



St. Anthony Fraternity Newsletter

December 2023

Franciscans Commemorate the 800th Anniversary of Christmas at Greccio December 25, 2023

As Franciscans, we have read the story of Christmas at Greccio from Thomas of Celano, St. Bonaventure, Julian of Speyer, and Henri d'Avranches. These biographies of Francis were written between 1228 to 1239. So, these stories were fresh in the minds of these writers. The story of Christmas at Greccio is about how Francis, in his way of following and experiencing Christ in and through the Gospel, set about to concretely and practically enact the birth of "the Babe of Bethlehem", as he referred to the Infant Jesus. He asked a friend of his, John of Greccio, to help him concretize his vision of enacting the memory of the babe who was born in Bethlehem. He wanted to see as much as is possible with his own eyes the discomfort of the infants needs, the lowly poverty of the Savior born in Bethlehem. He wanted to see Jesus lying in a manger and, how with an ox and an ass standing by, he rested on the hay.

This was planned 15 days before Christmas and was ready on Christmas Eve 1223. The celebration of Christmas at Greccio was joyous and marvelous. A Mass was celebrated. Francis proclaimed the Gospel and preached about the poor King born in Bethlehem. He stirred the hearts and souls of all the people who attended. The night was illuminated with candles; there was singing and festivities continued into Christmas day.

In memory of this event an altar was constructed above the manger in the Church at Greccio and dedicated in honor of holy Father Francis.

Eight hundred years later, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus and place our nativity sets under a tree, or on a table, as a visible reminder of the night when our Savior was born, we think of this significant event in the life of our founder, St. Francis of Assisi in 1223. What an impact this event has had all over the world! Francis' act of enacting the reality of the birth of Christ gave birth to many, many creches - full size, miniatures, live or still; made of various materials and placed in churches, homes, museums, and parks. These nativity sets give us beauty and wonder and remind us that Christmas is about the Gospel according to Luke 2: 1-14.



Two-Month Financial Statement 2023	OCT	NOV
Monthly Donors	14	13
INCOME		
Regular Contributions	575.00	355.00
Endowment Interest	84.59	87.41
Exceptional Income: <u>Oct</u> : Retreat , Profession Food, St. Francis Fraternity/Other, Profession Program. <u>Nov</u> : Donation for Picnic Food	200.00 700.00 150.00 100.00	133.33
Subtotal for Exceptional Income	1150.00	133.33
TOTAL INCOME	1809.59	575.74
Transfer from Savings		
TOTAL DEPOSITED (Checking Acct.)	1809.59	575.74
EXPENSES		
RECURRING EXPENSES		
Spiritual Asst. Stipend	100.00	100.00
Council Admin, Supplies	19.95	24.80
Formation Expenses		
Newsletter: Supplies and Printing		29.75
Newsletter Postage	132.00	
Website Fee (annual)		180.00
Apostolate: Poor Clare's Donation	100.00	100.00
Apostolate: Franciscan Friars Donation	75.00	100.00
Franciscan Friars Donation	75.00	75.00
Contingency Fund Transfer to Savings	50.00	50.00
Subtotal Recurring Expenses	476.95	559.55
EXCEPTIONAL EXPENSES: <u>OCT</u> : Retreat	200.00	50.00
Donations, SFO Profession Food, Profession Food	300.00	50.00
Donation, Priest Stipend, Hall Donations, Music Fee.	700.00	75.00
<u>NOV</u>: Brother Gordon Stipend, Margaret Cortez Stipend, Flowers Poor Clares	150.00 150.00 100.00	
Subtotal Exceptional Expenses	1600.00	175.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	2076.95	175.00
Beginning Balance (Checking Acct.)	7318.11	7050.75
Ending Balance (Checking Acct.)	7050.75	6891.94
Contingency Fund (Available Savings Funds)		
Beginning Balance	3900.95	3952.11
Transfers From Expenses	50.00	50.00
Earned Dividend	1.16	
TOTAL CONTINGENCY FUND	3952.11	4002.11

Calendar

Fraternity Gathering

Sun. Dec. 17 - 1:00 pm

Inquirers' Formation

Dec 16 - FUN Chapter 11

Franciscan Movement I



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December Birthdays

Mary Lou Narvaez - Dec. 13

Martha Ramirez - Dec. 18



Thanks

**Brothers and Sisters
For Bringing Food to Our**

Christmas Table

A-K Salad and Side Dishes

L-R Dessert

S-Z Main Dishes



Minister's Message

A Blessed and Happy Advent to all,

In the season of Advent, we pray, reflect, watch and wait. As we wait for the Dawn from on high to break upon us through the birth of our Savior, may we be ever mindful of our Franciscan witness in the world. Now, more than ever, it seems that our families, friends and community are busy anxiously preparing for the holidays. Throughout the hustle and bustle, I pray that we will be an example of peace and joy to our brothers and sisters as we prepare our hearts to receive the Light of the world into our hearts in celebration of the Nativity of our Lord. May we emanate the Light through Francis and may we reflect the Light through Clare. May we be instruments of peace...

In anticipation of the coming of the Messiah, I pray that the Holy Spirit will remind us daily of the merciful love that our Father poured out upon us through the gift of His Son for our salvation.


Peace,

Your servant minister - Israela


Our St. Anthony Fraternity website is up and running, thanks to Rex Schlicher, Vice Minister. <https://franciscansalbuquerque.sfousa.org/> Check it out. For many inspiring resources on Christmas at Greccio go to: <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org> Go to Resources.

Christmas Gifts

Bring food gifts of canned good and non-perishable food to the December Gathering for the St. Felix Food Pantry. Also, bring a gift for the Gift Exchange, if you wish to participate.



Pray for the health of Marilyn Migliarini, Connie Jo Martinez, Consuelo Chavez, Bill Parras, and pray for the repose of the soul of Paul Martinez and solace and comfort for Margaret Martinez and her family.



Prayer Requests

We get Letters . . .

from : Rebecca Griego, OFS, St. Francis Fraternity, Santa Fe

Words cannot express how I felt at the Profession Ceremony.

*I am overwhelmed and truly grateful
to all of you for your loving, caring support
at this special time in my life.*

*My heart is full of joy and I know I am forever blessed
by each and everyone of you!*

*Thank you for asking us to join and for all you did to make
The day an absolute success!*

*We are forever tied as brothers and sisters in Christ
and our beloved father St. Francis . Rebecca*

from : the Poor Clares in Roswell

Peace and Blessings, November 26, 2023

Our dear Brothers and Sisters in St. Francis,

May God reward you for your beautiful and generous offering, which you sent on behalf of the St. Anthony Fraternity, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of our monastery. We heard that some of the Fraternity members were able to be here, and we were particularly happy and grateful that they were able to join us in thanking God for the many blessings he has bestowed on us these past 75 years. Of course, one of those blessings I the spiritual friendship and support we have had from the members of the Fraternity over the course of many years. We know that our Poor Clare life would not be possible if it were not for the assistance and support of many brothers, sisters, friends, and benefactors; and we thank you and ask the Lord to reward you for all you have been and done for us during those years.

Any true celebration is a celebration of the goodness and gifts of God, without that, none of our earthly happiness and success would be possible. During his homily, his Eminence, Raymond Cardinal Burke, whom we were honored to have with us to celebrate the anniversary Mass, reminded us that God is the source of all our blessings. He is all powerful, and even in our world today, there is still reason to have hope. If we trust in the grace of God, trust in the powerful help and intercession of our Mother Mary, and faithfully live the Gospel, we will not

(Continued on Page 5)

(Continued from Page 4 - Letter from Poor Clares)

only have hope ourselves, but also be a source of hope for others and lead them closer to the Heart of Jesus.

You and all of your intentions remain always in our prayers and we ask the Lord to supply you with grace and strength as you faithfully live your calling as Franciscans, bring hope and light into our world by your witness to the Gospel.

Most gratefully in our coming King,
Your Poor Clare Nuns

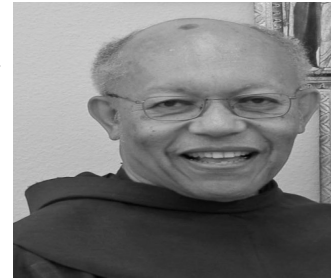


Profession Anniversaries

Israela Garcia
Mary Lou Narvaez
Tommie Page
December 16, 2012

11th Anniversary

Spiritual Assistant's Message



Dearest sisters and brothers in St. Francis,

“The holy way is the *only* way”—Sr. Norma Pimentel, M.J.

Each year, we are inspired by the start of the Liturgical Season of Advent. Each candle of the wreath challenges us toward the memorial of the birth of the Christ-child: 1st HOPE (we anchor our faith in trust of the Lord; 2nd PEACE (we exemplify our Franciscan life in channeling reparation to all); 3rd JOY (our temperament is practiced to exude divine empathy); 4th LOVE (we show that we are accepting the grace to treat other respectfully).

This year, the sad events of our world seem to be moving us backwards: instead of more peace, there is more consternation. So long as we’re not part of the problem (especially in our home or fraternity), we are indeed preparing the way for the Lord of Peace.

May the Prince of Peace brighten the light of your faith that we each be a witness to his courage and love.

Br. Gordon, OFM
—Fraternity Spiritual Assistant

Fraternity Contacts

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Our Mission Statement

We, the fraternity of St. Anthony, inspired by the vision of St. Francis, commit ourselves to the Gospel as our Way of Life; “Going from Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel”. We believe that we are called to be renewed continually through the celebration of the Eucharist and go forth to rebuild the Church through our witness.

We are the Ordo Franciscans Saecularis (The Secular Order) in the United States of America. We live our vocation in Our Lady of Guadalupe Empress of the Americas Region. Our Franciscan Community is the St. Anthony Fraternity located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.