



- the Chimes -

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P.O. BOX 29506
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20017
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May 21, 2023

WE WILL MEET ON SUNDAY, MAY 21, 1:00 PM IN PERSON AT THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY, ST BONAVENTURE ROOM.

Our infirm members are invited to join on Zoom at 130:

- To join by computer, use this link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88959681673?pwd=TldxL2VZWTh1bUllUzBGbUVmWV4rQT09> Meeting ID: 889 5968 1673 Passcode: 807192
- To join by phone, call 301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 889 5968 1673

Fraternity Meeting Agenda: Sunday, May 21, 2023, 1:00 pm

- Lunch and social 1:00 pm
- Opening prayer 1:30 pm
- Ongoing formation
- Evening Prayer and Closing

Mark your calendar: Joint Fraternity Retreat in September

Your Council is planning a half-day retreat jointly with St Mary of the Angels Fraternity (Rockville) to be held at the Franciscan Monastery on **Sun Sept 17** in place of our monthly meeting. We will screen the Vatican-sponsored film, "The Letter," followed by a discussion.

Please pray for our members: Mary Ann Corr, Maria Louisa Correa, Sarah Faizi's friend Ron Harner, Adele Lewis and family, Nancy McCleary, Carol Petro, Bill Richardson, Donna Wilkes.

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May Reflection

Michele Dunne OFS

In the reading from the Gospel according to John for the [sixth Sunday of Easter](#) (May 14), Jesus tells us what loving him consists of, saying it two different ways in case we should be in doubt: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” and “whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me.” For me, this passage recalls the old aphorism, “love is as love does.”

So, if I want to “do” my love for Jesus, what are his commandments I need to keep? In the very same passage from John’s Gospel, Jesus’s command is delivered twice: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you,” and again, “This I command you: love one another.” The commandment is utterly simple, yet it takes a lifetime to comprehend and to live it out.

Luckily, I am not left alone, with my poor human brain trying to figure out how to love others as God does. After all, I am not God, and it is not possible for me to see others with the eyes with which God sees them. But Jesus tells us in the Gospel passage for May 14 that there is help on the way: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows him. But you know him, because he remains with you, and will be in you.”

This suggests that there is some relationship between the truth that the Holy Spirit speaks within me and my ability to love others. Perhaps this truth, which Jesus promises will be “in” me, will keep me humble and nonjudgmental, able to see others and myself in right relationship and with divine compassion. Perhaps this truth will reassure me that this is not a love of a distant God or a Jesus who is far away; rather, as Jesus says, “I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you.”

There is also a wonderful reminder in the second reading, from the first Letter of St. Peter, that love is not only as love does, but also as love speaks. St. Peter counsels us always to be ready to speak about our faith but to “do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear.” Speak my truth and my faith, yes, but not in a way that is self-righteous or excludes the possibility of other views.

So, let me ask myself plainly: Am I loving Jesus by loving others? Am I in sync with the Spirit of truth within? Am I saying what I know to be true and witnessing to my faith—in the most loving way possible? Am I doing what I know is the most loving thing even when it is inconvenient? Am I willing to sacrifice my personal inclinations and interests—for example, my desire to pay the lowest possible taxes despite the needs of the poor, my wish to see a foreign military aggressor not only defeated but humiliated, or my reluctance to learn the language or culture of new immigrants or refugees to the U.S.—to love others as God loves, not grudgingly but lavishly? Only if the answer is yes—for which I will need the grace of God every moment of every day—can I begin to follow Jesus’ commandment and therefore to love him.

I need companions on this lifelong journey; how about you? Let’s walk together and work together to speak our truth and to love others as Jesus taught and commanded us to do.