

SFO News

Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the
Secular Franciscan Order

www.ilsfo.org

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Minister's Message

by Vickie Klick, SFO

Dear brothers and sisters,

As you should all know by now, we are receiving monthly "dossiers" of ongoing formation materials from CIOFS (the overall leadership of the Secular Franciscan Order). These "dossiers" include a section on the social doctrine of the Church, because the General Chapter in 2008 identified this as an area in which we need to grow in understanding. I was pleased to discover that the August materials actually address a doctrine that is very important to the way we govern the SFO.

The topic for August was subsidiarity. My simple way of looking at this technical term is that problems should be solved at the lowest possible level, by the people closest to the problem. In our political system, that means that something that can be done by a local government should be done there, rather than by the state or federal government. In the governance of the SFO, it means that local issues should be handled by local fraternities, regional issues by regional fraternities, etc. That seems pretty obvious, but it may be harder to see it that way when you want an issue to be resolved by someone else and it comes back to you! It is important, however, to avoid the temptation to quickly "fix" problems by imposing a solution from above, when in fact the people involved need to do the work (possibly with outside support) to come to a lasting solution.

On the other hand, there are some situations where a higher level fraternity sees the need to intervene because a serious problem is not being resolved. One of the reasons we have regularly scheduled visitations of every fraternity is to ensure that such problems are caught and addressed promptly. Even in those cases, subsidiarity will guide the higher level fraternity to do only as much as absolutely

necessary to ensure that the problem is resolved, and leave the rest to those involved.

Obviously, not everything can or should be decided at the local fraternity level - we wouldn't be an Order then, because everyone would just do their own thing. The challenge of subsidiarity is to balance a common direction with local adaptation, recognizing that one size does NOT fit all.

The CIOFS ongoing formation materials are an example of something that was deemed important enough to create and deliver to ALL Secular Franciscans worldwide! However, the way in which these materials are *used* is still up to the local fraternity.

Similarly, CIOFS has created new initial formation materials which are to be used worldwide, but our National Formation Commission is busy customizing the materials for use in the United States, and ultimately each fraternity will adapt the materials to the particular needs of its formation program. In both of these cases, a major topic (formation) was deemed to need a common approach for the whole SFO, but the details are left to lower levels to work out in accordance with their specific needs. THAT is subsidiarity.

I'm sure you can see that the balance between common direction and local adaptation can be an area where well-intentioned people may disagree. One person's necessary intervention may be another's authoritarianism. All of us, however, can take subsidiarity to heart and do our best to recognize how each of us can take personal action to make our own fraternities the best Franciscan "communities of love" they can be.

Peace and good, Vickie 

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The SFO News is the official publication of the Mother Cabrini Regional Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order.

Submission deadline is the
20th of each month.

CALENDAR

Unless otherwise indicated, all events are at Mayslake Village (Oak Brook).

* Election & Visitation dates subject to change.

February

14: Elections, St. Bernardine Siena

March

- 01: Fair Share, Census, and Annual Reports due
- 07: Elections St. Mary of the Angels at the Port
- 14: Visitation, St. Maximillian Kolbe
- 27: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.

April

- 10: Candidates' Retreat, Day 1
- 11: Elections St. Francis St. Louis
- 18: Visitation, St. Anthony of Padua, East Side

May

- 01: Candidates' Retreat, Day 2
- 15: Chapter of Ministers
- 16: Visitation, Nuestra Sra. de Guadalupe

June

26: Elections, St. Clare Kankakee

July

- 10: Leadership Workshop
- 17: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 18: Elections, St. Francis Assisi Crystal Lake
- 25: Elections, St. Anthony of Padua, Rockford
- 25: Visitation, St. Anthony Padua, Oak Lawn

August

07: Regional Gathering, Feast of the Portiuncula

September

- 11: Elections, St. Anthony Padua, Joliet
- 17-19: Regional Retreat, The Port, Frankfort
- 26: Elections, St. Francis of Assisi, Steger

October

- 3: Elections, Living Waters Korean Fraternity
- 16: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 19: Elections, Brother Jacoba Community
- 26-31: NAFRA Meeting

November

13: Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration (St. Peter's Church in the Loop)

Spiritual Assistant's Message

by Br. Joe Middleton, OFM

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I begin this article it is one month until I depart for my long awaited study pilgrimage to the Franciscan holy land. I will be participating with a group of about twenty pilgrims from all the branches of the Franciscan family from around the world. We will travel together for a month as we visit the well known and even many of the less well known sites of Francis' life journey.

We will spend a few days in Rome where we will visit the places special to Francis and today's Christians. Then we head to Greccio where we will visit the chapel and compound which was built on the site of that first Christmas nativity scene inspired by Francis. We will also visit other places there in the Rieti valley. From there we journey up to Assisi for about two and a half weeks. Ah! We will have the added thrill (I suppose) of being there for the Transitus and the great feast day of our holy father, Francis. I'll tell you all about it when I return.

I am particularly excited to be staying in Assisi for such a nice slice of time. And, after that nice slice of time I will return to Rome for another week. I will stay at the Franciscan Curia and from there I will cram as much Italian life and food into myself as is possible. There's even talk of a bullet train to Venice for a day or two with a possible visit to Padua. We'll see.

Now I'm not telling you any of this to make you jealous. I just wanted you to hear about my good fortune and where I am going and

to let you know why you probably won't hear from me in October. The other thing I wanted you to know is this declaration:

My particular and private goal and mission will be to seek out information and insight concerning the presence of the third order from the early times in these Franciscan places as well as what the modern day Italian Secular Franciscans are doing. I also want you all to know that in, particular, I will be carrying The Mother Cabrini Region of the SFO with me in my heart and my thoughts.

You will be remembered by me all over the Franciscan holy land especially on the feast. I ask that you pray for my safety and well being while I am away.

You haven't heard the last about this I promise you.

Your pilgrim Brother Joe ofm ☒

Recent Fraternity Election: Congratulations to Newly Elected Council Members:

St. Anthony Padua, Rockford

Minister	Joseph Scordato
Vice Minister	Cindy Strom
Secretary	Maureen Scordato
Treasurer	Gail Vannetter
Formation Director	Darlene DeSchipper

In Memoriam

Please pray for Eva Kovacevich, from St. Francis/St. Louis fraternity who died on June 15th. May God grant our sister eternal light, happiness, and peace and give comfort and hope to their grieving relatives and friends. Amen.

Ministers: remember to use our SFO Wake service when one of your members passes away. It is a beautiful service and will give great comfort to the family.

In-Formation

By Patrick Mendes, SFO
Regional Formation Director

I thought it would be good for us this month, to begin to reflect on our Profession in the SFO, in preparation for our Regional retreat. Not to worry...I'm not going to "steal the thunder" from the presentations of our incredibly gifted Retreat Director, Fr. Richard Trezza, OFM! My goal is to "set the mood" and get us thinking about the subject.

Let's begin with reflecting on the meaning of the Tau, our SFO symbol. We read in the *Major Legend of St. Francis* written by St. Bonaventure, the following: "The holy man (Francis) venerated this symbol with great affection, often spoke of it with eloquence and signed it with his own hand in the letters he sent, as if his whole desire were, according to the prophetic text, "to mark with a Tau the foreheads of those moaning and grieving" (Ezekiel 9:4) over the evils occurring in their day.

Francis was a faithful follower of the gospel and wished for us, his brothers and sisters, to follow his example of being truly converted to Jesus Christ

Article 4 of our Holy Rule reads: *The rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St. Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and with people.*

By our Baptism, we become children of God. By our Profession we promise to strive to live our baptismal promises more perfectly and to observe the Gospel in the manner shown us by our Holy Father Francis. It is the call to conversion, which we must strive for each day...the constant turning toward the Lord.

We have been given our vocations by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit gives us the grace each day, to make today a better day than yesterday, for ourselves and those around us. We are a people set apart; brothers and sisters on the Gospel journey in a very special way.

As we go each day from Gospel to life and life to Gospel, let us take some time to reflect on how we are answering the call to conversion, praying God's guidance and blessing for us and for our brothers and sisters.

I look forward to joining you on retreat as we listen to Fr. Richard offer insights and encouragement as we live the life we have professed.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus surround you with His love and fill your lives with His abundant blessings. ☒

JPIC

by Stephanie Sormane, SFO
Councilor for JPIC

The following article was recently distributed by Franciscan Action Network (FAN). I thought it a good idea to share it with you all because I think it's worthy of your attention and also gives you a very good idea of the way in which FAN addresses these important issues.

REFLECT

First, please review the readings for the 21st and 22nd Sundays in Ordinary Time (August 22 and 29). Our Sunday Gospels have been coming to us from Luke for the last several weeks. One of the themes in the 21st Sunday readings is the stranger from afar, and sharing the Good News with him. She comes, gathered by the LORD (in Isaiah) to see God's glory; the psalm, exhorts us to "Go out to all the world and tell the Good News." In this time where much emphasis is placed on fear, what Good News are we sharing with the world? Are we sharing the Good News of a God who gathers all of the nations together, a God of love, a God who calls the people from the "east and the west and from the north and the south ... (to) recline at table in the kingdom of God"?

Our God is not a God of fear, for as Timothy tells us, "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and sound mind." (2 Tim 1:7) If we have been called to share this Good News with the world, are we living in such a way, that people are drawn to the Good News, as people were drawn to Francis and Clare?

We are called to embrace the immigrant, to hear his and her story, to share our story with them. It is only in this shared living of lives, that we can truly live out of love, for as we begin to welcome the stranger, they no longer are stranger, but rather, they are known.

JPIC

By Stephanie Sormane, SFO
Councilor for JPIC
(Continued from page 3)

The 22nd Sunday's readings continue this theme. The psalm claims, "God, in your goodness, you have made a home for the poor" and in the Gospel, Jesus tells us a parable about attending a wedding banquet. Jesus continues by calling us to invite "the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind" to the banquet we host. These people, those who are minors, are the ones with whom we are called to share our abundance. On August 21, we celebrated the feast day of Pius X, who was a third order member of the Franciscans. Pius X had a heart for the poor and was known to have said, "I was born poor, I have lived poor, and I wish to die poor." Let us try to welcome those who seem different from us, especially the poor.

ACT

While FAN continues to work for comprehensive immigration reform (CIR), we are now also putting our energy into the DREAM Act, in conjunction with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Justice for Immigrants (JFI). The DREAM Act is NOT a substitute for CIR; however it is an important component.

What is the DREAM Act? It is a measure that was introduced on March 26, 2009 by Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) that would serve to provide legal status and educational opportunities to those who entered the U.S. as minor children. To learn more, visit www.usccb.org and search for Justice for Immigrants. You are encouraged to contact your representative and senators in Congress to support the DREAM Act. You can do that easily on the FAN web site - www.franciscanaction.org.

PRAY

An interfaith group, sponsored by The New Sanctuary Movement, gathers together on the first Thursday of each month at 12:00p.m. in front of the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They gather in prayerful solidarity with families who have been affected by deportation. The service lasts about a half-hour and includes songs, petitions, the reading of the names of people deported or waiting to be deported, and a closing prayer.

FAST

As an example, the Wheaton Franciscans (also an institutional member of FAN) joined in efforts of faith communities around the country by fasting on July 13 for immigration reform, concluding with an evening prayer service in the Motherhouse chapel.

God give you Peace!

Monica Herald

FAN Outreach & Communications Manager

www.franciscanaction.org ☒

News from "Around the Region"

By Gloria Huerta - Editor

Joann Lipka Minister of **St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity** in Oak Lawn shared the following:

On August 22nd Kathleen Michalak and Christine Konie were professed as new members. On that same day, Marita Finley celebrated her 50th Anniversary in the SFO.

On **Sunday, October 24th**, the fraternity is hosting a day of recollection conducted by Fr. Benet Fonck, ofm. The topic is "Secular Franciscans in a Secular World". The cost for the day is \$10 for food and materials.

St. Thomas More Korean Fraternity celebrated their first professions on June 27th at Mayslake Chapel. The newly professed are Hyung Ja Helen Bae, SFO, Sun Im Fabiana Han, SFO, Ji Eun Agnes Kim, SFO, Eun Mi Angela Park, SFO, Eun Ju Christina So, SFO.

St. Francis Fox Valley Fraternity had two members profess in May...Kristi Loar, SFO and Mary Sparks, SFO. Kristi does the fraternity's newsletter and is a Religious Ed Coordinator in her parish. Mary Sparks was formerly a third order Franciscan religious and has been very active in justice areas since she left her order and feels she has come full circle with her SFO profession.

And just recently, on August 28th, at the annual outdoor potluck meeting, the fraternity celebrated the golden jubilee of their Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Jonathan Foster, ofm.

If you have something you'd like to share in the *SFO News*, please email me at sfonews@ilsfo.org. I hope to feature much more news in the months to come. ☒