

# *Welcome to our Fall Newsletter*

**September 2025**

**ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA REGION**

**UP TO NOW NEWSLETTER**



**Covering the District of Columbia,  
Central Maryland,  
Southern Pennsylvania, all of Virginia,  
one fraternity in Delaware,  
one fraternity in West Virginia,**

**“Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing”**

**~ St. Francis of Assisi ~**

**2025 ~ Issue 3**

## St. Margaret of Cortona Regional Minister's September 2025 Message

My sisters and brothers, I extend greetings and peace to you, and I pray that you enjoyed your summer with friends and family and were able to take time away on vacation to rest and recharge. As I write this, I am preparing for my own vacation to the West Coast to visit with my daughter and friends.

We have a busy slate of activities coming up in the last few months of the year. The week of September 8-14, our region will be hosting the annual National Chapter of Ministers at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center in Marriottsville, Maryland. The National Executive Council will be joined by the 30 Regional Ministers from across the country, along with certain National Committee heads to discuss the issues that face our National Fraternity that include budget, formation, JPIC, along with other issues. This will also be an elective chapter, meaning that all the positions on the National Executive Council are up for re-election and by Saturday afternoon, September 13<sup>th</sup>, a new National Executive Council will be elected and in place.

Our region is honored to be this year's hosts, and I would like to extend many thanks for all the hard work to prepare for this event conducted by the planning committee consisting primarily of Rita Colleran, Joan Kane, Bob Longo, Bonnie Ng, Ray Glennon, Janice Benton, and Sarah Garcia. I apologize if I have missed anyone.

On the weekend of November 7-9, the annual Regional Chapter of Ministers will be held at Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat House in Bethesda, Maryland. This is where all 31 local fraternity ministers from around our region meet to discuss the status of our region. In addition to our regular agenda, there will also be a Visitation by our National Area Councilor and one of the National Spiritual Assistants to review our operations and administration to give us feedback on our functioning.

December will be preparation for the Annual Report that will be issued on January 1<sup>st</sup>, and most importantly, a spiritual preparation during Advent for the Christmas Season.

As our summer closes out, I wish you all a blessed and safe Labor Day Holiday weekend.

Pax,  
Gary Burton, OFS  
Minister  
Saint Margaret of Cortona Region

## 2024 – 2027 Regional Council

### Regional Minister:

Gary Burton, OFS

### Vice Minister:

Michael Oliver, OFS

### Secretary:

Maria Martinez, OFS

### Treasurer:

Randy Bender, OFS

### Formation Director:

Rita Colleran, OFS

### Area Councilor (N. MD/S. PA):

Michael Huether, OFS

### Area Councilor (MD/DE):

Tobias Harkleroad, OFS

### Area Councilor (Metro-DC):

Mary Tchida Badjo, OFS

### Area Councilors (VA):

Sita Chakrawarti, OFS

### Regional Interfaith/

### Ecumenical Chair:

Mike Huether, OFS

### Regional Spiritual Assistants:

OFM ~ Vacant

OFM Cap ~ Br. Michael Meza

OFM Conv. ~ Vacant

### Appointed Council Positions

#### Regional JPIC Chair:

Pat Boye, OFS

#### Regional Multi-Cultural Chair:

Sita Chakrawarti, OFS

#### Regional Youth and Young

#### Adult Commission Chair:

Carl Stacy, OFS

### Appointed

#### Non-Council Positions

#### Regional Database Manager

#### Regional Newsletter Editor

#### Region Website Administrator

#### Vocations/Archivist

Bob Longo, OFS

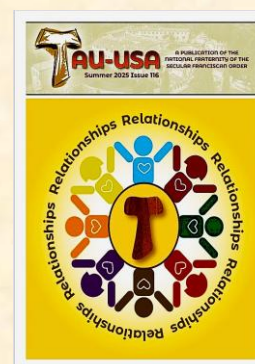
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## National TAU-USA Magazine - Summer Issue

(click on the cover page below)



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*Around the Region*  
*Newly Elected Councils*  
*Portiuncula Fraternity*



**L-R Formation Director:** Beth Benedetto, OFS, **Minister:** Patrick Finney, OFS,  
**Vice Minister:** Ana Finney, OFS, **Secretary:** Vicki Shanholtz, OFS, **Treasurer:** Kathleen York, OFS

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*St. Bonaventure Fraternity*



**Minister:** Jongsoo Lee (Francisco), OFS  
**Vice Minister:** Dong Sik Kim (Boniface), OFS  
**Secretary:** Dong Chan Bae (Antonio), OFS  
**Treasurer:** Chin Ho Kong (Luke), OFS  
**Formation Director:** Mikyong Son (Maria), OFS  
**Councilor:** Sunhyang Martin (Christina), OFS

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*St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity*



**Minister:** Melissa Reed-Konigsdorffer, OFS, **Vice Minister:** Charlie Heyden, OFS,  
**Secretary:** Ray Glennon, OFS, **Treasurer:** Jerry Yu, OFS,  
**Formation Director:** Jeanne Kerins, OFS, **Councilor:** Will Potter, OFS,  
**Councilor:** Ed Burgee, OFS

*Newly Elected Council*

*Tau Fraternity*



**L-R** Kimberley Heatherington, OFS - **Councilor**  
 Joseph Boyle, OFS - **Treasurer**  
 William Richey, OFS - **Secretary**  
 Cynthia Filan-Kim, OFS - **Vice-Minister**  
 Josh Goldberg, OFS - **Minister**  
 Gilbert Donahue, OFS - **Formation Director** (absent)

*New Inquirers*

**Little Flower Fraternity**



Rae Jean  
 Girardi-Gigel

**Sacred Heart Fraternity**



Francis Xavier  
 Cunnane III



Newly Professed

Immaculata Fraternity

L-R Julio Alvarez, OFS  
 Sandra Alvarez, OFS  
 Arlene Rager, OFS  
 Clancy Duncan, OFS



Our Lady Queen of the Angels Fraternity

Newly  
 Professed  
 Deb Diem, OFS >



Vicki Beers, OFS  
 < Sponsor

Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity

L-R Michael O'Rourke, OFS  
 Barbara Henry, OFS  
**Back row**  
 Brother Michael Meza, OFM Cap.



Shawn Dickey, OFS  
**Back row**  
 Father Patrick Monahan, OFM Cap.  
 Elizabeth Brownlee, OFS

St. Clare Korean Fraternity

L-R Mee Hyang Lucia Hong, OFS  
 Don Y. Anno Park, OFS  
 Sookyong Gemma Park, OFS



Temporarily Professed

Ok Chin Clare So, OFS

St. Francis DC Fraternity  
Newly Professed



L-R Constance Mwalagho, OFS

Mary Beth  
 Galanko Klemash, OFS

Events – Little Flower Fraternity



At their Annual >  
 Picnic

< At a Regional Event



## *The Passing of our Franciscan sisters and brothers*



**Our sister, Marlene Feaga, OFS, passed away on March 22, 2025. Marlene was a member of St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity and was professed in this Fraternity on June 15, 1996.**



**Our brother, John Michael McCrory, OFS, passed away on April 28, 2025. John was a member of St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity. John was professed in this Fraternity on February 22, 2003.**



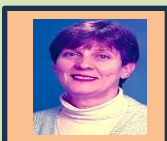
**Our sister, Maria Melida Andrade de Fuentes, OFS, passed away on June 9, 2025. Maria was a member of San Camilo Fraternity and was professed in Del Camino Fraternity on April 30, 2011.**



**Our sister, Patricia Bilz, OFS, passed away on June 14, 2025. Patricia was a member of St. Corad Hanover Fraternity and was professed on September 23, 2001.**



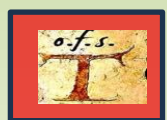
**Our brother, John Whipple, OFS, passed away on June 17, 2025. John was a member of St. John the Beloved Apostle Fraternity. John was professed in this Fraternity on December 15, 1991.**



**Our sister, Mary Jo Johnson OFS, passed away on July 4, 2025. Mary Jo was a member of St. Conrad Annapolis Fraternity and was professed in St. Joseph of Cupertino Fraternity on October 19, 1988.**



**Our brother, Jaime Sanchez, OFS, passed away on August 22, 2025. Jamie was a member of San Camilo Fraternity and was professed on May 13, 2023, in San Camilo Fraternity.**



**Our brother, Jaime Bernardo, OFS, passed away on August 23, 2025. Jamie was a member of St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity and was professed on June 15, 1985, in Mt. St. Sepulchre Fraternity in D.C.**



**Remember, Lord,  
those who have died and  
have gone before us marked  
with the sign of faith,  
especially those for whom  
we now pray. May these  
and all who sleep in Christ  
find in your presence light,  
happiness and peace.  
Through Christ our Lord  
Amen.**





## Interfaith Dialogue In The Contemporary World

This is part two of my series of articles based on the blog, “The Significance of Interfaith Dialogue in the Contemporary World” authored Dialogue Institute Alumnus Danyar M. Ali and from The Journal of Ecumenical Studies.

Spiritual growth and learning is also provided by interfaith dialogue. All religions of the world each carry certain and unique wisdom and insights into life and existence. Through dialogue, people of different faiths can learn by sharing each others insights, thus broadening their horizons. This will enrich the spiritual and moral life of all people and society. The interfaith dialogue may also help individuals understand their own beliefs more deeply and think more critically about their religious issues.


Interfaith dialogue can also play a significant role in securing and strengthening religious liberty and freedom from the religious discrimination and oppression that continues to exist in the world up to this day. When religious concerns work in unison, they are able to work more strongly in protecting the rights of religious minorities no matter the form of oppression. This can lead to a society where everyone can comfortably practice their beliefs without the fear of oppression and discrimination.

Interfaith dialogue provides benefits to education. We can teach our young people how to view differences and comprehend religious diversity through various curricula and joint activities. It is more influential on the new generation in the area of being more open-minded toward religious or cultural differences. When children and youngsters have little to no introduction or exposure to the existence of different religions, they will develop a society where these differences will become a source of fear and hostility rather than an enrichment of social and cultural life.

Another positive aspect of interfaith dialogue is that it can pose a challenge to extremism and even terrorism. Through dialogue, religious servant leaders can stand together against any extreme interpretation of religion and disseminate a message of peace, nonviolence, and tolerance. This is important in saving our youth from the clutches of extreme ideologies. Implanting the idea to society that different religions unite to raise their voices against terrorism and violence gives a powerful message to those who use religion for such violent purposes. Along this same line, it also becomes a means of preserving cultural and religious heritages. The mutual understanding and cooperation of these religious groups. It provides a way for them to help each other in the preservation of sacred sites, values, and traditions that are viewed as important to be maintained in the culture. This does a great deal in preserving some semblance of cultural diversity in the world and preventing the loss of historic sites and ancient traditions. Thus, different religions learn to respect each others sacred sites and work together to preserve them

In my final article of this series, we'll look at other factors that affect interfaith dialogue, both positive and negative.

Peace,  
Mike



*Muslim  
Jewish  
Christian  
Prayer  
for Peace*

O God, you are the source of life and peace. Praised be your name forever.  
We know it is you who turn our minds to thoughts of peace. Hear our prayer in this time of conflict.

Your power changes hearts. Muslims, Christians, and Jews remember, and profoundly affirm, that they are followers of the one God, children of Abraham, brothers and sisters; enemies begin to speak to one another; those who were estranged join hands in friendship; nations seek the way of peace together.

Strengthen our resolve to give witness to these truths by the way we live.

Give to us:

**UNDERSTANDING** that puts an end to strife;  
**MERCY** that quenches hatred; and  
**FORGIVENESS** that overcomes vengeance.

Empower all people to live in your law of love. Amen.

## Let's be the answer....

Living as we do in this 21st century, we are constantly reminded, or perhaps more precisely “bombarded with,” issues of our time - the good, the not so good, and the bad. But lately, an issue that has been pulling most profoundly on my heart has been that of the many who are thirsty and starving. As a nurse, the thought of this particular problem is truly heart breaking, for one of the first, most basic, and primary interventions for a failing body is its hydration and nutritional support. Jesus likewise emphasized the theme of drink and food in His many miracles and parables, to the extent that He even used the word “thirst” on the cross and gave us the Eucharist on the night before He died in an effort to make the importance of replenishing our souls understandable.

To make the problem even more disheartening and perhaps to give it a dramatic flair, we see pictures of children who are hungry and “wasting away.” They are held tightly by those who love them - those who in like manner are starving, those who are praying and hoping that their little ones will not be taken from them through lack of their most basic needs.

I'm sure these people wonder how such tragedy could have befallen them. A few years ago their world (hopefully) was much brighter - their children were safe, thriving, running, playing, “fussing,” smiling, hugging, laughing, caring, loving... They recall going to local stores for food, clothing, gifts, provisions for their homes... Those things and more helped to characterize the lives that have been taken from them - somehow...

It is unimaginable to them that those who are not in need - who live with plenty - can not or just do not help them, perhaps due to indifference, lack of understanding of the severity of the problem, or confusion as to how their surplus can get into the hands of the starving when there is blockage of humanitarian aid in that area of the world.

This suffering has happened despite the many incredible examples of so many individuals who have lived and served others before us - such as St. Teresa of Calcutta, innumerable Franciscan saints, missionaries, and martyrs. This has happened despite God the Father sending His Son to show us how to love, serve, and care for each other.

I am sure that all who are reading this article share similar thoughts as mine, pray ceaselessly for an end to this atrocity as well as to all types of needless suffering and oppression - often feeling that we can offer so little relief to such an enormous problem. But let us persevere in finding a way out for them, a way we can serve in the spirit of self-sacrifice that was shown to us so many years ago, for it is that spirit which we as Franciscans are to bring to our world.

In conclusion, I would like to share a story which to me expressed the importance of being more attentive to the plight of the starving. It was written by Peter Clemens, and was presented by the Catholic Action for Faith and Family team. Here goes:

Many years ago, as a student, I had occasion to travel in Europe during the summer. Without much money, I rented a room from a family in a poor part of town. It was terribly hot. With no air conditioning or fan, I opened the window and hoped I would fall asleep.

Maybe 1:00 AM, dozing in the still and humid night, I became aware of a noise outside my window and would soon discover that it was coming from an adjoining alley behind the house: a scratching noise...long silence...perhaps a full 2 or 3 minutes...scratching again.

Finally, in curiosity I went to the window to investigate. There was a little dog at the door to a neighboring house. He scratched at the door. Then he would stand, head cocked and listening, for a long time...waiting. When he couldn't hear any movement inside, he would scratch again, then stand silent and still...poised to hear any response. I waited with him for some time - cycles of “knocking” and waiting. A door finally opened, and the dog went in. I never heard a word or saw a person....

As with the student in the story, let us be alert to those who are looking to us for attention, and let us also be the ones to quietly answer their needs the best we can.

Joane Kane, OFS  
Little Flower Fraternity



## **JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION**

### **JPIC Reflections – You. Did. It. To. Me.**

“You. Did. It. To. Me.” Those of us familiar with the life of Mother Teresa recognize these words, called the “five finger Gospel,” and taught to her by her own mother when she was a child. Referring to Matthew 25:40, St. Mother Teresa considered this powerful verse to be essentially a summation of the Gospel.

*. . . whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.*  
*Matthew 25:40*

I was reminded of this verse recently as a Washington, DC television news crew interviewed a 67 year old homeless man named David being evicted from a homeless encampment in the Foggy Bottom section of the city. Asked to comment on what was happening to him, David quoted scripture in the on air interview:

*I remember the passage of, ‘As you have done to the least of these, you have done unto me.’ . . . targeting us and persecuting us feels wrong to me,”*  
*David, evicted homeless man*  
*NBC4 News, 14 August 2025*

Given one day notice, the homeless individuals at this location voluntarily packed to leave, but were unable to do so fast enough as many of their tents and personal belongings were bulldozed and dumped into garbage trucks.

An estimated 72 encampments have been removed from the city this year, according to US Park Police. One of the last homeless encampments to be removed, this Foggy Bottom neighborhood site was a place visited periodically by some of us Secular Franciscans. For many years, our Franciscan apostolate has collected and distributed blankets to the homeless on the streets every November, in Washington DC and Northern Virginia.

The individuals at this Foggy Bottom site reportedly asked if there was someone from the government with whom they could discuss the situation, and there was not. As they fled their outdoor home with plastic bags and shopping carts, homeless advocates speculated that while some of them may seek assistance at emergency shelters in Washington, DC, many of the displaced homeless population are walking across the bridge to Northern Virginia or to neighboring Maryland. Over time, similar sweeps have occurred in the suburbs as well.

The issues surrounding the recent DC evictions are complex. Alongside the August deployment of the US National Guard to assume policing duties in the city, the displacement of these homeless encampments are part of a “beautification” initiative that focuses on a three mile radius around the White House. It includes a new ballroom at the White House and higher quality asphalt on streets. Earlier in my own life, I lived and worked in this three mile radius for 10 years. At one point, I lived in a residential building in Foggy Bottom near the recently vacated homeless encampment. My neighbors inside the building were mostly government workers and lobbyists, many of them working at the nearby State Department. I also had neighbors outside the building, at that time mostly homeless men. Both inside and outside, my neighbors were interesting and sometimes a little quirky. I have frequented Foggy Bottom often over the years, watching the homeless community grow and change demographically. When I think about the three mile radius around the White House, in fact it already is quite beautiful in worldly terms, except for the homeless. . . These are not “beautiful people.” They are “for real” people, our Brothers and Sisters. As the Foggy Bottom homeless encampment was being bulldozed, someone held up a sign stating simply that “IT IS NOT A CRIME TO BE POOR.”

### **Homelessness, the Statistics**

Based upon a combination of the city’s homeless population counts and HUD statistics prior to the displacement, the city has an estimated 5000 homeless individuals, with 294 of them estimated to have been living on the streets and being a part of these encampment displacements. While there has been a more than 35 percent decrease in the city’s homeless

population over the past six years, this is not a national trend. More specifically, in Washington, DC, 60 percent are men, 82 percent are black (compared to 41 percent in the city’s total population). In real number terms, the city counts 930 homeless children under the age of 18. And there are 395 homeless senior citizens in the city.

Looking at significant national trends. . . According to an August 2025 study released by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness (ICPH), the fastest growing segment of our nation’s homeless, representing approximately one third of all homeless individuals, are families. Calling family homelessness a “national crisis,” ICPH defines this category as “members of families with at least one adult and one minor child.” In fact, an estimated one in 30 children in the United States are homeless.

To look at what can be done on a larger scale would involve lengthier discussions on issues like affordable housing and health care and racism. As Franciscans, it is good for us to be aware of some of the wisdom of our Mother the Church. Such inspiration can feed the Seraphic fire burning in our commitments as Fraternities and sons and daughters of Francis.

## **The Church on the Homeless**

Saint Pope John Paul II spoke often of the homeless and poor, making the case that Jesus himself had been homeless. In a 1996 Lenten message, he said “The Gospel calls us to be close to Christ who is homeless . . . Jesus identified himself with the homeless – ‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me’ (Matt. 25:35) – and taught that charity toward those in this situation will be rewarded in heaven...It is from God’s own love that Christians learn to help the needy and to share with them their own material and spiritual goods.”

Addressing the homeless community in a February 2010 visit to a homeless shelter in Rome, Pope Benedict XVI said, "know that the Church loves you profoundly and won't abandon you, because it recognizes in every one of your faces the face of Christ."

During his 2015 visit to Washington, DC, Pope Francis reminded us that “the Son of God came into this world as a homeless person,” Of course, the now well known story of how Pope Francis was prompted to “remember the poor” was an influence on how he chose the name Francis after our Seraphic Father.

In August, Pope Leo XIV welcomed local poor and homeless, and the volunteers who serve them, to a special Mass and lunch at the papal retreat in Castel Gandolfo. “In the church, everyone is poor and precious, and all share the same dignity,” he said. Following in the footsteps of his predecessors in his love for the poor, the Holy Father had worked extensively with the homeless during his missionary work in Peru.

## **A Call to Action**

Pope Leo XIV reminded the world, just a month into his Papacy, about the upcoming November 16, 2025 World Day of the Poor. Founded by Pope Francis in 2017. The day is an annual action-oriented event in the Church. In Pope Leo XIV’s message for the “9th No you don’t know World Day of the Poor,” the Holy Father states:

*The poor are not a distraction for the Church, but our beloved brothers and sisters, for by their lives, their words and their wisdom, they put us in contact with the truth of the Gospel. The celebration of the World Day of the Poor is meant to remind our communities that the poor are at the heart of all our pastoral activity. This is true not only of the Church’s charitable work, but also of the message that she celebrates and proclaims. God took on their poverty in order to enrich us through their voices, their stories and their faces. Every form of poverty, without exception, calls us to experience the Gospel concretely and to offer effective signs of hope.*

Also in the message, he explains:



*midst of uncertainty, poverty, instability and marginalization. They cannot rely on the security of power and possessions; on the contrary, they are at their mercy and often victims of them. Their hope must necessarily be sought elsewhere. By recognizing that God is our first and only hope, we too pass from fleeting hopes to a lasting hope.*

St. Mother Teresa also brings our understanding to a deeper level, having said:

*God has identified himself with the hungry, the sick, the naked, the homeless; hunger not only for bread, but for love, for care, to be somebody to someone; nakedness, not for clothing only, but nakedness of that compassion that very few people give to the unknown; homelessness, not only just for a shelter made from stone but for that homelessness that comes from having no one to call your own.*

## **What Our Fraternities Can Do**

In discerning what we as Secular Franciscans are being called to do. . . how amazing it would be for each Fraternity in our St. Margaret of Cortona Region to prayerfully consider how they may be called to respond to the World Day of the Poor in November. It need not be a grand gesture. Sometimes a small act of Charity can seem like a grand one to the recipient. Suggestions include:

Sometime in November, volunteer at a homeless shelter Ask them what they need. And listen. It may involve your face-to-face time or making a meal. Or it may be something unglamorous, as often in my own apostolate with the homeless, we collect items ranging from toilet paper to socks.

Consider having your Fraternity make a small charitable donation to its local food bank or shelter. Do your homework to know that more than 90 percent of the donation reaches the recipients versus administrative costs.

Educate fellow Secular Franciscans on who the homeless are in your local community. I know of one program to transition homeless back into housing and the workplace that accepts donations of clothes suitable for a job interview. Another program for homeless pregnant women also has special donation needs for both the mother and baby.

Many of our Fraternities have members who may be largely homebound, perhaps unable to go in person to volunteer. How meaningful it would be to have these Secular Franciscans support the efforts of others through prayer. As our Fraternities gather each month, in praying the Liturgy of the Hours or the Rosary, please remember the poor. Remember the homeless.

In interacting with the homeless in your local communities, look them in the eye. Have a conversation. Listen closely. Never assume what they need, but ask. Maybe they want to talk or pray. Or seriously, maybe they just want a fast food milkshake. Be loving and compassionate, but focused on what they need versus what you want to give them.

Also consider tapping into existing ministries. The closest thing we have to a regional apostolate is a group of us from several Fraternities who work with the homeless in various ways. For instance, we support the work with the Missionaries of Charity in Washington, DC, both a hospice for otherwise homeless individuals with serious and terminal illnesses, and also a house for pregnant homeless women including a place for them to live for a year or so after birth. This same ministry collects blankets each November to distribute to homeless individuals on the street in both Washington, DC and the Virginia suburbs.

If you need any help in researching the homeless or connecting with organizations in your community, please contact me directly at [jpic@secularfranciscan.org](mailto:jpic@secularfranciscan.org). Maybe you just want to brainstorm. Or perhaps you have a great idea that if you share it, I will be able to pass it on to other fraternities.

With the intercession of our Seraphic Father Francis, our Holy Mother Clare, and Mary our Mother Queen of the Seraphic Order, may we be inspired to hear with renewed meaning:

“. . . whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.”

Matthew 25:40

Or in the words of Mother Teresa, “You. Did. It. To. Me.”

## **JPIC NEWS AND UPDATES**

### **SEASON OF CREATION**

A reminder that The Season of Creation began on September 1 with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on October 4. This time coincides with both the Jubilee Year of Hope and the 10th anniversary of Laudato Si’, bringing special meaning to its celebration. This year’s theme of “Seeds of Peace and Hope” reflects the urgency of working “to create the conditions for peace, a lasting peace built together that inspires hope,” according to the Vatican.

Pope Leo XIV celebrated the first-ever Mass in the new form for the Care of Creation in July, at the Borgo Laudato Si garden and education center at Castel Gondolfo. In his homily, the Holy Father said that “we should pray for the conversion of the many people, inside and outside the Church, who do not yet recognize the urgent need to care for our common home.”

### **JUBILEE OF MIGRANTS**

The 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees is celebrated on October 4 and 5, planned by the Vatican to coincide with the Jubilee of Migrants on October 3 and 4. (The October dates were selected intentionally, also as homage to our Seraphic Father.) Some dioceses and parishes are still planning activities for September 28 or that week, as the World Day of Migrants and Refugees is traditionally held on the last Sunday in September, but was changed this year because of the Jubilee.

As Franciscans, please prayerfully consider this time as a call to educate both ourselves and our Fraternities on Church and Papal teaching on the subject. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) offers a resource packet for the Jubilee of Migrants, consistent with the USCCB’s longstanding commitment to immigration reform and “creating a culture of welcome in which all migrants are treated with respect and dignity.” Among its many resources, an especially helpful information source is the Justice for Immigrants website <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/>.

### **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SECULAR FRANCISCAN SOLIDARITY**

You may have heard about the November 17 International Day of Franciscan Solidarity through information shared with Fraternity Ministers in April. It is expected to be discussed further at the National Chapter gathering in September, after which we will be able to share how leadership recommends Fraternities be engaged. The date was selected to coincide with the feast day for the Order’s patroness, St. Elizabeth of Hungary.

### **JPIC SPEAKER TOPICS**

Speakers and discussion facilitators are available to interested Fraternities in the St. Margaret of Cortona Region, on a number of JPIC related topics, as listed in the Spring Newsletter. Let us know your specific need – a monthly Fraternity gathering presentation, a Fraternity Council meeting or formation class, or even help in presenting to a church group or in the community. We will attempt to match you with a Secular Franciscan, or in some cases another expert, who is willing to speak and facilitate discussion on the topic. Please contact us at [jpic-speakers@secularfranciscan.org](mailto:jpic-speakers@secularfranciscan.org). Also, please let us know if you personally are an expert on a JPIC topic and are interested in being a speaker-facilitator.



## **FIRST EVER REGIONAL JPIC RETREAT**

A working group of Fraternity JPIC animators are planning a retreat focused solely on the JPIC mission, to be held in May 2026. As we contemplate on “Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works. . .” Hebrews 10:24, the retreat will be a place to assemble and exhort and encourage each other in our JPIC mission.

Contact me at [jplic@secularfranciscan.org](mailto:jplic@secularfranciscan.org) if you are a Fraternity JPIC animator and want to be involved in further planning for the retreat. Thanks to those who have already made recommendations for speakers and topics. We so look forward to it. We will keep you updated.

## **FAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

Franciscan Action Network’s (FAN) annual Franciscan Justice Leadership Conference is being held in Washington, DC, on October 18 through 20. Welcoming young adults, students, Franciscans, and advocates for faith-based justice, this year’s keynote speaker is Dr. C. Vanessa White, OFS, an Associate Professor of Spirituality and Ministry at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and Director of the Certificate in Black Theology and Ministry. Her research interests include issues such as discernment, racial justice, diversity/intercultural dialogue, spiritual and ministry formation and issues pertinent to the life of Black Catholics.

While registration for the conference was previously full, FAN has now reopened registration on a limited basis. FAN Executive Director Michele Dunne asks that you contact her directly if you are interested in attending.

## **FAN WEBINARS ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

Dates are not yet confirmed, but stay tuned to more information on an upcoming series of Webinars by FAN to be presented in November and December.

## **GUADALUPE RIVER FLOOD DONATIONS**

Thanks to our Fraternity JPIC animators who contacted parishes in Texas impacted by the devastating Guadalupe River floods, and made recommendations on how to best donate to victims. And thanks to individuals and Fraternities who made a donation. Please keep in your prayers the 135 souls lost in the disaster.

## **FALL JPIC MEETINGS**

If you are a JPIC coordinator in your Fraternity, we look forward to your participation in upcoming JPIC working group meetings. If you are new in the role or are not receiving JPIC emails, please contact me at [jplic@secularfranciscan.org](mailto:jplic@secularfranciscan.org).

## **BRIDGING THEOLOGY AND SCIENCE**

If you have not yet read “The One Body of Christ in a Quantum Age,” author Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR offers a well written and relevant read. Making a case for the bridge between religion and modern physics, the author moves back and forth between the spiritual world and quantum theory, seeming to anticipate the reader’s next question. Reading the book feels as though we are actually having a conversation with Fr. Bernie.

The book is not intended to make us experts on quantum theory. Nor is it meant to be comprehensive. Rather Fr. Bernie gives us a basis, in a clear and interesting way helping us see the bridge. And he shares enough historical context for us to understand why the subject is important.

The depth is extensive, so much more than what I am able to share here. A really interesting book, thanks to Fr. Bernie for his important insights.

### JPIC MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of JPIC is to assist the Professed Secular Franciscans as they reflect on their relationship with God as manifested in the fruits of conversion in their lives. This with special regard to the daily choices made in the areas of justice, peacemaking and respect for all created things and people; as brothers and sisters of penance, bringing life to the Gospel and the Gospel to Life.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact Pat Boye, OFS or a member of the JPIC team at [jplic@secularfranciscan.org](mailto:jplic@secularfranciscan.org). If you are a JPIC coordinator at your local fraternity but not on our email list, please let us hear from you.

Pace e bene,  
Pat Boye, OFS  
Regional JPIC Chair



The Roman Catholic  
Archdiocese *of* Washington

**[Reflection Procession & Mass to Commemorate the 111th World Day  
of Migrants and Refugees](#)**