



THE JOY OF FRANCIS

Secular Franciscan Order | St. Francis Region #52 | Southern California



St. Francis 2015 Annual Retreat at Serra

RE: Newsletter

Planned publication dates for *The Joy of Francis* are Feb 15th, May 15th, Aug 15th, and Nov. 15th. **Submission**

Deadlines for information to be included must be received by Feb 1st, May 1st, Aug 1st, and Nov 1st. Local Ministers, as well as District and Language Group Liaisons, are encouraged to submit information about their fraternity's activities. Information should be sent to Cyl Maljan-Herbelin, OFS, 1933 Tudor Drive, San Jacinto, CA 19583 or as a Word document to cylmaljan@earthlink.net.

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Judith Mussatto, OFS, Regional Minister

Since June 17, 2015 I have received via e-mail copies of the Encyclical Letter *Laudato Sí*. The copy in Italian is 200 pages. A copy in English, reformatted, is 80 pages long. Italian or English, reformatted or not, it is a formidable document both for its content and length. Then came the study guides; these are in English.

Until recently I did not realize that the word "encyclical" is both a noun and an adjective: From the Oxford Dictionary. Encyclical. Late Latin. *encyclīcus*. Greek. *enkuklios*. (n) a letter addressed by the Pope to all the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church. (adj.) encyclical letter, a letter by the Pope intended for wider distribution.

Laudato Sí is an encyclical letter. Pope Francis has written this letter not to all the Bishops, not to all Roman Catholics. He has written this letter based on

St. Francis of Assisi's *Canticle of All Creatures* to all peoples of the earth and many are reading and commenting on his letter.

Catholics and non-Catholics are gathering in groups to study *Laudato Sí*. Are you part of a group that has studied or will be studying this encyclical letter? Is your local parish paying attention to this letter? If not, then this might just be the right time for you to approach your Parish Priest and/or Leadership Council to talk about starting a study group in your parish. I have the opportunity to be part of a core group at my local parish that will facilitate a parish wide study of *Laudato Sí* this Fall. Each facilitator received a copy of the encyclical letter in book form.

Why should we Secular Franciscans study this encyclical letter? Article 11 of our Rule states: *"Trusting in the Father, Christ chose for himself and his mother a poor and humble life, even though he valued created things attentively and lovingly. Let the Secular Franciscans seek a proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods by simplifying their own material needs. Let them be mindful that according to the gospel they are stewards of the goods received for the benefit of God's children. Thus, in the spirit of 'the Beatitudes', and as pilgrims and strangers on their way to the home of the Father, they should strive to purify their hearts from every tendency and yearning for possession and power."*

In paragraph 222 of *Laudato Sí*, Pope Francis states *"... Christian spirituality proposes a growth marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little. It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack. This implies avoiding*

the dynamic of dominion and the mere accumulation of pleasures."

Article 18 of our Rule states: *"Moreover they should respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, which 'bear the imprint of the Most High', and they should strive to move from the temptation of exploiting creation to the Franciscan concept of universal kinship."*

In paragraph 202 of *Laudato Sí* Pope Francis tells us that *"Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone. This basic awareness would enable the development of new convictions, attitudes and forms of life. A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal."*

Rather than quote all the articles of Chapter II of our Rule, *The Way of Life*, I encourage you to prayerfully read Chapter II, as you study *Laudato Sí*. You may conclude, as I am beginning to, that what Pope Francis is asking of the world should not be new to Secular Franciscans. *Laudato Sí* could be experienced as a booster shot.

We can continue to say how excited we Secular Franciscans are that the current Pope chose the name Francis; however, if we do not read, reflect and act on what he says in this encyclical letter, we will be nothing more than groupies basking in the glow of a Rock Star, happy with ourselves, content that the Pope has chosen the name of our Founding Father.

We are called to be much more!

Your Sister in Christ.
Judith

FORMATION

Jan DeSpain OFS, Regional Formation Director

First of all, thank you to the two-thirds of our local formation directors that returned my recent regional survey. We really appreciate your time as the information will be helpful in assessing strengths and needs for the future.

In the light of the upcoming papal visit to our country, I hope to encourage fraternity discussions on Bl. Junipero Serra who Pope Francis will canonize on September 23 in Washington D. C. (which is also the feast day of Padre Pio).

Many of you have visited Serra Retreat Center in Malibu over the years. Its patron, Fr. Serra certainly journeyed close to this site in founding the first nine missions in Alta California. What do you know about our brother, Junipero? As Seculars we have a connection in that Fr. Serra was very much influenced by a Third Order scholar, Raymond Llull.

This timely topic is not without controversy in our state and country. His canonization has not been welcomed by many who suggest he was instrumental in destroying Native American culture. There have been numerous articles written and symposiums presented, and I expect more to surface. In my August issue of St. Anthony’s Messenger their leading article (Junipero Serra, Saint or Scoundrel?) featured him. It could be a good starting point, especially if you are not familiar with his history.

As California Franciscans we might find his life particularly interesting. I’m sure most of you have probably visited at least one mission. Some of you, like the San Luis Rey Fraternity are blessed to meet and worship at the mission. I have visited all twenty-one, but I’d visit them again in a heartbeat.

If you haven’t visited San Carlos Borromeo in Carmel, CA, which is where Fr. Serra is buried, perhaps you might put this trip on your “bucket list”. ☺

Fr. Serra will be the first U.S. saint of Hispanic origin. Actually, Fr. Serra spent more time in Mexico (17 years) before he embarked on his work in establishing missions in Alta California. What I am sharing hopefully inspires you to research more about our new Franciscan saint. As a secular we should also investigate the life of Raymond Llull who inspired Serra to pursue missionary work. As you know, much can be found via the internet. I bought one of the newer books that just came out a few months ago. It is written by two historians from Santa Clare University. The title is, “Junipero Serra, California, Indians, and the Transformation of a Missionary”. It included new translations of Serra’s writings. The book is appropriate for someone who wants to do a serious study. There are of course, many other books and articles written.

In preparation for our Holy Father’s visit I ask your intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Fr. Serra during Pope Francis’ apostolic journey to the United States. We should pray also for healing and fruitful dialog with Native Americans as this unfolds. May we always be instruments of His peace and love.

Joyfully, Jan

JPIC NEWS

Elle Lesperance, OFS
NAFRA-JPIC Commission Member

Praise be to God! I hope you are enjoying the blessings of summer and continue to receive God’s awesome blessings through your local Secular Franciscan community.

I would like to hear from you in regards to the work that you do for others, for the poor, the needy, the

voiceless and others who need assistance. I encourage you to submit small write-ups about the outreach efforts that you do, even involvement in your parish outreach programs, either individually, as a group, or as a fraternity. This way we can encourage and strengthen each other in the work of bringing justice to the world, even with the smallest efforts or initiatives that we are involved in. You may also send related pictures as available.

By sharing our work and visions, we can begin to establish a small JPIC corner in our Regional Newsletter. Any announcements of future events or any JPIC-related articles that you think may help our regional JPIC efforts are also welcomed.

If you are a fraternity minister, please e-mail me the names of members of your fraternity who are willing to be part of our regional JPIC team. The goal is to be able to collaborate with each other in certain JPIC areas of interest.

I continue to offer myself as your JPIC animator and I am available to visit your local fraternity so that I can get to know you, encourage you and learn what JPIC efforts you do or are simply interested in. Perhaps you may want to be more involved in advocacy work, sending petitions or writing letters to our government officials in addressing areas of concerns in the local community, in our State, or in our country. We can surely learn from each other. We can put our visions, experiences, and efforts together. Number is power: the more of us actively involved and committed to peace work, the more peaceful resolutions we can offer to work for the common good.

Let us be proactive in living the JPIC articles in our Secular Franciscan Rule: Gospel to Life, Life to Gospel. Let us encourage and strengthen each other on how we can transform the world in the journey,

always seeking peace and joy for ourselves and others. I would like to hear from you, either by e-mail or by phone. Let's us truly build and sustain a relationship so that others can benefit from the Franciscan charism that we are called for.

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Cell phones: (818) 601-0433 or (818) 200-6281

LITTLE PLANTS

Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM Conv., submitted this Novitiate Newsletter, *Little Plants*, from the Immaculate Heart Monastery of Poor Clare Nuns of Los Altos Hills, CA, noting that he thought the beauty of their reflections are an inspiration for all of us, especially as we celebrate St. Clare's Feast Day:

TELLING TIME

How do you know what time it is? Whether you go by a clock, cell phone, or monastic bell, we all depend on some steadfast source to tell us the time. And what source could be more reliable than the Word of God? Although the Scriptures do not tell us information about the time of day, we can find there the most important thing we need to know about time: how to use it.

Of course we all wish we just had a little more time, especially the novitiate Sister who pushes the mop a bit faster down the hall in an effort to finish some of her duties before the bell for Vespers. Yet God insists on giving each of us 24 hours every day, no matter how much we need (or want) to get done. Many modern-day gadgets have been devised in an effort to "save time," yet the problem remains: time is not something that one can deposit in a bank and withdraw as needed. The fact is, time cannot be saved, it can only be spent; what is up to us is how we spend it.

MAKE THE MOST OF THE MOMENT

It was literally a long haul, and ended up taking several afternoons to get the job done. One wheelbarrow load after another, a novitiate Sister carted in the wood chips and spread them in all the spaces between plants in her garden. Although it took a long time, she knew that her labor today would spare her much time pulling weeds in the future.

A long time ago, eight centuries to be exact, Our Mother Saint Clare already understood this when she wrote to Saint Agnes of Prague, "Oh, what a great and praiseworthy piece of business it is to leave behind the things of time in favor of things eternal!" She recognized that although it is impossible to "save up" time, it is possible and praiseworthy to make a sort of investment: to make the most of the moment in a way which will pay off later, not only in this life, but in eternity.

TAKING TIME TOGETHER

"That's it, keep stirring a little bit longer." The experienced cook had set down her mixing bowl to check on her helper, a novitiate Sister who had never made this particular dish before. Without a doubt, the dinner would have been done much faster if the Sister cook had just done it herself, but she knew that there is no better way to spend time than loving your neighbor. By taking the time to teach someone else, she was building up community and sharing the joy of preparing a meal together.

A GOOD TIME

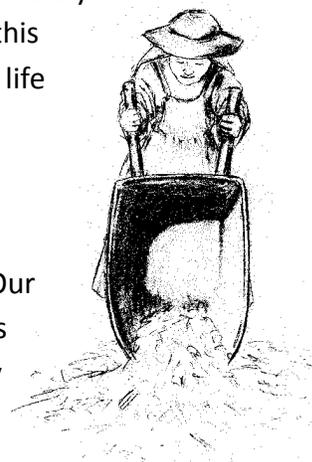
"So, what do you do all day?" The novitiate Sister paused as she looked at her family visitors through the parlor screen and pondered how to sum up the monastic schedule in an understandable way. "Well, when we get up, we go to pray, then we eat, and then we go back to pray. After that, we work, and then pray again, do some more work, and then back

to prayers ..." One may not notice until we put it into words just how much prayer punctuates the day of a contemplative. Yet this is precisely the way it is supposed to be. Perhaps we could get more done if we just did all the praying first and then all the working. Instead, continually coming back to the chapel is a way of "sanctifying time," that is, keeping us centered on the one thing we want to do with all our time: giving it completely to God. Our time is truly good when it is filled with God and given to Him. Praying the Angelus, saying grace before meals, morning offerings and night prayers are all ways in which we and countless other Christians can make each day a truly good time.

AT GOD'S PACE

A new novice knows that God's timing is perfect, especially as she learns to take a turn intoning the hymns at the Divine Office. The novice learns to follow the organ as she leads her Sisters in the praise of God. In music it is clear that some things simply cannot be rushed and there is a perfect timing for everything. We have also been learning this lesson from reading Saint Josemaria Escriva's biography in the refectory, which is appropriately titled At God's Pace. Indeed, this would also be a great title for life in the novitiate, which is a special time of grace and growing.

As we celebrate the feast of Our Mother Saint Clare during this Year of Consecrated Life, may it be for all of us a time of great joy, grace, and love.



DISTRICT NEWS:

Orange County:

On Sunday, July 5th, 2015, Judith B. Mussatto, OFS, Minister of St. Francis Region was Presider at **St. Clare Fraternity's** Chapter of Elections. Bill Mussatto, OFS, Delegate of the Conference of Regional Spiritual Assistants, served as Church Witness. Voters included members of St. Agnes and Vietnamese Martyr's Emerging Communities.



The newly elected council (2015-2018) is:

- Minister: Maria Huong Huynh, OFS
- Vice Minister: Canh Nguyen, OFS
- Formation Director: Joseph Bach Nguyen, OFS
- Secretary: Quang Nguyen, OFS
- Treasurer: Lieu Pham, OFS
- Councilor: Thuy Thanh Pham, OFS

On July 11th, 2015, Frank Miller, OFS, Regional Vice Minister was Presider at **San Juan Capistrano Fraternity** Elections. Armando Lomeli, OFS, Regional Spiritual Assistant, served as Church Witness.

The members of the new council are:

- Minister: Thomas W. Cooney, OFS
- Vice Minister: Cyndie Dunkerson, OFS
- Secretary: Robert Murray, OFS
- Treasurer: Joan A. Fessenden, OFS
- Formation Director: David Sire, OFS
- Councilor: Dr. Joseph J. Halka, OFS
- Councilor: Paul Kelly, OFS
- Councilor: Christine Riley, OFS
- Councilor: Dolores Ridill, OFS

WHAT WOULD ST. FRANCIS BE DOING IN THE WORLD TODAY

Diane Halal, OFS, Minister, Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity "What would St. Francis be doing in the world today" was the topic of a recent annual essay contest for eighth graders at St. Hedwig School, in Los Alamitos, California. Mrs. Sarah Visser, their 8th Grade Teacher, supervised the essay writing and submitted 63 essays to the local St. Maximilian Kolbe Secular Franciscan Fraternity, which sponsored the essay contest in an effort to interact with youth.

Although all students wrote well, the essay of Nick Guggiana stood out as being very well thought-out, inspiring and articulate. The award was given on Thursday, June 4th, during the Final Awards ceremony with the eighth grade students and their parents in attendance Guggiana received the prizes of \$25 and a stature of St. Francis for his winning essay.



Diane Halal, Fraternity Minister, Miss Kathleen Nocella, St. Hedwig School Principal, Nick Guggiana, Contest Winner, and Mrs. Sarah Visser, 8th Grade Teacher

His essay reads:

St. Francis Our Main Man

As you all may know Pope Francis, (the current leader of the Roman Catholic Church), took his name from St. Francis of Assisi. Pope Francis chose this name because of the courageously kind, loving,

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and caring man who owns it but, do you know the story and life of this honest man?

Saint Francis was born in a small but beautiful town of Assisi, Italy. Shockingly his original name as a child was Giovanni Francesco Bernardone. Even though Francis (Giovanni) came from an extremely wealthy family, he had little education. Later in his teen years he had served as a soldier in a gruesome war. Sometime after the war took its toll on the people Saint Francis was captured by the enemy country. While he was suffering in the grimy prison cell, Francis developed a severe illness that caused him to turn to God. Saint Francis promised God if he survived this he would alter his way of life to solidarity and almsgiving. Years after he was released St. Francis tossed his rich garments to his father and put on a bishops brown cloak. By doing this his father took him out of his will but that did not stop Francis, he just carried on his ministries by helping and caring for the poor and lepers. By doing this, people became interested in Saint Francis and all his holy works so, Francis decided to create a monastery filled with all his followers who did good works for the people of the community. His monastery is still around today!

Towards the end of his life in September 1224 St. Francis received the stigmata, the marks of the crucifixion of Christ, after 40 days of fasting just like Jesus did. In 1226, Saint Francis unfortunately died of old age but, in 1228 he canonized as a Saint in the Roman Catholic Church. Pope John Paul II in 1980 proclaimed him as the patron Saint of ecologists. The art below is the emblem of Saint Francis. His feast day is October 4.



In today's world St. Francis would be horribly busy with all the poverty, war, and illness going around in this world. I'm pretty sure if St. Francis saw all

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the poor and starving children in Africa, he would be the first one there to help the helpless children. He would probably build farms and missions with the help of the United Nations to help fill the weak towns with food and the joy of Jesus Christ. By doing this, he will help inspire regular citizens to help the world around them.

San Diego County:

On June 27th 2015, San Diego district had a picnic at the Pavilion of Mission San Luis Rey in Oceanside. All five fraternities in the district participated, representing four different languages.



Registration began at 8:30 am. At 9.30 am we started with group pictures, and then recited the Rosary in 4 languages (English, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese). In the morning we also had each of the five fraternities introduce themselves, followed by Fr. Franklin Fong, OFM sharing how the OFS can let people know of their presence. After lunch we had Crane for Peace project led by the team members of the Immaculate Conception Fraternity.



We also had a lot of games led by the members of the St. Diego Fraternity. We collected toys for abandoned children at Casa Cornelia in San Diego.

Besides the member of the five fraternities, also in attendance were Br. John Kiesler, OFM and Br. Vincent Nguyen,

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OFS from the Franciscan school of Theology. We also had Rock DeSpain, Regional Spiritual Assistant and his wife Jan DeSpain, Regional Formation Director.

We had about 70 members show up during the course of the day. We had a wonderful District Picnic with a lot of good food, fun, laughter and love combined with the ministry for abandoned children and Crane for Peace project.

Thank you very much to all of you for a job well done even when I had to leave early for my uncle funeral in Tustin.

Anthony Tuan Cao, OFS
Regional Councilor/San Diego District Liaison

Tri-County (Ventura, Santa Barbara, and north Santa Maria)

The St. Louis the King Fraternity in Santa Barbara reports that they recently had some exciting First Saturday monthly meetings in their Fraternity.

In June they went up to San Lorenzo Seminary in Santa Ynez and visited their Capuchin brothers there, sharing a Mass and a great lunch.

In July they were able to visit their Poor Clare sisters in Santa Barbara, and meet their newest postulant, Maria. She will be having her solemn profession sometime in the next year. They hope to hear about it and be included as they were when Sister Seraphica made hers last year.

August was a wonderful tour of the historical art of the Mission, led by their pastor, Father Charles Talley. He had given a similar talk to the docents, and shared it with them.

Orientation and Inquiry levels of formation have three members each.

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Plans for the rest of the year include a talk on Non-Violent Communication in October, a session on Our Lady of Guadalupe, or maybe the Crib of St. Francis, by one of their members (TBD) in either November or December. Early next year, probably, they will have a presentation by Vice-Minister Dean Wood on prayer beads (including the Rosary) across different religious traditions.

They still provide food to our Poor Clares monthly. They are planning fund-raisers to help support their increased activities and outreach programs.

They may or may not do their customary Our Lady Guadalupe play. It has been given mixed reviews by their membership. Some of them are sort of tired of it, some feel it is not solemn enough (it has become a comedy in some past years), and some are very devoted to the tradition. They will be voting on its inclusion or possible modification.

Los Angeles County:

On July 26th, 2015, Frank Miller, OFS, Regional Vice Minister was Presider at **St. Joseph Fraternity** Elections. Rock DeSpain, OFS, Regional Spiritual Assistant, served as Church Witness.

The members of the new council are:

Minister: Lucy Capones, OFS

Vice Minister: Mary Szachman, OFS

Secretary: Aida Quon, OFS

Treasurer: Rodina A. Gonzales, OFS

Formation Director: Michael Sanchez, OFS

Councilor: Benita Quilang, OFS

Councilor: Lorie L. Manay, OFS

San Bernardino/Riverside District

On June 14th, Bob Herbelin conducted a fraternal visit with Padre Pio Fraternity in Moreno Valley. He also conducted a fraternal visit on June 28th with Immaculata Fraternity in Riverside.

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On July 11th several members of the Holy Spirit Fraternity attended a multi-denominational meeting of Third Order Franciscans at Pilgrim Place in Claremont. In addition to fellowship and prayer we talked about how we do Initial Formation and how we are organized. We learned that they are now placing a greater emphasis on being in community. While they do some formation via email because of distances, they want to have local mentors. In one case they are using a Catholic Friar to mentor a remote candidate since there are no suitable Anglican Franciscans nearby.



On July 25th at Holy Spirit Church in Hemet, Padre Pio and St. Francis and St. Claire Fraternities celebrated the

Public Professions of Barbara Turkowski (Padre Pio) and Christine Nordlander (St. Francis and St. Claire). Fr. Stephen Gross, OFM Conv. celebrated the Mass and gave us a homily which challenged all of us to live up to our profession promises. Having the celebratory meal on the church property was seen as particularly effective in building fellowship and enhanced the day. Note: It was suggested that a sample of a profession pamphlet be put up on the Regional website as a resource.

On August 9th, we held the quarterly meeting of the Ministers, Vice Ministers and Formation Directors. All Fraternities were represented by both Ministers and Formators. The Fraternities exchanged plans for celebrating Transitus with several planning to go to celebrate with the Friars at Oceanside at 7pm on October 3rd. We continue to plan for a District Day Retreat. Fr Mark

Schroder, OFM is offering to give a retreat on St Francis, Pope Francis and *Laudato Si* if we can find a suitable location on October 10th. Fraternities will look for a venue for the planned Regional Ongoing Formation Workshop in early January. We discussed how to nurture future Servant-Leaders. It is emphasized to those currently in Initial Formation, that all are expected to be willing to serve the Order. The professed should be encouraged to serve actively even if they are not, currently on council. We also discussed the rules limiting how long people can serve consecutively. The fact that councilors, secretary, treasurer and formation director are all in one pool is now better understood. For example, a person who has served as formation director for three terms cannot be nominated for secretary but can be nominated for minister or vice minister.

The District held its annual picnic hosted by the Holy Spirit Fraternity on August 9th. It was very well



attended (we almost ran out of plates since nothing disposable was used). Members from all

fraternities, along with several guests, were able to attend. After the meal we held Ongoing Formation, where we discussed Chapter 2 of the *Joy of the Gospel*. Margie Rodriguez, who led the formation, broke us up into small groups making sure to mix people from various Fraternities in each group.

We currently have two people in Orientation, four people in Inquiry, and four in Candidacy.

William R Mussatto, OFM
District Formator/Liaison

REGIONAL CALENDAR

AUGUST 2015

23rd Fraternal Visit: St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity, Torrance.

SEPTEMBER 2015

13th Pastoral Visit: San Lorenzo Ruiz Fraternity, Los Angeles
 27th Fraternal Visit: St. Lawrence of Brindisi Fraternity, Los Angeles
 27th Pastoral Visit: St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity, Hemet

OCTOBER 2015

03rd Regional Executive Council Meeting, Claremont
 04th Profession: St. Clare Fraternity, Santa Ana
 04th Profession: San Luis Rey Fraternity, Oceanside.
 11th Elections: Holy Spirit Fraternity, Claremont
13-18th National Fraternity Chapter of Elections, New Jersey
 18th Fraternal Visit: St. Francis Fraternity, Anaheim
 19th Spiritual Assistant/Formator Class, St. Gregory's Whittier

NOVEMBER 2015

08th Fraternal Visit: St. Diego Fraternity, San Diego
 08th Elections: St. Maximillian Mary Kolbe Fraternity, Los Alamitos
 15th Elections: Immaculate Heart of Mary, Santa Ana
 21st Spiritual Assistant/Formator Class, St. Gregory's Whittier

DECEMBER 2015

05th Regional Executive Council Meeting, Claremont