



- the Chimes -

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P.O. BOX 29506
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20017
JULY 2023 Vol. LXVII, No. 7
July 16, 2023

WE WILL MEET ON SUNDAY, JULY 16, 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/86217446217?pwd=Y0tObGZsaVFiRmZmZUxnSUh1dm54QT09> Meeting ID: 862 1744 6217 Passcode: 954348
- To join by phone, call 301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 862 1744 6217

Fraternity Meeting Agenda: Sunday, July 16, 2023, 1:00 pm

- Lunch and social 1:00 pm
- Opening prayer 1:30 pm
- News of members
- Ongoing formation: St Junipero Serra
- 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, 12 noon-4 pm** in place of our monthly meeting. We will have lunch, watch the Vatican-sponsored film, "The Letter," and have a discussion facilitated by Sr. Louise Lears, a Sister of Charity.

Please pray for our members: Rosemary Boardley, Maria Louisa Correa and family, Sarah Faiz and friend Ron Harner, Fr. Jim Gardiner, Nancy McCleary, Carol Petro, George Ramsey, Bill Richardson.

Contacting Council

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July Reflection

Michele Dunne, OFS

The gospel passage we heard in mass on Sunday, July 2 (Matthew 10:37-42) contains a sentence that always gives me pause: “whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me,” Jesus said.

A couple of years ago, I was having a conversation with a friend who is a Catholic priest and I mentioned something about “carrying my cross” related to a hardship in my life. Fr. John looked at me and said, “I don’t think that was what Jesus was talking about when He referenced carrying the cross.” He pointed out that Jesus did not carry the cross because of the usual hardships that are part of our human condition: illness, death of loved ones, problems in relationships. Jesus was condemned to die by the religious and political authorities because He spoke and acted out against the norms of his day that imposed heavy burdens on people.

Some of those norms Jesus criticized included being kind to friends but unkind to strangers, storing up wealth while others go hungry, judging people harshly while not understanding their true circumstances, and observing purity customs that wound and exclude certain people (people who broke the law, for example, or had repulsive illnesses). In particular, He spoke out against the hypocrisy of the wealthy and religiously observant, who lived in relative comfort and isolated themselves from the poor, marginalized, and excluded people around them.

Thus, the cross that Jesus speaks of is not about *my* burdens but the heavy, unjust burdens that *other* people carry. Jesus says that if I am not willing to do what I can to lift the heavy burdens off the shoulders of others then I am not His follower and not worthy of Him. Ouch!

The question for me is, do I consistently take the trouble to do what I can to alleviate the burdens of other people? In my personal life, when I see someone suffering, am I willing to put myself at some inconvenience to cook a meal or run errands or lend money to them? Am I willing to speak up when I see someone treated unfairly or judged harshly, even by my friends or family? Do I use my voice, my time, my vote to weigh in on the side of fairness for the poor and the migrant, for the unborn baby as well as for the convicted criminal on death row? Whose cross am I willing or unwilling to carry, and what does that say about whether I follow Jesus?

These questions can seem overwhelming, but luckily the Holy Spirit is there to help me see, day by day, what I am called to do. Nowadays, I seldom do long, complicated intercessory prayers, because God knows what we need before we ask for it. Instead, I ask Him each morning to show me how and where I am to love and to give me the strength to do it. I trust He will show me for whom I should carry the cross that day.

