

# Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity

January - March 2026

## *Four Professed at Mishawaka*



Immaculate Conception Fraternity, Mishawaka, invites you to meet our newest professed members. From left to right, Marcie D. Signorino, Catherine Metcalf, Kenneth J. Engdahl, and Victoria A. Kruska. They made their professions at the Mass at St. Francis Convent, Mishawaka, on Saturday, October 18, 2025. Fr. John Eze was Celebrant, and Fr. Ryan Pietrocarlo and Fr. Felipe Campos were Concelebrants.

Thanks be to God!



*The Regional newsletter is published in January, April, July, and October on the first of the month. The deadlines to submit news, such as professions, retreats/days of reflection, election results, etc., are due by the 15th of the month prior to publication. **Ministers**, please email submissions to: Barb Braley at [bbraley345@gmail.com](mailto:bbraley345@gmail.com).*

## A Word from Our Regional Minister...

Happy New Year!

Praying all of you had a great Advent Season and a most joyous Christmas.

During the holiday season, it can be challenging to remain focused on the true meaning of Advent and Christmas. Advent is a sacred time of preparation, inviting us to ready our hearts for the celebration of Christ's birth. Christmas Day itself is the joyous commemoration of Jesus' birthday. Following this, the seasons of Lent and Easter call us to reflect deeply on the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord.

But let's pause and consider: how do we honor and praise Jesus throughout the rest of the year?

- How are you nurturing your Franciscan charism of *Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel*?
- Do you take time each day to read the Rule and allow its wisdom to shape your daily living?
- Have you explored the General Constitution? It is surprisingly rich in guidance and insight.

You might also find inspiration by visiting the National Website. There, you'll discover a variety of helpful resources. For example, under *Prayer Resources*, you'll find a collection of prayers to explore. Choose one or more that speak to your heart and weave them into your daily prayer life. In doing so, you not only strengthen your spiritual journey but also keep Christ at the center of your everyday living.

According to the OFS Rule (art. 8), the members of the Secular Franciscan Order are to join in liturgical prayer in one of the forms proposed by the Church, reliving the mysteries of Christ. These prayers may be:

- a. Morning and Evening Prayer from *The Liturgy of the Hours*, either in common or in private. These celebrations are to be preferred at the fraternity meeting.
- b. A shortened form of *The Liturgy of the Hours* according to forms adapted to the local churches.
- c. The *Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.
- d. The *Office of the Passion* written by St. Francis of Assisi
- e. The *Office of the Twelve Our Fathers* in one of its many versions that have been enriched with short biblical readings and adapted to the structure of *The Liturgy of the Hours*, especially since this form of prayer still thrives in many parts of the world and is a useful way of praying in everyday circumstances.

From the Letter of the Minister General, Secular Franciscan Order, June 24, 2018

"The life of a Secular Franciscan is not a uniform life. We are different. I invite all of you to discover your talents and find inspiration from the Rule. Discover the richness of God, the richness of our vocation! Go out and find how you can live your vocation in the Church, in society, among the poor, among the needy, among our neighbors, in the family, at work, in the fraternity, in free time, in different ways reflecting on the same charism and same vocation. Be inspired so that you can inspire others."

So put on your walking shoes and walk in the footsteps of our Seraphic Father, Saint Francis and make a difference in the world and your life. Have a happy and blessed 2026!

*God bless!*

*Sue Daly*

*Regional Minister*

*Our Lady of Indiana Fraternity*

## The Formation Corner

My husband and I recently adopted three cats from our local Humane Shelter. We are now in the acclimation process with them. We must learn their personalities and they must learn our “house rules.” As they and we adapt to each other, a sense of trust and belonging emerges. For example, just before I wrote this column, Missy climbed on my lap and proceeded to knead my belly for about 10 minutes while I stroked her back. That is a clear sign of trust and affection in cats.

There is something to be learned here about our prayer relationship with God.

When we first begin a prayerful relationship with God, we must get to know one another. The more we get to know one another, the more the sense of trust and affection grow. Each prayer is like “kneading” (or “needing”) God to show our trust and affection while God returns that affection by “stroking” us. It is, therefore, a mutual relationship.

Sue gave several examples in her column about different means of prayer for us. I would like to go further. Our Rule also tells us that “prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do” (article 8, paragraph 1).

In my experience, many of us struggle with the contemplative side of prayer. Some of this stems from what is even meant by contemplation, let alone how to do it.

The original definition of contemplation comes from the Latin “contemplatio,” which means “within the temple.” (Con = prepositional prefix + templatio = temple) Does in the temple mean that we must be in church? Nope. It refers to the temples within ourselves: our souls. In other words, we must be willing to let go of external distractions and give ourselves to our interior silence. This is where we most profoundly encounter God. Contemplation is where we “let go and let God.” We go only to encounter, to focus on God in our inner silence. This is God’s time!

Granted, the first time we enter fully into contemplation, it can be rather intimidating. We’re not used to it. It’s like our cats coming into our home; it’s unknown.

This is also different from meditation because we don’t focus on something we bring in from the outside, like a Scripture verse. Our focus is only on God for God’s own sake. As St. Clare put it in her second letter to St. Agnes of Prague, we need only to “gaze.” If God chooses to reveal something to us, then we can “consider” and “imitate.” The sublimity of this kind of experience is so profound!

One other kind of prayer that I would like to mention is extemporaneous prayer. This is prayer that is in the moment. Many of our Protestant brothers and sisters are much more fluent in this than many Catholics are. This is a shame because it can be very helpful for us. Remember, all prayer comes from God and returns to God. Therefore, we don’t really need to worry about what anyone else thinks about it.

I encountered a very simple 5-step “formula” for extemporaneous prayer that can fit absolutely any situation. It is: address, description, petition, result, and conclusion. An example might be: Lord Jesus (address), you are the Master Physician (description), look upon those who are sick (petition) that they may return to the blessings of good health (result). I/we ask this in your name (conclusion). Amen. With a little practice, anyone can lead prayer at any time.

*Peace and all good!*

*Your little sister,*

*Barb Braley, OFS, Regional Formation Director*

## OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Our Lady of Lourdes fraternity members gathered on Saturday, November 15, 2025 for their annual Remembrance Mass at Holy Name Catholic Church in Cedar Lake.

Afterward they gathered for monthly Franciscan formation followed by a celebration of the golden jubilee of Carole Donner's profession. Carole, a member of Our Lady of Grace parish in Highland, made her profession in the Order of Secular Franciscans on November 15, 1975. The fraternity presented her with a golden jubilee certificate and flowers.

She shared the spotlight with Laura Kadelak, who celebrated her 60th anniversary of profession in the Order. Laura, a member of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs parish in Merrillville, made her profession on November 10, 1965. She also received a certificate and flowers.

They shared a special cake baked for them in honor of the occasion.



Laura Kadelak



Mary Ann Meschi,  
Carole Donner, and  
Fr. Don Blaeser, OFM

## Profession Anniversaries

### HOLY FAMILY

1/6/2019 Eric Bobilya  
1/6/2019 Gina Lee  
1/8/2017 Francis Albert,  
1/8/2017 Michael Maloney  
1/8/2017 Susan Maloney  
2/10/2008 Kathy Harpel,  
3/17/1985 Jon Cooper  
3/18/1981 George Foster

### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

2/6/2004 Patricia Bellm  
3/19/2007 Jim Fuchs

### LADY CLARE

1/26/1987 David White  
1/26/1987 Kathleen White

### LITTLE PORTION

2/1/2020 Michael Booth  
2/1/2020 Michael Moon  
3/15/1989 Pauline Creutzburg  
3/15/1989 David Dieringer

### OUR LADY OF LOURDES

3/17/2018 Gloria Walker

### PEOPLE OF PEACE

2/9/1998 William Manning III  
2/13/1984 Shelia Gilbert  
3/28/1983 Joseph Stetzel

### ST. ANTHONY

3/25/2014 Luann Bartlett  
3/25/2014 Lory Lee  
3/25/2014 Jake Marhoefer  
3/25/2014 Melinda Marhoefer

### ST. BONIFACE

1/26/2019 Karen Sullivan  
3/6/1977 Betty Price  
3/15/1981 Robert Goodman

### ST. CHARLES

1/22/2012 Karen Amstutz

### ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS

1/26/1992 Paul Krilich  
3/17/2018 Joseph Martinez  
3/20/1994 Mary Mitchell  
3/20/1994 Barbara Wiecinski  
3/24/1991 Joanna Polanski

### ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

3/27/2011 Judy Johnson



The Immaculate Conception Franciscan Fraternity in Mishawaka now has a new member who transferred from Minnesota. Her name is Beatrice Conty-Charnock.

### Our Brother and Sisters Who Have Been Visited by Sister Death

<b>Bill Booher</b>	11/3/2025	Sacred Heart
Professed in 1987		
<b>Marcyle Voigt</b>	10/4/2025	St. Charles
Professed on 11/16/1997		
<b>Doris Bermes</b>	12/8/2025	St. Charles
Professed on 5/25/1991		

*Peace and All Good in 2026!*

## OFS-USA Governing Documents Cross-Reference Index

The *Essential Documents of the Secular Franciscan Order (2005)* is no longer in print. The Index in this document has been recently updated and has been added to the Home page on the OFS-USA website along with the OFS-USA Governing Documents that are contained within The *Essential Documents of the Secular Franciscan Order*.

ON THE HOME PAGE

<https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/>

### OFS GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

- [\*The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order\*](#) – 2020 Updated Translation in English & Spanish
- [\*The General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order \(2000\)\*](#) – 2020 Updated Translation in English & Spanish
- [\*Statutes of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States of America\*](#)
- [\*Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order – 2020 Updated Translation\*](#)
- [Index to OFS Governing Docs \(August 2025\)](#) – (This Index includes topical cross-references from the Rule 1978, General Constitutions 2000, OFS-USA Statutes 2003, The Ritual 1985, and Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order 2002)

# 21st Quinquennial Congress General Information

**Come celebrate with your Franciscan family!**

The Core Committee is looking forward to seeing you at the Q!  
29 July – 02 August, 2026 in Lexington, Kentucky

Registration is now open!

## **Easter of St. Francis: Rekindle the Flame**

### **Q Registration Cost:**

Regular *	\$650	January 01 - May 31, 2026
“Late Owl” *	\$725	June 1 - June 15, 2026
One-day-only **	\$160	January 01 - June 15, 2026

\* Includes meal plan: 4 dinners, 3 breakfasts and 3 lunches, beginning with dinner on Wed. July 29. Meals on your own Sunday, August 02.

Please note: Penitential meals will be offered on Friday

\*\* Includes 1 lunch and 1 dinner

**Registration closes June 15, 2026**

### **Quinquennial Registration Questions**

#### **Q: How do I register?**

- Registration link is: <https://ofs-usa.regfox.com/21st-congress-secular-franciscan-order-usa>
- The registration link will take you to RegFox, an online registration service.
- Please fill out the registration form provided.
- You will receive your Registration Confirmation by email.

#### **Q: Do I pay when I register?**

- A non-refundable \$100 per-person deposit is due at time of registration.
- You can pay in full OR you can return to the registration form and make payments.
- You will be able to return to your account at your convenience to make payments until May 30, 2026 or update information anytime. In order to do that, you will need to create a RegFox account, save and retain login and password information to access your account in the future (see instructions below on last page).
- Remaining balance will be automatically charged to your credit card on May 30, 2026.
- If you register after May 30, 2026 and until registration closes, you will need to pay in full.

#### **Q: Who may register?**

- Everyone is welcome: All members of the Franciscan family (1st, 2nd and 3rd orders), friends and families of Franciscans, and anyone interested in joining us.
- Family members may attend, but must be registered. Please note: there are no programs for children.

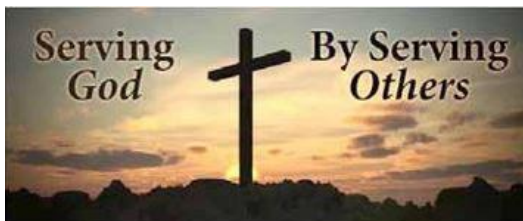
#### **Q: Can 2 people register on the same registration form?**

- You may register two (2) persons on one registration form.

“We, the Secular Franciscans of Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity, are called by virtue of Baptism and Confirmation to holiness. We are committed by our Profession to living the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in our time according to the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi for the rebuilding of the Church.

With the help of Mary our Advocate, Protectress, and Patroness, we will foster prayer, vital fraternities, and communication. We will provide direction, support and resources to local fraternities for understanding and implementing the Rule, the General Constitutions, and the National Statutes of the Secular Franciscan Order, and our Regional Fraternity Guidelines.”

**International Website:** [www.ciOFS.org](http://www.ciOFS.org)  
**National Website:** [www.secularfranciscansusa.org](http://www.secularfranciscansusa.org)  
**Regional Website:** [www.olirf-OFS.org](http://www.olirf-OFS.org)  
**To join OUR LADY OF INDIANA list-serve,** send a blank email to:  
[olirf+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:olirf+subscribe@googlegroups.com)  
 Follow us on **Facebook**



2026 CALENDAR		
1/10	9:30 (ET)	REC, Zoom
3/14	10:00 (ET)	Formation Teams Workshop, St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo
3/15		Deadline for April-June regional newsletter submissions
4/11	10:00 (ET)	Spring Chapter of Mats, St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo
6/13	9:30 (ET)	REC, Zoom
6/15		Deadline for July-Sept regional newsletter submissions
7/11	9:30 (ET)	REC, Zoom (if needed)
8/8	9:30 (ET)	Unity Day, St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo
9/15		Deadline for Oct-Dec regional newsletter submissions
10/10	9:30 (ET)	REC, Zoom
11/14	10:00 (ET)	Fall Chapter of Mats, St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo
12/15		Deadline for Jan-March regional newsletter submissions

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL		
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