



St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity  
Cornwall, P.E.I.

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI FRATERNITY NEWSLETTER**  
**June 2021**

**VOLUME XXXIII NO. 6**

**Indigenous Spirituality and Father's Day**

As Franciscans, we marvel at the wonders of God's creation: the earth and all that dwells within it, but also the universe with its countless planets, suns, moons and constellations.

Myths from all over the world have both a mother and a father figure in them. The mother is usually the Earth and the father the Sky or Universe. The Greek creation myth told of the goddess, Gaia, and the god, Uranus, who fell in love; Gaia was the earth and Uranus was the sky. Similar creation myths can be found in most ancient cultures.



Closer to home, the central spiritual beliefs of the Anishinabe people, a group of culturally related Indigenous people resident in what is now called Canada and the United States, can be summed up as follows; respect for self, respect for others, respect for Mother Earth and respect for Father Sky, the Great Spirit and the Universe (Excerpt from *First Nations Pedagogy* website, June Kaminski). It is also worth noting that the Medicine Wheel, used by generations of native people, embodies the Four Directions, as well as Father Sky, Mother Earth, and Spirit Tree, all of which symbolize dimensions of health and the cycles of life.

Note how there is distinctive room for both Mother Earth and Father Sky in these ancient creation myths and indigenous spirituality. While Western culture has tended to acknowledge Mother Earth, less attention has often been paid to Father Sky. The face of God can clearly be seen in both Mother Earth and Father Sky.



**Happy Father's Day** to all the special fathers in our fraternity. May you have a wonderful celebration of your giftedness. We are all most grateful for the gift of fatherhood.

## Ongoing Formation - June, 2021

Every three years, beginning in the month of June, our fraternity embarks on a process of discernment in which we collectively pray to the Holy Spirit to guide us in our evaluation of the past three years and envision where the Lord is calling us to journey as a fraternity. In this period, we also consider the type of leadership we wish to elect to guide us in our on-going Secular Franciscan journey.

At our June meeting we will begin this process of discernment with Sister Gemma sharing on the “Ministry of Service” and this will be followed by very short presentations by each Council member outlining their role and responsibility on Council.

In July, Doug Clorey will lead us in a dynamic “visioning” process in which we will examine where we have been and where we believe the Lord is calling us as a fraternity. This will be followed by the call for nominations which will be led by our Nominating Committee, Mary and Doug Hagen.

As we know, God only works through us the members. We therefore need to **pray and call forward (nominate)** those we discern as potential leaders, in conformity with our holy Rule, articles 21 and 22. Our vocation as Secular Franciscans calls us to grow in faith through personal and fraternal prayer, our formation and in our fraternal life. It is in this spirit of the Gospels, and the example of St. Francis and St. Clare, that we do as Christ commands. Let us enter this process joyfully and in a spirit of love and optimism.

(Submitted by Tom Wilkinson)



## Call to Serve

**“Each one, as a good steward of God’s different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he/she has received from God.” (1 Peter 4:10)**

Herein lies our call to Christian service and leaders of faith communities are called to serve in a distinctive way. Actually, Jesus gives his disciples a simple, clear example of what discipleship is all about – service - washing one another’s feet when we feed the hungry, visit the sick, care for the poor, comfort the afflicted, guide the assembly, speak truth with compassion and the many ways we sustain hope for others. May each one take time to reflect generously on how we desire to share our gifts for the leadership of this fraternity.

(Submitted by Sr. Gemma Dunn, CSM)

## Prayer of Discernment



Yahweh, God of the journey,  
you went with the Israelites in the form of a pillar of clouds  
by day  
to show them the way,  
and by night in the form of a pillar of fire  
to give them light for their journey. (Ex.13:21-22).

We long for that kind of assuredness of Your Presence  
as we discern the future direction for our fraternity.  
We fear the unknown and wonder what the future may hold for us.  
A part of us wants to hold on to the blessings we have known  
and to rest in the security of letting others take the lead.  
Remind us often that we each, in our own way, have gifts to offer our fraternity.

May we be open to your Word and your Way.  
Encourage us with a deepened awareness  
of the needs our brothers and sisters in fraternity.  
May we have the wisdom to follow the lead of spirit  
in planning for future of our fraternity.

We ask this through Christ Your Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

(Submitted by Doug and Mary Hagen)

## Truth and Reconciliation - Residential Schools

At its May meeting, the fraternity welcomed John Barrett of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, who presented on the theme of “*The History of Residential Schools in Canada and the Truth & Reconciliation Commission (TRC)*”.

During his presentation, John provided a balanced account of these matters and, at times, the content he presented was very sobering and emotional. He urged the fraternity to read the 94 calls to action of the TRC. John has since provided the fraternity with sufficient copies of the TRC report which will be distributed at the June meeting. John also provided some thoughtful questions for the small group discussions. Gerry eloquently thanked John for his moving and very informative presentation. The accompanying hymn was *We Are Called*.



(Submitted by Tom Wilkinson)

## Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

*In this contemplative poem, Felicia Morrell's words combine a deep awareness of God's presence while clearly naming the collective trauma of police brutality and lynchings. Read the poem slowly.*

### **Silence** (by Felicia Morrell)

Silence:  
If you're silent,  
you can hear the forest breathe,  
the holy hush of the tree's limb.

“Silence,” said Thomas Merton, “is God’s first language”:  
the way it soaks into your skin,  
surrounds you,  
blanketing you like the forest’s breath.

Silence:  
The cadence of the land at rest,  
the body asleep, the heart awake.

Silence:  
The deep rhythmic breathing of a mind slowed down,  
an ocean still,  
wet dew clinging to grass blade.

Silence:  
The sacred song trapped in a bird’s breast before its first chirp,  
the still of night across a desert landscape  
wrapped in a bone-aching chill  
before the sun rises to scorch its parched earth.

Silence:  
The lusty gaze of onlookers staring at the negro on the lynching tree,  
neck snapped,  
life ended,  
feet dangling,  
back and forth, back and forth.

Silenced:  
Hands up, don’t shoot!  
Body thrumming with a heady sense of power.  
Hands in pocket, resting pose, knees embedded into a man’s neck.

Silence, please.  
I. Can’t. Breathe.

Silenced.

(Excerpts from *Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations*, May 6, 2021.)



## Youth Adult Initiative



In September, 2019, Atlantic area fraternities were asked by the Atlantic Area Vice-Minister to consider ways in which Secular Franciscans could potentially connect with young adults. St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity's Young Adult Initiative is our response to that invitation. Our fraternity went through a process of exploring members' ideas and beliefs about engaging with young adults in 2020. Thereafter, Council decided to form the Young Adult Initiative with three of our members who were asked to follow through on the goal of accompanying young adults and journeying with them.

During that fall, the three Secular Franciscans worked to form a group with young adults for the purpose of discussing issues of importance to the members of the group. Four different young adults have joined us for various meetings, with a fifth person who committed to join us, but who thus far has been unable to, due to personal/family commitments at the meeting time. We had gatherings via Zoom approximately every five to six weeks, beginning in December 2020, and continuing through January, March and April 2021. At the April gathering, the group decided to take the summer off, and begin again in September.

We are looking forward to the group coming together again in September, for we find that we as older "spiritual seekers" have learned a great deal from the younger "spiritual seekers" in the group. We have been asked by Council to make a short presentation at our fraternity meeting on Sunday, June 13. We'll be happy to share more detail and answer any questions you might have at that time.

(Submitted by Martha Gabriel)

## Annual Fraternity Retreat 2021

The St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity annual retreat is scheduled for

**September 10-12, 2021  
at Our Lady of Hope Retreat Centre,  
in Bayview, PEI.**

The retreat will begin at 6 pm on Friday evening and conclude at 1 pm on Sunday (after lunch).



**The theme of the retreat will be "Community & the Gospel of St. John", and will be facilitated by Sr. Joan Campbell CSM.**

**Because of the present situation with COVID-19, there is a limit of 25 registrants and we are accepting registrations only from St. Francis of Assisi and Brother Leo Fraternities. A registration form is attached to this newsletter.**

## **June Birthday**

June 11	Marion Clorey
June 13	Kathleen May
June 15	Lorraine Gillan
June 16	Tom Wilkinson
June 22	Doug Hagen



Happy Birthday, Marion, Kathleen, Lorraine, Tom and Doug H. Blessings on you and your families!

## **Newsletter**

Newsletter items are always welcome. You may send them before the last Wednesday of the month to Doug Clorey at [jdclorey@gmail.com](mailto:jdclorey@gmail.com).

## **Upcoming Events**

Fraternity Meeting - **Sunday, June 13th at 7:00PM at St. Francis of Assisi Church hall (basement)**. Meeting setup will respect social distancing. Everyone is expected to wear a mask. There will be no food at this meeting.

## **2021 Fraternity Meetings**

Sunday, June 13	7-9 p.m.
Sunday, July 11	7-9 p.m.

August (Date TBD): Fraternity Picnic

September 10-12: Fraternity Retreat (Our Lady of Hope Retreat Centre)

Sunday, October 3	7-9 p.m. (Note: the <b>first</b> Sunday of the month)
Sunday, November 14	2-4 p.m.
Sunday, December 12	2-4 p.m.

**Mark your calendars!!**

**St Francis of Assisi Fraternity Annual Retreat 2021**  
**September 10-12, 2021**  
**Our Lady of Hope Retreat Centre, Bayview, PE**

**REGISTRATION FORM**

**Because of the present situation with COVID-19, there is a limit of 25 registrants and we are accepting registrations only from St. Francis of Assisi and Br. Leo Fraternities.**

The fees for the retreat are **\$180 for individuals** and **\$280 for a married couple sharing a room**. These fees include the costs charged by the retreat centre (for 2 overnight stays, 5 meals and snacks during the breaks) and a small amount to offset the expenses for travel, accommodation, and honorarium for the facilitator.

- Each room at the retreat centre contains a bathroom ensuite, and towels and bed linens are provided.
- To take full advantage of the retreat, everyone attending is expected to stay at the retreat centre from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon.
- There will not be a reduced rate for those attending only part of the retreat. **All registrants, whether they stay overnight or not, will have individual rooms for privacy.**

Please complete the registration form below and return it, along with the full payment of \$180 for an individual **OR** \$280 for a married couple sharing a room, to  
**Michael Cassidy, 5 Arbour Lane, Cornwall, PE C0A 1H4.**

- Make cheques payable to “St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity”.
- Registration with payment must be received by **Friday, August 27, 2021.**
- Cancellation date for refund: on or before **Sunday, September 5, 2021.**

(To cancel or obtain more information, contact Michael Cassidy at  
902-368-9309 or at mcassidypei@hotmail.com)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Local Fraternity \_\_\_\_\_

Room requirements (please check):    Single \_\_\_\_\_    Double \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact \_\_\_\_\_    Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**Dietary Requirements/Concerns** (Please specify)