

March, 2025

Volume 6, Issue 3

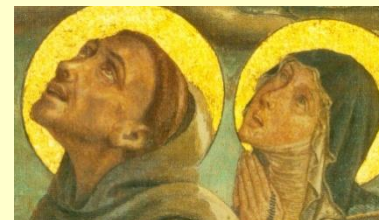
Il Poverello

The newsletter of the SS Francis and Clare Fraternity
of the Third Order of St. Francis

O holy Father, protect those in Your name (John 17:11) whom You have given to me in the world; they were Yours and You have given them to me. (John 17:6)

And the words which You gave to me I have given to them... - St. Francis of Assisi

www.thirdorderfranciscans.com



Something to Consider

Now that we have entered the month of March, we are not only beginning Lent with Ash Wednesday on March 5, but we have also come to the month dedicated to our good St. Joseph, whose feast day is celebrated on March 19.

For a man who is never quoted in the Scriptures or anywhere else, the story and reputation of St. Joseph has been known for over 2,000 years. He is remembered as a strong and decent man, who followed his Jewish faith with devotion. He did not just observe the rules – he lived them. He was a skilled carpenter and a hard worker who put in long days at his trade. His age when he became betrothed to Mary is unknown. For centuries, he has been pictured as much older, and with some contending he was a widower with children. Many modern scholars think it is quite possible he was only perhaps 4-5 years older than Mary, and that since it is not supported by Scripture, that he probably did not have a wife and family previous to Mary. Certainly, it would have been difficult for an elderly man to move his household in the middle of the night to Egypt, settle and reestablish himself and his family, and then to return later.

Much of the information on Joseph comes down to his reputation as a good and just man, who observed both civil and religious law, who loved his wife and Son, who was a good neighbor who worked hard, but most importantly, who obeyed the Will of God no matter what. He was the kind of man who put himself at God's disposal, and he led by example. And when he died, which seems to have happened between the finding of Jesus in the temple and the beginning of His public ministry, God gave him the great gift of being comforted by both Mary and Jesus as he slipped away.

St. Joseph has many patronages, including workers, unmarried women, families, fathers, carpenters, married couples, exiles, the sick and dying, and happy death. He is also the patron saint of Sicily, Canada, Croatia, Austria, and other countries. Most importantly, he is the patron of the Universal Catholic Church as declared by Pope Pius IX in 1870.

Most recently, the Eucharistic Prayer of the Latin (Western) Rite of the Church was changed to recognize Joseph as Mary's "most chaste spouse", confirming his virginity. The Friars Minor led the way soon after their establishment in honoring St. Joseph in his many qualities. This includes the practice of praying 7 Our Fathers and 7 Hail Marys in memory of the 7 Sorrows and 7 Joys of St. Joseph.

St. Joseph, pray for us!

Fraternity Council

Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM
– Spiritual Director
Roberto Meza, TOF
– Minister
James Miller, TOF –
Vice-Minister
Debbie Ventosa, TOF –
Master of Formation
Mary Dye, TOF – Secretary
Therese Harper, TOF –
Treasurer
Virgil Daniel, TOF –
Councilor
Rick Dunlap, TOF –
Councilor
Pepe Ventosa, TOF –
Councilor
Susan Kramer, TOF
– Newsletter

**Next Gathering –
Sunday, March 16 – 1:30 PM
St. Nicholas Byzantine Church
1051 E. Robinson Ave.
Coventry Twp. 44203**

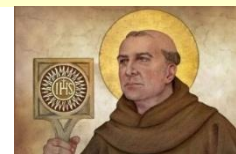
We are expecting you!

Franciscan Quote of the Month

“He was chosen by the Eternal Father as the trustworthy guardian and protector of His greatest treasures, namely, His Divine Son and Mary, Joseph’s wife. He carried out this vocation with complete fidelity until at last God called him, saying, ‘Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord.’”

St. Bernadine of Siena (1380-1444)

Franciscan, Priest, Preacher against Gambling, Infanticide/Abortion, Sorcery/Witchcraft, & Sodomy



Eucharistic Adoration



Sunday

Betty DeMarco, TOF
Marlene Walker, TOF

Monday

Rose Akins, TOF
Louise Daniel, TOF
Virgil Daniel, TOF
Chris Devore, TOF
LeeAnn Devore, TOF
Judith Hoyt, TOF

Tuesday

Michael Butts, TOF
Eileen Dunlap, TOF
Rick Dunlap, TOF
Therese Harper, TOF
Larry McNutt, TOF
Lucy McNutt, TOF
Maria Elena Meza, TOF
Roberto Meza, TOF
Carol Perrine, TOF
Cindy Russo, TOF

Wednesday

Mary Dye, TOF
Bill Marshall, TOF
Jim Miller, TOF

Thursday

Joanne Angeletti, TOF
Denise Williams, TOF

Friday

Robert Burtscher, TOF
Pepo Ventosa, TOF

Saturday

Susan Kramer, TOF

The apostolate of daily Eucharistic Adoration is VITAL to our Fraternity. It does not depend only on the 26 brothers and sisters listed above and is not only limited to one day. If you wish to take a place on the Adoration list, please contact Susan Kramer. When you find yourself at church, say a prayer of adoration to our good Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

March Anniversaries and Birthdays

Profession Anniversary

None this month!



Birthdays

LeeAnn Devore, TOF – 3/24
Judith Hoyt, TOF – 3/29

Stand for Life



Rose Akins, TOF and Bill Marshall, TOF will be praying in front of the abortion clinic in Cuyahoga Falls in March. If you choose to witness to the Church's teaching on life by praying at the abortion clinic, don't forget our rules for your own safety.

Remember to use the residential parking around the corner. Do not use business parking or Acme's parking – you will be towed. It may be easier to pray without distractions across the street, rather than in front of the clinic. Be sure to always remain on the sidewalk. If you cannot fulfill your commitment, find a substitute.

***NEVER* go alone to the clinic – pray from home if your partner will be absent and you cannot find a substitute.**

Changes to Our Monthly Gathering Format – by Virgil Daniel, TOF

Starting with the upcoming March monthly Gathering, the Council is changing how our Gatherings will begin. Well, change to venue that is, but still starting with prayer, as per our Bylaws. Bishop Robert Pipta, Eparchy of Parma, has graciously consented to our use of the main St. Nicholas worship space for our prayer time. Since we are going to spend a half hour or so in prayer at the outset of the Gathering anyway, why not pray before the Blessed Sacrament?

Here's how it goes: first, arrive as usual, draw your table number and get organized. Then, grab your Liturgy of the Hours book and your copy of the Opening Prayers for the Monthly Meeting and head to the Church. Here's where Bishop Pipta's conditions apply:

- As you enter the worship space, maintain a reverential silence, speaking only in a low voice; no unnecessary talking.
- While present in the Church, maintain order – from entering to departure.

The Blessed Sacrament is present on the altar, behind the curtain and the Royal Doors. Perhaps you might pray upon entering as our Father Francis suggests (per Constitutions Art 58):

“We adore You, most holy Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all Your churches throughout the world; and we bless You, because by Your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.”

Since we normally pray Daytime Prayer in choir, the Council asks that the men sit on the right side of the main aisle, facing the altar (before the icon of Our Lord), while the women sit to the left (before the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary). Finally, after the *Lectio Divina* Gospel reading is finished, we will quietly adjourn to the Hall and there conduct the usual sharing of our word with either a partner or the whole table, as appropriate. At some point, our Minister Prefect will again call us to order and we will pray grace before enjoying our fellowship time.

Thinking About & Praying for Our Novices – by Virgil Daniel, TOF

As we approach the Profession of our brother, Novice Joe Zbasnik, we are reminded to pray for all of our novices and their sponsors, and to invoke the intercession of their chosen patron saint as they continue to discern their commitment of making Profession as a Tertiary. Here's the list for your prayerful consideration:

Novice	Sponsor	Patron Saint
Joseph Zbasnik	Virgil Daniel, TOF	St. Maximilian Kolbe, OFM
Andrea Ferraro	Susan Kramer, TOF	St. Elizabeth of Hungary, TOF
Jerry Johnson	Kenny Green, TOF	St. Padre Pio, OFM
Jack Kellogg	Chris Devore, TOF	St. Elizabeth of Hungary, TOF
John Wilson	Pepe Ventosa, TOF	St. Maximilian Kolbe, OFM

Along with Joe professing at the Shrine on March 22, Tony Perez will enter the Novitiate, and two Isolated Tertiaries will profess. Please pray for Mary C. (Arizona), and Sharif R. (New York).

Hospitality and Little Portion

Rose Akins, TOF and Andrea Ferraro will prepare our lunch for the March Gathering.

Marlene Walker, TOF will prepare the Little Portion, and Kenny Green, TOF will deliver it. The Little Portion Apostolate ministers to the homeless and street people of Canton and Akron by providing a simple meal of sandwiches, fruit, and anything individually wrapped for our brothers and sisters in Christ – usually at least 2 meals. You may also add small sized toiletries such as Purell, soap, religious articles, disposable razors, etc. Tube socks are always very useful. Or you may want to deliver the offering. **If you are interested in helping, please contact Mary Dye, TOF.**



As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me.

Charity Fund

Council has decided to make contributions to the Charity Fund available to those members who are in financial distress. Each case will be individually determined by Council. The members in question will remain anonymous to the membership in order to maintain their dignity. If a special collection is needed, it will be announced prior to the Gathering.

For those who are interested in assisting, there will be a special collection at the March Gathering to benefit a member in need. If you wish to help, please bring whatever sum you wish to contribute and there will be a separate collection taken at the March 16 Gathering.

Columbus Catholic Men's Conference – by Matthew Poletti, TOF

The 28th annual Columbus Catholic Men's Conference (Called to be Saints – Men on a Mission) took place on February 22, 2025. I represented our fraternity, and I am happy to report that there were nearly 3,000 in attendance.



There was a relic of St. Ignatius of Antioch on loan for the occasion from a museum. Guest speakers Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, Dr. Ray Guarendi, and Mark Hartfiel.



2025 Pilgrimage News

The Ss. Francis and Clare Fraternity will host our annual pilgrimage on May 17, 2025. Council decided on visiting Nativity of the Lord Jesus Parish in Springfield Township (just south of Akron), where the founding pastor, Fr. David Halaiko, assembled a large collection of Nativities over the years. ****Those who attend will obtain a plenary indulgence if they follow the usual conditions attached to the indulgence!***

Our good St. Francis is responsible for the idea and implementation of the first Nativity in Greccio, a little village outside of Assisi, in 1223. The Church worldwide celebrated the 800th anniversary of this in 2023.

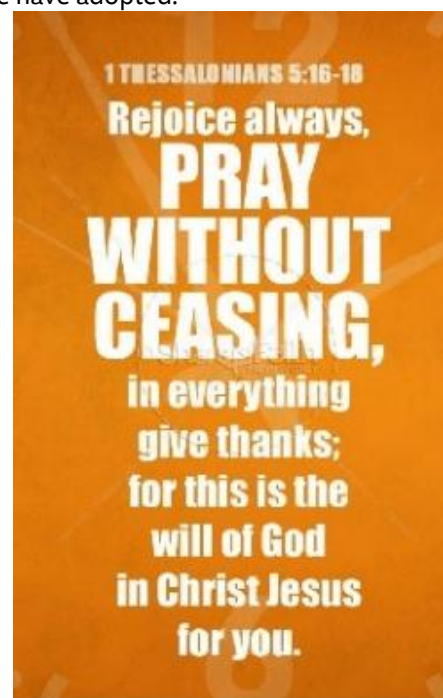
Our tour guide will be Fr. David Halaiko, who is a retired priest of the Diocese of Cleveland and who is the founding pastor of Nativity parish. Father is a licensed tour guide in Israel – which, like Italy, requires tour guides to pass a rigorous test in order to be certified. He is very knowledgeable about the history and politics of the Middle East and Europe, and will also offer Mass for us, as well as the opportunity for Confession. We will have lunch at Hartville Kitchen for our pilgrims to close out the day. Stay tuned – more details TBA!

Eucharistic Adoration and Daily Prayer

Council asks those of us who participate in Eucharistic Adoration – and the rest of our fraternity – to remember the following intentions every day when you pray:

1. **The spiritual protection of our fraternity and of all our members.**
2. **Those in our fraternity who are sick, and their families.**
3. **Pope Francis** and his intentions.
4. Our bishops and their intentions: **Bishop David Bonnar** of the Diocese of Youngstown, **Bishop Robert Pipta** of the Eparchy of Parma, **Bishop Earl Fernandes** of the Diocese of Columbus, and **Bishop Edward Malesic, JCL** of the Diocese of Cleveland.
5. The Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province of the OFM, particularly **Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM**, **Fr. Dennis Arambasick, OFM**, and **Fr. Robert Campagna, OFM**, who is the Provincial Minister.

6. **Our beloved, hard-working pastors and parish priests, and our parishes**, including **Fr. Miron Kerul'-Kmec** of St. Nicholas Byzantine Parish (Eparchy of Parma), who hosts our fraternity every month. We also pray for **Fr. Daniel Dozier, TOF**, an Isolated Tertiary who is the pastor of St. George Byzantine Parish in Olympia, Washington and St. Irene Byzantine Parish in Portland, Oregon, as well as being a professor at SS. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Seminary and contributor to "Catholic Answers" on EWTN radio. And **Fr. Ryan Furlong, TOF**, who is pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Vienna, St. William Parish in Champion, and St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in Cortland (Diocese of Youngstown) and who is a member of the St. Padre Pio Fraternity.
7. **Fr. Gastor Temu Bahati** of the Diocese of Moshi who is serving on the staff of his bishop, whom we have spiritually supported for several years.
8. **Frater Francis Tumaini** of the Diocese of Moshi, who is the Moshi seminarian we have adopted.
9. **All the seminarians of St. Mary Seminary and Borromeo Seminary in Cleveland**, which serves the Youngstown and Cleveland Dioceses, as well as **the seminarians of SS. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Seminary**, which serves the Eparchy of Parma. Our fraternity has spiritually adopted **Arthur Bodenschatz**, (St. Paul in North Canton) and **William Martzaklis** (St. Paul in North Canton) from the Diocese of Youngstown, **Joseph Rohan**, (St. Joseph Parish in Cuyahoga Falls), **Alex Krukemeyer**, (Our Lady of Victory Parish in Tallmadge), and **John Paul Antalek** (St. Mary Parish in Akron), all from the Diocese of Cleveland. These men, and Frater Francis of the Moshi Seminary, are the future leaders and servants of our Church.
10. Please add prayers **for the safety and protection of our Ukrainian brothers and sisters, and for the conversion of Russia** as Pope Francis has done in his Consecration of Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Also, **for the spiritual and physical protection of Catholic priests, religious, and lay people everywhere, particularly in Nigeria, Peru, Nicaragua, the Middle East, the Far East, and other countries where our Faith is being attacked.**
11. For the **protection of all life**, born and unborn, womb to tomb.
12. For the blessing of **an increase in priestly and religious vocations – including the Third Order Franciscans, and for an increase of faithful Catholic marriages and families.**
13. For the spiritual and physical health and protection of **Jakin Miller and all FOCUS missionaries**, who are working to keep the Faith among university students nationwide.



It is part of our holy Franciscan vocation to prayerfully support our fellow Franciscans, the Pope, our bishops, our priests, and seminarians and anyone in distress and danger. **We have no Order without prayerful Franciscans, no priests without our seminarians, no Eucharist without our priests, and no Church without the Eucharist.** We all work together doing the mission God has given us, for His glory. All these individuals on the list sacrifice daily for us, and it is our privilege to pray for them!

Meet Novice Tony Perez – by Debbie Ventosa, TOF, Master of Formation



Tony Perez was raised in Chicago and enjoyed time as a young boy fishing on the shores of Lake Michigan. While enjoying exploring the abundant crayfish, fishing and beauty of God's creation, the seeds of Franciscan peace and beauty were first planted in Tony.

Tony studied at the Illinois Institute of Technology where his dedication earned him a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering. During Tony's Formation he has applied that same diligence and attention to detail to his studies and is a joy to have in class. The Timken Company offered him a job and he landed in Canton, Ohio. He met and married his wife Renea in 1993 and has 4 girls. Three of their four daughters remain at home. They are 19, 17, and 15 years old. Clearly Tony has his hands full and his heart full as well.

Each of us has a unique faith journey. After not practicing the Faith for years, Tony's younger brother invited him to join the Exodus 90 group. All of Tony's brothers were practicing Catholics, so he followed the prompting of the Holy Spirit and joined the Exodus 90 group. This led him to apply to OCIA as a Baptized and Confirmed Catholic; he embraced his Faith and desired to live it fully. Matt Poletti invited Tony to explore the Franciscan way of Life. The time in Formation has been one of growth in seeing the vestiges of God in all Creation, especially the peace experienced in the beauty of nature.

Tony has the profound sense that the more he learns about the Franciscan Way of Life, prayer, and spirituality, the more he realizes he doesn't know. This is the heart attitude that keeps him yearning to learn more and embrace the humble peaceful way in imitation of St. Francis of Assisi.

I would encourage you to spend some time at the Gathering getting to know Tony and support his entrance into the Novitiate at the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted in Youngstown on March 22, 2025 at the Noon Mass. There will be a reception to follow.

The Franciscan Tradition of Stations of the Cross – from the Conventual Friars of the St. Joseph of Cupertino Province (Western California)

Within the Franciscan tradition Stations of the Cross were part of the Lenten devotional soon after St. Francis' return from the Holy Land in 1221. It was common when Holy Land pilgrims returned home, they often brought back a bit of Palestine. In addition to relics, the pilgrims also brought back the desire to re-create scenes from the Holy Land in order to share their experiences with those unable to visit the holy places firsthand. The Franciscans became active in the development of the devotion of the Stations of the Cross when they were granted custody of the sacred sites of Jerusalem in 1343. Then they began to promote the devotion of Christ's passion. During the 15th and 16th centuries the Franciscans began to build a series of outdoor shrines in Europe to duplicate their counterparts in the Holy Land. The number of stations varied; seven was common. These were usually placed, often in small buildings, along the approach to a church. A number of rural examples were established as attractions in their own right, usually on attractive wooded hills.

In 1686, in answer to their petition, Pope Innocent XI granted to the Franciscans the right to erect stations *within* their churches. In 1731, Pope Clement XII extended to all churches the right to have the stations, provided that a Franciscan father erected them, with the consent of the local bishop. One friar, St. Leonard of Port Maurice, expressed his zeal by erecting 571 sets of stations between 1731 and 1751, becoming known as the "preacher of the way of the cross." It is likely he was also responsible for reversing the order of the stations so that they ended at Calvary rather than at Pilate's house. At the same time, the number was fixed at fourteen. In 1862 this right was extended to bishops throughout the church – and the Stations of the Cross became a permanent and universal part of our Lenten prayers in commemoration of Christ's passion, death, and burial.

Note: The Stations of the Cross according to the method of St. Francis of Assisi may be found at www.mycatholic.life/catholic-prayers/stations-of-the-cross/stations-of-the-cross-st-francis-of-assis/

Don't Forget!

- The Profession of Joe Zbasnik and the entry of Tony Perez to the Novitiate will be held on March 22 at the Shrine in Youngstown, beginning with Mass at 12 Noon. A luncheon reception will follow. A donation of \$12 for the lunch, which will be provided by the St. Padre Pio Fraternity, can be given to Therese Harper at the March Gathering. She will need to notify the Youngstown fraternity asap, so if you are interested, be prepared and let Mary know!
- If your personal contact information changes (address, phone number, email address, etc.), please be sure to notify Jim Miller promptly. He is working hard to keep our roster updated!
- Since the February Gathering was cancelled, please bring a bit extra for the Common Fund collection if you are able!
- The April Gathering will be held on the 2nd Sunday of April (Palm Sunday) since the usual 3rd Sunday will be Easter.
- Also, if you choose to participate in the Adoration ministry, let Susan Kramer know. Simply pick a day of the week when you can dedicate time in Adoration for those on our ongoing prayer list, which is included in this newsletter. The Host does not need to be exposed in the monstrance for Adoration. As long as you are able to pray in a church or chapel with the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, it is Eucharistic Adoration. **Where two or more are gathered in His Name, Jesus has promised to be present!**



Lord, it is Good for Us to be Together!

Unfortunately, our February Gathering was cancelled because of bitter cold and heavy snow. Council apologizes for the late notice, but felt it was best not to ask our members to venture out as a matter of safety.

At the Council meeting, the upcoming pilgrimage on May 17 to Nativity of the Lord Parish was discussed. The proposed agenda is as follows:

- Confession offered from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM.
- Mass offered at 9:30 AM.

- Tour of the Nativity Museum following Mass until approximately 11:15 AM.
- Crown Rosary from 11:15 AM to approximately 11:45 AM.
- Lunch at Hartville Kitchen at 12 Noon.

Fr. David Halaiko, retired founding pastor of Nativity of the Lord Parish and registered Israel tour guide, will honor us with Confession, Mass, and his learned teaching on the history of Nativities, the usual living conditions of Jews who lived in the Holy Family's time and place, and the current political situation in the Middle East. We hope to conclude the day by no later than 2 PM. More details will be announced as we approach May.

The March Gathering will be Sunday, March 16 at 1:30 PM at St. Nicholas!

Save the Date (March, the Month of the St. Joseph)

March 19	Feast of St. Joseph, Most Chaste Spouse of Mary
March 22	Profession of Joe Zbasnik and Entry of Tony Perez to the Novitiate, 12:00 Noon, Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted
April 13	April Gathering moved to Palm Sunday to avoid meeting on Easter!
April 18	Good Friday (Day of Fast and Abstinence)
April 20	Easter – The Resurrection of Our Lord
May 17	Annual TOF Pilgrimage – Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Springfield Township
May 29	Ascension of Our Lord
June 8	Pentecost
June 22	June Gathering moved to June 22 to avoid meeting on Father's Day!
August 17	August Gathering / Annual Picnic at Queen of Heaven Parish
August 22-24	Annual Tridua

The Memorare of St. Joseph

Remember, O Most Chaste Spouse of the Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who implored your help and sought your intercession was left unassisted. Full of confidence in your power, I fly unto you and beg your protection. Despise not, O Guardian of the Redeemer, my humble supplication, but in your bounty, hear and answer me. Amen.

