

1226 — 2026 Franciscus

Eight Hundredth Anniversary of the Death of St. Francis



Leo XIV has proclaimed a special Jubilee Year from January 10, 2026 to January 10, 2027, to commemorate the VIIIth Centenary of the Death of Saint Francis

Pope Leo XIV officially inaugurated the **Year of Saint Francis** to honor the life and legacy of the Poverello of Assisi, who passed away on October 3, 1226. This special Jubilee Year encourages the faithful to follow Saint Francis's example of **holiness, humility, and peacemaking**, emphasizing active charity, care for creation, and reconciliation among people.

[8th Centenary of the Easter of St. Francis – material from Formation Secretariat – Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis](#)



Regional Minister, Debbie Tessier, ofs

Some 800 years ago, St. Francis walked on this earth, and left to us a rich legacy to carry on. His walk was most humble in a grass-roots kind of way, not aiming high, but stooping low, to build from the ground a foundation of Gospel love, simplicity, joy, peace, and evangelical fire in preaching the Gospel to the people. He repaired the church first with stones, and then with living stones, on the Holy virtues.

He considered his journey never done, never complete....he strove to reach ever greater holiness,

because he compared himself with Christ, the ultimate goal of our striving. That is a lesson I need to learn, to always remember, that we do not attain holiness, but continue to strive for it, never as a badge of honor, but as so much rust to be cleaned from our souls every day. And we all know that rust keeps coming back, and the process begins again and again, until that day God takes us back.

St. Francis has influenced my journey in so many ways. He was Italian and sang songs in French, inspired and music ministry is my work in a parish with an Italian community and because I grew up going to a French school, I was able to get involved with our National Fraternity's French speaking members through leadership and music. Francis turned his life over to God and avoided anything that was not God-like. My life has been and continues to be, a series of turnings to God, and away from what is not God-like...yet how easily I choose lifelessness over the flame of love and life.

Francis loved those who were most rejected and in need. My hope is to make a difference to those most in need, which inspired me to work with Appease Hunger, a sponsorship program for needy families in India. Francis also lived in

fraternity, and I am loving being in a family-like fraternity where we learn to better love God, each other, deny ourselves, and daily pick up our crosses. In hindsight, I see God's protection over my life, how God has placed me where he wants me to be, with St. Francis guiding me through to this moment, and I am so grateful and cherish the fact that neither one of them has not given up on me yet! *Please share with us how St. Francis has affected your journey!*



Fr. Peter Knaapen, OFM Conventual, Regional Spiritual Assistant

With the celebration of the Transitus of St Francis on October 3rd we come to the pinnacle of our 800th centenary celebrations. We began in 2023 reflecting on Christmas in Greccio. Francis' great gift of helping us to understand the beauty of the incarnation. Then we prayed and meditated on the Canticum of the Creatures in 2024 joining with all creation praising God through Brother Sun and Sister Moon. Last year we centred on Francis' Stigmata. Francis lifelong desire to imitate the life of Christ so perfectly that our Lord marked him with the sacred five wounds. This year we focused our attention on Francis embracing Sister death and his transition from this life to eternal life. These centenary celebrations have been a beautiful and rich experience for the whole Franciscan family. We were specially blessed in that Pope Leo made this year a year of grace so that the whole universal church could join in our celebration of St. Francis. The pardon of Assisi was extended to all through the special jubilee plenary indulgence.

I like to share some thoughts by the late Pope Francis that he said on one of his visits to Assisi. I think his words give us a direction for our lives as we follow Francis in his imitation of Christ. How was Francis ready to embrace Sister Death? Pope Francis say because he spent this whole life "putting on Christ" conforming himself daily to Christ. Francis began doing this by gazing on the crucified Christ in the chapel of San Damiano and allowing Jesus to look at him at the moment that Jesus gives his life for us and draws Francis and us to himself.

Pope Francis related in his homily that "On that cross, Jesus is depicted not as dead, but alive! Blood is flowing from his wounded hands, feet, and side, but that blood speaks of life. Jesus' eyes are not closed but open, wide open: he looks at us in a way that touches our hearts. The cross does not speak to us about defeat and failure; paradoxically, it speaks to us about a death which is life, a death which gives life, for it speaks to us of love, the love of God incarnate, a love which does not die, but triumphs over evil and death. When we let the crucified Jesus gaze upon us, we are re-created, we become "a new creation." Everything else starts with this: the experience of transforming grace, the experience of being loved for no merits of our own, in spite of our being sinners. That is why Saint Francis could say with Saint Paul: 'Far be it for me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ'" (Gal 6:14).

What struck me is the similarity of Pope Francis advise to that St Clare to Agnes of Prague. "Embrace the poor Christ. Look upon him most noble Queen, gaze, consider, contemplate and desire to imitate him."

Francis chose to be live a humble simple life because it brought him closer to Christ, his one great love. His aim was to live the Gospels, to live a life of poverty and simplicity, to follow the way of Jesus with reckless faith, absolute trust, and unwavering obedience. He not only taught the way of love, but he also lived it – he embodied it. As he was about to embrace Sister Death, he told his brothers that were there "I have done what was mine to do may God show you what is yours to do."

May we gaze, consider, contemplate, and imitate the Lord Jesus Christ. Happy Feast Day.

REGIONAL FORMATION DIRECTOR, LOU ESTOK, OFS

Our National Fraternity provided this document from our International Fraternity (CIOFS) to be shared with all of our Fraternities globally. As local Fraternities, we are invited to participate and take an active role in this year's Holy Year of Grace, November 9-15, 2026 Week of the Poor.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z3YcbYXjhg1qmnaYHQeLXznULmbNkouN/view?usp=drive_link

Decide as a Fraternity, how you will celebrate this mission in November from the 9th to the 15th. It could be a special Mass or prayer service at your local parish with refreshments afterward with, perhaps, someone(s) sharing their Franciscan conversion/ vocation story (5 minutes tops).

It could be, for example, an extra themed collection of canned food for St. Vincent de Paul, i.e., baby items or diapers for babies and adults, etc. It could be a shift together at a soup kitchen like St. Francis Table, Toronto, ON. Or a visit and song fest at a senior's home. Poverty in its many faces is physical, material, mental, emotional or spiritual. As a Fraternity, the choice of mission work is yours.

Remember in all you plan to do, you can also add the dimension of Vocation Awareness. You are bringing light to the Poor, to St. Francis of Assisi's ideals and our Way of Life. You can become living Ongoing Formation for one another and life for the world by being a living witness to each other in your local community.

Whatever you choose as a Fraternity, CIOFS humbly asks we report our Fraternal activities to them directly. They are preparing a special accounting to be given to our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, of what the Secular Franciscan Family has done in honor of St. Francis of Assisi's Holy Year of Grace. Trillium Region asks each Fraternity to please copy Trillium Minister, Debbie Tessier, of, on your Fraternity's special mission.

The heart of our Franciscan Charism is exposed this Holy Year: Our love of God and our love of neighbor. "And who is my neighbor?" asked the young rich man who was self-sufficient in need of neither his God nor his neighbor. Our blessed Poverty is that we need both God and one another to live a life of Fraternity with deep spiritual meaning, peace and joy.

Happy Blessed Holy Year of Grace!

Isolated OFS members groups

If you have had to move, and/or are unable to make your fraternity meetings due to illness or mobility issues, consider joining one of our OFS online groups. There are two groups that meet once a month, one on a Wednesday evening, the other on a Tuesday afternoon, for prayer, ongoing formation, and sharing. Visitors who miss a meeting due to weather are also welcome! For more information, please contact Debbie at deborah Tessier57@gmail.com.

OFS Rule Booklets are now available locally for \$4 each plus shipping! To order, please contact Debbie at deborah Tessier57@gmail.com

OFS Clothing Items are available. Shipping costs may apply. When possible, when there is a gathering, delivery may be possible without charge. Contact Debbie as above.

Trillium Regional Fraternity Virtual Spiritual Conference October 2026

It was not possible to organize this conference, as there are many fraternities planning Transitus' and events to commemorate St. Francis' Jubilee in their parishes.



Trillium Certificates

For Trillium Certificates to mark professions, anniversaries of profession & Service Recognition for Spiritual Assistants, (usually 5-year milestones) please contact: **Clelia Malerba, ofs, 905-851-8220 or malerbac@yahoo.com**. Please make your requests well in advance if you wish to have them on the profession day or anniversary date.

National Celebration of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

*Join is in an online celebration
of the life of St. Francis*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4TH

At 6 pm

Stories, song and prayers

*The link will be shared by your regional
Minister.*

ELECTIVE CHAPTERS

St. Joseph the Worker Fraternity, Port Elgin



St. Joseph the Worker, Port Elgin newly elected council Sept 9/26. Left to right...Anita Peplow (Treasurer), Deborah Jennings (Minister), Lucie Desbiens (Vice-Minister), Brenda Murray (Secretary), Bob Perrault (Formation Director)

Queen of Peace Fraternity, Madoc



The Queen of Peace Fraternity, Madoc, had a lovely guest at our last meeting. Always fraternal! St. Francis and St. Dominic well represented! Pictured Are Michael Painter of's and our friend Jacques Lambier third order Dominican. It was a great meeting! God bless us all!



St. John Vianney Korean Fraternity Professions



*Agatha Kim, Rosa Kang, Genovefa Lee, Hyginus Lee
Friar John Lee, Father Francisco Kang*

St. John Vianney Korean Fraternity Professions



St. John Vianney newly professed with friars and formation team.



St. John Vianney, St. Damian & Brother Leo
Fraternities-Korean OFS Retreat

This is a **new Novena** in honour of the 800th anniversary of St. Francis' Transitus. Maybe our Fraternity could pray it in preparation for the Transitus. See what you think.

The priest who wrote this is one of the two priests that accompanied us to Assisi in 2009.

Nine Around One – Franciscan Voice
<https://franciscanvoice.org/nine-around-one/>
<https://franciscanvoice.org/nine-around-one/?fbclid=IwY2xjawUISzJwZG9mBGV4dG4DYWVtAjExAHNydGMGYXBwX2lkDzQwOTk2MjYyMzA4NTYwOQABHiTGsnxU1aoYSLtUc1s6764vz810rYKnEuG-Wk6lFhF5G5pH38qPss0E7Pi aem jwFwLZZT a 70o HFwjVbjQ>

NEW NOVENA

The Franciscan Project - Summer 2026

Just as we were preparing for our Chapter of Elections at the beginning of 2026 and with the impending growth into two separate Fraternities (St. Anne, Tecumseh & St. Mary, Blenheim), our Holy Father Pope Leo XIV gave us back-to-back Holy Years!

This year 2026-2027 is the Holy Year of Grace in honor of the 800th Anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's Transitus. At that time, St. Anne's Fraternity (SAF) received a call from the Office of Bishop Ronald Fabbro, CSB to "...create a Franciscan program for the western part of the Diocese of London (DOL)..." in the Windsor Essex Deanery per his Office of Liturgy liaison, Betty Hompoth. With both the blessing and approval of our past Minister, John Vajdik, ofs and Trillium Regional Minister, Debbie Tessier, ofs, we got to work.

The steering committee of the SAF received suggestions, comments, plans, ideas from many more members (before separation) by phone and email. We met with pastors and staff of various Family of Parishes. We've celebrated Mass and presented in Oxley, ON; Harrow, ON; Kingsville, ON; Windsor, ON and Tecumseh, ON.

We're preparing to celebrate a Transitus at Our Lady of Assumption, Windsor with their Young Adult Ministry and students of the University of Windsor on Oct. 2; on Oct. 3, a Day of Recollection at St. Michael's, Windsor with Adoration, confessions, Mass, a Transitus and time for a walking pilgrimage to St. Francis of Assisi Church, Windsor to gain their Indulgences; and on Oct. 4, we celebrate a special Feast Day Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Church, Windsor with our SAF Renewal of Profession. We've invited all the priests and deacons of the Deanery to concelebrate and gain their own Holy Year Indulgence.

We've each shared our own vocation stories, Franciscan saints, and aspects of St. Francis of Assisi with the intention of fulfilling our ultimate mission: "Go rebuild My Church. You see it's falling down" and with the Centenary in mind. This Project has taught us, stretched us and bonded us as truly "minore" sisters and brothers. We already see the fruit of our humble and imperfect "YES."

Please continue to pray that God's Will be done; that Parish communities be strengthened; and that our small yet vibrant St. Anne's Fraternity in Windsor/ Tecumseh grows exponentially with vocations! And our "secret weapon?" We rely on all our active and elderly Secular Franciscans' prayers! You are our Prayer Warriors. Nothing can be done without prayer and preparation. Thank you all! God bless you all with His Peace and Goodness! *Lou Estok, ofs, Minister, St. Ann*

<https://photos.fifeusercontent.google.com/pw/APIGczMmJTSo4IgC-cq6l8IDnIrAmw81JAKSlæg5BR6-J1GFWJXBalV1PVtUw=s0-d-I?authuser=0>

(from left: Matt Lacey, Tracy Muscat, Michelle Roy, Claire Hryniw, Ray Search, Silvana Alvirez & Lou Estok. All worked on the display boards, oral presentations, and personal vocation stories.)

Novena to St. Francis of Assisi

You are invited to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Our dear sister Lou is hosting!

Topic: TRANSITUS NOVENA

Time: Sep 25-Oct 03, 2026 06:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83214865230?pwd=Z3TrwOupSnvp9XnY7N36EQwlBct8ST.1>

Meeting ID: 832 1486 5230

Passcode: 443214

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kRbzbqsW18Pphgr1ppMK71vWtqhFnG_k/view?usp=sharing

Go, rebuild
My
Church.
You see
it's falling
down.

NATIONAL FORMATOR'S COURSE

National Formator's Course

Begins Fall 2026 until Spring 2027

A six module course for those in Formation Director roles, those considering serving as a Formation Director, those on Formation teams, or interested persons.

For more information please contact Debbie

Tessier, ofs, deborah Tessier57@gmail.com

A Part II Course is being discussed for 2027-2028.

Keep us in your prayers!

The Formator's course provides an excellent way to learn about yourself, your own approach to Franciscan spirituality and how to effectively share this with others! The course is being offered to OFS members who would like to take the course online or by correspondence. The first online meeting will be held in late September. The course could be very helpful for Formation Directors of local and regional fraternities, for members of formation teams, and for other Secular Franciscans interested in enriching their understanding of Franciscan spirituality and sharing that charism with our sisters and brothers more effectively. Persons interested in taking the online or correspondence course should contact:

Debbie Tessier, ofs, deborah Tessier57@gmail.com,

National Formation Director

Registration form below.

National Formators 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 first four modules focus on Initial Formation, the last two on 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: deborah Tessier57@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, jburtonjmi@gmail.com	

OFS RETREAT CELEBRATING 800TH ANNIVERSARY

OF ST. FRANCIS' DEATH

The third annual OFS Retreat, hosted by St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity of Sarnia, will be held at Holy Family Retreat House in Oxley, near Harrow, on October 21st 22nd and 23rd this year. The Retreat will celebrate the Jubilee of the 800th Anniversary of St. Francis death. OFS members have priority and then if there is space available, others interested in the Retreat will

also be able to register. Information on the Retreat can be found on the internet at the Holy Family Retreat House site under Upcoming Retreats.

ON LINE REGISTRATION IS NOW AVAILABLE

I welcome your questions at 519-359-4427 or telkit65@gmail.com

Peace and all goodness, Kay Paton, ofs





**St. Anne's Fraternity,
Secular Franciscan Order**

A FRANCISCAN YEAR OF GRACE

A year-long series of Secular Franciscan Order (SFO) vocation stories, reflections, and celebrations leading to the 800th Anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's Transitus (passing) and Feast Day.

	SAT 13 JUN	ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA FEAST DAY St. Anthony of Padua Church (120 Munger St. W, Harrow, ON) 8 AM Confessions 9 AM Mass & reflections
	WED 15 JUL	ST. BONAVENTURE FEAST DAY St. John de Brebeuf Parish (67 Main St. E, Kingsville, ON) 5:30 PM Confessions & Eucharistic Adoration 6:30 PM Mass, reflections & refreshments
	TUE 11 AUG	ST. CLARE OF ASSISI FEAST DAY Most Precious Blood Church (1947 Meldrum Rd., Windsor, ON) 6 PM Program 7 PM Mass, reflections & refreshments
	THU 24 SEPT	ST. PADRE PIO FEAST DAY Good Shepherd Church (462 Advance Blvd., Lakeshore, ON) 5:30 PM Program 6:30 PM Mass, reflections & refreshments
	SAT 3 OCT	800TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. FRANCIS' TRANSITUS St. Michael's Church (2153 Parkwood Ave., Windsor, ON) 10 AM Retreat 4:30 Transitus Ceremony 5 PM Mass
	SUN 4 OCT	ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI FEAST DAY St. Francis of Assisi Church (1701 Turner Rd., Windsor, ON) 5 PM Mass with SFO Vow Renewal & refreshments

stannefraternitywindsor@gmail.com

La Verna Ministries, Peterborough

SEPTEMBER 2026

Tue Sept 01, 2026	Secular Franciscan Formation #31	7:00pm – 9:00pm
Wed Sept 02, 2026	Meditatio - Franciscan Meditation	7:00pm - 8:00pm
Thu Sept 03, 2026	Pray the Franciscan Crown Rosary	7:00pm - 7:45pm
Tue Sept 15, 2026	Secular Franciscan Formation #32	7:00pm – 9:00pm
Wed Sept 16, 2026	Meditatio - Franciscan Meditation	7:00pm - 8:00pm
Thu Sept 17, 2026	Pray the Franciscan Crown Rosary	7:00pm - 7:45pm
Sun Sept 20, 2026	St Luke's Youth Group Creation Walk	6:30pm - 8:00pm
Tue Sept 29, 2026	Secular Franciscan Formation #33	7:00pm – 9:00pm
Wed Sept 30, 2026	Healing Hearts Grief Ministry	7:00pm - 9:00pm



Autumn Programing 2026

OCTOBER 2026

Thu Oct 01, 2026 Pray the Franciscan Crown Rosary 7:00pm - 7:45pm

Fri Oct 02, 2026 ***Francis & Clare (2008)**, the definitive feature length video on the Saint's of Assisi. Showing La Verna, please **RSVP** as space is limited to 15 spaces.*

Sat Oct 03, 2026 ***Blessing of Animals @ La Verna** 12:00pm-3:00pm
(weather permitting of course)*

Sat Oct 03, 2026 ***Para-liturgy celebrating the Transitus** 5:15pm - 5:50pm
(death) of St Francis on this date in 1226*

Sat Oct 04, 2026 ***Feast of St Francis & Secular Franciscan Professions**
during St Alphonsus Ligouri's mass at 11:00am.*

Wed Oct 07, 2026 Meditatio - Franciscan Meditation 7:00pm - 8:00pm

Thu Oct 15, 2026 Pray the Franciscan Crown Rosary 7:00pm - 7:45pm

Wed Oct 21, 2026 Meditatio - Franciscan Meditation 7:00pm - 8:00pm

Wed Oct 28, 2026 Healing Hearts Grief Ministry 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Thu Oct 29, 2026 Pray the Franciscan Crown Rosary 7:00pm - 7:45pm



La Verna
820 Frank Street, Peterborough ON K9J 4N4
705-243-9131 laverna@capuchins.ca

May the Lord grant you peace and joy!