

Immaculata Fraternity Mission Statement:

As members of the Secular Franciscan Order

we seek to live the Gospel with the vision Jesus gave St. Francis to rebuild the Church.

(Ratified at our Council Meeting on April 8, 2019)

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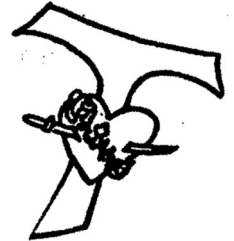
Our Goal for 2025: To visit or call those who are excused and homebound on a regular basis.

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Immaculata Vision ~ June 2025

Immaculata Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order

Riverside, CA / Editor: Lisa M. Boebinger, OFS ~ lisa.sfo@att.net



2025 is the 800th Anniversary of *The Canticum of the Creatures*

Calendar of Events for June 2025:

- 1 – The Ascension of the Lord
- 7 – (1st Saturday) – **Our Fraternity Gathering/meeting at St. Matthews at 10am**
- 8 – Pentecost Sunday
- 9 – Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church
- 13 – St. Anthony of Padua, Doctor of the Church
- 14 – Flag Day
- 15 – The Most Holy Trinity Sunday/Father's Day
- 19 -- Juneteenth
- 21 – Summer Solstice – First day of Summer
- 22 – The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ Sunday /Corpus Christi Sunday
- 24 – Solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist
- 27 – Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
- 28 – Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 30 – (the Last Monday) – **Council Meeting @ 10am @ St. Matthews in Corona**
- 30 – The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church

Looking Ahead to July 2025...

- 4 -- Independence Day ~ Holiday
- 5 – St. Elizabeth of Portugal
- 12 – (1st Saturday) – **Our Fraternity Gathering/meeting at St. Matthews at 10am**
- 15 – St. Bonaventure, Bishop and Church Doctor
- 16 – Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- 28 – (the Last Monday) – **Council Meeting @ 10am @ St. Matthews in Corona**

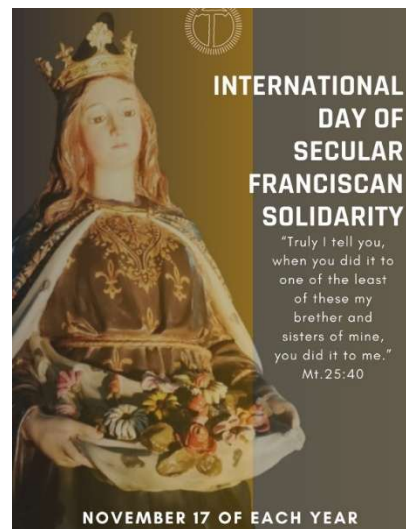
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Birthdays & Profession Anniversaries:

- June Birthdays: 30th – Arsenio Benedicto
- June Profession Ann.: 22nd – Lorraine Cardin, 1978
- 27th – Robert Dak, 1999
- July Birthdays: 3rd – Brenda Rogers
- 22nd – David Burrola
- July Profession Anniversary: (none)

Our Next Fraternity Gathering/Meeting will be on Saturday, July 12th @ 10 am @ St. Matthews.

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(More info coming next month.)

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Minister's Letter

*From the Desk of Your Friendly Minister,
Lisa Boebinger, OFS*

Halloo, my Franciscan Brothers and Sisters in Christ!
I found something I'd like to share with you from Minute Meditations ~ Franciscan Media. Enjoy:

Lead Like St. Francis

When a leader leads as to elevate all their community, a rare thing happens: The leader opens herself or himself up to transformation. It is the quintessential Franciscan experience of going to the margins, beyond the walls, and kissing the leper. We have an abundance of stories from our tradition that teach us time and time again that we are called to a leadership model that demands mutuality, elevating every voice no matter background, education, or even creed as is the case of Francis' meeting with the sultan. Every relationship carries the possibility of growth, including the relationship of leaders and followers.

—from *St. Anthony Messenger's "The Franciscan Nature of Leadership"* by Sara P. Marks

Very Prayerfully yours, Lisa B.

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**From the Formation Desk of Arsenio Benedicto, OFS
Your Friendly Neighborhood Formation Director:
Formation Fridays
(Formation Friday is the work product of the National
Formation Commission of the Secular Franciscan
Order-USA.)**

**Formation Friday: May 2, 2025
Mary Protectress of the Order**

To begin the month of May, we turn our eyes to the Blessed Mother who was so important to St. Francis. Our Rule and Constitutions guide us.

Rule: Article 9: "The Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, was open to his every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of his family.

The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently"

Mary's self-giving and prayer are set up as the primary example of gospel living. Devotion to her has always been a hallmark of the Franciscan calling, both as a way of expressing love for her and as an important way of finding Jesus himself. (Commentary on the Rule—white booklet)

OFS Constitutions: Article 16.1, .2: Mary, Mother of Jesus, is the model of listening to the Word and of faithfulness to vocations. We, like Francis, seek all the gospel virtues realized in her.

The brothers and sisters should cultivate intense love for the most holy virgin, imitation, prayer, and filial abandonment. They should manifest their own devotion with expressions of genuine faith, in forms accepted by the Church.

Mary is the model of fruitful and faithful love for the entire ecclesial community. Secular Franciscans and their fraternities should seek to live the experience of Francis, who made the Virgin the guide of his activity. With her, like the disciples at Pentecost, they should welcome the Spirit to create a community of love.

Questions for Sharing and Discussion

- What qualities of Mary are attractive to you?
- What is Mary's role in our lives and in the life of the Church?
- What is the goal of devotion to Mary? How do you discern whether your devotion to Mary supports your Franciscan life?
- What example does Mary set for us as Secular Franciscans?

Formation Friday: May 9, 2025

St. Francis had great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary because of her role in the Incarnation and the example she set for us. He made her the protectress of the Order and thereby of the entire Franciscan family.

"This simple collection of titles forms a litany of greetings describing Mary's role in the plan of salvation. The manuscript tradition suggests a close tie between this piece and the following, the A Salutation of the Virtues (We will feature these next week.) , and, therefore, presents the Virgin Mary as the model for every Christian who responds to God's virtuous presence in his or her life."

<https://www.franciscantradition.org/francis-of-assisi-early-documents/the-saint/writings-of-francis/the-undated-writings/a-salutation-of-the-blessed-virgin-mary/179-fa-ed-1-page-163>

A Salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1Hail, O Lady,
Holy Queen,
Mary, holy Mother of God,
Who are the Virgin made Church, a
2chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven
whom he consecrated with His most holy beloved Son
and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,

3in whom there was and is
all fullness of grace and every good.

4Hail His Palace!

Hail His Tabernacle!

Hail His Dwelling!

5Hail His Robe!

Hail His Servant!

Hail His Mother!

6And hail all You holy virtues

which are poured into the hearts of the faithful
through the grace and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit,
that from being unbelievers,
You may make them faithful to God.

Please read the references to Mary above. Read through once. Then prayerfully consider each word and sentence a second time.

- According to the phrases St. Francis used to describe the Blessed Mother, what do we learn about how he thought of her?

- Choose four words or phrases that touch you deeply. Spend some time thinking about why you chose those words.

- What does this Salutation, tell us about how St. Francis prayed?

- How do you include the Blessed Mother in your prayers each day? What do you say to her?

- Personal challenge: See if you can write some short phrases/praises of the Blessed Mother that are personal to you.

Formation Friday: May 16, 2025

What is at the CORE of Franciscan life and spirituality?

Take a look at what was important to St. Francis. There you will find a good roadmap. The words and ideas below are exemplified by our Seraphic Father. Have you noticed how often they are repeated in initial and ongoing formation? (Not necessarily in order of importance.)

- **The INCARNATION**— the CRIB--we think of the humility of God, of His self-emptying. Francis was in awe of the Incarnation. Meditate on the story of Francis creating the first Nativity scene at Greccio.

- **The CROSS** – is the sign of God's love made concrete. What do we see/experience when we GAZE on the cross? Meditate on Francis's experiences with the Cross of Christ.

- **The EUCHARIST- CHALICE/CIBORIUM** -- "O sublime humility! O humble sublimity! The Lord of the universe, God and the Son of God, so humbles Himself that for our salvation He hides Himself under an ordinary piece of bread!" (St. Francis-Letter to the Entire Order)

- **TRINITY** Franciscan life focuses on the Trinity. Francis saw that God is so generous that his love not only flows among the persons of the Trinity, it overflows to us. And we participate in the life of the Trinity.

- **CONTEMPLATION** – We spend time with Jesus, and we LISTEN; we desire not only to imitate him. Our goal is to be TRANSFORMED so that we are like him from the inside out.

- **CONVERSION/METANOIA** - We are people of penance- This means that we strive for daily spiritual improvements and changes that will bring us closer to Christ. "Let us begin, for up to now, we have done little..." (St. Francis quoted in The Life of Blessed Francis: FA:ED, vol. 2, p. 640 by St. Bonaventure)

- **CREATION/CREATURES** – God is absolute LOVE, BEING AND CREATIVITY. Francis saw all creation as being marked with the imprint of the Father. Creation is God's great gift and is dependent on Him to exist.

- **RELATIONSHIP**- Francis saw the relationship of the Father and the Son through the love of the Holy Spirit. We

are in relationship with God, our brothers and sisters and with all of creation - UNIVERSAL KINSHIP.

- **FRATERNITY** springs from the relationship we have with God, our brothers and sisters and all creation. "The Lord gave me some brothers..." (St. Francis)

- **CHARISM** - Like St. Francis, we strive to make Christ present in the world by living the Gospel in HUMILITY and SIMPLICITY. As Secular Franciscans, we do this while living in the world. "The Rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this..." (OFS Rule: Article 4)

- **SCRIPTURE** - In order to live the Gospel, we need to make it part of our lives through reading, meditation and study. "...going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel." (OFS Rule: Article 4)

- **TRANSFORMATION** - We use the gifts God has given us to become more Christlike. The Divine Spark never changes. We cooperate with the grace given us, and we become conformed to Christ.

- **PRAYER** - none of this is possible without prayer. We pray together, we pray alone, we pray with our voices, we pray silently and without words. (Our prayer is liturgical, personal and communal)

Share with your fraternity—perhaps over the course of a few months—how each aspect of Franciscan spirituality affects you. How do they affect your fraternity? How can they be highlighted personally and in your fraternity?

Formation Friday: May 23, 2025

The Little Flowers of St. Francis FA:ED, vol. 3, 566 (FA:ED=Francis of Assisi: Early Documents)

(The background quotes below come from a much longer introduction to the Little Flowers as found on the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition website. You can read all the chapters mentioned and many more at that same link.)

About the "Little Flowers:"

- "The popularity of these preachers [the friars] and the curiosity of the people may well have inspired what quickly became known as The Little Flowers of Saint Francis."

- "Written between 1328 and 1343 by Hugolino of Monte Giorgio and an unknown collaborator, the Actus Beati Francisci et sociorum ejus [The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions] was a collection of "little flowers" or anecdotes about Francis and his first brothers."

- "Many of the stories were rooted in both the written and oral Franciscan tradition."

- "In a sense, the Little Flowers epitomized much of the Franciscan hagiography of the fourteenth century." (Hagiographies have been written from the 2nd century to instruct and edify readers and glorify the saints.)

- Read the complete introduction to the Little Flowers and all of the stories at the link below.

<https://franciscantradition.org/francis-of-assisi-early-documents/the-prophet/the-little-flowers-of-saint-francis/2467-fa-ed-3-page-566>

The titles of some of the more famous stories about Francis and Clare found in the "Little Flowers" are:

- +Chapter 8: "O Brother Leo, write that here and in this is perfect joy." [FA:ED, vol. 3, 579]

- +Chapter 10: "Why after you? Why after you?" (Bro. Masseo to St. Francis) [FA:ED, vol. 3, 583]

- +Chapter 15: How Saint Clare ate with Saint Francis and his brother companions in Saint Mary of the Angels. [FA:ED, vol. 3, 590]

- +Chapter 16: How Saint Francis, counseled by Saint Clare and holy brother Sylvester to preach and convert many people, formed the Third Order, preached to the birds, and made the swallows remain silent. [FA:ED, vol. 3, 591]

- +Chapter 21: The story of the Wolf of Gubbio [FA:ED, vol. 3, 601]

- +Chapter 24: How Saint Francis converted to the faith the Sultan of Babylon and the prostitute who invited him to sin. [FA:ED, vol. 3, 605]

- +Chapter 33: How Saint Clare, at the Pope's command, blessed the bread that was on the table; and on every loaf there appeared the sign of the cross. [FA:ED, vol. 3, 624]

- +Chapter 35: How Saint Clare while she was ill was miraculously carried to the church of Saint Francis on the night of the feast of Christmas and heard the office there. [FA:ED, vol. 3, 626]

Artwork on the slide - Josep Benlliure

For discussion or to comment on in your journal:

- + How do the stories of the lives of Francis and Clare and their miracles inspire you in your life as a Secular Franciscan?

- + How do these stories line up with biographies of Francis and Clare that you have read?

- + What is the purpose of hagiography?

*Submitted by Your Friendly Neighborhood Formation Director,
Arsenio Benedicto, OFS.*

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JPIC OFS-USA

Matthew 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

OFS Rule 15: 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.

St. Padre Pio, OFM, Cap.: Don't let injustice get you down - Justice will triumph.



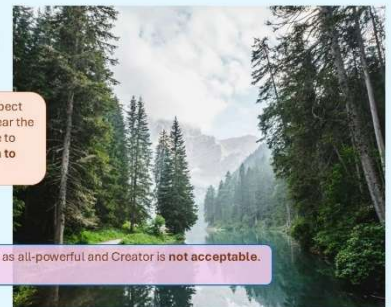
Secular Franciscans of St. Felipe de Jesus Fraternity work with Catholic Charity workers supplying food to the needy in Laredo, Texas. Source: St. Felipe de Jesus Fraternity (Laredo, Texas).

Psalm 19:1: "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims the works of his hands."

OFS Rule 18: [Secular Franciscans] should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which "bear the imprint of the Most High," and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship.

Laudato Si, 76: A spirituality which forgets God as all-powerful and Creator is not acceptable. -- Pope Francis

Image: Stock clipart of globe.



2016 Photo: Lago di Braies by Luca Brusa on Unsplash. This is a natural lake in the Prags Dolomites in South Tyrol, Italy.

Luke 1:49: "...all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and Holy is His name."

OFS Rule 9: [The Virgin Mary] was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of his family. Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently.

From Pope Francis: "Our Lady never points to herself, she points to Jesus, and that's what Marian piety is." (Spoken at a weekly general audience, 13 November 2024)

Image: Stock image of rosary beads.



Image: Detail | Ceiling of the Assumption of Mary in Santa Maria Immacolata a via Veneto, Rome | photo by Livioandronico

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**From the JPIC Desk of Patricia Grace, OFS
Regional JPIC Article for June, 2025**

Monthly JPIC Letter

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ and in St. Francis,
May the Lord Give You Peace.

Let us join our Franciscan voices in prayer for our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV.

I would appreciate your forwarding the attached reflection to all of our members. Please consider using it also at your gatherings for a few minutes' reflection or announcement. What a wonderful collective Franciscan voice for our new Pope.

Many blessings.
Peace and All Good, Patricia Grace

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Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation June 2025

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

On May 8, 2025, the Papal Conclave named Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost to become our new Pope. We know him now as Pope Leo XIV. May we join in prayer for our new Pope as he takes on his duties and responsibilities to lead our church, oversee its beautiful teachings, and serve as the spiritual guide to the Catholic world and beyond.

Compassionate, Loving Action

May we join together to learn more about Pope Leo XIV so we can support his work with more knowledge and strength. We know he was born in Chicago, graduated from Villanova University, studied at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, traveled and served throughout the world, most notably in Peru, became the first Pope from the United States, and the first Augustinian Pope. We know, however, sisters and brothers, that these are just the skeletal facts of a life lived in complete service to our Lord. May we learn more, study more, and continue to pray for Pope Leo as he takes on his duties. Then let us go out into our communities and tell the good news!



Let Us Pray

Lord, source of eternal life and truth, give to your shepherd a spirit of courage and right judgment, a spirit of knowledge and love. By governing with fidelity those entrusted to his care, may he, as successor to the Apostle Peter and Vicar of Christ, build your Church into a sacrament of unity, love and peace for all the world. Amen. <https://www.ncregister.com/>



Let Us Sing

The City of God by Dan Schutte was played to introduce Pope Leo. May we as a Franciscan family join in song. <https://youtu.be/8yEYOY9nUZI> This video on You Tube is beautiful and inspiring. May we pray, act, and sing as we carry God's Hope and Love into the world



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Centenary Celebrations

This will be the 3rd year of the four-year celebration of milestones in the life of St. Francis. The entire Franciscan family is celebrating the following events:

2025: The Canticle of the Creatures

2026: The Easter of St. Francis

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Let's Get to Know the Saints

(Catholic saints are holy people and human people who lived extraordinary lives. Each saint the Church honors responded to

God's invitation to use his or her unique gifts. God calls each one of us to be a saint.) Sometimes I use another saint for the month.

Losing (and Finding) Jesus Saint Anthony of Padua A.D. 1195–1231

If you've ever lost your car keys or wallet, there's a good chance you've prayed to this saint.

His name is Saint Anthony of Padua. But his life was not dedicated to helping people find lost items. It was dedicated to helping lost people find Jesus.



Anthony was born in Lisbon, Portugal, but his desire to meet Saint Francis of Assisi and join his order brought him to Italy. Once a Franciscan, Anthony went about serving the poor and sick. He cared first for their physical needs. Then he would remind them that Jesus too had no possessions, and he would begin to preach the Gospel.

Anthony is also an official Doctor of the Church—meaning his intellectual insights have greatly informed our understanding of theology. But one of his most meaningful contributions was to make the complex theology of the Scriptures accessible to the common people. He used simple, relatable analogies to explain the teachings of Jesus. Using this approach, Anthony brought a remarkable number of lost people back to Jesus.

At this point, you might be asking, "So why is he the patron saint of lost things?"

This is the story: Anthony had a book of psalms that he absolutely loved. One day, a monk stole the book and left the Franciscan community. Anthony prayed with all his might for its return, and soon the monk was struck by immense guilt and brought the book back.

Soon after Saint Anthony of Padua's death, people began praying to him whenever they deeply desired the return of a lost item. And this devotion broadened over the centuries.

But the greater lesson of Saint Anthony's life is that he helped lost people find Jesus. And that is what we are called to do as well, even if it is helping ourselves find Jesus after we have lost him.

We lose Jesus in our lives all the time. We wander away from Jesus all the time. We're either not even aware of it, or we do it on purpose.

Our task then is to find Jesus again. He is always waiting for us to return. All we have to do is say, "Jesus, here I am, and I need you." We can go to a church. We can talk to a priest. Or we can call up a trusted friend who is firm in their faith.

And if we need that extra bit of help, we can turn to Saint Anthony of Padua.

Saint Anthony, pray for us!

WHERE IN MY LIFE HAVE I LOST JESUS AND HOW CAN

**I FIND HIM AGAIN?
WHO ELSE IN MY
LIFE CAN I HELP
FIND JESUS?**

**I will keep finding
Jesus again, and again,
and again.**



*First class relic of
Anthony displayed at
the National Shrine of
St. Anthony of Padua
and Friary
([Cincinnati, Ohio](https://www.cincinnati.ohio))*

Feast Day: June 13
 Patron Saint of: Lost Things, Miracles, Travelers, Finding One's Spouse, Poverty, Sterility, Sailors, Fishermen, Swineherds, Mail Carriers
 Symbols: Lily, Book, Tonsure, Holding the Infant Jesus, Mule
 Canonized: May 30, 1232
 Canonized By: Pope Gregory IX

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Please keep in your prayers:

(If you are in need of prayers, please email me at lisa.sfo@att.net and I'll add your intentions to our list below:)
 and please add to your Prayer List the following:

Feb. 23, 2025: Please pray for the **repose of the soul** of **Ray Hardwick** and to keep his family in your prayers for peace and consolation.

February 2025: And please keep in your prayers Lorraine Cardin, who is not doing too well at this time.

February 2025: Sekoia Spencer continues to need prayers for dizziness. She has gotten a blood test for cancer. She is diagnosed with monoclonal gammopathy. Monoclonal gammopathy is a condition where an abnormal protein (called a monoclonal protein or M protein) is found in the blood.

Jan. 27, 2025: Arsenio Benedicto's wife Christine needs prayers for the Lord to guide the surgeon's hands for a successful surgery and full recovery. Surgery within the next 2 days. Neurovascular surgery near her eye. **Update** on Christine: Surgery was a **SUCCESS!** Praise God! **Update:** Christine had the other eye done and it was also a success. Now she needs prayers for her eyesight to get better after the 2 surgeries.

Oct. 7, 2024: Please pray for Bob Murray and his wife **Diane**, both are having multiple health issues.

May 23, 2024: Bruce McAdams needs prayers for his back and feet pain, and his diabetes.

July 2024, Please continue to keep in your prayers **Brenda Rogers and her family. Hopefully Brenda can come back to our Fraternity Gatherings again soon.**

Sept. 2024, please pray for **David Burrola**, who is in the process of transferring to the Padre Pio Fraternity in Moreno Valley, which is where he has moved to.

March 2023 ~ Please continue to pray for **Jim Rogers** (who has dementia), and **Mickie Rogers** as his care giver.

Jan. 13, 2023, ~ Please pray for **Camille Page's son, Joseph**, who is facing serious incarceration time.

May 2023: Our Sister Gloria Torres' Intentions: For all my family and grandchildren, peace in the world, for all our SFO members, for my brother Mario and my sister Bertha, that just died this past week, for the end of Ukraine's war by Russia. Come Lord Jesus come, for without you we perish. Amen

Please pray for our **Brother Raul Bosque', OFS.** He is having health issues and is working with the doctors to find out what they are. Hopefully, he can come back to our Fraternity Gatherings, since we're gathering at St. Matthews in Corona.

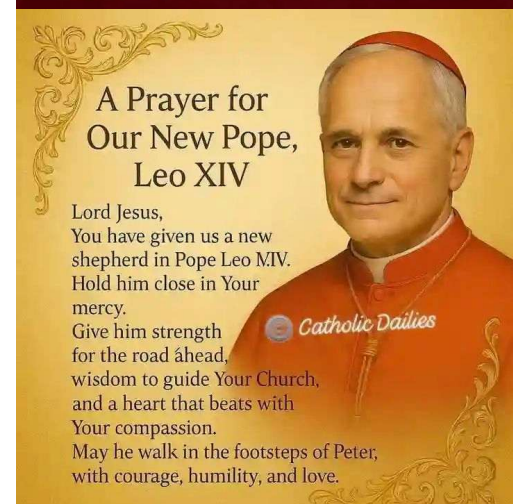
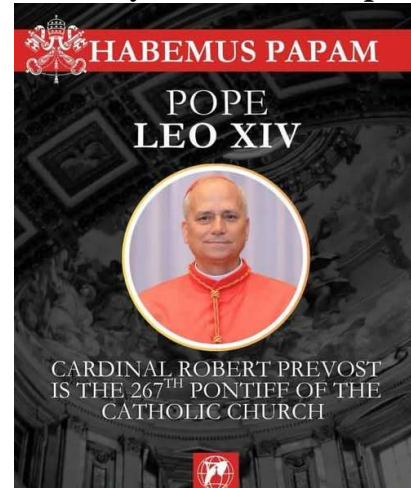
Please pray for **Sekoia Spencer's sons** Darius and Jason. **And please** continue to keep your **Fraternity brothers and sisters** in your prayers along with their intentions.

AND ... Have you prayed for your Franciscan Prayer Partner lately?

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We have a new Pope!

Pope Leo XIV
The very 1st American Pope



Pope Leo XIV explains his choice of name:

"... I chose to take the name **Leo XIV**. There are different reasons for this, but mainly because Pope **Leo XIII** in his historic Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* addressed the social question in the context of the first great industrial revolution. In our own day, the Church offers to everyone the treasury of her social teaching in response to another industrial revolution and to developments in the field of artificial intelligence that pose new challenges for the defense of human dignity, justice and labor."

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~ Holy Months ~

June: The Sacred Heart of Jesus – The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the revelation of God's immense love for us. It is depicted as a fiery furnace,

pierced, but beating with love. It is not a mere symbol, but a true physical reality.

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And now, a list of some of our up-coming Events for 2025. Please take a moment to peruse this list and see what topic you have signed up to present at our Fraternity Gatherings:

Our Ongoing Formation Book and the Chapter Presenter Assignments:

For our Fraternity Gatherings, from the book: ***A Knight and A Lady*** by Bret Thoman, OFS:

July 12th, Chapter 14: Evangelization: **Joice Quinsaat, OFS**

August 2nd, Epilogue: That we might follow His footprints: **Lisa B., OFS**

(The next book we will use for our **Fraternity Ongoing Formation** at our Gatherings is: ***"Franciscan Prayer – Awakening to oneness with God"*** by Ilia Delio, OSF, beginning Sept. 6th.)

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SECULAR FRANCISCANS SUMMER PROGRAM
"The Franciscan Way of Bold Hope: Caring When It's Hardest to Care"

David B. Couturier, O.F.M. Cap., Director of the Franciscan Institute

Sponsored by the Alma Kraus Endowment

June 14, 21, 28, 2025

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (EST) **2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Pacific Time**

All sessions will be held by Zoom

A Zoom link will be provided to all those who register for this program.



We are living in a time when the great democracies of the world are pulling back from their great commitment to care for those who are most vulnerable in society today. Some have called it a "crisis of care." As Secular Franciscans, we have been caring directly and communally for the poor since the

Order was first founded by Francis of Assisi in the 13th century. This three-part series will review the history and spirituality of Franciscan "caring when it's hardest to care."

The Zoom presentations will be:

1. "The Courage to Care: Embracing Hope in Difficult Times"

Exploring the Secular Franciscan call to love and serve even when faced with suffering, division, or despair.

2. "Wounded Healers: A Franciscan Theology of Disability and Care"

Seeing disability through the lens of Franciscan spirituality—how vulnerability, interdependence, and dignity shape a compassionate practice of care.

3. "Franciscan Transformative Care: Rebuilding Communities of Hope"

Drawing from the Franciscan tradition to create healing, inclusive, and hope-filled communities, especially in times of crisis and marginalization.

A Zoom link will be provided to all those who register for this program. [Click here to Register for](#)

the "Franciscan Way of Bold Hope: Caring When It Is Hardest To Care"

With Peace, Layna

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Layna Maher, OFS

Chair, National Formation Commission

Formation Director, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Region

Minister, St. Thomas More Fraternity, Fonda, NY

Listen - Discern - Go Forth National Theme 2022-2025

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Do No Harm

Reflect

I was looking forward to meeting a friend at a volleyball game. It had been a disturbing week. When I looked up in the stands, there he was chatting with the source of my disturbance. So I climbed the bleachers, and joined them. Later, I asked how he could sit next to the person we had both been disappointed in: "I'm a Methodist— 'Do no harm.'"

Pray

Merciful God,

Thank you for my friend,

who models for me how to live by the guiding pillars of his faith. When I am hurt or angry, help me go inward to draw strength from my own core beliefs, so I, too, can "do no harm"—or better yet, actually forgive.

Act

My friend shared with me two other "simple rules" of Methodism: "Do good" and "Stay in love with God." Spend time journaling or meditating to rediscover the "rules" you follow as a person of faith.

Today's Pause+Pray was written by Elizabeth Bookser Barkley, PhD

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A New Perspective on Memorial Day

Reflect

Once a year we set aside a day to honor those who have sacrificed their lives as part of their military service. We honor those who died in combat but we should also honor those whose minds and spirits were so broken by war that they took their lives. Many veterans take offense when someone says "Happy Memorial Day". For them it is a day of sad remembrance, not a day of celebration. It is a day for grieving.

Pray

Lord, this Memorial Day let me pause and pray for the families of those who died in combat or took their lives because of combat.

Grant them comfort and the knowledge that their loved ones are at peace in a place where there is no more war.

Act

If you know any veterans, rather than wishing them a happy Memorial Day, give them the gift of listening if they wish to speak of their lost comrades.

Today's Pause+Pray was written by Richard B. Patterson, PhD.

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**Stay safe and be healthy.
Hope to see you next Month!
God Bless you, always.**



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