



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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SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY FEAST DAY: AUGUST 15th



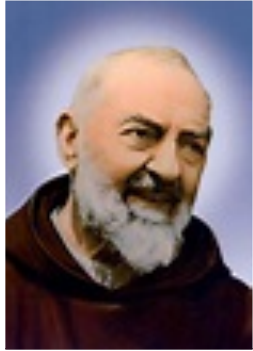
Hail Mary, full of grace, by the Archangel Gabriel, who was saying the Blessed Mother is favored by God and would give birth to the Son of God. Gabriel, an Archangel, who has the power to announce God's will to mankind, and he is the messenger of God. In the Gospel of Luke, Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus to Mary, and Mary wonders at this salutation (**Luke 1: 26-38**).

Mary, the "Mother of God," was assumed into heaven when her life on earth was over to be joined with her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, into heavenly glory. Mary's death is seen as her Dormition, which means sleep. This indicates the Blessed Mother did not die a typical death, but fell into a peaceful sleep because she was free from sin. She was "full of grace."

On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII proclaimed the Dogma of Mary, her Assumption of her body and soul into heaven, "The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary." We profess our faith as we say, the "resurrection of the body, and in "life everlasting." Mary's Assumption is a reminder of our own promise of eternal life. It is an infallible dogma, which Catholics are required to believe.



How did this come to be that Pope Pius XII proclaimed this dogma of Mary? It is not written in the Gospel? It was Mary herself in giving her **“Yes”** to the Archangel Gabriel to be the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. Mary is the first Christian and shows us how to be a Christian, especially in what she teaches us in her Magnificat (**Luke 1:46-55**). Mary is a perfect model for us in our journey as we strive for our heavenly glory.



St. Padre Pio had said, **“Mary’s Assumption into heaven was a divine act, showing her unique role as the Mother of God.”**

“We Catholics who venerate in Most Holy Mary the most tender and affectionate of Mothers can do no less than rejoice on that day sacred to the memory of her greatest victory, that is her Assumption into heaven and her Coronation as Queen of the angels and of all the saints.”

Pope Pius XII had declared in 1950 the dogma of faith with these words: **We pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthy life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory...he further added, the belief in the Assumption of Virgin Mary into heaven, “will make our belief in our own resurrection stronger and render it more effective.”**



Lastly, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: **“The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians (Paragraph 966).**

Sandy Baden, TOF

Sources: Wikipedia, EWTN, Vatican News

ST. LOUIS IX, KING OF FRANCE, 1214—1270

FEAST DAY: AUGUST 25th

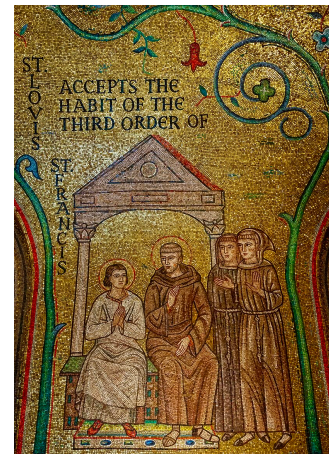
Submitted by: Patricia Ostaszewski, TOF



On August 25th, we celebrate the heavenly birthday of St. Louis IX, King of France. It is not surprising that King Louis is known as the Patron of the Third Order of St. Francis of Assisi, and he was crowned King when he was only twelve years old.

His mother, Blessed Queen Blanche, was herself a Third Order Franciscan, and raised her son in the true Christian Faith. She employed among his teachers several Franciscan Friars. When Louis became King, he joined the Third Order of St. Francis.

Louis was often criticized for not acting like a king. He liked to wear the simplest of clothing, sometimes even donning a plain brown cassock on special occasions and wearing the Tau underneath his garments. His cooks complained that he only liked simple food and that he added too much water to the finest wine that was served to him. He invited the poor to eat at his table and was known to sometimes wash the feet of beggars. He proclaimed, **“I see Christ in the poor.”**



In personal letters, Louis did not sign his name as “King Louis,” but rather simply **“Louis of Poissy,”** because it was in this parish that he was baptized, La Collegial Notre-Dame church. He founded hospitals supported monasteries, cared for lepers, and generously gave to those in need. He aimed to pray the Divine Office daily, but when he could not, he would have two priests to recite the Office aloud next to him. He reformed the French legal system, worked to reduce corruption, and sought peaceful resolutions before resorting to war. He practiced fasting and other acts of self denial, reflecting the Franciscan spirit of conversion.



King Louis led two Crusades to the Holy Land. In the first one, he was captured and imprisoned for several months. His captors offered to release him on the condition he deny Christ and the Christian religion. The holy King replied: **“Such blasphemous words shall never cross my lips.”** When threatened with death, Louis declared, **“Very well, you may kill my body, but you will never kill my soul.”** After some time, having witnessed his

unwavering courage, the infidels released him without penalty.

King Louis undertook a second Crusade in 1270. On the way he died of the plague while caring for his sick soldiers.



Like St. Francis, Louis did not care for material things that he could rightly claim as King. He avoided a life of luxury and promoted a special devotion to the sufferings of Christ.

King Louis IX died on August 25, 1270. He is a co-patron of the **Third Order of St. Francis of Assisi, and has been claimed as a member of the Order.**

He was canonized by Pope Boniface VIII in 1297.

Source: Catholic Network, Franciscan Book of Saints

Created by Leopold Tobin

ST. MAXIMILIAN MARIA KOLBE, OFM, CONVENTUAL FRIAR
FEAST DAY: AUGUST 14th



Raymond Kolbe was born in the Kingdom of Poland, January 8, 1894. His parents, Julius Kolbe, who was a weaver, and mother Maria Dabrowska, who was a midwife. They had four sons, which two had died of tuberculosis soon after the birth of Raymond.

When Raymond was nine years old he had a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mother, which he described: **“That night I asked the Mother of God what was to become of me? Then she came to me holding two crowns, one white, the other red. She asked me if I was willing to accept either of these crowns.**

The white one meant that I should persevere in purity and the red that I should become a martyr. I said that I would accept them both.”

In 1907, Raymond and his brother Francis joined the Conventual Franciscans minor seminary in Ukraine, which they both entered the novitiate. Raymond chose the religious name of Maximilian and professed his final vows in 1914, and at that time took the additional name of Maria. Also in 1914, World War I broke out and his father had joined the Polish Legions. He was captured and hanged as a traitor.

In 1915, Raymond earned a Doctor of Philosophy and in 1919 or 1922 earned a doctorate in theology. During this time he became involved in the consecration and entrustment to Mary which he had witnessed demonstrations by the Freemasons against Pope Pius X and also Pope Benedict XV. This encouraged him to start the Army of the “Immaculate One,” on October 13, 1917, which was a group who prayed for the conversion of sinners and enemies, which included the Freemasons, through intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He then added an additional line to the Miraculous Medal prayer: **“O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. And for all those** 5

who do not have recourse to thee; especially the Freemasons and all those recommended to thee.

Raymond Kolbe was ordained a Priest in 1918 and operated a religious publishing press, which became a publishing center. In 1931, Fr. Kolbe founded a monastery in Shanghai, which began the publication of the Japanese edition of the “Knight of the Immaculate.” He started a radio station “Radio Niepokalanow” with his amateur radio license.

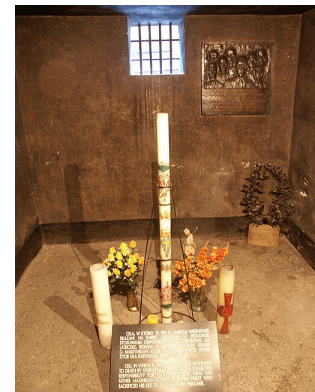


Fr. Maximilian Kolbe, OFM, had organized a temporary hospital within his monastery, at the beginning of World War II, and remained at the monastery where he was arrested on September 19, 1939. He was released in December 1939. Fr. Kolbe continued his work and then proceeded to shelter refugees from Poland, and also the Jews, which he hid from Nazi persecution.

The Gestapo shut down the Franciscan monastery where Fr. Kolbe was again arrested. He was incarcerated at the Pawiak prison in Warsaw on February 17, 1941. He then began to minister to his fellow prisoners.

*In July of 1941, a prisoner escaped from Auschwitz, which the camp commander ordered the guards to pick ten men to be starved to death. Franciszek Gajowniczek, yelled, **“My wife, and my Children!”** Fr. Kolbe then volunteered to take his place.*

An assistant janitor testified that Fr. Kolbe led the prisoners in prayer and he was always standing or kneeling in the middle of the cell. Fr. Maximilian Kolbe was the last of four prisoners who were given lethal injections of carbolic acid. His death occurred on August 14, 1941.



Fr. Maximilian Marie Kolbe, OFM, was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October of 1982 and was added to the General Roman Calendar.

Sandy Baden, TOF

Source: Wikipedia

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



Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone was born in the year 1181, baptized in Assisi, Italy, and was later known as Francesco. He attended the parish school at San Giorgio. Francesco had a privileged upbringing with wealth from his father as a cloth merchant. What could change this young man from enjoying this life of luxury and social status? First thought is God!

St. Francis has to undergo the Civil war in Assisi as he joined the fight between Assisi and Perugia in 1199-1200. He is then captured and imprisoned. His father saves Francesco with a ransom, and after a long illness he joins the crusade in 1204. God intervenes and gives Francis a vision which sends him home to begin his conversion. He begins to see in nature the love of God in all His creation.

St. Francis sees the love of God in people of poverty and then is able to kiss a leper. He sees this love of God and then nurtures it within his heart. There is no turning back from this point, but to see Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, to show St. Francis the love and beauty all of creation.



Thomas of Celano, a biographer of St. Francis stated, **"He discerned the hidden things of Creation with the eye of the heart, as one who had already been released into 'the glorious liberty of the children of God.'"** Then St. Bonaventure writes, **"When he bethought him of the first beginning of all things he was filled with a yet more overflowing charity, and would call the dumb animals, however small, by the names of brother and sister, forasmuch as he recognized in the same origin as himself."**

St. Francis expressed his love of creation in his writings, one which he wrote in 1225, “The Canticle of the Creatures.” It is a poem and gives glory to the beauty of all elements of nature, and refers to the creatures as his brothers and sisters. Then there is “Brother Sun and Sister Moon,” in which he encompasses all creation in his joy in thanking God for its beauty.

We could also think that St. Francis could paint such a picture showing the beauty and tranquility of the peace in God’s creation.

The other aspect of St. Francis was the response of animals to his call. They seemed to understand what he was saying and they reacted. In human nature, St. Clare reacted to St. Francis when he called. When preaching to the birds or calming a wolf, each creature responded in mutual love of each other.



As seen through the lens of an artist, it is easy to understand appreciation of God’s creation and the beauty of a scene that only God created. Sitting on the beach and watching waves splash onto shore, one after another, can bring pause to the enormity of the ocean, and the marine life within it.

When St. Francis created the Crech, (Nativity scene) he used live animals to invite reality to the birth of Christ for all to witness.

St. Francis understood the love of God in his creation. He contemplated and expressed that all were our brothers and sisters in Christ and interconnected in our humanity and in nature.

Sandy Baden, TOF

Sources: Christian History Institute, Franciscan Spirit, Franciscan Media

VIRTUAL MONTHLY ZOOM GATHERING, AUGUST 6, 2026

Our topic for the Virtual Monthly Zoom Gathering will be presented by:
Denise Williams, TOF



Denise Williams, TOF, is a member of the SS Francis and Clare Fraternity in Barberton, OH. As a pediatric RN she has dedicated her life in caring for children at Akron Children's Hospital for forty-seven years.

Denise began her journey into the Franciscan way of life and was professed November 12, 2022. She has been an integral part of our local Fraternity Formation Program and has a devotion to St. Chiara. We welcome Denise Williams, TOF, as she will be sharing a presentation on the "Beauty of Our Saints."



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

TONY PEREZ'S HOLY PROFESSION



Congratulations to Tony Perez as he will be celebrating his Holy Profession this month. Although a member of the SS Francis and Clare Fraternity in OH, many of you have had the privilege of getting to know Tony at the monthly zoom gatherings and Initial Formation.

Due to special circumstances he was not able to attend initial formation at his local fraternity. Thanks to the IT Formation team he was able to complete his initial formation with the Isolated Tertiaries. His profession will take place during our Tridua Retreat in August at the Shrine of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted in OH. Please

keep Tony in your prayers as he prepares to promise, “to observe all the time of my life the commandments of God and the Rule of the Third Order instituted by the blessed Francis, according to the form approved by Nicholas IV and Leo XIII.” We are blessed to have Tony as a member of our Franciscan family.

THE SODALITY OF THE HIDDEN CROSS

Of the Third Order of St. Francis
Under the Patronage of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted
By: Pepe Ventosa, TOF

The Franciscan Tertiary Community is pleased to announce the formation of the **Sodality of the Hidden Cross**, a spiritual apostolate for those who carry the often unseen crosses of illness, chronic pain, grief, loneliness, anxiety, hardships, or any other physical or spiritual suffering.

For more information, or to enroll in the **Sodality**, please visit our website at thirdorderfranciscans.com, click on “**Sodality of the Hidden Cross**,” in the menu bar.

See the attachment within the email of this Newsletter 10

“CAN’T MAKE IT TO OUR ANNUAL TRIDUA THIS YEAR”
Submitted by Pepe Ventosa, TOF



Can't make it to our annual Tridua this year? Consider spiritually joining your brothers and sisters on retreat from your own home. Here are some suggestions:

- *Select one of the days of the Tridua (Aug. 21, 22, or 23) for your retreat at home*
- *Find a place at home conducive for prayer and make it look like a “little chapel” (candle, crucifix, religious image, holy water) “Bless this place”*
- *Plan for strict silence as your circumstances allow—avoid using your cellphone (except for emergencies, watching the news, etc.)*
- *Start and end your retreat with one of the Tertiary Offices*
- *If possible, attend Mass*
- *If possible, receive the Sacrament of Confession just prior to the retreat*
- *Some topics for meditation to consider: a Gospel passage, St. Francis' Letter to the Faithful, the Incarnation, the Passion, a Crucifix*
- *Recite the “Renewal of Profession” prayer at the end of your retreat. This prayer is available on our website under “Ritual Prayers”*



"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 XXIV: LOVING THE SICK BROTHER

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



Blessed that friar (=Blessed is the servant) who loves his brother as much when he is sick—and can be of no use to him—as when he is well and can be of use to him.

Lothar Hardick, OFM, begins this Admonition with discussing meditative prayer. This leads us to understand the importance of our prayer and where the fruits of that prayer would lead us in all we do. Take to heart our sick brothers and sisters and the outpouring of our hearts with love and no expectancy of anything in return. Only with prayer can we accomplish those fruits from the grace God

gives us.

Our prayer brings us closer to God in the time we take in prayer and the love we bring to it. We cannot give to our neighbor if our prayer life is lacking in some way. We, as tertiaries, live in the world and can see people as they go about their lives. Some seem not to be even aware of God and others demonstrate the love in their hearts.

The last line of this Admonition reminds us of what President Kennedy had said, “Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country.” In the same respect the last line of this Admonition states, “God does not ask how much we have been loved, but how much love we have given.”

When we are in meditation, distracted, or lose the progress we felt in the beginning, it seems so frustrating. Lothar Hardick, OFM indicates, “we should say interiorly or even aloud, give consent, and not only in our intellect, but in our heart.” The love expressed to a sick brother or sister should be from our hearts as Lothar Hardick, OFM, reiterates, “which is expressed in good action, selfless help, and kindness.”

How do we do this for a person who is confined in the hospital. Confronted, many years ago, with a dear friend in our Parish who had a massive stroke, but she was able to speak. There were no relatives around her and she seemed to be searching for something. She was a woman with a deep faith in our Lord and she loved to pray the rosary. In asking her what she needed, she stated, “I cannot seem to pray the Rosary,” as tears welled up in her eyes. I suggested I would pray the rosary out loud by her bedside. No, that was not it!

The thought popped into my head...I suggested I would go to our Parish and pray the rosary for her in the little chapel where she went to Mass every day before the Blessed Sacrament. I told her to watch the clock at 1:00 PM and I would begin to pray the rosary. The look on her face was priceless with a beautiful smile on her wrinkled face, as she was eight-five years old. My dear friend passed away the next day. “Blessed is the servant who loves his brother as much when he is sick as when he is well.” I loved my dear friend and am thankful the Holy Spirit guided me in the time of her need and pray I would do the same for anyone.

If we examine our meditative prayer and see what is lacking, pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance, and always pray from the heart. This also comes back to the phrase, “What would Jesus do?” Are we capable of selfless help and kindness and can we put that into good action? Let us pray to bear fruit to love our brother or sister “when he or she is sick—and be of no use to him—as when he is well and be of use to him.”



“Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received—only what you have been given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.”

St. Francis of Assisi

SAVE THE DATE

AUGUST 1-2: PORTIUNCILA INDULGENCE

AUGUST 3: MONDAYS WITH MARY: August 6, 10th, 17th, and 24th,
6:30 PM Eastern Time, 3:30 PM Pacific Time

AUGUST 6: IT ZOOM GATHERING: 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 4:00 PM
Pacific Time. Discussion Topic to be presented by,
Denise Williams, TOF, "Beauty of our Saints"

AUGUST 13: IT INQUIRY FORMATION GROUP 6: 7:00 PM Eastern
Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time

AUGUST 14: ST. MAXIMILIAN MARIA KOLBE, OFM

**AUGUST 15: THE SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

AUGUST 20: IT NOVITIATE FORMATION GROUP 5: 7:00 PM Eastern
Time, 4:00 PM Pacific Time

AUGUST 25: ST. LOUIS IX, KING OF FRANCE

AUGUST 21-23: THIRD ANNUAL FRANCISCAN TRIDUA



