

# Tau Cross Region

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

## Minister's Message

Raymond A. Clarke, OFS  
Regional Minister

### What Makes Us Happy?

My dear sisters and brothers,

I wish you God's continued blessings throughout this Christmas season, New Year and beyond. At this time as it is, we often take time to reflect upon the year that was. We think about those that we've lost but have gone on to their heavenly reward. We think about the new additions to our families, for most of us, grandchildren, already here or expected to be here soon. There are a great number of other things we ponder; resolutions to weight loss, exercise programs, better eating habits, resolve to be better Catholics, and some of us even resolve to go to Mass more regularly. By now, I guess that you know where I'm going with this. Forgive me. I'm not at all good at disguising me feelings or intent. That is why I don't play poker□.

With the aforementioned said, I thank the fraternity ministers of our region for honoring me with the gift of service to our region,

as its minister. As I consider the responsibilities of the office, I am at once awed but equally exhilarated. *That makes me happy!* It is my intention, my sisters and brothers, that with your love, help and prayers, I can help to foster an even closer sense of brotherhood and mutual responsibility among our fraternity sisters and brothers, and the communities that we serve. This challenges too, also *makes me happy!*

As mentioned in my last column (and I call you to re-read, in context to this message), "we already engage in many activities, around the region, that do, indeed, serve the least of God's children. And this is good" and should also *make us happy!* But it is no reason for us to sit on our laurels and/or pat ourselves on the back. Our work is far from over. In fact, we must gladly, *happily* and readily acknowledge the fact the God has more work for us to do.

For this, we should be overjoyed and *happy!* The opportunity to do God's will, should surely fill us with glee; or simply just *make us happy!* These are among things that truly make me *happy*. Again,

recalling from my last column, "Christ, can be found everywhere ... and the fact that our work will never be done, should not be a source of frustration but rather a source of inspiration" and *happiness!*

Of course, we experience hardship, sadness and disappointments in life but where is it written in any of the great books that, no matter how good we are, as servants of our God, we will not have times of despair, anxiety, sadness, struggle and pain, in this world? Nowhere! We are a resilient people, buoyed by the strength of God and prayer. And just as the Church itself, we persevere and do God's will. How much better can it get? As for me, at this time of year and especially during the Christmas season, I instinctively am drawn to thoughts of three Catholic tenets: God, Family and Community. Painfully and humbly, I admit that I rarely feel that I have done enough in these areas. Albeit and in spite of the rough road that we sometimes travel, our region is healthy. We've lost some dear sisters and brothers but

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we've gained a few new, spirited and lovely Catholics. I'd like to tell you a bit more about the region's endeavors and accomplishments of the last year but I'm running out of my allotted space for this column. I'll do that at the April Chapter. However, this last paragraph spells out some things that really make me *happy!*

As always, I welcome and thank you for your prayers and making me *happy*. May God continue to bless and keep you throughout this New Year and *beyond*.

## NOTICE

**Tau Cross Regional  
Retreat  
at  
Cormaria  
Sag Harbor**

**April 17-19, 2018  
(Tues/Wed/Thurs)**

**Cost \$200  
Deposit \$25 (refundable  
until 3/31/18)**

**Make checks (full amount  
or deposit) payable to  
TAU CROSS REGION**

**Mail to Bob Campbell  
135 Centre Avenue, East  
Rockaway NY 11518  
Email [arcyc@aol.com](mailto:arcyc@aol.com) or  
call  
(516) 599-4256 for  
information and  
reservations**

## Fr. Matthias' Message

Fr. Matthias Wesnofske, ofm, Cap  
Regional Spiritual Assistant

### What's New?

The very idea of reading the newspapers or listening to or watching the news is to see what is new. We are sometimes surprised by the news. In our personal lives, we actually make plans to bring about changes or to make news, something new in our lives. We buy a new car, we go on vacation, we move, we join a group. However, in our spiritual lives we oftentimes don't expect anything new. We try to do our best, we study and live the Rule as best we can, we say our prayers, we attend Mass and receive Holy Communion. But we really don't expect anything new and we sort of fall into a routine. This can especially be true as we grow older. We certainly don't expect miracles or extraordinary graces. We are quite content with the way things are.

We have just celebrated the Nativity of Jesus. The story of Christ's birth is filled with different personalities and characters, from Jesus Himself, to the Blessed Virgin, Joseph, the Magi, the shepherds, and Elizabeth and Zechariah receiving news of Elizabeth's pregnancy even though she was thought to be barren; each giving us something to think about. As I have become older, Simeon and Anna, meeting Jesus in

the Temple 40 days after his birth, seems to be more attractive and appealing. Here were two people, who had spent their time in the Temple, expecting that one day the Messiah would appear. They were elderly, thinking they had lived their lives, and now just saying their prayers. They had lived their lives. But even in their old age, the Gospels tells us Anna was 84, something extraordinary did occur. The Messiah did come to the Temple and they saw Him and rejoiced.

We expect something new every day when we read the newspapers or watch the news on television. The very word 'news' is about something new or different. And as the New Year begins we expect new things in the New Year. A few days before the New Year, a friar was added to our community. He is newly ordained, 29 years old, and I am sure with his youthful enthusiasm and vitality he will bring new things to the community and the parish. So also in our spiritual lives we must be expectant and open to the grace of God in our lives. We pray for something for years, and as the years pass, we lose hope in expectation of God intervening in our lives. Jesus recommends persistence in prayer, to never give up. As long as we have life, God can work

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**( Fr. Matthias' Message cont. )**

surprises in our lives. God is anxious to draw closer to ourselves, to further reveal Himself, to help us grow in a deeper relationship with Himself.

Let us be open to the grace of God and expect God to draw us closer to Himself and further reveal Himself to us in this New Year.

## **A YouFra Update**

Jean D'Onofrio, ofs  
Regional Young & Young Adult  
Animator

This fall my parish welcomed a new Youth Minister, and I welcomed her by sending her the Youth and Young Adult program that is on our regional website. Perhaps we will be able to collaborate in bringing a Franciscan perspective to some of the activities in the New Year. Ms. Teixeira was most receptive. The Franciscan Action Network has been sponsoring the new film about St. Francis - The Saint and the Sultan. Check out their website for this timely film, it is to be aired on PBS! We are called to be bridge builders. Doing that, I attended Islam 101 at a local mosque and stayed to dialogue with members of the mosque sharing in their hospitality. The Newman club students at the SUNY@Stony Brook have started fund raising for their spring Mission Trip with the Appalachia Service Project

(ASP). Here is the excerpt from their weekly email newsletter:

*"Every year, ASP brings thousands of volunteers from around the country to rural Central Appalachia to repair homes for low-income families. By transforming faith into service, volunteers share talent, love, and concern with the people of Appalachia and with one another. More important than construction know-how is a willingness to enter into the communities and homes of Central Appalachia with sensitivity, concern, and love -- accepting people right where they are and just the way they are."*

*You (meaning the wider campus student community) are invited to join members of Stony Brook's CCM(Catholic Campus Ministry) during Spring Break as we partner with Appalachia Service Project and work to make homes warmer, safer, and drier for families in need. Volunteers can expect to take part in various construction projects related to home repair, community living, prayer and reflection, and simplicity.*

While not a specific Franciscan sponsored project, the values of Gospel living are reflected in the students' projects and prayers. Perhaps you might prayerfully consider donating to help the students with transportation expenses to get there ! Last year our

support made such a difference in the ability for several students to attend due to financial burdens. It is a way for us to be a presence in the lives of these students as they come to know the Lord and live the Gospel.

Here is the address and information. Thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration.

Joanne Buonocore,  
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Stony Brook Catholic Campus  
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631-632-6562

[catholic@stonybrook.edu](mailto:catholic@stonybrook.edu)

In His joy,  
Jean A. D'Onofrio, OFS

### **EARLY REMINDER FLIC 2018**

August 7-10  
at  
Mount Alvernia  
Wappingers Falls, NY

Presenter:  
Br. Richard Contino, OSF

For Additional Information  
contact  
Dcn. Bob Campbell, ofs  
at  
Phone: 516-599-4256  
or  
Email: [arcyc@aol.com](mailto:arcyc@aol.com)

## Formation Corner

Gene Keenan, OFS  
Regional Formation Director

### Section 14- Rule:

“ 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. ... let them exercise their responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service. “

At our recent Regional Day of Formation held on 10/21/17 at St. Anthony's High School, Br. Richard Contino, OSF and Br. Joseph Bach, OSF challenged us to live out our vocation as Secular Franciscans. I repeated their challenge at our Regional Fall Chapter on 11/4 at Our Lady of Loretto. For those who were unable to attend either of these events, I present that challenge here.

First, are you willing to keep the Sabbath alive in your hearts every day of the week and to feed that Sabbath every Sunday with the Word of God and His precious Body and Blood?

Second, as our Rule requires , are you willing to be evangelizers in the world every day by living our Rule and showing example to others by living the Gospel life?

Third, are you willing to embrace the lepers in your life as St. Francis did? This

requires us to let go of grudges, get along in charity with those who annoy us or cause us difficulty, and during this season, to welcome those who take our parking spaces and seats in church at Christmas Mass.

As most of you may be aware, I recently suffered a heart attack which has given me a new perspective on life. Our God is truly a God of second chances. Through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick, we are offered Our Lord's forgiveness for our sins. We are sometimes given the gift of life itself. Please do not waste one moment! Live each day as Christ wants us to live! Act on the challenges I presented NOW! Do not wait! “ For you know not the day nor the hour...

Happy New Year!

### PLEASE NOTE

To all Formation Directors:  
Save the Date- 1/27/18

Formation Directors  
Conference Day  
St. Andrew Byzantine  
Church  
Westbury, NY  
10AM-2PM  
Brown Bag Lunch  
\$15.00 fee

For all Formation Directors  
and Ministers

Info: Gene Keenan at  
genekeenan238@optonline.  
net

## Around the Region

### Professions:

- 07/08:** Arlene Jackson;  
Sr. Thea Bowman  
**09/24:** Joan Moore,  
Cure of Ars  
**10/08:** Yvonne Haynes,  
Cecilia Jalbuena  
Cheryl White  
Bl. Raymond Lull  
**10/22:** Elaine Mastronardi  
Judith Mastronardi  
St. Barnabas  
**11/12:** Mariline Michele  
St. Monica

### Deaths

- 09/26:** Monica Logan  
Bl. Josephine Leroux  
**10/20:** Dottie Gajda,  
St. Adalbert  
**11/27:** John Kausilas  
Holy Child Jesus  
**12/21:** Mary Ann Reap  
Cure of Ars

### Election:

- 12/02: Martin Glenn, Minister  
Sr. Thea Bowman

### Activities

- 10/03:** Fraternity Transitus  
Liturgies  
**10/21:** Tau Day of Formation  
held at St. Anthony H.S.  
**11/04:** Fall Gathering held at  
O.L of Loretto, Hempstead  
**12/02:** Advent Day of  
Recollection  
held at St. Anthony H.S.

### Upcoming Events

- 04/17-19:** Regional Retreat  
Cormaria Retreat House,  
Sag Harbor  
**08/7-10: F.L.I.C.** to be held at  
Mt. Alvernia, Wappingers  
Falls, NY presenter will be  
Br. Richard Contino, OSF



## Reflection on My first Tau Cross Regional Gathering

courtesy of Randall Stone  
in The Contemporary Franciscan Newsletter  
Bl. Raymond Lull Fraternity

The kindness at the Annual Fall Gathering was felt as soon as I arrived, as others who were attending guided me to the correct building and one could feel the Spiritual energy of the event. As someone who is in the visitation phase of discerning my Franciscan vocation, I sensed the Tau Cross Regional Community to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Upon entering the room that was setup for the event, I felt the compassion and exuberance of those who had prepared it for the day. There were smiles from ear to ear, welcome handshakes and of course guidance to the breakfast area.

After recognizing some of my fellow Fraternity members from the BRL, I sat down with them to enjoy breakfast and fellowship before the day's activities began. A short time later, I recognized a few people from the Parish and town I grew up in. After saying hello, one of them was so gracious and gave to me a Guardian Angel lapel pin. The charity of those I have crossed paths with embody what I have learned so far, both about St. Francis of Assisi and the Franciscan way of life, to live the Gospel.

Throughout the day, I learned more and more about the dedication of those who are involved with the Secular Franciscan Order. There were many presentations, filled with both information about the Franciscan way of life and humor. However, what stood out to me most was when two separate Franciscans presented on their mission involvement. The first was Charlie Moran, who discussed with great depth and tremendous gratitude in what God has led him to do in Haiti. He shared some photos of the way things are prepared and all the work that has to been done before going to Haiti. Then he shared about what was needed in the future, his message was inspirational as I hope that over time I can join in some capacity to help him fulfill God's will for his mission. His dedication to mission work and the charity of time and effort reinforced for me that I am in the right place. The second presentation that stood out was by our Minister Lousie as she shared about her trip to UGANDA and how it came about. It too spoke to me about how Franciscans are involved in many different ways to bring the Gospel to Life and Life to the Gospel.  
Randall Stone

## REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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## TAU CROSS REGION

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Please send items of interest (elections, professions, anniversaries, events, etc. to Regional Councilor Alicia D'Amato at P.O. Box 447, Miller Place, NY 11764 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



Profession of mother and daughter. Elaine and Judith Mastronardi. (Ortulana & Clare©) courtesy of Mary Korchowsky, ofs, St. Barnabas Frat...**CONGRATULATIONS!**.....Now where's Agnes?



September 24 at Cure of Ars church at the 1p.m .Mass. L-R: Brother Ferdinand Vogrin, Friar Witness, Joan Moore, professed and Robert Messa.



October 4: Transitus at St. Helen Fraternity with Br. Joseph Bach,



**Yvonne Haynes, Cheryl White and Cecilia Jalbuena.**  
Professed at Blessed Raymond Lull Fraternty, October 6  
**CONGRATULATIONS to ALL!**



Profession at St. Helen Fraternitzy April 29. L-R: Raymond Clark, R. Ministe, Professed Zena Basin and Ann Castellano, Minister: Frank Scotto



**Marie Lussoro, ofs,**  
Thirtieth Anniversary of Profession  
Blessed Raymond Lull Fraternity  
A Testament to Faith & Perseverance!  
**CONGRATULATIONS, MARIE!**