

# Servant News

## Franciscan Servants of the Holy Family



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December 2025+

Dear family and friends, Peace and All Good!

Welcome to Advent, the season to prepare our hearts and minds for celebrating the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. And how providential that just before we begin Advent, at least in the USA, we celebrate Thanksgiving. No matter what might be happening in one's life, we can find many ways in which God has blessed us, and continues to bless us. This gratitude can secure our hope in His future plans for us.

Every 25 years, more or less, our pope announces a Jubilee year/ Holy Year. We are nearing the end of the Jubilee Year of Hope, focusing on Jesus, *our hope*. Scripture challenges us to "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope." (1 Peter 3:15) This passage might provide for a good Advent reflection.

Through the centuries, there have been many ways to participate in a Holy Year, including going on pilgrimage to Rome to pray at the major basilicas, especially St. Peter's at the Vatican, and to allow God's holiness to transform us.

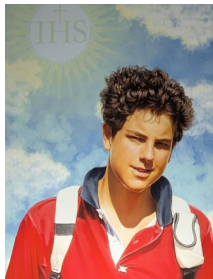
I had an opportunity recently to go on pilgrimage to Italy, including Rome, Assisi, and many other cities. Each day, we participated in Mass and visited a major basilica or other churches.

The sheer beauty of the churches was sometimes overwhelming, by the size and details, the statues and the saints they depicted, the stained glass windows that detail the magnificence of God's creation, His workings in the people who were inspired to create such beauty, and all who experience these works....These sites and so many around the world, preserve and share the stories of the faithfulness of people who lived their lives to glorify God, and the many who died as martyrs for it.

In Lanciano, Italy during the 8th century, a priest had begun to doubt Jesus' True Presence in the Eucharist. One day, during the Consecration prayer at Mass, holding the host and proclaiming "...the Body of Christ", the consecrated host in his hands began to bleed. This is the first known Eucharistic miracle.

(Right: reliquary with consecrated host that bled)

Recently-canonized Saint Carlo Acutis, among many things, sought to bolster people's belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist (not a mere symbol). He used the internet to research and



compile stories of Eucharistic Miracles through the centuries—a great use of the internet! This info was made into traveling displays available to parishes around the world, as well as online. St. Carlo died in 2006 at the age of 15. Born in Milan, he is buried in Assisi, having been inspired by the life of St. Francis, and Assisi is where he loved to spend his summers.

My favorite pilgrimage places are those of St. Francis, especially Assisi, where he lived, and LaVerna, a mountain retreat where he received the stigmata (wounds of Christ) two years before he died in 1226.

God is so good to perform so many miracles! He desires our healing, to quell our doubts. He wants to make us whole in body, mind, spirit, to accept His gift of faith, and live in His Truth and trust.

A pilgrimage is a journey to a holy place. Even if you cannot go on pilgrimage to a foreign country, I guarantee you that you can find inspiring beauty around you. Do you know the history and stories of your parish, where the relics are, why particular statues are displayed, whether miracles have occurred there? Go on pilgrimage!

Ministry at Corpus Christi in Lawrence has been very active and fulfilling, focused mainly on Children's Religious Education, including preparing children to receive the Eucharist for the first time. We offer the parents opportunities to learn more about their role as the "first and most important educators of their children in the faith".

Summer included a wonderful visit with family in TN, a 4th of July reunion with aunt and many cousins on the farm outside Montrose MO, and my annual, week-long retreat, a time to re-charge and renew. Or family welcomed a new grand-nephew August, son # 3 of Kevin and Genna.

In July I served as a chaperone for Corpus Christi youth attending a Steubenville Conference in Springfield, MO. It was a beautiful and high-energy weekend, encountering God with 5,000 teens!

I continue ministry with the Secular Franciscan fraternities in the KC area, and sometimes travel into Kansas and Oklahoma for Regional events and retreats.

Numerous loved ones have departed this life for the next—pilgrimage to heaven—including Aunt Myrna. We pray for God's loving embrace for all who have died.



While in LaVerna, during Mass, Julie, a Secular Franciscan and I renewed our commitment to live the Gospel Life as Franciscans.

As we prepare for the Christmas season, let us  
“...Always be ready to give an explanation to  
anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.”  
Know that I’m praying for you and your intentions.

God bless you and your family during the Advent  
and Christmas seasons!

Sister Doris

## The reason for our hope—on display

**7th Annual Living Nativity**—a group of dedicated volunteers are helping provide a tangible way of celebrating and reflecting on the birth of Jesus during this Advent Season. Join us if you can!



### *A Prayer For Families*

*Heavenly Father,  
you gave us the gift of each other  
and made us a family.  
Bless our family today with an  
abundance of Your love,  
the grace to forgive and to ask for  
forgiveness, and to be generous in  
serving each other,  
that we may be a sign  
of holiness and unity in the world,  
becoming more each day,  
like the Blessed Trinity,  
and the Holy Family at Nazareth,  
a communion of life and love. Amen.  
Holy Family,  
help us grow in holiness and unity.*

*Franciscan Servants of the Holy Family Presents*  
**THE LIVING NATIVITY**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025 1:00—4:00 PM  
Community Indoor Arena  
Douglas County Fairgrounds  
1930 Harper St, Lawrence KS 66046  
**LIVE ANIMALS, MUSIC and MORE**  
Free event. Donations accepted.

*Celebrating the Nativity of our Lord, Jesus Christ.*

**Want to volunteer?  
Scan the QR and find  
your opportunity today!**



## Novena for Families

Please join the Franciscan Servants of the Holy Family in praying a novena, (using the prayer above, or another) December 20-28, asking for the intercession of the Holy Family for your own family, the needs of all families, in gratitude for our many blessings. Sunday, December 28 is the Feast of the Holy Family.

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!*

With gratitude for your prayers, for the many volunteers, and financial help, **thank you** for helping further the Franciscan Servants’ ministry to families: *helping families grow in holiness and unity.*

**God bless you!**

The Franciscan Servants of the Holy Family  
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[www.kcfranciscans.org](http://www.kcfranciscans.org)

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