

Spring, 2024

Volume 5, Issue 1

The Troubadour

Newsletter of the Franciscan Tertiaries of
the Province of the Immaculate Conception



Keeping the Faith

We have all heard the Gospel so many times that we might lose some of the profound joy and awe of those who witnessed it. Those of us who have lost close friends and family to death may have some understanding of the despair and grief which Mary Magdalene felt at the Crucifixion. After spending a heartbreaking Sabbath and witnessing Jesus' horrifying death, she must have been exhausted and desolate. She probably could not sleep. So, she went to the last place she spent time with Him to find some comfort – His tomb. Just as any of us might visit the gravesite of someone we love.

Mary noticed something odd as she neared the tomb. The enormous stone that sealed the tomb – which had taken 2 or 3 men to move into place – was pushed to the side, leaving the entrance open. As she moved closer in the dim light before dawn, she saw the winding cloths that she, the Blessed Mother, and other sympathetic women used to clean, anoint, and wrap Jesus after His cruel death were carefully rolled and placed on top of the stone slab on which Jesus' body rested. And His body was gone.

The only logical solution was that grave robbers or Romans had removed the body. Mary sat down and started to quietly weep. It was just too much. She yearned to be near Him, even in death, and He was gone.

In her grief, she noticed a man in the growing light. He was not a Roman. Perhaps a gardener or another of Jesus' followers, who might know what happened to her dear Jesus. Wiping her tears, Mary asked him if he could tell her where Jesus was taken.

And, as we know so well, Jesus gently asked her if she did not recognize Him!

Astonished, Mary wanted to touch Him to see if He really was there. Jesus told her not to touch Him, but instead to notify the remaining Apostles (Judas had already committed suicide).

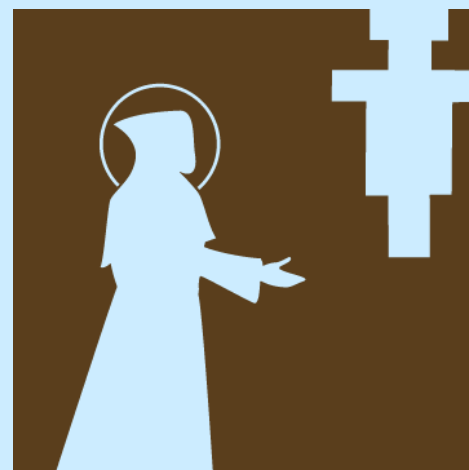
Mary did just that. She knew where the Apostles were in hiding. John and Peter ran as fast as their feet could carry them to see for themselves the truth of the Resurrection.

This isn't just a story passed down for over 2,000 years. It is the simple truth, written without embellishment. It is the profound reality of our Catholic Faith. Jesus, the Son of God, was cruelly tortured and executed, and returned to life!

He is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!

Spiritual Director

Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM
Shrine of
Our Lady Comforter
of the Afflicted
Youngstown



Editor

Susan Kramer, TOF

Franciscan Quote for Spring, 2024

“Do not abandon yourself to despair. We are the Easter people, & Hallelujah is our song!”

St. John Paul II (1920-2005) Feast Day – May 20

Priest, Bishop, Pope, Defender of the Church Against Naziism and Communism

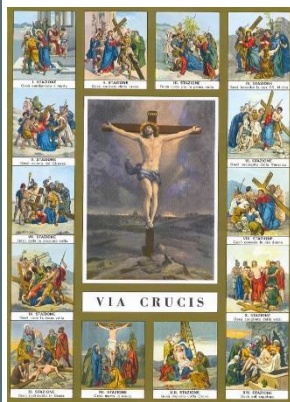


The Stations of the Cross – by Virgil Daniel, TOF

Certainly, the Stations of the Cross are a favorite devotion, particularly on Fridays during Lent. Many of us will once or more make “the Way of the Cross” this season. But were you aware of the indulgence granted to one who “personally makes the pious Way of the Cross.” It is a plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions. There are certain rubrics, of course, but some might surprise you.

- There must be 14 wooden crosses, think “the Wood of the Cross,” indoors or out. Pictures, bas relief, and such are nice enhancements, but not required. Only the 14 crosses are required. Ever think about those small wooden cross centered above or below the Stations in your parish church?
- “To make the Way of the Cross, however, it is sufficient to mediate devoutly on the Lord’s Passion and Death, and therefore reflection on the particular mysteries of the individual stations is not necessary.” (Manual of Indulgences, pg.56 #3) Prayers and readings are “common custom,” and worthy to be sure, but not mandatory.
- So, find yourself at Church and want to “do the Stations” on your own, but you forgot your book? “Meditation time” to the rescue!
- Procession from one station to the next, however, is required. If you are at a large service, only the celebrant needs actually to move station-to-station; you may stay in your place if your own movement is “inconvenient,” although turning your gaze to follow the celebrant is a good thing, when possible. (Manual, pg 56 #4)
- “Those legitimately impeded can acquire the same indulgence, if they spend some time, e.g. at least a quarter of an hour, in reading and meditating on the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Manual, pg 56 #5) Think shut-ins, here; you could, out of charity, be present with them, perhaps to read for them and then pray with them.

We do live in an electronic age, so “a plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who ... devoutly unite themselves to the Way of the Cross while it is being led by the Supreme Pontiff and broadcast live on television or radio.” (Manual, pg 55, §2)



Should certain requirements be lacking for the plenary indulgence, to devoutly make the Way of the Cross always carries a partial indulgence. So, can't get to Church? You can always make the Way of the Cross at home by pious meditation and prayer, perhaps by reflecting on your favorite pamphlet on the Stations or listening to the radio. (This is not the same, however, as the case of “those legitimately impeded” noted above.)

However one makes and/or prays the Way of the Cross, always keep in mind this teaching of the Church: (while) “*the Via Crucis is a pious devotion connected with the Passion of Christ; it should conclude, however, in such fashion as to leave the faithful with a sense of expectation of the resurrection in faith and hope;*” To which I say, “Amen!” (Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines, Vatican City, 2001, no 134)

Editor’s Note – Don’t forget – praying the Stations is not just for Lent!!!

Initial Formation Team News – by Debbie Ventosa, TOF



The formation representatives of the three local fraternities and the Isolated Tertiaries will be meeting at the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted to share and discuss the curriculum. They will bring together the current curriculum and share how best to enhance this and publish a manual that can be used for our formators as well as our students. Please continue to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, St. Francis and St. Clare as we undertake this endeavor in April.



SS. Francis & Clare Fraternity News – by Roberto Meza, TOF

Joe Zbasnik entered the Novitiate on February 24 with Isolated Tertiary Mary Colon, who travelled all the way from Arizona. The ceremony took place after Mass at the Shrine in Youngstown, with several members of the St. Padre Pio Fraternity (Youngstown), Our Lady of America Fraternity (Ashtabula) and Ss. Francis and Clare Fraternity (Barberton) in attendance. A delicious lunch was provided by our generous hosts, the St. Padre Pio Fraternity.



Because he lives in Lake County, Joe continues Initial Formation with the Isolated Tertiaries but is a member of our fraternity. He and Mary hope to be formally Professed next year – which will be here before we know it!



We extend our most sincere condolences to Joseph Zbasnik, a Novice of our fraternity, on the death of his beloved wife, Jennifer. Jennifer passed away recently after a long and courageous battle with Ewing's sarcoma, a form of cancer. May the angels lead her to the merciful arms of Jesus and welcome her to paradise. And may Jesus and our Blessed Mother Mary comfort Joe and hold him close.

St. Padre Pio Fraternity News



*No news this issue from the St. Padre Pio Fraternity of Youngstown.
We wish our entire Third Order Franciscan family the holiest blessings of the Easter Season!*

Our Lady of America Fraternity News – by Paul Fedele, TOF

Our Lady of America fraternity is hard at work, firming up the details of our upcoming Third Order Franciscan Community Pilgrimage in May. Here is the information so far:



On Saturday, May 4 we will meet at the Shrine of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (patroness of the Third Order Franciscans), which is located at 9016 Buckeye Rd., Cleveland, 44104.

The day will begin with the opportunity for Confession starting at 8:30 AM, followed by a Traditional Latin Mass (a low Mass). After Mass, Reverend Canon Hoogerwerf and Reverend Canon Bovee will lead us in spiritual reflections.



Around 11:30 AM, we will head for the shrine hall for lunch, which will be provided by Our Lady of America Fraternity Minister Paul Fedele, TOF (he will accept free will offerings).

After lunch, we will pray the Stations of the Cross, followed by the Litany of the Saints and the Litany of Loreto (remembering that May 4 is the First Saturday and May is the month of our Blessed Mother Mary). The day should conclude around 2 PM or so.

Evangelization Committee Being Formed! – by Pepe Ventosa, TOF

We are in the process of forming an "Evangelization Committee" for our community. This committee will be composed of eight +/- members from the various fraternities, who will be "sent", at least "by two", to promote the Third Order of St. Francis. We are presented with many opportunities to promote the TOF, such as parish picnics, local Catholic Men/Women Conferences, and such, by setting up a display table with TOF information and sharing the Franciscan way of life with others. The SS. Francis and Clare have already participated in such events. The idea behind having a committee is to have a pool of volunteers from our fraternities from which 2 or 3 people can be selected to attend such an event. If you would like to volunteer to be a member of this committee or would like more information, please contact Pepe. On the other hand, if you are "selected to volunteer" ☺, please prayerfully consider it.

Pope Leo XIII, in his Encyclical *Auspicato Concessum*, p. 25, wrote: "We desire that by your endeavors especially it may be increased and extended to many... take pains that the people may become acquainted with the Third Order and truly esteem it; provide that those who have the cure of souls sedulously teach what it is, how easily anyone may enter it, with how great privileges tending to salvation it bounds, what advantages, public and private, it promises..."

News from the Isolated Franciscan Tertiary Community – by Pepe Ventosa, TOF

At this time there are two groups in the Initial Formation Program of Isolated Tertiaries. One group will be completing the Novitiate this summer. The other group consists of 13 Inquirers whom, by the publication of this newsletter, would have entered the Novitiate. Please keep them all in your prayers as they continue to discern a call to the Franciscan way of life. A Student and a Teacher Manual for Initial Formation of Isolated Tertiaries was recently completed.

Mary, from Arizona, and Joe, from Ohio, traveled to The Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted on February 24, 2024, to have the Ceremony of Entry into the Novitiate celebrated by Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM. Following the ceremony a celebration hosted by the Padre Pio Fraternity, including a delicious lunch, was enjoyed by all. We thank the Padre Pio Fraternity for their hospitality and thank all those who were able to join Mary and Joe in this joyful celebration.

A virtual Franciscan Wake Service for the Isolated Tertiary Community was organized by Mary Tag, TOF, and Novice Sandy DeWaal. This program, as it was completed, was put quickly to the test with the passing to eternal life of our dear Isolated Tertiary sister, Bonnie Gilovich, TOF. We are thankful for Mary and Sandy for their "yes" in taking up this essential ministry for the Isolated Tertiary community. The Franciscan Wake Service helps us in living Rule Ch. 2

#14. Please pray for the repose of the soul of Bonnie Gilovich TOF. May she rest in peace.



Tien Tran, TOF Visits the Shrine – by Pepe Ventosa, TOF



Our brother, Tien Tran, TOF, visited the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted in March 2024. Tien lives with his family in Pennsylvania and was established as an Honorary Member of the Isolated Tertiary community by Fr. Vit on July 15, 2023. During his visit he was able to meet Fr. Vit, attend Mass and participate in Eucharistic Adoration. He is planning to have his Holy Profession at the Shrine on April 20, 2024. Those able to attend will be blessed by the opportunity to meet him. Tien was featured on the Autumn 2023 edition of the Troubadour. You can learn more about him and his beautiful ministry to the TOF by reading his article at this link: thirdorderfranciscans.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Autumn-2023.pdf (also available via our website).



Franciscan Tertiaries' Tridua 2024 – by Pepe Ventosa, TOF

TRIDUA

Franciscan Tertiaries

OFM Province of the Immaculate Conception



What is a *Tridua*?

“As it is impossible for a great number of Tertiaries to be several days away from home or work, tridua, also known as public Tertiary retreats, have been introduced. On three successive days a sermon is preached in the morning and in the evening, or at least in the evening. During the day the members are to practice recollection and devote as much time to prayer as their condition allows. Special

opportunities for confession are offered.” From: *Handbook of the Third Order Secular of St. Francis of Assisi*, p. 275.

As a simple Franciscan Tertiary retreat, most of the time in the Tridua is dedicated for individual prayer, recollection, spiritual reading and meditation. The object of the Tridua “is not only spiritual renewal in general but renewal in the spirit of St. Francis” *Handbook of the Third Order Secular of St. Francis of Assisi*, p. 276. Group activities are few and optional, and participation at these is left for the participant to discern. They are provided as an aid to keep your focus on God. The main talks for reflection will be provided by Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM. Attendees can stay at their homes or at facilities provided. Participants can attend one, two or the three days of the Tridua, as personal responsibilities allow.

Available during the Tridua:

- Daily Mass
- Eucharistic Adoration
- Confession
- Spiritual Direction
- Quiet areas for prayer and spiritual reading
- Station of the Cross for individual meditation
- Common areas for fellowship
- Simple meals

DATE: August 23-25, 2024

Starts Friday at 5:00 pm with Opening Mass

Ends Sunday at 2:00 pm after lunch

PLACE: Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted
Youngstown, OH

DONATION: \$40

HOUSING:

- Camping at the Shrine’s grounds
- House at the Shrine
- Local Hotel: a retreat group discount is available at \$149/night plus tax (hotel information provided upon registration)
- At your home or friend’s house

REGISTRATION:

Registration deadline: July 15, 2024

Registration available via Mat Posts or by completing the form included below.

REGISTRATION FOR TRIDUA
August 23-25, 2024

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: July 15, 2024

Name:

Address:

Email address:

Phone number:

Fraternity name (if applicable, or if Isolated Tertiary):

Please select:

- Professed member
- Attending Initial Formation, please specify:
 - Inquirer
 - Postulant
 - Novice

ATTENDANCE

I will be attending the following days (place an "X" inside parenthesis for all that apply):

- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday

HOUSING INFORMATION

I will be staying at (place an "X" inside parenthesis that applies)

- at my home or friend's home
- I will make my own reservations at a local hotel as follows (please select accordingly):
 - Provide me with the group discount hotel information and I will make the reservation. Group discount rate is \$149/night plus tax.
 - I will make my own hotel selection and reservation.
- I would like to stay at the house next to the Shrine. If a room is available, please let me know. I'm aware that steps are involved.
- I will camp on the Shrine's grounds and will bring my own camping gear.
- Other plans (please specify):

MEALS

Meals are included, but unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate special dietary restrictions. You are welcome to bring your own meals if necessary.

DONATION

Donation for the Retreat is \$40. Please make check payable to: Jose Ventosa, TOF, and write "Tridua Retreat" on the memo line.

Please send registration along with donation to Pepe Ventosa, TOF

Save the Dates!

5/18/24	Annual TOF Pilgrimage planned by Our Lady of America Fraternity (<i>Details TBA</i>)
8/23-25/24	Tridua

Darkness
CAN ONLY
BE SCATTERED
BY *light.*

Hatred CAN
ONLY BE
CONQUERED
BY *love.*

SAINT JOHN PAUL II

