

# Padre Pio Fraternity

## Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region

### Ongoing Formation



Our March gathering was continued exploration and discussion of Ilia Delio's book, *The Humility of God*. Marylou Holloway, OFS, led us with an articulate lecture, which was followed by discussion, on chapter 4.

The scientific community has arrived at a consensus that the Universe began with the Big Bang, and that the arrival of Mankind came through the slow (slow in our eyes, that is) process of Evolution. But is the Cosmos a unified whole, or a work continually in progress? What role does our own faith have in this? Though the moment of creation occurred long before any of us were even born, and Creation will continue to exist long after all of us pass, we have all, to some degree at least, attempted to exercise personal control over a world which we can't control. How do we give up this temptation to control our lives and our surroundings, and trust God as St. Francis so beautifully did?

How ourselves can evolve, over the course of our lives, and shift from the vision of a God Who does things for us to the vision of a God Who simply loves us; a God of self-emptying love. We have the example of St. Francis to help us!

When Brother Masseo found himself unsure of which road he was "supposed" to follow, in order to preach the Gospel, St. Francis simply directed him to spin around until he was told to stop; whichever road he was pointed toward when he stopped was the road he was to take. If we can simply trust in God with such childlike faith, we can live our lives with the peace of knowing that whatever road we're on is the one we're supposed to follow!

Marylou also challenged us with an exercise (homework, if you will) at the end of the presentation: to go home, be alone with God, and think about how He is everywhere in our lives. We're each only five minutes away from a life of peace.



*Stations of the Cross, March 4*

**Holy Father’s Intentions For April –  
Health Care Workers**

We pray for health care workers who serve the sick and the elderly, especially in the poorest countries; may they be adequately supported by governments and local communities.

**Candidates’ Corner –  
Travis Bongiorno**



Hi all! My name is Travis Bongiorno. I’ve been living in North Carolina for six years now since 2015, having lived in New Jersey since I was born. My wife Rachel and I are both parishioners at St. Francis of Assisi in Raleigh. We are both excited to be in the formation process of becoming professed Secular Franciscans. I love to read and have particular interests in philosophy, theology and medieval history. Someday, I would love to visit central Italy and Assisi again. You might not believe this about me but I am a quintuplet!

**Profession Anniversaries:**

**Christin Murray, OFS – April 16, 1996**

**Gail Halada, OFS – April 5, 2004**

**Council Members**

Spiritual Assistant:

Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM

Minister:

Sharon Winzeler, OFS

Vice Minister:

Ellen Ferrone, OFS

Formation Director:

Charlotte Witosky, OFS

Treasurer:

Zubair Simonson, OFS

Secretary:

Anna Rzewnicki, OFS

Councilors:

Dave Shick, OFS

Joan Monti, OFS

Jeanne Casciere, OFS

BSSF Region Minister:

DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS

Area 3 Councilors:

Ellen Ferrone, OFS

Martha Roman, OFS

## Apostolates

For JPIC:

Email Ellen Ferrone, OFS

For the website:

Email Sharon Winzeler, OFS

For Oak City Cares:

Email Lee Cunningham, OFS, or  
Marylou Holoway, 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:

Email Mayra Rangel

For the Newsletter:

Email Zubair Simonson, OFS

## Candidates' Corner –

### Rachel Bongiorno

My name is Rachel Suezann Bongiorno and I am so happy to call you all my friend.

I was born on February 4, 1983, in Inverness, Florida. My childhood was spent in Texas, along the Gulf Coast. My teenage years were spent in Louisiana. I've lived in North Carolina for the last seventeen years.

I wasn't raised Catholic. I joined the RCIA program at St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Church, in Louisiana, when I was 18. It was there that I received all of my sacraments, and my whole life changed for it.

For many years, I contemplated becoming a Third Order Carmelite. In 2019, I attended the "come and see" our fraternity gave, along with Travis (now my husband). I just knew this was right where I was meant to be.

I am currently working on completing my bachelor's degree, majoring in Spanish. If all goes as planned, I'll be graduating next year! My hope is to work within church ministries, to help people in whatever ways I'm able to.

Travis and I were married at Sacred Heart Church, in downtown Raleigh, on December 12, 2020. I chose this day because it's the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We also joined the Militia of the Immaculata together, out of our shared love for Mother Mary. If only I could be half the woman she is.

I'm excited to share that we are new parishioners at Saint Francis! After much discernment, we joined in March.

Once we profess, it is a dream of mine to see Assisi. I plan to sit on a hill and contemplate life like St. Francis did. "What would you have me do, Lord?"

I currently work at Whole Foods Market in North Raleigh, as a supervisor in Customer Service. If you ever stop by, please say hello! I'm always happy to see a friendly face.

## April – Month of the Holy Face and the Redemption

1. Bl. Elisabeth Vendramini, Virgin, religious of the Third-Order Regular [living in community, under a Rule], d. 1860
2. St. Francois de Paule, Priest, had been a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute, d/ 1507
3. St. Benedict the Moor, lay brother, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1589
4. Bl. Guillaume de Sicli, Confessor, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1404
5. St. Crescentia Hoess, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1744
6. Bl. Angele Salawa, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1922
7. Bl. Mary Assunta, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1925
8. Bl. Julian of St. Augustine, lay brother, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1606
9. Bl. Thomas of Tolentino and Companions, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, martyr 1321
11. Bl. Angelo of Chivasso, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1495
12. Bl. Boniface Zukowski, Priest, Conventual Religious, martyr 1942
13. Bl. Isabelle Rovira, Virgin, Capuchin religious, martyr, 1937
14. Bl. Lidwyne de Schiedam, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1433
15. Bl. Gandolph of Binasco, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1260
16. St. Benedict-Joseph Labre, Confessor, Cordbearer, d. 1783 Plenary Indulgence for Cordbearers. Anniversary of the profession of St. Francis (1209)
17. Bl. Paul de St. Madeleine, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, martyr 1643
18. Bl. Andre Hibernon, lay brother, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1734
19. Bl. Conrad of Ascoli, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1289
20. Bl. Anastase Pankewicz, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, martyr 1942
21. Bl. Francis of Fabriano, Priest, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1322
22. St. Conrad de Parzham, lay brother, Capuchin religious, d. 1894
23. Bl. Gilles of Assisi, lay brother, religious of the Franciscan 1st Order, d. 1262
24. St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Priest, Capuchin, martyr 1622
25. St. Marc, Grandes Rogations
26. Bl. Pierre De Pethancourt, Priest, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1667
27. St. Zita of Lucca, Virgin, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1278
28. St. Paul of the Cross, Priest, had been a tertiary before founding or joining another religious Institute, d. 1775; Bl. Luchesius, 1st Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1260 Plenary Indulgence for Franciscan Third Order Seculars (renewal of Tertiary Engagements)
29. Bl. Benedict of Urbino, Priest, Capuchin, d. 1625
30. St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo, Priest, Franciscan Third Order Secular, d. 1842

*\*If you would like to donate to the Padre Pio Fraternity via Zelle, the email address linked to the bank account is: [secularppt995@gmail.com](mailto:secularppt995@gmail.com)*

**Our website is at: <https://ofscentralnc.org/>**

## **Apostolate: A Pillar of Our Franciscan Life**

At the Gathering in January, we discussed the possibility of looking for a new apostolate(s). “What is an apostolate, exactly?” some may ask. The BSSF Regional Formators Guidelines answers this in considerable length,

By admitting the power of God as Three Persons, working in concert, we embrace Him as our mentor and His way as our model. Our region expresses this Trinitarian approach in the Four Pillars, a foundation of our Secular Franciscan way of life. These pillars are Spirituality, Formation, Fraternity, and Apostolate. The interplay among the Four Pillars addresses content, approach, living, and sharing of the Secular Franciscan life.

The Apostolate Pillar has a twofold intent; that of working with, and for. Such service rendered is a Gospel response, done by a group ‘of one mind and one heart’, communicating the example set by the early Christian community. The purposes of this Pillar are to recognize gifts which God has provided for our sisters and brothers, to forge bonds within the fraternity, and to simultaneously minister to the needs of others while witnessing to the Franciscan identity. Our apostolic life is integral with our fraternal life. As Franciscans, we minister to, and also with, our brothers and sisters as well as to the larger community.

The Four Pillars give us developed focus to authentically live *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*. We observe the Gospel of Our Lord by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the center of his life with God and people, going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel. The fraternity apostolate is our privilege, and responsibility, to go forth as witnesses and instruments of the Holy Spirit and the Church.

When we do choose an apostolate, we’ll come to know each other at a deeper level. Working with others is likewise an opportunity to learn about our own strengths and weaknesses. A cooperative spirit, attentive to those involved and to the objective of the task, are the basis to pursue an apostolate.

We, the Padre Pio Fraternity, are a very generous Fraternity with regards to our Apostolate at Oak City Cares, serving to those on the margins as a community. The growth of our own fraternity, which we are very thankful for, has given us the manpower and opportunity to participate in additional apostolates. I ask you to pray that the Holy Spirit guides us in identifying a new apostolate(s). - *Ellen Ferrone, OFS, Vice Minister*



**Marge Zombek, OFS – April 13**

**Shannon Brooks, OFS – April 13**

**Richard Hammer, OFS – April 19**

**Jeanette Cottone, OFS – April 20**

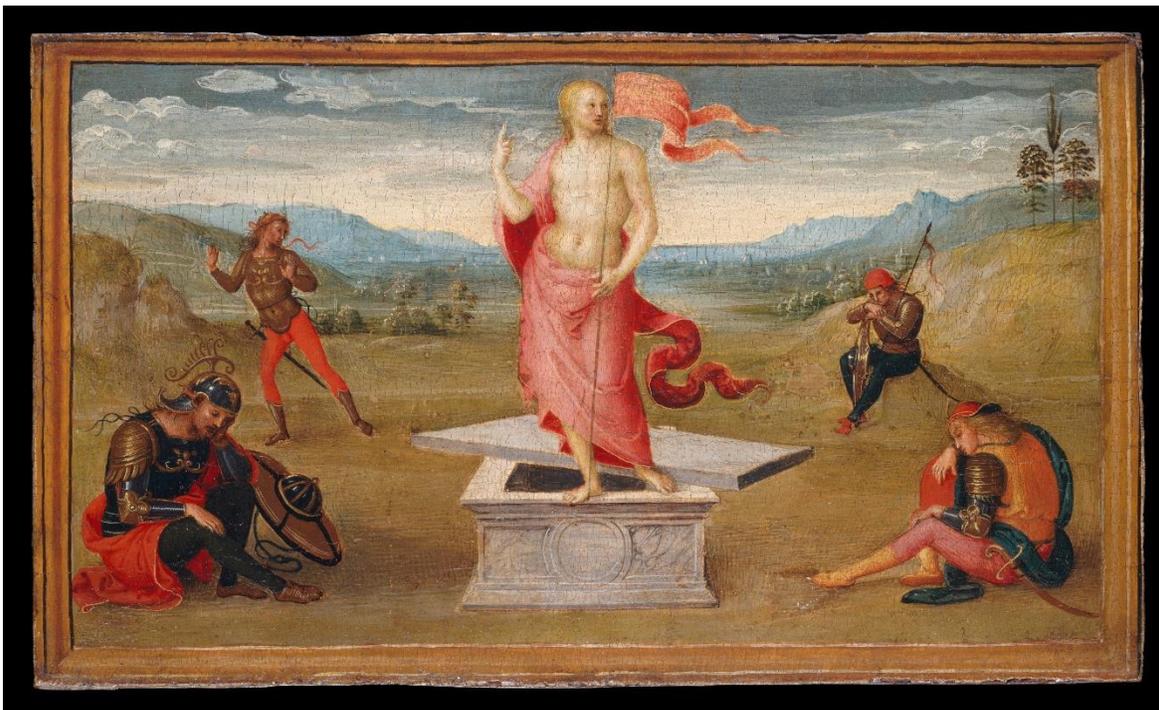
**Michael Gould, OFS – April 29**

## Words of Faith by Padre Pio:

“Why did Jesus Christ sacrifice himself to the point of death? Faith answers – to expiate for our sins. Why did he rise in such splendor? To show us the meaning of our redemption. In his death, we recall that we were dead because of sin. In his resurrection instead we have a perfect example of our resurrection in grace.” <https://padrepiodevotions.org/padre-pios-words/>

## Items of Interest:

- Living the Beatitudes, an online monthly session (totaling ten months) sponsored by the Secular Franciscan Order, began in February. You may join at any time.
- Sunday night discussions (via Zoom) of the Formation Friday readings, led by Ellen Ferrone, OFS, are still going on throughout Lent. Check your email if you would like to participate.
- The next hot meal service at Oak City Cares will be on April 23, and there is a greater demand for food and hours of service. Check your email for volunteering opportunities.
- Please read chapter 5 of Ilia Delio’s *The Humility of God* in preparation for our April gathering. Travis Bongiorno, OFS, will be leading the presentation in our ongoing formation.
- The Padre Pio Fraternity has donated \$500 to the Franciscan Relief Fund for those friars who are continuing to minister in the midst of the war. Please continue to pray for peace in Ukraine.
- Beginning this month, our fraternity gatherings will begin at 2:30 p.m.
- Happy Easter! He is risen indeed!



*Our next fraternity gathering will be on April 24, at the Church of St Francis of Assisi*