



# THE JOY OF FRANCIS

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

*St. Francis Regional Annual Retreat, May 26-29<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Serra Retreat Center, Malibu, CA.*

### Future Newsletters

Planned publication dates for *The Joy of Francis* are Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, May 15<sup>th</sup>, Aug 15<sup>th</sup>, and Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. **Submission**

**Deadlines** for information to be included must be received by Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, May 1<sup>st</sup>, Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, and Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. Local Ministers, as well as District Liaisons, are encouraged to submit information about their fraternity's activities. Information should be sent to as a Word document to [patriciadervish@yahoo.com](mailto:patriciadervish@yahoo.com) **NEW!!!**

### IN THIS ISSUE:

**Minister's Message by *Judith Mussatto, OFS***

**Vice Minister's Message by *Frank Miller, OFS***

**Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity Essay Contest**

**District News: San Diego County**

**District News: San Bernardino/Riverside**

**Announcement for Regional Gathering**

**Calendar and Other Announcements**

**A Calligraphy by Father Fong, OFM**

**On Page 2**



### MINISTER'S MESSAGE

*Judith Mussatto, OFS, Regional Minister*

### Change

*See, I am doing something New!  
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland,  
rivers. Isaiah 44:19.*

In the Canticle of the Creatures, Francis of Assisi wrote "Praised be You my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape ... ."

Richard Rohr, in one of his daily meditations, speaks of many forms of death - psychological, spiritual, relational or psychical - and only after we have walked through death and come out on the other side are we transformed, converted or enlightened.

Since the end of 2015 there have been a number of "relational deaths" on the Regional Executive Council (REC). The Secretary resigned in late 2015. In April, 2016 the Treasurer, who was also the database manager announced that he and his wife, the Communications Coordinator, were moving to Washington State. In early August, 2016 the Formation Director stepped down.

One change within a group is usually easily absorbed by the remaining members of the group. This was the case when Margie Rodriguez OFS, Councilor moved to the position

of Secretary. But many changes over so brief a period require new appointments and team rebuilding. The following members have answered the call to serve.

Treasurer: Ben Soriano, Our Lady of Guadalupe Fraternity  
Communications Coordinator: Patricia Dervish, OFS, Immaculate Conception Fraternity  
Online Calendar Manager: William Mussatto, OFS, Holy Spirit Fraternity  
Database Manager: Not yet Appointed.  
Formation Director: Not yet Appointed.

As we walk through this “relational death” and come out on the other side may we individually, as a Council, and as a Region, be transforming and enlightening.

***I promise to live all the days of my life  
the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
in the Secular Franciscan Order by  
observing its rule of life ...  
Rite of Profession.***

Your Sister in Christ  
Judith



## VICE MINISTER’S MESSAGE

***How good and pleasant it is when God’s  
people live together in unity!***

(Psalm 133:1 NIV)

By: Frank Miller, OFS

Despite the heat and humidity, I had a great time at the “Q” in Chicago in 2012. It was a time of blessing to be with my US Secular Franciscan sisters and brothers. So when the “Q” came up this year in St. Louis, at first I decided not to attend. After all, as Regional Vice Minister, I am fortunate in being able to visit our various Fraternities from San Diego up to the Tri-County area, meeting many of our Southern California Secular Franciscans each year. Each and every visit is inspiring and reaffirming in my own vocation.

But as the time for the Q grew closer, and the list of gathering speakers got more impressive, I felt the call once again to unite with our Order, and the many people who come from all over the United States to “live together in unity” for the 4 grace-filled days....and I am so glad that I did!

The St. Francis Region was well represented at the Q, with over two dozen Southern California Secular Franciscans who had made their way to the banks of the Mississippi. And those efforts were rewarded with rich, inspiring words from many thought-leaders within the larger Franciscan Family. In the St. Francis Region, we had been blessed to have Fr. Dan Horan all to ourselves at our annual Regional Retreat at Serra last year, speaking to us about our relationship with God. His talks at the Q were a continuing challenge of that relationship, being Gospel People to all we encounter. He dared us to be more than just followers of Jesus; he encouraged us to truly see Christ in every person and to interact with everyone with dignity, respect and in the tradition of our Franciscan charism. Even in recalling the horrors of recent violence in both Orlando and in Ferguson (very close to where we were

meeting), Fr. Dan invited us to remember that Gospel People don't judge, but instead we must move beyond the violence and confusion into an embrace of "the other", even when we don't always understand or agree with him/her. God's love isn't just for those who fit into the category of saint; we are all sinners who need to be filled with the Spirit. Our Franciscan tradition of Incarnation is one of love for the sake of love; not based on agreement or qualification. It meets the most basic of all the Gospel calls: "Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12 NIV).

We also had the chance to hear from two Friars who, for many of us, are the great instructors in our own formation: Fr. Murray Bodo and Fr. Lester Bach. Each of these speakers expanded on our need to blossom in our relationship with God. Fr. Lester reminded us that our Fraternities must be more than devotional gatherings. The Fraternity is a Sacred Space, and from them we should be drawn to action and impact, brought about by our commitment to renewal through daily conversion. Fr. Murray Bodo also inspired nearly 600 Secular Franciscans gathered. As he has done in so many of his books, he shared stories of when he has been challenged, when he has had doubts, but blindly said yes (as the Blessed Mother had done at the Annunciation) and saw amazing God-lead results from that surrender. In addition to these great Franciscan authors, our own OFS brothers and sisters from CIOFS and NAFRA shared their joy in our large gatherings. From the fiery "pulpit call" delivered by JPIC Chair Carolyn Townes, OFS to be "something greater", to the moving emotion-filled address by our OFS General Minister, Tibor Kauser, who was delighted and moved by the attendance in St. Louis ("I have never seen so many Secular Franciscans gathered in one place!"), to the many other speakers regarding YouFra or our international presence. Each presented a colorful mosaic piece of a diverse and living Order.

It isn't possible to capture everything that moved me or touched my spirit in these few

paragraphs. For those who were not able to attend the Q, the talks were captured by professional videographers and will be available shortly. I hope many of our Fraternities in St. Francis Region will take advantage of these DVDs and use them to further the conversation within our group sharing in ongoing formation (can be ordered at [www.franciscanvideos.com](http://www.franciscanvideos.com)). More information and slides from the Q can be found at [www.quinquennial.org](http://www.quinquennial.org).

### **I can't wait for Q 2021!**

#### **From Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity**

"What Would St. Francis Be Doing in the World Today" was the topic of a recent annual essay contest for eighth graders at St. Hedwig School. Mrs. Sarah Visser, their 8th Grade Teacher, supervised the essay writing and submitted 60 essays to the local St. Maximilian Kolbe Secular Franciscan Fraternity, which sponsored the essay contest in an effort to interact with youth. Although all students wrote well, the essay of Niko Tuliau stood out as being very well thought-out, inspiring and articulate. The award was given on Thursday, June 9th, during the Final Awards ceremony with the eighth grade students and their parents in attendance. Niko Tuliau received the prizes of \$25 and a statue of St. Francis for his winning essay. Here is the winning essay.

#### **The Life Changing Saint An Essay by Niko Tuliau**

If Saint Francis was here today, our world would be very different than it is now. Based on his story, and his actions, this is what I think Saint Francis of Assisi would be doing to help our world today. Saint Francis of Assisi was the patron saint of animals and ecology. He was born in 1181 in Assisi, Italy. During his early life, he grew up with a wealthy merchant father. When he was young, he became very spoiled. While surrounded by all that great wealth, he spent most of his early days in luxury. But soon, war between Assisi and Perugia broke out. This

is where the Story of Saint Francis of Assisi begins.

Even at the beginning of his life story, I can still pick apart the little details that would show what Francis would be doing today to help benefit our world. Even though he grew up surrounded by immense wealth, Saint Francis still took the heart to turn his life around and spend his life in poverty. He would set an amazing example by showing us to live a life of simplicity. He would show us how to value education more, and preach to the sick and needy.

Saint Francis spent nearly a year in prison after the war. Because of his inexperience in battle, he was swiftly captured and taken for ransom. He spent his days in prison, awaiting the payment from his father. It was here in this jail cell that Saint Francis started receiving visions from God.

The ransom was paid off, and he was set free in 1203. He returned to Assisi a completely different man. When he returned he felt empty inside. Drained from war, he set out to find anything to fill the void in his heart. One day in the countryside, he was riding on the back of his horse and encountered a Leper. Lepers were thought to be unclean, and most would politely avert their eyes and walk away. But Saint Francis felt sympathy, and embraced the leper. After the event, He felt a sense of pleasure and started to embrace this feeling.

If Saint Francis encountered someone suffering from a very similar disease, I am sure he would have done very much the same. He would have felt sympathy towards the suffering person and gave them the love that nobody else would. In this word today, we need more people like Saint Francis. If we did, this would set an excellent example for people to convert their life to a life of simplicity based around God. This life of simplicity would impact people suffering from natural disasters, political wars, and even everyday problems.

After the first encounter with the leper, Francis started spending more time in churches around his home town. Every day he prayed searching for an answer to fill the emptiness he felt, luckily he found some pleasure in helping care for and nurse lepers. But one day, while he was at prayer, Francis heard the voice of Christ telling him to live a life of great poverty and devote himself to God, He was also instructed to rebuild the Christian church. He obeyed and began preaching the good word all around Assisi, and was soon joined by twelve followers.

In the Present, Saint Francis would try his hardest to help people across the world answer their call from Christ. Even if he had to fly all the way across the ocean, he would still try to find the money to help someone in need of help to answer a call from God.

Lastly, in the building of the Christian Church, Saint Francis needed to raise money for the project. To obtain the money he needed, he sold some of his father's belongings without his permission. When Saint Francis came to the bishop with the money, he immediately told him to return it. Out of Sorrow for what he had done, he humbled himself further and left Assisi to preach the good word.

In the present day, I think Saint Francis would help anyone with a similar problem. If someone had done something they shouldn't have, he would encourage them to fix the problem, and repent the very same way he did.

In conclusion, based off of events that occurred during Saint Francis's lifetime, I bet that if he were here today he would encourage us to live a life of simplicity, show us how to give comfort to the sick and needy, help us answer a call from Christ, and help us solve all of our problems whether they are big or small.





Erin Rucker, St. Hedwig School Principal, Niko Tuliau, Contest Winner, Mrs. Sarah Visser, 8th Grade Teacher, and Diane Halal OFS, St. Maximilian Kolbe Secular Franciscan Member

## **DISTRICT NEWS:**

### **San Diego County:**

1/On August 7th ,2016 SD district had 2 elections for San Luis Rey and Nuestra Signore de Los Angeles Fraternities with the result as follows:

### **San Luis Rey Council:**

Minister: Donna Foley  
Vice minister: Karron Esmonde  
Secretary: Carol Imhoff  
Treasurer: Eileen Costa  
Formation director: Sandy Baden  
Councilor: Laura Chun  
Councilor: Dorothy Mann

### **Nuestra Signore de Los Angeles:**

Minister: Elena Morales  
Vice minister: Maria Ortega  
Formation director: Juanita Rangel  
Treasurer: Felipe Islas  
Secretary: Maria Perez  
Councilor: Lupita Kochert  
Councilor: Rita Rodriguez

2/On August 27 we had a district picnic for all 5 fraternities in San Diego District. This year

Immaculate Conception hosted this event. We had about 65 members attending. We had a lot of fun sharing food, games, play, and praying together. Due to the recent elections of the San Luis Rey and Nuestra Signora de Los Angeles Fraternities very few members from these fraternities were able to attend. We hope next year we will have more members to join the district picnic. Thank you every body for participating, especially thanks for Caroline, Minister at Immaculate Conception Fraternity, and her council members.

3/On September 3rd ,2016 we will have a Profession mass for the 2 members of the San Anthony of Padua Fraternity - Maria July Nguyen and Maria Minh Nguyen. Congratulations to both of you. Please pray for our sisters.

4/On Thursday September 22, 2016 The Franciscan School of Theology in Oceanside will start the new school year with the Franciscan Vision Lecture Series. The topic will be "St Francis Conformed to Christ: An example for Christians Today." This event is free and open to the public.

Anthony Tuan Cao. ofs  
SD District Liaison/Formator

### **San Bernardino/Riverside District**

On June 25<sup>th</sup> Bob Herbelin had a Pastoral visit to Immaculata Fraternity in Riverside. William Mussatto was an Observer. On June 26<sup>th</sup> William Mussatto was installed as the Spiritual Assistant for St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity in Hemet. Several members from our District attended the National Quinquennial in St Louis, MO where we were challenged by several excellent speakers. On August 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. the Ministers, Vice Ministers and Formation Directors from our Fraternities gathered for our Quarterly meeting. The primary work was reviewing the status of those in initial formation. Later the same day (at 5:00 p.m.) members of the Fraternities gathered for our annual Picnic.

**San Bernadino/Riverside District Picnic**



**Fraternities of San Diego County  
Gathering for a Picnic on August 27, 2016**





THE LOS ANGELES DISTRICT  
INVITES YOU TO  
The 2016 Regional Gathering of  
Secular Franciscans in St. Francis Region on  
**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2016 9AM – 2PM**

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PARISH HALL  
900 LA HABRA BLVD. LA HABRA, CA 90631

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Please join us for this Regional Gathering opportunity to hear

**Rt. Rev. Alexis Smith**

(Director for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles),  
speak on

***St. Francis and the Sultan.***

Fr. Alexis is a well-known, international speaker & Professor at  
Mount St. Mary's University.

Bring your own lunch and/or something to share.

Coffee & Muffins will be available in the morning.

The Joy of Francis  
August 2016

**Opportunity for Enrichment**

**St. Bonaventure's Journey into God. January 19 – 27, 2017. Franciscan Renewal Center. Scottsdale AZ. Contact: [amy@thecasa.org](mailto:amy@thecasa.org) 480.948.7460 ext. 132**

**We Welcome our Newly Professed:**

Brenda Dunkleman, OFS, Luis Guzman, OFS, Renee Lloyd, OFS, Clarence Lloyd, OFS, Andrea Maas, OFS, Violette Rhodes, OFS, Becky Taylor, OFS, Alexandra Terrio, OFS, Katherine Terrio, OFS, William Terrio, OFS, Karen Willson, OFS,

**Our Deceased Members:**

Shirley Prisk, OFS, 12/2015  
Roseann Frederick, OFS, 01/2016  
Michael Pollack, OFS, 01/2016  
Anita Albamonte, OFS, 05/2016

**CALENDAR**

August	27 <sup>th</sup> Profession St. Joseph and San Lorenzo Ruiz Fraternities. St. Kevins Church 4072 Beverly Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90004 at 1:00 p.m.
September	02 <sup>nd</sup> Profession. St. Anthony of Padua. Vietnamese Community Center 3114 - 40 <sup>th</sup> St. San Diego 92015. 03 <sup>rd</sup> Immaculate Conception Fraternity Retreat. Procession through Holy Door at Mission San Diego de Alcalá. San Diego. 17 <sup>th</sup> Procession through Holy Door. Mission Basilica, San Juan Capistrano. 31520 Camino Capistrano. San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. 25 <sup>th</sup> Pastoral Visit St. Lawrence of Brindisi. 25 <sup>th</sup> Pastoral Visit St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe.
October	8 <sup>th</sup> Regional Gathering. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 09 <sup>th</sup> Fraternal Visit Holy Spirit 09 <sup>th</sup> Elections San Lorenzo Ruiz 16 <sup>th</sup> Pastoral Visit St. Francis at Anaheim. 16 <sup>th</sup> Profession. Immaculate Heart of Mary Fraternity 30 <sup>th</sup> Profession Blessed Luchesius & Bounadonna Fraternity
November	13 <sup>th</sup> Fraternal Visit St. Maximilian Kolbe 13 <sup>th</sup> Pastoral Visit St. Diego
December	No Visits or Elections
January	13 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> Regional Chapter