

Good News Report

Secular Franciscan Order
Trillium Regional Fraternity



Number 90

March 2020

Ordre franciscain séculier
Fraternité nationale du Canada



Secular Franciscan Order
National Fraternity of Canada

March 14, 2020

Dear Regional Ministers,

May God give you peace.

I am writing regarding the recent outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that is infiltrating the world. The seriousness of this virus is clear, as is the desire to avoid spreading the virus. Realizing that the majority of our members are seniors, who are in the high risk category concerning the coronavirus, the OFS National Council is providing you with the following guidance. **Please distribute this message to all of your local fraternities.**

Firstly, we highly recommend that all face-to-face local and regional chapters or meetings be cancelled for the time being. If this involves cancelling elective chapters, either locally or regionally, the National Council will continue to recognize the existing elected councils until such time as elections can be held.

More importantly, as brothers and sisters, all of us are encouraged to find ways to stay in touch with each other, with our families, with our friends and with those in need. Even though we may not be able to be physically present to each other, we can call each other, drop off notes and/or food to those who are in self isolation or are elderly and, for those who have access to the internet, connect through email or other media. It is a time for us to be innovative in the way we provide care to those around us.

We ask you to continue to follow healthy hygiene practices as outlined in the guidelines of your national and provincial governments.

With regards to participating in public worship, we urge you to follow the guidelines of your local diocese. For those who are unable to attend mass, *Salt and Light TV* broadcasts a mass every day both online (saltandlighttv.org/mass/) and on their television station (check your local guide for channels and times). Daily mass is also available on YouTube which can be accessed at your convenience. You are also encouraged to use this time to reflect on the Word of God, including the daily readings in your missalette, as well as other spiritual writings.

Finally, let us all use this situation as an opportunity to spend more time in prayer for our world. We are including (below) Pope Francis' *Prayer to Our Lady, Health of the Sick*, which we urge all members to pray daily. You may also wish to consider this as an opportunity given to us for self reflection, a kind of retreat from the busyness of life. In addition, we ask for your continued prayers for our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering because of this outbreak, for their speedy recovery, for the repose of the souls of those who have died and for comfort and consolation to their families. Finally we pray for a speedy end to this pandemic.

Doug Clorey, ofs
National Minister

(Prayer on page 2)

PRAYER TO OUR LADY, HEALTH OF THE SICK

**O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey
as a sign of salvation and hope.**

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick.

**At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain,
with steadfast faith.**

You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need.

**We are certain that you will provide, so that,
as you did at Cana of Galilee,
joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.**

**Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the Father's will
and to do what Jesus tells us:
He who took our sufferings upon Himself,
and bore our sorrows to bring us,
through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.**

**We seek refuge under your protection,
O Holy Mother of God.**

**Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test –
and deliver us from every danger,
O glorious and blessed Virgin.**

A MOMENT WITH THE MINISTER

*Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages
“curing every disease and illness.” At your command,
the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the
midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we
may experience your healing love.*

*Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain
their strength and health through quality medical care.*

*Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working
together and neighbours from helping one another.*

*Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulner-
ability to a disease that knows no borders.*

*Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of
uncertainty and sorrow.*

*Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at
rest with you in your eternal peace.*

*Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As
they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May
they know your peace.*

I thought it best to begin with a prayer for these challenging times we are experiencing. By now, all the Ministers of the Region have received guidelines from our National Minister, Doug Clorey, regarding all local and Regional meetings, elections and visits to be cancelled. This will also include our upcoming Chapter of Elections that we had planned for May 1 and 2 at the St. Francis Centre.



All existing elected Councils at the Local and Regional levels will remain in office until elections can be held in the future.

Any fraternity members who have prepaid for the Chapter, a refund will be forthcoming from our Treasurer.

Most importantly, please remember that we are fraternity.

For Francis, the word “fraternity” identifies this relationship that each of us has with Jesus our brother. For St Francis, fraternity is his radical living in solidarity with all of humanity and creation. From the poetry and prayer of the *Canticle of the Creatures* to the *Story of the Wolf of Gubbio* and exemplified in the *Encounter with the Sultan*, Francis’ heart rests in the faithful recognition of his relationship with the other. Such love is an active self-emptying love that frees our hearts from self-interest, in a daily conversion, which builds up the bonds of fraternity. Its absence undermines and breaks this bond.

Please make every effort to stay in touch with one another through phone calls and emails.

Thomas of Celano, one of the early biographers of Francis, described the saint’s life as prayer; that is, all his thoughts, words and actions, even if trivial, were directed toward God in praise and thanksgiving. Viewing prayer as an intimate relationship with God rather than vocal, repetitive words helps me understand that my faintest desire to quiet down and search for God is prayer in itself.

Prayer as relationship requires trust in the grace of God. Psalm 46:10 captures this sentiment, “Be still and know that I am God.”

*Catherine Payne of-
Deus meus et omnia*



SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

Once again we find ourselves in the season of Lent. This season encourages us to take up three essential spiritual practices: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. I would like to focus on prayer.

Our Lord tells us in the 6th chapter of Matthew: when you pray "*do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do*". He reminds us that our heavenly Father "*knows what you need before you ask him*". Jesus goes on to say, "*when you pray say: Our Father ...*" He teaches us the prayer that we know as the Lord's Prayer.

We pray this prayer often, at least once a day. It is so familiar to us that at times we pray it by rote not even thinking of the words we are saying. In a way we have allowed this prayer to become "*empty phrases as the Gentiles do.*"

How can we allow the Lord's prayer to become the prayer it was meant to be for us. The answer is to meditate on the words of this prayer as Saint Francis did in his *Paraphrase of the Our Father*. Take at least 5 to 10 minutes each day to pray the Our Father slowly phrase by phrase even word by word. Start with the opening word: "*our.*" Reflect on what that means to you. Not **my** but **our** Father. That could be your whole prayer for 5 to 10 minutes. The next day move on to the word "*Father.*"

Each day take a word or phrase and reflect on it. Hopefully this will allow this beautiful prayer to have greater meaning in your life.

Fr. Peter Knaapen O.F.M. Conv



CORONAVIRUS

Fr. Peter Knaapen O.F.M. Conv

Recognizing the seriousness of the coronavirus (covid 19) pandemic, and realizing that the majority of our members are seniors, who are in the high risk category concerning the coronavirus, and the fact that we do not want to spread the coronavirus the Secular Franciscan National Council highly recommends that all face to face local, regional and national chapters or meetings be cancelled.

We ask for your continued prayers for our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering because of this outbreak, especially those in China, Italy and Iran. We pray for their speedy recovery. We also pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died and for comfort and consolation for their families. Finally we pray for a speedy end to this pandemic.

We asked you to continue to follow healthy hygiene practices.

- Wash your hands with soap or use hand sanitizer frequently
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or face
- Sneeze into a tissue or into your sleeve
- If you feel sick, please stay home

If you think you have the symptoms of the Coronavirus please contact your local public health department or your doctor on where you should go to be tested or receive medical help.

For those who are unable to attend mass, *Daily Mass TV* broadcasts a mass every day on both TV and YouTube. Please check your local guide for channels and times. You can watch the mass on YouTube at your convenience.

Please follow the directions of your local diocese in regards to mass attendance.

Be Still

And Know That I Am God

I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!

Psalm 99:1

knowingjesus.com

TREASURER'S TWO CENTS

"It is true that God's power triumphs over everything, but humble and suffering prayer prevails over God himself." — St. Padre Pio.

Mark Rozario ofs



VICE MINISTER

“Dust to Dust, Ashes to Ashes”. Our finality.



On Wednesday, February 26, we celebrated the first of the Forty Days of Lent: the day on which Catholics of the Latin Rite celebrate “Ash Wednesday,” by having a cross traced on their foreheads, using blessed ashes obtained from the palms that were blessed on Palm Sunday, and saying the words like: “*Remember man thou art dust and unto dust thou shall return*”. The words are an important reminder of our mortality ... that we did not come on this earth to stay, but we “came to pass”. Therefore this is the time for us to repent, abstain and make reparation in atonement for our sins during the forty days of Lent and to move victoriously to Easter.

The ceremony of the Ashes goes back to the First Council of Nicea when Roman Catholics were encouraged to Fast and abstain from eating meat on Wednesdays and Fridays during the forty days of Lent, in Reparation and atonement for sins. The Church today still makes that requirement that we Fast and abstain from meat and also to give to charity.

We should take into consideration that abstaining does not only mean abstaining from food and all the good things that give joy to the senses, but also from negativity: negative thoughts, words and those things that destroy the soul.

Why are ashes used and when did the practice begin? There are many examples of the use of ashes in atonement for disasters and reparation for sin, in the Old Testament. e.g. Job; and many other instances where we see God relenting from His anger when He saw the people in “sackcloth and ashes” atoning for their sins; and in the New Testament: Matt: 12:21. Jesus berating the cities where He had done the most of His miracles, “for they had not done penance”. *‘Woe to thee, Corozain, woe to thee Bethsaida: for if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in you, they had long ago done penance in sackcloth and ashes’*

Teresa Viechweg, ofs

VICE MINISTER

Sainthood For Everyone?



Lent is a time when everyone thinks about doing better. If you do the office of Readings you know that you are reading a story about Moses who is a prototype of Christ.

Adonai [God] gives Moses a huge task and then seems to get in his way as he tries to accomplish it. It seems also that way to us, at times, as we are so much like those Israelites who do nothing but complain every time in spite of the fact that God continually saves them.

God is a mystery that is for certain and He is a mystery not to be solved. We do our best, and as long as we do the mystery continues as well as His love.

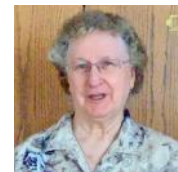
I think sometimes of St. Bernadette who said, "When I die all in Lourdes will say I am a saint as I cook in Purgatory. Though the way is difficult. It is the only way.

Pax et Bonum!

John Francis ofs

FORMATION DIRECTOR

REFLECTIONS



Lent opens up many aspects for meditation, but Psalm 106:21 has caught my attention....”*They forgot the God who had saved them, who had done great deeds in Egypt.*”

In her wisdom, Holy Mother Church directs our minds each year to reflect during Lenten where life begins and ends: In God. Thus I need to put God on my to-do list or to make God my front and centre, in other words my priority.

In our busy world things can become mechanical and lack heart and spirit. Has my life become work-centered, action-filled but God-empty?

How easily I can place God in a cornered section with to-do lists, spiritual or otherwise and fail to get to know God more than I could possibly put into words. I need to ask myself how I can find ways to see God at work or in the things on my calendar and everyday tasks.

I pray God will grant my eyes to see Him in every encounter and every task of each day like our holy father St. Francis did.

God bless and may God grant us a holy and happy Lenten season 2020.

Susan Luckasavitch, ofs

A Morning Prayer

by Hermy Villasenor, ofs
(St. Felix of Cantalice Fraternity)



Another day is past,
the night is almost over
Another day is dawning
with words and thoughts to bring

The wind is surely blowing
with precious grains unknown
The sun will come from hiding
with hopes and dreams to bear

The stars will rest from guiding
restless souls from their seeking
The moon will be a shadow
of the luminous orb displayed

Once more the beauty of creation
is revealed in all its splendour
The earth again is singing
exaltations to the Creator

But what about the human heart
still restless in its searching
defiant in its wandering
treading paths strewn with pain
Or the mind that remains weary
longing for some rest to be
flailing, floating aimlessly
in the restless and stormy sea

Ah, the crucifix upon the wall
is bidding me to come home
in the majesty of the naked Cross
rests the rest that I am seeking

Come to me says Him
whose head is crowned with thorns
hands are nailed, and side is open
feet are pierced in constant pain

His tender look up on the Cross
gives light to my own darkness
and the soothing love He bears
stills and comforts all my longing

Let me stay a while with you, Lord
within your wounds let me find haven
give me refuge in your breast
there to lay my head to rest

As the sun rises again
in the wonder of creation
hold me close, my Lord and Master
and lead me through the day

End -

St. Marguerite Bays - Canonized October 13, 2019.

According to John Paul II...

"Marguerite Bays encourages us to make our existence a path of love. [She] also reminds us of our mission in the world: to proclaim the Gospel in time and against time, especially to the young. She invites us to discover the greatness of the sacraments of the Church. ...She was a simple woman, with an ordinary life ... she did not achieve extraordinary things, and yet her existence was a long, silent march in the way of holiness."

- from the Homily of the Beatification Mass of Marguerite Bays,
29 October 1995

Marguerite Bays was best known in her village for being a simple, devout, and cheerful woman who didn't draw attention to herself. She strove to maintain a simple and austere life in order to better serve the sick and poor around her, who were often farmers displaced by the ever-increasing mechanization of agricultural labour. It was her love of service that led to a strong identification with the charism of St. Francis of Assisi. She felt freer to serve God if she was not a member of a religious congregation and instead joined the lay branch of the Franciscan family, the Secular Franciscan Order.



Prayer to Christ on Calvary

By Gabriela Mistral -
A Franciscan Poet

This afternoon, O Christ on Calvary
I came to plead with you for my ailing flesh,
but on seeing you my eyes went back and forth
from your body to my own with shame.

How can I complain about my weary feet
when I see yours utterly destroyed?
How can I show you my empty hands
when yours are covered with wounds?

How can I explain my loneliness to you
when you are hoisted and alone on the cross?
How can I tell you that I have no love
when your own heart has been torn?

Now, I no longer remember anything;
all my infirmities have fled from me.
The urgency of all pleading before you
has drowned in my imploring mouth.

Now I only plead to plead for nothing;
just to be here beside your dying image -
to learn that all pain is nothing but
the holy door-key to your holy gateway.

Amen.

**



I came to plead with you, Lord. But how can I plead my
case after I beheld you on the cross?

I came to complain about my emptiness, but all I can do
is contemplate your wounds.

I came to tell you about my loneliness, but you are so
lonesome up on that tree.

I came to say that I miss my beloved, but I can see your
heart has been torn.

When I contemplate you, I unite my lonely heart to your
pierced heart and everything acquires a new perspective.

I don't feel less lonely, but suddenly my loneliness
seems to have a purpose. Through you, O Lord,
the riddles of my sorrows grow meaningful. "*Now I re-
joice in my sufferings for your sake*" (Col 1:24).

Beneath the cross on Calvary, my life is transformed
because I suffer together with you.

Submitted by: Mrs. Teodora S. La Madrid, ofs

The Good News Report

is the newsletter of the Secular Franciscan Order, Trillium Region. We aim to publish it between the middle and end of: March, June, September, and December.

Opinions expressed by individual contributors do not necessarily reflect positions of the Trillium Regional Fraternity.

Any items you wish to include are warmly welcomed and will be considered, space permitting. Articles may be sent by the 8th of the month of publishing, to *deacon maurice Prindiville, ofs*, mprindiville@golden.net

Note: If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please let us know as above.

Local Fraternity Bulletin Board

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROFESSION !

St. Francis Fraternity Burlington celebrated the 60th Anniversary of Profession for Frank and Isobel Flood on Friday, October 4th, 2019.

Frank shared many enriching stories of fraternity life and gatherings in the early days!

May God bless them with renewed health, peace and joy!



*Frank and Isobel Flood
and
Fr. Peter Knaapen O.F.M. Conv. -
Regional Spiritual Assistant*



Anne Matyuska of St. Mary of the Angels, Welland and Frank and Irene shared memories.



Mark Rozario of St. Francis Fraternity presents certificates.



St. Anne's Fraternity, Windsor/ Tecumseh and Chatham

Fraternity Elections were held on January 26, 2020. The new Council members here are: (L toR) John Vajdik, - Vice Minister, Elizabeth Dorner – Secretary, Luis Alvarez, - Minister, Silvana Alvarez - Treasurer, Barbara Graham – Formation Minister. May St. Francis and St. Clare bless this new Council in all their work.



New Council: 2020 St. Benedict the Black the Black

St. Benedict the Black Fraternity celebrated their fraternal elections on Saturday February 1, 2020. St. Francis says, "Who are God's servants but God's minstrels who comfort the human heart and lead it to Spiritual joy?"



Minister: Mario Perez, Vice-Minister Eric De Souza, Formation Director: Carlos Abug
Treasurer: Angela Tedjo, Secretary: John Glyn-Williams

OBITUARIES



Alicya Wlusekofs

Alicya Wlusekofs, from St. Anne's Fraternity, Windsor/Tecumseh died January 8, 2020. She was the mother of Father Steve Wlusek who is the rector at St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica in London, Ontario.

Henricus Knaapen

Harry Knaapen 1919 - 2019, died peacefully at the Honoré Mercier Hospital in Saint-Hyacinthe. He was predeceased by Mary his wife of 72 years. Loving father of Mary (the late David Crutcher), Frank (the late Janeta Neilson) and Peter, OFM Conventual. Harry is also survived by his 5 grandchildren and his 12 great- grandchildren, along with many relatives and friends in Holland, California and Canada.

RITE OF ADMISSION

St. Felix of Cantalice Fraternity

St. Felix Fraternity celebrated the Rite of Admission of Yesmil Pena de Nunez on Sunday January 26.

Continued blessings on you, Yesmil, as you continue your journey to Profession.



From left to right: Guadalupe Lugo-Estok, Gerardo Elises, Yesmil Pena, Teodora La Madrid, Bro. Alan Gaebel and Ricardo Ong.



He was greeted by Toronto York Region Métis Council leaders Shirley deBassige and Marilyn Hew

LOUIS RIEL DAY

Hermey Villaseñor of St. Felix Fraternity, attended the 175th anniversary of the birth of Louis Riel and the 150th anniversary of the Red River Resistance led by Riel in defense of the Métis.



... and greeted by Margaret Froh, president of The Métis Nation of Ontario.



Do you need a certificate for a newly professed member or for a special anniversary for a fraternity member?

Please contact:

Clelia Malerba at: malerbac@yahoo.com