Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.

## Regional Retreat Form

**Where** Priest Field Pastoral Center, 4030 Middleway Pike, Kearneysville, WV 25430-3742  
**When:** March 20-22, 2015  
**Who:** All Secular Franciscans, including Candidates, Inquirers and Spiritual Assistants  
**Presenter:** TBA

### REGISTRATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Submit form no later than March 6, 2015
2. Please type or print all information clearly.
3. Only one participant per registration form.
4. **NON-REFUNDABLE deposit of \$50.00 must accompany this form.**
5. Make your check payable to **ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA REGION\*** and mail this form with payment to:

Mary Lou Coffman, ofs  
2862 Beechtree Lane  
Woodbridge, VA 22191  
Phone: 703.221.1846  
Email: [marylousfo@gmail.com](mailto:marylousfo@gmail.com)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_

### Please check room requirement:

**Rooms are designed for double occupancy for maximum attendees.**

- A) Single occupancy room: \$243.00
- B) Double Occupancy room: \$223.00
- C) Single Occupancy cabin: \$277.00
- D) Double occupancy cabin: \$252.00
- E) Dormitory: \$179.00

**\*Please make checks out to St. Margaret of Cortona Region, not to Mary Lou Coffman or to Priest Field. Thank you.**

Please indicate any special needs you have: \_\_\_\_\_

Please choose a roommate, or one can be assigned for you.

**Select single occupancy only if there is a serious or medical reason. Thank you!**

Name of preferred roommate: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed with this form \$ \_\_\_\_\_