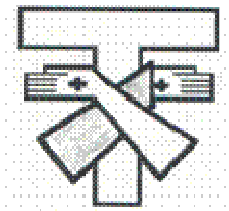


The Porter

St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, MD
Secular Franciscan Order – December 2023
http://stconradannapolis.sfousa.org/

The Porter deadline for next issue is January 11th. **Please send news, events, prayer requests, poems, or any interesting items** that you think other members may enjoy to: Joan Faltot, 8217 Grainfield Rd, Severn, MD 21144, or send by email to jd6bouv@verizon.net.

Fraternity Gathering	**Saturday, December 16, 2023** **Gather in the Parish Office (old Convent) following Mass at 8:30 AM** **St. John the Evangelist** **689 Ritchie Highway, Severna Park, Md. 21146** **Remember: There is a men's group in the Parish Office prior to the 8:30 am Mass. Fraternity members should avoid entering the Parish Office until after the 8:30 am Mass.**
Outreach	**Apostleship of the Sea – Plastic shoeboxes.** See page 3 for details
Refreshments	***Please remember to bring your coffee cup and appetite.*** **Christmas Potluck. Everyone is encouraged to bring food or drink to share**
Prayer	**Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming for Dianne Beaven** *Additional prayer will be incorporated into our program on Greccio. You can leave your LOH book at home but please bring your Ritual book.*
Program	Celebrating the 800th Anniversary Christmas of At Greccio 1223-2023
Prayer Requests	***For physical and spiritual healing of:*** Audrey Donnelly, Jeanne Wilbourne, Michael Huether, Evelyn Jones' son Jimmy, Audrey Bushée, Lita Milan, Bill Chitty, Jerry Miante, Kathleen Sievers, Jude Dodge, Carole Marsh's sister, Harry Thompson, Jackie Chaplin (sister of Kathleen Sievers), Gertrude Shelton (Marie's mom), Ed Sievers (Kathleen's husband), Evelyn Jones, Tessie Chitty, 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) ***(Please help update this list by sending changes/additions/ deletions to jd6bouv@verizon.net)***
Birthdays	Dennis Mallon – 12/17 George Ryan – 01/07 Marie Shelton – 12/26
Profession Anniversaries	Sorry, missed two in *The* Porter last month: Susan Greif – 11/15/1997 Jude Dodge – 11/18/2017 Santa Ragot – 12/14/1980 Harry Thompson 01/10/1991 Lita Millan – 01/10/2002
Council Meeting	Friday, January 5, at 7:00 pm via Zoom
Upcoming	**February 24, 2024. Day of Reflection for Inquirers.**

Events	Franciscan Monastery in DC. Fr. Stephen King will present "Living a Penitential Life." Cost is $50 which includes lunch. See Denise Miante if would like to attend. **September 6-8, 2024. 2024 Chapter of Mats.** Claggett Center, 3035 Buckeystown Pike, Adamstown, MD 21710

Minister's Minute:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our fraternity is looking forward to the celebration of Greccio this month as we gather together and thank God for the gift that Francis has given to the Church--the Creche created and remembered in countries all over the world. The display at the Franciscan Monastery (until January 7) is even larger than ever extending into three rooms and don't forget the wooden portrayal of St. Francis in the crèche near his altar. Confessions too.

See also The Greccio meditation that follows in the Porter or the Greccio info at SecularFranciscansUSA.org in order to spend time that is so precious before the Lord preparing our hearts to welcome HIM in. Remember our Prayer Partners 2023 prayer card--La Creche, la Croix, l'Eucharistie- Crib, the Cross and the Eucharist--"The Bread of heaven came down to earth to feed the hungry (Cyril of Jerusalem). We will begin anew in 2024 with new vision, new prayer partners, and will make our annual donations in January.

We welcome Jesus in when we welcome Him in the poor and needy, the stranger and the immigrant, the sad and sorrowing, the sick and the suffering, the elderly and lonely, too. So many of you reach out and share His love in so many ways. In Ch 9 Looking for Francis Today p137 it is quoted: "Francis and his brothers were to be images of Christ reminding people constantly of how the incarnate God had lived in this life within human flesh." We are grateful for David Weir who has shared his story of his work with St. Vincent de Paul in the Porter and who has requested transfer and been accepted by our Council into our fraternity. We will be Welcoming Dianne Beaven (along with Dave) on Saturday.+

Rule 19: Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others."

Please note Brother Connor's suggestion below starting tomorrow night Dec. 12th- Christmas with The Chosen: Holy Night- a film about the Nativity showing in theaters until at least Dec 17th.

Pax et bonum, Judith

I would like to let everybody know about **Christmas with The Chosen: Holy Night** - a beautiful film about the Nativity of Christ which is coming to theaters on December 12 until at least Dec 17th . Tickets and information are available at: https://www.fathomevents.com/events/christmas-with-the-chosen-2023/

Yours in Christ,
Brother Connor

TREASURER'S REPORT – JOE MCHUGH

Thank you for your continuing generosity ! ! !

October Balance			$3,494.45
FFA Stipend	($100.00)		$3,394.45
SA Stipend	($100.00)		$3,294.45
St. John's Stipend	($100.00)		$3,194.45
KOC @ St. John's	($100.00)		$3,094.45
Deposit		$1,025.00	
November Balance			$4109.45

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 Miante

Phoenix Backpacks: Filled 20 bags on Wednesday, November 15 at 10:00 in the school cafeteria. Staff is helping us again this year but with fewer people. THANKS to Catherine who helps me shop and Joe who helps us pack!!. Next Bag filling is scheduled for Wedesday, Dec 20 – same place and time.
Light House Shelter Lunches: Made 50 sandwiches on Thursday, October 26th. Thanks to Catherine and Paul for being the perfect hosts. Next scheduled sandwich-making is on **Thursday, December 28th, at 9:45** at Catherine's home.
Shelter Bus Passes: Will purchase and deliver 200 passes in December – probably at the sandwich delivery time.

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 16. 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 stiff 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. 16th 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.

SERVING THE POOR WITH SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

from Dave Weir, ofs

In September, 2022, I went to Mass at St. Bernadette's Church on Stevenson Road and learned about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Several members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul gave a presentation after Mass. After explaining what they do, one of the members concluded by saying "We need help". They asked that anyone who might be interested meet with the members in the back of the church after Mass. After hearing the member ask for help, I felt prompted to go to the back of the church and speak with them. I was invited to attend the next meeting, which took place the following Thursday evening at the Christ the King Pastoral Center, 126 Dorsey Road, Glen Burnie.

I found the members of the St. Josephine Bakhita conference, St. Vincent de Paul Society, to be very caring, spiritual people who are very sincere and strongly dedicated to helping the poor. They answer the calls that come into the Pastoral Center requesting financial support to avoid eviction, electricity or water shut off, and food deliveries. Sometimes a conference call is made to the neighbor by two members, but most of the time two members go to the home of the neighbor for a visit. If the neighbor needs food, the members bring food to the neighbor. During the visit, the members pray with the neighbor, review the neighbor's financial situation, provide information about various types of assistance that are available, and make suggestions on ways to handle the current crisis so that hopefully the neighbor will not find himself or herself in the same situation in the future. The members then make a recommendation to the group as to whether financial assistance should be offered to the neighbor. The recommendation is almost always a positive one.

For approximately one year, I have been answering all of the calls that are received at the Christ the King Pastoral Center on Wednesdays. I usually answer between five and ten calls and then log those calls into the ServWare database. I have been on numerous home visits and almost always find the neighbors to be very welcoming and appreciative that we are there to visit them. Sometimes it is assumed that people requesting financial and other assistance are in the situation in which they find themselves because they don't work. I have found that this is not usually the case. I have found that the majority of the cases involve people who work hard, but don't make enough money to be able to have savings to cover a period of unemployment caused by injury, illness, reduction in hours, or loss of employment. They need a helping hand to recover from an unfortunate situation and help them get back on their feet financially. The last fiscal year, 898 telephone calls were received, 338 households were helped, and 655 bags of groceries were distributed.

Since September of 2022, there have been three occasions that we had to stop making home visits and conference calls to neighbors requesting assistance. The down time only lasted a few weeks or so. We depend solely on donations to financially assist neighbors in trouble.

If anyone would like to contribute to the St. Josephine Bakhita conference, please make your check out to Society of St. Vincent de Paul and then on the memo line write St. Josephine Bakhita Conference. Mail your donation to Christ the King Catholic Church, 126 Dorsey Road, Glen Burnie, MD. 21061. Thank you for your generosity. (Or give your check to Dave Weir at the fraternity meeting.)

Saint Josephine Bakhita
Sudanese saint and former slave
ca 1869 – 8 February 1947

A Franciscan Reflects on Celano's Greccio 1223 Christmas

Anonymous Franciscan

After reading Celano's account of St. Francis' vision for a replica of Christ's birthplace (His nursery & first home) for midnight Mass at Greccio, Italy in 1223, I had several questions. Why was the scene so bare? Where were the people, especially Mary & St. Joseph?

A gentle voice spoke to my heart, "It contains only the most important elements.

The Stable/Animal Shelter is You/your heart; it is where Jesus wants to be born. I know you are far from perfect and will provide minimum shelter from the world outside but My original home was in a similar state. The openness of the animal shelter was important – it provided easy access between Me and the world – I wanted nothing to keep us apart.

The Ox represents the everyday mundane burdens/chores of your life that you carry in your heart.

The Donkey, because he carried Mary & Baby Jesus from Nazareth to Bethlehem & from there to Egypt, represents the spiritual/religious portion of your life carried in your heart. I want so much to be a part of your whole life – not just the spiritual/religious.

The Straw/The Hay, My original bed, provided food & bedding for the animals & stuffed mattresses and had other uses for the townsfolk. The bed is empty because I await your invitation to enter. My great desire/My goal was, and still is, to provide for all the needs of My people – the mundane, everyday "stuff" as well as the spiritual/religious portions of your life, and for the needs of all of creation."

Will you invite Me in? – I can't enter without being invited.

Will you ask Me to stay with you every day for the rest of your life? – for this I long.

Will you bring Me to others that I may provide for their needs, too?

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

I-Care Language

What we say and how we say it matters. Using I-Care language lets people know that you care about them and their feelings.

Examples

- *I like you*
- *Can I help you?*
- *Please*
- *Thank you*
- *Do you want to join us?*
- *Let's be friends!*
- *You're awesome!*

Little FRIENDS for PEACE **Peace Tool Card** *Kindness*

For more, visit www.lffp.org.

Be a Bucket Filler!

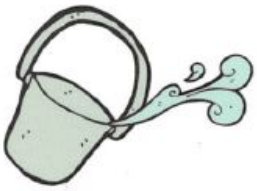
"One kind word can change someone's entire day."
- Unknown Author

We all have invisible buckets above our heads. Kind words and actions fill our buckets and make us happy, but negative thoughts and actions tip our buckets and leave us feeling sad.

Bucket Fillers

I like you
You are awesome
I care about you
I think you are wonderful

Bucket Tippers



I don't like you
You are annoying
You are not my friend
I don't care about you

Little FRIENDS for PEACE **Peace Tool Card** *Kindness*

For more, visit www.lffp.org.