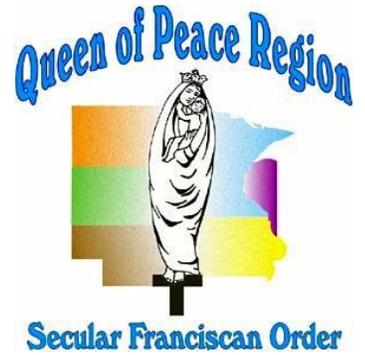


# TRACINGS

ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS | queenofpeaceregion.org



Winter 2014/2015, Issue 11

## Minister's Quarterly Message

I have just returned from the National Chapter Meeting (NAFRA) in Dallas and I would like to update you on some items. NAFRA will hold its Chapter Election October, 2015. All positions are open to election. At a minimum the Minister, Vice Minister, Secretary, and two Counselors have served two terms. Some will not run for a third term but might be open to another position. If you are interested in serving at the National level, let me know and I will put you in touch with the Nominating Committee.

The International Fraternity (CIOFS) will be holding its election Nov. 1-8, 2014 in Assisi. The Minister and Vice Minister will not be running again. Our current NAFRA Minister (Deacon Tom Bello) and International Councilor from NAFRA (Mary Stronach) have been nominated for CIOFS Councilor position (there are seven positions open, but highly unlikely two people from the same country would get elected.) Both NAFRA members speak

Spanish and Italian, so one of them might get elected. There is no one from the USA currently on the CIOFS council.

There was considerable emphasis on NAFRA's priorities for the upcoming year. I was especially interested in the Youth presentation as there are new leaders, a mother -daughter combo who are both OFS. I will be getting info out to the members on each of the priorities, either to the fraternity ministers or in Tracings.

There were some items that defy categorization, so I will simply state them. Assisi does not have a local OFS fraternity. The Holy Land is an emerging National Fraternity. The Central African Republic recently experienced the martyrdom of 25 OFS members. We have heard about the persecution of Christians in Africa. The CIOFS Minister included them in her Lenten message.

Peace and All Good  
Kim Pappas, ofs  
Minister

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## Servant Leadership Opportunity

Become the next Tracings Editor! Answer the call to service as a Franciscan! Share your gifts with everyone in the Region! Putting together a newsletter is as easy as pie. All you need is a computer, MS Word and you are in business. (A MAC may work better.) Just download the template of your choice and plug in pictures and data. Regional fraternity members provide the content. The editor is responsible for putting it together, not writing the whole thing! And you only need to do it four times a year! Don't say no to this one—it is a privilege to serve. Contact the acting editor if you feel called. [gordonofs@gmail.com](mailto:gordonofs@gmail.com)



## Franciscan Identity: We are a single family

"We are a single family united by our founder and our history."

"The spiritual emphasis for the First Order is minority. The spiritual emphasis for the Second Order (Poor Clares) is poverty. The spiritual emphasis for the Third Order Regular and the Secular Franciscan Order is conversion (penance)."

The Secular Franciscan Order was called the brothers and sisters of penance in earlier times. "Our identity as **Franciscan** Penitents begins shortly after St. Francis was given the gift of penance by the Lord and became a penitent himself. Quoting from his *Testament*:

The Lord granted me, Brother Francis, to begin to do penance in this way: While I was in sin, it seemed very bitter to me to see lepers. And the Lord Himself led me among them and I had mercy upon them. And when I left them that which seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of soul and body; and afterward I lingered a little and left the world." Source: "The Testament" para. 1.

Our Vocation is truly a gift of God because Brother Francis was converted through penance before he asked us, brothers and sisters of penance, to aspire to conversion. The spiritual life of a Secular Franciscan in the 21st Century can only grow through inner conversion. A "Franciscan Reflection" I wrote earlier gives some general points that one might aspire to in this metanoia or conversion. See: [Inner Peace](#). And for a Franciscan those points of inner peace should be basic goals.

Article 13 of the General Constitutions reads, "*Rule 7* Secular Franciscans, called in earlier times "the brothers and sisters of penance", propose to live in the spirit of continual conversion. Some means to cultivate this characteristic of the Franciscan vocation, individually and in fraternity, are: listening to and

celebrating the Word of God; review of life; spiritual retreats; the help of a spiritual adviser, and penitential celebrations. They should approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently and participate in the communal celebration of it, whether in the fraternity, or with the whole people of God."

The Rule was written by St. Francis, so apparently there were "penitential celebrations," in his time. We have the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a means to confess our sins, atone for them and try again to please the Lord.

Secular Franciscans, in fact, all Franciscans listen to and celebrate the Word of God by the frequent attendance at Holy Mass, and nowadays many, if not most of us, use the "Liturgy of the Hours" as a daily set of prayers in communion with the rest of the Church. For the OFS it is, of course, not mandatory to pray the Hours, but we do it anyway. In that, too, there is a penitential dimension. All Franciscans go on retreats, either personal, in-house (friary, convent) or in some other communal setting (e.g. fraternity), and with the OFS very often as "Days of Recollection." These are valuable days especially when we have the help of a Franciscan spiritual assistant in our midst. The Franciscan tradition needs to be an integral part of Franciscan life - how well this works with the participation of a spiritual assistant. In order to live this life we need more than just an intellectual knowledge of St. Francis and his teachings, we need to incorporate the life in our own spirituality.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is an **invaluable** spiritual tool to guide the penitent through Spiritual inner conversion. Without using this wonderful Sacrament, staying close to Jesus, and under His guidance to everyone else, is much more complicated.

"We have a responsibility to show the temporal world that the Gospel and the

*Continued bottom of next column*

## CONGRATULATIONS ST. THOMAS MORE FRATERNITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS



The St. Thomas More Fraternity was established on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1970. The fraternity celebrated its 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. In reflection of the Franciscan spirit- following Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis- a bronze plaque was created. The prayer of St. Francis and the fraternity's official date of establishment are displayed on the plaque. The plaque was presented with gratitude to Rev. Bob Hart, pastor of St. Patrick's Church, and mounted in the Franciscan garden on the wall of St. Patrick's rectory. We encourage all visitors, especially the children, to visit the garden and listen to the words of a simple prayer. A picture was taken of some of the Franciscan family members in the garden with the plaque superimposed on the picture.

Our fraternity is working on becoming "more active", "more visible" and "more joyful".

pax et bonum  
Sharon K. Hoffman O.F.S.

### Identity, Continued

Franciscan Charism can be lived in any age, under all conditions and in every stage of life. It follows, our identity as secular people—people in the world—is indivisible from the other components of our identity and we should "wear" our secularity with gratitude to the One who bestowed it upon us."

Peace and Good,  
Fred Schaeffer, OFS  
June 20, 2012

## Coming Home to Christmas

By Sr. Nancy Miller, osf

“There is no place like home for the holidays cause no matter how far you roam, when you pause for the sunshine of a friendly gaze...” This song famously sung by Perry Como, and later by the Carpenters, frequents the airways these days. It causes me to reflect on the meaning of “home”, how Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi perceived home and how we receive the homeless and the new immigrants at our country’s borders? What does “home” really mean? I invite you to prayerfully reflect on where is home for you? Who is with you when you are “at home”? What makes it home? In my own reflection, I am reminded of how blest I am to have several people, family and places with whom I am “at home with”.

St. Francis and St. Clare in their writings gave us valuable insights into what home is. For Francis, there was no one fixed residence or dwelling place on the earth that was home for him. He had an affinity for Rivo Torto, the Portiuncola and for the hermitages, but those were never permanent homes for him. For him, it was being on-the-way – a journey- with his brothers. With his encounter with the leper, he experienced Christ and God’s goodness. Aft that he voluntarily made himself homeless and opted for a new home – one totally dependent on God and rooted in the bonds of the fraternity. For him and his followers, a home was found in mutual brotherly and sisterly care. In Francis’ *Later Rule* he says, “Let the brothers not make anything their own, neither house, nor place, nor anything at all. The brothers are to be, “as ‘pilgrims and strangers’ in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and humility.” In Francis’ *Testament*, in his encounter with the leper,

he was led to show mercy and compassion for those in “world” – the poor - who he now saw as brothers and sisters.

In Clare’s *Form of Life*, she emphasizes mutual loving relationships and the need for charity with each other. She stressed the importance of forgiveness, for listening and for dialogue among the sisters so that they would express their needs to each other.

We find this Franciscan concept of “home” in the *Prologue of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order Rule*,

*How happy and blessed are these men and women when they do these things, and persevere in doing them because “the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon them.” and God will make his home and “dwelling place with them.” They are the children of the Father whose works they do. They are the spouses, brothers and sisters, and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Of course, Secular Franciscans need a house and property to sustain living adequately and we believe God dwells there. It is in the home, that we live out the Gospel and that is where God dwells.

For Francis and Clare, relationships are at the core of defining the Gospel vision. For both Francis and Clare, the way of being in relationships in the home, the familial relationship of being mother, brother and sister to one another is where Christ dwells. Choosing to be with the marginalized and serving the poor, seeing Christ in one another, reflects the Franciscan way of fraternal life. It is a way of being together with others “as pilgrims and strangers in the world”. It is a way that the “brothers and sisters” are seen

as members of the same family, and must love and care for their brothers according to the Spirit alive in them.” It is with who you are in relationship - this is home and where Christ dwells each day. Ultimately the way that each one relates to one another is the way one relates to God.

Christ dwells within the homeless and the new immigrants of women, children and men who are displaced. As we move through this Advent and Christmas season, may we open our homes and hearts to our sisters and brothers who are displaced. May we work for justice that they will be welcomed into our country and have their basic needs met. May others encounter a “friendly gaze” when they meet us and may we welcome them as sisters and brothers in Christ. Wishing you and your family continued Christmas blessings.

### Our new International (CIOFS) Council:

**General Minister:** Tibor Kauser, from Hungary

**Vice General Minister:** Maria Consuelo De Nunez (Chelito) from Venezuela.

#### Presidency Councillors:

Ana Fruk, Croatia

Ana Maria Raffo Laos, Peru

Attilio Galimberti, Italy

Michel Janian, Lebanon

Diana Silva Noemi, Argentina

Jenny Harrington, South Africa

Augustine Young Hak Yoon, Korea



## UPCOMING EVENTS

## REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### Minister

Kim Pappas, OFS  
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### Vice Minister

Tim Taormina, OFS  
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### Secretary

Gordon Walker, OFS  
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### Treasurer

Kathy Fraser, OFS  
[kathyfraser@frontiernet.net](mailto:kathyfraser@frontiernet.net)

### Formation Director

Margi Florence  
[margiflo32@gmail.com](mailto:margiflo32@gmail.com)

### MN, WI, ND, SD Council Member

Maria Hamilton  
[mhamil4388@aol.com](mailto:mhamil4388@aol.com)

### IA Council Member

Hazel Martin, OFS  
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### NE Council Member

Richard Beal, OFS  
[bealsfo@cox.net](mailto:bealsfo@cox.net)

### Regional Spiritual Assistants

Sr. Nancy Miller OSF  
[millern@osfdbq.org](mailto:millern@osfdbq.org)

Kathy Taormina, OFS  
[kathysfo@hotmail.com](mailto:kathysfo@hotmail.com)

### Queen of Peace Regional Spring Gathering

The 2015 Regional Spring Gathering will be held in Little Falls, MN on April 11<sup>th</sup> from 9:00AM to 4:00PM. More information and registration forms will be made available on the web site as well as the Spring Tracings to be published March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

### Annual Regional Fraternity Meeting

The Regional Fraternity meeting will take place at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo, MN again this year. Fraternity Ministers, mark your calendars for 29 thru 31 May 2015.

### OFS Summer Seminar

A Servant Leadership Seminar will be the focus of the Summer Seminar for all OFS in Altoona, PA, July 9-12, 2015.

### Nebraska Chapter of Mats: Servant Leadership Workshop

August 15, 2015. Hosted by St. Clare Fraternity. Location: New Cassel Retirement Center, 900 North 90th Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

### Queen of Peace Regional Fall Gathering

The 2015 Regional Fall Gathering, to be hosted by Saint Louis Fraternity, is scheduled for September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Rochester, MN from 9:00AM to 4:00PM.

### 2015 All Iowa Retreat

Will be held in Marshalltown, IA . Date and times to be determined.

### Flash Bulletin!

Spiritus Sanctus Newly Forming Group in Brainerd, MN was approved for elevation to Emerging Fraternity on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

## Secular Franciscans across the Country

### Reflections on Humility and Poverty:

#### from Saint Clare's 4<sup>th</sup> Letter to Blessed Agnes of Prague

"Gaze upon that mirror each day, O Queen and Spouse of Jesus Christ, and continually study your face within it, that you may adorn yourself within and without with beautiful robes, covered, as is becoming the daughter an most chaste bride of the Most High King, with the flowers and garments of all the virtues. Indeed blessed poverty, holy humility, and inexpressible charity are reflected in that mirror, as, with the grace of God, you can contemplate them throughout the entire mirror. Look at the border of this mirror, that is, the poverty of Him Who was placed in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes. O marvelous humility! O astonishing poverty! The King of angels, the Lord of heaven and earth, is laid in a manger! Then, at the surface of the mirror, consider the holy humility, the blessed poverty, the untold labors and burdens that He endured for the redemption of the whole human race. Then, at the depth of this same mirror, contemplate the ineffable charity that led Him to suffer on the wood of the Cross and to die there the most shameful kind of death" (4LAg 15.19-23).



Photo of one of the banners on display at the NAFRA Meeting in Dallas, TX Photo taken by Kim Pappas, OFS



Seculars from around Queen of Peace Region take time out for a photo op with Fr. Steven McMichael, OFM, Conv, at Immaculate Conception Church in Columbia Heights, MN. Fr. McMichael was presenting "Discipleship of St Francis of Assisi". He also presented the "Friends of Francis" weekend, Oct 31-Nov 2 at the Franciscan Retreat House.



## Prayer for our Beloved Deceased

Sr. Betty Berger, OSF, Spiritual Assistant to St. Crispin Fraternity asks us to remember in prayer her mother, Veronica Berger, who died October 24 at the age of 98 and was buried four days later. She was able to enjoy her 98th birthday on August 27 but had been failing since then.

May she rest in peace.

*Father of Mercy, we thank you for the gift of your Beloved Son. For the sake of His sorrowful passion, have mercy upon Veronica Berger, our beloved family and friends who have died.*

*May they know the fullness of your Trinitarian love forever in heaven with our Blessed Mother, the angels and saints!*

*United in prayer with Mother Mary, we ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord, in the power of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.*



*Margi Florence addresses the "All Iowa" Secular Franciscans at the Servant Leadership Workshop*

## Servant Leadership Workshop – Cedar Falls, Iowa

The Queen of Peace Regional Servant Leadership Workshop was held at the American Martyrs Retreat Center in Cedar Falls, Iowa on October 5, 2014. About 30 Secular Franciscans of the Iowa Fraternities joined with Regional representatives to explore ways to increase efficiency and develop familiarity with aspects of fraternity officer tasks.

Seven presentations were given on the servant tasks of Ministers/Vice Ministers, Secretaries, Treasurers, Formators, Councilors and Spiritual Assistants. A terrific lunch was served buffet style and the meeting closed with Holy Mass.

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