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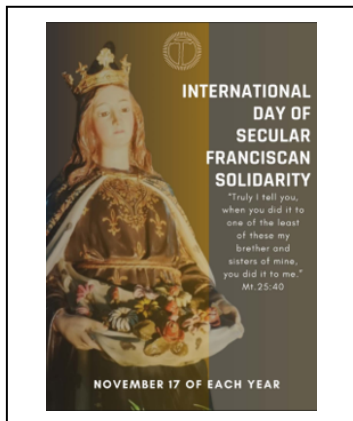
Divine Mercy Regional Newsletter

"Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible."
St. Francis of Assisi

International Day of Secular Franciscan Solidarity

Inspired by the life of our Patron Saint Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary and Princess of Thuringia, it would be held every year on November 17 (Feast of St. Elizabeth of Hungary) in all SFO and YouFra fraternities around the world.

The fraternities are free to choose the form in which they will carry out the Day, in which the brothers and sisters will directly contribute some alms, will carry out some fundraising activity or other activity. The resources collected during the Day will be destined to the attention of the needs of the brothers and sisters who are in need, whether due to illness or any other reason. They should also consider, according to the possibilities, the collaboration and/or support to other fraternities. The record of the financial movement shall be contained in a special report that shall be prepared and kept in the fraternity's archives, and shall also be made known to the brothers in the opportunity and form that they consider, in this way there will be a transparent practice in the use of resources.



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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.



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

A Franciscan Reflection for our Fraternal Journey

“Secular Franciscans should devote themselves especially to careful reading of the Gospel, going from Gospel to life and life to Gospel.” (Rule 4)

At the heart of our Franciscan vocation is a simple but lifelong movement: we bring the Gospel into the ordinary places of our lives, and then we return to the Gospel with the joys, struggles, questions, and hopes we have gathered along the way. This rhythm keeps our faith alive. It prevents the Gospel from remaining only words on a page and helps our daily lives become a place where Jesus is encountered anew.

Saint Francis did not follow Jesus from a distance. He allowed the Gospel to shape his choices, his relationships, his prayer, and his care for the poor and forgotten. He discovered God was speaking not only in Scripture, but also through creation, through the suffering of others, through Fraternity, and through the quiet movements of his own heart.

For us, “Gospel to life” may begin in small and humble ways: listening with patience, choosing peace over complaint, forgiving a hurt, simplifying our desires, or noticing Jesus in someone we might otherwise overlook. These little acts are not insignificant. They are the daily stones with which God rebuilds his Church.

This month and months to come, let us look lovingly and honestly at our own Fraternities, not with criticism or discouragement, but with the humble desire to see where the Holy Spirit may be inviting us to grow in our Fraternity and in our Franciscan Order. A thriving Fraternity is not measured only by numbers or smooth meetings, but by Gospel life, shared responsibility, loving presence, and a willingness to serve.

- Are our council positions being fully filled, and filled with a generous spirit, or is there a continuing struggle to find members willing and able to serve?
- Does our Fraternity fully understand the meaning of “apostolate”—not as the work of only one or two people, but as a mission embraced and fulfilled by the whole Fraternity?
- How is our Fraternity caring for members who cannot come to Fraternity gatherings? As we recall November 17, 2025—the first annual observance of the Feast of St. Elizabeth of Hungary and the International Day of Secular Franciscan Solidarity—let us ask: (also see <https://ciofs.info/2025/04/26/ciofs-announces-secular-franciscan-day-of-solidarity/>).

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER CONTINUED

- How has our Fraternity made visible its love for members who cannot participate in person? Over this past year, what concrete efforts have we made to visit, pray for, and embrace those members as an essential part of our Fraternity life?
- What is our Fraternity's action regarding vocations? Are we actively inviting those who may not yet know they have a Franciscan vocation, even though their Gospel life already reveals its seed?
- Franciscan Month Awareness is coming beginning September 26 and 27 and through all of October.
- What is our Fraternity's response? Are members actively involved by announcing at their Parish? Are members asking to place an announcement in their Parish's bulletin?

Please ask for permission from your Pastor to place a bulletin announcement and talk with the Parish. After permission received, contact Chris Leone, OFS National Councilor at cleoneofs@gmail.com for sample bulletin announcement and script.

Also see:

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/2026/07/october-a-month-for-all-things-franciscan/>.

These questions are not an exhaustive list of the life of a thriving Fraternity, but they can help us begin an honest examination. And there is one more difficult question to hold in prayer: is our Fraternity truly thriving, or merely surviving? There will always be short-term struggles in Fraternity life. Every Fraternity knows seasons of fatigue, transition, illness, or uncertainty. But when a short-term struggle becomes indefinite, we must ask how it is affecting the Fraternity's Gospel life, its joy, its service, its prayer, and its witness.

This kind of reflection is not meant to burden us. Rather, it invites us back to hope. God does not ask us to rebuild alone. He asks us to listen together, discern together, and respond together as brothers and sisters called to live the Gospel in the spirit of Saint Francis.

As we carry these questions to prayer, may they lead us not to discouragement, but to conversion of heart. When we look honestly at council service, apostolates, care for absent members, vocations, and the health of our Fraternity life, we are practicing the movement our Rule invites us to live going from Gospel to life, and life to Gospel.

Let us pray: *Jesus, center of our Franciscan life, help us to hear your Gospel in the real needs of our Fraternity and to answer with generous hearts. Teach us to serve where service is needed, to include those who are absent, to invite those whose lives already bear the seed of Franciscan vocation, and to discern together whether we are merely surviving or truly thriving. Show us, lead us, and guide us in the changes that are awaiting to make our Fraternities' lives become an even more living witness of Gospel to life and life to Gospel. Amen.*

Peace and all good,
Kathleen Carsten

The Prayer of St. Francis

You are holy, Lord, the only God,
and your deeds are wonderful.
You are strong, you are great,
you are the Most High.

The Spirit of Assisi: Finding Our Modern Encounters

Forty years ago, on October 27, 1986, a profound silence settled over the hilltop town of Assisi. At the invitation of Pope John Paul II, religious leaders from across the globe—Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and Christian—gathered not to debate theology, but to pray for world peace. They stood side-by-side, united in a shared reverence for humanity. This historic day became known as the "Spirit of Assisi."

But that autumn day in 1986 was merely the echo of a much older encounter.



In the fall of 1219, amidst the bitter violence of the Fifth Crusade, St. Francis of Assisi crossed the battle lines in Damietta, Egypt, to meet with the Sultan, Malik al-Kamil. Francis arrived not with weapons or armor, but with the simple greeting: "May the Lord give you peace." In a time defined by holy war, the Sultan welcomed the friar. For days, they engaged in respectful dialogue, recognizing the deep devotion in one another. They parted as brothers, leaving a timeless blueprint for peacemaking.

This blueprint is not a relic of the past; it is a living mandate. The call to interreligious dialogue emerges organically from our Catholic roots, asking us to step across our modern battle lines. The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order perfectly captures this ongoing mission: *"Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon"* (OFS Rule, Art. 19).

Trusting in that "divine seed" changes how we view our neighbors. The Spirit of Assisi challenges us to recognize that true peace is never passive. It requires the courage to leave our ideological encampments and seek out genuine encounters with those of different faiths and backgrounds.

As we navigate the final quarter of the year, how might we recreate that 1219 encounter in our own communities? It might mean extending an invitation to coffee with a neighbor of a different tradition, attending an interfaith Thanksgiving service, or simply choosing to listen with a deeply open heart when disagreements arise.

We may not be called to cross a physical battlefield in Egypt or gather world leaders in Italy. But we are called to be instruments of peace exactly where we are, trusting that every respectful encounter builds a more unified, fraternal world.

Peace,
Mike Carsten

MULTICULTURAL EVENTS IN A DIOCESE NEAR YOU!

Praising God from whom every blessing flows! From the Father of creation comes the beauty of His people who are made in His image and likeness. Our universal church encompasses the great richness that flows from our loving Triune God and within His house are brothers and sisters from every nation, diverse backgrounds, and many tongues. As we move through the remainder of this calendar year, here are a few more opportunities for you to see and be the face of God in the world, by exploring cultural events (including non-Catholic events) in a diocese near you.

Diocese of Saginaw

Every Sun | 3pm: Extraordinary Form (Latin) Mass, at Holy Family Catholic Church, Saginaw.

Diocese of Lansing

Sep 26-27 | 10am – 8pm: Pow Wow to honor the significance of the Anishinaabe people's ancestral powwow grounds, at Louis Adado Riverfront Park, Lansing

Oct 10 | 9am: Michigan Catholic Women's Conference, \$75 at the Lansing Center

Diocese of Kalamazoo

Aug 26 | 6pm: Circle of Friends – fellowship and gathering open to individuals with disabilities at St. Catherine/Stanley Center, Portage, MI. **Also on Sep 23, Oct 28, Nov 18, Dec 06**

Diocese of Grand Rapids

Aug 16 | 2pm: Sensory-Friendly Mass - St. John Paul II Church, Cedar Springs, MI. **Also, Sep 6th**

Sep 12 | 10am: Mass for Jubilee Year of St. Francis, Franciscan Life Process Center, Lowell

Sep 12-13 | Grand Valley American Indian Pow Wow, Riverside Park, Grand Rapids

Diocese of Gaylord

Aug 19 | "God Bless America" Mass with Bishop Walsh at St. Francis Xavier, Petoskey;

Masses also on **Sep 16**, 5:30pm: St. Ignatius, Rogers City; **Oct 21**, 5:30pm - St. Joseph, West

Branch; **Nov 4**, 5:30pm: St. Ann, Cadillac; **Dec 9**, 5:30pm - Immaculate Conception, Traverse City

Archdiocese of Detroit

Sep 6 | 2pm: Mass with a Musical Setting to Honor the Culture of Jazz at St. Moses the Black, Detroit

Sep 18-19 | Engaging the Young Church Conference 2026, \$45/\$85 at St. Anastasia, Troy

Oct 10 | 9am-5pm: 17a Conferencia de Mujeres Hispanas, Centro de Artes de Dearborn

Canticle of the Creatures - Brother Sun, Sister Moon

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him.

And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor!

Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you have made them bright, precious and beautiful.

St. Francis of Assisi, Canticle of the Creatures (c. 1224)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **Franciscan Month Awareness is coming beginning September 26 and 27 and through all of October.** Ask your Parish Pastor for permission to speak before the parish members, especially on September 26 and 27, and to place a notice in the Parish's bulletin. To obtain a sample of a bulletin announcement and speech, go to <https://www.franciscanmonth.org/>.
 - How is your Fraternity caring for members who cannot come to Fraternity gatherings? Do Fraternity members visit them, pray for them, and include them with a full heart?
- **November 17, 2026 is the second annual observance of the Feast of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Patroness of the Secular Franciscan Order, and the International Day of Secular Franciscan Solidarity.** It's never too late to begin observing this important ministry within your Fraternity. See OFS Minister General, Tibor Kauser's 2025 letter introducing this observance: <https://ciofs.info/2025/04/26/ciofs-announces-secular-franciscan-day-of-solidarity/>.
- **OFS-USA Chapter is October 13 -18, 2026.** Give Kathleen your questions about anything Franciscan and I will ask the council! Cell: 313.510.2614 or dmrecminister@gmail.com.

**Encountering
God in the
Parables**



WEEKEND RETREATS
2026-2027 SEASON

62460 Mt Vernon Rd, Washington Twp, MI
www.capretreat.org | 248.651.4826



The Blessing of St. Clare

Go forth in peace, for you have followed the good road.
Go forth without fear, for he who created you has made you holy,
has always protected you, and loves you as a mother.

Fraternity News

Congratulations on these Professions!



St Louis the King, August 13

Left to Right:

Eileen Bednard, OFS, Minister

Gina Pattison, OFS

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, August 16

Left to Right:

Greg Davis, OFS, Sponsor

Antoine Shaya, OFS

Michela Birosak, OFS

Susan Hayosh, Sponsor and Minister



St Paschal, Sylvania, August 24

Left to Right:

Michael Okragleski, OFS, Minister

Stephanie Tenorio, OFS

Nick Getzinger, OFS

Tracy Getzinger, OFS

Jim Bosinger, OFS

In Memorium

Lyle Bernard Tiffany

11/4/1943 – 6/18/2026



Lyle Bernard Tiffany, 82, passed away peacefully June 18. Bernard was professed on May 20, 1975 at Our Lady of Grace Capuchin Monastery Church, San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy, and transferred to St. Joseph Fraternity, Ann Arbor. Over the years, Bernard served the fraternity as treasurer several times, and the Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity as Regional Treasurer in 2000-2003.

The Peace Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

St. Francis of Assisi

Members of **Our Mother of Sorrows Fraternity in Grand Rapids** joined with lay Carmelites, Dominicans, Paulist Associates, Maryknoll Affiliates, The Order of St. John of Malta and Deacon Dennis Rybicki for an inspiring evening: **Prayer Service for Peace**. The Paulist Associates made the evening possible through the inspiration of the Paulist Associates of Columbus. The service included scripture reading, original music and other elements to reflect the local community. Everyone received an olive branch to take home, a perfect addition to our prayer space, reminding us we are called to be peacemakers.



St. Anthony Fraternity, members of Indian River, on Sunday, August 9th at Cross in the Woods Catholic Shrine took part in the **50th Anniversary celebration Mass and reception of Father Michael Fowler, OFM**. Ordained to the priesthood in 1976 as a Franciscan Friar, Fr. Mike was the first infant baptized in the Long House Chapel at the Shrine by Fr. Charles Brophy in 1949. Born and raised in the Petoskey area, Fr. Mike previously served as Pastor of Cross in the Woods Catholic Shrine and is currently serving St. Peter's in the Loop, Chicago, Illinois. He was assigned to San Antonio, Texas later this year to mentor seminarians in theology. Fr. Mike is a Franciscan Friar from the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Name	Professed Fraternity	Location	Date Entered Eternal Life
Lillian Timma	St. Elizabeth	Southfield	June 10
Bernard Tiffany	St. Joseph	Ann Arbor	June 18
Daniel Atkinson	St. Bonaventure	Detroit	August 4
Theresa Raymond	St. Joseph	Ann Arbor	August 8
Delbert Asbury	Solanus Casey	Roseville	August 27



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 Database Manager at dmrfratdata@gmail.com. Please remember the National database information must match your fraternity's Annual Report information! Accuracy is imperative! Thank you!

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE