



# Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity



## Secular Franciscan Order

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

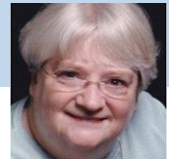
December, 2017

Volume 4, Issue 4

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

### A Message from our Regional Minister:

#### Kathleen White, OFS



Happy New Year!

It's the beginning of the Church year, and many things come to mind. First, the commercialism of the business world – immediately after Halloween, we find the stores pushing Christmas. We hadn't even had sufficient time to be thankful! And on December 26<sup>th</sup> we will see Valentines everywhere – then on February 15<sup>th</sup> we will have Easter candy and decorations galore! Our Church year is such a wonderful gift to us.

prepares us – to once again celebrate our New Year – Advent!

This Advent as we become more and more aware of awaiting the Second Coming, let us be aware that Jesus is awaiting us, as well. He awaits our prayers, he awaits us as we celebrate Mass, as we pray the Liturgy of the Hours, as we spend time in adoration of Him in the

presence of the Blessed Sacrament. He awaits us as we open our hearts to Scripture, most especially the daily Gospel (Rule, Article 4), coming to know Him more and more as we read his story and learn from His teachings. He awaits us as we experience and recognize His presence in our brothers and sisters, those we are close to and those we do

not know by name. Come, Lord Jesus!



Our celebrations in Advent lead us to the birthday of Jesus, and most importantly our expectation of the Second Coming. Our Ordinary (ordinal = numbered) time slows us down after the Christmas season, then our Lenten sacrifices and giving pulls us into an awareness of the giving and the sacrifices Jesus made for us.

Our pinnacle celebration – the Easter Vigil – welcomes new members into the Church through their acceptance of the Creed and their Baptism. The Easter season gives us continued joy and opens us to receive, again, the Spirit's graces as we celebrate Pentecost, the birth of the Church. Then our continuation of Ordinary Time calms us, reassures us, teaches us, guides us, and

As 2017 ends, we, as your servant Regional Executive Council, wish you great growth in your spiritual life this coming year. Read or re-read a biography of Francis, of Clare, of Bonaventure. Commit to studying an aspect of your Franciscan spirituality. Francis' writings. Clare's letters. We can't live the Gospel if we don't know the Gospel, and we can't fol-

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#### 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.

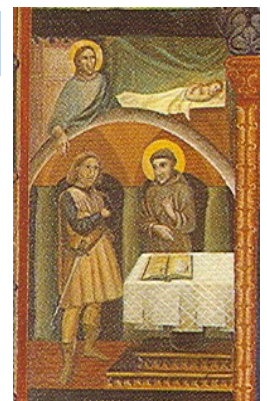
Pray for us with St. Michael the archangel and with all the powers of the heavens and with all the saints together with your most holy beloved Son, Lord and teacher.

### What We Have Promised to Live . . .

"The local fraternity is to be established canonically. It becomes the basic unit of the whole Order and a visible sign of the Church, the community of love. This should be the privileged place for developing a sense of Church and the Franciscan vocation and for enlivening the apostolic life of its members.

. . .to foster communion among members, the council should organize regular and fre-

quent meetings of the community as well as meeting with other Franciscan groups, especially with youth groups. It should adopt appropriate means for growth in Franciscan and ecclesial life and encourage everyone to a life of fraternity. The communion continues with deceased brothers and sisters through prayer for them. (RULE, Article 22 and 24).



## REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Kathleen White, OFS : Regional Minister

Barb Bräley, OFS: Regional Vice-Minister

Sharon Roberts: OFS: Regional Secretary

Lisa Cook, OFS: Regional Treasurer

Dave Dieringer, OFS :  
Regional Formation Director

Linda Grady, OFS, Sharon Marmalejo, OFS,  
and Richard Cain, OFS Regional Councilors

JPIC: Jack Hill, OFS,

Sr. Agnes Marie Regan, OSF:  
Regional Spiritual Assistant



National Minister, Jan Parker, OFS, Secretary, Sharon Roberts, OFS, Councilor, Sharon Marmalejo, OFS, Regional Minister, Kathleen White, OFS, Councilor, Linda Brady, OFS, Formation Director, David Dieringer, OFS, Vice-Minister, Barb Brady, OFS, Council, Rick Cain, OFS Treasurer, Lisa Cook, OFS, Spiritual Assistant, Sr. Agnes Marie Regan, OSF

low Francis to Jesus if we don't know what Francis is teaching us.

This coming year, 2018, is the 40th anniversary of the Pauline Rule. There will be greater emphasis on the Rule throughout the year – from NaFra USA and from your Regional Fraternity. We profess to follow the Rule – let us come to know it better and better – reading an article a day every day of the year! As Francis said, "Let us begin, for up to now we have done nothing."

**REMEMBERING THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER** with wills, bequests, donations, and prayers...

*Each of us can play an important part at our national, regional, and local levels.*

*There are several types of bequests that you can make to support a fraternity, such as General Bequests, Specific Bequests, and Percentage Bequests.*

**Prayer to St. Francis for Fidelity to the Rule**

Holy father, loving and most beloved St. Francis, I beseech you by the holy wounds of our Lord Jesus Christ, which were imprinted on your body, assist me to govern the five senses of my body according to the will and pleasure of almighty God.

Intercede for me, so that I may be most faithful in the observance of your Rule of Penance.

Obtain for me contrition and devotion, faith, hope, and charity, patience, and purity of body and soul, together with the grace of persevering in the service of our Lord; so that after this life I may merit to come to you, and with you to enjoy eternal happiness, which I hope through your intercession to obtain from Christ our Lord. Amen

from the *Secular Franciscan Companion*



*If you wish to direct your contributions to a specific category such as formation, scholarships, retreats, etc. you may certainly do so.*



O come Divine Messiah, the world in silence waits the day  
When hope shall sing its triumph, and sadness flee away.

Dear Savior, haste! Come, come to earth.  
Dispel the night and show your face,  
And bid us hail the dawn of grace..

O come Divine Messiah, the world in silence waits the day  
When hope shall sing its triumph, And sadness flees away.

–Simon-Joseph Pellegrin

## Barb Braley, OFS, Regional Vice-Minister : Reflections on the TAU

When I became a Candidate, just like everyone else who has ever become a Candidate, I received the Tau. I LOVE MY TAU!! I hope that those of you who have one love it and wear it (!), too. It is a sign of acceptance, of belonging.

It is also a sign to those outside of the Order — sometimes a sign to be respected, sometimes not. It is not always easy to wear the Tau. Depending on the kind of job one has, it may not be practical or even safe. However, for some people, whether at work or not, it is a sign of contradiction. A sign of faith contradicts unbelief. A sign of acceptance contradicts rejection. A sign of belonging contradicts isolation, whether voluntary or involuntary. Further, the one who wears the Tau is also a sign of contradiction because the wearer becomes that sign also.

Do not be fooled. Just as the Tau and the one who wears it are signs of contradiction to others, they are also signs of contradiction to us. This is where we are united with Jesus. In Luke 2:34, Simeon tells Mary and Joseph that Jesus will “be a sign that will be contradicted.”

Why do I even bring this up?

I am blessed to be able to wear my Tau to work. Currently, two others in my department are also Catholic and two others are practicing Christians. Four do not profess or practice any kind of faith.

In the past, there have been a couple of coworkers who teased me about the “T” meaning that I was trouble. We could laugh because I knew that they were teasing me, and that they really respected my faith and that I wore it. My previous boss, however, was an outspoken theological atheist. There was one day when the whole idea of the signs of contradiction really came home. This was in 2002 or 2003 in the wake of the priest scandal in Boston.

On one particular day, she blurted out that she couldn’t understand why anyone would believe in a church where people, especially the

clergy, abused children. There was no context for this statement, it just came out of the blue. At that time, I only had one Catholic coworker. Everyone in the room looked at me since I was the unabashed Catholic in the room. I said nothing. Neither did anyone else, including my boss, who then walked out of the room.

Hmm. Why did I not say anything? In fact, why did I not believe it was appropriate to say anything? Here’s why.

First, I acknowledged like I had on several other similar occasions that she was a sign of contradiction to me, but this was the first time that I realized just how much of a sign of contradiction that I was to her. I made it a policy never to initiate “churchy” talk at work. If someone asked me a question, I would answer it.

This leads to the second reason I said nothing. I realized that she had not really asked a question, even though it was “phrased in the form of a question,” to quote Alex Trebek on *Jeopardy*. An authentic question seeks an answer. I realized that she was only looking to start an argument in which she would “win” by being louder than I was, i.e. yelling her side of the argument. I witnessed her do this in arguments involving politics before this.

Finally, I was old enough to remember Madeline Murray O’Hare and her public “debates.” She wasn’t looking for answers, either. She was just looking for a way to discredit Christianity in a large venue and make Christians look incredibly foolish. (Yes, discernment is still a virtue!)

After everyone in the room recovered somewhat, the other Catholic in my department asked why I had not answered her, so I explained these reasons to her — then offered a silent prayer of thanksgiving for the grace of discerning that silence can also be a witness to the faith, just like the Tau.

While wearing the Tau is a great privilege, it will be a sign of contradiction for some. Please wear it any-

way. Remember the words, of Scripture, “But rejoice to the extent that you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed you may also rejoice exultantly. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you” (I Peter 4: 13-14).

Pax et Bonum!

Barb Braley, OFS,

Regional Vice Minister

irritantmom@hotmail.com



“The merit of Francis . . . Is in having shown to all the kind heart one must have to welcome the Child Jesus and thereby welcome God’s great and tender love (Roch Niemier, OFM, “In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare, p. 152”).





## Looking at Franciscan Values: St. Francis and the Church: Part One

We're all familiar with the story of the night St. Francis spent with his friend Bernardo. After spending the evening sharing Francis's newfound passion for living the Gospel, Bernardo's heart was deeply moved and he began to understand what was taking place within Francis' heart.

In the morning, the conversation continued and Bernardo made known his wish to "give back to the Lord what had been received from him". Together with another like-minded companion, Peter Catanio, the three climbed the steep pathway to the small chapel of San Nicolo near the center of the city, and as Francis said to his companions "... through the book of the Gospels, we will learn how the Lord instructed his disciples."

Having placed his feet on this Gospel pathway, neither Francis, Bernardo, or Peter ever looked back. Throughout his life he repeated again and again, "The Lord told me . . ." or later in his life "... the Most High Himself made it clear to me . . ." Throughout their lives, Francis, Bernardo and Peter lived in the promise of what Jesus had told them and asked of them.

However, that was only the simple, revelation of the mystery of God's way with these three faithful companions. Just a dream? Perhaps. But far more than that . . . as God's way continued to unfold.

"Having such faith in churches (the CHURCH), the small band set out for Rome to meet with Pope Innocent III, who also was experiencing "dreams" — one of a small man holding up the Lateran, the "mother church" of all Christianity which was falling apart. So in the year 1209 Francis and his first companions come to Rome to have their way of life approved, and in this simple gesture — the Franciscan family was born.

Think about this: moved by the virtue of FAITH, Francis, Bernardo, and Peter,



sincerely believe they have heard the voice of Jesus speaking through the words of Scripture; yet they travel the difficult, mountainous road to Rome to have that message confirmed by the Holy Father.

Already we have placed before us two of the major hallmarks of the Franciscan calling: (1) living according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and (2) fidelity to the Church. Because of his rootedness in Christ, Francis could embrace the church, for that was to embrace Jesus. In church leaders, Francis, because of his deep faith, could only see the successors of the apostles — not just human persons, admittedly, filled sometimes with all the sinful and nonsensical foibles of the human race. We're talking about a man FILLED with FAITH . . . a God-visited person who saw far beyond what was visible only to human eyes.

In his TESTAMENT, Francis gives us these priceless words: And the Lord gave me such faith in churches, so I just prayed and said: "We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ, in all your churches that are in the world and we bless you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world".

And in the RULE OF 1223, Francis' intention regarding loyalty and obedience to the Church leaves no room for doubt: He wrote, "... and so, firmly established in the Catholic faith, we may live always according to the poverty, and the humility, and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have solemnly promised."

Why am I preaching to the choir? As someone who has directed more than one choir, I know from experience that occasionally even the best of musicians and the best voices need to relearn and reorient themselves to good ole' Middle C! Otherwise, musical cacophony can torture the ears rather than uplift the soul.

Here are just a few key statements from the GENERAL CONSTITUTIONS of the OFS:

- (1) "All the faithful are called to holiness and have a right to follow their

own spiritual way IN COMMUNION WITH THE CHURCH (Article 1: #1)."

- (2) "... following the Rule APPROVED BY THE CHURCH (Article 1: #3)."
- (3) "The Secular Franciscan Order is PUBLIC ASSOCIATION IN THE CHURCH (Article 1: #5)."
- (4) "The OFS is governed by the UNIVERSAL LAW OF THE CHURCH (Article 4: #1)."
- (5) "The authentic interpretation of the Rule and of the Constitutions BELONGS TO THE CHURCH (Article 5: #1)."

*Let us continue examining this very important topic in our next edition.*

★  
This  
Christmas  
end a quarrel.  
Seek out a forgotten  
friend. Dismiss suspicion,  
and then replace it with trust.  
Write a love letter. Share some  
treasurer. Give a soft answer. Keep a  
promise. Find the time. Forgo a grudge.  
Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you  
were wrong. Try to understand. Examine your  
demands on others. Think first of someone else.  
Be kind; be gentle. Appreciate. Laugh a little. Laugh a  
little more. Express your gratitude. Gladden the heart of a  
child. Welcome a stranger. Take pleasure in the beauty and the  
wonder of earth.  
Speak your love.  
Speak it again.  
Speak it yet  
once again.





## Dave Dieringer, OFS, Regional Formation Director

I saw my first television commercial for Christmas in July. Early July! I saw homes being decorated with Christmas lights before Halloween in my neighborhood. I believe that our secular society has forgotten the meaning of Christmas.

Wikipedia describes Christmas as "an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed most commonly on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. A feast central to the Christian liturgical year, it is preceded by the season of Advent or the Nativity Fast and initiates the season of Christmastide, which historically in the West lasts twelve days and culminates on Twelfth Night; in some traditions, Christmastide includes an Octave."

But to our Father, Saint Francis, Christmas was real! It was NOT something that happened years ago. Not a holiday nor a commemoration! It IS an event that happened daily to Saint Francis. I think Saint Francis was a touchy, feely guy. He needed to see and feel the event. So in Greccio, he along with the townspeople, he set up the first crèche.

They helped "enact the memory of the babe who was born in Bethlehem: to see as much as is possible with my own bodily eyes the discomfort of infant needs, how He lay in a manger, and how with an ox and ass standing by, He rested on hay," says Thomas of Celano, Francis' first biographer.

The surprising thing about this is: Francis was nearly blind, very sick and near death. In fact, historians report that Saint Francis stayed in Greccio for months because he was too ill to continue his preaching and travels. He, Saint Francis who was blind, could SEE. We, who see, are BLIND!

The message should be clear for us. Our own Christmas crèche is a visible reminder of that night when our Saviour was born. May we never forget to SEE the little Babe of Bethlehem, who came to save us from sin. We must never forget that the wood of the manger that held Him would one day symbolize the wood of the cross. It is said that Francis had three great loves: the Incarnation, the Passion, and the Eucharist. Each devotion reinforced the others. May we

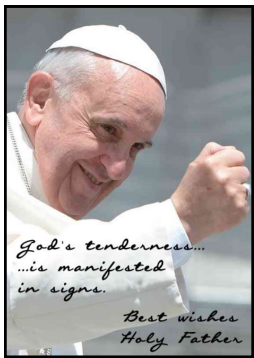
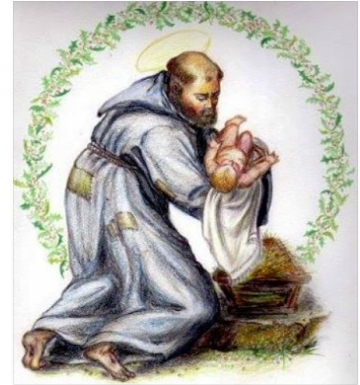


The altar at Greccio

too embrace Him with all of our love as did St. Francis by SEEING Christ in the Eucharist and one another?

I wish you a very holy Christmas.

Your brother Dave



"Today the Church once more experiences the wonder of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph and the shepherds of Bethlehem, as they contemplate the newborn Child laid in a manger: Jesus, the Savior.

On this day full of light, the prophetic proclamation resounds:

*"For to us a child is born,  
To us a son is given.  
And the government will be upon his shoulder;  
and his name will be called  
"Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Is 9:6)*

The power of this Child, Son of God and Son of Mary, is not the power of this world, based on might and wealth; it is the power of love. It is the power that created the heavens and the earth, and gives life to all creation: to minerals, plants and animals. It is the force that attracts man and woman, and makes them one flesh, one single existence. It is the power that gives new birth, forgives sin, reconciles enemies, and transforms evil into good. It is the power of God. This power of love led Jesus Christ to strip himself of his glory and become man; it led him to give his life on the cross and to rise from the dead. It is the power of service, which inaugurates in our world the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of justice and peace.

For this reason, the birth of Jesus was accompanied by the angels' song as they proclaimed:

*"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!" (Lk 2:14)."*



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

### OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS

Fraternity in St. John celebrated the Profession of seven members on the evening of October 4, 2017, in the day chapel of St. John Evangelist Church. It was a prayerful, solemn evening of great Franciscan joy in the present of family members, friends, and parishioners.



The four **INDIANAPOLIS** fraternities sponsored a bi-lingual celebration of the Transitus at Sacred Heart Church. There were about 70 participants who attended the service. Gratitude was extended to everyone for the gifts to the parish food pantry.

### SIGNIFICANT YEARS OF FRANCISCAN LIFE:

**St. Boniface:** Joe Wippel, 29 years, Mary Stewart, 26 years

**Our Lady of Lourdes:** Laura Kadelak, 52 years, Jim Donner and Mary Ann Mesche, 44 years, Joan Hamnik, 43 years, Carole Donner, 42 years, Judy Doolin, 41 years, Kathy Dominguez, 13 years.

**Immaculate Conception:** Fred Kugel, 33 years, Chris Beiting, 30 years, Sarah Beiting, 28 years, Sandy Waggoner, 27 years.

*May the Lord bless and keep you and grant you many blessings for your faithfulness to your Profession. If there are others we missed, let us know and we will honor them in our next edition.*

**ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL:** has invited all their brothers and sisters to attend the "Christmas Cruise Thru" at the Hicksville Fairgrounds before Christmas where they will have a sign in the card section

### OUR LADY OF LOURDES FRATERNITY

is bringing wrapped candy to their December Gathering to package in Christmas bags to share with guests at their St. Clare's Kitchen before Christmas. They also collected items for South Suburban Homeless Services.



Some of the members of the three fraternities in the **FORT WAYNE** area joined the University of St. Francis community in the annual lighting of the candles and Christmas celebration around Mirror Lake.



### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FRATERNITY

celebrated the Profession of Jeremy Hunter, OFS, Jennifer Hunter, OFS, Andre Thangham, OFS, Deb Jankowksi, OFS, and Deacon Jim Kitchens, OFS, on September 16, 2017. Here they are seen with the fraternity Council after the Eucharistic Celebration.



**CONGRATULATIONS** to Kathleen White, OFS, who has completed the "Franciscan Connections" course with Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM, has been certified, and has been assigned as Spiritual Assistant to Lady Clare Fraternity in Kokomo.

How many times today have you said

**THANK YOU?**

A New Year's resolution:

Forming an

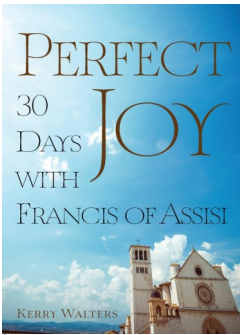
**ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE**



St. Francis would concur with these thoughts from St. Claude La Colmbiere:

"It is a great illusion to want all you hear about and all you see in books, as well as to burden yourself with so many devotional practices. Read very few books and make a great study of Jesus Christ crucified".





Every so often we're blest with the writings of a contemporary author who "hits the nail on the head" when it comes to putting into words the spirit of St. Francis. One such publication is "Perfect Joy: 30 Days with Francis of Assisi" by Kerry Walters. Published recently by Franciscan Media, this work is a series of reflections on concrete ways of living out the spirit of St. Francis in a spirit of *wisdom* not just *knowledge*" of facts about the Poverello and the heritage of spirituality which he left to his followers.

In addition to quotations from Celano and Bonaventure, the author adds his own insights and practical suggestions for living out Franciscan spirituality in everyday life. One reflection per day for the month are offered with serious points for reflection, prayer, and application to life. It is literally a thirty-day retreat in which one can participate from the comfort of one's favorite arm chair or prayer corner.

One of my favorites is the following:

"If we fail to pray well — much less to become a living prayer — there are several possible explanations. We may not be attending *lovingly*, for example. Our prayer may be indifferently mechanical, a pro forma ritual in which our hearts aren't really invested.

"Or, our prayer may be too noisy, chatty, too full of words. When this happens we're not able to listen to God for the simple reason that we're too busy talking.

"We may even be so fixated on the proper technique for prayer that we don't actually get down to doing it effectively. Our preoccupation with how we pray makes us forgetful of why we pray.

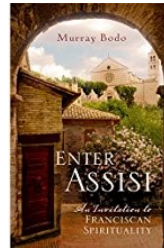
"What we need to know is that we already have everything we need to pray effectively. The Spirit of God already dwells within us at our deepest core . . ." ("Perfect Joy: 30 Days with Francis of Assisi", Kerry Walters, Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, Ohio, ©2016, p. 102).

The pages of Walter's book are filled with such thoughtful and practical suggestions

that one cannot afford to miss the wisdom of its pages. For purchase, you may contact the following:

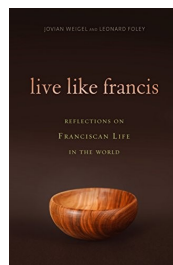
<http://info.franciscanmedia.org>

Other highly recommended books with Franciscan spirituality:



"Enter Assisi" by Fr. Murray Bodo, OFM, Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, OH, © 2015. Heartfelt meditations on being a pilgrim in Assisi from the master pilgrim.

"Live Like Francis" edited by Diane M.



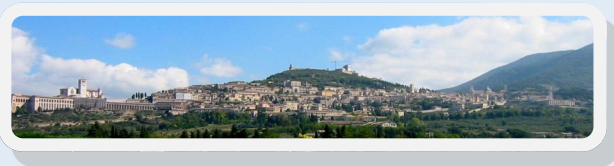
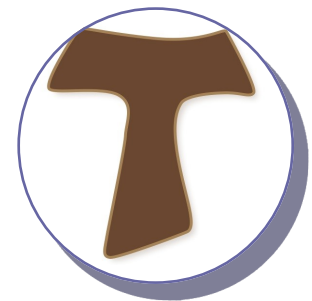
Houdek, OFS, Franciscan Media, Cincinnati, OH, ©2016. A meditation for each week of the year on a Franciscan theme directed mainly to members of the Secular Third Order, but great for anyone.



Sister Death has called home . . .

"Since they are immersed in the resurrection of Christ, which gives true meaning to Sister Death, let them serenely tend toward the ultimate encounter with the Father (RULE, Article 19)."

Let us remember all our departed Franciscan brothers and sisters, as well as our parents, siblings, children, friends and all loved ones.



Interested in Joining other Franciscans  
on a **Pilgrimage to Assisi** ????

October 8—18, 2018

**\$2,998.00 All inclusive (except for lunches and taxi)**

Get your name on the pilgrim list

Sr. Agnes Marie, OSF

[agnes.marie.regan@gmail.com](mailto:agnes.marie.regan@gmail.com)

## Our Lady of Indiana Regional Fraternity—Secular Franciscan Order



### 2018 Dates to Remember

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

OLI-Region-subscribe@yahoo.com



Your Regional Newsletter Staff

John Cheeseman, OFS

Mary Mitchell, OFS

Sr. Agnes Marie, OSF

Regional Counselors

**January:** No scheduled activities

**February 10:** Regional Executive Council—St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo

**March 10:** Spring Formation Directors and Team Members Workshop—St. Joan

**April 14:** Spring Chapter of Mats—St. Joan

**May:** No scheduled activities

**June 8, 9, 10:** Regional Visitation / REC—St. Francis University, Ft. Wayne

**July 14:** Candidates Day Away (need a host fraternity/venue)

**August 11:** Unity Day—St. Joan of Arc, Kokomo

**September 8:** Fall formation Directors and Team Members Workshop—St. Joan

**October 13:** Regional Executive Council—St. Joan

**October 8—18:** Assisi Pilgrimage with Sr. Agnes Marie

**November 10:** Fall Chapter of Mats—St. Joan

**December:** No scheduled activities

### A Christmas Message from Fr. Matthew Perry, OFM, General Minister of the Franciscan Order



“What difference does the Incarnation, the pouring out of the love and communion of God with each of us and with the entire world and created universe, make in our lives as Friars Minor? One response we might offer is found in the witness of Pope Francis who invites us to move into the existential peripheries of our world, promoting a Church and an Order that is open to the “joys and hopes, the grief and anguish” of the people of our time. Saint Francis also offers us clear and practical recommendations for how we might demonstrate God’s communion and love. As Francis witnessed in all of his relationships, we too are called to approach people with courtesy, respect and with ears and hearts open to listen to the murmurs

of their hearts, entering into their pain and their desire for a world made new. Like Francis, we are called to be persistent in our work, our service, keeping our eyes fixed on the goal and remaining faithful to our promise to walk with God’s people, especially the poor and oppressed, in humility and with hearts turned towards the Lord. And we, like Francis, must seek to take concrete steps – the rebuilding of a church in ruins – in order to be the reconciling presence of God in the world today, a world thirsting to death for peace”.

—Christmas Letter, December 27, 2013