

TAU CROSS REGION

The Newsletter of the Secular Franciscan Order for The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk Counties of New York

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Joan Geiger, SFO
Regional Minister

Dear Friends,

I wish you and yours a summer of rest and relaxation. May you be renewed in both body and spirit throughout the coming months.

As you know, Alicia D'Amato and I attended the "Forming the Formators" Workshop at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL from May 12-15. It was wonderful to rekindle friendships I had made with fellow Franciscans at the NAFRA Chapter last Fall, and meet many SFOs from across the U.S. who were representing their Regions at the Workshop.

One hundred thirty attended the Workshop – the largest gathering of Secular Franciscans to date, except for the Quinquennial.

"The importance of formation has emerged as the essential element to guarantee an authentic and deep sense of belonging..."

This project was begun almost 10 years ago (2002) when CIOFS at its Chapter commented: *"This [Formation] was by far the theme that received the most attention. The importance of formation has emerged as the essential element to guarantee an authentic and deep sense of belonging, rooted in a clear notion of identity and knowledge of the true nature of the OFS[SFO] and of its place in the Franciscan Family and in the Church. The Chapter has manifested the urgency of finding new, original and efficacious ways to give to formation the completeness and uniformity which an*

Order, spread around the whole world, deserves to accomplish the fundamental role of mature and authoritative apostolate it is called to offer, in collaboration with the rest of the Franciscan Family."

With this directive, the National Formation Commission of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order –

"The Chapter has manifested the urgency of finding new, original and efficacious ways to give to formation ...completeness and uniformity..."

USA, under the leadership of Bob Fitzsimmons, began an effort to develop fundamental and comprehensive materials for Orientation, Inquiry, and Candidacy, as well as on-going formation, in a user-friendly-format that would be presented to the Regions. In turn, this material would be presented to the local Fraternity Formation Directors [and Ministers] to assist them in assuring that candidates receive a thorough understanding and aware-

Regional Executive Council:

Joan Geiger, Minister: (718) 347-4470; geigerjmm@hotmail.com
Raymond Clarke, Vice Minister: (516) 374-1521; email Raymond.Clarke1@verizon.net
Alicia D'Amato, Secretary: (631) 331-7680; email damato1@optonline.net
Peter D'Amato, Treasurer: (631) 331-7680; email damato1@optonline.net
Ralph DiCicco, Formation Director: (631) 423-7431; ralpsfo@verizon.net
Constance Watz, Councilor: (718) 821-1875; cwatz711@aol.com
Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, OFM, Cap. Spiritual Assistant: (212) 564-9070 ext 244; email Mwesnof1@aol.com

"...the National Formation Commission ...began an effort to develop...materials...for formation."

ness of what it means to be professed as a Secular Franciscan. The binder has been aptly called "**FUN**" – in the words of St. Francis: *"Let us begin. For Up to Now we have done nothing."*

"The binder has been aptly called 'FUN' – in the words of St. Francis: 'Let us begin. For Up to Now we have done nothing.'"

At our June Regional Executive Council Meeting, we discussed the desire and possibility of presenting the material (a rather hefty 460 pages) to our local Fraternity Formation Directors and Ministers at 3 convenient locations (Bronx, Queens and Nassau/Suffolk) beginning in the Fall. An informational flyer with registration will be sent to Ministers and Formation Directors. We are hopeful that you will make every effort to attend one of the Workshops. In all probability, this will be on-going in 2012 as well.

I would also like to thank the Ministers who attended the Annual Chapter Meeting at St. Adalbert's on April 16th. I realize it was a busy time just before Palm Sunday and Easter. I hope the materials presented will assist you and your Fraternity Council. Next April we will be having both a Pastoral and Fraternal Visitation. I hope all Ministers (or a representative Council Member) will make every effort to be present.

Peace and all good
Joan

FR. MATT'S MESSAGE

Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, OFM, Cap.
Regional Spiritual Assistant

SUMMER THOUGHTS

It's the beginning of summer. When I look outside my window here in Manhattan, I look out on a metal, corrugated wall, two feet from my window. I usually can't tell if it is a sunny or a cloudy day. When I look out of my office window, I look across the street at a glass wall, the windows of a Chase Bank.

Yesterday, I went to celebrate a Mass of Profession in Lake Mahopac. Before Mass, I sat on a bench in front of the Church and looked out over Lake Mahopac as the sun was beginning to set. Last Sunday, I sat in the den of my sister's house and looked out, through the glass, sliding doors and watched a very tiny rabbit eating grass, as several sparrows nearby searched for seeds in the lawn. I suppressed feelings of jealousy for those who have the privilege of viewing these sights everyday, and instead, grew in appreciation of what Francis, Clare and so many mystics discovered in their praise of the glory of creation

"During this time of the year, I think it is important that we try to grow more in an appreciation of the wonders of creation."

Like so many of you who look out your window and see deer or turkeys on your lawn practically everyday, I am sometimes tired of hearing about climate change, rescuing the animals and planting a tree, when I am well aware of the perils perpetuated against human life. Today, as I walked past 'Whole Foods,' purveyors of organic, healthy, naturally grown and non-chemically produced foods, young women were standing in front of the store, once again, soliciting patrons for Planned Parenthood. It is a conflict many of us experience. Where do we put the emphasis? How can we grow in appreciation of the wonders of creation and yet, show our displeasure at the

destruction of nature and of human life? How could Clare go and lock herself in a monastery tending her little garden, when the world outside the monastery walls was falling apart? How could Francis spend so much time up on a mountaintop or on an island, or in a cave, when there were wars being waged, so much greed in the marketplace, and corruption among the clergy? How can we waste time admiring the beauty of a magnolia tree in bloom, when the world is going down the toilet? It seems our call, and our responsibility as Franciscans, is to achieve a balance between peacefully contemplating all life and its Creator, and yet, energetically protecting all life.

"How can we grow in appreciation of the wonders of creation..?"

During this time of the year, I think it is important that we try to grow more in an appreciation of the wonders of creation. We have more time usually during the summer to look around us. We are outdoors more frequently and are not rushing to get inside because of the cold, and nature itself is in full bloom. It is, of course, not just in looking at the beauty of nature, and it's not just striving to protect nature, but like Francis and Clare, it is an opportunity to wonder at the beauty of the Creator, the generosity and wisdom of the Creator, and to give thanks and praise. It can be a contemplative opportunity for all of us. It is a time to move from creation to Creator; to transcend from earth to heaven.

This week, the weekly Newsletter from FAN (Franciscan Action Network) gave some practical examples of how we can foster the preservation of creation by building bird houses or bird feeders, planting a garden, recycling, reusing, etc. This week, I also received a copy of *Catalyst, the Journal of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights* from the President and Publisher, William Donohue. The *Catalyst* had articles on Nancy Pelosi, and the "Boston Globe Cover-up," and "NBC Allows Leno to Bash Priests," and how third graders in a Seattle School were told they must call Easter eggs, "Spring Spheres," and Lady Gaga releasing her single,

"Judas," which begins with the words, "I'm in love with Judas," just before Easter. The *Catalyst* makes me angry.

"I think I'll just walk down 7th Avenue and ... praise God for the beauty and wonder of God's creation."

However, today, I think I'll just walk down 7th Avenue and go by the store, "Buy, Buy, Baby," and smile at the women and their babies in the strollers, and pass the Muslim selling a vast array of fruits in his wagon and admire the variety, colors and smells of the fruits, and then turn West, toward the magnificent Hudson River and the parks that have been planted along the river, and praise God for the beauty and wonder of God's creation. Maybe I'll sit down on a bench and praise, adore and give thanks. It's summer! I've got all winter to be angry.

"The Catalyst makes me angry. [But] ...I've got all winter to be angry."



SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, November 5th
Fall Gathering
at
St. Joseph Parish Hall
Babylon

Guest Speaker:
Fr. Richard Trezza

Branches of the Franciscan Family Tree: We Are Family

Margaret Birth
St. Michael's Fraternity

Do you ever look in the mirror and wonder where you came from? Not just the fact that you were born in New York City, or that your mom was a Smith and your dad was a Jones, but your genealogical roots: your earliest Smith or Jones forebears. That's part of what got me interested in genealogy as a hobby several years ago.

As Secular Franciscans, we're part of a spiritual family too. The first chapter of our Rule talks about that:

"1. The Franciscan family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God—laity, religious, and priests—who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charism of their common Seraphic Father in the life and mission of the Church.

"2. The Secular Franciscan Order holds a special place in this family circle. It is an organic union of all Catholic fraternities scattered throughout the world and open to every group of the faithful. In these fraternities the brothers and sisters, led by the Spirit, strive for perfect charity in their own secular state. By their profession they pledge themselves to live the gospel in the manner of St. Francis by means of this rule approved by the Church."

Our Franciscan family consists not only of sister and brother Secular Franciscans, but also Order of Friars Minor, Capuchins, Observants, and Conventuals, as well as Poor Clares, and other Third Order groups which include both actual orders sanctioned by the Vatican, and Confrater-

nities of Penitents and Associations of the Faithful—such as The Confraternity of Penitents, the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Francis, and Catholic musician John Michael Talbot's Franciscan community known as the Brothers and Sisters of Charity.

There are Franciscans from other denominations too, including the Order of Franciscan Penitents (Charismatic Episcopal Church) and the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans (whose members may belong to any Christian denomination).

When I began to discern whether I was truly called to become a Secular Franciscan, I wanted to make sure that 1) it really was the Franciscan charism to which I felt drawn and not the Benedictine or some other, and 2) it was the Secular Franciscan Order to which I felt myself being led and not to some other Confraternity of Penitents or Association of the Faithful.

I trust that it's clear what I determined: I am answering what is becoming, for me, a more and more resounding calling to the Secular Franciscan Order.

Because we are only one branch of a large Franciscan family, though, I also believe that we're called to know the other branches—because it's only by coming to know one another that we can form a greater Christian community and a greater Franciscan community. For that reason, I'd like to share with you, in a series of future articles, what makes the different branches of the Franciscan family tree unique and what unifies us all.

I pray that you'll enjoy joining me for this journey into our Franciscan genealogy!



National Prayer for Vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order

Marian R. Crosby, SFO
NAFRA Chapter 2010, Scottsdale, AZ

O, Good and Gracious God,

God of mercy, compassion, generosity and love,

As we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis, choosing daily to live the Gospel life,

Help us to help others hear your call.

Help us to help others to recognize their vocation as a Secular Franciscan that You have already planted in their heart.

Help us, so that together we all may work to bring the Gospel to life. Amen!

TAU CROSS REGION

The TAU CROSS REGION is published quarterly, in January, April, July and October. Articles by fraternity members are welcome. If accepted, they may be edited. Please submit copies by the 10th of the month prior to publication.

Please send items of interest (elections, professions, anniversaries, events, recognition) to Regional Secretary Alicia D'Amato, PO Box 447, Miller Place, NY 11764 or email at: damato1@optonline.net

Address correspondence to editor Peter D'Amato, PO Box 447, Miller Place, NY 11764-0447. TEL: (631) 331-7680 or email at: damato1@optonline.net

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

Gillen Melograno, SFO
Regional JPIC Representative

"Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith."

-Chapter 2, Section 15 of The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order.

Since January NAFRA has teamed up with Catholic Relief Services and USCCB to mobilize Catholics in fighting poverty throughout the world. The initiative is called Catholics Confront Global Poverty (CCGP). The goal is to bring 1 million Catholics nationwide together to confront global poverty by focusing on 7 priority issues. These include International assistance, Debt relief, International trade, Global Climate change, Migration, Peace, and Extractive industries.

Under the guidance of Kent Ferris, National JPIC Chair, and CRS, each month there is a nation-wide webinar (on-line discussion – or web seminar). Each webinar builds on the previous one. The following are the titles of the webinars up to June: (#1) *Presence in the World*, (#2) *What are we called to do?* (#3) *Don't Balance the Budget on the Backs of the Poor*, (#4) *Fraternity and Solidarity*, (#5) *Call and Response*, and (#6) *We're All in This Together: the Social Nature of Humanity and the Common Good*.

I receive a lot of information over the computer. If you feel like God is calling you to be informed and involved in Justice and Peace for our world, please e-mail me at gillallie@yahoo.com. I have links to websites that will enable you to join the above mentioned Catholics Confront Global Poverty (CCGP) as well as watch any of the past webinars and/or participate yourself in upcoming ones. I have information regarding Immigration, Capital Punishment, Japan's recovery, Hunger and Poverty, Climate Change, an upcoming Thomas Merton Retreat, and the Franciscan Action Network (FAN).

Contact me for more information about any of these! I look forward to hearing from you.

Love and Peace
Gillen Melograno

Yolanda Mastrelli, SFO celebrates 50th Anniversary

Lenny Battifarano, SFO
Bl. John XXIII Fraternity

On Saturday, May 24th, Blessed John XXIII Fraternity celebrated our sister Yolanda Mastrelli's 50th anniversary of profession at The Broadlawn Manor in Amityville. It was a milestone anniversary that does not happen very often. Fraternity members in attendance were Jean D'Onofrio Minister, Pat Consorte, Vice Minister; Barbara Consorte, Secretary; Lenny Battifarano and Joan Di'Donato. Also in attendance were her grandson, Scott; his wife and their three children; her grandson, Anthony; and niece, Maria. Brother Richard Contino, OSF led us in prayer and gave the blessing while her good friend and brother in Francis, Lenny Battifarano, gave Yolanda and her relatives Holy Communion. Yolanda's relatives, Jean and Pat, led us in the ritual and in the readings, and presented her with her fifty year certificate and several gifts.

It was a wonderful celebration. Yolanda is a wonderful example of a Franciscan who, despite her ailing health, continues to live the Rule daily with her faith to guide her.



Yolanda M. (lower left) and fraternity friends celebrate her 50th!

Upcoming Events of Note:

Poor Clare Fraternity 75th Anniversary

Betty Ann Soto, SFO
Poor Clare Fraternity

There will be a Mass and Brunch at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, October 1st, 2011 to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Poor Clare Fraternity. This will take place at St. Frances De Chantal Church located at 190 Hollywood Avenue, Bronx.

Interested in attending? Call Betty Soto at 718-863-8618 or Dorothy Madden at 718-292-4017

SFO Day of Recollection

DATE: Saturday, August 27
TIME: 9:30A.M. until 3P.M.
WHERE: Our Lady of the Island Shrine, Eastport

DIRECTOR: Fr. Matthias

SPONSOR: St. Lawrence of Brindisi Fraternity

CALL: 631-475-3426

Please bring a bag lunch. Coffee and soda are available in the Shrine coffee shop.

The fee will be \$10 per person.

DIRECTIONS

Take the L. I. Expressway to Exit 70. At the stop sign turn right. Continue for two miles to Eastport-Manor Road. Take this road 1/2 mile to the Shrine's entrance. **-OR-** Sunrise Highway (Rte 27 East) to exit 61. Keep to the left.

At the stop sign turn left (be careful as it is a 4-lane,divided road). Cross over Highway 51 at the traffic light. The Shrine's entrance is 2 miles on your left.

Christian Unity Celebration

Jean D'Onofrio, SFO, Minister
Bl. John XXIII Fraternity

Bl John XXIII SFO fraternity celebrated the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at its March gathering (postponed from January due to inclement weather). The fraternity used the Graymoor Scriptural Guide for the week in January as prayerful preparation in union with the wider Church. The Graymoor Ecumenical Celebration of the Word formed the basis of the prayer service, with the additions of the Prayer of St. Francis hymn, other prayers of St. Francis, and the Prayer for Franciscan Unity. This was followed by wonderful Franciscan hospitality consisting of St. Joseph pastries and homemade Irish Soda bread from Santa and Dan Matarazzo. Ken Norian, Provincial Minister of the TSSF (Third Order Society of St. Francis), and Alicia D'Amato, SFO, Regional Secretary were our invited guests. Ken presented us with a challenging reflection piece as well as presented the fraternity with copies of the Elements of Franciscan Unity drafted by the Joint Committee on Franciscan Unity on the Feast of St. Clare in 2005, revised Nov. 2006, and nationally published by The Cord. This is the third year that Bl John XXIII has hosted an ecumenical gathering. It is always heartwarming to share this evening of prayer and fellowship with Ken Norian as we continue to work and pray for Christian and Franciscan Unity.



Ken Norian, Jean D'Onofrio & Alicia D'Amato at Christian Unity Celebration

Congratulations Lorraine Arcella, SFO

On Your anticipated
Induction into the Equestrian
Order of the Holy Sepulchre



The members of the Tau Cross Region wishes to offer congratulations, prayers and best wishes to our sister, Lorraine Arcella, Minister of St. Helen Fraternity, Howard Beach for her anticipated induction into the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre in the Fall. The ceremony will be held at St. Patrick Cathedral, NYC, on October 2.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre is the oldest of the five major orders of knighthood founded in the 11th and 12th centuries along with the Knights Templar, Knights Hospitaller, Teutonic Knights and the Knights of St. Lazarus. It traces its roots to the First Crusade (1096-1099) and Godfrey d'Bouillon, its principal leader. Its purpose was to provide support and services to pilgrims to the Holy Land, particularly to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and was recognized by Papal Bull in 1113.

Lorraine is a retired RN who has given of her time, talent and treasure to the Church over a number of years. In addition to her membership in the SFO, she has been a lector, Eucharistic Minister, catechist and has served, along with her husband, the Physically Challenged Group as helper and secretary. She was nominated to the Order in 2010 and accepted this year. The ceremony will be celebrated by Archbishop Timothy Dolan. Lorraine says: "I especially love the order because they love St. Francis and give him all credit for the return of the Holy Land..."

Pax et Bonum, Lorraine!

AROUND the REGION

Alicia D'Amato, SFO
Regional Secretary

rites of ADMISSION

April 27: The following were admitted to Holy Family (em) Community:

Louis Arce, Stan Buturia, Anna R Capasso, Eileen Colon, Mary Colon, Paul Colon, Ronald DiGangi, David Dolan, Patrick J. Grisafi, Mireya Gutierrez, Joseph Healy, Rhonda Healey, Hugh McGarvey, Billy McNeece, Patricia Mulvey, Marie Rondeau, John Ruzicka, Angelo Stagnaro. The presider was Constance Watz of St. Adalbert Fraternity. The witness was Rev. Casper Furnari, SFO.

June 3: John and Theresa Barry were admitted into Bl. Raymond Lull Fraternity. The presider was Augusta VanDuzen, Minister. Rev. Matthias Wesnofske, OFM, Cap was Friar Witness.

rites of PROFESSION

April 25: Kathleen Fruner, SFO, St. Adalbert Fraternity, Presider: Minister Constance Watz, SFO; Friar Witness: Herman Czaster, OFM, Conv.

April 30: Betty Ann Soto, SFO, and Jacqueline Arivaldal Bilbao, SFO, Poor Clare Fraternity. Presider: Vice Minister, Isabel CINTRON, SFO. Friar Witness: Rev. Tom Garone, OFM.

May 15: Ann Arroyo, SFO and Helen Park, SFO, St. Agnes of Assisi Fraternity. Presider: Minister Al Rocco, SFO. Friar Witness: Rev. Conrad Osterhout, CFR.

June 14: Andrew Clark, SFO, Our Lady of the Atonement Fraternity. Presider: Minister Margaret Buckley, SFO. Friar Witness: Rev. Richard Trezza, OFM.

(continued on next page)

Around the Region (continued)

DEATHS

April 1: Florence Keegan, SFO, Bl. John XXIII
April 21: Mary Scanlon, SFO, St. Barnabas Freaternity.
April 25: John Stewart, SFO, Queen of the Seraphic Order
May 22: Peggy Keyes, SFO, New Pentecost Fraternity
May 22: Frances Cervasio, SFO, St. Helen Fraternity.
May 23: Virginia Kilcheski, SFO, St. Adalbert Fraternity
June 7: Marie Cooley, SFO, Bl. Raymond Lull Fraternity
June 12: Elinor Warrren, SFO, St. Lawrence of Brindisi Fraternity
June 20: Paul Reamer, SFO, Bl. Raymond Lull Fraternity

ANNIVERSARIES

60 Years: Al Rocco, SFO, St.

Agnes of Assisi Fraternity
50 Years: MaryLou Hughes, SFO, Il Poverello Fraternity.
50 Years: Yolanda Mastrelli, SFO, Bl. John XXIII Fraternity.
50 Years: Carmela Tesoriero, SFO Canticle of the Sun Fraternity
35 Years: Isa Pepe, SFO, Immaculate Conception Fraternity
30 Years: John Hack, SFO, New Pentecost Fraternity.
30 Years: Carl Ricco, SFO. Immaculate Conception Fraternity.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brunch on the third Tuesday of every month, 11:45 am, at the Premier Diner, Commack Rd, off Expressway exit 52. Interested: Contact Frank Harnos at 631-499-0074

August 11: FLIC at Mount Alvernia Retreat House, Wappingers Falls, NY. Theresa Baker, SFO principal presenter. Cost \$250. Contact Bob

Campbell ar 516-599-4256 for info.
August 27: Day of Recollection at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Island, Eastport, NY. 10-3. Sponsored by St. Lawrence of Brindisi Fraternity. Director: Fr. Matthias. Fee: \$10.00. Bring lunch.

August 27: Help Suffolk Picnic. Volunteers needed to assist. Contact Frank Harnos at 631-499-0074

September 17: "Getting to Know you Picnic" sponsored by St. Helen Fraternity at Forest Park in Woodhaven, Queens. 10-4. Brown Bag lunch. Grills available for use. Contact: Lorraine Arcella 718-843-1712

December 3: Day of Recollection at St. Anthony High School, So. Huntington, NY. 9 am Mass. Director: Br. Richard Contino, OSF. 9-3. Contact Pete D'Amato 631-331-7680. Cost \$15.00. Brown Bag lunch.

PAX!



Br. Sal & Fr. Matt at Cormaria in April



Canticle of the Sun Fraternity Awardees for years of service, June 26: L-R Carmela Tesoriero, 50 years; Michelle Vixamar; V.M.Dcn Larry Coyle, SA, 25 years of ministry; Carolee Lawrence, Minister, Rose Canepa, former Minister; Rey Ulassi, Treasurer.



A. D'Amato, A. Siegel, & RM Joan Geiger at St. Francis Univ, Loretto, PA.



Gale & Gene Durney and Bob Metz at Cormaria regional retreat, Sag Harbor



O.L. of Atonement Frat. Profession of Andrew Clarke, 6/14. Pictured L/R Fr. Richard Trezza, Marge Buckley, Minister; Denise Clarke, Andrew Clarke, Liz McCarthy, Formation Dir.



Lunch at the Premier Diner



Quiet moment at Villa Immacolata



Retreat Day at Villa Immacolata, Riverhead in May.