

THE CANTICLE

DIVINE MERCY FRATERNITY – SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER – VERO BEACH, FLORIDA

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DEC. 2011

*Divine Mercy Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order*

Vero Beach, Florida
www.franciscan-sfo.org

Fraternity Officers

Minister: Peggy Rysdyke, SFO
Vice-Minister: Donna M. Haro, SFO
Secretary: Helen Caldarone, SFO
Treasurer: Sarah Hardy, SFO
Formation Director: Eugene Caldarone, SFO
Councillors-at-Large:
Kathleen Van Buskirk, SFO,
Adele Lamour, SFO,
Fred Schaeffer, SFO
Spir. Assisitant: Rev.Mr. Richard Blake, SFO (when available)

Regular Meeting: SUNDAY, December 11, 2011, at 2:00 PM, in the South Room, Christian Living Center, St. Helen Church. The Council Meeting to follow.

Agenda and Schedule - Regular Meeting

- 2:00 Opening Prayer, Reports, Old/New Business
- 2:20 Blessing of the Donations to the Food Pantry
- 2:25 Ongoing Formation: Jack Reddy will give a presentation on the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land.
- 2:45 St. Francis at Greccio by Dona Haro
- 3:00 Refreshments and Break
- 3:20 Franciscan Crown Rosary
- 3:40 Liturgy of Hours
- 3:50 Closing prayer and Dismissal
- 4:15 Council Meeting

Refreshment Committee:

Snacks: Eugene and Helen Caldarone
Beverages: Sarah Hardy

Remember in your prayers: Ben Davis, Fred Schaeffer, Marie Fee, Jack Solloway, Pat Riordan, Father Tom Murphy, OFM, Stanley Widing, 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. Also, please pray for Michael Woods.

From the Minister's Desk: Congratulations to Ben and Virginia on their Profession as Franciscans, and also to Stanley on his Admission to Candidacy. In celebration of Jesus' Birthday we are printing St. Francis' Canticle. May everyone have a blessed Christmas.

A PRAYERFUL ADVENT AND A BLESSED CHRISTMAS

The Canticle of Brother Sun

by Saint Francis of Assisi

Most high, all-powerful, all good, Lord!
All praise is yours, all glory,
all honor and all blessing.

To you, alone, Most High, do they belong.
No mortal lips are worthy to pronounce your name.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through all that you have
made,
And first my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day;
and light you give to us through him.

How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendor!
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.
All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon and
Stars;
In the heavens you have made them,
bright and precious and fair.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers Wind
and Air,
And fair and stormy, all the weather's moods,
by which you cherish all
you have made.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,
so useful, lowly, precious and pure.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
Through whom you brighten up the night.
How beautiful is he, how joyful!
Full of power and strength.

All praise be yours, my Lord,
through Sister Earth, our mother,
Who feeds us in her sovereignty and produces various
fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

All praise be yours, my Lord,
through those who grant pardon For love of you;
through those who endure sickness and trial.

Happy those who endure in peace,
By you, Most High,
they will be crowned.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Death,
From whose embrace no mortal can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Happy those She finds doing your will!
The second death can do no harm to them.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks,
And serve him with great humility.



***Most high, all-powerful, all good, Lord!
All praise is yours, all glory,
all honor and all blessing.***

Advent is a special time

The focus of Advent is preparation for the coming of the Lord -- both in commemoration of His Nativity and His coming again at the end of time. Though most Christians see this time of year as a part of the "Christmas Season," it isn't; the Christmas season does not begin until the first Mass at Christmas Eve.

The mood of Advent is one of spiritual preparation, and the gaudy "Christmas" commercialism that surrounds it in the Western world should be overcome as much as possible. The singing of Christmas carols (which comes earlier and earlier each year), the talk of "Christmas" as a present reality, the decorated trees and the parties -- these things are "out of season" for Catholics; we should strive to keep the Season of Advent holy and penitential, always remembering, as they say, that "**He** is the reason for the Season."

Secular Franciscans, once called the "Order of Penitents," can make their Advent Season very special in a very personal way. Penance must be filled with a spirit of gratitude and joy, not pessimism. Through the cross we share in Christ's Resurrection. That's a privilege he grants to those he loves.

We know that suffering, pain, disappointments and fatigue are a part of everyday life. St. Francis has shown us that these sufferings are an opportunity to share an intimacy with Jesus in His mission of salvation. So take this time of Advent, and really look for daily opportunities to share this intimacy with Jesus' suffering. St. Francis of Assisi is such a great inspiration when it comes to penance. Let's make sure that we recognize Advent for what it really is, a time of preparation for the coming of Our Lord.

Advent is a great time to practice daily conversion; for Franciscans however, this is something we should be doing every day of the year. After all, we strive for perfection and that takes a great deal of daily effort. Spiritual reading helps us tremendously in keeping us going in the right direction.

May I wish you a very Holy Advent Season, followed by a Christmas Season where your only focus, this time of year, is the Nativity. Christmas really comes every day for those who love Jesus.

Peace and all Good,

Fred

Fred Schaeffer, SFO, 2011