

# Padre Pio Fraternity

## Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region Secular Franciscan Order of Central North Carolina

May 2024

### ***the little flowers of Padre Pio Fraternity***

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## Minister's Memo

by Sharon Winzeler, OFS, Minister

Msgr. John Wall's description of his October pilgrimage to Italy took me back 14 years to my first visit to Assisi.

This wasn't a pilgrimage. It was a Spring Break trip that included 40 high school students and six of us teachers serving as chaperones. Our tour to London, Paris and Rome included a half day in Assisi.

Neither Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris nor the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City brought me the peace and joy that I found in the crypt of Francis and his friends in the lower level of the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi.

When our bus arrived at the foot of the short climb to Assisi, I headed to the basement of the Basilica where the remains of Francis and his friends rested. Although I had not begun formation as a Secular Franciscan, I was close to starting my journey. Spending reflective time with Francis, Lady Jacoba and the others in the subterranean chapel brought me peace—and not because I was able to get away from the 40 students.

I was in awe of Francis, who loved Jesus so much he emptied himself so that he could serve God and others with a pure heart.

Four years later I once again traveled to Assisi. This time it was less than a month before my permanent profession. Joanne Jacovec, then minister, planned this weeklong trip for her, Maureen Copan and me. I remember the sweet perfume of the jasmine growing near the Basilica of St. Clare and the angelic voices of the Poor Clare nuns as they sang the Liturgy of the Hours behind the metal gates.

This trip brought more peace and joy as I expanded my connection with Francis by visiting where he first saw the San Damiano cross, served the lepers, and prayed in the caves.

Assisi contains a sacredness you won't find anywhere else. When you have the opportunity, I hope you can witness the life of peace, love and joy that Francis lived and that we seek by serving our Lord as unselfishly as he did.



**Fraternity Council**

Spiritual Assistant: Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM

Minister: Sharon Winzeler, OFS

Vice Minister: Rachel Bongiorno, OFS

Formation Director: Gladys Whitehouse, OFS

Treasurer: Janette Perez, OFS

Secretary: Mary Cockrill, OFS

Councilors:  
Richard Hammer, OFS  
Travis Bongiorno, OFS  
Anne Evangelista, OFS

BSSF Region Minister: Ellen Ferrone, OFS

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

Our website: [ofscentralnc.org](http://ofscentralnc.org)

Facebook: Padre Pio Fraternity Secular Franciscan  
Order of Central North Carolina

**Apostolates**

JPIC, Newsletter & Facebook: Rachel Bongiorno, OFS

Oak City Cares:  
MaryLou Holloway, OFS & Mary Cockrill, OFS

On-going Formation Team:  
Gladys Whitehouse, OFS

Prayer Requests:  
Deacon Phil Rzewnicki, OFS

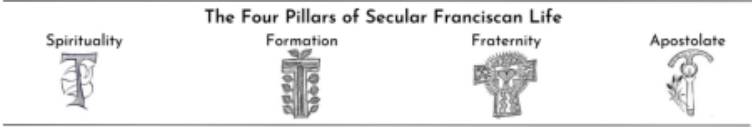
CPO & Fraternity Library: Maureen Copan, OFS

Website: Sharon Winzeler, OFS

Hospitality:  
Maureen McFadden, OFS & Alma Hammer, OFS

Sunshine: Frank Peluso, OFS & Laurie Wilburn, OFS

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.



“Earthly riches are like the reed. Its roots are sunk in the swamp, and its exterior is fair to behold; but inside it is hollow. If a man leans on such a reed, it will snap off and pierce his soul.”

-Saint Anthony of Padua



Photo Credit: Rachel Bongiorno, OFS

## Traditional Franciscan Calendar May Month of the Holy Virgin Mary

1. Feast of Saint Joseph the Artisan
2. St. Richard Pampuri
3. Bl. Edouard-Joseph Rosas
4. Bl. Ladislav de Gielnow
5. Bl. Beinvenu Marení
6. Bl. Marie-Catherine Troijani
7. Bl. Anne-Rose Gattorno
8. Feast of Mary Mediatrix of all Graces
9. Bl. Antoine Bajewski
10. Bl. Marie-Bernard Butler
11. St. Gemme de Sulmona
12. St. Ignatius of Laconi
13. St. Michel Garicoitz
14. St. Marie-Dominique Mazzarello
15. St. Jean-Baptiste de la Salle
16. St. Theophile de Corte
17. St. Paschal of Baylon
18. St. Felix of Cantalice
19. St. Yves
20. St. Bernardin de Sienne
21. St. Crispin de Viterbe
22. St. Joaquina Vedruna
23. Bl. Gerard de Villamagna
24. Bl. Jean de Prado
25. Dedication of the Basilica in Assisi, 1253
26. St. Philippe Neri
27. Bl. Gerard de Lunel
28. St. Jean-Baptiste Rossi
29. Bl. Etienne et Raymond
30. St. Joan of Arc & King Saint Fernando III
31. Feast of the Queenship of Mary

## The Pope's Prayer Intentions for May

For the formation of religious and seminarians

We pray that religious women and men, and seminarians, grow in their own vocations through their human, pastoral, spiritual and community formation, leading them to be credible witnesses to the Gospel.

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*Happy Birthday*

07 Anne Evangelista, OFS

17 Travis Bongiorno, OFS

22 Theresa Flynn, OFS

24 Anna Rzewnicki, OFS

28 Maureen Copan, OFS

29 Brian Denison, OFS

31 Dave Abell, OFS & Alma Hammer, OFS

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## Profession Anniversaires

May 9, 2003

Ginny Conway, OFS

&

May 8, 1954

Frank Peluso, OFS

# Sharing Our Blessings

## by Deacon Phil Rz., OFS

Bees are part of the biodiversity on which we all depend for our survival. As a landmark 2019 report from the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations notes, “Sacred passages about bees in all the worlds’ major religions highlight their significance to human societies over millennia.”

And pollinators contribute directly to food security. According to bee experts a third of the world’s food production depends on bees. When animals and insects pick up the pollen of flowers and spread it, they allow plants, including many food crops, to reproduce. The most common pollinators are insects, and among them, are the bees.

Bees are at risk from pesticides and air pollution. But sadly, bees and other pollinators, such as butterflies, bats and hummingbirds, are increasingly under threat from human activities. Bee populations have been declining globally over recent decades due to habitat loss, intensive farming practices, changes in weather patterns and the excessive use of agrochemicals such as pesticides. This in turn poses a threat to a variety of plants critical to human well-being and livelihoods.

Air pollution is also thought to be affecting bees. Preliminary research shows that air pollutants interact with scent molecules released by plants which bees need to locate food. The mixed signals interfere with the bees’ ability to forage efficiently, making them slower and less effective at pollination.

In May 2018, the European Union upheld a partial ban on three insecticides known as neonicotinoids to mitigate the lethal threat they pose to bees and their trickle-down effect on pollination as a whole. In August, 2022, world leaders at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference, called for the reduction of pesticides by at least two thirds by 2030.

These same world leaders encourage governments, organizations, civil society and concerned citizens to protect pollinators and their habitats. The UN has declared May 20 as World Bee Day. World Bee Day raises awareness of the essential role bees, and other pollinators play in keeping people and the planet healthy. The date coincides with the birthday of Anton Janša, who in the 18th century pioneered modern beekeeping techniques in his native Slovenia.

Here are some actions you can take to help preserve bees and other pollinators:

- Plant nectar-bearing flowers such as marigolds or sunflowers for decorative purposes on balconies, terraces, and gardens
- Buy honey and other hive products from your nearest local beekeeper
- Cut grass on meadows only after the nectar-bearing plants have finished blooming
- Use pesticides that do not harm bees, and spray them in windless weather, either early in the morning or late at night, when bees withdraw from blossoms

(Source: United Nations Environment Programme)



## Laudato Si' in a Year

'Laudato Si' Encyclical in a Year' is designed for those who have not read it, not read it in its entirety or would like a general revisit. There are 2 ways to participate according to your needs: Every 3rd Tuesday of the month, starting on May 21st, by Zoom, 7-8 p.m., or Flocknote text/email correspondence. We are preparing ourselves to celebrate during the Jubilee Year the 10-year anniversary of Laudato Si': On Care of our Common Home encyclical, the Laudato Si' Movement and the 800-year anniversary of the Canticum of the Creatures. To join or for further information, email Monica through the Office of Human Life, Dignity and Justice at HNOJ Cathedral: [socialconcern@hnojnc.org](mailto:socialconcern@hnojnc.org).

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## Meet the Inquirer Stacy Lewis



I was born in Woodstock, New York, and my family settled in Raleigh in the early 80s. I grew up and married in the Methodist church but divorced and later converted at St. Francis parish in 1999.

I work for the NC Housing Finance Agency's Business Intelligence team, analyzing program metrics and creating visualizations to assist in data driven decision-making.

I've always been interested in art and have worked as a graphic designer, animator and medical illustrator. In 2012 I started doing painting demonstrations at special events for the NC Museum of Natural History and other museums. A 2022 Called and Gifted workshop led me to expand the teaching aspect of these demos, and since then I've done sensory-friendly and STEAM oriented demos as well. I love sharing the joy in creating and in creation and I look forward to discovering more Franciscan joy among your fraternity.

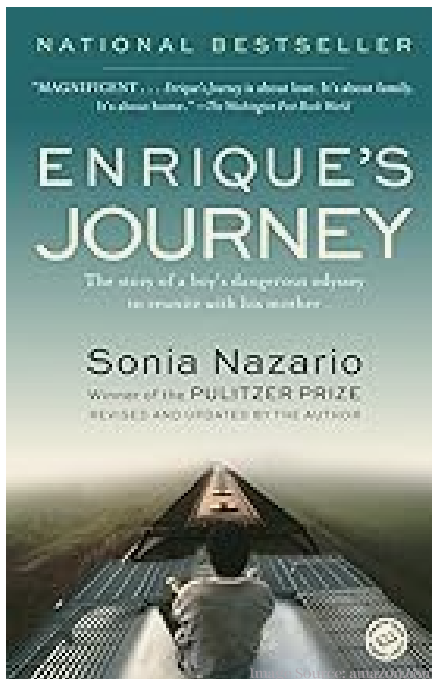


# St. Francis Staff Luncheon Service

## Friday April 26, 2024



Members of our Fraternity serving a meal at the staff luncheon for St. Francis Parish



The multicultural commission is organizing a book study for the month of May on Enrique's Journey, by the Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Sonia Nazario of the LA Times. This book chronicles the incredible journey of Enrique, a teenage boy from Honduras, as he travels to the United States to be reunited with his mother, whom he had not seen since he was five. The book puts a human face on the many immigrants (both documented and undocumented) who have crossed the southern border in the last 20 years and brings the reader into contact with the social forces that led them to make the dangerous journey to the US.

It will meet 4 times in May: Tuesday 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28, at 7:30pm EDT, 6:30 CDT, for one hour. Each week reflection and discussion questions to help guide the discussion will be provided. If you would like to participate, send an email to David (our Regional MCC point person) at [david.cruzuribe1963@gmail.com](mailto:david.cruzuribe1963@gmail.com) or reach out to any member of the Council.

Be sure to reply before May 3rd to receive the Zoom link.

God is “beyond,” beyond our heart and mind, beyond our feelings and thoughts, beyond our expectations and desires, and beyond all the events and experiences that make up our life. Still God is in the center of all of it. Here we touch the heart of prayer, since here it becomes manifest that in prayer the distinction between God’s presence and God’s absence no longer really distinguishes. In prayer, God’s presence is never separated from God’s absence and God’s absence is never separated from God’s presence. God’s presence is so much beyond the human experience of being together that it quite easily is perceived as absence. God’s absence, on the other hand, is often so deeply felt that it leads to a new sense of God’s presence. . . .

“My God, my God, why have you deserted me?” (Psalms 22:1). . . . When Jesus spoke these words on the cross, total aloneness and full acceptance touched each other. In that moment of complete emptiness all was fulfilled. In that hour of darkness new light was seen. While death was witnessed, life was affirmed. Where God’s absence was most loudly expressed, God’s presence was most profoundly revealed. When God, through the humanity of Jesus, freely chose to share our own most painful experience of divine absence, God became most present to us. It is into this mystery that we enter when we pray.

*Henri J. Nouwen*

### The Franciscan Family Chaplet prayer

By Nick Kovacs, OFS

**1)** Begin by making the **sign of the cross** and reciting the **Apostle's Creed**

**2)** Recite the **Hail Mary** once on each of these 3 beads

**3)** Begin the first decade by saying: "St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the First Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness." Recite the **Our Father**

**4)** Say once on each of these 10 beads "My God and my all !"

**5)** Begin the second decade by saying: "St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Second Order increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness." Recite the **Our Father**

**6)** Say once on each of these 10 beads "My God and my all !"

**7)** Begin the third decade by saying: "St. Francis of Assisi, through your intercession, I pray that the Third Order, both Regular and Secular, increases in vocations and that its members continue to grow in holiness." Recite the **Our Father**

**8)** Say once on each of these 10 beads "My God and my all !"

**9)** End by reciting once "We adore you O Lord Jesus Christ, because by your holy cross, You have redeemed the world." (note - if there is no centerpiece, pray this on the single bead below)

**10)** Say one "Glory be..." on each of the last 3 beads for the intentions of the Pope and for his continued holiness.

**11)** Make the **sign of the cross**

This prayer was granted an Imprimatur from  
Cardinal DiNardo

Image Source: secularfranciscansusa.org