

D I V I N E M E R C Y F R A T E R N I T Y
S E C U L A R F R A N C I S C A N O R D E R
V E R O B E A C H , F L O R I D A

Regular Meeting: Sun., January 13, at 2:00 PM—South Rm. St. Helen's Christian Living Center.

Council Meeting: Sat., January 19, at 9:30 AM—Arby's on west side of Rt 1, at 16th Place, Vero Beach.

Agenda and Schedule for Meeting:

- 2:00 Opening Prayer, Reports, Old/New Business
- 2:20 Blessing of our donations to the Food Pantry
- 2:25 Sharing how God is working in our lives
- 2.35 Day of Recollection sharing of meditation on St. Francis' quotations.
- 3:10 Refreshments and break
- 3:30 Liturgy of the Hours
- 4:00 Closing Prayer and dismissal

Refreshment Committee:

Snacks: Adele Lamour and Elaine Matthews

Beverages: John Matthews

Remember in your prayers: Julia McHugh, Jennie Donlin, Jerry Carey, Donna Haro, John Matthews, Fred Schaeffer, Marie Fee, Jack Solloway, and all professed Franciscans in our Florida region who are ill, as well as those members of our Fraternity who cannot attend our meetings regularly.

Upcoming Events: Day of Recollection, January 4th, 2008, 8:00 – 4:00 pm. A light breakfast will be provided, but we will have a brown-bag lunch. Desert and beverages will be supplied. Please bring the Liturgy of the Hours and your Bible. *A program is enclosed*

From the Minister's Desk: The New Year begins with the Solemnity of Mary and is followed closely by our Day of Recollection. This is an opportunity to start the year focused on the Lord and seeing Him through the eyes of Francis. Francis and Clare, as always, are our models for living the Gospel life. Let us be open to the plan that God has for us and let us start by spending a day solely focused on Him.

Have a blessed and holy New Year.

From: *Colloquies of St. Francis (XXIX)*

The Lord's Prayer is the most Salutory of all Prayers

Being asked by the Brethren to teach them how to pray, the holy man answered: "When you pray, say, "Our Father, Who art in Heaven," etc., and "We adore Thee, O Christ, in all Thy churches throughout the whole world, and we bless Thee, because by Thy holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world."

Minister: Peggy Rysdyke, SFO

Vice-Minister: Donna M. Haro, SFO

Secretary: Elizabeth Smith, SFO

Treasurer: Sarah Hardy, SFO

Formation Director: Helen Caldarone, SFO

Councillors-at-Large: Ed O'Donnell, SFO, Fred Schaeffer, SFO, and Kathleen Van Buskirk, SFO

Spir. Assisitant: Fr. Richard P. LaCorte, SFO

Vocation Director: Kathleen Van Buskirk, SFO

Commissioners

Work: Donna M. Haro, SFO

Family: Eugene Caldarone, SFO

Peace and Justice: John Matthews, SFO

Youth: Pauline Pavlick, SFO

Ecology: Fred Schaeffer, SFO

Other: Webmaster/Ed. Fred Schaeffer, SFO

Formation program for the Eighth Centenary of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-2007)**Year Two: THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT****Month 2. Youth and Formation, Giving Things up for God; This Home and the Heavenly one**

Today we know from the study of developmental psychology that every human being possesses from the very beginning an ability to grasp spiritual realities and act on them. This awareness of and need for the spiritual life is lifelong. It is not something we can put off until we are grown. For everyone it must be a daily and constant effort at conversion.

Conversion, which is central in the Franciscan concept of penance, means coming to put God in the center of our lives. According to St. Francis, what we do expresses who we are on the inside. If we love God and do penance, as we conform our hearts to Christ, we will produce worthy fruits that will improve not only our lives but those of all who come into contact with us.

Having a loving relationship with God makes the sacrifices we make for Him, or for others for His sake easier. St. Elizabeth made these sacrifices for God every day from her childhood on and they helped make her a saint.

As we strive for continued conversion, we must constantly remember that our true home is heaven. We are to think first of heavenly realities, as Elizabeth did, rather than earthly riches or popularity.

Spiritual Reflection

Is God truly at the center of my life? Am I allowing Him day by day to change me into His image? Do I think often of my heavenly home? Do I teach my children to think of God first from the beginning of their lives? Do I teach them to sacrifice for Him?

Scripture

"I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall not have other gods besides me" (Exodus 20:2-3).

"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22: 37-40).

"So do not worry and say, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear?' All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom (of God) and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides" (Mt 6:31-33 and Lk 12:29-31).

From the Secular Franciscan Rule: "[Those who do penance are] all who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength, and love their neighbors as themselves and hate their bodies with their vices and sins, and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and produce worthy fruits of penance." (Letter of St. Francis to Brothers and Sisters of Penance).

"United by their vocation as brothers and sisters of penance, and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls conversion. Human frailty makes it necessary that this conv.

Formation program for the Eighth Centenary of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-2007)

Year 1—Month 11. Elizabeth's charity and her hospital in Marburg

After Elizabeth received a settlement for the dower or marriage property her husband had left to her, she used it to build a hospital for the poor in Marburg, which was dedicated to St. Francis. Pope Gregory IX sent her a relic of the blood from the stigmata on the saint's side for the hospital chapel, and granted it an indulgence in a bull dated April 1229. This was one of the first foundations dedicated to the newly canonized Poverello.

Once the hospital was built, she appointed a day when she would give what remained to her away to the poor, who were gathered together in the hospital courtyard. When everything had been distributed, she had a bonfire lit, and served the people bread; she even saw to washing and oiling their feet. The poor people, restored spiritually and physically, began to sing. Elizabeth said to her companions "You see, I told you we must make people happy," and rejoiced with them. She wanted to remove the social barriers between rich and poor.

From this time on, she gave herself entirely to the service of God's poor. She would bathe the sick and put them to bed, she bound their sores and prepared their medicines. She played with the young children, including a little leper girl. She cared for poor pregnant women and their children. She earned money for herself and her sisters by spinning wool.

She wore a poor habit patched in the sleeves and lengthened with cloth of another color. She told her companion Irmingard, "The life of the sisters in the world is the most despised, and if there were a more despised life, I would have chosen it." She knew she was despised by the rich, but rejoiced to be serving the poor.

Gospel: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give it to the poor . . . Then come, follow me" (Mt. 19:21).

Year 1—Month 12. Her sickness and death

During the last two or three years of her life, Elizabeth was often ill. But illness did not discourage her or keep her from the service she was dedicated to. Even when forced to go to bed, she would prepare wool for spinning.

Elizabeth became ill and was aware that she was going to die at the age of 24, but accepted this as God's will for her. The witnesses of her final illness describe her as being cheerful and deeply absorbed in prayer. She even sang in response to a bird singing on the windowsill.

When she knew that her death was near, she told her confessor, Conrad of Marburg that she "wanted to mediate on her end, and the severe judgment of the dead and her Omnipotent Judge," wanting to be able to give a just accounting of her life to him. She died on November 17, 1231.

Spiritual reflection:

Elizabeth shows us how to prepare for death with joy at the prospect of union with God.

At the time of her death, Elizabeth had already accomplished more for God in her 24 years than many people do in 80. In imitation of her, it is important for all of us to be read to give a similar accounting to God for our lives if we should die tomorrow.

"Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy." (Mt. 25:21)



Day of Recollection



- 8:00Liturgy of the Hours
- 8:00 - 8:30.....Confessions
- 8:30Mass
- 9:10Breakfast – Father Hickey Center
- 10:00.....Father Michael will speak
- 11:00 – 11:10Break
- 11:10 – 11:40.....Bible meditation in church where the Blessed Sacrament
will be exposed
- 11:45 – 12:15.....Return to Father Hickey Center to share what God has
told us through meditation.
- 12:15 – 1:00 pmTalk given by Father Michael
- 2:00 – 2:10.....Break
- 2:10Francis Crown Rosary
- 2:30Return to church for period of reflection on quotes from
St. Francis
- 3:00Divine Mercy Hour
- 4:00Dismissal

The day of recollection will be held at St. Lucie Parish, 446 S W Irving St., Port St. Lucie, FL 34983
S.W. Irving Street intersects with Prima Vista Blvd.