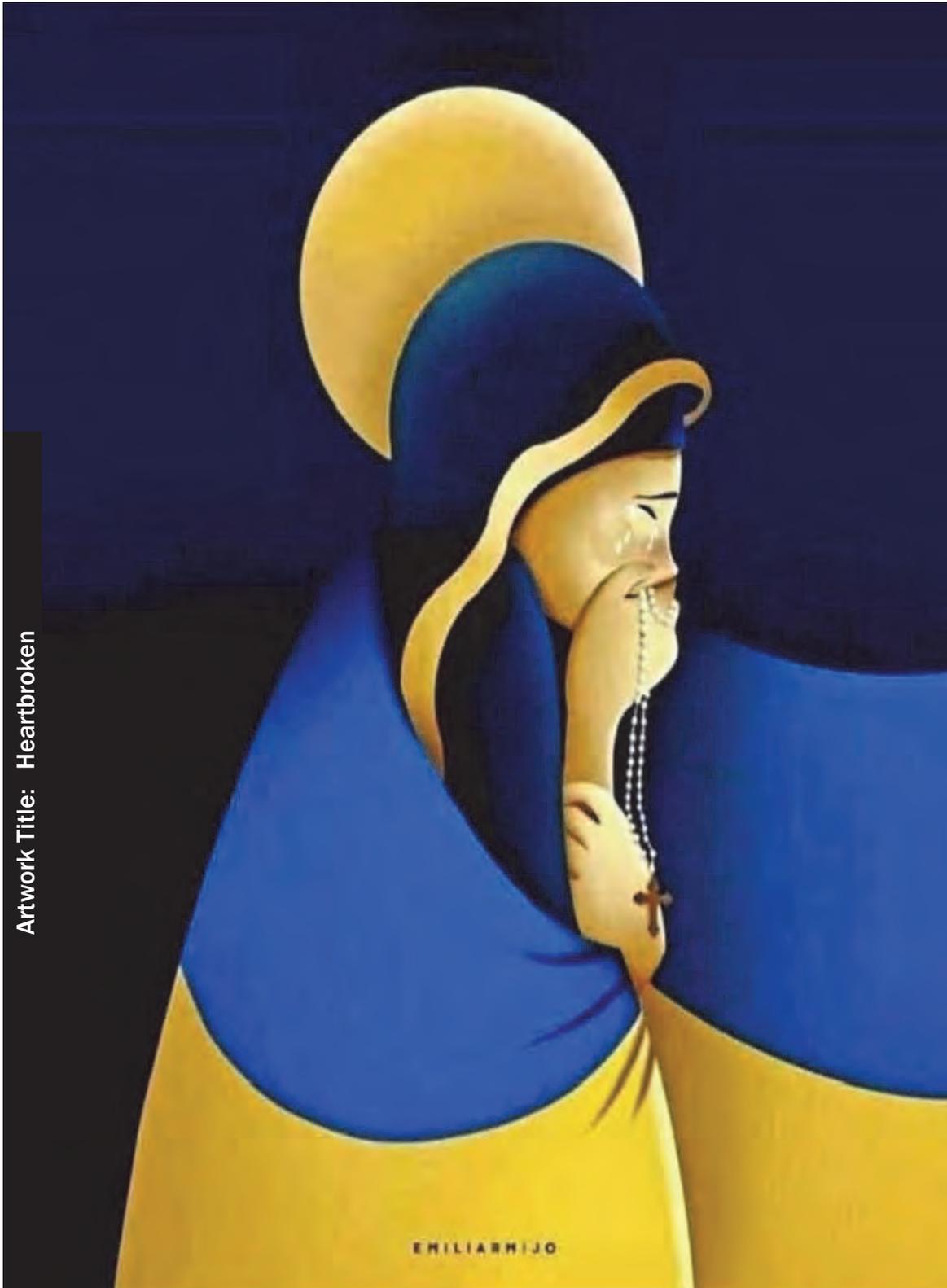




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CELEBRATING THE 800th anniversary of *Memoriale Propositi*



Artwork Title: Heartbroken

PRAY FOR PEACE

Pope Francis will consecrate Russia and the Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on Friday, March 25, 2022 during the Celebration of Penance that he will preside over at 5:00 pm [local time] in St Peter's Basilica.

The Director of the Holy See Press Office, Matteo Bruni, said in a statement: "The same act, on the same day, will be performed in Fatima by Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, papal almoner," who is being sent there by the Pope. The day of the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord was chosen for the consecration.

Pope Francis also prayed for the end of the war in Ukraine at his most recent [General Audience](#).

Pope Francis asks that we join with him in prayer for the end of the violence.

A LENTEN REFLECTION

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As you are reading this, we are probably halfway through Lent, but I'm writing it on Ash Wednesday as I reflect on another Lenten season.

I would not be the first to draw an analogy to Lent and the rigorous spring training that baseball players undergo (although at this writing the season is in jeopardy because of labor negotiations). I always think of Lent as a time to get back into shape or to enhance my spiritual life. All of this training is to prepare us to celebrate that glorious "opening day" that is Easter.

Pope Benedict XVI in his 2010 Lenten message said that Lent is a time to make "a sincere review of our life in light of the teaching of the Gospel." Some of us are in better spiritual shape than others, but all of us can use some "spiritual" spring training.

Lent is a time to strengthen our prayer life, to embrace our spiritual exercises and disciplines which strengthen us for the challenge of conversion — turning toward God and away from sin. I decided to pray the Office of the Passion this Lent written by St. Francis. As our National Minister, Jan Parker, OFS noted,

"it helps us to understand what was in Francis' heart when he chose certain Psalms and when he composed the beautiful antiphons, prayers, and praises."

An online version is available in [iBreviary](#).

Fasting is not just a limitation of our daily portions of food. Fasting is a way to empty ourselves so that God can fill us. We fast not only from food, but from anything that draws us away from God. Instead of surfing social media, surf through Scripture.

In addition to abstaining from meat on Friday, turn your phone off on Fridays!

That's a tough one.

"Giving up something" for Lent also does not have to mean chocolate or some other guilty pleasure. Giving up TV for one evening and using that time to pray or do some spiritual reading is another way to fast. St. Francis turned fasting into feasting by fasting in honor of, in conversion with, the saint of the day.

Tobit 12:8-9 says, "Prayer and fasting is good, but better than both is almsgiving with righteousness..."

those who regularly give alms shall enjoy a full life."

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FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER

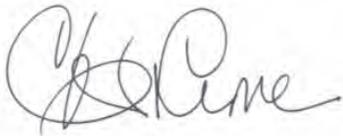
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There are several opportunities for almsgiving through donations to Church ministries like your local Catholic Charities, by donating your time, talent and treasure to needy individuals or organizations or the CRS Rice Bowl (that goes back to grammar school for me. We would receive the little cardboard box at the beginning of Lent, fill it with loose change and return it at the end of Lent).

Sometimes all we can give is a smile, or a nod of support, a shoulder to lean on, or to simply listen to someone's troubles. Sometimes that is the greatest sacrifice and may be the most generous alms we can give.

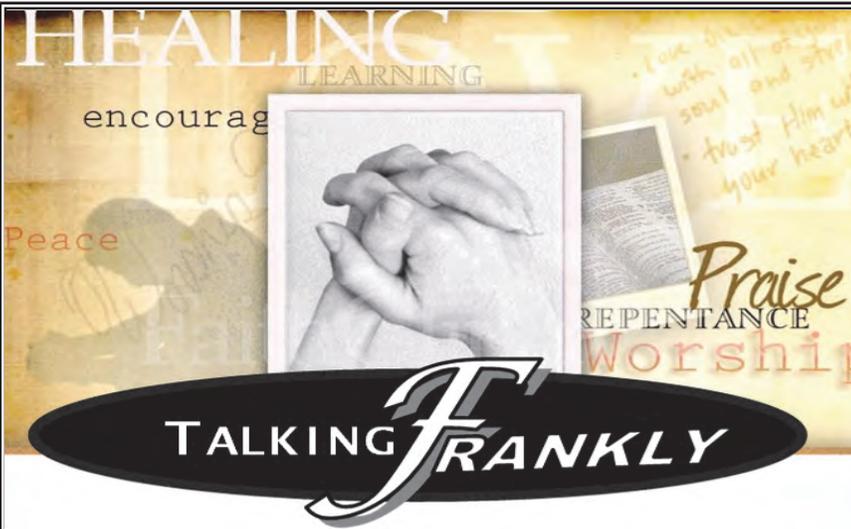
Hopefully, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving will lead us all to a deeper relationship with Christ that will carry on during the Easter season and beyond.

Peace and all good,



Chris Leone, OFS
Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region
Cleoneofs@gmail.com

Be strong, take courage, all you who hope in the Lord! (Ps. 31:25)
2021-2022 OFS-USA Theme



FR. FRANK M. MCHUGH, OFM
REGIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT
OLTAR REGION
Fmchugh77@aol.com

"Pardon My Lenten Smile"

About twenty-five years ago, I remember reading a book review in a religious magazine with the above title written by Fr. Michael Manning, SVD. Now, to be honest, I don't remember what was said about the book itself, (it's been a long time since I read it!), but I was still intrigued by this title.

For so many of us, Lent is thought of as a somber time because the focus is on sacrifice during this holy season. Thus, it would seem there is little to smile about if we are so focused on "what to give up for Lent."

Then, yesterday, I received the latest "Formation Friday" dated February 25, 2022. It stated that since Lent was about to begin, its emphasis for the next number of weeks would be on "penance and conversion." How wonderful! Then, the thought popped into my mind that penance can lead to conversion and conversion can lead to penance. Two sides of the same coin, so to speak.

This is especially true for us Franciscans!

Our holy father, St. Francis, taught us the importance of both penance and conversion through his love of fasting. In our western culture, fasting is thought of as something undesirable, something to avoid if possible. To deny oneself food makes no sense in our modern society.

However, fasting isn't just about food. I am reminded of another publication I saw several years ago that I think is important for all of us. And here it is!

continued on next page

LENTEN LITANY OF FASTING AND FEASTING

AUTHOR: WILLIAM ARTHUR

Fast from judging others;
Feast on the Christ in dwelling them.

Fast from emphasis on differences;
Feast on the unity of all life.

Fast from apparent darkness;
Feast on the reality of light.

Fast from thoughts of illness;
Feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute;
Feast on phrases that purify.

Fast from discontent;
Feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger;
Feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism;
Feast on optimism.

Fast from worry;
Feast on divine order.

Fast from complaining;
Feast on appreciation.

Fast from negatives;
Feast on affirmatives.

Fast from unrelenting pressures;
Feast on unceasing prayer.

Fast from hostility;
Feast on non-resistance.

Fast from bitterness;
Feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern;
Feast on compassion for others.

Fast from personal anxiety;
Feast on eternal Truth.

Fast from discouragement;
Feast on hope.

Fast from facts that depress;
Feast on truths that uplift.

Fast from lethargy;
Feast on enthusiasm.

Fast from suspicion;
Feast on truth.

Fast from thoughts that weaken;
Feast on promises that inspire.

Fast from shadows of sorrow;
Feast on the sunlight of serenity.

Fast from idle gossip;
Feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from problems that overwhelm;
Feast on prayer that undergirds.

Have a happy Lent everybody, and keep smiling!

God Bless,
Fr. Frank, OFM

Are You Interested in Working With Young Adults?

THIS SUMMER I ATTENDED A SERIES OF TRAININGS WITH THE NATIONAL FRANCISCAN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT COMMISSION (FY/YA) THAT CULMINATED IN AN INFORMATIONAL PACKET DEEMED TO BE “ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS” FOR ANY REGIONAL (OR LOCAL) FY/YA ANIMATOR.

Article 96.1 of our General Constitutions states, “The Secular Franciscan Order, by virtue of its very vocation, ought to be ready to share its experience of evangelical life with the youth who feel attracted to Saint Francis of Assisi and to seek the means of adequately presenting it to them.”

We are ready to take advantage of these “Essential Documents” and appoint a FY/YA Regional Commission Chair.

The Regional Franciscan Youth and Young Adult (FY/YA) Commission Chair (or may be called the Regional Animator) has the following responsibilities:

- To be the point of contact in the region for the National FY/YA Commission Chair
- To be the conduit for information to flow between the National FY/YA Commission, to the region, and to the local fraternities
- To be the conduit for information to flow between the local fraternities, to the region, and to the National FY/YA Commission Chair

The Regional FY/YA Commission Chair shall possess the following:

- An understanding of youth and young adults and their place within the Secular Franciscan Order and within the Church
- An understanding of the USA FY/YA Mission Statement and National Statutes, CIOFS’ Franciscan Way (YouFra): A Way of Vocation, CIOFS’ Formation Program for Franciscan Youth and the CIOFS’ Guidelines for Fraternal Animation. (All relevant documents can be found on the NAFRA website - [Youth and Young Adult Commission – Secular Franciscan Order – USA \(secularfranciscansusa.org\)](https://www.nafra.org/))

- Proof of current training (Virtus, Safe Environment, etc.) background check, or Code of Conduct required by their home diocese

The Regional FY/YA Commission Chair will do the following:

- Attend the Annual Regional Chapter
- Send reports and attend the Regional Executive Council meetings when asked
- Become familiar with the USCCB documents “Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry” for those working with teenagers and “Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults” if working with young adults

If you are interested, contact Chris Leone, OFS at cleoneofs@gmail.com

FORMATION

DIANE F. MENDITTO, OFS
REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR
Diane.menditto@gmail.com

What Makes Secular Franciscans Different from Other Catholics?

All of us who are Catholics have many things in common. Most of us grew up attending Mass every Sunday. We go to confession every so often. We pray many of the same prayers: the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Memorare, the Angelus, and prayers asking for the intercession of our favorite saints. Some Catholics read a bit of Scripture every day and attend bible study and some may even pray the Liturgy of the Hours.



Wow! That's a lot. So, what makes us different?
Let's look at five things about Secular Franciscans that set us apart.
(There may even be more than five.)

1. Our Profession — At Baptism, we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and become part of the Church. At Confirmation, the Holy Spirit prepares us to participate fully in the mission of the Church. **Profession, then, is our special opportunity.** It is the further strengthening of the promises that were made for us (or that we made) at Baptism. Through the Spirit, we “bind ourselves more closely to the Church and work intently to rebuild the ecclesial community and fulfill its mission among all people.”
(See *Rite of Profession, Ritual p. 22.*)

If you read the *Rite of Profession (Ritual pp. 18-26)*, you will see that at Profession, we **make a commitment to live the Gospel** by following in the **footsteps of St. Francis**. We promise to **build a more fraternal and evangelical world** based on the Gospel. We promise to be **faithful to our vocation** and to practice the **spirit of service**. We promise to **bind ourselves more closely to the Church** and to **participate more fully in her mission**. And we **pledge to make fraternity a visible sign of the Church**, a community of faith and love.

2. Our Fraternity Life — How can anyone be a Franciscan without fraternity? As much as St. Francis loved to find solitary places to pray, he always had friars nearby, and **he always returned to fraternity life**. He tells us, “*The Lord gave me brothers...*” (*Testament*) Fraternity is where we find **mutual support** in our faith. It is where **we learn to carry out the promises we made at profession**. Fraternity is like a **workshop** where we practice **universal kinship; patience; humility; simplicity; and acceptance of others**. It is where **we keep our vocation alive**. If fraternity life is well-lived, we will learn how to pray together and to work together to move the fraternity and the Church forward. We learn what it is to be a Franciscan by **how we listen to one another, accept those who are different** than we are, and by how we learn about the **Franciscan charism** together. Fraternity **nourishes our vocation** and helps us to bring the joy of knowing Christ to others both **inside** the fraternity and **outside** in our daily lives.



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FORMATION

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3. Our Rule and Constitutions — We Secular Franciscans are blessed to have a **Rule of Life and Constitutions approved by the Church**. These documents **guide us** in living out the Franciscan charism. We need to take the time to read the Rule frequently and pray about what the *Prologue* and each article tell us about our lives as Catholics and Franciscans. This is **one of the big advantages** we have over other Catholics. For example, since our *prologue* is taken from the **First Letter to the Faithful**, St. Francis himself is speaking directly to us when he reminds us that **we are a people of penance and conversion**.

Chapter One of the Rule has only three articles, but it **plants us firmly in the Franciscan family**. It tells us that our Rule is approved by the Holy See and that we are **linked** down through the centuries **to all those who have formed part of the three orders founded by St. Francis** in the 12th century.

Chapter Two contains articles four through nineteen. Here we find **the plan of life** set out for us as Secular Franciscans. **We learn how we are to pray; how we are to strive for daily conversion; how we are to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis in showing that the gospel can be lived; how we are to live in simplicity and humility; and how we are to reach out to all of our brothers and sisters and to all of creation**. Having this portion of the Rule is especially valuable to us on our daily journey to the Father. It is an advantage that other Catholics just do not have.

Chapter Three guides us in our fraternity life and tells us about the **structure of our world-wide order** and the purpose of our fraternity life.

The General Constitutions form a much longer document because they **interpret the Rule** and tell us how we are to carry out what is asked in the Rule. This document is also **approved by the Holy See**, and in promising to follow the Rule, we also promise to follow what is laid out in the Constitutions.

4. Our Franciscan Spirituality — comes from the spirituality of our founder, St. Francis of Assisi. **Franciscan spirituality is incarnational, intensely Eucharistic, and penitential**. We often hear the words “**crib, cross, and Eucharist**” when learning about St. Francis’s spirituality.



Artist John R. Howley

Francis was in awe of the **Incarnation**, the Kénosis (self-emptying) shown by God in becoming one of us. His devotion to the Incarnation is most obvious in the recreation at **Greccio** of the birth of Christ. But it goes much deeper.

Francis wanted to imitate Jesus perfectly in all things so that he too would become a son of the Father, so much so that he became known as the “**mirror of Christ**.”

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FORMATION

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St. Francis's constant **contemplation of the cross** is part of his devotion to the Incarnation. **Here is God**, who was not only born in a lowly manger, but God who was willing to die the worst, most humiliating death possible so that we could spend eternity with him. In order to imitate this death to self, Francis knew that penance and daily conversion (metanoia) were the only way to the Father. As he prayed on Mount La Verna, he asked two things: one, to let him experience the suffering Christ endured on the Holy Cross and two, for him to experience the love in which He did it. Francis's prayer was granted as he was imprinted with the wounds of Christ in the Stigmata.

And then, the Eucharist. Jesus is physically present with us every day under the appearances of bread and wine. We hear directly from Francis in the First Letter to the Custodians, *"With all that is in me and more I beg you that, when it is fitting and you judge it expedient, you humbly beg the clergy to revere above all else the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and His holy names and the written words that sanctify His Body. ³They should hold as precious the chalices, corporals, appointments of the altar, and everything that pertains to the sacrifice. ⁴If the most holy Body of the Lord is very poorly reserved in any place, let It be placed and locked up in a precious place according to the command of the Church. Let It be carried about with great reverence and administered to others with discernment."*

All of this is wrapped in Sacred Scripture. Francis gives us our spiritual focus. He lived by the words of the Gospel, and we imitate him in our reading and praying of and living out the gospel.
(See Article 4 of our Rule.)

5. **Our knowledge of and relationship to our founder** is an important part of our lives as Franciscans. We can trace the founding of our Order to one of the greatest saints of all time. He sets the example for us. As a matter of fact, at our profession, we promised to **live the gospel by following in the footsteps of St. Francis**. (See *Rite of Profession* quoted above.) We are blessed to have, unlike so many other religious orders, **many of the writings** of St. Francis to rely on to be sure that we remain faithful to the Franciscan charism. Just reading his prayers and letters gives us years of material for meditation and imitation and makes clear the path we are to follow.

So, let us praise God for his gift to us of the Franciscan way of life.
May we take advantage of all that is set out before us as we follow
Jesus in the footsteps of St. Francis on our way to the Father.



Diane Menditto, OFS
Regional Formation Director
Chair, National Formation Commission

JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

JIM ANDREANO, OFS
REGIONAL JPIC COORDINATOR
JimAndreano@gmail.com

Jesus sent out these twelve, after instructing them thus, “Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give. Do not take gold or silver or copper for your belts; no sack for the journey, or a second tunic, or sandals, or walking stick. The laborer deserves his keep. Whatever town or village you enter, look for a worthy person in it, and stay there until you leave. As you enter a house, wish it peace. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; if not, let your peace return to you. Whoever will not receive you or listen to your words – go outside that house or town and shake the dust from your feet. Amen, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.”

—Matthew 10: 5-15, “The Commissioning of the Twelve”

An ordinary Gospel passage, proclaimed by an ordinary priest in an ordinary church on an ordinary day in Ordinary Time.

Yet, of all the extraordinary ways in which God spoke to Francis, this ordinary Gospel may have been the most important turning point in a life that had many. It was this Gospel that inspired Francis to give up the life of an itinerant church repairman, and to become *Francis*. We are professed Franciscans because of this Gospel.

Or more specifically, because Francis heard this Gospel and resolved **to live it**.

And with that, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Jim Andreano, a member of the Most Holy Name Fraternity in North Jersey.

It is my privilege to have been appointed JPIC Coordinator for the Region. I am succeeding Chris Leone, who of course is now our Regional Minister.

What is JPIC?

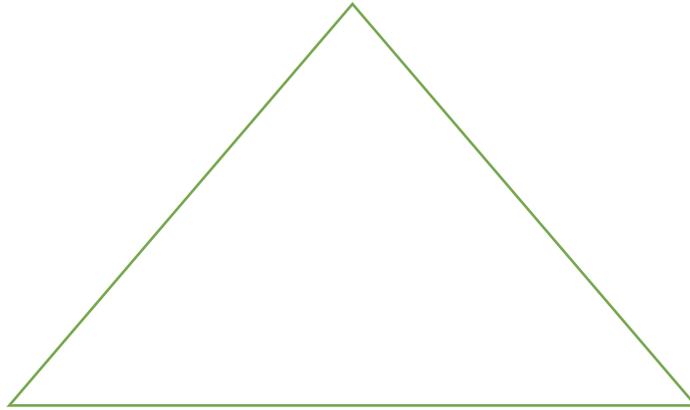
It stands for **Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation**. That is the official Franciscan branding, so that’s what we’ll go with. But I prefer a simpler title – **Gospel Living** – just as Francis did. Gospel to Life, and Life to Gospel.

So what does it mean to live the Gospel? I think Article 15 of our Rule sums it up nicely: *“Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.”*

By now you may be saying to yourself, “I can’t do that!” Or perhaps speaking for your Fraternity, “We can’t do that!” If so, I invite you to reassess.

I believe that the quest for Gospel Living (i.e. Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation) can be depicted as a three level pyramid.

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As Franciscans, prayer is foundational.
It is essential to our existence,
and the basis of all we do.

Building on that foundation, we are all called to perform acts of charity. For some, that occurs within the close circle of our day to day contacts. Others are in a position to expand that circle, and extend simple kindnesses for “the least of these”, which is to say for Jesus himself.

Some of us are called to take the next step from charity to advocacy. Both are vital. We need to help the victims of unfair societal structures. We also need to change those structures. We do that by speaking truth to power, as both Jesus and Francis did. We are just ordinary people – but so was that nameless priest who proclaimed that Gospel passage that changed our world.

Perhaps someone in a Fraternity will say, “I can do that”. If so, then the Fraternity can say “We can do that!” Because we Franciscans do nothing alone. In the Franciscan hierarchy, the smallest entity is the Fraternity – not the individual.

The call to live the Gospel is an essential part of our Franciscan call.
That is the mission of JPIC.
In the upcoming months, I will be in touch with specific ideas.

In the meantime, if you wish to help advance that mission within your Fraternity, please contact your Regional Minister or your local JPIC Coordinator (if you have one). Or if you want to go one step further and get involved at the Regional level, feel free to contact me directly at JimAndreano@gmail.com.

I do look forward to hearing from you!

SISTER 2021



DEATH 2022

† WILLIAM PETIX
DECEMBER 10, 2021
ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA FRATERNITY
MIDDLESEX, NJ
PROFESSION: OCTOBER 3, 2008

† DORCAS WILSON
JANUARY 10, 2022
LITTLE PORTION FRATERNITY
MT. VERNON, NY
PROFESSION: JUNE 17, 2008

† EYOLA LEDET, OFS
DECEMBER 16, 2021
St. Thomas More Fraternity
New York City, NY
Profession: October 6, 1987

† FRANK HARESLAK, SR.
JANUARY 17, 2022
ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA FRATERNITY
MIDDLESEX, NJ
PROFESSION: JUNE 13, 2009

2022 ANNUAL MEETING

CONVIVENZA

Your Regional Executive Council is happy to announce that once again we will gather, in person, for our yearly Chapter of Mats called CONVIVENZA on Saturday, April 30, 2022, in Bishop Manning Hall at St. Bonaventure Parish in Paterson, NJ, from 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Convivenza is the one, true opportunity for us all to gather as a Regional Family to pray, learn, share, and socialize. Please share this with everyone in your fraternity so that everyone is offered the opportunity to attend.

Our theme is **PADRE PIO AND THE SECULAR FRANCISCANS** and we are blessed and excited to have as our speaker, Fr. John Aurilia, OFM Cap. In 1967, Fr. John served as Padre Pio's personal secretary and will share some wonderful memories with us. Fr. John told us that Padre Pio had love for the Secular Franciscans.

Please let me know how many will be attending from your fraternity by April 18th. You may email or text me at: cleoneofs@gmail.com

For **More Information**, click on this link, or go to our website at:

<https://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org>



ORD, WE PRAY FOR
OUR FAMILY
OF
FRANCISCAN
BROTHERS
AND SISTERS
WHO HAVE ENTERED
INTO
ETERNAL LIFE.

WITH THE ARRIVAL
OF SISTER DEATH,
THE LIFE WE KNOW
IS CHANGED,
NOT ENDED.

SADNESS GIVES WAY
TO THE
BRIGHT PROMISE
OF IMMORTALITY.

OUR DEPARTED BROTHERS
AND SISTERS REMAIN A
PART
OF THE
COMMUNION OF SAINTS
AS WELL AS OUR
FRATERNITIES.

PLEASE KEEP THEM
LOVINGLY IN
YOUR PRAYERS.
AMEN.

F R A T E R N I T A S

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S



Photo credits: SJV/SHE FRATERNITY

On December 5, 2021, St. John Vianney/St. Elizabeth of Hungary (110), Paterson, held a Christmas party at the St. Bonaventure Church hall, which included a buffet and delicious desserts.

Guests, as well as some parishioners were invited, as the Fraternity combined the Christmas party with an added surprise party celebrating Fr. Frank McHugh, ofm, Spiritual Assistant of the fraternity, 45th anniversary in the Priesthood, and Christine Peragallo, 65th anniversary as a member in the Secular Franciscan Order and member of the fraternity.

Everyone enjoyed the party and celebration. Thanks be to God.

PICTURED:
CHRISTINE PERAGALLO, OFS, AND FR. FRANK MCHUGH, OFM.

P R O F E S S I O N S

October 10, 2021, St. John Vianney/St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity (110), Paterson, NJ, held the Rite of Profession for their 3 members who diligently attended formation classes every month for 2 ½ years.

Mass was celebrated by Fr. Frank McHugh, ofm, Spiritual Assistant to the Fraternity, who gave an excellent homily. A reception was held in the church hall to honor the newly professed members.



Pictured Front row, L–R: ROSICLER TERESA HASAN, MARY HANNIGAN, MARK MULE; **Back row** L–R:

Marie Palazzone, Minister; Fr. Frank McHugh, ofm, Spiritual Assistant; Magdi Nacheff, Formation Director.

PROFESSIONS

JOAN CURCIO was **WELCOMED** November 12, 2021, to the Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity # 118, Red Bank, NJ.

Pictured with Joan is Patrick Mullen, Formation Director; (Left) and Dawn Rusinko, Minister; (Right).



Photo credit: O.L.G. FRATERNITY

On March 19, 2022, the Porziuncola Fraternity # 136, East Hanover, NJ, held the **RITE OF ADMISSION** for **KEVIN ZERRENNER** and later celebrated with a St. Joseph Table.



PICTURED ON LEFT, FROM L-TO-R:

THERESE STEINEL, OFS, (Secretary);
LINDA PASQUALE, OFS, (Minister);
CHRIS LEONE, OFS, (Formation Director);
KEVIN ZERRENNER, OFS, New Admitted;
FR. FRANCIS KELLY, FPO (Spiritual Ass't);
HYACINTH LAWRENCE, OFS, Treasurer;
DOTTI ZOPPI, OFS (Vice Minister).

St. Conrad of Parzham Fraternity # 138, Hoboken, NJ, shared the good news that their 3 Candidates were **PROFESSED** on March 18, 2022, at St. Ann's Church in Hoboken. **CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL.**

PICTURED ON RIGHT FROM L-TO-R:

MARISOL MARIN, OFS, (Formation Director);
FR. REMO DISALVATORE, OFM CAP, (Pastor);
NEWLY PROFESSED OFS: MARTHA GOMEZ;
IRIS FELICIANO, NELLY MOLLINEDO;
and ALFONSO ZAMBRANO, OFS (Minister).



ELECTIONS

ELECTION RESULTS of November 10, 2021 SAN DAMIANO FRATERNITY 139, PATERSON, NJ



Photo credit: CHRIS LEONE, OFS

NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL PICTURED *L-TO-R*:

JIMMY WILLIAMS, OFS, Councilor; **DEBBIE ZWEIER, OFS**, Director of Formation;
HUGO BADER, OFS, Vice Minister; **THERESA SENSBACH, OFS**, Treasurer;
BEA HARRIGAN, OFS, Secretary; **RUTH PISANO, OFS**, Minister;
FR. MARTIN SCHRATZ, OFM CAP, Spiritual Assistant.

ELECTION RESULTS of December 12, 2021 ST. JOHN VIANNEY 135, COLONIA, NJ



Photo credit: CHRIS LEONE, OFS

NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL PICTURED *L-TO-R*:

FR. JOSEPH KUBIAK, OFM CAP, Spiritual Assistant; **DOROTHY SEWING, OFS**, Secretary;
ANNA ANGELA ZIELSKI, OFS, Minister; **AMORFINA MUHI, OFS**, Treasurer;
PAUL DI LENA, OFS, Director of Formation.
Zooming on the Laptop is **VALERIE MORENO, OFS**, Vice Minister.

ELECTION RESULTS of January 15, 2022

ST. JOHN VIANNEY/ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY FRATERNITY 110, PATERSON, NJ



Photo credit: CHRIS LEONE, OFS

NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL PICTURED IN THE PHOTO FROM *L-TO-R*:

FR. FRANK MCHUGH, OFM, Spiritual Assistant; CHARLENE BERG, OFS, Secretary;

MARIE PALAZZONE, OFS, Minister; ANN VADAKKEKARA, OFS, Vice Minister;

MARY ANN TIERNO, OFS, Treasurer. *Missing from photo*: ELIZABETH KNOLL, OFS, Formation Director.

ELECTION RESULTS of January 22, 2022

LITTLE PORTION FRATERNITY 133, MT. VERNON, NY



Photo credit: CHRIS LEONE, OFS

NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL

PICTURED *L-TO-R*:

FR. ANDRE CIRINO, OFM, Spiritual Assistant; PHIL PAPA, OFS, Vice Minister; ELISSA MILAN, OFS, Secretary;

PAT SPANA, OFS, Minister; RICHARD SPANA, OFS, Treasurer; DCN. VINCENT VERLEZZA, Director of Formation.



OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGION

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- The electronic format of *The Troubadour* is published quarterly— Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. It is available for downloading on our Regional website or by e-mail subscription. In order to be a subscriber, you must be an active professed or formation member of the region, and your complete address and e-mail must be on file in our database.

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—EDITOR

CALL FOR ARTICLES

Wherever you see or feel the spirit of Saint Francis at work in the world, in your lives, in your fraternity, in its members, and in your hearts—we want to hear from you. Come, share with us.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Submissions for **OFS E-vents** must be received by the 25th of every month.

Submissions for the next issue of **The Troubadour, SUMMER 2022,** are due to the Editor by June 15th.

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Monday 15.11.2021

Address of the Holy Father at the General Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order

This morning, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the participants in the General Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order, to whom he addressed the following words:

Address of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters of the Franciscan Secular Order, good morning!

I greet you with the words Saint Francis addressed to those he met along the way: "The Lord give thee peace!". I am pleased to welcome you on the occasion of your General Chapter. In this context I would like to recall some elements proper to your vocation and mission.

Your vocation is born of the universal call to holiness. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us that "lay people share in Christ's priesthood: ever more united with Him, they exhibit the grace of Baptism and Confirmation in all dimensions of their personal family, social and ecclesial lives, and fulfil the call to holiness addressed to all the baptized".

This holiness, to which you are called as Secular Franciscans, as the General Constitutions and the Rule approved by Saint Paul VI ask of you, involves the conversion of the heart, attracted, conquered and transformed by the One who is the only Holy One, who is "the good, every good, the supreme good" (Saint Francis, Praises of God Most High). This is what makes you true "penitents". Saint Francis, in his Letter to all the faithful, presents "doing penance" as a path of conversion, a path of Christian life, a commitment to do the will and works of the heavenly Father. In his Testament, he describes his own process of conversion in these words, which you know well: "The Lord gave to me, Brother Francis, thus to begin to do penance; for when I was in sin it seemed to me very bitter to see lepers. ... And when I left them, that which had seemed to me bitter was changed for me into sweetness of body and soul. And afterwards I remained a little and I left the world (1-3).

The process of conversion is thus: God takes the initiative: "The Lord gave to me to begin to do penance". God

continued on next page

leads the penitent to places where he would never have wanted to go: "God led me among them, the lepers". The penitent responds by accepting to place himself at the service of others and by using mercy with them. And the result is happiness: "That which had seemed to me bitter was changed into sweetness of mind and body". Exactly the path of conversion taken by Francis.

This, dear brothers and sisters, is what I urge you to achieve in your lives and in your mission. And, please, let us not confuse "doing penance" with "works of penance". These - fasting, almsgiving, mortification - are consequences of the decision to open one's heart to God. Open your heart to God! To open one's heart to Christ, living in the midst of ordinary people, in the style of Saint Francis. Just as Francis was a "mirror of Christ", so may you too become "mirrors of Christ".

You are men and women committed to living in the world according to the Franciscan charism. A charism that consists essentially in observing the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The vocation of the Secular Franciscan is to live the Gospel in the world in the style of the *Poverello, sine glossa*; to take the Gospel as the "form and rule" of life. I urge you to embrace the Gospel as you embrace Jesus. Let the Gospel, that is, Jesus Himself, shape your life. In this way you will take on poverty, minority and simplicity as your distinguishing marks before all.

With this Franciscan and secular identity of yours, you are part of the outbound Church. Your favourite place to be is in the midst of the people, and there, as lay people - celibate or married -, priests and bishops, each according to his or her specific vocation, to bear witness to Jesus with a simple life, without pretension, always content to follow the poor and crucified Christ, as did Saint Francis and so many men and women of your Order. I encourage you too to go out to the peripheries, the existential peripheries of today, and there to make the word of the Gospel resound. Do not forget the poor, who are the flesh of Christ: you are called to proclaim the Good News to them (cf. *Lk 4:18*), as did, among others, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, your Patroness. And just as the "fraternities of penitents" of yesteryear distinguished themselves by founding hospitals, dispensaries, soup kitchens and other works of genuine social charity, so today the Spirit sends you to exercise the same charity with the creativity required by the new forms of poverty.

May your secularity be full of closeness, compassion and tenderness. And may you be men and women of hope, committed to living it and also to "organising" it, translating it into real everyday situations, in human relations, in social and political engagement; nurturing hope in tomorrow by alleviating the pain of today.

And, dear brothers and sisters, you are called to live this in fraternity, aware that you are part of the great Franciscan family. In this regard, I remind you of Francis' desire that the entire family remain united, certainly with respect for the diversity and autonomy of its various components and also of each member. But always in a lively mutual communion, to dream together a world in which we are all, and all feel, that we are brothers, and working together to build it (cf. Encyclical Letter *Fratelli tutti*, 8): men and women who fight for justice, and who work for an integral ecology, collaborating in missionary projects and making yourselves artisans of peace and witnesses to the Beatitudes.

In this way we started out with the path of conversion, and then all these proposals of fruitfulness, that come from the heart joined to the Lord, and that loves poverty. May Saint Francis and all the Saints of the Franciscan family accompany you on your journey. May the Lord bless you and may Our Lady, "Virgin made Church", protect you. And please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you.

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