

JOYFUL SERVANTS OF THE CROSS ...praying for Church, world & your needs - And spreading Joy, Hope and Peace where it is needed.

Who are we? We are a secular group of religious-minded persons who have joined spiritual forces to show the power of prayer and the good results that can come about when people truly care about one another and help out where needed. Our saintly models include St. Benedict of Nursia (whose Rule we have modified and adapted to our own situation), St. Francis of Assisi (whose spirit of Joy is the most endearing legacy of this 12th century saint), and St. Faustina Kowalska (The Secretary of Divine Mercy) who communicated in her writings the message of Jesus (in our own day: 1939) of God's never-ending offer of mercy and forgiveness, hope and peace to all who simply ask for it.

In addition to these three primary patrons, we also rely heavily on the intercessory prayer of St. Joseph and St. Andre Bessette on our behalf. Our residence and chapel are named after and dedicated to them, and they are a part of our mentality and spiritually.

Why the name: Joyful Servants of the Cross? Devotion to the Cross of Christ has always been a very important part of Fr. Dinga's spirituality, since he was a child. It just "came naturally" – meaning it was a very special gift from God. He has spent years before the image of Jesus crucified trying to get the most out of what he was seeing and experiencing. Especially since his ordination and First Mass his contemplation led him to the idea that it is "only through the Cross of Suffering, that we arrive at the Cross of Victory" – there is definitely two ways (at least) to look at that beloved symbol of God's love, and Jesus' cooperation in his plan of salvation. After our group began our mediations

progressed (rather quickly) to adopting a vision of the Cross (Crucifix) as “something tragic, yes; but something very joyful. There is tremendous power in the Cross and it exudes True Joy, Hope and Peace to all who take the time to sit in front of it, ponder it, and pray! And so we chose the name “Joyful Servants of the Cross” – because it is our “bottom line.”

Some history: on June 29, 2005 (the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul) while visiting historic sites in Boston, MA, Fr. Dinga and Mr. Steinberg discovered a tiny little Franciscan Chapel at the very base of the great Prudential Tower on Boylston Street. It caught us totally off guard as we visited the indoor Copley Square Shopping Mall and it drew us to its quiet, and peace and joy! Now we had just come from visiting both the Von Trapp family lodge in Stowe, VT (with fresh memories of “The Sound of Music” and Maria telling Mother Superior that a Benedictine Nuns vocation was “to find out what is the Will of God and to follow it whole-heartedly”), then making a stop at Weston VT where the Benedictine Monks live, pray and work (who have a special music ministry – their CDs and music has been popular in the Church for 40 years now). It was a beautiful, secluded place and we both had an “opening of our spirits” kind of experience there.

So here we are at the base of the Prudential Center, visiting Jesus in the chapel of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. There is a gift shop there which is where we purchased new copies of “The Prayer of Christians” – the 1 Volume Liturgy of the Hours (or Breviary). Later that evening in our hotel room we prayed together for the first time Vespers for the Solemnity of Sts Peter and Paul. It was quite awesome and we knew that we would never be the same again: God had planted something in us that he would gradually and slowly and lovingly bring to fruition over the next several years.

When we arrived home we set up a spare room as a chapel, reserved the Blessed Sacrament and incrementally began furnishing it with the “holy things” needed to make a worthy prayer place. It has taken shape quite dramatically and beautifully throughout the nine years of our existence as a group, and now at its new location in a dedicated place here in Williamsburg, VA it is apparent that God has led us here for a very specific purpose and reason: we pray daily to find out what that is!

The motto that we chose was this: we exist “to give glory to God, and to bring Joy, Hope and Peace to the waiting world.” We do this in the ordinary business of our daily lives. If the “light” that we shine in the lives of others is beneficial, and makes them consider possibly a supernatural source for our motivation: then we will have done our duty.

The patch that we wear (see above) is circular, red-rimmed (representing how our group is protected not only by the Blood of Christ, but also by the Blood of the Martyrs, those who gave their lives to spread the faith at its inception), with a field of deep-blue, representing the sky, and our devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, with a small red cross in the lower right quadrant and centered a much larger gold cross – in the upper and lower left quadrants are the letters J S C – which indicated who we are as Joyful Servants of the Cross. The little red cross and the big gold cross demonstrates the dynamic of Christ’s love: his death on the Cross, yielded the Victory of the Resurrection: the Gold Cross. The Joy, Hope and Peace that we want to share emanates from this powerful Spirit-filled dynamic.

The medallion with the “Benedictine” Cross on it was purchased at Weston Priory in Vermont at our initial visit. We have worn these faithfully for nine years. It has only been recently that we have also “graduated” to a “profession cross” that we wear “in-house” and

mostly for “church services.” These are modeled after 19th century French Order Profession Crucifixes.

In addition the Father Superior wears a ring designating his authority in the group along with a Crucifix different from the regular medallion (if he so chooses – a “pectoral cross” symbolizing the love of God poured out in Christ, and His service to all mankind). Father Dinga wears either a JSC ring, or a ring with his priestly coat of arms emblazoned on it.

The distribution of administrative roles was soon decided in the summer of 2005. Fr. Dinga was elected spiritual head of the group and Mr. Steinberg was elected temporal head. These fulfilled the role of “abbot” and “prior” that are a part of the “modified Rule of St. Benedict” that we began to follow. (On the ninth anniversary of the congregation the titles Father Superior and Brother Superior, for Fr. Dinga and Brother Richard were officially designated which better shows how we are co-founders and share in the governance of the group.) After reading this Rule slowly, section by section, the first few years, we decided that we would write our own “version” of it that would omit things that don’t pertain to us, and retranslate the things that do. This of course is a work in progress and is ever being updated and modified.

In time we thought it best to discuss the kind of “habit” (religious wear) that would signify who we are. Our chief patrons over the first few years became St. Benedict of Nursia, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Faustina Kowalska – each for reasons to be shared later. We wanted the habit to reflect these patrons. Having become friends with a former Trappist tailor who lived in a neighboring state he told us that he could easily make what we wanted. And so the full dress habit consist of this: a full black robe, held together with a corded cincture that was tri-color

(red, white and blue actually: the red and blue for the Mercy Image with Blood and Water emanating from his radiant Resurrected heart, and white for the Franciscan Influence.

The cord has three knots made of white crowned with gold thread. These represent our Benedictine vows of Stability, Conversion of Way of Life, and Obedience (more on these later).

To emphasize the Benedictine flavor we wear a full-form scapular about 18" wide hanging from neck to shoes front and back – this the monks of old (and new) wear as a sign of taking on the “yoke of Christ” – the “Cross”.

To cap it off we wear a modified Franciscan Capuchin cowl that finishes the ensemble off nicely. For more solemn occasions we also have a grey full bodied top cape what is worn for processions and solemn feast days etc.

It is customary for fully professed religious to “take a name of a saint” to be his own from Profession Day forward: the Father Superior’s name: is Fr. Peter Anthony, jsc; the Brother Superior’s is Paul Andre, jsc. Thus our names, Peter and Paul reflect that feast day on which the congregation was founded.

What we do. We may have full habits, and the like, but “out in public” and “on the street” we bear only our logo patch on a dedicated set of simple sport shirts and cross medallion. We are never without them. And what we do “out there” is this: (having focused first on our own growth in holiness: seeking God because we believe ourselves to be his beloved children), we then bring the “Spirit of the Gospel” – that we glean from the prayer periods of the day (no matter how brief) – and we disseminate that “scent of Joy, Hope and Peace that can only come from God” – to “sheep” - to the people that he places directly in our

path during the day! This applies Pope Francis' admonition to clergy and religious to "smell of our sheep" – how can we minister to them if we don't rub elbows with them and really get to know them?

Very specifically, the primary work of a *Joyful Servant of the Cross* is to carry out your own particular duties in life whatever it may be (for example, Fr. Dinga, as a priest, and Mr. Steinberg as an RN) – but to "incense the sheep with joy, hope and peace" by offering others in need a helping hand in any way that might come up (if they are so willing to receive our help). We do not proselytize or force ourselves on anyone – we simply are there to be the "aroma of Christ." That is it! That's all there is: but it can be a very powerful fragrance that can beautify friendships, families, neighborhood, parishes and the like.

LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP

The essence of the June 11, and June 22, 2014 meetings of Father Superior and Brother Superior:

Father Superior (formerly known as "the abbot") presented **a perspective of proposed membership** in *the Joyful Servants of the Cross* – this due to some interest that is being shown by those who reside with us at Verena.

An element of "**non-discrimination due to religious affiliation**" was more clearly defined than before. **Everyone is welcome** to proceed through **the first two stages of membership**, though not all would likely see it through to the end – this is to be expected.

The basic elements of **Prayer, the Rule, and acts of charity (helpfulness)** are essential to group membership. **The founders**, as Catholic, and of different states of life, and as now fully professed, **are to be a model** for others **who follow their own path to holiness** (both Catholics and non-Catholics alike) within guidelines that are set forth by this congregation: i.e. praying 5 times a day (according to specific themes), and actively helping others, as well as staying in touch with other members of the group either personally, or electronically, or by mail.

The following are the stages that may be followed as far as entering into fuller membership in the “community” of like-minded/spirited persons.

The first level is the INQUIRER-“SEEKER” level. This level is open to anyone at all who wants to find out more about us, learn our ways and to try implementing them in their lives to “see if it in any way fits” – like a comfortable slipper.

The second level is called the OBLATE level. In our case, this means one who “offers him/herself” (to make an “oblation”) as a “confirmed seeker” – one who is committed to at least be numbered among the members and to whom they can turn for help in ministry (according to talents and abilities). The oblate can wear the simple member pendant.

The third level is the Simply Professed Non-residential – this level is reserved for Catholics because of the Eucharistic focus and full participation in the Mass that is required of members of this and the following level.) This is one step above the Oblate. These generous souls are willing and they promise to live our *Modified Rule of St Benedict*, to pray our other daily prayers, and to carry out the charism of the group: to spread joy, hope and peace wherever we go – (helping others deal with situations that God places them in – keeping in mind the motto: “through the red cross of suffering to the gold cross of victory”). The simply professed can wear the congregation’s multi-colored clothing patch.

The final stage of membership is the Fully Professed Residential. This is open to Catholic only. They are allowed to wear the full habit for religious services, including the profession cross. They have promised God solemnly to live the vows of “stability” “conversion of life” and “obedience.” They are bound to the prayer hours, and acts of charity, spreading joy, hope and peace for the glory of God, and the purification of the Church and spiritual transformation of the world.

For each of the levels there is a minimum program of learning that is required.

For the **Seeker Level** – there is a 6 mo. Period of Instruction; for the **Oblate Level**, a full year of instruction and practice, for the **Simply Professed**, one year beyond the Oblate; and for the **Final Profession** – two years beyond the Simply Professed.

PRAYER FORMS

OUR PRAYER HOURS	YOUR PRAYER OPTIONS – your first option is always to join us in ours
Morning Ritual Prayers including Community Prayers and the Holy Mass	Morning Ritual Prayers of your own choosing including those you hold most sacred.
Midday Prayer – from the Liturgy of the Hours – joining Christ’s own prayer of praise to his heavenly Father	Midday Prayer - a midday pause to see how we are doing accomplishing God’s will thus far today, and to ask his strength as we continue to do our assigned task...
3PM Prayers – the Hour of Redemption – including a decade of the Rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet	3PM Prayers – a pause at the Hour when Christ died, to be thankful for what He did for us, to ask his mercy on us, and to pray specifically for the intention of others...
Evening Prayer – Vespers – from the Liturgy of the Hours – the Church’s twilight prayer of praise and thanksgiving for the blessings of the day	Evening Prayer – the “sunset” prayer of creation – we thank God for the blessings of the day – and commit the rest of the day and night to His care – we pray again for the needs of all
Night Prayer – Community Night Prayers and the Liturgy of the Hours (Compline): asking God’s protection as we sleep, and the watchful prayers of the BVM and all the saints.	Night Prayer – in order to lay our heads down and sleep in peace we ask God’s specific blessing on us and our loved ones, and upon all who need his watchful eye – we invoke the care of the Blessed Mother of Jesus and the angels and saints as well – in our own way!
Other prayer forms: Meditation, Lectio Divina, Spiritual Reading, communing with nature.	Other prayer forms: Meditation, Lectio Divina, Spiritual Reading, communing with nature.

The following is a sample of the Modified Rule of St. Benedict that we try our best to live out:

PARTICULAR RULE IN OUTLINE FORM OF JOYFUL SERVANTS OF THE CROSS: [updated: June 29, 2014]

Being a congregation drawing from the strong religious influence of St. Benedict, St. Francis and St. Faustina our rule/constitution is flexible yet firm, balanced yet structured, disciplined yet charitable.

Our primary goal is to seek God, who is the source of our *joy, hope and peace*; and to share our experience of Him with others who can benefit from our ministrations to them: especially by the continual prayer that we offer on their behalf.

To discipline our lives we follow the core teachings of the Rule of St. Benedict (tr. Patrick Barry, OSB), with the following emphases and modifications:

PROLOGUE:

- We listen, as a child of God, to the guidance of our teacher (the Holy Spirit, through the Rule). We attend to the message we hear and make sure that it pierces our hearts, so that we may accept with willing freedom, and fulfill by the way we live, the directions that come from our loving Father.
- We pray before any undertaking, if only quietly and with ourselves. Then, we must be willing to accept whatever God sends as an answer to that prayer. Obedience to his will for us is of capital importance, especially to the Holy Spirit.
- We must always remember that the guidance offered by the Rule is not to be harsh or burdensome. If anything seems a strain, pray about it, speak with the superior about it, but do not give up: our eternal happiness is at stake – and our brother(s) are here (especially the superior) to help us achieve it.

And this too:

CHAPTER TWENTY THREE – THE GOOD SPIRIT THAT SHOULD INSPIRE THE MONASTIC LIFE

- *There is a spirit of wickedness and evil which creates a barrier to God's grace and opens the way to the evil of hell. But equally there is a good spirit which frees us from evil ways and brings us closer to God and eternal life. It is this latter spirit that all who follow the monastic way of life should strive, to cultivate, spurred on by fervent love.*
- *By following this path, they try to be first to show respect to one another, with the greatest patience in tolerating weaknesses of body or character. They should ever be ready to outdo each other in mutual obedience, so that no one in the monastery aims at personal advantage but is rather concerned for the good of others.*
- *Thus, the pure love of one another as belonging to one family should be their ideal. They should love their abbot with sincere and unassuming affection. They should value nothing whatever above Christ himself, and may he bring us all together to eternal life.*

OUR COMMUNITY PRAYERS

THE ANGELUS

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary: **And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: **Be it done unto me according to Thy word.**

Hail Mary . . .

And the Word was made Flesh: **And dwelt among us.** Hail Mary . . .

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, **that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

THE REGINA CAELI (Queen of Heaven) *(Easter Sunday to Pentecost)*

Queen of heaven rejoice, alleluia.

The Son whom you merited to bear, alleluia,

has risen as he said, alleluia.

Pray for us to God, alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia!

For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

MORNING PRAYER

As we begin our day as *Joyful Servants of the Cross*, may our first thought be of Christ the Lord; may all we think and say and do this day reflect his active presence in our souls, our hearts and our actions. As our Blessed Father St. Benedict exhorts us, let us *prefer nothing to Christ*, and let this decisive preference affect everything about us. And may the **joy** of St. Francis, the **hope** of St. Faustina's Mercy Message and the **peace** of Christ himself accompany us as we bring *Joy, Hope and Peace* to the waiting world, for the purification and perfection of the Church on earth, and the spiritual transformation of the world into the Kingdom of God in heaven. Amen.

COME, HOLY SPIRIT COME

And from thy celestial home
Shed a ray of light divine!

Come, Father of the poor!
Come, source of all our store!
Come within our bosoms shine!

You, of comforters the best;
You, the souls most welcome guest;
Sweet refreshment here below;

In our labor, rest most sweet;
Grateful coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.

O most blessed Light divine,
Shine within these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill!

Where you are not, man has naught,
Nothing good in deed or thought,
Nothing free from taint of ill.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew;
On our dryness pour thy dew;
Wash the stains of guilt away.

Bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;
Guide the steps that go astray.

On the faithful who adore
And confess thee evermore
In your sev'nfold gift descend;

Give them virtue's sure reward;
Give them your salvation, Lord;
Give them joys that never end.

Amen. Alleluia

Anima Christi

*Soul of Christ, sanctify me; Body of Christ, save me; Blood of Christ, inebriate me;
Water from the side of Christ, wash me; Passion of Christ, strengthen me; O good
Jesus, hear me;*

*within your wounds, hide me; let me never be separated from you; from the evil
one, protect me; at the hour of my death, call me; and bid me to come to you;
that with your saints, I may praise you forever and ever. Amen.*

Short-Form Deliverance

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of his cross, his blood and his resurrection, we bind you Satan, the spirit, powers and forces of darkness, the nether world, and the evil forces of nature. **We bind all demonic interaction, interplay, and communications between spirits sent against us. We send them directly to Jesus Christ for him to deal with as he wills.**

Prayer for a Spiritual Canopy

Dear Lord Jesus, please forgive us for all the times we have not submitted to you. Forgive us for all sinfulness, and for agreeing with the enemy and his lies. We submit to you as our Lord, and break every agreement we have made with the enemy.

Lord Jesus Christ, we now ask you to establish a hedge of protection around us, over us, and under us, and seal it with your blood.

We choose to put on the full armor of God; and ask that you cleanse us and seal us body, mind, soul and spirit, with your blood, Lord Jesus. We ask you to be our constant guide, defender, and friend this whole day long!

Closing of Deliverance Prayers

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for awakening our sleeping spirits, and bringing us into your light this day. **Thank you, Lord, for transforming us by the renewing of our minds.** Thank you, for pouring out your Spirit on us, and revealing your Word to us. Thank you, for giving your angels charge over us in all our ways. Thank you for our faith in you and that from our innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. Thank you for directing our minds and hearts into the love of the Father and the steadfastness of all your ways. Fill us to overflowing with your life and love, our Lord and King, Jesus Christ

PSALM 150

Alleluia (in season)

**Praise God in his holy place;
praise him in his mighty firmament.
Praise him for his powerful deeds;
praise him for his boundless grandeur.**

**O praise him with sound of trumpet;
praise him with lute and harp.
Praise him with timbrel and dance;
praise him with strings and pipes.**

**O praise him with resounding cymbals;
praise him with clashing of cymbals.
Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! [Alleluia!]**

3PM PRAYERS - JOYFUL SERVANTS OF THE CROSS

MISSION PRAYER

It is our sacred privilege, / as well as our God-given responsibility, / as *Joyful Servants of the Cross,* / to offer up to God / the prayers of those who rely on us / to intercede on their behalf, / as well as for our own heart-felt intentions and petitions / *for the purification and perfection of the Church on earth / and the spiritual transformation of the world.*

And as instructed by our Venerable Father Benedict, / our prayer should be moderately short and to the point: / and so now, in this brief prayer hour, / we lift up all the intentions and petitions / in our *holy prayer-reserve,* / and join them to our hearts' desire, / and offer them to Christ our Heavenly King / to do with as he wills: / he who lives now to intercede for us / at the right hand of the Father.

Blessed be God forever.

Amen.

Litany of Humility

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, *Hear me.*

From the desire of being esteemed, *Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the desire of being loved...

From the desire of being honored...

From the desire of being praised...

From the desire of being preferred to others...

From the desire of being consulted...

From the desire of being approved...

From the fear of being humiliated...

From the fear of being despised...

From the fear of suffering rebukes...

From the fear of being calumniated...

From the fear of being forgotten...

From the fear of being ridiculed...

From the fear of being wronged...

From the fear of being suspected.

Deliver me, Jesus.

That others may be loved more than I,

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

That others may be esteemed more than I...

That, in the opinion of the world, others may
increase and I may decrease...

That others may be chosen and I set aside...

That others may be praised and I unnoticed...

That others may be preferred to me in
everything...

That others may become holier than I, provided
that I may become as holy as I should.

Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

V./ Jesus, meek and humble of Heart.

R./ Make our hearts like unto yours. Amen.

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET

Optional Opening Prayer

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.

O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You!

(Using ordinary Rosary Beads)

+ Our Father; Hail Mary

I believe in God,

the Father almighty,

Creator of heaven and earth,

and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the power of the

Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended into hell;

on the third day he rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of God the

Father Almighty.

from there he will come to judge the living

and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ... *in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.*
(1x per decade)

for the sake of his sorrowful Passion *have mercy on us and on the whole world.* (10x per decade)

(At the conclusion) **Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One,**
have mercy on us, and on the whole world.

Optional Closing Prayer

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

NIGHT PRAYER

Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

Come, Lord Jesus, come! with salvation for your people!

Lord Jesus, you are our joy, our hope and our peace.

Sunday—THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

O everlasting and Triune God, / I consecrate myself to You today. /

Let all my days offer You ceaseless praise, / my hands move to the rhythm of Your impulses, / my feet be swift in Your service, / my voice sing constantly of You, / my lips proclaim Your message, / my eyes perceive You everywhere, / and my ears be attuned to Your inspirations. /

May my intellect be filled with Your wisdom, / my will be moved by Your beauty, / my heart be enraptured with Your love, / and my soul be flooded with Your grace. /

Grant that every action of mine be done / for Your greater glory / and the advancement of my salvation. / Amen.

Monday—NOVENA PRAYER TO ST BENEDICT

O glorious St. Benedict / model of virtue. / Vessel of God's grace. / We ask you to pray for us / in the presence of God. / We have recourse to you / as we live in an unstable world. / Shield us against indifference to God and our neighbor. / Inspire us to imitate you / in seeing and serving Christ in others, / and to work for His Kingdom.

Graciously obtain for us from God / what we need in the trials of life. / Your heart was always full of love, compassion and mercy / toward those who were afflicted / or troubled in any way. / You never dismissed, without consolation / anyone who had recourse to you. /

We, therefore, invoke your powerful intercession, / confident in the hope / that you will hear our prayers, / and obtain for us the graces and favors we ask.

(Name request...)

Help us, great St. Benedict, / to live and die as faithful children of God, / to seek and find His Will, / and attain the eternal happiness of heaven. /
Amen.

Tuesday—PRAYER OF ST FRANCIS

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. /
Where there is hatred, / let me sow love; /
where there is injury, / pardon; /
where there is doubt, / faith; /

where there is despair, / hope; /
where there is darkness, / light; /
where there is sadness, / joy. /

O Divine Master, /

grant that I may not so much seek - /
to be consoled / as to console; /
to be understood / as to understand; /
to be loved / as to love. /

For, it is in giving / that we receive; /
it is in pardoning / that we are pardoned; /
and it is in dying / that we are born to eternal life. /
Amen.

**Wednesday—PRAYER FOR THE INTERCESSION OF
SAINT FAUSTINA**

Saint Faustina, / you told us that your mission would continue after your
death / and that you would not forget us. /

Our Lord also granted you a great privilege, / telling you to “distribute
graces as you will, / to whom you will, / and when you will.” /

Relying on this, / I ask your intercession for the graces I need, / especially
for the following intentions:

(here think of your special intentions):

Help me, above all, / to trust in Jesus as you did / and thus / to glorify His mercy / every moment of my life. /

Amen.

Thursday—PRAYER TO ST JOSEPH

O Glorious St Joseph, / you were chosen by God to be the foster father of Jesus, / the most pure Spouse of Mary, ever-virgin, / and the head of the Holy Family. / You have also been chosen by Christ's Vicar / as the heavenly Patron and Protector of the Church founded by your son.

Protect the Pope and all bishops and priests united with him. / Be the protector of all who labor for souls; / and grant that all people may be docile to the true teachings of the Church / as they can bring supreme joy and happiness to their lives.

Lastly, dear St. Joseph, / be my protector a guide in the way of salvation. / Obtain for me purity of heart and a love for the spiritual life. / And finally pray for me that I may share in the peace and joy of your holy death.

Amen.

Friday—JSC PRAYER TO CHRIST CRUCIFIED

Most Holy Redeemer, Lord Jesus Christ, / Word-made-Flesh, / God's Friendship become Man, / we place ourselves before the image of Your most Holy and tender Love / – the instrument of both Your Death and Resurrection – / the Cross of Suffering and Victory.

Help us to understand what we see here; / help us to appreciate the great depth of Your love for us; / help us to feel moved to serve You / by sharing the Joy of Your Cross with others / who need hope in their lives. /

Dear Jesus, we adore You, we bless You, we worship You,
and we love You. /

Amen.

Saturday—Prayer to OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

O Mother of Perpetual Help, / you have been blessed and favored by God. / You became not only the Mother of the Redeemer, / but the Mother of the redeemed as well. /

We come to you today as your loving children. / Watch over us and take care of us / and those for whom we pray. / As you held the child Jesus in your loving arms, / so take us in your arms. / Be a mother ready at every moment to help us. /

For God who is mighty has done great things for you, / and his mercy is from age to age on those who love Him. /

Our greatest fear is that in time of temptation, / we may fail to call out to you, / and become lost children. / Intercede for us, dear Mother, / in obtaining pardon for our sins, / love for Jesus, / final perseverance, / and the grace always to call upon you, / Mother of Perpetual Help. / Amen.

In addition to these prayers we use the Liturgy of the Hours three times per day for Daytime, Evening as well as Night Prayer – this ancient prayer form traces its origins to the late 5th century as the “work of God” (Opus Dei), the work of the monks, priests, religious and some laity to join their prayer with that of Christ whose constantly gives praise and glory to his Father in heaven. The Church as the Mystical Body of Christ on earth was entrusted with this duty and privilege since that time. Deacons and priests and religious of the Catholic Church promise to pray it faithfully, daily for life. The Joyful Servants are not bound by the entire daily Office (as it referred to), but only the three hours mentioned above. It is a joy to recite these hours and the Presence of Christ is truly felt when it is undertaken. The Psalms which comprise most of the Office were sung in choir by the monks and nuns: many places still hold to that custom. It is a way to extended the sacramental graces and blessings of the daily Liturgy of the Eucharist into the hours of the day!

There are two ways in which you can participate with the Church (and the Joyful Servants) in this wonderful endeavor:

with by buying a one volume book containing the prayers: “Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours” Published by The Daughters of St. Paul (we would be happy to assist you in the purchase of one if you like, and show you how to use it).

Alternative way: by computer: <http://www.ibreviary.com/m/breviario.php> This is the Online Version of the “Breviary” as it is referred to. It too involves a learning curve that we would be happy to provide for those who wish. (There also apps for your Iphones and Androids).

The bottom line is to praise God, with Christ, in the Holy Spirit five times per day. We eat food to keep our bodies going, we must eat spiritual food to keep our spiritual dimension alive and healthy as well: **then we can go out and bring joy, hope, and peace to the waiting world!**

Newsletters are also in the works to be a regular publication: both on the blog and in hand-out form.

Regarding our standing with the Catholic Church:

We currently have no “official standing with the Catholic Church” – to do this we must submit a request for such approval to the local bishop – this we have not yet done because we felt that our membership was not strong enough in order to do so.

This in no way invalidates the reality and spiritual benefits that are to be had by membership in the group. In centuries past decades and even centuries passed before congregations of groups got the official nod. But the charismatic work (the work given them by God to do) was effective, powerful and a cause of great rejoicing for those associating with them.

If enough interest is shown in the group and membership at the first two levels rises substantially, then a logical progression would be to apply for official status with the bishop of the local diocese. Until then – “there is joyful work to be done – the opus dei – the work of God!”

A RECOMMENDED READING LIST

The Story of the von Trapp Family Singers – Maria Augusta Trapp

A Benedictine Legacy of Peace: The Life of Abbot Leo A. Rudloff

No Man is an Island – Thomas Merton

Diary of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska

The Rule of St. Benedict – trans. Patrick Barry, OSB

Teresa of Avila, An Extraordinary Life – Shirley du Boulay

The Joy of Full Surrender - de Caussade

Christ the Life of the Soul – Marmion

Christ and His Mysteries – Marmion

Union with God – Marmion

The Autobiography of Archbishop Fulton J Sheen

Padre Pio – The Wonder Worker

The Imitation of Christ – Thomas a Kempis

The Complete Works of St. John of the Cross

The Story of a Soul – St. Therese of Lesieux

Mrs Seton (the life of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton)

The Complete Works of Fr Joseph Girzone

Including the “Joshua” Series and others:

“Joshua” “Joshua and the Children”

“Joshua and the Shepherd” “Kara” “Never Alone”

“The Parables of Joshua” “A Portrait of Jesus” etc.

The Joy of the Gospel – Pope Francis

Fr. Dinga's Priestly Coat of Arms which is the impetus behind the JSC.



JOYFUL SERVANTS OF THE CROSS HYMN

BENEDICAMUS DOMINO

(music and lyrics by Fr. Bill Dinga)

1) *Benedicamus Domino!* / come let us bless the Lord of our life! / Let us give glory and honor and praise: / *Joyful Servants of the Cross, / Benedicamus Domino!*

2) We offer God our humble lives; / for him to transform and use as He wills; / trusting His merciful promises made: / *Joyful Servants of the Cross, / Benedicamus Domino!*

3) Give to us joy and hope to spread, / give to us peace and goodwill towards all men: / shine your light through us we ask you this day: / *Joyful Servants of the Cross, / Benedicamus Domino*