



# Our Fraternal Scoop



WINTER 2024 • Quarterly Publication



## MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER

### GOOD BYE 2024! What a year it was!

## HELLO and WELCOME 2025!



How does one thank so many for all that they have done and accomplished in the year 2024? As the Minister of our region, I feel like a proud parent of all that has been accomplished – my buttons are bursting. We have all stuck together, in all the work that needed to be done, from our own fraternity meetings and activities, to the holding of the National Chapter Meeting in our region, through the ups and downs, the understandings and the misunderstandings, and the list goes on. And yet there was always the love and support where it was needed. We have followed and prayed for those on their own journey like on the el Camino Trail. And I'm sure each of you can add your own thoughts and memories to this list. We have all been there in one way or another in all that we do. I keep saying "WE". But who am I referring to?? Well, for me the "we" are all of the Secular Franciscans, especially in the St. Thomas More Region – not forgetting our inquirers or the candidates who now have the "title" OFS after their names.

Actually, anyone who may be reading this can be and is added. The big challenge is how will we continue what we have shown, known and grown in 2024 and be sure it continues in 2025? I'm not asking can we? - because of course we can. We are Secular Franciscans!!

In borrowing and editing some of St. Francis words I want to leave you with this: "I have seen done what was ours to do. May Christ help us to continue to build upon what we have accomplished; May the Lord give us peace!"

And remember YOU are loved!





## MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR

Fraternity weekends are always busy, with planning and preparation, cooking for the potluck, phone calls asking questions and the unavoidable last-minute changes. If you ask JoAnne about it, she'll tell you it's not my favorite marathon.

But it's what we do, for lots of good reasons. Chief among them, Fraternity is a sign to the world that there's another way of looking at relationships. Instead of competing, pushing for powers or just trying to be seen, to Franciscans, relationships are where we meet Christ. They are a form of Eucharist. Think about it. God gives himself to us in the blessed bread and wine. Receiving this gift, we are united with God. He lives in us; we live in him. Multiply that by a church full of people and you have whole communities in whom God is present, active and seen. This is called "immanence" and it means the same thing as "Emmanuel". God is with us. This is what makes us effective signs to the world. The presence of Christ is his gift. We accept it and become his sacrament. This is why we come together in fraternity—love makes us one, and as one Body of Christ, we help each other grow along the way.

In our fraternity we like to do Candidate formation just before our Gathering. In our lesson today we were laughing at ourselves. As humans we are so clumsy in our relationships. We know where we wish to be, but often fall short. Sometimes it's spectacular how badly we can fail. But while we might feel like crying, it does help to laugh at ourselves in the company of friends, people who share our values, who know how hard it is to keep relationships going. I like it when people compare fraternity to being part of a family, because families seem to get special grace to hold us together through the hard times. It's not fun when we're suffering, but given enough practice, we begin to trust that things will get better, especially when we are willing to embrace our Eucharistic life.

To put it simply, people who believe in Christ in the Eucharist, who eat the bread and drink the wine, have a new life inside of them. And exploring this life is an important part of what we do as Secular Franciscans. We talk together about how Eucharist changes us, about how living with Christ gives us strength to imagine a new way of living, a way of forgiving, starting fresh, trying again... and trusting God to be with us. Eucharist is real food. It doesn't end or disappear when we leave Church. It goes with us. It is part of who we are and it gives us life in the living Kingdom of Heaven. All of this, and we don't even need a password...!

After our Fraternity Gathering, we are usually exhausted. But the wonders we see when like-minded people spend time together! The stories we hear! The victories we relate! The disasters too, the quiet cries for help and comfort, the promises of hope, the gathering and sharing of gifts. One of our Candidates explained today what it means to be "poor" and right away he had our Council weeping with amazement! These are treasures you can't buy. You have to invest yourself, your time, your strength and your prayer. You have to be willing to go out in the heat to join with your community and share your stories.

I just read this week how in the eighteen-fifties, friars in England had to encourage Seculars to meet once a month. They didn't gather regularly and without the support of fraternities, they failed to meet the social needs of their time and towns. Some modern Seculars don't have regular fraternities. Or get to Church often. Or discuss and debate the meaning of our Rule. Much of our life happens in fraternity, and from there goes out into the world to bear fruit. Without fraternity, I don't know how we would live the Gospel. But in fraternity I see both desire and growth, both prayer and service. I see people maturing in Franciscan values. I see the presence of Christ in his faithful people, and it isn't a passive presence. Rather, this Immanent Emmanuel, this living Person who is God-in-us is getting things done. Through us, God is building up his Bride, the Church. And it's a wonder to behold...!

# THOUGHTS FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 2024

And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” Luke 2: 12

In the Order for Christian Initiation for Adults, we teach that the sacraments of our Church are “effective signs of God’s grace.” This means that the sacraments “do what they say”. Baptism initiates. Eucharist unites. Confirmation seals and completes. It is through such “signs” that we are made into New Creatures, fit for living in the eternal Kingdom of Heaven.

What is the Sign of Christmas? A baby wrapped in warm clothes in a box made to hold food for farm animals. Even Linus can tell Charlie Brown what it means: good news for all people! Very, very good news...

But what does this Sign do? What real graces does this helpless baby bring to our world? Since this sign was so important to Francis, let’s look at what it has caused to happen among his followers...



**Minority:** Franciscans grow to believe that it is better to “be with (and among) the people rather than to be over them.” Authority and leadership are forms of service, enriched by listening, dialog, and effective action.

**Mercy:** Franciscans choose forgiveness over condemnation; patience over irritation, and acceptance over rejection.

**Membership:** United in the Body of Christ, Franciscans see Christ in everyone they meet, honoring each person’s sacredness and destiny...

**Mutuality:** Franciscans trade the words “I, me and my” for “we, us and ours”. They see themselves as inseparable parts of the Body of Christ and strive to make love their way of entering into and becoming part of Creation.

Francis loved Jesus so much that when he prayed at Christmas people saw him holding the Holy Infant in his arms. We can do as much—it’s not a stretch. We are no longer separated from God by our sins. Rather, the effect of Christmas is our salvation! Our prayers, our service and our hope have all taken on new meaning. We no longer wait for the Coming of Emmanuel. He is here with us, yes, we embrace him in our very hearts. And that is what the Sign of the Infant does. As the wise old man said in the Temple, “Now, Lord, you can dismiss your servant! For my eyes have seen the salvation of the world!” Now that we have this Gift—and its effect is transforming the world—how will we live the rest of our lives...?

Submitted by Tom McNamara, OFS Regional Formation Director

# NATIONAL CHAPTER OF THE OFS-USA HOSTED BY ST. THOMAS MORE REGION

Our Region had the privilege to host the National Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States from September 18-22 with the members of the National Executive Council arriving a few days early on September 14. It was a fun, spirit-filled and rewarding time spent with our Franciscan brothers and sisters from all 30 regions.

Many, many thanks to all who helped make the National Chapter a memorable and enjoyable experience for all our guests from all over the country.

Thank you especially to our most gracious and hospitable hostesses, Amy Sperry and Carmen Durón who spent the whole week at the CASA tending to various needs around the clock.

Thank you also to our drivers who gave rides to a total of 46 guests from/to the airport and especially to:

Rosemarie Leclercq  
Rico Rivera  
Margie Kessler  
John Elder  
MercyAnn Flint and Monica Ramirez  
Sang Cheol Park  
Pon Ku

Pat Nikolaisen  
Susan Simeone  
Phyllis Smith  
Kim Ivich  
Amy Sperry  
Steve Roszhart  
Maria Tiznado



For more stories and pictures about Chapter, please see articles on Pages 2-6 and 11-15 in the Fall 2024 issue of the TAU-USA.





## MESSAGE FROM OUR REGIONAL JPIC ANIMATOR

# Preparing for Jubilee Year 2025 Pilgrims of Hope



Every 25 years Popes have been proclaiming a time of Jubilee based on ancient biblical tradition. Pope Francis did this through his Bull of Indiction

***SPES NON CONFUNDIT –  
“Hope Does Not Disappoint.”***

When he announced this back in May, the Pope proclaimed: “***Christian hope*** gives us ***the courage to build a fraternal and peaceful world*** when it seems barely worth the effort.”

He encouraged us to “***see the promise of good*** at times when evil seems to prevail.”

The ***Catholic Bishops*** of Arizona point out the “***10 Hopes***” in this document that they urge the faithful to consider. Each reflects some aspect of Catholic ***Social Teaching*** – what following Christ in the footsteps of Francis is all about – being a bearer of peace, joy, and the fullness of life through actions of justice, mercy and love.

This year I hope to touch on each of these ‘hopes’ to at least some degree.

### The 10 Hopes:

- hope for peace over division,
- hope for enthusiasm for life and readiness to share it,
- hope for the openness to life and responsible parenthood,
- hope for prisoners through restorative justice,
- hope for the sick, those with disabilities, and those dedicated to their care,
- hope for youth and young adults,
- hope for migrants and refugees,
- hope for the elderly,
- hope for the poor and the hungry
- hope for greater Christian unity.

The year begins with the ***World Day of Peace***, January 1, 2025, whose theme is:  
“***Forgive us our trespasses, grant us your peace.***”

“***Only from a genuine conversion*** on all levels – personal, local and international – will true peace be able to flourish” this announcement said.

Once again, a reminder of our Franciscan emphasis on ***daily conversion***.

May the Lord have mercy on us all

**MESSAGE FROM OUR  
REGIONAL JPIC ANIMATOR** CONTINUED



# CREATION SUMMIT

*January 25, 2025*

*8:30 am - 3:30 pm*

**St. Francis Xavier Parish**

**4715 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85012**

Do you find yourself in awe of God's beauty in nature?

Have you been wondering how you can be more environmentally conscious?

Are you worried about the future of our planet?

Bishop John Dolan and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix invite you to a day of prayer, reflection, and conversation around care for the earth and our call to be stewards of all creation.

**All are welcome!**

For more information and to register, scan the QR code or visit

<https://dphx.org/catholic-social-teaching/creation-summit/>



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF PHOENIX



**ST FRANCIS XAVIER**  
A JESUIT PARISH & SCHOOL



Responding to Christ's call, in communion with the Church founded by Him and summoned by the gift of spirituality inherited from St. Francis of Assisi, representatives of the OFS and YOUFRA of the secular Franciscan fraternities from all over the world, have met in Rome, at XVII General Chapter, to reflect and agree on the future of our Order.

We feel overwhelmed by discovering that we are loved by God and that we are love, so in our hearts arises the need to send a strong message to everyone: **YOU ARE LOVE!** You, men and women who get up every morning to work, study, participate in social, economic, political and cultural life. You adults, young people, children... with certainties and doubts about your history; with dreams, hopes and fears... Each and every one of you, be assured: **You are love and you are loved!**

**God loves you** and from the first time he thought of you to call you to life, and until today, he has always maintained his love and faith. **He is not distant or absent:** he accompanies the day and shares the joys and sorrows. Discovering love that He has for us in our daily life, we can say that **we are fully alive, only if we love.** Just as Francis saw Jesus and was overwhelmed by the spectacle of the great love with which he was loved, let us indulge and allow ourselves to be touched, to be moved and to be inspired by Jesus and by each other! **May our lives and our actions proclaim to everyone: "God loves you! And I love you!"**

The only desire of our seraphic father St. Francis was that **all men should respond fully to their grace** as sons of God in the Son, **and become truly brothers among themselves.** In the light of our Rule and way of life, may we always be conscious of the **importance of everyday conversion.** Let us be transformed and converted **through our brothers and sisters.** Let us **keep the spirit of love in fraternities** so that we recognize in everyone persons of dignity. Sharing Franciscan spirituality, let us put all our strength in **renewing our fraternities** so that we may become **relevant and visible in Church and society.** Testimonies of brothers and sisters as an example for accepting Gods will even in difficulties of life can help us and teach us to believe and rely more on God. Brothers and sisters, let us be mindful that **true, deep love for each other, serving to brothers and sisters and our own humility** can help us overcome all issues and problems in our fraternities. In this way, we will be able also to bring others: children, youth and families closer to God and to the Church. What enables us to rebuild the Church is **to walk together, in humility of heart,** in communal search and discernment of the Will of God. **But we must start from within!**

And as we believe and confess that we will only have a full life if we love and manage to transform ourselves from inside and as a consequence also transform and renew our fraternities, we are aware that **the opportunity and hope for the world is the LOVE** that we've been reflecting on during these days. We are called to bring **the Gospel in to our lives** and our lives in to the Gospel. How do we do that? By **stepping out of our known and secure places,** because we are called to live **IN THE WORLD** and with the world. How can we know how to do it? By putting **our gaze on Him,** the same *Him* that the Francis put a gaze on, when called to renew the Church. This same God has infused, within our natural freedom, the authentic miracle **of the capacity to respond in love,** which generates the challenge of availability to **give life for others.** And in this same miracle, **He transforms us** in His closeness of love for those who are near or far. **He enjoys** the joy of the child who grows protected **and cries** for the absence of the unborn and the abandonment of the unwanted; **he dances** with the joy of youth in hope, but **feels the loneliness** of the young man who isolates himself with fear and apathy. The sweat of those who work to bring home is appreciated by God and **he stands in solidarity** with those who bitterly pass-through unemployment. He walks the fertile path of the peace and **searches in the ruins** of war for those who try to survive. He sits down to talk in the house of those who enjoy stability, but **walks with the migrant** who seeks his opportunity. Dear brothers and sisters, **isn't this also what we should do?** What we are called to do and to live? **Yes, it is!**

Therefore, our message and our words are also **a strong invitation:** let us **be transformed** by God's love, **let us BE LOVE** to our brothers and sisters, **let us love our fraternities** and our brothers and sister in the **humility of our hearts.** Come, **let us walk together,** seeking and discerning in fraternity the path that leads to **perfect love and charity!**



# REGIONAL ELECTIONS

On August 7, 2021 the Regional Council for St. Thomas More region was elected to serve our fraternity. The next Triennial Election Chapter will be February 8, 2025 when your Regional Council will meet at the Franciscan Renewal Center to elect a new council for the next 3 years.



We humbly ask that you continue to pray for all the servant leaders at all levels of our Secular Franciscan Order to make wise decisions as they guide and animate our fraternities and especially, at this time, that the Holy Spirit will lead us to prudently choose the next Regional Executive Council members.

Almighty, most high and supreme God,  
Father, holy and just Lord, King of heaven and earth:

We give you thanks for yourself.

Of your own will, you created all things spiritual and physical,  
made us in your own image and likeness and gave us a place in Paradise,  
through your only Son, in the Holy Spirit.

We trust in you and we ask for your light so that  
we may choose those who will properly  
serve our fraternity through their servant leadership.

Help us to select those who are able  
to animate and guide us by their example,  
their virtues and prudent decisions,  
so that the Gospel of Jesus in the spirit of St. Francis  
may come alive in our fraternity.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen!

# Camino and H2O Project



1

After 2 months traveling in Europe, Steve and I returned to Arizona on November 26. Taking into account a lot of editing and organizing our pictures, we ended up with “only” 1300 of them (just for the Camino part of our trip). Many of you followed us on Facebook where I posted daily. Here are some of the highlights:

Our journey started on Sept. 25 when we flew out of Phoenix and arrived in Lisbon Sept. 26. The very next day, we started our walk out of Lisbon, stopping at the Sé de Lisboa (Pic 1) where St. Anthony of Padua was baptized. (Pic 2) There we received the first stamp on our credential (pilgrim’s passport).

Along the way, we saw many beautiful shrines and churches, like the Church of the Holy Miracle in Santarem (Pic 3).

[https://www.piercedhearts.org/treasures/eucharistic\\_miracles/santarem.htm](https://www.piercedhearts.org/treasures/eucharistic_miracles/santarem.htm)

On Sunday October 6, we were blessed to go to Fátima (Pics 4 and 5) and attend Mass in the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity. This massive church seats 8,633. Wow!

<https://centerofportugal.com/poi/church-of-the-most-holy-trinity>



2



3



4



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6

For the most part, the weather was absolutely gorgeous and the temperatures very mild. The tail end of Hurricane Kirk, showered us with rain early on in our walk and we had downpours a few days here and there. Buying a couple of umbrellas helped make those rainy days tolerable! (Pic 6)

We arrived in Santiago de Compostella on Oct. 30 and on November 1, all Saints Day, we attended Mass in the Basilica where we witnessed the Butafumeiro swing on that occasion. (Pics 7 and 8)

<https://catedraldesantiago.es/en/liturgia/>

It took us all together 34 days (including 2 days of rest) to walk the distance between Lisbon, Portugal and Santiago de Compostella, Spain which totals roughly 640 kms (400 miles), although Steve's Fit Bit recorded 733 kms (455 miles). That's about the distance from Phoenix to Santa Barbara, CA 😊

Our Camino was absolutely amazing. We thank God for all the beautiful sights, the delicious meals, the rich encounters with our hosts and fellow pilgrims and simply the gift of safety on our journey. For the young woman who offered to fill our water bottles with ice cubes, God bless you. For the lady at the café who refilled our bottles with tap water instead of charging us for another bottle of water. God bless you. For the man, who from his balcony, pointed us in the right direction as we were headed the wrong way. God bless you. For all the smiles, friendly waves and Bom Caminho greetings. God bless you!



8

And for all the prayers you offered for us, especially when the pain in Steve's hip slowed our walk down for the first days and my feet ached at night, God bless you. As we carried our packs on our backs, we also carried all your prayer intentions in our hearts. You took part of our Camino in a special way. Thank you!



7

(Pic 9) We also want to thank each of you who pledged money for the H2O project. So far, we have collected \$ 2,867.93 with still a few outstanding pledges yet to come in. If you intend to participate, please do so before December 31, so that Steve may send a check on behalf of our region to our national treasurer early 2025.

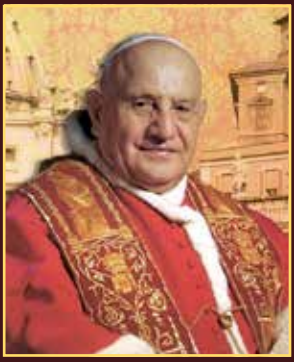


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May God bless each one of you and may God continue to bless our fraternity! (Pic 10)



10



# NEWS FROM POPE ST. JOHN XXIII FRATERNITY Yuma, AZ

## Elections

On May 19, 2024 Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity had Elections. It was nice to have St. Thomas More Region visit and help us with our elections. Our thanks to Cathy & Steve Roszhart, OFS and Susan Simeone, OFS. Congratulations to my Council members Connie Collier, OFS (Vice-Minister), Cosette Schaaf, OFS (Secretary), Lupe Saldaña, OFS (Treasurer) and Susana Gutierrez, OFS (Formation Director). I, your servant leader Denise Carrasquillo, OFS was elected Minister for a second term. I am excited to work with my council to build a strong fraternity full of love, compassion, kindness, charity and service for our community and the Region. It was beautiful to have Sister Janet Rose, OSF, our Spiritual Director with us on that day before she returned to Wisconsin for the summer break. Thank you Sister Janet Rose! You are a treasure to us and we all appreciate and love you.



## Welcoming Ceremony

On October 20, 2024 Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity in Yuma, AZ celebrated the welcoming of Susan James. It was a beautiful and perfect day as we held our Gathering at Sanguinetti Park. We could hear the birds singing and the squirrels were running up the trees. Dogs were barking and I'm sure St. Francis of Assisi was looking down on us and smiling with all the nature around us. We are so happy that she decided to embark on this journey of discernment after being a guest for over a year. We are so happy and pray that our Franciscan family continues to grow.



## Secular Franciscan Annual Yard Sale

We had fun at our annual yard sale which was a great success on November 15-16, 2024.

Students from Yuma Catholic High and the Immaculate Conception Church CCD Confirmation class came out to help us. They were fantastic helpers! We surely appreciated them helping us set-up and clean-up after it was over. Our Spiritual Assistant, Sister Janet Rose, OSF was there to help us set-up and run the sale. Her bright smile made everyone's day! A big THANK YOU to Lupe Saldaña, OFS and her mom Doña Leonor for hosting the yard sale at their home.



Continued on next page

## POPE ST. JOHN XXIII FRATERNITY continued



I'm grateful to our candidates; Maria Jo, Joan Johnson and Millie Quijano who helped and Susan

James our new Inquirer. This would not have been a success without the help of our professed members; Susana Gutierrez, OFS Ignacio Godinez, OFS (who moved tables, racks and boxes in his pick-up truck), Diana Orines, OFS, Connie Collier, OFS and Cosette Schaaf, OFS. We plan to donate the \$670 we made from the sale to several organizations like the St. Vincent De Paul Food Pantry in Yuma, Poverello House in Tucson and the Desert Nuns in Tonopah. May God bless everyone for all their hard work.



Article submitted by  
Denise Carrasquillo, OFS (Minister)





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

## Deo Gratias!

As Candidates, we like the nick name that we have heard ourselves called: "The Fab Five". However, we would

like to acknowledge and thank our "fabulous" Formation Team, and our supportive caring Sponsors, as well as our entire local Fraternity for helping us spiritually grow in our love, knowledge and understanding of what it means to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis. We especially thank our God for the graces we have received making it possible to arrive at this halfway point of our formation process.



## Come and See

Joshua Pan and Darlene Green are gracing us with their presence recently at our fraternity meetings as they seek to learn more about our Secular Franciscan Order. Joshua is a High School Senior who has been personally researching spiritual avenues of growth. (He was recently baptized as a Catholic in 2022.) Darlene, a friend of candidate Pat Stoy, expresses that she is "seeking to find a way to be a Jesus follower in this last chapter of her life".



## Farewell Donna

Ann and Wayne Tao, Colleen Malloy, and Donna Acquaviva pictured here attended the Regional Retreat this summer. Sadly, Donna (on the far right) has withdrawn from the transfer process to our Fraternity due to health problems. We miss her spunky personality and contributions and wish her God's continuous blessings.



## "To Set Themselves Free"

Our Fraternity is reading and discussing this book written by Teresa V. Baker, SFO. Sub-titled "A Continuous Guide to the Life and Rule of the Secular Franciscans", it offers meaningful insights and opportunities to share, whether one is in initial or ongoing formation. Thanks to Loretta Klem, our discussion leader for Article 1.

We are also grateful to Patrick Mowrer who led the Article 2 discussion during his visit at our Thanksgiving Fraternity Gathering.



Article submitted by Susan Kowalski, OFS



## NEWS FROM ST. FRANCIS FRATERNITY Phoenix, AZ

The last month of our year was both quiet and busy. After our wonderful Thanksgiving banquet, we began quickly planning for Christmas. Everything on the schedule had to be moved up, but our Fraternity rallied and made all the preparations...

Meanwhile, we organized a special donation of food and other supplies for fraternity members who have been suffering with illness. Our dialogues and service in this area helped heighten our awareness for families who find themselves in difficulty. We want to become more active in providing food, clothing and support in emergencies.

This led us to study Isaiah 15, a list of service ideas for anyone wanting to do more charity. The work is more complicated than just bringing a food box, since people these days need medical, legal and financial advice and support just to maintain a simple lifestyle. One never can tell what a fraternity might be called to do, so we are trying to prepare a small food pantry and to collect small cash donations, so that we can go in a hurry when someone is in need.

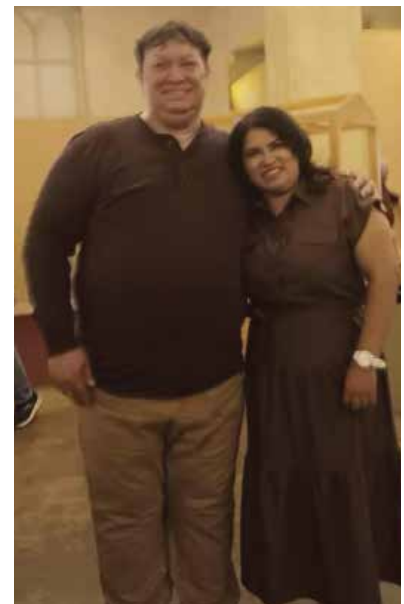
On a different note, some Fraternity members are organizing a small, mobile library. Our new web page is nearly ready. We have found a site-provider through Google that is very inexpensive.

Our Spanish Speaking Group has grown stronger and is taking to heart their call to profession. As they work to master English, we are all working together to build up and renew our community.

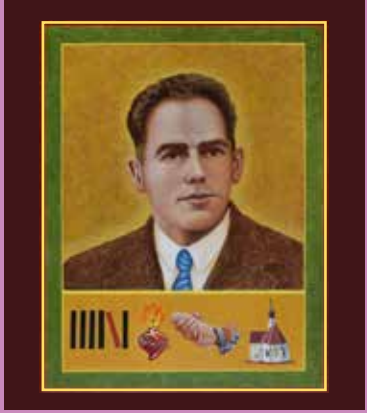
We are eager in 2025 to meet, work with and join other fraternities in activities such as lectures, liturgies, celebrations or service. If you have ideas and would like to combine with us in this way, please contact our Minister at [trmcnamara@yahoo.com](mailto:trmcnamara@yahoo.com).



Fraternity retreat, summer 2024



Joel and Marta  
their Day of Profession



## NEWS FROM BL. FRANZ JÄGERSTÄTTER FRATERNITY

Flagstaff, AZ

Our fraternity was quite involved during October. Thanks to the participation of our new Parochial Vicar, Fr Michael, we celebrated the Transitus of St Francis in the church, having a few of the local parishioners join us. Included in the celebration was the reading of a letter from Brother Elias who wrote to some brothers about the death of St Francis.



The Saturday following the feast of St Francis was the blessing of animals. Over 70 parishioners showed up, as well as members of Flagstaff came to have their animals blessed and received a medal of St Francis for their pets.



Finally, the local parish hosted a ministry fair. The parish invited us as a vocation table. Our fraternity manned to table with various fraternity members at each of the Masses. Several parishioners stopped by to find out who are the Secular Franciscans.

It was a wonderful month to celebrate our Seraphic Father, St Francis, and our Franciscan Traditions.



Article submitted by Patrick Mowrer, OFS

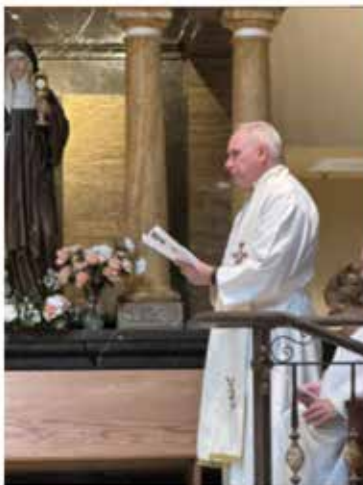


## NEWS FROM ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE FRATERNITY Surprise, AZ



### Welcome Ceremony

It is with great joy that we welcomed Deacon Mike Holmes during our gathering Sunday July 28. Deacon Mike's currently serves at St. Catherine Labouré in Chino Valley. He joins Tony Milanez and Doug Avann, who were welcomed in May and June respectively.



### Transitus of St. Clare

On August 10th our fraternity facilitated the prayer service for the Transitus of St. Clare. The celebration was enriched by the presence of Father Greg Menegay, VF, parochial vicar at St. Clare of Assisi Parish.



### Transitus of St. Francis

On October 3rd, members of our fraternity gathered at St. Clare of Assisi Church to commemorate the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi. Father Menegay assisted our members in the reflections on the life and passing of St Francis which deepened our spiritual connection to this special occasion. We were also blessed with the beautiful musical accompaniment provided by Jenny Rodriguez, which enriched the solemn and reflective atmosphere. It was a heartfelt evening of prayer, remembrance, and community as we honored the legacy of St. Francis.

## Profession

On Sunday, October 27, 2024 our fraternity joyfully joined in celebrating the profession of Barb Otterson, OFS. Her decision to embrace our Rule speaks to her desire to bring the spirit of St. Francis of humility, peace, and service-into her daily life, family, and community.



## Annual Christmas Potluck Gathering

The members gathered for their annual Christmas Potluck Gathering. A total of 19 members and guests were present and enjoyed cheerful fellowship and a delicious spread of food. After our meal, we all prayed, a Franciscan Crown rosary as it has been our custom for each Christmas potluck gathering. All helped gather a large quantity of "planned-over" that our brother Kevin, then delivered to the St. Vincent de Paul facility downtown to share.





# NEWS FROM ST. ANTHONY FRATERNITY Tucson, AZ

## Rite of Admission was held on October 13, 2024 for four candidates.



Starting from the left: Benjamin Rivera, Milagro Rivera, Trever Kortman, and Jose del Rosario. Minister Benjamin Saenz and Formation Director Sharon Masterjohn are in the center.

**The Rite was held in the Saint Clare Room at San Xavier de Bac Mission**

### Saint Anthony Fraternity had an election of a new Council on November, 10, 2024.

### Holiday Service Project



Starting from the left: Betty Nelson, O.F.S., Secretary; Doug Esch, O.F.S., Formation Director; Sharon Masterjohn, O.F.S., Treasurer; Julianne Hartzell, O.F.S., Spiritual Assistant; Veronica Jimenez, O.F.S., Vice Minister; Allison Herring, O.F.S., Councilor at Large; Benjamin Saenz, O.F.S., Minister.



The Fraternity's Holiday Service Project was to collect 23 winter jackets for the children of the San Xavier Mission School. The school just reopened with Kindergarten, First Grade and Second Grade students.

# Merry Christmas!



## NEWS FROM ST. DAEGUN ANDREW KIM FRATERNITY Chandler, AZ



The St. Daegun Andrew Kim Fraternity hosted the 12th Korean OFS Congress at the Franciscan Renewal Center from September 26 through 29, 2024. Our Fraternity was honored to host this significant event in Phoenix, Arizona. A total of 23 Korean Franciscan fraternities from the United States, Canada, and South Korea attended this Congress.

We were delighted to receive support from our Thomas More Region, Julianne Hartzell OFS, Susan Simeone OFS, and National Minister Jane DeRose Bamman OFS.

We also welcomed three guest speakers to this Congress: Fr. Francis Kim OFM from New Jersey, Fr. Leonardo Kim OFM from Korea, and Sr. Sophia Lee SFMA from Gallup, New Mexico.

Our Korean Congress schedule included the following: daily morning mass, morning and evening prayer, seven sessions of lecture, small group share, Eucharistic Holy Hour (Adoration & Confession), English-speaking guests (National Minister, Jane Bamman OFS, Fr. Micah Muhlen OFM), and each Fraternity Talent Show.

Through this gathering, the Korean Secular Franciscans met one another in four-day workshops to improve our vocation as Franciscans. Through this special Congress session, we listened and identified with the Holy Spirit. It was good to attend these workshops, and we were able to experience the glory of Jesus, attracted by the spirituality of St. Francis and the "Franciscan brotherly love."

Peace and Joy,

Article submitted by Michael Nam, OFS (Vice Minister





## NEWS FROM PEACE FRATERNITY Scottsdale, AZ

### Peace Fraternity is so happy to welcome the inquirers.



Above: Maggie Henderson, Anne Fowler, Patrick Jordon, Pat Fowler, David John, Mercedes (since picture had to move for job) and Brenda Curry. Missing in the picture is Sherry Brown who was not present for the picture.

Also in the picture are a couple of the sponsors: Judy Zene and Deanna Thomas and our formation director John Lomeli.

We are very excited to have such a dynamic group joining us.

Our fraternity was very sad to hear of Tom and Joanne's daughter Marie's death. We will keep them in our prayers. It was wonderful to see a nice group of Franciscan Seculars at the Mass and luncheon to help support our brother and sister.

Our Fraternity started planning our Christmas celebration. It's hard to believe another full year has almost gone by. Hopefully all of you are feeling blessed as we come into such a magnificent feast day. People have been sharing with me what they all have in their bucket list and so I started thinking about that and realized the only thing in my bucket list is to go to heaven when I die. God has given me so many blessings with my family and friends.

Of course, I hope to see other parts of the United States and Canada. But not any place I have to go. How about all of you? What's on your bucket list? Wishing you many blessings.

Submitted by Betty Holler, OFS (Vice-Minister)



## NEWS FROM ST. CLARE OF ASSISI FRATERNITY Phoenix, AZ

### Profession Retreat on October 26, 2024

Our fraternity hosted a retreat on October 26 for those who planned to profess this November. Our presenters, Patrick Mowrer, OFS,SA and Bridget Durham, OFS enlightened us with their energy of JOY, while enriching our Franciscan Spirituality! Thank you so much Patrick, Bridget, and all the Fraternity members who helped with this wonderful retreat for our candidates!



### Celebration of the Holy Eucharist & Rite of Profession Ceremony ~ November 9, 2024

A Celebration of the Holy Eucharist and Rite of Profession Ceremony were held at Corpus Christi Catholic Church on November 9, 2024. Hediliza Pelimiano Dizon, OFS, Regina Marie Bernadette Fortune, OFS, Antoinette Felicheta Monti, OFS, and Kyoko Yoshida Tavassoli, OFS made their profession into Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis as members of St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity.

The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Micah Mullen, Order of Friars Minor, and assisted by Fr. Kurt Pererea, Director of Vocations at Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, who grew up in the Corpus Christi Catholic Church community.

A heart-warming reception followed, and everyone enjoyed delicious Baked Ziti and a slice of “Tao” cake. Thank you very much for all your prayers and assistance to make this day so special for our newly professed fraternity members!



Article submitted by Toni Monti, OFS; Kyoko Tavassoli, OFS and Alan Tavassoli, OFS

# APOSTLATE VENEZUELAN FAMILY NEWS

## Supporting a Refugee Family: A Journey of Hope and Resilience

Dear Members of the Region, Fraternities, and Secular Franciscans,

The Venezuelan family we have been supporting sends their blessings and heartfelt thanks for your prayers and support.

Fleeing from the socio-political turmoil in Venezuela, the family arrived with little more than their determination to build a better future. Our community has rallied around them with prayers and donations, embodying the Franciscan spirit of compassion and service. The collective efforts of our members have made a significant impact, reflecting our commitment to living out the Gospel values.

We are delighted to report that the children are thriving in their school environment. Camila has started 1st grade, Diego is in 4th grade, and Fabiana is now in 7th grade. Eithan, who is 2 years old, is doing well and has begun speaking both Spanish and English. In August, we joyfully celebrated Camila's 7th birthday, and in October, we marked Diego's 10th birthday with great enthusiasm.

We are diligently making monthly payments of \$350 to the lawyer's office to support their legal journey. Currently, there is a \$711 left in their legal fund account. The asylum application was submitted in June, and their next immigration court hearing is scheduled for June 2025. In October, they met with their lawyer to gather the necessary documents and initiate the process for requesting a work permit. Let us continue to pray for a positive outcome.

Thank you for being instruments of peace and hope. Your support in their times of need and your acts of love and mercy are deeply appreciated.

May the Lord give you Peace.

Richard "Rico" Rivera,  
OFS Affiliate  
(602) 628-7502



# REMEMBERING OUR DECEASED MEMBERS



Elizabeth "Betty" Kiwak, **OFS** professed November 18, 1990,  
member of **Peace** fraternity died December 21, 2023

Patricia "Pat" Henrickson, **OFS** professed November 30, 2019,  
member of **Saint Anthony** fraternity died March 12, 2024



**Anthony Borgia, OFS** professed October 30, 2004 member  
of **St. Margaret of Cortona** fraternity died February 23, 2024

Edna Yugel, **OFS** professed April 21, 2018,  
member of **Saint Clare of Assisi** fraternity died March 12, 2024



**Charles "Chuck" Vecchi, OFS** professed November 7, 2000,  
member of **St. Margaret of Cortona** fraternity died August 7, 2024

May the souls of all our faithful departed  
through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen



# IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

## UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE REGION

February 8 – Regional Elections - Franciscan Renewal Center (FRC)

March 2 – San Damiano fraternity Triennial Visitations

## UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE NATION

2026 - July 29 – Aug. 2 - 21st Quinquennial in Lexington, KY

For more details go to:

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/21st-quinquennial-congress-q2026/>

## SUBMISSION DEADLINES AND PUBLICATION DATES

March 1      Deadline for Article Submission

March 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](mailto: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.

**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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