

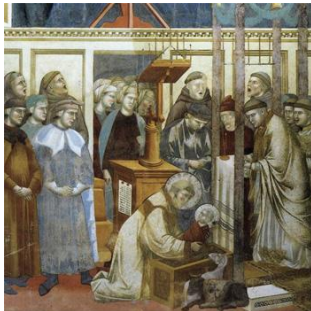
*St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity  
Cornwall, P.E.I.*

## **ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI FRATERNITY NEWSLETTER October 2020**

**VOLUME XXXII NO. 10**

### **The Four Basic C's of the Franciscan Charism**

Despite all the new scholarship and new insights, the Franciscan charism can be summed up in the Crib, the Cross, the Cup and Creation.



The first C is the Crib. The Crib represents our firm faith in the Incarnation; namely, that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us, humbling Himself out of love for God and for all Creation.

The second C is the Cross. Of course, Jesus' love did not stop at the Crib. Jesus' love for us carried all the way to the Cross, to his laying down his life for all of us. The San Damiano Cross depicts a loving, relational sacrifice shared with God's Creation: angels, humans and even a rooster! That love and sharing extend to the third C, the Cup.



The Cup of the Eucharist, the Blood and Body of Christ, keep us close to the Christ of the Crib, the Christ of the Incarnation, and the Christ of the Cross. The Eucharist not only represents the Passion and Death of Christ, but also continues His loving, giving presence among us, Emmanuel, the God Who will never leave us. As Saint Francis often said, "I see nothing bodily of the Most High Son of God in this world except his most holy body and blood" (Secular Franciscan Rule #5). This presence of Christ in the Incarnation and in the Eucharist continues in the fourth C, which is Creation.

The love of Francis for all of God's Creation is a love of God in all of Creation. Thus, in the Franciscan Charism, the 4 C's are interrelated, not unlike the inter-relationship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Crib leads to Cross, which leads to Cup, which continues Christ's Presence in all Creation, physically begun at the Incarnation.



(adapted from an article by Tom Bello, OFS, Tau-USA, Spring 2015)

## **October Fraternity Meeting**

The October Fraternity Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 4th at 7:00PM at St. Francis of Assisi Church hall (basement). The meeting setup will respect social distancing as at the September fraternity meeting. Everyone is expected to wear a mask. There will be no food or singing at this meeting.

In celebration of the Feast of St. Francis on October 4, members of Council will share a brief presentation on what makes us Franciscan. In this context, we will be discussing the charisms of St. Francis... these charisms (gifts) include: the Incarnation, the Cross, Community, and so on. We look forward to celebrating this meaningful feast with all of you!

## **Formation – Season of Creation**

Since the May, 2015 publication of *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis celebrated Sept. 1 as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation with the Christian family as the beginning of the Season of Creation and concluding on Oct. 4 the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

The 2020 theme for this season is **Jubilee for the Earth**. In Scriptural language, a jubilee is a sacred time to remember, to return, to rest, to restore and to rejoice. The following are some excerpts from Pope Francis' message last Sept. 1.



1. A Time to Remember that everything is connected and that genuine care for our lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others.
2. A Time to Return - turn back in repentance and to heal damaged relationships that are essential to supporting us and the whole fabric of life.
3. A Time to Rest and let the land heal and the earth repair itself and to find just and sustainable ways of living that give the earth the rest it needs.
4. A Time to Restore the original harmony in creation and heal stained human relationships. It is time for restorative justice, a time to cancel global debts of most vulnerable countries, a time to restore biodiversity, and a time to protect indigenous communities.
5. A Time to Rejoice in the Holy Spirit, inspiring individuals and communities around the world to rebuild our common home in response to the ecological crisis. "

**"Send forth you Spirit O Lord and renew the face of the earth." *Psalm 104***

## **Formation – Understanding the Gap**

### **Understanding The Gap – Some Insights**

For young people, God is present in all religious traditions. . . . not only do they believe that there is one underlying reality at the foundation of all major world religions but they are also convinced that different traditions and their unique approaches to God complement each other.



But it's also important to say that a lot of young people don't actually identify with a tradition any more. . . . Many of our churches, synagogues and mosques are freaking out when they hear this, thinking that young people are no longer interested in the sacred. But, to me, it is clear that young people are not necessarily rejecting God, they simply feel that many religious organizations have lost touch with reality and are too concerned with money, power, self-preservation, maintaining the status quo, and 'having right beliefs'. As a result, they tend to view them . . . as organizations that are no longer able to speak to and address some of the big questions of our time. It takes deep insight and spiritual courage to see that. It is for this reason and many others that I don't think of this ... as a sign of spiritual decline but rather a new kind of spiritual awakening.

(reflections by Adam Bucko, an Episcopal priest, activist, spiritual director to many of New York City's homeless youth and friend to the poor)

In my work with young people at the Centre for Action and Contemplation, I do not see a lack of spirituality and good faith in many seekers of the next generation, but rather an abundance of it and a deep desire to live with integrity and in alignment with their values. Such people are not satisfied with a faith simply handed to them by an institution or the previous generation. They insist on investigating what is truly important for transformation and a more just and compassionate world.

(reflections by Richard Rohr, OFM, a Franciscan friar and Catholic priest, recognized ecumenical teacher, spiritual writer, and founder of the Centre for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico)

## **I Love You**

(A Prayer by Nasser Saad)

With all my heart, I Love You,  
With all my soul, I Love You,  
With all my mind, I Love You,  
With all my strength, I Love You,  
Above all possessions and honours, I Love You,  
Above all pleasures and enjoyments, I Love You,  
More than myself, and everything belonging to me, I Love You,  
More than all my relatives and friends, I Love You,  
More than all men and angels, I Love You,  
Above all created things in heaven or on earth, I Love You,  
Only for Yourself, I Love You,  
Because You are the sovereign Good, I Love You,  
Because You are infinitely worthy of being loved, I Love You,  
Because You are infinitely perfect, I Love You,  
Even had You not promised me heaven, I Love You,  
Even if You menaced me with hell, I Love You,  
Even if You will try me by want and misfortune, I Love You,  
In wealth and in poverty, I Love You,  
In prosperity and in adversity, I Love You,  
In health and in sickness, I Love You,  
In life and in death, I Love You,  
In time and in eternity, I Love You,  
My God, My Saviour, My Advocate

## **Reflection During Challenging Times**

Attached are reflections by Richard Rohr that may provide some guidance during these unsettled times in which we are currently living (Attachment 1). Although written primarily for an American audience, much of his reflections can be adapted to our own situation in Canada. The article is entitled “**Some simple but urgent guidance to get us through these next months**”

## Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

### **Myths and Facts about Refugees in Canada (Part 1)**

- 1. Myth:** Refugees just want to take advantage of Canada's generous social programs.  
**Fact:** Refugees are forced to flee their homes, with some leaving behind good jobs. Most are eager to work but first learn a new language and wait to process their work permit which can take many months.
- 2. Myth:** Refugees might pose a security risk to Canada.  
**Fact:** Refugees flee from violence in search of safety. They go through rigorous security checks before entering Canada.
- 3. Myth:** Refugees jump the queue over other more deserving immigrants.  
**Fact:** Refugees are forced to flee their homes while economic immigrants have the ability to choose where and when to move. Canada recognizes this by having completely separate programs for refugees and economic immigrants. As such, there is no queue for economic immigrants.
- 4. Myth:** Refugees take jobs from Canadians.  
**Fact:** Refugees create jobs and expand the domestic market. Immigrants/refugees don't take jobs away from Canadians but increase jobs by stimulating the economy. They are eager to contribute to building Canada into a prosperous country for all. As Canada's birth rate continues to remain low and the aging labour force nears retirement, the integration of immigrants and refugees helps to maintain a stable economy. As well, many immigrants and refugees can be very entrepreneurial and end up creating businesses for themselves and often providing employment opportunities for others.

### Well4Africa Project

The St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity Council has approved a donation of \$1000 to the wells for Africa initiative and gratefully thanks the fraternity members for their support.





## **News from Brother Leo Fraternity**

It was with great joy that we celebrated the Rite of Admission with Winnie McCormack on July 19th at St. Mary's Church, Montague. Following the admission, fraternity, family and friends joined together at Claudia's cottage on the Cardigan River for a small restricted gathering during which social distancing was observed. We thank God for Winnie as we already see what a gift she is! She began her association with Franciscans in Ontario and then came back to the Island where she met Felicia who invited her to think about joining us. Due to life's circumstances, she wasn't able to connect until now. We thank Mother Fraternity for their support as we will be joining you for some of our initial formation sessions. Please keep Winnie and the fraternity in your prayers as we journey together.

We also ask you to pray for Felicia's daughter Rosanne who is awaiting surgery for a discomfoting hernia. Our deepest sympathy are extended to Janet and Charlie on the loss of their dear granddaughter; our love and prayers are with you.

Little Lambs of Brother Leo.



## **Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada**

It was with sadness that news was received of Bob Hunger's death, after a short period of illness. Within the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada, Bob shared his unique talents, his good humour, his artistry and his faithfulness as a leader in the Region. He served on the Regional Council of Eastern Canada with Tom Wilkinson and then as Regional Conference/Elective Chapter Registrar. He always worked hard and conscientiously in supporting the Secular Franciscan Order. Accompanying him throughout, Sharon was always present, sharing her good humour and her interest and concern for everyone. Bob and Sharon shared a great deal in life as well as a very special love and unique faith life. We will all miss Bob but are confident that he now rests happily with his God, with St. Francis and with all of our deceased sisters and brothers.

Our deepest sympathy and love are extended to Sharon and his two daughters. Rest in Peace, Good and Faithful Servant!



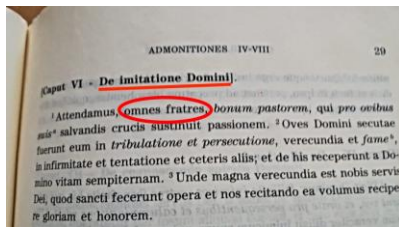
## **2020 Regional Elective Chapter**

Although the elective chapter of the Regional Fraternity of Canada could not be held as planned this year, all local fraternities were requested to submit their triennial reports.

For your information, attached is the 2020 report submitted on behalf of St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity (Attachment 2).

## **"All Brothers: On Fraternity and Social Friendship"**

Keep your eye out for Pope Francis' new encyclical on "Human Fraternity" which will be signed on Oct. 3 in Assisi. It is a sequel to the Document on Human Fraternity signed in Abu Dhabi with Grand Imam Ahmad al-Tayyeb last year.



Francis' encyclical title has been inspired by the Admonitions of St. Francis. The Vatican explained that the pope's new encyclical recalled his focus on fraternity which has become a central theme of his pontificate. The theme of fraternity is also present in his constant embrace of migrants and the poor.

## **Birthday Wishes**

### **October Birthday**

October 18                      Pauline Clarkin

Happy Birthday, Pauline. Blessings on you and your family!



## **Newsletter**

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

## **Upcoming Events**

Fraternity Meeting - **Sunday, October 4th at 7:00PM at St. Francis of Assisi Church hall (basement).**

**NOTE: Meeting setup will respect social distancing as at the September fraternity meeting. Everyone is expected to wear a mask. There will be no food or singing at this meeting.**

**Some simple but urgent guidance to get us through these next months.**

(reflections by Richard Rohr, September 19, 2020)

I awoke on Saturday, September 19, with three sources in my mind for guidance: Etty Hillesum (1914 – 1943), the young Jewish woman who suffered much more injustice in the concentration camp than we are suffering now; Psalm 62, which must have been written in a time of a major oppression of the Jewish people; and the Irish Poet, W.B. Yeats (1865 – 1939), who wrote his “Second Coming” during the horrors of the World War I and the Spanish Flu pandemic. These three sources form the core of my invitation. Read each one slowly as your first practice.

Let us begin with Etty:

*There is a really deep well inside me. And in it dwells God. Sometimes I am there, too ... And that is all we can manage these days and also all that really matters: that we safeguard that little piece of You, God, in ourselves.*

—Etty Hillesum, Westerbork transit camp

Note her second-person usage, talking to “You, God” quite directly and personally. There is a Presence with her, even as she is surrounded by so much suffering.

Then, the perennial classic wisdom of the Psalms:

*In God alone is my soul at rest.  
God is the source of my hope.  
In God I find shelter, my rock, and my safety.  
Men are but a puff of wind,  
Men who think themselves important are a delusion.  
Put them on a scale,  
They are gone in a puff of wind.*  
—Psalm 62:5–9

What could it mean to find rest like this in a world such as ours? Every day more and more people are facing the catastrophe of extreme weather. The neurotic news cycle is increasingly driven by a single narcissistic leader whose words and deeds incite hatred, sow discord, and amplify the daily chaos. The pandemic that seems to be returning in waves continues to wreak suffering and disorder with no end in sight, and there is no guarantee of the future in an economy designed to protect the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor and those subsisting at the margins of society. It’s no wonder the mental and emotional health among a large portion of the American population is in tangible decline! We have wholesale abandoned any sense of truth, objectivity, science or religion in civil conversation; we now recognize we are living with the catastrophic results of several centuries of what philosophers call *nihilism* or *post-modernism* (nothing means anything, there are no universal patterns). We are without doubt in an apocalyptic time (the Latin word *apocalypsis* refers to an urgent unveiling of an ultimate state of affairs).



Yeats' oft-quoted poem "The Second Coming" then feels like a direct prophecy. See if you do not agree:

*Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.*

Somehow our occupation and vocation as believers in this sad time must be to first restore the Divine Center by holding it and fully occupying it ourselves. If contemplation means anything, it means that we can "safeguard that little piece of You, God," as Etty Hillesum describes it. What other power do we have now? All else is tearing us apart, inside and out, no matter who wins the election or who is on the Supreme Court. We cannot abide in such a place for any length of time or it will become our prison.

God cannot abide with us in a place of fear.  
God cannot abide with us in a place of ill will or hatred.  
God cannot abide with us inside a nonstop volley of claim and counterclaim.  
God cannot abide with us in an endless flow of online punditry and analysis.  
God cannot speak inside of so much angry noise and conscious deceit.  
God cannot be found when all sides are so far from "the Falconer."  
God cannot be born except in a womb of Love.  
So offer God that womb.

Stand as a sentry at the door of your senses for these coming months, so "the blood-dimmed tide" cannot make its way into your soul.

If you allow it for too long, it will become who you are, and you will no longer have natural access to the "really deep well" that Etty Hillesum returned to so often and that held so much vitality and freedom for her.

**If you will allow, I recommend for your spiritual practice for the next four months that you impose a moratorium on exactly how much news you are subject to—hopefully not more than an hour a day of television, social media, internet news, magazine and newspaper commentary, and/or political discussions. It will only tear you apart and pull you into the dualistic world of opinion and counter-opinion, not Divine Truth, which is always found in a bigger place.**

**Instead, I suggest that you use this time for some form of public service, volunteerism, mystical reading from the masters, prayer—or, preferably, all of the above.**

**You have much to gain now and nothing to lose. Nothing at all.  
And the world—with you as a stable center—has nothing to lose.  
And everything to gain.**

## Report of St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, PEI for Regional Elective Chapter 2020

Prepared by Tom Wilkinson, Minister

**Current Fraternity Council**(2018-2021): Minister - Tom Wilkinson, Vice-Minister - Gerald Gabriel, Director of Formation - Martha Gabriel, Secretary - Michael Cassidy, Treasurer - Ruth Cassidy, Spiritual Assistant - Sr. Gemma Dunn, csm.

**Fraternity meets** the second Sunday of the month at St. Francis of Assisi Church, Cornwall, PEI. However, during the COVID pandemic, 2 regular meetings have been held via ZOOM and 1 in-person meeting where proper distancing was practised. Council meetings have also been held through ZOOM as have 2 additional fraternity and small sharing group meetings.

**Fraternity Membership:** 21 Permanently Professed, 2 Permanently Professed (Inactive), 2 Temporarily Professed, 2 Candidates, 1 Enquirer.

**Teams:** Life in fraternity is supported by each member, including those in Inquiry, being assigned to one or more of the following committees: Communications, Initial Formation, On-Going Formation, Hospitality and Library Resources, Justice Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC), Music Ministry, Outreach, Special Events and Young Adults. In this way, each member has an opportunity to participate actively in the life of our fraternity.

**Formation (Initial):** During the course of the mandate of both this and the previous Council, we have adopted a more flexible approach to Initial Formation which allows candidates to begin formation at different points in time, but connects all candidates with joint formation sessions which are held on a regular basis. This has an advantage in allowing more of our professed members to be involved with the formation process while also allowing candidates and enquirers to come to better know our members.

During the past 3 years, we have had 0 candidates make permanent profession, 2 make temporary profession, 2 persons became candidates, 1 individual in enquiry stage.

While several years of effort, travel and dialogue have been invested by our fraternity in establishing a fraternity in St. John's, N/L, this group has now diminished to 1 person who is Temporarily Professed and remains in regular communication and participation (where possible) with our fraternity. Two other persons from this group have moved near to Ottawa and have transferred to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Fraternity in that city.

**Formation (On-Going):** This committee continues to coordinate and provide for a 45-60 minute interactive presentation by different members at each fraternity meeting. We have been re-kindling the key elements of our Franciscan spirituality by exploring Murray Bodo's *The Way of Francis*. Occasionally, we have a guest speaker but that is the exception. These presentations are always well prepared and informative and help us to grow in understanding and to daily live out our Franciscan way of life.

**JPIC:** This committee is very dynamic, meet each month and presents a brief (5-6 minutes) JPIC

presentation at each fraternity meeting. They also encourage members to participate in JPIC study and initiatives and provide a monthly article for our Newsletter.

**Music:** We are very blessed to have the expertise, talent and commitment of Doug and Marion Clorey, as well as Martha Gabriel, to lead our music ministry for each of our meetings, liturgies and special events. This team adds so much to all our celebrations!

**Annual Fraternity Retreat:** We continue to hold our annual fraternity retreat at our Diocesan Retreat Centre and especially enjoy welcoming members from other fraternities in our Atlantic Area. Unfortunately, we have had to cancel our 2020 retreat due to COVID. However, we will look forward to welcoming everyone at our 2021 retreat (Sept. 24-26) when we will welcome Sr. Marianna Jung, fmm, of Montreal as our Retreat Animator. Sister will lead us in exploring the Life and Spirituality of Clare.

**Newsletter:** Our monthly newsletter with its content, graphics and quality is the glue that helps to bind us together. We are blessed to have an exceptional editor in Doug Clorey.

**Outreach Events:** Our fraternity continues to serve meals twice a year at the Upper Room Hospitality Centre for which we purchase ingredients, prepare and serve meals for about 75-100 persons. We organized a prayerful Seder Meal in 2019. This event requires much organization and preparation but is always well received by both our members and guests. Also, several members are engaged in the ministry of the local St. Vincent de Paul Society. We continue to financially support Franciscans International, Development and Peace, as well as a number of local community groups.

**Special Events:** The fraternity conducts a special prayer service on the Franciscan Feast of All Saints (November 29th). This affords us an opportunity to remember and pray for all our deceased members. We continue to celebrate our annual fraternity picnic each August which always includes our sisters and brothers of Brother Leo Fraternity. This is always a special opportunity to pray, relax, socialize and enjoy the natural beauty surrounding Joan McDonald's cottage in Brudenell, PEI.

**Prayer Ministry:** The fraternity receives many prayer requests both from our own members, and members outside of our Franciscan family. We are always happy to confidentially share such requests with our members and support these individuals with our thoughts and prayers.

**Acknowledgements:** We wish to thank Sr. Gemma, our Spiritual Assistant for her prayerful and dynamic support. We also thank the generous commitment and dedicated leadership provided by our fraternity members at other levels of our Franciscan family. We especially thank Doug and Marion Clorey for their on-going efforts on our National Council as well as Gerry Gabriel and Marion Clorey who serve as Spiritual Assistants to two of our neighboring fraternities on PEI and New Brunswick. Other members also serve on committees at the National and Regional levels. We also thank our Regional Leadership team, especially our Regional Minister Michel David, as well as George and Sherrill Guimond who work diligently in keeping our Atlantic fraternities informed and engaged.

Peace and All Good,  
Tom Wilkinson, Minister