

Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity



Secular Franciscan Order



"From the Gospel to life; from life to the Gospel"

March, 2017

Volume 4, Issue 1

NAFRA Theme for 2017: O breath of God, unite us in action

A Message from our Regional Minister: Kathleen White, OFS



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Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one. (Matthew 5:37) I am writing this on the 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time. The Gospel was a long one, with many golden nuggets, but the verse quoted above really spoke to me.

It reminded me of the **Questioning** during the **Rite of Profession**. *"Do you wish to embrace the gospel way of life by following the example and words of St. Francis of Assisi, which are at the heart of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order?"* We answered: *"Yes, this is what I want."* *"Do you wish to be faithful to this vocation and to practice the spirit of service proper to Secular Franciscans?"* We answered: *"Yes, this is what I want."* *"Do you wish to bind yourself more closely to the Church and to work intently to rebuild the ecclesial community and fulfill its mission among all people?"* We answered: *"Yes, this is what I want."*

We answered Yes. *Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one.* (Matthew 5:37)

This brings to mind those that are lapsed from our fraternities. We have just completed our 2016 Annual Report and the number of lapsed members is disturbing. Where are they? How did we lose

them? Did their "Yes" mean something different than our own? What can we do to help them?

Have you reached out to any of your fraternity's lapsed members? Offered a listening ear? Perhaps they are staying away because of a simple misunderstanding. Can you be the means of reconciliation? Is it a distance problem? Can you offer a ride? Is it lack of formation? Can someone meet with them and help get them current? Do they stay away because of a lack of means to contribute to the common fund? Can you offer a bit more each month on their behalf? Did they move away? Can you assist them in finding a fraternity close to where they now live?

They once said "Yes" – how can we help them say yes again? And sadly, perhaps the "yes" they need to say is regarding withdrawal from the fraternity and/or the fraternity and the Order. See General Constitutions Articles 50.2, 52.2b, 56.1, 56.3, 57 and National Statutes 5.5f and 20.

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New website:

<http://olirf-ofs.org/>

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.

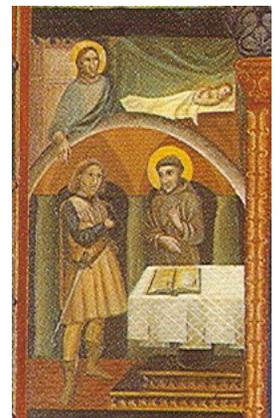
What We Have Promised to Live . . .

Let them esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption of the human community. (Rule Art 16)

In their family they should cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity, and respect for life, striving to make of it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ.

By living the grace of

matrimony, husbands and wives in particular should bear witness in the world to the love of Christ for His Church. They should joyfully accompany their children on their human and spiritual journey by providing a simple and open Christian education and begin attentive to the vocation of each child. (Rule Article 17)



REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- Kathleen White, OFS: Minister
- Barb Braley, OFS: Vice-Minister
- Sharon Roberts, OFS: Secretary
- Lisa Cook, OFS: Treasurer
- Dave Dieringer, OFS : Formation Director
- Linda Grady, OFS: NE Councilor
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- ~
- Jack Hill, OFS: JPIC:Animator
- Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation



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Prayer to Inspire Outreach Efforts to Our Lapsed Members

Good and Gracious God, it is your will to gather all people to yourself through Jesus, your Son. Guide us in our efforts to reach out to our brothers and sisters who have been one with us and now are separated from us through discouragement, anger, indifference, hurtful actions, or any other reason. Help us to be sensitive, hospitable, joyful, and courageous as we invite and encourage them to return to active membership in our Fraternity and in our Order. Strengthen our own commitment to our Franciscan vocation, and deepen our trust that you will work through us to bring your loving healing presence to those whom we reach out to in service to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi, pray for us!



Prayer of Pope Francis for Lent:

Dear Jesus,

During this season of Lent, we pray for persecuted Christians throughout the world. May all Christians who are suffering on account of their faith experience the spiritual and material support of the whole Church.

Fast



Give



Prepare



Pray





What Does it Mean to be a Prophet?

— Barb Braley, OFS, Regional Vice-Minister

About a year ago, someone mentioned that, in some ways, it is hard to be a *Secular Franciscan*. The word *secular* has such a negative meaning for so many Catholics in general. Secular means that people are worldly, deceived or deceitful, acquisitive, and unbelieving. In other words, what we as Christians are not supposed to be. Another Secular Franciscan even had to provide documentation that our Order was in conformity with the Catholic Church before being allowed to set up a display table at a diocesan event.

No doubt about it. There are times when it can be discouraging to be known as a *Secular Franciscan*, but that is, in fact, what we are. (And proudly so, I hope!)

These two occasions reminded me of when Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the temple. There they encountered Simeon, who told them that their child would be “a sign that would be contradicted” (Luke 2:34). Such is the life of a prophet.

Elijah would agree. After challenging Queen Jezebel’s prophets of Baal to a contest between Baal and God, the defeat of Baal, and the killing of Jezebel’s prophets, Jezebel swore to kill Elijah in the same manner (I Kings 18:1-19:3a).

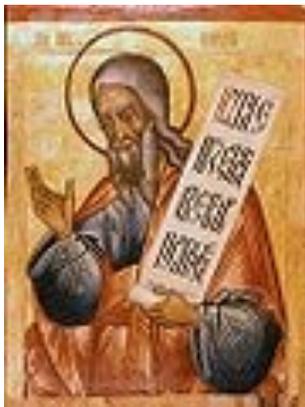
John the Baptist would also agree. John had called Herod the tetrarch to account for marrying his sister-in-law. Herod had John imprisoned and then killed (Matthew 14:1-12).

Saints Peter and Paul were both arrested and abused several

times before being executed for their prophetic witness to Jesus.

Why? Because they were signs of contradiction in their own times. They challenged kings and religious authorities. (Even St. Anthony was a gentle sign of contradiction for St. Francis by showing St. Francis that academics and piety could actually coexist.)

What does it mean to be a prophet? Fr. Dan Horan, OFM, in his book, *The Franciscan Heart of Thomas Merton*, defines a prophet as one who sees reality “as it truly is.” The prophet then becomes one who “speaks forth,” which is the sense of what a Scriptural prophet is (page 163).



What does all of this have to do with us? After all, aren’t the prophets of the Church our Pope, the bishops, the priests, and the deacons — those who are ordained?

Yes — and no. Yes, in that speaking out is very much part of their vocation as those who are ordained. No, in that it is not an exclusive club. We, as baptized believers, also have a vocation to be prophets. We must speak out when we see injustice and other wrongs.

As Secular Franciscans, our Rule obliges us to “go forth as witnesses and instruments of [the Church’s] mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by their life *and words*” (Rule, article 6 — italics mine). Our Rule also challenges us to *witness* to the good (article 12), and to “be in the forefront of promoting justice” (article 15). The difference is that our “mission field” is in the secular world: at work, at school, at the store, and yes, even at

church!

To be prophets in the secular arena, is to be a sign of contradiction to a world which always needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Will that make us popular? Probably not. Will what we say be accepted? By some and not by others. Is it for the faint-hearted? Absolutely not!

In the end, however, what we must be are *living invitations* to live new lives in Christ.

God Bless!

National Prayer for Vocations to the Secular Franciscan Order

O good and gracious God, God of mercy, compassion, generosity, and love, as we live our lives today in the model of St. Francis, choosing daily to live the Gospel life, help us to help others hear your call.

Help us to help others recognize their vocation as a Secular Franciscan that You have already planted in their heart.

Help us, so that together we all may work to bring the Gospel to life.

Amen!

(Composed by Marian R. Crosby, OFS, at the 2010 NAFRA Chapter, Scottsdale, AZ)

“So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone (Eph 2. 19-20).”



May you be blest with an island!



The writer of *The Little Flowers of St. Francis* tells us that on Carnival

St. Francis was inspired by God to cross a small strait of water in Lago Trasimeno so he could spend Lent in silence, prayer, and solitude. He asked a friend of his to carry him there on the evening of Ash Wednesday after dark so that no one would notice where he was going so that no one would disturb him. After his arrival on the island, Francis sheltered himself in a very thick brush that formed a little den for protection. Into this small space he would go for prayer and contemplation of heavenly matters and communion with his God for the whole of Lent.

When his friend returned for him on Holy Thursday, Francis had only eaten half of one of the two little loaves of bread which he had taken along. He ate only that one half "out of reverence for the fast of the blessed Christ, who fasted for forty days and forty nights without taking any material food". Francis didn't want to give himself or anyone else the impression that he was holier than Jesus.

Neither Jesus fasting in the desert for forty days and nights, nor Francis on the islet in Lago Trasimeno, had a formal structure into which they could go to pray. For Jesus there was no synagogue; for Francis no chapel or oratory. Yet both were so fascinated and absorbed in the presence of God that a building was not necessary. Their hearts were completely and totally directed to God.

None of us will go out into the desert and none of us will have the joy of silence, solitude, and the beauty of a small island in the middle of a beautiful lake where we can spend our forty days and forty nights. But like Jesus and Francis each of us is also called during this season of the Church's



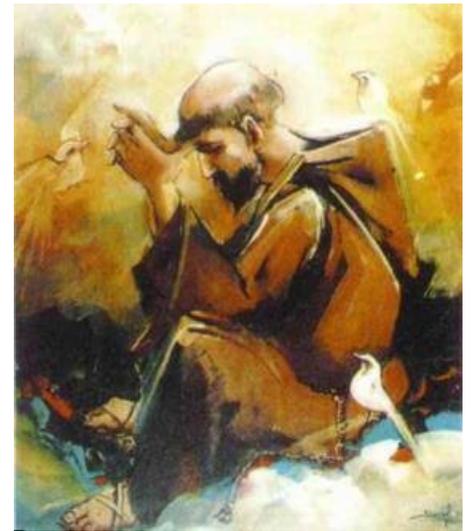
Lenten retreat to deepen our relationship with our God. But, as Franciscans called to a lifetime of conversion, we must find the space, an "island" or "desert" where God can touch the depths of our hearts. Where is it that He can find us? Where is it that God's voice will not be drowned out by the iPads, computers, smart phones, think-pads, doorbells, i-whatevers, and the incessant hum of human voices which draws us away from that Divine voice which can only be heard "not in thunder, not in earthquake, but in a small wisp of spiritual air in the depths of our hearts?"

Like Jesus and Francis, we are called to enter into the church of our hearts to offer sacrifice — not just wrack up forty days of all kinds of external actions which can become a source of pride. On this topic, Fr. Roch Niemier, OFM, wrote the following: "He [Francis] entered the church of his heart, He made of his heart an altar for God. His choice to spend Lent on an island was not of his doing or some pious romantic fling. He was captured, seized by the Spirit of God. And when God grasps us in the heart, the deepest center of our lives, then we can let go and be moved to adoration. Then we realize the meaning of the words of Scripture, "For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings" (*"In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare, pp. 135–136"*).

I pray that each of you may find an "island" of deep, prayerful quiet — be it your home prayer corner, a

quiet place by a stream, a shady grove in the woods, your recliner, your parish church, wherever . . . a place where you and God can spend time being fascinated by each other and where your heart can be touched more and more with His mystery and great love for you.

May you be blest with an island!



"The LORD is king! Earth, be glad! Rejoice, you islands of the seas!

Clouds and darkness surround him; he rules with righteousness and justice.

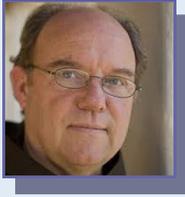
Fire goes in front of him and burns up his enemies around him.

His lightning lights up the world; the earth sees it and trembles.

The hills melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth.

The heavens proclaim his righteousness . . . (Psalm 97)."

Congratulations,
Brother William



Br. William (Bill) Short has been appointed Director of the *Collegium S. Bonaventurae – International Center for Franciscan Studies and Research*, the successor of Quaracchi study center in Grottaferrata and is now at St. Isidore in Rome.

At the request of the Board of the *Collegium*, which met for the first time in January, the General Definitory appointed Br. Bill as Director with the responsibility for coordinating all management tasks in close cooperation with the Board itself.

Br. Bill Short is friar of Santa Barbara Province in California and teaches at the *Franciscan School of Theology*, based at the *Mission San Luis Rey de Francia* in Oceanside (California). Br. Bill is a scholar of the Franciscan Sources and is one of the three editors of the 4 volumes of the *Franciscan Sources* in English. He has held various positions in the Order including that of the Secretary of the 2015 General Chapter and General Visitor in Mexico and South Africa.

Best wishes to the new Director!

(From Website of *Ordo Fratrum Minorum*)

From Sharon Marmalejo, OFS — Northwest Regional Councilor

Our Regional Spiritual Assistant, Sr. Agnes, asked all the councilors to write an article for the regional newsletter. While trying to come up with an idea, I came across something that I had written some time ago. This article was put in our fraternity's newsletter in 2005 and I would like to share it with you.

St. Francis has been attributed with the saying "Go out and preach the Gospel, and when necessary use words" [*Editor's Note: though there is no reference for this quote*]. This is something we should all do as Franciscans and Christians. I know there are a lot of Franciscans who are extremely busy with family, work, and parish ministries, but sometimes God calls us to go that extra mile in doing His work. With that thought, the idea of a soup kitchen came to mind. At this writing, I am excited to announce the idea became a reality. Fr. Kennedy, pastor at Holy Name parish, has given permission to start a Franciscan soup kitchen. There will be a lot of work involved getting this started, but once this gets started, it will be well worth the effort. (A shorten version of the actual article).

Sisters and Brothers, I am happy to announce at this writing in 2017, that St. Clare's Kitchen will be celebrating our 12 year anniversary on the feast of St. Anthony! It has been an incredible

journey these past 12 years, and we have been very blessed with the support of so many people. I can't begin to count how many people have wanted to help in some way with doing something for the kitchen. From the local farmers giving of their extra produce for our guests, to the local supermarket giving us their day old bakery goods. During this time, we have formed many friendships with our guests who come for a meal, as well as all the volunteers who help out. But

I really believe the only reason the Kitchen has been so blessed is because of the hand of God. I think as Franciscans we are doing what we have been called to do, serving

our brothers and sisters. So please keep us in prayer that we will be able to continue this ministry.

As we journey through Lent my Sisters and Brothers, may Jesus gift us all with his presence so that we can be a gift to others in carrying out our service as Franciscans.

Pax et Bonum,

Sharon Marmalejo. OFS





Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

In case you missed this wonderful reflection from TAU-USA by Carolyn D. Townes, OFS, National JPIC Animator, here is a thoughtful excerpt from the Winter 2016 Issue. It was titled, "Violence and Peace, The Origin of Two opposite Ways of Building Peace".

"There is a tendency toward making assumptions based on opinion. What I mean is, we have an opinion of the person or organization, and based on that opinion, we color everything they say or do in the light of that opinion, even if what they say or do is positive or just. They "rubbed you the wrong way," so everything about them is viewed from that perspective. Many of us have done this. No judgment here, just fact. After all, we are human, right? Well, this is where your nightly examination of conscience comes in handy.

- What past judgments are you holding about a certain person or organization?
- Is every action of the person or organization held under the scrutiny of that past judgment?
- Are you willing to let those past judgments go and start each encounter afresh? Why or why not?

Truly reflect on these questions in light of the Gospels. This is the basis of living Gospel nonviolence. This is the basis of building viable and peaceable communities. This is what Dr. Martin Luther King, called the beloved community. As Seculars, we're the beginning of the beloved community; or at least we should be a substantial part of it".



Sister Death has called home . . .

PEOPLE OF PEACE FRATERNITY
 Jeanette Wilson, OFS (Dec.2016)

Eternal rest grant to all our departed Franciscan brothers, sisters and family members. May Sister Death hold them close to the heart of Jesus.



What Lent Means to Me



As a professed Secular Franciscan, I have consecrated myself to the service of the Kingdom and promised to live "all the days of my life" the Gospel and the Rule. While I do reflect on these throughout the year, Lent gives me a special opportunity to take a closer look at them, to examine myself, and to consider how I might more faithfully observe both.

This isn't easy, as it requires a close examination of my willingness to give my all to God. I love the little aspiration, "My God and my All!" He is indeed my God, but is He really my "All"? I have yet to achieve this. It can be easy to fool myself into thinking that He is everything to me, but whenever I put myself first, do selfish things (or not do certain things, out of selfishness), ignore the needs of others, or even "forget" my responsibilities, that proves He is not my "All" at all!



So what can I do about it? Franciscan (Catholic) things, such as spending more quality time in prayer, fasting (with some difficulty) from food as well as other things, almsgiving, all with the penitential intention of drawing closer to God. The closer I am to Him, the farther I am from me. As the Baptist said, "He must increase; I must decrease." The Rule helps me to do this: if I am following the Rule, I'm following the Gospel, and drawing closer to God.

While I live on earth, God may never be my All; but with holy determination, I will be able to say with certainty in the next life, "My God and my All!"

Linda Grady OFS — Northeast Regional Councilor

News and Views from around the Region: both new and old

QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS FRATERNITY

Congratulations to Dave and Kathleen White for celebrating 30 years as Secular Franciscans on January 26! May St. Francis and St. Clare continue to bless you for your faithful following in their footsteps.

OUR LADY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Congratulations to the new Council: Dave Gretencord, OFS, Minister, Debra Snider, OFS, Vice-Minister, Carol Gaal, OFS, Secretary, Mark Scott, OFS, Formation Director, and Don Beckerich, OFS, Treasurer. Sr. Veronica, OSF, remains as Spiritual Assistant. May St. Francis and St. Clare lead and guide you as you minister to your brothers and sisters.

ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS Congratulations on the first edition of their fraternity newsletter. Thanks for keeping all of us "in the loop" about happenings in your growing Fraternity and for a lovely report of your annual retreat with an inspiring video entitled "Franciscans are to Look Like Jesus in the World" by Archbishop Lestocki.

Both **THE LITTLE PORTION Fraternity** and **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FRATERNITY** have welcomed new Orientees since January 1. May St. Francis and St. Clare be their guides as they begin their journey to Franciscan life in the Secular Franciscan Order.

CENTRAL REGION COUNCILOR

RICH CAIN WRITES: I had a nice visit with the **Peregrinos de la Paz** fraternity the other night. Such a warm and friendly family. And good food. I definitely ate too much. And a growing family with 6 candidates in formation! Thank you for making me feel so welcome! May we find more ways to bridge the language barrier.

The central region is hoping to start an annual picnic for the fraternities in Indianapolis this summer. They are already doing *Transitus* together and wanted to expand the great feeling of brother and sisterhood!

CALL OUT MEETINGS were sponsored by **Our Lady of Lourdes Fraternity** and **St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity** to invite anyone who might be interested in becoming a Secular Franciscan. Let us pray that these occasions may draw new brothers and sisters to follow in the foot-

steps of St. Francis and St. Clare.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

FRATERNITY serves breakfast every fourth Sunday at Our Lady of the Road, a Catholic Worker House for those in need. Recently, Bishop Rhoades of the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese dedicated a lovely chapel there for those who come as guests for breakfast, clean clothes, and other needed items.

PEOPLE OF PEACE FRATERNITY

We are encouraging People of Peace Secular Franciscan Order members and friends to attend the free showing of the "The Sultan and the Saint" film at Marian University on March 16 at 7:30 p.m.

Several members and friends of People of Peace Fraternity were able to attend a celebration of our Spiritual Assistant, Sr. Norma Rocklage on February 12, 2017. It wasn't that long ago that the Archdiocese of Indianapolis honored Sr. Norma in 2015 when she received one of the Spirit of Service awards.



Also, Sr. Norma received the 2017 Center for Interfaith Cooperation's Interfaith Ambassador Award. Our current Democratic Mayor, Joseph Hogsett along with his Predecessor Republican Mayor Greg Ballard, were in attendance. Cardinal Tobin sent a video message in his absence since he moved to New Jersey.

The People of Peace are so happy that we have been able to share time with Sr. Norma, and study and pray with her over time, despite her extremely busy schedule.

OUR LADY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT FRATERNITY

Franciscan Awareness Project: OLBS is hosting an Open House to be held at St. Luke's Catholic Church, Indianapolis, in order to promote OFS interest, spread the Franciscan word and to answer

questions and inquiries that are circulating with facts about the 3rd Order of St. Francis, throughout several local parishes (date and time not yet determined). OFS brochures and pamphlets will be distributed.

City-wide OFS Picnic. The four OFS fraternities of the Indianapolis area are planning a Franciscan-themed picnic. We plan to welcome the members of our families and the Regional Council. We hope this will become an annual event. This will be an outdoor event beginning with a Mass (date and time to be determined). This will allow our four fraternities to gather together twice per year which includes our annual celebration of a bilingual *Transitus*.

Community Project: Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Fraternity will be hosting: Morning Parish breakfast at St. Luke's Catholic Church on Saturday, April 22nd at 9:00am (following the 8:15am Mass in St. Luke's Chapel). All parishioners and guests are welcome. We will have OFS brochures available and a committee will be present to answer questions and inquiries concerning the Secular Franciscan Order

OUR LADY OF LOURDES FRATERNITY

We had our first Call-Out Meeting at St. Mary's in Griffith on February 25. Several people came to ask questions and see what we are about.. Alysson, Laura, Rose, Bernie, Carole, Joy and I all shared with them. Thank you all for participating. Our next Call-Out Meeting is March 11, 10:30 AM at St. Joseph Church in Dyer.

Please take a moment to look at the Northwest Indiana Catholic article about Secular Franciscans (Feb. 19, 2017, page 9). We are praying that the Holy Spirit will open hearts and lead the called to find one of our Secular Franciscan fraternities in Northwest Indiana.

The following fraternities are collecting items for their apostolates. Please bring items to Unity Day. Thank you.

HOLY FAMILY - Toiletries, packet drinks, socks, shoes, underwear

OUR LADY OF LOURDES - Pop can tabs, empty prescription bottles

PEREGRINOS de la PAZ - Diapers and wipes

QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS - Toilet paper

SACRED HEART - Canned goods and other non-perishables

ST. MARY of the ANGELS - Toiletries

ST. ROSE of VITERBO - Diapers & wipes, yarn



Have You Seen a Christian Today?



"Love without courage and wisdom is sentimentality, as with the ordinary church member. Courage without love and wisdom is foolhardiness, as with the ordinary soldier. Wisdom without love and courage is cowardice, as with the ordinary intellectual. But the one who has love, courage, and wisdom moves the world."

-Ammon Hennacy (Catholic activist, 1893-1970)

Have you seen a Christian today? While I was providing respite care for my mother a couple weeks ago, I read a book that asked me that question. It questioned if those individuals who professed to be Christian were acting like Christians. It also indicted me, making me question whether I was acting as a Christian. The person in the mirror was, in fact, a very poor example of a Christian. I took it a step further. Have I seen a Franciscan today? Another indictment for the guy in the mirror!

But we have hope. If we read Matt 9:12-13, we realize that Jesus did not call the righteous but the sinner. I **DID** see one of those in the mirror. We have the Gospel, which is the **GOOD NEWS** for the sick. Read it!

Have a life giving Lenten season.

The 2nd annual Candidates Day Away is scheduled for July 8th, 2017 at a location which has not yet been finalized by publication time of this newsletter. (SORRY). So, Formation Directors and candidates who did not attend in 2016, keep that date open and look for additional information coming soon!

Your servant and HIS,

Dave Dieringer,
OFS

Regional Formation
Director



40 Things to give up for Lent

Come, see who we Franciscans are . . .



1. Fear of Failure
2. Your Comfort Zone
3. Feelings of Unworthiness
4. Impatience
5. Retirement
6. People Pleasing
7. Comparison
8. Blame
9. Guilt
10. Overcommitment
11. Lack of Counsel
12. Impurity
13. Entitlement
14. Apathy
15. Hatred
16. Negativity
17. The Spirit of Poverty
18. Going through the Motions
19. Complaining
20. The Pursuit of Happiness



21. Bitterness
22. Distraction
23. Giving Up
24. Mediocrity
25. Destructive Speech
26. Busyness
27. Loneliness
28. Disunity
29. The Quick Fix
30. Worry
31. Idolizing
32. Resistance to Change
33. Pride
34. A Small View of God
35. Envy
36. Ungratefulness
37. Selfish Ambition
38. Self-sufficiency
39. Sorrow
40. My Life

Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity — Secular Franciscan Order

Receive a daily inspirational Franciscan email, as well as periodic Regional Fraternity news and prayer requests. To join OUR LADY OF INDIANA list-serve send a blank email to:

OLI-Region-subscribe@yahoogroups.com



Your Regional Newsletter Volunteers:

John Cheeseman, OFS

Mary Mitchell, OFS

Sr. Agnes Marie, OSF

Regional Executive Council

Why Renew on April 16?

On April 16, 1209, Innocent III, approved the first Franciscan Rule and the Order received its canonical status. On this date, may Franciscans throughout the world formally renew their commitment to the Franciscan way of life.

"If you wish to be perfect, go sell everything you possess and give it to the poor . . ."

"Take nothing for your journey, neither walking stick, nor sack. . ."

"If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross . . ."



Dates to Remember



March 18, 2017: St. Clare's Profession

April 8, 2017: Spring Chapter of Mats

April 16, 2017: Renewal of Vows/Promises for all three Franciscan Orders

April 28, 2017: Bl. Luchesi and Buonadonna, First Third Order Franciscans

May 24, 2017: Dedication of the Basilica of St. Francis

June 10, 2017: Regional Executive Council

June 13, 2017: Feast of St. Anthony

July 8, 2017: Candidates Day Away

August 2, 2017: Feast of Our Lady of the Angels Portiuncula

August 8, 2017: Unity Day—St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo

August 11, 2017: Feast of St. Clare

September 17, 2017: Feast of the Stigmata of Our Holy Father St. Francis

October 3, 2017: Celebration of Transitus in Honor of the Passing of St. Francis

October 4, 2017: Celebration of the Feast of St. Francis

October 14, 2017: Regional Executive Council

November 10—12, 2017: Tentative Regional Retreat

November 17, 2017: Feast of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Patroness of the Third Order

November 18, 2017: Fall Chapter of Mats

November 29, 2017: All Saints of the Seraphic Order

From Pope Francis' Message for Lent 2017:

"Dear friends, Lent is the favorable season for renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbor. The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take. May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need. I encourage all the faithful to express this spiritual renewal also by sharing in the Lenten Campaigns promoted by many Church organizations in different parts of the world, and thus to favor the culture of encounter in our one human family. Let us pray for one another so that, by sharing in the victory of Christ, we may open our doors to the weak and poor. Then we will be able to experience and share to the full the joy of Easter."

