

The Portiuncula

Franciscans of the Prairie Region

Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis

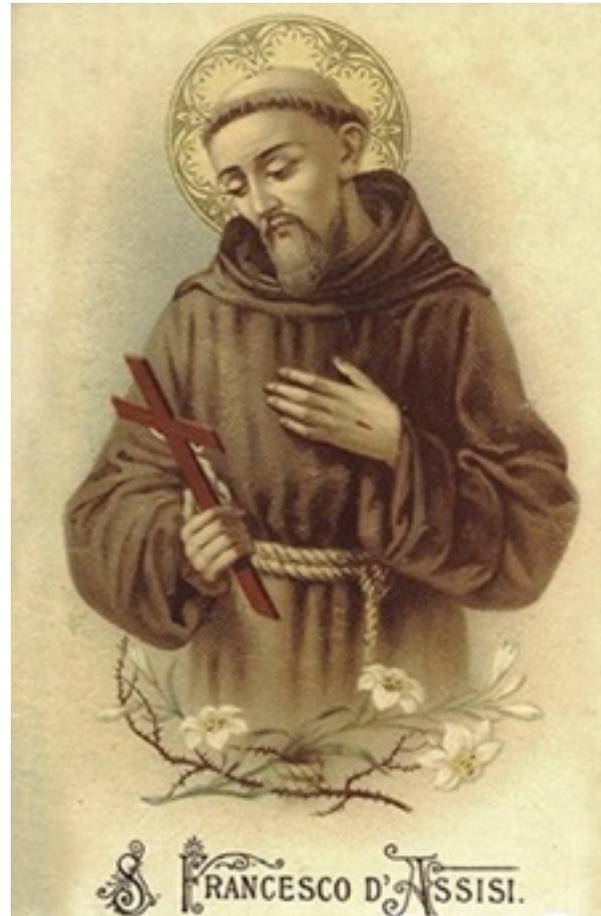
OUR MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Dear sisters and brothers in our Lord and His servant Saint Francis. From the Lord - grace, peace and **mercy!**

As this Spring 2016 issue of our Regional newsletter *The Portiuncula* arrives in your hands, the Regional Fraternity Council will either be meeting at the Chiara Center in Springfield or will have just concluded its meeting at which it elected a new Regional Executive Council. The members of the new Executive Council who will serve our Region for the next three years will be featured in future issues of our newsletter. This time around, in addition to the mandated offices (i.e., Minister, Vice-Minister, Secretary, Treasurer, and Formation Director), the Regional Fraternity Council decided to elect only two Councilors-at-large rather than three (as in the past) and to give them the responsibilities of serving as our Regional Councilor for Database Management and our Regional Councilor for Vocations Promotion. Thank you so much for your involvement in the nominations process for our Regional servant leadership and for your prayerful support leading up to the Elective Chapter on April 16, 2016. Please continue to keep the new Executive Council in your prayers as well!

As Minister, it was my privilege to serve at the side of the members of our outgoing Executive Council during these past three years. Each of them brought their own unique set of gifts and talents and placed them generously at the service of our Regional family. *Our General Constitutions* remind us that "The ministers' and councilors'



task to lead is temporary. The brothers and sisters, rejecting all ambition, should show love for the fraternity with a spirit of service, prepared both to accept and to relinquish the office" (article #32.2). In the spirit of this article, it is not too soon for us to begin the process of identifying those sisters and brothers who will be called to serve our Regional family at the 2019 Elective Chapter!

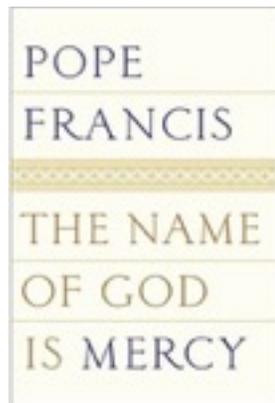
see **MINISTER** page 2

MINISTER

Continued from page 1

As our new Regional Executive Council assumes office, our Church finds itself already four months into the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy that runs from December 8, 2015 until November 20, 2016. Surely, these are not merely coincidental occurrences!

In January of this year, a book was published bearing the title, "The Name of God is Mercy" (an image of its cover is shown below). It details a series of interviews - an extended conversation, really - between our Holy Father Pope Francis and Andrea Torielli, a Vatican reporter and correspondent for the publication *La Stampa*. From the description of this book as found on Amazon.com, "**Pope Francis here invites all humanity to an intimate and personal dialogue on the subject closest to his heart - mercy - which has long been the cornerstone of his faith and is now the central teaching of his papacy.**"



So, how is each of us doing as Catholics and especially as Franciscans with the task of making God's name known, the name which is mercy? How are we seeking to put into practice the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in our individual lives and in our fraternities and our parishes? Specifically, how are we doing with our efforts to reach out to our lapsed fraternity members inviting them back to active Franciscan life?

I want to remind everyone of the major events in the life of our Regional Fraternity currently on the docket for 2016 that include the Annual Regional Picnic in Edwardsville on Saturday, **June 18, 2016** sponsored by Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville; the Annual Formation Day of Reflection on Saturday, **July 30, 2016** at the Chiara Center; and our Annual Regional Retreat directed by Sister Renita Brummer, O.S.F. the weekend of **September 9-11, 2016**, also at the Chiara Center. You will find more information about the Picnic and the Retreat elsewhere in this issue of

The Portiuncula. Please check to see that you have put these dates and events on your calendars and, if you haven't, PLEASE DO SO NOW!

In closing, it has been a supreme privilege and source of blessing for me to have served as your Minister for the past three years.

Please keep me in your prayers and please be assured of a special place in mine. May we never cease encouraging one another to live the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi!

Wishing you peace and every good, I remain

Your brother and servant - with fraternal love in Saints Francis and Clare,

Deacon Dave, O.F.S.,

Regional Minister

T *Ministrare, non ministrari*

"Bring God's Love to All!"
(NAFRA theme for 2016)



Newsletter Submission

Submit articles and photos for our Regional newsletter to Neil Suermann, OFS, newsletter editor.

Submission deadlines are Jan 1st, April 1st, June 1st and September 1st.

ONGOING FORMATION



**Delving into the
Spiritual and Corporal
Works of Mercy**

In the Winter 2016 Regional Newsletter, *The Portiuncula*, the Ongoing Formation section gave suggestions for studying the Works of Mercy and then listed all of the

Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

I want to take this opportunity to share with you my personal journey through the Works of Mercy. I decided to address #5 and #6 on the suggested list: #5, Ask volunteers to share their own experiences about a particular Corporal Work of Mercy; #6, Ask volunteers to share their own experiences about a particular Spiritual Work of Mercy.

The Spiritual Work of Mercy I am choosing: **ADMONISHING THE SINNER**. It must first be stated that all of us are sinners. Since we have entered into the Easter Season at the Easter Vigil on March 26, 2016 and therefore Lent is not that far removed from our memories, we can easily recall Ash Wednesday. One of the formulas that can be used for the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday (*Roman Missal*, p. 72) is "Repent, and believe in the Gospel." *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*, article #7 elaborates on this concept by stating, "United by their vocation as 'brothers and sisters of penance,' and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel itself calls 'conversion.' Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily." As Franciscans, we are truly blessed to belong to a Fraternity family where our brothers and sisters create the sacred place in which we can examine our relationship with God and encourage us to find ways to turn ourselves ever more closely to doing God's will. So, the statement under the topic which states, "Do not judge, but be supportive in helping others find their way and correct their mistakes. Together we can learn to walk more closely with Christ" fits perfectly with our Franciscan way of life.

My heart is touched by this Spiritual Work of Mercy when I reflect upon our dear sisters and brothers who are "lapsed" members. What have I personally done to reach out to them? What has our Fraternity done to reach out to them? What has our Council done to reach out to them? Every one of us as a Secular Franciscan is responsible for our brothers and sisters. Writing a note, sending an e-mail, using the telephone, texting, etc. all are ways to reach out to others. I must take the first step and commit to "doing something" to gather the sheep back into the fold, a good Resurrection image! As our Minister General, Tibor Kauser, O.F.S. wrote in his 2016 Easter letter to the Order, "Admonition is never a condemnation or an adjudication, but a loving approach to re-establish the injured fraternal bonds." It must be a priority for me to "leave my comfort zone" and walk hand in hand with my "lapsed" brothers and sisters, making every effort to accompany them back to the Franciscan family which is not complete without them!

The Spiritual Work of Mercy I am choosing: **BURY THE DEAD**. As all of you are aware, our most recent past National Minister, Deacon Tom Bello, O.F.S. embraced Sister Death on March 29, 2016. Our National Fraternity members united all of their prayers, love and support for the repose of Tom's soul and the consolation of his Immediate Family and his Franciscan Family. I am composing this article with tears running down my face as I remember Tom and his unique way of being Franciscan. He encountered a lot of lives as a family person, a deacon, a teacher, a Franciscan National Minister and a Secular Franciscan. I joined David in sending a card to his wife Judy, in writing something in the Funeral Home Guestbook, and offering prayers and Masses. So, I have "done" what was required to "bury the dead." Yet, that is NOT enough!!! I have been given this precious time to examine my own life and to ask myself about the differences that my life has made in the lives of those around me. Have I enabled others to see Christ in me? Have others experienced the Merciful Christ through my actions? Is my vocation as a Secular Franciscan reflected in all that I am and all that I do?

see **FORMATION** page 5

NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity Pastoral Visitation
 Submitted: Dwayne Goodwin, O.F.S., Vice-Minister

On Sunday, January 17, 2016, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity in Quincy welcomed Fr. John Sullivan, O.F.M., Regional Spiritual Assistant, for a Pastoral Visit. Fr. John braved the cold winds and snow and enjoyed an afternoon of observation, fellowship, ongoing formation, and prayer with members of the Fraternity and one Inquirer and one Aspirant who are discerning a vocation to the O.F.S.

Minister Rosanne Roy, O.F.S. welcomed Fr. John on behalf of the Fraternity and Dennis Dowell, O.F.S. provided ongoing formation by teaching on St. Francis and the Stigmata. Vicki Kurtz, O.F.S. said a few words concerning her Profession which will occur on February 21, 2016.



Following the group praying of Evening Prayer from the *Office of the Liturgy of the Hours* for the Second Week in Ordinary Time, Fr. John talked about the various forms of prayer that can be implemented during the monthly Gatherings which are listed in the back of *The Ritual of the O.F.S.* He spoke at length about the *Office of the Passion* and explained the way that St. Francis set it up to be prayed throughout the day, especially on the night of Holy Thursday through the afternoon of Good Friday. Following his very insightful talk, Fr. John sat in on the Council Meeting of the Fraternity and gave his assessment on how the Gathering went and offered feedback on how to make improvements to the monthly Gatherings focusing on **recruitment** and taking our Franciscan way of life to our home parishes and inviting prospective new members to “Come and See.” He also said it would be a good idea to have a question and answer session at our parishes to help answer any questions that prospective inquirers may have. Following the Council Meeting, Fr. John retired to the friary at St. Francis Solanus Church to

to enjoy fellowship and rest before returning to Springfield the next day. Pax et Bonum!



St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy

On February 21st, Vicki Kurtz made her formal profession to the Secular Franciscan Order at St. Francis Solanus Church, in Quincy, Illinois. Rosanne Roy, O.F.S., Minister of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, accepted her profession as a permanent member of the Order. For admission to the Order, a person must be a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation/Confirmation and Holy Eucharist in addition to being an actively practicing Catholic. Candidates initially begin with the “Rite of Admission” followed by 18-36 months of initial formation. Professed Secular Franciscans promise to follow the Rule of the Order and pledge to “Live the Gospel” in the manner of St. Francis of Assisi.



FORMATION

Continued from page 3

Let all of us commit ourselves to bringing back our “lapsed” brothers and sisters and not be satisfied until each and every one of them have been contacted to let them know that they are precious in God’s sight and that we miss them in our Franciscan Family.

Next, we can all reflect upon a person who has experienced his or her Transitus from this life to eternity and ask how his or her passing has made a difference in our lives. My sincere desire is that, when I embrace Sister Death, I hear our Lord saying to me “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord.” (The Bishop’s homily and instruction, Rite of Ordination of a Deacon) and that Saints Francis, Clare, and of course Thérèse, would be smiling in the background!

Thérèse, O.F.S.

Regional Formation Director

Calendar

April 16-17, 2016

Regional Fraternity Council Meeting and Elective Chapter, followed by a Regional Executive Council meeting, Chiara Center, Springfield

April 24, 2016

Elective Chapter, Our Lady of the Angels, Decatur

June 5, 2016

Fraternal Visitation, Pope St. John XXIII, Rock Island

June 18, 2016

Regional Picnic, hosted by Our Lady of the Angels, Edwardsville

June 30 - July 4, 2016

Franciscan Quinquennial Gathering, St. Louis, MO

July 19, 2016

Fraternal Visitation, St. Francis of Assisi, Teutopolis

July 30, 2016

Regional Day of Reflection for those in Initial Formation and Workshop for Formation Directs & Team Members

September 9-11, 2016

Regional Retreat with Sr. Renita Brummer, O.S.F., followed by a Regional Fraternity Council meeting and Regional Executive Council meeting, Chiara Center, Springfield

October 23, 2016

Elective Chapter, Franciscans of the Tau, Calhoun Co.

November 1-6, 2016

NAFRA Council Meeting, Winter Park, Florida

March 11-12, 2017

Regional Fraternity Council meeting and Regional Executive Council, Chiara Center, Springfield

July 29, 2017

Regional Day of Reflection for those in Initial Formation and Workshop for Formation Directors & Team Members.

September 29 - October 1, 2017

Regional Retreat, followed by a Regional Fraternity Council meeting and Regional Executive Council meeting, Chiara Center, Springfield



**Franciscans of the Prairie Retreat
September 9 – 11, 2016
Chiara Center**

**Facilitated by:
Sr. Renita Brummer, O.S.F.**

Praise Be: The Communion of Creation

The retreat weekend will:

Celebrate the goodness of creation
and of each creature

Explore our deepest Franciscan roots
of fraternity with earth

Enter into *Laudato Si'*,
Care for our Common Home,
Encyclical Letter of Pope Francis

The retreat will be contemplative, instructive, participative, celebrative, and challenging. We who name ourselves 21st century Franciscans will spend time with St. Francis who was and is “the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. . . . He was particularly concerned for God’s creation and for the poor and outcast. . . . He was a mystic and a pilgrim who lived in simplicity and in wonderful harmony with God, with others, with nature and with himself. He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.”

Laudato Si' #10

I am already looking forward to being with Franciscan brothers and sisters in the midst of our creation brothers and sisters at beautiful Chiara Center. Together we will be inspired to do what is good. The Spirit of the Lord is already leading us. “Praise be to you, O Lord!” Sr. Renita, O.S.F.

Franciscans of the Prairie

OFS Regional



Saturday June 18th, 2016

*Edwardsville Township Park
6300 Center Grove Road
Edwardsville, IL 62025*

10 AM – 3:00 PM - All Are Welcome

Please RSVP to Larry Ashlock, OFS at 618.540.8783

or email: lrashlock@sbcglobal.net

by Friday June 10th

Directions:

From the East: Take I70 West to I270 West. Then go IL159 North. After a couple of miles turn left on Center Grove Road (the park is about a mile off IL159 on the left – look for the huge fighter plane and grain silo - the High School is too far)

From Quincy: Take US HWY 67 South until it becomes IL255. Then take I270 East to IL159 North. After a couple miles turn left on Center Grove Road (the park is about a mile off IL159 on the left – look for the huge fighter plane and grain silo - the High School is too far)

From the North: Take I55 South. Then take I270 West to IL159 North. After a couple miles turn left on Center Grove Road (the park is about a mile off IL159 on the left – look for the huge fighter plane and grain silo - the High School is too far)

Franciscans of the Prairie Region

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Minister

Deacon David Ream, OFS
660-627-5626
umbria2@earthlink.net

Treasurer

Steve Roszhart, OFS
309-825-2810
sroszhart@gmail.com

Councilor (Leadership)

Sue Nelson, OFS
618-656-6261
susanecnelson@gmail.com

Vice-Minister

Jeannine Montgomerie, OFS
309-310-5315
jmntg.1229@gmail.com

Formation Director

Thérèse Ream, OFS
660-627-5626
umbria2@earthlink.net

Councilor (Data Base)

Cathy Roszhart, OFS
309-825-2900
croszhart@gmail.com

Secretary

Kathy Adams, OFS
618-483-5381
oremus7@gmail.com

Spiritual Assistant

Fr. John Sullivan, OFM
217-522-9822 x327
ofmsully@hotmail.com

Councilor (Newsletter)

Neil Suermann, OFS
618-792-4060
neil.suermann@gmail.com

REGIONAL APPOINTEES

YouFra Animator

Sue Nelson, OFS
618-656-6261
susanecnelson@gmail.com

JPIC Animator

Bill Ducett, OFS
wrducet@ilstu.edu

Webservant

Jason Deavers, OFS
got-2-dive@hotmail.com

Franciscans of the Prairie
19514 Orrick Trail
Kirksville, MO 63501-7126

