

Regular Meeting: Sun., June 11th at 2 pm - South Rm., St. Helen's Christian Living Ctr.

Council meeting: Sat., June 17th at 9 am.- Arby's on west side of Rte. #1 at 16th Pl. in Vero.

Agenda and Schedule for meeting:

(1:30 pm - Initial Formation sessions before the meeting.)

2:00 - Meeting called to order. Opening Prayer, Reports, Old/New Business.

2:10 - A Blessing of our donations to the Food Pantry

2:15 - Ongoing Formation and Discussion: We continue our focus on the lives and charisms of Franciscan saints and blessed. At our June meeting, Ed O'Donnell has prepared a talk on St. Anthony of Padua, one of the most loved on the Franciscan Calendar of Saints. Also, Helen Caldarone will present a talk on the life and virtues of Blessed Angela of Foligno, a religious of the Third Order.

As we learn more about those who have preceded us in living a Gospel-based life, we hope to renew our commitment and to find a particular saint or blessed who, through prayer, will help us on our journey in the footsteps of St. Francis.

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to a biographical report about each saint, please add your own comments on how studying and emulating this saint would be of value on your own franciscan journey. And, as much as possible, present your report in your own words.

3:00 - Refreshments and break

3:15 - Liturgy of the Hours for the 5th Sunday of Easter; Franciscan Crown Rosary

4:00 - Closing Prayer and Dismissal (If you have time, please assist us in straightening out the South Room before you leave for home. Thanks!)

Refreshment Committee for this meeting:

Snacks: Peggy Rysdyke and Fred Schaeffer

Beverages: Maureen O'Hare

Fraternity Apostolate: Please place your donations to the Food Pantry on our meeting table when you arrive.

Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity.

Remember in your prayers: Please continue praying for Jennie who is in a nursing home, for George Thomas, who will need dialysis, for Marie Fee whose family continues to experience many difficulties, and for an improvement in Fred's health.

From the Minister's Desk: At our July and August meetings, we are scheduling a **video presentation** entitled "No Turning Back: the confession of a catholic priest". This is the conversion story of Fr. Donald Calloway and is one of the most amazing conversion you are ever likely to hear. Since it is about an hour long, we will show it for a half-hour at each meeting. I am certain that you will be as awestruck as Gene and I were by this example of the power of God's mercy and love.

Upcoming events: Fraternity elections are scheduled to be held at our meeting on January 14, 2007. Father Tom Murphy OFM will preside.

A Franciscan Retreat is being presented by the religious staff at San Pedro Center, Winter Park, FL 9/29/06 thru 10/1/06. If you are interested, please contact the San Pedro Center 2400 Dike Road, Winter Park FL 32792-8104. Tel: (407)671-6322 or visit their website at www.sanpedrocenter.org for details.

The next Annual Regional Meeting will be at the San Pedro Center from Fri., May 25th thru 27th, 2007.

Minister: Helen Caldarone, SFO

Vice-Minister: Fred Schaeffer, SFO

Secretary: Jennie Donlin, SFO

Treasurer: Sarah Hardy, SFO

Formation Director: Gene Caldarone, SFO

Councillors-at-Large

George Thomas, SFO; Marguerite Rysdyke, SFO

Spiritual Assisitant

Fr. Richard P. LaCorte, SFO

Commissioners

Work: Jack Solloway, SFO

Family: Susan Solloway, SFO

Peace and Justice: Sarah Hardy, SFO

Youth: (*vacant*)

Ecology: Fred Schaeffer, SFO

Formation

Assistant Director: Donna M. Haro, SFO

Formation Team: Caroline DiGennaro, SFO;

Marguerite Rysdyke, SFO; Andrea Cardoza, SFO.

Webmaster/Editor: Fred Schaeffer, SFO

But where are the others?

Emanuela De Nunzio¹

On Sunday, seeing so many places empty in our churches, sadly our hearts ring out, “But where are the others?” It is almost an echo of the words of Jesus after the return of the cured Samaritan: “Were not the ten made clean? But where are the nine?”

The answer in sociological terms is not difficult. The years of modern *times* and the growth of *secularization* have brought a progressive loss of a “religious meaning” in life, that common patrimony of widespread knowledge and sensibility that has always represented the wealth of the Christian people. The reigning culture is emptying Sunday of its original religious meaning. Even in common language everyone has changed from saying “the day of Our Lord” to “the weekend”.

Sunday has been totally filled with all sorts of duties. Think, for example, of all the people working in the department stores and in public service; of the many young people engaged in amateur or professional sport; of the millions of people who travel every Sunday to go to the sea or take a vacation. And they all, more or less, feel the necessity to relax from the stress of the working week with its pressing rhythm. The man of today on his free day is anything but free: in the *area of comfort* he passes from the production line to the consumer and begins the week again more tired and emptier than before; in the *area of discomfort* often the suffering is so great that it kills the hope of a better future. In Italy a survey revealed the figures relative to the participation of Catholics at Sunday Mass. 57.8% defined themselves as a “practicing catholic” but of these only 21.4% go to Mass every Sunday. 33.7% of those who do not go, don’t go because “of boredom”, 19.8% because they “prefer to rest” and 11% because “they don’t feel any spirituality”. But we all need the Sunday Eucharist to gain strength to face the hard work in the journey of life. Deserting the Sunday Eucharist makes us poorer; it weakens our faith and belonging to the Church;

It impedes our making Sunday a day of joy and communion. Sunday is not only “the day of our Lord”; it is also “the day of man”. It calls us to carry out the sharing of time and love *in* the family and *with* the families. Receiving the gift of love that Christ makes of Himself in the Eucharist, the Christian family – husband and wife, parents and children – enlivens and augments the capacity to donate to each other reciprocally, gives a solid foundation to the family structure and re-establishes the relationship of solidarity inside the community.

The participation in the Eucharist should not be a duty to be carried out (“*let’s hope that at least the homily won’t be too long*”), but it should permeate the whole day and as a sign of the feast day reach, as a convivial gathering, the common table together (sometimes the only time during the week) of relatives and friends (especially if elderly and alone), giving attention to the situations of poverty (material and spiritual) verified around us.

The lay people are asked in a special way to protect the sacredness of Sunday which can guarantee that important “space for God” in the grey skies of materialism. The Eucharist, in fact, *teaches us* that life does not depend on one’s activity; *it calls us* to be not afraid of silence, of meeting God; *it pushes us* to live with a heart. From this is the need to cultivate this dimension in daily prayer, with the rediscovery of the beauty of the liturgy and the fascination of the “sacredness” of time.

In Italy the National Eucharistic Congress this year was celebrated using the theme, “Without the Sunday Eucharist we cannot live”: in such a way the martyrs of Abidene answered the representative of the Roman emperor who condemned them to death for not having observed the prohibition to gather for the Sunday Eucharist. In his homily at the end of the Congress the Holy Father said: “The Sunday precept...is a need for Christians, it is a joy; Christians can thus replenish the energy they need to continue on the journey we must make every week. Moreover, this is not an arbitrary journey: the path God points out to us through his Word goes in the direction inscribed in man’s very existence. The Word of God and reason go together. For the human being, following the Word of God, going with Christ means fulfilling oneself; losing it is equivalent to losing oneself.”

As Secular Franciscans we are urged to have, like St. Francis, an intense Eucharistic life (Rule SFO, n.5). Concerning this the General Constitutions give concrete indications: “The brothers and sisters should participate in the Eucharist as frequently as possible...not only to personal sanctification but also to fostering the growth of the Church and the spreading of the Kingdom.” (CC. GG., art 14, nn. 2 and 3). These orientations can help us also to make simple but profoundly human gestures that express and realize the solidarity, the sharing, the hope and the in complete liberation of man.

So, the Eucharistic Celebration becomes for all of us a precious occasion to verify our *conformity to Christ* (Reg. SFO, n. 7) and our vow to *imitate him* with the generous gift of our life (Reg. SFO, n. 13).

(1) Emanuela is a Presidency Councillor of CIOFS and lives in Rome, Italy.