



# “FROM GOSPEL TO LIFE AND LIFE TO GOSPEL” ST. CLARE FRATERNITY NEWSLETTER

St. Clare Fraternity, Stafford Springs, CT

April 2026

## MAY GOD GIVE YOU PEACE!

We will continue to lead the Rosary for Peace after weekend Masses at St. Edward through Pentecost Sunday, May 24th. Please join us, and invite others as we pray for the peace that is so needed in our world.

## PASTORAL VISITATION

Father Cid Joseph, OFM, will be with us at our May 23rd gathering for a Pastoral Visitation. We hope to see everyone there for this special time.

### FRATERNITY LIFE

#### Monthly Gatherings:

*Fraternity Gathering*  
**Saturday, April 25, 2026—10 a.m.**  
**St. Edward Parish Center**  
**Hospitality—Volunteer needed**

*Fraternity Gathering*  
*Pastoral Visitation*  
**Saturday, May 23, 2026—10 a.m.**  
**St. Edward Parish Center**  
**Hospitality—Volunteer needed**

*Please remember our Common Fund*



**St. Clare of Assisi, Patroness of our Fraternity**

*“Do not lose  
your inner peace  
for anything whatsoever,  
even if  
your whole  
world  
seems upset.”*



**St. Francis de Sales**  
**Secular Franciscan**

### OUR FRATERNITY COUNCIL:

*Minister:* Sandy Comarella, OFS

*Vice-Minister:* Zofia Fitzgerald OFS

*Secretary:* Nancy Rudek, OFS

*Treasurer:* Joe Comarella, OFS

*Formation Director:* Diane Garabedian, OFS

*Councilor:* Barbara Peirola, OFS

*Spiritual Assistant:*

Father John Koziol, OFM Conv

### CONTACT US:

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## POPE LEO'S

### PRAYER INTENTIONS

#### April 2026 -FOR PRIESTS IN CRISIS

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that their communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

#### May 2026 -THAT EVERYONE MIGHT HAVE FOOD

Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.

### OFS INTENTIONS

#### April 2026

For the success of the meeting of the CIOFS Secretariate of Formation and the national fraternities of Hong Kong-Macau, and CIOFS Presidency.

#### May 2026

For the national fraternities of Central Republic of Africa, Peru, Panama and Philippines.

### *Thoughts from your minister:*

My Friends,

An angel, an earthquake, guards shaken with fear, and an empty tomb. In the Gospels, we hear of the Mary Magdalene and other women going to the tomb, finding it empty, bringing Peter and the other disciple, only to have them all leave, not understanding, afraid.

All but Mary; Mary who loved much. Mary stays behind, once again alone, crying, perhaps not understanding and afraid too, but staying and being the first disciple to meet the Risen Lord. Given a message from Jesus, she races back to the others to tell them that she has seen the Lord. But they still did not believe.

I read an interesting thought that said that the tomb was opened not for Jesus to come out but so we could go in, see, and believe. That evening, the disciples were still behind locked doors, still afraid, even with the message from Mary. Walking right out of the sealed tomb, through locked doors, Jesus came to them and His very first words to them were "Peace be with you". I can only imagine the joy and excitement when they told Thomas of His Resurrection. And Thomas, trapped in the disciples' initial unbelief, insisted he would never believe, and therefore never have that peace unless he could see and touch the wounds of Christ's crucifixion.

The Resurrection is story of belief and hope, fear and faith. I heard the simple statement in the Gospels that "He was crucified" and watched the chilling details of Mel Gibson's *The Passion*. I read of Mary's encounter with a Gardener at an empty tomb and Thomas's invitation to run his fingers in the nail holes in His Lord's hands and place his hand in the wound in His side. Let me be the one who doesn't need to see and touch to believe. The Resurrection of Easter tells us that Jesus can and will come to us through the locked doors of our hearts and the empty tombs of our fears. And with that faith and hope, Jesus makes everyday Easter.

He is Risen, alleluia!!

Grace, peace 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 so that your absence may be appropriately recorded. 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 also for peace and unity in our country.

## FEAST DAYS

*April 17— Benedict Joseph Labre  
(Mabel)*

*April 21—Conrad of Parzham*

*April 23—Blessed Giles of Assisi  
(Father John)*

*April 24 - Fidelis of Sigmaringen*

*April 28—Blessed Luchesius &  
Buonadonna (Laraine)*

*May 1—St. Joseph the Worker*

*May 12—Leopold Mandic*

## WE PRAY FOR:

*Vocations to all branches of the  
Franciscan family, especially to the  
vocation of priesthood and the OFS*

*For the repose of the souls of Ginny  
Kuehl and James Smart (minister,  
Korban Fraternity)*

*Healing for fraternity members Ma-  
rie, Nancy R., Nancy L., DeDe ,  
Rich, Lynn, Greta , Anne, Marion,  
Carolyn, Pat, Charlotte, Mabel , Al-  
bert, Rich*

*Healing for: Father Jude, Brother  
Vincent, Tom, Ronald C., David D.,  
Bob G., Laraine D., Koren, Mary,  
Clare, Kerry, Jared, Kevin, Tracey,  
Angela, Samantha, Jared*

*For an end to the war in Iran,  
Ukraine and in all places affected by  
war, violence, and the lust for power.*

*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*

*In thanksgiving for all our blessings.*

## FORMATION

### **Franciscan Peacemaking in Distressing Times** **Joe Makely, OFS, Animator** **Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Commission**

*[Editor's note: The following are excerpts from the April 10, 2026 Formation Friday. In these times of war, divisiveness and discord, we as Secular Franciscans are challenged to remember our call to be peacemakers (OFS Rule, art. 19).]*

Pope Paul VI said "If you want peace, work for justice." (Day of Peace Message, 1972.)

The *OFS General Constitutions* put it this way: "Peace is the work of justice and the fruit of reconciliation and of fraternal love." (GC 23)

According to St Bonaventure, "Justice makes beautiful what has been deformed."

"Justice, then," said Murray Bodo, OFM, "is a path to peace: peace of mind, peace between and among people, and peace among all God's creatures." (*Surrounded By Love: Seven Teachings from St Francis*, 2018, Franciscan Media, 54.)



*(cont. pg. 4)*

## OUR RULE of LIFE

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

Concerning those who do not do Penance (cont.)

See you blind ones, deceived by your enemies: the flesh, the world and the devil, because it is sweet for the body to sin and it is bitter to serve God, for every vice and sin flow and proceed from the human heart (Mt 15:19, Mk 7:21) as the Lord says in the gospel. And you have nothing in this world or in that to come.

**REFLECTION:** Each of us is blind to something. Take some time this month to discern what most deceives our heart.

## Franciscan Peacemaking in Distressing Times

(cont.)

During times of great moral decision for the society and the Church, the members may expect to be called, both individually and collectively. Answering such a call is a unique challenge for every member, and responses will vary depending on temperament and situation.

There are those who say we should focus on prayer, which is true, but within a wider understanding. When we bring our fully functioning, Christ centered, contemplative Franciscan self to the peaceful, non-violent movement for justice, our struggle *becomes* a prayer.

Even the smallest actions are remembered by God, especially direct service for those affected. I may not organize or carry a sign at a public gathering, but I can be present, or offer lodging, food, or transportation, or send participants a mass card with a prayerful word of thanks. This fulfills a great promise from the Rule. Though it may not forestall martyrdom or less serious costs, it can bring the inner peace needed to be an authentic peacemaker.

Questions for Reflection:

- What is my duty as a Secular Franciscan in a time of public moral decision?
- How can my love bring beauty and truth to dark times in society?
- How does one evaluate a public policy in light of Magisterial teaching (the teachings of the Church)?

## 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*



**OFS Prayer for Vocation– April 2026**

For those OFS brothers and sisters who experience crisis in vocation.

"Enough of the idolatry of self and money! Enough of the display of power! Enough of war! True strength is shown in serving life..."

Pope Leo XIV

Vigil for Peace

St. Peter's Basilica,

April 11, 2026

