



# *- the Chimes -*

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P.O. BOX 29506  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20017  
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February 20, 2022

## **WE WILL MEET SUNDAY, FEB 20, 2022 AT 1:30 PM ON ZOOM ONLY.**

- To join by computer, use this link:  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89329272323?pwd=SXFhYURBTzh2TFZjZ2Q2WmxiT0N2Zz09>  
Meeting ID: 893 2927 2323 Passcode: 724420
- To join by phone, call 301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 893 2927 2323

### **Fraternity Meeting Agenda: Sunday February 20**

- Gather: 1:15-1:30 pm on Zoom
- Opening prayer
- News of members
- Presentation of 2021 Treasurer Report
- Short presentation on Franciscan Role in the Holy Land
- Discussion of Article 4 of our Rule
- Closing: Evening Prayer

**Preparing for our February Meeting** - Please read the excerpt below about the history of Franciscans in the Holy Land, as we begin a period of ongoing formation in 2022 focusing on the Holy Land.

Please also reflect on how learning about the Holy Land can help us better live **Article 4 of our Rule**: “The rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people. Christ, the gift of the Father’s love, is the way to him, the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us, and the life which he has come to give abundantly. Secular Franciscans should devote themselves especially to careful reading of the gospel, going from gospel to life and life to gospel.”

**Regional Retreat** - The St. Margaret of Cortona region will hold our annual regional retreat **May 13-15, 2022** at Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, MD. Cost to attend is \$270/person, which includes the room and all meals. Scholarship funds are available;

please contact the Minister if you would like to request a scholarship. Information to register is here: <https://saintmargaretofcortona.org/upcoming-events/> .

**Fraternity Finances** – January deposits were \$0; expenditures were \$361.66. Fair Share for 2022 is now due: \$40 each for active professed or candidates; \$20 each for excused members. Please remember that our fraternity must pay for all members and that 100% of Fair Share is passed on; none of it is used for our fraternity expenses.

**Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for March 2022**– *For a Christian response to bioethical challenges: We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.*

**Please pray for our members** – Rosemary Boardley & family, Maria Louisa Correa, Sarah Faizi's friend Ron Harner, Jean Fleurival, Nancy McLeary, Carol Petro, Dineen and John Whipple, and Donna Wilkes.

**Franciscan Feasts and Memorials, March** – 2, Bl. Agnes of Prague; 4, Bl. Didacus Joseph of Gadiz.

**Fraternity Birthdays, March** – 3, Mary Gigliotti; 11, Fritz Nicolas; 16, John Whipple

### **Contacting Council**

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**Our fraternity website:**

<https://dcsfo.org/>

## **February Reflection: The Holy Land and Us**

Michele Dunne, OFS

The name of our fraternity—Mt. St. Sepulchre—derives directly from the site in Jerusalem of the crucifixion and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The monastery where we

meet is the U.S. base of the Holy Land Friars, whose purpose is to serve the sites and people of the Holy Land, as they have for more than 800 years.

We have decided as a fraternity to spend some time this year getting to know the Holy Land better, starting with understanding the Franciscan role there. To get started, please read this excerpt from a much longer passage from the website of the Holy Land Custody:

“The Custody of the Holy Land is usually traced back to the year 1217, when the first General Chapter of the Friars Minor was celebrated at St. Mary of the Angels, near Assisi. In an act of inspiration, Francis decided to send his friars to all nations.

The world was, so to speak, divided into Franciscan "provinces," and the friars from Assisi went out to the four corners of the world. On that occasion, the Holy Land was not forgotten. The Holy Land appears among the eleven Mother Provinces of the Order. In the documents, it is designated by various names: Syria, Romania, or Ultramarina. included the Empire of Constantinople, Greece and the Greek Isles, Asia Minor, Antioch, Syria, Palestine, Cyprus, Egypt, and the rest of the Orient...

From the very beginning, it was considered to be the most important "province" of the Order. Perhaps this is why it was entrusted to the care of Brother Elias, a prominent figure in the burgeoning fraternity due to his organizational talent and his culture and experience. It would be interesting to know the initiatives taken by Brother Elias to organize and consolidate this part of the Order, characterized by particular environmental problems and by the vastness of the territory. His zeal, and the qualities that distinguished him as a leader must have driven him during the years of his mandate to lay the foundations of the Franciscan apostolate in all regions situated in the southeastern basin of the Mediterranean.

In 1219, St. Francis himself wanted to visit at least a part of the Province of the Holy Land. Well-known documents speak of the ‘Poor man of Assisi’ among the Crusaders, below the walls of Damietta. His encounter with the Sultan of Egypt, Malik al-Kamel, nephew of Saladin the Great, is also well documented.

The same documents add that after leaving Damietta, Francis went to Syria. In any case, the visit of St. Francis to the holy places certainly took place between 1219 and 1220. In this regard, Jacques de Vitry, bishop of Acre, wrote: ‘We saw the arrival of the friar Francis, founder of the Order of Friars Minor. He was a simple and unlettered man, but most lovable and dear to God and to men. He arrived when the army of the Crusaders was encamped below Damietta; he was immediately respected by all.’ During his brief voyage, Saint Francis showed by his own demeanor how future Franciscan missionaries should conduct themselves in those regions, and the specific field of their activity. According to the technique of the Poverello, evangelization must be done in a friendly way and with extreme humility, exactly as he had done with regard to the Sultan. Also, the holy places must be loved and venerated for their relationship with the most salient moments of the life of Christ.

Historians have argued that after the 13th century, and especially after the failure of the Crusades, access to the holy places was guaranteed using a new strategy, and that the missionary apostolate, with the unarmed presence of the Franciscans, replaced military expeditions.

The reconquest of Acre by the Muslims on May 18, 1291 marked the end of the Latin kingdom in the Holy Land. The Christians were put to severe hardship. The Franciscans were expelled from the Holy Land and forced to take refuge in Cyprus where, at the time, the Provincial headquarters was located. From the nearby island of Cyprus, the Franciscans never lost interest in the Holy Land. Like exiles far from their country, their constant desire was to find the means to live near the holy places. Nothing was overlooked in the pursuit of this goal. Historical documents of the time testified to private devotional visits and visits authorized by the Holy See in order to restore the Catholic presence in the holy places. A first benevolent gesture on behalf of the Franciscans was made by Sultan Baibars II (1309-10), who gave them the 'Church of Bethlehem,' but the Sultan died soon afterward, and the friars were unable to take possession of it.

In 1347, the Franciscans settled permanently in Bethlehem near the Basilica of the Nativity of our Lord. The first statutes of the Holy Land, which date back to 1377, provided for no more than twenty religious at the service of the holy places: the Holy Cenacle, the Holy Sepulcher, and Bethlehem. Their main activity consisted of ensuring the liturgical life in the shrines mentioned, and in providing religious assistance for European pilgrims. A document from 1390, specifies that the Province of the Holy Land, with its headquarters in Cyprus, also had a Custody in Syria, including four convents: Mount Zion, the Holy Sepulcher, Bethlehem, and Beirut.

The presence of the Franciscans in the Holy Land was primarily linked to the shrines and their care because, ultimately, all other activities were connected to this purpose and were considered as primary and of exclusive importance for the entire Church.”

(Source: <https://www.custodia.org/en/custody-and-its-history>)

