

"The Canticle"

Divine Mercy Fraternity • Secular Franciscan Order • November 2018

Regular monthly gathering

Sunday, **November 11, 2018**, 2:00-4:00 pm, at
St. Helen Church, South Room, Vero Beach

Fraternity Officers/Council Members (exp. Jan. 09, 2019)

Minister: Fred Schaeffer, OFS
Vice-Minister: Helen Caldarone, OFS
Secretary: Jean McGovern, OFS
Treasurer: Jack Reddy, OFS
Formation Director: Donna Haro, OFS
Councilor-at-large: Joanne Giordana, OFS
Spiritual Asst. Deacon Richard Blake, OFS
(when available)

Agenda and Schedule

- 2:00 Opening, Reports, etc.
- 2:10 Formation Director, Donna, will present Readings from St. Catherine of Genoa on the Souls of Purgatory. Various members will be asked to read. A list of our deceased members will be read too.
- 3:00 Break and Refreshments
- 3:15 Welcoming ceremony (*See Minister's Message*)
- 3:25 Liturgy of the Hours, using, "Christian Prayer,"
In lieu of Franciscan Crown, a Rosary may be said if time is too short.
- 4:00 Closing Prayers and Dismissal

Refreshments:

Snacks: Please bring what you can, if you are able.
Drinks: **Drinks are not needed.**

Council Meeting: Saturday, November 17 at St. John of the Cross (*see Fred*). Note NO council meeting planned for December 2018.

Remember in your prayers: All fraternity members, especially Marie, Fred, Stan and Virginia. Please pray for Nick (Joanne's husband) for healing. Please pray for Trudy who is discerning to become an OFS.

Anniversaries - November

Jack Reddy, OFS 11-13-2010; Virginia Davis, OFS 11-19-2011; and,
Nancy Thomas, OFS 11-20-2012

Minister's Message:

If Trudy Carlson returns in November, there will be a Welcoming Ceremony (see page 9 of the Ritual) for her directly after the break, before the Liturgy of the Hours. Although she is a part-year resident, we can solve that problem if her home fraternity cooperates.

Sunday, December 2, 2018, is the First Sunday of Advent. Please turn to page 3 for Advent reflections.

Jesus, our Brother

I was re-reading a book by Fr. Benedict Groeschel, CFR, "A Priest Forever." This is the beautiful story of Father Eugene Hamilton, who passed away from cancer on his ordination day to the priesthood. In this book, the author tells of the visit of Pope St. John Paul II in 1995 to St. Joseph's Seminary at Dunwoodie, New York, where fellow seminarians included Eugene's name in the prayer intentions prayed by the Holy Father, while Eugene was in the hospital. And Eugene recalled at the time how overwhelmed he was with the intercessions where he was mentioned, and the sense of gratitude he felt that we are really never alone in our trials and suffering.

We are never alone in trials and suffering - Jesus, our Brother, is always at our side, helping us get over the anguish and pain no matter how we feel about Him. Some people have lost all faith somewhere between their Baptism and the current experiences, and feel even more abandoned when a deadly disease comes their way. Jesus is so close ... they need only whisper that they are sorry for having offended Him, and when the opportunity arises to make a good Act of Contrition before a priest. Hospitalized people cannot always receive Sacramental absolution, as not all hospitals have priests nearby who can get there in time when a person is dying. We hope they can, but God understands a hearty "I'm Sorry" as a dying declaration in prayer, when one is at death's door. God listens, and He sees in our hearts and He knows our inner disposition. But when a person is still able to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and priests are available, then penitents should avail themselves of this beautiful Sacrament.

We, in general, have no idea when a person dies, what his or her inner disposition was at the point of passing. It is not important for us to know, but it is important for the dying soul to be genuinely sorry for any mortal sins that haven't been confessed and forgiven. We do not know if a soul not sorry for mortal sins can get into that state called Heaven. We can only depend on God's mercy and compassion, and we know He has plenty of that. So we hope that many souls are nevertheless saved.

Our Protestant brothers and sisters would have us believe that once a person is Baptized, that person is saved. What about the person who leads a life of crime? That just doesn't make sense to say that this soul is nevertheless saved. Baptism gives everyone the potential to be saved, but we have to do our very best to sin no more. And people keep telling me that is impossible. Well, it is not. Look at the Saints and Blessed, they were sinners and so are the rest of us.

The time at the end of one's life may be short, this is why it is so important to prepare by keeping close to a God who loves us dearly, by attending at least Sunday Mass, and receiving the Holy Eucharist. Do non-Catholics get to Heaven - sure, but they have to live a holy life too, in their own way. So we can all get on the right track, and it is my hope that you will not postpone this effort. God bless you.

Fred Schaeffer, OFS

September 13, 2010, Rev. 2018



Fraternity Chapter of Elections

As a guidance for elections, please read [May, 2015 FFMR Guidelines.docx](#) found on Regional website under "Current Guidelines." Although I did not file the required six months notice with the Region, the Regional Minister was already aware of this need (I thought). At our October meeting I issued the request to prepare a Nominating Committee. Please keep in mind the following:

55. Nominees for Local Fraternity Minister, Vice-Minister and Formation Director must be permanently professed for at least two (2) years. Nominees for all other positions should be professed for at least one (1) year. In addition, the Minister must have served on the council for at least one year.

Just when the Chapter of Elections will take place depends on scheduling by the Region, but our January meeting falls on the 13th and that would fit well with the expiration of the current Ministers and Council (Jan. 9) so please pray that all will work out. We will let you know when the Chapter will take place.

First Sunday of Advent

Advent is the time to let the light of the world shine in. It is a time of hope, of expectation as we watch the Christmas story unfold. During Advent we're introduced to a Woman, Mary, and to the Angel Gabriel who greets her with the words: "*Hail, full of Grace! The Lord is with you.*" And Mary replied at the end of Angel Gabriel's message "*Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your Word.*" Mary was humble and obedient to God's Will.

As we experience with great hope the First Sunday of Advent and listen to the Gospel, we find that the focus is on the Second Coming of Jesus. The Gospel commands us to be vigilant because no one knows when the Second Coming will take place except God. This is like our death—death comes as a thief in the night. So we hope for the coming of Christ, we hope to spend eternity with God and we should use Advent to prepare. While it is true that the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is only required if a mortal sin has been committed, the Sacrament has an immense spiritual value. It is a vast source of grace and since we don't know when death comes, let us always be in the state of grace. The Blessed Virgin Mary at Medjugorje recommends that we go to confession once a month. During Advent it is certainly recommended to go to Confession as a suitable preparation for the Birth of Christ.

A daily or weekly examination of conscience will lead to a more meaningful reconciliation experience when one could identify trends in our life and behavior which can stand improvement. Then, also try to attend daily Holy Mass during this time of preparation and maybe try to make that a permanent part of your morning.

Do something meaningful for your family to remind them of the Advent season. Acquire an Advent wreath with four candles and light one each Sunday morning. Have a member of the family read a little prayer as the candle is being lit. Pray for the integrity of your family, for health, for anything that needs prayer. The old adage "Families who pray together, stay together," is true. Make prayer a regular occurrence in your family with your children (single people can join a prayer group or pray alone.) Prayer is a conversation with God!

In Advent frequently pray the Rosary or Franciscan Crown, asking Mary our Mother to ask Jesus, her Son, to bless you and your family and to prepare you for the coming of the Lord, the Messiah. As Advent turns into Christmas, you'll want to take your family to Evening or Midnight Mass and watch the drama unfold in the Readings and Gospel that are read, and in your heart as you take it all in. We wish you a very special and blessed Advent season.

Fred Schaeffer, OFS (bc 8)

There are only two "Canticle" issues before Christmas, this one and the December issue. That's why we begin talking of Advent so early. I wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving. We have much to be thankful for. /Fred