

Dear Brothers & Sisters



March 2016

Newsletter of the

Northwest Franciscan Community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Palatine, Illinois

Secular Franciscan Order

Council Members

Minister:

Stephanie Heavey, OFS
minister@nwfranciscans.org

Vice-Minister:

Geri Allaire, OFS
viceminister@nwfranciscans.org

Formation Director:

Sue Gribbon, OFS
formation@nwfranciscans.org

Secretary:

Marc Golab, OFS
secretary@nwfranciscans.org

Treasurer:

Tom Sharapata, OFS
treasurer@nwfranciscans.org

Spiritual Assistant:

Patrick Mendés, OFS
sa@nwfranciscans.org

Newsletter Editor

newsletter@nwfranciscans.org

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

On another cold and snowy February night, we felt warm and loved clothed in our prayer shawls as we prayed the Liturgy of the Hours.

Two days later, we had our foreheads sealed with the sign of the cross in ashes as we began our Lenten journeys. Already, we are more than halfway through it. On page 2 is a true story ("The Rich Family") that reminded me of how Jesus spoke to the people in parables. Stories that are timeless in their truth.

■ **Helping Hands.** Our Sister Sue has graciously assumed the duties of the Mother Cabrini Regional Counselor for Fraternal Life. In a spirit of fraternity, let's team up with our sister to help her serve our brothers and sisters on the regional level. Ask Sister Sue how you can help.

■ **Religious Goods "Sale".** During social time at this month's gathering, we will have a used religious goods "sale", coordinated by Sister Cyndy. Please bring new or gently used books, statues, prints, medals, DVDs, CDs, etc. to the gathering. Items can be "purchased" for free-will donations, which will be used to benefit our Common Fund. In order to ensure a successful sale:

- **Do not** bring any items you received in the mail from charities, as we all have boxes of those.
- All leftover items **must be picked up and taken home by the donor.**

■ **Annual Open House Next Month.** April is our annual Open House, and we distributed notices with our February newsletter for you to share with your parishes. We also sent event information to *The Catholic New World's* "Around the Archdiocese" section and to Relevant Radio (930 and 950 am). Let us know if you see or hear us mentioned. Please personally invite to the open house someone you know who might like "to come and see" who we are and share our joy. ☒

At This Month's Gathering ...

■ **Ongoing Formation.** Professed brothers and sisters, please read **Chapter 04** in *What it Takes*. Please 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.

■ **Lenten Liturgy & Social Time.** Everyone, please join us at 7:30 p.m. for a special Lenten Liturgy (Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament) followed by a brief business meeting and social time will follow (remember to bring your own mugs). ☒

Common Fund Report

January beginning balance: \$ 974.74; deposits: \$485; expenses: \$325.60; ending balance: \$1,134.14. ☒

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.

Next Monthly Gathering:

Monday, March 14, 2016

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

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

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

* * *

You must call Stephanie if you cannot attend.

* * *


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

■ **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're currently praying for a group of students on their journey to Confirmation. In order to give them their notes before their confirmations (Friday, April 29), please bring them to this month's gathering, or mail them to our Vice-Minister, Sister Geri. 

The Rich Family

by Eddie Ogan, from *Chicken Soup for the Golden Soul*; www.chickensoup.com/stories?page=3542

I'll never forget Easter 1946. I was fourteen, my little sister, Ocy, was twelve and my older sister, Darlene, was sixteen. We lived at home with our mother, and the four of us knew what it was to do without. My dad had died five years before, leaving Mom with no money and seven school-aged kids to raise.

By 1946, my older sisters were married and my brothers had left home. A month before Easter, the pastor of our church announced that a special holiday offering would be taken to help a poor family. He asked everyone to save and give sacrificially.

When we got home, we talked about what we could do. We decided to buy fifty pounds of potatoes and live on them for a month. This would allow us to save twenty dollars of our grocery money for the offering. Then we thought that if we kept our electric lights turned out as much as possible and didn't listen to the radio, we'd save money on that month's electric bill. Darlene got as many house- and yard-cleaning jobs as possible, and both of us babysat for everyone we could. For fifteen cents we could buy enough cotton loops to make three potholders to sell for a dollar. We made twenty dollars on potholders. That month was one of the best of our lives.

Every day we counted the money to see how much we had saved. At night we'd sit in the dark and talk about how the poor family was going to enjoy having the money the church would give them. We had about eighty people in church, so we figured that whatever amount of money we had to give, the offering would surely be twenty times that much. After all, every Sunday the pastor had reminded everyone to save for the sacrificial offering.

The night before Easter, we were so excited we could hardly sleep. We didn't care that we wouldn't have new clothes for Easter; we had seventy dollars for the sacrificial offering. We could hardly wait to get to church! On Sunday

continued on page 3 ...

Anniversaries This Month

30: **Dorothy** (shut-in), Professed in 1974.

*God's blessings for your years of
Franciscan living!*

Calendar

March

14: Monthly Gathering

28: Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Stephanie's home

April

11: Monthly Gathering

25: Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Stephanie's home

Remember in Your Daily Prayers

- [PRIVATE]
- All infirm, shut-in, and deceased fraternity members.
- All those in initial formation 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.

"RICH", continued from page 2 ...

morning, rain was pouring. We didn't own an umbrella, and the church was over a mile from our home, but it didn't seem to matter how wet we got. Darlene had cardboard in her shoes to fill the holes. The cardboard came apart, and her feet got wet.

But we sat in church proudly. I heard some teenagers talking about our old dresses. I looked at them in their new clothes, and I felt rich.

When the sacrificial offering was taken, we were sitting in the second row from the front. Mom put in the ten-dollar bill, and each of us kids put in a twenty-dollar bill.

We sang all the way home from church. At lunch, Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs, and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes!

Late that afternoon, the minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment, and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn't say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp twenty-dollar bills, one ten-dollar bill and seventeen one-dollar bills.

Mom put the money back in the envelope. We didn't talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling poor. We kids had such a happy life that we felt sorry for anyone who didn't have our Mom and our late Dad for parents and a house full of brothers and sisters and other kids visiting constantly. We thought it was fun to share silverware and see whether we got the spoon or the fork that night. We had two knives that were passed around to whoever needed them. I knew we didn't have a lot of things that other people had, but I'd never thought we were poor.

That Easter day I found out we were. The minister had brought us the money for the poor family, *so we must be poor*, I thought. I didn't like being poor. I looked at my dress and worn-out shoes and felt ashamed—I didn't even want to go back to church. Everyone there probably already knew we were poor!

I thought about school. I was in the ninth grade and at the top of my class of over one hundred students. I wondered if the kids at school knew we were poor. I decided that I could quit school since I had finished the eighth grade. That was all the law required at that time.

We sat in silence for a long time. Then it got dark, and we went to bed. All that week, we girls went to school and came home, and no one talked much. Finally, on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We'd never known we were poor. We didn't want to go to church on Sunday, but Mom said we had to. Although it was a sunny day, we didn't talk on the way. Mom started to

sing, but no one joined in, and she sang only one verse.

At church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun-dried bricks, but they needed money to buy roofs. He said one hundred dollars would put a roof on a church. The minister added, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people?" We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week.

Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me, and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering.

When the offering was counted, the minister announced that it was a little over one hundred dollars. The missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this church." Suddenly it struck us! We had given eighty-seven dollars of that "little over one hundred dollars."

We were the rich family in the church! Hadn't the missionary said so? From that day on, I've never been poor again.

Minister's Note: Eddie's bio from 2000 states that she lives with her husband, Phil, in a log cabin in the Gillette Mountains in Coleville, WA. They have one son by birth, 11 adopted children, and many grandchildren. They have been foster parents to 77 children over the last 35 years.

A Blessed Easter to you and those you love. May you continue to be "rich" as the generosity of your hearts continues to reach out to your sisters and brothers in the Risen Jesus. ☩

Commentary for Easter Sunday Readings, Extraordinary Form

Excerpts from *My Sunday Missal* by Confraternity of the Precious Blood

"You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified. He has risen, He is not here ... Go, tell His disciples ... that He goes before you" (Gospel).

Yes; we, too, searchers after Christ, now confess we have found Him. The task before us is to "tell" others of His victory, that all may be "of one mind and heart" (Postcommunion).

Why? Because if Christmas is the loveliest Feast as we behold God *born of Mary* unto man's life, certainly Easter is the greatest as we behold Jesus *born of a tomb* so that man may rise unto God's Life.

Our faith in His Divinity is confirmed because He "overcame death;" our hope is enlivened because He has "opened unto us the Gate of Eternity" (Prayer). Is it any wonder that the "earth trembled ... when God arose" (Offertory)?

How are we to prepare for our Easter Communion? A Resurrection Day effort to "purge out the old" life for the "new!" How could we be nourished by the "sincerity and truth" of Divine Bread if it were spoiled by the "leaven" of an insincere will, or an untrue mind (Epistle)? ☩