

# OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the  
Secular Franciscan Order

www.ilsfo.org

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## Minister's Message

by Lorna Miressi, OFS

Brothers and Sisters,

May the Lord grant you peace!

On Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, leaders of our Mother Cabrini region gathered at Mayslake Village under the direction of our Formation Director Kristi Loar, OFS for our annual Leadership Study Day.

We had a wonderfully busy morning and early afternoon dialoguing about building fraternity and leading fraternities. We gathered in small groups for intra-fraternity dialogue. We met with other ministers, vice-ministers, secretaries, treasurers, formation directors and spiritual assistants to dialogue about our specific leadership positions in our fraternities. We talked a lot, learned a lot and had an overall great day!

As the minister, I was asked to give a Minister's Address. I was asked by Kristi, our formation director, to keep my message about 20 minutes long. Well, for those of you who know me, I love to talk. Furthermore, my choice of topic, Servant Leadership, is something I am very interested in so it was hard for me to keep my message 20 minutes long.


In a nutshell, Franciscan servant leadership is all about service. Leadership, in today's corporations and organizations, focuses on managing people and resources. Secular Franciscan leadership focuses on serving God's creation, especially God's people. (Servant Leadership, by Anne Mulqueen, OFS, Spring Edition 2013 of TAU-USA).

In 8 weeks we will be gathering as a region for our Mother Cabrini celebration. (More information follows later on in this newsletter). The day promises to be wonderful with a beautiful location, a great speaker, and an opportunity to gather in community for fellowship, worship and praise and, of course, food. We will also have a time to honor the deceased in our region over the last year. I look forward to seeing many of you at our celebration.

For those of you who are interested in finding out more about Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership, you can go to [www.nafra-sfo.org](http://www.nafra-sfo.org) and locate the spring 2013 issue of TAU-USA. In it you will find Anne Mulqueen's article on Servant Leadership. I also am working on presenting more on the "nuts and bolts" of Franciscan Servant Leadership in the near future. Until then, God's peace.

Lorna 

## In Memoriam

Irene Schramer, OFS, member of St. Francis of Assis Fox Valley, passed on to eternal life 9/8/2016 at the age of 95 and 1/2! She passed peacefully at home with family. We bid farewell (for now) to a lively and inspiring woman! Services were held at St. Rita's in Aurora on Friday 9/23 from 9-11, with mass at 11. Irene asked that the fraternity banner and pall be used for the services. 

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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.

## REGIONAL CALENDAR 2016

All events are at Mayslake Village unless otherwise noted

Saturday, January 16 —  
Regional Executive Council Meeting

Monday, March 2  
Per Capita/Census/Fraternity Annual Reports due

Saturday, March 19 —  
Regional Executive Council Meeting

Sunday, March 27 — Easter

Sat./Sun., April 9-10  
Candidates Retreat

Saturday, May 14  
Chapter of Ministers

Thursday-Monday, June 30-July 4  
Quinquennial Congress,  
St. Louis, MO

Saturday, July 16  
Regional Executive Council Meeting

Saturday, August 6  
Regional Gathering — Feast of the Portiuncula

Saturday, September 17  
Formation/Leadership Workshop

Saturday, October 1  
Regional Executive Council Meeting

November 1-6 NAFA  
Chapter/National Visitation –  
Winter Park, FL

Sunday, November 13  
Mother Cabrini Feast Day  
Celebration – location TBA

## Spiritual Assistant's Message

We are in the process of discerning and selecting a new Spiritual Assistant. Until this is accomplished, we would appreciate your prayers that our selection and appointment goes smoothly and we are able to appoint the new Spiritual Assistant who will most serve our needs. It will be difficult to replace Br. Joe, however it needs to be done. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

In the interim, the following is extrapolated from the St. Francis region website <http://www.stfrancisregion.org/cgi-bin/complex2/showPage.plx?pid=70>

on requirements and qualities for a Spiritual Assistant:


“ A Spiritual Assistant is one who serves a Secular Franciscan Fraternity as a member of that fraternity's council and who is specially charged with maintaining the "vital reciprocity" between the SFO, the 1st Order/TOR, and the Church. A Spiritual Assistant to the SFO links both the Church and the Franciscan First Order/TOR to the SFO. Spiritual assistants are responsible for fulfilling the mandate of the Church to assure the SFO's relationship to the Church and for maintaining the Franciscan family connections between the SFO and the First Order (O.F.M., O.F.M. Conventuals, O.F.M. Capuchins)/TOR (Third Order Regular).

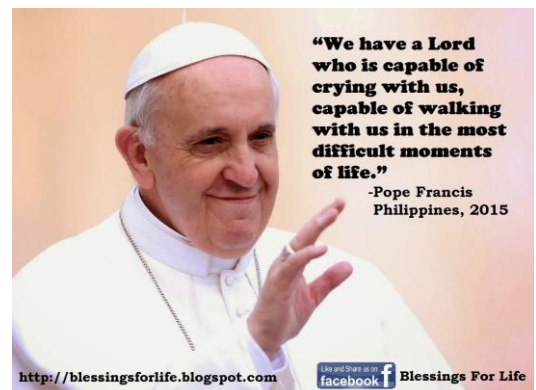
The principal task of the assistant is to communicate Franciscan spirituality and to co-operate in the initial and continuing formation of the brothers and sisters of a fraternity. (*Gen'l. Constitutions*, Art. 90.1)

The Spiritual Assistant is to be a witness of Franciscan spirituality and of the fraternal affection of the religious towards the Secular Franciscans and to be a bond of communion between the First Order/TOR and the SFO. (*Statutes for Spiritual & Pastoral Assistance to the SFO*, Art. 12.2.)

A Spiritual Assistant is not a director of fraternity life. Rather, the SA participates as an equal member of a council, assists in the ongoing formation of the council, and participates in the discussions and decisions of the council. The SA also assists with the initial formation provided to those who are preparing to come into the Order.

A SA can be a member of the 1st Order/TOR, of the 2nd Order (Poor Clares), or of one of the Orders of sisters who follow the TOR rule, or a trained Secular Franciscan, or a diocesan or other priest or deacon. “

Any volunteers ? 



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## INFORMATION

Nicholas Noe OFS

### *Breaking News*

*"To the other towns also I must proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God, because for this purpose I have been sent." (Lk: 4:43)*


All Franciscans live by the foundational rule of living the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi. And we are to devote ourselves to careful reading of the gospel, going from gospel to life and life to the gospel (Art. 4). We are often reminded that the Greek translation for "the gospel" is "good news," but just what is the good news? "Denying yourself and taking up your cross" doesn't sound like good news nor do the other hard sayings of Jesus.

At the end of a recent talk I was giving on Francis of Assisi, someone asked me very pointedly, "well, just what is the good news of the gospel?" There was a moment of panic as I tried to come up with a quick and concise answer so I could move on to an easier question. I replied, "God loves you, no matter what," and the questioner seemed more than satisfied. It was not an incorrect answer because the gospel certainly does convey a message of God's unconditional love. But if my "little gray brain cells" had been better aligned, I could have given a more precise scriptural answer by simply quoting Jesus, who tells us that he came to proclaim "the good news of the Kingdom of God." The Kingdom is at hand, but not fully. It will grow mysteriously like a mustard seed springs into a large plant. But for this to happen, we need to repent and change, be awake and watchful.

Had I answered with quotes from Jesus about the good news of the Kingdom, I'm not sure the questioner would have been as satisfied because of the words "news" and "kingdom." Based on my own experience, I don't think we read the gospel, nor hear the gospel read at Mass, in anticipation of hearing "the news," even if it's good news. We don't read and listen to the word of God with a "beginners mind." Our modern mindset regarding "the news" largely comes from what we see and hear on TV and other media, and of course most of what we see, hear, and read is "bad." The latest trend in TV news casting is to frame every event in terms of "breaking news," which always is about a shooting, an explosion, a fire, an earthquake, or hundreds


injured or killed in a Syrian town. But even when good news is reported, such as a promising cure for cancer, that good news is relatively less important than the good news of the gospel. What could be more important than God becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ? And when Jesus, the Word of God, speaks, we need to listen in a spirit of faith, hope and love, and honor his words as "breaking good news."

The word "kingdom" can also create confusion in the modern mind, especially in the West. It brings images of a king, his power and authority, and the political boundaries over which he rules. For some religious folks, their primary image of God is "King." But does the kingly image actually fit a God who is love, creates out of love, became human out of love, and with whom we should humbly walk? God's kingdom is not defined by political or religious boundaries, but exists wherever God's will is fulfilled. And God's will is to love: to love God, and to love others as yourself, including enemies and all creatures. In other words, God's Kingdom is really about loving relationships and, as some writers have suggested, it might be better called "God's Kin-dom."

Where do we see the emergence and growth of God's Kingdom in the midst of all the "bad news" being reported in the media. It actually is very easy if we are willing to let go and let the Spirit help us see, just as the Spirit helps us pray. We need only to look around and above us at the beauty of nature and all God's creation, a creation still in process. Whenever people love one another, are compassionate, merciful, or kind toward another, are forgiving, or are working for peace and justice, God's Kingdom and presence have blossomed. But it's not just a matter of seeing. Our Rule strongly emphasizes that "Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the Kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively." And we do so by following Christ, and acting in the Christian spirit of service (Art. 14). 

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### In Memoriam

Gene Davis was professed into the Brother Jacob's fraternity on January 19 of this year. It made him very happy to be a Franciscan at last. Unfortunately, he passed away on the 1st of September. A memorial Mass will be celebrated for him at St. Peter's in the Loop on Tuesday, September 20, at 6 pm with a reception downstairs afterwards. 



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

By Luana Leinhart, OFS

Grace and peace to you, sisters and brothers! Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si: on Care for Our Common Home*, is not only about the environment, but economic justice. Mindful that our shopping habits have real world consequences for the unseen people who manufacture our goods, Pope Francis exhorts us to support businesses that pay their workers living wages, and are environmentally responsible.

To that end, I'm excited to share a small business close to my heart, Wild Mantle. Their flagship product is a line of hooded scarves, or mantles. I purchased one last winter, and the moment I put it on, I felt warm, safe, and strong. Like a super hero. A mantle is not only a hooded scarf or cloak, but also one's role in the world (in 2Kings 2:13, it's both). I emailed the company's designer and founder, Avi Loren-Fox, to tell her how much I loved my mantle, and she wrote me back. The conversations that followed showed me that though Wild Mantle is a secular company with no religious affiliation, it has much in common with our Franciscan way of life.

Avi is not your stereotypical entrepreneur; she genuinely cares for her customers, and is honored to play a small part in their empowerment. Customers aren't just dollar signs to her; they are partners who, inspired and empowered by Avi's magical garments, want to inspire and empower others.

Wild Mantle products are made in the USA, consciously sourcing as many sustainable and/or recycled materials as possible, at a B Corporation knitting mill committed to manufacturing practices that are good for the environment and provide their workers living wages and other benefits. This means Wild Mantle garments are sold at a higher price point than comparable products made overseas. Avi has had offers to manufacture her products in other countries at a lower cost, but she's always refused, citing the

incongruence of selling a product that empowers customers, but disempowers the workers who make it, and contributing to the system that enables poverty in the US and around the world. I invite you to take up the mantle and see how it inspires you. You can visit the Wild Mantle website at: [www.wildmantle.com](http://www.wildmantle.com).

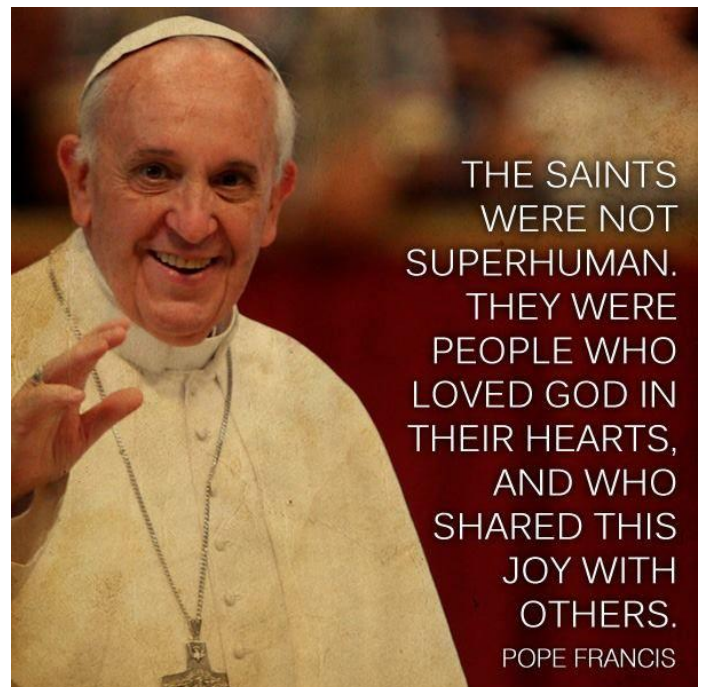
Learn more about B Corporations here: <https://www.bcorporation.net/what-are-b-corps>



Last month's mystery church was St. Helen, in WestTown.



Which Chicago Archdiocese church is this one? The answer will be in next month's issue. 





# Mother Cabrini Regional Secular Franciscan Order Celebration

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Techny Towers Conference & Retreat Center  
2001 Waukegan Road  
Techny, Illinois 60082

## Schedule of Events:

- 10:00 AM Sign-In/Registration
- 10:30 AM Speaker: Fr. Anthony Lajato, OFM Conv.  
*St. Bonaventure as a guide for Franciscans today.*
- 12:00 PM Pot-Luck Lunch
- 1:15 PM Mass
- 2:30 PM Evening Prayer and Remembrance of the  
deceased  
brothers and sisters of our regional fraternity.
- 3:30 PM Departure

Each fraternity is invited to bring a food item to share with regional attendees as part of our potluck lunch. Feel free to bring your fraternity banner.

Please RSVP to Barbara Elkins at [viceminister@ilsfo.org](mailto:viceminister@ilsfo.org) by Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup> with the number of people attending from your fraternity and the type of luncheon dish you plan to bring.