

The Portiuncula

Franciscans of the Prairie Region

Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis

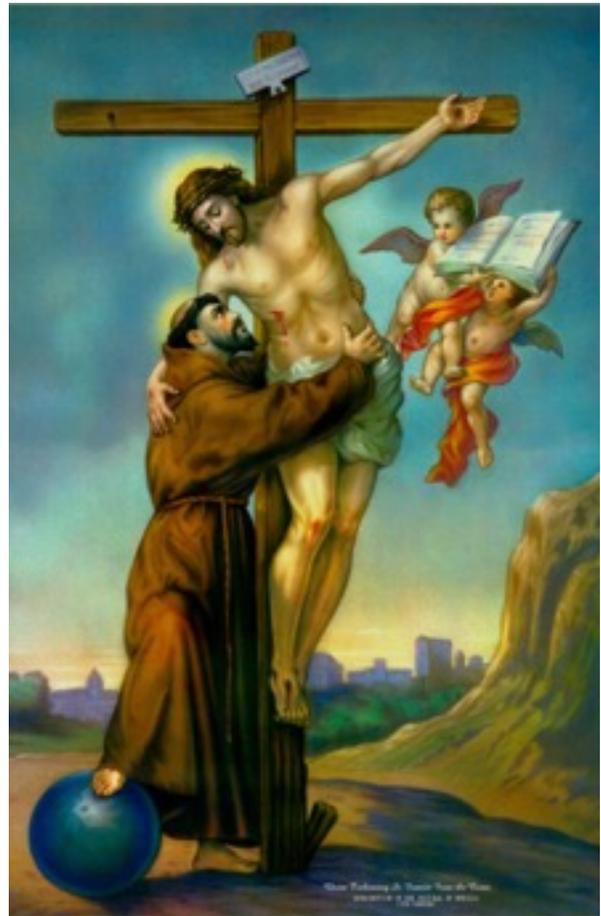
OUR MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Dear sisters and brothers in our Lord and His servant Saint Francis. May the Lord give you His peace!

I offer very warm and sincere fraternal greetings to everyone reading this edition of our Regional Fraternity newsletter, *The Portiuncula*. What an appropriate name for our newsletter, one that truly reflects who we are as a Region: a “little portion” of our great National Fraternity nestled in the heartland of our country! According to the demographic section of the *Annual Report* our Region submitted to NAFRA for the year ending December 31, 2015, we numbered 8 active canonically-established fraternities which are home to 210 Active and Active/Excused Professed members, 13 Candidates, 13 Inquirers, 7 Aspirants (those in Orientation), and 1 Affiliate. Eighteen of our sisters and brothers were embraced by Sister Death last year; let us always remember them in our prayers that our Lord may enfold them in His loving arms forever.

I am very saddened to say that 80 of our brothers and sisters were listed as lapsed members of our fraternities (i.e., those who apparently lack a good reason for not participating in some way in the life of the fraternity and who have not been excused from their obligations by the local fraternity council; see our *National Statutes*, article #18.7.b). Especially during this Jubilee Year of Mercy, I implore everyone - not just our Local Ministers - to make reaching out to our lapsed members a real and fraternal priority. They need to be personally and repeatedly invited to return



to active involvement in fraternity life. Our family is not complete without them!

Elsewhere in this edition of our newsletter you will read about our April 15-17, 2016 Regional Elective Chapter (and perhaps even see some pictures!) I wish to thank everyone who supported this Chapter in any way - by attending and participating, by allowing your name to be placed in nomination for elective office, by praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance.

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MINISTER

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Special thanks are due to our National Secretary, **Mattie Ward, O.F.S.**, who presided at the elections as the Delegate of our National Minister and who also provided the Regional Fraternity Council's Ongoing Formation prior to the elections; to **Father John Sullivan, O.F.M.**, our Regional Spiritual Assistant who also served as the Ecclesial Witness of our elections, the Delegate of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants; and to our brothers **Matt Eppel, O.F.S.** and **John Grillot, O.F.S.** who so capably oversaw our Regional nominations process. I would be sorely remiss if I did not also express my deep gratitude to the love of my life, **Thérèse**, my beloved wife of almost 38 years (and also our Regional Formation Director), for the countless ways she contributes to the life of our Regional family. May our good and gracious Lord reward each of you as only He can!

I believe we have reason to be grateful to God for the gift of the Executive Council elected on April 16, 2016. I have found them to be truly collaborative co-workers with me in our shared ministry of animating and guiding our Regional Fraternity over the next three years. This Executive Council has already reviewed and approved "job descriptions" for our Regional JPIC Animator, our Regional Webservant and our Regional Newsletter Editor. The group also reviewed the current draft of the proposed revision of our **Regional Guidelines**, a work-in-progress that now goes to the whole Regional Fraternity Council; stay tuned for further developments!

I want to continue to highlight and promote our upcoming Regional events for this year; the **June 18 Regional Picnic** at Edwardsville Township Park,

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., hosted by Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville; the **July 30 Regional Day of Reflection** for those in Initial Formation & Workshop for Formation Directors & Formation Team members; and the **September 9-11 Regional retreat** entitled "Praise Be: The Communion of Creation" led by **Sister Renita Brummer, O.S.F.** at the Chiara Center, Springfield (we have the whole house to ourselves, all 30 rooms!). Details about each of these events can be found elsewhere in this issue of *The Portiuncula*. These special moments in the life of our Regional family cannot be successful or bear the fruit God intends for them without **YOU** and your active involvement and participation. Please consider making them a personal priority in your calendar.

In closing, I wish to repeat my invitation: please let me and the members of your newly-elected Regional Executive Council know how we may be of service to you, and please let us always remember one another in our daily conversations with the Lord!

Wishing a safe and enjoyable summer to everyone, I remain

With a brother's 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)

*Next
issue:
Sept 15*

Deadline: Article and photo submissions are due on January 1st, April 1st, June 1st and September 1st.

Neil Suermann, OFS
Editor
neil.suermann@gmail.com

**The Portiuncula
MISSION STATEMENT**

The Portiuncula publishes the newsletter to inform, serve and inspire the Secular Franciscans of the Franciscans of the Prairie regional fraternity.

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.

In the Spring Issue, I shared with you my personal journey through the Works of Mercy.

For this issue, I asked the local Formation Directors to send me the ways in which their particular Fraternity is discussing/studying, reviewing, etc. the Works of Mercy. This is a compilation of their responses which I received.

Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity in Decatur will hear a reflection on the Corporal Works of Mercy, Visit the Sick. This will be preceded by their listening to a reading from the Gospel of John: 21:18. While this passage is a prophetic statement by Jesus to Peter in regard to Peter's eventual martyrdom, the reflection will describe how Jesus' words also reflect the monotonous life of those living in a nursing home. This then will be followed by a group sharing of their own experiences when visiting the sick and dying, bringing a human presence to those who only know loneliness. Deacon John commented that he would not be able to attend the Fraternity Gathering and asked George, a Candidate, to present the scripture passage and reflection which was already prepared for their consideration.

Deacon John O'Brien, O.F.S., Formation Director

Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity in Rock Island is using *Living & Serving in the Way of St. Francis: Reflections from Franciscan Volunteers*, edited by Julie McElmurry, 2015 Tau Publishing. A section is read out loud and then the discussion questions provided in the text are used to guide discussions.

Deacon Frank Agnoli, O.F.S., Formation Director

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy is pairing up one of the Corporal and one of the Spiritual Works of Mercy and discussing how they work together and how we effectively live them, especially in light of our elderly community. We ask probing questions and elicit a significant response and discussion about how we can live this in today's society and with the many health and ambulatory issues that our members have. I think that our brothers and sisters really become involved in these discussions. So, we will cover all of them over a period of 6-8 months, during the Year of Mercy. These discussions are part of our (almost) monthly JPIC presentation.

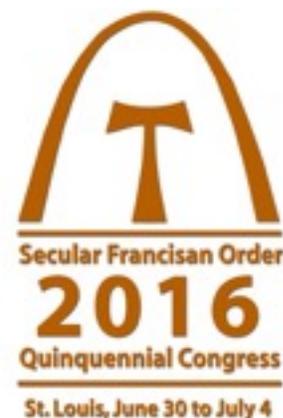
Dennis Dowell, O.F.S., Formation Team Member

How blessed we are to have three different ways to consider in covering the Works of Mercy! A book could be used, tie the Works with the Gospel and pair the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

I want to thank the three Fraternities who responded and I look forward as I know you do to the other Fraternities responding in future issues of *The Portiuncula*!

Thérèse, O.F.S.

Regional Formation Director



NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

Regional Executive Council Elections

by Pat DeLuca, Inquirer

Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island

I had the privilege to attend the triennial election of the members of our Regional Executive Council as an Observer. This event occurred on April 16, 2016 at the beautiful Chiara Center located in Springfield. This election was held as part of a Regional Fraternity Council Meeting.

Call to Order, Morning Prayer, Formation and Call for Nominations

The meeting of the Council was called to order in Bonaventure Hall by Regional Minister Deacon Dave Ream, O.F.S., St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy, followed by Morning Prayer from the Church's *Liturgy of the Hours*. Regional Formation Director, Thérèse Ream, O.F.S., St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Quincy, prepared the Prayers for the overhead screen which included thought-provoking illustrations. I reflected about these prayers being recited seven times daily by millions of Catholics, resulting in constant praise to our God. **"O Lord, in the morning thou dost hear my voice" (Ps 5:3).**

When prayer concluded, Deacon Dave introduced Mattie Ward, O.F.S., the newly elected Secretary of our National Fraternity, who served as our Election Presider, the official Delegate of our National Minister, Jan Parker, O.F.S. She provided us with informative and insightful Ongoing Formation regarding "Franciscan Servant Leadership" (**leadership**). Mattie presented four of St. Francis' Admonitions and Characteristics of Franciscan Leadership. (Specific details are included in the article "Regional Fraternity Council Formation" found elsewhere in this edition of our Regional Newsletter.)

As Formation concluded, Mattie reviewed the nominations that were requested of Regional members over the past few months. Nominations Co-Chairs were John Grillot, O.F.S., St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington and Matt Eppel, O.F.S., Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria. She then requested nominations from the floor and nominees responded as to their desire to proceed in the election process (**process**).

Prayer, Guidance from the Holy Spirit, Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction

After lunch, the meeting reconvened in St. Francis of Assisi Church. The service was led by Deacon Dave beginning with discernment upon the morning's formation by praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance in the process. We then participated in Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. I was inspired by the information we received from Mattie and how prayer, discernment, Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction are a vital part of making life decisions.

Spiritual Message, Prayers for Out-Going Members and Spiritual Leaders

After Church, we assembled back in Bonaventure Hall. Our Regional Spiritual Assistant, Father John Sullivan, O.F.M., also served as the Election Ecclesial Witness, representing the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. He delivered a Spiritual Message by reminding us that

**Jesus gave several**

examples of SHEPHERDING with love and sacrifice. Pope Francis' message on Good Shepherd Sunday was how all of us should be shepherds, and whomever our flock, we should love and care for them; as a result of our love and care for them, we should even **"SMELL LIKE THE SHEEP!"** Father's teaching was excellent and we are very blessed to have him as our Spiritual Assistant. After the Council conducted some Regional business, the process continued with prayers led by Mattie and Father John for the outgoing Executive Council members. Mattie then related six qualities of a spiritual leader: **Zeal for Righteousness, Compassion, Patience, Good Example, Good Judgment or Discernment, and Devotion to God.**

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ELECTION

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Prayer led by Mattie, Father and with all filled my thoughts with calling upon the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts and guide the process. **“Come Holy Ghost, Creator blest, and in our hearts take up thy rest” (LAMBILLOTTE LM)**

Formal Voting Procedure

A roll call was taken by the Regional Secretary, Kathy Adams, O.F.S., St. Francis for Assisi Fraternity, Teutopolis (who was also appointed to serve as the Secretary of the Elections) and Mattie confirmed the number of eligible voters.

Mattie announced positions: Minister, Vice-Minister, Formation Director, Secretary, Treasurer, Councilor for Database Management and Councilor for Vocations Promotion. Each position was voted upon separately. Mattie called for the final nominations.

The number of ballots distributed were counted aloud by Tellers (Steve Roszhart, O.F.S. and John Adams, O.F.S., St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Teutopolis).

The ballots were distributed, collected, re-counted and read aloud by the Tellers while Kathy completed the **Report of Tellers of Election Form** and proclaimed, **“In the name of Christ. Amen. I announce that the newly elected (Each Position) is...(Name).”**

The newly-elected stood and Mattie said, **“Do you accept this position?”** and the newly-elected responded, **“Yes, I do”** and she proclaimed, **“In the name of the Church and the Franciscan Family, I confirm the election of (newly-elected) as (position) of the Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity.”**

At the conclusion of the elections, four copies of the **Chapter of Elections Report** were completed by the newly-elected members, and were signed by Mattie, Father John, Kathy, Steve Roszhart and John Adams.

Results: Newly-Elected Regional Executive Council Members (2016-2019)

Minister: **Deacon Dave Ream**, O.F.S., St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy

see **ELECTION** page 6**Calendar****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

August 27, 2016

Regional Executive Council meeting Chiara Center, Springfield

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

April 13-15, 2018

Fraternal and Pastoral Visitation, Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Executive Council and Regional Fraternity Council, Chiara Center, Springfield

July 21, 2018

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

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Vice-Minister: **Mary Farrell-Diekemper**, O.F.S., Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria

Secretary: **Kathy Adams**, O.F.S., St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Teutopolis

Treasurer: **John Grillot**, O.F.S., St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington

Formation Director: **Thérèse Ream**, O.F.S., St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy

Councilor for Database Management: **Emma Lozowski**, O.F.S., Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville

Councilor for Vocations Promotions: **Kent Ferris**, O.F.S., Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island

Our Spiritual Assistant remains **Father John Sullivan**, O.F.M. (non-elected position)



Outgoing Members of the Executive Council

Prior to the formal election Mattie invited the outgoing members of the Council to come forward and we prayed for them. A portion of the prayer was, “**...The work of the Council is now completed. In gratitude let us bless our brother and sisters, who have served us for the past three years...**”. These faithful servants are:

Vice-Minister: **Jeannine Montgomerie**, O.F.S., St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington

Treasurer: **Steve Roszhart**, O.F.S., St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington

Councilor for Leadership Development: **Sue Nelson**, O.F.S., Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville

Councilor for Database Management: **Cathy Roszhart**, O.F.S., St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington

Councilor for Newsletter: **Neil Suermann**, O.F.S., Our Lady of Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville



Deacon Dave presented gifts to all the outgoing members and we expressed our sincere gratitude for their leadership. Relocating, Jeannine (Denver, CO), Steve and Cathy (Surprise, AZ), will be dearly missed by all Region members.

Installation of the New - Elected Executive Council

During Evening Prayer from the Church’s *Liturgy of the Hours*, Mattie invited the newly-elected Council members to come forward and recite the **Apostle’s Creed** and invited everyone to pray for these individuals. **The Ritual for Transfer of Records** began by outgoing members giving their records to the newly-elected. Mattie stated, “...I encourage you to follow in their (outgoing members) footsteps by carrying-out the duties associated with your Office diligently...and from St. Basil the Great...The blessing is particularly great



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when the service to be rendered is performed in humility, without arrogance, irritation and murmuring...". Mattie then offered a final thought **"...Above all, Trust in the Slow Work of God,... Give our Lord the benefit of believing that His hand is leading you..."**



What an extraordinary experience filled with new learning, prayer, discernment, calling upon the Holy Spirit for guidance, Eucharistic Adoration, Benediction and election formality! Also, the opportunity to observe the election process based upon our Order's spirituality, elements of servant leadership and enhancing relationships with our brothers and sisters. I believe the Regional Election Process can be best summarized by our Lord Jesus. **"...Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave to all. For the Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many"** (Mk 10:43-45).



Regional Fraternity Council Ongoing Formation

by Pat DeLuca, Inquirer
Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island

On April 16, 2016, our Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity Council met at the Chiara Center located in Springfield and Ongoing Formation was facilitated by Mattie Ward, O.F.S., who served as our Election Presider, the official Delegate of our National Minister, Jan Parker, O.F.S. She provided us with information regarding Franciscan Servant Leadership discussing four of St. Francis' *Admonitions* and characteristics of Franciscan leadership.

Admonition #4: That no one should appropriate to himself the office of superior.

"...Let those, who are set up over others, glory as much because of that office of superior, as if they had been appointed to the office of washing the feet of the brothers... After washing the Apostle's feet at the Last Supper,

Jesus proclaimed, "...even as the Son of man came not to be served but to SERVE..." (Mk 20:28).

Admonition #22: On Correction.

This *Admonition* concludes, "Blessed (is) the servant, who is not swift to excuse and humbly endures shame and rebuke because of sin, where he has not committed (any) fault." Jesus provides us with an example of ultimate **HUMILITY** standing before Herod, unresponsive, fully knowing His silence to false accusations will lead to his brutal scourging, crucifixion and temporary death. **"...So he questioned him at length; but he made no answer"** (Lk 23:9). Our leaders will experience undue criticism and misunderstandings of their actions while performing their duties.



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Leaders must realize that these situations are imminent and must react with silence in the echoes of accusations.

Admonition #5: “That no one should be proud, but rather glory in the cross of the Lord...”. A leader must acknowledge that accomplishments are only made possible **THROUGH GOD** and the **SACRIFICES OF CHRIST** on the Cross.

Admonition #9: On Love. “The Lord says, “**Love your enemies**; do good to those who hate you, and pray on behalf of those who are persecuting and calumniating you” (Mt 5:44). This teaching regarding leaders is also addressed in Lester Bach’s, O.F.M. Cap. book, The Franciscan Journey: Embracing the Franciscan Vision. He states, “In the SFO the council of a fraternity possesses the authority/power to serve the membership... The power is given to the minister (together with the council) to **SERVE** the brothers and sisters and to **LOVE** them...” (pg. 313).

Mattie proceeded to discuss characteristics of Franciscan leadership. She highlighted a work by Sister Margaret Carney, O.S.F., retiring President of St. Bonaventure University, entitled “Ten Characteristics of Franciscan Leadership: A contemporary approach based on a case study” which lists these characteristics:

1. **Respect for the Individual** - Leaders base this respect on the belief that all people are children of God.
2. **Empowerment** - Leaders provide individuals opportunities to utilize their God-given talents.

3. **Collaboration** - Leaders invite individuals to actively participate in decision-making.
4. **Communication** - Leaders are open, honest and consistent when communicating.
5. **Ethical Worldview** - Leaders behave on a deeply seated value system and do what is ethical.
6. **Commitment to the Growth of Others** - Leaders assist individuals to grow and develop.
7. **Informed Decision Making** - Leaders define problems, gather information, speak with individuals affected by a problem, attempts consensus and makes a decision when consensus is not achieved.
8. **Open to Learning** - Leaders are open to learning through experience, conferring and education.
9. **Compassionate, Fair and Strong** - Leaders care of people and are just, but decisive.
10. **Servant** - Leaders serve and love individuals as Jesus taught us.

Mattie’s information regarding four of St. Francis’ *Admonitions* and ten characteristics of a Franciscan Leader provided meaningful insights into aspects of leadership. Her presentation was timely and most appreciated as our Regional election process was to begin. Mattie’s instruction to the Council can be summarized by the following verse, Jesus proclaimed to the Apostles, “**If I then, your Lord and Master, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet**” (Jn 13:14).



Regional Executive Council Biographies

Deacon David D. Ream, O.F.S., Regional Minister

I have been in love with Jesus Christ and his Perfect Reflection, Francesco di Bernadone - Francis of Assisi - for as long as I can remember. *Il Poverello's* Gospel-centered vision of life has always appealed to me and challenged me. I was a Third Order Regular friar of the Sacred Heart Province from 1973 to 1977. I graduated not once, not twice, but three times! from Saint Francis College (now University) of Loretto, PA, with a B.A. in Philosophy and Psychology; a M.Ed; and a M.A. in Theology/Pastoral Ministry. I returned to formal membership in the Franciscan Family as a professed Secular Franciscan in 1988.

Other academic credentials include a M.Ed, in Counselor Education and a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Penn State University. I am also a National Certified Counselor and a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Missouri. I taught at Penn State in 1987-1988 and at Saint Francis College in 1988-1990. I am privileged to share my Catholic Franciscan life with my wife Thérèse, who is also a Secular Franciscan (and our Regional Formation Director). We live in Kirksville, MO, where I served on the staff of the University Counseling Services and as an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Counseling at Truman State University for 6 years (1992-1998).

On December 4, 1999, Bishop John R. Gaydos ordained me to the Diaconate for the Diocese of Jefferson City, MO. I was assigned to assist the Pastor of Mary Immaculate Parish in Kirksville, and its Mission of Saint Rose of Lima in Novinger, MO. In addition to the sacramental service associated with the ministry of deacon, I also have the privilege of working as a diaconal couple with Thérèse in coordinating the parish's ministry of pastoral care to the sick, hospitalized and home-bound parishioners while ourselves visiting the sick and home-bound on a regular basis.

From 1996-2002, I served as co-chair with Thérèse of the National Formation Commission of the

Secular Franciscan Order in our country. I am currently a member of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary Secular Franciscan Fraternity in Quincy, IL, where I serve as the Fraternity's Spiritual Assistant. I was first elected as Minister of Franciscans of the Prairie Region in May 2013 and re-elected to the same office in April 2016.

I invite you to take a moment to pray the prayer that our Seraphic Father Saint Francis composed and prayed in the chapel of San Damiano. As it was his prayer for guidance, enlightenment, and conversion of mind and heart, so let us - you and I - as we together seek to serve our Franciscans of the Prairie Regional family, make this our prayer as well:

Most high and glorious God, bring light to the darkness of my heart. Give me right faith, certain hope, and perfect charity. Lord, give me insight and wisdom so I might always discern Your holy and true will. Amen!

Thérèse A. Ream, O.F.S., Regional Formation Director

I have been a member of the Secular Franciscan Order since 1988. My husband David and I have lived in the small rural community of Kirksville, MO, since 1992. We really enjoy the Midwest and our picturesque home which is nestled between a large pond which we call Francesco and a smaller pond named Chiara. We decided to name our home Umbria after the Umbrian valley where Saint Francis of Assisi spent many of his hours traveling around and being brother to God's creatures. The animals at Umbria are plentiful. We have cats [4 inside: Mikie Clare; Angela Rufina (Angel); Bonaventura (Bona) and Antonio (Tony)], turkeys, squirrels, raccoons, deer, foxes, fish, herons, hawks, geese and many more. I am enamored with nature and find it a pleasure to work at home and look out the windows and view God's creation.

My real love is to be involved in Catholic Franciscan endeavors. I take seriously my baptismal call to share in the priestly, prophetic and servant identity of Jesus Christ. It is my privilege to serve as both the Regional Formation Director

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and the Formation Director for St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy. Sharing God's love, mercy, joy and peace with others as a Secular Franciscan is truly a blessing and a gift from the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

I believe that working collaboratively we may all bring about the Kingdom of God following the example of our Seraphic Father, St. Francis of Assisi. I invite you always to feel free to share your thoughts, ideas, feelings and questions with me for the good of the Order, umbria2@earthlink.net.

My prayer for all of us is that through "daily conversion" (i.e., *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*, article #7) we will grow closer and closer to God!

Peace and all good, Thérèse, O.F.S.

Mary Farrell-Diekemper, O.F.S., Regional Vice-Minister

Professed on February 12, 2006, St. Maximillian Kolbe Fraternity, Libertyville, IL. Transferred to Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria, IL in 2015.

I have the desire to do something more than what I've been doing so far in my spiritual life. I will strive to work in community with my brothers and support their spiritual growth. I feel we can grow together to serve the Lord and bring into action the Secular Franciscan charism. Deep down I sense a need to expose more individuals to the Secular Franciscan spirituality, and one way to do that is to serve as a Regional Executive Council member.

God has called me into action, and I want to embrace him as well as all the Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity brothers and sisters. **"Always go forward and never turn back."** - St. Junipero Serra

John Grillot, O.F.S., Regional Treasurer

Greetings to all! My name is John Grillot and I have recently been chosen to serve as Regional Treasurer. While I am looking forward to this service, I am a bit apprehensive for a couple of reasons. First, I am replacing a top notch

Treasurer, Steve Roszhart, who has worlds more experience than I in the world of accounting. I am blessed, however, that Steve has provided a good transition for me and has agreed to continue to help me as I learn the ropes. Secondly, I am also a relative "newbie" as a Professed Secular Franciscan, having professed on March 17, 2013...a mere 4 days after Jorge Bergoglio was chosen as our next Pope, Pope Francis.

My Franciscan journey started during 1984 when I first attended Mass at the Franciscan Chapel Center in downtown Tokyo while on a business trip. I met several parishioners, one of whom was a professed Secular Franciscan. While on another trip in 1987 I was able to travel with that Secular Franciscan to a Franciscan retreat house, Kiryu, in the mountains outside of Tokyo. It made a lasting impression that stuck with me. Many years later, in 2010, I visited Assisi while on a tour with my wife, and met a fellow traveler who was a Candidate in the SFO; this sparked a renewed awareness of God's call to the Franciscans and soon thereafter I entered into Orientation.

I've been married nearly 43 years to my wife, Kay, and together we've raised 5 children (4 boys and 1 girl ... ages 25-38) who are now scattered around the Midwest and in San Diego. Our family has grown to include 3 in-laws and 11 grandchildren (6 boys and 5 girls). Note: The 11th grandchild, a boy, is due in September. My education includes degrees in Engineering and Business, and I worked at Caterpillar my entire career in various areas. Although my work travel took me to many places throughout North and South America, Europe, and Asia, our home has been in Washington, IL for the last 37 years. Throughout that time I have been active in my home parish, St. Patrick Church, and have served in many roles and with various responsibilities.

I retired in 2012 with 40 years of service, and since that time have focused on volunteer work within my church and community, as well attending family events and "helping out" our grown children (lots of moving households and doing household projects). New "jobs" since retirement include working at Sophia's Kitchen in downtown Peoria and serving

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as an EM for taking Holy Communion to patients at OSF St. Francis Hospital in Peoria.

In addition to my new role in the Region, I also serve my local fraternity, St. Margaret of Cortona, as Secretary on the Council.

I will close with the closing of the Franciscan Morning Prayer that I use to start my day: **“Lord, look on me and leave in me peace and courage and Your Humble Wisdom that I may serve others with joy, and be pleasing to you all day.”** May I always “serve with joy” and “be pleasing to the Lord” in all that I do.

Pax et Bonum, John

Kent Ferris, O.F.S., Regional Councilor for Vocations Promotions

Hi! My name is Kent Ferris. I am a Secular Franciscan and am a member of the Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity in Rock Island. I am married to Lori Ferris, who is also a professed member of our order. We live in Muscatine, Iowa, and are the proud parents of Clare, 16, Miles, 14 and Lucy, 12. we have been married for 29 years and have been professed for almost 25. Lori and I have been members of three local fraternities in three different regions as schooling, careers and family have brought us back to the Midwest.

I've been asked to write a brief introduction as I was recently elected to the Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Executive Council. Additionally, my responsibilities include helping our Regional Fraternity with promotion of vocations. I'd like to share a short story that might give you a sense of how vocations can be experienced. At the last Q which took place in Skokie/urban Chicago, Lori and the kids accompanied me down to the lobby of the hotel on the opening afternoon to meet people who were checking in. We had been to local and regional events, but our family had never before been to a Quinquennial Congress. We ran into a lot of people we knew, and even more brothers and sisters who were happy to meet us. But we didn't stay down there for more than :30 or :45 minutes before Miles asked that we all go back to the hotel room.

When we got up to the room, Miles explained that he merely needed a break from the large groups of people. “It was all overwhelming. Everyone was so...nice.” Miles' honest assessment of our Order was that there were just a whole lot of people who were more than pleasant, but genuinely loving and joy-filled. I had never really thought of it in those terms before, but I appreciate his assessment. Later at the Q, the large group received feedback from the hotel staff that they'd never before had such a group stay at their hotel. Again, the feedback spoke to folks who were personable, caring and loved the hospitality being shown us as much as we loved being together.

Maybe this all speaks to why I am excited to help with vocations promotions. I truly believe that there are folks in this part of the country who would love nothing more than to learn more about St. Francis and his hundreds of years of followers, grow deeper in their love of God and his Son, Jesus, and who are open to the Holy Spirit in leading a humble, simple, joy-filled life right where they are. I've personally gained so much by growing in my Franciscan calling through community and I truly believe that others might be similarly moved.

I look forward to talking with folks from all across the Regional Fraternity about how we can promote vocations!

Peace and all good, Kent, O.F.S.

Kathy Adams, O.F.S., Regional Secretary

Many of you already know me. John and I journeyed into the Franciscan family in 2006 on October 17th. When we Professed - truly we had no clue what we were deeply committing to be a part of. Now after learning much more about Formation and knowing that it continues until Sister Death calls us home. The journey continues and by becoming more involved not only within our Fraternity, where I serve as Treasurer and John as Minister, I have found that by serving everyone on the Regional Executive Council I have learned so much more and I thank everyone for this opportunity of growth. I've come to learn and accept that I am an introvert and that is ok!

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BIO

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John and I live on a farm and he also owns his own small construction business while I myself have retired from working to become a full time Nana-care to our grandchildren especially 9 month old John Davis Alexander, son of Johnnie Lynn and Francis Clare, daughter of Charli Francis. Though our other grandchildren, John Roger, Elijah Garret and Abigale Nicole are over a lot. I'm an 'Extra-Help' Clerical for the U. of Illinois serving Fayette, Effingham and Clay County. I've done this since 1998. We also homeschooled our girls, and that in itself was yet another faith journey for myself. I'm looking forward to serving the Region in another term as your Secretary, and look forward to seeing many of you at the Picnic this month and the Retreat this fall. (Register early).

Emma Lozowski, O.F.S., Regional Councilor for Database Management

I have a master's degree in mathematics. I teach at Lewis and Clark Community college as adjunct (part time) faculty, but currently I am a stay-at-home mom until at least August of 2016.

I have done a lot of volunteer work at my parish, mostly at the parish school with my children. I also taught PSR, served as Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, served as a leader of the mother's group, and volunteered at parish events, such as making funnel cakes at our parish festival. I also enjoy helping to keep my neighborhood clean by picking up trash a couple of times a year. I am the Vice-Minister of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity in Edwardsville.

I have a wonderful husband, Andy. We have four daughters Kinga (15 years old), Ingrid (11), Ivette (8) and Marley (three months). My mother lives close by, but my extended family all live in Poland.

I was elected to be the Regional Councilor for Database Management. To fulfill my duties well, I have to be organized and record changes to membership status, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses in a timely manner. It's only with the wonderful help of my family that I can make myself available for the support of our Regional Minister and our Regional Council.

How do you spell Franciscan Leadership?

by Emma Lozowski, Regional Councilor for Database Management and Vice-Minister,
Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville

S - Speak, Lord, your servant is listening. Light shines in the heart of the just.

E - Ever be attentive to the voice of the Holy Spirit, calling you to do things that even you don't know you can do.

R - Receive the blessing from God for all you do. He alone knows the depth of your being; and what he knows you need, He will send you.

V - Victory will be yours; keep the Lord by your side. Not with violence; do not fight, but yield and receive.

I - Indeed, God loves truth in the heart. In the secret of your heart, He teaches you wisdom. (Psalm 51)

C - Call upon the Lord in time of need. He is always near; never far.

E - Everything on Earth has been created by the Lord Most High and Glorious, who gave it all to you. For you.

Highlights of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity

by Linda Howley-Skuby, O.F.S., Minister

'Oh how happy and blessed are these men and women when they do these things and persevere in doing them, because the spirit of the Lord will rest upon them and he will make his home and dwelling among them' (Is 1:2; Jn 14:23) from the Prologue of the Rule pr.

And so we begin:

St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity has some mystery surrounding it, but it also has enough history, that we can establish the fraternity was not always called St. Margaret of Cortona, but simply, St. Margaret!

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Thanks to the hundreds of fraternity brothers and sisters who have taken pictures, written secretary notes, and kept treasury records, we can document that the Secular Franciscan Fraternity has been an active fraternity since the turn of the 20th century. However, there are at least two professions noted in the archives in the late 1880's when the Franciscans established St. Mary's Church in Bloomington, IL.

The Franciscans from St. John the Baptist Province in Cincinnati, Ohio, sent Friars to work with the German immigrants and to establish a school as well. In the early days of the Catholic Church, the immigrants were knitted together by their Catholic faith. So the Germans settled together, and the Irish, and Polish maintained their language and customs and lived near the church they attended. One hundred thirty-five years later, the school and the church are still thriving and there are many different ethnic backgrounds. But sadly, the Friars will be leaving the Friary at the end of May for their home in Cincinnati. The Diocese will provide the priests to continue the faith community that has been developed. All of the historical data was discovered in the archives that have been preserved and protected from Council to Council.

The Secular Franciscans have grown along with the Friars at St. Mary's. Through all the changes, of time and culture, the family of St. Francis, both Seculars and Friars Minor are intertwined.

At St. Mary's, some parishioners asked, "What will happen with the Secular Franciscans?" We are rooted in the parish and will continue to live our Rule of St. Francis and be active in our parishes.

St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity is active in many JPIC activities in the community and in the 8 parishes that they attend. We have 42 active members and a few who are excused and unable to attend for many reasons. In the last 5 years, an effort continues to be made to maintain contact by phone, email and correspondence to encourage brothers and sisters. The goal of our Gatherings is to fulfill the four elements of learning set forth: spiritual, social, ongoing formation and business. When brothers and sisters cannot attend, it is import to communicate with them what happened

and share the joy of being together. We recently found a plan to send birthday cards to each brother and sister on their birthday. The newsletter, newly named, "The Humble Servant," is sent out electronically and mailed to those who do not have computers, or access to one.

When the new Council was elected in August 2014, we followed the suggestion to have a Council retreat. We were able to attend Mass together to start our day. At the first retreat, we formed a bond and then developed a Vision and Mission statement. It was a way to figure out our new roles and work together. We have done this for two years in a row and each time, we have realized growth.

As in any situation, there are circumstances that happen in which we did not agree. In discussing this, it is my hope to share that being part of the Secular Franciscan Order, we reflect on the bigger picture, not on our differences. We are Secular Franciscans, and the commitment to keep our promises and live according to the Rule of St. Francis must help us transcend the difference of opinion. Apologizing when we are wrong and forgiving is the next right thing to do.

One common thought which has been motivating the Council is leaving a path to continue for those who follow us. Just like 100 years ago, our brothers and sisters documented what they did and who was professed, and all their events. We take up the mission to care about each other and help each other. The Franciscan charism is alive and well in St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity.

Franciscans of the Tau Fraternity, Calhoun County

by Marcy Klockenkemper, O.F.S.

At our December Meeting we made boxes of food for eight families and delivered them to needy families. We then went out to eat together at the Barefoot Restaurant.

The retreat for O.F.S. members from the Franciscans of the Tau and the O.F.S. members

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TAU

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from Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville and St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy was held at the St. Joseph Church hall in Meppen, IL on February 27, 2016. Father John Sullivan, O.F.M. was the presenter. The topic was "Enjoying God with Bonaventure". There were over thirty people there. Everyone enjoyed the retreat.

A Pastoral Visitation was conducted by Father John Sullivan, O.F.M. on Sunday, February 28 at the St. Francis of Assisi office, at the regular meeting of the Franciscans of the Tau. The O.F.S. members were prepared and enjoyed their time with Father John. His report was very positive.

There were over twenty new candidates in this year's Kiononia Retreat held at St. Joseph's Church hall on March 11-13. The retreat's title was "Peace Be With You." Many of our O.F.S. members participated in helping to organize and plan the retreat. One member gave a talk, one made a banner, all participated in some way especially in meal preparation, prayer and support in all things needed for the weekend's success.

Confirmation was held at St. Francis of Assisi parish at St. Anselm's Church on April 19, 2016. Some of the members of the Franciscans of the Tau helped by preparing the evening meal for the 6-9 grade students, the Bishop, priests and deacon. Other services were readers and communion ministers. It was a joyous Mass and spirit filled time with the newly confirmed.

A fund raiser called the Quarter Auction was held at the Knights of Columbus hall in Hardin on April 8th. It helps to raise money for the pro-life committee in our parishes which some of our members also belong to. The proceeds go to Options Now in Alton, IL. They help pregnant women, fathers, families and the un-born with all issues that occur with an unexpected pregnancy. Our O.F.S. members helped with meal preparation, help in serving the meal and a gift for the Auction. The evening was very successful.

A fundraiser for pro-life is now in progress. Our O.F.S. members placed baby bottles in all the churches in our parishes for returned to the church

with their donation. The money is given to Options Now for pro-life work.

The Franciscans of the Tau Fraternity are giving out Bibles to couples recently married at a wedding gift. We all sign the card and hope to follow up with the couples in the future.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming

Robie Orf from Bowling Green, Missouri became an Inquirer after she experienced the *Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming* at St. Elizabeth's monthly Gathering on May 15, 2016. As suggested on page 9 of the *Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order*, Robie wrote her own words stating her inquiry in the O.F.S. "The Holy Spirit has brought me to the O.F.S.; to explore the Franciscan way of life. As I look back on my life, I have received many signs from the Holy Spirit pointing me in this direction. Now I am at the point where I would like to inquire into this way and learn more. By the grace of God, I may become a part of the O.F.S. and serve the Lord and His people more faithfully."



(l-r) Fraternity Minister, Rosanne Roy, O.F.S. lovingly supported Robie as the Spiritual Assistant Deacon Dave, O.F.S. concluded the *Ceremony* with a prayer!

Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island
Fraternal Visitation

On Sunday, June 5, 2016, the brothers and sisters of Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island, gathered for their Fraternity's triennial Fraternal Visitation. The Regional Minister, Deacon Dave, O.F.S. conducted the Visitation with both the Regional Vice-Minister, Mary Farrell-Diekemper, O.F.S. and the Regional Formation Director, Thérèse, O.F.S. observing. Mary was accompanied by her husband Richard as they traveled from Peoria to Rock Island for the Fraternal Visitation.

They commenced at 1:00 pm with the four persons in Inquiry meeting with some members of the Fraternity.



The Inquirers from left to right are: Alicia Harker, Pat DeLuca, and Roxanne and Pat Miner. The Inquirers shared their personal time lines as described in the *FUN Manual*, the session on *Franciscan Movement Two: Your Own Journey*.



The Gathering of the entire Fraternity was comprised of: Formation, Social, and some Business. In the picture left to right is Kent Ferris, O.F.S., Minister and Andrew Reif, Aspirant.

The Gathering concluded with the fourth element of every Gathering, Prayer. The Fraternity gathered in the hospital chapel for the praying of Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours.



The Fraternal Visitation concluded when the Regional Minister, Deacon Dave, examined all of



the Fraternity's records and registers.

The people in the picture are: seated, Gene Desauvoy, O.F.S., Vice-Minister; left to right, Deacon Dave, Regional Minister, Kent Ferris, O.F.S., Minister, Lori Ferris, O.F.S., Secretary, Deacon Al Angelo, O.F.S., Spiritual Assistant, and Mary Farrell-Diekemper, O.F.S., Regional Vice-Minister.



**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)

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