

OFS News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order

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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

On Saturday September 16th, our region gathered at Mayslake for our annual Formation/Leadership Day. The theme for the day was "Season of Creation".

Our Regional Formation Commission planned and carried out a very informative and interesting day. All who could attend were enlightened as well as challenged by what was said and done.

In the afternoon, Br. Marc Sheckells, our Regional Spiritual Assistant, facilitated reflection and small table discussions on Scripture, quotes from both our General Constitution and our Rule, and words from *The Life of Saint Francis: The Second Book* by Thomas of Celano. We were given three questions to address at our tables. These questions sparked some lively, and thought-provoking discussions.

One of the questions was "What are we doing good in our fraternities (regional and local)?" The answers that came from this question were awesome! Even as Regional Minister, I was not aware of the expanse of all the great activity taking place at local meetings as well as out in the community.

After listening to what was discussed at this workshop, I have decided to give fraternity ministers in our region the opportunity to let everyone know what their fraternity does that is "good".

In the months to come, I will be including, in my minister's message, responses that I receive from various fraternities.

In this way, the region will have the opportunity to hear about all the great things going on and perhaps glean some ideas for their own fraternity.

In order to do this, I am inviting each fraternity minister to briefly send me what you feel your fraternity is doing that is good and that you would like the rest of the region to know about. Please email this to me at minister@ilsfo.org.

Each month I will share with the region what I receive.

In closing I would like to remind everyone about our upcoming The Feast of Mother Cabrini celebration taking place on Sunday November 12th.

There is a detailed flyer/agenda included in this OFS Newsletter with information on the day. I encourage whomever can to attend. What better way to get to know your regional brothers and sisters, as well as your regional council members, than to gather to celebrate such a wonderful woman as St. Francis Mother Cabrini!

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 Bro. Marc Sheckells ofm

Maria was the youngest of thirteen children. She was born two months premature and there were concerns about her health and wellbeing, especially since only four of her 13 siblings lived passed adolescence. Although her health was always in the balance, she had early dreams of travelling and going to new places. Her parents died when she was 20. She tried to apply to the Daughters of the Sacred Heart, but they refused to her admission because of her chronic frail health. Rather than give up, she gathered a small group of women together and remained determine to leave home. Wanting to go East, when seeking advice from a prominent religious figure, she was advised "Not to the East, but to the West." At the age of 29, along with six companions, Maria arrived in New York City. Her travels were difficult, and her reception in New York was even more difficult. Despite this, or perhaps because of her immigration struggles, she committed herself to helping other immigrants who were coming in from her home country, eventually establishing numerous institutions throughout the country. Overcome by complications from dysentery, she died at the age of 67 in Chicago on December 22, 1917.

I share Maria's story because she, like so many people, worked hard to come to the United States. Even after the journey was fruitful and she arrived, the horrible treatment she received as an immigrant shaped her desire to serve those who wore the stigma of being an immigrant. Even today, the journey of immigrant people can be perilous, yet people come here for a wide variety of reasons. This desire to dream, live, and work in the United States has made immigration and immigrants the backbone of our nations since the founding of our country.

Today, the immigration system in our nation, a nation that begs to receive the "tired, poor huddled mass yearning to breathe free" needs a tune up. Most recently, political leaders have called for an end to the program that Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, also known as DACA. This program allowed children who arrived in our country illegally to remain, while also attending school and working, in the United States. I think it is important to say that I do not believe ANYONE is EVER illegal simply because they exist in a foreign land. Pope Francis, in a message issued ahead of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, reminds us that, "every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age." As people who are called to be in solidarity with those who are on the margins, I strongly urge everyone to keep immigrants and immigration as a focus of prayer, action, and mission. These people, who often do not have a voice, need ours to work with and speak for them. Before I end this column, I want to point out that Maria isn't usually known as Maria. Born as Maria Frances Cabrini, she is better known as Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, foundress of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Inspired by the Jesuit missionary Saint Francis Xavier, Saint Francis took the name Xavier in honor him. A champion of all causes immigrant, she fought hard for the rights of immigrants, specifically Italian immigrants. Our region, named after this remarkable saint, will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of her *dies natalis*, the day of her death. My hope and prayer is to see every one there so that we can celebrate the life and mission of this wonderful woman. In the words attributed to Saint Francis, "Start by doing what is necessary; Then do what is possible; Suddenly you're doing the impossible." Mother Cabrini is a shining example of this motto.

Together, we can make a difference and we can continue her cause to help, defend, and fight for the immigrants among us! May God bless you and give you the wisdom to know what is pleasing to Him and the courage to always do it! 🙏

IN-FORMATION

Nicholas Noe OFS

Me and My Stuff

"And I shall say to myself, 'Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat drink and be merry!' But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?' Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God." (Luke 12: 19-21)

A few years ago, I drove to New Orleans for a little sight-seeing and some Dixieland jazz. It was a week after Marti Gras, but not too late for the St. Patrick and St. Joseph parades, which are also big events. One afternoon, I decided to attend 5 pm Mass at St. Louis Cathedral, but it was still a couple of hours before Mass began. A streetcar line ran from The Riverfront Market to Jackson Square so, although not a shopper, I decided a walk through the mall might enable me to catch glimpses of the Mississippi River. As 4:30 pm approached, I looked for a way to exit the mall, but I could not find a stairway or an elevator. My frustration and blood pressure were reaching maximum when I finally found a stairwell, and was able to catch a just-arriving streetcar and make the late-starting Mass.

The next day I reflected upon my experience at the riverfront mall, and the thought struck me that perhaps hell would be nothing more than a long, narrow shopping mall, much like the one I was in the day before. Others would be in the mall-hell, but no one talked, because everyone was so mesmerized by the "stuff" in the display cases and shop windows, and the "stuff" being projected on the TV screens. There would be no exits. Possibly, those who like to "shop until you drop" would think this setting is more like heaven than hell, but in a short time, I am sure they would think differently.

There would be no God, no love, and no connections except with inanimate stuff. My experience at the New Orleans mall and hell came to mind again while attending a Secular Franciscan conference held at St. Bonaventure University this past July. The conference title was

"Developing as a Secular Franciscan Person." The last presentation by Fr. David Couturier OFM Cap, Executive Director of the Franciscan Institute, was on our "consumerist culture," and the "stuff" and "clutter" in our lives. We are depleting the world's resources disproportionately.

If every person in the world consumed as much as we do, the world would have to be three to five times larger than it is. We have only 5% of the world's population, but we generate 30% of the world's garbage. We consume twice as much as we did 50 years ago, and we each make 4.5 pounds of garbage per day. As Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato Si*, we have a "throwaway culture" and our world is beginning to look like a pile of filth.

But before we throw our "stuff" away, we need to put it somewhere. We might actually clutter our living spaces, but our closets, garages, and even public storage units also hold the many things we really don't need. High-rise public storage facilities are becoming more common, and 75% of our garages are so filled with stuff that our cars have to be parked outside. But the impact of all this clutter is not only physical. It requires us to take time to clean it, fix it, move it around, and even protect it. And all this stuff clutters our souls so we have less time for God and others.

Let me end by stating Article 15.3 of our OFS Constitution. I do so hoping that we will begin to discuss in our fraternities just how we can change our lifestyles, live more simply, resist our consumerist culture, and move toward living "sine proprio" in the manner of St. Francis.

"Secular Franciscans should pledge themselves to reduce their own personal needs so as to be better able to share their spiritual and material goods with their brothers and sisters, especially those in need. They should give thanks to God for the goods they have received, using them as good stewards and not as owners. They should take a firm position against consumerism and against ideologies and practices which prefer riches over human and religious values and which permit the exploitation of human person." ¶

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

By Luana Leinhart, OFS

Grace and peace to you in the Lord Jesus! I know my last column was hard for some of you to read. Please believe it was agony to write. If you want to talk about it or anything else, please feel free to contact me for a charitable dialogue.

Now, I have a confession to make. I am a big fan of Bishop Robert Barron. If he ever saw my DVD shelf, he'd think I'm stalker because I own almost everything produced by Word on Fire.

Last week, his podcast, The Word on Fire Show, was on the divide between 'pro life' Catholics and 'social justice' Catholics. The 'pro life' Catholics prioritize abortion and right to life issues above all, and the 'social justice' Catholics prioritize feeding the hungry and institutionalized injustice, like racism. And, apparently, never the twain shall meet. Is our country so entrenched in partisanship that we conform our beliefs to our political parties than our Church? Are we in danger of making politics and political parties our idols?

Why must we be either liberal or conservative? Why can't we love the unborn as much as the undocumented immigrant? We can and do disagree on how to fix the problem of illegal immigration and what should happen to the millions already here, but we must love them as Jesus does. If we can't figure out how to enforce our laws while also recognizing their dignity as God's beloved, then we aren't trying hard enough.

Sisters and brothers, we are called to influence the wider culture; not the other way around. We are leaven in the world! I don't think Jesus ever intended us to pick one issue or camp and devote ourselves exclusively to it.

Catholic Social Teaching has seven themes: Life and Dignity of the Human Person; Call to Family, Community, and Participation; Rights and Responsibilities; Option for the Poor and

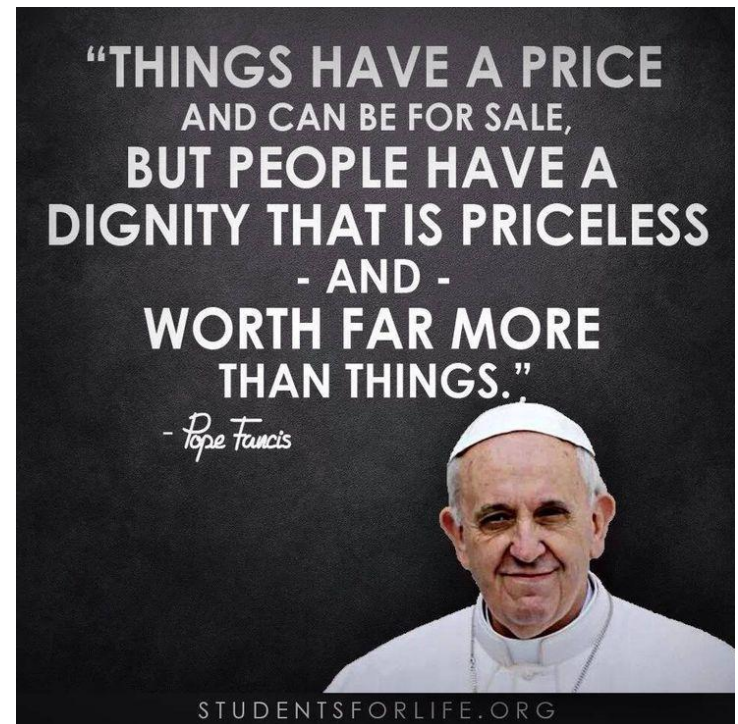
Vulnerable; The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers; Solidarity; Care for God's Creation.

I find myself intrinsically attracted to the same one or two themes because of my life experience, so I will challenge myself to realize the others with intention. I invite you to do the same; a little spiritual workout before we celebrate our Seraphic Father's feast.

The USCCB website

(<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>) has a plethora of resources on each theme and tips for practical ways of implementing them, which is also doing JPIC. It's a two-for-one special! Is there any JPIC-related topic you want me to write about?

Do you want me to come and speak to your fraternity about JPIC-y things? Please let me know. Your sister is at your service. Pax et bonum, y'all!





**Mother Cabrini Regional
Secular Franciscan
Order Feast Day
Celebration**

**Sunday, Nov. 12, 2017
10:00 am to 3:30 pm**

**Mayslake Village
1801 35th Street
Oak Brook, IL 60523**

Join your Sisters and Brothers as we joyfully and prayerfully celebrate the 100th anniversary of St. Frances Cabrini's meeting with Sister Death, which occurred on December 22, 1917, in Chicago.

Mother Cabrini, who founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, had her heart set on being a missionary in China. Instead, the Pope suggested that she "go West, not East" and serve the impoverished Italian immigrants who were flooding the United States. In joyful obedience to the successor of Peter, she became an immigrant on March 31, 1889, when she arrived in New York and began her work with her immigrant brothers and sisters. She was naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 1909.

She encountered much opposition, disappointment and difficulties, yet remained faithful to her mission. In the 28 years until her death, she founded 67 orphanages, schools and hospitals in the United States and South America, before succumbing to dysentery, and dying at Columbus Hospital, which she founded, in Chicago.

Only 21 years later, Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini was beatified on November 13, 1938, after restoring the sight of a baby who had been blinded at birth by an overdose of silver nitrate. The child, Peter Smith, was present at her canonization eight years later, on July 7, 1946, and became a priest.

Registration:	10:00 am
Convocation:	10:30 am
Mass and Rite of Remembrance:	2:00 pm
Departure:	3:30 pm

VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION on page 2

PARKING/CARPOOLING

There will be a 10:30 am Sunday Mass for the residents of Mayslake.

Do not park in front of the chapel or along the driveway leading to it; it is reserved for the residents attending Mass.

Drive past the chapel area to the back of Frigo Hall and there will be parking behind the residences. While there will be sufficient parking, **please consider carpooling as there can be a bit of a distance to walk from the parking areas to the west entrance to Frigo Hall.**

Those less able to walk such distances can be dropped off at the entrance.

FRIGO HALL, MAYSLAKE

Registration will be in Frigo Hall and all the day's festivities will be held in Frigo Hall, with the exception of Mass and the Rite of Remembrance in the afternoon. Direct entrance to Frigo Hall should be made from the west entrance to the building.

POTLUCK

The Mayslake facilities DO NOT have electrical outlets, ovens or refrigeration that would allow us to have a potluck luncheon with dishes that need to be kept hot or cold until lunchtime. A catered lunch will be provided to all attendees.

In the morning, there will be coffee, hot water for tea and bottles of water available. Each fraternity is invited to bring one "morning munchie" item, such as muffins, specialty breads, bagels which will be shared with our brothers and sisters.

R.S.V.P.

Please RSVP to Cecilia Vilorio Schneider, OFS, by **Monday, October 30, 2017**, with the number of people attending from your fraternity and the type of baked goods your fraternity plans to bring.

Thank You.