

**SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER**  
**St. Charles Fraternity**  
**P.O. Box 134, Avilla, IN 46710**

*Website: stcharlesfrat.com*

**May 2025**



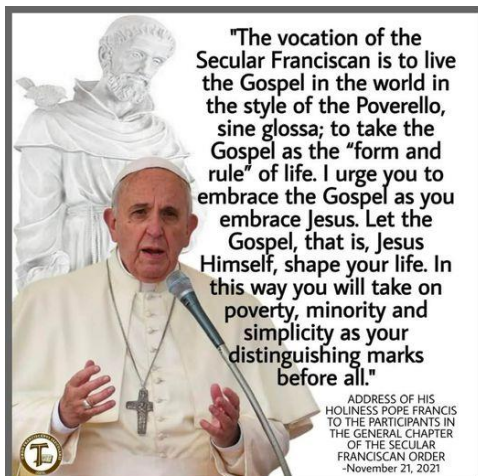
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Established on or before 2/9/1936	Last elections: 9/15/2024	Last fraternal visit: 11/19/2023
		Last pastoral visit: 11/20/2022

**IMPORTANT  
NOTICE**

**Effective immediately,** the fraternity's mailing address has changed (**see above**). The decision was made mainly due to cost. The FW box will still be active until the end of June, but please use the new one.

**May Calendar**

5/8 6:00pm Zoom SC Council meeting  
 5/15 7:00pm Zoom  
 Initial formation for Kathy. Chapter 4  
 5/18 1:30pm St. Mary's teachers lounge  
 SC fraternity gathering  
 5/22 6:00pm Zoom  
 Initial formation for Barbara. Chapter 22



**Prayer requests:**

**Within the fraternity:** Jackie Didier, Sandy Kiraly, Marcyle Voigt, Mary Lou Sohn, Barb Kluz, Barb Cain, Kathy Wendell - all for health.  
**Beyond the fraternity:** Sr. Anita – continued recovery; immigrants/refugees; Pope Francis – repose of his soul; the conclave to elect the new Pope; Kathleen White – recovery from hand surgery; Katie's mom and all those in nursing homes; our country; all immigrants who face fear and deportation.

*May the Lord give you peace!*

When I read Katie's questions for the May gathering, I was struck by the question, "As Christians, is it always about us?"

I admit; I cringed at this question, especially since I regularly teach a Prayer & Worship class at the University of Saint Francis. This is one important question that we discuss. The bottom line is this: who is the object of prayer?

Several times there have been students who have stated that they don't pray because it's too self-centered. In every class, there have been students who have stated that they pray to themselves.

Is prayer "self-centered"? Only if we actually do what the second group of students say they do and pray TO ourselves. True prayer is focused on God rather than on us. Prayers of petition, which are legitimate prayers, are still prayed TO God, but FOR us. Obviously, praying for something trivial, like another pair of shoes, is not necessarily what we should be praying about. What does God want for us?

In answer to those who state that they pray TO themselves, it turns out that they really mean that they pray BY themselves. Now most of us know the difference, but there's an interesting point here. Private, personal prayer can easily become a "me and God" thing. The beauty of the Liturgy of the Hours is that it is the prayer of the Church, the community of faith. We never pray alone. Somewhere, someone is praying the same prayer that we are when we appear to be alone. It's the same principle as the liturgy of the Mass; others are celebrating it at the same time that we are in our own parishes. This is the true essence of our being Catholic!

One of the helps that I use in extemporaneous (spontaneous) prayer comes from Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM, who is one of the members of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. For our papers in the Spiritual Assistant formation class, he kept telling us to be "complete and concise." In other words, say what you really need to say and shut up (my paraphrase).

I'll leave you with a challenging question: do we use excuses to avoid praying the Liturgy of the Hours? I'll be the first to confess that sometimes I do and then find it harder to return to it. Mea culpa!

*Peace and all good!*

### **BIRTHDAYS**

5/1 Marcyle Voigt  
5/10 Dave Frank  
5/31 Barb Kluz



### **PROFESSION ANNIVERSARIES**

5/19/1974 Mary Lou Sohn  
5/19/2019 Barb Cain & Deb Davis  
5/25/1974 Doris Bermes

## MAY FRATERNITY GATHERING

**Date:** May 18, 2025

**Time:** 1:30 pm

**Place:** St. Mary's school teachers lounge 232 N. Main St., Avilla

**Formation:** *Layman's Guide to the Liturgy of the Hours*, chapters 16 & 17

**Snacks:** Carry-in

**Franciscan Crown rosary** (instead of the Evening office)

### **ONGOING FORMATION:** *Layman's Guide to the Liturgy of the Hours*

**Chapter 16:** We will look at the different sources for Liturgy of the Hours during our formation time.

#### **Chapter 17: "But I still have Questions"**

**Complicated.** Learning to pray LOTH is complicated with the 4-week cycle, Office of Readings, Morning Prayer, Daytime Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Night Prayer. We are encouraged to pray Morning and Evening Prayer in particular as part of our Franciscan life. We also have liturgical seasons, Solemnities, Feasts and Memorials. How do you or did you work this out as you prayed the liturgy of the hours?

**OT or Jewish prayers? Shouldn't we be praying NT prayers or Christian prayers?** Did you or do you see a difference in these ideas as a Catholic? Francis embraced God and His Creation. Catholic Mass and LOTH includes both the New and Old Testaments in our worship and prayer. How does this make us know God more closely and value creation more? What danger is there of "dismissing" the Old Testament?

**Prayers are not where I am personally.** As Christians, is it always about us? Francis desired to see the other like Jesus saw the other. Name some examples.

**Some Psalms are violent.** How does the approach of Fr. Gallegher of the idea of assigning the violence to evil rather than persons in the Psalms help you understand more fully why we pray these and reflect on the violence in the Scriptures?

#### **Could it become routine and where do I have time?**

This is a today question. Boredom and business. What would Francis and Clare have to say about this? Reflect on this for yourself. How can the Rule help us as a guide to avoid boredom and business?

**Not always uplifting. Cannot get into each prayer.** Another today question. Dryness in prayer is real, but not praying is giving in to the temptation that prayer is not powerful. How do you think Francis' conversion brought him from ideas of glory to the idea of poverty? the ideal of social prominence to joy?