



Divine Mercy Region  
Secular Franciscan Order—USA

February 2024  
Volume 3, Issue 1



# Divine Mercy Regional Newsletter

## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Brothers and Sisters.

Please consider this an invitation for any fraternity council member to attend our next office hours. They occur every third Saturday of the month from 11am-noon. This was an idea our Formation Director, Michelle Bryk, brought to the regional council a few months back. Since then we have had two sessions. Each has provided some great information to those attending. You do not need a question to be answered to attend. Oftentimes the questions or comments by one person are important issues shared by all fraternities. It allows for everyone to share their experiences. I believe the sharing of experiences among fraternities has been the best part of these Zoom meetings. Having a council member from each fraternity present would help us all learn together. Please take an hour of your time to join us.

In August Divine Mercy Region will have its elections in DeWitt, MI. Are your talents something that would help our region? Perhaps the Holy Spirit is calling you to a position on the regional council. It is a blessing to serve. Nearly six years ago, I was elected minister of the region. I've made many mistakes along the way. Fortunately, Franciscans are merciful and forgiving people. Thank you! This is not meant to be a farewell address. That may be the next issue. However, I believe everyone of us on our council has grown during our term. Maybe that is something that God has brought to your heart. Listen to Him!

Theresa Brown and I serve on the Nomination Committee. Please contact us with nominations for any of the regional positions. Also, there are many appointed positions that the new council will make after the election. For instance, Formation Director, JPIC Animator, Vocations, YouFra, Database, Archivist, and Ecumenical Chair are some of the possible appointed positions. Our region becomes better

### REGIONAL COUNCIL

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**Visit our website at [divinemercuryregionofs.org](http://divinemercuryregionofs.org)!**

## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER CONTINUED

through the service of its members. Your talents can better our region.

Lastly, I would like to build interest in the 2026 Quinquennial or “The Q” for short. Every five years our Order has a national congress within the United States. All members are invited. The last Q was held in Phoenix. The 2026 Q will be held July 29-August 2, 2026 in Lexington, KY at the Griffin Gate Resort. This is a great facility and is easily accessible to our region and most of the eastern side of the country. There will be an article in the next issue of *The Tau*. More information will follow as it becomes available. Usually 600-700 Secular Franciscans attend The Q. It is five days of formation and fraternity at its best. Please make plans to attend.

Peace,

Jim Graczyk, OFS  
Minister Divine Mercy Region



**Leticia (Letty) Aguilar , OFS**  
St. Bonaventure Fraternity, Detroit  
Passed to eternal life on June February 8, 2024

**Frank Cole, OFS**  
Queen of Angels Fraternity, Sanford  
Passed to eternal life on July 16, 2023

**Theresa Punsalan, OFS**  
St. Francis Fraternity, Sterling Heights  
Passed to eternal life on August 15, 2023

**Bob Guinan, OFS**  
St. Joseph Fraternity, Ann Arbor  
Passed to eternal life on May 7, 2023

**Elaine Kozloski, OFS**  
Our Mother of Sorrows Fraternity, Grand Rapids  
Passed to eternal life on October 27, 2023

FROM THE REGIONAL TREASURER

REGIONAL TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT  
As of December 31, 2023

REGION NAME <u>Divine Mercy</u>		REGION # 56		
Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	
<b>Section 1</b>	<b>End of Year</b>	<b>As of</b>		
	<b>December 31, 2022</b>	<b>December 31, 2023</b>		
Cash balances, reconciled as of				
Checking account	\$ 49,885.92	\$ 53,073.38		
Savings account				
Other bank accounts/investments	21,171.71	21,256.55		
Other cash				
<b>1 Total all Cash &amp; Investments at year end (reconciled bank balances)</b>	<b>\$ 71,057.63</b>	<b>\$ 74,329.93</b>		
Activity year to date January 1 - December 31, 2023				
<b>Section 2</b>		<b>BUDGET for 2023</b>	<b>BUDGET for 2024</b>	
<b>Income:</b>				
Fair Share from local fraternities	\$ 22,308.00	\$ 22,620.00	\$ 22,100.00	
Other donations received	252.00			
Interest	84.84	84.00	84.00	
Regional events	3,125.00	1,300.00	2,500.00	
Annual Ministers' Gathering	901.00			
Local fraternity stipends	690.00	300.00	300.00	
Spiritual Assistant Training Program	250.00			
<b>2 Total income received as of December 31, 2023</b>	<b>\$ 27,610.84</b>	<b>\$ 24,304.00</b>	<b>\$ 24,984.00</b>	
<b>Section 3</b>				
<b>Expenses:</b>				
NAFRA Fair Share	\$ 7,531.00	\$ 7,395.00	\$ 7,395.00	
Annual Ministers' Gathering	\$ 8,722.48	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 9,590.00	
Regional events	\$ 2,995.79	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	
Executive Council Meetings	750.00	-	1,000.00	
Travel expenses	2,234.34	1,400.00	1,000.00	
Executive Council & Spiritual Assistant stipend	625.00	300.00	650.00	
Spiritual Assistant training program expenses	641.56	1,500.00	1,500.00	
Supplies, Postage, Storage, Zoom, Secretarial, Bank Chg	688.37	1,200.00	1,350.00	
Other expenses:	-	-	-	
JPIC	-	1,000.00	1,000.00	
Formation	-	500.00	500.00	
Vocations	150.00	-	500.00	
<b>3 Total expenses as of December 31, 2023</b>	<b>\$ 24,338.54</b>	<b>\$ 24,295.00</b>	<b>\$ 27,485.00</b>	
<b>4 Net income or loss as of December 31, 2023 (line 2 - line 3)</b>	<b>\$ 3,272.30</b>	<b>\$ 9.00</b>	<b>\$ (2,501.00)</b>	
<b>5 Cash balances at 12/31/2023</b>	<b>\$ 74,329.93</b>			
Regional Treasurer <u>Dawn Pulcer, OFS</u>				
Printed name of Regional Treasurer				

**APPOINTED MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**FORMATION DIRECTOR**

Michelle Bryk, OFS  
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Barb Scott, OFS

Vocations.divinemercuryregion@gmail.com



*If your fraternity is celebrating any new professions or jubilarian anniversaries this year, please send the names and your fraternity name to the Newsletter Editor, Barb Scott, OFS, bscott3315@gmail.com for publication in the next quarterly issue.*



**Save the Dates!**

Saturday, April 27, 2024

Divine Mercy Region Formation Day—Saginaw Center for Ministry

Friday-Sunday, August 2-4, 2024

Divine Mercy Region Annual Chapter—St. Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt

Saturday, October 26, 2024

Divine Mercy Region Formation Day—Saginaw Center for Ministry

# Regional Announcement

**REC Office Hours**

Time: Mar 16, 2024 11:00 AM

Apr 20, 2024 11:00 AM

May 18, 2024 11:00 AM

Jun 15, 2024 11:00 AM

Jul 20, 2024 11:00 AM

Aug 17, 2024 11:00 AM

Sep 21, 2024 11:00 AM

Oct 19, 2024 11:00 AM

Nov 16, 2024 11:00 AM

Dec 21, 2024 11:00 AM

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86483093705>

Meeting ID: 864 8309 3705

Dial by your location

• +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 864 8309 3705

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kc074flmHR>



OFS-USA OFFICIAL  
**CENTENARY POEM**

Kathleen Carsten, OFS  
July 24, 2023

In the embrace of time's flowing river,  
A momentous milestone draws near,  
Eight centuries of Franciscan endeavor,  
A legacy cherished, crystal clear.

Centenaries, a celebration profound,  
Gazing beyond the horizon's crest,  
To strengthen our Franciscan ground,  
And nurture our charism, blessed.

St. Francis, the Divine's chosen one,  
Received a gift, pure and rare,  
Complementarity, communion spun,  
Radiating love, beyond compare.

Those who adore the Lord's embrace,  
With hearts aflame, burning bright,  
Invited to join in this sacred space,  
Honoring the Poverello's holy light.

Laudato si' echoes the Franciscan call,  
To witness the beauty of the Gospel's tune,  
Through creation's embrace, we stand tall,  
Uniting hearts under a celestial moon.

A prophetic vision, we dare to dream,  
Rekindling the fire that burns within,  
A future bathed in love's sacred gleam,  
Igniting souls, releasing the din.

A tapestry woven, the Franciscan Family,  
With colors vibrant, diverse and true,  
Let all activities and initiatives be,  
Coordinated, as one, through and through.

A commission, representing the whole,  
Shall guide and inspire with utmost care,  
Ensuring our unity, an enchanting role,  
Visible, united, a Franciscan prayer.

So let us gather, hand in hand,  
In this jubilant journey, forever bound,  
800 years, a story we expand,  
A celebration resounding, profound.

May the spirit of St. Francis guide our way,  
As we honor the past and the future we seek,  
With love and joy, we humbly pray,  
For the Franciscan Family, strong and meek.

Photo Courtesy: Corinne Lorenzet, OFS

# Opportunities Around the Region

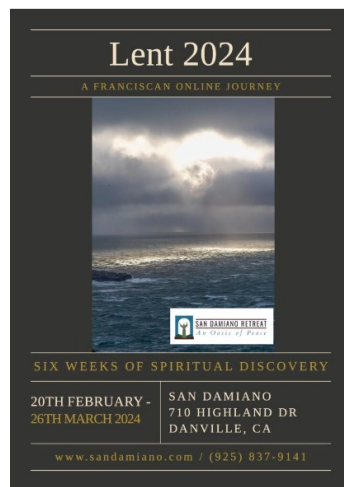
A FRANCISCAN ONLINE JOURNEY – SIX WEEKS OF SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY

Venue: Zoom Online

February 20, 2024 7:30 pm Pacific Time

Zoom Online on Tuesday evening series from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm.  
 Here are the dates: February 20; February 27; March 5; March 12; March 19; March 26.  
 Cost: \$60 per person.

Register at <https://sandamiano.org/events/a-franciscan-online-journey-six-weeks-of-spiritual-discovery/>



**The Sacraments - A Lifetime of Grace  
2024 Lenten Series**

Join us at Capuchin Retreat Center for our Wednesday Lenten Evening Series. Deepen your relationship with God through a richer understanding of the Catholic Church's seven Sacraments.

5.30 pm - Simple Dinner  
 6.00 pm - Reflection in the Dining Room  
 7.00 pm - Eucharistic Celebration



**SCHEDULE**

- Feb 21 - "Baptism & Confirmation" - Br. Vito Martinez, OFM Cap.
- Feb 28 - "Marriage" - Mrs. Sally McCuen, OFS.
- Mar 06 - "Holy Orders" - Br. Julius Milton, OFM Cap.
- Mar 13 - "Anointing of the Sick" - Br. Nathan Linton, OFM Cap.
- Mar 20 - "Penance" - Br. Steve Kropp, OFM Cap.
- Mar 27 - "Eucharist" - Br. Peter Chinnappan, OFM Cap.



To Register, Call 248-651-4826  
 Or Visit CAPRETREAT.ORG

\$10 DONATION  
 FOR EACH EVENT

62460 Mt. Vernon Road,  
 Washington, MI 48094

**The Sacraments - A Lifetime of Grace  
2024 Lenten Series**

Join us at Solanus Casey Center for our Wednesday Lenten Series. Deepen your relationship with God through a richer understanding of the Catholic Church's seven Sacraments.

Noon - Eucharistic Celebration  
 12.45 pm - Reflection During Lunch  
 02.00 pm - Blessing for the Sick Service



**SCHEDULE**

- Feb 21 - "Baptism & Confirmation" - Br. Vito Martinez, OFM Cap.
- Feb 28 - "Marriage" - Mrs. Sally McCuen, OFS.
- Mar 06 - "Holy Orders" - Br. Julius Milton, OFM Cap.
- Mar 13 - "Anointing of the Sick" - Br. Nathan Linton, OFM Cap.
- Mar 20 - "Penance" - Br. Steve Kropp, OFM Cap.
- Mar 27 - "Eucharist" - Br. Peter Chinnappan, OFM Cap.

1780 Mount Elliott Street,  
 Detroit, MI 48207

\$10 DONATION  
 FOR EACH EVENT

No Registration Required

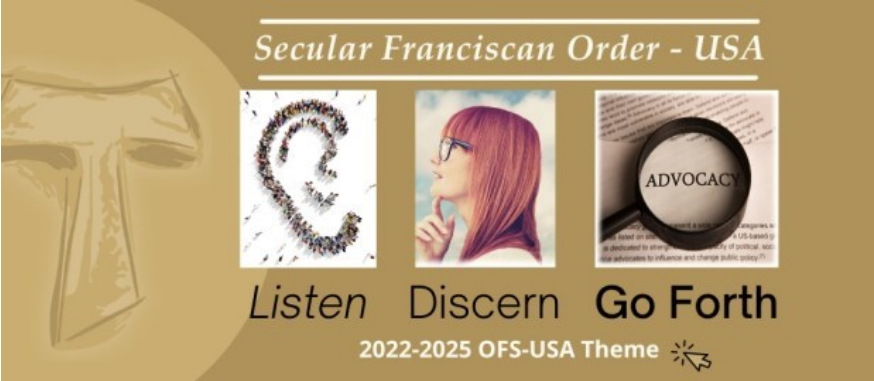
St. Paschal Fraternity invites their fellow members in the Divine Mercy Region to either meet up with them on Sat. Apr. 6th for an 11:30am group tour or attend on their own the Toledo Museum of Art TMA to view the exhibit of Caravaggio's four paintings, one of which is *Saint Francis of Assisi in Ecstasy* (ca. 1595-96). More information and an overview of the Caravaggio Exhibit is at this link <https://toledomuseum.org/exhibitions/the-brilliance-of-caravaggio-four-paintings-in-focus#Overview>.

If you would like to meet up with St. Paschal's group tour on Sat. Apr. 6th, you must email St. Paschal Minister, Michael Okragleski at [stpaschalfraternity@gmail.com](mailto:stpaschalfraternity@gmail.com) so he can make the TMA aware of their group size.



Fr. Greg Friedman, OFM is part of a team from Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs (FPP), organizing a pilgrimage *specifically* for Secular Franciscans next June. The dates are: June 16-28. Registration is available through FPP: <https://www.franciscanpilgrimages.com/> We are working with a couple in Cincinnati, OFS members there, and hope to tailor this experience for members of the family.

In addition, I will be assisting with another FPP program in October. The dates are October 6-18.



## Fraternity News



Congratulations to the new council of St. Thomas More Fraternity, Rochester Hills as of January 28, 2024

From left: Vice Minister Madge Kinsella; Minister Anne Kerr; Secretary Susan Hollander, MD; Treasurer Iroma Sarvananda



Congratulations to Solanus Casey and St. David Fraternities on their 20th Anniversaries of their reactivations on February 11, 2024.

# YouFra News

## MINISTRY FORMALLY KNOWN AS TAP INTO LIFE INTRODUCES MEMBERS TO FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY, RETAINS FOCUS ON SERVICE, FAITH

**DETROIT** — Young adult ministry at St. Bonaventure Monastery and the Solanus Casey Center is undergoing a bit of a facelift.

In an effort to forge a closer relationship with the wider Capuchin Franciscan young adult community in the United States, the local Capuchins announced the creation of a local chapter of [YouFra — short for Youth Franciscans](#) — a new identity for the province's Tap Into Life young adult ministry.

The name change emphasizes the ministry's closeness to the worldwide Capuchin community, with YouFras all around the world, and a greater spiritual connection to the Third Order Secular Franciscans.

“Previously we had Tap Into Life, which was formed in 2015, and that was our young adult ministry here for several years,” Maggie Jackson, minister for the Solanus Casey YouFra chapter, told *Detroit Catholic*. “We made the decision to become an official YouFra chapter. We are one of many chapters across the world, inviting young adults to increase their spirituality and learn more about Franciscan spirituality.”

*Naim Edwards, a council member for the YouFra Solanus Casey chapter, leads young adults in prayer and meditation at the tomb of Blessed Solanus Casey as part of Simple Service Saturday on Feb. 3.*

The Solanus Casey YouFra chapter officially launched Jan. 1. While the group will continue to meet on the third Sunday of the month at the Solanus Casey Center, as well as participate in "Simple Service Saturdays" on the first Saturday of the month, Jackson said the group will enjoy the benefit of being part of the wider Capuchin community.

As part of the transition, five members of the former Tap Into Life ministry made one-year commitments to live out the Franciscan values of poverty, chastity and obedience the best they can according to their station in life. The promises aren't formal vows like professed religious take, but a sign of the core team's commitment to living out the mission of YouFra, Jackson explained.

“Pretty much it's declaring we're going to live our Franciscan spirituality, that we are going to be a member of this group and we're going to try and bring people to Christ and increase their knowledge of Franciscan spirituality,” Jackson said.

YouFras exist around the world, usually for people in their early teens, and work closely with the Secular Franciscans, but the Solanus Casey YouFra chapter is one of only three YouFra organizations in the United States, explained Fr. Fred Cabras, OFM Cap., who serves as the spiritual minister for the Solanus Casey YouFra chapter.

To read the full article, go to <https://www.detroitcatholic.com/news/capuchin-young-adult-ministry-relaunches-as-solanus-casey-youfra-chapter>



**DIVINE  
MERCY  
REGION**

Order of Franciscans  
Secular

Lower Peninsula of  
Michigan and  
Toledo, Ohio

Whenever you have membership changes, please email member updates: information on new candidates/contact information and admission dates, profession dates, change of addresses, dates of deaths, lapse or withdrawal dates, or completed transfer forms to the Regional Secretary at [divinemercury.region@gmail.com](mailto:divinemercury.region@gmail.com).

Please remember the National database information must match your fraternity's Annual Report information! Accuracy is imperative! Thank you!

**Divine Mercy Region**  
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PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE