



Issue no. 10 – April 2021

Message from our Regional Minister

Come, let us clap our hands! Come, let us rejoice! Come, let us sing songs of great joy! Jesus is risen! Jesus lives! Alleluia!

The amazing news that Jesus lives and is the same today as yesterday is overwhelming. Jesus' passion, death and resurrection are streams of grace for you and me.... how awesome is our God!

Through Jesus, God sees us as His children, His beloved sons and daughters, citizens of heaven, significant as His chosen, graced to do all things in the strength that He gives us, assured that all things work together for good and much more encouragement is revealed to us through scriptures. No wonder, St. Francis loved the Word of God. Scriptures, to St. Francis, were life giving, life transforming, encouraging and became the way for his life. St. Francis reminds us to go from gospel to life and life to gospel. All is by the grace of God. Come, Lord Jesus, open our eyes to see You!

Today, sitting quietly before the Lord, I am blessed with the beauty of the rising sun, to hear the morning song of the birds, to be captured by the still and quiet of this new day. Lord, refresh me for this day ahead. Thank you, Lord for your Amazing Love, for this time with You. Bless all Secular Franciscans.

OLOTA is excited about plans moving ahead for its Regional Elections in 2022. Sent to all fraternities were two updates to the planning: the date for the elections had to be moved ahead one week as our original date conflicted with the Friars being called together to Quebec for their Chapter. Therefore, please mark your calendars: "May 6-8, 2022". The FCJ Centre in Calgary has been booked as the venue for our Chapter and Elections. Those who attended in 2019 will remember the FCJ Centre. Plan to return in 2022!

Another good news to share with you is friar Michael Perras from Mount St. Francis in Cochrane, Alberta has accepted our invitation to be the guest speaker. Friar Michael is excited to share spiritual insights to the theme: "Companions on the Journey".

Watch for more news to follow as plans continue forward. Blessings of Divine Peace and Joy!

Linda Adams, ofs



May 7, 2021 at 7pm BC / 8pm AB / 9pm MB Vespers and Crown Rosary

Join us at ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EvdWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310

Passcode: 741246

Or, call any of the following numbers from any phone and enter the meeting ID and passcode.

AB: 587 328 1099

BC: 778 907 2071

MB: 204 272 7920

When using telephone, press *6 to mute/unmute and press *9 to raise hand.

May 8, 2021 at 9am BC/10am AB/11am MB: Instrumentum Laboris overview, questions, and clarifications

Local fraternity ministers are invited to register through their Regional Vice Minister **before May 5**. Zoom link will follow after the registration. By this time, you should have received documents from your Regional Vice Minister; if you have not, please review the following documents (also available at www.olota.org) prior to the event:

- [Memo](#)
- [Reading Material](#)
- [Questions in PDF](#)
- [Questions in docs](#) (to download)
- [Prayer for the General Chapter](#)

From our Regional Director of Youth



First of all, a big "Thank You" to all the parents, teachers and our own Secular Franciscans who encouraged students to enter the Franciscan Fine Arts & Poster Contest, 2021!

We had 61 entries which was amazing considering so many churches and schools were closed. You "Got the word out" to the students and they responded to the theme of Pope Francis' "*Fratelli Tutti*/Brothers and Sisters All" with joy and enthusiasm.

We had posters, paintings, drawings and a poem arrive in our mailbox - what fun! We received artwork from students from six to fourteen years of age from Burnaby, Mill Bay, North Kelowna, Penticton, Saanich, Salmon Arm, Victoria, West Kelowna, BC and Edmonton, Eckville, Edson, Grimshaw Lethbridge, Red Deer, Saint Albert and Sylvan Lake, AB.

The winning entries (first names only) will be on the OLOTA website (olota.org) in early May, 2021.

Our youngsters and our youth are an inspiration as they speak from their hearts and show us by their artwork what is most important to all of us - being kind to animals, people and our fragile world, seeing everyone as our brothers and sisters and respecting all people as part of our human family.

Catherine McNiff, ofs

Pillars of our Fraternities

Have you read the [April 2021 issue of Living Fraternity?](#) At the end, there is a request made by the National Fraternity:

We ask members of regional and local councils to reach out to older members who are ready to share their history and journey in the OFS. When you have contacted some of these members, willing to share their history, send a summary to Marion Clorey mgclorey@gmail.com or Debbie Tessier deborahessier@gmail.com for the next issue of National Bulletin. Thank you in advance for your attention and collaboration.

From our Regional Director of Formation

The following OLOTA members successfully completed the requirements for the FORMATORS' COURSE (2020-2021).



OLOTA congratulates

Our Lady of the Angels' Region Formators' Course Participants:

- Cindy Davies, ofs—San Damiano, Salmon Arm
- Margaret Huggan, ofs—St. Agnes of Assisi, Coquitlam
- Anna O'Hagan, ofs—San Damiano, Salmon Arm
- Margaret Ross, ofs—St. Agnes of Assisi, Coquitlam
- Marie Semenoff, ofs St. Mary's, Calgary

- Ron Semenoff, ofs—St. Mary's, Calgary
- Beverly Silvester, ofs—St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Edmonton
- Lynn Spicer, ofs—St. Mary's, Calgary

National Formators Course Participants:

- Helena (Mee Suk) Hwang, ofs—St. Francis of Assisi (Korean), Surrey
- John Kalley, ofs—St. Pio, Surrey
- Irene Manning, ofs—St. Pio, Red Deer
- Joyce Reilander, ofs—St. Pio, Red Deer
- Edward Yee, ofs—St. Pio, Surrey

From September through March our sisters and brothers studied, explored and reflected on the nuances of OFS Formation in the context of faith development and human formation. Their goal was to equip themselves as formators within a framework of OFS formation and applied skills to facilitate Initial and Ongoing Formation in local fraternities. Congratulations! Pax et Bonum!

The course will be offered again in the fall through both OLOTA Region and National Region. Registration will be in early July. Look in upcoming newsletters for more information!

Lynda Black, ofs

Franciscans Advocate Human Rights in the United Nation – JPIC office, Italy

Summary of Webinar on April 24, 2021

Franciscan International (FI) is a non-governmental organization representing all levels of Franciscan families and advocating for preservation and protection of human rights in the context of the increasing criminalization of social injustices and poverty. Through its arm in the United Nations (UN), FI denounces:

- attacks on human rights and their defenders
- repressive policies in response to social discrimination
- excessive use of force by governments and their military and police

Recalling our Seraphic Father, St. Francis, when he encountered the leper, he realized the dignity of the leper and embraced him as a brother. All of us are created in the image and likeness of God and everyone deserves to be respected. We too, in the spirit of poverty, fraternity, and solidarity, are called to embrace a common brotherhood, to pursue peaceful and non-violent dialogues, and to promote justice.

In its advocacy, FI's efforts include building partnerships, networking, lobbying and negotiations, fundraising, research, publication, and interventions at the UN by bringing witnesses from the grassroots to the UN.

The presence of Franciscans across the globe, particularly with the poor and the disadvantaged, makes it effective for FI to advocate and defend justice at the international level. It becomes the bridge between the

disadvantaged and the UN. Its strengths lie in the capacity to monitor and report human rights violations, and in the Franciscan networks at all levels.

Finally, let us reflect on quotes from Murray Bodo's *Seven Teachings of St. Francis*: "This is what St. Francis of Assisi did, and that is what he does for us once we are caught up in his life and teachings. He makes us blossom, wherever and whoever we are. We blossom because we see in Francis what could happen to us if we were to embrace the overflowing goodness of God revealed in everything that exists, and let that embrace change us". May God help us continue our missions as Franciscans.

The recording of the webinar is available at YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=errTCbELymI>

Peace and Joy,
Lourdes von Burg, ofs

Franciscan Saints and Feast in May Month of the Holy Virgin Mary

1. Feast of Saint Joseph the Artisan
2. St. Richard Pampuri, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious institute
3. Bl. Edouard-Joseph Rosas, OFS
4. [Bl. Ladislas de Gielniow, OFM](#)
5. Bl. Beinvenu Mareni, OFM
6. Bl. Marie-Catherine Troijani, TOR
7. Bl. Anne-Rose Gattorno, TOR
8. Feast of Mary Mediatrix of all Graces
9. Bl. Antoine Bajewski, OFMConv
10. Bl. Marie-Bernard Butler, TOR



11. St. Gemme de Sulmona, OFS
12. [St. Ignatius of Laconi, OFMCap](#)
13. [St. Michael Garicoits, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious institute](#)
14. St. Marie-Dominique Mazzarello, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious institute
15. St. Jean-Baptiste de la Salle, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious institute
16. [St. Theophilus of Corte, OFM](#)
17. [St. Paschal of Baylon, OFM](#)
18. [St. Felix de Cantalice, OFMCap](#)
19. [St. Yves, Priest, OFS](#)
20. [St. Bernardine of Siena, OFM](#)
21. [St. Crispin of Viterbo, OFMCap](#)
22. St. Joaquina Vedruna, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious institute
23. [Bl. Gerard of Villamagna, OFS](#)
24. [Bl. John of Prado, OFM](#)
25. Dedication of the Basilica in Assisi, 1253
26. St. Philippe Neri, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious institute; [memorial of St. Mariane of Jesus Parades, OFS](#)
27. [Bl. Gerard of Lunel, OFS](#)
28. St. Jean-Baptiste Rossi, Priest, OFS
29. Bl. Etienne et Raymond, OFM
30. [St. Joan of Arc, OFS](#), [King Saint Fernando III, OFS](#)
31. Feast of the Queenship of Mary, Public Consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Novena in preparation of the feast of Pentecost Pentecost - Plenary Indulgence – Chant in public the Veni Creator Sacred Heart – Plenary Indulgence - Public recitation of the Act of Reparation

From our Regional Spiritual Assistant

The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep... The fourth Sunday of Easter, we celebrate the Risen



Lord as the Good shepherd, who lays down His life for the sheep. We can understand from this the kind of relationship Jesus had with His disciples; a relationship based on tenderness, love, mutual knowledge and the promise of an immeasurable gift, as He said "I came, that they may have life, have it in abundance." Jesus emphasizes the unique character of the good shepherd that is laying down his life for the sheep. What shepherd would sacrifice his own life for his sheep? He can acquire more sheep but has only one life. Jesus makes a free, voluntary gift of His life on the cross, through which sheep come to receive life in abundance. His self-gift on the cross is a perfect act of love, the greatest expression of love and the perfect example of His teaching that laying down one's life for another. Self-sacrificial love is the defining standard for all disciples of Jesus and especially for those appointed to be shepherd of His flock. For, it is that

self-offering that Jesus' shepherding finds its culmination. Whereas the hired hand knows that his life is more valuable than a mere sheep. For him the essential fact is that 'the sheep do not belong to him.' So, there is a lack of will and courage to stay with the flock in its moment of peril. His relationship with the sheep is mercenary. He is just interested more in his own welfare than the welfare of the sheep.

Jesus, also represents this shepherding in an absolute and exclusive way, is evident in His knowledge of the sheep. Jesus makes an important and powerful comparison. He compares the mutual knowing of shepherd and sheep (I know my own and my own know me) to the mutual knowing within God (just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father). The relationship of the Father and Son is one of unity and eternal love, which is the most radical self-giving. In scripture, to know a person means, not just to recognize someone but to possess that person, to be one with that person. So, God's

knowledge means that He adopts people into fellowship, cares about their lot, chooses them as His own, enters into a personal relationship with them and calls them to His service. And people's knowledge of God means that they know him as their God and themselves as adopted and called by Him and accordingly, they act in faith, in the consciousness of being called, in obedience. When Jesus as the Good Shepherd says that He knows those who are His, and they know Him, He represents in His own person that special relationship between God and His people; in Him God is concerned about His people as the people of His own possession. In Jesus God fulfills His promise that He Himself will shepherd His people by appointing one shepherd over them, so that in Jesus the sheep of God's flock will know God and hear God's voice.

Brothers and sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, we all have a vocation; to be a good shepherd and a good sheep. Everyone who is entrusted with the care of others is a shepherd. Pastors, parents, teachers, doctors, nurses, government officials and so on, are all shepherds. We become good shepherds by loving, caring, praying and spending our time, talents and treasures for their welfare and not ours. And, we become good sheep by hearing the voice and following the teachings of Jesus the Good Shepherd that come to us through the scriptures, ministers, pastors of the Church and each other. Our vocation is to love the sheep to the point of laying down one's life for them and live in an intimate and mutual relationship with them.

Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM

From St. Clare Fraternity, Chilliwack, BC

OFS's Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation - the San Damiano of Laudato Si'



Franciscans, particularly Secular Franciscans, cannot be Franciscans by themselves. We live in this world and we are mission-people. When Christ commanded St. Francis to rebuild His "church", St. Francis took it as rebuilding the abandoned San Damiano. As his formation deepened, he understood that it was the Mother Church at that time that needed renewal, and he was Christ's agent of change. While his order lived a monastic life, his followers were often commanded to go into various towns and villages to preach and to interact with the secular people. They lived by the Gospel, and they also brought life to the Gospel. It is the "Word in action", and for Secular

Franciscans, this is a call to be the "agent of change" in this temporal world that tends to lurch from crisis to crisis, from war to war, and from one moral downfall to another. Peace, justice, charity, human developments, sharing and service are rare episodes of life, but that is exactly what Secular Franciscans are called to do.

While Secular Franciscans have their individual apostolates as they live different lives and are given different talents, it remains necessary for the OFS to collectively engage the secular world through common paths and missions. Without the latter, there would be a myriad of personal interpretations of what Secular Franciscans believe – even under the same OFS Rules and Constitution, and actualize their individualized beliefs in diverse and sometimes self-contradictory directions. From this perspective, one can fully appreciate the importance of OFS's Justice and Peace apostolate: not only what it capsulizes in Franciscan teachings, but how it unites the Order in action as an agent of change in this "Common Home", as Pope Francis calls it.

In *Laudato Si'* (10), Pope Francis says he took his guide and inspiration from St. Francis, for the "care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically". He declares that St. Francis "shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace." In *Laudato Si'*, the Catholic Church "acknowledge(s) the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face"; the Church is not just concerned with the life to come, but also with this world where the Kingdom of Heaven begins. The Church sees her mission begin not just in humanity, but also in the relation between humanity and the physical world, the "integral ecology", and she intends to initiate a dialogue and action that involve individuals and international policy simultaneously. The Church has taken

on the mission to not just preach the "Gospel to life", but also a paradigm of "life to Gospel": How to live life on a planetary plane as an extension of Matthew 25 (35-36): Feed the hungry, quench the thirsty, shelter strangers, visit prisoners, comfort the sick, and clothe the naked – in the context of a finite world, justice, charity, human development, and the "proper value" to all creations. In essence, *Laudato Si'* teaches a new way of life and a new world for humanity, which is exactly what OFS's Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation embraces. Therefore, while *Laudato Si'* represents rebuilding the world on a global scale, JPIC has long been working at the grassroots level of San Damiano, rebuilding our small Franciscan community stone by stone as a humble cornerstone for the global call of *Laudato Si'* from the Mother Church.



Peter Li, ofs

Social Corner



Hello from St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Saskatoon, SK.

Hope everyone is well!

The month of May is fast approaching when we express our devotion to Mary for the whole month. I think back to my school days. I think about kneeling in the long hallway with all of my classmates saying the Rosary. I think about the crowning of the statue of Mary which stood quietly at the end of the hall. I think of the crown made up of fresh spring flowers placed on Mary's head. I think about the teachers who shared with us that Mary deserved a month not only for being the Mother of Jesus but she was our mother too. And if we prayer to her she would take care of us through the good times and bad times. This pandemic has given me lots of time to reflect on Jesus, Mary, the saints, and our catholic traditions.

Gentle Mary, pray for us.

Yvonne Armstrong, ofs

Hunting for a House –from Messenger of St. Anthony, April 2021 issue

We needed to buy a new home in Ottawa that was not too far away from Parliament Hill. I immediately asked St. Anthony to help us find the right home, and we spent 3 months with a realtor looking for a place, but nothing satisfactory ever came up – mostly because the houses were outside of our budget. During that time I conceived, but because it was a difficult pregnancy, the doctor ordered me a complete bed-rest, which meant no more house hunting! Fortunately, our realtor said he would continue looking for us.

The bed-rest gave me lots of time to keep praying to St. Anthony. One morning, the phone rang; it was our realtor telling my husband Jim that he believed he had finally found a house at an affordable price that suited our needs and that was not too far away from Parliament Hill. I asked Jim the exact location, and he replied, “It’s on Anthony Avenue.” I immediately said to him, “Tell him we’ll take it! That’s our home. I don’t even need to see it!”

It was a perfect residential area, only three blocks from St. Patrick’s Catholic Church and Elementary School. One block from a big YMCA Recreation Centre and four blocks from a big shopping mall. There was a good bus service to the downtown core and the Parliament buildings where Jim would be working.

The previous owner had six kids who had been very rough on it, so we needed to refurbish it completely, but we were still young so we enjoyed ourselves renovating it. We spent twenty happy years there until Jim got transferred to Vancouver, BC.



Rose-Marie Brown, ofs
St. Anthony of Padua, Maple Ridge, BC

Social Time while Deepening Our Faith

Join us to deepen our faith from a Bishop Barron Series called **Mystery of God** and share your faith with members from other fraternities. The session will begin on May 5, 2021 at 6:30pm BC / 7:30pm AB / 8:30pm MB. (Note: from May 12 – June 19, we’ll start at 6pm BC / 7pm AB / 8pm MB for review of the previous lesson)

[Link to handout](#)

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84370983314?pwd=YXZXZlIh4MkpUNHFueDV2VjVIMVZwdz09>

Meeting ID: 843 7098 3314

Passcode: 476163

Call any of the following numbers from any phone and enter the meeting ID and passcode.

587 328 1099 from AB

778 907 2071 from BC

204 272 7920 from MB