



THE JOY OF FRANCIS

Secular Franciscan Order | St. Francis Region #52 | Southern California



Transitus of St Francis at the San Luis Rey Mission in San Diego attended by Secular Franciscans from several fraternities.

RE: Newsletter

Planned publication dates for *The Joy of Francis* are Feb 15th, May 15th, Aug 15th, and Nov. 15th.

Submission Deadlines for information to be included must be received by Feb 1st, May 1st, Aug 1st, and Nov 1st. Local Ministers, as well as District and Language Group Liaisons, are encouraged to submit information about their fraternity's activities. Information should be sent to Cyl Maljan-Herbelin, OFS, 1933 Tudor Drive, San Jacinto, CA 19583 or as a Word document to cylmaljan@earthlink.net.

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Sylvia Paoli, OFS, Regional Minister

Hearts on Fire for the Lord!

My brothers and sisters,

Once again we are on the verge of Advent – the beginning of a new Church year and all that it brings. The year has passed far too quickly, it seems, and yet, there is still much to do and learn – and *be*.

This will be my last message to you as Regional Minister, for the next *Joy of Francis* will be published after the Chapter of Elections in January of 2015. It hardly seems possible that six years have passed since you first entrusted me to serve you in this position. Every minute of it has been a blessing to me. As with all that our Lord gives us, the path has not always been smooth and level; there have been hills and valleys, storms and sunshine, hail and rainbows. But through it all, I have learned, and grown, and been greatly blessed. Now it is time for someone else to take the leadership position to serve all of you in their own way.

When I was first elected minister, I took as a motto for my time of service, “Hearts on Fire for the Lord!” I hoped that with the help of the wonderful councils you have elected, and much help from the Holy Spirit, we could all grow much more aware of that fire of our Lord Jesus Christ that He wants us all to have in our hearts, the fire that motivates us to serve Him above all else, to evangelize the world as our Rule calls us to, and to be the Gospel people we all professed to be.

We have tried to turn our focus from “numbers” (of members) to the “quality” of those members. With much new formation material provided to us from CIOFS and NAFRA, we have substantially expanded our initial formation so that we are, more and more, truly forming those who seek to become Secular Franciscans into living witnesses to the Gospel given us by the Lord. Our ongoing formation has also expanded to help all who did not have the benefit of the kind of formation we’re able to offer now to our Inquirers and Candidates, so that, together, we may grow as the Franciscan Catholic Christians that we are and become that force in the world that Jesus asked Francis to be – and that many Popes since then have reminded us is our calling in the world and our duty to our Church.

We’re a long way from perfection, but then we know that will only come when we join our Friend for eternity. To all who have served on the Regional Council with me, I say a heartfelt “thank you”. Without you, nothing would have been accomplished. To all of those who said “yes” when asked to serve in other capacities – district liaisons, chairmen and members of our commissions and committees, hosts for various gatherings, and all who have served their own fraternities, I say a

heartfelt “thank you”, for you have stepped forward when called to serve and helped to make a difference. A big “thank you” to our regional and local spiritual assistants, who have been such a tremendous help in getting us back on the right path from which many of us had strayed after struggling for years to do it on our own, without spiritual assistants. And above all, there are no words to thank our wonderful mentor, Fr. Stephen Gross, O.F.M. Conv., without whose words of wisdom and constant support we would have faltered many more times than we did.

I urge every one of you to be determined to reach ever higher, serve even more, and love all of God’s creation ever more deeply. To date we have done nothing, and there is yet much to do.

Your sister and servant, Sylvia

UNPACKING CHAPTER 2014

*Judith Mussatto, OFS
Regional Secretary*

In October, it was my privilege to be an observer at Chapter of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order (NAFRA) which was held at the beautiful Montserrat Jesuit Retreat Center situated on the south shore of Lake Dallas, Texas.

There is one question that is usually asked of people who attend meetings and gatherings. What will you take away from this meeting, in this case, NAFRA Chapter 2014? My mental response was, “I will take the Chapter home and slowly begin to unpack the ongoing formation material from the meetings and homilies that we heard at daily Mass.”

For example, on Friday October 24 the reading was Ephesians 4:1-6. The presider was Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR. He began his homily with the following story:

Two friends were on a road trip. The driver pulled over to the side of the road and announced that he was out of gas. The passenger said "Didn't you realize that the gauge signaled empty?" The driver responded "I thought the 'E' meant Excellent and that I was doing quite well." Fr. Kevin reminded us that Vatican II calls us to read the signs of the times and sometimes we are like the driver. Vatican II calls us to note what is happening around us, to prayerfully examine what God is calling us to be and do.

In the letter to the Ephesians 4:1-6 St. Paul tells us what is expected of us ... *Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were all called into one and the same hope when you were called. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, over all, through all and within all.*

We are gospel people and when we professed we said "This is what I want." What God calls us to be and do is neatly put together for us by St. Paul in this letter to the Ephesians.

WHAT IS JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC)?

Elle Lesperance, OFS, Animator
Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)
NAFRA/JPIC Commissioner

To my brothers and sisters in Jesus and Francis, the joy of the Franciscan spirit be with you! Greetings of Peace and All Good!



Our spiritual father and patron, St. Francis of Assisi, praised and experienced all of God's creation as sacred. He exclaimed, "All praise be yours my Lord, through Brother Sun and Sister Moon....All praise be yours my Lord, through all that you have made....". Our OFS Rule asks us to respect all creatures animate and inanimate, which "bear the imprint of the Most High" and that we "shall strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship". As Secular Franciscans we are called to be stewards of life and creation.

The Book of Psalms, used in the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Hours, echoes the praise that creation gives to God along with humanity: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handiwork" (Ps. 19:2). St. Francis experienced true solidarity with the poor and marginalized and had a profound respect for all life. He embraced Lady Poverty by living very simply, making peace in every way. It is these values that inspire the Franciscan JPIC efforts. As Secular Franciscans, we work to bring Justice and Peace to our families, in the workplace, in our communities and in the world, to live a non-violent lifestyle, to end poverty, oppression and abuse and to stop the destruction of the planet. JPIC's efforts are often directed to the systems that cause this oppression and destruction. We work our common efforts to gradually change the world in light of Gospel truth.

Social justice addresses poverty and provides adequate services to all ages as a human right. Genuine social justice nurtures the weakest and promotes the common good. Without justice there is a diminishment of life in all its stages from the womb to the care center. Pope Paul VI emphasizes,

"If you want peace, work for justice". Pope John Paul II was a tireless advocate of the consistent ethic of life. He was a critic of war, especially the wars in the Middle East. He was a critic of the death penalty, of economic injustice and the violence of poverty and homelessness, of abortion and euthanasia. He was a critic of the ecological crisis. He was a defender of worker's rights and an apostle of the "Gospel of Life." These two apostles of Christ have followed the footsteps of Francis in the work of justice and peace.

The work of JPIC is a work of compassion, mercy and charity. Compassion asks us to go where it hurts, to enter into places of pain, to share in brokenness, fear, confusion, grief, loss and anguish. Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears. Compassion requires us to be weak with the weak, vulnerable with the vulnerable, and powerless with the powerless. Compassion means full immersion in the condition of being human. It is simply getting out of our "comfort zones" to see the face of Jesus in the poor, in the lonely, homeless, sick, dying, oppressed, abused and imprisoned. It is providing the immediate basic needs of the unfortunate and doing corporal works of mercy. It is walking with the unfortunate in their difficult journey.



Justice promotes systemic change through advocacy. Our awareness of the difficulty of life in society makes clear that the work of JPIC is much more than engaging in works of compassion, mercy and charity but also involves a mission in social, political and economic life. JPIC actively works and advocates for

the abolition of the death penalty, abortion and euthanasia, human trafficking and exploitation, child welfare, health care, crisis of water, non-violence, elder care, education, immigration, environmental and climate change issues, wildlife conservation and care of creation in general, and many more social issues.

To do the work of justice, Secular Franciscans can participate in legislation advocacy on a timely basis. OFS Rule states "Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and the courageous initiatives."

We can participate in project visits and join prayer vigils for peace. We must be active members and supporters of the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) and respond timely to its Action Alerts and other pertinent information. Advocacy work is not limited to letter writing to elected government officials, information/petition gathering, and animating and coordinating all that which has to do with Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation in conformity with our Rule, Constitution and General Statues and the decision of our General Chapter in collaboration with Franciscan Action Network (FAN). No one of us can do everything, but all of us can do something.

DISTRICT NEWS:

San Diego County

On Friday October 3rd, a Transitus of St Francis was held at the San Luis Rey Mission in San Diego. San Luis Rey Fraternity members gave a short reflection and hosted dinner for members from other Fraternities. Sixty Secular Franciscans attended the ceremony showing the community that we are alive and visible.



San Luis Rey Fraternity Minister David York and others before, during and after the Transitus (see group photos on page 1)

San Anthony of Padua Fraternity had a Rite of Admission on October 4th for Maria July Nguyen and Maria Minh Thi Do. On November 1st, Louis Gonzaga Duc Phi Nguyen made his Permanent Profession into the Order. The Profession Mass was held at the Vietnamese Catholic Center in San Diego with a reception of thanksgiving following the ceremony.



Tri-County (Ventura, Santa Barbara, and north Santa Maria)

The St. Louis the King Fraternity in Santa Barbara was visited by Sister Death. Lyn (Marilyn) Carman died on June 18th and Bob (Robert) Roux died on June 21st. Another one of their members, Bert Pipit, moved back to his native Philippines after retiring from Cottage Hospital.

In October, the Sisters the Poor Clares hosted a lovely Transitus service in their chapel, open to the Franciscan community. The fraternity used the weekend of our Seraphic Father's Feast to reach out to their parish of St. Barbara as well, with almond cakes made by fraternity member Ginny Petrini.

The fraternity also Professed four new members in September: Ken Given, OFS, Grace Given, OFS, Liz Ruhge, OFS, and Sandy Hornick, OFS.

Earlier in the year, fraternity members took a trip to visit their Capuchin brothers in Santa Ynez at San Lorenzo Seminary.

They are currently planning for their upcoming elections in January.

The Joy of Francis

Fall 2014

Los Angeles County:

St. Mary of the Angels EC held their annual Day of Recollection on Oct. 11, 2014 at the St. Mel Parish Serenity House in Woodland Hills. Their Retreat Master was Fr. Steve Gross, OFM Conv.



Fr. Steve Gross with members of St. Mary of the Angels EC

On October 12th, Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity celebrated the 50th anniversary of profession of Sylvia Paoli, OFS, with the Ceremony on Anniversary of Profession from our Ritual.

San Bernardino/Riverside District

Judith Mussatto, OFS conducted a Fraternal Visitation at St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity in Hemet on September 28.

Holy Spirit Fraternity joined the local Felician Sisters for Transitus on Oct. 3rd. Immaculata Fraternity had a new format for their Transitus service with parts performed by their members on the same day. On Oct. 25th Immaculata Fraternity had their annual Retreat.

Both Holy Spirit and Padre Pio Fraternities held a Wake Service for departed members at their November meetings. Holy Spirit Fraternity also led a praying of the Franciscan Crown after Saturday Morning Mass and invited the congregation to add their names to be prayed for.

The District Ministers, Vice Ministers and Formation Directors, or their representatives, attended a class on Conflict Resolution and Mediation by Greg Stone on Nov. 15th. At this same meeting, plans were finalized for a District Retreat on Feb. 28th led by Fr. Steve at Holy Spirit Church in Hemet from 9:30 – 2pm.

On Dec. 8th Immaculata Fraternity will celebrate their 31th Anniversary, including a Renewal of Profession.

LANGUAGE GROUPS:

Recent Activities of Vietnamese Fraternities:

The Feast of St. Francis

On Sunday October 5th, 2014, there was a special gathering of 3 Vietnamese groups and friends to celebrate the feast of St Francis with the presence of brothers and sisters from St Clare Fraternity, St Agnes Emerging fraternity and Vietnamese Martyrs Newly Forming Group, a number of Vietnamese Franciscan ex-seminarians, relatives and friends.

The Rite of Admission:



On this occasion, 2 new members were introduced to St Clare fraternity. Sylvia Paoli, new Spiritual Assistant of St. Clare Fraternity, led the Rite of Admission for 2 sisters from St Agnes, an emerging fraternity. The rite was conducted in English and Vietnamese.



The Transitus:

The next part of the ceremony, remembering the passing of St Francis, was held in a warm and fraternal atmosphere. A slide show was presented with interpretations about St Francis receiving graces during his beginning period of conversion.



The Mass:



After that, a mass was concelebrated by Father Maximillian Tuan Nguyen, OFM and Father Martin Tran. Father Maximillian just came back

after 8 years as a missionary in Vietnam. Father Martin came from Marseilles, France to visit his mother, Mary Cao, OFS, a member of St Anthony Padua in San Diego.

During the mass, everyone repeated their profession commitment and celebrated the 50th anniversary of the profession in OFS of brother Joseph Nguyen Duy Mich. Oct. 4th-1974-Oct. 2014

Lastly, there was the social time. Brothers and sisters had lunch in a joyful and fraternal atmosphere full of laughs, singing and sharing.



All Souls Day: Nov 2nd, 2014

On the first Sunday of November, St Clare Fraternity, St Agnes Emerging fraternity and Vietnamese Martyrs newly forming group came together to celebrate the feast of All Souls. Brothers and sisters remembered especially all deceased members of St Clare fraternity. A list of those members with short biography was read and



remembered. The mass was conducted by Father Thedadeus Linh Bui, son of the deceased minister, John Baptist Bui Cong Ngoc, OFS.



For names of and contact information of Regional Council members, appointed Chairs and District/Language Groups go to:

<http://www.stfrancisregion.org/About-St-Francis-Region/Executive-Council>

To submit articles and/or photographs for ***The Joy of Francis***, contact Cyl Maljan-Herbelin, OFS at cylmaljan@earthlink.net

Volunteers to translate this and future issues into Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese are needed. Contact Cyl Maljan-Herbelin, OFS at cylmaljan@earthlink.net