

*The Nativity of  
the Blessed  
Virgin Mary*

*Feast Day: September 8*



*Genter Altar by Jan van Eyck*

# *The Cord*

*September, 2020*

*Newsletter of the San Luis Rey  
Secular Franciscan Fraternity*

## ***Upcoming Gatherings on Zoom:***

- September Monthly General Gathering ~  
Sunday, September 13th, 1:00 – 3:00pm
- Transitus: October 3rd To Be Announced

## ***CHANGE of Monthly Gatherings Dates to 2nd Sunday of the month:***

- October Monthly General Gathering ~  
Sunday, October 11th, 1:00 – 3:00pm
- November Monthly General Gathering ~  
Sunday, November 8th, 1:00 – 3:00pm
- December Monthly General Gathering ~  
Sunday, December 13th, 1:00 – 3:00pm

## ***Our Gatherings Will Be on Zoom:***

**Login Link:** [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)

Click on: **Join a Meeting**

**Meeting ID: 760 726 2486**

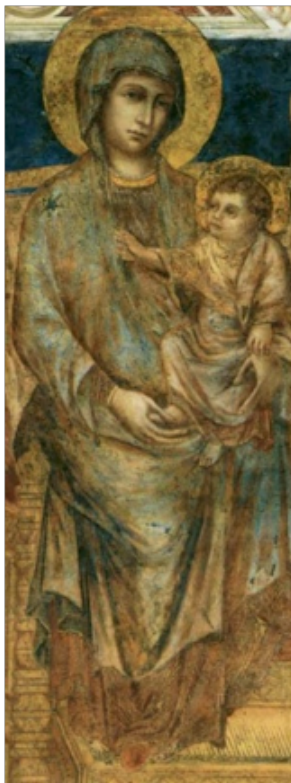
**Password: 1798**

Contact Us via our website [Contact Page](#)

San Luis Rey Secular Franciscan Fraternity  
Mission San Luis Rey  
4050 Mission Avenue  
Oceanside, CA 92057

## Minister's Note for September

### Our Lady and St. Francis – Each a Resounding ‘Yes’ to God



In September, we are invited to reflect on both the Birthday of our Lady (September 8th) and the Franciscan Feast of the Stigmata (September 17<sup>th</sup>). In holding both these beautiful commemorations in our hearts, I look to the commonalities – both Our Lady and St. Francis said a resounding ‘yes’ to God. Our Lady’s ‘Fiat’ or ‘yes’ brought God’s grace into the world as the Incarnation – Jesus. St. Francis followed Christ so fully and faithfully that he also brought Christ to the world so perfectly that he eventually bore the marks of the crucified Christ.

Francis did not choose the stigmata; he chose something much more difficult: he had chosen, simply, to follow Jesus. Francis chose to move forward each day following in the footsteps of the Lord. That can be frightening... who KNOWS where *that* will lead? Then he chose each day, despite what came... to still... follow. To allow himself to be Christ for others, and especially for the poor and marginalized. The stigmata was the outward sign of something that was innately *interior*. The true transformation occurred within. In the words of Fr. Dan Horan OFM, the stigmata was the ‘*exterior manifestation of a mystical relationship between the human person and God – proof of the transformative power of love.*’



Fr. Dan Horan OFM, invites us, on the Feast of the Stigmata —to look within, see how each of us does or does not bear the marks of Christ in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Perhaps we won’t receive the marks of Christ in the form of five wounds, but we could certainly—and should certainly—make visible the presence of Christ in every other way. How are we called to make visible the presence of Christ to others?



The feast of the Stigmata is a reminder of the power of love, as seen in the opening prayer for the feast day Mass:

*“Lord Jesus Christ, who reproduced in the flesh of the most blessed Francis, the sacred marks of your own sufferings, so that in a world grown cold our hearts might be filled with burning love of you, graciously enable us by his merits and prayers to bear the cross without faltering and to bring forth worthy fruits of penitence: You who are God, living and reigning with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.*

*Amen.”*

*Art: Cimabue - Madonna Enthroned with the Child, St Francis and Four Angels, 1278-80. Lower Church, San Francesco, Assisi*

Pace e Bene +  
Laura, OFS  
Minister, San Luis Rey

<https://sacredheartfla.org/about-us/being-franciscan/franciscan-feast-days/the-feast-of-the-stigmata-of-st-francis-of-assis/>  
<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2014/09/17/move-over-bellarmino-franciscans-today-feast-stigmata-st-francis>

## *Francis and St. Michael*

Francis had a deep devotion to St. Michael, so much so that he instituted a personal Lent of St. Michael. This extended period of prayer and fasting began on The Feast of the Assumption (Aug. 15) and ended on what was then called Michaelmas (Sept. 29). In Francis' time the archangels each had a separate feast day. Because of St. Michael's role in salvation history his feast was one of the great feasts and in the middle ages was a day of obligation. At that time he was the patron saint of knights. Today he is patron of the police, military, doctors and has always been the chief warrior in defense of our Church.

Francis had at one time made a pilgrimage to a cave on the east coast of Italy where in 492 A.D. a bishop in the Church experienced an apparition of St. Michael. Michael told the bishop that he had consecrated the cave and wanted a church built over it. When Francis visited, he did not enter as he felt it was so holy. An interesting fact is that to this day, this is the only building of worship in the Catholic Church not consecrated by man. Thomas of Celano's comments on Francis' devotion to the angels: "He venerated the angels with the greatest affection, for they are with us in battle and walk with us in the midst of the shadow of death. He often said that Blessed Michael should be especially honored because his duty is presenting souls to God."

In 1224 (two years before his death) Francis went to Mount LaVerna with three brothers to observe this lent. I find it fascinating that during this lent Francis received the stigmata around the time of the feast of the Exultation of the Cross (September 14th) by an angel (Seraph) with six wings and the body of the Crucified. Francis came down from the mountain on the Feast of St. Michael transformed into the likeness of the Crucified.



Another interesting connection for us comes from Pope Leo XIII who gave us our second rule in 1883. The following year (1884) after a Mass the Pope fell to the floor apparently dead, but was experiencing a vision of Satan's influence in the world in the coming century. He was so shaken by this he composed a prayer to St. Michael. This was added to the prayers after Mass from 1886 to 1968. After Vatican II it was removed, but in 1994 JP II urged people again to personally pray the St. Michael prayer.

We are living through troubling times now. Article 8 of our Rule states "As Jesus was the true worshiper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do." Could this encourage us to extend our time in prayer and contemplation? Consider adding St. Michael's prayer at the end of your rosary or to your prayers? In the Litany of the Saints, St. Michael is invoked second only to our Blessed Mother in that long list. He is our help in the battle that rages in our world and the Church, a battle already won. We should not lose hope. St. Michael is still our defender and we have recourse to him.

### *Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel*



St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Divine Power of God, cast into Hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

*Jan DeSpain, OFS  
Formation Director*

### *Blessed Mother*



We know on September 8th we celebrate the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary, “The Mother of God.” Mary is the woman who would be preserved from sin and would be the new Eve that would crush the head of the serpent. What joy in Heaven there must have been at her birth as there was at the birth of Jesus.

St. Gabriel said, with the highest praise to be given, “Hail Mary, the Lord is with Thee.” Mary to be the first tabernacle of our Lord, and Mary so full of grace. How blessed is She to be God’s choice as Mary gave her “Yes” to be Mother of Jesus.

We also cannot forget Joseph, who also gave his “Yes” to be the husband of Mary and the earthly father to her Son. Mary lived her life filled with love, honor, and praise to our Lord.

As we go from Gospel to Life and Life to the Gospel we must always remember the words Mary said at the wedding at Cana, “Do whatever He tells you.” These words are so important in living our lives in Christ, “Do whatever He tells you.” Mary also asks us to pray the Rosary to be with her in living the Gospel of her Son.

As we look to honor Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth, we give glory, honor, and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ in adoration of the Holy Eucharist.



*Sandy Baden, OFS  
Vice Minister*

## *The Stigmata of St. Francis - by Connie Collins, OFS*

We all know the story of the stigmata of St. Francis, which we honor on September 17. This month may be a good time to reflect on what it means to us today.

In his *Second Book* on the life of St. Francis Thomas of Celano provides a descriptive account of the event of the stigmata:



While he was staying in that hermitage called La Verna ... two years prior to (when) he returned his soul to heaven, (Francis) saw in the vision of God a man, having six wings like a Seraph, standing over him, arms extended and feet joined, affixed to a cross. Two of his wings were raised up, two were stretched out over his head as if for flight, and two covered his whole body. When (he) saw these things, he was filled with the greatest awe, but could not decide what this vision meant for him. Moreover, he greatly rejoiced and was much delighted by the kind and gracious look that he saw the Seraph gave him ... but the fact that the Seraph was fixed to the cross and the bitter suffering of that passion thoroughly frightened him. Consequently, he got up both sad and happy as joy and sorrow took their turns in his heart.

While he was unable to perceive anything clearly understandable from the vision, its newness very much pressed upon his heart. Signs of the nails began to appear on his hands and feet, just as he had seen them ... on the crucified man hovering over him.

His hands and feet seemed to be pierced through the middle by nails, with the heads of the nails appearing on the inner part of his hands and also on the upper part of his feet, and their points protruding on opposite sides. Those marks on the inside of his hands were round, but rather oblong on the outside and small pieces of flesh were visible like the points of nails, bent over and flattened, extending beyond the flesh around them. On his feet, the marks of nails were stamped in the same way ... His right side was marked with an oblong scar, as if pierced with a lance m and this often dripped blood, so that his tunic and undergarments were frequently stained with his holy blood.

(Celano, in Armstrong, Hellman, & Short, 2001)

Reading this account can be difficult, but also wonderful. We see the great love between Francis and the Crucified Christ. We see great pain, as well. Although we have not had that profound, deep experience that Francis had, perhaps we can relate in our own way to the mixture of both joy and sorrow that he felt. Maybe we are coming closer to these feelings as we maintain our relative solitude during the pandemic.

We are witness, through Celano's account, to a love so deep that identification occurred in a mutually expressive way. The wounds of Christ are the deepest expression of love that humankind has ever known. That Francis was gifted with the marks of the stigmata inspires us to move into the experience of that deep love.

Armstrong R. J., Hellman, J. A. W., & Short, W. J. (2001) *Francis of Assisi: The Saint*. New City Press.

## *PRAYER BEFORE OUR MEETING*

*Lord, Eternal God, we are about to begin our meeting  
and we do so with the awareness that without Your presence  
here at the center of our meeting, and within us, our work will be empty.*

*Grace us with Your Wisdom and Vision: gift us with Holy Humor and Humility  
so that, not only this meeting, but all our lives may be a meeting place for Your Kingdom.*

*To day Lord Jesus we praise and thank you for your Love. We are overwhelmed that you, like  
St. Francis of Assisi, held nothing back from us, by offering Your last drop of blood through  
Your Holy Wounds on the cross. Thank You for Your Love!*

*We ask You to send the Holy Spirit on us, and set us ablaze, so that with the Spirits help, we  
may respond more fully to you. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns  
with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever. AMEN*



*Sr. Madeline Fitzgerald, OSC*

*Spiritual Assistant*

*San Luis Rey Fraternity*

## *The 'Q' Will be held the Summer of 2023*

# Q

The Quinquennial, or 'Q' as it is affectionately called, is the Secular Franciscan Order National gathering and is held every five years. The National Executive Council convened and decided due to the existing uncertainties related to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Q scheduled for September 2021 has been canceled. The Q is now scheduled to take place in the Summer of 2023. More details will follow as they become available.

## What was lost, was joyfully found - Frances Thompson Garcia



The other day, I received a call from a woman trying to track down her mom's connection to the Secular Franciscan Order. The immense love she shared with her family was apparent in her daughter's voice and story. It took a day or two, although we could not find Frances in the National database as she was likely inactive, **we did find her**. Our Council secretary, Connie Collins, researched our handwritten records and found that your mom was professed as a Secular Franciscan on May 4th, 2003 at Mission San Luis Rey. She was one of **ours**. She was with us for a number of years; later, on May 15, 2010 she transferred to St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity in Hemet, CA. It was a sense of joy for the daughter to make this connection for her Mom. She was moved to tears when we asked to include her on our '[Sister Death](#)' Memorial Page (I did explain the significance of the Franciscan 'Sister Death' reference). This is a wonderful reminder for us all; when sharing critical information with your families when you're sick, in the hospital, or have even been welcomed by the heavenly angles to eternal life – include a reference for them to reach out to your Fraternity. **We don't want to lose you**. Say a prayer for Frances and ask her to pray for us. **Frances, welcome home.**

## September is the 'Season of Creation'



Let us join our OFM brothers in celebrating the 'Season of Creation.' They share on their [website](#) that the *Season of Creation* is approaching — it begins on September 1st 2020, which marks the World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation, and continues until October 4th, the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, Patron Saint of Ecology and Ecologists. Many Christians join in this special time to reflect, pray, and implement concrete activities that will lead humanity towards a lifestyle of solidarity that cares for our Common Home.

The Franciscan friars are enthusiastically joining in this ecumenical initiative. Several Provinces of the Order, through their JPIC offices, have organized activities in conjunction with the wider Franciscan Family. This year, our participation has more energy and hope because of the project

called *The Laudate Si' Revolution*. Please see their website for all the activities during the month of September. Let us join our fellow [Franciscans as we come together to celebrate the "SEASON OF CREATION"](#).

## *News from the Fraternity Council*

### *From our Director of Formation*

As we journey toward the Transitus and Feast of St. Francis keep our Aspirants Carolyn, Pam, Linda, Gina, and Candidate Heidi covered in prayer. We are indeed so blessed to have a virtual space to gather and build relationships each month.



In Candidacy Heidi and Dottie will discuss Chapter 18 from The Journey. The topic is being faithful and focusing on Article 10 of our rule at our class on September 12. As a professed member consider carefully how important your own faithful witness is to our order, your family, friends, and our Lord. We give thanks for the faithful witness of St. Francis, St. Clare and all the Franciscan saints who inspire us to become who you call us to be individually and collectively.

Jan DeSpain, OFS  
Formation Director

### *From our Formator & Councilors*

Our Aspirants met on zoom and covered chapter two in the Journey Book - The Three Orders- Structure within the orders & Discernment of Vocation.



We remember from our instruction on discernment that...the desires for humility and truth are essential elements of franciscan spirituality...for if you are to give him yourself you are never without the means of giving...to the laity: 'secularity' is in itself an officially recognized form of spirituality in the church...the secular is not in opposition to the sacred, it is the embodiment of the sacred.

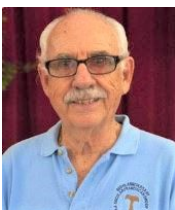
Kelly Farnum, OFS  
Councilor



Daily Message from Pope Francis, 08/25/2020.  
*'We ask ourselves - do we remember to praise God?  
... One time during the day to say: "Blessed be the Lord"  
... our hearts will expand, joy will increase.'*  
Pope Francis

Joe Cannon, OFS, Councilor

### *From our Treasurer*



You can mail your OFS fraternity contributions to:

**Rock DeSpain OFS,  
1257 Lodgepole Drive,  
Hemet CA, 92545**





## *Secular Franciscan Regional & National News*

The Regional Gathering will be on Saturday, September 19th from 1pm-3pm on Zoom. If you'd like to attend, please provide your name and email address to our wonderful Council Secretary, Connie Collins (connie.collins.ofs@gmail.com) by Sunday, September 13th (our next Gathering day).

Connie will compile all our responses and send them to Patricia Grace.



**SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER  
ST. FRANCIS REGION  
REGIONAL GATHERING  
BY ZOOM!**

**SEPTEMBER 19, 2020  
1:00 P.M. TO 3:00 P.M.  
THEME: ✨ CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING**

**WE WILL MEET IN THREE GROUPS:  
ENGLISH, SPANISH, AND KOREAN TO  
GREET EACH OTHER, PRAY, REFLECT,  
AND PRAISE GOD!**

**PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR MINISTER IF YOU  
PLAN TO ATTEND, AND A ZOOM  
INVITATION WILL BE SENT TO YOU!**



**PEACE AND ALL GOOD!**

Please see the most recent [National Tau Newsletter](#) for all the National News.



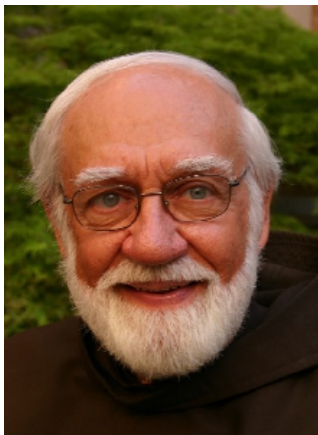
Franciscan School of Theology  
at the UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

### Franciscan School of Theology – Free Online Zoom Sessions!

We are blessed to have access to such riches of Franciscan thought! Please consider attending the Fall FST Zoom lectures. Please mark your calendars and enroll by 9/2.

- When: September 3, 2020 7:00 p.m.
- Who: Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.
- What: Rebuild My Church: What Franciscan Spirituality Has to Say to the Church Today. Enrollment is free; a free-will offering is very appreciated. Register [here](#). An email with additional details and other FST lectures available on YouTube will be attached to this Cord. Enjoy!

### *Weekend Retreat with Fr. Murray Bodo, OFM: Sept 18-19*



I invite you to take a look at your Franciscan bookshelf; I would be AMAZED if there was not a book or two there written by Fr. Murray Bodo. Murray Bodo is a Franciscan Friar and priest of the Province of St. John the Baptist. He is a poet and author of many books, including the best-selling, *Francis: The Journey and the Dream*. Fr. Bodo will be giving a weekend retreat:

#### **Lessons from St. Francis in a Time of COVID Pandemic.**

It's on **Saturday, Sep 19, 8:30am through Sunday, Sep 20, 11:00am**

I know this is a busy weekend for us (same weekend as our Regional gathering). Please also take a look at Fr. Bodo's online Zoom retreat to see if God may be calling you to this wonderful experience.

#### **RETREAT TALKS:**

9/19 08:30AM: Talk 1: The Wonder of the Incarnation and the Paradox of Gospel Poverty

9/19 10:30AM: Talk 2: How to Live the Gospel: Go and Repair My House

9/19 1:30PM: Talk 3: How to be a Peace-Maker

9/19 3:30PM: Talk 4: All Creatures are Our Brothers and Sisters

9/20 10:00AM Mass: Theme: The Joy of Humble Praise and Service of God

**Program Cost:** \$100 (per internet connection). To register over the phone, call the Retreat Center at 760-757-3659. Make sure to identify yourself as a Secular Franciscan.

### *Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University*



The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University will initiate the first International Franciscan Blog in partnership with The Franciscan Study Center at Tilburg University in the Netherlands. They aim to connect the best of Franciscan learning with the wider world of scholars, educated professionals and communities of practice: [www.franciscanconnections.com](http://www.franciscanconnections.com).

## Laura Chun's Zoom Meeting Room



To join by **Computer**, Laptop, Tablet, SmartPhone App:

- Click or Go to this [link](#) (full link is below):
- When prompted use: Meeting ID: 760 726 2486
- Then use Password: 1798

To join by **landline or audio-only Phone** (no video):

- Dial this number (it's in San Jose): 1-669-900-6833
- Meeting ID: 760 726 2486
- Then use Password: 1798

Full Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7607262486?pwd=dmRBNVU5WFUxMTdzaUxGcy9ibGtwdz09>



## Let us Pray for our brothers and sisters, especially: :



❖ For those with Profession Anniversaries in the month of September:

- September 9, 2007      **Barbara Upson**
- September 9, 2007      **Edward Upson**

- ❖ Let us pray for all those that are impacted by the fires, who have lost their homes, been evacuated, or breathing the fire-ravaged air.
- ❖ For *Diane*, the Godmother of Jason Williamson, a visitor on our website, who requested prayers
- ❖ For all of our families and friends and neighbors...for conversion and holiness and healing.
- ❖ For *Romeo Bassi* ~ *rest in peace (August 15)*. Bless you ROMEO - Father of our aspirant Gina Martinot. We pray as a fraternity for Romeo's family and his caregivers, for their healing in this grieving process. Gina, we love you and are here for any way we may be of service.
- ❖ For the safety of Laura, our Minister, and our Council that they may be filled with wisdom and grace to fulfill the roles in which they have been entrusted.

\* \* \*

**From the Editor:** Thank you all for your contributions to this month issue of *The Cord*. Due to change in our monthly general gathering date to second Sundays, please submit your articles, reports or adds by the 25th of the month to publish in next month issue. Send your Word or Pages files (font Arial 12 pt, if possible) and any photos (jpg or png) via email to: [mksfo@me.com](mailto:mksfo@me.com). Thanks, Marta



## *Canticle of the Sun*

*Composed by St. Francis of Assisi*

*Most High, all powerful, good Lord,  
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all  
blessing.*

*To You alone, Most High, do they belong,  
and no man is worthy to mention Your name.*

*Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures,  
especially through my lord Brother Sun,  
who brings the day; and you give light through him.  
And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor!  
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the  
stars,  
in heaven you formed them clear and precious and  
beautiful.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,  
and through the air, cloudy and serene,  
and every kind of weather through which  
You give sustenance to Your creatures.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,  
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,  
through whom you light the night and he is beautiful  
and playful and robust and strong.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,  
who sustains us and governs us and who produces  
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.*

*Praised be You, my Lord,  
through those who give pardon for Your love,  
and bear infirmity and tribulation.  
Blessed are those who endure in peace  
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.*

*Praised be You, my Lord,  
through our Sister Bodily Death,  
from whom no living man can escape.  
Woe to those who die in mortal sin.*

*Blessed are those who will  
find Your most holy will,  
for the second death shall do them no harm.*

*Praise and bless my Lord,  
and give Him thanks  
and serve Him with great humility*

*Mission San Luis Rey de Francia, Oceanside, California*

