

"The Canticle"

May 2017

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

- ◆ **Regular Meeting: Sunday, May 21, 2017, at 2:00pm, South Room of the Christian Living Center, St. Helen Church.**
- ◆ **Agenda and Schedule - Regular Meeting**
 - 2:15 Blessing of Donations to the Food Pantry.
 - 2:20 Discussion: Bring statue, favorite image or medal and tell us about your Marian devotions as Franciscans. Influence on your life, etc.
 - 2:50 Refreshments and Break
 - 3:10 Franciscan Crown Rosary
 - 3:35 Liturgy of the Hours
 - 4:00 Closing Prayers and Dismissal
- ◆ **Refreshment Committee:**
 - Snacks: Helen & Gene*
 - Drinks: Joanne*
- ◆ **Council Meeting, Sat. May 20, 2017, at 9 am, St. John of the Cross. Expected participants advised.**
- ◆ **Remember in your prayers:** Fred Schaeffer, Ginny Davis, Ed O'Connor. Marie Fee, Pat Riordan, Stanley Widing, Deacon Blake, and all Franciscans who cannot come to the meeting.
- ◆ **Anniversaries:** none

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:	
Jack Reddy, OFS	
Spiritual Asst.:	Rev. Mr. Richard Blake, OFS

The "EXPO" - May 7, 2017

Join us for a day of fun filled community building and outreach hosted by the various ministries of St. Helen Church and School. It's on Tallahassee Ave. Divine Mercy Fraternity is participating. It's for a good cause; see you before and after Sunday masses. **PARKING AND TRAFFIC ... Tallahassee Avenue will be blocked off.** "You may still enter the grass parking lot on either side. There will be a blockade stopping thru traffic just past the entrance of the parking lot on Tallahassee Avenue. There will be a second blockade at the intersection of Vero Beach Avenue and Tallahassee." (announced at St. Helen).

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

When we were children, we looked up to our parents and sometimes, also, to other people whom we admired because of some virtue that inspired our young lives. The same is true for honoring saints and other holy people. Asking their intercession came from the Hebrews of that time who honored their holy people, a custom found in many cultures. The Church honors people whom she has Beatified or Canonized in her Liturgy. In every country, a Roman Catholic Liturgical calendar gives the dates the Church honors her holy people. During Holy Mass, prayers are said with this holy person in mind, and these are supplicant prayers. "The witnesses who have preceded us into the kingdom, especially those whom the Church recognizes as saints, share in the living tradition of prayer by the example of their lives, the transmission of their writings, and their prayer today. They contemplate God, praise Him and constantly care for those whom they have left on earth...Their intercession is their most exalted service to God's plan. We can and should ask them to intercede for us and for the whole world." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, §2683)

There is also the common practice for Christians to receive names, at Baptism, of saints, particularly patron saints. "The patron saint provides a model of charity; we are assured of his intercession," according the Catechism of the Catholic Church, §2156. We pray for their intercession with God. Catholics are often accused of worshipping saints and blessed. Well, we don't, but we pray to them, asking them to intercede for us so that we may better be able to cope with our suffering, our trials and tribulations.

I began my life in Holland. I pray with and to these saintly people for intercession. Take, for example, Saint Nicholas Pieck and his companions. They were willing to give their lives for Jesus because they believed in Him as He is among us now, in the Real Presence, His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. We can ask them to help us be more courageous and to stand up for our faith when it counts, when our faith is on the line.

Blessed Peerke Donders is particularly close to my heart. In my younger years, I spent six years in the same village where Blessed Peerke, 115 years before, studied at the Minor Seminary there. At the time I lived there he had not yet been beatified but he was widely known in that area and we all believed without a doubt that he was a very holy man. I pray to Blessed Peerke for intercession to make me more charitable toward others, and to always think of the other person first.

If you are a student St. Willibrord could help you with your studies. He was known to have great zeal in his studies and he was a very humble man. Then there is St. Lebuin who was known to preach to the pagans with the Book of the Gospels in one hand and the Crucifix in the other. What courage! Pray to him that he help you be a witness for your faith. If you are a hotel owner or innkeeper or if you work in, or own, a vineyard, Saint Amandus is your man. Pray to him that he will intercede for you to solve your needs. People who experience frequent pains in their arms could pray for relief to Saint Amalberga. The people who live in the areas of Ghent, Belgium and Haarlem, The Netherlands, are often known to pray for intercession to Saint Bavo. They might pray to him to intercede with his good prayer to Jesus asking Him to bring Roman Catholics in Holland back to their Churches as many have fallen away and no longer recognize the validity of Catholic teaching. Germans pray to Saint Boniface but also those who are brewers and tailors do. Saint Eligius or Eloi is patron saint of blacksmiths and harnessmakers. Saint Gertrude of Nivelles intercedes in prayer for the relief of house or farm pests such as mice and rats. Saint Hubert is well known as the patron saint of archers and hunters. Blessed Itta seems to be the patron of those who have toothaches, and Saint John Berchmans is well known as the patron of altar boys and altar girls. Saint Lidwina of Schiedam is the patron saint of those who suffer for a long length of time. Saint Peter Canisius is patron saint of those working in the area of the Catholic Press and also of writers of Catechisms. Saint Suitbert (Swithbert) seems to be the patron saint of angina sufferers. Recently proclaimed by the Holy Father, Blessed John Paul II, Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (known as Edith Stein) is patron saint of Europe along with five other saints. She is also regarded as a strong intercessor for people who lost their parents. Finally, Saint Willibrord is the patron saint of people who suffer from epilepsy or convulsions but he is also the patron saint of Friesland, a province in the northern part of Holland.

Intercessory prayer is powerful because the Dutch and also all other Saints are so close to God. Please use not only the patron saints but all the saints and blessed to ask for favors and special blessings. And, while you're at it, please join me in prayer for the people of Holland, my homeland. I wrote the above lines more than ten years ago when I was in religious life. Much has changed in the meantime, so now I ask Franciscan saints and blessed to intercede for us. I especially ask St. Francis of Assisi, our Seraphic father, to seek the Lord's Blessing over all of us, who are serving Our Lord as Franciscans.

Fred Schaeffer, OFS

1/25/2012

A Secular Franciscan Saint

ST. PETER OF ST. JOSEPH BETANCUR



St. Peter of St. Joseph Betancur, or Pedro de San José Betancur (1626-1667), also known as Hermano Pedro, was born into poverty in the Canary Islands. He was a shepherd until the age of 24 at which time he traveled to Guatemala, then the capital of New Spain, hoping to connect with a relative and to begin training to be a priest. The journey so impoverished him that he entered a bread line served by the Franciscans. He took up work in a textile factory and later entered a Jesuit college to study for the priesthood. He discovered that he was a poor student, and had to leave the school. Instead, he became a lay Third Order Franciscan. He dedicated his life to helping the poor and oppressed in jails and hospitals, as well as ministering to African slaves, Native Americans, and anyone in need. He started a hospital and school for the poor and a homeless shelter. He also preached to the rich, inviting them to repent of their sins. Because of his effective apostolate he became known as "St. Francis of the Americas." People were attracted to his way of life and followed him, leading to the founding of the Bethlehemite Brothers and Sisters. In addition to serving the poor, they had the charism of special devotion to the Divine Child and the Blessed Virgin, and offered prayer and sacrifice for the holy souls in purgatory. Nightly St. Peter carried a heavy wooden cross through the streets as a form of penance and evangelization. It is also said that he was the first to start the Posadas procession during Advent. He died in 1667 and was canonized by Pope St. John Paul II as the first from Central America. His feast day is April 18.

From the Catholic Company Morning Offering 4/19/2017 received from Stephen Berry, OFS

