

A message from our National Minister

About our new name

Beloved National Family,

At the last International Chapter in October in Brazil it was determined that the official name of the Order is Ordo Franciscanus Sæcularis. www.divinemercyregion.org//2012/04/19/message/

When we use English, we are still the Secular Franciscan Order, not the *Order of Franciscan Seculars* or whatever. We remain Secular Franciscans, not Franciscan Seculars, when we use English.

What has changed is that your Regional Minister is now, in English, is Sheri Hafeli, OFS not SFO.

I am absolutely certain that OFS or SFO does not make me or you or Sheri any more or less Franciscan. We are still permanently professed. Our Order is still, in English, the Secular Franciscan Order.

Peace and Love in this Easter Season with our new language changes. The substance remains.

Tom Bello, OFS



Four fraternities win free registrations for the Q

Free Registration Scholarships provided by our National Executive Council were awarded to four local fraternities who attended the recent Regional gathering in Saginaw. Congratulations to St. Louis the King in White Lake, St. Isadore in Grand Rapids, Lumen Christi Emerging Fraternity in Wyandotte, and St. Elizabeth of Hungary in Southfield.

Come to the Q

July 3 to 8, 2012, Holiday Inn North Shore, Skokie IL (near Chicago)

It's spiritual. It's social. It's for the mind, for the soul, for the person you are yet to be!

Speakers include nationally renowned authors and theologians, Sr. Ilia Delio, OSF, and Br. Bill Short, OFM, with our own Ed Shirley, OFS, and Pat Brandwein-Ball, OFS.

Register today. Your local minister has the forms or download them from <http://www.nafra-sfo.org/Q2012/RegistrationFormQ2012.pdf>

Spiritual Message from Sr. Laura Hammel, OSC

Contemplative Prayer

I have an image that helps me in my practice of contemplative prayer. In the Hebrew Scriptures, one image for faith is the broad, long cloth or (he'min) that a woman uses to wrap around her and her child. I find the image of this child wrapped in its mother's arms to be a beautiful spiritual image of faith. The child feels safe and protected by its mother. In a similar way, we may imagine ourselves safe and protected in God's powerful arms. People through the ages have found peace in this image, and it is still relevant to us today.

Like a baby resting in faith with its mother, in contemplative prayer, we can rest in faith with God. While resting, we listen for God's presence. We are not listening for a voice or words. Rather, we are listening for God's unconditional love of us. We find ourselves at peace in that love. We find ourselves accepting it, and responding to it. We may sometimes feel so at rest that we fall asleep, even as a child sleeps in its mother's arms. This is contemplative prayer--being wrapped in faith and at rest in an awareness of God's love for us.

In order to practice contemplative prayer, find a quiet place to be alone. Close your eyes and let your mind be at rest. Let yourself become still. Focus on your breathing. Breathe out and let go of your concerns. Breathe in and repeat a word gently to yourself. The word itself is not important. The word is just a reminder to bring you back to attentive listening in case your mind drifts off to other thoughts or worries.

As your slow breathing helps to calm you, respond with an act of faith. Imagine yourself nestled in the arms of God like a baby securely wrapped in its mother's arms. When I practice contemplative prayer, I often remember Psalm 131:2. Like a weaned child rests against its mother's arm, So my soul is quiet within me.

As I enter back into my day, those moments of peace that I found in contemplative prayer can end quickly. However, during the day when I feel upset or unsettled, I go back to my slow breathing, close my eyes, and recall my experience of resting in God's love. I become once more like a weaned child, resting in its mother's arms. Once more, I find myself comforted. I find myself listening and responding in faith to the gift of God's presence.

Plan now to attend

Annual gathering and Chapter of Elections by Sheri Hafeli, OFS

We are pleased to announce that our next Annual gathering will be held on August 17-19, 2012 at the Augustine Center in Conway, Michigan near Petoskey. Letters will be going out to local fraternities soon.

Meanwhile I would like to share with you what another Regional Fraternity does to insure that they have appropriate attendance at their Annual meetings. This comes to us from Sylvia Paoli, OFS:

St. Francis Regional Fraternity has 100% attendance, and have had since several years back.

After a particularly large number of absentees on Friday evening and Sunday morning and several on Saturday, the Regional Executive Council gave the minister the authority to send out a letter that said ministers/delegates were expected to attend from Friday evening through Sunday morning. Any ministers/delegates who did not attend for the whole weekend would cause that fraternity to be put on probation for a year.

They have not had any fraternities go without representation since then.

Formation News

It is my pleasure to announce that the DVDs made from the presentations from the National Formation Workshop are now available. Bob and Alex Stronach have professionally filmed, recorded and made the DVDs of the National Forming the Formators FUN workshop, and the video and audio are excellent.

The workshop videos make up a five DVD set. NAFRA Formation has been able to secure decent pricing for a quality, durable set that includes five (5) DVDs with content topics printed on each in a one-inch thick DVD plastic case with slots for each DVD, Each case is shrink-wrapped.

The cost for one set of DVDs is \$13.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. I will take your orders within the specific timeframe and then order in bulk to save on the cost. Please consider purchasing a set for your Fraternity to be used for your own FUN workshops, for your Formation Minister and Team, as well as for your Council to be used as ongoing formation and as a great introduction to the FUN Manual.

Save the date - October 12-14, 2012

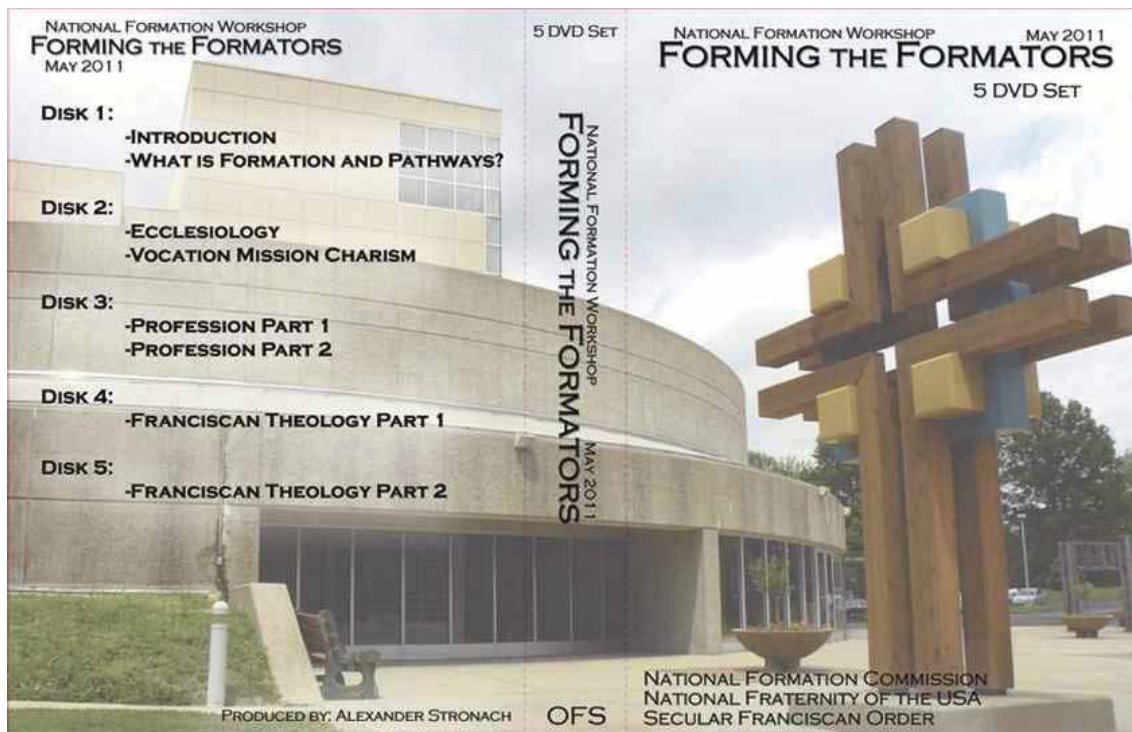
This Forming the Formators weekend is one for Formation Ministers as well as for Formation Teams. We are continuing with NAFRA's initiative of using the FUN Manual for all initial formation.

Last year you may remember that the Regional Formation Team, along with Jan Parker from NAFRA Formation, duplicated the initial training weekend covering chapters of "What is Formation" and "Pathways to Profession", "Ecclesiology", "Theology Tradition, Spirituality", "Charism, Vocation, Mission" as well as "Profession."

Please plan on attending this year's weekend as we will be covering a couple of more chapters with hands-on lesson planning and presentation practice. We will be sharing part of Saturday with the "newbies" at our annual Day of Formation.



Patti Reynolds, OFS



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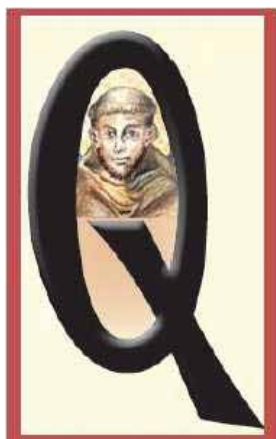
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Mark your calendar

Executive Council

June 2, 2012 Farmington Hills

August 17-19, 2012

Annual Ministers Meeting and
Chapter of Elections at Conway

October 12-14, 2012

Formation Weekend

October 13, 2012

Candidate Day - Inquir-
ers, Candidates and Newly
Professed at Saginaw Min-
istry Center and JPIC

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Local fraternities are encour-
aged to send their news and
upcoming events to the editor.

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