



Issue no. 11 – May 2021

## Message from our Regional Minister

The month of May brings to my mind more readily Mary, the Mother of Jesus. The month of May brings forth new life in flowers, shrubs, trees budding and bursting into full blooms. The sounds of twittering birds, the bright warm sunshine, the deeper blue sky.... ahhh, may the month May linger longer.

May celebrates mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers. May brings OLOTA to honor and celebrate our Secular Franciscans who have journeyed awhile, leaving a trail of legacy, experiences, stories of encouragement.

Our vintaged Secular Franciscans who are the pioneers or pillars of our fraternities are deserving of recognition and to be esteemed. Please write, therefore, a short paragraph or a short article on a long serving Secular Franciscan and forward to the National Office for publication.

Ahead, OLOTA looks to receive input from fraternities and their members on the document "Servant Leadership" ... your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, input are very important. The strength of the Order of Secular Franciscans comes from our fraternities, therefore, what you say is highly important to OLOTA.

OLOTA Regional Council will meet virtually the end of May for its Spring review of issues, concerns and plans for ahead. Please pray for us for Good Discernment, for God's Will and Plan to continue to unfold for fraternities and for our Region.

May Mary continue to intercede to her Son, Jesus for the Secular Franciscans. May Mary teach us docility, wisdom, courage to live our rule, especially rule 21 by being servant leaders. As our Franciscan spirit grows, loving service is a natural consequence when we are called to serve. With Mary, we devote ourselves to prayer, being thankful, peaceful, joyful people as witness to Jesus to those around us.

Amen?

Fraternally yours,  
Linda Adams, ofs



## June 4, 2021 at 7pm BC/8pm AB/9pm MB Vespers and Crown Rosary

Join us at ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1V0Z3EybWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

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.

## From our Director of Formation

### Formator's Course in September 2021

Are you interested in learning more about guiding and animating OFS Formation? Are you a permanent professed member of OFS? Then consider registering for the OLOTA online Formators course. OLOTA Formators Online Course begins in September 2021. The purpose of the course is to equip formators with a framework of OFS formation and applied skills to facilitate initial and ongoing formation in local fraternities. The online course lasts 6 months (break in December) and begins in September 2021 and ends in March 2022. It consists of 6 modules (through the OLOTA website) and three ZOOM meetings (September, January, March). Each module has a variety of course material: readings, YouTube visuals etc. Participants should be able to dedicate a minimum of 4 to 5 hours per month to complete pre-reading of course material, completion of monthly assignments in online postings and to participate in online group discussions. Early course enrollment is required to complete the mini training by OLOTA Webmaster Lanny Hui at [lanny.hui@gmail.com](mailto:lanny.hui@gmail.com) to navigate

through the Moodle website. Completed registration forms should be emailed to the course facilitator Lynda Black at [ms.999@shaw.ca](mailto:ms.999@shaw.ca) by August 15, 2021.

### **Franciscan Saints and Feast in June Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus**

1. [Bl. Felix of Nicosia, OFM](#)
2. [Bl. John Pelingotto, ofs](#)
3. [Bl. Andrew of Spello, OFM](#)
4. St. Francois Caracciolo, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute
5. [Bl Pacific of Cerano, OFM](#)
6. [Bl. Lawrence of Villamagna, OFM](#)
7. [Bl. Himiliana Cerchi, ofs](#)
8. Bl. Nicolas de Gesturi, OFM Cap
9. Bl. Innocent Guz, OFM Conv
10. Bl. Edouard Poppe, ofs
11. [Bl. Yolanda of Hungary, OSC](#)
12. Bl. Floride Cevoli, Virgin, Capuchin religious
13. [St. Anthony of Padua, OFM Plenary Indulgence for cordbearers](#)

14. Bl. Zephirin Jimenez, ofs
15. [St. Vincenta Gerosa, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute and Saint Mary Bartholomea Capitanio.](#)
16. Bl. Marie-Therese Scherer, a tertiary before joining another religious Institute
17. [Bl. Peter Gambacorti, ofs](#)
18. [Bl. Guy of Cortona, OFM](#)
19. Bl. Achille Puchata, OFM Conv
20. Bl. Micheline de Pesaro, ofs
21. Bl. Herman Stapien, OFM Conventual
22. [St. Thomas More, ofs](#)
23. [St. Joseph Cafasso, ofs](#)
24. Nativity of St. John the Baptist
25. [Bl. Bienvenu de Gubbio, OFM](#)
26. [Bl. Frederick Jassoone, OFM](#)
27. Bl. Marguerite Baeyts, ofs
28. St. Barthelemie Capitanio, a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute
29. Sts. Peter and Paul, Holy Day of Obligation, Plenary Indulgence
30. [Bl. Raymond Lulle, ofs](#)

### **Message from our Regional Spiritual Assistant**



***“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.”***

Pentecost officially is the birthday of the Church. And who is the Church? We are the church. So, it's our birthday. Acts of the Apostles (2:1-11) gives the description of the first Pentecost and what happened in that closed room where disciples had gathered. Sound of mighty *wind* from heaven, tongues of *fire* descending on the disciples; these are symbols of the Holy Spirit. Then, disciples go out preaching to the crowd of people. Galileans preaching to people of different nations gathered in Jerusalem and all understood their preaching in their own

language. The message is clear; what the disciples preached is a message destined for the whole world and not just for one people. All are speaking and hearing the message with full understanding, people are being brought together in unity under God.

Gospel of John (20:19-23) speaks about the mission of the disciples. Jesus says “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” Disciples do not send themselves but Jesus sends them to continue His mission on earth. What's the mission? “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any they are retained.” From this we get the clear message that as Jesus came to earth to reconcile humanity (world) to the Father and establish God's kingdom on earth; disciples are sent to do the same. It's about making people acknowledge the Lordship of God. It's about people living to the directives of God. Jesus says “go, therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Mt 28:19). The entire world is our mission field. It's important that making disciples is not reducible to converting people to Christianity and baptising them but a disciple is one who listens to Jesus and learns how to live, how to pray and how to do what is pleasing to God. Christian discipleship is a total way of life, a commitment to pattern our daily words and actions after the example set by Jesus. The ultimate mission of the Church is to bring back people to God and proclaim the Gospel of our Lord. To carry out this mission,

Jesus gave the Holy Spirit to His disciples; “He breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit.” Thus, the Holy Spirit brings them to a newness of life. They become a new creation and are filled with the courage to bear witness to Jesus.

We all have received the Holy Spirit on the day of our Baptism and then confirmed (Sacrament of Confirmation) to go out to spread the Gospel of our Lord. When we allow ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit then we have the fruits of the Holy Spirit; joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:16-25) in ourselves. The grace and gifts have been given to us in order to spread God's mission on earth. St. Francis of Assisi felt the outpouring and the presence of the Holy Spirit so closely that he attributed the guidance and direction of the Order to the Holy Spirit, calling the Holy Spirit the Minister of the Order. *Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love so that we may live in love with God the Father and be true to the mission entrusted to us by God the Son.*

Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM

## **From our Regional JPIC Director**

### **“Holy Family” and “Earth Family”**

*God is Love, praise be to you, our Lord!*

In Genesis, God saw that everything that he had made was very good (Gen. 1:31). Every human being is created out of love and made in the image and likeness of God. However, our first parents, Adam and Eve, made a choice to sin and became separated from God. Since then, human beings continue to sin and separate themselves from God.

Despite our sinfulness, God continues to love us by sending his only begotten son through Mary. As the new Eve, Mary is an excellent model of trust and total surrender to God's will. Her fiat (Lk 1:38) made human salvation possible.

In the month of May, we especially venerate Mary, our mother on earth and in heaven. We reflect on how beautiful it is to be guided in virtues by her. She is also a model for all mothers on earth. Through her way of life, she teaches us to live peacefully, lovingly, humbly, quietly, and respectfully towards St. Joseph and Jesus. Our Blessed Mother, like most mothers, did house chores including cooking and baking bread. In May, as we celebrate Mothers' Day, we reminisce the home cooked meals prepared from recipes that have been handed down from our great grandmothers to our moms. Some of us are blessed to be able to harvest fresh vegetables from our garden. The vegetables are grown in the soil which contains all nutrients we need to sustain our well-being. We also use clean water in our cooking. Yum... tasty and delicious! After the hearty meals, we socialize and/or go for a walk for some fresh air! Let us pause for a moment: do we see the love of the Creator in the creation?

God's love is also manifested through St. Joseph. This year, we are very blessed to celebrate the year of St. Joseph. During his lifetime, he protects Jesus and Mary. He worked laboriously and creatively with his hands. He taught Jesus how to become a good carpenter. His virtues, particularly obedience, humility, and total surrender to God, serve as a model of all fathers including priests, religious, and lay single men.

*“The Holy Spirit is in the Holy Family”!*

To complete the act of love to God's creation, God did not only send His only begotten Son but also, he sent an advocate the “Holy Spirit”. At Pentecost, we celebrate the birthday of the Church. We are the “Ch-ur-Ch”. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to his earthly family, including our Franciscan family members. Relationship (love), the heart of the Trinity, should be the heart of the Church. Our ability to relate to people, to God, and to the whole of creation is at the heart of Franciscan life. (p. 54, *Franciscan Journey*, Lester Bach OFM). The Christian tradition uses “creation” to refer to the project of a personal and Trinitarian God, who acts out of love. Everything has been destined to be in communion with him. Creation is a gift, a reality illuminated by the love which calls us together into universal communion (*Laudato Si' 76*).

God's love is manifested in the Eucharist. From the soil, the wheat becomes bread and is transubstantiated into the “Eucharist”, the living body of Jesus and the food for our soul and spiritual journey. Jesus never leaves us alone! God is an awesome God!

The sequence of events – Mother's Day, Pentecost and Father's Day, is not coincidental. All of them are connected by Trinitarian love, which is also the heart of the Holy Family: St. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. Now, the

Trinitarian love continues to exist in the Eucharist and within us as we welcome its presence. We can further meditate on the Trinitarian love by praying with John 17.

In gratitude, let us welcome the omnipotent and omnipresent God to manifest its presence in our daily lives. Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the earth, heal the Earth, and protect us and our families, your children! Rekindle the peace in our hearts!

Peace and Joy, Lourdes von Burg  
*Laudato Si' Week ---- May 16-25, 2021*

## Social Corner

### From Little Flowers of St. Francis Fraternity, Kelowna, BC



Alice McCrea, was born in Saskatchewan in 1927, the tenth child of a family of fourteen children. After completing her schooling, she entered the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM) in 1945 where she served her order through missionary work. Responding to the call of God, she returned to secular life in 1985 and worked in the child care field for a number of years. The spirit of St. Francis continued to live in her heart – she was one of the five founding members of her fraternity in Kelowna in 2005 and made her profession in the Secular Franciscan Order that same year.

Over the years, Alice has served her Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters as director of formation, librarian, infirmarian, and in hospitality ministry. She currently leads a fraternity apostolate which prays for cancer patients and has seen

many miracles of prayers answered.

At 93, Alice lives in a retirement home in Kelowna witnessing the love of Jesus to the other residents. Alice still has a huge heart and a big purse. When people ask her what she is wearing around her neck, she opens her purse and hands them pamphlets on Secular Franciscans as well as the Tau Cross, opening the door for more dialogue – possible over a cup of tea. Alice radiates the joy of St. Francis and like Clare, has a deep heart for prayer. She is wisdom personified. Alice continues to participate in the life of her fraternity, which is currently meeting by Zoom.

### From St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Saskatoon, SK

On December 1, 2021, I will be 35 years a Secular Franciscan. I am reflecting on how this wonderful adventure began. It is like a small tree in a large forest and each year my faith grew. I was standing at the back of the church in the morning and out of the blue, someone came up to me and asked whether I have ever thought of being a Secular Franciscan. We were planning to start a fraternity. That one question has changed my life. It was a way to renew my baptismal commitment and to deepen my relationship with Jesus. Recently, I have realized that being a Secular Franciscan is not just following the Ten Commandments but living out the Sermon on the Mount by being a peacemaker and a witness to the Gospel in the footsteps of St. Francis. I have made efforts to live like every Secular Franciscan try to live Gospel to life and life to Gospel. I am walking through the path of many notable Secular Franciscans: St. Pope John XXIII, St. John Vianney, St. Thomas More, St. Angela Merici, and St. Elizabeth of Hungary. I am blessed and pray that I may continue to walk in their footsteps for the next 20 years.

Yvonne Armstrong, ofs

### From St. Pio Fraternity, Red Deer, AB

Matt: 25-40, *Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters, you did for me.*

June 9<sup>th</sup> 1996 I was professed as a Secular Franciscan, with St. Maximillian Kolbe Fraternity Red Deer, and now I am celebrating my 25<sup>th</sup> year as a Secular Franciscan. It has been an amazing journey as I reflect on the past years, I never expected what God had planned for me. Our Franciscan Rule is my way of life, it gives me direction. Now 25 years later it is time to share how God has worked in my life.

Newly professed, I was asked to be part of the Formation Team with my fraternity. Taking with me with what I had learned from my formation experiences, I served the team for four years. This experience was a truly blessed time and exciting as I was able to pray/work/study with individuals inquiring and contemplating Franciscan way of life.

In 2001 Our Lady of the Angels Region (which is all Secular Franciscans in Western Canada) was having its Regional Chapter. Prompted by the Holy Spirit I found myself being directed to serve in a new way. On that weekend I was elected for the Regional Secretary for two terms from 2001-2007. During that time, I was blessed to serve under the direction of Ministers Murdoch MacLeod and Garnet Moses. I learned so much and so grateful and humbled by the experience.

Thinking I had fulfilled my work on Region, the Holy Spirit had other plans for me. During the Chapter in 2007 I was nominated for Vice Minister for Alberta for two terms 2007-2013. Serving as Vice Minister of Alberta was a blessing and a privilege. Throughout that time, I was fortunate to travel for Fraternal Visits and the greatest blessings were the relationships I made with my Franciscan Sisters and Brothers.

Again, believing I fulfilled my roles on Regional, the next thing I knew I was nominated and elected for two terms as Regional Minister in 2016-2019. Again, the Holy Spirit working and guiding my journey as a Franciscan. During this time, I was humbled and grateful for the council and the region I served for six years. As well, it was an honor and privilege to work with three Provincials, Fr. Dennis Vavrek OFM, Fr. Bob Mokry OFM and Fr. Pierre Charland OFM and Spiritual Assistants Fr. Louis Geelan OFM, and Br. Gerry Clyne OFM.

On another note of my journey, sixteen years ago, after a period of discernment and the Holy Spirit, I was prompted to begin a discerning group for a new Fraternity in Red Deer. On May 6<sup>th</sup> 2017, St Padre Pio Fraternity was canonically established.

Walking in the footsteps of St Francis for the past 25 years has allowed me to relinquish my control over my faith and give myself fully to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

My journey has just begun for as of now I have done nothing.

Amen.

Peace and all Good,  
Irene Manning, OFS