

## Minister's Message

by Lorna Miressi, OFS

On Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, our country will be choosing a new president. I don't know about all of you, but I am quite concerned about which candidate will be chosen to take on the job. As a woman, I am leaning toward Hillary Clinton and away from Donald Trump. Still another criterion I go by is to vote for the candidate who represents the party (Republican or Democrat) that I claim allegiance to. However, with this upcoming election I find myself throwing all this out the window and searching for another way to help me decide whom to choose.

Every year of a U.S. presidential election, the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops offers to the Catholic faithful the document "Forming Consciences for Catholic Citizenship". I located two bulletin announcements which summarize this document and may be helpful to others who are struggling to decide which candidate they are going to choose.

The first bulletin article is titled "Our Call as Catholic Citizens". This article asks the question "Who in the Church should participate in political life?". We all should! Responsible citizenship is a "moral obligation". We need to be "guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to any political party or interest group". As the article states, some of us Catholics may feel neither party (or candidate) shares our views on human life and dignity. This should not discourage us from voting. Rather, it should make us more eager to act. The article goes on to speak about how Catholic Social Teaching can guide our choice of whom to vote for. To quote Pope Francis, "progress in building a people in peace, justice and fraternity depends on four principles". These principles include the dignity of the human person, the common good, subsidiarity (larger institutions in society should not interfere with smaller or local institutions), and solidarity (committing oneself to the good of all). Looking at the views of each candidate, considering these four principles, can help one decide which candidate to choose.

The second bulletin article is titled "Making Moral Choices and Applying our Principles".

I wish to speak to the section of the article titled "What Public Policies Should Concern Catholics Most" (to read this article in its entirety go to [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/)). The bishops offer several policy goals that could guide voters as they form their consciences and decide whom to choose. In looking at each candidate's views on protecting human life and the dignity of all people, is the candidate working towards...

"Ending practices which destroy human life such as abortion, euthanasia, use of the death penalty, resorting to war to address international disputes?

Protecting the fundamental understand of marriage as the life-long union of one man and one woman, providing support for family life?

Achieving immigration reform?

Helping families and children overcome poverty, making sure all have access to education, work, helping to overcome hunger?

Protecting religious freedom?

Providing health care which respects human life, human dignity and religious freedom? Opposing policies that imitate racism, immigrant hostility, and other unjust discrimination?

Joining with others around the world to work towards peace, religious liberty, economic justice, protecting human rights, and caring for creation? "

It is my hope and prayer that all of you can vote next month. Remember it is the responsibility of each one of us to form our conscience in such a way that we choose the best possible candidate to lead our country in a manner which promotes life and human dignity for all.

(Taken from a reflection by the USCCB titled *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*.)

Lorna Miressi, OFS 

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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 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.**

## REGIONAL CALENDAR 2016

All events are at Mayslake Village  
unless otherwise noted

~~Saturday, January 16 —  
Regional Executive Council  
Meeting~~

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

~~Saturday, March 19 —  
Regional Executive Council  
Meeting~~

~~Sunday, March 27 —Easter~~

~~Sat./Sun., April 9-10  
Candidates Retreat~~

~~Saturday, May 14  
Chapter of Ministers~~

~~Thursday-Monday, June 30-July 4  
Quinquennial Congress,  
St. Louis, MO~~

~~Saturday, July 16  
Regional Executive Council  
Meeting~~

~~Saturday, August 6  
Regional Gathering —Feast of the  
Portiuncula~~

~~Saturday, September 17  
Formation/Leadership  
Workshop~~

~~Saturday, October 1  
Regional Executive Council  
Meeting~~

~~November 1-6 NAFRA  
Chapter/National Visitation –  
Winter Park, FL~~

Sunday, November 13  
Mother Cabrini Feast Day  
Celebration – location TBA

## Spiritual Assistant's Message

### HAPPY THANKSGIVINGS!

That's not a "typo" in the title line! November is a month of opportunities to give thanks; to remember and rejoice

November 1<sup>st</sup> we celebrate the feast of All Saints. Let us offer our thanks again to those favorite saints to whom we pray so often – St. Anthony who seems to help us find everything we lose. St. Joseph for so many reasons, Mother Teresa for showing us how to preach the gospel without using words and so many others of our favorites whose intercession we seek – let this be a day to say thank you to them and to our loving God who has given them to us as models of the gospel life and intercessors.

November 2<sup>nd</sup> we celebrate All Souls Day. I like the newer term for the feast day: The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed. So often this is a somber day for us as we remember our loved ones who have gone home to the Lord.

Especially if our losses are recent, we still feel the pain of loss not because they no longer suffer but because we miss them so much. Because we have loved much, we feel so keenly the feeling of loss.

For our loved ones perhaps not so recently gone to the Lord, we have memories of the special times spent with them and what they have done for us.

Now is a good time to thank God for giving them to us in our lives and to thank them for their love and loving example.

Many of us will call to mind our parents and all that they did for us, including raising us to know and love God. Can we take a minute this special day to just say a prayer of thanks to our deceased loved ones as well as to say a prayer for them?

November 11<sup>th</sup> Veterans Day. Let us take some time to give thanks to those who have served our country and placed themselves in harms way to keep us safe. Let us offer a prayer of thanks to our Lord for giving us these men and women who care for our country. Perhaps we can continue our All Souls Day prayer to especially remember those Veterans who have given their lives for us.

November 17<sup>th</sup> Feast of our Patroness, St. Elizabeth of Hungary. We can say a prayer of thanks to her for giving us the example of humility and compassion.

November 24<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Day. Amid all the joyful family celebrations, we need to call to mind what the day is really about – to borrow a line from a hymn... "Now thank we all our God..."

I would invite you to join me in a pre-Thanksgiving activity which I call my Thanksgiving Novena. 9 days before Thanksgiving, I start a list and each day I write one thing I am grateful for. On Thanksgiving day I take my list to Mass with me and during the quiet post-communion time, I read my list and express my thanks to the Lord.

I wish you all a month of happy thanksgivings as I give thanks to the Lord for the gift of you, my brothers and sisters and at Thanksgiving and always I pray that the Sacred Heart of Jesus will surround you with His love and fill your life with His abundant blessings!

Patrick Mendés, OFS  
Interim Regional Spiritual Assistant. 

## INFORMATION

### IN-FORMATION

Sr. Marilyn Renninger, OSF  
Regional Formation Commission

I remember seeing a picture of a tree full of colored leaves with the title, "Divine Mosaic". We just need to look around and notice some of the beauty of the Master Artist. Nature is fast changing as it begins its time of dying so that new life can be born.

But God's Divine Mosaic is also seen in the people, in each one of us. We each add color in some way through the different gifts we have, through our different personalities, through who we are and who we hope to become. I think we all would agree that we are such a splash of color, and God, as master artist, has a perfect plan.

November is a time of change. It places before us who we are to be in this life, and also who we are to be in eternity. We begin the month by celebrating the Communion of Saints. We pray to the saints in heaven and for the saints awaiting heaven. These feasts help us focus, not only on the present but also on our destiny. We are all saints in the making.

There is a saint within each one of us. Saints can be defined as those who accept and live God's friendship and love in the everyday circumstance of life. All saints will be with God in heaven, whether well-known and canonized or not. Perhaps some things we can reflect on as we celebrate the Communion of Saints are: When I think of myself as a saint, I . . . ; the saint I most admire is . . . and why? Or, as you read the newspaper or magazines, who are the people speaking and living the truth despite pressure from society or government? And then, be sure you take time to celebrate the saint within you.

It is hard to believe that this Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy is coming to an end with the Feast of Christ the King, but it must never end in our lives.

Truly this has been a year of enrichment and spiritual growth. I am confident that we have all grown, not only in our reflections on mercy and the many opportunities to experience God's mercy, as well as to be persons of mercy, but also in our knowledge and understanding of the importance of mercy especially in our families, our fraternities, our communities, our country, and our world. Because Jesus is the visible presence of God's mercy, and we know His teaching and examples of mercy, especially that mercy is how we will ultimately be judged, may we as Franciscans be that lived message in today's world to "*do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God*" (Micah 6:8).

Hope to see you all at the Cabrini Celebration on Sunday, November 13.

Blessings of peace and all good!  
Sr. Marilyn 

The mystery church in last month's publication was... St. Stephen King of Hungary in Wicker Park/West Town/Ukrainian Village and no, nobody guessed correctly. By the way, St. SKOH happens to be the church I was baptized in, my recall of that event however, is vague, at best...

Now, can you guess which beautiful church this is?



Awww c'mon this should be soooo easy!  
Especially for you 'old timers' (Catholics that is) - which is most of us...  
The answer will appear next month!

## Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

By Luana Leinhart, OFS

Grace and peace, sisters and brothers! Two years ago, I was encouraged to discern Franciscan saints to be my patron in the Gospel Life. A series of providential events led me to St Thomas More.

I'm on the RCIA team at my parish, and a candidate ("Dana") asked me to help find a saint for her Confirmation. She wanted an Arabic woman, like herself. Dana was perplexed when she learned of my connection to St Thomas More. I am a Black woman from the Caribbean. What could I have in common with a white Englishman who died in 1535?

A month before this conversation with Dana, I took one of those ancestry DNA kits. My results, which came in a week after talking to Dana, revealed that I'm 19% English. I later learned that my great grandmother was a white woman from England. St Thomas and I could be cousins. Thomas and I were joined years ago as members of Christ's Body. That binds us more than a family or blood connection because nothing, not even death, can sever it. No matter what other labels we carry, we are part of each other.

St Thomas More is the patron saint of politicians and lawyers; two fields that need a Franciscan overhaul. This election is the worst. God willing, we will never have one like it again. Somehow our political affiliations now matter more than our identity as Americans and sisters and brothers in Christ. There's no dialogue, empathy or compassion. We yell **at** each other instead of listening **to** each other. This is directly repugnant to our identity as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

In a homily, St Augustine said, "here is one bread; we, the many, are one body [1 Cor. 10:17] "One bread" - what is this one bread? It is one body formed of many. Remember that bread is not made from a single grain, but from many... Become what you see, and receive what you are: the Body of Christ. When we say "Amen", we are saying "Yes! I believe this is the Body and Blood of Christ and that I will be the Body of Christ to others." Let's all please remember that as we heal our nation and better our world. As one Body. **📖**

An All Souls Day Reflection

## FOR ALL THE DEPARTED

BY R.B. Gittelsohn

In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we remember them.

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, we remember them.

In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.

In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of Autumn, we remember them.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends, we remember them.

When we are wearing and in need of strength, we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.

When we have joys we yearn to share, we remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are part of us, as we remember them **📖**

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Since the 16th century Catholic piety has assigned entire months to special devotions. As a reminder of our duty to pray for the suffering faithful in Purgatory, the Church has dedicated the month of November to the Holy Souls. The Holy Souls are those who have died in the state of grace but who are not yet free from all punishment due to their unforgiven venial sins and all other sins already forgiven for which satisfaction is still to be made. They are certain of entering Heaven, but first they must suffer in Purgatory. The Holy Souls cannot help themselves because for them the night has come, when no man can work (John 9:4). It is our great privilege of brotherhood that we can shorten their time of separation from God by our prayers, good works, and, especially, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

**Prayer:** INVOCATION Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. **📖**



# Mother Cabrini Regional Secular Franciscan Order Celebration

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Techny Towers Conference & Retreat Center  
2001 Waukegan Road  
Techny, Illinois 60082

## Schedule of Events:

- 10:00 AM Sign-In/Registration
- 10:30 AM Speaker: Fr. Anthony Lajato, OFM Conv.  
*St. Bonaventure as a guide for Franciscans today.*
- 12:00 PM Pot-Luck Lunch
- 1:15 PM Mass
- 2:30 PM Evening Prayer and Remembrance of the  
deceased  
brothers and sisters of our regional fraternity.
- 3:30 PM Departure

Each fraternity is invited to bring a food item to share with regional attendees as part of our potluck lunch. Feel free to bring your fraternity banner.

Please RSVP to Barbara Elkins at [viceminister@ilsfo.org](mailto:viceminister@ilsfo.org) by Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup> with the number of people attending from your fraternity and the type of luncheon dish you plan to bring.