

Tau Cross Region

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

Fr. Matthias' Message

Rev. Matthias Wesnofske, ofm, Cap.
Regional Spiritual Assistant

The Year of Divine Mercy

As Franciscans, we are frequently reminded of going from Gospel to life, and in considering this year of Divine Mercy, Pope Francis' words in proclaiming this year in "*Misericordiae Vultus*", are particularly relevant for us as Franciscans. The Holy Father writes, "As we can see in Sacred Scripture, mercy is a key word that indicates God's action toward us." And the Holy Father continues, "In order to be capable of mercy, therefore, we must first of all dispose ourselves to listen to the Word of God. This means rediscovering the value of silence in order to meditate on the Word that comes to us. In this way, it would be possible to contemplate God's mercy and adopt it as our lifestyle." So, as Franciscans, we can grow in an appreciation of not only our vocation, but in the mercy of God, by constantly going back to Scripture, to meditating and praying with the Scriptures, particularly the Gospels.

I would like to mention two areas in particular in which we might grow during this coming year, and the first would be the acceptance of God's mercy in our own particular lives. This might be an area where we feel today, in our culture and society, that there is no difficulty, when we hear everyone is going to heaven, and we don't have to worry since God is all merciful. Purgatory is no longer relevant; we don't even have to pray for the Poor Souls, since everyone goes to heaven. There are elements of truth in such thought. The Catechism of the Catholic

Church has a mere three paragraphs on Purgatory. Jesus turned to the good thief on the cross and did not say, you will spend many years in purgatory and then I will see you in Paradise. Jesus did say, "This very day, I will see you in Paradise." Jesus did not say to the woman caught in adultery, "Now go and do penance for the rest of your life." No, Jesus said, "Go, and sin no more." So there is the need for a certain balance, but yet we have some who find it difficult to accept forgiveness, to accept the mercy of God. This might have been true of many of the saints, who did extraordinary penances for their sins. But we know that penance is primarily concerned about conversion; penance is meant to bring about a change in our lives so that we do not sin in the future. Doing penance is not 'spanking ourselves' for being bad.

In giving spiritual direction we find people who find it difficult to accept forgiveness or the mercy of God. People suffer from scrupulosity. It is common among Catholics. There is even a Newsletter from *Scrupulous Anonymous* published by Liguori Publications and it has been published for the past 52 years. It is a terrible suffering not to be able to accept or fully believe in the forgiveness and the mercy of God. May this year of mercy help us to grow in an appreciation of the mercy of God, to accept God's forgiveness, to grow in an appreciation of the gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and believe in its eternal effects. Secondly, let us be merciful. Jesus tells us, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy." St. Francis, especially in his Admonitions, speaks of showing mercy and forgiveness towards one another

and he concludes his Admonitions by saying: "Where there is mercy and discernment, there is neither excess nor hardness of heart." How many times, even in fraternities, have we found some who refuse to forgive or to show mercy. Some will even leave the Order because they feel they have been offended.

The Catechism says: "The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his/her spiritual and bodily necessities." The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Many of our fraternities and members are models of practicing these works of mercy. However, the spiritual works of mercy listed in the Catechism are instructing, advising, consoling, comforting and forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. Maybe this is an area where we need to concentrate, particularly in this Year of Mercy.

May we grow this year in an appreciation of the great gift of God's mercy and may we learn to express this mercy towards others.



JPIC

Frank Scotto, ofs
St. Helen Fraternity
JPIC MOMENT (Rule, Article 1)

Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

‘The values in the kingdom of God’ Our Rule in Chapter 1, Article 1 tells us we are ‘one among many’ united through God regardless of whether laity, religious or priest. We all follow Christ in the footsteps of our seraphic father Francis of Assisi, in the life and mission of the church. Each of us is but one spoke of a very large wheel, all working to support the weight the axle must bear?

Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato si’* recommends we find happiness in simple things: get-togethers, helping others, honing talents, enjoying art and music, and praying. Do these not fit in directly with our Christian life within community and church?

We attend our Franciscan gatherings to share our spirituality and build a road to conversion. Helping the sick, the homeless, the poor, and destitute are all part of our Franciscan life. We use our God given talents to assist us to the betterment of ourselves, families, friends, community, Church, the Franciscan Order and the world in its entirety which our loving God has created and given to us. Is this not the Franciscan way of life?

We seek the beauty in church art: the paintings, icons, sculptures, murals, and architecture. The Love of God is there for us to see and appreciate. They define God’s love for creation and all that is in it.

Saint John Paul II in 1989 said “As a manifestation of the human spirit, music performs a function which is noble, unique, and irreplaceable. When it is truly beautiful and inspired, it speaks to us more than all the other arts of goodness, virtue, peace, of matters holy and divine.”

The beauty of church music that surrounds us helps soothe the harshness of life and can cushion us from the ills which society can often subject us. As has been said: “Music can soothe the savage beast”. Our world has in many instances become ‘beastly’ and the serenity of church music, bearing the spirit of the Gospel and the love of God, renews us.

I have often written articles on Prayer. It is a most precious gift, and I feel it is the cornerstone of our faith. Prayer brings us harmony within ourselves and with God the Father. We communicate with Him in a dialogue seeking His love, wisdom and guidance.

Thought of the month:

When you talk to God, don’t be selfish – include the whole human family in your prayer.

Pace e’ bene Pax et bonum Peace and
Goodness
Amen

A YouFra Update

Jean D’Onofrio, ofs
Holy Poverty Fraternity

Brothers and Sisters,
During Pope Francis’ recent visit, the Order had two booths at the Philly World Meeting of Families for those who were interested in the Seculars. Thus far, I have not been notified of any young adults from our area who attended the Meeting who are interested. We had two booths in the hope that seeds were planted among those who attended. Meanwhile, since the Fall gathering, I have only heard from ONE Secular who has expressed interest in putting together an event for youth and/or young adults. I hope that perhaps in the upcoming year, 2016, each one of our fraternities can make this a New Year’s resolution-- one event for either youth or young adults, following the Diocesan guidelines for appropriate supervision. May God bless our efforts. "

Graces of the Franciscan Charism:

Social Justice and Peace

Margaret Birth, ofs
St. Michael Fraternity

The bad news is that we’ve encountered much racial unrest and socioeconomic trouble in the US—and indeed, worldwide—in recent years. The good news is: the Good News! As people devoted to living a Gospel-centered life, we Secular Franciscans have many potential opportunities, in this day and age, to speak out in love, to act in justice and to encourage peace.

Our Rule *repeatedly* calls us to do such good things: “Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively. Mindful that anyone who follows Christ, the perfect man, becomes more of a man himself, let them exercise their responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service.” (OFS Rule, 14) “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.” (OFS Rule, 15) “Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon.” (OFS Rule, 19)

This isn’t simply about how we respond to society at large; our concerns for love, justice and peace begin and end in our homes: “In their family they should cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity, and respect for life, striving to make of it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ.” (OFS Rule, 17) **next page**

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Our Constitution discusses these topics in depth: “In the spirit of minority, they [i.e., Secular Franciscans] should opt for relationships which give preference to the poor and to those on the fringe of society, whether these be individuals or categories of persons or an entire people; they should collaborate in overcoming the exclusions of others and those forms of poverty that are the fruit of inefficiency and injustice.” (Constitution, Article 19.2) “The fraternities should engage themselves through courageous initiatives, consistent with their Franciscan vocation and with the directives of the Church, in the field of human development and justice. They should take clear positions whenever human dignity is attacked by any form of oppression or indifference. They should offer their fraternal service to the victims of injustice.” (Article 22.2)

Again, our families are the foundation for any positive work we may do in our society: “Peace is the work of justice and the fruit of reconciliation and of fraternal love. Secular Franciscans are called to be bearers of peace in their families and in society . . .” (Article 23.1)

Life in the secular world offers us many opportunities to practice these charisms. There are members of my fraternity who volunteer at food pantries and homeless shelters; who donate gently used clothes and household goods to charities that support the poor; who write to politicians about issues of peace and justice; who feed beggars on the street; and who devote themselves to building lives for their own families that reflect the love and mercy of Christ. Every Lent, members of our fraternity drink water in place of other beverages and save the money we would have spent on those beverages. We then send it to YouFra’s H2O Project, which helps impoverished, water-stressed communities build wells and address sanitation needs.

The ways we can impact the world around us, as we advocate for peace and minister to the poor, are as myriad and hope-filled as our hearts and our creative ideas.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
Tau Cross Region Chapter

What: Tau Cross Region Chapter of Elections
Where: Holy Family Church
175-20 74th Ave.
Fresh Meadows, NY
When: April 9, 2016
PLEASE NOTE EARLY DATE!
Time: 9:30a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Important: All fraternity ministers or a representative must be present.

Directions to Holy Family Church will follow at a later date.
A light breakfast will be provided.
Be sure to bring your lunch!

Regional Executive Council:

Raymond Clarke: Minister: (516) 374-1521; Raymond.Clarker@verizon.net
Augusta Van Duzen, Vice Minister: (917) 539-0385; amvand@verizon.net
Alicia D’Amato, Secretary: (631) 331-7680; damator@optonline.net
Robert Messa: Treasurer: (516) 458-5243; rlmessa826@gmail.com
Judy Heffernan, Formation Director (631) 395-5442; JMHBlessings@optimum.net
Jean Thomas, Councilor: (718) 659-8223; cmt795@verizon.net
Councilor: Vacant
Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, ofm, Cap. Spiritual Assistant: (631) 286-7921 ext 28; mwesnofr@aol.com

Around the Region

Admissions

10/22: Dollic V. DeFrietas
St. Michael Frat.

Professions

9/27: Maxine Ansley
St. Michael Frat.
10/ 2: Patricia Mayle
Blessed Raymond Lull Frat.
10/ 4: Gary Duryee
St. Lawrence of Brindisi Frat.
10/10: Sally Haughney
Il Poverello Frat.
10/31: Evelyn Whitaker
Blessed Josephine Leroux Frat.

Deaths

10/16: Mary Paret
St. Adalbert Frat.
10/26: Agnes Rybicky
St. Adalbert Frat.
11/15: Rose LaMantia
St. Helen Frat.
12/15: Teresa J. Sheridan
St. Maximilian Kolbe Frat.
12/25: Lorraine Lee
St. John XXIII Frat.

Anniversaries

55 Years Ann Harrington
Blessed Raymond Lull Frat.
50 Years: Ann Masso
Cure of Ars Frat.
50 Years: Ann O’Grady,
St. Barnabas Frat.
50 Years: Palma Beilman,
Cure of Ars Frat.
50 Years: Phyllis Coulbourne,
St. Monica Frat.
25 Years: Veronica Holley,
St. Adalbert Frat.

Past Activities

10/3-5: Transitus Liturgies celebrated at St. Joseph’s Church, Kings Park,

Around the Region continued

at St. Adalbert's Church, Elmhurst,
at Cure of Ars, Church, Merrick.

11/ 7: Regional Fall gathering held at
Cure of Ars Parish Center

12/ 5: Advent Day of Recollection at
St. Anthony High School

Upcoming Events

April 9: Regional Chapter of
Elections to be held at Holy Family
Church, 175-20 74th Ave., Fresh
Meadows, NY. All ministers or
representatives are required to attend.

April 19-21: Annual Regional
Retreat, Coremaria Retreat House,
Sag Harbor, NY.

August 15-18: F.L.I.C. at St. Francis
Retreat House, Wappingers Falls, NY

2016 REGIONAL RETREAT

Tues-Thurs, April 19-21

at

Cormaria Retreat House
Sag Harbor, NY

Rev. James Gavin, ofm, Cap
assisted by:

Lawrence Rosania

Cost per person \$190.

NOTE: Fewer Rooms this year
Available First Come, First Served
Further Information, please contact

Dcn Robert Campbell, ofs
at

arcyc@aol.com

516-599-4256

REMINDER F.L.I.C. 2016

August 15-18

at

St. Francis Retreat House
Wappingers Falls, NY

August 15-18

Fee: \$275 per person

Retreat Master - TBA

For Information Contact

Dcn Bob Campbell

arcyc@aol.com

Professions:



Patricia Mayle, Bl. Raymond Lull
Professed 10/2 Congratulations!



Profession of Evelyn Whitaker at Bl.
Josephine Leroux, October 31. L-R:
Fr. Matt., Evelyn, Raymond Clarke,
Minister; Anita Jackson, F.D.



Lorraine Arcella, St. Helen



Marie Parisi, St. Boniface

Congratulations to our Jubilarians



Ann Masso, Cure of Ars 50 Years



Veronica Holley, St Adalbert
25 years

Not Shown but Remembered:

55 Years: Ann Harrington, St. Bonaventure

50 Years: Ann O'Grady, St. Barnabas

50 Years: Palma Beilman, Cure of Ars

50 Years: Phyllis Coulbourne, St. Monica

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 11764 or email at:
damato1@optonline.net.



Secular Franciscan Order XIX QUINQUENNIAL “Reviving Our Spirit”

June 30 to July 4, 2016 Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel

General Information Sheet

Date: Welcoming session begins on Thursday, June 30th late afternoon.
The Congress concludes with a closing Mass after dinner on July 3rd. Monday, July 4th is a travel day. No meals will be provided that day. Hotel restaurant hours will be posted on arrival.

Registration: Registration begins at 11:00 am Thursday, June 30th. Registration fee includes meals beginning with dinner on Thursday evening, breakfast, lunch, and dinner on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and snacks at breaks, plus the cost of materials and other Quinquennial expenses.

Registration deadline: June 9, 2016 No refunds after May 1st

Registration form and check, made out to NAFRA, are to be mailed to:

Judy Haupt, OFS, 204 Abbey Glen Way, Hardeeville, SC 29927

Registration Rates, Register By	Program Meals	Single Day Meals (no room)
April 15, 2016	\$320	\$125
April 16 to May 31, 2016	\$370	\$125
June 1 to June 9, 2016	\$420	\$140

Rooms: Reservations for lodging must be made **prior to June 9th** with the **Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel**, 9801 National Bridge Road, St. Louis, MO, 63164. Mention date and NAFRA to get a special rate. Phone: 1-888-340-2594 or 1-324-429-1100. *You can also use the following link as well to make reservations*
[Book your group rate for NAFRA \(Includes Complimentary Self Parking and Basic High Speed Internet:\)](#)

Room Rate: \$89 per night **per room** plus taxes and fees for 1 to 4 people. Room charges must be paid upon arrival at the hotel. The rooms have 2 Queen Beds or 1 King Bed.

Note: In the event that a guest checks out prior to the guest's reserved checkout date, an early departure fee of \$75.00 will be charged to that guest's individual account. To avoid this fee, please advise the hotel at or before check-in. damato1@optonline.net

Transportation and other amenities: The Hotel provides free shuttles to and from the airport. Free parking and high-speed Internet. See their website for a complete list: www.renaissancehotels.com/stlsa

Accessibility Needs: Limited number of rooms available. **Notify Hotel when registering of needs.**

- 1 Wheelchair access is **required:** Uses a wheelchair or scooter and needs roll-in shower.
- 2 Easy access is **requested:** Difficulty walking. Needs a room located near the elevator and/or walk-in shower.
Note: Special dietary needs and requests for a roommate must be noted on registration form.
- 3 **Miscellaneous:** Please consider bringing personal care items to be donated to the Franciscan St. Anthony's Food Pantry in St. Louis. Some ideas are toothpaste, toothbrush, comb, soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, and so on.

Questions? Find us on the web- the 2016q.org, e-mail the2016q@gmail.com, Twitter #the2016q

