



Issue no. 35 – July 2023

Message from our Regional Minister

My dear Franciscan Siblings,

I am still pondering my spiritual blind spots. I am more aware of them, day to day. It is strange to "watch" myself act, think, and feel throughout the day. And, as I re-discover my weaknesses and sinful nature, I re-discover (again!) my total helplessness in front of God. In exchange for surrendering them to Him, He has always given me the grace of gratitude towards Him, peace, and mercy. They make me realize that He only looks at my spiritual blindness with love. Not only that, in love, He desires to be one with me in the daily Eucharist. Again... who, me, a sinful one?

It boggles my mind that, why, with this Divine Mystery of Love, being poured out to me unconditionally, I am not elated enough nor awed enough during mass. Anyway, I will bring this to my prayers next time, -- "to sort this out with God" (which I do not think I can do alone!).

I am very grateful for the presence and support of both regional and local council members. It is my privilege as a regional minister to witness the passion and the desire to serve others. I wish all of you could see what I see, words are not enough to describe it.

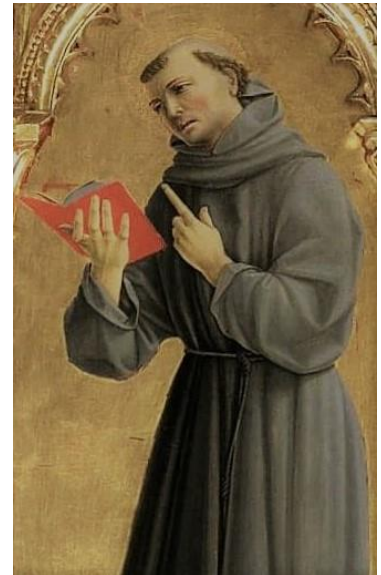
We just had an in-person regional council gathering at Mt. St. Francis (July 11-13, 2023). Although too short, it was sooo good to be with the Franciscan family, for sure! Watch for my report and budget (sorry, they sound boring!). We are currently working on them.

Have a good summer everyone!

Peace and all good,
Lanny

Every
creature is a
divine word
because it
proclaims
God.

St Bonaventure
(Feast Day
July 15)



[Link to SEASON OF CARING FOR CREATION](#)

[Link to TRANSITUS](#)

[Link to NOVENA TO SAINT FRANCIS](#)

Message from our Spiritual Director

Let them grow together until the harvest...

The 'parable of the wheat and weeds' illustrates the reality of our life as well. We know for sure, in real life wheat does not turn into weeds nor do the weeds into wheat. We are naturally very proud to be among wheat (good people) and irritated with weeds (evil people). We are like the servant in the parable ready to pull up the weeds, not realizing that little words of affirmation, encouragement and empowerment could turn the bad and ugly into beautiful souls.

God allows both good and evil to exist side by side until the harvest. This does not mean God approves evil. On the contrary, evil will have a severe punishment on the last day. God could win the battle in a moment by destroying right away anyone opposing His kingdom, but He does not do so. He has a good reason to delay because He is powerful but at the same time, kind and patient with the wicked. He gives enough time and opportunity for the wicked to repent and return to Him. Of-course God's delay is in favor of the wicked and who would not like this way.

There is no one who is completely good or completely evil on this earth. Only God is completely good and the devil is completely evil. God and the devil do not go together. God sows good seed and the devil sows bad seed to separate us from the love of God and His kingdom. No one becomes a saint or sinner in an instant. Lifelong friendship begins with a tiny smile or a bitter fight with a tiny misunderstanding. Whether a great deed or a great sin, both have a small beginning. We all have good and evil in us; it may be just tiny like the mustard seed but it is indeed hidden in us. We are called to recognize the good in ourselves and each other; nurture and nourish the seeds of goodness so that they can take deep roots and bear abundant fruits of the kingdom. And at times, we are challenged to recognize the evil in ourselves and others, uproot it with kindness filled with patience, but do it before it become a sinful habit preventing us from entering into God's Kingdom.

Friar Manoj

[Link to Ongoing Formation: SUMMER 2023](#)

From our REGIONAL Director of Formation

I wish all Secular Franciscans in Our Lady of the Angels Region a time of peace, joy and replenishment during this season of abundance.

God bless you,
Catherine

SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT COURSE

Begins in September

The on-line Spiritual Assistant course is called **A Course for Spiritual Assistants**. It was created by a committee from the OFS region of Trillium - including one of our National Spiritual Assistants

Fr. Peter Knaapen OFM Conv. - and supplemented by the instructor, Br. Gerry Clyne OFM. It is primarily designed for those Secular Franciscans aspiring to become Spiritual Assistants for an OFS fraternity (other than their own). But as the course contains much general material on Franciscan spirituality, it is offered to those who may be interested in taking it for their own spiritual advancement.

The course consists of twelve chapters. At the end of each chapter are questions to reflect on and share with the instructor and the other students. Two chapters are scheduled per month. This course is not academic. Those who want to take the course should not feel intimidated. It is offered free of charge. The only thing that is required of the students is to put in a good effort.

The course provides the opportunity for Seculars from across Canada to meet online with each other. The sharing of reflections on their mutual love of serving Christ through the Franciscan charism creates friendships and strengthens the sense of belonging to a national Franciscan community. There will be occasional Zoom meeting as well where students get to see those they have been sharing with.

The course will start on September 11, 2023 with responses to Introduction due September 23, 2023. Please register with Br. Gerry at gerryclyne@outlook.com.

Save the Dates

-VESPERS and FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY
first Saturday of each month. Next on -

Saturday, **AUG 5th** at 7pm PT/8pm MT/9pm CT
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VUZ3EvdWMrG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>
Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

-OUR INVITATION TO YOU!!!!

Come and celebrate with us! All are welcome! St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity of Richmond, BC will be celebrating the **profession of our 3 candidates, Aleta Atengco, Cynthia Chen & Marcela Ramirez** on **Sunday, Aug. 6 at 11:15 am**. Reception to follow after Holy Mass. Please pray for our candidates.

Address: St. Joseph the Worker Parish
4451 Williams Road
Richmond, BC

-FRANCISCAN VISION GLOBAL SUMMIT each month of 2023 to celebrate 800 Years of the Rule of 1223 and the Crib of Greccio. **NEXT SESSION:** Sat. **AUG 26th** at 3am PT/4am MT/5am CT by **Sr Frances Theresa Downing OSC** on: *Clare's contribution to preserving the heredity of the Rule of 1223 and the contributions of the Poor Clares to the Franciscan mission in our time.* Register to receive ZOOM link. Registration is free. >>>Click onto [POSTER](#) and [BROCHURE](#)

-INTERIOR BC FRANCISCAN PICNIC
Saturday, **AUGUST 12TH** 10:30 am at Carmel of St Joseph in Armstrong, BC. *San Damiano Fraternity* is happy to invite Secular Franciscans, families and friends to our annual picnic again this summer.
HOLY MASS at 11 am with *Fr Tony Acherman* as Celebrant. A potluck picnic-lunch and fellowship will follow as we celebrate the Feast of St. Clare and close with prayers.

NOVENA for **THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS OF THE PORTIUNCULA** via zoom
JULY 25th to AUG 2nd at 7 pm BC/8 pm AB/9pm MB
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EybWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WlIvQT09>
Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246
>>>Click onto [EXCERPTS on THE FEAST of OUR LADY of THE ANGELS](#)

Social Corner



Br Manoj makes a pastoral visit to Holy Spirit Fraternity in Olds, Alberta on July 15, 2023.

The June Session: Franciscan Vision Global Summit 2023

The June 24th session opened with *The Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus (FCJ)* from their International Formation House at Assisi near Santa Maria degli Angeli, Portiuncula singing an Invocation to the Holy Spirit. *Br Benedict Vadakkekara OFM Cap* gave a presentation on **The Franciscan Mission and Solidarity with the Poor in the World to Live Fully the Rule of 1223 in Our Time.**

Br Benedict chose to focus more on the Franciscan Mission. Francis of Assisi is the first founder of a religious Order to include a section in the Order's Rule on the Mission. At that time, the people of other religions were referred to as Saracens and infidels. The crusades were organised by the Church and state in response to Islam and its harsh movement across Europe, Asia and Africa. Evangelising was not an option at the time for religious missionaries. At the same time, Francis directed his friars to radical poverty asserting that this would ensure the authenticity of life they would require for evangelisation. With respect to going among people of other faiths the *Earlier Rule*, Chapter XVI reads: "The Lord says: *Behold I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be prudent as serpents and simple as doves.* Let any brother, then, who desires by divine inspiration to go among people of other religions, go with the permission of his minister and servant." The brothers that go among the people of other faiths are directed to do so in two ways. One is not to engage in arguments or

disputes but be subject to every human creature for God's sake and to acknowledge that they are Christians. The other way is to proclaim the Word of God when it pleases the Lord, that unbelievers would believe in the Father Son and Holy Spirit and be baptized. This is the only time Francis directs the friars specifically in obedience. The response to go among the people of other faiths is a personal one answering God's direct call. The idea of being in the midst of the world is a mission from the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. The two ways of going forth among the people describe meekness and voluntary submission that communicate values in a world that hungers for power and authority. What the Franciscan Mission promotes is peace, nonviolence and interreligious dialogue. The first way of going forth establishes a bond of mutual trust and respect and is needed before evangelisation can begin. Only then can the second way of going forth come to life in the sharing of faith. Francis himself travelled to Egypt to visit the Sultan speaking with him for three days, learning about his beliefs. The Sultan was very moved by Francis. Francis was impressed by the prayerful nature of Islam. Pope John Paul II said on March 3, 1984: "Among the many examples which could be drawn from the history of Christian mission, the norms given by St. Francis of Assisi, in the Earlier Rule of 1221, are significant. The friars who "through divine inspiration would desire to go among the Muslims... can establish spiritual contact with them (Muslims) in two ways: a way which does not raise arguments and disputes, but rather they should be subject to every human creature for the love of God and confess themselves to be Christians. The other way is that when they see that it would be pleasing to the Lord, they should announce the word of God".

Brother Benedict gave an inspiring presentation encouraging us and giving hope towards the mission of evangelization through interreligious dialogue of which Francis so gracefully lived.

A concluding hymn in honour of St. Francis was sung by Aspirants belonging to the Saint Francis of Assisi North-East India Foundation in Assam, India.

Prepared by Colleen Finlon ofs