



OFS: Secular Franciscan Order (& YouFra)

The Third Order of St. Francis in Ireland.

National Newsletter June 2025

"To follow Jesus in the footsteps of St. Francis"

Website: ofsireland.org



Note: YouFra News is on page 2



OFS Professions in Galway

On Sunday 25th May four new members were professed into the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS) in the Abbey.

From L to R:

Kelley Rickard (Galway OFS Minister),

Jean O'Leary Tomkins, Margo Willock,

Br. Jacopo Pozzerle OFM,

Alan Nevin, Rory O'Beirn and

Gabriel Costello (Responsible for Formation)

Reminder: Franciscan Day in Knock on Sunday June 29th 2025

Fraternities are asked to encourage members to attend, and if possible arrange transport. Please consider taking part to honour Our Lady, and to join with our Franciscan sisters and brothers at our National Shrine.

Welcome Pope Leo XIV

We rejoice with our Augustinian brothers and sisters on the gift of a new pope. *Ad Multos Annos* (May you have many years). St. Francis demonstrated a deep respect for papal authority and the Church hierarchy. He sought and obtained papal approval for his order's rule from Pope Innocent III. He consulted with Popes, including Innocent III and Honorius III, for guidance and support in establishing and developing his order. Pope Innocent III's endorsement of Francis's order was partly influenced by a dream he had in which Francis was seen holding up the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the "home church" of all Christendom. Pope Honorius III approved Francis's revised rule, the "Second Rule" in 1223. *(from Google AI)*

Russian Mystics

Words of spiritual counsel from the Russian Mystics of the early centuries of the Church:

In times of spiritual turmoil take refuge under the mantle of the Holy Mother of God.

Often quoted by Pope Francis

A Message for the Jubilee of Hope

from the concluding prayer of Morning Prayer on Thursday Week 4 of The Divine Office

Lord God, you restore our human nature to a dignity higher than you gave it at creation. Look with favour on the mystery of your love; keep your gifts of grace intact in those whose life you have renewed in baptism, the sacrament of new birth. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

June 2025 Prayer Intentions of the Pope and of OFS-YouFra

Because we grow in compassion for the world.

Pope: Let us pray that each of us will find consolation in our personal relationship with Jesus and that we may learn from his Heart compassion for the world.

OFS: For the national fraternities of Vietnam, Argentina, Canada, El Salvador, Nicaragua and the local fraternity of Athens.

Thanks to all contributors. Items ideally 50 to 100 words. Feedback welcome. Send items to irelandofs@gmail.com

YouFra in Assisi by Br Ronan OFM



Our first YouFra fraternity for the Franciscan family in Ireland, plus aspiring new members, went on their first pilgrimage to Assisi together from March 27th-31st 2025 as part of a discernment process before taking new promises/renew old promises in October of this year. We were enabled greatly to do this thanks to the generosity of the OFS Ireland in funding a good part of the expenses and to the Franciscan fraternity in San Damiano for providing the beautiful accommodation, which was at the centre of all the sights we wanted to visit.

San Damiano is the place where Francis heard Christ from the crucifix telling him, to “rebuild my Church, which as you can see is falling into ruin”. It is just down from the busy town of Assisi, nestled in quiet olive groves, which made it an idyllic place to stay. It is also on the way to the first real home of the friars at the Porziuncola, further down the valley, while itself is the first real home of St Clare of Assisi, having lived nearly all of her consecrated life there. So, we couldn’t really have stayed in a more significant place as Franciscan men and women.

On our first day, we went to visit the place where the San Damiano Cross is now held, up the hill to the Basilica of St Clare in the commune of Assisi. On the second day we spent a day of silent prayer and recollection in the hermitage of the Carceri, which St Francis and his brothers used to also go to pray in for extended periods of prayer in silence. Our third and final day in Assisi began wonderfully with Mass in San Damiano, followed by a guided tour of the place by the Guardian, Br Mauro, and then onto the Porziuncola down in the valley, by foot, for lunch and a tour of the Basilica. The last leg of the trip was to move ourselves to Rome for the night so we could catch the early flight home in the morning. This was just a logistical decision, but we ended up having a wonderful experience of fraternity from the Jesuits who put us up for the night in the famous Baroque Church of Saint Ignatius, in the centre of Rome.

All in all, the outstanding element of the whole experience was of fraternal welcomes everywhere we went. Be it in San Damiano, St Clare’s or Francis’ Basilica, the hermitage, the Porziuncola or St Ignatius. Apart from the genuinely felt sanctity of these places, they were brought to life by a Christian and Franciscan warmth of welcome that was truly inspiring.

The Franciscan charism can be a difficult one to articulate sometimes. We are brothers and sisters to one another, to the poor and, indeed, to all of creation. But what does this actually mean? We are called to be meek and humble, minors, and merciful. Again, all nice thoughts, but how do we know we understand them? Sometimes the only way to learn these things is by living and experiencing them. I think this is what we learned and experienced about the Franciscan charism during this trip – a wonderful preparation for the YouFra promises coming up in October.