



Dear Brothers & Sisters

Secular Franciscan Fraternity

We gather at **7:30 p.m** on the **second Monday** of each month at:

St. Joseph's Home
80 W. Northwest Hwy.
Palatine, IL

Council Members

Minister

Stephanie Heavey, OFS
minister@nwfranciscans.org

Vice-Minister

Sue Gribbon, OFS
viceminister@nwfranciscans.org

Formation Director

Jackie Leo, OFS
formation@nwfranciscans.org

Secretary

Tim Panzica, OFS
secretary@nwfranciscans.org

Treasurer

Kathy Fischer, OFS
treasurer@nwfranciscans.org

Spiritual Assistant

Jerry Stecker, OFS
sa@nwfranciscans.org

Councilor-at-Large

Kay Crnich, OFS

Our March 11th gathering was a cause for celebration as three of our aspirants were admitted into the Secular Franciscan Order which is part of the Third Order of St. Francis. **Jillian, Anthony** and **Marion** expressed their desire to become Candidates and continue their formation in the Secular Franciscan Order. The culmination of that formation and their discernment will be a formal profession to live the rest of their lives as secular Franciscans. As Candidates, they received the Tau cross which is the formal habit of all secular Franciscans around the world.

It was highly appropriate that their expression of desire to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis who walked in the footsteps of Jesus, was made after the fraternity walked through and meditated on the walk to Calvary prayed in the Stations of the Cross. ☒

Our Monthly Gathering...

Our next fraternity gathering is on Monday, April 8, 2019. All professed and candidates will gather at 6:30 p.m. in the library for formation. Read Chapter 4 in *Waiting for Love* and reflect on the questions for discussion at the gathering.

At 7:30 p.m. all members of the fraternity will meet in the chapel for a Word and Communion Service.

This is our Open House night. Please encourage those you know who might have a vocation to attend. Invite them to join us in the chapel at 7:30 p.m.

After the Communion Service, there will be a brief overview of the Secular Franciscan Order given by our Formation Director, **Sister Jackie, OFS**. Afterward, our guests and all fraternity members will gather in the ice cream parlor for social time . ☒

***Live Simply so that
Others may Simply Live.***

For privacy, all personal addresses, phone numbers, email, prayer intentions, and (for non-council members) last names are removed from this web version.

Anniversaries

This month, our Spiritual Assistant, Brother **Jerry, OFS**, is celebrating the eighth anniversary of his profession on April 30th.

God's blessings be yours for all your faithful service to Him as a secular Franciscan.

Member Directory

A copy of the Member Directory has been sent to all professed and candidates **by email only** together with this newsletter.

Please take a minute to be sure that your information is accurate. Let the minister know of any changes that need to be made.

An updated Member Directory will be published in June and will be available not only as a digital document but also as a print copy for those who do not have print capabilities. ☒

Common Fund – March 2019

Beginning balance	\$2004.44
Deposits	415.00
Expenses	0.00
Balance	\$2419.44

Annual Open House

April 8th is the date of our annual Open House. Invite friends, church members who have a Franciscan spirit to *Come and See* at 7:30 p.m. We will welcome them in the chapel and join in a Communion Service followed by social time in the ice cream parlor.

Let our guests express their reasons for coming. Don't hesitate to share your vocation story with them.☒

And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR APRIL

Universal: Doctors and their Collaborators in Torn Areas

That Christian communities, especially those who are persecuted, feel that they are close to Christ and have their rights respected.

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For all the young who lose their lives in military conflict, for all those injured for life, for all those who survive, that their sacrifices not be in vain, we pray to the Lord,

For all whose anger and inhumane zeal drive them to acts of terror and brutality, that they experience the humanizing effects of love in their lives, we pray to the Lord,

For all who migrate to lands not of their own and who cross cultures in search of greater dignity, security, and economic opportunity, that they find what they seek, we pray to the Lord,

For all who unthinkingly consume inordinate proportions of the earth's gifts, that they have greater consciousness and turn their hearts to more responsible living, we pray to the Lord, *

WE PRAY FOR THOSE NEAR AND DEAR

[PRIVATE]

For all of our **shut-in sisters**, that the health issues that keep them separated from us will be attended to with compassion and love, we pray to the Lord,

* Petitions taken from *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise*, Third Order Regular



Our Call to be a Secular Franciscan

This month we continue our stories of the path that led us to recognizing our call to become secular Franciscans. This is the story of Mary Kay, who will celebrate the 14th Anniversary of her profession in November.

Isaiah 58:9 “Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer, you shall cry for help, and He will say: Here I am!”

I will begin my story at the end, the end of my former life.

I moved back to Arlington Heights, my childhood hometown, after the end of a very long, difficult marriage. There was relief, but after being a wife and mother, I felt I had lost my identity.

One sleepless night in a house I now shared with no one, I cried to God literally, that I was lost, I was alone, I was fearful of my future.

I didn't realize at the time that He was listening. The next morning, a Sunday, I felt a peace I hadn't known for a long time. I went to Mass in the church where I had spent my growing up years. One of the hymns the choir sang was *Be Not Afraid*.

Afterwards, just leafing through the parish bulletin, a notice jumped off the page. “Come to an Open House about the Secular Franciscans.” I wrote the date and time on my kitchen calendar.

And the rest is...no, not history, but the beginning. The beginning of a spiritual journey and a future I could never have imagined.

My spirit has been awakened and is always being renewed in the Secular Franciscan Order. My profession opened the door to my soul. In came the Holy Spirit and the support and love, through Jesus Christ, of my Brothers and Sisters in fraternity.

God called me out of darkness into a new light, a new beginning. I am never alone!

Always Grateful,
Sister Mary Kay, OFS

The First Secular Franciscans Blessed Luchesio Modestini and Buonadonna di (d. 1260) Feast Day – April 28th

Luchesio and his wife Buonadonna wanted to follow St. Francis as a married couple. They helped set in motion the Secular Franciscan Order.

Luchesio was a merchant in the little town of Poggibonzi in Tuscany. More than most merchants, he was so entirely and solely concerned with material success that he was generally reputed to be an avaricious man. His wife, Buonadonna, was of a similar disposition.

Meeting Francis—probably in 1213—changed his life. The grace of God touched him and he realized how foolish it is to strive only for worldly goods, of which he could take nothing with him to eternity, meanwhile forgetting about his soul's salvation. He began to practice works of mercy and to perform his religious obligations with fidelity.

At first Buonadonna was not as enthusiastic about giving so much away as Luchesio was.

One day after complaining that he was giving everything to strangers, Buonadonna answered the door only to find someone else needing help. Luchedio asked her to give the poor man some bread. She frowned but went to the pantry anyway. There she discovered more bread than had been there the last time she looked. And the finest bread at that. She soon became as zealous for a poor and simple life as Luchedio was.

Since they had no one to care for but themselves and Luchedio feared that in conducting his business he might relapse into covetousness, he gave up his business entirely. He and his wife divided everything among the poor and kept for themselves only so much acreage as they needed for their support. Luchedio tilled this with his own hands.

(In the 13th century some couples, by mutual consent and with the Church's permission, separated so that the husband could join a monastery--or a group such as Francis began--and his wife could go to a cloister. Conrad of Piacenza and his wife did just that. This choice existed for the childless or for those whose children had already grown up.)

Luchedio and Buonadonna wanted another alternative, a way of sharing in religious life, but outside the cloister.

About this time St. Francis came to Tuscany. After his sermon on penance, hosts of people desired to leave all and enter the convent. But the saint admonished them calmly to persevere in their vocation, for he had in mind soon to give them a special rule according to which they could serve God perfectly even in the world.

At Poggibonzi, Francis visited Blessed Luchedio and greatly rejoiced to find this avaricious man so altered. Luchedio asked for special instructions for himself and his wife, so that they might lead a life in the world that would be pleasing to God.

St. Francis explained to them his plans for the establishment of an order for lay people, and Luchedio and Buonadonna asked to be received into it at once. Thus, according to tradition, they became the first members of the Order of Penance, which later came to be called the Third Order of St. Francis.

To meet this desire, Francis set up the Secular Franciscan Order. Francis wrote a simple Rule for the Third Order (Secular Franciscans) at first. In 1221, Cardinal Ugolino prepared in legal form a rule which Pope Honorius III approved verbally. For this reason the year 1221 is often given as the date of the founding of the Third Order of St. Francis.

After Luchedio had put on the gray garment of a Tertiary, he rapidly advanced toward perfect holiness. The charity of Luchedio drew the poor to him, and, like many other saints, he and Buonadonna seemed never to lack the resources to help these people.

When a plague raged in Poggibonzi and the surrounding places, Luchedio went out with his laden donkey to bring necessities to the sick. When he did not have enough to supply all, he begged for more from others on behalf of the distressed.

One day Luchedio was carrying a crippled man he had found on the road. A frivolous young man came up and asked, "What poor devil is that you are carrying there on your back?" "I am carrying my Lord Jesus Christ," responded Luchedio. The young man immediately begged Luchedio's pardon.

The time had come when the faithful servant of God was to receive the reward for his good works. When he lay very ill, and there was no hope for his recovery, his wife said to him, "Implore God, who gave us to each other as companions in life, to permit us also to die together."

Luchedio prayed as requested. Buonadonna fell ill with a fever, from which she died even before her husband, after receiving devoutly the holy sacraments.

Luchedio and Buonadonna both died on April 28, 1260. He was beatified in 1273. Local tradition referred to Buonadonna as "Blessed" though the title was not given officially.

At his grave in the Franciscan church in Poggibonzi, many miracles have occurred. His continuous veneration as Blessed was approved by Pope Pius VI. ☒

Our Apostolates

Bringing the Gospel to Life, and Life to the Gospel in the spirit of St. Francis

BINGO. Meets one night per month at 6:30 pm in St. Joseph's activity room. Please pick one month in which to volunteer. Contact Sisters Kay, OFS, or Mary Kay, OFS, to sign up.

FRANCISCAN OUTREACH. This is a year round project. With the closing of the Marquard Center in Chicago, the fraternity will work with Our Lady of the Angels Mission, a Franciscan mission on Chicago's near west side. Sister Geri, OFS, will coordinate this ministry and determine the ways in which we can be of service. Contact Sister Geri, OFS.

PRAYER & PRAISE MINISTRY. For our brothers and sisters unable to participate in our monthly gatherings due to poor health or transportation issues. For more information, or if you are ill or know of a member who is ill, please call our infirmarian, Sister Kay, OFS.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY. We interweave prayers along with God's love, care, and warmth into the stitches as we knit or crochet shawls for others. For more information, contact Sisters Sue, OFS, or Cyndy, OFS.

SUPPORT (Money, Materials). Quarterly donations are taken from any excess funds that are available in our Common Fund *after* all the fraternity obligations are met. The donations are given to: Franciscan Missionary Union, Franciscan Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL).

YOUTH PRAYER PARTNERS. Coordinated by Brother Tom, OFS, this apostolate matches up fraternity members with young people who are preparing for First Communion or Confirmation. For more information, please call Brother Tom.

2019 Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, all events are at St. Joseph's Home.

January

~~14: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)~~

February

~~11: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)~~

~~25: Council meeting, Sue's home~~

March

~~11: Monthly Gathering (Stations of the Cross)~~

April

08: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

22: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

May

13: Monthly Gathering (Crown Rosary)

June

10: Monthly Gathering (Anniversary Mass)

24: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

July

08: Fraternity Day of Recollection (Holy Family)

August

12: Monthly Gathering (Mass)

26: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

September

09: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

October

03: Transitus of our Holy Father Francis

14: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

28: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

November

11: Monthly Gathering (Mass – with Rite of Remembrance)

December

10: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

TBD: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

Glimpses of the Past

While going through some old files, your minister found these interesting items in the fraternity newsletter from **March 1992**. Twenty-seven years ago, our fraternity had **51 active members**.

The per capita (Fair Share) donation per member was **\$12**. ☒