



A MESSAGE TO OUR CUSTOMERS AND FRIENDS ON Franciscan Institute Spring and Summer 2020 Programs

March 23, 2020

Dear Friends:

Our understanding of the coronavirus pandemic and its trajectory into the future continues to evolve and become clearer. We are now receiving information that the pandemic crisis is going to last longer than first expected, for “several months” and likely well into the summer. We need to protect our staff and all guests. Therefore, in order to plan appropriately and wisely, we must make decisions now.

I am cancelling the June 26-28, 2020 Secular Franciscan Summer Conference on “Happiness and the Enjoyment of God: The Franciscan Vision of Life.” This is a disappointment. We have had about five consecutive summers of very successful seminars with our Secular sisters and brothers. We hope to return next summer in 2021 with an on campus program. But, this summer’s 2020 program for Secular Franciscans is cancelled.

The rest of our summer programs, however, are being delivered online. You can see the list of seminars being offered at the following link: <https://www.sbu.edu/about-sbu/sbu-campus-maps-directions/franciscan-institute/summer-2020-programs>.

- Dr. Joshua Benson, presently chair of our Theology and Franciscan Studies, is offering a seminar on the poetry of Robert Lax, local poet and friend of Thomas Merton;
- Dr. Jean-Francois Godet-Calogeras will be offering a seminar on “Clare and Women in the Early Franciscan Movement.”
- Dr. Aaron Gies, the Institute’s post-doctoral fellow, will be offering a seminar on “The Marvelous Depths: Reading Scripture with St. Bonaventure and his Teachers.”

Each of these would be a wonderful opportunity for deepening one’s summer education.

We had scheduled a spring Ignatius Brady Lecture for April 15th by Dr. Benjamin Winter on “Cleansed by Justice: Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of St. Bonaventure.” Because the SBU campus is largely empty for the next several months, we are postponing that Brady Lecture until the Fall 2020 semester. More information will follow.

Our mutual challenge is to protect the health of all our sisters and brothers. It is only right that we are the first in this care and compassion. Thanks for your understanding.

Peace and all good,

Fr. David B. Couturier, OFM. Cap.
Executive Director, The Franciscan Institute