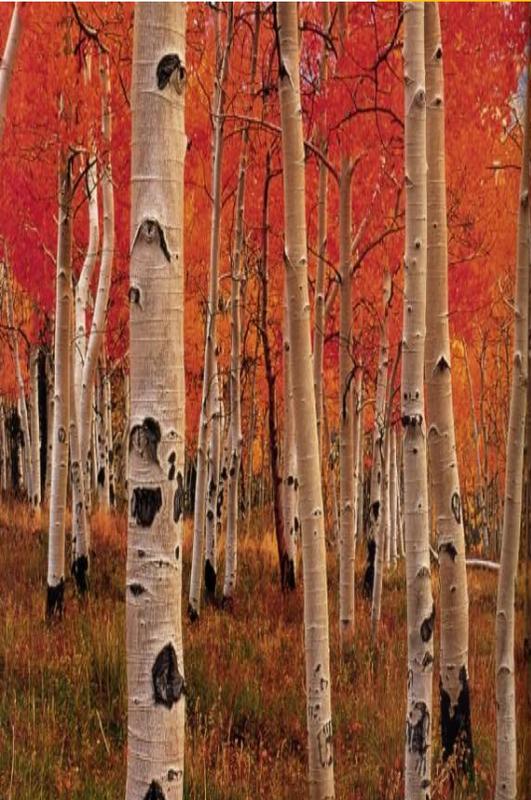


MAXIMILIAN KOLBE FRATERNITY



Our November meeting began, as all our meetings do, with prayer. We discussed our upcoming December meeting where we pack the “Seafarer’s Boxes” as gifts for those men and women who spend months at a time at sea. These people who work so hard to provide for their families, bringing us the products we take for granted, are very often mistreated and subject to near slave-like treatment. We will pray for them as we pack the boxes.

Everyone signed up to bring something, from deodorant to playing cards! As well, we are encouraged to bring toys and food or monetary donations to assist the St. Vincent de Paul Society here at St. Jerome’s. Delores reported that during the Christmas season, approximately 900 kids are given gifts and 300 families receive food.

We then watched a DVD from the “Q” on Laudate Si. The speaker was Brother Keith, OFM. Laudate Si is a vision of Franciscan Spirituality. He spoke of the relatedness of nature, God and humanity. We can have a direct experience of God in nature. Our care for the earth is directly related to our care for the poor. We are called to be a people of joy, self-giving and open-heartedness. Love of Beauty is a spiritual practice; Beauty is a pathway to God. We are called to an ecological conversion, encompassing love, gratitude, worship, praise, appreciation of beauty.

A statement from the 1972 Stockholm Environmental Conference, “Only One Earth”, says it perfectly: “We have forgotten how to be good guests, how to walk lightly on the earth as its other creatures do.”

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the Regional Retreat in Lake Charles May 5-7, 2017. The Retreat Master will be our sister, Karen Parsons, OFS, and the theme will be “Francis, Clare and Me”.

Oh, God of all,
at this time of
our gradual awak-
ening to the dan-
gers we are im-
posing on our
beautiful Earth,
open the hearts
and minds of all
your children,
that we may learn
to nurture rather
than destroy our
planet. Amen.

-Lorraine Schmitz

A WORD FROM OUR MINISTER:

Thankfully, we are through the craziness of this past national election and are moving into Advent. As we prayerfully prepare and await, let us be thankful for all we have in this country and not lose sight of the joy that is coming. Let us keep those who are fleeing persecution and violence in their homelands in our prayers, and actions, as we strive to build the Kingdom of God. May their journeys be safe and that the love manifested by Jesus Christ be shared with all those we encounter as we strive to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis.

I pray that I may have the courage to always counter the hateful expressions that are too carelessly expressed by seemingly good people with the Gospel message of Peace.

By our Baptism, and later strengthened by the Holy Spirit by our profession as Franciscans, we are to become like Christ and be welcoming, accepting, and embracing and merciful to everyone.

To quote from Sr. Anne-Louise Nadeau in the Pax Christi newsletter:

We believe that where there is Mercy...there is non-violent peace

Where there is Mercy...there is reconciliation with justice

Where there is Mercy there is profound respect for human rights and our common home, the earth,

Where there is Mercy, interracial justice thrives in an atmosphere of mutual respect and integrity.

May the Doors of Mercy always remain wide open, waiting to welcome all of God's people unconditionally, without hesitation or reservation.

We are called to see Christ in everyone just as Francis did with the leper. You may remember the commercial from years ago for Hotel 6 that said, "I'll leave the light on."

Let us not be like the innkeeper who did not have room at the inn for the Holy Family. Let the light of Christ shine through us.

God bless, michael

DECEMBER MEETING

Don't forget to bring your gifts for the Seafarer's boxes. We will have a great and blessed time assembling and wrapping the gifts.

The extent of our love of God is manifested by the manner in which we bear the trials He sends us. "Brave as death itself is love." That has been demonstrated by the holy martyrs. But those who have shed their blood for the Faith are not the only martyrs. Fidelity to duty can be a slow martyrdom, requiring sacrifice and sufferings that are equal to bodily martyrdom and sometimes demanding greater fortitude because of the length of time involved.

As St. Matthew tells us (24:13), "He who shall persevere to the end shall be saved."

Profit by the trials of life so that you will gain the strength and courage which become stepping stones from earth to heaven.

Regional News

Last week I had the opportunity to participate and represent our fraternity at the Regional meeting in Baton Rouge at the convent of the Franciscan nuns. It is always a blessing to meet with our Franciscan family from throughout the Region.

The St. Joan of Arc Region has fraternities in 4 states, and it has been a busy year with elections and visitations. 9 elections have been completed, and 3 visitations. Since there must be a Pastoral and Fraternal Representative at all elections and visitations, a special thanks goes to Brother Juniper, as he was the Pastoral representative at all of them! Thank you, Brother Juniper!

Our Regional Formation Director, Cynthia Duet, OFS, provided our on-going formation, beginning with Rule 19. We all need to strive to bring joy and hope to all. We need to come together and support one another. A common issue faced by many, if not all fraternities, are people who do not regularly participate in the life of the fraternity. Some profess and drift off, others do not take their profession promise seriously and as a result our meetings do not take precedence over other activities.

Brother Juniper stressed the importance of flexibility in Formation. He compared us all to a prism. It is one thing, yet comprised of multiple colors of light. Our Regional Minister, Cherryle, discussed her recent trip representing our Region to the National Chapter Meeting. Our National Chapter has been so supportive of those in our Region who have had multiple tragedies this year including the ambush of police officers and the Louisiana flooding. They told the assembly how one of our fraternities (St. Joseph in Baton Rouge) had responded to a request from International to assist with a situation in Africa, and how their generosity has been returned 20 fold. At last count over \$20,000 dollars has been contributed from our brothers and sisters throughout the country and world to support those in SW Louisiana.

Our Region is also exploring the possibility of hosting a National Chapter in a couple of years. There are only two cities that have the airport facilities needed, New Orleans and Houston as. Our former Regional Minister Pat Houghton is looking at possible retreat houses, etc..

Many of us are already receiving the daily e-mails from National. They are a wonderful, daily tool. If you are not receiving and want to, just send a blank e-mail to Tau-Daily-subscribe@yahoo.com