

"The Canticle"

May 2018

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



Regular Meeting:

*The next meeting is: **Sunday, May 20, 2018, 2:00 - 4:00pm, at St. Helen Church, South Room, Vero Beach, Florida (In May we meet on the Third Sunday)***

Agenda and Schedule

2:00 Opening, Reports, etc.

2:10 Formation Director (Donna): Please bring your Ritual

The Franciscan Crown with Franciscan Prayers and your meditations.

A program about the Franciscan Crown and the Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*see next page*).

3:10 Break and Refreshments

3:30 Liturgy of the Hours, using, "Christian Prayer"

4:00 Closing Prayers and Dismissal

Fraternity Officers/Council Members (exp. Jan. 09, 2019)

Minister:	Fred Schaeffer, OFS
Vice-Minister:	Helen Caldarone, OFS
Secretary:	Jean McGovern, OFS
Treasurer:	Jack Reddy, OFS
Formation Director:	Donna Haro, OFS
Councilor-at-large:	Joanne Giordana, OFS
Spiritual Asst.	Deacon Richard Blake, OFS

Refreshment Committee:

Snacks: Joanne Giordano

Drinks: Donna Haro

Council Meeting, Sat. May 26, 2018, 9 am, St. John of the Cross. (see Fred)

Remember in your prayers: All members of this Fraternity, and also, Deacon Blake OFS, and Franciscans unable to come to the meeting.

Anniversaries - May: none

Minister's Message: As the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary has a unique position among the saints, indeed, among all creatures. She is exalted, yet still one of us. Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth. At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all those who are to be saved.

(*Lumen Gentium*, no. 53)

Fred Schaeffer, OFS



We will pray the Franciscan Crown. Before we pray it we will pray The Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary pages 77-78 in the Ritual book. Seven different people will be assigned a decade of the crown. After they announce the mystery, they will give us a brief thought about the decade they will lead. We will finish each decade with the Holy Mary antiphon pages 83-84 in the Ritual book minus the Glory be. Call it The Franciscan Crown with Franciscan prayers and your meditations.

May 20—Formation Program

Life of the Soul

A reflection by Fred Schaeffer, OFS

The life within, in the soul, is a life of strong conviction for some, and a very fragile life for others. Either the flame burns brightly, or it is pinched off by human pride. Pride (egotism) is the cause of much evil that goes on in this world. It is also the leading cause that dedicated people leave convents, monasteries, and other orders, or even the church. In a similar way people who leave the Roman Catholic Church (for whatever reason) may have placed God second or third in their lives, but of course each person's situation is different. When that flame burns brightly, all is well, and the relationship between a soul and the Lord will evolve into a beautiful and holy relationship. When that flame begins to flicker, the relationship will lessen, and, when the flame goes out, there will not be a relationship anymore. When the life of the soul ceases, sin follows almost immediately, because we have lost the continual war with Satan. People have told me, 'oh, he does not bother me'... watch out, that's an attitude of inviting Satan to wreak havoc in your soul. It isn't nice to tell anyone to go to Hell. But do tell Satan to return to Hell and burn to a crisp. In other words, don't let him and his powers and principalities anywhere near your soul - that soul is reserved for a special relationship with Jesus, a strong relationship of total love with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That means God ALWAYS comes first.

A soul where that flame burns brightly is never without temptations. It takes suffering on the part of most people to maintain this total dedication to God, whether by religious vows, or the life of a spiritually healthy lay person. It can be a very rocky pilgrimage, on a path strewn with many boulders. God, however, loves a well-fought fight. He does not award spiritual slouching. He looks for dedication, zeal, and the strong will to please Him. He loves conquerors, He identifies with those who will give this fight their 100% effort. God is also a very forgiving Master. When we have erred, we confess our sins, and we promise to do better. We can say we love God, but do we really? Do our actions, our striving to obey Him, indicate willingness to try harder, or is it only a half-hearted effort? The great Saint Bonaventure, in so many words, said ... If you love God, you do not sin. If you still sin, you do not love God enough! That's really what this is all about. It is the nitty-gritty of the matter, not loving God enough. We all sin, some are apt to say. But what are you doing about it... are you trying to sin less, or are you a spiritual couch potato?