

E-Troubadour—February 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in St. Francis,

It seems as though we were just celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus, and now we are already beginning the time when we meditate on his death. It is so very Franciscan to have both of these momentous occasions on our minds and in our prayer time every day! The Crib and the Cross were a source of inspiration and wonder for our Seraphic Father because there he encountered the humanity and humility of our Savior. Francis emptied himself of all the distractions of this world so that he could fill himself continually with the presence of Christ.

Lent is a great time for us to give ourselves a “checkup” in this regard. Do the Crib and the Cross call out to us each day? Where do we find the inspiration to follow our Rule, “...*going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel?*” How do we treat one another? Are we kind? Are we willing to reach out to those in need? Are we willing to reach out to our own brothers and sisters with whom we do not agree? Are we *transformed* by the humanity and humility of Jesus as Saint Francis was? Some days it’s not easy.

Brothers and sisters, precisely because this is a challenge, we need to support and encourage one another in our efforts to live the Rule and the Gospel! We are blessed because one of the hallmarks of the Franciscan way of life is fraternity. The fraternity gives us life and can help us to nurture and strengthen our commitment as Secular Franciscans, but is up to us to reach out to one another. One way this can happen within the fraternity is through ongoing formation.

I want to encourage each one of you, not only Councils and Formation teams but everyone, to build a robust ongoing formation program in your fraternity. Read together, discuss the Franciscan topics that excite you, offer to give a presentation. Lately, I have read some excellent books and listened to two wonderful lecture series which I am going to recommend to you at the end of this letter. Perhaps some of these materials can be used in your fraternity. You might want to explore some of these titles for yourself and then offer to make a presentation. It is up to all of us to nourish one another!

I am looking forward to meeting many of you as we begin our cycle of Visitations and Elections for this three-year period. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the Region Executive Council with your questions or concerns. Please pray for us. We are praying for you!

Peace and blessings,

Diane

Diane F. Menditto, OFS  
Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region

Reading and Listening Recommendations:

**Lent and Easter Wisdom from Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi**

Compiled by John V. Kruse, PhD

Published by Liguori

(Available on Amazon)

**Francis of Assisi and the Future of Faith**

Daniel P. Horan, OFM

Tau Publishing (Kindle edition available on Amazon)

**The Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium)**

Pope Francis (Download a free copy here:

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html)

Or purchase in book or Kindle format from Amazon)

**The Last Words of Jesus**

Daniel P. Horan, OFM

Franciscan Media

**Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love**

Ilia Delio

St. Anthony Messenger Press

**FUN Manual**

National Formation Commission (Every fraternity should have a copy!)

**Audio Lectures**—Purchase CD sets or Download from *Now You Know Media*.

These are a bit pricey, but they are a good investment for the fraternity to have. The individual lectures can be played at a meeting and discussed. The CD sets come with a study guide.

**The Treasure of a Poor Man: St. Francis of Assisi and Franciscan Spirituality**

Brother William Short, OFM

<https://www.nowyouknowmedia.com/franciscan/the-treasure-of-a-poor-man-st-francis-of-assisi-and-franciscan-spirituality.html>

**Saint Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God**

Brother William Short, OFM

<https://www.nowyouknowmedia.com/franciscan/saint-bonaventure-the-soul-s-journey-into-god.html>

**Note: If you have other recommendations, please send them to me. We will compile a list to share with everyone.**