



Soldiers of Christ

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

February 2026

Sandy Baden, TOF, Editor

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THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD FEAST DAY: February 2, 2026



*We again recall in this new year of 2026, The Presentation of the Lord, which is also known as Candlemas, Christ the Light of the world, which candles are blessed on this day. The lit candles symbolize Simeon's prophecy that Jesus would be **"a light for revelation to the Gentiles."***

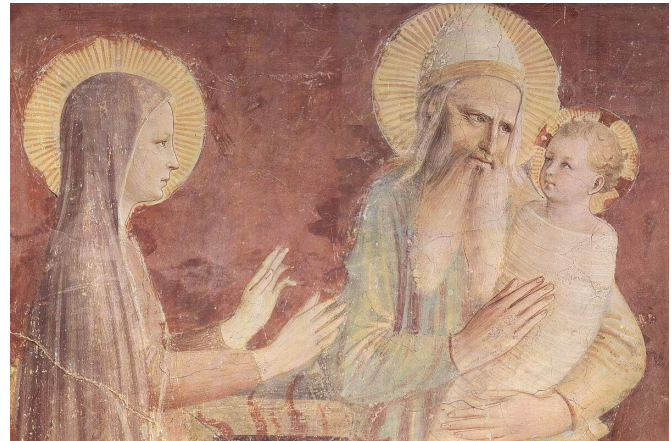
As we meditate, The Presentation of the Lord, in the fourth decade of the Holy Rosary, let us not forget as we read this gospel (Lk 2:22-39). This is part of the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ and of His Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, who kept all these things in the silence of her heart.

Mary, the "Mother of God," kept silent along with Joseph, as she listened to Simeon express his joy at seeing baby Jesus in Mary's arms. She hands Him over to Simeon for his blessing and hears the prophecy that "a sword will pierce His mother's heart," (Lk 2:35). Mary listens to Anna as she "gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem," (Lk 2:38).

What are we to make of this Presentation of the Lord? The obedience of Mary and Joseph as they followed the Jewish law, the Law of Moses, by presenting Jesus to the Temple 40 days after His birth for a first male born baby. Simeon and Anna, both prophets, confirm He is the Messiah. In our

own lives, we should be obedient to following “God’s Will,” through faith in the Holy Catholic Church.

Each time we enter the church we also make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and encounter our Lord in the Eucharist. Mary and Joseph carried our Lord to the Temple and they meet Simeon who takes our Lord in his arms,



“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all peoples; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

“Mary pondered in her heart” (Lk 2:19), these revelations were something Mary felt deeply as she meditated on these mysterious events in their pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem. Mary had to undergo the “Purification of Mary.” She was considered unclean for seven days and then **“spent thirty-three more days of a state of blood purity.”** During those forty days she could not **“touch anything sacred nor enter the sanctuary til the days of her purification are fulfilled,”** (Lev. 12: 2-8). Then Joseph had to redeem the child Jesus by making an offering to the priest, (Numbers 18:16), in order for Jesus to be presented in the Temple.

May we encounter our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist and feel Christ alive in our hearts on this feast day of the Presentation of the Lord as Mary and Joseph did on the pilgrimage to the Temple. **Sandy Baden, TOF**

Each year there is a Feast day of our Lord, the Blessed Mother, or a particular saint, and in your mind you may think, I have heard this before, it is something I already know. The question that comes to mind could be, what if nothing is discussed or written about these feast days because it is something we already know? Would we lose sight of the gospel, would we lose that little spark of something God could enlighten in our soul. We repeat the Hail Mary in the Rosary when we pray and meditate on the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, should we stop because we already know? The inspiration for these articles come from the Holy Spirit. Let us pray as we read or hear of a feast day, of what we already know, that we will be enlightened with something new.

God Bless, Sandy Baden, TOF

ST. COLETTE OF CORBIE, 1381-1477
Feast Day: February 7

St. Colette of Corbie was born with the name of Nicolette Boellet in the Village of Corbie in the region of France on January 13, 1381. Her father, Robert Boellet, was a carpenter and her mother was Marguerit Moyon. Her parents had no children in their old age, but had prayed to St. Nicholas. At the age of 60 years, Marguerite Boellet gave birth to a baby girl. They named her Nicolette after St. Nicolas in answer to their prayers. She was later called Colette.



Both her parents died in 1399 and Colette then joined the Beguines and realized their way of life did not suit her. She joined the Benedictine order as a lay sister to avoid an arranged marriage. In September of 1402, Colette received the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis and lived near the abbey Church with the direction of the Abbot of Corbie. From 1402-1406, Colette had dreams and visions which led her to believe she was being called to reform the Franciscan Second Order. Pope Benedict XIII of Avignon, allowed Colette to transfer to the Order of Poor Clares. He wanted her to found new monasteries to reform the Second Order of Franciscans to their original way of absolute poverty and austerity.

In 1410 Colette opened her first monastery of Poor Clares and through the rest of her life founded 17 monasteries under the reform of extreme poverty, going bare-foot, perpetual fasting, and abstinence. She also reformed a branch of Franciscan Friars known as Coletans. A branch of the Order of the Second Order of Franciscans are still known today as the Colettines.

Colette of Corbie passed away in her convent at Ghent on March 6, 1447. At the moment of her death she appeared to several sisters located in different convents. The Franciscan Order celebrates her Feast Day on February 7th, while it is celebrated on March 7th for everyone else. She was beatified by Pope Pius VII and is the Patroness of Women seeking to conceive, expectant mothers and sick children.

Sandy Baden, TOF

ASH WEDNESDAY
WEDNESDAY, FEB 18, 2026



An invitation from God for repentance on Ash Wednesday. John the Baptist gave us the message when he said, **“Repent, prepare the way of the Lord,” (Mt. 3:2).** Then later he reminds us, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” (Mt. 4:17)**

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, and as a reminder we do not eat meat on Ash Wednesday or Good Friday. We are called to penance, fasting, and prayer to help bring us closer to the love of Our Lord

Jesus Christ and prepare for the coming blessings of Easter.

The Rule of Pope Leo XIII—Third Order Franciscans

In our Constitution, Chapter Two, Tertiaries are to observe the Exercise of Religion within Article 62: ... **“by means of the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross, they shall reflect, especially during Lent and on Fridays, on the last sufferings of Christ.”** In our Church on Fridays of Lent we pray the Stations of the Cross, what a beautiful way to follow Christ in His Passion and at the same time be obedient to Article 62 in our Constitution.

INVITE NEW INQUIRERS

As the new Franciscan Jubilee Year has been proclaimed by Pope Leo XIV for St. Francis of Assisi, what a good time for us to look around and see who might be interested in our life as a Third Order Franciscan. Maybe a friend, a person sitting next to you in Church, or a relative. The interested individual would need to contact Pepe Ventosa, TOF through the website, thirdorderfranciscans.com “Contact Us.” The new Inquiry class will begin in April. The new Inquirer would need to “contact us” by the middle of March in order to participate with the April Inquiry Group.

POPE LEO XIV PROCLAIMS FRANCISCAN JUBILEE YEAR
January 10, 2026 to January 10, 2027



To mark the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's death Pope Leo XIV has proclaimed a Special Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi.

*Pope Leo XIV stated: **"This Year of Saint Francis should encourage all of us, each according to his or her own possibilities, to imitate the Poor Man of Assisi."***

Indulgence: *The faithful can receive a plenary indulgence by visiting Franciscan churches or participating spiritually.*

Notable Event: *The first public display of St. Francis's body is scheduled for spring 2026 in Assisi, drawing many pilgrims.*

Papal Message: *Pope Leo XIV emphasizes that St. Francis's message of universal reconciliation (peace with God, people, and creation) is urgently needed today.*

ENTRANCE INTO THE NOVITIATE

Congratulations to **Vincent Gagliardo** for his entrance into the Novitiate.

Vincent celebrated the Ritual of Entrance into the Novitiate on January 13, 2026 at Mt. Carmel Parish in Colorado with Fr. Don Malin as celebrant.



VIRTUAL MONTHLY GATHERING, FEBRUARY 5, 2026

Our topic during our February Zoom Gathering will be presented by Kennedy Pugh, TOF, concerning his musical ministry, **Reach Out Singers**.

Kennedy Pugh, TOF, was Professed on March 19, 2025, at St. Joseph Catholic Church with Fr. Steven Murray as Celebrant.

Born in Denver, Colorado and grew up in the Catholic faith. He attended a University in New Mexico.

“St. Padre Pio is the Franciscan Saint that inspires me and reminds me daily to “Pray, Hope, and Don’t Worry!”





Greetings to all who attend the Zoom IT Gathering on the first Thursday of each month. We are continuing to take attendance at each meeting. This is due to a Rule in Chapter II, XI, which “requires attendance.” Also, in Question 313 of our Catechism reminds us that our attendance is the ONLY external means for measuring the Tertiaries observance of the Rule and Constitutions.

*I have just finished the first six months of 2026 with Ongoing Formation Presentations, and the presenters will be sharing very exciting topics. Also, there will be **NO ZOOM IT GATHER MEETING** in **APRIL** due to Holy Week.*

If you are unable to make a Zoom IT Gathering, please email Ericka Witover for an excused absence. If you choose to attend by tape recording, send a message to Ericka and she will send it to you within a week after the Zoom IT Gathering.

A Happy 2026 to all! “Lord make me an instrument of thy peace.”

*Pax et Bonum, **Sandy DeWaal, TOF***

LORD JESUS, COME

Come, Lord Jesus;
Let love be our guide,
let Your Will be done.
Come, Lord Jesus Come.

Come, Lord Jesus;
Give us Your mercy,
let love bring us to contrition.
Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

Come, Lord Jesus;
Forgive us our sins,
may Your mercy save us.
Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

Come, Lord Jesus;
Let us live in Your Will,
let us love our neighbor.
Come, Lord Jesus, Come

Come, Lord Jesus;
May our prayer give You praise,
may we praise You in our song.
Come, Lord Jesus, Come

Come, Lord Jesus;
Let us be joyful in Your love,
let us praise Your Holy Name.
Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

Come, Lord Jesus;
We give You thanks for our Blessed Mother,
and to all the Angels and Saints,
Come, Lord Jesus, Come

Come, Lord Jesus;
We thank You for Your Passion, and
the Holy Eucharist that saves us.
Come, Lord Jesus Come.

Sandy Baden, TOF

Inspired by:

Come, Lord Jesus,
live in my mind,
 dwell in my heart,
be my companion
on this journey of life.

Pope Benedict XVI





"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
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.***

ADMONITION XVIII...PART 1 & 2

Compassion for Ones Neighbor

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



Blessed the man who is patient with his neighbor's shortcomings as he would like him to be if he were in a similar position himself (see Gal. 6:2 and Mt. 7:12). Blessed the religious (=Blessed is the servant) who refers (=restores) all the good he has to His Lord and God. He who attributes anything to himself, hides his master's money" (Mt. 25:18) in himself and "even what he thinks he has shall be taken away" (Lk. 8:18).

As we are becoming closer to the Lenten season, this Admonition is a perfect time for us to reflect upon this reading. Lothar Hardick, OFM mentions several prayers we should pray in our own "struggle with the powers of evil" because of our human nature, as we try, but sometimes fail in our weaknesses and the weaknesses of our neighbor. This reminds me when in Confession the priest said, "You could say a "Hail Mary" every time a wrong word comes out of your mouth, even if it is said a hundred times a day." It is a very humbling practice, but a good one!

In the context that we are speaking of Lent and of our failures and weaknesses, it is a time we should examine how we deal with the consequences of sin in our lives. Confession is most important and gives us the grace to overcome our weaknesses and find peace with God in our failures. If we go to Confession with the right frame of mind and are truly sorry for our sins we are forgiven.

Lothar Hardick, OFM also mentions we should make a simple prayer of: "I cannot," which reminds me of what Fr. Vit suggested, "No my Father won't let me." Three times it has come to our attention of just simple prayers to help guide our way in observing our weaknesses on repentance of our sins: No my Father won't let me, a Hail Mary, and I cannot.

As Lothar Hardick, OFM speaks several times, “Blessed the man who is patient with his neighbor’s shortcomings as he would like him to be if he were in a similar position himself,” as stated in this Admonition.

Sometimes our own opinions of our neighbor may be taken in a wrong context and we need to stop and reflect in walking in our neighbors shoes before we make any wrong conclusions. We or our neighbor may be just having a bad day, and therefore, we should be considerate of the fact and just say a simple prayer, Most of what is said in the Admonition by Lothar Hardick OFM is in regards to living within a Community. As Tertiaries our life is in the world and with our neighbors. We need to be patient with them, ourselves, and those with which we live.

Let us be mindful of our weaknesses and our failures, recapture the love of Christ in our prayer and our daily lives. Give our neighbor a smile and wish for a good day. Because we are living in the world and not in a Community we must evangelize, be good witnesses to our Lord, emanate the joy of St. Francis, and love our neighbor as our selves.



“St. Francis of Assisi taught that compassion for one’s neighbor means actively drawing others to God’s love through actions and words, rejoicing in their good, suffering with their misfortunes, and showing deep patience and understanding, even extending mercy to those who seem sinful by attributing the best possible motives, and avoiding slander as a form of spiritual murder, mirroring Christ’s own self-sacrificial love.

HE GAVE THANKS TO GOD

It is useless to persecute someone who is truly striving after virtue. The more they are attacked the more surely they will triumph. To be humbled, it is said, strengthens a generous spirit. (1 CelV)

***Peace of Heart/Based on the Life and Teachings of
St. Francis of Assisi***

Save the Date

FEBRUARY 2: THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

FEBRUARY 5: IT ZOOM GATHERING: 7:00 PM Eastern Time 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Discussion Topic to be presented by Kennedy Pugh, TOF, Reach Out Singers

FEBRUARY 7: ST. COLETTE OF CORBIE

FEBRUARY 12: IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 4: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time

FEBRUARY 18: ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 19: IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 5: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time

