



Soldiers of Christ

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

March 2026

Sandy Baden, TOF, Editor

Vol. 6, Issue 3

ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Feast Day: March 19, 2026

PART IV



Four articles have been written on the life of St. Joseph in the Soldiers of Christ Newsletter, and we ask, what more is there to write? We have found St. Joseph was silent in the Scriptures. He was considered as a “Just Man,” and gave his “Yes” to God to be the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

*As a “Just Man” in the eyes of God, as mentioned in **Mt. 9:13, Mark 2:17 and Luke***

***5:32**, is a man who has a humble relationship with God, obedient to “God’s Will,” has moral integrity, and behaves with fairness and compassion. In comparison, in the old testament, the bible refers to Noah as a “Just Man,” **Genesis 6:9**.*

*It is often said St. Joseph did not speak in the New Testament, however, in **Matthew 1:25**, he named our Lord, **Jesus**, as was the custom before the Presentation of the Lord, in obedience to the Law of Moses, and St. Joseph was fulfilling the angel’s command to name Him. The Blessed Virgin Mary was also given the name of **Jesus** by the Angel Gabriel.*

In regards to Catholic tradition and early apocryphal writings it indicates St. Joseph was a widower before he married the Virgin Mary and had children. In scripture they are referred to as the “brothers and sisters” of Jesus, (James, Judah, Joses, and Simon), and two daughters, (Assia and Lydia). This is a traditional belief in the Catholic Church and we are free to believe this tradition as long as the dogma of the Blessed Virgin Mary is perpetual. The other narrative some Catholics have come to believe is St. Joseph was a young man when he married the Blessed Virgin Mary and remained a virgin all of his life. These two narratives are based on theory and comes from the [Protoevangelium of James](#).

However, James, considered the step-brother of Jesus, is mentioned in Scripture **(Mt. 13:55)...****“Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? Originally he did not believe in Jesus until His resurrection, (1 Corinthians 15:7), and according to Paul, “After that He appeared to James, then to all the apostles.” Then again, (Gal 1:19), “But I did not see any other of the apostles, only James the brother of the Lord.”** James later became a leader in the Church, **(Acts 12:17 – 15:13).**

Whether St. Joseph was a widower with children or not we can only know for sure when we meet our Lord when our time on earth is over.

[Sandy Baden, TOF](#)

[An Ancient Prayer to St. Joseph](#)

[O St. Joseph whose protection is go great, so strong, so prompt before the Throne of God, I place in you all my interests and desires.](#)

[O St. Joseph do assist me by your powerful intercession and obtain for me from your Divine Son all spiritual blessings through Jesus Christ, Our Lord; so that having engaged here below your Heavenly power I may offer my Thanksgiving and Homage to the most loving of Fathers. O St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you and Jesus asleep in your arms. I dare not approach while he reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and Kiss His fine Head for me, and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls, pray for us. AMEN.](#)



SAINT AGNES OF BOHEMIA
January 30, 1211-March 2, 1282
Feast Day, March 6th

*Agnes was the daughter of Ottokar I of Bohemia, and her mother was Constance of Hungary, the sister to King Andrew II of Hungary, which makes Agnes a first cousin to **Elizabeth of Hungary**. St. Agnes is also known as Agnes of Prague and was a Bohemian princess, but grew up wanting a life of charity.*



*There were three proposals of marriage, which seemed not to materialize, and the last and most interesting was when Frederick II was refused by Agnes in 1226 and she asked for the help of Pope Gregory IX. When hearing from Pope Gregory IX, Emperor Frederick stated, **“I cannot take offense because in preference to me she has chosen the King of Heaven.”***

Through the help of Pope Gregory IX and land donated by her brother, Wenceslaus I, King of Bohemia, Agnes founded a Hospital of St. Francis and two friaries for the Franciscan friars between 1232-1233. Agnes was told of Clare of Assisi and her Order of Poor Ladies at the time, and began a friendship which lasted for over two decades in correspondence.

The monastery and friary complex, which was attached to the hospital with Franciscan friars and Poor Clare nuns, was the first community north of the Alps. Agnes herself became a Franciscan Poor Clare nun in 1234 and seven other women in Prague, and became the Abess in 1235. Even though she was an Abess of the Prague Clares she cooked and mended cloths of lepers and paupers. She was known for her visions, healing, and a prophecy of King Wenceslaus that he would be victorious in his battle against the Austrians.

Agnes also created a lay group at the hospital in 1238 called the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star, which was dedicated to nursing and was recognized as an order by Pope Gregory IX in 1236-37.

She lived the rest of her life in the cloister as Abess until her death on 3

March 2, 1282. Beatification for Agnes began in November 1872 and she was beatified in 1874 by Pope Pius IX. Pope John Paul II canonized Blessed Agnes on November 12, 1989, and she was given honor in 2011, 800 years after her birth.

Agnes was originally buried in the church of the St. Francis monastery, however, the nuns at the convent hid her body as they were escaping the Husitie attacks. Her body has never been found and it has been stated that could have been the reason for the delay in her canonization, but Pope John Paul II could not wait any longer and canonized her anyway.



The Monastery originally was named The Convent of St. Agnes, however, the community had been abolished in 1784, but again restored in the late 1960's. The building is now part of the National Gallery in Prague.

The nuns, after Agnes's death, had stayed at the convent until the Hussit wars in the 15th century. When they came back to the convent it had been taken over by the Dominicans and they stayed until the 17th century. The Friars Minor ceased to exist and the land was sold. Emperor Josef II abolished the convent in 1782.

The final restoration of the Convent of St. Agnes was completed and the National Gallery became its owner in 1963. The convent is known as a national cultural heritage landmark and gallery since 1978. The cloister is used for temporary exhibitions and there is a permanent exhibition of Medieval Arts of Bohemia and Central Europe.

The grounds of St. Agnes Convent are home to two convent gardens, which is open year-round which features twenty sculptures by contemporary Czech artists.

Sandy Baden, TOF

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MONDAYS WITH MARY
Franciscan Tertiaries' Women Prayer Group

- Mondays 6:30 – 7:00 PM EST via Zoom
- Please contact Gina Love to place your prayer request in our prayer journal

Under the patronage of Our Blessed Mother

TOF WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP
Submitted by: Pepe Ventosa, TOF

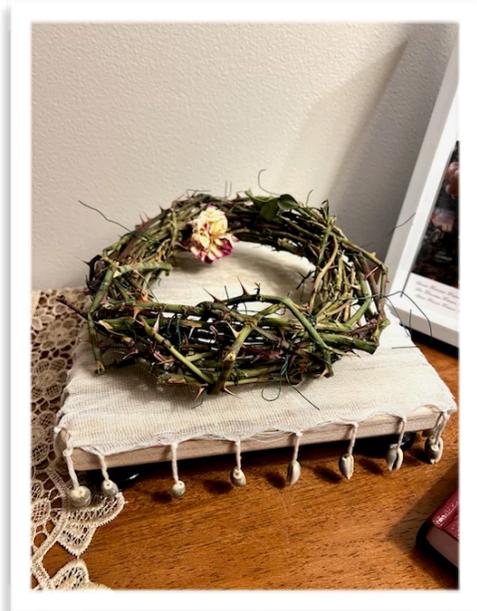
A women's prayer group, "Mondays with Mary," is being formed by Gina Love, TOF (St. Pio Fraternity) and Debbie Ventosa, TOF (SS Francis and Clare Fraternity) and is planned to launch on May 4, 2026. The group will meet via zoom, each week on Monday's Eastern Time from 6:30 PM—7:00 PM and Pacific Time 3:30 PM—4:00 PM, to pray the Rosary. All female members (novices and professed) of the TOF community will receive a zoom invite and are welcome to attend. A journal will be kept for prayer requests. Any TOF members who may have a prayer request can contact Gina to have their request placed in the prayer journal. Gina's email address will be available when the Zoom invite is sent.

Please contact Pepe Ventosa, TOF with any questions.

Pax et bonum
Pepe



CROWN OF THORNS



By: Patricia Ostaszewski

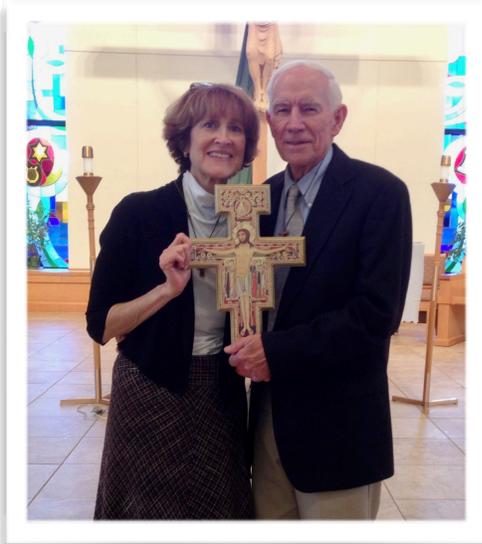
Patricia's comments of meditation on the Crown of Thorns.

I have rose bushes of different types. One in particular has both yellow and pink blooms. Though I enjoy it, it is the most difficult to prune due to the large thorns. This has helped me meditate on Jesus' "Crown of Thorns" and the unimaginable pain he suffered wearing it. I decided to start saving the stems with the large thorns and weaving them into a "Crown of Thorns." With gloves, I twisted the stems and held them in place with craft wire. One stem had a rose attached to it, and even when the stem dried the rose was still attached, as this happens a lot.

In my Book of Holy Hours, there is a passage, "His divine Brow anointed by Mary's kisses is torn by thorns."

VIRTUAL MONTHLY ZOOM GATHERING, MARCH 5, 2026

Our topic for our virtual monthly Zoom Gathering will be presented by:
Mary Lynn Tag, TOF, on “Humility.”



Mary Tag, TOF, was professed on October 5, 2013 and entered as an Isolated Tertiary in the Order of Friars Minor Province of The Immaculate Conception on April 19, 2021. Mary was born and raised in an average Catholic family in Chicago, in the suburbs, and worked remotely for a consulting company in Chicago. Having married Paul Tag, TOF, in 1982, they moved to Canton, Ohio where both were professed into the OFS Fraternity of St. Frances X Cabrini Fraternity. They later moved to Florida in 2018 and became Isolated Tertiaries in 2021.

We look forward to Mary’s presentation on “Humility.”



REMEMBER, there will be NO ZOOM IT GATHERING MEETING IN APRIL due to HOLY WEEK, March 29—April 5, 2026.



"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
Paul & Mary Tag, TOF***

THURSDAY

***Mary Colon, TOF
Bob Zupanek, TOF
Lisa Bute***

FRIDAY

***Sandy DeWaal, 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 the intentions of the members of the Isolated Tertiaries community.

ADMONITION XIX

The Humble Servant of God

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



Blessed the religious (Blessed is the servant) who has no more regard for himself when people praise him and make much of him when they despise and revile him and say that he is ignorant. What a man is before God, that he is and no more. Woe to that religious who, after he has been put in a position of authority by others is not anxious to leave it of his own free will. On the other hand, (Mt. 24-46) who is elected to office against his will, but always wants to be subject to others.

In reading of this Admonition many thoughts come to mind concerning obedience and humility before our God and our fellow man. One statement which stands out, which is mentioned many times in this commentary of Admonition Nineteen, **“What a man is before God, that he is and no more.”** Only God knows what you are before Him. Our calculations concerning ourselves is mostly seen through our eyes and those of our neighbors, is this not true?

Success seems to be our only aim when we try to accomplish something we are striving to achieve. In this Admonition it stresses the opposite scenario. Even though, as a Tertiary, our obedience to God and how we see ourselves before Him is something to contemplate. If we are to obtain humility, as this Admonitions dictates, we need to humble ourselves before our Lord in prayer and pray to God to lift the blinders that hide our true nature. How do you see yourself as God would see you? Only God, I suppose, could answer that question.

It is difficult to know how God would see us, but in reality we know God hears us, loves us, and guides us as we carry our cross in our journey through life. Do we want to be praised and exalted for all that we do that seems to be a successful job of accomplishment? Our true nature tends

to lead us in that direction, but we must remember it is God who brought us there for His glory. Give God the credit for whatever you do because God gave you that talent as we have discussed in Admonition XVIII.

As Lothar Hardick, OFM implies we should not worry about what others think of us and practice humility before our Lord because, **“What a man is before God, the he is and no more.”** Each time in reading this statement from St. Francis our understanding seems to become more in focus as to how we should not be concerned of how we look to others, but only to God. This also gives us freedom and joy in the thought of being humble towards our goal as we go into the loving arms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The world sees us individually in our accomplishments and judges us according to the abilities we have given them. This is a conflict in this Admonition, but everything in our faith would be in conflict with the world we live in today. We have been programmed in the world of chaos and disbelief as we try to practice our Christian values in the Catholic Church.

If God took away all our talents and all of our possessions, because they belong to Him, what would we be left with? The gift of our free will? **“What a man is before God, that he is and no more.”** If stripping us of our talents and possessions, think of who we are before God. In using our talents and possessions with our “free will,” we should give back to God what is His by using them for His glory.



In summary, Lothar Hardick, OFM gives a clear vision of St. Francis and his recommendations in practicing humility before our Lord. All that we have and our talents are given to us by God. We should, therefore, give back to God what is His and then wait for the words from our Lord, **(Mt. 25:21): “Well done thou good and faithful servant: thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”**

Save the Date

MARCH 2: SAINT AGNES OF BOHEMIA

MARCH 5: IT ZOOM GATHERING: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Discussion Topic to be presented by Mary Tag, TOF, on Humility.

MARCH 19: ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN Mary

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

Please note: Remember, there will be NO Zoom IT Gathering in APRIL due to Holy Week, March 29–April 5, 2026

May 4, 2026



MONDAYS WITH MARY
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