

# NEWS

NATIONAL FRATERNITY  
SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER  
IN THE UNITED STATES

Media Contact:

Bob Stronach, OFS, 315-796-9468; Mary Stronach, OFS, 315-796-9284, [stronach@kateriregion.org](mailto:stronach@kateriregion.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 19, 2013

## **Secular Franciscan Order Urges People of Good Will To Take a Cue from the Example of Pope Francis**

KANSAS CITY -- Leaders of the Secular Franciscan Order have issued an appeal to "all people of good will" to take a cue from the example of Pope Francis and embrace the world in love in their everyday lives.

"Pope Francis embraces the ideals close to the heart of Saint Francis of Assisi himself, including love for the poor and marginalized, care for creation, and peacemaking," the Order's national chapter said in a statement while meeting in Kansas City, KS, Oct. 19. "He vividly shows us that no individual is far from the heart of God, and thus, no individual may be rejected."

The leaders, representing more than 13,000 Secular Franciscans across the U.S. and in Guam, cited the pope's "bold peacemaking initiatives," including the "daring call to the world to fast and pray" over the war in Syria. "We wish to affirm and promote the spirit of nonviolence and reconciliation embodied by his words and witness... We support his efforts to embrace the world in love and to remind us of our call to be accepting of all people, recognizing that in mercy there is also justice."

They added: "As Secular Franciscans we pledge to work together to build a society which embraces these Gospel values. We therefore commit ourselves to prayer and compassionate action."

\*\*\*

## Statement at 2013 Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order

***“To follow Jesus means putting him first and stripping ourselves of all the things that oppress our hearts.” -Pope Francis***

We, the members of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order, have gathered at Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City, KS, from October 15 through 20, 2013. Called to be bearers of peace, we welcome the bold peacemaking initiatives of Pope Francis. We wish to affirm and promote the spirit of nonviolence and reconciliation embodied by his words and witness.

We believe the seemingly inevitable build-up toward war in Syria was halted in part because of Pope Francis' daring call to the world to fast and pray. Many efforts, including his, resulted in a nonviolent resolution of that stand-off. We support his efforts to embrace the world in love and to remind us of our call to be accepting of all people, recognizing that in mercy there is also justice.

We publicly and strongly affirm the Holy Father as he continues to model the consistent ethic of life in his commitment and fidelity to Catholic Social Teaching. We rejoice that Pope Francis embraces the ideals close to the heart of Saint Francis of Assisi himself, including love for the poor and the marginalized, care for creation, and peacemaking.

We exhort all our sister and brother Franciscans, all Catholics and Christians, and all people of good will to heed the example of Pope Francis as he daily models the heart and soul of charity and works for the betterment of humankind. He vividly shows us that no individual is far from the heart of God, and thus no individual may be rejected. As Secular Franciscans we pledge to work together to build a society which embraces these gospel values. We therefore commit ourselves to prayer and compassionate action.

###