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Secular Franciscan Order in the USA.

ALTISSIMO ONNIPOTENTE, BON SIGNORE, TUE SO' LE LAUDE, LA GLORIA ET L'HONORE ET OMNE BENEDICIONE. AD TE SOLO, ALTISSIMO, SE KONFAMO ET NULLO HOMO ENE DIGNO TE MENTOVARE.

LAUDATO SI' MI' SIGNORE, CUM TUCTE LE TUE CREATURE, SPECIALMENTE MESSER LO FRATE SOLE, LO QUALE IORNO ET ALLUMINI NOI PER LUI; ET ELLU E' BELLU E RADIANTE CUM GRANDE SPLENDORE DE TE ALTISSIMO, PORTA SIGNIFICATIONE.

LAUDATO SI' MI' SIGNORE, PER SORA LUNA E LE STELLE; IN CIELU L'AI FORMATE CLARITE ET PRETIOSE ET BELLE.

LAUDATO SI' MI' SIGNORE, PER FRATE VENTO, ET PER AERE ET NOBULO ET SERENO ET OMNE TEMPO, PER LO QUALE A LE TUE CREATURE DAI SUSTENTAMENTO.

LAUDATO SI' MI' SIGNORE, PER SORA AQUA, LA QUALE E' MULTO UTILE ET HUMILE ET PRETIOSA ET CASTA.

LAUDATO SI' MI' SIGNORE, PER SORA NOSTRA MATRE TERRA, LA QUALE NE SUSTENTA ET GOVERNA, ET PRODUCE DIVERSI FRUCTI CON COLORITI FIORI ET ERBA.

LAUDATO SI' MI' SIGNORE, PER QUELLI KE PERDONANO PER LO TUO AMORE ET SOSTENCON INFIRMITATE ET TRIBULATIONE; BEATI QUELLI KE SOSTERRANNO IN PACE KA DA TE, ALTISSIMO SIRANO INCORONATI.

LAUDATO SI' MI' SIGNORE, PER SORA NOSTRA MORTE CORPORALE DA LA QUALE NULLU HOMO VIVENTE PUO' SKAPPARE; GUAI A QUELLI KE MORRANNO NE LE PECCATA MORTALI; BEATI QUELLI KE TROVARA' NE LE TUE SANCTISSIME VOLUNTATI KA LA MORTE SECUNDA NOL FARRA MALE.

LAUDATE ET BENEDICETE IL MI' SIGNORE, ET RENGRATIATE ET SERVIATELI CUM GRANDE HUMILITATE.

Cantico delle Creature

LETTER FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER

JULY 2015

June 15, 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

This past weekend, your Regional Executive Council gathered in Beacon, NY, at the St. Lawrence Retreat Center to begin the process of “visioning” for our region. It was a tremendously fruitful weekend due to the hard work of a number of Council members and the presence of the Holy Spirit throughout our time together.

One of the themes that will heavily influence the future vision for our region has to do with our identity as Secular Franciscans—how we see ourselves and how others see us. It is interesting to note that even before our weekend discussions took place, Brother Doug and I have been raising precisely this theme with the fraternities we have been visiting.

Much of the material below is quoted or paraphrased from the following sources:

CIOFS.org; the *FUN Manual* section on *Vocation: pp. 11-13; Article 30.2 Constitutions*;

Franciscan Journey by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap. and Marie Amore, OFS, author of the *Vocation* chapter. Thank you also to Assumption Fraternity for your input!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A SECULAR FRANCISCAN?

Profession is by its nature a permanent and perpetual commitment.

At the moment of profession, we are linked and bound to the Order.

We become part of a specific Fraternity;

our life acquires meaning within the Fraternity;

we serve our brothers and sisters.

Profession is the basis of opening our hearts,

taking on activities and service to the advantage of the Order,

of society and of the Church.

To be professed means assuming a continual pledge of evangelical conversion.

The perpetually professed, according to their capability and possibility and in the

light of the interests of the Order, cannot be exempt, except for serious motives,

from accepting the positions or functions asked of them at any level in the Fraternity

whenever requested.

(Paraphrased from CIOFS.org)

continued on next page

LETTER FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER *continued*

A SECULAR FRANCISCAN

(OR SOMEONE WITH A VOCATION TO BE A SECULAR FRANCISCAN) . . .

Is a strong practicing Catholic.

Has the desire to follow the Gospel and shows:

Simplicity (without pretense).

Poverty (Confidence in the Father).

Humility (Truth of what and who we are before God).

Minority (Recognition that we are servants—not superior).

Abandonment to God (Trusting in God's unconditional love).

Has a personal faith relationship with Jesus (not just intellectual or devotional).

Is hope-filled.

Recognizes the need for daily conversion.

Lives the Rule and Constitutions and is committed to fraternity life.

Trusts in God and the importance of God in his/her life.

Has reverence for all creation and a sense of respect for it.

Is willing to share creative ideas and life with the fraternity.

Is willing to be present to his/her brothers and sisters in fraternity.

Is willing to witness to the Gospel through word and example.

Prays daily—especially Mass (when possible) and the Liturgy of the Hours.

Actively collaborates (in accordance with personal situation)

in the obligations and animation of the fraternity.

Our vocation is a gift and a commitment that must be strengthened continually.

We are not enrolled in a club or society; we have made a life commitment at profession.

How we live our lives and how we see ourselves, is what others will see.

People should recognize us as Catholics and as Franciscans without our having to tell them.

First, however, we must recognize ourselves.

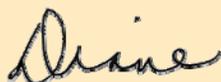
When we look in the mirror, do we see a Secular Franciscan looking back at us?

The Commitment checklist that follows can be used privately or with the entire fraternity.

The more we meditate on our commitment and on our Rule and Constitutions, the more

we will be transformed in our Franciscan lives as followers of Christ.

Blessings and joy to each of you,



LETTER FROM OUR REGIONAL MINISTER *continued*

MY OFS COMMITMENT CHECKLIST

Please check off all that apply to you.

This is a personal check list and will not be shared.

You are not required to do everything,
but you absolutely should be doing some things from each category.

FRATERNITY ACTIVITIES

- Attend gatherings regularly each month.**
(Call in to be excused for a good reason)
- Help set up before the meeting.**
- Help clean up after the meeting.**
- Volunteer for refreshments.**
- Volunteer to give a talk at the meeting for continuing formation.**
- Volunteer for Closing Prayer.**
- Pray each day for those on the Fraternity Prayer list and for the deceased of the fraternity.**
- Donation to _____.** *(fraternity charity)*
- Donation to _____.** *(fraternity charity)*
- Participation in Fraternity Apostolate.**
- Fraternity event.** *(attend/invite others)*
- Fraternity event.** *(help set up or clean up)*
- Keep in touch with excused members through visits, cards or phone calls.**
- Offer to pick up someone who needs a ride to the gathering.**
- Willing to be nominated and/or hold an office in the fraternity.**
- Attend Fraternity-sponsored Holy Hour or Spiritual Event or other event.**
(outside of meeting time)
- Invite a friend to attend a gathering.**
(Possible vocation)

REGION/CLUSTER

- Attend Region Workshops and/or Region Retreat.**
- Attend Cluster gatherings.**
- Attend Convivenza/Chapter of Ministers.**
- Attend Transitus/Feast Day Celebrations.**

SPIRITUAL AND FRANCISCAN LIFE

- Pray a form of Liturgical prayer each day.**
(i.e. the Liturgy of the Hours or Office of the Passion or Little Office of the Blessed Mother or 12 Our Fathers)
- Attend Mass regularly.** *Sundays, Holy Days and as often as possible— daily.*
- Daily examination of conscience.**
(We have committed ourselves to daily conversion.)
- Read and meditate on Sacred Scripture**
“Go from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel.”
- Read and meditate on our Rule of Life.**
- Read the Constitutions of our Order.**
- Make a yearly retreat or at least a Day of Recollection.**

Other devotions and prayers, especially the Rosary, are also a part of our daily prayer lives.

PERSONAL

- Set priorities.**
(As a lay-person I remember that Family is first, then my job, then my Franciscan family (local fraternity, cluster and Region, National and International fraternities.) and then all other activities.)
- Set a good example in family life and workplace.**



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OF THE ANGELS
2014-2017
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2015 REGION CALENDAR

OFS GENERAL MEETINGS

NAFRA CHAPTER

PLANNING MEETING

— See below

July 11, 2015

Our Lady of the Angels Region is hosting the National Fraternity Annual Chapter.

OLTAR REGION RETREAT

— See page 21

Friday, July 31 — Sunday, August 2, 2015

Mount Alvernia Retreat Center, Wappingers Falls, NY

MANHATTAN CLUSTER — PICNIC — BRING A DISH!

July 18 — SATURDAY, 11:00 A.M. — 3:00 P.M.

Bryant Park, New York City

OLTAR ANNUAL CHAPTER DETAILS TBA

November 7, 2015 — MARK YOUR CALENDARS

National Elective Chapter Planning Meeting

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

On June 6th, Ron Pihokker held the first planning meeting to present our host duties for the NAFRA Chapter to be held in Clinton, NJ in October. A number of people attended that meeting and have formed the core committee.

We are still in need of participation from the members of our region—there will be a lot to do! **If you cannot attend the meeting in Hackensack on July 11 personally, please try to send a representative from your fraternity.** Just as we need everyone's help,

we also need everyone's ideas and input. **We would love all fraternities to be represented at the meeting on July 11th.** Thank you for your service!

Diane F. Menditto, OFS, Minister, Our Lady of the Angels Region

≡ **RON PIHOKKER, OFS**
Chairperson
NaFra 2015 Chapter
Host Committee
rlpikhokker@aol.com

Dear Sisters and Brothers,
May the Lord give you Peace!

The Host Committee for NAFRA 2015 of our region will meet again on July 11, at 10:00 A.M. at St. Francis Church, 50 Lodi Street in Hackensack, NJ. We will be meeting in the Church Hall immediately below the Church (*not in the Bingo Hall where we met last time*). I look forward to seeing you there as we continue our planning to welcome our brothers and sisters to our Region to do the work of the National Fraternity.

If there are other members of your fraternity who would like to help, please invite them to come along. I look forward to seeing you.

Fraternally,
Ron

FRATERNAL TIDINGS

congratulations

ELECTIONS & PROFESSIONS



Photo credit: Tom Babich, OFS

ST. ANNE'S FRATERNITY
Fair Lawn, NJ

Congratulations to the newest professed member of our Franciscan Order, **KAREN PETERSON, OFS** who was professed on June 28th at St. Anne's Church in Fair Lawn, NJ.

We wish her great joy and every blessing.

VIVERE CHRISTUS EST
MEDAL RECIPIENT

Congratulations to **BARBARA SINATRA, OFS**, a member of the Most Holy Name Fraternity in Little Falls, NJ, who recently received the *Vivere Christus Est Award*.

Bishop Serratelli awarded the *Vivere Christus Est Award* at a diocesan celebration at the St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Clifton, NJ, on Sunday, June 14, 2015.

The *Vivere Christus Est* medal is awarded each year to recipients for their service and contribution to the Catholic Church. The Latin name translates, "To Live is Christ."

Barbara is a lifelong member of Our Lady of the Holy Angels Parish in Little Falls, NJ and gives of herself constantly in so many ways to support both the parish and the Most Holy Name Fraternity.

CONGRATULATIONS BARBARA!

Photo credit: Jody Pflucker, OFS



SISTER DEATH



THERESA HARRIS, OFS
Called home to the Lord
May 26, 2015.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held in Georgia, and a Memorial Mass in June. Theresa was a member of the Little Portion Fraternity in Westchester, NY.

INTO YOUR HANDS, O LORD,
we humbly entrust our sister,
Theresa Harris, OFS.

In this life You embraced her with Your tender love; deliver her now from every evil and bid her eternal rest. The old order has passed away: welcome her into paradise, where there will be no sorrow, no weeping or pain, but the fullness of peace and joy with Your Son and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

SPIRITUAL TIDINGS



THE REAL AND ACTIVE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

by
DEACON LUKE CONROY, OFS
St. Benedict
the Moor Fraternity
New York City, NY

The Eucharist is the summary of our daily living. In giving us the Eucharist, Jesus said: "Take it; this is My body." "This is My blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many." Jesus not only said those words, He lived them by a life of self-giving and by giving His life on the Cross.

You and I are to do the same. Our daily lives must reflect the Eucharist we celebrate. Each day, we must give of ourselves, pour out our lives in service and in love for others. How? St. John Chrysostom wrote a remarkable passage in which he brought out the intimate connection between the Eucharistic Body of Christ and the Mystical Body which is the Church. Speaking of the precious vessels of the altar and of the other liturgical objects by which we surround the Blessed Sacrament with honor, the Greek Father pointed out that it was even more important to honor the body of Christ by our interaction with our brothers and sisters in need. In this way, we are not only doing good to Him in the person of the poor, but we are making our own souls into sacred vessels of gold which give Him great glory. St. Chrysostom writes:

If you wish to honor the Eucharistic Victim, offer your own soul for which the Victim was immolated. Make your soul all of gold. If your soul remains viler than lead or clay, what good does it do to have a golden chalice? Do you wish to honor the Body of Christ? Then do not disdain Him when you see Him in rags. After having honored Him in Church with silken vestments, do not leave Him to die of cold outside for lack of clothing. For it is the same Jesus Who says, "This is My Body" and Who says, "You saw Me hungry and did not give Me to eat – What you have refused to the least of these My little ones, you have refused to Me." The Body of Christ in the Eucharist demands pure souls, not costly garments. But in the poor He demands all our care. Let us act wisely; let us honor Christ as He Himself wishes to be honored: the most acceptable honor to one whom we would honor is the honor which he desires, not that which we ourselves imagine. Peter thought he was honoring his Master by not letting the Lord wash his feet; and yet it was just the opposite. Give Him then the honor which He Himself has asked for, by giving your money to the poor. Once again, what God wants is not golden chalices, but golden souls."

St. John Chrysostom, Homily 50 on St. Matthew, 3

The Mass that we gather at is then the banquet of charity, of fraternal unity in Christ. It is the sharing of Christ's love with one another: so that the strong help the weak to encounter Christ and the weak, in their turn, give the strong an opportunity to love Jesus more by loving Him in His members. Without this perspective, our communions cannot attain the fullness and the joy that Christ desires them to have. As long as our love for Jesus in the Sacrament of His love is a love only for the Head, without sincere and warm affection for all our brothers and sisters, without interest in the spiritual or physical needs of His members, our spiritual life will remain stunted and incomplete.

In Eucharist, we celebrate here in worship what we must live out there in daily life. That is why the Eucharist is essential to Catholic belief and fundamental to Catholic life.



FORMATION

by
ED WOJCIECHOWSKI, OFS
Formation Director
OLTAR Region
edwojo@yahoo.com

FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP



Photos credit pages 8-15
Diane Menditto, OFS and Ed Wojciechowski, OFS

On May 16, 2015, a region-wide formation workshop entitled “Forming the Formator” was held at St. John Vianney and St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity in Paterson, NJ. The workshop, which consisted of four sessions, was presented by the Regional Formation Team and was attended by the Ministers, Spiritual Directors, Spiritual Assistants and Formation Teams of many of the fraternities throughout the region.

THE FIRST SESSION,
Roles, Responsibilities and Resources
for Successful Formation, was presented by Ed Wojciechowski, OFS and covered the roles and responsibilities of the Formation Director, Spiritual Assistant and Formation Team.

This session also included practical suggestions and guidelines for selecting resources for Initial and Ongoing Formation including books, audio and movies, websites and other online resources.

FORMATION



THE SECOND SESSION,

Practical Tips for Formators, was presented by Diane Menditto, OFS, and dealt with practical methods for educating adult learners. Diane highlighted the need for participatory learning and the need to spend time in prayer and meditation as part of the fraternity's formation meeting. Diane stressed the need to rely on each other to work in a collaborative and constructive environment in order to serve our fraternity as Formators.

THE THIRD SESSION,

Adult Formation in the Secular Franciscan Order,

was presented by Nancy Conroy, OFS, and accentuated the need for Witness. As Formators, we can't share what we don't have! The process of adult formation is about forming relationships modeled on our life with Jesus.

Nancy wrapped up her presentation with a hands-on exercise for developing a Formation Session.



THE FOURTH SESSION,

Spirituality of the Formator, was presented by Ron Pihokker, OFS.

Ron emphasized that spirituality is who we are and what we do because of what we believe and what we have experienced.

Ron spotlighted the characteristics of Christian Spirituality and Franciscan Spirituality. He drew attention to Formators as people who are called

to live the mission of the Church and as companions on the formation journey.

I'd like to thank the **St. John Vianney and St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity, in Paterson, NJ**, for hosting the workshop. Their warm welcome and Franciscan hospitality made everyone feel right at home!

I'd also like to thank everyone who attended the workshop and my co-presenters Diane, Nancy and Ron for making this a successful day of learning and Franciscan fellowship.

To download the handouts of the presentations, visit the regional website at:

www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/formation_workshop.html



The Formation Team is in the process of planning future workshops. If you have a topic that you'd like to see covered at a workshop, please contact me by email at: edwojo@yahoo.com

or by phone at 973-492-1035. Peace and Blessings, *Ed*



FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP

ROLES FOR SUCCESSFUL FORMATION



IMPORTANCE OF FORMATION

The journey of formation, which should develop throughout life, begins with entrance into the fraternity. Mindful that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of formation and always attentive to collaboration with Him, those responsible for formation are: the candidate, the entire fraternity, the council with the minister, the master of formation, and the spiritual assistant. The entire community is engaged in the process of growth by its own manner of living.

The candidates are guided to read and meditate on Sacred Scripture, to come to know the person and writings of Francis and of Franciscan spirituality, and to study the Rule and Constitutions. They are trained in a love for the Church and acceptance of her teaching. The laity practice living their secular commitment in the world in an evangelical way.



The formation of the brothers and sisters takes place in a permanent and continuous way.

It should be understood as an aid in the conversion of each and everyone and in the fulfillment of their proper mission in the Church and in society.

“The importance of formation has emerged as the essential element to guarantee an authentic and deep sense of belonging, rooted in a clear notion of identity and knowledge of the true nature of the OFS and of its place in the Franciscan Family and in the Church.”



FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP

ROLES FOR SUCCESSFUL FORMATION

ROLE OF THE FORMATION DIRECTOR

The master of formation has the following duties:

- to coordinate, with the help of the other members of the council, the formative activities of the fraternity.
- to instruct and enliven the inquirers during the time of initiation, the candidates during the period of initiation formation, and the newly professed.
- to inform the council of the fraternity prior to profession, concerning the suitability of the candidate for a commitment to live according to the Rule.



THE FORMATION TEAM



DEFINITION OF A FORMATION TEAM

- two or more persons who work together on common formation goals.
- who understand they must work in harmony to accomplish these goals.

GROUND RULES FOR INTERACTING AS A TEAM

- A high level of interdependence exists.
- Trust and mutual respect are present.
- Team members have good people skills and are committed to the team approach.
- They civilly and respectfully suggest correction and accept correction.
- They are willing to see a different perspective and better yet, seek out other's perspectives.
- They are willing to take risks and dream big.



FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP

ROLES FOR SUCCESSFUL FORMATION

ROLE OF THE SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT

The principal task of the assistant is to communicate Franciscan spirituality and to co-operate in the initial and continuing formation of the brothers and sisters.

The spiritual and pastoral care of the OFS, entrusted by the Church to the Franciscan First Order and the TOR, is the duty, above all, of their general and provincial ministers.

The *altius moderamen*, of which Canon 303 speaks, belongs to them.



The purpose of the *altius moderamen* is to guarantee the fidelity of the OFS to the Franciscan charism, communion with the Church and union with the Franciscan family, values which represent a vital commitment for the Secular Franciscans.

By virtue of the vital reciprocity between the religious and the secular members of the Franciscan Family and in regard to the responsibilities of major superiors, spiritual assistance to the fraternities of the OFS at all levels must be assured as a fundamental element of communion.



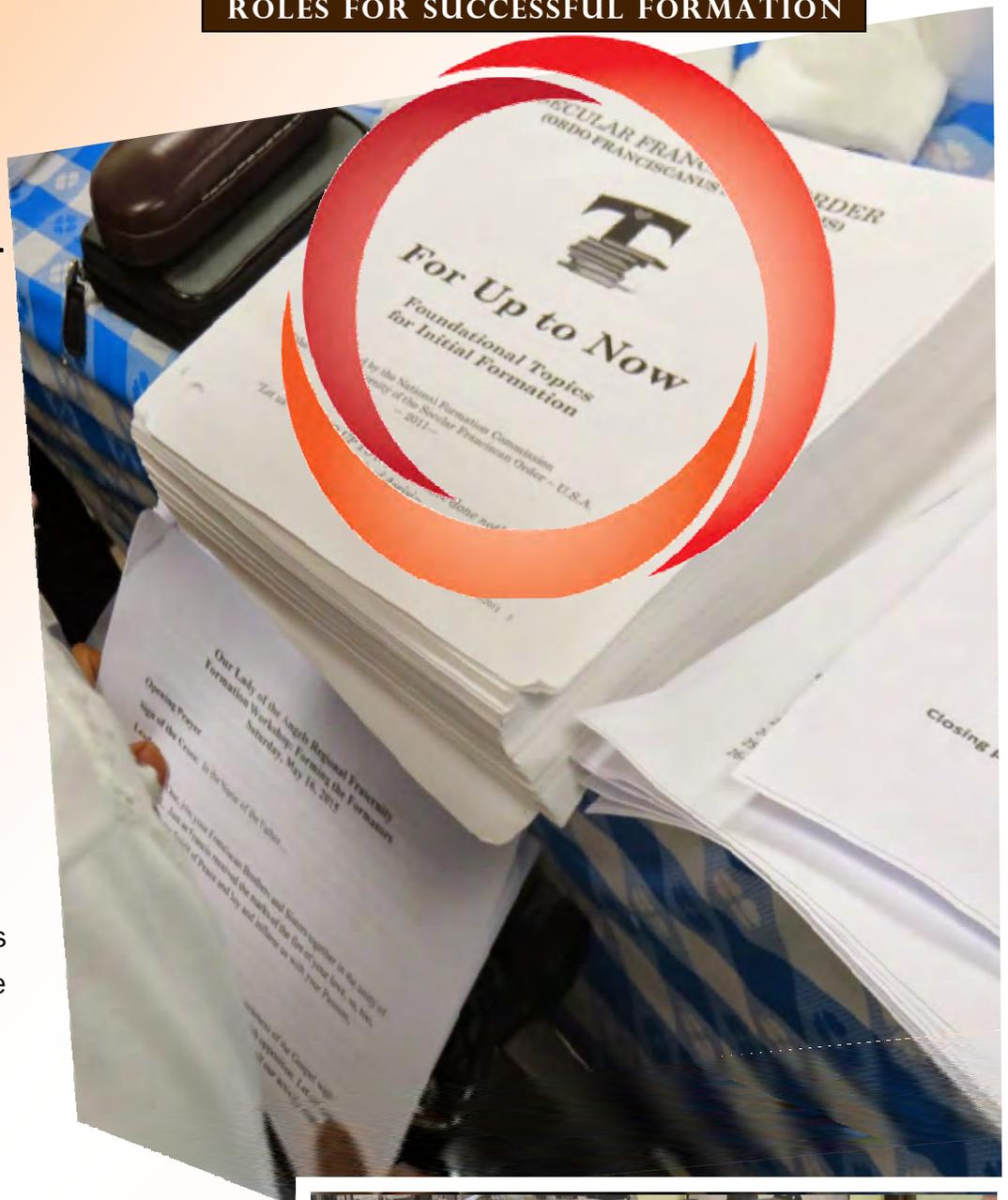
FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP

ROLES FOR SUCCESSFUL FORMATION

THE F.U.N. MANUAL

OBJECTIVES OF THE F.U.N. MANUAL

- to develop a more uniform formation process across the USA.
- to define essential elements of this formation, concretely.
- to provide our formators with easy to read and use materials that includes texts suitable for those in formation along with teaching aides, lesson plans, objectives, prayer actions, etc. to make facilitating the local and regional formation process easier and more user friendly.
- Lastly to increase our own understanding of who we are called to be as Franciscans, enhance our sense of belonging and ownership of our Order and to pass this Franciscan spirit on to others who respond to this same vocation.



FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP

FORMATION WORKSHOP QUOTES



"Team formation utilizing expert groups can be a very effective learning methodology that enforces that old Chinese proverb:

'Tell me and I'll forget.
Show me and I may remember.
Involve me and I'll understand."

Peace, CHRIS LEONE, OFS
Porziuncula Fraternity
East Hanover, NJ



OUR JOB AS FRANCISCAN FORMATORS

is to deepen our God-awareness in our own lives and then walk with people, meeting them where they are and encouraging and empowering them to become attuned to the experience of God in their lives. To help them to become attentive, aware, active contemplatives and disciples and, in the process, to discern whether their experience resonates with the Franciscan vision.

SPIRITUALITY OF THE FORMATOR

Presented by RON PIHOKKER, OFS

<http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/Formators-spirituality.pdf>



"WE MUST
RECOVER
OUR
CULTURE
OF
JOY."

FR. MATT
PRAVETZ, OFM



SAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR A FORMATION SESSION

- Topic Example: Penance and Conversion
- Article of the rule. (corresponds to topic) Art. 7
- Words from St. Francis and St. Clare, stories from their life, words of Franciscan fathers or Franciscan sources, etc.
- Scripture references. •Catechism references.
- Examples/stories from current culture, media, etc.
- Material from formation sources: FUN, Fully Mature, etc.
- Faith-sharing about the topic. (*Starter questions are helpful!*)

ADULT FORMATION IN THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

Presented by NANCY CONROY, OFS

[http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/Adult Formation in the Secular Franciscan Order.pdf](http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/Adult%20Formation%20in%20the%20Secular%20Franciscan%20Order.pdf)



Tertullian
(155-240 AD)
documented
pagan description
of the early
Christian
community:

"SEE HOW THEY
LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

FORMING THE FORMATOR WORKSHOP

FORMATION WORKSHOP QUOTES



INSTRUCTOR/FACILITATOR PRESENTS

- Instructor presents material in small chunks. •“Lecture”, PowerPoint presentations, collaborative learning “structures.” •Provides materials for “pre-reading.” •Provides an audio clip focusing on particular aspects. •Provides a video clip focusing on particular aspects.

BUT...I’M NOT A TEACHER! •Choose up-to-date materials.

- Spend time in prayer and meditation. •Rely on Team Work!
- Prepare for your presentations. •Use visual aids. •Provide Handouts.
- Use surveys and question cards. •Give opportunities for discussion.
- Break into teams and small groups.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR FORMATORS — Presented by DIANE MENDITTO, OFS

http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/Formators_Tips_notes-Menditto.pdf



Forming the Formators reminds me of the ‘mission of the twelve’ (Mark 6,7).

“He called and taught us, sending us out two by two”.

I was inspired by the well prepared presentation. It helped me expand my vision and gave me direction as a formator, especially the practical tips that will be very useful to my practice.

After all the presentations, we listened and shared together.

I gained spiritual strength as a Franciscan and felt the unity of our fraternities. Our future is growing by sharing our vision together and walking together.

I wish we’d had more time to learn about practical ways to use the F.U.N. manual.

MATILDA HWANG, OFS
Korean Martyrs Fraternity, New York City

FIAT OF ST. FRANCIS

—Then one day in the church of San Damiano, a chapel right outside of Assisi, he heard the invitation of Jesus: “Francis, go rebuild my Church, which you see is falling into ruins.” “Yes!” said Francis. “This is what I want, this is what I long for with all my heart.”

FIAT OF ST. CLARE

“As you contemplate further His ineffable delights, eternal riches and honors, and sigh for them in great desire and love of your heart, may you cry out:

Draw me after You! We will run in the fragrance of Your perfumes, O Heavenly Spouse.”

ON April 18, 2015, our St. Peter Fraternity, in Somerset, N.J. celebrated the profession of Ed Johnson. Each of us travels by our own life experiences to profession.

I think we all can see, as Ed relates, "... the power of the Holy Spirit" ... at work keeping us close and guiding us to our day of profession. We pray to the Holy Spirit for graces that will strengthen us as we live our commitment to the gospel life.

Penny Gleeson, OFS
Formation Director

A FORMATION REFLECTION

by **ED JOHNSON, OFS**



Photo credit: Joe McKenna, OFS

Reflecting on my Franciscan formation is something that is rather difficult to put into words. I suspect that spiritual experiences are often this way. I still see myself as a very unlikely Franciscan. That I have entered the order at all is probably a true testament to the power of the Holy Spirit.

I say I'm an unlikely Franciscan because my life experience has been in fields that are definitely far removed from the culture of our order. In fact, it would be hard to find fields more involved with the secular world, then those that I was involved in.

I initially worked as a newspaper man, but most of my professional life was spent as either a soldier or police investigator. As an infantry officer, I was trained to accomplish my missions by the efficient application of lethal force. Thankfully, I was never called upon to serve in combat. But combat was the purpose I was trained for.

Afterwards, my career was in law enforcement. The majority of that time was spent investigating violent crimes and working to apprehend those who perpetrated those crimes. It was a job that repeatedly showed the worst people have to offer. Without going into vivid detail, 17 years on the homicide detail drove home the realization that evil exists in the world and made it seem that God was far away. This background had a profound effect on my life and my faith.

continued on next page

FORMATION REFLECTION

continued from page 16

I never doubted the reality of God, but I think I was at best a nominal Catholic, and probably a lukewarm one at that. It would be accurate to say that I knew of Jesus, but did not know him. I subscribed to the maxim "God favors the side with the most artillery."

In a sense, my formation began before I applied to our order. It came with a recognition that I was traveling in the wrong direction. How I came to that conclusion I'm at a loss to explain. But part of it was a recognition that the force of law was not an adequate tool for solving our world's needs or problems. Having come to that realization, I quietly returned to our church and its sacraments.

For reasons I still can't explain, I became interested in St. Francis. I began reading a very secular account of his life entitled "The Reluctant Saint." Although it questioned aspects of the Francis story, particularly his receipt of the stigmata, it also presented a picture of a truly devout and good man. A man of non-violence, charity and true faith. He was also presented as someone who didn't start out that way.

In short, Francis seemed real to me. I followed that book by reading Chesterton's "St. Francis of Assisi." This presented Francis from another perspective.

Still not quite understanding all of it, I did an Internet search about Francis and Franciscans. It brought me to the OFS and to a meeting of St. Peter's Fraternity. I initially attended more out of curiosity than a commitment to join. But after reading the materials from that meeting, I decided I needed to know more about this order, and shortly thereafter, I decided to begin the formation process, still not sure if I would ultimately commit to our order.

Some folks come to spiritual awareness in a blinding flash, similar to St. Paul. For me, it is been an almost glacial process. While I have no reservations about the profession I will make, I still have questions as to whether or not I am deserving of admission to our order. It's hard not to question one's suitability when you look at the standards exemplified by so many in our order's long history.

I can answer affirmatively because of time spent before the Blessed Sacrament and reflections on materials we discussed in some of our formation sessions. In particular, our discussions on St. Peter, the apostle who so often fell short of the mark and yet ultimately rose to the occasion. To me, the lesson was clear. God calls us to serve despite, or maybe because of, our imperfections.

As someone noted: "The apostles were all far from perfect, and yet they were chosen by Jesus himself." After the Lord's crucifixion, these unlikely candidates would ultimately perform heroically.

So as I make my profession, I look forward to my service as a Franciscan, knowing that it is not the completion of a mission, but another step in a continuing conversion and a quest to better understand the Lord in the ways we can serve him.



Photo credit: Joe McKenna, OFS

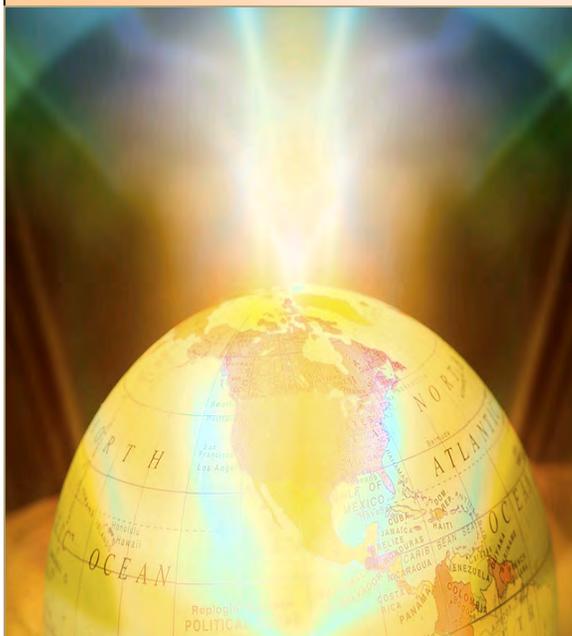




Written by
MARIA HAYES
 COMMUNICATIONS
 COORDINATOR
 Holy Name Province

FOR COMPLETE TEXT OF LAUDATO SI GO TO:

<http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/index.html>



THE release of Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si'" on June 18 energized the friars of Holy Name Province through the pope's call for immediate, inclusive dialogue and action to address the related challenges of poverty and global climate change.

As many media organizations have mentioned, and the pope himself explained in his encyclical, "Laudato Si'" or "Praised Be," is drawn from a prayer attributed to the friars' founder, St. Francis of Assisi, which praises God as He is witnessed through creation. While the prayer can be seen as a romantic portrayal of creation, it reminds people that the environment and humanity, as a special element of the ecosystem, are inherently intertwined.

In a [Holy Name Province news release](#)¹, Provincial Minister Kevin Mullen, OFM, said, "Pope Francis' analysis of the current world situation, one marked by great poverty and inequality, and global climate change, gives us a great deal to think about and a way to focus the friars' work. As a Franciscan, I am energized by his use of St. Francis as a model for all of us to follow. The encyclical has put me and my fellow Franciscans on special notice. It compels us to take the pope's message to heart. What an incredible gift from our Holy Father."

He continued, "The call to dialogue and action gives renewed encouragement for the many initiatives being carried out in the ministries of Holy Name Province in support of the poor and the environment. Our ministries do a lot of good work. This call just highlights the importance of this particular focus and, hopefully, will inspire our friars and partners-in-ministry with whom we serve to do even more."

"The Franciscans have a long history of standing with those most in need and today that includes those who suffer the consequences of environmental degradation and the destruction of God's creation," according to a [June 18 post](#)² on the blog of Holy Name Province's Office of Development. The post lists six of the most serious challenges facing "our common home."

A FRANCISCAN PERSPECTIVE

The day before the encyclical was released, Fr. George Corrigan, OFM, took to the airways in Tampa, Florida for an interview on Spirit FM 90.5, Tampa Bay's hit Christian music station.

He explained the meaning of the word encyclical to the hosts of "The Big Big House Morning Show," and described the connection between the encyclical's title and St. Francis' "Canticle of the Creatures."

continued on next page

FRANCISCANS WELCOME 'LAUDATO SI'

continued from page 18

When speculating what perspective the encyclical might contain, George said, "I think you'll find the focus is not on the science of climate change, but the way we consider and make choices. We consume goods and consume energy, but not necessarily in a mindful way. We make these choices every day in life, but do we make them in a mindful way, keeping in mind concern for the consequences?"

Soon after the encyclical was released, Fr. Daniel Horan, OFM, wrote a column for *America* magazine, <http://americamagazine.org/issue/franciscan-character-laudato-si> highlighting the connection between the document and the Franciscan charism. 

"From among the many Franciscan themes that arise in 'Laudato Si', at least three are worth highlight from the onset: leaving behind 'naïve romanticism,' recognizing the inherent value of all creation, and seeing the connection between abject poverty and environmental degradation," Fr. Daniel wrote. He added, "For Francis of Assisi, radical lifestyle change was required to authentically follow the Gospel. Embracing evangelical poverty as a means of protest against social injustices and a means toward closer solidarity led him among the poor and outcast of his day. Concurrently, his renunciation of the power systems of his society allowed him to — like St. Bonaventure — see God in all things and become a nature mystic. Today, we too are called to change our lives to follow the poor man of Assisi who has so inspired the present bishop of Rome to teach us with such authority and clarity rarely seen before."

Most encyclicals "end up sitting on a shelf," according to Patrick Carolan, executive director of the *Franciscan Action Network*. In an interview with *Inside Climate News*, Carolan pointed out that while Church leaders and theologians may talk about encyclicals, they rarely get the attention of the wider world. This document, of course, is different. "I've never seen a buzz [like this] around an encyclical my whole life," said Carolan, who pointed out that interest is coming from "people of all faiths and environmental groups."

The *Franciscan Action Network* is collaborating with the *World Wildlife Fund* and the *Sierra Club* to organize webinars and other educational opportunities to bring the pope's message to mainstream environmental groups. Fr. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM, of St. Camillus Church in Silver Spring, Md., was also interviewed by *InsideClimate News*. He affirmed that the encyclical would allow St. Camillus parishioners to "continue to challenge

ourselves" on sustainability and climate action.

TURNING TO AN 'INTEGRAL ECOLOGY'

The discussions and use of the encyclical "will play a significant role in the planning and work of Holy Name Province and the ministries that it serves," according to Russ Testa, director of the Province's Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

Pope Francis's words from paragraph 48 of the encyclical:

"The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation."

Throughout the encyclical, the pope analyzes the cause of this deterioration. The root of the decline, according to Pope Francis,

is the disordered way that people hold technology, consumption and individualism as guiding principles.

While these things are not inherently harmful when they are lived in an unbalanced way, they lead to destruction.

The pope's solution is to turn to an "integral ecology" that makes clear "the analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts."

Solutions must be based on "a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters." 

HNP news release¹

<http://www.hnp.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/franciscan-encyclical-news-release.pdf> 

HNP June 18 post²

<http://thefranciscans.org/laudato-si> 

Father Mychal Judge statue unveiled in East Rutherford

Article written by Kelly Nicholaides

Staff Writer, SOUTH BERGENITE

Submitted by: Daniel V. Sollecito, OFS

St. Thomas More Fraternity, NYC

The statue is larger than life, and befitting the legacy of Father Mychal Judge — the Franciscan Friar who left a trail of acts of kindness and courage and oversaw the spiritual needs of generations in East Rutherford and beyond.



Photo credit: Kelly Nicholaides

Holding a rosary and looking out over East Rutherford, the statue of Father Mychal Judge was unveiled on June 14 as hundreds looked on. East Rutherford elected officials unveiled the bronze statue which is the centerpiece of the reconstructed and transformed park on the corner of Hoboken Road and Paterson Avenue. The property, owned by the borough of East Rutherford, sits across the street from Saint Joseph's Church where the Franciscan friar worked.

Father Judge was an FDNY chaplain who died at age 68 at the World Trade Center during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks as he was administering last rites.

The \$40,000 sculpture created by renowned artist Brian Hanlon, who has created similar statues of Padre Pio, Yogi Berra and boxer Larry Holmes, was surrounded by clergy, police and firefighters from surrounding towns as well as representatives from the NYC Fire Department, including Chaplain Fr. Chris Keenan, OFM, Rotarians, Hibernians, and Knights of Columbus. Bagpipes and drums, a color guard march and speeches, the Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem, and a prayer prefaced the statue's unveiling.

"This is not a time for mourning and loss, but a time to recognize a life fully and well lived," said Reverend Donald Pitches of Carlstadt First Presbyterian Church. Judge left Pitches with a lasting impact more so than most.

Recalling his teenage years, "He looked over a teammate after a serious head injury in a football game and stayed with him until he was out of danger." "His compassion showed for Detective Steven McDonald [after a New York City shooting that left him paralyzed in 1986], the Pan AM Flight 800 families, and on September 11, 2001. Is that not etched and burned in our minds?"

Whether he was tending to a seriously injured teen, a police detective or people on September 11 at the World Trade Center, that was Father Mychal Judge and his life's work. In the end, 'the love you take is the love you make.' Father Judge was an inspiration to all. His life shows us how to live,"

"We come to relive the dreams of his mind, convey the message of his voice, carry the good works of his hands, and the love within his heart." The crowd launched into singing, "Let There Be Peace on Earth" in the end, and the Saint Joseph Church choir band performed.



2015 REGION RETREAT

FINAL CALL

We will once again be utilizing the beautiful facilities at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center in Wappingers Falls, New York, for our regional retreat from **July 31 – August 2, 2015.** The cost is \$175.00 per attendee.



OUR RETREAT MASTER IS FR. THOMAS HARTLE, OFM



Fr. Tom is a member of the Friars Minor of Holy Name Province and currently resides at St. Anthony's Friary in Butler, NJ. In the truest sense, Fr. Tom is an itinerant preacher. In addition to offering retreats, he also conducts pilgrimages to Assisi and Rome. Fr. Tom has the privilege of being the Spiritual Assistant to the Holy Name Federation of Poor Clares.



Photo credits: Diane Menditto, OFS and Ed Wojciechowski, OFS

PLEASE NOTE

THERE ARE A LIMITED NUMBER OF PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE. For additional information contact:

Richard Spana, OFS
914-478-2010
rickspanasfo@aol.com



RETREAT TOPIC: "OUR FRANCISCAN LIFE: AN ALTERNATIVE TO RUIN."

Fr. Tom will be giving 5 talks throughout the weekend— Friday evening, Saturday morning, afternoon, evening and Sunday morning.

Remember space is limited. Register now using the form below or on our regional website.

2015 REGION RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

Please check one Professed Candidate

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Fraternity: _____ Single room _____ Double room _____

Special Needs: _____ Room with: _____

Send completed registration form with \$175.00 check, payable to "Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity" to: RICHARD SPANA, OFS • 332 Warburton Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706 • Phone: 914-478-2010.

This registration form is available on our region website at: <http://ourladyoftheangelsregion.org>





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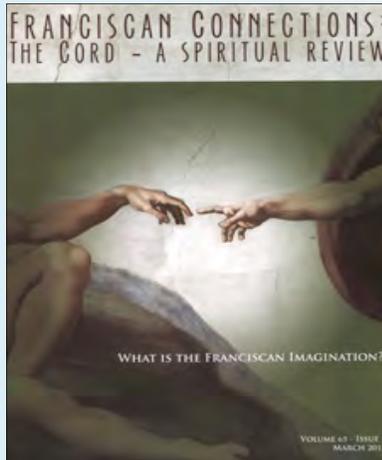


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1950 - 2014 ARCHIVES AND INDEX OF AUTHORS:

<http://www.franciscanpublications.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Cum-Cord-Index.pdf>



PAST ISSUES FROM 1950 TO 2010

<http://cord.sbu.edu>



From “The Cord” to “Franciscan Connections.” Expanding The Cord for Contemporary Needs

This past March 2015, the Franciscan Institute Publications launched the release of its new version of The Cord, retitled *Franciscan Connections* to reflect the inclusive, “connective” nature of the journal, which covers Franciscan ideals in the modern world in areas of Franciscan studies, healthcare, economics, literature, history and more.

Integrating the traditional fraternitas of Francis and Clare with the demands of the 21st Century, *Franciscan Connections* hopes to communicate Franciscanism and Franciscan-inspired actions to a broad audience of laypeople and religious. Retaining The Cord’s academic rigor and scholarship in Franciscan studies, *Franciscan Connections* adds poetry, photography, stories, and original artwork to reflect this broader audience and expanded focus.

Along with these, *Franciscan Connections* will include regular “impact” features that highlight Franciscan trends in healthcare, business, education, art, and science. Each issue also has a “Franciscan Roundtable” that features input and news from Franciscans around the world. Collectively, the journal hopes to connect communities and current issues through the Franciscan spirit, bringing together “all who dwell in the whole world,” as St. Francis tried long ago.

Franciscan Connections continuously looks for original nonfiction pieces, short fiction, photography, artwork, scholarly articles, and book reviews. The journal seeks to enlarge the understanding of and appreciation for the Franciscan vision and spirituality. In general, familiarity with what they have published in the past is the best guide. However, inquiries regarding issue-specific themes are welcome. Submissions reviewed on a rolling basis by the editorial staff and Franciscan Institute faculty.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

<http://www.franciscanpublications.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Franciscan-Connections-Submission-Guidelines-01.16.2015-.pdf>



GENERAL INFORMATION



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REGION DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR
ANNA GERACI, OFS

The Troubadour newsletter is a communications vehicle published by Our Lady of the Angels Region. It is published in 2 formats— printed and electronically.

- The printed version named, *The Troubadour*, is published twice yearly in March and October. It is mailed free to all professed members and Candidates of the region.
- The electronic version named, *e-Troubadour*, is published monthly and is available on our Region website or by email only. It is available to all professed and Candidate members of the region with e-addresses from our database.
- If you do not have computer access to a website, it is recommended that you speak with your fraternity Minister.
- Please notify me if you have a change in your name, address, phone, e-mail address or membership status. Please fill out the form below and surface mail to Anna Geraci, OFS, 161-B Cross Slope Ct., Manalapan, NJ 07726, or e-mail: TroubadourEditor@aol.com Please write **TROUBADOUR** in the subject line.
- Note that all changes submitted are also applied to the NaFra database which we maintain for our region. If you are a professed member or Candidate and are currently not receiving a copy of the *Tau-USA* National newsletter, please notify me.

—EDITOR

• CALL FOR ARTICLES •

Wherever you see the spirit of St Francis at work in the world, in your lives, in your fraternity and in your hearts—we want to hear from you. Come Share With Us.

• DEADLINES •

The Troubadour / *e-Troubadour* format is published on the 1st week of the month. All submissions for the next issue must be received by the 15th of the preceding month.

Submissions for the next issue of *e-Troubadour*, August 2015, are due by July 15th.

• ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS •

• The right to copy all material printed in the *Troubadour* is granted provided you credit the *Troubadour* and author.

• Not every article received may be published in the upcoming issue. Every consideration is given for publication in a future issue.

• When submitting articles for publication consideration, please state fraternity name and location, as well as your name and address.

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