

OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order

www.ilsfo.org

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Minister's Message

Dear sisters and brothers,
You likely have already received a request to pray for our National Minister, Deacon Tom Bello, and his wife Judy. Please keep Tom, Judy, and the rest of our National Executive Council, especially National Vice Minister Elaine Hedtke, in your prayers, while Tom undergoes treatment for metastatic cancer. This month marks a couple of major milestones in my life. Early in July 1980, just a few weeks after we graduated from college, Dave and I got married. Nine days later, I started work at Bell Telephone Laboratories in Naperville, then still part of the Bell System. While the name of my employer has changed several times (and will change again in 2016 as we are bought by Nokia, the Finnish telecommunications company), I still work on the same campus where I started 35 years ago. At the time, I had no intention of becoming Catholic; Dave was a non-practicing cradle Catholic and I was a non-practicing United Methodist. God works in mysterious ways, though, and the Holy Spirit used Dave to draw me into the Church in 1982 (and pulled him back with me!).

Once I became Catholic, I quickly realized I needed to be with others who wanted to do more with their faith than simply attending Mass on Sunday. In early 1983, I was attending some event downtown for work and went to St. Peter's for Mass. In their bulletin, I saw an advertisement placed by St. Francis-St. Louis Fraternity. I started what was then still called postulancy in September 1983, and was professed in June 1985. It's hard to imagine I've been professed for thirty years!

I like the fact that all these anniversaries fall so close together. Each represents a very significant commitment in my life. Each of these commitments has had its ups and downs. Married life is clearly sustained at

Times by that vow "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part." While our promises as Secular Franciscans are not as binding as vows, that promise to follow the Rule all the days of my life has made a big difference at times when it would have been easy to just let that commitment go. On the other hand, my work is governed by no such formal commitment (not even a contract), but I look at my work journey with the eyes of faith formed further by my Franciscan calling, and I see God's call for me to be where I am in my work, as well as in my marriage, the Church, and the Secular Franciscan Order. In turn, my work experience, even the parts that didn't go so well at the time, has helped form me and develop the skills that I have been able to use to serve our regional fraternity, particularly in the past six years.

Many people today are hesitant to commit because they don't know what will happen later. Truthfully, I think that's part of why we need commitments! I thought I knew what I was getting into when Dave and I got married, as we had been dating throughout college; thirty-five years later, I'm still learning! I'm still learning what my Secular Franciscan vocation means, too - the six years I've served as your regional minister have been a wonderful time of growth, and I am grateful for that. At work, I see the benefits of the perseverance I apply in these other areas of my life. After several years where my job was "just work," I'm in a position where I get to grow again. Faith helped me to recognize that I needed to be patient and that God was working even when I couldn't see it.

Vickie 

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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 2015

All events are at Mayslake Village unless otherwise noted

~~Saturday, January 17
Regional Executive Council Meeting~~

~~Monday, March 2
Per Capita/Census/Fraternity Annual Reports due~~

~~Saturday, March 21
Regional Executive Council Meeting~~

~~Sunday, April 5 — Easter~~

~~Sat./Sun., April 11-12 —
Candidates Retreat (tentative)~~

~~Saturday, May 16 —
Chapter of Ministers~~

~~Thursday-Sunday, July 9-12
Summer Seminar – Loretto, PA; topic
“Servant Leadership”s~~

Saturday, July 18
Regional Executive Council Meeting

Saturday, August 1
Regional Gathering – Feast of the Portiuncula

Saturday, September 19
Formation/Leadership Workshop

Saturday, October 3
Regional Executive Council Meeting

October 13-18
NAFRA Chapter/Chapter of Elections, Clinton, NJ

Sunday, November 15
Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration location TBA

Saturday, December 5
Regional Chapter of Elections



Spiritual Assistant's Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

July is undeniably summer time, vacation time and a good time to explore our Franciscan holy men and women. We start the month with several days of memorials for some of our Franciscan martyrs. Then we remember on the 15th the great Franciscan bishop and doctor of the church St. Bonaventure who has inspired and enlightened us all. Soon after that the Franciscan world celebrates on the 21st. Sorry I don't know a thing about him. If you do, tell me next the time you see me.

I always consider the 4th of July as being a serious and important cultural event here in the expanding nation of ours. From where we came from to where we are now. And I'm sure I have said to you before how much I love fireworks; especially great big, large scale extravaganza fireworks. I hope you get to enjoy some spectacular fireworks where ever you are. Even in your own back yard.

Now one more, most important event this summer for us Franciscans, all Catholics and for that matter, all citizens of the world is the latest so called sweeping encyclical from our Holy Father Francis. I have read some of the pirated copy that is out there and it is wonderful, clear, and good. It is from what I've seen deeply Franciscan in spirit. We should all be able to get our hands on a publishers copy by the beginning of July. So everyone rush out and get a copy and we can I'm sure benefit in many ways but in all honesty I selfishly expect to be made proud of being a Franciscan and proud again to be Catholic which is a very good reason to celebrate and perhaps shoot off some fireworks. These are my thoughts this month but again I must be honest and transparent.

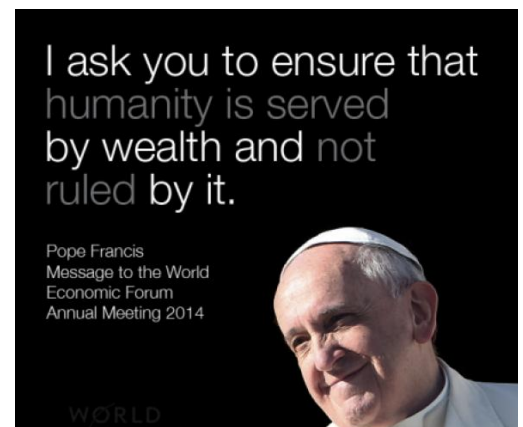
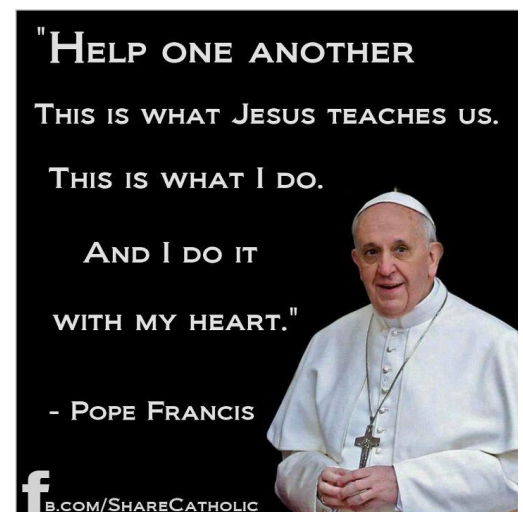
The truth really is this is the last task I have before diving completely into vacation mode. In a few hours I will be heading west to the mountains. I'll just say Happy Trails To You for now.

Your brother, Joe ofm.

Saw a link to this item from St. Katharine Drexel Regional Fraternity on Twitter.

Not sure how much of our reading audience would be interested in 60 years of back issues of The Cord, but free access is a good thing. Per the article (link below) the issue celebrating the 20th anniversary of the OFS Rule of 1978 is very interesting.

<http://www.skregion.org/2015/06/the-cord-a-franciscan-spiritual-journal/>



In-Formation

Nicholas Noe OFS,
Regional Formation Director


Some Thoughts About “Laudato Si”

Pope Francis’ long-awaited Encyclical on the environment and ecology was released early on Thursday, June 18. I expected the Encyclical would be immediately available on-line, and indeed that was the case. Because of my Franciscan commitment to care for creation, I simply could not wait until the Pope’s first Encyclical was published in book form. So I decided to print the entire letter, all 72 pages. Most of my day and evening was spent reading the Encyclical, but of course one reading is not sufficient. This is an Encyclical that needs to be studied and discussed by everyone. It is as globally important as *Pacem in Terris*, the Encyclical written by Pope John XXIII more than 50 years ago when the world was facing a nuclear crisis. And it is an Encyclical that should deeply resonate with us as Secular Franciscans. Why? Because Pope Francis has been true to his papal name, and has written an Encyclical that has a very definite Franciscan tone and quality.

The Franciscan influence is immediately apparent in the Encyclical’s title which is *Laudate Si*. The title is translated as *Praised be*, the recurring statement of praise to God in St. Francis’ *Canticle of the Creatures*. The subtitle is *Sulla cura della casa commune* and is translated as *On the care of the common home*. And Pope Francis writes that it is St. Francis who reminds us that our common home is our *Sister, Mother Earth*. But our home “cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her.” Pope Francis acknowledges the personal influence St. Francis has had on him when he writes: “I do not want to write this Encyclical without turning to that attractive and compelling figure whose name I took as my guide and inspiration when I was elected Bishop of Rome. I believe that

St. Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an *integral ecology* lived out joyfully and authentically.” An *integral ecology* recognizes the interrelationships in all aspects of creation, including not only nature, but humanity and the various social dimensions of humanity.

It is no surprise Pope Francis accepts the almost indisputable scientific evidence that climate change is a global problem with grave consequences. It is caused mostly by human activity, and it is the poor in the world who will suffer and are suffering disproportionately. Urgent action is required, including a significant reduction in the use of fossil fuels. But other ecological problems also exist: depletion of natural resources (water), loss of biodiversity; decline in the quality of human life, and global inequality. An integral ecology encompasses both an ecology of nature and a human ecology, and realizes the relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet.

Pope Francis does not recommend specific actions or solutions to our ecological crisis. But he does make a strong appeal for a new and open dialogue that includes everyone on how we are currently shaping our planet and will face our environmental challenges. All governments and institutions at all levels must be involved in the conversation. But nothing will change unless individual human beings change their consumeristic lifestyles and attitudes. An “ecological conversion” is required, and Pope Francis says the Church, as well other institutions, must increase people’s awareness through ecological education. He specifically mentions “houses of formation” and for us that means our *ongoing formation* programming. I strongly suggest we read, study and discuss *Laudato Si* in our fraternities within the year. 

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

Speak More and Listen More

By Barbara Elkins, OFS, JPIC Councilor

On June 14th, I had the honor of welcoming four of my fraternity brothers and sisters to a new stage of their formation as they made their Rite of Profession. During our celebration, one of my newly professed brothers shared that a friend had inquired about the next step. "What do you get to do now?" was how the question was posed. This question did lead to some wonderful discussions on what we are called to do. My favorite reply is that we respond to what is in front of us with truth and charity in order to share God's peace. This became evident the next day. I had a topic chosen for this month's article but as I was driving to work, the Holy Spirit guided me toward a different topic. I was listening to an interview with Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz on Relevant Radio. As president of the USCCB, he was sharing his thoughts on the statement he delivered June 10th on race relations. Archbishop Kurtz mentioned that the topic was significant as the bishops gathered for their annual Spring General Assembly in St. Louis, so near to Ferguson and as they look ahead to Baltimore in November. He touched on five concrete ways in which the Catholic community can commit to ending racism and promoting peace, justice and respect for all persons.

"Pray for peace and healing among all people.

Study the Word of God and the social teaching of the Church in order to gain a deeper appreciation of the dignity of all persons.

Make a sincere effort to encounter more fully people of different racial backgrounds with whom we live, work and minister.

Pursue ways in which Catholic parishes and neighborhoods can be truly welcoming of families of different racial and religious backgrounds.

Get to know our local law enforcement officers. Let them know of our support and gratitude. And encourage young people to respect all legitimate authority." www.usccb.org/news/2015/15-088.cfm

As he was discussing these points, I was struck by a comment he made in reference to prayer and study. He emphasized the importance of contemplation so that we may better respond rather than react in a given situation. This phrase definitely caught my attention. How often have I reacted to someone's actions or comments instead of taking the time to listen to them and then

respond thoughtfully? I was mulling this over throughout the morning when I came across Rex Huppke's workplace advice column in the *Chicago Tribune*. Rex was sharing some pearls of wisdom to his readers as he marked the 4th anniversary of his column. In it he wrote, "If I can distill one piece of advice out of these years, it might be simply: Talk and listen. We don't do enough of either." (June 15, 2015)

There it is again – a little extra emphasis from the Holy Spirit on how to respond better to others. The day was not over yet. On my way home from work, I heard an excerpt from Pope Francis' April 15th General Audience address on the family and highlighting the difference and complementarity between man and woman.

"In order to resolve the problems in their relationships, men and women need to speak to one another more, listen to each other more, get to know one another better, love one another more. They must treat each other with respect and cooperate in friendship. On this human basis, sustained by the grace of God, it is possible to plan a lifelong marital and familial union. The marital and familial bond is a serious matter, and it is so for everyone not just for believers. I would urge intellectuals not to leave this theme aside, as if it had to become secondary in order to foster a more free and just society."

https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150415_udienza-generale.html

Again, the message of the day repeatedly spoke of prayer, contemplation and honest dialogue with others. Speak more, listen more, respond rather than react. Just in case I didn't get the message, the reading for evening prayer that night was the following passage.

"Do not, my brothers, speak ill of one another. The one who speaks ill of his brother or judges his brother is speaking against the law. It is the law he judges. If, however, you judge the law you are no observer of the law, you are its judge. There is but one Lawgiver and judge, one who can save and destroy. Who then are you to judge your neighbor?" (James 4:11-12)

Do your best to respond to what is in front of you today with prayer, contemplation and a grateful heart.



Sponsored by the Northwest Franciscan Community of the IHM (Palatine), Fr. Robert Pawell, OFM will present a Day of Recollection on August 22 (Saturday) on "Going from Gospel to Life and Life to Gospel: Secular Franciscans Celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life" at St. Colette Catholic Church, 3900 Meadow Dr., Rolling Meadows.

All Secular Franciscans in the Mother Cabrini Region are invited to attend. The event is free, and lunch will be provided. Aside from Mass, all activities will take place in Halpin Hall, located in the church's basement. **It would be helpful if ministers or their delegates RSVP on behalf of their fraternities. Please RSVP by fraternity** by August 08 (Saturday) to Lisa Wathen, OFS at minister@nwfranciscans.org.

About the Speaker

Fr. Robert was born in Chicago and grew up on the city's northwest side. He entered the Order of Friars Minor in 1959 and was ordained in 1966. Fr. Robert holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy and Psychology from Quincy University, Illinois; a Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical University Antonianum, Rome; a Master's Degree in Pastoral Studies from Loyola University Chicago, Institute of Pastoral Studies; and a Certificate in Spiritual Direction from the Institute for Spiritual Leadership, Chicago. After 20 years of working in a variety of ministries around the country, in 1996 he returned to Chicago, where he cofounded Holy Evangelists Friary on Ashland Ave. He is currently the Director of Programs at St. Peter's Church in the Loop, and also serves as confessor, preacher and Eucharistic minister. On weekends, he assists at St. Bonaventure Oratory in Chicago.

Fr. Robert is an experienced spiritual director, parish mission preacher, retreat director and preacher, and days of recollection speaker for priests, religious, and laity. In his preaching, he makes use of poetry and story, the wisdom of saints and mystics, and insights from contemporary psychology to illuminate the Good News of the Gospel.

Agenda

- 9:00 a.m.: Registration and Continental Breakfast (Halpin Hall, in the church's basement)
- 9:45 a.m.: Presentation
- 10:45 a.m.: Mass (upstairs Chapel, behind the main altar); Celebrant/homilist: Fr. Bob
- 11:45 a.m.: Lunch
- 1:00 p.m.: Franciscan Crown and quiet prayer (Chapel)
- 1:45 p.m.: Break
- 2:00 p.m.: Concluding Presentation
- 3:00 p.m.: Evening Prayer (bring your copy of *Liturgy of the Hours*)

Dear Friends,

After 18 years of service to our brothers and sisters who find themselves without a home in Chicago, Diana Faust, our Executive Director, has announced her plans to leave Franciscan Outreach. In 1997, following a successful career as an attorney, Diana began her tenure with Franciscan Outreach as our first full-time Director of Development. In 2008, she was promoted to Executive Director. Through expanding our fundraising efforts and relationships with persons of good will, she enabled us to grow from two sites in 1997 and a budget of \$600,000 to our present five sites and a budget of over \$2,400,000. Diana advanced our mission and made us a stronger, more effective organization.

Diana's initiatives, as well as the dedicated work of our staff and volunteers, lead to the twenty-fold growth of our case management program from one half-time case manager to ten. Diana's work also led to the addition of Franciscan Annex as a second shelter site, the start of our Day Program, the implementation of our Streets to Home permanent housing program, the development of our Interim Housing Program, and the South Dorm Housing Intervention Program at Franciscan House. We've grown from not even counting how many persons we moved off the streets to verifying that 240 persons were placed into housing with our assistance last year. While our commitment to providing basic food and shelter to persons who are without a home has not dimmed, during Diana's time with us a whole new dimension was added to our work: changing lives. Diana has kept us focused on using the synergy of these two distinct but interrelated program models to improve the lives of those we serve.

A member of the Secular Franciscan Order, Diana has also kept us focused on the Franciscan values upon which we were founded over 50 years ago by Fr Phil Marquard, OFM, a member of the Sacred Heart Province of Franciscan Friars. She led the staff in articulating and living out the Franciscan values that we treasure: respecting the dignity of every person who comes through our doors, relieving suffering as an end in itself and the starting point of a relationship, believing that transformation is always possible, and leveraging the power of collaborative efforts. For all of this we are very grateful.

We will be conducting a search for our next Executive Director with the assistance of Kittleman & Associates. We look forward to continued growth as we start the next chapter in our service to the men and women of Chicago who are in need of a home. Diana will remain as Executive Director until she accepts her next opportunity. She has agreed to assist us with the transition when a new Executive Director is hired. Please join us in wishing Diana well as she continues to carry out her life-long commitment to making the world a better place.

~ The Board of Directors of Franciscan Outreach