

September 2018 • Vol. 24, No.10

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 for July 2018

**Lorna Miressi, ofS**

This month I would like all of you to hear about the great work being done by St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity in Joliet. I truly am inspired by what Rose, their minister, has to say. Perhaps some of you may want to join the brothers and sisters in their efforts...

Where are the seculars?

The St Anthony of Padua Fraternity – Joliet members are everywhere. We meet the second Saturday of the month to renew our spirit with prayer, formation and community. During this time, we support each other and work together as a community to share with others. We share our love of God and faith within our communities through a variety of JPIC activities.

Members share their time and compassion with the homebound at Our Lady of the Angels Retirement Home.

A few members made a visit to the inner city with college students and worked as tutors with the children at the Port Ministry. Before leaving they made a stop at their Bread Truck food ministry. It was amazing and humbling to help feed those in need.

One of our members served at an orphanage in Mexico for 6 months.

We collect, hats, gloves, scarves, food and hygiene items and distribute them to St John the Baptist Food Pantry and The House of the Good Shepherd in Chicago.

We collected coats for Puerto Rican Relief victims and the St Gregory the Great Church coat drive and one of our members is sponsoring a parish collection of items for young mothers.

We donate to Birthright and Morningstar Missions in Joliet.

We financially support the "water project" of the Friars of the Sacred Heart Province building wells in Africa. The friars in the Democratic Republic of Congo have sent a request to help fund water wells for two more villages.

We sponsor a table at the BlueStem Earth Festival at the local University of St Francis in Joliet. This is an annual symposium that gathers vendors and groups across Will County to share their

Knowledge on the benefits of being "eco-friendly". Our fraternity shares St Francis' views on the way we should respect the earth.

Working with a student peer minister at University of St Francis we conducted a "Prayer for Peace in Time of Violence: Franciscan Crown Rosary", which included reflections on social justice for each of the Joys of Mary.

We educated ourselves and others on social issues, adapting a session called "Voice of Mercy: Catholics Speaking" for several groups: 1) fraternity formation, 2) 7-8 graders at St. Jude School's Helping Hands Club, and 3) residents of Our Lady of Angels Retirement Center. Our 2018 Day of Reflection, "A New Kind of Fool in the World", focused on the Catholic and Franciscan paradigm for JPIC, using care of creation and immigration as examples. This included a panel discussion of member touched by immigration issues. Several of us attended the screening of the movie, "The Sultan and the Saint" and viewed together, "Pope Francis: A Man of His Word." We wrote letters to Congress on DACA and domestic hunger. Our letters on hunger contributed to about 3,000 letters collected by the Diocese.

We share our love of God and faith nurtured within our fraternity with our communities. Just as we are sent forth at the end of every mass, we are sent forth to our everyday secular life. We go back to our churches and communities continuing to share our love with others. Many of us go back to our parishes and volunteer as Eucharist ministers, lectors, sacristans and catechists. We serve on blood drives, Tootsie Roll drives for people with disabilities, the REACH program, RCIA, Bread for the World Offering of Letters campaigns, food pantries, and transitional housing and so much more. We try to live inspired by St Francis by serving our church wherever we are needed.

Submitted by Rose Marzano 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 2018

All events are at Mayslake Village unless otherwise noted

~~Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>—Regional Executive Council Meeting ?Per Capita/Census/Fraternity reports due~~

~~Saturday March 10<sup>th</sup>—Regional Executive Council Meeting~~

~~Sat./Sun. March 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> Candidates' Retreat~~

~~Saturday May 19<sup>th</sup>—Chapter of Ministers/ Election of New REC~~

~~Summer Seminar, Loretto PA (Date TBA)~~

~~Saturday July 14<sup>th</sup> Regional Executive Council Meeting~~

~~Saturday August 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Gathering—Feast of the Portiuncula~~

Saturday September 15 Formation Leadership Workshop

NAFRA Chapter - Date and Location TBA

Saturday October 6<sup>th</sup> Regional Executive Council Meeting

Sunday November 11<sup>th</sup> Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration - Location TBA

December Chapter of Elections (Date TBA)

## **Spiritual Assistant Message Bro. Marc Scheckells ofm**

The Transitus is coming! As the beginning of the school year becomes a reality and the end of Summer nears, my thoughts immediately focus on the Transitus. As a Franciscan, I must admit that I find this to be among the most exciting holidays of the year. The remembrance and celebration of the passing of Saint Francis stir in me strong feelings of appreciation and consolation. Additionally, I greatly respect how we channel the early Franciscans who mourned the passing of such a saintly, heroic man. The Franciscan family coming together to mourn and celebrate Francis' passing is probably one of the most quintessentially Franciscan things we can do. I cannot speak for every Franciscan, but I have to imagine that most Franciscans feel as strongly as I do.

With those passionate feelings in mind, it comes as no surprise that the Transitus brings together Franciscans of all three of the First Orders. Last year, the three branches of the First Order (OFM's, Capuchins, and Conventuals) came together to plan a touching and remarkable Transitus celebration. This year, the inter-order committee that planned the Transitus wants to extend a special invitation to not just the friars of the First Order, but to all Franciscans.

The plan and goal is to have a place for all Franciscans come together to celebrate the life and passing of holy man of Assisi. In this newsletter is an advertisement for the notable gathering.

It is my hope and prayer that every Franciscan will make an effort to celebrate the Transitus somewhere. There are many wonderful celebrations at various Franciscan places all throughout the area.

If you should find yourself free and wanting to share the special day with other Franciscans, please consider attending this event at Saint Clare of Montefalco Parish. If it is anything like last year's gathering, I am certain you will not regret attending!!! 📖





## IN-FORMATION

By Sr. Marilyn Renninger, OSF  
Regional Formation Commission

Nature and garden images abound in the Scripture as well as in the writings of saints and mystics throughout the centuries. They saw the world as given to us by a creative, generous, and loving God to show us His continual presence.

St. Francis of Assisi and also St. Clare, were lovers of nature. They had a profound love and reverence for everything God created, and like God, saw it all as good, believing that God prepared this world of life, beauty and wonder for his creatures, for us, as gift. St. Francis often broke out in song with praises to God whom he saw in all creation.

St. Teresa of Avila, a contemplative Carmelite, used the image of a garden for a soul. *"What an appealing image,"* she writes, *"to think of my soul as a garden and image that the Lord was taking a walk in it."* (adapted from Collected Works)

Gardening, whether it be in the soil or in ourselves, is one of the few things in which perfection can never be achieved. We work at it every day. It needs time, attention, and cultivation. It needs the sunshine of joy, of hope, and love. If we don't, the weeds take over; in the garden of our hearts, it is the weeds of sin. Also, no living thing can live without water. Neither can our spiritual life be alive without the waters of God's grace, and the waters of Jesus' love and teaching.

So before summer totally flashes past us I suggest that we put on our brakes, stop and see, and touch the reflection of God in the beauty surrounding us. The world that God created is a sacred gift to be carefully nurtured, respected, and cared for. As true Franciscans we sing, "Praise be yours, my Lord, through all that you have made" as we gaze on plants and flowers, hills and mountains, water and sky. If you haven't yet taken the time to just take a

with the Divine Gardener, do so, and immerse yourself in your surroundings, look at the signs of growth, take in the smells and the sounds and praise the Lord! Then sit down and reflect on the following:

What is the Divine Gardener doing in my soul?

What weeds is He pulling?

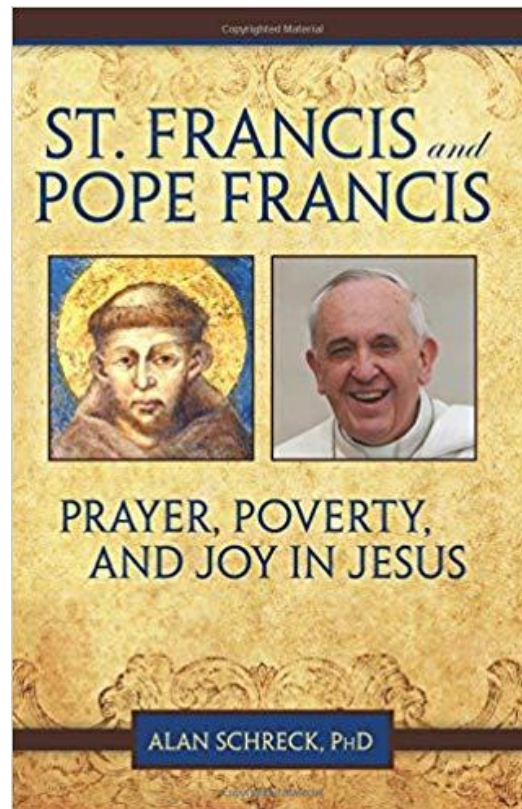
What good seeds is He planting in me?

What will I do to water them so they bud and flower?

Enjoy the rest of the summer. Fall is on the horizon.  
Peace and all good! 🙏

On Saturday, November 17, 2018, at 10:00 AM our Spiritual Assistant, Bro. Ed Tverdek, will be Ordained a Priest at St. Peter Church. Everyone is welcome to attend the Ordination and Reception afterwards – Note:

*Bro. Ed Tverdek currently serves as Spiritual Assistant to the St. Francis - St. Louis Fraternity at St. Peter Church in downtown Chicago.*



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

Luana Lienhart of

*Gaudium et Spes* begins with this phrase: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts."

Nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. I've thought a lot about those words the last few months as I've lamented our every growing political tribalism and it seems the more people are locked in to their tribes, there's a widening gap with our ability to empathize with those different from ourselves.

It's been almost a year since Puerto Rico was ravaged by a hurricane, and the island of American citizens has only recently had full restoration of electricity. This would be an outrage if it had been anywhere on the mainland US, and only some of us seemed to care. The Charlottesville riots last year.

The separation of children from their parents at our southern border with no plan to reunite them.

Unknown numbers of Native American women raped and killed each year on or near their reservations. Unknown because our government doesn't bother counting them. They can't file charges against their attackers because reservations don't have jurisdiction over non-reservation residents.

A segment of our population claims there's a war on Christmas, but ignores hate crimes against Muslims and Jews. And now the stories emerging from Pennsylvania which sadden and infuriate us.

I know we can't all effectively challenge all the ills in our world, but shouldn't we at least feel *something*? Is our political tribalism so pervasive that we can only have compassion for those who voted like us? Must we always cling to defensiveness when we're challenged or corrected? The Bible refers to this as a kindness, but we respond with 'What about...'. As if pointing out someone else's bad behavior or hypocrisy nullifies the argument, or excuses the other side's sins.

The only side we should want to be on is the side to whom Jesus will say 'You did it for me'. By the way, Flint Michigan still has a clean water crisis. Let's forget this tribalism and stop blaming and name calling. Let's roll up our sleeves and get to work. **T**



Please join in our 2018 Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity  
Study Day / Leadership Workshop & celebration of the

# 'the RULE'

as we celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary since its 1978 approval by Blessed Paul VI. Regional and local council members are invited to attend, as are those interested in future council roles - all are welcome!

*'The Rule of 1978 is an inspirational document, which expresses who we are, and to whom we belong, and it points us to the Gospel and love of God, neighbor and creation as a way of life...It identifies the world as the place where we as brothers and sisters, led by the Spirit, strive for perfect charity in our own secular state. The world is our home and our mission field, and we are stewards of its resources and responsible for its care.'* – the FUN Manual

When: Saturday September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 8:30am -3:00pm.

Where: Mayslake Village at 1801 35th Street  
Oakbrook, Illinois, 60523.

Lunch: \$15 (no charge if you bring your own)



**Please RSVP no later than FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7<sup>th</sup>  
to [formation@ilsfo.org](mailto:formation@ilsfo.org)**

When providing your response, please include your name, and fraternity.  
A headcount is needed to ensure we have enough food for all in attendance.

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity  
Study Day / Leadership Workshop 2018!



**'the RULE'**

Saturday September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
Mayslake Village: 1801 35<sup>th</sup> St. Oakbrook, IL

This year we focus on the Franciscan Rule in honor of its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary since its 1978 approval by Blessed Paul VI. Regional and local council members are invited to attend, as are those interested in future council roles.

**The Agenda:**

Registration	8:30 am
<b>Mass</b>	9:00 am
Continental Breakfast	9:45 am
<b>Welcome Address</b>	10:15 am
<b>Keynote</b>	10:20 am
Stretch Break	10:50 am
<b>Keynote</b>	11:00 am
Workshop Group Activity	11:30 am
<b>Keynote</b>	12:00 noon
Lunch; \$15 catered and delicious <i>(no charge if you bring your own)</i>	12:30 noon
<b>Keynote</b>	1:30 pm
<b>Ministers Address</b>	1:50 pm
Stretch Break & Cookies	2:20 pm
<b>Leadership Breakout Sessions or Keynote</b> Ministers & Vice Ministers Formation Directors Secretaries Treasurers Spiritual Assistants	2:30 pm
<b>Closing</b>	3:00 pm

*We expect to end no later than 3:00pm*

Organized by the Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity Formation Commission:

- Kristi Loar OFS, Regional Formation Director
- Lorna Miressi OFS, Regional Minister
- Nick Noe OFS, Commission Member
- Sister Marilyn Renninger OSF, Commission Member
- Brother Marc Sheckells, OFM Commission Member
- Luana Leinhart, OFS, Commission Member!

*The Franciscan Friars of the First Order (OFM, OFM Conv., OFM Cap.)  
Invite you to join us for a celebration of the*

# **TRANSITUS OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**



**Wednesday, October 3, 2018  
6:00 PM**

**St. Clare of Montefalco Church  
2640 W. 55<sup>th</sup> Street  
Chicago, IL 60632**

*A reception will follow in the gymnasium.*