

Communio

That All May Be One

Newsletter of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region
Secular Franciscan Order

Summer 2012

Annual Regional Gathering 2012 "Celebrating Family — Remembering Clare: A Clear Light for the Franciscan Family"



O how great is the vibrancy of this light
and how intense is the brilliance of its illumination!

While this light remained certainly
in a hidden enclosure,
it emitted sparkling rays outside.
Placed in the confined area of the monastery,
yet she was spread throughout
the wide world.

Hidden within, she extended herself abroad.

Yes, Clare hid, yet her life came to light.

Clare was silent, yet her fame was proclaimed.

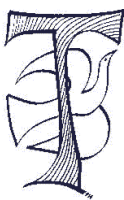
She was hidden in a cell, but was known in cities.

It should not be surprising that a light so enkindled,
so illuminating could not be kept hidden
without shining brilliantly
and giving bright light in the house of the Lord ..."

From "The Papal Decree of Canonization" of St. Clare (1255)
Regis Armstrong, OFM Cap., Revised Edition and Translation
The Lady — Clare of Assisi: Early Documents

The Four Pillars of Secular Franciscan Life

Spirituality



Formation

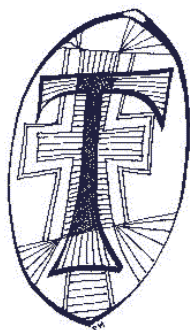


Fraternity



Apostolate





Minister's Message: Looking Forward With Great Anticipation

Dear brothers and sisters,

As this issue of our regional newsletter goes to press, I am excited about two upcoming events in our Secular Franciscan Order in the United States: the Quinquennial and our Annual Regional Gathering.

The time for the Quinquennial Congress, for which we have been praying, has arrived. July 3–8, hundreds of our brothers and sisters will gather as one family in Skokie, Ill., (near Chicago).

Together we will pray, share, witness, challenge, and enjoy one another. Our theme is: **Why Francis? Claim the Gift!** We will be blessed to hear from several dynamic speakers, including Sister Ilia Delio, OSF, and Brother Bill Short, OFM; plus, our own Ed Shirley, OFS, and Pat Brandwein-Ball, OFS.

Sister Ilia and Brother Bill will lead us in exploring the following topics: “Who Are You, O Lord?: A Franciscan View of God”; “And What am I?: Franciscan Understanding of the Human Person”; “Who Are We?: An Overview of the Franciscan Family and the Place of the SFO and the Rest of the Third Order.”

As our promo ads so articulately spell out, we will discover the passion, capture the spirit, and meet brothers and sisters who will help us take our Secular Franciscan vocation and the Secular Franciscan Order to the next level. My wife, Madeline, and I are truly blessed to be able to attend this “experience of a decade” along with 20 or more members of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region. We pray for safe travel for all involved.

The next anticipated event of the year is our very own Annual Regional Gathering. This will take place Aug. 3–5 (please turn to pages 9–11 for the weekend schedule). Once again it will be held on the grounds of the LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center, just outside Asheville, N.C. We are privileged to have Father Stephen Gross, OFM Conv., from the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, and Deacon Tom Bello, OFS, our national minister, visiting with us this year.

We will truly have a family celebration as we remember St. Clare in a special way throughout the weekend. This past Palm Sunday marked the 800th anniversary of Clare's entrance into our family as she made the journey from her home in Assisi to the Portiuncula (Our Lady of the Angels). “There Francis and his friars accompanied her with candles alight and

accepted her vows to live in the service of the gospel” (*FUN* Manual — “St. Clare of Assisi”).

Please take time to reflect on this section of the *FUN* Manual sometime this year in honor of the first member of the Second Order of our family — the Poor Clares.

I look forward to seeing our members come together to share our vocation and to renew acquaintances — to share in liturgy, prayer, mealtime, and social time together. It is truly one of my favorite times of the year. The ARG re-energizes me. It strengthens my commitment to live out articles 6 and 14 of our SFO Rule: “...to go forth as witnesses and instruments of (the Church's) mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by (our) life and words” and “(building) a more fraternal and evangelical world so that the

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kingdom of God may be brought about more effectively.”

As I travel throughout the Region conducting visitations and presiding at elections, I am humbled at the depth and breadth and length of our Secular Franciscan Vocation as witnessed by all with whom I come in contact. Please continue to pray for me and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit upon our elected servant leadership (at the local, regional, national, and international levels). I promise to continue to pray for all of you daily.

Peace and All Good,

Jerry

Jerry Rousseau, OFS, minister of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region, is a member of Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity in Blairsville, Ga.



Editor's Journal: Exciting events are upon us

Someday I might write about packing one backpack and a satchel for the Quinquennial, or three days at our Annual Regional Gathering (ARG), or for three weeks in Italy. Traveling light has its benefits.

This *Communio* has plenty of content, though.

Our regional minister's message, words of wisdom from our regional spiritual assistant, news of the exciting events that took place at the National JPIC Rally, among other things.

I hope to see all of you at the ARG, but I know we'll pray for any of you who aren't able to be with us. We look forward to meeting our national visitors. Yes, a region gets a visitation, just as does a fraternity; the regional council even has to fill out a pre-visitation questionnaire.

One of our treasured ARG customs is our eucharistic-adoration chapel. With that in mind, I'd like to offer you the accompanying prayer by St. Camilla da Battista Varano which you might like to use during adoration, or before receiving Communion.

Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS, is Communio editor. She is a member of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity in Hendersonville, N.C., and spiritual assistant to Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity in Blairsville, Ga.

Prayer to Jesus before the Eucharist

May the Lord Jesus Christ be blessed together with the glorious Virgin with all the saints, who are and may be of help to me so that I may worthily receive this holy Sacrament to their glory. Cure, O my Lord, all my infirmities and strengthen my weaknesses, so that I, with the help of this spiritual medicine, will be totally healed, and I pledge myself completely to your holy service. May your spirit, my Lord, enter into my soul so much that I might transform into you, so alive with charity, humility, obedience, poverty of spirit, mortification of the body and scorn of the world that you taught me with the example of your life and so that I unite myself so much with you that I can never distance myself in all time. Amen.

St. Camilla Battista da Varano in
From Worldly Princess to the Foot of the Cross:
The Life and Writings of
St. Camilla Battista Varano, OSC,
Edited by Bred Thoman, OFS

Regional Spiritual Assistant's Words of Wisdom:



Focus on the journey, not the outcome; Thoughts on voting

We are members of different organizations and groups. We see beginnings of different ventures. We don't always see the conclusions. We are part of something good. That is God's call.

We are here for a time. We are in the middle of things. We are on a journey. Some join us. Some depart from us. We go until Sister Death calls us. We contribute. We're part of the development.

If we were part of a building, we would be a mosaic.

We are never not a child of God, never not a Franciscan. We have the grace, the gift, the call. We are to teach the world with this grace, this gift, this love.

Our national election is only a few months away. Voting is a privilege and a responsibility. In light of this position, we are called to seriously discern, through prayer and reflection and with the teachings of the Catholic Church, a responsible choice of a political candidate for the office of president of the United States.

Candidates don't present a clear-cut image of their moral and ethical practices. Many of the issues that will confront the president-elect will call for clear and decisive action.

We the electorate are to choose the candidate who seriously embraces and practices an ethic and morality compatible with Catholic morality and ethics. If neither of the mainline candidates embrace those, there may be an independent candidate who could be more acceptable.

*Blessings for all times of peace and all good,
Father Linus*

Father Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv., spiritual assistant to the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region, is a member of St. Anthony of Padua Province, USA, which has its headquarters in Ellicott City, Md. He is Catholic chaplain at Syracuse University in Syracuse, N.Y.

Secular Franciscans help Franciscan sisters serve migrant workers

By Judy Haupt, OFS

Sisters Sheila Byrne and Stella Breen have been co-directors of the Franciscan Center, a Catholic social outreach of the Diocese of Charleston, on St. Helena Island, S.C., for almost 20 years. They belong to the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

The sisters serve the underprivileged in the area and help with the migrant workers when they are there.

About 1,500 migrant workers arrive in the late spring with little or nothing. The sisters collect and prepare packages of food supplies and other items.

For the past two years, the members of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity located on Hilton Head Island have helped by collecting toiletries. They sort and assemble the items into packages. Each one contains a bath towel, washcloth, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, and toothbrush to be given to the workers when they arrive. They have donated more than 400 packages each year and many extra items.

The members of the fraternity have assisted the sisters in other outreach programs and helped with a picnic for the kids they serve.

Judy Haupt, OFS, is minister of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity on Hilton Head Island, S.C.

Formation Director: Have courage, God is with us!

By Faye Martin, OFS

When Pope John Paul II was newly elected, Father Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap., sought to give encouragement to him, as Pope John Paul II stood on a precipice to lead the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Father Cantalamessa stood in St. Peter's Square, under the pope's window, and shouted up, "Have courage, God is with you!" The SFO now stands on a precipice that calls us to renew our Order. We are to make the sacrifice by renewing the SFO's initial-formation program. The call of the Holy Spirit should be a red flag that it is time and we are ready to make this sacrifice for the love of God. As we begin this journey, we must remember to have courage, God is with us!

This renewal is falling on the shoulders of the present-day local councils. We must begin by evangelizing ourselves, so that we can join the Church in its mission to proclaim, live, and make relevant the Gospel today. One of our National Formation Commission's intentions in creating *FUN* "is to increase our own understanding of who we are called to be as Franciscans, enhance our sense of belonging and ownership of our Order and to pass this Franciscan spirit on to others who respond to this same vocation" (*For Up to Now: Foundational Topics for Initial Formation (FUN)*, page 16).

"We are geared towards the perfection of charity and commit ourselves to the sanctification of the world, working within the world. ... The world becomes the 'place' where discipleship is lived and where one becomes holy, not in spite of, but precisely because of and by the means of being in the world" (Father Felice Cangelosi, OFM Cap.). Our way of life calls us to evangelize the secular world. As evangelical Franciscans, we seek to live a gospel life that flows from us, in the manner of St. Francis: "A servant of God should be burning with life and holiness so brightly, that by the light of example and the tongue of his conduct, he will rebuke all the wicked." In this way we fulfill our promise to "consecrate our life to the service of His kingdom" (SFO Profession formula). Have courage, God is with us!

I would like to revisit some common dialogues at the workshops. The first had to do with the purpose of our SFO resources and the responsibility of the fraternity and the formation team. Our SFO resources are meant to be a tool and blessing for Orientation, Initial Formation, and Ongoing Formation. Instead, our fraternities have burdened themselves by assuming responsibilities that are not their role. It is important to remember that our SFO resources are made for us, not us for the resources. Our resources help build a formation program which will unite us, inspire us, move us, and transform us to Christ, in the manner of St. Francis. Our society is known for its intensity, efficiency, and assembly line approach *to make ready the product*. We do not make ready the individual. We are not responsible to see that everyone who enters our initial formation program is professed. If the individual is truly called, the Holy Spirit in union with the individual will be the relationship that grows the call.

We plant the seeds of our life and assist the Holy Spirit and those in initial formation. **When planning another initial formation class**: the council in collaboration with the **formation team**, needs to meet and prayerfully discern its readiness for another class and the availability of trained formators. The fullness of our initial formation classes should be **offered: when** the book for Orientation and Initial Formation has been chosen, used in tandem with the *BSSF Regional Formators' Guidelines for Orientation and Initial Formation*, the *FUN Manual*, AND conducted by a trained, faithful witness of our Rule of life. Our BSSF Region highly recommends *The Franciscan Journey: Embracing the Franciscan Vision*. Observing how our fraternity members give flesh to our Rule of life is as important as the classes. This is our role and our gift to God, our Church, people, and creation. Faithfully living our Rule and sharing it is how we "we rebuild

the house of God.” Have courage, God is with us!

The next dialogue reflected councils and formation teams’ lack of familiarity and understanding of the spiritual foundation of the “Pathway to Profession.” It is essential that the formation director form oneself so to provide ongoing training and direction for the formation team and members of council. It is the council that interviews, discerns, and approves the individual’s Rite of Admission and the Rite of Profession. Sometimes the council may be needed to help discern issues that may arise with an individual or his [her] advancement into the Inquiry Phase, which is the beginning of initial formation. Before an initial formation class begins, the council needs to be satisfied that the formators and members of council have been properly trained to perform their particular formation role. It is also essential that a file for each person in initial formation be maintained, whether he [she] completes our formation program or not. We recommend that it be the formation director because the individual files are to be made available at Pastoral and Fraternal Visitations. Before an individual begins Orientation, he (she) is expected to meet privately with the formation director (or formator). During this dialogue, the formation director or formator completes the initial-interview form (p. A-6 of the *BSSF Regional Formators’ Guidelines*). Also included in the file should be a copy of the “BSSF Regional Orientation and Initial Formation Process Schedule” (beginning on p. 9), including the date as the individual receives or completes each expectation. Next include the “Orientation and Initial Formation Monthly Attendance Record, Fraternity, and Formation” document (beginning on p. 13), responses to his (her) reflection questions, written report on a brief biography of St. Francis, monthly homework assignments, letter of recommendation from his (her) parish priest, and any other pertinent information. Our classes are also meant to awaken an individual’s call to penance and conversion. We seek to imitate and become Christ like, in the manner of St. Francis. To do this, the formator needs to include some version of the following questions with the set of questions that follow each chapter:

- How does what we just studied change your relationship with God, our Church, others, and creation?
- How will it change how you will live differently in the secular world?

Our stories of conversion to the gospel are our faith stories to share with others. The local formation director/team and members of council are strongly encouraged to make the sacrifice and extend oneself in this manner. Have courage, God is with us!

The last dialogue centered on the lack of availability of OFM’s, Poor Clares, and diocesan priests as our fraternities’ spiritual assistants. They questioned if Seculars are given the gift to be spiritual assistants. Take time to prayerfully study and embrace the “Elements of Ecclesiology and Theology of the Laity” in the *FUN Manual*. Read how we *share in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ*. Remember, God is speaking to YOU through his Church. When we Profess, we choose “to bind ourselves more closely to the Church and to work intently to rebuild the ecclesial community and fulfill its mission among all people” (*Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order*). We cannot allow the fear of the unfamiliar to keep us from our journey into God. If you feel you might have the gift to be an SFO commissioned spiritual assistant, the opportunity of becoming one is already present in our Region. The Franciscan Family Connections course conducted by Father Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv., and team is already available to us. The second class is in progress. Like us, Father Linus and his team must also prayerfully discern their readiness and availability before beginning another class. Have courage, God is with us!

Faye Martin, OFS, is regional formation director for the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region; she is a member of Channel of Peace Fraternity in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation: It's in Our Franciscan DNA

By Carolyn D. Townes, OFS

DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS, of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity, and I were blessed and privileged to attend the **JPIC Rally!** April 12–15 at the beautiful Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Ill.

Thirty-six Secular Franciscan JPIC representatives, including JPIC National Commission members, regional animators, and friends of JPIC from 21 of the 30 SFO Regions, descended on the shrine to spend three days together in prayer, faith sharing, sessions on Catholic social teachings and our Rule, with strategies for moving from word to action.

It was indeed a blessing because this was the first gathering since we nationally moved from the Apostolic Commissions model to Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation in 2007. Although we are no longer operating under the Apostolic Commissions model, JPIC is in no way a replacement; rather, it's an "upleveling" of the commissions. The gathering was facilitated by Kent Ferris, OFS, our national JPIC animator; and Christine Elliott and Lonnie Ellis, OFS, of the Franciscan Action Network (FAN).

We are Franciscans who, like our seraphic founder Francis, received a divine call to rebuild the Church. Like Francis, who first interpreted the call literally and went about gathering bricks and cement to repair the physical structure of the building, we, too, set out to answer the call with the commissions. Work was done, and good work, no doubt. Yet, the task, the call from God, was much greater. With the JPIC model, we not only collect the bricks but also touch hearts.

Father Pio Jackson, OFM, from the Sacred Heart Province in the St. Louis area, joined us and shared with us the spirituality of JPIC. Father Pio said that the Franciscan spirituality of JPIC is not new; it is based on the Gospels. Being active in the JPIC movement as a Franciscan is the heart of our Rule; the work of JPIC is the essence of who we are. Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation is in the very DNA of the Franciscans — Religious and Secular. Therefore, it must not only be about what we do but more about who we are being.

Father Francis put down the bricks and picked up a new way of being — not only to his fellow brothers and sisters but to all of God's creation.

Article 15 of our Rule states: "Let them individually and collectively be in the forefront in promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives and their courageous initiatives. Especially in the field of public life, they should make definite choices in harmony with their faith."

Our Lord Jesus came to show us a new way of being — towards our sisters and brothers. Jesus bent down and washed feet and said to his disciples, as he says to us today, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34–35).

"We learn to disagree, but not dehumanize; we try to reconcile in our relationships... With all the negativity around, it is Franciscan fraternity that will heal," Father Pio said.

For me, it was in all of my doing and building that I thought I was living out the Gospel way of life. Then a series of most horrific losses shook me to my core. It was in the abyss of my grief that I could no longer *do* — I could only **be**.

Moving through the grief, I realized that people connected with me more in who I was being — not in what I did. I truly became a new creature; one who could slow down enough to be with her fellow creatures.



My dear sisters and brothers in Saint Francis, let us put down our bricks for a moment and begin to build with living stones — those who need us to just be with them, to sit with them, to listen to them, to give them a hug and a smile. This is JPIC in action. This is being Franciscan.

When I worked and ministered at St. Francis of Assisi Church and Friary in New York City, the people came in droves because of who the Franciscans were. Yes, there was the breadline that gave out meals every morning since the Great Depression. Yes, there were the consistent and daily confessions. Yes, there were the Masses that fit into everyone's schedules. But, it was the Franciscan friars who everyone came for; there was "something special" about the Franciscans.

When I was in the midst of my grief, the Franciscans were there for me, as well. They never preached to me, they never told me to "buck up and get back to business." They just sat with me, had dinner with me, listened to me, and cried with me. It was exactly what I needed to move through the grief.

"Jesus sent us out to share with the lonely, the poor, those who are in pain," Father Pio said.. "People are hungry today to be loved — to be needed."

As Franciscans, our call is to be healers to those in need of healing. This is in our very DNA; it is who we are. Together, as we move to rebuild our Church, let us build with the living stones of love, peace, and Franciscan joy.

May the Lord give you His peace!

Carolyn D. Townes, OFS, the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region's JPIC animator, is a member of Our Lady Queen of Angels, Emerging Community, in Columbia, S.C.

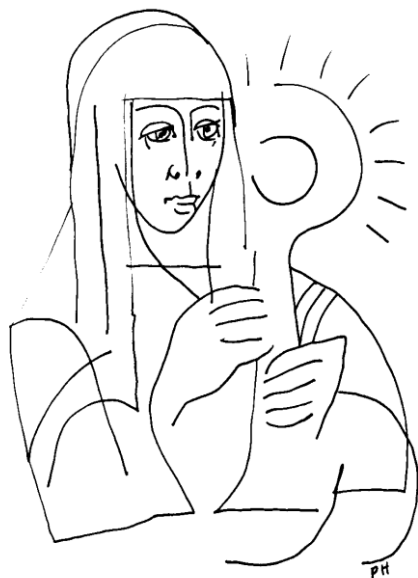
Regional Executive Council Gathering Recap

By Christine Washington, OFS

The Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis (BSSF) REC met March 24 at the Fairfield Inn near Greenville-Spartanburg Airport, Greenville, S.C. The council considered and acted upon the following:

- Web Site: We discussed the BSSF Region website. It will include our BSSF roster. Jerry Rousseau, regional minister, asked me, as secretary, to consider being the contact person for questions pertaining to the roster. The address of our website is <http://www.bssfsfo.org>.
- Fraternity Matters:
 - Rite of Canonical Establishment — We talked about the beautiful canonical establishments of two fraternities in Area 1: San Damiano Fraternity, Athens, Ga., on Feb. 13 and St. Pio of Pietrelcina Fraternity, Decatur, Ala., on March 10.
 - Our Lady Queen of Angels, Newly Forming Group, Columbia, S.C. — This fraternity has taken another step in its journey to canonical establishment. Jerry recommended, and the council approved, a status change from Newly Forming Group to Emerging Community. Congratulations, Our Lady Queen of Angels, Emerging Community!
 - St. Michael Fraternity, Garden City, S.C. — This fraternity was recommended to be a fully reactivated fraternity. The council approved the fraternity's request to change its name to Blessed John Duns Scotus Fraternity. As far as we know, this is the only fraternity in the United States to have this name. Congratulations, Blessed John Duns Scotus Fraternity!
 - Let us praise God for his goodness and keep our brothers and sisters in these fraternities in prayer as they celebrate these milestones on their Franciscan journey.
- Annual Regional Gathering: The proposed agenda for the upcoming ARG, Aug. 3–5, was

See REC, page 15



BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION

ANNUAL REGIONAL GATHERING

LifeWay Conference Center, Ridgecrest, North Carolina

August 3–5, 2012

**“Celebrating Family —
Remembering St. Clare:
A Clear Light for the Franciscan Family”**

FRIDAY, August 3

- 2:00 Meeting: REC + National Visitors (Johnson Spring Board Room)
- 3:00 Registration — Mountain Laurel Lobby (Channel of Peace Fraternity)
- 4:00 Meeting — Spiritual Assistants (Mountain Laurel Board Room)
- 4:00 Choir practice for cantors and musicians (Johnson Spring, 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- 5:00 Liturgy of the Hours: Evening Prayer (Johnson Spring 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- 5:30 – 6:30 Dinner buffet (tickets required)
- 6:45 Welcome, Opening Prayer (Johnson Spring 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
 - Recognition of New Councils, New Attendees, and Anniversaries
 - Introduction of National Visitors
- 7:30 Presentation — Father Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv., regional spiritual assistant:
“St. Clare: A Light for the Friars Minor”
- 8:30 Social (Johnson Spring Building, 2nd Floor: Refreshments in Room 3 A-D)

SATURDAY, August 4

- 7:15-8:15 Breakfast buffet (tickets required)
- 8:30 Celebration of the Eucharist, morning prayer — Procession to Eucharistic Chapel
(St. Elizabeth of Hungary fraternity – Augusta, GA)
- 9:45 Break
- 10:00 Regional Fraternity Council Meeting (see agenda on page 11)
- 10:30 Presentation — Bret Thoman, OFS: “In the footsteps of Clare and Francis”
(Johnson Spring, 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- Noon–1:00 Lunch buffet (tickets required)
- 1:15 Fraternity Expo***** (Johnson Springs Building, 2nd floor, Rooms 1 & 2)
- 2:15 Presentation — Sister Bernadette Marie Cappola, OSC:
“St. Clare: A light for the Modern-Day Poor Clares”
(Johnson Spring, 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- 3:15 Break

- 3:30 Discussion time: Q & A with National Visitors
- 4:00 Presentation — Carolyn Townes, OFS, & DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS:
Reflections on the JPIC Rally
(Johnson Spring, 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- 5:00 Liturgy of the Hours: Evening Prayer (Johnson Spring 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- 5:30-6:30 Dinner buffet (tickets required)
- 7:00 Presentation — Father Linus:
“Elements of Ecclesiology & Theology of the Laity” — *FUN* Manual
(Johnson Spring, 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- 8:00 Memorial for Deceased Members of Region
(St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity)
- 8:30 Social (Johnson Spring Building — 2nd Floor: Refreshments in Room 3 A-D)

SUNDAY, August 5

- 7:15-8:15 Breakfast buffet (tickets required)
(Time to check out)
- 8:30 Presentation — National Visitors “St. Clare – A Light for Secular Franciscans”
(Johnson Spring 2nd Floor, Azalea B&C)
- 9:45 Break
- 10:00 Celebration of the Eucharist, Morning Prayer
- 11:00 Adjournment — Closing Prayer — Closing Comments
- ***** Fraternity Expo will be open after lunch Saturday and remain open until early Sunday morning. Please take advantage of these local fraternity displays and share your experiences along the way. Special information tables on St. Francis Pilgrimages, the BSSF Web site, Jerry and Cricket Aull ministries/music, and Franciscan Institute/Franciscan Passages will also be available in this area.

FRANCISCAN BOOKS AND ARTICLES WILL BE FOR SALE
(St. Francis Springs Prayer Center)
Johnson Spring Building – 2nd Floor, Azalea Room A

***A Chapel will be open for Eucharistic Adoration 9:45 a.m. Saturday to 9:45 a.m. Sunday**

Please sign up to spend quiet time with our Lord
(Chapel: Mountain Laurel Building, lower level - conference room #9)

REGIONAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL MEETING

***** Saturday, August 4 10:00 a.m. – Noon
Johnson Spring Building, 2nd Floor, Room 3 A-D (Across from Azalea Room)

Every *elected* Fraternity Minister and REC is a member of the Regional Fraternity Council.
Please be present or delegate this responsibility to another member.

OPENING PRAYER

Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

REPORT OF TREASURER**BUSINESS**

Approval of amendments — BSSF Regional Guidelines
Approval of Budget for 2013
ARG 2013: August 2-4 (Ridgecrest) Chapter of Elections
Appointment of Nomination Committee
Calendar of Visitations/Elections —Sept. 2012/July 2013

COMMENTS from Regional Minister and National Visitors

OPEN FORUM — Please discuss items with regional minister before meeting.

ADJOURNMENT — CLOSING PRAYER

***MEMBERS OF FRATERNITIES, NEWLY FORMING GROUPS, AND EMERGING COMMUNITIES
ARE INVITED TO OBSERVE THE COUNCIL MEETING.

Congratulations New Councils**Immaculate Conception Fraternity**

Jonesboro, Ga.,

April 21

Minister: Sharon Loiselle, OFS

Vice Minister: Helene Ward, OFS

Secretary: Sharon Geist, OFS

Treasurer: Sylvan Thuente, OFS

Formation Director: Bret Thoman, OFS

Councilor: Antoinette Irons, OFS

Councilor: Theresa Ryan, OFS

Councilor: Katia Thoman, OFS

St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity

Charlotte, N.C.

June 3

Minister: Tom O'Loughlin, OFS

Vice Minister: J.C. Liu, OFS

Secretary: Martha Roman, OFS

Treasurer: Jennye Taylor Johnson, OFS

Formation Director: Rob Buchanan, OFS

Councilor: Valerie Gebhardt, OFS

Councilor: Earl Glenn, OFS

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS REGION**SCHEDULE OF VISITATIONS AND ELECTIONS (PROPOSED)**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>V/E</u>	<u>FRATERNAL / PASTORAL VISITOR</u>
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ARG August 3-5, 2012 (National Visitors)**2012**

Sep. 15	Garden City, SC	E	Jerry Rousseau/
Sep. 17	Athens, GA	E	Willie Guadalupe/Fr. David Hyman, OFM
Oct. 6	Decatur, AL	E	Willie/
Oct. 21	Wilmington, NC	V	Paula/Zanker/Pat Wilkerson
Oct. 21	Nashville, TN	V	John Knippel/Kathy Taormina
Nov. 10	Burlington, NC	V	Jerry/
Nov. 14	Fayetteville, NC	V	Jerry/
Nov 17-18	Raleigh, NC	V	Jerry/
Oct. 28	Hendersonville, NC	E	Sara Nell Boggs/
Dec. 16	Conyers, GA	E	John/Cricket Aull

NAFRA Annual gathering, Denver, Oct. 16-21**2013**

Jan. 12	Augusta, GA	V	Sara Nell/
Jan. 13	Duluth, GA	V	Jerry/
Feb. 16	Greenville, SC	V	Jerry
Mar. 7	Morehead City, NC	V	Jerry/
Mar. 10	Elizabeth City, NC	V	Jerry/
Apr. 6	Franklin, NC	V	Willie/
Apr. 14	St. Simons, GA	E	Charles Meyer/
May 5	Aiken, SC	E	Jerry/
May 11	Jonesboro, GA	V	Sara Nell/
May 14	Winston Salem, NC	E	Jerry/
June 2	Charlotte, NC	V	Willie/
June 9	Newton, NC	E	Sara Nell/Joanita Nellenbach
July 11	Asheville, NC	E	Jerry/Joanita

ARG August 2-4, 2013 (chapter of Elections)**Canonical Establishments in 2012:**

Athens, GA

Fr. David Hyman, OFM, delegate
(established Feb. 13)

Decatur, AL

Fr. Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv., delegate
(established March 10)**Probable Canonical Establishment in 2012:**

Conyers, GA (Sept. 9) Fr. John Koziol, OFM Conv., delegate

Newly Professed
Congratulations!

Fraternity of Brother Francis

Newton, N.C.

May 26

Rita Borst, OFS

Eric McIntire, OFS

Nora McIntire, OFS

Graced Reflections



Editor's Note: Chris Chirieleison, now an Inquirer in St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity, Hendersonville, N.C., included this poem as part of his answer to a question at the end of Chapter 3, "Francis, Clare, Catholic Doctrine," in *The Franciscan Journey*. The question: "How did Clare come to accept Francis' perceptions about the Gospel and Jesus?"

"The chapter describes Clare and Francis as mirrors in which to discover the Gospel spirit they both embraced, but in the way mirrors reflect light and even magnify its intensity," Chris wrote. "I think they also served in this role for the love of God. Although they could add nothing themselves to the sufficiency of that love, they were able to amplify its evidence by reflecting it to their brothers and sisters, as well as all of creation. I wrote this poem which relates somewhat to this notion of seeing God through each other."

Prisms and Panes

By Chris Chirieleison

How many panes enclose this form of facets;
Whose pale and brittle surface bends the light;
A light so pure and radiant, yet tacit;
It whispers as the dawn unto the night.

And names what joy resounds to please Perfection;
By magnifying elements ideal;
This Truth is known upon reflection;
A prism glorifies the spectrum it reveals.

Now pouring through these panes, this light rebounding;
Doth burst into a visible array;
Of colors bright and ever more astounding;
Than every flower gathered in bouquet.

What kind of eminence would rend itself by virtue;
Of mere refractions lesser in design;
Yet when we recognize each other's rare hue;
Our panes afford a glimpse of the sublime.

Writing Franciscan

Taking the downward path to upward mobility

***From Worldly Princess to the Foot of the Cross: The Life and Writings of Saint Camilla Battista Varano, OSC* by Bret Thoman, OFS. Tau Publishing (Phoenix, Ariz., 2012). 233 pp.; paper, \$11.95 at www.Tau-Publishing.com.**

By Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS

A beautiful young noblewoman gives up her wealth and comforts to embrace a life of poverty as a follower of St. Francis of Assisi. Sounds like St. Clare.

This book, however, gives us the life and writings of our newest Franciscan saint: Camilla Battista da Varano (1458–1524), canonized Oct. 17, 2010. Like Clare and Francis, she embraced the cross, which, Bret writes, “though pointing to the lowest place, was not the ultimate direction the great saints sought. Heaven above was.”

The illegitimate beloved daughter of the Duke of Camerino, in the Marches region of Central Italy, Camilla grew up in luxury, was well educated, and was expected to make a brilliant marriage.

She struggled with her vocation and in 1481 entered the Poor Clare monastery in Urbino, returning to Camerino in 1484 with eight other nuns. There she spent most of the rest of her life in the monastery her father purchased for her from Benedictine nuns.

From Worldly Princess to the Foot of the Cross begins with Bret’s excellent introduction to St. Camilla’s life and includes a chapter on how he came to know and admire her.

Some of us who have been on pilgrimages with Bret have met Father Ferdinando Campana, OFM, provincial of the friar Province of the Marches. He provides further information in “The Spiritual Experience and Background of Saint Camilla.”

Mother Chiara Laura Serboli, OSC, current abbess of the monastery where Camilla lived, writes that she is “A Woman for Our Times.”

“Like us, she found herself in an age of great movements — cultural, political, and scientific,” Mother Chiara Laura writes. “Absolutism was readily rejected, and relativism ruled. Some were fortunate to enjoy well-being, luxury, and hedonism to the extreme, while others wasted away through neglect and marginalization. In the name of false freedom, there was a distaste for moral rules.

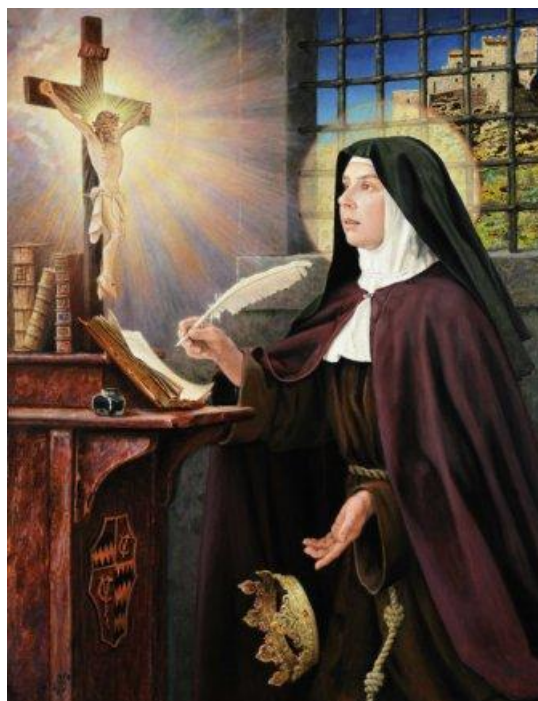
“Camilla lived, like us, in a time when it was not always clear which way to go.”

Her way was to remain with Christ on the cross.

This collection of Camilla’s major writings includes “Praise of the Vision of Christ,” “Memories of Jesus,” “The Mental Sorrows of Christ in His Passion,” “Instructions to the Disciple,” “Novena to the Virgin,” and “Spiritual Life,” her autobiography.

Like St. Francis, who prayed to experience all of the pain Christ felt during his Passion, Camilla wanted to suffer with her beloved Jesus.

“She understood, through a revelation of God, that Jesus Christ experienced not only physical pain on the cross, but especially interior pain,” Father Ferdinando writes. “She went



beyond the meditations of his physical pain (which was fairly common in her day), to descend into the depths of the Heart of Christ, that same Heart in which she saw her name written in letters of gold: “*Ego te diligo, Camilla*” (I love you, Camilla).

Reading her first work, the poem “Praise of the Vision of Christ,” written before she entered religious life, I was drawn into her longing to see Christ’s face, and felt some of that desire.

“O mirror of my heart,” she says to Christ and, to explain her impatience to see his face, tells him, “Do not marvel if I have great haste, because it seems a long time to those who wait.”

I loved her straightforward advice in “Instructions to the Disciple,” as fresh today as when she wrote it in 1501.

What a picture she creates, for instance, with her description of gossiping: “One devil sits on the tongue of the gossip, and the other by the ear of the one who listens. They both laugh among themselves and mock the fool who gossips and the idiot who listens. I hope you are wise and that you neither gossip, nor listen. If you are able to silence the gossip, you will obtain two goods: you will expel the demon from your brother’s tongue and confuse the other devil who was ready to put the gossip in your ear.”

In his preface, Bret states that, “As a mystic, St. Camilla did not write in prosaic or linear fashion; she wrote to express her spiritual experience of God. Thus, she frequently jumped back and forth between the first and third person in her spiritual colloquies, making it difficult to understand who is speaking to whom ...”

I don’t think that this is a major problem in getting to know this saint through her writings. Her work captivates me, and good endnotes help when clarification is needed.

This is an excellent introduction to St. Camilla’s life and thought, to be read any time, but would also be valuable for reflection during Lent. She wrote her “Novena to the Virgin” for use “in preparation for a Marian feast.”

Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS, is editor of Communio; a member of St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity in Hendersonville, N.C.; and spiritual assistant to Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity in Blairsville, Ga.

REC, continued from page 8

- discussed. We are preparing for a visitation from our National Fraternity.
- New Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation animator: Carolyn D. Townes, OFS, was welcomed as our BSSF Region’s new JPIC animator. Carolyn shared with the council her vision for developing JPIC for our region. This includes a focus on education in some of the basic issues of this commission.
- Amendments to the BSSF Region Guidelines: The council discussed two amendments to our Regional Guidelines: Article 9.a: Affiliates with a Local Fraternity and Article 9.b: Transfers and Returnees (inactive members). These amendments, or a version of them, will be presented to the Regional Fraternity Council at the ARG.

As we look forward to our Annual Regional Gathering in August, we pray that God’s ineffable peace reign in our hearts and minds.

Christine Washington, OFS, is the secretary of the Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Regional Executive Council and a member of St. Joseph of Cupertino Fraternity in Bessemer, Ala.

**Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis
Regional Executive Council**

Minister: Jerry Rousseau, OFS

Vice Minister: Frank Massey, OFS

Secretary: Christine Washington, OFS

Treasurer: Greg Savold, OFS

Formation Director: Faye Martin, OFS

**Spiritual Assistant:
Father Linus DeSantis, OFM Conv.**

Area 1 Councilors

Willie Guadalupe, OFS; John Knippel, OFS

AL: Bessemer, Decatur;

GA: Athens, Blairsville, Conyers, Duluth,
Jonesboro; **NC:** Franklin;

TN: Chattanooga, Knoxville, Nashville

Area 2 Councilors

Sara Nell Boggs, OFS; Charles A. Meyer Jr., OFS

GA: Augusta, St. Simons Island;

NC: Asheville, Charlotte, Hendersonville, Newton;

SC: Aiken, Charleston, Columbia, Greenville,
Hilton Head Island, Spartanburg

Area 3 Councilors

DorothyAnn Rowland, OFS; Paula Zanker, OFS

NC: Burlington, Elizabeth City, Fayetteville,
Greensboro, Morehead City, Raleigh, Wilmington,
Winston Salem; **SC:** Garden City

Archivist: Sara Nell Boggs, OFS

Communio Editor

Joanita M. Nellenbach, OFS

**Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation Animator
Carolyn D. Townes, OFS**

**Youth/Young Adult Fraternal Animator
Vacant**

Prayer Ministry (online prayer requests)

Area 1: Ada Winters, OFS

Area 2: Donna Kaye Rock, OFS

Area 3: Marie Stephan, OFS

Fraternity prayer coordinators
submit prayer requests

Rome and Assisi Immersion Pilgrimage

Accompanied by
Bret Thoman, OFS,
&
Father Linus DeSantis,
OFM Conv.

Sept. 30–Oct. 9, 2012

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Communio

is published 4 times a year:
Mid-January, end of March,
end of June, end of
September or Mid-October.
Send news and information
to sofwriter@att.net.