WINTER



2022

Connecting Secular Franciscan Fratenities throughout our region.













Frances Acosta, OFS Editor

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#### **Blessed Advent!**

Welcome to the Winter edition of The Troubadour!

I have done what is mine to do. May Christ show you what is yours to do." St. Francis of Assisi

I believe this quote is the heart of who we are as secular Franciscans. I often refer to it whenever I am discerning any decision I need to make. It serves as a reminder as we follow the footsteps of our seraphic father, we are following Christ. Francis always made sure through his writings that we remember that. As we enter the season of advent, we are invited to share in the mystery of the incarnation.

Advent is a time to begin again. Like Lent, hit the restart button. Francis often used this season, like Lent to renew his mind and heart by reconciliation, solitude and prayer. How blessed are we that he instituted the nativity scene as a visual reminder to always keep our eyes focused on Christ. Let us resolve this Advent season to set up our nativities in a prominent place in our homes and gather as a family in prayer or in solitude. Let us use this time wisely, silence the din of commercialism, clear our minds and make room in our hearts and await the birth of the king.

Let us be more:

Prayerful, mindful, loving, faithful and above all Grateful to be Franciscans.

Brothers and Sisters,

I look forward to beginning this journey with you as the editor of The Troubadour. May the light of Christ be with you in mind, heart and action. Until next time,





Frances Acosta.OFS Founder of Stella Mundi Franciscan Ministries



#### **Regional Council Members:**

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Fr. Frank McHugh, OFM **Regional Spiritual Assistant** 

Listen, Discern, Go Forth

2022-2023 OFS-USA THEME

# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

## CHRIS LEONE, OFS













Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region

Formation Director, Porziuncola Fraternity

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#### **Our Incarnational Spirituality**

A virtuous man attending the Christmas Mass at Greccio saw a little child lying lifeless in the manger and he saw the holy man of God (Francis) approach the child and waken him from a deep sleep . . Now he is awakened and impressed on their loving memory by His own grace through His holy servant Francis.

These words from The First Life of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano draw us into the mystery of the incarnation that St. Francis so desperately wished to remind the world of on that crisp December day in Greccio 800 years ago.

As Blessed John Duns Scotus taught us, the Incarnation was not a reaction, but the initial action that caused creation in the first place. Jesus was not an afterthought that happened because mankind did not keep our part of the covenant with God. Sin was not the reason for Jesus, and nothing man could have ever done could force God to act. Jesus comes because this was always God's desire and intention.

God incarnates because God loves creation and wants it to experience His love in a way appropriate for creatures. We can be intimate with God because of the incarnation.

However, because of the human choice for sin, God incarnate, Jesus Christ, comes as a redeemer, not because it's the only possibility but because God wants to show us that self-sacrifice is the strongest way to demonstrate love and to conquer sin.

In Jesus, God became a human being not just to tell us who and what God is but to also show us who and what we are supposed to be. Through the incarnation we share in the life of Christ. We also, then, share in the mission of Jesus. Each of us is called to extend the love and care of the Lord to those around us. As Franciscans we do that by observing the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We face the task of linking scripture and the life and words of Jesus to our own lives. We rely on the Holy Spirit to continue to teach us what we need to know. We cannot escape the message of scripture nor the model that Jesus gives. Francis understood the primacy of Jesus and sought to imitate what he saw and heard from Jesus (The Franciscan Journey, 137).

We are invited to pause before the mystery of the Incarnation in order to contemplate the depth of God's love for humanity. The Son of God becomes the Son of man; he becomes one of us, our brother (Second Version of the Letter to the Faithful 56, FF 201).

Our faith in the Incarnation prompts us to discover the seeds of the Word present in all cultures and in contemporary society, so that we might bring to bloom the seeds of humanity we find there. It urges us not only to defend life but also to become instruments of life and humanity in our families and fraternities, reaching out to those who are seen as social rejects, who are no longer considered human. The concrete way that Francis of Assisi celebrated the mystery of the Incarnation at Greccio, invites us to realize more fully "that we have been entrusted with a treasure which makes us more human and helps us to lead a new life. There is nothing more precious which we can give to others" (Evangelii gaudium 264).

Merry Christmas to you and your families,



Listen, Discern, Go Forth

2022-2023 OFS-USA THEME

## ON THE JOURNEY

## FORMATION

## **HUGO BADER, OFS**











**Regional Formation Director** 

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#### Thanks, Lord, for Listening

I hate to complain, but it was just one heck of a day.

I said to Jesus, it started out with a huge headache, and I felt like my head would explode. He said, "I had a pretty bad headache one day too."

Plus, all the holiday shopping and frenzy, just made it worse. He said, "I remember one time when there was a lot going on for Me too".

I shared that as I was getting into the car on the way to work, I picked up a branch in the driveway and got a splinter and boy did that hurt! He said, "I know the feeling."

As the day wore on and I was tiring, my back started to be really painful. He said," Yup, I've been there."

I continued, did I mention that my Arthritis kicked in and I could barely move my fingers and hands'? I heard Him sigh and He said, "I know exactly how that feels."

And then because I'm on my feet a lot, I told him how they were killing me by the end of the day. He said, "my feet hurt a lot once as well." Then, when I got home, I felt I deserved a little treat since I endured all these sufferings... right? And I was thirsty, so I opened a bottle of wine - a Chianti, poured a glass, said cheers, and took a delightful sip. He said, "I'm with you, I was really thirsty once too."

So, I asked Him what he did to get through it all and without hesitation, He said, "I thought of you."

Hello, my brothers and sisters of Our Lady of the Angels Region. I have the incredibly difficult role of stepping into Diane Menditto's previous role as Regional Director of Formation. Before I took that step. I had a conversation with Jesus about what I should do. He suggested I connect with the Holy Spirit. I replied, 'thanks', hoping for a clear cut answer. He said, no problem, and get back to me. So I followed his direction, prayed with the Holy Spirit and then shared with Jesus the outcome. He gave me a very clear cut answer. "Go for it".

So here we are. Our Region's theme is Listen, Discern and Go-forth. The 'Go-forth' part fits with Jesus' answer to me. I think it's very much part of our OFS vocation and profession to 'go-forth as witnesses and instruments of the Church's mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by our life and words'.

I hope you have a blessed and hope-filled Advent. This might be a very good time to have a conversation with our Lord and see what and how he wants you to 'go-forth'.



# SPEAKING FRANKLY

#### Fr. Frank M. McHugh, OFM





Regional Spiritual Assistant

Our Lady of the Angels Region

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#### "Possessed By Love"

When I read this quote, I had to stop and reread it again! I immediately thought of the Letters of St. John which constantly underscored that "God is Love." And isn't that the springboard for much of the Franciscan School of theology? Besides Bonaventure, isn't it the foundation for the writings of Blessed John Duns Scotus? But, of course!

Then, Fr. Anthony points out another corollary in Bonaventure's theology. Namely, "the one who enjoys God possesses God." This may give us pause. What if we do not enjoy God? The Seraphic Doctor's response is that then we do not possess God. And Fr. Anthony questions how many of us can honestly say we enjoy God?

The fact of the matter is that many of us were never taught to enjoy God; we were taught to fear Him. Much remedial work with the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit is needed to turn from fear to enjoyment.

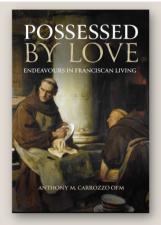
Let me say that this book is not a quick read and I am not rushing to finish it. In fact, I plan to begin reading it again because I'm sure there is still much more for me to learn. Yes, it can be challenging at times, but still, I find it inspirational. Perhaps it can be an inspiration for you too!

That is a rather strange title for an article, don't you think? Well, believe it or not, it is the title of a new book written by one of my former Provincials, Fr. Anthony Carrozzo, OFM. I was fortunate to have one of my friar brothers, Fr. Dan Lanahan, OFM. lend me his copy of this book which has a sub-title "Endeavors in Franciscan Living." It is a small book, but also a wonderful help in understanding the theology of St. Bonaventure.

Over the years, I have struggled to comprehend Bonaventurean theology. Fr. Anthony has clarified and simplified this theology in a way I find more comprehensible.

When we consider 'possession' we normally consider it from a negative view of being possessed by the devil, calling for exorcisms. That conflict has far more entertainment value than any positive understanding, as Hollywood has calculated so well.

St. Bonaventure corrects this, pointing out that we are possessed, to be sure, but by God. This is what he wrote: "No one possesses God without being possessed by God in a special way. And no one possesses God and is possessed by God without loving God and being loved by God in a particular and in comprehensible manner, as in the case of a bride and groom where each loves and is loved by the other."



Possessed By Love Endeavors In Franciscan Living

Anthony M.Carrozzo OFM (author)

Categories Spirituality, Theology With a Bonaventurian mind and heart Anthony Carrozzo OFM brings his life-long love for and study of St Bonaventure to bear in these perceptive reflections on contemporary Franciscan life and world events. His insights show us how St Bonaventure, far from being a figure who belongs to the past, has a perennial relevance and appeal not only for Franciscans but for all Christians.

Mary Petrosky FMM

Available at:

https://www.franciscanpublishing.com/

## Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation JIM ANDREANO, OFS











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#### The Principles of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation

The three principles of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) are in a certain sense like the Holy Trinity. They are all interconnected and form one indivisible whole. Yet each of them has its own distinct identity. In this column, we will focus on the first JPIC principle, Justice. What is Justice?

I don't think there is a single good answer to that question. There are many different forms of justice. The consensus among ethicists is that they can be summarized into four types. Let's look at each.

#### 1) Retributive Justice

This most basic, visceral form of iustice goes back to humanity's beginnings. It can be summed up in the Biblical verse "An eye for an eye". Or in modern parlance "You do the crime; you do the time." To some degree, a sense of Retributive Justice is necessary for society to function. However, it is vital that we not equate justice solely with retribution. Such a worldview will most certainly alter our relationship with God and with our neighbor, and not in a good way.

#### 2)Procedural Justice

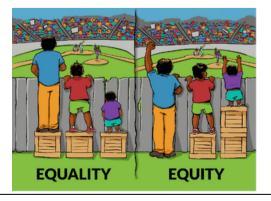
Procedural Justice is based on the quest for "fairness". I put the term in auotes because there is no consensus on what constitutes fairness. We all want to be treated fairly, but we disagree on what that means.

As a society, we define fairness through written laws and contracts, and through unwritten informal standards.

It is important that we adhere to them, but it is not enough. I call to your attention Jesus' encounter with the rich man from Mark 10:17-22, which is paraphrased VERY loosely below: RICH MAN: "Good Teacher, I have acquired all my wealth fairly. I do not lie, cheat, steal, or defraud. I play by the rules. I don't need to do anything else to attain the Kingdom of Heaven, do I?" JESUS: "Yes, you do." Which brings us to the next type of iustice...

#### 3)Distributive Justice

The concept of Distributive Justice is also based on fairness. It is concerned with ensuring that all members of society receive a "fair share" of the available resources. But again, what does this mean? Some sav that a fair share means everyone gets the same share. Others believe that sometimes, treating everyone the same is the least fair thing you can do. The below example illustrates how equality does not always equal equity.



The folks on the left are being treated exactly the same. As a result, one person is getting help that he does not need, and another is getting less help than he needs.

In our current cultural and political environment, the concept of Distributive Justice is controversial to some. Equitable distribution of resources means that those who need more will get more, regardless of what they may "deserve" or "merit". Our culture is considered a meritocracy, where folks get what they deserve and are thus entitled to it. (Whether this is true is another story.) But we Franciscans know that "Anyone who has two coats must share with the person who has none. and whoever has food must do likewise." (Luke 3:11). Why doesn't that person have a coat? Maybe it's his own fault? Doesn't matter. The Kingdom of God is based on abundant grace, showered on all of us. Good thing! We Franciscans do not shy away

from controversy or productive conflict. That is not at all incompatible with our role as peacemakers. (More on this in the next Troubadour issue!)

continued.... Page 6



## JPIC

#### Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

continued from Page 5

And on the subject of controversy:

#### 4) Restorative Justice

The concept of Restorative Justice goes one step beyond. It holds that it is not sufficient for the perpetrator of injustice (be it a person, or an economic/social system) to simply cease the injustice and start behaving justly. There must also be a good faith effort to repair the damage. At the individual level. Restorative Justice seeks to restore relationships to righteousness. Or as Jesus states, "Go first to be reconciled to your brother". (Matthew 5:24). Easier said than done of course. Forgiveness can be hard. Repairing the damage can be even harder. Yet as Franciscans, that is what we are called upon to do.

From a societal standpoint, the term Restorative Justice has multiple meanings. At one level, it is a criminal justice concept that focuses on repair rather than punishment – the opposite of Retributive Justice. At another level, it means showing a preferential option for the poor and marginalized who have been victims of injustice. Not just treating them equal, treating them "better". Do you find this controversial or objectionable? You shouldn't. It is directly out of Catholic Social Teaching.

One specific aspect of Restorative Justice, which has come into prominence in recent years, is Environmental Justice. This recognizes the reality that the poor and marginalized generally suffer the most from environmental degradation, despite the fact that they had the least to do with bringing it about. Therefore, specific restorative efforts are needed to repair the damage. This is an Integrity of Creation concern which you'll be hearing more about. But as Pope Francis made clear in his Laudato Si' encyclical, "Everything is connected".

SO... as Franciscans, we are called upon to work for justice, through works of both charity and advocacy. This may mean staking out positions which fall outside cultural norms. But as Pope Francis has said, "A Good Catholic Meddles in Politics".



#### 12 Weeks of Franciscan Peace 2022

A weekly program of peace-giving themes, reflections, and prayers leading up to Christmas is available on the website.

Developed by Carolyn Townes, OFS, National JPIC animator, the readings and reflections focus on peace from Oct. 3-Dec. 25.

A beautiful way to prepare for the coming of the Prince of Peace, the program includes thoughts or themes for each week, a reflection, a Psalm fragment, a reflection question, resolution, and prayer.

"In the program 12 weeks of Franciscan Peace by our sister Carolyn Townes, she quotes Claude Thomas as saying "Imagine, if everyone stopped the war in themselves - there would be no seeds from which war could grow." In our prayers of the faithful at Eucharist. we often pray for an end to war and conflict in various parts of our world. We need to pray for the seeds of war that grow in the recesses of our own hearts. When I am critical of my neighbor when I want more recognition for my service - all of these things are the beginnings of anger and resentment which can take root in my heart. We need to uproot those thoughts with the power of God's grace and forgiveness. And, of course, our commitment to daily conversion and prayer is the place where this can happen. We trust in the presence of the divine seed in everyone, including ourselves!"

Secular Franciscan Order - USA

https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wpcontent/uploads/12-Weeks-of-Franciscan-Peace-1.pdf

## FOLLOWING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS









#### Walking with St. Francis

As I write this, dear Brothers and Sisters, I am on United flight 41 from Rome to Newark. To my surprise, being appointed to the CIOFS (International Fraternity) Formation Commission also meant being invited to attend an in-person meeting in Rome from November 1-6. Pretty exciting, right?



Well, going all the way to Rome only for a 5-day-meeting seemed a shame to me. So, I decided to arrive four days early (at my own expense) and visit Assisi. Now THAT prospect was exciting!

My first visit to that blessed town was in 1982 on a pilgrimage, for the 800th Anniversary of St. Francis's birth, with the Secular Franciscans from Hackensack and Passaic, NJ. Two wellloved friars accompanied us. Fr. Pius Caccavalle and Fr. Damian Colicchio. both of good memory, were our sources for Franciscan history and gave us the thrill of having our "very own" friars celebrate mass for us at all the holy places. I remember using many tissues during that trip to dry the tears of joy that ran from my eyes as we entered each beautiful sanctuary associated with St. Francis and St. Clare.

Although I had returned on two other occasions, this time was just as special as the very first time. Except for one day, I made the journey alone. I took my time in that lovely Cathedral knowing that both St. Francis and St. Clare were baptized there. The baptismal font is still there covered with flowers. Sitting and praying with no time schedule was wonderful. San Ruffino was my "parish" while I was in Assisi. I visited several times and attended 10 am Mass on Sunday.

That first day after leaving San Ruffino, I walked down the steep hill to the Basilica of St. Clare. It was a Friday early afternoon, no weekend crowds yet. I had the San Damiano Cross all to myself. Quiet prayer while thinking...this is the "actual cross" that spoke to St. Francis.

I prayed for our region and for all those who are discerning a vocation. "Most High, glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart. And give me right faith, true hope, and perfect charity; sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out Your holy and true command."

Following that special prayer time, I walked around the Basilica and went down to the crypt where St. Clare is buried. Her body is there (really a wax figure), but I am told that on the side that faces the cloister, her bones are visible to the nuns.

After that visit, I went out to the piazza, bought a few items and, of course, had a gelato! The day ended with the steep climb back to my hotel and dinner in their dining room.

The next morning, I was blessed to be joined for the entire day by author Bret Thoman, OFS. Many of you know him from having read his biographies of St. Francis and St. Clare. We walked together through Assisi with Bret giving background and history every step of the way. In addition to the center of Assisi, we went to the Sacro Convento-the Basilica of St. Francis where Bret pointed out and explained the beautiful frescos. Then we descended to visit St. Francis's tomb where we also saw the small box containing the remains of Jacopa dei Settesole, friend to St. Francis and benefactor to the new order.

As the afternoon was ending, we headed to Santa Maria degli Angeli to visit the Porziuncola within the Basilica. The indulgence of the Great Pardon of Assisi is obtainable every day there, not just on August 2nd.

We also visited San Damiano, Rivo Torto, and two of the other tiny churches repaired by St. Francis. We stood in the square where St. Francis returned his clothes to his father and paused to see the spot where legend says he was born and where he died. We also visited the place where Francis cut Clare's hair as the sign that she was leaving the world.



Up and down hills and over cobblestones, we followed in the footsteps of St. Francis.

My Franciscan spirit is refreshed.

I pray that your vocation will grow and get stronger as mine has by walking with St. Francis.

Pace e bene, Dirie, 0F5

Diane Menditto, OFS



Photos credit: by Diane F. Mendito

## NEWS AROUND THE REGION



## PROFESSIONS, ADMISSIONS & ELECTIONS, ETC

#### **Elections**



Photo credit: Chris Leone, OFS

#### **Assumption Fraternity**

Front row - Fr. Robert Norton, OFM, Spiritual Assistant; John Trause, OFS, Minister; Frank Catalano, OFS, Secretary

Back row - Dr. Christopher Trause, OFS, Treasurer; John Buccini, OFS Vice Minister; Gerard Adubato, OFS, Formation Director



Photo credit: Chris Leone,OFS

#### St Anthony of Padua Middlesex Fraternity

left to right - Laura Vaz, OFS, Secretary;Karen Bonillo, OFS, Vice Minister; Msgr. William Benwell, OFS, Minister; Rosanna Ayers, OFS, Formation Director; Vanessa Carlomusto, OFS, Treasurer

#### **New Candidate**



Photo credit: Bennie Fonacier, OFS

#### **Sacred Heart Fraternity**

Mila Hipol was Welcomed into the Candidacy

From left to right

Cora Madrazo OFS, Melissa Olay OFS, Jenny Echevarria OFS, Bennie Fonacier OFS, Lester Fonacier OFS, Fr John McHugh OFM Cap, Mila Hipol, Cheryl Jenkins OFS, Dorothy Costello OFS, Jim Bianchi OFS, Yoly Maramba OFS, Alicja Tatarowicz OFS, Pat Pavelcheck OFS, June Treacy OFS, Anne Collins OFS, Christine Selvanayagam OFS, Evie Pacheco-York OFS

#### **New Inquirer**



Photo credit: Susan M. Leyden, OFS

#### **Servants of God Fraternity**

On November 9, 2022, JEANNIE SWEENEY was Welcomed into the Servants of God Fraternity in Yonkers, New York.

(left to right): Diane Cercone, Fr. Lawrence Joseph Schroedel, CFR (S.A.), Jeannie Sweeney (Inquirer), Susan Leyden, OFS (Secretary), Jinny Pineiro, OFS (Sponsor), Tom Scheuring (Fraternity Minister).

# Spotlight

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL



Photo credit: Mary-Frances Charsky, OFS

Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, is ecclesial witness for the election and presides over the installation of the new National Executive Council. Also at left is Silvia Diana, OFS, CIOFS presidency councilor.

Council members are right to left: Minister Jane DeRose-Bamman; vice-minister Diane Menditto; secretary, Susan Ronan; treasurer, Claudia Kauzlarich; and councilors Cherryle Fruge, Joshua Molidor and Donna Hollis.
The election was held at the

The election was held at the National Chapter meeting on Oct. 15, 2022, in Detroit.

Congratulations
TO ALL!















### Focus on the Admonition #25

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

Т S X F Υ F S F S 7 K X Е A Н E K W В W 0 Е Е Н D Ε C G 0 S M Α M M D D S C 0 D N M Н E 0 В Ε Т Υ Е C Α N Н F M Α Н R X В

#### **Word Bank**

1. much	2. loves
5. his	6. away
9. in	10. he
13. him	14. and
17. with	18. who
21. far	22. say
25. brother	26. behind
29. presence	30. admonition

3. blessed 7. charity 11. from 15. anything 19. the 23. that

27. back

4. not 8. servant 12. as

16. is 20, would 24. when

28. respects

Blessed is the servant who loves and respects his brother as much when he is far away from him as when he is with him, and who would not say anything behind his back that he would not say with charity in his presence.

## WISDOM

of the Saints 

St. Anthony of Padua (1195-1231)



Saint Anthony of Padua with the Child by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo



"O Father, in your Truth (that is to say, in your Son, humbled, needy and homeless) you have humbled me. He was humbled in the womb of the Virgin, needy in the manger of the sheep, and homeless on the wood of the Cross. Nothing so humbles the proud sinner as the humility of Jesus Christ's humanity."



**OLA Regional Website:** olangels.tripod.com

**REGION WEBSITE ADMINISTRATOR** DIANE F. MENDITTO, OFS



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**FACEBOOK ADMINISTRATOR** DIANE F. MENDITTO, OFS

## GENERAL INFORMATION











#### **Call for articles**

THE TROUBADOUR is a quarterly communication vehicle published by Our Lady of the Angels Region. It is published in 2 formats — print and electronic.

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 address and e- mail must be registered in our database.

The printed format of The Troubadour is published quarterly yearly—

It is freely mailed to all professed members and formation candidates in the region. 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, Spring, March 2023, are due to the Editor:
<a href="mailto:smfranciscanministry@gmail.com">smfranciscanministry@gmail.com</a>
by February 15th.

#### **ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS:**

- The right to copy all material printed in The Troubadour is granted provided you credit the Troubadour and author.
- Not every article received may be published in the upcoming issue.
   Every consideration is given for publication in a future issue.
- When submitting articles for publication consideration, please state fraternity name and location, as well as your name and address.

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Fraternity Name Fraternity Location

Date of Profession

Date of Admission



Our Lady of the Angels Region Secular Franciscan order Chris Leone, OFS 28 Stephen Terrace Parsippany, NJ. 07054