

SUMMER 2026

Communio

That All May Be One
Newsletter of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region
Secular Franciscan Order



Spirituality



Formation



Fraternity



Apostolate



"Into New Life: Celebrating the Easter of St. Francis"



Greetings my dear sisters and brothers,

This year's ARG Theme, "Into New Life: Celebrating the Easter of St. Francis" as we celebrate the 800th Anniversary of the passing of Seraphic Father. How blessed we have been these past three years to celebrate these significant moments/accomplishments of St Francis, Rule of 1223, The Canticle of Creation 1224, receiving the Stigmata 1225 and now the culmination of his life his passing.

It is our nature to remember lives well lived, to honor our ancestors, yet to walk in the footsteps of Francis, who leads us to Christ, these moments have not been just for us, Franciscans but for the world. The "poor little man of Assisi" who is revered by so many. Who not only impacted the culture of his time, but continues to do so today.

He continues to turn the world upside down, to embrace poverty with joy. Service of the lowliest as a gift as serving Christ. Humility to know we cannot do this without the Holy Spirit.

When the world is in turmoil today as it was in Francis's time, we too embrace an attitude of peace. A desire to help heal relationships. A desire to outwardly live Gospel to life and life to Gospel. To have Pope Leo XIV embrace this Anniversary, to give us the opportunity to share the good news, to Celebrate the Easter of St Francis.

Looking forward to seeing you at ARG, as we celebrate this gift we have received and share so willingly.

God bless

Ellen





i am who i am in the Sight of God, Nothing More, Nothing Less

In a recent conversation with a fraternity I heartfully offered “please reach out to me or your area councilor for questions or concerns. I don’t have all the answers, but i know where to look and who to ask. We can work it out together.”

We have so many rich sources and resources at our fingertips. There is not much that this soul can add; except this: remember the grace of quiet, still, and a listening heart. A seventeenth century Carmelite, Brother Lawrence, was faithful to “the practice of the presence of God”, attending to the constant awareness that God is present and with us. The writers of early Franciscan documents indicate that in his perpetual conversion and growth in holiness, poverty and humility, St. Francis grew in keeping the Lord ever in his presence

Looking to our practice of Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel, our Lord speaks to us in Mt 28:20:

Remember, I am with you always until the end of the ages

In the moments of our daily lives, let us keep and remember the ever presence of our Triune God.

Formation News and Resources:

***BSSF Formation Commission:** Lynn Oeser OFS, Chair Br Bob Menard OFM, Dave Shick, OFS, Lee Cunningham, OFS, Travis Bongiorno OFS, Becky Bresnahan OFS, Susan MacArthur OFS, Frances Acosta OFS, Michaeleen Davis OFS, Margi Williams, OFS. Gabrielle Cruz-Uribe OFS.

As a commission we are working to inspire a movement that seeks encounter and builds relationships with others as Catholic Christians in our Churches, in our families and communities, and in our fraternities.

***Formation Forums** are monthly one hour Zoom sessions for BSSF Formation Directors, Spiritual Assistants and all professed since we are all formators to one another. The invitations are sent to Spiritual Assistants and Formation Directors. The topics of recent “Forming Formators” portion of the meeting were the Four Pillars of the BSSF Region, Franciscan Simplicity presented by Dave Shick, OFS and Overview of Fratelli Tutti, Dilexit Nos and Dilexi Te presented by Theresa Christie, OFS. Linda Beauregard OFS and Jennye Taylor-Johnson OFS of St Maximillian Kolbe Fraternity shared a process for engagement of a sponsor. Sponsor as an [Agent of Formation](#) can be found at pg 59 of this link

[BSSF_Regional_Formators_Guidelines_for_Initial_Formation.pdf](#)

Next Formation Forum will be June 18th at 7:30 EDT. David Cruz-Uribe OFS and Gabrielle Cruz-Uribe OFS will Expand on Dilexi Te and its relevance to our Secular Franciscan Rule. If you are professed and would like to attend, ask your formation director to forward the zoom invitation to you.

***Formation Fridays** are forwarded to Formation Directors weekly, they are asked to forward to their Fraternity Members. An [archive of all Formation Fridays](#) can be found by following the link.

***Links:** [Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region](#), [Secular Franciscan USA](#)

Lynn Oeser, OFS, Regional Formation Director

JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the church door, you will not find Him in the chalice.

Saint John Chrysostom

While each of our fraternities has apostolates it shares among its members, many if not most Secular Franciscans also have their own personal apostolates - ways in which they show up in the world to serve others. I talked with Jerome Wagner, OFS, a member of the St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity in Charlotte, about one of his personal apostolates and how it brings him closer to Christ. Jerome is the JPIC animator for his fraternity. For the past five years, Jerome has been volunteering at a drive-through food distribution operation run by a group called Cooperative Christian Ministries in his hometown of Concord, NC. This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity.

Q: What do you do?

A: I help to get people from the interviewing area into the get-your-food area. And I interact with them, get their signature on some papers, chat with them a little bit, help load the food and that kind of thing. I do that on Mondays, typically from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM. And I also do a second time on Thursday evenings from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Q: How many people are served daily?

A: On certain days, we may serve 50 to 80 people depending on the day.

Q: Help us understand more specifically what you do.

A: I'm preparing a cart of food, and verifying that what needs to be in that cart is in that cart. I find the car that's associated with that order and tell them that we're ready to serve them and show them where to drive up. And then once they're in position to be loaded, I will interact with the driver and make sure I've got indeed the right person for that order, have them sign the form itself, chit chat a little bit and then as needed, also help to load food into their car and then let them know they're all set and tell them goodbye.

Q: What has surprised you about these experiences?

A: On occasion, the people who come to the food pantry where I'm helping load cars demonstrate remarkable devotion themselves in their prayer lives and so forth. There's one particular guy that I've seen for a number of months and in addition to praying for him, he will pray for me. So it's a reciprocal type of thing.

Q: Has this apostolate changed you spiritually?

A: It has changed me. My increased awareness of the depth of food insecurity in my area, higher sensitivity to that and using this as a tangible way to help address it.

Q: How would you talk to someone who might have fears of working with hungry people?

A: I'm not a lone ranger in this. Basically I'm coattailing on an operation run by a well-known, well-respected, long established entity in the community where they have paid staff, which must be supplemented by volunteers in order to do the work.

By Allison Salerno, OFS
Regional JPIC Animator



Experience Saint Bonaventure

The Franciscan Renewal Center is offering a free online retreat inspired by St. Bonaventure's Journey to God.

<https://casaconnect.thecasa.org/JIG>

JOURNEY TO GOD RETREAT



How may I serve you?

“1800 Francis, Frances speaking, how may I serve you?” That is my greeting every time the 1-800-Francis phone rings. I never tire of the little surprise or smile I hear on the other end. In 2024 the National Secular Franciscan Order, USA invited me to serve as coordinator. I hesitated at first, not wanting to take on yet another responsibility, but I prayed about it and felt a clear prompting: you are needed to help bring more brothers and sisters into the Order. Saying yes was one of those important commitments in my chosen vocation. You might be wondering, why am I telling you this?

May 11th, 2026 marks a deeply meaningful milestone in my life: 15 years since my profession as a Secular Franciscan. It is a moment filled with gratitude, humility, and joy; gratitude for the call, humility before the grace that sustains it, and joy in the gift of living the Gospel in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. At least I am trying to!

That this anniversary coincides with **Pope Leo XIV’s announcement of the Year of St. Francis** feels like a tender and providential affirmation. It is as though the Church herself is inviting all of us, Franciscans and non-Franciscans alike, to return to the simplicity, peace, and radical love that St. Francis lived and preached.

Being a Secular Franciscan is not about escaping the world, but about embracing it more fully through the Gospel. My vocation did not remove me from family life, work, or responsibilities. Instead, it transformed how I live them. St. Francis showed me that holiness is not reserved for monasteries or cloisters; it flourishes in kitchens, offices, parishes, neighborhoods, and communities.

Over these fifteen years, I have learned that the Secular Franciscan life is one of daily conversion. It means choosing, again and again, to live with humility, to seek peace where there is division, to offer forgiveness even when it is difficult, and to trust God when the path ahead is uncertain. The Lord knows there have been many challenging moments along the way, but you do not have to be a Franciscan to experience them; they are part of the shared journey of life.

I have come to understand peace and reconciliation not as lofty ideals, but as daily practices. They begin in the heart and extend outward: in families, fraternities, parishes, and a world wounded by conflict, fear, and division. Living this charism has shaped how I pray, how I listen, and how I respond to others, especially those who are hurting or forgotten. Heck, it encouraged me to start this ministry. I am blessed by all of you!

One of the greatest blessings of my vocation has been the gift of fraternity. Walking this journey alongside brothers and sisters who share the same Franciscan vision has been a continual source of strength, consolation, and encouragement. Together, we pray, discern, celebrate, struggle, and grow in faith and service. We gently remind one another that we do not walk alone on this path.

In fraternity I’ve seen people of different ages and backgrounds, all united by one calling: following Christ as St. Francis did. This shared path shows the Church as a community.

The announcement of the **Year of St. Francis** is more than a commemoration; it is an invitation. It calls each of us to ask: ***How am I living the Gospel today? Where is God inviting me to be an instrument of peace? What attachments am I being asked to let go of so that I may love more freely?***

For me, this year is a renewed “yes” to the promise I made 15 years ago: to live the Gospel faithfully according to the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, inspired always by the example of St. Francis and St. Clare, and guided and animated by the Holy Spirit. So to my Franciscan family, this is my love letter to YOU! **Pace e Bene!**

Submitted by Frances Acosta, OFS; Area 4 Councilor

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BELONG – BELIEVE – BEHAVE: “Do I BELONG as a Secular Franciscan?”

This past year, our Fraternity of the Stigmata of St. Francis has lost five precious members to Sister Death, including one of our founding members, and other members to the slow death of cognitive decline. As much as we miss these special brothers and sisters, the need arises to recruit new members. This is a question all of us face.

Before recruitment starts, let's ask ourselves two very basic questions? Who are we? Who would belong in our Fraternity?

On the surface, the answers to these questions are very basic. We are Secular Franciscans and we live Gospel to Life: Life to Gospel. Who belongs? Catholics in good standing who feel called to follow St. Francis.

But, any good outreach plan needs to dig deeper. When a visitor comes to visit our Fraternity, what do they see? What is their first impression of who we are? Are they welcomed and made to feel they Belong as a Secular Franciscan? During our Gathering, where do we place our emphasis? Think of the time allotted to the various activities that occur during the Gathering. Is anything given to the visitor to explain more about who we are?

Next, why would a visitor want to return? Or, would a visitor have a negative impression of us or think they don't Belong? This could happen unfortunately when the group seems cliquish and not welcoming to anyone new. What are our expectations of a visitor? Where do we expect them to be in the conversion process? Some church groups believe that someone needs to Behave (live a perfect Christian lifestyle) and Believe before they can Belong. Others take the view that we Belong (are loved by Christ) and that Believe is a process of learning how to Behave as a Christian. Simply, do we look on the negative of others (how they Behave) so that we rule out the option for them to Believe or to Belong? Do we make assumptions, label people or put them in a box limiting conversion? Or, do we look on others to Belong as made in the image and likeness of God and see their potential realizing they, like we, are growing in the process of Believe and Behave? Can we love unconditionally as St. Francis did?

After we reflect on who we are and how we present ourselves, the next step is to determine how we reach out to invite visitors and who are our target visitors. Do we have Fraternity activities to which we can invite visitors? How can we reach out to the parishioners of Catholic Churches in our area? Is there a local college or university? Do we have brochures or a newsletter or a website? How can we have personal contact with potential visitors to give a personal invitation?

Margi Williams
Minister, Fraternity of the Stigmata of St. Francis
BSSF Area 2 Councilor

Traveling and need to find the closest Catholic Church and Mass times?

<https://masstimes.org/>

ARG 2026

This year's theme: "Into New Life: Celebrating the Easter of St. Francis"

September 11 - 13, 2026

Ridgecrest Conference Center, Black Mountain, NC

OUR SPEAKER FOR THE BSSF AREA REGIONAL GATHERING



Darleen Pryds, Ph.D. has taught at the Franciscan School of Theology since 2001. As of June 30, 2026, she will officially retire from full time teaching. She is the author of many articles and books on Franciscan laity and offers spiritual retreats and pilgrimages to Rome and Assisi. In her spare time, she volunteers as a hospice caregiver. She enjoys hiking and playing tennis with her husband Scott. You can find more information about [Darleen Pryds](#) by following this link.

[Darleen Pryds YouTube Video](#)

Registration Packets will be sent out by June 15

Registration is due back to the Region; by Aug1

	Room (2 nights)	Meals @ \$77 per person	Total	Total Per person
Single	338	77	415	415.00
Double	338	154	492	246.00
Triple	358	231	589	196.33
Quad	378	308	686	171.50

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GOLF CART WILL BE AVAILABLE



ALL ABOARD!!!
WATCH YOUR STEP
PLEASE REMAIN SEATED
UNTIL THE VEHICLE COMES
TO A COMPLETE STOP!



FRATERNITY APOSTOLATE ACTIVITIES

Channel of Peace Fraternity Prison Apostolate

Are you coming to ARG in September? Do you have any unused greeting cards with envelopes lying around the house? We can use them. We will have a collection box at our display table in the conference room. I mean all kinds of greeting cards: all holidays, graduation, sympathy, encouragement, birthdays for all ages, sacraments (yes, there are Catholics in prison) etc. The only restriction is there cannot be any personal names and addresses on the cards or envelopes. Who gets them? The prison chaplain hands them out to any indigent inmate who cannot afford to buy a card to send to their family members for some special event. Its amazing how a simple card helps keep family bonds strong.

Which prison? Walker State Faith and Character based prison in Rock Spring, Georgia. It is the first and only faith and character based prison in Georgia. Why do we as Franciscans support this particular prison? In preparing for this article, I looked up a short definition of justice. It is “to make right”. There are four types of justice: 1) distributive—determining who gets what; 2) procedural—determining how people are treated fairly and equally; 3) retributive—punishment for wrong doing; and 4) restorative—trying to restore relationships to rightness. Walker State focuses on the restorative. Their mission is to reduce recidivism through utilization of Faith based and community partnerships that will support the offender’s transition from custody to community. Through their required programs and a huge volunteer support group Walker has a recidivism rate of 5% compared to 75% of most prisons.

What types of programs do they have that volunteers can be involved? One is Kairos Prison Ministry International, an interdenominational group of volunteers that provide two 3 day retreats a year helping inmates strengthen their spiritual habits of prayer, study, and service as they strive to replace old destructive habits. They have a Malachi Dad class that is scripture based to teach men how to be better fathers to their children. There is a one on one mentoring program where a volunteer is assigned an inmate and they meet for 1 ½ hours every two weeks to help them with questions of faith. A good example of a “character” trait that is emphasized is honesty. There are no locks on any inmate locker.

I had one inmate tell me his father had taught him to be a criminal. He wanted to learn a better way. He said, “ Can you teach me?” This was an open door to tell him about Jesus who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. What if I had not been there? So please, do not be afraid of volunteering at a prison. You are needed.

If not able to do prison ministry, how about helping them when they get out?

The first two years after release are critical. There are issues of job discrimination, housing discrimination, restoring family relationships, adjusting to new technologies, and learning how to make good decisions.They just need someone to help them. Is that someone you?

Submitted by Daryl Moffitt, OFS Minister, Channel of Peace, Chattanooga, TN.



St Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity Yard Sale

Hello Franciscan Brothers and Sisters,

Pax et Bonum! I am reaching out with a simple request that can make a real difference here in Lancaster County, South Carolina. This autumn we will hold a small yard sale to support three local charities, and your gently used donation of purses and scarfs/wraps would be a great blessing. These proceeds go directly to: **Women's Enrichment Center**- offering unwed mothers and their babies life-skills training, financial guidance and up to two years of supportive housing.

Lancaster Children's Home- caring for abused, neglected and unwanted children, and helping them through sports, social skills and practical life training.

Lancaster County Coalition for the Homeless- providing showers, laundry facilities and light meals for families without running water and for our homeless neighbors.

All donated items truly help the cause as demonstrated at our recent spring sale where we raised \$450 for these ministries.

Thank you dear brothers and sisters for considering this request. Supporting the vulnerable is at the heart of our Franciscan vocation and flows beautifully from our Four Pillars.

With gratitude and fraternal affection,

Lynn Carter, OFS, St. Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity, Lancaster, SC

NEW COUNCILS

Channel of Peace

Minister: Daryl Moffitt, OFS
Vice Minister: Gail Campbell, OFS
Formation Director: Barbara Garrison, OFS
Secretary: Dianna Starr, OFS
Treasurer: Jill Johnston, OFS
Councilor: Chris Liakos, OFS
Councilor: Ann Hammers, OFS



Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary

Minister: Christine Lukesh, OFS
Vice Minister: Kathy McInerney, OFS
Formation Director: Barbara Gloven, OFS
Secretary: Debbie Clisham, OFS
Treasurer: Angela Cavaluzzi, OFS
Councilor: Mary Houser, OFS
Councilor: Maureen Cronin, OFS



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Fraternity of Brother Francis

Minister: Esther Kelly, OFS
Vice Minister: Jane Wilson, OFS
Secretary: Mike Oeser, OFS
Treasurer: Karen A. Mitchell, OFS
Formation Director: E.S. Lynn Oeser, OFS
Councilor 1: Rita Borst, OFS
Councilor 2: Xiomara Palma, OFS
Councilor 3: Doug P. Miller, OFS



Blessed Duns Scotus

Minister: Mary Sacavage, OFS
Vice Minister: Ted Penney, OFS
Secretary: Barbara Umpleby, OFS
Treasurer: Kathleen Barnes, OFS
Formation Director: Joanne Penney, OFS
Councilor: Eric Schwartzkopf, OFS
Councilor: Mary Redden, OFS
Councilor: Annamaria Guzzi, OFS



Franciscan Family of Greensboro

Minister: Kathy Gallucci, OFS
Vice Minister: Susan Russell, OFS
Secretary: Holly Bessey, OFS
Treasurer: Joyce Best, OFS
Formation Director: Georgette Schraeder, OFS
Councilor: Judith Walsh, OFS



Is your Fraternity struggling to find an apostolate that everyone can do?

Check out: Project Linus is a national organization whose volunteers, called “blanketeers,” make blankets for distribution to children who are seriously ill or have been traumatized. There may be a chapter near you if not perhaps you could start a chapter <https://www.projectlinus.org/>

Our Lady of the Rosary Makers make rosaries for distribution to missions all over the world. <https://www.olrm.org/> Once the rosaries are made simply ship them to OLRM and they will take care of sending them to the missions.



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St. Padre Pio, Emerging Fraternity

Leader: Pete McCadden, OFS
Vice Minister: John Myers, OFS
Secretary: Leonore Myers, OFS
Treasurer: Lonny Persica, OFS
Formation Director: Rose Keene, OFS
Councilor: Mary Frances Veltri, OFS
Councilor: Patte Kennedy, OFS
Councilor: Lynn Carter, OFS



NEWLY PROFESSED



Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity
From left: Rose Keene, OFS, Linda McCadden, OFS, Lynn Carter, OFS, Pete McCadden OFS, Louanne Pelletier, OFS (back)

New Candidates

On Sunday, April 18, the Padre Pio Fraternity in Raleigh, NC, welcomed 11 new candidates. They are pictured below with their sponsors.

New candidates are: Jackie Centamore, OFS; Carla Fostiere, OFS; Michelle Hicks, OFS; Vicki Jack, OFS; Beth Lyon, OFS; Lynn Meserole, OFS; Denise Mickalites, OFS; Rula Osta, OFS; Hui Sharp, OFS; Michael Sharp, OFS; and Lori Zagiba, OFS. These candidates are continuing their formation and discerning their permanent call to the Secular Franciscan Order.



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A poignant and sentimental poem to pay tribute to Fathers Day
Tony DaVino OFS, Minister, St. Clare of Assisi Fraternity, Aiken, SC

WHAT TO GET DAD FOR FATHERS DAY

IF HE IS HANDY THEN GET HIM A DRILL
IF HE LIKES COOKING THEN GET HIM A GRILL

IF HE LIKES SKIING THEN GET HIM A HILL
HELP HIM GO HUNTING TO BAG A BIG KILL

IF HE'S A WRITER THEN GIVE HIM A QUILL
IF HE LIKES TO GARDEN HELP HIM TO TILL

IF HE CAN MAKE MOONSHINE BUILD HIM A STILL
THEN BUY HIM A JUG TO WASH DOWN THE SWILL

IF HE FANCIES PICKLES GET HIM A DILL
BUY HIM A LATTE AND DON'T LET IT SPILL

TAKE HIM ON A HAY RIDE WITH EVERY FRILL
SIT CLOSE BESIDE HIM TO KEEP OUT THE CHILL

IF HE IS TOO CLUMSY TEACH HIM A SKILL
IF HE GETS NERVOUS HE MIGHT NEED A PILL

IF HE GETS LONELY JUST SEND HIM A JILL
IF HE GETS BORED SHE WILL GIVE HIM A THRILL

GET HIS RICH UNCLE TO REDO HIS WILL
THEN TAKE DAD TO ROME AND SEND BACK THE BILL

IF HE IS NEEDY THEN GIVE HIM A MIL
IF HE IS GREEDY THEN HE SHOULD GET NIL

IF HE ASKS FOR HELP JUST GIVE HIM A LIL
IF HE WANTS SOME LOVING GIVE HIM HIS FILL

A MEDITATION ON THE OUR FATHER

Some time ago, when I was a student in the Encounter School of Ministry, we were given an assignment to journal as a part of our daily practice of listening to the Holy Spirit. I am not generally one who journals - I will sit for an hour and have an empty page at the end of that time. But one evening something happened, we had talked about prayers and the assignment that week was to journal with the Our Father. I sat in my usual spot on my couch fully expecting to have an empty page at the end of the hour of meditation, but to my surprise I simply started writing like I had never been able to before. This is what came to me:

Our Father, who art in heaven

But not just heaven, I am all around you; in my creations that I have provided for you. Just say my name and I'll be there - You've got a friend that will always be there

Hallowed be thy name

Holy, yes, but don't let that stop you from talking to me. I want to share my holiness with you. I want you to be with me.

Thy kingdom come

Yes I have a kingdom with many rooms and I have prepared a place for you. I want you in my kingdom.

Thy will be done

My will is for you to be with me and for your brothers and sisters too. Please walk with them and help them on their journey and let them help you too.

On earth as in heaven

Yes on earth. My kingdom could be there if only you have love. Love like I have for you. I made earth to be your home while you are on your journey to salvation. You could have heaven there - just go to Mass - I am there

Give us this day, our daily bread

I have provided the resources for you. It is there for you to use, but please be good stewards of the resources I have supplied, they are meant for ALL. Take care of your brothers and sisters in need. Some have more than others, please share

Forgive us our trespasses

My child, I love you, forgiveness is there for the asking. I forgive because I love. My love for you is everlasting.

As we forgive those who trespass against us

Please be kind to your brothers and sisters. If I can forgive, so must you. Use the love I have given you and reflect it back to your brothers and sisters. If we have love, that is all we need. Start with love and the forgiving is easy; as my yoke is easy.

Lead us not into temptation

Aaah temptation - Look at Jesus and how he handled temptation. Stand up to the tempter, I am there to support you. Do not be afraid of temptation, you are better than that.

But deliver us from evil

Yes, I will, all you need is love. I will never hand you over to the evil one. My child, I want you with me. Do not listen to his temptations - I have already won the battle, he just doesn't believe it yet. But he will!

Submitted by Theresa Christie, OFS, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity
BSSF Regional Secretary
BSSF Communio Editor



Health Tips from Dr. T

Theresa L. Christie, MD, OFS
St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity
Augusta GA

The Benefits of Movement for Your Joints

Movement is essential for maintaining healthy joints and overall mobility. Whether through daily activities, stretching, or structured exercise, regular movement keeps joints flexible, reduces stiffness, and prevents pain. A sedentary lifestyle, on the other hand, can lead to joint discomfort and increased risk of conditions such as osteoarthritis.

One of the primary benefits of movement is lubrication of the joints - “motion is lotion” as they say in the orthopedic world. Joints contain synovial fluid, which is a natural lubricant that reduces friction between bones. Physical activity helps circulate this fluid, ensuring that joints move smoothly and efficiently. Without regular movement, synovial fluid production decreases, leading to stiffness and discomfort.

Movement strengthens the muscles and ligaments that support the joints. Strong muscles help absorb impact and reduce stress on the joints, lowering the risk of injuries. Activities such as strength training, fitness classes and stretching improve muscle tone and flexibility; this will enhance joint stability and prevent strain.

Movement plays a significant role in reducing inflammation and stiffness. Low-impact exercises like swimming, walking, and cycling help improve blood circulation, which delivers oxygen and nutrients to the joints while removing waste products. This process helps reduce inflammation and slows down the progression of joint-related conditions.

Additionally, regular physical activity helps with weight management, which is crucial for joint health. Excess weight puts added stress on weight-bearing joints, such as the knees and hips, increasing the risk of conditions like osteoarthritis. By maintaining a healthy weight, individuals can relieve pressure on their joints and prevent long-term damage.

In summary, movement is vital for joint health. It keeps joints lubricated, strengthens supporting muscles, reduces inflammation, and helps maintain a healthy weight. Incorporating regular physical activity into daily life can prevent joint pain, improve mobility, and enhance overall well-being.



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COME AND EXPERIENCE A NEW TRAVELING EXHIBIT ON THE GEORGIA MARTYRS!

St. James the Less, Savannah (Narthex)

Wednesday, September 10, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m | Thursday, September 11, 8 a.m. to noon

Tailored for grades five and up, the museum-style exhibit tells the story of the Georgia Martyrs and life on the Georgia coast in the 16th- and 17th-centuries.

REMEMBERING THE MARTYRS: WALK WHERE THEY WALKED

Nativity of Our Lady, Darien | Friday, September 12

Mass with Bishop Parkes at 11 a.m.

Premiere of the documentary Catholics in the New World and interpretive ranger tours at Ft. King George to follow

Beatification of the Five Georgia Martyrs will take place on October 31, 2026 at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Savannah, GA. Cardinal Frank Leo, Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto will represent the Holy Father as Papal Legate. It is noteworthy that the beatification is taking place in this Jubilee Year of St. Francis.

The Georgia Martyrs were a group of five Franciscan missionaries who gave their lives for the Catholic faith in the sixteenth century. Their martyrdom is one of the earliest recorded Christian witness events in the New World. The martyrs : Pedro de Corpa, OFM; Blas Rodríguez, Miguel de Añón, OFM; Antonio de Badajoz, OFM; and Francisco de Veráscola, OFM challenged certain local customs, particularly the practice of polygamy among tribal leaders. Their deaths are a powerful witness to the Franciscan commitment to evangelization and fidelity to the Gospel, even in the face of persecution.

For more information and to register to attend follow the link below to the Diocese of Savannah website.

[Beatification of the Georgia Martyrs](#)

Franciscan **websites**



The Monastery of St. Clare: [Poor Clares](#)

Franciscan Friars: [Our Lady of Guadalupe Province](#)

Pilgrimages: [Franciscan Pilgrimages](#)

Justice and Peace: [Franciscan Action Network](#)

Secular Franciscan Order: [National Secular Franciscan Website](#)

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis: [Regional Secular Franciscan Website](#)

Consilium Internationale OFS: [CIOFS](#)

TAU: [TAU-USA](#)

The Gospel Through a Franciscan Lens

Homilies from Fr. Christopher are available on the national website :

[Fr. Christopher's Homilies](#)



BSSF Regional Executive Council Roster

Minister: Ellen Ferrone, OFS

Vice Minister: David Cruz-Uribe, OFS

Secretary: Theresa Christie, OFS

Treasurer: Charlie Comberrel, OFS

Formation Director: Lynn Oeser, OFS

Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Bob Menard, OFM

Area Councilors

Area 1: Gabrielle Cruz-Uribe, OFS

AL: Bessemer; **TN:** Chattanooga, Knoxville, Nashville

Area 2: Margi Williams, OFS

GA: Blairsville, Johns Creek, Lithia Springs, Jonesboro;

Area 3: Becky Bresnahan, OFS; Susan McArthur, OFS

GA: Augusta, **SC:** Aiken, N. Charleston, Murrells Inlet, Bluffton

Area 4: Michaelleen Davis, OFS, Frances Acosta, OFS

NC: Newton, Charlotte, Asheville, Hendersonville, **SC:** Spartanburg, Greenville, Indian Land;

Area 5: Lee Cunningham, OFS; Travis Bongiorno, OFS

NC: Elizabeth City, Morehead City, Wilmington, Raleigh, Burlington, Greensboro, Winston-Salem

Archivist: Lee Cunningham, OFS

Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation Animator: Allison Salerno, OFS

Multicultural Commission Chair: Vacant

Youth/Young Adult Fraternal Animator: Vacant

Web Master: Michaelleen Davis, OFS

Prayer Ministry (online prayer requests)

Area 1: Lindy Crace, OFS

Area 2: Anthony Cumia, OFS

Area 3: Christine Lukesh, OFS

Area 4: Carol Drum, OFS

Area 5: Bob Sabisch, OFS

Communio editor: Theresa Christie, OFS

