



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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TRANSITUS OF ST. FRANCIS OCTOBER 3, 2025



Each year, in October, we commemorate the passing of St. Francis of Assisi from this life into the loving arms of our Lord Jesus Christ, known as the Transitus. We revisit the living memory of St. Francis to remind us of our own commitment in this journey as Isolated Tertiaries.

Nearing death, Francis returned to Portiuncula, or the small chapel of St. Mary of the Angeles. Francis had requested to Brother Leo to bring his dear friend, Lady Jacoba Settesoli, to him. Lady Jacoba was known as “Brother Jacoba” and was a favorite among Francis and his brother Franciscans. Jacoba had met Francis in Rome in 1212. She was a widow with two sons and responsible for her husband’s vast estate. She was expected to remarry, until she met St. Francis. Jacoba was one of the first members of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance (Third Order Franciscans).

Brother Leo wrote to Jacoba telling her Francis was near death and he wanted to see her. He had requested, “I ask you to bring some cloth for a tunic, the color of ashes, like the cloth made by Cistercian monks beyond the Alps. Also, bring some of your sweet cookies made of almonds”

and honey.” In truth, she was already on her way as she heard he was dying, and in her hands were the almond cookies and a burial shroud.



“Lady Jacoba” was born near Rome in 1190 into a wealthy family. When she met Francis she wanted his guidance because she was a recent widow. They developed a relationship with her helping in hospitality to Francis and his brothers. Lady Jacoba cared for St. Francis as he was dying and helped prepare his body for burial.

After Francis’s death Lady Jacoba returned to Rome and was active in her vocation as a Third Order Franciscan. She managed to have the Benedictines turn over to the Franciscan Friars, a hospice for the sick poor, St Blaise, in the Trastevere quarter. This was where Francis had stayed on his visits to Rome.

It has been common knowledge that Jacoba died in Assisi on February 8, 1273, and was buried near the tomb of St. Francis in Assisi. In 1933 her remains were moved into the crypt of the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi. She was Beatified by Pope John Paul II. **Sandy Baden, TOF**



A TRANSITUS CELEBRATION FOR ISOLATED TERTIARIES

On Friday, **October 3rd**, Ericka Witover, TOF will be offering an online Transitus Service at 7:00 PM Eastern time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Ericka will send out an invite the night before.

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY OCTOBER 7th FEAST DAY



Our Lady of the Rosary had previously been known as Our Lady of Victory because of the battle between the Christians and the Turks, with a Victory for the Christians. It was a victory that was believed to be by the intercession of the Blessed Mother. Pope Pius V had dedicated this day of thanksgiving to Our Lady of Victory.

A young priest, Dominic de Guzman, had received a vision in 1208, while he was at the Monastery of Our Lady of Prouille, in France.

The Blessed Virgin Mary gave Dominic the Rosary to pray against heretics. He began to promote the Rosary throughout Europe. Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius X had confirmed the origin of the Rosary to Dominic, according to official documents.

Since the thirteenth century Mary had been honored as Our Lady of Victory. Pius V instituted the feast of Our Lady of Victory to commemorate the battle at Lepanto after he had called for all of Europe to pray the Rosary for victory in the battle. He believed it was through the Blessed Mother that the victory had been won. Pope Pius V, in 1569, formalized the Mysteries of the Rosary and promoted the prayer. Pope Gregory XIII had changed the name of the feast to, "The Feast of the Most Holy Rosary," and was to be celebrated on the first Sunday of October.

In 1671, the feast was extended by Clement X to Spain and later Clement XI to be celebrated by the Universal Church. Pope Leo XIII changed the feast to "Queen of the Most Holy Rosary," and he wrote eleven encyclicals of Our Lady of the Rosary and concerning the Feast. Pius X in 1913, changed the date to October 7th.

In 1917, in an apparition to three children in Fatima, Mary herself reveals, "I am the Lady of the Rosary." The Blessed Mother urged, Lucia Santos, Francisco and Jacinta Marto to pray the Rosary daily.

The Miracle of the Sun was seen at the last apparition by 50,000 people in 1917. Lucia had described the Miracle of the Sun: **“After Our Lady had disappeared into the immense distance of of firmament, beheld St. Joseph with the Child and Our Lady robed in white with a blue mantle, beside the sun. St. Joseph and the Child Jesus appeared to bless the world, for they traced the Sign of the Cross with their hands. When a little later, this apparition disappeared, I saw our Lord and Our Lady; it seemed to me that it was Our Lady of Sorrows. Our Lord appeared to bless the world in the same manner as St. Joseph had done. This apparition also vanished, and I saw Our Lady once more, this time resembling Our of Mount Carmel.”**



All that we learn of the history of Our Lady of the Rosary, the most important aspect is the intercessory prayer of Mary. Through Fr. Dominic we were given the Rosary in honoring the Mother of Jesus. We are given a prayer in which we can meditate with Mary and her Son, the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For those that do not pray the Rosary daily, reconsider to do so. Find the time or rather make the time to pray the Rosary. Mary always brings us closer to her Son. Just the mention of her name brings the thought of Jesus into our minds.

Padre Pio had a great devotion to the Holy Rosary, which he said, **“is a weapon against evil and path to God.”** He was never without a rosary in his hand or in his pocket. One of the most beautiful quotes from St. Padre Pio about the Rosary always brings a smile to my face: **“In times of darkness, holding the Rosary beads is like holding your Blessed Mother’s hands.”**



Sandy Baden, TOF

OUR SOLDIERS OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

Sandy Baden, TOF, Editor



We have reached an anniversary for our Soldiers of Christ Newsletter, which was in August 2025. Four years ago, in August 2021, the first issue of our Soldiers of Christ Newsletter, was established.

At that time, we had nine Professed Isolated Tertiaries, with two in Inquiry. It was an exciting time as we watched our Isolated Tertiaries grow during that year of 2021. Now we have thirty-five Professed Isolated Tertiaries.

After much discussion, our group of five in California, agreed to name our Isolated Tertiaries Newsletter, "Soldiers of Christ," thanks to Linda Menser, TOF, who came up with the name. Approved by Fr. Vit, Pepe and Debbie Ventosa, at the time, we are now beginning our fifth year of the Soldiers of Christ Newsletter for the Isolated Tertiaries of the OFM Province of the Immaculate Conception.

I have come to love writing articles for the Newsletter, as the Editor, however, "I would like to take that vast wealth of knowledge and talent," that our IT community possesses, as my husband, Ted, would say. We need a variety of writers on topics of the Blessed Mother, Our Lord, and Franciscan saints. If you feel you are not proficient enough to write, have no fear. That is what an editor is for, and this one loves to fix what needs fixing. Plus, I know there is an enormous amount of talent out there in our Isolated Tertiaries world, and if you can take the extra time, it would be appreciated.

Keep in mind I will add pictures and the articles would have to be 500 words per page and no more than two pages. All articles would have to correlate to the month of the Feast for the Blessed Mother, Our Lord, and Franciscan saints. The articles would need to be submitted before the month of its Feast day. Feel free to contact me if you have questions. God Bless you all!

VIRTUAL MONTHLY GATHERING OCTOBER 2, 2025

Our topic during our monthly zoom gathering will be presented by Brian Kusek, TOF, "Corpus Christi," Constitution 56-58; Admonition #1.



Brian Kusek, TOF, was Professed in July 2023. He and his wife Michelle, have three boys, James, Leo, and Joseph. They also have a newborn daughter who was born August 3rd, of this year, Lucy Seraphine.

Brian is the Director of Evangelization for the Diocese of Winona, Minnesota and is a member of our Initial Formation Team. He is helping with the Inquirers in Group 5, has a degree in Philosophy, and a Masters degree in Theology.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Annual Day of Recollection is taking place on November 8th at the OFM Province of the Immaculate Conception. We encourage all to attend, especially those who are in driving distance to the Shrine. A donation of \$12.00 would be appreciated, if you are able. RSVP to Pepe Ventosa.





"What wonderful majesty! What stupendous
condescension! O sublime humility! That
the Lord of the whole universe, God and the
Son of God, should humble Himself like this
under the form of a little bread, for our
salvation."

St. Francis of Assisi

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION ISOLATED TERTIARIES SCHEDULE

MONDAY

***Nancy Caraballo
Judith Inglesby, TOF***

TUESDAY

Linda Menser, TOF

WEDNESDAY

***Nancy Caraballo
Luis Guzman, TOF
Judith Inglesby, TOF
Paul & Mary Tag, TOF***

THURSDAY

***Mary Colon, TOF
Bob Zupanek, TOF***

FRIDAY

***Sandy DeWaal, TOF
Linda Menser, TOF
Pepe Ventosa, TOF***

SATURDAY

***Peter Emau, TOF
Miguel Mahan, TOF
Ericka Witover, TOF***

SUNDAY

Linda Menser, TOF

Please pray for the intentions of our Pope, bishops, and priests. Also pray for the community of friars of the Immaculate Conception Province for an increase in religious vocations in their community and for all the intentions of the members of the Isolated Tertiaries Community. 7

ADMONITION XIV POVERTY OF SPIRIT

**Study of the Admonitions of St. Francis of Assisi, Lothar Hardick, OFM
by: Sandy Baden, TOF**



“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Mt. 5:3). There are many people who spend all their time at their prayers and other religious exercises and mortify themselves by long fasts and so on. But if anyone says as much as a word that implies a reflection on their self-esteem (=on their ego that they love so much) or takes something from them, they are really poor in spirit. A person is really poor in spirit when he hates himself and loves those who strike him in the face.

How many of us can truly say we are “Poor in Spirit?” Surely this Admonition is difficult in practice, especially in the world we live in today. We are Tertiaries and are not living in a Community or a Cloistered convent. In today’s world we are expected to have many things to keep us living and moving about. Our disappointments when we lose something or feel we have been neglected in some way could keep us in turmoil at the loss. Sometimes one would think it is easier if we were living in a Cloistered convent because, when you think about it, they are provided with all they need, food, clothing, shelter, a place to pray, and they do not worry about what is going on beyond their walls. Is it really that simple?

What does it mean to read in this Admonition, “A person is really poor in spirit when he hates himself and loves those who strike him in the face.” To most people this sentence would make no sense. How difficult this would be to hate yourself and let someone strike you in the face. Sounds silly actually. There is a deeper meaning to this statement for a religious than for the ordinary person who has no faith in their prayer or concern for their spiritual growth.

In our spiritual life we acquire our growth through prayer, offer our sufferings to God, pray to do God’s will and not our own, and try not to let our ego get in the way. This comes from the love of God in our hearts and not just the prayers we pray with words, fasting, vigils, and scourging, etc., as Lothar Hardick, OFM states in this Admonition.

Remembering a time when working at Blue Shield of California, we were told our office we were working was going to close and move to another location fifteen miles away. Those of us who were Customer Service Representatives would have to go through a three hour interview to continue working in the same position in the new building. The silence in the room at the time was astounding. Then one by one each person 8

was called for their interviews which had to be completed in two months for one hundred people. For myself, I became ill and was in the hospital for twelve days with an infection throughout my body and Gall Bladder surgery. I was on sick leave for six weeks. When returning to work there were two weeks left, the office was going to close, and all the interviews were over. And, yes, some did lose their jobs after the interviews. After ten years of service I was afraid of losing my job. For the first time in my life I prayed for God's help and totally left the problem in God's loving hands. It was in God's hands, and not mine.

A reminder of what St. Padre Pio would say and what we remind each other:

“Pray, Hope, and don't worry. Worry is useless.”



A week later the secretary to the Manager of our office called me on the phone and ask me to meet her at the fax machine. As I approached she said, do you see the paper going through the fax machine?” Of course, was my reply. “Well that is your request for an interview into the Medical Management Department, which is a growing department and a higher salary.” I was called for the interview the next day. The interview lasted ten minutes and I was accepted for the job as a Clinical Support Coordinator, a higher paying job, and retired I in that department as a Senior Clinical Support Coordinator, nine years later. I thank God for His intervention.

So, what does this have to do with “Poverty of Spirit,” you may ask? The injustice of possibly being let go after years of service and to go through interviews was a devastating blow to ones mind. However, with prayer and humble faith in God leading the way, puts any fear in the background.

No matter what happens to us in this world we should keep our hearts and minds in humble reverence to Our Lord Jesus Christ. Your souls should remain at peace and rely on our Lord without fear. How difficult this is when sometimes we seem to forget, rely on ourselves, and let our ego get in the way. As Lothar Hardick, OFM says, “It is therefore, not possible to disturb, upset, or offend the man who is really poor in spirit by taking something away from him. Things may well have been available to him, but he knows that God had lent them to him and can take them from him whenever he wants to.”

In Accepting God's will, St. Padre Pio taught others to: “recognize the will of God, not your will, especially in the things that are hardest to bear.”

Save the Date

OCTOBER 2: IT ZOOM GATHERING: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Discussion Topic to be presented by Brian Kusek, TOF, "Corpus Christi."

OCTOBER 3: TRANSITUS OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Ericka Witover, TOF, will be offering an online **Transitus Service** on Friday at 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 Pacific Time. Ericka will send out an invite the night before.

OCTOBER 3: DAY OF FASTING (RULE, CHAPTER II, #IV): Having each observed the fast (for the Feast) of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, (as) likewise for (their) **Father Francis**, on the day before (each) solemnity: they are completely worthy of praise, if besides either the fast on Fridays, or the abstinence from meat on Wednesdays which are ferial days, they observe the ancient disciplines of the Tertiaries.

OCTOBER 4: FEAST DAY OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

OCTOBER 7: OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

OCTOBER 8: THE ANNUAL DAY OF RECOLLECTION at the OFM Province of the Immaculate Conception.

OCTOBER 9: IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 4: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time.

OCTOBER 16: INITIAL FORMATION INQUIRY GROUP 5: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time

