



September 2026

THE CALL

St. Thomas More Fraternity, Secular Franciscan Order

From Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel

Minister: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS; Vice Minister: Janette Martin, OFS; Secretary: Thomas Bender, OFS; Treasurer: Joseph Kennedy, OFS; Formation Director: Michael Landrigan, OFS; Councilor-at-Large: Ann Corro, OFS, Spiritual Assistant: Gil Donahue, OFS

Meeting – 2:00 p.m. - Sunday, September 13, 2026

St. Ann Catholic Church

Room 105 (under the Church)

5300 10th St N, Arlington, VA 22205

We are collecting socks for the needy

- *Opening Prayer* – Ritual, p. 50. *Note the different page as we are having our fraternal visitation.*
- *Ongoing Formation* – Sita will do a presentation on the Liturgy of the Hours
- *Fellowship*
- *Business Meeting*
- *Liturgy of the Hours* – Evening Prayer II for the Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
 - Psalms/Reading/Responsory/Intercessions from Evening Prayer II for Sunday, Psalter Week IV
 - Gospel Canticle Antiphon / Closing Prayer from the Proper of Seasons, Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
 - Hymn TBD. Please bring your breviary and hymnal.
- *Closing Prayer* – Ritual, p. 51.

The twentieth-century Catholic author J.R.R. Tolkien, in the words of a protagonist in one of his novels, described our responsibility in this way: “It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till.” The civilization of love will not arise from a single or spectacular gesture, but from the sum total of small and steadfast acts of fidelity that serve as a bulwark against dehumanization. For this reason, it is worthwhile pausing to reflect on some aspects of how we, each in our own way, can cooperate in building the civilization of love. Without presuming to exhaust this theme, I would like to propose five paths toward daily and public responsibility: the need to disarm words, building peace through justice, adopting the perspective of victims, cultivating a healthy realism and reviving dialogue and multilateralism. (Pope Leo XIV, Magnifica Humanitas, 213.)

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Minister's Reflection



Unlike Carlo Acutis and Rose of Viterbo (the subject of Gil Donahue's reflection for this month), most of us do not become saints in our teens. The apostles certainly didn't. Not only were they adults when Jesus called them, they had quite a learning curve on their way to sainthood. I love the stories about them: arguing over who was going to sit closest to Jesus, wanting to set up tents like a circus at the Transfiguration, denying Christ three times in one evening, and running away from both the crucifixion and Nero's persecutions (prompting the "Quo vadis?" story). Yet the latter are all now revered as the founders of the Church, and the former made it to canonization despite their early deaths.

It sometimes surprises me that the Bible presents the apostles as they really were, warts and all. But what a great gift this is. We get to see a portrait of real people, flawed human beings like all of us, who learn to believe and to confess their faith in Jesus as Messiah. That faith helps them to overcome their human frailty; follow Jesus' path and teachings; found the Church; and, ultimately, die for it. They become martyrs, i.e., true witnesses, to Jesus in both life and death.

Rose did not have Carlo's digital media platform for evangelization, nor his sacrifice of an agonizing illness and painful death. She was clearly precocious and passionate about her faith – becoming a Secular at age 10! She must also have been a bit of

a hothead to have mouthed off so vehemently in defense of the Pope that she and her family were exiled for a while. Otherwise, however, her life was not one that claimed the spotlight; she just lived her faith and followed Jesus' call through prayer, penance, good works, and the Franciscan Rule.

These are all great examples for us as we try to live holy, faith-filled lives. They remind us that, while only Our Lord is perfect, we, too, can overcome our faults and frailties, receive forgiveness, and allow him to transform our lives. As both Fr. Steven Oetjen and Fr. Joseph Rampino point out in their gospel commentaries in the August 20, 2026, Catholic Herald, professing Jesus should change our lives. Even if we are not called to do heroic acts, we must nevertheless combine faith and works, or else, as St James reminds us, our faith is useless (James 2:14-26).

Our Rule provides excellent guidelines for this. We cannot all be the madcap mendicant that St Francis was, nor are we, as seculars, called to St Clare's life in the cloister. Chapter II of the Rule explains how we are to live humble lives, with Christ as the center of our life, turning to him daily in penance and conversion. We are to participate in the sacramental life of the Church, both Eucharist and reconciliation. Our prayer life should prompt us to identify with and defend the poor and oppressed, to fulfill our obligations responsibly, to exercise our call to stewardship of the environment, and to rebuild and promote the Church through our evangelical witness in both words and actions. Nevertheless, the Rule is not a rigid document but one that allows each of us to follow it and our call in the unique way that God has planned for us. May the example and prayers of the apostles and St Rose, who shared with us their human failings, but who overcame them to become saints, help us on our way. Amen.

Pax et bonum,
Sita

Professions

9/11/2016

Andrea Bender
Thomas Bender
Sita Chakrawarti

Irenaeus
Thomas More
Clare

Birthdays of the Month

September – None

October

Ralph Palasek (6th)

Bernadette Lozano (23rd)

Necrology

James R Dimond (Min.) – September 23, 2015

Rev. Cornelius O'Brien – September 7, 2019

Prayer Intentions

For...

- For vocations to our Fraternity and all branches of the Franciscan family.
- *For the victims of violence and the conversion of the violent.*
- For all those who grieve on the 25th anniversary of 9/11.
- *For all those who travel by sea, air, and land.*
- For the sick, the suffering, and the captive.
- *For the elderly and for our elderly parents and their caregivers.*
- For students as they return to classes
- *For peace in the world and in our country and communities particularly in the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan and where there is violence.*
- Poor, hungry, lonely, homeless, unemployed, the dying and those with no one to pray for them.
- *For the upholding of human life from conception until natural death.*
- The health, protection and guidance of Pope Leo XIV, all bishops, priests, deacons, friars, and religious sisters.
- *For protection of Ukrainian and Ruthenian Rite Catholics and all Christians in peril.*
- For all youth in the world that they may experience exemplars like Ss. Pier Giorgio and Carlo Acutis that lead them to Christ.
- *For healing of the schism with the SSPX.*
- For the repose of the soul of Lisa Martin, Jan Martin's sister.
- *Grace Coipuram, OFS*
- Angela Gill, OFS who is undergoing chemo for cancer and her husband Anthony who has cysts on his pancreas.
- *For healing for April's back, of her legs, and knees (Baker's cyst).*
- Patrick Birello's back and leg issues.
- *For Ann and Bill Wester recovering from a respiratory infection after a trip to Iceland and for Bill's upcoming cataract surgeries.*
- For Katherine, who has ALS
- *For Denise, who is having chemotherapy.*
- For Donald, who is in memory care
- *Liz's friend Dan who has Parkinson's Disease.*
- For Ralph Palasek's recovery from the aftereffects of a serious infection.
- *Patricia Kennedy, mother of Joseph Kennedy, OFS who suffers from congestive heart failure.*
- Louis, son of Clarissa, of STM Parish, and for all those suffering from depression.
- *For April's friend, Kathleen who suddenly passed away while she was planting in her garden.*
- The sister of a friend of April, who does not want her sister to pray for her.
- *April's friend who has been overseas and never came back to the States.*
- April's friend, whose husband avoids Church, and his ex-wife who never went to Church.
- *The grandson of April's friend and another friend with suddenly worsening dementia.*
- For April's friend's mother, Adelaide and Christian, the grandson of Frank, the leader of her Luminaries group.
- *The Poor Holy Souls in Purgatory.*
- Religious freedom and for all persecuted for their belief in God.
- The work of the Order of Malta in Bethlehem in this time of strife and war.
- *The union of all Christians and salvation of all.*

Secretary's Notes

This month's meeting is our triennial fraternal visitation. Our Regional Minister, Gary Buton, OFS will be visiting us and learning about our fraternity.

Our Region's JPIC Committee is holding an event on September 19, 2026, Faith and Action: A Day of Sharing Our JPIC Journey. It will be at the St. John Paul II National Shrine. More details are on page 6.

Peace and Good,
Randy



Spiritual Assistant's Corner



SAINT ROSE OF VITERBO (1233 – MARCH 6, 1251) - SEPTEMBER 4

Even as a child, Rose had a great desire to pray and to aid the poor. While still very young, she began a life of penance in her parents' house. She was as generous to the poor as she was strict with herself. At the age of 10, she became a Secular Franciscan and soon began preaching in the streets about sin and the sufferings of Jesus.

Viterbo, her native city, was then in revolt against the pope. When Saint Rose of Viterbo took the pope's side against the emperor, she and her family were exiled from the city. When the pope's side won in Viterbo, Rose was allowed to return. Her attempt at age 15 to found a religious community failed, and she returned to a life of prayer and penance in her father's home, where she died in 1251. Rose was canonized in 1457.

Reflection

The list of Franciscan saints seems to have quite a few men and women who accomplished nothing very extraordinary. Saint Rose of Viterbo is one of them. She did not influence popes and kings, did not multiply bread for the hungry, and never established the religious order of her dreams. But she made a place in her life for God's grace, and like Saint Francis before her, saw death as the gateway to new life.

Saint Rose of Viterbo is the Patron Saint of:

Florists

Flower Growers

Gil Donahue, OFS

Spiritual Assistant, St. Thomas More Fraternity

The Walters Art Museum - Opens Aug. 26, 2026 through February 7, 2027



St. Francis Missal, Italy, ca. 1200.

Acquired by Henry Walters.

<https://art.thewalters.org/object/W.75/>

In August 2026, to commemorate the 800th anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's death, the Walters Art Museum will once again showcase *The St. Francis Missal*, a legendary 12th-century manuscript

that is believed to be a relic of the touch of St. Francis.

According to early accounts, in the year 1208 St. Francis and two of his followers were debating what God's plan for them might be. Unable to decide, they sought answers at the church of San Nicolò in Assisi. Francis opened the book on the altar three times at random. In every case, the text on the page urged renouncing earthly goods. This pivotal moment laid the foundation for the Franciscan order. The manuscript in the Walters collection, known today as the St. Francis Missal, is traditionally believed to be the very book consulted by St. Francis of Assisi and his companions.

An inscription in the Missal lends support to the legend that surrounds it, as the inscription chronicles the book's creation for the church of San Nicolò and also mentions the book's patron, Gerard of Ugo, who is documented in Assisi in the late 12th century. Due to the manuscript's possible contact with the saint, Franciscans worldwide consider the St. Francis Missal to be a relic of touch, and every year many make pilgrimages to Baltimore to be in its presence.

Centre Street Building, Level 3, Manuscript Gallery



Manifestation

I was not long in Rome when the notice came out that the public transit—including some of the trains between cities—would be closed that Friday for a “manifestation.”

Public workers sometimes hold a type of strike to register a protest and signal that a particular concern is important. In this case, it was about Gaza. If it were about working conditions on public transit, we would call this a strike in America ... but it isn't that.

Instead, this is an opportunity for public transit workers to let everyone know that they have a strong opinion, and that opinion matters.

Not everyone has to stop work. The result is that service is irregular, not stopped. That particular day, the manifestation affected the Rome public transit system, both buses and Metro, as well as regional trains. I did not need to use the Metro, but someone I knew was concerned to verify that her regional train would take her—as indeed it did, albeit with a delay.

Is the most important value always to simply be efficient and do what we are told? Maybe sometimes it is good to change the way we work to make clear that we hold some values dear. Those who value our work may consider our perspective.

What do you do to “manifest” the Gospel? Maybe this manifestation is as much about reminding ourselves as much as it is informing and encouraging others to pay attention to something important.

For your September reflection and discussion:

- * What do you do that interrupts your ordinary life in order to draw attention to something important?
- * When do you interrupt your life to draw attention to the Gospel?
- * Have you ever been inconvenienced by someone's expression of opinion? How did you respond?

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We'd love your feedback!



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Faith and Action
A Day of Sharing Our JPIC Journey
Saturday, September 19
11:00 AM – 3:30 PM
Saint John Paul II National Shrine,
Washington, DC

Leave behind all passivity and indifference. . . We cannot remain as unengaged spectators; rather, we must listen with our hearts, allow ourselves to be challenged, and become involved.
Pope Leo XIV

Come together to explore some of the charitable and advocacy efforts we are called to on the JPIC journey that lies at the core of our Franciscan spirituality. On the day's agenda will be:

- Guest Speaker Dan Melis, Executive Director of the Catholic Climate Covenant, followed by a discussion of actions we are able to take back to our own fraternities during this Season of Creation
- A discussion of the realities and misperceptions around homelessness, including ways to become involved in existing apostolates that serve our region's homeless neighbors
- A discussion of how advocacy for fair elections is rooted in our Catholic Social Teaching, including FAN Executive Director Michele Dunne, OFS sharing FAN's involvement in soliciting and training bipartisan poll workers.
- And more. . . including updates on ways to respond to the OFS call to "accompany immigrants," and brainstorming our future involvement in both peacemaking initiatives and also the OFS World Week of the Poor in November.

\$40 registration fee includes a light lunch. Please register ASAP, as spaces are limited. We regret that we are unable to accept unregistered walk-ins.

Register here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0D4DABAA2BAAFACE9-65634033-faith>

Sponsored by the St Margaret of Cortona Region JPIC team.
For more information, contact Pat at pboye@secularfranciscan.org.

Saints of the Month

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Franciscan-Saints-2022-1-Catalog-by-Mary-Lou-Coffman-OFS.pdf>

- September 1* St. Beatrice of Silva, Founder, Conceptionist Poor Clares (c. 1424-August 9, 1492)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Silva
- September 2* Bls. Apollinaris of Posat, John Francis Burté, Severin Girault, Priests and companions, First and Third Orders, Martyrs of Carmes (d. 1792)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/martyrs-de-carmes.html>
- September 4* St. Rose of Viterbo, Third Order Secular (c. 1233-March 6, 1251)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-rose-of-viterbo.html>
- September 6* Bl. Liberatus of Lauro, Priest, First Order (d. 1260)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-liberatus-of-lauro.html>
- September 7* Bl. Gentle of Matelica, Priest, First Order, martyr (d. September 5, 1340)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-gentle-of-matelica.html>
- September 8* Bl. John Tomachi and Sons, Third Order Secular, Martyrs (d. September 8, 1628)
<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-ioannes-tomachi/>
- September 9* Bl. Seraphina Sforza, Poor Clare Nun (1434-September 8, 1478)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-seraphina-sforza.html>
- September 10* Bl. Lucy de Freitas, Third Order Secular, martyr (d. 1622)
<https://joyfulspirit139.blogspot.com/2014/11/bl-lucy-de-freitas.html>
- September 11* Bl. Bonaventure of Barcelona, Friar, Founder Convent of St. Bonaventure (d. 1684)
<https://catholicsaints.info/blessed-bonaventure-of-barcelona/>
- September 13* First Order, Third Order Regular and Secular Franciscans, Martyrs of Japan (d. 1617-1628)
<http://franciscanchapelcentertokyo.org/history-of-franciscan-friars-in-japan/>
- September 17 Feast of the Stigmata of our Holy Father Francis**
<https://catholicism.org/the-stigmata-of-saint-francis-of-assisi-1224.html>
- September 17* St. Zygmunt Szczesny Felinski, OFS, Archbishop of Warsaw and Founder, Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary (Nov. 1, 1822-Sept. 17, 1895)
https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20020818_felinski_en.html
- September 18* St. Joseph of Cupertino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor Conventual (June 17, 1603-September 18, 1663)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-joseph-of-cupertino.html>
- September 20* St. Francis Mary of Camporosso, Friar, OFM, Capuchin (December 27, 1804-September 17, 1866)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/francis-mary-of-camporosso.html>
- September 21* Bl. Elizabeth Amodei, Third Order Secular, (1475-February 4, 1498)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-elizabeth-amodei.html>
- September 22* St. Ignatius of Santhia, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (June 1686-September 22, 1770)
http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2002/documents/ns_lit_doc_20020519_ignazio_en.html
- September 23* Finding the Body of St. Clare
<http://www.catholicapologetics.info/library/gallery/incorrupt/incorrupt.htm#-Clare>
- St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Capuchin (May 25, 1887-September 23, 1968)
<http://padrepiodevotions.org/a-short-biography/>

- September 24 St. Pacificus of Severino, Priest, Order of Friars Minor (March 1, 1653-September 24, 1721)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-pacific.html>
- September 26 St. Elzéar of Sabran (1285-September 27, 1323)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elzear_of_Sabran **Husband and Wife, Secular Franciscans**
 Bl. Delphina of Glandèves (1284-November 1358)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphine_of_Glandeves
 Bl. Aurelio of Vinalesa and Companions, Priest and Martyrs of Valencia (d. 1936)
<https://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/03/blessed-aurelio-of-vinalesa-presbyter.html>
 Bl. Lucy of Caltagirone, Third Order Regular (d. c.1400)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-lucy-of-caltagirone.html>
- September 28 Bl. Bernadine of Feltre, Order of Friars Minor, missionary (1439-September 28, 1494)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-bernardin-of-feltre.html>
 St. John of Dukla, Priest, Order of Friars Minor, Conventual (1414-1484)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Dukla
- September 29 **Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel**
<http://catholicstraightanswers.com/who-is-st-michael-the-archangel/>
- September 30 Bl. Charles of Blois, Third Order Secular (1319-September 29, 1364)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-charles-of-blois.html>
- October 1 Bl. Nicolas of Forca Palena, Priest, Third Order Regular
 (September 10, 1349-October 1, 1449)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-nicholas-of-forca.html>
- October 3 **Commemoration of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi**
- October 4 **Solemnity of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis**
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/solemnity-of-saint-francis.html>
- October 5 Bl. Felicia Meda, Order of Poor Clares (1378-September 30, 1444)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/blessed-felicia-meda.html>
- October 6 St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, Third Order Secular
 (March 25, 1715-October 7, 1791)
<https://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2018/06/st-mary-frances-of-five-wounds-of-jesus.html>
- October 10 St. Daniel and Companions, Angelo, Domnus, Hugolinus, Leo, Nicholas, and Samuel
 Priests, Order of Friars Minor, Martyrs of Morocco (d. October 10, 1227)
<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/saint-daniel-and-companions.html>
 Bl. Marie-Angela Truszkowska, Founder, Third Order Regular
 (May 16, 1825-October 10, 1899)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Truszkowska