

FRANCISCAN MIRROR

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Region
covering most of Upstate New York & Northwestern Pennsylvania

WINTER-
SPRING
2023



Carol Onuffer, OFS
regional minister

REGION'S SERVANT LEADERS

Carol Onuffer, OFS, is now regional minister for the St. Kateri Tekakwitha Region. Formerly regional vice minister, Carol stepped up to fill the unexpired term of Mary Momot, OFS, who had to step down due to family illness.

In conjunction with that change, Formation Director Layna Maher, OFS, moved into the vice minister's role, and Patti Dushane, OFS, was appointed as formation director.



2023 CHAPTER OF ELECTIONS

Please mark your calendars for the 2023 Chapter of Elections at Christ the King Retreat House in Syracuse, April 15-16. Mary Momot, OFS, is election chair. Each local minister is receiving information on the elections, including nomination forms for the regional offices of minister, vice-minister, treasurer, secretary, formation director, and area councilors. As Franciscans all professed members are called to be servant leaders.



POST-COVID CONGRESS DRAWS 647 FRANCISCANS

St. Mary's Basilica and the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Phoenix were the sites for the 20th Quinquennial Congress in August 2022. Despite daily temperatures topping 100 degrees F, the "Q" attracted 647 Secular Franciscans and other members of the Franciscan Family. *PAGE 3.*

SAINT KATERI TEKAKWITHA REGION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Minister

Carol Onuffer, OFS
(814)-923-7410
minister@kateriregion.org

Vice Minister

Layna Maher, OFS
(518) 332-4722
viceminister@kateriregion.org

Secretary

M. Kim Gardener, OFS
(716) 598-3832
secretary@kateriregion.org

Treasurer

Craig Miller, OFS
(607) 724-6491
treasurer@kateriregion.org

Formation Director

Patricia Dushane, OFS
(518) 943-2273
pattidushane@kateriregion.org

Councilor-Eastern Area

Linda Quaranto, OFS
(607) 797-2378
eastcouncilor@kateriregion.org

Councilor-Central Area

Linda Robinson, OFS
(315) 430-2210
centralcouncilor@kateriregion.org

Councilor-Western Area 1

Roderick Quebral, OFS
(716) 875-1780
westcouncilor1@kateriregion.org

Councilor-Western Area 2

Barbara Quebra, OFS
(716) 875-1780
westcouncilor2@kateriregion.org

Spiritual Assistant

Sr. Patricia Larkin, SOSF
(315) 247-4470
plarkin@sosf.org

Spiritual Assistant

Mary Frances Charsky, OFS
(607) 724-4528
mfcharsky@kateriregion.org

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Youth / Young Adult Chair

Peter Wooschlager, OFS
(315) 346-1015
peterpiano61@gmail.com

JPIC* Coordinator

Vacant

**Justice, Peace & Integrity
of Creation Commission.*

Vocations Chair

Vacant

Infirmarian

Karen Hoch, OFS
(315) 816-7085
khoch54@gmail.com

Webmaster

Bob Stronach, OFS
(315) 796-9468
webmaster@kateriregion.org

FRANCISCAN MIRROR

WINTER 2023

EDITORS

BOB STRONACH, OFS
MARY STRONACH, OFS
(315) 796-9284

PLEASE SEND NEWS & NEWSLETTERS TO:

MARY & BOB STRONACH
PO BOX 232
MARCY, NY 13403.
EDITORS@KATERIREGION.ORG

DEADLINE:

MARCH 15, OCT. 15.

Regional Minister's Message



By CAROL ONUFFER, OFS

WE DON'T NEED A HOLIDAY TO DO GOOD

During the Advent and Christmas seasons, I always have such ambitions for prayer and preparation. I get my books out. I make out a prayer schedule. I promise myself that I will not get “caught up” in the commercialized Christmas. Guess what? I do not do very well. I think, maybe, the problem is that the world does not follow the liturgical calendar. I was looking at Christmas decorations before Halloween was over. Christmas movies appeared on TV, and retailers were selling everything to make the holiday bright.

I was wondering why they behave like that. Is it because we all need a little love, and Christmas gives them an excuse to do so? On Christmas, it is ok to be generous. It is ok to be nice to your enemies. Families have a little down time to spend time with each other and it is OK because it is the holiday.

It is such a contrast being a Secular Franciscan. We do not need a holiday to offer compassion to others. We don't need an excuse to be kind. We follow the rule of Christ. We don't always get it right, but we try. We are more aware of our shortcomings because we are people of penance. We evaluate how we are upholding God's law daily. People notice that we are different, and not just because we wear a tau. Our tau is also within us. It has become part of our hearts so that when we offer our help and assistance to others, they get help from our hands and hearts.

I am so inspired by all the wonderful things that this region is doing. It inspires me to do more, and to begin anew each day. I am not bound by the calendar to love my human family. I can be a witness to the good yet to come and set myself free to love God and all my brothers and sisters (article 12).

My prayers and peace to all of you. Your little servant.

THE 'Q' WAS A FRATERNITY OF 647



Fr. David B. Couturier, OFM Cap., dean of Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University, tells Quinquennial Congress attendees: "Yours is a call to build communities of caring encounters." Photos by Robert Stronach, OFS.

By ROBERT STRONACH, OFS

A park adjacent to St. Mary's Basilica in downtown Phoenix features an encircling path under a canopy of trees. Along the path are statues of Pope Saint John Paul II, Saint Mother Teresa, and Saint Francis of Assisi (people leave coins in his open hands).

At one end of the park, under the spreading canopy, is a sculpture of

children holding hands and running in a circle. It is called the Circle of Peace (by artist Gary Lee Price).

An open spot in the circle beckons, with hands reaching out. On impulse Mary Stronach, the OFS vice minister general, joined the circle and kicked up her heel. In a way, the scene symbolized the 20th Quinquennial Congress

— bringing together diverse people in a circle of peace, joy and fraternity.

Hosted in Arizona's capital from Aug. 3 to 7, the "Q" attracted a total of 647 Secular Franciscans and other members of the Franciscan Family. Held every five years (although this one was delayed a year due to COVID concerns),
Continued on next page.





Friars concelebrate the opening mass of the Quinquennial Congress, with attendees filling the basilica.

Continued from previous page.

the congress kicked off with a celebratory dinner and welcoming remarks at the Sheraton Hotel Downtown. Then the throng of Franciscans ventured outside and crossed the street to attend the event's opening mass at St. Mary's Basilica, an historic Franciscan parish.

Minister General Tibor Kauser, OFS, and Vice Minister General Mary Stornach, OFS, brought greetings from the international order (CIOFS Presidency) and spoke about how the world's situation is calling for action, and challenged Secular Franciscans to leave the congress with the mission of building on the Franciscan movement by creating a rippling effect from doing one act of kindness each day. Participants got a head start on daily kindness, decorating and praying over blankets for a homeless shelter.

The "Q" also featured daily small group discussions ("little fraternities") and nearly a score of break-out sessions on a variety of Franciscan and spiritual topics.

Keynote presenters included:

- Fr. David B. Couturier, OFM Cap., dean of Franciscan Studies at St. Bonaventure University, Olean, New York.
- Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv., of the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky.
- Doug and Marion Clorey, OFS, past Canadian and international leaders.



"Q" attendees prep and pray over blankets for the homeless.

- Tim and Kathy Taormina, OFS, mentors for Franciscan youth (YouFra).
- Lori Hinker, OFS, a YouFra leader.

Friar David drew a standing ovation after delivering a speech centered around an important element of the Secular Franciscan Rule -- to build a more fraternal world. Describing it as a "divine charter to build a fraternal

world," Father David noted: "Yours is a call to build communities of caring encounters."

Bishop Stowe saw a parallel theme in the ministries of St. Francis of Assisi and Pope Francis with a focus on rebuilding and re-evangelizing the church. He pointed to a combination of

Continued on next page.



Members from St. Kateri Tekakwitha Region pose with regional banner. “Q” organizers provided banners for every region in the U.S. STANDING FROM LEFT: Bob Stronach, OFS; Sr. Pat Larkin, OSF; Linda Quaranto, OFS; Layna Maher, OFS; Mary Lou Gresham, OFS; Ruth Stanek, OFS; SITTING, Alice Creech, OFS.

Continued from previous page.

living the Gospel and being evangelizing missionaries.

Both St. Francis and Pope Francis believed that “living the Gospel is more important than talking about it,” he said, later adding: “No Franciscan can be exempt from being a missionary.” His talk drew a standing ovation.

Doug and Marion opened with a prayerful song before Doug began discussing the reality of the changing face of the Church. While the western, more developed world has experienced a decline in religious affiliations, “the number of Catholics across the world has increased 57 percent.” Immigrants, he said, represent the largest growth in the more developed parts of the world. In addition, the family circle is now more complex than ever.

The question, then, is how do we live the Gospel life in the midst of these changes?

Marion picked up the theme of change by taking the group back 800 years to 1221 to our foundational document,

Memoriale Propositi – the “project of life” as its name implies. The life and rule have changed over the years, she reminded the OFS; however, the current Rule of 1978, called Seraphicus Patriarcha, maintains key themes that were present 800 years ago – the importance of fraternity and family, simplicity, reconciliation and daily conversion, prayer, and peace. Despite change, Franciscans need to continue to live the rule -- going from Gospel to life and life to Gospel.

Doug and Marion closed their segment in song, leaving question: “So what does God have in store for me?”

Kathy and Tim Taormina, and their daughter, Lori Hinker, focused on the question and the challenge of conversion – past, present and future.

Kathy described how St. Francis changed lives, and inspired the brothers and sisters to be “exactly who they were supposed to be” and to live the Catholic faith to the fullest.

“People were swept up in love,” Kathy said, “and we are the benefactors of their

choice” to follow Francis and his spirituality – a spirituality that some described as an “aroma.”

“Our aroma is strong,” she said to ripples of laughter. “Long may we smell.”

Pointing to the “radical journey of those before us,” Tim said Secular Franciscans cannot be shy, cannot continue to be the church’s best kept secret. Tim looked to Francis’ advice: “Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”

Lori rounded out the session from a perspective of the youth of the order, noting: “We are called to continue the mission of sending, preaching, teaching and converting.” This happens, she said, when one receives the sacraments, witnesses, and extends a personal invitation.

Secular Franciscans cannot be passive, she said. “No matter what age, we much continue to be radical,” to live the Franciscan spirituality and share it with others.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO BILL GEARY

Holy Family Fraternity hosted a memorial picnic in Vernon last June to honor the memory of Orlo William Geary, OFS, who embraced Sister Death Jan 19, 2022 at the age of 86.

Bill was instrumental in starting Holy Family and was spiritual assistant to St. Joseph Fraternity in Utica at the time of his death. He is survived by his wife, Marion ("Duffy"), as well as numerous children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and foster children. Bill and Duffy were married for over 66 years and journeyed together in the Secular Franciscan Order. They were professed in 1981.

The picnic attracted members of the regional council and members of both the Vernon and Utica fraternities, who shared stories about Bill and his impact on the Order. Stephen Robinson, MD, husband of Regional Councilor Linda Robinson, MD, brought his bagpipes to play during a ceremonial tribute.

As a Secular Franciscan, Bill held many positions including regional minister when he helped the national order with its process of regionalization.

A native of Utica and a graduate of Whitesboro High School, Bill served in the U.S. Air Force for ten years.



Prior to his retirement Bill was employed with Hamilton College's bookstore and maintenance department. He also worked at Oneida Limited as a silversmith and was a groundskeeper at Madison County Children's Camp in Eaton. Bill had many artistic talents from painting to wood working and leather work. *(His artwork was featured in the Summer 2021 issue of Franciscan Mirror.)*



AROUND THE REGION

ST. MARIANNE COPE FRATERNITY ELECTS

The St. Marianne Cope Fraternity in Syracuse held elections in October, with Paul Streiff, OFS, being installed as minister.

Other officers are:

- Rich Adams, OFS, vice minister.
- Mary Ahern, OFS, formation director.
- Elizabeth Merante, OFS, secretary.
- Suzanne Beaupre, OFS, treasurer.

The presider was Linda Quaranto, OFS, regional councilor. The ecclesial witness was Sr. Pat Larkin, OSF, regional spiritual assistant.



FROM LEFT: Suzanne Beaupre (Treasurer); Elizabeth Merante (Secretary); Rich Adams (Vice Minister); Paul Streiff (Minister); not pictured, Mary

ST. PETER FRATERNITY ELECTS

John Jack Raab, OFS, was elected minister of St. Peter Fraternity in Erie, PA, in June 2022. Other officers are:

- Gail F. Baetzold, OFS, vice minister.
- Roger C. Baetzold, OFS, formation director.

- Carol Onuffer, OFS, secretary.
- Patricia S. Lewis, OFS, treasurer.

Western Area Councilor Barbara L. Quebral, OFS, presided at the elections, with Deacon Ron Walker, OFS, serving as ecclesial witness.



Pictured are, from left, Ecclesial Witness Deacon Ronald Walker, OFS, Formation Director Roger C. Baetzold, OFS, Secretary Carol Onuffer, OFS, Vice Minister Gail F. Baetzold, OFS, Minister John (Jack) Raab, OFS, Treasurer Patricia S. Lewis, OFS, and Western Area Councilor Barbara L. Quebral, OFS (Presider).

AROUND THE REGION

ST. THOMAS MORE HOLDS PROFESSION

St. Thomas More Fraternity of Kenmore-Cheektowaga, celebrated the Rite of Profession for member Paul Leuchner on Thursday, August 11, 2022 (the Feast of St. Clare).

The Rite was conducted at Paul's home parish, St. Timothy in Tonawanda, NY.

The celebrant was his pastor, Fr. Dennis F. Fronckowiak.

Paul Leuchner, OFS, with wife Linda.



CATSKILL FRATERNITY HOLDS ELECTIONS

St. Anthony's Fraternity in Catskill held its triennial elections in November 2022.

J.C. Berzal, OFS, was elected minister.

Other officers are:

- Mary Beth Lange, OFS, vice minister.
- Anthony Petrianni, OFS, secretary.
- Stephanie M. Ossendorf, OFS, treasurer.
- Patricia Duhane, OFS, formation director.

Regional Councilor Linda Quaranto, OFS, presided over the elections, with Regional Spiritual Assistant Sr. Pat Larkin, OSF, serving as the ecclesial witness.

2 PROFESSED AT ST. JOSEPH FRATERNITY IN UTICA



Ellen Benton, OFS, and Siosiana Merz, OFS

Ellen M. Benton and Siosiana V. Merz made their permanent profession in the Secular Franciscan Order as members of the St. Joseph Fraternity.

It is no coincidence that they chose to make their profession on Jan. 23, 2022 -- the feast of Saint Marianne Cope, who was a member of St. Joseph parish at the time the fraternity was founded in 1859 (and, according to some, who was one of the first mem-

bers of the fraternity).

The rite of profession took place during mass at St. Joseph & St. Patrick Church. Presiding were Fraternity Minister Robert Stronach, OFS, and Celebrant Fr. Richard Riccioli, OFM Conv. (Church of the Assumption, Syracuse). Concelebrants were Fr. Richard Kapral (St. Joseph & St. Patrick) and Fr. Kevin Bunker (St. John the Evangelist Church, New Hartford).



FROM LEFT: Minister Robert Stronach, OFS; Vice Minister Marsha Kistner, OFS; Treasurer Ana Pereira, OFS; Formation Director Concetta Carcone, OFS, and Secretary Siosiana Merz, OFS.

UTICA CONDUCTS ELECTIONS

St. Joseph Fraternity in Utica conducted election of officers in July 2022.

Robert Stronach, OFS, was elected to his second full term as minister.

Marsha Kistner, OFS, is the new vice minister.

Siosiana Merz, OFS, is the new secretary.

Ana Pereira, OFS, is the new treasurer.

Concetta Carcone, OFS, was elected as formation director, leading the formation team. The newly elected council serves a three-year term.

Regional Councilor Linda Robinson, OFS, presided over the election and Regional Spiritual Assistant Sr. Pat Larkin, OSF, served as the ecclesial witness.

AROUND THE REGION

ST. IRENAEUS HOLDS ELECTION

St. Irenaeus Fraternity in Allegany held its elections on April 24, 2022, with Anne-Claire Fisher, OFS, being elected minister.

Also elected were:

- Secretary Suzanne English, OFS.
- Formation Director Agnes Brush, OFS.
- Treasurer Don Watkins, OFS

Regional Councilor Roderick Quebral, OFS, presided.



St. Irenaeus Council, from left: Secretary Suzanne English, Formation Director Agnes Brush, Treasurer Don Watkins, and Minister Anne-Claire Fisher.

ST. PATRICK FRATERNITY ELECTS COUNCIL

Rick Heist, OFS, was elected minister of St. Patrick Fraternity in Buffalo on March 20, 2022.

Other council officers are:

- Vice Minister Mary Momot, OFS.
- Secretary M. Kim Gardener, OFS.



St. Patrick Council, from left: Treasurer Marie Meyer, Formation Director Pat Jaramillo, Secretary M. Kim Gardener, Vice Minister Mary Momot, Minister Rick Heist.

- Treasurer Marie Meyer, OFS.
- Formation Director Pat

Jaramillo, OFS.

Presiding was Regional Councilor Roderick Quebral,

OFS, with Regional Spiritual Assistant Sr. Pat Larkin, OSF, serving as ecclesial witness.

ST. JOSEPH CUPERTINO HOLDS ELECTION

Tracey Cheever, OFS, of Adams, NY, was elected minister of St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity in Watertown on May 29, 2022.

Others elected were:

- Vice Minister Patricia Heindorf, OFS, of Water-

town.

- Formation Director Bette Hartzell, OFS, Watertown.
- Secretary Martha Rittenhouse, OFS, Watertown.
- Treasurer Nancy Cheever, OFS, Adams.

Regional Councilor Linda Robinson, OFS, presided over the election while Regional Spiritual Assistant Sr. Patricia Larkin, OSF, served as the pastoral witness.

LEE STRONG PUBLISHES IN GILBERT MAGAZINE

An article of imaginative fiction by Lee Strong, OFS, entitled "OFM," has been published in the November/December 2021 edition of *Gilbert Magazine*, a publica-

tion of the Society of G.K. Chesterton, reports Regional Councilor Roderick Quebral, OFS.

"'OFM' does not mean what we Franciscans might think in this article, but St. Francis of Assisi definitely figures into the story," he said. Lee is the Minister of Glory of the Most High Fraternity.

AROUND THE REGION

GLORY OF MOST HIGH ELECTS COUNCIL

Lee Strong, OFS, was elected minister of Glory of the Most High Fraternity in Rochester in December 2021.

Other council members are:

- Vice Minister Nancy Strong, OFS.
- Secretary Marilyn Gawlik, OFS.
- Treasurer Mary M. Smith, OFS.
- Formation Director Betty Carmen, OFS.

Regional Councilor Roderick Quebral, OFS, presided with Spiritual Assistant Rich Baklas, OFS, serving as ecclesial witness.



FROM LEFT: Spiritual Assistant Rich Baklas, Minister Lee Strong, Vice Minister Nancy Strong, Secretary Marilyn Gawlik, Treasurer Mary M. Smith, and Formation Director Betty Carmen.

MEMBER AUTHORS 'FROM FELON TO SECULAR FRANCISCAN'

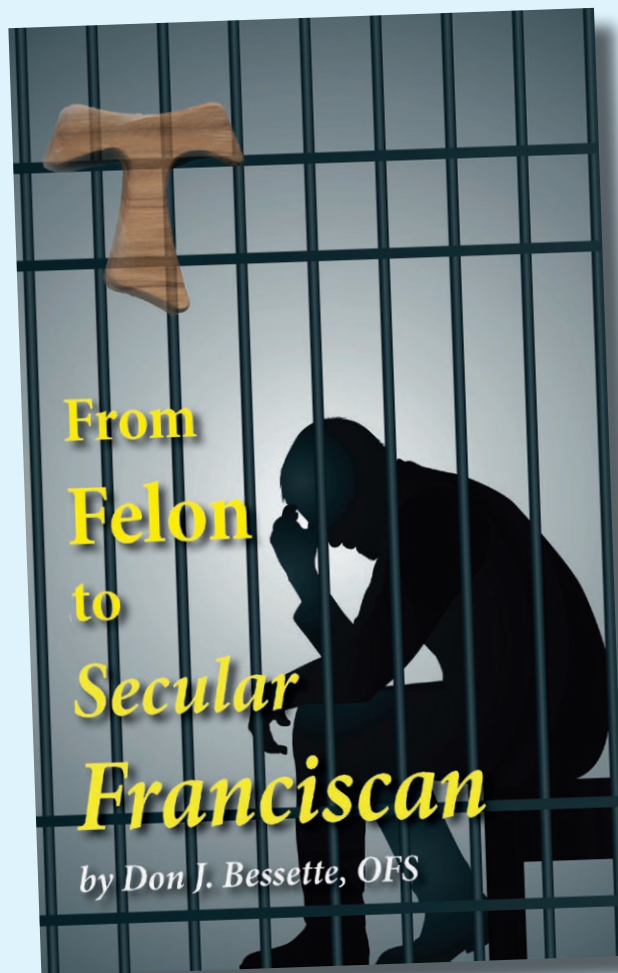
Using the pen name of Don Bessette to protect the privacy of his family, Donald Montero, OFS, has authored a reflective biographical work about his journey from being a convicted felon to discovering faith and becoming a professed Secular Franciscan.

From Felon to Secular Franciscan recounts his journey of faith, love and forgiveness: a journey from an abusive childhood to violent crimes to incarceration to the relentless

grace of God and those who refused to give up on him. The book debuted in 2022 and is available on Amazon.

Don and his Secular Franciscan wife, Mary, are from the Buffalo area. Don is a past fraternity minister. He is a lector and catechist in his parish and is active in the KAIROS prison ministry.

Don is retired and likes to bake a variety of breads as fundraisers for a local parish. He also enjoys the origami art of making various animals and flowers out of paper, playing chess and Scrabble online, and watching movies on true stories and events, especially world history and early American history.



AROUND THE REGION

4 PROFESSED AT BERNARDINE OF SIENA FRATERNITY

St. Bernardine of Siena Fraternity, Albany, had of profession of four candidates who have been preparing for about four years due to the pandemic.

The profession took place at the Kateri Tekakwitha Shrine in Fonda, NY, on September 25, 2021. Those professed were: **Michelle Potenciano, OFS; John Potenciano, OFS; Melanie Delf, OFS; and Carol Hockeson, OFS.**



FROM LEFT: Michelle Potenciano, John Potenciano, Melanie Delf and Carol Hockeson made their profession at the Kateri Shrine in Fonda.

The Regional Formation team worked with Formation Director Donna Lagasse, OFS, for about six months

on Zoom with the candidates. Donna set the lessons and the pace. Layna Maher, OFS, Sr. Pat Larkin, OSF, Linda Quar-

anto, OFS, and Mary Frances Charsky, OFS, were the Formation team members.

THE STORY BEHIND THE LENGTHY FORMATION JOURNEY

By DONNA LAGASSE, OFS

I was elected formation director in 2018. Angela Nelligan, Craig Jones, Joan Ottaway were all members of the Formation Team. Angela was our vice minister of St. Bernardine of Siena Fraternity.

The original group of 16 came together in autumn of 2016. Fr. Mike Tyson, OFM, a member of the Siena Friary was our Spiritual Assistant and head of the St. Francis Chapel on Wolf Road in Albany.

On Sundays, when the chapel was closed to the public, it became St. Bernardine of Siena's meeting place; before Mass

we had lesson time for the formation groups. Our day went from 10:30 a.m. to around 4 p.m. After 1:00 o'clock Mass we had our meeting, with ongoing formation, including a social time and evening prayer.

Then financial burdens decreed the closing of the chapel. Then COVID complicated matters even more. Our outside meetings stopped.

Angela was conducting conference calls to keep formation limping along. Unexpectedly, Angela died in March of 2021. We continued our conference calling, for everyone had telephones. I joined zoom and conducted our meet-

ings online with part of our fraternity, for several at that point did not have any internet service.

Then our regional council came to our rescue with an offer of assistance with the technical expertise to hold lengthy zoom meetings and very helpful prayer & video suggestions, as well as their personal input and Franciscan spirit. What a gift to our fraternity!

We combined both classes of candidates for the F U N Manual instruction of two chapters: The Rule and Profession. The second class continued with the Franciscan Journey lessons in our new home at the K of C Hall in Cohoes, NY.

Our original 16 dwindled to 9, then 8. Those eight began the zoom sessions and thrived. Then within four months of the date of profession, life events in two of the candidates caused them to pause and regroup in our second class of candidates.

It was five years of study time, due to the pandemic; but there are now four newly professed Franciscans who began their Franciscan life with St. Bernardine of Siena.

Today, we have four in the second class, and one who has suspended his studies to care for his two ailing, aged parents. He knows he is welcome to continue when he can.

AROUND THE REGION



FROM LEFT: Ecclesial Witness Mary Smith, OFS; Secretary Kathy Schmidt, OFS; Councilor Mary Monsees, OFS; Treasurer Ron Gostomski, OFS; Vice Minister Marge Mannoni, OFS; Councilor Pat Czlonka, OFS; Formation Director Teresa Benson, OFS; Councilor Sue Bouvy, OFS. (Minister Marge Keiffer not pictured).

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY FRATERNITY ELECTS COUNCIL

Margaret Keiffer, OFS, has been elected minister of Immaculate Heart of Mary Fraternity in Hilton, NY. The elections took place Nov. 8, 2021. Others elected to the

council are:

- Vice Minister Margaret Mannoni, OFS.
- Secretary Katherine Schmidt, OFS.
- Treasurer Ronald Gos-

tomski, OFS.

- Formation Director Teresa Benson, OFS.
- Councilors Suzanne Bouvy, OFS, Patricia Czlonka, OFS, and Mary Monsees, OFS.

Regional Councilor Roderick Quebral, OFS, presided, with Spiritual Assistant Mary Smith, OFS, serving as ecclesial witness.



ST. ANTHONY FRATERNITY HOLDS ELECTIONS

St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity in Lockport held its elections Sept. 9, 2021, with Robert Goodlander, OFS, being elected minister.

Others elected were:

- Vice Minister Debra Goodlander, OFS.
- Formation Director Alfred Picogna, OFS.
- Secretary Regina Hall,

OFS.

- Treasurer Maryann Vacanti, OFS.
- Councilors Michael Hall, OFS, and Kathleen Burt, OFS.

Regional Councilor Roderick Quebral, OFS, presided over the elections, with Deacon Ronald Walker, OFS, serving as ecclesial witness.

AROUND THE REGION

BUFFALO'S ST. JOSEPH HOLDS ELECTIONS

St. Joseph Fraternity in Buffalo held its elections on Sept. 18, 2021.

Michael Catalano, OFS, is minister. Other elected council members are;

- Vice Minister Trudi Lee, OFS.
- Formation Director Lurita Boud, OFS.
- Secretary Maureen Daley, OFS.
- Treasurer Eleanor Cox, OFS.

Regional Councilor Barbara Quebral, OFS, presided, with Alfred Picogna, OFS, serving as ecclesial witness.



FROM LEFT: Treasurer Eleanor Cox, OFS; Secretary Maureen Daley, OFS; Vice Minister Trudi Lee, OFS; Minister Mike Catalano, OFS, and Formation Director Lurita Boyd, OFS.

ST. BERNARDINE OF SIENA FRATERNITY ELECTS COUNCIL

ALBANY -- Olga Nicolai, OFS, has been elected minister of St. Bernardine of Siena Fraternity.

Also elected were:

- Vice minister Mike Dwyer.
- Formation Director Joan Ottaway.

^a Secretary Craig Jones.

- Treasurer Patrick Raimo.
- Councilors Donna Ferlazzo, Donna Lagasse.



Regional Councilor Linda Quaranto, OFS, presided at the election on May 15, 2022.

Regional Spiritual Assistant Sr. Pat Larkin, OSF, served as ecclesial witness.

EXPLORE THEOLOGY OF ST. FRANCIS

The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University has published a new handbook introducing the theology and spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi.

The free handbook provides readers with a simple methodology for entering into the spirituality of St. Francis using passages from his Earlier Rule of 1221.

It includes links to a 30-part series of short YouTube videos on the life of St. Francis completed by Franciscan scholars Fr. Wayne Hell-

The Franciscan Institute is an educational unit of St. Bonaventure University. It serves the needs of Franciscan and men and women around the world by providing research, workshops and seminars on Franciscan studies. It provides books through its publishing arm, Franciscan Institute Publications. Learn more at www.sbu.edu/franciscaninstitute.

mann, O.F.M. Conv., and Dr. Jay Hammond of St. Louis University.

The handbook is the work of Dr. Luke Togni, a scholar with a doctorate in Franciscan theology from Marquette University and a research fellow for the Franciscan

Institute. The prologue and afterword for the handbook were written by Fr. David Couturier, O.F.M. Cap., executive director of the Franciscan Institute and associate professor of theology and Franciscan studies at St. Bonaventure University.

“The handbook is available

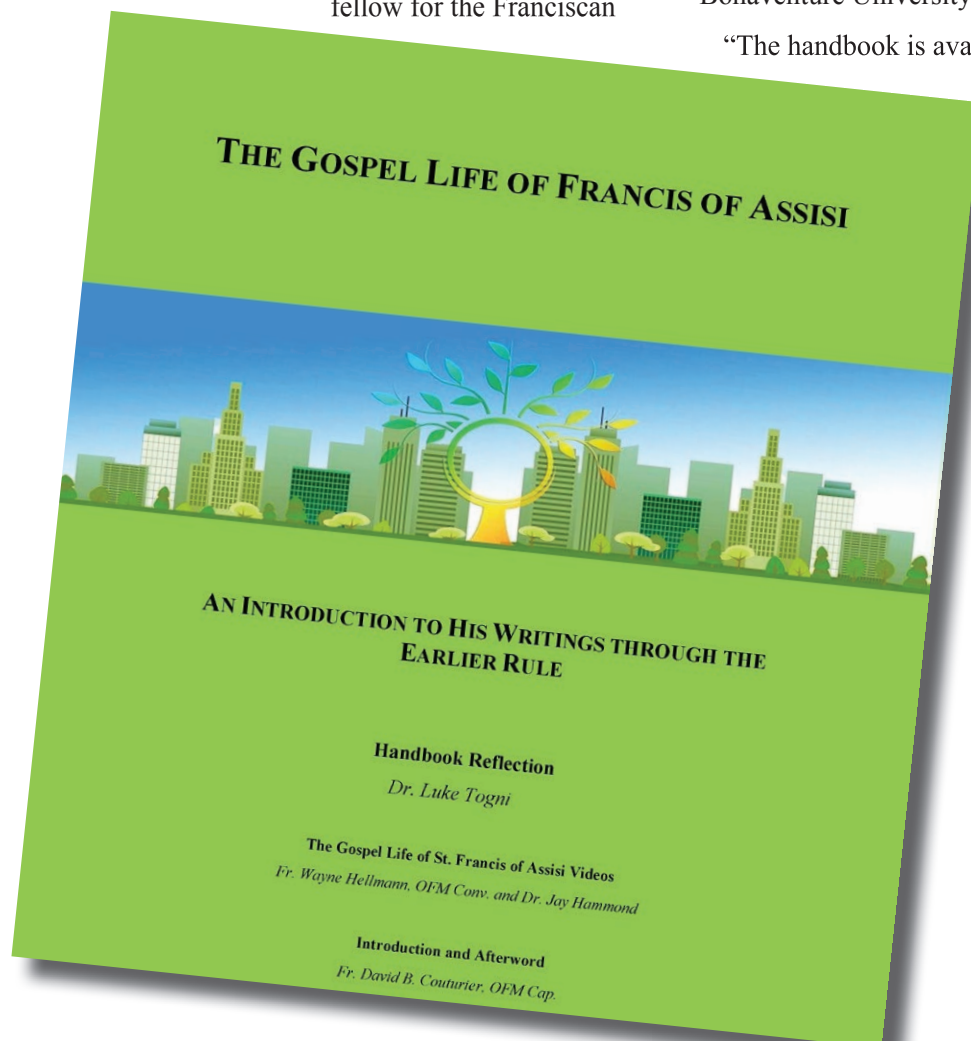
free of charge as a service to brothers and sisters, religious and secular, who want to learn more about the latest research into the life of the Poverello but don’t have access to research libraries,” said Father David.

It is being provided thanks to a generous donation from the O.F.M. Province of St. John the Baptist and the Alma Kraus Endowment for the formation of Secular Franciscans.

“For years the Franciscan Institute has been producing research that has found its way into select libraries. Now, we can make available to a new generation of women and men in distant and sometimes poor countries the same tools once reserved to libraries. Our brothers and sisters everywhere can now access this material on the internet,” said Fr. David.

“My gratitude goes to Fr. Wayne, Dr. Hammond and Dr. Togni for their superb scholarship, to the donors whose financial support was invaluable, and to all the research assistants and staff who worked for years on this project. I believe the Franciscan world will be grateful, as well.”

The handbook and videos are available by visiting the Franciscan Institute’s Gospel Life of Francis of Assisi Handbook webpage (url at left).



<https://www.sbu.edu/academics/academic-resources/franciscan-institute/gospel-life-of-st.-francis-handbook>



Vice Minister General Mary Stronach, OFS (4th from right), poses with other Secular Franciscans and friars in Clementine Hall in the Apostolic Palace following the audience with Pope Francis. Mary is a member of St. Joseph Fraternity in Utica, NY. Minister General Tibor Kauser, OFS, is third from left.



In St. Peter's Square, two Poor Clare sisters joyfully greeted Bob and Mary Stronach of St. Joseph Fraternity, Utica. The sisters are from a mountaintop monastery in Cortona, which Bob and Mary had visited the previous spring. The Poor Clares were part of the contingent participating in the papal audience.

AT A FRANCISCAN PAPAL AUDIENCE POPE HAILS CENTENARY PLANS

Recalling how he was moved to choose the name of Francis, the pope congratulated Franciscans of all types on plans to celebrate the five Franciscan centenaries over the next few years, specifically citing: in 2023 the Rule and the Christmas at Greccio, in 2024 the Stigmata, in 2025 the Canticle of Brother Sun, and in 2026 the Transitus of Francis.

OFS Minister General Tibor Kauser and OFM Conv. Minister General Fr. Carlos Alberto Trovarelli joined OFM Minister General Massimo Fusarelli as

Fr. Massimo addressed Pope Francis and explained that Franciscans want to make the centenaries a public celebration, becoming ever-more missionary disciples.

Some 300 Franciscans participated in the private audience with Pope Francis on Oct. 31, 2022, including Secular Franciscans from the CIOFS Presidency and OFS contingents from Italy as well as friars, Poor Clares and other Franciscan religious. The audience with the pope recognized the work of a Coordination Committee, established in 2021

to plan joint celebrations of the 800th anniversaries of those significant events in the life of St. Francis of Assisi. The committee consists of representatives from several dioceses in Italy and the entire Franciscan Family.

In his remarks, Pope Francis pointed to the centenary celebrations as a way to live the "imitation of Christ and love for the poor" because "Francis lived the imitation of the poor Christ and love for the poor in an inseparable way, like the two sides of the same coin".



PLAN NOW FOR THE CHAPTER OF MATS IN 2024

Regional Minister Carol Onuffer shares the announcement of a Chapter of Mats for the Secular Franciscan Order and YouFra to be held in Rome, Italy from November 14 to 19, 2024.

This is an opportunity for Franciscans to interact with other Franciscans and families throughout the world for Franciscan prayer, joy and fraternity. It is a way to celebrate the 800-year celebrations of important events in the life of St. Francis.

Carol said she was collecting

names of those who may be interested in attending to pass on the the national fraternity and the international order so they can get a sense of the number of people to expect.

"You must pay for all the expenses yourself, but what a trip it would be," she said.

In a letter to National Fraternities, Minister General Tibor Kauser noted: "In the spirit of our Franciscan charism, the Chapter of Mats will be very simple, and intentionally kept at low costs, so that

nobody will have difficulties to pay the necessary costs. A good part of the participants will be hosted by families, thanks to the hospitality of OFS Italy, and particularly that of the Lazio region. Others will be hosted in convents and retreat houses with simple accommodations."

"We do not intend to book hotel rooms to keep the costs of participation as low as possible."

He said they estimated "the possibility of between 3,000 and 10,000 brothers and sisters attending."