



The Porter

St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, MD
Secular Franciscan Order – January 2025
<http://stconradannapolis.sfousa.org/>

The Porter deadline for next issue is February 5. Please send news, events, prayer requests, poems, or any interesting items that you think other members may enjoy to: Joan Faltot, 715 Maiden Choice Ln, Apt CC122, or send by email to jd6bouv@verizon.net.



Fraternity
Gathering

Saturday, January 18, 2025
Mass at 8:30 in CHURCH followed by Gathering at the Annex
THE CHURCH IS LOCATED AT 7436 BALTIMORE ANNAPOLIS BLVD, GLEN BURNIE
Christ the King Annex is at
126 Dorsey Road, Glen Burnie, MD
(Next to Monsignor Slade Catholic School)

Weather
Policy

Our fraternity gathering will be CANCELED whenever Anne Arundel County cancels school activities for that Saturday. Beyond that individuals should also trust their own judgement if conditions are unsafe for them. So if you are unstable on your feet, and wind is gusting at 50 mph, you should consider staying safely anchored at home.

Refreshments



Annapolis/Eastern Shore
Please remember to bring your coffee cup and appetite.

Prayer

Bowie/Crofton/Severna Park: LOH – Saturday, 1st Week of Ordinary Time

Program

Vision Questions/Discussion for 2025; ProLife Issues Sharing Jeanie and Genny

Prayer Requests



For comfort the family and soul of: Ginesa Madar, Joe McHugh's niece
For physical and spiritual healing of: Jude Dodge's niece (ICU), Catherine Gonzalez; mother (broken shoulder joint), Ruth's daughter Kate, Jessica (Ruth's friend), Monica's daughter, Dave Weir, Jude Dodge, Margaret Jackson, , Audrey Donnelly, Jerry Miente and Denise, Tessie Chitty, Jeanne Wilbourne, Michael Huether, Evelyn Jones' son Jimmy, Audrey Bushée, Lita Milan, Bill Chitty, Kathleen Sievers, Carole Marsh's sister, Harry Thompson, Jackie Chaplin (sister of Kathleen Sievers), Ed Sievers (Kathleen's husband), , Kellie Eye (granddaughter of Susan Greif), Evelyn Jones' niece, Jimmy Wilbourne, Gerard Malka (brother of Genny Wilbourne), Carolyn Malka (sister-in-law of Genny Wilbourne).

Birthdays

Tessie Chitty – 1/21
Fr. Patrick Monahan – 1/31
Kathleen Sievers – 2/10
Mary Jo Johnson – 2/10
Joan Kvetkas – 2/11
Linda Haney – 2/16

Profession
Anniversaries

Margaret Jackson – 2/8/1998

Council Meeting	Saturday, February 1 st weather permitting at 1:00pm at Tyrrell's home the Council annual planning session
Upcoming Events	Friday, January 24, at 11 A.M. -- Capuchin Mass for Life will be held in the Crypt Church of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. All are warmly invited to attend!
	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.



Minister's Minute

Dear Brothers and Sisters, The first snowfall brought great joy with the look of a winter wonderland. I can just see St. Francis walking through it with his head to the sky catching the snowflakes on his tongue like a child does. Some times we have to look above the circumstances, to see the beauty, the goodness of the people, the generosity and sacrifices made for the sake of others. There is a lot of that going on in LA and in the South. Let us continue to pray for all the suffering in those areas , their families and friends and for the hardworking volunteers serving there.

We hear in the testimonies of people who have lost their homes and their livelihoods the necessity to not only look at the present situation but to look to the future and to make practical plans with a vision for what can be. It's that time of the year when we as a fraternity think about our vision for this upcoming year. In the past the members have answered the questions below and then the Council has met to discuss and reflect with the grace of the Holy Spirit to come up with a plan for the gatherings this next year. Please pray, reflect and prepare to answer those questions at our January gathering and if you cannot attend please send the answers to me (judithtyrrellofs@gmail.com) Your answers are important to all of us.

The Capuchins will be having their Annual Mass for Life in the Crypt at the National Shrine at 11 am on the Day of the March for Life January 24th. Pat and I will be going to the Mass but then returning home to watch the March and talks on EWTN. If you would like to join us for the Mass please call for a ride 410-721-7308.

This month the fraternity has often reflected on Pro-Life themes and two of our Prolife advocates will be sharing with us. Please come listen to their updates.

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.?

LIBRARY OF CONRAD BOOK CLUB

Club meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, so this month meeting is on **Tuesday, January 21 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.

MJ PARKER'S *LITTLE FRIENDS FOR PEACE* <https://www.lffp.org/>

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.

Peace Tool Cards (with luck) will return next month. Technical issues have prevented me from including one in this copy of *The Porter*.



BROTHER CONNOR'S REFLECTION

Here is a copy of the guided meditations that Br. Connor used at our December gathering.

Guided Meditation: Putting Yourself in John's Shoes

As we begin this prayer, settle into a comfortable position. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Inhale slowly... and exhale deeply. Let the busyness of your day fade into the background. Imagine yourself stepping into a quiet, sacred space where the Lord is waiting to meet you.

In this stillness, invite the Holy Spirit to guide your imagination and open your heart.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Picture yourself as John of Greccio, living in a small, peaceful village surrounded by rolling hills and quiet forests. You are well-known and respected, but there is a stirring in your heart—a yearning for something more, something eternal. You've been chosen to follow the Lord as a Secular Franciscan.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Feel the weight of this calling. It is not easy to let go of the honors and comforts of the world, but deep in your soul, you know that the treasures of the spirit far outweigh earthly status. Each day, you try to open your heart to the Lord, waiting to hear His voice, ready to serve.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

One day, as you're going about your business, you hear a familiar voice. It's Francis, and his face is lit with joy. He calls your name and says:

"John, if you want to celebrate the Lord's birth together at Greccio, hurry ahead of me. I need you to prepare a special place—a space where we can bring the story of Christ's birth to life. I'll tell you what to do, and I trust you to carry it out."

Pause for a moment. How do you feel hearing Francis's words? Is there excitement? A sense of responsibility? Anticipation? You know this task is important—not just for Francis, but for everyone who will come to Greccio.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Now imagine yourself setting out to Greccio, your steps purposeful, your heart open to this special task. You gather hay, stones, and wood to create a stable, just as Francis described. Each action feels sacred, as if you are laying the groundwork for something holy.

Picture the scene coming together: a simple manger at the center, soft hay arranged with care, lanterns casting a warm glow. You pause, look around, and feel a deep peace settling in your heart. This is an ordinary place, but you sense that the Lord is near, preparing to reveal Himself in a profound way.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Take a moment to immerse yourself in the sights, sounds, and textures of this moment. Feel the crisp winter air against your skin, hear the rustle of hay in your hands, and see the stable slowly take shape. What emotions rise within you? Anticipation? Joy? A quiet reverence?

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Now picture Christmas Eve. The stable is ready, illuminated by the glow of candles and lanterns. People from the village gather around, their faces full of wonder and hope. Francis begins to proclaim the story of Christ's birth, and the air is filled with quiet awe.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Feel the cold of the winter air softened by the warmth of lanterns and the glow of faces gathered together. Sense the hush, as if creation itself is holding its breath for this holy revelation.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

As you soak in this moment, something extraordinary happens. Your eyes are drawn to the manger, and suddenly, you see the Babe of Bethlehem. At first, He lies still, as if lifeless. But then, Francis gently lifts Him from the manger, and He awakens.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

The Babe's eyes—vivid and filled with light—meet yours. They are deep and full of love, a love that calls you to the very core of your being. His gaze is not just of innocence, but of divine understanding, as though He knows every thought, every yearning within you. His eyes glisten with warmth and peace, and you feel an overwhelming wave of love and tenderness flood your heart.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

You sense the weight of His presence in the stillness, and in that moment, you understand that this Child, so small and fragile, is the Savior of the world. You feel His invitation, as if He is calling you to draw near, to trust Him more deeply than ever before.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Kneel before the Babe of Bethlehem. What emotions stir within you as you kneel before Him? Gratitude? Awe? Maybe even a quiet longing? What do you want to say to Him?

What gift can you offer from your own life? Is it a fear you need to release? A distraction you want to set aside? Or perhaps a hope you're longing to entrust to Him?

Ask the Child to help you prepare your heart this Advent, just as you prepared the stable at Greccio. Pray for the grace to welcome Him with humility and joy.

(Pause for 40 seconds)

Now take a deep breath. Slowly begin to let the scene of

Greccio fade as you return to this moment. Wiggle your fingers and toes, and when you're ready, gently open your eyes.

TREASURER'S REPORT – JOE MCHUGH

Thank you for your continuing generosity !!!

November Balance		\$4,612.45
FFA Stipend	(\$100)	\$4,512.45
SA Stipend	(\$100)	\$4,412.45
Fraternity SA Christmas	(\$150)	\$4,262.45
Phoenix - Denise	(\$1,068)	\$3,194.45
Tokens - Denise	(\$1,063)	\$2,131.45
December Deposit/ Balance	\$2,555.00	\$4,686.45

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 Mianta

Phoenix Backpacks: Filled 24 bags on Wednesday, December 18th. Next bag-filling date is set for January 15 or 22. Denise could also use some help with shopping. Contact her for more details.

Light House Shelter Lunches: Made 50 sandwiches on Thursday December 26th at Catherine's and Paul's. Next scheduled sandwich-making is on Thursday, January 20th. Final location TBD – either the Gonzalez or Tyrrell home.

Shelter Bus Passes: Bought and delivered 200 all-day bus passes to the Lighthouse Shelter on December 26th.

ST. ANGELA OF FOLIGNO, WIDOW, THIRD ORDER SECULAR – from Joan Faltot

b. c1248 in Foligno (in Umbria) -- d. January 3, 1309. Tomb: church of St. Francis in Foligno, Italy

Beatified July 11, 1701 by Pope Clement XI. On October 9, 2013, Pope Francis declared her a saint by equipollent canonization, recognizing the validity of the long-standing veneration of her (without executing the ordinary judicial process of canonization).

Feast Day: January 4. January 7 in the United States. Patron of those afflicted by sexual temptation, widows

Angela was born into a wealthy family, probably married early and had several children. By her own report, she had loved the world and its pleasures. Details of the pleasures are not stated in her biographies online; however, as a patron saint of those afflicted by sexual temptation, one can assume she might have been the jet-setter of her age. However, around the age of 40, she had a vision of Francis of Assisi and came to recognize the emptiness of her life and so began her conversion. Around age 43 (c1291) her mother died, and a few months later so did her husband and children. She began to divest herself of her possessions and lived as a penitent. She joined the Third Order of St. Francis and placed herself under the direction a Franciscan friar Br. Arnoldo who also served as her confessor and is probably the same "Bro. A" who transcribed her *Memoriale in Latin*.

Angela is said to have received mystical revelations which are published in *Il Libro della Beata Angela da Foligno*. The history of her conversion is described in *Book of Visions and Instructions*. The Memorial containing these two books was finished by 1298 and received the approval of Cardinal James of Colonna and eight Friars Minor.

Prior to her death in 1309 she established at Foligno a community of other women tertiaries, who added to the Rule of the Third Order a commitment to a common life without, however, binding themselves to enclosure, so that they might devote their lives to works of charity.

Visions and mystical revelations continued up to her death when she had a vision of Christ appearing to her and promising to come personally to take her to heaven. During her life she was recognized as a mystic and spiritual

teacher. Maximilian van der Sandt, of the Society of Jesus, referred to her as the "'Teacher of Theologians', whose whole doctrine has been drawn out of the Book of Life, Jesus Christ, Our Lord"

FORMATION FRIDAY: DECEMBER 27, 2024

From Rita Colleran, OFS, Regional Formation Director

2025—Time to Examine our Love and Commitment

- **CONVERSION: the letting go of one's ego..."**
- **One is dying to a false self that tries to BE God, that tries to always be in control."**
- **This is a reversal, a "TURNING TOWARD" the Holy Spirit at work within us.**
--*Francis and Jesus by Murray Bodo, OFM*

+What can I do to make some beneficial changes in my attitude about fraternity and fraternal life?

1-Prayerfully participate in electing and supporting my local Council.

- Pray for them every day.
- Use my God-given talents to collaborate on and assist with all projects

+ What are some ways I can support my Council?

+ Do I have talents and abilities that call me to serve on the Council?

2- Love my fraternity

- Be present at gatherings.
- Listen to my brothers and sisters.
- Offer to help out.
- Reach out to excused members or to anyone who has missed a meeting. (Phone, email, card).
- Pray for our deceased members and for all those listed on your fraternity prayer list or prayer line
- Take note that for Franciscans, fraternity is a way of life (not just another "thing to do").

+What talents do I have to offer my fraternity?

+Do I participate willingly in fraternity activities?

3- Love our Rule

- Be sure that I am aware of what I promised at profession.
- Read, pray and meditate on the Rule—perhaps one or two articles each day.
- Think about how the Rule leads me closer to Christ.

+When was the last time I read the Rule?

+Do I make the effort to relate the Rule to my everyday life?

4- Love Scripture

- Be aware that St. Francis based everything he said or wrote on Scripture.
- Resolve to read a little Scripture each day.
- Pray the Liturgy of the Hours because it helps us to pray in fraternity (with the entire Church) and is filled with Scripture.

+How can I make time to read Scripture every day, or most days?+ How would I explain "Going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel," it to someone new or to a non-Secular Franciscan? (What examples can I give of how I do this?)

5- Strive for daily conversion

- Welcome the Holy Spirit into our hearts to help us to change for the better each day.

- Make use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
 - Remember that we are the “Brothers and Sisters of Penance.”
- +Do I review my actions and relationship with God each day? (What methods do you use?)
 +How have I changed since I first became a Franciscan? How have I changed since last week?

BEST FOR LAST:

6- Love the Eucharist and be changed by it

- Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy days and every day if I can
 - Take advantage of opportunities for Adoration—holy hours or just a visit to the tabernacle
- +What is my relationship to Jesus in the Eucharist?
 +Do I often visit with Jesus when there is an opportunity to attend Adoration?

As we enter 2025, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in everything you do!

2025: OPENING OF THE EIGHTH CENTENARY OF THE CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES

In 2025, we will celebrate the 800th anniversary of the composition of the Canticle of the Creatures. In the spring of 1225, shortly after his experience at La Verna, St. Francis of Assisi chose to spend fifty days at the Monastery of San Damiano, where St. Clare and the first Poor Sisters lived.

During his stay at San Damiano, Francis had been suffering through a night of pain caused by his illnesses, when he was visited by the Lord, who reassured him of His love and salvation. This event led Francis to compose the hymn of praise and thanksgiving to God that we all know.

As with the past 800th anniversary events, this year there will again be a celebration involving the entire Franciscan Family to officially kick off the centenary.

The celebration will begin at the Church of San Damiano in Assisi, at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 11, 2025. It will continue, that same morning, at the Bishop’s Palace - Sanctuary of the Spoliation [Church of Santa Maria Maggiore], where it will end later that morning.

Both parts of the celebration will be available for online viewing, while those wishing to attend in person may choose either location. In both sanctuaries, the other part of the celebration will be projected on a screen for attendees. The event starts at the location where St. Francis composed most of the Canticle of the Creatures and praised God for all His creatures. It concludes at the place where Francis’ verse about forgiveness resonates, inviting others to chant with him: “Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love.”

To follow the celebration online, go to: <https://www.centenarifrancescani.org/>
 The website will also offer downloadable booklets containing the text of the celebration in various languages.



This event occurred today as we are preparing to send this newsletter; it only arrived in Judith’s inbox yesterday in the late afternoon. This link is to YouTube primarily in Italian; the show starts just before the 13-minute point. https://www.youtube.com/live/E_KP1PK6OXo
 We will send the Regional Minister’s email about this to you so you can read a 12-page English translation of the event.

INTERCESSIONS FOR LITURGY OF THE HOURS

The following intercessions for the Liturgy of the Hours were prepared by the Commission for the Cause of the Saints for use in individual prayer or during fraternal meetings and forwarded to us by Isabella Di Paola, General Secretary CIOFS (Consilium Internationale Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis). Check out the International OFS site at: <https://ciofs.info/>

	Morning Prayer	Evening Prayer
Sunday	<i>You, Father of mercy, who called us to live according to evangelical penance following the example of St. Francis of Assisi,</i> – grant that by careful listening to your Word, we may go from the Gospel to life and life to the Gospel (cf. OFS Rule, art. 4).	<i>In every age, you, Father, have called people to holiness in communion with the Church,</i> – grant that, moved by the Holy Spirit, we may commit ourselves through our Profession to live the Gospel by observing the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order approved by the Church (cf. OFS Constitution, art. 1.1).
Monday	<i>You who in baptism united us to the death and resurrection of Christ and made us living members of the Church,</i> – make us witnesses of the Risen One and instruments of the Church’s mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by our life and words (cf. OFS Rule, art. 6).	<i>You, Lord, have given us words of eternal life in Jesus Christ our Savior,</i> – grant that in the spirit of the Beatitudes, we may free our hearts from every tendency of greed, possession and power (cf. OFS Rule, art. 11).
Tuesday	<i>You who call us to be conformed to Christ as “brothers and sisters of penance,” through our profession of the gospel life,</i> – grant that on our road to conversion, we may daily seek to overcome our human frailty and not become discouraged by lack of trust (cf. OFS Rule, art. 7).	<i>You Lord, who have always called to evangelical penance, as you did with Elizabeth of Hungary our Patroness,</i> – raise up new Franciscan vocations through the action of the Holy Spirit and the witness of the brothers and sisters (cf. OFS Constitution, art. 45.1).
Wednesday	<i>You who in Jesus taught us to worship you in Spirit and in truth along the roads of our lives,</i> – grant that we may make prayer and contemplation the soul of all we are and all we do (cf. OFS Rule, art. 8).	<i>You, Lord of creation, made marriage the foundation of the human community and a sacramental sign,</i> – grant that husbands and wives find in the Secular Franciscan Order a valuable aid in their own journey of the Christian life (cf. OFS Constitution, art. 24).
Thursday	<i>You who in the Eucharistic banquet have given us the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ to nourish us on our journey,</i> – grant that each one of us and our fraternities find in the celebration of the Holy Mass the source and summit of our whole life (cf. OFS Constitution, art. 14.2).	<i>You, Holy Father, call us to be bearers of peace in our families and society and build a just and fraternal world and a civilization, in which the dignity of the human person is at the foundation,</i> – grant that, following the example of St. Louis of France, our Patron, we assume social and civil responsibilities with a spirit of service (cf. OFS Constitution, art. 18.1 and 20.2).
Friday	<i>You who never tire of calling us to conversion,</i> – grant that we may always follow the poor and crucified Christ witnessing the love of the Father, source of joyful reconciliation, even in difficulties and persecutions (cf. OFS Rule, art. 10).	<i>You call some to live with private vows to help the spiritual and apostolic development of our Order,</i> – grant that these brothers and sisters commit themselves to live in the spirit of the Beatitudes and to make themselves more disposed to contemplation and to the service of the fraternities (cf. OFS Constitution, art. 36.1).
Saturday	<i>You who, in the Virgin Mary -- ever docile to your Word and your will -- have given us under the cross a Mother and an Advocate,</i> – grant that, in imitation of her unconditional availability, we may offer her an ardent and indescribable love, as did Saint Francis (cf. OFS Rule, art. 9).	<i>Father, your Son Jesus Christ has opened heaven to us by his death and Resurrection,</i> --welcome into your kingdom our departed Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters so that they come to enjoy your eternal reward.