



St. Padre Pio Press

December, 2020

December Meetings

Our December meeting will take place via Zoom on Sunday, December 13 at 12:15 PM. We will be talking about the Eucharist and JPIC (Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation). This is from a lesson taught by Patricia Grace, OFS. It is in your current issue of the Joy of St. Francis which you should have received if your email is current with Region. It was fascinating and I hope our discussion will lead us closer to Our Lord as He comes closer to us in this Advent Season. For those who may have missed it, I will attempt to put her article in our newsletter. If you are not receiving the regional newsletter, let me know and I will try to get it to you.

The council will meet via Zoom on Sunday, December 13 at 11:00 AM.

Baby Shower for Jesus



Please remember that we have our annual Baby Shower for Jesus to benefit Veronica's Home of Mercy this month. Usually we give needed items, but because of that awful virus, we cannot do that this year. In interests of safety, we ask you to send any amount of money you would have spent on items to Denise Leslie who will see that it is deposited and will notify our treasurer of the amount so that we can send it on to the home. This is separate from the Change for Charity fund.

Las Cartas



Reflection—Fear Not

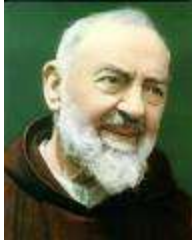
Sometimes we are afraid to do certain things that God has called us to do. It may

involve helping others when we believe that we are too tired to do so. Or, it may mean taking care of someone when we are anxious and fearful of their illness. Simply, we may not want to do something that God is calling us to do, especially when it takes us out of our comfort zone. It is normal to be afraid of things that are unknown and unexpected. During this Advent season, we are called to submit ourselves to prayer and to ask our Lord to help us when our connection to Him is lacking. As Franciscans, we are called to pray at all times. Remember the Word that gives us direction, "Be strong, do not fear." (Isaiah 35:4) God gives us what is lacking in ourselves, and He is aware of our weaknesses, faults, and imperfections. God has provided us with strength, goodness, and fortitude despite what we know we lack. During this Advent season, God calls us to reach out to Him and to ask our Lord to help us persevere. This time of the pandemic has kept us separated from our Franciscan community, but we know that God is always standing at our side. The Word states, "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be firm, steadfast, and always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." (1 Corinthians: 15-58)

Peace and All Good, Janet Serros, OFS, Minister

Word from Padre Pio:

"Walk cheerfully and with a sincere and open heart as much as you can, and when you cannot, always maintain this holy joy, at least do not lose heart or your trust in God."



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JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Regional J.P.I.C. Animator Patricia Grace, OFS

The Eucharist and JPIC

Like many converts from Protestantism to Catholicism, it was my clear and abiding belief in the real presence of Christ that brought me into the Church now nearly twenty years ago. I was an active Protestant, active in Christian education committees, teaching Sunday and Bible School, serving as lector, enlivening mission projects. But, on Saturday evenings, in my small town in Pennsylvania, I would find myself at St. Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Church, processing with others, to stand before the real presence of my Lord and Savior Jesus. With arms folded, I would receive a blessing, and then kneel to pray through and connect with the powerful currents running through my being. I knew I had received spiritually the true body and blood of our Lord. Finally, then, I entered RCIA and was received into the Church. Then, and now, I can receive Him physically. Praise be to God.

The Eucharist is our most powerful prayer. There we stand before Him humbly and in awe, reflecting on the enduring beauty of this gift of grace given to us by our most merciful and generous

Lord. We receive him and rededicate ourselves to never being separated from Him.

By the time you read this, dear sisters and brothers in Christ and in St. Francis, we will have gathered on November 14 to reflect upon the presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, and His unwavering devotion to us, calling us to be unwavering in our faithfulness to Him. We will have prayed through the four-fold pattern of the Eucharist – how our Lord took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His disciples gathered with Him in the upper room. We will have reflected on how we, too, are taken, blessed, broken, and given. For those of you not present, let us reflect together with those who were present on the call of the Eucharist.

We are “taken” at our baptism, and then again at our profession when we commit before God to live the Gospel way of life. We are “blessed.” Each of us was created, loved, and called into being by our Lord. Each of us was sent on a mission of love. Our work is to discern that mission for which we were sent, to embrace it, and fulfill it. God gives us the grace to do so. Each of us is “broken.” Indeed, we are broken by life. But, for our purposes here, it is instructive to consider what breaks our hearts? The unborn? The homeless? The elderly? The degradation of the environment, the unchecked desire for power that keeps wars raging? The refugees on the planet seeking safety? What breaks our hearts so wide so that the love God has poured into it can be poured out for the sake of the world?

We know we are “given.” Our Lord called each of us. St. Francis heard the call and followed. He then called all of us to join him in creating our Order that celebrates 800 years of presence in the world. We are nurtured and sustained by the words of our Beloved Saint Francis, “Who I am

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before God, that I am and nothing else.” Let us pray together to follow Jesus as St. Francis taught us. Let us then help each other as we journey forward, praying and working for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation.

Sending many blessings to all of you. Peace and All Good.

The article above is the lesson given by Patricia Grace at the last JPIC meeting. **Please read it carefully as it is our ongoing formation for December.** Patricia speaks of the Eucharist, how Our Lord took it, broke it, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples. The operative words are taken, blessed, broken, and given. The question we will be considering is, **“What breaks our hearts?...What breaks our heart so wide that the love of god has poured into it and can be poured out for the sake of the world?”** Even though we have a fraternal commitment to Respect Life, we each may have some other cause that is the one that personally breaks our heart. Please reflect on it and be ready to discuss in small group discussion. For example, is the unborn, the elderly, the homeless, the environment, the poor, the children of the world, the immigrant, or other issues? It is alright to have different personal areas where we are called to work. There is so much to be done in this world, and if we all do the same job, so much else that needs attention will be neglected. Jesus fills us with the Eucharist, and as part of our mission we live a life that reflects His love and concern for His little ones in this world. This was published in the winter edition of the Joy of St. Francis for those of you who receive it. I put it in our newsletter so that all of us could join in reflecting on the connection between the Eucharist and our mission to live as Jesus lived and to take care of our world and those in it. Dixie

A Prayer for Guidance

*Lord Jesus, may everything I do begin with You, continue with your help,
and be done under your guidance.*

*May my sharing in the Mass free me from my sins, and make me worthy of
Your healing.*

*May I grow in Your Love and Your service, and become a pleasing offering
to You, and with you to Your Father.*

May the mystery I celebrate help me to reach eternal life with you.



Sick Call

Betty Sonderman: Denise reports that Betty is doing much better. Praise God! Please keep praying for her.

Barbara Turkowski: At church last week I learned that Barbara's family at home are all recovering from Covid 19. Her husband Tom was hospitalized at the VA with Covid 19 and pneumonia. As of last Sunday, there was optimism that he could be returned home to his family, but the family is still in need of prayer.

Our minister, Janet Serros is ill at home. Please keep her in prayer.

Please Pray



Betty Sonderman, car accident and Covid 19-
Pray for healing and a return to independence
Julie Bash

Maureen Smith
Edison Marshall

Joe Leslie
Jan Parker, OFS
Gudelia and her family

Berta's son
For all suffering from fires, flooding, and
extreme weather

For all with the Coronavirus
For those who are struggling financially
For a vaccine for Covid 19

Louis Velasquez, Jr.

For the end to abortion

Margaret Sheppard and family—Dixie's sister-
in-law and nieces. Healing from Coronavirus.

Janet Serros

Barbara and Tom Turkowski and family



Saints' Corner St. Juan Diego



Juan Diego was first named Cuauhtlatohuac which means the eagle who speaks. His name is linked forever with Our Lady of Guadalupe because she first appeared to him at Tepeyac hill on December 9, 1531.

When Our Lady spoke to Juan Diego, she did so in his native language rather than the Spanish language. He was visited by Mary who was surrounded in heavenly light. She asked him to tell the bishop to build a shrine to her on the hill. However, the bishop did not believe Juan Diego and asked him for proof of the vision. On December 12th, while trying to find a priest to administer last rights to his uncle, he was again visited by Mary. He told her of the bishop's answer, and she had him gather roses and take them to the bishop as a sign. She also told him that his uncle would get better. Juan Diego found many roses on the hill, though it was winter. He put them in his tilma (cloak) and took them to the bishop. When he appeared before the bishop, dozens of roses fell out and an image of Mary was found to be imprinted in the inside of his cloak. The bishop ordered that the church be built on Tepeyac Hill in honor of the Blessed Mother. Juan Diego upon returning home, found that his uncle's health was restored. For the rest of his life, he lived in a hut next to the church caring for the pilgrims. He is buried in the shrine, and his tilma can be seen in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. He lived a life of humbleness and showed Christ's love by example. He was beatified on May 6, 1990, and canonized on July 31, 2002.

December Birthdays



- 9 Julie Bash
- 10 Denise Leslie
- 12 Germaine Thompson
- 13 Jane Wurzel

Anniversaries of Profession



- 12/18/90 Mary Pluegar

Change for Charity



Our Change for Charity fund is very low. This money is divided between a leper colony begun by a Secular Franciscan, a Seminarian, and Veronica's home of Mercy. Times are hard and if you have nothing to share at this time, don't worry. However, even your little pennies from Heaven would help. You may send them to Denise Leslie. Checks should be made out to the fraternity and the donation should be clearly marked as to the fund for which it is designated. Jesus will bless you. Denise's contact information was sent out. For those of you without computers, I will try (old brain) to remember to include it in the newsletter I mail to you. God bless you all.