

SUMMER



roubadour MAGAZINE

2023

Connecting Secular Franciscan Fraternities throughout our region.



Frances Acosta, OFS Editor

St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, Charlotte, NC

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Keeping a Faith-filled Summer

Summertime is here!

Trips to the beach, laying out near the pool, family vacation, even staycations are all events we look forward to. As we pack for the summer escapades, let's not forget to bring God along. Make Him part of the adventure, after all, He made it possible. Spiritual dryness is common in the summer. As we look forward to the relaxation and time away, we often neglect our spiritual needs. How can we live out our faith during vacation?

- Locate and attend the local church.
 - Unless you're vacationing in the woods, you can locate where the nearest church is and stop by and visit even if it's just to say Thank you.
- Keep a summer journal.
 - Challenge yourself to find God everyday. Where did you encounter his love? (Through people you encounter, visually through sightseeing etc.) write them down in your journal. We can keep great memories of our time away in other ways other than pictures.
- Read a spiritual book.
 - Here are some recommended books you can try. (you can click on the titles. It will direct you to amazon.)
 - Seasons of Your Heart: Prayers and Reflections, Revised and Expanded
 - Nourishing Love: A Franciscan Celebration of Mary
 - Light of Assisi: The Story of Saint Clare
 - Come to Mary's House: Spending Time with Our Blessed Mother

Fun reading for the family

- Stories of the Saints: Bold and Inspiring Tales of Adventure, Grace, and Courage

May the Lord fill the warm days ahead with sunshine and peace.

Have a Blessed and Joyous Summer.

Happy reading!

Frances Acosta, OFS



Frances Acosta, OFS
Founder of Stella Mundi Franciscan Ministry



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Regional Spiritual Assistant



Listen, Discern, Go Forth

2022-2025 OFS-USA THEME



Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region

Formation Director, Porziuncola Fraternity

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WHEN WILL IT BE ENOUGH

With mass shootings being in the news almost daily, 24 just in the first week of May and 202 so far in 2023, I felt it was time to re-publish my article from June 2022. Children killed for playing hide and seek on a neighbor's lawn; people killed at a mall in Allen, Texas just out enjoying a day of shopping and people killed, including a nine year old child for asking a neighbor to stop shooting his gun on his porch. Madness!

WHEN WILL IT BE ENOUGH?

I realize that this is a very sensitive and polarizing subject to be writing about. Maybe some of you are responsible gun owners and I respect that but I am sickened by children being slaughtered by those who do not respect life. This is not a political issue for me, it is moral.

Article 15 of our Rule states "let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives." Article 19 reminds us that "mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon."

I was not going to write about this subject but I received a letter from someone in the region who said she was told that the issue was "too unwieldy for a local fraternity to handle." I agree. Oftentimes, those discussions get heated and cause hard feelings and probably should not be discussed in fraternity meetings. Let me present what is solely my opinion on this subject. I am not trying to convert anyone or project that differing opinions are wrong. Some of the material I will present is from the US Catholic Bishops Conference.

Since the tragic event in Uvalde, Texas on May 24, 2022 where 19 children and 2 adults were murdered and another 17 injured, there have been, as of June 9, 2022 when I'm writing this, 40 mass shootings in 18 states with 43 killed and 180 wounded.

Forty mass shootings in 16 days! Mass shootings are incidents involving 4 or more killed or wounded. There have been 230 mass shootings in 2022 to date.

These are not just school shootings. These shootings have taken place in workplaces (including a Catholic hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma), at family BBQ's, at graduation parties, in bars, and at block parties. The deadliest of them were committed with an AR-15 or other assault type weapon. These are weapons of war and should not be in the hands of individuals. You do not need an assault rifle to hunt. In my opinion, assault weapons, weapons of war, were not what the founding fathers had in mind when they wrote the Second Amendment.

In 1994, with bipartisan support, Congress pushed through a federal assault weapons ban. That ban was limited – it covered only certain categories of semi-automatic weapons such as AR-15s and applied to a ban on sales only after the act was signed into law, allowing people to keep weapons purchased before that date. It also had in it a so-called "sunset provision" that allowed the ban to expire in 2004. The 10-year life span of that ban – with a clear beginning and end date – gives researchers the opportunity to compare what happened with mass shooting deaths before, during and after the prohibition was in place.

In a study by Michael J. Klein, Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, New York University, the proportion of deaths in mass shootings in which an assault rifle was used was lower in 1994 than it is today. Yet in this earlier period, mass shooting deaths were steadily rising.

The 1994 to 2004 period saw lower average annual rates of both mass shootings and deaths resulting from such incidents than before the ban's inception.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 3



Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region

Formation Director, Porziuncola Fraternity

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The data shows an almost immediate – and steep – rise in mass shooting deaths in the years after the assault weapons ban expired in 2004.

According to Klein, it is difficult to say conclusively that reinstating the assault weapons ban would have a profound impact, especially given the growth in sales in the 18 years in which Americans have been allowed to purchase and stockpile such weapons. However, given that many of the high-profile mass shooters in recent years purchased their weapons less than one year before committing their acts, the evidence suggests that it might.

In an article written by Thomas Reese on Religion News Service, “In response to recent mass shootings, Pope Francis and the U.S. Catholic bishops have called for gun control measures that would save lives. This undoubtedly surprises some people who think that abortion is the only public policy concern of the church’s hierarchy. Sadly, the media and the bishops themselves give too little attention to the larger “life” agenda.”

While praying for the children killed and their families in Uvalde, the Pope did not hesitate to say, “It is time to say enough to the indiscriminate trafficking of arms.” Pope Francis has frequently denounced gun trafficking.

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the chairs of four conference committees issued a statement urging all members of Congress to action in response to the killings.

In their letter on June 3rd to Congress, these bishops got into specifics on what they considered “reasonable” gun control. They encouraged Congress to improve “the firearm background check process in favor of the Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2021 (H.R. 8) and the Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2021 (H.R. 1446).”

They also supported extreme-risk protection orders (the so-called red flag law) through passage of the Federal Extreme Risk Protection Order Act of 2021 (H.R. 2377).

They complained that “In the ten years since the massacre of children at Sandy Hook, very little has been done by Congress to regulate these weapons and prevent another catastrophe. We urgently call on members of Congress to work together in a bipartisan fashion to make these horrific attacks less likely to happen again.”

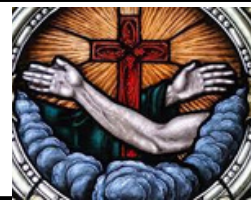
The bishops call for “a total ban on assault weapons and limitations on civilian access to high-capacity weapons and ammunition magazines,” including bump stocks. They cite studies showing that limitations on high-capacity magazines can reduce the number of people killed in mass shootings by as much as 38%, and those injured by as much as 77%. They also support universal background checks for all gun purchases and criminalizing gun trafficking. The bishops added their support to recent proposals to set a more appropriate minimum age for gun ownership. The USCCB website has additional recommendations: “Regulations and limitations on the purchasing of handguns; measures that make guns safer, such as locks that prevent children and anyone other than the owner from using the gun without permission and supervision.”

Another page on the website provides visitors an easy way to write their senators and representatives to support these gun control measures.

Thomas Reese reminds us that “Catholic social teaching has been referred to as the church’s best-kept secret. The bishops’ response to gun violence should no longer be a secret. It should be preached from the rooftops.”

As I was told in the letter I received “if not us, then who? If not now, then when?”

Peace and all good,



Regional Spiritual Assistant

Our Lady of the Angels Region

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NOISY CONTEMPLATION

I believe many of you know that the Franciscan First Order is comprised of three branches and they are: Conventual Friars (OFM Conv.), Capuchin Friars (OFMcap.), and Observant Friars (OFM). I am a member of the last group. Several years ago, the leadership of the OFM Friars came together in Africa for what is called a Chapter to discuss the future direction of the Friars in the years ahead. One of the components of this Chapter dealt with how we wish to identify ourselves to the world. After lengthy discussions, the group voted to adopt the following description: Franciscan Friars are “Contemplative Fraternities In Mission.” At first, the friars were surprised by the term “contemplative” because contemplation is associated with those who live in monasteries.

However, this addition is also a corrective measure for those friars who adopted the false notion that was prevalent shortly after the Second Vatican Council that said, “My work is my prayer.” When you think about it, it doesn’t make sense! We need to find balance in our understanding of who we are as Friars. Could this be true for Secular Franciscans?

The problem comes from western cultures’ emphasis on productivity. “As long as I’m busy, I must be doing God’s will” is the snag that comes from a wrong and misdirected spirituality. As St. Teresa of Calcutta often said, “God does not call us to be successful; He calls us to be faithful.” So, the traditional definition of prayer is still valid today – “Prayer is the lifting of our minds and hearts to God.” As Franciscans, we need to remember the importance of prayer in the life of our holy father, Francis. He made time for extensive prayer that he loved as part of his daily routine.

Unfortunately today, all of us live surrounded by noise! In fact, we might find it extremely difficult to break away from the noise just to sit in silence in the presence of God. For many of us including myself, it’s unnerving to sit in silence! Before I retired from parish ministry, I developed the unnecessary habit of making up a “To Do List” for myself. Sadly to say, even now, I still find myself making lists from time to time! However, lately this “problem” has abated! My attempts at contemplation started out as short efforts, but now they are growing! Perhaps, all of us can strive to develop a contemplative side to our prayer life. Amen. Amen.



Photo credit: Canva



Regional JPIC Animator

Most Holy Name, Little Falls NJ

jimandreano@gmail.com

JUSTICE, PEACE, and INTEGRITY of CREATION

The quest to promote Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is absolutely central to Secular Franciscanism. It is not an optional add-on. It is an integral part of who we are.

That truth, as well as many others, were central themes of the recent Regional Convivenza on April 22, which focused on JPIC. As April 22 was Earth Day, we placed primary focus on the Integrity of Creation aspect of JPIC. However, it is impossible to address any of the components of JPIC in isolation. They are all connected.

The keynote speaker at Convivenza was Joseph Makley, Vice Chair of the National JPIC Committee. Joe focused on the two aspects of fostering the Integrity of Creation - individual action, and communal advocacy.

Individual Action can take many forms:

Transportation

Reduce gas usage - Walk, carpool, take public transportation, consolidate trips

Consider a more efficient vehicle (possibly electric)

Electricity Sources - Solar, Wind, Hydroelectric, etc.

Cut down on plastics - Reduce / Reuse / Recycle - in that order!

Dietary changes - cut down on meat consumption

Support sustainable, organic agriculture.

Etc, etc, etc.

The above actions are indispensable, yet they are not enough. No one individual created our current ecological crisis, and no one person will get us out of it. We must do it together, That means collaboration at the local, regional, national, and global levels. Yes, changing light bulbs is important. Changing laws is more important.

That's where advocacy comes in. Make your voice heard! As Pope Francis once said, "A good Catholic meddles in politics."

After this discussion on Integrity of Creation, we at Convivenza pivoted to more general topics. We took part in stimulating group discussions on Franciscan social justice scenarios, where we asked "What would I do...?" We then proceeded with a panel discussion where various local Fraternities presented what they were doing in the JPIC space.

Which leads us to the question, "How do I establish a JPIC ministry in my Fraternity?" Or, "How do I take our existing JPIC ministry to the next level?" It starts with the local JPIC Animator. Every Fraternity has one, but some don't know it. In some cases, the JPIC Animator is an appointed position. In others the Fraternity Council or the Minister assumes the role. But someone has to do it. It is not optional.

The role of the Animator is exactly what it sounds like. It is "to bring to life". To help stimulate ideas, to motivate, to inspire. NOT to do all the work. In some Fraternities it seems to work out that way, but that is not sustainable over the long term.

If you would like some assistance in developing or growing your JPIC program, the Regional JPIC Committee stands ready.

Please contact me at JimAndreano@gmail.com or 973-713-9674.

I would add that at the upcoming July Retreat, we are considering allocating time for an optional JPIC Workshop. You will hear more on this shortly.



NEWS AROUND THE REGION



PROFESSIONS, ADMISSIONS & ELECTIONS, ETC

Elections

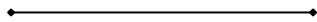
St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity Ringwood, North Jersey



Photo credit: Chris Leone, OFS

Pictured in the photo, left to right, are:

- Mario Sheldon, OFS - Treasurer
- Ann Marie Solch, OFS - Secretary
- Nancy Ihnat, OFS - Minister
- Denise Minissale, OFS - Vice Minister
- Rosanne Hughes, OFS - Formation Director



St. Benedict the Moor Fraternity NYC, NY



Photo credit: Chris Leone, OFS

Pictured below from left to right are:

- Artie Hasegawa, OFS - Treasurer
- Fr. Joseph Cavoto, OFM - Spiritual Assistant
- Nancy Conroy, OFS - Director of Formation
- Paul Beelitz, OFS - Minister
- Emily Marcelli, OFS - Vice Minister
- Joseph Lapponeese, OFS - Secretary

Fr. Joseph Cavoto, OFM (delegated friar witness).

APRIL 16TH The St. Thomas More Fraternity Celebrates Laurie Galvin's Rite of Admission. MANHATTAN, NYC



Photo credit: Stacey Antine, OFS

Election Thoughts to Ponder in Prayer

As you consider the solemnity of the action in which you will be soon participating, be sure to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in electing those who will serve, animate, and guide your fraternity for the next three (3) years. Reflect upon and take to heart the words attributed to St. Bonaventure, describing six (6) qualities of a spiritual leader:

Zeal for Righteousness: The moral sensitivity to anything unjust in him/herself (first) or others. It highlights the importance of purity.
Compassion: This should be demonstrated to those who are facing both physical and spiritual weaknesses. In other words, everyone! Today, this aspect would be described as being a servant to those who are in need.

Patience: Leaders are in critical need of patience due to at least three reasons: 1) leadership is exhausting and demanding work; 2) there is little apparent return for all the efforts a leader makes; 3) and many who are on the receiving end are ungrateful.

The Fraternity Council

Article 49

1. The council of the local fraternity is composed of the following offices: minister, vice minister, secretary, treasurer, and master of formation. Other offices may be added according to the needs of each fraternity. The spiritual assistant of the fraternity forms part of the council by right.

2. The fraternity, meeting in an assembly or chapter, discusses questions regarding its own life and organization.

Every three years, in an elective assembly or chapter, the fraternity elects the minister and the council in the way established by the Constitutions and statutes.

Good Example: Leaders are models that other people look to and follow their EXAMPLE, therefore, make it good! The leader is no better than the followers and the writer stresses humility and maturity. The operative word in this process is servant. Those who allow their names to be placed in nomination for any council position must remember that their election to that position will require their total commitment and availability to their brothers and sisters for the next three (3) years.

Good Judgment or Discernment: This guides the leader in knowing both what to do and how to do it. In relationship to this, the writer addresses how to encourage the spiritual and moral growth of the community and reminds his readers of the need for delegation and the danger of becoming buried under the heavy load of administration.

Devotion to God: While listed last, this is the most important quality because everything else depends upon it. A close, personal relationship with God guides us in all our leadership responsibilities. Here, the writer mentions the need for public and private prayer and cultivating an awareness or mindfulness of God in all of life.



Congratulations TO ALL!



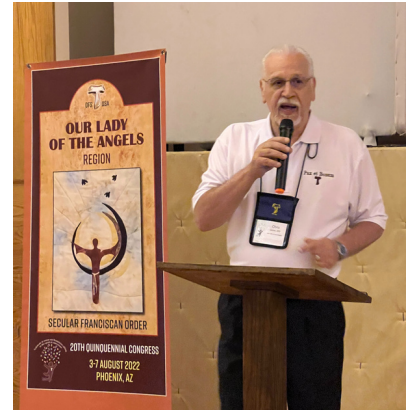


CONVIVENZA 2023

Integrity of Creation: A Franciscan Approach

Keynote By
Joe Makley, OFS

April 22, 2023





SAVE THE DATE

Secular Franciscan Order Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity Annual Retreat



Bearing the Light: Learning to Love One's Life Through St. Francis and St. Clare

Presented By
Fr. Samuel Fuller, OFM Cap.



July 28-30, 2023

In Person at

Mt. Alvernia Retreat House, 158 Delavergne Ave, Wappinger Falls, NY
full meals. Please note there are a limited number of individual rooms.

There are a limited number of partial scholarships available. For additional information contact:
Richard Spana, OFS (914) 478-2010 rickspanasfo@aol.com

Retreat Registration form: July 28-30, 2023

Please check: I am professed _____ I am a Candidate _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Fraternity: _____ Fraternity City: _____

Single Room _____ Double Room _____ Special Needs _____

Room With _____

Send completed registration form with \$200.00 check made payable to:
"Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity"
to: Richard Spana, ofs, 100 E. Hartsdale Ave., Apt. 2KW, Hartsdale, NY 10530



Admonition 24: Of True Humility

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

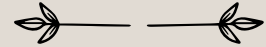
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Word Bank

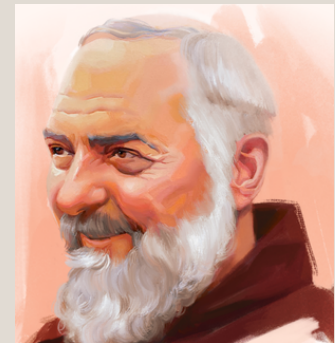
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|---------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. under | 2. masters | 3. works | 4. wise |
| 5. humble | 6. delay | 7. rod | 8. faithful |
| 9. confession | 10. servant | 11. found | 12. punish |
| 13. blessed | 14. offences | 15. interiorly | 16. contrition |
| 17. subjects | 18. satisfaction | 19. correction | 20. exteriorly |

Blessed is he who shall be found as humble among his subjects as if he were among his masters. Blessed is the servant who always continues under the rod of correction. He is "a faithful and wise servant" who does not delay to punish himself for all his offences, interiorly by contrition and exteriorly by confession and by works of satisfaction.

WISDOM of the Saints

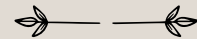


Padre Pio of Pietrelcina

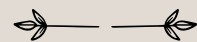


1867-1968

FEAST DAY: SEPTEMBER 23RD



"Be souls of prayer. Never tire of praying, it is what is essential. Prayer shakes the heart of God, it obtains necessary graces!"



OLA Regional Website:
olangels.tripod.com

REGION WEBSITE
ADMINISTRATOR
DIANE F. MENDITTO, OFS

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facebook.com/OurLadyoftheAngelsRegion

GENERAL INFORMATION



Call for articles

THE TROUBADOUR is a quarterly communication vehicle published by Our Lady of the Angels Region. It is published in 2 formats — print and electronic.

The electronic format of The Troubadour is published quarterly — Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. It is available for downloading on our Regional website. To become a subscriber, you must be an active, professed member, or be in initial formation in our region, and your complete address and e-mail must be registered in our database.

The printed format of The Troubadour is published quarterly yearly— It is freely mailed to all professed members and those in initial formation in the region.

Wherever you see the spirit of Saint Francis at work in the world, in your lives, in your fraternity, in its members, and in your hearts—we want to hear from you. Come, share with us.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES:

All submissions for the Fall issue of The Troubadour, September 2023, are due to the Editor: smfranciscanministry@gmail.com by August 15th.

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS:

- The right to copy all material printed in The Troubadour is granted provided you credit the Troubadour and author.
- Not every article received may be published in the upcoming issue. Every consideration is given for publication in a future issue.
- When submitting articles for publication consideration, please state fraternity name and location, as well as your name and address.

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Date of Profession

Date of Admission



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