



THE JOY OF FRANCIS

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



2014 Regional Chapter

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

My brothers and sisters,

Please give a warm welcome to Cyl Maljan-Herbelin who has taken over the Regional Newsletter. Feel free to send her stories and pictures and let her know what you think of the newsletter.

Our annual Chapter, with Visitation from our National Vice-Minister, Elaine Hedtke, and one of the National Spiritual Assistants, Bro. Bob Brady, OFM, is behind us, the first in a hotel. I heard many positive comments about the location, and would also like to hear if anyone had any problems with the hotel or the accommodations or anything else there. We will probably be in hotels in the future, as there are no retreat centers large enough to accommodate us that we can afford. I especially want to thank Peter Koh from St. Diego fraternity in San Diego for initially securing this location for us. Without his assistance we probably couldn't have contracted

for the property at the price we did. He provided an outstanding service to our region.

St. Bonaventure tells us that the root and guardian of all virtues is the virtue of *humility*, and defines humility as being “totally turned to the other.” Our wonderful Pope Francis, in a January 7th Mass homily, noting the importance of discerning what comes from God and what is false, stated that the way of Jesus Christ is always one of “humility.” Bonaventure insists that the outpouring of love from God shows the humility of God in that the Father chooses to turn to another - to be “other-centered.” Our response to God, in humility, is to turn totally to him. Pope Francis tells us that “if a thought, if a desire takes you along the road of humility and abasement, of service to others, it is from Jesus, but if it brings you to the road of sufficiency, of vanity, of pride, along the path of an abstract thought, it is not from Jesus.” He tells us to “put it to the test: Do I always choose the things that come from God? Do I know which are the things that come from God? Do I know the true criterion by which to discern my thoughts, my desires?” “The criterion,” says the Pope, “is the Incarnation of the Word. The Word is come in the flesh: This is Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ, who was made man, God made man, who lowered himself for love, in order to serve all of us.” As St. Francis reminds us: “Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, that He Who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally!”

My prayer for all is that each of us might allow God’s love to so totally permeate our very being that we will “hold nothing back” but be totally centered on Jesus, as Peter was when he got out of the boat and walked on the water towards Jesus.

FORMATION

Frank Miller, OFS

Regional Formation Coordinator

What shall we talk about?

This question is one that every Formation Coordinator & Fraternity Council has asked themselves. I know you want to make your

Ongoing Formation meaningful, educational and interesting!

We all know the wonderful Initial Formation books: *The Franciscan Journey*; *Fully Mature In Christ*; *Catch Me A Rainbow Too*; *The FUN Manual*; etc. But do you know these books can also be a wonderful source of topics for Ongoing Fraternity Formation? Some of us were professed 3 or 4 years ago.....some of us were professed 3 or 4 decades ago. Who we are as Secular Franciscans, hasn’t really changed. We are a Gospel people, following Christ, through the way of St. Francis of Assisi. But we possess a charism of many beautiful prisms. The way we look at each facet and angle has been updated through newer Formation materials, many times from those who know us best.....our brother and sister Secular Franciscans!

As beautiful as it is, we can only tell the Wolf of Gubio story to our brothers and sisters so many times! Use the wealth of information in our Initial Formation materials to be the basis for your Fraternity’s Ongoing Formation. Every Formation session, whether Initial Formation or Ongoing formation, should be an encounter with the Holy Spirit. Use the various chapters and topics as jumping-off points to generate discussion. As an example, probably all of us remember becoming acquainted with the topic of “Our Identity as a Secular Franciscan”; take the same topic and update it: What is our Secular Franciscan identity in 2014? What a rich and full discussion that is sure to generate! You will likely touch on prayer, works of charity, being a witness, finding Christ and BEING Christ to those around us, and so much more! I was blessed to participate in one Fraternity discussion on “What is the *Assisi experience* in Southern California?” The group sharing was vibrant with who are the lepers and where are the wolves in SoCal; where do we go to find our cave for prayer and reflection; How am I a brother/sister to my Fraternity 365 days a year and not just at a meeting once a month?

I am sure I am not suggesting anything you haven’t heard before when I say that a well-

prepared Formation (whether Initial or Ongoing) is not one which is prepared an hour prior to the meeting. The facilitator, whether a member of the Council or a member of the Fraternity, should be ready with their material. Look at some of the online resources and tools available to you: StFrancisRegion.org; NAFRAFormation.org; or any of our documents such as the Rule, the Constitutions, the National Statutes (available in several languages at the NAFRA website) or Regional Norms. Or just “Google” the topic and see what comes up to trigger you in a direction you hadn’t thought of!

I am happy to be available to offer a suggestion or where you might find some material on an idea you have. Feel free to email me at FrankMillerOFS@gmail.com. God bless you all!

A FRANCISCAN APPEAL TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Elenita Lesperance, OFS

Chairperson/Animator: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

Late last year, Pope Francis addressed the question of human trafficking as one of the most pressing issues in today’s society. Human trafficking, he said, “affects the most vulnerable people in society: women, children, the disabled, the poorest and those who come from situations of family or social disintegration.”

The Holy Father stated that victims, both Christian and non-Christian, must be freed from “this horrible trade.” Millions who are forced into labor, manpower or sexual exploitation constitutes a violation of their rights. Pope Francis asserted that, “All persons of good will, whether they profess a religion or not, cannot allow these women, these men and these children to be treated as objects, deceived, violated, often repeatedly sold, for various purposes, and at the end either killed or ruined physically and mentally, to end up discarded and abandoned. It is shameful.”

Human Trafficking constitutes a grave violation of the human rights of the victims and an offense to their dignity, as well as a defeat for the global community. It is a crime against humanity; therefore, we have the common responsibility, in the local and international community, to show “decisive political will” to end human trafficking. As Franciscans who are called to be bearers of peace and justice, we must involve as ourselves in legislative action or advocacy to stop the exploitation of the innocent victims who are helplessly trapped in this horrible crime of selling and exploiting human. This crime against humanity is truly a “pro-life” issue.

Human Trafficking is modern-day slavery which actually exists here in America, even though 150 years ago we formally abolished slavery and involuntary servitude with the 13th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Today, human beings are trafficked for labor, organ harvesting, and sexual exploitation. However, most cases of human trafficking involved forced prostitution of girls and young women. On average, a girl is only 12 to 14 years old when she is first trafficked, and she is often an immigrant, a runaway and/or a victim of sexual abuse. Those caught up in this despicable practice suffer alienation, disease, torture and even death. According to the US Dept. of Justice, the majority of human trafficking is classified as sex trafficking (almost 80%), labor trafficking (10%) and the remainder as miscellaneous trafficking. California is the most vulnerable states for human trafficking and Los Angeles is one the top three points of entry for victims.

While acknowledging that governments have taken some action, much more is needed to be done, including an examination of conscience. Pope Francis stated, “Whoever uses and exploits human beings, even indirectly, becomes complicit in their oppression.”

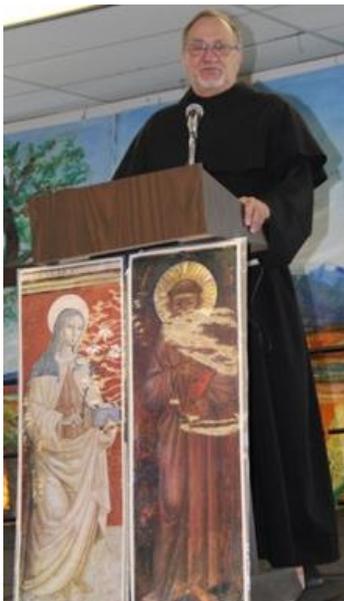
What can we do as Secular Franciscans who are out in the world, called to be lights in the darkness, salt of the earth, and bearers of peace and justice? How do we help the voiceless and

the oppressed? It is, quite obviously, that this horrible crime is a severe violation of our values as Franciscan Catholics in the dignity of every human person. This crime against humanity is truly a “pro-life” issue. Each of us is called to come to the aide of the poor and vulnerable, and to stop others who seek to exploit them. The Scripture reminds us that we are our brother’s/sister’s keepers.

The US Bishops Anti-Trafficking program encourages us to utilize to become advocates for the victims of human trafficking. Your local fraternity can host a prayer service and information sessions to reflect on the experiences of those who have suffered through this crime. We are invited to pray for the emotional, physical and spiritual healing of those who have been trafficked and make a personal commitment to work against human trafficking. Let us stay informed and respond to all legislative alerts against human trafficking.

REGIONAL NEWS:

Regional Gathering



On Saturday September 28, 2013 Secular Franciscans throughout the region, gathered at Angeles Plaza in downtown LA to be inspired and motivated by Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM Conv. and to enjoy the company of our brothers and sisters. We listened as Fr. Steve talked about Pope Francis and his

World Youth Day 2013 message of “*newness, harmony, and mission*” and how it applied to us.

His message was very nicely summed up with the following poem:

WE NEED SAINTS

- We need saints without veil or cassock.*
- We need saints who wear jeans and sneakers.*
- We need saints who go to the movies, listen to music and hang out with friends.*
- We need saints who put God in first place, but who let go of their power.*
- We need saints who have time everyday to pray and who know how to date in purity and chastity, or who consecrate their chastity.*
- We need modern saints, Saints of the 21st century with a spirituality that is part of our time.*
- We need saints committed to the poor and the necessary social changes.*
- We need saints who live in the world and who are sanctified in the world, who are not afraid to live in the world.*
- We need saints who drink Coke and eat hot dogs, who wear jeans, who are Internet-savvy, who listen to CDs.*
- We need saints who passionately love the Eucharist and who are not ashamed to drink a soda or eat pizza on weekends with friends.*
- We need saints who like movies, the theater, music, dance, sports.*
- We need saints who are social, open, normal, friendly, happy and who are good companions.*
- We need saints who are in the world and know how to taste the pure and nice things of the world but who aren't of the world.*



After lunch and small group discussions, we ended the day with fun and laughter playing games led by Anna Graciano, OFS!



2014 Annual Chapter

The Regional Fraternity gathered together for the annual meeting at the Best Western Plus Inn Suites in Ontario, CA the weekend of January 17 to 19th. The Chapter was our Fraternal and Pastoral Visitation with National Vice-Minister, Elaine Hedtke, OFS, and National Spiritual Assistant Br. Bob Brady, OFM as our visitors. The weekend provided a wonderful opportunity to share our region’s “strengths and challenges” with the visits and each other!



National Vice-Minister, Elaine Hedtke, OFS, and National Spiritual Assistant Br. Bob Brady, OFM

Regional Executive Council Meeting

*Saturday February 1, 2014
Our Lady of the Assumption Parish,
Claremont, CA.
Judith B. Mussatto, OFS
Secretary, St. Francis Region.*

Present at the meeting were: Minister, Sylvia Paoli, OFS, Vice-Minister, Robert Herbelin, OFS, Treasurer, Frank Miller, OFS, Secretary, Judith Mussatto, OFS, Councilors: Margarita Rodriguez, OFS and Anthony Tuan Cao, OFS, Regional Spiritual Assistants: Rock DeSpain, OFS and

Armando Lomeli, OFS. Mentor to the Regional Spiritual Assistants, Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM, Conv.

The council has been using the FUN manual as its source for topics for Ongoing Formation at its meetings and the topic for the February meeting was the second part of Chapter II of our Rule, using *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* by Teresa V. Baker, OFS.

Under Old Business:

- There was a wrap-up discussion on Chapter 2014, considering the things that worked well and those that needed improvement next year.
- The schedule for visits and elections in 2014 was reviewed and changes were made as per the requests of some fraternities.
- St. Francis Region will again have a booth at the upcoming Religious Education Congress in March at the Convention Center in Anaheim and the final plans for furnishing and the people to be host at the booth were discussed.
- The names of possible presenters for this year’s Serra Retreat were presented and Councilor Margarita Rodriguez and Minister Sylvia Paoli will follow up on those leads.
- St. Thomas More, Korean Language Fraternity, will be deactivated as the last three remaining members have transferred to other fraternities.
- Los Angeles District is in need of a Liaison. Will it be you?

Under New Business:

- The list of topics for possible seminars that were suggested at Chapter was presented and discussed.
- The pros and cons of have area gatherings in place of a regional gathering were discussed.
- The Vietnamese Martyrs Newly Forming Group will be elevated to the level of Emerging Community.

- Search for a location for Chapter 2015 has begun.

The Regional Executive Council along with District Liaisons and District Formators will gather at Pro Sanctity Retreat House, Fullerton, CA for their annual retreat, March 7-9, 2014.

The next meeting of the Regional Executive Council will be Saturday April 5, 2014 at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Claremont, CA.

Annual Retreat

The annual Regional Retreat at Serra Retreat Center in Malibu from May 23rd to the 25th with Pat Brandwein-Ball. Look for Registration materials soon!

DISTRICT NEWS:

Orange County

Judith Mussatto, Regional Secretary, conducted a fraternal visitation at St. Maximillian Kolbe fraternity (Los Alamitos) on October 13th.

The St. Maximillian Kolbe fraternity (Los Alamitos) sponsored a Mass for the Catholic Worker in Santa Ana on February 8th, 2014. This is an annual event.

San Diego County

On September 8th, Sylvia Paoli, Regional Minister, presided over the elections at San Luis Rey fraternity (Oceanside). David York was elected Minister and Sandra Baden was elected as Formation Director. Regional Spiritual Assistant Rock DeSpain served as the ecclesiastical witness. On November 11th, Rock DeSpain and Tuan Cao conducted a Pastoral Visit at the fraternity.



Several fraternities from the San Diego District attended the Transitus Service at the Mission of San Luis Rey.

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

Regional Spiritual Assistant Rock DeSpain conducted a Pastoral Visit at Saint Louis the King fraternity in Santa Barbara on November 9th.

On November 17th Regional Minister Sylvia Paoli, presided over the elections at St. Bonaventure fraternity (Ventura) where Mary Donahue was elected as Minister and Song Sayward was elected Formation Director. Spiritual Assistant Frank Miller was the ecclesiastical witness.

Los Angeles District

On September 22nd, Antonio Figueroa and Diane Mensah were professed at St. Lawrence of Brindisi fraternity, Raul Bosque, Minister.

Frank Miller and Margie Rodriguez conducted a fraternal visitation at St. Joseph fraternity in Los Angeles on October 27th.

A Pastoral Visit was conducted by Armando Lomeli, Regional Spiritual Assistant, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity (Hacienda Heights) on November 10th.

Regional Spiritual Assistant Armando Lomeli conducted a Pastoral Visitation at St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity on September 15th.

Greg LoVetere, OFS, Minister, Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity reports that on January 29, 2014, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity in Hacienda Heights worked jointly with the Religious Education staff and parents at St. John Vianney Church in Hacienda Heights to cook and serve hot meals for the homeless in the community. The meals were served in the O'Callaghan Center located on the church property and hosted approximately two hundred homeless men, women and children. Other groups volunteered their services each night during a two-week period from January 20th to February 2nd.

After the evening meal, the center was converted into a homeless shelter until the next morning. Security and supervision was provided throughout the night. Besides hot meals and

shelter from the winter cold every evening, clothing and hot showers were available.

St. John Vianney Church supports the East San Gabriel Valley Coalition for the Homeless. It is one of six churches in the area that volunteers its facilities.

Anyone interested in finding out more information, please visit the East San Gabriel Valley Coalition for the Homeless website: esgvchomeless.org.

San Bernardino/Riverside District

On December 8th Immaculata Fraternity, St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity and Holy Spirit Fraternity had a joint profession at St. Matthews Catholic Church, Corona, CA. Professed were Bruce McAdams, Camille Page, Maria Rodriguez, and Virginia Haddad. This joyous event was an opportunity for members of the District fraternities to get together.



Sylvia Paoli, Regional Minister; Ray Hardwick, FD, Immaculata; **Bruce McAdams, Immaculata**; Lorraine Cardin, Minister, Immaculata; **Camille Page, Immaculata**; Alma Jimenez, FD, Holy Spirit; **Maria Rodriguez, Holy Spirit**; Randy Rohrer, Minister, Holy Spirit; Jan DeSpain, FD, St. Francis & St. Clare; **Virginia Haddad, St. Francis & St. Clare**; Dave Teegarden, Minister, St. Francis & St. Clare; Rock DeSpain, Regional Spiritual Assistant.

Margie Rodriguez, Regional Councilor, was the fraternal visitor to Holy Spirit Fraternity (Claremont) on September 9th.

Bill Mussato, OFS, was installed as spiritual assistant for St. Padre Pio fraternity on November 10th by Robert Herbelin, OFS, Spiritual Assistant (delegate of Regional Spiritual Assistant, Rock DeSpain, OFS)

On November 17th, Regional Secretary Judith Mussatto, OFS, presided over the elections at St.

Francis and St. Clare Fraternity in Hemet. This was the first election at the fraternity since it was canonically established in November 2012. Dave Teegarden was elected Minister with Jan DeSpain as Formation Director. Bob Herbelin, fraternity spiritual assistant, served as the ecclesiastical witness.

LANGUAGE GROUPS

Korean

Ha Bong Maria Choi was professed at St. Maximillian Mary Kolbe Fraternity (Torrance) by Fraternity Minister Franciaco Gun Young Lee, OFS, on September 22nd.

Regional Spiritual Assistant Rock DeSpain conducted a Pastoral Visit St. Maximillian Mary Kolbe Fraternity (Torrance) on October 27th.

On November 24th, Regional Treasurer Frank Miller presided over the elections at Blessed Luchsius and Bounadonna Fraternity in Los Angeles. Apollonia Young Sook Han was elected Minister and Stella Rho was elected Formation Director. Spiritual Assistant Frank Miller served as the ecclesiastical witness.

Vietnamese

Spiritual Assistants Armando Lomeli and Taun Cao conducted a Pastoral Visitation at Saint Anthony of Padua fraternity in San Diego on November 2nd.

Spanish:

Regional Spiritual Assistants Rock DeSpain and Armando Lomeli conducted a Pastoral Visitation at Santo Toribio (Los Angeles) on September 15th.

Margie Rodriguez, Regional Councilor, was the fraternal visitor at Nuestra Senora De Los Angeles Fraternity (San Diego) on October 13th.

On October 20th, Regional Spiritual Assistant Rock DeSpain conducted a Pastoral Visitation at Immaculate Heart of Mary fraternity in Santa Ana



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