

This is what I want!

¡Esto es lo que quiero!

Joy of Francis

이것은 내가 원하는 것입니다

Đây là điều tôi muốn!

*Secular Franciscan Order — St. Francis Region #52 — Southern California
Winter Edition — 2025*

St. Francis Regional News! Minister's Message

Once again, we are starting a new liturgical year, beginning with the season of Advent – the time of preparation for the great feast of Christmas. Not only is it a time for decorating with lights, ornaments, and wreaths, or buying or making gifts for our loved ones, but a perfect time to contemplate what makes it such a great feast. St. Francis called Christmas the “feast of feasts,” and for good reason.

We may often think about the nativity scene of the Holy Family with the infant Jesus in the manger surrounded by animals. And we honor the feast by putting up nativity scenes in our homes, thanks to St. Francis and the first celebration of Christmas with the forerunner of modern day creches at Greccio 802 years ago. But we can go much deeper than that when examining what we are really celebrating – the Incarnation.

The almighty Lord and God created not only the earth and all its creatures, but the entire vast universe, with His Word.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. (John 1:1-3)

And when the time was right, God sent that Word to live among his people.

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us,
and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

We may have heard these words dozens of times in our lifetimes, but have we really given it much thought? Can we even grasp the magnitude of God taking on human form to live among us?

Jesus didn't enter the world as a fully developed human being, or as a conqueror or earthly ruler as many expected. He came as a newborn infant just like all of us, that needed to be cared for, loved, and nurtured. He needed to be fed and clothed and taught lessons, just like us. And although He is God, the Word made flesh, He felt all the feelings we feel, both physically and emotionally. Imagine that! God, who created the universe, choosing to live as one of us – the created! Something to ponder this Advent.

Happy New (liturgical) Year!

Caroline

Minister's Message Translations

Mensaje del Ministro

Una vez más, empezamos un nuevo año litúrgico, que comienza con el Adviento – tiempo de preparación para la gran fiesta de la Navidad. No es solamente un tiempo para decorar con luces, adornos y guirnaldas, o para comprar o hacer regalos a nuestros seres queridos, sino también es el tiempo perfecto para reflexionar acerca de lo que la hace una gran fiesta. San Francisco llama a la Navidad la “fiesta de fiestas,” y con buena razón.

A menudo quizá imaginamos la escena de la Natividad de la Sagrada Familia con Jesús infante en el pesebre rodeado de animales. Y hacemos honor a esta fiesta colocando nacimientos en nuestros hogares, gracias a San Francisco y a la primera celebración de Navidad con el precursor de los pesebres modernos en Greccio hace 802 años. Pero podemos ir mucho más allá cuando reflexionamos en lo que realmente estamos celebrando – la Encarnación.

El Señor Dios todopoderoso creó no solamente la tierra y sus criaturas, sino el universo entero, con Su Palabra.

En el principio era la Palabra, y la Palabra estaba con Dios,

Y la Palabra era Dios. El estaba en el principio con Dios.

Todas las cosas fueron creadas por El, y sin El nada fue creado. (Juan 1:1-3)

Y cuando se llegó el tiempo, Dios envió a esa Palabra para que viviera entre su pueblo.

Y la Palabra se hizo carne e hizo su morada entre nosotros,

Y vimos su gloria, gloria como la del Hijo único del Padre, llena de gracia y verdad.

(Juan 1:14)

Quizá hayamos escuchado estas palabras docenas de veces a lo largo de nuestra vida, pero ¿realmente las hemos meditado? ¿Podemos incluso comprender la magnitud de que Dios tomara naturaleza humana para vivir entre nosotros?

Jesús no vino al mundo como un ser humano plenamente desarrollado, o como un conquistador o gobernante terrenal como muchos esperaban. El vino como un recién nacido al igual que todos nosotros, que necesitaba se le cuidara, amara, y contemplara. Necesitó que se le alimentara, vistiera y educara, al igual que nosotros. Y aunque El es Dios, el Verbo hecho carne, sintió todos los sentimientos que nosotros sentimos, tanto físicos como emocionales. ¡Imaginen eso! Dios, el creador del Universo, eligiendo vivir como uno de nosotros – ¡los creados! Algo para meditar durante este Adviento.

Feliz Año Nuevo (litúrgico)!

Caroline

Thư Ngỏ của Trường Phục Vụ

Một lần nữa, chúng ta lại bắt đầu một năm phụng vụ mới, khởi đầu với Mùa Vọng – thời gian chuẩn bị cho đại lễ Giáng Sinh. Đây không chỉ là thời điểm để trang hoàng với đèn màu, đồ trang trí và những vòng hoa, hay mua hoặc làm quà tặng cho những người thân yêu, mà còn là thời khắc tuyệt vời để suy niệm về điều làm cho ngày lễ này trở nên trọng đại. Thánh Phanxicô gọi lễ Giáng Sinh là “lễ của các lễ,” và quả thật có lý do chính đáng.

Chúng ta thường nghĩ đến cảnh Giáng Sinh với Thánh Gia và Hài Nhi Giêsu nằm trong máng cỏ, chung quanh là súc vật. Và chúng ta tôn kính lễ này bằng cách dựng máng cỏ trong gia đình, nhờ Thánh Phanxicô và lần cử hành Giáng Sinh đầu tiên với mô hình của hang đá ngày nay tại Greccio cách đây 802 năm. Nhưng khi suy niệm điều chúng ta thật sự cử hành – Mầu Nhiệm Nhập Thể – chúng ta có thể đi sâu hơn nữa.

Thiên Chúa toàn năng không chỉ tạo dựng trái đất và mọi sinh vật, mà còn cả vũ trụ bao la, chỉ bằng Lời của Người.

*Thuở ban đầu đã có Ngôi Lời, và Ngôi Lời vẫn hướng về Thiên Chúa,
và Ngôi Lời là Thiên Chúa. Người vẫn ở với Thiên Chúa ngay từ nguyên thủy.
Nhờ Người mà muôn vật được tạo thành, và không có Người thì chẳng có gì được tạo thành.
(Gioan 1:1-3)*

Và khi thời gian đã tới, Thiên Chúa đã sai chính Ngôi Lời ấy đến sống giữa dân Người.

*Ngôi Lời đã trở nên người phàm và cư ngụ giữa chúng ta. Chúng tôi đã được nhìn thấy vinh quang của Người, vinh quang mà Chúa Cha ban cho Người, là Con Một đầy tràn ân sủng và sự thật.
(Gioan 1:14)*

Có thể chúng ta đã nghe những lời này hàng chục lần trong đời, nhưng liệu chúng ta đã thực sự suy ngẫm về chúng? Chúng ta có thể hiểu được phần nào sự cao cả của việc Thiên Chúa mang lấy thân phận con người để sống giữa chúng ta không?

Chúa Giêsu không bước vào thế gian như một con người trưởng thành, hay như một vị chinh phục hay vua trần thế như nhiều người mong đợi. Người đến như một hài nhi sơ sinh, giống như tất cả chúng ta, cần được chăm sóc, yêu thương và dưỡng dục. Người cần được nuôi ăn, mặc áo và dạy dỗ, giống hệt chúng ta. Và dù Người là Thiên Chúa, là Ngôi Lời đã trở nên xác phàm, Người cũng cảm nhận tất cả những gì chúng ta cảm nhận, cả thể lý lẫn cảm xúc. Hãy tưởng tượng điều đó! Thiên Chúa – Đấng tạo dựng vũ trụ – lại chọn sống như một trong những tạo vật của Người! Một điều thật đáng suy niệm trong Mùa Vọng này.

Chúc Mừng Năm (phụng vụ) Mới!

Caroline

봉사자 메세지

곧 성탄 대축일을 준비하는 대림 시기로 시작하는 새로운 전례해를 맞이하게 됩니다. 이 시기는 단순히 집을 장식하고, 사랑하는 이들을 위해 선물을 준비하거나, 화환을 다는 것만이 아니라, 이 축제가 왜 그렇게 위대한지 깊이 묵상할 수 있는 완벽한 시간이기도 합니다. 이러한 이유로 성 프란치스코 성인은 성탄을 ‘축제 중의 축제’라고 하셨습니다.

우리는 종종 아기 예수님께서 구유에 누워 계시고, 동물들에 둘러싸인 성가정 구유 장면을 떠올립니다. 성 프란치스코 성인과 802년 전 그레치오의 현재 성탄구유의 시작인 성탄 축제 덕분에, 집에 성탄구유를 장식하며 이 축일을 기립니다. 하지만 깊이 생각하면 우리가 진정 기념하는 것은 육화임을 깨닫게 됩니다.

전능하신 하느님께서는 땅과 그 안의 모든 피조물뿐만 아니라, 말씀으로 광대한 우주 전체를 창조하셨습니다.

한처음에 말씀이 계셨다. 말씀은 하느님과 함께 계셨는데 말씀은 하느님이셨다. 그분께서는 한처음에 하느님과 함께 계셨다. 모든 것이 그분을 통하여 생겨났고 그분 없이 생겨난 것은 하나도 없다. (요한 1,1-3)

때가 되자 하느님께서는 그 말씀을 당신 백성 가운데로 보내셨습니다.

말씀이 사람이 되시어 우리 가운데 사셨다. 우리는 그분의 영광을 보았다. 은총과 진리가 충만하신 아버지의 외아드님으로서 지니신 영광을 보았다. (요한 1,14)

이 말씀을 여러 번 들었지만, 정말 깊이 생각해 본 적이 있나요? 하느님께서 인간의 모습으로 우리 가운데 오셨다는 그 엄청난 신비를 우리가 이해할 수 있을까요?

예수님께서는 완전히 성장한 어른이나 많은 이들이 기대했던 승리자나 세상의 통치자로 오신 것이 아니라, 우리 모두처럼 돌봄과 사랑, 양육이 필요한 갓난아기로 오셨습니다. 우리와 같이 먹이고 입히고 가르침을 받으셨습니다. 그분은 하느님이시며, 사람이 되신 말씀이지만, 우리와 똑같이 육체적, 감정적 모든 감정을 느끼셨습니다. 상상해 보세요! 우주를 창조하신 하느님께서 피조물인 우리와 같이 사는 것을 선택하셨다는 사실을요. 이번 대림 시기에 깊이 묵상해 볼 만한 주제입니다.

새 전례해를 축하합니다!

Caroline

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation

SAVE THE DATE

LET US INCLUDE IN OUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS:

THE SEVEN GOALS OF LAUDATO SI'

JANUARY 7, 2026

6:30 to 8:00

ZOOM

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ and in Saint Francis,

May the Lord Give You Peace. May we join together in prayer as we begin our Advent reflections and practices in preparation for our joyous celebration of the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Praise Be to God.

Many still follow the ancient tradition of making New Year's resolutions. How beautiful it would be to join our Franciscan hearts this year in our resolves, and support and encourage each other as we strive to live our Franciscan charisms more deeply.

Our Lord encouraged His Holiness, Pope Francis, to follow his namesake, Saint Francis, and reach out to the whole world to hear the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor. The result was the wonderful encyclical *Laudato Si'* published in 2015. As we commemorate its tenth year, may we honor it through our personal and communal resolutions for the coming year.

We have invited the Care for Creation Team for the Diocese of San Diego to present to us The Seven Goals of Laudato Si' –

Opening, Patricia Grace

Response to the Cry of the Earth, Brother James Lockman

Response to the Cry of the Poor, Jim DeHarpport

Ecological Education, Bob Gilleskie

Ecological Economics, Christina Slentz, Director of the Care for Creation Team

Ecological Spirituality, Margaret McCahill

Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles, Jorge Mendoza

Community Building and Resilience, Father Emmet Farrell

Summary and Closing Prayer, Daniel Sullivan

A Zoom invitation and flyer will be sent to our Ministers in the New Year. Please mark your calendars now. And, dear sisters and brothers, please feel free to invite anyone you think would like to join us in this Franciscan endeavor.

Peace and Blessings,

Patricia Grace, ofs

JPIC Animator

St. Francis Region

Praised be You, My Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth

Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants

Capuchin Franciscan Identity

Our world today is a little more complicated than it was in 1528. Ever since the discovery of electricity our world has been progressing faster and faster. The cars are faster; technology is faster. It's no wonder that this upcoming generation struggles with identity. I remember back in the late 70's and early 80's it seemed strange to hear someone say that they are trying to find themselves. Though in full disclosure I found myself asking God, "Who am I". I remember being caught between who the Kip Ledger was that God created and who the Kip Ledger was that I had created before I joined the Order. I suppose like John Travolta in "Grease" I settled into a little of both. Though I don't ever remember being confused as to what a Capuchin was. I was always pretty confident in that. I'm not saying I was always correct, just confident in my own mind. I hope my understanding has grown over the last 30 years.

I suppose "back in the day" (1528), when the Capuchins first began it was a lot easier. The Capuchins lived the hermetical expression of the Franciscan tradition. After all, St. Francis actually wrote a way of life for Franciscan Hermits. Or was it that easy???

Purgation: Gaze

A Rough Start

The Capuchin Franciscans certainly had a rough start. Our founder, Matteo Da Boscio, was accused of being a deserter from the Observant Franciscans only to be bounced around between the Duchess of Camarino, the Observant Franciscans and the Conventual Franciscans until we finally wrote our own constitutions in 1536. Shortly after our humble beginning three of our founders left the Order, some for the Protestant Reformation. Then we were barely able to get our feet on the ground when in 1563 the Council of Trent forced us into monasticism. It seemed that only by the grace of the Holy Spirit were we able to persevere living in monasteries for the next 400 years. You can still see etched on the side of some of our friaries, "Capuchin Monastery" or even "Capuchin Fathers" as if only priests were Capuchins.

Illumination: Consider

In 1963 when the Vatican II Council explained that we can **now** go back to the original charism of our founder, it would only make sense that there were a lot of feelings, emotions and thoughts going through the hearts and minds of all the Capuchin friars. In the 1960's up through the 1990's there were some friars in protest of what the Capuchins had become during those 400 years, as well as a lot of experimentation as to what this new expression of our life should be.

Since the 1960's we have definitely come to an understanding that we are not monastic. Though we are still defining the nuance that, while we are not monastic, how do we express a heightened emphasis on the contemplative aspect of our Franciscan charism? After Vatican II we have

reevaluated our constitutions a few times. Since the year 2000 there has been a settling of the dust. Little by little we seem to be more focused on further developing specific aspects of our Capuchin identity.

In the last 30 to 40 years, here in the United States, there has been more of a focus of “being with the poor”. While some provinces have always participated in this aspect of our charism, some still find it a challenge to make this shift. All of the provinces in the US are continually redefining and discerning what this means for us. How do we nuance our approach to the ministries that we have, which ministries do we let go of, which ministries do we keep, and what new ministries do we move into given the complexities of the lower number of vocations and how will this all play out in the future as we further discern collaboration between the provinces.

Unification: Contemplation

Our Identity In Christ

So, are we totally confused about our identity yet? I believe there is a divine light shining the way for our Capuchin Franciscan Order. As I had mentioned in a past article, you don’t have to be a Capuchin to be a Franciscan, but you do have to be a Franciscan to be a Capuchin. First and foremost, as sons of St. Francis, we find our identity in Christ! St. Francis states in the beginning of our Rule, “The Rule and life of the lesser brothers is this: to observe the holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ...” (*Rule of 1223*). How many times have we heard it re-translated in modern times as “**live** the holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ?” The Capuchin Constitutions state, “Therefore, we truly carry on a filial conversation with the Father when we **live** Christ...” (*Cap. Const. 45:5*).

St. Francis formed his whole Rule of life after the Gospels. This is the major difference between the Franciscan approach to religious life and the approach to religious life of the other Orders. While yes, the other Orders also take observing the Gospel seriously, the Rules of St. Benedict and St. Augustine were not formed after the Gospels, they were formed after the Acts of Apostles, the communal life of the first Christian community. (*Acts 2:42-47*). Vita Evangelica vs. Vita Apostolica.

Our Identity as Brother

Because we find our identity in Christ, the reason for everything we do should come from the life of Christ, given to us through the writings of the Gospels. Our identity as brother is modeled after Christ being the “firstborn of many brothers” (*Rms. 8:29*). We are brothers to others when we see Christ in ourselves (*2 Cor. 13:5*), and we are brothers to others when we see Christ in the other. (*Matt. 25:40*)

A few years ago, I was a member of the “Brothers Think Tank”. This is a committee that was put together by one of our own Capuchins, John Pavlik, while he was the director of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. On this committee were brothers from many different Orders of the Catholic Church. Our mission was to help promote the role of a lay brother within the Catholic Church. Many people know what a Priest is and what a Religious Sister is, but oddly enough very few know what a Religious Brother is.

At one of our meetings, a brother from one of the other Orders voice his displeasure with ordained members calling themselves “Brother” . He felt that this took away from his identity as “Brother.” When he said that, it helped me to understand in a deeper way that as a Capuchin Franciscan, when an ordained member calls himself “Brother,” that’s what **gives** me my identity.

Before Vatican II we were commonly referred to as “Capuchin Fathers.” The shift of being known as “Father” to being now known as “Brother”, has emerged over the last 70 years. A major factor has been the change of the role of the Capuchin Lay Brother. Before Vatican II the Capuchins, as did many of the mixed Orders, lived in a two-class system; Capuchin Priests and Lay Brothers. They didn’t pray together - the Priests prayed the Liturgy of the Hours and the Lay Brothers recited a multitude of Our Fathers, even though by the 1900’s most Lay Brothers could certainly read. Priests and Lay Brothers didn’t recreate together. Even if there was only one Lay Brother in the friary, he recreated by himself, then had to clean the Priests recreation room.

Vatican II asked us to go back to the original charism of our founder. Over the last 70 years we have come to a deeper understanding of what that means. As a Capuchin Franciscan it shouldn’t matter whether we are ordained or not; we are all “Brothers”. This is why the generals of our Order refer to themselves, not as Father N., but always as Brother N. Our Capuchin Brother, Cardinal Sean O’Malley, often introduces himself as “Brother Sean”. And as St. Francis stated in his Testament, “And the Lord gave me some **brothers...**” (Test. 14)

Our Identity in Fraternity

Another aspect of Capuchin Franciscan identity that we have focused on lately has been “fraternity.” Fraternity is a huge part of our Capuchin Franciscan charism. Monks don’t live in fraternity; they live in community. Who knew there was a difference, right? In community you are one among many. The Acts of the Apostles talks about forming communal life. However, fraternity is not one among many, but one entering into a more intimate relationship with each friar that they live with, respecting each friar for their own uniqueness and dignity; small fraternities vs. large communities. Four or five Diocesan Priests may live in the same rectory yet never eat or pray together. Jesuits recently received permission from Rome not to have to pray together.

A few years ago, I was on the Chapter Preparation Committee for my province. While in a meeting with the Provincial Council and the Chapter Facilitator (who was an ex-Jesuit), we were discussing how we were going to shape the proposed agenda for the upcoming chapter based on the feedback from the different area gatherings of our province. Mostly the friars from the province were asking for reflections on “fraternity”. When the facilitator realized this, in his frustration he voiced, “No, it’s the mission! The mission is the most important aspect!” At which point I explained to him, “You were a Jesuit, ‘Whatever I can do For the Greater Glory of God!’” (which is the Jesuit moto, “Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam”) I continued, “That’s good, but it’s not us.”

For Franciscans, the mission is extremely important. Without it we are not fully Franciscan. However, fraternity is more important. Why? Going back to our original identity in Christ, Christ lived in fraternity; in the Trinity and fraternity was the first thing Christ established *before* he began his public ministry. And again, I repeat St. Francis’ statement from his Testament, “And the Lord gave me some brothers...” (*Test. 14*)

Action: Imitation

The Upcoming Generation

This upcoming generation seem to have a natural capacity for being “brother”, a deeper yearning for equality. A couple years ago, a young novice voiced his confusion that, while we talk of everyone being brothers, he couldn’t help but notice that there seemed to be a different level between the novices and the staff. While I’m sure now after a few years in formation he has a deeper appreciation for leadership in Franciscan formation, I thought his intent to be quite virtuous. This upcoming generation also seems to have a natural capacity for “fraternity”. They enjoy being with each other and doing things together, almost as if they had a longing for it; much more so than in the past. I also believe that this upcoming generation will challenge us to a deeper sense of prayer and simplicity.

This upcoming generation is also calling us to a deeper sense of authenticity. “Are we who we say we are?” However, let us not confuse “authenticity” with “perfectionism”. I believe all professed friars are living a somewhat authentic Capuchin Franciscan life, each of us in the gifts given to us by God. None of us live it perfectly, especially in the aspect of our charism that we fall short in and require care and patience from our “brothers” as we challenge each other in the continuing growth of our charism.

I am hopeful in the future of the Capuchin Franciscan Order as together we further deepen our Capuchin Franciscan identity, not by what we do, but by who we are and our approach to how we do it. How we minister as *brother*, in *fraternity*, out of our *prayer*, living in *simplicity*, by *living* the Gospel, by *living* Christ!

Kip Ledger, OFM Cap.

Formation

Kimberly McCarthy, OFS

Thank you, Holy Spirit! You showered your gentle guidance down upon those seeking to know more about St. Francis, leading them to the St. Louis the King Fraternity and initial formation. Fifteen people heard your call and answered. Of those 15, eight are in Orientation and seven are in Candidacy with our fraternity at Old Mission Santa Barbara. In addition, one of our fraternity members is assigned to lead a group of eight people at Mission Santa Inez in their formation with hopes of forming their own fraternity.

When those in formation heard the call of the Holy Spirit, they searched in different ways to find a fraternity. One couple called 1-800 FRANCIS looking for the closest fraternity. Another person heard about us from a friend in formation with our fraternity. A notice about the Seculars in our church bulletin got someone else's attention. Personally, in 2018, I found the region's website and sent an email asking what fraternity is near me. I got an email back that day connecting me with Minister Gregg Garrison, OFS. He invited me and my husband to dinner that same night. William Wicks, OFS, a former National Minister, was also a dinner guest! Thank you, Holy Spirit, from all of us searching!

Once people find us, we talk with them about why they are interested in going through formation. One person said that at church, "I had been observing the friars and admired their simplicity and humility." Another person said, "The appeal is a few things. It is the warmth and authenticity of the fraternity as a group. There is a welcoming spirit with a sense of a faith-filled community."

The structure of formation is guided by our Rule, General Constitutions, National Statutes, and Regional Governance Norms. Each formation leader uses that guidance while adding their own creativity to present the formation meetings. For Candidacy formation, I asked each of the seven candidates to choose one of the remaining meetings before profession in the Spring to present a short talk on a Franciscan theme. In addition, the candidate leads everyone in discussion about the chapter in *The Franciscan Journey* for that month. At a recent meeting, one of the candidates created a PowerPoint about YouFra - the worldwide Franciscan-centered youth groups.

Michael Aberle, OFS, is leading the new Orientation group of eight using *The Franciscan Journey*. He first had the group look at the preface which lists that newcomers are invited to become people:

- A) with a Franciscan spirit, perspective and ideals;
- B) with the ability to reflect the gospel in their lives and accept conversion;
- C) with a willingness to accept the OFS as a primary and permanent commitment;
- D) with a desire to build up the Church and the Kingdom of God;
- E) with a sense of Franciscan responsibility for social action;
- F) with a desire for contemplative prayer.

Michael said he sees this “as a guide for how to allow the Holy Spirit to form us as Secular Franciscans in our vocation.”

Lawrence Nichols, OFS is our fraternity member leading the eight people in formation at the Santa Ines Mission in Solvang. The group has sent a letter of request to our regional minister seeking official acceptance as a newly forming group. At their second Saturday of the month meetings, Lawrence uses *The Franciscan Journey* as the primary guide. He asks the members to select their favorite questions from the assigned chapter. Then they discuss the questions together. Lawrence said, “Some of our most memorable moments have come from the generosity and joy of our group - especially when one of the members shared gifts with us from her recent pilgrimage. Moments like these deepen our fellowship and remind us of the beauty of our shared journey.”

The beauty of our shared journey that Lawrence mentions is close to all our hearts in our fraternity. We are truly blessed to have 15 people in initial formation, and to be supporting a newly forming group. Thank you, Holy Spirit!



Are you thinking about going to the 2026 Quinquennial?



The committee that is planning the “Q” realizes that it is more expensive than in the past. They are asking those who may have some difficulty covering the costs to first consult their own fraternity council to see if there are funds available to help them to attend. If there are not, or if more is needed, members of our region may request funds using the “Travel Expense Reimbursement” form found under “Forms” on the region’s website. And if more is still needed, members can apply for a scholarship from OFS-USA. The

application form is available on the national website by clicking on the Quinquennial Congress icon on the home page.

The costs for the “Q” are:

Registration

Early bird - \$550	Through Dec. 31, 2025
Regular - \$650	Jan. 1 – May 31, 2026
Late Owl - \$725	June 1 – June 15, 2026



Easter of St. Francis
Rekindle the Flame

Registration includes 4 dinners, 3 breakfasts and 3 lunches, beginning with dinner on Wednesday, July 29. Meals on Sunday, August 2 are not included. (Travel day)

Hotel rooms

\$169.00 per night. Rooms can be shared for up to 4 people.
(Four nights: \$676 per room.)

Airfare

Costs for flights start at about \$500 round trip.

Applications for “Travel Expense Reimbursement”
must be submitted by **January 17th** to:

Amelia Sandoval
Regional Treasurer
11735 Silver Hawk Dr.
Yucaipa, CA 92399

Applications for scholarships from National are due **May 30, 2026**,
and are found with Quinquennial information on the national website.

Hopefully many members of St. Francis Region will be able to attend this great event!

Fraternity News

Holy Spirit Fraternity, Claremont



Ted Hewitt OFS, Randy Rohrer OFS,
Judith Mussatto OFS, Jaqui Bradley OFS, William Mussatto, OFS

Members of our Fraternity attended the Regional Gathering where we shared our thoughts with members of other English-Speaking Fraternities, on St. Francis's Cantic of the Creatures.

Our Regional Minister, Caroline Yandell, OFS and Fr. Chris Theil, OFM, Cap. presided over the election of a new council. Our new Fraternity Treasurer is Juanito Garlitos, OFS was absent.

We helped Our Lady of the Assumption Parish and Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish to conduct the Blessing of the Animals. This was the 1st time that Our Lady of Guadalupe had the Blessing of the Animals



Maria Rodriquez, OFS, Kristen Rohrer, Randy Rohrer, OFS, Judith Mussatto, OFS, Fr. Mike Montoya (pastor), Bill Mussatto, OFS, Jaqui Bradley, OFS

We also had our annual Renewal of Profession, again at St Margaret Mary Parish. They made us feel very welcome. We followed this with a meal at a local restaurant.

We welcomed Jannine Norvell, OFS who moved here from Washington state. The deciding factor in her move was that our Fraternity meets in the building next to her retirement home. Andora Nguyen was welcomed into Inquiry.

On November 8th, members of the fraternity attended morning Mass together at Our Lady of the Assumption Church and gathered afterwards with some parishioners to pray the Franciscan Crown and remember by name deceased Fraternity members, our family members and those of the parishioners in attendance. Some members concluded the morning in fellowship with a breakfast at a local restaurant.



Randy Rohrer, OFS (vice minister), Fr. Chris Theil, OFM. Cap (Church Witness), Judith Mussatto OFS (Secretary), Bill Mussatto OFS (Minister), Caroline Yandell OFS (presider), Margie Rodriguez OFS (Formation Director), Chris Figueroa OFS (Councilor)



Maria Ester Rodriquez, OFS, Maria Rodriquez, OFS, Myrna Kildare, OFS, Fr. Eugene Eburuche, Diana Cerda, OFS, Juanito Garlitos, OFS, Randy Rohrer, OFS

St. Clare Fraternity (K), Rowland Heights

New councilors elected on Sunday 7/1/2025.



Pictured: SA John Bosco Chong, Formation director Via Choi, Secretary Scorastica Byun, Minister Paul Oh, REC Margie Rodriguez, Councilor Julie Oh, Vice Minister Dominica Lee, Councilor Jemma Cha, Treasure Elizabeth Kim, REC Maria Rodriguez, REC Paul Lee.



Immaculate Conception Fraternity, San Diego

The Canticle of Creation as Franciscan Wisdom Text **By Becky Taylor, OFS, Immaculate Conception Fraternity, San Diego**

In the last few months, our fraternity has welcomed three people into Initial Formation. All three are eager to grow in their love of the Lord and our Franciscan spirituality.

Since February, with a few detours for timely topics, our ongoing formations have centered around *The Admonitions*. Various formators have researched and presented three or four *Admonitions* nearly each month, and our brothers and sisters have had the opportunity to dive more deeply into them, discuss them in small groups, and bring them from their heads into their hearts. We continue with our study through this February, when our initial study of *The Admonitions* will conclude.



Brother Keith Warner, O.F.M

Every September, the Immaculate Conception Fraternity presents a Day of Reflection. This year, Brother Keith Warner, OFM, shared the topic, “How *Laudato Si* Helps Us Live *The Canticle of Creation*.” Calling *Laudato Si* a “Franciscan wisdom text” that Pope Francis composed to motivate all people, Brother Keith said that *The Canticle of the Creatures* (another title for *The Canticle of Creation*), was written also for all people. In his interpretation of *The Canticle*, Brother Keith concluded that it is the fruit of decades of contemplative insights because Francis opened his heart repeatedly to God. *The Canticle* comes out of Francis’s learned, prayerful experience. *The Canticle* is a call to action for everyone! Looking at *Laudato Si*, Brother Keith noted that Pope Francis references St. Francis nine times and uses the term “integral ecology” (found in paragraph 10), which means the awareness that people are interdependent on each other. Both documents guide us in living our Franciscan charism. Our fraternity was blessed with this insightful and instructional presentation.



St. Francis of Assisi fraternity

Barbara Courtois, OFS

On October 17, 2025, our dear Sister, **Adriana Lopez**, left us and as it is with all our brothers and sisters who have gone before us, we are saddened by this loss. Adriana was part of my journey for only a short moment in time, but she was an inspiration! Though she was diagnosed with a terminal illness, she never stopped giving to her fraternity. Despite her illness, she stepped up and accepted the role of fraternity Councilor when others refused to run or even be nominated for any position. Some may have thought this foolish, I thought it was heroic and a sign of a true Franciscan heart.

Adriana will be missed as are all our brothers and sisters who go before us, but her legacy of courage and caring will live forever in our hearts.



Scully Fund Requirements

The Scully Fund has been set up to encourage fraternities in the St. Francis Region to participate in charitable activities.

When members of a fraternity take an active role in an apostolic activity and use fraternity funds to purchase materials or supplies for the activity, the fraternity may request to be reimbursed by the Scully Fund for half of those expenses by supplying the following:

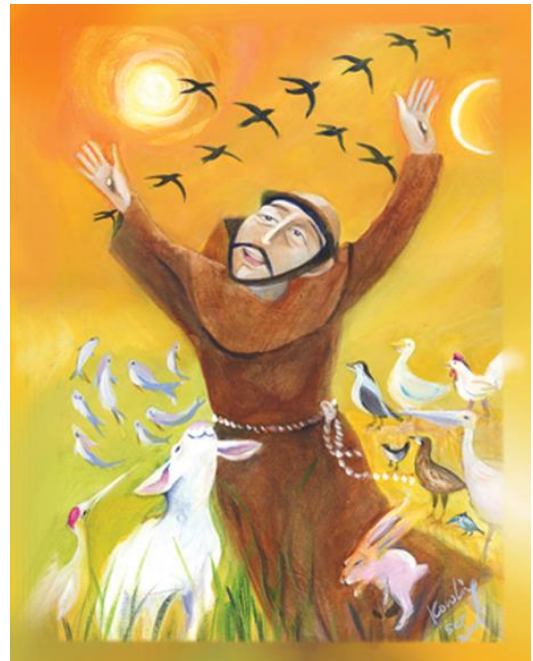
- A letter detailing the activity, the date it occurred, the number of fraternity members involved, and the amount of expenses incurred.
- Receipts for the purchases or a copy of the check(s) used to pay for the items.
- A request for reimbursement of half of the expenses.

Send the above information to either the Minister or Treasurer of the St. Francis Region.
THE ADDRESS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION IS: 10185 Pinetree Dr., San Diego, CA 92131-1218

The Francis Oratorio – A Unique Musical Tribute

As the Franciscan family prepares to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the passing of St. Francis of Assisi in 2026, a powerful new work is being brought to life—a deeply moving oratorio that invites us to reflect on the timeless vision of peace, compassion, and care for creation that St. Francis embodied. It's called the ***Francis Oratorio***.

An **oratorio** is a powerful musical experience that tells a meaningful story through voices, orchestra, and sometimes narration—without costumes or staging. You don't need to be a music expert to enjoy it—an **oratorio is for everyone**, offering a chance to be moved, inspired, and connected through sound and spirit.



Respect & Care for Creation – Franciscan Centre Ladywell, UK

The Francis Oratorio, composed by acclaimed composer and UCLA professor Richard Danielpour, with libretto (the storytelling part) by Franciscan scholar Sr. Margaret Carney, OSF, will be a poignant, 70-minute musical journey inspired by the lives of Francis and Clare of Assisi. Through stirring music for orchestra, chorus, soloists, and narrator, the oratorio will explore three essential commitments:

- *To care for our Earth*
- *To walk the path of peace*
- *To befriend the poor and vulnerable*

Premier performances are being planned for Los Angeles, Buffalo, and Boston in 2026 - with a future performance envisioned for Assisi. The Los Angeles performance makes this a beautiful opportunity for all of us in Southern California to join with the global Franciscan family in honoring this milestone through the unifying power of art and spirit.

When offered an opportunity to support this effort along leaders of the Franciscan orders here in the United States, the **St. Francis Region of the Secular Franciscan Order** happily joined in to provide spiritual and financial support. Please watch the Joy of Francis for updates when the ***Francis Oratorio*** premieres in Los Angeles and other cities in 2026. It will be a moving, beautiful experience we won't want to miss.



Witness the Papal Audience with Pope Leo XIV!

Nativity Pilgrimage

Where Faith Meets Adventure

Franciscan Pilgrimage of ITALY

JOIN
FR. ALBERT HAASE, OFM &
Spiritual Director and Chaplain



BRO. RUFINO ZARAGOZA, OFM
Liturgist and Musician



MAY 11-21, 2026

WE ALWAYS
✓ INCLUDE



Round-trip airfare



Airport taxes &
fuel surcharges



First-class hotels



Deluxe ground
transportation



Breakfast & dinner
daily



Site admission fees



Daily Mass



Professional
tour guides



Medical insurance



[trip.nativitypilgrimage.com/haase-ita-2026](https://app.nativitypilgrimage.com/trip/?trip=15383)

<https://app.nativitypilgrimage.com/trip/?trip=15383>