



OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS MESSENGER

Issue Number 53

January 2025

From Our Regional Minister

Dear brothers and sisters,

As we have entered the new year, let us remember in our prayers those who are still suffering because of war, violence, natural disasters (including Palisades fire), physical/spiritual sickness, and other reasons. There is always suffering in this world; we can use it to perfect our virtues or build new ones as we trust that God is always with us. This year, with the grace of God, we have reasons to celebrate with our community:

- Jubilee Year with the theme of Pilgrims of Hope. Thanks to David Bouchard and fraternities in Red Deer, AB, for inspiring us with ideas to celebrate personally, within our communities, and beyond. For those who could not attend the event on Jan 18, 2025, the recording is available: https://youtu.be/XkjTvhI3_dM

- 800th year Anniversary of Cantic of Creatures. On January 11, 2025 an official opening by the leaders of Franciscan Family took place in Assisi. We are blessed to receive the texts used in the event; by now you should have received the documents from your fraternity ministers. You are encouraged, at the discretion of your fraternity council, to use the text to celebrate the anniversary with your fraternity.

Many thanks to fraternities who have received 2024 annual reports/census and/or the annual contribution. The regional council depends on your prayers, fraternal, and financial support.

Please join us in the regional zoom events: monthly rosary and book club. Do not forget to attend the National online retreat on February 15 at 10am; the registration info is below.

*Your servant,
Lanny*

From Our Regional Spiritual Assistant

Let us begin again! It's true, every day is a new beginning and I always say to myself, it is never too late to begin again. One month in the Year 2025 is almost gone. Not sure how things have unfolded for you all. For me, it has been good so far. I am sure many of us have made good plans and resolutions for the year. However, no one totally knows how things are going to unfold in life. Whatever ways life may unfold in coming days and months, never give into hopelessness and anxieties. Rather, trust in God and have hope in him. Because, the blessings and promises of God are true. We are reminded of it on the very first day of the year, *The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.* (Numbers 6:24-26). Secondly, we are given Mary, the *Mother of God* as our model to follow and accompany us throughout the year. Mary, the *Mother of God* herself received blessings and also faced challenges of life. She never gave up her love for God but remained faithful to her first 'yes' throughout her life on earth. The year may bring blessings and challenges in living out our Franciscan vocation or life in general. I would encourage you to hold on to your love for God and

your Franciscan vocation. Live as best as you can, trusting in the Lord. Always be willing to look back to look forward. Go back to your first 'yes'- to your encounter with God and St. Francis of Assisi. That is the foundation one has to go forward in life, even if life may not go as planned. This year the church celebrates the Jubilee-Pilgrims of Hope and as Franciscans, we are celebrating the Centenary of the Canticle of Creatures. Take part locally as an individual or as a fraternity to celebrate these lifetime occasions. As pilgrims and strangers in this world we are offered these unique opportunities to renew our relationship with God and his creation. Dare to do something new in relation to God and creation. Little or in big ways, it's time to live in deeds of love for our Creator and his creation. Whatever you can do or dream to do, begin it. Your courage and trust in God, will pave the way forward for you. And also remember you may never know what results come from your actions, but if you do nothing at all, there will be no results. So, my brothers and sisters, ***let us begin again!***

Br Manoj Xalxo, OFM

From Our Regional Formation Director

In the Franciscan Daily Companion on January 19, 2025, we read - *Obedient to a carpenter! the God of eternal glory, submissive to a poor virgin! Has anyone heard of anything like this?*

Saint Anthony of Padua

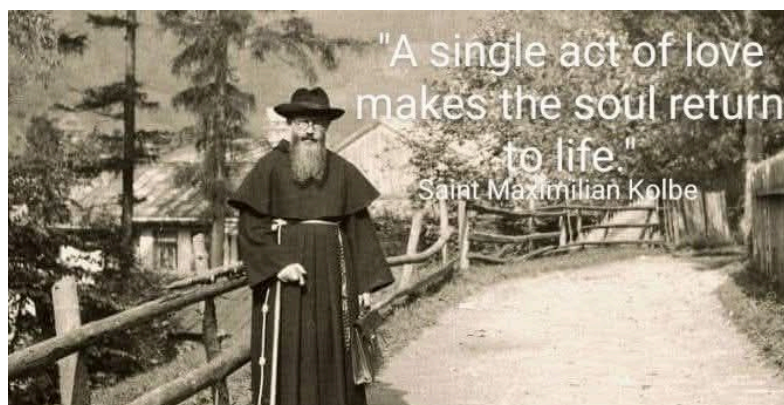
Jesus, Meek and Humble

REFLECTION. Jesus fully surrendered to the Will of the Father. This action did not diminish His dignity, but rather it fulfilled the destiny to which He had been called. Godliness lies not in acquiring power or prestige or fame. It lies in obedience to God's will, in humility and in meekness. Jesus teaches us these qualities by His example.

PRAYER. *Father, Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

In her book "On Earth as it is in Heaven" Josephine Lombardi says "I like to think of the Our Father as the prayer of pilgrims who mark the steps of their journey, sanctifying the Lord's name, building His Kingdom and trying to fulfill His will." When it comes to the rhythm of this filial prayer, I think of when pilgrims reach St. Peter's Basilica to go through the Holy Door, experiencing God's mercy and forgiveness. I see them go to the Tombs of the Apostles to profess the faith of the Church together, placing the seal of the 'Amen' on the entire journey they have travelled." Would you like your fraternity to journey together to another fraternity as "Pilgrims of Hope" and walk through their "Holy Doors," enjoy a day of fellowship and reflection on the *Our Father* and experience God's mercy and forgiveness in 2025?

Catherine McNiff, ofs



Franciscan Book Club

Contact Marlene Welch patmarlocel@gmail.com or
Miriam Liem ofsmiriam@gmail.com for more information.

Save the Date

- FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY

On the first Saturday of each month.

Next.. **2025 Feb 1st** @ **7pm PT/8pm MT/9pm CT**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86486098310?pwd=R1VOZ3EvdWMraG1PTTYxb1p1WllvQT09>

Meeting ID: 864 8609 8310 Passcode: 741246

-Canada wide FRANCISCAN RETREAT

"You Are Love" - A Document from CIOFS

Saturday, Feb 15th 2025 for 1.5 hours

10 am PT/ 11 MT/ 12 CT/ 1 pm ET/ 2 AT

*Hear from First Order, Poor & Clare's TOS
of the Franciscan family in French & English.*

Registration: Name, Email, Fraternity, City,

Fr or En to cmariefinlon@gmail.com

Link to [POSTER](#) to Document [YOU ARE LOVE](#)

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR VOCATIONAL PROMOTION OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER (2025) From CIOFS

JANUARY

*For all OFS brothers and sisters that they may fully embrace their vocation to follow Christ in
the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.*

FEBRUARY

For new vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order.

MARCH

For brothers and sisters who are discerning their vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order.

APRIL

*For the light of the Holy Spirit to guide the members of OFS local fraternities and councils
responsible for helping discern true vocation.*

MAY

For the development of the culture of vocations in our fraternities.

JUNE

For those OFS brothers and sisters who experience crisis in vocation.

JULY

*For young people to find clarity and courage as they follow Jesus in the footsteps of St. Francis
of Assisi.*

AUGUST

*For all the candidates who are preparing to make their professions in the Secular Franciscan
Order.*

SEPTEMBER

*For new true vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order through the intercession of all the
Franciscan Saints.*

OCTOBER

For a fruitful and close collaboration between the OFS fraternities and the spiritual assistants to promote vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order.

NOVEMBER

For the elderly, sick and the retired OFS brothers and sisters.

DECEMBER

For Secular Franciscan married couples, that their spousal life in the Franciscan spirit will inspire other couples to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.



FRANCISCAN RETREAT
Saturday - February 15, 2025
1.5 hours Canada-wide in French & English
10 am PT/ 11 MT/ 12 CT/ 1 pm ET/ 2 AT

YOU ARE LOVE
A Document from CIOFS
Hear from: First Order, Poor Clares &
Third Order Secular of the Franciscan family!

Registration: name, email, fraternity, city,
French or English to cmariiefinlon@gmail.com



Our Lady of the Angels Messenger, Secular Franciscan Order of Western Canada Region
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