

# Padre Pio Fraternity

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region

Secular Franciscan Order  
of Central North Carolina

*the little flowers of padre pio fraternity*

Volume 11 Issue 13

November 2022

We welcome those who would like to learn more about the Secular Franciscans.

Join us for our monthly gatherings on the fourth Sunday of each month, beginning at 2:30 p.m.

Location: Founders Room at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 11401 Leesville Rd., Raleigh, North Carolina.

## Community Outreach

Fourth Saturday afternoon | [Oak City Outreach](#)

Food Pantry | [Catholic Parish Outreach](#)



Giotto di Bondone: The Last Judgement. 1306. Scrovegni (Arena) Chapel, Padua, Italy

## **Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory**

O gentle Heart of Jesus,  
ever present in the Blessed Sacrament,  
ever consumed with burning love  
for the poor captive souls in Purgatory,  
have mercy on them.

Be not severe in Your judgments,  
but let some drops of Your Precious Blood  
fall upon the devouring flames.

And, Merciful Savior,  
send Your angels to conduct them  
to a place of refreshment,  
light and peace. Amen+

## *In loving memory of our brothers and sisters who have embraced sister death*

Grace Lambert, OFS 11.28.85

A Gordon Keating, OFS 06.22.86

Daniel Skurski, OFS 09.04.94

Paul Rutz, OFS 01.30.95

Lesley Stinson, OFS 02.13.96

Wally Bauer, OFS 01.21.97

Patricia Stapleton, OFS 11.30.10

Ron Howe, OFS 01.19.12

Jane Sullivan-Farris, OFS 03.07.12

Louise Friedman, OFS 07.24.13

Vincent McKone, OFS 01.05.15

Rosemary Ann Schneider, OFS, Founder 04.22.16

Art Schneider, OFS, Founder 09.22.22

Fr. Joseph Madden, OFM Conv. 04.23.19

Louis Coker, OFS 07.13.20

Jerry Russo, OFS 09.21.22

## **Our Franciscan Family**

Secular Franciscans are a community of Catholic men and women in the world who seek to pattern their lives after Christ in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. We believe that as human beings and Christians, we have such a vocation that we cannot fulfill alone. In our common response to the Gospel, we work together in community toward communion with all people. Building relationships is our way of life.

For more information, please send an email to [ofscentralnc@gmail.com](mailto:ofscentralnc@gmail.com) or [swinzeler@gmail.com](mailto:swinzeler@gmail.com) with your name, mailing address and telephone number, and the information you are seeking.

Fraternity Council

*Spiritual Assistant:*  
Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM

*Minister:*  
Sharon Winzeler, OFS

*Vice Minister:*  
Dave Shick, OFS

*Formation Director:*  
Charlotte Witosky, OFS

*Treasurer:*  
Zubair Simonson, OFS

*Secretary:*  
Anna Rzewnicki, OFS

*Councilors:*  
Joan Monti, OFS  
Jeanne Casciere, OFS  
Chris Peffley, OFS

*BSSF Region Minister:*  
Ellen Ferrone, OFS

*Area 3 Councilors:*  
Lee Cunningham, OFS  
Betti Pettinati-Longinotti, OFS

*Our website:*  
<https://ofscentralnc.org/fraternity/>

*Facebook:*  
[Padre Pio Fraternity Secular Franciscan Order of Central North Carolina](#)

**The Transitus of St. Francis service  
at The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi**

*“Each year on the third evening of October, we ritually remember the passing of St. Francis of Assisi from this life into God. To ritually revisit the story of Francis’ passing is vital; without it something significant is missing. It specifies the living memory of Francis; it intensifies our commitment to follow Christ in the way of the poor man of Assisi.”-  
[Secular Franciscans USA](#)*

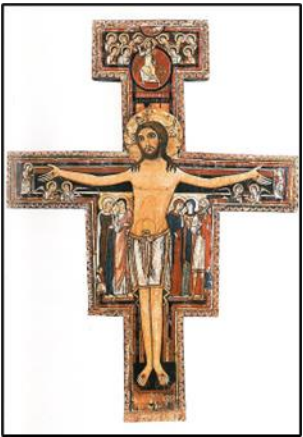
Oct. 03: Raleigh, NC

It was a chilly fall evening but the chapel was warm and inviting. The atmosphere was beautifully lit with candles in each window and upon the altar. Our intimate service began at 7pm with those in formation processing into the chapel, followed by our professed members.

Once everyone was seated, the reverent ceremony began with a call to prayer spoken by Mary Cockrill, OFS. Gladys Whitehouse, OFS stood as our celebrant adorned in a white robe. The Narrative of the Transitus of St. Francis was spoken by Marylou Holoway, OFS and Deacon Phil Rzewnicki, OFS and our gospel passage was John 13: 1-17. Fr. Jim shared an inspiring homily in which in the end he reminded us that we are called to be a light in this world for one another-as Franciscans, even more so. “What does it mean to be a people of witness that help each other shine? To shine forth in the world? We are called to be lights in this world always. (continued...)



**Let us Pray**



Most High, glorious God enlighten the darkness of my heart.

Give me true faith, certain hope and perfect charity, sense and knowledge that I may carry out Your Holy and true command.  
-Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi to discern God’s will

**The Pope’s Intentions for November**

*Children Who Suffer*

We pray for children who are suffering, especially those who are homeless, orphans, and victims of war; may they be guaranteed access to education and the opportunity to experience family affection.



## **Apostolates**

*For information please contact the following members*

### **JPIC:**

Gladys Whitehouse, OFS

### **The Website:**

Sharon Winzeler, OFS

### **Oak City Cares:**

Lee Cunningham, OFS, or  
Marylou Holoway, OFS

### **CPO & Fraternity Library:**

Maureen Copan, OFS

### **Hospitality:**

Maureen McFadden, OFS  
or Alma Hammer, OFS

### **Prayer Requests:**

Deacon Phil Rzewnicki,  
OFS

### **Scrapbook:**

Jeanette Cottone, OFS

### **Sunshine:**

Mayra Rangel

### **The Newsletter:**

Rachel Bongiorno, OFS

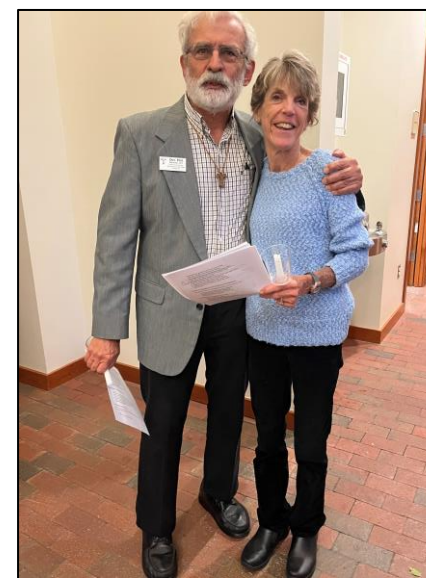
(Continued from page 2.)

And as Franciscans that light has to shine through with a brilliance that nothing else in this world can ever provide.”

-Fr. Jim Sabak, OFM. Ellen Ferrone, OFS led our Intercessions and the response was sung together as in one voice, we prayed, *O, God hear us; hear our prayer.* Dave Shick, OFS as Vice Minister graciously accepted the Renewal of Profession from our professed brothers and sisters before our last prayers.

Each person in attendance received a small white candle which was lit as we concluded. Together we processed outside to the Labyrinth for our final blessing. The flames of our candles glowed softly, giving us a visual reminder of how *together* we create a wonderful light that shines with a brilliance just as Fr. Jim said. It was truly a beautiful sight to behold.

After the transitus prayer service, fraternity members and friends enjoyed a small social gathering in the community center. Inside, away from the chill of the night, the air had a fragrance of fresh coffee as we enjoyed an assortment of treats. “Dear sisters Sharon, Rachel, Gladys and Ellen: Thank you all so much for the delicious goodies!! Everyone seemed to really enjoy your treats-I know that I sure did! Thank you again so much for making this such a nice and lovely event for everyone.” Dave Shick, OFS Vice Minister. The home-baked treats included adorable little friar cookies, brookies(brownies baked together with chocolate chip cookies) and two versions of Lady Jacoba cookies. -Rachel Bongiorno, OFS





## Celebrations

Profession  
Anniversaries

Birthdays

09 Janette Perez, OFS

19 Lee Cunningham, OFS

27 Alex Rommel, OFS

27 Sr. Kathy DeLancey, OSC



### A Prayer of Thanksgiving

All powerful, most holy, most high and supreme God, holy and just Father, Lord, King of heaven and earth, we thank you for yourself, for by your holy will, and through your only Son and in the Holy Spirit you have created every spiritual and corporeal being, and, having made us in your own image and likeness, you placed us in paradise.

And through our own fault we fell. And we thank you for just as through your Son you created us, so also, through your holy love, with which you have loved us, you caused him to be born true God and true man of the glorious, ever-virgin, most blessed, holy Mary, and you willed to redeem us captives through his cross and death and blood.

And we thank you for your Son himself will come again in the glory of his majesty to send the wicked ones who do not do penance and who do not know you, into the eternal fire, and to say to all those who do know you and adore you and who serve you in penance: "Come, you blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom, which has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world." (cf. Mt. 25:34)

And because we are all wretches and sinners and are not worthy to pronounce your name, we humbly ask that our Lord Jesus Christ your beloved Son, in whom you are well pleased, together with the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, would give you thanks for everything as it pleases you and him, who satisfies you in everything, through whom you have done so much for us. Alleluia!

-Excerpt from [Prayers of Saint Francis of Assisi](#)

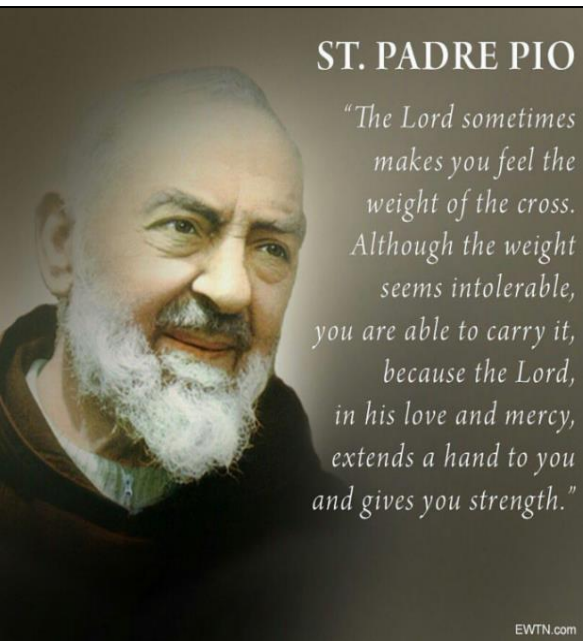
### *November Franciscan Calendar Month of the Holy Souls in Purgatory*

- 01 Feast of All Saints- Holy day of Obligation
- 02 Commemoration of all of the Faithfully Departed
- 03 Bl. Helen Enselmini
- 04 St. Charles Borromeo
- 05 Feast of the Saints Relics
- 06 Bl. Margaret of Lorraine
- 07 Bl. Raynier of Arezzo
- 08 Bl. John Duns Scotus
- 09 Bl. Gabriel Ferritti
- 10 Bl. Louis Guanella
- 11 Bl. Mary Crucifixa
- 12 Bl. John of Peace, Confessor
- 13 St. Didacus of Alcala, lay brother
- 14 St. Nicholas Tavelich and Companions
- 15 Bl. Sebastien de Jesus
- 16 St. Agnes of Assisi
- 17 Bl. Jane of Signa
- 18 Bl. Salome of Cracow
- 19 St. Elizabeth of Hungary
- 20 Bl. Migagros Ortells
- 21 Feast of the Presentation of the Holy Virgin Mary
- 22 Bl. Salvator Lilli
- 23 Bl. Marie de Jesus Bon Pasteur
- 24 Bl. Timothy Trajonowski
- 25 Bl. Humilis of Bisignano
- 26 St. Leonard of Port Maurice
- 27 St. Francis Anthony Fasani
- 28 St. James of the March
- 29 Saints of the Seraphic Order
- 30 Bl. Anthony Bonfadini

### [Meditations by Padre Pio](#)

They recognized Him. - Luke 24:31

"Call out to Jesus to remain with you always along the many roads to Emmaus of our time. May He be your strength, your point of reference, your enduring hope."



## Padre Pio Fraternity October Gathering

Our October Gathering was a *joyous and spiritual* event. We spent time in fraternity beginning with prayer and the welcoming of guests. Our on-going formation was focused on Metanoia and we viewed a video from Fr. David Pivonka ([linked here](#)) followed by fellowship and fraternity business.

### Formation announcements, Char Witosky, OFS (Formation director)

- Permanent profession date is July 15, 2023
- New orientation group will begin Jan. 22, 2023
- Fraternity retreat at St. Francis Springs is March 10-12, 2023

### Treasury Report, Zubair Simonson, OFS (Treasurer)

Contributions can be placed in an envelope with your name on it at the meeting or mailed to Padre Pio Fraternity, % Zubair Simonson, OFS  
6300 Creedmoor Rd, Ste. 170 Raleigh, NC 27612

On-going Formation discussion questions:

1. What does today's world think of Jesus? Who would you say the world thinks Jesus is?
2. Jesus told them not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah because their image of the Messiah and who the Messiah actually is were very different. What kind of God do you think the "world" is looking for?
3. Who do you say Jesus is? How has your image of Christ changed over the years?

### Eye on the Inquirer-Maria Marge

I was born on July 21st and am third oldest of seven children in an Italian family. We grew up in Queens NY and I moved to Long Island in my 20's. I utilized my business degree in various positions to include management and administration. My greatest vocation was raising my daughter and son and being their mom to this day. My husband Bob and I are gifted with two wonderful grandsons.

The Lord has blessed me with the most loving, kind and compassionate husband. He has inspired me to deepen my spiritual life and is truly a shining light and example of unconditional love.

### JPIC- Gladys Whitehouse, OFS

- L'Arche- L'Arche holds 3 community events a month: Thursdays 10-12, Wednesdays 4-5 pm and Tuesdays 1-3pm at the Edenton United Methodist Church downtown Raleigh.
- Ben and Gladys are going Tuesday, Oct. 25, to check it out. Any interested fraternity members are welcome to join them.
- Oak City Cares - Lee Cunningham, OFS, and Marylou Holloway, OFS. Our next two food services are Saturday, Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving weekend) and Christmas Eve.

### Items of Interest

Anne Evangelista, OFS is leading a team of fraternity members to work on recruiting young people to the order.

We are joining social media. Please contact Rachel Bongiorno, OFS if you have any thoughts, suggestions or requests.

New orientation sessions begin in Jan. All are welcome to join us at our gathering and retreat.

Sat. 11.19 OAK CITY CARES

Sun. 11.20 GATHERING\*

Sat. 12.03 FRATERNITY RETREAT Joanne Jacovec, OFS, will lead us in our annual day of learning and spirituality followed by Mass at 4p celebrated in the chapel by Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM. Please reserve your spot at the retreat by signing up on the [Sign-Up Genius](#) by 11.01. (See Sharon Winzeler, OFS or Jeanne Casciere, OFS if you have any signup questions.)

Sat. 01.07 PADRE PIO EPIPHANY PARTY at Maureen Copan's house 2-4p

Fri 03.10- Sun 03.12.23 ANNUAL RETREAT at St. Francis Springs

Sat. 07.15.23 PERMANENT PROFESSION at 11a. Mass at St. Francis of Assisi of our candidates. Reception afterward.

Frank Peluso, OFS at Father Casey Cole's first Mass



### Did you know?

Our National Fraternity tells us that our local fraternity is the basic unit of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS). It has a special purpose which is defined by the OFS legislation and a unique identity called a "juridical personality" in the Church. *Did you know, we have a history?* History is the interpretation of the significance of our past. Part of our history is lost, which is sad. Without the knowledge of our history and origin, our community is like a tree without roots. *Yes, we do have roots.* A member of our community, Ida Irwin, OFS has gathered for us from limited records, letters, the fraternity scrapbooks and by word of mouth from Marge Zombec, OFS, Joanne Jacovec, OFS, and the late Vincent McKone, OFS our history. This was accomplished in August of 2015. *Each month, this column in our newsletter will attempt to remind us of our roots. We will reflect on a part of the history of our local fraternity, "the basic unit of the Secular Franciscan Order."* Michael Crichton, an American author, brilliantly said, "If we don't know our history, then we don't know anything." He added, "Then, you are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree."

First, we ask ourselves what Francis expected of us penitents- a life consisting of following the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ with self-control, participating in the Eucharist regularly, praying and doing good works. He wrote, "O how happy and blessed are these men and women while they do such things and persevere in doing them because *the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon them and make It's home and dwelling place among them and they are children of the heavenly Father Whose works, they do and they are spouses, brothers and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Francis wanted our Franciscan family to be unburdened in relationship with each other and the Trinity (the Heavenly family). *We do this in fraternity.* Starting this November, we remember and pray for our deceased members.

-Frank Peluso, OFS



## "Help Me Rebuild and Reform our Church"

Oct. 22: Raleigh, NC

The Catholic Community of Saint Francis of Assisi hosted a Convocation in which the church held a celebration of Franciscan spirituality for parishioners and friends. The keynote speaker was Dr. Joshua Benson, a publisher and teacher of the history of medieval theology with a special focus on Franciscan figures. He gave a profound talk themed around living in the spirit of St. Francis. These included: Deep sympathy, letting the Lord lead you, the Eucharist, the humility of God, simple awareness and focus on scripture & prayer. He ended with a little prayer from a hermit with Franciscan ties he had learned about while teaching at the Franciscan Institute. "These words became a kind of touchstone for me and I think maybe they can become something of a touchstone for you." He shared with us:

"I am here for you. I have no other person to be here for and no other reason to be here. I am here at your disposal, your disposition. I have no desire except to do what you'd have me do. I have heard of other desires. I haven't heard any that mean as much to me as that. Have you heard of any that would mean as much to me, as knowing I was doing what you wanted me to do? Or even not knowing I was doing it? Simply, doing it. Why would I wish so much to do what you want me to? Only because I think I was made for that purpose. To listen, and do. To get my mind clear enough to listen and then do what I hear I should do. How do I know that the voice I'd hear would be yours? How can I know, that the thing I should do is a good one? I'd know because there is something I know about you. I know that you love me. I know that the things you tell me to do are from love. You don't tell me to kill, you don't tell me to hate, you don't tell me to die. You tell me to love. You tell me to do things love does. You show me the way." He ended by saying, "I hope that can be a prayer for you and you can be in this place and display that love..."

Our very own Gladys Whitehouse, OFS led a workshop to a full room in which the topic was *Can a 12th Century Mystic Still Be Relevant?* She used personal stories to help us relate to Saint Francis and to Franciscan spirituality. She challenged us, "WE are the church and how are we being called to rebuild the church?" She shared words from Pope Francis in her closing for us to reflect.

"Jesus did *not* found the church as a citadel of purity, nor as a constant parade of heroes and saints. Although, *thank God*, we do not lack these. It is something *much* more dynamic, a school of *conversion*, a place of spiritual combat and discernment, *where grace abounds along with sin and temptation*. Like it's members the church can be an instrument of God's mercy because *it needs that mercy*. Just as none of us should reject other people because of their sins and failures but *help them* to be what they are meant to be. Christ's followers should *love* and listen to the church. Build her up, take responsibility for her, *including her sins and failures*. At those moments when the church shows herself to be *weak and sinful*, let us *help her* get up again. *Let us not condemn or disdain her but care for her like our own mother*." She told us, "That's what we are called to do-to love the church, the way we love our own mother." Just as St. Francis would.

-Rachel Bongiorno, OFS



## The Monastery of Saint Clare- Travelers Rest, SC Our Partners in Prayer

Our Padre Pio fraternity became prayer partners with the sisters around the year 2015. We have both experienced growth in welcoming new members. The sisters welcomed Sr. Susanna who began her Postulancy in 2018. Srs. Claudia and Marguerite from Tennessee joined the group in 2019, following the closing of their monastery. Sr. Wylie from British Columbia, joined the group on Nov. 1, 2021. Last but not least, Mary Alice Gibson entered Postulancy in Feb. of 2022.

Our powerful prayers for each other are bearing much fruit through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are most grateful for the gift of these Franciscan women in our lives.

-Maureen Copan, OFS



The Poor Clares of Travelers Rest

Prayer Requests: [prayer@poorclaresc.com](mailto:prayer@poorclaresc.com)  
To learn more please visit: <https://poorclaresc.com/>



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Feast of All Saints	2 All Souls Day	3	4	5 Feast of the Saints Relics
6	7	8	9 Janette Perez's Birthday	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 Lee Cunningham's Birthday
20 Gathering	21 Feast of the Presentation of the Holy Virgin Mary	22	23	24 Thanksgiving	25	26 Oak City Cares
27 Alex Rommel & Sr. Kathy DeLancey's Birthday	28	29 Feast of All Saints of the Seraphic Order	30			

Free calendar created by [templatetodirectry.com](#)

“Thankful for Family”



Addy, great granddaughter of John and Gail Halada, OFS

Put your trust in Christ as your personal Savior.

Padre Pio believed that people can and must choose to serve God. To one correspondent he wrote, “I want you to be saved at all costs, and for this purpose you need to surrender to Jesus.” On another occasion, he wrote, “I want you to be saved...When will you give me this consolation, brother?” People are to abandon themselves to Jesus “like a child to his mother’s arms.” Padre Pio urged his disciples to pray to Christ: “Whom have I on earth besides you? Whom have I in heaven but you, my Jesus! You are the God of my heart and my inheritance, whom I desire eternally.

Excerpt: Padre Pio: The True Story: by C. Bernard Ruffin p.172

I remember the first time that I saw the Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan. I was excited to see the Rockettes and their precision dancing live on stage. But it wasn’t the famous falling toy soldiers’ sequence that thrilled me. It was the closing act. The Christmas Spectacular features the largest live nativity scene in New York City, and the music, the characters, the camels, and the simple beauty of the scene moved me to tears.

We have St. Francis of Assisi to thank for staging the first live nativity in Greccio, Italy, in 1223. Churches throughout Italy brought the Biblical story to life after St. Francis introduced the idea. The live re-enactments of the birth of Jesus were eventually replaced with the mangers we put under our Christmas trees and on our tabletops.

In 2023 we will celebrate the 800th anniversary of the first nativity play in Greccio. *Wouldn’t it be great if we could observe this event next Christmas with live nativity scenes in all our churches?* Camels might be in short supply in this area, but we could reenact the event where God humbled himself and entered our world as a little baby humbly born in a stable in Bethlehem.

Next year marks the beginning of a number of other centenaries that we as Franciscans will observe. The first Rule was adopted in 1223, followed by the receipt of the stigmata by St. Francis in 2024, the creation of the Canticle of the Creatures in 2025; and the Transitus of St. Francis in 2026. You will be hearing about the observance of these events in the future. In the meantime, you can read more about them in [this publication](#). *Be thinking of ways we can continue to share St. Francis with the world.* By the way, the Rockettes will be celebrating the 90th year of presenting the live nativity at the Christmas Spectacular in 2023. -Sharon Winzeler, OFS



A note from the Editor

Is there anything you would like to share or have featured in our newsletter? Please email me at [rchlrbnsn@gmail.com](mailto:rchlrbnsn@gmail.com)

-Rachel

Rachel and Travis Bongiorno, OFS

