



COMMUNIO

Newsletter of the Brothers and Sisters
of St. Francis Region

Winter 2023

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National theme calls Franciscans to listen, discern, go forth

By Ellen Ferrone, OFS
BSSF Regional Minister

What is mine to do?

We are all familiar with these words of our Father Francis, "I did what is mine to do, now it is your turn to do what is yours".

I'm on a mini retreat at St Francis Springs Prayer Center, Stoneville, NC. I can think of no better place to call on the Holy Spirit and ask for her guidance to write my letter to you my dear sisters and brothers.

There is a very large labyrinth here, and as I walked it, I prayed. I started with the word "Listen," it brought me to my morning prayer and how it warms my heart to hear the first songs from the birds outside my window. Their songs of praise to Our Lord.

I stop in mid-sentence and listen to their songs of love and adoration. This made me think, how well do I listen throughout the day? Do I stop and hear what people are saying? If I am truly present, can I then discern what my actions could be? What the other person may need without interspersing what I think they need?

Continued on next page

National Theme continued from page 1



As my reflection continued, I passed a magnificent statue of St Francis and the leper. I have stopped and contemplated this statue numerous times. In light of the words, what is mine to do and Listen Discern Go-Forth? I think of Francis asking what can I do for you my dear sister, my dear brother? What are your needs this moment? Not assuming or second guessing, listening, discerning, and going I think of Francis asking what can I do for you my dear sister, my dear brother? What are your needs this moment? Not assuming or second guessing, listening, discerning, and going forth.

As your regional minister, the question “What is mine to do?” is a big one. It takes a lot of listening, discerning, some more listening, discerning and sometimes a night’s rest before I can go-forth. Of course, this is not something I do alone, as you are all aware, we are in fraternity. Sometimes it’s easier to do it alone, though the outcome may not be the best. I think this is why Jesus sent the disciples out in two’s, it’s always better with a sister or a brother. And the Lord has blessed me with a gifted Regional Council.

So, what is it that is mine to do? Primarily to help each fraternity to live and grow in harmony. To build relationships between the REC and each Fraternity Council. To help each fraternity to grow in their Franciscan charisms, especially in Servant Leadership.

As a way to do this I have asked Carolyn Townes, JPIC Animator, and Lynn Oeser, Formation Director, to create a Servant Leadership Workshop that will be offered to each fraternity several months before an election.

We are all called to serve in one way or another, sometimes we need more information around what servant leadership means. Sometimes we all need to hear the same words at the same time. To process them by sharing with each other. To lift each other up and let them know we see things in them they may not see in themselves. To take the mystery out of what it means to be on the Council or take an appointed role. We are all the hands and the feet of Our Lord.

Continued on next page

National theme continued from page 3

So, I ask each of you to practice listening, going deeper into your prayers of discernment so that you too may go--forth knowing the Holy Spirit is with you along the journey. If you would like more information on this beautiful approach to discernment I encourage you to watch this YouTube video from the Franciscan Institute of Theology [“A Franciscan Spirituality of Discernment” By Dr. Thomas Nairn, OFM](#)

Wishing each of you a blessed 2023,

Ellen



Ellen Ferrone, OFS, Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Regionak minister, is a member of Padre Pio Fraternity, Raleigh, NC.

Do I Reflect the Light of Christ?

By Deacon Tom Shaver OFS
BSSF Regional Spiritual Assistant

May the Lord grant you His peace!

As I reflected on the readings for the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time this year, two themes emerged for me. The first theme came from the responsorial psalm, *“Here I am Lord, I have come to do your will.”*

I found myself asking the question what is the Lord’s will? This question led me back to my early Catholic grade school religion classes where we memorized and recited the Baltimore Catechism, specifically the question, “Why did God make you?” And its response, “God made me to know, love, and serve him in this world, and to be happy with him in the next.”

Essentially this is the will of the Father for us. Said a little differently, we are called to advance his kingdom, to glorify Him, and work toward the salvation and sanctification of His children through His son, Jesus Christ, all of which are found in sacred Scripture. While this simple formula may say it all, how do we interpret it and put it into action? It is His desire to be in a loving relationship with us first, and for us to practice good deeds secondly.

Unfortunately, life and the world get in the way. How often do we ask ourselves, where are we going? Where is life leading us? While this might not be something we normally reflect upon, they are the everyday concerns of life.

Everyday concerns are more down to earth business of living, making plans to meet immediate needs and desires. We get caught up in our day-to-day world as parents raising children working to put food on the table and a roof over our heads. We don’t think about this “concept” of doing the will of the Lord. Yet in most of our lives there are moments when we are confronted with more fundamental realities of life. Such moments can be the death of a relative or friend, the experience of deep and genuine love, or even a casual encounter. **Continued on next page**

Light continued from page 4

These moments cannot easily be produced at will, but when they do come, we should not take flight and turn back to trivialities. We should let the light of Christ into our lives at these points. We must welcome this new vision of where our lives are going and what we are about. We must pray that the loves and values at the root of our lives, which such moments reveal, may be transformed and renewed in the power of Christ's Spirit – the same Spirit that descended on Jesus at his baptism.

The second theme as I pondered our readings is the message found in all three readings, that is to ***be a light to the people of God***. In Isaiah, the book of the suffering servant, views the servant, Jesus, as the one who was formed as his servant from the womb, and made glorious in the sight of the LORD, ***the servant is to be a light to the nations***, that salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.

Paul's letter to the Corinthians begins with Paul and Sosthenes visiting the church in Corinth to share the good news of Jesus Christ--to be a "light" to that community. In the gospel of John, John the Baptist declares "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

These two themes come together as a challenge for us to be the "light of Christ" that shines on the world. We do it by living the gospel to the best of our ability. We have our good times and our bad times, but we live them in faith and hope, but most of all with love.

It is our faith, hope, and love which radiates the gospel message of good news.

Perhaps our new year's resolution should involve an examination of conscience, or as the Jesuits would say an examination of consciousness. When did we encounter Christ in our lives and how did we react when we encountered him? As a Franciscan, my goal is to see Christ looking back at me in the mirror and share that image with all the folks that I encounter during the day.



Deacon Thomas Shaver, OFS, Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region's spiritual assistant, is a member of Stigmata of St. Francis Fraternity in Johns Creek, Ga. He serves at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Marietta, Ga.

“Truly in a field of faith, this woman planted and cultivated a vineyard of poverty, from which abundant and rich fruits of salvation have been gathered.”

--From the Bull of Canonization of St. Clare

The God of the Poor Walks with Us

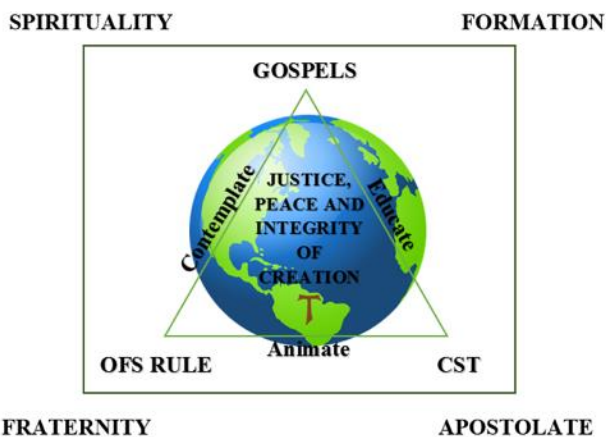
By Carolyn Townes, OFS

BSSF Regional Coordinator of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

“Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith.” (OFS Rule, Art. 15)

As I wind down my tenure as your Regional Animator for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, let me first acknowledge my heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to serve in this amazing capacity. It has been an honor and a privilege to grow in my own Franciscan journey through the eyes of a faith that does justice. I was doubly blessed to not only serve as your Regional Animator, but also your National Animator – of which my time is also ending.

There were many blessings and just as many lessons as I navigated the role of animator. First, we as Seculars still have a long way to go to be in the forefront of promoting justice by the testimony of our lives. Yes, many of us are in the forefront – and doing tremendous work. I know this to be true from the JPIC Award nominations each year. Reading through them and knowing there are Franciscans out in the world doing the work God calls us to is gratifying. Yet, there is so much more work to be done and not nearly enough of us doing it. This truly came to light when our Holy Father, Pope Francis asked our Minister General, Tibor Kauser, *“Where are you?”* We are the largest lay order in the Church, and yet we are still unseen by the Church.



My overarching intentions during my time as Animator was first and foremost, education. Just as formation is the heart of who we are and what we do, so is peace, social justice and the care of God’s creation. This was extremely important in the lives of Jesus and Francis. Learning about and growing into our Franciscan way of life is an ongoing journey. It does not stop at profession and it does not happen only at fraternity gatherings. Just as we are called to continuously deepen our relationship with the Holy Trinity through daily conversion, this deepening must never

exclude the poor, the marginalized, and victims of violence.

Like formation, peace and justice must be the center of our lives. It is not an option; it is a mandate from our Lord and our founder. It is not an extra thing we make time to complete or squeeze into our already busy schedules, it is who we are, day in and day out. It is part of our baptismal call as once exhorted by the prophet Micah: *“...and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.”* Are we doing these each and every day – especially when we don’t feel like it? This is part of the YES we professed or will profess.

The God of the poor walks beside me every day...

Continued on next page

God of Poor continued from page 6

What if you woke up one morning to find Jesus and Francis watching you? The Holy Pair will spend the entire day with you. What would your day look like? Would you see the things that Francis sees – the poor, the leper, the outcast? Would your heart break for the things that breaks the heart of Jesus – the lonely, the ignored, the abused? You said YES to this way of life. What does your YES truly mean?



Carolyn D. Townes, OFS, a member of Padre Pio Fraternity in Raleigh, NC, is the National and Regional JPIC Animator and a member of the International Board of Directors for Franciscans International.

By Carolyn Townes, OFS

National Animator, Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

This is an excerpt of Carolyn's Lenten article that can be found in its entirety at

<https://www.bssfsfo.org/home/>

During Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to doing three things: to seek the Lord in **prayer** and Scripture reading, to serve by **giving alms**, and to exercise self-control through **fasting**. I humbly invite us to faithfully and mindfully observe all three, to the best of our ability.

In your journey to being conformed to Christ, please find attached some goodies to assist you during these six weeks. Again, I include my **Lenten Season of Peace** for you and your fraternity members to *mindfully fast and feast*. I also include Lenten calendars and resources from the **USCCB** (also available in Spanish), **Creation Justice Ministries**, and the **DC Interfaith Power and Light**, who have created a Creation Care calendar. I invite you to check out more Lenten resources from the **USCCB** and the ever-faithful **Catholic Rice Bowl** from **Catholic Relief Services**.

For two weeks in Lent, I invite you to abstain from drinking any beverage except water, and set aside any money normally spent on sodas and coffees. In solidarity with our brothers and sisters who do not have clean water to drink, we increase our connections, awareness and responsibility to poor communities and God's Creation. You can choose to give individually or collectively with your families, fraternities, or faith communities. Last year, your generous donations helped bring clean water to communities here in the US and abroad. On behalf of those communities, we thank you most kindly.

Please send all contributions to the **H2O Lenten Project 2022**, c/o Claudia Kauzlarich, 2007 Maverick Trail Harrisonville, MO 64701-1545. **Make the check payable to OFS-USA**; with H2O Project in the memo line. And thank you for your generous contributions.

800th Franciscan Anniversaries Begin

By Lynn Oeser OFS

Regional Formation Director

Brothers and Sisters,

Grace and blessings to you in this New Year of Our Lord 2023. Now is the time we begin the three-year Celebration the Centenaries with the whole Franciscan Family.

The celebration is described as “A Multifaceted Centenary in which several centenaries will be celebrated.” A working tool of Information and texts can be found by following this link to the National website: [Centenario ENG Layout 1 \(secularfranciscansusa.org\)](http://secularfranciscansusa.org)

The themes have inspired, formed and endured in leading Franciscans by following Christ into deeper relationship with our creator for 800 years. These centenaries focus first on “being” - who we are to God, to ourselves, to our neighbors and to the world. Through the Holy Spirit, the actions, or the “doing” flows from who we have become.

The Early Franciscan documents describe Francis as laying prostrate before the Crucifix at San Damiano. Lying prostrate is posture of emptying of self, of humility, vulnerability and openness to the Creator and His will. It was from that place of spirit that his holiness began to grow and his holy actions began to flow.

Let us begin again and open our hearts to that place that invites our creator to form us in holiness. May we grow to be the unique beloved children that He wills us to be.

Peace and All Good!

Lynn



Lynn Oeser, OFS, is the formation director at the Fraternity of Brother Francis in Newton, NC, and regional formation director.

The Four Pillars of Secular Franciscan Life

Spirituality



Formation



Fraternity

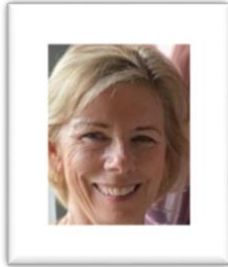


Apostolate



Meet your Regional Executive Council

A new Regional Executive Council was elected in August 2022 to serve three-year terms. Below find out more about your brothers and sisters who are serving you.



Minister: Ellen Ferrone, OFS

Local fraternity: Padre Pio in Raleigh, NC

Hometown: Raleigh, NC

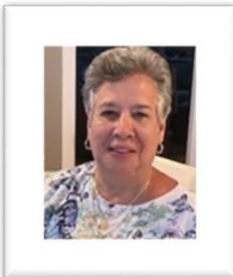
Year Professed: 2017

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? The generosity of our God. The Lord has blessed each of us with gifts and talents. I love helping unfold those gifts, and in the process learning where God is truly calling us. Our Franciscan spirituality is so rich to begin with and when we are truly working from the place God wants us, we are filled with the

Lord's joy and our individual efforts know no bounds. As Regional Minister I have the opportunity to interface with so many in the Region. If I can serve and help guide our Councils to be the best they can be then I'm doing what I believe God has called me to do.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters?

I started my Franciscan journey in Jan 2015, professed in Dec 2017 and was elected as a councilor in January 2018. I have been JPIC Animator, Councilor and Vice Minister for my fraternity, Padre Pio. I was elected to REC Councilor in 2019, appointed Regional Formation Director in Jan 2022 and elected to Regional Minister in 2022. I share this because every position has been joy filled getting to know more sisters and brothers in each step of this privileged journey. I invite you to participate in your councils and commissions, as each of us grows, so does our fraternities in service to the Lord.



Vice-Minister: Martha Roman, OFS

Local fraternity: Blessed John Duns Scotus

Hometown: Conway, NC

Year Professed: 2009

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? The support of my brothers and sisters has motivated me to be a servant leader. The ARG has motivated me also, the speaker, seeing brothers and sisters from year to year. My husband David's support has been a motivating factor in my

life as a Franciscans. Praying and the Holy Spirit has kept me focused on the positions I was elected for at the local and regional level.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I will continue to serve in whatever positions I'm needed.



Secretary: Mary Sacavage, OFS

Local fraternity: Blessed John Duns Scotus

Hometown: Pawley's Island, NC

Year Professed: 2018

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? The easy answer is, It's the right thing to do; however, there are times when I would prefer to run the other way and let someone else do it but I am reminded that I must "let my little light shine" rather than "hide it under a bushel"

as I sang in Sunday School. My parents were deeply involved in both church and community. They

taught me at an early age that it is much more important to share your God given talents freely and to love and serve God rather than to strive to be rich and famous. I've also learned that while I may not feel worthy or talented enough, if the Holy Spirit leads me to something, then God will provide all that I need to see it through. Finally, our Brother Francis said, "I have done what is mine, may Christ teach you what is yours!" If we are to keep the Franciscan spirit alive we each need to accept the call of the Holy Spirit to fulfill what is ours to do.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? My background is in administration, education, and social work. My husband, Charles, and I moved to Pawleys Island, SC, in 2014 when I retired. It was refreshing to find a very active Catholic faith community in Precious Blood of Christ Parish and even better to find a Secular Franciscan Fraternity! We enjoy the beach life with our dog, Theodosia (Theo for short). I am working part time in a dream job in a fabric store.



Treasurer: Zubair Simonson, OFS

Local fraternity: Padre Pio

Hometown: Raleigh, NC

Year Professed: 2015

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? Knowing that there is a need for our Secular Order, and that I have been called to fulfill that need.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I'm trying to go to all 30 of the Major League ballparks...and I'm more than halfway there.



Formation Director: Lynn Oeser, OFS

Local fraternity: Fraternity of Brother Francis

Hometown: Jefferson, NC

Year Professed: 2017

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I serve for God's love and faithfulness to me. I desire to be pleasing to Him. I pray that by serving my Franciscan Sisters and Brothers with love that I am serving God.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? With open heart and joyful hope, your servant am I.



Area 1 Councilor: Margi Williams, OFS

Local fraternity: Stigmata of St. Francis

Hometown: Roswell, GA

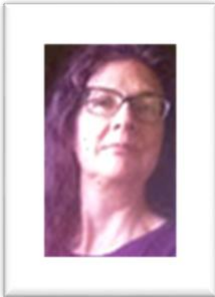
Year Professed: 2020

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? As Secular Franciscans, we are called to Penance as we endeavor to live "Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel" under the prayerful guidance of the Holy Spirit. As Area 1 Councilor, I see each Fraternity as an individual entity within the Franciscan community. My goal as a Servant Leader is to focus on each

Fraternity's positives and to help problem solve, through dialogue, any challenges as challenges are opportunities for creative problem solving. For when bad things happen, through faith in God, good can come. (Genesis 50:20)

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? Married 52 years, 2 grown children and 2 granddaughters. Attend St. Peter Chanel Catholic Church,

Roswell, GA: Lector, Sacristan, & EOMC. Facilitator women's faith group (Salvation Prayer Warriors). Rehabilitation nurse for 40 years. Currently Adjunct Nursing Faculty Brenau University, Gainesville, GA, AHA Instructor, and Senior Reviewer Elsevier Publishers.



Area 1 Councilor: Gabrielle Cruz-Urbe, OFS

Local fraternity: St. Joseph Cupertino, Bessemer, AL

Hometown: Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Year Professed: 1992

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I want to serve my sisters and brothers in the Region, offering the resources and support of the Regional Council. I want to listen to my brothers and sisters, get to know them, and strengthen our bonds in Fraternity.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I have been in Fraternities in Berkeley, CA, Lafayette, IN, and Hartford, CT before moving to Alabama in 2015. I have served as treasurer for two terms in Hartford, and am serving as treasurer again for my fraternity here. I have three grown children. The oldest one has Down Syndrome, and lives with us at home. I enjoy sewing, knitting, weaving, and crocheting.



Area 2 Councilor: Becky Bresnahan, OFS

Local fraternity: St. Elizabeth of Hungary

Hometown: Augusta, GA

Year Professed: 2008

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I'd like to say it was my unselfish desire to serve my brothers and sisters, but I've never seen myself as any kind of leader, much less a servant leader. That's when the Holy Spirit gets to be a little irritating. Those quiet taps on the shoulder have a

bad habit of getting me to do things I would never consider. So here I am.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I retired from teaching Deaf students but couldn't quite get the hang of it. Now I'm teaching high school students in a Catholic school and having the time of my life.



Area 2 Councilor: JC Liu, OFS

Local fraternity: St. Maximilian Kolbe

Hometown: Matthews, NC

Year Professed: 2007

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? By discussing and learning the way of Franciscan life with my brothers and sisters

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I grew up in Korea. Korean is my first language. Any issue with communicating with me? Please let me know we can figure out together.



Area 3 Councilor: Lee Cunningham, OFS

Local fraternity: Padre Pio

Hometown: Raleigh, NC

Year Professed: 2017

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I enjoy helping others and contributing to our fraternity.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I am grateful to have been able to walk this journey with other Secular Franciscans. I feel my faith has grown.



Area 3 Councilor: Betti Pettinati-Longinotti, OFS

Local fraternity: Fraternity of St. Clare

Hometown: Winston-Salem, NC

Year Professed: 2003

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? Our order is a fraternity of brothers and sisters with a common bond of faith and promises that guide our work and direction. We should all take mutual responsibility to servant leadership and to the care and growth of our order and fraternity. I enjoy getting to know others in our region. Each fraternity I am

greeted to has a host of different personalities and gifts. I learn so much from visiting with them and spending time getting to know them.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters?

Franciscan Spirituality is integral to my life. I love the Lord, the Father our Creator, Jesus, our Emmanuel and the Holy Spirit, our Comforter. I love the Lord in the Holy Eucharist. My favorite time of the week is Wednesday evenings, when I have a weekly appointment with the Lord at Adoration and the Holy Mass. I love my fraternity, my brothers and sisters and the common bond we hold. Faith, Family and Fraternity direct my time, attention and priorities, The Lord also made me an artist and I work at that professionally. www.plstudioartglass.com



Animator of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation: Carolyn Townes, OFS

Local fraternity: Padre Pio

Hometown: Raleigh, NC

Year Professed: 2000

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? Our Triune God called me to this way of life to serve and to help educate the brothers and sisters on various issues. Serving the Order has helped deepen my faith and my walk with the Lord. I depend on the Holy Spirit for all things as I could not do this without her!

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I came into the fullness of the Church in 1997 and immediately found and fell in love with the Franciscan way of life. I have never regretted the decision to follow that guidance and I am so grateful for this journey towards holiness with my Franciscan family.

“Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

--St. Francis of Assisi



Multicultural Commission Chair: David Cruz-Urbe

Local fraternity: St. Joseph Cupertino, Bessemer Alabama

Hometown: Tuscaloosa, AL

Year Professed: 1991

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I feel compelled to share what I have with my brethren in my local and regional fraternities.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I have been married for 37 years with three adult children. I am a professor of mathematics and currently Chair of the Department of

Mathematics at the University of Alabama.



YA/YAF Animator : Robert Dorsch, OFS

Local fraternity: Fraternity of St. Clare

Hometown: Winston-Salem, NC

Year Professed: 2018

What motivates you to be a servant leader among your Franciscan brothers and sisters? Servant leadership has been a way of life for me. When the Holy Spirit led me to this opportunity I embraced it.

What else would you like to share about yourself with your Franciscan brothers and sisters? I serve my local fraternity as the formation director. I love being Papi to 5 soon to be 6. My lovely bride of 40 years has been my gift. I enjoy

nature and published a book "To See HIM" that combines nature pics and poetry. In my spare time I volunteer for Project Healing Waters, assisting wounded vets.

Save the Date

Annual Regional Gathering

AUG. 11-13, 2023

RIDGECREST CONFERENCE CENTER
BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC

Apply Now for Funds to Benefit Apostolates

By Ellen Ferrone, OFS and Martha Roman, OFS

We are blessed in so many ways.

You may recall that in early 2020 the Brothers and Sisters of St Francis Region received a bequest of \$15,000. Ester Dutt, OFS from St Francis of the Hills Fraternity, Hendersonville, NC passed away in 2019 and left the Region this generous donation.

The Regional Executive Council at that time made the recommendation to the full Council that the monies should be divided into two areas. Of the bequest, \$7,500 was allocated to Formation and JPIC, the remaining \$7500 was to be distributed to the fraternities to support their apostolates.

To date we have distributed five apostolate requests.

We know that the work that is done in our communities for those less privileged means a lot to our fraternity members and the communities we serve. Fraternity sisters and brothers are generous with their time, talents and treasures and this extra support financially could truly make a difference.

We would like to encourage each fraternity to look at their apostolates to evaluate if they would benefit from an additional \$300. Examples of where the monies have been used are:

- food for the homeless
- books and videos for families in a shelter
- diapers for a food pantry

How to apply?

- Discuss and approve the proposal for your apostolate at a Council meeting.
- Direct the minister to fill out the Fraternity Resources/Requests for Charitable Donation Form found in www.bssfso.org under Fraternity Resources.
- Email the completed Form to Martha Roman, OFS (mroman2048@aol.com), David Cruz-Uribe, OFS (david.cruzuribe1963@gmail.com), and Lee Cunningham, OFS (emcunningham3@gmail.com).

Once the request is approved and the grant funds distributed, please provide a short article on the apostolate and how the money was used for the Communio. (**See article from previous award recipient on the next page.**) Don't forget to include pictures.

There are \$6,250 funds remaining. Our goal is to have all funds distributed by the end of 2023. This is a gift that needs to keep on giving.

OFS

It is our Order's abbreviation after our names or in other writing and refers to Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis, the official Latin name of our Order. In English we are still the

Secular Franciscan Order

Endowment Assists Fraternity Apostolate Grant Supports Christmas Morning at Coastal Autism Academy



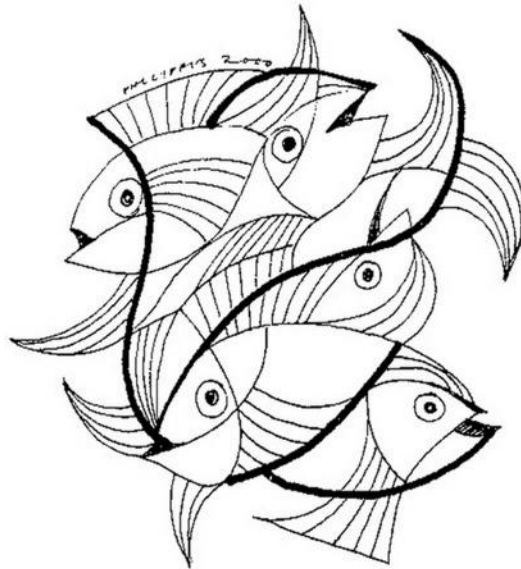
By Mary Sacavage, OFS

Imagine the opportunity to share Christmas morning with twenty-three autistic children ranging in ages from 12 to 19 years. The children's exuberance and joy were contagious as members of the Blessed John Duns Scotus of were blessed to join them.

The regional grant of \$250 was greatly appreciated. We used it toward the purchase of pajamas and socks for each child at the Coastal Autism Academy at Myrtle Beach. Additionally, we had a donation of soft blankets.

Members of the fraternity and St. Michael's Parish helped purchase gifts from the children's wish list for each child. Walmart donated the food for Christmas morning breakfast, which was prepared and served by fraternity members.

Thanks so much for enabling our fraternity to make this a special Christmas celebration for these children who provided us with a greater appreciation of the true meaning of Christmas.



**It is no use
walking
anywhere
to preach
unless
our walking
is our
preaching.**

St Francis of Assisi

Fraternity Shares Franciscan Creche Tradition

by Betti Longinotti, OFS

Since the Summer months, some members of our fraternity, the Fraternity of St. Clare, Winston-Salem, have been joining the BLD (Bukas Loob Sa Diyos- Open to the Spirit of God) community twice a month for a Healing Mass, their evening of Praise and Worship, and a few social events. At their summer Potluck in a High Point, NC, park, we were invited to prepare and present a skit for their annual Christmas party.

We decided to create a presentation sharing an aspect of our Christmas tradition and Franciscan spirituality with them. The legend of the Christmas Crèche was researched as told by St. Bonaventure and prepared into parts for nine readers. We prepared and showed placards of the visitors to the Holy Family and the crèche. Following our presentation, we sang "Silent Night" by candlelight. Members of our fraternity attended and shared the presentation.

Here are some reflections of this splendid December 17 evening :

"Sharing the story of the Christmas Crèche with the BLD community by some of our Fraternity members, at the Holy Family Catholic Church, was an enriching experience for me. The Secular Franciscans described the story of St. Francis of Assisi and how he evoked the birth of Jesus by setting up a manger in the town of Greccio, Italy. Both groups enjoyed a blessed night of prayer, song, fellowship, and food during the Christmas season. The BLD members learned about one of our Franciscan traditions while the Secular Franciscans appreciated the charismatic prayer and praise of the BLD members. The Holy Spirit was present in all throughout the evening. The BLD members share similar Franciscan virtues of humility, gentleness, kindness, and joyfulness. After sharing a potluck dinner together, the BLD members shared their traditional cultural Filipino dance and song performed by a group of women, and the men who carried the bamboo sticks. It was a very joyous and happy evening shared by all."-Elizabeth Sandy, OFS

"Each poster told a story. While listening to the words, the picture made more of an impact. It reminded me of the first Manger scene of Saint Francis." -Jerry Griffin, OFS

"We were honored to be asked to demonstrate a short presentation at the BLD Christmas Party. Being Franciscans celebrating Christmas, we decided on performing a short skit about the Christmas Creche. Betti, with some assistance from our Fraternity members, skillfully created beautiful pictures with handles for several of us to hold up representing people and animals present on this beautiful occasion. A slide of the Holy Family in the manger was also presented while we held up our cards and explained a little about what was on the card. This gave me an abundance of joy. Being able to offer this demonstration during such a sacred time was wonderful. The presentation was successful and we all had a wonderful evening praying, eating, dancing, and singing. A very prayerful and joyous occasion for all. Great camaraderie with like-minded folks, great evening" - Janice Howell, OFS

Continued on next page

Franciscan Creche Tradition continued

“Our Fraternity of St Clare presented an artistic representation of the manger scene at the Filipino Christmas party this December. It was a simple, beautiful, and loving gift to our BLD community here in Winston Salem. It was a commemoration of the first crèche done by St. Francis so many years ago in Greccio and a sharing and appreciation of diverse cultures, and a blessed way to celebrate Jesus’ birth.” -Mary T. Miller, OFS

“It was a privilege to share the Franciscan tradition of the Christmas Crèche with our Filipino brothers and sisters. It was a gift to share in their traditions of dance and food as well. The BLD community was very welcoming, and I was moved by their joyful worship. The evening was a “Being part of this prayer, praise and worship group has been an amazing step in my spiritual growth and development. Presenting the history of the crèche to the group, helped build a bridge with the community at large. Sharing our Franciscan charisms and history generated new familiarity with culturally varied group and allowed all to focus more on how we are similar vs different. This phenomenon is always the gateway to exponential relational growth. The cultural differences began to melt away and the humanity drove interactions. With a heart full of gratitude, I am thankful for this blessing.” - Bob Dorsch, OFS

Fraternity of St. Clare Shares Franciscan Tradition with Bukas Loob Sa Diyos- Open to the Spirit of God



Pax Christi USA Award Winner Will Speak at Aug. 11-13 ARG

By Ellen Ferrone, OFS

We are excited to announce that our guest speaker at the Annual Regional Gathering (ARG) is Marie Dennis, OFS.



I have met Ms. Dennis on several occasions and attended the retreat she directed for the Franciscan Family of Greensboro. She is engaging and passionate about her work. We hope this excerpt from the Pax Christi USA website will help you prayerfully consider attending ARG this year. ARG is August 11-13, Ridgecrest Conference Center, Black Mountain, NC.

Pax Christi USA, the national Catholic peace movement, has recognized Marie Dennis, former co-president of [Pax Christi International](#) and program chair for the [Catholic Nonviolence Initiative](#) as the 2022 recipient of the [Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Award](#). With this award on the 50th anniversary since the founding of Pax Christi USA, Ms. Dennis is being recognized for her long-standing witness and leadership within the Catholic peace and justice movement and her efforts to deepen the Catholic Church's commitment to nonviolence as a core value of the gospel.

Local fraternities will coordinate registration for the ARG.

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Blessed John Duns Scotus elected a new council on Feb. 18. From left to right: Barbara Umpleby, OFS, Secretary; Martha Roman, OFS, Vice Minister; Ken Wessling, OFS, Ecclesiastical Witness; Paul DiStefano, OFS, Formation Director; Mary Sacavage, OFS, Minister; Kathleen Barnes, OFS, Treasurer; David Roman, OFS, Councilor; and Ellen Ferrone, OFS, Regional Minister and election president.

Inviting Youth to Secular Franciscan Order

By Robert Dorsch, OFS
YA/YAF Regional Animator

What a rich resource we have in our youth. They are eager to learn, thirsty for faith and willing to be there. Many have noted the rising median age of our fraternities and region. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it does vividly illustrate an opportunity for Secular Franciscans to connect with young adults.

The BSSF Region is actively seeking ways to connect with young adults in our Catholic parishes. Each local fraternity is asked to appoint a member to serve as a Franciscan Youth and Young Adult liaison to work with a regional committee on a plan to reach our young adults.

Send the name of the fraternity member to bob.dorsch@icloud.com for inclusion in future online meetings to plan for our outreach to young adults.

Discussion with youth ministers and pastors reveals a need that currently evades existing programs. The 18 -39 age group leaves faith formation and searches for spiritual growth and service. Some find the Knights of Columba, others Bible study groups, some the various other church groups. Others are off to college where their faith is attacked daily, and some become vulnerable.

The USCCB has a framework outlined in “Renewing the Vision” which is intricately tied to creating a faith foundation for our youth. The question is what happens after that? Young adults are working hard to develop personal identity, relationships, meaning at work and a spiritual life. Many youth ministers have agreed that a YouFra may be precisely the answer to the spiritual quest.

This structure may allow guidance in accepting God's invitation, a call to holiness, a call to community and a call to service. This can be accomplished by connecting youth with Jesus Christ, the church, a peer community and with the mission of the church in the world.

Currently we are exploring YouFra serving geographic areas that may encompass four or five parishes and/or several universities.

“Officially, YouFra is supposed to be its own organization, with its own constitutions, its own local, regional and national fraternities, its own elected leaders, and its own financial resources. The Secular Franciscan Order is to provide support, mentoring, guidance and assistance with formation for YouFra. The relationship is similar to the relation the Friars have with the Secular Franciscan Order. The Secular Franciscan Order should also have structures in place to support YouFra at every level, and always ready to invite YouFra members should they want to pursue a deepening adult vocation to the Franciscan Gospel life as professed Secular Franciscans.”¹

¹Vision for Franciscan Youth in the United States

Ríobart (Rob) Breen, OFS Chair, Franciscan Youth and Young Adult (YouFra) Commission

Mother Cabrini Fraternity Elects First Officers

After the first post-Covid in-person Regional Executive Council we were joined by the Mother Cabrini Fraternity for their first Chapter of Elections in Conway, SC. Nine members, including their Spiritual Assistant, Friar Bob Menard, OFM, met with the Council.

Becky Bresnahan, OFS, Area 2 Councilor, conducted the election. It was a joy to be in extended fraternity in this way. After the elections, the fraternity and the REC enjoyed lunch together.



Four of the elected council members: Charlie Comberrell, Formation Director; Martha Comberrell, Vice-Minister; Nanette Perron, Minister; Cynthia Rae Gravely, Treasurer; and Sal Canello, Secretary (not pictured).

Welcome New Candidates



Three candidates were recently welcomed into the St. Francis & Clare Fraternity in Knoxville, TN.

From left to right they are: Velma Burke, OFS; Robert Kuyblawi, OFS; and Tracy Smith, OFS. Velma and Tracy were admitted on Dec. 11, 2022, and Robert was admitted on Jan. 15.

Day of Recollection Observed at St. Simons Island

By Larry Lynch, OFS

On December 1, 2022, The Five Georgia Martyrs Fraternity on St. Simons Island, GA, held their annual day of recollection with Fr. Joseph Mary, MFVA. Father Joseph is a priest with the Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word. He and his Franciscan brothers serve God through their presence and involvement with Mother Angelica's Eternal Word Television Network in Irondale, AL. The late Mother Angelica and her cloistered nuns belong to the second order of St. Francis. They are called the "Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration" and they live in "Our Lady of Angels Monastery" in Hanceville, Alabama.

Father Joseph Mary opened the day with Mass at St. William Church. After mass, a light breakfast was served and Father Joseph introduced the first "Conference" of the day with the theme of "Finding Healing in the Blessed Sacrament." A Prayer of Franciscan Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was said. Father stated that through the sacred humanity of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, miracles of healing can happen. He spoke of three major ways that healing miracles may occur:

1. Intellectual healings through the individual who asks for light, which is a gift from God. This gift brings spiritual enlightenment and wisdom to the individual for their spiritual journey.

2. Moral miracles are those which give persons the strength and endurance beyond normal physical achievement. An example is Mother Teresa's recommendation to her sisters to take time for a holy hour of Adoration to prepare them for each strenuous day.

3. Physical miracles are those that come through prayer before the True Presence in the Holy Eucharist. An example of this category is the 7,000 physical miracles that have occurred at Lourdes, France.

One of our fraternity members stated "I was most moved by Father's discussion about the real presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. His statement that when we are before the Blessed Sacrament, we are assured that Jesus is there for us and we can feel safe and comforted by his presence. "

Later Fr. Joseph followed the theme of "Franciscan Trust in Divine Providence" and showed a documentary of Mother Angelica's journey of faith and trust in God. By following God's will, she built a cloister, a shrine and the largest Roman Catholic television network in the world.

Father Joseph said that he joined EWTN as an engineer because he wanted to help Mother Angelica start the television network. While working there, Mother Angelica said to him, "You don't know this yet, but you will soon become a priest." Father Joseph did become a priest, responsible for the development of many television programs. Father celebrates masses, adorations and special programs for EWTN, which take him to many places in the world.

Mary Jane Marsh, OFS said, "The most spiritual communion I had with our Lord was reflection during Adoration. The overwhelming sense of peace was truly indescribable."

The third theme was "Finding Friendship and Heaven in the Blessed Sacrament." During Adoration, Father led attendees in prayers for healing and the sick. A fraternity member spoke with Father Joseph about praying in Adoration. Father said "sometimes we feel that we do not have 'words' for our prayers, and that's ok. Just sitting in silence and waiting with God, feeling Him in our hearts is enough."

Mary Jane Marsh, OFS said, "The most spiritual communion I had with our Lord was reflection during Adoration. The overwhelming sense of peace was truly indescribable."

Ann Mallon, OFS, remarked that "coming away from the Day of Recollection, I felt renewed, refreshed, and ready to enter into the New Year with Faith in our God, Hope for the future, and Love for God and neighbor."

Day of Recollection continued

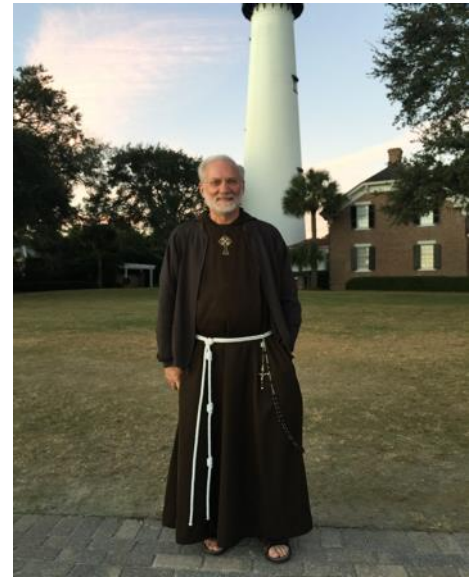
After the completion of the retreat, Georgia Ann Markley and I gave Fr. Joseph a tour of St. Simons Island. It was a beautiful informal time in which we got to know him better.

The day ended with a delicious, catered dinner hosted by Georgia Ann and her husband, Jack.

Members thanked the Markleys for the dinner and for enabling Fr. Joseph to come to St. Simons Island to lead our fraternity's Day of Recollection.



Dinner at the Markleys, left to right, Georgia Ann Markley OFS, Jack Markley, Colette Jackson OFS, Larry Lynch OFS, Patty Bergeron OFS, Fr. Joseph Mary MFVA.



Father Joseph Mary MFVA at St. Simon's Lighthouse

photos by Larry Lynch and Jack Markley

FLIPPING PANCAKES AT THE WELL

By Larry Lynch, OFS

Six members of The Five Georgia Martyrs Fraternity from St. William parish on St. Simons Island, Georgia spent the early morning hours on December 6, 2022 cooking pancakes for the homeless at The Well in Brunswick, GA.

The Well is a nonprofit ministry of Faith Works. It operates as a daytime safe shelter for the poor and homeless. The facility serves breakfast and it offers bathrooms, showers, a laundry room, toiletries, clothing, phone and internet service to those in need.

Our fraternity members arrived at The Well at 6:30 AM to find 15 or 20 homeless persons sleeping on the cold sidewalk and the center of a dead-end street.

Pancakes continued on next page

Pancakes continued

“There was some embarrassment at the life I live when seeing all of those suffering souls laying on the cold cement,” said fraternity member Colette Jackson, OFS.

Once inside the building, we set up our portable griddles, bowls, utensils and boxes of pancake mix. The homeless were delighted to learn that we were going to cook pancakes. I must admit I was embarrassed when a homeless man told me that my pancakes were the best he ever ate. My wife does all the cooking in our house, and the only foods that I can cook are pancakes and oatmeal.

Another member, the daughter of missionaries, was raised in Africa. Lee Norvell spent a lot of time conversing easily with the most rejected outcasts in society. I complimented her on her beautiful interactions with the homeless, and she replied, “I was just giving them my love.”

I asked Colette Jackson about her reaction to cooking pancakes, and she stated: “In retrospect I’ve been thinking how when life goes our way we consider ourselves blessed, and the more I thought about it the more I began to realize we are always blessed. God loves and blesses us all constantly. We just need to be aware. He blessed the folks coming to The Well with a place to come and breakfast to eat. He blessed us with the opportunity to serve,” said Collette Jackson.



Members of the Five Georgia Martyrs Fraternity in St. Simon’s Island, GA, prepare pancakes to feed individuals experiencing homelessness at The Well in Brunswick, GA. (Photos by Damian Fedorko)

Miracle at Greccio

A short story by Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS

Editor's note: This year we commemorate the 800th anniversary of the introduction of the creche in the cave in Greccio by St. Francis of Assisi. As a tribute, Joanita Nellenbach, OFS, offers this historical fictional account of the event.

"Come to the hermitage. I have something important to ask of you."

The message, on a scrap of parchment, was signed with a Tau, the T-shaped cross that was the favorite signature of Brother Francesco, the Poverello, the little poor man of Assisi.

A young friar from the hermitage, near the town of Greccio, brought the message to Sir Giovanni di Velita in his small woodland castle on a mid-December morning in 1223.

Next day, Sir Giovanni, lord of Greccio, wrapped himself in a thick woolen cloak and rode his horse the few miles to the hermitage, a cave set back from a wide stone ledge.

"Good morning, my friend," Giovanni said.

"Good morning, Giovanni," Francesco, clad in a coarse brownish habit, said as he came smiling to grasp Giovanni's hands, "may the Lord give you his peace."

"And to you." Giovanni enfolded Francesco in a tight embrace.

"You are well, and your son?" Francesco asked.

"Yes, I am well, but Lucca is not."

"What is wrong?"

"A horse threw him several months ago, then trampled on his legs. He may never walk again."

"I'm sorry to hear that." Francesco said. "I will pray for him."

"Thank you." And after a moment, "Now, what do you want me to do for you?"

"I have a wonderful idea," Francesco said, his dark eyes lighting up. "I need you to help me prepare for it."

"Prepare for what?"

"To celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, right here at this hermitage. A special Mass."

Giovanni stared at him for a moment. "Wouldn't it be disrespectful to have Mass at a cave?"

"But Jesus was born in a stable," Francesco said. "Some even say that was in a cave."

He opened the cloth bag hanging from a strap over his shoulder and pulled out a small rolled-up parchment.

"This is from Pope Honorius. I've just come from Rome. I explained to His Holiness that this would not be a novelty or a show. Everyone will experience Jesus's birth, without the danger of traveling all the way the Bethlehem. The pope approves it."

Giovanni took the parchment, unrolled it, read the words, and saw pope's signature. Slowly he rerolled the parchment, handed it back.

"Well, if His Holiness agrees with your idea."

"We will make this just like the stable in Bethlehem."

"We?" Giovanni paused, then smiled. "What do you want me to do?"

Francesco rattled off the list of things needed to recreate the stable. Would Giovanni also invite the villagers? A large flat rock, some three feet high, in front of the cave, would be the altar. Friar Giorgio, a priest, was to celebrate the Mass. He, Francesco, would preach.

Continued on next page

Greccio story continued

“We hear the story of the holy birth in the Gospel at every Christmas Mass,” Giovanni thought as he rode home. “But no one since that night has ever been a living part of it. Truly this Christmas will be even more special than usual.”

But Giovanni hardly needed to announce the Christmas event. His servants, excited, told the villagers all about it.

On Christmas Eve morning, Giovanni sent two stable hands to the hermitage — one man riding a donkey, the other driving an ox-drawn cart loaded with hay and a small manger. Giovanni soon followed, eager to see the stable take shape.

Placing the manger in front of the rock altar, the stable hands filled the feed trough with hay, then put plenty down in front of the animals, which were now standing to the left of the manger.

One of the men patted the ox and the donkey. “Sorry, my friends,” he said, “no eating out of the manger tonight.”

A steady procession of villagers singing traditional songs and carrying torches and candles that brightened the starry night, arrived at the hermitage, along with friars from remote locations.

“If only Lucca could be part of this,” Giovanni thought.

At midnight, Friar Giorgio began the Mass. Francesco stood near the altar. When it came time to preach, he moved to the manger.

“Our good and loving Savior became the babe of Bethlehem in a place just like this,” Francesco said, joyfully spreading his arms to take in everything. “Imagine, to us as a helpless infant — as poor, or even poorer, than we are.” Tears coursed down his cheeks. “He became one of us because he loves us so much. Let us rejoice in the Lord!”

Then — suddenly — gasps from the congregation. A bright light began to emanate from the manger.

Giovanni, transfixed, saw a sleeping baby boy appear on the straw. Francesco slowly bent and lifted the awakening infant. He and Francesco smiled into each other’s eyes. The baby lifted one tiny hand to touch the Poverello’s face. Francesco held the infant close, cradling him against his chest. Then, so slowly, as if he never wanted to let him go, he placed the baby back in the straw. The child disappeared, and the bright light gradually receded.

When Friar Giorgio had given the final blessing of the Mass, Francesco walked over to the manger, where Giovanni joined him. Others were coming to the feed trough and taking some of the straw.

“Never have we had a Christmas like this,” someone said. “It was so real, I felt like I was there at the first one.”

“I’ve never seen such a light,” another said. “It was so bright, yet soft and tender.”

“Yes,” from someone else, “a heavenly light. The way Brother Francesco bent over, you would have thought he was picking up a baby.”

“But you did pick up a baby — the Christ Child,” Giovanni, awestruck, said when the others had gone, singing their way down the mountain.

“Then you saw him, too,” Francesco said. “Take some of the straw and touch it to Lucca’s legs. As some were healed who touched our Lord’s garments, perhaps Lucca will be healed, too.”

And it was later told throughout the region that many sick people and animals were healed when touched by the straw taken from the manger that night.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
Election (E) and Visitation Schedule (V)

Date	Minister	Fraternity	E/V	Area	Councilor	Spiritual Assist.
Feb 24-25	Brenda Harris	St Francis of the Hill, Hendersonville, NC	V	2	JC Liu	Deacon Tom
4-Mar	Angela Cavalluzzi	Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Bluffton, SC	E	2	Becky Bresnahan	Ken Wessling
12-Mar	Bill Edwards	Channel of Peace, Chattanooga, TN	E	1	Margi Williams	Deacon Tom
Mar 18-19	Stephen Brace	Seven Dolors, Franklin TN	V	1	David Cruz-Urbe	Deacon Tom
Mar 25-26	Sharon Winzeler	Padre Pio, Raleigh, NC	V	3	Betti Longinotti	Georgette Schraeder
1-Apr	JC Liu	Maximillian Kolbe, Charlotte, NC	V	2	Becky Bresnahan	Deacon Tom
April 1-2	Dory Davis	St Elizabeth of Hungry, Elizabeth City, NC	V	3	Lee Cunningham	Georgette Schraeder
April 21-22	Valerie Baronkin	Our Lady of Good Council, Greenville, SC	V	2	Ellen Ferrone	Joanita Nellenbach
7-May	Jeanne Carter	Franciscan Family of Greensboro, NC	E	3	Betti Longinotti	Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM
17-June	Stephen Brace	Seven Dolors, Franklin, TN	E	1	David & (Gabrielle)	Deacon Tom
Sept. 8-9	Laura Cleary	Immaculate Conception, Jonesboro, GA	V	1	Margi Williams	Deacon Tom
11-Nov.	Karen Perry	St. Clare of Assisi Aiken	V	2	Becky Bresnahan	

11-Nov	Dory Davis	St Elizabeth of Hungry, Elizabeth City, NC	V	3		
	Lois Ann Cutia	The Five Georgia Martyrs/St Simons Island, GA	V	2	Becky Bresnahan	
	Sara Nell Boggs	St Michael of the Archangel, Spartanburg, SC	V	2		
	Sara Nell Boggs	St Michael of the Archangel, Spartanburg, SC	E	2		

**Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis
Regional Executive Council Roster**

Minister: Ellen Ferrone, OFS
Vice Minister: Martha Roman, OFS
Secretary: Mary Sacavage, OFS
Treasurer: Zubair Simonson, OFS
Formation Director: Lynn Oeser, OFS
Spiritual Assistant:
 Deacon Tom Shaver, OFS
Area Councilors

Area 1

Margi Williams, OFS; Gabrielle Cruz-Uribe, OFS
 AL: Bessemer;
GA: Athens, Blairsville, Conyers, Duluth, Jonesboro;
TN: Chattanooga, Knoxville, Nashville

Area 2

Becky Bresnahan, OFS; JC Liu, OFS
GA: Augusta, St. Simons Island;
NC: Asheville, Charlotte, Hendersonville, Newton;
SC: Aiken, Charleston, Columbia, Greenville,
 Hilton Head Island, Spartanburg

Area 3

Lee Cunningham, OFS; Betti Pettinati-Longinotti, OFS
NC: Burlington, Elizabeth City, Fayetteville,
 Greensboro, Morehead City, Raleigh, Wilmington,
 Winston-Salem;
SC: Garden City

Archivist: Sara Nell Boggs, OFS

Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation Animator
 Carolyn D. Townes, OFS

Multicultural Commission Chair
 David Cruz-Uribe

Youth/Young Adult Fraternal Animator
 Robert Dorsch, OFS

Prayer Ministry (online prayer requests)
Area 1: John Martin, OFS
Area 2: Dorothy Huebner, OFS
Area 3: Bob Sabisch, OFS

Fraternity prayer coordinators submit prayer requests.

Communio Editor: Sharon Winzeler, OFS

**Prayer for the Seven Gifts
of the Holy Spirit**

By St. Bonaventure

We ask the all-merciful Father, through you, his only begotten Son made man for our sake, crucified and glorified for us, to send upon us from his treasure house the Spirit of sevenfold grace, who rested upon you in all his fullness:

1. The spirit of wisdom, enabling us to relish the fruit of the tree of life, which is indeed yourself;
2. The gift of understanding to enlighten our perceptions;
3. The gift of prudence, enabling us to follow in your footsteps;
4. The gift of strength to withstand our enemy's onslaught;
5. The gift of knowledge to distinguish good from evil by the light of your holy teaching;
6. The gift of piety to clothe ourselves with charity and mercy;
7. The gift of fear to withdraw from all ill-doing and live peacefully in awe of your eternal majesty.

These are the things for which petition. Grant them the honor of your holy name, to which, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, thanksgiving, renown, and lordship forever and ever.

