

Immaculata Fraternity Mission Statement:

As members of the Secular Franciscan Order we seek to live the Gospel so as to inspire others to share love in Jesus in the spirit of St. Francis.

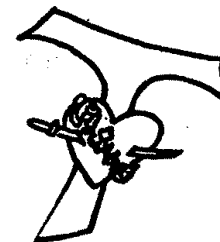
(Ratified at our Council Meeting on Sept. 11, 2017)

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Immaculata Vision ~~ January, 2018

Immaculata Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order

Riverside, CA / Editor: Lisa M. Boebinger, OFS ~~ lisa.sfo@att.net



Calendar of Events for January, 2018:

- 1 – Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God
- 3 – The Most Holy Name of Jesus
- 7 – Epiphany Sunday, The Epiphany of the Lord
- 7 – **Epiphany Celebration @ Mickie's @ 1:30 pm**
- 8 – The Baptism of the Lord
- 8 (2nd Mon.) – Council Meeting @ Lorraine's @ 4:00 pm**
- 15 – Martin Luther King Day - Holiday

18 (3rd Thurs.) – Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich Brigade, 4:00 pm @ St. Thomas' KDC.

22 – Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

27 (4th Sat.) – Fraternity Gathering @9:30 am @ St. Thomas's KDC

Looking Ahead to February, 2018...

- 2 – The Presentation of the Lord
- 2 – Groundhog Day
- 12 (2nd Mon.) – Council Meeting @ Lorraine's @ 4:00 pm**
- 14 – St. Valentine's Day
- 14 – Ash Wednesday – Fast and Abstinence**

15 (3rd Thurs.) – Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich Brigade, 4:00 pm @ St. Thomas' KDC.

18 – First Sunday of Lent
19 – President's Day - Holiday

24 (4th Sat.) – Fraternity Gathering @9:30 am @ St. Thomas's KDC

25 – Second Sunday of Lent

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Birthdays & Profession Anniversaries:

- January Birthdays: 3rd – Romy Quinsaas
- January Anniversaries – (none)
- February Birthdays: -- (none)
- February Anniversaries – (none)

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**Aarne Lozano's new address:
PO Box 52391, Riverside, CA 92517**

From an email sent by Aarne on Dec. 20 @ 9:00pm:

An Urgent Request for Shelter from our Brother Aarne Lozano! Read below and please see what you can do....

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
 My brother and I have a very special and Urgent request at this time in which we are preparing for the nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We both realize that this is probably not the best time of year to ask because of the holidays and the demands of people's families and their needs at this time of year. At the same time we must remember that in a way I cannot think of a better time of year to ask or even impose on others because Joseph and Mary themselves we're traveling to Bethlehem begging door to door asking for shelter even for a night. As much as I hate to compare my brother and myself to the Holy Family we are sadly in the same position this year having lost our home with nowhere to go and no one to take us in. We've been content to stay in motels for the past 2 weeks but with the cost of Motel stays renting U-Haul for 11 days as well as the cost of storage and other costs of our not having a home we have spent a small fortune already on everything and the money we have spent was supposed to go to our first month's rent in our new home which we are still trying to work out. We are having to beg people to give my brother myself and our dog Pietro a place to stay just for the next few days through Christmas because we are fast running out of money to stay in a motel. We realize we are asking for a lot and many people may not have the room for us and our dog to stay in for a few days this is a lot to ask and it's very difficult for us to even impose on someone else but we are in dire need and this is a genuine and Urgent request. Although we both hesitated feeling embarrassed to ask we both realized that as members of The Franciscan family for over 30 years we should feel no shame or embarrassment to ask our brothers and sisters to help if they are able to. So now we are putting this request out to those who might have an extra room "at the inn" if you are able to put us up for a few days we would be most gratified and appreciative of your hospitality although we would never be able to repay you fully please give us a call or contact us in some way if you are able to offer us a room to stay in for a few days if you have an extra room for my brother and myself and our dog Pietro can spend Christmas. We would not impose ourselves on you in terms of food or anything else we just need a warm place to stay other than our car or a motel we have to pay for thank you for your consideration. God reward your kindness.

Pace e bene, your Brothers Aarne and Mel.
(Having been in that desperate situation, Aarne, his brother and dog definitely have my prayers! I can't help, unfortunately, as I'm financially burdened right now. I'm sorry. Nina)

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**MaryBelle Neuffell, OFS
is with her Lord and Savior**

Jesus came to get her at 1:10 pm on Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2017.

The family thanks you for all for your prayers on their behalf. I know you will continue to pray for each of them: Jim Neuffell as well as their children: Cindy, Julie, Liz and Jimmy as they bury their wife and mom.

Funeral Service for our friend, MaryBelle:

MaryBelle wanted a very simple but joyful funeral service. It was a grave site service on Friday, December 15 at 10:30 am. She was buried at Riverside National Cemetery.

The grave site service was followed by a reception held at the home of their daughter:
Julie & Brian Nading

15723 Golden Spur Ct., Riverside 92504

Their home is not too far from Van Buren Ave near Mockingbird Canyon Road.

Thank you to all who provided a dish for the reception. Thank you to Shirley Kerr who work with the daughters to supply all their needs.



Jim has asked that we all pray:
**"Eternal Rest grant unto
Mary Belle, O Lord. And, let
the perpetual light shine
upon her. Amen"**

Mary Belle Neuffell, Dec. 1, 2008

Mary Belle Neuffell, OFS

Born: December 7, 1933 in Ralls, Texas

Passed: November 29, 2017 in Riverside, California

Wife of Jim Neuffell, OFS

Mother of Julie (Brian), Cindy (Earl), Jimmy, Liz (Daryl).

Grandmother of Rachel, Chad, Sam, Jenny, Allie.

Great-Grandmother of Luke.

May Mary Belle Rest in Peace



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Spiritual Assistant's Letter

From the Desk of **Bob Murray, OFS**

The Magi and Their Gifts

The Epiphany ~ January 7, 2018

Have you packed all your Christmas decorations and stored them away already? Maybe my grandpa knew something we don't because he didn't take his Christmas tree down until after January 6th, the feast of the Epiphany.

The Church has celebrated the Epiphany on January 6th for centuries. It recalls and celebrates the day when gentiles, the three kings from the east, met and adored the King of Kings. They had seen his star from afar and brought gifts with them for the newborn king. In recent years, the US Catholic Bishops have opted to celebrate this great feast on the Sunday closest to January 6th in order to keep its celebration alive as many have begun to ignore this wonderful feast.

Apparently, many Catholics have forgotten the importance of the Epiphany and continue to live according to society's values rather than faith values, essentially saying "Christmas is over, now let's get back to living our lives". Their Christmas trees have already found their way into the trash along with the gift wrap; credit card bills are arriving daily and their New Year's celebration has already become a fading memory.

Today, as you and I celebrate the Feast of The Epiphany, sometimes known as "The Feast of the Three Kings", we recall an ancient Armenian tradition that names those three kings: Balthasar of Arabia, Melchior of Persia, and Gaspar of India. Matthew lists their gifts in his gospel to indicate that Jesus is priest, prophet and king. And what were the gifts that they brought for the newborn king?

- **Gold** – a gift for a mighty **King**.
- **Frankincense** – incense used at the altar in the Holy of Holies by a Temple **Priest**.
- **Myrrh** - a thick resin used as a salve with a spicy smell that is extracted from a thorny tree in the mid-east. In Jewish tradition myrrh was used to prepare a body for burial – for Matthew, symbolizing the death of a **Prophet**.

Have you ever wondered why gentiles were the only ones to bring gifts for the baby Jesus? True, the shepherds had come from the fields to see the new born king but what gifts did they bring to honor him? And what might have been Joseph's and Mary's response to such gifts? Honestly, for Joseph, the **gold** could have come in handy when the couple wanted to rent a room at the time of the census. **Frankincense?** Jesus ancestors were of the priestly class... but it would years before he might possibly be able to use such a gift in the Temple. And **myrrh?** Jesus was a newborn and these men brought ointment for his burial? What were they thinking?

But the most important question for us today is this: What gift do you bring to the Christ Child on the Feast of **The Three Kings?**
~~ Bob Murray, OFS

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(From our November Council Meeting)

Prayer to be a Better Listener (good for 2018)

We do not really listen to each other, God, at least not all the time.

Instead of true dialogue, we carry on two parallel monologues.

I talk. My friend talks.

But what we are really concentrating on is how to sound good, how to make our points strongly.

How to outshine the person with whom we are talking.

Teach us to listen as Your Son listened to everyone who spoke to Him.

Remind us that, somehow, *You are trying to reach us through our partner in conversation.*

Your Truth

.....Your Love

.....Your goodness are seeking us out. Is the truth, the love and goodness being communicated?

When our words are harsh, hostile, angry, we convey the very opposite of those qualities.

Teach us to be still, Lord, that we may truly hear others – and, in them, You.

Amen.

(Submitted by Ray Hardwick)

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Council Meeting Notes for December 11th

- **Council Formation:** by Bob: Are we taking some bold steps? or are we just biding our time? We need to have vision. Where will this fraternity be a few years from now? Is this a fraternity bursting with promise? We really should stop and listen to the prayer we pray at the beginning of the council meetings. Do we think about what we're praying?
- **From our Formation Director:** Ray: (absent). Candidate interview on Jan. 8th at Lorraine's.
- **Emeritus Program** – what is it? It's for those who can't come to the meetings. Inactive members = Lapsed, Emeritus. We have Active members, Lapsed members and Emeritus.
- **We will begin a Scholarship Fund** – beginning end of January, Carol will put away \$50/month – to maybe help someone go to Regional Retreat in Malibu.
- **Our January Council Meeting** is the 2nd Monday, January 8th at 4:00 pm at Lorraine's house.
- **Ray's Book Recommendations:** (Ray absent)
- **Retreat Master** for the 2018 Serra Retreat: Sr. Margaret Carney, O.S.F., S.T.D.! Start saving your \$.

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**Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation
Self-Emptying
Loving Fully**

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

How can my life be a reflection of divine love in this time and place? The classic Christian phrase for discipleship—the imitation of Christ—means that we were made by God to become like God, loving all others, loving universally. — Sallie McFague [1]

More than any historical figure I know, St. Francis of Assisi imitated Christ. Some call Francis the second Christ. His poverty of spirit, humility, and selflessness reveal a life lived in union. In his Encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis writes:

I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. He is the patron saint of all who study and work in the area of ecology, and he is also much loved by non-Christians. He was particularly concerned for God's creation and for the poor and outcast. He loved, and was deeply loved for his joy, his generous self-giving, his openheartedness. He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace. [2] [Saint Francis'] response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus [as in "What's in it for me?"], for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists. . . . If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the

language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled. [3]

Jesus told us, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind" (Luke 10:27). He called us to a presence that is a broader and deeper kind of knowing than just cognitive thinking. Thinking knows things by objectifying them, capturing them as an object of knowledge. But presence knows things by refusing to objectify them; instead it shares in their very subjectivity. Presence allows full give and take, what Martin Buber (1878-1965) called the "I/Thou" relationship with things as opposed to the mere "I/it" relationship. Buber summed it up in his often-quoted phrase: "All real living is meeting." [4]

Gateway to Silence:
Let it go; let it be.

References:

- [1] Sallie McFague, *Blessed Are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint* (Fortress Press: 2013), 11.
 - [2] Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana: 2015), paragraph 10.
 - [3] *Ibid.*, paragraph 11.
 - [4] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Charles Scribner's Sons: 1958), 11.
- Adapted from Richard Rohr, *The Great Chain of Being: Simplifying Our Lives* (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2007).
(Submitted by Brenda Rogers, OFS)

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Good Advice

When people throw you stones, it's because you are a good tree full of fruits. They see a lot of harvest in you. Don't go down to their level by throwing them back the stones, but throw them your FRUITS so the seeds of yourself may inspire them to change their ways.
(From somebody somewhere on Facebook.)

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**(From the Word Among Us Catholic Magazine –
Daily Meditations for January 1 – February 13,
2018)**

**Sunday, January 7, 2018
The Epiphany of the Lord (Solemnity)
Isaiah 60:1-6**

Arise! Shine, for your light has come. (Isaiah 60:1)
What extravagant promises this reading contains! The prophet speaks of "splendor," "glory," "radiance," and overflowing heart, and the "wealth of nations." And who first heard these glowing words? Exiled Jews who had just recently returned to a Jerusalem in ruins. Somehow, the words of the prophet didn't quite match up with the realities on the ground. But that didn't stop these believers from rolling up their sleeves and working to bring about the glory that had been promised to them.

Similarly, how did the Magi recognize an earth-shaking event in the humble stable with Joseph and Mary? Even the religious and political leaders of Israel missed the birth of the

Messiah. So how could these pagan foreigners fall to their knees so readily, and offer such valuable treasures to this lowly child? Again, their expectations didn't match up with what they found when they first laid eyes on the Holy Family.

Like the Magi and the returning exiles, we have been given great and precious promises not only about a heavenly kingdom, but also about God's rule breaking into our world here and now. But how will that happen? Much of it depends on God's timing, but a lot depends on us. Every day, God invites us to roll up our sleeves and get to work building his kingdom. Every day, he reassures us that even our smallest acts of love contain within themselves the splendor and glory of heaven.

Today's feast tells us that the glory of God can be present in the most hidden and unlikely people and situations. It tells us that God is there in the everyday rhythms of our lives. May he give us eyes of faith to see him and trusting hearts to build the kingdom with him. The results will be spectacular!

"Thank you, Father, for the way you have traveled with us so far, and for the journey that lies ahead."

- Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13
- Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6
- Matthew 2:1-12

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Secular Franciscan Saint/Blessed of the Month Club:

(Catholic saints are holy people and human people who lived extraordinary lives. Each saint the Church honors responded to God's invitation to use his or her unique gifts.



God calls each one of us to be a saint.)

Pope Blessed Gregory X

Also known as

- Teobaldo Visconti
- Theobald Visconti

Memorial: 10 January

Pope Gregory X (Latin: *Gregorius X*; c. 1210 – 10 January 1276), born **Teobaldo Visconti**, was Pope from 1 September 1271 to his death in 1276 and was a member of the Secular Franciscan Order. He was elected at the conclusion of a papal election that ran from 1268 to 1271, the longest papal election in the history of the Catholic Church.

He convened the Second Council of Lyons and also made new regulations in regards to papal conclaves. Though briefly annulled by Pope Adrian V and Pope John XXI, these regulations remained in force until the 20th century, when they were altered by Pope Paul VI.

Pope Clement XI beatified him in 1713 after the confirmation of his cultus.

Worked to restore peace between Christian nations and rulers, for the recovery of the Holy Lands from Muslims, and

to reform the spiritual lives of clergy and laity. Called the *Council of Lyons* which briefly reconciled the Orthodox and Latin Churches. Tried to restore peace between the Guelphs and Ghibellines in Tuscany and Lombardy, and excommunicated those who worked against the reconciliation. Crowned Rudolf of Habsburg as Holy Roman Emperor and settled the fight over the crown among German princes.

Born: 1210 in Piacenza, Italy as *Theobald Visconti*

Papal Ascension: elected on 1 September 1271 following the longest election in the history of the Church

ascended to the throne on 27 March 1272

Died: 10 January 1276 at Arezzo, Italy of a fever

Beatified: 8 July 1713 by Pope Clement XI (cultus confirmed)

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Please keep in your prayers:

(If you are in need of prayers, please email me at lisa.sfo@att.net and I'll add your intentions to our list below:)

and please add to your Prayer List the following:

Please pray for comfort, consolation and strength for Mary Belle Neufell's husband Jim and their family in the passing of Mary Belle on Nov. 29th 2017.

Bob Murray's wife Diane is having leg problems, please pray for her health concerns. She is having surgery at the end of January, 2018.

Please pray for the health of my husband Bob Boebinger, he has a lot of pain and several health issues. We're hoping he can go back to work soon. Thank you kindly! (Lisa)

Our Sister Dixie Marshall wrote: Please pray for our little great granddaughter Ava Marie Marshall and her brother Aaron Liam Marshall. They are 3 and 4. She is experiencing speech delays and is having to live with challenges at home. Please also keep in prayer her mother Candice and her father Aaron Marshall who is trying his best to deal with the challenges and protect the children. Also, please remember our daughter June Marshall who is also doing her best to be of help to everyone. Thank you all and God bless you. Dixie

On Thursday, November 30, 2017 3:00 PM, Janet Serros <jserrosofs@gmail.com> wrote: Please pray for our Dixie Marshall's husband Edison who suffered a stroke over the Thanksgiving holiday. He was hospitalized on Monday. Please pray also for Dixie for strength and support. I have only emailed those that I had email addresses for you so you may forward the prayer request to anyone that was omitted.

Janet Serros - Minister Padre Pio Fraternity

Update 12/17/17 on Brenda's son Joseph, who was in a pretty bad motorcycle accident on Sept 2nd 2017: "My son Joseph is doing much better. He is still unable to go back to work though. His leg is in a brace still, he has an MRI next week to see if his ACL tendon is broke. We already know the PCL is blown. Good possibility of surgery. The accident happened September 2nd. It has been a long and difficult recovery. He was pretty mangled. I was his nurse! Ha! Thanks for the prayers. See you soon."

Update on Georgia Zepek's Mom: *My mom (Ruthie King) is still not doing very well with dementia. Please keep the family in your prayers. God Bless You, Georgia*

Please add Tiffany Maskew to our prayer list. She is only thirty years old and she had a stroke. Thanks, Carol

Please continue to pray for Ken Wilde for emotional reasons and migraines and pneumonia. Ken also had surgery on his right hand. (Ken is very lonely! He would like his fraternity brothers and sisters to call him, or come by to visit if they can, but please call him first.)

Please continue to keep Jo-Ann Hardwick in your prayers. On Dec. 30, 2017 she was rushed to Kaiser Emergency in Riverside with the flu and she was incoherent. And Ray who has a lot of pain in his knees, lower back and hip and also has the flu.

Donna Baylor asked for prayers for her daughter Beth Baylor, who suffers from paranoia. And please keep Donna in your prayers also. She just had ear surgery and it's very painful.

Please pray for Sekoia Spencer's sons Darius and Jason. Please continue to pray for David Burrola and Arne Lozano.

Please continue to pray for Lorraine's beau Edward Watkins, still recovering from pneumonia. Edward also had an auto accident and is home recuperating. Please continue to pray for Stella Pacifica Caywood's sons Mark and Paul.

And please continue to pray for George & Barbara Molchan. Update 12/27/17: I (Lisa) just got a call from Lorraine, she left a message and told me that our brother George Molchan is at Community Hospital, going into ICU to put a pacemaker in and to put him back on a feeding tube. Please pray for him.

Please pray for all those unemployed in our fraternity who are looking for a job, along with those who have lost their healthcare coverage. And who are in great financial problems due to being unemployed or other problems.

And please continue to keep your Fraternity brothers and sisters in your prayers along with their intentions.

AND ... Have you hugged & prayed for your Franciscan Prayer Partner lately?

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Do you know what our Region's website is?
<http://www.stfrancisregion.org/>
Check it out sometime!

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Your Monthly Pearls of Wisdom:

We hear with our ears, we listen with our hearts

~~ Jo-Ann Hardwick

Let's be brave enough to dream big, huge, embarrassingly impossible dreams.

~~ Melody Ross

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.

~~ Martin Luther King Jr.

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

~~ Anne Frank

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The Daily Extras:

World Traveler: Did you know that it's tradition to open your front door on New Year's Eve in Scotland before midnight to let the old year out and the new year in?

By the Number: 27: The number of publishing companies that rejected the manuscript of Dr. Seuss's first book for children, *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*.

Once Upon a Time . . . But True: Sloths and avocados have both trended in recent years, but they've been around a long, long time. Did you know that millions of years ago, avocados were a food source for giant ground sloths?

Wacky Weather: Did you know that the South Pole is colder than the North Pole?

Puzzler: If you put a coin in an empty bottle and insert a cork into the neck of the bottle, how could you remove the coin without taking the cork out or breaking the bottle?

Spelling Bee: Choose the correct spelling of this frequently misspelled word:

separate separate separate

From the Book Bag: Did you know that Roald Dahl, best known as an author of children's books, including *The BFG* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, was the screenwriter of the 1967 James Bond film, *You Only Live Twice*?

Act Your Age? Nah.: Astronaut John Glenn was seventy-seven when the Space Shuttle Discovery launched in 1998, making Glenn the oldest person ever to travel in space.

By the Number: 25 cents: Price for one pound (453 g) of Oreo cookies in a novelty can when the cookie was introduced in 1912.

Riddle: What can go around the world but stays in a corner?

Groaner: World's Best Bad Jokes: A dad took his six-year-old son to his first football game. Afterward, he asked the boy what he thought of the game. "It was exciting," he replied. "But I don't understand why they were killing each other for twenty-five cents." "What do you mean?" the dad asked. "Well, everyone kept yelling, 'Get the quarter back!'"

Name that 'toon: Can you identify this comic strip character? "I'm bald with a big nose, trouserless, and barefoot most of the time."

World Traveler: You probably wouldn't consider Australia as a skiing destination, but it does snow down under. The Australian Alps get about 6.5 feet (2 m) of snow from June through September.

First Time: Edgar Allan Poe's famous poem "The Raven" was first published in the *New York Evening Mirror* on January 29, 1845. Poe was paid \$15.

Green Clean: Use baking soda in place of many toxic and irritating cleaners. To clean the bathtub, sprinkle baking soda over the tub surface, then wet it, and scrub with a damp sponge. Rinse, and enjoy your shiny tub.

(Answer to Puzzler: Push the cork into the bottle and shake the coin out.)

(Answer to Spelling Bee: separate)

(Answer to Riddle: a stamp)

(Answer to Name that 'toon: Ziggy)

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**From the November 20th Press Enterprise:
Thanksgiving Prayer for Peace Seeks to Bring World
Together**

DEAR ABBY: Our organization, No Greater Love, is a nonprofit humanitarian organization that honors America's fallen and their families, and promotes peace. I am reaching out to you and your millions of readers about an important event we are planning. NGL invites you and your readers to become links in our Chain of Prayer for Peace.

As you gather together at Thanksgiving, please consider adding a special prayer for peace. Our goal is to link children and adults of all religions by praying on that day -- and every day possible -- for peace in the world.

We have invited the five major world religions -- Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism -- all of which regard peace as a universal concept. While our specific beliefs may differ, we are all one through our quest for love and peace. -- CARMELLA LaSPADA

DEAR CARMELLA: I am sure my readers will agree that your idea is one worth trying. I'm reminded of the adage that when a stone is tossed into a pond, the ripple effect spreads much farther than the point of impact. It's my prayer that when readers of all faiths focus their positive energy on such an important outcome, something similar will happen.

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Did you know: We have 2 Apostolate Groups?

Here they are and who are in the groups:

PB&J Brigade – Sandwiches for the Poor:

Lorraine Cardin, Georgia Zepek, Brenda Rogers, David Burrola, Joice & Romy Quinsaat, Camille Page, and Lisa Boebinger.

Committee to Visit the Excused in Our Fraternity:

Brenda Rogers, Ray Hardwick, Bruce McAdams, Camille Page, Lorraine Cardin, Carol Bryant, Arne Lozano, and Joice Quinsaat.

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Exploiting Our Home:

“Our sin is in exploiting the Earth instead of allowing her to give us what she has within her.”

Spreading His Word:

“Find new ways to spread the Word of God to every corner of the world.”

Stand Against Corruption:

“Reject every form of corruption which diverts resources from the poor.”

Welcoming Others:

“Let the Church always be a place of mercy and hope, where everyone is welcomed, loved and forgiven.”

Give Unto Others:

“True power is service. We must serve all people, especially the poor, the weak and the vulnerable.”

Radiating Christ's Love:

“A Christian is never bored or sad. Rather, the one who loves Christ is full of joy and radiates joy.”

God's Great Creation:

“Creation is not a property which we can rule over at will. Creation is a wonderful gift that God has given us to care for and use for the benefit of all, always with great respect and gratitude.”

~~ **Pope Francis**

**Something Bruce McAdams shared at out last
Fraternity Gathering in November:**

*(Compiled by Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR – National Spiritual
Assistant to the SFO)*

You know you're a Secular Franciscan when...

- you notice an unmistakable lack in desire to acquire more stuff
- peacemaking becomes incredibly attractive to you
- your eyes fill up when you hear about a trip to Assisi
- you want to dress (and LIVE) more and more simply
 - Christmas is for you is the greatest feast day
 - you take off work on October 4
- you laugh loudly and often when you get together with other Franciscans
- you hug people a lot, especially other Franciscans
- all your gatherings are noted for having too much and wonderful food
- you follow the Franciscan Saint of the Day religiously
- the term “fair share” not only means something to you, you try to give more than your fair share to the common fund
 - you read the TAU-USA from cover to cover
- you've read several books by Lester Bach, OFM Cap, and look forward to him writing more
- “Little Red Book” means “Holy Rule” to you and not something by Chairman Mao
- you like all Saint Francis statues, even the ones with the birds
- you have or want to have a Francis-in-a-birdbath
- you could open up your own Franciscan religious goods store with all the Franciscan memorabilia you have
 - you no longer want to be buried in a “shroud” because it's inappropriate for a secular person
 - your rosaries have seven decades
- you can sing “Make Me a Channel of Your Peace” without ever looking at the hymnal
- you recycle everything – I mean EVERYTHING
- you hear a Francis or Clare story and think, “This would be good for ongoing formation.”
- you know what CNSA stands for, as well as CIOFS and NAFRA
 - you can define “the Q” and “NEC”
- you can distinguish an OFM habit from a Capuchin one
- Your profession date is more important to you than your birthday
- your Liturgy of the Hours goes everywhere with you
- you receive the Eucharist and it's the high point of your day
 - you support all life issues and not just one
 - *(and one zinger!)(?)
- who is on the regional or national executive council and what they do is a complete mystery to you
- you don't have to dust off your Tau every month to wear it to the monthly meeting, because you wear it every day everywhere

(Okay, now which ones were you nodding your head to?)

Christmas at Greccio
Saint of the Day for December 24
The Story of Christmas at Greccio

What better way to prepare for the arrival of the Christ Child than to take a brief journey to Greccio, the spot in central Italy where Saint Francis of Assisi created the first Christmas crib in the year 1223.

Francis, recalling a visit he had made years before to Bethlehem, resolved to create the manger he had seen there. The ideal spot was a cave in nearby Greccio. He would find a baby—we're not sure if it was a live infant or the carved image of a baby—hay upon which to lay him, an ox and an ass to stand beside the manger. Word went out to the people of the town. At the appointed time, they arrived carrying torches and candles.

One of the friars began celebrating Mass. Francis himself gave the sermon. His biographer, Thomas of Celano, recalls that Francis “stood before the manger...overcome with love and filled with a wonderful happiness...”

For Francis, the simple celebration was meant to recall the hardships Jesus suffered even as an infant, a savior who chose to become poor for our sake, a truly human Jesus.

Tonight, as we pray around the Christmas cribs in our homes, we welcome into our hearts that same Savior.

Reflection

God’s choice to give human beings free will was from the beginning a decision to be helpless in human hands. With the birth of Jesus, God made the divine helplessness very clear to us, for a human infant is totally dependent on the loving response of other people. Our natural response to a baby is to open our arms as Francis did—to the infant of Bethlehem, and to the God who made us all afterward.

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An email for our Br. John Ubelhor, ofs dated after the Blessed Solanus Casey Beatification.

Lisa: Oh sure.

Again, say HI to everyone & let them know Elaine & I are doing well. BTW we viewed the whole beatification ceremony, it was perfect, music was also beautiful. You know, a lot of families in Detroit area (and probably elsewhere) have personal family experiences handed down to them of Fr. Solanus and his ministry.

My sister has a service medal Solanus himself blessed that my Dad wore all through WW2. My grandmother had asked him to pray that my Dad & uncle would come through war alive. Fr. Solanus told her not to worry, both would be okay & return home safe. They say he had both the gift of healing & prophecy..... so there you go.

Peace & best to all -- John U.

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Upcoming events around the Order:

Monday, January 15th, 2018 (MLK Day): Regional Chapter Gathering and Election. Invite observers, pay \$30.

Sunday, January 21st, 2018: @ Claremont – Muslim Dinner @ 6:30 pm. Need people to help. Showing 2 videos, prayers. For 100 people, 30 seats for Franciscans.

Saturday, February 10th 2018: Profession, 3:30 pm @ San Luis Rey Chapel, Fr. Steve presiding. Dinner @ Vitalli’s Restaurant

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Pictures from our fraternity Christmas Party on Dec. 11, 2017 @ Lorraine’s home: some of the party revelers:



Lorraine Cardin, Carol Bryant, Joice Quinsaats, Mickie Rogers and Betty Gonzalez



Carol Bryant, Joice Quinsaats and Betty Gonzalez



Mel & Aarne Lozano, Mickie Rogers, Lorraine Cardin, Bob Dak and Romy Quinsaats



Aarne & Mel Lozano

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Feel free to use the rest of this page for your notes from the Fraternity Gathering ...



Edward Watkins and Lorraine Cardin

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The Trio of Secular Franciscans from our fraternity that went Christmas Caroling at Orange Tree Convalescent on Dec. 19, 2017. Left to right, standing in the back: Lorraine Cardin, David Burrola and Joice Quinsaat.