



Up to Now

Newsletter of the St. Margaret of Cortona Region of the Secular Franciscan Order
Covering the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia,
and portions of West Virginia and Pennsylvania

Volume 27 Issue 1

Let us begin again, for up to now we have done nothing August 2023

Regional Minister's Message

Sisters and brothers in Francis and Clare,

When our Order was established, we were known as Brothers and Sisters of Penance. As the times changed so did our title, today, we are known as Secular Franciscans. I would like to take a look back at our original title and how it is still relevant today.

I have taken several passages from our Rule to meditate on:

Chapter 1

Concerning Those Who Do Penance

All who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength (cf. Mk 12:30), and love their neighbors as themselves (cf. Mt 22:39) and hate their bodies with their vices and sins, and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and produce worthy fruits of penance.

Oh, how happy and blessed are these men and women when they do these things and persevere in doing them, because "the spirit of the Lord will rest upon them" (cf. Is 11:2) and he will make "his home and dwelling among them" (cf. Jn 14:23), and they are the sons of the heavenly Father (cf. Mt 5:45), whose works they do, and they are the spouses, brothers, and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Mt 12:50).

We are spouses when by the Holy Spirit the faithful soul is united with our Lord Jesus Christ; we are brothers to him when we fulfill "the will of the Father who is in heaven" (Mt 12:50).

We are mothers, when we carry him in our heart and body (cf. 1 Cor 6:20) through divine love and a pure

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Regional Council St. Margaret of Cortona Region

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Bob Longo, OFS

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Michael Huether, OFS

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Regional Spiritual Assistants:

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Br. Michael Meza, OFM Cap

Anne Mulqueen, OFS

(OFM Conv delegated)

Regional Youth and Young

Adult Commission Chair:

Denis Castillo, OFS

Regional JPIC Chair:

Gil Donahue, OFS

Regional Interfaith

Ecumenical Committee

Chair: Mike Huether, OFS

Regional Multicultural

Chair: Sita Chakrawarti, OFS

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Regional Archivist:

Bob Longo, OFS

Regional Newsletter

Editor: Bob Longo, OFS

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and sincere conscience; we give birth to him through a holy life which must give life to others by example (cf. Mt 5:16).

Chapter 2

Concerning Those Who Do Not Do Penance

But all those men and women who are not doing penance and do not receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and live in vices and sin and yield to evil concupiscence and to the wicked desires of the flesh, and do not observe what they have promised to the Lord, and are slaves to the world, in their bodies, by carnal desires and the anxieties and cares of this life (cf. Jn 8:41).

These are blind because they do not see the true light, our Lord Jesus Christ; they do not have spiritual wisdom because they do not have the Son of God who is the true wisdom of the Father. Concerning them, it is said, "Their skill was swallowed up" (Ps 107:27), and "cursed are those who turn away from your commands" (Ps 119:21). They see and acknowledge; they know and do bad things and knowingly destroy their own souls.

See, you who are blind, deceived by your enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, for it is pleasant to the body to commit sin and it is bitter to make it serve God because all vices and sins come out and "proceed from the heart of man" as the Lord says in the gospel (cf. Mt 7:21). And you have nothing in this world and in the next, and you thought you would possess the vanities of this world for a long time.

But you have been deceived, for the day and the hour will come to which you give no thought and which you do not know and of which you are ignorant. The body grows infirm, death approaches, and so it dies a bitter death, and no matter where or when or how man dies, in the guilt of sin, without penance or satisfaction, though he can make satisfaction but does not do it.

And may they keep them in their mind and carry them out, in a holy manner to the end, because they are "spirit and life" (Jn 6:64).

And those who will not do this will have to render "an account on the day of judgment" (cf. Mt 12:36) before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 14:10).

As Franciscans, we are to live the Gospel life, but our way of life includes doing penance, not only for ourselves but for our Church, our families, and all of God's children.

Your Franciscan brother in Christ,

Bob

<http://saintmargaretofcortona.org/>

Around the Region

Congratulations to Newly Elected Councils

San Damián Fraternity



L-R Minister: **Santos Paniagua**, OFS
Vice Minister: **Milton Hernandez**, OFS
Secretary: **Maria DeJesus Ullon**, OFS
Treasurer: **Gloribel Paniagua**, OFS
Formation Director: **Sara Gonzalez**, OFS
Councilor: **Patricia Ramos**, OFS
Councilor: **Angel Hernandez**, OFS

St. Francis of Assisi Deaf Fraternity



L-R Fr. **Gino Correa**, OFM
Formation Director: **Janet Noyes**, OFS
Minister: **Consuelo Wild**, OFS
Treasurer: **Peter Noyes**, OFS
Secretary: **Sally Mooney**, OFS
Vice Minister: **David Koche**, OFS (on Zoom screen, bottom)
Councilor: **Dorothy Steffanic**, OFS (seated in blue jacket)



Blessed Solanus Casey Fraternity

L-R Minister:
Thom Partenope, OFS
Vice Minister:
Amy S. Kulesa, OFS

Secretary: **Eileen M. Peregoy**, OFS,
Treasurer: **Laurel Swencki**, OFS
Formation Director: **Claudette F. Lucas**, OFS
Councilor: **Kevin Kulesa**, OFS

Congratulations to Our New Candidates

Our Lady of the Rosary February 20, 2022

Genni McGlynn, OFS
Robert Matthews, OFS

Pope St. John XXIII

June 7, 2023



L-R **Barbara Henry**, OFS
Michael O'Rourke, OFS
Elizabeth Brownlee, OFS

July 5, 2023



**Shawn
Dickey**, OFS

Congratulations to Our Newly Professed



Pope St. John XXIII May 7, 2023

L-R **Patricia Sullivan**, OFS
Penny Jones, OFS



Portiuncula May 20, 2023

L-R **William Deroche**, OFS
Patrick Finney, OFS

Congratulations to Our Newly Professed (Continued)



**San Camilo
May 20, 2023**
L-R Graciela Amador, OFS
Hilda Morales, OFS
Sandra Herrera, OFS
Edgar J. Sanchez, OFS
Evelyn Rivera-Cusick, OFS,
Ana Hernandez OFS,
Enriqueta Aguilar, OFS, Maria Guardado, OFS

St. Conrad Hanover May 27, 2023



L-R Emory Appleby, OFS
Formation Director
Judy Topper, OFS
Mary Blickenstaff, OFS
Minister Frank Klem, OFS
Phil Pascoe, OFS



**St. Anthony Nagasaki
May 6, 2023**
L-R Jessica Cabness, OFS
Minister: Lenny Gacia OFS
Harold Zavarce, OFS



**St. Mary of the Angels
June 3, 2023**
L-R Aurea Roland, OFS
Ingrid Roberts, OFS
Mary Delia Sylla, OFS



St. Conrad Annapolis - May 20, 2023

L-R Linda Haney, OFS, Minister, Judith Tyrrell, OFS

Losses in the Family



Catalina Olaer, OFS, passed away on July 15, 2023. Catalina was professed on December 21, 2002 and was a member of Holy Family Fraternity in Manassas, VA

Charles Stephan, OFS, passed away on January 20, 2023. Charles was professed on October 4, 1999 and was a member of Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity in Williamsburg, VA

Theresa Krawiec, OFS, passed away on February 25, 2023. Theresa was professed on May 26, 1997 and was a member of Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity in Williamsburg, VA

Theresa (Terri) Joan Eagan, OFS passed away on April 5, 2023. Theresa was professed on April 7, 1999 and was a member of St. Francis DC Fraternity

Candidate **Joan Babin, OFS** passed away on October 7, 2022 – a member of St. Joseph Cupertino Fraternity



African-American Catholics Cause for Canonization

An Opportunity for Secular Franciscans to Support our Brothers and Sisters in the Faith

Gil Donahue, JPIC Animator

There are currently about 3 million African-American Catholics in the United States; they represent about 4% of church members. Our brothers and sisters in the African-American Catholic community have identified six distinguished and holy church people who they consider worthy of canonization. Some of these names may not be well known to other Catholics; several of these people lived in our mid-Atlantic area. Their stories are unique and compelling. Ralph Moore of St. Ann's Church, Baltimore, MD, is publicizing their causes for sainthood. To assist in that effort, he is conducting a letter writing campaign. Please contact me (Gil Donahue at baitang@gmail.com) if you would like additional information and are willing to support this effort.

Here are the names of the proposed saints:



Venerable Henriette Díaz DeLille, SSF (March 11, 1813 – November 16, 1862) was a Louisiana Creole of color and Catholic nun from New Orleans. Her father was a white man from France, her mother was a "quadroon", and her grandfather came from Spain. She founded the [Sisters of the Holy Family](#) in 1836 and served as their first Mother Superior. The sisters are the second-oldest surviving congregation of African-American nuns.

In 1988, the order formally opened the cause of canonization for DeLille with the Holy See. In 2010 Pope Benedict XVI declared DeLille to be Venerable. A miracle attributed to her intercession was approved by a medical board in 2013, advancing her cause.



Venerable Pierre Toussaint (27 June 1766 – June 30, 1853) was a Haitian-American hairdresser, philanthropist, and onetime slave brought to New York City by his owners in 1787. A candidate for sainthood, he was declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II in 1996. Freed in 1807 after the death of his mistress, Pierre took the surname of "Toussaint" in honor of the hero of the Haitian Revolution. Toussaint also became a successful barber and used his wealth for various philanthropic causes. He also helped finance the construction of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral.

Credited as the de facto founder of Catholic Charities New York, Toussaint is the first and only layman to be buried in the crypt below the main altar of the current Saint Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, generally reserved for bishops of the Archdiocese of New York.



Servant of God Julia Greeley (juliagreeley.org) - Denver's Angel of Charity, was born into slavery, at Hannibal, Missouri, sometime between 1833 and 1848. While she was still a young child, a cruel slave master, in the course of beating her mother, caught Julia's right eye with his whip and destroyed it.

As she lived in a boarding house, Julia's body was laid out in church, and immediately many hundreds of people began filing past her coffin to pay their grateful respect.

Julia was buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery (sect. 8, Block 7), and to the present day many people have been asking that her cause be considered for canonization, a request which was finally granted in the Fall of 2016. As part of the Cause for Canonization, Julia's mortal remains were transferred to Denver's Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception on June 7, 2017.



Servant of God Thea Bowman - [Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual](#)

[Adoration](#) - (born Bertha Elizabeth Bowman; December 29, 1937 – March 30, 1990) was a Black Catholic religious sister, teacher, musician, liturgist and scholar who made major contributions to the ministry of the Catholic Church toward African Americans.

She became an evangelist among her people, assisted in the production of an African - American Catholic hymnal, and was a popular speaker on faith and spirituality in her final years, in addition to recording music. She also helped found the National Black Sisters' Conference to provide support for African-American women in Catholic religious life. She died of cancer in 1990. In 2018, the Diocese of Jackson opened her cause for sainthood and she was designated a Servant of God.



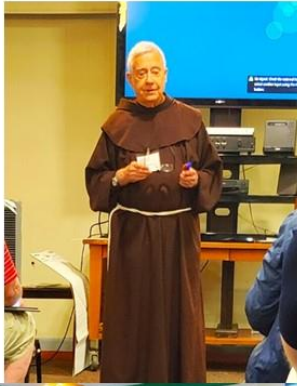
Venerable Father Augustus Tolton (April 1, 1854 – July 9, 1897), baptized Augustine Tolton, was the first Catholic priest in the United States publicly known to be Black. (The Healy brothers, who preceded him, all passed for White.)

Fr. Tolton was ordained in Rome in 1886. Assigned to the Diocese of Alton (now the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois), Tolton first ministered at his home parish in Quincy, Illinois before opposition from local White Catholics and Black protestants caused discord. Reassigned to Chicago, Tolton led the development and construction of St. Monica's Catholic Church as a Black "national parish," completed in 1893 at 36th and Dearborn Streets on Chicago's South Side. Soon after, he died of a heat stroke at the age of 43 in 1897. Fr. Tolton's cause for canonization was opened in 2010, and he was declared Venerable by Pope Francis in June 2019.



Servant of God Mother Mary Lange, foundress of the Oblate Sisters of Providence and first superior general of the [Oblate Sisters of Providence](#), took the religious name of Mary. She was superior general from 1829 to 1832, and from 1835 to 1841. This congregation would educate and evangelize African Americans. Yet they would always be open to meeting the needs of the times. Thus the Oblate Sisters educated youth and provided a home for orphans. Slaves who had been purchased and then freed were educated and at times admitted into the congregation. They nursed the terminally ill during the cholera epidemic of 1832, sheltered the elderly, and even served as domestics at Saint Mary's Seminary.

2023 Loyola Retreat Album



EFFECTIVE INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Peace and all good, my Franciscan Sisters and Brothers!

Continuing with our discussion on interfaith dialogue, we take another look at the article, “What Makes Dialogue Effective?” by Devorah Schoenfeld, PhD., associate professor at Loyola University of Chicago and published in “Ecumenical Trends” by the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute.

Another kind of interreligious dialogue is one where the participants collaborate to form an alliance. The alliance is either widely political as in an interreligious alliance in support of or opposing same-sex marriage, or narrowly political as in a synagogue or church operating a soup kitchen together or advocating together for affordable housing in a neighborhood. The alliance can also be purely intellectual as in Jewish and Christian archaeologists working together on digging for artifacts that either relate to the life and times of Jesus or will promote our understanding of Second Temple history, or as in a group of sociologists doing a study of American religious values that will be informative on how the clergy of each denomination does outreach.

Forming specific alliances may not be the purpose of all interested in Jewish-Christian dialogue. Dialogues can be had to either create an alliance or just simply to learn about each other. Participants may present a dialogue as a way to explore, for instance, marriage in different religions with the intent to create a shared definition of the value of marriage which they would support together or they could enter an alliance to expand the definition of marriage compatible to both religions. Sometimes, participants in Jewish-Christian dialogue will have an unstated goal of learning about and defending Judeo-Christian values, or creating an alliance between the religions to protect certain values against other beliefs which do not support these values.

Dialogues that have purposes of creating alliances do not always make this clear at the outset. Participants may be interested in the dialogue without being willing to participate in any particular alliance. The dialogue about marriage in different religions, for example, could be geared toward creating a shared definition of its value with the intent of the participants to defend that definition. Or it could do the opposite and show how that marriage in different cultures are in reality very different from each other and, thus, needs to have its definition expanded.

This kind of alliance can introduce difficulties for Jews who define themselves as secular, in ways that rarely have parallels among American Christians. Jews who consider themselves secular may encounter specific problems with alliances to further shared religious values. Many Jews who are religious but who view secular Jews as part of their community find themselves not willing to enter into an alliance which excludes them.

In my next article, we will take a look at dialogues where participants come together to learn about their own theology and work out how to apply it better.

Mike Huether, OFS
Regional Vice Minister
Ecumenical/ Interfaith Chairman
August, 2023

NATIONAL SECULAR FRANCISCAN THEME: LISTEN, DISCERN AND GO FORTH

During a conference in early May, National JPIC Animator Carolyn Townes led discussions on the theme adopted by the National Council: **LISTEN, DISCERN AND GO FORTH**. Regional JPIC Animator Gil Donahue participated in this process. It is important to consider the themes, relate them to our mission as Secular Franciscans, and consider how we might be more intentional in carrying them out.

LISTEN

Secular Franciscans are meant to be bearers of peace and perfect joy and act as salt and light in our communities. We are New Testament Christians, and particularly called to live The Beatitudes, engage in good works and give glory to God. Listening is essential to this process.

We need to ask ourselves, and fraternity members, these particular questions:

- What am I/are we being called to be and do?
- How can I/we best carry out the Gospel message in the fraternity, and in my community?
- What is holding me/us back?

Within our local fraternities, we need to engage in quiet listening. Pre-conditions are: respect each other and be open to the views of others. Listening should be non-judgmental. Ideally, we should set aside our own agenda and the retort “we’ve always done it this way.” This is an opportunity for new thinking.

DISCERN

Discernment is not a straightforward process. It involves listening and responding to the place within us where our deepest yearnings align with God’s desires for us. We need to consider what our individual charism is and how best to use it. We should ask ourselves:

- Why did God call me to be a Franciscan?
- Is my fraternity fulfilling its mission?
- Am I as an individual, and are we as a fraternity, making an effort to live a Gospel life?
- What is holding me/us back?

GO FORTH

The going forth process is outwardly oriented. We are expected to carry our Gospel values into the wider community. We have access to people and places unknown to the clergy.

To start, we need to be open to new ideas. We can also show individual and group initiative. A fraternity member might say: “I’m going to do this; would anyone like to join me?”

There are various social change roles; some individuals fit better with one than another:

1. **Helpers** - involving direct service, volunteering in charities
2. **Advocates** - working inside the system, attempting reforms, helping others navigate the system; social workers and attorneys
3. **Organizers** - planning, directing activities outside/alternative to the system
4. **Rebels** - speaking truth to power (i.e., being prophets); public protest and direct action

The discernment process should guide individual fraternity members to consider which one of these categories they most comfortably fit in. There is no “one size fits all.” We should ask ourselves:

- Which roles am I/are we most drawn to?
- Where can I/we make a difference?
- What do I and the fraternity do best?
- What can I/we do more?
- What is holding me/us back?

Finally, in the loving community that our fraternity is expected to be, let us remember: Everyone is a valued brother or sister. We should “Encourage each other every day while it is still today” (Hebrews 3:13).

Gil Donahue, OFS, JPIC Animator, St. Margaret of Cortona Region, June 13, 2023

Formation in the Region: Rita Colleran OFS, Regional Formation Director

The Depth and Richness of Secular Franciscan Life. . . was the theme of this year's Formation Retreat, inspired by the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition. Your servants of the Regional Formation Team felt it was important to provide formators and servant leaders with a deeper understanding about what St. Francis taught and meant for us all to grow closer to Our Lord, Jesus. Equally important is to offer discussion that would help to apply Franciscan principles to our everyday lives. Because this retreat is geared to Formation Directors, Formation Teams and Council members, it is hoped that by this experience, the participants will share what they learned and experienced with their fraternity brothers and sisters.



Key virtues of Franciscan life addressed included: **Metanoia/Conversion, Joy in Penance, Poverty, Perfect Joy, and Unity.** We talk, hear and read about these terms often. There are literally hundreds of writings about them if not more. It can be confusing and cluttered with so many interpretations and ideas. Hoping to clarify our understanding, we looked to our Religious Brothers, and posed this question -- What did St. Francis intend by these terms and how did he see us fulfilling these virtues?

We are blessed in our region to have such access to our OFM Brothers and, further, to have some that are experienced with our Secular Rule and Order, as well as extensively trained in Franciscan history, theology and Franciscan life. For the retreat, Fr. Stephen King, OFM Conv., Fr. Bart Karwacki, OFM Conv., and Br. Michael Meza, OFM Cap., came to teach and guide us. In addition, Fr. Charley Miller, OFM attended to help us along too.

The teachings we received truly brought us all to **a deeper and richer understanding and experience** of our Franciscan virtues. So much was given to us in the three days it's impossible to cover it all in this article; yet I will attempt to share with you a few of the highlights from each presentation.

Metanoia/Conversion: Focused on Rule 7: "motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel, let them conform their thoughts and deeds to those of Christ by means of that **radical interior change** which the gospel itself calls "conversion", Fr. King helped us to remember that this is a daily process which requires us to accept and do things other than what we want, and simply in faith say yes to God. In this way, we follow in the footsteps of St. Francis and grow closer to Jesus.

*The journey of changing one's mind, heart, self, or way of life;
a spiritual conversion.*

The testament given was: "The Lord gave me, Brother Francis, thus to begin doing penance in this way: for when I was in sin, it seemed too bitter for me to see lepers. And the Lord himself led me among them and I showed mercy to them. And when I left them, what had seems bitter to me was turned into sweetness of soul and body. And afterwards I delayed a little and left the world."



Joy in Penance: Using the **Letter to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance**, Fr. King helped us to grow in understanding about how our relationship with our Lord grows deeper in love as we show Him our whole heart, soul, and mind. There is happiness in union with the Holy Spirit. The richness that comes to us through Him as we trust in Him. This compared to those who do not engage in penance and ultimately are "held accountable before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ on the day of judgment". Here are a couple of references where you can read more about this: [Brothers and Sisters of Penance – Five Point Plan pg 19-21](#) and [To the Brothers and Sisters of Penance](#)

(*"The Depth and Richness of Secular Franciscan Life. . ."* from page 10)

Poverty: It was interesting to observe how many of are concerned with this virtue today. We are affluent in many ways and have so much. How do we embrace poverty? We learned about the heart of the virtue of Poverty, and our discussions and sharing our hearts helped to guide us in practicing this virtue in our Secular Franciscan Life. In brief, ***poverty for us is to clear away and give up all the earthly clutter (material, mental, emotion, spiritual) that get in the way of us following and loving Jesus Christ.***

Francis said: "The holy poverty shames greed, avarice and the cares of this world. Poverty is a virtue which is heavenly trampled everything that is earthly and transitory, *is the virtue that the impediments are removed so that the human spirit can unite freely with the eternal God.* It makes the soul, still pilgrims on earth; you live with the angels in heaven and the moment of death free from any constraint if they go to Christ.

It is humbling to think as Francis said that Our Lord chose poverty to bring us fullness of eternal life. According to Francis the choice of absolute poverty is essential to dismantle the old man and pave the way to climb up, and still is a means to escape the constraints of time and place, is to simplify life is the prerequisite for use of things without becoming slaves. [Franciscan poverty](#)

Perfect Joy: Fr. Karwacki guided his understanding that because of the love our Jesus and our relationship with Him, we always have peace, and joy of spirit. No matter what troubles or obstacles come our way, we only need to hang on to our relationship with Jesus and know He will see us through to ultimate peace and joy.

Saint Francis said: "Brother Leo, please listen to me. Above all gifts of the Holy Spirit, that Christ Jesus gives to his friends is the grace to overcome oneself, to accept willingly, out of love for Him, all contempt, all discomfort, all injury, and all suffering. In this and all other gifts, we ourselves should not boast because all things are gifts from God. Remember the words of Saint Paul: 'What do you have that you did not receive from God? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift (1 Corinthians 4:7)'" [The Assisi Project](#)

Unity: In OFS fraternal living, unity is central to our becoming as St. Francis and following His footsteps to love and have a relationship with Jesus Christ. *In unity, we can live and practice simplicity, harmony and peace, compassion, hope, perseverance and resilience, reconciliation, service, stewardship, prayer and reflection. The relationships between and among us in our fraternity can be reflective of our relationship with Jesus.* This section of the retreat was an open discussion about how to bring more unity in our fraternities. Fr. Bart Karwacki, OFM Conv., Fr. Charley Miller, OFM, and Br. Michael Meza, OFM Cap. served as a panel to guide us along the way in staying true to our Franciscan values.

Concluding Message: On Sunday, Br. Michael Meza, OFM Cap. brought all the topics together and inspired us in a very special way. Some mentioned that his presentation was "electric!" *He reminded us about growing closer to God is the purpose of our life. Without Him, life can be meaningless when considering eternity.* He combined all of the topics and taught how they all are relevant to each other to get us to where Jesus wants us to be.

Conversion or Metanoia – Radical internal change when we change our mind about something and develop a conviction about it. We have penance about our former self, grateful for the grace of the new conversion, and continue prayerfully.

Poverty is ridding ourselves of our selfish desires and thoughts; making room for faith, hope, charity and joy. We are open and receive graces and virtues. When we die to ourselves, we have unity with God.

With this little prayer, we understand better how to live each day:

**Lord, transform my mind
Holy Spirit, give me wisdom and courage
Jesus, let me know and feel your love that you have
for not only me but all your children.**

Regional Elections in April 2024



Sisters and brothers in Francis and Clare,

The St. Margaret of Cortona Regional Council is preparing for our April 2024 Regional Council Elections. Our National Area Councilor, Joshua Molitor, OFS, is on board and we already have a venue to hold the elections.

It's incredible to think that 2024 will be here before we know it. Therefore, I am asking our sisters and brothers who are two years or more professed, to discern placing your name on the 2024 – 2027 nomination slate for a position on the regional council. A nomination committee will be set up soon for you to contact for your questions.

In the meantime, below are the positions on the council and the duties for each office:

Bob Longo

Regional Minister

Article 51 General Constitutions

1. While firmly upholding the co-responsibility of the council to animate and guide the fraternity, the

minister, as the primary person responsible for the fraternity, is expected to make sure that the directions and the decisions of the council are put into practice and will keep the council informed about what he or she is doing.

2. The minister also has the following duties:
 - a. to call, preside at, and direct the meetings of the regional council; to convoke, every three years, the elective chapter of the fraternity, having heard the council on the formalities of the convocation;
 - b. to prepare an annual report to be sent to the national council after it has been approved by the council of the fraternity;
 - c. represent the [council] in all its relations with ecclesiastical and civil authorities. When the [council] acquires a juridical personality in the civil order, the minister becomes, when possible, its legal representative;
 - d. to request, with the consent of the council, the pastoral and [national] visits, at least once every three years;

- e. to put into effect those acts which the Constitutions refer to his or her competence;

The regional minister also has the following additional responsibilities:

- to read, study and implement the Rule, Constitutions, and Statutes;
- to set goals, resolve issues, and accomplish tasks for the good of the region;
- to set parameters on how the council meetings will be conducted;
- to inform the council members of their reporting responsibilities;
- to oversee that all regional council members are fulfilling their assigned duties;
- when needed, to delegate responsibilities to appropriate regional council member(s);
- along with the council, to set goals for the next three years;
- to make sure that the directions and the decisions of the regional council are put into practice;
- to keep the regional council informed concerning activities and information at the national level and inform (if needed) the local fraternities;
- to keep the regional council informed about local fraternity activities;
- to encourage area councilors to request local fraternity ministers to attend or send a local council representative to regional meetings and other regional activities;
- to ensure that communication is maintained between the region and the local fraternity;
- to ensure that TAU-USA National Newsletter and Up-to-Now Regional Newsletter are sent to local fraternities by the region's secretary or others assigned to do so;
- to make sure periodic updates are made to the region's directory of local councils;
- to convene a yearly Chapter of Ministers meeting;
- to offer a yearly regional retreat to local fraternities;
- to perform such other duties as are required by the SFO Constitutions and Statutes;
- to carry out the proper purposes of the council;
- to update and maintain the Regional Minister's Binder;
- upon leaving this position, to pass the Regional Minister's Binder to the newly elected regional minister;
- to make arrangements to hand over all regional documents to the newly elected regional minister;
- as an outgoing regional minister, to make him or herself available to help the incoming regional minister become acquainted with urgent and pending matters;
- to hold regional council meetings at least four times a year. (If the regional minister is unable to be present at a council meeting, the meeting may be held with the regional vice minister conducting the business; (see Article 52.1(c) General Constitutions.)

Regional Vice Minister

Article 52 General Constitutions

1. The regional vice-minister has the following duties:
 - a. collaborate in a fraternal spirit and support the regional minister
 - b. in carrying out his or her specific duties;
 - c. exercise the functions entrusted by the council and/or by the assembly or chapter;
 - d. take the place of the regional minister in both duties and responsibilities in case of absence or temporary impediment; (*Also, see Article 81 GC*)
 - e. assume the functions of the regional minister when the office remains vacant;

Additional Duties:

- read, study, and implement the Rule, Constitutions, and Statutes;
- perform such other duties as are required by the SFO

- Constitutions and Statutes;
- assist the regional minister upon request;
- exercise all functions assigned by the regional council;
- update and maintain the Regional Vice Minister's Binder;
- upon leaving this position, pass the Regional Vice Minister's Binder to the newly elected regional vice minister;
- make arrangements to hand over all regional documents to the new regional Vice Minister;
- the outgoing regional vice minister should make himself/herself available to help the incoming regional vice minister become acquainted with and brought up-to-date on pending matters.

Regional Secretary

Article 52.2 General Constitutions

2. The secretary has the following duties:
 - a. compiles the official acts of the regional fraternity and the council and assures that they are sent to their respective proper recipients;
 - b. to see to the updating and preservation of the records and the registers, noting admissions, professions, deaths, withdrawals, and transfers to and from the fraternities;
 - c. provide for the communication of the more important facts to the various levels and, if appropriate, to provide for their dissemination through the mass media;

The secretary also has the following responsibilities:

- if elected, holds voting privileges and is accountable for all decisions made by the fraternity council; if appointed, does not have voting rights on the council;

- compile the official minutes of regional council meetings. The council minutes are extremely important and must be maintained; they contain valuable and sometimes personal information. Every decision the regional council makes should be documented;

Please Note:

1. In the event one of the council members resigns, the council must vote on his or her replacement. This must be documented in the minutes as above. A council member who has been appointed in this manner does not have voting rights.
2. Many discussions and decisions made by the council are confidential and should be kept confidential. Be discreet in speech and keep this part of the meeting separate from the council meeting minutes.

Additional Guidelines

- keeps attendance records at regional council meetings, assists the regional council with general communications, assists in sending announcements of upcoming events, meetings, or other regional activities;
- forwards to the Regional Database Manager, documents such as newly received, newly professed, deaths, withdrawals, transfers, etc., received from the local fraternity;
- to ensure that TAU -USA and Regional Newsletters are sent to local fraternities through the region's secretary or others assigned to do so;
- updates and maintains the Regional Secretary's Binder;
- upon leaving this position, passes the Regional Secretary's Binder to the newly elected regional secretary;
- makes arrangements to hand over all regional documents to the new regional secretary;
- is available to help the newly elected regional secretary to become acquainted with his or her new position on the regional council;

Regional Treasurer

Article 52.4 General Constitutions

4. the treasurer, or bursar, has the following duties:
 - a. to guard diligently the contributions received, recording each receipt in the appropriate register, with the date on which it was given, the name of the contributor, or the one from whom it was collected;
 - b. to record in the same register the items of expense, specifying the date and the purpose, in conformity with the directions of the regional council;
 - c. to render an account of his or her administration to the regional council according to the norms of the national statutes;

The treasurer also has the following additional responsibilities:

- if elected, holds voting privileges and is accountable for all decisions made by the fraternity council. if appointed, has no voting rights (see NAFRA Statutes);

- presents an annual budget for conducting the business of the regional council;
- all payments are to be made by check, recorded in an accurate ledger;
- expenditure of funds must be approved by the council in advance;
- ensures the deposit of all funds into such bank accounts in the name of the region and keeps an accurate ledger;
- maintains a yearly calendar showing monthly payouts and future activity events for which the regional council will need to provide funding. This calendar will help the newly elected regional treasurer after regional council elections have taken place;
- presents an updated financial report at each regional council meeting showing current expenses, income, and checkbook balance;
- appropriate forms for reporting the financial health of the regional council can be found at: [Guidelines, Forms & Other Resources](#)
- submits a financial report and the bank account register for approval at regular intervals as decided upon by the regional council;
- provides the regional council with a year-end report showing receipts, expenditures, and balances in the treasury for the year;
- receives from local fraternity treasurers their Fair Share assessment from the fraternity's Common Fund;
- is available to answer questions when a local fraternity is planning to have an audit of their treasurer records;
- ensures local fraternity Audits are conducted every three years;
- sends the assessed fair share to the National Treasurer once a year;
- receives by the end of the year a current report of candidates and professed from each local fraternity treasurer;
- at a national visitation provides a stipend to both the pastoral visitor and national visitor, if approved by the regional council;
- keeps a copy of, and updates, if necessary, the region's Tax ID;
- updates and maintains the Regional Treasurer's Binder;
- upon leaving this position, passes the binder to the newly elected regional treasurer;
- makes arrangements with the newly elected treasurer and new regional minister to meet at the bank holding the region's checking account to sign signature cards. At this time the past treasurer will hand over all documents pertaining to this position;
- takes the following to the bank:
 - a. IRS Determination Letter;
 - b. An up-to-date letter from National stating – "St. Margaret of Cortona Region is a 501 (c) (3) Organization";
 - c. EIN Number;
 - d. Articles of Incorporation;
 - e. Latest Elections Report; (Original)

Regional Formation Director

Article 52 General Constitutions

1. The master of formation has the following duties:
 - a. to coordinate, with the help of the other members of the council, the formative activities of the local fraternity's;

The regional formation director also has the following additional responsibilities:

- if elected, holds voting privileges and is accountable for all decisions made by the regional fraternity council;
- if appointed, does not have voting rights on the council;
- coordinates, with the help of the other regional council members, the formation program for local fraternity formation directors;
- when needed calls the local formation directors for meetings and workshops;
- works with regional spiritual assistants and the formation team in developing formation programs for local fraternities;
- ensures that local fraternity formation directors obtain documentation such as Baptism Certificate, annotated with other sacrament dates are received from the inquirers. Inquirers need two letters of recommendation, one being from the inquirer's pastor; all are to be received before the "Rite of Admission." If married, provide verification of validity, Decree of Nullity, if applicable, if ordained, provide a copy of the letter verifying faculties; (See The FUN Manual – For the Formator 3-23-2011 – Page 18 of 26)
- sees that all local fraternity formation directors have The FUN Manual. This is a great resource for both initial and ongoing formation; make sure the members of the regional formation team become familiar with its contents. Ongoing formation materials such as Handbook for Secular Franciscan Servant Leadership can be purchased at Smoky Valley Printing and found in the TAU–USA national newsletter;
- ensures that local fraternity spiritual assistants are involved in the formation process in both initial and ongoing formation instruction;
- updates and maintains the Regional Formation Director's Binder;
- upon leaving this position, passes to the newly elected the Formation Director's Binder and *The FUN Manual*;
- makes arrangements to hand over all regional documents to the new regional formation director;
- is available to help the new formation director become acquainted with his or her new position on the regional council;

Regional Area Councilors

The area councilors have the following responsibilities:

- if elected by the local fraternity ministers or delegates at the time of the regional elections, hold voting privileges;

- the regional council may appoint councilors as deemed necessary, with no voting rights;
- the area councilor is accountable for all decisions made by the regional fraternity council;
- follow through on jobs assigned;
- within a reasonable time frame, area councilors are to prepare a spreadsheet of upcoming fraternal visitations and elections and forward it to the regional minister. At the end of each year, regional area councilors will create a spreadsheet for the new year and forward it to the regional minister;
- at the request of local fraternities, regional area councilors conduct regional visitations;
- if a fraternal visitation is due and the regional council has not received a request from the local fraternity, the area councilor will contact the fraternity minister;
- if the local fraternity minister has not attempted to contact a regional spiritual assistant to conduct a regional pastoral visitation, the area councilor will take on this responsibility;
- at the time of the fraternal visitation, the area councilor must see a copy of the fraternity's canonical establishment and a copy of the latest audit report;
- if a local fraternity appears to be in trouble, the area councilor will conduct an emergency regional visitation with a request to a regional spiritual assistant to conduct a regional pastoral visitation;
- the local fraternity minister will call a chapter of elections for their fraternity every three years. The outgoing minister cannot be elected to the vice minister's position after leaving the minister's position;
- if elections are due and the council has not received a request from the local fraternity, the area councilor will contact the fraternity minister;
- if the local fraternity minister has not attempted to contact a regional spiritual assistant to witness the elections or a delegate has not been assigned, the area councilor will take on this responsibility;
- regional area councilors are responsible for sending the **Council Members Handbook** to newly elected fraternity council members;
- collaborates with the regional council in determining areas of needs at the local fraternity level;
- accurate and organized records should be maintained of all communication regarding assigned duties in their area jurisdictions;
- notations or short summaries of important conversations or actions should be kept in a file for future reference;
- regional area councilor, once a year, calls a meeting with the local fraternity ministers in their jurisdiction. Calling a yearly meeting could save some headaches later down the road;
- maintains a Regional Councilor's Binder;
- upon leaving this position, pass the Regional Councilor's Binder to the newly elected regional area councilor for the assigned area jurisdiction;
- make arrangements to hand over all regional documents to the new area councilor;
- be available to help the new area councilor to become acquainted with his or her new area jurisdiction;

