



Issue no. 16 – October 2021

Message from our Regional Minister

Happy Hallow Eve of All Saints Day:

Can hardly believe that October ends this evening with our thoughts turning to favorite Saints. Am encouraged by the Church reminding us often of the Communion of Saints, all of whom leave spiritual legacies and some leaving us their experiences of visitations from Jesus or from Mary captured in special prayers (i.e., Divine Mercy) or in images reflected for us in paintings. How Good is our God? He remains LOVE and loves us beyond our wildest imagination. When storms, trials, tribulations swirl about, God's Hand holds us firmly and His Divine Heart is big enough to embrace us tightly.

OLOTA Regional Council held its fall meeting on Oct. 30, 2021 virtually.... oh, how my heart yearns for an in person together meeting.... however, am hopeful and looking forward to such an awesome, wonderful day of being together again. In the meantime, today is the Day the Lord has made and my heart will Rejoice!

Some highlights of the Regional Council meeting are listed for your interest:

- Plans continue in progress for the Regional Chapter of Elections first weekend in May, 2022. The registration fee for voting delegates will be greatly reduced. Regional will help fraternities financially in regard to this expense. Watch for the Registration form that will be coming to you in early 2022, showing the reduced registration fees for participants to the Regional Chapter.
- Fraternity meetings and elections are moving ahead with great exuberance in support of in person functions. The many challenging questions of what can be done, where to meet, how to be together are being overcome with National/Regional guidance and with your own creativity.
- A list of issues and their resolutions are available, i.e.: can professions be celebrated virtually? do fraternities have to meet in Parishes? Can elections be held virtually? Does the nominee have to be present at election day? When will the restrictions from the National directive change to bring all OFS together again?

These are a few examples of fraternity challenges. Contact me at yukon106@shaw.ca if you

have any of these concerns and want the answers or if you have other challenging pandemic type questions.

Thanks to Lanny who continues to be available to assist those fraternities still wanting virtual gatherings.

There will be a workshop early December, hosted by OLOTA through our Regional SA, Fr. Manoj for Spiritual Assistants/ Spiritual Resource Persons with the invitation being extended to all Fraternity members. It will sure to be an enriching spiritual time for those seeking Ongoing Formation nourishment. Watch for more information and details.

The comments above are key highlights, however, the Regional Secretary, Miriam Liem, will be producing a Summary of the OLOTA Regional Council meeting that will be made available to you.

Thank you for your prayer support, for meeting the pandemic challenges with such courage, for continuing to love each other, standing together in unity and harmony. Secular Franciscans are resilient people with hearts entwined with the Heart of Jesus.... radiating and glowing in Peace and JOY.

In service to you and in prayer for you,
Linda Adams, ofs

Upcoming Events

**Sat., Nov 6, 2021 at 6pm BC/7pm AB/8pm 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.

Sat. morning, Dec 4, 2021 – 1hr Workshop

Please save the date for a workshop organized by Fr. Manoj – the time and speaker are to be determined.

Message from our Director of JPIC

September and October are very important for all Franciscans and *Laudato Si'* animators to remember. Six years after its inception, the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) was renamed to ***Laudato Si'* Movement** (*Laudato Si'* is a short form of *Laudato Si', mi' Signore* which means "All praise to you my Lord"). Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* On Care for Our Common Home and Hear the Cry of the Poor, was inspired by our Seraphic Father St. Francis. Seasons of Creation begins on September 1 and ends on October 4: St. Francis death and a celebration of a new life everlasting with God.

On October 9, 2021, there was a JPIC workshop "ONE GOD, ONE MOTHER EARTH" open to all fraternity members at Zoom. The theme is Love of God and His Creation. **Friar Manoj** celebrated "Green Mass" or "Mass of Creation" for all the Franciscans at 9:00 am through St. Joseph the Worker YouTube site.

Sr. John Mary Sullivan, FSE gave two thoughtful talks in the morning in the afternoon. Video Cinema, Earthy Eucharist and Being a Gift to the Eucharist in between talks were shown to the attendees.

Laudato Si' as explained by Sr. John Mary is a call. "So they all need ecological conversion whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life virtue; it is not optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience." (LS 217)

"This [ecological] conversion calls for a number of attitudes which foster a spirit of generous care, full of tenderness. It entails gratitude and gratuitousness, a recognition that the world is God's gift and that we are called quietly to imitate His generosity in sacrifice and good works. ... As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has

linked us to all beings. We are all interconnected and joined in a universal communion." (LS 220)

"If we approach nature and environment without the openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs." (LS #11)

"Saint Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grant us glimpse of His infinite beauty and goodness. "Through the greatness and the beauty of creatures one comes to know by analogy their maker" (*Wis 13:5*); indeed, "his eternal power and divinity have made known through his works since the creation of the world" (*Rom 1:20*). For this reason, Francis asked that part of the friary garden always be left untouched, so that wild flowers and herbs could grow there, and those who saw them could raise their minds to God, the Creator of such beauty. Rather than problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise" (LS #12)

Thank you to those attending the workshop. For those unable to attend, here are the YouTube links:

- "Green Mass" or "Mass of Creation"
<https://youtu.be/Kvv30D1oA0k>
- Sr. John Mary Sullivan 1st and 2nd talks:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79Mj-flymBY&list=PL6BfKGFduRgfpjMfjhmL9Ai1zbvJvWR0>

Please spare your time to watch or listen to Sr. John Mary's talks as they contain many words of wisdom. You won't regret it. This is our Franciscan Moment! Enjoy!

Thank you and abundant blessings to us all! Praise to you, our Lord!

Lourdes von Burg, ofs

Reflection:

Franciscan Poverty

Franciscan mysticism is especially poised and prepared to lead people not only to inner experience, but to the possibility of daily and regular experience in the depth and beauty of the ordinary. Franciscan spirituality can do this precisely because it incorporates the seeming negative and moves our life to its hard edges, thus making things like failure, tragedy, and suffering the quickest doorways to the encounter of God. All can now enter if they are honest about their "poverty," which is a central theme for Francis.

Poverty for Francis is not just a life of simplicity, humility, restraint, or even lack. Poverty is the freedom to recognize that *myself—by itself—is powerless and ineffective*. This is not a low self-image but a very liberating and utterly honest self-image. In his Gospel, John puts it quite honestly when he says that a branch that does not abide in a Higher Power "is withered and useless" (John 15:6). The transformed self, living in union, no longer lives in shame or denial of its weakness,

but *even lives with rejoicing* because it does not need to pretend that it is any more than it actually is—which is now, ironically, more than enough!

Paul understood this kind of joy. God revealed to him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” This gave Paul the courage to write, “I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

There is nothing that God cannot and will not use to bring us to divine union—even sin. That is the full glory, effectiveness, and universality of the Gospel in its simple and clear splendor. In short, Francis democratizes the whole spiritual journey, and lets us know that it is available outside of monasteries, celibacy, moral heroics, or any false asceticism. This has not always been obvious in most Christian (or non-Christian) spirituality. Surely, this is why G.K. Chesterton called Francis “the world’s one quite sincere democrat.” The Gospel sense of “poverty of spirit” (Matthew 5:3) is the first necessary Beatitude because it allows us to join the whole human race in a willing and honest way. All pedestals are henceforth unnecessary.

Gateway to Silence:

We must bear patiently not being good . . . and not being thought good. —Francis of Assisi

Source: <https://cac.org/franciscan-poverty-2015-06-18/>

Social Corner

St. Francis of Assisi Korean Fraternity, Vancouver, BC Profession of Helena, Peter, Rosa, Celina and Martin Won Suk Choi on September 25, 2021



We had a beautiful mass and simple yet joyful reception at St. Andrew Kim Korean Parish. The spouses of two previously professed are now members of the fraternity. We are blessed with significant presence of Franciscan couples in our fraternity.

St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Vancouver, BC: Cathy’s Profession on September 26, 2021



The rainy day did not lessen Cathy’s joy as she made a solemn profession to become Secular Franciscan member of St. Francis of Assisi fraternity. Before the rite of profession, she shared the heartfelt content of her application to the profession with the congregation during a busy Sunday mass.

Transitus of St. Francis at St. Joseph the Worker, Richmond, BC on October 3, 2021



St. Anthony of Padua fraternity members celebrated the transitus of St. Francis of Assisi at their local parish. The transitus was presided by Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM. Some members from other fraternities attended the event in-person or joined the live-streamed version.

St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity, Coquitlam, BC: Glenda's Profession on October 23, 2021



We are very blessed to welcome Glenda as a newly professed member of the fraternity. By your thoughtful sharing, you have inspired us and affirmed our profession. We pray for the Lord's abundant grace in your Franciscan journey.