



Our Lady of the Rosary
Secular Franciscan Fraternity
Williamsburg, Virginia

www.olrsfo.weebly.com



2022

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

Another cold February before us, & only a few more weeks to Lent. What to do during these coming weeks? How about reaching out to other Fraternity members with a call or a card? Valentine's Day is just around the corner - a perfect excuse if one is needed. Why not turn this secular holiday into one full of the love of our Lord? Flowers & candy are nice to receive but nothing can equal a warm voice asking how you are, or the surprise of a card in the mail. It would be even better to receive a visit; present circumstances may not make this possible for many but the ability to reach out with love is still available to us.

May I jar your conscience just a little more? What plans have you made to celebrate Lent? Is there a specific program in your parish you could join? Or perhaps you could lead one for your Fraternity members? Be creative! We already have a Friday afternoon Rosary led by Susan via

Zoom. Perhaps you could lead something similar. Call me if you feel inspired to begin something beautiful.

I leave you with the following from Beginning Again with St. Francis:

"We often think that God's call comes to us when we have achieved a level of spiritual perfection, when we are worthy of so great a calling. But the reality for most of us is that we get hints & suggestions of a new direction for our lives at the most unexpected (& occupationally inopportune) times. It was this way for Jesus' first apostles. And it was this way for St Francis of Assisi & many other saints.

Prayer

Lord, you promise to make all things new, that includes me. As I begin this Journey to discover St Francis' way to you, I ask you to renew my faith, my hope, & my love. Amen"

Peace,

Maria

Important Dates:

2/3 Chris Wells — Birthday
2/20 Fraternity Meeting 1:00pm

Belated Birthday wishes to Robert
Matthews—January 21

Sorry I missed your birthday!

**Live A Life Worthy of
Your Call**

Secular Franciscan Order – USA
National Theme - 2021



Visit our website at olrsfo.weebly.com

Beginning Again with St Francis

"Let us begin to do good, for as yet we have done little." – St. Francis



Francis spoke these words at a time when most people already considered him a saint. In his mind, there was no plateau in life where he could feel he had "made it" & could coast into heaven from then on.

He did not compare his love with that of other men but with that of Christ; hence, he always saw an infinite expanse into which he could still go, becoming more and more like his Lord. God had already blessed you with his life & given you the gift of faith & faithfulness. Each time we begin anew, we enter a new phase of life intent on enriching our relationship with God. You are not entering upon something different from the Christian life or something better than the life of other Christians.

You are looking, like Francis & with Francis, into that vast expanse of Christ's love, & you desire to share it more deeply. The only thing different about your life is that your Christian life will now be given a particular coloring & direction by Francis & the traditions that have grown from his life & words. You're beginning again, & you will continue to begin again for the rest of your life.

In your spiritual life, you must be satisfied to progress gradually. Usually you will not notice your growth. Sometimes it may even seem you are growing backward as you discover your weaknesses & failings. But trust in God. Allow God to lead you

Upcoming Events



On March 9, 2022 at 10 am Donna Kendall will be giving a talk about Saint Catherine of Bologna for the series **"An Hour with the Saints"** at Saint Bede Catholic Church in Williamsburg. Saint Catherine of Bologna was a 15th century nun who went through her formation as a Franciscan then professed as a Poor Clare. She was an artist, writer, and poet. Her most notable work is *The Seven Spiritual Weapons*, and most famous painting is that of Saint Ursula and her Maidens. She is the patron saint of artists, liberal arts, against temptations, and the city of Bologna, Italy. Consider joining us to learn much more about this wonderful saint. Register online at bedeva.org in Adult Faith Formation programs or call Saint Bede and ask for Janet Hassan.



Everyday Battles...

& HOW TO WIN THEM!

CATHOLIC SPEAKER AND AUTHOR

LAURA PHELPS

Is coming to **St. Stephen, Martyr Catholic Church** on **Friday, February 25th at 7:00 - 8:30 pm**

Grab your friends for an uplifting evening of fellowship, drinks, and laughter as Laura Phelps, Catholic speaker and author, equips women of all ages to put on spiritual armor, face daily battles, and win! Laura's passion is fierce, her devotion to our Blessed Mother strong, and her message simple... we cannot outrun our cross, so we might as well embrace it. Vulnerable, funny, and totally Catholic, Laura's message of hope is sure to inspire.

Before registering, please close your eyes and invite the Holy Spirit to place a woman on your heart who needs His encouragement. As a favor to Him, consider gifting her a ticket. God will richly reward your faithfulness... plus you'll both enjoy a well deserved girls' night out!

Get Laura Phelps tickets today!

\$10 in advance. \$15 at the door.

Hope to see you on Friday, February 25th at 7:00 pm at St. Stephen, Martyr at 1544 S. Battlefield Boulevard, Chesapeake VA, as Laura connects and empowers women from across Hampton Roads.



Save the Date

Lenten Retreat

Saturday, April 9th from 9am to noon

More details at our February gathering

February Formation

Several people have said that they would like to change our formation focus from Fratelli Tutti to another topic. I am willing to change formation topics for the next several months, but **don't give away your book**. We will circle back to Fratelli Tutti later in the year. It is too important a document to put it aside permanently.

In February, Maria is doing a short presentation of the *Our Father* and that will be our jumping off point for our on-going formation this month.

As a way to prepare ourselves for Lent, please look at all the prayers of St. Francis that can be found in the Ritual Book on pages 99–102. We will focus on *The Prayer Before the Crucifix* and *The Prayer Inspired by the Our Father*. Please read the prayers daily and meditate on them.

- What does it mean to you that St. Francis wrote these prayers?
- Do you incorporate any or all of them into your daily prayer life?
- Do you think/remember to say *The Prayer Before the Crucifix* when you are praying in front of a crucifix?
- Have you formulated your own prayers and put them to paper?

We will discuss these questions and others during our February gathering.

Our Prayer Journey

- What kinds of prayer are compatible with this sort of journey?
 - Scripture and spiritual reading*
 - Meditation
 - Eucharist
 - Liturgical Prayer—Liturgy of the Hours
 - Conversations with Jesus
 - Contemplation



(We need to LISTEN to the voice of the Holy Spirit as He speaks to us.)

****Our spiritual reading can include the writings of Francis and Clare; writings about them; writings by Franciscan authors***

Member Profile—Sandra Link, SFO

A look at the life of Sandra Link

Sandra was born on March 22, 1941 in La Junta, Colorado. Her name at baptism was Sandra Rose Dawson. Her parents, Maurice and Rose Dawson lived in nearby Swink. Sandra, with an older sister, Sonia and younger sister, Sharon, spent her first 12 years in tiny Swink. The school she attended had an elementary and high school all under one roof. She played clarinet in the school marching band.

Her parents came from very different cultural backgrounds. Her father's ancestors emigrated from England. Her great grandfather teamed up with some Chicago businessmen and founded Longmont, Colorado. Her mother's ancestors included, King Ferdinand of Spain and the explorers, Columbus and Coronado. One ancestor, Cristobal Baca, a captain in the Spanish army was one of a group of adventurers who founded Santa Fe, New Mexico. His descendants founded Albuquerque, New Mexico and finally, Trinidad, Colorado. Her ancestry includes at least one saint; Elizabeth of Portugal, who was queen for several decades.

Maurice, Dawson was a management level executive with the Holly Sugar Company. In 1953, he was transferred to help manage the sugar processing plant in Brawley, California. Brawley is in the Imperial Valley desert where daily temperatures frequently exceed 100 degrees from Easter to Halloween (good weather for sugar beets).

They arrived in December and Sandra was immediately enrolled in the 7th grade at Sacred Heart School. There she met Steve Link, who would play a prominent role in her life. They were great friends. They traveled back country roads on his motor scooter, raised a steer for a 4H project and took ballroom dance lessons one evening a week. Unfortunately for their relationship, as soon as they graduated from the 8th grade, in June 1955, her parents shipped her off to a girl's Catholic boarding school, Our Lady of Peace Academy, near San Diego. Steve and Sandra would not see each other for 37 years.

Sandra graduated in June 1959 and immediately entered a convent. This was the route taken by a number of graduates of this academy and probably was her parent's goal from the beginning. Sandra's new name was Sister Rose Andre, a sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

In June, 1964, Sister Rose graduated from Mount St. Mary's College in Moraga, California (near Oakland) with a Bachelor's Degree in education. Shortly after graduation, while teaching in an elementary school, the time came for her Final Vows. This is a point where a young nun decides whether or not to be a nun for life. When she decided not to, she was whisked out the door so as not to negatively influence other nuns approaching this decision point.

Sandra moved back to her parent's home in Brawley and found work as an elementary teacher in a nearby school.

Within a few months, she met and married Paul Jones, who was a teacher as well. They had two children; Jonathan, born in November 1965 and Juliann, born in February, 1971.

They moved to Oceanside, California, where they both were employed in the school system. Sandra taught in the primary grades as a bilingual specialist. At the same time, she commuted to the University of San Diego a couple of evenings a week and earned a Master's Degree in Education with emphasis in Bilingual Curriculum. She later earned a Bilingual Specialist Credential from the University.

In the mid 70's she was offered a job at Mira Costa Community College in Oceanside, to teach English as a Second language in their evening program. She was teaching at Laurel Elementary school during the day and a couple of evenings a week, at the community college. Sandra taught immigrant adults how to read and write English. She realized she was happiest teaching adults.

In December, 1987, Sandra and Paul divorced. Sandra moved to Chula Vista, ten miles from the border with Mexico. She obtained a full time job with the Sweetwater Union High School District teaching immigrant adults how to read and write English. In her spare time, she commuted to the University of San Diego and earned an additional 30 graduate units in historical research and writing.

In 1990, Steve Link reentered her life. Ten years earlier, someone mentioned to him that Sandra's last name was Jones and that she lived in Oceanside. Being married and living in central California, Steve didn't think twice about the information. But, in the summer of 1989 and recently divorced, Steve decided it was time to move on. He accepted the job of Director of the Carlsbad, California Convention and Visitors Bureau. He bought a home under construction in nearby Oceanside. In mid-1990, he glanced at a phone book and saw there was a long list of people living in Oceanside with the name Jones. One name on the list was just three blocks from his home. Steve knocked on the door and Jonathan answered. He wouldn't divulge much information about Sandra. So, a month later, Steve returned. This time Juliann put him in touch with Sandra in Chula Vista.

The relationship started off slowly, mostly because of the 55 mile distance between their homes. But, it culminated in marriage in December 1993. They were married in a Greek Orthodox ceremony. Sandra returned to work at Mira Costa community College as well as two days a week at the Hot Springs Spa factory in Vista helping immigrant employees learn English plus help them cope with life in the U.S.

They also discovered the joys of international travel. In the next six years, they traveled to Hong Kong and five trips to Europe and England. Sandra was eager to live in Europe. Steve consented as long as he didn't have to learn a foreign language. They settled on England. After giving ample notice, they both resigned their jobs in January 2001. In May, they flew to England with just a few possessions. They found a home to rent in the quaint town of Battle in East Sussex. Their second floor bedroom overlooked the battlefield where William the Conqueror defeated the English in 1066.

There was a lot of activity in this community of 6,500 residents. Sandra joined the writers club, Steve joined the photography club and they both joined the historical society. Sandra taught the neighborhood children Spanish every Tuesday afternoon for free. They traveled extensively in the British Isles, touring castles, cathedrals and other significant sites. It was an hour's train ride to London to explore the city's many attractions or view various ceremonies when the Queen was involved. They also used the opportunity to travel throughout Europe.

They answered an ad to babysit a cat in a London home whenever the owner traveled. This happened several times a year. This enabled them to spend a week or so enjoying London with no lodging cost.

This was the happiest period of their lives. But, after two and a half years, it became apparent that the high cost of living in England was eating away their retirement savings. So they made the decision to return to the U.S. But rather than return to California, they decided to settle in Virginia, a state neither of them had visited. They chose Williamsburg. They purchased a home in a subdivision named Villages of Westminster (VOW).

Shortly after settling in, Sandra joined the VOW Writers Club, the VOW Garden Club and the VOW Book Club and Steve joined a photography club as well as the VOW Garden Club. Steve also signed on as a volunteer sailor at Jamestown Settlement. He was a crew member on the square rigged replica ships for 15 years. Sandra began teaching Spanish to several adult students for free in the dining room every Tuesday. One of her students, Glen Davis, invited her to a meeting of the local chapter of the Secular Franciscans. She undertook the initiation process and loves being a Secular Franciscan. She frequently says the second best decision she made besides marrying Steve was to become a Franciscan.

International travel was still in their blood. Their first year in Williamsburg, they flew back to England four times. They even flew back a couple of times a year to babysit Kiku the cat, until Kiku went to cat heaven around 2010. Until recently, they flew twice a year (Spring and Autumn) to either England, Europe or Japan/ Korea. This has been possible, because Steve retired from the Air Force Reserves and he and Sandra can fly free on military aircraft or civilian aircraft chartered to deliver troops somewhere.

Sandra has four grandchildren; Juliann's daughters, Alexa and Athena and Jonathan's sons, Ryan and Jason. Life has been a grand adventure.



If you wish to mail your monthly fraternity donation please send your check to treasurer, Barbara Massey, 862 Ventnor Drive, Newport News, VA 23608-8927. **Please make checks payable to SFO. Thank you!**



In January we celebrated the Ceremony of Sponsorship for our new Candidates—Robert and Genni.

In the above picture we have Robert Matthews with his sponsor Glenn Davis and Susan James who is the sponsor for Genni McGlynn along with Peg Crews, formation director and Maria Fuentes-Shermen, minister.

Little Franciscans in Training

"When Covid cases began to surge again in January Saint Bede's Children's Faith Formation classes were suspended until February. Instead, students were given a hands on assignment to do at home regarding: How to bring Christ to the world. These two young ladies decided to do some cooking (assisted by adults). Giulia and Sofia Kendall cooked chicken soup for a neighbor who was sick with covid. Then they prepared meals for 50 residents at the Pineapple Inn and delivered them on January 19th. Please pray for these children as their own circumstances are not ideal. Pax e bonum."



Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation

Stories I have heard from our St Vincent de Paul (SVDP) ministry

I do intake for SVDP and I listen to many very sad stories. The plight of the undocumented is particularly heartbreaking. As well, I must be very careful as many agencies will not help undocumented people. I work to ensure that if I ask a neighbor (which is what we call those who call our help line) to make a call to an organization I have made sure they will not be turned in.

During Covid a school counselor called our help line to ask if we could help a family that had come to her attention. It was a single father and two children. The father had been working as wait staff at a local restaurant but they had to furlough him because of Covid. His wife had just passed away with cancer. He was being paid "under the table" because he was undocumented. He was behind in his rent and needed food and shoes for his children. He had fled his country because of extreme violence. He had a college degree but could only get a job where he was paid "under the table". He had paid all of his wife's medical bills which used up all his savings. We were able to give him financial help as well as food and shoes. We also found an immigration lawyer who would take his case "pro bono". He was hired back at the restaurant so while he will not have an easy road he and his children will be safe and hopefully will have a path to citizenship.

Another family I have worked with were also undocumented. One of their children – their eldest daughter was DACA registered. It \$495 to register for DACA status. The young lady was working two jobs and trying to go to school. She was paying out of state tuition at the college because DACA recipients are not eligible for in-state tuition in North Carolina. Then came the news that her father had been deported. He had lived in the US for the past 16 years. When he finally arrived in Mexico he could not find a job. The mother and the daughter would together send money to the father. The mother lived in constant dread that she also would be deported. When I spoke with the daughter she told me she was 6 years old when she came to this country and spent the first couple of years hating her parents because they took her from everything she knew including her grandmother and grandfather. Of course now she understands why her parents did this. However she lives in mortal terror that her mother will be deported and will leave her with the sole responsibility for her younger brother as well as trying to get by and send money to her parents.

I wish with all my heart that more people would listen to the stories that I hear and we could all work for a better world.

Franciscan Perspective on Immigration

Here are some links to articles on immigration from the Franciscan perspective.

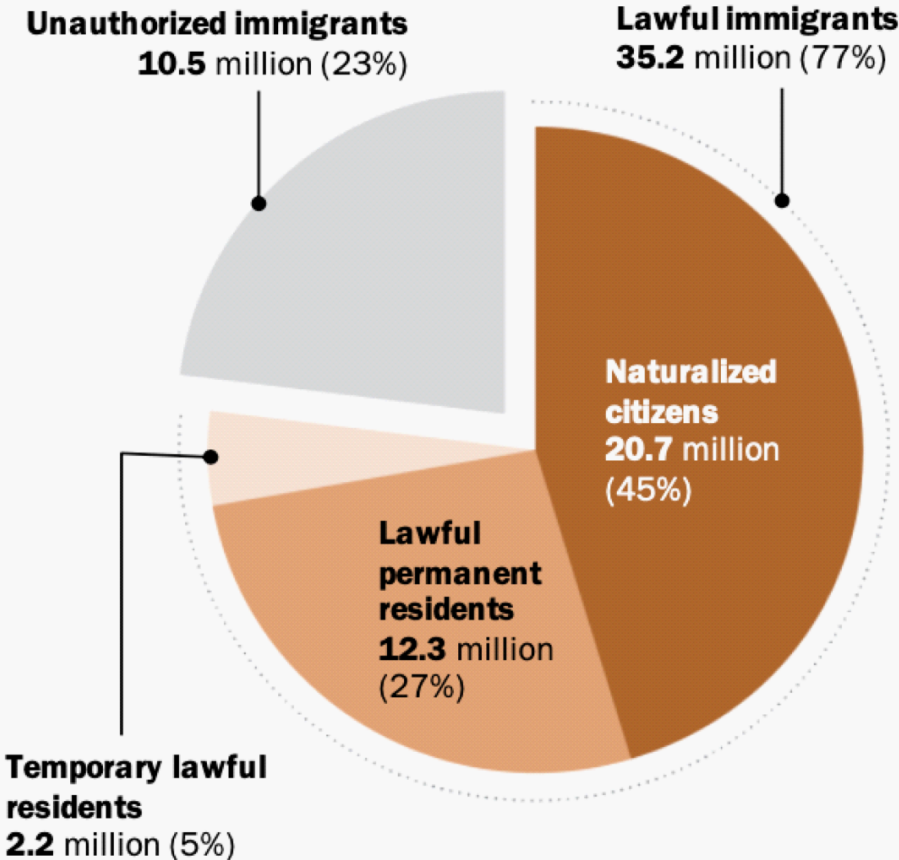
Franciscan Media - <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/franciscan-spirit-blog/a-franciscan-perspective-on-immigration>

Franciscan Friars of the Holy Name Province: <https://hnp.org/justice-and-peace/initiatives/immigration-reform-initiative/>

Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross - <https://hnp.org/justice-and-peace/initiatives/immigration-reform-initiative>

Unauthorized immigrants are almost a quarter of U.S. foreign-born population

Foreign-born population estimates, 2017



Note: Figures for the total and subgroups differ from published U.S. Census Bureau totals because census data have been augmented and adjusted to account for undercount of the population. All numbers are rounded. Unauthorized immigrants include some with temporary protection from deportation under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS), as well as pending asylum cases.

Source: Pew Research Center estimates based on augmented U.S. Census Bureau data.

Definitions:

Refugee, Asylum Seeker, IDP, Migrant



Welcome the stranger.
Protect the refugee.

Refugee: A refugee is a person who has been forced to flee their home country due to persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group (e.g., members of the LGBTQ community). The persecution a refugee experiences may include harassment, threats, abduction or torture. A refugee is often afforded some sort of legal protection, either by their host country's government, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or both. In the United States, refugees are hand-selected by the U.S. government and are screened in advance. They are subject to background checks and security screenings by multiple U.S. agencies. Only after everything is approved are they brought to the U.S. to reside permanently.¹

Asylum seeker: An asylum seeker is a person who has fled persecution in their home country and is seeking safe haven in a different country, but has not yet received any legal recognition or status.² In several countries, including the U.S., asylum seekers are sometimes detained while waiting for their case to be heard.

Internally displaced person: An internally displaced person, or IDP, is a person who fled their home but has not crossed an international border to find sanctuary. Even if they fled for reasons similar to those driving refugees (armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations), IDPs legally remain under the protection of their own government – even though that government might be the cause of their flight.³

Migrant: A migrant is a person who chooses to move from their home for any variety of reasons, but not necessarily because of a direct threat of persecution or death. Migrant is an umbrella category that can include refugees but can also include people moving to improve their lives by finding work or education, those seeking family reunion and others.⁴

¹ Based on "Who is a refugee?" from <http://www.hias.org/FAQ/HIAS>.

² Based on "What is the difference between an asylum seeker, a refugee and an asylee?" from <http://www.hias.org/FAQ/HIAS>.

³ <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c146.html>.

⁴ Based on "'Refugee' or 'migrant' - Which is right?" from <http://www.unhcr.org/55df0e556.html>.