

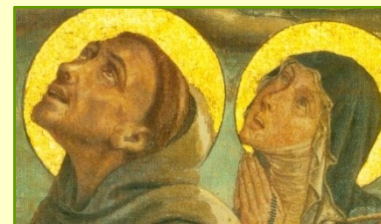
April, 2026

Volume 7, Issue 4

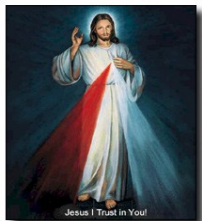
# Il Poverello

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*  
[www.thirdorderfranciscans.com](http://www.thirdorderfranciscans.com)



## Something to Consider: Divine Mercy Sunday, April 12



April is the Month of the Holy Eucharist and it also features the Sunday of Divine Mercy, which follows Easter Sunday. This is not surprising as Jesus told St. Faustina Kowalska, **Behold, for you, I have established a throne of mercy on earth – the tabernacle – and from this throne I desire to enter into your heart.** (Diary Entry #1485).

St. Francis believed that mercy is the bridge between God and humanity. Indeed, in the Christian Prayers, it is written *Lord, guide us in your gentle mercy, for left to ourselves, we cannot do your will.*

In the April 26 ETWN Family Newsletter, Fr. Chris Alar of the Marians of the Immaculate Conception and host of EWTN's *Living Divine Mercy* assures us that mercy is for everyone. "And that's the beauty of it. It's overabundant, undeserved, and unconditional."

On Divine Mercy Sunday, the Church extends a plenary indulgence for those who participate in Divine Mercy prayers and devotions in a church or chapel, or for those who pray the Our Father, the Creed, and a prayer to the merciful Lord in the presence of the Eucharist. Normal conditions apply for this indulgence: Confession within 20 days, receiving the Eucharist, and praying for the Holy Father's intentions.

Fr. Chris Alar notes that in order for this to be a plenary (not partial) indulgence, you cannot have an attachment to sin. Even though that is difficult, he says the *Extraordinary Promise* is also offered on Divine Mercy Sunday and is greater than a plenary indulgence. He explains, "Any of us can obtain the Extraordinary Promise by going to Confession, receiving Holy Communion, and having a purpose of amendment." He adds, "The beauty is that God gives this grace to anybody who wants it. And that's why it's so powerful because we can completely wipe our slate clean."

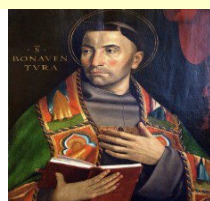
## Fraternity Council

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 19 – 1:30 PM  
St. Nicholas Byzantine Parish  
1051 E. Robinson Ave.,  
Barberton, OH 44203**

**We are expecting you!**

## Franciscan Quote of the Month



**"To manifest the sweetness of supreme devotedness, the Fountain of all mercy, the good Jesus, wept for us in our misery not only once but many times. First over Lazarus, then over the city [of Jerusalem] and finally on the cross, a flood of tears streamed from those loving eyes for the expiation of all sins."**

St. Bonaventure (*The Tree of Life*, Section 14)

St. Bonaventure (1221–1274) was a great 13<sup>th</sup> century mystic philosopher and theologian. Known as the "**Seraphic Doctor**," he is credited with structurally saving the Franciscans from internal division, earning him the title of the order's "second founder." He was canonized on April 14, 1482, and was later declared a Doctor of the Church in 1587-1588.

## 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, TOF  
Larry McNutt, TOF  
Lucy McNutt, TOF  
María 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

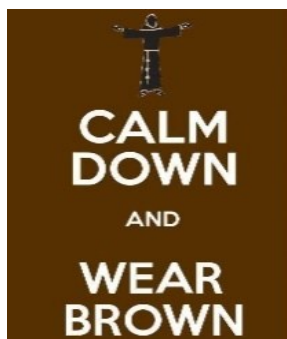
Susan Kramer, TOF

**The apostolate of daily Eucharistic Adoration is VITAL to our Fraternity. It does not depend only on the 27 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. He will never abandon us.**

## April Anniversaries and Birthdays

### Profession Anniversaries

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



Therese Harper, TOF, Mary Dye, TOF, and Donna Lovas will be praying in front of the abortion clinic in Cuyahoga Falls this month. 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

Mary Cate Roberts, TOF, Bob Burtscher, TOF, and Mary Dye, TOF, will prepare our Gathering Hospitality for this month's Gathering.



Bill Marshall, TOF, will prepare the Little Portion this month and Kenny Green, 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.*

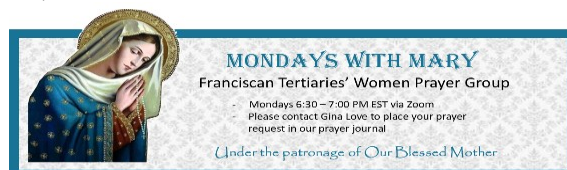
## Formation Class Updates by Debbie Ventosa, TOF



April formation dates are April 13 & 27 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the St. George Center. All members are welcome to join.

## TOF Women Prayer Group – Submitted by Pepe Ventosa, TOF

A TOF women's prayer group, "Mondays with Mary," is being formed by Gina Love, TOF (St. Pio Fraternity) and Debbie Ventosa, TOF and planned to launch the first Monday in May on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026. The group will meet via Zoom every Monday from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. Eastern time to pray the Rosary. All female members (novices and professed) of the TOF community will receive the Zoom invite and are welcome to attend. A journal will be kept for prayer requests. Any TOF members with prayer requests can contact Gina to have their request placed in the prayer journal.



## FRANCISCAN REMINDER

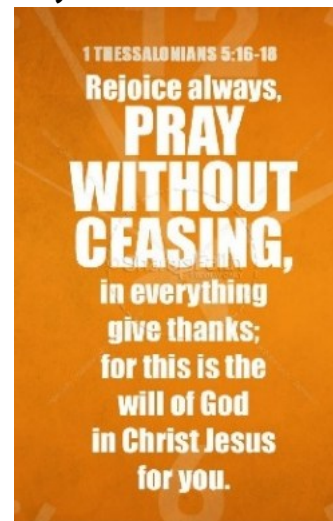
We begin our monthly gatherings with prayer inside the Church. As we pray Lectio Divina, we continue meditating on the Word of God as we return to our table. Please remember to keep **Holy Silence** during this transition until after sharing the word at your table.

## 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. Chris Gaffrey, 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,** and **Fr. John Rickert, FSSP, TOF** of Illinois, who is an Isolated Tertiary.
7. **Fr. Gastor Temu Bahati, Fr. Matthew Munishi, Fr. Augustine N'Depatanisho** 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!

### **Important Reminders:**

- ✦ Please contact Jim Miller, TOF, if you are unable to fulfill your monthly community gathering obligation.
- ✦ If there are any changes to your address, phone number, and/or email address, please contact Jim Miller, TOF.
- ✦ If you purchased the *Postulancy Student Manual* (\$15), *New Catechism of the Third Order Supplemental Materials* (\$13), and/or the *Catechism Supplement with Indulgences* (\$9) and have not yet paid, please endorse a check in the correct amount to St. Francis and St. Claire Fraternity and mail to: Therese Harper, TOF, 3647 Durham Road, Norton, OH 44203 – thank you!

## Ongoing Formation Materials For ALL Members



Since ongoing formation is life-long for all Fraternity members, you are encouraged to purchase the *New Catechism of the Third Order Supplemental Materials* (\$13) and the *Catechism Supplement with Indulgences* (\$9). These will be available for sale at our April Gathering.

### Lord, it is Good for Us to be Together!

Our March Gathering took place on Sunday, March 15, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. at St. Nicholas Byzantine Parish. We had over 40 members in attendance, along with our guest, Tess Greathouse, wife of Inquirer Gary Greathouse. Our other three Inquirers were also present – Connie Corey, Donna Lovas, and Paula Banks.

After determining our table assignments in the Hall, we walked in silence to the Church for Mid-Day Office. Opening Prayer was led by our Minister, Roberto Meza, TOF. Daytime Liturgy of the Hours was led by Kenny Green, TOF. We then prayed the Consecration to St. Joseph and our Renewal of Profession. Lectio Divina, using Sunday's Gospel, was read by Virgil Daniel, TOF, after which we returned to the hall for discussion.

After saying Grace Before Meals, we enjoyed a wonderful meal prepared by our newly professed members, Andrea Ferraro, TOF, Jack Kellogg, TOF, Jerry Johnson, TOF, and John Wilson, TOF. Thank you!

Roberto announced that volunteers are needed to set up our TOF table at Our Lady Mother of Perpetual Help Chapel at Walsh University on March 18 and 25 when Fr. Ryan Furlong will be speaking on St. Francis, Penance & Sacrifice from noon until 1 p.m.

On March 26, Fr. Joseph Tuscan, OFM Cap, will be speaking at St. Francis de Sales in Akron on “*St. Francis, Witness of Hope*” and “*Healing for the Church and the World*” at 7:15 p.m. Also on March 26, Sr. Roberta OSF will be speaking at St. Francis of Assisi in Canton on the San Damiano Cross from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

St. Francis of Assisi in Canton, Sancta Clara in Canton, and the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted are all pilgrimage sites for the Franciscan Jubilee Year for the Diocese of Youngstown.

Passports will be available at our April Gathering listing the 9 Diocese of Cleveland Jubilee Year pilgrimage sites.

A TOF WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP will be starting Monday, May 4 – “Mondays with Mary” will be meeting via Zoom to pray the rosary from 6:30-7 p.m. Prayer requests from both male and female novices and professed can be emailed to Gina Love.

Our May 16 Pilgrimage sponsored by the Padre Pio Fraternity will be to Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine in North Jackson, OH. At our April Gathering, we will collect \$20 lunch donations.

This month's Food Pantry items will go to St. Augustine's and will be delivered by Rose Akins, TOF.

The first meeting for our new Postulants will be on Monday, April 13, at St. Nicholas. Tony Perez's Profession will be at our August Tridua in Youngstown.

Jim Miller, TOF, distributed new member rosters. Please destroy previous outdated rosters. Jim also has Wake Service and Habit forms available. A Wake Service is a privilege of TOFs which occurs at the funeral home (see page 8 for more information).



John Wilson, TOF, delivered an inspiring presentation on the Stations of the Cross. Key takeaway: Franciscans follow Jesus along the Stations not in despair that He died for our sins, rather we take courage in how Jesus is unafraid and moves forward to face all that pain and hopelessness. John said, “How do we face our fears and not be afraid? We trust that God knows what God is doing with us, just as Jesus did.” Thank you, John.

Carol Perrine, TOF, is moving to Montana, so today is her last Gathering. She will be greatly missed and is encouraged to stay in touch with our Community! See the article about Carol on page 7.

We miss and pray for:

Elizabeth Francis, TOF, who is doing well physically and mentally though she is not driving. She is living with her brother and in need of transportation from Ravenna to make it to our Gatherings. She prays the Liturgy of the Hours and prays for our community.

Elizabeth Kerns, TOF, who has difficulty hearing so a good way to communicate with her is through emails, texts or letters.

Larry McNutt, TOF, who continues to battle chronic health issues. He and Lucy McNutt, TOF, still help their daughter and grandchildren.

Sandy Pollino, OFS, who is on her second of six chemotherapy treatments, is struggling but thanks us for our prayers.

Please keep Julia Tarulli, TOF, in your prayers.

Congratulations to Joe Zbasnik, TOF, on the One Year Anniversary of his Profession! And HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Joanne Angeletti, TOF, March 4, LeeAnn Devore, TOF, March 24, and Judith Hoyt, TOF, March 29!

The Little Portion was prepared by Jerry Johnson, TOF, and delivered by Bob Burtscher, TOF. Stand For Life volunteers this month are Mike Butts, TOF, and Rose Akins, TOF.

Father Vit was present, and he blessed and welcomed to the Postulancy Connie Corey, Donna Lovas, Paula Bank, and Gary Greathouse. Welcome!



Father spoke to us about Lent and the three aspects of Penance: Contemplation of the potential beauty of our resurrected souls; Penance of prayer, fasting, denial, sacrifice, discipline, patience, and how it can transform and perfect us; and Acceptance of our daily crosses with the perfect joy of both Jesus and St. Francis. Father also explained how Holiness is a lifetime process. Thank you, Father.

#### PRAYER INTENTIONS

These are the prayers entered in our prayer book:

The protection of our Fraternity and its members;

Our sick members mentioned above, along with Nettie Miller, TOF, Cindy Russo, TOF, and Susan Kramer, TOF; Pope Leo XIV, our Bishops, Friars of the Immaculate Conception Province OFM, our Pastors, parish priests, and parishioners;

The repose of the soul of Fr. David Halaiko who passed away March 4;

The members of our Confraternity of Priests;

The priests and seminarians of the Diocese of Moshi, especially Fr. Francis Tumaini and our diocesan seminarians;

For peace in the world, especially in the Middle East and for the safety of our Armed Forces;

For the protection of our Catholic priests and religious;

For the nephew of Mike Butts, TOF, who is interviewing with the TOR and for our Brother, Gordon, who is in Israel;

For the protection of all life;

For an increase in priestly vocations, TOF professed members, and for Catholic marriages;

And for the protection of Jakin Miller and all FOCUS volunteers.

We then closed our Gathering with Pope Leo XIV's prayer for the jubilee year, the Memorare, and the prayer to St. Michael.

Roberto led the Closing Prayers. Our petitions included the sick, our bishops, priests, seminarians, Jakin Miller, FOCUS, and world peace. Before the Closing Prayer, we also prayed Pope Leo XIV's Jubilee Year Prayer and The Memorare Prayer. Our next Gathering is Sunday, April 19.

## A Tribute and Well Wishes to Carol Perrine, TOF



It was bittersweet for our community to learn that Carol Perrine, TOF, is moving to Montana after Easter so she can be in closer proximity to her son, who lives in Canada. Although we are very happy and excited for her in this new venture, we know she will be greatly missed. We are so very grateful for Carol's generosity in the giving of her time and talents to our community over these past years.

We wish Carol all the best and ask that she stay in touch with our Fraternity so we can share in her excitement in this new chapter of her life!

Here are some interesting facts about Carol:

- ~ She was a member of St. Francis de Sales parish in Akron, Ohio, for many years
- ~ She professed into the OFS on August 1997
- ~ Her Franciscan Patron Saint is St Anthony of Padua
- ~ She received the TOF habit on August 16, 2020
- ~ She served as a formator while in her OFS fraternity for many years, as well as in our TOF fraternity up until this move
- ~ She will be joining Sandy Baden, TOF, in the TOF community of Tertiaries

**Thank you, Carol, and God Bless!**



In the photo below of the August 2021 Fraternity picnic, Sandy Baden, TOF, Isolated Tertiary, is pictured (at left, next to Susan Kramer, TOF, in the peach-colored shirt). Sandy had traveled all the way from California to meet the members of our Fraternity. Carol now will be joining Sandy's TOF community of Tertiaries. We are certain that Carol will be a blessing to the community of Isolated Tertiaries!



## So What Is a Franciscan Wake Service?



As TOFs, we can request a Franciscan Wake Service as part of celebrating our death as the gateway to total union with God. A Franciscan Wake Service typically precedes the funeral Mass, serving as a vigil where loved ones can pray and pay respects before the formal liturgy.

Key features of a Franciscan Wake Service include:

**Prayer-Centeredness:** prayers centered on scripture readings and reflections emphasizing peace, resurrection, and trust in God's providence (may include the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, Psalms, etc.)

**Franciscan Spirituality:** simplicity in ritual and setting, love and respect for all creation, and joy and hope even in the face of death. A Franciscan friar or lay minister may give a short reflection tying the deceased life's and Franciscan values.

**Community Gathering:** Franciscan members can attend and offer support and pray for the deceased.

There are several options available that you can request along with the Wake Service:

- (1) Wake Service in full Franciscan burial habit, including scapular, cord, and Crown Rosary (you will provide all items)
- (2) Wake Service buried in street clothes with scapular, cord, Crown Rosary, and a folded burial Shroud will be displayed (you will provide all items)
- (3) Wake Service buried in street clothes with scapular, cord, and Crown Rosary (you will provide all items)

### **Franciscan Wake Service Additional Information – Jim Miller, TOF**

*Welcome, My Sister Death! (11 Cel. 217)*

As we immerse ourselves in our Franciscan life, we also have the privilege of also giving witness to this life and receiving the prayers of our Franciscan community at the time of our death.

It is important to include this Wake service request in our end-of-life instructions so that your desires will be honored by your family.

The burial Shroud and cord are available if desired (the present cost is \$85).

We also keep a copy on file so that we can fulfill this desire.

You can download the request from our website or you can request a form via email. I also have copies available at the monthly gatherings.

Jim Miller, TOF

[jmillertof@outlook.com](mailto:jmillertof@outlook.com) / Phone 330.353-0579

### **Save the Date!**

April 3	Good Friday – Day of Fast and Abstinence
April 5	<b>Easter Sunday – The Resurrection of Our Lord</b>
April 12	<b>Sunday of Divine Mercy</b>
April 19	April Community Gathering
May 16	Annual TOF Community Pilgrimage – Details On Next Page
May 24	<b>Pentecost</b>
August 16	August Gathering/Annual Picnic at Queen of Heaven Parish Pavilion (Green, OH)
August 21-23	Third Annual TOF Tridua Retreat – Details TBA

# ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE

## SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2026

### OUR LADY OF LEBANON

2795 N. Lipkey Road, North Jackson, Ohio 44451

1:00 PM / **LUNCH**

**\$20 (INCLUDES TIP)**

*PASTA, MEATBALLS, GREEN BEANS, POTATOES,  
SALAD, ROLLS, DESSERT, COFFEE, WATER.*

2:00 PM / **PRESENTATION**

**BY CHORBISHOP ANTHONY SPINOSA**

*FOLLOWED BY AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT  
THE CHAPEL, GIFT SHOP, AND WALK THE  
BEAUTIFUL GROUNDS.*

4:30 PM / **CONFESSION**

5:00 PM / **MASS**

IF NECESSARY: CONTACT KARA SERTICK, TOF  
AT 330-501-7853

A FREE-WILL OFFERING WILL BE TAKEN  
FOR THE CHORBISHOP AND THE SHRINE



# Prayer for the Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi by Pope Leo XIV



*Saint Francis, our brother, you who eight hundred years ago went to meet Sister Death as a man at peace, intercede for us before the Lord. You recognized true peace in the Crucifix of San Damiano. Teach us to seek in Him the source of all reconciliation that breaks down every wall. You who, unarmed, crossed the lines of war and misunderstanding, give us the courage to build bridges where the world raises up boundaries. In this time afflicted by conflict and division, intercede for us so that we may become peacemakers: unarmed and disarming witnesses of the peace that comes from Christ. Amen.*

For the Jubilee Year of St. Francis, The Diocese of Cleveland has created a "passport" to the nine pilgrimage sites where you can visit, pray, and seek indulgences. Here is the link to the passport: <https://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/files/assets/francis-passport.pdf>

*NOTE: Passports listing the nine Diocese of Cleveland Jubilee Year pilgrimage sites will also be available at our April Gathering.*