

Council Meeting	Friday, January 3 at 7:00 pm via Zoom Hold the date: Saturday February 1st, weather permitting, the Council will hold their annual planning session at the Tyrrell's.
Upcoming Events	March 29, 2025, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm. Day of Reflection for Inquirers and Candidates Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America, 1400 NE Quincy St., DC. Br. Michael Meza, OFM Cap will be the presenter. All are invited, especially those who are in initial formation— inquirers and candidates. Lunch is included.
Events around town	Shrine of St. Anthony, Ellicott City: Advent Vespers and Confession. During Advent, the public is invited to join the Friars for Sunday Evening Vespers between December 1st and December 22 starting at 6:00pm with an hour of Confession and Adoration followed by Vespers at 7:00 pm.



Minister's Minute

Dear Brothers and Sisters, We hear a lot about WAITING during this Advent season. We all can relate to times of waiting, for a baby to be born, for diagnostic test results, for exam grades, on a shopping line, at a doctor's office, in traffic, etc. Today December 16 is the anniversary of my mother's death from pancreatic cancer in 1991. I had spent her final six weeks waiting with her for Jesus to come. It was a gift of time for love, for healing, for reconciliation, for caring and sharing and for prayer. The book by Henri Nouwen that spoke of waiting with hope, patience, expectant faith, surrender, etc., gave me consolation and strength along with the Eucharist, the Way of the Cross, the rosary and my family's encouragement. This article summarizes his teaching [:https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55b0fcd0e4b068ed2bbcf36b/t/5fc305873c02f22b9d70b39a/1606616455697/Waiting+for+God+by+Henri+Nouwen+Advent+Theological+Horizons.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55b0fcd0e4b068ed2bbcf36b/t/5fc305873c02f22b9d70b39a/1606616455697/Waiting+for+God+by+Henri+Nouwen+Advent+Theological+Horizons.pdf)

What are you WAITING for this ADVENT/CHRISTMAS? Is it an encounter with Jesus in a family member, a beggar at the corner, a crying child at church, an enemy, a Scripture passage, a page in a book, in a movie, in silence, in prayer, in the Eucharist, etc. Jesus is waiting for YOU too.

Thank you for your generosity in providing for the Seafarers by filling the boxes for them. See the guidelines that have been provided on page 5. Let us continue to pray for them through the intercession of Mary Star of the Sea. See below for a short prayer.

Catherine reminded us of the feast of the Holy Innocents, Dec 28th. Let's ask Our Lady of Guadalupe to pray for the parents of those who have ended the lives of these precious babies and bring about their conversion as she did MILLIONS of Mexicans. See note below on page 4. And let's remember the MARCH for LIFE on January 24, 2025.

January 1, 2025 is the World Day of Peace. See the Pope's Message on this link: <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/20241208-messaggio-58giornatamondiale-pace2025.html>

At our January gathering we will be again answering the Vision questions for your input regarding the fraternity meetings, changes needed, your ideas for speakers, etc. If you are unable to attend you will be able to mail or email your responses. Please do! YOUR INPUT MATTERS! ! The questions are set out on the next page.

Did you see the article about Greccio in the Magnificat? Br. Connor will be sharing with us Thomas of Celano's reading about that event along with his insights at our December gathering. We look forward to seeing you all there. May it be a Blessed Christmas for all.

Peace, love and joy, Judith

VISION QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY GATHERING

1. What suggestions do you have for programs, speakers/books for our meetings?
2. How do you serve in your parish? How would you like to serve with your gifts in our fraternity?
3. What suggestions do you have for Area Group activities? i.e., skits, saints, testimonies? monthly breakfast foods?
4. What changes would you like to see in meeting time, prayer, apostolates, food, etc.?

December 12: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe



An interesting historical note from Bishop Robert Barron's Gospel Reflection on this feast day.

Though Franciscan missionaries had been laboring in Mexico for twenty years, they had made little progress. But within ten years of the appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe practically the entire Mexican people, nine million strong, had converted to Christianity. Our Lady of Guadalupe had proved a more effective evangelist than Peter, Paul, St. Patrick, and St. Francis Xavier combined! And with that great national conversion, the Aztec practice of human sacrifice came to an end. She had done battle with fallen spirits and had won a culture-changing victory for the God of love.

JUBILEE YEAR 2025 PRAYER

PILGRIMS OF HOPE

Prayer from Living Faith Devotional

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth. When with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout of the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen



BROTHER CONNOR'S REFLECTION

Advent is an essentially Marian season, and the Secular Franciscans are an especially Marian order. In our *Constitutions*, Mary is presented to us as the model disciple because she hears the word of God, ponders this word in her heart, and incarnates this word in her life. Like Saints Bonaventure and Francis, Mary is someone who is at home in the Word of God, moving in and out of it quite naturally. Indeed, she is so at home in the Word of God that this Word makes His home in her. Pierced in her inmost depths

by the Word of God, Mary becomes mother of the Word Incarnate. As Franciscans, we are called to follow Mary's example. We are invited to live in the Word of God and to allow this Word to live in us. With Mary as our model and guide, let us strive to familiarize ourselves with the Sacred Scriptures, to ponder them in our hearts, and to incarnate them in our lives. Amen.

LIBRARY OF CONRAD BOOK CLUB

Club meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, so this month meeting is on **Tuesday, December 17 at 2:00pm**. Location will be at Audrey's home in Arnold. We'll be discussing chapter 5 of ABBA'S HEART by Neal Lozano. Contact Denise for more information.

TREASURER'S REPORT – JOE MCHUGH

Thank you for your continuing generosity !!!

October Balance		\$3,927.45
FFA Stipend	(\$100)	\$3,827.45
SA Stipend	(\$100)	\$3,727.45
St. Clare Hur. Rel. in NC	(\$170)	\$3,557.45
November Deposit/Balance	\$1,055.00	\$4,612.45

Fraternity contributions can be mailed to:

Joe McHugh

1740 Tedbury St, Crofton, MD 21114

Remember, when making your donation to the fraternity, use the memo line of your check to designate where you wish your contribution to be directed. There are three possible designations:

COM - Common Fund (includes Sabu family)

BUS - bus tokens for the Light House shelter clients

Phoenix – Phoenix Academy 'backpack' food

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES – Denise Mianté

Phoenix Backpacks: Filled 24 bags on Wednesday, November 20th. Next bag-filling date is set for December 18.

Light House Shelter Lunches: Made 50 sandwiches on Thursday October 24th at Catherine's and Paul's. Next scheduled sandwich-making is on Thursday, DECEMBER 26th. We do not make sandwiches in November due to Thanksgiving.

Shelter Bus Passes: Bought and delivered 200 all-day bus passes to the Lighthouse Shelter on Sept. 26th. Next Scheduled purchase and delivery is for December 26th.

From the Votive Mass for the Star of the Sea (PRAYER FOR SEAFARERS)

"O God, you have willed that Mary should shine forth as the Star of the Sea and protectress for us who are tossed about on the stormy waves. Grant that through her help and direction, we may be safe from dangers of soul and body, reaching the port of eternal happiness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen".

Special Fraternity Collections for December

APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA CHRISTMAS SHOE BOX

In December, our fraternity has traditionally put together gift boxes for merchant seafarers who visit the Port of Baltimore. We did this because the seafarers put out to sea for long periods of time and are away from friends and family during this festive season.

There are 3 ways to help:

- 1) If you wish to fill a plastic shoe box, you can bring it to the Fraternity meeting on December 21. Please remember that there are also women Seafarers as well!! New guidelines require we fill a plastic shoe box which makes sense since a cardboard shoe box is no match for the rodents in the port area who can sniff out the beef jerky in the box. Stuff the plastic shoebox full of some of the items below, and wrap it with festive paper. See the list of suggested items below.
- 2) You could send a check to the Apostleship of the Sea at 320 Cathedral Street; Baltimore, MD 21202.
- 3) You can order items in bulk (like socks, warm hats, or gloves) and bring them to the Dec. 21st fraternity meeting. We'll deliver them to Dundalk with the gift boxes. Or if you order bulk items online, e.g. Amazon, you can have them shipped directly to Apostleship of the Sea, 6 Dunmanway, Dundalk, MD 21222.

Suggested contents:

Toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, combs, nail clippers, mouthwash, shampoos, comb/brush, hand sanitizer, lip balm Hair conditioners, soap, shaving cream, deodorant, Q-tips, disposable razors

Socks, gloves, scarves, knit "watch caps" that cover the head and ears

Ball caps, pens, pencils, writing supplies, English dictionaries, 2024 calendars, pocket-sized address books/planners

Scotch tape, playing cards, travel sized games, reading materials (magazines, paperbacks)

Non-perishable foods/snacks/candy (no chocolate--it melts!) and a small Christmas card or blessing signed from a member, or members, of the Fraternity.

Answering violence with skills for peace since 1981

LFFP is dedicated to interrupting a culture of violence by teaching skills that prevent, resolve, and transform conflict. We believe that learning peace at any age can effectively counteract violence with tools for peace.

<p>Healthy Relationships Involve: Honesty, Trust, Respect, & Open Communication and Compromise</p> <p>Try using a quote as the focal point for your day or week. Be sure to read each with intention, and let the words influence the way you interact with and treat others.</p> <p><i>"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."</i> -Maya Angelou</p> <p>Life's most persistent and urgent question is, "What are you doing for others?" -Martin Luther King, Jr.</p> <p><i>"Connection: Connection is the energy that is created between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment."</i> -Brené Brown</p> <p> Little FRIENDS For PEACE Peace Tool Card Love and Compassion For more, visit www.lffp.org.</p>	<p>Relationships <i>connections with people such as friendships, work and family friendships, & romantic partnerships</i></p> <p> </p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Keep expectations realistic Accept people as they are and don't try to change them2. Talk with each other listen, share, and ask questions3. Be flexible. Allow for change and growth4. Take care of yourself5. Be dependable, trustworthy, responsible6. Handle Conflict Nonviolently Cool down, use "I" Statements, focus on the problem, take responsibility7. Be affirming8. Keep your life balanced9. It's a process10. Be Yourself <p> Little FRIENDS For PEACE Peace Tool Card Love and Compassion For more, visit www.lffp.org.</p>
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Catholic Humor

Jesus asked God, "Where have you been these past 4 years?" God replied, "In Ireland." Jesus was shocked by His Father's reply and replied, "The world has been wracked with war, there's been a terrible pandemic, and you have been in Ireland? Please Father, what have you been doing?" God leaned over and kindly whispered, "Working from home Son, working from home."

From: <https://www.irishcatholic.com/the-greatest-catholic-jokes-of-all-time/>