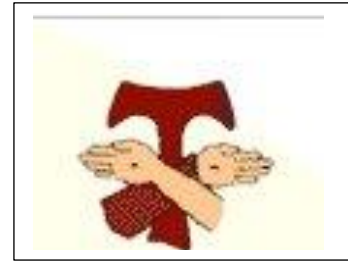


SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

St. Charles Fraternity
 P.O. Box 12644 M.P.O., Fort Wayne, IN 46864
 Website: stcharlesfrat.com
 January/February 2024



| | | | |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Minister: Joy O. | 260.452.7357 | jjolry@gmail.com | |
| Vice Minister: Barb B. | 260.242.3256 | bbrale345@gmail.com | |
| Secretary: Deb D. | 260.668.2440 | debdavishih@gmail.com | |
| Treasurer: Nancy S. | 260.417.1791 | nancy.steinhofer@gmail.com | |
| Formation Director: Rich C. | 260.667.4631 | richcain82@gmail.com | |
| Prayer Tree: Barb Braley (new) | 260.242.3256 | bbrale345@gmail.com | |
| Card Ministry: Barb Balbo (new) | 517.398.4968 | bbalbo@frontier.net | |
| Established on or before 2/9/1936 | Last elections: 10/17/2021 | Last fraternal visit: 11/19/2023 | Last pastoral visit: 11/20/2022 |

Ongoing Formation
Fratelli Tutti.
 The questions for reflection are on page 3.

Please pray for: Jackie Didier, Sandy Kiraly, and Joyce Wesner.

ST. CHARLES FRATERNITY CHRISTMAS FUN!!!



*St. Charles Fraternity
 Christmas Party
 December 10, 2023*

From left to right:
Barb Balbo
Joy Ory
Marcy Voigt
Rich Cain
Deb Davis
Barb Braley
Bob Braley (guest)

Not pictured (because she took the picture):
Jan Scher

May the Lord give you peace!

2024 marks the 800th anniversary of when St. Francis received the Stigmata. This is the third link in the chain of centenaries that we are observing with the whole Franciscan family of Orders.

Thomas of Celano and St. Bonaventure both give accounts of the event itself in their respective biographies of St. Francis. You probably remember the details.

When Francis was on an annual retreat, he saw a vision of a six-winged seraph who approached him. At their encounter, Francis was left with the marks of Christ's wounds imprinted on his own body. In Bonaventure's account, Francis has become entirely conformed to Christ, both interiorly and exteriorly.

In reading the entire account, this looks like a case of "be careful what you wish for; you may get it." Francis had asked to experience something of the suffering of Christ and the love of Christ. He received both in this one sign.

What do we ask for?

When each of us made our permanent professions – or if you will make it in the future – we renewed our baptismal promises, consecrated ourselves to the service of God's kingdom, and promised to live the Gospel in this Order for the rest of our lives by observing our Rule, our way of life. The goal is to reach perfect Christian love.

Like St. Francis, this is what we asked for. Is it what we really expect? This is a hard question – a very hard question. This is when I turn to the first question that is asked in reality therapy: "What do you really want?" The second question is the follow up: Are you willing to do what is required to achieve what you really want?

Do we really want to deepen our relationship with Christ? With the Church? With the members of our fraternity? Do we really want to serve the Church, the Order, and our fraternity? This last question is important because we will have our triennial elections in the fall.

In February, our fraternity will have been canonically established for 88 years. This would be a great time to get out your copy of the Ritual and renew your profession *prayerfully*.

May God grant you his abundant blessings in 2024 and maybe even grant you what you don't expect.

Peace and all good!

***Fratelli Tutti* Questions for Reflection**

Chapter 4

1. Define: *inculturation* & *assimilation*. How are they the same? How different?
2. Per GC 33.2: *The Councils of higher levels should not intervene in what can be satisfactorily dealt with by a local Fraternity or by a Council of a lower level. They should respect and promote their vitality so that they fulfil their duties properly.* How do we define *subsidiarity* in the OFS? How does it relate to subsidiarity in the worldview presented in *Fratelli Tutti*?
3. Reread articles 1 & 2 and article 13 of our Rule. In paragraphs 146-150, Pope Francis discusses the idea of a “mutual sense of belonging.” What connections do you make between these articles and what Pope Francis says? What connections do you make between these and the Franciscan Values of: encourage a trustful, prayerful community; serve one another, society, and the Church; and foster peace and justice. Read article 26 of our Rule. What connections do you make with the other parts of this question?
4. How do you connect the words “welcome, protection, promotion, integration” to those who wish to enter our fraternity/Order? Would they be equally applicable to someone who is of a different cultural or religious background than ours? How might this relate to articles 12 & 13 and to the 2nd Franciscan Value of a trustful, prayerful community?

Chapter 5

1. How does Pope Francis define: people, popular, populism (para 157-161)? What does he identify as the biggest popular issue? What connections do you draw between these definitions and biggest problem with articles 13b, 16, 22, & 26 of our Rule? What is needed to overcome the problems (para 166)? How does this relate to article 7 of our Rule?
2. What is the relationship between justice and false rights, according to Pope Francis? How are they related to the global common good? (para 171-172) Describe the “principle of subsidiarity” (para 175). This principle is at work in the OFS. Can you describe how?
3. What is the role of charity in politics? What should it accomplish? (para 177-192) How might this relate to article 22 of our Rule? What concrete actions might we as a fraternity take toward this goal?
4. St. Teresa of Avila said that Jesus has no hands but our hands. What connection do you make between this idea and para 194-195 of the encyclical? How does it relate to article 15 of our Rule?

JAN. FRATERNITY GATHERING

Date: Jan. 21, 2024 **Time:** 1:30 p.m.

Place: St. Vincent de Paul CC
Spiritual Center, Room B, door 1
1502 E. Wallen Rd., Fort Wayne

Formation: *Fratelli Tutti*, chapter 4

Food: snacks to share

Liturgy of the Hours:

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Pages 247 & 712; Hymn: #33

Homebound: I Peter 1

FEB. FRATERNITY GATHERING

Date: Feb. 18, 2024 **Time:** 1:30 p.m.

Place: St. Vincent de Paul CC
Spiritual Center, Room C, door 3
1502 E. Wallen Rd., Fort Wayne

Formation: *Fratelli Tutti*, chapter 5

Food: snacks to share

Liturgy of the Hours:

1st Sunday of Lent

Pages 270 & 787; Hymn: #94

Homebound: Luke 14:25-33

PROFESSION ANNIVERSARIES

1/22/2012 *Karen Amstutz*

None in February

BIRTHDAYS

Carole Beiswanger 1/20

Andrea Martin 2/9

Mary Lou Sohn 2/14

Secular Franciscans & New Year's Resolutions

As you may have noticed on page 1, there were very few of us at our annual Christmas party. We had a GREAT time!! The food was good (as always), there were new games this year, and there was lots of laughter. In fact, attendance at our fraternity gatherings has decreased over the last few years.

While we recognize that our fraternity is aging, along with its accompanying aches and pains, there are still those of you who could come but don't. The only place we experience our community life as Secular Franciscans is when we gather as a fraternity. The only place we have ongoing formation is at fraternity gatherings. Do you recall that when you made your permanent profession that you asked that "the fraternal bonds of community always be [your] help." Why? To "reach the goal of perfect Christian love." Consider this your invitation to make a New Year's resolution to attend fraternity gatherings if you have been away for a while. **We've missed you!!** (See dates & times at the top of the page.)