



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

St. Clare Fraternity, Stafford Springs, CT

May 2026

**MAY GOD GIVE YOU PEACE!**



*Remembering Ray*

*Profession to the Secular Franciscan Order—  
October 8, 1991*

*Tranistus to Eternal Life—May 10, 2026*



***“We must love God  
and adore him  
with a pure heart  
and mind,  
because this is  
what he seeks  
above all else.”***

***St. Francis of Assisi***

**FRATERNITY LIFE**

**Monthly Gatherings:**

***Fraternity Gathering  
Saturday, June 27, 2026—10 a.m.  
St. Edward Parish Center  
Hospitality—Greta***

***Fraternity Gathering  
Saturday, July 18, 2026  
Year of St. Francis Pilgrimage to  
St. Stanislaus Basilica, Chicopee, MA  
Details to come***

***Please remember our Common Fund***



**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](mailto:comsandy@cox.net)

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

## *Thoughts from your minister:*

My Friends,

I met St. Francis through Ray, and I'm sure a few of us here could say that. The Franciscans were new to our parish and so was I. But Ray was here. I think he had always been here. Ray was our sexton, but he didn't just look after our buildings and our cemetery; he loved St. Edwards and you could see that in all that he did. Ray shoveled the sidewalks, mowed the lawns, changed the lightbulbs. He would come from home on a Friday night and get the water heater running in the hall for a school function or come in early to start the furnace on a cold Monday morning. Then he would come into Mass, lector and serve at the altar if needed. Ray buried our fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, husbands, wives, and our children. He kept the grass mowed and the weeds around their headstones trimmed so that when we went to pray for them, we knew that they indeed were getting perpetual care. Ray loved St. Edward and served our church well.

I met the secular Franciscans through Ray a few years later. Again, I'm sure that a few of us could say that. St. Francis was a simple man and his theology was simple - "gospel to life and life to gospel". As minister, vice-minister, formation director, and councilor, Ray wasn't a teacher; he was our mentor. A follower of Francis, that was how he lived his life - "gospel to life and life to gospel". You opened the book, listened and let it speak to you, whether it was the gospel or the Saint Francis Omnibus or life. Just open, listen and let it speak to you.

In Matthew 23:13, Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees for blocking the entrance to Heaven with their many rules, pride and complicated spirituality. Sometimes I think that today religion is doing the same with its many rules, complicated theology and those who interpret the Word of God for personal or political gain. Not Ray. Ray kept it simple. Love our Savior, Jesus Christ; love the Eucharist, which he showed us in his devotion to daily Mass throughout the years and to Adoration. After working all day, Ray led us in Evening prayers on Wednesday nights. Open the book, listen to it, let it speak to you. Then serve. Bake bread for your neighbors. Get up early and give them a ride to work when they don't have a car. Take your friend kayaking or find a good place for a picnic. Give where you can. Take care of your family.

Ray did a couple of things before he passed away that stick with me. One, he gave Nancy a copy of the Secular Franciscan Crown Rosary to make sure we all know how to pray the crown rosary - always watching over our prayer life. And second, the last meeting he came to, he shared the story of how he met Ginny and how he knew from the very start that she was the love of his life. In the seventeen years that Joe and I have been with the fraternity, Ray had been asking for prayers for Ginny, never for himself no matter what he was going through. I think that was pretty close to perfect love. And I think when he shared that love with us for the final time, I don't think there was a dry eye in the room! Because of Ray, I pray I can be a better wife, a better friend, a better neighbor.

## FEAST DAYS

June 7—Franz Jagerstatter

June 13—Anthony of Padua (Diane)

June 18—Ven. Matt Talbot OFS

June 30—Raymond Lull (Espy)

July 1—Junipero Serra (DeDe)

July 4—Elizabeth of Portugal

July 10—Veronica Giuliani

## 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 soul of Ray Kuehl, our friend and model of Franciscan vocation*

*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, Kevin, Tracey, Angela, Samantha, Jared, Emma*

*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 broken families*

*For all migrants and refugees*

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

*In thanksgiving for all our blessings.*

*AMEN.*

## FORMATION

### **“Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death...”**

As our fraternity remembers Ray, it is good that we also remember his deep faith and trust in our Loving God. Ray’s commitment to prayer (especially Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament) and his Franciscan vocation were anchors in his life. Let us, too, find consolation in remembering our Franciscan view of Sister Death. From *Formation Friday*, November 3, 2023:

*St. Francis meditated on Sister Death throughout his life. Toward the end of his earthly life, he spoke of Sister Bodily Death in the Canticle of the Creatures.*

**“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.**

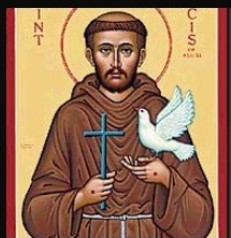
**Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm.” [FA: ED vol 1, p. 158]**

*Our Rule and Constitutions ask us to remain in communion with our deceased brothers and sisters.*

**Rule, Article 19:** *Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend toward the ultimate encounter with the Father.*

**Rule, Article 24:** *It should adopt appropriate means for growth in Franciscan and ecclesial life and encourage everyone to a life of fraternity. This communion continues with deceased brothers and sisters through prayer for them.*

**GC, Article 27.2:** *Secular Franciscans should commit themselves to create in their environment and, above all, in their fraternities, a climate of faith and hope so that “Sister Death” may be regarded as a passage to the Father, and all may prepare themselves with serenity.*



Francis of Assisi

Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received - only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.

AZ QUOTES



Ray was such a gentle soul. He was kind and humble of heart. He did follow in the footsteps of Francis and served as an example for us all. May he rest in peace. DeDe



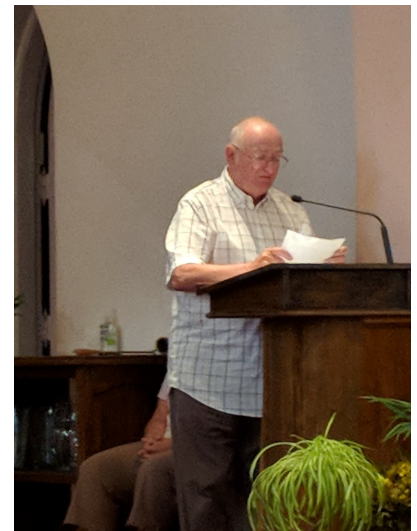
Losing Ray is such a big loss for the fraternity. He has been with us since the beginning and was always a shining example of being a Franciscan. May God comfort all his family and friends as we pray for Ray and Ginny. Peace, Rich



One memory that stands out to me was when a Franciscan friend named Diane asked Ray to design and make a cradle for her eighth child. Ray's wood-working skills were extraordinary. The child that the cradle was made for now has two children and his children both slept in that cradle. His craftsmanship reflected the goodness of his soul. The beautiful cradle will be used for generations to come and always be a treasured memory for me. Ray may you rest in peace. Greta

St. Francis once described the "perfect friar" – a description that took the best quality of each of his early followers.

If I had to describe the "perfect Secular" - I would just say "Ray". He was the best of all of us— simple, centered on Jesus, loving, gentle. His love of creation shown through his pictures and time spent kayaking. His devotion to Adoration, and to the Liturgy of the Hours. And so much more that he so unselfishly taught and gave to the rest of us.



Well done, good and faithful servant. May you be resting in the eternal peace of heaven, with God whom you served so well.

Peace, Corinne



## POPE LEO'S

### PRAYER INTENTIONS

#### 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.

#### June 2026- For the values of sports.

Let us pray that sports be an instrument of peace, encounter and dialogue among cultures and nations, and that they promote values such as respect, solidarity and personal growth.

### OFS INTENTIONS

#### May 2026

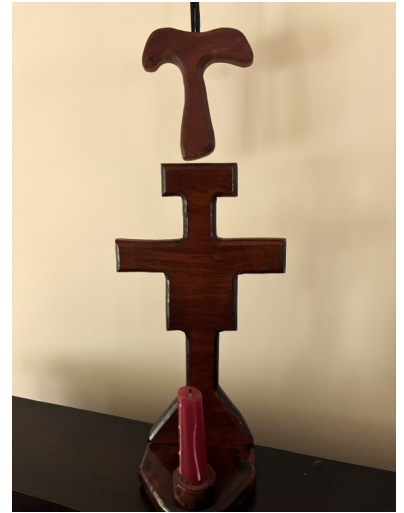
For the national fraternities of Central Republic of Africa, Peru, Panama and Philippines.

#### June 2026

For the national fraternities of Ecuador, Venezuela, Belgium and Switzerland.

### *Thoughts from your minister: (cont.)*

I won't ever be able to make a Tau for everyone nor a candleholder. And I probably won't even try to make bread for you. But I do know that Ray has taught me how to be a better Franciscan. Because of Ray, I begin my prayers every morning in thanksgiving for the many blessings of the day. I pray for those who asked me to pray for them, for those who have no one to pray for them and for those who I forgot to pray for. And I pray that because of Ray I can be a better minister for you.



Rest in peace with Ginny, my friend, and may you be singing and playing your guitar in Heaven's Infinite Choir.

And, Ray, pray for our fraternity along with Bernice, Nancy, Doris, Jeanne, Florence, Gerry, Anna, and Barbara.

Grace, peace and keep that Easter Hope alive,

Sandy

**On Thursday, June 25th, we will host  
a presentation on**

**"St. Francis Lives!**

**The Easter of St. Francis"**

**6:30 p.m.**

**St. Edward Church**

**Invite all to join us as we celebrate  
this Jubilee Year of St. Francis!**



**St. Francis  
Lives!**

**The Easter of  
St. Francis**



## Remembering a Friend

Ray was a pillar of our church, fiercely devoted to his faith in Jesus and his love for his wife Ginny.

He was our sexton for over 25 years, happily responding any time there was an issue at the church, school, hall, or cemetery. He took ownership of all of his responsibilities and made sure everything was working as it should be regardless of whether he was on the clock or on his own personal time. Our parish belonged to him and it was up to him to keep things running. Many times he came in to work in the very early morning hours to restart the aging boiler in the school so the kids would have a warm place to study, or show up in time to repair a broken or burned-out light in the church before a holiday Mass. He was Mr. Fixit. If something was broken and was needed quickly, he always found a way to make it work. He finally retired when he was 75 years old.

He stood up to lector when no one else was available, or serve on the Altar as needed. He served on the Parish Council for many years, finally stepping down when he was certain the foundation he helped create was solid enough to continue.

Ray was one of the original members of the St Clare Fraternity of the Secular Franciscans 35 years ago. As past minister, vice-minister and formation director, he was instrumental in recruiting many members.

He was a proud member of the Knights of Columbus Council 1395 where he helped with numerous fundraising events. In his later years he became a member of the K of C 4<sup>th</sup> Degree Assembly 2190 and was excited to attend meetings even after he could no longer drive at night.

Ray was a very dear friend. He is responsible for my guitar playing and for my vocation to the Seculars. His devotion to God, Jesus, and Francis was beyond faith. To quote his son at the funeral, "Ray didn't just have faith, he had facts." He just knew in the deepest part of him that all we believe is true. He was certainly one of a kind, the kind we all hope will be a part of our lives at some time. I consider myself truly blessed to have called him my friend.

Joe

## SAVE the DATE



## JUBILEE YEAR OF SAINT FRANCIS

1226- 2026

Saturday, July 18, 2027

Jubilee Year of St. Francis  
Pilgrimage

to St. Stanislaus Basilica,  
Chicopee

Mass, Reflection by Father  
John, Lunch, Fraternity Time

More details to come!