



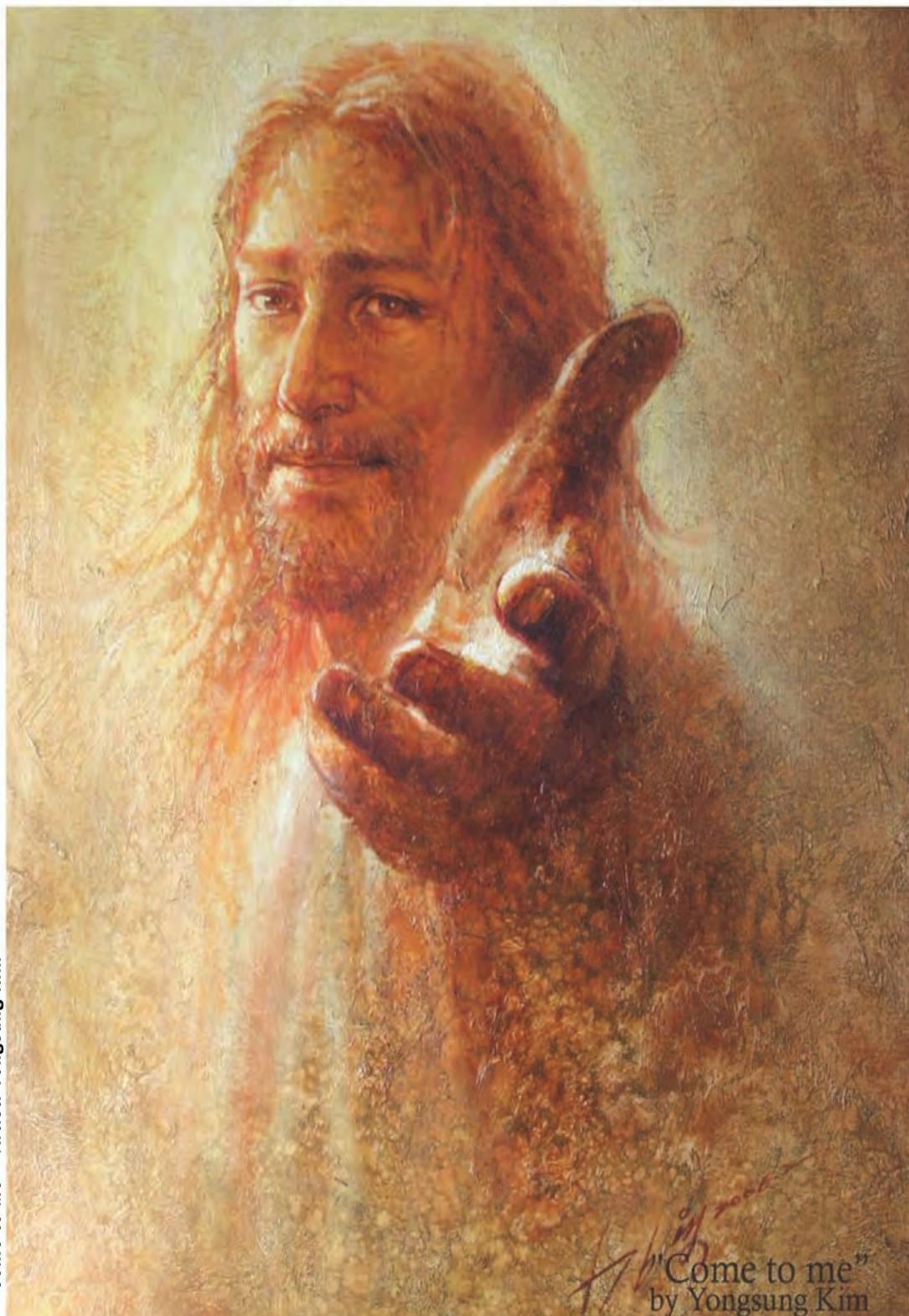
eT roubadour

MAY
2015

CONNECTING THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN
COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT OUR REGION.



Published by Our Lady of the Angels Region of the
Secular Franciscan Order in the USA.



Come to Me — Artist: Yongsung Kim

"Come to me"
by Yongsung Kim

LETTER FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER

MAY 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

It was wonderful to see so many of you at Convivenza! Our “family gathering” is always a highly anticipated and nourishing time for us as Secular Franciscans of Our Lady of the Angels Region. Thank you for making the effort to be present to your brothers and sisters.

This year during the months of May and June, many of your fraternities will be having a Fraternal and Pastoral Visitation. We already have twelve scheduled for this Spring alone! Those of you who have been Secular Franciscans for many years will have experienced a visitation or two, perhaps many more than two. Our newer members, however, might not have experienced this aspect of fraternity life. In any case, we all (myself included) can use a good review of the basics once in a while, so—

DID YOU KNOW

- • • That the earliest Rules of our order, right up to the advent of the Rule of 1978 and the Constitutions of 1990 (updated in 2000 and 2001), required that the visitor be a friar alone?

(You can read about this in the *Handbook for Spiritual Assistance—updated in 2012*)

- • • That our present day Rule in Article 26 and our Constitutions in Articles 92 and 94 give us important insight into the Fraternal and Pastoral Visit?

“The purpose of both the *pastoral and fraternal* visits is to *revive the evangelical Franciscan spirit*, to *assure fidelity to the charism and to the Rule*, to *offer help to fraternity life*, to *reinforce the bond of the unity of the Order*, and to *promote its most effective insertion into the Franciscan family and the Church.*”

(Constitutions: Article 92-1)

“The *fraternal visit* is a *moment of communion*, an *expression of the service and concrete interest* of the secular leaders at the various levels, so that the *fraternity may grow and be faithful to its vocation.*”

(Article 94-1)

“*Among the various initiatives to achieve the purpose of the visit*, the visitor will give special attention:

- to the *validity of the formation*, both initial and permanent;
- to the *relations entertained with other fraternities at the different levels*, with Franciscan youth, and with the entire Franciscan family.
- to the *observance of the directives and of the guidelines* of the International Council of the OFS and of the other councils;
- to the *presence in the local Church.*”

(Article 94-2)

“The visitor will (also) *check the report of the previous audit* or verification of the financial and property management of the Council, the register of the accounts and every document pertaining to the property of the fraternity...”

(Article 94-3)

LETTER FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER *continued*

DID YOU KNOW

- • • **That one of the duties of the fraternity minister at each level is “to request, with the consent of the council, the pastoral and fraternal visits, at least once every three years.”?**

(Article 51-2)

[The minister at each level makes the request to the council of the higher level.]

We suggest that this request be made **every three years, 18 months after a new council is elected**. If we don't hear from your minister, we will contact him or her. We like to keep everyone up to date! (By the way, Ministers can request visits at other times if, in collaboration with the council, it is deemed necessary.)

- • • **That your fraternity minister and council prepare ahead of time for the visitation?**

We ask that the Minister and Council collaborate on filling out a Pre-visitiation Questionnaire to be returned to me at least three weeks before the visitation. The questionnaire asks about everything mentioned above in Articles 94-2 and 3. We also send a check-list to help the Minister and Council know what to have ready for us. (You can read all of these forms on our region website on the Resources page, second column, half-way down:

http://olangels.tripod.com/region_links.html



- • • **That the visitors (Brother Doug and I—or on some occasions my delegate) will meet with your Council before we meet with the entire fraternity?**

At that time, we look at and sign the fraternity records, talk about the formation program and ask if the council would like us to help out with any aspect of your fraternity life. Very often, Vice Minister, Nancy Conroy, or one of the other councilors will accompany me. Brother Doug will also make special time to meet with your Spiritual Assistant.

- • • **That after we meet with the council, we meet with the entire fraternity?**

First, we will pray together. Our Ritual has special prayers for the Fraternal and Pastoral visit on page 50. You can pray and meditate on these ahead of time if you wish. Then we will have a little time for some ongoing formation. Last, BUT BY NO MEANS LEAST, it will be your turn to ask questions, express concerns and make any comments you would like us to take back to the Region Executive Council.

- • • **That your Minister and Council will receive a written report from me and Brother Doug with commendations, comments and suggestions for your fraternity?**

Ask to see it about two weeks after the visit!

- • • **That we look forward to our visits with local fraternities because you are our brothers and sisters and we love getting to know you better?**

Although we see many of you at Convivenza, the Chapter of Ministers, our retreat and at some of the Cluster gatherings, the visitation provides us with additional time to be with you in fraternity. We hope that you will find the Fraternal and Pastoral visit to be an uplifting time in your lives as Secular Franciscans!

Please know that I think of you often and pray for you every day. Please keep me and your Region Executive Council in your prayers.

Many blessings to you,

Diane F. Menditto, OFS, Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region



**OUR LADY
OF THE
ANGELS
2014-2017
REGION
EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL:**

MINISTER:

Diane F. Menditto, OFS
dianefmdfm@aol.com

VICE-MINISTER:

Nancy Conroy, OFS
paxjesu@yahoo.com

SECRETARY:

Kate Asselin, OFS
kate.asselin@shu.edu

TREASURER:

Richard Spana, OFS
ricksphanasfo@aol.com

FORMATION DIRECTOR:

Ed Wojciechowski, OFS
edwojo@yahoo.com

COUNCILOR:

—Manhattan
Patricia Clayton, OFS
reap.clayton@gmail.com

COUNCILOR:

—Staten Island/
Central New Jersey
Mary-Frances Reavey, OFS
mfreavey@gmail.com

COUNCILOR:

—North Jersey
Ronald L. Pihokker, OFS
pihokkro@rcan.org

COUNCILOR:

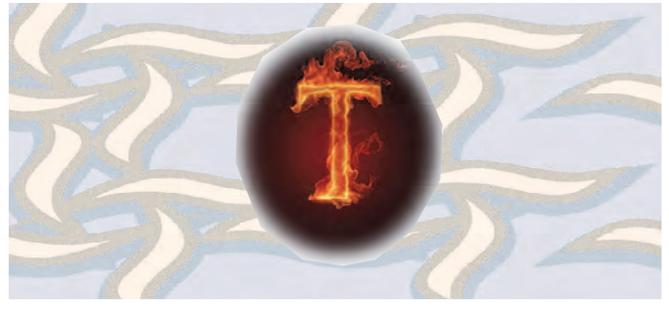
—Westchester
Sheila Tuohy, OFS
sheillatuohy@optonline.net

SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT:

Bro. Doug Soik, OFM Cap
dsk2131948@yahoo.com

2015 REGION CALENDAR

*Mark your Calendars,
details will follow.*



O.F.S. GENERAL MEETINGS

FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP

— See page 5

Saturday, May 16, 2015, 9:30a.m. — 3:00p.m.

St. Bonaventure's Church, 174 Ramsey Street, Paterson, N.J.
Open to all local Formation Directors, Formation Teams,
Spiritual Assistants and anyone else interested in Formation.
Brown Bag lunch. RSVP via phone or email.

Contact: Ed Wojciechowski, OFS, Region Formation Director
Phone: 973-492-1035 • **Email:** Edwojo@yahoo.com

REGION RETREAT

— See page 11

Friday, July 31 — Sunday, August 2, 2015

Mount Alvernia Retreat Center, Wappingers Falls, NY

NAFRA ANNUAL CHAPTER

October 13-18, 2015

Our Lady of the Angels Region will host
the National Fraternity Annual Chapter.

O.F.S. CLUSTER MEETINGS

NORTH JERSEY CLUSTER MEETING

Saturday, May 30 — 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Location: St. Francis of Assisi Church—Lower Hall, Hackensack, NJ
Guest Speaker: Jim Andreano who will address Environmental Issues.

Contact: Ron Pihokker, OFS, Region North Jersey Councilor
Phone: 973-497-4291 • **Email:** Pihokkro@rcan.org

STATEN ISLAND / CENTRAL NJ CLUSTER MEETING HOLY HOUR FOR PEACE

Saturday, May 30 — 11:00 a.m.

St. Matthias Church, 168 JFK Blvd, Somerset, NJ 08873

Contact: Mary-Frances Reavey, OFS, SI/Central Jersey Councilor
Phone: 732-828-1400 • **Email:** Mfreavey@gmail.com

UPCOMING WORKSHOP



E D W OJCIECHOWSKI, OFS

REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The Regional Formation Team is sponsoring a Formation Workshop titled "Forming the Formator," on **Saturday, May 16, 2015**, at St. Bonaventure's Church at 174 Ramsey Street, Paterson, NJ.

This workshop is open to all local Formation Directors, Formation Teams, Spiritual Assistants, and anyone else interested in formation. The schedule for the workshop follows below. This information is also posted on our website at:

<http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org>



If you plan to attend, please make sure that you bring a copy of the FUN Manual. If you don't have a personal copy of the FUN manual, you should be able to borrow your Fraternity's copy. We will begin the day with coffee and registration at 9:30 a.m., and the workshop will end by 3:00 p.m.

As always, we ask that you **bring along a "brown bag" lunch**.

Forming the Formator Workshop Schedule

- 9:30 a.m. - Registration and Coffee
- 10:00 a.m. - Welcome and Opening Prayer
- 10:15 a.m. - Roles, Responsibilities and Resources for Successful Formation
- 11:00 a.m. - Break
- 11:15 a.m. - Adult Learning Methods and The Fun Manual
- 12:15 p.m. - Brown Bag Lunch and fellowship
- 1:00 p.m. - Fun Manual Application Breakout Session
- 1:45 p.m. - Break
- 2:00 p.m. - Spirituality of the Formator
- 2:45 p.m. - Wrap-up and Closing Prayer

If any questions or to RSVP, please contact me directly by phone at 973-492-1035 or email: edwojo@yahoo.com



I hope to see you at the workshop on the 16th!



2015 CONVIVENZA

OUR REGION'S ANNUAL UNITY DAY: A FRATERNAL GATHERING OF FRANCISCAN JOY

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

On Saturday, April 25th, our region gathered for our yearly Chapter of Mats, also known as Convivenza. From the feedback I have already received, this was our "best Convivenza ever".

The "best ever" doesn't just happen. As Franciscans, we know that our best always comes out when we **work as a team**. The success of our day together Saturday was truly the result of team work. The initial planning by the Regional Executive Council; the generous cooperation and wonderful talks given by Fr. Matt Pravetz, OFM; the hospitality of our host fraternity, St. Mary of the Angels; the collaboration of those who prepared the prayers, music and materials we used; those who helped publicize the day; those who helped set up and clean up; ALL OF YOU WHO ATTENDED and all those who could not attend but prayed for us; made the day a true blessing and experience of fraternity.

If you would like to revisit the day, or experience it for the first time, please visit our website (top of first column) to view the pictures. We hope they capture the spirit of the time we spent together:

http://olangels.tripod.com/region_links.html

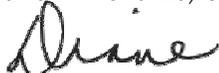


Our June issue of the *℄*-Troubadour will feature the day's events in greater detail.

The strength of our Region is found in your Franciscan spirit and the openness and love you show to one another.

May you always be blessed and strengthened in your vocation as you follow in the footsteps of Jesus and Francis.

Diane F. Menditto, OFS



Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region

FRATERNAL TIDINGS

congratulations

ELECTIONS & PROFESSIONS



Photo credit: Ed Wojciechowski, OFS

Election results of April 11, 2015
Porziuncola Fraternity, NYC.

Council as pictured in the opposite photo L-to-R:

- Dorothy Zoppi, OFS, Secretary**
- Linda Pasquale, OFS, Vice Minister**
- Christopher Leone, OFS, Minister**
- Victoria A. Robinson, OFS
Formation Director**
- Marie Manno, OFS, Treasurer**

SISTER



DEATH

Sr. Liliame Alam, F.M.M.



Called home to the Lord on April 26, 2015.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Thursday, April 30th at Holy Name Church on West 96th Street.

Sr. Liliame, a Franciscan Missionary of Mary, was born in Lebanon and missioned to the United States in 1995. She received her master's degree in Spirituality of Theology and served in a variety of roles – teaching, leadership and formation in many locations including the Middle East, France, Morocco, Rome, Egypt and the United States.

She also worked for Franciscans International. Her latest assignment was as Director of Finance and Administration at the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus where she was much beloved by the Holy Name Community.

Sr. Liliame was a wonderful friend to the OFS and gave a powerful presentation to our Region on the topic of Human Trafficking several years ago; it may be found on our regional website at:

http://olangels.tripod.com/region_links.html



GO OUR FATHER,

Your power brings us to birth,
Your providence guides our lives,
and by Your command we return to dust.

Lord, those who die still live in Your Presence,
their lives change, but do not end.
We pray in hope for our family, relatives and friends,
and for all the dead known to You alone.

In company with Christ,
Who died and now lives,
may they rejoice in Your kingdom,
where all our tears are wiped away.
Unite us together again in one family,
to sing Your praise forever and ever. Amen.

FRATERNITY APOSTOLATES

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our OLTAR Region recently received a solicitation letter from *Amazon Relief*, a relief organization of OFS's working together Internationally, caring for the Poorest of the Poor, Assisting Victims of Leprosy, Helping Families break-out of Poverty, and Educating "at-risk" children in the remote Amazon Region of Brazil.

Those of you who attended the recent Convivenza 2015 gathering, heard our Regional Secretary, Kate Asselin, OFS, briefly discuss the organization and their mission. In this May issue of *e-Troubadour*, we'd like to better acquaint everyone with this worthy organization.

Excerpts from their solicitation letter (*opposite*) best explains the reason for their monetary request and the opportunity they would like to make us a part of. While the Regional Executive Council has agreed to support Amazon Relief's Boat Project, it is hoped that our local fraternities will also consider contributing to this worthy effort.

Amazon Relief has been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

All donations are Tax-Deductible.

Also, check out their website at:

<http://www.amazonrelief.org>



Amazon Relief takes no money out of any donation for administrative costs, travel, mailings, or even the cost of their website (all these costs are paid by some "special angels" or from bank interest). Every dollar donated goes to those in need.

Fraternities willing to support this project should send a check made out to "Our Lady of the Angels Region" to our Region Treasurer, Richard Spana at 332 Warburton Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706.

Our Region will collect all contributions and send one check to Amazon Relief.

by

**Anna Geraci, OFS — Editor
and**

**Kate Asselin, OFS
Regional Secretary
OLTAR Region**

kate.asselin@shu.edu



Dear OFS Brothers and Sisters:

We have received a request, an offer, and an opportunity.

The Request — We have been asked if we could fund the purchase of a boat which would allow priests and missionary teams to serve 90 isolated communities located along a large, remote stretch of the Amazon River.

The Offer — One of our donors has offered to match dollar for dollar all donations given to purchase this boat.

The Opportunity — By giving missionaries the tools they need to carry out this ministry we can be an integral part of carrying Christ's Good News to the ends of the world.

A few details — Currently there is a priest and team of lay missionaries who try to serve these 90 communities. Transportation is, however, a constant and major problem. All travel must be done by boat, as there are no roads to these communities. There are commercial riverboats that carry passengers from time to time along the river, but there are several problems with these:

- There are hefty costs to transport missionary teams.
- Drop off and pick up times are irregular.
- As missionaries complete their work in a village, they cannot immediately move on to the next village (they must wait for another commercial boat to come up the river, and they can only take that boat when they have assurances that there will be another boat to bring them back).
- There are seasons of the year when the river is low and commercial boats cannot reach the communities.

continued on next page

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Many people assist in the work of Amazon Relief, both in the United States and in the Amazon.



Jim Flickinger, OFS, is the administrator of *Amazon Relief* in the United States. He and his wife, Lois, are Secular Franciscans residing in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Jim is a former Minister (1995-2001) of Our Mother of Sorrows Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order and has served as the Peace and Justice Commissioner for the Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity of the OFS. Jim is the recipient of many awards for his humanitarian work, including the National Franciscan Peace Award in 2000.

continued from page 8

The end result is that all of the communities are served irregularly, and many of the communities are rarely served.

We have spent the last several months determining what type of boat would work best for the missionary team, getting quotes for the purchase of the boat, and determining how ongoing operational costs will be paid. We are very satisfied as to the needs, benefits, and costs, and I am writing to ask for your help.

The boat will cost about \$50,000. It will transport and be able to sleep (in hammocks) up to 12 missionary team members. (The ability to sleep on the boat is very important, for most communities lack lodging for the missionaries).

Operational costs should be less than are currently being paid for commercial riverboat transportation, (and if costs exceed funds available, the Archdiocese will cover these).

What is also special about this is that

- There is a priest and a lay missionary team in place to travel and carry the Catholic faith to these 90 communities.
- The boat can be used for decades.
- And even more, the true benefit reaches beyond decades — the benefits are eternal, souls are at stake.

Our real investment is not in the boat; the boat is only a tool. Our real purpose is to allow the Good News to continue to be carried to the ends of the earth.

We would like to say "yes" to the request that has been made of us. The boat is needed, we can double every donation made, and it is a true opportunity to respond to Christ's Great Commission. **Please help.**

Everything you give will be used towards the purchase of this boat — and with this appeal everything you give will be doubled. As always, no part of your donation is used for administrative costs.

Peace and All Good,
Jim Flickinger, OFS

Amazon Relief

**Changing Lives
Today, Tomorrow, and
Eternally.**

Today

- Providing food, medicine, clothing, and home repairs to victims of poverty and leprosy.
- Feeding children in our schools, and feeding the community at large at Franciscan soup kitchens.
- Providing medical and educational supplies to indigenous people living in remote areas of the Amazon.
- Providing mobility carts to lepers.

Tomorrow

- Funding schools and programs to educate and assist over 3,000 "at risk" children; providing tutoring and arts programs for youth living in leper colonies; funding vocational schools for students living in areas of high unemployment; and providing accelerated learning/ tutoring programs to help students prepare for employment, college, and professional certification exams.
- Providing tutors, computer training, nutritional training, and adult education.

Eternally

- Providing religious education to schoolchildren.
- Building 31 chapels for the poor and lepers.
- Funding educational needs of Franciscan and other seminarians.
- Funding missionary travel to serve the poor in remote areas of the Amazon.

continued on next page

UPCOMING EVENTS

ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS FRATERNITY, NEW YORK CITY

YOU ARE INVITED to join the St. Mary of the Angels fraternity, in New York City, NY, to a special evening titled,

**OUR LADY'S CALL TO CONVERSION
GIVEN BY FR. PAUL LOSTRITTO, OFM**

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

7:00 p.m. • St. Mary of the Angels Chapel.



Fr. Paul Lostritto, OFM, is a Franciscan Friar who serves as a Parochial Vicar at the Church of St. Francis of Assisi in Midtown Manhattan.

He is the Executive Director of Franciscan Bread for the Poor and its ministries, the St. Frances Breadline and Franciscans Deliver, a food pantry on wheels. He also serves on the Board of Directors of *The Dwelling Place*, a homeless shelter for women located in Hells Kitchen in Midtown. Fr. Paul is a talented, charitable, and charismatic leader. Known for possessing exemplary interpersonal skills and being an accomplished public speaker, Fr. Lostritto often receives invitations to present lectures on religious and scriptural topics.

Holy Name of Jesus Church
207 West 96th Street
New York, NY 10025
212-749-0276

For More Information
contact Fraternity Minister:
Peggy Ledger, OFS:
Peggyl@ix.netcom.com



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From Our Rule:

"Secular Franciscans ... accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ... [and] place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ."

*Section XIII of
The Rule
of the
Secular Franciscan Order*

Secular Franciscans Changing Lives

8 REASONS TO HELP

- Amazon Relief is a project of Secular Franciscans working together internationally.
 - We are serving lepers, "at risk" children, indigenous people, and the poorest of the poor.
- We are providing immediate aid, and at the same time providing an education so as to break the cycle of poverty.
 - We are helping people spiritually as well as physically. Religious education is a part of all our programs.
- All monies are closely monitored. Disbursements are approved in advance, and disbursed through Catholic priests.
 - Our donations go a long way. Not only are costs lower than in the U.S., but the mere fact that our programs exist and are well-run results in volunteers and donations from people living in the Amazon.
- You are making a gift that keeps on giving. educational and spiritual benefits continue forever.
 - No administrative costs are taken out of your donations (all these costs are paid by some "angels" or from bank interest to assure that 100% of your donation will go to serve the poor). Thus, each donation allows one (or more) person to be served who would not otherwise be aided.

2015 REGION RETREAT

We will once again be utilizing the beautiful facilities at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center in Wappingers Falls, New York, for our regional retreat from **July 31 – August 2, 2015**. The cost is \$175.00 per attendee.



OUR RETREAT MASTER IS FR. THOMAS HARTLE, OFM

Fr. Tom is a member of the Friars Minor of Holy Name Province and currently resides at St. Anthony's Friary in Butler, NJ. In the truest sense, Fr. Tom is an itinerant preacher. In addition to offering retreats, he also conducts pilgrimages to Assisi and Rome. Fr. Tom has the privilege of being the Spiritual Assistant to the Holy Name Federation of Poor Clares.



Photo credit: HNP



Photo credits: Diane Menditto, OFS and Ed Wojciechowski, OFS

PLEASE NOTE

THERE ARE A LIMITED NUMBER OF PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE.

For additional information contact: Richard Spana, OFS
914-478-2010
rickspanasfo@aol.com

RETREAT TOPIC: "OUR FRANCISCAN LIFE: AN ALTERNATIVE TO RUIN."

Fr. Tom will be giving 5 talks throughout the weekend— Friday evening, Saturday morning, afternoon, evening and Sunday morning.

Remember space is limited. Register now using the form provided below or on our regional website.

2015 REGION RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

Please check one Professed Candidate

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Fraternity: _____ Single room _____ Double room _____

Special Needs: _____ Room with: _____

Send completed registration form with \$175.00 check, payable to "Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity" to: RICHARD SPANA, OFS • 332 Warburton Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706 • Phone: 914-478-2010.

The Registration Form is also available on our region website at: <http://ourladyoftheangelsregion.org>



by
ED WOJCIECHOWSKI, OFS
Formation Director
OLTAR Region
edwojo@yahoo.com



May is an exciting time of the year. The snowy days of Winter are gone and have been replaced by the warmer days of Spring.

May is a time for First Holy Communions, graduations, weddings and for celebrating mothers.

It's also a time to honor the mother of our Lord. The Blessed Virgin Mary holds a special place in the lives of Secular Franciscans.

The OFS Rule describes Mary as a 'humble servant of the Lord, who was open to His every word and call.'
(OFS Rule, Chapter 2, Article 8)

St. Francis declared Mary 'the protectress and advocate of his family.' (OFS Rule, Chapter 2, Article 8)

Also, we are reminded that Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently. (OFS Rule, Chapter 2, Article 8)

One way that we can honor Mary in our individual and communal prayer life is by praying the Franciscan Crown Rosary. The Franciscan Crown Rosary, also known as the Seraphic Rosary, the Franciscan Crown, or the Rosary of the Seven Joys of Our Lady, recalls seven joyful events in the life of Mary: the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation, the Finding in the Temple, the Resurrection and the Assumption. We meditate on each of these events when we pray the Franciscan Crown.

The Franciscan Crown consists of seven decades of Hail Mary's. Each decade is preceded by an Our Father. Unlike the Dominican Rosary, no Glory Be or any other prayers are said at the end of each decade. At the end of the seven decades, two additional Hail Mary's are prayed, bringing the total of Hail Mary's to 72, the number of years of Mary's life. The Franciscan Crown is concluded by praying one Our Father and one Hail Mary for the intentions of the Pope.

A few years ago, my fraternity began a new tradition to pray the Franciscan Crown at our May gathering. We have found that praying the Franciscan Crown as a community is a way for us to honor Mary as protectress of the Franciscan Family.

This May, I suggest that you take the time to pray the Franciscan Crown either individually or in community. Who knows, maybe you'll start a new tradition in your Fraternity, too!



FRANCISCAN RESOURCES

*"I'm not sure of how many Secular Franciscans are aware of the Franciscan periodical called **Tau** that is published by our friars in India and directed to the entire Franciscan family. I have read **Tau** since 1979 and have discovered much about how Franciscan life is lived in another culture. The articles give us a glimpse of Franciscan life and family on the other side of the world."*

Fr. Andre Cirino, OFM

Publication name: **Tau (Journal)**

Editor: Fr. Joy Prakash, OFM

email: taueditor@gmail.com



St. Anthony Friary

85 Hosur Road, Bangalore 560 095, India

Subscription rate per year: \$20.00

Please consider a subscription. Note—there is no website.



Tau is a Journal which searches into the life, personality and charism of St. Francis of Assisi, as recorded in the early sources, expounded in the history and tradition of the Franciscan movement up to the present day. It's mission is to help bring about a deeper knowledge and a more ardent love of the Franciscan way of life.

It is published 4 times a year, in March, June, September, and December.

This 5.5 x 8.5 booklet size runs a total of 32 pages, 3-4 articles per issue, and is sent via Air Mail in a 6 x 9 envelope. It contains no artwork or photography — just good reading.

PREVIOUS ARTICLES AND CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Becoming a child with the Child, editorial by Fr. Joy Prakash, OFM

How Authentic is "Our" Franciscan Identity? by Fr. Fidelis D'Lima

Thinking from Below—Secular Christianity in the Writings of Francis of Assisi by Fr. Gerald Lobo, OFM

The Face of Christ, The Face of Humanity, editorial by Fr. Joy Prakash, OFM

Advent: With Francis and Clare, Praying on the Way to Christmas by Sr. Edith van den Goorbergh, OSC

Spiritual Motherhood by Fr. Andre Cirino, OFM

The 'Dark Night' Experience of Francis D'Assisi by Fr. Arokiam John, OFM



POETRY

Mercy Abounds Forever



by
DOLORES JULES, OFS
St. John Vianney
Fraternity
Colonia, NJ

Have beaming rays
shine from My heart,
redeeming mercy from the start.
I'm asking all to have great trust,
for My mercy is a must".

Sister Faustina given a quest,
became at once a greater test.
What the Lord asked her to do
became a task believed by few.

The Lord, our God,
asked of His daughter,
"Have a picture painted
of My blood & water.

This mercy is poured out to all,
pleading, asking, hear His call.
This mercy, ages will endure,
for it will be our greatest cure.

Jesus, I trust in You.

FRATERNITY SPOTLIGHT



Photo credit: Jody Pihokker, OFS



MOST HOLY NAME FRATERNITY

The fraternity was founded
on September 19, 1926.

The fraternity is located in
Little Falls, NJ.

FRATERNITY MEETINGS ARE HELD

ON THE 1ST MONDAY
OF THE MONTH,
7:30 P.M.

OUR LADY OF THE HOLY ANGELS
ST. FRANCIS HALL
465 MAIN STREET
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[https://
mostholynamesfo.wordpress.com](https://mostholynamesfo.wordpress.com)

by

JODY PIHOKKER, OFS

Most Holy Name Fraternity
Little Falls, NJ

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Most Holy Name Fraternity, in Little Falls, New Jersey, is a local expression of the global Secular Franciscan Order and the Franciscan movement. We exist to keep the dream of St. Francis of Assisi alive and to work toward its fulfillment in today's world.

Our lives are woven together on this spiritual journey towards Christ. Our journey is characterized by an openness to conversion. Drawing from our varied life experiences and from our individual gifts, we are a joyful family committed to the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of one another.

Recognizing this commitment as sisters and brothers united in a faith deeply rooted in the Gospel, we inspire each other to be spiritual people; to grow and to respond to our Franciscan vocation; and to make a positive difference in the world. Be it in simple ordinary circumstances, or in extraordinary circumstances, which require courageous initiatives, our Rule urges us to dedicate our actions to working with issues common to the family, work, peace, justice, and ecology and to bring about the Kingdom of God.

Our fraternity embraces and supports several apostolates; *Bridges Outreach* and *Family Promise*. In recent years, our fraternity periodically joins the members of the *Bridges Outreach* in traveling to New York to provide meals and help distribute items of clothing and toiletries to needy and homeless individuals. With *Family Promise*, our fraternity volunteers 4 times each year, usually for a week each time.

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Photos credit: Most Holy Name Fraternity



For more than 25 years, the Bridges Outreach organization has made weekly trips to lower Manhattan, Newark and Irvington, New Jersey to provide meals, clothing, and toiletries to needy and homeless individuals.

In recent years, our fraternity has periodically joined the members of Bridges in traveling to New York to distribute these items.

Prior to making the trip, our fraternity buys the food and makes several hundred brown bag lunches. We also collect new clothing and toiletries for the individuals in need.

Besides fulfilling the obvious needs of the people being served, our fraternity aims to help this organization provide a sense of community to those we meet.

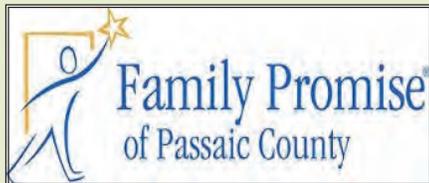
In the course of this ministry, as the Bridges Outreach says, "stereotypes fade, understanding develops, caring overcomes indifference, a sense of purpose prevails and friendships are formed based on mutual respect."

For additional information go to their website at:

www.bridgesoutreach.org



If anyone is interested in joining us in one of our ministries, they are very welcome.



Family Promise is an interfaith organization which houses temporarily homeless families for up to 4 months at various churches of all denominations. The churches provide housing on a rotating schedule and families usually stay for one week at each location. Usually 3 to 5 families-- up to 14 children and adults are given lodging.

Family Promise also offers a number of support services to the families, including daycare, job training when needed, and assistance in finding permanent housing.



Photos credit: Family Promise

Nearly 80% of the families served are able to find permanent housing.

Our fraternity volunteers 4 times each year, usually for a week each time.

Since we do not have the ability to house the families, we work in conjunction with St. Timothy's Lutheran Church in Wayne, New Jersey, where the families stay.

When the day's activities of the families are complete, they are transported to St. Timothy's, where our fraternity members bring meals, give companionship, play with children, and stay overnight.

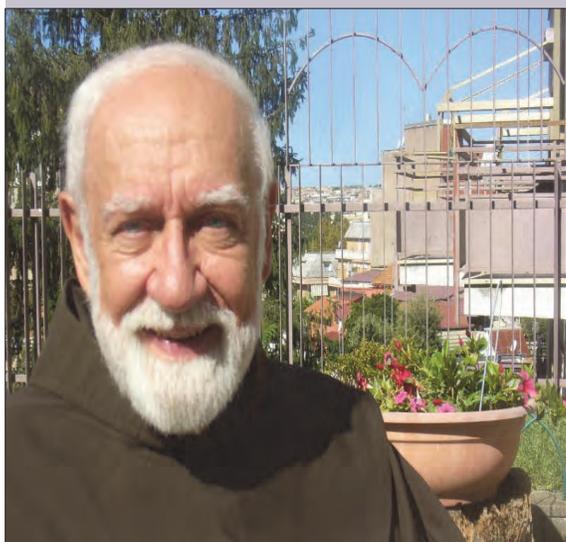
Our fraternity, together with the Family Promise organization, are "people of faith working together to provide homeless families with *HELP* for today and *HOPE* for tomorrow!"

For additional information go to their website at:

www.fppassalccounty.org



UPCOMING EVENTS



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PROVINCE FRANCISCAN LIBRARY TO HOST FR. MURRAY BODO, OFM POETRY READING

FR. MURRAY RESIDES IN INNER-CITY CINCINNATI, OHIO, AND SPENDS TWO MONTHS OF THE YEAR IN ROME AND ASSISI, ITALY AS A STAFF MEMBER OF "FRANCISCAN PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMS."

FR. MURRAY BODO'S WEBSITE:
www.murraybodo.com

THE newly established Immaculate Conception Province Franciscan Library in New York City is pleased to announce that it will host renowned Franciscan writer, **Fr. Murray Bodo, OFM**, for an afternoon of poetry reading.

Fr. Murray is a Franciscan Priest and Poet. He holds a Ph.D. in English and has taught English and American Literature, composition, and creative writing. His latest books are *Enter Assisi: An Invitation to Franciscan Spirituality*, (January, 2015), and *Francis and Jesus* (2013). His most recent books of poetry are *Of Francis and Clare* (2013), and *Something Like Jasmine* (2012).

Father Murray has read his poetry at various venues in America, Italy, and England, including in William Wordsworth's church in the English Lake District.

His reading will consist of reading and commenting on selected poems from his published work. The commentary will include the context in which the individual poems were written, the poet's understanding of poetry and its function in society, elements of the craft and art of poetry, and the poets who have influenced his own writing.

He will read from several of his books of poetry, including *Of Francis and Clare*, a collection of poems about St. Francis and his parents, Pietro Bernardone and Lady Pica, about St. Clare, and about Assisi.

DATE: Sunday, June 14, 2015 **TIME:** 2:00 P.M.

PLACE: Immaculate Conception Province Franciscan Library
125 Thompson Street, New York, NY 10012

All are welcome to this free event.

If you wish to attend, we ask that you RSVP to: internos@icprovince.org so that the Friars will know the number of those attending.



by

VALERIE MORENO, OFS
St. John Vianney Fraternity
Colonia, NJ

Several months ago, **Valerie Moreno, OFS**, (*contributing writer for The Troubadour*) wrote a poem called "Colors" about losing vision and submitted it to the *Magnets and Ladders Magazine* where it was published as a guest submission. Soon afterwards, she was told that someone was trying to contact her.

Turned out it was a lady from the University of Southern California Eye Institute. They were in the process of making a film for their Board on eye blindness and technology research and wanted to use "Colors" as part of the film. The poem would be narrated by a professional narrator in different film shots.

In Valerie's own words, she was, "stunned, amazed and delighted." Asking several questions and some research later, she gave permission for them to use the poem. She dedicated it to her loved ones—Mary, Jack, Levi and the OFS family; "thank you for your prayers and love. I feel the same as Michael Jackson when he talked about his work. 'I have nothing to do with it almost—it's created in the universe. It's God's work, not mine.' He took responsibility to do his best because of his conviction. I can hope to do the same."

—EDITOR'S NOTE: *Magnets and Ladders* is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose magazine provides a platform where novice and experienced writers with disabilities can showcase their work and learn from professionals and fellow writers.

Their website can be found at:

<http://www.magnetsandladders.org/wp/?p=154>



"Last Light" A film on blindness, in three parts.

The series of films were recently released covering the topic of blindness and the USC Eye Institute's groundbreaking work in treating and, for the first time, curing blindness. The opening film is based on the poem "Colors" by blind author Valerie Moreno, OFS, which forms the spine of the opening film.

The films shown were part of an important live presentation to the USC Eye Institute's Board of Trustees. Dr. Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, Professor and Chair, Department of Ophthalmology; and Director, USC Eye Institute, sent enthusiastic thanks for how much these films helped.

The film is now publicly viewable on Vimeo at:

<https://vimeo.com/124223955>



COLORS

A POEM ON SIGHT LOSS

Suddenly
all I perceive
is swept away—
every anchor lost,
life fact dulling
first to smokey swirling gray
ending in still, crushing black.

World upside down,
I am suspended
between reality
and memory
just beyond my reach...
nothing but absence
and grief
for all I have lost,
the brilliance of sky,
fullness of sun,
the sparkle of love
in someone's eyes.

Heavy endless black
banishes color
and awareness
I can never replace...
like church bells
in moaning wind,
a flicker of last embers
of a dying fire,
singular vessel
on a sea,
I search for clarity
in tar-thick isolation.

THE GOSPEL AS THE RULE OF LIFE OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

by

FR. ARKADIUSZ
MIROSLAW CZAJA, OFM
Divine Mercy Fraternity
Clifton, NJ

Saint Francis of Assisi was a great follower of Jesus Christ. With all his heart, he yearned to live in accordance with the Gospel. The Gospel is of major importance in his vocation, which was not only evangelical, but also evangelizing. Poverty, chastity, and obedience, as well as emulating the Gospel faithfully, constituted the foundation of his life. Saint Francis was aware that Jesus Himself had revealed this way of life to him. He confesses it in his Testament:

"When the Lord gave me brothers, no one showed me what I should do, but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the Holy Gospel." (Testament)

In the Rule we read: *"The Rule and life of the Friars Minor is this, namely, to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by living in obedience, without property, and in chastity."* (Rule)

Saint Francis desired to live entirely according to the Gospel; therefore, he wanted to become as Christ-like as possible. He understood that to live by the Gospel means to follow the Savior. On February 24, 1208, during the Holy Mass at the church of the Angelic Mother of God (St. Mary of the Angels), Saint Francis heard the words of the Gospel penetrate deeply in his heart:

"...As you go, preach this message: The kingdom of heaven is near ...
Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts;
take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff ..."
(Mt 10, 7-10).

Listening to the excerpt about the commissioning of the twelve apostles, when the Lord indicated how they were to go out to the whole world to spread the Word of God, Saint Francis deeply understood the purpose of his life – his vocation. He found these words to be his calling; he wanted to live according to the Gospel and to preach conversion and penance. The Gospel illuminated the path of his vocation. And so, Francis became an eager follower of the Gospel, by means of which the Son of God communicated with him. He saw the presence of Jesus Christ in the Gospel. The Gospel became his rule of life. For Saint Francis, cherishing the Gospel meant loving Jesus Christ, thus, listening to it means listening to the Savior.

Therefore, the Word of God should be a foundation of the spiritual life of Franciscans. One should consider it along with the Rule and other documents of the Order. The Saint used the words of the Savior in sermons and letters often.

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Francis showed us the ideal of living the life of penance and love through obedience to God. Following the Gospel completely formed the foundation of St. Francis's life. The first rule, approved orally by Pope Innocent III, consists of numerous fragments from the Gospel. The Saint used the words of the Savior in sermons and letters often.

Through the vow of profession, Franciscans respond to God's call, which means devoting oneself to serve Christ in a special way. Profession does not only join a person to Jesus, but similarly to baptism, it incorporates a man into the Roman Catholic Church even more closely. Franciscans should be eager in the service of spreading the Gospel, according to the example and charism of Saint Francis.

It is worth quoting the words of the Holy Father Pope Francis from the Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, which says,

“The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ, joy is constantly born anew. In this Exhortation, I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church’s journey in years to come.”

A sacramental life is a characteristic aspect of Franciscan spirituality - the sacramental life which allows a person to live and ponder the living presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

It should be emphasized that Franciscan spirituality is evangelical spirituality. People choosing the Franciscan life should have two crucial objectives: an aspiration to Christian excellence and an apostolate – the acts of service which we are called to do by the Roman Catholic Church.

At present, as in past centuries, people all over the world are dedicating their lives in service to Jesus Christ, following the example of Saint Francis.

In order to fulfill the call, Franciscan communities should be, above all, schools of prayer and deliberation on the Word of God and ought to be based on love for God and people. It reveals itself through preaching Jesus Christ Risen Savior and through prayer for, and service to, the poorest people. Therefore, membership in the Franciscan community obliges us to follow Christian role models.

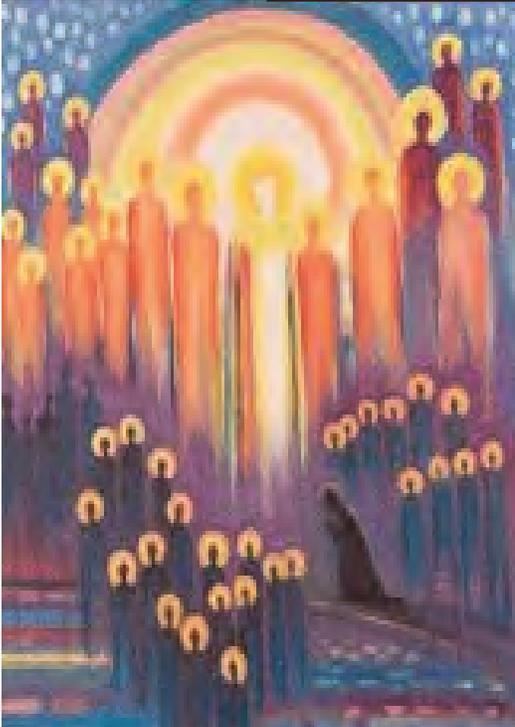
People seeking to follow Saint Francis's example in their lives should become models of Christian faith for today's world.

Franciscans must accept the great challenge of apostolate as part of the mission of the Roman Catholic Church, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the example of their lives.

The Saint chose to live according to the Gospel, which became his Rule of Life.



FRATERNAL TIDINGS



Photos credit: Angela G.C. Rodin, OFS



by

DEACON BILL JOYCE, OFS
St. Anne's Fraternity
Fair Lawn, NJ

On Becoming A Saint

Saturday, March 14, 2015, St. Anne's Fraternity, in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, sponsored a Day of Reflection. Twenty intrepid souls braved threats of deluge to attend. Deacon Bill Joyce, OFS, (*above*) presented **"On Becoming a Saint."** He began with a reading from John 14:1-6. From all eternity, Jesus has prepared a place for each of us, for all of us, to be with Him in Heaven forever. He wants us to be with Him, forever. He wants us to be saints. Anyone who goes to Heaven is a saint. Jesus is God; God is infinite, and we humans are not. When Jesus told stories, His images were, of necessity, limited by what the human minds could absorb.

When Jesus spoke of Heaven, He spoke of a wedding feast, maybe even a king's wedding feast. That was the best party the first-century mind could comprehend. Heaven is better than that, but our understanding can only go so far.

Some people think that Catholics worship saints. That's not so; we worship *only God*; we venerate the saints. Some people say we have idols of the saints in our churches. Up until about two hundred years ago, more or less, most people were illiterate. The church taught about the saints with stories and images. Having statues, paintings, and stained glass windows of the saints was the same as having a family photo album, or today, a photo file. We see the pictures of family members and we tell stories about them. All saints are members of our Christian family who have reached the goal of this life — they've made it to Heaven.

The canonized saints are members of our Christian family who have reached the goal of this life - they've made it to Heaven, and whom the Church **formally declares** have made it to Heaven. They did what they were supposed to do in life, but did it to a heroic degree.

The proof the candidate is in Heaven is two miracles worked through his/her intercession; one miracle for beatification, occurring after the death of the candidate, bestows the title "Blessed" on the candidate. For martyrs, if the Pope issues a decree of martyrdom, the beatification miracle may be waived. A second miracle, subsequent to beatification, including martyrs, qualifies the candidate's enrollment on the list of saints.

WHAT'S A MIRACLE?

A miracle is a sense-perceptible suspension of the laws of nature. It's something that we can see and touch, that is not possible under the laws of science. For those who are not Franciscans, your path for holiness is for you to find, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Going to Heaven is kind of like going to New York City, there are lots of roads that will get you to the same place. We Franciscans believe that St. Francis' way is what works for **us**.

COULD A THIEF BECOME A SAINT?

Dismas, the Good Thief, crucified alongside Christ, prayed, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom!"

Jesus replied "Amen, I say to you, (*you better pay attention*), **this day** you will be with Me in paradise." Dismas is the only saint canonized by Christ Himself.

COULD A WOMAN WHO ABORTED ONE CHILD AND BORE ANOTHER OUT OF WEDLOCK BECOME A SAINT?

Dorothy Day, (1897-1980) was a Benedictine Oblate; suffragist, pacifist; baptized at age 30, on the Feast of the Holy Innocents. With Peter Maurin, she founded the Catholic Worker, based, in part, on the teachings of Francis of Assisi.

THE KEY IS REPENTANCE.

God can't forgive us if we don't repent and try to do better.

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DOES A FISH KNOW IT'S WET?

For a fish, it's just the way it is. The water of Baptism, overflowing with God's graces, surrounds us, permeates us. We're in an *ocean* of God's gifts and graces. Most of the time, we don't even realize it's there, but all we have to do is reach out and use the gifts and graces we already have. We've had them since our baptisms. Every time we enter a church, we bless ourselves in holy water, recalling our baptisms.

IF ACHIEVING HOLINESS (SANCTITY) IS SO EASY, WHY AREN'T THERE BILLIONS OF CATHOLIC SAINTS?

Well, there are. Any person in Heaven is a saint. There are many ways to Heaven; they're all equally easy, or equally difficult.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU FIND YOURSELF FACING A MEDICAL PROCEDURE YOU'VE NEVER HAD BEFORE?

You talk to people who've already had the procedure, so you'll have an idea of what to expect.

OR, WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU FIND THAT YOU HAVE TO DRIVE DOWN TO FLORIDA?

You talk to someone who's driven to Florida, so you'll know what roads to take, where the speed traps are, and where to stop to eat or rest on your journey.

The end of our journey is Heaven; Jesus Himself told us that He has had our place there ready *from all eternity*. But to get to Heaven, we first have to pass through this life. Who better to guide us than the people who have already gotten through this life and are now in Heaven?

Our church has over 10,000 saints and blessed. That number includes over four hundred Franciscan saints, blessed, venerable, and servants of God. That's canonized saints and those whose causes for sainthood are well underway.



I'm sure you've heard of Cafeteria Catholics, those who pick and choose what church teachings they'll follow. It's a negative term. But I think we're allowed to do the cafeteria bit when we look at the saints and decide whose examples we'll try to follow. We have over 10,000 to choose from.

There are kings and queens; missionaries and martyrs; porters and kitchen helpers; diocesan priests and homebound; doctors of the church and illiterates; soldiers and slaves; prelates and penitents.

What each person in this very different group of human beings has in common with the others is that he/she loved God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind, and all his strength.

Each saint followed the path that was right for her/him. May God show us our path.



**OUR LADY OF
THE ANGELS
REGION
COMMUNICATIONS
TEAM:**


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&
e-TROUBADOUR**
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**REGION DATABASE
ADMINISTRATOR
ANNA GERACI, OFS**

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Troubadour newsletter is a communications vehicle published by Our Lady of the Angels Region. It is published in 2 formats— printed and electronically.

- The printed version named, *The Troubadour*, is published twice yearly in March & October, and is mailed free to all professed members and Candidates of the region.
- The electronic version named, *e-Troubadour*, is published monthly and is available on our Region website or by email only. It is available to all professed and Candidate members of the region with e-addresses from our database.
- If you do not have computer access to a website, it is recommended that you speak with your fraternity Minister and try to set up a buddy system.
- Please notify me if you have a change in your name, address, phone, e-mail address or membership status. Please fill out the form below and surface mail to Anna Geraci, OFS, 161-B Cross Slope Ct., Manalapan, NJ 07726, or e-mail me at: TroubadourEditor@aol.com Please write **TROUBADOUR** in the subject line.
- Note that all changes submitted are also applied to the NaFra database which we maintain for our region. If you are a professed member or Candidate and are currently not receiving a copy of the *Tau-USA* National newsletter, please notify me. —Editor

• CALL FOR ARTICLES •

Wherever you see the spirit of St Francis at work in the world, in your lives, in your fraternity and in your hearts—we want to hear from you. Come Share With Us.

• DEADLINES •

The Troubadour / *e-Troubadour* format is published on the 1st week of the month. All submissions for the next issue must be received by the 15th of the preceding month. **Submissions for our next issue, *e-Troubadour*, June 2015, are due by May 15th.**

• ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS •

- The right to copy all material printed in the Troubadour is granted provided you credit the Troubadour and author.
- Not every article received may be published in the upcoming issue. Every consideration is given for publication in a future issue.
- When submitting articles for publication consideration, don't forget to state fraternity name and location, as well as your name and address.
- All photos and original art will be returned upon publication completion.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Please change (or add) the following information to the region database:

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E-mail address

Fraternity Name and Location

Date of Profession

Date of Admission