

Lent

Prayer, Fasting &
Almsgiving



The San Damiano Cross



Attributions: [St Francis of Assisi, Cigoli, 1599](#)

The Cord

March, 2023

Newsletter of the San Luis Rey
Secular Franciscan Fraternity

Monthly Gatherings: 2nd Sundays

March Gatherings:

General Gathering:

March 12:

**10:00am Mass at San Luis Rey Mission
Church**

**11:30am BYO box lunch at Mission Retreat
Center Refreshment Lounge**

* * *

12:30pm Prayer in Mission St. Clare Chapel

**1:00 to 3:00 pm General Monthly Gathering
Room TBD and on Zoom (link [here](#))**

Vespers: No Vespers in March

Next Month General Gathering:

3rd Sunday

April 16, 2023

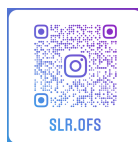
Login for All Zooms:

www.zoom.us Click on: **Join a Meeting**

Meeting ID: 760 726 2486 Password: 1798

Contact us via our website [Contact Page](#)

Mission San Luis Rey
4050 Mission Avenue
Oceanside, CA 92057



Minister's Note for March – Professions!

On Saturday, February 4th, the San Luis Rey Fraternity welcomed four new sisters into the Secular Franciscan Order: Gina Martinot Quinn OFS (sponsored by Liz Mavis OFS), Carolyn Brock OFS (sponsored by Connie Collins OFS), Linda Gossett OFS (sponsored by Barbara Kaylor OFS), and Pamela McArthur OFS (sponsored by Carol Imhoff OFS). The Profession was held at the Mission San Luis Rey historic church and featured a communion service celebrated by Dcn. James Seiffert, OFM. Many, many thanks especially to our Director of Formation, Jan DeSpain OFS, for her guidance and support of these newly professed as well as Sr. Madeline Fitzgerald, our Spiritual Assistant.



From left to right: Laura Chun OFS – Minister, Jan DeSpain OFS – Director of Formation, Sr. Madeline Fitzgerald OSC – Spiritual Assistant, Gina Martinot Quinn OFS, Carolyn Brock OFS, Linda Gossett OFS, and Pamela McArthur OFS. Photography by Tuan Cao, OFS.

As professed members of the Secular Franciscan Order we had the beautiful opportunity to see our own professions in a new and vibrant way. There is so much grace! You can read more about Profession, and stir up the grace within us animated though our own professions [here](#).

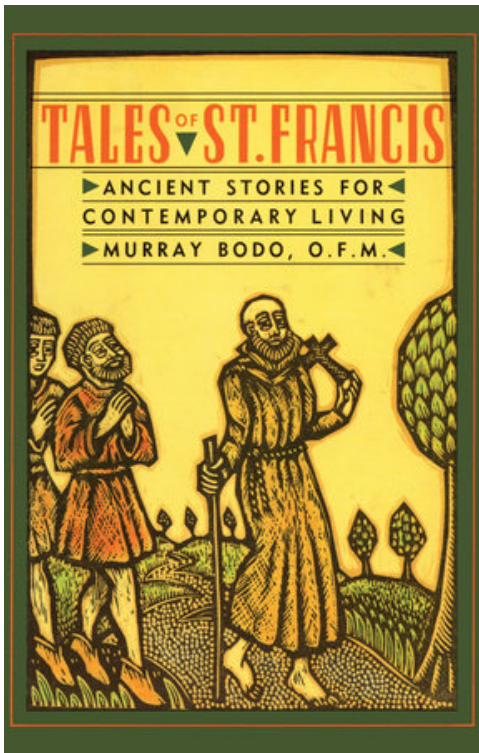
“Lord, watch over these your servants: Gina, Carolyn, Linda, and Pamela. May the Spirit of your love penetrate their hearts, so that your grace will strengthen them to keep their commitment to the gospel life.” (Ritual II,30)

Pace e Bene -
Laura

Laura Chun, OFS, Minister, San Luis Rey Fraternity



Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving...



Words that we've heard before... and we get the chance each Lent to consider them anew. Murry Bodo, OFM, shares a Franciscan story that resonates with me especially during Lent. This story is about fasting, of course, but also about compassion:

There was a time at the very beginning when Francis and his brothers lived at a place near Assisi called Rivo Torto...At Rivo Torto they fasted and did penance with all the enthusiasm and sometimes the imprudence of novices in the life of the Spirit, as the following story shows. One night, as they all lay sleeping soundly, a loud cry broke into their dreams: "I am dying! I am dying! Help me!"

And the brothers, startled for their sleep, saw St. Francis already at the side of the terrified brother. "What is it, brother? Tell me." And though he was now embarrassed, the brother overcame shame and said: "Forgive me, Father Francis; but I am dying of hunger."

Then St. Francis immediately ordered the brothers to light a torch and go out and gather some herbs and vegetables and whatever else they could find for all of them to have a good, nourishing meal. He said this so that the poor brother would not have to be humiliated by eating alone. And so all the brothers set themselves eagerly to the task of preparing a meal and then they all sat down with the hungry brother and ate a midnight supper.

Fr. Murray Bodo shares a lesson inspired by this story. He asks us to distinguish between moderation and excess. Murray Bodo advised that we mature in our relationship with God when we let God come and go as God wills and not try to force things with an exaggerated penance.

It would seem to me that Francis showed so much compassion to the hungry friar. To share in a meal so the friar would not be embarrassed. To not hold his own penance up as a model or by 'virtual signaling...' but by meeting the young, hungry friar where he was and ensuring – he was no longer hungry. Perhaps this Lent as we fast – we can do what we can to ensure that others have something to eat.

Pace e bene -
Laura

Laura Chun, OFS, Minister,
San Luis Rey Fraternity



The History of the Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross devotion commemorates the Passion and Crucifixion of Christ with art and prayers. Along the way, a series of events happened. In the centuries following the Resurrection, Christians began to walk, and look for signs of that fateful day. The Via Dolorosa or “the way of suffering” or “the sorrowful way” as it was known. Over time, miniature shrines were established for devotions, but the practice remained small and localized but was not popular until the Franciscans came upon the scene.

In 1217, Francis of Assisi sent missionaries of his brotherhood to minister in Egypt and visited the Holy Land himself. In 1219, during the crusades, the Franciscans encountered the devotion and were naturally moved by the highly sensory and incarnational prayer bringing it back to their own local churches. By this time, the Franciscans were about 5,000 men spread throughout much of Europe and when they brought the devotion back from the Holy Land, it spread fast. Over the next few centuries, the practice became mostly exclusive with the Franciscans.

In 1342, Pope Clement VI made the Franciscans the official custodians of the holy places, meaning that many disparate devotions that had developed in the area over time were unified under one command of leadership, and the devotion took on an official character for the Franciscan charism all around the world.

In 1686, Pope Innocent XI granted the order permission to erect representative stations of the Holy Land devotion at their churches, extending the indulgence of going on pilgrimage to any Franciscan Church. This was a huge step for the Franciscans at the time. St Leonard of Port Lawrence erected 500 representations in his lifetime solidifying it as an essentially Franciscan devotion. People around Europe travelled to Franciscan Churches to receive the indulgence.

That was until 1731, when Pope Clement XII extended the practice allowing any church in the world to establish this practice provided it was blessed by the Franciscans. Now everyone in the world could enjoy the so-called Franciscan devotion. The stations are not an explicitly biblical practice because it grew from many customs over a period of time. At the time, there were different practices with as few as 7 stations while others as many as 37 stations. This is when Clement officially fixed the number of stations to 14 that we enjoy today.

In 1991, on Good Friday, Pope John Paul II celebrated the Scriptural Way of the Cross. He replaced the stations with the ones that are explicitly mentioned in scripture rather than the traditional way they were being used. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI approved this method for meditation and celebration. The Stations are a prayer that has taken many different forms over the years. Today, many churches put on actual live performances of the Stations on Good Friday.

Sam DeSantis, OFS

(Source: YouTube “Breaking the Habit” Fr Casey Cole OFM)

*Sam DeSantis, OFS
Vice Minister, SLR Fraternity*



Prayer



Saint Francis of Assisi in Prayer is a painting by Lorenzo Lippi

As we enter into the Lenten season, we are called to prayer, penance and almsgiving. To my great consternation, I was asked to write about prayer. As you all know, there are entire books written on the subject! I was wondering what I could possibly say in a short article, however the Gospel for Ash Wednesday gave me a hint. When we pray, we are to go into our Inner Room and close the door. (Matthew 6:6) Once in the Inner Room we have many choices on how to proceed as we raise of our minds and hearts to God. (St. John Damascene) Here is a brief review of the different types of prayer according to our Catholic Catechism. After the basics from the Catechism, I will share some Franciscan prayers and others.

In Paragraphs 2626-2643, the Catechism describes five basic types of prayer. *

1. Worship (Blessing and Adoration)

The Mass and the other liturgies of the Church are full of prayers of adoration or worship, such as the Gloria (the Glory to God). We exalt God and acknowledge our dependence. This is also an act of humility.*

2. Petition

This is self-explanatory--we ask for both spiritual and temporal needs with the caveat of 'Thy will be done'. In my experience, the letting go of the outcome is the bigger challenge. Prayers of forgiveness and mercy fall into this category too. *

3. Intercession

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church notes (Para. 2634), "Intercession is a prayer of petition which leads us to pray as Jesus did." In a prayer of intercession, we're not concerned with our needs but with the needs of others.*

4. Thanksgiving

This a wonderful way to pray—to offer thanks throughout the day for anything and everything. Getting up to a really sunny kitchen is an opportunity for me to offer thanksgiving for the morning light that greets me. I also give thanks for the much-needed rain, although I've been a little less enthused on that one lately.

5. Praise

Prayers of praise acknowledge God for what He is. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Para. 2639) notes, praise "lauds God for his own sake and gives him glory, quite beyond what he does, but simply because HE IS. *

*The substance here is from an article written by Scott P. Richert for Learning Religions webpage.

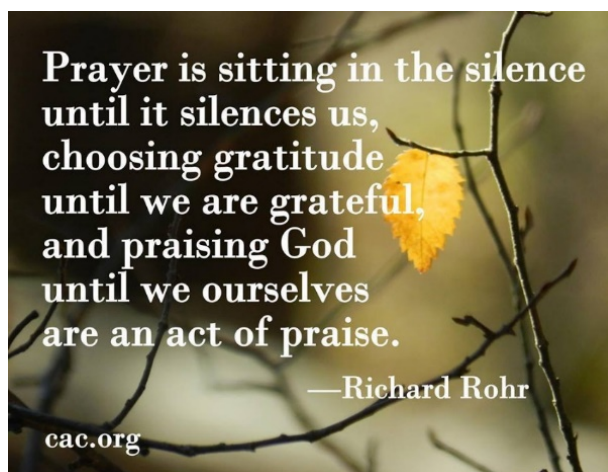
Now that I have covered the basics on prayer types, let's take a look at some of our father Francis' and more current saints and teachers' prayers. This is one of my favorite prayers by St. Francis:

*Most High, Glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of our minds.
Give us a right faith, a firm hope and a perfect charity,
so that we may always and in all things act according to Your Holy Will.
Amen.*

Here is a simple prayer from a beautiful soul:

"For me, prayer is a burst from my heart, it is glance thrown toward Heaven, a cry of thanksgiving and love in times of trial as well as in times of joy." Therese of Lisieux

In the end, when we are done with all the words and thoughts, it is the silence that will teach us and in the silence that we will meet our glorious God and sweet friend!



Corinne Helena, OFS,
Treasurer,
San Luis Rey Fraternity



Almsgiving

What is almsgiving? We Catholics see it as one of the three pillars of Lent, as well as one of the corporal works of mercy. It is also one of the five pillars of Islam (called Zakah), one of the 10 perfections in Buddhism (called dana, or generosity), a noble deed in Hinduism (also called dana), and a practice of justice or righteousness in Judaism (called tzedakah). According to our Catechism, "Giving alms to the poor is a witness to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God" (CCC 2462).



Giotto - St Francis Giving his Mantle to a Poor Man, 1297-99. Upper Church, San Francesco, Assisi

Why is it done? Of course, the giving of alms, whether in the form of material gifts, service, or presence, does something for others, but it also does something for us. From the martyr's life to the widow's mite, almsgiving creates in us a spirit of generosity. This quality certainly edifies us as individuals, but more importantly, it connects us to God and God's people in a profound way. Remember the allegory of the long spoons? The story is about someone who asks to see what heaven and hell are like, and is shown a vision. In both places, people are given long spoons with which to eat. The spoons are, in fact, so long that the people cannot reach their own mouths with them. Those in hell exist in eternal frustration because they cannot feed themselves; those in heaven enjoy eternal loving kindness because they use their spoons to feed each other (Handiwiki.org). They are *connected*.

"Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2446).

Resources:

Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church: revised in accordance with the official Latin text promulgated by Pope John Paul II*. United States Catholic Conference.

<https://handwiki.org/wiki/Unsolved:Allegory%20of%20the%20long%20spoons#Variations>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alms>

Connie Collins, OFS
Secretary



Profession Memories - February 4, 2023

On February 4, 2023 in the Historic San Luis Rey Old Mission Church we joyfully celebrated with Gina, Pam, Linda, and Carolyn their profession into the Secular Franciscan Order. Here are some moments captured on camera by Tuan Cao, OFS.



News from the Fraternity Council

Please note: *The March General Monthly Gathering* will be on Sunday, March 12, 2023. *Zoom access starting at 1 pm* will be provided for those *who cannot attend in person*.

The San Luis Rey Fraternity Council



Laura Chun, OFS
Minister



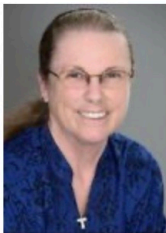
Sam DeSantis, OFS
Vice-Minister & Formator



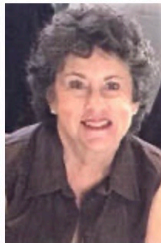
Jan DeSpain, OFS
Formation Director



Sr. Madeline Fitzgerald, OSC
Spiritual Assistant



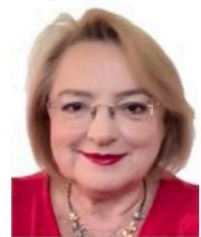
Connie Collins, OFS
Secretary



Corinne Helena, OFS
Treasurer



Pam Pert, OFS
Councilor



Marta Kassai, OFS
Councilor & Newsletter Editor

No Vespers on Zoom in March



The Council is prayerfully considering whether to go forward with Vespers on zoom on a monthly basis due to the low attendance in the past few months. An announcement will be made shortly regarding the path forward.

From our Treasurer



You can mail your OFS fraternity contributions to:

Corinne Helena, OFS
1048 Turnstone Way
Oceanside, CA 92057



Prayers Requested from the Fraternity:

1. **Linda Ochwat, OFS** has been in the hospital for a month because she fell, couldn't get up and walk. She is receiving physical therapy twice a week but her legs need to be strengthened with exercise. She requested our prayers and is thanking us for keeping in touch.
2. **Prudy Hrisanthopoulos, OFS** was scheduled for surgery on February 27 to remove a large kidney stone and requested our prayers for a successful outcome. See update below.
3. Heidi Madden has requested prayers from the fraternity for healing for **Mary Jo Strom**. Since we last saw her at our January gathering, she suffered a major complication after heart surgery and came very close to passing. She is on the mend and very grateful. Please keep her in your prayers.
4. **Rock DeSpain, OFS** had eye surgery in Murrieta on Friday February 9th. Please keep him, as well as Jan who is taking care of him, in your prayers.

Prayers Answered

Prudy Hrisanthopoulos, OFS had her surgery for kidney stone on February 28, and it went fine. Prudy says she is doing well now and thanks everyone for their prayers. She said she could feel them and they made a big difference to her.

Please update us so we can continue to pray for your special intentions, or give thanks to God for his great mercy and love.

Please send your prayer requests and updates to Sam DeSantis, OFS, Vice Minister: carguyrt66@gmail.com

*Sam DeSantis, OFS
Vice Minister*



District Picnic

This is a loving hello and reminder to save the date for our fraternities to gather at the reserved space of San Dieguito Park on June 24th 2023 from 10:00-2:00 for our annual District picnic. More information, on a flyer to be developed, will be available soon. Peace and love as we begin this beautiful Lenten Season. *Peggy Botte, OFS*

Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs Presents...

Franciscan Spirituality as a Counter Cultural Path. Pilgrimage to Assisi, Cortona, Foligno, Greccio, & Rome, Italy on **October 12-22, 2023**. For more information and to register, please contact Jenell Klovas at (414) 427-0570 ext. 246 or jenellfpp@thefranciscans.net.



Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation: Love the Lord, Love the Earth, Love God's Kingdom

See, Judge, Act*

SEE

The message of the encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, is that it is our sacred duty to preserve the beauty and bounty of the earth, our common home, and to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. The Franciscan Friars of the Saint Barbara Province have created an integral ecology initiative to honor and fulfill this sacred duty. The initiative is entitled "*Laudato Si'* Spirit: Collaboration for Action in the West." (See: <https://laudatosispirit.org/>) We, the Secular Franciscan Order of the St. Francis Region, have been invited to participate in this initiative.

JUDGE

In response to this invitation, we gathered on October 1, 2022 for a retreat at Mission San Luis Rey. Brother Keith Douglass Warner, O.F.M. from the Franciscan School of Theology and an expert on ecology, and Mercedes Matthews, Program Coordinator for *Laudato Si'* Spirit presented. Through an animated presentation by Brother Keith and opportunities for discussion, we learned of the climate problems and the effects on our common home, Sister Mother Earth, suffered most profoundly by the poor. Mercedes Matthews explained further how the *Laudato Si'* Spirit is organized, invited us to learn more on the website, and offered us her help.

ACT

Many of us present took the message back to our fraternities. On February 13, we convened our first meeting of the *Laudato Si'* Focus Group for the Secular Franciscans of the St. Francis Region. All fraternities were invited to attend. Six fraternities attended: Holy Spirit, Immaculata, Immaculate Conception, Mission San Luis Rey, St. Francis, and St. Luis the Rey. We gathered to vision how we want to move forward. We had a lively discussion with many wonderful ideas offered. We discussed how we want to examine our own lifestyles to understand how we as individuals contribute to the climate crisis and the changes we may want to make in our own lives. We discussed possible activities and actions by our fraternities and our parishes. Some dioceses in our region have Care for Creation teams and we considered how we may want to bring our Franciscan lens to that process. We acknowledge that there are possible civic actions we may eventually want to engage. We concluded we will take this message back to fraternities for further consideration on how to act.

OUR NEXT MEETING OF THE LAUDATO SI' FOCUS GROUP IS **APRIL 11 AT 7:00 P.M. JOIN US! CONTACT PATRICIA GRACE AT patriciaelizabethgrace7@gmail.com for a ZOOM INVITATION OR CALL HER AT 442 300-4652.**

Peace and All Good,

*Patricia Grace, OFS
JPIC Animator*

**See, Judge, Act* is the name of a book by [Erin M. Brigham](#), Ph.D., a theologian and professor at the University of San Francisco. She provides a process to organize our thoughts and actions in keeping with Catholic teaching when addressing social issues.



To join by Computer, Laptop, Tablet, SmartPhone App:

- Click or Go to this [link](#) (full link is below):
- If prompted use: Meeting ID: 760 726 2486
- Then use Password: 1798

To join by landline or audio-only Phone (no video):

- Dial this number (it's in San Jose): 1-669-900-6833
- Meeting ID: 760 726 2486
- Then use Password: 1798

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7607262486?pwd=dmRBNVU5WFUxMTdzaUxGcy9ibGtwdz09>



Let us Pray for our brothers and sisters, especially: :



❖ For those who died in the month of March ~~~✝

- March 2, 1995 **Amanda Martineau, OFS**
- March 9, 2012 **Thomas F.M. Siersma*, OFS**
- March 11, 2012 **Thomas Siersma*, OFS**
- March 15, 1995 **Robert Wells, OFS**
- March 16, 1989 **Gertrude Brown, OFS**
- March 28, 2001 **Katherine Kundinger, OFS**

❖ For those who were professed in the month of March

- March 8, 2009 **David York, OFS**
- March 8, 2015 **Dorothy Mann, OFS**
- March 9, 1997 **Mary Behnke, OFS**
- March 9, 1997 **Patricia Dominguez, OFS**
- March 20, 1994 **Marjo Gray, OFS**

❖ For Linda Ochwat, OFS who is still hospitalized after her fall and is receiving physical therapy so that she can walk again.

❖ For Mary Jo Strom to fully recover after her heart surgery.

❖ For Rock DeSpain, OFS for improved sight after eye surgery.

From the Editor: Thank you all for your contributions to this month issue of The Cord. Due to change in our monthly general gathering date to second Sundays, please submit your articles, reports or adds by the 25th of the month to publish in next month issue. Send your Word or Pages files (font Arial 12 pt, if possible) and any photos (jpg or png) via email to: mksfo@me.com



Marta
Dr. Marta M. Kassai, OFS, Editor