



## The Clarion Newsletter Of The St. Clare Fraternity, OFS

May 15<sup>th</sup> 2016 issue 144

Meeting every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday @ 12:30 PM  
St. William's Ministry Center  
Naples, Florida

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**THE MONTH  
OF MAY IS  
DEDICATED  
TO THE  
BLESSED  
VIRGIN  
MARY.**

**Let each of  
us pray  
every day  
asking Her  
to intercede  
on our  
behalf.**



### **FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK**

To my dear brothers and sisters in the St. Clare Fraternity. 5/8/16)

Today we celebrated the feast of the Ascension, a much undervalued feast in my mind, because to me it is the Lord's visual way of saying that He is going first and that we are all intended to follow Him. In our everyday world we get so occupied with so many things that we often forget what is really important or at least we temporarily lose our focus on our eternal destiny.

Do you all remember the last part of the answer to that all important question we were all asked in the Baltimore Catechism. **"Why did God make us? It was to "to be with him forever in the next life."** Isn't that what is all important?

Shouldn't that be our main objective in life and yet, don't you and me and all people, allow so many things to distract us from that ultimate goal. The things that distract us from that ultimate goal can be physical, sexual, social, political, technological, environmental or whatever.

The process is so insidious that we are most often not even aware that we have been sidetracked. Often we think that we are pursuing a noble venture when in fact we might be quite deluded.

Today, I received from a genuinely devout Christian gentleman, a rather harsh judgmental statement about Islam and all its devotees. He quoted from many early church fathers and saints in defense of his position. I have no intention of addressing his presentation point for point.

Instead, I would like to present what I believe is an appropriate approach to this ever new encroachment into our Western World.

I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the perfect revelation of the Father. He has revealed to us the truth of the Trinity as a unique eternal family of love. Christ is the greatest and the last prophet.

That God would centuries later reveal Himself to Mohammed, indicating that Christ was not the Son of God, but rather just another prophet, and one of less importance than Mohammed, whose life was anything but exemplary, to be very charitable, is totally ludicrous.

We can clearly see here the influences of the Arian heresy that was rampant in the Arabic world.

Jesus' life and all his actions bear witness to His great holiness. That claim cannot be made for Mohammed even from a cursory examination of his life. This is not to say that there aren't a great many followers of Islam who are sincere and holy and worthy of our respect. **But we cannot close our eyes to the fact that there are many within Islam who are dedicated to the destruction of all remnants of Christianity.**

Just look at what is going on in that part of the world and on the role of Isis. I do not believe that God would ever want us to give them a "free pass".

We have an obligation to defend the innocent, to stand up for those who are persecuted, to resist the terrorists, and to be willing to die for goodness and truth.

I always thought that most of the Christian martyrs died in the first few centuries. That is so untrue. More Christians have died for their faith in the past two hundred years than in the 18 centuries previous.

Do you think that it is totally impossible that you might also be asked to die for your faith? And if so, are you ready?

Your brother and servant in Christ,  
Bill

**From the editor:**

**Our minister Bill is reminding us of the persecutions that all Christians worldwide are experiencing and he addresses these issues from his heartfelt sorrow for all their sufferings.**

**At the same time he is exposing us to the reality of the situation and challenging all of us to stand up and be counted as those who will defend what we believe in.**

**I believe that means that we should pray more than ever before for God's protection and ask God to give us the courage to act whenever necessary to show our complete support for what we believe in.**

**Our Motto should be:**

***"WE HAVE FAITH AND WE WILL ACT"***.

**Editor: Bob Kowalski**

*This is what scripture has to say:*

Ephesians is the great Pauline letter about the church. It deals, however, not so much with a congregation in the city of Ephesus in Asia Minor as with the worldwide church, the head of which is Christ (**Eph 4:15**), the purpose of which is to be the instrument for making God's plan of salvation known throughout the universe (**Eph 3:9–10**).

## EPHESIANS, CHAPTER 6

**6:10-17** *Battle against Evil.*

**10\*** Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power.

**11** Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil.<sup>g</sup>

**12** For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.<sup>h</sup>

**13** Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground.<sup>i</sup>

**14** So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate,<sup>j</sup>

**15** and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace.<sup>k</sup>

**16** In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all [the] flaming arrows of the evil one.<sup>l</sup>

**17** And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.<sup>m</sup>



**Thank you Blessed Mother for  
all your help**

**These flowers are like you dear  
and sweet Mother; keep us  
always in your prayers.**



## OUR FRATERNITY LIFE

### CELEBRATIONS:

Happy  
Birthday!

### Birthdays:

HAPPY Birthday, Pat and Carol. May God bless you all the days of your lives, your brothers and sisters of the St Clare Fraternity.

June 19<sup>th</sup> Pat Gagnon

June 13<sup>th</sup> Carol Gillespie

### St. Clare Fraternity Profession Anniversaries



Congratulations Janet, Michael, Cindy and Bill; Thank you for all that you have done over the years, all your Brothers and Sisters of the St. Clare Fraternity.

Janet Eidem                      professed 10 years 2006

Michael Stuart                Professed 11 years 2005

Cindy Phillips                professed 7 years 2013

Bill Acini                        professed 20 years 1994

## The Secular Franciscan Saints and Blessed to be remembered in June

*I read about these saintly and blessed people and I was very impressed and inspired by their lives.*

June 12<sup>th</sup> Bl. Jolenta, Religious III Ord.

June 17<sup>th</sup> St. Chmielowski, Religious, III Ord. founder

June 22<sup>nd</sup> St. Thomas More, Martyr, iii Ord.

June 23<sup>rd</sup> St Joseph Cafasso, Priest, III Ord.

June 30<sup>th</sup> Bl. Raymond Lull, Martyr, III Ord.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

May 22<sup>nd</sup> MARIANCONFERENCE at Ave Maria University and then our Monthly meeting at Carol and Douglas Bart's home in the city of Ave Maria after the last conference.

Our monthly meetings for the months of June and July are being finalized as of this printing but all will be notified by email as to the place and time .

June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 4<sup>th</sup> 2016 **THE XIX QUINQUENNIAL "Reviving Our Spirit" St. Louis, Missouri** Try hard to attend this event, there has been a great deal of work and preparation putting this together

Our Minister Bill is finalizing the location and plan for the Feast Day of St Clare and we will all be informed in the future.

And finally, remember to keep open Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> to Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> for the NAFRA CONFERENCE at San Pedro in Winter Park Florida. As many as possible should attend.

(Continuing Fraternity Life)

**Our minister Bill** has assigned apostolates to each member in the Fraternity and these are the beginning of a great idea for complete member participation.

We may not fit where we were placed but I am sure that with little suggestions we can move to those areas where we have a better fit.

The most important thing is that we are on a brilliantly stated journey to establish special interests and total member open dialogue. With this approach we can broaden our perceived limits as to what we are capable of involving ourselves in, and that opens the door that we were all so hesitant to go through.

Just to keep these uppermost in our minds, here are the Apostolates:

PEACE AND JUSTICE

ECOLOGY

FAMILY LIFE

WORK

YOUTH

Just as a reminder about the September monthly meeting. We will start brainstorming ways to best serve the needs of others and that includes hands on and financial options. I know after hearing from some of the members at our last meeting it appears to be a welcome topic. All seemed to be ready to contribute many ideas and everyone knows that with supported research on the suggestions we will be able to make intelligent and compassionatedecisions.

*And now, the long awaited and overlooked information at the writing of the April Clarion Newsletter by the editor, that's me Bob. I now present the Treasurers Report from our Treasurer Pat Gagnon and she is very good at what she does*



## TREASURER'S CORNER

### ST CLARE FRATERNITY

#### FINANCIAL REPORT MAR-APR 2016

<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$2,355</b>
<b>Income:</b>	
March Common Fund	\$ 350
April Common	\$ 230
<b>Expenses:</b>	
St Matthews House	\$ 200
Annual Regional Meeting	\$ 215
Reorder checks	\$ 22
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$2,498</b>

If you are unable to attend the meeting please send your monthly donation to my attention at:  
St Clare Fraternity  
c/o Patricia Gagnon, OFS  
23 Grouper Dr.  
Naples, FL 34112

## WRITING OUR OWN STORY

### THE HOLY DOOR OF MERCY

On Wednesday April 20th the “Son” shone on five members of St. Clare Fraternity as we journeyed on pilgrimage to Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in Boca Grande, Florida. Our Lady of Mercy Church is well known for its architecture and stained glass windows. It was built in 1950 in the style of an old Spanish Mission. Many of the objects in this church represent the work of Spanish artisans. Along with Epiphany Cathedral in Venice it has been designated to have a Holy Door of Mercy. As pilgrims, Bill Roche, Pat Gagnon, Carol Gillespie, Marsanne Hufty and I walked through the Holy Door and spent a grace-filled hour in prayer.

The Jubilee Year of Mercy had begun on December 8, 2015 when the Holy Door at St. Peter’s in Rome was opened, and it will end on November 20, 2016 when the door is ceremoniously closed and bricked shut until the next Holy Year. This ritual dates back to 1499 when Pope Alexander opened the door on December 24 to begin the Holy Year 1500. At the ceremonial opening, the pope strikes the door three times with a silver hammer while singing, “Open unto me the gates of justice.” The threefold strike recalls Moses’s striking the rock to bring forth water, God striking the earth to free Paul and Silas from prison and the strike the soldier gave Jesus on the cross.

Our passage through the Door of Mercy marked our rejection of sin, acceptance of the merciful love of Christ, and the extension of His merciful love to all we encounter.

The Holy Year provides an opportunity “to experience the holiness of the church” through a plenary indulgence. “Through indulgences the faithful can obtain the remission of temporal punishment resulting from sin for themselves and

also for the souls in Purgatory.” (CCC) To obtain the Jubilee indulgence, we make a pilgrimage through the Holy Door and ask for God’s mercy. Within a week before or after our passage through the Door of Mercy we must “receive the Holy Eucharist, go to sacramental confession, pray for the Holy Father’s intentions, and have the intention to be completely detached from sin”. A Jubilee indulgence can be received multiple times, but a maximum of once a day. Also, an indulgence can be assigned by the recipient to a deceased person. We are encouraged to perform Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. May the “Son” shine on you as you make your own pilgrimage during this Jubilee Year.

For available hours at Epiphany Cathedral, you may call 1-941-484-3805.

For hours at Our Lady of Mercy, please call 1-941-964-2254.

Submitted by Carol Bart



Pat) and “centering prayer” were offered. Also, a Rosary was recited by the exterior Tau cross for the prayer requests of members from the fraternities. We came together for Mass and for Morning and Evening prayer. The chapel was adorned with many beautiful fraternity banners.

We were not only fed spiritually. There was no scarcity of “scrumptious food”. Mealtimes gave us the opportunity to get to know our sisters and brothers from other fraternities. Our days ended with socials where we continued to form bonds as family.

If you can plan to attend the 2017 Regional Meeting, you will find it an enriching experience.

Submitted by Carol Bart.

*Thank you Carol for your great stories.*

One last thing to write about for this month is the day we spent at Ave Maria celebrating “the Annunciation”. Bishop Dewane presided over the mass with special intentions for our St. Clare Fraternity.

No photos were taken but the day which started at 5:PM was one to remember; the music and the singing was so appropriate for the celebration of this most holy day. The church was packed with students from the University and the neighbors of the town of Ave Maria. We were fortunate to be seated in the front right side of the church about five or six rows from the altar. The sanctuary was full of priests, deacons and altar servers. This was a High Mass and the smell of incense and the ringing of bells coupled with the beautiful singing made this mass so wonderful that you did not want it to end.

After the Mass we all went to the mall on the University campus and enjoyed an evening of food and entertainment.



## ***ANNUAL REGIONAL MEETING***

***Pat Gagnon, Father Keven Quelly, Carol Bart and Jeanne Sachs with our banner***

Our annual Regional meeting took place from April 29 to May 1 on the beautiful grounds of San Pedro Retreat Center in Winter Park, Florida. Pat Gagnon, Jeanne Sachs and I travelled together to San Pedro. We enjoyed a weekend of shared prayer, inspiring conferences and joy-filled meals and socials with our Franciscan brothers and sisters from Florida, Georgia and Alabama. On Friday evening John Deaton OFS spoke to us on Franciscan spirituality. He explained the roots of the Franciscan charisms of poverty, humility and simplicity. On Saturday our Regional Spiritual Assistant, Father Kevin Queally TOR challenged us to be peacemakers by asking us if we listen to others and respect their dignity. He emphasized the importance of dialogue with people who have different views from our own. Father told us to examine whether we have changed our minds lately. Our ongoing formation session was facilitated by Marie Thomas. She used an article by Father Lester Bach OFM entitled “Unity and Franciscans” as a model to teach a recommended approach to formation which would allow for the involvement of all fraternity members. Short sessions on “Lectio Divina” (by our very own

Please keep submitting your stories to me for the next Clarion. They are just "great".

Editor Bob Kowalski



## ***Inspirational articles from dedicated Religious writers***

### **About Marriage**

From Dr. David Jeremiah,

Friday, May 13, 2016

### **Pushed Together**

*Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:11**

In her book *Praying for Your Prodigal Daughter*, Janet Thompson describes the anguish she and her husband, Dave, faced with a daughter in crisis. Out of their experiences came blessings, for the Lord knows how to bless us amid our burdens; and one of those blessings was a closer marriage. "We can let a prodigal daughter be a bitter dividing force," Janet wrote, "or she can actually draw us closer together when we realize that the same love that brought this child into our world—whether by birth or adoption—will see us through.... A prodigal doesn't always negatively affect a couple. Any crisis my husband and I have gone through together has only strengthened our marriage and commitment to each other."

### **Not breaking the bruised reed**

Henri Nouwen - April 17, 2016

Some of us tend to do away with things that are slightly damaged. Instead of repairing them we say: "Well, I don't have time to fix it, I might as well throw it in the garbage can and buy a new one." Often we also treat people this way. We say: "Well, he has a problem with drinking; well, she is quite

depressed; well, they have mismanaged their business...we'd better not take the risk of working with them." When we dismiss people out of hand because of their apparent woundedness, we stunt their lives by ignoring their gifts, which are often buried in their wounds.

We all are bruised reeds, whether our bruises are visible or not. The compassionate life is the life in which we believe that strength is hidden in weakness and that true community is a fellowship of the weak.

### **Reflection:**

Although I am not usually touched by poetry, these lines from a poem by W H Auden, quoted in a novel I am reading, truly resonated with me:

***"If equality of affection cannot be.  
Let the more loving one be me."***

### ***Mother Teresa***

Life is an opportunity, benefit from it.

Life is beauty, admire it.

Life is a dream, realize it.

Life is a challenge, meet it.

Life is a duty, complete it.

Life is a game, play it.

Life is a promise, fulfill it.

Life is sorrow, overcome it.

Life is a song, sing it.

Life is a struggle, accept it.

Life is a tragedy, confront it.

Life is an adventure, dare it.

Life is luck, make it.

Life is life, fight for it."

### **Quote from Mother Teresa**

"Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand."

# Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation

## Community

### Summary

Sunday, April 17-Friday, April 22, 2016

There is no other form for the Christian life except a common one. (Sunday)

"This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." --John 13:35 (Monday)

Foundational love gives us hope and allows us to trust "what is" as the jumping-off point toward working together for "what can be." (Tuesday)

People want something more from church; they long for a spirituality that connects with their whole life, not just on Sunday morning. (Wednesday)

We must help people connect to The Story, the mystery of God and the universe, so that they can understand the significance of their lives as part of the body of Christ. (Thursday)

Church, of all places, should be inclusive and reflective of our diverse and complex world. (Friday)

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### Practice

#### Agape Feast

The early Christians shared *agape* (love) feasts in their small communities.

Somehow eating together creates a space where we can be vulnerable and present. By sharing our food, or by coming empty handed and receiving from another's bounty, we enter true communion.

### Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Friday April 22, 2016

Christianity teaches us that our world is holy, that everything is matter for sacrament.

#### OUR WHOLE WORLD IS HOLY

**In its view, the universe is a manifestation of God's glory and humanity is made in God's image. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, the food we eat is sacramental, and in our work and in sexual embrace, we are co-creators with God.**

The problem however is that, most times, our daily lives are so dram, distracted and fixed upon realities that seem so base that it makes this idea ("everything is sacrament") seem adolescent fantasy.

When we watch the news at night our world doesn't look like the glory of God; what we do with our bodies at times makes us wonder whether these really are temples of the Holy Spirit, the heartless and thankless way that we consume food and drink leaves little impression of sacramentality, and the symbols and language with which we surround our work and sex speak precious little of co-creation with God.

We have lost the sense that the world is holy and that our eating, working and making love are sacramental; and we've lost it because we no longer have the right kind of prayer and ritual in our lives.

We no longer connect ourselves, our world, and our eating and our making love, to their sacred origins.

It is in not making this connection that our prayer and ritual falls short.

An older generation, that of my parents, had their own pious way of doing this ritual. They blessed their fields and workbenches and bedrooms, they prayed grace before and after every meal, and some of them went to finalize their engagement for marriage in a church.

Socrates once said that the unexamined life is not worth living. It is also not sacramental. Eating, working, and making love, without reflective prayer and proper ritual, are, in the end, dram and non-sacramental. The joylessness of so much that should bring us joy can tell us as much.

## Understanding the Communion of Saints

[The Catholic Spirit](#) Father Michael Van Sloun

October 27, 2011

This core belief is stated in the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting."

The communion of saints is a "communion," a union, a common bond, a profound connection, a great fellowship — shared among the "saints," the holy ones, the Christian faithful, those who are filled with grace, members of the one body with Christ as the head.

The communion of saints is the Church" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 946). It has three states or divisions, the communion of saints of the living, those who are still on their pilgrim journey on earth; and the communion of saints of the dead or the faithful departed, some of whom are being purified, those in purgatory, and the ones who are enjoying eternal glory in the presence of God, those in heaven (Catechism, No. 954).

## Peace and Good

### Through the year with Francis of Assisi by Pat McCloskey, O.F.M.

May 15<sup>th</sup> 2016

For though he knew that the kingdom of heaven was set up in all the habitations of the land {Isiah 38:15} and believed that the grace of God was given to the elect of God {Luke 18:13 in every place he had however experienced that the place of the church of St. Mary of the Portiuncula was endowed with more fruitful graces and visited by heavenly spirits [Ephesians 6:10; Philippians 3:1]. Therefore he often said to his brothers "see to it, my sons, that you never abandon this place. If you are driven out from one side, go back in at the other. For this place is truly holy and is the dwelling place of God. Here, when we were but a few, the Most High gave us increase; here he enlightened the hearts of his poor ones by the light of his wisdom; here he set our wills afire with the fire of his love. Here he who prays with a devout heart will obtain what he prays for and he who offends will be punished more severely. Wherefore, my sons, consider this dwelling place of God to be worthy of all honor. (Celano, First Life of St. Francis, 106)

