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# Tau Cross Region

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

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## Minister's Message

Raymond Clarke, ofs  
Regional Minister

### Service through Evangelism

My dear Sisters and Brothers. I trust that your summer has been safe, fun and faith filled. I pray that God's continued blessings have brought peace, health and freedom from anxiety to you all. Summers can be an extremely busy time, with vacations, activities, with children and grandchildren. And let's not forget those of us still blessed to have our parents with us to whom we provide services and activities. As I think of my parents, I recall my father in particular, deceased since 2006, who was and remains the most inspirational and guiding influence of my life. This topic of service, that I seem to be stuck on, is one of the great lessons that my father instilled in my sister and me.

Service is not just a voluntary act of kindness but a responsibility; a responsibility that we accept at Baptism and can be performed in many ways. Before we are baptized, we already belong to our respective nuclear and extended families by blood. However, at baptism we are welcomed into the broader family of our Catholic Church and, by extension, the world community. Ours is a universal church to which we are to give service. Hence our responsibility to love,

nurture, care for, assist and be examples of God's love. It does not end with our nuclear and extended families. What we do, fail to do and say to and around our children shapes the generations to come, the world and the eternal destiny of us all. When we are blessed with children, this responsibility comes naturally, as naturally as our heavenly Father's love. But our heavenly Father's love does not end at the doorstep of his house; a house to which he invites us for eternal peace and love. As we strive to be good examples to our children so we must endeavor to be good examples to all. Jesus did not come just for the saved or just the people in his village where he grew up, but for all people.

*Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead they set it on a lampstand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Matthew 5: 15-16

Do we see all people, as part of our whole, our sister or brother? This is something that all Catholics must continually ask themselves. Are we "our brother's keeper;" do we treat the stranger with immediate distrust; do we fear the foreigner just because his customs are different than ours? I can see that it would be

naïve not to be somewhat guarded given the state of our world today. But let us first be guided by faith not fear, common sense not a blind isolationism.

In devoting oneself to evangelism, we truly open ourselves too our universal family, as well as God's voice and decree. Yes, we expose ourselves to ridicule, insult, perhaps even alienation from within our nuclear families but the Christian path has never been promised to be an easy one without trial or disappointment. Nonetheless, we are called to be examples of God's love and evangelize in what we say and do, in how we whether suffering and how we continue to strive to do God's will and give God thanks for how he loves us. Strive for brotherhood and mutual responsibility among our fraternity sisters and brothers and the communities that we serve.

As always, I welcome and thank you for your prayers. May God continue to bless and keep you.

### **Prayer to Evangelize**

*Father, I acknowledge that it is a sin not to evangelize. I repent. Forgive me. May I fall so much in love with Jesus that it would be normal for me to tell others about Him. Empower me by the Holy Spirit to be His witness (Acts 1:8).*

## Fr. Matthias' Message

Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, ofm, Cap  
Regional Spiritual Assistant

### Francis Lives Today

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, was in Assisi for the World Day of Prayer for Peace, to which many representatives of various religions throughout the world were gathered. This was the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first day of Prayer for Peace, which St. John Paul II convened in Assisi. On August 4<sup>th</sup>, the Pope was also in Assisi to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pardon of Assisi, the granting of the Portiuncula Indulgence. Eight hundred years after his life, Popes, leaders of different religions, thousands of pilgrims are still going to Assisi because of the impact and influence of the little poor man from Assisi. We Franciscans, after years of formation and study of the life and writings of St. Francis, can certainly understand this appeal. We can also appreciate the fact of the Holy Father choosing the name of Francis. Watching these leaders gathered in the lower basilica, right above the tomb of St. Francis, and as the camera scanned the beauty of the walls and the frescoes of this ancient basilica, can be a moving experience. What an influence St. Francis had on the world, and continues to have, especially in the areas of peace, ecology and mercy. What a heritage is ours!

However it can become just a hearkening to the past, recalling stories from the past, unless we, the followers of St. Francis today,

make that heritage a living reality in our world today, to live as Francis lived. We can bask in the glory of St. Francis and the Order, or we can make the ideals of St. Francis real and living today.

Franciscan Action Network, Franciscans International, the Franciscan Federation, the National JPIC Commission, are all efforts to make these ideals alive in our world today. Do we pay any attention to what they are saying to us as they try to make Franciscanism alive today in our world and in our times?

Isn't it amazing how one little Poor Clare nun, Mother Angelica, not possessing college degrees or expertise in the area of computers and the media, was able to produce a media empire, spreading the Gospel message all over the world to millions of people. Or how an ordinary couple, Luigi and Maria Quattrochi were able to achieve beatification as Secular Franciscans; he, a bank employee, she, a homemaker and a nurse; Maria just dying in 1951, not people from the Middle Ages, and how St. John Paul II remarked that 'they lived an ordinary life in an extraordinary way.' Jim and Lois Flickenger started 'Amazon Relief' working with lepers in the Amazon, Alan Ouimet started 'Franciscan Family Apostolate' and is responsible for the building of over 3,000 homes for the poor in India.

These are the people we hear about. How many countless individuals are contributing their time and energy every day to promote and live the Franciscan ideals in our society today? In

soup kitchens, in hours of prayer, on sick beds, in teaching the faith, in visiting the sick and imprisoned, in fighting injustice and working for peace, in defending the unborn, they live the Franciscan ideal. They encourage us and help to show us the way, so that the ideals and life of Francis, who lived 800 years ago, lives today. Francis and his ideals live today

### Formation Corner

Eugene Keenan, ofs  
Regional Formation Director

"Yet, Lord, you are our father; we are the clay and you our potter: we are all the work of your hand." Isaiah 64:7

We are all constantly being formed by the Father, through the love and mercy of the Son, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit! We should keep that in mind when we conduct our initial and ongoing formation sessions, recognizing that it is the Lord who is doing the formation. In my last article, I mentioned that my goal was to make contact with each formation director. To that end, I sent out a small questionnaire to you and thank the seven directors who replied. For those who have not yet replied, there is still time and I would really like to hear from you and how your fraternities are doing. This will give me a better idea of how formation is going in the Region and will enable me to see how together we can make formation work better for us as a Region.

My prayers are with all the formation directors and the members of their fraternities. I pray that we follow the example of St. Francis and Clare and imitate Our Lord in poverty of spirit, in love, and in mercy. **PAX ET BONUM**

## Can We Really Learn True Forgiveness?

Frank Scotto, ofs  
Regional Vice Minister

Can we, restricted by our human nature, find the strength to truly forgive those who have wronged us? How can we forgive one who has taken the life of someone we love: father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, child, friend, or neighbor? How is it possible to forget the hurt, the pain, the unbearable harm caused by others which we have been made to suffer? Is forgiving and forgetting different? Is one possible without the other? The clarity we seek requires much soul searching and prayer.

The answer does not come easily, nor can hurt be made to disappear by saying "I forgive you" when the sincerity is in lack. They become words without genuine substance. The conflict between forgiving and forgetting takes us in a quagmire to which we see no end. To some, if we are to forgive, we then must forget. However, the simple act of putting an event out of one's mind is not forgiving but mental containment. True, forgiving requires strength in oneself. It requires faith, and more importantly the love which Jesus asks of us:

*"But rather, love your enemies and do good to them .....then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for He Himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful just as your Father is merciful"* (Luke 6: 35-36)

So is Jesus saying that we should love murderers, terrorists, child molesters, rapists, robbers, and those of lesser harm: bad neighbors, feuding in-laws, relatives, and the like? Yes He is!

Our human nature is the greatest obstacle in truly forgiving because for most of us, it cries out to 'get-even' fueled by the desire for revenge. It drives us and overshadows what God wishes us to do. We seek the revenge first, and then believe that forgiveness and forgetting will follow. This is so far from the truth. When we give in to anger, revenge, and/or 'getting even', we enter a dangerous arena, the arena of sin. We have allowed Satan to rule over us. Confucius (yes, there really was one....born Kong Qui) said ["Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves."](#) Why? One is for them, the other for you because *two* lives have been destroyed!

So how do we learn to forgive? The answer to that is rather simple. We look to those role models who over eons of time have shown us the meaning of pure 'forgiveness'.

Joseph, who had been sold into slavery by his brethren, became Pharaoh's confidant. His brothers were terrified, understanding that he had been given over to save their lives, but Joseph comforted them, saying: *Fear not: for am I in the place of God.* (Genesis 50:19).

Esau forgave his brother Jacob, who had taken away his primogeniture, and their father's blessing, with cunning and deceit. (Genesis 33:4). There were many others! What about the martyrs of the Church? The saints detested sin, but forgave sinners who tortured them and took their lives. The greatest act of true forgiveness comes from our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus as he died on the cross. With his final breath, Jesus shows us the way: *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do"* (Luke 23:24)

Think on this question for a

moment: If God cannot be anything less than pure love, mercy and forgiveness, why did Jesus cry out to his Heavenly Father with such a plea? Was Jesus really asking God to forgive or did His cry suggest a more sublime implication? He knew the pain his Father would suffer, as all fathers, and was sending a message with his lament. What was it? Jesus was well aware his Father would forgive but Jesus might have been imploring his Father to show *us* how to forgive! Jesus words express love and forgiveness in their truest sense, and in that we can find the strength to pardon those who have caused us harm.

Now that we have found the way to forgive, do we forget? Should we? This can also cause some inner conflict and controversy. Forgetting for many brings some closure to bury the hurt. In others, the memories of the harmful experience brings wisdom, and in turn prevention. However, there is a greater benefit in not forgetting as well. We might remember *how we forgave to motivate us to 'forgive' again!*

*"We are not called to live without the other, above or against the other, but with the other, for the other and in the other. This means welcoming and bearing witness to the beauty of the Gospel; loving each other, sharing joy and suffering, learning how to forgive and ask forgiveness."*

(Pope Francis, The Angelus for Trinity Sunday)

Forgiving and forgetting may be easy to define, but in reality are much harder to live out in practice. The answers come not in the material world, but in the spiritual one!

## Around the Region

### Admissions

None

### Professions

None

### Deaths

- 06/16:** Dorothy Stone,  
St. Helen Fraternity  
**06/21:** Josephine Deveau  
St. Boniface Fraternity  
**08/01:** Mariann 'Joy' Patron  
St. Helen Fraternity  
**08/28:** Barbara Kretowski  
Holy Poverty Fraternity

### Elections

- 07/17:** Peter D'Amato, elected  
minister, Our Lady Queen of  
Angels Fraternity  
**07/17:** Dan Volpe elected minister  
St. Agnes of Assisi Fraternity

### Activities

- 07/30:** Portiuncula Celebration at  
St. Anthony High School  
sponsored by the Franciscan  
Brothers of Brooklyn  
**08/15-18:** F.L.I.C. held at Mt.  
Alvernia Retreat Center,  
Wappinger's Falls, NY, Teresa  
Baker, ofs Presenter.  
**08/27:** Help Suffolk Annual Picnic  
sponsored by New Pentecost  
Fraternity.  
**09/10:** Day of Recollection  
sponsored by St. Lawrence of  
Brindisi Fraternity at the Shrine of  
Our Lady of the Island, Eastport.

### Upcoming Events

- 10/29:** Tau Regional Fall Gathering  
to be held at Queen of All Saints  
Church, 300 Vanderbilt Ave.,  
Brooklyn, NY. (See p.6 ). Guest  
Speakers, save the date.  
**12/03:** Advent Day of Recollection  
at St. Anthony High School (See  
Notice on Page 5)

## FLIC 2016

Robert Campbell, ofs  
Bl. Raymond Lull Frat

On August 15-18, 38 Franciscans, including two Franciscan Friars (Father Matthias Wesnofske OFM Cap and Father Cidouane Joseph OFM) gathered at Mount Alvernia, Wappingers Falls NY for FLIC 2016. FLIC stands for Franciscans Living In Community – it's not a retreat but truly a Franciscan "family" gathering. Included in the 4 days are the same elements we experience in our local monthly fraternity gatherings: prayer, formation, a bit of business and a lot of socialization.

As in the past several years, formation was provided by Teresa Baker OFS, former National Formation Commission member and author of several formation books. This year's theme was Secular Franciscans and Their Impact On Our World. Teresa told the life stories of about 12 SFO Saints and Blesseds (including our own Raymond Lull) and explained how they lived out the SFO Rule. Teresa also connected with this Year of Mercy by showing how each one practiced the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

**Peace and all good,  
BobC**



Regional FLIC Attendees



## Mission to Uganda

Louise Sandberg, ofs  
Bl. Raymond Lull Frat

Louise Sandberg OFS is going to Uganda on Mission with Stephen Smith OFS and his Life Teens after Thanksgiving for 2 weeks. Stephen spoke at the Quinquennial in St Louis and invited anyone who was called by God to join him.

Our itinerary is based on the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy: visit the sick - home visits, bring hope to the broken, shelter the homeless - house construction, feed the hungry - street kids, clothe the naked -- clothing distribution, visit those in prison - present bibles, food, toiletries, lead teens closer to Christ -- Lifeteen Mass, give drink to the thirsty -- present water line from money collected for SFO H2O project 2016.

This agenda relates to the Year of Mercy and what we did at FLIC this year -- look at Franciscan saints and name the works of mercy exemplified by their lives. We also added which rule they seemed to champion.

I hope Stephen and I will be living The Rule, certainly Gospel to life and life to Gospel. Please pray for us, and if you want to support the feeding and housing projects, you are welcome.



Welcoming Ceremony at St. Lawrence  
Dr. Peter Suski & Mrs Stacie Butler

**Bronx  
Transitus**  
at  
Immaculate Conception  
Church  
754 Gun Hill Road  
Bronx, NY

Monday October 3, 7:00 PM

Renewal of Promises  
Please bring a copy of Yours

For further information:  
Contact: Fay Muir  
at  
718-944-4668  
Email: fumir@aol.com

**Regional Executive Council:**

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**Spiritual Assistant: Fr.  
Matthias Wesnofske, ofm,  
Cap.** (631) 286-7921 ext 28;  
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**Transitus Liturgy**

**Date:** Tuesday, October 4

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Place:** St. Joseph's Church  
59 Church St.  
Kings Park

**Hospitality:** To follow the  
Transitus Ceremony in the  
Centennial Room (across the  
street from the church)

**Refreshment Contributions**  
Cake, cookies, etc, are  
appreciated

**All are Welcome!**



**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  
(articles, photos, elections,  
professions, anniversaries,  
events, etc. to:

Alicia or Peter D'Amato at:  
P.O. Box 447  
Miller Place, NY  
TEL: 631-331-7680  
Email: damato1@optonline.net

**Advent  
Day of Recollection**

**Saturday, December 3, 2016**  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
St. Anthony High School  
275 Wolf Hill Rd, Melville

**Director:**  
Brother Richard Contino, ofsf  
**A Profoundly Christian  
Christmas**

**Day will include:**  
Holy Mass at 9 AM  
A Breakfast of  
Coffee, Buns, Rolls, etc  
AM & PM Conferences  
with Brother Richard  
Quiet time for prayer &  
reflection  
Benediction  
Brown Bag lunch

Stipend \$15.00 per  
Call, email for more info  
Pete D'Amato 631-331-7680  
or damato1@optonline.net  
Frank Harnos 631- 834-1549  
or fharnos@ aol.com

**Transitus Liturgy**

Sponsored by St. Adalbert  
Fraternity  
at  
St. Adalbert's Church  
52-29 83<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Elmhurst, Queens, NY  
(Lower Church)

Monday, Oct. 3 at 7:00 PM

Refreshments afterwards  
St. Francis Meeting Room

Everyone invited to attend  
and celebrate with us!

## TAU CROSS REGION

ALL OFS BROTHERS AND SISTERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND

OUR ANNUAL FALL REGIONAL GATHERING

ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2016

9:30 AM TO 3:00 PM

QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS PARISH – ST. JOSEPH'S HALL

300 VANDERBILT AVENUE

BROOKLYN, NY 11205

(PARKING LOT LOCATED ON CLERMONT AVENUE  
BETWEEN LAFAYETTE AND GREENE AVENUES)

GUEST SPEAKERS

MASS

BRING "BROWN BAG" LUNCH

### Exciting News!

We are getting ready to launch the  
new Regional Website...



#### **STAY TUNED!**

- ◆ Fresh look
- ◆ Calendar
- ◆ Resources for Members, Inquirers,  
Fraternities...



#### **ALL IN ONE CONVENIENT LOCATION!**

MORE INFO AT THE ANNUAL TAU CROSS  
REGION FALL GATHERING,  
OCTOBER 29TH, 2016