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34th Annual International Week of Prayer and Fasting Unites the Faithful around Saints Francis of Assisi and Carlo Acutis, "God's Influencers"

"God's Influencers" theme draws pilgrims to Washington, D.C. and worldwide online, November 14–22, 2026 — featuring the opportunity for attendees to venerate St. Carlo Acutis's heart relic

October 22, 2026 – WASHINGTON, D.C. **International Week of Prayer and Fasting** co-founders and hosts, **Ted and Maureen Flynn,** **in collaboration with the Legion of Mary and other Catholic groups**, are calling Christians from around the world to join them for the **34th International Week of Prayer and Fasting,** from November 14 to November 22, 2026. This year's theme, **"God's Influencers,"** draws a powerful connection between St. Francis of Assisi — marking the 800th anniversary of his death in this special Jubilee Year — and St. Carlo Acutis, the Church's newly canonized "millennial saint."

"In these chaotic times where the United States and the whole world seems to be experiencing a lot of chaos with our weather, families, Church, and politics, we need to find the Silence … and the Peace. We need to ask Our Divine Creator for His Peace and for His protection for Life…we need to Pray and Fast," said Maureen Flynn, co-founder of the International Week of Prayer and Fasting.

Opening Day will be held in person on Saturday, November 14, at the **Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.**, with a day of prayer, Eucharistic Adoration, Mass and the Rosary, featuring speakers **Msgr. Anthony Figueiredo, the Very Rev. Chris Alar, MIC,** and

Ted Flynn. Bishop Emeritus Robert J. Baker, of Birmingham, AL, will serve as Main Celebrant and Homilist for the Noon Mass.

"Christ has won the victory over sin, suffering, death, and every form of evil," said Bishop Robert J. Baker, Bishop Emeritus, Birmingham, AL. "Through our prayer and fasting He brings healing to our lives and hope to our world."

Two of this year's Opening Day speakers are perennial audience favorites. **Very Rev. Chris Alar, MIC,** Provincial Superior of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception and host of EWTN's *Living Divine Mercy,* draws crowds with his engaging, deeply personal teaching on Divine Mercy and the Marian apparitions. **Ted Flynn,** IWOPF co-founder, author, and executive producer, brings decades of research and storytelling on the Eucharist, Fatima, and other Marian Apparitions to audiences in over 700 venues worldwide — making him one of the event's most requested returning speakers.

One highlight of this year's event: **Monsignor Anthony Figueiredo**, Director of International Affairs for the Diocese of Assisi, will travel from Assisi, Italy, to accompany the Pilgrim Relic of St. Carlo Acutis and speak about St. Carlo Acutis. The Pilgrim Relic, St. Carlo's Pericardium, is a section of the membrane that surrounded the **young saint's heart.** It will be available for Veneration at the Basilica, and Monsignor Figueiredo will pray with and for those in attendance.

Pope Leo XIV personally received Monsignor Figueiredo and the reliquary at the Vatican.

Below: *Pope Leo XIV with Monsignor Anthony Figueiredo and the reliquary containing the Pericardium Relic of St. Carlo Acutis.*



Monsignor Figueiredo authored the bestselling biography *Carlo Acutis, Saint of the Young: His Life, His Miracles, and 5 Steps to Being a Saint;* he will sign copies of his book at the Basilica.

"St. Francis guides us to Jesus; Carlo guides us to Jesus," said Archbishop Domenico Sorrentino, who has led the Diocese of Assisi for 20 years, describing the connection at the heart of this year's theme.

Following Opening Day, the Week of Prayer and Fasting continues online with a **Virtual Conference on November 16, 17, and 18,** featuring ***Very Rev. Chris Alar, Susan Brinkmann, Fr. Tom Celso, Dave and Joan Maroney, Dr. Andrew Kubick, Linda Carl, Fr. Jose Maniyangat, Alexis Walkenstein, Dr. Seggy Acosta, and Susan and Brian Middleton. Antonia Acutis,*** mother of St. Carlo, has also been invited to send a video message to attendees.

"We have brought together some of the most dynamic and faithful Christian speakers to inspire an international audience with wisdom, witness, and the practical ways to bring more prayer and more fasting into the lives of the faithful," said Ted and Maureen Flynn. "No matter where you are in the world, this is a Divine appointment for every believer."

Download: Description of the Official Pilgrim Relic of Saint Carlo Acutis (PDF)

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For more information or to register, visit IWOPF.org, email info@iwopf.org, or call 888-478-PRAY. To schedule an interview with Ted and Maureen Flynn or one of the other speakers, please contact Maureen Flynn at info@iwopf.org or 888-478-PRAY.