



The Herald

Newsletter of St. Elizabeth
of Hungary Regional
Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order
Winter 2023

From our Regional Spiritual Assistant
Pamela O. Deres, OFS



Did you know that St Francis De Sales was born to a noble family in the kingdom of Savoy, near Geneva, Switzerland on August 21, 1567, in the "St Francis of Assisi room" of his family home, so named from an old painting on the wall showing the friar of Assisi preaching to the birds?

That at his baptism he was named

Francis Bonaventure after two Franciscan Saints, that his family was clearly devoted too? Imagine two of our beloved Franciscan saints were given to him as his Patron Saints on that special day! It's no wonder that after he was appointed coadjutor Bishop of Geneva that he had himself enrolled in the Archconfraternity of the Cord of St Francis.

The similarities between the lives of our 2 Francis's are quite profound. Both men were born into wealth and position, raised by fathers who had great ambitions for their first-born sons. One to continue in the family business, the other to become a lawyer and ascend to the ranks of Senator. Both had mothers who understood the call of God, the Mission, that their sons were being called to by their Heavenly Father. Both had Bishops who paved the way for them to answer their Divine Call.

St Francis prayed in the chapel three times for God to reveal to him how he should proceed. St Francis de Sales was traveling with his companion to Padua to study for the bar, three times he was knocked off his horse and the sword and scabbard formed the cross on the ground. It was a quiet country road with no bumps and yet three times St Francis de Sales landed unceremoniously on the ground with the cross facing him. Both men received the message loud and clear; God has special plans for them, and both said yes without hesitation.

Our Portiuncula Chapel at Assisi was especially dear to Saint Francis de Sales because of the great spiritual favors he received there. At Evian, on the south shore of Lake Geneva, St Francis of Assisi appeared to him and said: "You desire martyrdom, just as I once longed for it. But, like me, you will not obtain it. You will have to become an instrument of your own martyrdom."

(Continued on Page 2)

Spiritual Assistant's Message	1
From the Minister's Desk	2
Reflections on Regional Retreat	3
Corpus Christi Award	3
Regional Chapter, 2023	4
Congratulations to the Newly Elected Councils!	5
St. Francis and the Nativity	5
Regional Lenten Service Project	6
Peace and Blessings from the Formation Team	6
Let Peace and Justice Flow!	7
Requiescat in Pace	7
Lenten Retreat Day, 2023	8
Servant of God Joseph Dutton Celebration	9
District 3 Day of Recollection	9
Joint "Third Order" Come and See Event	10
Reflection on the Cantic of Co-Creation	11
Congratulations to the Newly Professed!	12

(Spiritual Assistant Message, Continued from Page 1)

Yes, you read that right: St Francis of Assisi actually appeared to St Francis de Sales!

I have come to have great affinity for this beautiful Holy man who held Our Seraphic Father in such high regard. Sadly, in this small space it is impossible to delve deeply into the Introduction to the Devout Life, but I did want to share 5 things to learn about Virtue from St Francis de Sales written by Kevin Clark:

Pick a Specific virtue to practice: choose one you will have the opportunity to practice:

Patience: It is with our own family and friends that we need to show the most patience.

Humility: St Francis suggests: "Never cast down your eyes without humbling your heart".

Gentleness: If we have acted badly in anger, St Francis suggests we waste no time in trying to make amends.

Obedience: A good place to start: bending our will to the will of others when we are not required to.

Whether St Francis de Sales was actually a Third Order Franciscan is up for debate. SSPX Third Order of St Francis (TOSF) Chaplain Fr. Jacques Emily has written an article stating he was definitely a TOSF Cordbearer. (I could not access the article to verify this information) Other sites including Roman Catholic Saints "stated that Saint Francis de Sales was not a Franciscan Tertiary, but a member of the Third Order of the Minims, founded by St Francis of Paola. However, he accepted affiliation to the First Order of St Francis from the Capuchins in 1617; and his spirit undoubtedly has a close kinship with that of the Seraphic Saint. He once told the Capuchins that he belonged to the Franciscan Order by special ties; and in 1609, the holy bishop, girded with the cord, preached a beautiful sermon and took part in the traditional procession of the archconfraternity."

St Francis de Sales worked closely with the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, who were very active in preaching the Catholic faith in his diocese. They appreciated his cooperation so much that in 1617 they made him an official associate of the Order, the highest honor possible for a non-member.

His motto was: "He who preaches with love, preaches effectively." As Secular Franciscans are we not always called to reach out in love?

St Francis De Sales, doctor of the church, Bishop of Geneva, author of *Introduction to the Devout Life* and *Treatise on the Love of God*, pray for us.

Minister's Message

Theresa Pratt, OFS

I hope and pray your Summer is wonderful! May it be marked with laughter and joy. As I was preparing to write this article, I came upon this paragraph:

Saint Francis recognized God's work in creation and loved it. He was foremost a follower of Jesus, but in him there was no tension between loving God and loving all creatures of God. Rather, Francis reveled in the sun, gazed upon the stars, danced with the air, was drawn to the fire, marveled at water and loved the earth. He recognized the beauty of God in creation and loved God all the more for the abundance of this gift. He celebrated the beauty and interdependence of creation through poetry and called it "good." And good it is.

— from *Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth*, by Ilia Delio, Keith Douglass Warner, and Pamela Wood

It reminded me of how blessed we are in the Northeast to have four seasons. Each season has it's own beauty. The Northeast has so much natural beauty to remind us of God's generosity and love. I personally feel closest to God when I'm on my walks with my new puppy. Not really walks yet. Presently, she's in a backpack on my back half the time. So, this summer I pray you'll get out and about and see the beauty that God has blessed us with.



Peace Prayer of St Frances de Sales:

"Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life; rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise, God, whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand it, God will carry you in His arms.

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same understanding Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day.

He will either shield you from suffering or will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations."

“3 Cs for Secular Franciscans” Reflections on the Regional Retreat

Elaine Lareau, OFS

These are my reflections and review of our May retreat with Father Joe Powell, OFM, Parish Administrator of St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Derry, NH, as our retreat master. With his laid-back, no-frills style, this young Franciscan priest delivered a strong message gently.

He chose 3 Cs for Secular Franciscans: Conversion, Communion, and Co-Creation. He spoke of conversion as leading us out of our way of doing to a complete turnaround. When we receive Baptism, we become children of God, as our first complete turnaround. Communion easily relates to Eucharist. At the same time, we connect to community (with unity). We are called to expand our vision to common ground and our common humanity. Father Joe stressed conversation as it relates to dialogue, derived from “dio” (with) and logo (word-Christ). We recall the Prologue of John’s Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1)

In reference to Co-Creation, we refer to economy, “the laws of the household and the household of the world, where we care for each other.” Each person is precious as we note in Jeremiah: “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.” (Jeremiah 1:5) With economy we consider ecology, that draws us into our vision of nature, as we are stewards of all nature and all living beings. As I reflect with the 3 Cs, I am aware of this simple sequence as relating to Jesus’ call to love one another.

Especially, Father Joe asked us: “Who passed down the Franciscan spirit to you?” What trait attracted you to this person? Was it fierceness, boldness, passion, hospitality? He cited the example of Theresa Baker’s intensity and her ability to get straight to the point. For me, this was a valuable moment in the retreat, as it brought the people who inspired me strongly to mind.

In highlighting conversion, we need to consider our falls. We were led to realize that “when there is a fall, there is a call to growth.” St. Francis had a fall of disillusionment in prison. Still, he responded to the call, “Go repair my Church.” St. Clare fell from the security of wealth to the lowliness of life below the city walls. Still, she responded to the call of faithfulness to God in the cloister of San Damiano. Cutting St. Clare’s hair represented the need to “cut back.” To me, cutting a woman’s hair, especially so dramatically, cuts into personal pride and femininity. This was a sacrificial act, a meaningful loss. With the need for a “necessary fall,” we think of St. Paul “falling off his high horse,” in Father Joe’s words.

In remembering St. Francis’ simple way, we think of his spontaneous decision to follow Christ. He read from the Gospel: “If you want to be perfect, go sell what you have and give to the poor.” (Matthew 19:21) He did not choose theological study to make his decision. He relied on the word of Christ. Also, I am aware that he responded to another reading: “Take nothing for the journey.” (Luke 9:3) We see his authenticity and pure desire, to which he calls his Franciscan followers.

During this retreat, Father Joe spoke volumes in an economy of words. He left us, inspired by his humor and directness. I have experienced time well-spent reflecting and reliving the retreat.



St. John the Baptist Fraternity Honored with Corpus Christi Award

Minister Dean Astumian, OFS, accepts the Corpus Christi Award from Corpus Christi Parish in Winslow, ME, for outstanding volunteer service to the parish. The fraternity was honored at an outdoor Mass on June 10th, 2023.

Regional Chapter 2023

This year's Regional Chapter was a Visitation Chapter. We were blessed to have Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM, and Joshua Molidor, OFS, join us for our Pastoral and Fraternal Visitation. Fr. Jerome, National Spiritual Assistant, conducted the pastoral visitation. Joshua Molidor, OFS, a delegate of National Minister Jane DeRose-Bamman, OFS, conducted the pastoral visitation.

The time of a Fraternal Visitation is a moment of grace for the Regional Fraternity. The nature and purpose of a Visitation is documented in the General Constitutions, Articles 92-94, and is well worth reading. It can be found on the National Website home page under "OFS Governing Documents". [https:// www.secularfranciscansusa.org/](https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/)

Our visitors did an excellent job. It truly was a grace filled weekend and we got our yearly business completed, too. (We approved our budget and reviewed the state of the Region, updated each of our commissions' activities, had on-going formation and prayer times.) The visitors spent time with all the Regional Executive Council, local ministers and spiritual assistants, listening and answering questions.

They were especially impressed by our ongoing formation on struggling fraternities and how we can better help members through their tough times. In their report to our Region, they stated: "This was an excellent reflection sealed by the small group discussion, where ministers from each area of the region committed to one concrete action that would address this common attitude and invite ongoing renewal."

The formation was led by Steve Shields, OFS, Regional Formation Director, and Mary Galpin OFS, from the Regional Formation Team.

Of course we are not without challenges and areas to be worked on. Below is their list of recommendations to our Region.

As discussed in the formation session, start now in identifying and preparing members within the region for leadership positions, as elections are coming up soon!

See to it that the district councilors visit the fraternities face-to-face, perhaps during a local gathering, so as to encourage their renewal of after-Covid fraternal life. This will also help to witness to the strengths and weaknesses of each local fraternity, and so bring this back to the REC!

As you find it difficult to communicate with the non-English speaking communities, please check with St. Margaret of Cortona region on their success with

the communication equipment they purchased. They are just down the road, Bob Longo, Minister!

Instill in each Zoom gathering with the locals the need for good communication, relationships, and renewed efforts to vocations, our National Priorities.

In the midst of the turmoil that the pandemic caused, continue to Pray! Hope! And don't Worry!

The Regional Executive Council takes these recommendations seriously and will work on action plans. So recommendations are already being worked on!

Our 2023 Regional Chapter also provided us with a very special reunion. All four of our current and past regional ministers were there.

Theresa Pratt, OFS—2018-present
Jackie Walsh, OFS—2006-2012
Pat Brandwein-Ball, OFS—2000-2006;
Miriam Kennedy, OFS—2012-2018

John Finneran, OFS, was our first Regional Minister—1997-2000, after Regionalization in 1996. John passed away in 2016.



Help Needed for the upcoming Regional Chapter of Elections

Our next Regional Chapter will be an Elective Chapter. The Regional Executive Council is looking for people who are willing to serve on the Nomination Committee. The committee will start work in the fall. Please let your Regional Minister, Theresa Pratt, OFS, know if you will be willing to help. Theresa's email is tmpratt99@yahoo.com.

Congratulations to our Newly Elected Councils

The Heart of St. Francis, Houlton, ME—6/23/2023

New council from left to right: Kathy Klein, OFS, Formation Director; Deacon Al Burleigh, OFS, Vice Minister; Sonja Burleigh, OFS, Secretary; Lynette Dobbs, OFS, Minister; Susan Hardy, OFS, Councilor; Mary McCready, OFS, Treasurer.



Blessed Lucius Fraternity, Brockton, Massachusetts - 3/12/2023

From left to right: Theresa Pratt, OFS, Treasurer; Heather Cherniack, OFS, Minister; Anne Daunt, OFS, Vice Minister; Roberta Fitzgerald, OFS, Secretary and Mary Hughes, OFS, Formation Director.



St. John the Baptist Fraternity, Waterville, Maine—3/12/2023

From left to right: Martha Patterson, OFS, Vice Minister; Kathy Swegart, OFS, Formation Director; Dean Astumian, OFS, Minister; Kay Spofford, OFS, Secretary and Dan Spofford, OFS, Treasurer.



St. Francis and the Nativity

Dan Spofford, St. John the Baptist Fraternity,
Waterville, ME

It was a bright sunny Sunday Advent morning in Maine. St. John the Baptist Secular Franciscan Fraternity and Corpus Christi Parish had been working on the Blessing of Nativities, a St. Francis of Assisi Coloring Contest, and a Parish Gathering. Our pastor, Father Dan, and Pastoral Life Coordinator, Kim, were wonderfully supportive. It was all coming together!

Weeks prior, we met with grades K-6 formation students to tell them about St. Francis and how he brought the Nativity to life at Greccio. We also introduced a related St. Francis coloring contest sponsored by our fraternity! Eyes were bright as the students listened with interest.

Coloring pages were distributed at this time and were collected a week later to be judged by members of our Fraternity. First and second prizes were awarded by age group, as well as small “prizes” for all students who participated.

On the Second Sunday of Advent, our fraternity would:

- Ask all parishioners to bring a piece of their Nativity set to Mass to be blessed,
- Give prizes for the coloring contest (religious children’s books, gift cards, St. Francis prayer cards, and certificates of participation), and,
- Invite all parishioners to a meal together at the decorated Parish Hall.

A table was set up in front of the altar at the 10 a.m. Mass and it was filled with special pieces of family creches and all were specially blessed. After Mass, over 75 parishioners gathered to have soup, bread, desserts, and water so graciously provided by fraternity members. We awarded prizes to all students participating. It was joy-filled with young and old, singles and families together in a spirit of love, community, and fellowship. Our fraternity was filled with the joy of the season. We are sure St. Francis was beaming in heaven as we introduced his charism of peace, joy, and love to a needy world. Praise be to God for his goodness.

We welcome you and your fraternity to think about a similar event at your parish this coming Advent. Please feel free to contact snowfutbol@gmail.com for planning materials. Blessings to all!

Please continue to pray for and support Bakhita’s family in Cairo as they continue to wait for their Visas in an increasingly dangerous environment. Bakhita sends her everlasting gratitude to St. Elizabeth of Hungary regional participants involved in saving her remaining family.

Together We Served

Lynette Dobbs, OFS

As Secular Franciscans we all have professed to serve others. We serve our families, our fraternities, our parishes, our neighbors and so many others throughout the world to include those who are marginalized. When we started the Lenten Project, I remember hoping that at least some fraternities would participate. Out of 27 fraternities, I'm happy to report that 18 fraternities reported back with what they had collected and distributed. A couple of other fraternities reported they were waiting until late spring/early summer as their parishes already had planned Lenten projects of some sort.

Together the region collected 8,708 items (3,790 pair of socks, 1,851 sets of underwear, 962 T-shirts and 1095 other items), not including the many sandwiches that were made and delivered to the homeless and food that was given to food pantries as part of this project. One fraternity even helped a priest set up a house for someone. Items were distributed to soup kitchens, food pantries, thrift stores, elementary schools, homeless shelters and services, Project Bread, alcohol services, medical clinics, St. Vincent de Paul Society, community action programs, outreach centers, Catholic Charities, migrant ministries, religious organizations who distribute to the poor, free clinics, homeless veterans, Capuchin Mobile Ministry, and children. Looking at this list, I feel it safe to say that St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region has truly served those in need this past Lenten season.

What can we learn from this project? Fraternities working on a fraternity project can become more cohesive, joyful and yes, make a difference in our world today as a result of their efforts. Partnering with schools, parishes, churches of other faiths and community agencies can help enhance our efforts, help us work together with others outside our faith and bring awareness that we exist as an Order.

Working as a region, our efforts our multiplied and many more people were helped this Lenten season as a result. So many other great things can be learned from this, too many to list. I thank all who prayed and were involved in this effort.

Going forward, perhaps your fraternity can begin to think of ways to physically encounter people living on the fringes of society. Many fraternities may already encounter others. For those who haven't, remember how encountering the leper of his day, St. Francis' heart changed? As we encounter others and reflect Christ to them, most often they will mirror Christ

back to us and the love of Christ inside all of us will multiply and shine as God's children grow closer to Him.

May we encounter Christ in all those God brings before us as we journey with one another and strive to deepen our relationship with Him!

Peace and blessings from the Regional Formation team!

This year's Formation Conference will be held on November 10, 11, and 12 at the Franciscan Guest House in Kennebunk, ME. This year our focus will be on Franciscan Leadership and will be geared towards those who are serving (or considering serving) on the REC, or their local Councils, as well as Formation Directors and their Formation teams.

During this year's conference, we will roll up our sleeves and work with our Regional Formation team to dig deep into a Franciscan approach to leadership with real-world examples. We will join in break-out sessions to reflect and share our experiences and balance our work with time for prayer, reflection, and social interaction.

Some of this year's topics include:

Real-world discussions / difficult discussions:

- How to have a true dialog
- Listening skills
- Communication styles
- Delivering bad news

Making decisions together and with the Holy Spirit:

- Discovering consensus
- Letting go
- Leaving room for the Holy Spirit
- The Holy Spirit Approach

Servant Leadership:

- Attributes of leadership
- Understanding our gifts
- Self-reflection

Who will take my place?

- A Gospel Approach to mentoring new leaders

Training for Formation Directors:

- Formation resources
- Teamwork
- Council Formation

We look forward to seeing you this November!

Let Peace and Justice Flow!

Lynette Dobbs, OFS

As we watch or listen to the news, or perhaps even look out our windows, it is easy to see that justice and peace are lacking in much of the world we live in today. Being Secular Franciscans, we are called to build a more fraternal and evangelical world (Rule 14).

Furthermore, we should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which “bear the imprint of the “Most High,” and we should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship. (Rule 18) We can do this by helping others recognize the responsibility we all have to be good stewards of creation, ensuring justice and peace for present and future generations. Our stewardship expands beyond our neighborhoods to the entirety of this planet Earth.

Unfortunately, in our world, many people in the Southern Hemispheres suffer greatly from a lack of resources while those in the Northern Hemispheres often exploit the resources they have, which has resulted in uneven distribution of wealth. Ensuring the ability to meet basic needs for all people and the sustainability of our planet for future generations may seem like a tall order. However, we are invited to start where we can, perhaps that is our home or perhaps our neighborhood or church. We can then build as more and more people come to see the beauty of God’s gift of creation and the responsibilities that go with such a precious gift.

The Season of Creation ecumenical movement is celebrated annually from September 1st, World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation to October 4th, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. The theme for the Season of Creation this year is “Let Justice and Peace Flow.” Have you thought of ways to not only celebrate this important season, but also share it with others?

Here are a few ideas:

- Host an Ecumenical Prayer Service.
- Hold a Nature Prayer Walk.
- Eliminate one disposable item from households each week during the season.

2023-2026 Franciscan Centenaries

A four-year celebration of the 800th anniversary of events in the life of Francis. For more information, please go to: www.centenarifrancescani.org/

2023 — The Later Rule & Christmas at Greccio (1223)

2024 — The Stigmata (1224)

2025 — Canticle of the Creatures (1225)

2026 — Easter of St. Francis (1226)

- Eliminate use of plastics where possible.
- Encourage people to learn more about their carbon footprint and how they can reduce it.
- Educate people on how resources being depleted, consumption and industrialization have contributed to unequal distribution of wealth.
- Hold a session with youth ministry helping them to realize the importance of maintaining biodiversity and the issues related to climate change.
- Have a viewing and discussion of Pope Francis’ The Letter Film.
- Help young children plant herbs that can be grown inside during the winter and distribute them to others. This can help them begin to appreciate the interdependence we have with plants.
- Invite church groups to join in the clean up of an area of town (beach, cemetery, park, road, neighborhood, etc.).
- Plant trees.
- Host an art contest of ways to care for creation.
- Encourage advocacy on current issues related to justice and peace in your area and beyond (providing legislative contact information and sample letters on various issues).

For more information on The Season of Creation or for other ideas on what you can do to make a difference please visit the following websites:

Seasonofcreation.org

Laudatosi.org

Catholicclimatecovenant.org

Requiescat in Pace

Saint Francis of Assisi—Medford MA

Agnes Sticklor, OFS—1/16/2023

Saint Anthony—Roxbury MA

Constance Piccione OFS—2/28/2023

Mary Campbell, OFS—4/4/2023

Saint Anthony—Nashua, NH

Carmen Blushiy, OFS—4/14/2023

Saint Michael & the 9 Choirs of Angels— Rochester NH

Thelma Arenburg, OFS—4/7/2023

Carmel Trepanier, OFS—4/18/2023

Greccio—Derry, NH

Carol Noel, OFS—5/14/2023

Lenten Retreat Day, 2023—St. Francis Fraternity, Milton, MA
Led by Fr. Sam Fuller, OFM Cap.



“The Lord leads all persons by the paths and in ways pleasing to him, and each believer responds according to his heart’s resolve and the personal expression of his prayer.”

I think this quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church encapsulates, for me, the theme of the day of retreat in Milton, Saturday, March 4th by Father Sam Fuller, OFM Cap.

The retreat, planned and hosted by St. Francis Fraternity in Milton, MA, and open to all the District 6 fraternities, began with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass after which we had a period of fellowship over a delightful continental breakfast.

Father asked us before the presentation started to be open to what the day will bring. In the first session, Father Sam showed us a photograph of a large, stone sculpture that he had created called “The Deer Yearns” and asked us what we saw in this piece. The experience was to lead us to feel/hear the Holy Spirit teach us about God and prayer in a unique way. It certainly seemed to work as it challenged us to go deeper and be open to new insights. It was interesting to hear what attendees saw and experienced in the picture. Even though the picture was the same for all, the responses, what each saw and felt, were very different and intriguing. Later, in the second session, Father would continue about prayer but this time using a poem.

Father Sam introduced us to a concept of ‘carefree timelessness’ in prayer. He suggested we “allow God to introduce Himself as He is,” and that “the language of God is silence.” On our part “we come before God naked.”

The nexus of our relationship with God is his mercy. Father wanted us to be certain that we understood prayer as being “union with God.”

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament followed the first session and allowed us time to ponder what we had just experienced and to pray. Lunch followed and we had a wonderful opportunity to talk with our brothers and sisters from our district, to catch-up and laugh at stories about life and family, and to talk about our vocation.

After lunch Father Sam introduced us to his experience working with the homeless and poor in Boston and tied that into prayer. He highlighted it with reference to Mother Teresa’s motto for her order, the crucifix with the quote “I thirst.”

In all, it was an exciting day because we were all moved with the hope of a deeper prayer life. Even though Father’s words were few because he was not giving a lecture, he, instead, invited us to see, to experience, to ponder, and to pray in a way we probably would not have done without his help.

Like Jesus’ disciples in the Scripture, we came away excited for the possibilities Father opened for us, and we were grateful for the generous, Franciscan hospitality offered to us by St. Francis Fraternity in Milton.

For more on Father Sam Fuller and his sculptures and to read more about prayer see his website, <https://samuefullercapuchin.com/>

Jack McDermott (Regional Formation Team, District 6)

180th birthday celebration of Servant of God, Joseph Dutton

Anne Cote, OFS

Aloha! This greeting of love and friendship was heard many times during the day as we joined in the 180th birthday celebration of Servant of God, Joseph Dutton, Layman, at Blessed Sacrament Church in Stowe, VT on April 23, 2023 at the invitation of the pastor, Fr. Jon Schnobrich.

As we entered the church, a lei of silk flowers or black polished Hawaiian kukui nuts were draped around our neck. The atmosphere was one of joy and excitement as people from Hawaii came over to our pews and visited with us.

The Most Reverend Larry Silva, Bishop of Honolulu, was the Principal Celebrant, Concelebrants were Msgr. Robert Sarno, Fr. Schnobrich, Fr. Sahaya Paul, Fr. Bernie Gaudreau and Fr. Pat Forman. Hymns were sung in both English and Hawaiian.

Bishop Silva spoke in his homily about Dutton's life and his forty-four years of service to the lepers on Moloka'i. He became a Secular Franciscan at the end of his life.

After Mass, we walked through the pouring rain to the church hall. Inside we took from the free display table handouts on the life of Dutton, prayer cards with a third-class relic and medals. We sat at round tables in a large hall filled with other attendees and enjoyed a delicious lunch.

We were excited to meet Sister Cheryl and Sister Nariisse from the Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities. They gave us each a tiny gift bag that contained a St. Marianne Cope prayer card and a small vial that contained dirt from her grave. Sister said that



front row - Kevin Coy, OFS; Fran Rawden, OFS; Teresa Herreid, OFS; Regina Fournier, OFS
back row - Marie Clardy, OFS; Anita Wellman, OFS and husband Spike Wellman.

when her grave was exhumed only large bones were found so we may have bits of her bones mixed in with the dirt

After lunch the Gracious Ladies of New York City performed a number of Hawaiian dances for us accompanied by Claudia Goddard on the slack key guitar. We even stood and danced one of them!

We were then shown pictures on a large TV screen of the artwork on the outside of Blessed Sacrament Church which depicts Dutton's time with Fr. Damien and the lepers. Each panel was explained in detail; we could then better understand and appreciate what the artist, Andre Girard, had painted.

Msgr. Sarno then updated us on the status of the cause for canonization of Dutton. One possible miracle is currently being investigated. We were urged to notify Fr. Jon or Fr. Paul if our prayers to Dutton resulted in what seemed to be a miracle.

Fr. Jon lead us in singing "Happy Birthday" and then someone from each table served us birthday cake! Fr. Paul sang a final blessing for us and then we headed home.



District 3 Day of Recollection

Sowers of the Word Fraternity in Windham, ME, hosted a Day of Recollection for District 3 fraternities on March 25th, 2023. There were 30 people in attendance, including Joe and Patricia Makely, OFS, from Holy Family Fraternity in Norway ME, pictured here with members of Sowers of the Word Fraternity (going around the table counter-clockwise): Flora Hand, OFS, Shauna'h Feugen, OFS, Deacon Larry Guertin, OFS, Sue Guertin, OFS, Deb Bernier, OFS, Deacon Peter Bernier, OFS and Gerry Lizotte, OFS.

Come & See

Nicki Frye, OFS, Minister,
St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity, Lewiston, ME

The Saint Francis of Assisi Fraternity in Lewiston, ME, invited the Third Order Dominicans and the Lay Carmelites of Prince of Peace Parish in Lewiston, ME, to participate in a joint “Come and See” event. This was a first for all of us.

We had a first meeting to get to know each other and evaluate how we could best work together. By the end of the meeting we were so pleased and excited about this joint effort.

We decided on the “Come and See” date on Corpus Christi Sunday, June 11, 2023. Possible venues were discussed. We referenced the Franciscans National website and were guided by “Come & See” Events Suggestions. We advertised in the Diocesan publication ‘The Harvest’ and church bulletins in the Prince of Peace Parish and the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish (in Auburn, Maine, across the river from Lewiston).

As we planned, the venue location changed to maximize our visibility to the men’s 3-day ACTS retreat and an Adoration Holy Hour. Fortunately, we were able to reserve the hallway in the Basilica near the events.

Our focus for the “Come and See” was to essentially introduce ourselves. We decided against having a speaker and a power point demonstration, thinking that would be more appropriate at respective individual Orders.

We agreed that each Order would have a 3’ by 4’ poster, giving symmetry to the set up. We obtained access to a printer that used rolls of cardboard-like paper, allowing for bigger graphics. The Franciscan poster included our founder, date of first papal approval, and information on the Tau.

We all had our brochures which included Franciscan ‘Come & See’ brochures from the NAFRA web site. The brochure had room for contact information, meeting times and dates. Business cards were made with this same information as well as NAFRA and the St. Elizabeth of Hungary regional website info. On the day of the event, we started to set up around 9:30 AM. We were booked from 11 AM to 4 PM. We each had our own tables and placed signs to direct traffic. We were all pleased with the final location.

Many members of each fraternity participated on this day and engaged those who showed an interest. Many also went to the priest-led Holy Hour. We found that there was not much milling around our tables looking at our information, rather people seemed to pick up information or ask specific questions. Personal invitations to join us were well received.

Outcome? We are hopeful to see an interest in visits to our Fraternity. An unexpected fruit of the Come & See is that the Dominicans invited the Franciscans and Carmelites to help them conduct their annual Basilica Tour held during the Lewiston-Auburn balloon festival which attracts summer visitors and people throughout the state of Maine. The Franciscans will be setting up a little cafe! All three orders will be able to set up their posters and brochures while making personal contacts. We feel so blessed to have another collaboration with our brother and sister third order Dominicans and lay Carmelites. We feel that Saint Francis of Assisi would be proud of our efforts to enrich the faith of fellow Catholics while rebuilding our Church through collaboration and love.



Elizabeth of Hungary Region Executive Council

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Joe Makley, OFS-Regional Vice Minister
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Steve Shields, OFS—Formation Director
Sarah Anderson, OFS, Pamela Deres, OFS, and
Alice Aubuchon, OFS, - Regional Spiritual Assistants

Reflection On the Canticle and Co-creation

Heather Cherniack, OFS

Between the Quinquennial and our last Retreat on the 3 C's (Conversion, Communion, and Co-creation) I find it impossible to look at our relationships in Fraternity without looking at the Canticle. At the Q each Keynote speaker called on us to remind us that we are truly being lead in our Secular Franciscan Vocation by Pope Francis – especially in the works of *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*. In *Laudato Si* we are challenged to look at our relationships with the Earth and with the poor as a throw away culture that has created the most environmental and ecological impact on the poorest and most vulnerable of humanity. In *Fratelli Tutti* Pope Francis describes Saint Francis as expressing, “the essence of a fraternal openness that allows us to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives. (*Fratelli Tutti* I)” Pope Francis then goes on in his longest encyclical to lay out the challenges and advice of living this way in relation to each other.

Looking at the Canticle of Creatures I believe we too can look and see a Sacramental nature in our own relationships with Creation. Before we get crazy, I am talking about panentheism and not pantheism. There is a difference. That is a whole other subject – the long and short of it for now is that panentheism is acceptable within Catholicism whereas pantheism is not.

When I reflect upon the Canticle of Creation this is what I see. When the Canticle of Creatures addresses Brother Sun – I see Brother Sun as a metaphor for Jesus Christ. After all, Christ is the Light which in us shines. Christ walks with us during the day. And He does shine magnificently. He is our food and our subsistence as the light of the Sun feeds all plants which then feed all things on the food chain through photosynthesis. Without the Sun or Christ, we have nothing – we have no Sacraments, or Sacramentals. Then we come to Sister Moon. During the night when we cannot see the Sun – or Christ we can see Sister Moon. The Moon has no light of her own. Mary had no divinity. However, the Moon reflects the light of Christ. The phases of the Moon are dependent upon how much of the Sun is blocked at night by the Earth. Then there is Brother Wind. Brother Wind could be seen as a metaphor for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit often makes appearances in the form of Wind and/or Fire. We will talk about Fire in a moment. This is how the Holy Spirit first appears to the Disciples.

As we move forward, we see metaphors for the Sacraments of Initiation. In Sister Water we are reminded of Baptism. In Brother Fire we are reminded again of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. And in Sister Earth when

speaking of the fruits and vegetables, we are reminded of the grapes and wheat. These are the same grapes and wheat used to make the bread and wine that become the Body and Blood of the Eucharist. In looking at the Sacramental Relationships of all these things it is Brother Sun and Sister Water who makes it possible to grow these things in Sister Earth so that we can have these things on the altar and partake of the Body and Blood who is represented by Brother Sun.

In the end laying nude on the floor waiting for Sister Death, St. Francis wrote the last verse about Sister Death. In almost all cultures death wears a scary mask. The grim reaper comes to mind as we come closer to Halloween. However, St Francis chose the feminine. He chose the sister – almost reminiscent of his beautiful relationships with St Claire or Br. [Lady] Jacoba. As we look back to the First letter of St Francis – the one which created the Secular Franciscan Order we are reminded that we will meet Sister Death. The Sister Death which St. Francis adds in his Canticle of the Creatures is exactly the Death he speaks about in his letter to the Faithful.

May we be reminded that we have a sacramental relationship with all of God's creations as each moment we have with a creation of God is a moment with Him. May we remember that not only when interacting with nature, but with each other. In many of our Fraternities today there is friction and division. We must heal it and learn true dialogue. Often we hear that we are not called to work with youth or young people – but if we are all connected we are called to work with everyone. We are called to be prolife from womb to tomb and everything in between because we have a relationship with all life and all that God has created, even that person that we just cannot seem to tolerate. The same is true with our Ecumenical ministries to which we are called, as well as our multicultural ministries, and our JPIC ministries. We are called to find our relationships with another, built within these ministries, through conversion, communion, and co-creation as we are all gifts to one another, not just the brothers and sisters whom we are used to seeing as gifts.

The Herald

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Regional Fraternity**

Schedule of Newsletter Deadlines:

Winter 2024 Issue: December 15, 2023

Summer 2024 Issue—June 15, 2024

Celebrating our Newly Professed!

Dennis Marsicano, OFS, of St. Ann Fraternity in Southborough, MA, was professed on June 10, 2023 at his home parish of St. Michael's in Hudson, MA. Pictured (from left to right): Michael Herlihy, Formation Director; Patrick O'Donnell, Minister and Altar Server; Dennis Marsicano, Professing; David Pirie, Vice Minister; (behind David Pirie) Fr. Laurence Tocci, Ecclesial Witness and Pastor of St. Michael's Church of Hudson, MA.



Susan Conroy, OFS and Kenneth Steeves, OFS, of Greccio Fraternity, professed on June 3, 2023 at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Derry, NH.



Wendy Koski, OFS of St. Anthony Fraternity- Nashua, NH, was professed on July 23rd at St. Joseph the Worker Parish. Pictured below are Fr. Sam Fuller, OFM Cap., Presider; Betty Antocci, OFS, Minister; Wendy Koski, OFS, newly professed and her husband Mark Koski, OFS.



Upcoming Events

2023 Fall Formation Conference

November 10-12, 2023 (confirmed)
Franciscan Guest House, Kennebunk, ME

2024 Regional Elective Chapter

4/12-14/2024 (confirmed)
St. Basil's, Methuen, MA

Regional Retreat 2024

Planned for 5/17-19/2024
Location to be determined

Franciscan Day 2024

Planned for 8/24/2024
Location to be determined

Formation Conference 2024

Planned for 11/1-3/2024
Location to be determined