

ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO FRATERNITY

Gathering – March 15, 2015

Ministers Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Francis and Clare,

At our February Gathering we welcomed six new inquirers, they are:

Joan Babin, Mick Michieli-Beasley, Joanne Hann, Joe Hann, James Kim-Young and Denise Murphy, please be assured of our prayers.

On another note, our Formation Director, Geri Flynn, OFS, has compiled a list of events for ongoing Formation from March to December 2015:

Our Theme for this Year is "The Contemplative Aspect of Living the Franciscan Life"

March- the fraternity members should read from the Catechism (in advance of the Gathering date) the sections in the Catechism of the Catholic Church #2709 thru #2719. This should lay a good foundation for all of us, whether new to this type of prayer, or experienced. I will come up with a few discussion questions for small groups and we can all explore together.

April- Brother Lawrence will review the General Instructions for the Liturgy of the Hours with the fraternity. He will follow this first presentation with two others in May evenings so that we may go deeper into the "official prayer of the Church"

May- Joe Hamilton will speak to us on the topic of "Food Justice" and how our Franciscan life applies to this topic. He will address the many facets of the earth's abundance and blessings as it pertains to the most vulnerable among us- those without a voice- (this includes the earth and the elements). We will see a way to put our prayers and awareness into action

June- In order to include as many of our fraternity members who wish to participate in this year of prayer and study as possible, we will ask those of us with special devotion or interest in saints especially known for their contemplative way of life, to share short presentations on their lives (biographical sketches, topics of their writings) - anything that would help us to know the saint better

July- Sister Delio's book "Franciscan Prayer" has a thought provoking chapter on contemplation. We will consider building the meeting around her thoughts and words. She has included discussion questions at the end of the chapter

August- I am hoping Fr. Julio might speak with us. I will approach him shortly

September- Fall picnic

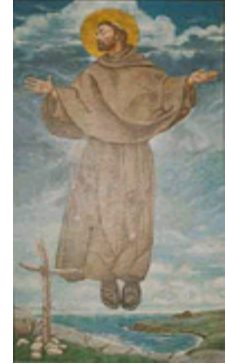
October- we will return to our ongoing formation manual "Seeking A Gospel Life" for the chapter on prayer

November- Memorial Mass for our departed Brothers and Sisters

December- Christmas Party!!

It is the hope of the formation team and fraternity council that this will be a most fruitful year of spiritual growth and love for the Trinity and each other, as modeled

The Flyer



Our Fraternity Council

Minister: Bob Longo, OFS
410-921-0040

V. Minister: Sherry Lewis, OFS
410-788-5395

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.

We will pray

A Way of the Cross in
Solidarity with the
Persecuted Church



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

by Saints Francis and Clare, so that we may share the fruits of the Spirit with all.

**** Please read the pages as noted above and remember to bring your Catechism at our March Gathering**

Your Fraternity Council

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

Brothers and sisters in Francis,

This month’s letter is actually a replacement letter for after hearing Fr. Hilary preach during the first week of Lent I decided to pick up off of his topic and save the letter originally written for another time. Several years ago I was reading a short work on the Old Testament book of Job and there was a wonderful phrase that caught my attention and, I think, goes quite well with Fr. Hilary’s sermon. The author made a statement that human beings, all of us, are spirits inhabiting body made of dust, I remember when I first read and I thought what a wonderful way of expressing our very existence as human beings, creatures of God. I readily recognize the truth of the statement as it was in the text but it was Fr. Hilary’s sermon on ashes that brought it quickly back to my mind. Dust and ashes are expressive of the same thing, therefore the book’s author could just as easily said a body of ashes. This is exactly what each of us is. Others have phrased it differently by saying that we are basically living dust and what brings forth the life within the dust is the spirit of God which is breathed into us. In effect, our very lives are dependent on the grace and goodness of God.

In Fr. Hilary’s homily he was speaking of ashes as being a reminder of this doctrine above. Look at how we use the ashes. Today we mark the forehead with the sign of the cross using ashes. One might wonder since all other anointing in the Church use oils why we use ashes on Ash Wednesday. I would respond that the ashes are to remind us, as is said during the anointing, “you are dust and to dust you shall return.” Personally, I would prefer this statement to the other possible one because to my mind it strikes the heart of the anointing. In Old Testament times it was not uncommon for sinners to do repentance by wearing sackcloth, sitting in ashes and putting the ashes upon our heads. We repent and remind ourselves that we are, without God’s grace, merely dust and ashes and our sin is because we think of ourselves as being important enough to do what we want rather than what God wants.

So as we continue to go through the season of Lent we should remember the symbol of the ashes and what they remind us of. It is really telling us to reflect upon our humility and that we oftentimes overstep our position and forget who it is who allows us to have life in the first place. We have no say over our lives, it is God who ultimately has the say of our lives and it is our thankfulness to God that we show by living in accordance with his will. As Fr. Hilary reminded those of us in the Shrine that day we are mere creatures of God which have life only at the will of God and it is the symbol of the ashes on Ash Wednesday which sends us into Lent contemplating how faithful we as creatures made of dust and ashes actually are to God the giver of life.

Peace, Br. Lawrence



Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance: \$ 875.06
 Income **411.00**
 Total **\$1286.06**

Expenses:

Formation **19.96**
 Franciscan Mission **300.00**
 Br. Manny **50.00**
 Formation **19.08**
 Franciscan Friars **100.00**
 Brother Lawrence **50.00**
 Website Fee **15.00**
 Total Expenses: **\$ 554.04**

Ending Balance: \$ 732.02

Thank You for your monthly contributions

Contribution is Tax Deductible

Jesus' Experience of Temptation

by *Friar Jim Van Vurst, O.F.M.*

One of the most significant aspects of the season of Lent is to remind us of how Jesus entered into the human experience. We face that fact when the Passion and death of Jesus are revealed to us during Holy Week.

We know from Church teaching that Jesus was both divine and human in nature. That's referred to as the "hypostatic union," which we cannot fully comprehend. For many people, it seemed beneath God's dignity to become human. Further, how could God suffer and die on the cross? But that is exactly what happened.

The answer is that even though Jesus was God (and human) he did not hang on to those powers and qualities that made him God. He gave them up in his human life to be just like us in all things except sin. This is, of course, a great mystery. Even when we believe it in our heads and hearts, our emotions tend to make Jesus' life different from ours. In reality, Jesus walked this earth as a human being, and the Gospels are crystal clear in telling of Jesus' human experiences.

One of Us

When Scripture tells us that Jesus was tempted, that is exactly what happened. The first occasion is what we heard in the Gospel of Mark (1:12-13). Mark's account is very brief. Matthew and Luke go into detail for each of the three temptations, and Luke adds a very significant detail: "When the devil finished every temptation, he departed from him for a little while."

The implication is that Satan was not finished with Jesus. There were multiple occasions for temptation during his ministry. But I want to point out that the most terrible and painful work of Satan must have been when Jesus was hanging on the cross in unbearable pain, looking at those who were laughing, spitting, and mocking him.

Imagine how Satan would whisper in Jesus' ear: "Oh, Jesus, what a failure you have been. How disappointed your Father must be in you. Despite all your preaching, look what you have now—nothing!" The expression "kicking a man when he is down" doesn't even describe what Satan was doing to Jesus in those moments.

When we say that Jesus was just like us in all things except sin, it is worth our while to reflect on his experience and try to deepen our understanding of Jesus' suffering for all of humankind.

Upcoming Events

Our Next Book Sharing Meeting – All Are Welcome

Date: Saturday, April 4th - 1:00 pm ~ 3:00pm

Place to be determined at a later date

Book: We will be starting a new book "Clare, A Light In The Garden" by Murray Bodo

If you need to purchase a book, please contact Lita Maisel at the Shrine Gift Shop at 410 - 531-2800

March Birthdays



Cindy Mohler, OFS 3/13
 Amy Kulesa, OFS 3/14
 France Staudenmann OFS 3/29



Remembering Your Profession

Gail Bunyan, OFS 3/21/99

Life Before Life

In a mother's womb were two babies. One asked the other: "Do you believe in life after delivery?" The other replied, "Why, of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense" said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?"

The second said, "I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths. Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now."

The first replied, "That is absurd. Walking is impossible. And eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies nutrition and everything we need. And since the umbilical cord is so short, life after delivery is to be logically excluded."

The second insisted, "Well, I think there is something and maybe it's different than it is here. Maybe we won't need this physical cord anymore."

The first replied, "Nonsense. And moreover if there is life, then why has no one ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery there is nothing but darkness and silence and oblivion. It takes us nowhere."

"Well, I don't know," said the second, "but certainly we will meet Mother and she will take care of us."

The first replied "Mother? You actually believe in Mother? That's laughable. If Mother exists then where is she now?"

The second said, "She is all around us. We are surrounded by her. We are of her. It is in her that we live. Without her this world would not and could not exist."

Said the first: "Well I don't see her, so it is only logical that she doesn't exist."

To which the second replied, "Sometimes, when you're in silence and you focus and you really listen, you can perceive her presence, and you can hear her loving voice, calling down from above." - Útmutató a Léleknek

Why Are Some Catholics Embarrassed by the Cross?

St. Peter was riding high. Jesus had just asked the disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" While the rest of the disciples stumbled around in confusion, Peter hit a home run. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then, moments later, Jesus blesses him and entrusts him with the keys of his kingdom, giving him far more authority than he could imagine. Whatever you bind in heaven will be bound? Oh yes, Peter was feeling fine.

But then, as they continued their journey, Jesus began talking strangely, predicting his own suffering and death at the hands of the priests and Pharisees. The disciples were worried and puzzled — but Peter was downright upset. What was Jesus saying? He couldn't mean it. He had just affirmed that he was the long awaited Messiah, the Son of God! Surely he was only



Calendar

At the Friary

Seder Meal will be held on **Thursday, March 25th** from **6 PM – 8 PM**. The cost is \$30 per person. Please RSVP by Monday, March 16 on line info@shrineofstanthony.org or call 410 531-2800

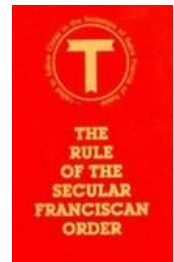
Palm Sunday Mass 12 noon on **March 29th**.

Tenebrae Service, Wed., **April 1st** at 7:30 PM

Mass of the Lord's Supper Thursday **April 2nd** 7:30 PM

Easter Vigil Mass, **April 4th** 7:30 PM

Easter Masses **April 5th**, 6:15 AM and 12 Noon



Rule 8 of the Secular Franciscan Order

As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do.

Let them participate in the sacramental life of the Church, above all the Eucharist. Let them join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of the life of Christ.

moments away from ushering in a glorious earthly kingdom; a kingdom in which, he, Peter, son of Jonah, would occupy a very prestigious position. Jesus couldn't mean it, and Peter felt he had to set him straight. "God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you."

Then something happened that shook St. Peter to the core. Jesus, his meek and gentle master, turned to him with an angry fire in his eyes. "Get behind me, Satan!" he exclaimed. "You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men." Peter was stunned, humiliated, and grief stricken. Had Jesus just called him...Satan?

But Jesus wasn't finished. He turned to the rest of the disciples who were still reeling from this sudden zeal on the part of their Master. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me," Jesus continued passionately. "For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

THE CROSS

As we read this account in Matthew's Gospel, we are compelled to ask: Why was Jesus so angry? Wasn't St. Peter simply looking out for him? The answer is quite simple. Jesus loved the cross. His death was not an accident of circumstances or the outcome of a successful plot on behalf of the Pharisees, but rather the longing of his heart. Jesus Christ came to earth for one reason only—to redeem fallen humanity—and the cross was his chosen instrument of redemption. His whole life was like an arrow shot towards Calvary. The cross was always before his eyes.

The disciples, on the other hand, were appalled by the idea that their Lord could be killed. They did not listen to Jesus' warnings and calls to sacrifice everything. They were interested only in the easy road, the smooth road. They longed for glory and a high place in the Messiah's restored earthly kingdom. To them, their journey could end in no other way. The cross? Far from loving it, they were horrified by it, repelled by it.

Jesus looked into their hearts and saw their empty ambition, their pride, their love of comfort, their vain envy of one another. His infernal enemy, Satan, had been cast from heaven for the very pride and ambition his closest friends were now displaying. And it made Jesus angry. He turned to them and assured them that if they did not embrace the cross as he did, they had no part with him. The cross that so horrified them became the one condition of their salvation.

In short, many Catholics prefer the wide and smooth road. They do not see the bloody sacrifice of Christ as central to the faith — they are horrified by it like the disciples before them. To them, niceness, friendliness, and tolerance are at the heart of the Catholic faith.

Jesus Christ is repelled by this weak-kneed, milquetoast faith, and to it he thunders, "Get behind me Satan, you are a hindrance to me." For Christ still loves his cross. He still bears in his hands and in his side the wounds that purchased our salvation. To all those who would follow him, he still offers the same condition: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

THE NARROW WAY

As we begin this Lent, we must again hear and heed the call of our Lord and Savior, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Strive to enter through the narrow gate. Take up your cross and follow me." We must reject easy and comfortable Catholicism, a Catholicism that demands nothing of us. We must not hide the crucifix, but rather gaze lovingly upon it, recalling the words of St. Paul, "We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." We must turn from the sin of our complacency and begin again to embrace the cross, for it alone is the sure way to true joy and life eternal. **Sam Guzman** is the founder and editor of the [Catholic Gentleman](#)

Mountaintops & Valleys

Several months ago, while shopping at our local Giant Eagle store, one of the books in the book rack caught my attention. It was entitled *Hiking Through: One Man's Journey to Peace and Freedom on the Appalachian Trail* by Paul Stutzman. I put it on my long list of books to buy later, when I could find the time. Not too long afterwards, a package arrived in the mail for my birthday. It was from Jim, my long-time friend and co-worker. Jim and I worked together for over thirty years, many of them sharing the same office. We had problem-solved, hiked, camped, scuba dived, rock-climbed, raised kids, and walked with each other through the darkest days of

our lives. We always managed to find some way to make each other laugh and lift each other's spirits. It should then come as no surprise to find the *Hiking Through* book under the wrapping paper. I planned to put it aside and wait for some cold winter nights to read and savor the adventure.

Hiking Through turned out to be completely different than any other through hike book I have read before. The Appalachian Trail is a 2,176 mile long path that winds its way from Georgia to Maine going through fourteen states. Most through hike books start out with a detailed description about the backpack, shoes, tents, and other necessary details, but this book only covers them briefly. What is important at the start of this book, and to the story contained within, is the background. Paul began life in a traditional Amish family, then they moved to the Conservative Mennonite Church, and eventually, once married, Paul moved to a more liberal Mennonite church. His spiritual upbringing did not, however, prepare him for the death of his wife from breast cancer. While lurking in the background for most of his life, the questions of: "Is God there?", "Why is there suffering?", "Does God have a plan for my life?", "How can I relate to God?" and other similar questions came to the forefront. He chose to hike the Appalachian Trail to try to find some answers. In the book we meet many of his trail buddies that helped him look at, and answer, these questions.

One companion was named Padre the priest, or just Padre. On the Appalachia trail people pick up or chose trail names that they go by, Paul's name was Apostle, after the Apostle Paul. One morning when Apostle was telling Padre about the mountain top healings that he had experienced from God, Padre responded by comparing the hike to the paschal mystery. Apostle had never heard of the paschal mystery and wanted an explanation. Padre said, "It refers to the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the promise of life that gives us. I walk through the low valleys on this trail and see the dead trees and decaying matter, I'm reminded of the death of Jesus. But I continue on to higher elevations and see new growth and new life that reminds me of His resurrection. That's the rhythm of our spiritual lives, too. We walk through valleys, we lose loved ones, we suffer, we struggle, we experience many kinds of deaths. We travel on to a mountaintop...pause and enjoy the views...but we do not stay on the mountaintop...Someday we'll pass through the last valley and finally reach the last mountaintop, and we'll never be bored by the glorious views that await us there." Padre helped Apostle undo many of his false and erroneous impressions of the Catholic faith.

Although not explicitly stated, the Franciscan spirituality of care for creation and seeking God through contemplation is an inherent part of Apostle's journey north. The purpose of the Appalachian Trail, according to Benton MacKaye, the founder, was "to walk, to see, and to see what you see." Apostle encountered God in all the extremes of the hike: from quiet early morning awakenings to holding on for dear life in gale force winds, in the mountain peak vistas he saw the hand of God at work, and also in gentle streams and in raging rivers. Whether ambling along flat stretches or climbing up vertical rock faces, he found the presence of God. God was one of his hiking companions, and their conversations are quite interesting. In his most moving mountaintop experience of God, one in which he fell down and cried, he discovered that he was called to spread the message of God's love, and that we must stop taking each other for granted.

This was one of the few books I read almost straight through, taking part of two days and one night. In the beginning of this story, I said I planned to put this book aside to read during the long winter nights. But those winter days and nights were not what I expected. I read it while sitting by the wood stove resting and recovering from my heart irregularity. This was read truly during a valley experience. Near the end of the book, I read the following quote "Who does God want me to encourage with this message? I may never know. He's the one who will place it exactly where He wants it." I could only sit and laugh at myself.

Even if you are not into hiking and that type of activity, I strongly recommend this book as a Franciscan adventure into contemplation and experiencing God in all we do. Peace. Harry Ford, OFS

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