

Quinquennial 2016

On Thursday, June 30th of this year, over 600 Secular Franciscans and friars of the Franciscan First Orders convened in St. Louis, MO, for Quinquennial Congress XIX. Fourteen Seculars from the LaVerna Region were among the attendees. Note our group picture in front of our hotel.



The first Congress was held in Chicago in 1921. Third Order members from all over the U.S. were gathered as one family for the first time. Six thousand friars, prelates and Tertiaries were in attendance. The delegates proposed to the Provincials that one national Third Order organization be formed with its own Directive Board and an Executive Council. Every 5 years since (hence the nickname QUINQUENNIAL) a Congress has been held in major cities across the United States.

The theme for this year's "Q" was REVIVING THE SPIRIT. We all have gifts and ways that we revive our Franciscan Spirit; the Quinquennial's hope was to offer a variety of both national speakers and international guests in different presentation formats, opportunities for all of us to share in little fraternity groups around a series of questions formulated by Father Dan Horan OFM, our keynote speaker, and to listen to other speakers from around the United States as they share how they "revive" their spirit.



Fr. Dan's three keynote addresses focused on Mercy and Minority in the Franciscan Tradition. Specifically, they broke down as "Creation and Poverty," "Violence and Peacemaking," and "Racism and Xenophobia." The complete texts of his and other main presenters (Father Lester Bach OFM Cap and Fr. Murray Bodo OFM were names you are familiar with) appear on our National SFO website: www.nafra-sfo.org. Click on Quinquennial 2015 for presentations, photos, and comments.

As Jan Parker, National Minister, phrased it: "How desperately our world needs this "evangelizing impulse"! How our Church needs members alive in Christ to bring hope and healing to those in need! ... We are the ones who now bear this Franciscan gif, entrusted to us, to be shared with the Church and the world. This is why it is so necessary that we continually be open to revival by the Holy Spirit....Let the joy of revival begin!"



The 3 ½ days were filled with joy at meeting old and new friends, sharing in discussions as well as delicious meals. There were plenty of opportunities to purchase books, t-shirts and totes, and religious articles.

Each of us was energized through this "Q" to go out and share the Good News when we returned to our respective fraternities and communities, with a deeper understanding of our role in today's world to live the Gospel in all we think and do, in peace, joy, and mercy for all.

By Sharon Dale OFS