

Tau Cross Region

Secular Franciscan Order for The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk

Minister's Message

Joan Geiger, ofs
Regional Minister

Dear Sisters and Brothers,
Peace be with you!

I hope your summer is off to a good start and that the season offers you time for rest and relaxation, renewal and rejuvenation in mind, body and spirit.

The information in this column is the collation of the Fraternities Annual Reports that I gave at the April Chapter and submitted to the National Fraternity from the Tau Cross Region.

Statistics

Our Fraternities are bonded to 4 Franciscan Provinces: Most Holy Name of Jesus, and Immaculate Conception (OFM), St. Mary (OFM, Cap.) and St. Anthony of Padua (OFM, Conv.) [Since the Chapter, the St. Anthony of Padua Province is now in a new jurisdiction called Our Lady of the Angels Province.]

We have 560 Professed Members, 44 Candidates and 33 Inquirers. Sister Death called 23 of our members. We have 29 Fraternities, 2 Emerging Groups and 1 Newly Formed Group. Five

hundred fourteen members or 92% of our Region are English speaking; 46 members or 8% of our Region are Spanish speaking.

Fraternal Life

Our Region sponsors an Annual Retreat. Fraternities sponsor Days of Recollection – Our Lady Queen of Angels and New Pentecost (Advent); Our Lady of the Atonement and Bl. Raymond Lull at Tabor Retreat Center (June) and St. Lawrence of Brindisi at Our Lady of the Island Shrine(August). We have an Annual Spring Chapter and Fall Gathering and presenters speak on aspects of Franciscan Spirituality. Many of our members also attend FLIC – Franciscans Living in Community (August) at Mount Alvernia, Wappingers Falls. We are blessed to listen and learn from Teresa Baker who will be presenting to us for the 5th year. New Pentecost and Our Lady Queen of Angels sponsor a picnic at the beginning of each summer. Some members get together weekly or regularly for Bible Study and a few monthly for lunch. In addition, Fraternities hold special services e.g. Transitus, Greccio, Blood Drives, etc.

Our Franciscan presence is felt in our Churches and Dioceses in

many ways. To mention just a few of our activities: we volunteer at homeless shelters, assist women facing crisis pregnancy, donate to food pantries, clothing drives, and serve as Lectors, Cantors, EMHC, teach in faith formation programs; donate to national and international relief organizations, as well as to a variety of missions – Bethany House, St. Anthony's Breadline, Save the Children, Friar Suppliers, and the Poor Clares. We support environmental laws and collectively sign letters to our legislators regarding gun control, and pro-life issues. We collect socks and Box Tops for Education, tutor children, assist the physically challenged and sponsor seminarians. We are involved in issues of social justice, entertain at nursing homes and provide sandwiches and snacks for the homeless in NYC.

We keep in touch with our “isolated members” through our quarterly Newsletter as well as local fraternity newsletters, also by phone calls, card, and visits. We bring them Eucharist and provide transportation so that they can attend Fraternity gatherings and events. Several Fraternities have an Infirmarian or Contact Person who is responsible to keep in

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Minister's Message continued touch with members who are unable to attend the monthly gathering.

Formation

We use a variety of text for both Initial and Ongoing Formation. The FUN Manual, The Franciscan Journey, Imitating the Life of St. Francis and To Live as Francis Lived were listed in both categories.

As Formation and Youth are two of our Regional Goals, we listened to and were motivated by presentations on Formation and Youth.

Judy Heffernan, Regional Formation Director, has conducted workshops on the FUN Manual and will continue to do this. In the afternoon of the Chapter, Judy and Gene Keenan, Lorraine Arcella and Rachele Sannino gave presentations on Formation with suggestions and ways to recruit and invite people to the Secular

Franciscan way of life. Wearing your Tau Cross, speaking at weekend Masses, announcements in the Church bulletin, posters or tri-folds showing who Secular Franciscans are, are helpful ways to attract members. We have updated and have available an attractive Regional brochure with information about the Secular Franciscan Order. You can contact Judy if your fraternity needs brochures.

Youth

Jean D'Onofrio continues to serve as advisor to the Young Adult Group. As a follow-up to Jean's presentation at the 2013 Fall Gathering, we heard from two young women – Kelly Molzen and Alex Mancuso – who have been involved in Franciscan Ministries. Kelly spoke of her work with the Franciscans in Garrison, her passion for healthy nutrition and her gardening efforts in the Bronx. Alex shared her story as a Lay Franciscan Missionary in Camden, NJ and her interest in

environmental stewardship through her work. It was evident that both Kelly and Alex were living the Franciscan charism of seeing God in all of creation. Fay Muir also shared her involvement in caring for creation and in networking, mentoring, and meeting with young adults in the Bronx.

Take time this summer to observe the beauty of nature as you care for all of God's creation.

Peace and all good,
Joan

The Graces of the Franciscan Charism:

Part 2: Poverty & Simplicity

nnnnnnnnnn by Margaret Birth, ofs
St. Michael Fraternity

Issues of how we reflect Gospel-inspired poverty and simplicity have been addressed in different ways over the centuries since St. Francis of Assisi presented his first version of our Rule in 1221. That first change in our Rule occurred in 1289, when Pope Nicholas IV revised the Rule of 1221. Then, the Rule of 1289 remained in place, unchanged, for nearly 600 years.

The concern that Pope Leo expressed, in creating the Rule of 1883, was “to wisely accommodate laws, as much as this can be done, to the times, to morals, yet always using the highest equity in precepting and adapting these.” He wanted to make following the Rule as a Secular Franciscan something viewed as an attainable goal for more people than were already professed at that time.

With the Rule of 1883, for the first time in Secular Franciscan history, the habit was not a full garment, but a “small scapular and one cord”; instead, brothers and sisters were to, “in every refinement [cultu] and apparel [habitu], having disdained [posthabita] more sumptuous elegance, hold that, which is befitting to each (of them), the rule of moderation” and also to “frugally use food and drink.”

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RETREAT DAY:

Saturday, August 23

Icon of Christ

With Bro. Richard Contino, ofs

Sponsored by

Immaculate Conception Fraternity

754 East Gun Hill Road

The Bronx, NY

For Additional Information

Please contact Minister

Fay Muir, ofs

at: 718-944-4668

email: Fumir@aol.com

ALL WELCOME!

The Graces...

continued
With regard to entertainments: "Let them with extreme caution [per quam caute] abstain from dances [choreis], public spectacles [ludis], and the more shameless plays [scaenis], likewise from riotous processions [comissionibus]."

The contribution to the fraternity's common fund was no longer a specific set amount, but brothers and sisters were to "contribute in common as they can [pro facultate]." They were, however, still to make a last will and testament—but by no particular deadline.

When the Rule we now follow, Pope Paul VI's Rule of 1978, was first proposed it was within the context of the recent conclusion of the Second Vatican Council; it was nearly 13 years in the making. This

segment of Paragraph 3 of the Rule of 1978 makes it clear that this newest Rule supersedes all previous rules: "The present rule, succeeding *Memorale 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*" (emphasis added).

In the Rule of 1978, our habit shrank again, becoming whatever "distinctive Franciscan sign" is designated by the statutes of our national fraternity—here in the U.S., the wearing of some form of tau cross; our frugality was no longer dictated by specifics but by "a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods"; modesty and entertainments went unspoken; however, the idea of "contribution according to their means" to the fraternity's common fund did continue. We're no longer required to tithe, pay off debts, or make wills, either—but many members try.

Do these changes in our Rule allow us to avoid the discipline related to poverty and simplicity of our predecessors in the Secular Franciscan Order?

A Secular Franciscan following the Rule of 1978 might not wear clothing in particular colors or styles, true, but might instead choose to buy clothing on sale or at second-hand stores or to donate their gently-used clothes to charity

—and might hold on to TVs, cars, computers and other modern appliances until they wear out, rather than always buy the newest, for example. Even without specific dictates, we still understand the value of modesty in dress and in various forms of entertainment. With flexibility and openness to interpretation such as that in the Rule of 1978, these changes in the wording of our Rule may actually allow us to take upon ourselves—each of us as we feel called to do so—a level of discipline that is, in its own way, a demanding yet fulfilling way of life for seculars living in our current day and age.

SECULAR FRANCISCAN DAY OF RECOLLECTION

DATE: SATURDAY, AUGUST 23,

TIME: 9:30 A.M. UNTIL 3 P.M.

WHERE: OUR LADY OF THE ISLAND -EASTPORT

DIRECTOR:
FR. MATTHIAS WESNOFSKE,

PRESENTED BY
ST. LAWRENCE FRATERNITY

SIGN IN 9:30-10:00

MORNIN PRAYER 10:00-10:30

CONFERENCE 10:30-11:15

MASS 11:30-12:30 (Pilgrim Hall)

LUNCH 12:30-1:30 (Brown Bag)

CONFERENCE 1:30-3:00

BENEDICTION 3:00

For additional information call 631-949-0048

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YouthFra A Vocation Journey nn

Edited by Peter D'Amato, ofs
Our Lady Queen of Angels Fraternity

For those of us not familiar with the General Constitutions, Artcles 96-7 regarding The Franciscan Youth (YouFra), myself included, I present quotes and explanations as offered in: Franciscan Youth (YouFra): *A Way Of Franciscan Vocation*; CIOFS, 2004:

nnnnn

Some of the essential elements in their vocational journey are: To feel the call of the Holy Spirit, to undergo, in fraternity, the experience of Christian Life; Progressive discovery of St. Francis, his project of life and his values; Ecclesial and social presence, in order to have concrete apostolic experiences.

The Franciscan Youth, as described in the SFO General Constitutions, differs from other Franciscan Youth groups by:-The acceptance of the Rule of the SFO as an inspirational document; -The personal and formal commitment (the Promise) is made before God and the fraternity to live that inspiration; -Belonging to the Franciscan Family and being an integral part of the SFO; the accompaniment and animation provided by the lay Franciscans -The proper National Statutes approved by the National Council of the SFO...which sets...the conditions to belong to the Franciscan Youth.

The reason why I quote these passages here is to impress upon us all, something of which I was unaware: Franciscan Youth is an integral part of the OFS and for which we carry a

certain amount of responsibility. This relationship is not accidental. It is *organic* and can be seen, as above stated, as: *A Way of Franciscan Vocation*.

On April 26 those who attended the Regional Chapter were pleased to meet two idealistic, committed young adults, Kelly Moltzen, RD, and Alex Mancuso. Alex gave a presentation about her 2 year Franciscan Lay Missionary experience in Camden, NJ; an amazing tribute to the work God has done thru her volunteer efforts. Alex is currently on the NAFRA YouFra Commission Board under Rob Breen and is working with me (Jean D'Onofrio) to establish a YouFra group locally. Alex made a wonderful poster that is available for parish/fraternity vocation fairs.

Kelly Moltzen, a registered dietician, has been a Franciscan in spirit all her life! She lives a counter-cultural lifestyle making food, habitat and professional choices in keeping with Franciscan values of eco-justice and simplicity. She takes courageous initiatives on behalf of climate change and the environment. We are blessed to have her in our region working with Fay Muir, OFS, Minister of Immaculate Conception Fraternity in the Bronx. And we are doubly blessed, as Kelly, having read over our Constitutions and Rule, realized that she is of profession age and is in formation at Immaculate Conception fraternity. Kelly's presentation was a story of her

Franciscan journey. Here are some excerpts from her talk. Perhaps you may know others who might be inspired by her words.

Through (a) youth group I came to be introduced to the Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries...The Franciscan Charism I came to know has always held a special place in my heart, and ever since then I have sought to experience this feeling through my everyday life.

At college I participated in Catholic Ministry...but the group didn't quite satisfy me spiritually. There was not enough sense of meaning, purpose and feeling of community that I found at CYFM. I have come to see health disparities as a matter of justice and integrity of creation-issues that the Franciscan Charism calls us to address...As I was looking for more faith-rooted approach to address food justice and health disparities...I came across...the Franciscan Action Network and the Franciscan Earth Corps program which I quickly came to realize was exactly what I needed...Finally I found a way to integrate my desires to address food, environment, and health issues in with my faith. I didn't know I would find myself back with the Franciscans, but that's how God's sense of humor works, I suppose.

Ditto Francis of Assisi, Kelly. Welcome to his world! Our prayers and best wishes are with you as your journey continues :-)

Around the Region

Admissions

Mar. 23: Maxine Ansley,
St. Michael Fraternity

Professions

May 2: Grace Callahan, Betty
Lloyd, Bl Raymond Lull Fraternity

June 21: Patricia Battiato,
St. Helen Fraternity

Deaths

April 10: Christina Alves,
Cure of Ars

April 22: Francis Murray,
St. John XXIII

May 1: Dottie Catone, Il Poverello

May 4: Joy Rogalle, Il Poverello

May 10: Lillian Kohnken
St. Thomas More Fraternity

May 21: Olga DaNaro,
St. Adalbert Fraternity

May 28: Antoinette Malandro

nnnn St. Lawrence of Brindisi Frat.

TAU CROSS REGION

The TAU CROSS REGION is published quarterly in January, April, July and in 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, etc. to Regional Secretary Alicia D'Amato at P.O. Box 447, Miller Place, NY 11774 or email at: damato1@optonline.net.

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

Anniversaries

25 Years: Linda Corcoran,
St. Adalbert Fraternity

Activities

April 26: Tau Cross Region Chapter, Holy Family Church Hall, Fresh Meadows, NY.

May 6-8: Tau Cross Region Retreat, Cormaria Retreat Center, Sag Harbor, NY.

June 14: Day of Recollection at the Tabor Retreat Center, Oceanside,

June 28: Tau Regional Picnic, Elwood Park, E. Northport, NY.

Upcoming Events

July 26: Prayer Experiences of Francis and Clare, sponsored by Holy Poverty Fraternity, presenter: Br. Damian Novello, osf, location: St. Francis Center, Centerport. For more info contact: Ralph DiCicco, 845-592-1794; ralphdsfo@gmail.co
Reserve by: July 23.

August 11-14: F.L.I.C., to be held at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center, Wappingers Falls, NY. (see box)

August 23: Day of Recollection at Our Lady of the Island Shrine, Eastport, NY. (see Box p. 3)

August 23: Help Suffolk Picnic, New Pentecost Fraternity. For info: contact Frank Harnos at: fharnos@aol.com or 631-834-1549

August 23: Retreat Day: Icon of Christ, Immaculate Conception Fraternity. (See box p2)

Nov. 29: Day of Recollection for Advent, St. Anthony High School, Wolf Hill Road, Melville, NY.

For Info contact P. D'Amato at 631-331-7680. Stipend: \$15.00

FORMATION CORNER

Judy Heffernan, ofs
Regional Formation Director

Vocation is a call from God to a distinct state way of life in which the person can reach holiness. We are NOT called because we are holy and worthy.... But we are called to become holy! We are not special because God chose us to become Franciscans.... We need this more than others and this is where God sees that we need work. By this path or Vocation of Following St. Francis in imitating Christ, we can become holy! Our Vocation and the purpose for all is Communion with God and with each other.

As Franciscans there is a special place for us within the world to bring Christ to others. Are you living out your promise that you made during your profession?



F.L.I.C



FLIC, August, 2012
Were you there?

Well you can be there this year.
Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center
Wappingers Falls
If you're interested, contact Dcn. Bob Campbell at 516-599-4256



Congratulations to Linda Corcoran
St. Adalbert Fraternity for 25 years as
a professed Secular Franciscan.
Pictured L-R C. Cangialosi, C Watz,
C. Talento, Linda Corcoran, and B.
Pietromonaco



St. John XXIII Fraternity celebrates the
canonization of its namesake the good
Pope John.



A Reflection
in
Black & White



Tau Cross Region Retreat, May 2014



St. Lawrence of Brindisi Fraternity at
prayer. Healing Mass, June 1, 2014



Fr. Jim Gavin at the Tau
Region retreat May, 2014.



This year's Newbie Is next year's veteran
Dylan Eugene! :-)

Picnic in the Park! Saturday, June 28



Retreat at Mt. Alvernia, Wappingers
Falls. St. Adalbert Fraternity & friends



Grace Callahan and Betty
Lloyd professed into Bl.
Raymond Lull Fraternity on
May 2 Congratulations!