



# Clarion

## NEWSLETTER

### SAINT CLARE REGION

## LOOKING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD!

*It's been a tremendous blessing serving as your regional minister these past three years! I could not have done it without the wonderful support of our regional council, our fraternities and our ministers!*

*Being able to visit each fraternity, meet with its members and councils, has given me such an appreciation of our common commitment to our vocations and our order. Quite frankly, every time I leave after spending time with our fraternities I am thoroughly impressed and peacefully reassured .*

*Though our present council will be discontinuing on June 8th, I am looking ahead to our next council and all that we will be called to do. Looking back with love and appreciation, looking forward with trust and mercy. St. Francis said it so perfectly, "Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing." Each day is a new start to make a difference in the world around us, to soak up God's mercy and love for us, and to try again to be the best version of ourselves for the Lord. AMEN!*

***Our Regional Council Elections are Saturday, June 8th, 2024 at St. Gerard Majella Catholic Church, 1969 Dougherty Ferry Rd, St. Louis, MO 63122. We will start with 9am Mass, followed by business, elections and lunch. All are welcome! Ministers (or their representatives) must be present to vote. If you have any questions or would like to place your name in consideration for an office, please contact me or Connie Shanks 573-776-3434.***

*With Peace & Love Always! Chris Blood, OFS*

## May 2024

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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.

## THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN FRATERNITY



### ***St. Joan of Arc Fraternity, Memphis TN***

*Diana Garavelli, Helen Lenahan, Mike Lenahan, Susan Thomas, Elizabeth Jose, Mike Bardos, Arumugam Gurusamy, Annapoorna Mary, Nancy Adair, Kim Hoffman-Neal and Kathryn Byer. Not pictured: Rick Neal, Melanie Miles & Deacon Norman Alexander.*

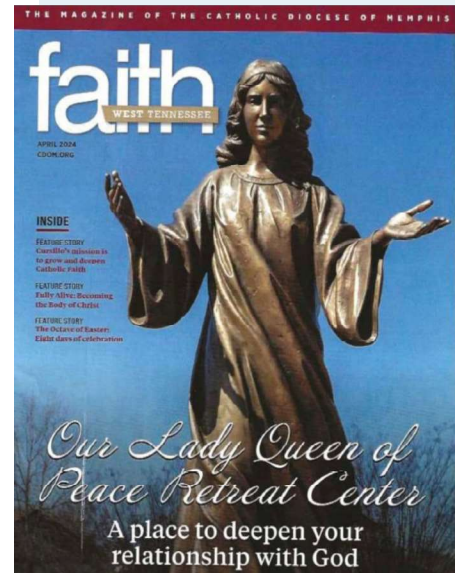
In the April 2024 edition of 'Faith West Tennessee' (the magazine of the Diocese of Memphis), our very own St. Joan of Arc Fraternity was highlighted. It's an excellent article, here are some excerpts:

*In 1872 at St. Mary Catholic Church in downtown Memphis, a group of inspired lay men and women gathered to form an intentional community rooted in the example of St. Francis of Assisi. They were inspired to do so by Franciscan priests at St. Mary's and the Franciscan Sisters at St. Joseph Hospital in downtown Memphis.*

*The Memphis Secular Franciscans serve material and spiritual needs of the poor, the outcast and the socially marginalized in a wide variety of ministerial settings. Their purpose is to foster growth and development in Christian values through their work in various ministries and local parishes throughout the Catholic Diocese of Memphis.*

*Alongside their primary vocations, they are involved with financially supporting a Franciscan Family Apostolate in Kerala, India, which assists the poor to self-sufficiency. Additionally, they have a robust blessing bag ministry which assists the homeless, and they work with Project Outreach, a ministry that provides food, scholarships and school supplies to those in need in Fayette County.*

*Secular Franciscans have a deep heritage in Memphis and throughout the world. There are 13 professed Secular Franciscans in the Diocese of Memphis, with one in formation. The Order has been weaved into the very fabric of the Church for more than 800 years and, with the grace of God, they will continue to remind us of the life of St. Francis of Assisi.*



## THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN PROFESSIONS!



### PROFESSIONS

Edith Barber OFS, Pete Joergensen OFS, and Carol Kleinert OFS are professed into the Secular Franciscan Order at St. Teresa of the Child Jesus Catholic Church in Belleville IL on Sunday, March 17.

Rev. Stanley Konieczny OFS was the celebrant and presider.  
Roger Mueller OFS, minister, received their professions.

March 17, 2024

St Peter Fraternity

Belleville, IL

*“I, by the grace of God, renew my baptismal promises and consecrate myself to the service of his Kingdom. Therefore, in my secular state I promise to live all the days of my life the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order by observing its rule of life. May the grace of the Holy Spirit, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our holy father Saint Francis, and the fraternal bonds of community always be my help, so that I may reach the goal of perfect Christian love.”*

# THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN VIRTUAL RETREATS!

## ST CLARE REGION VIRTUAL LENTEN RETREAT

MARCH 9, 2024



Deacon Steve  
Schisler, OFS

## 2024 Regional Formation Retreat

### “Passion of Christ & Secular Franciscan Way of Life”

Formation Team: Regional Formation, SOG Thea  
Fraternity, & St. Joan of Arc Fraternity



FULL RETREAT  
RECORDING



[https://drive.google.com/file/  
d/18zSz4mk6sssE4VgRX4-  
PS10IOmWr\\_QHw/view?](https://drive.google.com/file/d/18zSz4mk6sssE4VgRX4-PS10IOmWr_QHw/view?)

## THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN SERVICE ON THE COUNCIL



### Newly Elected Council Members (left to right):

## St. Joan of Arc Fraternity

MEMPHIS, TN

Elections- April 2024

*“The local fraternity becomes the basic unit of the whole Order and a visible sign of the Church, the community of love.”*

*Article 22 of the  
OFS Rule*

(Chris Blood OFS, Regional Minister, Presider)

Mike Lenahan OFS, Treasurer

Melanie Miles OFS, Vice-Minister

Rick Neal OFS, Councilor

Kim Hoffman-Neal OFS, Minister

(Bob Janota OFS, Ecclesial Witness)

Arumugam Gurusamy OFS, Formation Director

Mike Bardos OFS, Secretary

**CONGRATULATIONS AND  
THANK YOU FOR SERVICING!**

# THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL WITHIN A RETREAT

By Deacon Joe Puglis

## 2024 Regional Retreat

## Il Ritiro Franciscan Retreat Center Dittmer, MO

April 5-7, 2024

April 7, 2024, being Divine Mercy Sunday, we thought that God's Divine Mercy would make a great topic for our retreat, on the same weekend that the Church celebrates its Feast Day.

The Retreat was held at [IL RITIRO, Franciscan Retreat Center](#) in Dittmer, MO.

We had 21 retreatants including our Regional Minister, Mrs. Chris Blood, OFS, our Fraternity Minister, Mrs. Connie Shanks, OFS, our Retreat Leader, Deacon Joe Puglis, OFS, and many other notable and spiritually beautiful Secular Franciscans, Candidates and Inquirers.

This summary will not encompass the entire retreat's series of discussions, but will include a few of the reference items that were used in the presentations.

**[Naaman:](#)** A story of Mercy and Grace, Baptism and Conversion. Our personal response to God's Mercy.

**[Jonah:](#)** A story of God's boundless and Divine Mercy in a larger, grander context, Nineveh. Jonah's refusal to accept God's mercy. And our call to share the Mercy of God, the Mercy of Jesus with our world (even our enemies).

A few other fun or informative references on Jonah:

A creative, slightly sarcastic, but fun, and reflective viewpoint on Jonah –

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/jonah/>

More information and references can be found in this link:

<https://joyfuleservantsofs.wordpress.com/2024/04/07/2024-regional-retreat-divine-mercy/>

PHOTOS FROM THE RETREAT ON THE NEXT PAGE!

# THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL WITHIN A RETREAT

## 2024 Regional Retreat

## Il Ritiro Franciscan Retreat Center Dittmer, MO

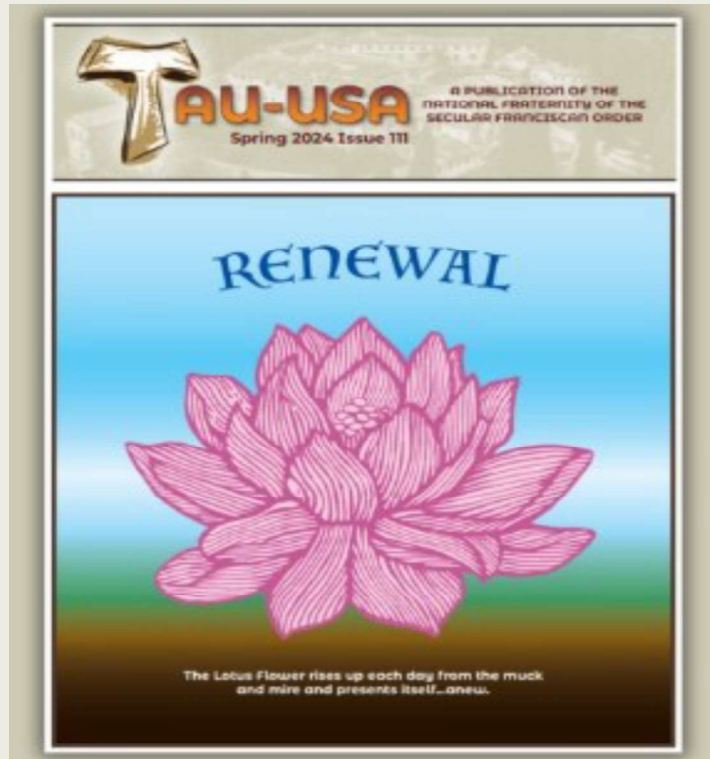
April 5-7, 2024



## NATIONAL OFS-USA NEWS!

THE LATEST  
EDITION OF  
THE TAU-USA  
MAGAZINE IS  
ONLINE ONLY

CLICK ON  
THE PHOTO  
TO READ  
AND  
DOWNLOAD



## Celebrating the Gift of the Stigmata 1224-2024

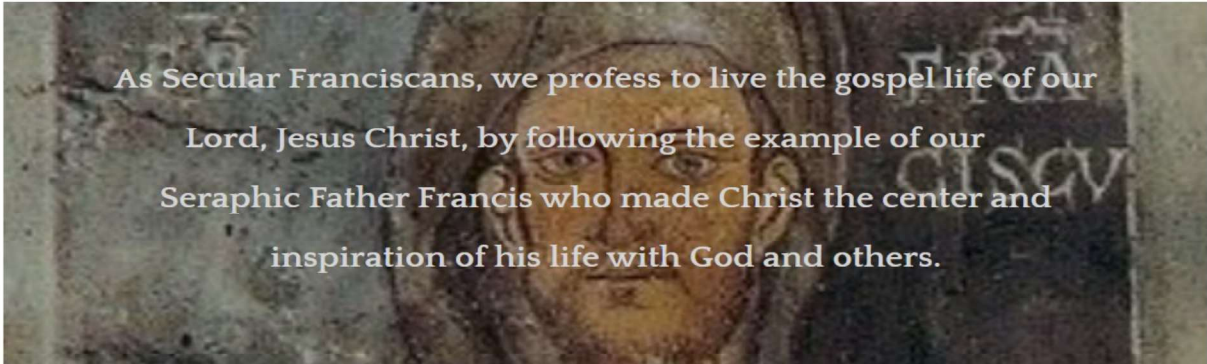


PLEASE GO TO OFS-USA WEBSITE OR CLICK ON THE PHOTO ABOVE TO LEARN  
MORE ABOUT THE GIFT OF THE STIGMATA, ONE OF THE CENTENARY  
CELEBRATIONS. THERE IS A WEALTH OF INFORMATION THERE.

[SECULARFRANCISCANSUSA.ORG](http://SECULARFRANCISCANSUSA.ORG)

ST CLARE REGION SECULAR  
FRANCISCAN ORDER USA

WELCOME    OUR FRATERNITIES    FORMATION    CLARION NEWSLETTERS



As Secular Franciscans, we profess to live the gospel life of our Lord, Jesus Christ, by following the example of our Seraphic Father Francis who made Christ the center and inspiration of his life with God and others.

Welcome to the  
St. Clare Region  
of the Secular  
Franciscan Order USA!

St Clare Region Website: [www.stclareregionofs.org](http://www.stclareregionofs.org)

### Our Region's Website!

On our website we have information on all of our fraternities, our regional formation workshops and resources, our archived newsletters, and more!

As we continue to add and build the site, please email us to add more information on your fraternity, your formation suggestions, your newsletters...

The website is designed to be a repository for ALL of our fraternities. Let's build this together!

#### Followers of Francis Fraternity

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#### San Damiano Fraternity

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#### St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity

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#### St. Joan of Arc Fraternity

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#### St. Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity

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#### Servant of God Thea Bowman

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