



ORDINIS FRANCISCANI SAECULARIS
St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity, Welland.
Newsletter #167 February 2020

Debbie

Minister's Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With the Regional Chapter coming up, it seemed appropriate to talk about service to the Secular Franciscan Order. It is true that this topic is a favorite for me, and you have all heard some of my stories around serving at the different levels of fraternity. And so I would like to begin by saying how serving in office has been a joy, a challenge and a formation for me. My first few years of school were difficult, as I came from an English speaking household and was put into a French school system (no partial immersion in those days!). And so the first few years were a struggle and I withdrew into myself, not attempting to speak for fear of being ridiculed. It was not until Grade 4 that, with the compassionate approach of the teacher, that I was slowly coaxed into trusting this new language and the people who spoke it. That was when my academic marks climbed from F's to C's to B's and then A's. By the end of High School I was doing very well. Rather than go to University, I married and had children, and lived the rural life I had always dreamed about. But I eventually did go back to school and earned a degree in Music. In the meantime, the Secular Franciscan Order became a part of my life. My academic abilities and bilingualism became of use, not only in my work, but in the Regional and National levels of the Order. Nothing I learned had been a waste, but had become the foundation for a life of service of joy and love. God's plan for my life becomes ever more clear, the biggest challenge being how to help the people in my life understand why I do the things that I do and why my approach to life is different. Jesus Christ is my life, and St. Francis helped me to see that. It is joy to do all that he asks me to do, for when it becomes difficult, He is there. It is my fervent prayer that others come to trust in Christ to be joyful servants of this great gift, the Secular Franciscan Order.

Peace and all good to my brothers and sisters in the fraternity!

Coming Events:

- ~ Sun. Feb. 2nd, Regular Monthly Meeting 1:30 p.m.
 - ~ Mon. Feb, 10th, 1:00 pm, Council meeting.
 - ~ Fri. Feb. 28th, Formation Meeting 1:30 p.m.
 - ~ Sun. Mar. 1st, Regular Monthly Meeting 1:30 p.m.
- All above meetings in St. Kevin's Hospitality Room.*

**Gospel to Rule & General
Constitutions Leaders**

Feb. 2nd, ... Rule. 8, Art. 12.3, & 14.2 ... Bonnie
Mar. 1st, ... Rule 9, Art. 16.1 ... Debbie

Pope's Monthly Intentions:
February



Universal – Victims

For : *A generous welcome to the victims of human trafficking, enforced prostitution, and violence.*

Monthly Devotions: February

**Holy Family
Prayer**

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph,
I give you my heart and my soul.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, be with me at the hour of my death.
Amen.*



Profession Anniversaries:

No Anniversaries this month.

Birthdays

**David Fox ~~~~~February 1,
1969**

Many Happy Returns of the Day, Dave!

From our Spiritual Assistant

St. Francis was in darkness. Jesus came to Him and said, 'Follow me,' and Francis did... leaving everything of His former life, including his father.

St. Francis didn't intend to become a 'fisher of people,' but he did.

Near the end of his earthly life, Francis entered into a darkness of physical blindness. But that darkness only made the light brighter inside him

And made the light of Jesus shine from Francis more fiercely.

'the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death, light has dawned.'

Jesus burst into the lives of Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John - like a light that was all the more dramatic because it erupted suddenly from within a routine of darkness. Jesus called them to a radical change in their lives. His proclamation was "Repent" which literally means to change direction: 'change from what you have been doing - and come in a new direction with me - following me.' Following Jesus is such a total commitment to a new direction... that to say that Jesus called them 'to follow Him' is exactly the same thing as to that he called them 'to repent.'

And, to follow Jesus, the first disciples did leave everything and set off in a new direction. Simon Peter and Andrew, who knew nothing but fishing, "immediately left their nets and followed Him"... and James and John "left their boat and their father" and followed Him.

AND, to follow Jesus is also the same thing as changing into someone who will "fish for people." Jesus calls us to follow Him - to follow Him is to do what He does - and He calls people to follow Him.

To follow Him is to bring His light into other people's darkness in the same way that He came into your darkness. To follow Him is to inspire these others to change the direction of their life - so that instead of going away from Jesus - they follow in the Way in which He is going... as you have changed your direction and follow in His Way.

We aren't the Light... or the Way. We follow Jesus by showing His light (and His Way) to others. If we don't do that - if we keep the light for our self (hide it under a basket) ... then we aren't following.

And there is darkness (out there) for us to carry His light into: darkness of denial and doubt; darkness of depression and sadness; and of pain and suffering, and of death, great darkness of hatred and violence...

There is a great need for followers who will give His light to those who sit in these darkneses. But... "You can't give what you haven't got," You have to embrace His light - before you can give it away..

Jesus has come into our lives (as blazing light into darkness) not just once, but over and over. But have we noticed and remembered those flashes of light? Have we allowed His light to bring us to life... or has He been just part of the background of darkness? Is His light drawing us to repentance (that is: to becoming new,) or is Jesus the "same old, same old" Do we have His light to share with others - or have we settled back into an uncomfortable acceptance the darkness?

Are we people who no longer sit in darkness because we've been changed by His great light?

And, are we people who follow the light by repenting from the darkness into the light?

And, are we people through whom His light is dawning for those who sit (yet) in the region and shadow of death?

'the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death, light has dawned.'

deacon Maurice

St. Joseph of Lionessa: Feast day, February 4th

Born in Leonessa in Umbria 1556 and named Eufrazio Desiderio. Died February 4th 1612.

As a child he was very religious and used to build little altars and pray there, inducing his friends to join him.

At age sixteen years he became ill. On his recovery he joined the Capuchin Franciscan Order near Assisi taking the name of Joseph.

He was known for his great abstinence. In 1587 was sent to minister to the Christians in

captive in Constantinople. He stayed with the Benedictine monks.

Eventually he was brought to the attention of the Sultan, condemned to death and hung on a gallows for three days. There he was miraculously released by an angel.

Back home in Italy, Joseph, preached and ministered to the poor. He died on February 4, 1612.

He was canonized by Benedict XIV.