



# Soldiers of Christ

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

June 2026

Sandy Baden, TOF, Editor

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## THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (Corpus Christi) Feast Day June 7, 2026



Oil Painting by  
Carl Emil Doepler  
(Corpus Christi Procession)

*Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church, presented to Pope Urban IV, the feast of Corpus Christ on the Holy Eucharist, the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ. Recognizing in 1264, the Eucharistic Miracle of Bolsena, Pope Urban IV established the feast of Corpus **Christi** as a **Solemnity** and it was extended to the entire Catholic Church.*

*The story of the Eucharistic Miracle of Bolsena happened when a Priest, Peter of Prague, doubted the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Having come to Bolsena, Italy in 1263 on a pilgrimage to Rome, he stopped to celebrate Mass at the tomb of St. Cristina in Bolsena. At the moment of*

*consecration, the host bled on his hands and the on linen corporal. It was Pope Urban IV who investigated the miracle and then issued a papal bull to establish the **Feast of Corpus Christi**.*

*Studies in 2015 confirmed the spots on the linen corporal is blood and is currently preserved on display*



*in a reliquary of the Chapel of the Corporal, located at the Cathedral of Orvieto.*

*Going back to the 8th century (750 AD), in Lanciano, Italy a similar miracle occurred with a Basilian monk, also doubting the Holy Eucharist as the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ.*



*The Basilian monk had witnessed the bread and wine turn into the body (flesh) and blood of Christ during Mass at the church of Saints Legonziano and Domiziano. The Catholic Church confirmed the miracle as a divine sign of the Eucharist for those who doubt.*

*The findings in 1971 by Dr. Odoardo Linoli, indicate the flesh is of human origin of the (heart wall) and the blood also is human, and is type AB. The host has been preserved for over 1,200 years and shows no signs of decay or preservatives. The relic is preserved in a reliquary at the Church of St. Francis in Lanciano, Italy, and open for pilgrims to see.*

*The most current miracle of the Holy Eucharist was confirmed by the Vatican in 2013. In Vilakkannur, Kerala, India, the face of Jesus was seen on a consecrated host during a Mass celebrated by Fr. Thomas Pathickal at Christ the King Church. The face had appeared originally as a small spot which gradually enlarged and became the face of Jesus Christ. The investigation took 12 years after the occurrence for the Vatican to confirm this miracle.*



*What a gift given in these miracles, but do we really need miracles to believe? The Apostle Thomas stated, **“Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my finger into His side, I will never believe.”** Then later our Lord said to Thomas, **“Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”** (John 20: 24-29).*

*Sources: Wikipedia, Spiritual Direction, The Catholic Talk Show.*

*Sandy Baden, TOF 2*

## ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (1195-1231)

**IF A MULE COULD TALK: Submitted by: Patricia Ostaszewski, TOF**



*The feast day of St. Anthony of Padua is celebrated on June 21, and is also the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. How Providential! There is that adage that “the more things change, the more they stay the same.”*

*St. Anthony was born Fernando Martins de Bulhoes in Lisbon. He was not Franciscan at first. Instead he joined the monks at Holy Cross Monastery in Coimbra, Portugal. While there, he met Friars of the Franciscan Order who came through the monastery on their way to be missionaries in Morocco. He made friends with them and admired their simple and evangelical way of life. Months later, these same friars were brought back from Morocco, beheaded for preaching the Catholic faith while daring to denounce Islam. King Alphonso II of Portugal ordered that they be buried as martyrs at Holy Cross Monastery. After that, Anthony was inspired to join the Franciscan Order and took the name Anthony after Anthony the Great, the Desert Father.*

*St. Anthony was so well-known for his mastery of preaching the Word of God that St. Francis appointed him official homilist for the Order. One of his most well-known miracles occurred when a heretic refused to believe in the Real presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. The heretic challenged the saint and proposed that he would bring out a mule that he starved for three days. Would the mule go to the hay and oats or to the holy monstrance? When Anthony raised the monstrance, he proclaimed:*



***“In the name of Thy Creator, whom I, though unworthy, hold in my hands, I command thee, O beast, to come and adore thy God: so that heretics may learn from this irrational creature that all creation is subject to the Body of Christ present on the altar.”***

*The mule ignored the hay and knelt to the ground for several minutes, in adoration.*

*A recent study by the Pew Center reported that seven out of ten Catholics believe that the consecrated host is merely a symbol and not the Body and Blood of Our Divine Savior. **Oh, if a mule could talk.***



*June is the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a devotion that began in the 17th century, when St. Margaret Mary Alacoque received visions in which Jesus revealed His heart, burning with love for Humanity. The devotion projects a heart surrounded by thorns and capped with cross and flame, the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Real Presence in the Eucharist.*

*St. Bonaventure described St. Francis's deep devotion to the Passion, stating, **"The heart of our Lord was pierced by a spear so that, through the wound we see the invisible wound of love. The exterior wound of the Heart shows the wound of love of His soul."***

*St. Anthony would have encouraged devotion to the Sacred Heart as a reminder that God, the Trinity, is truly present in the Holy Eucharist. How providential is it that St. Anthony of Padua's feast is celebrated in June, the same month that is dedicated to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus.*

*Sources: [OFM.org](http://OFM.org), [onepeterfive.com](http://onepeterfive.com) [ewtn.com](http://ewtn.com)*

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**  
**SPECIAL JUBILEE YEAR**  
**WHAT ABOUT ST. FRANCIS, PART II**  
**January 10, 2026—January 10, 2027**



*In Part I of the May issue of the Soldiers of Christ Newsletter were the numerous blessings St. Francis received, as gifts from God, and were listed as the first to be recorded.*

*One gift from God given to St. Francis of Assisi was not mentioned. It was the gift of the **stigmata**, which he was the first person to receive in recorded Christian history. As we may already know, as he was praying at La Verna, St. Francis received the vision of a crucified seraph or angel. In his vision, and in*

*prayer, he saw a brilliant six-winged seraph descending from the sky.*

*The angel was nailed to a cross and had smiled at Francis as he descended. When the vision had disappeared the physical marks of the **stigmata** appeared upon St. Francis's body on November 17, 1224. St. Francis tried to hide the wounds of the **stigmata** until his death in 1226. Only a few of his companions knew of the **stigmata** as he hid by wearing a habit that covered his hands and feet. His love of God in the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, God had blessed St. Francis with the physical wounds of His Son.*

*In receiving the gifts from God, St. Francis had conquered his own ego, he had stated, **"Above all the grace and the gifts that Christ gives to his beloved is that of overcoming self."** He considered ego not something to "fight" but to "empty," embracing the Leper, the Renunciation of Wealth, Choosing the Valley, Radical Humility in Action and The Ultimate Goal: Total Union, as St. Francis had said, **"Christ Increase,"** and **"Who are you, my God, and who am I?"***

*After St. Francis discovered his life of a privileged son, of a wealthy merchant, he changed his life to simplicity, humility and joy. His ego was to disappear and was to be replaced with a dependence upon God.*

St. Francis embraced his **“Nothingness,”** and sought to be the least of his followers and left his ego behind him. From the Admonitions, St. Francis stated, **“What a man is in the eyes of God, that he is, and nothing more.”** In regards to his humility he believed, **“The more one grows in holiness, the more one realizes their own spiritual poverty without God.**



Then, there was the **“Nothingness”** of Creation: He reflected on the fact that everything is a gift, love for animals, the sun, the moon, Sister Death, and in the beauty of God there was **“Perfect Joy,”** because of the greatness of the creator.

To have nothing, you lose nothing, and then enter into a world with God by accepting insults, rejections, and hardships with patience. In his poverty Francis saw in having nothing there was nothing to lose, and there was nothing to defend. In this **“Perfect Joy”** he saw his freedom and the love of God.

An interesting story when St. Francis was carving a bowl out of a piece of wood. He stopped and through the bowl into the fire because he realized the wood was interfering with contemplation of God. However, Francis accepted a large piece of real estate, Mt. Alverno, as a gift. The thinking was Mt. Alverno was one of Francis’ favorite places to be and to pray. This did not interfere with the contemplation of God.



When Francis was suffering before his death he wrote the Canticle of the Creatures and Sister Bodily Death, as he was nearly blind and suffering with the stigmata. His **“Perfect Joy”** throughout his life, was the love of God and the embodiment of his **“Nothingness.”**

**Sandy Baden, TOF**

Sources: EWTN News, Sacred Heart.org, Augustin.biz, Franciscan Media, Walking humbly with [god.com](http://god.com) & The Sojournes

**ANNUAL TOF PILGRIMAGE**  
**Submitted by: Pepe Ventosa, TOF**



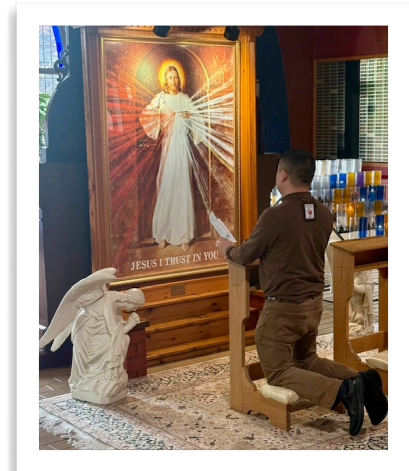
*The 5th Annual TOF Pilgrimage, sponsored this year by St. Pio Fraternity in Youngstown, OH, took place on May 16, 2026. Forty, Third Order Franciscans enjoyed a day of prayer, fellowship, lunch, lecture, and liturgy at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon. We were welcomed by Kara Sertic, TOF, Minister of St. Pio Fraternity and pilgrimage organizer, who led us in prayer before the meal and distributed the agenda.*

*Time during the lunch was filled with sharing and reconnecting with our fellow brothers and sisters. Following lunch we walked the grounds, prayed, visited the gift shop, and reconvened at 3:00 PM in the main chapel for the bishop's lecture. The bishop beautifully shared many stories of the Shrine and the daily miracle of the Eucharist that takes place during the liturgy.*






*He wove the year of St. Francis into the lecture and encouraged us to be ambassadors of peace. Choir Bishop and Fr. Vit heard confessions and a renewal of profession and Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary were prayed together in the Chapel. We concluded with the reverent Sacred Liturgy at 5:00 PM.*



*Three of our Isolated Tertiaries, Novice, Patty (PA), Tien, TOF (PA), and Bob, TOF (PA) were able to attend the pilgrimage and met some of their sisters and brothers who live in fraternity.*



*Basilica National Shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon. Church building in Ohio, the United States of America.*



**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*

*Submitted by Gina Love, St. Pio Fraternity*

*We are so blessed to live in a time when we can take advantage of the most sophisticated technology the world has ever seen, for the purpose of praying for one another and giving glory to our God in heaven.*

*On the 1st week of May we have begun a women's Rosary ministry called "Monday's With Mary." Using Zoom, women from all three of our fraternities and the Isolated Tertiaries of the Immaculate Conception, OFM connect with each other in a way that was impossible just a few years ago.*

*Tertiaries, if you have a prayer intention that you would like us to pray, please send it to me, Gina Love, TOF. It will be recorded in our book, and our women will pray every Monday with our Blessed Mother, the Queen of Heaven for those intentions.*

*Ladies, we welcome you to log in with us every Monday night at 6:30 PM Eastern time, 3:30 PM Western time, with your Rosary. Be sure to check your email for the invitation and the link. If you are not receiving the invitation, send me an email and I will add you to my list.*

*We believe in the power of prayer.*

**VIRTUAL MONTHLY ZOOM GATHERING, JUNE 4, 2026**

Our topic for the Virtual Monthly Zoom Gathering will be presented by: Stephanie Susberich, TOF, "A Saint in My Family Tree."



Stephanie was Professed on October 4, 2024 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Kansas City. She attended public grade school and high school. NYU was her first college degree, which she earned in individualized studies, (Concentration in Communications and voice.). She has a Masters degree in voice and recently received a DMA (Doctor of Musical Arts). Currently she teaches four University Classes, weekly.

She has a devotion to St. Mariana of Jesus of Paredes, which her mother had revealed to her that she is related to

to this Saint. We welcome Stephany Susberich's, TOF presentation on "A Saint in My Family Tree."

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Our annual Tridua Retreat will take place on August 21-23, at the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted in Ohio. Registration is available in the Mat Posts. Please note the deadline for registration is July 20, 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***

***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 XXII, TRUE CORRECTION**  
**Study of Admonitions of St. Francis, Lothar Hardick OFM by:**  
**Sandy Baden, TOF**



***Blessed the religious (=Blessed is the servant) who takes blame (=correction), accusation, or Punishment from another as patiently as if it were coming from himself.***

***Blessed the religious (=Blessed is the servant) who obeys quietly when he is corrected, confesses his fault humbly and makes atonement cheerfully.***

***Blessed the religious (=Blessed is the servant) who is in no hurry to make excuses, but accepts the embarrassment and blame for some fault he did not commit.***

*In this Admonition we can try to understand the servant who takes blame patiently, the servant who obeys quietly, and the servant who is in no hurry to make excuses, and accepts the consequences. Can we see ourselves in any of these situations or maybe all of them? Looking back we can see how we should have reacted differently or how we had accepted the "Correction" for our fault, or not.*

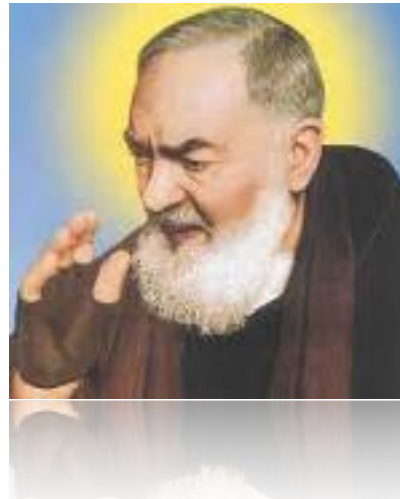
*Lothar Hardick, OFM concentrates on the word "Correction," which is much better than the word punishment. Correction seems to be the best way to explain any blame or criticism from another to ease hurt feelings or anger which may arise. If "True Correction," is needed, hopefully it would be done tactfully, with love, and consideration of the person receiving the correction. If correction is given with harsh words and insensitivity it would be difficult to accept, but we must control ourselves in these situations. Resentment can occur towards the person giving the "Correction." We can then take it to prayer and remember patience is a virtue.*

*Humility is also a virtue and when being corrected it can be difficult. What good would it do to be angry and upset over being corrected. If we take.*

*the blame for something we have done, accept it, and the Correction might not seem so bad. Remember Our Blessed Mother and how she took everything into her heart in silence. Can we not follow Mary's example? If not, we might have difficulty in obeying quietly, and in repentance say a few "Hail Mary's. Also be thankful we are not living during the time of St. Francis and have to take the kind of corrections he would give as Lothar Hardick, OFM has illustrated.*

*St. Padre Pio advised, "Hate your faults with a quite hate," and "be critical of yourself." In his teachings Padre Pio clarified, "we must bear the faults of others, we must also tolerate ourselves, humbling ourselves in our daily transgressions."*

*"In regards to correcting or punishing, it would be seen as acts of charity and one must be "courteous and gentle."*



*How do we accept the embarrassment and blame for some fault we did not commit and not be in a hurry to make excuses? We then would have to include humility, patience, and what else? Obedience, humility, and patience combined as they all play a part in remaining silent when being accused. Our Lord Jesus Christ was taken and falsely accused before he was brought before Pilate and then ordered to be scourged. All that our Lord experienced was in His silence and with the will of the Father. This is the time to think of our Lord in His passion and realize in the end the truth will be exposed.*

*Patience, humility, and obedience fits all three of these encounters, and with acceptance of listening to the accusation and correction from another be considerate as a listener and in silent acceptance of what is being presented.*

*To be humble and obedient while being corrected as our Lord did in His passion and sometimes be silent as the Blessed Mother of God. Lastly, the blame for the fault we did not commit, endurance in prayer, continue to do "God's Will," and not worry what others may think. Give thanks to God and remember it is God who knows the truth.*

**SAVE THE DATE**

**JUNE 1: MONDAYS WITH MARY: June 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and June 29th: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time.**

**JUNE 4: IT ZOOM GATHERING: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Discussion Topic to be presented by, Stephanie Susberich, TOF, "A Saint in My Family Tree."**

**JUNE 7: THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST  
(Corpus Christi)**

**JUNE 11: IT INQUIRY FORMATION GROUP 6: 7:00 PM Eastern Time  
4:00 PM Pacific Time**

**JUNE 13: ST ANTHONY OF PADUA, Priest and Doctor of the Church**

**JUNE 18: IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 5: 7:00 PM Eastern  
Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time**

**JUNE 21: FATHER'S DAY**

