



◆ **Regular Meeting:**

*The next meeting is: Sunday, September 10, 2017,  
2:00 - 4:00pm. South Room, Christian Living Ctr.,  
St. Helen Church.*

◆ **Agenda and Schedule - Regular Meeting**

2:00 Opening, Reports, etc.

2:10 Blessing of Donations to the Food  
Pantry.

2:15 *The Stigmata of St. Francis.* Readings from Bl. Thomas of  
Celano and St. Bonaventure. *St. Padre Pio's Stigmata.* Reading of St.  
Padre Pio's own account. By Donna Haro.

2:55 Refreshments and Break

3:15 Franciscan Crown Rosary

3:40 Liturgy of the Hours

4:00 Closing Prayers and Dismissal

◆ **Refreshment Committee: (September)**

Snacks: Joanne, Donna

Drinks: John Matthews

◆ **Council Meeting, Sat. September 16, 2017, at 9 am, St. John of the  
Cross. See Fred**

◆ **Remember in your prayers:** Fred Schaeffer, Ginny Davis, Ed O'Don-  
nell, Marie Fee, Pat Riordan, Stanley Widing, Deacon Blake, and all  
Franciscans unable to come to the meeting.

◆ **Anniversaries:** None

◆ **Minister's Notes:**

See next page

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: Vacant

Formation Dir.: Donna Haro, OFS

Councilor-at-large: Jack Reddy, OFS

Spiritual Asst.: Rev. Mr. Richard Blake,  
OFS (when available)



**Minister's Notes**

As you are aware there was no August meeting. Instead, there was a meeting of "Our Lady of Loreto Family" (Ministers of fraternities in the Region's southern end of Florida). It was held at St. Helen since the South Room was available. It was a planning meeting. I'll talk about this briefly at the next meeting./ Fred

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**Prayer of Silent Love**

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church (see Vatican website), we find a short summary in paragraph 2724: "Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in his mystery."

Those who frequently read my writings on prayer, will recognize that I'm pursuing "Contemplation" more frequently in the past ten years. Yet contemplation is always a Gift of God. The only way we (people) can prepare ourselves to be open to contemplation is to make a change in our spiritual life - that is, curtail sin (wipe it out of your lives if you can!), attend the Sacraments frequently, and definitely when required. Build a level of enthusiasm in your prayer life. Let us remember that we are in the presence of the Lord who is our dearest friend.

Scriptures tell us that our relationship with God should be as that of a child. In other words, a relationship devoid of an 'agenda'. Children in their relationship to parents (primarily) or very close relatives, are open and trusting, and that is what our Lord wishes all of us to be with Him.

Many adults cannot relate to such simple and beautiful relationships because they have never experienced that in their young lives. First of all, there are probably thousands of people whose childhood was less than stellar. Many were victims of abuse, and if you were, that stigma stays in the back of your mind. Sometimes for life. Those who somehow have to relearn to have trust can do so with God's help, and ONLY with His help.

God is not like other people. He does not abuse for He will only do GOOD things. So if you are not ready for a contemplative relationship because of some long-suffering impediment, keep praying, and trust me when I say He does answer prayers. Not always right away, but He will help you particularly when you have Faith and you keep asking for peace in your soul. There will come a time when distractions, possibly caused by previous onerous situations in one's life, will lessen. These distractions can even disappear altogether but you really should build up a daily prayer life. A spiritual bond, a time of silent love which is spent in thought (perhaps at Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament), frequently recurring (e.g. daily or once a week for a set period of time), and God will search you out and help you become closer to him.

As I've written before, it is not necessary for one to be a member of a monastery or convent in order to engage in contemplation if Our Lord extends this gift or grace to you. I've known very ordinary people in all states of life whose relationship with God was very, very close. The only reason I know this is because they told me about it. And, I felt at the time, it was a privilege to listen to their story. Many just were close to Jesus but not necessarily in a contemplative relationship. This relationship is, of course, a very personal thing, so most will probably not share this information. Keeping up a close relationship isn't always that easy, in fact, most of the time it is not. People are heavily attacked through temptations which tend to break down this silent love between us and the Creator. As Pope Francis frequently tells us, Jesus desires us to talk to Him. Let's do that with great love.

May the Lord shower you with His Blessings!

Peace and Good!

Fred Schaeffer, OFS

October 24, 2013; Note below: August 15, 2017

Almost every day when I am tardy in beginning Morning Prayer, the Holy Spirit reminds me to begin. His quiet voice is always there, especially today on this beautiful feast of Our Lady: her ascension into Heaven. She is with all of us who love her and Her Son, Jesus.