

Tau Cross Region

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

Minister's Message

Joan Geiger, ofc
Regional Minister

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Peace be with you!

I hope you have enjoyed a restful and relaxing summer. Now that the season of Fall is upon us, let us take time to marvel at the array and rich colors of God's creation. How fortunate we are to celebrate the change of seasons.

I am writing this column on the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary. We have just recently celebrated the birth of Mary and during the month of October in addition to the Feast of St. Francis, we commemorate the Feast of the Holy Rosary.

The Virgin Mary, humble servant of the Lord, was open to his every word and call. She was embraced by Francis with indescribable love and declared the protectress and advocate of the family. The Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently. [Rule 9]

In May I had the opportunity to make a Marian Pilgrimage through Portugal, Spain and France. Allow me to share with you my thoughts on the Shrines at Fatima, Montserrat, and Lourdes.

The years 1916 and 1917 were the darkest in the history of the people of Europe. The Bolshevik Revolution had broken out and Russia tried to impose by force, atheism and religious

persecution. Prior to Our Lady's apparitions near Aljustrel to Jacinta (7), Francisco (9), and Lucia (10), from May to October 1917, the young seers were visited three times by an angel of peace who asked them to pray in reparation for indifferences and the conversion of sinners. Our Lady asked that we do penance and pray the rosary for the conversion of Russia and peace. After each mystery of the rosary Our Lady asked us to say: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those who are in most need of your divine mercy. Fatima is a place of hope and peace. Each evening at 9:00 o'clock a statue of Mary is carried in procession as the rosary is prayed.

Spiraling around a two mile high mountain was Montserrat – the view was breathtaking! Although now a Benedictine Monastery, it was here at the altar of Our Lady that St. Ignatius, founder of the Society of Jesus/Jesuits, lay down his sword. The wooden statue of Our Lady, blackened by candles that burned before it day and night, is thought to have been carved in the early days of the Church. A historian has commented: "In all ages, the sinful, the suffering, the sorrowful have laid their woes at the feet of Our Lady of Montserrat, and none have gone away unheard or unheeded." It is no wonder that this place is the heart of the Catalonian people.

On February 11, 1858, Bernadette Soubirous had gone to the banks of a river near the Cave of Massabielle to

gather wood. She heard a sound similar to a gust of wind. Our Lady appeared to her dressed in white with a blue band draped from her dress. Our Lady was carrying a rosary and requested prayers for sinners and penance. It wasn't until the 16th apparition on March 25 that Our Lady said: "I am the Immaculate Conception." The messages with the Lady in White were never long, took place in silence and were extremely intense. Mosaics of the Mysteries of the Rosary are backdrops for the many altars in the Basilica of the Rosary. Here too, at 9:00 o'clock in the evening, a statue of Mary is carried in procession as the rosary is prayed.

We live in a time of intense and almost daily persecution of Christians. Thousands of refugees are fleeing from the Middle East, Asia and Africa in search of religious freedom. Let us keep them in prayer – the rosary and penance are a good place to start.

From October 13th to the 18th I will be in Clinton, NJ attending the NAFRA Elective Chapter. Please pray for those who have been nominated to serve on the National Executive Council and for those who be elected to Office. I look forward to seeing you at our Fall Gathering at Cure of Ars, Merrick on November 7th.

Peace and all good,

Joan



What's in a Name?

Part II

Frank Scotto, ofs
St. Helen Fraternity

Years later, when Francis stood before Bishop Guido to renounce his worldly possessions with the desire to live a religious and penitential life, Francis had no name in mind for his 'life', or those 'penitents' that would ultimately follow him. As his followers grew in number, the first name assumed by the early friars was "Viri Poenitentiales de Civitate Assisi Oriundi" ("Penitents from the town of Assisi"). Very befitting indeed!

The penitential order, which grew rapidly, was not in and of itself formed by Francis. The lay order of penitents came together, self-propelled, seeking a purer life through prayer, and sacrifice. Francis was to become the impetus, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, by which they would ultimately become an 'order', known as the Third Order of Penitents. It is unknown as to when Francis actually started to use the name Order of Penitents but it is believed to be in the early 1200s. In 1221, "Memoriale Propositi", written by Cardinal Hugolino, and later approved by Pope Honorius III was the first official use of the text "*Third Order of St. Francis*", for the *Brothers and Sisters of Penance*.

In 1289, for the first time in its long history, the Third Order was given a Rule included within a Papal Bull. The Rule is addressed to the *Brothers and Sisters of the Order of Penitents*. We're getting there!

It was apparent with all of the 'monikers' applied to those within the Third Order of St. Francis since the early days, the Order had no clearly defined persona, and was in need of reform. This did not take root until the 20th century when Pope Leo XIII wrote encyclical letter

"Auspicato"(1882), in which he expressed his desire to give a new identity to the Third Order of St. Francis. However, "Auspicato" continued in making the Third Order depend excessively upon the First Order Friars.

After Francis founded his Order in the 1200s, research indicates in the centuries that followed, the Third Order Secular was still unable to attain its own uniqueness being subjugated to the First Order.

Thus, in the aftermath of Vatican II, it was fully determined that the Third Order Secular needed a more suitable autonomous nature. So it came to be: On 24 June 1978, Pope Paul VI formally approved the new Rule for the Franciscan laity with the Apostolic Letter "Seraphicus Patriarca".

The new Rule proposed a new name for the Third Order of St. Francis: **Secular Franciscan Order (SFO)**. Its structure includes a prologue, beginning with the *Exhortation of St. Francis to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance*, thereby in the manner of writing, the Rule goes to the heart of the evangelical and penitential life of the Secular Franciscan Order.

And so we were born! Not done yet.

In October, 2011 at the XIII General Chapter meeting in San Paulo, the International Council declared and clarified the official name of the order to be *Ordo Franciscanus Sæcularis (Order of Franciscan Seculars)*. "The acronym which refers to the name *Ordo Franciscanus Sæcularis* is **OFS** and is always to be used regardless of the language. For example, when Secular Franciscans use the acronym after their name, they must use **OFS**". (Encarnación del Pozo, OFS General Minister)

Only now in this century, are the Secular Franciscans 'coming of age', and have their own identity, conjoined with the 1st Order and yet apart from

them. I guess you could say we are concentric circles, with each having its own 'continuity'. Our destiny was laid out centuries before 'our coming of age in 1978'.

In the year 1210, Francis appeared before Pope Innocent III, a tiny band of 11 seeking approval for their 'way of life'. His Holiness and a flock of 11 before him. Twelve in number! Sound familiar? Coincidence or divine providence! Pope Innocent III spoke these words to our beloved Francis and his followers "Go with the Lord, brothers, and, as the Lord shall inspire you, preach repentance to all men. When the all-powerful Lord increases you in numbers and in grace you return to me joyfully, and I will grant you more and establish you securely" (acc. Thomas of Celano 'Vita Prima', *Analecta Franciscana*). This meeting between Francis and the Pope was monumental! Prior to this,



Innocent had taken a stand against any group wishing to 'preach' as it led to heresy in many instances, but Francis stood humbly before him with a true sincerity and

pious nature, and a dynamism for evangelical life.

It may have taken a few centuries for us to gain 'in number' but we did, and on the 24th day of June in the year 1978, we 'returned', and were 'securely established' for all time!

Oh, my Beloved Francis. If only you could have envisioned what would happen to your 'simple' Orders? Or, maybe to the glory of God, you did! I think we need to start a new 4th order: "The Blessed Order of Confusion in the Spirit of St. Francis".

Formation Corner

Judy Heffernan of
Regional Formation Director

This Reflection is based on material found in the Vocation, Charism, and Mission section of the F.U.N. Manual.



In a Foreword to this section written by Benedetto Lino, OFS, Coordinator of the Formation Commission International Presidency, contains some information that should be read by all Secular Franciscans.

Too often, especially in the past, candidates were admitted in the Order simply “because they were good and pious people” or because they held in great esteem some holy friar or simply because they liked Saint Francis. Often, until today, people ask to enter the Order because they feel lonely or because they need to feel part of a group or simply out of devotion. Obviously this is not enough. Quite the opposite... Entering in a “Form of Life” such as the Franciscan Life is not just one of many “optional” decisions we make in our lives. It is the result of a very precise call of God to become Franciscan with a very precise purpose.

Becoming a Secular Franciscan is, must be, the result of an authentic vocation. Along with it comes a precise mission, in communion with the Entire Franciscan Family, sustained by the very charism of St Francis, which enables us to accomplish the mission in our secular state. It is absolutely necessary to rediscover and to live to its full extent the vocational dimension of our being members of the Secular Franciscan Order.

It is no longer acceptable to become a Secular Franciscan out of devotion

or without a true and authentic vocation. In the absence of a real vocation there are many ways to share in Saint Francis’ spirituality and in our own secular Franciscan spirituality, without entering the order.

The Franciscan

The deepest identity of a Secular Franciscan is based on their relationship with Jesus Christ, God’s gift to the People of God.

We believe that the Church has the mission to bring the spirit of generosity, forgiveness, reconciliation, and celebration to all people. Franciscans are dedicated to do whatever is needed not only to proclaim the gospel message by words, but also to make it evident in their lives.

Whether they speak the word or live the word, they bring the message to the Church and the world. They go from the *Gospel to life and life to the Gospel*.

It is never just talk. It becomes a life of love, as Jesus’ life was one of love, even to death on the cross. Secular Franciscans, through life itself, share love with all people and all creation.

They gently call people to love through the example of their personal lives as well as their community life in fraternity.

taken from:
The Franciscan Journey, p7

Around the Region

Admissions

- 6/28:** Joan Moore, Cure of Ars
8/02: Camille Pirozzi, Migdalia Vaca
Michael Rocco
St. Lawrence of Brindisi
8/23: Willy Camy, St. Michael
9/11: Yvonne Haynes, Cheryl White
Cecilia Jalbuena
Bl. Raymond Lull

Deaths

- 4/03:** James O’Neill,
Bl. Raymond Lull
4/06: Constance Della Bartolomes
Holy Child Jesus
4/17: Loretta Slawinski
Our Lady Queen of Angels
4/25: Mary Kowalski, St. Adalbert
5/02: Kathleen Morris,
St. Bonaventure
6/24: Gilda Kalivas
St. Lawrence of Brindisi
6/26: Austin Gallagher
St. Mary Queen of Angels
7/04: Deacon Jose Roa, St. Louis
7/23: Frances Fudge
St. Mary Queen of Angels
8/01: Rose McGivney
St. Mary Queen of Angels
8/03: Concetta Farrell,
St. John XXIII

Anniversaries

- 60 Years:** Alda Miller, Holy Poverty
37 Years: Margaret Goodwin
35 Years: Ralph Goodwin
Both of Our Lady Queen of Angels
25 Years: Deacon Bob Campbell
Bl. Raymond Lull

Activities

- 7/14:** Immaculate Conception
Anniversaries Celebration
7/25: Day of Recollection at Alvernia
Sponsor: Holy Poverty Frat
8/01: Portiuncula Celebration at
St. Anthony HS sponsored by
the Franciscan Brothers.

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Around the Region (continued)

Activities

- 8/17-20:** FLIC at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center, Wappingers Falls, NY
8/29: Annual Day of Recollection by St. Lawrence of Brindisi
8/29: HELP Suffolk Picnic sponsor: New Pentecost
8/29: Day of Recollection sponsor: Immaculate Conception Frat.

Upcoming Events

- 10/03:** Transitus Liturgy celebrated at St. Adalbert Church, Elmhurst (see ad on page 5)
11/07: Regional Fall Gathering to be held at Cure of Ars Church, Merrick, NY (see Ad, Page 5)
12/05: Advent Day of Recollection at St. Anthony HS, sponsors are: New Pentecost and Our Lady Queen of Angels Fraternities



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Let Your Light Shine: Youth & Young Adult Initiatives

Jean D'Onofrio, ofm
Holy Poverty Fraternity

All is gift. And have an attitude of gratitude! When we approach the ministry of working with youth and young adults, if we keep these two mantras in mind, we then operate out of a model that honors the God within them, already at work! It becomes an honor, not a chore, to work with them.

We can meet them where they are and, with an "empty mind" like Richard Rohr, OFM likes to say, learn from them even as we share our wisdom, time, talent and treasure. We can allow them to transform us! And, we ask, "Would you allow us to be with you and in some way to serve you?"

Then the possibilities are endless and might include:

- Can our fraternity supply the pizza for the youth/young adult meeting/social, etc?
- Can our fraternity sponsor the informational session on Care for creation, or a movie night (Paddington Bear is a wonderful fun choice for little ones to look at immigration basics—what would you do to help someone adjust to a new country—make them something they like—even a marmalade sandwich!)
- Can we supply a religious door prize for an event?
- Would they like some Franciscans at a beach clean-up that they are doing?
- Do they need some community contacts to get a certain "job" done?
- Be judicious as to what events you invite youth/young adults to attend. Involve them in the planning!

Many people, younger and older, will be passing thru the Philly Convention center during this graced time. And they will have badges with scan codes that have their contact info on them.

At both booths, our Secular Siblings will have scanners to record the visitors info and connect them to the appropriate Regions.

Brothers and Sisters-- this is a huge and exciting opportunity for vocations and for sharing our Franciscan spirituality with youth and young adults thru various SHINE events. Are you ready? Is your fraternity ready?

Pray for the visitors to the Franciscans booths (134 & 651), and for us here in the TAU CROSS REGION, because the Lord is working!! We must do our part too-- always starting again! in His Joy,

Jean D'Onofrio, OFS
Regional Youth and Young Adult Coordinator

Pope Francis' PRAYER TO THE HOLY FAMILY

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in you we contemplate the splendour of true love, to you we turn with trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel and small domestic Churches.
Holy Family of Nazareth, may families never again experience violence, rejection and division: may all who have been hurt or scandalized find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth, may the approaching Synod of Bishops make us once more mindful of the sacredness and inviolability of the family, and its beauty in God's plan.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, graciously hear our prayer.

**Regional & Fraternity
Notices, Items of Interest**

**Reminder
December 5, 2015
Annual**

Advent Day of Recollection
to be held again at
St. Anthony High School
275 Wolf Hill Road
Melville, NY

9 a.m. Mass,
Light Breakfast
10 am Morning Conference
*Mary, our Advent Companion
and Guide*

Presenter:
Brother Richard Contino, OSF
Lunch (bring your own)

1 pm Conference
2: 30 pm Benediction
3:00 pm Discharge

Stipend: \$15.00 per person
For Info Contact:
Frank Harnos, ofs: 631-834-1549
email: fharnos@aol.com
or
Alicia & Peter D'Amato, ofs at:
631-331-7680
email: damato1@optonline.net

Regional Retreat for 2016

Our 2016 Annual Regional Retreat
will once again be held at
Cormaria,
Sag Harbor NY.
Father James Gavin OFM Cap
Retreat Master,
assisted by
Laurence Rosania.
Dates: April 19-21
Info: contact Dcn Bob Campbell
email: Arcyc@aol.com or
Call him at 516-599-4256

Regional Fall Gathering

November 7, 2015
9:30 to 3:00
Cure of Ars Parish Center
2323 Merrick Ave.
Merrick, NY

Guest Speaker:
Brother Richard Contino, OSF
Topic: *Mercy*

Breakfast Provided
Bring Lunch

Transitus Service

**Saturday Evening, October 3rd at
7:00 pm**



St. Adalbert Lower Church
52-29 83rd Street, off Grand Ave.,
Elmhurst

The Conventual Franciscan Friars &
St. Adalbert Secular Franciscan
Fraternity welcome you.

Parking lot: off corner of Grand on
83rd, and between school buildings.
Refreshments follow in back room.

ENTER: Ramp to Lower Church on



Transitus Celebration

October 3, 2015
at
Cure of Ars Parish
Chapel
2323 Merrick Ave.
Merrick, NY
7:30-9:00 pm
Optional Eucharistic
Adoration
to follow immediately after

sponsored by
Cure of Ars Fraternity
Merrick

Everyone Welcome
Info:
Contact Minister Robert Messa
at
516 458 5243

Early Bird

F.L.I.C. for 2016
St. Francis Retreat House
Wappingers Falls, NY
August 15-18; Stipend \$275.00

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.



In chapel at the Portiuncula Celebration
St. Anthony HS, August 1



Rite of Admission for Camille Pirozzi, Michael Rocco
Migdalia Vaca, St. Lawrence of Brindisi Fraternity on
Sunday, August 2.



Deacon Bob Campbell & Minister
Louise Sandberg on the occasion of
his 25th Anniversary. Time well spent
in our service. Thank you, Bob!



Electing a council at Bl. Raymond Lull
Rear: Fr. Norbert LoSouze, ofm, Cap.,
(SA), John Barry (Treasurer), Theresa
Barry (VM), Maria Lussoro (FD)
Front: Grace Callahan (Secretary), Louise
Sandberg, (Minister)



Election at St. Mary Queen of Angels: Seated Front:
Maureen Enright, Margaret Flemming. Rear Row:
Frances Schmidt, Margaret Walsh, Fr. Matthias, ofm,
Cap. Corazon Bustamante, Carmen Ciriaco,



A little lunch at the Shrine



By popular demand, the new council at St. Lawrence.
Elected June 29: L-R Fr. Matthias (SA), Mark Crean
(Minister), Gene Keenan (VM), Martha Sconfienza
(Treasurer), Judy Heffernan (FD), Sylvia Murdolo
(Secretary), Maryfrancis Meow (Councilor)



Group of Franciscans Living In Community (F.L.I.C.) Aug. 17-20