



Issue Number 47

July 2024

From Our Regional Minister

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We just had an in-person council meeting at Mount St Francis in Cochrane to support our first order friars and strengthen the bond between council members. Some highlights are: Jewel gave us some updates about discerning regional options; from our discussions, we recognize the need of fraternities, particularly in Manitoba, to feel connected in the region either with other fraternities or with the regional council members.

- We recognize the fraternal spirit existing in our region:
 - St. Maximillian Kolbe (Red Deer, AB) was willing to build connections with members from Immaculate Conception (Winnipeg, MB) and isolated members in Parksville (Vancouver Island, BC).
 - St. Pio (Delta, BC) is helping St. Francis (Vancouver, BC) with ongoing and initial formation.
 - Fraternity members participate in the inter-fraternity activities: annual summer picnic and fall retreat in BC interior, Chapter of Mats in Alberta and BC, annual BC retreat in Mission.
 - To overcome distance and traveling time, contact by Zoom or other online tools such as FaceTime or WhatsApp, or even phone calls are encouraged.
- Since the National Council requested that we do not plan for the regional chapter

election in 2025, we extended our council term to Fall 2026.

- The regional council is financially supporting the Festival of Tents by paying the registration fee of one young adult from each province: Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. More details mentioned at the poster below.
- Thank you to our sister Irene Manning, experienced in the regional matters, we were discussing our vision and mission of our council.
- Our vision statement is: We follow Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi to Christ.
- Our mission statement is: We, in the spirit of Christian service, will promote, animate, and coordinate the Franciscan life and activities of our brothers and sisters of the Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we observe the Gospel, in the spirit of Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi, in order to bring about a more fraternal, evangelical, peaceful world and build the Kingdom of God.
- We wish to remind all fraternity members: attending the regional Chapter of Election is the responsibility and duty of every fraternity although it is not strictly mentioned in the rule or General Constitutions. Unity can be very fragile - it only takes one person (or one fraternity) to sow the seed of division by deciding not to participate at any level at all.

Your servant,
Lanny Hui

Porziuncola, Our Lady of the Angels

St Francis received a message from God at San Damiano to *rebuild my church*. Together with his brothers he rebuilt St Mary of the Angels which was in ruin. It was there at the Porziuncola while at Mass Francis heard the Gospel in a new way. From Matthew 10:7-14, the scripture said, *As you go, proclaim the good news, the kingdom of heaven has come near. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons...* Francis replied, "This is what I want, what I seek, what I desire with all my heart." Francis of Assisi, vol 1 The Gospel, the Word of God, became the core existence for Francis. At the Porziuncola Francis received the promise of the pardon (Il Perdono) from Jesus Christ through Mary also known as the Porziuncola Indulgence. He came to know Mary deeply as with the brotherhood they became more rooted in the Gospel. The Porziuncola became the center of the Franciscan movement and the womb from which it grew. Francis' firm belief in Mary's role as Mother of God stood up to the heresies of the time who tried to reduce Mary to nothing. Francis gave birth to a brotherhood at a place named after the Virgin Mother and he would continue to teach his brothers how "We are like Christ's mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body through love and pure and sincere conscience; and give him birth through a holy activity, which must shine before others by example." Francis: Later Exhortation, Francis of Assisi, vol 1, The Saint



From **July 24 to August 2**, Secular Franciscans of Western Canada Region will pray a **NOVENA** to OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS on Zoom at 7 pm Pacific Time. Please join the Novena Prayer on the days that you are able to do so.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EvdWMraG1PPTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

From our Regional Spiritual Assistant

"Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest for a while" (Mk. 6:31) ...With these words, Jesus invites the apostles to get away from the routine of ministry (work), to rest, to relax, to recoup and to recharge their batteries. Jesus recognizes that after their period of intensive apostolic labors, the twelve need to be refreshed once again in His presence and in their fellowship with one another. Deserted place recalls the desert, a place of testing but also a place of solitude and retreat where God's people withdraw from the world for special intimacy with Him. Jesus not only called them to be a disciple (be with Him) but also called them to be an apostle (sent out on a mission) to proclaim the 'Goodnews' to all nations. Unless one spends time with Him, one can find it rather challenging to face the world and bear fruit of the one's calling. So, to be with Him remains a requirement of fruitful apostleship. We can get caught up every day in a whirlpool of work. We have many things to do that even twenty-four hours do not seem to be enough. Life can become a burden rather than a free gift of God to be lived in His service. We can be more inclined to live to work rather than work to live. It's a humble invitation of Jesus for all of us too, "come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest for a while." Work is important but relationships are the most important. Christian life is a continuous passage from the presence of God to the presence of people and back to God again. We should allow God the opportunity to speak to us and recharge us with spiritual energy and strength by setting aside enough time for Him to speak to us and for us to speak to Him. We are familiar how St. Francis of Assisi time and again withdrew himself to a deserted place (caves, forests) for solitude in order to know himself and to deepen his relationship with God. Recourse to our own deserted place will help us to find who we are before God and the other and replenish with the energy we need to be an instrument of God's love and a missionary disciple wherever we live. The council of 'Our Lady of the Angels' of Western Canada gathered this month at Mount St. Francis, Cochrane, to report what we have done in service of our brothers and sisters in our roles. It was not only a time of reporting and discussion but also a time for

us to relate and strengthen our relationship with God and each other in the silence of the nature that retreat house provides. There are a lot of expectations and demands to be met, not only coming from the members of our fraternities but also by society in general but one can only do as much as one has the strength; both physical and spiritual. Little or more, but doing them with love for God and others and with a Franciscan spirit is what matters the most. And in order to do this, we all need to come away to our own deserted place...let us find one that truly leads us to God.

Br Manoj Xalxo



Saint Bonaventure

Cardinal & Seraphic
Doctor of the Church
(Feast Day July 15)

Since beatitude is nothing other than the enjoyment of the supreme good, and this supreme good is above us, no one can attain beatitude unless he rises above himself, not in body but in heart. Yet we cannot rise above ourselves unless a superior power lifts us up.

No matter how well we plan our spiritual progress, nothing comes of it unless divine assistance intervenes. And divine assistance is there for those who seek it humbly and devoutly, who sigh for it in this vale of tears by fervent prayer. Prayer then is the mother and the beginning of the ascent. St Bonaventure: The Journey of the Mind To God

From our Regional Director of Formation OUR VALUE BEFORE THE LORD

On July 20, 2024 a quote from St. Francis of Assisi in the *Franciscan Daily Companion* by Jude Winkler, OFM states "What a man is before God, that he is and no more."

REFLECTION: When each of us tries to determine our value as a person, we can exaggerate: either by being unrealistically positive, seeing ourselves as all

but perfect, or by being unrealistically negative, seeing ourselves as total failures. We have to look at ourselves through the eyes of God. We are broken, we are sinners, but we also are loved beyond limit. In their book *Franciscan Virtues Through the Year*, the members of the Confraternity of Penitents write on love of self and say "God loved us enough to die for us, so how can we not love ourselves?" God made us and God only creates good, so how can we be anything but loveable? God leaves no room for disparaging ourselves, only for repentance for any sins committed or blunders made. If we love ourselves, then we will automatically have humility, patience, kindness and love for others, because God made them too.

PRAYER: *Let me see myself always, O Lord, as You see me. Amen*

Catherine McNiff, ofs

Save the Dates

...Zoom BIBLE STUDY...

Wild Goose Series on the Holy Spirit
with Fr Dave Pivonka, TOR

Thursdays starting September 5th

6:30pm PT/7:30pm MT/8:30pm CT

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89424828739?pwd=2q6WV6Yh8Fo8swsjhHioZKqVBNuaZE.1>

Meeting ID: 894 2482 8739

Passcode: 048961

- FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY

On first Saturday of each month. **Next.....**

August 3rd @ 7pm PT/8pm MT/9pm CT

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EybWMrAG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

- FRANCISCAN VISION GLOBAL SUMMIT

Aug 31st 2024 *The impact of the Stigmata of Francis on Clare of Assisi's devotion to the Crucified One & on the life of the Early Franciscan Women*

Speaker: Sr Frances Teresa Downing, OSC

Registration is free. For Info see [BROCHURE](#)

- FRANCISCAN FESTIVAL OF TENTS 2024
for Young Adults on Labor Day Weekend
Aug 30th to Sept 2nd at Our Lady of Victory
Camp near Red Deer, Alberta. For more info
 see poster below.

- Calling all Formators to a Zoom
FORMATORS WORKSHOP
on Saturday, Nov 2nd
see poster for info

To view links to
 resources on the
 STIGMATA go to
www.olota.org

Sept 17, 1224-2024
Celebrate 800 Years



 National Secular Franciscan Order in Canada

Calling All Formators!

Gather with other formators across Canada in a Zoom

FORMATOR'S WORKSHOP

Workshop Themes

Servant leadership in the Writings of St Francis & St Clare
 Intro to the Thematic Guide for Formation Programs
 & The Companion Document
 Time to *share ideas, methods & experiences*
 And to *give feedback* on the workshop

Saturday - November 2, 2024
10am PT/11am MT/Noon CT/1pm ET/2pm AT
 For about 90 minutes

A unique opportunity to
 - connect with other formators across Canada
 - learn & share what works best for your candidates & formation teams
 - be open to the Holy Spirit working through brother & sister Franciscans

Registration deadline October 26, 2024

To register send the following information to Colleen Finlon, ofs at
cmariefinlon@gmail.com

Name - Fraternity - Region - Email - Fraternal position

**YOUNG ADULT
 FRANCISCAN
 FESTIVAL OF TENTS**

**OUR LADY OF VICTORY CAMP
 AUG 30TH to SEPT 2ND**

FELLOWSHIP, FRATERNITY AND FRANCISCAN SPIRIT

- Fellowship, Prayer, Mass, Reconciliation/Confession, Prayer, Talks and Small Group Faith Discussions.
- Icebreaker Games, Improv, Karaoke, Relay races, & more.

Registration Link:




DETAILS

- **Address:** Our Lady of Victory Camp, 41203 Range Road 11, AB T0C 0J0
- **When:** Labour Day Weekend
 Friday, Aug 30th at 6:00pm to Monday, Sept 2nd at noon.
- **Cost:** \$100
 Food, water, showers, bunk bed or camping sites provided

Register by QR code. Contact for questions: maritzachouza@gmail.com or clarakilala@gmail.com

OLOTA is sponsoring registration fee (100 CA) for one young adult from each western regional province, BC, AB, SK & MN, who would like to attend the event (400 CA in total). Fraternities can send young adults from their parishes. Contact davidandcathybouchard@gmail.com or maritzachouza@gmail.com for more details. If Franciscans would like to volunteer in this event, please contact David Bouchard for more information.

The article is taken from "Way of Life" by Richard A. Portasik, OFM

CHAPTER ONE

The Secular Franciscan Order

ARTICLE 1

The Franciscan family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God — laity, religious, and priests — who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charism of their common Seraphic Father in the life and mission of the Church.

Throughout the centuries the Holy Spirit has raised up many "spiritual families ... in the Church." These families, composed of laity, religious and priests, have as their main goal the following of Christ; but the manner of attaining that goal varies with the charism of their founder. Among these families is the Franciscan family. The Franciscan family, while pursuing the goal of following Christ, distinguishes itself from all others by following "in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi."

The Franciscan family is a large family. It embraces members of the First Order (Friars Minor, Capuchins, Conventuals) and Third Order Regular, of the Second Order of Poor Clares, and of the Secular Franciscan Order (former Third Order). Each of these branches has its particular way and form of making present the charism of St. Francis. This charism is the source of unity among the diverse Franciscan branches, and at the same time the font from which Franciscans endeavor to carry out their mission in the Church.

Since Vatican II has called all spiritual families to return to the original charism of their founders, it would be apropos to reflect on some of the important characteristics that underlie the charism of Francis. In his pursuit of perfection and in his desire to imitate Christ as completely as possible, Francis lived a life of total poverty in a brotherhood which he called "lesser brothers."

Secular Franciscans, like all other members of the Franciscan family, have the vocation to follow Christ by living in poverty, fraternity and minority according to their state and profession in life. Through poverty (a spirit of detachment) they witness to the things that are above rather than the things below; through fraternity they grow in the acceptance of each other as brothers and sisters in Christ; through minority they recognize their own human imperfections and attest to the truth that they are called to serve rather than to be served.

Keep scrolling down

Social Corner



BC Coastal Retreat at the Mission Abbey on June 21-23, 2024 with Br Dan Gurnick, OFM. During this blessed time, two new baby girls were born. A granddaughter was born in PEI to Marla Poirier & a grandniece was born to Margaret Huggan in BC.



OLOTA Council met in person at Mount Saint Francis Retreat Centre in Cochrane, AB July 2024.

Our Lady of the Angels Messenger, Secular Franciscan Order of Western Canada Region, July 2024

Minister Lanny Hui, ofs lanny.hui@gmail.com Editor Colleen Finlon, ofs cmariiefinlon@gmail.com

