

April, 2025

Volume 6, Issue 4

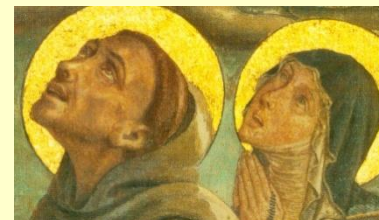
Il Poverello

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

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Something to Consider

Appropriately, April is the month on the Catholic calendar dedicated to the Holy Eucharist, which we will soon commemorate at the Easter Triduum, as well as at *every* Mass and Divine Liturgy celebrated every day of the year.

Francis' Eucharistic life was evident in his fervent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist was the heart of his spiritual life. He regarded it not as one devotion among many, but as the center around which all the rest of them turned. Brother Leo, his faithful companion, spoke of his "deep adoration for and devotion to the body of Christ" and Celano writes that "Francis burned with the love they came from his whole being for the sacrament of the Lord's body, and he carried away with wonder at the loving kind and condescension and most condescending love shown there. (2 Celano 201).



One of his favorite prayers was this: we adore you, Lord Jesus Christ, here and in all your churches in the whole world, and we bless you, because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world (testament)

Writing to his friars, He told them our whole being should be seized with fear, the whole world should tremble and heaven rejoice, when Christ the Son of the living God is present on the altar in the hands of the priest.

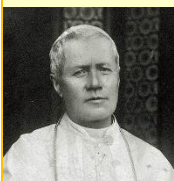
Fraternity Council

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, April 13 – 1:30 PM
St. Nicholas Byzantine Church
1051 E. Robinson Ave.
Coventry Twp. 44203**

We are expecting you!

Franciscan Quote of the Month



*"The devotion to the Eucharist is the most noble, because it has God as its object.
It is the most profitable for salvation, because it gives us the Author of Grace.
It is the sweetest, because the Lord is Sweetness Itself."*

St. Pius X (1835-1914) Feast Day – August 21

Pope, Encouraged Frequent Communion and Lowered the Age for First Communion, 3rd Order Franciscan

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.

April Anniversaries and Birthdays

Profession Anniversary

None this month!



Birthdays

John McGough, TOF – 4/1
Bill Marshall, TOF – 4/7
Andrea Ferraro – 4/13
Joe Zbasnik, TOF – 4/13
Betty DeMarco, TOF – 4/17
Nettie Miller, TOF – 4/30

Stand for Life



Joanne Angeletti, TOF; Mary Dye, TOF; and Carol Perrine, TOF will be praying in front of the abortion clinic in Cuyahoga Falls in April. 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.****

Reminder for Our Monthly Gathering – by Virgil Daniel, TOF

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.

- 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.

Hospitality and Little Portion

Rose Zaratsian, TOF and Mary Dye, TOF will prepare our lunch for the April Gathering.

Mary Cate Roberts, TOF will prepare the Little Portion, and Bill Marshall, 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.

Don't Forget!

- 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.
- If you choose to participate in the Adoration ministry, let Susan Kramer know. 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.

2025 Pilgrimage News

TOF Annual 2025 Community Pilgrimage

****Obtain a plenary indulgence if you follow the usual conditions attached to the indulgence, Bishop Malesic of Cleveland!***

Date: May 17, 2025

Location: Nativity of the Lord Jesus Parish 2425 Myersville Rd. Akron, Ohio 44312

Confession at 8:30 AM, Mass at 9:30 AM, Crown Rosary, then a tour of the Bethlehem Cave and Nativity Museum.

Next, lunch at Hartville Kitchen (1015 Edison St. NW, Hartville), where pilgrims pay for their own meal. We expect the day to end around 2 PM.

Franciscan Scapular Medals

Franciscan scapular medals are now available for purchase online. To order please visit the Patron Saint Medals website at www.patronsaintmedals.com and then search for "Franciscan scapular medal." These are sterling silver scapular medals and they cost \$89.99. We will be ordering pewter scapular medals that will be available in the near future at the Shrine for a lower cost.

Getting to Know Jerry Johnson by Debbie Ventosa, TOF

Oligario Johnson (aka Jerry), is a Novitiate of the fraternity of Saint Francis and Clare. Jerry and his twin sister were born in the Philippines, to his mother Gloria and father Eural, a soldier from Akron. This began the unfolding of the plan God had for Jerry.

The cross and passion of Christ was the favorite subject of St. Francis for meditation and interior conversion. Jerry had his share of crosses as he grew up in the Philippines to a single mom. He was an "Amerasian", separated from his sister when they were 3 weeks old. He endured relentless bullying and discrimination especially during his school years and was drawn to St. Francis of Assisi and the song "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace". The Missionary Society of St. Columban from Ireland operated the local high school and Catholic college. It was following these turbulent high school years and years of discrimination that he found a friend in one of the nuns who ministered to Jerry and his Mother. Although he didn't complete his college education in psychology due to poverty he reflects that he was given other opportunities.

"God is the Mastermind behind the journey", Jerry will say with a heartfelt smile. A position opened at the local parish for him to be the head acolyte and for the next five years he fulfilled the honor while attending to the care of his elderly ailing mom. Following that job, he was in the Cursillo movement and Charismatic renewal. In 1968 the Red Cross helped him search for his father, and that's when he discovered he had a twin sister! Unbeknownst to Jerry his father had been searching for him for decades and the efforts were thwarted by his mother. At age 36 he was joyfully reunited with his father in Akron and met his half siblings as well. His 10 years with his father before he passed were a source of healing and cherished by Jerry.

Jerry worked for 16 years in the Military Sealift command of the US Navy which took him to many ports across the world. His first stop debarking from each mission was to visit the Catholic church for Mass, Confession and prayer. Through all the decades of life's challenges Jerry knew God would take care of him. He recounts surviving the Mount Pinatubo volcanic eruption shortly before he was to leave the Philippines to come to the USA., and two close calls during his service with the US Navy. He relied on his Faith, and the communion of saints.

Jerry attends St. Sebastian parish, sings in the choir and serves as a lector. Bill Marshall TOF extended the invitation to "The Come and See", where a renewed desire to grow deeper in the faith was ignited. During his time of Formation the unconditional love of St. Francis and his humility spoke volumes to Jerry. Isaiah 43:1 Jerry shared that the Franciscans are his destiny, "He called me by my name ...through St. Francis...and praise to Jesus that I responded to that call."

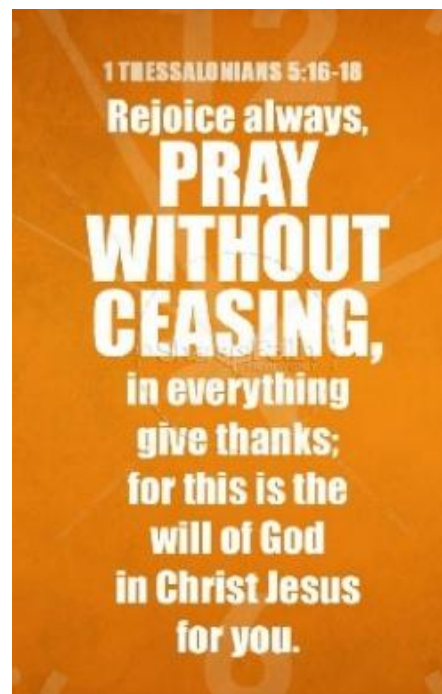
I invite you to take time to visit with Jerry who completed his Postulancy and entered the Novitiate 11/9/2024. He continues to grow in the Franciscan spiritual life and looks forward to permanent profession.



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, Bishop Robert Pipta, Bishop Earl Fernandes, and Bishop Edward Malesic, JCL.**
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, Fr. Daniel Dozier, TOF, Fr. Ryan Furlong, TOF, Fr. John Rickert, FSSP, TOF** of Illinois, who is an Isolated Tertiary.
7. **Fr. Gastor Temu Bahati and Frater Francis Tumaini** of the Diocese of Moshi.
8. **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.
9. 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.**
10. For the **protection of all life**, born and unborn, womb to tomb.
11. 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.**
12. 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!

Recommitting to the TOF – Renewing our Profession

Article 29. *In the Gospel our Lord gives this admonition: “No one who looks behind him, when he has once put his hand to the plough, is fitted for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). Therefore, the tertiary brothers and sisters – as persons who have embraced a constant way of life in the world – shall strive to strengthen themselves more and more in their holy resolution. Hence, they are urged to make a frequent renewal of their profession with devotion, at least privately; but to make it publicly on the anniversary of the profession of our holy Father Francis (April 16), and at the time of retreat. (From the Constitution of the Third Order Franciscans)*

We are asked, in Article 29 of our Constitution (above), to renew our Profession as Franciscans on April 16, which is the anniversary of St. Francis’s own Profession. Below is the Renewal of Profession prayer – don’t forget to pray this on April 16!

Renewal of Profession

Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God in three persons, I present myself before You, to give You thanks for all the blessings and mercies You have bestowed on me with so much bounty since the moment I came into the world.

I thank You in particular, O my God, for having made me a member of the Third Order of Your servant St. Francis.

I confess that the yoke of the holy order is not heavy, that its obligations are not difficult,
and that its blessings are many and great.

I embrace anew the holy rule of our glorious father St. Francis.

I ratify my profession and renew it with all my heart, promising again in the presence of Your Divine Majesty,
in honor of the immaculate Virgin Mary, of blessed father Francis, and of all the saints,
to observe all the time of my life the commandments of God and the rule of the Third Order,
as also to fulfill the penance imposed on me by my superiors for any transgressions against the rule.

O my God, with the assistance of Your grace, I will, from this day forth,
to be more exact in the fulfilment of my duties as a Tertiary.

Deign to bless this my resolution. Kindle in my heart the fire of Your love, that, glowing with the warmth
of your charity, I may be a true child of our seraphic father, and never cease to serve and love You. Amen.

March 22, Profession Day

Here are some memories of the Profession of Joe Zbasnik and Mary Colon, and the entrance to the Noviate of Tony Perez (including a shot of the items available from the Shrine Gift Shop!) *(Thanks to Pepe for the photos!)*



Learning to Pray the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Pepe Ventosa, TOF

The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary is one of the Offices entrusted to us Tertiaries by Pope Leo XIII. Although we are familiar with praying The Liturgy of the Hours, not many are familiar with the Little Office of the BVM.

Fr. John Rickert, FSSP, TOF, will be presenting at the monthly virtual Gathering of the Isolated Tertiaries the Office in general, its history, and instructing on how to pray the Little Office of the BVM. All Tertiaries, Isolated or those in fraternity, that are interested in learning this Office are invited to join. Please contact Pepe to be included in the Zoom invite. This gathering will take place on May 1st, 7-9 PM Eastern Time Zone. If interested in purchasing the Little Office of the BVM, the Latin and English edition published by Baronius Press is a great choice.

Lord, it is Good for Us to be Together!

We met for the March Gathering on Sunday, March 16 at St. Nicholas Byzantine Parish at 1:30 PM. We had 30 in attendance, including our friends and visitors Annie Butts, Teresa Ventosa, Fred Kramer, Lucy Soldan, OFS, and Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM.

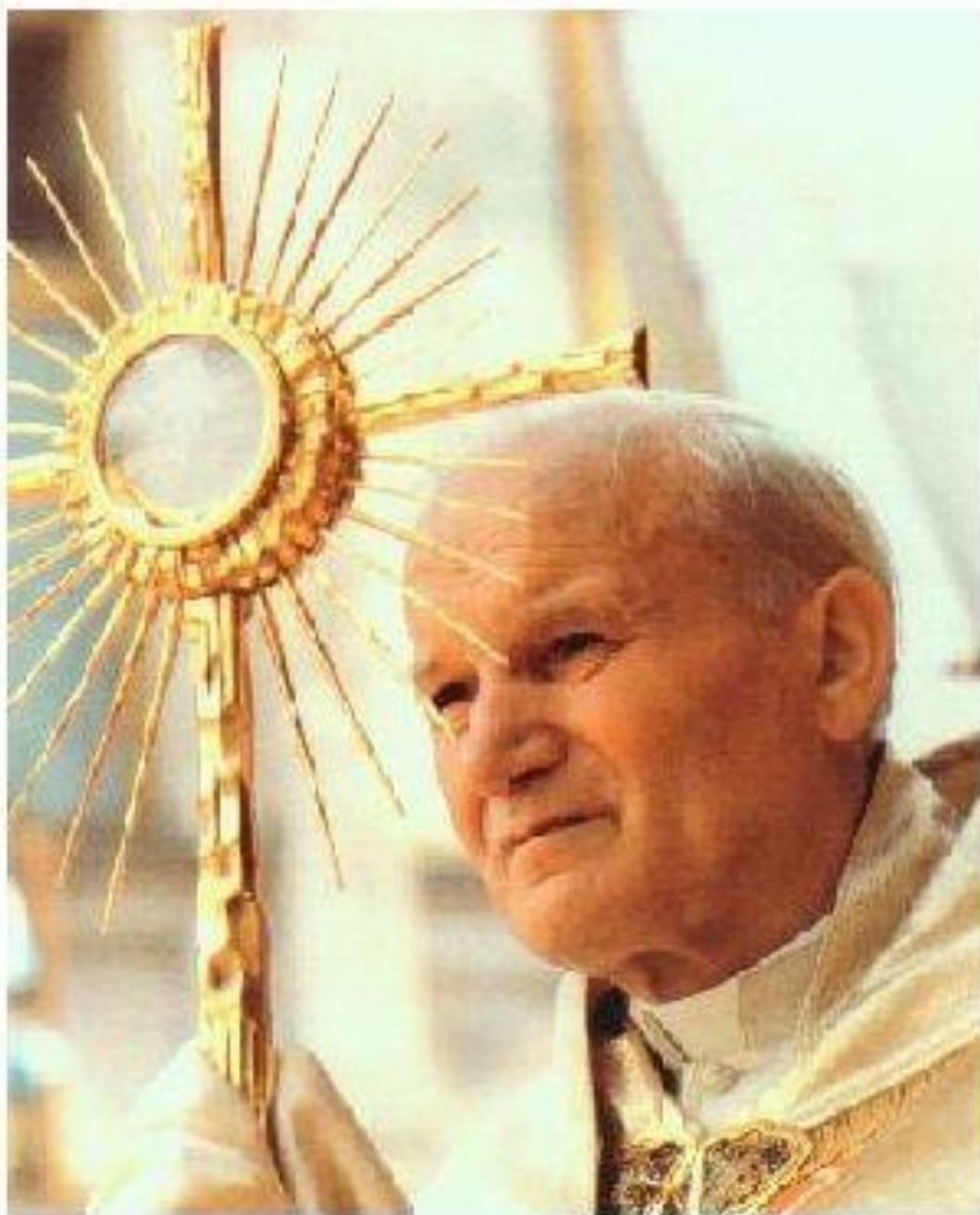
- After assembling in the Social Hall, Roberto Meza, TOF (Minister) led us to the church for Liturgy of the Hours
 - Kenny Green, TOF; Debbie Ventosa, TOF; and Bill Marshall, TOF led us in the Liturgy of the Hours.
- Virgil Daniel, TOF proclaimed the Gospel of the Transfiguration.
- Roberto Meza, TOF led us in the Consecration to St. Joseph in anticipation of the Feast of St. Joseph on March 19.
- We returned to the Social Hall, where we had our Lectio Divina discussions at each assigned table.
- Roberto Meza, TOF led us in Grace before we enjoyed a tasty meal from Rose Akins, TOF and Andrea Ferraro (taco bar, salad, pizelles, and fresh berries – yum!)
- Roberto Meza, TOF shared letters from Bishop Bonnar of Youngstown, Bishop Malesic of Cleveland, and Bishop Pipta of the Eparchy of Parma acknowledging receipt of our annual report.
- Roberto Meza, TOF also shared a letter from Deacon DeFrange of the Diocese of Youngstown thanking us for the gift of New Testaments for the prison ministry.
- We were reminded of the upcoming profession of Joe Zbasnik and the progression of Tony Perez to the novitiate on March 22 at the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted in Youngstown.
- Betty DeMarco, TOF gave us an update on fundraising for Living Bread Radio. Betty asked us to check out the website and to pray for the success of the current campaign. The station is forming prayer teams.
- Roberto Meza, TOF shared a letter of thanks from Peggy at Embrace for our monetary donations and supplies for their pro-life ministry.
- Bill Marshall, TOF led us in Ongoing Formation. His topic was Article 61 of the Constitution.
 - We are asked to participate in monthly Confession.
 - We should examine our consciences daily.
 - Spiritual reading is vital to our vocation as Franciscans.
 - Spiritual reading supplies us with ammunition to fight evil.
 - Sacred Scripture, both Old Testament and New Testament, strengthens our souls.
 - Commentaries on Sacred Scripture can be very helpful.
 - The Book of Proverbs provides quick lessons.
 - The Psalms are expressions of love and worship.
 - The lives of the saints give examples of living the Gospel with heroic virtue.
 - Aspirations and spontaneous prayer.
 - Jesus, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.
 - Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner.
 - Jesus's name is a prayer itself.
 - The Stations of the Cross provides meditation on Jesus's journey to Calvary.
 - Bill Marshall's personal favorite is The Imitation of Christ by St. Thomas á Kempis
 - Who we are is God's gift to us. Who we become is our gift to God.
 - God sometimes speaks to us through a human agent.
- Roberto Meza, TOF gave the Infirmarian Report on behalf of Maria Elena Meza, TOF
 - Jennifer Kerns, TOF is improving but asks for our continued prayer.
 - No report on Elizabeth Francis, TOF.
 - Sandy Pollino, OFS faces serious health challenges but maintains an optimistic outlook.
- Debbie Ventosa, TOF (Master of Formation) gave the Formation Report
 - Tony Perez will enter the Novitiate on March 22 at the Shrine
 - Joe Zbasnik will be Professed on March 22 at the Shrine.
 - Two Isolated Tertiaries, Mary Colon from Arizona and another IT from New York, Shariff, will be Professed on March 22 at the Shrine.
 - Carol Perrine, TOF continues to lead the Formation class for the Novices (Andrea Ferraro, Jerry Johnson, Jack Kellogg, and John Wilson).



- Therese Harper, TOF is collecting money and taking reservations for the Profession and the TOF Pilgrimage.
 - There was also a Charity Collection for a member in financial distress.
- Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM offered Ongoing Formation on the subject of sacrifice.
 - Sacrifice is not just about giving up.
 - Sacrifice brings us closer to God and removes obstacles.
 - Denying ourselves helps us focus on God.
 - Fasting, abstaining, and sacrificing removes distractions keeping us from God.
 - Fasting clears the mind so we can give our full attention to God.
 - Fasting is not just about abstinence.
 - Distinguish what brings us to God, not just empty ritual.
 - We must discern how to obtain true piety.
 - True and unselfish sacrifice brings us to God.
 - Replace what we sacrifice with something good and spiritually enriching.
 - Build up good spiritual habits slowly and steadily so they remain with us after Lent.
- Roberto Meza, TOF recognized the March birthdays (Joanne Angeletti, LeeAnn Devore, and Judith Hoyt).
- The Little Portion was prepared by Marlene Walker, TOF and Kenny Green, TOF will deliver it.
- Bill Marshall, TOF and Rose Akin, TOF participated in the Stand for Life on March 15.
- Roberto Meza, TOF led us in prayer of intercession.
 - For sick members and our families.
 - For an adopted nephew of Susan Kramer, TOF who is suffering health challenges.
 - For the urgent needs of the Vincentano family.
 - For the spiritual and physical health and protection of Pope Francis.
 - For Bishop David Bonnar of Youngstown, Bishop Robert Pipta of the Eparchy of Parma, Bishop Earl Fernandes of Columbus, and Bishop Edward Malesic of Cleveland.
 - For the Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province of the OFM, particularly Fr. Robert Campagna, OFM, Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM, and Fr. Dennis Arambasick, OFM.
 - Our pastors and parish priests.
 - The priests of the Moshi Diocese in Tanzania.
 - The seminarians we have spiritually adopted:
 - Frater Francis Tumaini of the Diocese of Moshi
 - Arthur Bodenschatz and William Martzaklis of the Diocese of Youngstown
 - Joseph Rohan, Alex Krukemeyer, and John Paul Antalek of the Diocese of Cleveland
 - The people of Ukraine and all those in war zones.
 - For the safety and protection of all Catholics worldwide, especially priests and religious sisters.
 - For the protection of all human life.
 - For an increase in priestly vocations, vocations to marriage, and vocations to the Third Order Franciscans.
 - For Jakin Miller and all FOCUS missionaries.
- We prayed a Memorare and the St. Michael Prayer.
- Roberto Meza, TOF led us in the Gathering Closing Prayers.
- Roberto Meza, TOF reminded us that ***the next Gathering will be early, on April 13, which is Palm Sunday, because the third Sunday of April will be Easter Sunday.***

Save the Date (April, the Month of the Holy Eucharist)

April 13	April Gathering moved to Palm Sunday to avoid meeting on Easter!
April 16	Renewal of Profession
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



"Do not abandon yourself to
dispair. We are an Easter people
and hallelujah is our song. "

St. John Paul (1920-2005)