

The Porter

**St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, MD
Secular Franciscan Order –March 2014**

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Volunteers

Historian	Marie Shelton	(410) 590-5570	marifrances@catholic.org
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The Porter deadline for the May issue is May 1st. Please send news, prayer requests, poems, or interesting things that you think other members may enjoy to: Jean Gaes, 1824 Lang Drive, Crofton, MD 21114 or send by email. Help me update the prayer list!



Fraternity Meeting

Saturday, April 12, 2014-Please note we are meeting on the 2nd. Saturday of this month because the 3rd. is Holy Saturday. We will be saying goodbye to Br. John Kuzma, our spiritual assistant who will be moving on to a new assignment this summer. Everyone is encouraged to make or buy a card for him and offer him a spiritual bouquet. Our Fraternal Visitation will be held this month. Please welcome our visitor, Mary Simmons.

Refreshments



Annapolis is bringing Lenten breakfast items this month. Please remember to bring a coffee cup. Glen Burnie will be next and should arrange to take the supplies home, restock if necessary, and return them at the next meeting.

Program

A reflection on St. Francis' meditation on the Our Father will be shared by Judith Tyrrell.

Liturgy

Bowie-Crofton: (Please assign roles before the meeting.)
Morning Prayer- Saturday Week 5 of Lent (Set up your book ahead of time.)

Outreach

The Lighthouse Shelter is in need of diapers (sizes 4 and 5), food items including canned chicken and tuna, canned fruit, boxes of cereal, rice. They also need bus tokens. Denise Miente will be buying and delivering some if you wish to contribute in this way.

Prayer Requests



Please remember these sick and/or homebound members: Mary Hammon who is recovering from surgery; Jennifer (Mary Jo's daughter- in- law) now at home, Brigida Cobb, Mary Musselwhite, Joan Robinson, Pat Troup, Emilie (Genevieve Wilbourne's niece), Gerry Gaes (Jean's husband), Theresa Lawrence (Marie Shelton's sister) and all who suffer with chronic illnesses, Pat Troups' grandson and granddaughter, grand-niece of Genny Wilbourne, Emily's grandson, Jane Donahoe, Mary Cooke ,Rita Rossi.

Birthdays

April 6 – Mary Cicero, April 7 – Susan Greif, April 21 – Santa Ragot,

Treasury

Common Fund balance: \$1141.46

Council Meeting	TBD
Upcoming Events	
April	Easter is Sunday, April 20 th . Feast of St. Conrad, April 21 st .
May	C4C May 3 rd . – 10AM- OLF Our Fraternity Meeting- Saturday, May 17 th at St. Johns will include Welcoming of Catherine and Rite of Admission for Audrey
June	C4C June 7 th . – 10AM- OLF Fraternity Meeting will be a picnic on June 21 st . C4C July 12 th . -10AM-OLF
Upcoming:	
July	Meeting on the 3 rd . Saturday
August	Our annual visit to the Poor Clares in Washington DC
September	Pastoral Visitation
October	Open House
November	Area group -book sharing presentations
December	Christmas Party

COMMUNITY

Minister's Minute: Brothers and Sisters of Penance,

What joy to be in this season of Lent, a season of conversion and mercy, prayer, fasting and almsgiving that St. Francis seemed to love so much. His Office of the Passion (sent to you today) that Father Cirino presented to the Region a couple of years ago(2011) in that fine Red book entitled the Geste of the Great King is a source of inspiration and meditation as we seek to increase our closeness to God through increased prayer this season. It is a time for increase in charity as well and our fraternity will continue our donations to the Light House (see separate list of new items) and will be sadly saying Farewell too our Spiritual Assistant, Brother John Paul Kuzma OFM Cap as he leaves for his summer assignment after graduation in May on our meeting day. PLEASE NOTE: we are asking you to create or buy a card for a spiritual gift/bouquet for him with your personal note and bring it to the meeting in April so you can give it to him or send it to Cap College (if you cannot attend) 4121 Harewood Rd. N.E. Washington DC 20017-1510... We are so grateful for his sharing with us his insights into the importance of our intentions in doing our Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving at our Day of Reconciliation and all he has done to support the Council and the fraternity by his living the Franciscan charism, attending meetings, giving retreats, teaching us about the Office etc.

Please continue to reach out to our sick and suffering members and their family members. We also continue to fast and sacrifice in this time of Lent and I hope you have been able to attend your Soup Suppers and Stations at your parishes (OLF has one at 6:30). Did you know that St. Leonard Port Maurice a Franciscan is credited with getting the Stations we know today started in over 500 churches in Italy?

This month we celebrate our patron, St. Conrad of Parzham (not Piacenza) on April 21st. Please ask him to pray for our fraternity and our work with the "newly forming group" at Holy Family. Denise is doing an excellent job of getting us started on formation with them and several attended the Formation retreat at St. Anthony's this weekend.

This Saturday is our Fraternal Visitation and Mary Simmons will be coming from the Regional Council to do our evaluation. Please let us ask Padre Pio to pray for her and the graces needed for that day. I will be sharing with you about Forgiveness and Peacemaking in Relationships based on St. Francis' Our Father(see the prayer in the back of your Ritual to read ahead) and the story of St. Francis, the Mayor and the Bishop. pax et bonum, Judith

Find information about St. Conrad of Parzham, our patron, at <http://www.capuchins.org/stconrad.html>

These are just a few quotes. You might want to read the whole article.

“St. Conrad of Parzham is known for the warm care he tirelessly provided the steady stream of pilgrims who came to the Capuchin friary during his 40 years as friary porter (or doorkeeper) near the ancient Marian shrine at Altötting, Bavaria...Bro. Conrad was born Dec. 22, 1818, the second youngest of 12 children, five of whom died in infancy. He was 31 years of age when he went to the door of the Capuchin friary at Altötting. The local superior, Fr. Thomas Hacker, received him as a candidate. After six months he was given the Third Order habit and assigned to help the porter of the friary. Johann had been a secular Franciscan for the past eight years. From that time on he was known as Bro. Conrad in honor of St. Conrad of Piacenza, S.F.O., a 14th century Franciscan hermit and penitent.

Conrad found the life hard at first, as he admitted in a letter to his family, but he soon got used to it. “Our day is divided between prayer and work and I have little time left for anything else. ... Day after day he carried out a task that to all outward appearances was not very important, one that would never find a place in the pages of history. It was a job like that of any other porter. After all, a porter is just a porter and that is that, even if he opens and closes the door at St. Ann’s for 41 years. How many other porters before him received visitors at the same door? ...All classes of people came to the friary door: the children, the poor, workers, farmers, day laborers, young people, the unemployed, mothers of families, the sick, the hungry, the desperate—the whole gamut of humanity. When the bell rang Bro. Conrad opened the door, smiled and opened his heart in compassion. ...The more than 100,000 pilgrims that came each year to Altötting provided Bro. Conrad with a golden opportunity to live out his own special charism. The words used in the process to characterize his sanctity are quite restrained. He was “an ordinary Capuchin, nothing special about him.” He was “good, gentle, kind, devout, and made a good impression.” The brothers who helped him never saw him moody or upset.. At nine o’clock he locked the friary and the doors of the church. At last he could be alone with God. Sometimes, however, sleep gained the upper hand and a confrere might find him late at night still in the church. He was exhausted. What sustained him in this daily routine for 40 long years?

He himself reveals much about his interior life in some ...to an unknown Tertiary. “My way of life consists above all in loving and suffering while contemplating, adoring, and admiring the love of God for us poor creatures. I will unite myself to the love of my God at all times until the end. I am continually united with His love, and nothing stands in my way. While carrying out my many duties I am often so intimately united with Him that I talk with Him as confidently as a child with his father. I tell him all my concerns, my wishes, whatever bothers me, and I beg Him to give me His grace with the greatest confidence, even after committing some imperfections. Then I beg Him with all humility to pardon me because I want to become a good son. I want to love Him with all my heart.

“Let us give ourselves over completely to our dear and good heavenly Father. Let us always love Him, and our hearts will be enlarged. There must be no standing still. Our love must become a flame which destroys within us all that does not unite us intimately with Him.

“I am always happy and content in God. I accept all things, pleasant or unpleasant, gratefully from our dear heavenly Father. He knows what is best for us and so I am always happy in God. I try to love Him very much. There is only one thing that grieves me, and that is that I love Him so little. If I could become a seraph of love I would call on all creatures to help me love my God. I must close now. I could go on and on. Love has no limits. I would have to write much more but I don’t have the time. The bell is ringing to call me once more to praise God.”

Care for Creation (C4C)- *Franciscan Care for Creation*

The C4C study began on Saturday Feb 1, 2014. Some of our members, OSF members from the region, and members of Our Lady of the Fields attended. See below for more information-

Franciscan Care for Creation

Informs - Franciscan Action Network's adult formation program addresses important environmental issues

Inspires – Putting faith into action

Challenges – Our call to Catholic Social Teaching

Invites a response – St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi inspired a vision to help us respond to our ecological vocation

and continues each first Saturday for the next 5 months; Mar 1, Apr 5, May 3, Jun 7, Jul 12 (first non-holiday Saturday). Each session begins at 10 am at Our Lady of the Fields, 1070 Cecil Ave., Millersville, Md., room 202. At noon, a light lunch will be shared (optional) and discussion to follow (optional) ending at 2 pm.

Discussion topics will focus on building a deeper relationship with Christ recognizing the obstacles and distractions to discerning His will. The C4C program has been published by Franciscan Action Network and includes a DVD and study guide. Handouts will be provided. This study at OLOF is sponsored by St. Conrad Fraternity. Register with Susan Burns to receive the materials. seburns318@comcast.net 410-245-0890

The 6 **C4C** session topics are: 1. **Telling the Franciscan story** - Overview of Franciscan themes and approaches relevant for environmental justice and ecological sustainability 2. **Opening the Book of Creation** - Basic ecology, the science of ecosystems, watersheds, food security, climate change, and the ecological footprint 3. **Hearing the cry of the poor** - Environmental justice, and the impacts of pollution and climate change on poor and marginalized people 4. **Speaking in the public square** - Catholic Faithful Citizenship, servant leadership, political processes, and civic engagement 5. **Reading the signs of the times** - Applying a Franciscan ecosocial analysis to identify problems and suggest possible directions 6. **Doing what is now ours to do** - Creating a plan of action for environmental justice and Caring for Creation



Our Peace Cross is continuing to circulate! Mary Cicero suggested that we continue Pope Francis' request for "Prayer for Peace." In November we began passing around a San Damiano Cross, praying we become instruments of Peace and cry out to all the world for PEACE. (Note: The bag contains many items: the Cross, Pope Francis' "Cry for Peace", St. Francis Novena, Prayer for Peace St. Clare, St. Margaret of Cortona crucifix prayer, Prayers for peace from World Religions (Assisi), Scriptural Rosary for Justice and

Peace, Pope Francis Urbi et Orbi Christmas Message of 2013, Pope Francis World Day of Peace Message for 2014, Prayer for Refugees and Victims of War, explanations of the San Damiano Cross and a Notebook in which to write your prayer intentions. These are all listed on a yellow folder- replace all materials when you pass it along after a week to the next person on your membership list in your Area.)


We're proud to join with the [Fast for Families](#) bus tour as it makes its way across America to Washington DC.

We need your voice and signature on an urgent petition to increase the pressure on Congress to enact commonsense immigration reform that ends our nation's greatest moral crisis -- our broken immigration system.

[Make your voice heard right now. Click here to sign the petition asking Congress to take action!](#)

Tell the House leadership that as a person of your faith you want Congress to stop the suffering and to be on the right side of history. It's time for Speaker John Boehner and Majority Leader Eric Cantor to schedule a vote on immigration reform.

[Fast for Families](#) is taking our message for immigration reform across the country and will be delivering your petition signatures on April 9 as the bus tour arrives in Washington DC.




Washington, D.C., National Mall @ 4th Street
Wednesday, April 9, @ 9:30 a.m.–noon

Join us for a rally on the National Mall to end the Fast for Families Across America tour and the 48-hour Women Leader's Fast as we continue to raise our voices calling on Congress to end the suffering caused by our broken immigration system.

Location: National Mall at Fourth Street between Madison and Jefferson

Time: 9:30 a.m. Rally welcoming buses and concluding Women's Fast Program
11:30 a.m. Procession to U.S. Capitol

www.fast4families.org www.facebook.com/Fast4Families [@Fast4Families](https://twitter.com/Fast4Families) #TimesNow #Fast4Families



FRANCISCAN ACTION NETWORK
ACT.FAST.PRAY.

For more information, contact Sylvia Ruiz 202-257-9805
sylvia.ruiz@sciu.org

In D.C.? Join us on Wednesday April 9th for the petition delivery to Congress.

Gun Control: Another shooting at Fort Hood. Please pray for the victims and their families. Please pray for an end to violence. Please pray for a change of heart for the US Congress to hear the cry of the poor, to reject the worldly call to power, possessions, and profit and change their priorities to benefit the common good and divert military weapon funding to the needs of the people.

Minimum Wage: Last Friday, I spoke at a rally in Cleveland about raising the minimum wage. While I was there, I had the opportunity to talk with 11-year-old Jesseca Hudson, who came out to show her support. Before I'd even boarded my plane back to D.C., she had already emailed me, telling me how she wanted to help in the fight to give millions of workers the wages they deserve. Jesseca doesn't think that someone working full-time should struggle to make ends meet. But full-time workers earning the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 only earn about \$14,500 a year in wages -- below the poverty line for a family of two. That's unacceptable. And it's why the President has called on Congress and state governments to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour -- and on businesses to act on their own to increase the pay of their workers. **If you agree, then add your name -- and share why you think we need to raise the wage.**



Raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 will benefit about 28 million workers across the country. And it will help businesses, too: Raising the wage will put more money in people's pockets, which they will pump back into the economy by spending it on goods and services in their communities. **The bottom line: America deserves a raise.**

Care for Creation C4C: This past Saturday our environmental discussion concerned the needs of the poor. Our nation's and the world's story of power neglects the needs of the poor in the decisions made to allow corporate America to pollute, to deplete our natural resources, to put the common good at risk in favor of power, possessions, profit. The poor live in the areas polluted by the story of power, subjecting them to greater health issues from air pollution (asthma), water pollution (digestive disorders), and soil pollution from insecticides and pesticides (cancers). And, the poor have no voice. Be an advocate for the poor. Log in to Franciscan Action Network to see how you can help, write your congressional leaders.

Also, write your congressional leaders about the Keystone Pipeline. This week the scientific community revealed the negative effects of global warming including the negative contribution of the Keystone Pipeline. Ask Congress to reject the influence of the story of power of the oil lobbyist and to listen to the needs of sustaining clean water tables in the Midwest and the needs of sustaining the environment for the residents – the American Indians. Ask Congress to direct the funding to alternative means of energy.

Susan Burns