

# 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 12 Issue 14

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](#)



Adoration of the Magi Altarpiece, left hand predella panel depicting the Nativity Gentile da Fabriano, Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy, 1423

## APOSTOLIC LETTER

### ADMIRABLE SIGNUM OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIVITY SCENE

The enchanting image of the Christmas crèche, so dear to the Christian people, never ceases to arouse amazement and wonder. The depiction of Jesus' birth is itself a simple and joyful proclamation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God. The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture. As we contemplate the Christmas story, we are invited to set out on a spiritual journey, drawn by the humility of the God who became man in order to encounter every man and woman. We come to realize that so great is his love for us that he became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with him.

With this Letter, I wish to encourage the beautiful family tradition of preparing the nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares. Great imagination and creativity is always shown in employing the most diverse materials to create small masterpieces of beauty. As children, we learn from our parents and grandparents to carry on this joyful tradition, which encapsulates a wealth of popular piety. It is my hope that this custom will never be lost and that, wherever it has fallen into disuse, it can be rediscovered and revived. [Read more here.](#)

December 2022

## 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:*  
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*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](#)

**12 Weeks of Franciscan Peace 2022**

A weekly program of peace-giving themes, reflections, and prayers leading up to Christmas is available on the website.

Developed by Carolyn Townes, OFS, National JPIC animator, the readings and reflections focus on peace from Oct. 3-Dec. 25.

A beautiful way to prepare for the coming of the Prince of Peace, the program includes thoughts or themes for each week, a reflection, a Psalm fragment, a reflection question, resolution, and prayer.

At our August 2022 Quinquennial, Marion Clorey, OFS, mentioned “12 Weeks of Franciscan Peace” in her keynote address. Marion said this about the program:

“In the program 12 weeks of Franciscan Peace by our sister Carolyn Townes, she quotes Claude Thomas as saying “Imagine, if everyone stopped the war in themselves – there would be no seeds from which war could grow.” In our prayers of the faithful at Eucharist, we often pray for an end to war and conflict in various parts of our world. We need to pray for the seeds of war that grow in the recesses of our own hearts. When I am critical of my neighbor when I want more recognition for my service – all of these things are the beginnings of anger and resentment which can take root in my heart. We need to uproot those thoughts with the power of God’s grace and forgiveness. And, of course, our commitment to daily conversion and prayer is the place where this can happen. We trust in the presence of the divine seed in everyone, including ourselves!”

You can find 12 Weeks of Franciscan Peace readings and reflections here: [\[English\]](#) [\[Spanish\]](#)  
[Read more here: 12 Weeks of Franciscan Peace 2022](#)

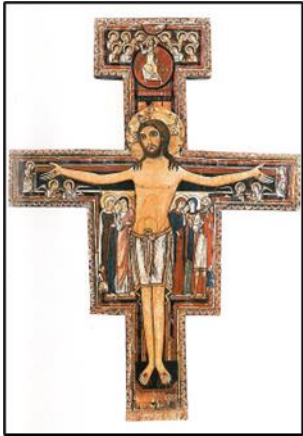


**12 Weeks of Franciscan Peace**

October 3 - December 25



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 December**

***Volunteer Not-for-Profit Organizations***

We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

**Advent from the friars of Holy Name Province**

**As we prayerfully wait for the coming of Christ, of Peace made Flesh, we can do our part to promote peace-filled living in our world.**

Like Francis and Clare, we must confront contemporary issues and discover how God is calling us to build peace in our world today. Francis didn’t simply pray for peace, but he worked actively to address conflict and bring people together. The stories of the wolf of Gubbio, of Francis and the Sultan, of the bishop and the mayor of Assisi, all serve to highlight the great desire of Francis to foster peace, which he felt was a task conferred on him by God. We must seek the urgent need to address the problems of our time.

[Advent 2012 – In the Spirit of Assisi – Holy Land Peacemaking](#) (PDF)  
[Adviento de 2012 – En el Espíritu de Asís – Pacificación de Tierra Santa](#) (PDF)

**Advent Prayer by Henri Nouwen**

*Lord Jesus,  
Master of both the light and the darkness, send your holy spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.*

*We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.*

*We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.*

*We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.*

*We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.  
We who are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, “Come Lord Jesus!” Amen*





*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

The Gospel passage pertaining to the angel Gabriel and his appearance to the priest Zachariah (Luke 1: 5-23, 57-66) evokes major themes that we are often asked to consider implementing around this time of year: silence and reflection, turning away from the noise, preparing ourselves for the coming of the Lord and looking inward and listening to our hearts. Reading the infancy narrative contained within the first chapter of Luke's Gospel, we find common ground with Zachariah in his period of silent reflection. He was struck "dumb" or mute out of his disbelief that his wife Elizabeth could bear a son in her advanced age. Whether or not we find that this sort of disbelief or doubt in God is the product of burdensome challenges or tragedies in our lives, or from the fact that we have just witnessed a wondrous miracle of God, it is not hard to imagine the ways in which we too might be rendered silent in need of reflection. However, as Franciscans, we might have an opportunity to revisit this story in a different light.

Zachariah spends approximately the entire length of Elizabeth's pregnancy without being able to speak. As the Evangelist tells us, his speech is restored by his bearing witness to God's will by inscribing the name of John the Baptist on a tablet for his family and community to see. While we envision this event in its overlap with Mary's Fiat before the angel Gabriel, we can see distinct parallels of faith and testimony are drawn to reckon with one another. We think of our own days of steadfast and solid faith in Mary's submission to the Lord; our less noteworthy days of fragility and rash action in thinking of Zachariah's doubt before the angel of the Lord. Yet one question remains: How did Zachariah manage that silent day-to-day period if not for his direct and willing immersion into the events and plans of his life that the Lord had set out for him?

As Franciscans, our charism calls us to reflect on our own immersive witness to the role of the Lord's will in our respective lives. Our days have ups and downs. In walking alongside Zachariah this Advent season, we might find that the smallest, most seemingly insignificant actions we take, the trials and tribulations we face, bring us closer to the Lord in paths to holiness. It is in this immersive and conscious acceptance of ourselves in a gradual journey of faith through a lens of Franciscan joy that we may approach the crib of our Lord this December 25th. Like Zachariah, we might craft a canticle of love and praise all our own at each end. By simply doing what is ours to do this Advent season, we too will see that because of the tender mercy of our God, our Franciscan journey in hope will guide our feet into a way of peace. -Travis Bongiorno, OFS



St. Francis of Assisi Preparing the Christmas Crib at Greccio, Giotto, Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi, Assisi, Italy, 1297 - 1300

*"It is believed that St. Francis of Assisi created the very first crib scene in the year 1223.*

By gathering live animals and people in a stable to re-enact the first Christmas, he hoped to help the local townspeople better understand the poverty and love of Jesus. The Christ Child was lying on the hay in a manger between a live ox and a donkey. *Legend has it that the Christ Child himself appeared in the manger to complete the scene.*

St. Francis honored Our Divine Lord in a special and memorable way for people who were taking Christmas for granted. Including animals for authenticity, St. Francis filled the manger which was used as the altar with hay. The Eucharist, placed on this manger-altar, caused many to see the Divine Infant held by St. Francis. *They realized Christ was among them.* He was there just as He was in the stable in Bethlehem. Thus, many understood God's love is ever-present, and His presence all-loving. By His coming so helpless, God showed he loves, respects, and trusts us. All were overwhelmed with love for an innocent child that early Christmas morning.

*St. Francis hoped the crèche would serve as a reminder of all that Christmas should be, and what he began in Greccio in 1223 would become part of Christian tradition."*

\*[From Liturgy of the Hours & Office of the Passion of Francis of Assisi: by Deacon Dave & Thérèse Ream, O.F.S., 3/2016, Revised July 2017] *Read more:* Source: [Christmas Creche and St. Francis of Assisi](#)



John & Gail Halada, OFS

*"Home is not where you are from,*

*it is where  
you belong.*

*Some of us  
travel the whole  
world to find it.*

*Others,  
find it in a person."*

*-Beau Taplin //The Explorers*

## Celebrations

## The O Antiphons

## December Franciscan Calendar Month of the Incarnation

### Profession Anniversaries

12.02.17

Ellen Ferrone, OFS  
Theresa Flynn, OFS  
Lee Cunningham, OFS  
Chris Peffley, OFS  
Michael Hancock, OFS  
Lynn Oeser, OFS

### Birthdays

12.11 Ida Irwin, OFS  
12.28 Sharon Winzeler, OFS  
12.28 Mary Cockrill, OFS



Photo Credit:Hannele Kulyk

Dec 17 *O Sapientia (Wisdom)* -O Wisdom, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High. You fill the universe and hold all things together in a strong yet gentle manner. O come to teach us the way of truth.

Dec 18 *O Adonai (Lord)* -O Adonai and leader of Israel, you appeared to Moses in a burning bush and you gave him the Law on Sinai. O come and save us with your mighty power.

Dec 19 *O Radix Jesse (Root of Jesse)* -O stock of Jesse, you stand as a signal for the nations; kings fall silent before you whom the peoples acclaim. O come to deliver us, and do not delay.

Dec 20 *O Clavis David (Key of David)* -O key of David and scepter of Israel, what you open no one else can close again; what you close no one can open. O come to lead the captive from prison; free those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Dec 21 *O Oriens (Rising Sun)* -O Rising Sun, you are the splendor of eternal light and the sun of justice. O come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Dec 22 *O Rex Gentium (King of all nations)* -O King whom all the peoples desire, you are the cornerstone which makes all one. O come and save man whom you made from clay.

Dec 23 *O Emmanuel (God with us)* -O Emmanuel, you are our king and judge, the One whom the peoples await and their Savior. O come and save us, Lord, our God.

See source link for Scripture references and reflections.  
Source:[Catholic.org](https://www.catholic.org)

## An Advent Reflection

“We can never tell how patient or humble a person is when everything is going well for him. But when those who should cooperate with him do the exact opposite, then we can tell. A man has as much patience and humility as he has then, and no more.” –St. Francis of Assisi

Advent is a time of waiting. It is a time of preparation for Christmas, but it’s also a reminder of all that awaits us in the fulfillment of the kingdom. In our daily lives during December, we wait for package deliveries; we wait in checkout lines and at customer service counters. In his writings, St. Francis consistently counseled both patience and joy. Do we reflect those qualities in our everyday encounters?

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God,  
who made heaven and earth,  
the sea, and all that is in them;  
who keeps faith forever;  
who executes justice for the oppressed;  
who gives food to the hungry.  
-PSALM 146:6-7

Excerpt: Advent 2022 Daily Reflections with Saint Francis  
by Diane M. Houdek

Ellen Ferrone, OFS John and Gail Halada, OFS & Rachel Bongiorno OFS



## [Meditations by Padre Pio](#)

The Heart of our Divine Master has no more amiable law than that of sweetness, humility, charity. Often place your confidence in Divine Providence and be assured that sooner heaven and earth shall pass away than that the Lord neglect to protect you.



## Padre Pio Fraternity November Gathering

Did you know?

*Did you know that before 1978, our order was known as the Third Order Secular?*

### 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

### Ongoing Formation: Episode 2- [Metanoia by Fr. David Pivonka](#)

1. When did you decide that heaven is your ultimate goal? What brought you to that point of decision?
2. Heaven is our goal, but we must be intentional about aiming for this. We don't just fall into heaven. How do you intentionally direct your life towards heaven?
3. Jesus looks at you with love. What does he ask of you? How are you able to give it to him?
4. Today, on this Feast of Christ the King, what do imagine Jesus would do if he were living here now? How does this speak to you in regards to where to focus your energies and talents?

### JPIC, Gladys Whitehouse, OFS

- Oak City Cares with Lee Cunningham, OFS, and Marylou Holloway, OFS. Our next two food services are Saturday, Nov. 26 (Thanksgiving weekend) and Christmas Eve. Each member will receive two Christmas bags that we ask you to prepare for our guests at Oak City. Suggested items are: Small toiletries, hand cream/sanitizer shampoo, toothbrush/toothpaste, lip balm, single doses of Advil/aspirin/Tylenol, band-aids, wet wipes, tissues, first aid portable pack, hats/gloves/socks, homemade cookies, peanut butter crackers, applesauce, granola bars, gift cards (such as McDonald's)
- Update on L'Arche (Speaker in February)

**Announcements:** Continue to reach out to our visitors. A new orientation session will begin on Jan. 22.

### Items of Interest

*Saturday, Dec. 3.  
Joanne Jacovec, OFS, will lead us in our annual day of learning, and spirituality, followed by Mass at 4 p.m. celebrated in the chapel by Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM. We will collect \$10 to cover lunch.*

*Sts. Cyril and Methodius'  
St. Nicholas European Christmas Market Friday Dec. 9, 5-9 pm and Saturday Dec. 10, 10 am - 5 pm*

*Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023.  
Padre Pio Epiphany Party at Maureen Copan's house from 2-4 p.m.*

*March 10-12, 2023. Annual retreat at St. Francis Springs.*

*Saturday, July 15, 2023.  
Permanent Profession at 11 a.m.  
Mass at St. Francis of Assisi of our candidates.  
Reception afterward.*

Bob Marge



### Eye on the Inquirer-Bob Marge

I was born in Brooklyn, NY to Syrian American Christian parents. My first encounter with the Catholic faith was a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It was inside the home of one of my childhood friends and was deeply touched by it. I was in the US Army for two years and afterward enrolled in SUNY Farmingdale and got my AAS in Criminal Justice. I became an NYPD officer in 1986 and retired in 2001. I previously was a SUNY Stonybrook Public Safety officer in 1981 all my time at Stonybrook counted toward my pension.

I love studying Church History and the Bible. Above all my conversion was in 1999 and the NYPD (95%) Catholic had a great influence. I've been married to my soulmate for 22 years. My hobbies are working out and playing online chess. My wife Maria is my Christian role model. I have two stepchildren and two beautiful grandsons from my stepdaughter. I have 2 sons from my first marriage.

Fr. Bonaventure Brown, OFM



Rosemary Schneider, OFS



The first gathering place was Our Lady of Lourdes Parish with Rosemary as the "Prefect", Art as the Secretary and Fr. Steven Walsh, OFM as the Spiritual Director. (Titles were different under the 1883 Rule). Fr. Bonaventure Brown, OFM became the Spiritual Director from 1976 to 1978. By the way, Father Bonaventure was one of my formators in 1963 at Holy Name College in Washington, D.C.

It wasn't until the 1978 Rule of Pope Paul VI that the seculars became independent of the friars. Today, we have Friars as spiritual assistants but they do not run the fraternity, only advise on spiritual matters. *We are fortunate to have Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM.* Sadly, because of the shortage of Friars, many fraternities are lacking friars as spiritual assistants today. In 1978, titles also changed under the new Rule and Rosemary received the title as Minister. The TOS after her name was also changed to OFS. Fr. Jeffrey Ingram, OFM, then became the Spiritual Assistant and was soon replaced by Fr. Thomas Sanford, OFM for the next year. By 1980, the Padre Pio Fraternity was meeting at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Downtown Raleigh.

-Frank Peluso, OFS

## From the Catechism of the Catholic Church-The Immaculate Conception

487 What the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ.

490 To become the mother of the Savior, Mary "was enriched by God with gifts appropriate to such a role." The angel Gabriel at the moment of the annunciation salutes her as "full of grace". In fact, in order for Mary to be able to give the free assent of her faith to the announcement of her vocation, it was necessary that she be wholly borne by God's grace.

491 Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, "full of grace" through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854: *The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.*

492 The "splendor of an entirely unique holiness" by which Mary is "enriched from the first instant of her conception" comes wholly from Christ: she is "redeemed, in a more exalted fashion, by reason of the merits of her Son". The Father blessed Mary more than any other created person "in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" and chose her "in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him in love".

493 The Fathers of the Eastern tradition call the Mother of God "the All-Holy" (Panagia), and celebrate her as "free from any stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature". By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long.

"Let it be done to me according to your word. . ."

494 At the announcement that she would give birth to "the Son of the Most High" without knowing man, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary responded with the obedience of faith, certain that "with God nothing will be impossible": "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be [done] to me according to your word." Thus, giving her consent to God's word, Mary becomes the mother of Jesus. Espousing the divine will for salvation wholeheartedly, without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and to the work of her Son; she did so in order to serve the mystery of redemption with him and dependent on him, by God's grace.

As St. Irenaeus says, "Being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race." Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert: "The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith." Comparing her with Eve, they call Mary "the Mother of the living" and frequently claim: "Death through Eve, life through Mary." Source: [Catholic.org](http://Catholic.org)

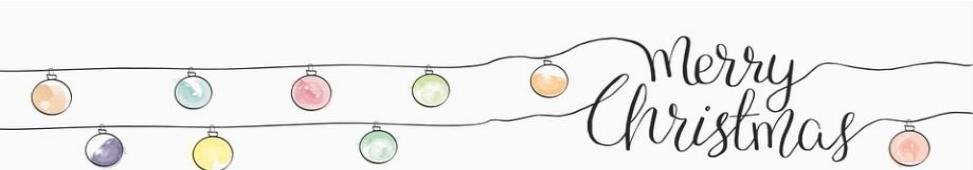
### *Prayer to the Immaculate Conception*

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, did prepare a worthy dwelling place for Your Son, we beseech You that, as by the foreseen death of this, Your Son, You did preserve Her from all stain, so too You would permit us, purified through Her intercession, to come unto You. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen+



The Immaculate Conception, Bartolome Esteban Murillo, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD, US, 1670





# December 2022 Fraternity Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Profession Anniversaries	3 Fraternity Retreat
4 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent	5	6	7	8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception	9	10
11 Ida Irwin's Birthday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent	12	13	14	15 Mary Queen of The Seraphic Order	16	17
18 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent	19	20	21	22	23	24 Oak City Cares
25 Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ	26	27	28 Feast of the Holy Innocents Sharon Winzeler's Birthday Mary Cockrill's Birthday	29	30	31

Free calendar created by templatesdirectory.com

Realize that you have no righteousness of your own.

Padre Pio gave the following rules:  
“Never be pleased with yourself.  
Do not complain about offenses perpetrated against you.  
Forgive everyone with Christian charity.  
Always groan as a poor wretch before your God.

Never marvel at your weakness, but recognize yourself for what you are; blush over your inconstancy and faithlessness to God, and confide in him, tranquilly abandoning yourself to the arms of the heavenly Father like a babe in the arms of his mother.

Never exult in any way in any virtues, but ascribe everything to God, and give him all the glory and honor.”

Excerpt: Padre Pio: The True Story: by C. Bernard Ruffin p.172-173



Dave Shick, OFS & Chris Peffley, OFS

“Franciscan elves Chris Peffley and Dave Shick helped Ida Irwin's living community put up their Christmas tree. Thanks to all of you who offered to help.”  
-Sharon Winzeler, OFS



Ida Irwin, OFS

We spend a lot of time thinking about gifts during Advent.

I’d like to propose that metanoia—or the ongoing conversion that brings us closer to our center of spiritual being and to our God—is God’s gift to us. *Metanoia came to the disciples and the apostles as they realized that Jesus Christ was divine and human. Metanoia came to the three Wise Men when they worshipped the baby Jesus and presented him with kingly gifts. Metanoia came to Mary when she freely accepted the Angel Gabriel’s announcement that she would be the mother of Christ.* Bottom line, with the arrival of Jesus in our world, a new state of affairs began—the Divine and human met, and metanoia led us to change our way of thinking. *Metanoia helps us follow Jesus.*

The word metanoia is closely associated with repentance, but metanoia is stronger and deeper. As Catholics, we are used to repenting for our sins. “Repent and sin no more” is a familiar Gospel verse. If we translate ‘repent’ into ‘metanoia,’ we will come closer to our target of seeking the holy. Metanoia doesn’t mean to just say you are sorry, but to see that you can move on, safely rooted in God’s love. *Metanoia means converting from ‘me centered’ to ‘God centered’ in our lives and actions.*

Christ calls us to open our eyes to the merger of the human and divine. That was why he came. He invites us to learn about the power of God’s kingdom through metanoia—the changing of our attitude. *This daily conversion enables us to center our focus on God and His love.* That’s what he means when he tells us to believe in the Good News.

Think about how many times Jesus was criticized, questioned, and attacked in the Gospels. Never did he get defensive and fight back. Instead, he relied on the radical trust in his divine nature and used that power to maintain his balance and to teach his followers. Of course, there are times when our way of seeing our lives with metanoia is not perfect. When we see with fear, we feel a need to defend ourselves and possibly lash out at the universe—or what we see as potential adversaries. That is when we bring in the metanoia and change direction. *Metanoia enables us to believe, or have faith, and be overwhelmed by the power of God—to permit divine energy to be at every level of our being.*

To believe is to surrender to our God who wants to be incarnate or come alive in us. To believe is to say, ‘yes,’ and move forward. Jesus invites us to find the new center of our lives in the same place he found his own—in the unconditional love of God. Our daily conversion brings us to that sacred place where we are safe. -Sharon Winzeler, OFS



Photo Credit: Rachel Bongiorno, OFS

A note from the Editor

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

-Rachel