

## Minister's Message

By Vickie Klick, SFO

Dear brothers and sisters,

At this time of year when our fraternities are asking us to contribute a little more to help pay the "fair share" of the expenses of the Order, I think it is appropriate to briefly review what this contribution is about AND what it provides each of us in the Order. The basis for it comes from Article 25 of the Rule:

*Regarding expenses necessary for the life of the fraternity and the needs of worship, of the apostolate, and of charity, all the brothers and sisters should offer a contribution according to their means. Local fraternities should contribute toward the expenses of the higher fraternity councils.*

Please note that the local fraternities, not individuals, contribute toward the expenses of the higher fraternity councils (that is, the regional, national, and international fraternities). While we each are reminded to help our fraternities meet this obligation, it isn't a matter of each person paying "dues" of \$25 apiece. Rather, it's approximately what the expenses for the higher levels of fraternity work out to per person - all are to contribute "according to their means" in order to make up the amount needed on a fraternity by fraternity basis.

The "fair share", then, is the means for supporting the higher levels of fraternity. What do you get for that? Here are a few examples. At the regional level, of course, we have events such as the gathering for the feast of the Portiuncula, the Mother Cabrini celebration (refreshments are partially underwritten by the Region), the Leadership Workshop and so forth. The *SFO News*, the regional website, and vocation and apostolic activities are also supported by each fraternity's contributions.

The most visible sign of how our money is spent nationally is the *TAU-USA*. What a blessing for us to have this fine publication!

All professed members should be receiving TAU-USA quarterly (fraternity ministers, please contact me with names and addresses of any professed members who are *not* receiving TAU-USA). Those who are not professed can visit the NAFRA website ([www.nafra-sfo.org](http://www.nafra-sfo.org)) to read the newsletter in its entirety or article by article.

On the international level, formation has been identified as the #1 priority for the Order. CIOFS, the International Presidency, has developed initial formation materials for use worldwide, which are being adapted for our needs by the National Formation Commission. You will also be seeing some communications about the new materials for ongoing formation from International.

These are some of the concrete benefits you derive from your "fair share" contributions. The fact is that at each level of fraternity, we have Secular Franciscans coming together to deal with the challenges we face, to set goals for the future, and in general to "animate and guide" our Order. Each of our fraternities is helping to fund that vital work for the future of the Order. Please contribute as you are able to help your fraternity make up its fair share.

This is an appropriate place to mention that The National Fraternity voted to donate \$1000 from its donor fund to help the people of Haiti through Catholic Relief Services. Our Region will be adding \$200 to that sum. Please remember the people of Haiti, both now and in the months and years to come, as they work to rebuild their country.

May the Lord's peace be with you and all those dear to you.

Vickie 

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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.

**CALENDAR**

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

*\* Election & Visitation dates subject to change.*

**February**

**14:** Elections, St. Bernardine Siena

**March**

- 01:** Fair Share, Census, and Annual Reports due
- 07:** Elections St. Mary of the Angels at the Port
- 14:** Visitation, St. Maximillian Kolbe
- 21:** Visitation, St. Anthony of Padua, East Side
- 27:** Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.

**April**

- 10:** Candidates' Retreat, Day 1
- 11:** Elections St. Francis St. Louis

**May**

- 01:** Candidates' Retreat, Day 2
- 15:** Chapter of Ministers
- 16:** Visitation, Nuestra Sra. de Guadalupe

**June**

- 26:** Elections, St. Clare Kankakee

**July**

- 10:** Leadership Workshop
- 17:** Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 18:** Elections, St. Francis Assisi Crystal Lake
- 25:** Elections, St. Anthony of Padua, Rockford

**August**

- 07:** Regional Gathering, Feast of the Portiuncula

**September**

- 11:** Elections, St. Anthony Padua, Joliet
- 17-19:** Regional Retreat, The Port, Frankfort
- 26:** Elections, St. Francis of Assisi, Steger
- 26:** Visitation, St. Anthony Padua, Oak Lawn

**October**

- 3:** Elections, Living Waters Korean Fraternity
- 16:** Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 26-31:** NAFRA Meeting

**November**

- 14:** Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration (*location TBD*)

**Spiritual Assistant's Message**

by Br. Joe Middleton, OFM

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Here we are, deep into Winter once again where we are somewhat restricted by the cold climate and the limited sunlight. All of this is familiar to us in our region of the country. These conditions can be frustrating and potentially depressing arising from situations such as cabin fever, bruises from falling, or the reality of isolation. However, instead of focusing on the negatives, let's look at where we are from a different perspective; one that is more optimistic and hopeful.

It seems to me that Winter offers us a perfect opportunity to embrace a spirit of prayer and contemplation. Consider how inviting it is to gaze into a bright warm fireplace, or how comforting it is to prepare a hearty soup, or how delightful it is to wrap yourself in a blanket as you enjoy the sight of snow falling like God's love on everything. All of these occasions, and so many others, offer us golden opportunities to ponder and consider our lives, our Franciscan vocations, our relationship to God, our history.

Now, consider this. I find it interesting as I ponder the current entries in the Proper Offices of Franciscan Saints and Blesseds in the Liturgy of the Hours (which is published by the English-speaking conference of the Order of Friars Minor) that there are two memorials in place to honor Franciscan martyrs.

The first on January 16th is in honor of Berard, the priest and companions who were the first disciples of Saint Francis to be martyred. In 1220 they were chained, cruelly tortured and finally condemned in Marrakech, Morocco. These excellent friars and their companions came to be known as the Protomartyrs. I encourage you to

explore and share this story with your community.

Then on February 6th we honor Peter Baptist, Paul Miki and their companions, who incidentally were lay Franciscans. These courageous people achieved the crown of martyrdom on February 5, 1597 in Nagasaki. This important Franciscan story which takes place in Feudal Japan is filled with tension, danger and intrigue as well as history. This sorrowful and brutal episode demonstrates how cultural clashes have resulted in tragedy. Explore their story and share what surfaces with your fraternity and faith community.

I pray that during these Winter months you all may grow deeper in faith, understanding and knowledge as you read and share stories of Franciscan development throughout evangelical history. ☒

**Around the Region**

The Saint Anthony of Padua [East] Fraternity is sponsoring a Day of Recollection on Sunday February 21, 2010 from 9:30 to 4:30. The theme is "The Year of the Priest and Saint Francis of Assisi." Father Ildephonse will give several presentations. The cost is \$10.00 that covers breakfast and lunch and resources. The fraternity meets at St. Francis de Sales Parish Hall at 10211 Ewing Ave., Chicago, IL. Contact [sfnews@ilsfo.org](mailto:sfnews@ilsfo.org) if interested in attending. All SFO members or friends are invited. ☒

**Prayer for Vocations**

LORD, JESUS, we ask you to send more servants to your people. Choose from our parishes, from our homes, from our schools and colleges, an abundant harvest of apostles for your Kingdom: priests, sisters, brothers, deacons and lay ministers. We pray that those you call may never lose awareness of the dignity and need of their vocation.

O Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, teach to all those the Master calls to say a joyful "yes" as you did at the Annunciation. Amen. (Source: USCCB.org) ☒

## In-Formation

By Patrick Mendes, SFO  
Regional Formation Director

This is my first monthly column as your newly elected Regional Formation Director. I am honored to return to the position I held from 1997 to 2000.

We are in an exciting period of our Secular Franciscan Lives as our General Presidency leads the way to a standardized approach to Initial Formation as well as offering all of the National Fraternities some excellent on-going formation materials. Specific information on these materials has been sent to each of the local fraternities and I urge you all to take advantage of this great opportunity.

Looking ahead to this year, first on my agenda is to assemble our Regional Formation Commission (Team).

Coming up very soon, is the Region's annual Candidates' Retreat, done in our customary format of two Saturdays – a month apart. This year the dates are April 10 and May 1. I urge our candidates across the Region to mark your calendars and reserve the dates now. Specific information will be sent to the local fraternity ministers and formation directors very shortly.

Our Regional Leadership workshop, which will take place on July 10, will be filled with all of the latest information that has come from Rome as well as from our National Formation Commission on the work being done with International Standardization of Initial Formation as well as other leadership and development issues so vital to our life and growth.

After having served 3 years as National Minister I am delighted to return to our Region and serve in this time of growth in our formation processes. If I can be of help to any of you, feel free to contact me.

I am looking forward to seeing you as we gather about the Region. ☒

## Some Changes Regarding Apostolates/JPIC

by Stephanie Sormane, SFO  
Councilor for JPIC

As we have been discussing over the last year, the area in which we address how we live the Rule in our daily lives has officially changed from "Apostolates" to "JPIC" (which stands for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation). The other branches of the Franciscan Family use "JPIC" and the SFO are joining in that common terminology.

At its gathering on January 16 the Regional Executive Council agreed to cancel the Apostolic Action Workshop previously scheduled for Saturday, March 20, for the year 2010. In its place, Stephanie Sormane, the new JPIC Councilor, will be contacting each fraternity in the Region to arrange a meeting at a regular fraternity gathering to discuss the new vision for JPIC, a thorough understanding of the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) and how each and every SFO in our Region needs to become an active participant in activities spearheaded by NAFRA and FAN. Stay tuned for more news in this area! ☒

## Franciscans International Rep Here March 6

by Stephanie Sormane, SFO

On Saturday, March 6, 2010, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Mayslake Village, Heather Metcalfe of Franciscans International will be here to speak about FI's work at the United Nations and elsewhere and how we as Secular Franciscans can help. This is an important opportunity and all are welcome to attend. A letter will be going out to all Ministers with more details but we wanted to give you this head's up since we've just received confirmation from Heather. It would be wonderful if there could be a representative from each fraternity in the Region. It's just an hour-and-a-half and well worth our time! ☒

## Interesting Read....

On January 13, Pope Benedict addressed in his general audience spoke about the Mendicant orders in a speech called "*The Proposal of a 'Lay Sanctity' Won Many People*". It is a very well written speech on the values of lay movements then and now. The link to the speech is [www.zenit.org/article-28044?l=english](http://www.zenit.org/article-28044?l=english) ☒

## Professions

**Stephanie Heavey, SFO** and **Deacon Louis Riccio, SFO** of Northwest Franciscan Community of the IHM (Palatine) made their Professions on January 11. ☒

## NAFRA Donation for Haiti – How you can help:

NAFRA recently sent two checks to Catholic Relief Services for Haiti Relief. If you would like to support this effort the information is below.

On Jan. 19, 2010 a check for \$1,000.00 from our Donor Fund was sent to Catholic Relief Service for the Haiti disaster.

On Sunday, Jan. 24, 2010 another check for \$3,390.00 to CRS from the donations that I have received in the last week. Thank you for your generosity for the Haiti Disaster.

Keep sending to me your donations for Haiti Disaster. Remember the check should be made payable to NAFRA and the comment line on the lower left should state "For Haiti Relief".


Mail the check to:  
Dennis Ross, SFO  
8933 Trailwood Court  
Mentor, Ohio 44060-2131

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## Mark Your Calendars – National Vocations Conference, St. Patrick Catholic Church, St. Charles, IL March 4-7, 2010

The 8th annual **HERE I AM LORD** National Vocations Conference will take place March 4-7, 2010.

The conference was founded in 2003 to address the need of vocation awareness. The vocations of marriage, single life, religious life and the priesthood are all vocations in the eyes of God and the Church! **HERE I AM LORD** provides an opportunity for young people and adults of all ages to recognize that fact. The largest parish-based vocations conference in the United States brings together Religious from across the country to share the JOY of their vocation. The best Catholic speakers and musicians join to share the JOY of their vocation and faith.

Members of the St. Francis Fox Valley Fraternity will be staffing a booth at the Conference to encourage vocations to the SFO. If anyone is interested in helping out please contact Gloria Huerta at [pr@ilsfo.org](mailto:pr@ilsfo.org). The link to the event website is [www.hereiamlord.net/vocation\\_national.php](http://www.hereiamlord.net/vocation_national.php) 

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## Introducing your SFO News Editor

By Gloria Huerta, Councilor for PR and Communications

Greetings! My name is Gloria Huerta and I am assuming the role of *SFO News* Editor for a second term. Many of you know who I am but for those who don't, here's a little info about me.

I currently live in Wheaton, IL with my husband, Ron. I belong to the St. Francis Fox Valley Fraternity in St. Charles, IL and am currently Vice Minister and just finished a term as Secretary. As a way of giving back, for the past three years I have participated in a Computer Literacy program sponsored by the Peoples' Resource Center in Wheaton, IL.

For the past six months I have been unemployed but have been fortunate enough to find another job and begin a new career on February 1. I look forward with eager anticipation to the year ahead.

As I have stressed previously the *SFO NEWS* is YOUR newsletter. In order for this to be a "regional" newsletter there needs to be news FROM the region. If your fraternity is sponsoring a presentation, having a day of reflection or doing something else interesting (particularly if it relates to ministry) please be sure to send this news along. You never know who you might inspire by your fraternity's good works.

Finally, any of you reading this who are your fraternity's newsletter editor, please be sure to start forwarding your fraternity's newsletters either by email or snail mail to me. My email address is [pr@ilsfo.org](mailto:pr@ilsfo.org). If you need my home address either email or call me at 630-690-0535.

I look forward to hearing from you and for serving as your newsletter editor. 