

# The Portiuncula

## Franciscans of the Prairie Region

*Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis*



### REGIONAL MINISTER’S LETTER

The Lord give you Peace!

I send you all greetings on behalf of the newly elected Regional Executive Council (REC).

Minister - Kathy Adams OFS

Vice-Minister - Linda Howley-Skuby OFS

Formation Director - Matt Yee OFS

Secretary - Lynn Carter OFS

Treasurer - Donna Williams OFS

Councilor for Database Management - Jacques Elloye OFS

Councilor for Vocations Promotions - Marlene Mertes OFS

& our Spiritual Assistant - Deacon David Ream OFS

One always feels the weight of filling the shoes of those before them. I am no different as I too feel unworthy & inadequate too. But, I feel if called - then I should answer - "Here I am Lord". While I am not an eloquent writer or have great words of wisdom, I do have an immense love of our beautiful Franciscan Order. I have met so many of you over the years and I'm very humbled to serve our Region. I know many will be holding Elections, and my prayer is that you hear the call of the Holy Spirit to also allow your name to be nominated to serve your Fraternity. We each have our gifts and bring our uniqueness to our Fraternity.

I'm writing this short note while in the car as I've recently been with all our Brothers & Sisters who were at Phoenix for the Quinquennial Congress - this year we were Celebrating 100 years (+1) since our first Quinquennial Congress in Chicago with over 600 Secular Franciscans attending. It truly was a Reunion. While the speakers were good, the presence and gathering in small fraternities to share was very nice. Our Region was blessed to have 7 in attendance (4 from St. Margaret of Cortona).



Please visit the national website ([secularfranciscansusa.org](http://secularfranciscansusa.org)) for more ... much more ... info from the “Q”.

I invite any who would wish to join our Fraternity to unite our prayers daily. To pray for each other, our Fraternities (Local, Regional, National & International). This was shared to our Fraternity by a Candidate, (Deb), she suggested uniting our prayers. So every day since our gathering in July my alarm goes off at noon - calling me to pray specifically for all my Brothers and Sisters of the Order ....

*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. (& yes, many times it's by singing).*

I look forward to gathering with you all, and pray we can do so soon.

May we continue our good work for the Lord!

Pax,

***Kathy***

Minister, Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity

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## **REGIONAL FRATERNAL & PASTORAL VISITS AND ELECTION**

On July 22-24, 2022, the Regional Fraternity Council held a day-long meeting in Springfield conducted by the outgoing Regional Minister, Emma Lozowski, OFS and on Sunday elected the new Regional Executive Council members. After Mass and Morning Prayer on Saturday, Father Jerome Wolbert, OFM, pastoral visitor, made a presentation on the Encyclical Fratelli Tutti by Pope Francis. This document upholds that we are brothers all and have an outwardly apostolic ministry. Over lunch the local ministers in attendance were able to discuss common issues that affect our respective fraternities. Getting our questions answered was very helpful.

In the afternoon, the business of the meeting included ratification of the Annual Report from the Region to the National Executive Council based on Annual Reports from local fraternities. The Regional Calendar of Visitation/Elections was reviewed for correctness. It was announced that the Regional Retreat in October, 2022 may be Zoom depending upon the existing COVID regulations at the time. There will be a Silent Auction only if the meeting is held in person.

Donations are encouraged to the Fr. John Sullivan, O.F.M. Memorial Retreat Scholarship Fund. Other business included the hope to have a Summer Regional Picnic in 2023 and remarks from the outgoing REC members.

After dinner and Evening Prayer, a social time was held.

On Sunday after Mass and Morning Prayer, the Treasurer's Report was presented by John Grillot. Fr. Jerome then spoke of us all being companions on our Franciscan journey.



The next order of business was the election of the REC with Fraternal Visitor and OFS-USA Councilor Dennis Ross, OFS presiding. The following were elected: Kathy Adams as Minister, Linda Howley-Skuby as Vice Minister, Lynn Carter as Secretary, Donna Williams as Treasurer, Matthew Yee as Formation Director, Jacques Elloye as Councilor for Data Base Management, and Marlene Mertes as Councilor for Vocation Promotion. We congratulate them all.

*Submitted by: Carol Burroughs, ofs Minister of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity*

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## REGIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT'S MESSAGE

Dear Franciscan sisters and brothers of the Prairie,

May the Lord give you peace!

### A Spiritual Assistant's Reflection on the Recent Gathering of our Regional Family

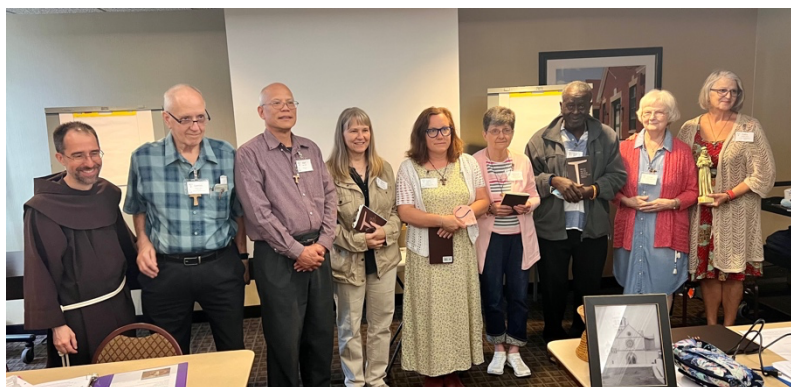
The weekend of July 22-24, 2022, witnessed the celebration of a tremendous moment of grace and blessing for our Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity. After two years and eight months of meeting only virtually because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was made in collaboration with the National Executive Council to hold the Pastoral and Fraternal Visitation of our Regional family that had been postponed from 2021 and combine it with a Chapter of Elections which was originally scheduled for March of this year. National Councilor **Dennis Ross, O.F.S.** served as our Fraternal Visitor and Presider for the Elective Chapter while Conference of National Spiritual Assistants' member **Father Jerome Wolbert, O.F.M.** served as our Pastoral Visitor and Ecclesial Witness for the elections. Father Jerome had conducted the last Pastoral Visitation of the Region in 2018.



**Emma Lozowski, O.F.S.**, our outgoing Regional Minister, led the rest of the Regional Executive Council in doing a fantastic job attending to all the necessary details of the Regional Chapter. Emma discerned that she would not allow her name to be placed in nomination for re-election when her family made plans to spend an entire year living abroad in Hungary, Emma's country of origin. Since the beloved Chiara Center is no longer currently available as a meeting site, an alternative was found for this meeting at the Drury Inn in Springfield; Springfield is still a fairly central location for the Region. We were blessed to have on-site celebration of Holy Mass both days of the Chapter with Father Jerome as our Celebrant and *Yours Truly* serving as Deacon.

I found it truly noteworthy that all members of the Regional Fraternity Council were in attendance at this Chapter. That included all six local fraternity Ministers who together with the members of the Regional Executive Council constitute the Regional Fraternity Council. (Our Region currently has seven established, active fraternities, but only six which have a functioning Council and Minister.) The only real disappointment I experienced was the general disregard attendees had for the COVID Safety Protocol that the REC had developed for this meeting. Brothers and sisters, we can do better in showing our love and concern for one another!

Father Jerome facilitated the group's Ongoing Formation by leading us through an overview and reflection on Pope Francis's third encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* ("All brothers [and sisters]") subtitled "On fraternity and social friendship." You may recall that the Pope signed this document on October 3, 2020 at the Tomb of Saint Francis of Assisi whose way of life and Gospel vision inspired the theme. It is a vision we Franciscans hold dear as essential to our vocation!



The elections for the new Regional Executive Council were held on the final day of the Chapter. What a blessing for me to be present at these elections as an observer and a prayer! I see the new Regional Executive Council is a wonderful blending of new and old faces, continuity and novelty. Our newly elected Regional Minister, **Kathy Adams, O.F.S.** from St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Teutopolis, has served our Region faithfully and well for the past nine years, six as

Regional Secretary and three as Regional Vice Minister. **Lynn Carter, O.F.S.** from St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, Quincy was readily re-elected Regional Secretary and she now begins her second term in this office. The same is true of **Marlene Mertes, O.F.S.** of St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity, Bloomington who was re-elected Regional Councilor for Vocations Promotion. And speaking of “old faces,” although not elected since I was appointed by the Friars, I continue to represent the Friars as the sole Regional Spiritual Assistant.

New faces on the REC include **Linda Howley-Skuby, O.F.S.**, our new Regional Vice Minister. She recently completed two terms of service as the Minister of her local fraternity, St. Margaret of Cortona, Bloomington. The Region has a new Treasurer, **Donna Williams, O.F.S.**, also of the Bloomington fraternity. (She is now the third consecutive Regional Treasurer to come from St. Margaret of Cortona.) Sacred Heart Fraternity, Peoria has given us two new members of the REC, **Jacques Elloye, O.F.S.**, our new Regional Councilor for Database Management, and **Matt Yee, O.F.S.**, our new Regional Formation Director.



Please offer a prayer of gratitude and love for the faithful service given by our outgoing Regional Executive Council members: **Emma; John Grillot, O.F.S.**, our two-term Regional Treasurer; **Pat DeLuca, O.F.S.**, Regional Formation Director; and **Jim Stomberg, O.F.S.**, Regional Councilor for Database Management. Both Pat and Jim graciously accepted appointment to their roles after those elected to these two offices found it necessary to resign from the REC and so they served without vote, having a consultative voice only. However, their contributions were monumental!

Please pray also for all our newly-elected and re-elected Regional servant leaders that the Lord may bless all of us through their ministry. What a privilege to serve with such dedicated Franciscan women and men!

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



*Deacon Dave, O.F.S.,*  
Deacon Dave Ream, O.F.S., Ph.D.  
Regional Spiritual Assistant,  
Franciscans of the Prairie Regional Fraternity  
Secular Franciscan Order  
***T In Persona Christi Servi***

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## ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA FRATERNITY - BLOOMINGTON

Finally, a Memorial Service ... and More!



St. Margaret of Cortona Fraternity had five sister members pass away during the months that we were not meeting in person due to COVID. In June, we decided it was time to have an appropriate memorial service for them at our gathering. We used the Secular Franciscan Order Memorial Service text, lit a candle for each sister, and read each obituary so we would all better understand who they were and who they left behind. Our Minister, Carol Burroughs and Treasurer, Connie Noble led the service with Donna Williams providing piano accompaniment for the Peace Prayer which was sung. Father Greg Nelson, from St. Mary's Parish, joined us.

Of those we memorialized, the longest serving member was Helen Killian, who had professed Oct. 2, 1968. Others included Barb Dehority, professed June 28, 1998; LaVerne Evans, professed Sept. 15, 2002 at the age of 80; (Yes, LaVerne was 102 when she died.); Beth Scott (Petri), professed July 15, 2007; and Ann Charback, professed August 3, 2008. Our Franciscan Priest, Father Ric Schneider, who is now retired and living in Cincinnati, OH, celebrated a mass for the deceased in his now home parish there.

After the service, we had a potluck to bid farewell to our member, Dianne Genseke, as she is moving out of the area. Dianne had joined us when her Secular Franciscan Fraternity in Streator blended with ours a few years ago. Best wishes and Godspeed, Dianne. We all enjoyed the time to socialize. We prayed for safe travels for those going to the Quinquennial in August and for the Regional Elections. May the Holy Spirit be moving among us.



*Submitted by: Carol Burroughs, OFS, Minister  
Photos by: Leo Grimes, OFS, Secretary*

## OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS FRATERNITY - DECATUR

### Anniversary date of Fraternity members Permanent Profession

Deacon John O’Brien July 13	Agnes Compton July 25	Gloria Guy August 2
John Shiels August 2	George Menard August 2	

### Efforts to grow the fraternity ... we’ll be taking the following action items:

- Fraternity members recently printed and placed informative tri-folds explaining the Franciscan charism and our fraternity in Narthex of their individual parish.
- Fraternity members recently purchase “uniform brown vests complete with the TAU” as an accent on the left chest pocket to show who we are.
- Our fraternity is hosting a social and “Come and See” where parishioners of Our Lady of The Holy Spirit Church and other parishes can learn more about the Franciscan charism and our fraternity.
- Also we’re writing a short article on Franciscan charism and our fraternity for publication in our individual parish bulletins.

*Submitted by: George Menard, OFS, Minister*

## SACRED HEART FRATERNITY - PEORIA

We want to **congratulate** and **welcome** our newly elected **Regional Executive Council** members and our **Regional Spiritual Assistant**.



**Fr:** Linda Howley-Skuby, OFS, Kathy Adams, OFS, Lynn Carter, OFS, and Marlene Mertes, OFS,  
**Br:** Deacon Dave Ream, OFS, Spiritual Assistant, Jacques Elloye, O.F.S., Donna Williams, OFS, and Matt Yee, OFS

### Regional Elective Chapter 2022

July 24, 2022

#### Minister

Kathy Adams, O.F.S.

#### Vice Minister

Linda Howley-Skuby, O.F.S.

#### Formation Director

Matt Yee, O.F.S.

#### Secretary

Lynn Carter, O.F.S.

#### Treasurer

Donna Williams, O.F.S.

#### Regional Councilor for Database Management

Jacques Elloye, O.F.S.

#### Regional Councilor for Vocations Promotion

Marlene Mertes O.F.S.

**Thank you for your Yes to Serve!**

Two of the newly elected Regional Council members are from the Sacred Heart Fraternity - Peoria. Matt Yee, OFS, Formation Director and Jacques Elloye, OFS, Councilor for Database Management.



Robert Righi, an Inquirer, continues his Ministry of serving the poor. He has been volunteering at a soup kitchen in Nebraska. He has also helped with their Vacation Bible School with the Lakota and Ogallala Sioux children.



Robert said he has gone to the Wounded Knee area where he is volunteering at a food pantry that has been closed from lack of volunteers. They have a lot of revamping to do to get it up and running. With it being remote it makes it hard to get supplies and

volunteer workers.

Robert is asking for our prayers that he get the volunteers and all that they will need to serve. He said he will be away on his Ministry serving the poor for one year.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup> we held our Annual Picnic at the Hickory Grove Park. Great fellowship and delicious food. Fun was had by all.



After our meal, Matt Yee, handed out the third Topic of St. Francis’ three loves – The Eucharist. We had a great discussion on the topic.

Matt then asks Jim and Kathy to share one of the most memorable moments they experienced on their trip to the Holy Land. They both thought



our Mass in the upper room at the Franciscan Cenacle, in Mount Zion was very moving, when Fr. Charles consecrated the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit was truly present in everyone.



**The upper room** at the Franciscan Cenacle at Mount Zion, Jerusalem.

The Institution of the Last Supper

Now as they were eating,\* Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, **“Take, eat: this is my body.”** And he took a chalice, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, **“Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins”**

**Matthew 26:26-28**

**The tabernacle is in the heart of Jesus.**

*Submitted by Jim Stomberg, OFS, Secretary*



## ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY FRATERNITY QUINCY

After a long absence our Fraternity began meeting in person this last Spring. How thrilling it was to see each other face-to-face! We were finally able to have the long over-due Rite of Admission for our candidate Mary Jane Pranger (on May 22, 2022) What a glorious way to come back together and she was surprised by the presence of her hometown pastor for the ceremony.

We are currently preparing for our chapter of elections this fall and for Mary Jane’s Profession.

(L-R) Fr. Dennis Hoffman,  
Mary Jane Pranger (our candidate)  
Alan Pranger (her husband)



*Submitted by Deb Moffitt, OFS, Minister*

## POPE ST. JOHN XXIII FRATERNITY

Fraternity members Kent Ferris, OFS and Andrew Reif, OFS were ordained as deacons on July 9th. The Liturgy of Ordination to the Diaconate was presided over by the Most Reverend Thomas R. Zinkula, the Ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Davenport, Iowa at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Fraternity member Deacon Frank Agnoli, OFS, Director of Deacon Formation for the Diocese, was one of the Masters of Ceremonies; Fraternity member Lori Ferris, OFS, wife of Deacon Kent, and participant in this Diaconate class, served as one of the Mass Readers.

The Ordination Liturgy was permeated with the presence of the Holy Spirit, as the enormous congregation robustly filled the Cathedral with prayer and hymns.



Bishop Zinkula  
Deacon Andrew (left)  
Deacon Kent (right)



Deacon Andrew  
Wife Tracy  
Daughter Mary



Deacon Kent and Children



The Liturgy was well-attended by other members of our fraternity. Deacons Kent and Andrew join Deacon Al Angelo, OFS, Spiritual Assistant and Deacon Frank Agnoli, OFS, Formation Director in the diaconal vocation. Our members are very proud and blessed to have four deacons as part of our fraternity.

For several years the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) has been our fraternity’s financial apostolate. Twenty-five percent of our monthly donations is given to this outstanding organization. Pat DeLuca, OFS, had the pleasure to meet with Executive Director, Michele Dunne, OFS, and Tobias (Toby) Harkleroad, OFS, Director of Campaigns, at the Quinquennial Congress. At their information booth, the three had a very informative discussion. Earlier this year, Deacon Frank and Deacon Kent, Treasurer, led a portion of FAN’s National Prayer Service in remembrance of the January 6, 2021, violence at our Nation’s Capitol Building. Over 2000 individuals participated in this virtual event.



Pat, Michelle & Toby



Finally, other members of our Regional Fraternity attended the Quinquennial Congress. The “National Fraternity” gave all thirty Regions a beautiful banner with stand. Pictured around our Region’s banner (left to right) are: John Grillot, OFS, St. Margaret of Cortona-Bloomington, Maria Galloway, OFS, (SMOC-B), Theresa Witte, OFS, (SMOC-B), Barbara Thompson, OFS, (SMOC-B), Kathy Adams, OFS (newly elected Regional Minister, Saint Francis of Assisi-Teutopolis John Adams, OFS, (SFOA-T) and Pat DeLuca, OFS. Thank you, National Executive Council, for this wonderful gift.

John G., Maria, Theresa, Barbara, Kathy, John A. and Pat

*Submitted by Pat DeLuca, OFS, Minister*



### *On the lighter side ...*

If Franciscans were a sandwich ... they’d be a Veggie.

Why, you may ask?

They tried to add some ham and cheese, but ended up preaching to Brother Hog and Sister Cow.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE REGION (2022)

- September 24 Hybrid Regional Executive Council (REC) meeting – Zoom
- October 15 National Elections (see below for more info)
- October 16 Elections – Pope St. John XXIII – Rock Island
- October 16 Elections – St. Elizabeth of Hungary – Quincy
- October 30 Regional Fraternity Council Meeting (RFC) – Zoom
- November 20 Fraternal Visitation – St. Francis of Assisi - Teutopolis

### 2022 OFS-USA Chapter of Elections

The OFS-USA (National Fraternity) will hold its Chapter Oct. 11-16, 2022 in Detroit, Michigan.

This Chapter will also be a Chapter of Elections for the next National Executive Council.

**There is room for observers.**

Observers are responsible for paying for lodging, meals and transportation.

If you would like to attend as an observer, please contact Jane DeRose-Bamman OFS, National Secretary, at [ofsusasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:ofsusasecretary@gmail.com) or 505-228-6851 for information on registering.

The registration deadline is August 29, 2022.

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## FALL EDITION PORTIUNCULA DATES

- October 15 “Call for Articles” by Newsletter Editor
- November 1 Deadline for Article Submission
- November 8 Draft submitted to REC for review & feedback
- November 15 Publication

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Newsletter questions or comments?

Contact John Grillot OFS at [grilljw@gmail.com](mailto:grilljw@gmail.com) or 309-696-4846

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***See next page for a Bonus section!***

Our Sister Fraternity, St. Bonaventure Region in Mbarara, submitted a full-page ad in the Quinquennial Program. They expressed their gratitude for our prayers and support, and ask for continued prayers.

## GREETINGS FROM ST. BONAVENTURE REGION MBARARA, UGANDA



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are profoundly honored and excited to have you as our Brothers and Sisters "OFS".

I welcome you my dear brothers and sisters on at "The Q". Since 2015, our region St. Bonaventure Mbarara Region and our national fraternity of Uganda have had a twining relationship together with Franciscans of the Prairie Region in Illinois, USA. How wonderful it is to live in the presence of the Lord as one people/ brothers and sisters!

We are grateful for your prayers and formation support that you have sent us. In 2018 you shared with us a variety of formation materials & books that we shared with other national fraternities in Africa where in need. Again, in 2019 you brought us statues of St. Francis together with Tau crosses, a PC projector, and some financial resources that were shared with local fraternities to further our ongoing formation.

May Almighty God bless you abundantly and continue to pray for us to be canonically established as the national fraternity of Uganda and pray



St. Bonaventure Region members with St. Francis statues from Franciscans of the Prairie

for our regional to have established a center building (office) that is our dream plan.

Remember! As Franciscans we believe that if we establish a firm foundation which is grounded in our faith in Jesus and His church, we can withstand the ravages of Satan and stand as a teacher to the love of Christ as demonstrated by Saint Francis.

Our Franciscan fraternity's foundation is built on four pillars: Spirituality, Formation, Fraternity and Apostolate. Each pillar does not stand by itself but supports the three other pillars. Together these four pillars all work to support our entire fraternities.

In our regional fraternity, we are currently working to strengthen these pillars through different mission work such as prison Ministry, Youth, Children/ Youfra, Education for the Poor, Environmental Protection/JPIC and Health for All (Poor) among others. The Franciscan value calls for interaction with other people and creation.

Mwebebare Munonga!

**Thanks Very Much.**  
**"Pax et Bonum".**

*Compiled by*  
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National Council of Uganda, CIOFS Councilor Jennifer Harrington, Regional Council of St. Bonaventure Mbarara together with the Arch. Bishop of Mbarara Archdiocese His Grace Paul K. Bakyenga