



Issue no. 7 – January 2021

Message from our Regional Minister

“Arise, my people, let your light shine for all nations to see, for the glory of the Lord is streaming from you” (Is 60:1)

2020 was a year of unprecedented events. The OFS Family was challenged in every way: lockdowns, learning new ways to keep connected, learning to listen to God, deepening prayer life, managing pandemic fatigue, obeying health safety disciplines. From these hurdles, several questions arose:

What spiritual insights have been gained to move us forward into and through 2021?

Are we discovering the Heart of Jesus through this storm? What has happened to my prayer life? My growth in intimacy with Jesus? My relationships with others? How do I spend the gift of time? Am I looking to Jesus to guide me through this maze of confusion? Did the pandemic change my perspective on my spiritual life, if so, in what ways? What did God reveal to me about my life?

I have learned that nothing is for certain in this world. I know my strength and inner peace come from God alone, not from the world. When I get up in the morning and see the sun rising in all its splendor, I am confident that God continues to be in control of everything. Reading from the Letter of James, I hear these words: “Come now you who say such and such.... you have no idea what your life will be like tomorrow. Instead, say: If the Lord wills it, we shall live do this or that”. Living moment by moment according to God’s Will allows us to live in God’s presence and peace...His place of safety for us is being close in His Divine Heart. St. Francis practiced being obedient to God in all matters. St. Francis trusted Jesus with every word of the Scriptures. 365 times in the Bible, God tells us “Do not be afraid, I am with you”

Appears around us there are many headlines and disagreements even between people of faith about major issues of national concern. The atmosphere appears to be charged with conflict, stress,

upheavals.... a great Storm between good and evil rages.

For OFS, the ideal spot is to stay calm, quiet in the centre or eye of the storm. Stay hidden in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He alone can bring calm, order and healing to our troubled world. To be reflective while we are being still before God is the perfect place of safety, quiet and peace.

2021 will be a year of renewed inner strength, a time to reaffirm our commitment to God, to renew our own profession as Secular Franciscans, to trust implicitly in Jesus...He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Jesus is the only pathway for Secular Franciscans to safely tread.

Thank you, fraternity members for your prayers. Regional councillors are firm in their commitment to pray for all fraternities. Thank you, ministers of Fraternities for submitting to OLOTA the required annual census form. God will bless all fraternities for your good stewardship ...one small step unto God and God always returns many blessings. God loves obedience. All we do, we do unto God.

Bind us together, Lord, with Your chords of love. By the Grace of God, all Secular Franciscans stand united in the love of Jesus, being witness to Jesus by being light, allowing the light of Jesus to glow from each of us. Let us never stop singing Praises to God almighty...King of kings, Lord of lords. Come Secular Franciscans, let us join together to face 2021 in the renewed hope, faith, love and trust in God.

Linda Adams, ofs

Prayer Request

Please pray for the following seven friars who are being treated for Covid-19 at Carrefour Providence Infirmary, Montreal:

Pierre Boucher	Bertrand Sylvain
Roger Brisson	Jacques Lefebvre
Jean-Paul Lainesse	Francois De Ruijte
Andre Comtois	



**Fri, Feb. 5, 2021 at 7pm BC/8pm AB/ 9pm MB
First Friday: Evening Prayer and Crown Rosary**

Join us at ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EvdWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WIIvQT09>

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

Franciscan Saints and Feast in February:

1. Bl. Patrick O'Loughran
2. Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary
3. [Martyrs of Japan, Franciscan 1st & 3rd Order Secular](#)
4. [St. Joseph de Leonisse](#)
5. [St. Jane of Valois](#)
6. Bl. Pius IX
7. St. Egide-Marie de St. Joseph
8. [Bl. Anthony of Stroncone](#)
9. [Bl. Clare of Rimini](#)
10. Bl. Alojzije Stepinac
11. Apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes, 1858
12. Bl. Andre Ferrari
13. [St. Eustochium of Messine](#)
14. [Bl. Philippa Mareri](#)
15. [Translation of the relics of St. Anthony](#)
16. [Bl. Veridiana](#)
17. [Bl. Luke Belludi](#)
19. [St. Conrad de Plaisance](#)
20. [Bl. Peter of Treja](#)
21. [St. Margaret of Cortona](#)
22. Feast of the Chair of St. Peter
23. [Bl. Isabelle of France](#)
24. Bl. Innocent XI
25. [Bl. Sebastian of Aparicio](#)
26. [Bl. Antonia of Florence](#)
28. Bl. Jeremie de Valachie

Recent News from CIOFS

Early in 2020, National JPIC Committee proposed to financially support a Well4Africa project in Malawi called [St. Lawrence Water Project](#). In August, the committee was informed that the project was fully funded by a German Franciscan Foundation and was asked to consider to re-direct the support to another Well4Africa project:

[Mutemwa Care Centre](#) for the leprosy in Zimbabwe. [Here](#) is the latest news with the latest figure received from all fraternities in Canada. The news is also published in [CIOFS website](#).

This year marks 800 years of *Memoriale Propositi* or the first Rule of the Order of Penitents, or Third Order (one of the resources can be found [here](#)). Local fraternities are encouraged to celebrate within their fraternities, as mentioned in the [letter from Tibor Kauser, ofs](#) (CIOFS General Minister).

Message from Our Director of JPIC

Dear Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis and St. Clare, Happy New Year to all! Let us “pause and reflect” God’s love for us – the love that cannot be separated from God’s love of creation. Let us honor the Divine’s breath that connects all living things through our actions as well as our words as we pray.
Act: think of one practical step you can make today to care more earnestly for creation. Take heart that even our small actions make an impact.

- Franciscan Media.

Blessings and keep safe.

Peace and Joy, Lourdes von Burg, ofs

Revised English Translations of Official OFS Documents

By this time your vice ministers should have sent you the electronic copy of the Rule, Ritual, General Constitution, and a cover letter from our CIOFS general minister Tibor Kauser, ofs. They are also available at www.olota.org (or click any of the following links):

[Letter from Tibor Kauser](#)

[The Rule](#)

[The Ritual](#)

[General Constitution](#)

Humility in Franciscan Fraternity

Br. Gerry Clyne discusses about humility in the interactions within a fraternity – an excellent material for Lent.

Links: [Zoom Recording](#)

[Handout](#)

OLOTA ZOOM Account Booking

If your fraternity would like to book a ZOOM meeting using OLOTA Account (free), please check the schedule [here](#) before making any ZOOM booking. The link is also available at www.olota.org (close to the top).

For more info, booking, and getting familiar with ZOOM please contact Lanny Hui at 778-999-7097 or lanny.hui@gmail.com

Message from our Regional Spiritual Assistant



Year of St. Joseph

Dear brothers and sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, May the Lord give you peace!

Pope Francis has proclaimed a special “Year of St Joseph,” beginning on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception 2020 and extending to the same feast in 2021. In a new Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris Corde* (With a Father’s Heart), Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows. He says “Each of us can discover in Joseph – the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence – an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation.”

We have St. Joseph before us as the model to follow and fall in love with. St. Joseph as the just man, loved God and neighbour. He kept his faith in God and cooperated with God’s plan of salvation. “The Son of the Almighty came into our world in a state of great vulnerability. He needed to be defended, protected, cared for and raised by Joseph. God trusted Joseph, as did Mary, who found in him someone who would not only save her life, but would always provide for her and her child. In this sense, St. Joseph could not be other than the Guardian of the Church, for the Church is the continuation of the Body of Christ in history, even as Mary’s motherhood is reflected in the motherhood of the Church. In his continued protection of the Church, Joseph continues to protect the child and his mother, and we too, by our love for the Church, continue to love the child and his mother” (*Patris Corde*). Pope Francis encourages the entire Church to reflect on the personality and character of St. Joseph as we go through this hard time together and never give up our trust and faith in God.

The Gospels are pretty much silent and do not record any words of St. Joseph but his silent yes and actions speak louder than the words. In his silent character, we can see how righteous, obedient and humble a person he was. He was the breadwinner of the family; he did whatever he could to provide for Mary and Jesus. He showed his love for Mary and Jesus. He worked on his trade as carpenter and taught Jesus his trade. He did even in his sleep, in dream the will of God. Even in his sleep, he continued to listen to God’s plan of salvation for which he was chosen to be an instrument. In every encounter with the angel, without question he acted promptly on the will of God. He also kept the Sabbath and went to the temple in Jerusalem for the Passover. He did everything for the love of God as a just man. He experienced the same difficulties and challenges in life that we all of us do and yet he remained faithful to God, Mary and Jesus.

I come from a village which is dedicated to St. Joseph. St. Joseph is the patron saint for Canada; my first missionary country. The first parish that I served in Canada is named after St. Joseph (St. Joseph Basilica, Edmonton) and now at present I also serve in a parish dedicated to St. Joseph the Worker (Richmond). From my

childhood I have seen on 19th of March; the feast of St. Joseph (the husband of Mary) the entire village gathered at the Mother Mary's grotto to celebrate a solemn Mass. The villagers joyfully honored the saint with thanksgiving Mass, cultural activities and festive meal. For sure, most people know that he was a carpenter (Worker) and villagers predominantly being farmers have taken this quality of St. Joseph to work hard and provide for their families. Feel blessed and at the same time challenged. I have lived, served and continue to serve a parish that is dedicated to St. Joseph, but pose a question to myself; am I in any way living by his examples? It's our human tendency that when things become too familiar to us, we never think of reflecting and asking further questions. St. Joseph and St. Francis of Assisi did everything for the love of God and did nothing to get any attention from others. They never made themselves the center of attraction; they denied themselves, took up their daily cross and followed the way shown by God, thus remained focused on the plan of God for them. They did everything to serve the creator and not their own whims and fancies. They never worked for self-promotion but for promotion of God in their entire life.

In the words of St. Francis of Assisi "Let us begin again, brothers, for up until now, we have done little or nothing," this is my encouragement for all of us brothers and sisters, let us begin again for it's never too late to begin anew. In this year 2021, let us be passionate in living our Human, Christian and Franciscan vocation, and fall in love with St. Joseph to live by his example.

Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM

JPIC Ongoing Formation in Fraternity



In [Chapter 2 of *Laudato Si'*](#), Pope Francis turns from an exposition of various illnesses afflicting the world and the human family to the development of a treatment plan rooted in faith and the Bible. He begins by re-emphasizing the necessity for science and religion to be in dialogue: "If we are truly concerned to develop an ecology capable of remedying the damage we have done, no branch of sciences and no form of wisdom can be left out, and that includes religion and the language particular to it. The Catholic Church is open to dialogue with philosophical

thought; this has enabled her to produce various syntheses between faith and reason" (LS #63).

We are made in God's image, justifies what we want with them & each other, we are called to be responsible stewards. (67-69)
Not abusing the Earth but cultivating and caring.

Two conclusion of these teachings:

- ❖ 1. We need to let go of our attachment to consumerism to buying things we don't need.
- ❖ 2. If we give up this attachment to luxury we are able to respond more freely to calls for distributive justice.

Online Links: [Laudato Si' Study Guide Chapter 2](#)

[How Wolves Change Rivers](#)

[Fr. Daniel P Horan: Understanding Laudato Si' Episode 1](#)



5th Fine Arts & Poster Contest 2021

Our Lady of the Angels Regional Council

Secular Franciscans of Western Canada

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI & POPE FRANCIS'S NEW ENCYCLICAL

“FRATELLI TUTTI” OR “BROTHERS & SISTERS ALL”

More than 800 years ago St. Francis of Assisi followed Jesus and lived His Gospel. He saw God in the dignity of all persons, especially the poor and those who were suffering. He made peace with the Muslim Sultan. St. Francis was kind to animals and showed people how to reach out to their brothers and sisters all over the world.

Today Pope Francis echoes the words of Saint Francis in his message to all the people of God in his Encyclical called “Fratelli Tutti” or “Brothers and Sisters All.” He asks us to see the dignity of God in all persons and to love all our brothers and sisters. He tells us to offer others the gift of kindness and dialogue with one another and respect our common humanity, helping those who are suffering and those who live far away from us.

WE ARE ASKING ALL YOUNG ARTISTS, POETS AND WRITERS TO BE INVOLVED IN POPE FRANCIS'S ENCYCLICAL BY PARTICIPATING IN OUR FINE ARTS & POSTER CONTEST WITH PRIZES FOR THE WINNERS IN EACH CATEGORY:

Category: 5 – 8 Years

Title: *How am I kind to people and animals?*

Draw a poster or make a painting

Category: 9 – 12 Years

Title: *Who are our brothers and sisters?*

Draw a poster or make a painting. Explain your artwork in 30 words or less

Category: 13 – 16 Years

Title: *How can we make all people part of the greater human family?*

Draw a Poster, make a Painting, write a Poem or write a Narrative (250 words).

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 2021

CONTEST INFORMATION & ENTRY FORMS ON OLOTA WEBSITE: www.olota.org

Catherine McNiff, ofs – Director Of Youth, Our Lady Of The Angels Regional Council
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