

## 2014–2017 REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### MINISTER

**DIANE F. MENDITTO, OFS**  
160 Overlook Avenue, Apt. 16-F  
Hackensack, NJ 07601-2232  
201-343-0950  
[dianefmdfm@aol.com](mailto:dianefmdfm@aol.com)

### VICE MINISTER:

**NANCY CONROY, OFS**  
32 Vine Street  
Nyack, NY 10960-3404  
845-642-7073  
[paxjesu@yahoo.com](mailto:paxjesu@yahoo.com)

### SECRETARY:

**KATE ASSELIN, OFS**  
45 Park Avenue, Apt. 103  
Verona, NJ 07044-2432  
973-489-8978  
[kate.asselin@shu.edu](mailto:kate.asselin@shu.edu)

### TREASURER:

**RICHARD SPANA, OFS**  
170 East Hartsdale Avenue, Apt. 1-F  
Hartsdale, NY 10530-3536  
914-478-2010  
[ricksphanasfo@aol.com](mailto:ricksphanasfo@aol.com)

### FORMATION DIRECTOR:

**EDWARD WOJCIECHOWSKI, OFS**  
55 Red Twig Trail  
Bloomingdale, NJ 07403-1203  
973-492-1035  
[edwojo@yahoo.com](mailto:edwojo@yahoo.com)

### COUNCILOR - MANHATTAN

**PATRICIA CLAYTON, OFS**  
20-64 35th Street  
Astoria, NY 11105-2035  
917-502-9895  
[reap.clayton@gmail.com](mailto:reap.clayton@gmail.com)

### COUNCILOR - NORTH JERSEY

**RONALD L. PIHOKKER, OFS**  
377 Rutherford Blvd.  
Clifton, NJ 07014-1220  
973-472-0889  
[rlpihokker@aol.com](mailto:rlpihokker@aol.com)

### COUNCILOR - SI & CENTRAL JERSEY

**MARY-FRANCES REAVEY, OFS**  
44 Heather Drive  
Somerset, NJ 08873-2824  
732-545-6425  
[mfreavey@gmail.com](mailto:mfreavey@gmail.com)

### COUNCILOR - WESTCHESTER

**SHEILA A. TUOHY, OFS**  
1 Father Finian Sullivan Drive 13-B  
Yonkers, NY 10703-2823  
914-969-6928  
[sheilatuohy@optonline.net](mailto:sheilatuohy@optonline.net)

### SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT:

**FR. FRANCIS M. MCHUGH, OFM**  
St. Bonaventure Friary  
174 Ramsey Street  
Paterson, NJ 07501-3251  
973-279-1016  
[fmchugh77@aol.com](mailto:fmchugh77@aol.com)

### SPIRITUAL ASSISTANT:

**BR. DOUGLAS SOIK, OFM CAP**  
St. Lawrence Friary  
180 Sargent Avenue  
Beacon, NY 12508-3993  
845-838-0759  
[dsk2131948@yahoo.com](mailto:dsk2131948@yahoo.com)



# SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

## OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY

October 10, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy draws to a close with its many blessings, the Regional Fraternity will gather for our **annual Chapter of Ministers on November 19th**. This year's Chapter gathering is special because **it is also the triennial Fraternal and Pastoral Visitation for our Region**.

*"The purpose of both the pastoral and fraternal visits is to revive the evangelical Franciscan spirit, to assure fidelity to the charism and to the Rule, to offer help to fraternity life, to reinforce the bond of the unity of the Order, and to promote its most effective insertion into the Franciscan family and the Church." (General Constitutions Article 92)*

With this in mind, **I convoke our Annual Chapter and invite every minister to attend!**

**We will gather on Saturday, November 19, 2016, at St. Francis Church Hall, 50 Lodi Street, Hackensack, NJ, (enter on Holt Street-directions attached).** Registration and coffee will be at 9 am and the meeting will begin **PROMPTLY at 9:30**. Proposed adjournment is at 4 pm. Please bring a brown bag lunch. (As always, coffee, beverages and snacks will be provided.)

Since, in addition to the Pastoral and Fraternal Visitation, important Regional business will be carried out, **each fraternity must be represented at the Chapter**. If you are unable to attend, you may send the fraternity vice minister in your place. If this is not possible, a professed member of your fraternity should attend and bring a letter delegating him/her to represent the fraternity and vote on your behalf. Observers from your fraternity are also welcome, but do not have the right to vote. Please extend our invitation to your fraternity Spiritual Assistant as well.

(Please **return** the attached Response Form by **November 4<sup>th</sup>**.)

Your Regional Executive Council will welcome the visitors from the National Fraternity on Friday evening. **Mary Stronach, OFS** and **Fr. Christopher Panagoplos, TOR**, will discuss the state of our Region with the REC and will examine our records at that time.

The Visitation will continue at the Chapter on Saturday as the Visitors meet with all local Ministers who form the Regional Fraternity. In addition, we have an excellent Chapter program planned. Ongoing formation will serve as a conclusion to the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy with discussion of our "next steps." We will pray together at Mass; discuss important business affecting our Region; and take time to share your comments and concerns. (Please bring with you the attached agenda.)

Please plan to participate in the “**Winter Apostolate for the Homeless**” sponsored each year by our host fraternity, St. Francis, by bringing **hats, gloves, scarves, white socks and/or small toiletries** for distribution at the shelter in Hackensack.

*(Note: The shelter requires that these items be new.)*

At our Chapter gathering I will also report to you on the state of our Region. We have had the opportunity to visit many fraternities this year. In addition, we thank you for the excellent reports you have submitted to the Region which have allowed us to get to know your fraternity better. There are many reasons to rejoice, and your Regional Executive Council and I look forward to greeting you personally and sharing what has been accomplished over the past year, as well as plans for the future.

If you have not as yet provided us with a copy of your **Document of Establishment**, please bring an extra copy with you. Or, if your document is missing, and you have not already done so, please bring a letter which states that fact and provides the date of the first professions in your Register, the friar who witnessed those professions, the province to which your fraternity is bonded, and the location of your fraternity at that time. With that information we hope to be able to recreate a Document of Establishment for you.

Please remember that the annual Chapter is one of the most important events in the life of the Regional Fraternity, and the Pastoral and Fraternal Visit makes it even more special. It is your duty to attend, but we sincerely hope that it is an occasion to which you look forward. We certainly look forward to being with YOU!

Please know that you are always in my prayers; please keep us in yours.

Many blessings to you and your fraternity,



Diane F. Menditto, OFS  
Minister  
Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity

**PLEASE BRING THIS COPY WITH YOU TO THE MEETING**

**OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY  
AGENDA - CHAPTER OF MINISTERS - November 19, 2016**

**St. Francis of Assisi Church — 50 Lodi Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601**

**9:00 AM:** Registration and coffee

**9:30:** Call to Order and Welcome: Diane Menditto, OFS, Regional Minister  
Franciscan Morning Prayer  
Roll Call: Kate Asselin, OFS, Regional Secretary  
Approval of Minutes of 2015 Chapter  
*(Please review the enclosed copy and bring it with you.)*

**10:10:** Introduction of visitors

Fraternal Visitor: **Mary Stronach, OFS**; Pastoral Visitor: **Fr. Christopher Panagoplos, TOR**  
(Visitors meet with the Regional Fraternity.)

**10:50:** Break

**11:00:** Ongoing Formation: Year of Mercy - Next Steps

**11:30:** Break (Prepare for Mass)

**11:45:** Mass - Celebrant and Homilist: Fr. Christopher Panagoplos, TOR, Pastoral Visitor

**12:45-1:30 PM:** Lunch (Brown Bag)

**1:30:** Minister's Report to the region

**1:45: Remarks** - Regional Spiritual Assistants

**2:00:** Budget Presentation, discussion and approval  
*(Please review the enclosed copy and bring it with you.)*

**2:30:** Visitors' Comments to the Regional Fraternity

**3:30:** New Business

Concluding remarks

**4:00:** Closing prayer and adjournment

# DIRECTIONS

## **ST. FRANCIS - HACKENSACK**

50 Lodi Street, Hackensack, NJ 07601

Church phone: 201-343-6243

Diane's cell phone: 201-446-0667

### **From GW Bridge (or exiting the Turnpike onto Route 80 West):**

Take I-95 to I-80 west local exit 66 Hudson St., Hackensack.

Get off Route 80 at exit 66 (Hudson Street/Hackensack/Little Ferry), at the end of the ramp continue to the light and turn left onto Hudson Street.

Proceed to the third light and make a left onto Broadway.

Proceed one block and make a left onto Holt Street. You will see the church.

Park on Holt Street.

### **From I-80 East:**

Take the Hudson Street, Hackensack/Little Ferry exit (66).

From the ramp, make a left onto Vreeland Ave. At the light turn left onto Hudson Street. Go under I-80 and proceed to the fourth light (the light before going under Route 80 counts as #1) and make a left onto Broadway. Proceed one block and make a left onto Holt Street. You will see the church. Park on Holt Street.

### **From Route 17 South:**

Exit onto I-80 East in Hasbrouck Heights/Lodi area.

Follow the above directions from I-80 East.

### **From NJ Turnpike:**

Stay on the Turnpike past the final toll booth.

Take I-80 West LOCAL and follow the GW Bridge directions.

### **From Route 46:**

Exit at Teterboro Airport, Huyler Street, South Hackensack. Stay on Huyler Street to the second light. (Huyler Street becomes State Street.) At the second light, turn right onto Lodi Street. Proceed four blocks on your left to the second church at the corner of Lodi and Holt Streets.

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**TRANSIT:** Take the NJ Transit **165 bus** toward Westwood, NJ, from Port Authority.

Get off on Hudson Street, Hackensack, at East Broadway stop.

Cross Hudson Street.

Walk in one block on Broadway, and you will see the church.

Enter the church hall on Holt Street.

**OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGIONAL FRATERNITY  
BUDGET WORKSHEET FOR THE YEAR 2017**

<b>Account</b>	<b>Type of Income</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Account</b>	<b>Type of Expense</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1110	Per Capita Income*	32040.00	2110	Per Capita Expense (NAFRA)**	13617.00
	Transfer from Savings	4000.00			
		36040.00	2120	Spiritual Assistants	5000.00
1120	Interest Income		2130	Regional Minister	500.00
1160	Chapter Income		2140	Regional Council	1200.00
1170	Miscellaneous Income		2150	Office Operating Expenses	323.00
1180	Retreat Deposits/Fees		2170	Meeting Place/Storage Space	500.00
			2180	Newsletter	5000.00
	Based on 801 Professed and Candidates		2190	Retreat	1500.00
	* Per Capita Income:		2200	Unity Day/Convivenza	1000.00
	\$40.00 Per Person \$32,040.00		2210	JPIC Committee	300.00
	**Per Capita Expenses(NAFRA)		2220	National Visitation/Election	1500.00
	\$17.00 Per Person \$13,617.00		2230	YOUFRA	100.00
			2300	Formation	1000.00
			2400	Vocations	1000.00
			2600	Miscellaneous Expense	500.00
			2800	Contributions	1000.00
			2900	Travel	2000.00
	Total Income	36040.00		Total Expense	36040.00



# **Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity**

## **Chapter of Ministers Meeting MINUTES**

**November 7, 2015**

St. Francis of Assisi Church  
Hackensack, NJ

# Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity

## Chapter of Ministers Meeting

St. Francis of Assisi Church

Hackensack, NJ

November 7, 2015

REC MEMBERS ATTENDING: Bro. Doug Soik, OFM Cap. Diane Menditto, OFS, Minister, Nancy Conroy, OFS, Vice-Minister, Kate Asselin, OFS, Secretary, Ed Wojciechowski, OFS, Formation Director, Richard Spana, OFS, Treasurer, Ron Pihokker, OFS, Councilor, North Jersey Cluster, Mary-Frances Reavey, Councilor, Central Jersey Cluster, Sheila Tuohy, Councilor, Westchester Cluster.

EXCUSED: Pat Clayton, Councilor, Manhattan Cluster.

GUESTS: Dcn. Luke Conroy, Msgr. William Benwell, Fr. Frank McHugh, OFM

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- **Opening Prayer** Regional Spiritual Assistant, Bro. Doug Soik offered the opening prayer and N. Jersey Counselor Ron Pihokker gave the Gospel reading (Matthew 5:1-2).
  - **Welcome** Regional Minister Diane Menditto welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda for the day.
  - **Roll Call** Regional Secretary Kate Asselin read the roll of all fraternities in Our Lady of the Angels Region. A total of 21 fraternities were represented.
  - **Ongoing Formation** *Laudato Si—On Care for Our Common Home.*
    - Regional Formation Director Ed Wojciechowski presented on *Laudato Si*. Links for the power point presentation and two related You Tube videos shown are below:
      - Power point presentation: [http://olangels.tripod.com/Laudato\\_Si\\_Ed\\_Wojo.pdf](http://olangels.tripod.com/Laudato_Si_Ed_Wojo.pdf).
      - The "Top 10 Messages of Laudato Si" [https://youtu.be/a\\_lqFTYLc\\_4](https://youtu.be/a_lqFTYLc_4)
      - Laudato Si: An Urgent Appeal for Action <https://youtu.be/lcP5E2trsX4>

St. Francis shows us the bond between concern for nature, justice, our common bond and interior peace. The "cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are intimately connected." We cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation, the exploitation of the earth and the violence done to our brothers and sisters.

Integral ecology is inseparable from the notion of the common good (a concept that seems to be breaking down, as the well-off become divorced from the poor and the earth itself.) Underlying the principle of the common good is respect for the human person. Our dependence on nature is less apparent to us than to the poor. Technical solutions run the risk of addressing symptoms and not the more serious underlying problems. "...Idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose." [Pope Francis].

Water, which is necessary to all life, is a prime example. While some make millions of dollars selling bottled water, others go without access to clean water and the earth's fresh water resources are depleted without concern for future life. There are toxic islands of plastic bottles the size of Texas accumulating in our oceans!

Franciscan teaching calls on us to "respect all creatures (OFS Rule 14) because everything bears the imprint of the most high." We are called to recognize the value of all creation in God's eyes. We may take what we need, but we must *not* take *more* than we need. This is 'ecological conversion.' Respect for the dignity of our human brothers and sisters, as well as all creation, nature and its inherent laws so that life may flourish in a peaceful world.

- Comments on *Laudato Si* presentation
  - Andy Klutkowski, Anna Geraci, Alex Kiczek, Ron Pihokker and others shared thoughts on St. Bonaventure's idea of the "fingerprints of God;" or the 'Sacramentality' of creation': how God reveals Himself in all the infinite and beautiful forms of creation.

As Catholics, we see in created things the goodness of God, beyond the concrete forms. The *raison d'etre* or purpose of all life transcends mere utility and should be treated as such. These concepts are at the heart of who we are as Franciscans.

- Vice Minister Nancy Conroy asked all assembled to share the information on *Laudato Si* with their fraternities and to pray for the success of the UN Conference on Climate Change to be held in Paris November 30th to December 5<sup>th</sup>. The overarching goal of this Conference is international action to address global climate change.

What can we do? First we need to change our hearts, then our lives, for the good of all. We can begin by signing the Petition for Global Climate Change. Catholic Climate Covenant is an excellent resource. Click on this link to explore the many ways you can help: <http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/>

- **Approval of Minutes from 2014 Chapter of Ministers**

- The minutes from the last Chapter of ministers' meeting were distributed and reviewed by the membership. Minor corrections were noted by the Secretary. Pat Spana made a motion to accept the minutes. Dolores Jules seconded the motion and the 2014 Minutes were accepted with the assent of all.

- **Region Reports**

- State of the Region, Diane Menditto, OFS  
Diane thanked all those who have stepped up to serve the Region, especially the ministers who lead our 34 fraternities and who comprise the Region Council. The Region Executive Council (REC) has been trying to help struggling fraternities and we are happy to report that there are signs of new life!



So far this year, the REC has conducted 16 visitations and seven elections for fraternities. Ministers are reminded that each fraternity should have a routine visitation every three years. Request forms and other information are available on the website.

<http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/>

Fraternities in difficulty are encouraged to contact a member of the REC directly.

Region membership includes 835 professed members and 46 candidates. Languages spoken include English (72%); Korean (22%); Polish (4%); and Spanish (3%). We are hoping to increase the number of Spanish-speaking members. Currently, there are 30 Spiritual Assistants and four fraternities with openings.

Ministers are thanked for providing the annual fraternity reports. Please know that it is worth the effort and that your efforts are appreciated. The information is important for future planning and serves as a reference for visitations, elections and many other communications. The quality and accuracy of the fraternity reports is the essential basis for the Region's report to National.

Last year, the Region's fair share to NAFRA was \$14,977, with all but one fraternity contributing. Diane commended every member for giving as he/she is able to meet this essential obligation.

The Troubadour, our popular Region newsletter, is published electronically every month; with a paper version printed and mailed twice a year. Thanks to Anna and all who continue to make this an excellent publication!

Our Region website is growing! So far it has logged 20,000 visits; our Facebook page has 2,826 subscribers. A number of fraternities have shared their newsletters with the Region; for this purpose electronic format is preferred.

Diane is a member of the National Formation Team and she and Regional Formation Director Ed Wojciechowski attended the National Formation Workshop in Kansas City. Dawn Rusinko, OFS, represented Our Lady of the Angels Region and provided assistance to NAFRA at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia.

Our Lady of the Angels Region was proud to host the 2015 NAFRA Chapter meeting in New Jersey, made possible by scores of volunteers from fraternities across the Region. (Committee Chair Ron Pihokker will provide a full report on the event). National elections were held and Jan Parker was elected Minister. She sent a "thank you" note to Diane to share with the whole region. See the website <https://www.nafra-sfo.org/> for a photo of the new National Executive Council and all NAFRA information.

The 2016 Quinquennial, or "Q" gathering of our Order will be held June 30—July 4<sup>th</sup> in St. Louis. Registration materials are available on the website and scholarships are available! All are encouraged to attend!

The Region's future plans include a Servant Leadership Workshop and Conflict Resolution Workshop, as well as an updated version of the Region Guidelines. The REC will meet with Fr. Nick Mormando, OFM Cap., Provincial Minister of Stigmata Province, to discuss ways to help each other, share community life and collaborate in apostolic work.

Upcoming Cluster events include: The Manhattan Cluster will commemorate the feast of Sts. Elizabeth and Louis with profession, Saturday November 21<sup>st</sup> at 11am at St. Francis Assisi Church. The North Jersey Cluster will sponsor a Day of Reflection on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

- Spiritual Assistant's Remarks Bro. Doug Soik, OFM Cap.  
Bro. Doug commented that this year has been focused on fraternity visitations; these have been graced encounters and he has been happy to get to know more of us better. There has been some success filling openings for fraternity Spiritual Assistants—thanks be to God! Bro. Doug believes the future looks promising for the Seculars. As we continue to evolve as Franciscans, we know that the Church is also evolving, and we are together with *Laudato Si*. We must be open to the many ways there are to pursue the common good and enjoy each other and all that God has created.
- Formation Director's Report Ed Wojciechowski, OFS  
Ed has been writing a monthly column on formation topics for the *Troubadour*. Deacon Luke Conroy has also contributed and he would like to see more members submit articles as well.

The National Formation Workshop focused on the theme of "*Be who we say we are*". To do this we must first know ourselves in a deep way. This is what formation is about. When we live the Gospel, then we can go out and spread it!

A special candidate session was held at this year's Region Retreat. Ed would like to expand the format for candidates next year, and encourage more candidates to attend the Retreat.

Ed attended a special Reflection on the Secular Franciscans, including a talk by Fr. Sam Monaco, OFS, as part of an extended celebration of the feast of St. Francis held at St. Mary's Church in Pompton Lakes.

For the future, Ed plans to expand the initial formation offerings beyond the fraternity level, and develop programming for the Clusters at the Regional level. Please contact Ed if you would like help with formation and let him know if your fraternity is having a profession so that he can extend a welcome to the person.

Recommended reading: *The Saints and Mercy, Pastoral Counsels for Living the Jubilee Year; The Holy Year of Mercy, A Faith Sharing Guide*. More resources are posted on the Formation page on line at <http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/formation.html>

{Mass was held at mid-day with Fr. Frank McHugh, OFM, celebrant and homilist}

- NAFRA Host Committee Report Ron Pihokker, OFS, Chair  
Ron thanked the Committee members, all who attended meetings during the year-long planning process, and all the volunteers who gave of their time, talent and treasure to make the NAFRA Chapter Meeting a great success. The Region is proud of the hospitality provided and grateful to all of you!
  - *Our brothers and sisters felt welcomed by so many and in so many ways:*  
By the heroic shepherds (Frank Catalano and Maddie Romaine and many others!) who organized transportation back and forth to the airport at all hours of the day and night and made sure that not one lamb was lost!  
By Italia Testa and Marie Palazzone, who worked with legions of fraternity volunteers to provide the Welcome Bags filled with all kinds of small but necessary items that our guests greatly appreciated!

By Pat Franz, who was in charge of the Registration desk and made sure that every person was taken care of from beginning to end!

By Rick and Pat Spana and Debbie and Joe Wickham, who were on deck constantly helping out wherever needed the entire week!

*...And by all of you who were present to welcome our brothers and sisters at the national Chapter.*

- An ordinary hotel meeting room was transformed into a chapel for the NAFRA meeting. Special appreciation goes to Joe Wilson who organized everything, prepared all the liturgies, arranged for the music, and served as Cantor, guitarist and Lector, as needed! We are especially grateful to Msgr. William Benwell, who allowed us to keep the Eucharist in the chapel. Diane got auto-candles delivered by Amazon at the last minute, just in time for Mass (!) and took responsibility for removing the Eucharist each evening for safe-keeping.
  - A beautiful quilt with Tau design was hung in the chapel. Made by Mary-Frances Reavey, the quilt was also used as the logo on name tags, 'welcome bags' and all meeting materials. The next *Tau* will feature Mary Frances' quilt on the cover!
  - We thank God for the beautiful fall weather the day of our trip to Liberty State Park, featuring ferry rides to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island that Kate organized, followed by a special Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark, which many Franciscans in the Region attended.
  - The Korean Martyrs Fraternity provided magnificent entertainment with both traditional dance and musical performances in the evening. There is a lot of special talent in our Region!
- Treasurer's Report Richard Spana, OFS
- Rick reviewed the Treasurer's Report provided and answered questions from the members. He explained how the Region accounts are kept and clarified that the Region operates on a calendar year – *not* fiscal year – basis. Alex Kiczek made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and Mary-Frances seconded the motion. By voice vote, the Treasurer's Report was accepted as is with no changes.
  - 2016 Budget  
Rick reviewed the 2016 budget and answered questions from the members. Diane emphasized that we have tried our best to keep expenses to a minimum. The budget increases the fair share by \$3.50 per person to \$40. Note that the current rate of \$36.50 has been in place for the past 3 years— \$2.50 of the \$5.00 mandated increase was implemented; the other \$2.50 was not.

Based on 881 professed members and candidates, the fair share contribution to NAFRA is \$14,977. Rick commented that if we look at fair share amounts across all regions, we see that Our Lady of the Angels is in the lower half, with 15 of 30 regions contributing more than we do.

Alex Kiczek made a motion to accept the proposed 2016 budget and Sheila Tuohy seconded the motion. The 2016 budget for Our Lady of the Angels Region was unanimously approved by voice vote of the members.

- **New Business**

- **Volunteer!** Kate encouraged the fraternities to consider supporting the OFS-run organization Amazon Relief (See <http://www.amazonrelief.org/>). The Fr. English Center in Paterson is in need of groceries or contributions to purchase groceries for the growing number of hungry people they serve. (See <http://www.passaicresourcenet.org/search/father-english-center/>)  
Want to help animals? Check out your local shelter or Pet Finder (<https://www.petfinder.com/>). Volunteers are always needed or you just might find a new best friend! Everyone can do something!  
Pray and watch for those opportunities that cross your path.
- **Year of Mercy** Ron mentioned the Jubilee Year declared by Pope Francis that begins December 8. The idea of *mercy* is central to his papacy and to the Gospel and to Jesus: It is the very heart of who we are. Remember we are an order of penitents: penance and mercy go hand in hand. For more on this topic, please see the website [www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org](http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org)
- **Thank You!** Andy Klutkowski wanted to thank everyone for their caring during his recent health issues. Our Franciscan commitment is a reason to celebrate. We belong to each other; may we continue to love each other on the journey!
- **St. Francis Fraternity** Nancy Conroy thanked the Hackensack host fraternity for the special hospitality provided for this meeting!

- **Open Forum Sharing**

- Ed (St. Francis, Hackensack) expressed appreciation to all who donated clothing and other items for the homeless, those in prison and their families in need.
- A round of applause for Jim B. (St. Anthony, Butler) who is celebrating five years since his open heart surgery! Jim mentioned that the Laurelwood Arboretum in Wayne is worth a visit. (See <http://www.laurelwoodarboretum.org/>)
- Nancy C. shared about the "Garden of Hope" started on land provided by local congregation of sisters to grow fruits and veggies for the parish pantry. That little seed spawned others, including a "Garden of Love" Boy Scout project and now there is so much more good fresh food for those in need! Cultivate your gardens, plant your seeds and see what happens!
- Sam M. mentioned that Holy Name Fraternity would like to sponsor a celebration of the Transitus of St. Clare again, but is looking for better ways to get the word out and hoping that more people will attend.
- Diane encouraged everyone to e-mail fraternity news and information including event notices for the website; if you want it to go in the *Troubadour*, the deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- In response to complaints from some members that have not been receiving the *Troubadour*, ministers are asked to submit updated addresses, both street and email for their fraternity. (The *Troubadour* is e-mailed every month; a print version is mailed two times a year). Ministers should also notify the Region of addresses for new candidates as soon as they are accepted, so that the person receives both the *Troubadour* and the *Tau*. (Diane reminded the Ministers that candidates should also be contributing to the Common Fund.)

- There was a discussion about the *Troubadour*. There was general agreement about the value of the *Troubadour*; it serves everyone in the Region. However, it is a costly item in the budget. To save money, the print version has been reduced to two issues. Many members depend on the printed format, but there are those who prefer the e-version. However, the cost per copy is about the same whether it is 500 or 1,000; so there would be no further cost-savings for producing fewer print copies.
- **Closing Prayer** Bro. Doug led the members in prayer (Hail Mary full of grace...). Fr. Frank gave the final blessing.
- **Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm.

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*Faithfully Submitted,*  
*Kate Asselin, OFS*  
*Secretary*  
*September 23, 2016*