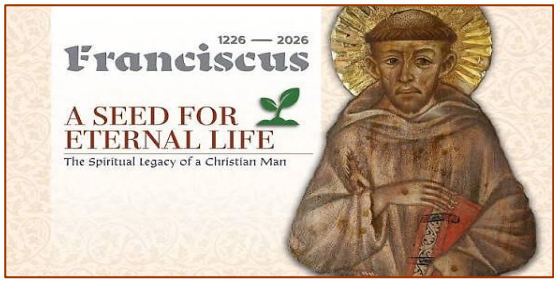
Fall 2026

Secular Franciscan

Bulletin of the Secular Franciscan Order in Canada

Celebrating the Easter of St. Francis

It is an opportunity to thank God for all the gifts he has bestowed on us, particularly for the gift of Francis of Assisi and his evangelical life, which has become our charism, articulated in different nuances of discipleship and apostolate, and which today still has the strength to call out to women and men of all cultures, both inside and outside the Catholic Church.



National Minister / International Councillor, Jewel Jasmins, ofs

Dear Brothers and Sisters - Happy Feast Day!

Reflecting on the Easter of St. Francis calls to mind the special legacy our Seraphic Father left us; the relinquishing of life, the welcoming of Sister Death and the passing of the torch to his followers to carry on the mission God had entrusted to him. Each of us called to embody the Gospel by word and witness for the building up of God's Church. The task of renewal begins in our daily conversion and reflected in generous love and care for our human fraternity and all of God's creation.

This summer I had the privilege to visit our Secular Franciscan family in the USA, at their 21st Quinquennial Conference in Kentucky. At this ingathering of some 500 members at the Conference, I met many members of our Franciscan Family and was impressed by their broad reach of living out their vocations in service to their communities in small and great ways. Keynote speakers at the conference offered a variety of spiritual enriching topics that were both inspiring and enriching. One of the blessings of my presence there, was peace-making. As our two countries were in the midst of a trade war, the reassurance that the conflict had no impact on the fraternal bonds that united our Franciscan family was reinforced. Secular Franciscans there asked to convey their love to all the brothers and sisters in Canada. We are looking at opportunities to build new bridges between our National Fraternities.

We received our National Fraternal Visit Report from the Minister General, Tibor Kauser, ofs, which served to identify areas needing our attention and recommendations for growing and strengthening our National Fraternity. Our National Council had the opportunity to meet together and work on visioning the future following a virtual presentation on '*Regenerating the Franciscan Seed'* by Mary Stronach, ofs, Vice-Minister General. The presentation offered us a revisit of our Franciscan vocation and mission; individually and collectively as a national fraternity. The presentation can be made available on request at ofscanadanational@gmail.com

The National Bulletin publication is currently in the process of transition. Our longtime publishing team that tirelessly generated our National Bulletin; Debbie Tessier, ofs, and Deacon Maurice Prindiville, ofs, have passed on the torch of this service to the National Team. We thank them for their tremendous contribution in keeping us connected through the years. To maintain this service, we are looking for volunteers with a background in photography, creative art, graphic design, translation (English/ French / Korean / Tigrinya), and videography. We are mindful that some members who are isolated may have only the means of their regional bulletins and national bulletins for keeping their Franciscan spirit nourished and connected. Please contact ofscanadanational@gmail.com for further information or if you would like to volunteer.

NATIONAL FORMATION FOCUS

A beautiful opportunity!

What a beautiful opportunity to share our Franciscan charism with our parishes and with our communities, this feast of St. Francis of Assisi! Having this year dedicated as a Jubilee of St. Francis gives us a unique opportunity to shine the light of the blessings of the penitential life to all. How is your fraternity spreading the joy and the blessings of this inheritance that we have received?

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The National OFS of Canada will host *A Jubilee Celebration of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi*
Sunday, October 4, 2026 ***at 12 pm PT/ 1pm MT / 2 pm CT / 3 pm ET / 4 pm AT***
Liturgy of the Word, Testimonies from Lady Pica, Lady Jacoba, St. Clare & Br. Leo, songs and prayers
Zoom link https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87991434822?pwd=JqdHbdbwVYkeCAUzy3abysSQHxWv1z.1
Meeting ID: 879 9143 4822 Passcode: 135814

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National Workshop on Week of the Poor **via Zoom - Saturday, October 17, 2026**
10 am PT/ 11 am MT/ 12 pm CT/ 1 pm ET/ 2 pm AT

The International Fraternity has asked fraternities to participate in the Week of the Poor, November 9-15th, 2026. This workshop is intended to bring some ideas to fraternities on what they can do to help their members understand the importance of the issues around poverty, and how they can be addressed on that week. Save the date! More information and agenda to come!

National Formation Director, Debbie Tessier, ofs

FORMATION INFORMATION / RESOURCES

OFS National Formator Course – Six months - Online and Correspondence (Fall semester)
Contact Debbie Tessier at *deborahtessier57@gmail.com* for more information. *An Application Form for the National Formators Course is available on the back page of the Bulletin.*

On-going Formation - *Exploring Our Rule (Module 4) Living the Rule* On-going Formation: Exploring Our Rule (Module 4) – Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis

Franciscanism Online Course (in English) Academic Year 2026-2027 (A) *Starts in October.*
TWO-YEAR COURSE OF FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY AND INTELLECTUAL TRADITION – *In the Footsteps of St Francis and St Clare.*
PONTIFICIA FACOLTÀ TEOLOGICA SAN BONAVENTURA - SERAPHICUM
PONTIFICIA UNIVERSITÀ A - NTONIANUM - ROMA

A course based on "Stigmata and Easter of Families" – Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis

Spiritual Assistant Resources

Spiritual Assistance Course by Br Gerry Clyne, OFM. This online Course is being offered to professed members who are interested in deepening their knowledge of Franciscan spirituality and are open to serving a fraternity in the role of a lay spiritual assistant. The Course starts on November 7, 2026. For further information, contact Br. Gerry Clyne, OFM at gerryclyne@outlook.com

KOINÕNIA: The beauty and appeal of the Christian life – Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis

Thank you National Centenary Task Force

Meet our Centenary Task Force Members

The OFS National Fraternity Task Force was commissioned by the National Council to generate and disseminate resources around the 800th Centenary events in the life of St. Francis: the Later Rule and Christmas at Greccio (1223), the Stigmata (1224) the Canticle of the Creatures (1225) and the Transitus of St. Francis (1226).

Photo by Marlene Welch, ofs

Formed in December 2023, and made up of members from coast to coast, they provided a diverse range of resources in both English and French including plays, music, meditative walks in nature, prayers and services for private and group reflection.

Below are some of the experiences of the Task Force members:
Bethanne O'Neil: *I was unsure what we would be doing at the beginning, but the experience of recreating Christmas at Greccio in my local fraternity using the provided resource helped to remind me of the importance of having a Task Force for the 800th celebrations.*

Cathy Payne: *Looking back, I realize that the experience was about much more than organizing celebrations. It became an opportunity to reflect more deeply on the Franciscan values of simplicity, compassion, peace, care for creation, and service to others.*

Sherrill Guimond: *The opportunity to work together as a family helped to remind me that these anniversary events are the very foundational resources of our Franciscan Spirituality and why I chose to become a Secular Franciscan.*

Marlene Welch: *I am appreciative of my time serving with this group. It allowed me to meet a group of dedicated Secular Franciscans, focused on the common good of the Canadian Fraternities and willing to devote their time and talent to achieve our objectives.*

Marion Clorey (Co-Chair): *The opportunity had two significant side benefits: getting to experience fraternity with sisters from across the country and deepening my own vocation through the reflections on the themes.*

Joan McDonald (Co-Chair): *It was genuinely fun finding and creating resources that local fraternities from across the country could use or adapt to their own needs and interests. Through it all, we became connected, a caring family stretching from coast to coast.*

Jewel Jasmins: *Participating as a member of the team awakened deeper research into every Centenary event of St. Francis' life. The opportunity of coming together from different regions, created great synergy and accomplishments. Thank you to our great Centenary Task Force.*

REGIONAL FRATERNITY OF EASTERN CANADA

The Atlantic Area Assembly

This gathering of the Atlantic Area fraternities of the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada was held on April 18, 2026, in keeping with our Regional Statutes. Local ministers and the regional vice-minister worked together to choose a topic for the Assembly that would meet the needs of our local fraternity members. *Making Peace in the Footsteps of St. Francis* was chosen as our theme, due to its relevance in our troubled times. Times, noted by a number of participants, that were not so very different from the unsettled time when St. Francis walked the earth.

Submitted by Martha Gabriel, ofs, Atlantic Area Vice-Minister, RFEC Canada

Participants from all five of the Atlantic Area fraternities gathered in Amherst, Nova Scotia to explore first of all, fostering peace within ourselves, and secondly, to discuss and practice how we could bring peace to others. Members worked in small discussion groups that stayed together for the day. With the aid of questions developed by our facilitators, participants generated quality personal sharing and reflections. Our capstone activity was developing an action plan for our own commitment to living peace within ourselves and also bringing peace to others.

The event was deemed to be a great success by all who attended, as well as by those who planned, organized and facilitated the activities. The work we did together on becoming/being peacemakers as we live our Franciscan charism, met and even exceeded expectations. Secular Franciscans from across Atlantic Canada—living in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island—finished the day committed to continuing this critical work.

Congratulations to our new Members

On February 11, 2026, four members made their profession into the St. Bonaventure Fraternity in Barry's Bay, Ontario. This wonderful event in the life of the fraternity took place at St. Lawrence O'Toole Church in Barry's Bay.

Photo -left to right are Marek Milan, minister, Morris Korneluk, Virginia Korneluk, Mary AnnMcCrae, and Joseph Ridout.
Submitted by Martha Gabriel, ofs.

Regional Fraternity website links

Franciscan Focus – Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada Atlantic Canada
Trillium Regional Fraternity - WELCOME – Ontario
Fraternité régionale « François d'Assise (Québec) https://frat-reg-ofs-francois-dassise.org
Home | OLOTA Our Lady of the Angels (Western Canada)

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

Congratulations !!

to the new Council of Our Lady of the Angels Regional fraternity. The Elective Chapter was held in Kelowna on July 4, 2026. Members from the National Fraternity, Martin Deschênes (National VM Francophone) and Fr. Alix Poulin, OFM Cap. (National Spiritual Assistant) presided and witnessed the Elective Chapter.
Photo courtesy of Lanny Hui.

Back row left to right: Blaise MacSween (JPIC Director), Christine Reeves (VM-BC Interior), Paulette Matovich (VM–MB/SK), Michelle Butt (Secretary), Maritza Chouza (Director of Youth), Carmen Moorhouse (VM – BC Coastal), Erika Bancila (VM -AB South), Isaac Reyes (VM- AB North), Fr. Manoj Xalxo, OFM (Spiritual Assistant), Fr. Alix Poulin, OFM Cap.
Front row left to right: Gary Jose (Treasurer), Audrey Gross (Formation Director), Lanny Hui (Minister), Martin Deschênes.

Our Lady of the Angels Regional Elective Chapter – June, 2026 - *Photo courtesy of Lanny Hui, ofs.*

[Franciscan Youth Canada - YouTube]

Festival of Tents in Alberta

September, 4-6th 2026

Young adults (aged 18–39) gathered for the third annual edition of this festival on the shores of Lake Gull in central Alberta. Secular Franciscans prepared the meals, whilst a Sister of Atonement and six Friars Minor (OFM) gave talks on the theme: 'Being instruments of peace'.

Photo of OFS Cooks (left to right): David, Denise, Heather and Cathy.
Submitted by David Bouchard, ofs

Fraternité régionale « François d'Assise »

Ste-Colette's Fraternity together at table

Special guest, baby Lyam 3-weeks old

The Ste-Colette fraternity gathered in August for fellowship during a very seasonal activity—guess what?—a turkey and corn roast. After enjoying the beautiful weather with wonderful company like Yanick and Magalie and their 3-week-old newborn, Lyam. ~ *Contribution by Richard Chamberland, ofs.*

Fraternité 2026 was held in June. The theme was 'La Pâque de François' (The Passover of Francis)
Guest speaker: Pierre Brunette OFM;
an abstract is available from Richard Chamberland or Christine Lacroix
Everyone was delighted to have taken part
Photos courtesy of Richard Chamberland, ofs

La Fête des tentes 2026

famillefranciscaine

For video click on the Instagram link Instagram

FRANCISCAN PRESENCE

Franciscans Serving Truth and Reconciliation

In the quiet solitude of a crumbling San Damiano chapel, St. Francis heard the words, “Go Rebuild my Church”. With solemn profession into the Secular Franciscan Order, these famous words similarly penetrated deep into my being. Franciscan sacramentality and vocation necessarily involve tangible and communal responses. Baptized as an infant in Catholic tradition, seasoned with Celtic spirituality and adopted into an Indigenous community as a young adult, seemed to prepare a half-baked Franciscan for service among Canada’s Indigenous People.

The bishop approached me with an assignment to serve at St. Peter’s parish in Calgary and St. Paul’s parish on the Piikani FN, I was immediately struck by the irony of these two patronages locked once again in evangelizing togetherness. Northern Canada’s Dene communities taught me that Indigenous people desire their leaders live attentively and honestly with all creation. No parachute saviors with too many answers! After departing the city for life on the Piikani FN, my ministry remains simply to connect and share the Living Gospel, worship Creator, and attend to the afflicted. St. Francis would surely have discovered, as I have, God’s beauty resting upon St. Kateri Tekakwitha’s people and upon this Nation!

Deacon thomas OFS (Abuttsosiipiita)
Piikani FN Canada

Franciscans Footsteps **Hope – God is love!**

Brothers and sisters, I am moved to confide to you in all simplicity that in the month of August 2026, I have felt particularly stirred in my soul by the work of Blessed Good Father Frédéric. Especially so with regard to two outdoor Stations of the Cross that he designed in order to make the reality of the Mystery of the Cross more visible.

On Saturday, August 1st at the Shrine of Reparation to the Sacred Heart and Saint Padre Pio in Pointe-Aux-Trembles, on the occasion of the celebration of the Portiuncula organized by anglophone Secular Franciscans, I walked the Stations of the Cross in the bocage. Actually it was only in July that I discovered this Shrine. I then sensed a poignant immersion in the story of Jesus Christ's Passion. It turns out that the following Sunday, August 2nd, I attended the Eucharistic celebration at the Holy Name of Jesus parish without realizing that it was the liturgical Feast of St. Mary of the Angels of the Portiuncula. On Monday, August 3rd, I was moved to drive to Trois-Rivières, to the Shrine of Good Father Frédéric**.

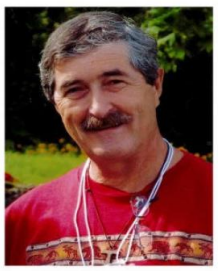
An invitation had been circulated to participate in a pilgrimage beginning with a Mass and culminating in an outdoor Way of the Cross, also designed by Good Father Frédéric, at Saint Élie de Caxton. However this took place in the church due to heavy rain.

May our faith kindled in God the Creator, in our Saviour Jesus Christ, animate us in effective collaboration, two and more with love, even soul-love. Are we not spiritual beings living a human experience, called to be co-creators for the common good in the Cosmos ever evolving since 14 billion years...

Tex Jude G. Albert, ofs
OFS - Fraternité Sainte Famille, LavalSFO – Vice-minister Saint Patrick’s Fraternity, Montréal
Membre du comité national Justice, Paix, Intégrité de la Création OFS/SFO

Remembering our beloved Secular Franciscan brother and sister who have gone to be with the Lord.

George Henri Guimond
1951-2026



George Henri Guimond, ofs

George Henri Guimond, born on September 12, 1951, passed away on July 19, 2026. George leaves behind his wife Sherrill, and three grown children. George was a Secular Franciscan and was very involved in his fraternity in New Brunswick, served as Vice Minister on the regional fraternity council as well as the National Fraternity Council.

George leaves behind cherished memories for friends, family, and all who had the privilege of knowing him. George's life was marked by connections and experiences that touched those around him. Though he is no longer with us, the moments shared, the laughter, and the support he offered will continue to resonate. All who knew George will carry forward his memory in their hearts.

A funeral Mass was held on Saturday, July 25th 2026 at 11:00 AM at the St. Simon and Jude Catholic Church in Forest City, New Brunswick.

"Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace."

Gabrielle Picard Dupré was very active in the OFS and also served at the national level.

Celebrating the Transitus of St. Francis

Transitus Almond Cookies

A traditional Franciscan recipe, guaranteed to please the palate.

3 1/4 cups (~325g per batch) Almond Flour unbleached, fine ground
1 1/4 cup Granulated Sugar unrefined, cane sugar (can be reduced by up to 1/2, to your taste)
2 Eggs large, room temperature
3 tsp Natural Almond Extract or to your taste
a pinch of salt

Recipe by Marla Poirier, ofs

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350F (325F convection bake). Line 1-2 baking trays with parchment and set aside .

1. In a large bowl, mix together eggs, sugar, and almond extract.
2. Add almond flour, a pinch of salt, and mix together with a spoon or spatula.
3. Form into 1 tbsp dough mounds, roll into balls, and place on a baking sheet, 1-2" apart.
4. Decorate with a few sliced almonds.
5. Bake for 15-17 minutes or until the tops are dry to the touch, and edges/bottom golden brown. Let cool on baking sheet.
6. Dust with powdered sugar and store in an airtight container at room temperature for 3-5 days or in the freezer for up to 6 months.
7. Enjoy!

Secular Franciscan Order Canada - Home – National Fraternity of Canada website
International Fraternity link (CIOFS) Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis – Consilium Internationale OFS (CIOFS) | Secular Franciscan Order

National Formators Online/Correspondence Course

APPLICATION FORM

Overview of the Order of Franciscans Secular – National Formators' Course

Course Duration 6 months (September 2026 – May 2027)

Course start date September 28, 2026

Course Content: Six Modules **Language:** English

Objectives: To equip formators with a framework of OFS formation and applied skills to facilitate Initial and Ongoing Formation in local fraternities.

Methodology: Online Course through e-mail and Zoom (6 meetings). Correspondence Course through e-mail and Zoom (4 meetings).

The modules focus on Initial Formation and Ongoing Formation.

1st Module=Identity, Role and Mission of a Formator

2nd Module=Initial Formation in the OFS; Catholica Faith Inventory

3rd Module= Equipping the Formator; Adult Learning Principles

4th Module= Initial Formation Process; Profession: Gift and Commitment

5th Module=Multigenerational Outreach & Formation; Servant Leadership

6th Module= Ongoing Formation Overview and Materials; The Four Pillars

Pre-requisites: Permanent profession in the OFS. Active interest in participating in OFS Formation.

Course Load: *Requirement to dedicate a minimum of 4-5 hours a month to complete pre-reading of course material, completion of monthly assignments in online postings and participate in online group discussions/ Zoom conferences.*

Please complete application form and send by e-mail to: Debbie Tessier: deborahtessier57@gmail.com

Registration

Name:	Name of Fraternity / Region
Address:	E-mail Address:
Current Role and Responsibilities in the OFS	Comments re. Experience in OFS Formation
Online Course Instructor: Maria Ferrera, ofs maferrera@cogeco.ca **Course by correspondence Instructor:** Jo-Ann Burton, ofs, jburtonjmj@gmail.com	