

OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order

www.ilsfo.org

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Please note that the views expressed herein represent those of the individual contributors,
and may or may not reflect the collective view of the Region.

Minister's Message

By Lorna Miressi, OFS

As part of my message for October, I invited each local minister to email me a brief description of one of their fraternity's projects which takes place during the year.

Stephanie Heavey, minister of Northwest Franciscans of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Secular Franciscan Order, sent me the following:

"One of our annual projects is putting together 120 Christmas Bags for the homeless who dine at the Marquard Center. Each gallon size bag contains items that are so handy but not easy to come by on the streets: packages of handwipes, Q-tips, cottonballs, Band-aids, packages of tissues, lip balm, handwarmers, emery boards, combs, pads of paper and pens, small calendar pads, a bag of candies and, of course, tooth brushes, toothpaste, cotton socks. Also included in each bag is a Christmas card and a prayer card from the fraternity.

Fraternity members choose the items which they will purchase and put into "ready to stuff" condition. Large packages of Q-tips, cottonballs, band-aids, etc. are broken down into smaller quantities and placed in snack size plastic bags. All items are brought to the minister's home on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.


On that day, we gather first to celebrate Mass and share Eucharist. Afterward, all enjoy a typical Franciscan potluck dinner with an abundance of food and laughter. An assembly line forms in the family room and the 120 bags are stuffed and readied for delivery to the Marquard Center in early December."

Now, it just so happens that Stephanie's fraternity chose to assist the Marquard Center, a dining center located at Franciscan Outreach in Chicago. I am certain that there are other locations that a fraternity might chose to service. If any fraternity needs assistance in finding an outreach center in need of items for the homeless, just ask or search on line.

As the Advent and Christmas seasons approach, I'm sure that there will be many opportunities to do similar projects like Stephanie's fraternity.

The need is there all the time to be of service to the poor and the homeless in our midst.

Don't forget our next regional gathering at Mayslake Village. On Sunday, November 12th we will celebrate the Feast of Mother Cabrini.

Details were included in our October OFS News (and this edition as well)
Peace, Lorna 

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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

NAFRA Chapter - Date and location TBA

Sunday November 12th Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration - Mayslake

REGIONAL CALENDAR 2018

All events are at Mayslake Village unless otherwise noted

Saturday, January 20th Regional Executive Council Meeting ?*Per Capita/Census/Fraternity reports due*

Saturday March 10th Regional Executive Council Meeting

Sat./Sun. March 17th/18th Candidates' Retreat

Saturday May 19th Chapter of Ministers/ Election of New REC

Summer Seminar, Loretto PA (Date TBA)

Saturday July 14th Regional Executive Council Meeting

Saturday August 4th Regional Gathering - Feast of the Portiuncula

Saturday September 15 Formation Leadership Workshop

NAFRA Chapter - Date and Location TBA

Saturday October 6th Regional Executive Council Meeting

Sunday November 11th Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration - Location TBA


Saturday December Chapter of Elections (Date TBA)

Spiritual Assistant's Message Bro. Marc Sheckells ofm

When I say the word "family," what comes to your mind? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary's first definition of the word family reads, "a group of individuals living under one roof and usually under one head." Perhaps the word family conjures up images of your parents, the people who love and cared for you when you were young. Maybe you think of your children, those whom you love and have cared for when they were young. For many people, family invokes a much larger image. The second definition for family reads, "a group of persons of common ancestry." This larger image may include aunts, uncles, and cousins. Although both of these are correct, it is the third definition of family that I want to comment upon. In its third entry, the dictionary further defines family as, "a group of people united by certain convictions or a common affiliation." In short, what unites people is not solely their blood or their residence, but conviction and affiliation are possible adhesives that bind people into one family. On November 1st, the Solemnity of All Saints, the entire Church will gather to remember those Christian family members who have gone before us marked with a sign of their faith. Like any family, we remember those people who have made a significant contribution

to the group. We look at their pictures, their statutes, and sometimes their relics, as we recall how important they are to us. Additionally, we keep them alive by telling their stories! These saints are not gone and forgotten, but their stories are shared and enjoyed over and over again. These individuals, whom we call saints, provide the entire Church with the tools and motivation needed to keep fighting the good fight. This celebration becomes even more personal on November 2nd, the Feast of All Souls, as we remember the people who directly impacted our lives. We remember it is because of their contributions that we are Christian and baptized into the faithful. These personal saints also inspire us to work toward holiness and to build up the kingdom.

Family is a tough word to precisely define. It means so many different things to so many different people. As we begin to recall those who have gone before us, let us also be inspired to share our blessing and appreciation for those who are still with us. Since I have become the Regional Spiritual Assistant, I am aware that I am now part of the Secular Franciscan family. Together we run the great race and together we share in the joy, pains, and struggles of life. I thank you for allowing me to be a part of your family. Additionally, I give thanks to God for the gifts and talents He allows me to share with you. Who are among the saints in your life that are still living?

As we prepare to celebrate All Saints Day, perhaps today is a good day to help them know how wonderful they are! May your telephone light up, your mailbox be filled, and your bursting email account be a testament to how you have fully lived your Franciscan vocation!!! 

IN-FORMATION

A Season of Creation

By Kristi Loar, OFS

This past September and October we spent time in reflection (and in action) around a seasonal celebration that began on September 1st (World Day of Prayer for Creation) and ended on October 4th (the Feast day of St. Francis). This year our Mother Cabrini Regional Study day and Formation workshop fell on September 16th making this year's 'Season of Creation' a timely workshop theme.

'Jesus was able to invite others to be attentive to the beauty that there is in the world because he himself was in constant touch with nature, lending it an attention full of fondness and wonder. – Pope Francis (Laudato Si', 1997)

Our day began with Sue Gribbon's presentation of 'Bees & Butterflies!' where Sue shared her personal experiences as a bee keeper and caretaker for Monarch butterflies. An encouraging witness to the worth of caring for the tiniest of creation.

Sister Marilyn Renninger followed with presenting 'A Franciscan Vision of Creation' and reminding us that God's immortal spirit is in all things. The OFS Rule (Article 18) instructs us to respect all creatures, animate and inanimate. That we, as Franciscans, are to see the world as a gift from God, and be concerned about the common home for all creation. Sister Marilyn challenged each of us to consider the connection between justice and the environment so to hear both the cry of the Earth, and the cry of the poor. And to reflect upon the question: 'What have we each done personally since the release of Laudato Si?'

Nick Noe presented 'Awareness of Creation & God's Love' using St. Francis' life as example of humility, love, and action – 'for up until now we have done little or nothing'. Nick provided encouragement on becoming 'Ecologically Converted Franciscans' by gaining a better understanding of the Franciscan view of

creation as given to us by Francis, Bonaventure and Duns Scotus; by looking at creation both nature and humanity with a contemplative gaze and with the eyes of the heart; and by living our Rule more deeply, with more intention, and with a higher level of consciousness. Nick printed out the lyrics to the song 'What a Wonderful World'; and in a moment of inspiration, Jerry Stecker sang to us with a voice so deep and beautiful.

As a group we brainstormed some terrific ideas on how we can become more actively engaged as local and regional fraternities:

- Greater presence in parish and local community events as individuals, and as fraternities
- Wear our Tau in public
- Engage in parish or community activities that promote opportunities for spiritual dialogue; even with strangers
- Look for new ways to live the 'Franciscan' life
- Prayerfully consider leadership roles in the Secular Franciscan Order as our religious provinces become smaller; Spiritual Assistants, local/regional/national Council members, etc

It was a joy to have so many fraternities represented and interacting throughout the day. A special thank you to Father Ed McKenzie, Brother Marc Sheckells, Sister Marilyn Renninger, Nick Noe, and Sue Gribbon for their inspiring words. As a pillar of our Franciscan Spirituality, the theme of 'Creation' is fitting for celebration of our amazing universe.

'Good God, creator of the world, draw us into prayer and celebration as we reflect upon the gifts of your earth and the stewardship you have entrusted to us. Let your Holy Spirit stir us, and move us, and give us courage to remember that all good gifts come first from you.'

"Yes, I think to myself, What a wonderful world!"
Peace,
Kristi ☒

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

By Luana Leinhart, OFS

Grace and peace to you in the Lord Jesus! I've often considered changing my name to "Lu-Ah-na". It's the phonetic spelling of my given name, and would save me the trouble of constantly correcting people when they call me "Lu-Anna", but then it wouldn't be the beautiful Hawaiian word my mother heard and loved when she wanted just the right name for me.

I'm an adjunct at DePaul University, and I had a Hawaiian student during the summer term, and hearing him say my name was like beautiful music. If you're thinking that's rather silly, please be assured that my name is mispronounced every day of my life, even after I've politely corrected people and said it aloud myself.

Several times. I can't tell you how many times I've had a student with a name they love, that represents their heritage, or honored family member who's said, "I know my name's hard to say, so you can call me "Bob", "Kate" or other more Anglo-sounding name. When I tell the student that I want to call them by their proper name, they always look like I've given them the sun.

Our names are intrinsically linked to our identities, and we should consider the message we send when we don't actively try to learn a person's name. I like to write my students' names out phonetically and I check in with them to make sure I'm saying it correctly.

Even if I'm still wrong, they know I'm trying, and that their name, their identity, and personhood are important to me.

When we don't take the time and effort to learn someone's name, we send the message that they're not important, or not important enough to make the effort. Or that their name is too foreign; too 'other' for us to be bothered. And trust me, that hurts. A lot. At best you're 'foreign' and at worst, invisible. We don't go through life trying to hurt others, but sometimes we do, whether it was our intention or not. And a person's dignity matters more than our good intentions.

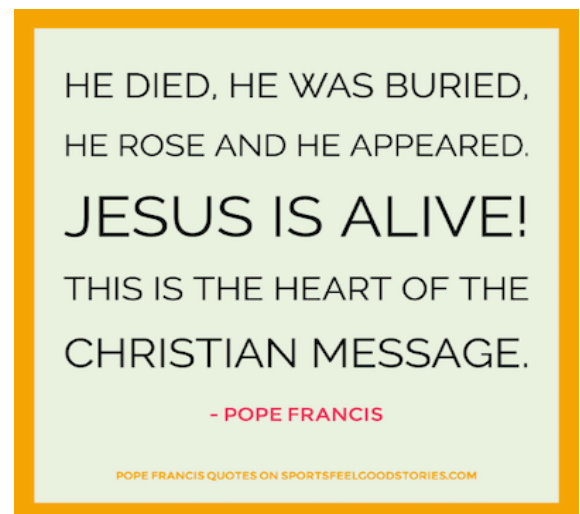
A recent study showed that children in all age and ethnic groups have a greater sense of belonging and positive relationships in their classrooms when their teachers learn their names. This leads to a greater rate of positive outcomes in every area they measured. If the teacher makes the effort, the students will follow their example. When they don't, the students don't. At worse, they bully the students with the 'weird names'. You can read more about that here:

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

and here:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/a-teacher-mispronouncing-a-students-name-can-have-a-lasting-impact>

Learning someone's name is an act of charity. I know it means the world to me. A small effort can yield a massive reward, and in this case, it honors someone's family, history, and dignity. Let's please take the time to be charitable in all ways, starting with this one. 📖





**Mother Cabrini Regional
Secular Franciscan
Order Feast Day
Celebration**

**Sunday, Nov. 12, 2017
10:00 am to 3:30 pm**

**Mayslake Village
1801 35th Street
Oak Brook, IL 60523**

Join your Sisters and Brothers as we joyfully and prayerfully celebrate the 100th anniversary of St. Frances Cabrini's meeting with Sister Death, which occurred on December 22, 1917, in Chicago.

Mother Cabrini, who founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, had her heart set on being a missionary in China. Instead, the Pope suggested that she "go West, not East" and serve the impoverished Italian immigrants who were flooding the United States. In joyful obedience to the successor of Peter, she became an immigrant on March 31, 1889, when she arrived in New York and began her work with her immigrant brothers and sisters. She was naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 1909.

She encountered much opposition, disappointment and difficulties, yet remained faithful to her mission. In the 28 years until her death, she founded 67 orphanages, schools and hospitals in the United States and South America, before succumbing to dysentery, and dying at Columbus Hospital, which she founded, in Chicago.

Only 21 years later, Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini was beatified on November 13, 1938, after restoring the sight of a baby who had been blinded at birth by an overdose of silver nitrate. The child, Peter Smith, was present at her canonization eight years later, on July 7, 1946, and became a priest.

Registration:	10:00 am
Convocation:	10:30 am
Mass and Rite of Remembrance:	2:00 pm
Departure:	3:30 pm

VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION on page 2

PARKING/CARPOOLING

There will be a 10:30 am Sunday Mass for the residents of Mayslake.

Do not park in front of the chapel or along the driveway leading to it; it is reserved for the residents attending Mass.

Drive past the chapel area to the back of Frigo Hall and there will be parking behind the residences. While there will be sufficient parking, **please consider carpooling as there can be a bit of a distance to walk from the parking areas to the west entrance to Frigo Hall.**

Those less able to walk such distances can be dropped off at the entrance.

FRIGO HALL, MAYSLAKE

Registration will be in Frigo Hall and all the day's festivities will be held in Frigo Hall, with the exception of Mass and the Rite of Remembrance in the afternoon. Direct entrance to Frigo Hall should be made from the west entrance to the building.

POTLUCK

The Mayslake facilities DO NOT have electrical outlets, ovens or refrigeration that would allow us to have a potluck luncheon with dishes that need to be kept hot or cold until lunchtime. A catered lunch will be provided to all attendees.

In the morning, there will be coffee, hot water for tea and bottles of water available. Each fraternity is invited to bring one "morning munchie" item, such as muffins, specialty breads, bagels which will be shared with our brothers and sisters.

R.S.V.P.

Please RSVP to Cecilia Vilorio Schneider, OFS, at by **Monday, October 30, 2017**, with the number of people attending from your fraternity and the type of baked goods your fraternity plans to bring.

Thank You.