

OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order

www.ilsfo.org

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Minister's Message

By Vickie Klick, OFS

Dear sisters and brothers,
Before I turn to my main topic for this month, I want to call your attention to the Mother Cabrini Celebration (flyer included with the emailing of the *OFS News*). This year we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the establishment of our regional fraternity. We will be having the celebration at Mayslake Village this year, and will start the day with a talk by Fr. Bob Powell, OFM at 10:30AM, with Mass after lunch. We should be finished with our evening prayer and remembrance of our members who have died in the past year by about 4:00PM. I hope you will join us for this special celebration.

What does daily conversion mean in your life? Our recent Mass readings and the reflections of Pope Francis have provided me some vivid reminders of how we are to be converted. In the Gospel read on September 12 (Luke 6:39-42), Jesus talks about how we see the splinter in our brother's eye but miss the wooden beam in our own. This passage led Pope Francis back to the previous Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 18:15-20) in which Jesus told us how to deal with someone who has sinned against us. Summarizing his points very briefly: 1) We cannot reprimand someone without love and charity (he compared it to performing surgery without anesthesia); 2) We must speak the truth, not gossip or slander – if we are speaking truth with love and charity, it may still be hard to hear but it is easier to accept; 3) We must reprimand with humility, remembering that we have many and most likely bigger failings of our own. Pope Francis describes such fraternal correction as an act that heals the body of the church, which in turn defines our actions as loving and gentle, not causing further injury. He warns against “a certain delight” in seeing something wrong that we feel must be corrected.

So...let's say someone (in your family, in

your fraternity, in your workplace, wherever) did something that you know was wrong and it made you really angry, and you really want to respond and point out the error(s) in detail. (If this never happens to you, make sure your family knows to start saving to promote your cause for canonization now! ☺ I have nothing to worry about in that regard, myself.) Just stop and ask yourself, Am I doing this with love for the other? For me, that is a moment for conversion.

We do need to correct one another, but if we do it the wrong way, we may be doing more harm than good. Worse, as Pope Francis warns, if we enjoy finding things to correct in others, that's a problem that we need to recognize and deal with in ourselves. I find the idea that reprimand/correction is for the healing of the body of the Church to be very significant. So often, we bring up issues in ways that make matters worse! We need to recognize those issues that need fraternal correction and, with prayer and humility, accept the Lord's guidance in bringing the matter to healing in as private a way as possible. In turning the light of Christ on the matters that make us angry, we are also likely to find many petty annoyances that we should simply live with, in the spirit of the Little Way of St. Therese of Lisieux. Think how much happier our families, our churches, and our fraternities could be if we did a better job of practicing this way of fraternal charity! Let us all pray for the grace to bear with one another and to do everything with love. Vickie ☑

P.S. For more on Pope Francis' homily mentioned above, see

<http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-s-morning-homily-do-not-take-pleasure-in-others-mistakes>

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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.



CALENDAR

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

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

September 2014

- 27:** Study Day / Leadership Workshop
- 28:** St Thomas Moore – (E)

October 2014

- 11:** Regional Executive Council Meeting
- 21-26:** NAFRA Chapter, Lake Dallas, TX

November 2014

- 16:** Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration and 20th anniversary of establishment of the Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity – Location TBD

Spiritual Assistant’s Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Oh my God help us. My heart trembles when I say or try to write the word October. I am barely used to being in the month of September but here we are. I was talking with a couple of my brothers the other day about the ordination of one of our brothers (Macario Torrez Torrez) on September the 27th. As we were discussing all the details of this event which were somewhat piling up I said oh we won’t have to worry about that until September at which point my brothers began to laugh as they reminded me that we were already well into September. Then days later I remembered that the regions study day was also on September 27th.

Oops! Now, you who know me know that I hate to miss a thing but I must attend the Ordination of my Dear Brother More’ and then a few days later a group of us are flying down to Fr. More’s home town in Mexico to celebrate with his family for a few days. What a wonderful way to celebrate the continued movement of the Franciscan Spirit isn’t it?

Speaking of the Franciscan Spirit; we all stir it up mightily in early October don’t we? As we pull out all the stops to celebrate the Transitus of our father Francis on Friday the 3rd and then as we all know the great feast celebrating his life and legend happens the next day on Saturday the 4th. Hear at St. Peter’s we will celebrate the feast on Monday the 6th with a solemn celebration at the 11:40 Mass. St. Peter’s always does it beautifully. I’ll never forget a few years ago when I had the golden opportunity to be in Assisi for the feast which was the fulfillment of a dream. But as it so often happens when a dream meets reality I was profoundly disappointed and I wished then that I could be transported over to St. Peter’s because

I found the celebration in Assisi much less than beautiful let’s just say. It’s always beautiful at St. Peters. I hope that all of you are able to participate with your brothers and sisters at this time especially.

Now, here’s a further bit of Franciscan News. In October we have the first opportunity to commemorate the lives of two of our newest saints. First on October 10th we celebrate the happy memory of our beloved John Paul II. Then later in the month on October the 23rd we honor Pope John XXIII who was not only the Holy Pope but also a Secular Franciscans.

The only other small item I will mention is that there was a gathering at Marytown for this year’s annual gathering for spiritual assistants in late September but at the time of this writing it hasn’t happened yet. I’ll tell you all about it later.

Till later I send you my blessings and best wishes.

Your Brother Joe Middleton, ofm

In Memoriam

As of press release, we are sad to announce the passing of our sister, Esther Foropoulos, ofs, of the Northwest Franciscan Community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who was greeted by our Lord at 3:00pm, Sept 19, 2014.

In-Formation – Regional Formation Council

By Nicholas Noe, ofs
Regional Formation Director

Why Francis?

One story in *The Little Flowers of St. Francis* is about a pointed conversation between Brother Masseo of Marignano, and St. Francis. Masseo was one of Francis' early companions and Francis liked Masseo for his holiness, good disposition and common sense. But Masseo could be a little self-centered at times (aren't we all?). One day Masseo decided, perhaps half-jokingly, to test the humility of Francis. So he asked Francis three times: "Why after you?" Francis asked him what he meant. "I mean, why does the whole world seem to be running after you, and everyone wants to see you and hear you and obey you? You are not a handsome man. You do not have great learning or wisdom. You are not a nobleman." Francis replied in a very calm manner and from his humble disposition. "You really want to know why everyone is running after me? (God) has not seen among sinners anyone more vile and insufficient than I am. And so to do that wonderful work he intends to do...He chose me, for God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and the base things of the world and the despised, to bring to naught the noble, the great, the strong, so all excellence in virtue may be from God and not from creature."

Another humble man was not asked the same question, but was asked why he selected the name "Francis." Initially, there was some question as to whether Pope Francis was referring to Francis of Assisi, Francis Xavier (a Jesuit) or Francis De Sales. I remember a TV priest-commentator raising the question shortly after the pope's name was announced. Not being a "pope watcher" (although a reader of encyclicals and other papal writings), I was not following the election and keeping track of

the number and color of the smoke events coming from the chimney above the Sistine Chapel. But I received an alert notice on my iPad that white smoke was coming from the chimney, so I decided to watch TV for a few minutes. Everyone was surprised that Cardinal Bergoglio selected "Francis" for his papal name, and I hoped and assumed he meant "Francis of Assisi," as did most other observers. A friend sent me an email in which she wrote that the day before the announcement, she was doing a walking mediation and wondered why a pope had never selected "Francis." It's a good question, especially given the Church has had four Franciscan popes and each selected other names.

But Pope Francis has made it clear he was thinking of Francis of Assisi. As the votes were still being counted, but his election assured, Cardinal Bergoglio was hugged by his good friend, Cardinal Franciscan Claudio Hummes, who said "don't forget about the poor." "Then, right away, thinking of the poor, I began thinking of Francis of Assisi. Then I thought of the wars, and Francis is a man of peace ...For me, he is the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation. He is the man who gives us this spirit of peace, the poor man...**How I would like a Church which is poor and for the poor!**" It is very clear from his actions, statements, and writings (The Joy of the Gospel) that Pope Francis wants to change the direction of the Church, the people of God, from an overemphasis on doctrine, dogma, and ritual (orthodoxy) to more of an emphasis on orthopraxis. In other words, he feels the Church (and that means us) must spend more time and energy on engaging the major and everyday problems of the world and attempt to solve those problems as witnesses of our faith in Jesus Christ. He picked the name "Francis," not because he wanted to glorify St. Francis, but because St. Francis is the archetypal model for what the Buddhists call "fingers pointing to the moon." And the moon, of course, is Jesus Christ.

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Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

Celebrating the 35th Anniversary of St. Francis Named Patron of Ecology

By Barbara Elkins, OFS, JPIC Councilor

On November 29th, 1979, Pope John Paul II named St. Francis of Assisi Patron of Ecology. In celebration of the 35th anniversary of this proclamation, the JPIC animators in Rome have created a website <http://francis35.org> which offers resources to assist you in commemorating this anniversary in prayer, ritual and gathering.

The members of Romans VI, the International Commission for JPIC, have written a beautiful 35th anniversary reflection for us, their brothers and sisters throughout the world, in the hope of “deepening our understanding of what it means to call Francis the patron of ecology, and to explore the responsibility we inherit, as followers of Francis, to care for creation as its stewards.”

Within this reflection, they share that “the example from Catholic tradition of St. Francis of Assisi can inspire us to respond to the cry of the earth with love, compassion and generosity. While we should not seek to mimic a medieval man in our vastly different, modern context, nevertheless we can still look into his example as we formulate our own vocational responses to the environmental crises of our modern world.

A contemporary vocational response can still draw insight from Francis’ example of ecological consciousness. But we will need to develop a new synthesis that wisely combines his religious inspiration, along with the best scientific information, into a new moral vision. In this way we will ‘retrieve’ and helpfully transmit our tradition to an age of ecological crisis.”

The reflection concludes by sharing some practical considerations to strengthen our efforts with some concrete examples where Franciscans are currently seeking to translate the ecological awareness of our founder into actions that address the ecological crises that we face.

“Francis was a hope-filled man. He inspires us to have realistic hope based on the belief that people, motivated by God’s Spirit, will respond in sufficient numbers to begin the healing of the planet. The greatest hope for change is not the threat of disaster but the Gospel message that there are alternatives to the blindness, greed and competitiveness that cause so many disasters.”

Take some time to reflect on ways you may translate the ecological awareness of St. Francis into actions. You may want to plan a special event for the November anniversary. Here are some practical resources for you to consider.

Franciscans for Ecology <http://francis35.org>

Catholic Climate Covenant
www.catholicclimatecovenant.org

Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth
Ilia Delio, O.S.F., Keith Douglass Warner, O.F.M., and Pamela Wood

Care for Creation in the Daily Life of the Friars Minor
The Office for Justice, Peace and the Integrity Of Creation. Rome, 2011
www.ofm.org/01docum/jpic/DailyLifeEcology_ENG.pdf

This 25-page document provides a simple format to study the actual impact of our lifestyle on the environment. It proposes nine areas of daily life that can help with this personal analysis: Water; Energy; Garbage and waste; packaging; Paper, batteries and toxic substances; Transportation; Food; Fair Trade; and Liturgy and prayer.

Each area is covered in a 2-page handout that provides a factual description plus practical suggestions for “What You Can Do Now” and Community Reflections. **This is an easy way to include our call to care for creation within your ongoing formation.**

Within this document, it is noted: “In the next six-year period (2009-2015) all the Entities of the Order, with the help of the JPIC Office, should commit themselves to examine the impact of our life style on creation, especially regarding climate change, and promote environmental justice in order to highlight the relationship between social and ecological themes” (OFM 2009 General Chapter, Mandate 43.2).

τ O Lord, grant us the grace to respect and care for Your creation. Amen **🙏**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Please plan to join us at Mayslake Village on

Saturday, September 27, 2014

for the

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity Study Day

The Law of Peace in the Heart

followed by Leadership Workshops

Fr. Al Mirz, OFM will present our Study Day this year. With all the violence in our world and in our own communities today, it is vital to seek peace, and to start with the one person we can directly change – ourselves.

The day will start with registration at **8:30AM** and Mass at **9:00AM** in the Mayslake Chapel. Fr. Al will have presentations before and after lunch. After Fr. Al's final presentation, we will have parallel sessions for those in present or future fraternity leadership, led by members of the Regional Executive Council and Regional Formation Commission:

- Ministers – Vickie Klick
- Spiritual Assistants and anyone involved in Prayer and Praise – Br. Joe Middleton and Lorna Miressi
- Formation Directors – Member(s) of the Formation Commission
- Treasurers – Dale Marzano

For those attending one of the leadership sessions, the day will end by ~3:45PM.

Cost for the day is **\$15** to share in the catered lunch. As usual, there is no charge if you bring your own lunch. **Ministers - please call or email Bonnie Michels OFS, our councilor for fraternal life, at (fratlife@ilsfo.org) with the final count of those coming who want the lunch AND those who are bringing their own.** Please help us plan ahead so we have enough food for all without much waste.

Hope to see you there!

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity Secular Franciscan Order

What: Mother Cabrini Celebration/Region's 20th Anniversary

When: Sunday, November 16, 2014

Where: Mayslake Village, 1801 35th St. Oak Brook, IL 60523

Detailed Schedule (times approximate):

10:00 Sign-In / Register/Gather in **Friigo Hall** (downstairs)

10:30 Speaker: Fr. Bob Powell, OFM

12:00 Lunch (main meal catered, pot-luck desserts)

1:00 Reflections on 20 years of Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity

1:30 Break

1:45 Mass (Chapel) (upstairs)

3:00 Video of Mother Cabrini (Friigo Hall) (downstairs)

3:30 Evening prayer/remembrance of deceased

4:00 Departure

Please note:

- We need a count of attendees for lunch to Bonnie Michels by **November 1** (fratlife@ilsfo.org).
- If you have a Fraternity Banner, please bring it.
- Dessert for the lunch will be pot-luck.