



Issue no. 2 – August 2020

Message from our Regional Minister

Are you getting “precaution fatigue” from trying to defend yourself from Covid-19?? YOU ARE GOD’S CHAMPION! Nothing is impossible with Our God! God asks us to see things as signs of the times. With the Holy Spirit guiding and counselling each Secular Franciscan, Covid challenges can and are being overcome! When in God’s Will, He provides the Way! Many fraternities are scheduled to celebrate fraternity elections in the coming months ahead. The question will be: shall a fraternity proceed or what is the alternative? Prayer and Discernment is paramount! Consider all the safety precautions posed by your Parish. When the planning logistics are lined up, a fraternity may proceed. If the opposite presents itself, i.e. there is no venue large enough to accommodate voting members to be socially distanced, then a letter to OLOTA through your Regional Vice Minister be written requesting a postponement of fraternity election to a later date. The next Regional Council Meeting of OLOTA is scheduled for the first weekend in October. Fraternities are high on the priority list. Link with your OLOTA Family through Regional Councillors.

In HIS LOVE,
Linda Adams, ofs



Sep 1: World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

Pray with your fraternity or in private. Download the prayer at www.olota.org

Sep 1 – Oct 4: Season of Caring for Creation

Pray with your fraternity or in private
Download the prayer at www.olota.org

Sep 8: OLOTA Formators Online Course

facilitated by Lynda Black (ms.999@shaw.ca). This course is the same as the National course but offered specifically to OLOTA region Secular Franciscans.

Sep 8: National Formators Online Course

facilitated by Jewel Jasmins
(jajasmins@gmail.com)

Sep 8: National Formators Correspondence Course

facilitated by Donna Dooling
(donnadooling@gmail.com)

Sep 12: Spiritual Assistant Online Course

facilitated by Br. Gerry Clyne
(gerryclyne@outlook.com)

Sep 16: Live Laudato Si' Learning Webinar

10:30 AM Pacific

Learn about the Laudato Si' Special Anniversary Year Plan and how to engage in ecological justice work that will benefit those negatively affected by damaged ecosystem. Presenters: Andrew Conradi, ofs and Sr. Mariángel Marco Teja, UdJ

Registration: https://bit.ly/gccmcanada_justtransition

Oct 30: Well4Africa Contribution Deadline.

To get more information about this worthwhile project:

<https://mailchi.mp/78ff0434c0bc/well4africa-may-update-meet-the-community>

You can contribute via your fraternity then the fraternity can write a cheque payable to **Our Lady of the Angels** with a memo “**Well 4 Africa**” and send the cheque to the regional director of

JPIC: **Lourdes Von Burg**
#3 Alyssum Court
Osoyoos, BC V0H 1V1

Franciscan Saints and Feast in September:

- 1: Bl. Beatrice of Silva
- 2: Bls. John Francis Burte, Severin Girault, and companions, martyrs
- 4: St. Rose of Viterbo
- 14: Exaltation of the Holy Cross
- 15: Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows
- 17: Stigmata of our holy Father Francis
- 18: St. John Cupertino
- 20: St. Francis Mary of Camporosso
- 26: St. Elzear of Sabran and Bl. Delphine

Franciscan Youth and Young Adults

Members from the OLOTA Region have been working as a team to create ways of outreach to youths, young adult and families in our local communities. We are very fortunate to have some highly motivated and talented Secular Franciscans with great experience working with youths, that are planning to help you and your fraternity outreach to the young, in Faith sharing through some practical and fun ways, by creating a tool kit to draw from if needing some ideas. If you know of any young adult who might just be curious as to what is the big stir of St. Francis of Assisi, tell them to check us out on Franciscan Connections: Youth - Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Franciscan-Connections-Youth-299019950702012/> OLOTA Franciscan Youth page: <https://www.olota.org/moodle/course/view.php?id=32>
Email: franciscanyouthcanada@gmail.com

Text: 604-649-8636 (Jewel Jasmins)
or even our YouFra global connection
<https://youfra.net/about-en/>

Our Franciscan Young Adult Group meet twice a month virtually on ZOOM on the first and third Saturdays from 3pm- 5pm. (Ages 18-35)

ZOOM Meeting of Spiritual Assistants on Aug 21, 2020

As the new Regional Spiritual Assistant of OLOTA, Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM saw a need and an opportunity for all local fraternity spiritual assistants and spiritual resource persons to meet and share their experiences. The ZOOM meeting was attended by twenty-two participants: a mix of seculars, Franciscan friars, and diocesan priests. The keynote speaker was Br. Gerry Clyne, OFM. He has been a long-time Spiritual Assistant to local, regional and national fraternities. His ministry as a spiritual assistant has been a great blessing to him: it has strengthened and deepened his own Franciscan spirituality and it has kept him in touch with the wider world and blessed him with fellowship and many friendships. The recorded ZOOM meeting is available at www.olota.org, under **Recent files**.

Message from our Regional Director of Youth

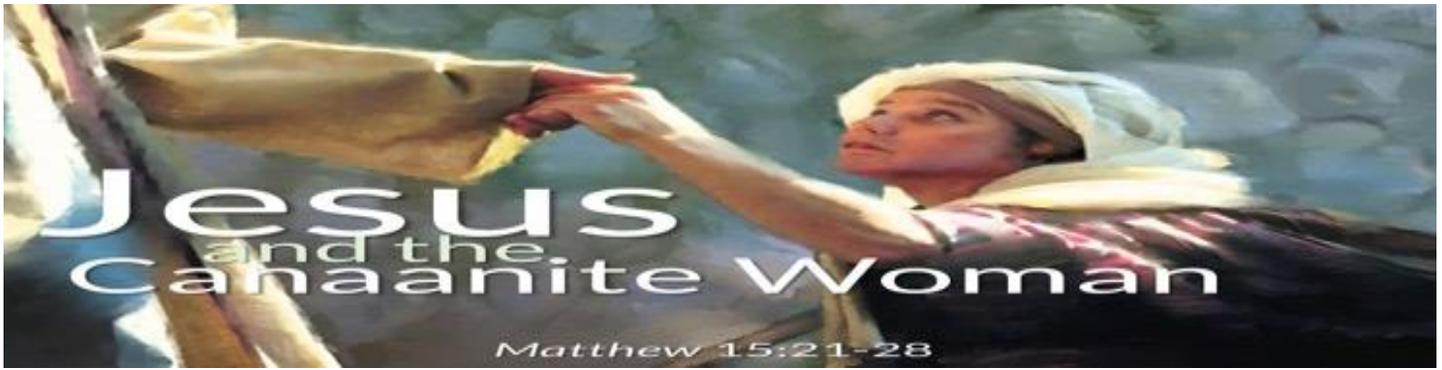
PRAY FOR OUR STUDENTS!

September is an exciting time for the students in our communities as they head back to school, college and university. This year is different with COVID-19 in the air.

Let us all pray for our students, teachers, instructors, and support staff that they feel safe, loved and welcomed in their places of learning, whether at school or at home. Let us also ask the Holy Spirit to be a source of strength for our politicians and educational leaders so that they make decisions in the best interest of all students in this time of need.

Catherine McNiff, ofs

Message from our Regional Spiritual Assistant



If you want to get into the Olympic competition, you'd better be a pretty good athlete. If you want to get into the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, you need excellent musical ability and training. If you want to get into the Miss America Pageant, you'll be greatly helped if you are good-looking and somewhat talented. But to get into the Kingdom of God, all you need is Faith – to say, “Lord, I believe,” and to say this, not in words alone, but also in action, expressing Faith through life. The Canaanite woman in the Gospel story believed.

In the Gospel Jesus demonstrates that salvation was meant for the Jews and as well as Gentiles by healing the daughter of a Canaanite woman as a reward for her strong Faith. We should not be surprised at the apparent harshness of Jesus towards the woman. Jesus started by not answering a single word to her pleading. A merciful and compassionate man, who always had compassion for the crowd, seems not to care about her, it's like saying; it's none of my business, leave me alone. The greatness of this woman's Faith consists in her willingness to cross the barrier of racism. She is a pagan and yet, she was calling him “Son of David”, a title that she had heard the Jews using for the savior of the world to come. Jesus said to her, “It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.” At first sight, we feel shocked that Jesus should at all use the word ‘dogs’, the term Jews used for the non-Jews. Jesus did not offend her but told the truth how Jews viewed a non-Jew. The Canaanites were the ancestral enemies of the Jews and were regarded as pagans, idolaters and unclean. She, on the other hand is not offended and put off by the remark but with conviction replied, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.” Her humility is in admitting that she did not deserve the master's attention and time but she is convinced that even if dogs do not get to sit at the master's table, they can always enjoy the intimacy with the master by sitting at the feet of the master. Jesus answered her, “Woman great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” The woman got more than she had hoped for. She had come with one request but she received two blessings instead; her daughter was released from demonic possession, received a new life and she herself found a new life as well because of her encounter with Jesus. Jesus here demonstrated that his mission is to break down the barriers and to remove the long-standing walls of division and mutual prejudice between the Jews and the Gentiles.

God does not discriminate but welcomes all who believe in Him, who ask for His mercy and who try to do His will. Faith in God that brings salvation to people; to belong to this or that nation counts for nothing in order to be saved. None of us has in oneself the power to obtain salvation and no one can claim any right to be saved. Only God can save us and He longs to do it. We must not block God's effort to save us. Jesus shows us that we are saved because of God's mercy and love. God's mercy and love are extended to all who call on Him in Faith and trust, no matter who they are. God's care extends beyond the boundaries of race and nation to the hearts of all who live their Faith in word and in action, expressing Faith through life.

Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM

Message from our Regional Director of JPIC

Dear brothers and sisters of St. Francis and St. Clare,

Peace and all good!

I am hopeful that you are enjoying your summer break in spite of the drastic changes caused by Covid-19. This crisis has affected us, our life socially, economically, physically, and ecologically. Through our trust in God, our faith, and love to one another, our hearts and spirits are again ignited to serve one another in a simple way.

Our Minister General Michel A. Perry, OFM reminded us that as Secular Franciscans, this is not a time to close ourselves but to bring love and care to our brothers and sisters to all creation, especially to the needy, poor, downtrodden and socially isolated.

Pope Francis' encyclical letter *Laudato Si' on Care of our Common Home* is a prophetic call. His spiritual inspiration is our Seraphic Father St. Francis, a patron Saint of Ecology, who wrote "Canticle of Creatures" a few years before he died. The Canticle serves as a clarion call to renewed love and respect for all creation. It is a call to bless, praise, thank, and serve God. Humility keeps us in touch with reality. The Canticle is a prayer, a teaching, and a stimulus for exploring the wondrous mystery of our relationship to all things and to God. (*Catch Me A Rainbow Too*, Lester Bach, OFM Cap., page 338)

This year, the Pope announced the "Special *Laudato Si'* Anniversary Year" as we celebrate the fifth anniversary of the encyclical letter. On May 24, 2020, the Dicastery Promoting Integral Human Development announced that the anniversary would be celebrated until May 2021. Also, the Vatican released a document on Integral Ecology called "Journeying for the Care of the Common Home": a guide to Catholics and all Christians about our relationship with God's creation. Safeguarding creation is everyone's responsibility.



A few months ago, our Minister General Michel A. Perry, OFM, and the Ordo Fratrum Minorum JPIC office in Italy invited and motivates us to be the forerunners and ambassadors of *Laudato Si'* Revolution. A study will be available from September 2020 till September 2021. The word "revolution" does not mean a battle but, in context of a spiritual sense, an ecological conversion of our hearts and minds which reconnect ourselves into God's wonderful creation. (*click on the left picture to listen to a 2-min talk by Michael A. Perry, OFM*).

One way to promote the ecological conversion within our fraternities is to include a 10-15-minute JPIC discussion in ongoing formation. The discussion could be facilitated by your JPIC representative or anyone in your fraternity. I will forward the discussion materials - a study guide which include a summary, questions for reflection, and a YouTube site and link. It is suggested that the study guide is to be forwarded to fraternity members sometime before the meeting so that the members have an opportunity to read, understand, and make notes for productive discussions.

As a Secular Franciscan, each of us is called to be an “Ambassador” and to be a steward of care for creation! We can only achieve this goal by educating ourselves and acquiring wisdom and understanding of what is happening in our common home. Through God’s grace, one simple action at a time will make a big difference.



St. Francis befriended the Wolf of Gubbio (*click on the picture on the left to listen to Fr. Michel Lasky, OFM Conv talking about St. Francis Befriending the Wolf*). In our time, the climate change is our “Wolf”. The spiritual guidance of Pope Francis and our beloved friars helps, guides, and leads us to ecological conversion. We pray that their inspiration may inflame our hearts with spirit of love, faith, and hope.

In Revelation 21:5, Jesus says “I make all things new”. Now, we are journeying towards the eternal sabbath, the new Jerusalem, our common home in heaven. There, we will find ourselves face to face with the infinite beauty of God

(*Laudato Si’* # 243) and be able to fully understand with admiration and happiness the mystery of the universe, which with us will share in unending plenitude.

Thank you for your time. Keep safe. May the Love of Christ through the works of the Holy Spirit shine in your hearts and act according to His will for us! Blessings to all!

Peace and Joy,
Lourdes von Burg, ofs

SOCIAL CORNER

Message from minister of St. Anthony’s, Winnipeg, MB

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Fraternity has been unable to gather together as we used to, which was once a month. As I’m sure you have similar restrictions in your own province, you would understand that this means that we cannot visit our members at home, in the Nursing Home or in Hospital.

However, our members are not forgotten. We have had for many years a Phoning Committee and this is the way we keep in touch. Each member of the Phoning Committee has a list of our members which they try to contact at least once a month to see how each member is doing and to answer any questions they may have about the Fraternity. Our Fraternity is an aging membership, so most are happy to visit with each other through phone conversations as they have done for many years.

*God Bless,
Mashenka Guillen*



Little Flowers of St. Francis Fraternity (Kelowna, BC):
Celebrating Feast of St. Clare with Alice (93 years young)



Fr. Mark McGuckin with St. Clare Fraternity,
Chilliwack, BC on the Feast Day of St. Clare



St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity
(Vancouver, BC):
Celebrating Assumption of Virgin Mary



Aug. 21, 2020: Gathering of Spiritual Assistants and Resource Persons



St. Clare of Assisi, Coquitlam BC - Picnic