

SUMMER



roubadour MAGAZINE

2024

Connecting Secular Franciscan Fraternities throughout our region.



Frances Acosta, OFS Editor

St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, Charlotte, NC

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My 2024 Summer Reading Picks

During the summertime, when warm breezes call out to us, our hearts yearn for adventures beyond our grasp. The following list offers a blend of experiences to take you to uncharted territories, inspiring you with stories that awaken your spirit and expand your imagination and faith:

Anxiously awaiting summer as a devoted Jane Austen enthusiast, I am excited to dive into "**Jane Austen's Genius Guide to Life**" by Haley Stewart and Ave Maria Press. Through this enlightening Catholic perspective, Stewart beautifully delves into how Austen's characters and themes can guide us in discovering our true selves and embracing personal growth and fulfillment.

"**The Hidden Legacy**" is a captivating multigenerational fiction masterpiece by Catholic writer Carrie Sue Barnes. This engaging and wholesome tale intricately weaves together journeys of faith that will enchant readers. Set against the backdrop of World War I, the story follows a granddaughter uncovering her grandmother's past, offering a compelling narrative that will keep you eagerly flipping through the pages.

Delve into "**Saint John Paul the Great: His Five Loves**" by Jason Evert to explore the extraordinary life of John Paul II. Evert delves into the depths of John Paul's fundamental affections, including Youth, Love among individuals, Communion, devotion to the Virgin Mary, and the significance of Sacrifice.

By embracing moments of solitude and contemplation, we give ourselves the gift of self-reflection and inner peace. In these quiet instances, we can tune in to the whispers of our hearts and the subtle nudges of our souls, guiding us towards our authentic calling. Let us not fear slowing down or lingering in the present moment a bit longer. By intentionally extending these moments, we may discover genuine fulfillment and joy. Happy Reading!

Frances, ofs

Wishing You a Blessed Summer!



Frances Acosta, OFS
Founder of Stella Mundi Franciscan Ministry
stellamundi-ofs.org



Regional Council Members:

Chris Leone, OFS
Regional Minister

Ed Wojciechowski, OFS
Vice Minister

Debbie Wickham, OFS
Treasurer

Joanne Malick, OFS
Interim Formation Director

Mary-Frances Reavey, OFS
Secretary

Dawn Rusinko, OFS
Councilor Central Jersey

Jim Andreano, OFS
Councilor North Jersey

Open
Councilor Manhattan

Richard Spana, OFS
Councilor Westchester

Br. Rudolph Pieretti, OFM Cap.
Regional Spiritual Assistant



Listen, Discern, Go Forth
2022-2025 OFS-USA THEME



Minister

Our Lady of the Angels Region

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COME, HOLY SPIRIT!

As I write this we are nearing Pentecost and I am more aware of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the bond of love between the Father and the Son. The Father pours Himself out in love to the Son who, in return gives Himself totally to the Father in love. That outpouring of love between the Father and the Son is so real it is embodied by a third person – the Holy Spirit.

I often explain this outpouring of love to my RCIA candidates in a marriage analogy. I tell them that the husband gives himself, all that he is, in love, to his bride – emotionally, spiritually and in the marital act, even physically. She, in return, gives all of herself, in love, to her husband – emotionally, spiritually, and physically. That very outpouring of love between the husband and the wife is so real that nine months later you have to give it a name! We see in marriage a window into the very mystery of God's own inner life- God who is love.

That bond of love between the Father and the Son indwells in our soul and transforms us. The mission of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify us; to make us holy; to help us live a holy life and proclaim the Gospel

The Holy Spirit does that through his gifts which we receive at Baptism – wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. These gifts make us faithful in obeying divine inspiration. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us – charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR in his book *Breath of God*, discusses Jesus breathing on the Apostles and inviting them to receive the Holy Spirit. No driving wind, shaking buildings or tongues of fire. Just a simple breath, the breath of God. That breath moved frightened followers from a locked room to the corners of the earth.

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to build, animate, and sanctify the Church and bring souls into communion with God so that they bear fruit and give witness to Christ. Thus, the Church's mission is not an addition to that of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but is its sacrament: in her whole being and in all her members, the Church is sent to announce, bear witness, make present, and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity (CCC 738).



***Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts
of your faithful
And kindle in them the fire of
your love.
Send forth your spirit and they
shall be created,
And you shall renew the face of
the earth.***

***O, God, who by the light of the
Holy Spirit,
Did instruct the hearts of the
faithful,
Grant that by the same Holy
Spirit
We may be truly wise and ever
enjoy his consolations,
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.***



Interim Regional Formation Director

St. Elizabeth of Hungary S.I., NY

jtk1024@verizon.net

Let Us Do Good

You might have to be living under a rock not to have heard about the Tunnel to Towers organization, created after September 11, 2001 in honor of Firefighter Stephen Siller. For just a few moments, I'd like to tell you some background that brings my fraternity, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, much joy in our Franciscan vocation.

Stephen Siller's parents, Mae and George, were both members of the separate Secular Franciscan Fraternities on Staten Island. They were raising seven young children when at the age of eight, Stephen lost his dad, and then, just a year and a half later, he lost his Mom. He was then brought up by his older siblings, and he was a married father of five and a firefighter when, after his own shift had ended, he ran through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to the Towers, where his life ended tragically, like so many others.

Gina Siller Vogt is our fraternity's vice-minister, the same fraternity to which her mother belonged. Gina and Frank, who is chairman of the Tunnel to Towers foundation, enjoyed seeing the profession dates in our register and the secretary notes for Mae, who became a member when Gina was just six months old.

Frank speaks openly to the media of the influence of St. Francis in all that the Foundation accomplishes. Their motto, "While we have time, let us do good" is straight from the lips of St. Francis himself.

St. Francis Friary was formerly a Conventual Franciscan novitiate, which went through several incarnations in its 75+ years on Staten Island. Lastly it was St. Francis Center for Spirituality, a daytime retreat center for schools and parish groups. In 2014 it was sold to the Coptic Egyptians, and our fraternity began a nomadic journey from St. Teresa Church, to Msgr. Farrell High School, to the Eger Home, to Our Lady Queen of Peace Church.

The inability of our fraternity to keep its numbers up when we could only meet at night reached crisis level- but, miraculously, the Siller Family, whose own brother had gone through St. Francis years ago and remained close to the Friars, stepped in.

This wonderful family had restored the gym, kitchen and basement meeting rooms in memory of Russell, enabling the now-called St. Mary Christian Center to have an adult day care area and sports room for their own members.

Frank and Gina arranged for our fraternity to return monthly once again to the original place where their parents had been so many years ago!

It is a joy to see the immense good that the Siller family has accomplished over the past 23 years. The ultimate sacrifice of one young man thinking of others has been the vehicle for the physical, emotional and spiritual rehabilitation of thousands of fallen first responder families and homeless veterans. May the holy work of this great saint continue through his followers forever!

joanne





Councilor, North Jersey

Most Holy Name, Little Falls NJ

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Are You Being Called to Bring JPIC to Life?

The advancement of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) is an essential part of our Franciscan calling. It is, or should be, something that each of us live every day.

That said, some of us are called to advance JPIC in a special way. These people are called JPIC Animators. Perhaps you are one - and do not know it yet! My purpose today is to help you discern if this is your calling.

What exactly is the role of a JPIC Animator? First, let's talk about what it is not.

- It is not somebody who has to do everything.
- It is not even somebody who WANTS to do everything. In a well-functioning Fraternity, nobody has the right to do everything, even if they want to!
- Nor is it an easy way for the Minister to put a check mark in a box, allowing the rest of the Fraternity to proceed with business as usual.

Now let's talk about what the role does entail. In the simplest sense, it is exactly what the name implies. To animate. To bring to life.

It's more than just being a Coordinator, although that's certainly part of it. It's even more than being a Servant-Leader, although that's part of it as well.

It involves lighting a fire within the minds and hearts of fellow Fraternity members. Or more specifically, to nurture the fire which is already smoldering, to varying degrees, within each member.

What does it take to fill this role?

- The first and most obvious prerequisite - the fire must first be burning within you! You must have a passion for the advancement of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation.
- Must have the mindset that JPIC is an integral part of your vocation, and not an optional extra.
- Must be willing to share that belief with your fellow Fraternity members.
- Must have Administrative and Servant-Leadership skills - but not necessarily on Day One! These can be learned and developed. Your Minister and Fraternity Council will help.
- Full profession is not required, a Candidate may serve in this role.
- Must be mindful and respectful of the diversity of opinions and beliefs of your members.



Councilor, North Jersey

Most Holy Name, Little Falls NJ

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To that last point, take comfort in the knowledge that JPIC is a wide umbrella, which encompasses all aspects of the Gospels, our Rule, Catholic Social Teaching, and our Franciscan charism. Many worthy causes and activities, interconnected but diverse, fall under this umbrella.

It is impossible for any one Fraternity to have the passion, energy, and resources to embrace all these worthy causes. But hopefully one of them, or maybe two or three, will touch your Fraternity's collective heart. That is where you can put your initial focus.

Once the JPIC Animator and the Fraternity have decided on a mission to pursue, how do you do so?

There are several approaches, none of which are mutually exclusive. Rather, they build upon one another:

- **Prayer.** *The foundation of all we do.*
- **Financial Support.** *A good place to start, but maybe you can go further.*
- **Charity.** *For those who are able to do so, active hands-on involvement can be transformative to those who are assisted, and also to those who assist.*
- **Advocacy.** *This involves working to change laws to advance JPIC principles. It requires the courage to speak truth to power. Through our acts of charity, we can help some. Through effective advocacy, we can help many.*

SO... is there a chance that the role of JPIC Animator is part of your Franciscan calling?

If the answer is "Maybe", please speak to your Minister. There is a very good chance that in your Fraternity, the role is currently vacant, and is waiting for you to step up to fill it! Or, if you wish to do some additional fact-finding first, please feel free to contact me at JimAndreano@gmail.com.

Thanks so much for your prayerful consideration.

Jim



<https://ofsgb.org/mission>



FAREWELL FOR NOW, FR. FRANK!

FR. FRANCIS McHUGH, OFM STEPS DOWN AS REGIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

After serving for ten years as our regional spiritual assistant Fr. Frank has decided to retire – this time for real.

We were blessed to have him for so many years and truly appreciated his service and contributions to the region. He has attended countless visitations and was the ecclesial witness to hundreds of local fraternity elections. He will be sorely missed.

The Regional Executive Council bid him farewell and Godspeed with some parting gifts. Mary-Frances Reavey, OFS, regional secretary, presented Father with a quilt on behalf on the Council. Chris Leone, OFS, on behalf of the Regional Executive Council, presented him with a canvas of Francis receiving the Stigmata memorializing his talk on the Stigmata. After some heartfelt applause from the attendees, Father Frank gave us his “final” final blessing.





WELCOME!

**BROTHER RUDOLPH (ROD) PIERETTI, OFM CAP,
IS APPOINTED REGIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT**

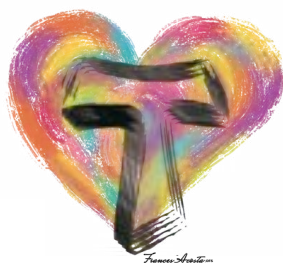
".....the Lord gave me brothers..."

- St. Francis of Assisi

I'm absolutely thrilled to share some wonderful news with you! Fr. Robert Williams, OFM Cap, who is the Provincial Minister of the Capuchin Province of the Sacred Stigmata, has kindly assigned Bro. Rod as the Regional Spiritual Assistant of Our Lady of the Angels Region. I'm happy to announce that this assignment is effective immediately.

Bro. Rod, with his extensive spiritual wisdom, dedication, and commitment, is a perfect match for this role. If you'd like to know more about him, I encourage you to read his illuminating article in the 'Just a Thought' section of this magazine. It offers a more comprehensive picture of Bro. Rod and his spiritual journey. **Let's all give a big, warm welcome to Brother Rod in his new role.**

I have every confidence that he'll provide wonderful spiritual guidance and support for our Region.



Blessing of Saint Francis

May the Lord bless you.

May the Lord keep you.

May He show His face to you and have mercy. May He turn to you His countenance and give you peace.

The Lord bless you.



Regional Spiritual Assistant

Our Lady of the Angels Region

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Getting to Know Brother Rod

Greetings and best wishes to all members of Our Lady of the Angels region. Recently, I have been assigned to serve as the Regional Spiritual Assistant, following in the footsteps of Fr. Frank McHugh, OFM, who faithfully served in this capacity for more than ten years. He has kindly assured me that his guidance and advice will be made available when needed or requested.

Since the first days of my postulancy at St. Lawrence Friary in Beacon, New York in 1978, the OFS's were part and parcel of our friary life. We looked forward to the monthly gatherings, the Stations of the Cross during Lent, the summer picnic, the Christmas party and the countless cakes, pies and cookies that always seemed to find their way to our table. In fact, I can't think of my Capuchin religious life without recounting the exceptional goodness and charism of the Third Order, as we used to call it in the day.

Over the years I have mostly been assigned to projects dealing with the maintenance of buildings and grounds at our larger friaries. I have also worked with the foreign missions. The past six years were devoted to being a caregiver to the sick and elderly at our infirmary. At present, I am stationed at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Hackensack, New Jersey where I work as sacristan and help with the various parish activities.

As the newly appointed Regional Spiritual Assistant, I hope to contribute in some small way to the life and spirit of the Secular Franciscan Order. I extend to you my sincere appreciation for the beautiful example you give to the local society and to the world at large. May the Lord continue to call new members to this sacred way of life.

Bro. Rod



The Ministry of Caring, Inc.



PROVINCE OF THE SACRED STIGMATA OF ST. FRANCIS



The Ministry of Caring, Inc.



Regional Spiritual Assistant

Our Lady of the Angels Region

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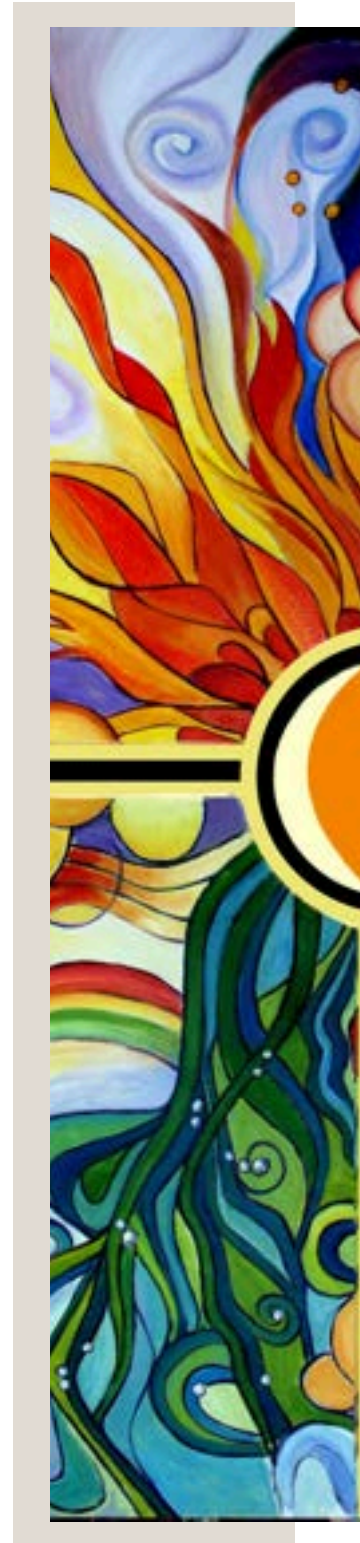
Surprise!

Everyone loves a surprise—a pleasant surprise. What would life be like without surprises? Probably pretty routine and mundane, just slogging through one day after another with little or nothing to spark the fires of excitement and inspiration. What about our Christian life? Are there any surprises in store for us? There certainly are! And in fact the possibilities are literally infinite. It is said that after his conversion, St. Francis never let an inspiration of the Holy Spirit go unheeded. Following through with a prompting of the Holy Spirit will always lead to a surprise because the outcome is so much more than we bargained for, so much more than we could ever expect or predict. God multiplies the little we offer in ways and means beyond our understanding.

We can easily become overwhelmed from the constant stream of problems and difficulties that beset our personal life and the world around us. With so many areas that need attention we can be tempted to shrug our shoulders, feel helpless, roll our eyes and pull the covers back over our heads. But this is not what the Lord of history is inviting us to do or become. We are called to be courageous in the face of innumerable challenges by availing ourselves first and foremost to the workings of the Holy Spirit. “He will guide you to all truth” (Jn. 16:13). Allow the Lord to prioritize our needs and concerns and then follow through in all sincerity and generosity.

Great occasions for serving God come seldom, but little ones surround us daily has been the maxim for countless saints down through the ages. Before we start our day, and in any given situation whether pleasant or repulsive, we can pray for the Holy Spirit to set the stage and lead us in the role or capacity the Lord knows we can fulfill. “Lord, what should I say to my estranged family member? Lord, who can I help today; put them in my path. Lord, the tension is unbearable; give me an opportunity to bring your healing intervention.” Such prayers dispose of our hearts, minds and spirits to the workings of the Divine. And once set in motion, fasten your seatbelts for the good that you do or say will bring about life-giving dividends. Just remember that if you don’t see them in this life, you will surely see them in the next when you cross the threshold of eternity and hear the resounding shouts of—***Surprise!***

Bro. Rod





Fraternity is more than local

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I write this, I am on my way home from Rome after attending a meeting of the CIOFS International Formation Secretariat. Working with my brothers and sisters has been such a positive and uplifting experience that I began to think about why this would be so. Have you given any thought lately to the fact that we are all members, not only of our local fraternities, but also of the Regional, National, and International fraternities? My time this past week with the CIOFS Formation Secretariat brought this point home beautifully.

The Secretariat members come from all over the world. We are from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, the Czech Republic, Romania, and the USA– a real alphabet soup! Our two common languages are Spanish and English. Sometimes, I get to serve as the translator, but for this meeting, one of the Presidency councilors who speaks Spanish, English, and Italian joined us.

We last met in person two years ago, but this past week, we began our meeting as if we had never been apart. The rhythm of our conversation and our work was smooth and pleasant. Our prayers and our meals were heartfelt and hearty. We spoke in whichever language was comfortable at that moment.

You may find that this happens when you get together with long-time friends or family. But, isn't the same thing often true when we gather with our Franciscan brothers and sisters?

We need to be examples to one another of keeping our commitment as Secular Franciscans. How can others trust us to lead if they see that we don't have respect for and live according to the Rule that we promised to follow when we were professed?

The Secretariat cares deeply about our Order and about the formative material we are creating that will bring all of us closer to God and strengthen our vocations. Even though our local fraternities are thousands of miles apart, we walked together in the footsteps of St. Francis. We discussed what can benefit every member in every local fraternity throughout the world.

What is truly special and emotional for me, though, is to see how people of different backgrounds, languages, and cultures are so much alike in our love for one another, for God, and for our Franciscan vocation. The Holy Spirit has given each one of us the exact gifts and talents we need to allow us to get along and to be productive. It's a bit of a miracle to see what even a tiny (6 of us) "temporary" Fraternity can accomplish if we are open to the Spirit and to one another.

Let's all thank God for this gift of fraternity. It is a priceless gift that we should never take for granted. It is a pearl of great price, a treasure, that we should take great pains to preserve and share with others.

By Diane Menditto, OFS
National Vice Minister



Photo credit: <https://ciofs.info>

NEWS AROUND THE REGION



PROFESSIONS, ADMISSIONS & ELECTIONS, ETC

Pastoral & Fraternal Visitation

**St. Francis Fraternity
Hackensack, New Jersey**



Photo credit: Maureen Menakis, OFS

March 14, 2024

Pictured: Diane Menditto, OFS, (formator), Fr. Prem Kumar, OFM CAP (Spiritual Assistant), Rosellina Iacono, OFS (mentor), Josephine Cigna, OFS (newly admitted candidate), Chris Leone, OFS (Regional Minister), and Fr. Frank McHugh, OFM, (Regional SA).

Election

**St. Stephen Fraternity
Perth Amboy, New Jersey**



Photo credit: Chris Leone, OFS

New Council

March 17, 2024

Pictured: Left side, front to back Urszula Statkiewicz, OFS, **Councilor** Martia Jarosz, OFS, **Vice Minister** Halina Fidura, OFS, **Secretary**

Right side, left to right

Bozenna Jedra, OFS, **Minister** Janina Cag, OFS, **Treasurer** Zdzisław (Ziggy) Wiernasz, OFS, **Formation Director** Maria Wiernasz, OFS, **Councilor** Fr. Frank McHugh, OFM, **Ecclesial Witness**

Election

**Servants of God Fraternity
Yonkers, New York**



Photo Diane Cercone, Aspirant

On April 10, 2024

Newly elected 2024-2027 Council

Left to right:

William Edelson, OFS - **Vice-Minister**
Jinny Pineiro, OFS - **Treasurer**
Susan Leyden, OFS - **Secretary**
Tom Scheuring, OFS - **Minister**
Marise Frangie, OFS - **Formation Director**

Ceremony of Welcoming

**St. Anne Fraternity,
Fair Lawn NJ**



Photo credit: Angela Rodin, OFS

On March 28, 2024,

The fraternity received 3 new inquirers.

Seated (left to right) are

Claudia Brockway,

Nina Conn, and Maureen Neville.

Standing behind are council members

Eleanor Davina - **Secretary**,
Bill Joyce - **Formation Director**,
Mary Peregrine - **Vice-Minister**,
Fr. Jim Bernard - **Spiritual Assistant**,
Marianne Thorpe - **Treasurer** and
Sue Moleti - **Minister**.

Rite of Admission

**St. Francis Fraternity
Hackensack New Jersey**



Photo credit: Diane F. Menditto, OFS

March 14, 2024

celebrated the Rite of Admission of Josephine Cigna

Josephine Cigna (to the right of the cross). Also pictured, **Rosellina Iacono** member of the formation team who is Josephine's mentor.

**St. Anthony fraternity
Butler, New Jersey**



Photo credit: Joe Carluzzo

April 8, 2024

Admitted to Candidacy in the photo are, left to right:

Rich Gadomski, OFS (**candidate**)
Enzo Fonzo, OFS, (**candidate**)
Laura Marklin, OFS (**candidate**)
Sue Krista, OFS (**candidate**)
Maryanne Hanisch, OFS (**candidate**)
Patty Elghari, OFS (**candidate**)
Ed Wojciechowski, OFS - **Minister**

Congratulations To all!



NEWS AROUND THE REGION



PROFESSIONS, ADMISSIONS & ELECTIONS, ETC

Rite of Admission

**St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity
Ringwood, New Jersey**



Photo credit: Daniel Solch

March 3, 2024

St. Catherine of Bologna Church,
Front row – Debbie O'Brien, **Candidate;**
 Fr. Michael Tyson, OFM, **Spiritual Assistant;** Anna Appel, **Candidate;**
 Connie Kohn, OFS; **Back row –** Mario Sheldon, OFS, **Treasurer;** Rosanne Hughes, OFS, **Formation Director;** Joyce Wagner, OFS; Ann Marie Solch, OFS, **Secretary;** Nancy Ihnat, OFS, **Minister.** Denise Minissale, OFS, Vice Minister, was off-site.

Answers to puzzles on pg.11



*27 O wonderful loftiness and stupendous dignity!
 O sublime humility!
 O humble sublimity!
 The Lord of the universe,
 God and the Son of God,
 so humbles Himself
 that for our salvation
 He hides Himself
 under an ordinary piece of
 bread!*

9	4	8	1	2	5	3	6	7
1	5	7	4	6	3	9	8	2
6	3	2	9	7	8	5	1	4
8	9	6	2	1	7	4	3	5
3	2	5	6	8	4	1	7	9
7	1	4	3	5	9	8	2	6
2	7	3	5	9	1	6	4	8
5	6	1	8	4	2	7	9	3
4	8	9	7	3	6	2	5	1

My God, My All!

It is with true joy that I share this update on our three prospective members in the Candidacy phase. Their participation, talents and faith lives have enriched our Franciscan circle and bring inspiration to our group. Joan Curcio, Rosemarie Spedaliere and Melissa Taylor-Bahrs are three exceptional ladies with a great appreciation for our way of life! Praise God and may He continue to bless our entire Order with servant leaders such as these. 🙏

The Courtship: Orientation

A person of deep faith, freshly smitten, invited into His life with a simple, "Come and See"...

Exclusively Dating:

Inquiry

Intigued by getting to know Him more personally, because after all, to know Him is to love Him. With eyes for only Him, they're falling deeper and deeper in love.

Engagement Period: Candidacy Phase

Without words He asks, "Do you love Me? Will you be Mine?" "Of course I will" is the delighted reply of the one who was searching for that true and trustworthy, loving Companion.

Nuptial Day: Profession

The day has arrived! Just as the Groom gave His life for His Bridegroom, so too does the humbled and chosen beloved give their, "Yes", to life with Him on the path carved out for their own call to holiness, which is a call to an Eternity with Him.

Blessings,

Karyn Witter-Fusco, OFS

Our Lady of Guadalupe
Red Bank, NJ



Congratulations To all!





COVIVENZA 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

*"The Stigmata of St. Francis: Simple or Complicated?
What the Early Documents Tell Us."*

CONVIVENZA 2024 ATTENDANCE SETS A NEW RECORD!

One hundred and seventeen brothers and sisters representing 27 of our 29 fraternities attended Convivenza on April 27 in Bishop Manning Hall at St. Bonaventure parish. That number is even higher than pre-pandemic levels when 80-90 attended. Needless to say, the regional executive council was ecstatic! It was a grace filled day as Fr. Frank McHugh, OFM, our Regional Spiritual Assistant, led us in a discussion of the Stigmata as captured in the early documents. Father's talk was followed by Mass with Fr. Prem Kumar, OFM Cap, Spiritual Assistant to St. Francis fraternity in Hackensack and the pastor of St. Francis Church concelebrating.



After lunch, Father Frank continued his presentation and directed each table to discuss how they have been "wounded" by someone or some event. We were asked to reflect on that wound in light of the Peace Prayer of St. Francis and if the Peace Prayer helped us deal with the wound.

Chris Leone, OFS, Regional Minister, announced that our annual regional retreat would be held on August 2-4 at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center in Wappingers Falls, NY. The retreat is being held on our region's feast day of Our Lady of the Angels of the Porziuncola. The retreat is being led by Fr. Andre Cirino, OFM; Deacon Joe Patrona, OFS and Deacon Vinny Verlezza, OFS. Topics include the Assisi Pardon, Fraternitas and Francis' Love of the Eucharist. The cost is \$225 per person and includes 5 meals. The registration form can be found on page 15.

Chris also announced Fr. Frank's retirement as our Regional Spiritual Assistant and introduced Bro. Rudolph (Rod) Pieretti, OFM Cap. from the Stigmata Province as our newly appointed Regional Spiritual Assistant (see separate article pg. 7).



NEWS AROUND THE REGION



COVIVENZA 2024 HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED



NEWS AROUND THE REGION



**Photo credits:
Diane F. Menditto, OFS &
Ed Wojciechowski, OFS &
Laura Beausoleil, OFS**



SAINT MARY OF THE ANGELS FRATERNITY~ NYC, NEW YORK

In March, our fraternity enjoyed a successful Food Drive in support of the food pantry at Holy Name of Jesus-Saint Gregory the Great Parish. Some members of the fraternity were present the weekend of March 16th and 17th to volunteer their time in support of this important initiative. We collected \$1,484 cash/checks and a substantial amount of non-perishable food items. We are thankful to this community of faith for their care and concern for our brothers and sisters most in need.

"He who labors as he prays, lifts his heart to God with his hands." Saint Benedict

As a member of Justice, Peace, and the Integrity for Creation (JPIC), our fraternity participated in the "Care for Creation" Fair, April 20th and 21st, at the Church of Holy Name of Jesus-Saint Gregory the Great Parish school cafeteria. Light refreshments were served. Saint Mary of the Angels Fraternity represented a table offering some handouts to the community such as information about the Secular Franciscan Order, Saint Claire Heirloom Seeds, Saint Francis coloring pages, Saints Francis and Clare prayer cards, and authentic seashells hand-engraved with the words, "Earth Day 2024."

Cabrini Immigrant Services NYC, and Laudato Si' Movement had representatives present to speak to the community. Other partner organizations sent over material handouts about caring for creation.

At 3 PM, we gathered outdoors in front of the Church to pray, Via Creationis. The Pastor read each of the Seven Stations of Creation and a Leader read the corresponding Seven Stations of Nature. The prayerful reflections were thought provoking and deeply touching. We shared many happy moments with family and friends while raising the collective consciousness on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation.

Saint Francis of Assisi, The Journey and the Dream:

"Saint Francis stood atop Mount Subasio gazing upon the breathtaking panorama of Assisi and the whole valley of Spoleto below him. He looked down and saw a tiny jonquil looking up at him. And he forgot the majesty of mountains and valleys in concentrating on the delicate, trembling beauty of this single mountain flower. It stood there in the freedom of the mountain air glorifying God. Its life, so brief and vulnerable, was an act of praise as everyone's life should be. It did not worry about what it would accomplish in life or leave behind. Nor did it fear, for its own brief existence. It simply was."

A Reflection on Mother Earth:

Glory and wonder fill our heart as we attune our five senses. to the beauty that surrounds us. We lift our heart, hands, and voice to songs of praise, giving thanks to the LORD our God, for the depth and breadth of life in all His magnificent Creation.

We see and marvel at the countless stars of night, the phases of the evening moon light, the grandeur of the hills and valleys, all the animals that grace the earth, the rivers long and wide, and the ocean deep overflowing with sea creatures. We feel the warmth of the rising sun giving light to our days, the early morning dew and the gentle breeze, the light rain that caresses our face. We feel the Flame of Love, JESUS, alive in our heart.

We hear the sweet melody of the robin's song at dawn, the ocean waves crashing on the sandy seashore. the howling winds and thunderous storms, the yellow and brown honeybee yielding sweet honey. We smell the fragrant flowers and budding trees, while tilling the soil to taste the sweet fruits of the earth.

Awe and Wonder fill our soul when we embrace and bless each grace-filled moment. Together we celebrate and give great thanks for all His magnificent creation...the sanctity of life. All creatures, human, non-human, and the cosmos, all created by our God. How Great Though Art!

*May our every step and every breadth be a prayer of thanksgiving...Jesus, I trust in you.
Mother Mary, Mother of God, Mother of the Universe, Queen of Peace, Pray for us.
Saint Joseph, Foster Father of Jesus, Pillar of Families, Pray for us.*



Photo credit: Julia McGinnity

Catherine M. Skurka, OFS



Secular Franciscan Order Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity Annual Retreat August 2 – 4, 2024 Mt. Alvernia Retreat House Wappingers Falls, NY

Arrival: Friday between 4pm and 6pm. Dinner @ 6pm. **Departure:** after breakfast, Sunday.
Cost \$225.00 payable with registration. Includes presentations, double room, private facilities and five full meals. Please note there are a limited number of individual rooms.

Directions to Mt. Alvernia Retreat House, 158 Delavergne Ave., Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

From Westchester:

Take either the Taconic Parkway or Route 684 to Route 84 West. Take 84 West to Exit 46 (Route 9 North/Poughkeepsie) Take route 9 North for about 8 miles, you will see Home Depot on right, continue a few traffic lights, pass route 9 Mall (Kohl's department Store & Borders Book Shop), now move into LEFT lane at next traffic light turn left onto Route 9D (also called West Main St.) follow 9D passing the first light (South Hills Mall) at next light make right turn onto Delavergne Ave. go up hill Mt Alvernia is on your left.

From New Jersey:

Take either Route 17; Garden State Parkway or Palisades Parkway North to I 87 New York State Thruway. Follow I 87 North to I 84 East (Exit 17) follow I 84 to exit 46 Route. Take route 9 North for about 8 miles, you will Home Depot on right, continue a few traffic lights, pass route 9 Mall (Kohl's department Store & Borders Book Shop), now move into LEFT lane at next traffic light turn left onto Route 9D (also called West Main St.) follow 9D passing the first light (South Hills Mall) at next light make right turn onto Delavergne Ave. go up hill Mt Alvernia is on your left.

From New York City:

Go over George Washington Bridge and follow directions above from New Jersey.

➤ Retreatants should arrive between 4PM & 6PM, Dinner is between 6 and 7PM.

Registration Form Please check one Professed Candidate Inquirer

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ E mail _____

Fraternity: _____ Single room: _____ Double room _____

Special Needs: _____ Room with: _____

Send completed registration with \$225.00 check, payable to "Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity" to: Richard Spana OFS, 100 E. Hartsdale Avenue, Apt 2KW, Hartsdale, NY 10530

Registration form which can also be found on our website -
[Our Lady of the Angels Region: New Jersey-New York-USA](#)



Presenters & TOPICS

Fr. Andre Cirino, OFM

Fraternitas

*Deacon
Vinny Verlezza*

The Pardon of Assisi

Deacon Joe Patrona

Francis' Love for the Eucharist



‘Trinity’s Triumph’ movie tells story of young men following their vocation in seminary

By MICHAEL WOJCIK

NEWS EDITOR

Michael J. Wickham wishes more Catholics knew the joy of “hanging out” with priests.

While studying at Siena College in Loudonville, NY, Wickham especially enjoyed talking with Father Bill Beaudin, a Franciscan Friar and the chaplain at the time. Conversations ranged from Catholic theology to favorite movies and music. Wickham, a Catholic raised in the Paterson diocese, brought movie-goers his “up-close” perspective of priestly and seminary life in his work on a new independent film, “Trinity’s Triumph.”

Wickham co-wrote, directed, and edited “Trinity’s Triumph,” a coming of age story of three young men in seminary and their struggles in discerning their vocations. The fictional tale also pulls back the stained-glass curtain on the real life joys and challenges of seminarians and priests today. In his directorial debut, Wickham shot the film in various locations in New York and the Newark Archdiocese in New Jersey in 2019. The movie went live on streaming platforms in November after three years of delays due to COVID-19.

“I’m proud of the movie. It’s gotten positive feedback,” said Wickham, 41, raised in St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in the Oak Ridge neighborhood of Jefferson Township. Today, the married father of two lives in Los Angeles and worships at a parish in Hollywood. “In the movie, the seminarians are on a journey to become men and priests. It’s about their brotherhood as they take on a profession that defines them. It shows priests and seminarians as humans and doesn’t avoid their problems.”

“Trinity’s Triumph” follows three young men studying at the fictitious Holy Trinity Seminary. They lean on each other and their faith as they navigate their vocations. Some are forced to deal with real-world struggles, such as figuring out whether they are called to marriage and not to the priesthood.

Wickham co-wrote the script with Father Stephen Fichter, pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Wycoff, episcopal vicar of education in the Newark Archdiocese, and actress and writer Kathleen Carson. He directed 30 actors and many extras, including St. Thomas parishioners. Wickham drew on his experience in the movie industry, where he has produced films, shorts, web series, and commercial videos; directed shorts; and written feature screenplays.

“Michael is faithful and, in the movie, describes our Catholic culture well. He poured his soul into this film,” Father Fichter said.

Wickham leaned on his Catholic faith, passed down from his parents Joe and Debbie, both Third Order Franciscans. Debbie is a lay collaborator for the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in Denville. As a child, Wickham was an altar server and helped with Confirmation retreats at St. Thomas.

“The movie shows the challenges of the call to priesthood for some- but not all- men in seminary. Not everyone is called. The ones who are called go on to become good priests,” said father Benjamin Williams, pastor of St. Thomas and St. John Vianney Parish in the Stockholm neighborhood of Hardyston Township. “The movie is well done.”

To learn more about “Trinity’s Triumph” and where to stream it, visit:

<https://njersy.co/3U1bgx9>

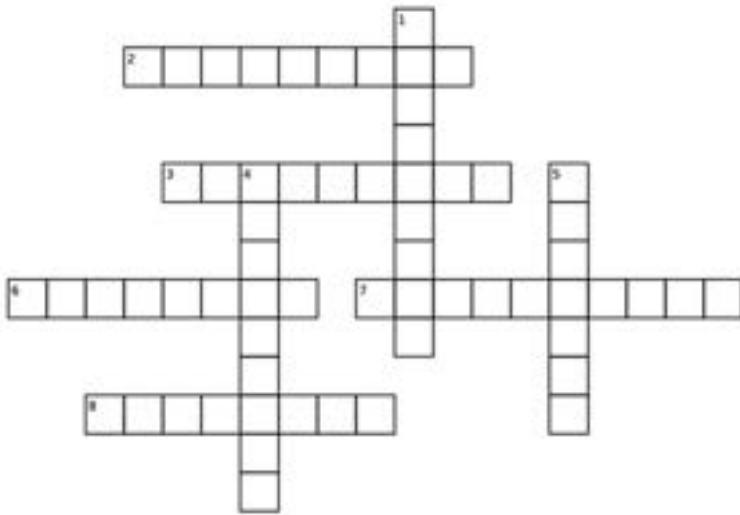
Michael J. Wickham is the son of Debbie and Joe Wickham, OFS



Just FOR FUN!

A letter to the Entire Order

Use some of the words in the puzzle to complete the letter below



Down:

1. the quality of being extremely good, beautiful, or enjoyable.
4. the quality of being very serious and important, or morally good.
5. the state or quality of being worthy of honor or respect.

Across:

2. inspiring delight, pleasure, or admiration.
3. preservation or deliverance from harm.
6. a modest or low view of one's own importance.
7. extremely impressive.
8. all existing matter and space considered as a whole.

SODUKO

	4		1			6	
	5		4	6	9	8	
6		2	9		5	1	
8	9	6				5	
	1	4	3		8	2	6
	7			1			8
					7		
		9	7				5



Answers to puzzles

ON PAGE 12

A Letter to the Entire Order

*27*O _____ and
 _____ dignity!
 O sublime _____!
 O humble sublimity!
 The Lord of the _____
 God and the Son of God,
 so humbles Himself
 that for our _____.
 He hides Himself
 under an ordinary piece of
 bread!



Artist: Sister Victoria Masil,
 Franciscan Sisters of
 Christian Charity

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION



Calling for articles, poems, event photos

THE TROUBADOUR is a quarterly communication vehicle published by Our Lady of the Angels Region. It is published digitally.

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 candidate in formation of our region, and your complete e-mail address must be registered in our database.

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 next issue of The Troubadour, Fall, September 2024, 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.
- When submitting articles for publication consideration, please state fraternity name and location, as well as your name and address.
- Photos are limited to 2 or 3. Some submitted photos will be used.

Because of our magazine article regional submission requirements, I am limited in the number of accepted submissions. Therefore, not all articles, poems or event images can be published in the current edition. I will give consideration for future publication.

 *Franciscan Resources*

Our Lady of the Angels Region

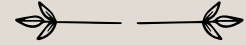
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Wisdom

OF THE SAINTS



St. Alexandria of Rome



(c. 300AD)

FEAST DAY: 23 April

"O God of George, help me, for You only are the true God!"

St. Alexandria of Rome

St. Alexandra of Rome was the wife and empress of the Roman Emperor Diocletian. Although her husband hated Christians, she was inspired by St. George and became a Christian herself.

When she openly professed her faith, she was condemned to death. Just before her execution, she was allowed to rest and she died peacefully before the soldiers could kill her.

Dear Lord Jesus, give me courage to stand with You when others challenge me to reject You. Amen

St. Alexandra of Rome, pray for us!

