

The Porter

St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, MD
 Secular Franciscan Order – December 2016
<http://stconradannapolis.sfousa.org/>

Council

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Volunteers

Historian	Marie Shelton	(410) 590-5570	marifrances@catholic.org
Infirmarian	Evelyn Jones	(410) 827-9023	edjones56@verizon.net

The Porter deadline for the January issue is January 6th. Please send news, prayer requests, poems, or interesting things that you think other members may enjoy to: Joan Faltot, 8217 Grainfield Rd, Severn, MD 21144, or send by email.



Fraternity Meeting

Fraternity Meeting and Advent Day of Recollection
 NOTE: This meeting will run later than normal—probably **until about 1:00 pm**. Both breakfast and lunch will be available. Please make an effort to stay for the entire program. Also note change of location.

Saturday, December 17, 2016

St. John the Evangelist, 607 Ritchie Hwy., Severna Park, MD 21146

8:30 Mass- Church. Meeting 9:15 – **Gathering Space Meeting Room** to left of the large foyer at the back of the church, past the restrooms.

Refreshments



Bowie/Crofton/Severna Park will supply breakfast.
 Glen Burnie/Pasadena and Annapolis/Eastern Shore will supply lunch.
 Since everyone is bringing something, it is not necessary for anyone to bring a great deal. Although this is our Christmas celebration... we do not want to waste food.
 Annapolis/Eastern Shore will be next, so please arrange to take the supplies home, restock if necessary, and return them at the next meeting.
Please remember to bring your own cup!

Program


Day of Recollection: *Reconciliation During Advent and Beyond, Living a Life Penance*
 Leader: Br. James Watson, OFM Cap.
 Christmas Carols

Liturgy

Annapolis/Eastern Shore
 Morning Prayer- Saturday of the Third Week in Advent – Psalter: Week 3

Treasury

Common Fund balance: \$1,446

<p>Outreach</p>	<p>Special collection for Women in Prison at Jessup. Prison does not supply personal items to female detainees; they must be purchased. Some, especially newly arrived, do not have any money. The Prison Chaplin at Jessup keeps packages of personal items packed by St. Lawrence Parish in Jessup. The packages have a dual purpose: the inmate receives needed items and the also gets an introduction to the Chaplin.</p> <p>Items needed: Shampoo (24 oz. or less), conditioner, toothpaste (regular size), toothbrush, hand and body lotions, deodorant, bars of soap. Not allowed: baby oil, powders. Items should be regular size bottles, not travel/trial-size. Please bring these items to the December meeting.</p> <p>Lighthouse Shelter Lunches: Thursday, Dec 15, 9:30 am, at home of Joan Kvetkas. Contact Denise if you plan to come.</p> <p>Phoenix Academy: We'll be having our ongoing collection for the weekend food program. Please be generous! Student backpacks will be filled on Dec. 21st. at the 12:30 pm at the Academy.</p>	
<p>Prayer Requests</p> 	<p><i>Please pray for our sick and/or homebound members:</i> (Please help us update this list.)</p> <p>Denise Miente, Susan Burns (hip replacement), Jude Dodge, and Kathy Duffy's daughter, Lynne, our country.</p>	
<p>Birthdays</p>	<p>Marie Shelton – 12/26 Jenny Moreira – 12/31 George Ryan – 1/7</p>	<p>Deborah Proctor – 1/10 Ed Wilbourne – 1/16 Tessie Chitty – 1/21</p>
<p>Profession Anniversaries</p>	<p>Harry Thompson – 1/10/1991 Lita Millan – 1/10/2002</p>	
<p>Council Meeting</p>	<p>Saturday, January 7, 2017 at 1:00 at the Tyrrell's home</p>	
<p>Upcoming Events January</p>	<p>Care for Creation, "Building a Relationship with God" January 7, 2017. 9:15 – 11:00 am Our Lady of the Fields Church, Millersville, MD Contact: Susan Burns, seburns318@comast.net</p>	
<p>February</p>	<p>Care for Creation, "Building a Relationship with Others" February 4, 2017. 9:15 – 11:00 am Our Lady of the Fields Church, Millersville, MD Contact: Susan Burns, seburns318@comast.net</p>	
<p>March</p>	<p>Care for Creation, "Building a Relationship with Nature" March 4, 2017. 9:15 – 11:00 am Our Lady of the Fields Church, Millersville, MD Contact: Susan Burns, seburns318@comast.net</p>	
<p>April</p>	<p>Seventh Annual Day of Reflection for Inquirers, Candidates & Newly Professed April 1, 2017. St. Anthony Shrine, Ellicott City, MD Regional Retreat April 28-30, 2017. Priestfield Retreat Center, Kearneysville, WV</p>	
<p>October</p>	<p>Formation Directors Weekend October 6-8. Loyola Retreat House, Faulkner, MD</p>	

COMMUNITY



Minister's Minute: Dear Brothers and Sisters of Penance, Have you settled in to Advent since our election in November? I'm not sure we should ever "settle in" to any liturgical period of the year; all of them our special! But I know Advent can seem to be the most hectic time of the year, even though it is "the most wonderful time of the year." Christmas preparations can hack away at our peace. What are we to do? Let's follow St. Francis' example.

Thomas of Celano tells us: "So thoroughly did the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Crucifixion occupy [St. Francis'] memory that he hardly wanted to think of anything else." So, if you are feeling overwhelmed or out-of-sorts spiritually during Advent, think about the humility of God, who came down from heaven and became like us so we could become more like Him. The Creator of the Universe chose to experience everything (good and bad) we experience (except, of course, sin). He loved us that much! Note, too, that even though Francis pondered the charity of the Crucifixion, choosing to do the will of His Father led Jesus to the Cross; how much more selfless and humble can one get? If that isn't enough to fix your funk, then think about St. Francis' sermon on Christmas Eve 1223, at Gubbio, where he had arranged for a crèche, consisting only of an empty manger, an ox, and an ass, to show the humility and simplicity of the place where God chose to be born in human form. Thomas of Celano says about Francis' sermon: "His mouth was filled more with sweet affection than with words. Besides, when he spoke the name Child of Bethlehem or Jesus, his tongue licked his lips, as it were, relishing and savoring with pleased palate the sweetness of the words." Let this sweetness still your heart. Thomas' entire story of the crèche is available on the next page, as Judith suggested at our first meeting of your new council. Meditate on it and be refreshed. We, your new council, hope to see as many of you as possible on the 17th when Br. James will lead us in reflecting on penance during Advent and beyond. In Christ & St. Francis, Pat



Congratulations to

Laura Benso, OFS

Sarita Palmer, OFS

who celebrated their Rite of Admission on Saturday Nov. 19, 2016

Have you made arrangements for your headstone?



Judith Tyrrell recently photographed Joan Leckinger's headstone.

Note the Tau with crossed arms on the back of the tombstone and the name of our order on the front of the tombstone.

FRANCISCAN WRITINGS

The First Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano

Chapter 30: Of the manger that he made on Christmas day

84. His chief intention, his principal desire and supreme purpose was in and through all things to observe the holy Gospel, and with all watchfulness, all zeal, all the longing of his mind and all the fervor of his heart perfectly to follow the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and tread in His footsteps. He would recall His words with assiduous meditation and dwell on His works with the most piercing consideration. And chiefly did the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Passion so occupy his memory that he would scarce ponder over anything else. Therefore that which he did at the fortress called Greccio on the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ in the third year before the day of his glorious decease is to be recorded and dwelt on with reverent memory.



There was in that place a man named John, of good repute, but of better life, whom blessed Francis loved with special affection, because, having been a man of the most noble and honorable position in his town, he had trampled on the nobility of the flesh, and followed after the nobility of the mind. This man did blessed Francis send for (as he was often wont) about fifteen days before the Nativity of the Lord, and said to him, "If you will that we celebrate the present festival of the Lord at Greccio, make haste to go before and diligently prepare what I tell you. For I would make memorial of that Child who was born in Bethlehem, and in some sort behold with bodily eyes His infant hardships; how He lay in a manger on the hay, with the ox and the ass standing by." When the good and faithful man heard it, he made haste and prepared in the aforesaid place all the things that the Saint had told him of.

85. The day of gladness drew nigh, the time of exultation arrived. The brethren, were summoned from many places; the men and women of that town with exulting hearts prepared tapers and torches, as they were able to illuminate that night which with its radiant Star has illuminated all the days and years. At length the Saint of God came, and finding all things prepared, beheld them and rejoiced. The manger had been made ready, the hay ass were led in.

There Simplicity was honored, Poverty exalted, Humility commended; and of Greccio there was made as it were a new Bethlehem. The night was lit up as the day, and was delightful to men and beasts. The people came, and at the new Mystery rejoiced with new rejoicing. The woodland rang with voices, the rocks made answer to the jubilant throng. The brethren sang, yielding due praises to the Lord, and all that night resounded with jubilation. The Saint of God stood before the manger, full of sighs, overcome with tenderness and filled with wondrous joy. The solemnities of Mass were celebrated over the manger, and the priest enjoyed a new consolation.

86. The Saint of God was vested with Levitical ornaments, for he was a Levite, and with sonorous voice chanted the holy Gospel--an earnest, sweet, clear and loud-sounding voice; inviting all to the highest rewards. Then he preached to the people who stood around, and uttered mellifluous words concerning the birth of the poor King and the little town of Bethlehem. (And often, when he would name Christ Jesus, aglow with exceeding love he would call Him the Child of Bethlehem, and, uttering the word "Bethlehem" in the manner of a sheep bleating, he filled his mouth with the sound, but even more his whole self with the sweet affection. Moreover, in naming "the Child of Bethlehem" or "Jesus" he would, as it were, lick his lips, relishing with happy palate, and swallowing the sweetness of that word.) There the gifts of the Almighty were multiplied, and a vision of wondrous efficacy was seen by a certain man; for in the manger he saw a little child lying lifeless, to whom the Saint of God seemed to draw near and (as it were) to rouse the child from the lethargy of sleep. Nor was this vision incongruous; for the child Jesus had been given over to forgetfulness in the hearts of many in whom, by the working of His Grace, He was raised up again through His servant Francis and imprinted on a diligent memory.

At length the solemn vigil was ended, and each one returned with joy to his own place.

87. The hay placed in the manger was kept, in order that thereby the Lord might save beasts of burden and other animals, even as He multiplied His holy mercy. And verily so it came to pass, for many animals in the region round about which had divers diseases were freed from their sicknesses by eating of that hay. Moreover, women in long and grievous labor were safely delivered by putting some of the hay on themselves, and a crowd of persons of either sex suffering from various ailments gained their long-wished-for health at that same place. Finally the place of the manger was hallowed as a temple to the Lord, and in honor of the most blessed father Francis, over the manger an altar was reared and a church dedicated, to the end that where beasts had once eaten fodder of hay, men might thenceforth for the healing of soul and body eat the flesh of the spotless and undefiled Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who in highest and unspeakable charity gave Himself for us, Who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, God eternally glorious, world without end. Amen, Alleluia, Alleluia

CREATION

Care for Creation – “Laudato Si” Notes on the Death of Creation

by Susan Burns as presented November 5, by John Hoppa

“Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with colored flowers and herbs”. #1

Last month I paraphrased Deacon Tony Grillo’s presentation on Laudato Si, Birth of Creation. We explored the spirituality of God’s Creation, His Gift to us to care for as responsible stewards, to keep and till, not to dominate and rule. When we do not till and keep as God intended, we open ourselves to sin. We become filled with pride and self-reliance. We seek our own welfare first. We feel we can make it on our own – without God. The result is sin, darkness, spiritual death, “A spirituality which forgets God as all-powerful and Creator. . . We end up worshiping earthly powers, or ourselves, usurping the place of God, even to the point of claiming an unlimited right to trample his creation underfoot. . . .” # 75

And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Genesis 4:8. And so it came to pass, the murder of God’s Creation. And the murder of God’s Creation continues today where we are jeopardizing the very existence of God’s gift of life.

The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. #21

Today we experience unbridled exploitation of the earth; bio hazardous materials, toxic waste, atomic energy. We are the throw away culture, hyped on our consumerism to get the latest and “throw away” whatever we no longer want. We need to think beyond ourselves.

Laudato Si speaks about 3 areas where we are destroying God’s Creation; pollution and climate change, water, and loss of biodiversity. Today we think “What can I do to take care of myself” regardless of the cost for future generations. In the US we are still debating the reality of climate change and the rest of the world is debating what to do about the destruction of God’s Creation, where the poor of the world suffer disproportionately. Clean drinking water is a basic universal right, but in the global south people are dying of water-borne illnesses. Things are dying and becoming extinct. God had provided a complete interconnected ecosystem, but we have chosen to destroy for our convenience instead of reviewing the consequences or recognizing God’s Glory.

The encyclical calls us to scrutinize the signs of the times in light of the Gospel. Scrutinize the decline of human life and the breakdown of society. Look at technology and consider the impact of scientific advancement on the whole of

society. Technology cannot be the sole response to our environmental crisis. The media gives only what the people want to hear instead of giving us a challenge to our intellect. This behavior only reinforces the binders we install so we can readily miss “the other.” Global inequality is another sign of the times. The poor are most acutely exposed to the effects of global climate change and pollution. We need to hear the cry of the poor and of the earth. We are succumbing to willful indifference and lack of care. We need to move beyond a focus on self and shift our economic views, not allowing capitalism to benefit only the rich sacrificing society and the poor. We need to stop embracing that nothing is wrong. Pope Francis tells us that the church is not telling us how to act, only that we must act for sustainability of the environment for future generations.

Praise be our Lord, we can overcome the death of creation because of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hope rings eternal in our hearts. The next 3 sessions will be on the Resurrection of Creation; Jan 7 Building a Relationship with God, Feb 4 Building a Relationship with Others, and Mar 4 Building a Relationship with Nature. The sessions are at 9:15 am at Our Lady of the Fields, room 203/204.

An excellent resource to learn more of Pope Francis's teachings in Laudato Si is a series of videos titled "Understanding Laudato Si," by Fr. Daniel P. Horan, OFM. These can be found at:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQ2W1tFFtdJn9V9_DvEbz9Bygt7XsYXRj

To understand more of the effects of climate change take a look at the stunning climate change documentary starring Leonardo DiCaprio at:
<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/before-the-flood/videos/before-the-flood/>

To see the reality of climate change locally view this video.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCc3C89qxOM>



Following tips are from http://www.recyclemoreoften.com/Newsletters/Summer_2016 which is a link off of Anne Arundel County’s recycling information page.

Recycling Grass Clippings/Yard Waste. When choosing a bag for your yard waste, think brown, not black. If you collect your grass clippings or other yard waste for recycling at the curb, use a brown paper lawn bag designed for that purpose, instead of plastic bags. Yard waste placed out for collection in plastic bags will no longer be accepted beginning January

2017. A major reason for this revision to the program is that composting with plastics can be expensive, time consuming and not environmentally friendly. The ground plastics have to be separated from the yard waste during the composting process. Paper bags will compost right along with the leaves and grass clippings, creating a cleaner more valuable product. Paper lawn bags can be found in most grocery stores, hardware stores and online. Regular paper grocery or shopping bags are not durable enough for yard waste collection.

Plastic Bags. Wondering what to do with all those plastic shopping bags? Bundle them together in one bag and tie the bag shut. While residents are allowed to place bundled plastic bags in their yellow recycling containers, you are encouraged to return them to the grocery store for recycling. Returning the bags to the store provides manufacturers with a cleaner source material for making park benches and decking materials.

Our Patron Saints and Blesseds in this Jubilee Year of Mercy

November 4 – Blessed Teresa Manganiello, OFS (1849-1876), was born in southern Italy. She was the youngest of eleven children and, like many of the children in this rural area, worked in the fields and home rather than go to school. She expressed her desire at the age of 18 to consecrate her life to God and later was clothed in the Franciscan tertiary habit. Her admirable traits included “innocence of life, her great devotion to the crucified Lord, in a spirit of penance, in reparation for the sins of the world.... She never refused help to anyone who came to her. She distributed bread and clothing and had, by her own initiative, a sort of rudimentary pharmacy with herbs she cultivated for minor illnesses that were spreading at the time.... To her door came the poor, the sick, the oppressed of all types and she received them with a smile and a warm word, giving medicine and love; medicines for the healing of the body and the soul.” Blessed Teresa’s time of prayer was her priority over everything else. Although she could neither read nor write, she had great wisdom and remembered things clearly, amazing those who were learned. Blessed Teresa died at the age of 27, having caught tuberculosis. Pope Benedict said of her, “She lived a simple and humble life between house work and the spiritual work of the Church.... Like St. Francis of Assisi, she tried to imitate Jesus Christ, offering up sufferings and penances in reparation for sins, and she was filled with love for her neighbor.... Always smiling and sweet, she departed for heaven, where her heart was already living, when she was only 27.”

November 6 – Blessed Joan Marie de Maille, OFS (1331-1414), of French noble birth, was a pious child. Her father died in 1340 and she lived with her grandfather, who chose a man for her to wed: the baron Robert II. She consented to the marriage after failing to secure her grandfather's permission to join a convent as a nun. Her grandfather died during the 1337 wedding itself, and she decided to consecrate herself to God as a virgin. Her husband consented to this. He was later captured in a battle and she sold all of her possessions and also borrowed money for the ransom, but her husband fled and returned home before she could send it to his captors. Her husband died from injuries sustained in a battle between the French and the English in 1353 and she became a nurse to help the ill and poor despite losing all she had. Her in-laws were unkind to her and blamed her for squandering her husband’s fortune for charitable ends and so deprived her of her widow’s inheritance and cut ties with her. She became a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis and in 1388 moved into a small room at a church in Tours. She had the gift of prophetic insight. Some revelations of future events were so important that she felt duty-bound to communicate them to the king of France. In her later years particularly, Joan increased her attention to those in prison, whether as captive of war or jailed. On one occasion she succeeded in persuading the king to free all the prisoners in Tours. Her solicitude for the imprisoned doubtless sprang from the remembrance of the bitter captivity, years before, of her own dear husband. But concern for the jailed was also, of course, one of the corporal works of mercy listed by Jesus as meritorious of heaven: “I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me.” (Matt. 25:36). Marginalized herself, she became patron of the marginalized.

December 15 – Blessed Mary Frances Schervier, OFS & foundress (1818-1876), who once wanted to become a Trappistine nun, was instead led by God to establish a community of sisters who care for the sick and aged in the United States and throughout the world. Born into a distinguished family in Aachen (now Germany, then ruled by Prussia), Frances ran the household after her mother’s death and established a reputation for generosity to the poor. In 1844 she became a Secular Franciscan. The next year she and four companions established a religious community devoted to caring for the poor. In 1851 the Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis were approved by the local bishop; the community soon spread. The first U.S. foundation was made in 1858. Mother Frances visited the United States in 1863 and helped her sisters nurse soldiers wounded in the Civil War. She visited the United States again in 1868. When Mother Frances died, there were 2,500 members of her community worldwide. They are still engaged in operating hospitals and homes for the aged. Mother Mary Frances was beatified in 1974.

Reflection - The sick, the poor, and the aged are constantly in danger of being considered “useless” members of society and therefore ignored—or worse. Women and men motivated by the ideals of Mother Frances are needed if the God-given dignity and destiny of all people are to be respected.