



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

St. Clare Fraternity, Stafford Springs, CT

February 2026

## MAY GOD GIVE YOU PEACE!

## PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

A reminder that our **February 28, 2026 gathering** will be a **Fraternal Visitation** by Joe Krans, our regional vice minister. Chris Jeffcoat, the area councilor for the region, will accompany Joe. During the visitation, Joe and Chris will meet with the Fraternity Council at 8:30 a.m., and with the entire fraternity at our regular time of 10:00 a.m. We encourage all members to plan to attend this time of connection between our fraternity and our region.

### LENTEN MASS & REFLECTION

See page 4 for details

### FRATERNITY LIFE

#### Monthly Gatherings:

**Fraternity Gathering**

**Fraternal Visitation**

**Saturday, February 28, 2026—10 a.m.**

**St. Edward Parish Center**

**Hospitality—Barbara**

**Fraternity Gathering**

**Saturday, March 28, 2026—10 a.m.**

**St. Edward Parish Center**

**Hospitality—Volunteer needed**

*Please remember our Common Fund*



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



**“Jesus warns us  
not to be sad  
in doing penance,  
so that penance  
may arise from love.”**

**St. Maximilian Kolbe**

### **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:**

comsandy@cox.net

## POPE LEO'S

### PRAYER INTENTIONS

February 2026

#### *FOR CHILDREN WITH INCURABLE DISEASES*

Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

March 2026

#### *FOR DISARMAMENT AND PEACE*

Let us pray that nations move to effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

## OFS INTENTIONS

February 2026

For the national fraternities of Uruguay and South Africa.

March 2026

For the national fraternities of Korea, Chile, Albania, Malaysia, Singapore and Japan.

### *Thoughts from your minister:*

Friends,

"May the Lord give you peace". What a strange greeting from a man who wanted nothing more than to be a great knight, twice leaving his home and his family to prove himself on the battlefield. The world around him was ripe with class conflicts, religious wars, the crusades. Francis was more than ready for the battles and the nobility that victory could bring him. Until, that is, the day he heard a voice ask him "who is it better to serve, the Lord or the servant?".

Like Francis, we are each called to choose who we want to serve. Our world isn't that much different than St. Francis' world. We are living in a time of extreme class conflicts as the gap between the wealthiest and the poorest grows wider and wider. Extreme religious viewpoints are just as prominent and just as violent. Genocide, war, and violence become just another headline. "May the Lord give you peace" is harder to hear in all the noise of conflict and harder to believe in.

Yet despite the violence in his time, St. Francis became a man of "peace, reconciliation, and brotherhood". He found his peace in embracing poverty, serving the poor, by living in the humility of Christ, by loving his neighbor and practicing penance. By living the Gospel life, he was able to stop civil wars in Siena and Arezzo, to tame the wolf of Gubbio, to bring reconciliation between the mayor and bishop of Assisi, without a weapon or a shield. While he wasn't able to end the Crusades or convert the Sultan, his love of Christ led him to a peaceful dialogue, allowing him to share his faith and learn of the Sultan's faith as well. "May the Lord give you peace."

Lent calls us to turn around, to examine our lives, to prayer, fast and penance. St. Francis lived all three, sometimes celebrating up to 5 periods of Lent each year. This Lent, as I face the sultans and wolves in my life, I need to turn away from those perspectives that keep me from peaceful dialogue. I need to turn away from media that flashes out snippets and partial truths about what is happening in our world and who is or isn't making it happen. I need to limit the voices that keep blasting over the voiceless, the poor, the forgotten. I need to take better care of Mother Earth as she is being assaulted daily. This Lent I need to be an instrument of peace, prayer and penance. "May the Lord give you peace".

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

*February 19—Conrad of Piacenza*

*February 24—Blessed Luke Belludi*

*March 2—Agnes of Prague (Anne)*

*March 3—Katherine Drexel*

*March 9—Frances of Rome*

## 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 Marie, Nancy R., Nancy L., DeDe, Rich, Lynn, Greta, Anne, Marion, Carolyn, Pat, Charlotte, Mabel, Albert*

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

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

*For the Confirmation students at St. Edward Church*

*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.**

If you have names that you would like added to the prayer list, please contact Corinne.

## FORMATION

### **The Gift of OFS Fraternity Choosing “WE” over “ME”**

*From a Facebook post by the OFS of South Australia*

Fraternity is more than belonging to a group, it is a way of living where we intentionally choose relationship, mutual care and shared responsibility. In a world that often pushes independence and self-focus, fraternity gently invites us to walk together, just as we are.

*Be present, not perfect.*

Show up as you are. Fraternity grows through honesty and presence, not performance. Simply being there for one another builds trust.

*Practice deep listening.*

Listen to understand, not to reply. Allow others to share their joys, struggles and doubts without rushing to fix or judge.

*Speak with kindness and courage.*

Fraternity includes gentle honesty. When something needs to be said, speak the truth with respect and love, never gossip or division.

*Choose forgiveness quickly.*

Community life is real life and misunderstandings happen. Forgiveness keeps fraternity alive and hearts free.

*Share life simply.*

Meals, conversations, prayers and small acts of service create bonds. Fraternity is often built in ordinary moments.

*(cont. on 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.)

They do not possess spiritual wisdom because they do not have the Son of God, the true wisdom of the Father. It is said of them: *Their wisdom has been swallowed up* (Ps 107[106]:27), and *Cursed are those who turn away from your commands* (Ps 119[118]:21). They see and acknowledge, know and do evil, and knowingly lose their souls.

**REFLECTION:** How can I better understand the wisdom of the Father and what He is saying to me in my life today? When do I let my own will lead me away from the will of the Father?

## The Gift of OFS Fraternity ~ Choosing “WE” over “ME” (cont.)

*Pray for and with one another.*

Holding others before God deepens unity. Prayer reminds us that fraternity is a gift.

*Carry one another's burdens.*

Offer practical help when someone is struggling. No one should walk alone.

Living fraternity is a daily choice to see the other as a brother or sister, to slow down, to love patiently. When we live this way, community becomes a place of healing and joy.

For Reflection:

Which of the descriptions of “fraternity” most resonate with you?

Which in your view are most evident in our fraternity?

Which might we need to work on...together??

### 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— February 2026**

For new vocations to the Secular Franciscan  
Order.

## LENTEN MASS and REFLECTION

Saturday, March 7, 2026

Mass—10:00 a.m.

Followed by a Lenten Reflection by  
Father John

Please plan to attend, and invite others to join  
us as we enter more deeply into our Lenten  
journey.



Our fraternity will be leading a Rosary for Peace after each weekend Mass at St. Edward throughout Lent. Please plan on joining us as we seek the intercession of our Blessed Mother in these times of conflict and division. We need volunteers to lead the Rosary, if willing to help please contact Sandy.