

## Minister's Message: August Gathering Approaches

by Stephanie Sormane, SFO

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Wow, half the year is over already and the time for our Franciscan Gathering is fast approaching! Hope it's already marked on your calendar – **August 4 (Saturday)**, at Mayslake Village. Flyers are being mailed out, and see the related article on page 3 for full information.

We're welcoming back Fr. Ferd Cheri, OFM and the Althoff Gospel Crusaders – that great choir of 50 high school students from Belleville, IL. Everyone enjoyed them so much in 2005; we feel very fortunate that they could come back again this year.

Fr. Ferd will celebrate Mass and direct the choir, as well as give a special address entitled "The Feast of the Portiuncula: Our Lady of the Angels: Its Place in Our Franciscan Spirituality, Tradition, and Youth

Ministry." Remember, this Franciscan Gathering has always celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of the Angels and always takes place on the Saturday closest to August 2, the Feast Day. The celebration is taking on special significance as we approach the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Franciscan Order, which will occur in 2009. Remember, the Order's birthplace was the Portiuncula in Assisi!

The Franciscan Gathering is always the *best* event at which to bring family and friends – and anyone who may be even remotely interested in learning more about the SFO or Franciscans in general. We pray, we listen, we eat, and we're entertained – a great mix, lots of fun, not too serious. Think about who you'd like to bring!

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## Spiritual Assistant's Message

by Fr. Don Blaeser, OFM

I want to tell you about a very exciting event that just took place. From June 18 to 21, friars from four of our O.F.M. Provinces met together at the Marriott Hotel in Racine, WI to listen to presentations, discuss, and pray together. There were about 1/3 of the friars present from each of Assumption of the BVM, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sacred Heart, and St. John the Baptist provinces.

The focus of the gathering was on our interprovincial collaboration. We were creative, imaginative, and daring. We said, let's not wait for the future to happen to us, let's chart our course and plan for our future. Let's do more together, and consider the possibility of one day restructuring ourselves into one province.

I have to say that for me personally, this was delightful. But then I have had the advantage

of working for seven years in an interprovincial setting. From 1993 to 2000 I was on the staff of the interprovincial novitiate, San Damiano Friary, in Cedar Lake, IN. That novitiate accepted novices from these same four provinces as well as from vice-provinces and custodies. We were equal partners in the venture, and I found it to be a richly rewarding experience. During my years there, we worked well together, and the novices had the broader experience of seeing themselves as members of the whole Franciscan Order, and not just a given province.

Also, I was able to travel to different friaries belonging to other provinces, and many friars from all over paid visits to the

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*Councilor for Youth/  
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Sandra Kisel, SFO

## Spiritual Assistant

Fr. Donald Blaeser, OFM

**Newsletter Editor**

Lisa Wathen, SFO

The SFO 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.**

### Events of Interest

**July 22–28:** Franciscan-run parish St. Clare of Montefalco, 2640 W. 55<sup>th</sup> St., Chicago, is holding a Eucharistic Conference from 6–9:30 p.m. each night. For more information, contact Sandra Kisel, SFO.

**August 2–8:** The Portiuncula Center for Prayer in Frankfort is holding a conference, “Franciscan Gateway to Interreligious Experience,” from 7 p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Thursday) through noon on the 8<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday). Costs are \$325 single occupancy, \$275 double occupancy, \$200 commuter. For more information, email Sister Corrina Thomas, FSPA at 815.469.4883.

**August 5:** Marytown is hosting “Love Alone Creates,” the annual Kolbe Award Banquet at University of St. Mary of the Lake/ Mundelein Seminary in Libertyville. The event will start at 2:30 p.m. with Mass, followed by cocktails and a silent auction, then dinner and the award ceremony. Costs are \$100 per person, \$800 per table. This year's recipient is Br. Camillus Dulude, OFM CONV.; Fr. Thomas Euteneuer, President of Human Life International, is the keynote speaker. For tickets, call 847.367.7432 on or before July 20.

**August 18 & 25:** Marytown in Libertyville is holding a 2-part Day of Reflection series: “Mary, Mother of the Eastern Church” (18<sup>th</sup>), directed by Fr. Ephrem Cramer, OFM CONV., and “On the Eastern Church” (25<sup>th</sup>), directed by Fr. Thomas Loya, from 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. both days. The veneration of our Blessed Mother as it is experienced through the Eastern traditions will be explored.

Cost is \$35 per person, each day, which includes continental breakfast and lunch. For more information, call 847.367.7800, Ext. 225

## Around the Region

**Northwest Franciscan Community of the IHM (Palatine).** At their June gathering, lay missionary nurse Teresa Kostuk shared her story of missionary work among the poor, sick, and suffering in Nigeria.

Following her talk, the fraternity presented her with a check for \$50, which will be used to purchase much-needed medical supplies for those Ms. Kostuk serves.

**St. Bernardine of Siena Fraternity (Wayne).** On June 23, the fraternity's Ecology Apostolate held a “Prairie Path Clean-Up and Fellowship” in which members cleaned up a portion of the Great Western Trail in north central DuPage County, then shared a picnic lunch.

Once an old freight railroad line, the path was converted into an 11.5 mile, multi-use recreational trail that runs from Villa Park to West Chicago.

**St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity (Libertyville).** All are invited to attend the fraternity's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, which will include Mass, followed by a reception.

- **Date:** August 12 (Sunday)
- **Location:** Marytown  
1600 W. Park Ave.,  
Libertyville
- **RSVP By:** July 1 (Saturday)

For more information or to RSVP, contact Muriel Baum, SFO. ☐



## 2007 Minister's/Formation Directors Workshop Report

by Stephanie Sormane, SFO

First, it was agreed to change the workshop's name from the “Minister's/Formation Director's Workshop” to “**Leadership Workshop!**”

We had an excellent turnout: nearly 50 attendees—representing 18 fraternities—which included 9 from the Regional Executive Council. Rosemary Zimmerman, SFO presented all the formation workshops throughout the day. Lisa Wathen, SFO spoke on communication, and Sandy Kisel, SFO on youth and young adults.

My offering was Leadership 101, during which an excellent dialog among those present developed, so some of what I planned to present had to be omitted for lack of time. Therefore, I'm including a capsulated version of what couldn't be presented, as well as information on recommended materials:

- **Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership.** Each Fraternity should have a copy, which has just been revised and is available for \$25 through NAFRA (see the inside back cover of any *TAU-USA* issue).
- **Council Job Descriptions.** In the *Minister's Reference Manual*, under Tab Y, see Articles

51-52 of the *General Constitutions*. Use these as the basis from which to adapt your fraternity's council job descriptions to meet your needs.

- **Minister's Reference Manual.** Ministers need to become familiar with this! It's filled with valuable information. I have the impression that many don't realize all the assistance available within the *Manual*. Spend a couple of hours really going through it—you'll be glad you did!
- **Minister's Manual Updates in Progress.** Some information in the *Manual* is out of date—mainly contacts—which will be updated at the 2008 Chapter of Ministers. In the meantime, use the newly-issued red *Regional Directory* for contact information—the entire Regional Executive Council is listed at the front.

Because we ran out of time, we were unable to hold the fourth set of workshops. Mine would have been on vocations and what we can do to encourage them—much too big a topic to cover here—so we'll try to address that in August! ☐

## Treasurer and Budget Updates

### New Treasurer Appointed

Stephen Lanterman, SFO of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity (Frankfort) has agreed to serve as Regional Treasurer, replacing Bob Spinozzi, SFO. Stephen has been working with Rosemary Zimmerman, SFO on formation, and in that capacity has attended at least one Regional Executive Council meeting.

We greatly appreciate Stephen taking on this new responsibility.

### Proposed Budget for 2007-08

The proposed Regional Budget was distributed to fraternity ministers present at the Leadership Workshop on June 16. It was unanimously approved by those ministers present, which constituted a majority of the Region. However, copies are being sent to those ministers who were not present.

If any ministers have questions about the budget, please contact Stephanie Sormane, SFO. ☐

## Feast of Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula

As mentioned in this month's "Minister's Message" (see page 1), our annual Regional Gathering is fast approaching. You and your family, friends, and any interested individuals are cordially invited to attend our celebration of the **Feast of Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula!**

- **Date:** August 4 (Saturday)
- **Location:** Mayslake Village  
1801 35th St., Oak Brook
- **Times:** 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
- **Cost:** Lunch is \$15 per person; however, you're welcome to bring your own lunch.
- **RSVP By:** July 22 (Sunday)

*Fraternity ministers:* Please contact Chris Bruhnke, SFO with the total number of attendees from your fraternity no later than July 22 (Sunday). It will be particularly helpful if each fraternity minister, or a delegate, would make one call or email for the entire fraternity, as calls from individual attendees can become quite overwhelming.

### Schedule Overview

- 8:00 a.m.: Registration
- 9:00 a.m.: Mass in the Chapel
- 10:00 a.m.: Continental Breakfast
- 10:30 a.m.: Fr. Fernand Cheri, OFM
- 11:45 a.m.: Lunch
- 1:15 p.m.: Althoff Gospel Crusaders
- 2:30 p.m.: Evening Prayer and Closing

### General Information and Parking

All events will be inside at Mayslake Village. The day will begin and end in the Chapel; lunch will be in the Senior Center.

While there is some construction going on at Mayslake Village, there will be ample parking space available.

### About the Speaker

A member of Sacred Heart Province of the Order of Friars Minor, Fr. Fernand J. Cheri, III, OFM, is the Director of the Althoff Gospel Crusaders of Althoff Catholic High School in Belleville, IL. Fr. Cheri has served in parish ministry and taught in high schools throughout the country. He holds a M.Div. degree from Notre Dame Seminary (New Orleans) and M.A. in theology from Xavier University of Louisiana. His deep interest in black sacred music is reflected not only in the topic of his master's thesis, *Song of the Soul and the Soil*, but also in his archive of some 5,300 recordings of gospel music and files of gospel sheet music.

Fr. Cheri's address will focus on "The Feast of the Portiuncula: Our Lady of the Angels: Its Place in our Franciscan Spirituality, Tradition and Youth Ministry."

### About the Choir

The 50-member Althoff Gospel Crusaders have earned high praises as ambassadors of faith and dedication to God, having performed throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area. ☐

## Living the Gospel of Life

"Contrary to a popular myth, the Living Will did not spring from a patient's rights movement fed up with overzealous and unwanted treatment being 'forced' on terminally ill patients. Rather, the Living Will was invented by the 'right to die' movement as a step toward legalization of euthanasia. Few people are aware of this fact. Yet knowing the history of the movement to legalize euthanasia (and assisted suicide) is essential to understanding and combating the Culture of Death.

"The Euthanasia Society of America (ESA) [renamed Society for the Right to Die in 1975] was founded in New York in 1938. Its goal was to gain social and legal acceptance for the 'right' to kill vulnerable human beings (people the organization called 'mental defectives' and 'incurables'). In 1939, ESA proposed legislation for 'voluntary' euthanasia. ... In a pamphlet entitled 'Merciful Release', ESA explained its strategy: 'The public is readier to recognize the right to die than the right to kill, even though the latter be in mercy.'"

~ Julie Grimstad, "The Living Will Boondoggle", 15-May-07, *MichNews.com*

"What the Church has said is that because it is the first gift from a loving God and the condition for all other human goods, all our other rights—life itself has to be a top priority. It is the most basic gift, and if we lose the right to live we lose everything else."

~ Richard Doerflinger, Deputy Director of the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

## Calendar

Note: The NAFRA General Chapter will be held in September or October; TBD.

### July

- 1: RSVPs due for 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity
- 3-8: National Quinquennial Congress Radisson-Green Tree, Pittsburgh, PA
- 14: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m., Mayslake Village
- 22: RSVPs due for Regional Gathering, Feast of the Portiuncula

### August

- 04: Regional Gathering, Feast of the Portiuncula, Mayslake Village
- 12: 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, 12 p.m. Marytown, Libertyville

### October

- 12-14: Regional Retreat, Marytown
- 20: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m., Mayslake Village

### November

- 11: Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration, hosted by St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity (Fox Valley) at St. Patrick Parish, 6N491 Crane Rd., St. Charles

**Minister** *continued from p. 1 ...*

The Althoff Choir will be very appealing to youth as well as to adults, so please spread the word at your parishes and encourage your youth groups to attend. It's important that we find creative ways to expose youth to Franciscan spirituality, not only for the positive impact on their lives, but also in the hopes that one day they may consider becoming Franciscans themselves, as seculars or religious. This is a great opportunity to do just that!

We do ask that you let us know by **July 22 (Sunday)** how many will be coming so we have enough food. We never want to turn anyone away, but when people RSVP only 1-2 days before an event, it's too late to change the catering order and we sometimes run out of food. On the other hand, ordering extra and then having lots left over isn't good either. So please, help us plan well by letting us know who's coming by July 22.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Gathering on August 4! 📅

**Assistant** *continued from p. 1 ...*

novitiate. So, there was the opportunity to get to know many of the friars from other entities.

As you can imagine, there is some hesitation, some fearfulness, and many questions surrounding the idea of ever forming one province. In addition to the practical issues, which are many, there are simply the traditions and ethnic differences, the rich histories and colorful stories about our members, and the anticipation of loosing much of that richness.

We're looking at both a birthing and a dying, and the two are so intermingled as to prompt everyone to say, let's be careful, let's go slowly, but let's keep going.

It's enough for you to just be aware of this, since most of you are bonded to a province of O.F.M. friars. But I believe there is also an application we can make to the Secular Franciscan Order. What happened some years ago with "regionalization" in the S.F.O. was a very similar experience.

Yes, there were losses. But the result is that there is a new awareness of being members, not just of a single fraternity, or even being bonded to a Conventual or O.F.M. or T.O.R. province, but of belonging to the wider Franciscan Order which is worldwide! There is a wonderful richness that we experience when we see ourselves as part of that magnificent global picture.

Another way I experienced this myself was when I went on the Assisi Pilgrimage in 1977. After the pilgrimage was over, I traveled around on my own in Italy and Germany, and when I knocked on the doors of friaries and introduced myself, they welcomed me, let me eat at their table, drink their booze, and spend the night. It gave me a powerful experience of the acceptance, indeed, the love that is shared simply as a result of being a Franciscan.

If you haven't experienced that wider dimension of membership in the Franciscan Order, I hope you find such an occasion soon. This helps us to deepen our commitment, and to resolve to do all that we can to lend ourselves to the common effort – to live the Rule that we have professed: To live the Gospel of Jesus Christ wholeheartedly in the Franciscan spirit.

May God bless you in your efforts to be lovers of Christ and of all our sisters and brothers, as were our founders, Francis and Clare of Assisi. 📅