

Our Fraternal Scoop

Fall 2026 -Quarterly Publication



Mission:

Our Fraternal Scoop, a publication of the Saint Thomas More Regional Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order of the United States, is a vital communication link between all members throughout the regional fraternity. The articles within the publication, while sharing the Secular Franciscan charism and vision, are intended to share news between the Regional Executive Council and local fraternity about various events and activities. Our goal is by everyone contributing to the newsletter, that it will foster fraternal closeness.



MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER

What was the most important or most awesome experience since our last newsletter? Well, the “Q” of course. It was a true family event. And yes, I do mean family. You see, I consider and have thought of our Franciscan way of life a family adventure. And the “Q” proved my feelings.

I am currently stuck on “family.” I see all of us – the Secular Franciscan Order - as a family. The “Q” event made this definition of mine stronger. No, I don’t have my head in the sand. I am very aware of family – I have a Hartzell family that I am so proud of, and know they are always there. That is who most anyone would go to when talking of family.

However, there is my and your Franciscan Family. This family is one you go to for various reasons and maybe that extra help. (Maybe for a prayer, here and there.) You wouldn’t necessarily go to them for everything. But this family is there when needed, and place a much needed light on the world through a different set of eyes. In some cases there is, what I will call, the God factor along with St. Francis. They will understand the conversion going on within, during various challenges being faced. And not afraid to tell you how you might be better able to handle whatever you may be facing.

This all started the “sharing of family” and what it means to me because of the “Q”. In a room of over 400, each time we came in, you never would have guessed that we were meeting for the first time or that we have different thoughts, feelings, etc. We were ready to share, especially in our Little Fraternities. What all of this means to me, and hopefully somewhat now to you, is that we are family, along with God and St. Francis.



WHAT IS FRATERNITY...



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 NOT:

Not simply a prayer group.

Not a Bible-study group.

Not a social club.

Not a support group.

Not a parish committee.

Not a group that meets once a month, has coffee, and goes home.

Those things may happen in fraternity but they are not its identity.

The local fraternity is the basic unit of the Secular Franciscan Order and a visible sign of the Church as a privileged place where the Franciscan vocation grows, where members learn to live the Gospel together, and where their apostolic life is strengthened.

Fraternity means I don't just belong to a group. I belong to people.

People who will challenge me.

People who will pray for me.

People I may sometimes misunderstand.

People who may sometimes disappoint me.

People who don't always think like me.

And that's precisely where the 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.

(Continued next page)

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.

REGIONAL RETREAT

Fellow Franciscans!

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2026 Retreat. It was an informative and wonderful experience, and it was truly a joy to share this beautiful journey with all of you.

We appreciate you taking the time to complete the evaluations. We have read through your feedback and will be implementing changes for next year's retreat.

On behalf of the 2027 Retreat Committee, we are excited to announce that our speaker for 2027 will be Sister Renita Brummer, OSF.

Please save the date for June 11-13, 2027, at the CASA. More details will follow.

Warm regards,
2027 Retreat Committee



MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

My Dear Franciscan Sisters & Brothers,

I pray your summer was delightful, you were able to get away from the heat and relax in the cool mountain breeze or relax on the beach or relax by a swimming pool. For me there was not much happening other than what I share with you now.

I was able to relax for a short while and then in July it all changed. All the Friars of the order, gathered in St. Louis for our second Chapter as a new province. For the first time we elected a new administration with Br. Michael Perry, OFM, our new provincial minister, for the next 6 years. Some of you may remember him as being the Minister General of the order a few years ago. His newly elected divinator/councilors are new with one exception.

The next item, I was able to be present for the election of a new beginning again of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity in Las Vegas. I felt it was important for me to be present for this event and decided to fly to Las Vegas instead of driving. I did not want to experience the loss of not being there because of an event on the road happening that would prevent me from the experience. If you recall, four of us could not be present for profession because of an accident which shut down the highway for most of the day. It was a good thing we had had a backup so the profession could move forward without my presence. If that was not in place we would have had to reschedule their profession. The chance for this to happen again is highly unlikely, but I learned a long time ago that one cannot take any chances. Always have a backup plan. By me attending this election along with our Regional Minister we were able to be present at the Election of their new council. We should keep this council in prayer as they begin anew.

The sad part of August was losing one of our Friars who spent part of his life at St Mary's Basilica when I was assigned there. Fr. Edward Sarrazin, OFM passed away the end of July. His Funeral Liturgy was on the 5th of August in Tucson at St. Xavier del Bac and burial was on the 6th of August at St. Francis Cemetery, in the Friars section, here in Phoenix. Many of you may remember his dry wit and short homilies. He usually had the early mass on Sunday at St. Mary's. He has been added to my list of prayers prayed every morning.

The end of August Spiritual Assistants gathered in Flagstaff for a live meeting. To begin I thought I could not be present do to distance and night driving. The length of time could be a factor, because of the altitude; I can only handle a few hours. I was able to attend the gathering of Spiritual Assistants to have an overview of the new Spiritual Assistant handbook which was just published. It was a great experience for us. I am anxious to begin studying it along with the rest of the Spiritual Assistants. I pray all of our Spiritual Assistants have the new SA handbook. Because beginning in September we will be using it in our monthly meeting starting in the beginning.

It is hard to believe that we are now entering the fall season. Soon we will be celebrating the Stigmata, and the great feast of St. Francis.

May God grant you peace,

Fr. Micah Muhlen, OFM



MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR

Good day, good people,
We continue to enjoy the blessedness of this Jubilee Year. Proclaimed by Pope Leo XIV, the **Franciscan Jubilee Year** began back in January 10, 2026 and will conclude January 10, 2027. As you know, it marks the 800th anniversary of the *transitus* (the death/passing) of St. Francis of Assisi in 1226.

Our Holy Father has offered this prayer for the occasion:

***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

First of all, this is a wonderful prayer that would be good to have as part of your gathering, council meeting, part of your opening or closing prayers, or maybe simply part of your daily prayer. This is a wonderful topic for formation and reflection. You can check out a video presentation by Fr Wayne Hellman, OFM Conv on the Jubilee Prayer of St Francis of Assisi on YouTube (simply put in this title in the search bar of YouTube or go to secularfranciscansusa.org and look for the events from the "Q"). Let's hope and pray that it takes root in all our lives.

Peace and good to you all,

Patrick

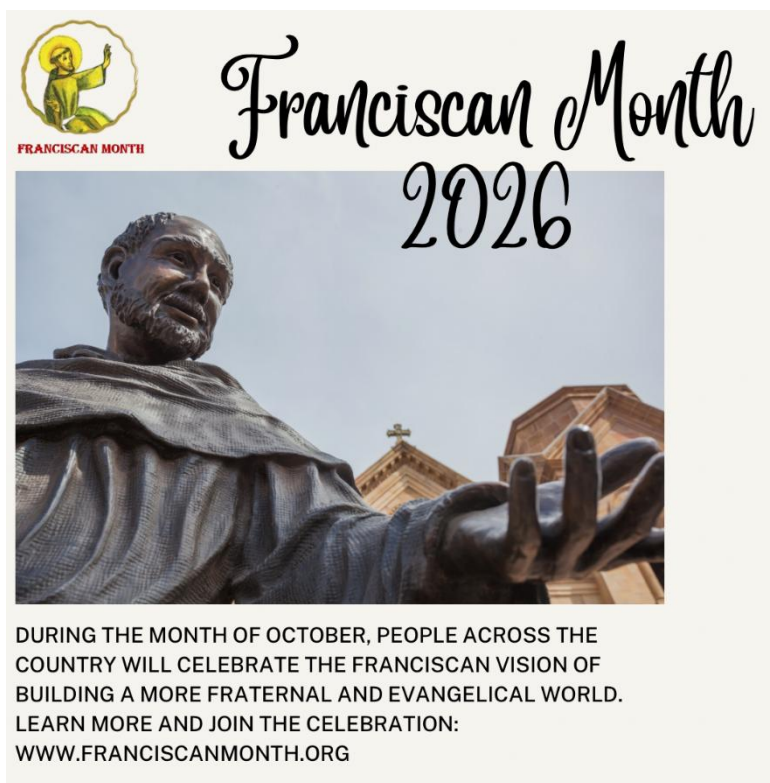
Submitted by Patrick Mowrer, OFS

FRANCISCAN MONTH

The mission of Franciscan Month is to celebrate the 800-year charism of the Franciscan way of life; to build awareness about this way of life and to invite and inspire people of all faiths to live it.

We are asking Secular Franciscans to promote Franciscan Month in the diocesan (non-Franciscan) parishes where they are parishioners by asking their pastors for permission to speak at the Masses on the weekend of September 26-27 and to include a bulletin announcement to run on that weekend and the 4 Sundays in October.

I know that some pastors may not let us speak ("if I let you speak, I have to let other groups speak"). In that case, it would be wonderful if they simply ran the bulletin announcement on that weekend and the 4 Sundays in October. The announcement has the website address - www.franciscanmonth.org - so hopefully parishioners will visit the site.

A poster for Franciscan Month 2026. At the top left is a small circular logo with a green figure of St. Francis and the text "FRANCISCAN MONTH". To the right, the text "Franciscan Month" is written in a large, elegant script, with "2026" below it in a similar but slightly smaller script. Below the text is a photograph of a bronze statue of St. Francis, showing his head and outstretched hand. The background of the photo is a clear blue sky and the top of a building with a cross. Below the photo, the text reads: "DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER, PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY WILL CELEBRATE THE FRANCISCAN VISION OF BUILDING A MORE FRATERNAL AND EVANGELICAL WORLD. LEARN MORE AND JOIN THE CELEBRATION: WWW.FRANCISCANMONTH.ORG".

FRANCISCAN MONTH

Franciscan Month
2026

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Thank you for supporting this initiative, especially during this Jubilee Year of St. Francis.

Feel free to drop me a line to let me know how your pastor responded. Thanks!

Chris Leone, OFS
National Councilor
chrisleoneofs@gmail.com



October: A Month for All Things Franciscan

By Chris Leone, OFS • National Councilor



We have Black History Month, Autism Awareness Month, and many others. Let's promote October as Franciscan Month. Franciscan Month was conceived in 2023 and launched at St. Francis College in Brooklyn, NY, by Brother Gregory Cellini, OSF, a Franciscan Brother of Brooklyn.

In 2024, our reach broadened to the Archdiocese of Newark and the Dioceses of Metuchen and Paterson in New Jersey, as well as the Archdiocese of New York and Dioceses of Brooklyn and Rockville Centre in New York. In 2025, we expanded nationwide with the support of all the Orders of the Franciscan Family.

The mission of Franciscan Month is to celebrate the 800-year charism of the Franciscan way of life, to build awareness about this way of life, and to invite and inspire people of all faiths to live it.

Our intention for 2026 is to promote the Franciscan values of simplicity, care for creation, peacemaking, the dignity and integrity of each person and service to the poor, marginalized and forgotten - especially during this Jubilee Year of St. Francis.

We will accomplish this with a focus on engaging Franciscan colleges, universities and high schools; Franciscan and diocesan parishes; and selected U.S. retreat centers. The friars will speak at the Masses in their parishes.

We are asking Secular Franciscans to promote Franciscan Month in the diocesan parishes where they are parishioners by asking their pastors for permission to speak at the Masses on the weekend of September 26-27, and to include a bulletin announcement that weekend. A script and bulletin announcement will be provided. Once you receive permission from your pastor, reach out to me for the script. cleoneofs@gmail.com

The Franciscan Month team is preparing a series of coordinated events and a large-scale digital campaign for October. Recognizing the reach and impact of digital media, our primary emphasis will be on spreading awareness of Franciscan spirituality and its values through online platforms. This includes weekly themed blogs, videos, and social media content, alongside in-person events developed in collaboration with our target communities.

Our ultimate goal is an official Vatican designation of October as Franciscan Month.

Please visit our website - www.franciscanmonth.org



St. Francis and scenes from his life.
By Master of San Francesco Bardi - 13th century.

BRINGING THE Q HOME...



A total of 480 participants gathered in Lexington KY at the Griffin Gate Marriott Resort from Wednesday July 29 until Sunday August 2 for the 21st Quinquennial Congress of the OFS-USA Secular Franciscan Order. 17 members from St. Thomas More Region attended the Q (missing in the picture Steve Roszhart who got to spend most of the Congress in the hotel room sick with Covid 🙄)

Our Keynotes speakers, Br. Bill Short, OFM, Darleen Pryds, PhD and Fr. Wayne Hellmann, OFM Conv. all offered excellent presentations which are all available for you to view on the National Website.



After each talk, we met in small groups called "Little Fraternities" to dialogue and share.



The closing Celebration of the Eucharist was concelebrated by His Excellency Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Apostolic Nuncio for the USA and Most Reverend Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conventual, Bishop of Lexington, KY, as well as Father Stefan Acatrinei, OFM Conv., General Spiritual Assistant for CIOFS from Romania and 3 of the 4 members of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA)



All also enjoyed awesome panel discussions ...



...and great entertainment by the dynamic duo Amy and Carmen 😊!



BRINGING THE Q HOME...

For lots more pictures of the Q, all the videos of the Keynotes presentations, the Apostolic Blessing of Pope Leo and the homily during the closing Mass delivered by His Excellency Archbishop Gabriele Caccia go to: <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/updates-from-the-q-july-29th-through-august-1st-2026/>

Trying to say what the Q was like for me is like asking a child to list every toy they want for Christmas.

The Q was so amazing.

When I first arrived, of course there was the hustle bustle of setting everything up.

Everyone was smiling and talking and having fun doing the various jobs. True Franciscan spirit. Starting with the mass and dinner was the perfect start. The speakers were beyond great; I didn't want them to quit. How such perfect ones were chosen I don't know.

I could feel the excitement everywhere. The schedule kept everyone on track allowing their own needs to be addressed. I felt very blessed the whole time knowing I was a part of this great group of people. Having the entertainment time each evening sent everyone home with a smile, anxious to return the next day. My only question is; where is the next one being held? Nothing we say can possibly express what those attending experienced.

Betty Holler, OFS (Peace Fraternity)



I had the privilege of attending the Q in Lexington Kentucky from July 29-August 1, 2026. This was my second Q I attended since being professed. I had a wonderful time. It was so inspiring and it was great meeting many of my fellow Secular Franciscans from different parts of the USA. All three guest speakers were great and inspiring. One of my favorite parts this time were the Little Fraternity groups. It was so organized. Questions for discussion on each speaker were in the program book and they were all great questions that each little fraternity discussed.

I learned so much by listening to my fellow Secular Franciscans.

We had Mass every day and it was great. Friday, we had Holy Hour and that was also a great experience. I'm excited about new materials being published to help fraternities with Formation. I visited most of the vendors and picked up several good books. I even think I have our next book for our Fraternity to use for ongoing Formation. I heard many positive comments about the Q that I can't wait for the next one. Our National Minister, Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS even suggested we tell everyone in our fraternities to start saving \$20 a month for the next 5 years so you can plan to attend. I thought that was a great idea. Hope you will consider that. I can guarantee you that you will not be disappointed. I want to thank Cathy Roszhart, OFS from our Regional Fraternity and the entire Q Committee for an excellent job. Did you know Secular Franciscans got Talent?!!!! Patrick Mowrer, OFS did magic with the Nuncio and Amy Sperry, OFS and Carmen Durón, OFS danced and hosted the Franciscans Got Talent Show. It was so much fun!

Hope to see you at the next Q in 2031!

Denise Carasquillo, OFS (Pope Saint John XXIII fraternity)



BRINGING THE Q HOME... (Continued)

I was amazed at the wide variety of people and their viewpoints at the "Q" this year. All Franciscans, but various opinions about life and social issues. The nice thing was that we were able to enter into dialogue about these differing thoughts. Part of the "Q" was having us separate into "Little Fraternities" where we could share about the speaker's words. I was a bit apprehensive at first, but we warmed up to each other shortly. A question about reaching out to the marginalized had me share a story of "breaking down the wall" on our AZ border simply by building houses for those without and connecting to the families that we built for.



It was a bit later that one from the little fraternity spoke to me and thanked me for sharing, for all she knew about the Hispanics was what she heard on FOX news, which painted a fearful image of them. The dialogue opened her eyes to see the human faces on these poor "Human beings" and her need to reach out in the future. **Differences faded away for a while and the common good with which we Franciscans teach became our deep connection.**
Patrick Mowrer, OFS

Q After Glow

It is with great joy that I come to you, brothers and sisters to share what I witnessed and experienced at the 2026 Quinquennial in Lexington, Kentucky.

As we entered the lobby of the Marriott Hotel there were countless (over 400 I am told) brothers and sisters with Tau's around their necks. The excitement was palpable; it was felt throughout the hotel; in the elevator, hallways of the hotel, standing in line at the Starbucks kiosk, banquet room, were smiles, hugs, and chatter!

Amy Sperry and I had the privilege of moderating the entertainment for two evenings. One was a Mingle Bingo the other was Franciscans Got Talent! Each night we witnessed laughter, claps and beaming faces from the stage that we stood! It was incredible!

Brothers and Sisters made connections that will leave a lasting mark for years to come!

The next Q will be in five years, save a dollar every day so you can attend!! You'll never regret it!

With much love,
Carmen Durón, OFS (Saint Francis Fraternity)



BRINGING THE Q HOME... (Continued)

I was so gratified by the experience of fraternitas at the Q. I saw and felt great joy and love flowing between my brothers and sisters from across the country. The smiles, laughter and the vulnerable tears that were shed during my little fraternity get-togethers - so beautiful and uplifting. **The Holy Spirit was alive and so visible in the good people around me at the Q.**

Amy Sperry, OFS



I've participated in Qs in the past and I've had the joy of experiencing each one carries its own unique spirit and character. With that being said, a grand highlight was having a mass celebrated with the Pope Leo's Papal Representative, His Excellency, Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States. **Archbishop Caccia was such a gift of joy, with a gentle spirit of God's love and sharing delightful humor and laughter.**

Another highlight was the first Franciscan's Got Talent presented by our own Amy Sperry and Carmon Duron with their abundant Franciscan energy of Joy. They opened the show dancing as they welcomed, bringing our spirit alive with a creative humorous musical performance by the NEC and surprising us all, especially with the last verse dedicated just for the Nuncio. Patrick Mowrer, entertained us his talent of magic, especially inviting the Nuncio to join him. The evening was full of laughter!



Lastly, as the chair of the subcommittee for the Raffle, I am shouting out with gratitude and joy! St. Thomas more region "Rocks"! The volunteers selling raffle tickets were the best, personally helping so many, especially when the table got so busy, some just stepped right in to help. The idea of having an art creation with the Q logo was very inspiring! It was a joy to meet each artist in person with their stories.



There was such a spirit of Franciscan community with artists sharing their creations with each other and volunteers and attendees sharing their own inspirations of the art creations on display. The best part was two of the winners are from our own region, Carmen Duron and Denise Carrasquillo! Pat Nikolaisen, OFS (Saint Clare of Assisi fraternity)

BRINGING THE Q HOME... (Continued)

The 2026 Quinquennial in Lexington, Kentucky, was a wonderful reminder of the connections we share as a Franciscan Family. The presence of members of our International Council was a beautiful reflection of how those connections extend far beyond our own fraternities and national boundaries.

I was especially struck by how naturally everyone related to one another: whether joining someone at Mass, taking a seat together at a table for a meal, or gathering in our little fraternities. There were no strangers, only an openness that came from our shared vocation. The Quinquennial was also a wonderful opportunity to share our successes and struggles with people who understand them, since so many of our fraternities experience similar joys and challenges.



Having Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv., of Lexington and Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, present and actively involved throughout the Quinquennial was a meaningful reminder to me that the Secular Franciscan Order has a valued place within our Catholic Church family. Together with the First Order, Second Order, and Third Order Regular, we are all part of one Franciscan Family, each living our vocation while sharing the call to keep the charism of St. Francis of Assisi alive in the Church and in the world today. Article 2 of our rule was prominent at the Q.

Bridget Durham OFS (Blessed Franz Jägerstätter Fraternity)



Steve and I have attended four Quinquennials over the past 14 years. Each one has been unique: held in a different location, featuring different keynote speakers, and centered around a different theme. Yet, despite these differences, they have all shared something deeply meaningful—the beautiful gift of a family reunion.

When we experience our monthly local gatherings, which may last two or three hours, or even a regional retreat that may last a weekend, we cherish the time we have together. But the Quinquennial offers something truly special, something on a different scale. Every five years, we have the opportunity to gather as a larger family, from Wednesday afternoon through Sunday morning, to pray together, worship together, dialogue about our vocation, and share meals around the same table.

It is more than simply an event or a gathering. It is a time to reconnect, renew our relationships, celebrate our shared vocation, and remember that we are part of something much larger than ourselves. The Quinquennial truly is a family reunion—a precious gift that comes only once every five years.

Cathy Roszhart, OFS



MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL JPIC ANIMATOR



“The Two Feet of Love in Action”

based on Pope Benedict XVI's reflections
in Deus Caritas Est and Caritas in Veritate

The Foot of Charity

To Meet Basic Needs for People Today

- Volunteer at homeless shelters
- Tutor children
- Assist women who face a crisis pregnancy
- Participate in a community beautification program
- Donate to food pantries and clothing closets
- **Sponsor a refugee family**
- Raise money for an overseas development project

The Foot of Justice

To Break the Cycles of Poverty

- Expand access to affordable housing
- Work to improve the education system
- Extend legal protection to unborn children
- Support environmental protection laws
- Participate in a living wage campaign
- Promote peace
- Advocate for international assistance

Brothers and sisters,

I truly believe the Lord made the Osal-Fajardo family part of our family when on that hot August evening in 2023, they first came to Rico's attention—and soon after, to the St. Francis Fraternity and finally to our Region. They have been actively complying with the requirements of the asylum process and attending the required proceedings.

Along with prayer, here are some concrete ways we can we can continue to support this family:

- Help Edison find steady work or side jobs, preferably near 19th Avenue and Camelback. He is skilled in construction, general repairs, and basic vehicle maintenance.
- Help the Osal family meet ongoing expenses, including legal fees and car insurance. Dot Himes and Harry McGinnity have pledged \$200 per month for as long as needed. Others who feel called to help may contribute on a one-time or ongoing basis through Zelle.
- Continue to keep the family in your prayers as they seek stability, security, and hope for the future.
- If you feel moved to assist financially to help them remain on their current legal pathway, here is their mailing address:

Edixon Jose Osal and Family
4715 N Black Cyn Hwy, #2096
Phoenix, AZ 85015

You can also send funds directly to family send via Zelle (Edixon Osal via 602-394-8223).

(See update from the family and from Rico Rivera on next 2 pages)

A Family Update: With Faith, Gratitude, and Hope

First of all, it is a pleasure to greet you and remind you how enormously grateful we are to each and every one of you for the support and human warmth with which you have embraced us; from the bottom of our hearts, you make us feel right at home. May God bless each of you with much life and health.

We wanted to share with you how our journey has been lately. This time continues to be a long race to achieve the stability and peace of mind that we so deeply long for while we continue our immigration process. Unfortunately, the first lawyer we had did not help us as she should have: she did not do her job well, there were too many inconsistencies in the stories, and a great lack of communication on her part, which led us to the hard news that our asylum was denied.



Faced with this, we found ourselves in the urgent need to look for a new lawyer to submit an appeal. With a lot of effort, we were able to pay for the start of the contract; the appeal has already been submitted and is currently in progress. Sustaining ourselves between legal payments and rent without a steady job has been a very difficult challenge, but we keep all our trust placed in God; He is good, and we continue to trust in His plans.

Despite the storms, we have been doing well, and there are many blessings to celebrate: School progress: The four children are doing very well in school and have advanced a lot with the language. They have passed important exams such as the AZELLA test and other evaluations of English as a second language. They are thriving in every way!

Great achievements: Fabiana already had her graduation and is moving on to 9th grade, and little Eithan, who is 4 years old, also moved up a level!

New milestone achieved (Our move): In October of last year, we managed to move to a new apartment. We moved close to Rico, of course, because we are not going to leave him alone! He is not going to get rid of this noisy family that came into his life that easily (haha). Rico has been the family that this country gifted us; we are so grateful to have found him and, honestly, I think he also needed to find us, he had too much silence in his house! I take this opportunity to ask for a big round of applause for Rico and for his brother Herman, excellent people and wonderful human beings. In reality, all of you are; we are deeply grateful to have met you and for all your help.

A big scare overcome: With Eithan, we went through a very big scare, as he was in the hospital due to febrile seizures. Since then, his health has become more delicate and he gets sick often, so we strive twice as hard to take care of him and protect him.

Job stability: In the economic area, I (Alejandra) managed to find a job where I have been for two months now, and thanks to God, that has helped us tremendously to sustain ourselves with the rent.

In the midst of everything, I remain focused on raising them by example. I am teaching my children to help their neighbor: whenever we can, we give something to eat and drink to the homeless, and they love to collaborate. I will firmly make sure to leave good people in this world. We continue to face the road with much faith and hope. The easy road is not always the best one, so I am grateful for every difficulty, because I know it has made me grow more as a person. May God protect you all. We hope to see you again very soon.

With immense affection,
Osal Fajardo Family

Greetings and Peace be with you.

The family is sincerely thankful to the Franciscan community for the prayers, encouragement, and the financial support received in response to the request for help with their legal expenses.

As many of you may recall, the law firm agreed to keep the existing contract open provided the family paid \$2,000 toward the outstanding balance and then resumed monthly installments. Otherwise, they would have been required to enter into a new contract and risk losing the benefit of payments already made.

In response to this situation, members of the Franciscan community provided \$1,375 in donations, and Rico provided a \$700 loan, for a total of \$2,075. The family was then able to pay \$2,000 to the immigration attorney by mid-June.

Toward the end of June, Alejandra received news that her father had passed away in Venezuela. This resulted in additional unforeseen expenses for the family. Rico assisted with a portion of these costs through a donation and an additional loan. Thanks to this support, Alejandra's father was able to receive a dignified funeral and was laid to rest during the first part of July.

After making the attorney payment, the family received an additional \$750 in financial assistance. With the school year beginning on August 3, the parents chose to use the additional funds to purchase needed school supplies and back-to-school clothing for the children, and repayment of the immigration loan from Rico was deferred. The children were able to begin the new school year with new school clothes and the materials they needed for school.

Toward the end of August, the family was able to make another payment of \$500 toward the immigration legal fee, reducing the remaining balance to \$3,500.

The family remains deeply grateful for the prayers, encouragement, and support they have received.

Brother in Christ,

Rico Rivera

ricodiakonos@gmail.com

To assist financially:

Edixon Jose Osal and Family
4715 N Black Cyn Hwy, #2096
Phoenix, AZ 85015

You can also send funds directly to family send via Zelle (Edixon Osal via 602-394-8223).

TECHNOLOGY THAT CONNECTS:

Enhancing/Creating Your Website to Grow the Secular Franciscan Order

Many of our fraternities do not yet have a website, or have only limited online information available.

This matters more than we may realize. Right now, nearly **90%** of our Order is aged 61 or older in the US, and our numbers have declined from 14,000 members to less than 10,000 since 2010.

While the wisdom of age is invaluable, we need the energy of today's youth to stay relevant.

We have to meet folks where they are at: Online.

Our fraternities have something beautiful to offer: prayer, fraternity, Franciscan spirituality, and a way of living the Gospel in the world. But people cannot respond to an invitation they never see.

Colleen is a member of the St. Margaret Fraternity in Las Vegas. She and her husband, Bill have offered to help all our fraternities to either build or help you update your website.

To highlight the impact creating a website has made, Saint Margaret of Cortona fraternity, currently **has 4 members under the age of 60 in formation with 3 of the 4 being under 40 and the youngest being 19. This is the highest percentage of younger folks in formation in the entire region.** All of these members found the Order through the website that Colleen created.

This highlights how a simple website can be one of our most important recruiting tools. It does not need to be fancy. It only needs to answer a few basic questions: (Who are we? Where and when do we meet? How can someone contact us? What is the Secular Franciscan life? How can an interested person learn more?)

We also know that many fraternity members are concerned about the amount of work involved to build or maintain a website, especially if they are not comfortable with technology. The good news is that this effort is meant to make things easier, not harder. The websites can be simple, low-cost, and easy to maintain. Colleen and Bill just need someone to give general design guidance, specific information about contacts, and sign off on the completed product. **Whoever your fraternity appoints would need zero technical knowledge.**

Your REC encourages each fraternity to consider creating or updating a website. If your fraternity is interested, please identify one contact person who can work with Colleen and Bill. Again, **you do not need to be tech savvy**; you only need to be willing to help make your fraternity visible to those who may be searching. To sum up, this is what they are offering you:

Free - The site, hosting, and a web address all cost nothing. The only possible cost is a custom domain if you ever want one (around \$12/year).

Easy to update - Most content like news and schedules changes through a simple editor, no tech background needed.

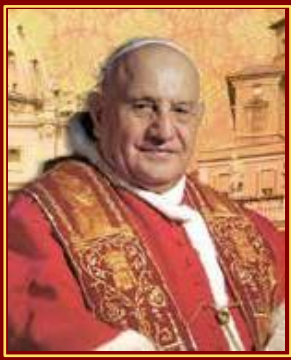
Open, not locked in - The source files are all public and aren't tied to me or any one company. If Colleen ever step away, anyone can pick it up and keep it running.

Built to scale - One shared system for many communities, with Colleen for ongoing support.

Fast and low-maintenance — very little to break or hack.

For more information contact Colleen Malloy, OFS cmalloy925@gmail.com

Thank you for considering this important opportunity to support vocations and help our fraternities grow.



NEWS FROM POPE ST. JOHN XXIII FRATERNITY Yuma, AZ

Rosie Roman, OFS celebrated 25 years as a Secular Franciscan on April 17, 2026. She has been a member of Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity in Yuma, AZ for her entire Franciscan journey.

She was born in Eastlake, Colorado and was married to Jose Roman for almost 68 years. They had four sons; Jose Luis (married to Yolanda) Victor (married to Rose Ann), Armando (married to Jennifer) and Stephen Bruce (married to Ernestine). She has 18 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren. Jose Roman passed away on March 17, 2024. Rosie worked as a teacher's aide for the Yuma School District for 27 years. When she retired, she volunteered at St. Francis Parish as a Eucharistic Minister and then later taking Holy Communion to the home bound. She also helped in the Sacristy taking care of robes for altar servers and the purificators. She was captain of the 24-Hour Holy Adoration Chapel of St. Clare for several years at St. Francis Parish.



In 1990, Rosie experienced the Cursillo and was active for several years helping with the movement. Then a friend invited her to a Secular Franciscan Gathering (meeting as Rosie called it) and she really liked it, especially the way they prayed The Liturgy of the hours. She confessed she didn't know anything about St. Francis but loved the way they sang the song "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace". She started formation and on April 17, 2001 was professed at the St. Clare Chapel. Father Jacob officiated at her profession and all her Franciscan brothers and sisters were present at the Mass and it was a beautiful. She says her Franciscan journey has been a wonderful experience. They are her Christian Family and have always been there for her to support her and each other.

Rosie is 92 years old now and has slowed down. She says she is not as active as she used to be. She tries to attend gatherings as often as she can to continue to support and animate her Fraternity. She watches daily mass, prays the rosary and also Holy Hour on EWTN. "I pray and talk to Jesus, Our Blessed Mother Mary and my Archangels, Michael, Raphael and Gabriel for divine protection and guidance, courage to go on until God calls me Home". She says she is blessed to have four wonderful sons and their families to look after her. She is grateful for her Franciscan Family and all their support.



NEWS FROM ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE FRATERNITY Surprise, AZ

Our fraternity suffered the loss of two members recently. They both will be sorely missed.

Mary Jane McSparran professed September 2, 2021 in The Encounter fraternity in **Winter Haven, Florida** and transferred to **St. Maximilian Kolbe** fraternity November 11, 2022. She faithfully attended our gatherings until her health prevented her to do it. Mary Jane generously contributed to all our apostolates, at times bringing carloads of items to donate. Mary Jane welcomed Sister Death on May 16, 2026



Rita Cummins professed June 26, 2022 and was embraced by Sister Death July 3, 2026

Rita was energetic and was always ready to volunteer to help. She coordinated many trips down to Nogales to bring car loads of donations for the people at the border through the Kino Border Initiative. She never used the excuse to be too old or too busy to be active in our Fraternity. At the time of her passing, she was a member of the Council. Even though, it took a lot for her to ride down from Mayer to Surprise, she never missed a gathering until the very end.

Our sisters Mary Jane and Rita, were truly beautiful Franciscans and there is no doubt that our Lord and our Seraphic Father, Francis welcomed them both in Heaven with the words "Well done, faithful servants".



17 members of our fraternity attended our Regional Retreat this year!
(Not in the picture: Lucy Ibarra, Deacon Richard and Diane Carmody, Phyllis Smith and Kevin Moshier)



NEWS FROM ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA FRATERNITY Las Vegas, NV

We finally have a council!

On August 30, our fraternity held our election. These are the results:

Minister: Colleen Malloy;

Vice-Minister: Sue Kowalski;

Secretary: Pat Stoy;

Treasurer: Kathy Crowley;

Formation Director: Janine Anderson.



In other news, Kathy and Sue continue their personal apostolate with the Las Vegas Catholic Worker: they help provide a hot meal to the unhoused and other marginalized persons on Saturday mornings. Our fraternity's apostolate with Catholic Charities also continues: we help them stock their food pantry and provide them with other supplies at their request. In July, we were blessed to donate canned vegetables. In August, we donated protein sources to them.

We also have five new aspirants/inquirers, to begin The Franciscan Journey. Hopefully, we will have pictures of them at our next issue. The first initial formation class was held on August 14, under the direction of our spiritual assistant, Patrick Mowrer. Our new formation director, Janine Anderson, will continue to guide them also.

Article submitted by Angie Freeman, OFS

God bless our new council!

And thanks to Julianne and Father Micah for traveling such a distance to preside at our election. Blessings upon the both of you.



Lastly, we ask for healing prayers for our former Minister, Ann Tao and her husband Wayne.



NEWS FROM PEACE FRATERNITY Scottsdale, AZ

Hello from Peace Fraternity!

Gratefully, Peace has continued to have many visitors throughout the past few months. I remember when my group started orientation; we didn't gather in the summer months as attendance was so low. It is exciting to see a full room of people all year long now. Right now, we have 5 Candidates and 3 in orientation.

I am happy to share that Peace Fraternity is alive and growing!

I would like to share something that was a real honor at the Q. Most of you know I attended the Q. Pope Leo certainly fulfilled his promise to send us a surprise from the Vatican!

In walks, Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, the newly appointed Apostolic Nuncio, (Ambassador of the Holy See) from the Vatican to not only represent the US in our Catholicism directly to Pope Leo but to be the representative from the Vatican to the United States. He is originally from Milan, Italy. He has such beautiful spirituality and words to encourage all Catholics. One of the things the friars who were also attending did, as Franciscans do, they joined us wherever there was a spot at the events and dinners. Archbishop Caccia joined us for the last evening's talent show. The room was full of laughter and talent. Archbishop's title did not stop Patrick Mowrer OFS, our Regional Formation Director, from including the Archbishop in his magic performance. One step and he was on stage with a big smile and twinkling eyes. We can rest assured Pope Leo made the perfect choice. Keep him in your prayers as Archbishop Caccia continues his journey.

Wishing everyone peace and laughter,





NEWS FROM ST. CLARE OF ASSISI FRATERNITY Phoenix, AZ



In July we were so blessed to welcome five inquirers into candidacy:
Tami Carroll, Kent Bell, Linda Flaherty-Biggs, Kate MacDonald, and Nan Talahongvah.

They join us from three different parishes across the valley. St. Clare Fraternity members now have the opportunity to bring Franciscan spirituality to 17 parishes! We were also excited to welcome four new aspirants in August as well.



In ongoing formation, we celebrated the Transitus of our patron, St. Clare, whose feast day is August 11. We have the privilege of having a first-class relic of St. Clare, which is displayed in the sanctuary at Corpus Christi. After praying the beautiful transitus prayer, we were able to venerate the relic.



We also continued in our apostolates to serve the poor and the sick. Fraternity members, along with family members and friends, have been serving at monthly shifts at Feed My Starving Children in Tempe, AZ. Also, we were excited to learn that the impact of our Food Box Ministry has grown through a generous grant given to the Franciscan Friars of the Holy Spirit in Laveen, AZ, which is available through June 2027. We continue to supply food donations and are delighted to learn that the friars can distribute even more food to the Native American communities they serve. Finally, our pre-hospice and hospice ministry continues for Holy Spirit Parish in Tempe, AZ. Church and Secular Franciscan volunteers visit and pray with residents at Inspirations Retirement Community, Tempe Acute Care Facility, and a few homebound parishioners.

As we look forward to our council elections in October, we have learned more about servant leadership in formation. In September, formation will focus on the Beatitudes. We will continue praying about how our fraternity can use the talents of its many diverse members to serve the council and continue to bring the Gospel and Franciscan spirituality to our brothers and sisters in our many parishes and communities.

Article submitted by Kathleen Hicks, OFS



NEWS FROM BL. FRANZ JÄGERSTÄTTER FRATERNITY Flagstaff, AZ

Greetings from Northern Arizona

We joyfully announce that we have three new professed Secular Franciscans!

Katherine Caccavale, OFS, Al Caccavale, OFS, and Jim Valek, OFS made their profession on Saturday, June 13, 2026, at San Francisco de Asis Catholic Church in Flagstaff, Arizona.

The day was especially fitting as it was the Feast of **St. Anthony of Padua**, whom the cohort had chosen as the patron of their formation group. Father Michael Gilbert celebrated the Mass, and Jim and Tina Valek's daughter, Anitram, sang a beautiful *Ave Maria* at the conclusion of the Profession Mass.



In the photo of the newly professed, **Maurice Clifford, OFS**, can be seen on the screen. Maurice began his Franciscan journey as part of this formation group and sadly passed away before he could complete the journey alongside them. However, Maurice was blessed to make his profession before he met Sister Death. Although he could not be there in person on this special day, Maurice was very much present, in the prayers of the Mass and in the hearts of his formation companions and the entire fraternity.



It was a very special and joyful day, with most of the fraternity present, including our newly welcomed inquirers. Following the Mass, we gathered for a wonderful reception at the home of Patrick Mowrer, OFS.

Enjoy these photos from this memorable Profession Day!

Pace e Bene!

Article submitted by Bridget Durham OFS, Minister



NEWS FROM ST. FRANCIS FRATERNITY Phoenix, AZ

The summer months at Saint Francis Fraternity are a blend of work and leisure. Members take vacations and plan trips. But our community continues, in spite of the heat. Plans made in the springtime flow into the summer as we hone and assess. Traditionally it's our season for planning the coming year so that we are ready when September arrives.

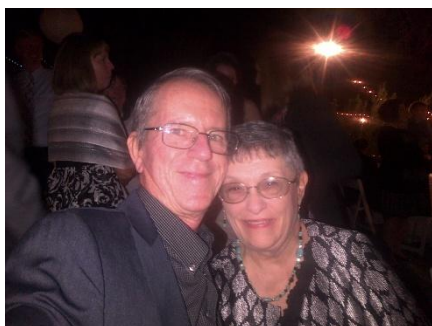


These past few months we had happy things to celebrate and a few more somber moments. At our gatherings we celebrated anniversaries of Profession, we planned our Fall Retreat, we companioned our Candidates and we prepared for new projects. Mostly, summer is the season for watching things grow and for anticipating new harvests. To say there is no "Big News" to report is a good sign that things are generally balanced and functioning as they should. It helps everyone relax, reflect and tend to their needs.

Things have been going well enough that we've been able to reflect on some of the deeper tasks we've been wanting to take on. One high priority here is to create a program to really explore Common Prayer as a fraternity, to be more intentional in our prayer-lives and as always, develop opportunities for community and personal service.

As we pray together, work together and grow together we discover our unique gifts and the call to live as Francis did. It's hard to predict which efforts will rise to the top but we are blessed with an abundance of goodwill, and we look forward to expanding our time together, praying, learning and serving.

Happy Autumn!



At our August 2026 gathering, for our Community Prayer, we did a Transitus to St. Clare of Assisi in honor of her death. As a special surprise to the Fraternity, Fr. Camou from St. Mary's Basilica let the Fraternity use the Relic of St. Clare of Assisi housed at the Basilica. It was a wonderful surprise to everyone and made the day more meaningful.

Last but certainly not least...

JoAnne and Tom McNamara celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations!

Article submitted by Tom McNamara, OFS (Minister) and Rita Laguna, OFS (Secretary)

NEWS FROM ST. DAEGUN ANDREW KIM FRATERNITY Chandler, AZ

On July 6, our fraternity gathered to celebrate the feast day of our patron saint, Saint Andrew Kim Taegon. Following prayers, we shared refreshments and a joyful time of fellowship. The gathering was richly blessed by the attendance of many members.



On August 16, three of our brothers and sisters celebrated the Rite of Admission into our fraternity at the church. As they spend the coming year in formation—studying the Franciscan spirit, the Rule, and our way of life—we earnestly ask for your united prayers. Please pray that all of them persevere with one heart, with no one falling behind, so that they may all safely reach next year's Profession ceremony.



NEWS FROM OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY FRATERNITY Scottsdale, AZ

It has been a year since our Fraternity moved our gatherings to St. Patrick's church. Some of our members are parishioners and are actively ministering in the Parish. Cheryl Cook has been our liaison scheduling rooms and instrumental in meeting our needs. Cheryl is an active member of the Women's Fellowship Ministry. The Women's group has planned a Prayer Breakfast and invited Amy Sperry to talk on Father Francis and the Franciscan Spirituality. In the planning stages Cheryl brought this to the council and thought it would be an opportunity for participants at the breakfast to learn about the Franciscan vocation. We are blessed with a wonderful website that was designed by Nancy Brady. The website is designed for people interested in knowing more about Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity.

To keep the cost minimal and to get a bang for our buck we asked Nancy Brady to design a business card that we can have available for the Prayer Breakfast and for each member to hand out.

Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity

Secular Franciscan Order

An official religious order within the Roman Catholic Church for laypeople and Diocesan clergy who live the Gospel in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi.



Come and See!

We meet the second Saturday in the months
of September - June
9 AM To 11 AM

St. Patrick's Catholic Community
10815 N. 84th St, Scottsdale, AZ 85260
Email: ourladyoftherosaryofs@gmail.com
Website: www.ourladyoftherosaryofs.org



NEWS FROM ST. ANTHONY FRATERNITY Tucson, AZ

One of our apostates is the Poverello House who serve the homeless. Not only do we provide financial support, but we also provide meals for the men and women receiving respite from the heat and elements. Our mission is to provide meals to these people as if they were Jesus.



Allison Herring, OFS
prepares lunch for
the female clients.



**Tucson's Poverello House for the Homeless Men and Women
of our Tucson Community**



Natalie Hammond the manager



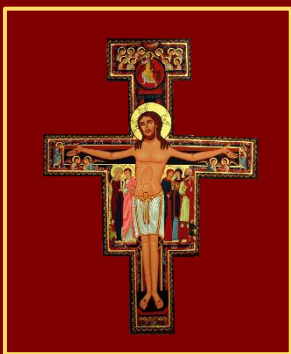
and some of our clients



Benjamin Saenz, OFS and his wife Ana
who prepare lunch once a month.



John and Betty Nelson, OFS
who bring meals to the
Poverello House.



NEWS FROM SAN DAMIANO FRATERNITY Glendale, AZ

The San Damiano fraternity is struggling and asks for the region's prayers.

A few of us are caregivers to family members. One of our fraternity members has just been diagnosed with cancer. Another is recovering from a stroke. Two members have recently moved into assisted/independent living facilities. Two of us are in physical therapy.

And yet, we still manage to gather each month for prayer, ongoing formation, and fraternitas.

At each gathering we pray the Our Father in unity with all Secular Franciscans.



UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE REGION

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Mark your calendars for our next Regional Retreat June 11-13, 2027

SUBMISSION DEADLINES AND PUBLICATION DATES

📅 December 1

Deadline for Article Submission

📅 December 15

Publication of "Our Fraternal Scoop"

VISIT BOTH WEBSITES OFTEN FOR NEWS AND VALUABLE INFORMATION

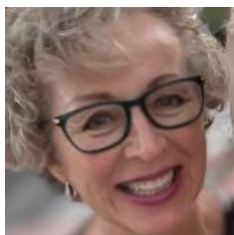
National Website: <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/>

Regional Website: <https://www.stmregionofs.com/>

Questions/Submissions:

Please contact: Cathy Roszhart, OFS croszhart@gmail.com or 309-825-2900

Please remember to notify your council and Database manager of any changes of mailing or email addresses, and new phone numbers.



For any updates, please contact our Regional Database Manager: Amy Sperry, OFS 9261962a@gmail.com

To read the last issue of the TAU-USA, please go to:

https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/TAU-USA_English_120_sum_26.pdf

REMINDER: A great way to foster your personal Ongoing Formation!

To receive a daily email featuring, in monthly rotation, The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, the Admonitions of St. Francis, an article from the OFS General Constitutions, the USA National Statutes, Little Flowers of St. Francis, a Franciscan quote, and additionally, the Franciscan saint of the day. (This is not a discussion list.)

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