



Issue no. 14 – August 2021

Message from our Regional Minister

August, and in a few days, the calendar page shall turn to September. August seemed to be a whirlwind of fleeting days. OFS tasks at the regional level continued at a contrasting slower pace. One recent week for me was occupied with a trip to Ontario. Flying across Canada was a challenge with flights cancelled, lengthy delays and revised flight schedules for the bustling travellers seemingly to be always in long line-ups. Yet, all of life continues to move forward, no matter the circumstances or challenges. Was life so fast paced and challenging in the days of St. Francis? My heart settles with the Prayer of St. Francis: “Lord, make me an Instrument of Peace” The OLOTA Regional Council will be planning its Fall Regional Council Meeting in the next few weeks. Fraternity Ministers, if you have any issues, please ensure they be communicated to your Regional Vice Minister. OLOTA is interested and are here to serve and support fraternities. Bless you with Divine Peace

Peace and joy,
Linda Adams, ofs

Upcoming Events

Sep. 1, 2021: Deadline to submit registration for National Formators Course

- **French Correspondence version**
Facilitated by Francoise Malbouef, ofs
Email: fmalboeuf@sympatico.ca
Format: correspondence or email and 3 Group Zoom tele/videoconferences
- **English Correspondence version** Facilitated by Catherine Payne, ofs
Email: catherinepayne279@gmail.com
[Registration form](#) deadline: **September 1, 2021**
Format: correspondence or email and 3 Group Zoom tele/videoconferences
- **English Online version**
Facilitated by Jewel Jasmins, ofs
Email: jajasmins@gmail.com
[Registration form](#) deadline: **September 1, 2021**
Format: Online version using a Moodle platform and 4 Group Zoom videoconferences

Sep. 1 – Oct. 4: Season of Creation

Resources: <https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>

Sat., Sep. 4, 2021 at 7pm BC/8pm AB/9pm MB Vespers and Crown Rosary

Join us at ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EvdWMrG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

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.

Sat., Oct. 9, 2021 (9am – 4pm) JPIC retreat: One God One Mother Earth

RSVP: September 30, 2021.

Speaker: Sr. John Mary Sullivan, FSE.

Let us spend a day retreat with Jesus with the theme of “Love of Creator and His Creation.” Fr. Manoj will celebrate mass at his parish and will be live-streamed through YouTube. To register, please contact Lou by email letecia78@telus.net or call her at (250) 495-2477. YouTube link and ZOOM info will be sent to the attendees.

Oct. 16, 2021 Spiritual Assistant Course begins

The Spiritual Assistant Course is designed for those who are considering helping other fraternities as Spiritual Assistants or as Resource Persons or simply helping their fraternities when Spiritual Assistants are not available to attend fraternity meetings. The course gives you a Spiritual Assistant lens of looking at a fraternity. The course can be done online through www.olota.org website or by email correspondence. Any professed member interested in registering for the course, please contact Br. Gerry at gerryclyne@outlook.com. As he is getting settled in Montreal, please allow a few days for his email response.

Message from Regional JPIC Director

If you have not heard, Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) has been changed to LAUDATO SI MOVEMENT. The new website is

<https://laudatosimovement.org/>

Like previous years, the Annual Season of Creation takes place between September 1 and October 4, 2021. This year, the theme is, “*A Home for All? Renewing the Oikos of God.*” *Oikos* is a Greek word for “home,” or “household.”

Excerpts from [2021 Season of Creation Full Guide](#):

By rooting our theme in the concept of *oikos*, we celebrate the integral web of relationships that sustain the well-being of the Earth.

Human relationships also have ecological significance. Economic (*oikonomia*), social and political relationships

affect the balance of creation. Everything that we fabricate, use and produce has its origin in the Earth, whether mineral, plant or animal based. Our habits of consuming energy and goods affect the resilience of planetary systems, and the capacity of the Earth to heal itself and sustain life. Economic and political relationships have direct effects on the human family and the more-than human members of God’s *oikos*. Genesis 2.15 reminds us that among our co-creatures, the Creator has given humans a special vocation to tend and keep the *oikos* of God.

Through the prayer intercession of Our Blessed Mother Virgin Mary, St. Joseph the protector of Child Jesus and Mary, St. Francis and St. Clare that Jesus will pour His grace upon us and inflame His heart for all humanity. Pray for us!

Peace and Joy,
Lourdes von Burg, ofs

Message from our Regional Spiritual Assistant

Choice for God or against God is up to each one of us

Christian life is a series of daily choices for God or against God, as we choose to live out or reject the truths He has revealed through His prophets and especially through His Son Jesus. The fundamental choice we make determines how we live our lives, deciding whom we will serve. God has blessed us with free will (freedom) to choose what’s good for ourselves but at the same time we have to bear the consequence of those choices that we make.

Jesus challenged Jewish people and His apostles, to make their choice: to accept Him as the true Bread from Heaven who gives them His Body and Blood as their Heavenly Food or to join those who have lost their Faith in Jesus and left Him, expressing it as the hard teaching (Jn 6:53, 60-69). The Jewish leaders and many others chose badly; Judas made the worst choice of all; pretending to follow Jesus while planning to betray him and never even dared to ask for forgiveness for the wrong choice he made in life. Peter and the other apostles chose well; “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God” (Jn 6:68-69). Many other disciples abandoned Jesus because they did not understand His teaching, so they did not accept it, and thus refused to believe in Him. Their attitude could be ours too; we do not understand it, so we do not accept it. This happens because we lack faith. Faith is must to understand and accept Jesus and His teaching. Faith is not a given. It is not simply a set of ideas to be held on to. Most of us are baptised when we were babies, faith is handed down to us by our parents, grandparents and godparents. But as we grow to be an adult, all we need is to personalize and grow deeper in the faith. Faith is a living relationship with God and His vision of life. It is a relationship that needs to grow and be deepened with the years. It is a relationship that has constantly to be re-appraised in a constantly changing world.

Jesus did not negotiate with those who were leaving Him; neither did He compromise the truth of His doctrine to win them over. He did not bargain with them and call them back. He just let them go. There are truths in the teachings of Jesus that are non-negotiable. There is the danger we have: we are Christians that tend to pick and choose, a customised Jesus, a Jesus who fits in with our likes and dislikes, a Jesus whom we find comfortable and convenient. We like and long for His love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness but when it comes to anchoring our life with His way, life and truth, then we find it challenging and hard. The life that Jesus proposes is swimming against the currents of society. For sure, they are challenging but they lead us to eternal life. Perhaps we too will feel like leaving Jesus, leaving His Church. Many times in our life, we may experience some serious doubts about our faith and find no meaning in it. Perhaps we have had that experience already. No doubt, living faith is a challenge and not easy in this fast-changing digital world. It can be very painful and disconcerting. There are many reasons why this can happen to any one of us. And it is also human to encounter those challenges. But many have reflected that, in spite of the difficulties and doubts, there is really no viable alternative to the way of life that Jesus proposes. It is a way of life that is not invalidated by the scandalous behaviour of some of Jesus’ followers. We learn to make a clear distinction between the essence of Christ’s vision and the messy way in which His followers try to live it. Jesus wants us to choose Him over evil, choose life over death, choose the good over bad and be faithful to our part of the covenant that we have made with Him on the day of baptism to love God and our neighbour above everything else.

Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM

Social Corner

Message from St. Maximilian Kolbe, Red Deer, AB



In June 2021, St. Maximilian Kolbe fraternity had a chapter of election. The newly elected council members are Ann Harmon, Debra Petty, Cathy Bouchard, David Bouchard, and Sharon Sutherland. Congratulations and thank you for serving our brothers and sisters in the council!

Message from St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Saskatoon, SK

As I begin to reflect on the Feast of Saint Clare on August 11, my mind drifts towards Clare's relationship with Jesus through the Eucharist. The Eucharist was her spiritual food and source of her strength. She turned to the Eucharist when she needed strength as in 1249 when Saracens invaded the San Damiano Monastery. Let us be like Clare and make the Eucharist our spiritual food and strength in time of need.

Blessings, Yvonne Armstrong, ofs

Message from St. Anthony of Padua, Richmond, BC



We held a summer gathering on August 6. The original plan was to have it at Garry Point Park in Steveston but the forecast was a 50% chance of rain. So, we changed it to an indoor club house of one of our members apartment complex which was very near the park. Being a Friday, it was not possible for some members to come.

Message from St. Francis of Assisi (Korean Fraternity), Vancouver, BC



On August 20-22, 2021, 54 Korean fraternity members from Vancouver, Calgary, and Edmonton attended a retreat through ZOOM. Our spiritual assistant, Fr. Joachim Yoon, OFM invited Sr. Marianna Jung, FMM from Montreal to give a talk about the Life of St. Clare.

On August 21, we had the Rite of Admission during the mass. The ceremony was attended in-person by the council members and the four candidates. The event was live-streamed through ZOOM.