



- the Chimes -

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December 20, 2020



No Fraternity Meeting This Month.



OBTAIN AND READ AT LEAST THE INTRODUCTION TO FRATELLI TUTTI FOR THE JANUARY MEETING! See p4.

◆ Theme: **KEEP WATCH** ◆

Bible Quote of the Month

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (*Lk 2:8-12*)



Prayer of the Month

O Blessed Virgin Mary, Holy and Immaculate Vessel of Our Lord, guardian of the Secular Franciscan Order, mother of Our Savior and mother to us all, keep watch over those who have been entrusted to your care, that we may keep watch for your Son this Advent, as well as watch for His presence in those whom we encounter each day, and so to carry out His Divine wish that we treat our brothers and sisters as we would Him Who is Redeemer of all. Amen.

Christmas Donations

Each year Council approves various donations, reserving enough funds to pay for upcoming fraternity expenses. This year, thanks to your generous donations, Council decided to donate a total of \$1300 to the following organizations: Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America, Capuchin College Breakfast Ministry, Franciscan Family Apostolate (in addition to our regular donation), Franciscan Foundation for the Holy Land, Catholic Charities of DC, St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families, the Archdiocese of Washington's Community Food Security Program, and So Others May Eat. Thank you once more for your generosity.



The Information Corner – Pope Quote



"Come, Lord Jesus, make our distracted hearts watchful. Awaken within us the desire to pray and the need to love."¹

¹ Twitter, posted Dec 4, 2020, accessed 12/4/20, URL <https://twitter.com/pontifex>

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ADMONITION OF ST. FRANCIS

1. The Body of the Lord (cont.)²

Whence: "Sons of men, how long with a heavy heart?" (Ps 4:3) Why is it that do you not know the truth and believe "in the Son of God?" (cf. Jn 9:35) Behold, every day He humbles Himself (cf. Phil 2:8), just as when "from royal thrones" (Wis 18:15) He came into the womb of the Virgin; every day He comes to us Himself humbly appearing; everyday He descends from the bosom of the Father upon the altar in the hands of the priest. And just as to the holy Apostles in true flesh, so even now He shows Himself to us in the Sacred Bread.

² *The Writings of St. Francis of Assisi*, tr. by Paschal Robinson (1905), accessed September 9, 2017, URL <http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/wosf/wosf03.htm>.



The Rule

Chapter Two, Article 9 of The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order.

The Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, was open to his every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of his family.



The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently.

Papal Intention for the Month

Prayer Intention – **For a life of prayer.** We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.³

Fraternity Finances

\$ Last month we received \$640 in donations and disbursed \$161.07 in expenses. This does not include undeposited checks.

A Stitch in Chimes

Here's a look at our fraternity 20 years ago:

In December of 2000 the fraternity attended a Christmas luncheon hosted by Fra. Fabian, OFM, Guardian of the Monastery; made Christmas donations totalling \$200; published a thank-you letter from Mary Anne Corr, our outgoing Minister, as well as a welcome letter from our incoming Minister, Vicky Spalding; and Fr. Kevin wrote a reflection on how the child Jesus came to us in Bethlehem and comes to us each day in the Eucharist.



³ Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network. Accessed Nov 21, 2020, URL <http://popesprayerusa.net/popese-intentions/>

The Information Corner

Dec 4th – Memorial of Bl. Peter Tecelano⁴.



Peter Tecelano was born c.1200 in Campi, Tuscany, Italy. He married and worked as a comb maker. After the death of his wife he entered the Franciscans as a tertiary and served as a nurse to the sick in a Franciscan hospital. He also toiled making combs. In his lifetime, he was reputed to be a deeply mystical and holy

individual and was credited with miracles. He died in December of 1289 and was buried at the Franciscan church in Siena. He was beatified on Aug 18, 1802, in part because of miracles reported as occurring at his tomb.

Please Pray For Our Members

Adele Lewis and her sister Diane Dalton; Larry Bleau; Mary Ann Corr and her family; Maria Louisa Correa; Sarah Faizi and her friend Ron Harner; Jean Fleurival; Nancy McCleary; John Hewitt; Margaret Murphy and her family; Fritz Nicolas and his family; Mary Okumu and her family; Carol Petro; Cecilia Thieman and her family; John and Deneen Whipple; Donna Wilkes and her family. Also pray for Jan Parker, the National Fraternity Minister.

January Birthdays

January 4 – Victoria Spalding, 15 – Dineen Whipple, 17 – Adele Lewis, 29 – John Hewitt, M.D., 29 – Bennett Solberg, and 30 – Anthony Mazzucco.

Feastdays of Franciscan Friars

Keep in your prayers friar Manuel Ybarra, whose feast day is January 3.

⁴ Source: Catholic Online, accessed 12/5/20, URL https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=5314

Study of Fratelli Tutti

Starting in January 2021 the fraternity will begin its study and discussion of the recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Italian for “brothers (and sisters) all”. It has an introduction and eight chapters, so we will have this as an Ongoing Formation activity for the next nine meetings.



It is important that you access, read and be prepared to discuss each chapter before the meeting. It is freely available online at http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html and as a PDF on our web site under the Members / [Recommended Reading section](#).

If you do not have access to a computer to download it, or you prefer a book, you can purchase a copy at a Catholic bookstore or on many web sites, such as the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (<http://store.usccb.org/fratelli-tutti-p/7-678.htm>) and amazon.com. If you need assistance obtaining a copy please contact Larry or Michele.

Council has also located a free study guide that we plan to use. While this is helpful, it is not necessary, as the discussion leader each month will have a copy. If you wish to view or download it, you can find it online on the web site of the Franciscan Federation at <https://franfed.org/fratelli-tutti-study-guide/>. A link to the current chapter’s study guide will be posted on our web site each month.

Pray For Our Deceased Mary Okumu’s sister, **Flora Okumu**, died on November 27, 2020. May the souls of the faithful departed, especially those of our members and their families, rest in eternal peace in the presence of our Lord.

Jesus and Love – A Reflection Prayer

By Helen Walls, OFS



Love equals Jesus, Jesus is Love! I want to know what Love is! Jesus is Love! That's who Jesus is! Jesus is Love!

Jesus' Love is unconditional! He gives us what we need! We need to show Jesus' Love to others! To everyone we encounter! Jesus' Love transforms us!

St. Francis, our Seraphic Father, embraced and healed a leper! St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta says Jesus' love begins at home with the family.

Yes, Jesus is Love! I offer my sufferings to Jesus on the Cross.

Life, Death – the Resurrection. We await His return! Yes! Jesus is Love!

From the Mailbox: News of our Family

- **Vilma Camposano** says she is still undergoing treatment, misses the fraternity members, and asks for your prayers.

Withdrawal from Franciscan Action Network (FAN)

Enclosed in this edition of the *Chimes* is the statement released by the Secular Franciscan Order of the USA, commonly referred to as the National Fraternity. The National Fraternity has withdrawn as an institutional member of the Franciscan Action Network. No other explanation beyond this statement was or will be forthcoming.

This only affects the National Fraternity's participation. No member or local fraternity who currently participates with FAN is obliged or is under any pressure to cease that participation; that is totally a personal decision. Your local Council has not taken any position on this matter, either.

December Reflection

By Larry Bleau, OFS

This is the time. A time of great joy and anticipation: Advent, waiting for our Lord to appear. Scripture has foretold it, nature anticipates it, and the poorest among those in Bethlehem become the richest for their having participated in it.



This is the time. A time of watching for the Lord, being aware not only of His coming, but of our own becoming: becoming more like Him, as He wants us to be, and becoming more caring of our friends, neighbors, acquaintances, and yes, even enemies.

This is the time. A time of rejoicing in the Lord, for He has fulfilled the promises of ages: to be present to us and among us.



The taking on of human form by Jesus is the most precious gift He gives to us, for He is now Emmanuel – God With Us – and in that form takes on our human joys, pains, temptations, trials, sufferings, deaths, and, upon His own Death, our sins and those of all mankind for all eternity.

This is the time. A time to rejoice, give praise, and give thanks. Rejoice in Him Who Came, praise for His gifts to the world, and thanks for those He has given us to walk with Him on the road.

May He walk with each of you this Advent, Christmas, and your entire life.





THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY of the SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER - USA

Important Announcement for the Members of the National Fraternity – OFS-USA

The National Council of the Secular Franciscan Order – USA, meeting in Chapter, October 21-24, 2020 voted to withdraw our institutional membership in the Franciscan Action Network (FAN). We want each OFS member to understand:

- (1) the reasons for this action, and
- (2) what this means for the OFS going forward.

Why did the OFS-USA withdraw from FAN?

Many OFS members were in Philadelphia in 2007 when the idea of FAN was first broached. We were intrigued by the idea of working for social justice together with other members of the Franciscan family, and doing it in a Franciscan way. We wanted to bring Franciscan values to bear on the legislative process in our country, and we saw it as a good way to put into action Articles 14-19 of our Rule and the 2nd foot of love of action as described by the US Bishops Conference. We especially appreciated the articulation of the Franciscan values which were to underlie FAN's work, including

- Our means of doing advocacy will not dehumanize or demonize those with whom we disagree on policy matters.
- Our efforts will be done in a manner that is non-partisan and with the hope that the legislation for which we advocate will come with bipartisan efforts. This is both a value of proper relationality and a way of seeking greater effectiveness.

Thus, at its 2007 Chapter, the National Fraternity Council voted to become an institutional member of the Franciscan Action Network.

For some time things went well. But as time went on, it seemed as though FAN was placing less emphasis on adhering to the founding values in the way they worked. This troubled us, and from 2017-2020, we made a concerted effort to dialogue with the Board about our concerns. Sadly, our efforts have not borne much fruit. Our members have become increasingly concerned about how FAN is representing us in the public square, to the point where we have regretfully deemed it necessary to sever our institutional ties to FAN.

How does leaving FAN affect individual OFS members?

It should be made clear that this action does not limit any individual OFS efforts to work alongside FAN or support them in any way; institutional membership is not required for participation. Individual OFS members, local fraternities and Regions are free to continue to support and work with FAN in whatever ways they choose, financial or otherwise. Indeed, those involved in Franciscan Solidarity Tables (a program supported by FAN) are encouraged to continue with those efforts.

Living our Rule / and the 2nd foot of love in action

Our decision to withdraw from institutional membership in FAN comes at a time when there is a new energy – a real awakening – around a vision of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation that lies at the heart of our OFS Rule. As a result of our visioning gatherings, JPIC focus groups have formed, and there is more involvement by members at large. Withdrawal from FAN should in no way be construed as a withdrawal from our obligation to “build a more fraternal and evangelical world (Art. 14),” and to “...individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by [our] human lives and [our] courageous initiatives (Art. 15).” The National Fraternity Council will be exploring ways forward, and some ideas have already surfaced as to how we as an Order can continue our efforts to effect change. We encourage everyone to read and discuss the **Handbook for Animators of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)** as you re-commit yourselves to living our Rule.

Approved by the National Executive Council – October 25, 2020