

# OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the  
Secular Franciscan Order

www.ilsfo.org

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## Minister's Message

By Vickie Klick, OFS

Dear sisters and brothers,  
Sometimes it's hard to remember how blessed you are until someone else points it out to you! When I was driving our guest and musician, Jerry Aull, to the airport, he commented that he had been confused about the event we were having, because it wasn't our ANNUAL regional gathering, nor was it a Regional Executive Council event.

The Aulls are from the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Regional Fraternity, which spans five southeastern states. It's no wonder they only gather once a year – it's a real trip! We know we are fortunate to have such a compact region (as came up again this year during our visitation by the National Fraternity), but to have someone else come and just be impressed that we *can* meet multiple times per year makes its own impression.

Speaking of our multiple events per year, it's already time to plan for our next event. The Regional Study Day (followed by Leadership Workshop breakout sessions for council members and potential members) is Saturday, September 27, almost exactly midway between the Feast of the Stigmata and the Feast of St. Francis. Fr. Al Mirz, OFM, will be speaking on "The Law of Peace in the Heart". See the flyer (sent out to the same mailing list as the *OFS News*) and let your minister know that you plan to attend (and whether or not you will participate in the lunch). Guests are very welcome – bring anyone who wants to live a more peaceful life! One of the many benefits of having multiple regional gatherings per year is that more people can potentially participate.

On the other hand, meeting for a weekend ensures there is more social time. Some of you already make more time to visit by arriving early – it's always good to see a nice crowd gathering already at 8:30!

I encourage you to chat with someone you don't know at every regional event, sometime during the day – whether at lunch, during a break, or whenever. Yes, by all means catch up with the folks you only see at regional events – but add to your circle too.

It's not too early to remind you of the Mother Cabrini Celebration coming up on November 16. We will be having it at Mayslake Village this year, as we celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of our Regional Fraternity. We are planning a special day, so mark your calendar NOW and watch for more information in October.

The blessing of our compact region is our good fortune – obviously it's God's gift to us, not something that we did. (New York and New Jersey also have some very compact regions – it goes with the urban territory.) How often do we treat blessings that just "happened to us" as if we did something to cause them or earn them? It's good to recognize (as best we can) the extent of God's free and gracious gifts to us, and to consider how well we have used our free will to accept them (or not). I think that even the trials in my life are God's gift, in the sense that they are *my* trials, suited to my strengths and weaknesses, not someone else's.

That's why St. Paul could be confident that we won't be tested beyond our strength (see 1 Corinthians 10:13). Let us all take a moment to thank God for the gifts of our faith, our families and friends, our vocation, and our fraternities – local, regional, national, and international.

Peace be with you all - Vickie

Vickie 

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The *OFS News* is the official publication of the Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order.

Submission deadline is the  
20<sup>th</sup> of each month.



## CALENDAR

*Unless otherwise indicated, all events are at Mayslake Village (Oak Brook).*

- **Election & Visitation dates subject to change. (E=Election/V=Visitation)**

### August 2014

- 2: Regional Gathering – Feast of the Portiuncula

### September 2014

- 27: Study Day / Leadership Workshop  
28: St Thomas Moore – (E)

### October 2014

- 11: Regional Executive Council Meeting

- 21-26: NAFRA Chapter, Lake Dallas, TX

### November 2014

- 16: Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment of the Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity – Location TBD

## Spiritual Assistant's Message

vs.1. There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.

vs.2. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.

vs.4. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

Ecclesiastes chapter 3

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As September arrives bringing to a close the good old summer time I find myself thinking about all of the Secular Franciscans who have journeyed together here in the Mother Cabrini region and most especially those fraternities that have deactivated recently. I am mindful of the many occasions when I have said to some of our fraternities during visitations when the quite common concern of diminishment and lack of vocations is expressed. Don't be afraid your fraternity is naturally becoming grandparents and the life dynamics of grandparents is much different from immersing or ascending young adults and their doings. I always encourage them to recognize the vitality that they do have and to share with each other to enjoy the pleasant community of old friends and then to expand their activities to include nurturing and encouraging other fraternities with wisdom to impart and the fragrant Franciscan spirit to brighten our world. But before I become to Polly-Anna-ish let me stop and acknowledge that sadly Grandparents die, or in the language of secular Franciscan fraternities they deactivate. Let us love one another as they have shown us.

Your Brother Joe M, ofm

September 2014

If someone is reading this newsletter 'second hand' i.e. printed or forwarded from someone else' email – and you would like to receive it 'first hand' (via email) simply drop me a line [pr@ilsfo.org](mailto:pr@ilsfo.org)

It costs nothing to add another email to our distribution list. Marc

Excerpted from the Cathloic News Agency

Pope not just for Catholics, but for the world -

Seoul, South Korea, Aug 17, 2014 / 12:05 pm (CNA/EWTN News).- A group of pilgrims who traveled from Taiwan to participate in events surrounding Pope Francis' visit have expressed their joy at seeing him, particularly for the beatification of 124 Korean martyrs.

"It is the first time I have attended such a huge event with so many people. And I just heard on the news that about 1 million people attended the Mass, and only about 17 to 19 percent of them were Catholics," one of the group members, Theresa, told CNA Aug. 17.

"I think that the Pope is not just for Catholics, but for the world. He is for peace, and his kindness to the whole of humanity" displays that, she said. Coming as part of a group of 50 from Sacred Heart Parish in Taipei with her twin sister, Theresa explained that participating in the Aug. 16 Mass with Pope Francis, during which he beatified 124 Korean martyrs, was especially impactful.

"I was very touched, even though I don't know the language and I don't know the Koreans, the whole atmosphere was quite great."

During his homily, Pope Francis spoke of the great witness that the martyrs give, stating that "All of them lived and died for Christ, and now they reign with him in joy and in glory."

## In-Formation – Regional Formation Council

By Sandra Kissel, ofs

### FRANCIS BUILD UP MY CHURCH WHICH IS FALLEN INTO RUIN...

Each time I lay eyes on the San Damiano Crucifix these words of our Lord speak more clearly. As Franciscans, as Christian's there is no such thing as formation of and sanctification for ourselves alone. Everything we have is a gift freely received at great cost by Our Lord. The mission we have/ the commitment we're drawn to - is to love our Lord deeply and then bring Him out and make Him known as "Mothers, brothers and sisters" to those who hunger and thirst for Him but still don't know it! For so many souls, their lives are darkness, empty, miserable and they don't know why. They have everything but don't know God. We have only to listen to the world news to know that! In God alone and with Him, everything in life makes sense, without Him everything falls into ruin. And what does He want in return? Souls! And so, what is there for us to do but freely, lovingly give, not just of our excesses but beyond as He did, all for love.

Well, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak! We make a great start, we think we're off, everything is great and then we fall! Looking at the calendar for August and September wondering what to write; first I saw the Portiuncula Feast day: the feasts of St. John Vianney, St. Dominick, St. Clare, St. Maximilian Kolbe and St. Padre Pio; then, *Mary's Assumption into Heaven, the Queenship of Mary, O.L. of Czestochowa, The Birth of Mary, Sorrowful Mother, the Holy Name of Mary!*

In reflection, I can't recall reading about one saint who didn't attribute every good they had obtained from the Heart of Jesus to the merciful intercession of Mary Immaculate. The saints all tell us that Mary is the fastest, most direct and surest way to obtain our sanctification and the greatest good for souls. She puts our feet on a straight path and we know what direction that is!

I've received letters from the incarcerated speaking of a book titled "*33 Days to Morning Glory.*" Right afterward I was given not one copy but 5!

I began reading...the Introduction, the first day, the second. Returning to the Marian Feast Days at the front of the book, I determined to renew my Consecration. The day was August 6<sup>th</sup>, the next Marian feast day (*the 34<sup>th</sup> day*) was the Nativity of Mary, (*the date I was first Consecrated*)! Anyone who confesses they need to "*jumpstart*" their devotion to Mary or wants to live his Profession promises more sincerely; to be able to let go and trust God more and more without limits; I recommend this book. Father Gaitley's retreat begins with the great apostle of Marian devotion; St. Louis de Montfort, then St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Pope St. John Paul II.

You know there's a reason Jesus entrusted us to His Mother. St. Maximilian Kolbe puts it this way: "The Divine Heart of Jesus, which burns with love for us who are guilty, finds in this regard a means worthy of divine wisdom. He gives us His own dearly beloved Mother, Mary, as our mother and protector. She is the saintly creature among all saints and angels, to whom He refuses nothing, since she is the worthiest and most loved of all mothers. Besides, He has given her a very large heart, which enables her to notice even the smallest tears and to work for the salvation and sanctification of every single human being. She is the bridge that leads us to the most Holy Heart of Jesus. We have a Mother who has been given to us by God, a Mother who tenderly watches over every action, every word, every thought of ours, (*Stronger than Hatred, 51*). Joachim Cardinal Meisner says: "A consecrated person ponders the mysteries of the life of Christ. They desire to join their lives to the lives of Jesus and Mary. "In our journey through life we need a com-panion who knows the way, a sure support on which one can rely, a path that leads to our goal." Francis too entrusted his entire Order into Mary's hands!

A very special 'Thank you' to those who have individually and fraternally remembered our incarcerated brothers and sisters,  
God bless you all! **T**

## Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

Happy New Year!

By Barbara Elkins, OFS, JPIC Councilor

Yes, I know it is only September but I have always considered September a time to start anew. As a student, September signaled the start of a new school year with new clothes and shoes, school supplies and a chance to catch up with the classmates I did not see over the summer months. It wasn't long before I continued the cycle with my own son, looking forward to what the new school year will bring and observing how much he has grown. Now I am preparing lessons and organizing materials as I begin a new year in my role as a school librarian. The summer months have provided me with some time to escape the usual routine and to explore new places. But now, September is my time to reassess my daily routines with that "back to school" spirit.

One of my explorations this summer was to visit Diane Faust, OFS and her staff at Franciscan Outreach. This exceptional ministry is located just a few minutes from my school. Many of you are quite familiar with the work of Franciscan Outreach but I would like to share what I learned.

Franciscan Outreach is one of the oldest and largest providers of services for men and women who are homeless in the Chicago area. What began in 1963 as a half-way house for 16 ex-offenders by Fr. Phillip Marquard, OFM has since grown to a fruitful ministry that supports five local sites. Franciscan Outreach's mission is to create an effective, well managed, sustainably funded organization that affirms the human dignity of people in need regardless of their background or religious affiliation. Franciscan Outreach operates with a small staff and manages a community of volunteers that provided safe shelter-nights to over 100,000 homeless individuals and over 200,000 meals to anyone in need last year. Their case managers met with over 26,000 individuals to help them find whatever they needed to build a better life. This commitment to service resulted in helping 258 men and women get off the streets and into homes last year.

Are you looking for some ways to put our Rule into action? Here are a few ideas from Franciscan Outreach:

### Sponsor a Bed

They are offering a *Sponsor a Bed* program to help them to raise funds in support of the Franciscan House, a 257-bed shelter located at 2715 W. Harrison Street and the Franciscan Annex, a 70-bed shelter located at 200 S. Sacramento. Sponsorship can be by individuals, businesses or work, family or church groups. At a cost of \$500 per year, a sign posted on your sponsored bed will tell everyone who stays there that someone cares. Go to [www.franoutreach.org/sponsorabed.html](http://www.franoutreach.org/sponsorabed.html) for details.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Franciscan Outreach Association relies on its volunteers for administrative, fund-raising and maintenance assistance throughout the year. A calendar of dinner volunteer opportunities is available on their website. Contact Merrill Gonzalez ([Merrill@franoutreach.org](mailto:Merrill@franoutreach.org)) for more information about all volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers are also needed to assist with their many fundraising and awareness events. Events Coordinator Kasey Schregardus is happy to share information about their upcoming events throughout the area. ([kasey@franoutreach.org](mailto:kasey@franoutreach.org))

### Promotion Assistance

Neil Ryan, the Annual Fund & Communication Coordinator, shared a few ideas on how Secular Franciscans can get involved. He would like our assistance in spreading the good news about Franciscan Outreach. If you are willing to "open the door" to your parish or community by inviting him to speak or set up a promotional venue, please contact him at [neil@franoutreach.org](mailto:neil@franoutreach.org). Sponsoring and supporting this type of event is a wonderful way to draw new people to your fraternity.

**Franciscan Outreach (773) 278-6724**

I hope to explore the many other Franciscan ministries in our region soon. How fortunate we are to have so many avenues to live to bring the Gospel to life and life to the Gospel. Pax et bonum. **T**