

Padre Pio Fraternity

The Brothers and Sisters of Saint Francis Region

Minute Meditation for Lent:

St. Padre Pio of Pietralcina

Pax et bonum!

It is of capital importance that you emphasize what is the basis for holiness and the foundation of goodness. I mean to talk about the virtue of which Jesus presents himself explicitly as the model: humility (cf. Mt 11,29). Inner humility; more inner than outward. Recognize who you truly are: a nothing, something quite miserable, weak, full of defects, capable of turning good into bad, to let go the good for the bad, to attribute to yourself the good, and to justify yourself in doing bad, and for love of evil, to despise the One who is the Supreme Good.

Never go to bed before having first examined your conscience to consider how you spent your day. Turn all your thoughts towards the Lord and consecrate your person to him as well as all the Christians. Then offer to his glory the sleep you will get, without ever forgetting your guardian angel, who is always at your side.

~ from Saint Padre Pio of Pietralcina (1887-1968), Capuchin Buona Giornata, p.81

“The life of a Christian is nothing but a perpetual struggle against self; there is no flowering of the soul to the beauty of its perfection except at the price of pain”
(saying of St. Padre Pio).

Rite of Admission - see p 4



The Rite of Extraction

At our gathering on January 25th we celebrated one of the oldest traditions of the Franciscan community and is observed by the First, Second and Third Orders, Religious and Secular, during the first of the year. We believe that God speaks to us in many ways, not the least of which is through the example of his saints, through the inspired words of Scripture, and through the virtues that were exemplified by St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Pio and other saints.

Our selected patron saint for the year, with Scripture passage, and the Franciscan virtue might be a special source of inspiration in the challenges, which might be facing us during the year.

“When you look at the crucifix, you understand how much Jesus loved you then. When you look at the Sacred Host, you understand how much Jesus loves you now.” ~
Bl. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Spiritual Assistant:
Rev. Douglas P. Reed

Council Members:

Lay Minister:
W. Stanley Driscoll OFS
Vice Minister:
Michael Evaniuck, OFS
Formation:
Joanne Jacovec. OFS

Treasurer:
Sharon Winzeler, OFS
Secretary:
Maureen Copan. OFS

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

BSSF Region:

Minister,
Jerry Rousseau, OFS,
Area 3 Councilors:
Frank Massey, OFS,
And
Marie Stephan, OFS

March 21, 2015
Starting at noon

Fraternity Gathering
Lenten Simple Lunch
and Prayer Service
at
Ida Irwin's OFS
11700
Arnold Palmer Dr. Raleigh,
NC 27617



THE MONTH OF March 2015

Devotion

March is the month of devotion to St. Joseph, whose feast falls on March 19th. The date of the solemnity of St. Joseph dates to the end of the 15th century; within the next few centuries, the entire month as a time for devotion to St. Joseph became part of tradition.

In a society which seems to discourage the importance of marriage and fatherhood, St. Joseph, the spouse of the Virgin and the man given the responsibility of raising Jesus, is an incredible model of an obedient, faithful, Christian father.



- Universal: That those involved in scientific research may serve the well-being of the whole human person.
- Evangelization: That the unique contribution of women to the life of the Church may be recognized always.

FRANCISCAN SAINTS FOR MARCH

- 2 **St. Agnes of Bohemia**, virgin, II Ord. Agnes refused to play a part in a politically arranged marriage. She decided to devote her life to prayer and spiritual works, for which she sought the help of **Pope Gregory IX**. On land donated by her brother, **King Wenceslaus I of Bohemia**, she founded the Hospital of St. Francis (ca. 1232-33) and two friaries for the **Franciscan** friars, who had just come to Bohemia at her brother's invitation. Through them Agnes learned of **Clare of Assisi** and her **Order of Poor Ladies**, the monastic counterpart of the friars. She began a correspondence with the Lady Clare (with whom she corresponded for over two decades but never met in person), which led to Clare's sending five nuns from the monastery in Assisi to Prague to begin a new house of the Order. This was the first Poor Clare community north of the **Alps**.
- 3 **Bls. Liberatus Weiss**, Samuele Marzorati and Michele Pio Fasoli, priests and martyrs, I Ord.
- 5 **St. John Joseph of the Cross**, priest, I Ord.
- 9 **St. Frances of Rome**, religious, III Ord.
- 12 **St. John Bosco**, priest, III Order, founder. He was brought up by his saintly Tertiary mother, Margaret. It was no doubt due to her example and influence that John too joined the Third Order of St. Francis of Assisi. In 1854 St John Bosco founded the religious order of Salesians, so called in honor of St Francis de Sales. Its members devote themselves to the education of poor boys.
- 18 **St. Salvator of Horta**, religious I Ord.
- 20 **Bl. John of Parma**, priest, I Ord.
- 22 **St. Benvenute** of Osimo, priest, I Ord.
- 23 **St. Catherine of Genoa**, III Ord. wrote about purgatory which, she said, begins on earth for souls open to God.
- 24 **Bl. Ludovico of Casoria**, priest, I Ord. social reformer and founder.
- 30 **St. Peter Regaldo**, priest, I Ord. patron of the internet!



Happy Anniversary of Profession 12 Years

Ginny Conway, OFS	03/05/2003
Joyce Wesner, OFS	03/27/2003



A Lenten Reflection with St. Bonaventure, OFM

Bonaventure's Franciscan thought is best provided by his *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* [**The Soul's Journey Into God**]. He writes:

"Inspired by the example of our most blessed father, Francis, I wanted to seek after peace with yearning and souls, sinner that I am and all unworthy. Yet I am the seventh successor as Minister to all the brothers in the place of the blessed father after his death. It happened that after thirty-three years after the passing of the saint, moved by divine impulse I withdrew to Mount LaVerna as a place of quiet, there to satisfy the yearning of my soul for peace. While I dwelt there, pondering on certain spiritual assents to God, I was struck by the miracle which in this very place had happened to blessed Francis, That is, the vision he received of the winged seraph in the form of the Crucified. As I reflected on this marvel, it immediately seemed to me that this vision might suggest the rising of St. Francis into contemplation and point out the way by which that state of contemplation may be reached."

It became clear to Bonaventure that this mystical experience was not only the goal of his vocation and that of the brothers but the path to it. It became apparent to him that the vision of the six-winged Seraph indicated that the crucified Christ was at the very heart of Christian life, the center around which all else evolved.

"The six wings of the Seraph, can be rightly understood as signifying the six levels of uplifting illuminations (See the six degrees

below) by which, as if by steps or stages, the soul is disposed to passover to peace through ecstatic transport of Christian wisdom, The road to this peace is through nothing else than a most ardent love of the Crucified. The love of which so transported St. Paul into Christ when he was carried up into the third heaven (2 Cor 12:2) *that he could say (Gal 2:20) With Christ I am nailed to the cross, I live, not I, but Christ lives in me.* And this love also so absorbed the soul of Francis that his spirit shone through his flesh the last two years before his death when he carried in his body the sacred marks of the passion."

{The six degrees of the love of God: Therefore, according to the six stages of ascension into God, there are six stages of the soul's powers by which we mount from the depths to the heights, from the external to the internal, from the temporal to the eternal--to wit, sense, imagination, reason, intellect, intelligence, and the apex of the mind, the illumination of conscience. These stages are implanted in us by nature, deformed by sin, reformed by grace, to be purged by justice, exercised by knowledge, perfected by wisdom.

A new and **improved version** of Bonaventure's six degrees of the love of God. (de six gradibus dilectionis Dei):

1. Sweetness. The soul has had a first taste of the sweetness of the Lord. (suavitas) – sensitivity,
2. Eagerness. Having had this taste, the soul longs for more. (aviditas) – enthusiasm,
3. Satisfaction. The soul comes to know that only the love of God is the only thing that can fill and satisfy our longing. (saturitas) – longing for excess in grace,

4. Inebriation. Now drunk with the love of God, the soul takes no pain or discouragement from trials and difficulties, but in fact seeks them for the love of God. (ebreitas) – intoxicated,

5. Security. In this state, nothing is a threat to the soul; nothing can separate it from the love of God. (securitas) – freedom from care,

6. Tranquility. Like those saved in Noah's Ark, the soul can rest and even sleep the sleep of contemplation, safe from everything. (tranquillitas) – at peace with everything, *from A minor Friar*}

Bonaventure then proceeds to articulate his own understanding of the vision. In so much that St. Francis becomes that of the Christian soul who washes in the blood of the Lamb, who becomes inflamed with desire.

"The figure of the six wings of the Seraph, therefore, brings to mind six steps of illumination which begin with creatures and lead up to God, Whom no one rightly enters except through the Crucified. (Jn 10:1) *For he who enters not by the door, but climbs up another way, is a thief and a robber,* (Jn 10:9) *But if anyone enter by this door, he shall go in and out and find pastures.* For this reason St. John says in Revelation (Rv 22:14) *Blessed are they who wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb, that they may have a right to the tree of life and that by the gates may enter into the city.* That is to say, that no one can enter into the heavenly Jerusalem unless he enters through the blood of the lamb as through a door. For no one, in any way, is disposed for divine contemplations that lead to spiritual transports unless, like Daniel, he is also (Dn 9:23) a man of desires. Now, such desires are enkindled (continued on p 4),



LENTEN REFLECTION

(continued From p3)

in us in two ways, to wit, through the outcry of prayer, which makes one sigh (Ps 37:9) from our heart, and through the refulgence of speculation by which the mind most directly and intently turns itself toward the rays of life.”

In Bonaventure’s 1255 sermon on St. Francis, he says “those signs of consummate love now provided for those who would follow Francis’ lead on the path into God, Francis’ stigmata were expressed signs for someone whose life provided a map of perfection, one that could be followed because of external signs of God’s approval.”

From various sources



Happy March Birthdays

Joe Travers, OFS
March 10
Suzie Nelson OFS
March 12
Christine Murray OFS
March 12
Betty Pate
March 13
Ailen Evaniuck OFS
March 15
Robert Ochart
March 30

Next Gathering

March 22, 2015
In the Trinity Center
Top floor
4th Sunday @ 1:30 pm
(Subject to change.)
@ St Michael Catholic
Church,
804 High House Road,
Cary, NC

**Orientation and Candidate
Formation
starts at 11:45**



Rite of Admission - Padre Pio Fraternity



From left to right: Joanne Jacovec, OFS, Formation Director, Dianne Greet, OFS, Victoria Romero, OFS, Bernard Dawson, OFS, Marie Roccoforte, OFS, Louis Coker, OFS, W. Stanley Driscoll OFS, Minister

“We intend to be of service to all through our secular state of life for the glory of God and to fulfill his plan of love in behalf of all people.” from the Rite of Admission

The Testament of St. Francis of Assisi – In his own words: “I have done what is mine; may Christ teach you what is yours.” Francis of Assisi (2 Celano: 214)

After 18 months of preparation and initial formation, five of our Franciscan brothers and sisters, as shown in the picture to the left, celebrated their admission into the Secular Franciscan Order on Sunday, February 22, 2015. Father Douglas Reed, Spiritual Assistant, officiated at the Rite of Admission along with Stan Driscoll OFS, Minister and Joanne Jacovec OFS, Formation Director.

As our beloved founder taught in his Testament, each of our new candidates studied, listened, prayed, discerned and responded to the call of our Lord, Jesus Christ to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis. Father Doug reflected on the “gift of our Rule of Life and Secular Franciscan vocation.” Stan mentioned that this was the first Rite of Admission since our fraternity’s elections and activation. Joanne thanked Louis, Bernie, Dianne, Marie and Victoria for their dedication to our initial and ongoing formation programs, participation in our fraternal life and spiritual observances, and service to our JPIC apostolates. Padre Pio Fraternity is truly blessed and graced by their presence!