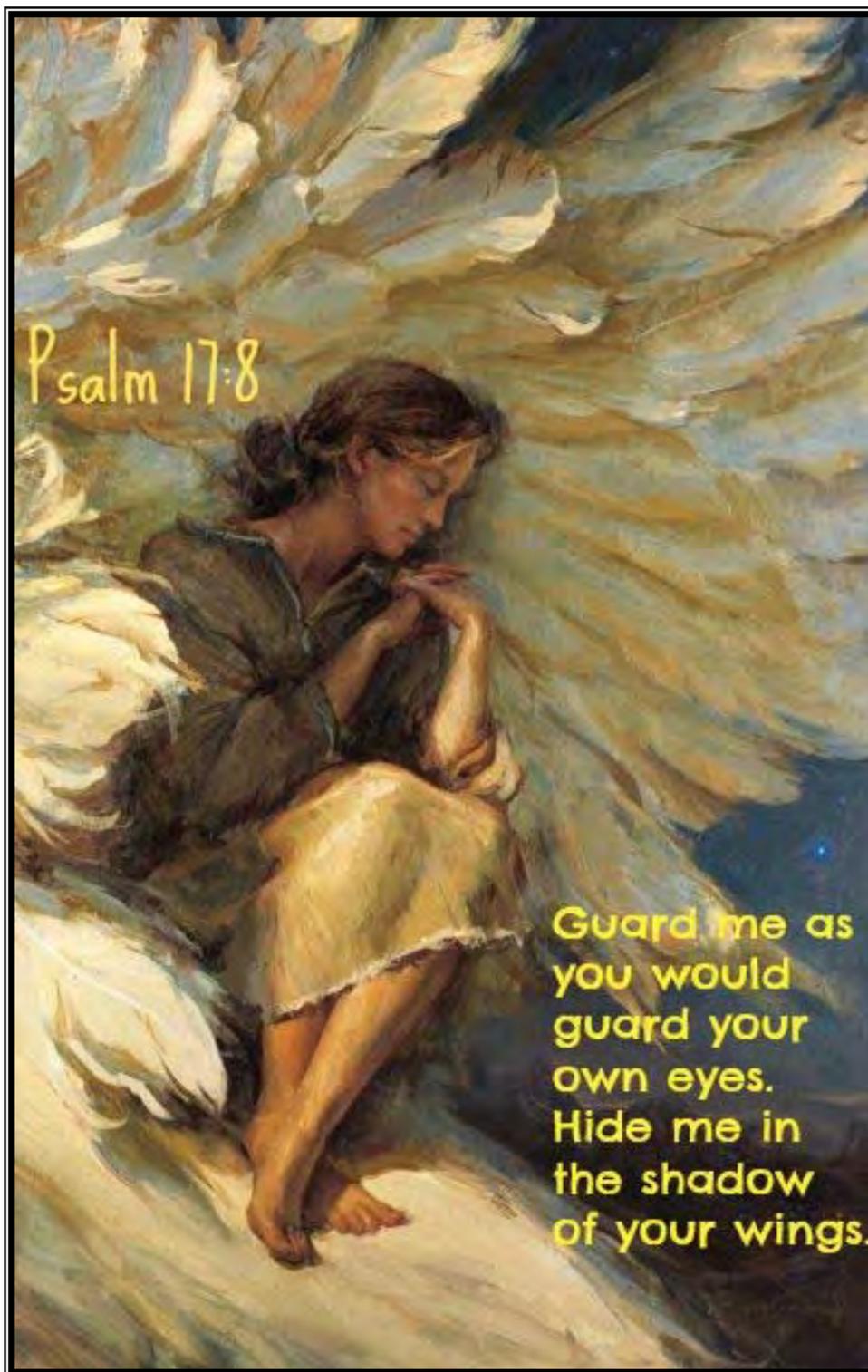




Electronically published by Our Lady of the Angels Region
of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA.



LETTER FROM OUR REGION MINISTER



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

It seems as though we were just celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus, and now we are already beginning the time when we meditate on his death. It is so very Franciscan to have both of these momentous occasions on our minds and in our prayer time every day! The Crib and the Cross were a source of inspiration and wonder for our Seraphic Father because there he encountered the humanity and humility of our Savior. Francis emptied himself of all the distractions of this world so that he could fill himself continually with the presence of Christ.

Lent is a great time for us to give ourselves a “checkup” in this regard. Do the Crib and the Cross call out to us each day? Where do we find the inspiration to follow our Rule, “...going from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel?” How do we treat one another? Are we kind? Are we willing to reach out to those in need? Are we willing to reach out to our own brothers and sisters with whom we do not agree? Are we transformed by the humanity and humility of Jesus as Saint Francis was? Some days it’s not easy.

Brothers and sisters, precisely because this is a challenge, we need to support and encourage one another in our efforts to live the Rule and the Gospel! We are blessed because one of the hallmarks of the Franciscan way of life is fraternity. The fraternity gives us life and can help us to nurture and strengthen our commitment as Secular Franciscans, but is up to us to reach out to one another. One way this can happen within the fraternity is through ongoing formation.

I want to encourage each one of you, not only Councils and Formation teams, but everyone, to build a robust ongoing formation program in your fraternity. Read together, discuss the Franciscan topics that excite you, offer to give a presentation. Lately, I have read some excellent books and listened to two wonderful lecture series which I am going to recommend to you at the end of this letter. (See page 3) Perhaps some of these materials can be used in your fraternity. You might want to explore some of these titles for yourself and then offer to make a presentation. It is up to all of us to nourish one another!

I am looking forward to meeting many of you as we begin our cycle of Visitations and Elections for this three-year period. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the Region Executive Council with your questions or concerns. Please pray for us. We are praying for you!

Peace and blessings,

Diane

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

LETTER FROM OUR REGION MINISTER *continued*

READING AND LISTENING RECOMMENDATIONS:

Lent and Easter Wisdom from Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi

Compiled by John V. Kruse, Ph.D.

Published by Liguori (Available on Amazon)

Francis of Assisi and the Future of Faith

Daniel P. Horan, OFM, Tau Publishing (Kindle edition available on Amazon)

The Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium)

Pope Francis (Download a free copy here: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html



Or purchase in book or Kindle format from Amazon)

The Last Words of Jesus

Daniel P. Horan, OFM, Franciscan Media

Clare of Assisi: A Heart Full of Love

Ilia Delio, OSF, St. Anthony Messenger Press

FUN Manual

National Formation Commission (Every fraternity should have a copy!)

<http://iqfastprint.com/sfo.html>



Audio Lectures—Purchase CD sets or Download from *Now You Know Media*. These are a bit pricey, but they are a good investment for the fraternity to have. The individual lectures can be played at a meeting and discussed. The CD sets come with a study guide.

The Treasure of a Poor Man:

St. Francis of Assisi and Franciscan Spirituality

Brother William Short, OFM

<https://www.nowyouknowmedia.com/franciscan/the-treasure-of-a-poor-man-st-francis-of-assis-and-franciscan-spirituality.html>



Saint Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God

Brother William Short, OFM

<https://www.nowyouknowmedia.com/franciscan/saint-bonaventure-the-soul-s-journey-into-god.html>



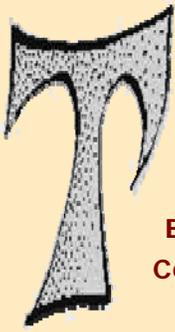
Note:

If you have other recommendations, please send them to me.

dianefmdfm@aol.com



We will compile a list to share with everyone.



**OUR LADY
OF THE
ANGELS
2014-2017
REGION
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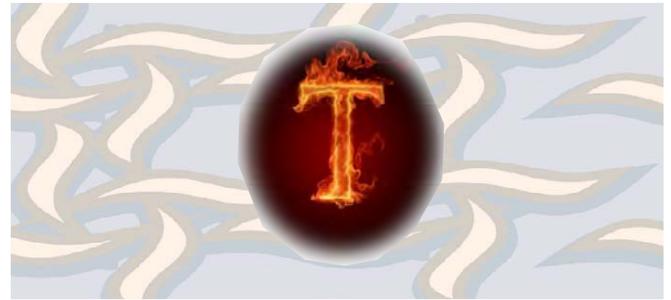
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Bro. Doug Soik, OFM Cap
dsk2131948@yahoo.com

2015 REGION CALENDAR

*Mark your Calendars,
details will follow.*



O.F.S. GENERAL MEETINGS

2015 CONVIVENZA

Saturday, April 25th
Holy Name of Jesus Parish
West 96th Street, New York City, NY

2015 REGION RETREAT - See page 11

Friday, July 31 – Sunday, August 2, 2015
Mount Alvernia Retreat Center
Wappingers Falls, NY

2015 NAFRA ANNUAL CHAPTER

October 9-18, 2015
Our Lady of the Angels Region will host
the National Fraternity Annual Chapter.

CALENDAR

EVENTS

"Living spiritually" today means understanding and respecting the ethical responsibilities we have as consumers. We must embrace and live the Gospel's message proclaiming the dignity of each and every person even in (especially in) the marketplace to fulfill this responsibility.

Please join the parishes of **St. Ignatius Loyola** and **St. Francis Xavier** for an interactive discussion on the labor issues, human coercion and sex exploitation that are all a part of Human Slavery in today's world – and what we all can do to combat this!

February 5, 2015 at 7 P.M
St. Ignatius Loyola • Wallace Hall
(Park Ave. & 84th St. NYC)

RSVP by February 1 to:
AntiSlaveryRSVP@gmail.com (preferred) or call 212-288-3588

Free will offerings appreciated.

How many slaves work for you?



Slave Labor + Consumerism

A Forum featuring Franciscan
David B. Couturier, OFM, Cap

Co-sponsored by St. Francis Xavier + St. Ignatius Loyola parishes
The forum will be held at St. Ignatius Loyola's Wallace Hall
(Park Avenue and 84th Street) on the evening of

February 5, 2015 @ 7pm

RSVP by February 1 to: AntiSlaveryRSVP@gmail.com

OUR LADY OF
THE ANGELS
REGION
COMMUNICATIONS
TEAM:



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The TROUBADOUR*
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REGION WEBSITE
ADMINISTRATOR
DIANE F. MENDITTO, OFS

REGION WEBSITE
[www.ourladyofthe
angels region.org/](http://www.ourladyoftheangelsregion.org/)



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ADMINISTRATOR
PEGGY LEDGER, OFS

YAHOO GROUP
[http://groups.yahoo.com/
group/OLTARegion/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OLTARegion/)



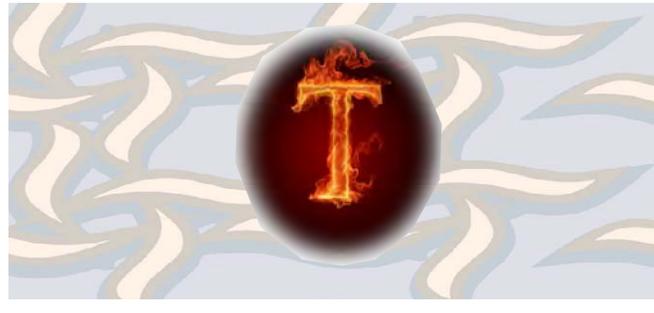
FACEBOOK
ADMINISTRATOR
DIANE F. MENDITTO, OFS



[https://www.facebook.com/
pages/Our-Lady-of-the-Angels
-Region-Secular-Franciscan-
Order/257320867672618](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Our-Lady-of-the-Angels-Region-Secular-Franciscan-Order/257320867672618)



REGION DATABASE
ADMINISTRATOR
ANNA GERACI, OFS



2015 REGION CALENDAR

Mark your Calendars,
details will follow.

O.F.S. CLUSTER MEETINGS

NORTH JERSEY CLUSTER MEETING

Saturday, February 28th – 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
St. Bonaventure Church
174 Ramset St., Paterson, NJ 07501
Contact: Ron Pihokker, OFS, North Jersey Councilor
Phone: 973-497-4291
Email: Pihokkro@rcan.org

CENTRAL NJ AND STATEN ISLAND CLUSTER MEETING

Saturday, March 7th – 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
St. Matthias Church—Parish meeting room in school
168 JFK Blvd, Somerset, NJ 08873-2230
Contact: Mary-Frances, OFS, Central Jersey/SI Councilor
Phone: 732-828-1400
Email: Mfreavey@gmail.com

MANHATTAN CLUSTER MEETING

Saturday, May 2nd – 10:00 a.m.
St. Francis of Assisi Adult Education Center
Meeting Room # 4
135 West 31st St., New York, NY 10016
Contact: Patricia Clayton, OFS, Manhattan Councilor
Phone: 917-502-9895
Email: Reap.clayton@gmail.com

CALENDAR EVENTS

OFS 2015 LENTEN RETREAT **Sacred Heart Fraternity, Yonkers, NY**

Fr. Matt and Br. Scott Surrency (*a student friar from Boston*) will be leading our annual Secular Franciscan retreat at Sacred Heart, 40 Convent Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10703, on **Saturday, February 21.**

The day-long retreat will focus on Reconciliation with God, our neighbors, and ourselves. The retreat begins with Morning Prayer at 8:00 a.m. in the friars' chapel and concludes with Mass at 5:00 p.m. in the main church.

The day will include spiritual conferences, the Rosary, Eucharistic Adoration and an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Lunch will be provided. All are welcome. Please call the parish office or email Fr. Matt at: Please call the parish office or email Fr. Matt at: fathermattj@gmail.com if you plan on attending so that enough food may be ordered.



TREASURER'S REPORT

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGION



FOR THE PERIOD	December 1, through December 31, 2014			
	Beginning Balance	Deposits	Ending Balance	Budget
Cash Balance				
Checking Account	2783.77		2783.77	
Interest				
Misc. Income				
Cash Held on Behalf of the				
N. Jersey Cluster	375.00		375.00	
La Verna Fraternity	595.19		595.19	
Checks issued During the Month			-2122.95	
Account Balance End of Month			1631.01	
Savings Account	19054.30	1.72	19056.02	
Income Statement:	Opening Balance	Additions	Closing Balance	
Income				
Per Capita Income	29858.00		29858.00	31756.00
Total Income	29858.00	0.00	29858.00	
Expenses				
Per Capita to NAFRA	14263.00		14263.00	14790.00
Spiritual Assistant	3750.00		3750.00	5000.00
Regional Minister	159.35		159.35	525.00
Regional Council	3347.76		3347.76	1300.00
Office Expenses	308.48		308.48	241.00
Meeting Place/Storage	800.00		800.00	200.00
Newsletter				2000.00
Retreat	14300.98	-11656.00	2644.98	1200.00
Unity Day's	2497.26		2497.26	700.00
JPIC Committee				500.00
Formation				1000.00
Misc. Expense	375.87		375.87	500.00
Contributions	1280.00	-780.00	500.00	1000.00
Visitation Fund				800.00
YOUFRA				500.00
Travel	1694.96		1694.96	1500.00
Transfer to Savings				
La Verna/Fr money held	109.50		109.50	
Total Expenses	42887.16	-12436.00	30451.16	31756.00
Net Income or Loss				

Attested to: Richard Spana
Regional Treasurer

TREASURER'S REPORT



OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS REGION

BUDGET WORKSHEET FOR THE YEAR 2015

Account	Type of Income	Amount	Account	Type of Expense	Amount
1110	Per Capita Income*	30660.00	2110	Per Capita Expense (NAFRA)**	14280.00
			2120	Spiritual Assistants	5000.00
1120	Interest Income		2130	Regional Minister	500.00
1160	Chapter Income		2140	Regional Council	1300.00
1170	Miscellaneous Income		2150	Office Operating Expenses	200.00
1180	Retreat Deposits/Fees		2170	Meeting Place/Storage Space	200.00
			2180	Newsletter	2000.00
	Based on 840 Professed Members		2190	Retreat	1100.00
			2200	Unity Day/Convivenza	600.00
	* Per Capita Income: \$36.50 Per Person \$30,660.00		2210	JPIC Committee	400.00
			2220	National Visitation/Election	800.00
	**Per Capita Expenses(NAFRA) \$17.00 Per Person = \$14,280.00		2230	YOUFRA	400.00
			2300	Formation	1000.00
			2600	Miscellaneous Expense	400.00
			2800	Contributions	1000.00
			2900	Travel	1480.00
	Total Income	30660.00		Total Expense	30660.00

FRATERNITY APOSTOLATES



Photos credit: San Damiano Fraternity

☪☪☪
SAN DAMIANO
 FRATERNITY

The fraternity is located in Newton, NJ.

FRATERNITY MEETINGS ARE HELD:

ON THE 2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH,

7:30–9:30 P.M.

SACRED HEART CENTER
AT 20 OLD SWARTZWOOD RD
NEWTON, NJ 07860

MINISTER

KENNETH MAJEWSKI, OFS

CONTACT:

Kamlpm@aol.com



SAN DAMIANO FRATERNITY PARTNERS WITH OPERATION CHILLOUT

by Joanne Cuomo, OFS



Members of the San Damiano Fraternity, Newton, NJ, were very pleased this past November to fill 17 backpacks with winter clothing and toiletries for the homeless military veterans in New Jersey. After an October visit to our fraternity by Deacon Ray Chimileski, founder of *Operation Chillout*, San Damiano decided to partner with his organization to help the Vets.

Operation Chillout provided the new backpacks with specific lists of items needed for both men and women. The organization promotes a homeless outreach campaign each year and the outcome of this Winter campaign resulted in many deliveries. During the period from December 14th through January 2015, deliveries included 13 counties in New Jersey, two towns in PA, and several towns in Rockland County, NY.

San Damiano Fraternity hopes this will be the beginning of a longstanding commitment to assist the homeless veterans in this worthy ministry. This year, not knowing our capacity, we set a goal of filling 15 bags for *Operation Chillout*, yet we filled 17 plus an almost-full 18th bag. Next year, God willing, we hope to increase our goal!

We are also looking forward to helping with their Summer campaign when new t-shirts, baseball caps, and bottled water are collected and distributed.



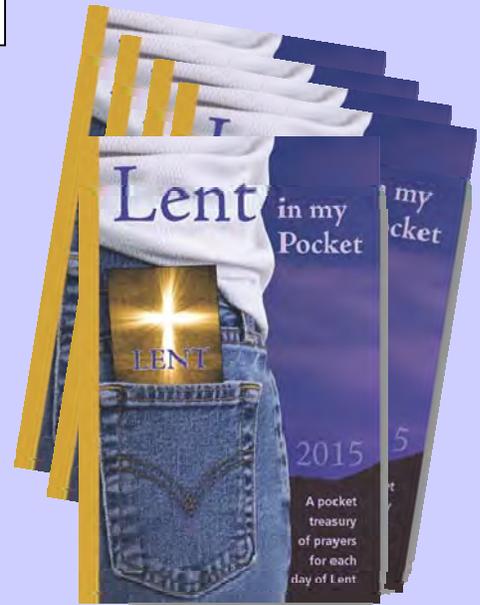
LENT 2015

The Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province—Office of Development are offering a new booklet for the Lenten season titled, “Lent in my Pocket.”

“We rise again from ashes...” is the refrain from a popular Lenten song that reminds us not only of our sin, but more importantly of God’s unconditional love and forgiveness and the opportunity to begin again, over and over again, in our lives.

These daily reflections can help each of us to begin again during the days of Lent as we make our way “up to Jerusalem” to be with the Lord as He suffers, dies and rises again – bringing us to new life.

Many blessings for a holy and joyful Lent,
Fr. David Convertino, OFM, Executive Director



This little pocket booklet WITH ALL NEW REFLECTIONS FOR LENT 2015, is a daily way to begin the day with a simple reflective prayer for each day of Lent, and then an action thought that brings someone or some ministry to our minds and hearts.

This free booklet is available in an e-book, or hard-copy (which will be mailed to you) format. Supplies are limited, so order your free copy now.

THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS OF HOLY NAME
PROVINCE—OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT
144 West 32nd Street
New York, NY 10001
212-564-8799

[http://thefranciscans.org/
lent_2015_order/](http://thefranciscans.org/lent_2015_order/)



ABOUT OPERATION CHILLOUT

OPERATION CHILLOUT HOMELESS VETERANS OUTREACH



Operation Chillout is a grassroots interfaith coalition founded in the year 2000 by concerned volunteers to help a group of homeless Vietnam veterans living in the open under a railroad trestle in northern New Jersey.

“We believe in the inherent worth of every homeless man, woman, and child and provide emergency supplies and survival gear to the most vulnerable members of our communities wherever we encounter them. We bring our care to all homeless people without regard to their religious affiliation, ethnic heritage or state of life.”

We particularly seek out veterans of our military services, many of whom, because of the traumas they endured in service to our nation, face acute Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and chronic illnesses of body, mind and spirit, and are represented among the highest percentage of the homeless in the USA.

We practice nonviolence, radical acceptance and hospitality toward all to whom we minister.

We welcome all strangers as we would a guest to our family and observe “no borders – no barriers” in our work.

We practice humility, charity and the “spiritual and corporal works of mercy” to alleviate the suffering of the poor and homeless in our communities and throughout the world.

For more information email:
ray@operationchillout.org
and/or visit their website at:
<http://operationchillout.org>



BEING HOMELESS HURTS
OPERATION CHILLOUT HELPS





DAWN RUSINKO, OFS
OLTAR REGION - YOUFRA CHAIR
DawnRusinko@yahoo.com

There have been some recent changes to YouFra on the National level. Rob Breen, OFS, has stepped down as the chair, and Sue and Christie Nelson, OFS, have assumed the position. They are a mother-daughter team working diligently to get new guidelines and resources in place for us to move forward in our outreach efforts to the youth and young adult communities. While we wait for these materials and resources to be available, your Region is working very hard at forging a way for Youth and Young Adult groups to emerge in our area.

I've been in communication with a young man who seems to have a Franciscan spirit inside of him. He is eager to help me start a group and says that everything his peers find enjoyable and entertaining, he does not. His desire is to study and learn Scripture and to carry out God's will to the best of his ability. I find his desires impressive for a 21-year-old. He is hoping that by helping me start this group he will meet people his age who share the same passion.

IS THERE A FRANCISCAN



I ask you to, please pray for us to succeed in reaching out to this age group because as you know the Devil and his minions would love nothing more than to prevent our efforts from bearing fruit.

Just yesterday, an article surfaced by a priest who reached out to the young adult community in an attempt to answer the question: Where are the young adults? And why aren't they coming to church?

I must admit his findings were the same as my findings from many conversations with them.

You can read the full article at:
<http://ncronline.org/blogs/parish-diary/attempt-answer-question-where-are-young-adults>



INSIDE OF YOU?

A huge secondary problem in the youth and young adult community is drugs and alcohol. If you know of any youth struggling with this issue you may want to share this inspiring short video with them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WlOTwlt1aek#t=13>



I will keep you updated as to the progress of our budding group and please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have or if you are interested in forming your own group.

I can be reached by e-mail at DawnRusinko@yahoo.com



Together in the spirit and wisdom of St. Francis in 2015.



2015 REGION RETREAT

We will once again be utilizing the beautiful facilities at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center in Wappingers Falls, New York, for our regional retreat from **July 31– August 2, 2015**. The cost is \$175.00 per attendee.



Photo credit: HNP

OUR RETREAT MASTER IS FR. THOMAS HARTLE, OFM.

Fr. Tom is a member of the Friars Minor of Holy Name Province and currently resides at St. Anthony's Friary in Butler, NJ.

In the truest sense, Fr. Tom is an itinerant preacher. In addition to offering retreats, he also conducts pilgrimages to Assisi and Rome. Fr. Tom has the privilege of being the spiritual assistant to the Holy Name Federation of Poor Clares.



Photo credits: Diane Menditto, OFS and Ed Wojciechowski, OFS

Join your Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters in this opportunity to share some community time and spiritual growth.

Additional Retreat Information will be available soon, but remember space is limited, so mark-your-calendars now and pick a roommate.



FRATERNAL TIDINGS

congratulations

2014 — PROFESSIONS



April 27, 2014, Profession of
ROSANNE HUGHES and
JOSEPHINE ROBINSON

Both on the right side of the photo.

On the left side of photo:

Patrick Hanley, OFS, Minister.

They were professed into
St. Mary of the Assumption
Fraternity, Pompton Lakes, NJ.



Photo credit: St. Mary of the Assumption Fraternity



Photo credit: Tom Babich, OFS

On Sunday, May 4, 2014, St Anne's Fraternity, Fair Lawn, NJ, welcomed two new members: **ELEANOR DAVINA** and **MARY PERAGINE**. The profession took place at the Noon day Mass at St Anne's Church in Fair Lawn.

St Anne's Fr. Colin Kay was the Celebrant and Deacon Bill Joyce, OFS, our Formation Minister, was the homilist and master of ceremonies.

After Mass, we adjourned to the church hall for a celebration of our two new secular Franciscans.

Photo L-to-R: Angela Rodin, OFS, Minister; Eleanor Davina, OFS; Mary Peragine, OFS; Deacon Bill Joyce, OFS, Formation Director.

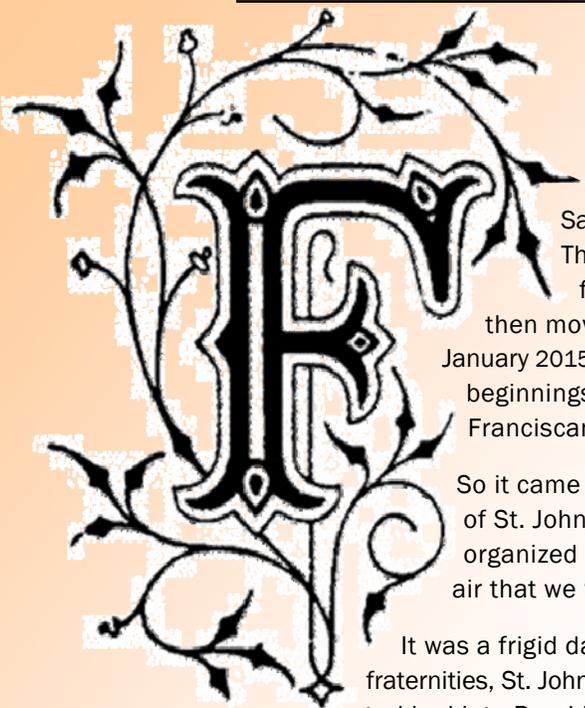


Profession of
MAY THERESA HORNE and **ROCHELLE MARY MARTIN**
on December 13, 2014.

They were professed into St. Mary of the Angels
Fraternity/All Saint's Emerging Fraternity,
New York City, NY

FRATERNAL TIDINGS

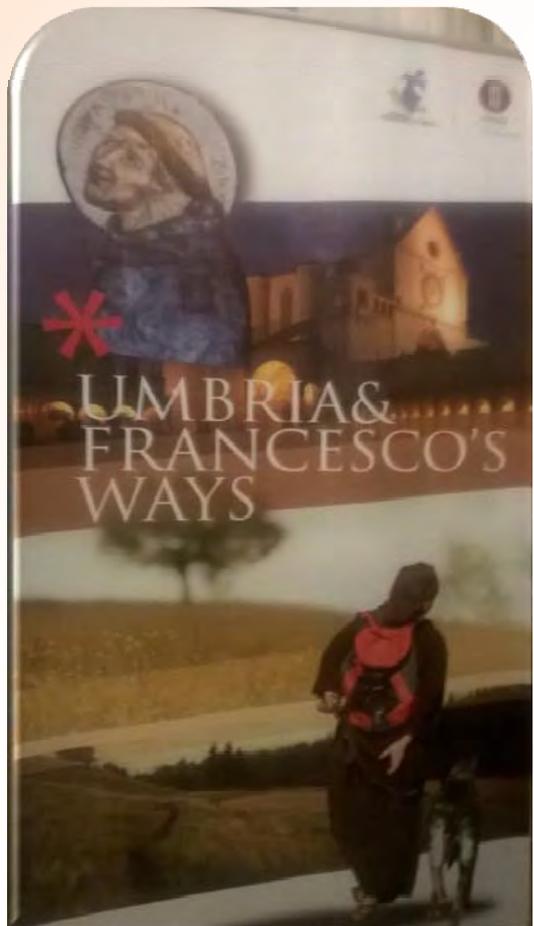
by
Dolores Jules, OFS
and
Italia Testa, OFS



For the first time in 700 years, 19 artifacts from the Sacred Convent of St. Francis in Assisi went on display in New York. The exhibit, Frate Francesco, "Friar Francis: Traces, Words and Images" first arrived at the United Nations in New York on November 2014, then moved to the Brooklyn Borough Hall for public display from November to January 2015. These manuscripts which detailed St. Francis's life and the beginnings of the Order were a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for all Secular Franciscans in the New York/New Jersey area to view.

So it came to be, that Dolores Jules, OFS and Italia Testa, OFS, both Ministers of St. John Vianney, Colonia, NJ, and St. Anthony of Padua, Scotch Plains, NJ, organized this trip for their fraternity members. Great excitement was in the air that we would soon be able to view our Seraphic Father's works.

It was a frigid day on Saturday, January 3rd, just above the freezing mark when 3 fraternities, St. John Vianney, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Stephen's, Perth Amboy, NJ, trekked into Brooklyn. Thanks to our fearless leader, Dolores Jules, OFS, who rented a bus from First Student Charter bus rental, which helps out non-profit organizations.



Our starting point was at the St. John Vianney Church, in Colonia, NJ, at 10:00 a.m. There were 25 individuals present, from all three fraternities, as well as family and friends, young and old. Susanna and Maria Testa, ages 11 and 8, respectively, were excited and overjoyed to be present and witness what they felt were, "the greatest sacred documents ever in history, second to the Ten Commandments!"

When we arrived, we were escorted upstairs to the Brooklyn Borough Hall, where people were waiting to get in. Of course, no photo taking was allowed, but we managed to snap a few shots before we entered the room.

"What an awesome sight it was to see all the artifacts!" stated fraternity member, Rosanna Ayers, OFS. "It was simple, just like St. Francis," mentioned Rose McMahan, OFS. Each display was constructed out of discarded lumber, imitating St. Francis' love for creation and each manuscript was protected and enclosed within Plexiglas. Although 90% of the documents were in Latin, and the rest in venerable Italian, above each work was a description of each document in English.

Our guide, Fr. Solanus M. Benfatti, CFR, mentioned that these documents, the great works of St. Francis, have been sitting in the bowels of the monastery, never even exposed to the Pilgrims in Assisi. "It took a great amount of effort and money to bring St. Francis' writings to New York."

continued on next page

FRATERNAL TIDINGS

continued from page 13

“The Fioretti, The Cantic of Creation, the Chorus book and the Bible, were there sitting right in front of our eyes.”

The first letters from the Pope to St. Francis, and works of the great biographers, St. Thomas of Celano and St. Bonaventure, all in Latin.

It was an incredible sensation to be a witness of these great works. The calligraphy writing was so perfect and a piece of art.

“I am speechless and humbled to be in the presence of our Seraphic Father’s creations,” stated Italia Testa, OFS. “Imagine, our Franciscan history, together all in one room!”

Special thanks to Anna Zielski, OFS, member from St. John Vianney, who led the fraternity members in prayer with the Crown Rosary, as well as other prayers and songs on the bus.

Also to Paul Di Lena, OFS, Formation Director of St. John Vianney, who provided the members with English translations of the Rule and the Cantic of Creatures written in 1225.



Dolores Jules, OFS, expressed her sentiments on the return bus trip, saying, “Since never having visited Assisi, when I was reading those documents, I felt Father Francis near to me in a special way. It renewed my enthusiasm to know more about him.”



UPCOMING EVENTS

SECULAR FRANCISCAN PROGRAM:

ASSISI IN THE TIME OF FRANCIS: BIRTHPLACE OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCANS

“SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI” by Mario Zampedroni



At the turn of the 13th century, Assisi, like the rest of Italy and most of Western Europe, was going through dramatic changes in the society. A thriving economy and prosperous commerce had brought the rise of a middle class that wanted its share of power. The alliance of the land owners and the money makers created flourishing cities, but also added to the poverty of those who held no shares in the wealth.

Those in charge of the Church were too involved in those politics. The laity reacted to these unjust and un-Christian developments: the penitential movement, focused on a return to the Gospel, arose. Francis, Clare, and others joined it.

This weeklong course looks at how the Order of Secular Franciscans (OFS) developed in this atmosphere and in this place.



Instructor:

Jean-François Godet-Calogeras
Professor of Franciscan Studies, St. Bonaventure University
Event Dates: July 20-24, 2015 • **Time:** 1:00 - 3:40 p.m.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
OR TO REGISTER GO TO:**

<https://www.sbu.edu/academics/schools/franciscan-studies/summer-program-2015/secular-franciscans-program>



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FRATERNAL TIDINGS

by Dolores Jules, OFS

EPIPHANY PARTY HELD

Members of the **St. John Vianney Fraternity, Colonia, NJ**, held their annual Epiphany Party this past January 10, 2015, for the residents of the St. Joseph Senior Home located in Woodbridge, NJ. Anna Zielski, OFS, has been the chief organizer of this event for many years. During the party, the agenda includes her reading from Scripture and then asking questions about it. Residents are so pleased when they know the answers.

Desserts, fruits, and refreshments are always served. What a surprise we had this year when Alec Kiczek, Sr., OFS, his wife Carol, and son, Ron, from Cortesia Fraternity, Middletown, NJ, joined us for the party. They brought an assortment of home-made perogies, stuffed with cabbage, sauerkraut and potato cheese; they even came equipped with frying pans and the essentials to fry them. Best of all the residents had some. They were delicious. In addition, several more members joined in on the fun, including Danuta Wyszynski, OFS, from St Stephens Fraternity, Perth Amboy, NJ.

As always we had a sing-a-long. Bob Timper, OFS, accompanied us with his guitar and we sang English and Polish Christmas carols. Residents enjoy this since most of them are Polish and singing in their native tongue gives them great joy.



Photo credit: Dolores Jules, OFS



UPCOMING EVENTS

by Peggy Ledger, OFS

OFS 2015 LENTEN FOOD DRIVE

St. Mary of the Angels Fraternity, New York, NY

Our food drive began in the early '90's (1993 or 1994) when our member, Maria Moran, OFS, learned that food shipments for our parish food pantry were being held up on the docks. At her urging, the Fraternity began to collect food at every weekend mass. The food collections turned into a twice-a-year effort; once at Thanksgiving and once at Easter.

It's held as a two-weekend event. On the first weekend, members of the Fraternity will hand out parish bulletins with flyer announcements inserted. We'd been including brown paper bags, but stopped because most people didn't use them. The following weekend, our members are again at each weekend Mass

to collect the food and/or financial contributions that people bring. This year, our first Food Drive weekend will be held **March 15th** and the second on **March 22nd**.

We learned the hard way that it isn't a good idea to collect food on Palm Sunday. We do the collections early to allow the folks who run the food pantry to have the time to sort and package the donations. The Food Pantry at Holy Name feeds approximately 150 families from our own neighborhood each week.



Holy Name of Jesus Church
207 West 96th Street
New York, NY 10025
212-749-0276

For More Information
contact Fraternity Minister:
Peggy Ledger, OFS:
Peggy1@ix.netcom.com



FRATERNAL TIDINGS



On January 10, 2015, **St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity, Scotch Plains, NJ**, celebrated their annual Epiphany Dinner along with their newly appointed Spiritual Assistant, Msgr. William Benwell, Vicar General of the Diocese of Metuchen.

Members were warmly greeted by the new Spiritual Assistant. Minister Italia Testa, OFS, commenced the evening with a brief introduction, and Monsignor Benwell led the Epiphany prayer service with the fraternity.

Msgr. Benwell, son of the late William and Mary Benwell, was born in 1954 in Plainfield, New Jersey. He attended public schools in Middlesex Borough and after graduating from Rutgers University in 1976, immediately began studies for the Priesthood at Immaculate Conception Seminary, then located in Mahwah, New Jersey.

His first exposure to *Franciscanism* came during his seminary formation. On the grounds of the Immaculate Conception Seminary was a house of formation for the Capuchins of the Province of the Stigmata of St. Francis. Among Msgr. Benwell's classmates was Fr. Vincent Fortunato, a former provincial minister.

Following his Ordination in 1980, Msgr. Benwell served as associate pastor of Our Lady of Victories Parish, Sayreville; and as secretary to then-Bishop Theodore McCarrick, the first Bishop of Metuchen, before being assigned to further studies at St. Paul University, Ottawa, Canada. Shortly after receiving his licentiate degree in Canon Law from St. Paul University, Msgr. Benwell was named pastor of Our Lady of the Mount Parish, Warren, and to posts in the diocesan tribunal and chancery.

"Msgr. Benwell, (opposite right) is presented to Pope St. John Paul II by Bishop Paul Bootkoski, Bishop of Metuchen, September 2004.

Msgr. Benwell accompanied the Bishop on the *Ad Limina* visit of the Bishops of New Jersey and Pennsylvania."



FRATERNAL TIDINGS

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Since 2003, Msgr. Benwell has served the Diocese of Metuchen on a full-time basis as vicar general and moderator of the diocesan curia. He is also Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Catholic Charities and serves as a weekend assistant at St. Bartholomew Parish in East Brunswick, NJ.

He considers one of the highlights of his term as vicar general—and of his priesthood was being a participant in the diocesan pilgrimage to Assisi and Rome in 2005, and preaching at Mass in the Porziuncula in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels.

Msgr. Benwell is “deeply grateful to the Lord and to Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity for the opportunity to become part of the Franciscan family.” He considers it the culmination of a journey that could be said to have begun at his birth—he was born on October 4th.

“St. Francis has long formed my understanding of Christian discipleship in general and of the priesthood, in particular. The attention we so often give to Francis’ love of poverty and the created order, while certainly appropriate, sometimes leads us to overlook his great devotion to Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist. Pope Francis has been reminding us of the importance of the personal encounter with Christ; St. Francis reminds me of the special way we encounter Christ in word and sacrament.”

Italia Testa, OFS, Minister, expressed her gratitude. “We are thrilled and overjoyed that Monsignor Benwell has joined our Franciscan family and that with his presence, he will help us blossom and grow in holiness and virtues!

He was a Christmas gift handed to us from the Good Lord.
God is so Good!
Thank You, St. Francis!”



FRATERNAL TIDINGS

by Angela Rodin, OFS

THE family THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS together

This headline holds especially true for 5 Secular Franciscans from **St. Anne's Fraternity from Fair Lawn, NJ**. Dante De Nicola, Mary Ann Macaluso, Peter Macaluso, Susan Moleti, and Angela Rodin, OFS's, recently traveled together to Italy on a 10-day pilgrimage to Rome - Assisi - Florence led by their own Fr. Colin Kay of St. Anne's Parish. Although Fr. Colin is not a Franciscan priest, the trip was Franciscan all the way.

Each day we prayed from a pamphlet provided by Father Colin called, "Italy 2014 with Francis:" In Assisi, we had Mass in a chapel in the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels on the first day, and in the Chapel of Peace (one of the chapels inside the Basilica of St. Francis complex), on the next day.

We had ample free time in Assisi, so the five of us took a trip to San Damiano to see the Cross that spoke to St. Francis.

There was a beautiful statue on those grounds of St. Francis contemplating the valley and Our Lady of the Angel's Basilica in the distance.

The Basilica of St. Clare had, in addition to her crypt, relics of hers and those of Francis.

Everyone on the trip, Franciscans, and non-Franciscans, agreed that the days in Assisi were the most peaceful and gratifying of the trip.

In Rome, there is a little church where St. Francis is said to have stayed while he was in Rome, called, St. Francesco in Ripa. Unfortunately the rooms were under renovation so we couldn't get in them, but the church was lovely and worth the visit.

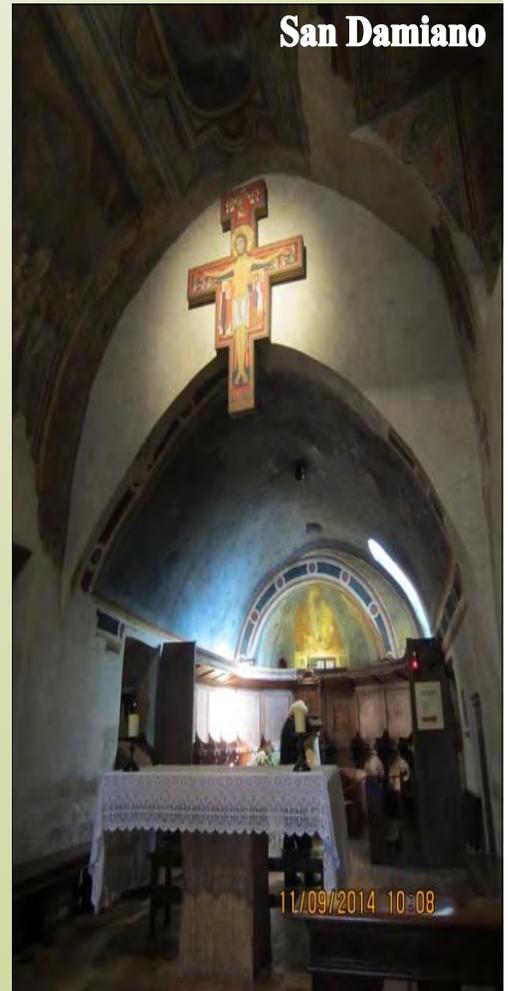
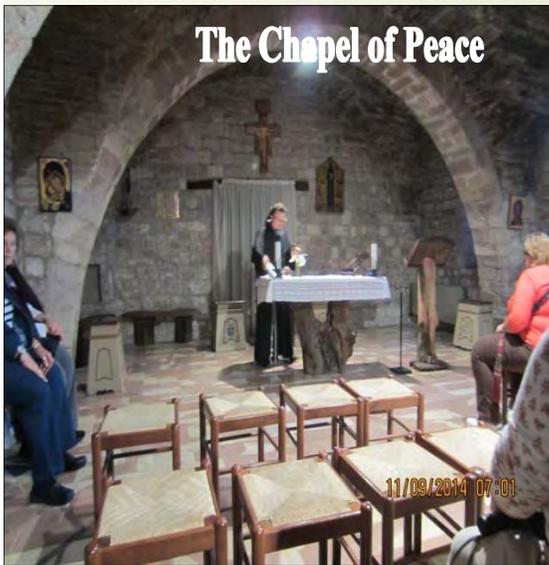


Photo credit: Angela Rodin, OFS

2014 FRANCISCAN JUSTICE/PEACE AWARD

Citing his “ground zero” work on behalf of desperate migrants in southern Arizona, the Secular Franciscan Order bestowed Tucson Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas, D.D., with the *Franciscan Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation* (JPIC) Award.

The award was presented at the Order’s national annual gathering, held October 21-26, 2014 at Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House, Lake Dallas, Texas.

Br. David Buer, OFM, a Franciscan friar who himself received the JPIC Award in 2010 for his work with the homeless and migrants in Arizona, accepted the award on behalf of Bishop Kicanas, who was unable to be present.

JPIC Commission Chair, Carolyn Townes, OFS, introduced Brother David and National Minister, Deacon Tom Bello, OFS, presented the award, saying the bishop “exemplifies the Franciscan values of peacemaking, charity and justice for the poor.”

The award included a glass statue of “God’s hands embracing the world,” and a \$2,000 prize.



Photo credit: Robert Stronach, OFS

Brother David Buer, OFM, accepting the Franciscan Peace & Justice Award on behalf of Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas from National Minister, Deacon Tom Bello, OFS.

In a video message, Bishop Kicanas expressed “deep gratitude,” praised the advocacy of Secular Franciscans on behalf of the poor and homeless, and said the award encourages him and others to continue the fight to fix a broken Immigration System.

Secular Franciscans nominating the bishop wrote:

“Over the last decade, southern Arizona has been ‘ground zero’ for the humanitarian crisis of desperate migrants risking their lives, by crossing the desert on foot. Each year, 150-200 human remains are found in the desert around Tucson. Many more hundreds are found each year along the Mexican border in Texas, New Mexico and California.

“Bishop Kicanas has been tirelessly working to create bridges of love and concern in an era of wall building and militarization. He helped form the ‘Dioceses Without Borders’ project, which unites the Catholic Dioceses of Phoenix, Tucson and Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico, to work together on migration issues. He reaches out to all the human beings in the borderlands: the humanitarian groups; the Border Patrol and other enforcement agencies; the migrants; the faith community; the ranchers and elected officials. He welcomed the Jesuit’s Kino Border Initiative project in Nogales. Bishop Kicanas’ commitment has also played an important role nationally, testifying before Congress, for the need for comprehensive immigration reform.”



Photo credit: Robert Stronach, OFS

JPIC Commission Chair Carolyn Townes, OFS, and Br. David Buer, OFM, pose with the Franciscan Peace and Justice Award that was awarded to Tucson Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas.

THE ANNUAL AWARD, FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE FRANCISCAN PEACE AWARD, WAS REVIVED IN 2007 AFTER A LAPSE OF SEVERAL YEARS.

2007 award recognized the work of **DR. TONY LAZZARA, OFS**, an American physician who operates a clinic and shelter for ailing children in Peru.

2008 award honored **MARIE DENNIS, OFS**, who directs the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and who is immersed in advocating on behalf of people marginalized by society, poverty, abuse, war, violence, and human trafficking.

2009 award went to **DON RYDER, OFS**, from Wisconsin who helped save the Maasai people in Kenya from disease and drought by drilling water wells.

2010 honored **BRO. DAVID BUER, OFM**, for his work with the homeless and marginalized in Tucson and Las Vegas.

2011 recognized **Fr. Louie Vitale, OFM**, a friar known for protests against war and torture and advocacy for the poor.

2012 award to **JANICE BENTON, OFS**, from Maryland, who was honored for her advocacy work for people with disabilities.

2013 DR. MARGIE SWEENEY, OFS, from Florida, was honored for her work in alleviating poverty in developing countries.

A two-part video interview with Dr. Sweeney can be viewed at:
YouTube.com/SecularFranciscans



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