

OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order

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Minister's Message

by Lorna Miressi, OFS

I am sitting here at my kitchen table enjoying the beautiful spring weather on this early-May Day. The grass is green and the flowers are blooming, thanks to all the spring rains we have had in April. The Easter season is still with us for a bit longer. We are blessed! Alleluia! Christ is risen.

This past weekend our local ministers from across our region gathered at Mayslake Village for our annual Chapter of Ministers. What a weekend! In addition to the usual "chapter" business, we were blessed to have in our company our sister Jan Parker, OFS, who is our National Minister and Br. Bob Brady, OFM, who is a member of the Council of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA). Jan and Br. Bob were here to carry out our tri-annual Visitation. Many of you - whether you are fraternity ministers, you were representing your local fraternity in the ministers' place or you were a visitor - were with us in community.

I know that I was inspired and encouraged by our visitors' presence, by their words and their love. It is my hope that you were as well. Please talk with your fraternity minister, or his/her representative at the gathering, for details.

We have an important and exciting opportunity for ongoing formation coming up this July. From July 6th through the 9th, at St. Francis University

in Loretto Pa, our National Executive Council is hosting our 8th Summer Seminar for Secular Franciscans. The seminar is titled

"Multiculturalism and Diversity: Who is My Neighbor?"

I received an email from NAFRA back in February announcing that registration was open. Below, you can find part of this email again. Please note that after June 1st the price of registration does increase from \$290 to \$315. Also, if you can share a room the cost decreases.

Registration for the 2017 OFS Summer Seminar is now open. This year's topic, "Multiculturalism and Diversity: Who is My Neighbor," is particularly relevant to current issues, and our presenters, Mary Stronach, OFS and Carolyn Townes, OFS will provide a stimulating and informative program. A registration form can either be printed and mailed or accessed directly online at: <https://my.francis.edu/sfbus/ICFL/ICFLseminar.asp> The address of where to mail the registration form can be found on the registration form.

God's peace be with you.

Lorna Miressi, OFS
Regional Minister 

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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 20th of each month.

REGIONAL CALENDAR 2017

All events are at Mayslake Village unless otherwise noted

Saturday, January 21st——
Regional Executive Council Meeting

Monday, March 6th Per Capita/Census/Fraternity reports due

Saturday, March 11th——
Regional Executive Council Meeting

Sat./Sun. March 18-19th Candidates' Retreat

Sunday, April 16th Easter

Saturday May 20th——
Chapter of Ministers/Visitation from NAFRA

Saturday, July 15th
Regional Executive Council Meeting

Saturday, August 5th
Regional Gathering – Feast of the Portiuncula

Saturday, September 16th Formation Leadership Workshop

Saturday, October 7th
Regional Executive Council Meeting

NAFRA Chapter – Date and location TBA

Sunday November 12th Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration – location TBA

Spiritual Assistant's Message

Sometimes, we can know a person and never really “know” them. When I was a young child, I spent quite a bit of time with my grandmother. She would tell me stories about various people, including my father, my uncles, and my grandfather. As she told a story, I would listen, enthralled by her images, and cling to every word. It was not until she passed away that I realized, “I do not know her.” When people told me stories about her, it was if my grandmother was a completely different person. I found out that she and her family barely survived the Great Depression. I found out that she was a religious sister for many years of her life before leaving the convent. I am sure that each of us has encountered people in our lives that, after hearing someone else’s description, have wondered “who is that person?” Believe it or not, the saints in our Franciscan family are not that different. As his feast day approaches on June 13th, Saint Anthony of Padua is one of the most popular and beloved saints, but also one about whom people seem to know so little.

When most people think about our brother Anthony, they know “Anthony, Anthony, Look Around . . . Something’s Lost and Must Be Found!” I learned that prayer when I was very young and it has proven most useful when I have

misplaced things. It wasn’t until I was a Franciscan friar that I realized Saint Anthony was also a Franciscan. What some may not know is that Saint Anthony of Padua was not from Padua. In fact, he wasn’t even from Italy. He was born in Lisbon in 1195 to a wealthy family. Despite being from a wealthy family, Anthony was regularly challenged by God to something new and different. As a young man of 15 years old, Anthony joined the Augustinian Order, giving up his comfortable life of affluence to be a servant of God. Later in his life, as news of the Franciscan protomartyrs reached Anthony’s ears, he was determined to become a Franciscan and devote his life to being a minor friar.

This call from God to be a servant did not end after Anthony joined the friars, but continued to grow and develop. He was known for his outstanding preaching, which is why he is often seen with a book open and Christ nearby. He is also known for being the patron of assisting those who have lost items. This patronage stems from the legend that one of his prized possessions, a psalter with notes and comments, was stolen from him. Noticing it was missing, Anthony began to pray that it would be found. Moved with guilt, the thief returned the stolen book (which is said to be preserved in a friary in Bologna). Additionally, Anthony was also a teacher, teaching in several universities throughout France, and a provincial minister residing, choosing to live in Padua.

Like Anthony, our journey as Franciscans does not end once we have made our vows. Our formation must be constant, ongoing, and

(continued below)

IN-FORMATION

Sr. Marilyn Renninger, OSF
Regional Formation Commission

A Blessed Easter to all! Christ has risen as he said, Alleluia! What a beautiful season we are celebrating, and for fifty days! Our Franciscan hearts are bursting with "alleluias".

In an article I read on St. Francis of Assisi, the question was asked, "Can the Poor Man of Assisi, who bore on his body the wounds of Jesus Crucified, be rightly called an Easter Saint? What do you think?"

We know that it was Francis' great love that led him to ask Christ to grant him to feel in his body the pains of the Passion and to feel in his heart the love which urged Christ to die for us sinners, and God answered his prayer with the Stigmata. For two years Francis bore the wounds of Christ's Passion with a new joy. It was union with the crucified Christ that led to union with the resurrected Christ. For it was after he received the stigmata that he composed the praise prayer called **The Canticle**.

We were saddened as we accompanied Jesus in the Garden and then lived the Passion of the Lord on Good Friday as Jesus experienced **Sister Death**. The next day we waited patiently for the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night. Our hearts again echoed the Canticle composed by St. Francis as we experienced **Brother Fire**, beautiful and playful and robust and strong, lighting up the night with the Light of Christ, and we sang, "Thanks be to God".

Sir **Brother Sun** gave us some spectacular days. He sure is beautiful and radiant with great splendor of God, Most High, of whom he bears likeness. Also, we cannot help but look around in amazement as we see new growth everywhere, and praise **Mother Earth** who is presently producing varied colored flowers for us to enjoy.

Easter is a season of praise, hope and grace. There would be no resurrection if there was no death. I think we can conclude that St. Francis is an Easter Saint, not only because of his words but also his actions. His great love for Christ crucified led him to his Easter triumph. Francis' life and sufferings turned into seeds of resurrection. So too, the trials and sufferings of our lives can lead to resurrected joy.

Let us bask in the glory of Jesus' Resurrection and live these fifty days to its fullest. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Easter blessings of peace and all good! ☩

(Spiritual Assistant's message, cont. from above)

driven by the Holy Spirit. We are called to take our gifts, which differ for everyone, and share them with the world. Anthony's gift was preaching, and he did it well. What gift are you hiding? What token of yourself could you generously share with others? In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus states:

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."

Inspired by Anthony, and our Holy Father Saint Francis, I encourage everyone to continue discerning your gifts and renewing your call to be a servant. Additionally, it is my sincere prayer that we do not get discouraged by the world around us, but that we realize our Gospel message is vitally needed and greatly desired! We are the light that people need, shine my brothers and sisters. Shine brightly!!!

Bro. Marc Sheckells, OFM ☩

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

By Luana Leinhart, OFS

Grace and peace to you in the Lord Jesus! Last month I wrote about the works of mercy and their role in JPIC. Well, here's another opportunity for us to put our faith in action! A dear friend, Br Dave Schwab, is a Capuchin in Milwaukee.

He was the director of the Capuchin Franciscan Volunteer Corps, which recruits young college grads to serve a year in underserved communities, living in homes with other full-time volunteers. I met Brother Dave when I was a Cap Corps volunteer, and we've kept in touch over the years.

Br Dave is participating in the Capuchin Run/Walk for the Hungry this year, as he has every year since its inception. The race benefits the St Benedict Meal, a soup kitchen and medical center serving the poor in Milwaukee. Milwaukee has a high rate of economic disenfranchisement, which disproportionately affects families of color.

Please consider running or walking with us on June 15th, or make a donation to support St Ben's Meal. Sign up for "Team Capuchin" if you want to join Br Dave and me on Milwaukee's lakefront, or start one with your fraternity! Information from the event's website is below:

http://support.thecapuchins.org/site/TR/Events/General?pg=entry&fr_id=1070

Capuchins' Run Walk for the Hungry will be held on Friday, June 16, 2017.

2017 registration is now open for individuals and teams. Register before June 4 to receive the early bird discount. Runners: \$30 Adult, \$20 Child. Walkers: \$25 Adult, \$15 Child. All fees go up \$5 on June 5, 2017.

NEW THIS YEAR:

A new route for the walkers which will include beautiful views of the inner harbor and the Third Ward! And as always, our 5K run is USATF certified and chip timed/scored.

Help feed Milwaukee's hungry and enjoy one that city's top festivals! Every registered participant gets access to Polish Fest for the full run of the festival, June 16-18!

This is the 12th year for the Run Walk event whose proceeds are shared by Capuchin Community Services' two locations: House of Peace and St. Ben's Community Meal.

If you are a registered participant or team captain and have a problem with any part of the registration process, please contact Mel Brunner, Special Events Coordinator at 414.374.8841 x41 or mbrunner@thecapuchins.org (no spaces).

Thank you to last year's 1,850 Run Walk for the Hungry at Polish Fest participants.

Luana 

NOTICE

The Feast of the Portiuncula, will be celebrated on Saturday, August 5th in Mayslake/Oak Brook, Il. Fr. Ed Mackenzie (our new Provincial Spiritual Assistant to the Sacred Heart Province) will be our speaker. The subject and more details will follow. So please mark your calendars and let's make this a great turnout for this annual Franciscan celebration!



St. Francis - St. Louis Fraternity will have a "Day of Recollection" at
The National Shrine of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini
2520 North Lakeview Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614

On Sunday, July 16, 2017 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

All Franciscans, family and friends of the Mother Cabrini Region are invited to join us.

AGENDA

- 10:00 AM Sunday Mass in the Chapel at the National Shrine
(Optional for those who do not attend Sunday Mass at their own Parish)
- 11:00 AM Day of Recollection begins in meeting room in the basement
Opening Prayer, remarks, welcoming and Reflection
- 11:30 AM Small group discussion
- 12:00 PM Break for lunch
- 1:00 PM Presentation "*Laudato si*: and the Care for Creation in Practice"
Including questions and discussion
- 2:30 PM Cleanup of all food items and equipment
- 3:00 PM Dismissal from the National Shrine

The National Shrine has public transportation available with a CTA Bus that stops right at the front door of the Shrine. The Shrine also has free limited underground parking for those attending the National Shrine. All the details and more information about the Shrine can be found at:

<https://www.cabrinationalshrine.org/>

Our "Day of Recollection" will have a "Pot Luck" type of lunch served. For those who are able, we ask that you bring some type of food and/or drinks for the lunch. There is a large Refrigerator available, but there is no Microwave or oven available for the food we bring. For those who want to drive to the Shrine we ask that you car pool within your Fraternity so we will have enough parking spaces available for everyone. There is no reserved parking, and all parking spaces are "first come first served" for everyone who comes to the National Shrine, not just our group.

There will also be a "Free will donation basket" for those attending.