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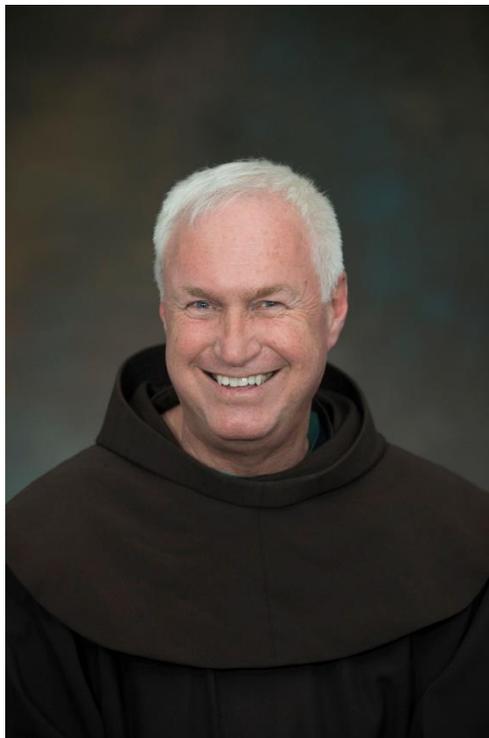
# *Padre Pio Fraternity*

## *Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region*

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### **Goodbye!**

Fr. Steve Kluge, OFM, our spiritual assistant, as well as his fellow friars at St. Francis of Assisi Church, have, in obedience, moved at the request of the Franciscan Order, and our church is becoming a diocesan church. His farewell letter is printed below.



Thank you, Fr. Steve, for sharing with us your time and your insights! You will be dearly missed.

### **Ongoing Formation**

Questions to always ponder:

What does it mean to be a Secular Franciscan?

How would we explain to those outside of the Franciscan community, who may be curious, what it means to be a Secular Franciscan?

## Holy Father's Intentions for September - Respect for the Planet's Resources

We pray that the planet's resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner.



### Suzie's Prayer Corner

My prayer life is very simple. For me it is an ongoing conversation with God. I wake up each morning with a prayer of thanks and end each day with a prayer for all my blessings. Throughout the day whether it is a song, a face-to-face conversation or seeing God's face in someone I am always reminded that I should be the face of God to another. The problem for me is listening so that I can hear God's voice. I strive to hear and then act upon what is asked of me. This conversion allows me to understand why I choose each day to be more Christ-like. I see through prayer the beauty of God's world and how blessed I am to be part of it all.

*-Alexandra Rommel, OFS*

## Council Members

Spiritual Assistant:

Now Open

Minister:

Lee Cunningham, OFS

Vice Minister:

Ellen Ferrone, OFS

Formation Director:

S. Lynn Oeser, OFS

Treasurer:

Zubair Simonson, OFS

Secretary:

Michael Hancock, OFS

Councilors:

Suzie Nelson, OFS

Maureen Copan, OFS

Chris Peffley, OFS

BSSF Region Minister:

DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS

Area 3 Councilors:

Ellen Ferrone, OFS

Martha Roman, OFS

# Apostolates

For JPIC Email Ellen Ferrone,  
OF

For Oak City Cares: Email  
Sharon Winzeler, OFS

For CPO or Library:  
Email Maureen Copan, OFS

For Hospitality:  
Email Gladys Whitehouse, OFS

For Prayer Requests:  
Email Deacon Phil Rzewnicki,  
OFS

For Scrapbook:  
Email Jeanette Cottone, OFS

For Sunshine:  
Call Marge Zombek, OFS

For the Newsletter:  
Zubair Simonson, OFS

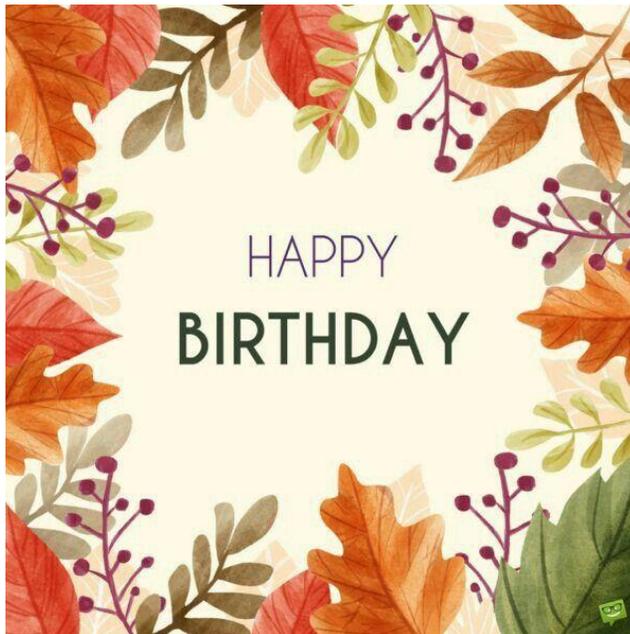
For the Website:  
Email Sharon Winzeler, OFS

# Life on the Council

I was elected Councilor for a 3-year term previously. I helped by doing tasks to assist the other Servant Leaders and became involved in Formation for Orientees and Inquirers. Due to the Minister moving away, I moved up to Vice Minister, which involved more looking up information for decision-making and I read the Franciscan Saint for the month at the Gatherings. I led the gathering when the Minister was not available.

I was elected Councilor for the current 3-year term. I do tasks to help other Council members.

*-Suzie Nelson, OFS*



**Marie Roccoforte, OFS – September 2**

**W. Stanley Driscoll, OFS – September 14**

**Mike Oeser, OFS – September 17**

**Zubair Simonson, OFS – September 18**

**Ellen Ferrone, OFS – September 19**

**Ben Whitehouse, OFS – September 19**

**Gail Halada, OFS – September 25**

## Care of Creation 3,2,1 – July Edition

*by Carolyn Townes, OFS*

*The following is a short excerpt from Carolyn’s JPIC July 2020 Edition. The focus is water.*

“Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water, who is very useful to us, and humble and precious and pure.”

Water resources face a host of serious threats, all caused primarily by human activity. They include pollution, climate change, urban growth, and landscape changes such as deforestation. Each of them has its own specific impact, usually directly on ecosystems and in turn, on water resources.

If inadequately managed, activities like farming, forest-clearing, road-building, and mining can lead to too much soil and suspended particles ending up in rivers (sedimentation). This damages aquatic ecosystems, impairs water quality and hinders inland shipping.

Our water resources, irregularly distributed in space and time, are under pressure due to major population change and increased demand.

Source: GreenFacts.org

How do my actions effect water supply? What can I do to ensure the safety of the water supply that effects my immediate neighborhood?



### **Your Monthly Question to Ponder:**

In some places, water is becoming a “commodity subject to the laws of the market.” Why does Pope Francis say that water cannot be treated like other natural resources – available for purchase for those who can afford it?



**September – Month of the Holy Cross**

1. Bl Joachim de Albocacer, Priest, Capuchin religious, martyr 1936
2. Bl. Martyrs de Carmes, d. 1792
3. St. Pius X, Pope, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1914
4. St. Rose of Viterbo, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1252 Plenary Indulgence for cordbearers
5. Bl. Gentil de Matelica, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, martyr 1340
6. Bl Liberat de Laure, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1258
7. Bl. Eugenie Picco, Virgin, religious of the Third-Order Regular [living in community, under a Rule], d. 1921
8. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
9. Bl. Seraphique Sforza, Virgin, of the Franciscan 2nd-Order; a "Poor Clare" sister, d. 1478
10. Bl. Martyrs of Japan, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order and Franciscan Third Order Seculars, d. 1622-1632
11. Bl. Bonaventure de Barcelone, lay brother, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1684
12. Feast of the Name of Holy Mary
13. Bl. Apollinaire Franco, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, martyr 1622
14. Exaltation of the Holy Cross
15. Feast of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows
16. Bl. Roland de Medicis, Confessor, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1386
17. Feast of the Stigmatization of St. Francis of Assisi
18. St. Joseph de Cupertino, Priest, Conventual, d. 1664
19. Bl. Louis Alleman, Bishop, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1450
20. St. Francois-Marie de Camporosso, lay brother, Capuchin religious, d. 1866
21. Bl. Elizabeth Amerina, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1498
22. Bl. Ignace de Santhia, Priest, Capuchin religious, d. 1773
23. ***St. Pio of Peitrelcina, Priest, Capuchin religious, d. 1968***
24. St. Pacifique de San Severino, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1721
25. St. Nicholas de Flue, Confessor, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1487
26. Bl. Lucie de Catalagirone, Virgin, religious of the Third-Order Regular [living in community, under a Rule], d. 1400
27. St. Elzear de Sabran, Confessor, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1323
28. Bl Bernadin de Feltre, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1494
29. Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel
30. Bl. Charles de Blois, Confessor, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1364

## Formation News

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May grace be yours. It's hard to believe that my tenure as Formation Director is in its last months.

Upon my election to the council in 2018 I sought the wisdom of elders in the fraternity and the region. In the document "Nuts and Bolts of being a Council", the first duty under Formation Director is:

Coordinate with other council members the formative activities of the fraternity. The document later states: Ongoing formation is the domain of the council (Four Pillars).

It took me a while and a few failures, but in January of 2019 I put out a call for volunteers for the ongoing Formation advisory group and was very blessed with an enthusiastic response. Members of the group are Maureen Copan, O.F.S., Lee Cunningham O.F.S., Ellen Ferrone, O.F.S., Sharon Winzeler, O.F.S., Fr Steve Kluge, O.F.M., and myself. We discuss and advise topics and themes for ongoing formation and retreats and present our recommendations to the council for a vote.

In the late spring of 2019, we put out a general survey to the fraternity. After consolidating the responses, the top two requests for ongoing Formation was Clare/Spirituality of Clare followed by *Simple Living, Franciscan Living*. We proposed *St Clare: Beyond the Legend*, by Marco Bartoli for our next ongoing formation topic. The council approved our proposal. We will begin in September. Please purchase the book, it is available on Amazon.

In researching the second most mentioned topic from the survey, I came across four wonderful books that I wanted to share with you:

1. *Following Jesus in the Footsteps of Francis*, by Fr. John Anglin, O.F.M., available from Franciscan Media. Fr Anglin is a friend of Fr Steve's.

2. *Live like Francis: Reflections on Franciscan Life in the World*, Jovian Weigel, O.F.M., and Leonard Foley, O.F.M. Many secular Franciscan, including myself, recommend this exercise. It's nice because the reflections are just a few pages at a time. Available on Amazon.

3. *Dating God: Live and Love in the Way of St. Francis* by Daniel Horan, O.F.M. I like this one a lot.

4. *The Lessons of St. Francis: How to Bring Simplicity and Spirituality into Your Daily Life*, by John Michael Talbot. This one is from my early Franciscan exploration. It impacted me deeply because the author is a Christian musician.

Other duties of the Formation Director include working with the formation team and spiritual assistant to instruct and enliven those in initial formation. The Formation Director is responsible for maintaining formation records.

It is true joy to serve you. Your joys are my joys; your sorrows are my sorrows. I will not accept a nomination for any office on the council at our election in January. As most of you know, Mike and I will be moving to Jefferson, NC upon retirement.

I am your servant. You are each embedded in my heart.

Peace and all good!

*Lynn Oeser O.F.S.*

## Words of Faith by Padre Pio:

Jesus...Mary...

<https://www.padrepiodapietrelcina.com/en/last-days-padre-pio-before-passed/>

## Items of Interest:

-Louis Coker, OFS, our departed brother was recently featured in an article published by the Catholic Gentleman. The link is: <https://catholicgentleman.net/2020/08/the-saints-we-touch-the-example-of-ordinary-holiness/>

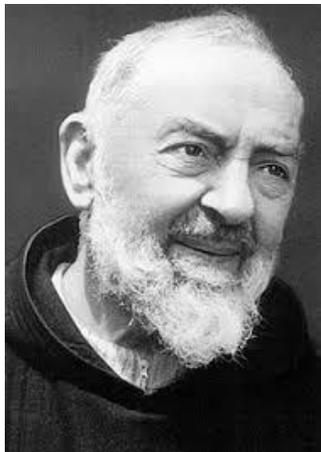
-During this time of pandemic a few of our members have been and remain homebound. A phone call or a card would go a long way to remind them that they are remembered, and much loved.

-Donations to the fraternity may be mailed to:

Zubair Simonson  
6300 Creedmoor Rd, Ste 170  
Raleigh, NC, 27612

-A reminder that we will be reading Marco Bartoli's *Saint Clare: Beyond the Legend* for ongoing formation. The first chapter will be discussed in our September meeting. The book is available on Amazon at: <https://www.amazon.com/Saint-Clare-Beyond-Marco-Bartoli/dp/0867169508>

-The Franciscan communities of India have posted a beautiful video, singing "Make a Channel of Your Peace," which was shared during the August meeting, and available for viewing at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EENt8gpa-ng&feature=youtu.be>



*The Feast of St. Padre Pio is on September 23. He has been with the Lord, praying for us, since 1968. For that we owe him much thanks!*

**Marge Zombek and Joanne Jacovec were both professed on the Feast of St. Padre Pio, in 1975 and 2000, respectively. Congratulations on your landmark anniversaries!**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I take my leave of you as your spiritual assistant, instead of my usual talk, table discussion followed by large group sharing, I thought I might take this time to offer you a bit of encouragement as found in the Testaments of Francis and Clare.

Upon reading these beautiful works I am struck by the fact that for both Clare and Francis, they were keenly aware of and grateful for their vocation which found its' source in God. Indeed, Francis understands that he was called while "in sin" and Clare realizes that this vocation to live penance is "received daily from [her] benefactor, the Father of Mercies". So the first encouragement I give to you is to be grateful for the fact that God has called you into this grace filled Order, but also be grateful that you have, and are cooperating with the Holy Spirit, whom Francis calls the true "minister general" of the order. Gratitude is one of the virtues of living a life of Franciscan Penance.

As Secular Franciscans you too have been called from something, to something greater. I won't say that we lived our lives sinfully, but if formation and profession shows me anything it is that we are called to live life with a bit more intentionality, and with a bit more depth. As I have often said, "formation puts nothing new into a person. Rather formation gives a language to express what has always been within us." All of our Franciscan lives thus begins with a listening heart...listen for and to the Spirit within you each and every day, and then act on the Spirit's prompting with an attitude of charity.

As Franciscans we must remember that the world was and is created "very good". Given all the horrors of the age we are living in, we must be careful to see and highlight the good that is still being done, and live so as not to add anything that will divide God's people...and aren't all people, and indeed all of creation, God's. Thus we are called to see each other and ourselves through the vision of Christ.

The pursuit of wealth is necessary, however, we must remember that wealth, and all that comes with it, cannot be the ultimate motivation for how we live our lives. As Franciscans, we must begin to live from our depths; that place in our souls in which Christ dwells within all of us, and yearn for the eternal and everlasting wealth that only Christ can be for us. We might call this virtue of Franciscan penance, the "spirit of interiority" or "contemplation". As Seculars we are called to invite others to join us in this endeavor: thus Evangelization through how we live our lives, and using words only if we must.

With the incarnation of the Word of God, I suppose the Father could have begun anew, with creating for Christ a whole new human nature. But the Father didn't. Instead, Christ takes on our own weakened human nature, albeit without sin, and recreates/restores us from within. And if we are restored it is so that the whole "groaning creation" might wait in hope for its restoration. We, human beings, are the condition for the possibility that God could become part of His creation from the inside. It is only human persons that have the capacity to hear and receive the invitation to participate in the divine life by giving God human flesh and human nature. As Franciscans, we understand that the Virgin Mary played a unique role in the giving of human flesh and human nature so that the Word of God could become incarnate. Her role was unique but not solitary. As St. Bonaventure reminds us we are all called to give Christ flesh and bring Christ to birth in every age through our imitation of Him. It is the living in imitation of Christ that is another piece of the definition of Franciscan penance.

Penance then is another name of the virtue of poverty: not necessarily material, but existentially. Our lives are not our own, but God's. We live not simply for ourselves alone,

but for others, particularly the poor and the marginalized. After all Francis writes that it was the Lord who LED him to the lepers first, rather than to the healthy and well off.

Our talents, and indeed all that is good, is given to us from God, for the common good of the Church and the world. And this is lived first of all in our families, and most especially in and through the Fraternity. We are called to share what we have been given, and to share Generously. “And the Lord gave me brothers” Francis writes. And though I like to think that there was a “dammit” that followed, Clare reminds us that she saw the increase of her sisters “a mercy and grace”.

Fraternity, like family, demands hard work. And to be honest I have sometimes said “dammit” concerning the people that Christ has put in my life. But when I am at my best, and take the time to reflect on the sometimes difficult relationships the Lord has blessed me with, I can see mercy and grace. We are not called to live life alone. We are created to be social. We are created in the image and likeness of God Who Is in God’s Very Self Relationship. I encourage you to see each other as gift, not as threat, and to BE the mercy and grace of God to each other. As I have often said, “we find what we look for.” Use the vision of the Holy Spirit as you go throughout your day. And then you will see within you, the holy courage and divine mercy, to reach out to others, in or without the fraternity, who may, in some way, be different. As St. Clare writes, “Loving one another with the charity of Christ, let the love you have in your hearts be shown outwardly in your deeds...”.

Finally, persevere. As Clare writes, “May you hold what you always hold. May you do what you always do and never abandon.” We are called to hold on to, to be crucified to Christ. However, we need to remember that it is Christ who has first grasped onto us. And though at times we might let go Christ will never let go of us. So too with our relationship with each other. Never abandon your sisters and brothers in fraternity. Never despair of the world no matter how terrible or terrifying the news. Christ has us, now and always: we are never alone. With the resurrection and ascension of Christ, humanity, and by extension, creation itself is now part of the God-head, and this was the Father’s plan all along.

Francis writes, “the Lord showed me what to do, may the Lord show you”. The good news is that we are not called to be Francis nor Clare. God calls us to be ourselves, and to give Christ permission to live through us in our own unique way. As Francis wrote to Brother Leo, “In whatever way it seems best to you to please the Lord God and to follow His footprints and His poverty, do this with the blessing of God.”

Gratitude, a listening heart, charity, interiority, vision, evangelization, imitation, generosity, and perseverance...these gifts of the Spirit are within each one of you, and this fraternity. Continue to be and to live what I see. And may the Lord give you peace.

And let the gathered church give a resounding Amen.

*-Fr. Steve Kluge, OFM*

**Our next gathering (via Zoom) will be on September 27, 2020**