

T AU-USA

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Mission to Share the Vision

The TAU-USA, a publication of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order of the United States, is a vital communication link between the OFS-USA leadership and all candidates and all professed Secular Franciscans throughout the United States. The articles within the publication, while sharing the Secular Franciscan charism and vision, are intended to inform, inspire, and challenge.



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Jim Wesley, OFS

Spanish Editor
Cindy Wesley, OFS

Copy Editor
Donna Kendall, OFS

Layout and Design
Stan Sisson, OFS

Special Assignments Editor
Sharon Winzeler, OFS

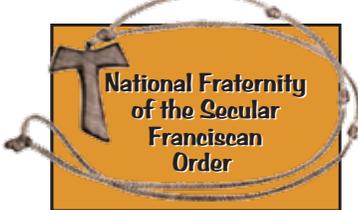
NEC Consultants
Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS
Diane Menditto, OFS

Website Coordinators
James Thomas, OFS
Sharon Winzeler, OFS

TAU-USA email
tauusa.ofs@gmail.com

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National Executive Council

nec.ofs.usa@gmail.com

National Minister
Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS

National Vice Minister
Diane Menditto, OFS

National Secretary
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A Spanish version of the TAU-USA is now available and being mailed to Spanish speaking members upon request. If you wish to receive the TAU USA in Spanish and not English, please send your name, address, fraternity name and region name to: Cindy Wesley OFS, cw93444@gmail.com or 846 Calimex Place, Nipomo, CA 93444.

Building Relationships with the help of Jesus

by Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS, National Minister

Relationships is the third aspect of our national focus for 2022-2025. The Gospel and our Rule call us to be in relationship. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matt 18:20 NAB

Reflecting on Jesus’ reminder from Matthew 18:20 – if two or three are gathered in his name, then He is there, we recognize that relationships with our Franciscan family members are especially important.

From August 22, the National Fraternity Council experienced our fraternal and pastoral



relationship is strained a bit? What happens if there is conflict?

Of course, none of us are perfect. We are called to live the Gospel. We will fall short at times. However, there is no place for racist attitudes or remarks in living the Gospel. Respectful dialogue is critical for our fraternal way of life. However, as we know from OFS Rule Article 7, we are called to

daily, ongoing conversion. Thus, we must never lose hope that our transgressions can be overcome. We must take it seriously and be committed to start again each day.

For council members encountering these situations, they may need to implement Jesus’ teachings referenced earlier in Matthew 18 (verses 15-17) which are also woven into the procedures specified in our General Constitutions Articles 56.2 and 58.2. If our members don’t feel they have the skills to effectively address the issues, then please reach out to the other council members or the members of the next higher council level for assistance.

Let us be encouraged to look for opportunities to build relationships:

- within or outside the Franciscan family (OFS Rule Articles 1, 2, 12, 17, 19),
- with other members of the Church (OFS Rule Articles 5, 6, 8),
- with people in our communities (OFS Rule Articles 13, 14, 15, 16) or
- with the non-human part of creation (OFS Rule Articles 11, 18).

I am challenged to embrace the opportunities for perfect joy, so that God’s glory can shine. May the Holy Spirit lead us as we listen, discern, and go forth to build up the kingdom of God.

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matt. 18:20 NAB

visitations as required by Article 26 of the OFS Rule and Articles 92-95 of the OFS General Constitutions. We are connected with our fourth fraternity – the international fraternity. Through this process, we continued to build relationships with our international family. Although the official report is not expected for several months, the initial feedback was overall positive. The visitation identified areas for us to work on which fit in with our priorities and theme.

Over the last year, the National Executive Council (NEC) has worked on building or enhancing relationships with the Regional Executive Councils (RECs). We learned that some of our RECs have grappled with issues. Relationships are strained. Some relationships are wounded because of harsh behavior. We received a report of blatant racist behavior.

When relationships are good – it is easy for them to flourish. What are our reactions when the

OFS-USA National Chapter 2023

by Sharon Winzeler, OFS



Visitors and NEC. Front row: *Cherryle Fruge, OFS.* Second row (left to right): *Fr. Carlos Gines Campos Julve, TOR; Mary Frances Charsky, OFS; Kathleen Molaro, OFS; and Dina Shabalina, OFS.* Third row (left to right): *Susan Ronan, OFS; Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS; Diane Menditto, OFS; Claudia Kauzlarich, OFS; Layna Maher, OFS.* Back row (left to right): *Fr. John DeLaRiva, OFM Cap.; Donna Hollis, OFS; and Joshua Molidor, OFS.*

Seventy Secular Franciscans, friars and visitors met at the General Chapter in St. Louis amidst a record-setting heat wave Aug. 22-27. One day the mercury soared to 104 degrees, breaking a record of 101 degrees set in 1943.

This was a visitation year, and Secular Franciscans were honored by the presence of fraternal visitor Dina Shabalina, OFS, from Ukraine, and pastoral visitor Fr. Carlos Gines

Campos Julve, TOR, of Peru. Visitations are held every six years at the national level. This year's event was at the Pallottine Renewal Center. Secular Franciscans recognized the celebration of Ukraine's Independence Day on August 24 by singing the national anthem and



On August 24, 1991, the Ukrainian Parliament declared the country's independence from the Soviet Union so each year Ukraine celebrates its Independence Day. Since their Independence Day occurred at chapter, attendees sang the Ukrainian National Anthem to honor fraternal visitor Dina Shabalina, OFS.

providing a generous check to Dina for the Secular Franciscans in Ukraine.

Dina and Fr. Carlos spent the week talking in groups and individually with members of the National Executive Council, regional ministers and spiritual assistants.

“My hometown is thousands of miles away from this place, but this week I couldn’t feel the distance. I felt like I am at home,” Dina said.

“I appreciate very much that you were honest with us. You shared not just your joys and achievements but also your challenges,” she said.

She praised the NEC and the regional ministers for their work.

“The higher you are, the more burden of service you take upon your shoulders,” Dina said.

She praised the efforts that the Secular Franciscans were making to reach out to youth.

“I appreciate that you are looking for ways to find the young people. The young people need you. Don’t be afraid to show them who you are,” she said.

Dina was fluent in English. Fr. Carlos had an interpreter, but he delivered his closing remarks in English.

“This moment is by the grace of God. I discovered the Franciscan fraternity years ago. It helped my vocation as a friar grow,” he said.

Fr. Carlos said he saw true fraternity among those gathered and encouraged them to seek God’s grace and spiritual support in guiding the Order.

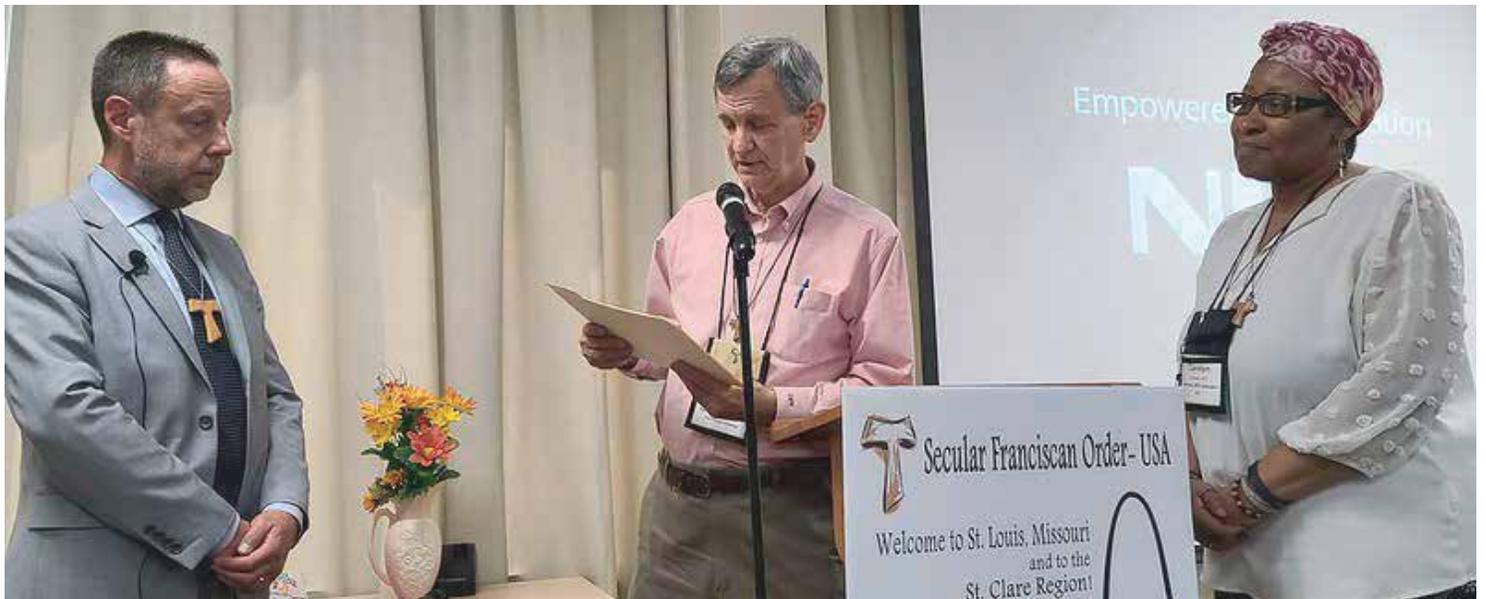
“Let’s not only use our logic and wisdom but also our faith in the grace of God because this is his work,” he said.

The chapter concluded with the recitation of the Hail Mary in many of the languages represented at the chapter English, French, Spanish, Polish, and Ukranian.

The week also included meetings, Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis on hisfeast day, budget adoption, the Minister’s State of the Order Address, the JPIC award, and an activity demonstration by the CentenaryCommittee.



The relic of St. Francis is present at each Chapter meeting.



from left to right, JPIC award recipient Steve Wasko, OFS: new JPIC animator Joe Makley, OFS: and out going animator Carolyn Townes, OFS.

Budget Decisions at Chapter 2023

Every fraternity council should prepare a budget. (GC 50.2e; IS10.1j; NS 5.5i, 6.4c) The National Fraternity is no exception. Each year the National Executive Council prepares a budget estimating projected income and projected expenses to accomplish the work of the National Fraternity Council (NEC, commissions, committee). As each of us are experiencing, in the last several years, the cost of transportation, food, lodging, and postage significantly increased. At the same time the income has decreased due to a decrease in membership. Something had to be changed. The NEC reviewed where costs could be trimmed and adjusted the budget estimates (example: reducing the number of in-person NEC meetings).

Based on the increase in expenses and the decrease in income, the NEC estimated that we will use up our savings within the next five years. Therefore, the NEC discussed the need to raise fair share. The last increase in Fair Share was in 2014 to \$17 per person, 9 years ago.

At the August 2023 Chapter, the need to increase fair share was presented to the Regional Ministers. After much discussion and many suggestions, the National Fraternity Council voted to raise the fair share by \$5 per member (to \$22 per member per year to be paid by each local fraternity) starting in March 2025 (based on the number of members on December 31, 2024).

In addition, one of the largest expenses of the National Fraternity is printing the Tau-USA newsletter. It has been a priority to send out printed copies as a formation tool, but also because many of our members do not have email or access to review the newsletters digitally. Many entities are going to digital only publications or printed based on a subscription. **To reduce expenses, the National Fraternity Council voted to print only one of the four editions planned to be published in 2024.** This will reduce expenses by an estimated \$40,000. The other three will be available in digital only format.

Neither decision is ideal, however, the National Fraternity Council is doing our best to keep expenses as low as possible so we will be able to ride the wave of increased expenses for several years in a row.

Rite of Remembrance

Some 390 fraternity brothers and sisters who died in the past year were honored during the Rite of Remembrance at Chapter. Donna Hollis, OFS, and Joshua Molidor, OFS, NEC councilors, led the observance. Each regional minister placed a rose in a vase on the altar in honor of the deceased members. The flowers also sat on the altar at the Mass at the cathedral basilica of St. Louis.

The Ritual Update

Final revisions are underway on the new Ritual book, according to national minister Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS. Publication is expected in 2024. Since the current version is out of print, fraternity members can use the online version until the new one is published. The Ritual update is available at two websites:

secularfranciscansusa.org
ciofs.org

Provinces update

Fr. Larry Hayes, OFM, is the provincial of the unified OFM province at the headquarters in Atlanta, according to Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM. Fr. Mark Soehner, OFM, is the provincial vicar. The friars will continue to seek ways to serve the Secular Franciscans, Fr. Jerome said. The merged province is called Our Lady of Guadalupe and officially began on Oct. 17. It is the merger of six American provinces: Holy Name, Sacred Heart, Assumption, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and Saint John the Baptist. Santa Barbara Province is expected to join the new province soon.

For more information, go to <https://ofm.org/en/appointed-definitory-for-the-future-our-lady-of-guadalupe-province.html>

New CNSA Member - New CNSA Member - Fr. Marek Stybor, OFM Conv., from Our Lady of the Angels Province, was introduced as a new member of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA). The CNSA is comprised of the four spiritual assistants, one from each friar obedience (Order of Friars Minor, OFM Capuchin, OFM Conventual, and Third Order Regular). The CNSA is responsible for guiding all the spiritual assistants of the OFS in the United States and the NEC.



Entertainment- St. Clare Regional Minister Christine Blood, OFS, and members of her region presented attendees with “A Taste of St. Louis” on Aug. 25, featuring local favorite foods. Afterward, former national minister Jan Parker, OFS, narrated a skit taken from chapter 34 of “The Little Flowers of St. Francis.” The story involves a pilgrimage that the French king St. Louis made to visit the holy Brother Giles. Performed with humor, reverence, and colorful costumes, the skit delighted the audience.



Chapter Day Away

by Vickie Klick, OFS

Celebrating the Feast Day at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis

National Chapter attendees celebrated the feast of our patron, St. Louis IX, King of France, at a Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis at its 2023 Chapter on the feast day of St. Louis, Aug. 25.

Fr. Tom Nairn, OFM, provincial of Sacred Heart province, was the celebrant.

Fr. Nairn is author of “A Franciscan Spirituality of Discernment”, the source of the National Fraternity’s theme “Listen, Discern, Go Forth.” He is provincial minister of the Franciscan Province of the Sacred Heart located in St. Louis.

St. Louis was king of France from 1226 to 1270. He is known for his kindness and service to the poor, which included making sure that those in his community were fed on a daily basis. He would often help serve the meals.

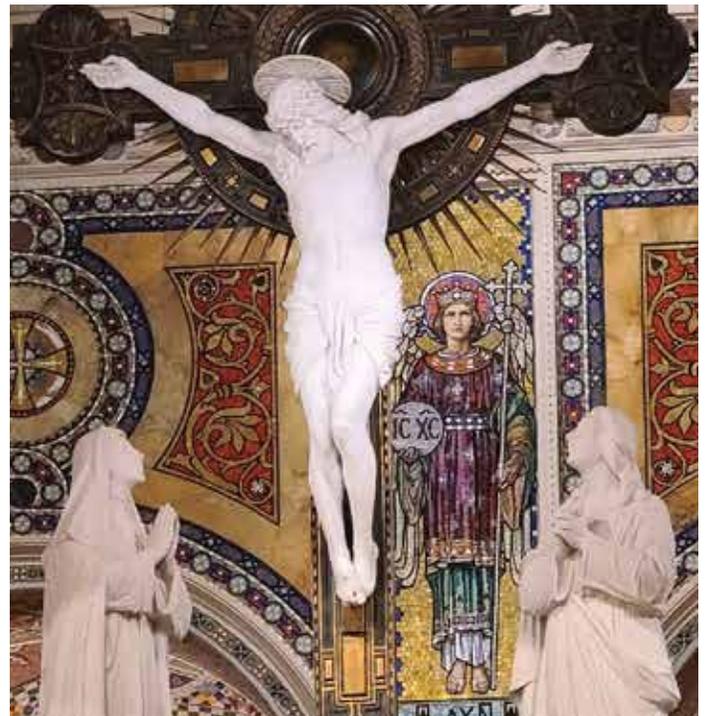
Fr. Tom's homily reflected on how odd it seemed to have a king and a crusader as a patron of our order. He connected the readings from Wisdom, 2 Timothy, and the parable of the talents from Luke to show St. Louis as a king who was a servant leader, who cared for the poor personally, who worked for peace, and who was a true evangelist. Using Francis' Letter to All the Faithful, Fr. Tom presented St. Louis as a model of what it means to be a member of the Franciscan family.

The cathedral is a stupendous experience in itself and a representation of Byzantine and Romanesque design. The interior is covered with 83,000 square feet of mosaics, depicting scenes from the Old and New Testaments, the religious history of the city of St. Louis, and, in the narthex, the life of St. Louis. One of the scenes shows St. Louis receiving the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis, our Secular Franciscan Order. It was very special to celebrate the feast there.

Originally designated a cathedral, it was given the distinction of a cathedral basilica in 1997 by Pope John Paul II who visited it in 1999. A basilica is the highest designation that can be given to a church building and is only bestowed by the Pope. The three signs that a church has been named a basilica are the presence of the Ombrellino (umbrella), Tintinnabulum (Bells), and the Papal Cross Keys. A cathedral is the home church for the bishop or archbishop of the diocese.



Off on a Day Away - Chapter attendees traveled to downtown St. Louis for Mass and a tour of the St. Louis Basilica-Cathedral on a record-breaking 104° day.







Franciscan Centenary Celebration Activity

by Sharon Winzeler, OFS



Vickie Klick, OFS and Terri Leone, OFS



Vickie Klick, OFS, chair of the Centenary Task Force, led an activity focusing on the four-year Franciscan Centenary Celebration. The focus of the year 2023 is the Rule and Christmas at Greccio, 2024 will be the Gift of the Stigmata, 2025 the Canticle of the Creatures, and 2026 the Easter of Francis of Assisi.

Chapter attendees had an opportunity to participate in an exercise focusing on the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order. The attendees worked in pairs to discuss questions focusing on the life of St. Francis of Assisi. The goal of the activity was for the participants to better understand how living the Rule, builds relationships between sisters and brothers.

“The questions provide opportunities for us to be transformed. We apply the questions to our lives, share with others and grow deeper and closer as Franciscans,” Vickie said.

“These are questions that recognize that we come to the Order by different paths, but the reason we are here is part of the lens that shows how we understand and focus on our way of life. With Francis, we learn about his conversion experiences. Something happened in your life that made you think you needed something more. What was that?” she asked.

Vickie talked about her admission to the Catholic Church on Christmas Eve in 1982 and her profession in 1985. She explained, “I was looking for fraternity. I needed to be with other people who shared my beliefs.”

Animated conversations could be heard throughout the exercise as fraternity members were eager to share their experiences. The questions in this module relate to fraternity, the Rule, and living the Gospel life. Prayers for Fraternal Life are also included in the formation series.

This activity and others that relate to the Franciscan Centenary Celebration can be found in the Centenary section of the Secular Franciscan website under “Activities and Prayer Resources” near the bottom left of the page.

“And whoever observes these things let him be blessed in Heaven with the blessing of the Most High Father, and on earth with the blessing of His Beloved Son with the Most Holy Spirit the Paraclete”

(Blessing of St Francis found in The Testament of Francis)



Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation



A Change in Leadership

by Sharon Winzeler, OFS



Carolyn Townes, OFS & Joe Makley, OFS

Joe Makley, OFS, is the new national animator for Justice and Peace and the Integrity of Creation. He replaces Carolyn Townes, OFS, who was appointed to the position in 2013 by the late Tom Bello, OFS. Bello asked Townes to work on educating Secular Franciscans on JPIC issues.

The National Executive Council paid tribute to Caroline (Carolyn) for her 10-year term with a retrospective slide show featuring her work on the JPIC commission.

Carolyn said goodbye with a talk on kindness. “When we show kindness to others, it inspires them to do the same, creating a chain reaction that spreads joy and positivity. As Franciscans, we are called to be instruments of peace, in our Order, in our Church, and in our world.”



Tribute to Carolyn Townes, OFS

Joe has worked with the JPIC commission since 2016 and became vice chair in 2019. He and his wife, Patricia, belong to the Holy Family Fraternity, which meets at St. Catherine of Sienna Church in Norway, ME. Professed in 1996, Joe has worked in JPIC-related issues at the local, regional, and national levels.

Joe shared, “Since being appointed, I reviewed our history, especially the transition from the Apostolic Commissions to JPIC in 2007. The hope then was to reflect on who we are as foundational to what we are doing. We are to support the sincere, daily conversion described in our Rule, and facilitate reflection on that, leading to action. For example, while meditating on the Canticle of the Creatures, we may hear it in a new way, in our hearts, and rediscover our love for God in creation and a new awareness of the sins we have committed against nature.”

Joe also spoke of following the inspiration of initiatives led by his predecessor Carolyn. He explained, “Another example would be the Faith and Racial Equity course facilitated by Carolyn Townes during the summer of 2021. We had books to read, but the main thing was listening. The time she invested in hearing and telling stories, sometimes tough stories was vital to our understanding of JPIC. In depth, we practiced Paragraph 19 of our Rule. We listened in love, open to conversion, just like Father Lester Bach emphasized so strongly in Franciscan Journey. That kind of listening is still central to who we are, a visible sign of our penitential walk.

Working in conjunction with the wishes of the National Executive Council, Joe has plans for the future of JPIC. On public issues, he will work in concert with the National Executive Council and the other commissions and committees to provide good Catholic information, a Christ-centered Franciscan response, connections to one another, and timely opportunities to pray, reflect, and act.

Joe emphasized that, in addition to the planned activities, he’d work to facilitate better understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, through hosting or connecting with one or more online seminars. Much of the increase in JPIC activity over the last few years was organized remotely, including focus groups on Care for Creation, Immigration, and Spirituality of JPIC, all of which were led by members in the regions who did their planning remotely. So, there will be more chances to connect and share and serve. Communications are a focus that should be a two-way conversation.

He invited members to contact him or other commission members directly. Their contact information is available on the Secular Franciscans USA website.

2023 Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award

by Joseph Makley, OFS
National Animator, Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

Our JPIC award recipient for 2023 is Steve Wasko, OFS. Steve is a member of St. Bonaventure Fraternity, in the Divine Mercy region.

He is founder and executive director of the St. Suzanne Cody Rouge Community Resource Center, which is a faith based non-profit in Detroit.



Steve Wasko, OFS

What follows is a brief interview with Steve:

Steve, you gave us a compelling story about how a project in a parish served the greater community. Could you expand on that for the members who were not present?

After many years of service to the local community, our Catholic elementary school at the parish I have been worshipping at since birth, St. Suzanne Our Lady Gate of Heaven in northwest Detroit, closed in 2002. Like many urban parishes, we felt compelled to quickly fill what would be an empty building and so we leased the entire facility to one, and then another, charter school. Great income for the parish! But nothing to do with mission, which in our case called for our church to respond to the needs of both our faith community and neighboring community. Rather than continue this practice, we chose to find a sustainable solution to building a full-service community resource center, which occurred in several iterations but became a reality in its present form in 2018. Our focus is intensely neighborhood-centric, with leadership, board members, staff and providers based in the immediate community and, vitally important services based on what the community has stated it needs. With a mission to Empower Children, Families and Youth with Hope, we host programs ranging from early childhood to senior citizens. We are an enduring Catholic presence and truly the center of the community.

You've led a life of service in both public and Catholic education and bring significant experience and knowledge to your work. What advice can you give to those of us wanting to energize parish connections to our communities?

As professed Secular Franciscans, Article 13 of our Rule calls on us to serve with a gentle and courteous spirit and accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an Image of Christ, and to place ourselves joyfully on an equal basis with all people. A program focused on Black Catholic spirituality that some of us have become involved with through Loyola Marymount University teaches us that proximity to those we serve makes the credible difference in understanding and responding faithfully in dialogue, service, and faith. The work we are doing, more so than simple service at a charity, forces the parish to be directly involved and working in conjunction with the community. Our pastor at the time we reorganized, the wise and gentle Fr. Vic Clore, noted that we would step into the role of landlord and 'convener.' Some of us ran with that. As a convener, we can help to organize disparate elements in synergy. We can help to marshal services that the community has enunciated it needs and desires. And, you realize, we can be picky and choosy; we can settle only on quality. We can create and sustain connections that lead to brotherhood.

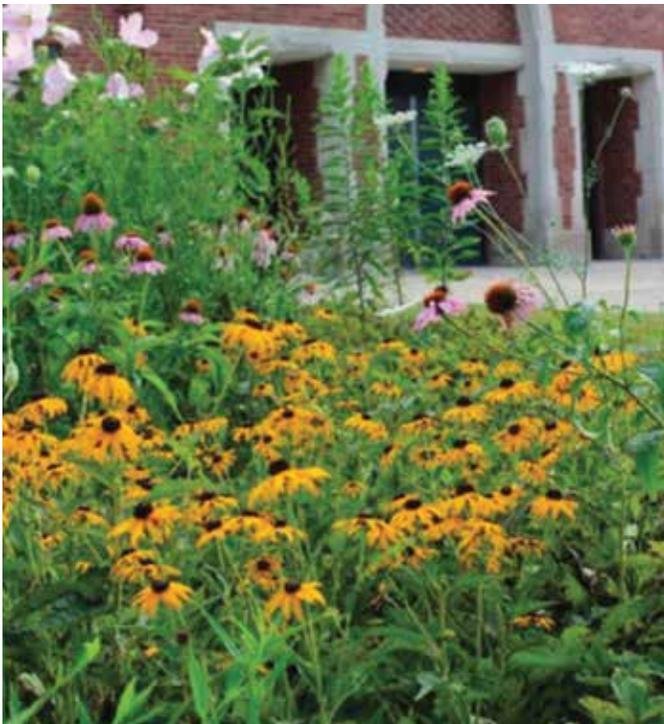
Frankly, at the parish and even at the diocesan level, that can be messy and sometimes confusing. Sometimes we take a step backward. But it is worth the effort.

As you spoke to us in St Louis, I kept thinking of Paragraph thirteen of our Rule: “A sense of community will make them joyful...” Can you say how you became aware of your vocation as a secular Franciscan?

Article 18 also calls for us to respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which bear the imprint of the Most High. At the Center we have infused sustainability, innovation, partnerships, and green thinking - more so than the typical social service agency. We’ve created these amazing rain gardens and natural habitats on our urban grounds that process rainwater, reduce costs, attract pollinators and have also served as the basis for authentic semester long education programs for youth and adults. The rain gardens remind me daily of the kind and gentle reverence Francis had for all of God’s creation...the same call that Pope Francis speaks about in *Laudato Si’*...the same spirit I sensed when Father David Preuss, OFM Cap pointed out the longtime fraternity gathering each month at the Solanus Casey Center back in 2018. With my brothers in Christ, Joe and Joshua, we took the journey to profession in 2020.

What keeps you going?

I think we’re on to something here. Last year the Catholic Foundation of Michigan named us the top awardee and the Spirit of Innovation. They provided a grant to seed additional community resource centers tied to parishes in the City of Detroit. There is a cohort of four that have been meeting; one has approval from the Archdiocese to proceed. I am really energized by our churches taking a leadership role in resilient communities. Regrettably, this has not always been the case. We have a pastoral letter in Detroit, *Unleash the Gospel*. This is real, tangible work toward that.



The site photo is one of the eight rain gardens at St. Suzanne Our Lady Gate of Heaven parish in Detroit, MI. The individuals are Storm Water Specialists - adults in the neighboring community who became certified for employment maintaining green stormwater infrastructure as a result of educational programs here.

Pictured are: (front to back): Adele Hawkins, Regina Pendleton, Trista Hill.

Report on the State of the Order 2023

Minister Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS, updated attendees with the 2023 State of the Order address at the OFS-USA Chapter Meeting on Aug. 22 at the Pallottine Renewal Center in Florissant, MO. From Guam to Maine, the national Secular Franciscan Order covers 8,000 miles and 11,000 active members and candidates in 30 regional fraternities, she said.

State of the Order 2023

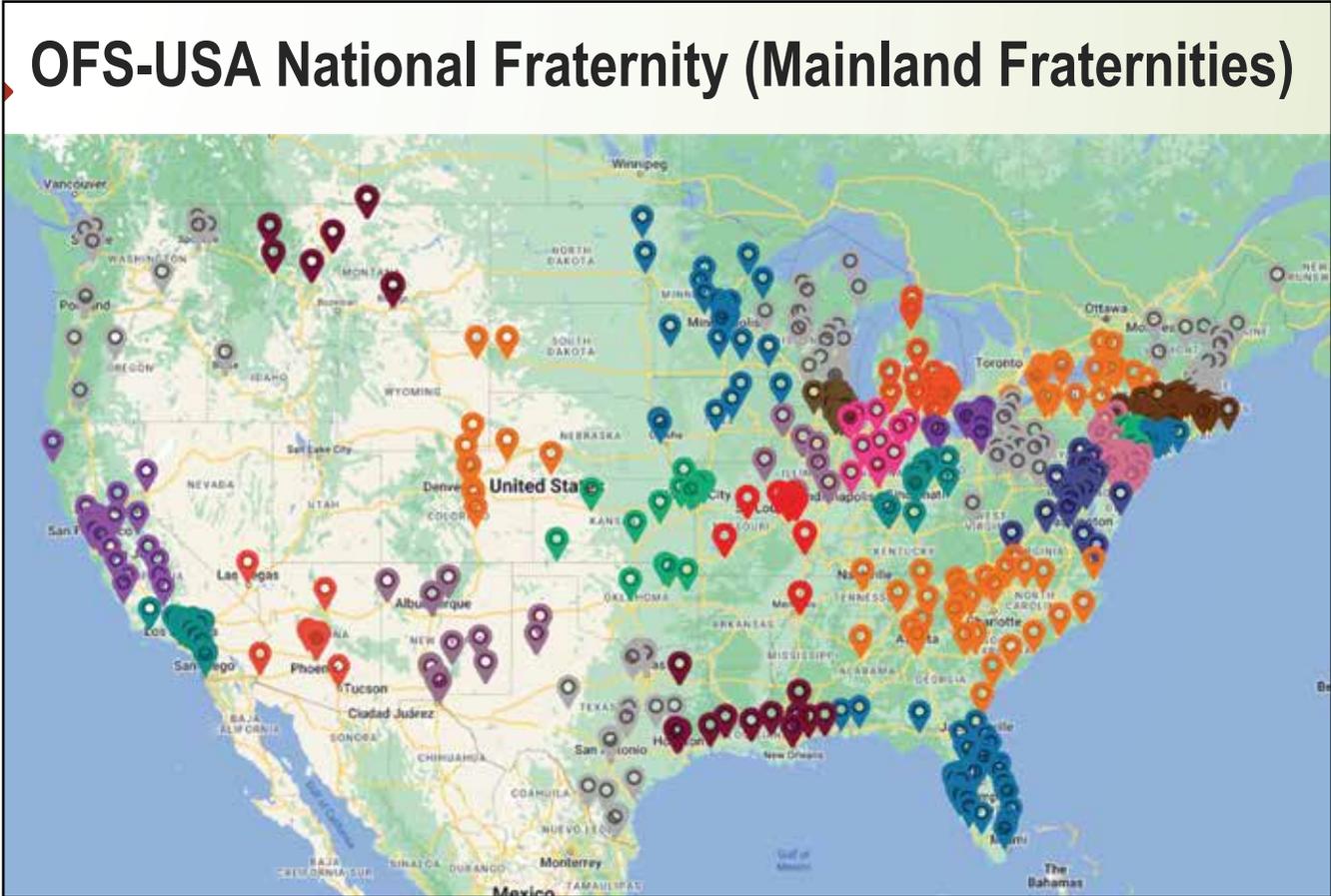
OFS-USA Chapter
Pallottine Renewal Center
Florissant, Missouri
August 22, 2023

Jane DeRose-Bamman OFS
National Minister, OFS-USA
on behalf of the National Executive Council (NEC)

In the last 10 months since the The International Council (CIOFS) - primarily relating to the experimental version of the international statutes. was elected; members have responded to:

- Requests from regional ministers included help on issues with members, Regional Executive Councils (REC), Regional Spiritual Assistants (RSA), formation, and monetary issues.
- The International Council - the (CIOFS)- primarily relating to the experimental version of the international statutes.
- The call to conduct regional visitations and elections.

The NEC remains focused on its three priorities--vocations, communications, and relationships. The State of the Order address was organized by these priorities.

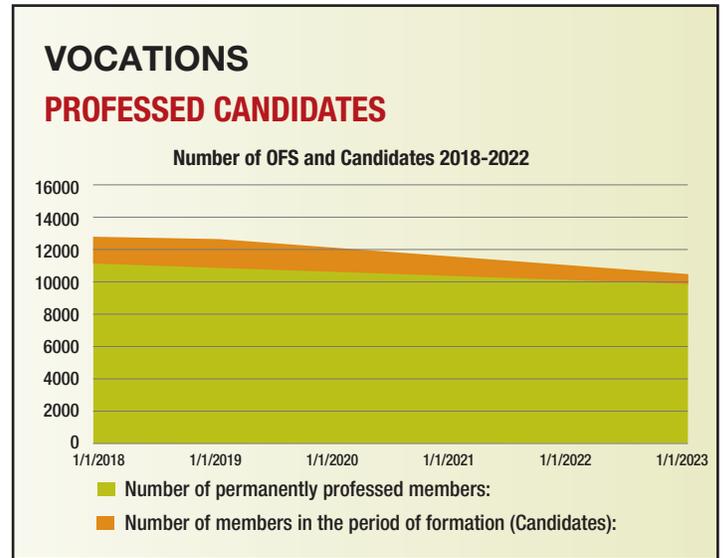
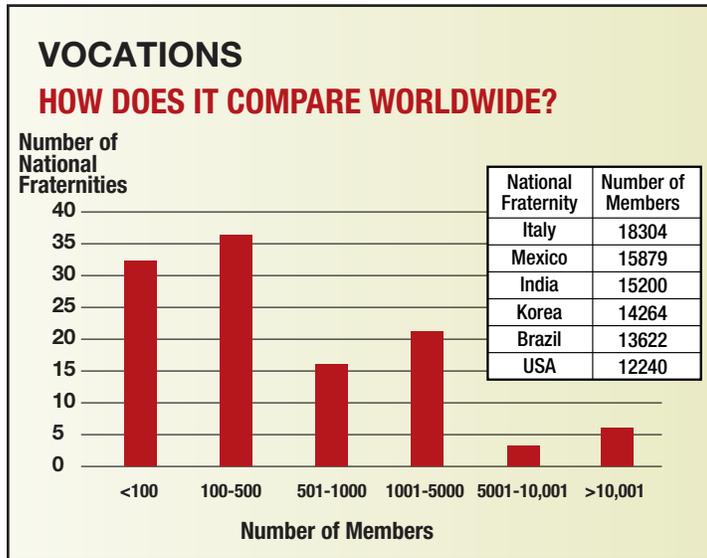


Vocations

“Numbers of the professed and candidates have decreased since 2018,” Jane said, “when at one time there were more than 13,000. The reduction may be due to improved database reporting as well as the deaths of members exceeding the number of new members.

Continuing to grow and inspire others to the Secular Franciscan call is vital.

“Wanting to share our vocation is a sign of our belief in the Franciscan way of life, but of course, the foundation is prayer and trusting that God will touch the hearts of potential new members,” she said.



The number of fraternities has also declined from 635 established and emerging fraternities in 2018 to 582 in 2023.

There are 30 regional fraternities. Each has as few as seven or as many as 30+ local fraternities. Regional memberships range between 66 and 850 brothers and sisters.

“Approximately 11 percent of our members prefer to communicate in a language other than English. Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese are the next largest language groups,” Jane said.

Based on 2021 figures, the U.S. has the sixth largest number of fraternities in the world after Italy, Mexico, India, Korea, and Brazil. Worldwide there are 114 nations with established or emerging fraternities.

“But numbers are not what we really need to focus on as a priority,” Jane said. “We want quality vocations where members know what it means to be a Secular Franciscan.”

Quoting from a recent Formation Friday, Jane said, “It’s not what we do but who we are.’ We live the Gospel by following the example of St. Francis. We make a lifelong promise to live out our Baptismal commitment.”

Communications

The goal of communications relates to our ability to attract and retain vocations, Jane said.

Some of the items relating to this priority include the rollout of Phase 1 of the new database that will help improve communication of information and ease in reporting. Use of social media such as Facebook and posting of materials on the website have made it easier to share information. Councilor groups among the regional ministers have made it easier to get to know each other, share ideas, and provide peer support.

There is also a continued focus on sharing information in emails and holding workshops and training. Other communication methods include meeting with RECs after elections, translating documents into Spanish and Korean, offering formation events in Spanish, and raising awareness of providing ease of access to materials by the Accessibility Committee.

Relationships

“Within the Order, the NEC is working to help the regions address tough issues. The beauty of the NEC is that we are a council, not just one person,” Jane said. This allows NEC members to attend visitations and elections and respond to questions.

On the international level, members from the United States have participated in JPIC and formation. Last year, Diane Menditto, national vice-minister was appointed to serve on the CIOFS—Formation Secretariat. Mary Stronach continues as vice-minister of CIOFS.

“Forming and maintaining relationships with spiritual assistants is certainly a priority. Although this has been an ongoing priority, we still have fraternities without spiritual assistants,” Jane said.

There are 50 Regional Spiritual Assistants covering 29 of the 30 regions. Twenty-one Secular Franciscans serve as Regional Spiritual Assistants in 15 regions.

Friars comprise about 40 percent of the local spiritual assistants. Secular Franciscans comprise 28 percent.

Other Franciscan organizations in which members of our Order participate:

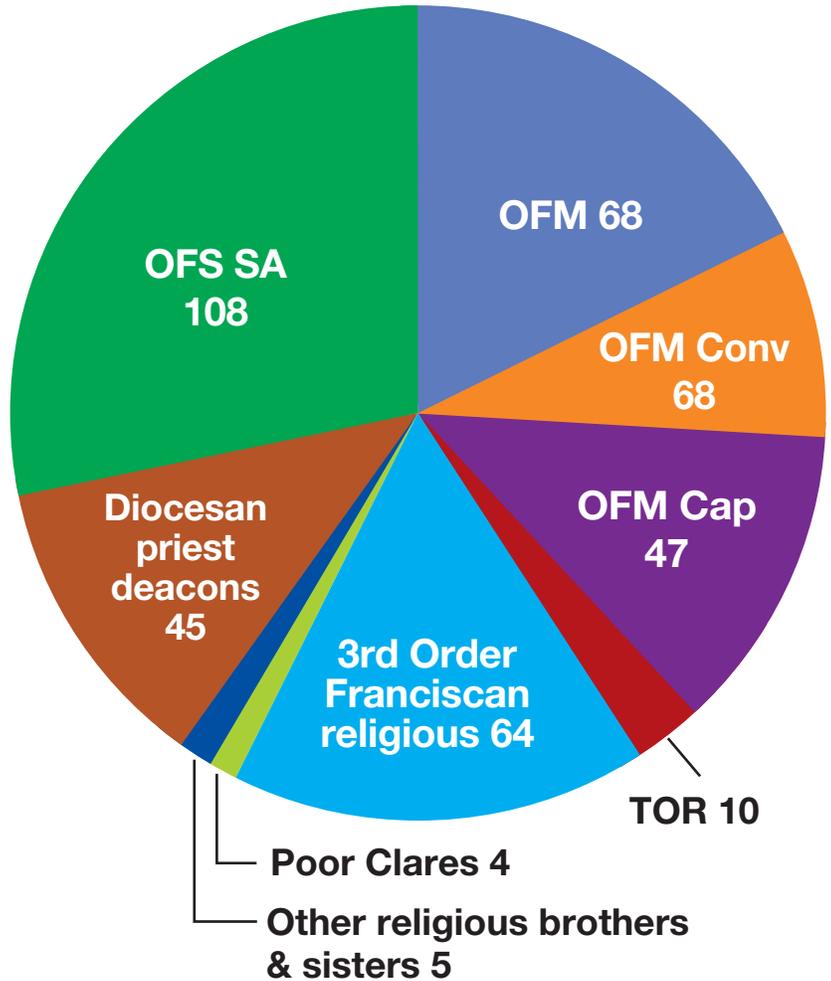
Additionally, the order has maintained its relationship with the church by connecting with the bishops who must approve the establishment of new fraternities.

“These last 10 months has been a busy time. In addition to the items mentioned earlier, we’ve also completed a revision of the ritual and are exploring printing options,” she said. The updates to the White Rule book are being translated.

“May our hearts and minds be open to actions that further our priorities. May Jesus Christ be praised, now and forever,” Jane concluded.

A PowerPoint slideshow that illustrates the key points of the 2023 State of the Order address is available on the website.

**Local Spiritual Assistants
as of 12/31/2022**





What Way are You Going?

by Fr. Christopher Panagoplos, TOR

Taking Sides. Really?

Abraham Lincoln had it right. We should not claim God's blessing and endorsement for national policies and practices. We should not proclaim that God is on our side. Rather, said Lincoln, we should pray whether we are on God's side. Martin Luther King Jr reminded us of God's purposes for peace, for justice, for the building of the "beloved community," where everyone is welcomed, everyone is included, and no one felt left out of the conversation. By the working of the Holy Spirit in human hearts, unity is forged in diversity.



"God is on our side" ideology is bad theology. It foments self-righteousness, triumphalism. Rightly so, "if we are on God's side," we breathe a spirit of humility and reflection, accountability, perhaps even penitence—values missing in public life. When we are on God's side, we are challenged to **listen** to God present in the poor, the vulnerable, those left behind; to **discern** basic issues with the help of our Rule and Constitutions; and then go **forth**, resolute in loving relationship with people and all creation

*Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is neither
R/D, right/left, liberal/conservative.
CST is Christocentric.
God does not take sides.*

As we **Go Forth**, allow me to add the words "**gently and pastorally.**"

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is neither R/D, right/left, liberal/conservative. CST is Christocentric. God does not take sides. People seeking leadership positions in government are not divinely appointed! They are chosen for many reasons by many people deeply rooted in faith. We Franciscans are not single-issue voters, but some of us are! Truth-telling is a religious issue—one party defends truth while the other refutes it. Respecting the image of God in every person, in the migrants and refugees, is a religious issue—one party is for offering shelter and security while the other sends them back. Failing to protect the lives of the innocent and defenseless is a religious issue and is a sin against justice.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops www.usccb.org insisted in their pastoral Faithful Citizenship, "that Catholics who bring their moral convictions into public life do not threaten democracy or pluralism but enrich them and the nation. The separation of church and state does not require division between belief and public action, between moral principles and political choices, but protects the right of believers and religious groups to practice their faith and act on their values in public life."

With political leaders obligated to the money of wealthy individuals and corporations, and with the media elites joining the ranks of the rich and famous, who will sound the call to justice? Politics runs on ideological polarities, even to the extreme, and that leaves many people feeling left out. From the political Right we find differences between aggressive nationalists and cautious Isolationists, corporate defenders and principled fiscal conservatives. From the Left, liberalism is everywhere, differences from pragmatic centrists to green lefties, and finding themselves on the defensive. Libertarians are a mixture: liberal on cultural and moral issues, conservative on fiscal and economic policy.

What say you? What about your voice? your “prophetic” voice, speaking moral truth? Our ancestors are Hebrew prophets like Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah. They look into the signs of their times, diagnosing the present, and pointing the way to a just solution. **“Prophetic creativity” is using imagination to open up political options** which are failing to solve our most pressing social problems. Prophetic creativity is **active faith-based language that goes beyond old divisions and seeks the common good—the link between personal ethics and social justice.** So, let us strive to capture the imagination, commitment, and the trust of the majority of people in our country. Let personal and social responsibility be woven together in search of the common good. Franciscan Sister Thea Bowman would pray for us and for much needed grace.

I believe that we Franciscans have the capacity, by God’s grace, to envision a world other than the one that is in front of us. The world in front of us is propelled by money, power, greed, fear, and violence where God is eliminated as a serious player and a real character. **Faith encourages us** that God governs with justice and compassion. **Faith assures us** that God creates viable conditions for life to flourish. Fear cannot hold us captive in working for an alternative world. **Prophetic creativity imagines an alternative way to the dominant forces confronting us. It begins with faith, and imagination!** The presence of God has not been vacated. The presence of God lives—in us. Faith, great faith, is called for in these turbulent times.

You recall several times in the Gospels we find Jesus’ disciples to be of “little faith” because they were preoccupied with the world immediately in front of them: worrying about food and clothing; worrying about wind and storm; worrying about bread. Their “little faith” caused them to miss the point—about trust—in the grace of God to provide what is needed for life, and to engage us all on behalf of the “kin-dom” of God. Creative and imaginative thinking can broaden horizons for the greater good of all. We hear many people pre-occupied with the world immediately in front of them, many voices: clamoring about the state of

health care, the wrong leader being elected, jobs going overseas, people of other political persuasions, the rise of acceptable immorality, crime, global warming, poor people, rich people, black people, to name a few. We cannot assume that the world immediately in front of us is the only world the way it is presently arranged, with no possibility of newness.

What will keep us going through all the terror- and fear-talk? Trust! Trust in God, and His ways in us. **“Be not afraid, I go before you always,”** and in all ways. Let us pray

***Most high, glorious God of justice,
open our eyes to see you
in the faces of the poor;
open our ears to hear You
in the voices of the exploited;
open our mouths to defend You in the public
square as well as in deeds of mercy.
Remind us that what we do to the least among
us, we do to You. Amen.***



Quotations from Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA

**“Remember who you are
and whose you are.”**

**“Can you remember who you were before
the world told you who you should be?”**

**“When you know whose you are and who
you are, you will run the race of life
differently.”**

**“I try to make sense of life. I try to keep
myself open to people and to laughter and
to love and to have faith.”**

¹ Francis of Assisi: The Saint, p. 109

² Rule of 1221

CHRIST, ST. FRANCIS, and FRANCISCAN THEOLOGICAL TERMS

by Anne Mulqueen, OFS
National Formation Commission

Today, in Franciscan circles, specific words or phrases are used to describe the Franciscan understanding of Christ and Christ's relationship to humanity and creation. Too often, no clear definition is given, and many Franciscan teachings are skipped over without understanding what is meant.

This should not discourage us because St. Francis' understanding of the Almighty deepened throughout his life. The man who began by repairing churches was not the same man who wrote the Canticle of the Creatures and gave himself back to God in the arms of Sister Death. So, Let us begin...

Franciscan Emphasis on the Blessed Trinity

The Trinity appears nowhere in the title of this article, but we must understand Franciscan Trinitarian spirituality to understand how our founder experienced God through each person of the Blessed Trinity. Also, he understood each person of the Trinity as relating to each other. In *The Praises of God*, written by Francis to Brother Leo, he writes:

You are three and one, the Lord God of gods;
You are good, all good, the highest good,
Lord God living and true.

Further, he writes in his Earlier Rule, Chapter XXIII.

Let all of us truly and humbly believe, hold in our heart and love, honor, adore, serve, praise and bless, glorify and exalt, magnify and give thanks to the Most High and Supreme Eternal God Trinity and Unity Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Creator of all. Savior of all who believe and hope in Him, and love Him.

Now that we have established that St. Francis' approach to the Godhead was Trinitarian let us turn to his love and devotion to the humanity of Christ.

Christ as Center (Christocentric)

Before theologians began to develop the concept of Christ as the center of all creation, St. Francis understood that ***all things spiritual and corporal were created through the Son²***.

The late Fr. Eric Doyle, OFM, an English theologian, wrote on why Christocentrism is important for us to understand. Fr. Eric wrote:

Francis reminds us all to realize the dignity God has bestowed on us: our body he formed and created in the image of his Son, our soul he made in his own likeness (Admonition V). The body of the Incarnate Word, Jesus of Nazareth, was the blueprint for the bodies of the first human beings. ...

For all their simplicity and clarity, [the sentence] of Francis just quoted, has a rich theological content. Contained in embryo is the Christocentric vision of the Franciscan school and even the doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy as formulated and expounded by John Duns Scotus.

Christocentrism naturally leads us to an understanding of the Primacy of Christ.

Primacy of Christ

The best way to understand the Primacy of Christ is through Scripture, particularly the Gospel of John and Colossians 1:15-20.

John's Gospel begins by telling us that the Word, Jesus, was with God from the very beginning, and the Word was, in fact, God. Everything that exists came through Jesus; without him, nothing would exist.

3 St. Francis of Assisi and the Christocentric Character of Franciscan Life and Doctrine, *Franciscan Christology* p 7.

Through Jesus, we have life and a light that overcomes and dispels darkness. (Paraphrase of John's Prologue). In Colossians, St. Paul and Timothy address the church in Colossae. To emphasize that Jesus is the fullness of God. Paul emphasizes the primacy of Christ in these key verses. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation... the head of the body, the church... the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:15, 18).

Christ as Exemplar

Often, in Franciscan sources, you will see Christ defined by the word Exemplar. St. Bonaventure 13.5. Consider Admonition V, wherein Francis writes, ... how excellent the Lord made you, for he created and formed you in the image of his beloved son according to the body and to his likeness according to the spirit. Christ is the original, the exemplar, and we are the expression of the original artwork of God.

HAECCEIATAS

Haecceitas is a Latin word that translates into English as thisness. In Franciscan theology, the term was used by Blessed John Duns Scotus to express the unique and never-to-be-repeated quality of all creation. In the words of the song, There'll Never Be Another You, nor will anything created be replicated. Haecceitas relates to the sacredness of each person and each thing. This concept is essential for all to understand because from it comes our belief in the dignity of each human person and the value of all God's creation.

Franciscan Lectio Divina

When most prayerful people think of Lectio Divina, they imagine the traditional contemplative way of praying that involves four movements: reading Scripture, meditating on Scripture, entering into prayer, and then contemplatively resting in God's presence.

Franciscans have another method that goes beyond contemplation into conversion and action. In her letter to Agnes of Prague, St. Clare of Assisi designed a new approach to prayer. Instead of divine reading, Clare offered sacred seeing. Using the crucifix as her image, Clare asked Agnes to gaze upon Christ with the eyes of the heart. Using her mind and imagination, Clare instructed Agnes to consider her thoughts while gazing. The next step Clare suggested was to contemplate Christ by being present to him in silence and allowing the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to emerge. The final step, imitation, is the one that transforms us into the one we love and empowers us to continue Christ's mission.

Conclusion

The words and phrases used in this article are skeletal; covering them in depth would require writing a book. Also, many more terms need to be defined. The bad news is I had to pick and choose. Fortunately, there is good news. We have many Franciscan books in circulation that go deeply into these topics. I exhort you (using one of St. Francis' favorite terms) to further research our rich Franciscan history and theology.

One book I highly recommend is *The Franciscan Moral Vision: Responding to God's Love*, edited by Thomas A. Nairn. It can be purchased from the Franciscan Institute or Amazon.

Questions:

- How have you experienced Christ as being central in your life?
- If Christ is the blueprint for the image of God and the one through whom all that exists is created, what is your relationship with all of creation?
- How do you enhance the survival and thriving of humanity and the rest of God's creation?

National Ecumenical/Interfaith Committee



Seek with Encounters, Dialogue with Others by Ron Lacey, OFS



From left to right are Ron Lacey, OFS; Donna Hollis, OFS; and Fr. Masud Syedullah, TSSF

One of the greatest joys at the recent National Chapter, for me, was meeting in person two of my fellow Ecumenical/Interfaith Committee members, Donna Hollis, and Carolyn Townes, as well as our friend Fr. Masud ibn Syedullah, who attended the Chapter as an observer on behalf of the Third Order Society of St Francis (TSSF). I was especially grateful that Fr. Masud shared with me some of the history of the founding of the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity – and the role he played in the founding. I also enjoyed learning about his ministry in Hyde Park, NY, and his parish’s intimate connection with the Roosevelts.

I couldn’t help thinking how our meeting – an Anglican priest at the Chapter of a Catholic order – would have been, for far too long, unthinkable. Until people did think of it! And then these people acted on it: Roman Catholic Secular Franciscans reached out to the Anglican TSSF and the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans and asked for dialogue. Meetings were held, and five principles of Franciscan unity, across our denominations, were discovered: baptism, charism, call, Christo-centrism, and the prophetic voice. The Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity was founded, and in time the Order of Lutheran Franciscans joined. “How blessed it is when brothers and sisters dwell together in unity,” (Ps 133:1).

It may not seem very big, noticeably big, but in fact, as Pope Francis reminds us in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*: “If we want to encounter and help one another, we have to dialogue... Persistent and courageous dialogue does not make headlines, but quietly helps the world to live much better than we imagine,” (198). We must all create processes – indeed, a culture – of encounter. In such a culture, “we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone,” (216). Processes of encounter will “build a people that can accept differences,” (217). It’s hard to imagine anything the world needs more right now than building bridges and accepting differences! This is especially incumbent upon people of faith. Christians “need to find occasions to speak with one another and to act together for the common good and the promotion of the poor,” (282).

If you have not already done so, please spend some time with *Fratelli Tutti*. Maybe read it with your Fraternity, or start a reading group in your parish, or just read it by yourself. It beautifully articulates the vision of a culture of encounter, with helpful suggestions to create processes of encounter.

Fratelli Tutti may also be useful in addressing the important subject of anti-racism, something that was discussed at length at our National Chapter. Not being racist is not the same thing as being anti-racist. Anti-racism is an active and definitive stand against racism, including systemic and institutional racism, which can be all too easy for majority-culture people like me to overlook. Anti-racism is the intentional work for inclusion, respect, and a more just world. We need reminders.

One may wonder what anti-racism has to do with ecumenism. For starters, they both grow out of loving and honest encounters, and they are both aimed at creating and fostering further encounter and dialogue. Pope Francis doesn’t go out on a limb when he says: “Jesus never promoted violence or intolerance,” (238). But he reminds us that society – of which our Order is a little piece, our Church a bigger piece – is a family, and “the joys and sorrows of each of its members are felt by all. That is what it means to be a family!” (230). “There is no end to the building of a country’s social peace; rather, it is an open-ended endeavor, a never-ending task that demands the commitment of everyone and challenges us to work tirelessly to build the unity of the nation,” (232).



Where Are Our YouFras? (Youth Fraternities)

by Kathleen Molaro, OFS
National Youth/Young Adult Commission Chair

As the Franciscan Youth and Young Adult Commission has stated many times, our mission calls us to share the Franciscan way of life through prayer, formation, and social justice action. Even though we may only have a few official YouFras in the states, we discovered in reading last year's annual reports, there are individuals, fraternities, and regions all across the United States who are taking seriously our OFS Rule, Article 24 to "Foster communion among members," especially with our young people, and to "adopt appropriate means for growth in the Franciscan and the ecclesial life."

The concluding document from the recent (XI Latin American Congress and I American) OFS-YouFra Congress in Paraguay states that it's imperative that we "strengthen the bond between OFS and YouFra with listening, dialogue, opportunities and presence!" Throughout the nation, folks are finding ways to do just that. The power point we shared at the 2023 NAFRA Chapter highlighted some of what we learned in the reports, and hopefully encouraged ministers to return to their regions energized and determined to increase efforts in this vital area of OFS life.

There is one question that continually comes up in conversations with Regional Animators and Ministers. "Why don't we have YouFra in the United States?" Folks are concerned that when young people contact their fraternities, there are only a few YouFras to which they can be directed. My quick answer is that the youth in the United States have different needs than those of countries where YouFra is well established.

In the final report of the National Dialogue on Catholic Pastoral Ministry with Youth and Young Adults, we are reminded that "...the urgent needs of the young are very different in other countries and continents even within the commonality of the one faith." In the United States, our young people are faced with challenges unique to our area of the world, and within their own communities. I'll attempt to give a few simple explanations as to why this is a reality, but there are other reasons also, so this could be a semester long topic of study! We are a cosmopolitan society—quite diverse even within local communities. Diversity is a gift! Each culture represented offers unique perspectives, traditions, and ways of living. Even though this gives our country a wonderful flavor, it also offers challenges. Young people have so many choices, especially when it comes to faith and ways of life. In the YouFra heavy countries, we find mostly Catholic societies quite often accompanied by the presence of Franciscans. Young people grow up with the influence of Franciscan charism and YouFra and are deeply immersed in their Catholicism.

As a result of the diversity and freedoms we experience in the United States, young people are often faced with a lack of identity. They don't automatically consider themselves bonded to a particular culture or religion. Youth in other countries have only one cultural identity, so their sense of belonging is stronger. In fact, the tradition in our country whereby young people leave home after they finish high school contributes to this lack of identity. Suddenly thrust into a society filled with divisiveness and mixed messages makes "adulthood" difficult for our United States youth. In other cultures, young people traditionally continue living at home until they are married or make a major life change.

Our country is also blessed with affluence, which means most young people have access to computers and internet. Again, this is a gift—but can also present problems. In *Christus Vivit*, Pope Francis suggests that "Contemporary life offers immense possibilities for action and distraction, and the world presents all of them as valid and good. All of us, but especially the young, are immersed in a culture of zapping. Without the wisdom of discernment, we can easily become prey to every passing trend."

In the book *iGen: Why today's Super Connected Kids are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* the author, Jean Twenge, PhD, states that even

though there are great personality characteristics in this age group, “new media is making teens more lonely, anxious, and depressed, and is undermining their social skills and even their sleep.” The commission is delving into these (and many other) differences more deeply. We are asking the question, “How are we, as Secular Franciscans, uniquely equipped to offer our younger Catholics the support they need in facing these challenges. How can we best accompany them? What is distinct about us, and how might that help us specifically respond to the needs of young people?”

Our young people need encouragement, inspiration, and support in their journey toward holiness. And we, as older more seasoned Catholics need their energy and enthusiasm, their questions and challenges, and their youthful presence in our journey toward holiness. We walk together as pilgrims.

Thank you for loving our youth and mustering up the courage and time to step into their world. We will be resuming our monthly zoom gatherings soon. We hope to see you there!

Additional Pictures From Chapter



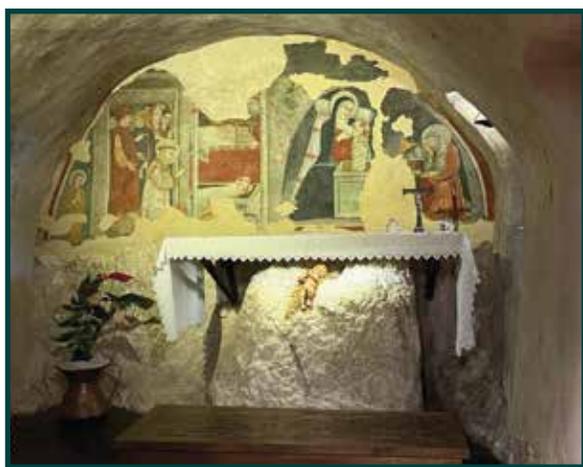
Christmas at Greccio (1223)

by Bret Thoman, OFS

This year, the Franciscan Family continues to observe a series of eight-centenary commemorations. In 2023, we are reflecting on two important events that occurred 800 years ago: the Approval of the Later Rule and the reenactment of Christmas at Greccio.

Not far from Rieti, in the northernmost part of the eponymous valley, is the hill town of Greccio. Home to just about 100 residents, the village is famed for an event that took place in 1223. Within a grotto nestled within a cliff, here, St. Francis of Assisi reenacted the first nativity scene.

Referred to locally as the “New Bethlehem,” St. Francis desired to recreate a living nativity scene (with live animals and hay) in order to render the feast of the birth of Christ more real. Before this event, the feast of the Nativity of Christ was a minor feast in the liturgical calendar of the Church.



The grotto where the first nativity scene took place



The hermitage of Greccio stands out prominently on the side of a cliff.

St. Francis had been to Greccio several times and was close to a local knight and tertiary named Giovanni (John). Francis told John that he wished to “enact the memory of that babe who was born in Bethlehem: to see as much as is possible with my own bodily eyes the discomfort of his infant needs, how he lay in a manger, and how, with an ox and a donkey standing by, he rested on hay” (Thomas of Celano, First Life, Chapter 30).

The site was a cave on the face of a cliff some three kilometers (2 miles) from the village. With John’s assistance, animals were led to the grotto and hay and a manger were installed. St. Francis, a deacon, served at the Mass. The liturgy came to life spectacularly. The people gathered entered into the mystery of the incarnation in an entirely novel way as they saw with their eyes what Christmas meant.

Afterwards, an altar was constructed over the manger and a small church was built around the grotto. A similar Mass was celebrated the following year. In time, the practice spread to other parts of the region, then all of Italy. Soon, people everywhere began reenacting Christmas in such a way. Today, Greccio is visited by tens of thousands of pilgrims each year. A hermitage staffed by OFM Franciscan friars safeguards the grotto where St. Francis recreated the first creche. Around the cave is an ancient hermitage where St. Francis and the early friars lived in the early thirteenth century. It includes a primitive refectory and dormitory.

Above it is the newer hermitage (that is, from the mid-thirteenth century), built during the era of St. Bonaventure, the Minister General of the order. The small, wooden cells can be visited along with the ancient choir and church.

Next to the old church is a modern church with a display of hand-crafted creches along an upper corridor. Particularly striking are those from the school of Naples, known for a long tradition of artisanship and nativity scenes. The message is that the birth of Jesus was not an event that took place remotely in a faraway age and place; rather, our Savior is with us here and now

Franciscan Living

PRAYER: The Heart of Who We Are

by Francine Gikow, OFS

Do you know the secret of perseverance in our vocation? Ever wonder how people remain committed as Secular Franciscans for 30, 40, 50 years? The answers seem simple but are, in fact, difficult to live because they require untiring efforts and a penitential option for the spiritual path. Even professed members can lose their vocation through the busyness of family, work, and other commitments if they fail to make prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do. (OFS Rule, 8)

This intimate prayer life demands time, desire and perseverance. As for any lover, time together is foundational for any relationship. We cannot have a relationship without conversation, listening and responding. Intimacy in prayer is a necessity. Rote prayers and rushing through our prayers to finish, is not a fitting gift to our all loving God for as Jesus said: "...in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them"...(Mt. 6:7-8)

If we have the desire to live like Francis, intense, passionate prayer time is needed to listen to God's voice, and to be open to see Him in each other and the world. God makes Himself present to us individually because our relationship with Him is unique; we are made for a particular purpose, exclusively our own.

Balancing our life of prayer and action is important as we strive to live more closely to Christ. Our commitments to daily prayer, Mass or other spiritual exercises should begin to take priority over "sleeping in," retrieving emails or checking social media. It is penitential since we relinquish time and material things to become closer to God. What a glorious sacrifice!

A desire for our relationship with God means that it must become a priority in our life as we make a conscious choice for spending time with the Father, Son, and Spirit. Even if we don't feel desire; ...the Spirit helps us in our weakness ...for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. (Rom. 8:26)

Perseverance is vital in our commitment to a relationship of prayer. We have made this commitment at the time of our profession; however, it requires the ongoing nourishment of our own spiritual life with reading, retreats, and study. In addition, we have to pray for ourselves-for the grace to persevere in this vocation God has given us.

It is also imperative that a Secular Franciscan have a vibrant, intimate relationship with God through prayer, scripture and the sacraments. Jesus instructed us: And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites...Go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. (Mt. 6:5-6) Through silence, we allow intimacy to occur.

Scripture is indispensable to intimacy because we profess to go from gospel to life and life to the gospel. We learn to interiorize and personalize the teachings of Jesus in scripture. Fr. Eric Doyle, OFM, describes meditating on Holy Scripture as an exchange between Christ and those who love Him; we need to read scriptures lovingly, listen to them lovingly, as we would listen to or read a letter from someone we loved. Remember, St Jerome said, ignorance of scripture is ignorance of Christ.

The sacraments are also available as a source of grace which enables us to persevere. It may entail making changes in your schedule to include daily Mass, and the frequent use of the sacrament of Reconciliation. Without the sacraments, we are setting ourselves up for failure by starving our souls of the graces needed to persevere in our life of prayer.

Through an intimate relationship with God, we can become a home for the Holy Spirit and a conduit for Christ to enter into this secular world through us:

***Abide in me, and I in you...
He who abides in me and I in him,
he it is that bears much fruit.***

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