

## **Celebrating the Easter of Francis of Assisi 1226 – 2026**

*An exercise in embracing our personal relationship with Francis:  
Our Seraphic Father, Our Brother and Our Friend*

This exercise is designed to enrich and strengthen our relationship with our Seraphic Father Francis as brothers and sisters in the OFS. This exercise can be useful for Ongoing Formation within your fraternities as well as with your homebound members. It can be used in large or small group settings or in private settings at home.

### **Step 1 – Preparing the space:**

Transform your meeting space by dimming lights if possible and lighting a few candles. A scented wax burner with frankincense wax melts can add to the experience. There should be adequate light to write. If you have access to music, a soft Gregorian chant or peaceful instrumental music can be played quietly in the background.

### **Step 2 – Preparing the group or individual:**

Make sure everyone is comfortable and focused. Everyone should have something to write on and a pencil or pen. Tables would be helpful so that participants can have a writing surface. The Minister or Leader can invite participants to close their eyes and take slow, deep breaths as they all invite the Holy Spirit to open and fill their hearts with peace. Take your time...

**Minister/Leader: (read slowly)**

Brothers and sisters, imagine that you are with Francis at his Transitus. The brother who you have been listening to and following is dying. The friend who opened your heart to the Gospel and who planted the seed of your vocation is gone... (Pause) What will you do? (Pause) Where will you go? (Hold for ten seconds of silence.) In this tremendous loss of your friend, you are asked to tell people about Francis – to honor him with a eulogy.

As you develop this eulogy you should reflect on Francis' life. What defined Francis? What was important to Francis? What brought him joy? What was he passionate about? Share a story or experience from his life that made you laugh, cry or deepen your faith? How did he impact your life? Finish the eulogy by describing how your personal relationship with Francis inspired you and what message of hope Francis' life brought to the world.

**Step 3 – Composing the eulogy:**

Allow time for participants to write a short eulogy in honor of St. Francis. Mention that it does not have to be fancy. It can be an outline, bullet points, scribbled notes or an actual eulogy.

**Step 4 – Sharing the eulogy:**

After the amount of time designated for this portion of the exercise is met, invite participants to share their eulogy with the fraternity. Depending on your fraternity, you may find that sharing one-on-one with another person is preferred. You may find table discussions to be helpful. Sharing with the entire fraternity may be more fruitful. You know your fraternity best so choose the one that is the best fit for your fraternity.