

Immaculata Fraternity Mission Statement:

As members of the Secular Franciscan Order

we seek to live the Gospel with the vision Jesus gave St. Francis to rebuild the Church.

(Ratified at our Council Meeting on April 8, 2019)

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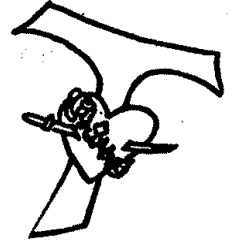
Our Goal for 2024: To visit or call those who are excused and homebound on a regular basis.

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Immaculata Vision ~ ~ April 2024

Immaculata Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order

Riverside, CA / Editor: Lisa M. Boebinger, OFS ~ ~ lisa.sfo@att.net



2024 is the 800th Anniversary of *The Gift of the Stigmata.*

National Fraternity (NAFRA) Centenary Celebration via Zoom (Date and time to be determined)

Calendar of Events for April 2024:

5 – Marilyn Gunnerson’s Profession, 11am @ St. Matthews Church, and Reception.

6 – (1st Sat.) – Fraternity Gathering @ 10:00 am @ St. Matthew in Corona.

7 – Divine Mercy Sunday

8 – The Annunciation of the Lord

14 – A Gathering of Secular Franciscans

29 – (the Last Mon.) – Council Meeting 10am @ St. Matthew in Corona

Looking Ahead to May 2024...

1 – Saint Joseph the Worker

4 – (1st Sat.) – Fraternity Gathering @ 10:00 am @ St. Matthew in Corona.

9 – Ascension of the Lord (Observed in Ecclesiastical Provinces)

12 – Mother’s Day/Ascension of the Lord

13 – Our Lady of Fatima

19 – Pentecost Sunday

20 – The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church

24-26 – OFS Regional Retreat at Serra Retreat house in Malibu (see info at right)

26 – The Most Holy Trinity

27 – Memorial Day - Holiday

27 – (the Last Mon.) – Council Meeting 10am @ St. Matthew in Corona

31 – The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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Birthdays & Profession Anniversaries:

April Birthdays: 5th – Lisa Boebinger

27th – Bruce McAdams

April Profession Anniversaries: 8th – Aarne Lozano, 1991

23rd – Arsenio Benedicto, 2021

May Birthdays: 2nd – Gloria Torres

5th – Jim Neufell

May Profession Anniversary: 4th – Raul Bosque, 2003

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Our Next Fraternity Gathering/Meeting will be on Saturday, May 4th @ 10:00 am @ St. Matthew.

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Heads Up! The OFS Regional Retreat is coming up!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Annual Regional Retreat at Serra in Malibu. Please pass it on to all of your members. This year the presenter is our own Br. Kip Ledger, OFM Cap. He has given some retreats and presentations to councils and fraternities in our region, and the feedback has all been very positive. I especially encourage those who haven't attended a Regional Retreat in the past to consider attending. Serra Retreat Center is an exceptionally beautiful location. We are fortunate to have it in our region.

I understand that those who are not fluent English speakers may not benefit from this retreat, but we want everyone to know they are invited. I hope to see a lot of you there this year. *(I have the Retreat Registration Form, please let me know if you'd like one ~ Lisa B.)*

Peace & JOY! Caroline

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Minister’s Letter

From the Desk of Your Friendly Minister,

Lisa Boebinger, OFS

Halloo, my Franciscan Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

I found something I'd like to share with you from Minute Meditations ~ Franciscan Media. Enjoy:

Parable of the Two Criminals

The kingdom of God is made present in the experience of those who seek God’s will above all else in this life. Consider the two being executed with Jesus. The second criminal, facing the end of his earthly existence recognized Jesus as the son of God and, having admitted his wrongdoing, proclaims this truth. And Jesus responds: Amen.

Paradise, or the kingdom, is also a reality that is not off in some distant future, but is, as Jesus says, here “with me today.” It is easy, with the quickly impending death of the three being executed, to mistake Jesus’ words as simply referring to the next life—which, he also surely meant. However, what Jesus is also affirming in his response of “Amen,” is the truth that we are called not just to say the prayer Jesus taught us to the Father, but to live it in our daily lives. *Thy will be done!*

It seems to me that our focus on the Passion of the Lord, especially his death on the cross, has distracted many of us

from the last parable the Gospels show us: the parable, as I call it, of the two criminals. It is the parable of how to pray, which is reflected in how we live. So which criminal are you? How is it that you pray?

—from the book *The Last Words of Jesus: A Meditation on Love and Suffering* by Daniel P. Horan, OFM

Prayerfully yours, Lisa B.

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**From the Formation Desk of Bruce McAdams, OFS
our Friendly Formation Director
Formation Directors Letter for April 6, 2024,
Fraternity Gathering**

**Gospel Preaching and Gospel Life
Similarities and Differences**

For Franciscans, preaching the gospel and a gospel way of life are not only similar, but virtually identical. This point is illustrated by a story that is often told about Saint Francis.

Francis once called one of the brothers and said: “we are going to preach in the city today.” So, the brother followed Francis and they walked through the city. It seemed there wasn’t a street they didn’t walk in that town. They greeted people, stopping occasionally to help someone in need, but never took time to actually give a sermon. When they arrived back at their hermitage, the brother said to Francis ‘ I thought you said we were going to preach in the city today.” Francis replied: “Brother, we have been seen by many people, and our behavior closely watched. It was thus that we have preached our sermon.”

This story has helped give rise to a popular saying that has been attributed to Francis: “preach the Gospel always, when necessary, use words.” Francis constantly emphasized, namely that our lives must be the primary means of bringing the Gospel to people. In fact, it does no good to talk about Jesus message if we do not embody it.

Your Friendly Formation Director, B

**National Prayer for Vocations to the
Secular Franciscan Order**

O, Good and Gracious God, God of mercy, compassion, generosity, and love, we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis, choosing daily to live the Gospel life. Help us to encourage others to live out their vocations. Help us to help others to hear Your call, and to recognize their vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order that You have already planted in their heart. Help us, so that together, we all may work to bring the Gospel to life. Amen.

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**Nuggets From the Desk of
Our Brother Ray Hardwick, OFS:
A Prayer for Women Throughout the Ages.**

Spirit of renewal, God of many names, and one transforming and abundant love, we turn this month, in our nation's life, to reflect on the stories, the heritage and the struggles of the women throughout the ages. We seek to learn from all those voices that have been left unheard. May we pause before the silences of the ages, find who has been left out, and craft new ways of inclusion for every week, and every month. May this spiritual practice bring out the voices of all those struggling, all those left apart. May we let go of our assumptions and cold comforts, of what is the normal to live by, unless it be a standard that is rooted in compassion,

in inclusivity, in diversity. May this month of reflection teach us to search for those stories that are different from our own. Mother of possibility, in the finding, may we come to know ourselves changed. Renewed where we are dry, Hopeful where we are lost, and open where we are shut. Amen. -- Rev. Jude Geiger

Submitted by Ray Hardwick, OFS

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**The Joy of Francis Regional News
St. Francis Region #52
Southern California Spring Edition — 2024
Minister’s Message**

This year Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day fell on the same day. Some may think that the two don’t go together, but as one ponders the initial meaning and intent of Valentine’s Day it is possible to understand that a day that celebrates love shared with a day of fasting and abstinence can better direct us through Lent. Love can become our road map through Lent.

As I thought about this juxtaposition of the two celebrations what came to mind was the life of a now deceased member of my fraternity. Gabe was a man of great faith who willingly shared it with those around him. He traveled widely during his career, including to countries where Christianity was not well accepted. He was comfortable sharing his Catholic beliefs with Muslims, Buddhists, or anyone else, including – and maybe especially – with atheists.

One of the things that has impacted me the most about Gabe was the way he lived his marriage. When his wife, Gaye, had to be moved into a care facility he visited her every day – sometimes twice a day. I accompanied him on a few occasions and saw that Gaye didn’t really recognize him anymore. Gabe shared with me that several of the staff members at the facility asked him why he visited so often when she wasn’t aware most of the time. His reply has stayed with me: “She is my wife, and I have chosen to love her as long as I live.” “Chosen to love” – what a concept!

This isn’t the romantic, emotional, passionate type of love that is often exhibited with hearts and flowers. It is the “agape” love – defined as the selfless, unconditional love demonstrated in scripture and by the life of St. Valentine. It is defined as the fatherly love that God has for us, and our reciprocal love for God. It is love with sacrifice, as Gabe exhibited by visiting his wife every day until she died. It is love with sacrifice, as is exhibited by our Lord Jesus on the cross – the ultimate love sacrifice.

We are called to love as God loves. To do so is a choice. Love is a sacrificial choice. So starting Lent on Valentine’s Day is appropriate after all. Let love be your road map this Lenten season. Choose to love!

Peace, joy & LOVE, Caroline

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A TRUE STORY OF DIVINE MERCY:

"A relatively young priest is in a hospital visiting some of his parishioners. He is walking down the hallway, and a nun stops him and says, “Father, can you go into this room? There’s a man on his deathbed. He’s been here for days. We’ve asked priests to go in, but he chases everyone away. He doesn’t want to talk about Jesus. But he’s dying. Could you please visit him?”

The priest goes in and introduces himself to the patient. The guy erupts and starts cursing at him. He is so angry: “I don’t want anything to do with you. Get out of here!”

The priest says, “Okay” and goes out into the hall.

The nun is still there. She says, “Could you go back in?”

The priest replies, "He doesn't want anything I have to offer."

"Just give it another chance," pleads the nun.

The priest reluctantly reenters the room. "I'm not going to ask if you want to go to confession. I'm not going to ask if you want Holy Communion. But is it okay if I just sit here next to your bed and pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy?"

The old man replies, "I don't care. Do whatever you want."

The priest sits down and begins softly praying the words of the Chaplet: "For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world. For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world...."

Suddenly the man bursts out, "Stop it!"

Startled, the priest looks up and asks, "Why?"

"Because there is no mercy for me!"

"Why do you think there is no mercy for you?" asks the priest.

"It doesn't matter," responds the old man.

But the priest persists: "Why do you think there is no mercy for you?"

"I'll tell you... Twenty-five years ago, I was working for the railroad. My job was to lower the crossing guard arm when a train would come to prevent cars from going on the tracks. But one night I was drunk.

I didn't lower the crossing guard arm, and a couple and their three young children were on the tracks as a train came, and they were all instantly killed. That was my fault. So there is no mercy for me. I have failed. It is over."

The priest just sits there staring at the rosary in his hands. Finally, he asks, "Where was this?"

The man tells him the name of the Polish town.

The priest looks up and says, "Twenty-five years ago, my mom and my dad were taking my little siblings on a trip. I couldn't go with them. They were driving through this small town. For some reason the railroad crossing guard arm wasn't lowered. As they were crossing the tracks, a train came and killed them all. I lost my whole family that night." The priest gazes intently into the man's face, and he says, "My brother, God forgives you. Not only that, I forgive you."

The man realizes that God's mercy is for him.

The priest asks, "Would you let me hear your confession and give you the Eucharist?"

The man makes his confession and receives Holy Communion. Two days later he dies. Mercy wins. His failure is not final.

The story goes on. It's kind of cool. After giving the man Communion, the priest goes into the hallway in search of the nun. He can't find her. The administration tells him, "We don't employ any nuns at this hospital."

For years the priest does not know who this nun is. Eventually he goes to the town of Vilnius, which is where Saint Faustina lived. He goes to the convent to say Mass for the nuns there. He sees a painting on the wall of Saint Faustina, and he says, "I've met that nun a couple of years ago."

"No, Father, you did not," replies one of the nuns. "She's been dead since 1938."

The priest then realizes it was Sister Faustina who told him to go into the patient's room, told him to go back again into that room.

Failure is not final. Not when it comes to Jesus.

Jesus is no longer dead. He is risen, and He is ruling over His creation using His almighty power to direct everything in the world to get you safely to that eternal life."

He has found a way to remain with us and abide with us while we journey on this earth. He has chosen to become good bread for us. Bread that sustains. Bread that gives life. And he who was able to transform water into wine has also transformed himself into bread.

It looks like bread and tastes like bread, but it is transformed, changed. It is now the Body of Christ—by his own word. He who is love. He who is the Father's gift of love to us has turned his love into bread to sustain us while we sojourn. And that love is a merciful love.

It brings us a reason to hope and it deepens our faith. These three things are all that really last in life, faith and hope and love. The greatest of these? Is LOVE. (*Found on Facebook*)

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Please keep in your prayers:

(If you are in need of prayers, please email me at lisa.sfo@att.net and I'll add your intentions to our list below:)

and please add to your Prayer List the following:

Feb. 25, 2024: Please keep **Joice Quinsaat** in your prayers. She made it home safely from her 3 months visit to the Philippines, but she now is sick with pneumonia and is antibiotics.

Feb. 8, 2024: GOOD NEWS! **Bruce's son Brad McAdams** had his surgery to remove the rest of the tumor in his stomach and was very successful! Praise God! Now we have to pray for the Aneurism in his heart!

Jan. 31, 2024: Please continue to keep **Ray Hardwick** in your prayers. His health issues don't seem to be getting any better. Hoping to see him at Marilyn's Profession.

Jan. 6, 2024: Please pray for **Lorraine Cardin's beau Adam Anhalt**. And also pray for **Anthony Basum**.

Jan. 16, 2024: Update on our Sister Brenda Rogers and her family: Hi Lisa, lots has happened since I last emailed. My granddaughter Ash had her baby at the end of November. She was born with a form of dwarfism called campo melic. Her main problem was her lungs. She was on a ventilator from the beginning at Irvine Medical Center and stayed there. Many ups and downs. She was named **Athena Rose** ♀ She struggled but was a fighter. Sadly, Athena passed away last Wednesday night, January 10th (Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Athena Rose and for Brenda and her family.**)

My mom continues with worsening dementia, lots more care, on and off hospice, lots of medical appointments. Peace and good, Brenda.

June 29, 2023: Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Brenda's husband Dave** and continue to pray for peace and consolation for Brenda and her family.

March, 2023 ~ Please pray for **Jim Rogers (who has dementia)**, and **Mickie Rogers** as Jim's care giver.

Feb. 1, 2023, from Joice: Kindly add **Deacon Jim**. He's a little under the weather after assisting at last Sunday's Mass at Queen of Angels. Thanks again and God bless all. Peace, Joice and Intercessory Prayer Team

Jan. 13, 2023, ~ Please pray for **Camille Page's son, Joseph**, who is facing serious incarceration time.

May 2023: Gloria Torres' Intentions: For all my family and grandchildren, peace in the world, for all our SFO members, for my brother Mario and my sister Bertha, that just died this past week, for the end of Ukraine's war by Russia. Come Lord Jesus come, for without you we perish.

Amen

Please keep in your prayers, **Bob Murray's brother Richard Murray** who has Parkinson's.

Please pray for our **Brother Raul Bosque’, OFS**. He is having health issues and is working with the doctors to find out what they are.

Please pray for **Sekoiya Spencer’s sons** Darius and Jason. And please continue to keep your Fraternity brothers and sisters in your prayers along with their intentions.

AND ... Have you prayed for your Franciscan Prayer Partner lately?

Let us pray:
Father of goodness and love, hear our prayers for the sick and for all who are in need. May they find consolation in your healing presence. Show your mercy as you close wounds, cure illness and free downcast spirits. May these special people find lasting health and deliverance, and so join us in thanking you for all your gifts. We ask this through the Lord Jesus who healed those who believed. Amen.

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And now, a list of all our up-coming Events for 2024. Please take a moment to peruse this list and see what topic you are assigned to present at our Fraternity Gatherings:

Our Ongoing Formation Book and the Chapter Presenter Assignments:

For our Fraternity Gatherings, from the book: ***A Knight and A Lady*** by Bret Thoman, OFS:

- May 4th, Chapter 5: Penance: **Lorraine Cardin, OFS**
- June 1st, Chapter 6: The Cross: **Bruce McAdams, OFS**
- July 6th, Chapter 7: Leprosy: **Velma Chromity, OFS**
- Aug. 3rd, Chapter 8: Fraternity: **Arsenio Benedicto, OFS**
- Sept. 7th, Chapter 9: Catholicism: **Arsenio Benedicto, OFS**
- Oct 5th, Chapter 10: St. Francis and Nonbelievers: **Nik Peterson, OFS**
- Nov. 2nd, Chapter 11: Creation: **Gilbert Ortiz, OFS**
- Dec. 7th, Chapter 12: Franciscan Prayer: **Sekoiya Spencer, OFS**
- 2025** Jan. 4th, Chapter 13: Peace and Peacemaking: **David Burrola, OFS**
- Feb. 1st, Chapter 14: Evangelization: **Joice Quinsaat, OFS**
- Mar. 1st, Epilogue: That we might follow His footprints: **Lisa B., OFS**

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**A Minute Meditation
From Franciscan Media
Saints Lead Us to the Table**

The lives of the saints are not meant to make us feel small, they are not meant to feel unattainable, and they are not the stories of superhuman beings. The saints became vessels of God’s hope to God’s people. They allowed themselves to be transformed by the truth of Scripture, practicing the traditions and teachings of our faith in a way that welcomed all people to the table. As a universal Church, we can learn from these three holy people how to love our neighbor, make space for others, and live daily lives marked by the love of the Gospel.

The saints draw us into the conversation of faith, life, and the ways in which we can love each other and, in doing so, love God. They draw us out of isolation, indifference, and darkness to walk along a road that leads us to a table where everyone is welcomed to come and break bread with the Messiah.

—from *St. Anthony Messenger’s “Our Saints, Ourselves”* by Vanesa Zuleta Goldberg

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**Pause and Pray
Following the Better Angels of Our Nature
Reflect**

In his first inaugural address, President Abraham Lincoln counseled his listeners to follow the better angels of their nature. War was on the horizon, and yet Lincoln asserted that “we are not enemies, but friends.” In our uncivil and divisive time, we can listen to the better angels of our nature and, like Francis, be instruments of peace in every encounter, even in times of contentiousness.

Pray

*God of all people,
Let me follow the better angels of my nature.
Let me seek peace and strive to be a peacemaker.
Let your dream of peace motivate and guide me
In every situation
So that every encounter will be reconciling, healing, and uniting.
Amen.*

Act

In every situation today, whether watching the news or dealing with others’ behaviors, ask: “In this context, how can I follow the better angels of my nature? How can I promote friendship, not enmity? How can I be a multiplier and not a divider in terms of friendship and creativity?” Observe your responses as you seek to be an instrument of peace toward others and in your life as a citizen.

Today’s *Pause+Pray* was written by Bruce Epperly.

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And now, Photos from our #2 Elite Assistant Newsletter Photographer, Christine Benedicto, Mrs. Arsenio:



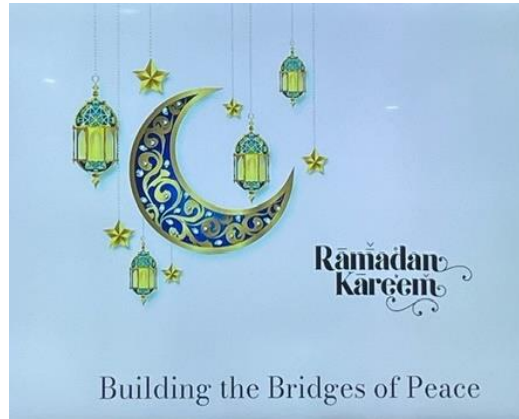
From our participation at the 2024 Iftar Dinner at the Corona/Norco Mosque:



Those at our table: Christine, Arsenio, Henna, Bruce, (3 people I don’t know) Sekoiya and Lisa B.



Our Muslim liaison Henna, and Bruce M.



The slide show



And speaking of Bruce, he was one of the speakers.

Islamic Society of Corona-Norco Ramadan Iftar Dinner 2024

Program	
Moderators: Sis. Fatima Quadar Khan Sis. Ayra Berket	Adhan (call to prayer) <i>The following is the Arabic transliteration and the English translation of the call to prayer.</i>
Quran Recitation Qari Abdulkareem Alhazmi	Allahu Akbar Allah (God) is Great (said four times)
Translation and Remarks by: Shk. Obair Katchi, ISCN IMAM	Ashhadu an la ilaha illa Allah I bear witness that there is no god except the One God (Allah). (said twice)
Adhan (7:05PM) HAMZA BASNAWI	Ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasool Allah I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. (said twice)
Iftar (Breaking of the fast)	Hayya 'al as-Salah Hurry to the prayer (Rise up for prayer) (said twice)
Salatul Maghrib: Adjourn to Prayer Hall	Hayya 'al al-Falah Hurry to success (Rise up for Salvation) (said twice)
Dinner	Allahu Akbar Allah is Great (said twice)
Welcome Remarks Sis. Shazia Meraj, Director Interfaith	La ilaha illa Allah There is no God except the One God (Allah)
Remarks by:	
Tom Richins, Mayor City of Corona	<i>All-Haram Mosque in Makkah (Kaaba)</i>
Karen Speigel, Supervisor Riverside County	<i>It is toward this spot that Muslims turn five times a day in prayer. And it is the goal of every devout Muslim to make a pilgrimage to the Kaaba at least once in a lifetime.</i>
Athar Sayeed, President BOD, ISCN	Islamic tradition asserts that Abraham and Ishmael built the Kaaba as a copy of God's
Wes Speake, Corona Councilmember	
Bruce McAdams, Catholics Church	
Robert Newman, Chief of Police	
Tony Daddario, Corona Councilmember	
Rudy Preciado, Church of Christ / LDS	
Concluding Remarks & Vote of Thanks Mohammed Ashraf, Chairman - BOT	

Islamic Society of Corona-Norco	
Board of Directors	
President:	Athar Sayeed
Secretary:	Kamran Haque
Treasurer:	Abdur Rauf
Director:	Shazia Meraj
Director:	Shabbir Moosaji
Director:	Samar Hajjar
Director:	Farhan Khan
Director:	Bassam Yamout
OTHER BOARDS	
Trustees	Board of Education
Mohammed Ashraf	Moizuddin Haqami
Itekhhar Saulat	Syed Mazhar Ali
Waleed Nassar	Mashood Mirza
Ghulam Mustafa	Mir Ali Khan
Shahid Jalal	
IMAM	
Shk. Obair Katchi	
Ramadan Iftar-Dinner Coordinators	
ISCN BOD	
The Women's Committee	
Armi Hassounah	
& Many Volunteers and Youth	

The Program for tonight



Bruce in the food line



Food served ~ Please don't ask me what it all.



Arsenio, Lisa, Sekoia and Bruce.



Goodies on the table, to be eaten at exactly 7:05 pm to break the Ramadan fast. Pistachio Baklava with dried apricots, and a plate of nuts and dates.

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Christ is Risen!
A Reflection for Easter Sunday
By Most Rev. Michael Duca

I have always been at a loss for how to greet people at Easter. I suppose the default greeting is “Happy Easter,” but that has always seemed too small for the wondrous feast of the Resurrection. It also seems too secular and mundane, like “Have a nice day.”

The greeting that I believe is most fitting on Easter Sunday is not a greeting at all but rather the proclamation, “*Christ is Risen!*” and the response, “*He is Risen Indeed!*”

This is not a passive greeting but a proclamation that invites an active response.

Often when we advocate for the rights of the vulnerable, the abolition of the death penalty, and fair treatment of the immigrant, it can feel as if we are speaking into the darkness, at times with a worry that this darkness might overwhelm us. Be reminded that at the core of each of these advocacies is the foundation proclamation, “*Christ is Risen!*”

Christ is the Light that overcomes the darkness, and when we speak of the hope and truth of the Gospel, we are speaking Light into darkness. At times it seems that no one is listening, but their silence does not diminish the Light of Christ. This Light of truth continues to prick the conscience of those listening, and when we wonder if anything is happening, we hear someone with a changed heart cry out in faith, **HE IS RISEN INDEED!**

The response to our proclamation is an ecclesial moment where two or three are gathering. When someone responds, we feel the strength and support of the Body of Christ.

We cannot proclaim “*Christ Is Risen,*” out loud without 1.) being pulled into the mystery of our faith, 2.) giving a public witness and 3.)

considering what you truly believe and how it is reflected in your life.

The challenges before the Church today are calling us to consider whether our Catholic faith is a generic title that has little influence in our lives or whether we embrace our Catholic faith so that it influences our whole lives. Give witness to your faith in your life.

Do not just hope for a Happy Easter, but rather pray for a faith that is willing to proclaim Jesus risen from the dead, out loud!

“CHRIST IS RISEN!” And let the Church respond, “HE IS RISEN INDEED!”

Submitted by Ray Hardwick, OFS

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Feel free to use the rest of this page for your notes from the Gathering. Stay safe and be healthy. God Bless you, always.