



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

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

Our last gathering of 2019 was on December 9th. How blessed we were to have our Regional Spiritual Assistant, Brother Marc, OFM, lead us in a Mini Advent Retreat. The presentation focused on **Who is our Neighbor** and on our calling as secular Franciscans to treat every person, without any exceptions, as our neighbor. Just as God allows the sun to shine on every person, good or bad, so must we allow our kindness and love to be of help to everyone without any judgment on our part. Brother Marc's love for us, his secular brothers and sisters, touched us with every word he spoke. All of our spirits—whether they were already aglow or were just coasting along—were quickened and invigorated by that love which made our reception of Love Itself so much more sacred in the Communion Service that followed. ☒

Our Monthly Gathering...

The January gathering will be held on Monday, January 6, 2020. All professed and candidates will gather in the library for formation at 6:30 p.m. Please read Chapter Ten in *Waiting for Love* and be prepared to discuss the questions.

At 7:30 p.m., all will gather in the chapel for a Communion Service followed by social time in the ice cream parlor. ☒

Anniversaries

Jan. 11, 2010	Stephanie Dcn. Lou
Jan. 11, 2016	Tim
Jan. 14, 2008	Sue J. Bonnie

God's abundant Blessings be Yours!

And So We Pray...

PAPAL INTENTIONS FOR JANUARY

Promotion of World Peace

We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE NEAR AND DEAR

Response: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For a renewed enthusiasm in all **professed** to embrace our calling as secular Franciscans and live according to the rule we professed, we pray to the Lord,

For our **candidates** who are discerning their vocations as they learn from the rich Franciscan texts during their formation and also from sharing the life of the professed at gatherings, we pray to the Lord,

For the **men and women** who will come to us this year to discern a calling to the secular Franciscan way of life, we pray to the Lord,

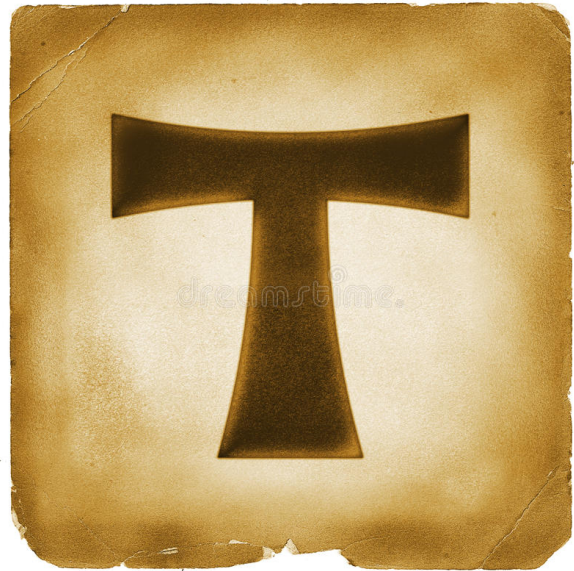
For all of our **shut-in sisters**, that this new year will bring comfort and healing in abundance, we pray to the Lord,

For all the **residents of St. Joseph's Home** and for the **Little Sisters of the Poor**, who lovingly welcome us into their home each month, we pray to the Lord,

For our **homeless brothers and sisters** who are served by Franciscan Outreach, we pray to the Lord,

For all those who are served by **the members of our fraternity** in the many capacities in which we participate, we pray to the Lord,

For **all those who have no one to pray for them**, we pray to the Lord,



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 our Brother Tim.

I was a junior in high school and we were all talking about after high school plans. Whether we were going to college or straight into a job. I wasn't all that sure exactly what I wanted to do yet, besides my life long dream of becoming a letter carrier through the post office. I had always been really close and involved with my parish from ushering to being a Eucharistic minister to being in a youth group, trying to get more people to join and being involved in church activities. Ever since I was a child I had always enjoyed joining my grandparents in coming to their monthly gathering. So I knew that God had been sending me a calling. I always felt that I was being called to be a priest. One day my grandfather accompanied me downtown to St. Joseph's seminary to seek my discernment in becoming a priest. It came to the conclusion that I had to go for 8 more years of school, 4 years at St. Joseph's and the other 4 years at Mundelein seminary.

After hearing this news I was like “oh man 8 more years of school”. I didn't want to do that as bad as that sounds.

A few years went by and I graduated high school and was still getting involved in a lot of different activities. Thinking after those few years after my visit to the seminary that my calling had slipped through my fingers, but yet I still felt I was being called to something but what could it be??? Somehow I don't remember how, but I got involved with the pro life group at St. John Cantius. Two years straight I went to the March for life in Washington D.C, with the brothers of St. John Cantius; my second year I was made a chaperone. It brought to me this wonderful idea, maybe my calling was to become a brother. I got in touch with Brother Chad, he told me what I would have to do. I scheduled myself a weekend to come and stay at St. John Cantius and follow the schedule the brothers do. I had an absolute blast and didn't want to go back home.

My last day came and I had only one more task I had to do, which was to have an interview with the Pastor. Father Phillips and I sat down and talked about how I liked the visit and what my thoughts were. I told him I loved it and what would my next steps be before I am considered?

He asked me if I had any medical conditions. I told him I had a pre-existing heart condition (Pulmonary Stenosis). Basically the valve keeps opening irregularly and the valve regurgitates fluid, which at some point would need to be repaired. The doctors all said that there had been no change at every three year check up. Father had told me he would have to pass it by the council before they could make a final decision.

A few days went by. I received an email from Father Phillips stating the council had denied my request to become a brother. I was so disappointed that once again my calling had slipped through my fingers.

It was about a year later and I know I still had this calling, I had been with my grandparents

at their monthly gathering. During social time, my grandfather had asked why don't I consider joining the order? I thought, “Why didn't I think about this sooner?”

What I had been intensely searching for had been in front of my face this whole time. I asked Jackie about joining. She handed me the book *Francis and the Dream*. I studied it and felt that this was right for me. I decided to join the fraternity.

It has been four years since my profession and I am currently serving on the council and could not be happier. This is my home, my family, my future and mostly serving the Lord as he has called me.

Brother Tim, OFS

Would You Approve of a Religion Whose Leader was a Condemned Criminal?

In this day and age of anything goes, that isn't as farfetched as it sounds. If its doctrines made sense, would you approve, even if the person who started it was condemned to death by the government?

Whether you approve or not, you already are part of such a movement.

The Roman government viewed Jesus as a person who fomented unrest against the Empire and as such was condemned to death before he could start an insurrection.

Jesus is a condemned criminal who has been worshiped by billions of people for 2,000 years.

Grace is when God gives us things we don't deserve.

Mercy is when God spares us from things we do deserve.

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 or Mary Kay to sign up.

FRANCISCAN OUTREACH. This is a year round project. Welcome Kits with necessities for kitchen, bed and bath are needed for every person transitioning from homelessness to an apartment. We will buy the items needed and fill kits throughout the year. For more information, contact Sister Faith.

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.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY. We inter-weave 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 B. or Cyndy.

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:, Francis-can Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL).

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

*Bringing the Gospel to Life
and
Life to the Gospel.*

2020 Calendar

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

January

13: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

February

10: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

March

02: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

09: Monthly Gathering (Stations of the Cross)

April

13: Monthly Gathering (Divine Mercy chaplet)

27: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

May

11: Vocation Day (Mass)

June

08: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

22: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

July

13: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

August

10: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

24: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

September

14: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

October

12: Monthly Gathering (Crown Rosary)

26: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

November

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

December

14: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

TBD: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home
