



Our Lady of Indiana

Regional Fraternity - Secular Franciscan Order

September 2014

Volume 1, Issue 2

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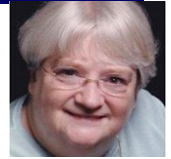
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A Message from our Regional Minister: Kathleen White, OFS



For this "Unity Day Edition" we have been asked to reflect on our annual gathering. There are several references from our Rule that I wish to share with you.

From our Rule, Article 3: *Secular Franciscans, therefore, should seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ in their brothers and sisters, in Sacred Scripture, in the Church, and in liturgical activity.*

We certainly encountered the Christ in our brothers and sisters that day! The celebration of the Eucharist was wonderful and the best way to start our anniversary celebration! Throughout the day there was laughter, and sharing, and the discovery of new and exciting things about each other... who has the white cat? Who speaks fluent German? Who served in the military? Who has been to Assisi more than three times? It was a joy to witness the challenge posed to each of us to find that one person who could complete our play sheet. I think it was actually possible to fill all but one of the squares.

From our Rule, Article 14: *Secular Franciscans, together with all people of good will, are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the kingdom of God may be brought about*

more effectively.

How did we go about building that fraternal and evangelical world? I think each of us had an opportunity to talk with someone, share with someone, and hug someone. My fraternal world was expanded by a wonderful conversation I had at lunch with former Regional Minister Frank Vargo, and also others throughout the day. It is always such a joy to see those of you that are familiar to us from various other Regional Fraternity gatherings - elections, visitations, chapters, workshops and retreats. Another joy comes from greeting those that are "new" to fraternal life - inquirers, candidates, and spouses of members. Welcome to the family!

From our Rule, Article 22: *[Fraternity] should be the privileged place for developing a sense of Church and the Franciscan vocation and for enlivening the apostolic life of its members.*

What does that mean - *privileged place*? The Thesaurus helps us understand... advantaged, fortunate, honored, favored, benefited. Wow! Do we feel this way about our own local fraternity? Are we **advantaged** because we belong? Is it **fortunate** that we can claim membership in the Order, in frater-

Our Regional Prayer — a Gift from St. Francis

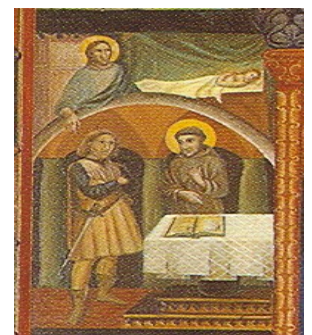
Holy Virgin Mary, among all women born into the world, there is none like you. Daughter and Handmaid of the Most High, sovereign King, the heavenly Father, Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

Pray for us with St. Michael the archangel and with all the powers of the heavens and with all the saints together with your most holy beloved Son, Lord and teacher.

What We Have Promised to Live . . .

"The Secular Franciscan Order holds a special place in this family circle. It is an organic union of all Catholic fraternities scattered throughout the world and open to every group of the faithful. In these fraternities the brothers and sisters, led by the Spirit, strive for perfect

charity in their own secular state. By their profession they pledge themselves to live the gospel in the manner of Saint Francis by means of this rule approved by the Church (**Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, Chapter One: Article 2**)".



nity? Is it an **honor** to attend? Is fraternity **avored** over all other activities and opportunities? And are others **benefitted** because we were there to encourage them, pray with them, serve them? When we experience fraternity we come away better for the encounter. We expand that to the Regional Fraternity when we attend Unity Day, Formation Workshops, Chapters, and Retreats. The Regional Executive Council is also so very blessed to be able to serve the local Fraternities through Visitations and Elections. If fraternity is, indeed, to us the privileged place, how are we contributing to the encounter for others? Are we anxious to see our Franciscan brothers and sisters? Do we listen intently to

their faith sharing? Is there a way we can serve them to ease their burden, to increase their joy?

From our Rule, Article 24: *To foster communion among members, the council should organize regular and frequent meetings of the community as well as meeting with other Franciscan groups... It should adopt appropriate means for growth in Franciscan and ecclesial life and encourage everyone to a life of fraternity.*



Regular and frequent... this brings me to my soapbox. Many of you have heard this from me before... at visita-

tions, in workshops, and at Chapters. How regular? How

frequent? If it is indeed a privilege to gather, why don't we do it more often? Bible studies meet weekly. Prayer groups meet weekly. Cursillo



groupings meet weekly. Weight Watchers, AA, Al-Anon, NA groups meet weekly. Yet here we are, in the midst of our privileged place, only gathering monthly to share faith, pray, learn, grow. Seems that we have some challenges. Why not expand our fraternities to include a Bible study, or a separate study of the essential documents that govern our Order? We could plan one Sunday a month that we attend

Mass together, sitting as a group, to be that visible sign to the parish that there are Franciscans here! See how they love one another?! Could we arrange to handle all the ministries at a Mass? Ushers, greeters, lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, servers... all wearing the Tau – that visible sign of the Order.

To the 160+ that attended Unity Day 2014 – it was wonderful to see you! To those that were not there – you were missed! We hope you enjoy the memories as you read through this newsletter and see the pictures of some of the people who were there. I offer a special thanks to those who took photos and shared them for our archives. See how they love one another!

1 Peter 5:14



Thoughts from our Regional Vice-Minister, Dave Dieringer, OFS



For the past few weeks, there has been a running discussion in my small circle of friends at work, about the uniqueness of being Franciscan. What is so special about Saint Francis and Franciscans? I have been finding myself going to Franciscan theologians for that answer. In particular, I look to John Dun Scotus. John shared that the heart of Franciscan theology is LOVE!

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." That is the heart of being a Franciscan... LOVE. We love! My question and challenge to you today, my dear brothers and sisters, who have you loved, today?

We, as Franciscans are challenged by our God, to love as He loves. Sin is simply not loving as God loves. Who or what have you loved, today?

A friar friend of mine, years ago shared this quote with me and I wish to share it with you:

"We are, all of us, molded and remolded by those who have loved us, and though that love may pass, we remain none the less their work--a work that very likely they do not recognize, and which is never exactly what they intended." François Mauriac, *The Desert of Love*

I regularly hear, "How should we do that?" We have our Father Francis, the Rule, and our Church to guide us and mold us, but above all I have listened to Saint Clare. She told us that we have the example of Christ Jesus to look up to!

"Gaze upon Him,
Consider Him,
Contemplate Him,
As you desire to imitate Him".
"Love enfolds
It is no longer I that live, but

Christ that lives in me.
I am secure in the Lord.
I can look out, now, through the Lord's eyes.
I can see the world as He created it, in His mercy,
I can see my sisters and brothers with His love,
and I can worship the Father through the eyes of the Son in the Love of the Holy Spirit."

LOVE, TODAY!



"And yet, Yahweh, you are our Father; we the clay and you our potter, all of us are the work of your hands."

(Isaiah 64-8)



News and Views from Around Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity . . .

A note from your Editor: the items in this column may have arrived a month or two before publication of the newsletter, but they are still important sharings. The date after each entry indicates the date we received the information and name of reporter when possible.

Congratulations to **Carman Grau, OFS**, and **Kristine Swank, OFS**, of **ST. BONIFACE FRATERNITY** in Lafayette who made their permanent Profession to the Franciscan Order on June 28, 2014 (6/11/14).

The **PEOPLE OF PEACE FRATERNITY** in Indianapolis held a retreat on the campus of Marian University on Saturday, July 12, 2014 to reflect on Pope Francis' Exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel" (5/27/14).

OUR LADY OF LOURDES FRATERNITY joyfully welcomed three new Candidates to their community: **Alyson Braatz, Linda Bundy, and Cindy Varenkamp**. May Sts. Francis and Clare bless them and their sponsors as they journey toward profession in the Franciscan family (7/2014).

ST. ROSE OF VITERBO FRATERNITY continues reaching out to the poor through their monthly pancake breakfasts which have served over 1800 meals in the past year. These tasty events have not only served those who are hungry, but have, as per their newsletter, also helped them grow in a spirit of fraternity (7/8/2014).

SACRED HEART FRATERNITY in Indianapolis lays claim to being the oldest fraternity in our Region. They were established "in the year 1877, two years after the establishment of Sacred Heart Parish in Indianapolis. The first reception in the Third Order was Ida Seiter, August 26, 1877, by Father Pancretius, OFM" (from *Historical Summary* submitted for Unity Day, August 9, 2014). Congratulations, dear brothers and sisters!

ST. CHARLES FRATERITY had several milestone profession anniversaries this year. Back in May, Henry Schmitt, Jr. celebrated 50 years and on May 19, Mary Lou Sohn celebrated 40 years. On September 19, Jackie Didier, Jan Scher, Margie Huss, Julie Karst, Barb Kluz, Laura Haiflich, and Ann Tuttle will celebrate 15 years. On October 15, Dorothy Ward and Alice Williamson will celebrate 25 years. On December 18, Joann Arendt will celebrate 20 years. May God bless

each of them for the faithfulness to their professions!

On July 20, they received three Candidates through the Rite of Admission. They are Carole Beiswanger, Joy Olry, Sandy Kiraly, all of Fort Wayne. Providentially, Sr. Agnes Marie was in attendance for the Pastoral Visitation. They celebrated with an ice cream social following the Rite of Candidacy. (Barb Braley on 9/7/2014)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FRATERNITY AND OUR LADY OF INDIANA REGIONAL FRATENITY extends our sympathy to Frank Vargo, OFS, former Regional Minister and Fraternity Minister on the death of his mother, Rita Vargo, OSF. Sister Death took her home to our heavenly Father at the age of 92 years. Rita made her Profession as a Secular Franciscan when she was 85 years of age (Sr. AM 9/18/2014).



L-R: Mary Compton, OFS; Aida (Yolanda) Ianson, OFS; Marguerite (Marge) Sayers, OFS

On Sept. 17, 2014, Mary Compton, Aida (Yolanda) Ianson, Marguerite (Marge) Sayers made their Profession to the Secular Franciscan Order at a Mass celebrated by Fr. David Huemmer, OFS, in Kokomo. Lady Clare fraternity welcomes these women who will be a great asset to the fraternity, and to the world at large as they help to build a more fraternal and evangelical world. (Linda Grady, OFS on 9/20/2014)



From our Regional Spiritual Assistant: Sister Agnes Marie, OSF

The Spiritual Energy of Stones . . .

I can't help myself! Honest! Every time I walk into the little chapel of the Portiuncula I have to place my hands on the stones . . . the stones that Francis placed there as he repaired this tiny but very powerful shrine in honor of Mary and which was to become his favorite place on earth. Guess I'm just hoping that some of his spiritual strength and power will somehow rub off on me.

It was Our Lady of the Angels / Portiuncula that became the heart and center for Francis and for the whole Franciscan family and movement that was to follow. When you sit in that tiny space, one can feel the spiritual power recharging one's entire being, heart and soul. And we're reminded once again that, like Francis, Jesus is for us our true

center and that He is the one that gives meaning to everything else — friends, work, spirituality, values, etc. When one is sitting there, one needs to sit quietly with immense openness like an empty vessel that allows itself to be filled with the only One who can satisfy our longings and desires — the One for whom, "our hearts are restless" until they're filled to overflowing with Him.

St. Paul expressed it this way: "I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him . . . (Philippians 3:8)".

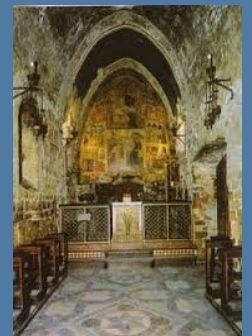
Fr. Roch Niemier, OFM, reflected on that statement of Paul by writing:

"One cannot help but be mesmerized by the energy Paul is exerting for Christ. Jesus is his center and pulling force. Jesus is the reason for all this energy. Our presence at the Porziuncula is telling us the same. Jesus is to be the center and motivating force of our lives... if we fail to know Jesus as a center, as our goal, we lose the race".

So sitting quietly in that little chapel with a hand placed discretely on the wall is like having one's heart and soul fed by the richness of a banquet far beyond words. No wonder Francis and his brothers loved this place so deeply, or as St. Bonaventure tell us, "This place the holy man loved more than other places in the world . . . for here he began humbly, here he progressed virtuously, here he ended happily...

this is the place where the Order of Lesser Brothers was begun by Saint Francis under the prompting of divine revelation (*Francis of Assisi, Volume II, The Founder*, pp. 540-541)".

And the stones still shout out that gift and grace to all the pilgrims who enter its sacred space with a power greater than all the forces of the Universe! "All praise is yours, all glory, all honor and all blessings. To you, alone Most High, do they belong".



Compassion in the Spirit of Jesus — A Reflection by Barb Braley, OFS

Nearly 20 years ago, I started to work as a CNA at local nursing home. Shortly after I started working there, another aide asked me, "Don't you feel sorry for all of these people?" When I answered that I did not, she asked me rather impatiently (no pun intended) why I was working there. I responded by explaining to her the difference between feeling sorry for someone and having compassion.

The word compassion, in its truest definition, comes from the Latin "com passio." It means "with suffering." This is what we mean when we speak of the passion of Christ. (Like the movie title of a few years ago.) However, we usually define passion as a strong feeling or emotion about something. But that definition doesn't apply here.

In order for us as Christians to really follow Christ, we must walk the way of suffering. Sometimes it's the way of our own suffering and sometimes it's the way of others' suffering. When we do, we see our situations and the situations of others realistically. Then we can respond to real needs. Compassion builds people

up, it's constructive.

Feeling sorry for people, on the other hand, fails to see things realistically. When we don't see things realistically, then we can't respond to needs appropriately since we don't see the needs clearly. Feeling sorry for someone fails to build people up and is, therefore, destructive.

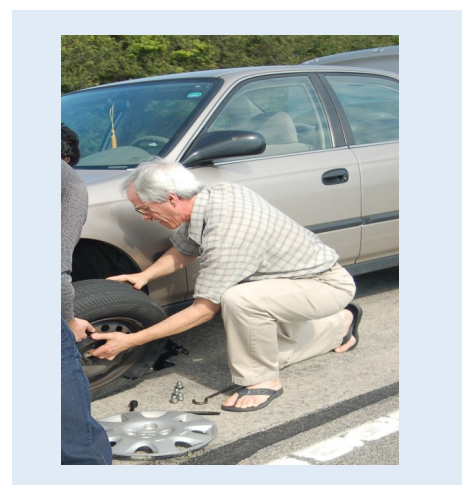
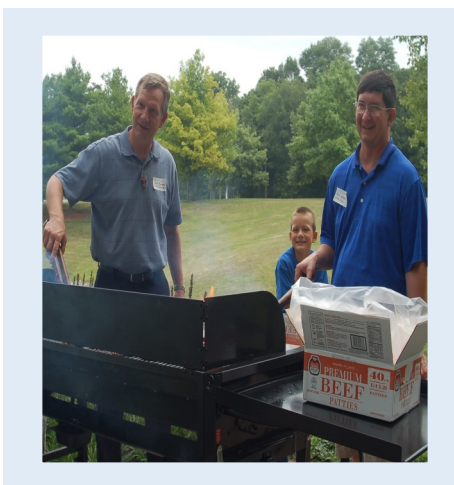
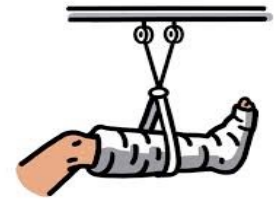
For example, if someone has a stroke and has diminished use of one side of the body, a compassionate response would be to allow that person to do what he or she can do and assist only as much as needed in a given task. It may require more of our time, but the person being helped is able to retain some sense of dignity, continue to do what he or she is able to do, rehabilitate what is diminished, and a good relationship may develop. It's constructive.

On the other hand, if we feel sorry for this person, we only see what he or she can't do, especially in relation to what could be done before. Therefore, the response may be to consign this person to a chair or to bed and do everything for them, making a true invalid out of this person unnecessarily. Our "service" will likely be resented, whatever shreds of dignity this person is desperately trying to hold onto are not recognized, and the relationship suffers as

well. It's destructive.

This relates quite well to Jesus' teaching about practicing the corporal works of mercy (Matthew 25). What these works really show is our authentic love for the neighbors God has given us, no matter who they are, or in what situation they are. When we see clearly and realistically, we see like Christ sees. (Whose eyes and ears and hands and feet does Christ have if not ours?) When we are willing to enter into the suffering of others, that is compassion. Then we can respond as Christ responds: with authentic love and respect.

Pax et bonum!



A Reflection from Barbara Peloza, OFS, Infirmarian of Our Lady of Lourdes Fraternity



I'm in the process of downsizing my living quarters. And that means selling the home I have enjoyed for over 40 years. Although I've accepted the fact that the home is too large for me to handle, it wasn't an easy decision. The memories evoked when I look at the pictures on the walls, the walls themselves, and even the street driven on for so many years causes so much angst.

But the decision to move was necessary, and the problem now centers on all that I've managed to accumulate. What do I pack? What will be most needed in the future, and destined at this time to an unknown address? Is there a particular remembrance that defines my life here? Presenting a home for sale is an overwhelming task!

As the realtor stated, the home should be devoid of my personality. It should be staged to allow a pro-

spective buyer the ability to envision their own design or plan.

And so I began (what I thought) was selective packing. After hours of decision-making, and looking at the stacked tubs of what I had deemed as 'irreplaceable' items, I began to question why I ever thought of them as important. Would it make any difference if I don't save them now? I haven't looked at most of the items or used many of them in quite a long time, and I haven't missed them. In fact, looking at what I'm planning to save now would be almost comical except for the amount of money spent for the privilege of owning them. Was I ever that naïve?

Does this 'stuff' define who I am? After 40 years, I can't remember having a definite plan for these possessions. Favorite pillows, albums filled with pictures, clothes too small for wear, and cabinets filled with appliances – all these are to be put out of sight, hidden from prospective buyers. Salvation Army, here I come.

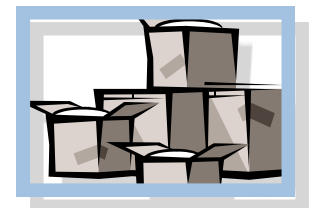
Holding onto memories is great but they

shouldn't define us. That definition will be based on how we've used our 'important' items: Catholic education, receiving sacraments, and most importantly, the faith to ask and accept forgiveness when we have erred. As a follower of St. Francis of Assisi, and committed to living the gospel of Jesus, I've welcomed the many opportunities that deepen my devotion to our Lord.

The question then changes: Having accepted God's gifts, have I fully understood His plan for me – to be with Him in heaven? Have I been true to His teachings? And, most importantly, will God accept my efforts and welcome me - His faithful servant?

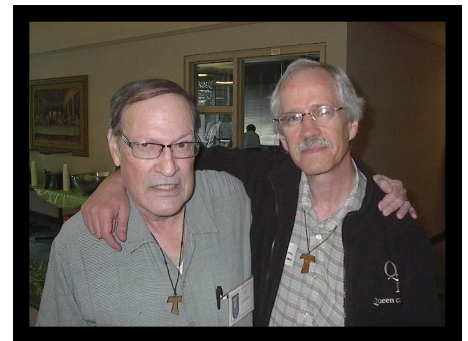
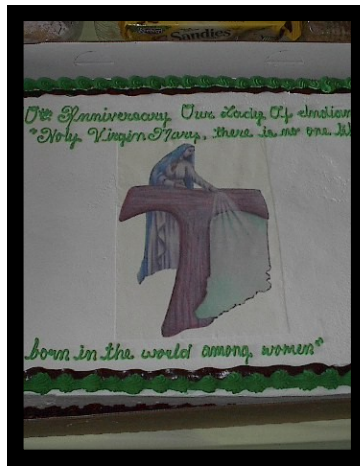
Peace,

Barbara Peloza, OFS



Unity Day — August 9, 2014

Celebrating Franciscan Fraternity



Unity Day
collection for the Poor Clares
\$1,935.60
Thanks to all who generously contributed to assisting our Poor Clare Sisters



Featuring Sacred Heart Fraternity, Indianapolis

The following information is only a brief sharing of the history of SACRED HEART FRATERNITY in Indianapolis. Limited space only allowed sharing a few interesting vignettes from them — the oldest Secular Franciscan community in Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity. Brian Faust, OSF, would be delighted to share the rest of the document. It's fascinating!

The Sacred Heart Fraternity was established in the year 1877, two years after the establishment of Sacred Heart Parish in Indianapolis, IN. The first Reception in the Third Order was Ida Seiter, August 26, 1877 by Father Pancretius, OFM.

We have no information about the very early history of the fraternity, however, we are fortunate to have in our files, copies of minutes of meetings dating from January 1, 1918 to January 1, 1957 in hardbound books.

From the minutes of meetings from 1918, we know that there were two branches of the fraternity, one English and one German (Sacred Heart was the German National Parish of Indianapolis.) Fraternity meetings were presided over by a priest. The officer titles were Prefect, Assistant Prefect, Secretary and Assistant Secretary, and each branch had its own set of officers. Up until January, 1918, the two branches met separately, but at the January 27, 1918 meeting, an order proposed by the Reverend Director was unanimously accepted. "The English and German branches will meet together on the 4th Sunday each month. The meetings will be held in Sacred Heart Hall instead of in the church and will open at 3pm with prayer followed by a business meeting. The Prefects of the respective branches shall preside alternately. The business meeting will be followed by a spiritual instruction by the Reverend Director in both English and German, after which the Tertiaries will proceed to the church for Benediction, recitation of the Office and the concluding prayers of the meeting."

The meeting topics in 1929 centered on the importance of regular meeting attendance and the use of attendance envelopes.

The Provincial and National tax for the year 1929 was 8 cents per professed member.

November 9,10,11, 1929- Fifth Provincial Convention of the Third Order of St Francis, Sacred Heart Province was held in Springfield IL. Topics were about the fraternity and council meetings and how to induce attendance at the meetings.

Membership report Jan 1, 1929 to Jan 1, 1930

Total membership 1-1-29	955
Novices cancelled	56
Professed suspended	185
Transfers	3
Resignations	4
Deaths	24
Professions, reinstatements	81
Total membership 1-1-30	764

Members were suspended if they did not bring in or mail their attendance envelope for three consecutive months and did not ask to be excused.

The Third Quinquennial National Convention was held August 8-12, 1931 in San Francisco and the fraternity was entitled to send seven delegates. There was a Special Train from Chicago to San Francisco for the Tertiaries which left Chicago at 10:30pm August 4. Rates ranged from \$10.20 to \$84.00 for a one way ride. The Keynote address was "Catholic Action."

March 27, 1965- Fr Elias opened a general meeting with an explanation of the Third Order's place in the world today. He said the Third Order is needed for many reasons and he cited four of these.

"First of all the Third Order should be outstanding in otherworldliness. It should help people concentrate on spiritual things in direct counterpoint to today's emphasis on material goods, their acquisition, care and enjoyment.

Secondly, the Third Order is in the world for service. We should not be so concerned with what the world has to offer, but what we have to offer the world. Our Lord, in fact, did not come to this



From
Our Lady of Indiana
Regional Fraternity

Sister Death has
welcomed home...

Immaculate Conception Fraternity:

Richard McCloskey, OFS, on June 28, 2014.

Louise Balint, OFS, on August 12, 2014

Rita Vargo, OFS, mother of Frank Vargo, OFS, former Regional Minister of Our Lady of Indiana

St. Charles Fraternity:

Delbert Karst, OFS on July 15, 2014

Queen of All Saints Fraternity:

Nellie, Engle, OFS, August 26, 2014

If anyone has been missed, may our dear brother or sister rest in God's peace!

world to be served but rather "He took upon Himself the form of a servant." In like manner, the Pope has not a title of 'boss' so much as 'the servant of the servants of God.'

Thirdly, the Third Order is here to be a witness. One is a witness in three different ways: he KNOWS something or he BELIEVES something or he IS something. A tertiary knows what is right and just and he believes it sincerely. But most of all, he IS just and IS an example of his creed by helping each of his neighbors and sticking up for what he knows to be true and right.

And lastly, the Third Order is in the world in a spirit of community. People in the world are our brothers and our concern should be with each of them. We take them as we find them, and being ecumenical we offer our brothers next door and far away the spirit of the Order and its set of values. Our brothers are all over the world and we live in this world community."

What words of wisdom Fr. Elias has for us, even today, 50 years later.

Sorry we couldn't have added more of this fascinating history! Thanks, Brian!

Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity - Secular Franciscan Order

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To join OUR LADY OF INDIANA list-serve
send a blank email to:
OLI-Region-subscribe@yahoo.com



Walking in the
footsteps of
Saint Francis
and St. Clare of
Assisi as Secular
Franciscans.

Like us on Facebook



Dates to Remember

- October 4 — Feast of St. Francis of Assisi
- November 8, 2014: Chapter of Mats, St. Patrick's, Kokomo
- November 17, 2014: Feast of St. Elizabeth, Patroness of the Third Order
- December 25, 2014: Feast of the Incarnation, Our God Becomes One of Us
- January 10, 2015: SA Formation
- February 14, 2015: Regional Executive Council
- March 14, 2015: Formation Worship for all Formators
- April 11, 2015: Chapter Of Mats, Kokomo
- May 9, 2015: SA Formation
- June 13, 2015: Regional Executive Council
- August 8, 2015: Unity Day
- September 12, 2015: SA Formation
- October 10, 2015: Regional Executive Council
- November 14, 2015: Chapter of Mats



"Brother Francis, your little and looked-down-upon servant in the Lord God, wishes health and peace to all . . . to whom these words may come . . . may you foster such honor to the Lord among the people entrusted to you that every evening an announcement may be made that praise and thanksgiving may be given by all people to the all-powerful Lord God (*A Letter to the Rulers of the Peoples*, FA:ED, Vol. 1, p. 58)".

A message from DCN. TOM BELLO, OFS National Minister Secular Franciscan Order, USA

"Our National Theme for 2014, adopted by the National Fraternity gathered in Annual Chapter in October 2013 is: "Be the Merciful Presence of God." We are inspired and guided by the words of Pope Francis:

"Dear brothers and sisters, let us be enveloped by the mercy of God; let us trust in his patience, which always gives us more time. Let us find the courage to return to his house, to dwell in his loving wounds, allowing ourselves be loved by him and to encounter his mercy in the sacraments. We will feel his wonderful tenderness, we will feel his

embrace, and we too will become more capable of mercy, patience, forgiveness and love."

Ordinarily, we do not live in community; rather, we live with our families and perform our jobs out in the world, gathering in fraternities on a regular basis. On the one hand, our fraternity is the whole world; on the other hand, our local fraternity, our home-based faith community if you will, is the world where we work out our salvation AND the salvation of our sisters and brothers."