

# *JOY OF FRANCIS*

Secular Franciscan Order—St. Francis Region #52— Southern California  
Summer Edition 2019

## **St. Francis Regional Gathering** **Saturday, Sept. 21, 2019** ***THE HEART OF ST. FRANCIS***

Please join us for the 2019 Regional Gathering of St. Francis Region on  
Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>  
From 8:30am – 3:00pm.

St. Matthew's Parish Center

2140 W. Ontario Ave. Corona, CA 92881

RSVP: Randy Rohrer, 951-285-9287. [rohrrerw@msn.com](mailto:rohrrerw@msn.com),

Secular Franciscan, Margaret McCahill, MD, will speak to us about  
St. Francis and his ability to find the Lord in the stranger. What was in the  
heart of Francis that led him to an understanding with the Sultan? What  
message do his actions, 8 centuries ago, say to us today?

To enhance our experience and to intertwine our journey with that of the Saint  
from Assisi, we will also visit a nearby Mosque, learn more about the 5 Pillars  
of Islam, and gain an understanding of their faith and forms of prayer. This  
encounter will heighten our understanding of this great act of love, courage  
and faith, which still speaks to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**The meal of the day at St. Matthew's is a pot luck brunch,  
beginning at 9:00 a.m. Please bring a favorite dish to share.**

**Your brothers & sisters look forward to seeing you on  
Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>!**

## Minister's Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

### A Journey of Friendship

This year marks the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Francis of Assisi's meeting with Sultan of Egypt, al-Malik al-Kamil around the month of August in the year 1219. In commemoration of this event the Friars Minor have prepared *A Commemorative Booklet* published by Franciscan Media. I present here brief excerpts from that booklet. My hope is that you will be enticed and/or inspired to use the link that you will find at the end of these excerpts in order to download and read your **free copy** of the booklet.

Francis has made two earlier unsuccessful attempts to travel to the East. At the General Chapter of 1219, he delivered the following message:

*"Let all the brothers be attentive to what the Lord says: Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you"* (Mt. 5:44) "For even the Lord Jesus Christ, whose footsteps we must follow (cf. 1Pt. 2:21), called his betrayer "friend" and freely gave himself up to those who crucified him. Therefore, all those are our friends who unjustly inflict on us trials, anxieties, shame and injuries, suffering and torment, martyrdom and death. We should love them greatly, for out of what they inflict on us we have eternal life."

"The meaning of this message is this: the one who you (and almost everyone else, including the Church), thinks is your enemy (inimicus) is, in fact, your friend (amicus). Now, such a breathtaking assertion has nothing to do with warm feelings and affections (our usual interpretation of the word "friend"). This is not about friendship: it is not even about having a positive estimation of another. ... To understand the true import of Francis's words and to avoid the pitfall of equating the meaning of "friend" with "friendship," it is better to associate the Latin word *amicus* (friend) with a word that is a little more familiar to us and more central in the Franciscan lexicon: *frater*. Seen in this light, the one we have been taught to see as our enemy - taught by society, taught by the Church - is actually our *fratres et sorores*, our brothers and sisters."

Francis is leading by example; he is faithful to the life he promised to lead since his encounter with the lepers. He is "treating every human person as a sacred creature of the human fraternity." Francis delivered this message of fraternity, "first, to the Christian Crusaders gathered outside the Muslim stronghold at Damietta in Egypt, preparing a new and bloody assault upon the seat of Sunni power there; and second, to the Muslims in Damietta itself, including the court of their leader, the sultan al-Kamil."

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019, as part of our Annual Regional Gathering, Secular Franciscans in St. Francis Region will have the opportunity to meet with our Muslim sisters and brothers. We will travel, not the 2,900+ miles like Francis did, but a mere 3 miles from St. Matthew's Parish in Corona to share Francis's and our message of fraternity.

Michael F. Cusato, O.F.M., *Healing the Violence of the Contemporary World: A Franciscan Paradigm for Dialogue with Islam in St. FRANCIS AND THE SULTAN, 1219-2019. A Commemorative Booklet.* Franciscan Media. <https://ofm.org/blog/st-francis-and-the-sultan-1219-2019-a-commemorative-booklet/>

Peace and All Good, Judith Mussatto, OFS

## Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants

### Living the Gospel

This is what we profess to as Secular Franciscans. Article 4 of our Rule says: “The rule and life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people.”

So how do we do that?? Is it a matter of doing lots of “good works”? Or is it spending substantial time in prayer? Does volunteering for a lot of church projects do it? Take some time to reflect on this and see what you come up with. I would suggest the Gospel of John to aid you in this reflection.

We can also find much guidance in *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the “Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity”. Chapter One begins: “Laypeople are the leaven of the world! Christians have one goal: to spread the word about Christ” to all people. The Holy Spirit gives everyone gifts and we must learn what our own gifts are and how to use them to build up the Body of Christ. We are told we much cooperate with each other. Think about that. That means our families, those at work, our neighbors, our fraternity members, and the casual contacts we make. “By living in faith, Christian people see Christ in all.” DO I see Christ in every person with whom I come in contact during my daily life? What about the people we don’t like, or those who constantly find fault with us, or who argue with us about everything? Do I see Christ in them? If not, then I’m not living the Gospel.

We are told we need to live the true spirit of the Beatitudes. Do you know what that spirit is? How long has it been since you’ve really read and meditated on the Beatitudes? Have you considered reading a spiritual book on the Beatitudes? Michael H. Crosby, OFM Cap., has written an outstanding book called “Spirituality of the Beatitudes.”

The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity describes aspects of the spirit of the Beatitudes, including a true sense of poverty, which is neither sumptuousness nor destitution. It includes a true sense of humility, aware of our gifts but not seeking empty honors. We need to grow in a sense of justice, for everyone in every part of their life. We should live with the virtues of honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness and courage.

This is just a beginning. Start thinking about it, as it applies to your daily life.

Sylvia Paoli, OFS  
President-in-Turn, Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants

## FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF FORMATION LUCY IBARRA

### Happy summer and back to school time!

I would like to share some of my thoughts on our retreat at Serra Retreat Center this year, May 2019. Our retreat master was Fr Dominic Monti, OFM. The topic was "Pope Francis – Gaudete Et Exultate" on the "Call to Holiness in Today's World".

Rejoice and be Glad, God chose us before the world began. Father started with a teaching from Father Thomas Merton, OCSO, who was an American Trappist Monk. Father Louis, as Thomas Merton was called after his ordination, was known to say that it is not too hard to be a saint. One just has to want it. Therefore, let our response to God's love be holiness. The root meaning of Holy is separate - to be set apart. We are formed by the word of God. The Pope states that God wants us to be HOLY, each in his or her own way. Don't get caught up in an image of what you think others want you to be. Be who you are.

Father Dominic stated, the more he read about St Francis the more he realized Francis was not saying copy me or be me. He was saying follow in my footsteps and you make the journey yourself. I have just made a path for you. Bring out the very best of yourself! St Francis did not ask for cookie cutter Franciscans, he asked in our own way to respond radically in the way the spirit calls you to be.

"EMPTY YOURSELF." Remember God's call comes first. We need to work on our inner self. I give myself to God and He gives back to me grace and gifts which help me become one with Him.

God is our loving Father  
My being comes from God  
Jesus is my brother  
The Holy Spirit is my spouse

We need to listen to what our mission is. Each one of us is devoting our lives to God's mission, which is the reign of God. We need to pray "Grant what you command and command what you will." Not everybody can do everything. God takes us where we are, and we work with that. I love what Father said: "We need to work on our weakness. It's not like a microwave. It is more like a crockpot. We need a sense of humility about our weakness and the weaknesses of others. Never look down on people.

On Day Three, Father Dominic focused on how The Beatitudes are our ID card of life! The Beatitudes challenge us to grow in our life. We need to strive with Resilience. We need to roll with the punches. If God is for us who can be against us? We need to live in community. If we live apart it is hard to fight against the evil one. It is good to be with each other and work and pray together. The Christian life is a constant battle that we need to fight.

It was a great weekend and being with our brothers and sisters was a true blessing. There is so much more. I suggest you buy the DVD recording from Bill Mussatto.

Please save the following dates, for all Formation Directors and teams. The format will be a round table session. Let's share our thoughts on how you plan Formation for our new brothers and sisters and Ongoing Formation. I will be sharing some of our thoughts that our Regional Council would like to see each Fraternity doing. Please send me any questions you want me to research and discuss.

**October 19<sup>th</sup> (Our Lady Guadalupe – La Habra)**  
**October 26<sup>th</sup>(pending) Pro Sanctity - Fullerton and February 1<sup>st</sup> – San Diego**

Peace and all good,

Lucy Ibarra, OFS

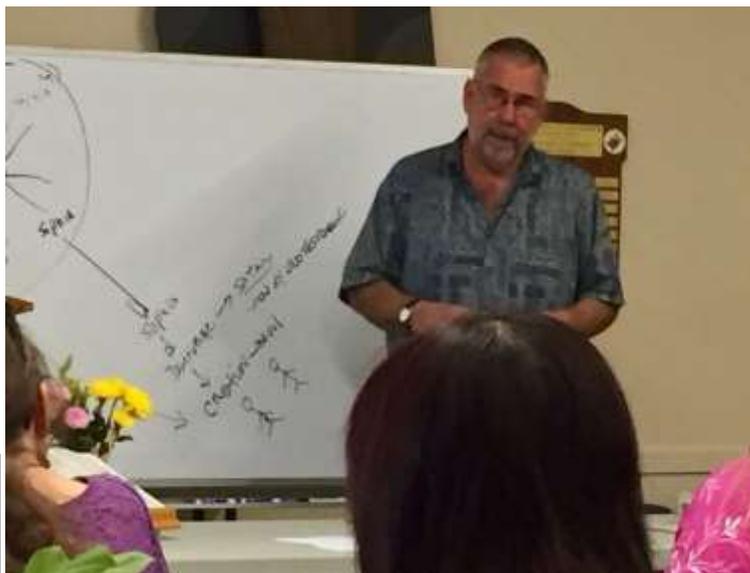
## SAN DIEGO DISTRICT Tuan Cao, OFS, District Liaison

On July 13, 2019, Immaculate Conception Fraternity professed Thomas Stoddard into the Fraternity and the Order.



Patricia Grace, OFS, Minister, Father Gino Correa, OFM, Andrew, Thomas and Dawnella Stoddard

On July 14, 2019, Immaculate Conception had its annual Day of Recollection. Father Thomas Herbst, OFM, was the retreat master. The topic was "A Franciscan Reading of Scripture"



On August 10, the five fraternities in San Diego celebrated their Franciscan life together at a picnic at Santee Lakes.



**SONGS, PRAYERS, FUN, GAMES,  
& WONDERFUL FOOD**



**JOY FILLED  
FELLOWSHIP**



**Gifts collected to send to Casa Del  
Inmigrantes in Tijuana, Mexico**



On August 4, Mission San Luis Rey Fraternity elected a new council.  
The new council is pictured here:  
Joe Cannon, Councilor, Connie Collins, Councilor,  
Sandy Baden, Vice Minister  
Kelly Farnum, Secretary, Luis Guzman, Treasurer,  
Karron Esmonde, Formation Director,  
and Laura Chun, Minister

## Riverside/San Bernardino William Mussatto, OFS, District Liaison



On May 5<sup>th</sup> Padre Pio Fraternity had their May Crowning for Mary followed by praying the Franciscan Crown. They were blessed to welcome Damaris Lizarraga and Margaret Palafox to Inquiry. In June Sylvia Paoli conducted their pastoral visit.



On the third Sunday in May Holy Spirit Fraternity had a Marian Celebration, including the Crown Rosary. It was followed by the annual potluck with several guests and family members. Vice-Minister Maria Rodrigues, OFS, became the Minister of Holy Spirit Fraternity when Claudia Thompson, OFS, moved to Texas. Elections are now scheduled for September. A visitor has asked about becoming an Affiliate of the Order so we will begin her formation shortly.

**Immaculata Fraternity is continuing their outreach, together with members of St Matthews Parish and a local Mosque, to the poor at a local park.**



(Photos by Romy & Joice Quinsaas, OFS)

## Orange District Trudy Weigel, OFS, District Liaison

We had a couple of important events in May and June

On May 19, 2019, Immaculate Heart of Mary Spanish Fraternity professed 2 new members to the order. It was a very beautiful profession given at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (Delhi). All members of the Secular Franciscans present processed into the church and out afterwards. A reception followed in the church hall. During the profession the father asked the candidates to share what profession meant to them. They shared from their hearts. The whole service was very beautifully done.



### Orange District Picnic - by Tinh Le, OFS

Immaculate Heart of Mary Fraternity and Saint Clare Fraternity, Santa Ana, jointly hosted the annual Orange District picnic on Saturday June 29, 2019 at Mile Square Regional Park in Fountain Valley, CA.



Meeting Friends, Old and New



Good Food, Good Company

## Orange District Trudy Weigel, OFS, District Liaison



Mile Square Regional Park, Fountain Valley, CA – Article and Photos by Tinh Le

It was a pleasant early summer day for all of us to spend some leisure time at the park. Despite schedule conflict experienced by our brothers and sisters of the Korean speaking fraternities, there were still many of us attending the picnic.

The festivity began at 10:00 a.m. with opening prayer. All participants gathered around to thank God in their own languages (English, Spanish, Korean and Vietnamese) for a beautiful day and for the opportunity to be with our Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters. Although at the start, it appeared that not many of us could make it to this event. But by noon, more and more people arrived bringing with them their favorite goodies. There were also quite a few family members present. As always, we had plenty of delicious food for everyone to enjoy. We ate, we drank, and we spent time visiting with one another, then we ate some more. The festivity lasted until 4:00 p.m.

To top it all off, Fr. Nhan Tran, a priest from Vietnam, and Fr. Hien Linh Cong Bui came for a surprise visit. We all shared authentic Mexican food, Vietnamese entrées, a variety of fresh fruits and traditional picnic snacks. Everyone was happy to be together and cherished the fun-filled day.

I really enjoyed sampling the delicious Mexican cuisine. But what I was most grateful for was the opportunity to rejoice in the company of my brothers and sisters. At this picnic, I had the chance to meet people that I've never met before. I hope that a lot more of us can attend the annual picnic next time around since it is an

excellent opportunity to experience a sense of belonging to the Secular Franciscan Family.

Peace and All Good!

Tinh Le, OFS



**More Good Food**



**Enjoying quality time**

## St. Francis Fraternity Cecilia Bae, Minister

We had a Retreat & Profession celebration on June 16th, 2019,  
at Old Mission San Luis Rey Church.  
Two Brothers & Three Sisters were Professed.



Ehum, Young Hee (Colomba), Do, Kyong Ae (Agatha), Ma, Soo Keum (Agnes),  
Choi, Sung Yeol (Anthony), Chang, Seung Woon (Daniel).



Pax et Bonum, Cecilia

Secular Franciscan Order - St. Francis Region #52

**Important Announcements**

Fr. Steve’s new address: Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM, Conv., **Nazareth House, 3333 Manning Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90064.**

Fr. Lester Bach, OFM. Most of us have met Fr. Lester or are aware of him through his many books which we used or are using for Initial and Ongoing Formation. Fr. Lester had a bad fall a couple of weeks ago. If you would like to send him a card his new address is: **St. Paul's Elder Care 316 Fourteenth St., Kaukauna, WI. 54130.**

**POET’S CORNER**

**Strength**

“Strength of my soul,” a spiritual muscle, potency of purpose, tenacious courage, power beneath weakness, bravely holding on, endurance, perseverance, willingness to stand firmly in spite of seeming defeat, fortitude amid the forces of impossibility.

I rely on you, Oh Lord to be the Strength of My Heart,  
to fill the gaps of my inadequacies.

Strength for me when I limp along weakly,  
Unable to activate what is best in me.

Strength to turn toward those in need  
When my heart is hollow, my mind shallow.

Strength to carry me though confusion,  
To bolster my faith when it declines.

Strength for the times I am tempted  
to turn from what facilitates my growth.

*Adapted from the August meditation of Joyce Rupp.*

**Important Announcements**

**Last Will and Testament**

Each of us can play an important role in preserving and extending our Secular Franciscan way of life, in our own fraternity, and at the regional level. This can be accomplished in many ways, including a bequest in our will.

Suggested beneficiaries:

Your FRATERNITY  
Your REGION

Suggested wording for your bequests:

1. A BEQUEST FOR GENERAL PURPOSES:  
"I give and bequeath the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_% of my disposable estate) to: (name and address of fraternity, or region).
2. A RESIDUARY BEQUEST OF INDEFINITE AMOUNT:  
"After payment of expenses, debts and specific bequests, I direct that the residue of my estate be given to: (name and address) or "I bequeath to (name and address) any part of my estate that other beneficiaries are unable to receive because of death or other reasons."

THE ADDRESS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION IS:  
276 E. Green St.  
Claremont, CA 91711



## CALENDAR - August to December

August	<p><b>26<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup></b> National Gathering of Regional Spiritual Assistants. Attendees from St. Francis Region: Sylvia Paoli, OFS, Margie Rodriguez, OFS, Armando Lomeli, OFS.</p> <p><b>29<sup>th</sup> -1<sup>st</sup></b> September. National Gathering of JPIC Animators. Representing St. Francis Region: Patricia Elizabeth Grace, OFS.</p>
September	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup></b>. Elections. Nuestra Senora De Los Angeles Fraternity. Presider: Regional Secretary Caroline Yandell, OFS. Church Witness: Regional Spiritual Assistant Margie Rodriguez, OFS.</p> <p><b>8<sup>th</sup></b> Elections. Holy Spirit Fraternity. Presider: Regional Vice-Minister Frank Miller, OFS. Church Witness: Fr. Christopher Theil, OFM, Cap.</p> <p><b>14<sup>th</sup></b> REC meeting. In San Diego.</p> <p><b>15<sup>th</sup></b> Pastoral Visit. St. Francis Fraternity (K) at Anaheim. Visitor: Regional Spiritual Assistant, Armando Lomeli, OFS.</p> <p><b>21<sup>st</sup> Regional Gathering at St. Matthew's Parish in Corona.</b></p> <p><b>22<sup>nd</sup></b> Pastoral Visit. St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe Fraternity (K) Visitor: President in Turn, Regional Spiritual Assistant, Sylvia Paoli, OFS.</p>
October	<p><b>13<sup>th</sup></b> Pastoral Visit. St. Francis Fraternity (K) Los Angeles. Visitor: Regional Spiritual Assistant, Margie Rodriguez, OFS.</p> <p><b>15<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup></b> National Chapter, Corpus Christy, Texas. The Regional Minister will represent the Region. The Regional Secretary will attend as an Observer.</p> <p><b>27<sup>th</sup></b> Pastoral Visit. St. Lawrence of Brindisi Fraternity. Regional Spiritual Assistant, Margie Rodriguez, OFS</p>
November	<p><b>10<sup>th</sup></b> Fraternal Visit. St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity. Visitor Regional Minister, Judith Mussatto, OFS.</p> <p><b>10<sup>th</sup></b> Pastoral Visit. Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity. Visitor: Regional Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Christopher Theil, OFM, Cap.</p> <p><b>17<sup>th</sup></b> Pastoral Visit. St. Diego Fraternity. President-in-Turn Regional Spiritual Assistant, Sylvia Paoli, OFS</p>
December	<p><b>8<sup>th</sup></b> Elections. St. Claire Fraternity. Roland Heights. Presider: Judith Mussatto, OFS Regional Minister. Church Witness: Regional Spiritual Assistant, Armando Lomeli, OFS.</p>

*PEACE AND ALL GOOD  
FROM  
YOUR REGIONAL COUNCIL*

*Judith Mussatto, OFS  
Minister  
St Francis Region*