**SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER**

**Five Franciscan Martyrs Region**

*Florida, South Georgia, Lower Alabama*

[www.ffmr-ofs.org](http://www.ffmr-ofs.org/)

**Annual Local Fraternity Report for the Year Ending December 31, 2024**

**Complete *and* approve at a Fraternity Council Meeting *and* submit before *February 14, 2025.***

*(Attach additional pages if there is not enough space.)*

*This may be completed by editing the file and sending the completed, saved report to the Regional Minister.*

**Name of Fraternity:** St. Clare, Ave Maria

**Gathering Place, Address, Phone:** Ave Maria Parish Hall, 102 Pope John Paul II Boulevard, Ave Maria FL 34142; 239-261-5555

**Council Meeting Day(s), Time, Place:** Starting next month we will be meeting on the fourth Friday, 3:30 to 5:00 via Zoom

**Monthly Gathering Day(s), Time:** First Sunday of the month, Ave Maria Parish Hall, 12:30 to 3:30 with initial formation after the gathering. We encourage members to join the formation group and some have done this.

* Were there any changes in your Fraternity Council in 2024? **{NO}** {YES}; If not due to an official election, give reason for change:

## SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT INFORMATION

* Does your fraternity have a Spiritual Assistant? If so, please provide name, address, phone, and email if not already provided with Council contact information. We do not have a spiritual Assistant
* In what year did this assignment begin? Not applicable
* Was he/she formally assigned by your Provincial? {NO} {YES}; If so, list the name of the Provincial who made the assignment and the obedience to which you are bonded. Not applicable
* How many of your local fraternity gatherings has your Spiritual Assistant attended this past year? Not applicable
* How many local Council meetings has your Spiritual Assistant attended this past year? Not applicable

## FORMATION INFORMATION

* List all the books and other materials used for initial and ongoing formation:
* INITIAL – The Franciscan Journey, FUN manual, History of the Secular Franciscan Order (William Wicks), Formation Friday, other Franciscan texts by various authors.
* ONGOING – Writings of St. Bonaventure, Formation Friday, Wild Goose, The Heroes of Assisi in World War II and all of the above.

\*Our formation director gave a talk comparing the writings of Bonaventure and Celano to more modern-day writers regarding the life of St. Francis.

\*We were fortunate enough to have a presentation (via Zoom) by Fr. Murray Bodo and Susan St. Sing – God’s Love Song a Vision of St. Francis and St. Clare.

* What topics in the *FUN Manual* or *Franciscan Journey* have been used and are useful for Ongoing Formation?

\*This Summer we studied the Virgin Mary and Franciscan Spirituality. We used much of the resources located in the FUN manual.

* How often has your fraternity discussed the status of *Instrumentum Laboris*?

We discuss this in council, but in answering this questions I realize we haven’t really discussed it with the whole fraternity.

* What initial goals has your fraternity set as a result of *Instrumentum Laboris*?

We are trying to take steps to develop a relationship with the Ave Maria University Students.

* What goals has your fraternity reached as a result of *Instrumentum Laboris*?
* In the spring and summer we hoped to connect with the Ave Maria University students when they return in the fall. We met with Fr. Joseph their ministry leader and made tentative plans. Unfortunately, Fr. Joseph was ill then he was so busy with the students it never got off the ground. We will make another attempt during the 2025/26 school year.
* Do you have a local fraternity Newsletter? {NO} **{YES and no}**

We had a newsletter, but our editor just recently had to step down because of health concerns.

* If so, how often is it published? It was published quarterly
* How is it distributed? Email and snail mail
* With whom do you share your newsletter (bishop, Regional Executive Council, your Family Councilor, etc.)? Fraternity, REC, regional ministers, local parish

What Apostolic work does your fraternity do as a whole fraternity? What percentages of the fraternity participate?

We support Catholic Charity’s Casa Maria Soup Kitchen, food pantry and distribution center in Immokalee.  75% of our members are involved.  Those who are able, volunteer in person, while three to four members make sandwiches for the in person volunteers to distribute among the poor.  Four members who live further away volunteer creating and distributing “backpacks” filled with needed supplies and food.  Two volunteers run a clothing/basic needs distribution service (Queen of Peace Foundation) out of Catholic Charities (though independent) on Tuesdays.

* Describe the activities (Mass, prayer services, etc.) your fraternity attends outside the regular gathering times.

Yearly Mass for the fraternity

Blessing of the Animals

Transitus

Greccio talk as part of a Living Nativity

Sponsored author talk on the history of Immokalee Florida (immigrant community)

St. Clare Day celebration with the San Damiano Poor Clares

Extraction of Saints on Epiphany Sunday

Attend a meeting of The Catholic/Jewish Dialogue group – The Assisi Underground

## JPIC, YOUFRA, ECUMENCIAL OUTREACH, VOCATIONS

* Describe the personal contact you have had with the youth in your area this past year.

\*The fraternity made several serious attempts to connect with the Ave Maria University students, but nothing has materialized for various reasons.  The students as well as the Catholic Campus Minister are very busy.  One action that looks promising is using the prayer partner model to connect a fraternity member to a student.  The member will make contact and pray for the student.

\*The youth group at St. Agnes Church helped with the Greccio presentation with two youth (English and Spanish) dressing as St. Francis and telling the Greccio story.

* Who is the current contact for your Youth/Young Adults/YouFra Animator for your fraternity.

There are several of us who work on this but no one is named the animator.

* How many in your fraternity, including the Minister or Youth Animator, attended any National or Regional Youth/YouFra Zoom or in-person workshops/meetings?

Two members attended workshops via Zoom but health issues interfered with their ability to continue.

* List your Fraternity “JPIC” projects and activities for 2024.

1. Casa Maria Soup Kitchen and other outreach services

2. Community Pregnancy Center

3. Annual March for Life, Ave Maria

4. Catholic Days (two days) in Tallahassee

5. Pro-life sidewalk prayer participants (one member does this on a weekly basis)

6. Annual donation to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4174 provided a Christmas dinner and Christmas presents to a Veteran and his family.

7. One hundred Christmas cards with our handwritten messages were distributed to Veterans who were homebound, in hospitals and rehab centers.

* Describe your participation in any Ecumenical outreach activities in 2024.

Minister joins the Catholic/Jewish dialogue group periodically

* Describe the activities you have done to increase vocations to the Secular Franciscans in your fraternity.
* All of our activities are advertised in the bulletin at Ave Maria.  We have also headed events at various parishes (as they allow us to do so).  For example: St. Clare Day, Blessing of the Animals, Transitus, Greccio, talk by author of Immokalee’s Fields of Hope – Carlene Thissen.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

* What programs has your Fraternity participated in during 2024 (Retreats, Days of Recollections, special celebrations)? Please see above.
* What programs/events has your Fraternity Council planned for 2025? At the end of January we will be joining St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity on a retreat at OLPH. The retreat is focused on humility.
* Is there anything you wish to share with the Regional Executive Council? We have been actively looking for a spiritual assistant and are hoping to be supported in finding one.
* Describe any difficulties you have had connecting with the Region when scheduling elections, visitations or when having problems within your fraternity.

None – the minister is on the REC

* What has been your fraternity’s greatest challenge this past year?

We have four very enthusiastic candidates and 4-5 visitors who are anxious to begin formation. They will be bringing new life into the fraternity. Our challenge is that some of our members have had difficulty be more active because of health and family issues. During initial formation, it is essential that we emphasize the level of commitment necessary to become a Seculary Franciscan.

* What are your fraternity’s strongest asset(s)?

Our location is a big draw because the town of Ave Maria has people of all ages. All of the people on council are strong, committed Franciscans and we have some people in formation with a lot of enthusiasm.

* How many in person gatherings have you had this past year?

We meet everyone month, all year, in person

* About how many members attend in person? An average of 15
* How many attend through some electronic means? An average of 4
* During the past year, how often have you been in touch with your Family Councilor? How was this done (personal contact, zoom, email, or phone conversations)?

At least 6 times. Our minister is on the regional council so she is frequently in touch with the councilors.

* How often have you or your delegate attended your family gatherings this past year?

There was only one family meeting (as far as I know) and I was sick and my vice-minister wasn’t able to attend.

* How are you keeping in touch with your shut-in members?

Two people with health issues join our gatherings via Zoom.

Our minister takes the Eucharist to two long term Franciscan women who live in the area. They are not able to join our fraternity but we stayed connected to them and included them in our Extraction of Saints. Several other members regularly call two members who have health problems. Supporting those with health problems is generously shared by fraternity members.

* How are you keeping in touch with your Active-Excused, Lapsed, or Temporary Withdrawn members?

These members are on our contact list so they receive all of the fraternity emails and updates. Several members call or try to get in touch with those excused and lapsed members on a regular basis.

* When was your last profession? Our last Profession was in 2020 How many were professed? Four members were professed.
* Is your *Come and See* brochure available in another language? Yes, on the regional website

Do you need the *Essential Documents* in another language? Available on the regional website

* How many members received and read the one printed copy of the TAU-USA, the National Fraternity’s newsletter? Fourteen members correctly receive a printed copy of the Tau. They love receiving it and they do read it. We have 7 members who would like to receive a printed copy. Note: the fraternity will gladly cover the cost or part of the cost of sending it to them.
* How many members received and read the 3 electronic copies of the TAU-USA? Two member receive electronic copies.

Do you provide a printed copy for those members without email? NA

* Do you prefer the electronic or printed copy of the TAU-USA (the cost for each printed edition in Spanish and English is $30,000)? We prefer printed copies. We have two Spanish speaking members.

Keep copies of this Annual Report and your Annual Treasurer's Report in the Fraternity's records

IF YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND SOMETHING OR NEED HELP, CONTACT US! WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

***Note***: You will shortly receive your Fair Share Contribution assessment. Please mail a check along with your Fraternity’s 2024 Treasurer’s Report to the address below.

**MAIL OR EMAIL YOUR ANNUAL REPORT TO:**

Jeane Swaynos, OFS (FFMR Regional Minister)

216 East Sweetwater Creek Drive

Longwood, Florida 32779

Cell 407-462-0808

[**swaynos@cfl.rr.com**](mailto:swaynos@cfl.rr.com)

**Also send a copy to your Family Councilor.**

**MAIL YOUR TREASURER’S REPORT AND FAIR SHARE CHECK TO:**

Karen Rooney, OFS (Regional Treasurer)

1315 Mirror Terrace NW

Winter Haven, FL 33881

Cell 863-224-5919

[**karenrooneyofs@outlook.com**](mailto:karenrooneyofs@outlook.com)

## LOCAL FRATERNITY VISITS

Father Jerome Wolbert, OFM, is one of our National Spiritual Assistants and the Provincial Spiritual Assistant for Our Lady of Guadalupe Province, which encompasses almost the entire USA. He will be coming to visit our region for a Regional Pastoral Visitation on May 16-18, the dates of our Annual Meeting. He will extend his trip to permit him to personally visit as many local fraternities as possible. During these visits he will meet with the council and, if possible, the local fraternity. He will be arriving on May 9th and flying back May 27th.

Below is a list of dates when he could visit your local fraternity. Please designate three dates that would work for you in ranking order. He will be visiting throughout the week. You will need to schedule your meeting at that time and may need to provide housing for one night for him. You may want to meet at someone’s home if the church where you meet is not available.

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet with your Provincial Spiritual Assistant, and we will try to accommodate as many fraternities as possible. Please List your first three choices and return it with your completed annual report. Times are flexible, please be specific.

**Availability to Meet with Fr. Jerome**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Day** | **Morning 9-12** | **Afternoon 1-4** | **Evening 5-9** |
| 5-10 | Saturday |  |  |  |
| 5-11 | Sunday (Mother’s Day) |  |  |  |
| 5-12 | Monday |  |  |  |
| 5-13 | Tuesday |  |  |  |
| 5-14 | Wednesday |  |  |  |
| 5-15 | Thursday |  |  |  |
| 5-16 | Friday Annual Chapter Meeting | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| 5-17 | Saturday Annual Chapter Meeting | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| 5-18 | Sunday Annual Chapter Meeting | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| 5-19 | Monday |  |  |  |
| 5-20 | Tuesday Any of these |  |  |  |
| 5-21 | Wednesday Days |  |  |  |
| 5-22 | Thursday Are good |  |  |  |
| 5-23 | Friday For St. Clare, |  |  |  |
| 5-24 | Saturday Ave |  |  |  |
| 5-26 | Sunday Maria |  |  |  |