

JOY OF FRANCIS



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

November 2018

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In every Franciscan newsletter, be it fraternity, region, national or international, there is a space reserved for the Minister. I am grateful for this privilege. Given the events in our country and around the world especially in the last week, I struggled to find a topic for this space that will be relevant to the time in which we live. I looked to our Rule where Article 19 tells us that ...

"...we are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, we should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting in the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, we should strive to bring joy and hope to others. ..."

A tall order indeed. And yet, this is what we 'signed up for', what we agreed to be on the day of Profession. We each said "Yes, this is what I want."

At the 5:30 p.m. Sunday vigil Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish in Claremont, California, on Saturday November 10, 2018, the sending forth hymn was *We Are Called* by David Haas. This hymn is based on the words from the Prophet Micah 6:8. The messages I received from Article 19 and David Haas are the same. Take time to read and meditate on this message so beautifully expressed by David Haas. Sing!

Make a joyful noise.

Come Live in the Light.

We Are Called by David Haas

*Come! live in the light!
Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the kingdom,
to live in the freedom of the city of God!*

*We are called to act with justice.
We are called to love tenderly.
We are called to serve one another, to walk
humbly with God.*

*Come! Open your heart!
Show your mercy to all those in fear!
We are called to be hope for the hopeless,
so all hatred and blindness will be no more!*

*Sing! Sing a new song!
Sing of that great day when all will be one!
God will reign, and we'll walk with each other
as sisters and brothers united in love!*

Are we ready to: live in the light! act with justice, love tenderly, serve one another, walk humbly with God, open our hearts, show mercy, be hope for the hopeless. Come! Let us sing a new song! Sing of the time when we will walk as sisters and brothers united in love! We must visualize this new day if we want it to become reality.

There is much work for us. Let not our hands and minds be idle!

Your Sister in Christ,

Judith



Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants

MORE ON PRAYER - Contemplation

From the CRSA

Contemplation, often referred to interchangeably as centering prayer, is perhaps the prayer where we listen the most and speak the least. In contemplation, we go beyond thought and image, beyond the senses and the rational mind to that center of our being where God is working a wonderful work. Contemplation is a very simple, pure form of prayer, frequently without words; it is an opening of our hearts to the Spirit dwelling within us.

In contemplation we spiral down into the deepest center of ourselves. It is the point of stillness within us where we most experience being created by a loving God who is breathing us into life. To enter into contemplation requires a recognition of our dependency on God and a surrender to His Spirit of love.

“ . . . the Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness. . . the Spirit expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words. . . ” (Rom. 8:26) The Spirit of Jesus within us cries out *“Abba, Father.”* (Rom. 8:15)

Before attempting to enter into this type of prayer, turn yourself totally over to God. Surrender everything to Him, including your free will. Then, as with all prayer, get into a comfortable position, probably just with both feet on the floor, hands relaxed and open in your lap. Sit quietly, comfortably and relaxed. Move to the center within your deepest self. This movement can be facilitated by imagining yourself slowly descending in an elevator, or walking down flights of stairs, or descending a mountain, or going down into the water, as in a deep pool. As you descend, you are leaving your conscious self behind, along with all your cares and worries, and becoming totally still. In the stillness, become aware of God's presence: peacefully absorb His love. There is no need for words, only for *being* there with the Lord, listening to Him if He speaks, or simply being in His presence.

Praying contemplatively takes time. Don't expect a miraculous or perfect experience the first time. But as you keep working at it, you will find yourself getting closer and closer to God, and spending more and more time with Him – and wanting to spend more. Ideally, the best place for such prayer is alone, in your own prayer space, without time constraints on you. It can be done in a group, as in fraternity meetings, but you will, of necessity, have to bring it to an end within a reasonable length of time. When praying this way in a group, use the descending motion (whether of an elevator, stairs, or other ways) spoken slowly and quietly aloud by the leader, to help all follow. When you bring it to a close, do so with a spontaneous prayer or a prayer together such as the Our Father.

Sylvia Paoli, OFS
President-in-turn, CRSA



A Reflection

Dolores Cullen, OFS - Holy Spirit Fraternity

WHEN YOU PLANT A SEED



The Felician (Franciscan) Sisters hosted a Transitus. A goodly number of sisters and their auxiliaries were there, but an additional third of the attendees were members of my fraternity, Holy Spirit. I began to reminisce—

Soon after my graduation from high school on Chicago's Great South Side, Mom and I went to live with Grandpa on the German North Side and I joined the choir at my new parish. Franciscan Sisters taught at the parish school and Sister Cecile was choir director. To help me make new friends, she suggested, "Why don't you visit the young people's group at St. Peter's?" The seed was planted—and I did.

That was St Peter's by the railroad yard, a renowned Franciscan center before "St Peter's in the Loop" (110 W. Madison) existed. Socials every Friday night. Many activities for young people. Their Third Order had 100 members—many marriages resulted. Mine was one of them—and my Profession on October 24, 1948 came one week before my first baby arrived.

When my husband got his MS degree from De Paul we moved West. His new college job paid twice his Chicago teacher's salary. Now we *could* plan music lessons for our 4 children.

We lived 30 miles from LA—and the only Third Order Fraternity in the area at that time. Because we hoped for a closer Franciscan connection, my husband worked diligently to start a local fraternity. It was 1980. How to start a fraternity was not common knowledge. But he persisted. It was finally established on Oct 4, 1981. Holy Spirit has become a loving group ready to help each other, and much more.

I thought about all this at the Felician convent. I have had 70 years of being a Secular. What more blessed and edifying a life could one want? It all grew from the seed Sister Cecile planted about visiting the young "Antonians" at Old St Pete's. And Holy Spirit Fraternity is the proof of its fruitfulness.

October 4 -The Feast of Saint Francis

A Pilgrimage To Assisi

For the feast day of our Beloved Saint, Patricia Elizabeth Grace, minister of the Immaculate Conception Fraternity and editor of the Joy of Francis, and Caroline Yandell, Secretary of the Regional Council, pilgrimaged to Assisi. We left San Diego on September 26 and arrived in Assisi the following day. When planning this trip, we decided it was going to be a true pilgrimage. We had both been to Assisi before and therefore did not feel any pressure to see everything or even to stop in Rome. Our hearts and minds were set on prayer and contemplation.

We arrived late afternoon and entered Assisi through the Porta Nuova for a walk up the hill to St. Anthony's guest house, run by the Franciscan Sisters of Atonement, and overlooking the Basilica of Santa Chiara. Over the next week we entered and exited through the eight gates that serve as the portals to this beautiful beloved town. The walls of the Assisi served to create a sense that we were being held, removed any distractions, and focused our attention. The gates reminded us to keep open to the Divine Will of our Loving Lord.

A Pilgrimage to Assisi - Continued



Throughout the week we ventured together and alone, with books and journals, and our own thoughts and prayers, to the holy places in and around Assisi. We sat at the original cross of San Damiano, now in the Basilica of Santa Chiara to Gaze, Consider, Contemplate, and seek to Imitate, following the instructions of Saint Clare given in her Second Letter to Saint Agnes. We walked the path to San Damiano to sit where the sisters sat, reflect in the rooms where they slept, and stand at the door where Saint Clare held the lamp to protect the city from the Saracens. We reflected for many hours before the twenty-eight panels created by Giotto and hanging in the Cathedral of St. Francis. Each panel draws us into a part of the life of the Beloved Saint and invites us to contemplate more deeply his path to our Lord. Patricia had a long morning at Saint Stefanos while Caroline ventured up to the Rocca Maggiore. We both attended Masses throughout the city.

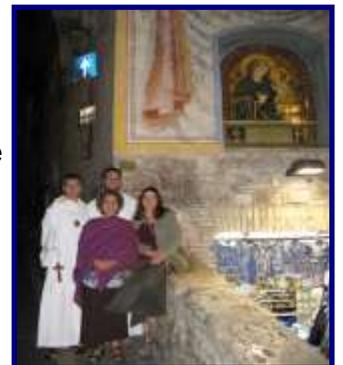
We dedicated one day to walk the path of St. Francis up Mt. Subasio to the Eremo di Carceri - the hermitage and the caves where Francis often went to pray overlook Assisi and the Umbrian Valley. As we ventured down the rocky path in the late afternoon, we imagined that the climb was probably as challenging to St. Francis and his brothers as it was to us!

On the day of the Transitus, we attended Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels, the beautiful church that surrounds the Portiuncula. We were joined by Brother Gabriele, a young man who was with our fraternity for several years before returning to his native Italy, entering the religious life, and joining the Benedictines. He enriched our worship experience by sitting behind us and translating the homily. Once again, we were so struck by the universality of the Mass and the joy that comes from it regardless of the language of the celebrant. After mass, we knelt in the Portiuncula where St. Francis knelt, and leaned against the walls where we imagined he leaned during his long hours praying before the crucifix.

Brother Gabriele had traveled from his monastery north of Assisi with Father Elijah and we all met for lunch and conversation after the Mass. The day became one of the highlights of our pilgrimage. Father Elijah is from the U.S. and our lunch conversation was rich, deep, at times profound, and at times filled with laughter, despite the solemnity of the day. We were reminded that our Beloved Saint calls us to joy in all things. After lunch we traveled the few miles to Rivotorto, the church built over and around where St Francis lived with his brothers. We also visited the Church of Magdalena and, after procuring the key from the priest at Rivotorto, entered the one room chapel where we believe St. Francis and his brothers prayed, and where we know our recent Popes visited. Father Elijah celebrated a Mass there, for our intentions. We dedicated the Mass to our grandchildren. In the evening, we went to the Tomb of St. Francis to pray his Transitus. We received a blessing from Father Elijah as we parted to walk back to St. Anthony's and they departed for the journey back to their monastery. The next day we arose early to celebrate the feast day, filled with Mass, prayers, and walks around Assisi.

The pilgrimage had many lighter, human moments as well. We shopped for presents for our families and for the sisters and brothers in our fraternity. We enjoyed wonderful meals, celebrating the Italian cuisine that is so pleasing. We even had a few gelatos!

We returned home with a deep sense of awe and gratitude. How blessed we are that our Beloved Saint entered our lives and is leading us in so many ways to the feet of Jesus and to the heart of the Father. We offer prayers for all of our Franciscan sisters and brothers throughout the world. Amen.



REGIONAL GATHERING September 9, 2018

On September 9, 2018 our Region gathered at St Gregory the Great Church in San Diego. In 1978, our Rule was revised and we celebrated the 40th Anniversary of our revised Rule. Through presentations and large and small group discussions, we examined our Rule in depth. We shared the journey together with a lot of happiness and a lot of international food. We ended the gathering with a group picture with the beautiful church in the background. (Submitted by Tuan Cao)



The Franciscan family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God — laity, religious, and priests — who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi. In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charism of their common Seraphic Father in the life and mission of the Church.

The rule of the secular Franciscan order, article 1

ORANGE DISTRICT TRUDY WEIGEL, OFS, DISTRICT LIAISON

20th Anniversary Celebration!

On Saturday February 10, 2018 St. Maximillian Kolbe Fraternity in Los Alamitos celebrated their 20th anniversary as a fraternity.

Report by Anne Killian

It was with joy and thanksgiving that we gathered together to celebrate the anniversary of our fraternity's founding 20 years ago. Saturday, February 10th, began with mass and all professed members came forward to renew their promises of profession.



Afterward we had breakfast in the hall, followed by Tina and Diane sharing their Franciscan journey.

ORANGE DISTRICT - Continued TRUDY WEIGEL, OFS, DISTRICT LIAISON



“Let us bless our Lord and God, living and true; to Him we must attribute all praise, glory, honor, blessing, and every good forever. We thank you, Lord, for calling us to the Franciscan Way of Life.”

Fr George Reynolds talk was on **“Mary at the Foot of the Cross”** followed by Clarence and Gwen reading the Stations of the Cross from the booklet **Mary the Mother of Jesus**. The retreat ended with discussions and a potluck lunch.



August 11, 2018

Feast of St. Clare Day of Recollection at the San Juan Capistrano Basilica

September 22, 2018

Profession of Cynthia Urquides
St. Maximillian Kolbe Fraternity



Cyndie Dunkerson, OFS
Minister
San Juan Capistrano Fraternity



Sister Blanca
Lopez



San Juan Capistrano Fraternity participated in the ministry fair at the Basilica.

Transitus Celebrations - October 3, 2018

San Juan Capistrano Fraternity Celebrated the Transitus of St. Francis in the Historic Chapel in San Juan Capistrano Mission.

St. Maximillian Kolbe Fraternity attended the Transitus of St. Francis at St. Simon and Jude Parish in Huntington Beach.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Spanish Language Fraternity attended the Transitus of St. Francis at the St. Francis Home in Santa Ana.

ORANGE DISTRICT - Continued **TRUDY WEIGEL, OFS, DISTRICT LIAISON**

On October 7, 2018, St. Clare Vietnamese Language Fraternity celebrated a short Transitus of St. Francis followed by a celebration of the Feast of St. Francis and a Mass at their regular meeting.

November 10, 2018 Requiem Mass at the San Juan Capistrano Basilica for our deceased Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters.

In December the Immaculate Heart of Mary Spanish Language fraternity will celebrate La Posada, time and place to be announced.

SAN DIEGO DISTRICT **TUAN CAO, OFS, DISTRICT LIAISON**

On October 3rd, 2018 San Diego District had a Transitus of St Francis at Mission San Luis Rey in Oceanside. As usual the old church was packed with Friars, Poor Claire's, and Secular Franciscans. This year the ceremony was more simple but did not lack any detail. The event ended with a reception at the Sacred Garden. All of the people had a wonderful evening with joy and peace.

On October 6, 2018 St Anthony of Padua Fraternity had a profession for Maria Nguyen Thi Mem. The Profession Mass was celebrated by Fr Michael Tran Xuan. Sylvia Paoli, OFS, President-in-turn, Regional Spiritual Assistants, served as the Church witness. Representing the Regional Executive Council were Jai Chan Lee, OFS, Regional Treasurer and Peter Song, OFS, Councilor.



[A Note from Judith Mussatto, OFS, Minister of St. Francis Region: The next two articles fall under the heading of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. Is your fraternity or your district participating in or organizing similar activities that fall under this heading? If your answer is yes, please use JOY OF FRANCIS to share the stories of your activities and events.]

A Prayer Service at the U.S. Mexico Border **Patricia Elizabeth Grace, Minister** **Immaculate Conception Fraternity** **October 20, 2018**

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, stated that the only reasonable response to the challenges presented by contemporary migration is solidarity and mercy. Following his directive, eleven Franciscan sisters and brothers and their guests from the Immaculate Conception Fraternity in San Diego gathered at Friendship International Park on October 20, 2018, to pray, sing, read and reflect on scripture. Our prayer service was held in English and Spanish, and included songs and prayers in both languages.

SAN DIEGO DISTRICT - Continued TUAN CAO, OFS, DISTRICT LIAISON



We were clear in our intentions. We went to the border to pray. It was not our goal to debate immigration policies, nor to try to untangle the complexities of sovereign nations. We gathered because we know in our Franciscan hearts and in our lives that our Loving Lord is the one who is sovereign over the earth. People makes borders. God creates life. He is a God of Justice, who crosses all boundaries and we are all His children, each one of us. We stood in prayer, with and for God's inclusive love. We stood in faith, knowing that God is creating a world in which all of His children are safe, cared for, and loved. It may be difficult to see that world, but God calls us to hold that vision and to know that He holds all of his children in His heart.

After ending in prayer and singing Make Me a Channel of Your Peace, we sat together over a bagged lunch, and reflected upon our experiences. We plan to reach out to Franciscans on the Mexican side of the border for further prayer during Lent. Please join us if you feel called.

*His Loved ones Are Very precious to Him
and He does not lightly let them die. Psalm 116:15*

On November 11 ,2018 we had a District gathering for Thanksgiving. Due to schedule conflicts this year, we had only members from the Immaculate Conception and St Anthony of Padua Fraternities. Before praying and sharing the foods we had ongoing formation on Articles 6 and 7 of our Rule. After the group pictures we packed a lot of bags for the homeless, filled with some essentials and a few "goodies." Each of us carried home a few bags to distribute to those in our communities. Such a beautiful way to share Thanksgiving and spread a little Franciscan love.



SAN DIEGO DISTRICT –Continued TUAN CAO, OFS, DISTRICT LIAISON

On November 11, 2019 The Saint Diego fraternity professed Philip Sungmo Kang, Lucia Hyunsoon Kang, Andrew Chihyun Yoon, and Albert Jun Lee. Father Honorius Kim, OFM, was the celebrant and Brother John Keisler, OFM, served as the Church witness. David York, OFS, Regional Councilor, represented the Regional Executive Council.



CALENDAR

December	Event
8	Profession. St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity December 8, 2018. Time: 3:00 p.m. Place: St. Francis High School Chapel. 200 Foothill Blvd. La Canada, CA 91011.
16	Fraternal Visit: Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity. Hacienda Heights.
January	
13	Fraternal Visit: St. Diego Fraternity. San Diego.
18 - 20	Regional Chapter. Ontario, CA
31	Deadline for turning in Annual Reports.



Secular Franciscan Order - St. Francis Region #52

Important Announcements

Annual Report

Good News. The Fair Share contribution per Professed and Candidate will remain at \$50.00. The emeritus member will pay 50% of the current fair share which is \$25.00. There is; however, a change in the deadline for submitting your Annual Reports and Fair Share.

The new deadline for submitting your reports is January 31st, 2019. You have the option to hand in your report at Chapter on the week-end of January 18-20, 2019.

This change of deadline will greatly help the REC in the preparation of its report to the National Executive Council.

Please ask your database person to update your fraternity rosters. The calculation of your amount of Fair Share is based on the number of Professed and Candidates recorded in the region's database on December 31st, 2018.

So, to recap:
 Up date your roster in the region's database.
 Prepare your report
 Submit report on the weekend of Jan. 18-20 or no later than January 31st.

Note from Your Editor

We are trying a new format for our Joy of Francis. The new format permits more and larger pictures, which we all enjoy. I look forward to any comments or suggestions.

Please send any submissions for our next edition to patriciaelizabethgrace7@gmail.com by February 1. We are so blessed to keep alive this beautiful way of life and share it with all around us. It is an awesome and wonderful duty and privilege to share the Charism of our Beloved Saint.

Peace and All Good, Patricia

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



*PEACE AND ALL GOOD
 FROM YOUR REGIONAL COUNCIL*

*Judith Mussatto, OFS
 Minister
 St. Francis Region*