



THE PADRE PIO FRATERNITY SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER



I love you this much!

The Brother and Sisters of St. Francis Region

St. Valentine's Day

“Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.” 1Cor.13:4-7

~ In God's eyes everyday is Valentine's Day - a day of love. ~

SNOWSTORM JONAS CAUSES OUR JANUARY

GATHERING TO BE CANCELLED.



Fr. Steve Kluge, OFM

Presenting

**“A GAZE ON THE SAN DAMIANO
CRUCIFIX”**

Fr. Steve Kluge (pronounced Kloo-gee), originally from New Jersey, is a Franciscan friar currently serving in the Community of St. Francis parish. He enjoys holding the door on Sunday mornings greeting the “Saints of God.” He and Fr. Steve Patti were ordination classmates, ordained on the same day in 2001. He is an excellent homilist, retreat master and dedicated friar and we are very fortunate that he is going to be our February presenter at our Gathering on February 28th. He composes poems and reflections for the Sunday bulletin.



Did you ever stop to think how Francis would react to misfortunes in the snow? Here is a story from *Francis of Assisi: The Saint*.

“One day Francis was walking half-naked through the forest, when he suddenly fell among robbers. When they asked him who he was, he responded prophetically without fear, ‘I am the herald of the great King! What is that to you?’ They indignantly whipped him, and threw him into a snow-filled ditch, and insulted him saying, ‘Lie there stupid herald of God!’ When the brigands departed, he jumped out of the snowy ditch joyfully, and more energetically sang praises to the Creator of all.”

See you at the February gathering!

ApostLates

For CPO contact Maureen Copan, OFS

**For Oak City Outreach
Contact Ellen Ferrone**

**For Hospitality
suggestions see Marie Roccoforte, OFS.**

For Sunshine call Marge Zombek, OFS to have a card sent to someone.

**For info on JPIC &
Website see Sharon Winzeler, OFS**

**Prayer Requests:
go to Susan Stamey**

**Ida Irwin, OFS does our
scrapbook.**

**Our superb library is
maintained by Maureen Copan, OFS**

**To add items to the
Newsletter contact Frank E. Peluso, OFS.**

**We are on the web:
Go to:
<http://ofscentralnc.org/>
(All past newsletters
are on the website!)**

THE POPE'S PRAYER

INTENTIONS FOR

February

Universal: Care for Creation

That we may take good care of creation – a gift freely given – cultivating and protecting it for future generations.

Evangelization: Asia

That opportunities may increase for dialogue and encounter between the Christian faith and the peoples of Asia.

Jubilee Year of Mercy and Lent

How can we show others the mercy of God? We say that God is compassionate, but we ignore the poor. We say that God loves us and has mercy on us, but we hold grudges against our friends. Our actions need to authentically reflect God's mercy. The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. "Being filled with the love and mercy of Christ, we shall be stimulated to reach out to others in corporal and spiritual works of mercy," the African bishops said. "Pope Francis invites us to 'rediscover the corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned and bury the dead'." "He urges us 'not to forget the spiritual works of mercy: to support the doubtful, educate the unenlightened, warn sinners, comfort the suffering, forgive offenses, be patient to those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead'." This lent is a perfect time to

utilize as many of these works as we can. Lent 2016 commences on Wednesday, February 10 and culminates on Thursday, March 24. As we understand, Lent is the season of penance and prayer before Easter. It starts every year on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter Sunday. Ash Wednesday 2016 falls on February 10, 2016, and Holy Saturday 2016 falls on March 26, 2016, - Franciscan Friar

Franciscan Saints

for February

1 St. Veridiana. (benedictine visited by St. Francis in 1211).

1 Bl. Andrew of Segni,

4 St. Joseph of Leonissa, priest

6 Sts Peter Baptist, Paul Miki, and Comp., martyrs of I and III Order.

7 St. Colette of Corbie, virgin of II Order.

8 St. Giles Mary of St. Joseph I Order

10. Ash Wednesday

15 Transfer of the Body of St. Anthony of Padua

17 Bl. Luke Belludi, religious, I Ord.

19 St. Conrad of Piacenza, hermit, III Ord.

One day while hunting he ordered attendants to set fire to some brush in order to flush out the game. The fire spread to nearby fields and to a large forest. An innocent peasant was imprisoned. Conrad confessed, saved the man's life and paid for the damaged property. Soon after this event, Conrad and his wife agreed to separate: she to a Poor Clare monastery and he to a group of hermits following the Third Order Rule. Prayer and penance were his answer to the temptations that beset him. Conrad died kneeling before a crucifix.

27 Bl. Sebastian of Aparicio, I Order
(Easter is on March 27th)

Mother Teresa and Prayer

Mother Teresa was once asked about her prayer life.

The interviewer asked, "When you pray, what do you say to God?"

Mother Teresa replied, "I don't talk, I simply listen."

Believing he understood what she had just said, the interviewer next asked, "Ah, then what is it that God says to you when you pray?"

Mother Teresa replied, "He also doesn't talk. He also simply listens."

There was a long silence, with the interviewer seeming a bit confused and not knowing what to ask next. Finally Mother Teresa breaks the silence by saying, "If you can't understand the meaning of what I've just said, I'm sorry but there's no way I can explain it any better."

St. Bonaventure said: "Whether St. Francis was walking or sitting, at home or abroad, whether he was working or resting, he was so fervently devoted to prayer that he seemed to have dedicated to it not only his heart and soul, but all his efforts and all his time."

February dedicated to the Holy Family.

February is the month dedicated to the Holy Family. Though the start of the Lenten season changes within the calendar year, a fair-sized portion of February gives us a space of time between the Christmas and the increased focus on Jesus's public life and ministry, which occurs in Lent. Therefore traditionally February has become a time to recall the Holy Family; within the Holy Family is where Jesus spent the time between his birth and embarking on his public journey.

"The Holy Family is the beginning of countless other holy families."

~ St. John Paul II

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,
I give You my heart and
my soul.



NEXT GATHERING

February 28, 2016
The Catholic Community
of
St. Francis of Assisi
Leesville Rd,
Raleigh, NC 27613

Formation

In the
Lifelong Education
Siena Center
Rooms 751 and 752
Meets from 11:00 am
to 12:15 pm

Fraternity Gathering

at 1:00 to 3:00 pm
Anthony Hall,
Founders Room



The remembrance of the
most holy Passion of Jesus
Christ is the door through
which the soul enters into
intimate union with God,
interior recollection and most
sublime contemplation... -
St. Paul of the Cross

Giving Yourself Away

There's the familiar biblical story of the rich young man talking to Jesus . At the end of their conversation Jesus says to him: "There is still one thing left for you: sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

What is this if not the story of Francis of Assisi's life? It was what he desired with all his heart and what he lived out until the day he died. I use to think that finding your life by losing your life was a commandment. This is what you should do. But no, it is not a commandment. It is the meaning of what it is to be a human being. If you want to find yourself, give yourself away. This is what existence is like. If you give yourself away you won't run out of life. Being and giving yourself is exactly the same thing. It's what it means to be human. The Franciscan movement results from Francis and the brothers learning about what is required so that human beings might flourish as God intended. The real religious genius of Francis of Assisi lies in his ability to appreciate and value the human as the religious. In simple terms, Francis understood the gospel as showing us what it means to be really and simply human as brothers and sisters in the context of social meanings and structures that are often anti-human. To be a healthy human brother or sister is to be a holy human person. Our way of being simply human is the message Francis was called to share – God's house is repaired and renewed in brotherhood and sisterhood, where human life in its weakness, fragility and vulnerability are embraced and celebrated and endured and supported in patience and healthy relationships, and where honest conversation is practiced and promoted as a way of being.

This is the vision of fraternal life that the early Franciscan writings set out. We are all responsible for living toward this goal by virtue of our common profession. The real challenge is, I believe, to make that common profession the basis for common life and practice not in an ideal place, but in the real space of brotherhood and sisterhood that God has given us to flourish. And that happens as we give ourselves to one another and those we serve. We give ourselves away.

The foundation of existence we call God is self-gift: the gift of the self to the other. It is precisely correct to say that if we're going to exist we must give ourselves away. If this is true for the Christian's life, indeed for a human life, how much truer is it for us Franciscans who by our profession claim nothing for ourselves. But it is important, I think, to see that this "giving up" has a purpose. It is not "giving up," not "losing your life," for just any reason at all. But to find your life, to receive it back, and not only from God but from one another and from the people we are privileged to live with, acknowledge as friends, serve as followers of our savior. This is not a teaching just for those who have lots of things. This is not about stewardship. This is what you and I as caregivers have to offer people. If they give themselves away they will find themselves too.

If we're going to exist humanly we have to give ourselves away. This is the meaning of love. If you can't give yourself to someone then you're not loving that person. And when you give everything you have and are to another then you love that person unconditionally. As John says it again: God is love. God cannot not love us. Even when we do things that are wrong, God loves us unconditionally. We cannot displease God. God is love, constantly giving God's self to you and me. And we, you and I, are made in God's image. We are to give ourselves away.

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Council Members

**Spiritual Assistant: David McBriar,
OFM**

Lay Minister: W. Stanley Driscoll, OFS

Vice Minister: Michael Evaniuck, OFS

Formation: Joanne Jacovec, OFS

Treasurer: Sharon Winzeler, OFS

Secretary: Maureen Copan, OFS

**Councilors: Ida Irwin, OFS . Suzanne
Nelson, OFS, Frank Peluso, OFS**

BSSF Region

**Appointed Minister: Dorothy Ann
Rowland, OFS**

**Area 3 Councilors : Carmen Madero,
OFS , Frank Massey, OFS**

Giving Yourself Away - Continued from page 4.

How can you do this? How can you so minister to people that they will want to give themselves away too? The necessary first step is what one of my favorite poets, W.H. Auden, calls “the intensity of attention.” You have to pay attention to people. Intensity of attention is deep. It’s not warm emotion. It’s paying attention to him to

Let me tell you a story. "A remarkable Hasidic Rabbi, Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev in Ukraine, used to say that he had discovered the meaning of love from a drunken peasant. The rabbi was visiting the owner of a tavern in the Polish countryside. As he walked in, he saw two peasants at a table. Both were gloriously in their cups. Arms around each other, they were protesting how much each loved the other. Suddenly Ivan said to Peter: 'Peter, tell me what hurts me?' Bleary-eyed, Peter looked at Ivan: 'How do I know what hurts you?' Ivan's answer was swift: 'If you don't know what hurts me, how can you say you love me?'"

To know what hurts God's people, our sisters and brothers in humanity, is not to know the statistics of the sociologists, the conclusions of the cultural anthropologists, the predictions of the economists, even the insights of the theologians. It is to know in the biblical sense of entering into a relationship of love with what and whom you know. People are so very grateful if you pay attention to them. If you hear their story, if you begin to realize what hurts them. Another word for this kind of self giving is friendship. Of course, we can't enter into everyone's life as a friend. But there are elements of friendship which, I submit, historically have characterized us Franciscans. We listen to people. We pay attention to them. We make an effort to understand them. This, for me, is at the heart of our Franciscan ministry. In this act of friendship, or benevolence, you give another hope because you have recognized their dignity. And you have invited them into their own awareness that they have the need to give themselves away, to love another, to love others. They are loved and know what love means.

You know there are many definitions of the human. For Aristotle, I am a rational animal. For Descartes, I think therefore I am. But for Plato, I am the animal capable of friendship. We only have things by giving them away. How are you going to do that? Attend to the ways you can. Enter into friendship with others, wish another well, facilitate his/her own love of self.

Calvin Trillin is a contemporary essayist. He won one of the Sydney awards a few years back for the best magazine article of the year. It was an essay on his late wife, Alice. He recalls this incident. “At one point, Alice was working at a camp for children with genetic disorders. She wondered how one child, Lisa, could be so cheerful, even though she neither grew nor could digest food. Then she saw a letter from Lisa's mother. "If God had given us all of the children in the world to choose from, Lisa,' her mother wrote, "we would only have chosen you." Alice pulled her husband aside: "Quick. Read this. It's the secret of life." Indeed. The secret of life. Giving yourself away and finding yourself. Losing your life and gaining it.

by David J. McBriar, O.F.M. January, 2016

SAVE THIS DATE



**Bread for the World Annual North Carolina Convention
March 19, 2016, 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.
Highland United Methodist Church, 1901 Ridge Road, Raleigh, NC
Registration Fee \$25.00 includes lunch**



QUOTES BY BENEDICT J. GROESCHEL, CFR

One thing that is not being tried in any particularly enthusiastic way by people who call themselves Catholic is Catholicism. — Fr. Benedict Groeschel, The Reform of Renewal, 1990

“Even when we do not choose evil, we choose the good so half heartedly and with so many qualifications that mediocrity becomes our canonized status quo.” — Benedict J. Groeschel

“I remember once in the Holy Land seeing a sign in the shape of an arrow along a road. It said, "Armageddon, 4 kilometers." If ever there was a sign that made you wonder whether you wanted to continue down a road, this was it.” — Benedict J. Groeschel, After This Life: What Catholics Believe about What Happens Next

“The Church is a collection of poor sinners. The Catholic Church is a collection of 1.1 billion very poor sinners. That's a lot of original sins, and it is no wonder we have trouble.”

— Benedict J. Groeschel, The Journey of Faith:



A LETTER FROM MONSIGNOR DOUGLAS P. REED

The following is a letter to all of us from our former Spiritual Assistant, Monsignor Douglas P. Reed of St. Michael's in Cary, NC. We congratulate him on recently being named "Monsignor" by Pope Francis. We were most fortunate and grateful to have him help restart our fraternity.

Dear Padre Pio Fraternity Members,

During this Holy Year of Mercy, may the Lord fill you all with his choicest blessings.
May your new location and new spiritual director lead you in the steps of St. Francis,
I thank God for the opportunity to help you get started again! May you continue to grow.

God Bless you

Fr. Doug



May God bless you with anger

At injustice, oppression,
And exploitation of people,
So that you may work for
Justice, freedom and peace.



May God bless you with tears,

To shed for those who suffer pain,
Rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand
To comfort them and
To turn their pain to joy



And may God bless you with enough foolishness

To believe that you can
Make a difference in the world,
So that you can do
What others claim cannot be done
To bring justice and kindness
To all our children and the poor.

a franciscan blessing

Amen

"In the evening of life, we will be judged on love alone." St. John of the Cross