"FROM GOSPEL TO LIFE AND LIFE TO GOSPEL"

ST. CLARE FRATERNITY NEWSLETTER

St. Clare Fraternity, Stafford Springs, CT — August 2026

MAY GOD GIVE YOU PEACE!

FRATERNITY PICNIC

Saturday, September 26th

Time, details will be discussed at our August 22nd Gathering.





"Love God serve God, everything is in that."

St. Clare of Assisi



FRATERNITY LIFE

Monthly Gatherings:

Fraternity Gathering
Saturday, August 22, 2026—10 a.m.
St. Edward Parish Center
Hospitality—Barbara

Fraternity Picnic
Saturday, September 26
St. Edward Parish Center
Time To Be Discussed

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: Diane Garabedian, OFS

Councilor: Barbara Peirolo, OFS

Spiritual Assistant:

Father John Koziol, OFM Conv

CONTACT US:

comsandy@cox.net

POPE LEO' S PRAYER INTENTIONS

August 2026—*FOR EVANGELIZATION IN THE CITY.*

Let us pray that in large cities, often marked by anonymity and loneliness, we may find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative ways to build community.

September 2026—FOR THE CARE OF WATER

Let us pray for the just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it.

OFS INTENTIONS

August 2026

For the national fraternities of Ireland, El Salvador and the 2nd Pan-African Congress.

September 2026

For the success of formation workshop of formators in Chile, the national fraternities of Peru and Cuba.

Thoughts from your minister:

Peace my friends,

I would make a terrible prophet. After spending the month with Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nahum, and Ezekiel, it's easy to see that we need a prophet today to make sense of the wars, the bombardment of natural disasters ranging from heat domes to earthquakes to droughts and flooding, the hate, the violence, and so on that plagues our world today. But it shouldn't be me. My prophecies would swing between the tears of Jeremiah and bluntness of Ezekiel as he tells the princes of Tyre, Sidon, and the king of Egypt that they will suffer because of their infidelity to the Lord, finally settling on the path of Jonah who tries to simply flee. Being a prophet isn't easy. The Lord tells us "Pay attention!" – pay attention to our covenant, to the love I have poured out on you; I am the Creator, the Lord your God, take no other God before you.

We don't often think of St. Francis as a prophet, perhaps because he didn't go through the streets of Assisi warning the people of their sinfulness, shouting that their way of life was full of evil. Instead, he moved outside the city walls, away from the temptations of power and wealth to care for the poor and live among the lepers, to teach those who wanted to follow him a new way of living the kingdom of God – Gospel to life and life to gospel. That's what true prophets do. They show us the new way to live by showing us the old.

St. Francis certainly was open to the messages and revelations that God spoke to him, messages that he quietly shared with his followers – pay attention, love the Lord your God in all creation for He is the Creator.

As Jeremiah, Isaiah, Jonah and even Ezekiel finally completed the tears and woes and cries of destruction of God's prophecies, they, too, came to see what St. Francis found in his meditations and wanderings, what God spoke to Jeremiah, "With age-old love I have loved you; so I have kept my mercy toward you. Again I will restore you, and you shall be rebuilt" (ch 31:3). And so Francis went on to rebuild. Our challenges, too, are to keep going, to pay attention, to live the love of our Creator and continue to rebuild.

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, the Holy Land, Iran, 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

August 22—Queenship of Mary

August 25—Louis IX of France, Patron of the Third Order (Corinne)

September 4—Rose of Viterbo

September 17—Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis

September 18 –Joseph of Cupertino (Zofia)

WE PRAY FOR:

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

Healing for fraternity members Marie, Nancy R., Nancy L., DeDe , Rich, Lynn, Greta , Anne, Marion, Carolyn, Pat, Charlotte, Mabel , Albert, 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, Mike, Chris, Mary Ann Julian OFS, Mary Beth, Jim

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.

AMEN.

To add names to the prayer list, please contact Corinne.

FORMATION

OFS GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

Last month we reviewed the structure of the OFS. This month we look at the documents that govern our Order.

The relationship of the Secular Franciscan Order's governing documents forms a descending hierarchy of authority and application: the **Rule** is the foundational spiritual core of the Order, the **General Constitutions** provide universal legal and structural application, and the **Statutes** adapt these norms to specific regional or local operational needs.

THE RULE

The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order is our core governing document, from which flow the others. Our Rule consists of 26 articles which define the fundamental charism, spirit, and way of life to live the Gospel in the manner of St. Francis while remaining in secular life. We have had only 4 rules since the time of Francis, with the current rule approved in 1978.

THE CONSTITUTIONS

The General Constitutions (GC) of the Secular Franciscan Order articulate, interpret, and detail how the Rule is to be applied across the entire global order. The GC are approved by the Holy See (the Vatican) and the General Chapter of the OFS, they possess universal juridical force, bridging high-level spiritual ideals with concrete organizational criteria (such as membership rules, formation processes, and governance structures). Our current GC was approved in 2000, and put into practice in early 2001.

(cont. page 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.)

The devil snatches the soul from his body with such anguish and tribulation that no one can know it except he who endures it, and all the talents and power and “knowledge and wisdom” which they thought they had will be taken away from them.

REFLECTION: Some of Francis’ writings can be very challenging, as they force us to examine our innermost feelings. What might be some of the “talents and powers” that we cling to?

OFS Governing Documents *(cont.)*

STATUTES

Statutes are specific operational bylaws created for international councils, national fraternities, regional fraternities, or local fraternities. They handle localized details like election term lengths, meeting frequencies, or local council duties. Statutes must strictly align with and be approved by the higher level of fraternity governance; they can never contradict the General Constitutions or the Rule.

We have **International Statutes**, most recently approved in November 2024, as well as **National Statutes** which were approved in 2013, but are currently being revised. The National Statutes can apply the International Statutes more strictly, but never more loosely.

Regions develop **Regional Guidelines** to adapt the above to their specific needs. They can never be less strict than the National Guidelines. Some local fraternities establish their own guidelines.

October is Franciscan Month! We will be sharing some ideas on how we can promote our Franciscan life with others. Please bring any ideas you may have to our gathering. Let's be creative!

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 Vocations– August 2026

For all the candidates who are preparing to make their professions in the Secular Franciscan Order.

SAVE the DATES!

Regional Day of Recollection - September 19, 2026—9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

St. Anthony of Padua Church 149 S Pine Creek Rd, Fairfield, CT

Regional Chapter—November 14, 2026—9:00 AM—3:00 PM

This Chapter will be a Visitation from our National Fraternity and National Spiritual Assistant

St. Pius X Church 310 Westfield St., Middletown, CT