

Up to Now

Newsletter of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region of the Secular Franciscan Order

Covering the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia,
and portions of West Virginia and Pennsylvania



Fr. Philippos Philippus, OFM/Cap

Volume 19 Issue 2

Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing.

November 2015

Words of Wisdom – Our National Visitations and Regional Chapter

It was a brisk cold morning on November 12, 2016, but at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish in Crofton, Md., the hall was filled with Franciscan warmth. Fifty-five of our professed sisters and brothers from the St. Margaret of Cortona Region came together for their annual Regional Chapter. We were also blessed to have two visitors from National (NAFRA) Mary Stronach, OFS. and Father Christopher Panagoplos, TOR. to conduct our Fraternal Visitation and Pastoral Visitation. This event occurs every three years, just as our regional council conducts its visitations. The National visitors assess the life and vitality of the region and provide guidelines for the next three years.

The day was busy, with lots of agenda items to cover, but what stood out most were talks by Mary Stronach, Fr. Panagoplos, Anne Mulqueen (Regional Spiritual Assistant Delegate, OFM Conv) and Brother Michael Meza (Regional Spiritual Assistant, OFM Cap).

Mary Stronach, National Visitor, met with the regional council the night before the Chapter and reported to the local Ministers the following day about how excited she was about what was happening in our Region. Mary conveyed to those in attendance that what we had shared with her and what she has learned about St. Margaret of Cortona Region has greatly enriched her as a person.

Mary talked about the struggles many local fraternities experience: they are the same at the Regional, National and International level, and we were encouraged. We were asked to consider and share the vision, the charism and mission of the Secular Franciscan Order. It starts with each one of us. Mary quoted the saying, “We are only as strong as our weakest link,” so it starts with each of us to be strong, to support our Order as much as possible, whether at the local, regional, national or international level.

Our National Pastoral Visitor, Fr. Christopher Panagoplos, shared with us, as Franciscans, the need to be more involved in what is happening in our country, be a more powerful voice for the marginalized. Father offered several examples of how we as Secular Franciscans can make

a difference in an ever changing world. We need to be a visible sign to all. We need to be involved in the political arena.

“We wear our habit, the TAU Cross, we can blend into society, just like yeast, hidden in a mass of dough, and we can quietly make improvements in anything we touch without notice. As Franciscans we can change the outside of ourselves; with God’s mercy, transformation has already taken place.”

Anne Mulqueen spoke of Our Blessed Mother’s Fiat (Magnificat) and gave us ten examples of Mary’s yes:

1. Openness to the Spirit
2. Spirit of Spontaneity (Mary Visits Elizabeth)
3. Spirit of Courage
4. Spirit of Joy
5. Spirit of Readiness
6. Spirit of Humility
7. Spirit of Adventure
8. Spirit of Hospitality
9. Spirit of Wonder and Awe
10. Spirit of Thanksgiving

(See “Chapter” on p. 6)

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Regional Minister's Message



FOUR FRATERNITIES

Our former regional and national minister, the late Tom Bello, would always remind me that we are all members of four fraternities. There is, of course, our local fraternity, what our Rule calls "the basic unit of the whole Order and a visible sign of the Church, the community of love." (22)

But our Rule also says, "The Secular Franciscan Order is divided into fraternities of various levels - local, regional, national, and international. Each one has its own moral personality in the Church. These various fraternities are coordinated and united according to the norm of this rule and of the constitutions."(20)

We are members of ALL four fraternities, and this reality was brought home this month. As your regional minister, I was one of 30 regional ministers who attended the annual national chapter at San Pedro Retreat Center in Orlando, Florida. In addition to prayer, formation, social time, and a little business (Tom's description of what every fraternity meeting should be, in order of importance), the chapter included the triennial international visitation. Chelito Nunez, the Vice Minister General of our Order (from Venezuela), and Father Francis Dor, OFM Cap, a General Spiritual Assistant (from Cameroon), conducted a fraternal and pastoral visitation to the national fraternity of the United States.

There are 110 countries with a Secular Franciscan presence. Our international executive council (called the CIOFS Presidency; CIOFS stands for "Consilium Internationale Ordo Franciscanus Secularis") is, as you can imagine, quite busy with visitations, elections, and the other business of an Order of the Church.

Six days after returning from the national chapter, we began our annual regional chapter. Ministers or their representatives from 26 of our 33 fraternities attended, and, ironically, it was our region's triennial national visitation. Mary Stronach, our national executive council's international councilor, and Fr. Christopher Panagoplos, OFM TOR, a national spiritual assistant, conducted the fraternal and pastoral visitation.

I love attending my fraternity meetings. I find Francis and Clare, and their charism, in the faces and words of the sisters and brothers of Saint Anthony of Nagasaki Fraternity. I am sure that you do as well, when you attend your fraternity meetings. But sometimes, I forget that I am part of a larger community. The Secular Franciscan Order is truly a self-governing Order of the Church, as I witnessed at the national and regional chapters. Our first Rule, *Memoriale Propositi*, was approved in 1221. Our current Rule was approved in 1978 by Blessed Pope Paul VI. While sometimes our fraternities might feel like a parish organization, or a devotional group, or "just another club," remember that each of us made a permanent profession to this Rule, and our Rule's interpretation "belongs to the Holy See and its application will be made by the General Constitutions and particular statutes." (3) Our international fraternity, national fraternity, regional fraternity and local fraternity are bonded together by these documents and our shared Franciscan charism.

On page 6, there is a copy of "Pray the Rule," a way to remind us through prayer of our commitment to our Rule and the way of life to which it calls us. Kathleen White, the regional minister of Our Lady of Indiana region, and the keeper of the "TAU Daily" listserv, recently shared this with us. I hope that our fraternities will take the opportunity to incorporate this prayer into their regular prayer life.

Patrick Martin
Regional Minister

Websites of Interest

The Right to Religious Freedom

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops released this powerful video explaining and defending the right of all people to freedom of religion. <https://www.catholicvote.org/video-the-right-to-religious-freedom/#prettyPhoto> Thank you, Bob Longo

Where Moses Saw the Holy Land

<http://catholicregister.org/home/international/item/23396-memorial-marking-where-moses-saw-promised-land-reopens-in-jordan?platform=hootsuite>

Thank you, John Clem

Regional Formation Director's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Christ! Peace be with you!

I want to thank all those who attended the Formation Directors Workshop at Loyola Retreat House October 14-16. Your presence was a blessing to everyone in the Region. For those who were unable to attend, flash drives will be given out; one per fraternity, at the Regional Chapter on November 12. The flash drives contain helpful information, that can be downloaded and revised to suit each fraternity's needs. You may also print out the materials contained on them to use in a binder for reference or to give to those in formation. The events of that weekend are highlighted in another article on page 9.

As your formation director for the Region, I highly encourage you to take the time to study our Rule, the Constitutions, and the Catholic Catechism. If you are able to attend daily Mass, that is an added blessing. To receive Holy Communion, the source and summit of our faith and Christian life, is truly to partake in the closest possible encounter with Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is through this encounter and your quiet time with Jesus that you will come to know God's daily will in your life.

The sacrament of Reconciliation is another instrument of God's great mercy. Consider making frequent trips to the confessional in this Year of Mercy (Dec. 8, 2015 to Nov. 24, 2016). I encourage you to visit the Vatican Website page at http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c2a4.htm and study the articles of faith regarding this great Sacrament, so you can share these truths with others.

Article 4:1422 of the Catholic Catechism states:

Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example, and by prayer labors for their conversion.

And in the words of St. Padre Pio to a penitent regarding his soul, "Even a house gets dusty after eight days." So true!

Brothers and Sisters, each of us has been called to serve God in a capacity that no other person has been called. You have been chosen, not only as a Franciscan but as a disciple of Christ, to aid in the formation of others. This carries no little weight. It is one of dignity and grace and must be taken seriously. In chapter 25 of Matthew's Gospel, we see Jesus explaining the parable of the servants and the talents given to each. Jesus reminds us that we will be judged accordingly on the talents we have received and how we have used them to serve God and our neighbor.

From time to time, we need to ask ourselves, "How am I serving God, my family, my neighbor, my fraternity? Do I put God first by making time to commune with Him and by obeying His holy precepts?"

Brothers and Sisters, we cannot share the love of someone we do not know with others. And we cannot claim to know someone if we do not spend time with them. The same is true with Christ.

I would like to close my letter to you with a story from the book *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*. It is a reminder for us to pray for our beloved dead during this month of November. Therefore, while performing corporal works of mercy, let us not forget our obligation to perform spiritual ones as well.

"Once while Brother John of LaVerna was saying Mass, on the day after All Saints Day, for all the souls of the dead, as the church required, he offered that most high Sacrament (which because of its efficacy, the souls of the dead desire above all the other good things which can be done for them) with such charity and feeling of compassion that he seemed as if completely melted by the sweetness of pity and fraternal charity. Therefore, in that Mass as he devoutly raised the Body of Christ and offered it to God the Father, he prayed that for love of his blessed Son Jesus Christ, who was hung on the Cross to redeem souls, he should be pleased to free from the sufferings of Purgatory the souls of the dead, created and redeemed by him. Then he immediately saw an almost infinite number of souls leave Purgatory, like innumerable sparks of fire from a lighted furnace, and he saw them rise into heaven through the merits of the Passion of Christ, who is offered daily for the living and dead in that most sacred host, worthy of adoration forever."

Brothers and Sisters, let us pray for all people, both living and deceased, that one day we may enter into God's glory

Fraternally yours in St. Francis and Christ,

Vicky Spalding, OFS, Regional Formation Director

The critical first step of waste prevention has been overshadowed by a focus on recycling. Please help to promote a greater awareness of the importance of the "Reduce" part of the Reduce-Reuse-Recycle mantra. For a great overview of how raw materials and products move around the world, see the video *The Story of Stuff* at <http://www.globalstewards.org/ecotips.htm>.

Spiritual Assistant's Message

Peace and all good sisters and brothers, When I was asked to write an article for this issue of *Up to Now*, I was faced with a dilemma. Do I write as a secular Franciscan or as a spiritual assistant? I face that dilemma almost every day when I consider my identity as a secular Franciscan and my role as a spiritual assistant. What I have to do and still work on is to integrate my spiritual assistance role into my identity as a secular Franciscan. And that is an ongoing challenge.

Article 26 of the Secular Franciscan Rule of 1978 states:

As a concrete sign of communion and co-responsibility, the councils on various levels, in keeping with the constitutions, **shall ask for suitable and well prepared religious for spiritual assistance.** They should make this request to the superiors of the four religious Franciscan families, to whom the Secular Fraternity has been united for centuries.

Because of circumstances beyond our control, not all fraternities have friars as spiritual assistants. Obviously, the Rule of 1978 did not envision secular Franciscans as spiritual assistants when it called for suitable and well prepared **religious**. And so we turn to the General Constitutions of 2000, to help us understand the procedure to follow when **friar** spiritual assistants are not available:

General Constitutions, Article 89.4 states:

When it is not possible to give such a spiritual assistant to the fraternity, the competent major superior can entrust the service of spiritual assistance to:

- a. religious brothers or sisters of other Franciscan institutes;
- b. diocesan clerics or other persons, **specially prepared for such service, who are members of the OFS;**
- c. other diocesan clerics or non-Franciscan religious.

Probably one of the most important concepts to keep in mind is that the spiritual assistant is **not a director but an assistant**. The fraternity council is the authority concerning fraternal life. Spiritual assistants are not experts who have all the answers. Their role is one of collaboration and co-responsibility.

The major or primary responsibilities of spiritual assistants is to guarantee fidelity of the Secular Franciscan Order to the Franciscan charism, communion with the Church and union with the Franciscan family. These values represent a vital commitment for Secular Franciscans. (OFS Const. 85.2; See Canon 303, CCL).

This leads us to the next question. What qualities do we expect to be present in a suitable and well prepared spiritual assistant?

- Obviously, a spiritual assistant must be knowledgeable about Franciscan spirituality and have a thorough understanding of the secular Franciscan way of life.
- The spiritual assistant must be a person of prayer and have a good grasp of Scripture, especially the Gospels so that he or she can assist secular Franciscans in their Gospel way of life.
- A spiritual assistant needs good communication skills, without which it would be difficult to give assistance to a fraternity. The spiritual assistant offers spiritual reflections at council and fraternity gatherings—always keeping in mind that they are “working with” the fraternity and its council and not directing it.
- Ideally—and I say ideally because this is an area where many of our spiritual assistants are pressed for time—a spiritual assistant should be involved in initial formation. If they cannot attend initial formation sessions, they should have sufficient personal contact with the candidates to assess their growth in understanding the Franciscan charism. Also, the spiritual assistant, as an agent of formation, should assist the council in discerning the presence of a vocation in each candidate. Obviously, spiritual assistants are to be present at fraternity gatherings where they have input during ongoing formation.
- The spiritual assistant is expected to participate in council meetings as an active member. The spiritual assistant votes on all issues except elections and financial matters.
- The spiritual assistants are the fraternities’ link—their life-giving union—with the First Order and Third Order Regular provinces to which they are bonded.
- The local spiritual assistants should maintain good communication with the regional spiritual assistants.

When I speak with members of local fraternities, they question me about how to obtain a spiritual assistant. Article 26 of the Rule states clearly that when seeking a spiritual assistant, “They should make this request to the superiors of the four religious Franciscan families, to whom the Secular Fraternity has been united for centuries.”

- The pronoun “they” in Article 26 refers to the local council; it is the local council who requests a spiritual assistant from the appropriate provincial spiritual assistant.
 - Although the Rule places the responsibility on the local council, I think I am safe in saying that your regional council is willing to assist you.
- If the local fraternity knows of someone they would like assigned as spiritual assistant, they can suggest that person to the provincial spiritual assistant.
 - The fraternity supplies the provincial spiritual assistant with the name, address, and resume, assuring the provincial spiritual assistant that the recommended person is suitable and well prepared.
- The provincial spiritual assistant is the one who has the authority to appoint a spiritual assistant for a local fraternity. He might require additional information to be sure this person is suitable and well prepared to serve the fraternity.

(See “SA” on p. 15)

Within the Word: Awash in God's Mercy

Editor's Note: The Sunday readings mentioned below come from the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, Oct. 30, 2016

Our Jubilee Year of Mercy is coming to an end. But that does not mean our practice of mercy ends. What have we learned about what "mercy" means? We must begin by considering the mercy of God. It is only because we are awash in God's mercy that we can even begin to be merciful ourselves.

It is impossible to adequately describe the merciful love of God. Sunday's psalmist makes a good effort: "The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in mercy. The LORD is good to all, compassionate toward all his works" (Ps 145:8-9). We have heard that statement so often we may be numb to its power. But what do these words mean?

The Lord is "merciful" and "compassionate." The two Hebrew words here are related to the word for "womb." This "mercy," declared twice, is the love of a mother for her newborn child. Is there any greater or more passionate love? Another Hebrew word is translated "mercy" at the end of Psalm 145:9. This word, *hesed*, is love in the bones, the love that has so permeated a person that it is part of their DNA. This *hesed*, this mercy, is who God is. This statement is the best description of God the Old Testament writers could conceive. It occurs in every part of the Old Testament, from the Pentateuch to the Prophets (see Exod 34:6; Neh 9:17; Psalm 103:8; Sir 2:11; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2).

Sunday's reading from the Book of Wisdom elaborates on God's mercy. This writer's insight may surprise us: God is merciful precisely because God is all powerful! Mercy is not weakness; it is strength. God is merciful because God can do all things. God is merciful because God loves all things. Our call is first of all to surrender to God's merciful love and then to imitate it in our relationship with each other. If God loves "all things that are," how can we aspire to less?

St. Paul prays that we may have the strength to do this. He implores God to make us worthy of God's call and to enable us to "bring to fulfillment every good purpose." Mercy is not a solo enterprise. It is only through the power of God and the strength of our common purpose that we can learn to be truly merciful.

Zacchaeus is a great example. He begins simply out of curiosity. He wants to see who this man is that has made such a crowd gather. Zacchaeus has to make an effort, however, because he is short. (I understand his dilemma!) So it seems the first move is his. But Jesus surprises him and invites himself to dinner at Zacchaeus's house. The merciful love of Jesus, not only associating with but honoring this scorned tax collector, fills Zacchaeus with the strength of a corresponding love. Immediately he pledges not only to restore what he has taken wrongly but also to offer generous help to the poor. As Pope Francis says in his prayer for this Jubilee Year of Mercy: "Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus . . . from being enslaved by money." Zacchaeus has



Niels Larsen Stevens By Gunnar Bach Pedersen - Own work (Own photo) (Randers Museum of Art, Randers, Denmark), Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1428023>

tasted the overwhelming love of God and is now compelled to show that love to others.

We too have been surrounded and filled with God's love. We have been given the power; now our task is to use it.

—Sr. Irene Nowell

Irene Nowell, OSB, is a member of Mount St. Scholastica Monastery in Atchison, Kansas. She is author of Pleading, Cursing, Praising: Conversing with God through the Psalms and continues to write on Old Testament topics.

Sr. Irene Nowell, "Within the Word: Awash in God's Mercy," from the October 2016 issue of *Give Us This Day*, www.giveusthisday.org (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016). Used with permission.

Mark Your Calendar



April 1, 2017 — Seventh Annual Day of Reflection for Inquirers, Candidates and Newly Professed. St. Anthony Shrine, Ellicott City, Md.

April 28-30, 2017— Regional Retreat. Priestfield Retreat Center, Kearneysville, W.Va.



October 6-8, 2017 — Formation Directors Weekend. Loyola Retreat House, Faulkner, Md.

(From "Chapter" on p. 1)

The Magnificat is a beautiful prayer, a wonderful prayer for meditation.

Anne concluded by quoting Article 9 of the Rule: "Secular Franciscans should express their ardent love for her by imitating her complete self-giving and by praying earnestly and confidently."

Brother Michael spoke to us on "consolation and desolation and what it means to be builders".

Quoting Pope Francis, he said, "We must build bridges not walls". We are called to bring peace, putting aside all of what we are, and put on Christ and let us be for God in God and toward God. In our baptism we were baptized, Priest, Prophet and King.

When we pray the rosary, at the beginning we pray that the Lord will increase our faith, our hope and our charity. If we combine faith, hope and charity with our baptismal promises of Priest Prophet and King, then we can bring them to work together in these ways. The faith in life of the sacraments, our priesthood is also there for the people to teach what the Gospel wants us to teach them, that's our priesthood. Our charity comes from our kingship. Jesus

said "Happy are those who believe but have not seen," and that's who we are — people who give without counting the cost. Our hope comes not only for eternal life, but also that God is with us always (Mat 28:20)

When our faith is challenged, or when we feel that the Lord does hear us, we can call this a time of desolation, but our consolation comes from knowing that He has always been there in the past and that through the pain and suffering of the cross we have the resurrection and the promise of eternal life, knowing that this also shall pass. So let us truly build bridges in this time of uncertainty, let us truly be interiors to our deepest core and live out the prayer of peace that is Saint Francis. Because today we live in dark times, that is what some people are saying or others may say it is a time of change, but for us Secular Franciscans it is our time to bring peace. Where there is hatred, love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith where there is despair, hope where there is sadness joy; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; So let us live gospel to life, life to gospel and "put on Christ" (Rom 13:14) and let us be courageous and let us walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor 5:7).

— Bob Longo, OFS



PRAY THE RULE

O Lord, our God, we intend to make present the charism of our Seraphic Father Francis in the life and mission of the Church, in various ways and forms but in life-giving union with one another. By our profession, we pledge ourselves to live the Gospel in the manner of St Francis by means of our Rule approved by the Church (Arts. 1-3). Help us, we pray, so that daily we may:

- observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St Francis, going from gospel to life and from life to the gospel (Art. 4);
- seek to encounter the living and active person of Jesus Christ in our brothers and sisters, in sacred scripture, in the Church and in the Eucharist (Art. 5);
- go forth as witnesses and instruments of the Church's mission among people, proclaiming Christ by our life and words (Art. 6);
- conform our thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by the radical interior change which the Gospel calls "conversion", making use of the sacrament of reconciliation on the way to renewal (Art. 7);
- let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all we are and do (Art. 8);
- imitate the Virgin Mary's complete self-giving in her openness to your every word and call (Art. 9);
- faithfully fulfill the duties proper to our various circumstances in life (Art. 10);
- seek the proper spirit of detachment and purify our hearts from

every tendency and yearning for possession and power (Art. 11);

- acquire the purity of heart needed to set ourselves free to love God and our brothers and sisters (Art. 12);
- accept all people as your gift, Lord, and an image of Christ (Art. 13);
- exercise our responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service (Art. 14);
- be in the forefront of promoting justice by the testimony of our human lives and by courageous initiatives (Art. 15);
- esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption and service of the human community (Art. 16);
- cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity and respect for life in our families, striving to make it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ (Art. 17);
- respect all creatures, animate and inanimate "as bearing the imprint of the Most High" (Art. 18);
- be bearers of peace and messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, as immersed in the resurrection of Christ, we serenely tend towards Sister Death and our ultimate encounter with you, our Father (Art 19).

All this we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Brother.
Amen.

Liam McCarthy, OFM

St. Margaret of Cortona Region Annual Chapter



Photos by
Bob Stronach, OFS
Gary Burton, OFS

Franciscan Mission Service

OVERSEAS MISSIONER FORMATION: GROWING IN THE FRANCISCAN TRADITION

For Franciscan Mission Service (FMS), formation goes both ways. A three-month curriculum imparts the knowledge to sustain missionaries over the next two years. In turn, FMS responds to feedback from those in the field by refining the formation process. Individuals preparing for service benefit from new sessions and new techniques designed to deepen their awareness of their host countries and themselves.

Just like missionaries for the past two decades, this year's participants received a core curriculum of Franciscan spirituality. In addition, there was a dedicated session on problem solving for health situations in an unfamiliar environment. Missioners acquired skills to solve health issues on their own and an understanding of when to reach out for assistance in an emergency. In a new self-defense class, they learned how to take care of themselves in potentially threatening situations.

To tend to other self-care needs, a new session was added on building helping relationships. Missioners acquire basic pastoral counseling skills as a foundation for their work in the community. Different environments bring their own stressors, but each setting requires reflective listeners who understand the subtleties of ministry of presence. Missioners learn that good boundaries are essential to having the strength to minister in the long term in places where many people need a good listener.

This message is also reinforced through studying Franciscan values. As missioner Maggie Van Roekel shared after MJ Park's presentation on peace, "If we want to be instruments of peace in the world, we must first find our own balance and inner peace." During a formation session over Skype, current missioner Janice Smullen shared that her work with MJ helped her incorporate inner peace into her ministry with children in a Jamaican elementary school.

But as all missionaries discover, communication takes place through the lens of culture. For this reason, we have



Class 32 missioners in a formation session with Fr. Joe Nangle

enriched our formation sessions on cross-cultural communication. For example, an alumna of the Immaculate Conception High School in Kingston, Jamaica, introduced missioners to the country's distinctive speaking style or patois. They also used role playing to prepare themselves for different communication styles than they were accustomed to in the United States, such as the Caribbean fondness for nicknames. Bolivia and Guatemala are "people first" cultures that don't follow a U.S.-style time clock. No matter what their destination, missioners were more prepared to encounter a new way of life just as valid as their own.

Whether teaching about health, counseling, or culture, this year's formation sessions built on FMS' long commitment to Catholic social teachings. For the D.C. headquarters to successfully impart Franciscan values, we have to live them. To do this, we must listen as well as teach. Feedback from each formation session and every communication with missioners in the field shape the next group's formation experience.

This attentiveness bears fruit. As current missioner Catherine Sullivan said after last year's formation process, "It was clear that FMS sets itself apart from other mission services, in that it is not project-oriented, but people-oriented."

Since formation sessions are open to all the staff and volunteers within FMS, our D.C.-based program participants also benefit from the formation process by acquiring a solid Franciscan background for serving communities in need in the nation's capital.

At Franciscan Mission Service, we are proud of our formation program, and we continue to grow to meet the needs of our missioners and the communities they serve. A thoughtful formation process is our gift to all our men and women who will then go on to give generously for the next two years.

Franciscan Mission Service



Self defense class led by Zurriane Bennett

Formation Directors Workshop

On October 14-16, 40 Franciscan brothers and sisters from 19 fraternities in our St. Margaret of Cortona Region met at Loyola Retreat House on the Potomac in Faulkner, Md., for a Formation Director's Workshop. We gathered in fellowship and prayer, but most of all to receive information for developing our formation skills and to learn valuable tools for formation from one another.

The topics were covered over the weekend in five presentations by four different speakers. Victoria Spalding gave the first two presentations on "Discerning the Call to the OFS" and "Orientation." Mike Huether gave a presentation on Inquiry; Jeanie McLees on Candidacy; and Anne Mulqueen, our Regional Spiritual Assistant Delegate, on the topic of Ongoing Formation. The weekend closed with Mass on Sunday presided by our Regional Spiritual Assistant, Fr. Kevin Treston, OFM. The weather was perfect, and we were able to enjoy the grounds and water view as an added plus from our Creator. He surely smiled upon us!

Binders with materials were given out, one per fraternity, at the workshop. Flash drives with helpful information were also given out. The materials in the binders and on the flash drive covered topics that included the suggested readings for the *Franciscan Journey*, formation lesson plans, sign-up sheets for mentoring and attendance, Fran-



members for Fair Share dues, plus more.

One of the biggest successes of the workshop was the ability to obtain permission to use and reprint the Suggested Reading Materials contained after each chapter in the *Franciscan Journey*. This offers a huge help in the formation process. It will serve as a valuable tool for each formation director when supplementing the reading after each chapter in the *Franciscan Journey* book.

At the annual Regional Chapter on November 12, a flash drive was given to those fraternities that were unable to attend. The materials on the flash drive can be printed out by each fraternity for their individual use in formation.

In closing, I would like to thank the staff of Loyola Retreat House for all their accommodations, as well as all the presenters, my formation team, and all those who attended.

I am grateful and pleased to announce that our next Formation Director's Workshop will be held at Loyola on October 6-8, 2017, so please mark your calendars in advance! The topics covered will be in the area of "On-going Formation."

Thank you for all you do, and may God continue to bless you for your service to Him.

Yours in Christ and St. Francis,
Victoria L. Spalding, OFS
Regional Formation Director



ciscan style of prayer, bios of Franciscan Saints, *Lectio Divina* meditations, a recommended Franciscan reading list, Daily Consecration to the Immaculate, Franciscan feast days, Smokey Valley printing order form for materials, the General Constitutions, Statutes of the National Fraternity of the OFS in the United States and information on how to classify



Around the Region

RECEIVED AS CANDIDATES

Patricia Boye, OFS, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 Cynthia Filan-Kim, OFS, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 James Girouard, OFS, Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity,
 Warrenton, Va.
 Josh Goldberg, OFS, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va.
 Joseph Messina, OFS, Tau Fraternity, Herndon, Va..
 Maureen Zwirble, OFS, Sacred Heart of Jesus Fraternity,
 Warrenton, Va.



Newly professed members of the newly-forming group within St. Conrad Fraternity (Annapolis). (Front row L to R) Judith Tyrrell, OFS, Minister, St. Conrad; Marie Waleryszak, OFS; Deacon Br. James Watson, OFM Cap, Spiritual Assistant of St. Conrad fraternity; Fr. John Paul Kuzma, OFM Cap (a former SA of St. Conrad); Kathy Duffy, OFS; and Sandy Horvath, OFS; (middle row) Ron Van Nest, OFS (liaison); Kathy Brady, OFS; and Denise Mianite, OFS, Formation Director, St. Conrad; (top row) David Littleton, OFS, John Treichel, OFS, and Judy Hool, OFS.



St. Anthony of Nagasaki Fraternity newly professed John Cusick, with Evelyn Rivera, Valeria Vasquez Velez, Laura Rainey, minister, and Bill Hunt, John's sponsor. Presiding is Fr. Erick Lopez, OFM.

NEWLY PROFESSED

Andrea Bender, OFS, St. Thomas More Fraternity,
 Arlington, Va.
 Thomas ("Randy") Bender, OFS, St. Thomas More
 Fraternity, Arlington, Va.
 Steve Boeren, OFS, St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity,
 Baltimore, Md.
 Katherine L. Brady, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.
 Mary Chandler, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity,
 Ellicott City, Md.
 John Cusick, OFS, St. Anthony of Nagasaki Fraternity,
 Washington, D.C.
 Sita Chakrawarti, OFS, St. Thomas More
 Fraternity, Arlington, Va.
 John Downing, OFS, St. Clare Fraternity, Rehoboth Beach,
 Del.

Flower Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.
 John Handiboe, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity,
 Ellicott City, Md.
 Charlene ("Charlie") Heyden, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino
 Fraternity, Ellicott City, Md.
 April Holdun, OFS, St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity,
 Baltimore, Md.
 Judith M. Hool, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.
 Sondra K. Horvath, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis,
 Md.
 Joan Carol Kane, OFS, Little Flower Fraternity, Baltimore,
 Md.
 Jeanne Kerins, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity,
 Ellicott City, Md.
 Boniface Kim, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity,
 Ellicott City, Md.
 Juliana Kim, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity, Ellicott
 City, Md.
 David Littleton, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.
 Mark McPherson, OFS, St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity,
 Ellicott City, Md.
 Patricia Riggles, OFS, St. Thomas More Fraternity,
 Arlington, Va.



Little Flower Fraternity newly professed: Anna (Ann) Louise German, Kelly Ann Frederick, Joan Carol Kane

Kathleen M. Duffy, OFS,
 St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.
 Beverly Edwards, OFS, St.
 Michael the Archangel
 Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.
 Marjorie Foor, OFS, St.
 Michael the Archangel
 Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.
 Kelly Ann Frederick, OFS,
 Little Flower Fraternity,
 Baltimore, Md.
 Anna (Ann) Louise
 German, OFS, Little



St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity newly professed (from left) Tony Sarcone (Formation director), Anne Prosser, April Holdun, Stephen Boeren, Beverly Edwards, Marge Foor, Cynthia Evans (Minister)

(See "Around" on p. 11)



Newly professed members of St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity (from left): Carl Fischer, OFS, Mark McPherson, OFS, John Handiboe, OFS, Charlene Heyden, OFS, Mary Chandler, OFS (in Green) Jeanne Kerirns, OFS, Juliana Kim, OFS and Boniface Kim, OFS

Anne Prosser, OFS, St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity, Baltimore, Md.
Joe Smith, OFS, St. Clare Fraternity, Rehoboth Beach, Del.
John A. Treichel, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.
Ronald L. Van Nest, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.
Marie A. Waleryszak, OFS, St. Conrad Fraternity, Annapolis, Md.



Newly professed members of St. Clare Fraternity, Delaware: Fr. Ron Pecci, OFM, John Downing, Joe Smith, Andy Zampini, Minister, Mary Moran, Formation Director

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED Companions of Francis and Clare Fraternity, Salem, Va.

Minister: David Kauffman
Vice Minister: Mary Fitzgerald
Secretary: Cathy Griffin
Treasurer: Eileen Highberger
Formation Director: Tom Fame
Councilor: Angela Kauffman
Councilor: Christine Young

St. Bonaventure Fraternity (Korean), Fairfax, Va.

Minister: Maria Kang Gibson
Vice Minister: Agata Ok Soon Kim
Secretary: Kye Sook Lee Gabriela
Treasurer: Kyung Sook Bae Elizabeth
Formation: Margaret Ok Hee Kang
Councilor: Ki Nam Han Teresa



St. Bonaventure Executive Council (from left): Regional Councilor Bob Longo, OFS; Secretary Mong Sook Lee Susan, OFS; Councilor Ki Nam Han Teresa, OFS; Treasurer Kyung Sook Bae Elizabeth, OFS, Ministe: Maria Kang Gibson, OFS; Formation Directo: Ok Hee Kang Margaret; OFS, Vice Minister Kye Sook Lee Gabriela, OFS; Regional Spiritual Assistant Br. Michael Meza, OFM Cap.

Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity, Hampton, Va.

Minister: Terry Carlino
Vice Minister: Beatrice Sanford
Secretary: Kenneth P. Holt
Treasurer: Barbara Massey
Formation Director: Edward Gerhard



Our Lady of the Rosary Executive Council (from left): Minister: Terry Carlino, OFS, Vice Minister Bea Sandford OFS, Secretary: Ken Holt, OFS, Spiritual Assistant Sister Agnes Narocho, LSOSF, Treasurer: Barbara Massey, OFS, Formation Director: Ed Gerhard, OFS

St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity, Lancaster, Pa.

Minister: Susan Jamison
Vice Minister: Genie Dutton
Secretary: Marilyn Wall
Treasurer: Carmencita Fiesta
Formation Director: Tom McGrath
Councilor: Peg Nicholson
Councilor: Lillian Soriano
Councilor: Mary Badjo

With great joy...

We are happy to announce that, on November 11, the Regional Executive Council approved the Davidsonville group of St. Conrad (MD) to become the Saint John XXIII Emerging Fraternity. Our prayers and best wishes are with you. Welcome to the region!

Beatification of Eight Friars Minor

Scutari, 5 November 2016 – Amongst the thirty-eight Blessed martyrs of the Communist persecution in Albania (1945-1974), are numbered 8 religious of the Order of the Friars Minor: a bishop and seven priests. From 1944 for nearly 50 years the Albanian Catholic Church suffered harsh persecution at the hands of one of the fiercest Communist dictatorial regimes of the present age. During this period our martyrs were condemned to death, or died under torture or due to the harsh conditions of imprisonment. They accepted for love of Christ an unjust sentence: they welcomed suffering with a patient spirit and a heroic faith. At the moment of death they had words of forgiveness for their persecutors and trust in God, for themselves and for their tortured country.

BLESSED GJON SHLLAKU, PRIEST OFM (1907-1946)

His martyrdom comes at the start of the persecution, as he was condemned to execution by firing squad together with six companions in March 1946. He made his solemn profession in 1928 and was ordained a priest in 1931. He was considered one of the greatest Albanian intellectuals of his time.

When, in December 1945, the seminary student, Mark Çuni, with Gjelosh Lulashi, Qerim Sadiku e Frano Mirakaj, all lay people, was arrested on the charge of wishing to start a resistance movement, it created the pretext to involve the Jesuits, Fr. Giovanni Fausti SJ, and Fr. Daniel Dajani SJ, as well as the Franciscans. To strike at these zealous religious, who were distinguished in the world of culture and who dedicated themselves to the formation of consciences, was the first step to reduce Catholicism in Albania to a religion of silence and the catacombs

Father Gjon Shllaku and his companions were put on trial in the “Rozafa” cinema in Scutari and condemned to death by shooting on 4th March 1946, at the cemetery in the town. The night before the execution the condemned were heard praying and singing at the top of their voices, up to the time they left to be martyred whilst singing litanies to Our Lady. The bodies of the martyrs were never found.

BLESSED BERNARDIN PALAJ, PRIEST OFM (1894-1946)

He made his solemn profession in 1917 and was ordained as a priest in 1918. He was a teacher and a parish priest. A prolific writer and man of culture he was arrested at the Rrubik friary whilst he was parish priest and guardian there on 22nd October 1946. In order to find a reason to charge him the police set up a scene whereby arms were discovered in the friary, hidden there unbeknownst to the friars by party members. He was brought to Scutari and imprisoned in the Gjuhadol friary which had been requisitioned and transformed into a prison. He had spent the finest years of his religious formation there, carried out his

priestly ministry and his teaching duties. Subjected to inhuman torture he resisted for a total of forty days. He died tied to a tree in the friary, having contracted tetanus through contact with rusty iron which cut into his wrists. It was 2nd December 1946.

BLESSED SERAFIN KODA, PRIEST OFM (1893-1947)

Ordained a priest in 1915, he was a teacher, parish priest, Definitor and Provincial Bursar. He was unjustly accused of conspiracy and of having organized a meeting with priests and other friars in the friary dedicated to the Annunciation in Lezhë on 12th October 1946. In fact it was a fraternal meeting on the occasion of his name-day, but they wished to portray it as a meeting to set up to found a Christian Democratic party. On the same pretext they arrested subsequently others who had participated at the reunion: Mons, Frano Gjini, Bishop, and Father Mati Prendushi, OFM. Father Serafin was locked up in the stable of the friary, and died as a result of torture, without trial or charge against him, on 11th May 1947. He was buried in the friary garden at Lezhë, where his remains were rediscovered on 16th September 1994.

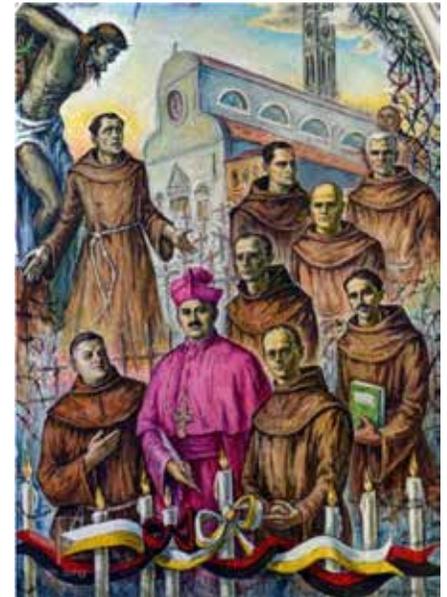
BLESSED CIPRIAN NIKA PRIEST OFM (1900-1948)

He made his solemn profession in 1921 and was ordained a priest in Rome on 25th July 1924. A teacher, Master of the clerical students, Master of the novices, Provincial Minister, Director of the Franciscan college, and from 1944 Guardian of Gjuhadol friary. He was arrested in Scutari on 8th November 1946, falsely accused of having hidden arms in the church which the Communists themselves had planted.

He was shot on 11th March 1948 together with 16 other persons at the cemetery of Rémaj and abandoned there. He had gone to his execution reciting the rosary in a loud voice and concluding with the Te Deum laudamus. His last words were: “Long live Christ the King and we forgive our enemies”.

BLESSED MATI PRENDUSHI, PRIEST OFM (1881-1948)

He is associated with the martyrdom of his fellow friar Fr. Ciprian Nika, in respect of the charge of arms being found in the church of the friars at Scutari and their shooting on



11th March 1948. A parish priest, Guardian, Definitor, Vicar and at the time of his arrest Provincial Minister. Upon hearing the sentence of death being pronounced he went to embrace the person who had accused him telling him, "I am praying with all my heart for all the lies you have told against me and others. I will pray the Lord to have mercy upon you and to forgive you, as I am forgiving you!" His body was never found.

BLESSED VINÇENC PRENNUSHI OFM, ARCHBISHOP OF DURAZZO (1885-1949)

He was the leader of the band of martyrs by reason of his ecclesiastical dignity as the Primate of Albania (1946). Twice Provincial Minister, from 1929 to 1935, he was elected Bishop of Sappa and consecrated in the cathedral in Scutari on 19th March 1936. He was transferred to archbishopric of Durazzo and from 1943 was the Apostolic Administrator of Southern Albania. Monsignor Prennushi represented the highest authority of the Catholic Church in Albania. His capture and condemnation was essential to the Communist regime's strategy to attack Catholicism. The dictator had asked the bishops to create a national church separating it from the Holy See, to which he had received a blunt refusal.

Arrested and imprisoned in Durazzo on 19th May 1947, he was condemned to twenty years detention. The serenity with which he faced up to the punishment was manifest in his continuing exercise of charity even within the restrictions of imprisonment. He died on 19th March 1949 of a heart attack, caused by the maltreatment, tortures and fatigue to which he was subjected. He is buried in the Cathedral of Durazzo.

BLESSED GASPÈR SUMA, PRIEST OFM (1897-1950)

He made his solemn profession in 1919. He was ordained as a priest in Genoa in 1921, and arrested on 24th May 1948 at Gomsique where he was parish priest. He was then brought to Scutari and detained in the Gjudadol friary, of which he had been Guardian, and which in the meantime had been turned into a prison. Here he was questioned at length and tortured. The harsh prison regime and lack of medical attention aggravated his precarious health situation, already weakened by cancer, meant the he died suffering greatly on 16th April 1950

His tomb is venerated at the church of St. Francis in Scutari.

BLESSED KARL SERREQUI, PRIEST OFM (1911-1954)

He made his solemn profession in 1932, receiving his ordination to the priesthood in Torricchio di Pescia (Italia) on 29th June 1936. He was arrested the full exercise of his pastoral ministry for not wanting to reveal the content of the confession of a man which was made just before his death, which occurred as a result of being wounded in a shootout with the Communist police. For this Fr. Karl was subjected to terrible torture and was sentenced to life imprisonment and forced labour. He received the sentence

in a completely serene fashion, saying: "In my heart I experienced the great joy of being able to die for Christ". He died in Burrel prison, because of his maltreatment on 4th April 1954. His grave was never discovered.

BLESSED MARIJE TUCI, (1928-1950)

The only woman of the group was linked to the Franciscan family. She was for a short time a teacher. On 11th August 1949 she was arrested as an aspirant to religious life with the Franciscan Sisters of the Stigmata. She was sentenced to a 3 years suspended sentence. She died in the hospital of the prison in Scutari on 24th October 1950 due to



the ill treatment received, and also for rebuffing the advances of her torturer. Amongst the tortures she suffered was being closed in a bag with an enraged cat, whose scratching resulted in her contracting blood poisoning. The martyrdom was ascribed also to her wish to defend her purity, and from the persecutor's point of view, scorn for the life of a woman who had decided to consecrate her virginity to the Lord.

From <https://usfranciscans.org/2016/11/04/beatification-of-eight-friars-minor/>

Thank you, John Clem

Editor's Note: In the August issue of *Up to Now*, I ran the article below incorrectly identifying the wonderful woman who is the impetus for the C4C program at Our Lady of the Fields parish. With my deep apologies, I'm running the article again, now giving credit to Susan Burns.

What Are We Doing?

Susan Burns, OFS, of St. Conrad's Fraternity in Annapolis, has been instrumental in developing an extensive Care4-Creation program in her parish, Our Lady of the Fields, in Millersville, Md.

The program includes the OLF organic straw-bale vegetable garden, which brings fresh and healthy vegetables to the Friday night ministry. Other aspects of the program are Fair Trade, bee keeping, the carbon footprint of the parish and communities, and educational mini-seminars on the changing climate, waste management, water, biodiversity, solar power, fracking, and sustainability of the environment.

To see a video on the project, go to

[http://www.ourladyofthefields.org/care-for-creation/.](http://www.ourladyofthefields.org/care-for-creation/)

Franciscan Saints, Blesseds and Feasts

(click on the name to go to a Web link)

NOVEMBER

- 15 [Bl. Mary of the Passion](#), Virgin, Founder, 3rd Order Regular, d. 1904
- 17 [St. Elizabeth of Hungry](#), Virgin, Patroness of Franciscan 3rd Order Secular, Plenary Indulgence (renewal of Tertiary engagement), d. 1231
[Bl. Jeanne de Signa](#), Virgin, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1307
- 18 [Bl. Salome de Cracovie](#), Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1268
- 19 [St. Agnes of Assisi](#), Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1253
[Bl. Salvatore Lilli](#), Priest, 1st Order, martyr 1895
- 20 [Bl. Milagros Ortells](#), Virgin, Capuchin religious, martyr 1936
- 21 [Feast of the Presentation of the Holy Virgin Mary](#)
- 24 Commemoration of all the Deceased of the Franciscan Family (I, II, III Orders)
- 25 [Bl. Elizabeth of Reute](#), virgin, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1420
- 26 [St. Leonard de Port-Maurice](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1751
- 27 [St. François-Antoine Fasani](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1742
[St. Humilis of Bisignano](#), Religious, 1st Order, d. 1637
- 28 [St. James de la Marche](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1476
- 29 Saints of the Seraphic Order
[\(We pray the Franciscan Litany of the Saints\)](#)
- 30 [Bl. Antoine Bonfandini](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1482

DECEMBER

- 2 [Bl. Marie-Angele Astorch](#), Virgin, Capuchin religious, d. 1665
[Bl. Raphael Chylinski](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1741
- 4 [Bl. Francois Galves](#), Priest, 1st Order, Martyr 1623
[Blessed Pietro Tecelano](#), 3rd Order Secular, d. 1289
- 5 [Bl. Peter of Siena](#), Confessor, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1289
- 8 [Feast of the Immaculate Conception](#), Patroness of the Seraphic Order, Holy Day of Obligation, Plenary Indulgence for tertiaries and cord bearers

- 9 [Bl. Delphine de Glandeves](#), Virgin, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1360
- 10 [Bl. Peter Tecelano](#), 3rd Order Regular, d. 1289
- 11 [Bl. Hugolinus Magalotti](#), 3rd Order Secular, d. 1373
- 12 [Discovery of the tomb of St. Francis 1820](#)
- 13 [Bl. Pius Bartosik](#), Priest, 1st Order, martyr 1941
- 14 [Bl. Jean Discalceat](#), Priest, d. 1349
- 15 [Bl. Mary Francis Schervier](#), Virgin, 3rd Order Regular, d. 1876
- 19 [Bl. Conrad of Offida](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1306
- 23 [Bl. Nicolas Factor-Estaña](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1583
- 24 [Bl. Bentivolio of Bonio](#), Priest, 1st Order, d. 1231
- 25 Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Holy Day of Obligation
- 26 [St. Albert Chmielowski](#), Confessor, Founder, 3rd Order Regular, d. 1916
- 27 [Bl. Matthia Nazzarei](#), Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1320
- 28 Feast of the Holy Innocents
- 29 [Bl Gerard Cagnoli](#), lay brother, 1st Order, d. 1342
- 30 [Bl. Margaret Colonna](#), Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1280

JANUARY

- 1 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
- 3 Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus
- 4 [Bl. Angela of Foligno](#), widow, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1310
[Bl. Ruggiero da Todj](#), religious, 1st Order, d. 1237
- 5 [Bl. Diego José of Cádiz](#), priest, 1st Order, d. 1801
- 7 [St. Charles of Sezze](#), lay brother, 1st Order, d. 1670
- 8 [Bl. Eurosia Fabris](#), 3rd Order Secular, d. 1921
- 10 [Bl. Gregory X](#), pope, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1276
- 11 [St Thomas of Cori](#), priest, 1st Order, d. 1729
- 12 [St. Bernard of Corleone](#), lay brother, 1st Order, d. 1667
- 13 Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- 14 [Bl. Oderic de Pordenone](#), priest, 1st Order, d. 1331
- 16 [Sts. Berard and Companions](#), Protomartyrs of the Order, d. 1220
- 17 [St. Matthew of Girgenti](#), Bishop, 1st Order, d. 1451

- 20 **Bl. Jean-Baptiste Triquerie**, priest, 1st Order, martyr 1794
St. Eustochia Calafato, virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1491
- 21 **Bl. Joseph Nascimbeni**, priest, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1922
- 22 **St. Vincent Pallotti**, priest, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1850
- 23 **St. Marianne Cope**, virgin, 3rd Order Regular, d. 1918
- 24 **Bl. Paula Gambará-Costa**, widow, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1515
- 26 Bl. Georges Matulwicz, Bishop, Third Order Secular, d. 1927
- 27 **St. Angela Merici**, virgin, founder, 3rd Order Regular, d. 1540
- 28 **Bl. Bienvenu de Recanati**, priest, 1st Order, d. 1289
- 29 **St. Francis de Sales**, Bishop, Doctor of the Church, Codbearer, d. 1622
- 30 **St. Hyacintha de Mariscotti**, virgin, 3rd Order Regular, d. 1640
- 31 **St. John Bosco**, priest, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1888

FEBRUARY

- 1 **Bl. Patrick O'Loughran**, Priest, 1st Order, martyr, d. 1612
- 2 Bl. Andre Ferrari, Bishop, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1921
- 3 **Martyrs of Japan**, 1st Order, lay brothers and 3rd Order Secular, d. 1597
Bl. Andrew of Segni, religious, 1st Order, d. 1302
- 4 **St. Joseph de Leonisse**, Priest, 1st Order, d. 1612
- 5 **St. Jane of Valois**, Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1505
- 6 **Bl. Pius IX**, Pope, 3rd Order Secular, d.1878
- 9 **Bl. Clare of Rimini**, Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1346
- 10 **Bl. Alojzije Stepinac**, Bishop, martyr, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1960
- 13 **St. Eustochium of Messine**, Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1485
St. Giles Mary of St. Joseph, lay brother, 1st Order, d. 1812
- 14 **Bl. Philippa Mareri**, Virgin, 2nd Order, d. 1263
- 15 **Translation of the relics of St. Anthony**
- 16 **St. Veridiana**, Virgin, 3rd Order Secular, d. 1242
- 17 **Bl. Luke Belludi**, Priest, First Order, d. 1286

(From "Spiritual Assistant" on p. 4)

He might require additional information to be sure this person is suitable and well prepared to serve the fraternity.

As I conclude this correspondence with you, I am aware that no letter from a spiritual assistant is complete without a spiritual reflection. And so as we enter a new Church year and the season of Advent, it is time to prepare our hearts to more fully experience the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must rid ourselves of those attitudes and behaviors that prevent God from making a dwelling place among us. Let us remember and reflect upon the words of Jesus, "...stay awake! For [we] do not know on which day [our] Lord will come."

And in the words of Pope Benedict XVI:

"Advent is concerned with that very connection between memory and hope which is so necessary

to man. Advent's intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope. The purpose of the Church's year is continually to rehearse her great history of memories, to awaken the heart's memory so that it can discern the star of hope....

It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open doors of hope." [Seek That Which is Above, 1984—Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger]

*Wishing you peace and all that is good,
Your sister Anne Mulqueen, ofs
Delegated Regional Spiritual Assistant
For the OFM Conventual Friars*



The Regional Executive Council wishes you a blessed Advent and a holy and joyous Christmas season. Peace and all good to you and all you hold dear.