

FIDDLESTICKS

Issue 138

Pentecost 2021



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Lifelong Formation

The "Ongoing Formation Team" has now been renamed "Lifelong Formation Team." (Below) you will find a letter from Sr. Dale Carmen. After prayerful discernment and team input, we feel this new name is a good fit. Some of the input shared was that the word "ongoing" just sounds burdensome. With the word "lifelong," one thinks of active commitment, in this case, to God by way of following Jesus in the little ways. Also, as Dale points out, we as an Order of Franciscans, should never become complacent in our abidance by the Rule of Life and Principles set before us after Profession. As we grow in the Spirit so shall our Rule of Life grow and flow. Unlike our Franciscan founders, Francis and Clare, who had limited resources to draw from, we today, have so many wonderful resources and people within our Order and outside the Order to draw from for Spiritual and Franciscan growth. We should never feel satisfied or full-up on Franciscan enrichment. We should never allow ourselves to fall into the comfort of routine after Profession. Accountability and desire for growth with each other is part of being a family.

Sr. Dale requests that her letter be posted in Fiddlesticks and its wisdom received with open and loving hearts!

Lifelong Formation
Dale Carmen O.E.F.
March, 2021

I have been in formation since early 1980s. First, as a Postulant and Novice under the Third Order, Society of Saint Francis (T.S.S.F.) Formation Counselors. In 1983 I was Professed a member of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans and since then have attempted to follow our Principle # 16, "...we covenant to draw up and live by a Personal Rule of Life based on the Rule of this Order (Principles)...we shall always be under supervision and accountable to an advisor." For the first 29-30 years of OEF we followed the pattern of TSSF whereby the Chaplain of the Order or Area Chaplains, determined a Professed member's 'supervisor' or 'advisor.' One was expected to report to their advisor four times a year.

(Continued on page 2)

Lifelong Formation... continued

Since approximately 2012-2013 there has been a shift from someone else (Chaplains) choosing our Formation advisor, to people choosing their own 'Formation Partner' after Profession, and thereby continuing to honor accountability to our Personal Rule and the General Rule, as described in Principle # 16.

As a Professed member, I have had my Formation 'supervisor', or Partner chosen for me until 2020. Even after the change to choosing one's own Formation Partner, I asked officers and Council members to choose one for me. Why?

Formation, after Profession, as I understand and desire it, is a relationship within OEF that takes what I say I want to do, my Personal Rule of Life; and reflects with me on my Personal Rule's applicability to the General Rule (Principles). In other words, am I doing what I want to do in living out a Franciscan life faithful to Jesus of the Gospels? Am I being faithful, transparent, honest and accountable? Do I paint broad generalities to 'love and justice' in my Personal Rule and nothing comes of it in my day-to-day life? Am I growing spiritually by humbly sharing my efforts, mistakes and shortcomings with another Professed brother or sister?

I prefer a Formation advisor/Partner be chosen for me because how do I know who would be good for me? I have had 12-15 chosen for me and they were all helpful to me in vastly different ways. One of my first formation advisors/partners was Afi Binta-Lloyd, herself an OEF Novice at the time. She was a Pentecostal Pastor, now deceased, who was incredibly different and deep and knew the Holy Spirit like no one I had ever known. She also was no-nonsense, practical and had a sense of humor. I may not have chosen Afi; however, she was certainly God's pairing then, and I am grateful.

A little over a year ago my Formation Partner honestly admitted I was asking spiritual questions he/she didn't know what to do with and advised me to find another Formation Partner. I asked the Council to find and assign me to one. One Council member gave me a list of 3-4 suggested people to ask. There again, how do I know who would be good for me? I assume

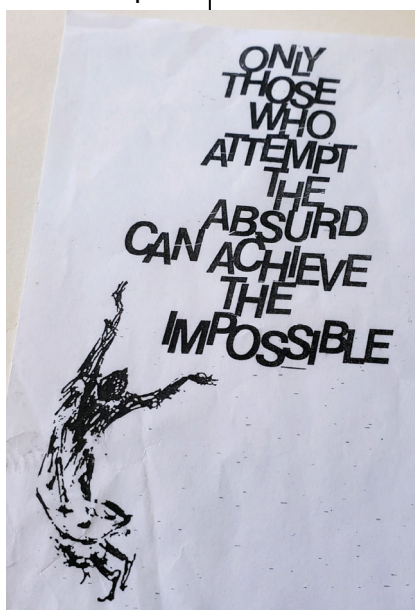
that each and every Professed member of OEF has something to teach me about spiritual growth and accountability to our Rules. If left to my own leanings, I would probably ask someone I know and with whom I have things in common. Most likely, someone who is not God's first choice to keep me on task.

This is the whole point of Lifelong Formation. In Christianity, in religious community, it is common and easy to speak the words and slide by on the discipline and doing which bears fruit for a suffering world; animate and inanimate. We need accountability or, God forbid, we may become comfortable. Being too comfortable can be a distraction to spiritual growth, purposefulness and fruitfulness, as witnessed in the lives of Jesus, Francis and Clare.

A long time ago I read a book on the history of Franciscanism. It referred to Francis forming a Third Order and a Rule for them (1221?) which would be doable by the common people; married or single, any profession, etc. This Rule included the promises not to have fur trim on your sleeves, or silk thread in your garments, or to bear arms. Remember, this was at a time when serfs were bound to work the land and fight the battles of the Lord of the manor, the land on which they depended. Then, there was a paragraph I shall never forget. The author claimed that the large number of ordinary people who joined the Third Order and followed the Rule, "contributed to the eventual breakdown of the feudal system in Europe".followed the Rule...contributed...to the breakdown of...feudalism.....

That's an incredible collective tsunami of social change based on accountability to Francis, Clare and Jesus. Do I expect the same from the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans? Yes, yes, yes. Christianity, the fate of the natural world and all who suffer, need us to embrace our covenant of accountability. I keep a logo and quote always close (shown at left): the logo is an abstract dancing, jumping, exuberant image of Francis, beside the comment, **"Only those who attempt the absurd can achieve the impossible"**.

We try, in Lifelong Formation, the impossible.





Words from The Servant Council



Our annual Chapter/Convocation is almost here. Our theme this year is, "Peace, Comfort and Joy: Caring for Our Community". We are planning the usual events such as the Juniper Cup contest (actually Denise M. is), worship services, business session and small groups. **The last day to register is May 31st. Please go to the OEF website to complete the registration form, whether you are attending in person or via Zoom.** If you are unable to register online then email or call John Micahel Longworth, Steve Bowman or Markie Oliver to give your information. This is a hybrid gathering, meaning there will be as much as possible online (ZOOM) .

We are also planning our community service opportunity at Pallottine Renewal Center. By providing volunteer time at the Center we are being more green, less driving, and we can do more and have more siblings be involved. Currently they are allowing us to care for their flower gardens and finding some indoor tasks for us. We have been invited to create/build a compost (wooden structure) system, and maybe a wood crib if there is time and energy. So for those interested in outside work please bring some old clothes, these should be dirty jobs. For all of you who are coming early on Wed. there will be a lot of opportunities.

Also for those who are attending in person, please bring a water bottle and/or a travel mug (less paper cups). We are trying to be as green as we can. There will be very few paper copies of everything we do at C/C. Also for those driving please consider bringing a camp chair or two with you. We are planning to be outside as much as possible. And if you are driving, you will be asked to make a trip or two to the airport to pick up or drop off a sibling or two.

We are planning at least 4 small group sessions at C/C. These group sessions will be focusing on how we care for one another. You will be in the same group throughout our gathering. For those attending online you will be placed into Zoom

groups. Our tech siblings will work out all the details to ensure that you will be included.

We are all looking forward to our time together. Come let us worship, play, eat, work and be together in peace, giving comfort and experiencing joy.

I encourage folks, if the tech is not their thing, to call John Michael, Steve (Salachar) or me (Markie) and we can take their information. Steve will be doing a lot of the tech stuff at C/C and he can help folks with the online ZOOM stuff during C/C.

OEF Council Statement of Support for and Solidarity with our Transgender and Inter-sex Siblings and Communities

Dear siblings, and all friends of our little Order of Ecumenical Franciscans,

There is joy in remembering how we have been called together, to celebrate the Divine Presence and grace in everything, and to follow the Poor Christ in lives of mutual care and accountability. For many of us, this calling has also been healing. We have known well the sting of exclusion, bigotry, discrimination, and violence. What a difference to find a community where we can receive one another as gifts, where we can welcome, include, and learn with and from one another! And in learning to love each other more honestly and fully, we find we are also drawn more deeply into the love of God.

But this joy is often mixed with grief, and today we especially acknowledge the hatred aimed at transgender and inter-sex people. Bullying, abuse, assault, murder, and suicide are all too common, especially for those who are Black, Brown, or Indigenous.

(Continued on page 4)

Words from the Servant Council... continued

Discrimination in health care, education, housing, religious institutions and employment are everyday experiences. And each year, we brace ourselves for the next round of legislation that will be proposed to further legalize discrimination.

This year has brought new highs of such legislation. In 2021, at least 117 bills in 33 states have been introduced that are aimed at discriminating against transgender people, especially youth. While many of these bills will not become law, Arkansas has already outlawed providing gender-affirming treatment to minors. And even proposing these bills is an attempt to normalize discrimination against an already vulnerable population.

Christ's love compels us to proclaim, in the face of such discrimination and harm, that not only "Trans Rights are Human Rights," but that transgender, non-binary, gender-expansive, gender nonconforming, and inter-sex people are children of God who bear the Divine image.

In our General Rule of Life, we joyfully and wholeheartedly affirm that: "Members are ... inclusive of all gender identifications and sexual orientations." In this spirit, we urge all people to work together to oppose all anti-trans legislation and to bring about full and equal inclusion of transgender and inter-sex people in all areas of life.

In the love and grace of Jesus, and in the little way of Saints Francis and Clare,

Your Servant Council
(Betty Lou, Bruce James, Jacoba, Juniper, and Markie)

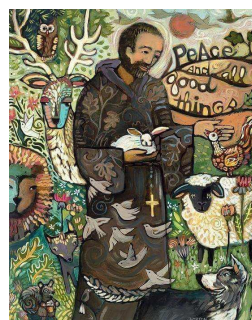
Please check out the latest resource on our Formation Resources Page!

saintfrancislibrary.org

Take Care, Br. Stephan

JPIC Musings

by, Sr. Julian Baker, OEF



Francis would call creatures, no matter how small, by the name of "brother" or "sister," because he knew they shared with him the same beginning.

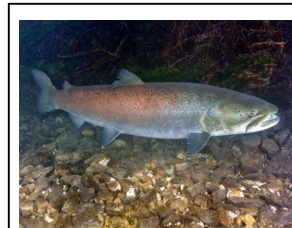
—Bonaventure, *The Life of Blessed Francis*

We who follow Francis in the 21st century know this well. We see changes around us in the elements that support all life—air, water, earth, commerce—in the forested places that burn, near enough to feel the heat and breathe the smoke.

Brother Coyote writes about the environment Christ lived in. We learn about the tilapia, called Saint Peter's Fish; about secret fishing grounds near the Sea of Galilee; different species of fig trees and types of grains prevalent in the 1st Century. As we follow Christ through the New Testament, we are reminded that what was happening then is happening right now. Saint Peter and crew might still be able to make a living on the Sea of Galilee today but four out of every ten fish swimming in the lakes and rivers of North America are endangered.

When I moved to Western Washington in 1963, the population was 2.955 million, now it is 7.8 million. Salmon seemed to be everywhere. Native peoples were protesting, demanding treaty rights be honored and enforced. They won and blocked two planned terminals for shipping coal to Asia. Even though the State is obligated to protect salmon, the largest run of sockeye in the Lower 48 is failing, extinction looms.

What is your favorite fish? How is it doing?





O.E.F. Principle #13 - A Reflection

By Sr. Carol Stiver, OEF



"We shall respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which 'bear the imprint of the Most High;' and we shall strive to move from the temptation of exploiting Creation toward the Franciscan concept of universal kinship."

As Francis taught us to look for the small evidences of God's work, I marvel at the mysterious patterns of frost on my window. I pick up a rock (some of its elements the same as in my blood stream) streaked with quartz and wonder at its origin likely to have been brought 1000 miles south to me with the great heaves of our planet scooping out great gorges of rock and soil.

It's not unlike the creator labor pains that moved me east from my native Ohio. A long time friend of mine remarked upon visiting at yet another address of mine, "you always live in a beautiful location."

It's true. As a nurse shopping in the starter house category, my eyes only light up when I see the poetry of land in a home with a spark of fun included. Currently I live on a hill overlooking the forest beneath and above me. It stretches out to the horizon with not a human made device in sight. The view in the enclosed photo is of the early morning facing west as it awaits the fall rays of the sun.

Besides the usual groundhogs and squirrels I once saw some high tree foliage moving and it turned out to be a bear. When I moved in my chair causing it to snap, I was face to face with her from my balcony. We held eye contact for a good ten seconds with 40 feet of crisp morning air between us and even with this distance I could tell by her head that she was much bigger than me. Having had enough of me, she turned her head and was again invisible, the foliage moving violently as she descended.

Purposefully, I live in an apartment, climate wise I can no longer justify a single family dwelling for myself. My heating needs are nil as I share walls, ceiling and floor with my neighbors and I have pulled in a roommate to share my footprint. Overhead, I hear the scampering of the neighbor's Labrador-sized cat. I argue with Andrea that, yes, I hear her using her new drum set and no it does not bother me. I wonder if she will ever believe me! I wonder who is making the delicious sauce that I smell in the hallway and I think about preparing

something good for myself. Like many decisions based in climate friendly awareness, there are unexpected bonuses and I count the interactions of others among them.

The importance of contact with others has never been more noticeable than in these Covid times. A year ago, not only did the pace of our interpersonal relationships slow, but so did our supply chain. Suddenly our grocery stores had empty shelves and coolers. Baking ingredients and cuts of meat were in short supply. Smaller stores needed our patronage to keep their doors open. Our skies cleared a little as cars stayed at home. Sometimes we could appreciate the stillness and slowed pace as a hidden gift of the pandemic. I was led to return to a vegan lifestyle. Like a peasant, I look to see what is in cheap supply and determine to make something good of it.

I was just in my teens when I started my life as a sometime vegetarian, perhaps in concert with the first Earth Day, celebrated in 1970. I was swayed primarily by the argument that animals raised for consumption were a huge use of water supplies, as is the use of processed foods. It continues to be a major reason for my food choices, followed closely by the needless use of animals to satisfy our palate.

What can I do to be good to my Earth? At this time I choose to write the politicians to support the giant infrastructure bill that includes deep and wide measures to push our big hearted country into several ecological directions that embrace love for our planet.

I can celebrate Earth Day with a new sign for my window with the words, "Stop Buying Things" superimposed over a picture of our blue and green planet.

I can sing along with musicians big and small to be good to our planet such as on You-Tube links.

And I can pray with others: We pray for clean air, clean water, and clean soil. We know the sky, land, and waterways. Teach us to care for the Earth as you desire. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.





Fellowship News



The New Zealand Fellowship continues to attend Wellington Area TSSF meetings. In recent months it was decided to call this TSSF Group the **Gubbio Fellowship**.

We are privileged to be able to meet in person and exchange hugs.

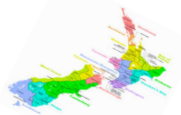
At the moment the group is studying the TSSF Australian province Novice Notes along with reflections on them written by a former New Zealand TSSF member. These studies also refer to the TSSF Principles.



The group has also been watching several episodes of a Virtual Pilgrimage of Assisi put together by some New Zealanders who had traveled to Assisi. The event was held live late last year in Palmerston North and we have been watching videos of that event.

The most recent meeting was on Saturday May 1st.

Kiwi



THE VERY FIRST SHARED GATHERING OF THE GREAT NORTHWEST & THE GOLDEN GATE FELLOWSHIPS

will take place on Saturday, May 29th, 2021, from 9:30am to noon (give or take) PDT in a Zoom Room hosted by Kathy Lawler.

We who were once The Juniper Fellowship (after a west coast tall-tree and bush) consisting



of Northern CA, OR, & Washington, then split for travel convenience into **The Great Northwest Fellowship**

(WA, OR, UT & MT) and **The Golden Gate Fellowship**, will Zoom together, praising God, and



being our "be".

- *Opening Prayer/Liturgy*

- *CHECK-INS really as the main agenda item*
 - *Reflections on what we've heard from the check-ins about our part in the life of The Order, and any issues you discerned that we all need to be a part of addressing.*
 - *Sharing "news" from or about The Order and its Members and the upcoming Chapter/Convocation in St. Louis — how many of us are planning on being among the Gathered? How many Zooming in?*

- *Closing Prayer/Liturgy and Send-out.*

Zoom Guests are welcome from wherever. To receive the invitation and link, contact Sister Kathy Lawler at kylawler.oef@gmail.com

- michael vosler

Also, **The Great Lakes Lighthouse Fellowship** continues to gather via Zoom every other Sunday at 4:00PM CDT. Our next gathering is Sunday May 23. Please email Br. John Son-of-Syvert for an invitation: jsyverts@hotmail.com.

-Sister Chris





RIP Gerry Clark



Gerald Francis Clark (a postulant in OEF) died February 19, 2019, a month short of his 70th birthday. In his online obituary (available at <https://tinyurl.com/2apwrhu3>), Gerry is identified — correctly — as “a life-long advocate and good friend of people in poverty.” He was also a biblically-grounded theologian, an indefatigable activist, and a champion and cheerleader for ecumenical efforts. He did his initial formation with Nancy Menning, OEF and was being companioned by Reg Weeks, OEF when he suddenly “went silent” in early 2019.



Gerry had a short walk with OEF in 2012, but then stepped aside to focus his energies on a housing project. When he returned to apply for postulancy in November 2017, he was pursuing a D Min (Doctor of Ministry) degree through the Portland Seminary of George Fox University. The tentative title for his dissertation was “Liberation Spirituality is God’s Healing Balm for the Poor and Marginalized Suffering from Mental Health Maladies.” The D Min degree was largely taught online, so Gerry was able to continue living at home in Rochester, NY. On his 62nd birthday in 2011, he had committed to traveling only by public transportation and by walking. So, when he needed to travel to Cannon Beach, Oregon, for periodic retreat gatherings with his D Min cohort, he rode the Greyhound Bus across the country.

Nancy Menning recalls that Gerry rode the Greyhound Bus from Rochester to Ithaca, NY, on December 28, 2017. It was a cold, windy day in Ithaca. The temperatures were in the single digits, with wind gusts up to 20 mph. Nancy met Gerry at the bus stop and the two of them walked around the west side of town, stopping in for a light lunch at the State St Diner and later, to warm up, popping in to sit and rest awhile at the homeless warming shelter. Mike Foster, another OEF postulant, was staffing the shelter in those days, so — amid the busyness of that context — Nancy and Gerry got to visit with Mike a short while as well. Then Nancy walked Gerry back to the Greyhound depot to catch his ride back to Rochester.

Gerry also traveled by Greyhound Bus to an August 2018 OEF regional gathering at Fred and Marian Jaxheimer’s home in Sugarloaf, PA. Fred recalls Gerry arriving with a 12-pound Mortadella ham (to contribute to our meals together), a large Celtic Book of Daily Prayer, and not a whole lot else. Due to the bus schedules, Gerry spent an extra night in Pennsylvania and accompanied Fred on his morning ministry travels the next day. In between taking a blind dialysis patient to their treatment and giving communion to a woman in a

nursing home, Fred and Gerry shared life experiences of advocating and befriending the poor and of championing and witnessing ecumenical cooperation.

Gerry had an energetic mind, drawn especially to theology and social justice. His personal reflections and public witnesses were always scripturally grounded and often peppered with theological concepts and interpretations of the original Hebrew and Greek terms of the biblical texts. His last report to his formation companion, Reg Weeks, was on justice (chapter 12 of OEF’s formation materials). He began with biblical references linking justice and peace, then wrote about being enraged by media accounts of voter suppression in Georgia. Gerry never stopped with righteous anger. He put it to work. After reading about the situation in Georgia, he reached out to the Black woman pastor who had been mentioned in the news coverage. He prayed with her and then asked two other people he knew who had also suffered racial intimidation to call and pray with her. His chapter report continued (for two more single-spaced pages) to recount other actions he had taken in New York to secure the legal rights of the poor and marginalized, ending with this summation: “So, I am deeply involved in keeping the blindfold on Lady Justice and keeping fingers off the scales.”

Gerry had a minimalist lifestyle. He traveled by bus and by foot. He lived in the barrio, the Spanish section of the poorest part of Rochester, NY. He carried a big ham and a very big book of prayer, and not a whole lot else. Reflecting on the book *St. Francis and the Foolishness of God* by Dennis, Nangle, Moe-Lobeda, and Taylor, he commented that the authors’ intended audience “seems to be suburban white people.” Then he wrote, “I have already moved beyond the lifestyle they reference.” But he made that statement with humility, asking himself what else beyond material goods he could yet relinquish. What more could he give up and surrender to the will of God? And he questioned whether his “independence” was a form of “wealth” he was still unwilling to give up. “Does my independence really give me the ability to do things that I would not otherwise be able to do, or is that just rationalization and narcissistic justification?”

Gerry Clark was an example for us all. Rest in peace, good and faithful servant.



l-r: Sr. Petra, Br. Fred, Br. David
D. Sr. Nancy, Donna Clair
(Inquirer), Gerry

INSIGHTS FROM THE BIBLE STUDY TABLE

At the OEF Bible Study April 14th, we were focused on Luke 24:36-48, and we discerned that the first part of the passage is Jesus saying "to the Eleven and those gathered with them, 'Why are you so fearful? Yes, It's really me! standing before you in all my physicality.'"

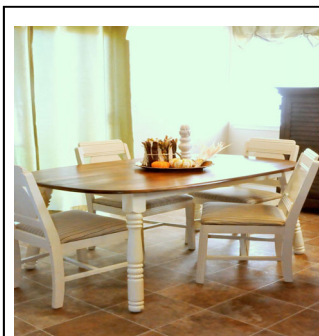
Then Jesus curved that into "And it's really you in the fullness of your physicality who will be my witnesses and carry my message to all the people of the world to change their hearts! You will be clothed by power from on high to do that."

And then we thought, a faithful reading of that passage will occasion the realization that the next turn on that story is: "It's really us...." for this time, in the places where we live and where we go.

At the end, Denise Magnuson, n/OEF shared her appreciation of OEF with the image that for her OEF is a New Wineskin within the Christian community into which has been poured the New Wine of Ecumenism and Inclusiveness offered to the world as a gift from God.

My heart affirmed that! May it be so. And consider again the OEF-Chat invitation to the OEF Bible study.... every week, or whenever you can add your presence and spirit.

Peace! - michael v./ oef



OEF Online Bible Study

The weekly OEF bible study has moved to Wednesday at 8:00 pm edt. You can join the study on Zoom at

Topic: OEF Bible study Time: This is a recurring meeting Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89760718708?pwd=N2R0THcrWUpWSzlyM2N3eEdG-dEF0QT09>

We study the gospel for the coming Sunday as listed on the Revise Common Lectionary. We use the "African method" bible study: Read the passage, everyone picks the word or phrase that stands out for them. Read the passage again (in a different translation), everyone identifies how this impacts them as a person. Read the passage a third time (in a third translation) and everyone identifies how this impacts us as a community. Then time for general sharing on the passage.

You are most welcome to join!

Br. Juniper, OEF



OEF History Project

For those who haven't heard, we (Sr. Dale, Br. Ron, Sr. Markie, and I) are working on a history of The Order. As we move forward, it would be helpful to me to receive copies of pictures, notes, meeting records, and the like to help fill out the content of the book, especially anything that reflects not only "business" decisions but personal takes on the Order at any given moment in time.

Thanks,
Betty Lou





Something for Earth Day



Creation Hymn for the Season of Creation

**This hymn is intended to be sung in a 'kitset' fashion. The first and last verses are always to be sung. In between, insert, from the remaining verses, as many verses as you wish to match the week's Creation theme*

This music and these words can be freely reproduced for use in worship.

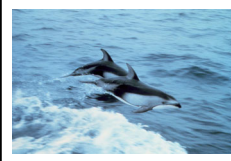
Please acknowledge Vivien and Susan as the composer and author.

Music: © 2016 Vivien Chiu

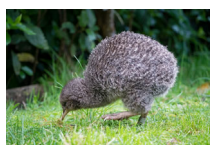
Words: © 2017-18 Susan Jones

**1 In our world we find delight
For creation, day and night
Brings us solace, joy;
Spirit grows, refreshes, gleams
as the earth fuels richer dreams
just by being here;
May this beauty never end
May this solace always be here
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion.**

**2 Maui dolphin skims the waves
Gray and sleek, graceful at play
Aotearoa's child;
Paua clings beneath the tide
Hiding beauty deep inside
Aotearoa's jewel;
May this beauty never end
May this blueness always be here
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion**



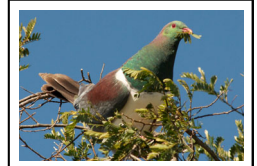
**3. Dark to light flies on the moth
Mottled, marked, like linen cloth
Only found right here;
Hiding in the darkest nest
Kiwi like the night the best
Only found right here;
May this beauty never end
May this brownness always be here
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion**



**4. Kauri reaches to the light
Strong and powerful, full of might
Giant of the trees;
Delicate, the orchid climbs
Over branches, green moss-lined
Swaying in the breeze;
May this beauty never end
May this greenness always be here
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion**



**5. Tui, iridescent coat,
Singing from a trembling throat
Crowns New Zealand's bush;
Kereru with mighty wings,
Blue and purple plumage brings
To New Zealand's bush;
May this beauty never end
May this iridescence stay here
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion**



**6. Storm brings dark clouds, waterfalls
Lightning's crash astounds us all
As the front rolls in;
Rain that lashes window panes
Brings new life to parched farmland
Re-hydrating fields;
May this beauty never end
May this rain continue watering
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion**



**7. Mountains march to distant heights
Wilderness tests all our might
Where the tussocks blow;
Windswept tors define the land
Desert plateaus, mountains stand
Old eruptions' scars;
May this beauty never end
May this rock and earth remain here
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion**



(Continued on page 10)

Something for Earth Day...continued

8. Looking into starry skies
Galaxies defeat our eyes
Distant stardust glows;
Spinning planets circle suns
Stars are born, supernovae stun
Cosmos is our 'hood;
*May this beauty never end
May this universe remain here
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion*



9. Water trickles, rushes, spouts
Deep calm lake drains to river
mouth
Power wrested from snow;
Humans, animals and plants
need hydration, need the chance
to refresh and grow;
*May this beauty never end
May this water last for everyone
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion*



10. Planet Earth spins like a jewel
Let us care and not be cruel
To this treasured gem
This blue teardrop hanging there;
Children's children need a share
We owe this to them;
*May this planet always flourish
May its children still inherit
May we help this star to shine bright;
Show Earth divine compassion*



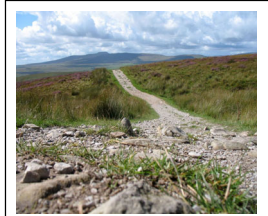
11. Let's endorse humanity
Part of Earth's full family
All made welcome here
Many genders, races, tribes
Personalities that jibe
All are welcome here;
*May all people feel accepted
Nations show true understanding
May all humans love each other;
And show divine compassion*



12. Skies stretch over all our
lives,
Prides of lion to bees in hives
All bask in the sun
Clouds race through as gale
winds blow
Cirrus high and stratus low
Skies are bright or glum;
*May the air be always fragrant
And its clarity untainted;
May the human race take notice
And show divine compassion*



13. Land provides our standing place,
hills through which the rivers trace,
give us space to be;
Ground which holds us, gives
us base,
needs our care, through all our
days
so it will survive;
*May this place continue
standing
May this earth continue holding
May our feet be ever grounded
Held in divine compassion*



14. It's a mystery who made this -
evolution, hand-made care -
multiple ideas.
But it's not a mystery who
Needs to care for green and blue -
We have all been charged
*To make sure this never ends
That this beauty does remain here
That the human race takes notice
And shows divine compassion*

-Submitted by Diane Gilliam-Weeks, New Zealand



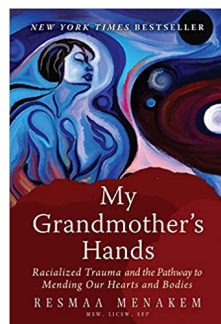
A New Book Study!

Anyone interested in joining in a study of "[My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies](#)" by Resmaa Menakem Tuesdays from 8:00-9:30 pm EDT, please reach out and let me know. If there is interest, the study will begin May 4th.

Publishers Weekly

Sensitive and probing, this book from therapist Menakem delves into the complex effects of racism and white privilege. Departing from standard academic approaches, he speaks from the wisdom of his grandmother and his own expertise in somatic therapy, a field that emphasizes the mind-body connection. Trauma, both present-day and historical, forms the cornerstone of Menakem's analysis. He writes that race is a "myth—something made up in the 17th century," with the concepts of whiteness and racial superiority nonetheless now "essential facts of life, like birth, death and gravity." The result is that both black and white people are traumatized with fear of the racial other and with the "dirty pain of avoidance, blame, and denial." At the outset, Menakem implores readers to "experience" his book in their bodies. To this end, bodycentric activities, such as breath exercises, are described throughout. Menakem emphasizes body mindfulness, helping readers move from unhealthy reflexive responses to traumatic emotions to the conscious experience of "clean pain," which involves directly facing such emotions and thereby getting past them. Menakem is specific when directing his messages. "To all my white readers," he says, "welcome... let's get to work." To law-enforcement officers he gives the same welcome. And to African-Americans, he offers counsel and highlights the value of their experiences.

Br. Juniper, OEF



2021 Juniper Cup!

Hi Siblings,

It's getting closer to Chapter/Convocation 2021. I have a theme for our Juniper Cup.

Ready Set Go!

Franciscans get ready to go.

By land, air, or sea you will know.

Up or down, near or far

Follow your star.

Adventure awaits us let's go!

For Juniper Cup 2021 please write a funny Limerick on the theme of Franciscan(s) traveling.

Peace and all Good,

DeniseM

Kudos to Sr. Kiwi for making my attempt at a Limerick into a real Limerick!

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

Submissions for the Post-Chapter 2021 issue of "Fiddlesticks" will be accepted immediately.

Deadline for submissions is July 15, 2021.

Send submissions to Sister Chris at
capoef@solarus.biz

or snail-mail to:

Christine Petersen, OEF
934 Round Oak Ct.
Nekoosa, WI 54457

Thank you!



A Brand New Life - Halleluiah!

Dear siblings,

**I am writing to tell you of the arrival of our
baby boy,**

Luca Anthony Blesz

born on 4/21/21 at 8:47 pm.

He came in at 8 pounds, 5 ounces.

My wife Darla and the baby are doing well.

Peace to all of you,

Dale Blesz, n/OEF



Luca Anthony Blesz



Race Relations 101

by, Dale Carmen, OEF



I share a true story about my father who was a life-long small farmer in North Dakota, U.S.A.

My sister lives in Washington state so once (1980s) I went with my parents by train to visit her. On our way back, we were sitting in the Seattle train station waiting for our train. My mom and I were on one bench and, across from us was my father sitting on one end of a long pew-like bench. He looked over at a middle-aged black woman at the other end of his bench. Now, you need to know my father was a social person. I jokingly said at his funeral, "Dad could strike up a conversation with a light pole". I watched my father scoot over a little closer to the black woman, lean toward her and say, "Well, what's it like being a negro in Seattle?"

I was really embarrassed at such a personal and 'deep' question of a complete stranger. The black woman, with worn-down shoes and a weary 'after-a-long-day' look, slowly turned toward my dad and looked him over.

She saw a white man with a respectful gaze and an honest question. There was no sense of superiority, fear or ill-will in this man. She sighed and started to talk to my dad and he listened intently. Somewhere in her story, I believe, he learned she was raised in a share-cropper's family in the deep south and the conversation turned to the common experience of scratching out a living on the land. When we got up to leave (a half hour later?) my dad reached over and they shook hands.

Lessons from my dad? Be curious. Ask. Listen. Respect. 'Lean in' to someone else's reality. Find common ground. It takes courage to do so.

Tree Planting Ceremony at Pallottine Renewal Center

by, Markie Oliver, OEF

On Sept. 15th of 2020 our donated tree was planted at the Pallottine Renewal Center, in Florissant, MO. Our tree was one of about 17 trees planted that day. The Oak trees are replacing the old and sick Oak trees that line the driveway that leads up to PRC. These older Oak trees were planted 50 years ago. My first hope is that these new Oak trees can live as long and more. The next time you are at Pallottine walk along the driveway and see each one with its individual plaque. Our plaque reads: Order of Ecumenical Franciscans "Caring For Our Common Home".

My second hope is that we can continue to donate a tree for each year that we gather at Pallottine. This is a meaningful act for us as a community to do something for our common home.

It was an honor to represent the OEF at the ceremony. We each had the opportunity to read/say something about who or why the tree was given. I shared our long history of coming to PRC for our annual Chapter/Convocation gatherings and how we can care for our common home thru acts of compassion and healing. I also read "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" with a few new verses to honor the day and represent our siblings.

Here are those extra verses,

Be praised, my Lord thru Brother Birds, you have been given feathers to wear and wings to fly, you are noble among the creatures. Come near and perch thyself high to see.

Be praised, my Lord, thru Brother Squirrel, who darts here and there, up and down the tree trunk, busy gathering nuts for the winter season, always playful.

Be praised, my Lord, thru Sister Tree, for you are a giver of life. Your limbs provide a safe space, shelter from all of the cruelties and

uncertainties of this world. Your trunk is strong and provides stability to those in need. Your leaves are flags of many colors, bright and ever changing. Always inviting, providing shade for all creatures. Your roots hold us all close to one another. Sustaining us with needed nourishment and anchoring us all to Sister Mother Earth.

Be praised, my Lord, be praised.



An Important Reminder

Reminder! Nancy Menning is the OEF Treasurer. Contributions can be made by sending a check (made out to "Order of Ecumenical Franciscans") to Nancy at:

**Order of Ecumenical Franciscans
c/o Nancy Menning, Treasurer
908 Elm St
Missoula, MT 59802**





Fiddlesticks
c/o Christine Petersen, OEF
934 Round Oak Ct.
Nekoosa, WI 54457
U.S.A.

New Zealand Lord's Prayer

Eternal Spirit
 Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
 Source of all that is and that shall be,
 Father and Mother of us all,
 Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo though the universe!
 The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of
 the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
 Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
 sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.
 In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
 In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
 From trials too great to endure, spare us.
 From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
 For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
 Now and for ever. Amen.
 - Submitted by Sr. Helen Bathurst, OEF

Make Me A Fool

If loving You with all of my heart makes me a fool,

then make me a fool.

If a desire to serve You with all that I am makes me a fool,

then make me a fool.

If trusting You for everything makes me a fool,
then make me a fool.

Make me a fool, Lord.
And make me proud to be one.

Amen.

**Author Unknown*
Submitted by Br. David Delacroix, OEF

