



Dear Brothers & Sisters

Secular Franciscan Order
Palatine, Illinois

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

Geri Allaire, OFS
viceminister@nwfranciscans.org

Formation Director

Sue Gribbon, OFS
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Secretary

Marc Golab, OFS
secretary@nwfranciscans.org

Treasurer

Tom Sharapata, OFS
treasurer@nwfranciscans.org

Spiritual Assistant

Patrick Mendés, OFS
sa@nwfranciscans.org

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

What blessings our Heavenly Father conferred on us in the past year. While society around us was filled with turmoil and “doom and gloom”, we understood that as secular Franciscans we live physically in this world but our hearts and souls live elsewhere. And we were blessed to witness the profession of two new members as secular Franciscans, to be bypassed by Sister Death within our ranks and to be there to console those of us who did lose loved ones, to welcome men and women whose hearts are leaning toward the secular Franciscan way of life, to host a dynamic Day of Recollection that enlightened our thoughts about Purgatory (a manifestation of God’s Mercy and not vengeance as some would believe), and to spend a carefree afternoon or two with each other as families do.

The evening of December 12, 2016 found us gathered in full community to discuss the praying of the Liturgy and its many twists and turns, to pray with each other and receive Jesus Himself into our hearts and bodies, to share food and conversation with each other as another year was fast coming to its end. It was inspiring to see how the Spirit worked to bring us all together on a snowy Advent night. As we gathered together surrounding the altar – men and women of all different ages, different heights, different education, different careers, different ministries, different likes and dislikes, different temperaments – how beautiful it was to see us as one, united in prayer and love and fraternity.

Our gratitude to Brother Patrick, for leading us in our discussion, Brother Deacon Lou, for presiding at the Word and Communion Service, and to Sisters Sue and Jackie, and Brother Tim, for leading us in song.

Our Monthly Gathering...

All professed members will gather on Monday, January 9 at 6:30 pm. We will begin using the book *The Holy Year of Mercy* for our formation this year. Please read the Introduction which will explain the sets of questions at the end of each session. Read Session 1 including *Understand! Grow! Reflect! Act!*. As we begin this New Year, answering these questions is a marvelous way to step away from the frenzy of everyday life and focus on what we are doing and why. All are invited to join us in the chapel at 7:30 pm for a Communion Service followed by social time in the ice cream parlor. Notify the minister if it is impossible for you to attend this meeting.

Fraternity Book of Prayer

While in Assisi this past October, we visited a local printer. There was a little notebook that caught my eye. It seemed just the right size to use for a Book of Prayer for all those needs and concerns of our hearts which go beyond those which are listed in our fraternity newsletter.

This Fraternity Book of Prayer can be used to voice prayers of need, prayers of blessing, prayers of thanksgiving. The book will be available at all fraternity gatherings and liturgies for anyone who wishes to express their petitions.

May my prayer come to You like the sweet smell of incense. Ps. 141

Dear Brothers & Sisters www.nwfranciscans.org

Anniversaries

January takes the prize for the most anniversaries of profession in our fraternity. *God's Blessings to All!*

Jan. 13, 2000	Connie
Jan. 14, 2008	Sue Bonnie
Jan. 11, 2010	Stephanie Dcn. Lou
Jan. 11, 2016	Mary Tim

Directory Change

Please make the following change:

[PRIVATE]

Fair Share is Due

The **\$35** Fair Share is due by March. It is a yearly obligation of both *Professed* and *Candidates* as well as our shut-in and inactive members. The Fair Share supports our Regional and National fraternities. It is a **separate donation** from our monthly Common Fund donations which support our fraternity.

Please give our Treasurer Brother Tom your check this month or at the latest in February. If \$35 is a financial burden for you at this time, please contact Brother Tom.

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2017 Calendar

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

January

09: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)
23: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

February

13: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

March

13: Monthly Gathering (Stations of the Cross)

April

10: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)

May

08: Monthly Gathering (Franciscan Crown)
22: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home

June

12: Profession Mass (Kathy and Faith)

July

10: Monthly Gathering (Liturgy of the Hours)

August

14: Monthly Gathering (Communion Service)
28: Council Meeting, Stephanie's Home

September

09: (*Saturday*) Fraternity Day of Recollection,
St. Colette's *replaces regular fraternity meeting*

October

03: Transitus of our Holy Father Francis
replaces regular fraternity meeting

November

13: Monthly Gathering (Mass – with Rite of Remembrance)
19: (*Sunday*) Franciscan Outreach Project, Stephanie's home
19: Council Meeting, Stephanie's home, (following Outreach gathering)

December

11: Profession Mass (Fr. Dennis)

Remember in Your Prayers

THE INTENTIONS OF POPE FRANCIS FOR JANUARY

Christian Unity.

That all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity.

(*Beginning this month the Pope will present only one prayer intention each month rather than two. A second prayer intention will be added related to urgent situations.*)

[PRIVATE]

For the health concerns of our dear shut-in sisters.

For all **deceased** fraternity members.

All **those in initial formation** and their formation instructors.

Our entire **Franciscan Family, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd (Secular and Regular) Orders**: For strength in commitments and increase in vocations.

For the **work we do as fraternity**, especially for **Franciscan Outreach, Franciscan Missionary Union, the Poor Clares** in Palos Park, and **Amazon Relief**.

For the **Guests of Franciscan Outreach's Soup Kitchen**: That they know God's loving care and overcome the difficulties that keep them homeless.

For the **Little Sisters of the Poor** and the residents of St. Joseph's Home.

For 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 can simply live.

Are active and participate in Franciscan apostolates.

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. Donations are accepted year round in the Christmas stocking at each monthly gathering. 100 Gift Bags are made up in November for the guests at the Franciscan Outreach soup kitchen in Chicago. Contact Sister Stephanie for more information.

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 Jackie.

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 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: Franciscan Missionary Union, Franciscan Outreach, Poor Clares (Palos Park, IL) and Amazon Relief.

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.

Self-Transformation

Another New Year has begun and we are bombarded with ads and ideas of how to improve ourselves physically, mentally, socially. Self-transformation from what we were in 2016 to what we could become in 2017.

The word self-transformation is really a description of the impossible when it relates to becoming more like Jesus. In truth, we cannot make ourselves different – transform ourselves. We do not have that power. God does.

So why can't He just change us? He sees what we are like. He knows what He would like us to be. But He does not and cannot because He gave us free will as a gift. It is ours to use as we desire. We must ask for His help *and* cooperate in the process. It won't be instantaneous.

So after seeking His help, what can we do? Henri Nouwen said that we "will not be able to meet Jesus in our body while our body remains full of doubts and fears." Ridding ourselves of doubt, fear and anxiety is what God asks of us.

Five star advice for today when we are anxious about the governing of America, fearful because of all the terror attacks and unrest in our world. When we pray to God calling Him the Almighty and all powerful, are we still thinking we could do a better job of setting things right if we were given the chance?

Our humanness will always keep trying to resurrect fears and anxieties and doubts. One of the definitions of transform is 'convert'. Not a one-time thing. As secular Franciscans we are called to undergo conversion every day.