

"The Canticle"

June 2018

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



Regular Meeting:

The next meeting is: **Sunday, June 10, 2018, 2:00 - 4:00 pm, at St. Helen Church, South Room, Vero Beach, Florida**

Agenda and Schedule

2:00 Opening, Reports, etc.

2:10 Formation Director (Donna):

Franciscan Summer Film Fest Part I – To ponder– How does this film show going from Gospel to life and from life to Gospel?

3:00 Break and Refreshments

3:20 Liturgy of the Hours, using, "Christian Prayer," followed by the Franciscan Crown, if time permits.

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
(when available)

Refreshment Committee:

Snacks: Donna Haro

Drinks: Helen Caldarone

Note: there will not be a Council Meeting in June because most of the Council members will be out of town.

Remember in your prayers: All fraternity members, especially Fred, Stan and Virginia. Also please pray for Nic Giordano (Joanne's husband) for healing.

Anniversaries - June: none

Minister's Message:

In a recent Reflection I have written, the Holy Spirit led me to the subjects of "Silence" and "Praying to and with Jesus". All of that is related. Saint Faustina Kowalska describes this relationship in her Diary, at paragraph #411 in a beautiful manner: "March 21, 1935. Often during Mass, I see the Lord in my soul; I feel His presence which pervades my being. I sense His divine gaze; I have long talks with Him without saying a word; I know what His divine Heart desires, and I always do what will please Him the most."

That reaffirms that the language of prayer with Jesus is silence. And, silence is also the absence of other thoughts. If, during Mass, our thoughts are all over the place, thinking about relatives, friends, football, the Ladies Guild, or whatever, then we are not silent. But it is a different kind of silence, perhaps. How can we concentrate on Jesus, be He in the Blessed Sacrament during Holy Mass, or in public Adoration, or, as He usually is, contained in the Tabernacle? Go one step further ... How can we concentrate on Jesus when he is with us in our Heart, when one is distracted with or without sound? In that sense, sin is also a distraction from inner silence, because when we sin we tell God that we know better than He, at that moment or time.

Most people have trouble with complete silence and even with partial silence. Look at what happens when the priest sits down after Holy Communion and just doesn't get up to continue Holy Mass in the same length of time he usually does? People get fidgety, they look at each other in disbelief, they think of getting out of the parking lot when they are really still at Mass... sounds familiar? People are terribly impatient. Why are we in such a rush!? Relax! I've got news for you, if you live in Vero Beach, FL and you are into retirement, life is much, much calmer. I don't worry about the next minute or two, or even ten minutes ... life ends fast enough, why let these remaining years be a time of frustration? Not necessary!

So sit down with Jesus. And quietly prepare to pray, taking time to just adore Him in the tabernacle in silence. If your manner of adoration takes place outdoors (e.g. sitting in a beautiful spot in nature, by a bog or marsh for example) this way of seeing God in nature, though certainly valid, should never take the place of attending Sunday Mass, of course. I'd love to have the opportunity again, to sit in the early



morning by such a beautiful marshy area while the birds become active and daily life begins again - that mental picture certainly reminds us of God's beauty and gives great joy. There are so many ways in which we can adore Him in a simple way, and thus use that time to provide intercession in prayer for someone's toil and troubles. That's an image of a Prairie Warbler, one of the small neo-tropical migrants sometimes seen in Florida (said to breed in Mangroves).

I've said hundreds of times in these reflections that "prayer works" - I'd like to shout that out so everyone can hear me, because it is true. There was a day last week that I was in the hospital for some tests (upper and lower GI series), and I just could not sleep the night before the procedure. I wasn't worried or anything because I knew I'd be sedated, but I was so uncomfortable that I could not sleep, and I asked a close friend if she would pray. And I did manage about four hours of sleep (better than nothing!) - and the night after the procedure, I slept twelve hours... Thank you Lord!

Jesus is an immense help in negotiating these small problems in life. Many small problems occur every day. Many people pray to the Saints and Blesseds, and they ask if they would, in turn, ask Jesus that some intention be granted ... Jesus hears those requests. And they are granted also. I feel that in my spirit, in my heart. And if I can show other people, that is you, my readers, or surfers, that I believe... then perhaps you can also believe so strongly in the Lord.

There are so many people who offer nothing but criticism, how they negatively feel about religion, the church, their lives, and all sorts of grandiose subjects that have nothing whatever to do with relationships. You see, what we have with God is a relationship; a relationship of love, of speaking (prayer) with/ to God, and in that sense, relationships are very important. Such a relationship with God will one day save your soul - He promised us: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."* Jn 3:16.

Work on your relationship with Jesus, and with His Mother, Mary who is our mother as well. Start simply, and His Grace will bring this relationship to a level that is far greater than we would ever think it could be. Make a habit of silent reflection, just sit and relax by Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and He will help you along the way.

Peace and Good!

Fred Schaeffer, OFS May 22, 2011, rev. 2018