

Dear Brothers & Sisters



December 2015

Newsletter of the

Northwest Franciscan
Community of the
Immaculate Heart
of Mary

Palatine, Illinois

Secular Franciscan Order

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Submission deadline is the
last Tuesday of each month.

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

From the Minister

Our fraternity was so fortunate to have our Regional Councilor for JPIC, Barbara Elkins, OFS, at our November gathering. On the subject of Catholic social teaching, her presentation took us from the surface to a deeper level in two ways: A questionnaire helped us examine our conscience in the light of Catholic social teaching, and we had an opportunity to pause and search into ourselves for those activities that ignite our energy and enthusiasm. Through simple sticky notes, we learned about other fraternity members who shared our passions, furthering community and communication.

Thank you to our Spiritual Assistant, Brother Patrick, for arranging the presentation and facilitating the celebration of Mass by Fr. David. It was a delight to have Fr. David with us again.

At our November gathering, we also welcomed into Inquiry Diane and Fr. Dennis, who have expressed an interest in our Secular Franciscan way of life.

Later on November 22, which turned out to be a winter wonderland, 16 fraternity members gathered at my home for our annual Franciscan Outreach project. Once again, we were blessed to share the experience of *Domus Ecclesiae*, the House Church of the early Christians. With the sun glinting off the snow-laden trees behind him, Fr. Johnpaul celebrated Mass and graced us with his always-inspiring words that open our eyes to the True Light that we need to follow when the neon lights start to blur our vision. Not breaking tradition, all brothers and sisters were very generous in donating delicacies for a scrumptious feast, after which everyone went into assembly line mode and made short work of packing the 100 gift bags for Franciscan Outreach. Sister Geri drove to Marquard Center on December 02 to deliver the gift bags.

A huge thank you to Sisters Kay and Cyndy, who innocently volunteered "to come early and help set up" and ended up driving to the store for salt and shoveling the ice off the bottom of the driveway to ensure the safety of all brothers and sisters. All hips, wrists, elbows, and noggins thank you, dear sisters.

■ Save the Date. After such a joyous time, our thoughts echo, "We need to do this more often." Yes, we do, so mark your calendars now! As it's never too early to *think summer*, we will have a summer get-together at my home on July 31 (Sunday); details to follow in the coming months. I think that it's safe to optimistically say that no one will have to shovel ice and snow.

■ Common Fund. Our Treasurer, Brother Tom, informed me that due to recent expenses, our Common Fund has fallen to \$815 as of December 04. Part was necessary for our fraternity's website, and part was to cover the cost of our Franciscan Outreach Christmas project. Please keep our need in mind when contributing to the Common Fund in December and January. ☒

At This Month's Gathering ...

■ Ongoing Formation. Professed brothers and sisters, please read Chapter 2 in *What it Takes*, and reflect on and write down your answers for all the questions. Please be aware that all Professed are to attend ongoing formation and our monthly gatherings. If, for whatever reason, you're unable to attend, you *must* call our Minister, Sister Stephanie.

■ Communion Service & Social Time. Everyone, please join us at 7:30 p.m. for a Communion Service, followed by a brief business meeting and social time (remember to bring your own mugs). ☒

Next Monthly Gathering:

Monday, December 14, 2015

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

6:30 p.m.: Professed brothers and sisters, please arrive at this time for Ongoing Formation. Candidates are encouraged to observe.

7:30 p.m.: Start of our Gathering
with Communion Service,
followed by a business meeting
and social time. All welcome!


* * *

You must call Stephanie
if you cannot attend.


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Our gatherings are at 7:30 p.m. on
the second Monday of each month.

Common Fund Report

October beginning balance \$1,683.33; deposits \$365.00; expenses \$211.60; ending balance \$1,836.73. 


Our Apostolates

- **Bingo.** Meets one night per month at 6:30 p.m. in St. Joseph's activity room. Everyone, please see the sign-up sheet at our gathering and pick one month for which to volunteer. For more information, call Sisters Kay or Mary Kay.
- **Franciscan Outreach.** We collect items for delivery to the guests at Franciscan Outreach's Marquard Center. Call Sister Stephanie for more information.
- **Prayer & Praise Ministry.** For our brothers and sisters unable to attend our gatherings due to poor health or transportation issues. For more information, or if you're ill or know of someone who's ill, please call our Infirmarian, Sister Jackie.
- **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 or Cyndy.
- **Support (Money, Materials).** Quarterly donations from our Common Fund of any excess funds available *after* fraternity costs go to the following: Franciscan Missionary Union, Franciscan Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL), Amazon Relief.
- **Youth Prayer Partners.** Coordinated by Brother Tom, this apostolate matches up fraternity members with children preparing for First Communion or Confirmation. We last prayed for Confirmands at St. Thomas of Villanova (Palatine), and will pray again for a new group of students when we have more details. For more information, call Brother Tom. 

2016 Fraternity Calendar

To help us better plan for our gatherings in the new year, our Spiritual Assistant, Brother Patrick, has compiled the following liturgical/fraternity calendar for 2016.

Note: In September and October, the planned dates are on days other than the second Monday of the month. Those events replace our regular fraternity gatherings.

- **January:** Profession Mass of Candidates Mary and Tim
- **February:** Liturgy of the Hours
- **March:** Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament (*Lenten liturgy*)
- **April:** Communion Service
- **May:** Franciscan Crown Rosary
- **June:** Mass (*patronal feast, Immaculate Heart of Mary, is this month*)
- **July:** Liturgy of the Hours
- **August:** Communion Service
- **September 10 (Saturday):** Fraternity Day of Recollection
Replaces regular fraternity gathering
- **October 3 (Monday):** Transitus of our Holy Father Francis
Replaces regular fraternity gathering
- **November:** Mass, with Rite of Remembrance
- **December:** Communion Service 

Anniversaries This Month

There are no anniversaries this month.

Calendar

December

14: Monthly Gathering

January

11: Monthly Gathering

25: Council Meeting

Remember in Your Daily Prayers

- [PRIVATE]
 - [PRIVATE]
 - [PRIVATE]
 - All infirm, shut-in, and deceased fraternity members.
 - All Candidates, Inquirers, and Aspirants and their formation instructors.
 - Our entire Franciscan Family, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd (Secular & Regular) Orders: For strength in commitments, increase in vocations, and the work we do, especially for Franciscan Outreach, Franciscan Missionary Union, the Poor Clares in Palos Park, and Amazon Relief.
 - The guests of Franciscan Outreach's shelter and soup kitchen: That they know God's loving care and overcome the difficulties that keep them homeless.
 - Little Sisters of the Poor and the residents of St. Joseph's Home.
 - Our families and loved ones.
- Please pray that our fraternity and all Franciscans:
- Live the Holy Rule we've professed,
 - Bring the Gospel to Life, and Life to the Gospel in the spirit of Francis,
 - Live simply so that others may simply live, and
 - Are active and participate in the Franciscan apostolates.