



COMMUNIO

Newsletter of the Brothers and Sisters
of St. Francis Region

Spring 2023

Celebrating Franciscan Life at Annual Regional Gathering

What happens when you bring together Franciscans from all parts of the Brothers and Sisters of the St. Francis Region to commemorate a centenary, observe Eucharistic adoration, hear an inspiring speaker on justice and peace, pray the Liturgy of the Hours in a variety of formats, and celebrate the joy of being a Franciscan?



The Annual Regional Gathering (ARG), of course. This year's ARG's theme is "Celebrating the Rule: 800 Years of Peacemakers in Christ Through Nonviolence."

Mark your calendars now for the event scheduled for Aug. 11-13 at the Ridgecrest Conference Center in Black Mountain, NC.

This year's speaker is Marie Dennis, OFS, the 2022 recipient of the Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Award. She was recognized for her witness and leadership within the Catholic peace and justice movement and her effort to deepen the Catholic Church's commitment to nonviolence as a core value of the gospel.



Marie Dennis, OFS

As we celebrate the founding of the Rule 800 years ago in 1223, we will listen and discern ways to nurture its significance in our fraternities and our own lives.

Costs for the weekend depend on how many attendees are sharing a room: Single, \$320; Double, \$191; Triple, \$156.67; and Quad, \$136.50.

All prices include meals.

Payment will be due at check-in which begins at 4 p.m. on Aug. 11.

Contact your local fraternity to register. Local fraternities should forward registrations to regional area councilors by July 7.

Seeing the Gifts in Others: Listen Discern Go Forth

By Ellen Ferrone, OFS
BSSF Regional Minister

Minister's Message

Do you remember what it was like when you were first asked to Fill in the blank.

Someone saw You! You were recognized for something, maybe it was something you didn't realize you had done.

We recognize gifts in others all the time. We pay them a complement and they say Oh No, not me. What if we pursued that line of talk;

Yes, I see a Franciscan heart in you, Come and See.

Yes, I see and hear a kind spirit always willing to listen, maybe this leads to an invitation to learn what it means to be a spiritual assistant.

Yes, I see someone who is a willing organizer, come check out being on the fraternity council.

Yes, I see someone who is passionate about serving others, come check out being our Justice, Peace, Integrity of Care animator.

Yes, I hear someone who plays an instrument, has a beautiful voice, come and check out leading our Gatherings in song.

Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others. Article 19 of our Rule.

Let us lean into Listen, Discern, Go Forth. This is not only for our own discernment, but we are also called to be in fraternity, to lift up all our sisters and brothers. To help all see the gifts the Holy Spirit has blessed us with.

With peace and love,

Ellen



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

Visiting Greccio, Site of First Recreation of Mystery of Incarnation by Francis of Assisi

By Carolyn Townes, OFS

BSSF Regional Coordinator of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

As a member of the International Board of Directors (IBD) of the non-governmental organization Franciscans International, I was blessed to attend a recent board meeting in Assisi, Italy. Franciscans International is the voice at the United Nations on issues of human rights, environmental justice and peacebuilding.

As the IBD, we decided to have our meeting in the place where the Franciscan movement began.

We also decided to add on a pilgrimage at the end of the meetings and have the staff of our Geneva, Switzerland and New York City offices join us. As I was on the planning committee for the places we were to journey to, and knowing it was the 800th anniversary of St. Francis creating the first Christmas crèche, we also had to go to Greccio.

Greccio is the most popular sanctuary in the Rieti Valley. The word crèche comes from the name of this town, adapted into English through the French.

This event was considered so important in Francis' life that Thomas of Celano made it a turning point in his biography of Francis. From Friar Thomas we read, "*Francis used to recall with regular meditation the words of Christ and recollect His deeds with most attentive perception. Indeed, so thoroughly did the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Passion occupy his memory that he scarcely wanted to think of anything else.*" No one else in history had the foresight or presence of mind to recreate the mystery of the Incarnation in human dimensions. Francis felt the call to do so. He created the possibility of entering into that visual representation of the birth of our Savior; using live animals, hay and a manger. Before long, a church would be erected on the site where the Greccio nativity scene took place.

As the FI pilgrims traveled to Greccio from Assisi, it was a cold and rainy day. We were able to have some background on Greccio by Friar Domenico, the guardian of the community there. He also took us to see the old library where the early friars were encouraged to study, and we passed one of the dormitories once occupied by St.

No one else in history had the foresight or presence of mind to recreate the mystery of the Incarnation in human dimensions. Francis felt the call to do so. He created the possibility of entering into that visual representation of the birth of our Savior; using live animals, hay and a

Bonaventure. We were also able to have Christmas Mass in the grotto and visit the church and the gift shop. Although it was a rainy day, it still held the mystical feeling as it must have 800 years ago.

I traveled to Greccio for the first time in 2009 and I must say, I did not feel much difference. With the exception that I am older in my Franciscan journey, the experience was still as fresh and meaningful as it was all those years ago. The only noticeable difference was it took me longer to get up all those steps to the top!

As I prayed for our Franciscan family, I felt the grace of the Holy Spirit and the presence of our Seraphic Father Francis in that wonderfully sacred space. And as we celebrate the 800th anniversary of that first Christmas scene, we also celebrate the spirit of Francis as he made present the Incarnation of our loving God, who humbled himself to become one of us for his great love of us.



A rainy Greccio photographed by Carolyn Townes, OFS.



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.



"Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world."
C.S. Lewis

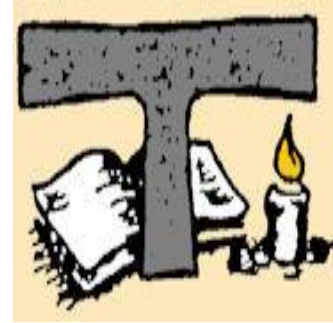
Accident, reflection closes chapter for regional spiritual assistant

By Deacon Tom Shaver OFS
BSSF Regional Spiritual Assistant

Good brothers and sisters in Christ,
May the Lord grant you His peace!

While driving home from a visitation this year, I was involved in a terrible vehicle accident that totaled my truck and put me in the hospital and inpatient rehabilitation for a month.

When I arrived at the hospital, I was in shock and physicians said that I was near death. I attribute the prayers of my Franciscan brothers and sisters and my parish community that God didn't allow Sister Death to take me. God isn't finished with me. While recuperating, I prayed whether I should retire from diaconate ministry and resign as regional spiritual assistant.



I chose to continue the diaconate ministry and resign as regional spiritual assistant.

Several factors weighed on my decision to retire as spiritual assistant. The principal considerations were travel, regional spiritual assistant duties, and my physical and mental capacities to perform the duties with quality. I will continue to support the region as spiritual assistant until the provincials appoint a replacement. However, I am limiting my driving to the Area 1 fraternities that are within a 3-hour drive. I offered to continue working with the spiritual assistant training program.

In discussions with our provincial spiritual assistant, Fr. Cid, I discovered that each bonded province is supposed to have its own regional spiritual assistant, which means that our region would have five regional spiritual assistants. Whether that is doable or not is the big question. With the shrinking population of members in the first orders, they may not be able to provide friars to the region. So, this will be a wait and see issue.

How does this affect you? Unless you are a minister, spiritual assistant or member of the regional executive committee, it doesn't impact you.

You and I have only one duty as professed members of the OFS, to live the gospel of Jesus Christ in accordance with the Rule of the SFO. How do we do that? First and foremost, we need to read and study the gospel. (Reminder: there are not four gospels, but only one and his name is Jesus Christ.) Further, we need to read and reflect on the Rule. Additionally, we need to be active participants in our order, especially at our local fraternity level. We made three promises when we were professed:

1. To embrace the gospel way of life following the example and words of St. Francis of Assisi, which are at the heart of our Rule.
2. To be faithful to this vocation and to **practice the spirit of service** proper to Secular Franciscans. (emphasis added)
3. To bind ourselves more closely to the Church and to work intently to rebuild the ecclesial community and fulfill its mission among all people.

In simple terms, we promised to live the gospel as Father Francis did, to practice service within the order and within our community, and to build up the Church to the best of our abilities.

At the end of Mass as deacon of the word, I send the community out with the words, “Go announce the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” Occasionally, I modify it in a Franciscan “flavor”, “By your actions, go announce the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” I encourage you my brothers and sisters of the Franciscan family to announce the gospel by your actions.

Peace and all good things, your brother in Christ,

Deacon Tom Shaver OFS



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.

Secular Franciscan Websites

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region

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

National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/>

Consilium Internationale Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis (CIOFS)

(International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order)

www.ciofs.org

Franciscan Spirit Called by Light and the Word

By Lynn Oeser OFS
BSSF Regional Formation Director
Brothers and Sisters of St Francis Region

Grace and Peace to you!

As I sit to pen this article it is still Eastertide. I am immersed in sights and sounds and smells of creation. The flowers and buds are pleasing to the eyes and nose and the sounds give a symphonic background to the bustling activity. Sister Water is rushing pure and clear. Brother Wind is blowing clouds playing hide and seek with Brother Sun, the Creatures are buzzing, chirping singing and dancing, and a bull dozer is bringing up the base with its motor offering intermittent arias with the backup beep.



My intent is to write a few more words on the Centenary Celebrations for this year – Celebrating the Rule and Christmas at Greccio, but what words can I offer?

The WORD himself, humbly took on our human poverty and suffering revealed himself to be the Way, the Truth and the Life.

St Francis of Assisi, our Seraphic Father made The Word the center of his life with God and people. Franciscans have followed Christ by his example for 800 years.

Along with the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we have Franciscan saints, Franciscan theologians, Franciscan witnesses, Franciscan writings and Franciscan traditions that are too numerous to count. I am humbled with wonder, dear sisters and brothers. I have no words. No *words*, but I have an example. In his time St. Francis had been asked by the vicar to preach to the poor ladies at St. Damiano, and this was his preaching:

He had ashes brought and made a circle with them round himself on the floor, and then put the rest on his own head. As they waited, the blessed father remained in silence within the circle of ashes, and real amazement grew in their hearts. Suddenly he got up, and to their great surprise, recited the "Have mercy on me, God," instead of a sermon. As he finished it, he left quickly....By his action he taught them to consider themselves ashes, and that nothing else was close to his heart except what was in keeping with that view. Remembrance of a Soul FA:ED, Vol 2, P380

We too are dust. Yet, the Light of the World has calls us to be his own.

Let us celebrate with Franciscans past and present who have professed to *observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people. Christ, the gift of the Father's love, is the way to him, the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us, and the life which he has come to give abundantly-* Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order Article 4.

It is my joy and pleasure to serve and accompany you on this journey seeking out the lessons of our Franciscan past and forming our souls in the gospel lives that we have professed to live. For resources,

guidance, or just to talk, you may contact me any time. My contact information is in the Regional Directory.

Let us listen to what is before us with humility. Let us discern what is ours to do in prayer, with scripture and the help of the Holy Spirit, and Let us go forth celebrating in joyful hope for the Light of the World has called us to be His own.

Let us Praise and glorify Him forever!

Lynn Oeser OFS

BSSF Regional Formation Director



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

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region Visitation and Election Schedule					
Date	Minister	Fraternity	E/V	Area	Councilor
6/5-6	Lois Ann Cutia/Larry Lynch	The Five Georgia Martyrs St. Simons Island, GA	V	2	Becky Bresnahan
6/17	Stephen Brace	Seven Dolors Franklin, TN	E	1	Gabrielle Cruz-Uribe
7/21-22	Sara Nell Boggs	St. Michael the Archangel Spartanburg, SC	V	2	JC Liu
7/22-23	Dory Davis	St. Elizabeth of Hungary Elizabeth City, NC	V	3	Lee Cunningham
9/8-9	Laura Cleary	Immaculate Conception Jonesboro, GA	V	1	Margi Williams
11/11	Karen Perry	St. Clare of Assisi Aiken, GA	V	2	Becky Bresnahan
11/12	Mike Yamat	St. Thomas More Wilmington	E	3	Lee Cunningham

Multicultural Dates and Activities to Consider

By David V. Cruz-Uribe, OFS
Regional Multi-cultural Commission Chair

As we move from spring into summer, I want to suggest some dates and events for further reflection and action by your local fraternities. Engaging with multiculturalism is something your fraternity can do regularly, exploring the rich racial and ethnic variety of our Church, our country, and our local communities.

By the time you get this newsletter, May 25 will probably have already passed. This date is the third anniversary of the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, in 2020. As you will remember, Mr. Floyd was pinned to the ground by three police officers which caused him to asphyxiate. His death led to nationwide protests and revitalized the *Black Lives Matter* movement, which had started in response to the shooting death of Trayvon Martin in Florida in 2012.

While the slogan and movement *Black Lives Matter* is viewed as controversial by some people, it is worth remembering that it has nearly universal acceptance in the African-American community. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has provided some very useful resources explaining its meaning and history, and why it is in accord with Catholic teaching:

<https://www.usccb.org/reflections-movement-black-lives-blm>

The best way to understand this, however, comes from a photography of Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso, praying for George Floyd a few days after he was murdered.

This sad anniversary might be a good occasion for your fraternity to reflect on the ongoing legacy of racism in America. The bishops' pastoral, *Open Wide Our Hearts*, would make an excellent ongoing formation for your fraternity. I have also prepared a video of a talk on racism that can be used.

On a more positive note, 19 is Juneteenth, an important holiday for African-Americans to mark the end of slavery in the United States. If there is a Black Catholic community in your area, find out if they are going to celebrate Juneteenth and see if your fraternity can join them. Or simply attend mass at their church as a fraternity.



Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso, praying for George Floyd a few days after he was murdered.

Photo by Corrie Boudreaux/El Paso Matters, [CC BY-ND](#)

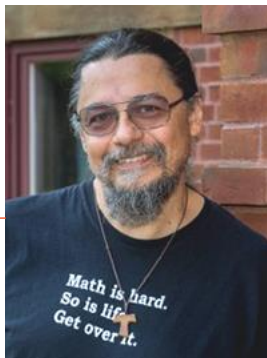
July 14 is the feast of St. Kateri Tekawitha, the only Native American saint in the United States. St. Kateri was a member of the Mohawk Nation from what is now upstate New York. Information about the *Lily of the Mohawks* can be found in an article from Franciscan Media:

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-kateri-tekakwitha/>

Her feast day also provides a great opportunity to learn more about the Native American tribes who live in your area.

Finally, September 16 to October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month, beginning on Mexican Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Central America are the most common. This month is a good opportunity to learn more about the Hispanic community in your area. Find out where they are from and what their special saints and devotions are. Everyone is familiar with Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of Mexico, but there are many, many more, such as Our Lady of Providence, the Patroness of Puerto Rico.

If your fraternity is interested in learning more about some topic, or having an ongoing formation program that touches on multi-culturalism, please reach out to me (david.cruzuribe1963@gmail.com).



David Cruz-Urbe, OFS, is a member of St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity in Bessemer, AL, and serves as the BSSF Regional Multi-Cultural Commission Chair.

The Communio is published quarterly for the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States in March, June, September, and December. Deadlines for each issue are Feb. 15 (March); May 15 (June); Aug. 15 (September), and Nov. 15 (December). Submit your article to swinzeler@gmail.com

News from around the BSSF Region



Channel of Peace Fraternity Chattanooga, TN Newly Elected Officers March 12, 2023

From left to right: Deacon Tom Shaver OFS Regional Spiritual Assistant/ Ecclesiastical Witness; Brian Tierney OFS, Treasurer; Ann Albee OFS, Counselor; Kathy Stephens OFS, Counselor; Karen Humphries OFS, Counselor; Roh Johnson OFS, Vice Minister; Paul Semmens OFS, Minister; Geri Toeller OFS, Secretary; Chris Liakos OFS, Formation Director; Hellen Neff OFS, SA in Training; Margi Williams, OFS, BSSF, area councilor
Photo by: Bill Edwards, OFS



Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity Hilton Head, SC Newly Elected Officers March 4, 2023

From left to right; Ken Wessling, OFS Spiritual Assistant served as Pastoral Witness/ Kathleen Sheehan, OFS Secretary / Christine Lukesh, OFS - Formation Director/ Yoli Hackney, OFS- Vice Minister/ Carmen Stratos, OFS- Treasurer/ Judy Graff, OFS – Minister/ Peggy Cleary, OFS- Councilor/ Mary Houser, OFS – Councilor/ Becky Bresnahan, OFS – Fraternal Witness.



Franciscan Family of Greensboro (NC) Fraternity Newly Elected Officers May 7, 2023

From left to right: Joe Vodenichar, OFS, Councilor; Jeanne Carter, OFS, Secretary; Georgette Schraeder, OFS, Councilor; Kathy Gallucci, OFS, Minister Susan Russell, OFS, Vice Minister (seated); Jeanne Kiley, OFS, Formation Director; Bob Pearson, OFS, Councilor Judith Walsh, OFS, Treasurer

News from around the BSSF Region

Secular Franciscan from South Carolina Among Catholic Women of the Year

By Judy Graff, OFS
Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity Minister

Christine Lukesh, OFS, was recognized as Catholic Women of the year at Saint Gregory the Great Parish in Bluffton, SC. The award was presented at 9 a.m. Mass on Sunday, May 7, and included her crowning of our Blessed Mother's statue.

Christine was professed Dec. 3, 1999, at St. Francis of the Gospel Fraternity in Hewitt, NJ. She transferred from St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity in Butler, NJ, when she and her husband, Rich, moved to Bluffton.

She serves our local fraternity, Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity, as Formation Director for a second term. She served our Region as Area 2 Councilor 2019-2022.

She is active in many ministries including eucharistic minister and lector. Christine also leads the weekly rosary prayer. For the past several years she has coordinated and led the annual retreat. She also volunteers at Mercy Mission weekly, a Catholic outreach of the diocese.



Christine Lukesh, OFS

Listen, Discern, Go Forth!
2022-2025 OFS-USA Theme

News from around the BSSF Region

Fraternity of Brother Francis Introduces Centenary Theme by Celebrating Greccio

By Lynn Oeser OFS
BSSF Regional Formation Director
Brothers and Sisters of St Francis Region

At our December gathering, the Fraternity of Brother Francis in Newton, NC reflected on the accounts of Christmas at Greccio. We celebrated, discussed and gave thanks for God's incomprehensible love for us through the humility and poverty of the incarnation and for His continued providence in the gift of the Eucharist.

The Eucharistic prayer was read through this lens, and we considered St. Bonaventure's prayer after communion. An exploration of the Centenary text on Greccio and our "being" in Christ and in the world was begun.

Mindful that our Lord came into this world as a frail and helpless newborn infant, as an apostolic activity we provided infant items and packed 10 backpacks that were donated to the Ashe Pregnancy Care Center to help infants and families in need. With a spirit of communion we offered prayers for those who would be receiving the back packs.



Blessing backpacks filled with love and prayer by the Fraternity of Brother Francis, Newton, NC.



St. Francis and Clare Fraternity Knoxville, TN Permanent Profession May 6

Jessica Trentham, OFS, (second from right) professed at a ceremony at the St. Francis and Clare Fraternity in Knoxville, TN, on May 6. Pictured from left to right are: minister, Terry Paradis; Fr. Peter Iorio; Jessica, and formation director Jean Schneider.

News from around the BSSF Region

Fraternity of St. Clare In Winston-Salem Spreads Seeds of Franciscan Spirituality among College Students

By Elizabeth Sandy, OFS
Fraternity of St. Clare

Brothers and Sisters from the Fraternity of St. Clare in Winston-Salem, North Carolina had the opportunity to meet with Wake Forest University Catholic Campus Ministries and provide a light dinner for the students on April 26.

The Secular Franciscans who participated in the end of the spring 2023 semester gathering prepared dinner, dessert, and beverages for approximately 25

students and Father Marcel Amadi, who led the prayer blessing for the gathering.

The Holy Spirit worked through the Secular Franciscans and the college students as they engaged in lively discussions about St. Francis and the Gospel Way of Life. All the students were receptive to hear about Franciscan Spirituality and were very gracious to the Secular Franciscans for the dinner and fellowship.

“Our turnout and service speak loudly,” Father Marcel said.

“I was genuinely impressed and grateful for the sincere interest from the students,” Robert Dorsch, OFS, said.

Mary Miller, O.F.S. joyfully remarked, “A handsome Wake Forest senior from Los Angeles asked me for my phone number.”

The Fraternity of St. Clare in Winston Salem, North Carolina will continue to nurture the relationship with Wake Forest University Catholic Campus Ministries next academic year when they welcome the students back to campus Sept. 6 and towards the end of the fall semester on Dec. 6.



Fraternity members at the Fraternity of St. Clare plan regular meals and fellowship with students at Wake Forest University in North Carolina as a way of sharing Franciscan spirituality.

BSSF Regional Executive Council Recap

By Mary Sacavage, OFS
BSSF Regional Secretary

My how time flies! It seems like just yesterday that we were at ARG electing a new Regional Executive Council. Under the leadership of Ellen Ferrone, OFS, Regional Minister, your REC has been busy. We've had monthly ZOOM meetings and two in-person weekend meetings. We've also had three ZOOM meetings with REC and Fraternity ministers.

The highlights of those meetings include:

- With RFC approval, resolution of the surplus funds (\$21,000) in the Region's treasury.
 - Bishops in each of the eight Diocese represented in our region received a check or \$2000 to be given to Catholic Charities to provide services in the Diocese.
 - Establishment of a grant program to support multi-fraternity retreats, \$5000.
- Preparations for August 2023 Annual Regional Gathering by both planning and logistics committees of REC members. Exciting updates will be provided soon.
- Given the dialog at the 2021 ARG meeting regarding travel time to Ridgecrest and the challenges for navigating the grounds, REC members conducted lengthy research and in-depth discussion on the location for ARG 2024. This was presented to the REC via a ZOOM meeting. Based on feedback and continued discussion, it was determined that the only alternative may be a financial burden on our members. REC remains open to recommendations for future meetings.
- Our Regional Spiritual Assistant and area councilors have been busy conducting elections and visitations within the region.
- Our Vice Minister, Martha Roman, OFS, heads the Apostolate Grants Committee. Grants were awarded to two fraternities, Saint Clare in Winston Salem and Saints Francis and Clare in Knoxville, in support of their Apostolates. Grants were increased to \$300. Please continue to submit your requests.
- The Formation Director, Lynne Oeser, OFS and the JPIC Animator, Carolyn Townes, OFS, prepared Servant Leadership training to encourage more members of fraternities to become actively involved on local Councils. They have presented this to several fraternities, either by ZOOM or in person. They are also preparing for Formation Retreats. Please reach out to either Lynn or Carolyn for further information.
- Annual reports from each of the local fraternities were reviewed and the regional report was submitted to the National Fraternity.
- A multicultural survey was sent to each of the fraternities. Most fraternities returned the survey. Our Multicultural Chair, David Uribe-Cruz, OFS, has been busy reaching out to the local fraternities seeking involvement in enhancing outreach to diverse communities.
- Our Youth and Young Adult Chair, Bob Dorsch, OFS, continues to seek local fraternity volunteers to find new ways to engage youth and young adults. The Fraternity of St. Clare, under the leadership of their FY/YA liaison, arranged for a meal at Wake Forest

University. It was well received, and hopefully other fraternities will find ways to do similar activities.

- Our web site/Communio Editor, Sharon Winzeler, OFS, has been busy keeping the web site current as well as preparing the Fall 2022 and Winter 2023 editions of the Communio.
- One of our focus areas was to find ways to better serve the local fraternities. We look forward to more ZOOM meetings with the local ministers to discuss ways that we can all work together. REC plans to have ZOOM meetings with each of the newly elected Councils.
- Your Regional Treasurer, Zubair Simonson, OFS, and Regional Secretary, Mary Sacavage, OFS, along with all members of the REC are available to answer any questions or provide whatever assistance you may need. Mary also serves as the Regional database manager and can assist as needed.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Regional Gathering August 11-13, 2023.



“God could not have chosen anyone less qualified, or more of a sinner, than myself. And so, for this wonderful work He intends to perform through us, He selected me- for God always chooses the weak and the absurd, and those who count for nothing.”

--St. Francis of Assisi

**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, OFS

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

**The Franciscan Institute
St. Bonaventure University
Summer 2023 Programs**

Secular Franciscans:

From Gospel to Life: Jesus in the New Testament

June 3, 10 & 17, 2023, noon-1:30 p.m. ET (Zoom only)

With Fr. David B. Couturier, O.F.M. Cap.

This mini-course over three Saturdays will provide Secular Franciscans with a faithful and contemporary view of Jesus, as He is presented in the Letters of Paul and the Synoptic Gospels.

This course is free of charge.

**The New Franciscan Moral Vision:
A Seminar on Franciscan Ethics**

June 28-July 1, 2023, 9 a.m.-noon ET (Zoom only)

A Seminar with Dr. Krijn Pansters and Fr. David B. Couturier, O.F.M. Cap., co-editors of "Lesser Ethics: Morality-as-Goodness-in-Relationship" (Franciscan Institute Publications, 2023).

This conference will the developments in the Franciscan moral vision in the age of terrorism and pandemics, along with the influence of Pope Francis on Franciscan ethics.

Using their new volume, "Lesser Ethics: Morality-as-Goodness-in-Relationship," Fr. Couturier and Dr. Pansters will provide perspective on the challenges and insights of a developing Franciscan moral vision. Participants should purchase a copy of the new book, Lesser Ethics, FIP 2023 at www.franciscanpublications.com. The cost of the course is \$40 plus purchase of book.

Find more information and classes at the [St. Bonaventure University website](http://St.BonaventureUniversity.com).