

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!

“Deadlines” are funny sorts of things, usually somewhat arbitrary, but definitely necessary to facilitate accountability and to allow the process of producing something new in a dependable manner. And so it is with the October 1st deadline for submitting articles for this edition of our beloved Regional newsletter!

October 1, 2017: the date the annual Chapter of our National Fraternity Council concluded at the Conventual retreat center in Mt. St. Francis, Indiana. October 1, 2017: the date our annual Regional retreat directed by **Father Paul Joseph Langevin, O.F.M. Conv.** concluded at the Chiara Center in Springfield, Illinois. October 1, 2017: the date that both our Regional Fraternity Council and our Regional Executive Council met immediately following our Regional retreat. October 1, 2017: although the celebration of the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time took precedence over the Memorial of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, nevertheless,



the life of this ever-popular “Doctor of the Little Way” could not help but inspire our Franciscan hearts - *even though she was a Carmelite!*

As we come to the final quarter of this Year of Grace 2017, we as a Region have so much for which to be thankful and so much for which to be hopeful as we look ahead to 2018. Franciscan life is all about relationships and we have many relationships for which to be grateful!

The Lord has seen fit to bless us with twelve newly-professed sisters and brothers this year! Prayerful congratulations go out to **Gloria Guy, O.F.S., George Menard, O.F.S. and John Shiels, O.F.S.** of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Decatur; to **Jim Alstrum, O.F.S., Todd Lanzotti, O.F.S., Tony Pecora, O.F.S., Chris Teuerle, O.F.S., Barbara Thompson, O.F.S., and Donna Williams, O.F.S.** of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington; and to **Scott Diestelkamp, O.F.S., Bob Gayhart, O.F.S., and Jim Stomberg, O.F.S.** of Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria. As Regional Minister, I extend a very warm welcome to each of these sisters and brothers who are now definitively incorporated into the Secular Franciscan Order.

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All eight of our local fraternities remain active and vital, with four of them having celebrated Elective Chapters this year resulting in renewed servant leadership to help guide and animate them for the next three years (Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria, August 12th; St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington, August 27th; Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville, September 9th; and St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Teutopolis, September 17th). And because of these elections, we welcome two new local Ministers to our Regional Fraternity Council: **Scott Diestelkamp, O.F.S.** of Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria and **Gene Drees, O.F.S.** of St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Teutopolis. We also welcome back two re-elected Ministers: **Linda Howley-Skuby, O.F.S.** of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington and **Larry Ashlock, O.F.S.** of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville.

Two of our fraternities welcomed Fraternal Visitors from the Regional Executive Council this year to help them evaluate their efforts to live the Rule of our Order and to grow in ever-more faithfully living the Franciscan Gospel life. I am very grateful to my two Fraternal Visitation Delegates, our Regional Treasurer **John Grillot, O.F.S.**, who visited Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Decatur (June 25th) and our Regional Vice-Minister, **Mary Farrell-Diekemper, O.F.S.** who visited St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy (September 17th).

Thanks to the dedicated work of our Regional servant leaders, we have a common framework for our life as a Regional family in the form of our recently revised and approved **Regional**

Guidelines. We also have new and extensive set of tools to support our initial and ongoing formation efforts which have come to us by way of our **Regional Formation Resource Kit** thanks to the vision and focused labor of our Regional Formation Team (**Pat DeLuca, O.F.S.** of Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island, **Matt Eppel, O.F.S.** of Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria, and **Cyndy Garwood, O.F.S.** of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington) so capably led and inspired by our Regional Formation Director (and my own “Little Flower”), **Thérèse Ream, O.F.S.**

In terms of our hopes for 2018, we continue to function without a Regional Spiritual Assistant ever since the death of our beloved **Father John Sullivan, O.F.M.** last November. The Regional Spiritual Assistant is the concrete sign of the unity that exists between our Order and the friars of the First Order and Third Order Regular. Please, please continue to pray fervently that the Lord will soon fill this void with the person of His own choosing.

We also continue to be in need of a qualified and willing individual to serve as the Region’s Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Animator. If interested, please contact me or any member of the Regional Executive Council for more information.

Our Region’s triennial Fraternal and Pastoral Visitation from the National Executive Council and the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants is scheduled to take place the weekend of April 14-15, 2018. In preparation for this special moment of communion and grace, the Regional

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*Next
issue:
Jan 15*

Deadline: Article and photo submissions are due on January 1st, April 1st, July 1st and October 1st.

Deacon Neil Suermann, OFS
Editor
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**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.

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Executive Council has completed a *Pre-Visitation Questionnaire* that seeks to convey our perception of the Region's strengths and weaknesses, our accomplishments and the challenges that we see before us. Through the members of the Regional Fraternity Council, I am asking all the members of our Regional family to be faithful in praying the Regional Visitation Prayer in the months and weeks leading up to this event. I will also be extending an open invitation to everyone in our Region to come to the Chiara Center for the April weekend to meet our Fraternal and Pastoral Visitors; we've reserved all 30 rooms for the night of Saturday, April 14, 2018! **So, mark your calendars now for the NAFRA Visitation, April 14-15, 2018!**

In closing, I extend again my oft-repeated invitation: please let me and the members of your Regional Executive Council know how we may be of service to you, and please let us always remember one another in our daily prayers!

Wishing a safe and enjoyable remainder of the year to everyone, I remain

With a brother's love in Saints Francis and Clare,

Deacon Dave, O.F.S.,

Regional Minister

T *In Persona Christi Servi*

"O Breath of God, unite us in action!"
(NAFRA theme for 2017)

ONGOING FORMATION

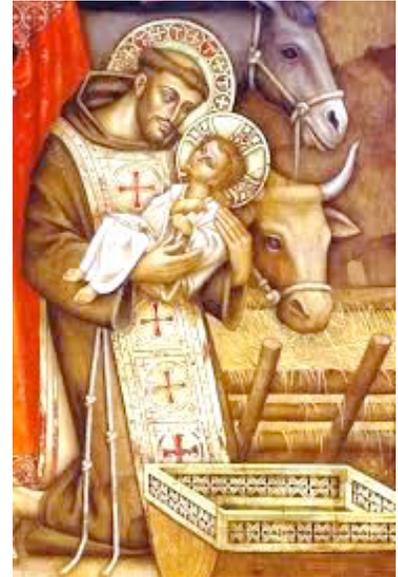
My dear brothers and sisters,

The Lord give you peace!

I would like us to focus on the remaining months of the year in relationship to Christmas!

In **October**, we had the opportunity to honor our Seraphic Father by embracing his Transitus and his entrance into eternal life. So, October can be a month that we focus on our **Franciscan** way to prepare for the Christmas miracle of the Incarnation.

November which has us honoring the saints and remembering those who have gone before us is a good month to appropriate our **Catholic** heritage. Praying to the saints and for those who have died is a wonderful privilege we have as Catholics.



This is yet another way to prepare for Christmas as prayers are offered for others. And if this is not enough, we have Thanksgiving to give God praise for all of the blessings we have. One of the most important blessings is that of relationships. First and foremost is our relationship with our Triune God. Then, we are gifted with our relationship with all of creation. This includes humanity, unborn to those dying, and all that God has created.

Now the month of **December** is a little trickier. It is so easy to get caught up with all of the commercial preparations for Christmas and get side tracked from our spiritual preparations. So, we can schedule times for **spiritual preparation** now in our December calendars. This will ensure that we are preparing for the Solemnity of the Word made flesh and making it a priority. Our souls should be as prepared as possible to welcome the Christ Child into our hearts and our Creches.

Wishing all of us a blessed 3 months preparation for Christ Mass!

Thérèse, O.F.S.

Regional Formation Director

Franciscans of the Prairie Annual Region Retreat was a Pure Gift

On the weekend of September 29 - October 1 our annual Regional Retreat was held at the beautiful Chiara Center in Springfield, Illinois. There were approximately 55 participants this year, which included candidates, an affiliate, newly professed, professed members, and even a few family members. This year the weather was perfect!



The Retreat Director was Father Paul Joseph Langevin, O.F.M. Conv., and the subject of his five talks over the weekend was “The Admonitions of St. Francis.” The “Admonitions of St. Francis” is a classic writing of St. Francis. We

learned that the word “admonition” comes from the Latin word *admonitio*, which means a challenge, an exhortation, and a calling to mind of principles essential for life. The “Admonitions of St. Francis” offers practical advice on going from “...Gospel to life, and life to the Gospel.” At each of Father’s



talks we studied the admonitions together, and we were challenged by Father to read them often and apply them to our everyday lives. The Admonitions of St. Francis are just as pertinent today as they were in the time of St. Francis, over 800 years ago. In the words of our Regional Minister, Deacon Dave Ream, Father Paul Joseph was a “Master Formator.” We all left the retreat a little richer in knowledge and insights regarding our Franciscan spirituality, thanks to Father Paul Joseph.



As usual, the Chiara Center accommodations and meals were excellent. New to our retreat this year was a block of time on Saturday afternoon for quiet prayer, reflection, walks along the scenic Chiara Center walking paths, and rest. Father offered the Sacrament of Confession. Also, during this free time, some participants gathered in the St. Francis of Assisi Church, in the Chiara Center

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complex, to pray a rosary for a sick priest. Others gathered outdoors to pray the Stations of the Cross. The stone carved statues of the Chiara Center outdoor Stations of the Cross, juxtaposed against the beauty of the early Fall day and magnificent scenery of the Chiara Center grounds, easily lifted mind and heart to the Creator of it all!



As in past years, each evening we had an optional social time in the Chiara Center “Bethany Room.” It is always well-attended, and this year was no exception. Everyone seemed to enjoy getting to know each other better, catching up and simply savoring the goodness of our Franciscan family. Since the fraternities are spread out throughout the state, it is not often that we see each other!

If you have never been to one of our retreats, you are encouraged to go next year! There are scholarships available, if the cost is an issue. You will not regret it! It is a pure gift. It is a labor of love, and many are involved in the planning and preparation of the Regional Retreat. A special thanks to all who were involved to make it happen, especially our Regional Executive Council. The speaker next year is Father Michael Higgins, T.O.R., a friar of the Sacred Heart Province of the Third Order Regular. The theme: St. Francis, the Master of Prayer. Hope to see you there next year!

*Submitted by
Jan Emmert, O.F.S.
Vice Minister, St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity,
Bloomington*

Save the Date. Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Retreat, September 28-30, 2018.



The Franciscans of the Prairie Region is truly pleased to have **Fr. Michael Higgins, T.O.R.**, a friar of the Sacred Heart Province of the Third Order Regular, lead the Region's **September 28-30, 2018** Retreat! The theme is: **St.**

Francis, the Master of Prayer.

Regional Minister Deacon Dave, O.F.S.'s vision of celebrating all of the unique gifts which each branch of the Franciscan family embodies was brought to fruition when Fr. Mike graciously accepted the invitation to be our Retreat Facilitator in 2018.

Since the Region's establishment in 1994, our Regional Retreats have featured members from the different branches of the Franciscan family: O.F.M. friars, O.F.M. Capuchin friars, an O.F.M. Conventual friar, Poor Clare nuns, a sister who follows the Third Order Regular Rule of life, Secular Franciscans and now a Third Order Regular friar.

After service with the U.S. Army Signal Corps in Vietnam, Michael entered the Sacred Heart Province of the Third Order Regular in 1978 in Loretto, PA. He received a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree from St. Michael's College, a Master of Sacred Theology (S.T.M.) from Regis College, both member schools of the University of Toronto, and a Master of Arts (M.A.) in formative spirituality from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA. His ordination to the priesthood in 1985 was followed by service in collegiate

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education and religious formation for both friars and secular members of the Franciscan family.

Fr. Mike received a Doctor of Sacred Theology (S.Th.D.) with a specialization in Franciscan spirituality from the Antonianum in Rome in 1999. This was later complemented in 2007 by a Ph.D. in Higher Educational Administration through Capella University. From 2001 to 2007, Fr. Mike served in Rome as Vicar General of the Franciscan Third Order Regular friars and as the Minister General of the Order from 2007 to 2013.

In 2014, he served at the Franciscan School of Theology in Oceanside, California as Special Assistant to the President and Dean and assumed the position of Vice President for Academic Affairs in 2015. Rev. Michael Joseph Higgins, T.O.R., was then appointed in August 2016 as the eighth President of the Franciscan School of Theology. Fr. Mike is a distinguished Franciscan friar, scholar, educational administrator, and global churchman.

Please mark your calendars now so that we, the brothers and sisters of the *Franciscans of the Prairie Region*, will welcome our dear brother, Fr. Mike, with open arms, smiling faces and Franciscan joy!

Regional Executive Council (REC) Meeting

Following the Regional Fraternity Council (RFC) meeting, and a quick bite to eat, the Regional Executive Council (REC) met.

It has become the custom of the REC to schedule their meetings to follow the RFC meetings and also conduct other needed business via electronic communications. Their scheduling has been a part of this Council's goal in serving the Region.

The main topic of business was discussion on preparing for our National Visitors at the April of 2018 Regional Fraternity Council Meeting. The Pre-Visitation Questionnaire was discussed and Thérèse will compile the answers shared by each REC member. In addition to preparing for the National Visitation in April 2018, the Council also focused on the upcoming Regional Visitations to Local Fraternities. As stated at the recent RFC

meeting, 'cross-training' has been very favorably received amongst not only the REC members but the Local Fraternities as well. It has provided for an opportunity to visit Fraternities and also gives the Fraternities a chance to see a different REC presider or visitor. Also discussed was the situation of the vacancy of a Regional Spiritual Assistant.

As always, it is truly a joy to serve the Region as the Secretary.

Pax,

Kathy Adams, O.F.S.

Summary of the Regional Fraternity Council Meeting, October 1, 2017

After a very uplifting Retreat with Fr. Paul Joseph Langevin, O.F.M. Conv. on the 28 Admonitions of St. Francis, we assembled for a Regional Fraternity Council meeting. Having met the quorum for the meeting, Deacon Dave, O.F.S. opened the meeting with a review of the past minutes, and treasurer reports.

John Grillot, O.F.S. presented the budget, and an overview of income and expenses, with discussions as to the future of the investments and use of funds from the Ave Maria account. This was approved. The investment has produced money to support the scholarship fund that was initiated at the last Regional Fraternity Council meeting in memory of the recent passing of Fr. John Sullivan, O.F.M. and Fr. Benet Fonck, O.F.M. in the previous year.

In addition, the fair share contribution across the U.S. fraternities was shown in a graph, but was not current.

Two particular outcomes were that John was requested to evaluate the fair share contributions of the Fraternities in the U.S. and in the Midwest to assess how we may need to increase our fair share contribution. John will share this research assignment with the Ministers from Sacred Heart Fraternity in Peoria and Our Lady of Angels Fraternity in Decatur.

A motion was also made and passed to have a permanent retreat scholarship in the name of Fr. John Sullivan, O.F.M. established. This is to honor

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the extensive work that Fr. John did for the Franciscans of the Prairie Region as Spiritual Assistant and brother of us all in so many ways. His knowledge, wit and understanding guided us all in forming us to walk with St. Francis as true brothers and sisters.

Other points noted:

1. We also were encouraged to use our Regional Guidelines with our local fraternities and especially in developing our newly elected councils.
2. Maintain an accurate data base and inform Emma Lozowski, O.F.S. of changes in our data base. Emma also suggested active prayer and contact for lapsed members.
3. Each fraternity can choose to send contributions to the flood victims in their own manner or through the National Treasurer, Jerry Rousseau, O.F.S., who will send "gift cards" to identified Secular Franciscans with donations that are contributed.
4. The Region is in need of a Regional JPIC animator. It was suggested that we advertise in our local newsletters for this much needed role.
5. We were encouraged to share the next Regional Meeting, April 14-15, 2018 for those who wish to attend as observers, and to meeting the NAFRA visitors for both Fraternal and Pastoral visits. All Ministers or Delegates and REC members, and Spiritual Assistants are also invited.

Submitted by

Linda M. Howley-Skuby, O.F.S.

Minister, St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity,
Bloomington

Regional Formation Resource Kit

At the July 29, 2017 Regional Formation Workshop for Formation Directors and Team Members, a challenge was presented to the participants concerning the Kit.

Challenge for 2018! The Formation Directors were asked to mark the *Table of Contents* which was

stapled together and in the outside back sleeve and write the date when the information from the Kit was shared and the audience ("Come and See" people: initial, ongoing, newly professed formation, etc.). The Fraternity which uses / incorporates the

most topics from the Kit will receive a Franciscan item for the Fraternity! This presentation of the item will occur at next year's *Regional Formation Workshop* on July 21, 2018.



Every Fraternity member can be involved because I asked all of the Formation Directors to please present the contents of the *Regional Formation Resource Kit* to everyone at one of their Gatherings prior to December so everyone is in the know. Therefore, every Fraternity member has the opportunity to know what is in the Kit. Then each member can request that the Formation Director address certain topics according to interest and appropriateness to a particular month. The actual presentation could be made by any of the following: Formation Director, Formation Team Member or any other member of the Fraternity.

Wishing all of you great success with this Challenge!

Thérèse, O.F.S.

Regional Formation Director



All-Day Formation Workshop at the Chiara Center

On Saturday, July 29, 2017 an all-day regional formation workshop was held at the Chiara Center in Springfield, Illinois. The workshop was very capably presented by our Regional Formation Director, Thérèse Ream, O.F.S. Formation

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Directors, formation team members, and delegates were invited. The workshop was well-attended. Every fraternity in our region had at least one representative at the workshop. In addition, the weather was beautiful, which made travel easier for those attendees driving from the more distant fraternities.

The highlight of the workshop was the unveiling of the new Regional Formation Resource Kit. Not a boring manual, this “kit” is more a hands-on, practical resource which should make planning both initial and ongoing formation easier - and more fun! The Regional Formation Resource Kit is actually a three inch binder divided into 33 sections, with a handy flash drive attached to a binder ring inside. Each page of the binder is enclosed in a plastic sleeve, for easy copying and updating. The sections include clip art, questionnaires, and even check lists for the Formation Director, as well as a multitude of Secular Franciscan topics for formation. This project was obviously a labor of great love. It was a three year project in the making. We are so blessed to have the talents of all the Regional Formation Resource Kit contributors: Regional Formation Director Thérèse Ream, O.F.S., Regional Minister David Ream, O.F.S., and the Regional Formation Team: Matt Eppel, O.F.S., Cyndy Garwood, O.F.S., and Pat De Luca, O.F.S.

At any regional event at the Chiara Center, it is always a bonus to hear what other fraternities are doing, and to exchange helpful information. This workshop was no exception. There was good discussion among the workshop attendees. Also, in an adjacent meeting room, there was a Day of Reflection for all those in initial formation in our region. It was led by Regional Minister David Ream, O.F.S. The two groups - Formation Workshop and Day of Reflection - enjoyed meeting in the Formation Workshop meeting room for lunch at noon, followed by a Prayer experience and Closing Prayer at the end. All in all, it was an enjoyable, informative day!

Submitted by Jan Emmert, O.F.S.

*Vice-Minister, St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity,
Bloomington*

Regional Day of Reflection

On July 29, 2017 the Regional Day of Reflection for those in Initial Formation and Workshop for Formation Directors and Team Members was held.

It was a great privilege to participate in the Regional Day of Reflection at the Chiara Center in Springfield, Illinois. Everyone gathered for Mass with the Sisters of St. Francis in their Chapel. It was an honor and joy. Formation has been a journey of new friendships, learning and ongoing discoveries of God’s plan for me as a Secular Franciscan. The day of reflection marked the day before my profession, along with my classmates, as a Secular Franciscan with the St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington. We were not the only candidates preparing to be professed during the upcoming week. Needless to say, we were excited and that excitement has not left us, since formation is “for always” as was discussed and explored during our day of reflection with Deacon Dave Ream, O.F.S., our Regional Minister.

Following a time of gathering, coffee and conversation, everyone made their way to their appropriate formation area. While Thérèse Ream, O.F.S., Regional Formation Director, conducted the ongoing formation and team portion of the workshop, Deacon Dave, O.F.S. presented to those in formation.

Once we made our introductions, Deacon Dave, O.F.S. presented an authentic look at the Secular Franciscan presence in our Region as well as nationally and internationally. We, in formation, pondered the reality of what our Regional Minister had presented and the challenge we were presented with. The discussions reflected a wide range of thoughts on what we, the soon to be professed and professed, could do to attract others to the Secular Franciscan Order. But, even more importantly, recognizing our individual gifts from God and how, as Secular Franciscans strengthened with the Holy Spirit, how we should utilize these gifts to be Christ for others as needed in the present as well as the future. It was a poignant moment in that we looked around the room knowing that it will be up to us to respond to this call in order that we have a presence in the future always knowing that our

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responses and movements must be joyfully rooted in Christ through the eyes and heart of Francis.

After a most delicious lunch, Deacon Dave, O.F.S. made available various informative resources to assist us in our formation. He also shared a stunning video from Bishop Robert Barron on St. Francis of Assisi as a “Pivotal Player” in the Catholic Faith. Following the video and discussion, Deacon Dave conveyed the informative value of creating a time line to better understand and talk about the sequence of events and details surrounding the life of Francis. We were given the opportunity to create individual hand drawn time lines with markers, pens and pencils while Deacon Dave gave a most insightful, educational and engaging narrative on the life of Francis. This timeline will serve as a quick “go to” tool to pinpoint areas of research and reflection for on going study and application in my own life as a Secular Franciscan.

With prayer, song, food, fellowship and absorbing conversations and reflections, the day came to a close and all journeyed home with renewed spirits, and food for thought and action.

Good is good
Pax et Bonum!

Donna M. Williams, O.F.S.
St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington

Regional JPIC Animator

At the Regional Fraternity Council meeting on Sunday, October 1, 2017, the members of the Council said that *The Portiuncula's* October edition should address the issue that our Region does not have a Regional JPIC Animator. It was suggested the Job Description for Appointees, Appendix B from the *Regional Guidelines* be included. Also, it was recommended that every local Fraternity incorporate the same article in their local newsletter so that everyone is given the opportunity to prayerfully discern if God is calling him/her to explore the possibility of serving the Regional Fraternity in this capacity. Please direct all of your inquiries to Deacon Dave, O.F.S.,

Regional Minister, umbriaz@earthlink.net. Thanks for giving this matter your prayerful attention.

Regional Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Animator

In accordance with the provisions of article #23.5 of the *National Statutes*, the Regional Executive Council (REC) may appoint positions as deemed necessary; however, only those persons duly elected to office shall have voting rights within the REC; all others shall act in consultative roles. Such appointments may be provisional or valid until the next elective chapter or until otherwise revoked by the REC. These appointments are made by the REC, but not from among members of the REC. One such appointment is the Regional JPIC Animator.

The Regional JPIC Animator serves the Region by calling forth the passion of the members of the local fraternities with regard to the areas of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation and promoting their apostolic expression in accordance with articles #12 - #19 of the *Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* and articles #15 - #23 of the *General Constitutions*. The Animator develops and articulates the vision which guides Regional JPIC activities, giving encouragement, guidance and information to the local fraternities to enhance the spirit and life of their JPIC programs. The Animator affirms and challenges the Fraternity members to recognize, understand and embrace peace and justice ministry as an essential element of their Franciscan evangelical vocation through the process of initial and ongoing formation.

The Regional JPIC Animator assumes the following responsibilities:

1. To serve as the Region's official contact person with the National Fraternity's (NAFRA) JPIC Commission;
2. To forward to each local JPIC contact person and the members of the Regional Fraternity Council (RFC, i.e., local Fraternity Ministers and REC) pertinent materials from the NAFRA JPIC Commission;
3. To translate the information from the NAFRA JPIC Commission into usable suggestions for

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- practical implementation in the local fraternities;
4. To be proactive in developing, planning, coordinating and assisting with implementation of JPIC programs and events for the local fraternities;
 5. To submit a Regional JPIC-themed article for each issue of the Regional Newsletter;
 6. To submit a written report on Regional JPIC activities for each meeting of the REC and the RFC, and annually provide the RFC with a written report that would include proposed changes to the JPIC Animator's Job Description;
 7. To submit, within one month of the event, a specific written report to the REC on any NAFRA-sponsored activity attended as the Regional JPIC Animator if attendance is funded by the Region;
 8. To get approval from the REC for expenses and receive reimbursement, including travel to local fraternities within the Region to present JPIC programs, etc.; and
 9. To attend, at the Region's expense, the Spring RFC meeting and any other REC and/or RFC meetings when invited or when deemed necessary.

This job description will be reviewed periodically by the Regional JPIC Animator and the REC to insure that the agreed upon responsibilities are being met.

+ Adopted and approved by vote of the Regional Executive Council, May 5, 2016.

Regional Visitation Prayer (April 14 & 15, 2018)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Lord give you peace!

I am humbled by the genuineness of your response in always offering prayers whenever they are requested. We pray for those who are sick, those who have died, those experiencing difficulties in their lives and for events within our Order. I am

asking you to please add this Regional Visitation Prayer to your prayers since our Fraternal and Pastoral Visitation will occur on April 14-15, 2018. As The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, article #8 states: "As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are an do."

Thank you,
Deacon Dave, O.F.S.

Regional Visitation Prayer

We praise and thank you, O Lord our God, for through your love and wisdom you have called us to holiness through the Franciscan way of life. Through your grace and inspiration, you have provided for us the means to promote fidelity to the Franciscan charism, to observe the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, and to receive greater support in the life of the fraternity. By the power of your Holy Spirit we will come together soon for the fraternal and pastoral visitation of our Region, in order to evaluate our efforts and to renew our dedication to live the holy Gospel of your Son in the footsteps of St. Francis. We ask for your blessing and guidance so that this occasion may help us to appreciate our vocation more deeply, to embrace it more enthusiastically, and to share it more fully with one another and with all people.

Give us the fullness of your Spirit. Take full possession of our hearts; root out of them attitudes of selfishness and false fear. Give us the will to persevere, as followers of St. Francis in the contemporary world, in rebuilding the Church and in proclaiming the Good News of salvation. Where we have faltered or even failed, give us the strength to begin anew, the light to discover our true meaning and purpose, and the courage to move forward with conviction and humility. "May the power of your love, O Lord, fiery and sweet as honey, wean our hearts from all that is under heaven, so that we may die for love of Jesus' love, who was so good as to die for love of our love." This we ask through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGION

**St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity,
Quincy
Fraternal Visitation**

The fraternity members participated in the September 17, 2017 Fraternal Visitation which occurred during the fraternity's regularly scheduled



fraternity gathering. Since the Regional Minister belongs to this fraternity, he delegated this

responsibility to another Regional Executive Council Member. The Regional Vice-Minister, Mary Farrell-Diekemper, O.F.S. from the Peoria area conducted the Visitation.

Mary and her husband, Dick, joined Secular Franciscans for the 11:00 am Mass in St. Francis of Solanus Church. Following the Mass, the visitors



and fraternity members gathered in the parish hall for a bite to eat prior to the beginning of the gathering. Rosanne Roy, O.F.S., Fraternity Minister, provided materials for Mary to review prior to the actual gathering of the fraternity. Mary was also able to review the records/materials kept by the Secretary, Treasurer, Formation Director and Spiritual Assistant. The officers interacted with Mary and provided information on a variety of topics.



At 1:00 pm, Mary began the gathering with the prayer from *The Ritual*, pages 50-51 and then shared a few opening remarks with the fraternity.

The gathering proceeded with the praying of the *Liturgy of the Hours; A Prayer for the Nation* along with a reflection which Dwayne Goodwin, O.F.S., Vice-Minister, had composed; discussion on the *Season of Caring for Creation*; Lectio Divina on the Gospel for the following Sunday; snack break; audio of 2 sections from the *Journey and the Dream* (Murray Bodo, O.F.M. narrating) followed by discussions in dyads/triads/tables and then group comments. At the conclusion of the formation portion of the gathering, Rosanne discussed some business items.

When Rosanne concluded the business component, Mary addressed the portion of the *Pre-Visitation Questionnaire* concerning "What questions or issues does the Council wish



the Visitor to address to the whole Fraternity during the Fraternal Visitation?" It was very evident that Mary had done a lot of prayerful preparation in gathering specific information that she wanted to share. Mary talked about the formation text she had used and then referenced *The Vocation, Charism and Mission of Secular Franciscan* section from the *FUN Manual*. She invited all of the fraternity members, whenever possible, to read and reflect upon the Charism aspect in this section.

The gathering concluded at 3:11 pm with prayer from *The Ritual*, pages 51-52, led by Mary with the Spiritual Assistant giving the final blessing.

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

At the July 16, 2017 monthly gathering of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy, Illinois, Dennis Dowell, O.F.S. introduced Jim Smith to the Fraternity. The Minister, Rosanne Roy, O.F.S.



welcomed Jim by stating “Be assured that in your search you will have the support and the encouragement of our prayer, our formation and our example.” The ceremony concluded with Deacon Dave Ream, O.F.S., Spiritual Assistant, imparting a blessing. Jim became the fraternity’s newest Inquirer!



**St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity,
Quincy
Sponsor Ceremony**

On August 20, 2017, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy celebrated the Sponsor Ceremony for Jim Smith with Joe Schmidt, O.F.S. becoming his sponsor. He will journey with him as his spiritual companion throughout his Initial Formation. Joe prayed: “I am grateful and honored

to join you on this journey both in prayer and with my presence. I promise to fulfill my duties as your Sponsor and I will support you each step of the way as you continue your discernment. It is my desire to: Strengthen you with prayer, bless you with love and encourage you with hope. In the name of the Fraternity, I ask you Father to look kindly on Jim as he listens to your voice. Open his heart to your Spirit and bring to fulfillment the good work you have already begun. Amen” [Formation Director Cyndy Garwood, O.F.S., St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington, August 2016, provided this Sponsor prayer} Jim responded: “I am so blessed to continue my journey. I know that as you share your Franciscan life with me, I will be even more blessed. Thank you for promising to be my Sponsor on this journey.”



Pictured (l-r): Sponsor, Joe Schmidt, O.F.S. & Inquirer, Jim Smith



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**Sacred Heart Fraternity,
Peoria
Service Project for the Needy**

On Tuesday, July 18, 2017, members of the Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria went to the South Side Mission and served meals to the poor, under head cook Robert Righi.



Pictured (l-r): Bob Gayhart, O.F.S., Kathy Christy, O.F.S., Jim Stomberg, O.F.S., Matt Bennett, O.F.S., Pat Snell, O.F.S., Sondra McEnroe, O.F.S., Matt Tee, O.F.S. and Vera Yee.

**Sacred Heart Fraternity,
Peoria
Elective Chapter**

On August 12, 2017, the Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria held their triennial Elective Chapter.



Front Row (l-r): Sondra McEnroe, O.F.S., Vice-Minister, Pat Snell, O.F.S., Treasurer, Kathy Christy, O.F.S., Formation Director.
Second Row (l-r): Jim Stomberg, O.F.S., Secretary, Scott Diestelkamp, O.F.S., Minister and Fr. Giles Michael Gilbert, O.F.M. Conv., Spiritual Assistant.

**Sacred Heart Fraternity,
Peoria
Thirty Year Profession Jubilee**

Fran Bucynski, O.F.S. recently celebrated her 30 years of profession. Thank you for your faithful service.



Pictured (l-r): Pat Snell, O.F.S., Fran Bucynski, O.F.S., and Marci McCann, O.F.S.

**Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity,
Rock Island
Transitus Prayer Service**

On Tuesday, October 3, 2017, the Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island, Illinois celebrated the Transitus of St. Francis at Our Lady of Lourdes in Bettendorf, Iowa.



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**Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity,
Decatur
Profession**

On August 2, 2017, the Feast of Our Lady of the Angels, Mass was celebrated in the chapel of St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur, Illinois by Father Dennis Keepman, O.F.M., assisted by Deacon John O'Brien, O.F.S. During this celebration three members of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Decatur, John Shiels, O.F.S., George Menard, O.F.S. and Gloria Guy, O.F.S. made their permanent profession. A reception was held in the Assisi Room after Mass.



Pictured (l-r): Fr. Dennis Koopman, O.F.M., George Menard, O.F.S., Gloria Guy, O.F.S., John Shiels, O.F.S., Deacon John O'Brien, O.F.S., Formation Director.

**Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity,
Edwardsville**

St. Boniface Cemetery in Edwardsville has a dedicated area for the deceased Secular Franciscans. Three past members of Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity are buried there, in close proximity to each other and a beautiful white statue of St. Francis. The statue reminds us that St. Francis watches over



the peaceful resting place of our brothers and sisters. Recently, it has come to our attention that the statue needed some cleaning and painting. A restoration project was completed on a sunny Saturday afternoon. We found that working together in fraternity is one of the best ways to spend time with each other and get to know one another. We were grateful for the beautiful day.

**St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity,
Bloomington
Elects a New Council**

The St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity met for their monthly gathering on August 27, 2017 at St. Mary's Church in Bloomington, Illinois. There were 35 brothers and sisters present. Instead of the usual "ongoing formation," however, there was important business to conduct! We held Elections for a new Council. This happens only every three years.

The slate of nominees was completed beforehand, thanks to the diligent efforts of the fraternity's ad hoc Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee was composed of active fraternity members and appointed by the outgoing Fraternity Council several months prior. Rosemary Elias, O.F.S. chaired the Nominating Committee, and Leo Grimes, O.F.S. and Kevin Kaurin, O.F.S. served on the committee. John Grillot, O.F.S. was the "Election Consultant" since he has had experience in Council elections at both the local and regional level. The task of the Nominating Committee was to assemble the slate of nominees. They did this by calling for and accepting nominations from the fraternity membership, and then contacting the nominated member to verify that they were able and willing to serve for the office nominated for. The fraternity is very grateful for the generous service of the Nominating Committee.

The fraternity is also grateful to our Regional Vice-Minister, Mary Farrell-Diekemper, O.F.S. for presiding as the delegate for Regional Minister Deacon Dave, O.F.S. at the Elective Chapter. In addition, we are thankful for our Regional Secretary, Kathy Adams, O.F.S. who served as Secretary of the Elections, and Sister Betty Jean Haverback, O.S.F., who served as the Ecclesial
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Haverback, O.S.F., who served as the Ecclesial Witness.

The St. Margaret of Cortona slate of nominees was unique in one way: there was only one nominee for each office. Such was the humility of the brothers and sisters - it almost seemed like no one wanted to run against someone already elected! Here is the newly elected Council of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity:

- Minister: Linda-Howley-Skuby, O.F.S. (re-elected)
- Vice-Minister: Jan Emmert, O.F.S. (re-elected)
- Secretary: Leo Grimes, O.F.S.
- Treasurer: Jason Deavers, O.F.S.
- Formation Director: Marlene Mertes, O.F.S.
- Councilor: Carol Burroughs, O.F.S. (re-elected)
- Councilor: Lynn Johnston, O.F.S.

*Submitted by
Jan Emmert, O.F.S., Vice-Minister,
St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington*

**St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity,
Bloomington, Illinois, USA**

and

**St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity,
Kakoba / Nyamitanga, Mbarara,
Uganda**



During a visit to Uganda in 2015 with my good friend, Fr. Julius Turyatoranwa, I met a Franciscan Friar, Fr. Dismas Turinawe, O.F.M. in the city of Mbarara. When I asked if he knew about Secular Franciscans, I learned that he was the Spiritual Assistant for a local OFS fraternity.

Since that time I have maintained contact with them, as part of a “Twinning” relationship between our fraternities.

I have also stayed in touch with National (Mary Frances Charskey, O.F.S.) and International (Jenny



Harrington, O.F.S.) council members who are involved in the “Twinning” initiative. They are pleased that we are developing this inter-fraternity relationship, while at the same time have urged caution to avoid developing any sort of dependency. Rather, we should focus on holding up each other’s fraternity in prayer, learning about each other, and formation support.

An Update...

Accordingly, over the last year or so I gathered surplus Franciscan-oriented books from our library surplus, extra books from the Streator fraternity’s now-closed library, from our Fall Retreat “shared book table,” and from my own surplus (it’s amazing how many books I’ve collected over the years). In early June of this year I (finally) shipped two boxes of books to Uganda. After researching FedEx, UPS, and the USPS, I ended up shipping the boxes using the USPS “flat rate” boxes, noting however



that the “flat rate” for shipping to Uganda is far more costly than shipping within the USA or to Europe.

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REGIONAL MISSION STATEMENT



We, the Secular Franciscans of Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity, are called by the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation to holiness. We are committed by profession to living the Gospel values of our Lord Jesus Christ in our time according to the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi for the rebuilding of the Church. With the Holy Spirit as our guide, and by following the simple example of St. Francis of Assisi, we intend to spread, like the prairie fire of old, cleansing the earth and nourishing the land with His Word. The Regional Fraternity Council will provide direction and resources to local fraternities for understanding and implementing the Rule, the General Constitutions, and the National Statutes of the Secular Franciscan Order.



My contact in their fraternity, Gilbert Muhumuza, O.F.S. told me that on July 8 the books arrived and were opened. They were received with much joy and happiness, and he sent along several pictures to share with you.

I will continue to remain in contact with Gilbert, and hope to visit their fraternity sometime next year (2018).

*Submitted by John Grillot, O.F.S.
St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington*

Calendar

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, also Newly Professed.

July 22, 2018

St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington - Fraternal Visitation.

August 5, 2018

Pope St. John XXIII Fraternity, Rock Island - Elective Chapter

September 8, 2018

Our Lady of the Angels Fraternity, Edwardsville - Fraternal Visitation

September 16, 2018

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy - Elective Chapter

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