



"FROM GOSPEL TO LIFE AND LIFE TO GOSPEL"

ST. CLARE FRATERNITY NEWSLETTER

St. Clare Fraternity, Stafford Springs, CT

September 2025

MAY GOD GIVE YOU PEACE!

TRANSITUS of ST. FRANCIS

We will be having our Transitus of St. Francis at St. Edward Church on Friday, October 3rd. Time to be decided at our September gathering.

We are making plans to visit Faith Formation classes later in October to introduce them to St. Francis. Bring your ideas to our gathering! Volunteers will be needed!



Stigmata of St. Francis

September 17

*"In the
spiritual life,
he who does not
advance
goes
backward."*

St. Padre Pio

**Feast Day—Sept.
23**

FRATERNITY LIFE

Monthly Gatherings:

Fraternity Gathering
Saturday, September 27—10 a.m.
St. Edward Parish Center
Hospitality—Barbara

Fraternity Gathering
Saturday, October 25—10 a.m.
St. Edward Parish Center
Hospitality— volunteer needed

Please remember our Common Fund



St. Clare of Assisi, Patroness of our Fraternity

OUR FRATERNITY COUNCIL:

Minister: Sandy Comarella, OFS

Vice-Minister: Zofia Fitzgerald OFS

Secretary: Nancy Rudek, OFS

Treasurer: Joe Comarella, OFS

Formation Director: Corinne Lorenzet, OFS

Councilors Diane Garabedian, OFS

Barbara Peirola, OFS

Spiritual Assistant:

Father John Koziol, OFM Conv

CONTACT US:

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POPE LEO'S

PRAYER INTENTIONS

September 2025

FOR OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ALL CREATION

Let us pray that, inspired by St. Francis, we may experience our interdependence with all creatures, loved by God and worthy of love and respect.

October 2025

FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS TRADI- TIONS.

Let us pray that we believers of different religious traditions will work together to defend and promote peace, justice and human fraternity.

OFS INTENTIONS

September 2025

For the national fraternities of New Zealand, Australia, Slovakia and USA.

October 2025

OFS: For the national fraternities of Great Britain, France, Croatia and Cuba and for the Asia Oceania Congress.

Thoughts from your minister:

Friends,

In a recent reflection from Richard Rohr, I read the words of a song written by Cyprian Consiglio titled "One Minute to Midnight" as he reflected on a pilgrimage to Holy Land. While he was there, he witnessed the splitting up of the Palestinian lands. Inspired by the prophet Isaiah, his verses read "We've beaten our ploughshares back into swords / and made spears of our pruning hooks... We've turned revelation to a battle of words / and made weapons of our holy books."

As I watch the news, I've been trying to reconcile the violence and war in our world with the late Pope Francis' theme of "Seeds of Peace and Hope" for the 2025 Season of Creation, as he turned to the prophet Isaiah (32:14-18) for inspiration. While we mourn two innocent children, here in our country, killed in yet another senseless school shooting, in a Catholic school, have we become numb to the thousands of innocent people throughout the world who are victims of war (just another form of mass murder), of genocide?

I have a prayer I pray each day that for those caught up in the violence in the Ukraine. Over the past three years, I've had to add those caught up in the violence in the Gaza, the Holy Land, throughout the Middle East, -Syria, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan; for those caught up in the violence in Russia, in Myanmar and India, in Haiti and Jamaica; in the violence in Sudan, Ethiopia the DRC and throughout Africa; the drug and gang wars in Central and South America. And I pray for those caught up in the current violence in the streets of America - in our country! It goes onto to pray that we implore You for peace, that You comfort those who fear, and grant wisdom and discernment to our world leaders.

Are we creating more swords than ploughshares? More spears or pruning hook? St. Francis aspired to be a great and noble soldier when he was younger and proudly went to war, I'm guessing armed with a spear and a sword. And yet, with his conversion, following Christ and searching for peace in a war-filled world, he went on to risk his life to meet with the Sultan of Egypt, Malik al-Kamil to beg for peace and an end the crusades. Touched by Francis' love of God, the Sultan granted St. Francis and his companions' safety on the journey home and began to treat Christian prisoners with kindness. While the encounter did not end the devastation of the Crusades, it did begin a dialogue of peace and respect between Christian and Muslims.

Let us continue to implore our God for peace. Let us once again beat those swords and spears into ploughshares and pruning hooks. In our prayer and our lives, let us once again plant seeds of peace and hope. Grace and hope, Sandy

FRATERNITY MATTERS

A REMINDER: Our monthly gatherings are a "privileged time" of fraternity and community. A time for us to share and grow together in our Franciscan vocation. If you cannot attend a gathering, and are not permanently excused, please contact one of the council members to let us know you will not be attending. Thank you.

MAY WE BE INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE Continue to pray for peace in the Ukraine and the Holy Land, Haiti, the Sudan and all those places in the world torn apart by war, civil unrest, violence and fear. Please pray also for peace and unity in our country.

FEAST DAYS

September 17—Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

September 18—Joseph of Cupertino (Pat)

September 23—Pio of Pietrelcina

September 26—Elzear & Delphina (Marion)

October 4—Our holy Father Francis of Assisi (Laraine)

October 11—Pope St. John XXIII (Marie)

WE PRAY FOR:

Vocations to all branches of the Franciscan family, especially to the vocation of priesthood.

Healing for fraternity members Marie, Nancy R., Nancy L., DeDe, Rich, Lynn, Greta, Anne, Marion, Carolyn, Pat, Charlotte, Mabel, Albert

Repose of the soul of Keith Lamelin, Nancy's stepson

Healing for : Father Jude, Brother Vincent, Ginny, Tom Stauffer, Ronald C., David D., Patty, Bob G., Gayle, Robert, Frank, Emily, Alison, Jan, Laraine D., Kirk, William, Harry, Bob, Guy, Koren, John, Mary, Clare, Kerry

For an end to the wars in Ukraine and the Holy Land and all places suffering from tyranny, violence and corruption

For an end to the gun violence in our country

For all migrants and refugees

Peace, healing and justice in our country and in the world

FORMATION

A REFLECTION ON THE CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES (CONT.)

This month we finish our reflection on Father Christopher Panagoplos', TOR, teaching on the Canticle.

But suddenly with the external clarity of dawn came the inner clarity of grace, reassuring him of his final destiny. This gave a different meaning to his suffering. The usual image of a harmonious world, the vehicle of divine praise, overcomes the confusion brought on by evil [Pozzi]. From grammar to prayer, I would like to think that we who encounter the text of the Canticle must not do so on the level of sentimentality, but rather on the level of a relentless probing into the essence of things, in order to touch there the presence of God [Pozzi].

As a prayer of praise to God the Creator, The Canticle is an expression of our attitude toward creation, which is to accept and love creatures as they are. Francis believed that the entire universe—the self and the environment to which the self belongs—is the work of the highest creative power, the creativity of Transcendent Love. By creation, God brings to being what did not exist, and then in love, lets it be itself. Like the Creator, Francis loved creatures by letting them be themselves, by encouraging them to grow in their uniqueness and by sharing with them their being themselves. Human beings, we proclaim, are made in God's image. Not only did God create all creatures, He made a covenant with them (Gen 9). God knows and loves the sea otter as the sea otter, the scarlet pimpernel as the scarlet pimpernel, grains of sand as grains of sand. As images of God, it is our privilege to do the same.

(cont. on page 4)

OUR RULE of LIFE

PROLOGUE: EARLIER EXHORTATION OF SAINT FRANCIS TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PENANCE

Chapter One: Concerning those who do Penance *(cont.)*

We are spouses when the faithful soul is joined by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ. We are brothers to Him when we do the will of the Father who is in heaven (Mt 12:50). We are mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body through a divine love (1Cor 6:20) and a pure and sincere conscience and give birth to him through a holy activity which must shine as an example before others (Mt 5:16).

REFLECTION: How do I see myself as a brother/sister/mother to Jesus? Do my actions "shine as an example" to others?

REFLECTION on the CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES *(cont.)*



The experience which gave birth to the Canticle is mystical, a creative encounter with reality, when it brings about new being by an increase of being. It causes to be what did not exist prior to the encounter—the self becomes more truly the self, reality becomes more truly reality [Eric Doyle, OFM, “St Francis, The Song of Brotherhood”].

The remarkable circumstance about the composition of the Canticle is that Francis, being almost totally blind, was able to compose a song about the beauty and unity of creation, because he was already one with himself and with the world, and the world was one with him. I believe these beautiful words come from the inner depths of his heart. To “see with the eyes of the heart” is to see what is essential, invisible to the eye. The sun, the moon and the stars, the wind and the earth, and the fire and water were within him. By the light of the inner sun, Francis saw the loveliness of everything. St Francis is full of surprises: he calls poverty his Lady; death as sister; bitterness becomes sweet; dispossession, a sign of possession of oneself by communion with reality other than the self; ecological problems reflect the inner human problem of alienation and selfishness; integration, a remedy to alienation; prayer reveals that we belong to the world, not separate from it. And above all, for Francis washing the suffering and disfigured bodies of lepers, is now for us to establish justice and peace at the local and international levels.

CANTICLE OF THE CREATURES

This year, as we celebrate the Centenary of the Canticle of the Creatures, each month a member of the Regional Formation Team will share meditations on a verse of the Canticle. Spend some time with the meditation, and make it your own by adding your own reflections.



*Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death,
From whom no one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
For the second death shall do them no harm.
Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

It is not something that happens to us ... it is the last thing that we do. Thanks to our brother, Francis of Assisi, death is to us a creature of God ... our Sister. As Francis acknowledged all creation as reflections of God, death was no exception. It was the last ‘creature’ added to his Canticle of Creation just before his own Transitus.

As Christians, we know that death is the gateway to eternal life with God. But do we normally have relationships with doors and gates? Of course not. But as Franciscans, we see death as the sister who accompanies ... who facilitates the transition from earthly life, to a life of full awareness of the divinity within us. That full realization communicates with God – the fullness of Divinity - for all eternity.

Our life on earth is constantly accompanied by earthly deaths. They take the form of violence, war, injustice, loss of loved ones, misunderstandings ... all the things that make life unbearable. Francis experienced the same in his day. But he did not just stand by and allow these things to dominate his life. Instead, he befriended all of creation and allowed it to bring him Seraphic joy and peace. Death was not simply a release from earthly cares and concerns, but the moment to reap the fruits of the worldview that was Francis’.

“Media vita in morte sumus...”, “In the midst of life, we are in death” goes the 912AD prayer of Notker, the Stammerer. A Franciscan person may turn that around to say, “In the midst of death, we are in life”. Joyfully living here on earth, death, as sister comes to help us to the next level of fuller and higher “perfect joy”. When God sees fit – may we embrace our Sister with joyful acceptance.

Fr. Cid

Scenes from the Canticle of Creatures Event

Eight members of our Fraternity, as well as Father John, attended the Canticle of the Creatures event on Saturday, August 31st. The Franciscan Missionary Sisters, with their helpers, put on a most inspiring, joyful celebration of the Canticle. The day included talks on the Canticle by Sister Monica, a presentation from an entrepreneur from NYC who runs a sustainable bakery, another from a member of the Laudato Si Movement and a slide show and talk on Laudato Si by Father Ben, a Capuchin friar from NYC. The whole day was outside, under Brother Sun, and included Mass, times of sharing and a terrific lunch.

Members from 3 other fraternities attended, as well as a number of people interested in protecting our Common Home.



Sister Monica's Tree!



Don't Forget!!!

There are many Regional "live" and Zoom events during September. They are all posted on the Regional Website!

Anyone interested in attending the Regional Day of Recollection on Saturday, Sept. 20th can carpool with Corinne. Give her a call if you plan to come.

If you need help with online registration for any event, contact Sandy or Corinne.

NATIONAL PRAYER for VOCATIONS to the SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

O Good and Gracious God, God of mercy, compassion, generosity and love,
As we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis, choosing daily to live the Gospel life,

Help us to help others to recognize their vocation as a Secular Franciscan that you have already planted in their heart.

Help us, so that together we may all work to bring the Gospel to life.

AMEN!

Marian R. Crosby, OFS

