

## Council Report for 2019-2020

Your Council, siblings, who have been called to serve the community, are grateful to have had this year together. When we started this journey in June 2019 we had no idea where we were heading. We began as a successful transition from one group of Council members to another group. Only one member of the previous Council continued on. All looked like things would be similar to previous practices and responsibilities. The world we knew was about to change.

The current practice of the Council is to meet weekly for an hour on a ZOOM call. We generally send emails weekly back and forth addressing concerns. Your Council also meets one a year in a face to face gathering. We met from Jan. 31st through Feb 2nd, 2020, at Pallottine Renewal Center in the St. Louis area.

Each year the Council gathers to work on administrative needs of the Order, pastoral concerns, Chapter/Convocation planning and community building. This year we met with some other Franciscans who were attending the 1st Joint Franciscan Formation Summit. This summit was a joint meeting with OFS, OLF and our own members. (see their report for details)

Those first 8 months sailed by uneventful. Then COVID-19 began. Our focus changed. We are called to provide pastoral care but now that became a major concern of ours. We began our weekly meetings with an update on COVID-19 and how that was affecting our little community. During this time period we also began to discuss what we will do regarding the 2020 Chapter/Convocation.

The planning of Chapter/Convocation each year is a large part of Council's duty. We started planning in the Fall of 2019 and then in the Spring of 2020 we had to switch our plans - from a in-person gathering to an online event. We spent the Spring monitoring the situation, discerning "what if" and discerning what we should do. At first we decided to move Chapter/Convocation to Aug. and maybe things would change for the better. it did not. We decided our gathering would be online to best serve our siblings needs. We also decided to stay with our focus on St. Clare.

As a guide for our planning for Chapter/Convocation we used the following general ideas about our purpose for gathering.

"..to connect as a community, discern the Spirits leading and serve alongside each other in our time together." (Thank you Michael Vosler for these guiding words)

Storytelling is a major element of our gathering (this will not change). Staying on the same time zone - Central Time Zone, as if we were in St. Louis, helps with some sense of being "normal". Having time to fellowship with one another is a normal activity that we want to continue with just will be in a different format.

In the current world that we find ourselves in, we are thinking about the following.

\*How does the witness of St. Clare impact our individual life and the life of our Order?

\*How can we follow Jesus in the footsteps of Francis and Clare in the moment? We think spending 3 years at the Pallottine Renewal Center gives us opportunities to develop relationships in the St. Louis County area, that will aid us in our goals. We have lots of resources and relationships in St. Louis, such as, Anytown Youth Leadership, Christ the

King United Church of Christ (their minister is the Rev. Dr. Traci Blackman)  
and an Interfaith Coalition group.

In summary here are some of what we accomplished, guided or walk along beside throughout this past year:

- Provided pastoral care to our siblings
- Represented our Order at other Order's Chapter/Convocation - TSSF and OLF
- Wrote weekly Advent reflections - focus was on the Gospel readings
- Wrote weekly Lent reflections - focus was "community covenant for a supportive and affirming Order of Ecumenical Franciscan."
- Wrote a statement regarding the Australian wildfires
- Wrote a Black Lives Matter statement
- Supported Br. Coyote in his Earth Day reflections during the Spring
- Wrote a statement reflecting on Earth Day
- Planned the 2020 online Chapter/Convocation
- Conducted a weekend long face to face gathering
- Met with the Joint Franciscan Formation group
- Ongoing building connections with our task/ministry groups

The 2020 Chapter/Convocation will be different but can be the same fellowship. Come early, long before Morning Prayer, and let's have that early morning coffee.

Remember "St. Clare, light from within, what can we learn from her witness". May we all step into her light.

Your Council

Betty Lou Leaver, Jacoba Katya (David) Ketchum, Bruce James Kay, Juniper (John George) Robertson, Markie Oliver