



Our Lady of Indiana

Regional Fraternity — Secular Franciscan Order

December 2015

Volume 2, Issue 4

NaFra Theme for 2016: "Bring God's love to all."

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A Message from our Regional Minister: Kathleen White, OFS



We have a PVC arbor that frames our kitchen window, and in late fall each year we remove the hummingbird feeder and replace it with a seed feeder. We also fill the wire holders with suet. Then the show begins! As absolutely delightful as the hummingbirds, the sparrows, chickadees, and woodpeckers (to name a few) gather several times a day to eat... and eat... and eat. And what do we do? We stop washing dishes or making supper or getting a beverage and we watch them. We are captivated by them. The feeder is right outside the kitchen window, only a few inches away, so the view is up close and personal. The birds are beautiful and their presence is a blessing (and in deep snow, the feeders are a challenge to re-fill).

What does this have to do with our Franciscan spirituality? Well, there is reverence for creation, there is a recall of Scripture (*As the sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest to settle her young, My home is by your altars, Lord of hosts, my king and my*

God! Ps 84:4; Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Matt 10:29; Even the hairs of your head have all been counted. Do not be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows. Luke 12:7) and there is joy (perfect joy, when you fall in the deep snow and spill the seed).

I recall that a few of the fraternities pack birdseed in small bags and attach this message:

Feeding the birds for St. Francis St. Francis is well known for his love and respect for all of God's creation, that is why Pope John Paul II named St. Francis the Patron Saint of Ecology. "St. Francis wanted all creation to celebrate the Birthday of Jesus. It was his desire that all mayors and lords of castles issue a decree that would require the scattering of grain on the roads on Christmas so that our friends the birds might have some-

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.

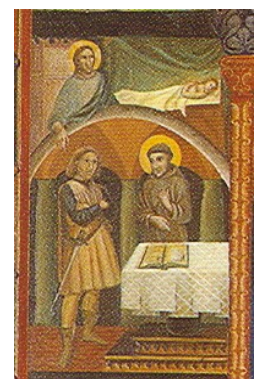
Pray for us with St. Michael the archangel and with all the powers of the heavens and with all the saints together with your most holy beloved Son, Lord and teacher.

What We Have Promised to Live . . .

"United by their vocation as 'brothers and sisters of penance' and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel calls 'conversion.' Human frailty

makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.

On this road to renewal the sacrament of reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father's mercy and the source of grace (Chapter 2: Art. 7)."



REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Kathleen White, OFS : Regional Minister

David Dieringer, OFS: Regional Vice-Minister

Ruthi Carrillo, OFS: Regional Secretary

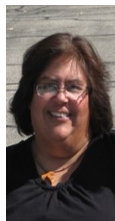
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Sr. Agnes Marie Regan, OSF
Regional Spiritual Assistant



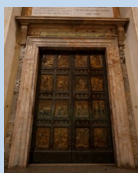
thing to eat." Take this bird seed home and feed the birds on Christmas Day in the example of St. Francis. From the Mirror of Perfection #19 (Lemmons Edition)

Fraternity members distribute the seed packets at Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. I can only imagine the fun they have as they gather each Advent to assemble the packets.

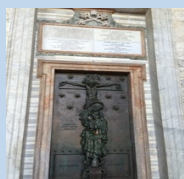
Ahhh... Advent! The wreath in the middle of the table, a candle lit each week, a prayer, and the promise we all look forward to: Christ will come again! While our Advent is not as penitential as our Lent, it still calls us to reflection, restraint, and renewal. The Church asks us to wait patiently to decorate... and it is hard to wait, isn't it? I know a man from our parish who has over 50 (yes, 50!) totes of decorations that he carries down from his attic storage for his themed trees and the rooms in his home.

Let's take time to reflect on the second coming of Christ, to practice restraint in our spending (yet generosity in our giving to those in need), and renewal as called for in our Rule - *United by their vocation as "brothers and sisters of penance" and motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that radical interior change which the gospel calls "conversion."* Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily. On this road to renewal the sacrament of reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father's mercy and the source of grace. Article 7

May your Advent be spiritual, your Christmas celebrations be joyful, and your New Year be blessed with peace and all good. I am your servant.



Jubilee Year of Mercy: 2016
The Four Holy Doors



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



My good brothers and sisters,

Not very often, I “steal” an article but I did for this newsletter, because I had never read it before. I hope and pray that it will teach you the same lesson that it taught me. (From the Congregation of the Mother Co-Redemptrix, U.S. Assumption Province.)

Once upon a time, there was a man who worked very hard just to keep food on the table for his family. This particular year a few days before Christmas, he punished his five year-old daughter after learning that she had used up the family’s only roll of expensive gold wrapping paper.

As money was tight, he became even more upset even on Christmas Eve as he saw that the child had used all of the expensive gold paper to decorate one shoebox she had put under the Christmas tree. He also was concerned about where she had gotten money to buy what was in the shoebox.

Nevertheless, the next morning the little girl, filled with excitement, brought the gift box to her

father and said, “This is for you, Daddy!”

As he opened the box, the father was embarrassed by his earlier overreaction, now regretting how he had punished her.

But when he opened the shoebox, he found it was empty and again his anger flared. “Don’t you know, young lady,” he said harshly, “when you give someone a present, there’s supposed to be something inside the package?”

The little girl looked up at him with sad tears rolling from her eyes and whispered: “Daddy, it’s not empty. I blew kisses into it until it was all full.”

The father was crushed. He fell on his knees and put his arms around his precious little girl. He begged her to forgive him for his unnecessary anger.

An accident took the life of the child only a short time later. It is told that the father kept this little gold box by his bed for all the years of his life. Whenever he was discouraged or faced difficult problems, he would open the box, take out an imaginary kiss, and remember the love of his beautiful child who had put it there.

As we celebrate the miraculous birth of our Savior, we are reminded of the many times we have failed to recognize his presence in the ups and downs

of our everyday life. Jesus is the precious gift from God to the world! The Gospel of Saint Luke captures the beauty of this priceless gift by revealing it to the shepherds: *“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on who his favor rest.”* (Luke 2:14)

In a very real sense, each of us has been given an invisible golden box filled with unconditional love and kisses from God, our children, family and friends. There is no more precious possession anyone could hold.

Merry Christmas and may our loving God continue to fill your shoebox to overflowing!

Dave



“If only you knew what gifts God is offering you . . .”





Reflections from our Spiritual Assistant,

Sr. Agnes Marie, OSF

“Lord make us Instruments
of Your Peace”

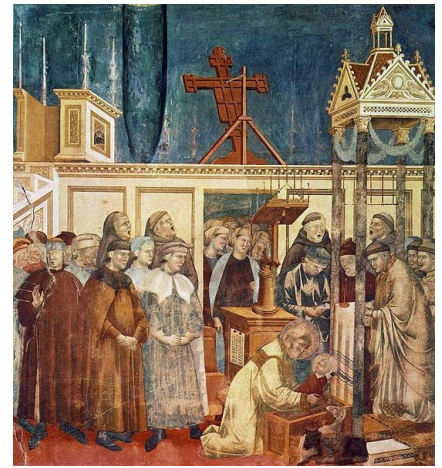
The time in which Francis lived was not much different from ours. Francis had literally gone to the Mideast in an attempt to convert the Sultan and attempt to bring peace to the world. We might ask ourselves “Is that situation on our planet any different today?” With multiple evil activities terrorizing our world —and not just the Mideast, are we not still facing the same war-mongering ideologies which are seeking to destroy the Church and all persons of good faith — both blatantly as well as subtly?

Thomas of Celano also indicates that the folks of Francis’ time knew the stories of the Incarnation, but did those mysteries in any way touch their hearts? In commenting on this, Fr. Roch Niemier, OFM, wrote the following, “How does one preach the Word of God to those who think that they already understand it? How does one listen and feel as if though one were hearing and witnessing the stores of the Gospels for a first time? How did Francis reach people with a message they have heard again and again? He decided to concretize God’s

great love through a visual picture of Bethlehem, placing it before the eyes of the people (*In the Footsteps of Frances and Clare*, p. 149).”

At least during the time of Francis, as far as we know, there were not also forces wishing to make the visual representation of the Christmas story *politically incorrect*. So we are faced with the challenge of remaining steadfast while clinging steadfastly to our belief in faith that His promise to be with us “all days until the end of time” is unflinchingly true. Add to that Jesus’ promise to the Church that “the gates of hell shall not prevail” against it — we can trust Him as we hear His voice remind us, “Be not afraid.”

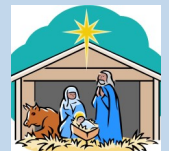
So the question is, how can we make the stories of our God becoming Incarnate again touch our hearts in a new way and how can we present them to a badly confused world? I suspect that something my dear mother repeated often might have some validity, “Actions speak louder than words.” Perhaps our best plan of action would be to concretize in all our words and actions what we profess to be, “Heralds of the Great King” and instruments of His peace



whether or not we’re *politically correct*. Whenever I shop during the next weeks approaching Christmas I plan to say “Merry Christmas” to whomever and as I walk away, I will add “God bless you!” If St. Francis can risk his life walking into the tent of the Sultan Malik-el-Kamil and professing his faith in Jesus, I can walk out of a department store and do the same. And if they object, I’ll show them my sales receipt and ask them “Did you accept my money?”

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love’s pure light:
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.



News and Views from Around Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity



National Minister, Tom Bello, OSF, was honored to assist with the distribution of Holy Communion during Pope Francis's visit to Philadelphia on Sunday, October 20, 2015. Here we see Tom, the second deacon in the lineup.

Congratulations to the ten brothers and sisters of **LADY CLARE FRATERNITY** of Kokomo who are celebrating twenty-five years as Professed members of the Secular Franciscan Order: David Brown, OFS, Marilyn Brown, OFS, Elaine Chmiel, OFS, Harry Chmiel, OFS, Joan Dudash, OFS, Theodore Dudash, OFS, Joan Klemko, OFS, James Konopa, OFS, Priscilla Lerche, OFS, and K. Elaine Stiner, OFS.

SACRED HEART FRATERNITY in Indianapolis are busy preparing their annual bird seed packets to be distributed during Christmas Masses to their respective parishes in the Indianapolis



area. They are fulfilling Francis's desire that all mayors and Lords of castles issue a decree that would require the scattering of

grain on the roads on Christmas so that the birds might have something to eat. This is an annual project for the brothers and sisters of Sacred Heart Fraternity.

On Sunday, October 11, 2015, a caravan of brothers and sisters from **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FRATERNITY** went on pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Passion in St. John, Indiana. The Lord blest the group with perfect weather, a knowledgeable docent, and blessings galore as they walked the beautiful and prayerful Way of the Cross.

Congratulations to **OUR LADY OF LOURDES FRATERNITY** for thirty years of providing service to St. Clare's Kitchen. They average 5,000 meals a year for those who come through their doors. Some have been coming since they began the Kitchen in 2005. Certainly those who come are deeply appreciative of the warm food and Franciscan hospitality that greets them each time.

The four fraternities in Indianapolis — **PEOPLE OF PEACE, SACRED HEART, PEREGRINOS DE LA PAZ, and OUR LADY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT** celebrated the Transitus together in a bilingual service on Saturday, October 3rd at Sacred Heart Parish. Fellowship, fun and an abundance of delicious food was served afterwards at Sacred Heart Parish Hall with refreshments provided by the four fraternities and participants.

ST. CHARLES FRATERNITY in Fort Wayne celebrated the Profession of Joy Olry, OFS, Carol Beiswanger, OFS, and Sandra

Kiraly, OFS, into the Secular Franciscan Order in Avila. Each are very special women with unique charisms that will help to promote the life of the Gospel.

A message from **MOTHER MIRIAM and the KOKOMO POOR CLARES:** Your Poor Clare Sisters send their heartfelt gratitude and sister love and prayers for your magnanimous *Unity Day* love gift of \$2,809.00. We are humbled by your generosity and goodness to us. We ask the Father of Mercies to bless each of your fraternities with growth in numbers and we pray for holiness and joy for each of your members.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FRATERNITY is grateful for the vocations to the Secular Franciscan family but also for a very special four legged brother who now boasts a medal of St. Francis around his neck. Ambrose received his medal the day his master and five other Inquirers received the TAU Cross and entered into Candidacy.



QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS FRATERNITY, Logansport, celebrated the Rite of Admission on Nov. 24, 2015, for candidate Michael Booth.

Celebrating Transitus and the Feast of St. Francis— 2015

FROM INDY: All the fraternities of Indianapolis (People of Peace, Los Peregrinos de la Paz, Sacred Heart, & Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament) gathered together for a bi-lingual celebration (Spanish/English) of Transitus at Sacred Heart Church. We had a social in the church hall afterwards. This was the first time all four fraternities gathered together for this glorious feast. We plan on celebrating Transitus together next year (bi-lingual of course) and maybe have many more unified celebrations/meetings in the future. I'm very proud of the fraternities for collaborating and working together (Anglos and Latinos) in a peaceful manner to commemorate Holy Father Francis' passing into eternal life. I believe this celebration broke down some cultural barriers and unified us as an Order of many multi-cultural facets.

Paz y bien,
Sr. Veronica Lopez, OSF

FROM LAKE COUNTY: The Lord give you peace brothers & sisters of Our Lady of Indiana Region. We were blessed to have the presence of Bishop Donald Hying on the day of Transitus. Bishop Donald celebrated a vigil Mass, delivered an inspirational and informative homily about St. Francis and participated in our Transitus service. As he approached the pulpit, he said, I asked Fr. Sergius if he wanted to deliver the homily because we could listen to his wisdom for hours! Throughout his homily Bishop Donald spoke of St. Clare and the Poor Clare sisters. He knows Mother Mariam well.

We gathered in Holy Name of Jesus Church, Cedar Lake, IN. The pastor is Fr. Ed Tlucek,

OFM, who lead us in the Transitus service. Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters from Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Mary of the Angels and Little Portion of St. Francis fraternities were present. In addition, religious from the Congregation of Albertine Sisters Serving the Poor (CSAPU); Sisters of St. Joseph—Third Order St. Francis and Sisters of the Order of St. Francis and parishioners of Holy Name of Jesus parish. We were truly blessed by their witness and presence. Thanks be to God.

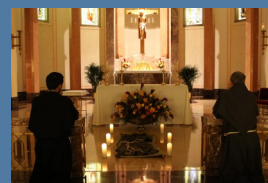
And, yes, we did gather afterward to share fraternity, food and beverage (especially the sweets) and thank God for the gift of our calling. On that night we were together in a privileged place on a solemn and joyous night. *"O God we praise Thee: we acknowledge Thee to be Lord"*

John Szczepanski, OFS

FROM CASS COUNTY: Queen of All Saints Fraternity, Logansport, sponsored the annual Blessing of Animals at 3PM Oct. 4. It was bilingual.

Present were 2 priests, 4 Franciscans, 2 horses, 1 parrot, 1 rabbit, 1 service dog, a dozen dogs and several cats.

We had beautiful weather and a blessed time!



Immaculate Conception,
Mishawaka



St. Boniface, Lafayette



Queen of All Saints,
Logansport

Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi

If you haven't already done so, you might want to consider our Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi during this very special Jubilee Year of Mercy.

On December 8, 2015, Pope Francis will open the Holy Door at St. John Lateran and will open the Holy Doors at the other three Patriarchal Basilicas in the following weeks.



Walking through these doors is a privilege granted only every twenty five years or for a special intention of the Holy Father. Thus, during our Assisi Pilgrimage 2016, we will have the graced opportunity to enter through the Holy Doors of all the Patriarchal Basilicas in Rome as well as the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi. A Plenary Indulgence is attached this devotional act as we enter to meet Christ present in a very special way — under the usual conditions. He, the King of Heaven and Earth, is the Door which

opens to the Father and He is waiting for each of us. Or as Pope Francis has written in his Exhortation "Misericordiae Vultus", "In this Jubilee Year, let us allow God to surprise us. He never tires of casting open the doors of his heart."

For more information about [Pilgrimage Rome and Assisi 2016](#), contact Sr. Agnes Marie at: agnes.marie.regan@gmail.com

There are still several openings available if you're interested in joining us, as it'll be another twenty five years before the Holy Doors will again be opened.

Franciscan Enrichment Possibilities: Study Day V

Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity continues to offer all our brothers and sisters an opportunity for enriching and deepening their understanding of the Franciscan calling and charism.

Originally the basic purpose of these Study Days was and remains to provide additional spiritual enrichment possibilities for the training of Spiritual Assistants for those fraternities in the Regional Fraternity who are without an SA. However, it was soon recognized that the presenters and topics for these sessions would be of value for each and every brother and sister of Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity.

At our Chapter of Mats meeting in Kokomo on November 14, Kathleen White, OFS, shared reflections from the NaFra meeting where "prayer" was offered as an area needing greater reflection and study — especially in the Franciscan tradition. Please see a quotation about the importance of



A message from Tom Bello, OFS, former National Minister:

"Every fraternity and council and individual gathering should start and end with prayer, often as provided in the RITUAL. Ongoing formation should include building the prayer life of the individuals and of the whole fraternity. Many fraternities offer or attend Mass around their meeting times. Many fraternities offer a variety of prayer forms: praying the Liturgy of the Hours at the appropriate time, the Franciscan Crown, the Rosary, centering prayer, intercessory prayers, prayers for vocations, or simply quiet time for silent prayer or contemplation, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament or with one another".

And don't forget to keep Tom in prayer as he courageously deals with serious illness. May the Lord of healing place His hand upon our brother, Tom.

prayer from Minister Tom Bello, OFS, as quoted below.

STUDY DAY V:

January 23, 2016



Topic: "Franciscan Prayer: the Heart and Soul of Our Franciscan Vocation". Our very own brother Rev. Mr. Bill Gallagher, OFS, Deacon of Sacred Heart Parish, Notre Dame, IN.

If you would be interested in joining us, please contact Sr. Agnes Marie, OSF, to register so that sufficient materials may be prepared.

Email:

agnes.marie.regan@gmail.com

Telephone: 574-259-5427



From
Our Lady of Indiana
Regional Fraternity,

Sister Death has
welcomed home . . .

ST. CHARLES FRATERNITY

Delores Mungovan, OFS
(Professed 11.20.1977)

Diana Muldeney

St. BONIFACE FRATERNITY

Louise Halsmer, OFS

Mary Craigmile, OFS

Brother of Carmen Grau, OFS



*"Sing psalms to the Lord
with the harp, with the
sounds of music.*

*With trumpets and the sound of
the horn acclaim the King, the
Lord.*

*Let the sea and all within it
thunder;*

The world, and all its peoples.

*Let the rivers clap their hands
And the hills ring out their joy.*

*Rejoice at the presence of the
Lord, for He comes to rule the
earth.*

He will rule the world with justice

*And the peoples with
fairness. (Psalm 98)."*





2016 Dates to Remember

To join OUR LADY OF INDIANA list-serve send a blank email to:

OLI-Region-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

You'll be happy you did.

Also, "like" on Facebook

Your growing Regional Newsletter Staff — more or less:

Mary Andrews, OFS

John Cheeseman, OFS

Mary Mitchell, OFS

Sr. Agnes Marie, OSF

Who else's name should be here? **Yours?**

Jan. 23: Regional Study Day V: A whole day to spend time praying and reflecting on the nature and beauty of "Our Franciscan Prayer Heritage" by Rev. Mr. Bill Gallagher, OFS. You may wish to prayerfully read or re-read Ilia Delio's outstanding book, "Franciscan Prayer" in preparation for this day.

Feb. 13: Regional Executive Council at St. Joan of Arc in Kokomo at 10:00 a.m.

March 12: Formation Workshop: Open to Local Fraternity Formation Teams

April 9: Chapter of Mats and Regional Elections: all Ministers or their Delegate required to attend

June 11: Regional Executive Council at St. Joan of Arc in Kokomo at 10:00 a.m.

June 30—July 3: Quinquennial — St. Louis, Missouri

July 9: Candidates Day Away: St. Francis Convent, Mishawaka: Open to all candidates and local formation directors (and their teams)

Aug. 13: Unity Day at St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo: open to all Indiana Franciscans

Sept. 10: Fall Formation Workshop: Open to Local Formation Teams

Oct. 8: Regional Executive Council at St. Joan of Arc in Kokomo at 10:00 a.m.

Nov. 1—6: NaFra Chapter—Orlando, FL: Regional Minister attends

Nov. 12: Fall Chapter of Mats: all local Ministers or their Delegate required to attend.



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

A Message from our Holy Father, Pope Francis



1. Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him. The Father, "rich in mercy" (*Eph 2:4*), after having revealed his name to Moses as "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (*Ex34:6*), has never ceased to show, in various ways throughout history, his divine nature. In the "fullness of time" (*Gal 4:4*), when everything had been arranged according to his plan of salvation, he sent his only Son into the world, born of the Virgin Mary, to reveal his love for us in a definitive way. Whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. *Jn 14:9*). Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.

2. We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.

3. At times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father's action in our lives. For this reason I have proclaimed an *Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy* as a special time for the Church, a time when the witness of believers might grow stronger and more effective (*Misericordiae vultus, #1-2*).