

**THE ST. JOSEPH FRATERNITY OF
THE SECULAR FRANCISCANS**

**ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA REGION
"ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARI"**

THE FRANCISCAN SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

September 2026

**Next Meeting: September 12th at 10:00 am at
STJB St. Elizabeth Room (No Mass)**

Saint Pope Pius X – September 3rd.

It is the way of almighty God to bring honor to those who are mean in their own eyes. That has been demonstrated in the life of Joseph Sarto, later Pope Saint Pius X. He was born in 1835 in the little Venetian village of Riese, where his parents, who were unimportant but devout people, reared a family of ten children during a period of great need.

The clergy of the parish interested themselves in Joseph, the well-behaved leader of the Mass servers, and assisted him in securing an education. In the year 1858, when he was 24 years old, he received holy orders. For nine years he was chaplain in Tombolo. His superior wrote of him: "I am convinced that someday he will wear the mitre, and then -- who knows?" Chaplain Sarto took the great Franciscan St Leonard of Port Maurice as his model in life and in the pulpit. At four in the morning, he was already kneeling before the tabernacle.

For 9 years he was pastor in Salzano. It was during this period that he joined the Third Order of St Francis and established 2 fraternities of Tertiaries. Henceforth he strove in his words and in his writings, especially by Franciscan simplicity and frugal standards of life, to emulate the ideals of the seraphic saint.

For another space of 9 years, he was vicar general, canon, and regent of the seminary of the diocese of Treviso.

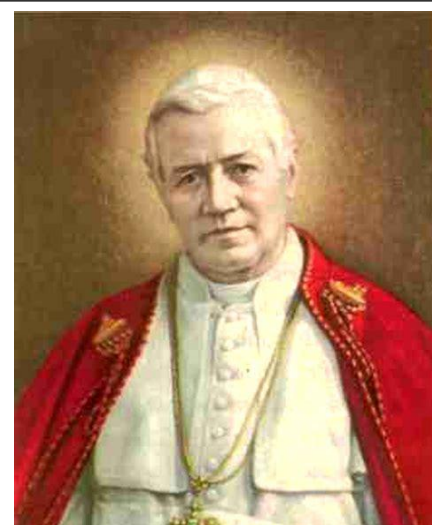
"He will not die in Treviso," was significantly said of him at that time.

He was bishop of Mantua for 9 years. This made no change in his habits of life; he would not tolerate any festive receptions. He devoted himself with unflinching zeal to the ever-important apostolate of the press, the pulpit of modern times. At the same time, the poor were his favorites.

As patriarch of Venice, he wore the purple of the cardinalate for another period of nine years, always remaining a faithful son of the poor St Francis.

The death of Pope Leo XIII in 1903 brought him to Rome for the papal election. Who would be the new pope? Cardinal Sarto answered: "Leo XIII, who enlightened the world by his wisdom, will be succeeded by a pope who will impress the world by the saintliness of his life." Without suspecting it, he gave a description of himself.

After he had been elected pope, he announced his program: To renew all things in Christ. He did much for religious revival, especially by promoting early and daily Communion, by enacting measures for the sanctification of the clergy, by encouraging the Third Order, and last, but not least, by his own holy life.



St. Pope Pius X

HAPPY FALL !

Birthdays:

- Joyce Manno (12st)
- Kelly Podlaszewski (17th)

Prayer Intentions:

- Brother Vincent
- Kelly & her family
- Scott's wife Yolly
- Joyce Manno's son Daniel

September Refreshments:

**+ others who wish to help.
Mary Jo will bring coffee.**

Saint of the Month -

Virtue of the Month – JIM!

"Jesus said to them, Believe me when I tell you this; the bread that comes from heaven is not what Moses gave you. The real bread from heaven is given only by my Father. God's gift of bread comes down from heaven and gives life to the whole world." John 6: 32-33

From “The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order – Chapter 2 - 11

“Trusting the Father, Christ chose for Himself and His mother a poor and humble life, even though He valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children.”

Formation: Read the book, “Live Like Francis”, Reflections 28, 29 and 30 and reflect on the “Application to Daily Life” questions in each chapter.

Mother Angelica mentor a step closer to sainthood

On July 7, the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio, announced that the positio has been officially submitted to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints at the Vatican for the cause of Rhoda Wise.

This is an important step in the cause for the beatification and canonization of Rhoda Wise, as it marks an end to the "diocesan" phase, moving on to what is often called the "Roman" phase. It will now be up to theologians at the Vatican to review Wise' life and determine if she lived a life of heroic virtue. If they discover there is enough evidence, then they will recommend to the Holy Father that she should be declared Venerable.

While many in the United States may not be familiar with Wise, many Catholics are familiar with Mother Angelica, the lively nun who founded EWTN and whose broadcasts continue to touch hearts around the world.

Mother Angelica was inspired by the life of Rhoda Wise, whom she knew when she was living in Ohio.

Born into a Protestant family, Wise developed a large ovarian cyst in 1931, which was removed, but soon after she suffered a number of other ailments that kept her confined to a bed.

During one of her stays in the hospital she befriended one of the Catholic sisters who worked at the hospital. She taught Wise how to pray the Rosary, as well as about St. Thérèse of Lisieux. All of this had a great impact on Wise, who converted to the Catholic Church in 1939.

Eventually the pain and complications from her various ailments became so severe she was sent home to die. However, it was there that she began having visions of Jesus and St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

In one vision Jesus said he would come back with St. Thérèse to heal her, which he did. Wise was miraculously healed from many of her ailments. Later on Wise would receive the stigmata, the wounds of Jesus, on her forehead, hands and feet.

While a teenager, Mother Angelica visited Wise in hopes of receiving spiritual consolation and potentially a miraculous healing of a "dropped stomach." Wise told Mother Angelica to pray a novena to St. Thérèse and at the end of the nine days, she was healed.

This healing propelled Mother Angelica to join the Poor Clares, eventually founding EWTN. If it wasn't for Rhoda Wise, there would be no EWTN.

FRANCISCAN TEACHINGS

Love Builds

Not unlike our age, Francis saw firsthand how “knowledge” led to division rather than connection and humility: in the spiritual and scriptural justification for the Crusades, in the widening disconnect between clergy and laity, and in academia in which the study of theology remained in the head and never became “incarnational” in a person’s life. In the Franciscan tradition, charity—which is rooted in love—arose from one’s connection to the “other.” Some scholars conclude Francis’ Christian conversion fundamentally unfolded as his relationship with lepers continued to deepen and grow. Lepers who were once “bitter” to Francis not only became “sweet,” but also held the key to his own continued conversion as a follower of Christ.

—from St. Anthony Messenger’s “Building Peace in a Nation Divided”
by Stephen Copeland

Did you know there were once four popes in the same year? by Aleteia

In 1276, the Catholic Church witnessed an unprecedented historical event: four different men sat on the papal throne successively within a single calendar year.

We had two popes in one year in 2025, with the death of Pope Francis and the election of Leo XIV. Some people can still remember the last time we had three popes in one year: 1978, when Paul VI died and was succeeded by John Paul I, who reigned for only 33 days before his death shocked the world. John Paul II was elected shortly afterwards. But four popes in one year? It sounds like part of the plot of a Dan Brown thriller ... and certainly, it has been centuries since it happened.

Gregory X, who reformed papal conclaves

Pope Gregory X was elected after an extraordinarily long election process in Viterbo, Italy, that lasted from 1268 to 1271. He promulgated the constitution *Ubi periculum*, which governed future papal elections. Cardinals were confined in a special area of the papal palace under lock and key (*cum clave*). Their food was progressively restricted the longer they took to elect a new pope, and they were prohibited from leaving the premises until the election concluded.

Following a four-year pontificate, the Pope died on January 10, 1276, in Arezzo, Italy, paving the way for a series of rapid changes. Born Tedaldo Visconti around 1210 in Piacenza, **Gregory X was a Third Order Franciscan and a promoter of the Crusades.**

Innocent V, the first Dominican

On January 21, 1276, just one day after the first conclave under the new rules began, Peter of Tarentaise of Savoy was elected. He took the name Innocent V. As a Dominican friar, a professor at the University of Paris, and a collaborator of St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas, Innocent V continued his predecessor's efforts to promote the Crusades and reconcile the Latin Church with the Eastern Church. He also established the tradition of the pope wearing a white cassock (the habit of the Dominicans). After only five months as pontiff, he died after a short illness (possibly malaria) in Rome on June 22. He was about 51 years old.

Adrian V, a pope who wasn't even ordained a priest

The cardinals elected Ottobono Fieschi of Genoa on July 11, 1276. A diplomat known for his mediation in England, he became Pope Adrian V. His only major decision was to suspend the strict conclave rules set by Gregory X. However, Adrian V died in Viterbo on August 18 after just 38 days in office, before he could even be ordained a priest. He had been made a cardinal three years earlier by his uncle, Innocent IV.

John XXI, a Portuguese doctor

On September 8, 1276, Pedro Julião of Lisbon ascended to the throne as Pope John XXI. He remains the only Portuguese pontiff in history. The son of a pharmacist, John XXI studied medicine in Paris, Salerno, and Palermo. He is often identified as the author of the *Thesaurus pauperum* (a medical guidebook for the poor). Gregory X appointed him archbishop of Braga, Portugal, in 1272.

During his eight-month pontificate, the Holy Father mediated between the kings of France and Castile, financed universities, and built a library in the papal palace in Viterbo. He died on May 20, 1277, from injuries sustained when the roof of his study collapsed on top of him.

Was the year of the four popes more than a historical curiosity? These short pontificates resulted from fortuitous — or perhaps providential — circumstances, not foul play (as far as we know). However, the papacy was undoubtedly going through a notable crisis at the time. The Church was embroiled in conflicts with rulers like Charles I of Sicily and Rudolf of Habsburg. At the same time, it was grappling with institutional decay, evidenced by the three-year *sede vacante* period just a few years prior.

This entire historical episode from 1268 to 1276 ultimately contributed to the stabilization of papal election procedures. Pope Nicholas III became the next pontiff in November 1277. His papacy lasted until 1280 and was marked by a period of reforms. He strengthened papal control over the Papal States and streamlined the papal chancery's work. He also supported the still-young Dominican and Franciscan orders, and **resolved a conflict over poverty among the Franciscans.**