



# Clarion

## NEWSLETTER

### SAINT CLARE REGION

## Saints Alive!

Summer is a time of picnics, walks in the park, swimming, boating, golfing, family reunions, baseball, soccer, fishing... really just anything that is outside! And as we all settled into the summer months, it seemed that the routine of finally being able to go outside filled our souls with refreshing warmth and rest. We do give praise to all we have been given in the peaceful moments of the long summer days.

And what our Seraphic Father Francis wrote about this in his Canticle of the Sun pretty much sums it up, **“Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him.”** Amen!

Our region’s Director of Formation, Annapoorna Mary OFS, filled us up with the light of the saints this past summer as well. There were 15 members from around our region who wrote summaries and reflections on saints who have been a particular influence on them. I suggest you click on this link <https://stclareregionofs.org/summer-saint-series> to read about them. You can also find them under the **Formation** tab on our region’s website.

And while you’re there, check out our website and perhaps share it with a person or two who you may want to gently invite to your next fraternity gathering. One never knows what can happen once we ‘go outside’ our comfort zones, but God knows and God uses each and every one of us to give praise to all we have been given and to share all of that with those in our lives.

Peace & All Good, Always,

Chris Blood, OFS

## Summer 2023

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The Secular Franciscan Order was established by St. Francis of Assisi more than 800 years ago. Our purpose is to bring the Gospel to life where we live and where we work. We look for ways to embrace the Gospel in our lives and try to help others to do likewise.

# SAINT CLARE REGION- CHAPTER GATHERING

## 2023 SAINT CLARE REGION CHAPTER GATHERING

**Saturday,**

**November 4,**

**8:30am—2:00pm**

**Hosted by:**

**Padre Pio Emerging  
Fraternity**

**Coffee, snacks and  
lunch provided**

Our annual Regional Chapter Gathering will be on Saturday, November 4, 2023 at the Saint Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, MO.

The St. Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity is hosting our gathering.

**ALL ARE INVITED FROM THE REGION!**

Saint Francis Medical Center  
211 Saint Francis Drive  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703

We will begin our Chapter Gathering with Morning Prayer at 8:30am in the Chapel, followed by fellowship, meeting, lunch and regional business in a separate meeting room space at the medical center.

Because it is a Regional Chapter and business will be conducted, it's important that each fraternity is represented. Preferably the minister of each fraternity represents the fraternity at the Chapter gathering. Should the minister be unable to attend, the vice-minister is the delegate. Should the vice-minister be unable to attend, the fraternity council then decides on the delegate.

Should you need overnight accommodations,  
please contact

Shawn Asmus (573)-324-7806

shawnasmus@hotmail.com

(The Region will pay for overnight accommodations for each minister or delegate).



Saint Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, MO

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN FELLOWSHIP



*On July 22, members of the St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity enjoyed some very nice fellowship, picnic style, at Immaculate Conception Parish in Arnold, MO.*

# THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN NEW CANDIDATES

## ADMISSIONS

AUGUST 20, 2023

ST. PETER

FRATERNITY



*On August 20th, Edith Barker, ofs and Pete Joergensen, ofs were admitted into the Order and to St. Peter Fraternity in Belleville, IL.*



**Members of the St. Peter Fraternity receiving Edith & Pete into the Order.**



**Edith & Pete's families!**

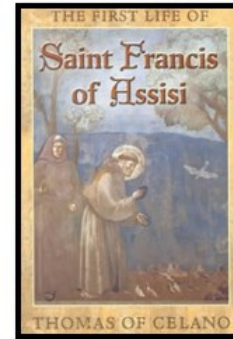
# THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN THE FRANCISCAN TAU CROSS

BY  
BONNIE SABIN,  
OFS

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI  
FRATERNITY



The first biographer of Saint Francis, Brother Thomas of Celano, wrote: "He [Francis] favored the sign of the TAU over all others. With it alone he signed letters he sent and painted it on the walls of cells everywhere."  
(*Treatise on the Miracles*, No. 3)



Alpha Α α	Iota Ι ι	Rho Ρ ρ
Beta Β β	Kappa Κ κ	Sigma Σ σ
Gamma Γ γ	Lambda Λ λ	Tau Τ τ
Delta Δ δ	Mu Μ μ	Upsilon Υ υ
Epsilon Ε ε	Nu Ν ν	Phi Φ φ
Zeta Ζ ζ	Xi Ξ ξ	Chi Χ χ
Eta Η η	Omicron Ο ο	Psi Ψ ψ
Theta Θ θ	Pi Π π	Omega Ω ω

[www.5728.com](http://www.5728.com)

**What is the Tau and why was it so important for St. Francis?**

The Franciscan Tau cross is a simple cross, based on the Greek letter T, which is pronounced **taw**. It predates the cross of the Crucifixion, and for this reason it is also called the Old Testament cross.

## The Tau in the Bible

The two clearest references to the Tau in the Old Testament are **Job 31:35** and **Ezekiel 9**. At the end of his long speech Job says, "Here is my Tau, let Shaddai answer me." That meant something like, "Here is my **signature**; I have now finished speaking. Let the Almighty answer me." Francis also used the Tau as a signature.

In Ezekiel, the prophet has a vision in which God calls a man clothed in linen, who has writing instruments at his side, to go through Jerusalem and sign a Tau upon the foreheads of **those who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it** (Ez 9:3-4). In the destruction of the city, all those who were signed with a Tau were spared. Those persons "belonged" to the Lord, they were consecrated. It is clearly a prophecy of our Redemption through the Cross of Christ. The Old Testament Tau cross is an "anticipatory cross."

## THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN THE FRANCISCAN TAU CROSS

BY  
**BONNIE  
SABIN, OFS**

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In the New Testament, in the **Book of Revelation** the word “Tau” does not appear, but the visions of St. John are closely linked with this symbol. When the text speaks of “the seal printed on the foreheads of the servants” it clearly alludes to Ezekiel 9 and the Tau printed on the foreheads of the penitents.



*Revelation 7:1-8*  
Painting by Christopher L. Scott

### **St. Anthony the Hermit and the Tau**

Tradition holds that in the 3rd century, **St. Anthony**, the Egyptian hermit who is considered the **father of monasticism**, carried a Tau cross. St. Francis was familiar with the Order that followed in the footsteps of St. Anthony, a community which was active in Assisi during Francis’s time. This is likely where he first encountered the Tau Cross.



## THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN THE FRANCISCAN TAU CROSS

BY  
BONNIE SABIN,  
OFS

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### The IV Lateran Council

It was an extraordinary homily on the passage of Ezekiel 9 that inspired Francis to adopt the Tau as his signature and as the symbol his Order. In 1215 Pope Innocent III opened the **IV Lateran Council**.

Greatly desiring reform in the Church, he invited all superiors and founders of religious Orders, new and old, to participate. Francis, whose Order had been approved six years



Pope Innocent used God's words in Ezekiel: "Pass through the city and mark with the Tau the foreheads of the men who weep for the abominations..." and he exhorted all those present to be **champions of the Tau and the Cross**.

How did Francis react? He took the Pope's message personally to heart. The Pope had said "Mercy will be granted to those who bear the **Tau, a mark of penance and renewal in Christ**."



From then on Francis wanted to sign himself and all his brothers with the Tau; it became the symbol of the Order's mission.

The Tau colored Francis' entire spiritual life, which became even more a spirituality of the Cross and of salvation. This shines through his prayers, for example his Office of the Passion. It ultimately led him to the wounds of Christ.

# THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN THE FRANCISCAN TAU CROSS

BY  
BONNIE SABIN,  
OFS

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## The role of Secular Franciscans in the world and in society

In *implementing the Rule of the SFO* and in *nurturing the relationships* among the other branches of the Franciscan family and the Church, Secular Franciscans find their role. This implementing and nurturing means seeking *perfect charity expressed in concrete action*, whether that be simple “everyday” love and action for one’s fellow Franciscans and the persons we interact with each day, or a more organized apostolate of the Fraternity.

At the same time, Secular Franciscans know and embrace their **need for daily continuous conversion**. We are *brothers and sisters “of penance,”* and the Tau we wear is a sign of the newness of Christian life.

In Ez 9:8-9 Ezekiel falls facedown and cries out, “Oh, Lord GOD, when You pour out Your wrath on Jerusalem, will You destroy the entire remnant of Israel?” God replies, *“The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of bloodshed, and the city is full of perversity.”* In our world today, on our whole planet iniquities abound, amplified by technology and the values of godless secularism. Being brothers and sisters of penance is more important than ever!

Sometimes Francis would stretch out his arms to show his friars that *their habit was also the Tau Cross*. Each Friar was to be an active symbol of the crucified Christ who saved us and embraces us.



THE  
RULE  
OF THE  
SECULAR  
FRANCISCAN  
ORDER



## THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN THE FRANCISCAN TAU CROSS

BY  
BONNIE SABIN,  
OFS



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Since St. Francis preached simplicity and humility, the Tau cross in jewelry is typically very simple. Quite often, a simple wooden cross is worn on a cord.

It is in effect the Secular Franciscan habit. SFOs should wear it in some form or another (as a necklace, a pin, a ring, etc.) and be buried with a Tau.

Our current minister general, Tibor Kauser, OFS, said that while we do not wear an outward garment as a habit, we should “wear” visible signs of being a Secular Franciscan: kindness, love of God, love of others, a readiness to serve, simple lifestyle, prayer life, sacramental life, commitment to our Order, commitment to one’s Fraternity, visibly living from Gospel to life and from life to Gospel.

Do you have a prayer that you recite as you are putting on your Tau every day? Here is a suggestion from our latest edition of *Tau-USA* (Spring 2023):

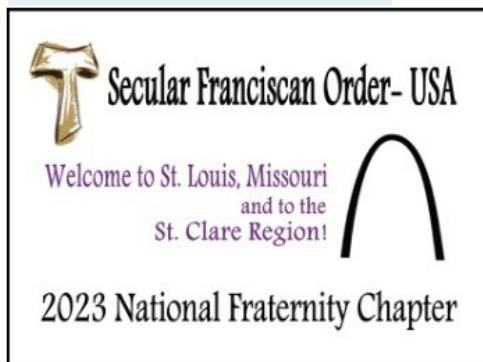


***“May I walk toward Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis today and always.”***

***Walking through Assisi July 2022  
My husband Ed and I spent our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in Italy***



## THE NATIONAL CHAPTER GATHERING IN ST. LOUIS



As you know, we hosted the 2023 National Fraternity Chapter in St. Louis! Thanks to all who volunteered from the Region to help— Connie Shanks, Maureen Gray, Tom Brinkmann, Padraic McGrath, Jan Parker & the Little Flower Players (from San Damiano Fraternity).

I also had the help from many of my fellow parishioners from St. Gerard Majella Parish- Mary & Jeff Desits, Tara Scherer, Barbara Axmacher, Kara Lydon, Barb Frein, Dan & Kim Dykas and my husband, Tom Blood.

The Chapter gathering was wonderful, highlighted by our special Mass August 25th where we all celebrated together at the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis on the Feast Day of Saint Louis, King of France, our patron. Fr. Tom Nairn, OFM, current Provincial of the Sacred Heart Province (OFM) was the main celebrant.

The Chapter was also a Fraternal & Pastoral Visitation, led by Dina Shabalina, OFS from Ukraine & Fr. Carlos Compos Julve, TOR from Peru. They loved St. Louis and the Arch!

And if you hadn't had a chance to read the article that Jennifer Brinker recently wrote in the *St. Louis Review* about Saint Louis, King of France, and the Secular Franciscans, here it is!

<https://www.archstl.org/secular-franciscans-are-called-to-embrace-the-gospel-in-the-ordinary-circumstances-of-their-lives-8914>

The next edition of the next TAU-USA magazine will contain much on the Chapter gathering. In the meantime, you can visit the national website and Facebook to see more photos.

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/>

Peace & All Good,

Chris Blood, OFS



AUGUST 22-27, 2023  
ST. LOUIS, MO



Fr. Carlos Compos Julve TOR &  
Dina Shabalina, OFS



The relic of Saint Louis, King of France, on display for us at the 'Old Cathedral' on August 25.

# THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN FORMATION

## 2023 Regional Formation Workshop

Formation Workshop– Saint Clare Region

Initial Formation (Candidacy to Profession)

November 11, 2023 9:30am-12pm

Venue: Zoom

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting](#)

Participants: All fraternities of the St. Clare Region

Formation Team: Regional Formation & Servant of God Thea Bowman

Emerging Fraternity & Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity

### 2023 Regional Formation Workshop

Saturday,

November 11

9:30am-12pm

Via Zoom Meeting

No	Agenda Topics	Presenters & Speakers	Time
1.	Welcome greetings	Ms. Annapoorna Mary, OFS, Regional Formation Director & Ms. Christine Blood, OFS, Regional Minister, St. Clare Region	2 minutes
2.	Opening prayer & blessing & Introduction/ Liturgy of the Hours	Spiritual Assistant of the hosting Fraternity: / Deacon or priest present	10 minutes
3.	Praise & Worship & Reflection	Ms. Annapoorna Mary, OFS, Regional Formation Director, St. Clare Region, MO, USA	10 minutes
4.	Franciscan Saints/SOG	SOG Thea Bowman & SOG Julia Greeley : Ms. Becky Bouck, OFS, Formation Director, Joyful Servants Fraternity	15 minutes
5.	Candidacy Over view & The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order: [[FUN Manual 207- 252] pages]	Annapoorna Mary, OFS, RFD ,	10 minutes
6.	JPIC with synopsis of Catholic Social Teaching : TBA: 15 minutes[ FUN pages 253- 273]	Servant of God Sr. Thea Bowman Emerging Fraternity	15 minutes
7.	Francis and his approach to Divinity :TBA: 15 minutes[ 274-296]	Servant of God Sr. Thea Bowman Emerging Fraternity	10 minutes
8.	Franciscan Theology, Tradition & Spirituality: 15 minutes [ 297- 327]: [National Executive council member]	Franciscan Journey: Jan Parker	15
	<b>Break</b>	<b>Break</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>
9.	Profession:: REC [ FUN pgs 327-344]	Mr. Pat Smith, OFS, Minister St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity & Regional Treasurer & REC.	10 minutes
10	Penitence and Conversion: TBA: 15 minutes [FUN pgs 345- 362]	Mr. Stan Kiger, OFS, Minister, San Damiano Fraternity	15 minutes
11	Profession witness talk TBA	Padre Pio Fraternity Mr. Shawn, OFS, Minister & Team: Mr. Hugh Protzel , OFS & Mr. Bob Antil, OFS[ St. Padre Pio Fraternity]	20 minutes
12	Profession Preparation, Documents & Ritual:	Christine Blood, OFS, Regional Minister. St. Clare Region, MS, USA	10 minutes
13.	Closing prayer	Spiritual Assistant of the Fraternity: Mary Wainscott, SA	3 minutes

OUR  
REGION'S  
MINISTERS  
BY  
FRATERNITY

**Followers of Francis Fraternity**

**Minister:** Ken Livingston OFS  
1852 E Stoneridge Dr  
Springfield, MO 65803  
417-368-0316  
[kenlivingstonofs@gmail.com](mailto:kenlivingstonofs@gmail.com)

**St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity**

**Minister:** Dcn. Steve Schisler OFS  
1916 Laverne Dr.  
Arnold, MO 63010  
636-296-0806  
[sschisler59@yahoo.com](mailto:sschisler59@yahoo.com)

**Joyful Servants Fraternity**

**Minister:** Connie Shanks OFS  
922 Brookside Ln  
Rolla, MO 65401  
573-776-3434  
[connieshanks@gmail.com](mailto:connieshanks@gmail.com)

**St. Joan of Arc Fraternity**

**Minister:** Kim Hoffman-Neal OFS  
1536 Michael St  
Memphis TN 38111  
816-550-9614  
[horselover.2050@yahoo.com](mailto:horselover.2050@yahoo.com)

**Monte La Verna Fraternity**

**Minister:** Christine Domagalski  
OFS  
6133 Old Alton Rd  
Granite City, Il 62040  
618-304-2575  
[justintimetaxes@gmail.com](mailto:justintimetaxes@gmail.com)

**St. Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity**

**Acting Minister:** Shawn Asmus  
OFS  
3230 Ridge Rd  
Jackson, MO 63755  
573 204-7688  
[shawnasmus@hotmail.com](mailto:shawnasmus@hotmail.com)

**San Damiano Fraternity**

**Minister:** Stan Kiger OFS  
444 Forsheer Dr.  
Chesterfield, MO 63017  
636-399-8384  
[slks5@aol.com](mailto:slks5@aol.com)

**St. Peter Fraternity**

**Minister:** Roger Mueller OFS  
1830 Raab Avenue  
Belleville, IL 62226  
618-277-5147  
[dmrImueller@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dmrImueller@sbcglobal.net)

**St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity**

**Minister:** Ronald Sansone OFS  
137 W St. Louis St  
Pacific, MO 63069  
314-575-1771  
[charlene@ronsansone.com](mailto:charlene@ronsansone.com)

**Servant of God Thea Bowman  
Emerging Fraternity**

**Acting Minister:** Tom Brinkmann  
OFS  
4142 Castleman Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63110  
314-488-5089  
[tbrnkmnn@gmail.com](mailto:tbrnkmnn@gmail.com)

## St. Clare Regional Council

**Minister:**

Christine Blood, OFS  
11726 Fawnridge Dr  
St. Louis, MO 63131  
314-973-9195

[christinebloodofs@gmail.com](mailto:christinebloodofs@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:**

Pat Smith, OFS  
1530 Liguori Dr.  
Barnhart, MO 63012  
573-310-3472

[pat.smith.barnhart@gmail.com](mailto:pat.smith.barnhart@gmail.com)

**Councilor:**

Tom Brinkmann, OFS  
4142 Castleman Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63110  
314-488-5089

[tbrnkmnn@gmail.com](mailto:tbrnkmnn@gmail.com)

**Vice-Minister:**

Robert Prior, OFS  
107 Fox Terrace Cir  
Nixa, MO 65714  
417-234-7803

[rm\\_prior@yahoo.com](mailto:rm_prior@yahoo.com)

**Formation Director:**

Annapoorna Mary, OFS  
1528 Mount Moriah Rd  
Memphis, TN38117  
901-405-1571

[maryannapoorna@yahoo.com](mailto:maryannapoorna@yahoo.com)

**Councilor:**

Gloria Smith, OFS  
1530 Liguori Dr.  
Barnhart, MO 63012  
573-310-3103

[canterbury609@earthlink.net](mailto:canterbury609@earthlink.net)

**Secretary:**

Maureen Gray OFS  
4051 S Parkhill Ct  
Springfield, Mo 65807  
660-537-0421

[mgraysfo@gmail.com](mailto:mgraysfo@gmail.com)

**Councilor:**

Connie Shanks, OFS  
922 Brookside Ln  
Rolla MO 65401  
573-776-3434

[connieshanks@gmail.com](mailto:connieshanks@gmail.com)

**Spiritual Assistant:**

Fr. Pio Jackson, OFM  
P.O. Box 278  
7992 St. Francis Lane  
Dittmer, MO 63024  
314 620-3354

[pio.ofm@juno.com](mailto:pio.ofm@juno.com)

