

# OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the  
Secular Franciscan Order

[www.ilsfo.org](http://www.ilsfo.org)

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## Minister's Message

by Vickie Klick, OFS

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am writing this column two weeks after the end of the Quinquennial Congress. It was a huge event, with some 600 Secular Franciscans, friars, sisters, and others in attendance – the most at any of the four Qs I've been to. (However, the program's history of the Quinquennials shows that the first Q in Chicago was much larger, with thousands attending. It's hard to imagine!)

Our Minister General, Encarnita del Pozo, came from Spain; our Vice Minister General, Doug Clorey, came from Prince Edward Island in Canada; one of our general spiritual assistants, Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR came from Mexico. We even had a couple of Poor Clares join us! As for our region, we were distinguished by the largest number of members present (44 of us came for a day or more) – I wish even more of you had been able to come! We were also distinguished by the longest professed member present – Mary Ceil McManus of St. Anthony, Oak Lawn has been professed 67 years! The runner-up was former National Vice-Minister, Marie Amore, who has been professed 65 years.

These statistics give you a glimpse of the scope of the Q. However, the numbers are not the important part. As has been the case at the other Qs I have been to, the small "Q fraternities" are where the real action was. It is where we reflected on the presentations by Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF, Br. Bill Short, OFM, Ed Shirley, OFS, and Pat Brandwein-Ball, OFS. It is where we built relationships and learned more about the different ways people live the Secular Franciscan life around the United States. It is where we reflected on the last full day of the Q about what God was saying to us as individuals and as an Order in the United States through all of the events of the week. We shared our thoughts about the role of the Order with our national leadership. Our National Minister, Deacon Tom Bello, OFS, synthesized our thoughts into a final presentation before the closing Mass. You can read a summary of his remarks at <http://www.quinquennial.org/2012/07/be-who-we-are-in-all-we-do-leader-sums.html>.

What did I personally bring home from the Q? First and foremost, a sense of God's love for me. Truly this is a grace and answer to prayers, and something which, if I can hold onto it, will – *must* – change my life. Second, I had a deep sense of peace which persisted for several days after I came home. Third, as always when I am with my brothers and sisters, I have a strong sense of being part of a large family; when we are at our best, we are very, very good.

Beyond the personal, the Quinquennial gave me renewed hope for the future of the Secular Franciscan Order as the leaven hidden throughout the world which can and will transform it. We need to continue working on instilling that sense of mission within the world in all of our members and those in formation; our mission to show the world the possibilities of a "community of love" as Blessed John Paul II described us; our mission to build bridges and be peacemakers, to live our vocation in everything that we do. We will all hear much more about our opportunities to make a difference in the world in the months and years to come.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you whose hard work helped to make the Quinquennial a success. It was a challenge for the planning team and the hotel to make the logistics work for so many people, and the extreme heat of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July week didn't help. Your sacrifice of time and effort is truly an act of service to your brothers and sisters – washing one another's feet.

If you were able to be at the Q, please share the experience as much as you can with the rest of your fraternity. There are recordings available – DVDs and audio – which you can use for ongoing formation, with the Q fraternity discussion questions for follow-up. Keep it going!

Blessings, Vickie 

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The *SFO News* is the official publication of the Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order.

## CALENDAR

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

- **Election & Visitation dates subject to change. (E=Election/V=Visitation)**

### January

- 14: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.  
 15: St. Francis, Crystal Lake Fraternity (V)  
 22: St. Anthony, Oak Lawn Fraternity (E)

### February

- 18: Apostolates Workshop  
 26: St. Anthony, Rockford Fraternity (V)

### March

- 01: Fair Share, Census, and Annual Reports due  
 10: St. Anthony, Joliet Fraternity (V)  
 17: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.  
 25: St. Francis, Steger Fraternity (V)  
 28: San Damiano Fraternity (V)  
 31: Candidates' Retreat, Day 1

### April

- 1: Living Waters Fraternity (V)  
 17: Brother Jacoba Community (V)

### May

- 05: Candidates' Retreat, Day 2  
 19: Chapter of Ministers

### June

### July

- 3-8: Quinquennial Congress, Chicago, IL  
 14: Council Meeting 9:30 a.m.

### August

- 04: Regional Gathering, Feast of the Portiuncula  
 23: San Jose Fraternity (V)

### September

- 08: Junipero Serra Fraternity (E)  
 08: Wellspring Community (E)  
 10: NW Franciscan Community (E)  
 29: Leadership Workshop

### October

- 06: Council Meeting 9:30 a.m.  
 16-21: NAFRA Meeting - Denver, CO  
 28: St. Thomas More Fraternity (V)

### November

- 04: St. Elizabeth Hungary Fraternity (E)  
 11: Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration  
 17: St. Francis, Fox Valley Fraternity (E)  
 18: St. Juliana Fraternity (E)

### December

- 04: St. Clare Fraternity - Oak Brook (E)  
 08: Regional Chapter of Elections

## Spiritual Assistant's Message

by Br. Joe Middleton, OFM

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At this mid-summer point of the year it seems to me that there are two topics of discussion to develop for this writing. The first of, course, is the dreadful hot and dry weather but if it's all the same to you I'll skip any further discussion of that sorrowful topic except to encourage you to stay in the shade and to look out for each other. The other relevant current topic for discussion is the recent Quinquennial Congress which occurred during the week of the Fourth of July heat wave. Oops! I forgot I wasn't going to talk about the weather. So now, let's get back to the national gathering of the Order of Franciscans Secular. If you haven't heard yet there were 600 or so of your sisters and brothers gathered at this great event which you have heard a lot about from your local fraternities and The Regional Council.

I'm certain that you will hear many of the details and statistics from other writers in this publication and from those who attended this special gathering so that in this feature I would like to present some of the information and insights from the perspective of the Spiritual Assistants.

Fr. Armand Trujillo Cano, TOR was there. You may recognize him as one of the frequent contributors to the Monthly Dossiers from The Presidency of the OFS International Councils Ongoing Formation Project. Also present was the four member Council of National Spiritual Assistants along with several Regional Spiritual Assistants of which I am one and a smattering of local SA's from many different places. There were two occasions for the spiritual assistants to meet together to dream and plan. It was made clear to us that the number one concern from the membership at large is that spiritual assistants be able and well prepared which is not always the case.

The other bit of excitement and hope is the emergence of able and well prepared Secular Spiritual Assistants who have been called into service of their brothers and sisters. There is a wealth of

wonderful material available from Smokey Valley Printing that is presented as a part of the TAU-USA. First off there is the (revised) Handbook for Spiritual Assistants, and then there is Franciscan Family Connection by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM. Cap, and finally, there is Life-Giving Union which is a supervised year-long correspondence course prepared by the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. One very interesting idea that was presented to us was the proposal that a fifth role would be added to the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants for a Secular Spiritual Assistant. I believe this idea is inspired and most appropriate.

After a conversation with the Regional Executive Council I have proposed that the spiritual assistants of this region will gather at a time (to be determined) in late September or early October to begin a discussion of a program to seek out and prepare a small class of potentially appropriate candidates for becoming Secular Spiritual Assistants. The idea for this program would be the formation of a class that could work together to enhance and benefit the candidates in preparation (and the region at large) as we prepare for the future. For now I ask that you pray for this dream and that you keep your eyes and hearts open to discover who might be called by God to serve.

Your Brother Joe M, ofm 

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*May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He show His face to you and have mercy on you. May He turn His countenance to you and give peace to you...*

*I bless you during my life and after my death, as I am able, out of all the blessings, with which the Father of mercies has blessed and will bless His sons and daughters in heaven and on earth and a spiritual father and mother have blessed and will bless their spiritual sons and daughters...*

*May the Lord always be with you and may you always be with Him. Amen*

*St. Clare*

## In-Formation

By Sr. Marilyn Renninger, OSF  
Regional Formation Commission

Why Francis? Claim the Gift! My prayer is that you, like me, are still basking in the blessings of the “Q”. High kudos to the “Q” Planning Committee for they certainly raised the bar. It was one of the most delightful and life-giving conferences I have attended, beginning with the Welcome and Opening Liturgy to the spirited Closing Liturgy. All the presentations from Sr. Ilia’s opening keynote to the very last of the talks, gave us much to reflect on in light of our Franciscan vocation. I am anxiously awaiting the DVD’s of the presentations.

Inspirited wisdom was shared in the “Q” fraternities which met after each presentation. On the last evening Tom Bello, as National Minister, summarized them so well.

So I don’t go on and on, here are just a few prominent truisms gleaned from the talks for your reflection:

- Francis focused on the life of Jesus Christ, the whole Gospel.
- Our vocation is a calling that keeps calling.
- We give witness first by our lives, then by what we do.
- We are to live the **PC** life:
  - Penance – Conversion
  - Poverty – Contemplation
  - Piety – Compassion

I often think of the joyful spirit that radiated throughout the Holiday Inn from the six hundred attendants during those four days. I hope each person present received great energy from rubbing shoulders with so many Franciscans and sharing their Franciscan spirit. May we carry the vigor and vitality of the “Quinquennial Congress XVIII” to our monthly gatherings for a long, long time. (Oh, the next time you see Patrick Mendes be sure to ask him about his microphone humor.)

We remember a very great woman on August 11. And, also the special year of St. Clare comes to a close. May her message in her Second Letter to Agnes be imbedded in our hearts:

*“What you hold, may you [always] hold. What you do, may you [always] do and never abandon. But with swift pace, light step, unswerving feet, ... may you go forward securely, joyfully, and swiftly, on the path of prudent happiness, not believing anything, not agreeing with anything that would dissuade you from this resolution or that would place a stumbling block for you on the way so that you may offer your vows to the Most high in the pursuit of that perfection to which the Spirit of the Lord has called you.”*

Peace, joy, and every good!  
Sr. Marilyn 

## Thank you, Mother Cabrini Region

My co-chair, Dr. Clare Reidy, OFS and I want to express our heartfelt and sincere thank you to all of you who helped make the 18th Quinquennial Congress the great success that it was!

Our thanks goes out to the local committee chairs and their committees. Mary Beth Murray, OFS, (St. Bernardine of Siena Fraternity) Chair of the Welcoming Committee and her committee members were at the airport welcoming and directing the brothers and sisters coming in from across the country. They put in long hours on a very hot day and their efforts were much appreciated by the arriving guests. Lorna Miressi, OFS (St. Bernardine of Siena Fraternity) chaired the Hospitality Committee and worked the registration desk helping folks find their way around the hotel. Our Regional Minister, Vickie Klick, OFS, chaired the Logistics Committee. They assisted with special needs of the participants, especially in getting one to necessary medical care. Fr. Larry Drefein, OFM, Spiritual Assistant to St. Thomas More Fraternity, was Chair of the Liturgy Committee. Fr. Larry and his committee planned our liturgies and the beautiful music for them. Acclaimed liturgical musician and composer, Sally Daley, OFS, directed the choir and provided the accompaniment for all liturgies.

Last but not least, a great big thank you goes to the fraternities who prepared the Welcome Packets. They were much appreciated by the participants and gave them a sense of our Region. They enjoyed the enclosed notes from the fraternities who prepared the packets.

And to all who attended and participated in the “Q”, you truly helped make it a happy family reunion for our Franciscan Family across the nation.

Patrick Mendés, OFS  
Q. Planning Committee Co-chair 

## **JPIC NEWS — JPIC and the Q**

By Stephanie Sormane, OFS, JPIC Councilor

We had a very busy and successful July! The Quinquennial Congress was held in Skokie July 3-8 with over 600 participants! And inspired by our wonderful speakers, there was really good sharing in and out of the “Q Fraternities” renewing old friendships and making new ones. There will be a full report in the next *TAU USA* which will be more thorough than I can do, both in allowable space and completeness of reporting. I will only say that this was my 4th Quinquennial and I thoroughly enjoyed it and learned a lot. For those who couldn’t or chose not to attend, I hope you will read the reports in the *TAU* and consider attending in 2017.

FAN was represented at the Q and had a JPIC meeting on Friday evening. It was mainly a general information meeting and encouraged people to join FAN as an individual member and learn more how about getting involved. That’s something all of you can do, too. If you don’t want to join right away, you can learn a great deal just by visiting the website once a week. There is an excellent meditation and then articles on current issues.

As we have just concluded a Quinquennial and anticipate reports before long, I began to review the Santa Clara Statement of 1972 which I mentioned two articles ago. As I neglected to bring copies to our Chapter in May, I’m going to share some of it now, as I think the statement is very worthwhile and will supply food for thought in anticipation of the reports on the Q just concluded and what we are going to do with what we learned. I hasten to remind you, this was written 30 years ago. Have we changed?

**WE ACKNOWLEDGE WHERE WE ARE.** There is disunity and turmoil in our society. As Franciscans we have an answer to this condition in the very Faith we profess. But we have failed to translate this Faith from a mere profession to a way of life

- We have not been honest with ourselves in living our Faith
  - The fear of being different;
  - The inconvenience which Faith-action causes;
  - The fear of change;
  - The fear of insecurity which change brings

All the above have prevented us from having the courage of our convictions.

- Our lives have not been a witness to our Faith which holds the answer to our social problems. We have not been living the Gospel fully.

**OUR BASIC THRUST.** To begin with, therefore:

- We shall not retain the old for the sake of the old, nor embrace change for the sake of change. Rather, we shall open our lives to the encounter with Christ and its insecurity as did the rich young Francis when he embraced the leper.
- We shall be positive about the solution of social problems, neither negative nor condemnatory.
- We shall express our opinions to our neighbors and to those with whom we come into contact, in humility and charity, in order to help mold their thinking.
- We shall select one particular issue, using our own personal initiative and without disregarding other issues and we shall do what we are able in our circumstances to help solve that particular problem.

More next month! 

## **Message from Mother M. Teresita, PCC**

We look forward to celebrating St. Clare’s feast day Mass for the conclusion of the Clarian eighth centenary year, Bishop Andrew Wypych will be the principal celebrant on Saturday, August 11 at 8:00 a.m. The novena leading up to her solemnity will begin on Thursday, August 2 and conclude Friday, August 10. We hope that you can join us for the novena service in our chapel every evening at 7:30 p.m., with Benediction and the Blessed Sacrament, or send us any petitions you wish remembered in the novena prayers. On the final evening of the novena, the blessed St. Clare’s bread will be distributed to all those present. As we did last year, the solemn novena will conclude with the recitation of the prayers to gain the plenary indulgence granted us specially for the centenary year.

And so, once again, we assure you of our prayers, and in a special way during the days of the novena leading up to our August 11 celebration of this loyal and outstanding daughter of the Church. Privileged are we to be able to call her our mother and foundress. She promised to bless us during her life and after her death, “as much as I am able, and even more than I am able.” May you and your loved ones know yourselves to be gathered into that blessing and the power of her intercession. 