



# Our Lady of the Rosary Secular Franciscan Fraternity Williamsburg, Virginia

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2022

## May is the Month of Mary

May is traditionally dedicated in a special way to honoring and seeking the intercession of Mary as the Mother of God and Mother of the Church.

### May Crowning: What It Is and Why We Do It

At its simplest, May Crowning is a ritual celebrated in the month of May where an image or statue of Mary is crowned with a wreath of flowers and honored as the Queen of Heaven and the Mother of God. But this simple ceremony carries deep meaning for the Catholic faith.

### The Ceremony

Unlike most holidays, May Crowning doesn't have a set date and can be celebrated at any time during the month of May. Some churches opt for Mother's Day, while others do it as soon as May arrives. Recently however, Pope Francis chose to add the day to the liturgical calendar, placing it the day after Pentecost. For 2021, that means it falls on May 24th.

There is also no set ritual, but traditionally May Crownings are celebrated during Mass on that day and after a procession, a crown of flowers and herbs is placed on the head of a statue of Mary. It's usually followed by prayers and/or hymns centered around Mary. The flowers and herbs are usually replaced throughout the rest of the month to keep them fresh.

### The Meaning of May Crowning

While Mary the Mother of God is revered and celebrated all year long, May is a special month to celebrate the "Queen of Heaven." May has been Mary's month since the medieval period, when May was considered the end of winter and the start of a new season of growth. It's a time for new beginnings and the chance to begin with gratitude and devotion.

There are many reasons she is considered the "Queen of Heaven." She was a perfect follower of Christ, and so is considered the crown of creation. She is also the Mother of the Son of God, Jesus, who is the King of Israel and the universe. And of course, she is the most important woman of our faith, and our spiritual mother.

It's our hope and prayer that this May, you'll celebrate May Crowning in your own parish or home, and have a special encounter with Christ through the Virgin Mary.

### Important Dates:

5/15 Fraternity Meeting 1:00pm

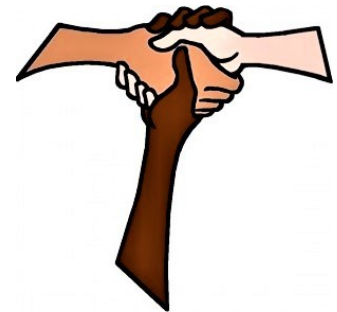
5/20 Sr. Juliana — Birthday

5/21 Cindy Holland — Birthday

5/25 Maria Fuentes-Sherman — Birthday

## Live A Life Worthy of Your Call

Secular Franciscan Order – USA  
National Theme - 2021

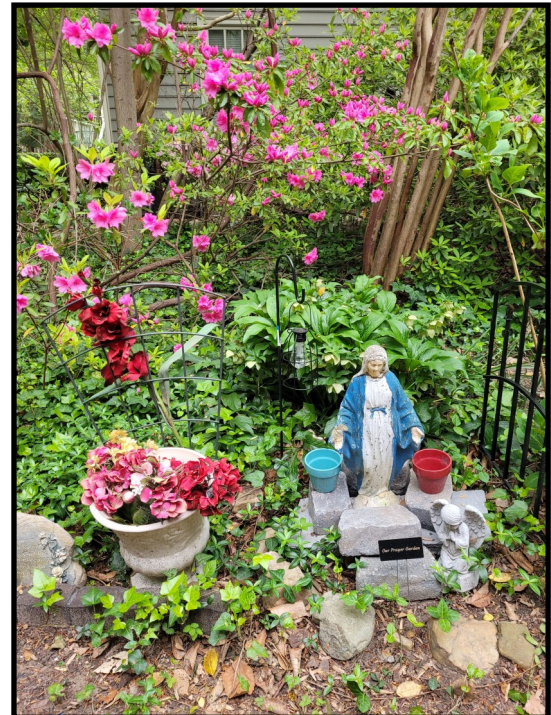


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If you wish to mail your monthly fraternity donation please send your check to treasurer, Barbara Massey, 862 Ventnor Drive, Newport News, VA 23608-8927. **Please make checks payable to SFO. Thank you!**

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Pictures of Donna Kendall's outdoor prayer space.



# Did you know?

Karen Coulson spent time in Ireland. Here are a few pictures from her visit.



Statue of St. Patrick along the Pilgrim's Path in Lough Derg.



St. Brigid's Well



Kissing the Blarney Stone



The Rock of Cashel

## Refugees stories Compiled by Donna Hollis, OFS

These stories are real as revealed to me by Refugee families as they stayed with us at Holy Cross Retreat Center on their way to families awaiting them in the States.

“Love does not care if a brother or sister in need comes from one place or another...Jesus asks us not to decide who is close enough to be our neighbor, but rather that we become neighbor to all.” (Fratelli Tutti Chapter. 2)

The journey begins as the Refugees leave their Country and finally are settled in a safe environment within our Country – then they begin to tell their stories to us.

“A young mother pled for her oldest daughter who was detained at the border because she was 18 years old ; she was considered an adult. The mother was released with her younger child but the older daughter had to stay in detention. There were lawyers who volunteered to help those that needed legal advice while in detention.

The mother stayed at our hospitality site, broken hearted by the separation of her oldest daughter. Since refugees are only given a short time to arrive at their destination; she continued on her journey by bus. The detained daughter who had legal help was released and eventually she was reunited with her family, but the pain and suffering remains through the time of separation.”

“When we took in a mother and son at the retreat center, they were there only a few days before we took them to the bus station so they could continue to their destination. It was then the mother told us that she got word the evening before that her younger son who stayed behind with family in their Country was shot and killed . She had to choose to either go back and mourn/bury her son, knowing they would not be able to return to the U.S. or she could choose to continue the journey with her elder son and have a better life without threats and violence. Out of a mother’s love she chose to continue the journey with her elder son to give him a better life leaving the heartache to heal in time and keep moving forward. “

“Two young father’s came to stay with us and their two teen age daughters.

The drug cartel in their Country wanted to ‘buy’ their daughters and use them for sex trafficking. The girls told of their plight in escaping from the men who wanted to kidnap them and how they managed to get away from them. The fathers were told they would kill them if they didn’t hand them over. In the night the fathers took their daughters and made it to the Mexican border, where they crossed and then came to stay with us. “

“ the journey is perilous, dangerous and full of fear of what will happen to the refugees. One such young lady was raped by a border patrol agent as she was traveling through a border just to

get away from the violence and meet up with her husband who was already in the U.S. By the time she came to us she was in tears fearing how she would have to tell her husband that she is now pregnant and it isn't his child. We comforted her and called her husband to let them talk together. Many hearts have been broken through the journey, yet in spite of the danger, they continue on in order to live in safety and begin a new life without threats."

Many more stories have been told about the refugee journey just as heart felt as these. Families are displaced, children in detention and some are lucky enough to settle in a new land, seeking jobs to sustain their livelihood so they can indeed begin again. As Pope Francis states in his new book "Let us Dream" We must dare to dream! We must dare to Hope!

"We encounter the temptation to build a culture of walls, to raise walls, walls in the heart, walls on the land to prevent this encounter with other cultures." F.T. 27

"Each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, by uniting and not dividing, by extinguishing hatred and not holding on to it, by opening paths of dialogue and not by constructing new walls." F.T. 284

"the Lord appeared to Abraham by the terebinth of Mamre when he saw three travelers approach he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them. He brought some water, had food prepared and showed them a place to rest under the tree. Afterwards he walked with them to see them on their way, He knew he had been visited by messengers." (Genesis chapter 18)

GOOD DAY, GOOD PEOPLE! Greetings from the Immigration Focus Group! Thank you for your interest in Immigration and Refugee issues from the Franciscan perspective. It has been our privilege to prepare this Toolkit for you. It is intended to:

- Increase your own personal knowledge of immigrant/refugee issues.
- Equip you to present the issues and facilitate discussions on them.
- Most importantly, animate members of your Fraternity or Region to initiate positive action.

The Toolkit is structured into 11 modules, as follows:

- 1) “Read Me First” overview - you’re already doing that.
- 2) A Glossary of Immigration Terms. For use as a reference as you proceed.
- 3) Immigration 101 Presentation - A Powerpoint presentation to provide a historical overview and current status of immigration in the US. Also included is a narrative presenter’s guide.
- 4) Immigration and Catholic Social Teaching - A set of documents (with links to other sources) on what Catholicism and Franciscanism have to say on this topic.
- 5) Climate Crisis and Immigration - A short, self-explanatory Powerpoint presentation outlining how climate change is a major cause of involuntary immigration. Also included is a link to a video clip on Climate Migration.
- 6) Immigration as a Pro-Life Issue - A short, self-explanatory Powerpoint presentation, on how immigration is a key component of the consistent ethic of life which we Franciscans advocate. Can be viewed as a companion document to Module #4.
- 7) Immigrants Help Build America - A narrative and graphical depiction of the important role of immigration in our nation’s economic growth and development.
- 8) Fratelli Tutti on Immigration - A narrative and complementary slide show focusing on key aspects of Pope Francis’ recent encyclical, with emphasis on its implications on immigration policy. A companion document to Module #4.

- 9) Resource Guide - This module consists of two components: a short list (with links) of possible resources, and a slide presentation rebutting common arguments against immigration.
- 10) Refugees Stories - A set of first-person anecdotes and recollections of the hardships endured by specific individuals. This takes the statistics and policy arguments down to the human level.
  
- 11) Guide to Letter Writing - An instructional module on how to write effective Letters to the Editor, an important advocacy tool.

We hope that this Toolkit will answer questions. More importantly, we hope it will generate questions. Such as:

- What issues can I get involved in?
- What is mine to do?
- What is the most important thing for me, as one single individual, to focus on?

There is no one right answer to the first question, as the issues are highly localized. For some, it may mean seeking justice for asylum seekers from Central America. For others, it may mean extending hospitality to refugees fleeing Afghanistan. Or for others, it may mean supporting folks who are already here, who are American in every sense except legal status.

What is ours to do? That answer consists of three parts: Prayer, Charity, and Advocacy. We as Franciscans all know what prayer is, and we all know its power. We also know what charity is, and frequently engage in acts of charity. We may be less familiar with advocacy - which is the process of persuading our electing representatives to do the right thing. As Pope Francis once said “A good Catholic meddles in politics”.

“But I’m just one person! What can I do?” May we respectfully suggest the following: Stop being just one person. Leverage your strength and influence with that of others. Join a prayer group in your Fraternity or Region. Or a charity group. Or an advocacy group. If no such group exists, start one. Don’t be shy about using the resources at your disposal: your Fraternity ministers, your Regional JPIC Coordinator, and we in the Immigration Focus Group.

On that last point, we'd love to hear from you! If you need assistance, maybe we can help. If you don't need assistance, maybe we (and others) can learn from you. And of course, we eagerly await any comments or suggestions on the contents of the Toolkit itself.

May the Holy Spirit guide us all as we proceed down this challenging but very critical path.