

# Padre Pio Fraternity

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

## *the little flowers of Padre Pio Fraternity*

### Minister's Memo

March 2025

by Sharon Winzeler, OFS, Minister

Lent is a 40-day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that begins on Ash Wednesday.

It struck me last month at Oak City Cares that Padre Pio Fraternity observes at least two of those practices every month. Our fraternity's devotion to serving those in need reinforces our call to live Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel.

May we continue to manifest our blessings with service. I am privileged to call each of you brother and sister.

Peace, Sharon



# Saint of the Day March 2025

					1 Saint David of Wales	2 Saint Agnes of Bohemia
3 Saint Katharine Drexel	4 Saint Casimir	5 Saint John Joseph of the Cross	6 Saint Mary Ann of Jesus of Paredes	7 Saints Perpetua and Felicity	8 Saint John of God	9 Saint Frances of Rome
10 Saint Dominic Savio	11 Saint John Ogilvie	12 Blessed Angela Salawa	13 Saint Leander of Seville	14 Saint Maximilian	15 Saint Louise de Marillac	16 Saint Clement Mary Hofbauer
17 Saint Patrick	18 Saint Cyril of Jerusalem	19 Saint Joseph, Husband of Mary	20 Saint Salvator of Horta	21 Blessed John of Parma	22 Saint Nicholas Owen	23 Saint Turibius of Mogrovejo
24 Saint Oscar Arnulfo Romero	25 Annunciation of the Lord	26 Saint Catherine of Genoa	27 Saint Gregory of Narek	28 Saint Catharine of Bologna	29 Saint Ludovico of Casoria	30 Saint Peter Regalado
31 Saint Stephen of Mar Saba						

Source: [franciscanmedia.org](http://franciscanmedia.org)

## The Pope's Prayer Intentions March

For families in crisis

Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

Source: [uscch.org](http://uscch.org)

Happy Birthday

5 Char Witosky, OFS

11 Stacy Lewis, OFS

12 Suzie Nelson, OFS

15 Dave Shick, OFS

24 Gladys Whitehouse, OFS



## Living The Now

One of the greatest temptations of our lives is to live ahead of ourselves and not believe that something is happening here and now. The world in which we live makes us believe that the real thing is happening next week, next month, or next year. As Christians, we are challenged to believe that what is happening is always happening here and now. At this moment. Now. If we live the now, the present, to the full, the future will grow. It will reveal itself to us because we have already received the Spirit. We have already received the beginning of the eternal life. We are already in the House of God. We are already breathing God's breath. Let's stay there and listen carefully.

*Henri J. M. Nouwen*

Lord Jesus Christ, grant me the gift of understanding. Help me to understand the feelings of others, the desires of others, the goals of others.

At the same time, help me to understand myself in my actions and reactions. Widen my vision beyond my own small world to embrace with knowledge and love the worlds of others.

Help me, Lord, to always see you at work in my own life and in the lives of others. Bless me with insight, acceptance and love that is tempered by you who are all things to all men.

Amen.

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### PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

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Istockphoto.com  
elev8.hellobeautiful.com  
Shared by Lynn Oeser,OFS

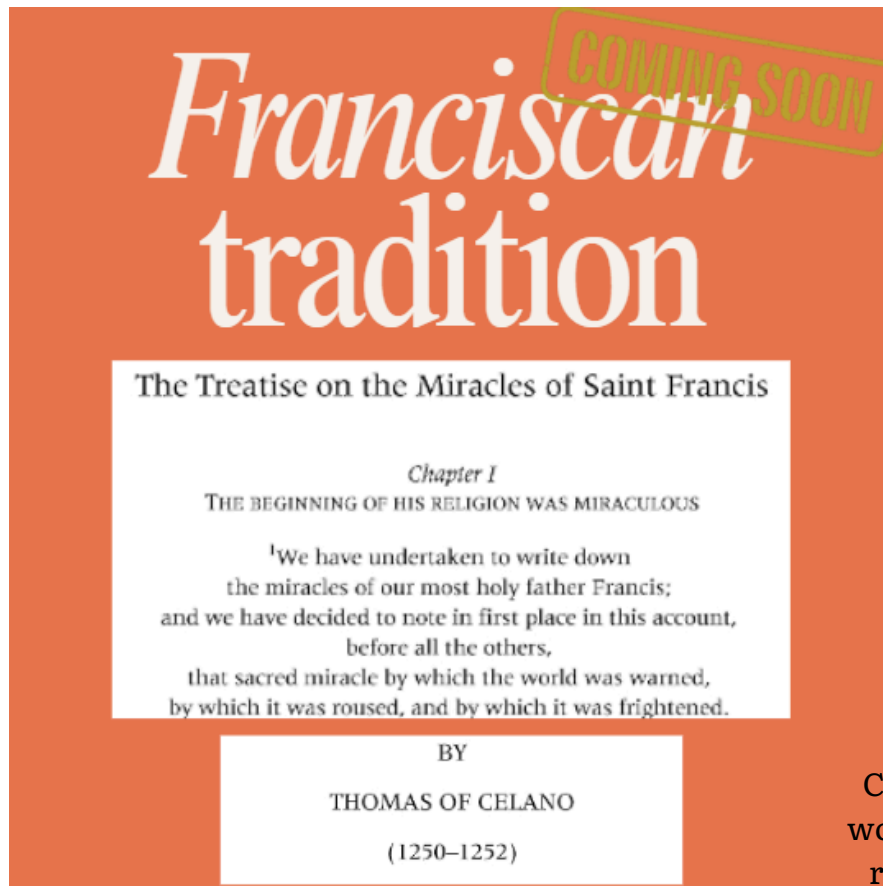
# Sharing Our Blessings

by Deacon Phil Rz.

So, what happens to each of us Secular Franciscans as we progress through Inquiry, Initial Formation, Candidacy and onto Profession seeking ongoing formation for the rest of our earthly lives? We all are on a pilgrimage of transformation. Revelation came to me from the current Give Us This Day booklet. Gratitude to Fr. Henri Nouwen for his inspiring words:

“To follow Christ requires the willingness and determination to let God’s Spirit pervade all the corners of our minds and hearts and there make us into other Christs. Formation is transformation, and transformation means a growing conformity to the mind of Christ, who did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself.

Thus discipleship cannot be realized without discipline. Discipline in the spiritual life, however, has nothing to do with the discipline of athletics, academic study, or job training, in which physical fitness is achieved, new knowledge is acquired, or a new skill is mastered. The discipline of the Christian disciple is not to master anything, but rather to be mastered by the Spirit. True Christian discipline is the human effort to create the space in which the Spirit of Christ can transform us into his lineage.”



Contact Rachel, if you  
would like more details!  
[rchlrsn@gmail.com](mailto:rchlrsn@gmail.com)

Excerpt from [FranciscanTradition.org](http://FranciscanTradition.org)

# Who am I, O Lord?

## a communication examen

How do I Prepare?

+Do I listen in silence?

+Do I ask the Holy Spirit to open my heart and mind?

+ Do I gaze on the Cross of our Lord, Jesus and see my own poverty?

"But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. "Gal 6:14

+Do I listen to Jesus in Sacred Scripture?

“Let anyone with ears to hear listen!” Mark 4:9

Holy Spirit show me myself.

What impediments to communication am I prone to?

+Do I interrupt?

+ Do I Think about my response while the other person is talking?

+ Am I truly present to the other? Am I distracted? Am I disinterested?

+ Am I focused on my own agenda? Do I judge, label or name call? (even privately?)

+ Do I make my decision, and stop listening? Do I feel superior? Self-important?

+ Do I want to solve the other person's problem?

+ What words trigger me? Elicit anger or defensiveness? Cause me to shut down?

+ Do I see the good in others ?

+ When I speak are my words kind, are they true and are they necessary?

+ Do I speak with joyful hope? Or with predictions of darkness, doom and gloom?

+ Do I cast blame? Do I demonize those who have different views?

+ Do I hear the cry of the poor in the one to whom I am with?

+How do I use social media?

+ Do I read texts and emails that I receive carefully? Do I ask for clarification?

+ Do I read my texts and emails carefully before hitting send?

+ Do I remember that you love my neighbor as you love me?

“If we truly live the gospel by following the example of St Francis of Assisi, then we understand the importance of encounter, the gift of conversation, the importance of listening sessions on all levels fraternity and the sacredness of relationships.”

How to Talk Like a Franciscan - Read more [here](#)

## Fraternity JPIC Events:

Lenten Book Club: Sundays at 6 pm via Zoom (link in the agenda emails).

Culture Shift: Nonviolence at Work by Kit Miller.

March Event;

Sunday, March 23, 5 pm, 7709 Sandy Bottom Way

Food and conversation about the Franciscan Action Network webinar on immigration

April Event:

Tuesday, April 22, 4 pm, Lake Lynn Recreation Center

Earth Day Celebration!! Come enjoy beautiful nature and fellowship with your brothers and

May Event:

Saturday, May 3, 10 am, North Carolina Museum of Art


Come enjoy God's beautiful creation, the company of the Fraternity, and a special art exhibit featuring the Stations of the Cross

## Community JPIC Events:

Please pray for our imprisoned brothers during their Kairos retreat March 5-8. Send your first name to [Mike@mcgrailgroup.com](mailto:Mike@mcgrailgroup.com) to let them know!

Sunday March 9, 10:15 am, Clare Hall: solidarity Sunday for peace in Israel and Gaza

Saturday, March 29, 6:30 pm: free movie screening of American Coup: Wilmington 1898. Violent overthrow of a multiracial government.



Amid the heated debates, vitriolic rhetoric, and conflicting perspectives, how should we understand the migration issue? As Catholics, we are called to see beyond the biased news stories and instead give witness to the inherent, God given value of every human being.

We invite you to learn more about Catholic teaching and migration. A few minutes could open your hearts to a new perspective - one rooted in faith, justice, and compassion. Please forward this postcard to family and friends so that they can learn more on this issue as well.

**[Learn more here](#)**



Catholic teaching and migration – Justice for Immigrants

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

## Apostolates

JPIC: Theresa Flynn, OFS

Newsletter & Facebook: Rachel Bongiorno, OFS

Oak City Cares:  
Mary Cockrill, OFS & Marianne Norris, OFS

On-going Formation Team:  
Mercedes Cooley, OFS

Prayer Requests:  
Deacon Phil Rzewnicki, OFS

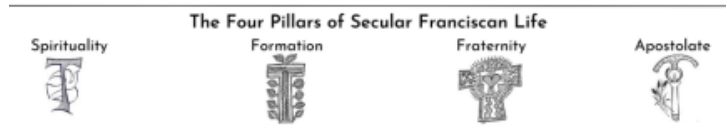
CPO & Fraternity Library: Maureen Copan, OFS

Website: Sharon Winzeler, OFS

Hospitality:  
Maureen McFadden, OFS & Alma Hammer, OFS

Sunshine: 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: Clare Hall at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 11401 Leesville Rd., Raleigh, North Carolina.



Source: secularfranciscansusaorg

## Dates to Remember

- Feb. 23: Payment for retreat due: Payment goes to Janette Perez.
- March 9-April 13 : 6 p.m., on Zoom Book Club on nonviolence led by Michael Evangelista, OFS.
- March 22: Next food service at Oak City Cares.
- March 23: Gathering
- March 23: After gathering, dinner and discussion of Franciscan Action Network immigration webinar
- April 4-6: Retreat at St. Francis Springs.
- April 22: Earth Day nature time and park cleanup at Lake Lynn. Meet at recreation center at 4 p.m.
- April 27: Gathering
- May 3: North Carolina Museum of Art visit at 10 a.m.
- May 30: Permanent Profession of candidates at 11 a.m. Mass followed by a reception. We will not have a gathering in May. The profession will serve as our gathering for May.
- Aug. 8-10: Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Annual Regional Gathering at Black Mountain, NC