

OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order

www.ilsfo.org

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Please note that the views expressed herein represent those of the individual contributors,
and may or may not reflect the collective view of the Region.

Minister's Message

By Lorna Miressi, OFS

Greetings all! It is my hope that you are enjoying your summer. Perhaps you have been taking enjoyable vacations. Maybe you just took a "stay-cation", got work done around your house, or simply relaxed.

Whatever way you have been spending your time, I hope you have appreciated it. In my message to the Region this month, I would like to address the first of two topics which have come to the attention of the Regional Executive Council.

Over the last month, two fraternities in the region were visited by members of the REC. After the visitations took place, it was brought to the attention of the rest of the REC that both fraternity councils were "requesting more 'face time' with the REC.

They also touched on a need for staying connected with other fraternities and the REC" (quote from Barbara Elkins, OFS, vice-minister of the Regional fraternity). Perhaps more of our local fraternities feel the same, yes? As a matter of fact, this is one of the reasons we have visitations; to find out concerns and topics that a fraternity might have which the REC needs to address.

If I may, I would like to offer a couple conceivable solutions to the need for "staying connected with other fraternities". One of these is to try to gather in community with the fraternities that are in your cluster. Each of your fraternity ministers has a Mother Cabrini OFS Regional Fraternity Directory for 2017 which lists, on the inside front cover, the five Clusters of

fraternities that were created according to proximity of each one's location.

Perhaps you might plan a cluster picnic in the summer or a cluster retreat. Another way to stay connected is to participate, whenever it is possible, in our regional gatherings held each year. Each of these gatherings (except for possibly the Mother Cabrini gathering in November which changes location) is held at Mayslake Village, a central location to our region.

I strongly encourage everyone to try to come to our regional gatherings. You may want to carpool, which makes it easier for some to get there and to find a parking place at Mayslake. If you want to come and need a ride, ask your minister to help you get one.

I will be addressing the second topic - more face time with the REC - next month. Until then, I encourage you to try and attend our August 5th Feast of the Portiuncula gathering at Mayslake. Please contact your minister before July 28th if you plan on attending.

In addition, the region is gathering for our Leadership workshop on Saturday September 16th at Mayslake to which anyone in leadership, or interested in being a leader, is welcome. Finally our Mother Cabrini Feast celebration is taking place this year at Mayslake on Sunday November 12th.

May God's peace be with you.
Lorna 

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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 2017

All events are at Mayslake Village unless otherwise noted

~~Saturday, January 21st——
Regional Executive Council Meeting~~

~~Monday, March
6th PerCapita/Census/Fraternity reports due~~

~~Saturday, March 11th——
Regional Executive Council Meeting~~

~~Sat./Sun. March 18-
19th Candidates' Retreat~~

~~Sunday, April 16th Easter~~

~~Saturday May 20th——
Chapter of
Ministers/Visitation from
NAFRA~~

~~Saturday, July 15th
Regional Executive Council Meeting~~

Saturday, August 5th
Regional Gathering – Feast of the Portiuncula

Saturday, September
16th Formation Leadership Workshop

Saturday, October 7th
Regional Executive Council Meeting

NAFRA Chapter – Date and location TBA

Sunday November
12th Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration – Mayslake

Spiritual Assistant's

Message by Bro. Marc S. ofm

Many years ago, I was blessed with the opportunity to spend several weeks in Assisi during my solemn vow retreat. I was able, during this extended time, to visit the many Franciscan sites and places located within and around Assisi. These places were of particular significance to me because of the many stories I had heard and books I had read about the life and events of Saint Francis. I visited San Damiano, which was being used as a novitiate for the friar community of Assisi. It was there that I saw the spot where Saint Clare is said to have passed from this world to her heavenly reward. At the Basilica of Saint Clare, I saw the famous cross of San Damiano; the cross that spoke to Saint Francis and instructed him to rebuild the church that was falling into ruin. Few spots in all of Assisi, except for maybe the tomb of Saint Francis, was more powerful for me than the Portiuncula.

At first glance, the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels was an odd building. It was dark and filled with many people walking every which way and speaking in a variety of different languages. Even more bizarre was the smaller Church that was located inside of this massive edifice. That smaller church, the Portiuncula, stood in the front, center of the basilica and, truthfully, looked rather out of place. As I inched closer, it dawned on me that Saint

Francis once stood exactly where I was standing. As I touched the building, I realized Saint Francis touched these same stones. As I sat in one of the tiny pews praying, and occasionally weeping, I knew Saint Francis had done the exact same things in this same building. The emotions of being RIGHT were Saint Francis had been were so overwhelming and so spiritually moving. I was truly with my brother Francis at that moment.

It is within this context that I stress the importance, wonder, and true Franciscan spirit captured by the upcoming Feast of Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula. It is not simply a great day or just a possible time to gain a plenary indulgence, but our entire region is invited to gather together to commemorate this holy place and celebrate our Franciscan vocations. This year our region will once again gather at Mayslake Village and have the opportunity to listen to the great words of Father Ed McKenzie, our provincial spiritual assistant. We will have the chance to visit with one another and enjoy the community of brothers and sisters that the Little Man of Assisi brought together. We will also pray together, celebrating Eucharist and joining our prayers to that of the entire region and the larger Church. In short, the Mother Cabrini Region is invited to do the most Franciscan thing possible on this holy day, gather together to celebrate community, to pray together, and to better form ourselves to do the work of the Lord. Is that not marvelous and wonderful?

My brothers and sisters, I highly encourage and implore you to attend this regional gathering. It is about more than just the talk and

(Spiritual Assistant's message cont. from prev. page)

more than just Franciscans praying, it is about connecting our lives together, proudly celebrating our Franciscan vocation, and supporting our brothers and sisters on the journey. If you have already registered, I look forward to seeing you there. If you have not, please take the time and consider attending. We are called to serve, called to support one another, and called to be a living witness of the Gospel. This gathering is an opportunity for one to do all three of those without even breaking a sweat. It is my hope and prayer to see as many Franciscans of the region at the gathering!!! God bless you and may the intercession of Saint Mary of the Angels keep us safe from all evil, protected from all harm, and on the proper path of salvation! 📖

IN-FORMATION

Sr. Marilyn Renninger, OSF
Regional Formation Commission

Once I see August on my calendar, I seem to bemoan the fact that summer is going fast and I think about everything I had hoped to accomplish. But, then I think, just bask in the beauty and sacredness of each day as it comes and enjoy it to its fullest.

August gives us Franciscans great opportunities for celebration. I want to mention three. The first is the Feast of St. Mary of the Angels of the Portiuncula, August 2, a feast for all Franciscans. The little church, the Portiuncula, was special to St. Francis and he made it the heart and center of the Franciscan Order. Today it stands in the midst of the glorious Basilica called, Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula. Let us celebrate together on Saturday, August 5, at Mayslake Village.

Second is August 11, the feast of St. Clare of Assisi, St. Francis' co-worker, another feast for all Franciscans. Clare, I believe, more than anyone else, intently and perfectly followed Francis' ideals. Twenty-four hours is not long

enough to celebrate her feast. Therefore, we begin with the Transitus the evening before and remember the last days and hours of her passing from earthly life to eternal life.

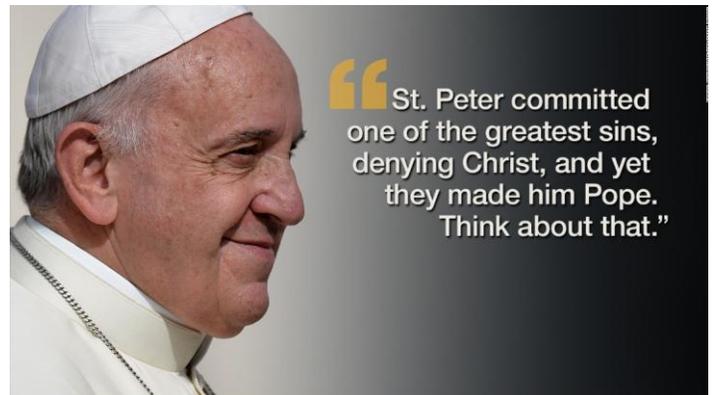
The third is August 25, a special day for Third Order Franciscans, the TOR and OFS for it is the Feast of their patron, St. Louis IX, King of France. He led an exemplary life. The Catholic Encyclopedia says that he was renowned for his charity. *"The peace and blessings of the realm come to us through the poor he would say." Beggars were fed from his table, he washed their feet, ministered to the wants of the lepers, and daily fed over one hundred poor.* He also founded a house for the reformed prostitutes and one for blind men, as well as three hospitals.

Like St. Elizabeth of Hungary, he not only lived during the time of Francis, but was greatly inspired by him and imitated him.

Some questions we want to ask ourselves daily are: "How am I imitating these great Franciscan saints? What am I doing to build the church, the people of God? Am I reaching out to the forgotten, the lonely and the needy? Am I willing to be uncomfortable?"

*"What you hold, may you always hold.
What you do, may always do and never abandon.
But with swift pace, light steps, and unswerving feet,
so that even your steps stir up no dust,
go forward securely, joyfully, and swiftly,
on the path of prudent happiness...
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."*

St. Clare of Assisi 📖



Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

By Luana Leinhart, OFS

Grace and peace, sisters and brothers! The novel and film series *Divergent* takes place in dystopian Chicago, after a particularly devastating war. It was determined that the only way for avoid that again was to divide society into one of five factions, based on personality type and traits considered to be most important.

The people in Abnegation are self-less, and run the government. Candor value honesty, and run the justice system. Erudite value knowledge and its pursuit. They are teachers, and scientists. Dauntless, the brave, provide law enforcement, and Amity, the kind, are the farmers who grow produce and animals.

As the story unfolded, I longed to live in Amity among those committed to kindness; who live in intentional harmony with each other and the land. How lovely not have to deal with people who think differently, or make our lives difficult. Of course, this segregation is directly repugnant to the Gospel.

It's so easy to become siloed by our biases, political parties, our fraternities. Have you ever noticed at that regional gatherings, we tend to sit with our local fraternities? Have you noticed our tendency to sit in cliques at fraternity meetings? Are we sisters and brothers to all Creation, or just our friends? Do we have the humility to admit when we're wrong, or to listen when another idea is contrary to our own? Do we get so hung up on petty differences or grievances that we don't see Jesus in each other? All the time.

How can we be leaven for the world if we're bickering or ignoring each other? How can we live our Rule to the full when we're so siloed and myopic? We can't.

Our Franciscan family comes in all sizes, cultures, political beliefs, and walks of life.

And that is beautiful. We must love each other as Jesus loves us because he told us to, and because he's present among us. He's in all the baptized: the homeless person, the homosexual, the conservative, the liberal, your best friend, and especially in the Franciscan who dances on your nerves. That's not lip service or sentiment; it is our faith and our charism. Let's live it.

We have two regional gatherings coming up: the Portiuncula and Mother Cabrini feast celebrations. What a glorious opportunity to sit with a sister or brother you don't know! If not for the main sessions, at least for lunch. Make a new friend. Learn a new name! Be reconciled to someone with whom you've quarreled. We can't be leaven for the world in isolation, so let's reach out, and be of good cheer.

"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I do not need you.' ... so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy." 1 Corinthians 12:21-22, 24-26. 

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity members cordially invite you and the members of the Steger and Joliet Fraternities to our annual cluster picnic this August. Please let us know if you and your members plan on attending by August 1, 2017. We look forward to sharing in the fun with our brothers and sisters! Enjoy the summer weeks ahead!

Peace and all things good,
Rosalie Leitelt, OFS
Secretary

"Only to do the right and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Mi 6:8) 

Youth and Young Adults

Bob Burham OFS

As I prepare for my trip to St. Louis to join the National OFS Gathering on the Topic of Youth, I've learned three points that will guide me as I continue to minister to youth and young adults (YYA):

Youth outreach is a priority. "The OFS, by its very vocation, ought to be ready to share its experience of evangelical life with the youth who fell attracted to Saint Francis of Assisi and to seek the means of adequately presenting it to them." (General Constitutions, Article 96.1) Sharing our Franciscan vocation with youth and young adults is what we do because it is who we are.

The goal of YYA outreach is not to create future OFS members. Rather, YYA outreach is a service and a ministry. As our General Minister, Tibor Kauser, and the Presidency Councilor for YouFra, Ana Fruk, remind us, "Outreach to youth is a service to youth. It is not an OFS factory." The goal of YYA outreach is to help youth and young adults discern their vocation in life.

There is no specific approach. This service and ministry will take many forms. How a fraternity serves and ministers to youth and young adults will depend on the talents and capabilities of local fraternities. The Holy Spirit will present us with opportunities to serve, each in our own unique way. Our task is to be mindful of what the Holy Spirit might be asking of us and then discern the best way to proceed. I'm excited, honored, and humbled to have been chosen to attend the National Gathering of Youth for the Secular Franciscan Order. I look forward to sharing with you the results of this Gathering, which I hope will empower local fraternities and individual Secular Franciscans to share the Franciscan charism with youth and young adults. In the meantime, you might want to consider the following questions on your own or within your fraternity:

or within your fraternity:

- What does my/our experience of living an evangelical life look like?
- How could I/we explain it to a young person in a way that makes sense to them?
- What stories of St. Francis and St. Clare might resonate with youth today? How might I/we share these stories with them?

May the Lord continue to bless you and give you peace!

Bob 

Pope Francis encyclical on the environment and human ecology, *Laudato Si*,

was the topic of discussion at the St. Francis - St. Louis Fraternity "Day of Recollection".

One question that was asked was, "How can we as Franciscans help the environment in a meaningful way"?

One suggestion was to "To Drive Less or not as often".

That may sound difficult or impossible, especially for those who live in the far suburbs from Chicago. However, there are some practical steps we can actually do that will also be a sign of our charity and compassion for others.

We can start a car pool at our own local Fraternities. Many Fraternities have "Senior Citizens" who can't drive or are no longer able to drive or even do not own a car. You can continue that practice for the Mother Cabrini Celebration and other Regional and Local OFS events.

For those of us who are Senior Citizens, over 65, you can apply for an RTA Reduced Fare Permit that applies to all Public Transportation in the State of Illinois, which includes all METRA, PACE and local city buses. That will allow unlimited Public Transportation at Half Fare everywhere.

If you have Disabled License Plates or are Social Security Disabled you can apply for the RTA Disabled Permit. This allows unlimited Free Public Transportation everywhere in the State of Illinois.

Since most METRA Train stops in the near and far suburbs have parking facilities located at their train stops, you can drive to the train, park your car and take the METRA Train the rest of the way or a combination of METRA Train and local bus all the way to your destination. This is especially true when visiting St. Peter Church or the National Shrine of Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini in Chicago.

The next time we have an event at either St. Peter Church or the National Shrine of Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini, I will explain the full route by METRA Train or CTA Train and local city buses all the way to your destination.

Norman Mosk

St. Francis - St. Louis Fraternity 

YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE

MOTHER CABRINI REGION'S 2017

FRANCISCAN GATHERING CELEBRATING

THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF THE PORTIUNCULA

FEATURING AS GUEST SPEAKER

FR. ED MCKENZIE, OFM, PROVINCIAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT WITH THE

PROVINCE OF THE SACRED HEART, ST. PETER'S CHURCH,

SPEAKING ABOUT

LAUDATO SI' AND THE 3 VOICES OF POPE FRANCIS,

ST. FRANCIS AND FR. PHILIP MARQUARD O.F.M.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2017 - AT MAYSLAKE VILLAGE

1801 35th STREET, OAK BROOK, IL.

REGISTRATION AT 8:30AM-MASS AT 9:00AM

CATERED LUNCH - \$15.00 PER PERSON

YOU CAN BRING YOUR OWN IF YOU PREFER.

FEAST OF THE PORTIUNCULA FRANCISCAN GATHERING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2017
AGENDA

8:30 A.M. REGISTRATION
9:00 A.M. MASS
9:45 A.M. CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
10:15 A.M. ADDRESS
11:45 A.M. LUNCH
1:00 P.M. ADDRESS
2:00 P.M. EVENING PRAYER

(TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE)

ABOUT FR. ED MCKENZIE, OFM

Fr. Ed was ordained in 2011, he was professed in the SFO in 1981. Before that, he was in the minor seminary in Oakbrook, Il. between the years 1963-1967. Most of his life has been spent within the charism that we call "our life with Christ and Francis."

He left the minor seminary in 1967 and soon after that was drafted. His first assignment was with NASA from 1968-1969. He was on the Apollo 11 team flying cover for all of the astronauts. Soon after, he was sent to Vietnam where he worked in combat rescue as a hoist operator on helicopters, an unpleasant time in his life that still haunts him today. He suffers from Post Traumatic Stress, as many combat veterans do. But he is one of the lucky ones in that he has a support group that helps him through it all.

He is on two retreat teams for combat veterans and finds great satisfaction in that God can use his experiences to help others with similar problems. He asks for our prayers and support for this important ministry in our country today.

He joined the First Order in 2003 and journeyed toward priesthood May 5th 2011. He truly loves his priesthood and looks forward to offering his service for the good of the Province and our Region.

HOW TO RSVP (by July 28th)

Please RSVP by Fraternity. It will help us a lot if fraternities could have one person call with the total for your group. Many thanks for your understanding and assistance!

GENERAL INFORMATION, DIRECTIONS AND PARKING

All events will be inside at Mayslake Village; the day will begin in the chapel. Presentations and lunch will be in the Senior Center.

Directions: Get to Route 83 from wherever you're coming from; exit at 31st Street; go west to the first signal (St. Pascal to the left; Regent to the right); turn left and follow to where road dead ends into 35th St.; turn right (only way you can go) and continue to main (chapel) entrance to Mayslake Village (3rd street on your left).

Parking: Suggest parking at chapel entrance first; if that gets full, park in the Senior Center lot (next entrance west on 31st St.); if that's full, drive around to the back of the building facing north in the Senior Center lot-you would find parking at the back of that building.