

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

St. Charles Fraternity
P.O. Box 134, Avilla, IN 46710

Website: stcharlesfrat.com



March 2026

Minister: Barb Braley	260.242.3256	bbraley345@gmail.com	
Vice Minister: Joyce Wesner	260.715.8999	epsilon@muphi@hotmail.com	
Secretary: Deb Davis	260.668.2440	debdavishih@gmail.com	
Treasurer: Rich Cain	260.667.0940	richcain82@gmail.com	
Formation Director: Katie Herendeen	260.582.9773	mcherendeen@gmail.com	
Prayer Tree: Joyce Wesner	260.715.8999	epsilon@muphi@hotmail.com	
Card Ministry: Barbara Balbo	517.398.4968	bbalbo@frontiernet.net	
Established on or before 2/9/1936	Last elections: 9/15/2024	Last fraternal visit: 11/19/2023	Last pastoral visit: 11/16/2025

Calendar

3/12 6:00pm Council meeting Zoom
 3/15 1:30pm Fraternity gathering, St. Mary's school
 3/19 7:00pm Kathy's initial formation (ch 13) Zoom
 4/9 6:00pm Council meeting Zoom
 4/19 1:30pm Fraternity gathering, St. Mary's school
 4/16 7:00pm Kathy's initial formation (ch 14) Zoom

BIRTHDAYS

3/4 Jackie Didier
 3/21 Patti Webster

**NO PROFESSION
ANNIVERSARIES**

St. Charles 90th Jubilee

On February 8, our fraternity celebrated its 90th Jubilee with Mass at St. Mary's, Avilla, and a carry-in lunch following. Fr. Dave Voors, pastor of St. Mary's graciously celebrated Mass for us. There were seven members in attendance for the celebration.



At left clockwise:
 Rich Cain, Katie Herendeen, Deb Davis, Karen Amstutz, Barbara Balbo. Not pictured: Nancy Steinhofer and Barb Braley.

At right: the cake for our celebration.



GOD IS LOVE Articles 16-18
SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS
AND QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Basic 4 questions for each reading. These are based on St. Clare's admonitions to Agnes of Prague to "gaze," "consider," "contemplate" and "imitate." They also borrow the "layers of formation" from Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap, which are information (what we need to know), formation (how we make sense of what we know and make it our own), and transformation (how this changes us so that we begin to live it out).

These 4 questions will be applied to each section of our formation each month. This will help us on that continuous formation as Secular Franciscan Catholic Christians.

- 1. What ideas struck you or stood out to you as you read? What did you learn?**
- 2. What connections did you make between the encyclical and the supplemental readings?**
- 3. How does what you read deepen your understanding of your Franciscan vocation?**
- 4. What new ideas and desires do you have to change or integrate into your life as a Franciscan and a Catholic?**

For article 16 of God Is Love

God's Love and Christian Life. ⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. ⁸Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. ¹⁰In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us.

¹³ ^[d]This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as savior of the world. ¹⁵Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us.

God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. ¹⁷In this is love brought to perfection among us, that we have confidence on the day of judgment because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God^[e] whom he has not seen. ²¹This is the commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother. - *1 John 4:7-21*

For article 17 of *God Is Love*

Article 17 states that God is visible through Jesus. **Additional question:** what connection(s) do you make between the Annunciation and the command to St. Francis from the San Damiano crucifix to “rebuild My Church”?

Announcement of the Birth of Jesus. ²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ And coming to her, he said, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, ³³ and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴ But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” ³⁵ And the angel said to her in reply, “The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; ³⁷ for nothing will be impossible for God.” ³⁸ Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

From *The Remembrance of the Desire of a Soul*, chapter 6 – Thomas of Celano

With his heart already completely changed – soon his body was also to be changed – he was walking one day by the church of San Damiano, which was abandoned by everyone and almost in ruins. Led by the Spirit he went in to pray and knelt down devoutly before the crucifix. He was shaken by unusual experiences and discovered that he was different from when he had entered. As soon as he had this feeling, there occurred something unheard of in previous ages: with the lips of the painting, the image of Christ crucified spoke to him. “Francis,” it said, calling him by name, “go rebuild My house; as you see, it is all being destroyed.” Francis was more than a little stunned, trembling and stuttering like a man out of his senses. He prepared himself to obey and pulled himself together to carry out the command. He felt this mysterious change in himself, by the could not describe it. So it is better for us to remain silent about it too. From that time on, compassion for the Crucified was impressed into his holy soul. And we honestly believe the wounds of the sacred Passion were impressed deep in his heart, though not yet on his flesh. - *FA:ED, page 249*

For article 18 of *God Is Love*

Then the holy lover of profound humility moved to the lepers and stayed with them. For God’s sake he served all of them with great love. He washed all the filth from hem, and even cleaned out the pus of the sores, just s he said in his *Testament*: “When I was in sin, it seemed to bitter for me to see lepers, and the Lord led me among them and I showed mercy to them.” For he used to say that the sight of lepers was so bitter to him that in the days of his vanity when he saw their houses even two miles away, he would cover his nose with his hands.

March Gathering

Date: March 15, 2026

Time: 1:30 pm

Place: St. Mary's school teachers lounge 232 N. Main St., Avilla

Formation: *God Is Love* – Articles 16-18

Snacks: Everyone

Evening Prayer for the Liturgy of the Hours: 4th Sunday of Lent

Christian Prayer: pages 342 & 931 Hymn: #94 on page 1546

Vol II: pages 280 & 1505 Hymn: page 33

Lord, Who Throughout These 40 Days

21st Quinquennial Congress General Information

29 July – 02 August, 2026 in Lexington, Kentucky

Registration is now open!

Easter of St. Francis: Rekindle the Flame

Q Registration Cost:

Regular * \$650 1/1 - 5/31/2026 "Late Owl" * \$725 6/1 – 6/15/2026

* Includes 4 dinners, 3 breakfasts & 3 lunches, beginning with 7/29 dinner. Meals on your own Sunday, 8/2. Please note: *Penitential meals will be offered on Friday.*

Registration closes June 15, 2026. If you would like assistance with the registration, please contact Jim Konopa: jekonopa@gmail.com or (765) 432-3453 prior to June 1.

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 may register two (2) persons on one registration form.
- 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 any time. To do that, you will need to create a RegFox account, save and retain login and password information to access your account.
- 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.

Prayer Requests

Within the fraternity: Jackie Didier; Sandy Kiraly; Mary Lou Sohn.

Beyond the fraternity: Sr. Anita; political leadership; increase in OFS vocations.