

Christmas

December 25

The Incarnation



Attributions:

[Star marking the birthplace of Jesus Christ in the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem Israel.](#)



Attributions:

[Christmas tree](#) and Nativity scene

The Cord

December, 2023

Newsletter of the San Luis Rey
Secular Franciscan Fraternity

Monthly Gatherings: 2nd Sundays

November Gathering:

December 10, Sunday:

12:00 noon Social Time in our Gathering Rm
Choosing Fraternity Charity

1:00 to 2:40 pm General Monthly Gathering
with **Dr. Darleen Pryds**

2:40 pm Prayer in St. Clare Chapel

* * *

Next Month General Gathering:

2nd Sunday

January 14, 2023

Login for All Zooms:

www.zoom.us Click on: **Join a Meeting**

Meeting ID: **760 726 2486** Password: **1798**

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

Mission San Luis Rey
4050 Mission Avenue
Oceanside, CA 92057



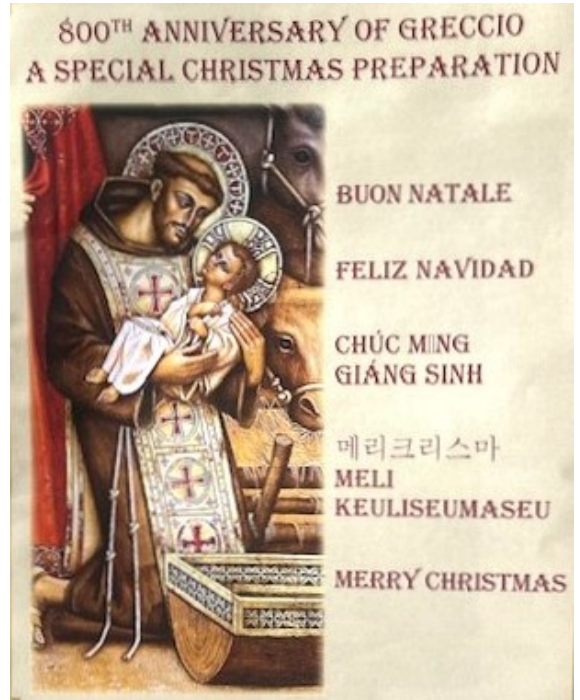
Minister's Note for December

What a tremendous Joy!

About a year ago, Caroline Yandell OFS, our Regional Minister, approached Sr. Kathy Warren OSF, the Director for the Office for Women Religious and asked, 'Does the Franciscan family have any plans to celebrate the 800 Anniversary of Greccio?'

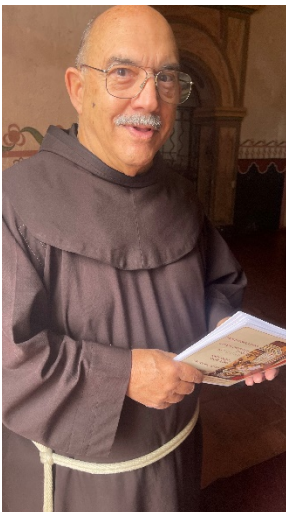
From its first inkling, this beautiful 800th Anniversary celebration was a labor of love of the First (Friars), Second (Sisters), and Third (Seculars) orders of the Franciscan family.

There were two celebrations, one at Immaculate Conception church in Old Town, the other at Mission San Luis Rey. It was so exciting to share in this event created by all three orders. The Seculars were represented in all our language groups: English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean.



It's events where the branches of the Franciscan family come together – and when we gather with Seculars from many fraternities, in our District, Region, or Nationally, that we truly experience what it is to be a member of this beautiful community. Our Franciscan spirituality is so *much* more than our one Fraternity – and that's a camaraderie you could deeply feel at both of these Greccio events. What a privilege it was to be present! For me, I've found that the 'spirituality of presence' can mean that sometimes *there's so much joy in just showing up*.

I was the photographer for both events (graciously assisted by Tuan Cao, OFS).





Darleen Pryds will be joining us at our December gathering to talk about Greccio. You can read her article in St. Anthony Messenger [here](#). Sr. Kathy Warren, Fr. Vince Mesi, Sr. Madeline and I were interviewed by the Southern Cross regarding this beautiful 800-year tradition. You can read that article [here](#) and see all the Diocese Greccio resources [here](#), including Fr. Mike Blastis's homily [here](#). The article written by Fr. Anthony Garibaldi and myself on the Story of the Christmas Creche is [here](#).

Ready for more Greccio joy? Please check out this amazing prayer booklet on creating your nativity scene with Pope Francis, '[Greccio and the O Antiphons](#).' You'll love it!

Pace e bene –

Laura Chun, Minister, San Luis Rey Fraternity



Guest speaker for November – Fr. Martin Carbajo, OFM

Fr. Martin Carbajo joined us for our November Gathering, kicking off our celebration of the 800th Anniversary of Greccio. Fr. Martin’s talk was so compelling that many of us stayed an EXTRA HOUR to hear it all. It was wonderful. A PDF of Fr. Martin’s PowerPoint slides have been added to the ‘Ongoing Formation’ section of our website at www.slr-ofs.org/ongoing-formation ... Or you can link directly to them [here](#). Enjoy!



Of the many things Fr. Martin shared with us, he said, that ‘Next year, we will celebrate the gift of Stigmata, thus completing the celebration of Greccio. By uniting the crib to the Eucharist, Francis showed that the incarnation is inseparable from the paschal mystery. Celano tells us that, in the humble manger at Greccio, Francis contemplates the humanity of Christ and his suffering on the cross. In fact, there is no manger without stigmata, because “being Christian means living in a Paschal manner.” Benedict XVI, «General audience» (Dec. 23, 2009).

Fr. Martin also shared that ‘Francis continues to repeat to us: “I have done what is mine; may Christ teach you yours” (LMj 14:3). To respond to this challenge, we need a deep faith that can help us see the starry sky in the darkness of night. In a consumerist and hyper-accelerated society, we need to return, metaphorically, to the refuge of Greccio, finding shelter in the rock, and allowing ourselves to be “wrapped in silence” (AdS 3).’



Laura Chun, OFS

Minister, San Luis Rey Fraternity



Giving Birth to Christ

Back when I was minister of Mount Alverno Fraternity in Redwood City of the Bay Area, some 20 years ago, our fraternity gathering fell on Mother's Day in May. When I arrived, my fraternity brothers and sisters waited me with a Mother's Day card addressed to me from the fraternity and a flower bouquet saying I was like a mother to them. I was stunned, first of all because I never married, I don't have any children (just Godchildrens), and I never thought of myself as a mother. They reassured me that I was one, in a spiritual sense. Perhaps they were right.

This small fraternity comprised of only a handful active members (5 or 6) when I joined them after transferring from Delaware to the Bay Area with my job. They were wonderful Franciscans but their numbers were decreasing. I helped out first with formation. Their numbers started to increase and they probably felt "reborn" after a few years and elected me their minister. So what does it mean for a lay person to be a spiritual mother?



A [Nativity scene](#) from Germany, Photo: Andreas Praefcke, [Friedrichshafen](#), Germany: Katholische Kirche Ailingen, Krippendarstellung Photographed by Andreas Praefcke, April

St. Francis of Assisi writes so beautifully in his *Letter to the Faithful*:

"All who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their virtue (cf. Mk 12:30) and love their neighbors as they do themselves (cf. Mt 22:39), and hold their bodies in hatred with its vices and sins, and receive the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and bring forth fruits worthy of penance: O how blessed and blest are those men and women, while they do such things and persevere in them, since upon them rests the Spirit of the Lord (cf. Jn 14:23), and they are sons of their Heavenly Father (cf. Mt 5:45), whose works they do, and *they are spouses, fathers and mothers of Our*

Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Mt 12:50). We are spouses, when by the Holy Spirit the faithful soul is joined with Our Lord Jesus Christ. We are His brothers, when we do the will of the Father who is in Heaven (Mt. 12:50). Mothers, when we carry Him in our heart and body (cf. 1 Cor 6:20) by divine love and a pure and sincere conscience; we give birth to Him by holy work, which should shine upon others as an example (cf. Mt 5:16)."

Never a better time than now, this Advent, while waiting for the Lord's coming at Christmas, to grow in our love for God and our Neighbors, to show our light to others that they may see the Lord in us, and come closer to Him. The world needs Christ more than ever. So let us not hide our light under a bushel. "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in Heaven" (*Matthew 5: 15-16*)

Merry Christmas

Dr. Marta Kassai, OFS,
Councilor, San Luis Rey Fraternity



A Greccio Plenary Indulgence

This article was shared with us by Denise Scalzo, OFS, a member of our fraternity often traveling to the Holy Land. You can find more about the plenary indulgence and much more Greccio information on the Diocese of San Diego website at www.sdcatholic.org/greccio

By [Francesca Pollio Fenton](#), CNA Staff

This year, Catholics will be able to receive a plenary indulgence from Dec. 8, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to Feb. 2, 2024, the feast of the Presentation in the Temple of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by praying before a Nativity scene in a Franciscan church. Earlier this year, on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the faithful gathered at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy, to honor the beloved Italian saint and celebrate the [800th anniversary](#) of the approval of the Rule of St. Francis (1223) and the creation of the Nativity scene in Greccio. As part of the celebration of this Franciscan Centenary, the [Conference of the Franciscan Family](#) asked Pope Francis for the approval of this plenary indulgence.

The conference wrote: "In order to promote the spiritual renewal of the faithful and increase the life of grace, we ask that the faithful receive a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions from 8 December 2023, the solemnity of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to 2 February 2024, feast of the Presentation in the Temple of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by visiting the churches run by Franciscan families throughout the world and stopping in prayer in front of the Nativity scenes set up there."

The Apostolic Penitentiary welcomed the request, allowing the faithful to receive this indulgence under the usual conditions. Those who are sick or unable to participate physically can obtain the indulgence by offering their sufferings up to the Lord or by "carrying out practices of piety."

What is a plenary indulgence?

A plenary indulgence is a grace granted by the Catholic Church through the merits of Jesus Christ, Mary, and all the saints to remove the temporal punishment due to sin. The indulgence cleanses a person of all temporal punishment due to sin. However, it must always be accompanied by a full detachment from sin.

Conditions to receive a plenary indulgence in all cases:

1. Detachment from all sin, even venial.
2. Sacramental confession, holy Communion, and prayer for the intentions of the pope. Sacramental confession and receiving the Eucharist can happen up to about 20 days before or after the act performed to receive a plenary indulgence.

It is appropriate that Communion and the prayer take place on the same day that the work is completed. One sacramental confession is sufficient for several plenary indulgences. However for each plenary indulgence one wishes to receive, a separate reception of the Eucharist and a separate prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father are required.



Denise M. Scalzo, OFS

December with Darleen Pryds on Greccio

Please join us at our December gathering where our guest speaker will be Darleen Pryds, professor at the Franciscan School of Theology.

We will be focusing on the 800th anniversary of Greccio. You are invited to bring a figurine from your own Christmas creche at home (please write your name on the bottom) for the day – and to be mutually blessed by us all.

Our speaker, Darleen Pryds, will speak on “A Spirituality of Interdependence: Reconsidering the Entire Community of Faithful at Greccio.” With Darleen, we will engage in the Franciscan story of Greccio to listen for deeper connections and ways of being present with one another and with all of creation. There will be an experiential component of contemplative presence which can prepare us to experience Advent as the contemplative season that it is. If you’d like to read and reflect on the story ahead of time, Darleen is asking that we please read [from Thomas of Celano’s First Life of Francis](#).

Darleen Pryds is a professor at FST but more importantly has found Franciscan studies and spirituality to be her lifelong path to understand and experience God in the ordinary daily life that surrounds us all. She’s written books and articles on lay Franciscan spirituality, but finds that her most important contributions come on Friday nights when she volunteers as a caregiver in hospice.

From Laura Chun, OFS

Darleen’s article on Greccio: <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/st-anthony-messenger/greccio-and-the-first-live-nativity-800-years-of-tradition/>

Our December Gathering is Special! We’re getting into the Spirit of Giving! Arrive at Noon on Sunday, December 10th.

What would all this talk of Greccio and Christmas be about if we didn’t also include gift-giving??? Please arrive at **Noon** for the beginning of our time together. Bring a lunch, and if you’d like, please also bring some treats to share. We’ll talk as we eat lunch; this first hour will be dedicated to choosing a charity or two to support this holiday season with a financial contribution from the fraternity.

We’ll take turns sharing about each of our favorite causes and as a fraternity, vote to decide which we’d like to support this year. Bring information to share about your favorite charity so you can share that with the fraternity. Remember if your favorite cause is not chosen, you can always support it as an individual, so it’s all good. Please arrive on time at Noon on 12/10 (December 10th) to share in the camaraderie and conversation of our communal giving.





In Care of Creation



CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT/SÉ NUESTRA LUZ

Bernadette Farrell



1. Long-ing for light, we wait in dark-ness. Long-ing for
 2. Long-ing for peace, our world is trou-bled. Long-ing for
 3. Long-ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long-ing for
 4. Long-ing for shel-ter, man - y are home-less. Long-ing for
 5. Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



1. truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 2. hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 3. wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 4. warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 5. hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



1. your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 2. has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 3. bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 4. shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 5. to one an - oth - er, mak - ing your king - dom come.



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the dark - ness.
 ¡Sé nues-tra luz, Cris-to Se - ñor, en las ti - nie - blas!

CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT/SÉ NUESTRA LUZ (CONT. 2)



Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered to-day.

¡Sé nues-tra luz! Bri-lla en tu J - gle - sia reu - ni - da hoy. 4. Re-

Estrofas



1. Luz an - he - la - mos en las ti - nie - blas. Só - lo tú
2. Paz an - he - la - mos pa - ra un mun - do he - ri - do, es - pe - ran -
3. Pan an - he - la - mos, son mu - chos con ham - bre. Se - dien - tos de
4. fu - gio an - he - la - mos los de - sam - pa - ra - dos, bus - can - do ca -
5. Mu - chos los fie - les, mu - chos los do - nes, y co - ra -



1. pue - des dar la ver - dad. Haz de no - so - tros
2. za - do y su - frien - do en do - lor. E - res el Ver - bo que
3. a - gua, a - ún tie - nen sed. Haz - nos tu pan,
4. lor y del frí - o es - ca - par. Haz de no - so - tros al -
5. zo - nes que pi - den sa - nar. Se - a - mos sier - vos del

al Estribillo



1. tu pue - blo san - to, tu luz pa - ra j - lu - mi - nar.
2. nos ha sal - va - do. Con - viér - te - nos en tu voz.
3. pan com - par - tí - do, que da al mun - do de co - mer.
4. ber - gue y am - pa - ro, pa - re - des de pie - dras vi - vas.
5. u - no al o - tro ha - cien - do el rei - no lle - gar.

News from the Fraternity Council

Fraternity News!

Our fraternity life is ever evolving, and I am delighted to share that we have been extraordinarily blessed with so many of our Fraternity members willing to give so much for the life of the Fraternity. We have been blessed with members attending our gatherings in person and on Zoom; in keeping us in their prayers, and in sharing both their joys and heartaches. We share a beautiful fraternal bond.



I ask that we all keep Pam Pert in your prayers that she be surrounded by love and concern as she navigates this time of grieving the loss of her beloved husband, Tim. Pam has been on the Fraternity Council and has determined that this is the time to step away from that role for the time being. Pam remains a beloved member of the fraternity – please keep Pam lovingly in your prayers.

It was time to appoint a Council member to fill in Pam’s place. An appointed Council member is a part of all Council decision making but does not have the right to officially vote. After prayer, discernment, and discussion with Region, the Council asked Linda Gossett OFS, if she would take on the role of an appointed Council member until our next round of elections. Linda graciously agreed! Thank you, Linda!



Over the years, our Fraternity has also been extraordinarily blessed with the presence of Rock and Jan DeSpain. Both served at Region and in our Fraternity. Jan is currently the Director of Formation. Both Rock and Jan have been in our prayers as Jan journeys alongside Rock through hospice toward the gates of heaven. Please, please, continue to keep Rock, Jan, and their family in your prayers.

As a fraternity, we are also blessed with several people interested in formally beginning Formation. Eileen Costa has very graciously to become a Fraternity Formator. Eileen is a past Director of Formation and has a Master’s degree in Theology from the Franciscan School of Theology. Jan DeSpain will remain our Director of Formation until the next round of elections. Formation for our new folks will begin in early 2024. Thank you so much, Eileen!!!



Karron Esmode has worn many hats over the years; she is a past Minister, our current JPIC Animator, and the fraternity Outreach Coordinator. Karron has asked that we find another wonderful person to take on the role of Outreach Coordinator so she can maintain focus on her JPIC work. Many, many thanks to Karron for all she has done for so long!!!

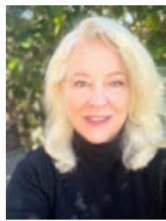
We are blessed that Carolyn Brock, who currently mails the Cord to our homebound each month, lovingly replied ‘YES!’ when asked to take on the role of the Fraternity Outreach Coordinator. At a previous Regional visitation, Br. John Kiesler, OFM was very impressed that we HAD this role as a Fraternity and that our homebound remained a part of fraternity life. Thank you so much Carolyn for taking on the Coordinator role. May each member of the fraternity respond lovingly and generously when you ask for their support in this wonderful outreach.



The December General Monthly Gathering will be on Sunday, December 10. with our guest speaker **Darleen Pryds, Ph.D.** Come directly to **our Gathering room at 12 noon.** Council invites you to participate selecting a Fraternity Charity! Bring your lunch or something to share (sweet or savory, preferably finger foods - cookies, crackers, cheese, small bites) to our gathering.

We will have the **Chapel prayer** after Darleen's presentation around **2:40pm** in St. Clare Chapel, and will last 20 min.

The San Luis Rey Fraternity Council



Laura Chun, OFS
Minister



Sam DeSantis, OFS
Vice-Minister & Formator



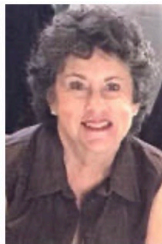
Jan DeSpain, OFS
Formation Director



Sr. Madeline Fitzgerald, OSC
Spiritual Assistant



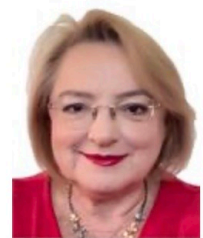
Connie Collins, OFS
Secretary



Corinne Helena, OFS
Treasurer



Pam Pert, OFS
Councilor



Marta Kassai, OFS
Councilor & Newsletter Editor

From our Treasurer



You can mail your OFS fraternity contributions to:

Corinne Helena, OFS
1048 Turnstone Way
Oceanside, CA 92057





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

- Click or Go to this [link](#) (full link is below):
- If 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

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



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



❖ For those who died in the month of December ~~~✝

- **December 4, 2002** **Mary P. Ryan Molnar, OFS**
- **December 12, 2021** **Mary Hayes, OFS**
- **December 29, 1998** **Mae Coash, OFS**

❖ For those who professed in the month of December:

- **December 10, 2006** **Penny Johnson**
- **December 15, 1991** **Jan DeSpain**
- **December 15, 1991** **Rock DeSpain**

❖ For Rock DeSpain, OFS who has been placed on hospice care, and for Jan DeSpain, OFS to have the strength caring for him.

❖ For Fr. Jerome E Nadine who passed away in Fallbrook on Saturday September 30, 2023 ironically, on the Feast Day of St Jerome. He was born in Scranton, Pa in 1933 and was 90 years of age.

❖

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



Marta

Dr. Marta M. Kassai, OFS, Editor