



Soldiers of Christ

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

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Sandy Baden, TOF, Editor

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POPE LEO, XIII 1810—1903 TOF



Pope Leo XIII, was born on March 2, 1810 and was named *Vincenzo Gioacchino Raffaele Luigi Pecci*, in Carpineto, Romano, Italy. When he was just a child, *Geoacchino Pecci* was sent to school at the Jesuit College of Viterbo where he remained until 1924. He obtained doctorates in canon law, Theology, and civil law. His early career was spent as a secular clergy, meaning he was not required to swear an oath. On December 31, 1837, *Geoacchino Pecci* was ordained a Roman Catholic priest.

Vincenzo Gioacchino Pecci was appointed as a delegate to Benevento in Italy by Pope Gregory XVI in 1838. In 1843 he was made a diplomate for the pope and was sent to Belgium. In 1846 he accepted the position of Archbishop of Perugia and then was made a cardinal in 1853. Cardinal Pecci was elected on February 20, 1878 as **Pope Leo, XIII**. **Pope Leo, XIII** encouraged a devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary and was strongly against Freemasonry. He had issued eleven papal encyclicals on the rosary, which gave him the name of the “Rosary Pope,” and he approved five new Marian scapulars.

Pope Leo XIII became a Third Order Franciscan because of his devotion to St. Francis. He stated: he “exhorts all Christians to join the Order...For all these reasons we have long and earnestly desired that each one shall strive to the utmost of his power to imitate St Francis of Assisi.” **Pope Leo, XIII** had revised the third order rule in 1883 for modern times. **Pope Leo, XIII** passed away at the age of ninety-three of pneumonia on July 20, 1903.

There is an interesting story of **Pope Leo, XIII** and St. Terese of Lisieu. While on a pilgrimage with her father and sister in 1887 they had attended an audience with **Pope Leo**. St. Terese of Lisieus kissed the pope's slipper while he then presented his hand. Instead of kissing the hand she said, "Most Holy Father, I have a great favor to ask you. In honor of your Jubilee, permit me to enter Carmel at the age of fifteen." **Pope Leo, XIII** answered, "Well my child, do what the superiors decide." Therese replied, "Oh Holy Father, if you say yes everybody will agree!" Finally, the pope said, "Go...go... you will enter if God wills it." Two guards lifted her, while still on her knees in front of the pope, by her arms and carried her to the door where a third guard gave her a medal of the pope. Shortly thereafter, the Bishop of Bayeus authorized the prioress to receive Therese of Lisieus. In April 1888, she entered Carmel at the age of fifteen.

On the issue of **Pope Leo, XIII** and a vision, which he had composed the prayer to St. Michael in October 1884, there were various accounts as to the vision itself. Apparently, the pope had a vision after celebrating Mass and was so upset he composed the prayer to St. Michael. He later mandated the prayer be said after every low Mass from that point on. The prayer being said after mass was stopped around the time of Vatican II.

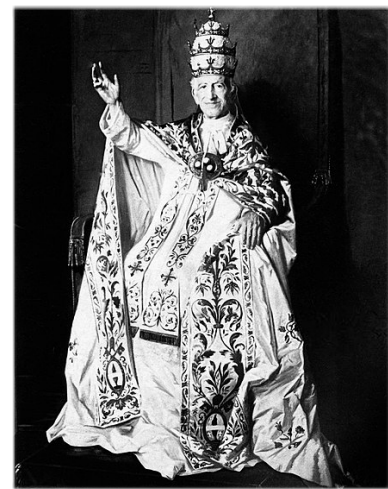
Pope John Paul II recommended the St. Michael prayer be said publicly or privately quoting, "Although this prayer is no longer recited at the end of Mass, I ask everyone not to forget it and to recite it to obtain help in the battle against the forces of darkness and against the spirt of this world." **Pope John Paul II, Regina Caeli, April 24, 1994.**

Pope Francis stated on September 29, 2018 and asked, "Catholics everywhere to pray the Rosary each day during the following month of October and to conclude it with the prayer of St. Michael."

Sandy Baden, TOF

PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavily hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen



PROMOTING THE THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS
Submitted by, Brian Kusek, TOF



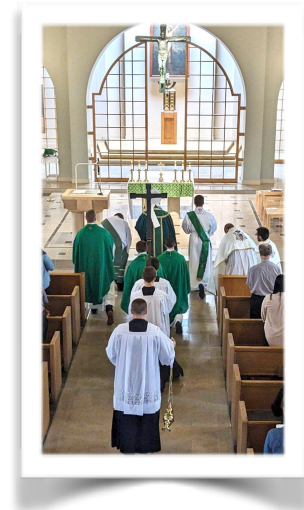
John Gust, Novitiate and Brian Kusek, TOF



Bishop Robert Barron

On June 18-19, 2024, two hundred priests, deacons, and lay leaders gathered with Bishop Robert Barron at St. Mary's University of Minnesota for the Diocese of Winona-Rochester's annual conference on ministry, leadership, and evangelization.

Many third orders and apostolates from across the diocese were invited to table during breaks to share the good work being done in our local church. Novice John Gust and I were privileged in this gathering, and spoke to many who were interested in our TOF community, including a couple who had already spent significant time on our website! God be praised. Please pray for those who are discerning, and for all who are working for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.



CANONIZATION OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

St. Francis of Assisi
Philip Fritters, Artist



Born: Giovanni di Pietro de Bernadine 1181

Died: October 3 1226

Canonized: July 16, 1228, Assisi Papal States
by Pope Gregory IX

Feast Day: October 4

Founder of the Franciscan Order and Confessor of the Faith and Stigmatist

Venerated In: Catholic Church
Anglicanism
Lutheranism
Old Catholic Church

Major Shrine: Basilica of San Francesco d'Assisi

St Francis of Assisi was canonized as a Saint on July 16, 1228, two years after his death, by Pope Gregory IX. The next day, Pope Gregory IX laid the foundation stone for the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi.



PRAYER CHAIN UPDATE

Dear All,

We have taken the decision to update the **Prayer Chain** protocols including the option to make prayer requests for friends.

The latest protocols are as follows:

1. *If you are aware of a fellow Isolated Tertiary (IT), family member or a friend who requires prayers (e.g. someone in your cluster is involved in a serious accident or is suffering from a serious health issue), then you may send an email to all ITs (per the latest roster) with sufficient information regarding your prayer request;*
2. *Provide updates to the group as significant developments unfold e.g. the individual has been released from the hospital and is making a good recovery at home;*
3. *Respond to emails from any ITs seeking updates;*
4. *Refrain from providing detailed personal information, merely only what is absolutely necessary for the IT to include the individual in their prayer intentions e.g. their name and nature of the serious health issue;*
5. *This is only for members of our IT community (professed members and novices). Inquirers are not included in this email list as they are not members of our IT community. They are in the process of discerning to become members and will be so when they enter the novitiate. We can certainly pray for any of their needs, but they are not included in the **Prayer Chain** initiative;*
6. *Send the emails Bcc (to protect the email addresses in case they are accidentally sent to non intended recipients);*
7. *Recipients to consider saying three Hail Mary's upon receiving the prayer chain and/or saying the following at 3:00 PM (the Hour of Mercy) "My Blessed Mother if you will you can [assist person X with...], thank you for hearing my prayer; and*
8. *The email list in the Roster is private and is not to be shared with anyone outside the IT community.*

Thanks & God Bless,
Frank

GETTING TO KNOW OUR NOVITIATES

Joseph Michael Kaltoum



I have been blessed to be husband to Connie and father to three children, Michael 13, Alyssa, 11, and Marcus 9, and for the past six years we have been residing on a rural property just outside of Canberra, Australia.

I was born in Sydney to a Maronite Catholic family and have three brothers. We were blessed to be part of a bigger family and community. My father was one of eleven and my mother is one of five, as well as regular BBQs and events with the larger clan, with roots in Bsharri Lebanon, the hometown of the poet Khalil Gibran, and the great Cedars of God. Growing up my parents always ensured that we attended Mass every Sunday, and in my primary years I was an alter boy for our school parish, St. Joseph the Worker. I remember I loved serving and the Mass always drew me in

spiritually and I remained reverent whenever we attended. My fondest memory of the faith, at that time, was having a group devoted to Our Lady pray the rosary in our home. The leader of the group was a young mystic who had visions of the crucifixion during the rosary. After the rosary he gave a talk on the brown scapular and gave me one. I wore the scapular every day as well as regularly prayed the rosary until later in my teens.

Unfortunately, like many Catholics, I was poorly catechized in the faith and had fallen away. I began to misbehave in school and was more interested in hanging with the “wrong” crowd. To my shame this eventually led me to getting involved with shady characters and illegal activities. But, by the grace of God, I had a conversion of heart at eighteen and returned to the Church. However, this was short lived as I did not find many people at our Church who had the same passion or zeal for the faith. Without guidance I had fallen away from the Church again. This time, I began work as a real estate agent, frequented night clubs on the weekend with my brother and his friends, and generally lived a secular life.

In 2004 I was approached by a friend to join Freemasonry and in 2005 I was initiated into the Craft. As a younger member of a much older (average age was seventy) organization, I was encouraged to move up the ranks and take on other offices as well as join other orders, like the royal arch, the rose croix, the 30th degree and the rosicrucians. It was in the rosicrucians that I began to look into the occult. But it was also in the rosicrucians where my path back to the Lord began. During a conversation with another member who was discussing the fake gospels, which at that time, I was fully engaged in learning this “secret knowledge.” Amazingly another member walked up to him and angrily demanded to see these books he was talking

about and to show him how they were true and not a forgery. At that moment I thought to myself, he is right, how do I know this is the truth and the slow journey returning to the faith began.

I was married to Connie in 2008 and we were blessed with the birth of our son Michael in 2011. It was at his birth that I had another conversion of heart experience. Driving home that day I broke down and wept for hours, and I finally realized I could no longer ignore the Lords calling. I decided to leave the Freemasons and return to the faith of my ancestors. Luckily this time, I found someone who helped me and I began self catechizing, learning apologetics by listening to talks from lighthouse media, Catholic Answers, and the like. In 2013, I decided to continue my studies in Theology at Notre Dame in Sydney and completed my bachelors with a major in Philosophy in 2018.

My journey to the Franciscans was almost by accident. I began researching third orders and other confraternities as a friend and I wanted to start a men's group that was more devoted to the faith with a stricter type of rule. I had mentioned this interest to a Dominican priest, who then invited me to the local Dominican Third Order meeting the next day. I attended, but was not very impressed. The following day at Mass I mentioned this to a fellow parishioner who himself was a Third Order Franciscan and introduced me to Pepe. Although, through the initial inquiry period there wasn't a strong call, but this changed when a quote from St. Jean Vianney was mentioned at the final meeting and I found out he was a Third Order Franciscan as well. During my conversion and the following years, I read his amazing sermons and continued to read particular ones to overcome and remind myself of certain vices that I had fallen into. This was what I needed to know and that I should continue to the novitiate, and subsequently, I have chosen St. Jean Vianney as my Patron.

Even more amazingly I recently learnt that my aunty who was a nun in Libanon, who I had always thought belonged to a Maronite order, was actually a Franciscan Sister of the Holy Cross. I found out that the order was established by a Capuchin Priest, Blessed Yacoub Al Haddad to assist the poor, disabled, and orphans. Unfortunately, my aunty passed last year, but I'm sure her prayers had helped me back to Christ and the Franciscans. My Novitiate ceremony was March 19, 2024.



1786-1859

Feast Day Aug 8

(St. Jean-Marie
Vianney)
Priest and TOF



Blessed Yacoub Al Haddad, TOF
Feb 1, 1875—June 26, 1954

ONGOING ZOOM MONTHLY GATHERINGS

We give our appreciation to Bob Zupanek, who will be assisting Linda Menser, TOF with our Monthly IT Gatherings. Bob is a novice who finished Initial Formation in June 2024, and was accepted for Holy Profession into the TOF, by Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM, our spiritual Director. Also Bob is planning to celebrate his profession during our Tridua Retreat in August 2024. We thank Bob for giving of his time to assist Linda with our gathering.

Pepe Ventosa, TOF

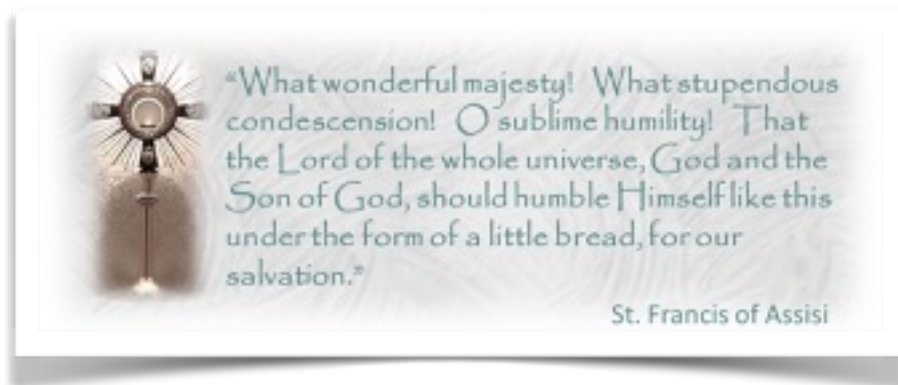
VIRTUAL MONTHLY GATHERING: THURSDAY JULY 11, 2024

*Our virtual monthly gathering in July will be on the **2nd Thursday (the 11th)** as the first Thursday is July 4th. Hope this change will not prevent you from joining us on that day.*

ARTICLE 74 FOR THE “JULY 11, 2024” Monthly Gathering:



Tertiaries shall carefully observe and uphold the virtue of justice, both commutative and distributive, both legal and social, prudently tempering it with charity. With great sincerity they shall show themselves to be true Christians and Franciscans by paying their debts, by giving and taking just price of goods on sale and for work done, by cultivating a spirit of thrift, by promoting peace among members of the different social classes, by bettering the conditions of the poorer class, by giving particular support and encouragement to the middle class, and by honoring agricultural and manual work as well.



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION ISOLATED TERTIARIES SCHEDULE

<i>MONDAY</i>	<i>Judith Inglesby, TOF</i>
<i>TUESDAY</i>	<i>Linda Menser, TOF</i>
<i>WEDNESDAY</i>	<i>Luis Guzman, TOF</i> <i>Judith Inglesby, TOF</i> <i>Paul & Mary Tag, TOF</i>
<i>THURSDAY</i>	<i>Bob Zupanek</i>
<i>FRIDAY</i>	<i>Linda Menser, TOF</i> <i>Pepe Ventosa, TOF</i> <i>Sandy DeWaal, TOF</i>
<i>SATURDAY</i>	<i>Ericka Witover, TOF</i> <i>Peter Emau, TOF</i> <i>Miguel Mahan, TOF</i>
<i>SUNDAY</i>	<i>Linda Menser, TOF</i>

Please include prayer for the intentions of our Pope, bishops, and priests. Also pray for the community of Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province, for the increase in religious vocations in their community and for all members of the Isolated Tertiaries Community.

ADMONITION XXVIII (VIRTUE AND VICE) VIRTUE SHOULD BE CONCEALED



Virtue should be concealed or it will be lost. Blessed is the servant who treasures up for heaven (Mt. 6:20) the favors that God has given him and does not want to show them off for what he can get out of them. God himself will reveal his works to whomsoever he pleases. Blessed is the servant who keeps God's marvelous doings to himself. (see Lk. 2:19, 51).

In the beginning of this Admonition it has become clear what is meant, as the example of Our Blessed Mother, she "kept all these things in her heart." Like a light bulb above my head that was just turned on, I understand. A spiritual gift from God should be concealed for a treasure in heaven. How beautiful is that thought?

As we have learned from previous Admonitions that everything that God has given belongs to God, even every breath we take. It is up to God to reveal the gifts from himself, who has blessed us. A story in the book, "The Little Flowers of St. Francis, by Raphael Brown, illustrates a young boy had followed St. Francis into the woods late at night and into the morning. Francis had gone to pray privately, and while in prayer, a great light had circled him as he prayed. Within the light were Francis, our Lord, and the Blessed Mother. It was many nights of prayer that St. Francis had experienced these conversations with our Lord and the Blessed Mother. This young boy was a witness to one of them, and therefore, these experiences of Francis were revealed. The treasure for Francis would be in heaven as he kept them to himself, it was the Lord who revealed them.

Most importantly, we should be in the right frame of mind in our spiritual life by going into our room and follow God's will as we pray. The only reward should come from God and our treasure will be great when we enter into heaven. Whatever is to be revealed is a gift from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mt. 6: 19-20: Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

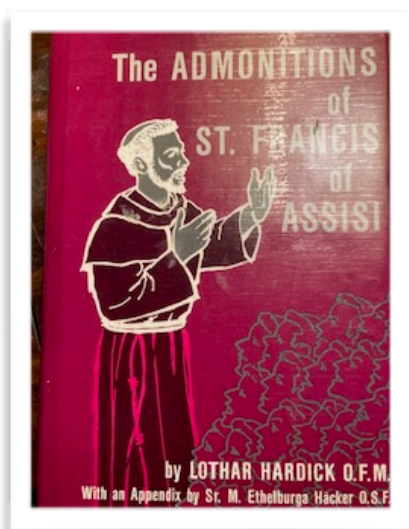
The Admonitions of St. Francis of Assisi, By, Lothar Hardick, OFM

On page eleven is Admonition 28, which is the last of the Admonitions in the book, “The Admonitions of St. Francis of Assisi,” by Lothar Hardick, OFM. It has taken almost three years to go through all the Admonitions. There have been several requests by Novitiates, and IT’s, to start over with Admonitions 1-28 because they have been through half or less of the book by Lothar Hardick, OFM, as he tries to read the mind of St. Francis of Assisi.

We will begin again in the August issue of the Soldiers of Christ Newsletter. In reviewing what was written in 2021, when we started this study of the Admonitions, I discovered Part II and Part III were omitted. We will start with Admonition Part I in August, and continue with Part II and Part III in the following two months, then continue with Admonition IV—XXVIII.

The book of Admonitions of St. Francis of Assisi, by Lothar Hardick, OFM is out of print. The copy I have was a used book from Thrift Books and was expensive. The book is hard to find. I retyped the book and that is what you have received each month. As I go through the Admonitions again, hopefully, I will catch all the typo’s and you will have a clean copy.

*Sandy Baden, TOF
Editor*



Save the Date

JULY 4: ***INDEPENDENCE DAY, Happy 4th of July.***

JULY 11: ***IT ZOOM GATHERING:** 7:00 PM Eastern Time; 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Discussion will be Article 73.*

JULY 16: ***THE CANONIZATION OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI***

JULY 18: ***IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 3:** 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time.*

JULY 20: *The death of Pope Leo, XIII, TOF*

JULY 30: ***ST. LOUIS IX MEN'S, TOF, PRAYER GROUP ZOOM MEETING:** 8:00 PM Eastern Time. Please contact Miguel Mahan if you want to receive the zoom link invite.*

Upcoming Events

AUGUST: *On August 23-25, 2024 we will be having our first “Tridua,” also known as a Tertiary retreat at the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted. See the Article in the January issue of the Soldiers of Christ Newsletter.*



