



Secular Franciscan

National Bulletin June 2025 of the Secular Franciscan Order in Canada

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800th Anniversary
of the composition
of St. Francis'
***The Canticle
of All
Creatures***

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Come, Holy Spirit

*Renew
the face of the
earth.*



Set our hearts
on fire
with your love

NOMINATIONS

**Lord, what do you
want me to do?**

The National Nominations Committee is still looking for candidates for next June's National elective chapter. There are several positions to be filled. If you feel called to serve your national fraternity or if you have a sister or brother with leadership talents who might be interested, please contact us! Peace and joy!

Jewel Jasmins, ofs, Martin Deschênes, ofs: ofsnational@hotmail.com
or visit ofscanada@hotmail.com

Minister and International Councillor, Jewel Jasmins, ofc



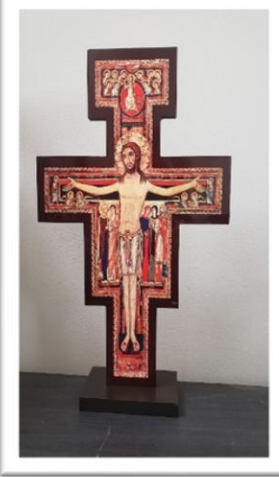
Dear Brothers and Sisters- Pax et bonum!

Answering the Call

We have been spiritually enriched through the living example of our beloved Pope Francis who showed us how to fully live the Gospel of love and compassion, before returning to the Father's House. Our good Lord remind us on His continued presence with us, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." (John 14:18). His Gift of the Holy Spirit renews and empowers us to be His witnesses wherever we are.

Our witness takes place in our daily lives through small gestures and through the mission God has prepared for us to do. We only have to answer God's Call, as St. Francis did in his prayer before the Crucifix in the small Chapel of San Damiano. Lord, what is Your will for me? Pope St. John-Paul II once said, *"If He asks much of you, it is because he knows you can give much."* And *"Remember that you are never alone, Christ is with you on your journey every day of your lives!"*

As our National Fraternity council concludes our term of service, and a reset will occur at our upcoming National Elective Chapter in Québec City later this month, I reflect on the last three years of having the opportunity to serve you and our Secular Franciscan family as your national minister. The years vaporized quickly since stepping out in faith to accept the position of this service. It was no small decision to answer the call. Somebody had to step into the role, and if the Good Lord makes a Call to me, then I should discern and consent to it, fulfilling the promise of service made at the time of Profession.



San Damiano Crucifix

We are servant leaders when our way of life sets the proper standard for others, not as perfect creatures but as penitents. Having had the opportunity to meet many wonderful brothers and sisters across Canada and serving with a committed national council and many generous volunteers, my term as your national minister has been a great blessing. Thank you for your great support by which together we have pushed out to new frontiers and reached some new milestones.

As some of our regional fraternities and local fraternities prepare for their Elective Chapters, let us offer our support with prayers and generous hearts to answer the Call to serve. Reflection on service by our new Pope Leo XIV. "Beginning with St. Peter and up to myself, his unworthy successor, the pope has been a humble servant of God and of his brothers and sisters, and nothing more than this." – Address to the College of Cardinals, May 10, 2025. This statement is a powerful expression of papal humility and continuity. Pope Leo is placing himself within the long line of successors to St. Peter, the first pope, affirming that the role of the pope is not about power, prestige or personal greatness, but about service.

GOSPEL TO LIFE - AND LIFE TO GOSPEL
Friday of the Sixth Week of the Easter Season
REDEMPITIVE SUFFERING

Deacon Maurice Prindiville, ofs

This Gospel excerpt - from the night of the Last Supper - differs from preceding parts of John 16 in that it speaks - not about the Holy Spirit, or Jesus' going away and coming back - but only about suffering and glory: that is, about **redemptive** suffering that leads to glory.

The Gospel **Acclamation** is very clear about the Lord's suffering and glory, "**Christ had to suffer and to rise from the dead, and so enter into his glory.**" ¹Luke 24.46 The **Gospel** is clear that **disciples, too**, suffer - and that their suffering can be transformed into rejoicing, "**you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.**"

We're (reasonably) well-schooled in the theology that the suffering and death of Jesus opened up grace and salvation to those who believe in Him. (**Why** the Father chooses to redeem us in this specific way is less clear) But, intellectually, we 'see' the redemptive value of the Lord's suffering - and we see that He chose to accept this severe suffering - even though He wished to avoid it. In Matthew 26, "**Jesus then said to His disciples, 'My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.'** And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, '**My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.**'" ²Mat 26: 38-39 Jesus embraces this cross in an act of Love, Love for the Father, Love for you.

We're also '**aware of**' the redemptive value of **our** suffering, even as we struggle with 'why there is so much suffering.' We know that - in the current state of our world - some suffering is **inexplicable** and **inevitable**; we know that some of a disciple's suffering is caused by **persecution**; we know that **people cause additional suffering** for one another.

Jesus teaches us that our suffering **can** become joy. He is the Suffering Servant, and He calls His followers to take up redemptive suffering - as He did.

When the mother of James and John came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favour of Him.

"**Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?'** They said to Him, '**We are able.**' He said to them, "**You will drink my cup...**" ³Mat 20: 22-23

In John chapter 15, Jesus assured His disciples, "**Remember ... 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you.**" ⁴15:20

Gospel Acclamation (Luke 24.46, 26)

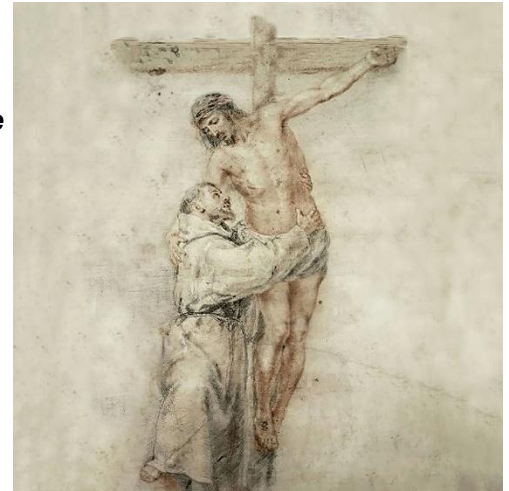
Christ had to suffer and to rise from the dead, and so enter into his glory.

John 16.20-23a [When Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father, He said to the disciples:]

²⁰*Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. ²¹When a woman is in labour, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. ²²So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³On that day you will ask nothing of Me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in My name, He will give it to you.*

In ways that, again, are hard for us to put into words, our suffering can **unite us** to Jesus: In 2 Corinthians "...we **share abundantly in Christ's sufferings**..."^{1:5} In Colossians St. Paul wrote, "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I **complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions** for the sake of his body, that is, the Church."^{1:24} In 1 Peter, "But rejoice in so far as you **share Christ's sufferings**, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed."^{4:13}

Suffering can shape us more closely into the image of Jesus. The stigmata - the five wounds of Jesus received as a confirmation of a saint's desire to be joined to the suffering of Jesus - is a most extraordinary "sign" of **being grafted into His suffering**.



On Mount La Verna, in 1224, St. Francis of Assisi prayed the following prayer just before being blessed with the stigmata, "Two graces I ask. The first, that in my soul and in my body, so far as may be possible, I may **feel that pain** which You, sweet Lord, did suffer in the hour of Your most bitter passion; the second, that I may **feel in my heart**, so far as may be possible, **that exceeding love**, whereby You, Son of God, were enkindled to willingly bear such suffering for us, sinners." Little Flowers "On the Stigmata: Third Consideration"

The second of these two petitions explains what makes suffering **redemptive** - "**that I may feel in my heart...that exceeding love**, whereby You ... **willingly bear** such suffering for us, sinners."

Suffering endured because it is inevitable is not redemptive. Suffering endured with resentment is not redemptive. Suffering sought out as a type of discipline is not redemptive. BUT, suffering embraced for love of God, and for love of neighbour is redemptive. In John 16, Jesus uses the powerful example of **the love** of a mother giving birth. She accepts great suffering because of her immense love of her child whose face she longs **to see** for the first time, whose eyes she longs to gaze into: "you have pain now; but **I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice**,

Let us pray - "... may we feel in our hearts, so far as may be possible, that exceeding love, whereby You, Son of God, were enkindled to willingly bear such suffering for us, sinners." Amen.

Two graces I ask The first, that in my soul and in my body, so far as may be possible, I may feel that pain which You, sweet Lord, did suffer in the hour of Your most bitter passion; the second, that I may feel in my heart, so far as may be possible, that exceeding love, whereby You, Son of God, were enkindled to willingly bear such suffering for us, sinners

Little Flowers "On the Stigmata: Third Consideration"

NATIONAL CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS 2025

JUNE 26 – 29, 2025

CENTRE DE SPIRITUALITÉ DES URSULINES

Loretteville, QC

National Formation Director, Catherine Payne, ofs



May the Lord give you peace....

We recently had a visitor to our fraternity gathering. He was inquiring into the Secular Franciscan life. What did it mean to be a Secular Franciscan? What does it mean to follow St. Francis??? It reminded me of our Workshop on the Beatitudes. We, Secular Franciscans, across Canada are so grateful to our own Martha Gabriel ofs from the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada for leading us on the path to our Franciscan life

through the Beatitudes.

We are blessed to be-

poor in Spirit, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, peacemakers, full of joyfulness, servant leaders, pure in heart, merciful, in love with all of creation, followers of the Gospel, ongoing formation & spiritual growth, prayerful, builders of a more fraternal & evangelical world

I am sure you can add to my list of Secular Franciscan characteristics for yourself. It is an interesting task to try and describe our Secular Franciscan Order in just a few words and yet live it out loud. Perhaps our actions should speak more about who we truly are! Jesus left us the 33 words for life and eternal life in His final address to the apostles: **“.....love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”**

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation---National JPIC Team

[Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation - Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis \(OFS\) Canada](#)

Franciscanism: Jesus Within

Marilyn Deery, ofs

For the Indigenous Peoples who have been severely traumatized, their trust in God goes deep. God is their eternal Hope. Their Spirituality goes deep. A Spirituality that gives a moment of Hope when muted by society. When they are made to feel nothing more than a grain of sand on the beach.

St Francis was the living and physical Hope of the invisible God for the Lepers. The Lepers who are made poor because they are marginalized. The Indigenous Peoples who are made poor and marginalized in the social ladder by the world.

*“Love is a decision” (Marriage Encounter, 1982) :
the poor and marginalized are made rich by God.*

St. Francis made the decision *to live in humility* ... as taught by Jesus of our Father. The importance of Sacred Scripture then resonates *in our decision to live* “from the Gospel to life, and from life to the Gospel” (St Francis, Rule # 4).

As a Secular Franciscan, we are called to live a life in fidelity to God. In obedience, we are called to follow God’s will. In obedience, we listen and follow the teachings of Jesus ...

To place God first. And, to follow the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church in valuing and respecting the dignity of the human person. We are called to live in the spirit of obedience to the Popes and his priests whose hands consecrate the bread and wine ... *an obedience that glorifies God Himself.*

With the example of the life of St Francis and St Clare, listening and following God’s will fosters within us a deep awareness and compassion for all of creation and her suffering. God the Creator is the One who loves first.

Through the Holy Spirit, the mission for all of humanity is “to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength” (Mark 12:30) ... and to reach out to the other with the same Christ-like openness. Furthermore, if we value what a person is saying, we are valuing the person, and where they are coming from.

“Mirroring Jesus and the Blessed Mother Mary” is living in humility (St Clare). In humility, the deepest relationship with God and others are formed.


With merciful hearts, we are able to be good companions for the suffering. Selfless giving of being a silent presence for the other creates an atmosphere of healing.

... Always listening to the Word of God in the Gospel, Liturgy of the Hours and through others forms positive endorsements within ... that we come to realize and experience the secure thoughts and the encouragement of Hope, Joy and Peace. Aquene, Peace

Perspectives from the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada (RFEC)

Submitted by Gerald Gabriel, ofs, Eastern Fraternity Regional Minister, gerry.rfec@gmail.com

[Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada – OFS – Franciscan Focus](#)

 I offer these few words about the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada’s support of the endeavours of Franciscans International. I do so with the hope that this will encourage others:

- To keep informed of the important advocacy work that Franciscans International performs, and
- To possibly consider providing financial support for FI’s efforts.

In our Region, we are blessed to have what we call our Heritage Fund. These resources were “gifted” to the Regional Fraternity a number of years ago when one of the local fraternities sold a dwelling that they owned. This facility at one time housed older OFS members; but eventually it became too costly to maintain, and the fraternity decided to sell. The investment from these funds has been earmarked for specific purposes. One of the purposes was to provide annual support to Franciscans International.

More recently, our Regional Fraternity Council decided to focus on supporting the advocacy of Franciscans International for the protection of the human right to water. With this objective in mind, local fraternities were invited to consider donating funds as well. As a result, over the past two years our Region (Council and fraternities jointly) have donated close to \$4,500.00 to Franciscans International **specifically for their efforts to protect people’s access to water**. It is interesting to note, that often Franciscans International’s efforts are aimed at aiding indigenous people to protect their local source of potable water, that affords them food, livelihood and good health.

On behalf of the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada, we invite our OFS brothers and sisters to consider providing support to Franciscans International...thank you!

A footnote: Franciscans International is active at the United Nations in New York. Franciscans International is not only concerned about the protection about the human right to water, but they are also very involved in the fight against climate change and the protection of biodiversity. Please get in touch with us, if you wish to receive contact information for Franciscans International.

Trillium Regional Fraternity News



Newly Elected Trillium Regional Council 2025-2028

Lidio Soldera, Treasurer; Mary Reid, Vice Minister; Debbie Tessier, Minister; Fr. Peter Knaapen, SA; Fr. Alix Poulin, Nat. SA; Clelia Malerba, Vice Minister; Lou Estok, Formation Director; Maria Ferrera, Vice Minister (absent)



Some Trillium Chapter Delegates, Spiritual Assistants and National Minister, Jewel Jasmins (3rd from left behind)

Sister Glinda was feeding the daycare children their lunch. She placed a small bowl of peas in front of 3 year old Lucio. Lucio took the bowl and dumped the peas on the floor. Sister Glinda asked Lucio patiently, "Lucio, why did you throw your peas on the floor?" Lucio told her: "Peas on earth!"



Regional Fraternity of Our Lady of the Angels

Winter Young Adult Retreat 2025 “Journey with the Magi”



We were blessed having 45 young adults join the retreat at Mount St. Francis, in Cochrane AB. We journeyed together during the weekend of January 3rd to January 5th along with the friars: Fr. Dan

Gurnick, Fr. Joachim Yeo Won Yoon, Br Aldin, Br Brandon and Br Vincent. The retreat featured Lectio Divina for Saturday and Sunday Mass readings, small groups reflection, journey with the magi walk, adoration, opportunity for reconciliation, Mass, prayer time, quiet time, meals together and fellowship. Young adults from the provinces of BC, AB and Sk bonded through meeting and journeying together during the weekend.

Maritza Chouza, ofs

8th Annual Franciscan Art Contest, 2024

Students in K to G12 from the provinces of BC, AB, SK and MN participated in the 8th Annual Franciscan Art Contest. Students from Holy Cross Elementary in Burnaby BC received their prizes. They won 1st place, Honour Award and Artistic Merit Award in kindergarten; and 1st place, Honour Award and Artistic Merit Award in Elementary. Lanny and my self had the



beautiful opportunity to give the prizes to the students in person during the Mass at Holy Cross Parish on February 20th. They were so happy receiving their gift cards and diplomas! God bless you with peace and joy.

Maritza Chouza, ofs

INDIA and Franciscan Shrine



*Blaise MacSween ofs of St Pio Fraternity in Red Deer, AB travelled to Southern India to visit friends & St Louis Friary located in St Francis Junior College at Palamaner, Andhra Pradesh.
(l to r) Shrine of Our Lady of Good Hope, life size San Damiano Crucifix, the life of St Francis shrine.*

Local Fraternities in OLOTA



On January 5th, St Anthony of Padua Fraternity of Maple Ridge, BC gathered for an Epiphany dinner at their regular meeting time. It was a special time with Epiphany prayers, food & the company of brothers & sisters.

Fr. Manoj Xalxo, ofm & Lanny Hui, ofs visit St Pio Fraternity in Delta, BC.



EASTERN REGIONAL FRATERNITY



A very special evening Mass was hosted by members of St. Anthony of Padua and St. Mary of the Angels Fraternities at St. Kevin's Church in Montreal on April 30, 2025. Members from different Quebec Area fraternities attended to celebrate this profession for three members of the OFS: Mary Ann Paggabao and Vergie Payos, both from St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity, and Marie Hye Jung Park from St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity. Congratulations to our three sisters!



The event at St. Kevin's Church was an opportunity to say goodbye to Father Pierre Charland (previously the Provincial of the Holy Spirit Province, OFM Friars) before he made the move to Baie-Comeau, Quebec, to be installed as the new Bishop there.



Profession of two members (Janice Goodfellow and Linda Trifiletti) of Immaculate Conception Fraternity at the John Paul II Church in Lachine, Quebec.



April 6, Quebec Area Retreat: A spiritually rewarding time for all of our sisters and brothers from the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada who were able to attend!



Secular Franciscan is a quarterly publication of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in Canada. It is available in French and English. Past publications can be found on the National website: www.ofscanada.ca

PAX ET BONUM!