



Divine Mercy Region
Secular Franciscan Order—USA

May 2022
Volume 1, Issue 2



Divine Mercy Regional Newsletter

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Brothers and Sisters,

If you are able, I invite you to join us at the Quinquennial Congress. It will be held August 3-7, 2022, in Phoenix, AZ. The Q is for all Secular Franciscans. It is held every five years to celebrate and renew our Franciscan calling.

This is my first Q! Everyone has expressed a joy and excitement that the Q brings and an opportunity to meet brothers and sisters IN PERSON from around the country. Plus, it is a wonderful chance to learn from many high-level presenters throughout the conference. This is also my first trip to Arizona! Yes, it will be HOT in Phoenix in August, but they have air conditioning. My wife and I are planning to arrive early and take a trip to the Grand Canyon!

Details of the Q are in the latest issue of the Tau, also on the [secularfranciscanusa.org website](http://secularfranciscanusa.org). It is part of our Franciscan charism to have a great time! We offer hospitality, courtesy, kindness, and friendship to one another. Please let me know if you are attending. It's nice to see friendly and familiar faces!

Following the Q, our Divine Mercy Chapter Meeting will be held in Dewitt, MI at the Franciscan Retreat Center August 12-14, 2022. Ministers or their delegates should be making plans to attend. Our Region pays for the local minister or delegate to attend. More details will be coming out as we get closer to the event.

We follow that up with our Region hosting the 2022 National Chapter Meeting in Detroit this coming October. If you can help us in even the smallest way, please let us know. We need people for registration,

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Visit our new website at divinemercuryregionofs.org!



Registration
closes July 1!

[Click here for
more
information.](#)

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER CONTINUED

hospitality, musicians, and cantors for Mass, among other areas. This is a chance to serve our Order in a way that doesn't come up very often. Please contact Barb Scott, OFS, vocations.divinemercuryregion@gmail.com to volunteer.

As time has progressed, I think we are all hopeful to be able to gather again in large groups. We have missed that over the past two years. The Q and IN PERSON National Chapter Meetings have been put off. Let's pray that we can continue on our path back to our normal gatherings.

Peace,
Jim Graczyk, OFS , Minister, Divine Mercy Region

FROM THE FORMATOR

I very much hope there was someone from your fraternity in attendance for the Regional Spring Gathering on April 23. We were so blessed by the sharing from Fr. George Kooran, OFM Cap. along with Mary VanderPloeg, OFS and Kim Spaniola, OFS. They helped us reflect on how Franciscans and our vocation are to be rooted in Scripture. I was both challenged and excited.

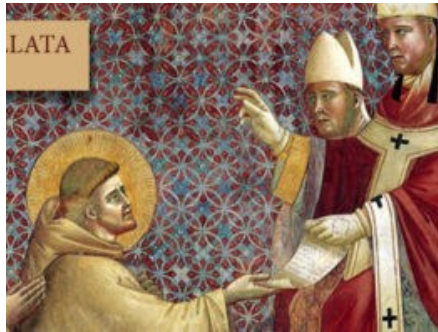
I was excited about the beauty of and energy behind our call and vocation as Seculars. God moving and acting in us and through us is an undeniably beautiful thing. We know it when we see it – and as Seculars we should always be looking for it. Part of our call is to cooperate with God and the Church in the world. We have to be vigilant and look for that movement of God so we can support, assist, and be His hands and feet in our world. When we are present, it is true beauty and the Kingdom here on earth.



Catholic
Church
invites us to
celebrate
Laudato Si'
Week 2022

May 22-29

[Click here for more
information.](#)



FROM THE FORMATOR CONTINUED

I was also challenged. Our call is to continual conversion. We get comfortable. We like where we are, what we do, and who we do it with. Yet our call tells us that we are to embrace, welcome, support, and work with others who have the call. (Formation) We have to be willing to embrace change and go where the Lord calls. Sometimes we think that we have already done that. Our rule is really clear however – “Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.” (Art. 7) We know there are saints who began their work that we recognize today who did not begin until their middle age. We know movements that have helped our Church influence and impact the world for the better that have been carried out by Catholics of all ages.

As I prayed on this, I thought about where God is calling me in my Franciscan journey, within the apostolate of my fraternity and as Formation Director of the Region. I am beginning to see some ways that he may be calling me to spend more time with my Franciscan sisters and brothers to aid locally and Regionally. I know from experience that this will mean saying no to some other things in my life. That is hard, but I am not prepared to tell God I don't have time for the work he is placing before me. What is he placing before you? Before your fraternity? Before our Region?

Mary concluded her talk with the following words and I share them with you. May they be embraced and be true for the whole human family.

“Change begins on the inside and works its way out. The Holy Spirit is rousing us from indifference on the inside and leading us to steps that will bring the world back to right order and new life.”
Mary VanderPloeg April 24, 2022.

Let us bring the good news to the world! Let our fraternities be the signs of this faith, hope and love, places of shining generosity of offering our services freely, places like the opened arms of Jesus welcoming and embracing everyone, places of deep prayerful spirit and places of prophetic visions of our Christian and Franciscan vocation! ~Tibor Kauser, CIOFS General Minister

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NEW COUNCILS ELECTED

St. Francis Fraternity Council / Sterling Heights Elected April 27, 2022:

Left to Right: Treasurer Dawn Pulcer, Minister Jane McKay, VM Mary Lambrix, Sec Chris Monette, Form Dir Frances Schena, SA Fr. Lenz



Lumen Christi Fraternity Council / Wyandotte Elected April 28, 2022:

Left to Right: Treasurer Vince Cariotti, Minister Joe Iaquina, VM Amber Scudder, Sec Sylvia Jagielski, Councilor Pat Jurasek, Councilor Greg Montminy



United themselves to the redemptive obedience of Jesus, who placed His will into the Father's hands, let them faithfully fulfill the duties proper to their various circumstances of life. Let them also follow the poor and crucified Christ, witness to Him even in difficulties and persecutions.

— Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order – Article 10

Our Mother of Sorrows /
Grand Rapids Elected March
30, 2022:

Minister-Chris Bueche, OFS
Vice Minister-Jeff Dills, OFS
Secretary-Carol Dills, OFS
Treasurer-Mark Mann, OFS
Councilors-Jim Howard, OFS;
Todd Oatley, OFS; Mary
VanderPloeg, OFS; Paul
Wojtas, OFS



Congratulations to all new Councils!

Congratulations to the
Fraternities who
celebrated Anniversary of
Canonical Establishment of
in March, April, and May:

3/19/2003 St. Clare
Fraternity
(19 yrs)/St Clair Shores

3/27/1898 St. Anthony
(124 yrs)/Indian River

4/8/1973 San Damiano
(49 yrs)/Brighton

5/21/63 St. Joseph
(59 yrs)/Ann Arbor

NEW PROFESSIONS



The Troubadours of St. Clare
Fraternity

December 4, 2021
Profession at St.
Bonaventure, Detroit
Troubadours of St. Clare
Fraternity welcomed
(Front Row Standing L-
R):
Sally McCuen, Lori
Kengel and Dan Carsten

with Fr. George Kooran, OFM, cap officiating.
Also standing are Kathy Carsten (Formation Director) and Mike
Carsten (Minister).
(2nd Row Seated L-R) is Rita Saigh and sponsors, Jerry
Alderman, Marie Amore and Kim Spaniola.
Sally, Lori and Dan began their formation a few months before
the Pandemic when we were able to meet in person. During the
Pandemic Lockdown their formation continued via Zoom.
Welcome, Sally, Lori and Dan to the Troubadours of St. Clare.

If your fraternity is celebrating any new professions or milestone
anniversaries this year, please send the names and your fraternity name to
the Newsletter Editor, Barb Scott, OFS, bscott3315@gmail.com for
publication in the next quarterly issue.



We Remember

Rose Tarafa, OFS—
Divine Providence (d.
1/30/22)

Stella Mordarski, OFS—
St. Bonaventure/Detroit
(d. 3/4/22)

Carol Gilhuly OFS—St.
Elizabeth of Hungary (d.
3/30/22)

Those That Have
Gone with Sister Death

Opportunities Around the Region

Day of Recollection

Date: Saturday, June 18

Time: 10 am - 3 pm, (Mass before lunch)

Presenter: Fr. Jerome Wolbert, OFM

National Spiritual Assistant, President-in-Turn of CNSA

Topic: Highlights of Fratelli Tutti (third encyclical of Pope Francis) subtitled 'on fraternity and social friendship'

Cost: Free (donations accepted)

To bring: brown bag lunch and drinks

Location: St Louis Center

16195 W Old US 12

Chelsea, MI 48118



Sponsored by St. Joseph Fraternity, Ann Arbor

Please RSVP if able, or questions:

Bob Brundage, OFS

rjbrundage2000-RSVP@yahoo.com

News from St. Paschal Fraternity Toledo:

We have moved our meeting location to St. Anthony of Padua in Temperance. We meet in person and with video call at the same time.

News from Saint David Fraternity:

Our fraternity and at least five other local fraternities were present on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 2022, to celebrate Mass and support Father Alex Kratz, OFM at Saint Joseph Shrine Chapel and the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Pontiac. We, at Saint David, come together four times a year to do outreaches. This date was chosen as it was on this Marian Feast that the Shrine was purchased by Terra Sancta Ministries. We invited other regional, local fraternities to come together to pray and socialize to show our interdependent relationship with each other as one Franciscan Family.

Terra Sancta Ministries relies completely on Divine Providence (donations) to maintain this holy place. It does not engage in fundraising, only "faith-raising." It receives no financial help from the Archdiocese nor from the Franciscan Order. The purpose of this annual event is to support the shrine (one of six Marian shrines of Michigan) and Terra Sancta Ministries.

We are very proud of our Franciscan Priest, Father Alex, who took on this Holy-Inspired project to renovate the 1940 Chapel. This year we not only prayed the Rosary, celebrated Mass together, but also prayed the Consecration Prayer to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for Peace with others throughout the world on this Feast Day. After Mass, Fr. Alex led the Stations of the Cross for those who could stay for the entirety of the Gathering.

Next year, we hope more Fraternities will take advantage of this annual event to support the Franciscan endeavor of this beautiful place to pray and to share fellowship with our Brothers and Sisters.

For information about the Shrine, search St. Joseph Shrine and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Pontiac.

Troubadours of St. Clare Fraternity Presents:

2022 - 2023 FAITH AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FORMATION SERIES

In September we will start our Bimonthly Formation Series with guest speakers
September 13, 2022 - [Tony Spaniola](#) will present on the **“Widespread Threats to Health,
Drinking Water and the Environment from the *Forever Chemicals* Known as PFAS.”**

November 8, 2022 - Fr. George Kooran OFM Cap. will present on the **“Theology of
Creation”**.

January 2023 - Doris Allen OFS, Divine Mercy Region Justice, Peace and Integrity of
Creation (J.P.I.C.) Animator will present **“The Gospel, Catholic Social Teaching, our
Rule, and Our Movement into J.P.I.C.”**

March 2023- Sally McCuen OFS will present **“The Life of St. Oscar Romero”**.

May 2023- Kim Spaniola OFS will present **“Rooted in Scripture Living in Service”**.

Click [here](#) to access the Troubadours Fraternity Calendar

The Divine Mercy Region has a new website!

<https://divinemercuryregionofs.org>

If you have any pictures, formation, or service opportunities you'd like to share with your brothers and sisters, please use the “Suggestion Click Here” link in the lower right corner of the website home page. Websites are things that evolve and change according to our needs as a fraternity throughout lower Michigan.

Call for Volunteers

As you may have heard announced, Divine Mercy Region has the honor of hosting the 2022 National Meeting of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA. This meeting is held every October for all the Regional Ministers of the United States to come together as the National Fraternity. This annual meeting is an important gathering, and in 2022 we have the opportunity to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for our brothers and sisters from across the US.

As we begin our preparations and planning, an important part of that will be to make sure we have volunteers in place to create that welcome, and also give everyone a smooth experience. Below you will find a list of areas in which we need volunteers. We are hoping that there will be Franciscans from the Region who will be attending part or all of this event. We are hoping that some of those who attend will be willing to volunteer a few hours or several shifts during the week.

Barb Scott from our Region has agreed to coordinate our volunteer efforts. All fraternity members are invited to share their time in this opportunity. Below you will find a list of all the possible volunteer roles. If you are interested in volunteering, you can contact Barb for more information or to get your name on the list. We ask everyone to prayerfully consider helping us welcome our guests.

Barb Scott - bscott3315@gmail.com

Cell – (616) 550-5916

Volunteer Needs

Airport volunteers for greeting on arrival at Detroit Metro airport - up to 12

Registration – 8 for multiple shifts – also handle info board throughout the week

Greeter for arrival – 4

4 hosts for the socials

1 photographer

Copy person – 2

Tech helper – 2

Medical Point person – 1 – It would help to have someone from Detroit in this role who plans to attend

The Chapter begins on Tuesday, October 11 and ends Sunday, October 16. A detailed schedule of the week will be forthcoming.

Thank you in advance for your consideration!

Be strong, take courage, all you who hope in the Lord.
~Psalm 31:24

National J.P.I.C. News

2022 Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Award

And so, my dear brothers and sisters, it is that time again when we, as a Franciscan community, recognize those individuals who are doing exemplary work in the areas of peace, social justice, and the care of God's creation. I know there are wonderful Franciscans out there on the front lines, serving and tirelessly working for the common good. Please prayerfully consider nominating that ordinary Franciscan who steps out into the extraordinary.

[Click here for the nomination form](#). Only nomination forms will be accepted. Nominations are only open to members of the worldwide Franciscans Family - Friar or Brother; Poor Clare; 3rd Order Regular Sister; 3rd Order Secular, Ecumenical Franciscan – Clergy or Lay member.

Please email the forms back to me at [ctownes26 @ gmail.com](mailto:ctownes26@gmail.com). Please put JPIC AWARD in the Subject line. I will email you an acknowledgement upon receipt of your form.

DEADLINE FOR ALL NOMINATIONS IS FRIDAY, JULY 15, 2022. This is the first call for nominations.

Any questions, please feel free to contact me or your National JPIC Commission representative.

Annual H2O Project

And just a reminder: It is never too late to contribute to the **H2O Project**. Yes, Lent may be over, but the need for clean, drinkable water will always be with us. As we continue to navigate these uncertain times, one thing remains certain – the need for clean water. Consider donating to the H2O Project individually or collectively with your family or fraternity. Donations can be sent to our National Treasurer, Claudia Kauzlarich, 2007 Maverick Trail, Harrisonville, MO 64701-1545. **Make the check payable to OFS -USA** – with H2O Project in the memo line. Thank you for your generosity.

Wishing you Easter blessings of peace and all good!

[Carolyn D. Townes, OFS](#)

National Animator,

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

[U.S. Secular Franciscan Order](#)



My Queen

*There is a chain around my neck,
On which there rides a Queen.
She is the flower of Israel,
The loveliest ever seen.*

*O Mary Sweet, we need your help.
A scourge has crossed our land.
It takes the lives of unborn souls,
With wicked bloody hands.*

*For life means naught
Where gold's concerned.
It's dollars that tell the tale
Of who will live and who will die,
For mercy does not prevail.*

*So save us from that devil's horde.
On your sure care we lean,
And ever on my chain you'll ride,
My dear and precious Queen.*

*Patricia Jurasek OFS
Lumen Christi Fraternity*

In this Easter season, how can we love our neighbors more intentionally?

- Use this [Examination of Conscience](#) to reflect on where God is calling you to be "salt and light" in your family, community, and online engagement.
- Share your commitment to the Civilize It pledge on social media using [#CivilizeIt](#) and [#ABetterKindofPolitics](#).
- Pray the [Prayer for Civility](#) (below).

Prayer for Civility

Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where uncivil words prevail, show me how to model love.

Help me remember the God-given dignity of all and invite others to do the same.

Show me how to build bridges and not walls and see first what unites us rather than how we diverge.

Let me seek to understand before asking to be understood.

Give me a listening heart filled with empathy and compassion.

May I be clear in sharing my own position and respectful and civil in describing those of others.

Let me never tolerate hateful ideas.

May I invite all to charity and love.

Lord, help me to imitate your compassion and mercy.

Make me an instrument of your peace.

Amen.

LITANY: LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

May is mental health awareness month. Along with St. Dymphna, whose feast day is May 15, and patron saint of the mentally ill, let us offer our prayers for those who suffer the pain and distress of mental illness.

LORD, BE CLOSE TO GIVE YOUR COMFORT (Repeat after each line)

When pain and distress is overwhelming

When worn out and weary

When the feeling of alienation arises

When troubled by impatience and negativity

When loneliness adds to anxiety

When it is difficult to communicate

When discouragement and despondency sets in

When fear makes it impossible to face the future

When the mental illness attacks self esteem

When anger and resentment assail

When beset by worry or fretfulness

When it is hard to rely on others to care

When envy arises toward those without a mental illness

When the recovery process goes slower than hoped

When it is hard to let go of long held plans

When pessimism or cynicism holds sway

When anguish is intensified by the need for reconciliation

When loved ones are far away

When the mental illness causes financial hardships that lead to worry or despair

When afflicted by the feeling of nothing to hope for

When depression makes it impossible to even think

When friends draw back fearful of mental illness

When the mental illness makes us moody and irritable

When haunted by regret and the shame of past sins

When it is difficult to sleep

When there is a loss of appetite

When there is resistance to necessary change

When the side effects of the medicine are difficult to bear

When tempted by denial

When nobody seems to understand

When bound to home or afraid to go out

When listlessness and apathy threaten

When all that is needed is a caring word

When it is impossible to maintain familiar routines

When it is hard to find the strength to go on

When thoughts of suicide appear

When it becomes difficult to pray

When suffering is hard to bear – LORD, BE CLOSE TO GIVE YOUR COMFORT

Our Father ...

Let us pray: Most merciful Father, Your beloved Son showed special compassion to lepers, tenderness to those long sick, and healing to the infirm before him. We place before You all those who have a mental illness and are in need of healing grace. Grant them courage and give them hope. May Your love and mercy raise up all who suffer from mental illness and bring them health and peace. We ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen.



Source: Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers: <https://catholicmhm.org/>.

**DIVINE
MERCY
REGION**

Order of Franciscans
Secular

Lower Peninsula of
Michigan and
Toledo, Ohio

Whenever you have membership changes, please email member updates: information on new candidates/contact information and admission dates, profession dates, change of addresses, dates of deaths, lapse or withdrawal dates, or completed transfer forms to the Regional Secretary at divinemercury.region@gmail.com.

Please remember the National database information must match your fraternity's Annual Report information! Accuracy is imperative! Thank you!

Divine Mercy Region
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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE