

Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity
NEWSletter

Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity of
lower Michigan and Toledo Ohio

September 2007



Executive Council

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Mary Bittner, SFO

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Lois Flickinger, SFO

Formation Minister

Marie Amore, SFO

Spiritual Assistant

Friar Tod Laverty, OFM

Messengers of peace moving forward with Francis



Ministers and guests met August 3 - 5 at St. John's Center for Youth and Family in Plymouth. Next year's annual meeting will also be held there August 15-17, 2008.

Regional Fraternity holds Annual Meeting

The Minister of the Regional Fraternity, Mary Bittner, SFO, opened the 2007 Annual Meeting on Friday August 3 with words of welcome. She referred to the three-year theme chosen earlier: *Messengers of peace moving forward with Francis*.

She reminded the group that Francis told his followers that the Lord had revealed to him that he should greet everyone with the words, "May the Lord give you peace." She remarked that this was one of only three times when Francis said that the Lord had revealed something to him. She urged us to continue our exploration of peace and remember to communicate peacefully and fruitfully.

Participants in this year's Annual Meeting of the Regional Fraternity were taught several techniques to help them in their ministry in their local fraternities. Sessions on Friday evening and all day Saturday let small groups practice Respectful Communication through Mutual Invitation. Characteristics of Low- and high-Context Communications Styles were introduced to help people understand the differences in the ways people approach different tasks and issues.

On Saturday evening Vice Minister Roger Ensign, SFO led the group in an Open Forum in which attendees could discuss any matters that interested them. One idea that was discussed was the possibility of having a Region-wide project in which many fraternities could join together with a common purpose. [See sidebar] Some of those present who had attended the Quinquennial Celebration in Pittsburgh recounted their most memorable experiences.

Regional Project proposed

Organizers are inviting local fraternities throughout Divine Mercy Region to a towel collection for donation to shelter programs.

The committee hopes to kick off their project sometime after Christmas. "People remember the shelters at Christmas, but then they forget about them," explains Ona Harris of St. Bonaventure Fraternity in Detroit. She adds that the organizers hope to have local fraternities on board so that collections can begin shortly after Easter.

Others already involved in the planning include: Jim and Lois Flickinger, Sheri Hafeli, June McRae, Rose Maroto, Joseph Lee, Cathy McAllister, Marge Krystiniak, Lisa Craig, Sandra Harrington and Bella McKigney.

If your fraternity or other group would like to join in this first Regional apostolate, please contact Ona Harris, SFO at onaharris@peoplepc.com, 313-862-3297 or any of the people named above.

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Participants in this year's Annual Meeting of the Regional Fraternity were seated at eight tables that had been assigned to them at check-in. These groups continued to work and pray together throughout the weekend.

Saint Francis Sculpture Garden for Prayer and Meditation planned

Instruments of Hope is partnering with St. Ann's Home for the Aged to build an outdoor meditation garden on a serene and secluded area of its property. St. Ann's is a ministry of the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus and is located at 2161 Leonard St. in Grand Rapids.

This will be a place for residents and visitors to relax, reflect, and connect with their faith and loved ones. The centerpiece of this experiential prayer garden will be a collection of bronze sculptures depicting the lessons and life moments of St. Francis of Assisi. This collection, created and cast by local artist Mic Carlson, has been exhibited at the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy. Now they will grace the grounds of St. Ann's Home. There will also be benches placed along the path and an outdoor chapel where visitors can sit in solitude. A brick Tau and a grotto with the deathbed scene of Francis surrounded with his friends will be constructed as well.

Local fraternities and individuals may place a name on a garden bench, pedestal, chapel bench, or brick. For more information contact Jim and Lois Flickinger flickingersfo@prodigy.net or visit www.instrumentsofhope.com.



Mic Carlson's bronze sculpture "Palanca"

St. Elizabeth of Hungary remembered on her feast day

St. Paschal Fraternity of Toledo, Ohio is sponsoring the raffle of a porcelain image of St. Elizabeth of Hungary as part of their observance of the 800 year anniversary of the SFO patroness. This handmade likeness is beautifully decorated and uniquely designed. Chances are \$2.00 each. The deadline and drawing will be on her feast day, November 18, 2007.

Please send offerings payable by check or money order to St. Paschal Fraternity P.O. Box 9118 Toledo, Ohio 43697-9118 and indicate St. Paschal raffle.



On the Road by Fr. Tod, OFM



*Friar Tod Laverty, OFM
Regional Spiritual Assistant*

As we go to press this time we're all getting back to "normal" after a warm and welcome summer. Perhaps as the new year gets underway, we could profit from taking a look at our relationship with the other brothers and sisters in our fraternities.

As I go around the Region I hear a concern expressed in many different ways: Where are the people who have professed to live our life in fraternity?

At any given fraternity meeting it is natural that one or more members of the fraternity might be missing for some very good reason. Yet one hears of fraternities where the absences of members is so chronic that fraternities cannot function. There are not enough members to have a fraternity meeting; there are brothers or sisters one hasn't seen in months. The reasons given for missing a fraternity meeting seem weak or non-existent.

This inability to depend on certain members in the fraternity leads to a feeling of insecurity in the fraternity, and the insecurity is corrosive.

The analogy of a job comes to mind. If someone hires me for a job, I show up every day for work. I don't call in some day and say I'm not coming to work because I have out of town guests or I'm taking a holiday or I have a card party going on at my place or someone in my family is having a birthday.

Public profession of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order by its very nature binds us to a certain fidelity to our brothers and sisters. It's challenging balancing all the responsibilities of family, job, fraternity, etc. As we begin a new year let's clarify for ourselves where we stand in relation to our fraternity.

Passings

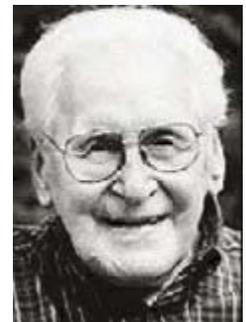
Joseph D. Boyer, SFO

Joseph D. Boyer, SFO of East Lansing, 99, died June 27, 2007. He was a member of St. Bonaventure Fraternity in Lansing and celebrated 70 years as a member of the Secular Franciscan Order in 2006.

He was born on January 25, 1908, in Stevens Point, WI, and he was preceded in death by his loving wife, Elizabeth Marcella, and infant daughter, Winifred Boyer.

Surviving are his five daughters, three sons, 26 grandchildren and 33 great-grandchildren. Joseph Boyer was a parishioner and usher with Church of the Resurrection for over 50 years.

The Funeral Mass was celebrated on Monday, July 2, 2007, at Church of the Resurrection with Father Larry Delaney officiating. The Rite of Committal was held in Lakeview Cemetery, South Haven. The family requests that donations be made to St. Francis Retreat Center, 703 E. Main St., DeWitt, MI 48820 in memory of Joseph Boyer.



Leonard Sobczynski, SFO

Leonard Sobczynski, SFO was a member of St. Bonaventure Fraternity in Detroit. He died on June 5, 2007 at the age of 87.

Leonard was the beloved husband of Ethel; dear father of Lonnie (Judy), Gregory (Francine) and the late Tina Marie Anderson (David); grandfather of three and brother of Roman (Rita), Dorothy Kubek and Paul.

Visitation was held at Fred Wood Funeral Home (Rice Chapel), and Mass was celebrated at St. Maurice Catholic Church on Monday. Rosary and Military Services were held on Sunday.

Mark your Calendar Now

September 15

Conference for inquirers, candidates and formation ministers and teams at the Center for Ministry in Saginaw. Registration forms and directions have been sent to each fraternity.

September 30

A Simple Man concert remembering Fr. Solanus, 5 p.m. at St. Bonaventure Monastery Chapel. Tickets \$15. Limited seating. [see below]

November 10

St. Isidore Fraternity, Grand Rapids Day of Recollection beginning at 8:30-9:00 a.m. Roch Neimeher, OFM will be the speaker. All are invited. [see below]

November 18

St. Paschal, Toledo drawing for handmade image of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. Tickets \$2 each. [see article p. 2]

April 5, 2008

Spring Ministers Meeting at Holiday Inn, Lansing.

August 15-17, 2008

Annual Meeting and Visitation at St. John's in Plymouth. Our National Minister Patrick Mendes, SFO will be making a Fraternal Visit. Guests will be welcome to attend.



Divine Mercy NEWSletter is a bi-monthly publication of Divine Mercy Regional Fraternity of Lower Michigan and Toledo, Ohio.

Local fraternities are encouraged to send their news and upcoming events to the editor.

The deadline for the November issue is October 15.

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Editor

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Remembering Father Solanus Concert scheduled

The Secular Franciscans of St. Bonaventure Fraternity in Detroit invite you to a special concert, Remembering Father Solanus, A Simple Man, in honor of Bl. Solanus Casey, OFM, Cap. on September 30, 2007.

The evening will begin at 5 p.m. in the Chapel of St. Bonaventure Monastery, 1780 Mt. Elliott in Detroit. Featured will be the Father William Cunningham Memorial Choir, the Metro Catholic Gospel Choir, John King Academic and Performing Arts Academy.

Tickets are \$15 each and are available through the Secular Franciscan Office at 313-579-2100 ext. 137, or you may call Ona Harris, SFO at 313-862-3297. Seating is limited, so get your tickets early.

St. Isidore Fraternity in Grand Rapids will host a Day of Reflection on Saturday November 10, 2007 at St. Isidore Church, 628 Diamond, Grand Rapids. Registration will begin at 8 am, and the Day will close at 3:30 pm.

Fr. Roch Niemier, OFM will be the guest speaker. He is the author of the popular book *In the Footsteps of Francis And Clare*.

Local Ministers will receive final details and registration information by mail at the beginning of October. All are invited.

Recent Elections

St. Clare, Grand Rapids

Minister: Marge Krystiniak
Vice Minister: Rosemary Paparella
Secretary: Elaine Ogrodzinski
Treasurer: Walter Krystiniak
Formation: Mary Kay Whitaker
Councillors:
Ardith Quick
Richard Quick
Charles Marker
Mary Ellen Hathaway

San Damiano, Brighton

Minister: Jerome Palka
Vice Minister: Veronica Brennan
Secretary: Clara Line
Treasurer: Karen Szczerowski
Formation: Nancy Myer
Councilor: Michael Rzeppa

St. Francis, Jackson

Minister: Barbara McClure
Vice Minister: Betty Peters
Secretary: Evelyn Hankerd
Treasurer: Arlene Shepherd
Formation: Cathy McAllister

Mary Queen of Apostles, Sand Lake

Minister: Nancy Maioho
Vice Minister: Mary Hentig
Secretary: Bill Hentig
Treasurer: Rosemarie Patin

St. David, Washington

Minister: Leigh Lentine
Vice Minister: Natalie Frey
Secretary: JoAnn Traczynski
Treasurer: Robert Paille
Formation: Michael Atkinson