



SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

Five Franciscan Martyrs Region

Fall 2015

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

By Marie Thomas, OFS, Regional Minister

Secular Franciscans and the Church

Francis, as you all know, loved the Church and respected its priests ~ no matter what! Even if the priest was accused of adultery, Francis still respected him. Why? No matter how sinful, it is only a priest who can bring us the body and blood of Christ. Therefore, Francis respected and loved every priest.

We say we love the Church. We go to Mass, attend devotions, assist in its ministries, support and uphold its principles and teachings, etc. We must be devout Catholics and active in the Church in order to be admitted to the Order. We even make our promises before a priest in the Church. In other words, Secular Franciscans are intimately united with the Church.

Yet ... very often I hear statements such as these from various Franciscans:

- “Why should our fraternity give the priest a stipend for just walking across the parking lot to be with us?”
- “Why should we go out of our way for the priest? The priest is here to serve us; not the other way around.”
- “I will not unless you promise me that we will get ...”
- “Why should we make it easier for the Provincial Spiritual Assistants? They have not been active in the past. They may be few and overworked but so is everyone else.”
- “It is the Provincials’ responsibility to send us Spiritual Assistants. We should not be the ones beating the bushes for someone.”

Yes, these are **actual statements I have heard with my own ears** coming from some of our so-called Secular Franciscans. They have forgotten their initial promise. They have gotten caught up in day to day things and haven’t stepped back to see the direction in which they are heading. You may have recognized one or two or more of these members in your own fraternity.

As Christians, Christ told us to “love one another.” In fact, this is how others will know we are Christian. If this is true of all Christians, how much more does it apply to Secular Franciscans? Our Rule and General Constitutions, Article 30, emphasize this fact: “The brothers and sisters are co-responsible for the life of

MISSION STATEMENT

The Five Franciscan Martyrs Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the United States is the organic union of all Secular Franciscan fraternities in the State of Florida, South Georgia, and Lower Alabama. We desire to promote in the world a deeper presence of the Catholic Faith and the Franciscan tradition; and we seek to bring the Gospel Beatitudes of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, as personified by St. Francis of Assisi, to all our secular, daily lives. We foster a spirit of prayer, conversion, reconciliation, justice and service, especially to the marginalized in our society. We invoke the intercession, honor the memory, and advance the Cause of the patrons of our Region, the Five Franciscan Martyrs of La Florida, who, in A.D. 1597, freely gave their lives in testimony to the dignity of Christian marriage and family life. (Rewritten from original 1991 version and approved in February 1999, updated February 20.)



Pope Francis Visit to United States, 2015

the fraternity (members) to which they belong ...” Nowhere does it single out the Spiritual Assistant or the Minister or the Regional Council or the Formation Director as the sole persons who are responsible in bringing all the fraternity members to a deeper relationship with God. This is everyone’s responsibility.

The members, especially the council members, must dialogue and work together to help bring this love and joy of Christ to all. Yet several fraternity ministers and council members have resigned this year and several others are considering following this same path. Why? Many times, the Minister is the easy target of blame not blessing, of defamation and not dialogue.

At the elections, both the ministers and the council members of our fraternities are called to put their personal issues aside and humbly serve the brothers and sisters as representatives of God’s love. They have all been called in a special way, by the Holy Spirit, to be His instrument for providing guidance, formation and support to every single fraternity member on this spiritual journey which all of us are traveling.

If Francis were alive and in our midst today, I believe, he would weep with grief over these developments. What have we done to his order? How far have we strayed? We all promised to be attentive to the Holy Spirit and do God’s will.

Let us remember our final destination is to be united with God. Let us be God’s smile to one another and share God love as we resolve to follow the admonition of Pope Francis, who wrote in his book, The Joy of the Gospel:

“Everyone needs to be touched by the comfort and attraction of God’s saving love, which is mysteriously at work in each person, above and beyond their faults and failings.”

Marie Thomas, OFS
Regional Minister

Annual Meeting

Apr 29-May 1, 2016 at San Pedro

Hosting NAFRA National Conference

Oct. 30th to Nov. 6th San Pedro Center

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Marie Thomas, OFS
Regional Minister

Jeane Swaynos
Regional Vice Minister

Patricia Gagnon, OFS
Regional Treasurer

Carole Bertrand, OFS
Regional Secretary

Rosemarie Ingersoll, OFS
Regional Formation Minister

James Grant, OFS
West Central Councilor

Bonnie Barlow, OFS
East Central Councilor

Maureen O’Hare, OFS
Southeast Councilor

Barbara Carroll, OFS
Southwest Councilor

Peggy Nye, OFS
Northern Councilor

Fr. Kevin Queally, T.O.R.
Regional Spiritual Assistant

Janice Novello, Ph.D., OFS
Regional Chair for Franciscan Young Adults

Fred Schaeffer, OFS
Regional Webmaster

Theresa Zesiewicz, MD, OFS
Regional Newsletter Editor



Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Assisi,
Picture by T. Zesiewicz



Courtyard, Basilica of St. Francis, Assisi

INSPIRATIONS ON RULE FOR SECULAR FRANCISCANS

Submitted by **Dr. Janice Novello, OFS**

I, N.N., by the grace of God, renew my baptismal promises and consecrate myself to the service of his kingdom. Therefore, in my secular state I promise to live all the days of my life the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order by observing its rule of life.

~ **Rite of Commitment to the Gospel Life or Profession in the Secular Franciscan Order**

Dearest brothers and sisters, just think of the decisive influence we could have for changing the world if all the 500,000 Secular Franciscans, scattered around the world in some 111 countries, lived their vocation to the full.

~ **Fr. Benedetto Lino, A Specific Vocation for a Particular Mission, OFS General Chapter 2011**

And now, at the dawn of the new millennium, does the Franciscan adventure still have meaning? Does it still have any chance of success? Never has true fraternity been so longed for and at the same time so little lived. Never has the Franciscan charism been more needed than today in order to offer the total Christ to a disintegrating world which fears a brotherhood of solidarity among all human beings without exclusion.

~ **Cardinal Roger Etchegary, Homily of April 9, 2000, on the occasion of the Great Franciscan Jubilee**

What does the rule ask of us? To be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. We are not bystanders any more. Franciscans get involved. ... Doing nothing is no longer a choice for us.

~ **Lester Bach, OFM Cap, The Franciscan Journey: Embracing the Franciscan Vision**

For those who are “called to follow Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi” (Article #1), particularly through the Secular Franciscan Order, the rule of life becomes the central focus and basic font for setting forth the evangelical goals of life, for unraveling the meaning of the gospel commitment, and for detailing the means to be evangelized and to evangelize others with the supportive context of life in fraternity.

For this reason, the rule needs to be read, understood, digested, and absorbed into the personal and communal existence of every Secular Franciscan.

~ **Benet A. Fonck, OFM, Called to Follow Christ**

Found on <http://www.livingtherule.org/>

“LAUDATO SI’, MI’ Signore” – “PRAISE BE TO YOU, MY LORD”

By Marie Thomas, OFS, Regional Minister

The Encyclical from an OFS View ~ and the Internet

“LAUDATO SI’, mi’ Signore” – “Praise be to you, my Lord.”

These are the words that open Pope Francis’ revolutionary new encyclical on the environment or – On Care for Our Common Home. Laudato Si means “Praise be to you” which is the first line of a canticle by St. Francis that praises God with all of his creation.

Right from the beginning, Pope Francis states the goal of his document: “In this Encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home.” Usually, papal documents are addressed to the bishops of the Church or the lay faithful but Pope Francis addresses this message to ALL people.

What does he mean by dialogue? “I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation that includes everyone, since the environment challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all” (#14).

This is the core of the document, but Pope Francis also makes a moving call to conversion for those in the Church as well. By quoting St. Francis of Assisi’s beautiful canticle, he remind us that our common, earthly home is our family with whom we share our life and who enfolds and sustains us. But for St. Francis, the path to oneness with creation was more profound than a mere love of creatures.

Pope Francis focuses on a number of important themes:

- **Both A Moral and A Spiritual Challenge.** Pope Francis writes, “The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So what they all need is an ‘ecological conversion’, whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork, is essential to a life of virtue” (#217). In other words, it is a call to a profound interior conversion—to renew our relationships with God, one another, and the created world.

- **Care for God’s Creation.** God created the world and entrusted it to us as a gift. Now we have the responsibility to care for and protect it and all people as our family because we are all part of creation. The entire human race and all of creation, past, present and future, belong to our created family. We are one human family and have a shared responsibility for others and for creation. We do not “Lord over it” as though we are its master and it is our servant. St. Francis’ knowledge of the world was shaped by love so he saw the world through the eyes of love. His life showed us that love has the power to change hearts and in turn to change the world. He let things be themselves and in being themselves Francis saw the beauty of God.



- **Impact on the Poor.** People suffering in poverty have contributed the least to any climate change, yet they are the ones who are most impacted by it. As a result of excessive use of natural resource by the wealthy, those who are poor suffer the lack of clean air, water, food, and more.
- **Technological Development.** We must serve our fellow human beings and augment human dignity, and not create an economy of exclusion. All people must have what is needed for human development. Concern for nature does not outrank humanity. We must protect vulnerable human beings, such as unborn children, people with disabilities, or victims of human trafficking.
- **A Time to Act.** Pope Francis calls for a change in lifestyle and wasteful ways. We can make important changes as individuals, families, and communities, and as civil and political leaders.

“Injustice is not invincible” (no. 74) and we act knowing that we seek to live out God’s vision of renewed relationships with God, ourselves, one another, and creation.

What Can We Do?

Every Secular Franciscan is called to take concrete steps – from reducing consumption to working for political change – to better care for creation. Here are a few ideas.

- **Let’s become more aware of our entire created family.** Care for one another and creation includes understanding that “everything is connected” (no. 91) and that everyone and everything affects the future of the planet and humankind.
- **Let’s change our lifestyle and habits.** For example, get a re-usable water bottle, take shorter showers, walk or take public transportation instead of driving, recycle, don’t run the water to get it hot or while brushing teeth, buy energy efficient appliances, etc.
- **Let’s make changes in your parish, school, or workplace where possible.** For example, start recycling, use washable dinnerware (Stigmata Fraternity already does this!), share newsletters electronically instead of printing them, and so on.
- **Let’s support local efforts to solve environmental problems.** Many groups around the country are working to make changes in their neighborhoods, city, and region changes that make an ecological difference. Let’s find out what is going on locally and get involved.
- **Let’s contact our members of Congress to share the message from Pope Francis.** Sign up for action alerts with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at ... <http://cqrcengage.com/catholicbishops/jphd>
- **Above all, let us see the world as God sees it.** A spiritual person who has surrendered to love and whose heart is moved by love, sees the world as rich in goodness. For Francis, all creatures became his family. He saw goodness throughout all of creation and found himself as a part of that creation; not above it but within it. Let us hold together the opposites of life by living in the unity of love.

Below is an excerpted from “A Christian prayer in union with creation,” in *Laudato Si’*, no. 246:

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love, teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of you.

Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made. Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.

God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.

Enlighten those who possess power and money that they may avoid the sin of indifference, that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live. The poor and the earth are crying out.

O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty.

Praise be to you!

Amen.



Some Quotes from the Encyclical that Say Much Using Few Words:

“The emptier a person’s heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume” (#204). #LaudatoSi

“One Person of the Trinity entered into the created cosmos, throwing in his lot with it, even to the cross” (#99). #LaudatoSi

“The deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet (#48). #LaudatoSi

“When we fail to acknowledge... a poor person, a human embryo... it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself” (#117). #LaudatoSi

“In this Encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home” (#3). #LaudatoSi

“The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth” (#21). #LaudatoSi

“We seem to think that we can substitute an irreplaceable and irretrievable beauty with something which we have created ourselves” (#34). #LaudatoSi

“It is possible that we do not grasp the gravity of the challenge now before us” (#105). #LaudatoSi

Many excerpts were taken from the Internet “Summary of Laudato Si, Pope Francis’ Encyclical on the Environment” written by Kevin Cotter.



CANCER

Jean-Pierre de Caussade, “Every moment we live through is like an ambassador who declares the will of God.” The path to holiness lies in everyday tasks and duties, not in heroics.

Christ arrives NOW carrying eternal riches. Christ Arrives Now Carrying Eternal Riches. I was thinking about the wonderful riches of Christ’s presence here and now. As this awareness came to light, I suddenly I saw the acronym formed by the first letters of this little meditation; it reads “cancer.” I was quite startled. I didn’t figure that out; it was just there. Christ IS present in every experience so, of course, the experience of cancer is no exception.

In recent months, I have learned numerous persons very dear to me have been diagnosed with cancer and many of the prayer requests we receive are for people with a diagnosis of cancer. Sometimes the intent of the person requesting prayer is to help the individual “battle” cancer. “God, help me beat this!” Can I pray to “win this war?” I’d rather pray that instead of preparing for battle, we enlist the healing energies of courage and grace to face whatever lies ahead. I pray we all stay in touch with Christ’s eternal riches of immeasurable compassion here and now.

God does not will suffering and death in itself, but gives gifts of love in new life in and through suffering. I want to find what the gift is in every untoward event as it happens. Maybe I can end up being very gifted! And my friends, too!

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Alice C. McDonald, 73 of Gainesville, Fla. passed away on Monday, July 6 after a long battle with cancer. Alice was born in Toledo, Ohio and moved to this area 2 years ago from Crestview, Fla. Alice was a retired nurse, a member of Queen of Peace Catholic Church, and a former member of Our Lady of Victory Parish. She enjoyed working with the Franciscan order, Catholic Women’s group and the Girl Scouts. At the time of her death, she was a Councilor for the Five Franciscan Martyrs Region of the Secular Franciscan Order. Alice is survived by her children- Heather Oskey, Rose Godwin-McDonald, Albert McDonald, Andrew McDonald, Rodrigo McDonald, Martin McDonald, and 10 grandchildren. Alice is preceded in death by her husband of 41 years Michael McDonald and son Owen McDonald. She will be greatly missed by all but her joyful and loving attention to everyone will be remembered for years to come.

Please continue to pray for **Deacon Tom Bello**, OFS.

UPDATE ON CRAFT GROUPS

EAST CENTRAL GROUP

By Jeane Swaynos, OFS, Vice Minister

Recycled Rebirth Crafters

We have made some items in our craft meetings this past quarter. Our fraternity St. Francis of Assisi, Apopka, has also connected to a small organization of 4 women called “Brighter Lipstick, Bigger Earrings.” This group of retired school teachers makes earrings for 6 infusion centers throughout the central area of Florida and this is growing quickly. These free earrings are distributed to women who are receiving Chemo therapy at the various infusion centers.

Since July 1st the four of us have made over 1200 pair of earrings. We now supply 6 infusion centers with pink trees decorated with 75 pairs of earrings; they are refilled and monitored regularly. These are given freely to any patients that need as sign of hope that they are loved and cared for. Some of us are cancer survivors and understand how a sign of hope and love is so important to the healing process. We are collecting any old jewelry to help with this project. We recycled the beads and recreate earring.

If you have any old broken jewelry to donate for this project please contact me. If you would like to start this project in your area and adopt an infusion center in your area and need some guidance, please contact me. This is a great way to spread the Franciscan spirit and create out of recycled material. (swaynos@cfl.rr.com)

Check us out on Facebook: “Brighter Lipstick, Bigger Earrings”



SOUTHEAST AREA

Led by Catherine Bilquin, Minister of St. Padre Pio Fraternity in Jensen Beach cbilq77@yahoo.com

Their ideas are still in the planning stage.

Please contact the other crafters to see what is going on in your area. Please share this with all the members. Perhaps someone may be interested?

WEST COAST AREA

St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity (Dunedin)

Led by Jeanette Grant ellesmereangels@gmail.com

This group is working on Plastic canvas Tau crosses.



MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL CHAIR FOR FRANCISCAN YOUNG ADULTS

By Janice Novello, Ph.D., OFS

What I Learned While at the White House

On August 20, 2015 I accepted an invitation from the White House and participated in a Climate Study Event as a Key Educator. In 2013 I was named a Climate Steward by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and have enjoyed working with scientists and educators from many countries to collect data about climate change and find ways to abate the causes of a Climate that is changing 100% more rapidly that it ever did as evidenced by many sources. I went to our Nation's Capital ready to discuss the serious situation with other experts.

To my surprise, almost one third of the guests were students! Discussions, chats and panel discussions continued with Dr. Sullivan, Administrator of NOAA, David Friedman of the Department of Energy and Melinda Lily of the Alliance for Climate Education, but it was the times when the proceedings were led by students that we all picked up our notepads and wrote furiously, trying to keep up with the enthusiastic stories these young people shared. Middle Schoolers leading their classmates in innovative ways to recycle, and High Schoolers spending their summer vacations in other countries to teach and learn more about energy conservation were the true educators. Four college students from four different areas of the U.S. shared how they were helping new tech companies to start green, holding recycling classes in the parks after school, leading research to find agricultural plants to meet the environmental challenges of a warming environment, and providing weekly webinars to disseminate climate data and share solutions. The staff of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy ensured that every student had a chance to share their strategies and ask questions.

A few days later I was officially notified that my NOAA grant to work with students in all ten counties of the Diocese of Venice, Florida, was granted. God is so good to bestow on me the opportunity to work with youth on the Care for God's Creation Project. Although I will be prayerfully disseminating research, data and championing ideas in the way of Saint Francis and Pope Francis, I know I will be learning more from our Youth that I could ever teach.

I invite you to look around in your community and find the young who are working to respect and protect God's creation. Join them in this work and find a new joy.

Matthew 11:25

At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.

Rule of The Secular Franciscan Order Chapter 2:11
Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children.



Here are a some resources Franciscans might use to help you get started working with our Youth in Ecology and Climate Study:

- UN Climate Change Conference, Paris
<http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/en>
- Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness Network
<http://cleanet.org/index.html>
- United States Conference on Catholic Bishops: Ecology resources
http://uscbb.org/search.cfm?site=newuscbb&proxystylesheet=newuscbb_frontend&q=ecology&btnG.x=0&btnG.y=0&lang=eng
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration— Education <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/>
- Laudato Si'
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Peace, Joy and many Blessings,
Janice Novello, OFS, Ph.D.
Young Adult Apostolate Liaison
janiceofs@yahoo.com

LET'S DO SOMETHING!

By Andy Buchleitner, OFS

“There should be less talk; a preaching point is not a meeting point. What do you do then? Take a broom and clean someone’s house. That says enough.” (Mother Teresa)

And how about our JPIC Pope Francis. Hope you got to see and hear him during his America trip. If ever there was a man who was ready to roll up his sleeves and get busy, it is this beautiful man of God.

I remember many years ago when I joined the Legion of Mary and was given the task of praying in front of the abortion clinic every week. Our Legion took very little time in coming to the conclusion that this was a necessary work and I was happy to be doing something positive to battle a horrendous injustice in our society. I began to feel, however, after several years of faithful service to this cause, that my efforts were not making a difference. Fortunately, I didn’t quit. For as I continued my prayerful witness, I began to be joined by like-minded Christians. As the weekly crowd began to build in front of the clinic, new enthusiasm and ideas began to spring up. It was ultimately decided that, through our faithful prayer, God was

ready to support an even greater effort. He brought together the resources to allow us to build a pro-life clinic, right next door to the abortion clinic. We saw the miracle happen when, four weeks after our grand opening, the abortion clinic, which had been in business for decades, closed their doors!

I give this example as a witness to what can happen when action, rather than just talk, happens. Had we continued to talk about the evil of abortion without actually acting to address the wrong, we probably would still be talking. But how easy it can be to get caught up in a discussion. Not only does everyone have an opinion but they most often feel that they must make their point with many words of explanation. What if we just sat down at our next meeting, I suggest a meeting held without chairs, and talked rather about what positive action we could take to address an injustice – and then act it out? Don’t we pretty much already know what needs to be done – so “LET’S JUST DO SOMETHING!”

There is always something we as Franciscans can DO. If we need to talk about the issue to get a clearer understanding of the need, fine. If we need to meet to discuss some positive action we will take, great. But until we actually “take a broom and clean someone’s house,” what have we really done? For me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

5 CARDINAL RULES FOR LIFE

- Make peace with your past so it won’t disturb your present.
- What other people think of you is none of your business.
- Time heals almost everything. Give it time.
- No one is in charge of your happiness. Except you.
- Don’t compare your life to others and don’t judge them, you have no idea what their journey is all about.

Tesh.com



OUTREACH SUNDAY

Five Franciscan Martyrs' Region

October 4, 2015 was our Region's first "Outreach Sunday". It's important for us to let people know about the Secular Franciscan Order, as some of them may have a discernment to profess themselves to Jesus in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, live the Gospel life, and follow the Rule. Anecdotally, many Catholics are not aware of our Order's existence. May we ask the following?

If you or members of your fraternity took part in Outreach Sunday, either by speaking at Mass, handing out brochures, or another event, please email me at drtheresaz@gmail.com or let the Regional Council know! We would like feedback on the event (how many members participated, how many people called back to talk about visiting your fraternities, etc.

- As this was our first "Outreach Sunday", it was a learning experience. For example, the schedules of many parishes are made at the beginning of the year, and several of our members told me that they were unable to talk about the SFO due to prior Church obligations on October 4th. In fact, this was the case in my own parish. However, my pastor is going to allow me to talk on November 15th at all masses. So although we recommend "Outreach Sunday" to take place on October 4th, or near the feast of St. Francis, if this date is not suitable for your parish, another replacement date is fine. We are grateful for the opportunity to speak to our brothers and sisters about this experience.
- Linda Bertino OFS created more economical brochures that we used that were identical to the original brochure, but were without color, thus saving on copying costs. I have PDF's of these, as does Linda, if anyone needs the template for copying. Thank you, Linda!

Thank you for taking part in the event. Again, please send feedback or suggestions to me, or to any member of the Regional Council, as they will be helpful going forward. It is our charge, as His modern-day disciples, to lead others to Jesus, through the Rule and Gospel life.

Theresa Zesiewicz, MD, OFS

Regional Newsletter Editor

COME ONE! COME ALL! FRANCISCAN DAY OF REFLECTION

James Grant, OFS

San Damiano Fraternity, Sun City Center, along with St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Dunedin, are again sponsoring a "Franciscan Day of Reflection" at the Franciscan Retreat Center on Friday, November 20, 2015. Rev. Anthony Aarons, TOR of the San Pedro Retreat Center, Winter Park, will be presenting "How Can We Maintain Our Franciscan Charism of Joy and Simplicity in the World We Live In Today?"

The day will begin at 8:30 AM with Registration and will include a Continental Breakfast, Morning Prayer, Mass, two separate presentations by Father Anthony, Lunch and the praying of the Franciscan Crown Rosary. There will be time for personal reflection, as well. The day will conclude at 3 PM.

The Franciscan Center is located at 3010 N. Perry Avenue in Tampa, FL 33603. The cost will be \$35.00 for each participant, due in advance, please. Call Kristine Littrell at 585-455-7410 with your initial reservation. Then you can mail your fee, made payable to San Damiano Fraternity, to her at: 1308 Crystal Greens, Sun City Center, FL 33573. Last day for reservations is November 13.





LAUDATO SI', ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME STUDY GROUP

Dr. Janice Mary Novello, OFS

Portiuncula Fraternity

Father Kevin Queally, TOR, assisted by Claudia McIvor, Director of Faith Formation at Saint Mary Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church, Saint Petersburg, Florida, is facilitating an opportunity for in depth study and dialogue on Laudato Si'.

On September 27, Father and a group of approximately 15 attendees participated in the first session. Each person was eager to share what he/she thought was a memorable moment in the Pope's recent visit to the USA. They then related their experience to the Introduction of the Encyclical and tied it into a possible action to employ during the week. The sessions will continue through November 15.

Father Kevin states, "The goal of studying Laudato Si' is to examine the themes of the encyclical with parishioners,

others who might attend, and on-line participants. This study continues a series begun with an Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching and then a study of the Holy Father's earlier encyclical "The Joy of the Gospel." "

Father and Director Claudia have taken the opportunity one step further in order to reach as many people who would like to participate. A blog has been set up with resources, videos and opportunity for prayer so that all may participate, no matter how far away from Saint Petersburg they may be or if circumstance prohibit travel. There are more than 70 people participating on the blog. People post reflections to the readings and others respond with their own thoughts and additions. Father has been posting a personal response to each of the posts and his Franciscan Spiritual Leadership is appreciated.



FRATERNITY TIPS AND IDEAS

Linda Bertino, OFS

There are two major issues facing Secular Franciscans today. One is the increased age of our members and the other is people not remaining committed to the Secular Franciscans. We need to look at what we can do to promote interest in the Secular Franciscans and maintain their commitment to the order. I have encountered these issues in other groups and wanted to share some of the information I learned along the way. The information below includes ideas to promote Secular Franciscans and possibly generate more interest from the younger age groups.

The current financial situation in our world today is felt by all and extends to our Secular Franciscan families. Especially when we consider the fact that the many of our members are over the age bracket of 60-65 and on fixed incomes. Based on this, we need to consider our involvement with technology,

“We need to look at what we can do to promote interest in the Secular Franciscans and maintain their commitment to the order.”

computers, Internet and social media. I am sure that some of our members do not even have a computer. How do we generate interest in the younger people that are caught up in the age of Technology – smart phones, tablets, Bluetooth’s, etc.? We need to learn how to use their media to reach out to them and draw them in to us. There are several ways for this to be accomplished and hope your fraternity will consider if any will be beneficial for your group.

Email

I want to begin with an email address. The most important thing is to get one of the FREE email accounts (Hotmail, gmail, yahoo, outlook, etc) set up for the fraternity. Not one that belongs to one of the members who pays a fee (aol, earthlink, etc). If you use an email address that belongs to a member of the fraternity then you are stuck if and when that person is no longer associated with your group. The use of the generic email account makes it possible to pass on the email account to the next elected council. I also use a password that will be easy to remember and when new council members are elected they can either keep the password or make a change. The email account remains the same.

Social Media

Many who use the computer and Internet have heard of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. These are some of the Social Medias that many people are using to promote their group. This is free and just takes a bit of time to register as a business group to get the information out to the world. You have the opportunity to post whatever information and links you feel will be important to the reader. Facebook gives you the option of making the site public or private. All on Facebook can view the public option. A person will need to get permission to be part of the private group. Only members of the group are allowed to post, comment and view the page.

Web Site

A web site is another way to promote the Secular Franciscans and your fraternity. Our fraternity council recently decided to change our web site. I had previously managed a web site for a rehab nurses group. I found it fun and enjoyed entering information I knew would be beneficial for others. There are several FREE web sites but they may have some restrictions, limited tech support and pop-up ads. However, many of these sites offer deals for a nominal amount, which allows a more creative expression. The average cost was \$75-100/year. Some offered multiple year savings. I realize this may be beyond the financial means for many fraternities but the free ones may help to generate interest for your group. I can hear the comments: That’s too hard, I cannot do that, I don’t have time, etc. What I want to tell you is that if you can copy and paste in a document – you can do this.

I found several different options available (Web.com, Webs.com, Bluehost.com, etc.) but ultimately went with GoDaddy. It was a personal choice based on cost, benefits, and ease of use. Once I had things arranged, the tech support person directed me to the tools I needed to start building the web site. I took my time and as I completed a page, I had the ability to preview it before the actual site was published. It also had a variety of templates to use for the background, which I was able to personalize for our fraternity. The advantage to this is that a member of the fraternity has the ability to keep the site current and add information in a timely manner. If you pay a web management company to manage the site for you, the cost can be several hundreds of dollars/year plus the initial set-up expenses.

FRATERNITY TIPS AND IDEAS

Print/Copy Expenses

I also want to share with you a way to save money on copying expenses. Each fraternity can apply to Office Depot for a business account. All you need is the Letter of Non-profit status and the EIN Tax number. The account can be set for billing or pay as you go. The savings for the copying is about 50%. We just had 100 double-sided brochures in black & white done for \$6.07. I have yet to find a place that can do better unless you can get it done for free through a member.

Retaining Member Commitment

I pondered the issue of getting people to remain committed to their fraternity. It seems that somewhere in the formation process of 18 months the person and formation team miss something. Is it possible that the tools we are using need to be updated to meet the needs for the younger person? Do we need to make the formation tools available through the Internet, tablets, etc. When do you see young people reading a book? Most of the time they are seen with their smart phone, tablets, Kindles, Nooks, etc. Maybe it's time for the formation team to consider advancing to the Tech Age with our formation products.

SAVE THE DATES!!

Dear Brothers and Sisters, peace to your hearts! The work on the "Q" is well underway and lots of exciting plans are in the making. Our XIX Quinquennial will be held June 30 - July 4, 2016 at the Renaissance Airport Hotel in St. Louis, MO. Please mark these dates on your calendar for what is sure to be an exciting time for the family of Secular Franciscans. Come get reacquainted with old friends and go home knowing several new ones! Many interesting and informative conferences are being planned.

More information as well as the registration form will be available in the next few weeks. Stay tuned!

Please share this e-mail with all the folks in your Region so they can 'save the dates', too.

Blessings,

Kate Kleinert, OFS

*Make me a channel of your peace.
~St. Francis of Assisi*

FUN QUIZ

Hint: All the questions below refer to the Summer, 2015 Regional Newsletter.

1. Where is the "Privileged Place" mentioned in the first article?
2. What kind of heart does not need to know the other's purpose in order to love them?
3. How is Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, helping us celebrate the region's 25th anniversary in October, 2016?
4. What are the dates for the Annual Meetings in 2016 and 2017?
5. What did Andy Bucheitner say was his most important task when working with the elderly?
6. What is our new regional web site address?
7. This year's NAFRA Conference was held in New Jersey. Where will it be held in 2016?
8. Who is the editor of the regional newsletter and the head of the Out-Reach Committee?
9. Who recommends that the young people get their hands dirty?
10. Which fraternity makes an annual pilgrimage to "Mission Nombre de Dios?"

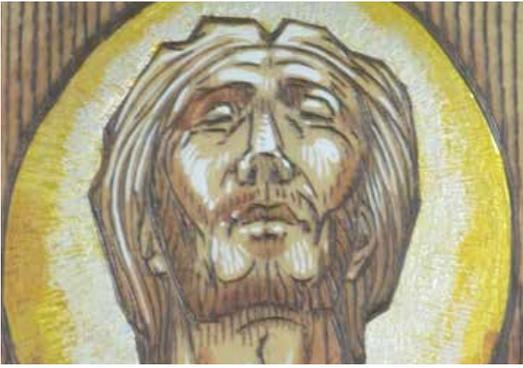
The answers may be found on another page in this Fall, 2015 Regional Newsletter.

TIME TO PREPARE FOR OUR REGION'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY!

Linda Bertino, OFS

To celebrate the Five Franciscan Martyr's Region's 25th Anniversary on October 23, 2017, the Regional Executive Council is sponsoring a **10 day trip to Assisi and Rome.**

The potential trip is scheduled for sometime in the middle of **October, 2017.** We will spend 7 days in Assisi and 3 days in Rome. Our tour guide will be none other than our Regional Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, who has acted as a tour guide 3 or more times and knows his way around. However, he warns that there will be a great deal of walking so start your fitness program now and bring out the piggy bank so you can start saving. Watch for more details in the future.



CALL FOR PAPERS

**“Franciscan Women: Medieval & Beyond”
Women and the Franciscan Tradition Conference
The Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University
July 12-15, 2016**

From July 12-15, 2016, the Franciscan Institute at Saint Bonaventure University will host a major conference dedicated to women and the Franciscan Tradition, ranging from the Middle Ages to the contemporary world. The organizers seek to bring together women and men who are living the Franciscan tradition in various ways -- as members or associates of the three Franciscan orders, coworkers in Franciscan institutions, etc. -- with academic scholars who want to bring their research into a mutually enriching conversation with a broader audience.

Individual papers, panels, and workshop proposals are sought that engage academic, pastoral, and socio-political aspects of this topic.



Answers to “What Did It Say”:

1. Our fraternity 2. A heart at peace 3. Acting as Tour Guide to Assisi & Rome 4. April 29-May 1, 2016 and April 28-30, 2017 5. Bringing Jesus to them 6. ffmr-ofs.org 7. San Pedro, Winter Park, FL 8. Theresa Zesiewicz 9. Janice Novello 10. St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Apopka, FL

Possible areas of focus include, but are not limited to the following:

- Franciscan women and leadership
- Female Franciscanism during the Middle Ages
- Female Franciscanism and the Early Modern World
- Franciscan women in the “New World”
- Franciscan women and ministry
- Scholarly trends and the study of religious women
- Women and the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition through the ages
- Franciscan Women and the Contemporary Church.

Proposals are due by **November 20, 2015**. Notifications of acceptance, rejection or need for alterations will be sent to authors by **January 11, 2016**. Send a paper proposal/draft of your text no later than November 20, 2015, directly to:

Women & the Franciscan Tradition Conference
Franciscan Institute St. Bonaventure University
Murphy Building – Room 100
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778
dcouturi@sbu.edu

Organizing Committee:

- **Lezlie Knox** (Marquette University)
- **David Couturier, OFM Cap.** (St. Bonaventure University)
- **Timothy Johnson** (Flagler College)
- **Diane V. Tomkinson, OSF** (Neumann University)

NEWS FROM THE FRATERNITIES

SOUTHEAST AREA

St Padre Pio Community at Jensen Beach

By Jean Ziegler, OFS

This year has so far been quite eventful. We have been blessed with a great Spiritual Assistant, Fr Paul Gabriel, Conventual. In May, as well as having the May Crowning in honor of Our Lady, we also had our Regional Visitation with Fr Kevin and Marie Thomas. We welcomed Stan Olenzak as an Affiliate and in September we had the Rite of Welcome for Peggy Wall and Balla-Rina Jones. In addition to these events we are still in the process of becoming Canonically established.



EAST CENTRAL AREA

St. Maximilian Kolbe, DeBary

By Jean Ziegler, OFS

Profession News

St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, DeBary, Florida celebrated a solemn Profession on the anniversary month of our Rule, (June 24th.) On June 20th, Ruth Carter proudly added the O.F.S. initials after her name. Minister Carmen Thompson, OFS, accepted her Profession on behalf of the fraternity; the Celebrant was Rev. Blasé Romano, TOR, Province of the Immaculate Conception.

We Are Truly Blessed

The Formation Team (made up of all the Councilors plus one) has no time for rest. There are still two classes of Candidates in initial formation and the five who came as visitors are now beginning as aspirants. We are thankful to Almighty God, our church communities (fraternity members are from four different churches in the east Volusia County), and our fraternity members for our increase in vocations.

Deacon Bill Joyce to visit us in October. Bill and his wife will be traveling to our fraternity on October 17th. Deacon Bill will give a two hour talk on the Stigmata of St. Francis. All are invited.



(Left to right) Fr. Blasé Romano, TOR, Ruth Carter, OFS, Carmen Thompson, OFS, Minister, Jane Clough, OFS, Vice Minister and Dolores Novotny, OFS, Formation Team

St. Michael the Archangel, Tampa, Florida

By Jim Grant, OFS

David Koehler and Marie Coady-Koehler were married on October 3rd, 2015! Congratulations for a blessed and joyful life together!

Please continue to offer prayers for the sick members of our fraternity.

El Enquentro/The Encounter Fraternity, Lake Wales

El Enquentro/The Encounter Fraternity, Lake Wales held a Chapter of Elections Saturday September 5, 2015 in the conference room at the former Holy Spirt Church School, in Lake Wales. The presider was James Grant, OFS, representing Regional Minister Marie Thomas and the Ecclessial Witness was Bro. Mark Brown, OFM representing the Regional Spiritual Assistant Rev. Kevin Queally, TOR.

Assisting the presider were: secretary Sharon Anderson, Candidate, tellers Deacon John Avery, OFS and Rosemary Shaffer, Inquirer, tally recorder Vilma Ayala, Inquirer.

The slate of elected officers are as follows:

- Minister: **Jose L. Ayala, OFS**
- Vice-Minister: **Karen Rooney, OFS**
- Secretary: **Georgia Ferreira, OFS**
- Treasurer: **Joan Holdman, OFS**
- Formation Director: **Lucy Feliciano, OFS**
- Councilor-at-Large: **Emily McDonald, OFS**



(Left to right) Georgia Ferreira, Karen Rooney, Jose Ayala, Joan Holdman, Emily McDonald, Lucy Feliciano



(Front Row - Left to right) Deacon John Avery, Emily McDonald, Rosemary Shaffer

(Back Row - Left to right) Sharon Anderson, Georgia Ferreira, Karen Rooney, Jose Ayala, Vilma Ayala, Joan Holdman, James Grant, Bro. Mark Brown

St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity, St. Petersburg

St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity, St. Petersburg welcomed three members as Candidates at their meeting September 20; Phyllis Hall, Priscilla Romano, and Marty Roach. On Sunday November 15 Candidates Cheri Jenner, Cindy marks, and Michael Mendez will be professed during a Mass.

If all goes as planned, in the spring of 2016 Candidates Loretta Johnson, Cathy Chrzanowski, Melinda Nene, Joy Richards, and Nancy Merigliano will be professed. Details for their profession will be announced when arrangements have been finalized.

Holy Spirit Fraternity, Spring Hill

Holy Spirit Fraternity, Spring Hill hosted their annual barbecue on Sunday September 13.



St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Dunedin

St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Dunedin presented Jubilarian Certificates to four members who have been professed fifty or more years but were not able to attend the Regional Annual Meeting this past May. At the June meeting certificates were presented to Karyn Reedman (57 years) and John Probert (50 years). At the July meeting a certificate was presented to Bernice Grum (57 years). At the August meeting a certificate was presented to Francis Arnold (59 years). October 3 Bro. Mark Brown, OFM, the fraternity Spiritual Assistant, hosted a Transitus Service at St. Paul Friary. The fraternity will co-host with San Damiano Fraternity a Franciscan Day of Reflection at the Franciscan Retreat Center, Tampa. Details appear in another article in this issue.

San Damiano Fraternity, Sun City Center

San Damiano Fraternity, Sun City Center will co-host with St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity a Franciscan Day of Reflection at the Franciscan Retreat Center, Tampa. Details appear in another article in this issue.

St. John Capistrano Fraternity, Tampa

St. John Capistrano Fraternity, Tampa held a Chapter of Elections on October 10. Results of the election and photos (if available), will be published in the next newsletter.



(Left to right) Bernice Grum and Jim Grant



(Left to right) Francis Arnold and Jim Grant



(Left to right) John Probert, Karyn Reedman, Jim Grant

