



Our Lady of Indiana

Regional Fraternity - Secular Franciscan Order

June 2014

Volume 1, Issue 1

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A Message from our Regional Minister: Kathleen White, OFS



Each October at the National Fraternity (NAFRA) Chapter, they accept an inspired theme for the coming year. Last year it was "**Be the bridge**" and this year it is "**Be the merciful presence of God**".

I was still thinking about being a bridge, and all the wonderful imagery that is helpful when explaining and teaching and praying - when the new theme was announced at the end of the Chapter. Shifting gears has been slow for me. How can I be the merciful presence of God? How can I inspire you to be the same? How can we be that for each other for the next year? For the rest of our lives? In requesting mercy from my Almighty God and Father, Lord Jesus, and their Holy Spirit, am I also asking The Big Three to teach me mercy so that I can be the same to others? I am not one to hold a grudge or remain angry for long, so I was wondering how this could be applied to my simple life.

I recently had a falling out with a lady from our parish - she chastised me for my "rudeness" in pointing out - redirecting - her own rudeness during a weekly small meeting of women. We have parted ways... and I am looking back at my earlier statement of "I am not one to hold a grudge or remain angry for long" -

thinking - maybe I **am** one to hold a grudge and remain angry. A haunting chant comes to mind - **Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned** - I apologize to her but she has not responded. I pray for her - for us.

What does it mean to be merciful? The dictionary says showing kindly forbearance or compassion to somebody. I know that I know that God is merciful to me, a sinner. I believe that when I see Him face to face we will talk about "I am not one to hold a grudge or remain angry for long." So I encourage all of you to "**Be the merciful presence of God**" Maybe next year the theme will be along the line of **Be chocolate for others**. I can really wrap my head around that one!

Exciting things are planned for the coming year and beyond. We are looking forward to celebrating the 20th anniversary of regionalization, beginning at Unity Day August 9th. We sincerely hope for each fraternity's participation. Formation workshops will continue on the 2nd Saturday of September and March each year. And it is with great gratitude that we are resurrecting the Regional Fraternity newsletter - how appropriate during this Easter season! Thank you to all involved!

Our Regional Prayer — a Gift from St. Francis

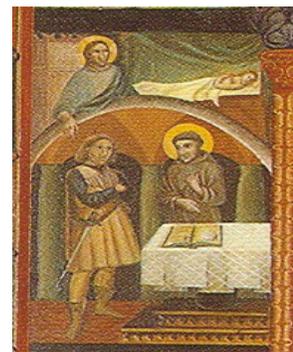
Holy Virgin Mary, among all women born into the world, there is none like you. Daughter and Handmaid of the Most High, sovereign King, the heavenly Father, Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

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 Franciscan family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God — laity, religious, and priests — who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi.

In various ways and forms but in life-giving union with each other, they intend to make present the charism of their common Seraphic Father in the life and mission of the Church (**Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order**. Chapter One: #1).



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



GRAY-HAIRED OLD LADIES

This is an old story, one that I have shared many times. It's a story of how God has spoken to me though the lives and actions of "gray-haired old ladies"!

For months, the Guardian Friar of the house had encouraged me to inquire about the Secular Francis-

can Order. His line to me was "You would be perfect for it". I had asked him what it was all about. All he ever said was "that they live a Franciscan way of life; they live the gospels". This went on for months. He never told me anything more.

Finally, one day, I saw one of the fraternity members from my parish on a swing on her front porch. Being,

I had a minute or two to kill, I stopped. "She was the first!" I innocently asked her about the OFS. For the next hour and a half she shared with me her life, those she loved and those who loved her. Perhaps she saw something in me that I didn't see in myself because she invited me to the next fraternity meeting. And somewhat reluctantly I came!

That first meeting was packed with "them"! Some need help just getting up the few steps of the house. All these gray-haired old ladies! I quietly questioned myself, what could these old ladies teach me about gospel living?

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From our Formation Director, Bill Jannausch, OFS

"Let us refer all good to the most high and supreme Lord God, and acknowledge that every good is His . . ." (Rule of 1221)

During the past year, our Regional Formation Director has given of his time, talent, and giftedness to walk us through the manual "Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership".

Bill challenged everyone present to create and nurture an environment where each brother and sister can grow in the freedom to be a co-heir with Christ. Thus, each person has a God-gifted talent to

bring to their respective fraternity.

Perhaps Bill's most important statement was this one which is fodder for all to consider, especially if attendance at fraternity meetings has become a hit and/or miss occasion for you:

"When a member of the fraternity is absent we are all diminished because each person brings the uniqueness of his or her personhood to the fraternity. Your absence leaves the fraternity without that special God-given gift.

A SPECIAL REQUEST FROM OUR BROTHER BILL:



Ulrike, Bill's wife, continues to have serious health issues connected to her knee. Both Bill and Ulrike, would be grateful for everyone's prayer storming Heaven for her healing.

Meet Your Regional Council . . .

In case you haven't met Our Lady of Indian Regional Council, this lovely photo pictures almost everyone . . .: First Row: Maria Garrido Merida, OFS, Councilor, Kathleen White, OFS, Regional Minister, Linda Grady, OFS, Councilor, Sharon Roberts, OFS, Regional Treasurer. In the back row, Sr. Agnes Marie, OSF, Regional Spiritual Assistant, Bill Jannausch, OFS, Regional Formation Director, Bill Duffy, OFS, Regional Councilor, Dave Dieringer, OFS, Regional Vice-Minister. Not pictured is Ruthi Carrillo, OFS, Regional Secretary.



Bill Botkin, OFS: A Gift to the Franciscan Family for 60 Years

By Sharon Roberts, OFS, St. Anthony Fraternity, Muncie, IN

Retired Muncie jeweler and former traveling circus clown, William ("Bill") Botkin was recognized recently by members of St. Anthony Fraternity, Muncie, for his 60 years as a professed Secular Franciscan.

Bill's Franciscan journey began in 1953 when he was a student at Our Lady of the Lake minor seminary on Lake Wawasee. Invited to join the Third Order of St. Francis, as was customary at the Crosier seminary in those days, Bill's formation took place at monthly meetings during times when classes were in session. Then "exactly one year plus

three days later," he and his fellow novices were led into the church to make their professions. "There was no Mass," he recalls, "just the profession ceremony."

Under the Rule of Leo XIII (1883), the recitation of 12 Our Father's, 12 Hail Mary's, and 12 Glory Be's constituted the Office to be said daily, or the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin could be substituted. Bill remembers the seminary fraternity having about 75 members in those days, one of whom was William Fink, also a St. Anthony Fraternity member, with 61 years as a professed secular Franciscan.

Returning to Muncie around 1956, Bill became associated with St. Anthony Fraternity

whose 30 or so members met at St. Lawrence Church. "In those days," he recalls, "there was no food at the meetings like we have today—just coffee maybe. The meetings were similar but not as structured as they are today. We studied St. Francis or some other saint and prayed." Bill fondly remembers the habit he wore every day: a scapular and knotted cord.

Asked how being Franciscan has influenced his life, Bill reflected, "Following St. Francis has made me a more complete Catholic in regards to fraternity and faithful day-to-day Catholic life."

Lifelong Muncie resident and St. Mary Church parishioner, Bill has demonstrated this

conviction repeatedly though his many

years of service to church and community. Besides assisting as Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, altar server, and reader (over 43 years at St. Mary's!), Bill volunteers once a week at the local cancer center and, as "Banjo Bill," entertains residents of over 90 nursing homes throughout East Central Indiana with hour-long performances of music and humor an average of two to three times a week. Bill and his wife Judy have been married for 52 years and have three sons.

Congratulations, Bill Botkin, on a vocation well lived!



FRATERNITY NEWSLETTERS — Thanks and God Bless

Thanks to everyone who has been sending their fraternity's newsletter. Each one is a beautiful reflection of your life together as Franciscans and your involvement with your local Church community.

Thanks to Kathleen for encouraging you all to send your newsletters to each fraternity. We can always learn so much from each other. Everyone is

always looking for new and creative ideas for gatherings and outreach. We have a rich resource of new ways of living our Franciscan charism by our sharing these newsy reports.

Please keep them coming.



"I decided to offer you the words of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . which are spirit and life"
 "Second Letter to the Faithful," St. Francis



From our Regional Spiritual Assistant: Sister Agnes Marie, OSF

The following words sent to us recently by Kathleen White, OFS, our Regional Minister are a challenge to all of us:

"What does the rule ask of us? To be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. We are not bystanders any more. Franciscans get involved. We involve ourselves in wise ways, observing, judging, acting.

We use common sense. We get help if that is needed. We seek trained help if that is needed. We seek training if that is needed. We support professional help if that is needed. But doing nothing is no longer a choice for us."

~ Lester Bach, OFM Cap, *The Franciscan Journey: Embracing the Franciscan Vision*

Perhaps they struck me so forcibly because I had just read a few words from Pope Francis's Exhortation, "The

Joy of the Gospel". Pope Francis writes:

"I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting, and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security . . . more than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the

(Continued on page 5)



From **Our Lady of Indiana Region**, Sister Death has welcomed home . . .

From **The Little Portion Fraternity** in Lafayette:

Robert Rausch, OFS, on December 3, 2012

Edna Holbrook, OFS, on February 6, 2014

Rollie Frye, OFS, on February 8, 2014

May the souls of the faithful departed rest in the Lord's peace!

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

The four fraternities in the Indianapolis area, **Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament**, **People of Peace**, **Peregrinos de la Paz**, and **Sacred Heart**, are planning to co-sponsor a "Getting to Know You" opportunity to encourage vocations to the Secular Franciscan family. More information will follow as plans continue to develop.

Our new local fraternity, **St. Mary of the Angels**, is making their new home at St. John Evangelist Church in St. John, Indiana. Welcome to **Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity**, dear brothers and sisters!

Don't forget to mark your calendars with a **HUGE RED** circle for August 9, 2014, to join the celebration of twenty years as **Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fra-**

ternity. We'll meet at St. Joan of Arc in Kokomo to give praise and thanks to God for the graces that have come our way, and to enjoy each others company with a joyous Franciscan spirit.

Members of the **Immaculate Conception** fraternity in Mishawaka were inspired by Brother Paschal Kolodziej, OFM Conv. During their annual retreat. Brother Paschal presented two inspirational reflections on "Mary in the Franciscan Tradition".

Holy Family Fraternity in Fort Wayne is joyously welcoming and preparing seven new members for Secular Franciscan life in their Formation program. On Sunday, June 1, **Holy Family** elected new officers: Minister, Beth Freistroffer, Vice-Minister, Trish Bugajski, Sec-

retary, Vicki Jacobs, Treasurer, Donna Cardeaux, Formation Director, Erin Gigli,

Thanks be to God! During mass at St. Francis of Assisi parish March 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, Luann Bartlett, Lory Lee, Jake Marhoefer, and Melinda Marhoefer made their permanent professions as Secular Franciscans. Please join **St. Anthony Fraternity**, Muncie, in welcoming our newest professed members.

Please join **St. Anthony Fraternity** in congratulating



two of our members who celebrated the anniversaries of their professions as Secular Franciscans at our fraternity gathering earlier this week. They are William (Bill) Botkin, 60 years, and Dorothy West, 25 years. St. Anthony Fraternity is blessed to have Bill and Dorothy among its members.

St. Boniface Fraternity will be assisting residents at Tippecanoe Villa with a joyful game of bingo on May 17th, and will enjoy a carry-in dinner for their monthly gathering on June 7th.

"Praise and bless my Lord and Give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility"
(Canticle of Creatures)

(Spiritual Assistant, continued from page 4)

fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and Jesus does not tire of saying to us : "Give them something to eat" (Mk 6:37).

Pope Francis, "The Joy of the Gospel, #49).

St. Francis of Assisi would have agreed with both of the

above as he wrote in "The Rule of 1223":

"They must rejoice when they live among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and the powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside",

—St. Francis of Assisi, FA:ED, Vol. 1, Rule of 1223, Chapter IX.

Although not every one of us can, because of age and physical limitations, go out and preach on the street corners of our world, we can

all be in solidarity with the poor, the weak, the oppressed, and all those who are "spiritual lepers" in our society by our daily inclusion of all of them in our daily prayer and concern. We can also be supportive of those who can literally "get off your seat, get on your feet, get in the street". As Pope Francis makes very clear in his *Exhortation* no one is excused from preaching the Gospel as its rooted in our baptismal commitment. And as Franciscans, it is doubly

rooted in the promises we made on the day of our Profession to "go from life to the Gospel and the Gospel to life" by preaching the Gospel always "if necessary, using words".

We must never forget pondering and living those words that Jesus speaks to us, "Give them something to eat".



(Dave Dieringer, continued from page 3)

They had trouble just getting around.

As the meeting began, these people started to share "how" they lived the Gospels. One bought groceries for a neighbor who could not get out! But she was the one with the walker! One did craftwork for her family and

friends. But she was slowly losing the senses to Alzheimer Disease. One was quiet but smiled and encouraged others during the course of the meeting. I had found out, she had just lost her husband to cancer.

I was humbled that day as I am still. I realized that I could learn a great deal from these gray-haired old ladies only if I let myself be open. I found that the

Spirit of God worked through these ladies. I continue to praise God for the gifts that these ladies continue to share with me, their servant.



Come join the celebration with your brothers and sisters of

OUR LADY OF INDIANA REGIONAL FRATERNITY

20th Anniversary of Regionalization

AUGUST 9, 2014

St. Joan of Arc Church, Kokomo

For all Secular Franciscans of North and Central Indiana

"Let them . . . show themselves joyful, cheerful and consistently gracious in the Lord (ER, Chapter VI, #15)."

Our Lady of Indiana Secular Franciscan Regional Fraternity

Kathleen White, OFS
612 Front Street
Logansport, IN 46947
1-574-721-5205

Dates to Remember



To join OUR LADY OF INDIANA list-serv go to:

OLI-Region-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

You'll be happy you did. See you there!



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

Check us out on
Facebook

June 14, 10 AM: Regional Executive Council (REC), St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo

June 13: Feast of St. Anthony of Padua

August 2: Feast of Our Lady of the Angels

August 9: UNITY DAY: Celebrating 20 Years as

OUR LADY OF INDIANA REGIONAL FRATERNITY

St. Joan of Arc in Kokomo, 10:00 AM

Opening with Mass at 9:15 AM

August 11: Feast of St. Clare of Assisi

September 13, 10 AM: Meeting for Formation Team members at St. Joan of Arc in Kokomo

October 11, 10 AM: Regional Executive Council, St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo



National Theme for OFS 20 14

"Be the merciful presence of
God".

Cf. OFS Rule, Art. 19 and
OFS Rule, Art.20)

You are needed . . .

To make our 20th anniversary celebration on August 9 an event to remember, we need everyone's input and assistance. To help on the various committees, please let Kathleen know how you'd like to use your gifts of time, talent, and treasure

COMMITTEES:

Liturgy and Prayer Committee;
Fr. James Kendzierski, OFM,
will be our Celebrant
Hospitality Committee
Luncheon Committee
Program Committee

Publicity Committee:
Registration Committee
Exhibit Committee

Most of the work in preparation for our 20th Anniversary can be done via email or phone, though we may need to throw in one face-to-face planning session at Kokomo.

To volunteer, please contact Kathleen White, OFS, at 574-721-5205 (phone/text), or email Kathleen at: kdwofs@comcast.net

