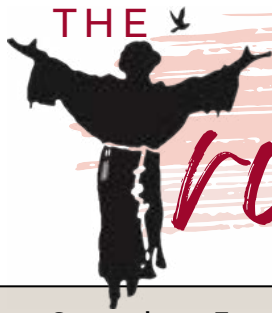


SPRING



# rourbadour MAGAZINE

2024

Connecting Secular Franciscan Fraternities throughout our region.



Frances Acosta, OFS Editor

St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, Charlotte, NC

smfranciscanministry@gmail.com

## Happy Lent!

*O Lord, make this Lenten season different from the other ones. Let me find you again.  
Amen.  
- Henri Nouwen*

When was the last time you made time for God in solitude?  
Besides Sunday, when was the last time you made a date with God?

At the center of Francis' heart was Jesus. Like Jesus, Francis was known often for going off to remote places to be alone in solitude and contemplation to encounter Jesus.

Lent is an invitation. It is a time we draw near to the Lord, walking with Him on the road to Calvary.

### In solitude:

**Be Present-** "Hear I am Lord." (Isaiah 6:8)

**Relate-** focus on His presence. He loves you. He wants to be with you. He is always with you.

**Receive-** "Lord I come to do your will." (Hebrews 10:9)

**Respond-** "Speak Lord for your servant is listening." (1 Samuel 3:7-11)

**Let Him lead.**

**Let Him guide.**

*In order to make our Lenten season different from others is to be still and wait for the whisper!*

*May you find renewal for your spirit and an awakening of your faith this Lenten season.*

Peace and Grace to all,



Frances Acosta, OFS  
Founder of Stella Mundi Franciscan Ministry

[stellamundi-ofs.org](http://stellamundi-ofs.org)



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



Minister

Our Lady of the Angels Region

cleonofs@gmail.com

## Lent: Spring Training for Catholics

*"Francis was always new, always fresh, always beginning again."* [i]

*"Lent is spiritual spring training — we get the flab out, we get the sins out," said Cardinal Timothy Dolan in 2012 after the Ash Wednesday rite at St. Patrick's Cathedral. "Our fight is not against the Red Sox or the Cardinals; it's against Satan and sin and selfishness."*

Just as spring training prepares the major league baseball player for the challenges of the new season, Lent, the spring renewal of our Christianity, prepares us for the challenges of our spiritual lives. It is with simplicity that the Gospel of Mark presents the testing of the Lord in just two verses on the first Sunday of Lent. The Spirit sends Jesus to the desert for forty days. Jesus is put to the test. We do not find the three temptations of changing a rock to bread, or jumping off the parapet of the Temple safely, or receiving the power of the world which we read in Matthew and Luke. The temptations were not important to Mark. For Mark the only thing that matters is that the Lord was strengthened by this test and then was ready to proclaim his Father's Kingdom.

As we begin Lent and relate the forty days the Lord spent in the desert to the forty days of Lent, we also can relate tests that we have had or may still have in our lives. Spiritually, we are ready for the curve balls that life throws at us.

We have confidence in ourselves, and more important, confidence in the Lord who is preparing us to do battle for Him.

St. Francis encouraged his followers to live lives of conversion. This is our Spring Training! This is a time when we embrace special spiritual exercises and disciplines, which strengthen us for the rigorous challenge of conversion. It may encompass major steps in our life with God or smaller everyday steps that slowly draw us to our eternal destiny. Lent allows us time to focus on the need for conversion, constant conversion.

*"Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily."*[ii] We may have defining moments in our life of faith but need to augment these with the many lesser moments that keep us on the proper path. Fasting and abstaining from meat can remind us of the need to depend on God, as well as connect us to those who go daily without these basic necessities. Giving our time, treasure, and talent to someone, especially the poor, expands our world to all God's people and helps us better love God and others. Spending extra time in prayer makes the Lenten experience quite personal and draws us even deeper into our life with God.

One of the best elements of Lent is the way it instills hope. All thirty teams come out of spring training with the hope that this is the year they will get to the World Series. The same sense of hope permeates the season of Lent. *"There always is a sense that dedication to the discipline and penance of the 'daily grind' of Lent will lead toward the promise of the Resurrection — the ultimate victory over sin and death and the 'championship trophy' of Eternal Life."*[iii]

Like St. Francis, let us strive each day during Lent to make ourselves new, make ourselves fresh and begin again.

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[i] Thomas of Celano, "First Life of St. Francis," in Marion Habig, *St. Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources (Cincinnati: Franciscan Media, 2009)*, 118.

[ii] *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, Article 7.*

[iii] Most Reverend Jeffrey Haines, *Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, 2019.*



Regional Spiritual Assistant

Our Lady of the Angels Region

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### ARE WE POOR IN SPIRIT?

When Jesus paraded into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the people who cheered Him along the way regarded the event as a royal procession. They expected Jesus to ride into town, declare Himself their King and start the long-awaited revolution against the Roman government. When he refused to do so, the crowds turned against Him, enabling the religious authorities to engineer His arrest, His trial, His torture, and His execution.

Jesus' refusal to be the King the people expected Him to be and wanted Him to be is a recurring theme of the Gospels from the very beginning of His public ministry. When Jesus was tempted in the desert, the whole issue for Him was whether or not to become King. He lived in a time of political turmoil when the people were hoping and praying for a powerful leader, a strong King. And the temptation that came to Jesus was to be that King. The devil urged Jesus to demonstrate His mighty power in ways that would excite and dazzle the people to the point where they would rally around Him and declare Him their King.

'When Peter first recognized Jesus as the Messiah, Jesus began to tell him of the suffering and death that was to come. Peter said, "No! This will never happen to you, Lord." Peter was saying, "You're the King. You're going to be our political and military leader. This is what we expect of You." And Jesus rebuked him saying, "Get behind Me, you Satan."


In the motion picture, "The Empire Strikes Back," Luke Skywalker lands his skycraft in a desolate, mucky, foggy swamp. There he meets the "Yoda" for the purpose of learning how to deal with his enemies. Luke's skycraft sinks out of sight into the mud.

The Yoda instructs Luke that the mighty power called "The Force" will enable him to lift his craft out of the swamp. Luke tries to follow the Yoda's instruction, but fails. The craft remains stuck in the mud. Then the Yoda says, "No, no, my son, you are trying to use 'The Force.' You can't use 'The Force.' Let 'The Force' use you." Jesus resisted all temptations to use "The Force" (which is God).

Instead, He let God use Him. He carried out His ministry in harmony with God's Will. "Not my Will, but yours," He prayed to the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane.

We must learn to allow God to use us. When we place ourselves in God's hands and submit to Gods' Will, then His Power flows through us and gives us the strength to rise up from the level of mere existence to the New Life Christ is calling us into.

As members of the Franciscan family, you and I strive to base our lives on Gospel living. And we know it is a life long challenge to do so. I pray these words will inspire us to continue on our journey to live the Gospel in spirit and in truth!



"Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."  
-Matthew 5:3





Interim Regional Formation Director

St. Elizabeth of Hungary S.I.,NY

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## AN INVITATION TO DEEPER PRAYER

My son Kevin was ordained in 2007 as a priest for the Archdiocese of New York. Several years before, he made a personal retreat at the Trappist Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers, Georgia. On New Year's Eve, he went into the chapel and climbed up into the choir loft to pray alone in the presence of the Lord; and after some time, he fell asleep. Upon awakening, he realized that all the doors had been locked, so he settled down to await the early morning procession of the monks back into the chapel.

After a few minutes, a side door opened, and from the loft, he observed a lone monk take a place below and, in what seemed like only moments, the monk entered into what appeared to be a very deep state of prayer. Kevin couldn't help but admire how quickly this monk was able to dismiss the cares and distractions of the world, and surrender himself in silence to a quiet, contemplative stance. He didn't seem alone, but in the arms of God. At dawn, Kevin descended the stairs and walked unobserved behind the last monk back to his retreat room.

The monk who impressed Kevin so much was Fr. Basil Pennington, the renowned spiritual writer, speaker and teacher. In his book *Call to the Center*, he wrote "We want a deeper, more experiential union with him. It is like any true friendship, as it grows it needs to go beyond words and do things together and for each other.

The image which God Himself has frequently used is that of the marital embrace, the total being to each other. We need those times of prayer when we listen not just with our ears, our eyes, our minds, but more with our hearts, with our whole being."

Couldn't these words describe St. Francis? Clare herself wrote, "We become what we love, and who we love shapes what we become."

Fr. Pennington told a story of the time he saw a brilliant fresco in an ancient monastery on Mt. Athos in Greece, and he wondered about it – so unlike the other very dark frescos, which had become hidden by grime from candle smoke over the ages.

He was told that a visiting art restorer had offered to restore the frescos and he asked permission just to let the monks see the possibilities that an authentic restoration could produce. During the first stages of painstaking, slow cleaning, the dark images seemed to become lost altogether as the chemicals applied began to do their delicate work.

The monks became alarmed and halted the work – they were more comfortable with the murkier colors – those were the shades the monks were used to. After the artisans packed up and left their unfinished work, the film of accumulated dirt began to fall away.

The original colors were "freed" and they were incredibly alive, beautiful. The monks looked at the fresco now with new, wiser, eyes.

Fr. Pennington tells us that as the restoration of the Divine Image within us proceeds, we have to have great patience, great faith in the Master Artisan, and give permission for those layers of muck to come to the surface to be cleansed, or better, healed. The habit of faithful time for prayer, is the vehicle for this gentle, persistent process toward wholeness.

We must, like Francis and Clare, allow God to work with us on our secret attachments or disordered habits.

We have much to be grateful to the Church for in giving us another Lenten opportunity; for once again opening ourselves to the graces of a new and brilliant restoration toward likeness to the Lord.

If you are interested in growth in spiritual life, check out some of the wonderful books of *Fr. Basil Pennington*:

**Centering Prayer: Renewing an Ancient Christian Prayer Form (1998)**  
**Prayertimes (1987)**  
**Praying by Hand: Rediscovering the Rosary as a Way of Prayer (1995)**  
**A Place Apart: Monastic Prayer and Practice for Everyone (1998)**  
**Centered Living: The Way of Centering Prayer (1999)**  
**Lectio Divina (1998)**  
 and many more!



Councilor, North Jersey

Most Holy Name, Little Falls NJ

[jimandreano@gmail.com](mailto:jimandreano@gmail.com)

## JPIC Update (Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation)

### A Suggested Lenten Observance

Looking for a different Lenten observance this year? The JPIC National Executive Council is proposing a simple approach which involves all three traditional activities: Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving. It is called the **H2O Project**.

Participation in the H2O Project is simple. To do so, we prayerfully give up expensive, and often environmentally-unfriendly, purchased beverages such as coffee and soda. Instead, we reunite with our dear Sister Water. (Sister Tap Water, that is.)

With each drink, we are reminded of how blessed we are to have plentiful clean water available to us simply by turning a faucet. So many others around the world lack this basic necessity. May we always remember them in our prayers.

While we don't generally consider cutting down or eliminating certain beverages to be a form of fasting, in our culture it most definitely is. Many of us believe that we cannot start the day without a stop at Dunkin, Starbucks, QuickChek, etc. for that \$3 cup of coffee. Or in my case, diet soda. Maybe we can do without it. Let's try. It's only for forty days.

The money that we save will add up quickly. For example, \$3 times 40 equals \$120. We then donate that money to the H2O project where it is put to use both domestically and abroad. The H2O Project helps meet the need for clean drinking water that we take for granted, by:

- Providing clean water to the residents of Jackson, MS during that city's recent water crisis.
- Drilling wells in Africa. Through 2022, 11 such projects have been completed in six African nations.

Each of us observes Lent in our own way. All donations are gratefully accepted, regardless of whether you choose to participate in the beverage fast.



To donate, please ask your Local Minister if your Fraternity is participating in this initiative. If so, your Fraternity will collect and remit your donations. Otherwise, **Please make your check payable to:**

**"Our Lady of the Angels Region (OLTAR)"**

**write "H2O Lenten Project" on the memo line, and send to:**

**Debbie Wickham, OFS  
16 Old Woodstock Trail  
Oak Ridge, NJ 07438**

Thanks in advance for your participation and generosity!



# NEWS AROUND THE REGION



## PROFESSIONS, ADMISSIONS & ELECTIONS, ETC

### Rite of Welcoming

**Most Holy Name Fraternity  
Little Falls, New Jersey**



Photo credit: Chris Leone, OFS

**Celebrating the Rite of Welcoming  
January 8, 2024**

Front row - Irene DeBernardo, OFS, **Secretary**;  
Christie Rice, **Inquirer**; Patti Policastro, **Inquirer**;  
Sr. Janice Jolin, SMIC, **Spiritual Assistant**;  
Fr. Sam Monaco, OFS, **Formation Director**  
Back row - Jim Andreano, **OFS, Treasurer**;  
Joe Wickham, **Minister**; Debbie Wickham, OFS,  
**Vice Minister**

### Rite of Profession

**Assumption Fraternity  
Wood-Ridge, New Jersey**



Photo credit - Gabriel Aduabato,

**Celebrating the Rite of Profession  
February 09, 2024**

Left to right in the photo: Presider **Fr. Leo Joseph Camurati, OP**; Dr. Christopher L. Trause, OFS;  
Frank Catalano, OFS;  
John J. Trause, OFS; Anna Buccini, OFS;  
John Buccini, OFS;  
Gerard Aduabato, OFS; Theresa Zito, OFS;  
**Candidate** Joan Van Lowe.

### Rite of Admission

**St. Benedict the Moor  
New York, New York**



Photo credit: Treasa Kozhipatt

**December 17, 2023**

**Douglas Dugan and  
Tony Paul Kozhipatt.**  
completed their Rite of Admission

*Left to right are: Douglas Dugan,  
Paul Beelitz (Minister),  
Fr. Joseph Cavoto (Spiritual  
Assistant), Francesca Ciolino-  
Volano (Formation Team),  
Tony Paul Kozhipatt.*

### St. John Fraternity

**New York City, New York**

**Celebrating the Rite of Welcoming  
Tatiana Nabyoure  
January 28, 2024.**



Photo credit: Lorna Lopez, OFS

Tatiana was welcomed by Concepcion Mallonga, **Formation Director** and Corazon Pontejos, **Minister**, and witnessed by Fr Michael Ramos, **Pastor** of St. John the Baptist Church.

### St. John Fraternity

**New York City, New York**



Photo credit: Lorna Lopez, OFS

**July 23, 2023**  
**Rite of Profession  
of  
Lydia Simon, OFS, and  
Noraima Maeda, OFS**



Photo credit: Lorna Lopez, OFS

**November 26, 2023**  
**Rite of Profession  
of  
Jeannie Calixte, OFS**

### St. Thomas More

**New York City, New York**

**January 21, 2024**  
**Walter Rosales, Michael Cannella  
and Barbara Fanning** completed  
their Rite of Admission



Photo credit: Stacey Antine, OFS

**First row** left to right,  
Stacey Antine, Florence Permanad,  
Teordora Reyes, Barbara Fanning  
**Second row:** Walter Rosales,  
Fr. Julian, Carol Ellsworth,  
Michael Cannella and Sui San

*Congratulations  
To all!*



# FOLLOWING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS



## 2024 The Year of Prayer

In preparation for the Jubilee year of 2025 – “Pilgrims of Hope” - Pope Francis wrote: “In this time of preparation, I would greatly desire that we devote 2024, the year preceding the Jubilee event, to a great “symphony” of prayer.”

What is Prayer?

Prayer is intimacy with the Great Mystery.

Be every moment aware of the Presence

How you are loved!

....So be awake to the Life that is loving you

And sing your prayer, laugh your prayer,

Dance your prayer, run and weep your prayer,

Sweat your prayer.

Sleep your prayer, eat your prayer,

Paint, sculpt, hammer and read your prayer,

Sweep, dig, rake, drive and hoe your prayer,

Garden, and farm, and build and clean your prayer,

Wash, iron, vacuum, sew and embroider and pickle your prayer,

Compute, touch, bend and fold and never delete

Or mutilate your prayer.

Learn and play your prayer,

Work and rest your prayer,

Fast and feast your prayer,

Argue, talk, whisper, listen and shout your prayer,

Groan and moan and spit and sneeze your prayer,

Swim and hunt and cook your prayer,

Digest and become your prayer.

Release and recover your prayer.

Breathe your prayer,

Be your prayer....

And so you are praying.

So you do what you be,

And all your being is blessed,

And all your life is a prayer,

And all your acts are a blessing.

Excerpted from What is Prayer?

From Moving to the Edge of the World By Alla Renee Bozarth,  
iUniverse 2003.

All rights reserved.

Compliments of Most Holy Name Fraternity, Little Falls, NJ

## The One

In her dream she saw the eyes,  
The eyes of a thousand dreams.  
Eyes of pure love, not of lust.

They are as tender as they seem.

And He said, “Fear not will I hurt you,  
nor will I cause you harm.

I’ve sought you out, you are the one  
Whose love is not lukewarm.

I come in Amber shades of Light That  
encircle and adorn me.

I AM the Light of LOVE and the LOVE  
of LIFE.

Do you choose to love or mourn me?”

“Mourn You, I will not”, she thought,

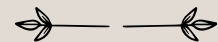
“but LOVE,

I already do.

For, in my dreams the only eyes are  
those belonging to You.”

Karyn Fusco, OSF

Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity  
Red Bank NJ



## Mirror

I look in the mirror. What do I see?

A child, broken.

A sinner.

Alone and at times invisible.

How can you love me?

How can you care about the person  
whose face I stare at?

I felt this warmth take over me.

In a whisper, I heard Him say, “look  
again deeply at the face in the mirror.

What do you see?

And so I did what I was told.

I looked intently and lo and behold,  
I saw Him staring back at me.

The one who gave up His life on a tree.

My beloved Jesus, how could I have  
missed to see the one who has my  
heart!

Stay focused on me my love He said.

We will never be apart.

O’ Lord my God, How great thou art!

By Frances Acosta, OFS  
Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity  
Charlotte, NC



## Franciscan Spirituality in App



(Photo by Valaurian Waller Detroit Catholic)

In my never- ending search for everything Franciscan I came across an article about a Franciscan app. A longtime member of the Hallow app, the prospect of a Franciscan app excited me, so I read on.

In the Detroit Catholic, Gabriella Patti on June 1, 2022 writes about Bro. Igor de Bliquey, OFM Cap.

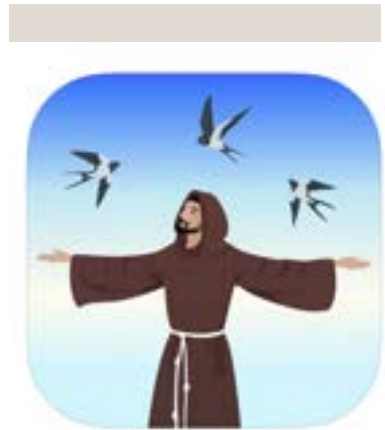
As his post-novitiate project, Bro. Igor, a Belgian friar in residence at St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit, developed the free app "Fr@elli" meant to help users grow in faith and turn spirituality into a lived experience. He stated "It first started as a Dutch app, but we recognized that we needed to branch out, so it became a bilingual app, now in English and Dutch," Bro. Igor explained, adding the app has received interest from the United States, India and Australia. "It has been fun to recognize that people need spirituality, and they are grabbing onto this as a tool to learn more about Franciscan spirituality." "The time of St Francis and the time now, I would say, are very similar" Bro. Igor said. "He tried to experience and find spirituality in the plain things of everyday (life) and open our eyes to what is happening here and now and go to the Gospel as a core of our spirituality."

While Bro. Igor hopes Fr@elli reaches more people with the truths of the faith, there are many great Catholic apps out there, he said. "There are so many good apps out there that are trying to inspire people to dig deeper in faith, and this is one of them," he said. "If this isn't for you, try another one. Find ways to work on your own spirituality and deepen your relationship with Christ. That's what we are all supposed to be doing, so let's go for it."

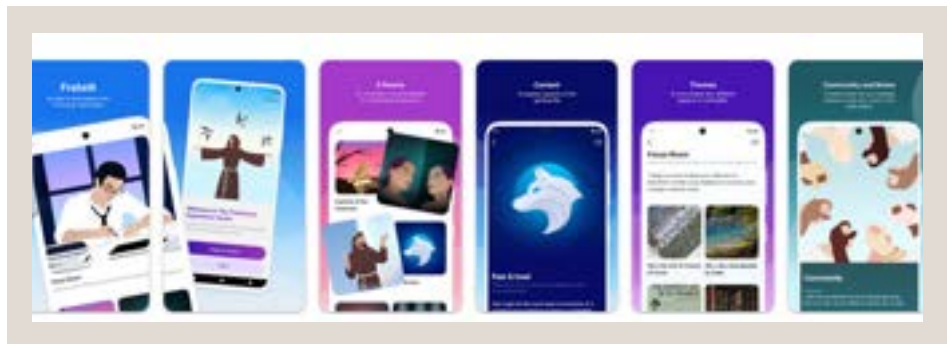
It is not as big as Hallow in terms of content but that is how Hallow started! I remember Hallow when it started I was one of their test users and look at it now. Maybe we can do the same for our fellow Franciscans and support this venture and set the world ablaze in Franciscan Charism!

For the full article please visit

<https://www.detroitcatholic.com/news/capuchin-friar-develops-smartphone-app-to-bring-franciscan-spirituality-to-masses>



Just click on the link below






# FOLLOWING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS



## Lenten RESOURCES

Click on the links 

arts & faith  
Lent

Enter into a visual prayer experience this Lent. Each week will bring a new video commentary about a work of art inspired by the Sunday Scriptures. Use these videos to take a new look at this season of spiritual renewal through the lens of sacred art.

### Cycle B: Lent 2024

- [Week 1 of Lent](#)
- [Week 2 of Lent](#)
- [Week 3 of Lent](#)
- [Week 4 of Lent](#)
- [Week 5 of Lent](#)
- [Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion](#)
- [Holy Thursday](#)
- [Good Friday](#)
- [Holy Saturday](#)
- [Easter Sunday](#)

LOYOLAPRESS.



A weekly newsletter compiled using various books and online resources to help you celebrate the season prayerfully. For a full experience of these Lenten resources, purchase the recommended books through the publisher or Amazon.

- [Week 1 of Lent](#)
- [Week 2 of Lent](#)
- [Week 3 of Lent](#)
- [Week 4 of Lent](#)
- [Week 5 of Lent](#)
- [Holy Week](#)
- [Easter](#)



## WISDOM of the Saints St. Maximilian Kolbe



1894 –1941  
FEAST DAY: August 14

*"The cross is the school of love."*  
St. Maximilian Kolbe

Father Kolbe's death was not a sudden, last-minute act of heroism. His whole life had been a preparation. His holiness was a limitless, passionate desire to convert the whole world to God. And his beloved Immaculata was his inspiration.

Grant, O Lord Jesus, that we, too, may give ourselves entirely without reserve to the love and service of our Heavenly Queen in order to better love and serve our fellowman in imitation of your humble servant, St. Maximilian Kolbe. Amen.

Three Hail Mary's and a Glory Be.

# GENERAL INFORMATION



## 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, Summer, June 2024, are due to the Editor: [smfranciscanministry@gmail.com](mailto:smfranciscanministry@gmail.com) by May 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.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM**

*Please change (or add)  
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**(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)**

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