

# THE ST. JOSEPH FRATERNITY OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCANS

ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA REGION  
"ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARI"

## THE FRANCISCAN SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

**October 2026**

**Next Meeting: No Meeting due to Transitus at  
St. Francis of Assisi Church in Harrisburg at 3:00**

### Feast of the Transitus of St. Francis – October 3rd.

**Invitation to the Fraternity  
To Celebrate the Transitus of St. Francis  
at the St. Francis of Assisi Church – 1439 Market St., Harrisburg  
Saturday, October 3rd - 3:00 PM – Refreshments afterwards**

On October 3, 1226, Francis of Assisi died. Franciscans worldwide observe this day as the Transitus: his journey from this life to the next. Every year, Franciscans all over the world celebrate the Transitus, or passing, of St. Francis with a memorial service that often includes a reenacting of St. Francis' final hours, storytelling, and singing, keeping alive the spirituality that Francis and his early companions left us.

What faith, what love there is in that answer! It reveals St. Francis' total surrender to the will of the "most high, all-powerful, all good Lord." It echoes the words of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Father, not my will, but yours be done," and on the cross, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."

The surrender of Jesus to the very Trinity of which Jesus is the Word is the ultimate act of love of the Beloved, whom Francis had embraced as a young man, the crucified Jesus who said to Francis through the lips of the San Damiano cross, "Go and repair my house, which, as you see, is falling into ruin."

So strong was Francis' love of Christ that the selfless love within him broke through his own body in the form of the sacred stigmata, the wounds of Christ crucified. It is a wonder that Francis did not begin to rise toward heaven then and there. But, of course, such spiritualism would be a denial of the mystery of Christianity: the incarnation of God in Jesus who, though God himself, suffered a very human death.

So, too, incarnate love kept Francis' human, as well as shot through with the Spirit of God. He lived two more years in pain and suffering that were transformed by God's voice shortly after Francis returned from Mount La Verna to Assisi. Francis had been away on Mount La Verna in Tuscany for a couple of months on a retreat in honor of St. Michael the Archangel, whose feast fell quite near the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. During that retreat, on or around September 17, 1224, Francis received the wounds of Jesus in his hands and feet and side.

When, a month or so later, he finally returned to Assisi, he went first to the monastery of St. Clare and her sisters, where a humble lean-to had been constructed on the side of the monastery. He was, practically speaking, blind from trachoma, an eye disease he had picked up in 1219 in Egypt during the Fifth Crusade. He was also suffering from what seems to have been tubercular leprosy, and he was hemorrhaging from the wounds of Christ.



The Transitus of St. Francis

## HAPPY FALL !

### Birthdays:

- Claudia Casseday (21st)
- Janis Donley (16th)

### Prayer Intentions:

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

### October Refreshments:

**Bring what you wish to help.  
Mary Jo will bring coffee.**

Saint of the Month - N/A

Virtue of the Month - N/A

*"Once justified, then, on the ground of our faith, let us enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, as it was through him that we have obtained access, by faith, to that grace in which we stand. We are confident in the hope of attaining glory as the sons of God." Romans 5: 1 - 2*

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

*“As the Father sees in every person the features of His Son, the firstborn of many brothers and sisters, so the Secular Franciscans with a gentle and courteous spirit accept all people as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ.”*

### **Bishop Fulton Sheen’s Beatification**

By National Catholic Register

Excitement continues to build for the beatification of media evangelist Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. Slated to become the first “Blessed” to have won an Emmy Award, the Illinois native is set to be beatified on Sept. 24 in St. Louis.

The beatification Mass will take place at St. Louis’ The Dome at America’s Center, which can hold more than 65,000 people. It will be the first beatification to take place in the United States since that of Blessed Michael McGivney in October 2020, which had a limited attendance due to COVID-19 restrictions. And it will mark the first time in nearly a decade — since the beatification of Solanus Casey in 2017 — that thousands of Catholics will be able to attend a beatification Mass for an American taking place in the United States.

Though Sheen’s earthly remains are in his home Diocese of Peoria, St. Louis was chosen as the city to host the beatification due in part to the availability of a venue large enough to accommodate all the pilgrims expected to attend.

As a Catholic figure, Sheen was popular in the mainstream culture of mid-century America in a way that has arguably never been rivaled. A staple of the radio waves and a prolific author, his TV program *Life Is Worth Living* also drew some 30 million viewers (and can be watched on EWTN), and he even won an Emmy Award for “Most Outstanding Television Personality” in 1953 over such industry giants as comedian Jimmy Durante and journalist Edward R. Murrow.

He was also renowned for, among other things, contributing his scholarly prowess to the Second Vatican Council, raising an estimated hundreds of millions of dollars to support worldwide missionary activity, and personally befriending and accompanying countless converts to the Catholic Church.

There will be a Holy Hour for young adults from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the Basilica of St. Louis, King of France, also known as the “Old Cathedral,” which is located by the Mississippi River on the grounds of the St. Louis Arch. During the Holy Hour, the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal will provide Eucharistic adoration with music, preaching and confessions.

The beatification Mass itself, celebrated on Pope Leo XIV’s behalf by Cardinal Luis Tagle, will take place on Thursday, Sept. 24, at The Dome at America’s Center, a stadium located in the city’s downtown. St. John Paul II celebrated Mass at the same stadium in January 1999 with 100,000 in attendance.

## **FRANCISCAN TEACHINGS**

### **Unity and Community**

Our Franciscan tradition speaks to the idea of unity through community. In *St. Francis of Assisi, the Mirror of Perfection*, written by Brother Leo, we are told the story of Francis waking up the brothers in the middle of the night to sit for a meal with one brother who cried out in hunger. Francis made it abundantly clear that it was “great necessity and charity [that] compelled” him to do what he did “out of love for [their] brother.”

This act of compromise came from a place of love without loss of identity or values. He wasn’t asking all the brothers to bend to the need of a single brother; he was asking that judgment be set aside so that each may have only what they needed. It seems the divisions of our time have caused us to lose the ability to make room for differences due to strict adherence to laws over compassion—something Jesus often warned the Pharisees against.

—from St. Anthony Messenger’s “Dialogue over Division” by Sara P. Marks

**Homily: If your brother sins, go and admonish him.** by Father Sahd, St. Joe's of York

Requested by Jim Hechinger, provided by Adrienne Bartell

“Jesus says to his disciples: ‘If your brother sins, go and admonish him.

Fraternal correction is difficult for most of us.

We see in the First Reading how Ezekiel was given the duty to be the watchman for the Jewish People. Ezekiel was given the responsibility to warn God's chosen People if they were going off course—it was on him if he didn't tell them the Truth. We hear in the Gospels Jesus Himself corrects his disciples on several occasions: he disciplines them when they are jealous of someone else casting out demons in His name; he rebukes Peter firmly because his way of thinking is not God's way but man's way; he redirects James and John's misguided ambition to sit at the right and left hand of the Father!

Starting from Jesus' teaching and example, fraternal correction has been practiced in the Church from the earliest times. It is not only a duty of justice, but a duty of love.

Fraternal correction comes from the theological virtue of love. A theological virtue is something that has been given to us by God at our Baptism, it is not something that we receive on our own. Be thankful for it when you receive correction, and don't neglect to practice it with those around you. Too often, our first reaction to correction by others is defensiveness. I remember praying the Rosary with another seminarian and after we finished praying the Rosary, he said that I should pray the Hail Mary's with more sincerity...I was very offended and thought, well, do you know how you pray the Rosary! But after a while, I came to understand that I prayed it too quickly and needed to think about what I was praying.

Fraternal correction is not done because we are irritated at another's faults, or because we want to prove them wrong or want to get back at them. Love is the only possible motive for fraternally correcting our neighbor.

We all know when we desire to correct out of anger, we do not have the other person's good in mind, but we have retribution and punishment—this is not fraternal correction! St Augustine says, “we must correct out of love, not out of a desire to hurt, but with the loving intention of helping the person to see the truth. Love is the reason why correction must first be done in private, to give the person dignity and respect they deserve! Fraternal correction most times is not a once and done talk with the other person, but it means spending time with them and leading them the joy of the Truth.

In 1305, Pope Clement V, a Frenchman, moved the Papacy from Rome to Avignon, France because of the request of a French King. Saint Catherine of Siena, some 67 years later, approached the pope, Gregory XI to move back to Rome. She desired to correct the pope, out of love, because she believed it was in the best interests of the Church, not any personal desire or agenda she had. She only persuaded the pope because she loved God and His Church!

If we are called to correct others, we are also called to accept fraternal correction from others, as well! This is difficult for us to hear, but all of us need to be challenged to be saints, no exceptions!

May we ask our Father to be open to correct others. May we also be open to correction from others and not see it as a sign of disrespect, but out of love for us and for our eternal salvation!

**How can I encourage my young children to go back to church?** By Fr Pat McCloskey

Have you been willing to share your reasons for going to church beyond “It's the law”? Although many people are afraid of being suckered in on the subject of religion, they can be terribly gullible about what they read online much to the delight of scammers.

A person's prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain needed for weighing options and consequences, is not fully formed for most people much before the age of 30.

Many young people mistakenly suspect that older people are too lazy to realize that they don't need to go to church. “Obligation ” doesn't convince them. When someone explains why he or she goes, that may receive a better response eventually.

Unfortunately, many people think of faith in God as though it is like their baby shoes: nice, but no one can expect to wear them forever. A 5-year-old's faith is fine for a 5-year-old, but unless it grows, it will not support an adult facing more serious challenges than that 5-year-old faces.