

OUR LADY of THE ANGELS Messenger

Issue Number 70

JUNE 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Eleven regional council members were elected in September 2022: regional minister, 5 vice ministers (Manitoba & Saskatchewan, Alberta North, Alberta South, BC Interior, BC Coastal), Secretary, Treasurer, Directors of Formation, Youth, and JPIC. Fr. Manoj Xalxo ofm continues his role as Spiritual Assistant. Director of Communications was changed from an elected position to an appointed position. Two council members are from Korean fraternities. Since then, two council members (Director of JPIC and Vice Minister of BC Coastal) have resigned due to personal issues. Currently, the position of JPIC is replaced by a committee from each sub-region and a liaison from the regional council. The regional minister, with the help of local fraternity ministers, has taken over the responsibilities of Vice Minister of BC Coastal. The council members were asked by the National Fraternity Council and agreed to postpone the Regional Chapter of Election to 2026 to allow the discernment of restructuring.

Here are some highlights:

1. Members from fraternities in Alberta and British Columbia continue to participate in their local Chapter of Mats. Annual retreats for the secular Franciscans take place at Mount Saint Francis (Cochrane, AB), Seton House (Kelowna, BC), and Westminster Abbey (Mission, BC).
2. In March 2023, St. Clare Korean Fraternity (Edmonton, AB) was Canonically Established, while St. Francis fraternity (Prince George, BC) became inactive.
3. Colleen Finlon, Director of Communications, has routinely managed www.olota.org and published/edited monthly newsletters including regional updates, articles, events and news from local fraternities. Colleen and Marlene Welch, from St. Mary's fraternity of Calgary, have worked in the following areas:
 - o Support for online National Formator's and Spiritual Assistant Courses
 - o Monthly Zoom Vespers and Crown Rosary
 - o Novena to Our Lady of the Angels (July 24 - August 1) and St. Francis (September 24 - October 2)
 - o Faith studies using materials from formed.org
 - o Book club discussion on The Franciscan Heritage series
 - o Daily morning prayers
4. Catherine McNiff, Director of Formation, facilitated inquiry sessions across the region for individuals physically distant from the closest fraternity.
5. Our Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Manoj, and the regional minister have physically visited fraternities outside their home province.
6. David and Cathy Bouchard organized a pilgrimage to Assisi, Greccio, La Verna, San Giovanni Rotondo, and Rome in October 2024.



Sacred Heart of Jesus

Symbol & living image
of the infinite love of
Jesus Christ!

[More From JPIC](#)

7. The National Restructuring Committee facilitated discussions between the local fraternity ministers in British Columbia, then Alberta and Manitoba-Saskatchewan. Here is the recommendation from the National Fraternity Council:
 - That the location of the regional chapter of elections be alternated between British Columbia and Alberta.
 - That a concrete financial plan and practice be established so that every fraternity can afford to send at least one delegate to the Regional Chapter of Elections.
 - That the Regional vice ministers continue to organize the Chapter of Mats, retreats, and other gatherings in their province.
 - That stronger lines of communication be developed between regional council members and the local fraternity council members through regular meetings with the local ministers, council members and formation directors; to foster unity, collaboration and mutual support.
8. Responding to the recommendation, the Regional Chapter of Election has been planned in Kelowna, every delegate is offered to participate in the equalization program of \$500/delegate (equivalent to \$10.50/month per delegate for 48 months or \$13.90/month per delegate for 36 months), Chapter of Mats and retreats were organized in Alberta and British Columbia annually, gatherings of local fraternity ministers and formation directors were organized in the past year.
9. In ministering the youth and young adults,
 - Maritza Chouza, Director of Youth, and Fr. Daniel Gurnick ofm have organized Annual Winter Retreat and Annual Franciscan Art Contest.
 - 2023: Poster Contest of Greccio Nativity Scene
 - 2024: Artwork contest on the 3"x3" tiles with the theme of Canticle of the Creatures. The tiles are all at Mt. St. Francis (Cochrane, AB) and will be displayed permanently.
 - David Bouchard, Vice Minister of Alberta South, and Maritza Chouza, with the help of Friars Guylain Prince, Daniel Gurnick, Michael Peras, and Joachim Yoon and three young adults (Clare, Arlene, and Adam), organized the first Annual Festival of Tents at 2024 and 2025 Labour Day Weekend at Our Lady of Victory Camp in Lacombe County, AB.
 - Fr. Joachim Yoon and the regional minister served the young adults at Simon Fraser University until July 2025. Activities include weekly faith studies and daily mass, local pilgrimages, hiking, participating with St. Francis of Assisi Korean fraternity, picnic, and board games.
10. Soon, events are being planned:
 - August 8, 2026: BC Interior: Summer Gathering in Salmon Arm, BC
 - August 21-23, 2026: Annual BC Coastal and Interior retreat at Westminster Abbey in Mission, BC
 - 2026 Festival of Tents during Labour Day Weekend at Our Lady of Victory Camp in Lacombe County, AB.
 - September 12, 2026: BC Interior Chapter of Mats in Kelowna, BC

- September 27 - October 11, 2026: Franciscan Pilgrimage (planned by Erika Bancila, minister of St. Mary's Calgary): to Assisi, La Verna, Greccio, Rieti Valley, Gubio, San Giovanni Rotondo, and Sanctuary of St. Michael the Archangel
- BC Coastal: Local Fraternity Chapter of Election St. Francis of Assisi, Vancouver
- November 28, 2026: BC Coastal and Interior Chapter of Mats/Advent Retreat at St. Joseph the Worker, Richmond BC

On behalf of the regional council, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all prayers and assistance received from all levels and orders.

Your servant, **Lanny Hui**
Regional Minister

From our SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT: Discipleship - A Divine Call

What makes the disciples of Jesus different from others and what makes Christianity distinct from any other religion? It is God's **grace**. God calls, consecrates and commissions one to His mission on earth. Discipleship is not something we take upon ourselves. We are called to it. Some people are very conscious of this call. They are aware of it in their aspirations, dreams and recognize it in the events of their lives. They hear the call as clearly as Simon, Andrew, James and John (twelve disciples) who heard the voice of Jesus. For others, the call to discipleship is not clear. They may experience an undefined restlessness, a dissatisfaction with their lives and struggle with it for a long time. People can respond to the call in one of two ways. They consider the mere suggestion of a discipleship an intrusion into their plans, or they drop what they are doing, leave their former concerns behind, and follow Jesus. In either case, the call to discipleship originates with God.

What are we called from? There seems to be a misunderstanding about being called and leaving everything behind as the twelve disciples did. This kind of leaving behind was not and still is not required of us for salvation. More significantly, disciples of Jesus are called to leave behind certain ways of living as they follow him. They are called away from sin and wickedness that breaks relationships with God and each other. They are called away from divisive ideas and disunity that weakens families and breaks communities. They are called away from pride, harsh judgments, prejudices and gossips, etc. that are deadly. They are called to leave behind the old self, selfishness and 'me' attitudes that hinders personal growth and excludes others.

What are we called to? Whether in public ministry or everyday life, disciples of Jesus are called to proclaim the Gospel message. *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news. Mk 1:15* So, the **message** is important. They are called to a life of servanthood after the example of Jesus himself. *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mt 20:28* They are called to *Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Mt 10:8.* They are called to heal diseases of mind, body and spirit by being present and attentive to them. They are called to reinvigorate life in those who have lost the sense and purpose of living and constantly live in hopelessness. So, the **service** is important. They are called to work for unity and peace in the midst of diversity and discrimination. They are called to smash the yoke that burdens others and help them carry the load. So, the **life living** is important. They are called to be the **salt of the earth and light the world** through their **way of living**. The disciples of Jesus are called to continue in their time and place the mission of the Son of God.

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Mt 16:24

Br Manoj Xalxo, OFM

From our REGIONAL DIRECTOR of FORMATION

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are getting closer and closer to the Chapter of Elections in Kelowna, BC in July 2026. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to guide all of us to choose strong and holy leaders to do the work of the new Regional Council of Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity. Let us pray this Holy Spirit prayer every day!

May peace be with you always,
Catherine McNiff, ofs

**Come Holy Spirit, fill my heart with your wisdom and kindle in me the fire that inspired your apostles.
Teach me how to listen. We are all called by God to share the good news of Jesus Christ.
Guide me in the words you wish me to speak and the deeds you wish me to do in serving
our God, Father - Son - Holy Spirit, one in love. AMEN.**

Synod 2021, 2023



With You is the Source of Life by Saint Bonaventure

Take thought now, redeemed man, and consider how great and worthy is he who hangs on the cross for you. His death brings the dead to life, but at his passing heaven and earth are plunged into mourning and hard rocks are split asunder.

It was a divine decree that permitted one of the soldiers to open his sacred side with a lance. This was done so that the Church might be formed from the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death on the cross, and so that the Scripture might be fulfilled: *They shall look on him whom they pierced.* The blood and water which poured out at that moment were the price of our salvation.

Flowing from the secret abyss of our Lord's heart as from a fountain, this stream gave the sacraments of the Church the power to confer the life of grace, while for those already living in Christ it became a spring of living water welling up to life everlasting.

Arise, then, beloved of Christ! Imitate the dove that nests in a hole in the cliff, keeping watch at the entrance like the sparrow that finds a home. There like the turtledove hide your little ones, the fruit of your chaste love. Press your lips to the fountain, draw water from the wells of your Savior; for this is the spring flowing out of the middle of paradise, dividing into four rivers, inundating devout hearts, watering the whole earth and making it fertile.

Run with eager desire to this source of life and light, all you who are vowed to God's service. Come, whoever you may be, and cry out to him with all the strength of your heart. "O indescribable beauty of the most high God and purest radiance of eternal light! Life that gives all life, light that is the source of every other light, preserving in everlasting splendor the myriad flames that have shone before the throne of your divinity from the dawn of time! Eternal and inaccessible fountain, clear and sweet stream flowing from a hidden spring, unseen by mortal eye! None can fathom your depths nor survey your boundaries, none can measure your breadth, nothing can sully your purity. From you flows the river which gladdens the city of God and makes us cry out with joy and thanksgiving in hymns of praise to you, for we know by our own experience that with you is the source of life, and in your light, we see light.



*From the HOLY FATHER LEO XIV on the Opening of the
Eighth Centenary of the Death of St Francis of Assisi*

(Assisi, 10 January 2026)

To the Ministers General of the Conference of the Franciscan Family “Our Sister Death”, exclaimed Saint Francis on 3 October 1226 in Porziuncola, as he went towards her as a man finally at peace. Eight centuries have passed since the death of the *Poverello* of Assisi, who wrote the word of Christ’s salvation indelibly in the hearts of the people of his time.

In commemorating the significant anniversary of the eighth centenary of his passing, I wish to join spiritually with the entire Franciscan Family and with all those who will take part in the commemorative events, hoping that the message of peace may find a profound echo in the Church and society today.

At the beginning of his evangelical life, he heard a call: “The Lord revealed to me that we should say this greeting: “May the Lord give you peace” [1]. With these essential words, he conveys to his friars and to every believer the inner wonder that the Gospel had brought into his life: peace is the sum of all God’s gifts, a gift that comes from above. What an illusion it would be to think that it can be built by human efforts alone! And yet it is an active gift, to be welcomed and lived every day [2].

It is the same greeting that, on the evening of Easter, the Risen Lord addresses to his disciples, afraid and locked in the Upper Room: “Peace be with you” [3]. It is not a formula of courtesy, but the certain proclamation of Christ’s victory over death. Like the voice of the Angels on Christmas night – “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those whom he loves” [4] – so the peace that the Seraphic Father proclaims is the peace that Christ himself made resound between heaven and earth.

In this age, marked by so many seemingly interminable wars, by internal and social divisions that create mistrust and fear, he continues to speak. Not because he offers technical solutions, but because his life points to the authentic source of peace.

The Franciscan vision of peace is not limited to the relations between human beings but also embraces the whole of creation. Francis, who calls the sun “brother” and the moon “sister”, who recognizes in every creature a reflection of divine beauty, reminds us that peace must be extended to the entire family of Creation. This insight resonates with urgency in our time, when our common home is threatened and cries out under exploitation. Peace with God, peace among human beings and with creation are inseparable dimensions of a single call to universal reconciliation.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the example and spiritual legacy of this Saint, strong in faith, steadfast in hope and ardent in active charity towards his neighbour, inspire in everyone the importance of trusting in the Lord, of living a life faithful to the Gospel, and of accepting and illuminating every circumstance and action of life with faith and prayer.

In this Year of Grace, I wish to offer you a prayer that Saint Francis of Assisi may continue to instil in all of us perfect joy and harmony:

*Saint Francis, our brother, you who eight hundred years ago
went to meet Sister Death as a man at peace,
intercede for us before the Lord.*

*You recognized true peace in the Crucifix of San Damiano,
teach us to seek in Him the source of all reconciliation
that breaks down every wall.*

*You who, unarmed, crossed the lines of war
and misunderstanding,*

*give us the courage to build bridges
where the world raises up boundaries.*

*In this time afflicted by conflict and division,
intercede for us so that we may become peacemakers:
unarmed and disarming witnesses of the peace that comes from Christ. Amen*

With these sentiments, I express my fervent wishes for good, especially for all of you who follow the charism of the Poverello of Assisi and for those who will commemorate the anniversary of his *dies natalis* in various ways, while I cordially impart my desired Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 7 January 2026

LEO PP. XIV

[1] Testament 23.

[2] Cf. Pope Leo XIV, *Address to the Diplomatic Corps*, 16 May 2025.

[3] *Jn* 20:19.

[4] *Lk* 2:14.

Pope Leo XIV Addresses Franciscan University

Steubenville Summer Youth Conferences 2026

[Watch Youtube video](#)

Save the Date

- *Pray the Franciscan CROWN ROSARY & VESPERS together!*

On the first Saturday of each month.

Next... **August 1st** @ 7pm PST/8pm MST/9pm CST

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EvdWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

- **Franciscan Book Club**

Next... Sunday, **September 6th** @ 6pm PST. Discussion on

The Franciscan View of the Human Person by Dawn M Nothwehr, OSF

Contact Miriam Liem at ofsmiriam@gmail.com or Marlene Welch at Patmarlocel@gmail.com

Young Adult Franciscan Festival of Tents

Our Lady of Victory of Camp in Lacombe, AB from September 4–6, 2026

(see poster below)

- *OLOTA Daily Morning Prayer Circle* on zoom!

We pray together for 30 minutes for an increase in Franciscan vocations:
Morning Offering – Liturgy of the Hours - Prayer to Attract Hearts of the OFS
Franciscan Family Chaplet Prayer - Psalm from the Little Office of the Passion

6:30 AM (BC), 7:30 AM (AB), 8:30 AM (MT/SK)

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87194635029?pwd=JblYxdyR4L3l2HWccz6lA4b9cBDyL4.1>

Meeting ID: 871 9463 5029 Passcode: 382440

Contact: ofsmiriam@gmail.com 604-819-1204

YOUNG ADULT
Franciscan
FESTIVAL of TENTS

FRANCISCAN SPIRIT
Mass, reconciliation, prayers, talks

COMMUNITY
Small group faith discussions, socializing + more

FUN & GAMES
Icebreaker, improv, karaoke, relay races

CREATION
Connect with nature

OUR LADY OF VICTORY CAMP
41203 Range Rd 11
Lacombe Country, AB

FRIDAY SEPT 4TH
7:00 PM
SUNDAY SEPT 6TH
1:00 PM*

COST: \$125
Includes food, water, showers and accommodation. Bunk beds available or bring your own tent.

FOR YOUNG ADULTS 18-39

Register please complete the form and a transfer your registration fee to ofshab@gmail.com
We will receive confirmation and a parking lot.
For more information email ofshab@gmail.com

Scan to register!



Blessed Jacob El-Haddad
of Ghazir, OFM Cap

1875-1954

Feast Day June 26

HIS LIFE

Prayer Intentions for Vocations (from CIOFS)

June 2026: For those OFS brothers and sisters who experience crisis in vocation.

July 2026: For young people to find clarity & courage as they follow Jesus in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi.

All intentions for 2026 from: the Holy Father, OFS/YouFra, OFS Vocations.

Brother Manoj goes to...



...visit with St Clare *Pickardville* Fraternity in Westlock Co, AB on May 19th.

...attend the Alberta Chapter of Mats at Sacred Heart Parish in Red Deer, AB on May 23rd.



...visit with Sts Louis & Zelig Martin Fraternity in Edmonton, AB on May 20th.



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

June 2026 Minister Lanny Hui, ofs lannyhui@gmail.com

Editor/Publisher Colleen Finlon, ofs cmarielifinlon@gmail.com

Pax et Bonum!