



Clarion

NEWSLETTER

SAINT CLARE REGION

“AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND MADE HIS DWELLING AMONG US...” John 1:14

“We are invited into the stillness of the creche, to be fed meditation and prayer, and to let the depths of His Love and Light rise within us. We, like Francis, are to live out our baptismal call to holiness and to awaken any aspect of ourselves that has grown too comfortable with the miracle of the Eucharist. As we prepare our hearts for Christ, we pray to be transformed, so we may bring Jesus into a world so in need of His Light.” Katherine Svec, OFS (2023) (Stations of the Creche Book)

During this time of year, we’re called to spend more time in quiet praise and thanksgiving because the greatest gift of all time is about to come upon us: the incarnate Son of God, the Word among us.

Just as we prepare our hearts this time of year to be the cribs of Jesus’ dwelling in us, we also must always be prepared to share the gift of Jesus to others readily and unreservedly, as Saint Francis did.

Let the words we share with each other be filled with love and respect. Let those words show His incarnational love in you from your transformed heart, by your words and your works.

It is with much love that I would like to tell each member of our region my thankfulness and joy for your continued dedication to our simple way of life, to your fraternities, to the order, and especially to those who will be called to join us. What a special gift we have been given!

Peace and All Good, Always! Chris Blood, OFS

Nov/Dec 2024

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THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN SERVING ON A FRATERNITY COUNCIL



On November 16, 2024, the JOYFUL SERVANTS Fraternity held their elections. Their newly elected council is (left to right): Deacon Joe Puglis, OFS, Spiritual Assistant; Mary Ann Puglis, OFS, Secretary; John Kemper, OFS, Treasurer; Mary Kate Saltzman, OFS, Councilor; Connie Shanks, OFS, Councilor; Becky Bouck, OFS, Formation Director; Debbie Noland, OFS, Minister; Terrie Foltz, OFS, Vice Minister. Maureen Gray, OFS, Presider and Deacon Joe Puglis, OFS, Witness.



And on December 7, 2024, the ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI Fraternity held their elections. Their newly elected council is (left to right): Christine Blood, OFS, Presider; Bonnie Sabin, OFS, Spiritual Assistant, Deacon Steve Schisler, OFS, Minister; Leena Lewis, OFS, Councilor; Sally Bartholomew, OFS, Councilor; Debbie Schisler, OFS, Treasurer; Mimi Siebert, OFS, Formation Director; Tim McGee, OFS, Vice Minister; Tom Brinkmann, OFS, Witness.

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN PROFESSION!

PROFESSION

Mary Kate
Saltzman, OFS

September 7, 2024

Joyful Servants
Fraternity

Fulton, MO



Mary Kate Saltzman, OFS. Her profession was at St Peter Church in Fulton, MO. Fr. Alexander Gabriel was the Celebrant. Many were at Mass to celebrate this wonderful occasion, along with her family and fraternity. Congratulations, Mary Kate!!

"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 PROFESSION!

PROFESSION

Jay Marquitz, OFS

October 20, 2024

St Anthony of Padua
Fraternity

St. Louis, MO



Jay Marquitz, OFS. His profession was at St. Anthony of Padua Church in St. Louis, MO. Ron Sansone, OFS, received his profession.

Many were at Mass to celebrate this wonderful occasion.
Congratulations, Jay!

"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 AT OUR REGIONAL CHAPTER

Saint Clare Regional Chapter Gathering

Saturday, November 9,
2024 in Rolla, MO



Our 2024 Regional Chapter was a huge success! We were able to all come together in Rolla, MO. The REC and most of the fraternities were represented.

We began the day with Morning Prayer followed by introductions of the REC and the Ministers (or representatives). Every fraternity was given a copy of the NEW Rule Book which was recently published by the NEC. All Fraternities were encouraged to purchase more for their members.

Annapoorna Mary, OFS, Regional Formation Director, gave a wonderful talk on JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation).

Deborah Atherton, an inquirer with the SOG Thea Bowman Emerging Fraternity, shared her faith journey towards the Secular Franciscan Order. Thank you!!

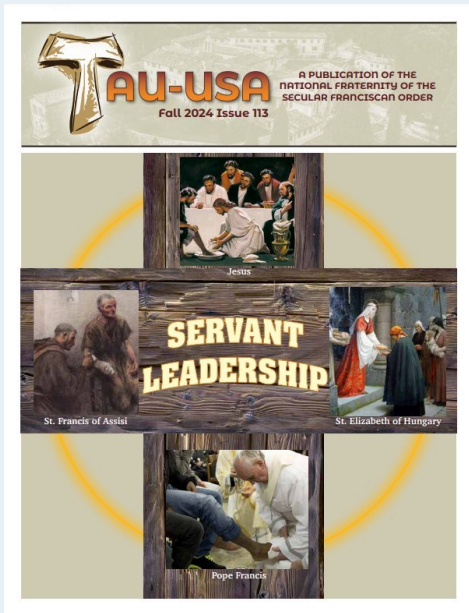
We assembled Blessing Bags to be given to those in need as we meet along the way.

We shared lunch and fellowship and Chris Blood presented the 'State of the Region' and the National Chapter. We concluded with some business and budget discussions. * Please note the Fair Share for the Region is \$60 for 2024. This approved by the Regional Fraternity Council on 12/4/2024.



THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN THE NATIONAL CHAPTER AND THE NEW TAU-USA MAGAZINE- FALL 2024

THE LATEST EDITION OF OUR
NATIONAL MAGAZINE, THE
TAU-USA IS AVAILABLE ONLINE:



CLICK ON THE PHOTO TO READ

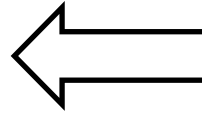
OR VISIT THE

NATIONAL WEBSITE:

WWW.SECULARFRANCISCANUSA.ORG

WWW.SECULARFRANCISCANUSA.ORG

The National Chapter was held in Phoenix, Arizona in September, 2024. The full summary of the Chapter can be found in the fall edition of the TAU-USA magazine. You can read this by clicking on the photo of the TAU-USA to the left.



Highlights included:

Celebrating the 800th Anniversary of Saint Francis receiving the Stigmata

Visiting the St. Vincent de Paul Center

Meeting some new Regional Ministers

Sharing in fellowship with all throughout the Chapter's time

Building up the community of the National Fraternity Council.



Listen. Discern. Go Forth.

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN RETREATS!



Christmas Zoom Retreat

Led by Deacon Joe Puglis
Joyful Servants Fraternity

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Saturday, January 4, 2025
10am—12pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88002939213>

St. Clare Region Retreat

Led by Fr. Frank Grinko, OFM

INFORMATION AND SIGN UP FORMS
WILL BE EMAILED TO
EVERY FRATERNITY
IN JANUARY, 2025

Thursday, August 7 to Sunday, August 10, 2025

Pallottine Renewal Center

SAVE THE DATE NOW

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL IN THE CHRISTMAS CRECHE

Saint Francis and the Christmas Crèche

What is the origin of the Nativity Scene (Crèche)?

The story of the origin of the Christmas Crèche rests with a very holy man, St. Francis of Assisi. In late December 1223, St. Francis, a deacon, was visiting the town of Greccio (Italy) to celebrate Christmas.

Greccio was a small town built on a mountainside overlooking a beautiful valley in Italy. St. Francis realized that the chapel of the Franciscan hermitage would be too small to hold the congregation for Midnight Mass. So he found a niche in the rock near the town square and set up the altar. However, this Midnight Mass would be very special, unlike any other Midnight Mass.

St. Bonaventure (d. 1274) in his *Life of St. Francis of Assisi* tells the story the best:



"It happened in the third year before his death, that in order to excite the inhabitants of Greccio to commemorate the nativity of the Infant Jesus with great devotion, [St. Francis] was determined to keep it with all possible solemnity; and lest he should be accused of lightness or novelty, he asked and obtained the permission of the sovereign Pontiff. Then he prepared a manger, and brought hay, and an ox and an ass to the place appointed. The brethren were summoned, the people ran together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that venerable night was made glorious by many and brilliant lights and sonorous psalms of praise. The man of God [St. Francis] stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety, bathed in tears and radiant with joy; the Holy Gospel was chanted by Francis, the Levite of Christ. Then he preached to the people around the nativity of the poor King; and being unable to utter His name for the tenderness of His love, He called Him the Babe of Bethlehem. A certain valiant and veracious soldier, Master John of Greccio, who, for the love of Christ, had left the warfare of this world, and become a dear friend of this holy man, affirmed that he beheld an Infant marvelously beautiful, sleeping in the manger, whom the blessed Father Francis embraced with both his arms, as if he would awake Him from sleep. This vision of the devout soldier is credible, not only by reason of the sanctity of him that saw it, but by reason of the miracles which afterwards confirmed its truth.

For example of Francis, if it be considered by the world, is doubtless sufficient to excite all hearts which are negligent in the faith of Christ; and the hay of that manger, being preserved by the people, miraculously cured all diseases of cattle, and many other pestilences; God thus in all things glorifying his servant, and witnessing to the great efficacy of his holy prayers by manifest prodigies and miracles."

Although the story is long old, the message is still clear for us today. Our own Nativity scenes which rest under our Christmas trees are a visible reminder of that night when our Savior was born.

May we never forget to see in our hearts the little Babe of Bethlehem who came to save us from sin. We must never forget that the wood of the manger that held Him so securely would one day give way to the wood of the cross. May we too tenderly embrace Him with all our love as did St. Francis. Amen.

Peace & All Good, Christine Blood, OFS

Artwork by Howard Schroeder, OFS

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SAVE THE DATES RECAP!

CHRISTMAS

ZOOM

RETREAT

- ◆ Christmas Zoom Day Retreat
Saturday, January 4, 2025 10am-12pm
Led by Deacon Joe Puglis
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88002939213>

LENTEN RETREAT

- ◆ LENTEN REGIONAL WORKSHOP
March 2025 via Zoom

JPIC WORKSHOP

- ◆ JPIC ANIMATOR WORKSHOP
June /July 2025 via Zoom

REGIONAL

RETREAT

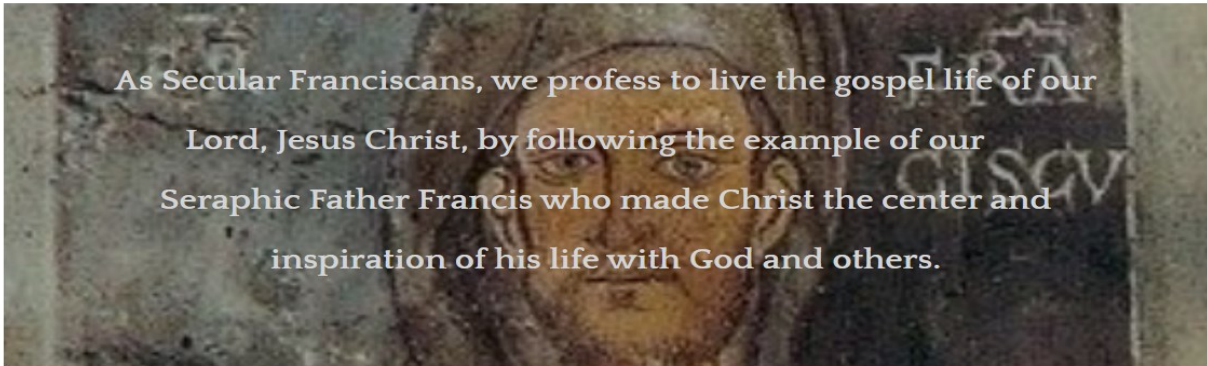
- ◆ St. Clare Regional Retreat
August 7-10, 2025
Pallottine Renewal Center
Florissant, MO
FULL INFORMATION AND SIGN UPS WILL BE
EMAILED BY THE END OF JANUARY 2025
Mark Your Calendars Now!

VISITATION

- ◆ OFS-USA National Chapter
September 17-22, 2024
Marriottsville, MD
- ◆ St. Clare Region– Visitation– Fall 2025
- ◆ The 21st Quinquennial Congress
July 29-August 2, 2026
Lexington Griffin Gate Marriott Lexington, KY

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

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

Minister: Ken Livingston OFS
1852 E Stoneridge Dr
Springfield, MO 65803

Joyful Servants Fraternity

Minister: Debbie Noland OFS
PO Box 2008
Camdenton, MO 65020

San Damiano Fraternity

Minister: Jan Parker OFS
190 Rockaway Drive
O'Fallon, MO 63368

St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity

Minister: Ronald Sansone OFS
137 W St. Louis St
Pacific, MO 63069

St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity

Minister: Deacon Steve Schisler
1916 Laverne Drive
Arnold, MO 63010

St. Joan of Arc Fraternity

Minister: Kim Hoffman-Neal OFS
1536 Michael St
Memphis TN 38111

St. Padre Pio Emerging Fraternity

Acting Minister: Shawn Asmus OFS
3230 Ridge Rd
Jackson, MO 63755

St. Peter Fraternity

Minister: Roger Mueller OFS
1830 Raab Avenue
Belleville, IL 62226

Servant of God Thea Bowman

Emerging Fraternity
Acting Minister: Tom Brinkmann OFS
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**St. Clare Regional Council
2024-2027**

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Memphis, TN38117

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