

Newsletter: Divine Mercy Region Secular Franciscan Order



Lower Michigan and Toledo, Ohio

September, 2013

From Our Regional Minister

My Dear Sisters and Brothers,

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As many of you may know, my mother, Phyllis Howard, passed away on August 9th during the annual minister's weekend meeting. As a result, I had to leave the minister's meeting to be with my mother and attend to family matters. God greatly blessed my mother because during the week preceding her death she was visited by her parish Priest who gave her Communion and the Sacrament of the Sick. In addition at the moment of her death, she was surrounded by her children as we prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet. She died peacefully and without any pain. My mother daily recited the Rosary and she received, as our mother Mary has promised those daily devoted to the Rosary, a blessed death.

I want to thank the regional vice-minister, David Seitz and the rest of the regional council, who graciously stepped up and assumed my responsibilities at the ministers meeting. I also want to thank the regional secretary, Linda Solis, for writing on my behalf the minister's reflection contained in this newsletter. On behalf of my family and myself, I want to thank all of you for your prayers, kind words and cards of condolence and Mass offerings for repose of mother's soul. I will be forever grateful for the blessings that God bestowed on my mother in granting her a blessed and peaceful death and for the love that you have shown to me and my family during this time of sadness and loss. May God give you Peace!

“All works of the Lord, bless the Lord. Let us praise and exalt Him above all forever.”
(St. Francis of Assisi, the Praises)

Thank you,
Jim Howard,
Regional Minister



From Linda Solis, Secretary of Divine Mercy Region:

He will answer them: I assure you, as often as you neglected to do it to one of these least ones, you neglected to do it to me. These will go off to eternal punishment and the just to eternal life (Matthew 25:45-46)

Taken by Surprise

Some people enjoy surprise visits. Others are disturbed by them. They would rather be prepared and have planned ahead. There are some who don't even like surprise birthday parties because they are thrown off balance before they can prepare themselves for how they will respond. They feel the privacy of how they would like to celebrate their special day has been invaded and taken out of their control.

There are lots of surprises in the Christian life. Christ surprises us all the time with what He can do with the problems we surrender to Him. But He has another way of surprising us. It's when He comes to us in people who are in need. How we respond to them is our response to Him. Intentional discipleship is spelled out in how we minister to people.

We wish we could manage our benevolence or concern for people on our time schedule and our perception of what are legitimate needs. It's not easy to relate to needy people as if relating to Christ. Often He comes to us to meet our won deeper need: to be partners with Him in ministering to people. When we give for the care of the needy in our offerings at church, we wish that would be the end of it. Then on Monday morning, or during some inconvenient moment of a busy week, someone at home, work, or in the community comes to us with one of the manifold needs of life. "Surprise!" Christ "You didn't expect Me right now, did you? Well, how you respond to this person will be your response to Me!"

None of us can do everything. But once we belong to Christ we are no longer our own. He will guide us to know what we are to do and for whom.

Divine Mercy Region Executive Council

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Marcia DePauw, OFS, Councilor
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Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity Calendar of Events

- Regional Executive Council Meeting, October 5, 2013, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Forming the Formator, November 1-3, 2013, Saginaw, Michigan
- Candidates Formation Day, November 2, 2013, Saginaw, Michigan



To submit articles for the newsletter, please send them to divinemeracy.region@gmail.com
To contact the editor, email divineprovidencefraternity@gmail.com

PRAY THE RULE

Liam McCarthy, OFM

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

- observe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of St Francis, going from gospel to life and from life to the gospel (Art. 4);
- seek to encounter the living and active person of Jesus Christ in our brothers and sisters, in sacred scripture, in the Church and in the Eucharist (Art. 5);
- go forth as witnesses and instruments of the Church's mission among people, proclaiming Christ by our life and words (Art. 6);
- conform our thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by the radical interior change which the Gospel calls "conversion", making use of the sacrament of reconciliation on the way to renewal (Art. 7);
- let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all we are and do (Art. 8);
- imitate the Virgin Mary's complete self-giving in her openness to your every word and call (Art. 9);
- faithfully fulfill the duties proper to our various circumstances in life (Art. 10);
- seek the proper spirit of detachment and purify our hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power (Art. 11);
- acquire the purity of heart needed to set ourselves free to love God and our brothers and sisters (Art. 12);
- accept all people as your gift, Lord, and an image of Christ (Art. 13);
- exercise our responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service (Art. 14);
- be in the forefront of promoting justice by the testimony of our human lives and by courageous initiatives (Art. 15);
- esteem work both as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption and service of the human community (Art. 16);
- cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity and respect for life in our families, striving to make it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ (Art. 17);
- respect all creatures, animate and inanimate "as bearing the imprint of the Most High" (Art. 18);
- be bearers of peace and messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, as immersed in the resurrection of Christ, we serenely tend towards Sister Death and our ultimate encounter with you, our Father (Art 19).

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

Around Our Region

Greetings from St. Paschal Fraternity in Toledo, Ohio! We will be hosting a retreat on Sunday, November 10, 2013. It will be from 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM at the Rosary Care Center on the northern edge of Lourdes University campus. The address is 6832 Convent Boulevard, Sylvania, Ohio. Lunch can be brown bag, or \$6.75 in the dining room. The presenter will be Sr. Mary Thill, OFS. Cost: Free Will Donation. Questions? Contact Jeannie Dery OFS at 419-472-1810 or Lisa Craig OFS at 419-508-8210. Please call to register by November 3, 2013, so we can plan for those who are coming. Thank you!