

"The Canticle"

August-September 2018

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



Regular Meeting:

The next meeting is: **Sunday, September 9, 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):
The Stigmata of St. Francis and St. (Padre) Pio
- 3:00 Break and Refreshments
- 3:15 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)

Refreshments:

Snacks: All: Please bring what you can, if you are able.
Drinks: no drinks are needed.

Council Meeting: Saturday, September 15 at St. John of the Cross (*see Fred*)

Remember in your prayers: All fraternity members, especially Marie, Fred, Stan and Virginia. Please pray for Nick (Joanne's husband) for healing.

Anniversaries - August or September: None

Minister's Message:

"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will."

[Mark 11:24 RSVCE]

How much more convincing do we need to pray? Some people pray when they are hurting, in trouble, broke, can't pay the rent or mortgage, (etc.) but when all is in order, when we do not have any immediate problems, prayer stops. Why? It does not make sense to me. Jesus gave us this wonderful gift, the assurance that when we pray, we will receive what we've asked for. Pray daily, pray frequently during the day. And, since we are Franciscans, let prayer never cease. The following article was written in 1997. It needed revision (correct grammar, cut down run-on sentences, etc.) so I revived it because prayer is always a timely subject. Have a great summer! Please keep in touch. See you in September! *Fraternal Love, Fred*

BREATH PRAYERS

Fred Schaeffer, OFS

"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will."

[Mark 11:24 RSVCE]

Our prayer is our means to communicate with God. Jesus told us: I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:61). We pray in different ways. All manner of prayer is good, but often we do not know where to begin. We find some time to sit down and concentrate on God, but then nothing comes. We can't find anything to say to God. For many, there is this urge to formalize or intellectualize prayer, but that isn't necessary either.

Years ago, I found a book in the library, titled: *The Breath of Life: A Simple Way to Pray*, " by Ron DelBene with Herb Montgomery (Winston Press, 1981). The content of that book rang a bell, and caused me to recollect a word in my native (Dutch) language about a special way of prayer that always worked for me. The Dutch word "Schietgebedje" means Ejaculatory Prayer, or, Aspiration, but I prefer the word "Breath Prayer" after I read the above-mentioned book. A Breath Prayer is a spontaneous mental prayer that one utters to God, probably dozens of times a day for many. I am not always conscious of it but usually the prayer calls my attention to God, if I say it often enough. So what does one say? Well, it depends on your level of intimacy with Jesus. I can tell you that one's public prayer posture and one's inner intimacy with Jesus is very different. The neat thing about a Breath Prayer is that it can be said while doing other things, and that's not at all disrespectful to God. Why? Well, because our work, our interaction with others (community), and also our time to play is our existence and it is always God's gift to us, so when we pray in this fashion we're involving God directly in these actions. That's good! Jesus is our Master, but is also our dearest friend, an association that helps me personalize my inner relationship with God. So what are these Breath Prayers?

I wrote this introduction to Breath Prayers about 20 years ago, and I must admit I don't pray like this as often as I should. Now, I ask the Holy Spirit to help me be with Jesus in all that I do and say to God. So get into the habit again and say often, *"Jesus I love you, please be with me."*

What happens when you pray? For some, very little. For others, very much. It differs. It differs by season, by inner disposition, by how we feel. There often isn't any rhyme or reason to it. Often, requests for favors get answered. My knee hurts (probably arthritis) and the following week after I pray about it, it doesn't hurt anymore. Well, you reason that it doesn't hurt because the weather is more favorable, it is dryer... but think again... Jesus made the weather too... and that prayer you sped to God really did help. Very often, prayers that may have helped you were uttered by someone else for you. Regardless, God heard! Keep praying, my friends... God will reward you with great peace of mind.

Fred Schaeffer, OFS (1997, rev. July 2018)

Happy Summer!

