

August 2016
"The Canticle"

Divine Mercy Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order, Vero Beach, Florida (www.dmf-ofs.org)

Regular Meeting: Sunday, August 14, 2016, at 2:00pm, in the South Room of the Christian Living Center, St. Helen Church.



Agenda and Schedule - Regular Meeting

- 2:00 Opening Prayer, Reports, Old & New Business
- 2:15 Blessing of Donations to the Food Pantry
- 2:20 OFS Rule 13 - Ed O'Donnell & Donna Haro.
- 2:50 Refreshments and Break
- 3:10 Franciscan Crown Rosary
- 3:35 Liturgy of the Hours
- 4:00 Closing Prayers and Dismissal

Council Meeting, Sat. August 20, at 9am, St. John of the Cross. (Officers & Councilors only. Questions, see Fred)

Refreshment Committee:

Snacks: Virginia Davis & John Matthews

Beverages: Peggy Rysdyke

Remember in your prayers: Fred Schaeffer, Marie Fee, K. van Buskirk, Pat Riordan, Stanley Widing, Deacon Blake, 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.

Anniversaries: None in August

From the Minister's Desk:

August isn't a month where I have too much inspiration to write, maybe because of the heat. So I found an old article I wrote years ago, on "Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula," a town and parish situated about three-quarters of a mile from Assisi. The town, numbering about 2000 inhabitants and officially known as Santa Maria degli Angeli, has grown up around the church (basilica) of Our Lady of the Angels and the adjoining Franciscan monastery. It was here that on 24 Feb., 1208, St. Francis of Assisi recognized his vocation; here was for the most part his permanent abode, after the Benedictines (of the Cluny Congregation from about 1200) had presented him (about 1211) with the little chapel Portiuncula, i.e. a little portion (of land); here also he died on Saturday, 3 October, 1226. According to a legend, the existence of which can be traced back with certainty only to 1645, the little chapel of Portiuncula was erected under Pope Liberius (352-66) by hermits from the Valley of Josaphat, who had brought thither the relics from the grave of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The same legend relates that the chapel passed into the possession of St. Benedict in 516.

The Abbot of St. Benedict of Mount Subasio... by working of divine grace and will, granted Blessed Francis and his brethren the church of the Blessed Mary of the Little Portion, as the smallest and poorest of all the churches they had. "And," said the Abbot, "we would want that this place be the head of all your places."

Blessed Francis did rejoice most of all that the name of the church was that of the Mother of Christ, and for that it was so small and poor a church, and moreover that it was named "Of the Little Portion," and that it was prefigured to be the head and mother of the holy Brothers Minor.

Fraternity Officers/Council Members
(exp. 3 years from Jan. 10, 2016)

- Minister: Fred Schaeffer, OFS
- Vice-Minister: Helen Caldarone, OFS
- Secretary: Jean McGovern, OFS
- Treasurer: Gene Caldarone, OFS
- Formation Director: Donna Haro, OFS
- Councilors-at-large:
 1. Edward O'Donnell, OFS
 2. Jack Reddy, OFS
 3. Stanley Widing, OFS



It was revealed to St. Francis, that among all the churches in the world that the Blessed Virgin loved, she loved no other with so abounding affection as this church. And because of this Francis had the greatest reverence and devotion toward it.

"I will," said St. Francis, that this blessed place be and remain forever the mirror and good example of the whole Order, and as a candlestick before the throne of God and before the Blessed Virgin burning brilliantly forever."

Shortly after 1290, the chapel, which measured only about twenty-two feet by thirteen and a half, became entirely inadequate to accommodate the throngs of pilgrims. The altar piece, an Annunciation, was painted by the priest, Hilarius of Viterbo, in 1393. The monastery was at most the residence, only for a short time, of the ministers-general of the order after St. Francis. In 1415 it first became associated with the Regular Observance, in the care of which it remains to the present day.

The buildings, which had been gradually added to, around the shrine were taken down by order of Pius V (1566-72), except the cell in which St. Francis had died, and were replaced by a large basilica in contemporary style. The new edifice was erected over the cell just mentioned and over the Portiuncula chapel, which is situated immediately under the cupola. The basilica, which has three naves and a circle of chapels extending along the entire length of the aisles, was completed (1569-1578) according to the plans of Jacob Barozzi, named Vignola (1507-73), assisted by Alessi Galeazzo (1512-72). The Doric order was chosen. The basilica forms a Latin cross 416 feet long by 210 feet wide; above the middle of the transept rises the magnificent cupola, flanked by a single side-tower, the second never having been finished. In the night of 15 March, 1832, the arch of the three naves and of the choir fell in, in consequence of an earthquake, but the cupola escaped with a big crack. Gregory XVI had all restored (1836-40), and on 8 Sept., 1840, the basilica was reconsecrated by Cardinal Lambruscini. By Brief of 11 April, 1909, Pius X raised it to a "patriarchal basilica and papal chapel". The high altar was therefore immediately rebuilt at the expense of the Franciscan province of the Holy Cross (also known as the Saxon province), and a papal throne added. The new altar was solemnly consecrated by Cardinal De Lai on 7 Dec., 1910.

Under the bay of the choir, resting against the columns of the cupola, is still preserved the cell in which St. Francis died, while, a little behind the sacristy, is the spot where the saint, during a temptation, is said to have rolled in a briar-bush, which was then changed into thorn-less roses. During this same night the saint received the Portiuncula Indulgence. The representation of the reception of this Indulgence on the facade of the Portiuncula chapel, the work of Fr. Overbeck (1829), enjoys great celebrity.

The Portiuncula Indulgence could at first be gained only in the Portiuncula chapel between the afternoon of 1 Aug. and sunset on 2 Aug. On 5 Aug., 1480 (or 1481), Sixtus IV extended it to all churches of the first and second orders of St. Francis for Franciscans; on 4 July, 1622, this privilege was further extended by Gregory XI to all the faithful, who, after confession and the reception of Holy Communion, visited such churches on the appointed day. On 12 Oct., 1622, Gregory granted the same privilege to all the churches of the Capuchins; Urban VIII granted it for all churches of the regular Third Order on 13 Jan., 1643, and Clement X for all churches of the Conventuals on 3 Oct., 1670. Later popes extended the privilege to all churches pertaining in any way to the Franciscan Order, even to churches in which the Third Order held its meetings (even parish churches, etc.), provided that there was no Franciscan church in the district, and that such a church was distant over an Italian mile (1000 paces, about 1640 yards). Some districts and countries have been granted special privileges. On 9 July, 1910, Pius X (only, however, for that year) granted the privilege that bishops could appoint any public churches whatsoever for the gaining of the Portiuncula Indulgence, whether on 2 Aug. or the Sunday following (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, II, 1910, 443 sq.; *Acta Ord. Frat. Min.*, XXIX, 1910, 226). This privilege has been renewed for an indefinite time by a decree of the S. Cong. of Indul., 26 March, 1911 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, III, 1911, 233-4). The Indulgence is *toties-quoties*, that is, it may be gained as often as one wishes (i.e. visits the church); it is also applicable to the souls in purgatory. (*From the Catholic Encyclopedia*)