

SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

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

Website: stcharlesfrat.com

July-August 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	deb@davishih@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

7/9 6:00pm Council meeting Zoom
7/16 7:00pm Kathy's initial formation (ch 17) Zoom
7/19 1:30pm Fraternity gathering, St. Mary's school
(ice cream social)
8/8 9:30am Unity Day, St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo
8/13 6:00pm Council meeting Zoom
8/20 7:00pm Kathy's initial formation (ch 18) Zoom

Prayer Requests

Within the fraternity:

Jackie Didier; Sandy Kiraly;
Mary Lou Sohn, Joyce
Wesner.

Beyond the fraternity: Sr.
Anita; growing vocations.

BIRTHDAYS

None in July

8/2 Katie Herendeen
8/15 Barb Braley
8/17 Karen Amstutz
8/19 Vicki Marcellus Smith
8/26 Deb Davis

PROFESSION ANNIVERSARIES

7/27/2003 Nancy Steinhofer
Joyce Wesner
None in August

SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT FORMATION

Sr. Anita Holzmer, OSF, Regional Spiritual Assistant, is soliciting names of anyone who might feel called to become a Local Spiritual Assistant.

A Local Spiritual Assistant walks with a local fraternity by ensuring fidelity to the Franciscan charism, by being directly involved in both initial and ongoing formation and is a member by right of the local fraternity Council with a voice in all matters and a vote in all matters except finances and Chapters of Elections.

If you are interested or would like to suggest someone, please contact Barb Braley.

GOD IS LOVE Articles 40-42 (July gathering only)

(Note: The text for articles 40-42 is included here because apparently some versions of the book do not include it.)

CONCLUSION

40. Finally, let us consider the saints, who exercised charity in an exemplary way. Our thoughts turn especially to Martin of Tours († 397), the soldier who became a monk and a bishop: he is almost like an icon, illustrating the irreplaceable value of the individual testimony to charity. At the gates of Amiens, Martin gave half of his cloak to a poor man: Jesus himself, that night, appeared to him in a dream wearing that cloak, confirming the permanent validity of the Gospel saying: “I was naked and you clothed me ... as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Mt 25:36, 40).^[36] Yet in the history of the Church, how many other testimonies to charity could be quoted! In particular, the entire monastic movement, from its origins with Saint Anthony the Abbot († 356), expresses an immense service of charity towards neighbour. In his encounter “face to face” with the God who is Love, the monk senses the impelling need to transform his whole life into service of neighbour, in addition to service of God. This explains the great emphasis on hospitality, refuge and care of the infirm in the vicinity of the monasteries. It also explains the immense initiatives of human welfare and Christian formation, aimed above all at the very poor, who became the object of care firstly for the monastic and mendicant orders, and later for the various male and female religious institutes all through the history of the Church. The figures of saints such as Francis of Assisi, Ignatius of Loyola, John of God, Camillus of Lellis, Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac, Giuseppe B. Cottolengo, John Bosco, Luigi Orione, Teresa of Calcutta to name but a few—stand out as lasting models of social charity for all people of good will. The saints are the true bearers of light within history, for they are men and women of faith, hope and love.

41. Outstanding among the saints is Mary, Mother of the Lord and mirror of all holiness. In the *Gospel of Luke* we find her engaged in a service of charity to her cousin Elizabeth, with whom she remained for “about three months” (1:56) so as to assist her in the final phase of her pregnancy. “*Magnificat anima mea Dominum*”, she says on the occasion of that visit, “My soul magnifies the Lord” (Lk 1:46). In these words she expresses her whole programme of life: not setting herself at the centre, but leaving space for God, who is encountered both in prayer and in service of neighbour—only then does goodness enter the world. Mary’s greatness consists in the fact that she wants to magnify God, not herself. She is lowly: her only desire is to be the handmaid of the Lord (cf. Lk 1:38, 48). She knows that she will only contribute to the salvation of the world if, rather than carrying out her own projects, she places herself completely at the disposal of God’s initiatives. Mary is a woman of hope: only because she believes in God’s promises and awaits the salvation of Israel, can the angel visit her and call her to the decisive service of these promises. Mary is a woman of faith: “Blessed are you who believed”, Elizabeth says to her (cf. Lk 1:45). The *Magnificat*—a portrait, so to speak, of her soul—is entirely woven from threads of Holy Scripture, threads drawn from the Word of God. Here we see how completely at home Mary is with the Word of God, with ease she moves in and out of it. She speaks and thinks with the Word of God; the Word of God becomes her word, and her word issues from the Word of God. Here we see how her thoughts are attuned to the thoughts of God, how her will is one with the will of God. Since Mary is completely imbued with the Word of God, she is able to become the Mother of the Word Incarnate. Finally, Mary is a woman who loves. How could it be otherwise? As a believer who in faith thinks with God’s thoughts and

wills with God's will, she cannot fail to be a woman who loves. We sense this in her quiet gestures, as recounted by the infancy narratives in the Gospel. We see it in the delicacy with which she recognizes the need of the spouses at Cana and makes it known to Jesus. We see it in the humility with which she recedes into the background during Jesus' public life, knowing that the Son must establish a new family and that the Mother's hour will come only with the Cross, which will be Jesus' true hour (cf. *Jn* 2:4; 13:1). When the disciples flee, Mary will remain beneath the Cross (cf. *Jn* 19:25-27); later, at the hour of Pentecost, it will be they who gather around her as they wait for the Holy Spirit (cf. *Acts* 1:14).

42. The lives of the saints are not limited to their earthly biographies but also include their being and working in God after death. In the saints one thing becomes clear: those who draw near to God do not withdraw from men, but rather become truly close to them. In no one do we see this more clearly than in Mary. The words addressed by the crucified Lord to his disciple—to John and through him to all disciples of Jesus: “Behold, your mother!” (*Jn* 19:27)—are fulfilled anew in every generation. Mary has truly become the Mother of all believers. Men and women of every time and place have recourse to her motherly kindness and her virginal purity and grace, in all their needs and aspirations, their joys and sorrows, their moments of loneliness and their common endeavours. They constantly experience the gift of her goodness and the unfailing love which she pours out from the depths of her heart. The testimonials of gratitude, offered to her from every continent and culture, are a recognition of that pure love which is not self-seeking but simply benevolent. At the same time, the devotion of the faithful shows an infallible intuition of how such love is possible: it becomes so as a result of the most intimate union with God, through which the soul is totally pervaded by him—a condition which enables those who have drunk from the fountain of God's love to become in their turn a fountain from which “flow rivers of living water” (*Jn* 7:38). Mary, Virgin and Mother, shows us what love is and whence it draws its origin and its constantly renewed power. To her we entrust the Church and her mission in the service of love:

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
you have given the world its true light,
Jesus, your Son – the Son of God.
You abandoned yourself completely
to God's call
and thus became a wellspring
of the goodness which flows forth from him.
Show us Jesus. Lead us to him.
Teach us to know and love him,
so that we too can become
capable of true love
and be fountains of living water
in the midst of a thirsting world.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 25 December, the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, in the year 2005, the first of my Pontificate.

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS AND QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

For GIL, article 40

From Scripture

Matthew 25:31-46

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, ³² and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ ⁴¹ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ ⁴⁵ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ ⁴⁶ And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

From the Rule

PROLOGUE

In the Name of the Lord!

Concerning those who do Penance

¹All those who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole mind, with their whole strength (*Mk 12:30*) and love their neighbour as themselves, ²who hate their bodies with their vices and sins (*Mt 22:39*), ³who receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴and who produce worthy fruits of Penance.

⁵O how happy and blessed are these men and women while they do such things and persevere in doing them, ⁶because the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon them (*Is 11:2*) and make its home and dwelling place (*Jn 14:23*) among them, ⁷and they are children of the heavenly Father whose (*Mt 5:45*) works they do, and they are spouses, brothers and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ (*Mt 12:50*).

⁸We are spouses when the faithful soul is joined by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹We are brothers to Him when we do the will of the Father who is in heaven (*Mt 12:50*). ¹⁰We

are mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body through a divine love (*1Cor 6:20*) and a pure and sincere conscience and give birth to him through a holy activity which must shine as an example before others (*Mt 5:16*).

¹¹O how glorious it is to have a holy and great Father in heaven! ¹²O how holy, consoling to have such a beautiful and wonderful Spouse! ¹³O how holy and how loving, gratifying, humbling, peace-giving, sweet, worthy of love, and, above all things, desirable: to have such a Brother and such a Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for his sheep (*Jn 10:15*) and prayed to his Father saying:

¹⁴Holy Father, in your name (*Jn 17:11*) save those whom you have given me in the world; they were yours and you gave them to me (*Jn 17:6*). ¹⁵The words that You gave to me I have given to them, and they have accepted them and have believed in truth that I have come from You and they have known that you have sent me (*Jn 17:8*). ¹⁶I pray for them and not for the world (*Jn 17:9*). ¹⁷Bless and sanctify them (*Jn 17:17*). I sanctify myself for them (*Jn 17:19*). ¹⁸I pray not only for them, but for those who will believe in me through their word (*Jn 17:20*) that they may be sanctified in being one as we are (*Jn 17:11*). ¹⁹I wish, Father, that where I am, they also may be with me that they may see my glory (*Jn 17:24*) in your kingdom. Amen (*Mt 20:21*).

Concerning those who do not do Penance

¹All those men and women who are not living in penance, ²who do not receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, ³who practise vice and sin and walk after the evil concupiscence and the evil desires of their flesh, ⁴who do not observe what they have promised to the Lord, ⁵and who in their body serve the world and the cares of this life: ⁶They are held captive by the devil, whose children they are, and whose works they do (*Jn 8:41*) ⁷They are blind because they do not see the true light, our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁸They do not possess spiritual wisdom because they do not have the Son of God, the true wisdom of the Father. ⁹It is said of them: Their wisdom has been swallowed up (*Ps 107[106]:27*), and Cursed are those who turn away from your commands (*Ps 119[118]:21*). ¹⁰They see and acknowledge, know and do evil, and knowingly lose their souls.

¹¹See you blind ones, deceived by your enemies: the flesh, the world and the devil, because it is sweet for the body to sin and it is bitter to serve God, ¹²for every vice and sin flow and proceed from the human heart (*Mt 15:19, Mk 7:21*) as the Lord says in the gospel. ¹³And you have nothing in this world or in that to come. ¹⁴And you think you will possess this world's vanities for a long time, but you are deceived because a day and hour will come of which you give no thought, which you do not know, and of which you are unaware when the body becomes weak, death approaches, and it dies a bitter death. ¹⁵And no matter where, when, or how a person dies in the guilt of sin without penance and satisfaction, if he can perform an act of satisfaction and does not do so, the devil snatches his soul away from its body with such anguish and distress that no one can know [what it is like] except the one receiving it. ¹⁶And every talent, ability, knowledge and wisdom (*2 Chr 1:12*) they think they have will be taken away from them (*Lk 8:18, Mk 4:25*). ¹⁷And they leave their wealth to their relatives and friends who take and divide it afterward say: "May his soul be cursed because he could have given us more and acquired more than what he distributed to us." ¹⁸Worms eat his body and so body and soul perish in this brief world and they will go to hell where they will be tortured forever.

¹⁹In the love which is God (*1 Jn 4:16*) we beg all those whom these words reach to receive those fragrant words of our Lord Jesus Christ written above with divine love and kindness.

²⁰And let whoever does not know how to read have then read to them frequently. ²¹Because they are spirit and life (*Jn 6:63*), they should preserve them with a holy activity until the end.

²²And whoever has not done these things will be held accountable before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ on the day of judgment (*Rom 14:10, Mt 12:36*).

For GIL, articles 41 & 42

From The Third Letter [of Clare] to Agnes of Prague

¹² Place your mind before the mirror of eternity!

Place your soul in the brilliance of glory!

¹³ Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance

and, through contemplation,

transform your entire being into the image

of the Godhead itself,

¹⁴ so that you too may feel what friends feel

In tasting the hidden sweetness

That, from the beginning,

God Himself has reserved for His lovers.

¹⁵ And, after all who ensnare their blind lovers

In a deceitful and turbulent world

Have been completely passed over,

May you totally love Him

Who gave Himself totally for your love,

¹⁶ At Whose beauty the sun and the moon marvel,

Whose rewards and their uniqueness and grandeur have no limits;

¹⁷ I am speaking of Him,

The Son of the Most High,

Who the Virgin brought to birth

And remained a virgin after His birth.

¹⁸ May you cling to His most sweet mother who gave birth to a Son Whom the heavens could not contain, ¹⁹ and yet she carried Him in the little cloister of her holy womb and held him on her virginal lap. (*CA:ED, 51*)

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?

July Gathering

Date: July 19, 2026

Time: 1:30 pm

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

Formation: *God Is Love* – Articles 40-42

Ice Cream Social: The Council will provide the ice cream. Please bring toppings and any other edibles to share.

Liturgy of the Hours: 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Christian Prayer: pages 620 & 931; hymn #40 (page 1522)

LOH: Volume III, pages 518 & 1137; hymn page 1137

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

NEWS ITEMS

1) We will wrap up *God is Love* for our **ongoing formation** in July. It was suggested that we revisit *Franciscan Prayer* by Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF. We used this book for ongoing formation about 14 years ago and most of our current active members were not involved yet. For those of us who were, we will have different questions for reflection. There will be no supplemental readings with *Franciscan Prayer* like we had with *God Is Love*. We will begin this book in September.

2) **Unity Day** is coming up on August 8 at St. Joan of Arc in Kokomo. The day will begin at 9:30 with Mass. Br. Jerry Schroeder, OFM Cap, will be the Mass celebrant and keynote presenter. Br. Jerry is the Provincial Spiritual Assistant for the St. Joseph Province of the Capuchin friars to which the St. Charles fraternity is bonded. The theme this year is the Easter of St. Francis. Plan to shop for books/gifts at Regional Resources. The event will conclude with the annual memorial service for those who have died in our regional fraternity since last Unity Day. We will arrange carpools at the ice cream social.

3) At our gathering on September 20, Sue Daly, our Regional Minister, is planning to join us for our triennial **Fraternal Visitation**. This will mark the first time Sue has visited our fraternity since her election last year. I know she will find a warm Franciscan welcome from us.

4) I received word from Sr. Anita that Fr. Ron Rieder, OFM Cap, has died. She indicated that he was a past Spiritual Assistant for our fraternity. May he rest in peace.

5) Word came that **Sr. Agnes Marie Regan**, OSF, died suddenly on Saturday, June 27. May she rest in the loving arms of Jesus!

*Prayer Life of the
Secular Franciscan*



*The bedrock of the
Secular Franciscan life
is prayer.*