

Up to Now

Newsletter of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region of the Secular Franciscan Order

Covering the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia,
and portions of West Virginia and Pennsylvania



Fr. Philippus Philippus, OFM/Cap

Volume 20 Issue 3

Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing.

February 2017

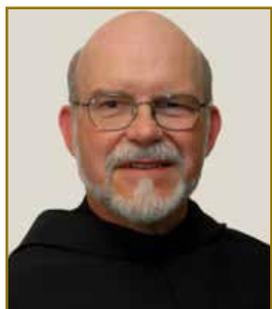
Regional Retreat 2017

The theme of this year's Regional Retreat, scheduled for April 28-30, is "Breaking Free: The Transformation of Daily Life." The retreat will be led by Fr. Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR.

Fr. Tickerhoof is currently the Director of Ongoing Formation for his religious community, and is a member of Franciscan Pathways, the community's retreat ministry. Fr. Bernie offers retreats and spiritual programs in retreat centers, parishes, and religious congregations. He has developed a variety of programs on contemporary spirituality, faith and biblical conversion, and leadership development.

Fr. Bernie received his Master of Divinity from St. Francis Seminary, formerly in Loretto, Penn., in 1978, and a Master of Theology in spirituality and liturgy through the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, Calif. (now part of Santa Clara University), in 1979. He received a Doctor of Ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 2001. He has also pursued graduate studies at the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University and at the Catholic University of America.

Fr. Bernie was ordained in 1978, and has been involved in spiritual ministry and retreat work since 1979. He has traveled widely throughout the country in a ministry of preaching, spiritual conferences, and retreats. He served on his community's initial formation team as Vocation Director (1993-1996), as Novice Director (2004-2012), and as overall Director of Initial Formation (2008-2012). He has done extensive work in Franciscan Spirituality through the Franciscan Federation of the United States and as a spiritual assistant for the Secular Franciscan Order at the local, provincial, and regional levels. Fr. Bernie served on his province's leadership team from 2008 to 2012.



Fr. Bernie is a founding member of the Vineyard Guild, an ecumenical organization dedicated to promoting spiritual leadership. He is also a member of Spiritual Directors



International and has an active ministry in the spiritual direction of a number of individuals. Other interests include storytelling, social justice, ecumenism and inter-faith, holistic spirituality, and ecological concerns. He is the author of several books and articles on various aspects of the spiritual life.

Join us at this yearly event where we renew our spirits and our acquaintances. See the registration form on [page 8](#).

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Regional Minister's Message



EMBRACING SISTER DEATH

"Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape."

These words from the *Canticle of the Creatures* certainly ring true these days. It is no surprise that as our Order ages, every fraternity has a brother or sister who has been embraced by Sister Death.

But as Franciscans, Francis admonishes us to have a particular attitude towards the end of life.

"Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death will do them no harm."

In a footnote to the *Canticle, Francis of Assisi: The Early Documents* tells us, "[These verses] composed in Francis' last hours, indicate an understanding of death different from" some of his earlier writings, such as the *Letter to the Faithful* found in our Rule. "Rather than fearing death, Francis greets it as yet another expression of God's presence."

Two of the brothers in our region, Tom Bello, OFS, and John Clem, OFS, were embraced by Sister Death in the past 12 months: Tom on March 29, 2016, and John on January 25 of this year.

In the fall of 2015, the two of them got together (along with Donna Hollis, OFS, of Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity in New Mexico) to produce a blog during the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Tom was a "veteran" Secular Franciscan and the national minister of our Order; John was a recently professed member of Mount La Verna Fraternity in Charlottesville. John had a ministry called Catholic Web Services, building websites for the Church. Many subscribed to his weekly "Top Catholic Tweets" and his blog, "Call to Holiness." They were a perfect match for a daily posting during the Holy Year. The website is archived (mercyhour.org) and I paid it a visit recently. They explained their purpose in the first entry:

Each day, God willing, during this Holy Year of Mercy, two Secular Franciscans, Deacon Tom Bello & John Clem, are offering a minor, but daily sustenance for our common pilgrimage closer to Christ and to salvation.

And God did will it. But Tom's cancer was taking more and more of his energy, and as he saw the end growing near, he wrote entries that would continue through mid-April, before others would take his place. The entry for the day he died was especially appropriate:

March 29, 2016

Since you have been raised up in company with Christ, set your hearts on what pertains to the higher realms where Christ is seated at God's right hand. Be intent on things above rather than on things of earth. After all, you have died! Life is hidden now with Christ in God. Colossians 3:1-3

The Year of Mercy meant a lot to Tom and John. The entry from March 9, 2016, captured it perfectly:

Jesus said to his disciples: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you." Luke 6:36-38

Be the merciful presence of God was the National Secular Franciscan Fraternity Theme 2014.

We'll miss Tom and John, as we miss all our brothers and sisters who have died. But we must always recall what our Father Francis told us:

"Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received - only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage."

Patrick Martin
Regional Minister



Caravaggio, Embracing Sister Death

Websites of Interest

Archaeologists Discover the Tomb of St. Philip the Apostle

In July 2016, archaeologists working in Turkey announced that they had discovered what they believed to be the tomb of the apostle St. Philip. The octagonal tomb was found on Martyr's Hill near the ruins of a fifth-century church dedicated to St. Philip. <https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/Story/TabId/2672/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/977/Archaeologists-discover-the-tomb-of-St-Philip-the-Apostle.aspx>

How Each Apostle Died and Where You Can Find Their Bones Today

<https://churchpop.com/2016/01/24/how-each-apostle-died-where-you-can-find-their-bones-today-2/>

Doctors of the Church

How many saints have been named Doctors of the Church? You may be surprised.

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/doctors.php>

Pope Recognizes Martyrdom of Oklahoma Priest Killed in Guatemala

Pope Francis has recognized the martyrdom of Father

Stanley Rother of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, making him the first martyr born in the United States.

<http://www.catholicnews.com/services/english-news/2016/pope-recognizes-martyrdom-of-oklahoma-priest-killed-in-guatemala.cfm>

Going the Distance

By just about any measure, the Apostle Paul's commitment to go to whatever lengths were necessary to bring the gospel to those who had not heard was remarkable. Find out the distances Paul travelled here.

<http://www.onleadingwell.com/2012/03/26/distance/>

How Does a Catholic Read the Bible?

Excellent and informative resource from the Rev. James Martin, S.J., widely known as "Father Martin" — editor at large at *America*, the national Catholic magazine.

https://www.museumofthebible.org/howcatholicsreadthebible?utm_source=convlookalike&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=hcrtb&utm_term=Co1WWo5NANA16Jo1110&utm_content=bbs



National Computer Committee Transition – New Website and Database Committees to Form

After many years of dedicated service, Dan Mulholland, Bob Herbelin and Roger Raupp are retiring from the National Computer Committee. Due to this change in personnel and in order to better achieve newly set goals, the Computer Committee will undergo a structural change.

The National Executive Council has set two new goals: (1) a major redesign of the NAFRA website (basically a new website); and (2) a transition to a new national database. To achieve these goals, the NEC will set up two new committees – Website and Database – and appoint a new Chair for each. These two committees will each have a different, distinct focus, but will communicate as needed and work together on projects wherever their areas of expertise overlap.

The Website Committee will consist of a Chair and one or two other members, chosen by the Chair, as it is important to have several persons available to update and maintain our website. We are very grateful to Vickie Klick, who has wonderfully maintained our webpage for many years. Vicky will continue to maintain our current webpage until a new one is developed and will assist in the transition as needed.

The Database Committee will initially be coordinated by Vickie Klick, who has accepted a one-year appointment as Database Transition Chair.

WEBSITE COMMITTEE CHAIR NEEDED

The NEC is currently seeking a Website Committee Chair, and we kindly request your assistance. Please distribute the following notice, which will also be included in the next issue of TAU-USA, and please let us know of anyone who may be a good candidate for this position.

WEBSITE DEVELOPER NEEDED

After many years of quality outreach and service, the NAFRA website is due for a major redesign. The National Executive Council is seeking a Secular Franciscan who has the skills necessary to design, develop and maintain a website that will appeal to newcomers, as well as serve our members.

The ideal candidate must have sufficient experience in Web Development and Multimedia Design or the equivalent to create and maintain a creative and interactive online presence for the NAFRA page. He/she will work with a committee of OFS to assess our needs, write copy, and provide photos, etc.

If you are interested in applying, please send your resume to Jan Parker at ofs.national.minister.usa@gmail.com and Jane DeRose-Bamman at janedbsfo@msn.com.

Please include links to websites you have designed and indicate whether you would offer this service as a member of a volunteer committee.

Regional Formation Director's Message

Brothers & Sisters! Happy New Year! May the peace of Christ reign in our hearts always!

Last year proved to be an exciting year for formation. In April, we held a day of reflection for our Inquirers and Candidates in Ellicott City, Md. It was the largest attendance we have had so far! Seventy-five people turned out for a day of prayer, Mass, and talks. Our next day of reflection will be held on Saturday, April 1. Please see the registration form on [page 6](#) for more information. The day will consist of workshops with talks, along with confession and Mass. Please have your members who are in formation sign up as soon as possible!

In October 2016, we held a Formation Director's Workshop Weekend at Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Md. Those who attended received a thumb drive full of resource material, as well as a binder with formation materials covering a variety of topics, ranging from "Discerning the Call to the OFS" to "On-going Formation." It was a blessed weekend, with a multitude of sharing, socializing, personal reflection, and learning from each other.

We have booked Loyola Retreat House again this year for the weekend of October 6-8. We will be covering topics related to on-going formation, as well as discovering ways in which fraternities implement tools for formation growth. I will be sending out a questionnaire soon to all formation directors with a few topics that I would like your input on. I will then compile the questions and answers to pass on to you for your own personal consideration. If you have any questions or topics you would like us to address, please email me at vspalding@md.metrocast.net. Thank you!

In November 2016, our region had a national visitation, along with our Annual Ministers' meeting. Our International Councilor, Mary Stronach, expressed her enthusiasm over the work being done in the area of formation in our region and also over the materials handed out at the October Workshop. She will be taking the materials to Rome to possibly use some of them for future formation. A big thank you to the Regional Formation team for your wonderful assistance!

I would also like to stress again the importance of holding Open Houses at least once a year. Open Houses are a good way to help discern in advance whether a person has a true calling to the OFS. It also gives people the opportunity to take a look at who and what we are called to be as Franciscans.

Here are just a few things to look for when discerning a person's call to the Order.

1. Why does the person feel called to become a Secular Franciscan?

2. Is the person a practicing Catholic and in solidarity with the Church's teachings?
3. Can the person commit to the monthly meetings?
4. Is the person a peacemaker and does he/she get along well with others?

The fraternity Council should discuss at the end of each formation period whether the aspirant is called to continue on to the next phase. Much prayer on the part of both the person discerning the call and the Council members should be stressed. Be sure to spend quiet time with God, and let the Holy Spirit guide you every step of the way!

I would like to end my column by sharing with you a story about St. Francis and his way of discerning a true call to the Order.

A reading from the writings of Bartholomew of Pisa.

Two young men once came to see the blessed Francis, desiring to be received into the Order. But the Saint, anxious to test their obedience and to find out whether they were really willing to surrender their own wills, took them into the garden and said to them, 'Come, and let us plant some cabbages; and as you see me doing, so you must do also.' So the blessed Francis began to plant, putting the cabbages with the roots up in the air and the leaves down under the ground. Then one of the two men did as Francis was doing, but the other said, 'That is not the way to plant cabbages, father; you are putting them in upside down!' But Francis turned and said to him, 'My son, I want you to do as I do.' And when the other still refused, thinking it all wrong, the blessed Francis said to him, 'Brother, I see that you are a very learned man; but go your way: you will not do for my Order.' So he accepted the one and refused the other.

Let us pray.

Lord, may we follow you even though at times it seems foolish or confusing. Give us the faith to discern your call! Amen.

May God bless you!

Vicki Spaulding, OFS
Regional Formation Director



Returning from the Deep: FMS Welcomes Back Six Missioners from Overseas

On certain old, old maps, the edge to the known world was marked, “Here be dragons.” Some pass through this sea, change through the unknown, and return to tell the tale. That’s what happened this January as Franciscan Mission Service welcomed back six returning missioners for a two-week re-entry retreat. Though each worked in different ministries, the six missioners all told stories about what happens when you get in deep with a community. As one person emphasized, “This wasn’t tourism. I found a new home.”

Patrick and Brandon came back from two years outside Kingston, Jamaica. Maeve returned from two years in Guatemala. Three missioners returned from Bolivia: Tom was in Carmen Pampa for two years, Jeff was in Cochabamba for four years, and Annemarie also served for four years in Cochabamba with plans to return.

Before going to Cochabamba, Jeff had previously worked in prison ministry. He found purpose and passion in the ministry once again, experiencing a profound level of connection with the men at San Antonio prison, where he worked in carpentry and sold handicrafts. He extended his time on mission an extra two years, and said that he actually considered living in the prison while performing his ministry.

Maeve wasn’t confident about her teaching skills when she began at Valley of the Angels orphanage. She plunged into the unknown and discovered she could excite some students about learning English. Maeve grew roots by finding a second family in the tight-knit school staff.

Those are some of the depths, but what about the dragons? Missioners confronted some big social problems while on mission, some so large it was difficult to find where they ended. Residents contend with poverty and faulty infrastructure, and so did the missioners. Some challenges were political or environmental—like the constant lack of water in Annemarie’s community in Cochabamba. Many challenges stretched into the past, such as the long history of oppression Patrick found in Jamaica.



Patrick and Mr. White in Jamaica after Patrick helped repair the Savanna-la-Mar resident's roof.

who described the effort he put in to build connections with the community, such as by participating in traditional dances at his school.

Sometimes the many-headed difficulties could seem overwhelming, such as in the soup kitchen where Brandon and Patrick worked in Savanna-la-Mar, Jamaica. Brandon was grounded by the local wisdom provided by Heda, a grandmother raising her two grandchildren. Patrick was very proud of a repair job for 90-year-old Mr. White.

“There were so many things you couldn’t fix,” Patrick said, but he was proud of helping to repair a roof for Mr. White.

Mission put hands to new use: for eating, sowing seeds, making bread, plucking chickens, carving wood. Maeve’s hands held onto children after a shooting near the orphanage. Annemarie was proud of planting gardens for a community program, but she took even greater satisfaction in empowering community members to take over and lead those programs.

For many of the missioners, speaking about returning was much harder than talking about what they had been doing on mission. Sessions led by former missioner Beth Riehle, as well as FMS Programs Manager Emily Norton, helped everyone reconcile the person who left the United States with the one who came home. Some marked the passage with a tattoo or by bringing home a dog, while others displayed new facets such as a more flexible sense of time or a taste for native dishes.

However they choose to live out the next phase of their life and their lifelong call to mission, the returning missioners can attest that there are some dragons to be found on mission, but there are also many experiences of diversity and wonder that can happen. Many things are alive when you go past established boundaries, get in deep with a community, and open yourself to a new country, way of life, and to the people around you. This is the way it should be. As it says in Genesis: “God created the great sea monsters and all kinds of crawling living creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of winged birds. God saw that it was good.”



Women from Santa Rosa selling vegetables from the parish garden, part of Annemarie's ministry in Bolivia.



Growing and Changing with Christ and Francis Franciscan Day of Reflection For Inquirers and Candidates Lent 2017

Saturday, April 1, 2017, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Shrine of St. Anthony
12290 Folly Quarter Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042
(410) 531-2800

Sponsored by the St. Margaret of Cortona Regional Formation Team

You have been called by Name. Do you know what that means and where you are going? Come and see how to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis, so you may be more completely conformed to the Gospel of Life.

(Formation teams and newly professed are also invited.)

Cost: \$45.00 per person.

Yes! I plan to attend the Franciscan Day of Recollection for Candidates and Inquirers.

Name _____

Fraternity _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Email _____

Phone _____

I am an Inquirer I am a candidate I am newly professed

I am a member of the formation team

Please complete this form and return by March 24 with check payable to

St. Margaret or Cortona Region

Send form and payment to:

Peter Noyes, ofs
2917 Shepperton Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20904
pnoyes@aol.com

My heart is ready, oh God; my heart is ready.

Psalm 57:7

[Directions to the Shrine of St. Anthony](#)

Homebound Ministries

Many of the members of our fraternities are reaching ages where they no longer have the mobility they once enjoyed. Many of us have difficulty leaving our homes or are completely homebound. There are still ministries that can be served by homebound brothers and sisters. Here are a few.

PRAYER

As Franciscans, we're called to pray the Liturgy of the Hours daily. But being homebound may mean that we have even more time available for prayer.

Keep a journal of prayer intentions. Keep written lists of prayers we've promised to say for others and prayers they've asked of us. Watch the emails that announce health or other problems of our brothers and sisters in the fraternity and add them to our list. Pray for our clergy, our country, our world. Pray for all those who need healing in body, mind or spirit (that's all of us). Pray for those who have no one else to pray for them.

Do you perform a repetitive task? Before beginning, dedicate each repetition as a prayer. Needlework and typing are among the tasks that lend themselves well to this activity. Each stitch or stroke can be a prayer.

SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT

If you have the time and the resources, write notes to those who are ill, who are going through the illness of a family member, who have lost a job or a loved one. Note writing has become a lost art, and it's touching to see how much a simple note means to someone who needs support.

If for some reason you're not able to send actual cards, you can always take a minute to send an encouraging email to a person who needs support. Don't just answer the group email with something like "We're praying for you." Send an actual message of sympathy and support. But if you can, send it through the mail. You'll be amazed at how touched people are that you actually took the time to write to them.

CRAFTS

Needlework of all kinds (knitting, crocheting, embroidery) is a very tangible way of serving others. Get a pattern for winter caps off the internet and donate the caps to those at your local homeless shelter. Make hats or blankets for newborns at your local right to life organization. In addition to being a welcome gift to those in need, one that says someone really cared about them, it's an ideal opportunity to do the repetitive prayer discussed above. You can find many free patterns on the Internet. Make a Prayer Shawl for someone going through a difficult time (health-related or otherwise) who could use an item of comfort. After the shawl is finished, the pastor blesses it, and it is given to that person.

COMPUTER SKILLS

If you have Computer Skills, there are a number of ways to serve. Set up or maintain your fraternity's website or FaceBook page. Create an email account just for receiving inquiries from

people and post it on your website or FaceBook page. Be the one who checks for emails and forward them to the person who can best respond if you're not able to respond yourself. That way no personal emails are out there on the Web. Offer to create and prepare a newsletter for your fraternity.

INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

There is a website run by The Voice of Martyrs, an organization that works to support and free Christians imprisoned for their faith in other countries. One of the things that individuals can do is send letters through the website to those who are imprisoned. It's a fairly mechanical process: there's not much room for originality in the actual letters. Their website can be found at <http://www.persecution.com/public/homepage.aspx?clickfrom=%3d6d61696e5f6d656e75>. Then click on Get Involved – after you read all of information that's available on the website.

I've heard a representative of the organization speak, and he says that just the fact that people "out in the world" are aware of the prisoners has two results. 1) It cheers and strengthens the prisoners. 2) Prisoners have many times been released on this evidence of outside awareness.

Compassion International is another organization that offers opportunities for ministries for the homebound. It provides the ability to sponsor a child in a third world country. The sponsorship does involve a monthly donation, but it also allows regular communication with your sponsored child through letters and photos. Their website is <https://www.compassion.com/>.

If you are homebound, know that your brothers and sisters are praying for you, and take joy in this opportunity to serve others in a different way.

Mark Your Calendar



April 1, 2017 — Seventh Annual Day of Reflection for Inquirers, Candidates and Newly Professed.
St. Anthony Shrine, Ellicott City, Md. See Registration Form on [page 6](#).

April 28-30, 2017— Regional Retreat.
PriestField Retreat Center, Kearneysville, W.Va. See Registration Form on [page 8](#).



October 6-8, 2017 — Formation Directors Weekend.
Loyola Retreat House, Faulkner, Md.

November 18, 2017— Regional Chapter.
Location TBA.

PriestField Pastoral Center

ANNUAL RETREAT 2017

Where: Priest Field Pastoral Center, 4030 Middleway Pike, Kearneysville, WV 25430-3742

When: April 28-30, 2017

Who: All Secular Franciscans, including candidates, inquirers and spiritual assistants

What: Breaking Free: The Transformation of Daily Life

Presenter: Father Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR (see background on page 1)

REGISTRATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Submit form no later than **April 14, 2017**
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:
Peter Noyes, ofs
2917 Shepperton Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20904
email: pnoyesofs@yahoo.com

***Please make checks payable to St. Margaret of Cortona Region, not to Peter Noyes or to Priest Field. Thank you.**

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
- F) Days Only: \$121.00

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

Please indicate any special needs you have: _____

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

Name of preferred roommate: _____

Amount enclosed with this form \$ _____

PriestField Pastoral Center

Directions to Priest Field

Please DO NOT set your GPS to Kearneysville – We are located on Route 51 in MIDDLEWAY

From West Virginia and Points West of I-81

- From I-81 Southbound, take WV Exit 5, Inwood— turn left off the ramp on Route 51 East—
 - From I-81 Northbound, take WV Exit 5, Inwood— turn right off the ramp on Route 51 East—
- 1) Follow Route 51 East for 0.6 miles;
 - 2) Turn right at the stoplight of the T-intersection of Routes 11 and 51;
 - 3) Go 0.2 miles, moving into the left turn lane; then
 - 4) Turn left where Route 51 continues east at the next stoplight.
 - 5) Continue on Route 51 East for 4.0 miles – this is Middleway Pike
 - 6) Slow down before crossing the green Opequon Creek bridge, for a blind RIGHT turn into PriestField immediately after the Route 51 bridge.

From Baltimore & Washington, DC via I-70/I-270 thru Frederick, MD

- From Interstate 270 North: Follow signs to Interstate 70 West, moving immediately to right lane for next exit.
 - From I-70 West: Take Exit 52— Route 340 to Charles Town, WV.
- 1) On Route 340 approaching Charles Town (25 miles), DO NOT TAKE Route 340 HIGHWAY BYPASS, continue to Route 51 West.
 - 2) Continue straight on Route 51 W through historic Charles Town to the stop sign and “Y” in road.
 - 3) Bear to the right—and continue on Route 51 West for approximately 7 miles. WE ARE LOCATED ON ROUTE 51, in Middleway.
 - 4) As you descend a hill you will see a green bridge ahead— slow down to prepare for a blind LEFT turn into PriestField immediately before the bridge.

From Washington, DC, Northern Virginia, and Dulles Airport

- From VA-267 W/Dulles Toll Road is accessible from I-495 and I-66.
 - From Dulles Airport follow signs to Dulles Airport Access Road. Stay in the far right lane for an immediate right exit onto access road to VA-267 W/Dulles Greenway towards Leesburg.
- 1) On VA-267 W/Dulles Greenway, pay toll and continue west toward Leesburg for 13.5 miles.
 - 2) Left Exit 1A onto VA-7 W to Leesburg / Warrenton for 4.0 miles.
 - 3) Right exit onto VA-9 to Hillsboro / Charles Town. Follow Rt 9 to Charles Town, WV (approximately 19 miles).
 - 4) Approaching Charles Town (2 miles past the Shenandoah River bridge) DO NOT TAKE ROUTE 9 HWY BYPASS. Continuing straight, the road becomes Route 115 N.
 - 5) Stay on Route 115 for 2 miles to the center of historic Charles Town.
 - 6) Turn left at the intersection marked Route 51 West (Washington Street).
 - 7) Continue straight on Route 51 West through downtown Charles Town to the stop sign and “Y” in road.
 - 8) Bear to the right—and continue on Route 51 West for approximately 7 miles. WE ARE LOCATED ON ROUTE 51, at the edge of Middle way.
 - 9) As you descend a hill you will see a green bridge ahead— slow down to prepare for a blind LEFT turn into PriestField immediately before the bridge.

Exact GPS Coordinates to our driveway:

Latitude: 39.319512 Longitude: -77.987979



Around the Region

RECEIVED AS CANDIDATES



St. Conrad Fraternity, Severna Park, newly received candidates from left: Laura Benso, OFS, Sarita Palmer, OFS

Laura Benso, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Severna Park, Md.
Bob Eves, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Jan Floom, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Marvin Floom, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Pat Koch, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Harry Logel, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.

Sarita Palmer, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Severna Park, Md.
Margie Petrizza, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Bobby Ruiz, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.



Saint Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, newly received candidates from left: Pat Koch, OFS; Jan Floom, OFS; Marv Floom, OFS; Harry Logel, OFS; Bob Eves, OFS; Margie Petrizza, OFS; Bobby Ruiz, OFS

NEWLY PROFESSED

Mary Chandler, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
Michele Dunne, OFS, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
Wendy Enderson, OFS, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.



Saint Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Triangle, newly professed from left: Anabal Monserrate, OFS; Anissia Monserrate, OFS; Louise Ravert, OFS; Marty Rendon, OFS; Tom Ryan, OFS; Susan Ryan, OFS; Donna Kocian, OFS; Mike Ryan, OFS

Carl Fischer, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
James Girouard, OFS, The Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity, Warrenton, Va.
John Handiboe, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
Frank Klem, OFS, Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C.
Donna Kocian, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Charlene Heyden, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
Jeanne Kerins, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
Juliana Kim, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
Boniface Kim, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
Mark McPherson, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
Anibal Monserrate, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Anissia Monserrate, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Louise Ravert, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, VA
Martin Rendon, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Michael Ryan, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Susan Ryan, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Tom Ryan, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Triangle, Va.
Maureen Zwirble, OFS, The Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity, Warrenton, Va.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED

Mount La Verna Fraternity

Minister: Philip Klim, OFS
Vice Minister: Carl Stacey, OFS
Secretary: Marta MacGloin, OFS
Treasurer: Melanie Bninski, OFS
Formation Director: Therese Auger, OFS



Mount La Verna newly elected council from left: Br. Matt Hindelang, OFM Cap. Formation Director: Therese Auger, OFS, Secretary: Marta MacGloin, OFS, Treasurer: Melanie Bninski, OFS, Vice Minister: Carl Stacy, OFS, Minister: Philip Klim, OFS



Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity Council, from left: Joanna Madorma, OFS, Minister; Ramona Hrusa, OFS, Vice Minister; Br. Mike Meza, OFM Cap.; Toya Finzel, OFS, Secretary; Cindy Evans, OFS, Regional Councilor

Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity, Warrenton, Va.

Minister: Joanna Madorma, OFS
Vice Minister: Ramona Hrusa, OFS
Secretary: Toya Finzel, OFS
Treasurer: Doris Rowzie, OFS

St. Conrad Fraternity (Annapolis)

Minister: Patrick Tyrrell, OFS
Vice Minister: Mary Henry, OFS
Secretary: Joan Faltot, OFS
Treasurer: Kathleen Sievers, OFS
Formation Director: Denise Miente, OFS
Councilor: Judith Tyrrell, OFS

LOSSES IN THE FAMILY



John Clem, OFS, November 18, 1964 - January 25, 2017. He was a member of the Mount La Verna Fraternity, Charlottesville, Va. Professed July 20, 2014, he served as secretary of his fraternity, as well as webmaster for the region and many local fraternities. His

blog, Call to Holiness, was a source of much information about the events in the wider church.



Helene Hogan, OFS, January 20, 2017, She was a member of the Mount St. Sepulchre Fraternity, Washington, D.C., and previously served as secretary.



Bea McDonnell, OFS, Sept 15, 1921 - August 5, 2016. She was a member of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity, Warrenton, Va.

Sally O'Connell, OFS, May 24, 1931 - February 09, 2017. Sally was professed in 1984 in St. Thomas More Fraternity and transferred to Holy Family Fraternity.



Daniel Resendes, OFS, May 30, 1926 - November 17, 2016. Deacon Resendes was instrumental in founding the Permanent Diaconate program of the Arlington Diocese in Virginia. He was the first permanent deacon in the diocese and served for 41 years in that capacity. He was a member of the Sacred

Heart of Jesus Fraternity, Warrenton, Va.

Dolores Shero, OFS, May 4, 1939 - January 14, 2017. She had been home-bound for about 10 years. She was in a wheelchair prior to that and loved to attend fraternity meetings. She faithfully prayed her rosary and watched EWTN most of her days. She was a member of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity, Warrenton, Va.



Donald Sweitzer, OFS, June 7, 1933 – January 29, 2017. He was a member of the former St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Fraternity, as was his wife, Millie Sweitzer, OFS.



Who Was Saint Sharbel?

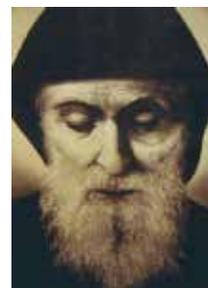
Editor's Note: Those who have attended a regional event at Priestfield Pastoral Retreat Center may be aware that one of the cabins is named St. Sharbel. But do you know who St. Sharbel was?

Saint Charbel Makhlof, O.L.M. (or Sharbel Maklof, May 8, 1828 – December 24, 1898) was a Maronite monk and priest from Lebanon. During his life he obtained a wide reputation for holiness and he has been canonized by the Eastern and Roman Catholic Church.

ORPHAN AND SHEPHERD

Youssef Antoun Makhlof was born on May 8, 1828, one of five children born to Antoun Zaarour Makhlof and Brigitta Chidiac. They lived in the village of Bekaa Kafra, possibly the highest in the Lebanese mountains. His father, a mule

driver, died in August 1831, returning from corvée for the Turkish army, leaving his wife a widow to care for their children. Later she remarried a man who went on to seek Holy Orders and became the parish priest of the village.



The young Youssef was raised in a pious home and quickly became drawn to the lives of the saints and to the hermit life, as was practiced by two of his uncles. As a young boy, he was responsible for caring for the family's small flock. He would take the flock to a grotto nearby, where he had installed an icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He would spend the day in prayer.

[\(See "Sharbal" on p. 15\)](#)

What Are We Reading?

The Apostle: A Life of Paul, John Pollock, Doubleday, NY

Rather like scientists who argue tentatively from “inference to the best explanation,” John Pollock mitigates his speculations with what seems a broad scholarship and familiarity with relevant topography, historical accounts, archeology, biblically cross-referenced clues and implications, and hermeneutics. The result is an outstanding biography of the first century evangelist who influenced the course of human history more than any political figure has. At one point, discussing “a certain political event in Ephesus” during an account of what is known as Paul’s second missionary journey, Pollock describes his method in these words: “Paul’s story enters a brief though vital period when the facts are obscure. Luke turns very discreet.” After citing a highly plausible political explanation for Luke’s discretion, he continues: “What happened must be pieced together from clues scattered aground the New Testament and in secular history. . . A biographer has to decide between slowing to a halt here in a bog of conflicting possibilities which can never be resolved, or striding boldly across a causeway of conjecture. I choose the second course and, without stepping aside to discuss all the alternatives, tell the story as I see it. Paul’s next eighteen months unfold somewhat as follows, though the tone of assurance in my narrative must not disguise that some of its conclusions are tentative and disputable.” (p. 192) This excerpt furnishes a good picture of Pollock’s approach when some speculation is necessary to flesh out the story.

The book is an extremely enjoyable reading experience. This from chapter 15: Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke, “probably in the last week of July 50 [AD],” under sail from Troas: “They did not think of themselves as passing from the continent of Asia to Europe. The terms were in use, but the Aegean was Greek on either side. They had, instead, the excitement of approaching a new province, bringing them nearer Rome. They knew that beyond Macedonia they could reach Achaia and Italy, and the vast lands of Gaul, Spain, Germania, even the mist-bound island of Britain lately added to the empire: all save Rome untouched by the Good News. They were not bringing force of arms or a political program: just four men — and Another, invisible, who had known these seas and shores before Achilles or Agamemnon or Ulysses; who could demolish empires and cities by the breath of His mouth, but who had chosen to humble Himself and come to Macedonia as quietly, as weakly as, in the flesh, He had come to Bethlehem half a century before.”

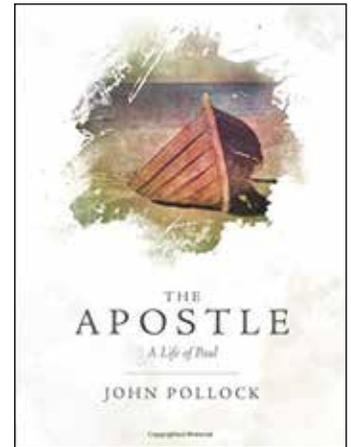
Sea routes, roads, typical seasonal meteorology, local flora, the lay of cities, ports and provinces, physical features of the landscapes, political liaisons and intrigues, local deities, the art, architecture and practices of pagan worship centers, the identity and motivations of opposition, philosophical schools, regional industries, first century seamanship and vessels — Pollock descriptively reveals all these elements

of the New Testament narratives. While a typical reading of the New Testament virtually ignores these features of context, to better recognize them is certainly a boon to understanding. This is one of the great values of this book. Pollock also manages to reveal Paul’s characteristics, tendencies, reasonings, knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy, personal interests and personality traits; he does this rather speculatively, but based on cited references

nonetheless. An example: “they took the ship through the islands of the Cyclades, beautiful in a wine-colored sea. Paul could enjoy it. Because *Acts* has no place for his personal feelings he has been considered indifferent or loftily superior to scenery. Yet he writes of the beauty of the stars, how one differs from another in glory; he was aware of the beauty of the human body and he notes how in great houses he visited some of the vases and bowls were works of art, others merely useful.”

The texts I’ve chosen to quote should give a sense of Pollock’s biography of Paul, the fearless advocate, ambassador, mediator and counselor who modeled the understanding that “Christians must outlove, outjoy, outthink, and always welcome those who oppose them.” I recommend the book, bearing in mind, of course, that direct textual statements have been augmented with inference and speculation. Two or three times I thought that Pollock’s “inferences” were likely not correct, but these are exceptions. Where speculation is unwise, unsupportable or unnecessary, Pollock generally steers clear. For example, regarding the possible Pauline authorship of the NT letter/book of *Hebrews*, Pollock says, “some hold that *Hebrews* was composed” during Paul’s confinement in Caesarea in 58. He then briefly explains other views without personally endorsing any of them. (The only biblical evidence of the authorship of *Hebrews* is “textual” and, I believe, indicates that Apollos, the Alexandrian scholar, is the most probable author. Claims for Pauline authorship are inevitably attempts to explain why the letter doesn’t sound/read as though Paul had written it, while the most likely explanation is simply that he did not. On the other hand, it does sound/read like the writings of well-known Alexandrian theologian/scholars [thus our obvious candidate is Apollos, as Luther believed]. Pollock reservedly states only that this particular question cannot be finally resolved.) I enjoyed the book on two levels: it ties together what often seem like disjointed narratives; and it is also a valuable series of contextual insights.

— Reviewed by Wesley L. Janssen
November 28, 2005, on amazon.com



Franciscan Saints, Blesseds and Feasts

(Click on the name to go to a Web link.)

FEBRUARY

- 15 [Transfer of the Body of St. Anthony of Padua](#)
16 [Bl. Veridiana](#), Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1242
17 [Bl. Luke Belludi](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1286
18 [St. Bernadette Soubirous](#), Virgin, cordbearer, d. 1879 Plenary Indulgence possible for Cordbearers only
19 [St. Conrad de Plaisance](#), Confessor, Third Order Secular, d. 1351
20 [Bl. Peter of Treja](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1304
22 [Feast of the Chair of St. Peter](#)
23 [Bl. Isabelle of France](#), Virgin, Second Order, d. 1270
25 [Bl. Sebastian of Aparicio](#), lay brother, First Order, d. 1600
26 [Bl. Antonia of Florence](#), Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1533
27 [Bl. Louise Albertoni](#), Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1533
28 Bl. Jeremie de Valachie, lay brother, First Order, d. 1625

MARCH

- 2 [St. Agnes of Prague](#), virgin, Second Order, d. 1281
3 [Bl. Innocent of Berzo](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1890
[Bls. Liberatus Weiss, Samuele Marzorati and Michele Pio Fasoli](#), priests and martyrs, First Order, d. 1716
5 [St. John-Joseph of the Cross](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1734
6 [St. Colette de Corbie](#), Virgin, Second Order, d. 1447
7 [Bl. Christopher of Milan](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1485
9 [St. Frances of Rome](#), was a tertiary before founding another religious Institute, d. 1440
10 [St. Catherine of Bologna](#), Virgin, Second Order; d. 1463
11 [Bl. John Baptist Righi of Fabriano](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1539
[Bl. Jean Kearney](#), Priest, martyr, First Order, 1653

- 12 [Bl. Angela Salawa](#), virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1922
[Bl. Louis Orione](#), Priest, Third Order Secular, d. 1940
13 [Bl. Agnellus of Pisa](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1236
15 [Bl. Louis of Casoria](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1885
16 [Bl. Torello of Poppi](#), Confessor, Third Order Secular, d. 1282
17 [Bl. Mark of Montegallo](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1496
18 [St. Salvator of Horta](#), religious, First Order, d. 1567
20 [Bl. Hippolyte Galentini](#), Confessor, Third Order Secular, d. 1620
21 [Bl. John of Parma](#), priest, First Order, d. 1289
[Bl. Amedee IX de Savoie](#), Confessor, Third Order Secular, d. 1472
[St. Nicholas de Flue](#), Confessor, Third Order Secular, d. 1487
22 [St. Benvenute of Osimo](#), priest, First Order, d. 1282
23 [Bl. Jeremy Lambertenghi](#), Priest, Third Order Secular, d. 1513
26 [Blessed Didacus Joseph of Cadiz](#), Priest, Capuchin, d. 1801
28 [St. John of Capistrano](#), Priest, First Order, d. 1456
29 [Bl. Jane Mary of Maille](#), Virgin, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1414
30 [St. Peter Regaldo](#), priest, First Order, d. 1486
31 [St. Leonard Murialdo](#), Priest, Third Order Secular, d. 1900

APRIL

- 2 [Bl. Elisabetta Vendramini](#), religious, Third Order, was a Secular Franciscan before founding another religious institute
[St. Francis of Paola](#), Priest, founder, Third Order, d. 1507
3 [St. Benedict the Moor](#), lay brother, First Order, d. 1589
4 Bl. Guillaume de Sicli, Confessor, Third Order Secular, d. 1404

- 6 **St. Crescentia Hoess**, Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1744
Bl. Angela Salawa, Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1922
- 7 **Bl. Mary Assunta**, Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1925
- 8 **Bl. Julian of St. Augustine**, lay brother, First Order, d. 1606
- 9 **Bl. Thomas of Tolentino and Companions**, Priest, First Order, martyr, 1321
- 11 **Bl. Angelo of Chiavasso**, Priest, First Order, d. 1495
- 12 **Bl. Boniface Zukowski**, Priest, First Order, martyr, 1942
- 14 **Bl. Lidwyne de Schiedam**, Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1433
- 15 **Bl. Gandolph of Binasco**, Priest, First Order, d. 1260
- 16 **St. Benedict Joseph Labré**, cord-bearer of St. Francis, d. 1783
- 17 Bl. Paul de Ste. Madeleine, Priest, First Order, martyr, 1643
- 18 **Bl. Andre Hibernon**, lay brother, First Order, d. 1734
- 19 **Bl. Conrad of Ascoli**, Priest, First Order, d. 1289
- 20 Bl. Anastase Pankewicz, Priest, First Order, martyr, d. 1942
- 21 **Bl. Francis of Fabriano**, Priest, First Order, d. 1322
St. Conrad de Parzham, lay brother, First Order, d. 1894
- 23 **Bl. Gilles of Assisi**, lay brother, First Order, d. 1262
- 24 **St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen**, Priest, First Order, martyr, 1622
- 25 **St. Pedro de San Jose Betancur**, religious, Third Order, founder, d. 1667
- 26 Bl. Pierre De Pethancourt, Priest, Third Order Secular, d. 1667
- 27 **St. Zita of Lucca**, Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1278
- 28 **Bl. Luchesius**, First Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1260 Plenary Indulgence for Franciscan Third Order Seculars (renewal of Tertiary Engagements)
- 30 **Bl. Benedict of Urbino**, Priest, First Order, d. 1625

St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo, Priest, Third Order Secular, d. 1842

MAY

- 2 **St. Richard Pampuri**, Confessor, was a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute, d. 1930
- 3 Bl. Edouard-Joseph Rosas, Bishop, Third Order Secular, d. 1903
Bl. Arthur Bell, Henry Heath, John Woodcock, et al., priests, martyrs of England, First Order, d.1646
- 4 **Bl. Ladislav de Gielniow**, Priest, First Order, d. 1505
- 5 **Bl. Beinvenu Mareni**, lay brother, First Order, d. 1289
- 6 **Bl. Anne-Rose Gattorno**, Virgin, Third Order Regular, d. 1900
Bl. Marie-Catherine Troiani, Virgin, Third Order Regular, d. 1897
- 7 **Bl. Agnellus of Pisa**, priest, First Order, d. 1236
- 8 **Bl. Jeremiah of Valacchia**, religious, First Order, d. 1625
St. Amato Ronconi, priest, Third Order Secular, d. 1304
- 11 St. Gemme de Sulmona, Virgin, Third Order Secular, d. 1439
Bl. Antonio of St. Anne Galvoa, priest, founder, First Order, d. 1822
St. Leopold Mandic, priest, First Order, d. 1942
St Ignatius of Laconi, lay brother, First Order, d. 1781
- 13 **St. Michael Garicoits**, Priest, was a tertiary before founding another religious Institute, d. 1863
- 14 **St. Marie-Dominique Mazzarello**, Virgin, was a tertiary before founding another religious Institute, d. 1881
- 15 **St. Jean-Baptiste de la Salle**, Priest, was a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute, d. 1719
- 16 **St. Margaret of Cortona**, penitent, Third Order Secular, d. 1297, Plenary Indulgence possible (renewal of engagements of the Franciscan Third Order Secular)



MONK

In 1851, Youssef left his family and entered the Lebanese Maronite Order at the Monastery of Our Lady in Mayfouq to begin his training as a monk, later transferring to the Monastery of St. Maron in Annaya, located in the Jbeil District near Beirut. Here he received the religious habit of a monk and took the name Charbel, after a Christian martyr in Antioch from the 2nd century. He made his final religious profession in the Order on November 1, 1853.

The young monk Charbel then began his study of philosophy and theology at the Monastery of Saints Cyprian and Justina in Kfifan, in the Batroun District of Lebanon, to prepare himself for receiving Holy Orders. Among his professors at the seminary was Father Nimatullah Kassab, who was himself later also declared a saint. He was ordained six years later, on July 23, 1859, in Bkerke. He was then sent back to St. Maron Monastery, where he lived a life of severe asceticism in the monastery.

HERMIT

In 1875, Charbel was granted by the abbot of the monastery the privilege of living as a hermit at the Hermitage of Saints Peter and Paul, a chapel under the care of the monastery. He spent the next 23 years living as a solitary hermit, until his death from a stroke on December 24, 1898.

DEATH AND MIRACLES

Charbel was interred at St. Maron's Monastery on Christmas Day of that year. It was reported that, during the transport of his corpse, the inclement weather conditions hindered the pallbearers in carrying out their duty.

"Father Charbel died on the eve of Christmas; the snow was heavy. We transferred him to the monastery on Christmas day. Before we moved him, the snow was falling rapidly and the clouds were very dark. When we carried him, the clouds disappeared, and the weather cleared." Statement by George Emmanuel Abi-Saseen, one of the pallbearers

A few months after his death, a bright light was seen surrounding his tomb and the superiors opened it to find his body still intact. Since that day, a blood-like liquid flows from his body. Experts and doctors are unable to give medical explanations for the incorruptibility and flexibility. In the years 1950 and 1952, his tomb was opened and his body still had the appearance of a living one. The official site mentions: "In this century his grave has been opened four times, the last time being in 1955, and each time it has been noticed that his bleeding body still has its flexibility as if it were alive"; there is no mention of later openings. The Catholic Tradition website says: "Father Joseph Mahfouz, the postulator of the cause, certified that in 1965 the body of Saint Charbel was still preserved intact with no alteration. In 1976 he again witnessed the opening of the grave; this time the body was completely decomposed. Only the skeleton remained."

VENERATION

On December 5, 1965, Pope Paul VI presided at the beatification of Father Charbel at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council. The Pope said: "A hermit of Mount Lebanon is enrolled in the number of the blessed... a new eminent member of monastic sanctity has by his example and his intercession enriched the entire Christian people ... may he make us understand, in a world largely fascinated by wealth and comfort, the paramount value of poverty, penance and asceticism, to liberate the soul in its ascent to God."

On October 9, 1977, Pope Paul VI presided at the canonization of Blessed Charbel. At the time Bishop Francis Zayek, head the U.S. Diocese of St. Maron, wrote a pamphlet entitled "A New Star of the East." Bishop Zayek wrote: "St. Sharbel is called the second St. Anthony of the Desert, the Perfume of Lebanon, the first Confessor of the East to be raised to the Altars according to the actual procedure of the Catholic Church, the honor of our Aramaic Antiochian Church, and the model of spiritual values and renewal. Sharbel is like a Cedar of Lebanon standing in eternal prayer, on top of a mountain." The bishop noted that Sharbel's canonization plus the beatification causes of others prove "that the Aramaic Maronite Antiochian Church is indeed a living branch of the Catholic Church and is intimately connected with the trunk, who is Christ, our Savior, the beginning and the end of all things."

As a member of the Lebanese Maronite Order and as a Saint of the Maronite rite, St. Charbel is an exemplar of the Maronite expression of Catholic holiness and values. As a Saint of the Universal Church, St. Charbel Makhlouf's example of virtue and intercessory power is available to Catholics of all backgrounds. Faithful to his Maronite spirituality, St. Charbel became a Saint for the Universal Church.

MIRACLES

A great number of miracles have been attributed to Saint Charbel since his death. The most famous one is that of Nohad El Shami, a 55-year-old woman at the time of the miracle who was healed from a partial paralysis. She tells that on the night of January 22, 1993, she saw in her dream two Maronite monks standing next to her bed. One of them put his hands on her neck and operated on her, relieving her from her pain while the other held a pillow behind her back. When she woke she discovered two wounds in her neck, one on each side. She was completely healed and recovered her ability to walk. She believed that it was Saint Charbel who healed her but did not recognize the other monk. Next night, she again saw Saint Charbel in her dream. He said to her: "I did the surgery to let people see and return to faith. I ask you to visit the hermitage on the 22nd of every month, and attend Mass regularly for the rest of your life." People now gather on the 22nd of each month to pray and celebrate the Mass in the hermitage of Saint Charbel in Annaya.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charbel_Makhlouf

Carbon Fast for Lent 2017



Why Fast?

Throughout history, fasting has been integral to the spiritual practice of people of all faiths. Like pebbles in our shoe, the hunger pangs of fasting are a steady reminder of an intention to leave behind an old way of life and to prepare for spiritual rebirth. The feeling of hunger prompts a continued awareness of the need to become more conscientious in our actions and to wholeheartedly commit to the inward transformation we seek. Fasting also reminds us to keep in our hearts the plight of the poor and the imperative to care for the least of these.

Many of us grew up “giving something up” for Lent—candy, meat, or other pleasures—only to gleefully indulge in the forbidden item when the season passed and then carry on with business as usual. While going without something we enjoy gives us a taste of sacrifice—and perhaps a gentle reminder of the those who routinely do without—it does not often bring about a deeper inward change.

We hope that this guide to a Lenten “Carbon Fast” will help you not merely “give up” some conveniences temporarily, but will assist you in making a more fundamental transformation as you prepare to awaken to new life in Christ.

Why Carbon?

Because carbon is a heattrapping gas that contributes to global warming, reducing carbon emissions is critical to slowing the progression of climate change.

Reducing carbon emissions is urgent. Climate change is happening right here, right now. From droughts and erratic weather patterns that interfere with agriculture, to heat waves and natural disasters that claim lives and wreak havoc on communities, we must take swift and effective action.

Those who are being affected most severely by climate change including millions of people in the developing world who have lost their homes and

livelihoods— are those whose own carbon footprints are the smallest, and who have fewest resources to cope with the fallout. This means that reducing our carbon emissions is also a matter of social justice.

Because every individual contributes to carbon emissions, every individual can also make changes to emit less. By making changes in the ways we drive our cars, heat and cool our buildings, and consume food and other goods that have travelled thousands of miles to get to us, we do our part in reducing the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere.

How to use this calendar

Our hope is that you will commit this Lenten season to heeding the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor by taking steps to cut your carbon emissions. We hope that these steps will help you build sustainable habits and move toward what the Pope has called an “ecological conversion”—a transformation of the heart that shifts how understand your relationship with nature and other people.

To these ends, we have suggested one sustainability-related activity for each day between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Some of these might be things you’re already doing. Some require a little preparation. Some might be rather challenging.

Christians are called to dwell in community, to share in one another’s burdens and joys, and to work together as members of one body. You might see if members of your congregation or family want to participate in the Carbon Fast with you.

If doing one activity each day seems overwhelming, you might instead choose one activity each week and repeat it each day. Or choose one action and do it for the whole season.

In this season of repentance and rebirth, we hope above all that this calendar will be a tool for spurring action and reflection, helping us right our relationship with the Earth, in these 40 days and beyond.



Carbon Fast for Lent



MARCH 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ash Wednesday Calculate your carbon footprint: www.nature.org/greenliving .	2 Based on your carbon footprint score, set goals for shrinking your emissions.	3 Learn about our oceans and commit to buying only seafood that was fished sustainably.	4 Install a programmable thermostat. Set it lower during the day and at bedtime.
5 1st Sunday Find the most environmentally friendly way you can to get to church today.	6 Put out bird food. Enjoy the beauty of these and other creatures on God's Earth.	7 Consider ordering sustainably grown palms for your Palm Sunday service.	8 Read Matthew 25:34-45. Consider how environmental degradation affects the poor.	9 Set your printer to print on both sides and buy paper that has a recycled content.	10 Run your dishwasher only with a full load. Skip the heat cycle and let your dishes air dry.	11 Caulk and weatherstrip around doors and windows to plug air leaks.
12 2nd Sunday Consider starting or rejuvenating an Earth Care Team in your congregation	13 Learn about how your diet impacts climate change: vegmichigan.org .	14 If you like to buy coffee on the go, remember to bring your travel mug with you!	15 Turn down your water heater; 120 degrees is usually hot enough.	16 When heating water on the stove, use a lid. Only use as much water as you need.	17 Feast of St. Patrick Celebrate St. Patrick's Day by sourcing your corned beef and cabbage locally!	18 Make sure your tire pressure is set correctly for optimal gas mileage
19 3rd Sunday Take a walk. Greet your neighbors, feel the sun on your face. Rejoice in all creation!	20 Call your utility company to schedule a free home energy assessment and get free upgrades.	21 Instead of using the dryer, hang your clothes to dry on a rack.	22 Save trees and reduce waste by stopping unwanted junk mail at dmachoice.org	23 "Just Say No" to plastic bags. Keep cloth bags on hand for planned or impromptu shopping.	24 Turn the water off while brushing your teeth to save 50+ gallons of water per week.	25 Think prayerfully about our use of natural resources. What would Jesus drive, eat, etc.?
26 4th Sunday If your family has more than one car, use your most fuel efficient one for errands and trips.	27 Systemic change not climate change! Become an advocate at: MichiganIPL.org/action	28 As you plan your garden, choose native perennials that require less water.	29 Tame your lead foot while on the highway. Higher speeds reduce fuel economy.	30 Do the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, and Recycle.	31 Check that all lights and electrical equipment are switched off when not in use.	1 Throw out any incandescent lights in your home and install LEDs.



Carbon Fast for Lent



April 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 4th Sunday If your family has more than one car, use your most fuel efficient one for errands and trips.	27 Systemic change not climate change! Become an advocate at: MichiganIPL.org/action	28 As you plan your garden, choose native perennials that require less water.	29 Tame your lead foot while on the highway. Higher speeds reduce fuel economy.	30 Do the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, and Recycle.	31 Check that all lights and electrical equipment are switched off when not in use.	1 Throw out any incandescent lights in your home and install LEDs.
2 5th Sunday Observe the Sabbath by unplugging your electronics and yourself!	3 Protect our waterways by learning about proper prescription drug disposal.	4 Watch this: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_lqFTYlc_4	5 Explore how you can make an upcoming vacation "greener."	6 Set a timer for 5 mins. and see how your shower compares. Can you improve your time?	7 Watch movie about faith and environment Ideas: www.miipl.org/films-videos/	8 Learn about your power. How much of the energy you use comes from coal? Nuclear? Gas?
9 Palm Sunday Wash your clothes in cold water. Modern soaps do not need hot water to be effective.	10 Power down your computer at the end of the day. Screen savers do not save energy!	11 Every device that plugs in draws power even after it's charged. Smart strips can help!	12 Change your furnace filter every 3 months to ensure that your furnace runs efficiently.	13 Holy Thursday Turn off your ignition when waiting more than 10 seconds to protect air quality.	14 Good Friday Try buying nothing today. Repurpose, borrow, or simply go without.	15 Holy Saturday Make your own cleaning products with non-toxic ingredients like vinegar and essential oils.
16 Easter As you reflect on the Resurrection, continue to celebrate and steward God's creation!	17 Bonus: Recalculate your carbon footprint. Did it shrink?					



Brought to you by Michigan IPL, with thanks to Washington IPL for many of the ideas contained in this calendar.