

## Minister's Message

by Vickie Klick, SFO

Dear brothers and sisters,

I hope your summer is going well, despite the current heat wave as I write this. I hope you have found some time to slow down and recharge - or that you will before the summer is over.

As professed Secular Franciscans, we have promised to follow the SFO Rule. It's easy to forget that the Rule itself commits us to far more than just the Rule itself! I tend to go quickly over Article 3 of the Rule, but let's look at it now (*italics mine*):

Rule 3. The present rule, succeeding "Memoriale Propositi" (1221) and the Rules approved by the Supreme Pontiffs Nicholas IV and Leo XIII, adapts the Secular Franciscan Order to the needs and expectations of the Holy Church in the conditions of changing times. Its interpretation belongs to the Holy See and *its application will be made by the General Constitutions and particular statutes.*

This means that by professing our Rule, we have also committed ourselves to the General Constitutions and the National and International Statutes, because they tell us how to apply the Rule. This is made clearer by Article 4 of the General Constitutions themselves:

4.1. The SFO is governed by the universal law of the Church, and by its own: the Rule, the Constitutions, the Ritual, and the particular statutes. [*Note that the Ritual is part of our governing documents as well.*]

4.2. The Rule establishes the nature, purpose, and spirit of the SFO.

4.3. Rule 3 The Constitutions have as their purpose:

- ❖ to apply the Rule;
- ❖ to indicate concretely the conditions for belonging to the SFO, its government, the organization of life in fraternity, and its seat.

It should be clear by now that if we don't know our Constitutions, we don't know how to live our life as Secular Franciscans. I echo the words of Blessed John Paul II to the Tenth General Chapter of the SFO in 2003, "study, love and live your General Constitutions!" The General Constitutions and National Statutes are readily available at the NAFRA website, <http://www.nafra-sfo.org>. The General Constitutions document includes links to Polish, Portuguese, Korean, and Vietnamese translations; the Statutes are also available in Korean. The Rule, Constitutions, International Statutes, International version of the Ritual, and Statutes for Spiritual Assistance are available in the four official languages of the SFO (Italian, French, Spanish, and English) at <http://www.ciofs.org/a9enodoc.htm>.

Electronic copies of these documents allows the reader to search for a reference to a particular article of the Rule in the Constitutions (such as the reference to Rule 3 above), making it easy to cross-reference the Rule and the Constitutions (and the Statutes as well). However, a printed copy can be easier to read. A good resource is the *Essential Documents of the Secular Franciscan Order*, available with the order form on the last page of TAU-USA. If you are professed and not receiving TAU-USA, let you minister know. TAU-USA is available electronically at the NAFRA website mentioned above. I encourage you to take a good look at the entire list of NAFRA publications listed on that page, including Fr. Lester Bach's latest formation book, *The Franciscan Journey*. Many of the books have significant bulk discounts; consider making a fraternity order!

May your study of the Constitutions help you follow Christ more closely in the spirit of Francis and Clare.

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.

**CALENDAR**

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

- **Election & Visitation dates subject to change.**  
(E=Election/V=Visitation)

**January**

- 15: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 17: San Jose Fraternity (E)

**February**

- 15: St. Junipero Serra (V)
- 26: Apostolates Workshop

**March**

- 01: Fair Share, Census, and Annual Reports due
- 14: NW Franciscan Community (V)
- 19: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.

**April**

- 2: Candidates' Retreat, Day 1
- 17: St. Thomas More (E)

**May**

- 07: Candidates' Retreat, Day 2
- 12-15: National Formation Workshop, Belleville, IL
- 21: Chapter of Ministers - Fraternal & Pastoral Visitation

**June**

- 07: St. Clare Fraternity (Oak Brook) (V)
- 12: St. Juliana Fraternity (V)
- 23/ Summer Seminar - "Fraternity"
- 26: Loretto, PA
- 26: St. Anthony Padua (East Side) (E)

**July**

- 10: St. Elizabeth of Hungary (V)
- 10: St. Maximillian Kolbe (E)
- 16: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 23: St. Francis of Assisi Fox Valley (V)

**August**

- 06: Regional Gathering, Feast of the Portiuncula
- 07: St. Bernardine of Siena (V)

**September**

- 17-18: Regional Formation Workshop for Ministers/ Formation Directors
- 18: St. Mary of the Angels (V)

**October**

- 02: St. Francis/St. Louis (V)
- 15: Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 25-30: NAFRA Meeting

**November**

- 13: Mother Cabrini Feast Day Celebration (location TBD)

**Spiritual Assistant's Message**

by Br. Joe Middleton, OFM

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Unless I am mistaken, which is entirely possible, I believe that I have finally visited every Secular Franciscan Fraternity in the Mother Cabrini Region. These encounters are generally centered on the occasions of the pastoral visitation which are scheduled every three years, or to witness the fraternity's elections which also occur in three year cycles.

Then there have also been many wonderful experiences that we have shared as we gathered for the numerous celebrations and special events sponsored by the region. And I believe it is worth mentioning at this point that from my wide experience of the SFO there is a great benefit to being connected in a region as compact as The Mother Cabrini Region is. Because of this, we are able to gather more easily, and so we frequently do. All of this combined with the recent occasion of the region's visitation from the National Fraternity (NAFRA) compels me to earnestly proclaim that, from my perspective, what we have here is very good. I have seen it with my own eyes. I can testify without reservation to the strong, able and prepared leadership we have available to us here. This Regional Executive Council (REC) is deeply motivated as well as creative in their designs for our activities and the direction of our movement toward a closer union with God in the footsteps of St. Francis.

We have several mature and well-established fraternities that have come to their grace-filled golden years with a history of full and rich experiences who demonstrate such fine values. It is an honor to be in their company. Therein I have found a worthiness and generosity of applied Franciscan Spirit.

We are also blessed by the presence of a number of fraternities more recently established who have become beacons of Franciscan Light to our region based in great part by their faithfulness, passion, and zeal. I find this familial growth to be a gift of encouraging hope and farsighted vision. When I am among them I gratefully thank God that He gives us each other as brothers and sisters.

There are more than a few fraternities in our region that are small and intimate where deep sharing occurs and where Franciscan Hearts are developed and encouraged. They have the potential of having close contact with each other as well as with others in their cluster and even in the region. I find again and again in small Franciscan faith communities that there are many occasions when, because of the contact with God's good people, my heart burns within me and if you know me at all you will know that to me this is a true and wondrous sign that God is present and that we are indeed on holy ground.

One more thing that I would list as a great blessing that streams from this region is the fair representation of The Franciscan World present. Those of European extraction are certainly well represented; a few are of African ancestry. There are plenty of brothers and sisters from the Philippines, as well as other parts of Asia. We have the proud distinction of having two Korean Fraternities in our region and two Hispanic Fraternities as well. This diversity allows us the benefit of a rich cultural infusion and I might add, to my delight, some interesting good food when we gather. Perhaps in words not directly attributed to St Francis, but certainly words he would agree with, I will end by simply saying – it's a wonderful world.

With my best wishes I remain  
your Brother Joe ☒

**In-Formation**

By Patrick Mendes, S.F.O.  
Regional Formation Director

**An Exciting New Era for Initial Formation**

Initial Formation will be taking on a whole new approach as we begin to implement the Universal Standardized Formation Program as directed by the General Presidency of the Secular Franciscan Order.

Following the extensive work and research done by the International Formation Commission and the great work done by our National Formation Commission, we are ready to embark on this exciting new, integrated approach to initial formation for our Inquirers and Candidates across the whole world! The 405,000 Professed Secular Franciscans world wide have welcomed this exciting, creative and much anticipated program of formation, which will fully explain and teach our Secular Franciscan charism in a thorough, balanced and faithful manner.

All of the Regional Ministers and Formation Directors across the USA gathered at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL this past May for the unveiling of the new *For Up to Now (FUN)* Manual, which is a comprehensive resource for formation directors in every Fraternity in the USA. It is not a textbook for those in Formation, but rather a thorough reference manual for those whose ministry is formation. This rich and complete work will be made available to all the formation directors, ministers and spiritual assistants of our Mother Cabrini Region at our September workshop for Ministers, Formation Directors, Formation team members and spiritual assistants.

At that time, the members of the Regional Formation Commission will demonstrate the use of a model curriculum which can be followed by local fraternities, or they are free to develop their own, so long as all of the areas required by the Minister General and the General Presidency of our Order are covered during the time of Initial Formation.

Please pray for us as we prepare to launch this exciting new venture in the Initial Formation Process. With the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we will be able to teach and share our unique Secular Franciscan Charism with generations to come.

In late breaking news, we were informed that the FUN Manual has been translated into Spanish and will be made available to us soon. It is expected that it will also be translated into Korean and perhaps other languages as well.

Let us offer a prayer of thanks for the Formation Commissions (International and National) for their hard work and dedication that have brought us this incredible resource and new approach to Initial Formation. **¶**

**New Spiritual Assistant Appointment**

Congratulations to Patrick Mendes, SFO on his recent appointment as Spiritual Assistant of NW Franciscan Community of Immaculate Heart of Mary. As most of you know Patrick is the Regional Formation Director and has been a Secular Franciscan 50 years. He is incredibly generous with his treasure, time, and talent and our Region has been and continues to be blessed by his leadership. **¶**

**Congratulations to Newly Elected Council Members:**

**St Anthony East Side**

- Minister Dorothea Alfini, SFO
- Vice Minister Gloria Chavez, SFO
- Secretary Marie Szymanski, SFO
- Treasurer Marie Szymanski, SFO
- Formation Director Dorothea Alfini, SFO

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**St Maximillian Kolbe**

- Minister Peggy Esposito, SFO
- Vice Minister Muriel Baum, SFO
- Secretary Diane Jacobson, SFO
- Treasurer Welly Madinaveitia, SFO
- Formation Director Caryn Habley, SFO

**Novena in Honor of St. Clare - 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year**

The Poor Clares of Immaculate Conception Monastery warmly invite you to participate in the annual novena in honor of St. Clare, beginning Tuesday, August 2 at 7:30p.m. and concluding on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. The feast day Mass will be celebrated at 8:30 a.m. in the Monastery on Thursday, August 11<sup>th</sup>.

Beginning August 11 the sisters will celebrate a year of Jubilee culminating on August 12, 2012, the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Clare's decision on Palm Sunday 1212 to begin her life following in the footsteps of St. Francis.

In honor of this milestone anniversary, Pope Benedict XVI has granted a special plenary indulgence for this commemorative year. This indulgence can be obtained not only by those who go on pilgrimage to Assisi, but also to all who take part in any of the special celebrations in honor of St. Clare in any Poor Clare monastery. Those unable to travel or confined to their homes may gain the indulgence by uniting spiritually with these services. Attached is a link to the Holy Father's decree <http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/apoorclares.htm>.

The address of the Monastery is 12210 Will Cook Road in Palos Park, IL.

**JPIC News – FAN Workshop in Milwaukee – Part 2!**  
**By Stephanie Sormane, SFO**  
**JPIC Councilor**

The FAN workshop is next week, and if everyone from this Region shows up that said they would, we will have six people there. For a workshop taking place out of our area, that's not too bad. We just received the agenda, and I would like to share it with the Region so you know what happens at these meetings:

**Effective Action for Justice in the Spirit of Saints Francis & Clare**

St. Francis Capuchin Center  
1927 N 4<sup>th</sup> St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53212-3611

**Tuesday, July 26**

Welcome and Centering Prayer  
9:00 a.m. Introductions: Hearing from Everyone in  
9:45 the Room  
Break  
10:40 Story-telling and One-on-One Relational  
12:45p.m. Meetings  
1:45 Lunch  
2:00 Personal Reflection: Ken Beattie, SFO  
3:30 A Spirituality of Power  
4:00-5:00 Discussion  
Free time  
5:30 Eucharistic Liturgy  
Dinner

**Wednesday, July 27**

9:00 a.m. Prayer  
9:30 Power Analysis and Upcoming  
10:40 Opportunities  
11:50 Developing Plans in Teams  
Evaluation

Some additional information:

- One-on-one relational meetings are a basic tool of citizens' organizations. Citizens' organizations are formed specifically to organize citizenry, usually through religious and other non-profit organizations, to help the membership help themselves. The project(s) can be almost anything. If you'd like an example of a local citizens' organization and the activities they've undertaken, go to [www.dupageunited.org](http://www.dupageunited.org).
- Ken Beattie, SFO is the immediate past Regional Minister of LaVerna Region (most of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan). Ken has been involved with FAN since the first meeting in Baltimore in 2007.

- The Spirituality of Power and Power Analysis and Upcoming Opportunities – power has to do with our ability to organize so we can accomplish something; it has nothing to do with overcoming others.

That should give you some idea of what is happening in Milwaukee on July 26 and 27. I look forward to reporting what happens.

Meanwhile I received some materials from Kent Ferris, SFO, our JPIC National Councilor, with respect to Fair Trade products offered by Catholic Relief Services (CRS). There are actually a number of Fair Trade companies who offer their products through CRS. This was all new to me; my parish sells Fair Trade products but we order them from Equal Exchange. The most common products are coffee, tea, and chocolate. Some companies sell various crafts as well. What's so great about Fair Trade products is the "middle man" is bypassed; and in so doing, the farmers and craftsmen who produce these products have a chance of making a living. With coffee, for example, growers who work with the large coffee corporations only make about 25 cents per pound of coffee beans. (Remember, coffee beans must be picked by hand.) However, those who work for Fair Trade companies make about \$1.25 per pound – a huge difference – which allows the farmers to provide for their families (very simply) and to allow their children to go to school.

In going over the information Kent sent me, one needs to choose the company they would like to work with, and then make contact. I will try to better organize this information and have it available at the August Gathering for those who are interested. It's a wonderful way to help the poor help themselves. **✠**

***Blessing of St. Clare***

*I bless you during my life and after my death as much as I am able and even more than I am able, with all the blessings by which the Father of mercies has blessed and will bless his spiritual sons and daughters in heaven and on earth. Amen.*

***Rest in Peace***

**Rosemary Warren, SFO** of St. Francis Crystal Lake, wife of Dave Warren, SFO of same fraternity on July 16.

**Catherine Padula, SFO** of Northwest Franciscan Community of the IHM (Palatine) June 28.

May these sisters and all our dearly beloved through the mercy of God rest in peace, Amen.