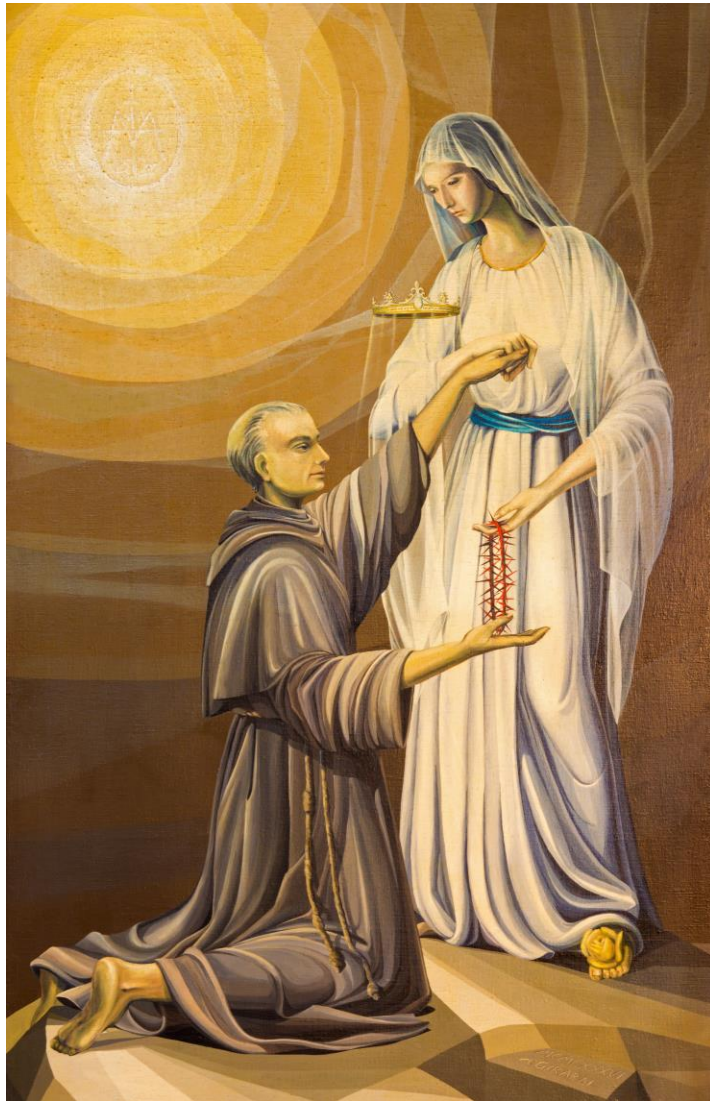


# Communio

That All May Be One

Newsletter of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region  
Secular Franciscan Order

Summer 2021



## St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe

He wrote about a vision he had when he was 10:

“That night I asked the mother of God what was to become of me, a child of faith. Then she came to me holding two crowns, one white, the other red. She asked me if I was willing to accept either of these crowns. The white one meant that I should persevere in purity, and the red that I should become a martyr. I said that I would accept them both.”

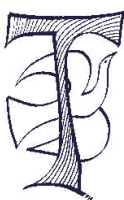
A. Girardi: Painting of St. Maximilian Kolbe and the Virgin Mary of Lourdes in the Chiesa (Church) of San Francesco, Brescia, Italy, 1984.

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jozef sedmak / Alamy Stock Photo

## The Four Pillars of Secular Franciscan Life

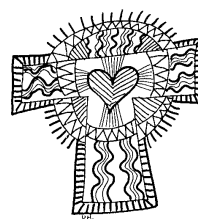
Spirituality



Formation

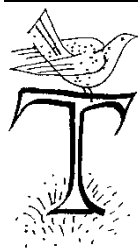


Fraternity



Apostolate





## Editor's Journal: Writing a New Journey

Way back in late 2004, Judy Haupt (now Graff), OFS, our regional minister at the time, sent out an email asking for someone to become editor of *Communio*. The previous editor had resigned. I was sure that a volunteer would show up. Someone with skills beyond mine.

After Judy sent a couple more emails, I accepted the invitation.

Thanks to all of you who've sent articles, columns, fraternity news and announcements, we've never lacked for content that has informed us and helped us to deepen our Secular Franciscan vocations.

I told Judy that the issue would be as large or as small as we had copy to fill it. Some issues have been more than 20 pages; one, early on, was only eight. Illustrations have evolved from black and white drawings to color photos. With all of us working together, there has been a *Communio* every quarter since that first issue in March 2005.

This is the 66th issue I've edited. And now it is my last.

When you look at the ARG agenda (pp. 14–17), you'll see that Sharon Winzeler, OFS, is to be appointed as *Communio*'s new editor. Sharon has a journalism background, serves as our regional webmaster, and was recently elected minister of Padre Pio Fraternity in Raleigh, N.C. I think she'll do well.

My Aug. 19 flight to Italy is to look for a place to live in Spello, a beautiful town about 15 minutes from Assisi. Returning here in mid-September, apartment lease in hand, I can apply for the visa that will allow me to live long-term in Italy.

I'd also like to make further contact with the Secular Franciscan fraternity in Spello and to attend some of their gatherings. When I was there in 2018, they met every Monday, 4–5 p.m. I hope to transfer to that fraternity.

Having already fallen in love with Italy during my pilgrimages and solo visits, I'd thought from time to time that maybe I would live there — someday.

But it was really Father Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv., my spiritual director for nine years, who got me started. Many of you knew him, since he was our regional spiritual assistant for the last 16 years of his life and spiritual director for quite a number of our region members.

"You need to write a novel," he suddenly said during our May 2015 spiritual direction session. "Let go of the formality and indulge yourself. Doing fiction will expand your vocabulary and your creative power."

I was stunned. Though we'd often talked about my writing, fiction had never come up.

"But I never thought I had much talent for fiction."

"Stop it!" he said. "I hate that! I don't even want to hear it — 'never had any talent for fiction!'"

We both laughed, but he was serious about it. Later that day, he said, "You have your next assignment. Get your apartment in Italy and write that novel. You have four days to do it."

Brother Bill Short, OFM, was our guest speaker at the ARG in 2017. As I was driving him to the airport after the gathering, I told him that I wanted to write Franciscan-based historical fiction and asked him where I should live: in this country, where the books would be published, or in Italy,

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where the stories would be set.

"You'd be in this country to work with the publisher," he said, "but the bulk of your writing should be done in Italy."

So, there it was: the second confirmation that living and writing in Italy weren't just my personal whims. This was what I was being called to do.

Writing is, after all, my other vocation. Though I haven't published any historical fiction — yet — that will come. There will be other Franciscan writings, as well.

Obviously, it's taken more than those four days that Father Linus mentioned, but I'm on my way. I ask for your prayers for my journey, as I will pray for all of you for yours.

*Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS, is Communio editor. She is a member of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity in Hendersonville, N.C., and spiritual assistant to Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity in Blairsville, Ga.*



## Minister's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the Lord give you peace!

As I've been homebound since February, there has been ample opportunity for reflection and introspection during the many quiet moments of the day.

Lately, the Holy Spirit has prompted me to consider "embracing the other" because I feel there is much separation and isolation of those who are deemed not normal or different. My current situation initially caught me off guard and definitely not prepared for the length of time for all of the items required to move on to a final surgery. Thankfully my Franciscan virtue chosen for me during the Franciscan Extraction of Saints this year by the Holy Spirit is patience.

I came upon a quote the other day by Rebecca West (Dec. 21, 1892–March 15, 1983), who was a British author, journalist, literary critic, and travel writer (the quote being on one of my calendars). It said, "There was a definite process by which one made people into friends; it involved talking to them and listening to them for hours at a time."

Franciscan values, talking, and listening; yes, surely to be able to embrace the other. Jesus and St. Francis did that all the time; meeting people where they were, listening and talking, supporting them on their journey, and accepting them as they were.

Our Annual Regional Gathering theme this year is "And Who Is My Neighbor?" and in light of the current times, fits right in with embracing the other. We will have our triennial regional visitation this year. Josh Molitor, OFS, national councilor, will be fraternal visitor; Father Christopher Panagoplos TOR, Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, will serve as pastoral visitor. Please extend them your Franciscan love and joy during their time with us.

Also, Father Cidouane Joseph, OFM, provincial spiritual assistant (PSA) of Holy Name Province, is coming to meet with us. Father Cid is newly appointed PSA, and many of our fraternities are bonded to Holy Name Province (look in the latest BSSF Region Roster that Nora Wessling sent recently to see which fraternities are bonded to that province). What a wonderful opportunity for all of you!

So sorry I won't be able to be present, but I'll be with you in spirit.

Please note that there will be posted on our website the ARG packet and prayer booklets as soon as they're compiled. We're trying to be good stewards of our environment and take care of Mother Earth as God and Pope Francis want us to do.

*BSSF Region Minister DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS, is a member of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity, Bluffton, S.C.*

## Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation: Encounter as a Path to Peace and Joy

By Carolyn D. Townes, OFS

“Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.”  
(OFS Rule, Art. 19a)

Those of you who know me or have heard me speak, know Article 19 is my favorite article of our holy Rule.

Why?

Because it speaks of peace, unity, and fraternal harmony. It also speaks of the transforming power of love and pardon — which can be difficult if we do not trust the presence of the divine seed in everyone. But there is one word in this article that sums up what truly makes an encounter a path to peace and joy. That word is “dialogue.”

Since the awful graced year of the beginning of the pandemic and the racial unrests, three words have become a constant companion on this journey of justice, peace, and integrity of creation: **Education, Encounter, and Engagement**. These words have been my constant clarion call as Animator for our region and our nation. These words, for me, have become the message for such a time as this; this “new normal.”

Article 19 of our holy Rule goes on to say: “Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others.”

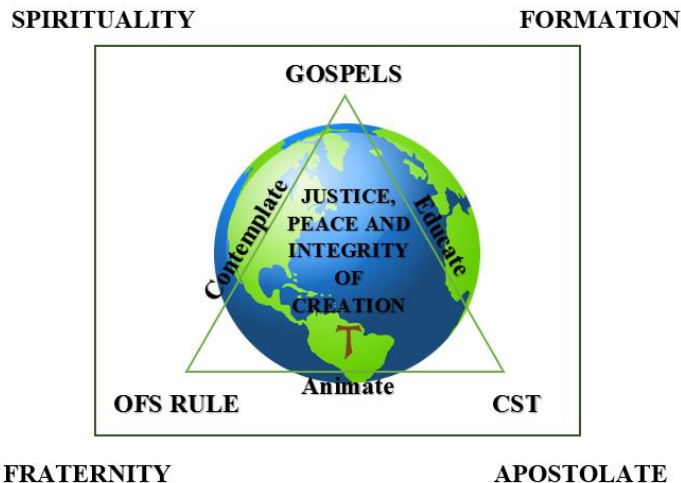
You cannot bring joy and hope to others if you have not had the encounter with them. When I speak of having the encounter, obviously I mean with those people with whom you might not normally have that encounter: the poor, the marginalized, the refugee, the migrant, or those of a different ethnic, economic, or faith group.

Encounters are easy to have with those who are just like us, those we frequently meet: friends, family, fraternity members, our parish communities. We know, like, and trust them because we have taken the time to listen to their stories. Are we willing to be still and listen to the stories of the migrant, refugee, or street beggar?

One definition of encounter is “an unexpected or casual meeting with someone or something.” This means that an encounter is not formal or planned. All of your T’s may not be crossed or your I’s may not all be dotted — and that is perfectly OK.

You bring your perfectly imperfect self to each and every encounter to listen to the stories of those who are different from you. You also bring your empathy, your curiosity, and your wonder. These are the ingredients of wonderfully unexpected dialogue. Once we listen to the stories, once we have the encounter, there is no longer fear or mistrust. We begin to build communities — beloved communities.

Author and speaker Margaret Wheatley stated it beautifully: “Remember, you don’t fear people whose stories you know. Real listening always brings people closer together. Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world. Rely on human goodness. Stay together. Seek





the encounter. Maintain the experience of encounter. Build bridges of peace and joy; build beloved communities.

May the Lord continue to give you peace as you seek those beloved encounters.

*BSSF Region JPIC Animator Carolyn D. Townes, OFS, is a member of St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity in Aiken, S.C. She is the National JPIC Animator, and a member of the International Commission for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.*

## Fraternity celebrates member's 50th anniversary of profession

By Bob Martin, OFS



**Cathy Champon, OFS, displays her 50th-anniversary-of-profession cake during the celebration in June. (Photo by Jill Varney, OFS)**

A celebration is certainly in order — *de rigueur* — when a Secular Franciscan celebrates a milestone anniversary of profession in our Order.

Cathy Champon, OFS, vice minister of St. Clare Fraternity in Asheville, N. C., was recently feted (and surprised) on that rare occasion, with a 50th-anniversary cake and applause at the June monthly gathering.

“Wow!” she exclaimed, pressing her hands to her cheeks and marveling for a moment at having joined the Order at the tender age of 17, following in the footsteps of her mother and grandmother, also Secular Franciscans.

Upon joining St. Clare a few years ago, she faithfully drove some 100 miles from her home in Elizabethton, Tenn., to Asheville to meet each month with other fraternity members at St. Lawrence Basilica.

When the pandemic struck with decisive and disruptive force, pushing everyone into lockdown, Cathy was not deterred, even by a novel and deadly virus. She created “Whispering Mountains,” a monthly spiritual newsletter based on the writings and teachings of St. Francis and his Rule, so as to maintain a sense of family during the enforced separation among her distant fraternity members.

After the last in-person gathering at St. Lawrence in February 2020, monthly meetings were suspended until Father Patrick Cahill, pastor of St. Eugene’s in North Asheville approved a temporary site for fraternity meetings at his parish, beginning in February 2021.

Since then, Cathy has been her usual fraternal self, combining not only valuable insight into initial and ongoing formation of professed members and candidates but with her own brand of humorous asides.

The celebratory gathering concluded as the fraternity toasted Cathy with: “Cathy, here’s to another 50 years.”

*Bob Martin, OFS, is treasurer of St. Clare Fraternity in Asheville, N.C.*

## Youth and Young Adult Commission

By Joe Vodenichar, OFS

Hello my brother and sisters in Christ,

Good things are starting to take place as we come out of Covid-19.

I helped out with my parish's Vacation Bible School, June 21–25, by assisting with registration and with games in the gym.

Really enjoyed working with the youth and meeting members of our parish, whom I haven't seen in almost 15 months due to Covid.

Also, I got an email from Stephen H. Smith, OFS, minister of Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity in Blairsville, Ga. He is the acting youth minister for his parish until after our ARG. Then he will be the assistant youth coordinator. He has been really busy with the youth. He has coordinated Vacation Bible School and made preparations to take teens to summer camp the week before the ARG.

Prior to this he was working remotely with the youth in their Uganda mission. His fraternity has partnered with the parish youth group by providing meals and occasional formation.

I'm so thrilled we have Stephen working with our youth as a youth minister in our region. He is doing an outstanding job. Keep up the good work, Stephen!

May the peace of the Lord be with you always!

*Joe Vodenichar, OFS, Youth and Young Adult Commission chair, is a member of Franciscan Family of Greensboro Fraternity, Greensboro, N.C.*

### BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION CALENDAR SCHEDULE OF VISITATIONS (V) AND ELECTIONS (E) June through November 2021

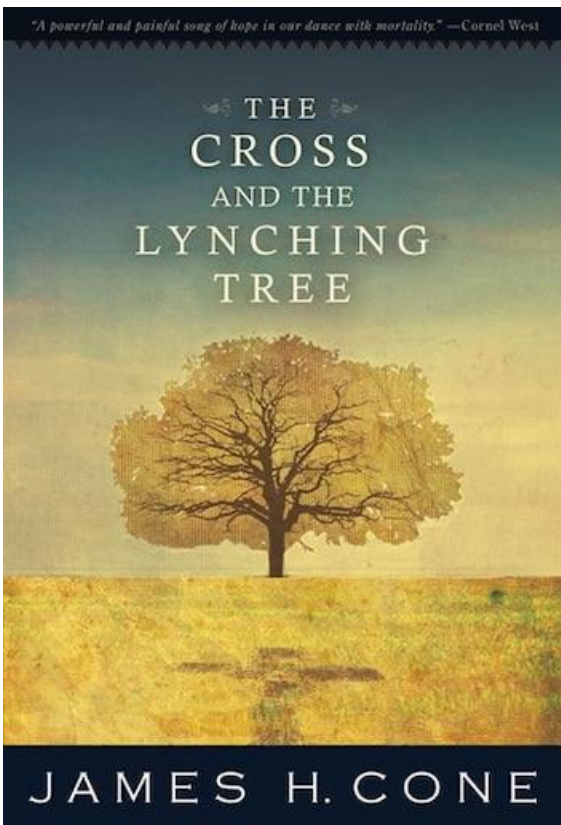
* confirmed	V+ follow-up visit	(observers in parentheses)
Date	Fraternity/Group & Location	V Fraternal/Pastoral Visitors E Presider/Ecclesial Witness
<b>Aug. 13–15: Annual Regional Gathering, Ridgecrest, NC Regional Triennial Visitation</b>		
Sept. 11*	Immaculate Conception, Jonesboro, GA	E David Cruz-Urbe/Dcn. Tom Shaver
Sept. 11–12*	Channel of Peace, Chattanooga, TN	V Sharon Loiselle/Jean Schneider
Sept. 13–14*	St. Clare, Winston-Salem, NC	V Martha Roman/Dcn. Tom Shaver
Oct. 15–16*	Bl. John Duns Scotus, Garden City, SC	V Ellen Ferrone/Dcn. Tom Shaver
Nov. 20*	St. Francis of the Hills, Hendersonville, NC	E Betti Longinotti/?
<b>2022</b>		
Jan. 7–8	St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Augusta, GA	V ?/?

## Racism and Secular Franciscans

By Barb Robless, OFS

“Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others” (OFS Rule, Article 19).

The Rule of our Secular Franciscan Order is like Scripture, always stirring our hearts and



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moving our minds to understanding our personal journey and the context of God's movement in our everyday lives, newly informed hearts interpreting it's meaning to us personally and fraternally as Secular Franciscans.

Our spiritual maturity as Secular Franciscans grows us individually and fraternally through *dialogue*, something that we use in formation. While this technique is not new to us, I am always taken aback by how many Seculars voice hesitance or uncomfortableness when it comes to dialogue on the subject of racism.

Perhaps it's the political venue or fears of upsetting the apple cart, stirring up unpleasant memories of the past, concerns of having to deal with differing opinions on the subject that could cause initial division with whom we are in dialogue, or felt perceptions that silence will make all fears or troubles mysteriously go away. Or perhaps it's having to unearth unconscious bias that lies deeply within one's own personal and family history.

I have had the pleasure this past year of participating in virtual discussion and dialogue on books suggested by our Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Animator Carolyn Townes, OFS.

One book, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson, articulates the historical Black narrative that involves hierarchal racism and its recurring evolution that goes back to slavery in our country.

The other book, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James H. Cone, seeks reconciling the reality of racism and the gospel message of Black liberation from violence during the lynching era.

Both books are powerful in their own right and stir a gamut of emotions and feelings that pour forth, the spiritual fruit of which grow into a deeper understanding of today's concerns regarding systemic racism and the criminalization of Blacks. More important and meaningful is the change of heart to move us as Secular Franciscans to do what we need to do with this metanoia within our lives.

Ministers and fraternity members from across the U.S., from California to Maine and as far south as Alabama entered into the dialogue sessions on caste and systemic racism within

institutions. We accepted the emotions and feelings that were stirred, with honor and respect for each other, as we journeyed deeply and more significantly in empathy with an understanding of the importance in allying ourselves with our Black brothers and sisters, being open to their narratives on race, and dealing with uncomfortableness in the spirit of St. Francis and his stories.

The discussions and dialogues had group guidelines, and embodied prayer and grace, as we listened to each other's stories in light of the books' narratives, respected each other's journeys, spoke with "I" statements to take ownership of one's own representation of Christ. There was no blaming, no shaming, no attacking. We honored humility and respected confidentiality.

Among the dialogue questions: "Did it ever occur to you to link the cross and lynching in this country?" and "Do we sometimes forget that the cross is a paradox because it 'inverts the world's value system with the news that hope comes by way of defeat?'" These questions were provocative and this, too, was in the spirit of the Jesus who sought to help listeners understand God's presence amid seemingly difficult situations.

St. Francis understood the power of storytelling, as Jesus told parables the same way, and it took people's hearts and minds to the spiritual core of a meaningful God-moment event in recognizing God in one's midst incarnationally despite turmoil, conflict, or uncomfortable feelings. Jesus and the prophets made many in their day feel uncomfortable.

One important take-away that I learned from reading our Black brothers and sisters' narratives is that most people don't think of themselves as racists. It is systemic policies and programs developed over time that one endorses and advocates that exclude our Black brothers and sisters and other minorities or create obstacles that keep them from their equal rights (like policies against immigration and the poor and marginalized) that defines one as a racist.

Reading and listening to the stories of our Black brothers and sisters brings an incarnational understanding of Jesus in our midst and a metanoia that stirs Secular Franciscans to further move to act on social justice in our Secular lives with this new understanding and alliance.

I encourage you to read these books individually and, if you feel spiritually moved, to read them in your fraternities as a way of allying with those who are most poor and marginalized, as you continue to find Jesus in your midst as you listen to narratives that you might at first approach hesitantly or fearfully. Several copies of each book will be available at the Annual Regional Gathering.

May the Lord give you peace in your dialogue and discussions on the subject of racism and in your efforts to bring joy and hope to others as Secular Franciscans.

*Barb Robless, OFS, is minister of the Fraternity of St. Clare in Winston-Salem, N.C.*

Reminder from Our Regional Spiritual Assistant to  
Fraternity Ministers and Chosen Leaders:  
Our fraternities are bonded to friar provinces and must respond to  
Provincial Spiritual Assistants' requests for information.

### **Secular Franciscan Websites**

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region

**[www.bssfsfo.org](http://www.bssfsfo.org)**

National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States (NAFRA)

**[www.secularfranciscansusa.org](http://www.secularfranciscansusa.org)**

Consilium Internationale Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis (CIOFS)

International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order

**[www.ciofs.org](http://www.ciofs.org)**



## Congratulations, New Councils



### **St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, Charlotte, N.C., June 5**

Secretary Mark Ceraldi, OFS (left); Treasurer Janet Ceraldi, OFS; Councilor David Papandrea, OFS; Minister J.C. Liu, OFS; Vice Minister Jennye Taylor Johnson, OFS; Formation Director Mary-Claire Dempsey, OFS. Not shown: Councilor Eneida Ceballos, OFS.



### **St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Bessemer, Ala., June 27**

Minister Christine Washington, OFS (left); Vice Minister Beth Ann Ryan, OFS; Secretary Roxanne Bessette, OFS; Treasurer Gabrielle Cruz-Uribe, OFS; Formation Director Janet Waters, OFS; Councilor Lannie Newman, OFS

## Congratulations, Newly Professed



### Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Fraternity

Burlington, N.C.

Oct. 26, 2020

Rose Ann Bobak, OFS (left),  
Paul Bobak, OFS,  
Judie Bringhurst, OFS,  
Flo Echevarria, OFS,  
Joe Knight-McKenna, OFS,  
Sue Watson, OFS  
Michaelle Ballard, OFS

### Sts. Francis and Clare Fraternity

Knoxville, Tenn.

July 10

John Michael Fox, OFS (left)  
Francesca Follone-Montgomery, OFS  
Cindy Murphy, OFS,  
Peggy Burnette, OFS.

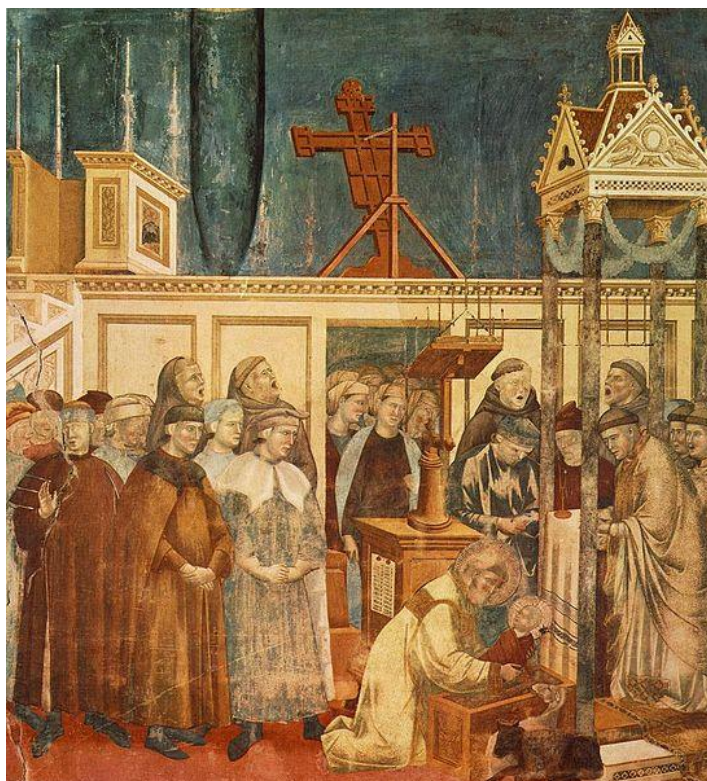
Pictured with

Rev. Dr. John A. Orr, pastor,  
St. Mary Roman Catholic Church,  
Athens, Tenn.



Sts. Francis and Clare's new candidates:  
Jessica Trentham, OFS; and Mary Ellen Little, OFS





Giotto di Bondone, "Institution of the Crib at Greccio," painted 1295,

Upper Basilica of St. Francis, Assisi, Italy

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

## **"Christmas at Greccio"** **A Franciscan Advent Retreat** **Dec. 10-12, 2021**

The Fraternity of Brother Francis, Newton, N.C.,  
invites you to celebrate the birth of our Savior  
through Advent reflections and Franciscan prayer and silence  
at the Catholic Conference Center, Hickory, N.C.,  
nestled in the heart of the North Carolina mountains.  
In addition to silence and reflections, "Christmas at Greccio"  
will share in the blessing of the crib in the barn,  
with hymns, a fire pit, and walking reflection trails,  
as well as rocking chair decks with views perfect for meditating on our Lord.  
Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.  
Come to spiritually prepare for the joy of Christmas  
as St. Francis inspired us.

Peace and all good to you brothers and sisters!  
Details and Registration online at: <http://catholicconference.org/Greccio>

Lodging is limited so please reserve your room early at  
<http://catholicconference.org/greccio>

## BSSF Regional Executive Council Recap

By Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS

The Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Regional Executive Council met via Zoom on May 22. Here are highlights of that meeting:

- Vice Minister Carmen Madero, OFS, reported that she had been fraternal visitor for the visitation to Sts. Francis and Clare Fraternity, Knoxville, Tenn. Deacon Tom, was pastoral visitor.
- Secretary Nora Wessling, OFS, continues to communicate with various fraternity members and fraternity database managers and to provide assistance as needed regarding NAFRA database needs. She continues:
  - to encourage keeping info updated. Continues to communicate with Cyl Maljan-Herbelin, OFS, NAFRA administrator, with questions/requests as needed from local fraternities, regarding their needs in managing or updating information on their databases.
  - to make notations in local fraternity database note sections that elections/visitations were cancelled due to restrictions from the pandemic. If known, rescheduled date was also noted. Notified via email, ministers of the respective fraternities that notation was made in their fraternities' NAFRA database page note section.
  - to keep records of regional fraternity elections and to gather and organize records in secretary notebook.
  - Also, sent updates to Sharon Winzeler, OFS, BSSF regional webmaster, after recent successful local fraternity elections to post newly elected ministers' names as contact persons of those fraternities; posted new meeting times as needed.
- Treasurer Ken Brooke reported on the first quarter total income and total expenses and that the region is in good shape financially.
- Deacon Tom Shaver, OFS, regional spiritual assistant, said that he has had only one response to his request for people to take the training; will send out another request.

He has also contacted provincial spiritual assistants (PSAs) about status of SAs. He asked that in next *Communio* there be a reminder to fraternity ministers that our fraternities are bonded to friar provinces and must respond to PSA requests for information.
- *Communio* Editor Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS, who has been editor since March 2005, asked the council to begin seeking a new editor, as she is planning to move to Italy later this year to write Franciscan-based material, including historical fiction. She will produce the summer issue, out in July, but is not sure if she will be available to work on the fall issue, which comes out in October.
- JPIC Animator Carolyn Townes, OFS, said that in the last week of July, she would be doing a retreat for the St. Thomas More Region's incoming spiritual assistants. They have 20 Secular Franciscans, priests, and sisters training to become spiritual assistants. Carolyn has also:
  - Continued to conduct and participate in the National JPIC Focus Groups: Care for Creation, Immigration, Spirituality and JPIC, and Mindful Dialogues;
  - Facilitated Lenten book discussion on *Walking with Francis of Assisi: From Privilege to Activism* by Bruce Epperly.
  - Conducted a five-week Lenten Meditation series, which again proved to be quite



- successful and needed by those who attended.
  - Conducted two virtual prayer services for Lamentation and Hope, which were attended by more than 100 Franciscans from the United States and Guam.
  - Attended the virtual Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, Feb. 6–9; the virtual Ecumenical Advocacy Days, April 18–21; and the Franciscan Federation Assembly in May and June.
  - Participated in the six Pax Christi weekly prayer services. She was asked to participate one week by praying the Litany of Repentance, after which attendees broke into small groups to discuss the reflection.
  - Continues to attend the virtual prayer vigils sponsored by the Catholic Mobilizing Network, which averages about 300 participants.
  - Emailed JPIC Lenten Letter, Easter Letter; Pentecost Letter to go out during week after Pentecost.
  - Continues to participate in FAN monthly National Solidarity Tables calls.
  - Contributed article to regional newsletter, *Communio*; as well as an article to the national newsletter, *TAU-USA*.
- Regional Formation Director Dianne Ambrose, OFS, reported on “Racial Justice: Our Franciscan Witness,” a six-session program she gave with Carolyn Townes and Area 1 Councilor David Cruz-Urbe, OFS, and Carolynn Townes. She is putting together the series’ materials to send to fraternity ministers and formation directors.

Dianne plans to restart Evening Prayer on Mondays and to have two formation sessions each month: one presenting a topic, the other with open discussion of the topic.
  - Area councilors reported on their activities, which included:
    - presiding at elections and serving as fraternal visitors for local fraternity visitations
    - reviewing form for fraternities to use in requesting funds from the bequest from a member of the region. These bequest grants are to be used for fraternities’ apostolates
    - attending Zoom lectures from the Franciscan School of Theology at San Diego, Calif
    - keeping in touch with fraternities via emails and phone calls
  - Council discussed upcoming Annual Regional Gathering, scheduled for Aug. 13–15 at Ridgecrest Conference Center, Black Mountain, N.C. The theme is “And Who Is My Neighbor?” Carolyn Townes and Deacon Tom Shaver volunteered to work on the schedule.

Regional visitation this year. Fraternal visitor: Josh Molitor, OFS, national councilor; Pastoral visitor: Father Christopher Panagoplos, TOR, Conference of National Spiritual Assistants.

DorothyAnn said that, at this time, because of just reopening after the pandemic, Ridgecrest will not provide catered meals; all meals will be in the main dining room.
  - Next REC meeting is scheduled for Aug. 13, 2 p.m. at Ridgecrest Conference Center.

*Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS, is Communio editor. She is a member of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity in Hendersonville, N.C., and spiritual assistant to Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity in Blairsville, Ga.*



Noon – 1:00 **Lunch** buffet (tickets required) (Main Dining Room)

1:15           **Local Fraternity Ministers and National Visitors Meeting**  
(Johnson Springs, Building 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Room 5)

1:15           **Spiritual Assistants Meeting – Johnson Spring Board Room**

1:15           **Small group discussions – Johnson Spring 3A-D & 4A-D**

3:00           **Break**

3:30           **Discussion time – Q & A with National Visitors**

4:00           **Open Forum – Regional Council**

5:00           **Liturgy of the Hours Evening Prayer (Johnson Spring 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Azalea  
B&C)**

5:30-6:30   **Dinner** buffet (tickets required) (Main Dining Room)

7:00           **Presentation —** possibly Josh on responsibilities to our Order

8:00           **Memorial for Deceased Members of Region**  
(Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity)

8:30           **Brothers and Sisters time together**

## **SUNDAY, August 15**

7:15-8:15   **Breakfast** buffet (tickets required) (Main Dining Room)  
(Time to check out)

8:30           **Liturgy of the Hours Morning Prayer**

9:00           **Presentation – National Visitors (Johnson Spring 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Azalea B&C)  
/ Discussion Time**

10:15          **Recognition of newly professed – Renewal of Commitment (all  
professed)**

10:30          **Celebration of the Eucharist**

11:30          **Adjournment: Closing Prayer, Closing Comments**

.....  
**FRANCISCAN BOOKS AND ARTICLES WILL BE FOR SALE**

**(St. Francis Springs Prayer Center)**

**Johnson Spring Building – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Azalea Room A**

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See ARG, p. 16

ARG, from p. 15

**\*A Chapel will be open for Eucharistic Adoration 9:45 AM Sat until  
9:45 AM Sun.**

Please sign up to spend quiet time with our Lord  
(Chapel: Mountain Laurel Building, lower level - conference room #5)

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## **REGIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**Saturday, August 14, 2021 \*\*\*\*\* 10:00 a.m. –Noon**  
**Johnson Spring Building - 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 5 A-D (Across from Azalea Room)**

**Every elected Fraternity Minister and REC is a member of the Regional Fraternity  
Council.**

**Please be present or delegate this responsibility to another member.**

### **OPENING PRAYER**

*Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order*

### **ROLL CALL**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **REPORT OF TREASURER**

### **BUSINESS:**

Approval of Budget for 2022

Appoint Sharon Winzeler, OFS, as Editor of *Communio*

ARG 2022: August 12-14, 2022 (Ridgecrest) Chapter of Elections

Appointment of Nomination Committee

Calendar of Visitations/Elections – Sept 2021-Dec 2022

**COMMENTS from Regional Vice Minister and National Visitors**

**OPEN FORUM – Please discuss items with regional vice minister before meeting.**

### **ADJOURNMENT – CLOSING PRAYER**

**\*\*\*MEMBERS OF FRATERNITIES, NEWLY FORMING GROUPS AND EMERGING  
COMMUNITIES ARE INVITED TO OBSERVE THE COUNCIL MEETING)**



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

**Minister: DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS**

**Vice Minister: Carmen Madero, OFS**

**Secretary: Nora Wessling, OFS**

**Treasurer: Ken Brooke, OFS**

**Formation Director: Dianne Ambrose, OFS**

**Spiritual Assistant:  
Deacon Tom Shaver, OFS**

**Area Councilors**

**Area 1**

**David Cruz-Uribe, OFS; Sharon Loiselle, OFS**

**AL:** Bessemer;

**GA:** Athens, Blairsville, Conyers, Duluth, Jonesboro;

**TN:** Chattanooga, Knoxville, Nashville

**Area 2**

**Betti Pettinati-Longinotti, OFS; Christine Lukesh, OFS**

**GA:** Augusta, St. Simons Island;

**NC:** Asheville, Charlotte, Hendersonville, Newton;

**SC:** Aiken, Charleston, Columbia, Greenville,  
Hilton Head Island, Spartanburg

**Area 3**

**Ellen Ferrone, OFS; Martha Roman, OFS**

**NC:** Burlington, Elizabeth City, Fayetteville, Greensboro,  
Morehead City, Raleigh, Wilmington, Winston Salem;

**SC:** Garden City

**Archivist: Sara Nell Boggs, OFS**

**Communio Editor**

**Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS**

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

**Multicultural Commission Chair  
Position Vacant**

**Youth/Young Adult Fraternal Animator  
Joe Vodenichar, 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.

**Thoughts for When God Calls  
Us to a New Endeavor in  
Our Vocation**

“[Mary] says almost in a hushed whisper, ‘Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word’ (Lk 1:38). ...

“[S]he has said it. She is now being led by that same Spirit beyond her familiar into a world that will be. She has become a pilgrim, one whose whole life will be faith in the unfolding of God’s promise; and everything now will not be what it seems. It will be more: a sign, a symbol, a reality that contains a deeper, other reality that is its meaning, its purpose, its destination.

“All she needs to do is listen and respond and store up memories in her heart. For there are angels about and there is the Holy Spirit, who has come upon her, freeing her from the bondage of herself and simultaneously making her totally herself. The power of the Most High now overshadows her and she is wholly God’s servant, yet wholly herself.

“Thus begins Mary’s pilgrim way.”

Murray Bodo,  
*The Place We Call Home:  
Spiritual Pilgrimage as a Path to God,*  
pp. 82–83

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