



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

## **ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI FRATERNITY NEWSLETTER**

**March 2020**

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### **Embracing Changes in Life**

Mary gives Franciscans a model to follow by how she embraced the changes in her life. We too face many changes in our faith. Vatican II, as well as many other events in recent decades, have invited us to new perspectives in our faith.

We are well aware of the declining numbers of men entering the priesthood and women entering religious orders. We know that closing and combining of parishes sometimes brings distress and apprehension to parishioners in those parishes.



The sexual abuse scandals and loss of trust are serious issues to confront and work through in our lives. The violence in our world increases fear among us ... and sadly we are sometimes the victims of violence.

New findings which bring new insights into scripture are not always easy to accept. The rapid and invariable growth of technology brings us sometimes to crossroads in our faith. These and other events in our world challenge us.

By studying and accepting Mary as a model for embracing change, we find a safe harbor, "a Star of the Sea", to reflect and to move on through the changes in our lives.

(excerpt from *Francis and the Blessed Virgin Mary*, Mary Simone, OFS, 2011)

## **Formation**

### **Mary, Mother of God**



Mary gives birth in a barn or stable and the shepherds come to see her Child. They leave singing praises. Mary ponders and reflects and treasures all these things that happen to her. She is our model in so many ways. Here, Mary is the first follower of Jesus, the first disciple. And the example she sets, the model she gives through her actions is that a follower of Jesus takes time to reflect on life's events. A true disciple believes that there is meaning and mystery in daily life. A Christian takes time to pray quietly and sit at the feet of his or her Master to be still and hear God's lessons that present themselves.

### **Invitation to Reflect**

Mary pondered these things in her heart. Compare this response to that of Francis: "Yes, this is what I want."

Please meditate on this and try to discern the deep meaning of the word "ponder".

Where do both of these responses fit into our spiritual lives and our response to God's call to discipleship?

## **Justice, Peace and Care of Creation**

### **Community and Fraternal Life**

*A sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ. (OFS Rule, Art. 13 b)*



Think about all the relationships you have in your life.

In order to strengthen and nurture those relationships, you must spend quality time with the people in those relationships. During this time, we dialogue, we listen, and we get to know the other person. In our relationship with God we must spend time with God and get to know Him. From that relationship, we are better able to be with our brothers and sister, in family, in community and in fraternity.

Today we need our communities and fraternities. Lives have become busy. Loneliness has heightened and, more and more, people are hiding behind the screens of their online devices. It is said that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. This applies to all of our relationships, and our apostolic mission is to let people who are struggling know that they are loved. It is also an important message to consider in fraternity. It is important that we develop caring relationships with our brothers and sisters. It is also important that we extend our interaction beyond our monthly meetings. What about taking some time occasionally (setting time aside) to just chat with each other about what is going on in our lives, and offering support and encouragement? This builds community, and community builds vibrant, healthy fraternal life.

(taken from *Catholic Teaching and Fraternal Life*, Carloyn D. Townes, OFS, National JPIC Animator)

### **Invitation to Reflect**

Take some time to reflect on this question – How can we help to build fraternity outside of monthly meetings?

### **Liturgical Prayer**

The fraternity welcomed Fr. Keith Kennific to its regular February meeting. Tom Wilkinson (Minister) introduced Fr. Keith who led the ongoing formation section of the meeting. His theme was Liturgical Prayer and its relation to Article 8 of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. Fr. Keith explained the origins and benefits of liturgy and what distinguishes liturgical prayer from devotional prayer. Some of the areas that he highlighted included:



- The original meaning of the word 'liturgy' (from the Greek) is that it is work undertaken as a public service, something intended for the common good.
- Liturgy is the official public prayer of the Church. It is ritualistic prayer and not limited to the sacraments. The profession of religious vows, for example, is a form of liturgy.
- Liturgical prayer is community-based while devotional prayer (e.g. rosary, novenas, etc.) is individual-based.

- Don't underestimate the importance of the ritualistic nature of liturgy: going through the motions is important when we don't feel like doing something or being someone.
- Liturgy is the centre of religious life and the Eucharist is the centre of liturgy.
- "Sometimes, people are ready for God, but not ready for the Church."
- With regard to the Eucharist: "Receive what you already are, and become what you receive." (St. Augustine)



Fr. Keith was relaxed and inspiring as he engaged the fraternity in a dialogue on the topic. At the conclusion of the session, Mary Hagen, a member of the ongoing formation team, thanked Fr. Keith on behalf of the fraternity.

### **Annual Fraternity Retreat 2020**

The 2020 annual fraternity retreat will be held on September 25-27, 2020 at Our Lady of Hope Retreat Centre. Please take note of this date on your calendars.

### **Regional Elective Chapter**

The Regional Elective Chapter of the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada will be held on July 31 – August 2, 2020 in Cacouna, Quebec.

### **March Birthdays**

March 24	Marion Marshall
March 31	Maureen Goodick

Happy Birthday Marion and Maureen!  
Blessings to you and your families.



### **Lunch Schedule**

Ron Bolger  
Marion Marshall

## **Newsletter**

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

## **Upcoming Events**

**Fraternity Meeting - Sunday, March 8 at 2:00 pm** in St. Francis of Assisi parish centre, Cornwall.

**Fraternity Meeting Dates for 2020 in St. Francis of Assisi parish centre, Cornwall**

Sunday, March 8	2-4 p.m.	
Sunday, April 5		7-9 p.m. (Note: the <b>first</b> Sunday of the month)
Sunday, May 3		7-9 p.m. (Note: the <b>first</b> Sunday of the month)
Sunday, June 14		7-9 p.m.
Sunday, July 12		7-9 p.m.
August: no fraternity meeting (annual picnic)		
Sunday, September 13		7-9 p.m.
October: no fraternity meeting (annual retreat)		
Sunday, November 8	2-4 p.m.	
Sunday, December 13	2-4 p.m.	