

Newsletter: Divine Mercy Region Secular Franciscan Order



Lower Michigan and Toledo, Ohio

April, 2014

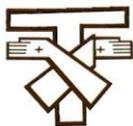
From Our Regional Minister

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In this edition:

- From Our Regional Minister
- Spring Ministers' Meeting
- JPIC Representative Needed!
- Regional Events
- Formation News
- Alphabet Prayer
- Nickels & Dimes
- From Death Into Life
- Contact Us!

“Let us bless the Lord, the living and true God; to Him let us always render praise, glory, honor, blessing, and every good. Amen. Amen. So be it. So be it.” (St. Francis, Office of the Passion)



At the national gathering in Kansas City, the topic of 501(c)(3) status of fraternities came up for discussion. For those of you who do not know what 501(c)(3) status means or why it is important, it is the provision of the IRS code dealing with the non-profit status of organizations. Because of the fact that NAFRA is designated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, NAFRA does not have to pay income taxes to the federal, state or local governments. Each Secular Franciscan fraternity has 501(c)(3) status under the umbrella of NAFRA's non-profit 501(c)(3) status. Therefore, our local fraternities do not have to pay income taxes. However, our local fraternities must be mindful that their 501(c)(3) status, since it is a result of NAFRA's status, and therefore it is important not engage in any activity that might jeopardize NAFRA's non-profit status with the IRS. Since our fraternities are often engaged in charitable work, it is important to know that certain conduct could jeopardize NAFRA's status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. In that regard, fraternities may not give money directly to an individual for charitable purposes. Sometimes a fraternity may learn that a person is in need of financial assistance. If your fraternity wants to assist that person by giving financial assistance, it can do so, but not by giving money directly to the person receiving the assistance. So for example, the fraternity could legally give a gift card to a supermarket, pay rent directly to the landlord, make a mortgage payment directly to the bank, pay a utility bill or purchase clothing for a person in need of financial assistance. These activities are all permitted because they do not involving giving funds directly to the individual being helped. Please keep this requirement of the IRS code in mind when your fraternities engage in charitable assistance to those in need.

Jim Howard
Divine Mercy Regional Minister

Spring Ministers' Meeting

Just a reminder to all Ministers of Divine Mercy Region: The Spring Minister Meeting is just around the corner. The snow is melting, activities have started, and we are looking forward to seeing you again. This is an opportunity for us to spend time with each other, to meet our new Ministers, exchange ideas and share fraternity experiences. Please make every effort to attend or send your delegate.

The meeting will be April 12, 2014. It will be held at the Saginaw Center of Ministry, 5802 Weiss, Saginaw, Michigan. Registration starts at 9:00 a.m. and a continental breakfast will be provided.

This year we will be having Mass celebrated after the meeting in the chapel. Thank you, Fr. Jerome, for being our celebrant.



Divine Mercy Region Executive Council

James Howard, OFS, Minister,
jblakehoward@gmail.com (616) 459-7940
Dave Seitz, OFS, Vice-Minister,
dseitzmj@yahoo.com
Linda Solis, OFS, Secretary,
divinemeracy.region@gmail.com
Ray Boisvenue, OFS, Treasurer,
ribnorth@iname.com
Marge Krystiniak, OFS, Councilor,
margelkofs@hotmail.com
Sheri Hafeli, OFS, Councilor,
shafelisfo@gmail.com
Marcia DePauw, OFS, Councilor,
djm49749@gmail.com
Bob Bowersox, OFS, Councilor,
Yukon_bob2000@yahoo.com



Regional Representative Needed Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

Are you interested in current affairs, and have a passion for peace, justice and creation?

If so, you might be the very person that the region needs!

We currently have a position open for a person with knowledge of the five non-negotiables, the Catechism, and Catholic Social Issues. This person is someone who enjoys working with others, is resourceful, and has good organizational skills.

If you believe that you may be this person and are interested in this opening, please submit your name to Linda Solis, OFS at divinemeracy.region@gmail.com.

Regional Events...

April 12	Spring Minister Meeting, Saginaw, MI
June 21	Regional Executive Council Meeting, DeWitt, MI
Aug 9-10	Annual Minister Meeting, DeWitt, MI
Nov. 1	Candidate Day, Saginaw, MI
Nov. 1	Regional Executive Council Meeting, Saginaw, MI (after Candidate Day)

Formation News

The third out of three "Forming the Formators" weekends, which included the Annual Day of Formation for Candidates, was held at the Center for Ministry in Saginaw the weekend of November 1-3, 2013. "Be the Bridge: Accept all people as a gift of God," was our theme for the weekend which included focus on Articles 5 and 13 of our Holy Rule, and Article 18 of our Constitutions.

Our evening began on Friday with our Michigan Poor Clare Sisters, Laura & Dianne, who live in Saginaw. We heard Sister Laura's presentation on "How is the Rule a Model of Transformation for Us" with Sister Dianne's *Lectio Divina* prayer style on St. Clare's beloved text for her own transformation from Scripture: 2 Cor 4:6-10, 16-18. Later, we prayed before the Blessed Sacrament with a Eucharistic Adoration meditation and the Litany of Saints.

Saturday, our Annual Day of Formation for Inquirers, Candidates, and Newly Professed began with hospitality, welcome, introductions and an overview of the day, followed by greetings from Jim Howard our Regional Minister, and prayer by formation team member, Deacon Richard Hulan. The first presentation was "Be the Bridge." So, think about a bridge....a structure carrying a pathway or roadway over a depression or obstacle, a time, place, or means of connection or transition, the upper part of the nose, the part of a pair of glasses that rests upon it, a piece raising the strings of a musical instrument, a card game, etc. Next, think about how others have been a bridge: a bridge to love, a bridge to God, because He is love; and consider those who have been bridges for us: the Blessed Virgin Mary was a bridge between Jesus and the Disciples. She is a bridge between Jesus and us. Jesus

is the bridge between Him and God, and between us and Heaven. And the Holy Spirit is the bridge between us and Jesus. And remember that all the Saints and Souls are being a bridge of prayer for us to God in Heaven. Let us also think about how we have been a bridge to others and to accepting all others.

+ Teach me, Lord, to look deeply into others to find you there. It's so easy to focus on the "unfinished" part of a person and miss your Spirit that might be veiled behind a grumpy face, an angry word, a proud expression. Give me the eyes of your Spirit to see as you see. Amen +

Also presented was a Franciscan Musing on "Francis and the Sultan" by Regional Treasurer, Ray Boisvenue and others, based on the story in the Omnibus of Sources, Franciscan Herald Press.

The second presentation was led by our Vice-Minister and Formation Team member, David Seitz, on Humility. This wonderful gathered time together included "St. Francis' Language for God," used the FUN Manual as the foundation, and included the threefold movement of humility as taught by St. Bonaventure: 1.) God moves in humility towards man, 2) Man responds in humility towards God...resulting in 3) Man's movement in humility towards others (all creatures).

The third presentation on "Francis & the Just Faith Program" was presented by newly professed, Lori Fedewa, from Our Mother of Sorrows Fraternity in Grand Rapids. And Loren Connell, OFM, helped us to look at "A Franciscan Spirituality of the Eucharist for the Twenty-First Century" highlighting the "Earlier Exhortation to the Brother and Sisters of Penance," the "First Letter to the Custodians," and 1 Corinthians 11; the spirituality of the Middle Ages; the

spirituality of the Second Vatican Council; and concluded with Luke 24, "The Earlier Rule of the Lesser Brothers," and "The Testament."

Father Loren offered Sunday Liturgy for us at the end of the day, and after dinner the Formators were back together again recapping the day and commented on how God's Spirit moved in us and how we will pass this on to those in our fraternities. What an incredibly blessed day!

Please note that this year's Annual Day of Formation (Candidate Day) for inquirers, candidates, and newly professed will be held in Saginaw at the Center for Ministry on Saturday, November 1st, 2014. Registrations will be available online and at the August Annual Meeting for Ministers.

Please also note that the Formation Team and I have heard your requests and would like some feedback on the following ways to help you with your needs: Would your fraternities consider hosting an annual day of reflection? We would love to come and offer this reflection time together if the East side and the West side of Michigan would gather together. One day of reflection for East side of the state and one day of reflection for the West side of the state, possibly in the early fall and in the late spring. (The fraternities in Northern part of the state have already been offering days of reflection, usually in June.)

Hosting a day would include the group of fraternities from that side of the state to: for instance, be in charge of finding the facility, one or two fraternities be in charge of hospitality, one in charge of registration, one in charge of possibly inviting a priest for Mass, etc. Thank you for your consideration and emailing me to let me know what you think. Patti Reynolds.
(pattir ofs@gmail.com)

Alphabet Prayer

Anonymous

One night while babysitting, a grandfather passed his granddaughter's room and overheard her repeating the alphabet in an oddly reverent fashion. "What on earth are you up to?" he asked.

"I'm saying my prayers," explained the little girl. "But I can't think of exactly the right words tonight, so I'm just saying all the letters. God will put them together for me, because he knows what I'm thinking."

Fresh Packet of Sower's Seeds: Third Planting, by Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R. , p.8.



Nickels & Dimes

By Ray Boisvenue OFS, Regional Treasurer

So...you are elected Treasurer. And then.... the former Treasurer gives you 20 boxes with 67 years of records! What do you do with it all? What are your responsibilities? You might become overwhelmed and say to yourself "Should I call the Regional Treasurer?" No. That's the first answer. [Hint: Who wrote this article?]

The Regional Treasurer (that's me) would suggest that you look up the web site for the National Secular Franciscan Order. And what would you find there? There's a line item called "Forms and Other Resources." Clicking on that opens a new page. Scrolling down, you will find "**Local Fraternity Treasurer's Forms.**"

These forms can be downloaded in Word or Acrobat format, and they contain information about reporting requirements and various forms for treasurers to use.

A little further down on that same webpage is a letter from the National Treasurer about record retention. Wow! To your relief, it says you only have to keep records of income and expenses, including all bank records, for a period of 6 years, and records of capital assets until six years after disposal (like cars, boats. Who would have these?) There goes 19 boxes of stuff! Although, if you destroy records, your council should be aware of it. Some records you may wish to keep longer.

Helpful Links:

<http://www.nafra-sfo.org/>

<http://www.nafra-sfo.org/forms/>

Watch this space for more interesting information to come, like: How long has this position of Treasurer been in existence?



From Death into Life...

Our Mother of Sorrows Fraternity, Grand Rapids, MI:

KATHRYN BRAUNSCHNEIDER, born Sept. 11, 1927, entered Eternal Life on Oct. 4, 2013

LYNN ALLAN DUBRIDGE, born April 12, 1935, entered Eternal Life on January 9, 2014

You can find us on the Internet at: www.divinemercuryregion.org

Please send stories and pictures of your fraternity's events to Jan or Linda:

Jan Kaeding OFS, Editor, divineprovidencefraternity@gmail.com

Linda Solis OFS, Secretary, divinemercuryregion@gmail.com