

# TRACINGS

ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS | www.queenofpeaceregion.org



Secular Franciscan Order

Summer 2016, Issue 17

## Reflections on the Annual Regional Council Meeting

*Following is an article which combines reflections about the annual meeting by Linzy Martin, OFS and Bob Barnes, OFS taken from their fraternity newsletters.*

It was good to see old friends and make new ones at the Regional gathering in Buffalo, MN. It was a lively gathering of OSFs and Spiritual Assistants from five of the six states that make up our region. Because it was the year for the Region's visitation we were also joined by national minister, Jan Parker, OFS and CNSA President-in-turn, Br. Bob Brady, OFM.

Three main challenges for all of us came out of the weekend's discussions: 1) that we as individuals and as fraternities must become much more familiar with our Essential Documents, 2) that we move from simply saying prayers to praying, and 3) that we become more active in inviting people into our journey and charism.

The most significant item voted on at the meeting was the raising of the Fair Share from \$50.00 to \$55.00 for the professed and from \$17.00 to \$22.00 for can-

didates. We have had two fair share increases in the recent past. These raises went directly to the International and National Councils respectively to cover their increased expenses. Neither of these two increases assisted the Queen of Peace Region's budget dilemma. This \$5.00 increase will enable the Region to continue to deliver formation and pastoral and fraternal visitation services at expected levels. Without this increase we would not have been able to balance the 2017 budget. After looking at and discussing our options the ministers voted unanimously for the increase.

One take-away that we brought home from the meeting was derived from a comment made by Kathy Taormina, OFS, one of our Regional Spiritual Assistants. In talking about prayer she said, "Prayer without action is incomplete prayer." My first thought was: WOW, have I wasted a lot of prayers in my lifetime. It doesn't do me much good to pray for the poor or for the end to poverty and then continue on my "self-indulgent" ways. Nor does it do

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much good to pray for the various clean water projects and then continue to take 20 minute showers. St. Francis called himself a worm, the lowest of the low. I eventually realized what St. Francis already knew - that we are all worms as long as we fail to do what we can for the poor, continue to waste food and water, lead self-indulgent lives and fail to do our part for world peace by making peace with those around us. Coming to grips with the idea that you are the lowest of the low - a worm - is difficult and kind of harsh at first, but once you realize that you are called to do your best, then try a little harder each day, and don't attempt to change the world; just try to change your little corner of the world. You will then see that you are in pretty good company.

Our regional JPIC animators, Mary Higgins, OSF and Cynthia Gunsolly, OSF, led the ongoing formation at the Regional fraternity meeting. They

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## LAUDATO SI' One Year Later

by Mary Higgins, OFS  
Regional JPIC Co-Animator

Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* was released in June of 2015. There is good news and bad news to share one year later.

First - the good news. *Laudato Si'* received much attention when it was released, during a year of positive developments. Pope Francis addressed the UN in September with a passionate call to act on climate change and in December an historic agreement was reached by 195 nations to reduce carbon emissions and limit global temperature rise. The agreement was signed on Earth Day, April 22, 2016. More businesses, government agencies, educators and individuals are becoming aware of the need to reduce dependence upon fossil fuels and curb consumption.

Now - the bad news. Disturbing evidence of the effects of climate change continue to pile up - rising sea levels, bleaching of coral reefs, droughts and major flooding, alarming heat waves, concern about adequate and safe water supplies, and continued overconsumption of fossil fuels by developed nations.

In the US, only 10% of us are aware that 97% of scientists agree that climate change is real, with human consumption a major contributing factor. 74 % of people never or almost never talk about it, and only 6% believe we can and will be successful in efforts to turn things around.

So, we have work to do. As Franciscans, our connection to all people and all of creation, our concern for the poor who are most impacted by the effects of climate change, and our call to personal conversion are all part of the fabric of our Franciscan vocation.

What can we do? We can pray with our eyes open to the needs of the world around us, study and inform ourselves on the issues, speak up and make changes in our own lifestyles. We can contact lawmakers, asking them to support initiatives that address climate change, and encourage our local fraternities and parishes to bring the message of *Laudato Si'* to the forefront. Check out the Catholic Relief Services or Catholic Climate Covenant websites and the JPIC page on our Queen of Peace website for information on climate change and what WE can do.

### **Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God**

*Pope Francis, Laudato Si', 119*

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## Charitable Giving . . .

At the Queen of Peace Annual Regional Council Meeting in Buffalo there was significant discussion about donations to Queen of Peace Region through charitable giving. This discussion took place during the deliberations about raising the Fair Share from \$50.00 to \$55.00 for professed and from \$17.00 to \$22.00 for candidates effective for the year 2017 and beyond. Please see the Annual Meeting minutes distributed separately.

The assembled Regional Council unanimously approved the Fair Share increases while at the same time recognizing the need for increasing Regional revenues through charitable giving. We all give as generously as we can to our favorite charities and apostolates. Under IRS rules 501(c)(3) the Secular Franciscan Order is exempt from income taxation. Therefore donations are deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the

## Charitable Giving - Continued

IRS in accordance with the code.

Part of the discussion about this endeavor was focused on the Region receiving donations through the web site. The Regional Executive Council has conducted the research necessary to evaluate the pros and cons of doing this and has judged that doing business this way may not be cost effective. The fees charged by electronic transaction agencies are prohibitive for a low volume enterprise. Until the Region can establish a predictable record of continuous positive cash flow through charitable giving we can only accept donations by personal check or cash.

Nonetheless significant potential exists to develop a meaningful revenue stream through charitable giving. To achieve this potential Region must raise the level of awareness within our Secular Franciscan Community as to how members can assist by including the Region in their charitable giving plans each tax year.

Please communicate this tax strategy and giving opportunity to all your members so both you and they can consider adding Queen of Peace to their charitable giving list and perhaps restructure their giving allocations to include Queen of Peace Region in some small way.

Queen of Peace will be happy to send each donor a tax receipt at the end of the tax year. The Region would also be delighted to have you set up a monthly disbursement account with your bank whereby your bank would deduct your designated amount from your checking account and deposit it to the Queen of Peace bank account. Tax deductible giving can also be set up through Bill Pay or Pay Pal.

For further information please contact Kathy Fraser, OFS Treasurer or Gordon Walker, OFS, Secretary.

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## Reflections - Continued

presented information on Catholic Social Teaching, *Laudato Si*, the work of JPIC and the resources available on the new Queen of Peace web site. Mary reminded those present of the basic principles embedded throughout Catholic Social Teaching:

1. The life and dignity of the human person
2. Rights and responsibilities with focus on the common good
3. The call to community, family and participation
4. The dignity of work and rights of the worker
5. Solidarity of the human family
6. Option for the poor and vulnerable
7. Care for creation

Even a cursory look at this list shows the strong connection between Catholic Social Teaching and our Franciscan way of life. As we continue to study *Laudato Si* let us keep in mind how it weaves together Catholic Social Teaching and our Rule.

*Thanks to Linzy and Bob for their thoughtful insights into what our annual meeting is all about - becoming better Franciscans and bringing the good news to our worlds.*

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Little Portion Fraternity New Council - May 22, 2016

L-R: Jim Hubley, New Minister Sharon Kinker, Annette Rohlik, Steve Tykwinski, and Mike Rohlik. Not pictured: Mary Deutz.

### Secular Franciscan Order Queen of Peace Region Charitable Giving Form

I/We would like to make a tax deductible donation to the OFS Queen of Peace Regional Common Fund:

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

- or -

As a Memorial to: \_\_\_\_\_

My/Our check numbered \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ is included in this mailing, made out to "QUEEN OF PEACE REGION".

My/Our Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form and your check to:  
Treasurer, OFS Queen of Peace Region  
22983 W. Martin Lake Drive, Stacy, MN 55079



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### The Quinquennial

NAFRA will hold the “Q” in St Louis, June 30 – July 3, 2016 at the Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel. Rediscover the Franciscan Charisms and enjoy new growth and fruitfulness in your vocation. Share your joys and your insights as we look forward to future endeavors as a National Family.

### Regional Formation Workshop

A Regional Formation Workshop is being planned for August 13, 2016 at Saint Bonaventure in Bloomington, MN. Mark your calendars for this important event. More information will be provided as planning continues.

### Nebraska Chapter of MATS

The Nebraska cluster will be holding their 2016 Chapter of MATS at St Stephen the Martyr Church in Omaha, NE. The Chapter is scheduled for August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

### All Iowa Retreat

Holy Trinity Fraternity, Dubuque and The Companions of St Francis NFG will be hosting the 2016 All Iowa Retreat on 18 September, 2016 at the Basilica of St John the Evangelist, 1915 University Ave., Des Moines, IA. Mass and profession of Rosemary Sloss, OFS – 10:30AM Speaker Sr Nancy Miller, OSF Contact Ann Weltin, OFS 563 590 6302.

### Queen of Peace Regional Fall Gathering 2016

The 2016 Regional Fall Gathering, sponsored by St Leonard of Port Maurice Fraternity, will be held Saturday, October 8th, 2016 from 8:30 AM to 3:45 PM at St. Austin's Church in North Minneapolis, 4050 Upton Ave N. Sr. Elise Saggau, OSF, will be speaking on Franciscan Spirituality Today: What Difference Does It Make?

### Queen of Peace Regional Spring Gathering 2017

The Regional Spring Gathering sponsored by Spiritus Sanctus Emerging Fraternity, will be held at the Franciscan Mother House in Little Falls, MN, Saturday, April 22, 2017. Registration is from 8:30 to 9 AM. Program begins at 9AM. Guest speaker is Fr. Daniel P. Horan, OFM Conv., who will be speaking on the Franciscan Spirit of Thomas Merton. Registration information will be available later.

## TRACINGS

### Regional Newsletter ISSUE 17 | Summer 2016

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