

OUR PAST

The first Secular Franciscans were Luchedio and Buonadonna, who lived at Poggibonzi, in Tuscany.

Luchedio Modestini was a merchant. He had a reputation for being an avaricious man, and Buonadonna was the same. He was a wealthy man, and they enjoyed their high life.

Luchedio heard St Francis preaching, and liked so much what he heard that he was converted, and converted his wife!

He noticed the way St Francis lived and wanted to join the friars, but he was committed to his marriage, and had a business to look after.

St Francis knew other people who also wanted to join his Friars Minor, but could not, because they had other commitments.

St Francis would have everyone live the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So, he wrote a letter to all the faithful, which many lay people and clerics adopted as their Christian way of life.

They joined the Brothers and Sisters of Penance, inspired by St Francis of Assisi.

Luchedio and Buonadonna are considered to have been the first members of this Order for secular clergy and laity.

They gave most of their possessions to the poor, and kept only enough for their own use.

They spent the rest of their days living the gospel way of life of St Francis, looking after the sick and needy.

They loved each other so much that they asked God to let them die together.

Buonadonna died in 1260, just before Luchedio.

Luchedio was declared Blessed. His feast day is April 28.

WE ARE THE PRESENT

The way of life of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance has been updated several times by the Popes, to fit changing times.

In 1289, Nicholas IV gave them a Rule, which was updated in 1883 by Leo XIII, who called them the Third Order Secular of St Francis.

Paul VI updated that Rule in 1978, after the Second Vatican Council, and called us the Secular Franciscan Order.

This is the Rule we follow, as we live in the world, leading ordinary lives in union with our Lord Jesus Christ, and doing ordinary jobs, inspired by St Francis.

We are men and women, secular clergy and laity, married or single, all committed to live the gospel in the manner of St Francis of Assisi.

St Francis left us
his letters and prayers
and some other writings,
especially his Rules
that express his way of life.

The early friars who were with him
have handed down many stories
These simple stories touch our lives.
We draw inspiration from them
in our family life, at work, and in society.

St Francis shows us also
the value of prayer.
Like Jesus, he spent time alone
in prayer and contemplation,
then he would go out and preach.

Our Secular Franciscan Fraternity
helps us to balance
our active life and our prayer life.

Each Fraternity is accompanied by a
Spiritual Assistant who is appointed by
one of the Franciscan Orders of Friars
Minor.

The members elect a Fraternity Council
which includes a Minister, Vice Minister,
Secretary, Treasurer and Formator.

The local Fraternities are autonomous
but are grouped in Regional Fraternities,
each with its own Regional Council.
There are six Regional Fraternities in
Australia, one in New Zealand, and one in
Singapore-Sabah.

Together with Papua New Guinea,
they form a National Fraternity of Oceania,
and elect a National Council.

All the National Fraternities together
form the Secular Franciscan Order.
They elect an International Council,
which has its Secretariat in Rome.

The Secular Franciscan Order
received its present Rule from Paul VI,
in 1978,
its Ritual from a Roman Congregation,
in 1983,
and also its General Constitutions from
another Congregation, in 2000.

YOU ARE THE FUTURE!

Are you interested?

Contact:

SECULAR FRANCISCANS

***Our Past,
our Present,
and our Future***