

OUR LADY of THE ANGELS Messenger

Issue Number 73

September 2026

Hello Everyone,

Many thanks to you all for praying for the holiness of the regional council members. I specially would like to thank the morning prayer group who have been praying for me daily. I am deeply touched by your support and love. Do you remember page 5 of Franciscan Journey in the second paragraph? For those who have been formation directors or in the formation team accompanying the inquirers in your fraternity, you would probably agree with me that this paragraph should be memorized or prayed on regularly. *“As you announce peace with your mouth, make sure that you have greater peace in your hearts, thus no one will be provoked to anger or scandal because of you. Let everyone be drawn to peace and kindness through your peace and gentleness. For we have been called to this: to cure the wounded, to bind up the broken, to recall the erring. Many who seem to us members of the devil will yet be disciples of Christ.”* - Francis of Assisi, The Founder Vol II p. 102. If you are like me, who have short photographic memory and need to re-read this again after some time, you may feel “Gee, I have failed as a Franciscan based on the criteria set in this paragraph alone.” Anyways, let us not beat ourselves up or point out others’ mistakes, but rather let us begin again to make a journey towards radical conversion. St. Francis said, “The Lord gave me brothers.” Our version can be somewhere along this line... “The Lord gave me a controlling sister, an opinionated brother, maybe one generous sister, an unreliable brother, etc... etc...”. In that state, we are tempted to think “My fraternity would be better off without this person in the council” or



The STIGMATA of St Francis



Stigmata Feast Day September 17th
[At La Verna](#)



NOVENA for ST FRANCIS
Sept 24 to Oct 2 at 6:30–7 pm PST
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EvdWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>
Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

to resign from a position in the council or to quit the fraternity or to stop attending the fraternity gathering “to take a break”. It is worth pondering that St. Francis taught us to call them brothers and sisters while suffering physically. We need all the graces we can get to keep the dialogue alive and have the courage to initiate the reconciliation. The gift of reconciliation with God, ourselves, and others is probably one of the best gifts we can give to God to celebrate the 800th feast of St. Francis’ Easter.

We just had a council gathering on September 11 on zoom. Our next gathering will be on November 6. Our council members are focusing on executing the plenary given to us during the regional chapter of election in July. If you would like to know what they are, please let me or the regional council member know or ask your fraternity ministers or delegate(s) to the regional chapter from your fraternity.

Your servant, Lanny

From our regional SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what is yours! St. Francis of Assisi
St. Francis’s Transitus is not a death to be remembered but a passage to be entered. What he crossed over from possession to poverty, from fear to fraternity, from isolation to communion is the same passage the Gospel asks of us as we celebrate his 800th Transitus. It’s called in our Franciscan tradition, not a funeral, and not a memorial. We call it a Transitus - a ‘passing over’ from this earthly life to the glory of eternal heaven. We do not participate as an audience, rather, we participate as his brothers and sisters. We enter this sacred time (vigil) and find our way to the Portiuncula (Little Portion), to gather around Francis as he dies, as the early friars once did.



In the life of St. Francis, this “Passing” was a process of continuous conversion toward doing the will of God. After his initial conversion of leaving his family and Assisi, Francis was in a continuous process of discerning God’s will in his life. He dedicated himself to the will of God by living, “the present of his life.” St. Francis delved into the contemplative prayer depths of his own tradition, as opposed to mere repetition of tired formulas. He sought direction in the mirror of creation rather than intellectual and fabricated ideas. And most radically, he looked to the underside of his society, to the suffering, for an understanding of how God transforms us. He walked the journey himself and thus he could lead others along the path. It was by living the present moment of his life; St. Francis inserted himself into the will of God toward the fullness of life. This meant, dying to his human will and living for God’s will. This dialectical experience of life-through-death was revealed to him through the mystery of the Cross, which is the power and wisdom of the Father. Hence, in the life-project of St. Francis, Jesus the Crucified was the only model whom he wanted to imitate as perfectly as possible. And, for he absolutely knew that Jesus is the only secret code to eternal life that he deeply wished and desired.

St. Francis, left this world (Sister Mother Earth) faithfully living what was his to do, “I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what is yours.” As his brothers and sisters, we follow the spirit of St. Francis in everything we do and yet we can only do it in the way we ourselves are inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit. We can only change the world insofar as we have changed ourselves. We can only give away who we are and what we have. We can only offer to others what God has done in and for us. Sacred time of Transitus of St. Francis, be a reminder for us to live in communion with God and each other. Let it be an invitation and encouragement to embark on a spiritual pilgrimage; renewing our vocation to live the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, offering Him to humanity. *Wish you a Blessed Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, our Seraphic Father!*

Br. Manoj Xalxo, OFM

From our DIRECTOR of FORMATION

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

How do you plan to celebrate this historic 800th year anniversary of the Transitus of St Francis? A few possible ideas might be:



- Hold an outdoor prayer service using fire, water and plants in remembrance of Francis's love of all creation. Follow with the hymn "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace".
- Pray St Francis's *Canticle of Creation*.
- Reflect on your remembrance of your own profession day.
- Pray for fellow Franciscans that have passed.
- Meditate on your own passing.
- Take a quiet walk while offering special gratitude for all God's gifts of the earth.
- Try to picture yourself in Francis's brothers shoes the night he passed, share your thoughts of what they might have been feeling that night.
- Give praise and glory for the Franciscan brothers and sisters God has given you.

Prayer: St Francis, help us to love God and all creation as you did. Open our eyes and hearts to see the beauty all around us as and to recognize the face of Jesus in everyone we meet, especially those less fortunate. Give us the wisdom and will to protect Mother earth. Amen

Audrey Gross, ofs

From our DIRECTOR of JPIC

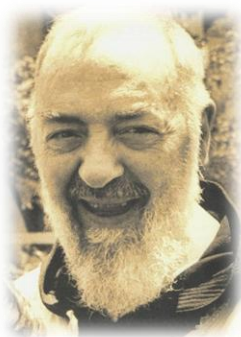
Blessings,

As this message comes to print my travelling will take me to Saskatoon and Winnipeg that ends an eventful tour through the region. As I drive and pray, I find myself pondering communications and how we can streamline collaboration in JPIC without carrying additional burdens. Speaking on behalf of JPIC, the committee members have voiced a consensus for better communication between JPIC and fraternity ministers or their JPIC animators. This would also include regional vice ministers who need to be in the communication loop for their district.



There are four upcoming initiatives put together last year by the committee. There is a plan to reinstitute these during the coming year since many did not receive or were unclear of them for one reason or another. Once I finish travelling, I will post these individually at different intervals during the coming year. Stay tuned for the JPIC future pathway as we develop connections with our communications group to advance our cause to streamline our walk with St. Francis.

With prayer & good intentions,
Blaise MacSween, ofs



**St Pio of
Pietrelcina**
1887-1968
Feast Day Sept 23
OFM Capuchin priest
mystic & Saint who
bore the bleeding
wounds of Christ.
[HIS LIFE](#)



**St Rose of
Viterbo**
1233-1251
Feast Day Sept 4
Third Order
Franciscan,
mystic & Saint
[HER LIFE](#)

FESTIVAL OF TENTS 2026



Twenty young adults gathered at Our Lady of Victory Catholic Camp near Bently, AB from Sept 4-6, 2026, for **Our Lady of the Angels Annual Festival of Tents** weekend. The support of several friars for the entire weekend was wonderful. A huge thanks to the OFS for providing cooks and cookies for the weekend. Thanks to OLOTA Council for sponsoring four participants and for members of various fraternities who helped sponsor people. Thanks to the Knights of Columbus for their sponsorship.



LITANY OF PEACE

From the desire to control ... *Deliver me, Lord Jesus*
From the desire to give my opinion ...
From the desire to project myself as the victim ...
From the desire to impress others ...
From the desire to please everyone ...
From the tendency to complain ...
From all my irrational fears ...
From all violent speech ...
From failing to accept uncertainty ...
From comparing myself to others ...
From not accepting my limitations ...
From an unhealthy desire for perfection ...
From an unhealthy attachment to others ...
From excessive self-blame ...

From holding on to grudges ...
From holding on to the past ...
From wanting more than I need ...
From the impulse to justify myself ...
From worrying about the future ...
From thinking only about myself ...
From losing perspective on life ...
From not being able to laugh at myself ...
From not being able to forgive myself ...
From over analyzing the intentions of others ...
From the desire to change others ...
From thoughts that this world is all there is ...
From failing to trust in God ...
From failing to see God in all things ...

PEACE PRAYER: God of peace, calm me and heal me.
Let Your peace reign in my heart at this very moment and for all eternity.
We make our prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.
Amen.

– by Fr. Matthew Guckin

REMINDERS OF OUR VOCATION

Fraternity is not just a group of people who like St Francis. It is a way of becoming brothers and sisters. One of the easiest things to misunderstand about a Secular Franciscan fraternity is what it actually is.

It is not simply a prayer group.

Not a Bible-study group.

Not a support group.

Not a group that meets once a

Those things may happen in identity.

of the Secular Franciscan Order

privileged place where the

members learn to live the

apostolic life is strengthened.

to a group. I belong to people.

People who will pray for me.

misunderstand.

disappoint me.

me.

Franciscan adventure begins. Because it is easy to love Franciscan spirituality. It is much harder to love Franciscan brothers and sisters.

St Francis didn't create a spirituality of comfortable isolation. His vocation was a vocation to live the Gospel in fraternal communion.

So what does real fraternity look like?

1. Show up — not just physically, but personally. Don't simply attend meetings. Bring your real self.

Listen. Participate. Take responsibility. Fraternity requires presence, prayer and active collaboration from its members.

2. Stop asking 'What do I get?' Start asking, "What can I give?" A fraternity becomes alive when responsibility is shared, not when everything is left to the council, minister or a few enthusiastic people.

3. Learn to love people who are different from you. If everyone has to agree with you before you can call them brother or sister, that's not fraternity. Franciscan fraternity is a school of patience, forgiveness, dialogue and humility.

4. Don't disappear between meetings. Call someone. Visit someone. Pray for someone. Check in on the person who has gone quiet. Build relationships beyond the monthly gathering. Community takes intentional effort.

Fraternity is not a place where I come to prove that I am right. It is a place where Christ teaches me how to become more capable of love.

And perhaps this is the deepest Franciscan challenge: you don't choose your brothers and sisters because they are perfect. You learn to love them because Christ has placed them beside you.

"The Lord gave me brothers."

And maybe sometimes the real prayer is:

Lord, teach me not only to be a Franciscan, teach me how to be a brother. Teach me how to be a sister.

Teach me how to belong.



Not a social club.

Not a parish committee.

month, has coffee, and goes home.

fraternity but they are not its

The local fraternity is the basic unit and a visible sign of the Church as a

Franciscan vocation grows, where

Gospel together, and where their

Fraternity means I don't just belong

People who will challenge me.

People I may sometimes

People who may sometimes

People who don't always think like

And that's precisely where the

Submitted by Cathy & David Bouchard, ofs x 2

On The CENTENARY

Articles on the Centenary have been posted in the past in **OLOTA Messenger**. As cited previously, the main sources are the two following websites available in English. You can bookmark them to read and view the many articles and images published there.

- **Centenari Francescani:** [Home - Centenari Francescani](#)
- **EWTN Vatican:** [Holy Year of Saint Francis: 8th Centenary of his Life](#)

The **Franciscan Vision Global Summit** has been featuring monthly presentations on zoom internationally since the Centenary celebrations began in 2023. Reports on the presentations were made by Colleen Finlon and Marlene Welch and published in our **OLOTA Messenger** during 2023 and the first three months of 2024. You may access them on [OLOTA.org](#) For 2023 scroll down to get them in the archives.

Our **OFS Canadian National Website** features a schedule with links to the Centenary events since 2023. [800th Centenaries - Secular Franciscan Order Canada](#)

Save the Date

NOVENA FOR ST FRANCIS [Text](#)

Pray the Franciscan **CROWN ROSARY & VESPERS**

On the first Saturday of each month.

Next **Oct 3rd @ 7pm PST/8pm MST/9pm CST**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EybWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

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)

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

Meeting ID: 871 9463 5029 Passcode: 382440

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

Prayer Intentions for Vocations (from CIOFS)

Sept 2026: For new true vocations to the Secular Franciscans through the intercession of all the Franciscan Saints.

Oct 2026: For a fruitful and close collaboration between the OFS fraternities and the spiritual assistants to promote vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order.

[All intentions for 2026 from: the Holy Father, OFS/YouFra, OFS Vocations.](#)

What's Happening!

BC Coastal held their Annual Retreat at the Westminster Abbey in Mission, BC on August 21-23. Twelve fraternities from BC and one from AB were represented. Sr Mary Margaret and Sr Janet (Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist) led the retreat on the theme *St Francis of Assisi: A Man of Peace, Then and Now* (1226-2026).



St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity in Coquitlam gathered for their Summer Potluck on August 27. The image was taken in the Chef's Lounge of the 50th floor of a high-rise building. Those who attended enjoyed the incredible view!

Little Flowers of St Francis Fraternity in Kelowna held their yearly day retreat organized by Maria Levko, Minister on Sept 12. Gathered at Seton House of Prayer, Deacon Jeff Loma led the group on the theme *Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace*. The retreat was open to San Damiano and St Pio fraternities as well as friends from Kelowna.





Fr Manoj Makes Pastoral Visits in Alberta

Sept 2 St Mary's, Calgary

Sept 3 St Padre Pio's, Calgary

Sept 4 Mary Queen of Peace, Pincher Cr

From our regional MINISTER

Hello Everyone,

Thank you for your trust to re-elect me as your regional minister. By God's grace, I was professed in 2009 at St. Clare of Assisi in Coquitlam and served both at the local and regional councils. Being in this position now makes me aware that I cannot do a good job without your help. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities to work with the previous and the current council members. With your prayers, the help of the regional council and God's grace, I aim to make steps to deliver the plenary/wishes stated by the regional chapter delegates.

Lanny Hui, ofs



Carmen



Christine



Erika

2026-2029 OLOTA Western Region Council

Minister: Lanny Hui **Vice Ministers:** BC Coastal: Carmen Moorhouse, BC Interior: Christine Reeves
AB N: Issac Reyes, AB S: Erika Bancila, SK&MB: Paulette Matovich

Regional Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Manoj Xalxo, ofm **Secretary:** Michelle Butt **Treasurer:** Gary Jose

Director of Formation: Audrey Gross **Director of Youth:** Maritza Chouza

Director of JPIC: Blaise MacSween **Director of Communications:** Colleen Finlon

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

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Pax et Bonum!