

# St Louis Fraternity

## Secular Franciscan Order

**Minister:** Ramona Digre, SFO  
**Vice Minister:** Mary Lou Jensen, SFO  
**Formation Director:** Larry Price, SFO  
**Treasurer/Secretary:** Jerry Onkels, SFO  
**Spiritual Assistant:** Sr. Rafael Tilton, OSF

**The Church of Saint John the Evangelist  
O'Day Room  
Thursday, September 15, 2011**

### FRATERNITY GATHERING

**6:00 PM Liturgy of the Hours:** Ramona Digre

**6:30 PM Rite of Welcoming for Shawn Hernandez:** Lead by Ramona Digre and Larry Price

**6:45 PM Opening Prayer:** Ramona

- Snacks, Fellowship
- Announcements and Handouts
- Ministry updates and Check-ins

**7:00 PM Prayer, Formation and Gospel Study:**

- **Review of SFO Rule 19** "From Gospel to Life" (Ramona)
- **Discussion next Sunday's readings**, September 18, 2011 (Everyone)
- **Fully Mature with the Fullness of Christ (Benet Fonck, OFM):** Larry Price
  - Candidacy Session 11, section 17: "Through the Example and Help of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (Revisited from August gathering)

**7:45 PM Fraternal Franciscan Spiritual Direction**  
– Sr. Rafael Tilton

**8:00 PM Closing prayer** - Sr. Rafael

### For Fraternity Discussion:

#### **SFO Rule 19**

Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.

Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others. Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend toward the ultimate encounter with the Father.

#### **COMMENTARY ON THE SFO RULE**

Official Commentary from the National Spiritual Assistants' Commission, Benet A. Fonck O.F.M., Coordinator.

A particularly Franciscan ministry is peace-making. Peace grows out of the search for personal integrity and harmony with others and the discovery of God's presence everywhere. It is built up by affirming oneself, seeing others revealers of God's love, taking a positive approach to solutions, and communicating constantly with the Lord. It is putting aside all thought of violence and embracing a largeness of heart. The result of peace is joy and hope. A special application of this ministry of peace-making is preparation for death at which time a person arrives at that ultimate encounter with God and an eternal peace in his presence that fulfill the earthly quest for peace.

**Readings for Sunday, September 18, 2011  
(Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time)**

**Reading 1:** [Is 55:6-9](#)

**Responsorial Psalm:** [PS 145:2-3, 8-9, 17](#)

**Reading 2:** [PHIL 1:20C-24, 27A](#)

**Gospel:** [MT 20:1-16A](#)

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard.

Going out about nine o'clock, the landowner saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' So they went off.

And he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o'clock, the landowner found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard.'

When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day's burden and the heat.'

He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?'

Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."

**A reflection on this Gospel from “God’s Word is Alive” by Alice Camille:**

*“Are you envious because I am generous?”*

The story of the workers in the vineyard follows the encounter of Jesus with the rich young man. This context is interesting, because Jesus has just told the young man to give up all he has and become his disciple. As we know, the man turns away sadly.

Then, Peter pipes up, observing that the Twelve have done exactly what Jesus asked—given up everything to follow him. “What will we get for that?” Peter asks. Jesus assures him the reward of disciples is great. Then he tells the story of the vineyard workers.

The jaws of the disciples must have dropped. You mean—we can hear them saying to themselves—you mean we who have been with you from the start will get the same wages as those who cast their lot with you in the end? Forget sitting at Jesus’ right or left—they would end up in the bleachers with everybody else!

This is the problem with God. Divine justice sounds terribly unfair by our standards. Our thoughts are not God’s thoughts, and our scales weigh things out quite differently. For most of us, needless to say, this is our only hope.

**Action Response:**

Try finding God in new places. Pray in the supermarket, during the commute; vary the time and method of your prayer. Perhaps God will have something new to say.

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**Coming Events:**

- **Saturday, Sept. 3** at 10:00 AM: Petition prayer hour and candidacy formation
  - Reflection on Catch Me a Rainbow Too (Lester Bach, OFM). Chapter 13: “Franciscans and Family Life” pp 206
- **Tuesday, Sept. 13** at 7 PM: Seminar from the series “Catholic Social Teaching: Our

Best Kept Secret” held at Holy Spirit Church, NW Rochester

- **The Life and Dignity of the Human Person as a Root of Catholic Social Teaching**. Susan Windley-Daoust, PhD, Assistant Professor of Theology, St. Mary’s University. (Seminar Series Flyer attached)
- **Saturday, Sept. 24, 2011:** Formation Workshop, St. Bonaventure in Bloomington, MN, 8 AM to 3:30 PM
- **Saturday, October 22, 2011:** Queen of Peace Regional Gathering at the Cathedral of St. Paul, St. Paul, MN. Registration materials are found on the our website: [www.sforochester.org](http://www.sforochester.org)

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We’ll end this newsletter with some reflections from Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM:

**Contemplative Prayer**

I think the contemplative mind is the most absolute assault on the secular or rational worldview, because it really is a different mind—a different point of view.

The mind I call the “small self” or the “false self” reads everything in terms of personal advantage, short term effort, “What’s in it for me?”—and “How will I look?” or “Will I look good?” As long as one reads reality from the reference point of the small self of “how I personally feel” or “what I need or want”, you cannot get very far. The lens never opens up.

Thus, the great religions have taught that we need to change the seer much more than just telling people what to see. That is *contemplation*.

“Contemplation” or “meditation” in some groups, was rediscovered in contemporary times beginning with the writings of Thomas Merton in the 1950s. The word most Christians are more familiar with is simply “prayer”.

Unfortunately, in the West, prayer had become something functional; something you did to achieve a desired effect—which too often puts the ego back in charge. As soon as you make prayer a way to get what you want, you’re not moving into any kind of new state of consciousness. It’s the same old consciousness, but now well disguised: “How can I get God to do what I want God to do?” It’s the egocentric self deciding what it needs, but now instead of manipulating everybody else, it tries to manipulate God.

This is one reason religion is so dangerous and often so delusional. If religion does not transform people at the level of both mind and heart, it ends up giving self-centered people a very pious and untouchable way to be on top and in control. Now God becomes their defense system for their small self! Even Jesus found this to be true of the scribes, Pharisees and teachers of the law.

In order to understand contemplation and the contemplative mind, we need to talk about the “True Self,” *who you are in God from all eternity*. This is the only self that has ever existed. It’s the only self that exists right now. The trouble is that most people don’t know it or even know about it! The work of religion is to get you to know your True Self, “hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3) as Paul puts it.

You came from God. Your deepest DNA is divine. You’re already spiritual beings, and the daily concern and question is “How do I become human?” I believe that’s why Jesus came as a human being. He didn’t come to teach us how to go to heaven but how to be a human being here on this earth—which is heaven now.

**Prayer Starter:** Clear my mind, Lord, for your Truth.