



Issue no. 38 – October 2023

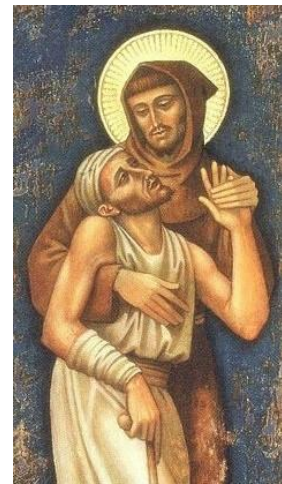
Message from our Regional Minister

Have you ever thought about what causes negative thoughts? I can think of a few things of many: being constantly interrupted in a conversation, being busy, being misunderstood/rejected, being in pain, and many more causes. Before facing moments like these, you have to prepare yourself to face the storm of negativity: anger, doubt, despair, darkness, temptations to quit, hopelessness, no desire to pray, to name a few (I'm sure you can name some more). I know some of you are facing these moments - when it is very bad, it could look like St. Francis' seemingly never-ending physical suffering or like Jesus' facing his agony. What's the secret of St. Francis' ability in composing the joy-filled Canticle of the Sun in the midst of his worst physical suffering? The only answer I can think of is God's grace. His grace is always sufficient (cf. 2 Cor 12:9). Only by his grace, we can go against the storm of negativity, he will calm the storm and transform it into self-emptying love. Next, I'm challenging each one of you and myself to ask this question: how can I self-empty love my brothers and sisters in my fraternity? That's the kind of love that St. Francis gave to his brother friars, that's the kind of love Jesus gives to us. This is what we are called to do, each time we sing "Prayer of St. Francis."

Please don't beat yourself up when you start arguing with others and interrupting them as soon as you finish praying the liturgy of the hours with them at the beginning of fraternity meeting. We're all in this together as sinners, graced with God's infinitely merciful love! There is always a chance to end it with self-emptying love.

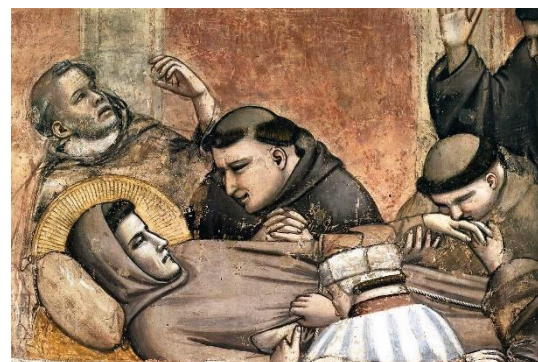
Changing topics to the regional events: by this time, you all should be well aware of the Discerning

**The Feast of
St Francis of Assisi
(Oct 4)**



Options in Western Region of Canada. Receiving my constant emails and distributing them to fraternity members may seem like purgatory, on top of your day-to-day responsibilities and suffering. I thank you for being patient. If you prefer, you can send me the mailing list of your fraternity members and I can send my email straight to them, to lighten your load. To me, sending it only to you or one hundred people is the same: I just click the "SEND" button once. All of the email addresses, except the regional council members will be in bcc. Let me know how I can help.

Praying for you and your fraternity,
Lanny



**The
Transitus
(Oct 3)**

Message from our Spiritual Assistant

Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

Mt 22:21

Is there anything that does not belong to God?

The Pharisees and Herodians asked Jesus, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" A census tax implied that, if one were a citizen, one owed the money to the emperor. The Jews believed that they had only one Lord and Ruler and that was their God. Taxes, or any form of submission, should be made to Yahweh alone. Paying taxes to the emperor reminded God's people of living under the heel of a foreign power. Jesus did not go by the flattery words of Pharisees and Herodians but knew their malice. If He said, it's lawful to pay the taxes to the emperor, He will go against the sentiment of the Jews who hated Roman emperor. And if He said, it's not lawful, the Herodians will report to the emperor about an uprising revolt to his rule and reign.

The Pharisees and Herodians presented the 'Yes or No' option, trying to cause a dilemma for Jesus but Jesus did not enter into controversy and asked them to show Him a coin used for paying tax. Then, He further said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" They answered Caesar's. A Roman coin had on one side the image of the emperor with the inscription "Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus" and on the other side his title "Pontifex Maximus" (high priest). Thus, Caesar claimed not only political sovereignty but also Divine attributes which again is not liked by the Jews because God alone is divine and not Caesar, who is just a mere creature. By having the possession of a Roman coin, the Pharisees or Herodians principally approve of paying tax, whereas in practice they were trying to show their dislike. Jesus calls them 'hypocrites' for that reason. Jesus says, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." What does it mean? For Jesus, both the political and religious obligations can be legitimately met. Paying taxes is not a compromise of one's duties toward God, nor does serving God exempt one from supporting the civil government. If a Roman coin bears the image of Caesar, it belongs to him, give it to him as simple as that. But what is it that belongs to God? It is the human person who bears the image of the living God (Gen 1:26-27). God breathed into us His very life, created us in His image

and likeness, so we belong to him. Our life and everything we have belong to him, except sin. Yes, read it right, everything belongs to God, except sin that exclusively is our possession. Our highest priority and obligation in life is to God. By birth we are citizens of a country, by baptism we are citizens of heaven. We have obligations toward both. Caesar's authority and space are limited and that also he holds it under God and is responsible for proper governance for the good of all. But when Caesar oversteps the mark and puts itself in place of God, Christians are in the last resort absolved from obedience. We must give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and not the things that are God's.

In the context of a world in crisis, Pope Francis is always asked to take sides. But he says there are not two sides but only one and that is of Peace. We can further say, there are not two ways but only one, that is the way of God who is Jesus Christ, who is Love. Love for God and neighbor has to come for our heart and therefore give to God our hearts, so that He can dwell in and produce love in abundance for all. In times of challenges and contradictions that our world and its authority propose, let us remember to give our obedience and even be ready to give our life to God so that we may not be enslaved by sin that leads us away from eternal life in heaven.

Br Manoj

Message from our Director of Formation

In the Franciscan Daily Companion on October 24, St. Bernardine of Siena says:

You are rewarded not according to your work or your time but according to the measure of your love.

In his Reflection Fr. Jude Winkler, OFM states:

All of us have not received the same talents. We do not have the same challenges. It is important not to judge our efforts by an external evaluation that does not take into account what God expects of us. God wants us to try our best, so that we love as much as is possible in our particular situation.

What about you? Do you live your life with kindness and love? How are you when things do not go according to your way? Are you resentful, disappointed? What is God teaching you at this time?

Peace,
Catherine McNiff, ofc

Save the Dates

-7th Franciscan FINE ARTS & POSTER CONTEST

Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council invites children and youth to participate in our 7th Franciscan **FINE ARTS & POSTER CONTEST** held on **December 3, 2023**. For more information see

Links to [POSTER](#), [INVITATION](#), [ENTRY FORM](#), [LETTER TO PASTORS & SCHOOLS](#)

-VESPERS and FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY

****New Time**** On first Saturday of each month.

NOVEMBER 4th @ **7pm** PT/**8pm** MT/**9pm** CT

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EybWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246



-FRANCISCAN VISION GLOBAL SUMMIT

each month of 2023 to celebrate 800 Years of the Rule of 1223 and the Crib of Greccio. **NEXT SESSION:** Saturday **NOV 25th** at 3am PT/4am MT/5am CT with Br John Sekar OFM on *Future of Franciscan Charism, Life and Rule in Asia* and with Br Matthew Beckman OFM on *Future of Franciscan Charism, Life and Rule in Oceania*. Register for ZOOM link. Registration is free.

>>>Link to [POSTER](#) and [BROCHURE](#)

Report on Franciscan Vision Global Summit: The September 30, 2023 Session

The September Session: The absence of the expression “To follow Christ and his Mother” in the rule of 1223; its meaning and significance today. By Sr Jessy Thomas FCC

After a hymn to the Holy Spirit was sung, Sr. Jessy Thomas (FCC), moderator for the evening’s session, introduced the speaker, Br. Arokiam John. Br Arokiam began by drawing our attention to Pope Francis’ encyclical “Laudato Si”. He noted that this serves to bring us much encouragement as we can clearly see Franciscan charism and spirituality embodied in the document “The Care of the Common Home.”

Francis stressed fidelity to the Church, so following Jesus and his mother, Mary, was the lived experience of the friars. The phrase “To Follow Christ and his Holy Mother” is, however, not found in the Rule of 1223 but first appeared in the writings of Francis a few days before his death and passed on to Clare. Francis used his Letter to the Faithful and other writings to stress aspects of the way of life that could not be added to the rule as it had already received papal approval. Reference to the Blessed Virgin may have been contained in the Protorule of 1209, submitted by Francis to the Pope. However, as this has been lost, it is unable to be proven. The Blessed Virgin was mentioned in the Rule of 1221 (Regula Non-Bulata) but disappeared from the Rule of 1223 (Regula Bulata). Clare later instituted the phrase in her “Form of Life” which would govern the Poor Clares.

Reference to the Blessed Virgin can also be found in the “Fragments,” (written excerpts of the early rule copied by the friars.)

-To follow the life and most high poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ and his most holy mother

-To follow the teachings and footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ

Francis stressed that those who live a life of penance receive the fruits of the Spirit. Therefore, the goal of the brothers would have been to do the will of the Father, to follow Christ his son and to be in union with the Spirit. To strive to enter into the Trinitarian life, would be to have the same vocation that Mary did. By her fiat, she did the will of the Father, in union with the Holy Spirit and was the first and most perfect disciple of her Divine Son. Brother Arokiam drew our attention to the fact that Francis called us to “follow” Jesus and his most Holy Mother; not to “imitate” him and his mother; which suggests that we can somehow become like Christ or Mary. We cannot repeat what Jesus and Mary did. We can however, seek to diminish ourselves so that we may grow in Christ.

Junior sisters of the Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King concluded the evening’s program with a Marian hymn.

Prepared by Marlene Welch, ofs

Social Corner



The Season of Creation was celebrated by St Pio Fraternity of Red Deer, AB on October 7th. Together they enjoyed a nature walk & bird watch at Alix, AB hosted by *Blaise MacSween*. *Chris Olsen* from the Naturalist Club guided the walk. *Deacon Roger* presented the ongoing formation. The beauty of creation was shared by *Deacon Roger, Irene Manning, Nelly Brillantes, Denise Guillemaud, Carol Bryson, Pat Rawlusk, Lynne McLoughlin, Theresa & Mark Hopper, Chris Olson, Blaise MacSween, Joyce Reilander, Cheryl Deagle* (photographer).



St Clare Fraternity in Picardville, AB celebrated founding member, Darlene Young's 25th anniversary of profession as a Secular Franciscan at Holy Mass on Oct 6th at St Benoit Catholic Church with several of their members.



St Clare Fraternity in Picardville prays the Rosary for Our Lady to intervene for Canadian & world concerns.



St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity of Coquitlam, BC celebrated Right of Admission for Candidacy for *Trish Soler* with new Spiritual Assistant, *Fr. Tadeusz* at their monthly gathering in October.

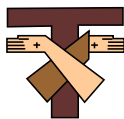
Alice McCrea of Little Flowers Fraternity of Kelowna celebrated her 96th birthday of Oct 25 with thirty family, friends & Franciscans.



Alice has a tradition of crocheting snowflakes to give to each of her guests who come to celebrate.



The Transitus was celebrated by St Anthony of Padua Fraternity in Richmond, BC at St Joseph the Worker Church on Oct 3.



Our Lady of the Angels Messenger, Secular Franciscan Order of Western Canada Region, October 2023
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