

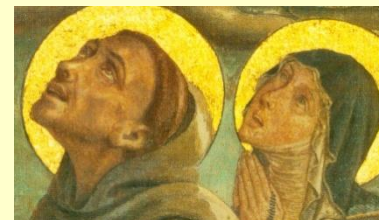
August, 2025

Volume 6, Issue 8

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 (St. Michael's Lent by Philip Kosloski, Aleteia, published 8/14/19)

It was in the midst of this "Lent" that Francis received the wounds of Jesus on his body. While St. Francis is widely known for his love of the poor and his great care of nature, he also possessed a deep interior life that was punctuated by frequent periods of prayer and fasting. He often stepped away from his community of brothers and sought solitude to deepen his relationship with God.

In 1224, two years before his death, Francis felt drawn to Mt. LaVerna and set out with a few of his closest brothers to spend a period of prayer and fasting on the mountain. St. Bonaventure records in his biography (written between 1260-1266) how Francis, "was brought after many and varied toils unto a high mountain apart, that is called Mt. Alverna. When, according unto his wont he began to **keep a Lent there, fasting, in honor of St. Michael Archangel**, he was filled unto overflowing, and as never before, with the sweetness of heavenly contemplation."

The Little Flowers of St. Francis, a collection of stories about St. Francis that was compiled during the 13th century, records these words of St. Francis to his brothers, "My sons, we are drawing nigh to our forty days' fast of St. Michael the Archangel; and I firmly believe that it is the will of God that we keep this fast in the mountain of Alvernia, the which by Divine dispensation hath been made ready for us, to the end that we may, through penance, merit from Christ the consolation of consecrating that blessed mountain to the honor and glory of God and of His glorious mother, the Virgin Mary, and of the holy angels."

St. Bonaventure adds that, "Unto the Blessed Michael Archangel—inasmuch as his is the ministry of bringing souls before God—[Francis] cherished an especial love and devotion."

This fast kept by St. Francis runs from the Solemnity of the Assumption (**August 15**) and ends on the feast of St. Michael (**September 29**). Similar to Lent that occurs before the feast of Easter, it excludes all Sundays.

It was during this fast that St. Francis received the **stigmata**, the holy wounds of Jesus Christ. The traditional date for the reception of the stigmata is **September 17**, a few days day after the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (which is on **September 14**).

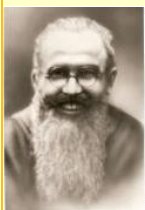
Fraternity Council

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/PICNIC!!! –
Sunday, August 17 – 1:30 PM
Queen of Heaven Pavilion
1800 Steese Rd.,
Uniontown, OH 44685**

We are expecting you!

Franciscan Quote of the Month



"The Immaculate alone has from God the promise of victory over Satan. She seeks souls that will consecrate themselves entirely to her, that will become in her hands forceful instruments for the defeat of Satan and the spread of God's kingdom."

St. Maximilian Kolbe, OFM (1894-1941) – Feast Day August 14
Franciscan Friar, Seminary Teacher, Founder of Monasteries in the Far East and India,
Newspaper Publisher, Radio Broadcaster, Protector of Holocaust Victims, Martyr

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
Jerry Johnson
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
Pepe 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.*

August Anniversaries and Birthdays

Profession Anniversaries

Bob Burtscher, TOF – 29 Years

Carol Perrine, TOF – 28 Years



Birthdays

Debbie Ventosa, TOF – 8/6

Jim Miller, TOF – 8/15

Dennis Gacioch, TOF – 8/22

Stand for Life



Rose Akins, TOF; and Therese Harper, TOF will be praying in front of the abortion clinic in Cuyahoga Falls in August. 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.****

Hospitality and Little Portion

Our August Gathering will be combined with our annual picnic at Queen of Heaven Parish! Mary Dye will distribute food assignments via email. If you have any questions, please contact Mary.



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

Cindy Russo, TOF will prepare the Little Portion, and Bob Burtscher, 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.***

Picnic Plans!

Our annual fraternity picnic, which will be held August 17, is approaching! We will once again gratefully accept the hospitality of Fr. David Durkee and Queen of Heaven Parish, and will hold our picnic on their beautiful grounds. Council is looking for volunteers who can help set up ahead of the picnic and clean up afterwards. ***If you are interested and are kind enough to assist, please contact a member of Council.***

Requiescat in Pace



Sheila Burtscher, for whom we have been praying for some time, passed away in July from an ongoing illness.

We offer our sincere and fraternal condolences to Bob and their children. May Sheila rest in the comforting and merciful arms of Jesus.

Formation Class Dates by Debbie Ventosa, TOF

The Come and See was held Monday, August 11th and there were 14 interested individuals who attended. Virgil Daniel and Father Vit presented with support from several professed members as well as novices.

Our Formation students are hard at work in their studies as they progress toward Profession Day, as is the trusty Formation Team! They are preparing their letters and interviews will be scheduled soon. Please continue to pray for the students and the Formation Team!

Below are the dates for formation for the current novices:

August 4 and 18 September 8 and 22 October 6 and 20 November – Practice and Holy Permanent Profession

We Welcome New Honorary Member Teresa Ventosa!!!



It is with great joy that the Council informs you that Teresa Ventosa, daughter of Debbie and Pepe, was accepted by Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM, as an Honorary Member of the Franciscan Tertiary community and accepted by our Council as a member of our Fraternity at the Council meeting in July, 2025.

Honorary members are those who, due to serious circumstances, find it impossible to attend Initial Formation. Members in this category are practicing Catholics in good standing with the Catholic Church and approved initially by our Spiritual Director (Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM), prior to being accepted into a fraternity. Their gift to the community is intercessory prayer.

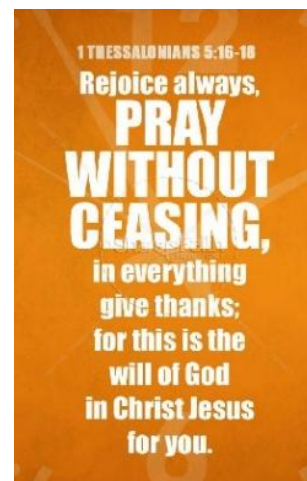
Many of you are familiar with our lovely Teresa. She was born in 1997 and diagnosed with Tuberous Sclerosis when she was 3 months old. Severe seizures during her early life have affected her neurological development. Despite all of her physical ailments she is a joyful girl, always bringing a smile to those who meet her. She is very sensitive to the suffering of others and aware of the need for prayers. She loves to pray the Rosary in the evenings before going to bed and includes many who ask in her intentions. She will serve our fraternity by praying for the special needs of our members and the fraternity prayer intentions. Teresa joins Tien Tran, TOF, and Eric Witover, TOF, as Honorary members of our community of Franciscan Tertiaries.

Welcome to our Franciscan family, Teresa, and God bless and protect you!!!

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. **For the spiritual and physical health and protection of Pope Leo XIV.**
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. Patrick Boyle, 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, North Canton)** and **William Martzaklis (St. Paul, North Canton)** from the Diocese of Youngstown, **Joseph Rohan, (St. Joseph Parish, Cuyahoga Falls)**, **Alex Krukemeyer, (Our Lady of Victory Parish, Tallmadge)**, and **John Paul Antalek (St. Mary Parish, Akron)**, all from the Diocese of Cleveland. These men and all seminarians 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.** Also, **for the 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 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!



FRANCISCAN REMINDER

We begin our monthly gatherings with prayer inside the Church. As we pray Lectio Divina, we continue meditating on the Word of God as we return to our table. Please remember to keep **Holy Silence** during this transition until after sharing the word at your table.

Lord, it is Good for Us to be Together!

Our July Gathering was July 20, 2025 at St. Nicholas in Barberton. We had 30 in attendance, including Fr. Vit, Annie Butts, and Gary Greathouse.

- After assembling in the Social Hall and determining our table assignments, Roberto Meza, TOF (Minister) led us to the church for **Liturgy of the Hours**.
 - Kenny Green, TOF, Debbie Ventosa, TOF, and Mike Butts, TOF led us in the Liturgy of the Hours.
- Virgil Daniel, TOF proclaimed the Gospel of the day, from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 10:38-42), the story of visit with Mary and Martha, who complained that Mary did not help serve. “Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.”
- 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 our luncheon, which was prepared by Cindy Russo, TOF, Mary Dye, TOF, Mary Cate Roberts, TOF, and Debbie Ventosa, TOF – meatballs, fruit salad, pasta salad, green salad, brownies, watermelon, and other desserts – very tasty!
- As we ate our delicious lunch, Roberto Meza, TOF reminded us that pantry donations are to go to the classroom next to the hall (between the kitchen and bar area).
- Roberto also reminded us that August 17 is our annual fraternity picnic as well as our August Gathering. We will enjoy the hospitality of Fr. Durkee and Queen of Heaven Parish in Green. Mary Dye will be in touch with food assignments soon!
- Roberto announced that the Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province, to which Fr. Vit belongs and under whose guidance we are happy to follow, has elected Fr. Patrick Boyle, OFM as Provincial Minister. Fr. Robert Campagna, OFM, who had been the Provincial for some years, will now be Vicar Provincial.
- The Tridua will be in late August. If you would like to attend, please fill out the registration form and get it to Pepe Ventosa, TOF asap.
- Virgil Daniel, TOF has hard copies of the by-laws available for anyone who is interested.
- St. Augustine of Barberton was selected as the recipient of the food pantry collection. Rose Akins, TOF will see that it is delivered.
- Cindy Russo, TOF announced a pilgrimage/retreat to Barto, Pennsylvania with the Padre Pio Prayer Group. Mary Dye, TOF will handle reservations if anyone is interested. The cost is \$165, or \$230 for a private hotel room.
- Roberto Meza, TOF led us in Grace After the Meal.
- Virgil Daniel, TOF led us in Ongoing Formation on the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, in place of Bob Burtcher, TOF who is grieving the death of Sheila, who passed away this week.
 - Virgil stressed we “must be washed in the Blood of the Lamb” – to undergo Baptism and to frequently participate in Mass and the Sacraments.
 - There is power in the Precious Blood of Jesus.
 - We are redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus as explained in the First Letter of St. Peter.
 - “The Blood was the price that set captives free” – Johnny Cash.
 - There have been several miracles worldwide involving the Precious Blood of Jesus, such as the blood-stained corporal and fleshy host that has been on display in Orvieto, Italy for centuries. This particular miracle involved a priest celebrating Mass, and at the Consecration, he mentally doubted the reality of the True Body and Blood of Jesus. The host turned to flesh and blood stained the corporal. When the remains of this miracle and others were scientifically tested, not only was the flesh and blood confirmed to be human, but the blood type in each miracle was AB+.
 - Virgil then led us in the Litany of the Most Precious Blood.
- Fr. Vit taught ongoing formation on the subject of how to live the spiritual life of the Threefold Way by St. Bonaventure.
 - Purgation
 - Stir the conscience. When you look at your sins, recall shame negligence, your sins, and imperfections.
 - Illumination
 - Recognize distorted desires and look at the goal which is union with God.
 - Unification
 - Use interior dispositions.
 - Examine the use of your time.
 - How are you achieving your goal through prayer, reading, and good works.
 - Examine any negligence you have in progressing in virtue. Seeking beauty is good but not separate from God.
 - Evaluate desires, problems, pleasures, and shame for sins.
 - When we feel shame for our sins, we realize how miserable we are in the light of God.
 - We develop a healthy fear of God, fear of judgment, and weeping for our own sins. We start begging for a cure. We desire to extinguish our passions and desires and have a sudden switch to the realization that, “I need divine help. God help me! I want to be like you, God.”
 - We become more aware of Evil. Like Anger, whether its words, smirk, or wave of hand.



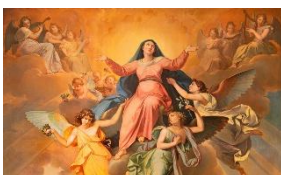
- Envy manifests as sadness at someone's success or lack of help for someone in need.
- Laziness is exhibited when one is blaming others for something.
- Three tools to sharpen our consciences:
 - Remember your death. It is inevitable and unknown.
 - Remember the Blood of Christ. Union with Christ brings us to life.
 - The Last Judgment – the Judge is always right and the sentence is inescapable.

Formation News – Debbie Ventosa, TOF, Master of Formation, reported that all is well and that the current Novices will profess in November at the Shrine on the Day of Recollection.

Novice John Wilson with his beautiful daughter, Colleen →



- There is a Come and See on August 11 (the Feast of St. Clare) at St. Nicholas from 6:30 PM to 8 PM at the St. George Center. Bulletin and Pulpit Announcements are available for any professed member to use at his or her parish with the permission of his or her pastor.
- Roberto Meza, TOF gave the **Infirmarian Report** on behalf of Maria Elena Meza, TOF.
 - Kenny Green, TO/F reported Elizabeth Francis, TOF is doing well and enjoys the company of her brother.
 - Jennifer Kerns, TOF has not replied to Roberto's email, nor has Julia Tarulli, TOF. Please continue prayers for both.
 - Judith Hoyt, TOF reported Sandy Pollino, OFS continues to have health challenges and asks for our prayers. She is working on writing a book and on music. Dorothy Takacs, OFS is also in need of prayer because of her ongoing health issues.
 - Our lovely Betty DeMarco, TOF joined us today!!!
- Roberto Meza, TOF recognized all July profession anniversaries and birthdays.
- Cindy Russo, TOF prepared the Little Portion and Kenny Green, TOF will deliver it.
- Carol Perrine, TOF and Joanne Angeletti, TOF will pray for the Stand for Life in July.
- Roberto Meza, TOF led us in Intercessory Prayer:
 - For the sick (Andrea Ferraro, Jennifer Kerns, TOF; Elizabeth Francis, TOF; Sandy Polino, OFS; and sick family members) and for our sick family members.
 - For the repose of the soul of Sheila Burtscher, who entered eternal life this week.
 - For the Priestly Confraternity of the Order of St. Francis.
 - For the success of the upcoming Come and See night.
 - Pope Leo, his intentions, and his health.
 - Our local Bishops (Bishop David Bonnar of Youngstown, Bishop Earl Fernandes of Columbus, Bishop Robert Pipta of the Eparchy of Parma, and Bishop Edward Malesic of Cleveland).
 - The friars of the Immaculate Conception Province of the OFM, particularly Fr. Vit Fiala, OFM; Fr. Dennis Arambasick, OFM; Fr. Patrick Boyle, OFM, and Fr. Robert Campagna, OFM.
 - Our pastors and parish priests, including Fr. Miron Kerul-Kmec of St. Nicholas, Fr. Gordon Dozier, TOF, and Fr. Ryan Furlong, TOF of the Diocese of Youngstown.
 - Fr. Gastor Bahati and Frater Francis Tumaini of the Diocese of Moshi.
 - Our local seminarians – Arthur Bodenschatz and William Martzaklis of the Youngstown Diocese; and Joseph Rohan, Alex Krukemeyer, and John Paul Antalek of the Cleveland Diocese.
 - The safety of those in war zones worldwide – Catholic and non-Catholic.
 - Protection of all life from conception to natural death
 - Jakin Miller and all FOCUS missionaries.
 - For an increase in holy vocations – the priesthood and religious life, the Third Order Franciscans, and for married life.
- Roberto Meza, TOF led us in the Memorare and the Prayer to St. Michael.
- We prayed the Closing Prayers.
- **Roberto Meza, TOF reminded us that our next Gathering will be August 17 at Queen of Heaven at 1:30 PM!**



Save the Date (August, the Month of the Immaculate Heart of Mary)

August 2	Portiuncula Indulgence
August 11	Feast of St. Clare of Assisi ***COME AND SEE AT ST. NICHOLAS – ST. GEORGE HALL – 6:30 PM!!!
August 15	Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady – HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION
August 15	St. Michael's Lent and Fast Begins
August 17	August Gathering / Annual Picnic at Queen of Heaven Parish, 1:30 PM
August 22-24	Annual Tridua
October 4	Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

LOVE TOTALLY HIM WHO GAVE HIMSELF TOTALLY FOR YOUR LOVE
 lift your eyes up to heaven often; you are invited to take up your cross & follow Jesus Christ
 BE VIGILANT
 IF YOU SUFFER WITH HIM, YOU WILL REIGN WITH HIM
 IF YOU CRY WITH HIM, YOU WILL HAVE JOY WITH HIM
 LET US PRAY
 FOR ONE ANOTHER, UNDER THE SWEET YOKE OF CHARITY
 WE WILL OBSERVE MORE EASILY THE LAW OF JESUS CHRIST
 LOVE THAT CANNOT SUFFER IS NOT WORTHY OF THAT NAME
 meditate assiduously on the mysteries of his passion and on the pains that his blessed mother suffered at the foot of the cross
 leave behind absolutely everything that in this deceptive & unstable world has trapped its blind lovers
 IT IS SUITABLE OF FAITH TO MAKE US HUMBLE IN THE JOYFUL EVENTS & IMPASSIVE IN THE MISFORTUNES
 St. Clare of Assisi
 THIS LABOR OF OURS IS BRIEF, BUT THE REWARD IS ETERNAL
 NO FEAR SHOULD DETAIN YOU BECAUSE GOD IS FAITHFUL IN HIS WORDS AND HOLY IN ALL HIS ACTIONS
 rejoice always in the Lord and do not allow yourself to become involved by any darkness or bitterness
 WE BECOME WHAT WE LOVE & WHO WE LOVE SHAPES WHAT WE BECOME
 GAZE UPON HIM, CONSIDER HIM, CONTEMPLATE HIM, AS YOU DESIRE TO IMITATE HIM
 Blessed be you, My God, for having created me
 TRANSFORM YOURSELF ENTIRELY THROUGH CONTEMPLATION INTO AN ICON OF DIVINITY
 CATHOLIC TO THE MAX