
X*X*X CLOSING THOUGHTS X*X*X

“We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body.”

2 Corinthians 4:8-10

“Sometime during the day, with your beverage of choice, make an effort to re-connect with the Rule and Constitutions, studying and reflecting, actively contemplating on what you professed to be and do. You gotta stay bright to be the light of the world.”

Fr. Christopher Panagoplos TOR, President in turn, CNSA

Many of us will look back on this time of pandemic isolation as a time of spiritual metamorphosis. The ways in which we have changed during this time will be the measure of our trust in a God who calls forth the butterfly in each of us.

Miriam Kennedy OFS St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region

I was thinking the other day that the Coronavirus is a sort of Grinch, who as the story goes, tried to “steal” Christmas. The Grinch took away all the externals of Christmas from the little town of Whoville, but, amazingly, Christmas still came. Similarly, the COVID-19 Grinch is trying to steal Easter from us. But Easter will still come, even though it is highly unlikely that we will be able to physically attend Mass and receive the Eucharist. We won’t have the externals, but Easter will still come – in our hearts and in our souls! Let us remember that WE are the Church, the Body of Christ.

Pat Serotkin OFS, Our Lady of Poverty Regional Fraternity.

The pandemic has given us a lot of lemons. God has given us the recipe for lemonade.

Kate Kleinert, OFS St. Katherine Drexel Region

Regional Diversity Team

Shortly after the tragic death of George Floyd this past May, St. Joan of Arc Regional Minister Cherrylle Fruge shared that her region had started a diversity team. The following is a report from Cherrylle about this effort:

The idea of developing a Diversity Team began so we could do a process of elimination to dissect the roots of racism that falls under the umbrella of All Violence. The agenda for the first Zoom gathering was to find out “Who We Are” by each telling our story. *“Have you ever been discriminated against or shunned on your Franciscan Journey. Have you experienced discrimination within the Order?”*

We needed to first work “within” before we could work outward – ruling out if there were any issues within the Order concerning racism or discrimination of any kind to all people of diverse cultures. If there is a problem within the Family, we have to work on addressing the dysfunction, educate and reconcile our differences so we can begin healing the wounds from the inside out. Once the wholeness of our self returns, only then can we more fully understand how to educate with love and compassion in the world in which we live.

I am happy to say that everyone on the team said that the Order “felt like home” and being in fraternity sustained them. Since there are no issues within the Order in our region, our focus moved to educate ourselves on the Beatitudes of Good Communication amongst all people. I heard a quote that went something like this: *“You are the other part of me, I don’t yet understand.”* We need to learn from each other. This is why learning and practicing mindful dialogue is so important with all people, because we don’t understand each other and what life is like from the perspective of other cultures. We are now working “outward” to help make this happen. Cherrylle Fruge, OFS, St Joan of Arc Regional Fraternity